ROCHFORD CORE STRATEGY ADOPTION

1 SUMMARY

1.1 This report recommends the adoption of the Rochford Core Strategy following receipt of the Inspector's Report from the Planning Inspectorate Service, confirming that the plan is sound.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 The Core Strategy is a key part of the Local Development Framework – a collection of documents which set out how development will be managed in the District up to 2025, and beyond.

2.2 The Core Strategy was submitted to the Secretary of State in January 2010, who appointed an Inspector to conduct an examination into the soundness of the plan. On 27 October 2011, the Inspector issued her final report on the Core Strategy confirming that it was sound. As such, the Council may now adopt the Core Strategy.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 The production of the Core Strategy was an iterative process with the submission version being agreed at Council on 9 September 2009. This version of the plan set out the Council's strategy for delivering a minimum of 250 dwellings per annum, in accordance with the requirements of the East of England Plan 2008 (the relevant Regional Spatial Strategy for Rochford District).

3.2 The Council resolved (Minute 200/2009) that the Rochford Core Strategy Submission Document be accepted for pre-submission consultation, followed by formal submission to the Secretary of State. The submission version of the Core Strategy, and other evidence documents, was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for examination in January 2010.

3.4 The role of the Planning Inspectorate is to conduct an examination into the soundness and legal compliance of the Core Strategy on behalf of the Secretary of State. Guidance from the Planning Inspectorate states that the time period between submission and final report on soundness and legal compliance is six months. That being the case, it was anticipated the final Core Strategy could be adopted in autumn 2010.

3.5 However, a number of events, primarily at national level, have subsequently caused delays to the process. Most notably, statements and instructions issued by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, followed later by Court judgements that these were unlawful.

3.6 Following a dialogue with the Inspector in 2010, the Council agreed to make changes (called the schedule of amendments) to the submitted Core Strategy

to reflect the decision of the Secretary of State to revoke Regional Spatial Strategies (for Rochford the East of England Plan - see Minute 261/2010).

3.7 However, as a result of the outcome of the legal challenges to the Secretary of State's attempts to revoke regional strategies, Rochford District Council's intention to adopt a Core Strategy which set what it considered to be an appropriate housing figure based on up-to-date evidence were frustrated. As set out in the report to Council on 21 July 2011 (Minute 185(2) 2011), perhaps the most significant decision was that of the Court of Appeal on 27 May 2011 which ruled that the proposed abolition of Regional Spatial Strategies is not a material consideration at all in plan-making (e.g. the preparation of Core Strategies) and that it would be unlawful for a Local Planning Authority preparing, or a Planning Inspector examining, Development Plan Documents to have regard to the proposal to abolish Regional Spatial Strategies.

3.8 The Inspector wrote to the Council, clarifying her views on the implications of the above on the Core Strategy:-

"As you will be aware from the hearing sessions, an area of concern is the relevance of the RS [Regional Spatial Strategy] housing figures. In this regard I have to take into account the fact that the RS remains part of the development plan and that your strategy has to be in general conformity with the RS. Accordingly….I have not been able to support your proposed changes which were published for consultation last autumn."

3.9 The above statement also confirmed that the Core Strategy was once again out of sync with the legal position in relation to the status of the East of England Plan.

3.10 The Council submitted a request to the Inspector on 29 July 2011 for the examination to be suspended until December 2011, in order to allow the outcome of the Localism Bill to be considered, and to enable the Council to undertake other minor changes to ensure the plan period has regard to a likely new adoption date of 2012.

3.11 This request was rejected by the Inspector, but a way forward was suggested that would deliver 250 dwellings per annum over the period to 2025, not to 2027, the date required for a full fifteen year period. However, this would be predicated on an early review of the plan.

3.12 The Council subsequently (Minute 202/2011) resolved to revert to the original version of the Core Strategy with the aforementioned changes, and commit to undertake an early review.

3.13 The schedule of minor amendments to the Core Strategy Submission Document was produced, consultation carried out on the changes, and the results submitted along with the revised Core Strategy to the Inspector as agreed by Council (Minute 202 (2-6)/2011).

4 THE INSPECTOR'S REPORT

4.1 On 27 October 2011 the Inspector wrote to the Council and issued her final report on the Core Strategy. Her report confirmed that the Core Strategy was sound subject to a limited number of changes. The changes required can be summarised as follows:-

- A commitment to an early review of the Plan [as per changes proposed by the Council (Minute 202 (2)/2011)];
- Amendments to the policy for Gypsy and Traveller provision [as per changes proposed by the Council to correct dates to account for the delay in the examination process (Minute 202 (2)/2011)];
- An amendment to provide greater flexibility to consider the implications of affordable housing requirements on the viability of schemes;
- Additional wording in some policies to ensure the Core Strategy is fully compliant with the Habitats Directive; and
- Inclusion of a list of superseded policies.

4.2 The changes to the Core Strategy recommended by the Inspector are set out in three appendices of the Inspector's report (A, B and C). As noted in the Inspector's report (paragraph 3):-

"None of these changes materially alter the substance of the plan and its policies, or undermine the sustainability appraisal and participatory processes undertaken".

4.3 Appendix A sets out a schedule of the changes that were suggested by the Council, which the Inspector has determined are significant in relation to soundness.

4.4 Appendix B provides a schedule of changes that were suggested by the Council, which the Inspector has determined are minor and do not relate to soundness. However, in her report, the Inspector endorses the Council's view that they improve the plan.

4.5 Appendix C provides a schedule of the changes the Inspector considers are needed to make the plan sound.

4.6 The Inspector concludes that with the changes she recommends, set out in Appendices A and C, the Rochford District Core Strategy DPD satisfies the requirements of s20(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and meets the criteria for soundness set out in PPS12. As the Inspector's report is binding, the Council must enact these changes if its wishes to adopt the Core Strategy. In addition, it is noted that the changes the Council suggested which are set out in Appendix B, whilst not binding, improve the plan.

4.7 A final version of the Core Strategy incorporating the changes set out in Appendices A, B and C of the Inspector's report has been prepared and circulated separately to all Members.

5 ADOPTION

5.1 As set out above, the Inspector has found the version of the Core Strategy agreed by Council to be sound subject to changes which, as stated in the Inspector's report, do not alter the substance of the plan. That being the case, the Council may now adopt the Core Strategy.

5.3 The adopted Core Strategy will form part of the Development Plan for the District and will play a fundamental role in shaping the future development of the District and the determination of planning applications.

5.4 The Council is required to give formal notice of the Core Strategy's adoption. Any person aggrieved by the adoption of the Core Strategy may make an application to the High Court under Section 113 of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Any challenge must be made on the grounds that either the document has not been prepared within the powers conferred by Part 2 of the 2004 Act or that a procedural requirement of the Act or associated Regulations has not been complied with. Any such application must be made promptly and in any event no later than six weeks after the date of the adoption notice.

6 SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

6.1 Section 19 (5) of the 2004 Act requires all development plan documents to be the subject of a Sustainability Appraisal; The SA process assesses the likely significant economic, social and environmental effects of the Core Strategy.

6.2 In July 2011 (Minute 185(2)/2011), the Council asked the Inspector to delay the issuing of a decision on the soundness of the Core Strategy to enable a review of the Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal to be undertaken, following a High Court Ruling in respect of the format of Sustainability Appraisals in the case of Save Historic Newmarket v. Forest Heath District.

6.3 This review was completed and the outcome published as the Core Strategy SA Addendum 2011. This provided a clear summary of the alternative locations for development considered throughout the SA process and the reasons for selecting/rejecting those alternatives. The Core Strategy SA Addendum 2011 was submitted as part of the examination and was considered by the Inspector in her report.

6.4 As part of the procedures for adoption of the Core Strategy, a statement must be prepared explaining how environmental considerations have been integrated into the Document; how the environmental report has been taken into account; how the opinions of consultees have been taken into account; the reasons for the choosing the adopted strategy in light of reasonable

alternatives considered; and how the significant environmental effects of implementing the Strategy will be monitored. The statement has been circulated separately to all Members (the SA/SEA Core Strategy Adoption Statement).

6.5 In addition, a note has been prepared to demonstrate that the adoption of the Core Strategy by Rochford District Council is compliant with all relevant Strategic Environmental Assessment/Sustainability Appraisal legislation, having regard to Sustainability Appraisal undertaken through the iterative process of the document's production. In summary, this report concludes that adoption of the Core Strategy would be compliant with all relevant SA/SEA legislation. The note on compliance is included in the SA/SEA Core Strategy Adoption Statement.

7 RISK IMPLICATIONS

Risk Implications of failure to adopt the Core Strategy

7.1 Failure to adopt the Core Strategy is considered to be a high risk strategy for the District. Whilst it is understood that many residents want to see little, if any, development take place in the district, the existing situation is clear – notwithstanding the fact the Localism Act is now in place there remains a requirement for the delivery of 250 dwellings per annum as per the East of England Plan. Crucially, with no spatial strategy in place, these dwellings might very well receive consent, (possible via the Secretary of State as evidenced elsewhere outside of the District) at locations that are not favoured and without the supporting infrastructure envisaged in the Core Strategy.

7.2 Furthermore, the Government's draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out that cross boundary housing assessments will continue to be required and that unless up-to-date plans are in place, planning applications must be determined in accordance with the NPPF, including its presumption in favour of sustainable development. That being the case, this could result in greater levels of development where it can be shown proposals are sustainable, though the NPPF does state that green belts should continue to be protected.

7.3 Finally, the Core Strategy is not simply about housing, but sets out policies that seek to support and deliver, new employment opportunities and town centre developments.

Risk implications of adoption of the Core Strategy

7.4 If adopted, the Core Strategy may be subject to legal challenge under Section 113 of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Correspondence from third party Core Strategy objectors during the course of the examination suggests that a legal challenge may occur.

7.5 It is relevant to note that a challenge can only be brought on the grounds that the document is not within the appropriate power; or a procedural requirement has not been complied with. However, the Inspector concluded that the Core Strategy complied with all relevant legal requirements. In addition, the Core Strategy is considered to be in compliance with all relevant SA/SEA legislation.

8 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Adoption of the Core Strategy would have a major impact on how the District develops in the future, and thus on the environment. The Core Strategy directs development in a manner which balances economic, social, and environmental factors, and is supported by sustainability appraisal.

8.2 Failure to adopt the Core Strategy will mean no clear planning framework for the future development of the District is in place, which will increase the likelihood of planning applications being sought for development on land that is not considered to be acceptable for development, and will have unacceptable environmental impacts. The key test will be the availability of a five-year supply of housing and this is dependent on the adoption of the Core Strategy.

9 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The adoption of the Core Strategy can be met from existing resources, and will enable the Council to proceed with the production of other Development Plan Documents (including Area Action Plans).

9.2 The required inclusion of a commitment to an early review of the Core Strategy, following adoption, is expected to have resource implications, which will need to be considered and quantified in due course along with a timetable for the review.

9.3 A potential legal challenge to the Core Strategy under Section 113 of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 may have significant resource implications for the Council, and potentially significant cost implications.

10 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 As detailed above, if adopted, the Core Strategy may be subject to legal challenge under Section 113 of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

11 RECOMMENDATION

11.1 It is proposed that Council **RESOLVES** to adopt the Rochford Core Strategy, incorporating the changes set out in Appendices A, B and C of the Inspector's report of 27 October 2011.

Shaun Scrutton

Head of Planning and Transportation

Background Papers:-

Inspector's report, October 2011

Core Strategy SA Addendum 2011

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Rochford District Council

December 2011

Local Development Framework

Core Strategy Adopted Version

LDF

Rochford District Council

Rochford District Council

www.rochford.gov.uk

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Foreword

The Core Strategy Submission Document, with a potential adoption date of 2012, will not cover a 15 year plan period.

As such, the Council is committed to undertaking an early review of the Core Strategy to put in place a plan that covers at least 15 years, and complies with emerging national policy. The reasons for this situation are set out below.

The Council submitted the Core Strategy Submission Document to the Secretary of State for independent examination on 14 January 2010. Hearing sessions took place between 11 and 21 May 2010 to discuss the key matters and issues determined by the Inspector, and an additional hearing session on affordable housing took place on 7 September 2010. However, changes at the regional and national level, as well as developments in case law led to a delay in the examination process.

Following the Secretary of State's announcement to withdraw Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS) on 6 July 2010, the Council proposed amendments to the Core Strategy Submission Document (called the Schedule of Changes). These amendments were based on the housing figures proposed for the District up to 2031 in the revised East of England Plan, which was submitted to the Government in March 2010. These revised figures were agreed at the regional level and supported by Sustainability Appraisal and Habitat Regulations Assessment. The Schedule of Changes to the Core Strategy Submission Document was consulted on between 18 October and 30 November 2010 and the hearing sessions for the Schedule of Changes took place on 1 and 2 February 2011. However, after several rulings, the Court of Appeal has now concluded that the Secretary of State's intention to revoke RSS cannot be a material consideration, as held in *Cala Homes (South) Ltd) v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government* on 27 May 2011.

As the amendments to the Councils' Core Strategy had been taken in light of the Government's pronouncements, the above ruling rendered the Core Strategy out of sync with the legal position in relation to the status of the East of England Plan.

The decision was then taken, following advice from the examination Inspector, to revert back to the Core Strategy as originally submitted, albeit with minor amendments as requested by the Inspector following the original hearing sessions in May 2010. Such minor changes included alterations to correct anachronisms in the document resulting from the time lapse.

Contents

		Page
1	Introduction	7
	The Role of the Core Strategy	7
	Developing the Core Strategy	8
	Sustainable Community Strategy and other key documents	9
2	Spatial Characteristics, Issues and Opportunities	26
	Introduction	26
	Environment	26
	Population and society	28
	Housing	29
	Economy	31
	Transport	32
	Settlements	33
3	Vision	36
	The Vision for Rochford District	36
4	Housing	41
	Vision	41
	Objectives	41
	Introduction	42
	The efficient use of land for housing	44
	Extensions to residential envelopes and phasing	45
	Extension to residential envelopes post-2021	47
	Affordable Housing	49
	Dwelling Types	50
	Lifetime Homes	51
	Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation	52
	Appendix H1	54
	Appendix H2	58
5	Character of Place	61
	Vision	61
	Objectives	61
	Introduction	62
	Design	62
	Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments and Conservation Areas	63
	Listed Buildings	63
	Scheduled Monuments	63
	Conservation Areas	64
	Local Lists	65

6 The Green Belt 66
Vision 66
Objectives 67
Introduction 68
Protection of the Green Belt 68
Rural Diversification and Recreational Uses 70
7 Upper Roach Valley and Wallasea Island 72
Vision 72
Objectives 72
Upper Roach Valley 73
Wallasea Island 74
8 Environmental Issues 75
Vision 75
Objectives 76
Introduction 77
Protection and enhancement of the natural landscape and habitats 77
Local Wildlife Sites (LoWSs) 77
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) 77
Crouch and Roach 78
Special Protection Areas (SPAs) 79
Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) 79
Ramsar Sites (Wetlands of International Importance) 79
Historical and Archaeological Sites 79
Coastal Protection Belt 80
Flood Risk 81
Air Quality Management Areas 83
Renewable Energy 84
Code for Sustainable Homes/BREEAM 86
Contaminated Land 87
9 Community Infrastructure, Leisure and Tourism 89
Vision 89
Objectives 90
Introduction 91
Planning Obligations and Standard Charges 91
Education 92
Healthcare 94
Open Space 95
Community Facilities 96

Play Space 97
Youth Facilities 98
Leisure Facilities 99
Playing Pitches 99
Tourism 101
Appendix CLT1 102
10 Transport 104
Vision 104
Objectives 105
Introduction 106
Highways 106
Public Transport 108
South Essex Rapid Transit (SERT) 109
Travel Plans 110
Cycling and Walking 110
Greenways 111
Parking Standards 112
11 Economic Development 114
Vision 114
Objectives 115
Introduction 116
Employment Growth 117
London Southend Airport and Environs 120
Existing Employment Land 121
Future Employment Allocations 124
12 Retail and Town Centres 128
Vision 128
Objectives 128
Retail 129
Village and Neighbourhood Shops 130
Town Centres 131
Rayleigh Town Centre 132
Rochford Town Centre 133
Hockley Town Centre 135
13 Implementation, Delivery and Monitoring 136
Key Diagram 173
Appendix 1 – Replacement Local Plan policies to be superseded by Core Strategy 174

1 Introduction

The Role of the Core Strategy

1.1 Rochford's Core Strategy is the main, overarching document of the Rochford District Local Development Framework – a collection of documents that will determine how the District develops in the future. It sets out the overall strategy for the District until 2025.

1.2 The Core Strategy explains how the Council will deliver the spatial aspects of the vision set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Council's Corporate Plan, as well as how regional and national policies, including those contained within the East of England Plan, will be applied locally.

1.3 The Core Strategy is also intrinsically linked with the Council's Corporate Plan and vision.

1.4 The Core Strategy does not allocate land, or specify the boundaries of development sites, nor does it include development management policies. These issues will be addressed through other Development Plan Documents (DPDs) which must conform to the policies in the Core Strategy. Full details can be found in the Council's Local Development Scheme (LDS).

1.5 The Core Strategy approach must be sound and as such it is necessary for the policies to be underpinned by a comprehensive evidence base and subject to an external sustainability appraisal – a process whereby the economic, environmental and social consequences of policies are assessed. It is also important that the Core Strategy reflects the views of local communities and the Council have carefully considered the results of previous consultation exercises in drawing up this document.

1.6 The Core Strategy comprises:

1. **Spatial Characteristics, Issues and Opportunities –** A summary of the physical and social characteristics of the District of relevance to its future planning, alongside the main challenges and opportunities.

2. **Vision –** The Council's vision for the development of the District.

3. **Strategies, Activities and Actions –** What the Council propose to do to address any identified problems, challenges and opportunities that will deliver the Council's vision.

The strategies, activities and actions are broken down into the following sub-sections:

- Housing
- Character of Place
- Green Belt
- Upper Roach Valley and Wallasea Island

- Environmental Issues
- Community Infrastructure, Leisure and Tourism
- Transport
- Economic Development
- Retail and Town Centres

4. **Implementation, Delivery and Monitoring –** How the Council will implement the strategies, activities and actions, mitigate risks to these and measure success.

5. **Key Diagram –** Visual representation of the Council's core policies. The Key Diagram is not a Proposals Map and does not allocate land. Where policies relate to a specific element of the Key Diagram, this is indicated by the following symbol:

Developing the Core Strategy

1.7 The Core Strategy has been prepared in a number of stages, each one subject to appraisal and public participation. Each stage was developed having regard to the results of community involvement and sustainability appraisal of the previous stage, as well as to new evidence and changes to national or regional policy.

1.8 In September 2006 the Council published its Core Strategy Issues and Options document. This was followed by the publication of the Core Strategy Preferred Options in May 2007. Following the results of consultation on the Preferred Options document, the Council resolved to prepare a revised Core Strategy Preferred Options. The Core Strategy Revised Preferred Options was published in October 2008. The Core Strategy Submission Document provided the final opportunity for consultation and appraisal prior to public examination in 2010.

Sustainability Appraisal

1.9 As the Core Strategy has developed, each stage has been subject to sustainability appraisal (an appraisal of the economic, social and environmental effects of the plan/options) to help inform the decision making process.

1.10 The results of the Sustainability Appraisals, including non-technical summaries, for each stage of the Core Strategy are available as separate documents.

Community Involvement

1.11 Community involvement is an essential part of the plan-making process. There has been ongoing community involvement in the preparation of Rochford's Core Strategy and in particular at three key stages: Core Strategy Issues and Options; Core Strategy Preferred Options; and Core Strategy Revised Preferred Options.

1.12 Consultation on the Core Strategy has been carried out in accordance with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement.

1.13 In addition to community involvement on proposed policies within the Core Strategy, consultation has also been undertaken in relation to aspects of the evidence base, particularly in respect of the deliverability and viability of residential development locations.

1.14 Details of community involvement exercises in respect of the preparation of the Core Strategy, and the results, are available as separate documents.

Sustainable Community Strategy and other key documents

1.15 A number of other strategies and plans have had to be taken into consideration in the development of Rochford's Core Strategy. Such documents, together with an explanation as to how they have influenced the Core Strategy and/or how the Core Strategy will aid the delivery of their objectives are listed below.

Sustainable Community Strategy

1.16 The Sustainable Community Strategy is the long-term vision for the District and sets out the priorities for improvement intended to deliver the vision. It is developed by the Local Strategic Partnership – a partnership of local public, private and voluntary sector organisations who play a key part in the provision of services within the District.

1.17 The Sustainable Community Strategy informs the Core Strategy and acts as an umbrella for all other strategies devised for the area.

1.18 The Sustainable Community Strategy and Rochford's Core Strategy are closely linked sharing the same objectives and evidence base.

1.19 The Sustainable Community Strategy identifies seven key priorities:

- **Supporting the Ageing Population**
- **Fostering Greater Community Cohesion**
- **Strengthening the Third Sector (voluntary sector)**
- **Increasing Accessibility to Services**
- **Keeping Rochford Safe**
- **Encouraging Economic Development: Skills, Employment and Enterprise**
- **Promoting a Greener District**

1.20 The Core Strategy has a role to play in delivering all of these as set out in the table below.

Sustainable Community Strategy Priority	Objective	Role of Core Strategy in Achieving Objective	Key Section/Policies of Core Strategy
Supporting the Ageing Population	To support the needs of the ageing population through enabling them to live independently in their own homes for longer and providing accessible services available by a range of transport methods	It is important to ensure that as people get older, and life expectancies increase, they can live independently for longer, for example through good housing design that meets the Lifetime Homes Standard. The Core Strategy also seeks to ensure that high quality services are available in locations accessible to all members of the community by a range of transport methods, particularly through policies in Community Infrastructure, Leisure and Tourism, Retail and Town Centres and Transport chapters.	• Lifetime Homes/Policy H6 • Healthcare/Policy CLT4 • Community Facilities/Policy CLT6 • Leisure Facilities/Policy CLT9 • Public Transport/Policy T3 • Travel Plans/Policy T5 • Cycling and Walking/Policy T6 • Retail • Retail in town centres/Policy RTC1 • Sequential approach to retail development/Policy RTC2 • Village and Neighbourhood Shops/Policy RTC3

Sustainable Community Strategy Priority	Objective	Role of Core Strategy in Achieving Objective	Key Section/Policies of Core Strategy
Fostering Greater Community Cohesion	To make Rochford District a place where residents have a sense of belonging in their communities. To enable residents to have the opportunity to participate in civic life and to reduce all inequalities within our communities.	The sense of community is vital for eliminating social exclusion and encouraging cohesion. The Core Strategy seeks to ensure that sense of community and identity is retained in existing residential areas, and that new residential developments are such that they will foster a sense of community. The Core Strategy also seeks to ensure that the needs of all the community are met, including through providing additional social infrastructure to meet the needs of future and existing communities. The Core Strategy seeks to ensure equal opportunities within new developments through providing a mix of housing that meet a variety of needs.	• Affordable Housing/Policy H4 • Dwelling Types/Policy H5 • Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation/ Policy H7 • Design/Policy CP1 • The Community Infrastructure, Leisure and Tourism chapter seeks to ensure that the needs of local communities, both now and in the future, are met through the adequate provision of a range of social infrastructure such as community, leisure and youth facilities in accessible locations

Sustainable Community Strategy Priority	Objective	Role of Core Strategy in Achieving Objective	Key Section/Policies of Core Strategy
Strengthening the Third Sector (voluntary sector)	To support and encourage the development of a vibrant Third Sector (voluntary organisations).	The Core Strategy provides a positive planning framework which encourages a diverse range of services to the community including the provision of community facilities, youth facilities and the accommodation of community uses within the regeneration of the District's town centres. It also seeks to encourage the development and enhancement of the voluntary sector. A recurring theme through the Core Strategy is the need to ensure the District's sense of community and identity is maintained and enhanced. This is expressed through policies on a variety of themes, including residential development, character of place and social infrastructure.	• Community Facilities • Employment Growth/Policy ED1

Sustainable Community Strategy Priority	Objective	Role of Core Strategy in Achieving Objective	Key Section/Policies of Core Strategy
Increasing Accessibility to Services	To reduce inequalities in service provision and add extra value through a holistic approach to ensure that rural communities and those at particular disadvantage have access to all services.	The Core Strategy seeks to maximise the accessibility of services through a range of actions including: the balanced delivery of housing both in areas where existing services are available and accessible, and to areas where additional housing will ensure local services will be viable and will help increase accessibility to services; the regeneration of the District's town centres to ensure a range of facilities that meet local demand; the provision of additional community, leisure, retail and employment uses within accessible locations; and improving transport links between rural settlements in the east of the District and the west of the District, where services and facilities are concentrated.	• The strategy for housing provision is set out in the Housing chapter • Extensions to residential envelopes and phasing/Policies H2 and H3 • Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation/Policy H7 • The Retail and Town Centres chapter seeks to ensure local commercial centres provide for the needs of local communities and benefit from regeneration (through the preparation of Area Action Plans), where appropriate • The Community Infrastructure, Leisure and Tourism chapter seeks to ensure that local communities, have a sufficient range of social infrastructure in accessible locations • The Transport chapter seeks to improve community access to local services through encouraging a range of sustainable transport methods and improving east to west connections

Sustainable Community Strategy Priority	Objective	Role of Core Strategy in Achieving Objective	Key Section/Policies of Core Strategy
Keeping Rochford Safe	To ensure that our communities feel safe and that their fear of crime decreases.	Planning has a role to play in the reduction of crime and the reduction of the fear of crime. The Core Strategy has identified specific local opportunities for regeneration which will seek to design out crime and reduce anti-social behaviour.	• The need to create safe and inclusive communities with the extension of residential envelopes is considered in the Housing chapter • Regeneration of the District's commercial centres of Rayleigh, Hockley and Rochford through the preparation of Area Action Plans presents an opportunity to design out crime and address issues of anti-social behaviour • The provision of youth facilities (Youth Facilities/Policy CLT8) to provide appropriate and inclusive facilities in accessible locations

Sustainable Community Strategy Priority	Objective	Role of Core Strategy in Achieving Objective	Key Section/Policies of Core Strategy
Encouraging Economic Development: Skills, Employment and Enterprise	To encourage a thriving and enterprising local economy that has high levels of skills, sustainable businesses and increased employment opportunities.	The Core Strategy directs additional employment to appropriate, sustainable locations that will meet the needs of businesses and employees. The Core Strategy seeks to enable the delivery of the spatial aspects of the Council's Economic Development Strategy. It does this through a range of policies, including supporting the implementation of a number of schemes that will provide enhanced employment opportunities, the creation of an environment which will allow new businesses to grow, and providing training opportunities for local residents. It also sets a planning policy framework which is supportive of small and medium sized businesses The Core Strategy sets the overarching policy for London Southend Airport, which seeks to realise its economic potential, whilst having regard to local amenity and environmental issues. The Core Strategy seeks to enable rural diversification and support rural enterprise, whilst having regard to the need to protect the character and openness of the Green Belt.	• The Economic Development chapter seeks to encourage employment growth within the District, realise the potential of London Southend Airport and environs through the production of a Joint Area Action Plan and strategically relocate employment land in the District, where appropriate • Rural Diversification and Recreational Uses/Policy GB2 • The Retail chapter seeks to retain and enhance the District's local commercial centres, in particular supporting the regeneration of Rayleigh, Hockley and Rochford centres

Priority	Objective	Role of Core Strategy in Achieving Objective	Key Section/Policies of Core Strategy
Promoting a Greener District	To address the causes of climate change at a local level for the benefit of those that live, work in and visit the District	This issue is one which runs as a theme through the whole of the Core Strategy. In particular, policies on future housing (including location and Code for Sustainable Homes requirement), transport (reducing the requirement to travel), and environmental issues seeks to minimise the local contribution towards climate change.	• Extensions to residential envelopes and phasing/Policy H2 • Extension to residential envelopes post-2021/Policy H3 • Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation/Policy H7 • The Environment chapter seeks to protect and enhance the biodiversity and natural environment of the District by protecting sites of local, national and international importance. The chapter also seeks to promote sustainable construction techniques and the use of renewable energy sources, where appropriate • Public Transport/Policy T3 • South Essex Rapid Transit (SERT)/Policy T4 • Travel Plans/Policy T5 • Cycling and Walking/Policy T6 • Greenways/Policy T7 • Parking Standards/Policy T8

Local Area Agreements (LAA2) – The Essex Local Area Agreement 2008-2011

1.21 The Local Area Agreement forms a partnership between Rochford District Council, Essex County Council and other councils in the locality (excluding Southend and Thurrock). It identifies 10 key priorities for the District and surrounding areas which need addressing in order to achieve the Essex Strategy's vision, which is simply "To support Essex people to liberate their potential to enjoy the best quality of life in Britain".

1.22 The priorities identified in LAA2 and how the Core Strategy will contribute towards their achievement is set out below. It must be stressed, however, that as with the priorities of the Sustainable Community Strategy these priorities cannot be delivered through the planning system alone. Achievement of these objectives requires the combined operations of different departments and organisations.

1.23 The following outlines the role the Core Strategy will play in delivering each of the LAA2 priorities.

LAA2 Priority	Role of Core Strategy in Achieving Priority	Key Section/Policies of Core Strategy
Priority 1: Fewer children and young people missing education or not in education, employment or training.	The Council will ensure that the educational needs of the District are met through the provision of educational facilities in accessible locations. Our approach to ensuring employment provision is identified in the Economic Development chapter of the Core Strategy.	• Education/Policy CLT2 and Policy CLT3 • The Economic Development chapter seeks to encourage employment growth, employment sites in accessible locations and training opportunities to meet the needs of the local population
Priority 2: More people supported to live independently in their own homes with better support for carers.	The Core Strategy requires new development to meet the Lifetime Homes Standard, to enable people to stay independent in their homes for longer. The Council also recognise the importance of ensuring the adequate provision of affordable homes within the District to meet the needs of the population.	• Lifetime Homes/Policy H6 • Affordable Housing/ Policy H4 • Healthcare/Policy CLT4 • Community Facilities/Policy CLT6

LAA2 Priority	Role of Core Strategy in Achieving Priority	Key Section/Policies of Core Strategy
Priority 3: Better public health and longer lives.	The Core Strategy contains policies to ensure that future residential development does not negatively impact upon healthcare provision for future and existing communities, and that healthcare facilities are implemented in a timely manner and in accessible locations, where required. The Council are working with the South East Essex Primary Care Trust, or other relevant organisation, and other partners, to ensure that adequate facilities are provided to meet the changing population and their needs.	• Healthcare/Policy CLT4
Priority 4: Children and young people realise their potential in education.	The Core Strategy contains policies to ensure that educational facilities meet the needs of current and future communities, and that such facilities are accessible to the District's population.	• Education/Policy CLT2 and Policy CLT3
Priority 5: Essex roads are safer, less congested and everyone has access to essential services.	The Core Strategy sets out highway infrastructure improvements which will be made a priority within the District. However, it also contains policies which seek to reduce the populations' reliance on the private car through development in sustainable locations accessible by alternative transport methods, and the delivery of infrastructure which enables alternatives such as walking and cycling.	• The Transport chapter seeks to improve the highway network through the District, where appropriate, particularly east to west connections. It also seeks to encourage alternative modes of transport and decrease reliance on the private car through, for example, travel plans

LAA2 Priority	Role of Core Strategy in Achieving Priority	Key Section/Policies of Core Strategy
Priority 6: More participation in sports, culture and volunteering for the benefit of the whole community.	The Core Strategy contains a number of policies which ensure a range of new leisure development is implemented in accessible locations, and that existing leisure facilities, both informal and formal, are retained. The Core Strategy also recognises the need for additional community facilitates to accompany new development.	• Open Space/Policy CLT5 • Community Facilities/Policy CLT6 • Leisure Facilities/Policy CLT9 • Playing Pitches/Policy CLT10 • Employment Growth/Policy ED1
Priority 7: Essex is a safe place to live.	New development will be implemented having regard to the need to design out crime. Proposed Town Centre Area Actions Plans for Rochford, Hockley and Rayleigh in the Core Strategy will tackle the issue of safety and crime, for example anti-social behaviour, to ensure a safer environment for residents.	• The need to create safe and inclusive communities with the extension of residential envelopes is considered in the Housing chapter • Regeneration of the District's commercial centres of Rayleigh, Hockley and Rochford through Area Action Plans presents an opportunity to design out crime and address issues of anti-social behaviour • The provision of youth facilities (Youth Facilities/Policy CLT8) to provide appropriate and inclusive facilities in accessible locations

LAA2 Priority	Role of Core Strategy in Achieving Priority	Key Section/Policies of Core Strategy
Priority 8: Essex has a strong and competitive economy.	The Core Strategy contains a raft of policies which will aid the delivery of the Council's Economic Development Strategy, enable the development of key employment generators, and deliver additional employment uses within sustainable locations.	• The Economic Development chapter seeks to encourage employment growth within the District, realise the potential of London Southend Airport and environs through the production of a Joint Area Action Plan and strategically relocate employment land in the District, where appropriate • Rural Diversification and Recreational Uses/Policy GB2 • The Retail chapter seeks to retain and enhance the District's local commercial centres, in particular supporting the regeneration of Rayleigh, Hockley and Rochford centres
Priority 9: A smaller carbon footprint with less waste.	The Core Strategy outlines how new development will be required to be more energy efficient and sustainable. The Core Strategy also promotes the development of small and large scale renewable energy schemes.	• The efficient use of land for housing/Policy H1 • Extensions to residential envelopes and phasing/ Policy H2 • Extension to residential envelopes post-2021/ Policy H3 • Large Scale Renewable Energy Projects/Policy ENV6 • Small Scale Renewable Energy Projects/Policy ENV7 • Code for Sustainable Homes/Policy ENV9 • BREEAM/Policy ENV10 • Public Transport/Policy T3 • South Essex Rapid Transit (SERT)/Policy T4 • Travel Plans/Policy T5 • Cycling and Walking/Policy T6 • Greenways/Policy T7

LAA2 Priority	Role of Core Strategy in Achieving Priority	Key Section/Policies of Core Strategy
Priority 10: A well managed environment.	The Core Strategy supports the preservation of the District's valuable natural and historic environment, for example through the protection of Local Wildlife Sites and reintroduction of the Council's Local List.	• The Environment chapter seeks to protect and enhance the biodiversity and natural environment of the District by protecting sites of local, national and international importance. The chapter also seeks to protect historical and archaeological sites • Local List/Policy CP3

1.24 The Core Strategy will have to be reviewed in the event of a new Local Area Agreement, post-2011, setting different priorities.

East of England Plan

1.25 The East of England Plan outlines planning policy for the whole region and our Local Development Framework is required to conform to it. The East of England Plan contains an array of policies which are applicable to the whole of the region and which the District must consider. In addition, the plan also contains detailed requirements for individual districts and boroughs. Those which are particularly relevant to Rochford are as follows:

- Provision of 4,600 additional dwellings between 2001 and 2021.
- Creation of no less than 3,000 additional jobs.
- Provision of an additional 15 authorised pitches for Gypsy and Traveller caravans by 2018, to achieve a total of 22 pitches.
- London Southend Airport as a driver for economic development.

Additional Relevant Strategies

1.26 The Council have a number of other strategies currently in place whose spatial elements are expressed within this Core Strategy. However, it recognised that the Local Planning Authority cannot deliver the Council's objectives alone and must work in partnership with other organisations. Their strategies also influence this document (and, once finalised, vice versa).

1.27 The strategies at regional, sub-regional, county, district and sub-district levels include the following:

Regional Strategies

- East of England Plan (2008)
- Framework for Regional Employment and Skills Action (FRESA)
- Regional Economic Strategy (2008-2031)
- Regional Environment Strategy (2003)
- Regional Health Strategy 2005-2010
- Regional Housing Strategy 2005-2010
- Regional Social Strategy (2007)

Sub-Regional Strategies

Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership:

- Delivering the Future (2003)
- Green Grid Strategy (2005)
- Thames Gateway South Essex Sub Regional Housing Strategy 2008-11

County Strategies

Essex County Council:

- Adult Health & Community Well-being Accommodation Strategy
- Childcare Sufficiency Assessment
- The Children and Young People's Plan
- Disabled Accommodation Strategy
- Essex and Southend Waste Local Plan (2001)
- Essex Biodiversity Action Plan
- The Essex Design Guide (2005)
- Essex Sports Facilities Strategy 2007-2020
- Essex Strategy 2008-2018
- Essex Supporting People 5 Year Strategy 2005-2010
- Local Area Agreement 2 2008-2011
- Local Transport Plan 2006-2011
- Mental Health Accommodation Strategy
- School Organisation Plan 2008-2013
- The Urban Place Supplement

District Strategies

- Asset Management Plan (2008)
- Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy 2008-2013
- Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans (2007)
- Contaminated Land Strategy (2004)
- Corporate Plan 2009
- Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy 2005-2008
- Crouch and Roach Estuaries Management Plan (2005)
- Cultural Strategy (2004)
- Economic Development Strategy (2009)
- Housing Strategy (2009)
- Partnership Guidance (2008)
- Play Action Plan (2008)
- Play Strategy 2007-2012
- Sustainable Community Strategy (2009)

Sub-District Strategies

Hockley Parish Plan Group:

- Hockley Parish Plan

Rawreth Parish Council:

- Rawreth Parish Plan

Rochford Parish Council:

- 2004 Vision Statement

1.28 Government planning policy, in the form of Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs), Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) and circulars also guide the content of the Core Strategy.

Evidence Base

1.29 In terms of the evidence base the Council have drawn upon in drafting this document, in addition to the aforementioned strategies and plans, the following have played an important role in informing the Core Strategy:

- **Affordable Housing Viability Study (2010)** assesses the viability of the affordable housing policy in the Core Strategy.
- **Annual Monitoring Reports** report on a range of indicators on an annual basis since 2004.

- **Call for Sites** was carried out in early 2007 and resulted in the submission of a number of sites from developers, land-owners and agents for consideration by the Council.

- **Community Involvement** carried out on the Issues and Options version of the Core Strategy in 2006, the first version of the Core Strategy Preferred Options in 2007 and the revised version of the Core Strategy Preferred Options in 2008. As well as reports on the results of the consultation of the general public and specific stakeholders, this includes reports on the results of workshops at King Edmund School, Fitzwimarc School and Greensward Academy undertaken to ascertain the views of young people in the District.

- **Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans (2007)** assess the characteristics of the District's Conservation Areas, as well as proposing action to ensure their value is retained or enhanced.

- **Employment Land Study (2008)** examines the supply and demand for various forms of employment land and compares this to the current and projected future economic profile of the District in order to determine the spatial requirements for future employment.

- **Essex Landscape Character Assessment (2003)** outlines the extent of the three broad landscape character types within the District, and includes an assessment of their sensitivity to different forms of development.

- **Essex Thames Gateway Water Cycle Study – Scoping Study (2009)** a sub-regional review of the existing condition of both the natural water environment and the water infrastructure which serves the population of the South Essex

- **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (2008)** details a wealth of data around health and well-being issues in Essex.

- **Local Wildlife Site Review (2007)** is an assessment of existing and potential local wildlife sites to determine their importance as natural habitats.

- **Looking Back and Moving Forward – Assessing the Housing Needs of Gypsies and Travellers in Essex (2006)** provides an assessment of the projected future accommodation needs for Gypsies and Travellers up until 2016.

- **Open Space Study (2009)** examines the current provision and quality of a variety of open spaces throughout the District.

- **Retail and Leisure Study (2008)** examines the shopping and leisure use habits of the District's residents, and the spatial implications of these for the future development of the area.

- **Rochford District Historic Environment Characterisation Project (2006)** provides a wealth of evidence on the importance of the historic environment within the District and facilitates the integration of management and conservation principles within the planning process.

- **Rochford Futures Report** profiles the social, economic and environmental characteristics of Rochford District at a District and Ward level.

- **Strategic Environmental Assessment Baseline Information Profile 2008-2009** presents a plethora of secondary data about the social, physical, environmental and demographic characteristics of the District.

- **Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment** determines the availability, suitability and achievability of housing development sites within the District.

- **Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2008** provides data on housing supply and demand at the sub-regional level. The **Strategic Housing Market Assessment: Update Report 2010** provides a review of the situation in order to reflect changes to the Thames Gateway South Essex housing market in the period from October 2008 to February 2010.

- **Sustainability Appraisals and Strategic Environmental Assessments** were carried out on previous documents, assessing the social, economic and environmental impacts of proposed policies. The results of these have been incorporated into this document. Appraisals of this document have also been undertaken. An addendum to the Core Strategy Submission Sustainability Appraisal (**Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Addendum 2011**) was produced in June 2011 following the Forest Heath court ruling (*Save Historic Newmarket v. Forest Heath District Council*) which provided an additional interpretation on undertaking Strategic Environmental Assessments. The addendum provides further detail on the appraisal of the preferred general locations and the reasonable alternatives.

- **Thames Gateway South Essex Strategic Flood Risk Assessment** determined the areas at risk of flooding across the sub-region, and calculated the probability of their flooding, enabling land across the sub-region to be categorised as Flood Zone 1, 2, 3 depending on the risk.

- **Thames Gateway South Essex Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Review – Scoping Report (2009)** provides a review of the Thames Gateway South Essex Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) which was published in 2006.

- **Urban Capacity Study (2007)** examines the capacity to accommodate development within the District on existing appropriate sites. This study has been superseded by the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.

2 Spatial Characteristics, Issues and Opportunities

Introduction

2.1 A detailed assessment of the spatial characteristics of Rochford District is provided in the 2008-2009 Strategic Environmental Assessment Baseline Information Profile. This chapter provides a summary of these characteristics, together with the key issues and opportunities they represent.

2.2 The District of Rochford is situated within a peninsula between the Rivers Thames and Crouch, and is bounded to the east by the North Sea. The District has land boundaries with Basildon and Castle Point District and Southend-on-Sea Borough Councils. It also has marine boundaries with Maldon and Chelmsford Districts. The District has linkages to the M25 via the A127 and has a direct rail link to London.

2.3 The District is home to an estimated 82,200 people as at 2009 dispersed among a number of settlements, the three largest of which are Rayleigh, Rochford and Hockley.

2.4 The Rochford District has a total land mass of 16,800 hectares. It is rich in heritage and natural beauty, with many miles of unspoilt coastline and attractive countryside. There are more than 200 sites of archaeological interest, 14 ancient woodlands and several nature reserves across the District.

2.5 The District is predominantly rural, which is reflected in the fact that 12,763 hectares are designated as Metropolitan Green Belt. Large areas of the District are of ecological importance, with Sites of Special Scientific Interest totalling 12,986 hectares.

2.6 Part of Rochford District is also within the Thames Gateway – a national priority for regeneration.

Environment

2.7 The landscape of the character of the District has been broadly identified as being made up of three types: Crouch and Roach Farmland; Dengie and Foulness Coastal; and South Essex Coastal Towns. The latter of these three is least sensitive to development. The locations of these character areas are identified within the Strategic Environmental Assessment Baseline Information Profile.

2.8 A significant proportion of the District's land is protected for its landscape and/or ecological value. Such areas are focused in the east of the District towards the coast, but also includes a large area to the south of Hockley (Hockley Woods and the Upper Roach Valley) The exact extent of such areas is shown in the Strategic Environmental Assessment Baseline Information Profile.

2.9 The character of the District is split, with a clear east-west divide. Areas at risk of flooding and of ecological importance are predominantly situated in the sparsely populated, relatively inaccessible east. The west of the District contains the majority of the District's population, has better access to services and fewer physical constraints.

2.10 The District's coast is largely undeveloped, relatively inaccessible, and home to large areas of ecological importance, including Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Special Protection Areas, Ramsar Sites and Special Areas of Conservation. Foulness Island is owned by the Ministry of Defence and is used as a proving ground over marsh sands for munitions, with access to it restricted.

Issues and Opportunities

2.11 Locations for development are limited by physical constraints, including land at risk of flooding, areas protected for their landscape value, sites protected for their ecological value etc. Some such areas are of local, regional, national and international importance, including those protected by the EU Habitats Directive.

2.12 7,071 hectares of the Rochford District have a 1% annual probability of fluvial flooding and/or a 0.5% annual probability of tidal flooding, as calculated by the Environment Agency.

2.13 The District contains a number of Conservation Areas which will continue to evolve and develop over time. It is crucial that any change is managed to preserve the unique character of such areas, whilst allowing them to adapt to change.

2.14 Large areas of open space are located in proximity to the District's main settlements. This provides the potential for recreational opportunities to be created if such spaces are linked to areas of residence. The Upper Roach Valley provides a particular opportunity.

2.15 The western area of the District contains areas of ecological and landscape importance, most noticeably the Upper Roach Valley and Hockley Woods which have the potential to provide high quality open space accessible to people.

2.16 The additional development the District is required to accommodate has the potential to impact upon the environment, and on resources. While many of these issues are not specific to the District, water supply merits particular mention. South Essex relies on water imported from outside of the area and additional development will exacerbate this requirement. Development will need to be implemented in a manner which minimises its impact on the environment and enables the conservation of resources, as well as being phased to enable providers of water supply and treatment infrastructure to upgrade capacity in a timely manner.

2.17 The physical geography of the District gives rise to the potential to explore opportunities to promote tourism. The potential impact of such tourism on the environment must be carefully considered.

2.18 The Wallasea Island Wild Coast project, adjacent to the realigned coast of Wallasea Island, represents a particular tourism opportunity – one which will have to be carefully managed given the area's ecological importance.

2.19 The nature of the District engenders the potential to position Rochford District as the 'green part' of the Thames Gateway South Essex sub-region.

Population and society

2.20 The last Census in 2001 recorded the District as having a population of 78,489. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) estimates that the population of the District in 2009 is 82,200 and projects that this will rise to 87,000 by 2021.

Issues and Opportunities

2.21 The population of Rochford District is unevenly distributed. The largest settlement is Rayleigh which, in 2001, was home to 30,196 people (38% of the District's residents at that time). The population of the District in 2001 was broken down by Parish as follows:

Parish	2001 Population
Ashingdon	3165
Barling	1657
Canewdon	1477
Foulness	212
Great Wakering	5512
Hawkwell	11231
Hockley	8909
Hullbridge	6445
Paglesham	249
Rawreth	1003
Rayleigh	30196
Rochford	7610
Stambridge	696
Sutton	127

2.22 The distribution of facilities and services across the District broadly reflects the distribution of population.

2.23 Rochford District has a higher proportion of older residents than the national and regional averages. The under-20 population of the District is expected to fall between 2008 and 2025, with the population of those aged 20 to 64 remaining relatively stable. The over-65 population is expected to increase considerably by 2025, outnumbering the under-20's by 2015, and leading to an overall increase in the District's population.

2.24 The District's ageing population may result in a smaller workforce and a higher dependency ratio, to the detriment of the economic prospects of the area. The ageing population could also lead to an increased demand for health and social care, rather than services for youth. However, a lack of facilities for young people is a current weakness in the District. The changing demographic balance could result in the isolation of pockets of young people in the area – this may have an effect on the social and economic futures of local young people.

2.25 The need to support the area's ageing population is a key priority within the District's Sustainable Community Strategy and planning has an important role to play in ensuring that the local population is able to live independently for as long as possible and receive high quality services when needed. For example, the Council must ensure that appropriate forms of housing are implemented and that services and facilities are accessible.

2.26 The District experiences relatively modest levels of in-migration, primarily into areas along the border with Basildon but also into the Foulness and Great Wakering Ward.

2.27 The average household size in Rochford District is greater than the national average. This is particularly the case in the western part of the District, perhaps indicating that the higher levels of in-migration in these parts are due to parents seeking the quality of life and prosperity needed to support families.

Housing

2.28 As at September 2009, there were 34,464 households within Rochford District. The average price of a detached dwelling in July 2008 was £300,000, which is lower than the average price for the same property type in Essex (£397,967, source: **www.home.co.uk).**

2.29 The East of England Plan requires that a minimum of 4600 dwellings be built in Rochford District between 2001 and 2021. This figure is based on meeting the needs of the current and the future population of the District.

2.30 Current need encompasses the number of people in the District who are living within a household and who want to move to their own accommodation and form a separate household. Projected need is derived from the supposition that the population is projected to increase from 81,300 in 2007 to 87,000 by 2021. In order to meet the needs of our growing population, houses need to be provided for those moving to their own accommodation.

2.31 The East of England Plan acknowledges that between 2001 and 2006 810 dwellings were completed in the District. Furthermore, between 2006 and 2008 an additional 618 dwellings were developed.

2.32 The Council are required to ensure there is an adequate supply of housing for a 15 year period, and assuming adoption of the RCS in 2010, that would mean continuing the annual requirement beyond 2021 to 2025.

Issues and Opportunities

2.33 The District is predominately Green Belt, tightly drawn around existing settlements, the vast majority of which is undeveloped. There is a limit to how much infilling and intensification existing settlements can sustain without their character being adversely affected, particularly given that the District contains ten Conservation Areas. As such there are concerns as to the land uptake and loss of greenfield land that the housing requirement will engender.

2.34 Potential housing development land is further limited by the fact that much of the District is subject to constraints which prohibit the development of housing, such as Flood Zone 3 or areas of ecological importance. Details of land subject to constraints are included within Strategic Environmental Assessment Baseline Information Profile.

2.35 There is a high-level of home ownership in the District. However, concealed households (person or persons living within a household wanting to move to their own accommodation and form a separate household, e.g. adult children living with their parents) are largely unable to afford to enter the local housing market due to the gap between house prices and income. There is a limited supply of affordable housing in the District and the development of additional affordable units across the region is not keeping pace with demand. The Thames Gateway South Essex Strategic Housing Market Assessment identifies a total newly-arising housing need of 241 per annum in Rochford District. It also calculates that there is a need for 131 net additional dwellings per annum to be developed in the District – this represents 52% of the District's annual housing completion requirement as set out in the East of England Plan. The Thames Gateway South Essex Strategic Housing Market Assessment notes the need to ensure that the affordable housing requirements set by local authorities do not render the delivery of housing economically unviable and recommends local authorities across the housing market area set a requirement for 35% of new dwellings to be affordable.

2.36 The Thames Gateway South Essex Strategic Housing Market Assessment also examines the need for different forms of affordable housing. The assessment found an acute need for social rented housing, as well as significant potential market for intermediate housing (although notes that actual demand for intermediate housing is still somewhat unproven). As such, the assessment recommends local authorities aim for an 80:20 split of affordable housing between social rented and intermediate provision.

2.37 Housing need studies and other data from sources such as the housing waiting list indicate that demand for housing is focused primarily on the District's larger settlements of Rayleigh, Hockley and Rochford, but there is still demand for housing in other settlements.

2.38 A snapshot of housing need based on the Council's housing waiting list in May 2009 indicated that demand was distributed as follows:

Settlement	Housing waiting list demand (percentage of District total)
Rayleigh	44.4
Rochford	29.0
Hockley	6.3
Great Wakering	5.9
Hullbridge	5.5
Stambridge	0.8
Rawreth	0.6
Canewdon	0.4
No preference	7.2

2.39 As well as directing housing growth to areas of need/demand, and away from unsustainable locations subject to constraints, the Council must consider the relationship of housing growth to areas of employment growth.

2.40 The development of additional housing will impact upon all forms of physical and social infrastructure. This impact will require contributions to be made by developers by way of planning obligations.

2.41 Failure to provide affordable housing that meets the needs of the District's residents may lead to continued out-migration, to the detriment of the vitality of local communities.

2.42 The construction of additional housing will have the potential to deliver affordable housing to meet the current shortfall, in order to supply housing for local community need. This will only happen, however, if planning policies are in place to ensure a proportion of the housing developed is affordable.

2.43 The release of land for housing provides an opportunity to ensure that infrastructure is developed alongside it that benefits residents of both existing dwellings and those that will be developed. Planning obligations and the use of standard charges provide a mechanism to contribute towards the delivery of the required infrastructure.

Economy

2.44 Rochford has a small, but reasonably productive, and enterprising economy. Although the District does not record significant levels of 'high skills', a solid foundation of basic and intermediate skills underpins the local economy, and supports a healthy share of knowledge-driven jobs.

2.45 Rochford District is a generally prosperous part of the country, despite only a modest share of resident 'knowledge workers', the typically higher paid employees. This is reflected in reasonably low deprivation, excellent health conditions among the District's population (although some pockets of poorer health in the more urban areas are evident), and one of the lowest crime rates in the country.

Issues and Opportunities

2.46 The small economic scale, modest levels of high skills and local competition may be undermining the sustainability of the Rochford economy; resulting in Rochford ranked within the lowest quartile of local districts by its economic change score.

2.47 In addition, data at the ward level shows some evidence of an economic divide between urban and rural areas; this is particularly noticeable in levels of skills, where wards close to the coast have significantly lower levels of skills than wards close to the town centres.

2.48 The economy of the District is dominated by the service sector with over three-quarters of those employed in the District working in this sector. This is, however, a smaller proportion than that of either the region or the country.

2.49 Although the District is predominantly rural, the proportion of local businesses involved in agricultural activities is low, constituting a fraction over 3% of VAT registered businesses in Rochford District compared to national and regional figures of a fraction over 5% and over 5.5%, respectively.

2.50 The direction of travel for the local economy is not as positive as many other local authorities in the UK. Rochford relies on jobs in manufacturing to a greater degree than nationally and regionally, yet this is the sector which is shrinking the most due to changes in the economy. However, type of manufacturing is important and Rochford has a number of specialist manufacturing businesses which continue to perform well.

2.51 Business enterprise in the District is largely made up of smaller firms, with nearly three-quarters of businesses employing between 0 and 4 people. This is above the national average. Conversely, the District contains few businesses that employ large numbers of people.

2.52 The more highly paid knowledge workers (with higher weekly incomes) are found mainly along the borders of Basildon and around Rochford town centre – giving rise to another rural-urban divide in the District. Higher levels of deprivation are found in the more rural parts of Rochford.

2.53 A high proportion of the Rochford workforce commutes out of the District. 30% travel to work in Southend, 14% to London, 9% to Basildon and 15% travel elsewhere outside the District.

2.54 London Southend Airport is located within the District and has the potential to be a focus for economic growth, not simply in terms of aviation-related industries, but also as a catalyst for wider forms of employment which would benefit from being in proximity to a thriving airport.

2.55 Skills and training opportunities must be made available to local people to ensure that local communities will benefit from employment opportunities. In addition, the Council must consider the distribution of housing growth in relation to employment growth areas.

2.56 The Thames Gateway is a national priority for regeneration and growth and has been identified by the government as one of the growth areas for new housing in the South East. The vision for Thames Gateway South Essex is focused on the creation of sustainable communities that make the most of the unique characteristics of South Essex. Rochford District is recognised as an area for developing leisure, recreation and tourism activities and in particular is key to the development and expansion of the Green Grid – the connection of residential areas with green spaces.

2.57 Rochford District's proximity to engines of economic growth – London, South East knowledge economy etc – together with improvements in technology and the more rural quality of life available in the District – provide economic opportunities.

Transport

2.58 Rochford District has two strategic trunk routes in and around its boundary, namely the A130 and A127. The A127 provides a link to London, a main commuter and employment destination. There are also three train stations located in the District, which provide a direct service to London Liverpool Street.

2.59 London Southend Airport is located on the boundary with Southend Borough and is predominantly within Rochford District.

Issues and Opportunities

2.60 There is a high level of car-ownership in the District. However, the proportion of people travelling to work by public transport is greater than the national and regional averages, primarily due to the accessibility of rail links from the District three main urban areas.

2.61 Away from the three main settlements, car dependency is high. Congestion and environmental impacts will continue to worsen with population growth if this trend is not reversed.

2.62 The strength of the spheres of influence of the large neighbouring centres of Southend, Basildon and Chelmsford means that traffic is drawn through Rochford District's own centres to them. This not only has an impact on traffic congestion in general, but also engenders concern with regards to air quality within the District's town centres. This situation has the potential to be exacerbated if development is not directed to the appropriate locations around settlements. Particular locations where this is a concern include east of Rayleigh, where commuters to Basildon and Chelmsford are drawn through the centre of Rayleigh; west of Hockley, where those commuting by car to Southend or Chelmsford/Basildon are drawn through the centre of Hockley or Rayleigh, respectively; and east of Rochford, where vehicular movements would inevitably be directed through Rochford's historic centre. Given such concerns the location of future development must be considered alongside opportunities to locate development in areas where alternatives to car use are more viable, alongside other sustainability issues.

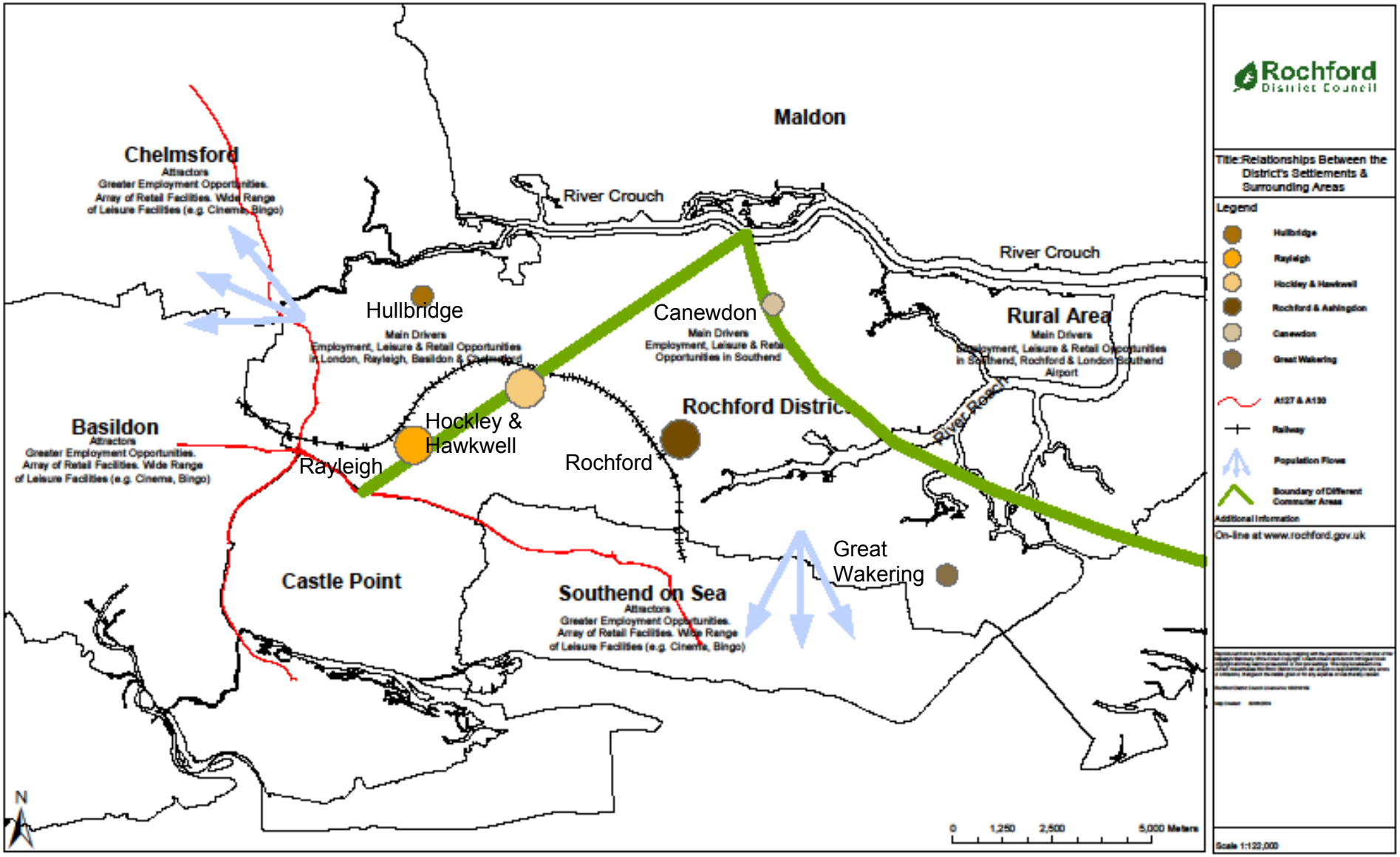
2.63 The lack of public transport provision throughout most of the District is an obstacle to reducing car dependency. There is, however, some opportunity to utilise public transport, particularly within the three main settlements which contain rail links between each other, Southend and London.

2.64 Current cycle networks in the District are limited both in quantity and quality and do not encourage people to travel by bicycle. Through the new planning process, there is an opportunity to improve this situation and provide an integrated network of cycle paths across the District.

Settlements

2.65 The proximity of Southend-on-Sea and the relationship between this urban area and the predominantly rural Rochford District has a considerable impact upon the characteristics of the District. Southend is the largest retail centre in the sub-region, attracting consumer expenditure from a wider area and contributing to the leakage of spending out of the District. The retail catchment area of Southend overlays those of all of the District's centres. In addition, Southend provides a range of employment opportunities and is within easy commuting distance of a large proportion of the District's population.

2.66 Different parts of the District have a stronger relationship with different nearby towns. This relationship is illustrated in diagrammatic form below.


Maldon
Chelmsford
Attractors
Greater Employment Opportunities.
Array of Retail Facilities. Wide Range
of Leisure Facilities (e.g. Cinema, Bingo)
River Crouch
River Crouch
Hullbridge
Main Drivers
Employment, Leisure & Retail Opportunities
in London, Rayleigh, Basildon & Chelmsford
Canewdon
Main Drivers
Employment, Leisure & Retail
Opportunities in Southend
Rural Area
Main Drivers
Employment, Leisure & Retail Opportunities
in Southend, Rochford & London Southend
Airport
Rochford District
Hockley &
Hawkwell
Basildon
Attractors
Greater Employment Opportunities.
Array of Retail Facilities. Wide Range
of Leisure Facilities (e.g. Cinema, Bingo)
Rayleigh
Rochford
Great
Wakering
Castle Point
Southend on Sea
Attractors
Greater Employment Opportunities.
Array of Retail Facilities. Wide Range
of Leisure Facilities (e.g. Cinema, Bingo)
N
0
1,250
2,500
5,000 Meters
Rochford
District Council
Title:Relationships Between the
District's Settlements &
Surrounding Areas
Legend
Hullbridge
Rayleigh
Hockley & Hawkwell
Rochford & Ashingdon
Canewdon
Great Wakering
A127 & A130
Railway
Population Flows
Boundary of Different
Commuter Areas
Additional Information
On-line at www.rochford.gov.uk
Scale 1:122,000

Issues and Opportunities

2.67 Within the District there are four tiers of settlement. The first tier comprises Rayleigh, Rochford and Hockley. These are all settlements with a range of services and facilities as well as some access to public transport.

2.68 Of the first tier settlements, Rayleigh has the best access to services within the District. Rochford and Hockley contain local town centres catering for local need. Management Horizons Europe's (MHE) UK Shopping Index (2008) ranks the top 7,000 retail venues within the UK (including town centres, stand-alone malls, retail warehouse parks and factory outlets) based on current retail provision. This index ranks Rayleigh as a minor district centre, Rochford as a local centre, and Hockley as a minor local.

2.69 All of the District's settlements have their own identity and characteristics. However, in terms of housing markets and access to services and facilities, it is possible to group some of the District's settlements: Rochford and Ashingdon; and Hockley and Hawkwell.

2.70 The second tier comprises Hullbridge and Great Wakering. These settlements have a more limited range of services and access to public transport is relatively poor.

2.71 The third tier is made up of the small rural settlement of Canewdon. This settlement has few services and public transport provision is generally poor.

2.72 The remaining rural settlements, groups of dwellings located within the Green Belt, can be grouped together as a fourth tier. These settlements have little or no services and residents are often completely dependent on the private car to access facilities.

2.73 The District's towns and villages are diverse in character reflecting their history, location and size. The character, layout and form of groups of buildings, streets and spaces make a significant contribution to providing a sense of place and adding to the quality of life in town and country. Residents have a strong sense of identity with their own settlement.

3 Vision

The Special Qualities of Rochford District

3.1 Rochford is a predominantly rural District situated in the south east corner of Essex, covering an area of 65 square miles between the Rivers Thames and Crouch. It is bounded to the east by the North Sea, which contributes to the important natural qualities of the local landscape. The District has land boundaries to the south and west with Basildon District, Castle Point and Southend–on–Sea Borough Councils, alongside northern marine boundaries with Maldon and Chelmsford Districts. It is located within south east Essex, benefiting from important road and rail linkages to London.

3.2 Whilst it is within easy reach of key economic hubs, the District retains its rural character, with the vast majority of it Greenfield, Green Belt land encompassing numerous local, national and international sites of nature conservation importance. As such the landscape of the District is rich in biodiversity, heritage and natural beauty, with many miles of unspoilt coastline and attractive countryside.

3.3 There are three main settlements within the District namely Rochford, Hockley and Rayleigh, located in an arc along the Southend Victoria to Liverpool Street railway line, and these provide a range of services and facilities for local communities. The space between these settlements and the urban boundary of Southend to the south is an important green area, with many protective designations, including an ancient woodland and country park; this is the district's green lung. Beyond the three main settlements, the character is of rural countryside with smaller village settlements and sporadic groups of dwellings. The District's settlements have distinct characteristics, which are diverse in reflecting their individual history, location and size, and residents have a strong sense of identity with their own settlement.

3.4 Preserving and enhancing the special natural and built characteristics of Rochford District is important and so developing a vision which reflects this aspiration whilst providing for the needs of existing and future communities is paramount.

The Vision for Rochford District

3.5 The Council's corporate vision is shared with that of the Local Strategic Partnership:

'To make Rochford District a place which provides opportunities for the best possible quality of life for all who live, work and visit here'

To support this, the Council has four main corporate objectives. These are:

- Making a difference to our people
- Making a difference to our community
- Making a difference to our environment
- Making a difference to our local economy

3.6 Having regard to the Council's corporate vision and the Sustainable Community Strategy, a more detailed vision has been prepared for the Core Strategy which flows from the characteristics, issues and opportunities identified in the previous section of this document. The vision for the District is set out below.

Short Term

3.7 The openness and character of the Rochford Green Belt continues to be protected, though small areas next to settlements have been released for development. Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park has been expanded to the east and west and access from Cherry Orchard link road, including improved footpath and cycle access has been implemented**,** enhancing Rochford District's role as the green part of the Thames Gateway South Essex, and reinforcing the importance of the green lung between the main settlements. Other parks and open spaces continue to be improved through a rolling programme of open space refurbishment, contributing to the needs of local areas and improving linkages to the countryside.

3.8 The Council's balanced strategy to the distribution of housing is beginning to take shape: housing development is focussed on the settlements with the greatest range of services and facilities, but directing a proportion to smaller settlements to ensure that rural communities are nurtured and sustained. At the same time, the distribution of housing is balanced ensuring that there is a fair and equal division of new development across the district, providing new sustainable, residential developments that are carefully planned well related to infrastructure, community facilities, and play spaces. These have begun to be implemented alongside the additional infrastructure, meeting the identified needs of local communities. A new single-form entry primary school with early years and childcare facilities has been built in Rochford, well related to residential development, and is serving the local community. Additional facilities for young people are being provided, with at least one new facility a year being developed. Additional leisure uses at Rayleigh leisure centre have been implemented.

3.9 The character of the District continues to be enhanced. A Local List has been adopted which has afforded additional protection to locally significant buildings and items of street furniture. Work has begun on implementing the Conservation Area Management Plans which is having a positive impact on the character and appearance of the District's Conservation Areas. Redevelopment of buildings in the Battlesbridge Conservation Area that are unsympathetic to the location is taking place, enhancing the character and appearance of the Conservation Area whilst respecting the objectives of the Green Belt.

3.10 The Council has worked with Essex County Council to identify specific transport improvement schemes, such as online road improvements and the implementation of travel plans. These have been initiated and are helping to reduce congestion on the District's roads. Improvements to public transport, aided by the increase in demand resulting from new development, have led to a more frequent, reliable and comprehensive public transport system with better linkages between bus and rail.

3.11 The Council is using the findings of the Employment Land Study to ascertain future employment provision to meet the District's needs, and to assist in identifying alternative locations for old and poorly located employment sites which are no longer fit-for-purpose. The potential of London Southend Airport and its environs is beginning to take shape through the provision of a Joint Area Action Plan in partnership with

Southend Borough Council. This provides a unique opportunity for employment development delivering jobs that reflect the requirements of aviation industries. On a smaller scale, the long term future of the Baltic Wharf as an employment area has been secured; this is a unique deep water facility, identified as a major built site within the green belt.

3.12 Area Action Plans for Rochford, Rayleigh and Hockley town centres have been produced and adopted. The plans provide a clear framework, developed having regard to the results of community involvement, to guide the regeneration of these centres and, in the case of Rochford and Rayleigh, taking into account their historic character and heritage. The first phase of enhancement opportunities is being implemented, making these areas more attractive to visitors and investors.

Medium Term

3.13 The first phase of sustainable urban extensions to meet the District's housing needs over the plan period have been implemented. New residential developments continue to be implemented in accordance with the Council's balanced strategy, providing housing to serve local communities. These new residential developments, designed to reflect the principles of the Essex Design Guide and reflecting local design elements, contain a variety of house types and are well related to new and existing community facilities and services, ensuring sustainable communities. Dwellings are carbon-neutral, meeting Code level 6 of the Code for Sustainable Homes. Other new non-residential developments are of a sustainable construction, meeting the BREEAM rating of 'Very Good' as a minimum. New healthcare facilities in accessible locations have been developed in the District, including a new primary care centre which provides hospital-type services such as day care procedures, outpatient clinics and diagnostic tests to the District's residents.

3.14 Sustainable, well used and strategically located industrial estates are being protected and enhanced, where appropriate. A small area of the District's Green Belt has been reallocated for employment, and development of these new sites has begun to be implemented facilitating the creation of new jobs which meet the population's needs and contribute towards the District's economy. A new employment park in the west of the District with good links to the main access networks has been developed which caters for a range of employment types in a flexible manner that adapts to changes in the economy. The Eco-Enterprise Centre is a flagship, eco-friendly building creating an inward investment draw which is bringing new businesses into the area. New businesses at the Eco-Enterprise Centre are being supported at the most vulnerable points in their lifecycle, helping to sustain economic activity and promoting the District's entrepreneurial culture. Appropriate uses within the District's commercial centres are being supported, providing employment opportunities at the same time as enhancing important town centre areas.

3.15 The London Southend Airport and Environs Joint Area Action Plan supports and regulates the operations of London Southend Airport taking into consideration environmental and social effects, and residential amenity. This is an important sub-regional airport that is supporting new aviation related employment opportunities and including an Airport skills academy delivering training for aircraft engineers and other trades. A new airport terminal building and railway station complex has been completed and is operational following the implementation of an agreed surface access strategy.

3.16 Green tourism initiatives and rural diversification have provided sustainable opportunities for rural businesses whilst maintaining a high quality environment. These initiatives have encouraged small-scale tourism projects sensitive to the local environment which help to sustain the rural economy without contributing to climate change. Acceptance of greater flexibility towards rural diversification has resulted in the development of a number of bed and breakfasts and hotels, facilitating stays in the countryside for visitors to the area. The Wallasea Wetlands project is well on the way to completion and provides one of the largest managed retreat projects yet seen in Europe; the project has been designed to reflect the historic characteristics of the old Rochford coastline.

3.17 A walking cycling and bridleway network has been implemented across the District. There is improved public access to the District's rivers. Online highway infrastructure improvements have improved access to Baltic Wharf further securing its future as an employment area. The South Essex Rapid Transit System (SERT) has been implemented giving people a genuine sustainable alternative to the private car. The District's tourism offer has been further enhanced through the implementation of heritage initiatives.

3.18 The District's role as the green part of Thames Gateway South Essex has been further solidified. Conditions have been put into place which is enabling wildlife to thrive in the Roach Valley. The area's size and layout as a green lung within the arc of the main settlements, allows for people and wildlife to utilise the space with minimum conflict. Local, national and international sites of nature conservation importance are being increasingly protected and enhanced to improve their biodiversity and wildlife value. The Coastal Protection Belt continues to be protected from unnecessary development and other potentially detrimental impacts.

Long Term

3.19 The District's distinctive character and historical built environment has been protected and enhanced. The vast majority of the District's Green Belt remains open and undeveloped, and the District continues to perform the role as the green part of Thames Gateway South Essex. The role of the Upper Roach Valley as a green lung has been further reinforced providing a substantial informal area of recreation, with green links criss-crossing the valley and connecting Rochford with Rayleigh and linking the Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park with Hockley Woods.

3.20 New development has been implemented which contributes positively towards the District's character and ensures the District's communities continue to thrive. A range of high-quality, sustainable new dwellings with unique vernacular design characteristics that meet the needs of local people of all social groups are in place and integrated into communities and served by new infrastructure. A wide range of accessible community facilities and local services have been provided alongside new development which aids the integration and cohesion of communities. Such facilities include green open spaces, community halls, and play spaces, which cater for residents of all ages.

3.21 A new single-form entry primary school with early years and childcare facilities has been built in Rayleigh, well related to residential development, and is serving the local community. Primary schools in the District's rural settlements are well attended and remain important, viable community facilities. The District's secondary schools have been expanded and enhanced.

3.22 Initiatives to reduce carbon emissions from new and existing developments are being encouraged and the proportion of the District's energy supply from renewable and low carbon sources has been increased.

3.23 Local, national and international sites of nature conservation importance are protected. The protection of Sites of Special Scientific Interest has resulted in improvements to the percentage of which, by area, are in 'favourable' or better condition.

3.24 Developer contributions have ensured that new developments are well integrated with public transport. Cycle and pedestrian networks have been developed linking important areas. Road infrastructure through the District has been secured and improved with easier access to the A127 and A130. Basildon, Chelmsford and Southend continue to be significant attractors – although the strength of their spheres of influence on the District has been reduced by enhancement of the District's town centres, employment areas, and development in and around London Southend airport. In addition to public transport and highway improvements, new residential development has been directed to areas where the use of alternatives to the private car is viable and where, in the event that car journeys to these spheres of influence are taking place, traffic is directed along strategic routes as far as practicable, avoiding local roads and town centres.

3.25 Over 3000 net additional jobs have been provided which meet local employment needs. A balance has been struck between the local workforce and jobs through the aviation-centred skills training academy providing local workers with high-value, transferable skills. London Southend Airport's potential as an economic catalyst for the sub-region has been realised.

3.26 The employment park in the west of the District has been implemented and contains a range of employment uses providing local jobs. The new employment park is accompanied by a travel plan and is accessible to workers by a range of transport options. Old, poorly located, "bad neighbour" industrial estates have been relocated to fit-for-purpose sites in sustainable locations which meet the needs of businesses and benefits residential amenity.

3.27 The District's town centres are vibrant places containing a range of shops, services and facilities that meet local demand. The vast majority of new retail development has been directed to Rochford, Rayleigh and Hockley. Some additional retail has been provided within the District's smaller settlements and within residential areas outside of the designated centres which provides convenient, accessible top-up shopping for local communities and reduces the need to travel. The leakage of retail expenditure outside of the District has been significantly reduced, with shoppers attracted to the District's town centres not simply due to the provision of retail, but because of the range of activities and the quality of the environment.

4 Housing

Vision

Short Term

- New sustainable, residential developments are planned that are well related to infrastructure, community facilities, and play space. These have begun to be implemented. A number of residential developments, along with additional infrastructure, have been completed and are meeting the needs of local communities.

Medium/Long Term

- A range of high-quality, sustainable new dwellings that meet the needs of local people of all social groups are in place and integrated into communities.
- The vast majority of the District's Green Belt remains undeveloped.
- New infrastructure has accompanied new residential development, meeting the needs of local communities.

Objectives

1. Ensure the delivery of an adequate supply of sustainable dwellings to cater for the District's growing demand, as per the requirements of the East of England Plan (2008) and a 15 year housing land supply.
2. Deliver a balanced strategy for the distribution of housing, directing housing growth to the most sustainable locations having regard to social, economic and environmental considerations.
3. Ensure the District's settlements remain viable and that rural services can be sustained.
4. Prioritise the redevelopment of appropriate brownfield sites for housing, to minimise the release of Green Belt land for development.
5. Ensure the delivery of housing which caters for the needs of all communities in terms of tenure, type and location.
6. Ensure that appropriate infrastructure accompanies new housing development.

Introduction

4.1 It is important that planning ensures the provision of sufficient, good quality new homes in appropriate, sustainable locations.

4.2 The East of England Plan requires a minimum of 4600 dwellings to be provided in the District between 2001 and 2021. In addition, the Local Planning Authority is required to plan for delivery of housing for at least 15 years from the date of adoption of the Core Strategy (2010) and, in so doing, assume that the average annual requirement of 250 units will continue beyond 2021 to 2025.

4.3 Rochford's allocation is based on meeting current and future needs of the population. Current need encompasses the number of people in the District who are living within a household wanting to move to their own accommodation and form a separate household but are unable to do so (e.g. adult children). Projected need is derived from the supposition that the population will increase from 81,300 in 2007 to 87,000 by 2021.

4.4 The East of England Plan notes the provision of housing within local authorities between 2001 and 2006, and specifies the remaining provision between 2006 and 2021. Rochford District is required to accommodate 3,790 dwellings between 2006 and 2021, at an approximate average of 250 dwellings per year. Post 2021, in accordance with PPS3, the District is required to continue the development rate of 250 dwellings per year. As such, the Core Strategy addresses the location of housing provision to 2025.

4.5 The Annual Monitoring Report confirms that between 2006 and 2008 there were 618 additional dwellings completed in the District.

4.6 The 2009 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) examined the supply of housing land and, although identified some capacity from extant permissions and other appropriate sites, also ascertained that Green Belt would have to be reallocated in order to meet the requirements of the East of England Plan as outlined below.

Source	Dwellings			
	2006-2015	2015-2021	2021-2025	Total 2006-2025
Housing requirement (250 dwellings per year)	2250	1500	1000	4750
Actual completions (2006-2008)	618	-	-	618
Extant planning permissions	210	0	0	210

Source	Dwellings			
	2006-2015	2015-2021	2021-2025	Total 2006-2025
Existing allocations/other appropriate sites identified in Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment	671	506	0	1177
Total without Green Belt release	1499	506	0	2005
Green Belt release required	751	994	1000	2745

4.7 As noted within the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, the Council is required to identify and allocate additional sites for development in order to meet its housing requirement. The Core Strategy sets out the general locations for housing development and approach to delivery. The precise boundaries of housing sites will be detailed in the Allocations Development Plan Document.

4.8 The concept of sustainable development is at the heart of any decisions with regards to the location of housing. The primary factors in determining the location of future housing include current infrastructure (along with opportunities to deliver future infrastructure); access to services; facilities; housing demand/need; deliverability; public transport/possibility of reducing car dependency; opportunities to utilise brownfield land; community needs and physical constraints; need to protect areas of landscape value, ecological importance and high quality agricultural land.

4.9 As described in the **Spatial Characteristics, Issues and Opportunities** chapter of this document, the District contains a number of settlements. Some of these settlements, although they have their own distinct identifies, are not functionally separate from their neighbours and for the purposes of the Core Strategy have been grouped together as one, namely: Rochford/Ashingdon; and Hockley/Hawkwell. These settlements/groups of settlements can be divided into four tiers, with the settlements in the higher tiers being more developed, subject to greater housing demand/need, and generally more suitable to accommodate additional housing for the reasons described above. The settlement hierarchy is as follows:

Tier	Settlements
1	Rayleigh; Rochford/Ashingdon; Hockley/Hawkwell
2	Hullbridge; Great Wakering
3	Canewdon
4	All other settlements

4.10 The strategy for the distribution of housing development is a balance between focussing development on the higher tier settlements, whilst allocating a proportion of the housing development to the lower tier settlements (with the exception of the fourth tier, where additional development is considered unsustainable) to ensure these established communities can be sustained and that rural services continue to be supported.

4.11 The District experiences high-levels of out-commuting and leakages of retail expenditure. Whilst the Core Strategy seeks to counter this situation through a variety of measures, the Core Strategy must also acknowledge that residents will continue to utilise centres outside of Rochford District for employment as well as other services and facilities. Therefore, the strategy for the location of housing also involves a balance between directing additional housing to areas with a close relationship to Southend, and those with a closer relationship to Chelmsford and Basildon.

4.12 In short, the Council's approach to the location of housing development can be described as a balanced strategy.

The efficient use of land for housing

4.13 The Council recognises the importance of making best use of brownfield land. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment identifies a realistic figure that can be accommodated within existing settlements and other appropriate land, based on the identification of specific sites.

4.14 The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment examines four sites that are currently allocated for employment: Eldon Way/Foundry Estate, Hockley; Rawreth Lane Industrial Estate, Rayleigh; Stambridge Mills; and Star Lane Industrial Estate, Great Wakering. In the case of all four sites, the Council believe that their redevelopment to include housing represents a more appropriate use of the land. In the case of Eldon Way/Foundry, any redevelopment should also include a range of employment uses appropriate to a town centre location. The Council recognises, however, that additional land in more appropriate locations must be allocated for employment in order to accommodate businesses displaced from these sites. The Council's approach to this is set out in the **Economic Development** section of the Core Strategy.

4.15 The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment and Core Strategy acknowledge that, as set out in PPS3, the Council can not rely on as yet unidentified sites coming forward for development in the future. Such windfall sites, including through intensification of existing residential areas, have historically made a contribution towards housing supply within the District and are likely to continue to do so. However, the Council are concerned about the impact 'town cramming' is having on the attractiveness and character of many neighbourhoods across the district. It is therefore concluded that, having regard to this and the results of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, the government's target of providing 60% of new housing development on previously developed land has become unrealistic for Rochford.

4.16 In line with the Habitats Regulations and in consultation with NE, EA and Essex and Suffolk Water, development proposals must ensure that the water supply necessary for the development can be supplied sustainably (and without adverse effects on European Sites).

Policy H1 – The efficient use of land for housing

The Council will enable the delivery of housing to meet the requirements of the East of England Plan (2008), and will ensure there is an adequate supply of land for the development of housing over a 15 year period.

The Council will prioritise the reuse of previously developed land and ensure the delivery of appropriate sites within existing settlements identified by the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.

The Council will seek the redevelopment of Rawreth Lane Industrial Estate, Eldon Way/Foundry Industrial Estate, Stambridge Mills and Star Lane Industrial Estate for appropriate alternative uses, including residential development, with alternative employment land allocated in appropriate locations as identified in **Policy ED4**.

Any scheme for the redevelopment of Stambridge Mills must include adequate flood mitigation measures to satisfy the PPS25 exceptions test.

Appendix H1 outlines the infrastructure that will be required for the development of newly allocated housing sites.

The remaining housing requirement that cannot be delivered through the redevelopment of appropriate previously developed land will be met through extensions to the residential envelopes of existing settlements as outlined in **Policy H2.**

Residential development must conform to all policies within the Core Strategy, particularly in relation to infrastructure, and larger sites will be required to be comprehensively planned.

In order to protect the character of existing settlements, the Council will resist the intensification of smaller sites within residential areas. Limited infilling will be considered acceptable, and will continue to contribute towards housing supply, provided it relates well to the existing street pattern, density and character of the locality.

The Council will encourage an appropriate level of residential intensification within town centre areas, where higher density schemes (75+ dwellings per hectare) may be appropriate.

Extensions to residential envelopes and phasing

4.17 In order to fulfil the requirements of the East of England Plan and to meet the housing need of the District, the Council is required to allocate additional land for residential development, including land which is currently allocated as Green Belt, due to the limited supply of alternative land.

4.18 Whilst the Council acknowledge that the housing requirement stipulated in the East of England Plan is a minimum, it must be also mindful of the need to maintain Green Belt as far as possible.

4.19 The locations and quantums for housing development as set out in **Policy H2** are such that on a settlement-by-settlement basis, when combined with development proposed through H1, a balanced strategy for housing provision is delivered.

4.20 In addition to identifying settlements where housing development will be directed to, the Core Strategy also sets out the areas around such settlements where an extension to the residential envelope is appropriate. The Council will direct development to the most sustainable locations on the edge of settlements having regard to:

- The proximity and relationship to existing centres, facilities and services;
- The availability of infrastructure and/or the potential for additional infrastructure to be provided for development in such areas;
- The potential to reduce private car dependency;
- The potential to avoid areas of constraint (such as areas at risk of flooding, sites of ecological importance, public safety zone, etc);
- The historical, agricultural and ecological value of land;
- The impact on highway network (including availability and impact on existing network, as well as potential for improvements to be delivered);
- The relationship of development locations to the District's areas of employment growth;
- The potential to create a defensible Green Belt boundary; and
- The avoidance of coalescence with neighbouring settlements.

4.21 Development coming forward within the identified areas will have to conform to other Core Strategy policies, notably those discussed in the **Transport** and **Community Infrastructure, Leisure and Tourism** chapters. **Appendix H1** outlines on-site infrastructure which will be required to be incorporated into development at each of the locations.

4.22 The Core Strategy sets out broad timings for the delivery of housing in the general locations identified. It is neither possible, nor desirable, for all sites that are ultimately allocated for housing to be delivered simultaneously.

4.23 A number of factors have been considered when drawing up the proposed general phasing of development, including the availability of infrastructure (in particular water infrastructure), the deliverability of potential sites within the areas, and the need to ensure that development is phased to allow its integration with existing communities.

4.24 It is also important to phase the loss of Green Belt land to ensure that there is not an early or excessive release which may discourage redevelopment of previously developed land or undermine town centre regeneration proposals.

4.25 In line with the Habitats Regulations and in consultation with NE, EA and Essex and Suffolk Water, development proposals must ensure that the water supply necessary for the development can be supplied sustainably (and without adverse effects on European Sites).

Policy H2 – Extensions to residential envelopes and phasing

The residential envelope of existing settlements will be extended in the areas set out below and indicated on the **Key Diagram,** to contribute to a five year supply of housing land in the period to 2015, and between 2015 and 2021.

Area	Dwellings by 2015	Dwellings 2015-2021
North of London Road, Rayleigh		550
West Rochford	450	150
West Hockley	50	
South Hawkwell	175	
East Ashingdon	100	
South West Hullbridge		250
South Canewdon		60
Total	**775**	**1010**

The detailed location and quantum of development will be articulated within the Allocations Development Plan Document.

Development within the above areas will be required to be comprehensively planned. A range of other uses and infrastructure (including off-site infrastructure), having regard to the requirements of the Core Strategy, will be required to be developed and implemented in a timely manner alongside housing. **Appendix H1** outlines the infrastructure that will be required for each residential area, and should be read in conjunction with **Policy CLT1**.

The Council will maintain a flexible approach with regards to the timing of the release of land for residential development to ensure a constant five-year supply of land.

Extension to residential envelopes post-2021

4.26 In considering the general development locations for post-2021 development, the same issues as for **Policy H2** above have been considered, but areas identified for post 2021 development may not be immediately deliverable, or the situation vis-à-vis infrastructure and the impact on existing communities is such that their delivery earlier would not be appropriate.

4.27 The figures, with an annual average of 250 units, meet the East of England Plan's minimum in the period 2021-2025 and do not make allowance for any contribution through windfall. The figures are approximates at this stage. The exact figures will need to be determined through the Allocations Development Plan Document process or, where appropriate, Area Action Plans at a later date.

4.28 As with the pre-2021 development areas, it is important to note that development coming forward within the areas outlined in **Policy H3** will have to conform to the other policies within the Core Strategy.

4.29 The Council will monitor the provision of housing and residential development may be allocated within the general locations prior to 2021 in the event that additional housing land is required.

4.30 In line with the Habitats Regulations and in consultation with NE, EA and Essex and Suffolk Water, development proposals must ensure that the water supply necessary for the development can be supplied sustainably (and without adverse effects on European Sites).

Policy H3 – Extension to residential envelopes post-2021

Post-2021, the residential envelope of existing settlements will be extended in the following areas (as indicated on the Key Diagram) to deliver the following approximate number of units post-2021. Prior to this time, Green Belt land within such areas will be safeguarded with the exception of release as per Policy H2.

Area	Dwelling post-2021
South East Ashingdon	500
South West Hullbridge	250
West Great Wakering	250
Total	**1000**

The detailed location and quantum of development will be articulated within the Allocations Development Plan Document.

Development within the above areas will be required to be comprehensively planned. A range of other uses and infrastructure (including off-site infrastructure), having regard to the requirements of the Core Strategy, will be required to be developed and implemented in a timely manner alongside housing. **Appendix H1** outlines the infrastructure that will be required for each residential area, and should be read in conjunction with **Policy CLT1**.

The Council will monitor the supply and development of housing in the District and may bring forward development in these locations prior to 2021 if required to meet East of England Plan requirements, but only if infrastructure to serve such developments is also brought forward earlier.

4.31 **Policies H1, H2 and H3** will deliver housing supply as illustrated in **Appendix H2**.

Affordable Housing

4.32 Affordable housing is defined in Planning Policy Statement 3 – Housing (PPS3) as follows:

"Affordable housing includes social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Affordable housing should:

– Meet the needs of eligible households including availability at a cost low enough for them to afford, determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices.
– Include provision for the home to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or, if these restrictions are lifted, for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.

Social rented housing is:
Rented housing owned and managed by local authorities and registered social landlords, for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime. The proposals set out in the Three Year Review of Rent Restructuring (July 2004) were implemented as policy in April 2006. It may also include rented housing owned or managed by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements to the above, as agreed with the local authority or with the Homes and Communities Agency as a condition of grant.

Affordable rented housing is:
Rented housing let by registered providers of social housing to households who are eligible for social rented housing. Affordable Rent is not subject to the national rent regime but is subject to other rent controls that require a rent of no more than 80 per cent of the local market rent.

Intermediate affordable housing is:
Housing at prices and rents above those of social rent, but below market price or rents, and which meet the criteria set out above. These can include shared equity products (e.g. HomeBuy), other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent but does not include affordable rented housing."

4.33 The Thames Gateway South Essex Strategic Housing Market Assessment identified an acute need for affordable housing within Rochford District, equating to 131 net additional affordable dwellings per year. This amounts to 52% of Rochford's annual target. However, it is important that viability is considered – the Council recognises the need to set a requirement that is economically viable. As such, 35%, being the indicative aim for the region as a whole as set out in the East of England Plan is considered appropriate as a local requirement.

4.34 The Council's Housing Strategy (2009) acknowledges the severity of the need for affordable housing in the District and one of its key priorities is to maximise the provision of affordable housing through the planning system. The 2009 Housing Strategy's action plan includes the aim to achieve 35% affordable housing on future development sites.

4.35 The Council recognises the need to ensure that affordable housing policies, or any other form of planning obligations, do not place an undue financial burden on developers such to prevent the delivery of development. The economic viability of affordable housing will vary depending on the market conditions at any given time. As such, the Council will continue to monitor the 35% target and may relax this requirement in specific cases where developers are able to demonstrate conclusively that for a particular development site the target is unachievable.

Policy H4 – Affordable Housing

At least 35% of dwellings on all developments of 15 or more units, or on sites greater than 0.5 hectares, shall be affordable. These affordable dwellings shall be tenure-blind and well integrated into the layout of new residential developments such that they are spread ("pepper potted") throughout larger developments, whilst having regard to the management requirements of Registered Social Landlords.

The Council will aim for 80 percent of affordable housing to be social housing, 20 percent intermediate housing. The Council will constantly review the affordable housing needs of the District and developers should consult with the Council's Housing Strategy team to ensure their proposals meet the Council's needs before submitting planning applications.

The requirement for the provision of affordable housing may be relaxed, for example where constraints make on-site provision impossible or where the developer is able to demonstrate that 35% provision will be economically unviable, rendering the site undeliverable. In such cases the Council will negotiate the proportion of affordable dwellings based on the economic viability calculations. It is expected that affordable housing will be provided on each development site; in rare cases, taking account of particular site characteristics, the affordable housing contribution may be provided by way of a commuted sum towards off-site affordable housing.

Dwelling Types

4.36 Historically, the mix of house types in the District has tended to have been dominated by larger houses at the higher end of the market. Whilst this has contributed to the character of the District as it is today, the concern is that if such a pattern were to continue it would not meet the needs of the whole community, particularly as the trend is for smaller household sizes due to social and demographic changes.

4.37 The Strategic Housing Market Assessment for Thames Gateway South Essex notes that although the majority of household demand growth is expected to result from increasing single person households, a high proportion of these are existing older households who already have housing and are unlikely to downsize.

4.38 However, there is a high demand locally for three-bedroom properties for families and it should be noted that the demand for house types can change over relatively short periods of time due to a variety of circumstances, and may vary across the District. As such it is necessary to keep the District's housing need under constant review.

4.39 It is important that a mix of house types is provided on larger sites coming forward to deliver mixed communities, as opposed to developments which cater entirely for only one demographic group.

Policy H5 – Dwelling Types

New developments must contain a mix of dwelling types to ensure they cater for all people within the community, whatever their housing needs. The development of both affordable and market housing should have regard to local need. Developers should consult with the Council's Housing Strategy team in order to determine the required mix of house types prior to submitting planning applications.

A proportion of the affordable housing provision within developments will be required to be in the form of three-bedroom or larger dwellings.

4.40 The housing allocation for Rochford District is based on meeting the current and future needs of the local population, but the development to meet this need must be sustainable not just socially, but also environmentally. The environmental issues that will apply to new housing, in addition to other forms of development are set out in the **Environmental Issues** chapter of this document. Character is also important and is discussed in the **Character of Place** section.

Lifetime Homes

4.41 As acknowledged in the Sustainable Community Strategy, the need to meet the needs of an ageing population is, whilst not unique to Rochford, particular prevalent in the District. Furthermore, the issue is particularly pertinent to the subject of housing provision. It is important that housing is designed to be flexible to changes in people's circumstances.

4.42 Lifetime homes are homes designed for people to remain in for as much of their life as possible and to this end are adaptable to the differing needs of different stages of their life cycle. Building Regulations now require new dwellings to have access and facilities for disabled people and in being so designed they are expected to help people with reducing mobility to remain longer in their homes. The Lifetimes Homes Standard promoted by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation goes further to provide housing that is more flexible and adaptable than that required by Part M of the Building Regulations and so are more suitable for older and disabled people.

4.43 By requiring homes to meet the Lifetime Homes Standard the Council are not simply applying a "one size fits all" approach, or forcing all homes to be the same – the Lifetime Homes Standard is about ensuring homes can be easily adapted to meet changing needs, for example, by having staircases that are wide enough to accommodate a chairlift, or doorways wide enough for wheelchairs.

4.44 Lifetime Homes are suitable for people throughout their lives and by ensuring that homes meet this standard, residents will be able to remain independent as they get older, or develop physical disabilities. All residents will age and anyone's circumstances can change. As such it would not be appropriate for only a proportion of new housing development to be flexible to meet people's changing circumstances.

4.45 It is little more difficult at the design stage to achieve the Lifetime Homes Standard over the requirements of the Building Regulations, and whilst it may be more expensive to implement, costs should reduce as the standard becomes widely accepted.

4.46 The Essex Joint Strategic Needs Assessment notes that many older people living in Essex cannot afford to adapt their home to meet their needs, or to keep it in a good state of repair. Such a situation has the potential to worsen given that the population is ageing, and highlights the importance of the Lifetime Homes Standard.

4.47 Lifetime Homes are not specifically properties for people with mobility problems and are not necessarily wheelchair standard accommodation. In addition to the Lifetime Homes Standard, it is important that a proportion of housing be wheelchair accessible so as to ensure new developments are socially inclusive.

Policy H6 – Lifetime Homes

All new housing developments will be required to comply with the Lifetime Homes Standard.

In addition, at least 3% of new dwellings on developments of 30 dwellings or more will be required to be built to full wheelchair accessibility standards. In the case of developments comprising between 10 and 30 dwellings, at least one dwelling will be expected to be built to full wheelchair accessibility standards.

In the case of both the Lifetime Homes Standard and the wheelchair accessibility requirements, exceptions may be made and a lower proportion of units accepted where such a requirement can be shown to threaten the viability of a particular development.

Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation

4.48 Planning must meet the accommodation needs of all communities, including Gypsies and Travellers. The need and demand for Gypsy and Traveller sites in the District has, historically, been very low, especially when compared with other areas of Essex. However, even this low demand has not been met in the past.

4.49 The East of England Regional Assembly has prepared a single-issue review on Gypsy and Travellers accommodation that equates to the allocation of an additional 15 pitches to be provided in Rochford District by 2018 to meet the 3% compound increase requirements beyond 2011.

4.50 Given the historically low demand within the District, provision for any additional pitches post 2018 will be subject to further review of need.

Policy H7 – Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation

The Council will allocate 15 pitches by 2018, as per the East of England Regional Assembly's single-issue review.

In allocating pitches the Council will examine the potential of current unauthorised sites to meet this need and will consider granting them planning consent subject to advice in *Circular 1/2006 – Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites.* Sites will be allocated in the west of the District, where transport links and access to services are better. In allocating sites consideration will include:

- The promotion of peaceful and integrated co-existence between the site and the local community;
- The wider benefits of easier access to GP and other health services;
- Children attending school on a regular basis;
- The provision of a settled base that reduces the need for long-distance travelling and possible environmental damage caused by unauthorised encampment on alternative sites; and
- The need to direct sites away from areas at high risk of flooding, including functional floodplains, given the particular vulnerability of caravans

Appendix H1

Location	New Infrastructure and Services to Accompany Residential Development
North of London Road, Rayleigh	• New primary school • Local highway capacity and infrastructure improvements • Public transport infrastructure improvements and service enhancements, including link between Rawreth Lane and London Road • Link and enhancements to local pedestrian/cycling and bridleway network • Link to Green Grid Greenway No. 13 • Public park land to provide buffer between the built environment and A1245 • Youth and community facilities • Play space • Sustainable drainage systems
West Rochford	• New primary school with commensurate early years and childcare provision • Local highway capacity and infrastructure improvements • Public transport infrastructure improvements and service enhancements • Link and enhancements to local pedestrian/cycling and bridleway network • Enhanced pedestrian access to town centre • Hall Road junction improvements • Sustainable drainage systems • Public open space • Play space • Youth facilities and community facilities • Link to cycle network
West Hockley	• Local highway capacity and infrastructure improvements • Public transport infrastructure improvements and service enhancements • Link and enhancements to local pedestrian/cycling and bridleway network • Sustainable drainage systems • Public open space • Play space • Link to cycle network

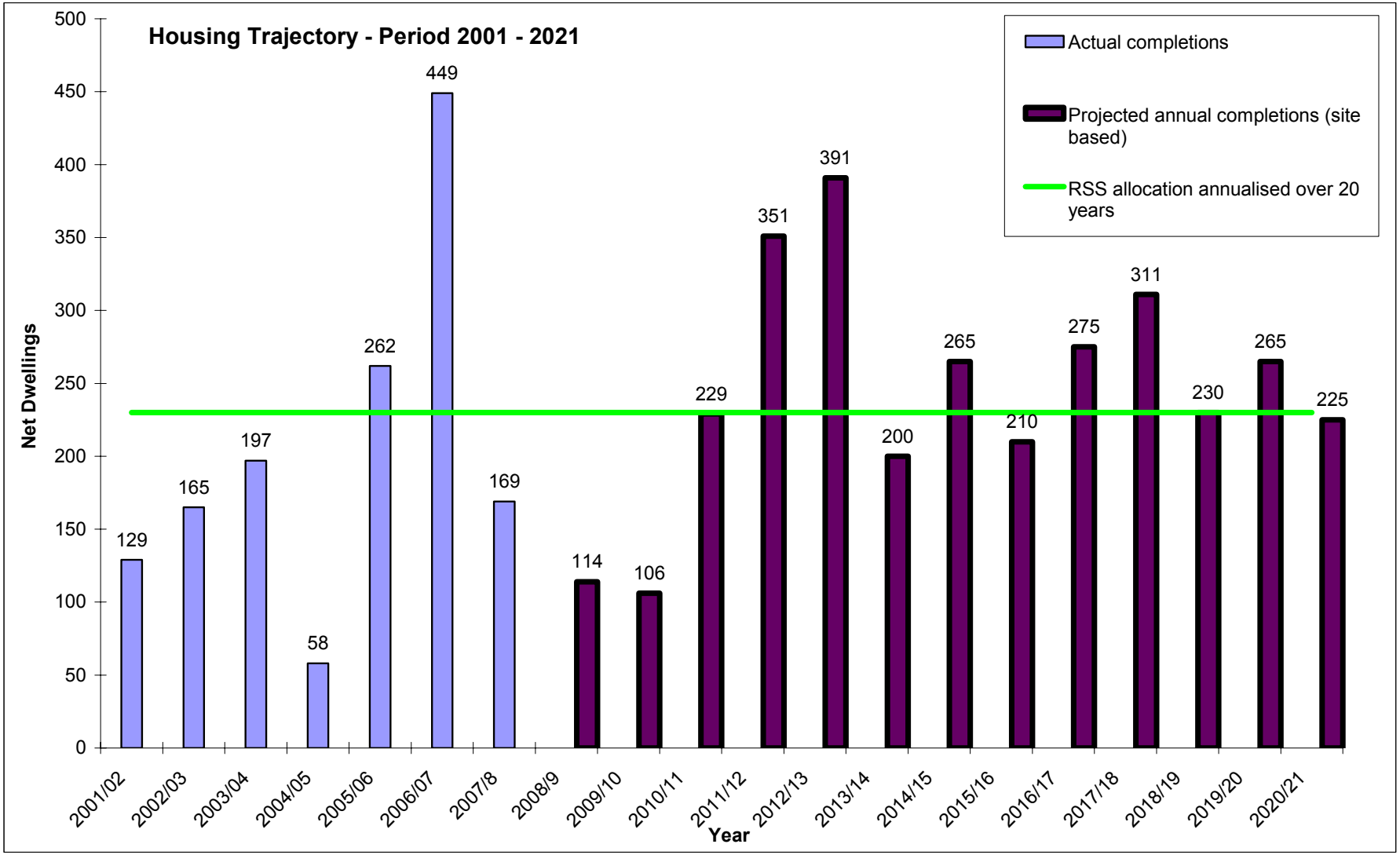
Location	New Infrastructure and Services to Accompany Residential Development
South Hawkwell	• Local highway capacity and infrastructure improvements • Public transport infrastructure improvements and service enhancements • Link and enhancements to local pedestrian/cycling and bridleway network • Sustainable drainage systems • Play space • Link to cycle network • Local highway improvements
East Ashingdon	• Local highway capacity and infrastructure improvements • Public transport infrastructure improvements and service enhancements • Link and enhancements to local pedestrian/cycling and bridleway network • Access to King Edmund School • Land made available for the expansion of King Edmund School • Sustainable drainage systems • Public open space • Play space • Youth facilities and community facilities
South West Hullbridge	• Local highway capacity and infrastructure improvements, including improvements to Watery Lane and Watery Lane/Hullbridge Road junction • Public transport infrastructure improvements and service enhancements • Link and enhancements to local pedestrian/cycling and bridleway network • Sustainable drainage systems • Public open space • Play space • Youth facilities and community facilities • Leisure facilities • Link to cycle network
South Canewdon	• Local highway capacity and infrastructure improvements • Public transport infrastructure improvements and service enhancements • Link and enhancements to local pedestrian/cycling and bridleway network • Sustainable drainage systems • Play space

Location	New Infrastructure and Services to Accompany Residential Development
South East Ashingdon	• Local highway capacity and infrastructure improvements, including contribution to traffic management of Ashingdon Road • Public transport infrastructure improvements and service enhancements • Link and enhancements to local pedestrian/cycling and bridleway network • Sustainable drainage systems • Public open space • Play space • Youth facilities and community facilities
West Great Wakering	• Local highway capacity and infrastructure improvements • Public transport infrastructure improvements and service enhancements • Link and enhancements to local pedestrian/cycling and bridleway network • Sustainable drainage systems • Public open space • Play space • Youth facilities and community facilities
Rawreth Industrial Estate	• Contribution towards new primary school within North of London Road, Rayleigh residential development • Public transport infrastructure improvements and service enhancements • Link and enhancements to local pedestrian/cycling and bridleway network • Public open space and play space • Sustainable drainage systems • Local highway capacity and infrastructure improvements

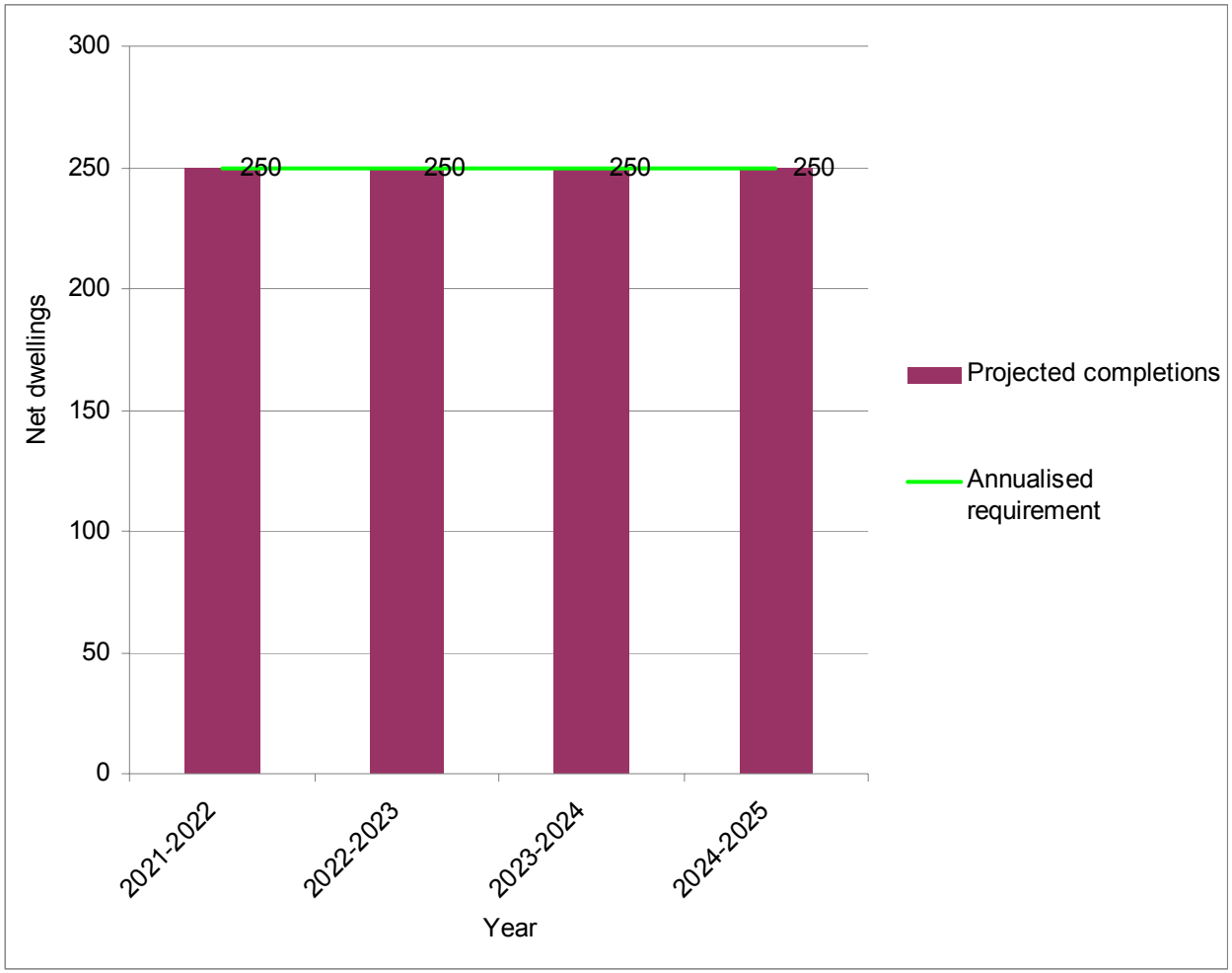
Location	New Infrastructure and Services to Accompany Residential Development
Eldon Way/Foundry Industrial Estate	• Contribution towards Hockley centre regeneration to be determined through development of Area Action Plan, including: – Public transport infrastructure improvements and service enhancements – Healthcare facilities – Public open space – Landscaping and street furniture – Pedestrian links between centre and train station, linking residential development to both – Early years and childcare facility – Youth and community facilities – Local highway capacity and infrastructure improvements, including Spa Road/Main Road junction improvements
Stambridge Mills	• Flood defence • Public transport infrastructure improvements and service enhancements • Link and enhancements to local pedestrian/cycling and bridleway network • Sustainable drainage systems • Local highway capacity and infrastructure improvements • Public open space • Play space
Star Lane Industrial Estate	• Local highway capacity and infrastructure improvements • Public transport infrastructure improvements and service enhancements • Link and enhancements to local pedestrian/cycling and bridleway network • Sustainable drainage systems • Public open space • Play space • Youth facilities and community facilities

Appendix H2

Housing trajectory 2001-2021 from combination of Policies H1and H2



Housing trajectory 2021 to 2025 from Policy H3



Breakdown of 2001-2021 housing trajectory by source

Source	Net dwelling completions														
	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Actual Completions 2006-2008	449	169	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Extant permissions	-	-	104	106	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Redevelopment of identified employment allocations	-	-	0	0	125	125	0	0	75	50	50	100	80	115	75
Other appropriate sites identified in SHLAA	-	-	10	0	104	101	41	0	90	0	0	36	0	0	0
Extensions to residential envelopes	-	-	0	0	0	125	350	200	100	160	225	175	150	150	150

All dwelling completions post-2021 from extensions to residential envelopes.

5 Character of Place

Vision

Short Term

- The Council has adopted a Local List which has afforded additional protection to locally significant buildings.
- Work has begun on implementing the Conservation Area Management Plans which is having a positive impact on the character and appearance of the District's Conservation Areas.

Medium/Long Term

- The District's distinctive character and historical built environment has been retained.
- New development has been implemented which contributes positively towards the District's character.

Objectives

1. To ensure that new development respect and make a positive contribution towards the built environment.
2. To support and enhance the local built heritage.

Introduction

5.1 The District has a distinctive character which is worthy of protection. The Council is committed to both maintaining and enhancing environmental quality in the District.

5.2 All new development will be expected to make a positive contribution to this character and be of high quality design. Quality of design is important everywhere within the District. It is essential in producing attractive, vibrant, sustainable places, in which people want to live, work and relax.

5.3 Government policy contained in Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1) – Delivering sustainable development, makes it clear that good design should be the aim of all those involved in the development process. PPS3 – Housing, also emphasises the need to create places, streets and spaces which meet the needs of people, are visually attractive, safe, accessible, functional, inclusive, have their own distinctive identity and maintain and improve local character. The Council will encourage high standards new build in all circumstances, including in respect of the location, siting, design and materials used, as well as ensuring that the proposal will contribute to the enhancement or, where appropriate, improvement of the character of the area in which it is proposed. Tree planting and landscaping schemes using native species appropriate to their location will be an important part of new development.

Design

5.4 Rochford District has a unique character and appearance, much of which stems from the traditional buildings that still dominate the towns and villages. However, more recently the adoption of modern standardised building materials and building design has, in some cases, begun to erode the character of the District. This trend must not be allowed to continue. The Council aims to follow the principles of good urban design set out in national policies and ensure the design of all new and existing development is consistent with the local character.

5.5 Design will be expected to enhance local identity by being sympathetic to local needs and by building on local opportunities. In addition, good design can encourage community cohesion by designing out crime and anti-social behaviour, and reducing inequalities. With regards to corporate identities, and in-house building styles, they will be expected to be adapted to the local setting and should respect local character.

5.6 The Council will encourage and support the production of Village Design Statements for settlements in the District. These are community-led guidance documents outlining the distinct character of villages and their proposed future development from a local perspective. Design Statements will encourage community ownership and inform planners, designers and developers of sustainable opportunities for village enhancement.

5.7 Promoting good design may sometimes conflict with other aims, for example, promoting renewable energy. While promoting the development of small-scale renewable energy projects, the Council will ensure the location, scale, design and other factors are carefully considered.

5.8 The Council has adopted Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 2 (Housing Design) and SPD 7 (Design, Landscaping and Access Statement) which provide detailed guidance on how good design can be achieved. The Essex Design Guide and Urban Place Supplement also provide guidance on delivering good design.

Policy CP1 – Design

The Council will promote good, high quality design that has regard to local flavour through the use of the adopted Supplementary Planning Documents and the positive contribution of Village Design Statements. The Essex Design Guide and Urban Place Supplement SPDs will help provide guidance without being overly prescriptive.

Developers of large residential schemes will be required to produce and adhere to design briefs, which reflect the local characteristics and distinctiveness of the development area.

Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments and Conservation Areas

5.9 Good design is crucial when considering proposals that may affect historic buildings, especially those that are listed due to their architectural interest, protected due to their archaeological or historical status, or their contribution towards the character and appearance of a Conservation Areas. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 provides specific protection for buildings and areas of special architectural or historic interest.

Listed Buildings

5.10 Buildings are listed to help protect the physical evidence of our past, including buildings which are valued and protected as a central part of our cultural heritage and our sense of identity. Hence, these buildings have statutory protection and Listed Building consent is needed for their demolition, or to carry out any internal or external alterations that affect their character.

5.11 The Council will support the national policies that seek to protect Listed Buildings and pay particular attention to retaining their character.

Scheduled Monuments

5.12 Scheduled Monuments are archaeological or historical sites which are of national importance and protected under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. There are five Scheduled Monuments in the District which are:

- Plumberow Mount, Hockley
- Heavy Anti-aircraft gun site, 380m SE of Butler's Gate, Sutton
- Romano-British burial site on Foulness Island, Foulness
- Rayleigh Castle, Rayleigh
- Rochford Hall (uninhabited portions), Rochford

Conservation Areas

5.13 Conservation Areas are 'Areas of Special Architectural or Historic Interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance' (Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990). They have been designated to preserve and enhance the character of a whole area. These areas are afforded statutory protection and in addition often contain many Listed Buildings.

5.14 The Conservation Areas within the District are as listed below.

Conservation Areas
Battlesbridge
Canewdon Church
Canewdon High Street
Foulness Churchend
Great Wakering
Paglesham Churchend
Paglesham Eastend
Rayleigh
Rochford
Shopland Churchyard

5.15 Many of the high quality built environments of the District have been designated as Conservation Areas. These areas have a distinctive character and the Council has adopted Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans for the District's ten Conservation Areas. These Appraisals and Management plans detail the character of the Conservation Areas, assess their quality, and the proposed actions to be undertaken to ensure their protection and enhancement.

5.16 Designation of a Conservation Area extends planning controls over certain types of development, including extensions, boundary treatments, the demolition of unlisted buildings and works to trees. However it does not prevent all change and the area may be subject to pressures (good and bad) that will affect their character and appearance. The Council will preserve the special character of the Conservation Areas and to promote good design through implementing SPD6 – Design guidelines for Conservation Areas, as well as the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plans.

Policy CP2 – Conservation Areas

The Council will work closely with its partners to implement the actions recommended in the adopted Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plans and will have regard to the advice in the CAAs and adopted SPDs when considering proposals for development within Conservation Areas.

Local Lists

5.17 The Council believes that many buildings in the District, despite not being listed, are of local distinctiveness and form part of a familiar and cherished local scene.

5.18 The Council dropped the Local List during the preparation of the Rochford District Replacement Local Plan, but more recent guidance (*Review of Heritage Protection: the way forward* (2004) DCMS and *Heritage Protection for the 21st Century* (2007) DCMS) suggests that these lists do have a valuable role. There is now positive encouragement from the government through the recent White Paper for the preparation of such lists and the Council will reintroduce such a list for the District.

5.19 Although there is no statutory protection for buildings included on Local Lists (except those in Conservation Areas), the Council will encourage owners to avoid demolition, unsympathetic alteration or changes which would diminish the architectural, historic or townscape value of these buildings.

5.20 The Council will not approve any unsympathetic alterations, including replacement of traditional windows or alterations to the external cladding, to buildings included in the Local List – specific design guidance and advice will be included in the Development Management Development Plan Document and appropriate SPDs.

Policy CP3 – Local List

The Local List SPD will give protection to local buildings with special architectural and historic value.

6 The Green Belt

Vision

Short Term

- The openness and character of the Rochford Green Belt continues to be protected, though small areas next to settlements have been released for development.
- Existing businesses in the Green Belt which are important to the local economy continue to be supported.
- Redevelopment of unattractive buildings in Battlesbridge Conservation Area is taking place, enhancing the character and appearance of the Conservation Area whilst respecting the objectives of the Green Belt.
- A number of rural buildings have been converted to enable and support green tourism projects and rural diversification.

Medium Term

- Green tourism initiatives have been developed which provide sustainable opportunities for rural businesses whilst maintaining a high quality environment. These initiatives have encouraged small-scale tourism projects sensitive to the local environment which help to sustain the rural economy without contributing to climate change.
- Acceptance of greater flexibility towards rural diversification has resulted in the development of a number of bed and breakfasts and hotels, facilitating stays in the countryside for visitors to the area.
- The first phase of sustainable urban extensions to meet the District's housing needs over the plan period have been implemented. A small area of the District's Green Belt has been reallocated for employment use in order to facilitate the creation of new jobs which meet the population's needs and contribute towards the District's economy.

Long Term

- The Green Belt remains predominantly undeveloped and open in character.
- Rochford District continues to be recognised as the green part of the Thames Gateway.
- The second phase of sustainable urban extensions is completed.
- Rochford is recognised as a tourist destination, with good access to the rivers and waterways and many visitors to the nationally recognised wetlands at Wallasea.

Objectives

1. Continue to protect the openness and character of the District's Green Belt.

2. Ensure the minimum amount of Green Belt is allocated to meet the District's housing and employment needs, and that extensions to the residential envelope are in sustainable locations, which retain the individual identities of settlements and prevent coalescence.

3. Ensure existing lawful businesses in the Green Belt are able to continue to function and contribute to the local economy, as appropriate, having regard to the impact on the openness and character of the Green Belt.

4. Ensure appropriate forms of diversification are encouraged to support the local rural economy and help achieve the vision of developing green tourism in the District.

Introduction

6.1 The District's land mass is predominantly Green Belt, and the Council envisages that Rochford District will continue to be the green part of the Thames Gateway. National policy on the Green Belt is contained within Planning Policy Guidance Note 2 – Green Belts (PPG2). This states that the five purposes of including land within the Green Belt are as follows:

- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another;
- To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

6.2 PPG2 also states that development should not be permitted in the Green Belt unless it is for any of the following purposes:

- Agriculture and Forestry (unless Permitted Development Rights withdrawn);
- Essential facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation, for cemeteries, and for other uses of land which preserve the openness of the Green Belt and which do not conflict with the purposes of including land in it;
- Limited extension, alteration or replacement of existing dwellings;
- Limited infilling in existing villages, and limited affordable housing for local community needs under development plan policies according with PPS3; and
- Limited infilling or redevelopment of major existing developed sites identified in adopted local plans (see Annex C of PPG2 for further details).

6.3 Policy SS7 of the East of England Plan states that the regional Green Belt boundary is appropriate and should be maintained. However, Rochford District is part of the Thames Gateway Sub-Region and the East of England Plan recognises that local strategic revisions to the Green Belt boundary may be necessary to meet local development needs in sustainable locations. As such a small proportion of the District's12,763 hectares of designated Green Belt land will be reallocated to meet local housing and employment needs.

Protection of the Green Belt

6.4 The application of Green Belt policy has helped protect the historic fabric of the District; prevent encroachment of development into the countryside; protect natural features, flora, fauna and their habitats; and safeguard the countryside to provide recreational opportunities.

6.5 The Council recognises that diverting development and population growth away from rural areas to existing urban areas can also assist in achieving sustainability objectives.

6.6 The Council will continue to support the principles of restricting development in the Green Belt, as set out in PPG2, and will preserve the character and openness of the Green Belt. However, a small proportion of the District's Green Belt will have to have its designation reviewed to allow the development of additional housing and business premises, taking account of the very limited opportunities to accommodate further development within existing settlements. Previous community involvement exercises have made it clear to the Council that the District's residents consider the protection of the Green Belt to be very important, as does national and regional policy. The Council acknowledge this, and will ensure that the amount of Green Belt land released is the minimum necessary for the purposes of housing and employment growth by prioritising land outside of the Green Belt for development, and, where Green Belt release is unavoidable, ensuring that developments occur at a reasonably high density to limit the amount of Green Belt land that is lost. The exact area of Green Belt land to be allocated for development will be dependent on the Allocations Development Plan Document, however, the policies within the Core Strategy will ensure that in the region of 99 percent of the District's Green Belt remains as such.

6.7 The term 'Green Belt' refers to a planning designation and is not necessarily a description of quality of the land. Land designated as Green Belt can include, primarily for historical reasons, developed land and brownfield sites. As such, whilst it is considered that all land currently designated as Green Belt helps achieve the five Green Belt purposes as set out in PPG2, to at least a degree, some Green Belt land is less worthy of continued protection. The Council will examine the degree to which current Green Belt land is helping to achieve the purposes of the Green Belt when considering reallocating the land.

6.8 Appropriate Green Belt locations have the potential to accommodate small-scale employment and recreation opportunities in the countryside, in the form of rural diversification. The Council supports the development and growth of rural diversification and the protection and enhancement of existing rural businesses within the Green Belt, which would benefit the local economy.

6.9 The Council will continue a restrictive policy towards employment growth in the Green Belt, though this will need to be balanced against local employment needs, economic viability and the businesses impact on the objectives of the Green Belt, through its activities and potential traffic generation for example. The conversion of existing rural buildings for small-scale employment uses will be promoted as far as practicable.

6.10 The overall strategic development of the District, however, must have regard to the different landscape characters with the aim of protecting and enhancing the diversity and local distinctiveness of the countryside.

6.11 Several of the District's Conservation Areas reside within the Green Belt, and as such, the Council consider it appropriate to support limited redevelopment within these areas to enhance the value and appearance of the Conservation Areas, which are of special architectural or historic interest.

Policy GB1 – Green Belt Protection

The Council will allocate the minimum amount of Green Belt land necessary to meet the District's housing and employment needs. In doing so, particular consideration will be given to the need to prevent the coalescence of individual settlements, in order to help preserve their identities.

The Council will direct development away from the Green Belt as far as practicable and will prioritise the protection of Green Belt land based on how well the land helps achieve the purposes of the Green Belt. Rural diversification and the continuation of existing rural businesses will be encouraged, as appropriate, so long as such activities do not significantly undermine the objectives or character of the Green Belt.

Rural Diversification and Recreational Uses

6.12 Whilst the District is predominantly Green Belt, only 3% of its VAT registered businesses are agricultural – less than the regional and national averages. It is recognised that diversification into other forms of economic activity is necessary if rural enterprises are to remain viable. There is concern that the current restrictive approach to development in the Green Belt will not allow the Council to achieve its vision of green tourism developing in the District and may hinder rural diversification. However, any over relaxation of Green Belt policies would be harmful to the character of the Green Belt, undermine the purposes of including land within it, and be contrary to sustainability objectives. A balance needs to be struck.

6.13 The Council consider a number of activities within the Green Belt to be appropriate and would not have an undue detrimental impact on the objectives of the Green Belt. Existing rural buildings already have an impact on the Green Belt, in particular its openness, and so the Council feel it is appropriate in the interests of encouraging rural economic sustainability to encourage the conversion of existing rural buildings for small-scale employment uses. The conversion of rural buildings for bed and breakfasts/small-scale hotels, where appropriate, is also considered appropriate as it would help to realise green tourism in the District. Outdoor recreation and leisure activities which are considered appropriate rural uses and would not have a detrimental impact on the Green Belt are also encouraged. However, the Council will seek to restrict the agglomeration of similar businesses (for example bed and breakfasts/small-scale hotels) to protect the character of the countryside.

6.14 Green tourism is a sustainable form of tourism which encompasses small-scale activities that can be promoted within the Green Belt. Such activities must be sensitive to the local environment, have minimal impact on the objectives of the Green Belt, and be sustainable in terms of stimulating and supporting rural economic growth and encouraging diversification of rural activities. Acceptable forms of green tourism on open areas of land include outdoor recreation and leisure activities such as bird watching, small-scale fishing lakes, cycling, walking and rambling. Designated areas where green tourism will take place include Wallasea Island and Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park, although it may take place throughout the countryside in appropriate locations, balancing the need to protect the character and openness of the Green Belt against supporting and enhancing the local rural economy.

6.15 Equestrian facilities and playing pitches, in particular, are appropriate activities in the Green Belt as encouraged in national guidance, which the Council support. Large scale equestrian facilities, however, are not considered an appropriate form of green tourism because they have the potential to significantly impact on the openness and character of the Green Belt. Equestrian facilities for leisure and outdoor recreation purposes as a suitable form of rural diversification will be encouraged in appropriate locations within the District.

Policy GB2 – Rural Diversification and Recreational Uses

The Council will maintain a restrictive approach to development within the Green Belt, but with some relaxation for rural diversification. Forms of rural diversification that may be considered acceptable in appropriate circumstances in the Green Belt include:

- Conversion of existing buildings for small-scale employment use;
- Green tourism which is small-scale and sensitive to the local natural environment (e.g. walking or bird watching);
- Conversion of buildings to bed and breakfasts/small-scale hotels; and
- Outdoor recreation and leisure activities.

In considering proposals for the above, issues pertaining to the purposes of the Green Belt and wider sustainability issues will be assessed, but the Council will make allowances for the fact that public transport is limited within rural areas of the District.

Retail (with the exception of farm shops) and residential development are not considered acceptable forms of rural diversification in the Green Belt.

The Green Belt provides leisure opportunities for the District's residents and visitors. Development that is essential for outdoor sport and recreation activities considered appropriate in the Green Belt (e.g. changing rooms connected with a sports use) will be permitted. Such essential facilities will be expected to have a minimal impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

7 Upper Roach Valley and Wallasea Island

Vision

Short Term

- Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park has been expanded to the east and west and access from Cherry Orchard link road, including improved footpath and cycle access has been implemented.

Medium/Long Term

- The Wallasea Island Wild Coast Project has been implemented and has created a space for bird watching and other recreation, whilst also enhancing biodiversity.

- The Upper Roach Valley has become a vast 'green lung' surrounded by Southend, Rayleigh, Hockley and Rochford and provides a substantial informal area of recreation, with green links between Cherry Orchard Country Park and Hockley Woods.

Objectives

1. To create additional informal, high quality recreational spaces in the Upper Roach Valley which is accessible to local residents, whilst ensuring the protection and enhancement of biodiversity.

2. To ensure the delivery of the Wallasea Island Wild Coast Project in an ecologically sensitive manner which provides recreation opportunities whilst enhancing biodiversity.

Upper Roach Valley

7.1 The Upper Roach Valley, including the area around Hockley Woods, is an area with special landscape characteristics. In the Rochford District Replacement Local Plan (2006) the area is designated as a Special Landscape Area and as an Area of Ancient Landscape. These designations arose from survey work carried out by Essex County Council.

7.2 The Upper Roach Valley is a large 'green lung' bounded by Rayleigh, Hockley, Rochford and Southend. As such, it represents an opportunity to provide informal recreational space accessible to local residents. Parts of the Upper Roach Valley are already well utilised, such as Hockley Woods and the recently established Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park.

7.3 There are fourteen ancient woodlands in the District and seven of them lie within the Upper Roach Valley, south of the head of the valley formed by the railway line. The area's importance to biodiversity is reflected in the designation of a number of wildlife sites within the Upper Roach Valley.

7.4 The need for more informal recreational space in South East Essex has been identified on numerous occasions over a number of years, including in the 1982 and 2001 Structure Plans and the 2005 Thames Gateway South Essex Greengrid Strategy.

7.5 The Council has sought to help address this need through the establishment of Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park. Work began on the Country Park in 2002 and the park has been gradually expanded. The approach to the development of the Country Park is centred on ensuring the right conditions are in place in order for fauna and flora to flourish, and utilising the existing features of the landscape, all with the minimum of human interference.

7.6 The Upper Roach Valley represents an opportunity to provide recreational activities in close proximity to the main residential settlements of the District, as well as Southend. The Council is carrying out works to improve access to the Country Park and will implement improved access and car-parking facilities in a manner that minimises the impact on the landscape. This provides an opportunity to link this area with the wider green infrastructure network and improve access to the countryside from surrounding areas.

7.7 To the north-west of the Country Park lies Hockley Woods – and to the south-west of Hockley Woods is an area designated as a special and historic landscape area. Currently these areas are not connected, but there is potential to do so to enhance informal recreational opportunities. Sustainable access to these areas (for example linked cycling networks) will be encouraged. These will also be used to provide wildlife networks, thus avoiding fragmentation of habitats.

Policy URV1 – Upper Roach Valley

The Council will strive to see the Upper Roach Valley become a vast 'green lung' providing informal recreational opportunities for local residents. The Council will protect the area from development which would undermine this aim and will continue the approach of creating the right conditions for flora and fauna to flourish, with the minimum of interference.

Access through the Upper Roach Valley and any essential development will be designed so as to have the minimum impact on the landscape and wildlife.

The Council will expand Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park, through compulsory purchase where necessary, and will create links with other parts of the Upper Roach Valley, effectively creating a single, vast informal recreational area. Links will include a network of footpaths, cyclepaths and bridleways that connect areas within the Upper Roach Valley and residential areas, whilst being located and designed so as to not adversely affect the landscape and wildlife.

Wallasea Island

7.8 The RSPB's proposed Wallasea Island Wild Coast Project has potential for tourism and leisure, as well as ecological, benefits. This project is adjacent to the recently realigned coast of Wallasea Island and involves the RSPB working in partnership with the Environment Agency and Crossrail to turn a large area of arable land into an area comprising a plethora of wildlife habitats comprising 133 ha of mudflats, 276 ha of saltmarsh, 76 ha shallow saline lagoons, 11 ha of brackish grazing marsh and 109 ha of pasture. The project also aims to incorporate improved access into the new landscape which will allow visitors to appreciate the area without adversely affecting wildlife.

7.9 At the same time, Essex Marina is located on Wallasea Island and there is potential to further develop waterfront recreation on the Crouch through the provision of additional marina facilities in this area.

7.10 Opportunities are somewhat constrained by the lack of accessibility to Wallasea Island, in addition to the need to ensure that any increased levels of human activity are not detrimental to ecological and environmental interests, particularly given that the area is part of the Natura 2000 network.

Policy URV2 – Wallasea Island

The Council will support the RSPB in delivering the Wallasea Island Wild Coast Project with the aim of enhancing the biodiversity value of the area.

The Council will also promote recreational use and additional marina facilities in the area, along with access improvements. Such development will be supported provided any adverse ecological impacts are avoided or mitigated for.

8 Environmental Issues

Vision

Short Term

- New homes are being developed in sustainable locations, all of which meet at least Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes.
- Initiatives to reduce carbon emissions from new and existing developments are being encouraged.
- Local, national and international sites of nature conservation importance are protected.

Medium Term

- Local, national and international sites of nature conservation importance are being increasingly protected and enhanced to improve their biodiveristy and wildlife value.
- Conditions have been put into place for wildlife to thrive in the Roach Valley. The area's size and layout allow for people and wildlife to utilise the space with minimum conflict.
- The Coastal Protection Belt continues to be protected from unnecessary development and other potentially detrimental impacts.
- Later phases of sustainable extensions to the residential envelope are being planned and have begun to be implemented. These strategically located and planned developments are predominantly situated within areas least at risk from flooding.
- New residential developments are carbon-neutral, meeting Code level 6 of the Code for Sustainable Homes.
- New non-residential developments are of a sustainable construction, meeting the BREEAM rating of 'Very Good' as a minimum. The District's Eco-Enterprise Centre is a flagship building meeting the BREEAM rating of 'Excellent' and providing a model for other developments to utilise sustainable, carbon-neutral construction.

Long Term

- The protection of Sites of Special Scientific Interest has resulted in improvements to the percentage of which, by area, are in 'favourable' or better condition.
- The proportion of the District's energy supply from renewable and low carbon sources has been increased.
- Existing dwellings incorporate renewable energy technologies to reduce their carbon emissions and energy costs.

- New residential and non-residential developments, as appropriate, obtain a proportion of their energy needs from renewable or low carbon sources produced on-site.
- New sustainable dwellings that meet the needs of local people of all social groups are in place and integrated into communities.

Objectives

1. Protect and enhance sites of local, national and international importance and protect the District's historical and archaeological sites.
2. Ensure development is directed away from the Coastal Protection Belt.
3. Ensure development is away from the areas most at risk from flooding, or where this is unavoidable; ensure that appropriate flood mitigation measures are implemented before development ensues.
4. Work with the Environment Agency to maintain the District's flood defences.
5. Reduce the impact of new development on flood risk.
6. Increase air quality and decrease the negative impact on the District's residents.
7. Encourage the growth of renewable energy projects and the integration of on-site renewable or low carbon energy technologies for new developments, as appropriate.
8. Ensure new developments are sustainable in terms of their impact on the environment and resources.
9. Encourage the remediation of contaminated land to fully utilise the District's brownfield sites.

Introduction

8.1 Planning has a key role to play in the protection and enhancement of the District's natural resources and the local environment. The Council will endeavour to ensure that the District's landscape, historic character, agricultural land, wildlife habitats, undeveloped coast and other natural resources are protected and enhanced. In cases where a negative impact is unavoidable, the Council will ensure that measures are in place to mitigate any adverse effects.

8.2 Sustainable development is intrinsic to the Core Strategy as a whole, and certain specific contributions towards this are set out in this section. Sustainable development requires effective protection of the environment and careful use of natural resources. It involves accommodating necessary change whilst maintaining and, where possible, enhancing the quality of the environment for visitors, local residents, and for its own intrinsic value.

8.3 The Council is mindful of the need to address climate change at a local level, and the role that planning has to play in this. Climate change has been a consideration in the development of all policies but this section also includes policies which specifically address the issue.

Protection and enhancement of the natural landscape and habitats

8.4 The Council is committed to the protection, promotion and enhancement of biodiversity throughout the District. Biodiversity is the variety of living species on earth, including well known trees and animals as well as lesser known insects and plants and the habitats that they occupy. It is an essential component of sustainable development.

Local Wildlife Sites (LoWSs)

8.5 Local Wildlife Sites (LoWSs) are areas which, despite their lack of national or international statutory protection, are of significant local wildlife value. In 1992 the UK signed the Convention on Biological Diversity which led to the production of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan. However, it is at the local level where the success of biodiversity lies. The Council carried out a Local Wildlife Sites Review in 2007, which showed that Rochford District contains 39 LoWSs. These are predominantly woodland, but there are also significant areas of grassland, mosaic coastal and freshwater habitat types. The Council will work with key stakeholders to promote designing in wildlife schemes in order to obtain a gain in biodiversity, and ensuring any unavoidable impacts from development are appropriately mitigated against.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)

8.6 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) are designated under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. SSSIs are the country's very best wildlife and geological sites. Natural England has a duty to provide notification of these sites. The SSSI network includes some of the best semi-natural habitats including ancient woodlands, unimproved grasslands, coastal grazing marshes and other estuarine habitats.

8.7 There are over 4,000 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) in England, covering around 7% of the country's land area. Over half of these sites, by area, are internationally important for their wildlife value, and as such are designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) or Ramsar sites. There are three SSSIs within the Rochford District as follows:

(i) Hockley Woods SSSI – A site predominantly owned by the Council. The site is also of national importance due to its ancient woodland designation.

(ii) Foulness SSSI – This comprises extensive sand-silt flats, saltmarsh, beaches, grazing marshes, rough grass and scrubland, covering the areas of Maplin Sands, part of Foulness Island plus adjacent creeks, islands and marshes. This is a site of national and international importance.

(iii) Crouch and Roach Estuaries SSSI – (previously known as River Crouch Marshes). This covers a network of sites (salt marsh, intertidal mud, grazing marsh, a fresh water reservoir) including Brandy Hole and Lion Creek, Paglesham Pool, Bridgemarsh Island and marshes near Upper Raypits. This site is of national and international importance.

8.8 The Government's Public Service Agreement for SSSIs is to have 95%, by area, in 'favourable condition' by 2010. Only Hockley Woods is currently meeting the Public Service Agreement target. Foulness only has 87.5% of its habitats meeting this target, and the Crouch & Roach Estuaries is in poor condition as it is classified as 'unfavourable no change'[1], or 'unfavourable declining'[2] condition. The site has not been adequately conserved in the past, but the Council is working closely with Essex County Council, the Environment Agency, the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), Natural England, Chelmsford Borough Council, Maldon District Council and the Crouch Harbour Authority to establish the Crouch and Roach Estuary Management Plan to remedy this situation.

Crouch and Roach

8.9 The Roach and Crouch estuaries complex drains into the Outer Thames Estuary between two areas of reclaimed marshes; the Dengie Peninsula to the north and the islands of Foulness, Potton, and Wallasea to the south.

8.10 The Crouch and Roach Estuary Management Plan has established objectives in order to strive to ensure the sustainable future of the Crouch and Roach estuaries. Objectives include:

- Have regard to and promote the need for sustainability of the estuary system;
- Seek to ensure that the natural landscape and wildlife is properly protected;

[1] Unfavourable no change: The special interest of the SSSI is not being conserved and will not reach a favourable condition unless there are changes to the site management or external pressures. The longer the SSSI remains in this condition, the more difficult it will be to achieve recovery.

[2] Unfavourable declining: The special interest of the SSSI is not being conserved. The site condition is becoming progressively worse.

- Seek to ensure sustainable public transport to and from the estuary;
- Encourage eco-tourism through the delivery of a sustainable tourism package;
- Disseminate and deliver information on water quality and raise awareness about improving water and air quality and promote a healthier environment;
- Seek to ensure that the historic environment is conserved and enhanced.

Special Protection Areas (SPAs)

8.11 Rochford District has two sites that have been confirmed as SPAs, they are the Foulness (classified in 1996) and Crouch and Roach Estuaries (classified in 1998).

8.12 The Council will endeavour to avoid any significant pollution, disturbance to or deterioration of these designated sites.

Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)

8.13 Part of the Essex Estuaries SAC lies within the District. It covers the whole of the Foulness and Crouch and Roach Estuaries from the point of the highest astronomical tide out to sea. As such it relates to the seaward part of the coastal zone.

Ramsar Sites (Wetlands of International Importance)

8.14 There are two listed Ramsar sites in Rochford District: Foulness and the Crouch and Roach Estuaries. The same sites are also designated as SPAs, under the Natura 2000 network.

Historical and Archaeological Sites

8.15 The District contains numerous sites of historical and archaeological interest in both rural and urban areas, for example:

- There are significant concentrations of prehistoric find spots between the settlements of Ashingdon and Hockley, and Ashingdon itself is an Early Saxon settlement;
- Land to the south of Great Wakering, where brick earth extraction has demonstrated continuous settlement from at least the Middle Bronze Age, also contains a number of important military remains dating from World War I and II including pillboxes, and anti-aircraft batteries;
- The historic core of the market town of Rochford is dominated by the many Listed Buildings and the surviving street pattern;
- A Motte and Bailey Castle lies just west of the medieval town of Rayleigh, which was constructed between 1066 and 1086 making it one of the earliest Norman castles in England.

8.16 The historic and archaeological importance of the District is further detailed within the Rochford District Historic Environment Characterisation Project.

Policy ENV1 – Protection and Enhancement of the Natural Landscape and Habitats and the Protection of Historical and Archaeological Sites

The Council will maintain, restore and enhance sites of international, national and local nature conservation importance. These will include Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Ramsar Sites, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Ancient Woodlands, Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) and Local Wildlife Sites (LoWSs). In particular, the Council will support the implementation of the Crouch and Roach Management Plan.

The Council will also protect landscapes of historical and archaeological interest.

Coastal Protection Belt

8.17 The undeveloped coast is one of the most important landscape assets of the District, matching the Special Landscape Areas. The District's coast and estuaries are of great importance recognised through national and international designations for their wildlife and natural habitats.

8.18 At the national level, Planning Policy Guidance 20 (PPG20 – Coastal Planning) has largely been replaced by the Planning Policy Statement 25 Supplement: Development and Coastal Change. This document and its companion practice guide provide guidance to Local Planning Authorities on planning for development and protecting the coastal environment. These documents are clear on the need to direct development away from areas vulnerable to coastal change and this is especially true for the Rochford District, where much of the coast is covered by national and international nature conservation designations.

8.19 At regional level, the Coastal Protection Subject Plan, a statutory plan adopted in 1984, defined the extent of the coastal areas within Essex where there would be the most stringent restriction on development, due to the special character of the open and undeveloped coast. Policy CC1 of the Essex and Southend-on-Sea Replacement Structure Plan (2001) embodies the commitment to the Coastal Protection Belt. This will be replaced by our own policies once the Development Plan Documents are adopted.

Policy ENV2 – Coastal Protection Belt

The Council will:

- Protect and enhance the landscape, wildlife and heritage qualities of the coastline, recognising the implications of climate change and sea level rise, and the need for necessary adaptation;
- Prevent the potential for coastal flooding; erosion by the sea; and unstable land (e.g. land slips);
- Not permit development in coastal areas which are at risk from flooding, erosion, and land instability;
- Ensure that development which is exceptionally permitted does not adversely affect the open and rural character, historic features or wildlife;
- Ensure that development which must be located in a coastal location will be within the already developed areas of the coast.

Flood Risk

8.20 Development opportunities on the undeveloped coastline are limited by physical circumstances in the District, such as risk of flooding, erosion and land instability, as well as conservation policies. Climate change and related sea-level rises will have an impact on flood risk. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) has been produced for Thames Gateway South Essex area. This assesses the flood risks posed and outlines the main hazard zones in order to further aid the planning process.

8.21 The Environment Agency is working with other Local Authorities in Essex, including Rochford District, in the production of a Shoreline Management Plan. The Shoreline Management Plan will be a high level document that forms an important element of the strategy for flood and coastal erosion risk management. The Council will work with the Environment Agency to ensure that the District continues to be subject to an appropriate level of protection.

8.22 Flooding can result in significant damage to properties and threaten human life. To counteract these risks, Planning Policy Statement 25 (PPS25 – Development and Flood Risk) requires that flood risk is taken into account at all stages of the planning process. The Council will avoid inappropriate development by appraising, managing and reducing the risk in the areas prone to flooding.

(1) Appraising risk

The Council will apply the sequential test and direct development to areas least at risk of flooding. The Council will apply the exceptions test, as per PPS25, when the sequential test has shown that there are no available locations for necessary development other than within areas at risk of flooding, and will only allow development within such areas if the benefits of the development clearly outweigh the

risks from flooding. When development is permitted, significant levels of flood risk management (e.g. surface water management plans, conveyance and Sustainable Drainage Systems) will be required.

A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for the Thames Gateway South Essex has been prepared and will be used to inform and apply the sequential test in development decisions for the District.

Areas at risk of flooding (Flood Zone 3) within the District are unevenly distributed, being concentrated towards the east of the District in predominantly undeveloped, rural areas. The majority of the District's settlements where new development is appropriate lie outside of flood risk areas. As such, it is envisaged that the vast majority of new development necessary within the District can be accommodated within Flood Zone 1 (areas least at risk of flooding), although there may be exceptions involving previously developed land.

(2) Managing risk

PPS25 states that Local Authorities should consider moving existing development away from areas at risk of flooding. Parts of Great Wakering and other existing settlements are in areas at risk of flooding. The Council believe it would not be appropriate to relocate these affected areas due to the detrimental impact this would have on community cohesion and the viability of such an approach. Nonetheless, the Council is working closely with partners to safeguard the flood risk area.

(3) Reducing risk

Built up areas need to drain to remove surface water. The traditional pipeline system has exasperated the problem of polluted runoff from urban areas entering the river system. It is necessary to balance the impact of urban drainage on flood control, water quality management and amenity.

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) offer an alternative approach to drainage in developed areas. The SUDS approach to drainage management includes a range of techniques to manage surface water as close to its source as possible to minimise potential flood risk. To produce a workable and effective scheme SUDS must be incorporated into developments at the earliest site planning stage. The Environment Agency has identified five techniques:

- Permeable pavement – The water passes through the surface to the permeable fill. This allows the storage, treatment, transport and infiltration of water.

- Green roofs and rainwater use – Green roofs can improve water quality and reduce the peak flow and the total volume discharged from a roof, and a way to increase biodiversity at the same time.

- Swales and basins – Swales are grassed depressions which lead surface water overland from the drained surface to a storage or discharge system, typically using the green space of a roadside margin.

- Infiltration trenches and filter drains – An infiltration trench is a shallow, excavated trench that has been filled with stone to create an underground reservoir.

- Ponds and wetlands – Ponds and wetlands can be designed to accommodate considerable variations in water levels during storms, thereby enhancing flood storage capacity.

Policy ENV3 – Flood Risk

The Council will direct development away from areas at risk of flooding by applying the sequential test and, where necessary, the exceptions test, as per PPS25. The vast majority of development will be accommodated within Flood Zone 1. However, considering the very limited supply of previously developed land in the District, proposed development on previously developed land within Flood Zone 3 will be permitted if it enables a contribution towards the District's housing requirement that would otherwise require the reallocation of Green Belt land, providing that it passes the exceptions tests and is able to accommodate the necessary flood defence infrastructure.

The Council will continue to work with the Environment Agency to manage flood risk in a sustainable manner through capitalising on opportunities to make space for water wherever possible and through the continued provision of flood defences where necessary.

Policy ENV4 – Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS)

All residential development over 10 units will be required to incorporate runoff control via SUDS to ensure runoff and infiltration rates do not increase the likelihood of flooding.

The requirement for SUDs will only be relaxed where there is conclusive evidence demonstrating that the system is not viable on a particular site.

Air Quality Management Areas

8.23 Air quality is affected by emissions from industrial and commercial activities, cars, airports, power stations, natural and domestic sources, within those, road transport accounts for around 40% of UK Nitrogen Dioxide emissions. The growing dependence on the car in the District has led to increased air pollution, although continuing improvements in technology may counteract this.

8.24 Local Authorities are required to carry out periodic reviews of air quality in their areas, and to assess present and likely future quality against statutory air quality standards. Where an area is designated as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA), the Council will consult local stakeholders and propose an Air Quality Action Plan for improving air quality in that area in particular.

8.25 In Rochford District, air quality tests showed that there may be exceedances of particulate matter (PM10) and Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2) in Rawreth Industrial Estate and Rayleigh High Street respectively, the Council has factored such issues into the formulation of its policies, in particular those around housing locations.

8.26 The Council aims to reduce the carbon emissions produced by vehicles through encouraging the use of public transport and travel plans. The delivery of South Essex Rapid Transit (SERT) will be one of the potential possibilities. This initiative is detailed within the **Transport** chapter. SERT will link residential areas with employment, retail areas and stations and become an alternative mode of transport to the private car. This high quality, frequent and high-capacity service will emit fewer harmful emissions and help to minimise the impact on the District's air quality.

8.27 In 2008, the Council introduced the Car Share Scheme to its staff and will continue promoting travel plans in order to reduce cars in key junctions where air pollutants accumulate the most.

8.28 Where development proposals are likely to involve significant emissions into the air or where a sensitive development is proposed near an existing source of emissions, the Council will require the submission of appropriate details to enable a full judgement of the impact of the development to be made.

Policy ENV5 – Air Quality

New residential development will be restricted in Air Quality Management Areas in order to reduce public exposure to poor air quality.

In areas where poor air quality threatens to undermine public health and quality of life, the Council will seek to reduce the impact of poor air quality on receptors in that area and to address the cause of the poor air quality. Proposed development will be required to include measures to ensure it does not have an adverse impact on air quality.

Renewable Energy

8.29 Addressing climate change is a major priority for the Council as evidenced by its inclusion within the Corporate Plan and Sustainable Community Strategy. One of the Council's corporate aims is to provide a greener and more sustainable environment and to be the 'green' part of the Thames Gateway. There is a need to reduce energy and water consumption not only for the benefit of the local environs, but also for the global environment. The Council is keen to reduce impacts of development on the environment through a variety of measures as set out in the following sections of this chapter.

8.30 Whilst recognising the contribution renewable energy can make, there are currently no plans for developing large-scale renewable energy projects within the District. If such schemes were to be proposed, the impact of such development on the character of the landscape would be a concern but the Council will endeavour to be supportive. The Council will refer to the Essex Landscape Character Assessment as a guideline, particularly in areas designated for their landscape and nature conservation value.

8.31 To balance nature conservation and the promotion of renewable energy, the Council will seek to reduce carbon emissions through supporting the development of small-scale renewable energy projects and through its commitment towards zero carbon for all new housing developments.

8.32 The Council will encourage the development of small-scale renewable energy projects, where appropriate, including additions to residential properties; these projects and schemes (utilising technologies such as solar panels, photovoltaic cells, geothermal heat pumps and combined heat and power schemes) have the potential to make a positive contribution towards renewable energy provision. The use of biomass heating will not be supported as biomass-burning boilers can produce more pollution than a similar gas system and emit a number of pollutants including nitrogen dioxide (NO_2), particles (PM) and sulphur dioxide (SO_2).

Policy ENV6 – Large Scale Renewable Energy Projects

Planning permission for large-scale renewable energy projects will be granted if:

- the development is not within, or adjacent to, an area designated for its ecological or landscape value, such as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Ramsar Sites, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's), Ancient Woodlands, Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) or Local Wildlife Sites (LoWSs); or if it can be shown that the integrity of the sites would not be adversely affected;
- there are no significant adverse visual impacts.

Policy ENV7 – Small Scale Renewable Energy Projects

The Council will favourably consider small-scale renewable energy development, particularly to residential properties, in both new and existing development, having regard to their location, scale, design and other measures, including ecological impact, are carefully considered.

8.33 The Council seeks to increase the proportion of renewable and low carbon energy generation within the District to reduce the consumption of fossil fuels and the District's carbon footprint. New development presents the opportunity to secure decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy sources such as on-site renewable energy generation technologies, which is relatively more cost effective to fit at the construction stage. Therefore new development presents the best opportunity to deliver such technologies.

8.34 The East of England Plan requires Local Planning Authorities to encourage developers to incorporate decentralised renewable or low carbon energy technologies to help achieve the Government's targets for reducing carbon emissions, and the Council's local policy is in line with its aims.

8.35 On-site renewable energy generation and low carbon energy generation have the potential to contribute towards a reduction in carbon emissions from the District, whilst also helping to reduce energy costs for future residents. The Council therefore supports the provision of on-site renewable and low carbon energy generation in new developments and will seek to secure its provision. The Council encourages developers of both residential and non-residential developments to incorporate on-site renewable energy technologies and low carbon energy technologies to provide a proportion of the developments energy requirements to reduce subsequent carbon emissions.

Policy ENV8 – On-Site Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Generation

Developments of five or more dwellings or non-residential developments of 1,000 square metres or more should secure at least 10% of their energy from decentralised and renewable or low-carbon sources, unless this is not feasible or viable.

Code for Sustainable Homes/BREEAM

8.36 New development has the potential to impact upon the environment, from the materials used to construct it, to the impact its future use has on natural resources. It is crucial that energy and water conservation measures be incorporated into new development measures, along with other sustainability measures.

Code for Sustainable Homes

8.37 The Code for Sustainable Homes is a national standard for sustainable design and construction of new homes. Mandatory rating for all new social housing developments against the Code for Sustainable Homes comes into effect as from 1 May 2008 and from 2010 all new homes will have to comply with it.

8.38 The Code is an environmental assessment method for new homes based on a scoring system of six levels. The different levels are reached by achieving both the appropriate mandatory minimum standards together with a proportion of the 'flexible' standards. The Code uses a sustainability rating system[3] indicated by 'stars', to communicate the overall sustainability performance of a home. A home can achieve a sustainability rating from one to six stars depending on the extent to which it has achieved the Code's standards. The Government's aim is for 'carbon neutrality' to be achieved in relation to residential development by 2016.

8.39 The Code for Sustainable Homes provides an all-round measure of the sustainability of new homes, ensuring that homes deliver real improvements in key areas such as carbon dioxide emissions and water use. The new mandatory minimum levels of performance have been introduced across 6 key issues[4]. The Government's ambition for the Code is that it becomes the single national standard for the design and construction of sustainable homes, and that it drives a step-change in sustainable home building practice.

[3] One star (★) is the entry level – above the level of the Building Regulations; and six stars (★★★★★★) is the highest level – reflecting exemplar development in sustainability terms, of which representing a "zero carbon home", one where there are no net emissions of carbon dioxide from all energy use in the home.

[4] (i) Energy efficiency/CO2, (ii) Water efficiency, (iii) Surface water management, (iv) Site Waste Management, (v) Household Waste Management, (vi) Use of Materials

BREEAM

8.40 It is important that all new non-residential developments should also meet a standard of high quality appraisal in terms of function and impact, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development.

8.41 BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) is the most widely used environmental assessment method for buildings. BREEAM covers a wide range of building types (e.g. BREEAM Offices, BREEAM Retail, BREEAM Industrial), which are assessed against a set criteria. There are four levels of rating (Pass, Good, Very Good and Excellent) for all non-residential developments to achieve.

8.42 The Council will require all non-residential developments to meet the relevant BREEAM assessment criteria. This is felt to be a more holistic approach than simply requiring a proportion of a development's energy to be generated from renewable sources, as it enables a far more proactive approach to carbon management and covers a wider range of issues other than just energy use.

8.43 Whilst the importance of building environmentally sound developments is acknowledged, the Council does not want to make development unviable through the imposition of overly onerous standards. As such, whilst a BREEAM rating of excellent will be encouraged, a rating of at least 'Very Good' will be required.

Policy ENV9 – Code for Sustainable Homes

For all new residential developments, the Council will ensure that there are real improvements in key areas such as carbon dioxide emissions and water efficiency. As a minimum, Code level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes will be required for all new residential development. From 2013, Code level 4 will be required as a minimum. From 2016 developments will be expected to meet the zero carbon target. The Council will expect developers to go beyond Code level 3 for developments between 2010 and 2013, particularly in terms of water conservation measures, unless such requirements would render a particular development economically unviable.

Policy ENV10 – BREEAM

The Council will require new non-residential buildings, as a minimum, to meet the BREEAM rating of 'Very Good', unless such requirements would render a particular development economically unviable. In cases where it is considered appropriate to relax the requirement to meet the BREEAM rating of 'Very Good' due to viability issues, the Council will still expect development to meet as high a BREEAM rating as is economically viable. The Eco-Enterprise Centre proposed for the District will meet the 'Excellent' rating.

Contaminated Land

8.44 Contaminated land is land that has been polluted with hazardous materials. This may, for example, be due to past industrial uses or storage of industrial substances on land.

As such, the issue of contaminated land has the potential to impact upon the reuse of previously developed, brownfield sites.

8.45 Legislation concerning contaminated land is discussed within Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, which came into force on 1st April 2000. This Guidance requires Local Authorities to inspect land in their area for threats to human health and the environment from land contamination.

8.46 The Council is continuing to inspect the District in order to identify contaminated land, as outlined in the Contaminated Land Strategy (2004). The Strategy clearly sets out how land which merits detailed individual inspection within the contaminated land regime, will be identified in an ordered, rational and efficient manner. The Council will not resist the development of appropriate sites solely because of land contamination, as contaminated land can be remediated and made 'fit for purpose'.

8.47 In light of the Council's desire to encourage the reuse of brownfield sites over greenfield land, identifying and mitigating the impact of contaminated land is paramount.

Policy ENV11 – Contaminated Land

The presence of contaminated land on a site will not, in itself, be seen as a reason to resist its development.

The Council will require applicants who wish to develop suspected contaminated land to undertake a thorough investigation of the site and determine any risks. Relevant remediation and mitigation measures will need to be built into development proposals to ensure safe, sustainable development of the site.

9 Community Infrastructure, Leisure and Tourism

Vision

Short Term

- New sustainable, residential developments that incorporate additional, or are well related to, infrastructure, community facilities and play space have been planned and have begun to be implemented.
- Other parks and open spaces continue to be improved through a rolling programme of open space refurbishment.
- Initiatives have been implemented, which provide more facilities for young people and at least one new facility a year is being developed.
- Additional leisure uses at Rayleigh leisure centre have been implemented.
- A new single-form entry primary school with early years and childcare facilities has been built in Rochford, well related to residential development, and is serving the local community.

Medium Term

- New healthcare facilities in accessible have been developed in the District, including a new primary care centre which provides hospital-type services such as day case procedures, outpatient clinics and diagnostic tests to the District's residents.
- Green tourism initiatives and rural diversification have provided sustainable opportunities for rural businesses whilst maintaining a high quality environment.
- The District's tourism offer has been further enhanced through the implementation of heritage initiatives.

Long Term

- A wide range of accessible community facilities and local services have been provided alongside new development which aids the integration and cohesion of communities. Such facilities include green open spaces, community halls, and play space, which cater for residents of all ages.
- A new single-form entry primary school with early years and childcare facilities has been built in Rayleigh, well related to residential development, and is serving the local community. Primary schools in the District's rural settlements are well attended and remain important, viable community facilities. The District's secondary schools have been expanded and enhanced.

Objectives

1. Ensure that adequate infrastructure is provided alongside new developments, through an open and transparent charging system.

2. Ensure that resident's educational needs are met through the provision of additional and expanded secondary schools, primary schools and early years and childcare facilities, where appropriate.

3. Work with the Primary Care Trust, or other relevant organisation, and developers to ensure the provision of adequate healthcare facilities within the District.

4. Protect existing facilities, as appropriate, and ensure the provision of new community facilities, play space, youth facilities, leisure facilities, playing pitches and open space alongside new development.

5. Facilitate and promote green tourism projects within the District.

Introduction

9.1 It is vital that new development is accompanied with appropriate infrastructure in order for it to be sustainable. The term 'infrastructure' encompasses a wide range of issues, from roads and sewers to education and healthcare. Infrastructure is provided by a range of groups, including both private and public organisations. It is imperative that the Council work with such organisations in order to ensure the requisite infrastructure is delivered when required.

Planning Obligations and Standard Charges

9.2 The planning system has, for a number of years, enabled councils to require developers to make payments or undertake additional works to mitigate the impacts of new development, using a system known as planning obligations involving a legal agreement between developers and local authorities. Government guidance on planning obligations is set out in Circular 05/2005 and the Council has used this to secure the provision of infrastructure improvements, such as highway improvements, and to ensure affordable housing is delivered. There are concerns that planning obligations cannot address all the infrastructure deficiencies that will be caused by new development, particularly the incremental impact of smaller developments which individually do not warrant the provision of planning obligations, but have a significant cumulative impact.

9.3 The Council will produce a document setting out standard charges to be imposed on developers to contribute towards infrastructure provision. This document will be subject to consultation and independent scrutiny before adoption. The document will detail what infrastructure is needed, how much this will cost, and detail how much contribution each development will be required to make based on a simple formula which relates to the size and impact of the development on infrastructure. It will ensure that standard charges are used to aid the delivery of the requisite infrastructure in a manner which is fair and provides clarity for developers.

9.4 It is important that the requirements set by standard charges do not render the delivery of development unviable, i.e. it should not be set at such a high rate as to prevent development. As such, when drawing up the details of how the standard charges will be applied in Rochford District through the production of an Infrastructure and Standard Charges Document, the Council will engage with key stakeholders within the development industry in particular.

Policy CLT1 – Planning Obligations and Standard Charges

The Council will require developers to enter into legal agreements in order to secure planning obligations to address specific issues relating to developments, including requisite on-site infrastructure and the provision of on-site affordable housing, as per Circular 05/2005.

In addition, the Council will apply standard charges to developments in order to secure financial contributions towards off-site and strategic infrastructure required as a result of additional development.

The contribution required will be based on a standard formula which will be set out in a separate Planning Obligations and Standard Charges document. This will be developed in conjunction with key stakeholders, including developers and service providers, having regard to the size and impact of developments, as well as impact on economic viability.

Residential and employment development will be required to contribute to infrastructure as set out in **Appendix CLT1** through Standard Charges.

The requirement to pay standard charges may be reassessed and modified in cases where actual provision of infrastructure or facilities normally covered by standard charges are provided as part of the development.

Education

9.5 It is crucial that planning addresses accessibility to education.

9.6 Essex County Council is the education authority for Rochford District and produces an annual plan on how education is to be provided within the area – School Organisation Plan. The report includes an analysis of supply and demand for school places within Rochford District. Essex County Council also has responsibilities in relation to the provision of childcare facilities and have produced a Childcare Sufficiency Assessment report, which sets out the supply of childcare and parental demand for childcare within Essex.

9.7 Recent data has demonstrated there is no direct correlation between estimated total population increase and the numbers of pupils in schools (the overall population increase has been largely due to an increase in the numbers of elderly people, with the youth population shrinking). However, the demographic for new housing has the potential to be younger than that of the existing population. Therefore new development may generate need for new educational facilities in particular locations, even though the overall school age population may not increase.

9.8 In determining the likely impact on school place supply and demand from future housing allocations it will be necessary to take a more sophisticated approach than purely looking at population projections.

9.9 Notwithstanding this, the distribution of housing proposed in the **Housing** section of the Core Strategy makes it clear that new single-form entry primary schools will be required in Rayleigh and Rochford as a minimum.

9.10 At least 1.1 hectares of land within areas allocated for residential development will be required for a primary school in Rayleigh and Rochford. In addition, the existing secondary school in Rochford – King Edmund School – will be allocated the necessary 3 hectares to allow the required expansion to meet additional need. Residential development in Hockley is not considered to generate a requirement for any additional significant educational development other than for an additional early years and childcare facility, but the Council will continue to monitor the situation and demand contributions from developers when required.

9.11 New schools will be developed within new residential areas, delivered through a combination of planning obligations and funding obtained through standard charges on development.

9.12 As set out in the **Transport** section of the Core Strategy, new schools will be required to produce a travel plan that demonstrates how use of the private car will be minimised and how safe, direct walking and cycling routes will be provided between new developments and educational facilities. Residential developments will also be required to contribute towards school transport where they are in excess of the statutory maximum walking distances from schools.

9.13 Improvements to, and in some cases expansion of, existing schools will also be necessary.

Policy CLT2 – Primary Education, Early Years and Childcare Facilities

The Council will allocate at least 1.1 hectares of land within the new residential areas of both Rayleigh and West Rochford, arising from the allocation of land in the general areas indicated in **Policy H2**, for new single-form entry primary schools with early years and childcare facilities. In addition, the Council will seek to incorporate a new early years and childcare facility into any redevelopment of the centre of Hockley.

The Council will work with Essex County Council and developers to ensure that new primary schools with early years and childcare facilities are developed in a timely manner and well related to residential development. The new schools will be of a flexible design that allows it to adapt to future supply/demand issues.

In conjunction with Essex County Council, the Council will carefully monitor the supply and demand of primary school places, as well as early years and childcare facilities. Developer contributions will be sought to increase the capacities of existing primary schools where required. Standard charges will be applied as per **Policy CLT1.**

Policy CLT3 – Secondary Education

As part of new development coming forward in Ashingdon, the Council will require that 3 hectares of land be reserved for the expansion of King Edmund School. In addition, new development in East Ashingdon will incorporate a new, improved access to King Edmund School.

The Council will work with Essex County Council and the individual schools themselves to achieve the necessary expansion of Fitzwimarc and Sweyne Park schools. Developer contributions will be required for this purpose where appropriate. Standard Charges will be applied as per **Policy CLT1**.

In conjunction with Essex County Council, the Council will carefully monitor the supply and demand of secondary school places. Standard Charges will be applied as per **Policy CLT1** to increase the capacities of existing secondary schools where required.

Standard Charges will be applied to mitigate the cost of transporting pupils from new residential developments in settlements without a secondary school to an appropriate secondary school, as per **Policy CLT1**.

Healthcare

9.14 Healthcare facilities are a crucial component of community infrastructure.

9.15 The Council will work with its partners – particularly the South East Essex Primary Care Trust, or other relevant organisation – to ensure that adequate healthcare facilities are in place to meet the needs of the District's growing, and ageing, population.

9.16 Current healthcare facilities are concentrated in the District's three largest settlements: Rayleigh, Hockley and Rochford. There are some healthcare facilities in the smaller settlements. Accessibility of healthcare services is vital and new facilities must be well located in relation to the District's population, and accessible by a range of transport options to ensure that no one is excluded.

9.17 The Council will take a two-pronged approach to ensuring this: firstly, new residential development will be located in areas from which healthcare facilities are accessible, or will be of a scale to ensure that new facilities are viable (see **Housing** chapter); Secondly, the Council will support the Primary Care Trust, or other relevant organisation, in identifying appropriate sites for additional facilities in appropriate locations.

9.18 Health Impact Assessments (HIAs) can be utilised to ensure that developments have regard to healthcare provision needs. Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is an approach that ensures decision making at all levels considers the potential impacts of decisions on health and health inequalities. The assessments identify the actions that can enhance positive effects and reduce or eliminate negative effects on health and inequalities, including in relation to the provision of healthcare facilities.

Policy CLT4 – Healthcare

The Council will take the following actions to ensure that healthcare needs are met:

- Assist the Primary Care Trust, or other relevant organisation, in identifying sites for additional healthcare facilities in the District which are well related to the District's population and in accessible locations, and aid their implementation.
- Require new residential developments over 50 dwellings and non-residential developments over 1000 square metres to be accompanied by a Health Impact Assessment and an assessment of their impact on healthcare facilities. Where significant impacts are identified, developers will be required to address negative effects prior to the implementation of development.
- Take a positive approach towards proposals for the renovation or replacement of healthcare facilities that become outdated.

Open Space

9.19 The District contains numerous open spaces within built up areas, both privately and publicly owned, formal and informal.

9.20 These contribute towards the character of the District's settlements and form green links, as well as providing recreation and sports opportunities.

9.21 While the District contains large amounts of open green space, it is important that new development incorporates accessible public open space, designed in such a way that is integrated into the development and accessible to local people.

9.22 In addition, particularly with development in town centre locations, public open space including public art can make a positive contribution towards character and sense of place, as well as residential amenity.

Policy CLT5 – Open Space

New public open space will be required to accompany additional residential development, having regard to local current and projected future need. Standard Charges may be applied to developments as necessary.

In particular the Council will seek the incorporation of a significant amount of public open space to accompany new, and be integrated with existing, residential development in the west of Rayleigh.

Provision of public conveniences and public art within public open spaces will be encouraged.

Furthermore, the following existing uses will usually be protected, whether in public or private ownership:

- Parks;
- Amenity areas;
- Allotments;
- Playing pitches; and
- Any other form of open space that has a high townscape value or is intrinsic to the character of the area.

New forms of the above will be promoted.

Community Facilities

9.23 A comprehensive range of community facilities, including meeting halls, places of worship and social clubs exist throughout the District. These are well used and provide an important role for communities. The Council will seek to safeguard the use of community facilities, and to ensure they continue to provide a useful function to the communities they serve.

9.24 A need for additional community facilities within the District will arise as a result of residential development and the increasing population. Community facilities can act as a focal point for new or existing communities, helping strengthen identity and sense of community.

9.25 A strong sense of community, it is hoped, will also contribute towards increasing participation in volunteering, as per one of the key objectives of the Sustainable Community Strategy.

9.26 The Council will, in conjunction with its partners, need to ensure that new community facilities are developed and existing ones adapted to meet changing needs.

Policy CLT6 – Community Facilities

Community facilities will be safeguarded from development that will undermine their important role within the community.

New community facilities will be promoted in new and existing residential areas where a need is shown. The Council may require such facilities to be accommodated within new residential development schemes.

Standard Charges may be applied as necessary in order to facilitate the delivery and enhancement of community facilities, as per **Policy CLT1**.

Play Space

9.27 With higher densities of residential development being required in order to reduce the amount of greenfield land lost to housing, it has become increasingly difficult to ensure that dwellings are accompanied with large garden areas that can be utilised as play space. As such, communal play space will play an important function in new residential developments. Communal space can help foster a sense of community within new developments, providing a space where neighbours interact.

9.28 The Council's 2007-2012 Play Strategy sets out the Council's approach to the provision of play space in the District. The Council aims to increase the number of affordable play, cultural and leisure opportunities for children and young people, including partnership agreements with schools and other publicly owned facilities. The Council also seek to establish play space which is safe, comprising activities that are self-directed and fun.

9.29 The Play Strategy recognises that accessibility of play space is key. As such, new play space should be provided within new residential developments. It is crucial that parents and children feel safe within such space; therefore play space should be located in areas that are subject to natural surveillance – i.e. are overlooked and/or are subject to a number of passers-by.

9.30 The provision of new space in the District should accord with the Council's Play Strategy.

9.31 There are a number of existing play spaces within the District which are well used and important to the local communities they serve. The Council will seek to protect and enhance such spaces, including through the provision of additional fixed play equipment funded by Big Lottery Fund money received.

Policy CLT7 – Play Space

New residential developments will incorporate appropriate communal play space which complies with the Council's Play Strategy, is accessible and subject to natural surveillance.

Play space within developments should be maintained by an appropriate management company.

The Council will usually protect existing play spaces and enhance them through the provision of additional fixed play equipment.

Standard Charges will be applied to secure play space enhancements as per **Policy CLT1**.

Youth Facilities

9.32 Formal places where people can meet and interact with their peers have traditionally fallen into two categories: spaces for children (e.g. playgrounds); and spaces for adults (e.g. pubs). Within such spaces adolescents do not tend to be welcome and may find themselves excluded. This coupled with a lack of accessible, appropriate, informal meeting places for adolescents in the District has created a demand for additional youth facilities. The exact nature of such facilities will depend on the particular local need and the particular group such use is meant for, for example facilities for 12 year-olds are likely to differ considerably from those appropriate for older teenagers.

9.33 The Council has provided a number of teen shelters in areas of the District where a need for spaces for youths was shown as a short-term measure.

9.34 There have been efforts in recent years by various organisations to create facilities for young people, but concerns have been expressed that existing planning policies have hindered their development. A more positive approach is now required. There is a particular opportunity to increase provision of activities for young people in the centre of Hockley, as detailed in **Retail and Town Centres** section of the Core Strategy.

Policy CLT8 – Youth Facilities

The Council will encourage the provision of additional facilities for young people within appropriate locations where a need has been identified and which are accessible by a range of transport options.

Such facilities should be appropriate to the target age-group, should be well managed and flexible to meet changing needs. Any development of youth facilities will be required to show that the views of young people have been incorporated into the development. Standard Charges will be applied to aid the delivery of youth facilities, as per **Policy CLT1**.

Leisure Facilities

9.35 Leisure activities have an important role to play in health, quality of life and the economy. The importance of having good, accessible leisure facilities is iterated in the East of England Plan.

9.36 The District contains an array of both private and public sports facilities. The two main leisure centres are Clements Hall, Hawkwell and Rayleigh Leisure Centre, but their offer is complemented by a variety of other facilities across the District.

9.37 A study carried out by Sport England in 2006 found that 74.7% of the District's adult population were satisfied or very satisfied with the level of sports provision in their area – the third highest satisfaction rating in Essex. However, only 6.95% of Rochford District residents live within 20 minutes of at least 3 different leisure facilities, of which at least one has received a quality mark. This is the 4th lowest in the County and below the Essex average.

9.38 Accessibility of leisure and recreation facilities is an important issue and future leisure developments should be in locations accessible by a range of transport options.

9.39 The Council recognises that there are a number of potential leisure opportunities in the District, such as within school premises, which are currently not available to all. Such facilities, if opened up fully, have the potential to increase accessibility to leisure activities for the District's population.

Policy CLT9 – Leisure Facilities

The Council will work with its partners to ensure that leisure facilities across the District are maintained and enhanced.

In particular, the Council will seek to enhance recreational opportunities at Rayleigh Leisure Centre.

The Council will also look to make the best use of existing facilities in the District by encouraging those such as within school premises to be made accessible to all.

Playing Pitches

9.40 In addition to other leisure facilities as discussed above, playing pitches are considered worthy of specific mention within the Core Strategy.

9.41 Playing pitches are areas of formal open space available to the public and used specifically for the playing of sports such as football, rugby, hockey and cricket.

9.42 The District has a role to play within the wider area with regards to playing pitch provision. Whilst the District relies, to a degree, on the more urban neighbouring centres for jobs, facilities and retail, there is a reciprocal reliance from these areas on Rochford to provide open space and recreational opportunities.

9.43 The District has the potential to accommodate playing pitches as they are considered an appropriate form of development within the Green Belt. However, playing pitches will not always be considered appropriate in all Green Belt locations. Playing pitches require maintenance and, in many cases, the provision of ancillary buildings and, as such, have a very different impact on the landscape to more informal open spaces. They are also subject to frequent visits. Issues such as accessibility, impact on biodiversity, character and openness of the Green Belt, and amenity of neighbouring residents must be considered.

9.44 Opportunities to accommodate playing pitches outside of the Green Belt are welcomed, as this will often provide facilities in more accessible locations, particularly if pitches are accompanying other visitor-generating activities. When considering proposals for playing pitches outside of the Green Belt, many of the same issues (e.g. accessibility, residential amenity etc) will still apply.

9.45 Sport England has published detailed guidance for the provision of essential built facilities to accompany playing pitches within *Design Guidance Notes: Pavilions and Club Houses*. Within the Green Belt, the minimum size recommended by the guidance for accompanying facilities must not be exceeded.

9.46 The Council will update the existing Playing Pitch Strategy Supplementary Planning Document on playing pitch provision which will include a more up-to-date analysis of the supply and demand of pitches, together with a quantitative and qualitative assessment of future need.

Policy CLT10 – Playing Pitches

The Council will take a positive approach to the provision of playing pitches within the District.

Green Belt locations for additional playing pitches will be considered appropriate in the following circumstances:

- There is a need for additional playing pitches in the area which cannot be met by available sites outside of the Green Belt.
- The site is in an accessible location on the edge of a settlement
- The impact on the openness of the Green Belt is minimised through the provision of pitches being on a small-scale and any essential accompanying facilities to be developed at the minimum necessary size having regard to guidance from Sport England.
- The finished site will be level, free-draining and of a sufficient size to accommodate the proposed uses, as stipulated in Sport England guidance.
- There is no undue impact on residential amenity or highway safety and efficiency.

In addition, the Council will resist the loss of existing playing pitches unless the replacement of such pitches by an equal or better provision in an appropriate location can be secured, or it can be clearly demonstrated that the site is not viable for use as a playing pitch.

Tourism

9.47 The Council is exploring the possibility of enhancing the District's economy through the promotion of tourism. The District has been identified as the 'green' part of the Thames Gateway and as having the potential to be the arts and cultural opportunities area for the sub-region.

9.48 The Council has begun to actively promote the area as a tourist destination, having produced and circulated a District tourism guide.

9.49 The District's tourism opportunities are focussed primarily on the themes of heritage, coastline and countryside. The latter raises a number of issues: impact on character and openness of the Green Belt; possible effect on biodiversity; and sustainability. It will be possible to promote rural tourism in a sustainable manner which respects biodiversity and the character of the Green Belt (The issue of tourism in relation to the Green Belt specifically is discussed in **Green Belt** chapter of the Core Strategy). The impact on ecological issues will also be a particular issue in respect of coastal tourism.

9.50 Government guidance on this issue contained within *Good Practice Guide on Planning Tourism* (DCLG, 2007) notes the potential for tourism to deliver economic benefits. The guide states that transport and accessibility is inherent to tourism. However, it also notes that public transport is often limited within areas with rural tourism potential and that other factors, such as the need for rural regeneration, need to be given weight.

9.51 The RSPB's proposed Wallasea Island Wild Coast Project has potential tourism opportunities and is discussed within the **Upper Roach Valley and Wallasea Island** chapter of the Core Strategy.

Policy CLT11 – Tourism

The Council will promote the development of green tourism projects and the conversion of appropriate rural buildings to bed and breakfasts/hotels which do not adversely impact upon character of place or biodiversity.

Whilst priority will be given to areas which are accessible by alternative means to the car, schemes that are in locations with limited public transport links will also be supported if such proposals are able to make a positive contribution to rural regeneration or the well-being of rural communities.

Appendix CLT1

Infrastructure Required	Standard Charges to be used		Planning Obligations to be used where appropriate	Other Issues/ Comment
	Residential Development	Employment Development		
Highway improvements	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Public transport improvements	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Cycle network	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Greenways	Yes	No	Yes	
Recycling facilities	Yes	No	Yes	
Primary education expansion	Yes	No	Yes	
Early years and childcare facilities	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Secondary education expansion	Yes	No	No	Land to be allocated within new residential areas, as appropriate.
New primary school, Rayleigh	Yes	No	Yes	Land to be allocated within new residential areas, as appropriate.
New primary school, West Rochford	Yes	No	Yes	Land to be allocated within new residential areas, as appropriate.
Expansion and improvement of access at King Edmund School	Yes	No	Yes	Land to be allocated within new residential areas, as appropriate.
Expansion of Fitzwimarc and Sweyne Park Schools	Yes	No	No	
Flood Protection Measures	No	No	Yes	

Infrastructure Required	Standard Charges to be used		Planning Obligations to be used where appropriate	Other Issues/ Comment
	Residential Development	Employment Development		
Sustainable drainage systems	No	No	Yes	
Youth facilities	Yes	No	Yes	Standard charges applied to secure expansions. Planning obligations applied to secure on-site provision where appropriate.
Community facilities	Yes	No	Yes	Standard charges applied to secure expansions. Planning obligations applied to secure on-site provision where appropriate.
Leisure facilities	Yes	No	Yes	Standard charges applied to secure expansions. Planning obligations applied to secure on-site provision where appropriate.
Healthcare improvements	Yes	No	Yes	Standard charges to secure delivery of new facilities. Planning obligations to require mitigation measures identified by healthcare impact assessment to be undertaken.
Open space	No	No	Yes	Open space to be provided alongside new residential development.
Play Space (new and enhancement of existing)	Yes	No	Yes	Standard charges and planning obligations applied to secure off-site and on-site provision, respectively, where appropriate.

10 Transport

Vision

Short Term

- Transport schemes have been initiated to help reduce congestion on the District's roads, such as online road improvements and the implementation of travel plans.
- Improvements have led to a more frequent, reliable and comprehensive public transport system with better linkages between bus and rail.
- Work will be undertaken with the County Council as highway authority to look at potential solutions to congestion issues across the District to ensure the highway infrastructure becomes 'fit for purpose'.
- The Rochford District Council Transportation Strategy Supplementary Planning Document has been adopted and will help to ease transport issues across the District.

Medium Term

- A walking cycling and bridleway network has been implemented across the District. There is improved public access to the District's rivers.
- Residential development will have considered community facilities provision and access to these will be easy and sustainable
- Appropriate infrastructure will have been put into place to secure access to the wharfage at Baltic Wharf, thus helping to secure its future as an employment area.
- The South Essex Rapid Transit System (SERT) has been implemented giving people a genuine sustainable alternative to the private car.

Long Term

- Developer contributions have ensured that new developments are well integrated with public transport. Cycle and pedestrian networks have been developed linking important areas.
- The new employment park is accompanied by a travel plan and is accessible to workers by a range of transport options.
- Road infrastructure through the District will have been secured and improved with easier access to the A127 and A130.
- Wallasea Island will be accessible by improved road access
- The employment park in the west of the District will have easy access on to the main transport networks.

Objectives

1. To deliver developments that will reduce reliance on the private car, and that are well related to the public transport network.

2. To deliver online improvements on the east to west road networks in partnership with the Highways Authority, Essex County Council.

3. To identify and assess locations in the District that currently suffer from poor highway connectivity and congestion, and work with the Highways Authority to identify solutions.

4. To work alongside Essex County Council and other Thames Gateway authorities to support the implementation of the South Essex Rapid Transit system, in particular ensuring that SERT connects the residential areas with the employment areas within Rochford District.

5. To ensure that all new developments including residential, employment, education and leisure, implement travel plans to reduce the reliance on the private car.

6. To work with Essex County Council and other organisations, such as Sustrans, to ensure that a safe, accessible and convenient network of cycle and pedestrian routes is implemented across the District.

7. To aid the delivery of greenways identified in the Thames Gateway Green Grid Strategy, alongside Essex County Council and neighbouring authorities.

8. To ensure appropriate car parking provisions accompanies development at a level which strikes a balance between meeting the needs of motorists, ensuring that parking does not take up excessive amounts of developable land, and encouraging alternatives to car use.

Introduction

10.1 The East of England Plan incorporates a Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) which outlines the delivery of funding for transport initiatives, and also sets out transport policies which are in line with the objectives of the East of England Plan. The Regional Transport Strategy is a statutory document and as such is influenced by the delivery programmes of both the Highways Agency and Network Rail. In turn, the Regional Transport Strategy will then help to shape Local Transport Plans (LTP) which are produced by Local Highways Authorities; namely County and Unitary Councils. The Local Transport Plan covering the district of Rochford is produced by Essex County Council and the current LTP covers the time period 2006-11.

10.2 Rochford District currently has high-levels of car ownership with only 16% of households in the District not owning a car or van (2001 Census). The District is also subject to high levels of out-commuting and suffers limited public transport provision, particularly in rural areas.

10.3 There are concerns that, with the projected population increase, car usage will increase to the detriment of the environment and lead to intolerable levels of congestion.

10.4 The Council will continue to work with Essex County Council who are the Highway Authority covering Rochford District, to ensure that the road network is maintained and upgraded where necessary.

10.5 However, highway improvements serving new developments and mitigating their impacts will be required to come forward in a timely manner, ensuring that developments are delivered alongside the necessary infrastructure.

10.6 In addition, improvements to existing east-west routes are also required in order to reduce the east-west divide of the District and to ensure that employment areas in the east remain viable.

10.7 Whilst current economic and social needs must be met, the only long-term option for Rochford District is to try and reduce the need to travel by car and promote the use of alternative methods of transport. It is recognised that people cannot be forced to not use their cars and the Council must be realistic in terms of ensuring there is adequate highway infrastructure. Planning must aim to give people the option to use alternatives. The theme of reducing car dependency is highlighted in this chapter, but also runs through the Core Strategy as a whole.

Highways

10.8 In order for development to be sustainable it must meet the needs of the present, as well as the future. Currently, the nature of the District does not lend itself to travel without the use of a private car. The District experiences high-levels of car usage and, whilst it is important that the Council plan development in a way that reduces this reliance on the car, the economic and social importance of car usage in the District at this time should not be underestimated.

10.9 It is important that new development be accompanied by the requisite highway infrastructure improvements to mitigate their impact on the existing network. The Council will work with Essex County Council to ensure that such highway improvements are delivered, aided through a combination of planning obligations and standard charges for developers (see Preferred Option CLT1 for further details). In addition, the Council believe that existing connections between the west, where the population is focussed, and the more rural east which nevertheless contains a number of local employment uses, is inadequate. The Council will work with Essex County Council to seek necessary improvements to east-west highways in order to help sustain employment uses in the east of the District. The Council will also liaise with developers to ensure the delivery of Transport Impact Assessments alongside any proposed development.

Policy T1 – Highways

Developments will be required to be located and designed in such a way as to reduce reliance on the private car. However, some impact on the highway network is inevitable and the Council will work with developers and the Highway Authority to ensure that appropriate improvements are carried out. The Council will seek developer contributions where necessary.

The Council will work with the Highways Authority to deliver online improvements to the east to west road network, and improvements to the highways serving Baltic Wharf in order to sustain employment in this rural part of the District. The Council will also work with the Highways Authority to find ways to manage congestion along specific routes in the District.

Policy T2 – Highways Improvements

The Council will work with Essex County Council Highways Authority to ensure that highway improvements are implemented to address issues of congestion, road flooding and poor signage. In particular, highway improvements to the following will be prioritised:

- Brays Lane, Ashingdon (improved to access to King Edmund School);
- Ashingdon Road to improve traffic flows and reduce congestion;
- Rectory Road/Ashingdon Road Roundabout;
- Watery Lane;
- Spa Road/Main Road Roundabout Hockley;
- Rayleigh Weir junction;
- Enhancements to the B1013 to improve traffic flows and reduce congestion; and
- Surface access to London Southend Airport.

It should however be noted that Rochford District Council is not the Highway Authority and as such does not have responsibility for the Highway network. The Council will however work closely with the Highway Authority, Essex County Council, in order to ensure any proposed schemes in Rochford are given the appropriate priority.

10.10 The list in **Policy T2** is by no means exhaustive or definitive and the Council will continue to work with Essex County Council to resolve any highways issues across the District as a whole. Details of highway improvements to improve surface access to London Southend Airport will be included as part of the London Southend Airport and Environs Joint Area Action Plan.

10.11 Essex County Council as the Highway Authority have also stated in their Local Transport Plan (2006 – 2011) that Rochford has been recognised as playing a prominent part on the regeneration of the Thames Gateway sub-region through its role as a centre for leisure and recreational facilities within the Thames Gateway. It is also noted within the LTP that the potential development of London Southend Airport will play a key strategic role for economy and tourism, and will require a Surface Access Strategy in order to provide a choice of transport alternatives.

10.12 A Route Management Strategy will be developed and implemented in order to tackle the issues of congestion and poor air quality around many junctions on the strategic networks by Essex County Council in partnership with Southend Borough Council and Thurrock Council. Specifically the Rayleigh Weir junction of the A127 is mentioned.

10.13 The Council will work in partnership with Essex County Council as the highway authority to design and implement a Transportation Strategy Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for Rochford District. The Strategy will assess the transport issues seen in the District and set out how they will be improved and dealt with.

10.14 The purpose of the Transportation Strategy SPD is to provide further detail and guidance on the transportation issues outlined in the Core Strategy. In particular, it will examine the highway issues outlined in Policy T2, and the transport infrastructure requirements of new housing development set out in Appendix H1 of the Core Strategy.

Public Transport

10.15 One method of reducing the need to travel by private car is to ensure that residential areas are connected to destinations, such as places of work and town centres, by a reliable and efficient public transport system. As public transport in the District is privately operated, there is a limit to how much the Council can influence the provision of public transport.

10.16 Planning should, however, ensure that new development is well related to existing public transport where possible, and encourage the provision of additional public transport. Planning can also require developers to contribute towards public transport provision, in order to mitigate against possible impacts of new developments on the highway network.

Policy T3 – Public Transport

Development must be well related to public transport, or accessible by means other than the private car.

In particular, large-scale residential developments will be required to be integrated with public transport and designed in a way that encourages the use of alternative forms of transport to the private car.

Where developments are not well located to such infrastructure, and alternatives are not available, contributions towards sustainable transport infrastructure will be sought.

The Council will work with developers, public transport operators and Essex County Council to ensure that new developments are integrated into the public transport system and, where necessary, public transport infrastructure is upgraded and marketing, publicity and travel incentives are provided.

The Council recognise that public transport is provided in the District as a commercial enterprise and, as such, it is important to ensure that developments are planned in a manner such that the provision of public transport to them is economically viable for operators. Nevertheless, the provision of public transport services and facilities is socially important, and contributes to equality of access to services. The Council will seek to ensure that good public transport links continue to be provided to the town centres.

South Essex Rapid Transit (SERT)

10.17 Essex County Council, in partnership with the unitary authorities of Southend and Thurrock, have developed a programme for the delivery of a rapid transit system for South Essex – South Essex Rapid Transit (SERT). SERT will comprise of a network of corridors connecting the four main hubs, key development sites, major services and providing connections between the radial routes. The four main hubs are Basildon, Thurrock, Southend and London Gateway Port. While the initial route does not directly serve the District, future phases have the potential to do so.

10.18 SERT will involve high-quality bus-based vehicles travelling on a combination of specially dedicated routes and existing roads where SERT vehicles are given priority over other traffic. This service will provide rapid and reliable connections between residential areas and employment within the sub-region, helping to reduce car usage and ease congestion.

Policy T4 – South Essex Rapid Transit (SERT)

The Council will work with Essex County Council to support the implementation of SERT. The Council will seek to ensure that SERT connects the District's residential areas with employment opportunities (particularly London Southend Airport and environs) and, where this is the case, assist Essex County Council in implementing dedicated routes and measures to ensure that SERT vehicles have priority over other traffic.

Travel Plans

10.19 A travel plan is a package of practical measures to encourage employees/staff and pupils/residents/patients to be able to use methods of transport other than the car, and to reduce the need to travel by private car. A travel plan should be tailored to a particular site and use, and include a range of measures which will make a positive impact at that site. These could include, for example, setting up a car sharing scheme; providing cycle facilities; offering attractive flexible-working practices. The idea is to make alternatives to the car more feasible and more attractive to people.

10.20 There are several types of travel plans. Trip destination travel plans have been the significant focus to date. Destination travel plans have the overarching aim of reducing car use to specific destinations – schools, workplaces, visitor attractions etc. The travel plan will be drawn up in partnership with the employer, school or attraction, local authority and public transport operators. An example would be a "walking bus" to a school, or a car share scheme operated by an employer.

10.21 Origin, or residential travel plans, addresses the problem from the opposite angle. However, this raises several issues in that the pattern of journeys originating from residential areas are to varied and multiple destinations. As a consequence of this residential travel plans should incorporate a wider variety of measures encouraging more sustainable travel choices. Targets should also be set within travel plans to ensure that the objectives are achieved. Residential travel plans highlight the necessity of high levels of connectivity with the local transport network, and may also involve more personalised travel plans.

10.22 Travel plans may vary in scale and form, from a small package that includes bus timetables, maps of cycle footpaths, etc, to larger measures such as cycle vouchers.

Policy T5 – Travel Plans

Travel plans will be required for developments involving both destinations and trip origins. New schools, visitor attractions, leisure uses and larger employment developments will be required to devise and implement a travel plan, which aims to reduce private, single-occupancy car use. Existing schools and employers will be encouraged to implement travel plans.

A travel plan will be required for any residential development comprising 50 or more units and should be tailored to meet the specific requirements of the development.

Cycling and Walking

10.23 Increased opportunities for cycling and walking not only provide health and leisure benefits, but can also help reduce car dependency for certain journey types.

10.24 A two-pronged approach will be necessary to improve people's opportunity to cycle: an improved network of safe and convenient cycle paths, together with the provision of secure cycle parking and other facilities such as lockers, changing rooms, showers etc. at destinations.

Policy T6 – Cycling and Walking

The Council will work with Essex County Council, along with other organisations such as Sustrans, to ensure that a safe and convenient network of cycle and pedestrian routes is put in place to link homes, workplaces, services and town centres. Where developments generate a potential demand to travel, developers will be required to contribute to the delivery of such a network. The Council will also continue to require developers to provide facilities for cyclists at all new developments.

The Council will also seek the further development of cyclepaths, footpaths and bridleways that, having regard to ecological interests, open up and develop the access network alongside the District's rivers.

The Council will also encourage new cycle and footpath links with neighbouring authorities.

Greenways

10.25 As part of ensuring that the regeneration of the Thames Gateway is sustainable, a strategy has been produced – the Green Grid Strategy – which has a number of aims, including to connect new communities with existing neighbourhoods, the regenerated riverside, local attractions and the countryside; create high quality new green spaces links in areas of opportunity and need; and plan and promote the Green Grid network as part of a sustainable transport strategy.

10.26 The Council are a member of the Green Grid partnership and, as such, are committed to seeing the aims of the Green Grid Strategy realised. Part of the Green Grid Strategy proposes the creation of "greenways" – footpaths, cyclepaths and bridlepaths that connect to and through towns and the rest of South Essex area which, in addition to leisure and recreational routes, also provide alternative transport options. A number of the proposed greenways are within Rochford District, and although not directly able to implement greenways alone, the Council will work with partners to see them realised.

10.27 It should be noted that the proposed cycle network has the potential to deliver an element of the planned greenways.

Policy T7 – Greenways

The Council will work with partners, including neighbouring authorities, to aid the delivery of the following greenways identified in the Thames Gateway Green Grid Strategy which are of relevance to Rochford District:

- Greenway 13: South Benfleet;
- Greenway 16: Leigh-Rayleigh;
- Greenway 18: Central Southend (to Rochford);
- Greenway 19: Southchurch;
- Greenway 20: Shoeburyness; and
- Greenway 21: City to Sea/Shoreline.

Parking Standards

10.28 National government policy, as stated in Planning Policy Guidance Note 13, has made it clear that parking policies should be used as part of a range of measures to promote sustainable transport and reduce reliance on the private car. It did state that Local Authorities should not apply minimum parking standards to development, but the requirement to set maximum parking standards was deleted in amendments to Planning Policy Guidance Note 13 in January 2011. The Council have always been concerned that limiting parking at the origin of trips, i.e. homes, may lead to excessive on-street parking, to the detriment of highway safety and efficiency. As such the Council have sought to maintain minimum standards in certain cases. Planning Policy Statement 3 indicates that local circumstances should be taken into account when setting standards, and that proposed development should take a design led approach to the provision of car paring space. This will enable the provision of car parking spaces that are "well integrated with a high quality public realm and streets that are pedestrian, cycle and vehicle friendly."

10.29 Our current parking standards are set out in Parking Standards Design and Good Practice Supplementary Planning Document (Adopted December 2010). These standards are based on evidence developed by Essex County Council in conjunction with the Essex Planning Officers Association.

10.30 The Council believe that limiting parking provision at trip destinations can have a positive impact on sustainability and reduce congestion. However, the Council also believe that limiting car parking for residential development has little impact on the number of cars people use, and has predominantly negative effects. In such cases, a minimum standard is appropriate, although residential development within town centre locations or within close proximity to one of the District's train stations may be exempted from such requirements.

10.31 Essex County Council in conjunction with the Essex Planning Officers Association concluded in its comprehensive review of car parking standards that a move to minimum standards at trip origins (residential planning) and maximum standards for trip destinations is appropriate, acknowledging the fact that limited parking availability at trip origins does not necessarily discourage car ownership and can push vehicle parking onto the adjacent public highway, diminishing streetscape and potentially obstructing emergency and passenger transport vehicles.

Policy T8 – Parking Standards

The Council will apply minimum parking standards, including visitor parking, to residential development. The Council will be prepared to relax such standards for residential development within town centre locations and sites in close proximity to any of the District's train stations.

Whilst applying maximum parking standards for trip destinations, the Council will still require such development to include adequate parking provision. Developers will be required to demonstrate that adequate provision for the parking, turning, loading and unloading of service vehicles has been provided.

11 Economic Development

Vision

Short Term

- The Council are using the findings of the Employment Land Study to ascertain future employment provision to meet the District's needs, and to assist in identifying alternative locations for old and poorly located employment sites which are no longer fit-for-purpose.
- The long term future of the wharfage at Baltic Wharf as an employment area has been secured.
- Area Action Plans for Rochford, Rayleigh and Hockley have been finalised and the first phase of enhancement opportunities are being implemented.
- The potential of London Southend Airport and its environs is beginning to take shape through the provision of a Joint Area Action Plan in partnership with Southend Borough Council.
- The Joint Area Action Plan seeks to realise the airport's potential as a driver for the sub-regional economy, providing significant employment opportunities and ensuring the quality of life for its residents and workers.

Medium Term

- Sustainable, well used and strategically located industrial estates are being protected and enhanced, where appropriate.
- New businesses are being supported at the most vulnerable points in their lifecycle through the development of an Eco-Enterprise Centre.
- The Eco-Enterprise Centre is a flagship, eco-friendly building creating an inward investment draw which is bringing new businesses into the area.
- Appropriate uses within the District's commercial centres are being supported.
- London Southend Airport and its environs has become a driver for the sub-regional economy, providing a range of aviation and non aviation-related employment opportunities for the local population.
- A skills training academy within the vicinity of London Southend Airport and its environs has been established to provide high-skilled training in aviation-related industries.
- The Joint Area Action Plan supports and regulates the operations of London Southend Airport taking into consideration environmental and social effects, and residential amenity.
- A new airport terminal building at London Southend Airport has been completed and is operational following the implementation of an agreed surface access strategy.

- A new employment park in the west of the District with good links to the main access networks has been developed which caters for a range of employment types in a flexible manner that adapts to changes in the economy.

Long Term

- Old, poorly located, "bad neighbour" industrial estates have been relocated to fit-for-purpose sites in sustainable locations which meet the needs of businesses and benefits residential amenity.

- The new employment park is accompanied by a travel plan and is accessible to workers by a range of transport options.

- Over 3000 net additional jobs have been provided which meet local employment needs. A balance has been struck between the local workforce and jobs through the aviation-centred skills training academy providing local workers with high-value, transferable skills.

Objectives

1. Ensure the growth of local employment opportunities and deliver an additional net 3000 local jobs by 2021.

2. Enhance the local skills base in the District through providing additional training and support.

3. Implement the London Southend Airport and Environs Joint Area Action Plan to realise the potential of this local resource.

4. Ensure the delivery of an Eco-Enterprise Centre which will provide valuable support for new businesses within the District.

5. Support the continued functioning and growth of small and medium sized businesses, and encourage flexible practices such as home-working to enhance the range of local employment opportunities in the District.

6. Implement Area Action Plans for the commercial centres of Rayleigh, Rochford and Hockley to enhance their attractiveness and increase spending retention within the District.

7. Support projects within the District such as Cherry Orchard Jubilee County Park and aid the delivery of priorities in the Economic Development Strategy.

8. Ensure the protection of existing employment land in sustainable locations, and reallocate "bad neighbour" industrial estates for more appropriate uses, such as residential, to meet the District's housing needs.

9. Allocate the minimum amount of Green Belt necessary for additional employment land, as appropriate, and fully utilise the office space potential of Rayleigh and Hockley centres.

Introduction

11.1 The Council's approach to economic development is focused on developing existing spatial patterns of employment, providing higher level employment, realising the economic potential of London Southend Airport, and enhancing the skills of the District's population.

11.2 Rochford District is a generally prosperous part of the country, despite only a modest share of resident 'knowledge workers', the typically higher paid employees.

11.3 There are a number of opportunities for economic development in the District, for example London Southend Airport has the potential to provide significant economic growth, including, but not exclusively, around aviation-related industries. Further to this, there is an entrepreneurial culture within the District; and the District is part of the Thames Gateway – a national priority for regeneration and growth.

11.4 In the past, employment allocations for the District were quantified in terms of the amount of land to be set aside for employment purposes. The East of England Plan instead specifies the number of jobs each sub-region must provide. Rochford District is within the Thames Gateway sub-region and must provide 3000 new jobs during the plan period. A significant proportion of these jobs can be accommodated as part of the growth around London Southend Airport and the Council will produce a Joint Area Action Plan with Southend Borough Council to ensure that the airport's potential is fully realised, whilst having regard to environmental and amenity impacts such as noise, air quality and traffic generation.

11.5 There are a multitude of physical constraints within the District that restrict opportunities for employment growth. The two primary constraints are the rural nature of the District together with the limited transport links – both issues are more prevalent in the east of the District. The Council encourage rural diversification in the District and are seeking improvements to transport connections. The Council's approach to rural diversification is set out in the **Green Belt** section of the Core Strategy and the approach to transportation issues in **Transport**.

11.6 There are a number of areas within the District which are currently allocated specifically for employment purposes and are protected from development which would undermine their role in generating employment. The Council consider it necessary to review some of these allocations, particularly in light of changes to the economy and the decline of the manufacturing sector. Some sites currently allocated for employment are better utilised as residential or mixed-use, reducing the need to release Green Belt for housing, or, where appropriately located, alternative employment or community uses other than industrial ones.

11.7 The Council examined these issues in depth through the production of an Employment Land Study. The study provides the following:

- An assessment of current and future demand for different types of employment land outside of the London Southend Airport Joint Area Action Plan area.

- An assessment of the current supply of existing employment land including analysis of the quality of existing employment land allocated in the Rochford District Replacement Local Plan 2006.

- An assessment of the appropriateness of potential additional sites for use as employment land.

11.8 The Employment Land Study assesses demand for additional employment land against two scenarios, in addition to a base line scenario. The two scenarios are based on differing levels of development at London Southend Airport.

11.9 Low growth involving some additional supply of employment land at the airport would have little impact on demand across the District. Higher growth increases both demand for additional allocations and supply for the District as a whole.

	Demand m^2	Supply m^2	Balance m^2	Balance ha
Base case				
Office	18,161	0	-18,161	-2.27
Industrial	15,356	15,760	404	0.10
Total	**33,517**	**15,760**	**-17,757**	**-2.17**
Scenario A				
Office	18,248	783	-17,378	-2.2
Industrial	15,901	16,685	1329	0.3
Total	**34,149**	**17,468**	**-16,049**	**-1.8**
Scenario B				
Office	20,603	3,340	-17,263	-2.2
Industrial	21,042	19,707	-1,335	-0.3
Total	**41,645**	**23,047**	**-18,599**	**-2.5**

11.10 Under all the Scenarios (including the Base Case) there is an additional net demand for employment land outside of the London Southend Airport Joint Area Action Plan area for office development of just over 2 ha and a sufficient land supply for industrial uses.

11.11 The Employment Land Study also recommends that any de-allocations of employment land be compensated for by allocations of new employment sites.

Employment Growth

11.12 The Council will actively seek to maintain high and stable levels of economic and employment growth in the District, and will support proposals that secure growth within high value businesses and which match local skills in order to reduce reliance on out-commuting.

11.13 The Employment Land Study has identified the economic characteristics and opportunities for the District as a whole (excluding the area around London Southend Airport which has been looked at in detail as part of the London Southend Airport and Environs Joint Area Action Plan evidence base). The study notes that the supply of employment land within the District is tight, with little available land. Rochford District is currently a stronger industrial, rather than office location, however, net additional demand for industrial land is very limited over the planning period. The study recommends that an additional 2.2 hectares of land suitable for office use be allocated.

11.14 Town centres have an important role to play in the District's economic development. Rochford is recognised as a healthcare hub providing local employment opportunities and supporting the vitality of the town centre. Rayleigh town is the largest in the District, supporting a range of activities, and the Employment Land Study has identified the potential for additional office uses within Rayleigh town centre given its strategic location. The economic potential of the town centres of Rayleigh, Rochford and Hockley is further acknowledged, particularly with regard to their redevelopment opportunities, through the provision of Area Action Plans. This is discussed in more detail in the **Retail and Town Centres** section of this document.

11.15 The Economic Development Strategy is regularly updated to reflect the local economic climate and local employment opportunities. It seeks to work with partners and colleagues to maximise opportunities for development within the District and encourage a thriving local economy. Three key themes emerging from the Economic Development Strategy run though the Core Strategy, including increasing the skills base, increasing competitiveness and enhancing places, to ensure a cohesive approach to economic and employment growth.

11.16 The Economic Development Strategy supports the development of key projects such as Cherry Orchard Jubilee County Park and Wallasea Island Wild Coast Project. The strategy supports the enhancement of the District's commercial centres to ensure their economic vitality by increasing footfall and spending retention in the District, through the development of Area Action Plans. Equally the Core Strategy supports economic and employment growth, local skills enhancement and the development of an Eco-Enterprise Centre in an appropriate location (Policy ED4) to provide support for new and existing businesses.

11.17 The Council recognises the need to develop skills within the District to meet local employment opportunities and vice versa, and as such, the Council supports the development of a skills training academy to ensure a balance. This approach has the advantage of training people and providing them with additional skills, increasing the proportion of highly skilled jobs in the District, and increasing people's transferable skills whilst reducing out-commuting.

11.18 The Council also recognises the need to support the development of an Eco-Enterprise Centre which would offer invaluable support and advice for early stage businesses at the most vulnerable point in their lifecycle.

11.19 The District is entrepreneurial in character, and small and medium sized businesses contribute significantly to the area's employment and economy. The Council supports the protection and enhancement of small and medium sized businesses, both within the existing industrial estates and town centres and those existing enterprises in rural locations, which are important to the local economy. The Council also acknowledges the important role that home-working can play in the local economy through retaining employment opportunities within the District, and the development of the Third Sector through enhancing local volunteering opportunities as encouraged in the Sustainable Community Strategy.

Policy ED1 – Employment Growth

The Council will encourage development that enables the economy to diversify and modernise through the growth of existing businesses and the creation of new enterprises providing high value employment, having regard to environmental issues and residential amenity.

The Local Planning Authority supports the Economic Development Strategy, and will ensure that planning enables the spatial aspects of the Economic Development Strategy to be delivered.

The Council will support:

- the development of Cherry Orchard Jubilee County Park;
- the development of Wallasea Island Wild Coast Project;
- the enhancement of the District's commercial centres;
- the development of an Eco-Enterprise Centre;
- the development of a skills training academy;
- the enhancement of London Southend Airport;
- the development and growth of the voluntary sector;
- the development and growth of home-working; and
- the protection and enhancement of the role of small and medium sized businesses.

The economic potential of the District's town centres, as well as social and environmental enhancements, will be realised through the development and implementation of Area Action Plans for Rochford, Rayleigh and Hockley.

An Eco-Enterprise Centre will be accommodated within an employment allocation which will support the growth and prosperity of new businesses at the beginning of their lifecycle.

The development of a skills training academy to enhance the skills base within the District and match local skills with locally available employment opportunities will be supported.

London Southend Airport and Environs

11.20 The East of England Plan identifies London Southend Airport as having an important role to play in the economic development of the area. London Southend Airport is split between Rochford and Southend, and, given its importance to the region, Rochford District and Southend on Sea Borough Councils are producing a Joint Area Action Plan in order to identify how the airport's economic potential can be realised.

11.21 Southend on Sea Borough's Core Strategy (December 2007) recognises the importance of London Southend Airport for the area. Strategic objective SO11 of this strategy is to:

"Secure the regeneration of London Southend Airport to enable it to reach its potential to function as a local regional airport providing for significant new employment opportunities and improved surface access subject to environmental safeguards"

11.22 The Airport Masterplan 2005, prepared by London Southend Airport, sets out a vision for how the airport could grow towards being a regional airport based on using its current runway (length 1,610 metres), but with the provision of new passenger infrastructure in the form of a railway station for the airport and investment in new passenger terminal facilities. The importance of the railway is fundamental to increasing the attractiveness of the airport to potential airline operators as it increases the size of the passenger catchment to include core markets within London (by reducing the travel time to the airport). With this investment, the Airport Masterplan indicates there is the potential to increase passenger movements at the airport to up to 2 million passengers by 2030.

11.23 The airport has been supported in phase one of its development and currently has planning permission for the development of the train station, passenger terminal and new hotel.

11.24 Whilst it is acknowledged has the potential to become a regional catalyst for economic growth and employment generation, the Council is mindful of concerns regarding the potential impact of the airport's development on the environment and on the amenity of local residents. These are issues that will be accounted for as part of the Joint Area Action Plan which provides an opportunity to introduce tighter controls over the operation of the airport.

11.25 The airport is surrounded by employment uses, many of which complement the airport. The Council believe that there is also an opportunity for economic development through the expansion of other employment uses around the airport, including those that are not directly linked or reliant on the aviation industry. Thus, whilst the airport has economic growth potential, it is recognised that the Council cannot be over-reliant upon one employment sector. As such, the growth of employment uses within the Joint Area Action Plan Area will not be focussed solely on aviation-related uses, although it is recognised that non aviation-related businesses would benefit from a thriving London Southend Airport.

11.26 Marrying local skills with jobs is necessary to increase local employment opportunities and sustain the local economy. Through recognising the growth potential of the airport, there is opportunity to provide high-tech skills training in aviation-related industries to meet local employment needs. The Council will support the development of a skills training academy, which can train the local workforce in an employment sector with growth potential and provide employees with valuable transferable skills.

Policy ED2 – London Southend Airport

The Council will support the development potential of London Southend Airport as a catalyst for economic growth and employment generation.

The Council will work with Southend on Sea Borough Council to prepare a Joint Area Action Plan for London Southend Airport and environs and will work with partners to see the airport's economic potential realised, whilst having regard to local amenity and environmental issues. The Joint Area Action Plan will enable the Council to regulate the operation of the airport through balancing noise and environmental issues with residential amenity.

The Council will support the development of a skills training academy around the airport to provide training to increase and enhance aviation-related skills in the local area and to meet local employment needs.

Expansion of employment land to the north of the airport for the development of non aviation-related industries will be supported to increase local employment opportunities within the District.

Existing Employment Land

11.27 The Council will enable existing businesses to diversify, modernise and grow and will protect employment land from alternative development that would reduce the quantity and/or quality of jobs in the District. Employment policies will maintain a degree of flexibility in order to ensure that sites can respond and adapt to changes in the economy.

11.28 However, the District contains several industrial estates which are looking tired and in need of investment. Some are also close to housing and have a negative impact on residential amenity.

11.29 The Council will consider the location and condition of existing industrial estates and will promote the creation of new employment areas in more sustainable locations. The Council will encourage the relocation of existing "bad neighbour" uses to more appropriate locations.

11.30 The Council will protect appropriately located industrial estates which are well used and sustainable with the potential for continued economic and employment vitality, and support the improvements recommended in the Employment Land Study, where appropriate.

11.31 Existing employment land identified within the District includes:

- Star Lane Industrial Estate, Great Wakering
- Baltic Wharf, Wallasea Island
- Eldon Way/Foundry Industrial Estate, Hockley
- Swaines Industrial Estate, Rochford
- Purdeys Industrial Estate, Rochford
- Riverside Industrial Estate, Rochford
- Stambridge Mills, Rochford
- Rochford Business Park, Cherry Orchard Way, Rochford
- Rawreth Industrial Estate, Rayleigh
- Imperial Park Industrial Estate, Rayleigh
- Brook Road Industrial Estate, Rayleigh
- Northern section of Aviation Way Industrial Estate, Southend

11.32 The Council will protect the District's employment land considered to be economically sustainable, good neighbour sites, which exist in harmony with surrounding land uses. Subject to enhancement or redevelopment where appropriate, the following sites will be protected:

- **Baltic Wharf** – This site adequately serves its current purpose in providing employment in port-related activities. Due to its poor strategic location and poor site access, infrastructure improvements should be made to improve its accessibility and to retain existing employment uses.
- **Swaines Industrial Estate, Ashingdon Road** – This is a fit-for-purpose industrial estate which is in a good condition. The existing uses should be retained.
- **Purdeys Industrial Estate** – This is a fit-for-purpose industrial estate which is in a good condition. The site should be maintained and, if possible, expanded.
- **Riverside Industrial Estate** – The quality of existing building stock at this site is very poor and so should be improved. It is centrally located, which makes it a strategically good site for additional office use to meet future requirements.
- **Rochford Business Park** – This is a new site in very good condition with good access to the highway network.

- **Imperial Park Industrial Estate** – This is a fit-for-purpose industrial estate with good access to amenities, which is in a good condition. The existing uses should be retained.

- **Brook Road Industrial Estate** – Although the existing building stock quality is poor there is potential for redevelopment which should incorporate high quality office accommodation.

- **Aviation Way Industrial Estate** – This site is in adequate condition but could be improved through enhancement, intensification and expansion which will be promoted as part of the London Southend Airport and Environs Joint Area Action Plan.

  The Council will seek alternative uses for existing employment land sites which are considered poorly located "bad neighbours", or where an alternative use would be more appropriate. In cases where such land is reallocated, the Council will seek to ensure existing businesses can be re-accommodated at appropriate alternative employment sites.

- **Star Lane Industrial Estate (5.8 ha)** – The site has good road access at a site level and it is adequately serviced for its purpose, however, it has poor strategic access and the quality of existing building stock is very poor. As such, the Council will reallocate this site for other uses and the existing employment land will be relocated elsewhere within the District.

- **Eldon Way/Foundry Industrial Estate (4.6 ha)** –In recent years there has been increasing pressure for non-industrial uses on the estate to be allowed in place of employment uses. The site is well placed in proximity to the centre of Hockley and would be more appropriately utilised as a mixed use development incorporating employment uses, as well as a range of community and leisure uses more appropriate to its town centre location. Alternative land will be required to be allocated to accommodate employment uses that may become displaced as a result of redevelopment.

- **Stambridge Mills (1.8 ha)** – This site is currently poor quality and is not in use. Whilst it could be safeguarded for light industrial use, it has been identified within the Urban Capacity Study as a suitable site for housing allocation, and as such, the existing employment land should be reallocated. Issues around flood risk must be resolved prior to any development of this site.

- **Rawreth Industrial Estate (5.9 ha)** – Existing building stock is of poor quality and the site has particular environmental issues. The site has been identified in the Urban Capacity Study as suitable for housing use, and as such, the site will be reallocated for housing. The existing employment land will be relocated elsewhere within the District.

The allocation of the above employment areas will entail the de-allocation of a total of 18.1 ha of employment land.

Policy ED3 – Existing Employment Land

Existing employment sites which are well used and sustainable will be protected from uses that would undermine their role as employment generators.

The Council will protect existing employment land within the District, but will reallocate land at Star Lane Industrial Estate, Eldon Way/Foundry Industrial Estate, Stambridge Mills and Rawreth Industrial Estate for appropriate alternative uses. Such uses may include a proportion of employment uses. Land capable of accommodating the businesses and industries that currently occupy these sites but which would not be appropriate to be incorporated into their redevelopment will be allocated to more appropriate and sustainable locations.

In the case of Eldon Way/Foundry Industrial Estate the nature of any redevelopment will be determined through the Hockley Area Action Plan and will include employment uses.

The Council will support improvements to the quality of all retained employment sites and will work with partners to maintain their viability by ensuring adequate infrastructure is in place. In particular, the Council will require improvements to the highways serving Baltic Wharf in order to sustain employment in this rural part of the District.

Future Employment Allocations

11.33 The Employment Land Study has identified that there is generally a sufficient supply of employment land for industrial use within the District, but that any de-allocation would have to be compensated for. The study also identified a need for an additional 2.2 hectares of office space. Land to the west of Rayleigh is the most suitable strategic location for additional employment land provision and the Employment Land Study recommends that land in this location comes forward for office development. There is a recognised deficit in adequate brownfield sites within the District, and as such, the Council will reallocate the minimum quantity of Green Belt land necessary in this appropriate location to meet this local need.

11.34 The industrial estate at Aviation Way is also a good strategic location with the potential to develop and provide additional capacity for non aviation-related industries with good infrastructure links. The potential enhancement, intensification and expansion of Aviation Way Industrial Estate will be explored within the London Southend Airport and Environs Joint Area Action Plan.

11.35 It is also important to take into account environmental and social considerations. New employment areas will be directed away from areas of landscape or ecological value. In addition, new employment developments must be accessible to all sections of the community by a range of transport opportunities and should be of a type that meets local skills.

11.36 In line with the Habitats Regulations and in consultation with NE, EA and Essex and Suffolk Water, development proposals must ensure that the water supply necessary for the development can be supplied sustainably (and without adverse effects on European Sites).

11.37 The Employment Land Study recommends that, in order to satisfy the additional office demand in the District, a portion of land west of Rayleigh, which is currently allocated as Green Belt, be developed for employment use. This will principally be a mix of high quality office and industrial space. This approach should ensure that the Green Belt allocation west of Rayleigh is, on the whole, still protected.

11.38 The rationale for allocating land in Rayleigh is that it is well connected to London by road on the A127 and it is an ideal location for strategic employment development in the District. Employment Land Study research shows that the west of the District is the most desirable location for employment mainly due to its strategic access. This location also relates well to the A127 enterprise corridor, which is a sub-regional focus for employment growth and infrastructure investment. The area will consolidate its position as a strategic office location during the planning period and a new development within Rochford District is a strategically sound place to develop office employment stock.

11.39 The Council will support the development of an Eco-Enterprise Centre. Enterprise, or business incubation, centres provide an ideal, structured environment in which new businesses can grow. They differ from other types of business support because they offer comprehensive, responsive and customised services to early stage businesses at the most vulnerable point in their lifecycle. The most obvious benefits are usually inclusive rents and short term tenancies which help businesses to avoid longer term financial commitments. With communal areas, access to meetings rooms and a shared reception, start-up businesses are able to bring prospective clients to quality premises and give a highly professional appearance. Business support services, seminars and training can be provided on site, making them far easier to access and lessening staff time out of the office to train.

11.40 The Centre's support services are usually provided by an internal team as well as sought from external networks and partner agencies. Incubation is a resource-intensive activity not intended to support businesses indefinitely. Incubation services help businesses to survive the particularly difficult first few years so they can move on with increased chances of sustainability.

11.41 The Council believes that the establishment of an eco-friendly Enterprise Centre would help to reduce the number of business closures in the District and help to educate forming businesses of their environmental responsibilities. The Centre, which will be a flagship, eco-friendly building, will also act as a much needed inward investment draw, bringing new businesses to the area. It would become a focal point for businesses in the District seeking access to information, guidance, mentoring and involvement with local business networks.

11.42 The Council will work with landlords to develop appropriate grow-on space in the District. The Council will do this by developing service level agreements and for landlords prepared to meet the necessary criteria, which will include operating business friendly leases and meeting certain environmental standards, their premises will be added to a list of recommended grow-on space for businesses moving on from the Centre. This will help to make best use of and improve local, vacant stock, and keep the businesses supported operating within the Rochford District.

11.43 In order to achieve this, the Council intend to secure public funding which in turn will be used to lever private sector investment. In terms of delivering services on an ongoing basis, the Council will work in partnership with other key stakeholders and partners whose remit is to support and develop businesses in the District.

11.44 The Enterprise Centre will be incorporated into employment allocations or an Area Action Plan that includes increased employment opportunities.

Policy ED4 – Future Employment Allocations

The Council will allocate 18 ha of industrial land to compensate for de-allocations as per **Policy ED3**. New employment allocations will be in better strategic locations to meet the needs of businesses, be in accessible locations to the local population, and at the same time minimise any negative impact on residential amenity. The Council will direct the majority of future employment to the west of the District and in proximity to London Southend Airport. Some industrial land will be allocated in proximity to Great Wakering to provide local employment and mitigate the de-allocation of Star Lane Industrial Estate.

In addition, the Council will allocate a further 2.2 ha for office development in order to meet projected demand. This office space will be predominantly directed to Rayleigh and Hockley, with exact locations and quantum to be determined through Area Action Plans for the respective centres. The Council will adopt a sequential approach, prioritising Rayleigh and Hockley centres with any demand that can not be accommodated in these centres being incorporated into a new employment allocation to the west of Rayleigh.

1. West of Rayleigh

The Council will allocate land to the south of London Road, Rayleigh to accommodate a new employment park capable of accommodating businesses displaced by the redevelopment of Rawreth Industrial Estate as well as additional office space. It will have the following characteristics:

- Able to accommodate employment uses displaced by residential redevelopment of Rawreth Lane Industrial Estate;
- Be suitable for high-quality office and industrial development;
- A versatile layout and design that can accommodate a range of uses and can be adapted to meet changes in the economy;
- Accessible by a range of transport options; and
- Good links to the A130 and A127.

2. North of London Southend Airport

The Council will allocate land to the north and west of London Southend Airport for employment uses to compensate for de-allocations elsewhere in the District.

The Council will work with the private sector to secure the delivery of an Eco-Enterprise Centre within a new business park incorporating employment uses. The Centre will provide invaluable support for early stage businesses and will be built to high environmental standards through meeting the 'Excellent' BREEAM rating for sustainable, carbon-neutral construction, reducing energy costs and promoting sustainable construction. The development of an Eco-Enterprise centre will be subject to a feasibility study.

The Council will also encourage the development of employment generating uses within existing settlements, particularly town centres, where appropriate.

3. South of Great Wakering

The Council will allocate land to the south of Great Wakering for a new strategically located employment park. This new employment facility will be capable of accommodating businesses displaced from Star Lane Industrial Estate.

12 Retail and Town Centres

Vision

Short Term

- Area Action Plans for Rochford, Rayleigh and Hockley town centres have been produced and adopted. The plans provide a clear framework, developed having regard to the results of community involvement, to guide the regeneration of these centres.

Medium/Long Term

- The District's town centres are vibrant places containing a range of shops, services and facilities that meet local demand.
- The vast majority of new retail development has been directed to Rochford, Rayleigh and Hockley. Some additional retail has been provided within the District's smaller settlements and within residential areas outside of the designated centres which provides convenient, accessible top-up shopping for local communities and reduces the need to travel.
- The leakage of retail expenditure outside of the District has been significantly reduced, with shoppers attracted to the District's town centres not simply due to the provision of retail, but because of the range of activities and the quality of the environment.

Objectives

1. To direct retail development to the District's town centres of Rochford, Rayleigh and Hockley.
2. To enhance the centres of Rochford, Rayleigh and Hockley ensuring they are vital and vibrant places containing a range of uses and activities for all.
3. To reduce the leakage of retail expenditure out of the District.
4. To ensure that village and neighbourhood shops provide a service for local communities, particularly for those with limited access to transport.

Retail

12.1 The Council approach to retail strategy seeks to strengthen the role of the District's town centres, whilst ensuring that village services are sustained.

12.2 The 2008 Retail and Leisure Study indicates that there is a significant leakage of retail spending out of the District, with the majority of shopping by Rochford District resident's undertaken outside of the District.

12.3 Shopping patterns vary across the District and by type of goods bought. With regards to convenience shopping (e.g. food), 17.8% of main food shopping is retained within the District compared to 54.4% of top-up shopping. This pattern is not replicated consistently across the District. Rayleigh retains the most convenience shopping, retaining 37.8% and 75.9% of main food shopping and top-up shopping, respectively. Other areas of District experience higher rates of retail leakage.

12.4 The majority of spending goes to Southend, Shoeburyness and Benfleet. Distance is not the only factor, with residents prepared to travel further to these areas than other potential retail destinations within the District.

12.5 There is an even greater leakage of spending in relation to comparison shopping (e.g. clothes, electrical goods etc) with the vast majority of spending going out of the District into Southend in particular, together with a considerable amount from the west of the District leaking out to Basildon.

12.6 Retail spending is projected to grow and it is important that the District ensures it at least maintains its current market share of spending – and continues to provide for the people who shop within the District – by ensuring there is adequate retail space allocated. In addition, whilst it is to be expected that a significant proportion of spending will be attracted out of the district to regional centres such as Southend, the Council recognises there is an opportunity to reduce leakage of expenditure out of the District by making town centres more attractive to shoppers, enhancing their vitality and vibrancy, and concentrating retail development within the District's centres.

12.7 National policy on town centres (Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth (PPS4)) states that Local Authorities should quantify the need for additional retail development and then identify locations for such development by applying a sequential approach which prioritises town centre locations. The District supports this approach as a means of ensuring the vitality and vibrancy of Rayleigh, Rochford and Hockley town centres.

12.8 The District contains one established out-of-town retail park – the Airport Retail Park located to the east of the airport and abutting a residential area of Southend Borough to the south. Although adjacent to a residential area, the retail park still maintains many of the characteristics traditionally associated with its more isolated contemporaries, namely a concentration on the sale of bulky, comparison goods and a layout that is unwelcoming to all unless arriving by car. Further retail development and intensification at this location is not only considered unsustainable, but would also undermine efforts to enhance the vitality of the District's town centres.

Policy RTC1 – Retail in town centres

The Council will seek to enhance Rochford, Hockley and Rayleigh town centres' market share of retail spending through the following actions:

- Enhancement of Rochford, Hockley and Rayleigh town centres making them more attractive places for shoppers to visit.
- Directing retail development towards the town centres of Rayleigh, Rochford and Hockley to ensure a strong mix of retail uses focussed within the respective town centres.

Policy RTC2 – Sequential approach to retail development

The Council will apply a sequential approach to the location of retail development which prioritises the town centres of Rochford, Rayleigh and Hockley.

When applying the sequential approach to retail development, the settlements of Rayleigh, Rochford and Hockley will be acknowledged as distinct areas – retail needs in one settlement cannot be met by development in others.

Where town centre locations are not available, edge-of-centre locations are to be utilised with priority given to locations which have good links to the town centre and are accessible by a range of transport options.

Small-scale retail development will be encouraged in out-of-centre residential areas and villages where such development will serve a local day-to-day need and will not undermine the role of the District's town centres.

Retail development in out-of-town locations, including intensification of uses in existing out-of-town retail parks is considered inappropriate and is not supported.

Village and Neighbourhood Shops

12.9 A great many shops and services are located outside of the established town centres and dotted throughout residential areas in the District's towns and villages.

12.10 These perform a vital role in providing convenience goods and services to meet people's day-to-day needs. The Retail and Leisure Study found that village shops were particular important in providing local top-up food shopping.

12.11 The location of such units within residential areas means that they can be easily reached on foot, reducing the need to travel. Local facilities also provide a lifeline for those without access to public or private transport. In addition to the aforementioned benefits, the provision of village shops and services can also help maintain a sense of place and community within the settlement. The protection of local shops and facilities is thus, for the foresaid reasons, considered to be crucial.

Policy RTC3 – Village and Neighbourhood Shops

The Council will protect existing retail uses within residential areas outside of the defined town centres.

The Council will encourage and support the provision of additional small-scale retail development in conjunction with new residential development, as long as such retail development will not undermine the role of the District's town centres.

The loss of such retail uses within residential areas will only be permitted where it has been clearly demonstrated that a retail use in the location is not viable and that the proposed alternative use will still offer a service to the local community that meets day-to-day needs.

Town Centres

12.12 There are three Town Centres in the District: Rayleigh, Rochford and Hockley.

12.13 Rayleigh provides the most comprehensive range of facilities, and is classified as a Minor District Centre in Management Horizons Europe's UK Shopping Index (2008). Rochford and Hockley are ranked as Local and Minor Local, respectively.

12.14 Table RTC1 below shows the ranking, together with score based on level of facility provision, the District's centres compared to centres within the sub-region. The ranking relates to approximately 7,000 centres (1 being the centre with the greatest retail provision).

Table RTC1 – Ranking of District and other local centres (Management Horizon's UK Shopping Index 2008)

Centre	Score	Rank 2008	Location Grade
Southend-on-Sea	254	54	Major Regional
Basildon	227	79	Regional
Rayleigh	57	600	Minor District
Pitsea	55	629	Minor District
Wickford	44	816	Minor District
Billericay	44	816	Minor District
Laindon	26	1364	Local
Rochford	20	1716	Local
Hockley	7	3321	Minor Local

12.15 As part of ensuring the vitality and long-term viability of the town centres, it is crucial that they contain a high proportion of retail uses. Whilst a proportion of non-retail uses (e.g. banks, building societies, restaurants and pubs) will complement a shopping centre, long stretches of 'dead' non-retail frontage and a high percentage of non-retail uses throughout the centre will undermine its role and vitality.

12.16 As such, the Council will seek to control the amount of non-retail use permitted within core areas of town centres. It is considered appropriate to define primary and secondary shopping frontage areas within town centres based on their existing characteristics and seek to maintain retail uses within these, albeit with a more relaxed approach to non-retail within secondary shopping frontage areas. It is important that town centres not only offer an enticing range of shops but also a pleasant environment in which to shop. The Council are committed to maintaining and enhancing the character and attractiveness of its town centres.

12.17 People make town centres vibrant. The Council will encourage people to visit town centres, by ensuring they are attractive, accessible and contain a variety of uses, but the Council will also enable people to live in the District's town centres by taking a positive approach to the residential conversion of buildings above ground floor level, residential intensification within town centres, and by incorporating residential development into large town centre schemes. This also has the advantage of reducing the need to develop greenfield sites or intensify non-central residential areas, whilst providing adequate residential development.

Rayleigh Town Centre

12.18 Rayleigh is the principal centre in the District and maintains a much greater proportion of its convenience and comparison shopping than any other area of the District, even drawing in spending from other areas around the District. Much of this retention in relation to food shopping is down to the presence of two relatively large convenience stores within Rayleigh, although one is located outside the town centre.

12.19 The town centre environment is positive and a portion of it is designated as a Conservation Area. The Council has produced Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans which assess their quality, and the proposed actions to be undertaken to ensure their protection and enhancement (see **Character of Place** section of this document for more details) and there are a range of actions proposed for Rayleigh.

12.20 The Retail and Leisure Study 2008 noted that Rayleigh's town centre comprised a higher proportion of comparison shopping units than the national average, and included national multiple retailers. Convenience shopping, retail service sector, financial and business uses are also well represented in the centre. The study, however, identified a lack of leisure uses, which includes pubs, bars, nightclubs, restaurants, bingo halls, cinemas etc.

12.21 In terms of the provision of floorspace relative to spending, the Retail and Leisure Study found that there was no capacity for additional convenience floorspace but considerable capacity for additional comparison floorspace.

12.22 Rayleigh town centre has a number of strengths: a strong convenience and comparison sector; a high amenity built environment; low proportion of vacant units; high retail demand; and a range of unit sizes thereby catering for a range of retailers, including national multiples; and it has undergone recent town centre improvement works.

12.23 In addition, the Employment Land Study has identified Rayleigh town centre as having potential to accommodate additional office space, due to its strategic location.

12.24 Given the current state of Rayleigh town centre and its ability to meet projected future demand, radical changes to the town centre are not considered necessary. The Council will explore the above issues and potential in detail through the development of an Area Action Plan for Rayleigh centre.

Policy RTC4 – Rayleigh Town Centre

The Council will ensure that Rayleigh town centre's role as the District's principal town centre is retained through the production and implementation of an Area Action Plan which delivers the following:

- Improved accessibility to and within the town centre
- A safe and high quality environment for residents and visitors
- A predominance of retail uses, including intensification of existing retail uses, which cater for a variety of needs
- A range of evening leisure uses
- Promotes provision of community facilities, including exploration of potential locations for a healthcare centre and, if appropriate delivery of such facility

The Council will work with landowners and its partners to deliver the Area Action Plan.

Rochford Town Centre

12.25 Rochford town centre is the second largest within the District and is classified as a local centre. Although it has a relatively strong convenience sector, the Retail and Leisure Study found the comparison sector to be limited. There is a significant leakage of spending out of the Rochford area for all forms of retailing.

12.26 Rochford town centre is part of the Rochford Conservation Area and its unique character and layout is an asset.

12.27 Rochford town centre contains only one national multiple retailer and the majority of units are of a small size, limiting their attractiveness to retailers. The presence of an additional national multiple would act as an 'anchor' and draw in additional shoppers and retailers. The October 2007 Focus Report indicated that since the date of the report, only four retailers expressed demand to locate within Rochford.

12.28 Notwithstanding the above, and the fact that there is a limited retention of spending, the Retail and Leisure Study has identified capacity for additional convenience and comparison retail floor space.

12.29 Work, including community involvement, has been undertaken in preparation for a masterplan for Rochford town centre. This, in conjunction with the Retail and Leisure Study, has identified a number of opportunities for the town centre.

12.30 The unique, historic character is one such opportunity that can be utilised to encourage visitors to the town centre. There are a number of opportunities to enhance this and, at the same time, improve connectivity and access around the centre particularly from the train station.

12.31 The market square is currently used for parking. The considerable potential for town centre enhancements through the pedestrianisation of the market square, thereby providing a focal point for town centre activities and encouraging a local 'café culture' complementary to other uses with the town, has been identified. There are, however, concerns over the impact on local businesses of the loss of parking and changes will have to be considered carefully before any final decision can be made about the future of the market square.

12.32 In addition, the current town centre boundary covers a considerable area beyond the key retail area. It is felt that the reduction of this will focus future retail development more centrally, reducing the dilution of retail activity within the town centre and improving its vitality and vibrancy.

12.33 Previous community involvement exercises have identified demand for community facilities. Current policies are restrictive towards non-retail uses within the town centre area and, whilst it is important that retail uses continue to dominate the town centre area, a more permissive approach to A3 (restaurant, cafes etc) and A4 (bars, pubs etc), would benefit the town centre, particularly if focussed around the market square. The introduction of evening activities within the town centre would also increase natural surveillance and help quell concerns regarding anti-social behaviour in Rochford.

12.34 The Council will explore the above issues and potential in detail through the development of an Area Action Plan for Rochford centre.

Policy RTC5 – Rochford Town Centre

The Council will produce an Area Action Plan for Rochford town centre which delivers the following:

- A safe and high quality environment for residents
- A market square area that encourages visitors
- Enhanced retail offer for Rochford
- A range of evening leisure activities
- Improves accessibility to and within the town centre
- Promotes youth community facilities

The Council will work with landowners and its partners to deliver the Area Action Plan.

Hockley Town Centre

12.35 Hockley is the smallest town centre in the District and there is less retention of spending within the Hockley area than Rayleigh or Rochford.

12.36 As with Rochford, Hockley retains very little expenditure.

12.37 It has a good mix of independent traders and a well maintained pedestrian environment. The size of Hockley itself and its location relative to the larger town centres of Rochford, Rayleigh and Southend, lessen its attractiveness to national multiples.

12.38 The Retail and Leisure study indicates that Hockley has great potential. Hockley has been identified as having a need for additional convenience floorspace, and with the housing target in the area; the Council will look at the opportunities for more valuable and appropriate uses of the industrial land between Hockley railway station and the town centre. This would enhance the retail and leisure offer of the town centre whilst at the same time provide an opportunity for a better linkage between the centre and the station.

12.39 Eldon Way/Foundry Industrial Estate, in particular, has been identified as a potential opportunity site given its location in proximity to Hockley centre and the train station, and the potential for industrial uses to be accommodated in more appropriate locations within the District, as examined within the **Economic Development** section of the Core Strategy.

12.40 The Council will explore the above issues and potential in detail through the development of an Area Action Plan for Hockley centre.

Policy RTC6 – Hockley Town Centre

The Council will produce an Area Action Plan for Hockley town centre which delivers the following:

- A safe and high quality environment for residents
- Enhanced retail offer for Hockley
- Redevelopment of Eldon Way/Foundry for a variety of uses more appropriate for a town centre location, including residential, commercial, employment and leisure
- A public space within a defined centre
- Improved connectivity between retail focus and train station
- Redevelopment of industrial uses for retail, leisure and residential development
- Green landscaping along Main Road, Spa road and Southend Road to enhance the visual amenity

The Council will work with landowners and its partners to deliver the Area Action Plan.

13 Implementation, Delivery and Monitoring

Policy	Implementation and Delivery	Potential Risk	Risk Mitigation	Monitoring
Housing				
H1 – The efficient use of land for housing	The Council will prioritise the use of appropriate previously developed land and land within existing settlements, whilst resisting the inappropriate intensification of residential areas, through the allocation of land as part of the Local Development Framework and by exercising development management. The Council will work with developers and service providers to ensure appropriate sites come forward.	Residential developments on appropriate sites within existing settlements or on previously developed land are not delivered.	Sites have been identified following consultation with developers, land owners and agents. Engagement with developers to ascertain deliverability of sites has taken place and will continue throughout the plan period.	The proportion of dwellings developed on previously developed land is recorded by the Council and will be included in the Annual Monitoring Report or other reporting mechanism, as appropriate, as is the density of residential developments. Data will be monitored according the national Single Data List where necessary.

Policy	Implementation and Delivery	Potential Risk	Risk Mitigation	Monitoring
Housing				
H2 – Extensions to residential envelopes and phasing	The Council will work with local landowners, agents and developers to ensure that development in these areas is viable. The 'call for sites' exercise has ascertained that there are sites within these locations which developers are willing and able to develop. The Council has worked with service providers and its partners to ensure that development within these locations is feasible. The completion of dwellings will be carried out by developers having regard to the Council's adopted policies in the Local Development Framework, guided by the Council's development management. The phasing will be controlled through the development management process and delivered by working with developers and landowners to ensure there is a constant five-year supply of available land that will be delivered.	Extensions to the residential envelope pre-2021 in the identified general areas are not delivered in time, and there is not a constant five-year housing supply.	Locations have been identified following consultation with developers, land owners and agents. Engagement with developers to ascertain deliverability of sites within locations has taken place and will continue throughout the plan period. A flexible approach will be maintained with regards to the timing of the release of land for extensions to the residential envelope to ensure a constant five-year supply of land. In the event that development in identified areas can no longer be delivered, alternative sites scheduled to be developed later will be brought forward.	As part of the Annual Monitoring Report or other reporting mechanism, as appropriate, the Council record planning permissions granted and completions of residential development. This is translated into a housing trajectory which includes an assessment of the five-year supply of land. Data will be monitored according the national Single Data List where necessary.

Policy	Implementation and Delivery	Potential Risk	Risk Mitigation	Monitoring
Housing				
H3 – Extension to residential envelopes post-2021	Sites within the identified general locations will not be allocated for development until post-2021. Such sites will be prevented from development until an appropriate time through the development management process. Post-2021, the completion of dwellings will be carried out by developers having regard to the Council's adopted policies in the Local Development Framework, guided by the Council's development management.	Extensions to the residential envelope pre-2021 in the identified general areas are not delivered, and there is not a constant five year housing supply. Extensions to the residential envelope post-2021 in the identified general areas are not delivered, and there is not a constant five year housing supply.	A flexible approach will be maintained with regards to the timing of the release of land for extensions to the residential envelope to ensure a constant five year supply of land. As such, some sites may be brought forward from post-2021 allocations, if allocated sites pre-2021 are not delivered. Where post-2021 sites are brought forward for development, it is anticipated that pre-2021 sites which were not delivered through earlier phasing, will be delivered post-2021. However, if there are not enough deliverable sites, then the Council will review the situation through the Local Development Framework Process.	As part of the Annual Monitoring Report or other reporting mechanism, as appropriate, the Council record planning permissions granted and completions of residential development. The Council will monitor the delivery of residential development and review the situation through the Local Development Framework process to ensure a constant five year housing supply. Data will be monitored according the national Single Data List where necessary.

Policy	Implementation and Delivery	Potential Risk	Risk Mitigation	Monitoring
Housing				
H4 – Affordable Housing	Affordable housing will be delivered in conjunction with developers and Registered Social Landlords. Developers will be required to enter into a legal agreement with the Council to ensure that the requisite proportion of affordable units come forward as part of a development. The policy makes allowances to ensure that this approach does not undermine the deliverability of schemes.	The affordable housing requirement renders development financially unviable, preventing the delivering of housing. Insufficient levels of affordable housing are delivered to meet need.	The Core Strategy policy allows for a flexible approach to affordable housing to ensure it does not render schemes undeliverable. The Core Strategy seeks a proportion of affordable housing in line with the recommendations of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment for the sub-region. The Local Planning Authority and the Council's Housing Strategy will work with Registered Social Landlords and developers to ensure an adequate supply of affordable housing. In determining specific sites for development through the Allocations Development Plan Document, the Council will have regard to the potential for affordable housing to be provided.	As part of the Annual Monitoring Report or other reporting mechanism, as appropriate, the Council record the tenure of dwellings completed, allowing the Council to ascertain whether the target for affordable housing is being met. Data will be monitored according the national Single Data List where necessary.

Policy	Implementation and Delivery	Potential Risk	Risk Mitigation	Monitoring
Housing				
H5 – Dwelling Types	The mix of dwelling types will be delivered by developers and guided by the Council's development management.	Developers wish to implement dwelling types that do not meet local need.	The Council will ensure that developers deliver a mix of dwelling types within new developments that meet local need. This will be ascertained through the Council's Housing Strategy team. The Housing Strategy team will engage with developers in the development process. Dwelling type mix will be regulated through the development management process. Pre-application advice will be available for developers.	The size of dwellings (in terms of the number of bedrooms they contain) is recorded as part of the Annual Monitoring Report or other reporting mechanism, as appropriate, enabling an assessment of the mix of dwelling types coming forward.

Policy	Implementation and Delivery	Potential Risk	Risk Mitigation	Monitoring
Housing				
H6 – Lifetime Homes	The delivery of dwellings meeting the Lifetime Homes Standard will be through developers, guided by the Council's development management. The policy makes allowances to ensure that this approach does not undermine the deliverability of schemes.	The requirement for all new dwellings to meet the Lifetime Homes Standard makes the scheme undeliverable.	A flexible approach will be maintained to ensure that where it can be shown that the requirement threatens the viability of a scheme, then the Council will require a proportion of units to comply with the standard. In determining specific sites for development through the Allocations Development Plan Document, the Council will have regard to the potential for lifetime homes to be delivered. If it is consistently shown that the requirement makes schemes undeliverable then the Council may review the situation through the Local Development Framework Process.	The Council will monitor the proportion of dwellings meeting the Lifetime Homes Standard as part of the Annual Monitoring Report or other reporting mechanism, as appropriate.
H7 – Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation	Gypsy and Travellers sites will be allocated by the Council but developed by private landowners. The development of sites will be guided by the Council's development management.	Allocated sites are not implemented.	The Council will allocate Gypsy and Travellers pitches through the Allocations Development Plan Document and will engage with representative groups to ensure that such allocations are suitable.	The Council will monitor the granting of planning permission for Gypsy and Travellers sites, and their development, as part of the Annual Monitoring Report or other reporting mechanism, as appropriate.

Policy	Implementation and Delivery	Potential Risk	Risk Mitigation	Monitoring
Character of Place				
CP1 – Design	The design of developments will be guided by the Council's development management. Developers will be expected to utilise, where relevant, the following as guidance for good design: • Supplementary Planning Documents; • Village Design Statements; • the Essex Design Guide; and • the Urban Place Supplement	Developments whose design does not reflect character of place or good design as recommended within supporting documents are granted consent.	The Council will work with developers at the pre-application stage to ensure that developments reflect the identity of individual settlements and promote good design. Supplementary planning documents will provide clear guidance to decision makers and applicants as to quality of design that will be required. This will be regulated through the development management process.	The success of the implementation of this policy will be monitored by recording the proportion of appeals of the Council's decision to refuse planning applications based on character of place which are dismissed.
CP2 – Conservation Areas	Recommendations within the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plans will be implemented through a collaborative approach with the Council's partners, and seeking legal advice and acquiring consent from the Secretary of State.	Lack of involvement from key external partners, including service providers.	The Council will work closely with its partners to implement the actions recommended in the plans. The Council has and will maintain regular dialogue with key stakeholders such as parish councils, Essex County Council and neighbouring local authorities.	The Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plans will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis to ensure Conservation Area boundaries are preserved and continue to enhance the local character.
		The need to accommodate new development harms character of Conservation Areas.	The Council will have regard to the guidance and advice in the plans when making decisions affecting Conservation Areas, ensuring that any new development respects the character of such areas.	

Policy	Implementation and Delivery	Potential Risk	Risk Mitigation	Monitoring
Character of Place				
CP3 – Local List	The Local List Supplementary Planning Document is currently being updated, and will be finalised and adopted. Buildings listed within this document will be protected by the Council's development management.	Lack of statutory protection for buildings on the local list results in loss of, or unsympathetic additions to, buildings of local architectural or historical value.	The Council will maintain and update the Local List ensuring it is robust, having regard to consultation with stakeholders and ensuring it comprises buildings worthy of protection whose protection is justified. The Council will work with the owners of buildings on the Local List and provide them with guidance and advice on how to ensure the building's character is retained. The impact of proposed development on a locally listed building will be considered as part of the development management process.	The Local List Supplementary Planning Document will be updated on a regular basis and the buildings contained within it examined as part of the update to ensure they are being protected.

Policy	Implementation and Delivery	Potential Risk	Risk Mitigation	Monitoring
Green Belt				
GB1 – Green Belt Protection	The Green Belt will be protected through the allocation of land and regulated through the development management process.	Pressure on the District to accommodate additional development results in the loss of Green Belt.	The Local Development Framework will set out a robust strategy for the delivery of all development required, based on sound evidence. By allocating land for the development the District is required to accommodate, the Council will be able to ensure that land allocated in the Local Development Framework as Green Belt remains protected from inappropriate development. The protection of the Green Belt will be regulated through the development management process.	The proportion of the District allocated as Metropolitan Green Belt will be assessed in production of the Allocations Development Plan Document. The outcome of planning applications for inappropriate development within the Green Belt will be recorded in the Annual Monitoring Report or other reporting mechanism, as appropriate.
GB2 – Rural Diversification and Recreational Uses	Rural diversification will be undertaken by landowners and enabled through a more permissive approach to the determination of planning applications.	Rural enterprise is restricted by the need to ensure the character and openness of the Green Belt is protected.	A more permissive development management framework balances the needs of rural businesses with the need to preserve the character and openness of the Green Belt.	The number of change of use applications permitted on land designated as Green Belt, and the nature of those uses, will indicate whether rural diversification is being undertaken and will be recorded in the Annual Monitoring Report or other reporting mechanism, as appropriate.

Policy	Implementation and Delivery	Potential Risk	Risk Mitigation	Monitoring
Upper Roach Valley and Wallasea Island				
URV1 – Upper Roach Valley	The Council will expand Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park through the use of Council owned land and the acquisition of land where necessary. The Council will only use compulsory purchase powers as a last resort where all other alternatives have been exhausted.	The extension of Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park to provide a vast 'green lung' linking other parts of the Upper Roach Valley for informal recreational opportunities is undeliverable. Pressure on the District to accommodate additional development results in difficulty in protecting the Upper Roach Valley from development.	The Council will work closely with landowners to secure the future of Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park, and will use compulsory purchase as a last resort. The Local Development Framework will set out a robust strategy for the delivery of all development required, based on sound evidence. By allocating land for the development the District is required to accommodate, the Council will be able to ensure that land allocated in the Local Development Framework as Green Belt remains protected from inappropriate development.	The expansion of Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park will be monitored as part of the Annual Monitoring Report or other reporting mechanism, as appropriate.
URV2 – Wallasea Island	The Council will work with the RSPB to deliver the Wallasea Island Wild Coast Project. Other stakeholders will also be engaged, including Essex County Council with regards to the sites accessibility, and the Environment Agency, given the physical constraints in the locality.	The Wallasea Island Wild Coast Project is not implemented/access improvements are not forthcoming. Development cannot take place due to harm to sites of ecological importance, including those with statutory protection.	The Council will work with the RSPB and other key stakeholders to ensure the Wallasea Island Wild Coast Project is delivered and the site is accessible. All plans are subject to Environmental Impact Assessment and/or Appropriate Assessment under Habitats Directive, as appropriate.	The progress on delivery of the Wallasea Island Wild Coast Project will be monitored as part of the Annual Monitoring Report or other reporting mechanism, as appropriate.

Policy	Implementation and Delivery	Potential Risk	Risk Mitigation	Monitoring
Environmental Issues				
ENV1 – Protection and Enhancement of the Natural Landscape and Habitats and the Protection of Historical and Archaeological Sites	The Council will prevent development that would be of harm to areas of international, national and local nature conservation importance and sites of historical and archaeological interest through the development management process. The enhancement of existing sites owned by the Council will be achieved by the positive management of them. In the case of other sites, the Council will encourage owners to do likewise. The Crouch and Roach Estuary Management Plan will be delivered in partnership with stakeholders.	The District's SSSIs are not being protected, and the Crouch and Roach Estuaries, in particular, continue to deteriorate in quality. The Crouch and Roach Estuary Management Plan is not delivered. Sites of historical and archaeological interest are not being protected.	Sites of international, national and local nature conservation importance and sites of historical and archaeological interest will be protected through the development management process.	As part of the Annual Monitoring Report or other reporting mechanism, as appropriate, the condition of the District's SSSIs will be recorded, enabling the Council to review whether the Public Service Agreement target is being met. Data will be monitored according the national Single Data List where necessary.
ENV2 – Coastal Protection Belt	The Coastal Protection Belt will be protected from harmful development through the development management process.	Development within the Coastal Protection Belt, in exceptional circumstances, is unavoidable which may impact on the open and rural character of the undeveloped coast.	The Council will direct development away from the Coastal Protection Belt, as far as practicable, through the development management process.	The success of this approach will be measured by the quality of the landscape in the Coastal Protection Belt, as well as its biodiversity. The Council will include reports on development within the Coastal Protection Belt in the Annual Monitoring Report or other reporting mechanism, as appropriate.

Policy	Implementation and Delivery	Potential Risk	Risk Mitigation	Monitoring
Environmental Issues				
ENV3 – Flood Risk	The Environment Agency is a statutory consultee on all planning applications where potential flood risk or water quality issues may arise. The Council will work with the Environment Agency to ensure that flood risk is reduced.	In exceptional circumstances, development is located within areas most at risk of flooding.	Proposals must pass the sequential test and the exceptions test, where necessary. Development will be required to be accompanied by appropriate flood mitigation measures. This will be regulated through the development management process.	As part of the Annual Monitoring Report or other reporting mechanism, as appropriate, the Council monitor the number and proportion of planning applications that have been allowed contrary to Environment Agency advice on flood risk or water quality. The Annual Monitoring Report or other reporting mechanism, as appropriate, will also detail total area at risk of flooding.
		Climate change and sea level rise increase the chances of flooding within the District, particularly in the east.	The Council will work with the Environment Agency to monitor flood risk throughout the District and will seek to ensure the most vulnerable areas at risk of flooding are defended, as appropriate. The Environment Agency updates the Council on areas at risk of flooding on a regular basis.	
ENV4 – Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS)	The Council will work with developers to ensure Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) are incorporated into new developments. This will be guided by the Council's development management.	The SUDS requirement renders a scheme unviable.	The policy makes allowances to ensure that this approach does not undermine the deliverability of schemes.	The Annual Monitoring Report or other reporting mechanism, as appropriate, will record the proportion of applications in which sustainable drainage systems are incorporated.

Policy	Implementation and Delivery	Potential Risk	Risk Mitigation	Monitoring
Environmental Issues				
ENV5 – Air Quality	Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) will be designated where necessary. Development within AQMAs will be restricted through the development management process. AQMA status will be removed once the air quality is deemed acceptable.	Air quality within the District deteriorates, negatively impacting on the quality of life of residents.	Air quality throughout the District is monitored on a regular basis, particularly at congestion hotspots and vulnerable highway intersections. AQMAs will be designated, as appropriate, and development will be restricted within these areas, until the air quality improves and the designation is lifted.	Air quality will be monitored by the Council, as required by the 1995 Environment Act, on a periodic basis. Air quality and development within AQMAs will be recorded. Data will be monitored according the national Single Data List where necessary.
ENV6 – Large Scale Renewable Energy Projects	The development of large-scale renewable energy projects will be guided by the Council's development management.	Detrimental impact on sites of nature conservation importance, and/or landscape character.	The policy does not permit such development which would have a detrimental impact. This will be regulated through the development management process.	The development of large-scale renewable energy projects will be monitored as part of the Annual Monitoring Report or other reporting mechanism, as appropriate.

Policy	Implementation and Delivery	Potential Risk	Risk Mitigation	Monitoring
Environmental Issues				
ENV7 – Small Scale Renewable Energy Projects	Some small-scale renewable projects such as domestic photovoltaic cells do not require consent from the Council. However, those that do require approval will be guided by the Council's development management.	Development management restricts small-scale renewable energy projects, to the detriment of the generation of renewable energy.	The Council will take a positive approach to such development through the development management process.	The Council will monitor the implementation of small-scale renewable energy projects in the Annual Monitoring Report or other reporting mechanism, as appropriate.
ENV8 – On-Site Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Generation	A proportion of the energy requirements for new developments will be required to be provided from on-site renewable or low carbon energy sources and will be regulated through the development management process. The policy makes allowances to ensure that this approach does not undermine the deliverability of schemes.	The requirement for new residential development and non-residential development, as appropriate, to provide a proportion of the developments energy requirements from on-site renewable or low carbon energy sources render development schemes unviable.	A flexible approach will be maintained to ensure that where it can be shown that the requirement threatens the viability of a scheme, the Council will require a smaller proportion of the developments energy requirements from on-site renewable or low carbon energy sources. If it is consistently shown that the requirement makes schemes undeliverable then the Council may review the situation through the Local Development Framework process.	The Council will monitor the proportion of new developments energy requirements being provided from on-site renewable or low carbon energy sources as part of the Annual Monitoring Report or other reporting mechanism, as appropriate.

Policy	Implementation and Delivery	Potential Risk	Risk Mitigation	Monitoring
Environmental Issues				
ENV9 – Code for Sustainable Homes	This will be delivered in partnership with developers and regulated through the development management process. The minimum requirements of building regulations will be enforced by the building control process.	The Code level requirement for a residential development makes development schemes unviable, resulting in a shortfall of housing development.	The Code level requirements are being introduced at a national level and as such the building industry will be required to adapt to such requirements irrespective of local policies. With regards to the aim for development to incorporate higher standards than the minimum required, the Council will maintain a flexible approach to ensure that the schemes are not rendered undeliverable. In determining specific sites for development through the Allocations Development Plan Document, the Council will have regard to the potential for higher standards to be achieved.	The Council will monitor the proportion of dwellings meeting the Code for Sustainable Homes standard as part of the Annual Monitoring Report or other reporting mechanism, as appropriate.
ENV10 – BREEAM	This will be delivered in partnership with developers and regulated through the development management process and building regulations.	The requirement to meet BREEAM standards undermines the viability of schemes, threatening the delivery of commercial development.	The Council will maintain a flexible approach to ensure that commercial needs are balanced with the BREEAM standards requirement.	The Council will monitor the proportion of non-residential development meeting the BREEAM standard as part of the Annual Monitoring Report or other reporting mechanism, as appropriate.

Policy	Implementation and Delivery	Potential Risk	Risk Mitigation	Monitoring
Environmental Issues				
ENV11 – Contaminated Land	Development on contaminated and suspected contaminated land will be guided by the Council's development management.	The remediation of contaminated land to make a site 'fit-for purpose' makes a scheme undeliverable.	The Council will work with developers and landowners to ensure that sites allocated for development are viable.	Development on contaminated land, together with measures to mitigate decontamination, will be recorded in the Annual Monitoring Report or other reporting mechanism, as appropriate.

Policy	Implementation and Delivery	Potential Risk	Risk Mitigation	Monitoring
Community Infrastructure, Leisure and Tourism				
CLT1 – Planning Obligations and Standard Charges	Planning obligations and standard charges will be imposed on developers, where necessary, and regulated through the development management process.	Planning obligations and standard charges render development undeliverable. Planning obligations and standard charge yield insufficient funds to delivery necessary infrastructure.	The policy explains that the Council will produce a Planning Obligations and Standard Charges document, which will be developed with stakeholder input. This will consider the size and impact of developments, and the impact on economic viability. The Council may also review the requirement for Standard Charges through the Local Development Framework process.	The Council will monitor the provision of contributions and, together with service providers, the infrastructure that is being delivered.

Policy	Implementation and Delivery	Potential Risk	Risk Mitigation	Monitoring
Community Infrastructure, Leisure and Tourism				
CLT2 – Primary Education, Early Years and Childcare Facilities	Increased primary school, early years and childcare provision will be delivered, where necessary, in partnership with Essex Country Council and developers, and guided by the Council's development management. Planning obligations and standard charges will be used to aid the delivery of the requisite educational provision.	Facilities cannot be delivered by Essex County Council on land allocated for additional primary schools with early years and childcare facilities.	The Council has engaged with Essex County Council throughout the Core Strategy production process to ensure emerging policies are deliverable. Land will be allocated through the Allocations Development Plan Document and the Council will work with Essex Country Council and developers, as necessary, to ensure the delivery of facilities in the identified locations. The Council will seek planning obligations and standard charges from developers to aid the implementation of required educational facilities.	The Council will work with Essex Country Council to monitor the balance between the supply and demand of schools in the District. Essex County Council monitors the present and future provision of school places within the County within *The Essex School Organisation Plan* which has been updated on an annual basis since 2003. The supply and demand for early year is monitored by Essex County Council.

Policy	Implementation and Delivery	Potential Risk	Risk Mitigation	Monitoring
Community Infrastructure, Leisure and Tourism				
CLT3 – Secondary Education	Additional land for the expansion of school sites (for example the King Edmund School) may be identified within the Allocations Development Plan Document. Secondary school expansion will be delivered in partnership with Essex Country Council and developers, and guided by the Council's development management. Planning obligations and standard charges will be used to deliver the requisite educational provision.	Facilities cannot be delivered by Essex County Council on land allocated. The anticipated expansion of Fitzwimarc and Sweyne Park schools, and other secondary schools as required, is not achieved due to constraints.	Land will be allocated through the Allocations Development Plan Document for the expansion of King Edmund School. The Council will work with Essex Country Council and the individual schools themselves, as necessary, to ensure the delivery and expansion of facilities in the identified locations. The Council will seek planning obligations and standard charges from developers to aid the increase in capacities of Fitzwimarc and Sweyne Park schools, and other secondary schools as required.	The Council will work with Essex Country Council to monitor the balance between the supply and demand of schools in the District. Essex County Council monitors the present and future provision of school places within the County within *The Essex School Organisation Plan* which has been updated on an annual basis since 2003.

Policy	Implementation and Delivery	Potential Risk	Risk Mitigation	Monitoring
Community Infrastructure, Leisure and Tourism				
CLT4 – Healthcare	Developers will be required to work with the Council, the Primary Care Trust, or other relevant organisation, and other stakeholders to address any deficiencies identified by the Health Impact Assessment. New healthcare facilities will be delivered in partnership with the South East Essex Primary Care Trust, or other relevant organisation, and developers, and their implementation guided by the Council's development management. The Council will use contributions from developers, through standard charges to provide healthcare facilities where necessary.	Healthcare improvements do not meet the needs of residents or are not delivered.	The Council will work with the Primary Care Trust, or other relevant organisation, to identify appropriate locations and aid the delivery of additional healthcare facilities. The Council will require Health Impact Assessments to ensure that developments over 50 dwellings meet additional healthcare needs prior to the implementation of development, as appropriate. The Council will support improvements to existing healthcare facilities.	The provision of adequate healthcare facilities will be reported by the Council using data from the Primary Care Trust, or other relevant organisation.
CLT5 – Open Space	The provision of new open space and the protection of existing open space will be regulated through the development management process.	The provision of new open space and/or the protection of existing open space is not achieved due to pressures to accommodate other forms of development.	New open space will be required as part of proposals for new developments, and the Council will seek standard charges as necessary. Existing open space will be protected through the development management process.	The provision of open space will be monitored by the Council.

Policy	Implementation and Delivery	Potential Risk	Risk Mitigation	Monitoring
Community Infrastructure, Leisure and Tourism				
CLT6 – Community Facilities	Additional community facilities will be delivered by working in partnership with service providers, including the voluntary sector, and developers. Planning obligations and standard charges will be used to finance the implementation of community facilities.	The provision of new community facilities and the protection of existing community facilities is not achieved due to pressures to accommodate other forms of development.	New community facilities will be required as part of proposals for new developments, where a need has been identified. The Council will seek planning obligations for their provision alongside new development as necessary. Existing community facilities will be protected through the development management process.	The needs for community facilities will be monitored using the 'barriers to housing and service domain' as an indicator from the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD).
CLT7 – Play Space	The Council will deliver additional play space where required, in conjunction with the developers of new residential sites. The Council will use planning contributions from developers to implement play space where necessary. The protection of existing facilities will be regulated through the development management process.	The provision of new, additional play space as required and the protection of existing play space is not achieved due to pressures to accommodate other forms of development	New play space will be required as part of proposals for new developments, where a need has been identified. The Council will seek standard charges for their provision alongside new development as necessary. Existing play space will be protected through the development management process.	The implementation of play space will be monitored and recorded as part of the Annual Monitoring Report or other reporting mechanism, as appropriate.

Policy	Implementation and Delivery	Potential Risk	Risk Mitigation	Monitoring
Community Infrastructure, Leisure and Tourism				
CLT8 – Youth Facilities	The Council will engage with young people through existing community groups and schools to ascertain their needs. The Council will work with other partners, including within the voluntary sector, and developers to ensure the delivery of appropriate facilities. The Council will use planning contributions from developers to implement youth facilities where necessary.	Additional youth facilities, where a need has been identified, are not delivered due to pressures to accommodate other forms of development Youth facilities are not appropriate to the target age group, and are not flexible to meet changing needs.	The Council will seek standard charges to aid the provision of additional youth facilities alongside new development, where a need has been identified, as necessary. The Council will engage with young people through existing community groups and schools to ascertain their needs. These findings will seek to ensure that youth facilities are appropriate in meeting the needs of specific age groups. Developers will be required to take into account the views of young people in designing youth facilities, and this will be regulated through the development management process.	The provision of youth facilities, together with a measure to ensure their long-term viability, will be recorded by the Council.

Policy	Implementation and Delivery	Potential Risk	Risk Mitigation	Monitoring
Community Infrastructure, Leisure and Tourism				
CLT9 – Leisure Facilities	The Council have adopted the 'Play Strategy 2007-2012' which will focus the resources available, and in turn, create a successful play offer captured in the acronym **VITAL – V**alue based, **I**n the right place, **T**op quality, **A**ppropriate and **L**ong term. The Council will use contributions from developers, through standard charges to provide leisure facilities where necessary.	Leisure facilities throughout the District, in particular Rayleigh Leisure Centre are not maintained and enhanced.	The Council will work with its partners to ensure that leisure facilities are maintained and enhanced, and will seek contributions, as appropriate, to enhance the leisure offer within the District. Schools will also be encouraged to make their leisure facilities available for public use.	The provision of leisure facilities may be monitored using the Sport England *Sports Facility Calculator*. The proportion (m^2) of both completed and outstanding leisure development within the District is recorded within the Annual Monitoring Report or other reporting mechanism, as appropriate.

Policy	Implementation and Delivery	Potential Risk	Risk Mitigation	Monitoring
Community Infrastructure, Leisure and Tourism				
CLT10 – Playing Pitches	The Playing Pitch Strategy Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is currently being updated, using the guidance created by Sport England. The purpose of the SPD is to assess current playing pitch supply and demand so that an adequate supply can be maintained. The provision of playing pitches within the Green Belt will be guided by the Council's development management. Sport England is a statutory consultee on all planning applications which have an impact on playing pitch provision (i.e. development of playing fields) and, as such, advise the Council on relevant issues.	Insufficient provision of playing pitches to meet demand within the District.	The Council supports the provision of playing pitches within accessible Green Belt locations, having regard to the advice of Sport England and the impact on the openness and character of the Green Belt. The loss of existing playing pitches will also be resisted, as appropriate, having regard to the advice of Sport England.	The Council's evidence base work on the Playing Pitch Strategy will be updated on a regular basis. Planning applications regarding playing fields are monitored by Sport England. The Council will report on these as part of the Annual Monitoring Report or other reporting mechanism, as appropriate.
CLT11 – Tourism	Appropriate tourism opportunities will guided by the Council's development management.	Green tourism opportunities within the District are not realised.	The Council supports the development of appropriate green tourism opportunities which will be regulated through the development management process.	The number of visitors is monitored as part of the "Economic impact of tourism" report by the East of England Tourist Board. The Council will report on relevant District matters as part of the Annual Monitoring Report or other reporting mechanism, as appropriate.

Policy	Implementation and Delivery	Potential Risk	Risk Mitigation	Monitoring
Transport				
T1 – Highways	The Council will work with the Highways Authority to improve sustainable alternatives to the car, and improve network connections across the District.	Sustainable alternative transport methods to the private car are not encouraged. Improved east to west connections across the District are not delivered.	The Council will work with the Highways Authority to improve sustainable alternatives to the car, and improve network connections across the District. Developer contributions and standard charges will be sought, where appropriate, to aid delivery.	Annual Progress Reports/Delivery Report – gives km of cycleways delivered, footpaths enhanced etc. The Council may need to contact Essex County Council for District data. Data will be monitored according the national Single Data List where necessary.
T2 – Highways Improvements	The Council will work with the Highways Authority to deliver highway improvements across the District.	Highway improvements identified in the policy, and other identified improvements throughout the plan period, are not delivered by the Highways Authority.	The Council will work with the Highways Authority to deliver highway improvements across the District as indentified in the policy, and other identified improvements which may arise, through monitoring the District's highway needs throughout the plan period.	The Council will continue to work with Essex County Council to resolve any highways issues which arise across the District. Data will be monitored according the national Single Data List where necessary.

Policy	Implementation and Delivery	Potential Risk	Risk Mitigation	Monitoring
Transport				
T3 – Public Transport	The Council will work with developers and service providers to ensure public transport provision is in place. The Council will ensure development is well located in relation to public transport provision through the Local Development Framework and guided by the Council's development management.	Public transport operators do not deliver additional and improved services due to perceived lack of commercial viability. New development is not well located to public transport networks due to limited availability of land.	The Council will work with developers, public transport operators and Essex County Council to seek improvements to the public transport infrastructure, where necessary. The location of new development will be strategically allocated though the Allocations Development Plan Document, having regard to access to public transport. However, where new development has inadequate access to the public transport network, particularly to the east of the District, the Council will seek contributions towards sustainable transport infrastructure as appropriate. Development will be located in a manner that encourages the use of public transport, making provision more commercially viable.	The proportion of new development within 30 minutes public transport time of various facilities is recorded and reported in the Annual Monitoring Report or other reporting mechanism, as appropriate. Data will be monitored according the national Single Data List where necessary.

Policy	Implementation and Delivery	Potential Risk	Risk Mitigation	Monitoring
Transport				
T4 – South Essex Rapid Transit (SERT)	The Council will work closely with Essex County Council to ensure the smooth implementation of South Essex Rapid Transit (SERT).	SERT is not delivered by Essex County Council and partners.	The Council will work with, and assist as appropriate, Essex County Council to ensure the implementation of SERT.	The implementation of SERT will be monitored by Essex County Council, and Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership (Rochford District Council is one of the partners). Data will be monitored according the national Single Data List where necessary.
T5 – Travel Plans	The Council will work with developers to ensure travel plans are implemented where required. This will be guided by the Council's development management.	Travel plans are not implemented.	The requirement for particular developments to create and implement travel plans will be regulated through the development management process.	The Council will report on the number of planning applications accompanied by travel plans as part of the Annual Monitoring Report or other reporting mechanism, as appropriate. Data will be monitored according the national Single Data List where necessary.
T6 – Cycling and Walking	The Council will work with developers, Essex County Council and Sustrans to ensure, through the use of contributions and the designing of facilities at the planning stage, cycling and walking provision is delivered.	Cycling and walking provision across the District is not delivered.	The Council will work with developers, Essex County Council and Sustrans to ensure the delivery of cycling and walking provision. Such facilities will be required to be designed into developments, and contributions may be sought, as appropriate.	In conjunction with Essex County Council, the Council will monitor the provision of cycling and walking infrastructure. Data will be monitored according the national Single Data List where necessary.

Policy	Implementation and Delivery	Potential Risk	Risk Mitigation	Monitoring
Transport				
T7 – Greenways	Greenways will be implemented by the Council in conjunction with landowners and Essex County Council.	Greenways are not delivered.	The Council will work with partners to aid the delivery of several Greenways within the District identified in the Thames Gateway Green Grid Strategy.	The delivery of Greenways identified in the Core Strategy will be recorded by the Council and reported in the Annual Monitoring Report or other reporting mechanism, as appropriate. Data will be monitored according the national Single Data List where necessary.
T8 – Parking Standards	The Council will ensure the provision of the requisite parking provision through development management.	The appropriate parking standards for residential development (minimum standards) are not adhered to, resulting in adverse impacts on highway safety and efficiency. The appropriate parking standards for trip destinations (maximum standards) are not adhered to, resulting in an excessive uptake of land for car parking and discouraging alternatives to travel by private car.	The Council will regulate the provision of the requisite parking provision through the development management process.	The Council monitor the provision of car parking on completed developments within the District as part of the Annual Monitoring Report or other reporting mechanism, as appropriate.

Policy	Implementation and Delivery	Potential Risk	Risk Mitigation	Monitoring
Economic Development				
ED1 – Employment Growth	The Council will work with landowners and business representatives and will produce an updated Economic Development Strategy which, in conjunction with land use policies, will ensure economic development in appropriate locations.	Sustainable economic growth where high value skills enhancement meets local employment opportunities is not achieved.	The Council support the delivery of priorities in the Economic Development Strategy which is updated regularly to reflect the local economic climate and local employment opportunities. The Council supports the development of numerous projects which seek to achieve sustainable economic growth and increase local employment opportunities such as the enhancement of the District's commercial centres, the development of a skills training academy; and the enhancement of London Southend Airport.	Employment levels in the District will be used as an indication of success. The proportion of employment development within 30 minutes public transport time is recorded as part of the Annual Monitoring Report or other reporting mechanism, as appropriate. The Council will also monitor the total amount of additional employment floorspace by type and employment land available by type as part of the Annual Monitoring Report or other reporting mechanism, as appropriate. Data will be monitored according the national Single Data List where necessary.

Policy	Implementation and Delivery	Potential Risk	Risk Mitigation	Monitoring
Economic Development				
ED2 – London Southend Airport	The Council will produce a Joint Area Action Plan in conjunction with Southend Borough Council that will set out how the Council will ensure that London Southend Airport's economic potential is realised in a manner that balances environmental and social considerations. Stakeholders will be engaged with as part of the Joint Area Action Plan.	Failure to work effectively with key partners and stakeholders to realise the airport and surrounding area's potential.	The Council will work closely with key partners and stakeholders to ensure the delivery of the Joint Area Action Plan for London Southend Airport and environs.	Employment uses developed in and around London Southend Airport will be recorded by the Council.
ED3 – Existing Employment Land	Existing employment allocations will be protected from inappropriate development which would undermine their function in providing job opportunities through the management of development.	Loss of existing employment land to alternative uses not protected. The reallocation of "bad neighbour" industrial estates for alternative residential uses is not delivered due to difficulties in land assembly, reluctance for owners to relocate business, and/or lack of available alternative locations for businesses.	Existing employment land which is well used, sustainable and strategically located will be protected through the development management process. Identified "bad neighbour" industrial estates will be allocated for alternative residential uses through the Allocations Development Plan Document. The Council will work with landowners, developers, business representatives and other stakeholders to ensure this is delivered.	The use and development of employment land is monitored as part of the Annual Monitoring Report or other reporting mechanism, as appropriate. The Council will also monitor employment land available by type as part of the Annual Monitoring Report or other reporting mechanism, as appropriate.

Policy	Implementation and Delivery	Potential Risk	Risk Mitigation	Monitoring
Economic Development				
			The number of businesses within the Eco-Enterprise Centre, and the proportion of these sustained within the District once they have left the Centre, will be used to measure its success.	
ED4 – Future Employment Allocations	The Council will allocate future employment land through the Allocations Development Plan Document. The Council will work with landowners, developers, business representatives and other stakeholders (including infrastructure providers) to ensure the successful delivery of employment development.	Appropriate alternative employment land to create additional employment opportunities and relocate displaced businesses from "bad neighbour" industrial estates is not delivered. The Eco-Enterprise Centre is not feasible.	Alternative employment land will be allocated through the Allocations Development Plan Document. The Council will work with landowners, developers, business representatives and other stakeholders to ensure this is delivered and that displaced businesses are suitably relocated. A feasibility study will be carried out for the Eco-Enterprise Centre.	The development of future allocations with appropriate employment-generating uses will be monitored by the Council as part of the Annual Monitoring Report or other reporting mechanism, as appropriate. Employment levels within the District will be used to indicate success. The number of businesses within the Eco-Enterprise Centre, and the proportion of these sustained within the District once they have left the Centre, will be used to measure its success.

Policy	Implementation and Delivery	Potential Risk	Risk Mitigation	Monitoring
Economic Development				
	A site within the new business park to the north of London Southend Airport will be allocated for the Eco-Enterprise Centre. The Council will secure public funding which in turn will be used to lever private sector investment. In terms of delivering services on an ongoing basis, the Council will work in partnership with other key stakeholders and partners whose remit is to support and develop businesses in the District.			The Council will also monitor the total amount of additional employment floorspace by type and employment land available by type as part of the Annual Monitoring Report or other reporting mechanism, as appropriate. Data will be monitored according the national Single Data List where necessary.

Policy	Implementation and Delivery	Potential Risk	Risk Mitigation	Monitoring
Retail and Town Centres				
RTC1 – Retail in town centres	Development will be directed towards the District's town centres through the allocations process and by making the town centres more attractive to shoppers (see other Retail and Town Centres policies).	Regeneration of the District's town centres is not delivered and an enhanced market share of retail spending is not achieved.	The Council will prepare and implement Area Action Plans for the town centres seeking to improve their vitality, vibrancy, and spending retention through site specific regeneration plans. Retail development will also be controlled, directing it towards the town centres, as appropriate, through the development management process.	The retail use of the town centres is included as part of the Annual Monitoring Report or other reporting mechanism, as appropriate. Success of the policy will be indicated by a high proportion of retail uses and new retail development being located in town centres.
RTC2 – Sequential approach to retail development	A sequential approach will be applied to ensure that the majority of retail development is located in town centres. This will be guided by the Council's development management. Small-scale retail development in out-of-town centres will be delivered in partnership with developers as part of the allocations process.	Commercial pressure for additional retail development outside of town centres harms the vibrancy and vitality of the District's centres.	A sequential approach ensures that retail development is located in the most appropriate, sustainable and accessible locations. It will ensure that such development is directed towards town centre locations, whilst balancing the need to meet the needs of local residents. As such, this approach also recognises that local commercial centres play an important role in meeting the day-to-day needs of the local population. Thus small-scale retail development is supported, as appropriate.	The retail use of the town centres is included as part of the Annual Monitoring Report or other reporting mechanism, as appropriate. Success of the policy will be indicated by a high proportion of retail uses and new retail development being located in town centres.

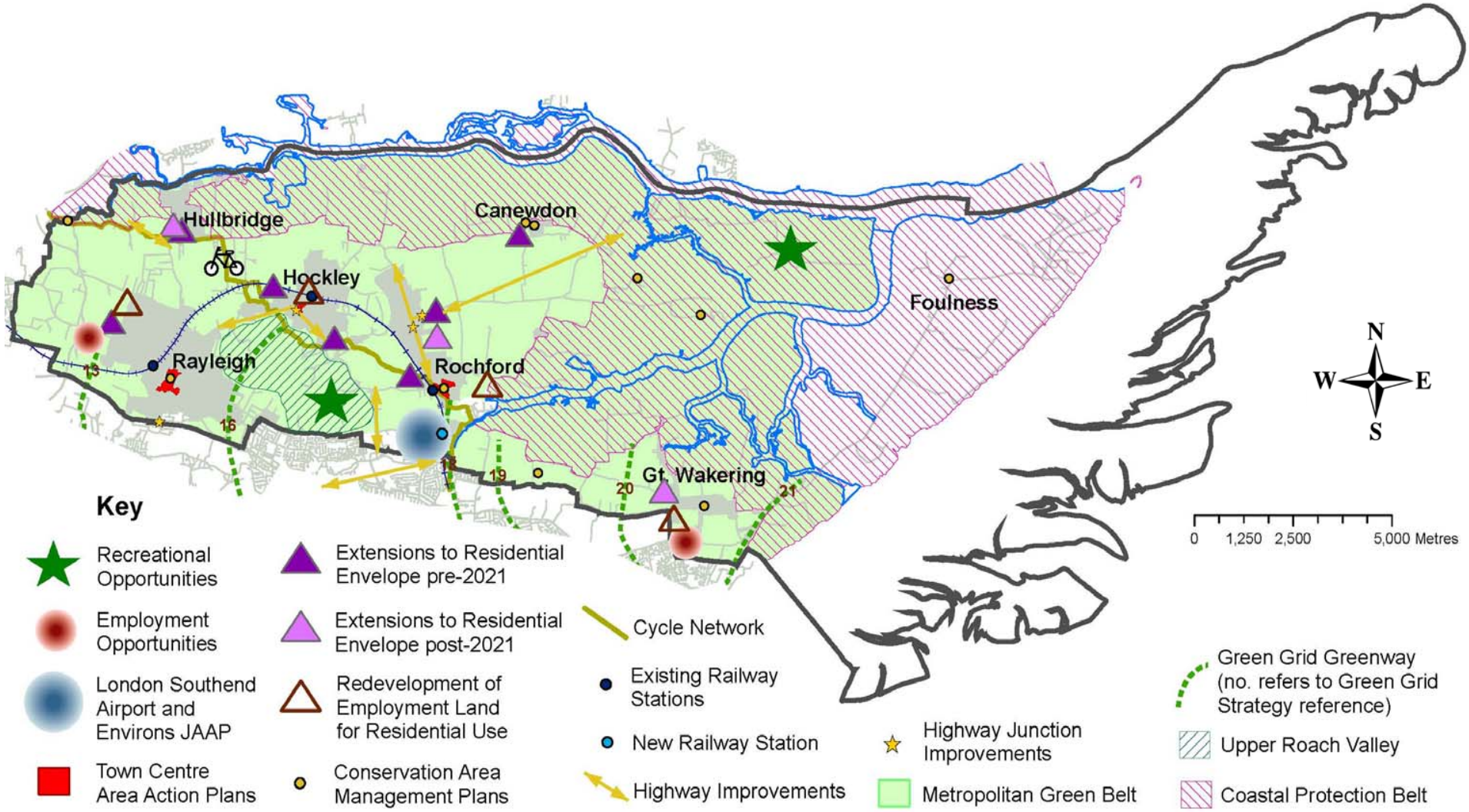
Policy	Implementation and Delivery	Potential Risk	Risk Mitigation	Monitoring
Retail and Town Centres				
RTC3 – Village and Neighbourhood Shops	The loss of village and neighbourhood shops will be resisted through the Council's development management. The Council will help maintain the viability of village and neighbourhood shops by ensuring that village communities continue to thrive – this will be achieved through a variety of actions, including ensuring there is adequate housing and service provision to support smaller settlements.	Pressure to accommodate alternative development results in the loss of retail uses within villages, to the detriment of village communities and making facilities harder to access, particularly for those without use of a car.	Additional small-scale retail uses within residential areas outside of the defined town centres will be encouraged, as appropriate, through the Council's development management. Existing retail uses within residential areas outside of the defined town centres will be protected through the development management process.	Annual surveys of the retail units within villages will be undertaken and reported in the Annual Monitoring Report or other reporting mechanism, as appropriate.
		Residential development does not take place within village areas, reducing the commercial viability of rural facilities.	Locations have been identified following consultation with developers, land owners and agents. Engagement with developers to ascertain deliverability of sites within locations has taken place and will continue throughout plan period.	

Policy	Implementation and Delivery	Potential Risk	Risk Mitigation	Monitoring
Retail and Town Centres				
RTC4 – Rayleigh Town Centre	The Area Action Plan for Rayleigh town centre will be produced by the Council with the input of specialist consultants, using masterplanning work already undertaken, and taking on board the views of local stakeholders. The Area Action Plan will be implemented in partnership with local developers and landowners.	The Area Action Plan for Rayleigh is not delivered. The regeneration of the town centre, providing a safe, accessible environment with a range of retail uses, evening leisure activities and community facilities, is not achieved.	The Area Action Plan for Rayleigh will be produced in consultation with the local community to ensure that it reflects local views and opportunities. The Council will work with landowners and its partners to deliver the Area Action Plan.	Surveys of retail areas are carried out on an annual basis. A drop in the number of vacant units and a rise in the total number of shops and facilities will indicate success. Revised retail and leisure studies will be carried out. Improvements in the town centre's health assessment will be seen as an indicator of success. Other indicators of the performance of the Town Centre Area Action Plan will include levels of anti-social behaviour reported in the area.
		Centres outside of the District draw retail expenditure away from Rayleigh and undermine regeneration potential of centre.	The Area Action Plan will identify actions to increase Rayleigh's attractiveness to shoppers and visitors, enabling it to compete with other centres.	

Policy	Implementation and Delivery	Potential Risk	Risk Mitigation	Monitoring
Retail and Town Centres				
RTC5 – Rochford Town Centre	The Area Action Plan for Rochford town centre will be produced by the Council with the input of specialist consultants, using masterplanning work already undertaken, and taking on board the views of local stakeholders. The Area Action Plan will be implemented in partnership with local developers and landowners.	The Area Action Plan for Rochford is not delivered. The regeneration of the town centre, providing a safe, accessible environment with a range of retail uses, evening leisure activities and an attractive market square, is not achieved. Centres outside of the District draw retail expenditure away from Rochford and undermine regeneration potential of centre.	The Area Action Plan for Rochford will be produced in consultation with the local community to ensure that it reflects local views and opportunities. The Council will work with landowners and its partners to deliver the Area Action Plan. The Area Action Plan will identify actions to increase Rochford's attractiveness to shoppers and visitors, centred upon its character and heritage, enabling it to compete with other centres.	Surveys of retail areas are carried out on an annual basis. A drop in the number of vacant units and a rise in the total number of shops and facilities will indicate success. Revised retail and leisure studies will be carried out. Improvements in the town centre's health assessment will be seen as an indicator of success. Other indicators of the performance of the Town Centre Area Action Plan will include levels of anti-social behaviour reported in the area.

Policy	Implementation and Delivery	Potential Risk	Risk Mitigation	Monitoring
Retail and Town Centres				
RTC6 – Hockley Town Centre	The Area Action Plan for Hockley town centre will be produced by the Council with the input of specialist consultants, using masterplanning work already undertaken, and taking on board the views of local stakeholders. The Area Action Plan will be implemented in partnership with local developers and landowners.	The Area Action Plan for Hockley is not delivered. The regeneration of the town centre, providing a safe, accessible environment with a range of retail uses, evening leisure activities and community facilities, is not achieved.	The Area Action Plan for Hockley will be produced in consultation with the local community to ensure that it reflects local views and opportunities. The Council will work with landowners and its partners to deliver the Area Action Plan.	Surveys of retail areas are carried out on an annual basis. A drop in the number of vacant units and a rise in the total number of shops and facilities will indicate success. Revised retail and leisure studies will be carried out. Improvements in the town centre's health assessment will be seen as an indicator of success. Other indicators of the performance of the Town Centre Area Action Plan will include levels of anti-social behaviour reported in the area.
		Centres outside of the District draw retail expenditure away from Hockley and undermine regeneration potential of centre.	The Area Action Plan will identify actions to increase Hockley's attractiveness to shoppers and visitors, centred upon its quality of environment, enabling it to compete with other centres.	

Key Diagram


Hullbridge
Canewdon
Hockley
Foulness
Rayleigh
Rochford
Gt. Wakering
13
16
19
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N
W
E
S
0 1,250 2,500 5,000 Metres
Key
Recreational Opportunities
Employment Opportunities
London Southend Airport and Environs JAAP
Town Centre Area Action Plans
Extensions to Residential Envelope pre-2021
Extensions to Residential Envelope post-2021
Redevelopment of Employment Land for Residential Use
Conservation Area Management Plans
Cycle Network
Existing Railway Stations
New Railway Station
Highway Improvements
Highway Junction Improvements
Metropolitan Green Belt
Green Grid Greenway (no. refers to Green Grid Strategy reference)
Upper Roach Valley
Coastal Protection Belt

Appendix 1 – Replacement Local Plan policies to be superseded by Core Strategy

On 5 June 2009 the Secretary of State wrote to Rochford District Council and issued direction under paragraph 1(3) of Schedule 8 to the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, saving a number of policies in the Replacement Local Plan (2006) which would otherwise have expired. A list of the policies saved can be viewed at **www.rochford.gov.uk/pdf/planning_schedule_of_saved_policies.pdf** or at Rochford Council Offices.

The Core Strategy contains policies that supersede a number of the saved policies within the Replacement Local Plan (2006). Such policies are listed in the table below.

Replacement Local Plan (2006) Policy to be Superseded	Replacement Policy in Core Strategy
HP1 – Overall housing provision	H1; H2; H3
HP2 – Housing site allocations	H2; H3
HP5 – Infrastructure	H1; H2; H3; Appendix H1; CLT1; CLT2; CLT3; CLT4; CLT5; CLT6; CLT7; T1; T2; T3; T5; T6
HP7 – Energy and water conservation	ENV9; ENV10
HP8 – Affordable housing	H4
HP9 – Rural exceptions	H4
HP13 -Mobility housing	H6
HP21 – Backland development	H1; H5
EB1 – Existing sites and the allocation of new sites	ED3; ED4
TP3 Traffic calming	T1
TP5 – Public transport	T3
TP8 – Car parking standards	T8
TP9 – London Southend Airport	ED2
LT1 – Rural issues	GB2
LT2 – Public playing pitch provision	CLT10
LT4 – Public open space	CLT5
LT5 – New public open space	CLT5
LT6 – Private open space	CLT5
LT7 – Safeguarding open space	CLT5

Replacement Local Plan (2006) Policy to be Superseded	Replacement Policy in Core Strategy
LT9 – Children's Play Spaces	CLT7; CLT8
LT10 – New Play Space Provision	CLT7; CLT8
LT17 – Tourism	CLT11
LT18 – Rural Tourism	CLT11
LT19 – New Hotel Accommodation	CLT11;GB2
BC1 – Conservation areas	CP2
NR1 – Special Landscape Areas	URV1; ENV2
NR2 – Historic Landscape	ENV1; CP3
NR7 – Local Nature Reserves and Wildlife sites	ENV1; ENV6
NR8 – Other landscape features of importance for nature conservation	ENV1; ENV6
SAT1 – New retail commercial and leisure development	RTC1; RTC2
SAT2 – District and local shopping centres and shops	RTC1; RTC2

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THE SA/SEA CORE STRATEGY ADOPTION STATEMENT

1. Introduction

The Rochford District Core Strategy was submitted to the Government for independent examination in January 2010, and following thorough scrutiny was found sound by the Inspector conducting the examination in October / November 2011. Rochford District Council subsequently adopted the Rochford District Core Strategy on [date to be inserted on adoption]

As an integral part of the preparation of the Rochford District Core Strategy, and in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Section 19 (5), the Plan has been subject to a Sustainability Appraisal (SA). The SA process assesses the likely significant economic, social and environmental effects of the Plan.

The SA of the Rochford District Core Strategy fully incorporates the requirements of the European Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment (Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004), and has played an important role in the development of the Rochford District Core Strategy. The SA has been prepared and updated at each stage in the preparation of the Plan. A timeline in the development of the Rochford District Core Strategy and accompanying SA undertaken is set out below (Table 1).

Table 1: Stages of Plan Production and accompanying SA/SEA work undertaken

Stage of Plan Production	Date	SA/SEA Work Undertaken
Identifying key sustainability issues	November 2005	SA Scoping Process (November 2005)
Rochford District Core Strategy Issues and Options	September 2006	Strategic Environmental Assessment And Sustainability Appraisal Environmental Report (September 2006)
Rochford District Core Strategy Preferred Options	May 2007	Strategic Environmental Assessment And Sustainability Appraisal Environmental Report (June 2007)
Rochford District Core Strategy Revised Preferred Options	October 2008	Sustainability Appraisal/ Strategic Environmental Assessment Sustainability Appraisal Technical Report (including update to SA Framework) (October 2008)
Rochford District Core Strategy Submission Document	September 2009	Sustainability Appraisal/ Strategic Environmental Assessment Sustainability Appraisal Technical Report (September 2009)
		Core Strategy Sustainability

Table 1: Stages of Plan Production and accompanying SA/SEA work undertaken

Stage of Plan Production	Date	SA/SEA Work Undertaken
		Appraisal Addendum 2011 (July 2011)
Rochford District Core Strategy Schedule of Minor Amendments	September 2011	SA / SEA implications reviewed
Inspector's Recommendations	October / November 2011	SA / SEA implications reviewed

At the national level, the guidance provided within Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Spatial Planning (PPS12) recognises that the SA process is an important component in providing a sound evidence base for the Plan. The SA process provides an assessment of the reasonable alternative options to the preferred strategy within the Plan, a procedure which was clarified in the Forest Heath Case[1].

The SA work undertaken in support of the Rochford District Core Strategy can be viewed on the Council's website[2].

The Council is required, as part of the procedures of adoption for the Rochford District Core Strategy in Regulation 36 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004, to prepare a statement explaining:

- how sustainability considerations have been integrated into the development plan document;
- how the options and consultation responses received on the development plan document and sustainability appraisal reports have been taken into account;
- the reasons for choosing the development plan document in light of other reasonable alternatives; and
- monitoring measures.

Each of the above matters will be considered in turn within this SA Statement.

2. How sustainability considerations have been integrated into the development plan document

The SA, incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), has played an integral part in the preparation of the Rochford District Core Strategy.

Each stage of the preparation of the Rochford District Core Strategy has been appraised against the SA Objectives, which have been refined and updated

[1] *Save Historic Newmarket v. Forest Heath District Council*
[2] www.rochford.gov.uk

throughout the development of the Plan and the accompanying SA. Where significant adverse effects, including environmental effects, have been predicted, the SA has sought where possible to identify means of offsetting these effects. Where it was considered that there were opportunities to enhance the sustainability of the proposals, recommendations were made as appropriate.

SA Scoping

During late 2005 a scoping process for Rochford was carried out by Essex County Council to help ensure that the SA covered key sustainability issues relevant to Rochford. Plans and programmes were reviewed and information was collated relating to the current and predicted social, environmental and economic characteristics of the areas. From these studies, key sustainability problems and issues were identified. An SA Framework was compiled, which comprised of a list of SA Objectives that aim to resolve the issues and problems identified. These SA Objectives were refined throughout the process and were used to test the draft DPDs as they were being prepared.

Issues and Options & SA/SEA Alternatives

The Core Strategy Issues and Options were developed initially during early 2006 and set out a range of options (or alternatives) for the following themes:

- The Green Belt and Strategic Gaps between Settlements
- Protection and Enhancement of the Upper Roach Valley
- Protection and Enhancement of Special Landscapes, Habitats and Species
- Housing Numbers and Phasing
- General Development Locations
- Affordable Housing
- Employment
- Good Design and Design Statements
- Character of Place and the Historic Environment
- Landscaping
- Energy and Water Conservation
- Renewable Energy
- Compulsory Purchase and Planning Obligations
- Community, Leisure and Tourism Facilities

This document was subject to SA in March 2006 by Essex County Council's environmental assessment team. This is reported in the Draft Core Strategy DPD SA/SEA Environmental Report, issued in September 2006. The range of options (63 in total) set out in the Issues and Options Document were assessed against the SA/SEA Objectives, set out in the report[3].

[3] Draft Core Strategy DPD SA/SEA Environmental Report available from http://www.rochford.gov.uk/PDF/planning_strategic_environmental_assessment_and_sustainability_appraisal_environmental_report.pdf (page 24)

The Environmental Report for the Issues and Options sets out the scoping report, baseline information and context for the appraisal of the options identified to address the issues in the Plan. The technical annexes appended to the main report systematically assess each of the options against the SA/SEA Objectives. The findings of this assessment have been summarised and included within the Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Addendum 2011[4] (Table 2).

Table 2: Summary of Approach to Alternatives Assessment and Selection

Options Considered and Appraised; Published Reports and Public Consultation	Reasoning for Progressing or Rejecting the Option in Plan Making
September 2006 Issues and Options SA Report:	
Strategic Option 1: The Green Belt & Strategic Gaps between Settlements Four alternatives considered: **A**- Relaxation of greenbelt policy. **B** - No strategic gaps, allowing coalescence in areas where the greenbelt performs only a token purpose. **C** - Continue its restrictive suite of policies for development within the greenbelt, in line with national guidance. **D** - Strategic gaps will be defined and protected by policy.	Options A and B were not taken forward due to the negative impacts they would have on the openness of the greenbelt and on the District as a whole. A combination of the other options was taken forward to reflect better sustainable development, and to promote a more sustainable strategic approach whilst minimising negative impacts on the District.
Strategic Option 2: Protection and Enhancement of the Upper Roach Valley Five alternatives considered: **A** - No country park allocation. **B** - No local landscape designations. **C** - No need for a further designation. **D** - A policy providing for protection/ enhancement and increased recreation opportunities. **E** - Identify land to be included in the Cherry Orchard Jubilee County Park and any further proposed extensions.	Option A was rejected as it has the most detrimental impact and greatest proportion of negative impacts. In contrast options D and E have the greatest proportion of major positive and positive impacts.
Strategic Option 3: Protection and Enhancement of Special Landscape Areas Seven alternatives considered: **A** - No local landscape designations. **B** - No coastal protection belt.	Options A, B and C resulted in significant negative impacts and so were discounted. Option D shows a high uncertain result in the short medium and long term. Options E, F and G showed some

[4] Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Addendum 2011 available from http://www.rochford.gov.uk/PDF/pla_policy_corestrat_sa_apprasial2011.pdf

Table 2: Summary of Approach to Alternatives Assessment and Selection

Options Considered and Appraised; Published Reports and Public Consultation	Reasoning for Progressing or Rejecting the Option in Plan Making
September 2006 Issues and Options SA Report:	
C - No protection for the landscape. **D** - Freedom for agriculture, horticulture, equine uses, leisure and tourism uses whilst restricting employment and housing uses. **E** - Protection for the undeveloped coast. **F** - Protection for the three Special Landscape Areas. **G** - Protection of the Area of Historic Landscape and Ancient Woodlands.	major positive impacts and as such, a combination of Options E, F and G was taken forward.
Strategic Option 4: Housing numbers Four alternatives considered: **A** - Not attempting to meet the cascaded figure due to the restrictive development position with regard to the green belt. **B** - Relying on windfall development and urban intensification, to prevent the need for any green belt releases. **C** - Not allocating land to accommodate all the dwelling units and relying on a percentage of windfall development and urban intensification. **D** - Ensuring enough land is allocated to accommodate all of the cascaded figure for homes from the East of England Plan (RSS14) for the period 2001 to 2021.	Options A, B and C demonstrate a declining positive effect over time, with negative implications in the future. Option D has a positive to uncertain effect in all temporal extents. As such, and having regard to the requirements for Development Plan Documents, Option D was taken forward.
Strategic Option 5: General Development Locations Five alternatives considered: **A** - Greater dispersal to minor settlements, enabling possible regeneration of local facilities. **B** - Split the housing allocation evenly between the parishes (excluding Foulness), so that each area gets a small amount of housing. **C** - Develop a new settlement, well related to transport links and providing its own basic infrastructure. **D** - Focus solely on an expansion of one settlement, creating a significant urban expansion. **E** - Allocate the total number of housing	The September 2006 Issues and Options SA Report noted Options A and B have major negative effects in the short, medium and long term. It was also demonstrated that option C would result in increasingly negative impacts throughout time. Option D has a diverse range of impacts with both negative and positive effects whilst Option E has the greatest concentration of positive effects. As such, Option E was carried forward and subsequently developed having regard to the evidence base and the results of community involvement.

Table 2: Summary of Approach to Alternatives Assessment and Selection

Options Considered and Appraised; Published Reports and Public Consultation	Reasoning for Progressing or Rejecting the Option in Plan Making
September 2006 Issues and Options SA Report:	
units to the top and second tier settlements, to gain a smaller number of large sites which will deliver the greatest amount of infrastructure improvements.	
Strategic Option 6: Affordable Housing Three alternatives considered: **A** - 30% of all new homes in the District be affordable on all sites. **B** - 50% of all new homes on sites in excess of 10 units will be affordable. **C** - Affordable housing will be set at 40% on sites specified in the Allocations DPD.	Option A has no impact on a number of the sustainability criteria; however there are positive impacts on criteria related to housing. Option B also has a high degree of no impact and uncertainty; however there is a greater concentration of positive impacts. Option C has a greater number of major positive impacts. The preferred option on affordable housing was taken forward having regard to the above, as well as issues of viability and the findings of additional evidence base documents.
Strategic Option 7: Accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers Two alternatives considered: **A** - No Gypsy or Traveller Site to be identified in the green belt. **B** - Accommodation needs for Gypsy and Travellers will be met by identifying in an existing residential area for a site and formally specifying it in the Allocations DPD.	Option A generally indicates no significant effects for the short-longer term with some minor negative impacts. The adoption of Option B would result in a greater amount of positive effects over the same time period. The preferred approach was developed having regard to the above, and other issues such as deliverability and land supply.
Strategic Option 8: Rural Exceptions Two alternatives considered: **A** - No rural exceptions policy. **B** - For windfall sites, 30% of all units will be required to be affordable. On rural exception sites all the units will be required to remain affordable in perpetuity.	Option A generally demonstrated strong neutral impacts, with some negative impact also. Option B in comparison had no negative impacts, but a greater degree of uncertainty. Having regard to the above, Option B was taken forward into the next iteration of the Core Strategy as a preferred option.
Strategic Option 9: Employment Four alternatives considered: **A** - No jobs figure to be included.	Options C and D displayed greater positive impacts and significantly lower no impact or negative effects than options A and B.

Table 2: Summary of Approach to Alternatives Assessment and Selection

Options Considered and Appraised; Published Reports and Public Consultation	Reasoning for Progressing or Rejecting the Option in Plan Making
September 2006 Issues and Options SA Report:	
B - Provide no details of the general locations **C** - Allocate a total number of jobs to be created in the District. It will specify areas within the District and their share of the overall total. **D** - Programme employment development in advance of new housing.	Having regard to the above a combination of Options C and D was taken forward into the next iteration of the Core Strategy as a preferred option.
Strategic Option 10: Good Design and Design Statements Seven alternatives considered: **A** - No emphasis on design. **B** - No emphasis on lifetime housing. **C** - No emphasis on sustainable design. **D** - Prescriptive design guidance within policy to ensure uniform design and high standards. **E** - Push design statements to the fore of the planning application process. **F** - Require 25% of units provided on all housing sites over 10 units to meet a lifetime housing standard. **G** - Require, at least compliance with Code for Sustainable Homes the minimum standards.	Options A and B show mostly no impact with some negative impacts, whilst Option C indicates mostly no impact results alongside some positive effects. Options D and E exhibit a combination of mostly no impact effects, with major positive and negative impacts. Option F shows a very high no impact result with less major positive results than other options. Option G demonstrates a slightly lower no impact effect, as well as major positive and positive results. Consequently a combination of the above was taken forward to the next stage.
Strategic Option 11:Character of Place Three alternatives considered: **A** - No emphasis on character of place. **B** - Prescriptive design guidance within policy to ensure uniform design and high standards. **C** - Protection of the District's identity and ensuring that new development respects the local character.	Options A and B display a high level of no impact and negative results, with option B showing positive impacts too. Option C has the greatest concentration of major positive and positive effects - and consequently Option C was taken forward.
Strategic Option 12: Landscaping Three alternatives considered: **A** - No emphasis on landscaping. **B** - Continue determining landscaping details post-application and through enforcement work. **C** - Push landscaping to the fore of the	Options A and B show strong no impact results, with some negative and uncertain results. Option C also shows a high concentration of no impacts, but also major positives. As such, Option C was taken forward as the preferred option in the next

Table 2: Summary of Approach to Alternatives Assessment and Selection

Options Considered and Appraised; Published Reports and Public Consultation	Reasoning for Progressing or Rejecting the Option in Plan Making
September 2006 Issues and Options SA Report:	
planning application process and making them a prerequisite for determination for certain application types.	iteration of the Core Strategy.
Strategic Option 13: Energy and Water Conservation Four alternatives considered: **A** - No emphasis on sustainable design. **B** - Deliver carbon-neutral development. **C** - Ensure new development promotes energy and water efficient buildings-also reduces the need to travel. **D** - Require compliance with the minimum standards, as set out in the Code for Sustainable Homes.	Options A, B and C all display strong no impact results, with some uncertain effects. Option D shows a higher quantity of no impact result, however, also shows major positive impacts. Option D was taken forward in order to achieve the most positive impacts.
Strategic Option 14: Renewable Energy Three alternatives considered: **A** - Push for any renewable energy uses in any location. **B** - Set a threshold for development size or number before requiring renewable energy to be included. **C** - Require all new housing and employment development to include renewable energy provision.	Option A has major negative and negative effects as well as no impact results. Option B shows a high no impact effect result, with no negative impacts. Option C indicates the same outcome as Option B but with additional benefits for provision of renewable energy. As such, Option C was taken forward as the preferred option in the next iteration of the Core Strategy.
Strategic Option 15: Compulsory Purchase Three alternatives considered: **A** – No compulsory purchase policy and attempt to use the legislation if required. **B** - Designate specific potential compulsory purchase sites. **C** - Set the framework to ensure that employment, residential, recreational and environmental enhancements for the district can be brought forward using compulsory purchase powers.	Option A has a high no impact and uncertain effect similar to Option B which also shows strong positive and major positive effects. Option C shows no uncertain impacts and shows high major positive and positive effects. As such, Option C was taken forward as the preferred option in the next iteration of the Core Strategy.
Strategic Option 16: Community, Leisure and Tourism Facilities **A** - Protect the green belt without providing any further guidance, leaving it	Option A shows a consistent positive effect, uncertain effect and no impact, with no negative implications. Options B and C show a higher degree of uncertainty and a higher negative

Table 2: Summary of Approach to Alternatives Assessment and Selection

Options Considered and Appraised; Published Reports and Public Consultation	Reasoning for Progressing or Rejecting the Option in Plan Making
September 2006 Issues and Options SA Report:	
up to central government in its review of Planning Policy Guidance Note 2. **B** - Reduce protection of the green belt to allow for community, tourism and leisure facilities. **C** - No policy on this issue, as it is currently not a major factor in the District. **D** - Provide a policy dealing with community, leisure and tourism proposals, which will provide clarity for developments, particularly within the Green Belt.	element whereas Option D has completely uncertain implications. As such, Option A with elements of Option D were taken forward to the next iteration of the Core Strategy, in order to provide the greatest positive impact whilst accounting for local circumstances within a central government policy.

The development of the Issues and Options Document, and the subsequent SA/SEA work undertaken considering the alternative options, informed the development of the Preferred Options Document.

Preferred Options

The Preferred Options Document was prepared in 2007, and addressed the same themes as the Issues and Options Document. It was subject to detailed SA by Essex County Council's environmental assessment team which was reported in the Core Strategy Preferred Options SA/SEA Environmental Report in June 2007. The options set out in the Preferred Options Document were thoroughly assessed against the SA/SEA Objectives, set out in the report[5] identifying the impact of the Preferred Options on the sustainability objectives and potential cumulative and significant effects.

The SA of the Preferred Options Document identified a number of cumulative and significant effects to be considered as a result of the preferred strategy. Furthermore, the SA made recommendations for further consideration, which are set out in Table 3. This table also details how they have been considered in the development of the next iteration of the Plan.

Table 3: Recommendations for further consideration and how these have been considered in the development of the Plan

Recommended issues for further consideration	How have these been considered?
Further consideration should be given to the alignment between the spatial strategy for the District and the	The Revised Preferred Options Document significantly altered the spatial strategy. This document

[5] Core Strategy Preferred Options SA/SEA Environmental Report http://www.rochford.gov.uk/pdf/planning_strategic_environmental_assessment_and_sustainability_appraisal_environmental_report_2007.pdf (page 9-11)

Table 3: Recommendations for further consideration and how these have been considered in the development of the Plan

Recommended issues for further consideration	How have these been considered?
associated topic-based policies.	identified in the Characteristics, Issues and Opportunities chapter that "Different parts of the District have a stronger relationship with nearby towns" (page 18). From this the balanced strategy to the distribution of housing was developed, which primarily focuses development within the highest tier settlements with some housing directed towards the lower tiers (with the exception of tier 4) to ensure the retention of local services and facilities. This strategy also links housing with areas which have a close relationship with the District's settlements such as Southend, Chelmsford and Basildon.
Further consideration should be given to the alignment between the settlement strategy and the economic and transport strategy for the District.	This was reconsidered within the next iteration of the Core Strategy. Options were subsequently appraised in the Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment Sustainability Appraisal Technical Report (October 2008).
Further consideration should be given to further appraisal of the range of development locations in the light of the scale and distribution of development commitments and potential further urban capacity.	More specific, yet still strategic, general locations were considered in the next iteration of the Core Strategy. The Urban Capacity Study was updated, and a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment was produced with the results accounted for in later iterations.
Further consideration should be given to undertaking an Employment Land Review and appraisal of employment locations.	An Employment Land Study was undertaken in 2008. Following this appraisal and the recommendations suggested for the spatial strategy for future employment, the next iteration (the Revised Preferred Options Document) included more robust and spatial options for employment development based on these findings. These options were subsequently appraised in the Sustainability

Table 3: Recommendations for further consideration and how these have been considered in the development of the Plan

Recommended issues for further consideration	How have these been considered?
	Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment Sustainability Appraisal Technical Report (October 2008).
Further consideration should be given to seeking a screening and scoping opinion on the need for appropriate assessment of possible effects on nearby European sites under the Habitats Directive.	The Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report is the culmination of work that had been ongoing since February 2009 that included HRA workshops (Council officers supported by specialist consultants Enfusion Ltd, 12 February and 8 July 2009), as well as discussions with Natural England with regard to the scope, approach, findings and recommendations of the HRA. The final report was completed in January 2010. As set out in the Statement of Common Ground between the Council and Natural England published in April 2010[6], it was agreed between the two parties "that the Core Strategy can be made sound and legally compliant through suggested changes, without the need to revisit a previous stage in the Core Strategy process." (paragraph 1.25).[
Further consideration should be given to discussion with transport and service authorities and operators to define infrastructure and services required to support the spatial strategy.	Discussions and consultation with transport and service authorities and operators have been ongoing throughout the development of the Rochford District Core Strategy. Strategic issues were addressed in subsequent iterations.
Further consideration should be given to the alignment between the spatial strategy and the requirements for its implementation in a sustainable manner.	In order to support the spatial vision, and development in the identified general locations, further details in respect of how development was to be implemented were set out in subsequent iterations of the Plan
The next iteration of the Plan should be accompanied by a Draft Monitoring Framework that includes	A draft Implementation, Delivery and Monitoring chapter for the preferred options was included within the next

[6] Statement of Common Ground between Rochford District Council and Natural England available from http://www.rochford.gov.uk/pdf/corestrat_rep_ne_rdc.pdf

Table 3: Recommendations for further consideration and how these have been considered in the development of the Plan

Recommended issues for further consideration	How have these been considered?
proposed indicators, particularly for the potential significant effects.	iteration of the Plan.
The next iteration of the Plan should be accompanied by a Draft Implementation Framework that includes a list of necessary infrastructure and service provision and mitigation measures to facilitate implementation of the strategy, together with their delivery timescales.	A draft Implementation, Delivery and Monitoring chapter for the preferred options was included within the next iteration of the Plan. A list of infrastructure requirements, developed in consultation with service providers, was defined in the next iteration of the Plan (Appendix H1). Such infrastructure requirements are also accompanied by indicative costs (Appendix CLT1).

Following the findings of the SA on the 2007 Preferred Options Document, and taking into account other evidence base considerations, such as consultation responses, the Council significantly revised the Plan during 2008.

Revised Preferred Options

The Revised Preferred Options for the Core Strategy were developed during spring / summer 2008 and the document was subject to detailed SA by specialist consultants, Enfusion, in October 2008. A revised SA Framework was also prepared and was sent out to statutory consultees for comment in September 2008. The finalised SA Framework which included 13 SA objectives is set out in Table 4. The vision and objectives were appraised and performed well against the majority of the 13 SA objectives[7]. Each Preferred Option was assessed against the full SA Framework objectives. This is detailed within Appendix VI of the Revised Preferred Options SA.

Table 4: The Revised Preferred Options SA Framework

SA Objective	Decision-Aiding Question Will it (the Policy)…?
1. Balanced Communities (SEA topic: Population & Human Health, Material Assets)	
To ensure the delivery of high quality Sustainable communities where people want to live and work	_ Will it ensure the phasing of infrastructure, including community facilities to meet ongoing and future needs? _ Will it ensure the regeneration and enhancement of existing communities? _ Will it ensure equal opportunities and that all sections of the community are catered for?

[7] Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment Sustainability Appraisal Technical Report (October 2008) available from http://www.rochford.gov.uk/PDF/planning_technical_report.pdf (page 13-16)

Table 4: The Revised Preferred Options SA Framework

SA Objective	Decision-Aiding Question Will it (the Policy)…?
	_ Will it meet the needs of an ageing population? _ Will the policies and options proposed seek to enhance the qualifications and skills of the local community? _ Will income and quality-of-life disparities be reduced?
2. Healthy & Safe Communities (SEA topic: Population & Human Health)	
Create healthy and safe environments where crime and disorder or fear of crime does not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion	_ Will it ensure the delivery of high quality, safe and inclusive design? _ Will it improve health and reduce health inequalities? _ Will it promote informal recreation and encourage healthy, active lifestyles? _ Will green infrastructure and networks be promoted and/or enhanced? _ Will it minimise noise pollution? _ Will it minimise light pollution?
3. Housing (SEA topic: Population & Human Health)	
To provide everybody with the opportunity to live in a decent home	_ Will it increase the range and affordability of housing for all social groups? _ Will a mix of housing types and tenures be promoted? _ Will it reduce the number of unfit homes? _ Does it promote high quality design? _ Is there sustainable access to key services? _ Does it meet the resident's needs in terms of sheltered and lifetime homes or those that can be easily adapted so?
4. Economy & Employment (SEA topic: Population & Human Health, Material Assets)	
To achieve sustainable levels of economic growth/prosperity and promote town centre vitality/viability	_ Does it promote and enhance existing centres by focusing development in such centres? _ Will it improve business development? _ Does it enhance consumer choice through the provision of a range of shopping, leisure, and local services to meet the needs of the entire community? _ Does it promote mixed use and high density development in urban centres? _ Does it promote a wide variety of jobs across all sectors? _ Does it secure more opportunities for residents to work in the district?
5. Accessibility (SEA topic: Population & Human Health, Air, Climatic Factors)	
To promote more sustainable transport	_ Will it increase the availability of sustainable transport modes?

Table 4: The Revised Preferred Options SA Framework

SA Objective	Decision-Aiding Question Will it (the Policy)…?
choices both for people and moving freight ensuring access to jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services by public transport, walking and cycling	_ Will it seek to encourage people to use alternative modes of transportation other than the private car, including walking and cycling? _ Will it contribute positively to reducing social exclusion by ensuring access to jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services? _ Will it reduce the need to travel? _ Does it seek to encourage development where large volumes of people and/or transport movements are located in sustainable accessible locations? _ Does it enable access for all sections of the community, including the young, women, those with disabilities and the elderly? _ Does it secure more opportunities for residents to work in the District, and for out-commuting to be reduced?
6. Biodiversity (SEA topic: Fauna & Flora)	
To conserve and enhance the biological and geological diversity of the environment as an integral part of social, environmental and economic development	_ Will it conserve and enhance natural/semi natural habitats, including the District's distinctive estuaries and salt marshes? _ Will it conserve and enhance species diversity, and in particular avoid harm to protected species and priority species? _ Will it maintain and enhance sites designated for their nature conservation interest? _ Will it conserve and enhance sites of geological significance? _ Does land use allocation reflect the scope of using brownfield land for significant wildlife interest where viable and realistic.
7. Cultural Heritage (SEA topic: Cultural Heritage, Landscape)	
To maintain and enhance the cultural heritage and assets of the District	_ Will it protect and enhance sites, features and areas of historical, archaeological and cultural value in both urban and rural areas? _ Will it support locally-based cultural resources and activities?
8. Landscape & Townscape (SEA topic: Landscape ,Cultural Heritage)	
To maintain and enhance the quality of landscapes and townscapes	_ Does it seek to enhance the range and quality of the public realm and open spaces? _ Will it contribute to the delivery of the enhancement, effective management and appropriate use of land in the urban fringe? _ Will it reduce the amount of derelict, degraded and underused land? _ Will it conserve and/or improve the landscape character?

Table 4: The Revised Preferred Options SA Framework

SA Objective	Decision-Aiding Question Will it (the Policy)…?
	_ Will it preserve and/or enhance townscape character and value? _ Will the local character/vernacular be preserved and enhanced through development
9. Climate Change & Energy (SEA topic: Climatic Factors)	
To reduce contributions to climate change	_ Will it reduce emissions of greenhouse gases by reducing energy consumption? _ Will it lead to an increased proportion of energy needs being met from renewable sources? _ Does it adapt to and provide for the consequences of climate change in a largely low-lying area and allow species room to migrate?
10. Water (SEA topic: Water, Fauna & Flora)	
To improve water quality and reduce the risk of flooding	_ Will it improve the quality of inland water? _ Will it improve the quality of coastal waters? _ Will it provide for an efficient water conservation and supply regime? _ Will it provide for effective wastewater treatment? _ Will it require the provision of sustainable drainage systems in new development? _ Will it reduce the risk of flooding and promote sustainable flood management, including, where possible, the enhancement of habitats and landscape?
11. Land & Soil (SEA topic: Soils)	
To maintain and improve the quality of the District's land and soil	_ Does it ensure the re-use of previously-developed land and urban areas in preference to Greenfield sites? _ Will higher-density development be promoted where appropriate? _ Will soil quality be preserved? _ Will it promote the remediation of contaminated land? _ Will the best and most versatile agricultural land be protected?
12. Air Quality (SEA topic: Air, Climatic Factors)	
To improve air quality	_ Will air quality be improved through reduced emissions (eg. through reducing car travel)? _ Will it direct transport movements away from AQMAs and/or potentially significant junctions?
13 Sustainable Design & Construction (SEA topic: Human Health, Material Assets, Climatic Factors, Fauna & Flora, Water, Air)	
To promote sustainable design and construction	_ Will it ensure the use of sustainable design principles, e.g. encouraging a mix of uses? _ Will it integrate new opportunities for biodiversity and habitat creation, where possible?

Table 4: The Revised Preferred Options SA Framework

SA Objective	Decision-Aiding Question Will it (the Policy)…?
	_ Will climate proofing design measures be incorporated? _ Will it require the re-use and recycling of construction materials? _ Will it encourage a reduction in waste and sustainable waste management? _ Will it encourage locally-sourced materials? _ Will it require best-practice sustainable construction methods, for example in energy and water efficiency?

Where there were any potential adverse effects predicted for sustainability, or opportunities identified to improve the sustainability of the Core Strategy, recommendations were made. The Core Strategy Preferred Options SA Report identified a number of recommendations for enhancement and mitigation, and identified a number of areas that could be given further attention in the development of the Submission Document, to ensure that an overall consistent and holistic approach to sustainability is adopted[8]. The Core Strategy Submission SA Report[9] details how the recommendations suggested at the Revised Preferred Options stage through SA work have been incorporated into the next iteration of the Plan (Table 5 and 6).

The table below sets out the recommendations for mitigation and enhancement for further consideration identified at the Revised Preferred Options stage and how these have been integrated into the development of the Submission Document.

Table 5: Recommendations for mitigation and enhancement and how these have been incorporated into the Submission Document

Recommendations for Mitigation & Enhancement	How the Plan has incorporated the recommendations
Further consideration could be given to the relationship between housing and employment development in the plan and how a mix of uses can be encouraged in new development.	Submission Policies RTC4, RTC5 and RTC6 for town centres seek to engender mixed-use developments and provide additional employment uses within close proximity to residential areas.
Some concern was raised as to the impact on existing communities of new development proposed at Great	The Council has advised that there will be considerable community involvement in the preparation of the

[8] Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment Sustainability Appraisal Technical Report (October 2008) available from http://www.rochford.gov.uk/PDF/planning_technical_report.pdf (page 51-53; a detailed table of recommendations for enhancement and mitigation is provided in Appendix VII)

[9] Core Strategy Submission SA Report available from http://www.rochford.gov.uk/PDF/planning_cs_sustainability_appraisal_core_strategy_submission_document.pdf (section 7; Tables 7.1 and 7.2; Appendix VIII)

Table 5: Recommendations for mitigation and enhancement and how these have been incorporated into the Submission Document

Recommendations for Mitigation & Enhancement	How the Plan has incorporated the recommendations
Wakering and Hullbridge - extensive consultation should be undertaken to ensure community concerns are addressed.	Allocations Development Plan Document. The Core Strategy also encourages input into the design process at a very local level by, for example, encouraging the development of village design statements and requiring developers to have regard to these in formulating their proposals.
Further encouragement could be given to establishing green industries, and the greening of existing industries, in order to minimise the effects of increased economic growth.	The Core Strategy seeks to facilitate the delivery of the Economic Development Strategy, which seeks to promote industries involved in the development of environmental technologies. The Core Strategy also recognises that projects that will engender environmental benefits will also have employment benefits, and supports the development of Wallasea Island Wild Coast project and the Cherry Orchard Jubilee County Park. Core Strategy Policy GB2 promotes green tourism as a form of rural diversification and policy ENV10 requires new non-residential buildings, as a minimum, to meet the BREEAM rating of 'Very Good'.
The proposed eco-enterprise centre should be located in a highly accessible location. A town centre location would maximise synergies in terms of making connections with existing businesses and services, in addition to having environmental benefits.	The eco-enterprise centre is proposed for location within the Joint Area Action Plan area. Whilst this is not a town centre location, it is an area where an eco-enterprise centre is most likely to be successful due to the focus of economic activity and agglomeration of businesses proposed there. In addition, the Joint Area Action Plan area is the focus of public transport improvements, including South Essex Rapid Transit, meaning that it will be one of the employment areas best served by public transport in the District.
Council may wish to set further	Core Strategy Policy ENV10 requires

Table 5: Recommendations for mitigation and enhancement and how these have been incorporated into the Submission Document

Recommendations for Mitigation & Enhancement	How the Plan has incorporated the recommendations
specific targets/requirements for non-residential buildings for water efficiency.	new non-residential buildings, as a minimum, to meet the BREEAM rating of 'Very Good'. BREEAM standards include targets relating to water efficiency and BREEAM credits are awarded where the following measures are in place: _ Water efficient appliances _ Water metering _ Leak detection systems _ Water butts
Sustainable Drainage Systems can have a range of wider benefits, including providing spaces for recreation and contributing to biodiversity. This could be further recognised in the submission policy wording.	The Core Strategy Submission Document promotes sustainable drainage systems and detail regarding their implementation is being examined in the Allocations Development Plan Document and, where applicable, Area Action Plans.
A more supportive approach to the development of renewable energy is recommended for the submission document, which encourages the development of renewables whilst considering environmental and aesthetic constraints. The provision of a secure, clean future supply of energy for the District could be served by a stronger co-ordinated policy approach to energy.	The Core Strategy is now more supportive of the development of renewable energy, through the addition of Submission Policy ENV8 ENV8 - On-site Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Generation.
There are opportunities for synergistic positive effects with biodiversity and cultural heritage, incorporating walking/cycling routes and local heritage into the wider green infrastructure strategy and Greenways.	The Council identified that this is one of the aims of the Greenways set out in the Thames Gateway Green Grid Strategy and supported by Policy T7 of the Core Strategy.
There are particular linkages and synergies between the provision of green infrastructure, leisure facilities, open space, walking and cycling facilities with meeting SA objectives on biodiversity, health and culture. The submission document could further explore opportunities for healthy lifestyles (for examples links with green grid, active facilities,	The Council does not consider it appropriate for the Core Strategy to be overly prescriptive with regard to the nature of such facilities; however, the specifics of youth facilities will be determined at a local level having regard to specific needs of young people.

Table 5: Recommendations for mitigation and enhancement and how these have been incorporated into the Submission Document

Recommendations for Mitigation & Enhancement	How the Plan has incorporated the recommendations
outdoor gyms), biodiversity enhancement and incorporating cultural heritage into the green grid concept.	
The plan could encourage appropriate design and landscape selection to minimise water consumption and maximise natural filtration, for example, when designing open space and play spaces.	The Council advised that the development of new play spaces will be required to comply with other policies within the Core Strategy (as well as national policy), including those that relate to sustainable construction.

In addition to the key recommendations above, the SA of the Revised Preferred Options also identified a number of areas that could be given further attention in the submission document. The table below sets out how these have been incorporated into the Submission Document.

Table 6: Recommended issues for further consideration and how these have been considered in the development of the Submission Document

Recommended issues for further consideration	How have these been considered?
Further consideration could be given in the plan to the effects of climate change and possible outcomes for the District (e.g. habitat fragmentation, coastal squeeze, accelerated sea-level rise).	The Council has advised that Core Strategy Policy ENV1 supports the implementation of the Crouch and Roach Management Plan, which seeks to address such issues. In addition, policy ENV3 states that the Council will continue to work with the Environment Agency to manage flood risk in a sustainable manner through capitalising on opportunities to make space for water wherever possible and through the continued provision of flood defences where necessary. This will include working with the Environment Agency on the Shoreline Management Plan for Essex, which will address issues such as habitat fragmentation, coastal squeeze and potential accelerated sea-level rise.
The plan could have a stronger focus on heritage and culture- for example through committing to the Rochford/ Southend 'cultural hub' described in the East of England Plan. There could also be stronger recognition of the	Core Strategy Policy ENV1 has been amended to include, "the Council will also protect landscapes of historical and archaeological interest".

Table 6: Recommended issues for further consideration and how these have been considered in the development of the Submission Document

Recommended issues for further consideration	How have these been considered?
District's maritime and industrial heritage, and the architecture of rural towns and villages and agricultural buildings. Further policy guidance should be provided for the protection of listed buildings and archaeology.	
Further consideration could be given to the need to protect and enhance landscape character, including a specific policy on this.	See above.
Further consideration could be given to meeting skills and training needs for the wider community, including higher education and education for an ageing population.	This matter should be further considered by council in further iterations of the Community Strategy.

It is clear from the above table that the recommendations arising from the SA of the Revised Preferred Options Document have informed the development of the Submission Document and improved the sustainability of the DPD.

Submission

The Core Strategy Submission Document was developed early during 2009 and subject to SA in August of the same year. A review of the Draft Core Strategy Submission Document was undertaken in June 2009 to establish how the changes made to the Core Strategy since the Revised Preferred Options Document affected the findings of the SA Technical Report (consulted on in November 2008).

It was determined that the findings of the detailed SA undertaken for the Revised Preferred Options Document would not be significantly affected. Therefore further detailed SA work was only undertaken for two new Submission policies (Policy ENV8 and T2). This is in accordance with Government guidance on Sustainability Appraisal[10]. However, a number of changes were made to existing policies within the Revised Preferred Options Document, and these have also been considered in the preparation of the Core Strategy Submission SA Report. Where relevant, additional commentary was added as addendum text in italics (see Chapter 5 of the Core Strategy Submission SA Report) to consider the significance of those changes.

The vision and objectives were also re-appraised due to changes made since Revised Preferred Options. The compatibility analysis and commentary for the

[10] Core Strategy Submission SA Report available from http://www.rochford.gov.uk/PDF/planning_cs_sustainability_appraisal_core_strategy_submission_document.pdf (see paragraph 5.3)

individual themes (which is based on the structure of the Submission Document) against the SA Objectives can be found in Appendix V of the Core Strategy Submission SA Report (September 2009).

The Core Strategy Submission SA Report notes that "On the whole, the findings of the SA suggest that the Core Strategy will make significant contributions to the progression of SA Objectives." (paragraph 5.9) The recommendations suggested through the SA of the Revised Preferred Options Document were considered by the Council and, where appropriate, incorporated into the Submission Document, as summarised in Table 5 and 6. A progression table was included on the appendices (Appendix VIII of the Core Strategy Submission SA Report) showing how the SA recommendations have been incorporated throughout plan-making.

SA Review

During the examination into the soundness of the Rochford District Core Strategy, new case law in the form of the Forest Heath case[11] on 25 March 2011 provided an additional interpretation of the EU SEA Directive.

The Inspector examining the Rochford District Core Strategy accepted the Council's request to delay the issuing of a decision on the soundness of the Plan to enable a review of the Core Strategy Submission SA Report in light of this case law development.

The review was drafted by specialist consultants, Enfusion, appraising in detail the preferred general locations, and the reasonable alternatives, for residential and employment development during the Plan period. The final addendum (Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Addendum 2011) was then consulted upon in June/July 2011. The results of this consultation were considered and a version of the Addendum finalised[12] accordingly and submitted to the Inspector for consideration as part of the examination. This addendum should be read in conjunction with the Core Strategy Submission SA Report produced in September 2009.

The SA Addendum 2011 provided a clear summary of the alternatives considered throughout the SA process and the reasons for selecting/rejecting those alternatives- refer to table 2 of this adoption statement. It also included a detailed appraisal of broad locations for housing and employment development within individual top and second tier settlements, building on the previous assessment of alternatives for the Issues and Options stage. This Sustainability Appraisal was subject to public consultation. The consultation responses and appraisal were considered as part of the Inspector's determinations, and in the Council's decision to adopt the Core Strategy. Table 7 and 8 below set out the reasons for selecting / rejecting the broad locations for housing and employment development, respectively, including consideration of sustainability recommendations.

[11] *Save Historic Newmarket v. Forest Heath District Council*
[12] Core Strategy SA Addendum 2011 available from http://www.rochford.gov.uk/PDF/pla_policy_corestrat_sa_apprasial2011.pdf

Table 7
Housing development options for Rochford District
Housing development options for Rochford/Ashingdon: Location 1: West Rochford Location 2: South Rochford Location 3: East Rochford Location 4: North Ashingdon Location 5: South East Ashingdon Location 6: East Ashingdon
Reasoning for Progressing or Rejecting the Options in Plan Making : Location 1 (West Rochford) was selected it is a sustainable location, particularly in terms of accessibility, economy and employment, and balanced communities. In addition, the location relates well to London Southend Airport and proposed employment growth there, is not subject to significant environmental constraints which would inhibit development, and is of a scale capable of accommodating other infrastructure, including a new primary school which would have wider community benefits. The location performs well to the proposed balanced strategy, and, due to its location in relation to Southend and the highway network, would avoid generating traffic on local networks for non-local reasons. The location is unlikely to enable infrastructure improvements to King Edmund School, but is nevertheless selected for the aforementioned reasons. Location 5 (South East Ashingdon) and Location 6 (East Ashingdon) were selected as they are well located in relation to King Edmund Secondary School, which amongst accessibility benefits also means that there are opportunities for important, required improvements to the school to accompany additional development in these locations to the benefit of the wider community. Location 5 would also allow for a significant amount of development to be accommodated in a manner which does not entail development projecting out into the open countryside. Location 2 was not selected as it has the potential to engender coalescence with Southend, performed less well in sustainability terms compared with West Rochford and would be less likely to deliver community benefits than development in South East and East Ashingdon. Location 3 was not selected as it was not considered as sustainable a location as West Rochford. There are greater environmental constraints to the east of Rochford, including Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites. Development to the east of Rochford has the potential to be affected by noise from London Southend Airport, given its relationship to the existing runway. Whilst a small quantum of development may be accommodated within this general location avoiding land subject to physical constraints, such an approach is less likely to deliver community benefits, and would necessitate the identification of additional land, diluting the concentration of development and thus reducing the sustainability benefits of focussing development on larger sites. Location 3 is also unlikely to aid the delivery of improvements to King Edmund School. Furthermore, it would generate traffic on local networks for non-local reasons, i.e. traffic to Southend would be likely to be

directed through the centre of Rochford, including through the Conservation Area.

Location 4 was not selected due to its poor accessibility and distance from service and facilities, particularly when compared to alternatives. It was less likely to engender improvements to King Edmund School than Locations 5 and 6.

Housing development options for Rayleigh:
Location 7: West Rayleigh (North of London Road, Rayleigh)
Location 8: East Rayleigh
Location 9: South West Rayleigh
Location 10 : North Rayleigh
Location 11: South/ South East Rayleigh
Location 12: Rawreth village

Reasoning for Progressing or Rejecting the Options in Plan Making :

Location 7 was selected as the preferred location for housing development in Rayleigh, as the location provides opportunities for the co-location of development with the adjacent proposed employment area. Due to its location on the west side of Rayleigh it will also result in less air pollution and congestion in Rayleigh Town centre, as traffic will not need to travel through the centre. It corresponds well to the proposed balanced strategy in the Core Strategy, and relates well to Chelmsford and Basildon, avoiding generating traffic on local networks for non-local reasons. Location 8, 11, and 9 are all likely to have more of an impact on air pollution and transport in the town centre; locations 10 and 11 could lead to coalescence with Hullbridge and Southend-on-Sea Borough respectively. Locations 8, 10, and 11 perform less well in terms of the proposed balanced strategy, in that they either relate better to Southend than Chelmsford / Basildon, and traffic to the latter centres would be drawn through local networks and town centre. Location 8 was also likely to have negative effects on landscape, being located close to the Upper Roach Valley and Hockley woods. The Sustainability Appraisal found that the West Rayleigh location would have the most positive effects of all the locations, and it performed particularly well on the objectives relating to balanced communities, economy and employment.

Location 12 is detached from Rayleigh, and whilst it relates well to Basildon and Chelmsford centre, it would lead to isolated development poorly served by services and facilities and performs poorly in terms of its sustainability.

Housing development options for Hockley/Hawkwell:
Location 13: West Hockley
Location 14: South Hawkwell
Location 15: Northeast Hockley (incl North Hockley)

Reasoning for Progressing or Rejecting the Options in Plan Making :

Location 13 (West Hockley) was selected as this general location benefits from good access to the centre of Hockley and the local services and facilities located there including education, health and public transport hubs, as opposed to Location 15 where these local services and facilities may be less accessible. There is also a proposed Sustrans route in proximity to this general location. It is well related to recreational opportunities within Hockley Woods and the wider Upper Roach Valley.

Development in this location would therefore have a positive impact on sustainability in terms of accessibility and healthy and safe communities. This location also has the potential to utilise existing previously developed land in the locality (although this will be dependent on the allocation of land within this location, if this location were to be included in an adopted Core Strategy), as well as opportunities to create a defensible Green Belt boundary. It relates well in terms of the balanced strategy, as the west of the settlement has a strong relationship with Chelmsford and Basildon.

Location 14 (South Hawkwell) would positively contribute to the balanced strategy as it is well related to London Southend Airport, which is a key economic driver in the area, and the strategic highways network and Southend to the south. There are opportunities to identify sites in this general location which would not project into the open countryside, particularly given the proximity of the Upper Roach Valley (which is a Special Landscape Area), and the potential to create a defensible Green Belt boundary. Development may therefore have a positive impact on economy and employment, balanced communities and landscape. This general location is well related to recreational opportunities as there is a leisure centre situated in south Hawkwell, and areas of public open space are in proximity to it (such as Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park and Hockley Woods). A Sustrans route is also proposed in proximity to this general location.

Location 15 (North East Hockley including North Hockley) has a relationship with Chelmsford, Basildon and Southend, and would subsequently direct traffic either through Hockley centre to the south west / west, or along Ashingdon Road to the south, which in conjunction with other general locations identified (such as east Ashingdon and south east Ashingdon) would have a significant impact on the local highway network. In effect it would generate traffic on local networks for non-local reasons, and have a negative impact on the balanced strategy. It is not as well related to local recreational opportunities as west Hockley and south Hawkwell, or the proposed Sustrans route. Furthermore depending on the sites taken forward, this general location may not be well related to local services and facilities in Hockley centre, and as opposed to Locations 13 and 14, it has greater potential to project into the open countryside.

Housing development options for Hullbridge:
South West Hullbridge

Reasoning for Progressing or Rejecting the Options in Plan Making :

Hullbridge is recognised as a distinct settlement with its own community and therefore housing needs, and development at this settlement corresponds towards the balanced approach to housing distribution supported by sustainability appraisal. Hullbridge is subject to significant constraints to the North West and North East that inhibit development. Development to the South West would relate well to Rayleigh and to links towards Basildon and Chelmsford centre without encouraging the generation of additional traffic on local networks for non-local reasons. It also an opportunity for infrastructure improvements that would serve the wider community.

Housing development options for Canewdon:

South Canewdon
Reasoning for Progressing or Rejecting the Options in Plan Making : Canewdon is recognised as a distinct settlement with its own community and therefore housing needs, and development at this settlement corresponds towards the balanced approach to housing distribution supported by sustainability appraisal. The location is not subject to significant environmental or physical constraints. In addition, the proposed location sets to provide good accessibility to Rochford town centre and would minimise the impact on traffic passing through the village centre. Although Canewdon is defined as a tier 3 settlement, the proposed development performs well in relation to the balanced strategy, and would be able to retain the community cohesion of the village.

Housing development options for Great Wakering: West Great Wakering
Reasoning for Progressing or Rejecting the Options in Plan Making : Great Wakering is recognised as a distinct settlement with its own community and therefore housing needs, and development at this settlement corresponds towards the balanced approach to housing distribution supported by sustainability appraisal. The location is not subject to significant environmental constraints which would inhibit development, and is of a scale capable of accommodating other infrastructure, including youth and community facilities which would have wider community benefits. The proposed development to the West relates well to Southend and would therefore minimise additional traffic on local networks for non-local reasons. The location is relatively close to the existing centre and associated services.

Table 8
Employment development options for Rochford District
London Southend Airport West Rayleigh South Rochford (east of Airport)
Reasoning for Progressing or Rejecting the Options in Plan Making : London Southend Airport is recognised as a having the potential to be a key economic catalyst within the sub-region. The approach of focussing additional employment development around London Southend Airport is supported by sustainability appraisal.

The allocation of current Green Belt land to the west of Rayleigh was recommended by the Employment Land Study and supported by Sustainability Appraisal.

South Rochford (east of Airport) could include the expansion of the existing industrial estate (Purdeys), but the release of additional Green Belt land in this location is not supported by the Employment Land Study. Whilst this location is in proximity to London Southend airport, the area to the east of the airport is disconnected from the airport itself by the existing railway line. Furthermore, there is limited amount of land to the east compared to the north and west of the airport. In addition, development to the south of Rochford has the potential to engender the coalescence of Rochford and Southend.

London Southend Airport and land west of Rayleigh were therefore selected as the preferred general locations for employment allocations and South Rochford was rejected.

Other options that were not considered realistic:

Wallasea Island
North Ashingdon

Reason for rejection:

Whilst there is a small amount of existing employment land in Wallasea Island, the area is subject to significant physical constraints and the Employment Land Study does not recommend Green Belt land be allocated for employment within this location.

There is no existing employment allocation to the north of Ashingdon, and the Employment Land Study does not recommend it as a location for the consideration of the release of Green Belt for employment.

The evidence outlined above demonstrates that the release of Green Belt land is justified in West Rayleigh and around London Southend Airport, but not elsewhere within the District. The only other location where existing Green Belt land is proposed to be allocated for employment land is in Great Wakering, but this is simply a direct replacement for existing employment land in this location being deallocated, as recommended by the Employment Land Study.

Schedule of Minor Amendments

A Schedule of Minor Amendments to the Core Strategy Submission Document (as originally submitted in January 2010) was produced in September 2011. This schedule proposed minor amendments to correct anachronisms etc. and included a commitment to an early review of the Plan.

The Inspector's Report confirms that the changes to the Core Strategy Submission Document proposed in the Schedule of Minor Amendments "do not materially alter the Strategy." (paragraph 11). The Report does go on to state that "However, I have taken the view that a limited number are significant for my determination of soundness and these are included in

Schedule A to my report." (paragraph 11). In light of this the Council considered it to be appropriate to confirm, in the interests of sustainability, that the cumulative amendments proposed to the Rochford District Core Strategy both by the Council and the Inspector would not impinge on sustainability considerations.

As such, specialist consultants, Enfusion, considered the potential SA / SEA impacts of these changes. This can be found in Appendix 1 (as part of the assessment as to whether the Core Strategy has complied with the relevant SEA / SA legislation and regulations). In short, the changes to the plan arising from the examination process do not significantly alter the findings of the SA.

Adopted Rochford District Core Strategy

As detailed above, the Sustainability Appraisal has made numerous recommendations throughout the development of the Core Strategy. These recommendations and how they have influenced the development of the Core Strategy are summarised above (in Tables 5- 8) and detailed in Appendix VIII of The Core Strategy Submission report. The SA Review and SA consideration of changes and minor amendments have also been considered by the Inspector as further evidence in preparing the Inspectors report, and by the Council in making its decision to adopt the Core Strategy.

3. How the options and consultation responses received on the development plan document and sustainability appraisal reports have been taken into account

Each stage in the development of the Rochford District Core Strategy has been subject to community involvement. The Council has produced several reports outlining how comments received through public consultation have been taken into account. The Consultation Statement[13] submitted in January 2010 alongside the Core Strategy Submission Document for consideration as part of the examination comprehensively details how comments received have influenced the development of the Rochford District Core Strategy. In particular, for example, the Preferred Options Document prepared in 2007 was significantly revised in 2008 following consideration of the results from community involvement, SA work and other key evidence base documents.

The SA reports produced at each stage have been available for comment alongside the different iterations of the Rochford District Core Strategy.

The key sustainability issues were identified through the SA scoping process and the Council consulted statutory consultees (Natural England, the Environment Agency and English Heritage) in November 2005.

[13] Consultation Statement available from http://www.rochford.gov.uk/PDF/planning_cs_consultation_statement.pdf

The Issues and Options Document was published for consultation in September 2006. The SA and the consultation results helped to determine the preferred overall spatial strategy and the Preferred Options Document, which were published for public consultation in May 2007. A number of the comments received from the consultation expressed a desire to see greater detail in the Core Strategy. However, the issue that elicited the most responses related to the location and amount of new housing. As a result of these concerns the Council revised the Core Strategy Preferred Options Document, which was published for consultation in November 2008.

A revised SA framework was sent out to statutory consultees in September 2008. Comments received as a result of this consultation were reviewed and changes made where possible and relevant; responses are summarised and reported in Appendix II of the Core Strategy Submission SA Report.

The Preferred Options SA Report was published for public consultation with the Core Strategy Preferred Options Document in November 2008. Comments received on the SA were considered and where appropriate were addressed within the Core Strategy Submission SA Report and appendices. Appendix II of the Core Strategy Submission SA Report provides a summary of comments received and responses to those comments.

The SA review was also consulted upon and took comments into account in the finalisation of this addendum (see Appendix 3 of the Core Strategy SA Addendum 2011).

4. The reasons for choosing the development plan document in light of other reasonable alternatives

In developing a sustainable, deliverable and viable strategy for the future development of the District, a balance is needed to ensure the delivery of housing, employment, infrastructure and community facilities to meet needs whilst being mindful of the significant environment constraints. Due to the District's coastal location, there are numerous environmental designations such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), and Ramsar sites, in addition to the area being predominantly Green Belt. The Rochford District Core Strategy has sought, at a local level, to strike this balance whilst complying with national and regional objectives.

The SA of the Submission Document appraised the effects of individual policies, as well as the overall effect of the Plan, including cumulative and incremental effects. The SA found that the emerging Rochford LDF will make a significant contribution to sustainability in the District, with a particularly strong focus on meeting housing and community needs, enhancing accessibility and protecting the Districts natural environment. The key negative effects identified relate to increased housing and employment development and the expansion of London Southend Airport. Whilst the SA recognises that it is these actions which have been determined at a higher policy level (the East of England Plan), the SA has sought to make further

recommendations to assist the Council in mitigating the negative effects and enhancing the positive opportunities of this development for Rochford District

In preparing the Rochford District Core Strategy the recommendations made throughout the Sustainability Appraisal process have been considered, and, as detailed in the SA report have resulted in further amendments to the Core Strategy, further enhancing the sustainability of the Plan.

The Inspector examining the Core Strategy found the Sustainability Appraisal to be in accordance with Government guidance and to be adequate.

The SA of the Submission Document, which was noted in the Inspector's Report, states that "the actual locations for growth proposed …… are considered to be the most sustainable options available, within the overall high levels of population growth being proposed in the East of England Plan" (paragraph 5.17 of the Core Strategy Submission SA Report). The Inspector's Report also recognises that the decision making process in the development of the Rochford District Core Strategy must take into consideration and strike a balance between a range of evidence. Paragraph 30 of the Inspector's Report acknowledges that "The outcome of exercises such as the sustainability appraisal will depend to some extent on the weight the decision maker chooses to give to different objectives, but this does not necessarily indicate a flawed process."

The review of the Core Strategy Submission SA Report produced by independent specialist consultants provided further support for the spatial strategy within the Core Strategy Submission Document. Indeed, the Inspector's Report further states that:

"It is alleged that the Council failed to carry out a comparative assessment of alternative broad locations for growth against certain matters such as the relative contribution to the Green Belt. However, the SA is informed by a comprehensive scoping report and I find no reason to conclude that any significant effects have not been taken into account. The SA Addendum (July 2011) provides a more detailed appraisal of the alternative locations considered, and was subject to public consultation. I have taken into account criticisms that the Addendum was produced after the submission draft plan, but sustainability appraisal is an iterative process." (paragraph 31).

The Inspector's Report goes further to state, in relation to the rejection of reasonable alternatives and the robustness of the SA process undertaken throughout the development of the Rochford District Core Strategy, that:

"Overall, there is no compelling reason to question the integrity of the SA as a whole, and no convincing evidence to dispute the conclusion of the SA that the chosen locations are the most sustainable, and therefore the CS is sound in relation to this issue." (paragraph 32).

Given that the SA supports the policies within the Core Strategy, and the selection / rejection of alternatives, together with the fact that the SA has been

considered through examination and found to be adequate, the Core Strategy clearly represents a sustainable plan for Rochford District.

5. Monitoring measures

The Implementation, Delivery and Monitoring section of the Rochford District Core Strategy sets out how the policies will be monitored, primarily through the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), or other reporting mechanism as appropriate.

Furthermore it is confirmed within the Inspector's Report that:

"The implementation, delivery and monitoring chapter of the CS indicates the ways in which each policy will be monitored and includes national and core indicators which should enable the strategy to be adequately monitored and adjusted if necessary. The identification of risk mitigation measures is a commendable inclusion in this section of the CS, which gives confidence regarding the delivery of the strategy. The CS contains effective mechanisms to monitor delivery of the strategy." (paragraph 60).

6. Conclusion

The Rochford District Core Strategy sets out the most sustainable strategy for the District given the reasonable alternatives. It is a sound strategy, which has taken into account the findings of SA work, consultation responses and a wide range of other evidence throughout its development.

SA/SEA Compliance and Quality Assurance

1.1 Rochford Council has commissioned Enfusion Ltd to undertake a compliance review of the SA work undertaken on the Rochford Core Strategy. This review considers the SA work with regard to compliance with relevant UK and EU legislation, SA/SEA guidance, current good practice and the recent Forest Heath SEA case law.

1.2 This independent review considered the requirements for SA/SEA of LDFs as set out in the following legislation and guidance:

- European Directive 2001/42/EC (the *Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive*)
- HMSO (2004) *The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations* (the *SEA Regulations*)
- ODPM (2005) *A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive*
- DCLG (2008)*Plan Making Manual*[1]
- DCLG (2008) *Planning Policy Statement 12* (PPS12)

1.3 The review drew upon professional experience, current good practice and the recommendations from the recent studies for DCLG (2010) into the effectiveness of SA/SEA in spatial planning[2]. It also paid particular attention to the recent judgment[3] on SEA in the High Court (March 2011) that now provides case law with regard to assessment of alternatives in SEA. The review is structured according to the SEA stages as set out in the SEA Guidance: Appendix 9 Quality Assurance (2005). This provides a checklist for considering compliance with the requirements of the EU SEA Directive. The review focused on procedures, aiming to identify any potential risks to soundness of the SA/SEA.

1.4 Having undertaken this review, it is our professional opinion that the SA/SEA of the Rochford Core Strategy (incorporating the Addendum reports of September 2010 and July 2011) is compliant with the SEA Directive and requirements and PPS 12 requirements for Sustainability Appraisal. It has also been prepared in accordance with relevant guidance and with good practice Sustainability Appraisal. However, as previously advised, we would recommend that the Council also seeks a legal opinion in relation to this matter.

1.5 Of particular note is the timing of the second SA Addendum report, which was prepared during a suspension of the Core Strategy Examination (but may be considered necessary to fully meet compliance requirements in relation to SEA alternatives). There is currently a lack of legal interpretation around the issue of seeking to clarify an SA/SEA report during a suspension of an examination, however in this instance we believe the work is justified and helps the Council to be prepared for any potential legal challenges. This view is supported by the Inspector who states that 'I have taken into account criticisms that the Addendum was produced after the submission draft plan but sustainability

[1] http://www.pas.gov.uk/pas/core/page.do?pageId=109798 (accessed 7 June 2011)
[2] http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/15130101.pdf
[3] High Court of Justice (March 2011) EWHC 606 Save Historic Newmarket Ltd v Secretary of State & Forest Heath District Council

appraisal is an iterative process' (paragraph 31). Also that 'Overall, there is no compelling reason to question the integrity of the SA as a whole, and no convincing evidence to dispute the conclusion of the SA that the chosen locations are the most sustainable, and therefore the CS is sound in relation to this issue' (paragraph 32).

1.6 For a further summary of the issues surrounding a similar case, we would recommend reading the Inspector's Conclusion on Further Suspension of the West Berkshire Core Strategy: http://www.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=24036

Table 1.1 SA/SEA Compliance and Good Practice Review

Note: The Sustainability Appraisal Technical Report- Rochford Core Strategy Submission Document (September 2009) is referred to below as 'the SA Report'.

		Requirements of SEA Directive	Compliance	Reference to: SA Scoping Report (December 2008) & Final (April 2009) Initial SA Report (July 2009) Interim SA Report (November 2010) Commentary
	Objectives and Context			
1	The plan's or programme's purpose and objectives are made clear.	Directive 2001/42/EC Article 5(1)a	Yes	Section 1 of the SA Report sets out the contents and main objectives of the Core Strategy. The relationship with other relevant plans is summarised in Section 3 and Appendix IV of the SA report.
2	Sustainability/environmental issues and constraints, including international and EC protection objectives, are considered in developing objectives and targets.	Directive 2001/42/EC Article 5(1)e	Yes	The SEA objectives have been derived from a review of the plans and programmes and a strategic analysis of the baseline information (Section 6 of the scoping report, Section 3.1 and Appendix IV of the SA Report)
3	SA/SEA objectives, where used, are clearly set out and linked to indicators and targets where appropriate.		Yes	Section 6 of the scoping report contains the SA objectives and indicators. This is repeated in tables 3.2 and 8.1 of the SA report.

4	Links with other related plans, programmes and policies are identified and explained.	Directive 2001/42/EC Article 5(1)a	Yes	Section 3.1 and appendix IV of the SA report illustrate these links and where relevant linkages are also made in the appraisals.
5	Conflicts that exist between SA/SEA objectives, between SA/SEA and plan objectives, and between SA/SEA and other plan objectives are identified and described.		Yes	Compatibility analysis is described in section 4.1 of the SA report and in Appendix 5.
	Scoping			
6	Consultation bodies are consulted in appropriate ways and at appropriate times on the content and scope of the Environmental Report.	Directive 2001/42/EC Article 6.1 & 6.2	Yes	This is summarised in section 5 and in Appendix II of the Environmental Report. Further information is also available in the SA Scoping Report.
7	The assessment focuses on significant issues.		Yes	Section 5 and 6 of the SA Report detail the significant issues identified in the appraisal.
8	Technical, procedural and other difficulties encountered are discussed; assumptions and uncertainties are made explicit.		Yes	Identified where relevant throughout the SA report, and summarised in Section 0.16. Uncertainties recorded in appraisal tables in appendices.
9	Reasons are given for eliminating issues from further consideration.		N/A	No issues have been eliminated which is typical for SAs of spatial plans as all issues are generally considered to be relevant.
	Alternatives			
10	Realistic alternatives are considered for key issues, and the reasons for choosing them are documented.	Directive 2001/42/EC Article 5(1)h	Yes[4]	Also known as options (for plan-making purposes) the alternatives are described in Section 2: Appraisal methods, and Chapter 4 of the SA Report.

[4] Refer Paragraphs 1.4-1.5 of this report in relation to timing of the addendum report. We also advise seeking legal counsel on this matter.

				In light of the recent High Court Ruling Save Historic Newmarket v. Forest Heath District Council, Enfusion advised the Council that it would be prudent to undertake a review of the Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal, ensuring compliance with the new case law on SEA arising from this ruling. In March 2011, a further addendum to the SA Report was produced that summarises the approach taken to the alternatives assessment, including reasoning for the selection/rejection of alternatives. It also includes consideration of more detailed housing and employment locations (than previously appraised). This report was made available for public consultation from 13 June to 11 July 2011.
11	Alternatives include 'do minimum' and/or 'business as usual' scenarios wherever relevant.		Yes	The 'do minimum' or 'business as usual ' scenario (i.e. to not prepare the Core Strategy) is not considered relevant to the Core Strategy, as this would be against government requirements. Nothwithstanding, the appraisal has been undertaken against the existing baseline conditions and trends, which effectively constitutes the business as usual approach.
12	The sustainability/ environmental effects (both adverse and beneficial) of each alternative are identified and compared.	Directive 2001/42/EC Article 5(1)b	Yes	This is detailed in Section 2: Appraisal methods, and Chapter 4 of the SA Report as well as throughout the SA Addendum report (July 2011).
13	Inconsistencies between the alternatives and other relevant plans, programmes or policies are identified and explained.		Yes	Where relevant, any inconsistencies are described in the appraisal matrices.
14	Reasons are given for selection or elimination of alternatives.	Directive 2001/42/EC Article 5(1)h	Yes[5]	The sustainability performance of the options is described in the SA Report. The reasoning for selection and elimination of strategic alternatives considered throughout the SA process is provided in the text of the addendum report (July 2011).

[5] Ibid

	Baseline information			
15	Relevant aspects of the current state of the environment/sustainability and their likely evolution without the plan are described.	Directive 2001/42/EC Article 5(1)b	Yes	Section 3 of the SA Report summarises the relevant baseline conditions for sustainability (including the state of relevant environmental aspects) in the District. Appendix III (prepared by Essex County Council) sets out this information in more detail. The likely evolution of current conditions ('trends') is detailed in Appendix III where available.
16	Environmental/sustainability characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected are described, including areas wider than the physical boundary of the plan area where it is likely to be affected by the plan.	Directive 2001/42/EC Article 5(1)c & Article 5(1)d	Yes	Where relevant and available, information regarding particular areas has been included in Appendix III.
17	Difficulties such as deficiencies in information or methods are explained.		Yes	Relevant data gaps are identified in Section 4 of the scoping report, described in 0.16 of the SA report and acknowledged in the appraisal matrices, where applicable.
	Prediction and evaluation of likely significant environmental effects			
18	Effects identified include the types listed in the Directive (biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climate factors, material assets, cultural heritage and landscape), as relevant; other likely environmental/sustainability effects are also covered, as appropriate.	Directive 2001/42/EC Article 5(1)f	Yes	Relevant sustainability topics addressed and clearly presented including correlation with SEA topics. This is included within section 5 and 6 of the SA Report (and summarised in the NTS), as well as detailed in the appraisal matrices.
19	Both positive and negative effects are considered, the duration of effects (short, medium or long-term), and temporary/permanent effects are addressed.	Directive 2001/42/EC Article 5(1)f	Yes	This is detailed in the Appraisal matrices (in the appendices) and also described in the NTS and Sections 5 and 6 of the SA Report.

20	Likely secondary, cumulative and synergistic effects are identified where practicable.	Directive 2001/42/EC Article 5(1)f	Yes	Section 6 summarises the cumulative effects arising from the plan, including synergistic and secondary effects; these are also outlined, where relevant in the appraisal matrices.
21	Inter-relationships between effects are considered where practicable.	Directive 2001/42/EC Article 5(1)f	Yes	Where relevant these are outlined in the appraisal matrices and summarised in sections 5 and 6 of the report.
22	The prediction and evaluation of effects makes use of relevant accepted standards, regulations, and thresholds.		Yes	Where practicable, these are referred to in the appraisal matrices, however due to the high level nature of a Core Strategy appraisal, this is not always appropriate.
23	Methods used to evaluate the effects are described.		Yes	The appraisal methods are described in section 2 of the SA Report.
	Mitigation measures			
24	Measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and offset any significant adverse effects of implementing the plan or programme are indicated.	Directive 2001/42/EC Article 5(1)g	Yes	Where significant adverse effects, including environmental effects, have been predicted, the SA has sought where possible to identify means of offsetting these effects. These are detailed in Appendix VIII and summarised in section 7 of the SA Report.
24	Issues to be taken into account in project consents are identified.		Yes	Yes, where appropriate through the appraisal matrices.
	The Environmental Report			
25	Is clear and concise in its layout and presentation.		Yes	Yes.
26	Uses simple, clear language and avoids or explains technical terms.		Yes	Yes.
27	Uses maps and other illustrations where appropriate.		Yes	As appropriate, and located in the Baseline appendices. It is also noted that the SA report accompanies the Core Strategy document which includes detailed maps.
28	Explains the methodology used.		Yes	Section 2 of the SA report explains the method used.
29	Explains who was consulted and what methods of consultation were used.		Yes	Section 2 of the SA Report and throughout the report.

30	Identifies sources of information, including expert judgement and matters of opinion.	Directive 2001/42/EC Article 5.2	Yes	The evidence and reference column in the appraisal appendices includes this information.
31	Contains a non-technical summary (NTS) covering the overall approach to the SA/SEA, the objectives of the plan, the main options considered, and any changes to the plan resulting from the SEA.	Directive 2001/42/EC Article 5 (1) j	Yes	The SA Report includes an NTS addressing the necessary requirements.
	Consultation			
32	The SA/SEA is consulted on as an integral part of the plan-making process.		Yes	The SA has been consulted on as an iterative and ongoing process – and integral to the plan-making process.
33	Consultation Bodies and the public likely to be affected by, or having an interest in, the plan or programme are consulted in ways and at times which give them an early and effective opportunity within appropriate time frames to express their opinions on the draft plan and Environmental Report.	Directive 2001/42/EC Article 6.1 & 6.2	Yes	Statutory and public consultation has been undertaken according to statutory timeframes i.e. 5 weeks for SA scoping; at least 6 weeks at other key junctures in the Core Strategy's production (Issues and Options, Preferred Options and Submission).
	Decision-making and information on the decision			
34	The environmental report and the opinions of those consulted are taken into account in finalising and adopting the plan or programme.	Directive 2001/42/EC Article 8	Yes	Refer to Appendix I of the SA report. Further consultation was also undertaken on the Addendum to the SA report in July 2011 and comments taken into account accordingly.
35	An explanation is given of how they have been taken into account.	Directive 2001/42/EC Article 9 (1) b	Yes	Refer to Appendix I of the SA report and Appendix III of the SA addendum (July 2011).
36	Reasons are given for choosing the plan or programme as adopted, in the light	Directive 2001/42/EC	Yes	Reasons for choosing the plan or programme as adopted are provided in the SA report addendum (July 2011).

	of other reasonable alternatives considered.	Article 9 (1) b		
	Monitoring measures			
37	Measures proposed for monitoring are clear, practicable and linked to the indicators and objectives used in the SEA.	Directive 2001/42/EC Article 5 (1) i	Yes	Refer to Section 8 Implementation and Monitoring of the SA Report.
38	Monitoring is used, where appropriate, during implementation of the plan or programme to make good deficiencies in baseline information in the SEA.	Directive 2001/42/EC Article 10	N/A	This will be an ongoing process after adoption of the plan through the Annual Monitoring Review.
39	Monitoring enables unforeseen adverse effects to be identified at an early stage. (These effects may include predictions which prove to be incorrect.)		N/A	As above.
40	Proposals are made for action in response to significant adverse effects.		N/A	As above.
	Appraisal of Significant Changes & SEA Statement			
41	When adopted, the relevant authorities and public are informed and the following are made available: (a) the plan or programme as adopted, (b) a statement summarising how environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan or programme and how the environmental report, the opinions expressed pursuant to Article 6 and the results of consultations entered into	Directive 2001/42/EC Article 9	Yes	A detailed and thorough SA Adoption statement has been prepared by the Council that meets all of the requirements listed.

	have been taken into account and the reasons for choosing the plan or programme as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with. c) the measures decided concerning monitoring in accordance with Article 10.			
41	An SEA is undertaken of changes likely to have a significant effect. Note: An environmental assessment need not be carried out for a minor modification to a plan or programme unless it is likely to have a significant effect.	Part 2 (6) The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004	Yes	The SA report documents changes to the plan throughout production and where applicable, appraises changes where a significant effect is likely. Subsequently, the following appraisal of changes has taken place: - Further Sustainability Appraisal of the Rochford Core Strategy Submission Document: Addendum. This considers the proposed changes to the Core Strategy Submission Document in light of the revocation of Regional Spatial Strategies and the issuing of a revised Planning Policy Statement 3 Housing (PPS3). - The Addendum report (July 2011) includes consideration and appraisal of more detailed housing and employment locations as a result of consultation responses received that queried the appraisal of alternatives outlined in the SA report. -Additional SA of changes has been undertaken in November 2011 and provided as an annex to the report recommending adoption of the plan. This includes consideration of significant changes proposed by the inspector and by the Council.

Sustainability Appraisal of further changes to the Rochford Core Strategy

1.1 The Council is proposing to make a number of further changes to the Rochford Core Strategy prior to its adoption. Three schedules are appended to the Inspectors Report (October 2011) as follows:

- **Schedule A:** Significant changes proposed by the Council.
- **Schedule B:** Minor changes.
- **Schedule C:** Changes recommended by the Inspector.

1.2 The Sustainability Appraisal is required to consider changes to the plan to determine if they are likely to have a significant effect. Changes that are not significant will not require further sustainability appraisal work[1].

1.3 As Schedule B contains only very minor changes, i.e. factual updates, corrections of minor errors or minor amendments in the interests of clarity, it is not considered necessary to subject this Schedule B to further sustainability appraisal as no significant effects are considered likely.

1.4 A screening assessment of the changes proposed in Schedule A and C was undertaken to determine if these changes were likely to result in significant effects. The appraisal found that none of the proposed changes are likely to result in significant effects nor materially alter the findings of the Sustainability Appraisal as provided in the Sustainability Appraisal Technical report accompanying the Core Strategy on submission.

[1] Planning Advisory Service: Plan-making Manual: Publication and submission of a development plan document: sustainability appraisal

Appendix A Schedule of significant changes proposed by the Council

The changes below are expressed either in the conventional form of strikethrough for deletions and underlining for additions of text, or by specifying the change in words in *italics*.

The below proposed changes relate to changes to the Core Strategy Submission Document (September 2009)

The page numbers and paragraph numbering below refer to the Core Strategy Submission Document September 2009, and do not take account of the deletion or addition of text.

Ref	Page	Policy / Paragraph	Amendment	Justification	Sustainability Appraisal Screening Commentary
A1	N/A	N/A	*Insertion of a statement about the position of the Core Strategy Submission Document and commitment to an early review of the plan. See Appendix CSSMA 1 for details.*	The Inspector requested the insertion of this text in her letter dated 11 August 2011.	This is a procedural amendment and will not have a significant effect on the results of the SA as predicted.
A2	21	1.25 (Third bullet point)	Provision of an additional 15 authorised pitches for Gypsy and Traveller caravans by 201~~1~~8, to achieve a total of ~~18~~22 pitches.	The single issue review (Accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in the East of England) set a total allocation of 18 pitches to be achieved by 2011 through the provision of 15 additional pitches to those already authorised. Given the delays to the Core Strategy examination, this allocation cannot be achieved in the given timeframe. This figure, however, was based on a baseline position of three pitches, which were authorised by 2006. As at July 2010, there were seven private Gypsy and Traveller pitches in the District. The single issue review which set the requirement for pitch	This amendment to the Core Strategy reflects delays in the adoption of the Core Strategy and ensures the requirements for Gypsy and traveller sites outlined in the single issue review will still be met. Therefore the change to the Strategy is not considered significant and will not change the findings of the SA.

Ref	Page	Policy / Paragraph	Amendment	Justification	Sustainability Appraisal Screening Commentary
				provision by 2011 also set an annual 3% compound increase in pitch provision requirement beyond 2011. This equates to the provision of 15 pitches by 2018 in addition to the seven authorised pitches in order to achieve a compound increase in provision to 22 pitches to meet the requirements of the review.	
A3	37	3.1-3.3	*Insertion of additional text on the vision for Rochford District within the Vision chapter. See Appendix CSSMA 2 for details.*	The Inspector requested that the Council prepare additional text on the vision for the District following the hearings sessions in May 2010.	The additional text added to the vision was previously dispersed through the Core Strategy document in themes that have individual visions and objectives that all contribute to the overall vision for the District. The SA provided a commentary for each individual theme to consider the compatibility of the themes vision and objectives against the SA Framework. The changes to the vision are not considered to significantly alter the SA findings.
A4	49	4.46	The East of England Regional Assembly has prepared a single-issue review on Gypsy and Travellers accommodation that ~~has resulted in~~ equates to	The single issue review (Accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in the East of England) set a total allocation of 18 pitches to be achieved by 2011 through the provision of 15	This amendment to the Core Strategy reflects the delay in the adoption of the Core Strategy and ensures the requirements for Gypsy

Ref	Page	Policy / Paragraph	Amendment	Justification	Sustainability Appraisal Screening Commentary
			the allocation ~~within the East of England Plan~~ of an additional15 pitches to be provided in Rochford District by 201~~1~~8 to meet the 3% compound increase requirements beyond 2011.	additional pitches to those already authorised. Given the delays to the Core Strategy examination, this allocation cannot be achieved in the given timeframe. This figure, however, was based on a baseline position of three pitches, which were authorised by 2006. As at July 2010, there were seven private Gypsy and Traveller pitches in the District. The single issue review which set the requirement for pitch provision by 2011 also set an annual 3% compound increase in pitch provision requirement beyond 2011. This equates to the provision of 15 pitches by 2018 in addition to the seven authorised pitches in order to achieve a compound increase in provision to 22 pitches to meet the requirements of the review.	and traveller sites outlined in the single issue review will still be met. Therefore the change to the Strategy is not considered significant and will not change the findings of the SA.
A5	49	4.47	Given the historically low demand within the District, provision for any additional pitches post 201~~1~~8 will be subject to further review of need.	The date has been amended in line with the above.	Comments as above.
A6	50	Policy H7 (First sentence)	The Council will allocate 15 pitches by 201~~1~~8, as per the East of England Regional Assembly's single-issue review.	The policy text has been amended to reflect the accompanying text as above.	Comments as above.

Appendix C Schedule of significant changes proposed by the Inspector

Inspector Change No.	Policy/Paragraph/Page	Change	Sustainability Appraisal Screening Commentary
IC1	Policy H4	Amend the first sentence of the third paragraph to read: The requirement for the provision of affordable housing may be relaxed, for example where constraints make on-site provision impossible or where the developer is able to demonstrate that 35% provision will be economically unviable, rendering the site undeliverable.	The change to wording in Policy H4 is not considered to have a significant sustainability effect. The text has changed from previously 'in exceptional circumstances' to take account of viability considerations on a site by site basis (i.e. that exceptions will be considered where a development is economically unviable). This change is considered unlikely to result in a significant sustainability effect, as the requirement for 35% affordable housing is still maintained in the policy.
IC2	H1, H2, H3, ED4	Add the following text to the reasoned justification for the policies: In line with the Habitats Regulations and in consultation with NE, EA and Essex and Suffolk Water, development proposals must ensure that the water supply necessary for the development can be supplied sustainably (and without	This change, which constitutes additional text to the reasoned justification, helps to draw attention to the problem of water supply in Rochford District. It is unlikely to have a significant sustainability effect as it is

		adverse effects on European Sites).	already a requirement through the EA consenting process (Any new licences for water abstraction granted by the EA are required to demonstrate that there will be no adverse effects on European sites through the undertaking of Habitats Regulations Assessment). Notwithstanding, the clarification is supported as it ensures Natural England's concerns are addressed in relation to the HRA.
IC3	ENV6	Amend the first bullet point to read: The development is not within, or adjacent to, an area designated……	The policy has been amended to clarify that large scale renewable energy projects will not be permitted 'adjacent to' an area designated for ecological or landscape value. This change is likely to have further minor positive effects for biodiversity and landscape, however this will not change the appraisal results for this policy.

IC4	Appendix	Include the list of superseded policies[2] as an appendix to the Plan.	This change constitutes a clarification and is not likely to have significant sustainability effects.

[2] SUBDOC10