



# Employment Land Study (ELS) 2024

## Rochford District Council

**TWO COUNCILS  
ONE TEAM**



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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. Rochford District Council (the Council) is in the process of preparing a new Local Plan for the District that will be used to guide development in the District to 2040 and beyond, as expected by national planning policy, set out in the National planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).
- 1.2. The NPPF states that the planning system should be genuinely plan-led. It requires that succinct and up-to-date (local) plans provide a positive vision for the future of each area; a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priorities; and a platform for local people to shape their surroundings.

### Aims and Objectives

- 1.3. The Employment Land Study (ELS) provides a definitive position statement on employment land supply within the District to meet future needs, using both quantitative and qualitative analysis. It reviews each of the District's existing employment sites in turn, considering their attributes, capacity and constraints to determine how they might contribute to supporting a vibrant and thriving local economy through the timeline of the new Local Plan. The ELS also considers whether there is merit in designating new employment allocations from identified undeveloped sites with potential to support employment activity, along with previously-developed sites which support employment uses.
- 1.4. The scope of the ELS covers the following stages:
  1. Undertake site visits to established and prospective employment sites to assess key site conditions relating to:
    - i. Strategic access
    - ii. Local access
    - iii. Site quality, amenities and environment
    - iv. Market attractiveness
    - v. Developmental and environmental constraints

Subsequently, to assign a series of traffic light categorisations and scores for each site to assess their overall quality; to summarise strengths/weaknesses for each site; and subsequently form recommendations on future action for the sites from a series of categories.

2. Supplementing the outputs and recommendations from the 2017 South Essex and 2023 Rochford Economic Development Needs Assessments (EDNAs) and 2022 South Essex Employment Land Availability Analysis (ELAA) with site/desk-based analysis to:
  - i. Review the stock of existing operational employment land which is already in use, identifying any opportunities for redevelopment, intensification or redesignation of employment land to help meet the District's economic needs,

as identified in the 2022 EDNA. Also to identify any instances where a site is not fulfilling its role as an employment site and may warrant alternative designations.

- ii. As part of this, to review newly-allocated employment sites in the existing (2011) Core Strategy and (2014) Allocations Plan, using desk analysis and site visits, to determine whether employment activity has commenced, increased or reduced on these sites, and to recommend whether the allocations remain effective.
  - iii. To review former employment sites which were allocated for alternative uses under this plan. Through desk analysis and site visits, to determine whether employment activity has remained on these sites, and whether the allocations remain effective.
  - iv. To assess the potential and suitability of any prospective employment land allocations (e.g., land identified through the Call for Sites process) to help address any identified employment need arising from the 2022 EDNA.
  - v. To assess significant informal/unallocated sites with notable employment activities (including previously-developed land within the Green Belt), determine their role in providing employment space, and whether their role warrants formal safeguarding in future plan-making.
3. Considering the above, along with evidence from the EDNA, to make recommendations for the Economy & Employment policies in the new Local Plan. Areas to consider may include:
- i. Broad acceptable use class policies for existing and new employment sites. This will consider in particular recent changes in Permitted Development rights which make it easier to change between uses within Class E (e.g. from office to retail), and how policies could introduce restrictions to protect employment land.
  - ii. Whether any existing/new sites should be allocated/deallocated for employment use.
  - iii. Whether any undesignated sites in the District which are currently in use for employment warrant further consideration for allocation.
4. When Class MA of the General Permitted Development Order was introduced in 2021 (GPD0), allowing easier conversion of Class E (commercial) uses to residential through Permitted Development, one of the prior approval requirements for proposals is *the impact on intended occupiers of the development of the introduction of residential use in an area the authority considers to be important for general or heavy industry, waste management, storage and distribution, or a mix of such uses*. To protect both important employment sites and the amenity of residents, this study will identify which employment sites in the District are considered important for such uses, with a view to refusing Class MA proposals for conversion of use class E on these sites.

### **What the ELS does not do**

- 1.5. The ELS does not establish the demand for employment land, nor does it provide a property market analysis – these being set out in the 2017 South Essex and 2023 Rochford District Economic Development Needs Assessments (EDNAs); and the commercial property market supplement to the 2023 Rochford District EDNA. The EDNA findings are considered within this Study in relation to the projected demand/supply balance.
- 1.6. At this stage, no viability assessment is made of sites reviewed, given the majority of sites are already allocated and host employment development. Consideration of viability of any future employment site allocations will be given during the Whole Plan Viability Assessment.

## 2. Policy Context

2.1. This section covers the following relevant policy areas:

- National Planning Framework (NPPF)
- National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
- Relevant recent changes to the Use Class Order and Permitted Development rights
- Rochford District Local Development Framework

### National Planning Policy (2023 Update)

2.2. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)<sup>1</sup> has placed economic growth at the heart of its definition of sustainable development, recognising that ensuring the availability of sufficient land to support economic growth, innovation and productivity is central to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy. The role of local authorities and the planning system is to deliver economic growth in a positive and proactive manner which both provides a sufficient supply of sites and buildings for employment use, but which also supports business innovation and investment and coordinates the delivery of required infrastructure alongside this.

2.3. The main economic development focus within the NPPF (September 2023) is set out in Chapter 6, paragraphs 81-83 and can be summarised as follows:

- Planning policies should set out a clear, proactive strategy to enable sustainable economic growth over the Local Plan period, identifying strategic sites to support local and inward investment in line with the strategy.
- The specific locational requirements of different sectors should be addressed by planning policies and decisions, which could include the provision of appropriate sites/space to support 'clusters' of similar industries (e.g., creative industries or distribution and logistics). Such clusters should provide space at a variety of scales and in locations with suitable access for the requirements of the sector.
- Policies should allow for a degree of flexibility to accommodate emerging economic needs and working practices that may not be anticipated over the plan period, such as different types of flexible workspace.

2.4. In addition, paragraphs 84-85 focus on the rural economy and meeting the needs of businesses and communities in rural areas, recognising the importance of this to sustainable development. Several points are relevant to the provision of employment land and can be summarised as follows, stating that planning policies and decisions should:

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

- Enable conversion of existing buildings and provision of new ones to support the sustainable growth and expansion of businesses of all types in rural areas.
- Support development and diversification of agricultural/land-based rural businesses.
- Recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport.
- Developments on such sites will need to be sensitive to their surroundings, not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and maximise any opportunities to improve sustainable access via public transport and active travel.
- Where suitable opportunities exist, such sites should be encouraged on previously-developed land and sites which relate well physically to existing settlements.

### Upcoming Changes to the NPPF – Levelling Up and Regeneration Act

2.5. In December 2022, the Government launched a consultation<sup>2</sup> on a number of proposed changes to the NPPF, both immediate changes to the text and consultation on a wider set of topics, to bring it in line with the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (LURA, 2023). Whilst the immediate amendments primarily focused on expediting the plan-making process, housing and the methodology for determining assessed need, along with arrangements to monitor delivery, a number of future proposals may have a bearing on planning for employment land through the emerging Local Plan:

- National Development Management Policies (NMDPs): it is expected that a series of NMDPs will standardise development management planning policies relating to specific themes and provide greater certainty and consistency for applicants where required. Whilst the scope of NMDPs is not yet confirmed, it is understood that ‘generic’ issues of nationwide importance such as development in the Green Belt and achieving Net Zero/carbon reduction are likely to be considered, both of which will have an impact on the allocation of sites and buildings for employment purposes. NMDPs will help slim down and streamline local plans, whilst allowing them to focus on locally-specific matters. It is understood that NMDPs will focus solely on planning matters and not consider wider issues such as employment, whilst an employment-specific scenario is given as an example in which locally-specific planning policies would continue to remain relevant (‘a town which contains an important interconnected business cluster with very specific accommodation requirements and expansion needs’). Consequently, it is expected that policies relating specifically to employment land will continue to be developed locally.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/levelling-up-and-regeneration-bill-reforms-to-national-planning-policy>

- Enabling Levelling Up: As part of a future full review of the NPPF, the consultation proposed changes to NPPF Chapter 8 (*Building a strong, competitive economy*) to align national planning policy with the government's economic vision as set out in the *Levelling Up White Paper*. This considers ways to focus on sectors and activities which will boost productivity and distribute economic growth and investment across the UK. It is likely to include an employment land/business accommodation element as part of this.
- Wider future changes to national planning policy: the consultation listed several areas of the NPPF in which further updates may be required to bring national planning policy in line with changes due to come into effect through the LURA and other aspects of government policy. This included changes to NPPF Chapter 8 (*Building a strong, competitive economy*) through a further consultation on a framework to support economic development. This will include reviewing the approach to supporting employment land, and the consideration of supply chain and connectivity issues, including responding to information gathered as part of the government's *Future of Freight Call for Evidence*.

2.6. These sit alongside aspects of the forthcoming Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (LURA)<sup>3</sup>, which is likely to contain the following related to planning for employment land:

- Delivering Infrastructure: 'A non-negotiable, locally set Infrastructure Levy will ensure that developers pay their fair share to deliver the infrastructure that communities need'.
- Regeneration 'Enabling the regeneration of brownfield and other underused land to support local economic growth, whilst rejuvenating town centres by reducing blight and enabling high streets to thrive'.

### **National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)**

2.7. Planning Practice Guidance sets out broad methodologies for assessing the demand for and supply of housing and economic development land in its *Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment* guidance<sup>4</sup>. For the purpose of employment sites, it requires Local Planning Authorities to undertake an assessment to identify a supply of land which is suitable, available and achievable for economic development purposes over the course of the Local Plan period, in order to meet expected employment needs. This assessment firstly identifies sites and broad locations with potential for employment development; assesses their development potential; and finally assesses their suitability for development and the likelihood of this taking place (i.e. the availability and achievability).

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<sup>3</sup> <https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3155>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-and-economic-land-availability-assessment>

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2.8. This guidance should be considered alongside further PPG guidance on assessing economic development need<sup>5</sup>, which provides guidance for local planning authorities on how to determine the types of employment land which may be required in their area. It focuses on the methodological aspects of understanding current/future economic trends and analysing employment land requirements. It advocates the categorisation of land into different sub-areas and market segments and consideration of the balance between quantitative and qualitative employment land supply and demand. Forecasting should take into account future need within different market segments and economic sectors and identify any gaps in local employment land provision. It is noted that “national economic trends may not automatically translate to particular areas with a distinct employment base”, and that this work should be underpinned by both a robust evidence base and by engaging with the business community. The PPG identifies the following key components of an assessment of need for employment land:

- An understanding of the functional economic market area in which the local authority sits (which may extend across local authority boundaries).
- Developing an evidence base to understand business needs, including:
  - identifying the existing stock of employment land;
  - analysing the recent pattern of its supply and loss (e.g. through planning applications);
  - evidence of market demand (including the locational requirements of particular sectors), which could include both quantitative data and qualitative sources;
  - wider market signals relating to economic growth, diversification and innovation; and
  - any evidence of market failure – such as physical or ownership constraints that prevent the employment site being used effectively.
- Using market signals to forecast future need (e.g., forecasts of labour demand by sector; demographic assessments of labour supply; assessments of past take-up of property and future requirements; and consultation with business representatives).
- Translating these forecast requirements into employment land requirements by calculating the following key relationships:
  - Standard Industrial Classification sectors to use classes;
  - Standard Industrial Classification sectors to type of property;
  - employment to floorspace (employment density); and
  - floorspace to site area (plot ratios based on industry proxies).

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-and-economic-development-needs-assessments>

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- Analysis of current market demand (comparing available stock of land with requirements to identify any gaps or oversupply of employment land).
- 2.9. This needs guidance underpins the accompanying 2023 Rochford *Economic Development Needs Assessment* (EDNA), providing an employment floorspace requirement for the new Local Plan period (see paragraph 4.33 onwards for a summary of this). The ELS provides an additional qualitative dimension to the economic forecasting and floorspace analysis data modelled in the EDNA, and should be used in tandem with it to determine the ability of employment land within the District to cater for its future employment need, including by meeting identified qualitative needs.

## **Relevant Amendments to the Use Classes Order and General Permitted Development Order**

- 2.10. Significant changes to legislation during 2020 and 2021 introduced a series of changes to the Use Classes Order and Permitted Development rules which are likely to have significant implications for the provision of employment space. These are as follows:

### **Town and Country Planning Use Classes Amendment 2020**

- 2.11. The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020<sup>6</sup> came into force on 1st September 2020. This introduced amendments to the Use Classes Order to create a new Use Class E ('Commercial, Business and Service'). This replaced Classes A1, A2, A3, B1, and parts of D1 & D2, subsuming them into a single use class, meaning change of use planning permission was no longer required between this range of uses. Consequently, Class E includes the following uses:
- a. Shop other than for the sale of hot food
  - b. Food and drink which is mostly consumed on the premises
  - c. the following kinds of services principally to visiting members of the public:
    - i. financial services
    - ii. professional services (other than medical services)
    - iii. any other services which it is appropriate to provide in a commercial, business or service locality
  - d. Indoor sport and recreation (not swimming pools, ice rinks or motorised vehicles or firearms)
  - e. Medical services not attached to the residence of the practitioner
  - f. Non-residential creche, day centre or nursery
  - g. Business uses (as follows):
    - i. Office
    - ii. the research and development of products or processes
    - iii. any industrial process, (which can be carried out in any residential area without causing detriment to the amenity of the area)

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2020/757/contents/made>

2.12. The measure was primarily intended to support town centres and high streets by providing greater flexibility of use for units, thereby reducing vacancy and allowing businesses to adapt more quickly to a changing market. However, the inclusion of former B1 uses within the category does bring the possibility that office and light industrial premises, whether in town centres or on employment sites (such as office parks or industrial estates) could change use to retail, leisure or food & beverage uses with no permission required. If this were to take place on a large scale, it could significantly alter the character of many established employment areas, potentially undermining their capacity to provide business accommodation and employment opportunities in a range of sectors. Consequently, the situation within Rochford District relating to this should be monitored carefully, with observations recorded in the ELS helping to form a baseline.

### **New Class MA amendments to Permitted Development Rights**

2.13. In December 2020, the Government ran a consultation called ‘Supporting Housing Delivery and Public Service Infrastructure’<sup>7</sup>, which explored the possibility of converting units in the recently created Class E to residential through Permitted Development. The subsequent amendments to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (GPDO) came into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2021, resulting in the new Class MA Permitted Development<sup>8</sup>. This replaced the prior Class O, which allowed for office-to-residential conversion, which has facilitated a significant loss of office stock to residential uses since its introduction in 2013.

2.14. Class MA allows the change of use of up to 1,500sqm (16,145 sq. ft) of Class E floorspace that has been vacant for three months, and has been in Class E use for over two years, to take place under the Prior Approval process (i.e., without the need for a conventional change of use planning application). The use of Class MA is not permitted in the following designations:

- Article 2(3) Land – AONB, SPA, the Broads, National Park, World Heritage Site
- Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Safety Hazard Zone
- Military Explosives Area
- Listed Buildings
- Scheduled Ancient Monuments

2.15. The Prior Approval process is assessed against the following limited number of specified matters:

- Transport & Highways

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/supporting-housing-delivery-and-public-service-infrastructure>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2021/428/article/6/made?view=plain>

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- Contamination
  - Flood Risk
  - noise from commercial units affecting residents
  - natural light to all habitable rooms and if the conversion might affect business or similar area. If the existing use is a registered nursery or health centre then an impact assessment will also take place.
  - the impact on intended occupiers of the development of the introduction of residential use in an area the authority considers to be important for general or heavy industry, waste management, storage and distribution, or a mix of such uses.
  - if the existing use is a registered nursery or health centre then an impact assessment will also take place.
  - GPDO does not grant permission for any dwellinghouse that would be less than 37sqm or would not comply with the nationally described space standard.
- 2.16. Unlike the former Class O, there is now no consideration of the impact of the loss of retail/commercial space allowed. The only exception to this is where it involves the conversion of ground floor space in a Conservation Area, where a limited retail impact assessment may be carried out.
- 2.17. Class MA has potential significant implications for the stock of employment sites within the District, as office and light industrial premises in town centres and employment sites could see changes of use through this process, with consideration of economic impacts no longer a factor for the local planning authority. Whilst the removal of Class O means there is now an upper limit of 1,500 sq. m on the floorspace which can change use, the vast majority of office and light industrial units in Rochford District fall below this threshold, and are potentially at risk.
- 2.18. Whilst the prior approval process does not allow for consideration of economic impact, the need to consider impacts on intended residential occupiers in areas considered *important for general or heavy industry, waste management, storage and distribution, or a mix of such uses* could provide protection in employment sites deemed important for these uses. Consequently, the ELS lists sites in which significant concentrations of such uses were observed, and where Class MA is likely to be inappropriate (see paragraph 7.41).

### **Rochford District Local Development Framework**

- 2.19. The Rochford District Council Local Development Framework is comprised of a number of key adopted development plan documents; the most importance of which

being the Core Strategy<sup>9</sup> (adopted in 2011) and the Allocations Plan<sup>10</sup> (adopted in February 2014).

### **Core Strategy**

- 2.20. The Core Strategy was adopted in December 2011. The Core Strategy sets out the vision, objectives and strategic policies that were envisaged to shape the growth and development of the District over a plan period of at least 15 years.
- 2.21. The Employment section of the Core Strategy draws evidence from the 2009 *Employment Land Study Update Final Report*<sup>11</sup> and includes employment floorspace requirements for Rochford District between 2006-2021, which identified a net requirement for employment land across all scenarios modelled. The Core Strategy set out a series of objectives to meet the District's economic and employment land needs in both quantitative and qualitative ways, including the following:
- Ensure the growth of local employment opportunities and deliver an additional net 3,000 local jobs by 2021.
  - Implement the London Southend Airport and Environs Joint Area Action Plan to realise the potential of this local resource.
  - Ensure the delivery of an Eco-Enterprise Centre which will provide valuable support for new businesses within the District.
  - 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.
  - 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.
  - 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.
- 2.22. Policy ED1 (Employment Growth) discusses the Council's general approach towards supporting economic development in line with the objectives, whilst the enhancement of London Southend Airport is the specific focus of Policy ED2 (London Southend Airport and Environs). Policy ED3 (Existing Employment Land) sets out which existing sites will continue to be protected / improved as employment sites, whilst also identifying sites which are considered 'bad neighbours' or with potential for redevelopment, with these set to be de-allocated, amounting to 18 ha of employment land.

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.rochford.gov.uk/core-strategy>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.rochford.gov.uk/allocations-plan>

<sup>11</sup> [https://www.rochford.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-11/planning\\_employment\\_airport.pdf](https://www.rochford.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-11/planning_employment_airport.pdf)

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- 2.23. Policy ED4 then seeks to compensate for this loss through the allocation of new employment sites, both to meet forecast demand and compensate for losses of employment land to residential allocations (i.e., at Star Lane, Great Wakering; Stambridge Mills, Rochford; and Rawreth Lane Industrial Estate, Rayleigh, along with potential redevelopment at Eldon Way/Foundry Business Park, Hockley).
- 2.24. The assumptions and evidence base for employment land set out in the Local Development Framework documents are now considered out of date. Accordingly, an updated evidence base (including this ELS) having been prepared to inform the emerging Local Plan.

### Allocations Plan

- 2.25. The Rochford District Council Allocations Plan was formally adopted by the Council in February 2014. It allocates specific sites and sets out detailed policies, including residential, employment, education and open space uses, in line with the Council's Core Strategy, as follows.
- 2.26. **Existing employment land allocations:** The majority of the District's existing employment land, as set out in Policy ED3 of the Core Strategy, is protected from uses that would undermine their role as employment generators. These are outlined below, with the exception of Aviation Way Industrial Estate, which is protected under the separate *London Southend Airport Joint Area Action Plan (JAAP)* document:
- 2.27. Policy EEL1 – Existing Employment Land around Rochford:
- Swaines Industrial Estate
  - Purdeys Industrial Estate
  - Riverside Industrial Estate
  - Rochford Business Park
- 2.28. Policy EEL2 – Existing Employment Land around Rayleigh
- Imperial Park Industrial Estate
  - Brook Road Industrial Estate
- 2.29. Policy EEL3 – Existing Employment Land on Wallasea Island
- Baltic Wharf
  - Essex Marina
- 2.30. **New employment land allocations:** New employment land allocations on land previously designated as Green Belt were identified in the LDF Allocation Plan. This was to compensate for the reallocation of four existing employment sites for alternative uses and to accommodate additional employment uses, in accordance with Core Strategy Policy ED4. Policies covering these allocations are outlined below:

- 2.31. Policy NEL1 - West of the A1245, Rayleigh: allocation of former Green Belt land at Michelins Farm to compensate for the allocation of Rawreth Industrial Estate for residential use.
- 2.32. Policy NEL2 - South of Great Wakering: allocation of former Green Belt land on Star Lane to compensate for the allocation of Star Lane Industrial Estate and Brickworks for residential use.
- 2.33. Policy NEL3 – North of London Southend Airport: allocation of former Green Belt land to accommodate additional employment needs for the Rochford and Southend local authority areas. Note that full details of these sites and policies are included in the JAAP (see below).
- 2.34. The sites outlined above fall under the scope of this study, and are assessed for their effectiveness as employment sites, along with future potential for development or intensification. Summaries (by geographical cluster) are included in [Section 5](#), whilst the full proformas are included in [Appendix C](#).

### Rochford Town Centre Area Action Plan<sup>12</sup>

- 2.35. This document was adopted in 2015, and sets out the Council's vision for Rochford town centre and includes policies for managing development and protecting the character of the town centre. One its policies, *Policy 4 – Locks Hill Employment Site*, provides protection for the office-led employment uses in the Locks Hill area, along with support for further office development (or complementary uses) in this location.

### Hockley Area Action Plan<sup>13</sup>

- 2.36. Adopted in 2014, the Hockley Area Action Plan (HAAP) develops Core Strategy Policy RTC6, which envisages the redevelopment of Eldon Way/Foundry Business Park for a mix of uses considered more appropriate for a town centre. *Policy 1 – Hockley Area Action Plan framework*, designates the Eldon Way Opportunity Site and includes a Framework Plan map and Proposals Map, showing its location, different features and relationship with the wider town centre. This indicates the designation of the Eldon Way Industrial Estate as a mixed-use opportunity site, whilst the Foundry Business Park is retained for employment use. *Policy 5 – Protecting jobs* sets out the role of the Foundry Business Park as the retained employment component (to be treated as an allocated employment site through Core Strategy policies ED3 and ED4).

### Development Management Plan

- 2.37. The LDF Development Management Plan<sup>14</sup> includes Policy DM32 – Employment Land, to support the economic ambitions set out in the Core Strategy through the management of development proposals on existing and new employment sites. This seeks to prioritise B1 (office/light industrial) and B2 (general industrial) uses on these sites, recognising they are likely to result in a greater quantum of employment. Other

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.rochford.gov.uk/rochford-town-centre-area-action-plan>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.rochford.gov.uk/hockley-area-action-plan>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.rochford.gov.uk/development-management-plan>

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uses (including storage and distribution) are required to demonstrate aspects such as the number of jobs provided, viability of retaining B1/B2 uses, proportion of alternative uses present, impact on local town centres and wider sustainability issues. The policy also seeks to restrict retail development on these sites, requiring proposals to pass the required sequential tests.

### London Southend Airport Joint Area Action Plan (JAAP)<sup>15</sup>

- 2.38. The JAAP forms part of the suite of documents making up the Rochford Local Development Framework. Jointly developed by Rochford District Council and Southend-on-Sea City Council, it builds on the Core Strategies of both authorities and acts as a framework for the expansion of London Southend Airport and the regeneration of its environs through economic growth. In addition to the Airport site itself, the JAAP area covers both existing employment sites and newly allocated employment land in both Rochford District and Southend City.
- 2.39. The JAAP sets out a strong economic vision for the environs of the Airport, underpinned by plans to create a significant quantum of new employment space and local employment opportunities in Rochford and Southend, which have historically experienced both high rates of out-commuting and a shortage of employment space of all types. The JAAP vision is for *'an area that realises its potential as a driver for the sub-regional economy, providing significant employment opportunities and ensuring a good quality of life for its residents and workers. To achieve this, the area's assets and opportunities for employment need to be supported and developed'*. The JAAP is a long-term strategic document which has established planning policies for the designated area to 2031 and beyond, recognising that the realisation of the long-term economic benefits from the expansion of the Airport and development of its surrounding commercial areas is something which requires a considerable period of time. The vision plans for the creation of up to 7,000 jobs in the JAAP area over the timescale of the document. Relevant objectives supporting this vision include the following:
- Maximising the economic benefits of a thriving airport and related activity;
  - Seeking maximum return on public investment through attracting inward investment; and
  - Developing efficient use and upgrading of existing employment land resources
- 2.40. The JAAP sets out a number of site-specific policies to support the economic development of the Airport's environs, with the new employment land Areas 1, 2 and 3 (referred to as 'Saxon Business Park'), along with the majority of the existing employment site, Aviation Way Industrial Estate, falling within the JAAP boundaries (see Figure 1, below). These policies set out acceptable use classes and activities expected to take place on different parts of the JAAP site, in order to meet the

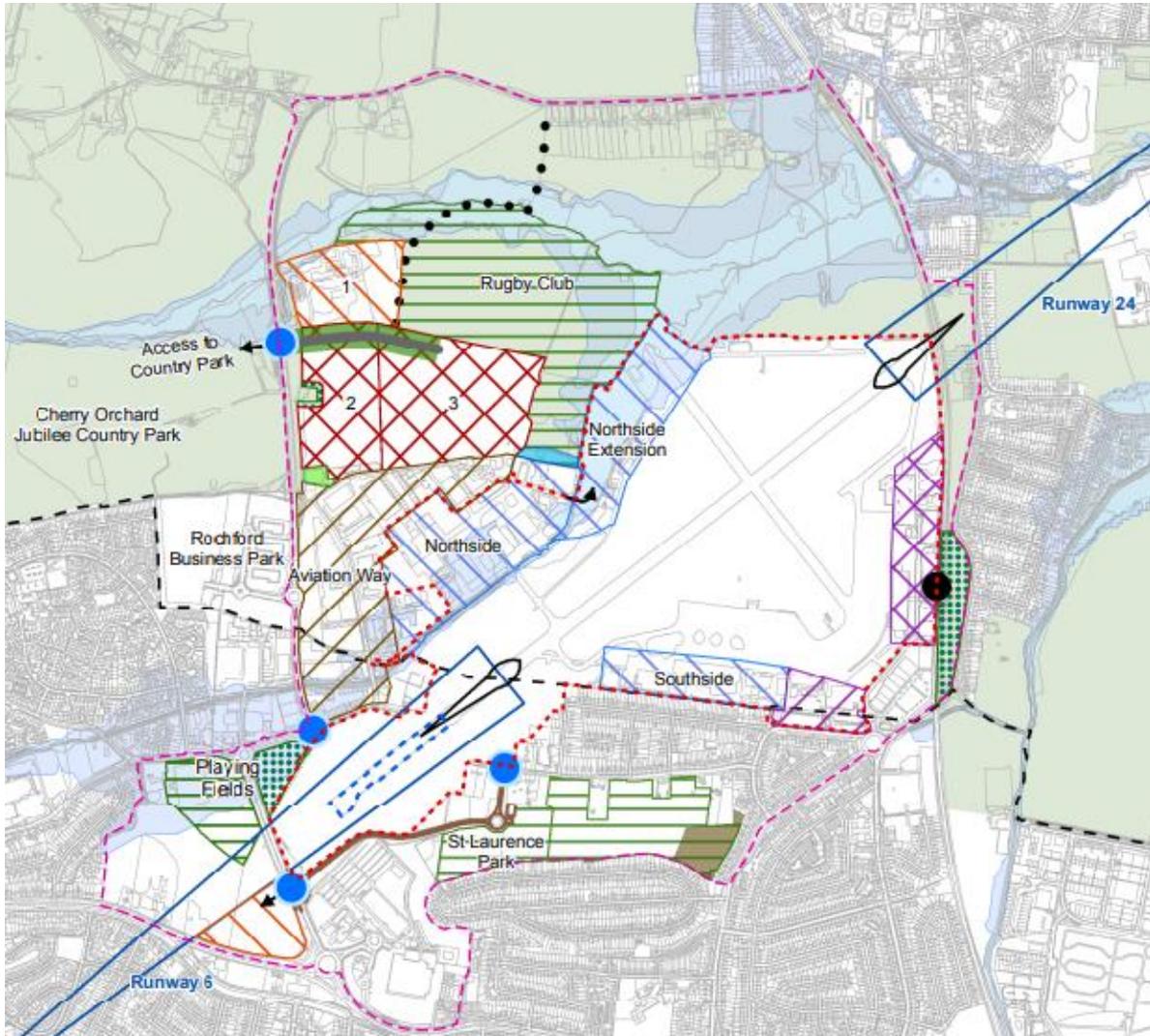
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<sup>15</sup> <https://www.rochford.gov.uk/london-southend-airport-and-environs-joint-area-action-plan#:~:text=The%20London%20Southend%20Airport%20and.was%20sound%20and%20legally%20compliant>

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economic objectives set out in the Vision and support sustainable local economic growth.

**Figure 1: London Southend Airport and Environs Joint Area Action Plan boundary and constituent sites.**



Source: London Southend Airport and Environs Joint Area Action Plan (2014).

2.41. Table 1, below, sets out these policies for each site, along with the quantum of uses permitted/envisaged. Some commentary on the extent to which each of these site-specific policies has been achieved is included in the cluster analysis in [Section 5](#). Note that scope is also provided for some supporting/ancillary uses, including storage and distribution or retail/food & drink.

**Table 1: JAAP Site-Specific Policies**

Site and approx.size (ha)	Policies	Use classes	Quantum permitted	Further details
Aviation Way (22ha)	Policy E2 - Aviation Way	B1/B2	N/A	Identifies opportunities to increase employment space

Site and approx.size (ha)	Policies	Use classes	Quantum permitted	Further details
	Industrial Estate			through restructuring and intensification of existing sites.
Saxon Business Park – Area 1 (5.5ha)	Policy E3 - Saxon Business Park	B1/ Education	20,000 sq. m	Envisages landmark building on gateway site, establishing identify of area as a high-quality business park.
Saxon Business Park – Area 2 (8ha)	Policy E3 - Saxon Business Park	B1/B2	30,000 sq. m	Required to provide a new junction to access the business park.
Saxon Business Park – Area 3 (12.5ha)	Policy E3 - Saxon Business Park	B1/B2	49,000 sq. m	Includes the extension of the access road to enable the further development of the business park.

Source: London Southend Airport and Environs Joint Area Action Plan (2014).

## Economic Policy Context

2.42. Alongside the relevant planning policies relating to employment land, a number of national, sub-regional and local economic strategies are useful for reference, as they set out priorities and objectives relating to economic development in the District and surrounding areas, along with the drivers for key priority sectors/industries and businesses at different sizes and scales of development.

### National Economic Policy

2.43. A range of national policies and ‘white papers’ form the recent rationale for supporting economic investment and employment growth across the UK, feeding into initiatives which directly or indirectly impact the supply of employment land.

2.44. The *Industrial Strategy: Building a Britain fit for the future*<sup>16</sup> White Paper, published in November 2017, set out a strategy to boost the country’s economic productivity and enable businesses to create greater numbers of high-paying jobs, investing in skills, infrastructure and innovation.

2.45. The intention was to boost productivity and earning power across the country by focusing on five foundations which align to the vision for a transformed economy, namely:

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/industrial-strategy-building-a-britain-fit-for-the-future>

- Ideas – the world’s most innovative economy
- People – good jobs and greater earning power for all
- Infrastructure – a major upgrade to the UK’s infrastructure
- Business Environment – the best place to start and grow a business
- Places – prosperous communities across the UK.

2.46. Alongside this, it set out a series of ‘grand challenges’, focused on innovative emerging sectors predicted to drive considerable economic growth, innovation and productivity increases. These were:

- The artificial intelligence & data-driven economy
- Clean growth
- The future of mobility
- Ageing society

2.47. In March 2023, the Industrial Strategy was subsumed into *Build Back Better: our plan for growth*<sup>17</sup> – the strategy, published in 2021. This set out a plan to guide economic recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic and boost productivity by focusing on opportunities, focused on three core pillars of growth – Infrastructure; Skills; and Innovation. It also focused on the national priorities to ‘level up the whole of the UK’; ‘support the transition to Net Zero’; and ‘support our vision for Global Britain’. A focus on the importance of place; infrastructure (including digital connectivity and transport); and spreading investment and regeneration across the UK; raised the prospect of positive implications for employment growth in South Essex, home to one of the Government’s designated Freeports.

2.48. The White Paper, *Levelling Up the United Kingdom*<sup>18</sup>, published in May 2022, develops Levelling Up priorities further, seeking to tackle geographic disparities across the UK by investing to improve regional productivity, pay, jobs and living standards through stimulating private sector growth. The paper identifies a series of ‘missions’ to deliver Levelling Up, as shown in Table 2, below:

**Table 2: Levelling Up Missions and Focus Areas**

Focus Area	Mission
	<i>Boost productivity, pay, jobs and living standards by growing the private sector, especially in those places where they are lagging</i>
<b>Living Standards</b>	By 2030, pay, employment and productivity will have risen in every area of the UK, with each containing a globally competitive city, and the gap between the top performing and other areas closing.

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/build-back-better-our-plan-for-growth>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/levelling-up-the-united-kingdom>

Focus Area	Mission
<b>Research &amp; Development (R&amp;D)</b>	By 2030, domestic public investment in R&D outside the Greater South East will increase by at least 40%, and over the Spending Review period by at least one third. This additional government funding will seek to leverage at least twice as much private sector investment over the long term to stimulate innovation and productivity growth.
<b>Transport Infrastructure</b>	By 2030, local public transport connectivity across the country will be significantly closer to the standards of London, with improved services, simpler fares and integrated ticketing.
<b>Digital Connectivity</b>	By 2030, the UK will have nationwide gigabit-capable broadband and 4G coverage, with 5G coverage for the majority of the population.
<i>Spread opportunities and improve public services, especially in those places where they are weakest</i>	
<b>Education</b>	By 2030, the number of primary school children achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and maths will have significantly increased. In England, this will mean 90% of children will achieve the expected standard, and the percentage of children meeting the expected standard in the worst performing areas will have increased by over a third.
<b>Skills</b>	By 2030, the number of people successfully completing high-quality skills training will have significantly increased in every area of the UK. In England, this will lead to 200,000 more people successfully completing high-quality skills training annually, driven by 80,000 more people completing courses in the lowest skilled areas.
<b>Health</b>	By 2030, the gap in Healthy Life Expectancy (HLE) between local areas where it is highest and lowest will have narrowed, and by 2035 HLE will rise by five years
<b>Well-being</b>	By 2030, well-being will have improved in every area of the UK, with the gap between top performing and other areas closing.
<i>Restore a sense of community, local pride and belonging, especially in those places where they have been lost</i>	
<b>Pride in Place</b>	By 2030, pride in place, such as people’s satisfaction with their town centre and engagement in local culture and community, will have risen in every area of the UK, with the gap between top performing and other areas closing.
<b>Housing</b>	By 2030, renters will have a secure path to ownership with the number of first-time buyers increasing in all areas; and the government’s ambition is for the number of non-decent rented homes

Focus Area	Mission
	to have fallen by 50%, with the biggest improvements in the lowest performing areas
<b>Crime</b>	By 2030, homicide, serious violence and neighbourhood crime will have fallen, focused on the worst affected areas.
<i>Empower local leaders and communities, especially in those places lacking local agency</i>	
<b>Local Leadership</b>	By 2030, every part of England that wants one will have a devolution deal with powers at or approaching the highest level of devolution and a simplified, long-term funding settlement.

Source: *The White Paper, Levelling Up the United Kingdom*<sup>19</sup> (2022).

2.49. The paper identifies the delivery of employment land and modern, flexible workspaces as some of the ways in which the Levelling Up goals can be met, and ‘left-behind’ places supported. A more positive approach to employment land in national planning policy is identified as key to supporting the provision of jobs, whilst increased engagement with infrastructure providers in the plan-making process is also a priority in helping bolster business productivity and overcome barriers. Reforms to the planning system are regarded as an important policy tool for achieving Levelling Up, and many of these aspects will be delivered through the forthcoming Levelling Up & Regeneration Act (2023), including through changes to the NPPF (see paragraph 2.2)

### Subregional Economic Strategies

2.50. Since 2011, Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) have been established across England to identify and support local economic growth priorities, encourage business investment and drive economic development. For Rochford District, the South-East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP), covering Essex, Kent and East Sussex, is the relevant LEP.

2.51. In 2018, the Government announced Local Industrial Strategies, long-term local economic plans aligned to the national Industrial Strategy, with LEPs identified as the vehicles to develop and deliver these for their respective geographic areas. Since 2019, SELEP has been working towards the development of a draft Local Industrial Strategy, with work towards this leading to the publication in March 2021 of the *Economic Recovery and Renewal Strategy (ERRS)*<sup>20</sup>, intended both to support economy recovery and growth in the SELEP region in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and drive longer-term prosperity, also considering the UK’s departure from the European Union. Alongside an immediate economic response to the challenges presented by the pandemic, the ERRS set out 4 strategic priorities based on the region’s unique geography and assets, as well as barriers and challenges to overcome:

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/levelling-up-the-united-kingdom>

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.southeastlep.com/our-strategy/economic-recovery-and-renewal-strategy/>

- **Business Resilience & Growth:** supporting start-up businesses; business innovation/collaboration; training & retraining of skilled personnel; improvement of digital infrastructure and attracting inward investment, in order to help the region's economy to grow back stronger and more productive.
- **UK's Global Gateway:** focused on the region's geographic position and network of nationally-significant ports and transport infrastructure (including airports and the Channel Tunnel) to leverage trade, investment, innovation and employment growth. Ways of achieving this included capitalising on Freeport designations at Thames Freeport and Freeport East; promoting the Thames Estuary as a major hub for trade and inward investment; and enhancing port connectivity. SELEP's investment of £23.09m from the Local Growth Fund into the Southend Airport Business Park, in Rochford District, was identified as a particular example.
- **Communities for the Future:** using future housing growth to create high-quality new communities that embody innovation and deliver improvements in quality of life, infrastructure and local economic growth, incorporating the latest renewable and low-carbon technologies. Related to employment spaces, these communities will make provision for new ways of working and digital technologies, providing high quality, flexible workspaces to meet the needs of different types of businesses and workers.
- **Coastal Catalyst:** addressed both the opportunities and challenges of the region's long coastline, focusing on growing sectors such as maritime, energy and green technologies, along with improvements to transport and digital connectivity to increase prosperity in coastal communities.

2.52. The Association of South Essex Local Authorities (ASELA)'s, *Growth and Recovery Prospectus*<sup>21</sup>, published in July 2020, outlines the main priorities which will make the South Essex sub-region *the place to live; to visit; to work and do business*. This identifies South Essex as an important economic corridor which contributes £17.9bn to the UK economy. The Prospectus sets out a plan to boost this by £15bn, raising productivity and creating a further 100,000 jobs by 2050, to be achieved through attracting investment in a series of priorities:

- Providing excellent and contemporary **digital infrastructure** including 5G and connectivity that will see businesses want to invest in the area and start successful and productive enterprises.
- Delivering significant improvements in **connectivity and public transport**, underpinned by investment in active travel projects which benefit people's health and wellbeing and could see major environmental benefits.
- Unlocking **housing** sites to deliver accelerated development seeing new quality homes, neighbourhoods and communities brought to South Essex, and enhancing amenity and place for existing local residents.

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<sup>21</sup> [https://ca1-asl.edcdn.com/asela-growth-recovery-prospectus-202007-v01\\_compressed.pdf?v=1596699780](https://ca1-asl.edcdn.com/asela-growth-recovery-prospectus-202007-v01_compressed.pdf?v=1596699780)

- Investment in **green and blue infrastructure** to enable new parks and river walks, supporting active use of environmental assets, adding to biodiversity, health and wellbeing outcomes, whilst supporting active and thriving communities.
- Improving **skills** across the region from school aged children through to adult training and education, ensuring that the current and future workforce can access productive and highly skilled jobs.
- A strategy to secure more **commercial development** from employers who can provide productive and well-paid employment, locally.
- Supporting **young people** to achieve their best and build their futures in South Essex.

### Local Economic Strategies

2.53. Essex County Council's *Sector Development Strategy* (SDS)<sup>22</sup>, launched in 2022, aims to coordinate economic growth across the county. It identified five key sectors that are best placed to deliver long-term sustainable growth and investment in the county, along with significant quantities and quality of employment opportunities. The strategy sets out a plan for coordinating support across multiple partners (both public and private sector), in order to maximise growth potential in the following sectors:

- Construction (including green construction and retrofit)
- Clean energy
- Advanced manufacturing and engineering
- Digi-tech
- Life sciences (including med-tech and care-tech)

2.54. The strategy also contains three strategic goals, to ensure the strategy targets the outcomes and inclusive, sustainable growth that will most benefit residents:

- **Strategic goal 1: A thriving economy** - using the sectors to market Essex as a centre of innovation and entrepreneurial spirit where the benefits of this growth are felt within the county. In practice that will mean:
  - More high quality jobs in the sectors of the future
  - More funding for innovation
  - Good quality buildings for businesses
  - A business community that is ready to take advantage of innovation and technology
  - Residents with the skills and confidence to embrace digital services and employment opportunities

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<sup>22</sup> <https://www.essex.gov.uk/running-council/plans-and-strategies/sector-development-strategy>

- **Strategic goal 2: An economy for everyone** - ensuring every resident of Essex has the opportunity to gain the skills and experience to succeed in the five sectors regardless of their background and identity. To be delivered by:
  - A skills system that is aligned with the jobs and opportunities of the future
  - A collaborative approach between education, businesses, and local government to deliver the skills needed for employment in the five growth sectors
  - Clear pathways of employment from traditional sectors into the five growth sectors
  - Equality of opportunity in growth sectors.
- **Strategic goal 3: An economy fit for the future** - centring green growth as intrinsic to the future growth of the five priority sectors to ensure Essex meets its target for a net zero county by 2035. Success for this opportunity looks like:
  - Reduced emissions in line with the ambition for the County to become net zero
  - Progress towards a decentralised and decarbonised energy system
  - Sustainable new homes and a thriving retrofit sector to improve existing homes
  - Essex at the forefront of low carbon (solar, offshore wind, nuclear and hydrogen) energy development and employment
  - Harnessing innovation to reach net zero ambitions.

2.55. Particularly relevant to the ELS, the SDS identified the key commercial accommodation requirements for the five priority sectors, with this ELS being able to use these to identify opportunities to support additional investment and growth on sites within the District by following recommendations and creating the right conditions:

- **Construction & retrofit:** the projected growth in construction and retrofit activity will likely increase the need for retail warehousing/trade counter spaces, warehouses and open storage land. Retrofit activity is likely to be spread across the county in proportion to the number of properties. As the industry shifts towards Modern Methods of Construction (MMC), large factories may be required for off-site assembly. Given the land-hungry nature of MMC factories, they may be more easily accommodated as part of large new employment areas such as those within Garden Communities.
- **Clean energy:** Power generators in the clean energy sector will need sites with access to and capacity within the energy distribution network, and waterside locations will be required for nuclear and offshore wind. Light industrial space will also be needed for the operation and maintenance of generation and distribution infrastructure. The south of the County, where development densities are higher,

may support more District Heat Networks. The middle of the County, which is more rural but has moderate agricultural quality, may accommodate more solar farms.

- **Advanced manufacturing & engineering:** The advanced manufacturing and engineering sector needs a wide variety of sizes and types of business accommodation for component manufacture and assembly operations, but most will benefit from sites with good access to the strategic road network and public transport interchanges and adequate utilities capacity. Research facilities will also be needed for the design, testing, and commissioning of new products and smaller-scale production processes. Teaching spaces and conference facilities can be important forums for knowledge-sharing and collaboration with partners. There may be the potential to develop Innovation Districts within larger town centres and existing employment areas as their uses continue to diversify.
- **Digi-tech:** Businesses that design, develop and test software require a highly qualified workforce – and teaching spaces and conference facilities can be important forums for knowledge-sharing and collaboration with partners. Businesses will require futureproofed broadband (fibre-to-the-premises) and 5G network access. Town centres and high streets, with their excellent connectivity and amenities, could accommodate SME's and larger companies in this field. South Essex is part of the Thames Estuary Production Corridor.
- **Life sciences (including Med-tech and Care-tech):** Businesses that design, test, and commission new products within the field of life sciences typically require controlled environments for different types of laboratories such as wet labs, microbiological/clinical labs, and in vivo labs. They require a highly qualified workforce, and teaching spaces and conference facilities can be important forums for knowledge sharing and collaboration with partners. CareTech businesses report a shortage of environments for testing their products, ranging from private dwellings to independent living developments and care homes. There may be the potential to develop Innovation Districts within larger town centres and existing employment areas as their uses continue to diversify.

### Rochford Economic Growth Strategy 2022-2025<sup>23</sup>

2.56. The Council's current *Economic Growth Strategy* sets out a 'Vision for Rochford', which seeks to achieve a more prosperous and diverse economy through 3 main ambitions, all of which involve the use of new and existing employment sites and enabling infrastructure:

- **Grow the economy:** Supporting local businesses to expand; adapt; and innovate. Includes supporting the roll-out of full-fibre technology, which will support both employment sites and home-based businesses.
- **Attract investment:** Promote and support the marketing of land and building opportunities across the District, including those on Airport Business Park (and the

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<https://www.rochford.gov.uk/GrowthStrategy#:~:text=Our%20Vision%20for%20a%20more,We%20will%E2%80%A6&text=entrepreneurship%20by%20improving%20skills%20and,who%20live%20and%20work%20here.>

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Launchpad flexible business facility); Support the delivery of new business spaces which targets known areas of unmet demand; Work to connect potential occupiers of vacant premises with low-interest finance through the South Essex No Use Empty Scheme; Support the delivery of new innovative and flexible business spaces in the District's centres and employment estates; Develop and launch a new place-based brand for the District to promote economic opportunities to investors; Champion and enable local investment opportunities.

- **Support entrepreneurship:** Invest in town centres and other opportunity sites to create jobs, reduce deprivation and attract new businesses; Work with the owners and operators of strategic employment sites to improve their attractiveness, competitiveness and accessibility to a wide range of potential users and employers; Secure and promote the job opportunities created by investment projects both in the District and the wider region, including those created by Airport Business Park, Thames Freeport and Lower Thames Crossing.

### Rochford Economic Growth Strategy 2017

2.57. The Council's preceding *Economic Growth Strategy 2017*<sup>24</sup>, part of the evidence base for the New Local Plan, identified both the Airport Business Park and growth of London Southend Airport as key local strengths, along with the District's entrepreneurial small business culture and strong business base of technical and manufacturing businesses. However, it also notes barriers to growth, such as a persistent issue with availability of suitable 'grow-on space' for small businesses (i.e., units of 150-500 sq. m), along with varying quality of available employment land. The strategy commits the Council to unlocking economic growth in the District through 4 key priorities, namely:

- Encouraging inward investment
- Growing and retaining businesses
- Supporting new businesses
- Developing skills and employability

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<sup>24</sup> <https://www.rochford.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-06/Economic%20Growth%20Strategy%202017.pdf>

### 3. Evidence Base

- 3.1. A number of previous studies are important reference points in considering the District's existing employment land provision, assessing future needs and how these can be provided for. This section firstly summarises the Council's recent adopted existing evidence base (including the previous version of this Study from 2014), before considering the most recent evidence which has been developed in parallel for the new Local Plan.

#### Past Adopted Evidence Base

##### 2014 Employment Land Study

- 3.2. The 2014 Employment Land Study<sup>25</sup>, carried out by GVA, was commissioned to provide a robust evidence base for the District's employment needs up to 2031, carrying out a baseline survey of the District's employment sites, as well as modelling expected economic growth against different scenarios, and the resultant demand for different types of employment land. It then undertook a demand/supply analysis to assess the suitability of the future employment land supply against expected demand, taking into account the allocation and de-allocation of specific employment sites within the Rochford Core Strategy.
- 3.3. In concluding, the Study noted a potential demand for additional employment land of between 3.1ha and 8.8ha, with this differing by scenario. Considering the demand/supply balance, it noted that the de-allocation of a number of sites in the adopted Core Strategy (Star Lane Industrial Estate – 5.8ha; Rawreth Industrial Estate – 5.9ha; and Stambridge Mills – 1.8ha, along with 3.4 ha at Eldon Way Industrial Estate), resulted in a requirement for a further re-provision of 7.6ha of employment space across the District, making a potential land requirement of 16.4 ha over the plan period. This was set against the future capacity of 12ha from site allocations at Land West of A1245 and Land South of Great Wakering, resulting in a residual 4.4ha to be met elsewhere. Note that this did not consider the 27ha allocated at Land North of Southend Airport, which was considered through the London Southend Airport JAAP and intended to attract additional employment growth, associated with the Airport. The Study considered that this 4.4ha could largely be accommodated through redevelopment/intensification of existing employment sites, along with some use of the JAAP land for uses other than those related to aviation. This had implications for 15ha of land West of the existing Purdeys Industrial Estate, which had been promoted through the Call for Sites process, but for which the Study determined there was no overriding need at that point in time.
- 3.4. The Study's wider recommendations included for the Council to support the selective redevelopment of all/parts of existing sites where stock does not meet modern businesses needs, and particularly to encourage more intensive use of land and sites to maximise employment numbers. It also stressed the importance of wider site environments being improved alongside redevelopment/intensification of individual

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<sup>25</sup> [https://www.rochford.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-11/planning\\_evibase\\_EB71\\_0.pdf](https://www.rochford.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-11/planning_evibase_EB71_0.pdf)

plots, noting that a failure to do so could result in Rochford sites losing out to mean investment and employment from more 'footloose' businesses who choose to locate in higher-quality sites elsewhere. Purdeys and Aviation Way Industrial Estates were noted as particular examples where overall site quality was not keeping up with some limited improvements to stock on parts of the sites.

### **South Essex Economic Development Needs Assessment 2017**

- 3.5. The 2017 South Essex EDNA<sup>26</sup>, a study by GVA, assessed the employment land needs across the South Essex local authorities, including Rochford. It considers the effect of a number of strategic-level trends on the subregion, including the relocation of industrial uses from Greater London to South Essex; the growth of new transport hubs (e.g. the London Gateway Port and Southend Airport); strengthening of specialist industrial clusters; and series of population, migration and demographic trends. The EDNA also assesses individual sites for their quality and makes recommendations for their future management, as well as assessing their suitability in supporting key growth sectors for South Essex.
- 3.6. The EDNA complements the Rochford Employment Land Study 2014 by providing a more strategic-level assessment within which the Study sits, with both documents having fed into the early stages of the new Local Plan.
- 3.7. On the supply side, the EDNA considered 112ha of employment land in Rochford District across 10 existing sites, comprising 8% of the total employment land in South Essex. It made a series of recommendations for the future management of each site, for example assigning a 'Protect & Enhance' / 'Monitor & Manage' approach to Purdeys Industrial Estate, advocating it be protected for B-class uses, whilst the encroachment of non-B-class activity should be monitored and refurbishment/delivery of new units supported. These 2017 site assessments form the basis of the approach to both the ELAA (see below) and the 2023 ELS with respect to employment site assessments for Rochford District, allowing for continuity, and for recommendations set out in the 2017 EDNA to be brought forward.
- 3.8. It also considered 10 key prospective employment sites, including undeveloped allocated sites and part of Eldon Way Industrial Estate, identified as being retained for B1/B2 use within the Hockley Area Action Plan (totalling 40.2ha), along with those currently being promoted for allocation in the new Local Plan (135.2ha).
- 3.9. The EDNA modelled a series of scenarios for future employment land requirement for Rochford District, utilising the East of England Forecasting Model (EEFM). This modelled a base employment forecast for 2016-2036, along with scenarios based on growth of London Southend Airport, significant relocation of industrial land from Greater London, and a combination of these prior scenarios. These are displayed in Table 3. As is shown, the combined forecast indicates a demand for 7 ha of employment land, which the EDNA notes aligns with the 2014 ELS 'High Migration'

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<sup>26</sup> <https://localplan.southend.gov.uk/sites/localplan.southend/files/2019-02/South%20Essex%20Economic%20Development%20Needs%20Assessment%20-%20Nov%202017.pdf>

scenario of 8.8 ha (which was based on a higher level of anticipated labour force growth). This modelling does not account for the direct employment growth (and associated employment land demand) associated with the JAAP, the majority of which is expected to be accommodated on the London Southend Airport site itself.

**Table 3: Rochford Employment Land Demand Projections 2016-36 by Scenario - South Essex EDNA**

Land (ha)	Total Land Requirement (ha)	Office	Manufacturing / Industrial	Warehouse
Baseline	-3	1	-3	0
Industrial Land Relocation	24	1	12	12
London Southend Airport Impact	-2	1	-3	0
Combined Forecast	7	1	6	0

Source: South Essex Economic Development Needs Assessment (2017).

### **Rochford Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) - 2017<sup>27</sup>**

- 3.10. To support the preparation of the new Local Plan the SHELAA analysed 219 promoted sites in the Rochford District for their suitability and availability for housing, and employment purposes, using the methodology set out in the PPG (see Paragraph 2.7). This identified 67 sites whose submissions to the Call for Sites process indicated interest in promoting them for employment use. These were a combination of sites promoted solely for employment and those which could include a component of employment/commercial alongside a wider housing allocation, or alternatively with employment use as an alternative option to a housing use.
- 3.11. Table 4, below, sets out the hypothetical capacity of suitable and available land in the district for employment development, as of 2017, based on the 67 submitted sites described above. A distinction is drawn between sites which do not fall within Green Belt and Special Landscape Areas and those which do, with the latter category also including sites where the availability was not known at time of submission. As a result, the capacity figures should be read as a maximum theoretical capacity.

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<sup>27</sup> <https://www.rochford.gov.uk/media/2799>

**Table 4: sites considered to be suitable and available for employment development – 2017**

	Number of sites	Total site size (Ha)
<b>Suitable (excluding Green Belt and Special Landscape Areas)</b>	23	19.32
<b>Suitable and Available (excluding Green Belt and Special Landscape Areas)</b>	17	18.76
<b>Suitable and Available (including Green Belt and Special Landscape Areas and where no availability information)</b>	27	154.62

Source: Rochford Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) - 2017

### 2020 Rochford & Southend Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment<sup>28</sup>

- 3.12. The 2017 SHELAA was updated in 2020 for the purposes of the Regulation 18 Spatial Options consultation on the emerging Local Plan, with the update being conducted jointly with Southend-on-Sea City Council, who were also developing a new Local Plan. In addition to housing sites, 56 sites within Rochford District were assessed for suitability and availability for employment development. Of these, 45 were assessed as being suitable, subject to policy change, whilst one was not suitable. The remaining 10 were determined not to be available.
- 3.13. Based on the PPG criteria, no sites were identified as being immediately deliverable, although 40 assessed to be so (subject to policy). No sites were assessed to be immediately developable, whilst a further 15 could be, subject to policy. One site was assessed to be not deliverable or developable.
- 3.14. It should be noted that very few sites were specifically and solely put forward for employment use, with many also found to be suitable, available and achievable for housing development.

### South Essex Grow-on Space Study

- 3.15. The *South Essex Grow-on-Space Study 2020*<sup>29</sup> provides supporting evidence relating to grow-on space (i.e., units of 150-500 sq. metres), and indicates that across South

<sup>28</sup><https://rochford.oc2.uk/docfiles/213/Housing%20and%20Economic%20Land%20Availability%20Assessment%202021.pdf>

<sup>29</sup><https://ca1-jsp.edcdn.com/downloads/FINAL-REPORT-Grow-on-Space-in-South-Essex-090220.pdf?v=1608722623>

Essex insufficient supply has been coming forward in recent years for a variety of reasons. This also indicates that, for industrial workshops in Rochford District, there is a 'moderate' level of demand, but that quantity of supply is 'quite low', and quality of the current supply is 'very low'. Consequently, there is a District-wide need for new employment land within Rochford District to address this historic shortfall in supply, which risks successful businesses being constrained in substandard accommodation, or having to leave the District altogether. These findings remain consistent with those of an earlier *Essex Grow-on Space Feasibility Study*<sup>30</sup>, published in 2016.

### South Essex Employment Land Availability Assessment (ELAA)

- 3.16. The emerging 2022 ELAA was jointly commissioned by the South Essex local authorities to assist in their joint future planning for accommodating economic growth, focused on identified key sectors deemed a priority for South Essex. It was carried out using a PPG-compliant methodology, consistent with the Government guidance for undertaking housing and employment land availability assessments. It comprises a series of components; firstly, a review of needs across the study area; secondly, a commercial market assessment; thirdly, a series of site assessments across the study area; and finally, a concluding report.
- 3.17. A sequential test of sites across the subregion (including Rochford District) was carried out, with sites tested for the following:
- **Availability of land** – as per the definition set out in the PPG.
  - **Suitability** - assessed against the expected nature of future growth from agreed 'key sectors' deemed strategic for driving economic growth in South Essex. These comprise:
    - Transport & Logistics;
    - Advanced manufacturing & engineering
    - Energy & green technology
    - Digital cultural & creative
    - Life sciences & health
    - Professional & business services
    - Construction
  - **Achievability** – broad consideration of barriers, challenges and opportunities, based on site assessments. These included whether sites were in the Green Belt, had existing uses, were being promoted for alternative uses (e.g. residential), had vacant land, or were suitable for intensification.

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<sup>30</sup> [https://www.basildon.gov.uk/media/7966/Grow-on-Space-Feasibility-Study-Oct-2016/pdf/Grow-on\\_Space\\_Feasibility\\_Study\\_-\\_Oct\\_2016.pdf?m=636535950925470000](https://www.basildon.gov.uk/media/7966/Grow-on-Space-Feasibility-Study-Oct-2016/pdf/Grow-on_Space_Feasibility_Study_-_Oct_2016.pdf?m=636535950925470000)

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3.18. The ELAA identified a series of spatial needs associated with each of these key sectors, including use classes; location and space requirements; and suitable areas in South Essex. These are listed in Table 5, below:

**Table 5: Location and site factors for strategic sectors in the South Essex ELAA**

<b>Sectors</b>	<b>Nature of employment activity</b>	<b>Location, space &amp; other requirements</b>	<b>Nature of suitable growth locations</b>	<b>Suitable South Essex areas</b>
<b>Transport &amp; logistics</b>	Largely B8 wholesale activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Good strategic road network connectivity</li> <li>● Link with key supply chain routes i.e. ports, airports – freeport a key factor</li> <li>● Proximity to London and South East markets</li> <li>● Access to large employment sites</li> <li>● Large yard space for vehicle circulation and turning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Strategic in nature based on key location and space requirements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Thurrock – London Gateway, Tilbury, Purfleet</li> <li>● Basildon – A127 corridor</li> <li>● Brentwood – Brentwood Enterprise Park Allocation</li> </ul>
<b>Advanced Manufacturing &amp; Green Technology and Construction</b>	Largely E(g)(iii) and B2 activity. Some B8 activity, however largely ancillary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Good strategic road network connectivity</li> <li>● Link with key supply chain routes i.e. ports, airports – boosted by potential Freeport activity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Largely strategic in nature based on key location and space requirements</li> <li>● However some local drivers where this is existing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Rochford / Southend – LSA Cluster</li> <li>● Thurrock – London Gateway, Thames Enterprise Park, Tilbury, Lakeside Basin</li> <li>● Basildon – A127 corridor</li> </ul>

Sectors	Nature of employment activity	Location, space & other requirements	Nature of suitable growth locations	Suitable South Essex areas
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Proximity to London and South East markets</li> <li>● Accessibility to skilled workforce</li> <li>● Clustering with similar activity</li> <li>● Access to medium to large employment sites in industrial park format</li> </ul>	<p>strength i.e. Basildon</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Brentwood – Brentwood Enterprise Park Allocation</li> <li>● Castle Point – Canvey Island</li> </ul>
<p><b>Digital / Cultural / Creative Industries and Professional &amp; business services</b></p>	<p>Mixed E(g) and B2 activity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Mixed use, urban environments, with good amenity provision</li> <li>● Cluster with similar activity and proximity to anchor tenants</li> <li>● Accessibility to skilled workforce</li> <li>● Good public transport connectivity</li> <li>● Strong digital infrastructure</li> <li>● Flexibility in space typologies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● May be primarily local in nature based on existing location characteristics and activity strengths</li> <li>● Strategic potential given Thames Estuary Production Corridor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Town centres across South Essex, particularly in Southend, Brentwood (Brentwood TC), and in parts of Thurrock, Rochford and Castle Point</li> <li>● Creative industries at Purfleet</li> </ul>

Sectors	Nature of employment activity	Location, space & other requirements	Nature of suitable growth locations	Suitable South Essex areas
<b>Health Technology</b>	Mixed E(g) and B2 activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessibility to skilled workforce</li> <li>• Urban environments</li> <li>• Proximity to R&amp;D and health facility clusters</li> <li>• Proximity to Advanced Manufacturing activity clusters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Largely local in nature based on specific location and clustering requirements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basildon – A127 corridor</li> <li>• Brentwood Enterprise Park</li> <li>• Rochford/Southend - LSA cluster</li> <li>• Some town centres</li> </ul>

Source: South Essex Employment Land Availability Assessment (2022).

3.19. The ELAA considered a total of 74 ‘available’ sites across the South Essex subregion, totalling 653.89 ha. Of these, 17 sites were in Rochford District, amounting to 129.75 ha.

3.20. An assessment of suitability against the South Essex key sectors identified several sites within Rochford District with potential for some of these, as set out in Table 6, below. However, no sites were identified as being suitable for strategic consideration for Digital / Cultural / Creative Industries and Finance & Business Services; or Health Technology.

**Table 6: Suitable sites for certain sectors in Rochford District – South Essex ELAA**

Site No.	Site Name	Cluster	Sector	Supply (Ha)
R1, R8, R17, R18, R19	Aviation Way; Rochford Business Park; Land west of Cherry Orchard Way and South of Cherry Orchard Way; Land west of Cherry Orchard Way and east of Cherry Orchard Way; Land East of	London Southend Airport Cluster (RO)	Advanced Manufacturing, Green Technology and Construction; Transport & Logistics	31.88

Site No.	Site Name	Cluster	Sector	Supply (Ha)
	Cherry Orchard Way			
R10 and R16	Purdeys Industrial Estate & Three Ashes	Purdeys Cluster	Advanced Manufacturing, Green Technology and Construction; Transport & Logistics	55.63
R7	Riverside Industrial Estate	Purdeys Cluster	Advanced Manufacturing, Green Technology and Construction Transport & Logistics	2.02
R15	Fairlawns Farm	Southend Arterial Road Cluster (RO)	Advanced Manufacturing, Green Technology and Construction; Transport & Logistics	5.34
R4	Brook Road Industrial Estate	Southend Arterial Road Cluster (RO)	Advanced Manufacturing, Green Technology and Construction Transport & Logistics	13.15

Source: South Essex Employment Land Availability Assessment (2022).

3.21. The ELAA achievability analysis narrows down the wider pool of potential sites by discounting those with significant constraints and delivery challenges, such as viability issues, being promoted for alternative uses or Green Belt designation, whilst identifying those with particular opportunities for development on all or part of the site (e.g. vacant infill, under-utilised land or intensification opportunities). This identified 275.09 ha of the 653.89 ha available (42%) was considered ‘achievable’. However, within this, only a small number of sites (totalling 14.5 ha, or 2% of all available land) offered ‘straightforward’ development opportunities on vacant sites with no constraints. Rochford sites R1 (Aviation Way) and R8 (Rochford Business Park) fell within this category. Other achievable sites with increasing levels of delivery

complexity included greenfield/agricultural land (126 ha - likely to require release through the Local Plan process), such as site R15 – Fairlawns Farm; reuse of sites with lower value uses (56.5 ha); or intensification of existing employment sites already in use (149.3 ha), including land in Rochford on Aviation Way and Purdeys Industrial Estates. The latter two categories are likely to have complications relating to displacement of activities, viability and land assembly.

- 3.22. The ELAA concluded by stating that whilst 275 ha has been identified across South Essex as being available, suitable and achievable for strategic employment needs, there remains considerable risk around much of this land. As a result, it may be appropriate to consider additional employment land allocations, which could include strategic provision as part of the designation of new communities, alongside significant housing and infrastructure. In addition, the role of existing town centres to contribute significantly (particularly for industries such as creative, digital technology and health tech), was highlighted, with emerging trends favouring flexible workspace in attractive, accessible locations close to amenities and transport links favouring these areas.
- 3.23. The ELAA site visits in Rochford were carried out in November 2021, making them relatively recent, and many of their observations and recommendations have been incorporated into site assessments set out in this ELS, with the ELAA survey data forming a useful baseline for reference prior to undertaking site visits, and for cross-reference when typing up the proformas. It was, however, still considered necessary for the Planning Policy team to conduct a full range of new site visits for the ELS. This reflects the need to capture additional sites not covered by the ELAA; incorporate additional data fields; and record changes which may have taken place on some sites in the time since the surveys. It also reflects that sites which may not be deemed 'suitable' in the ELAA assessment due to having limited potential to accommodate priority sectors are still likely to be able to provide employment at a local level across a range of other sectors.

## Emerging Local Plan Evidence Base

### 2021 Local Plan: Spatial Options Consultation

- 3.24. Between 28th July 2021 and 21st September 2021, Rochford District Council consulted on its *Spatial Options*<sup>31</sup> document, as part of the Regulation 18 stage of the new Local Plan process. This set out a range of challenges and opportunities relating to how Rochford District could change and grow over the new Plan period up to 2040, in particular on the 'spatial' aspect of future development – i.e., exploring different Spatial Strategy Options (SSOs) for where future growth and development could be located across the District. It also consulted on a series of interconnected themes that together will contribute to achieving a sustainable vision for the District over the next

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<sup>31</sup> [https://rochford.oc2.uk/docfiles/214/New%20Local%20Plan%20-%20Spatial%20Options%20Document%20\(Stylised\)%20-%20new%20date.pdf](https://rochford.oc2.uk/docfiles/214/New%20Local%20Plan%20-%20Spatial%20Options%20Document%20(Stylised)%20-%20new%20date.pdf)

20 years and beyond, with the topics and potential options set out within these thematic sections likely to underpin future policies within the Plan.

3.25. As part of this, the consultation posed a series of questions related to employment land, recognising the District's unique set of economic strengths (e.g., an entrepreneurial culture, high start-up business survival rates and a series of local manufacturing companies with national and global recognition) and weaknesses (such as a low job density, high degree of out-commuting and skills profile below the national average). It also identified opportunities (such as rise of remote working enabling more professionals and entrepreneurs to work in the District) and challenges (an identified shortage of 'grow-on' space for small and medium-sized businesses). The paper set out the following non-exclusive options for addressing employment and skills needs through the Plan:

- *Meeting future needs by allocating existing and new employment sites for specific employment uses (e.g. offices or light industrial)*
- *Meeting future needs by allocating existing and new employment sites for more general employment uses allowing employment sites to flexibly accommodate both employment and other uses.*
- *Meeting future needs by prioritising the delivery of existing employment land allocations at Saxon Business Park, Michelin Farm (West of A1245) and Star Lane which may be sufficient to meet macro needs based on current evidence.*
- *Meeting future needs by prioritising the delivery of new employment space alongside any new strategic housing developments (e.g. start-up business centres/co-working spaces or planning for live-work units).*
- *Meeting future needs by prioritising the expansion of existing employment sites, where adjacent plots can be easily developed to provide more workspace on established sites.*
- *Meeting future needs by prioritising the regularisation of informal employment sites [i.e. sites operating in rural/agricultural locations which have become lawful over time].*
- *Promoting the intensification of employment uses on existing sites (e.g. encouraging the replacement of open storage yards with business units).*
- *Requiring new developments of employment space to set aside a certain proportion for 'start-up' (under 150 sq. m) or 'grow-on' space (150-500 sq. m), to meet identified needs for these types of smaller space*
- *Re-allocating and promoting further development on former employment sites still in employment use (e.g. Rawreth Industrial Estate, Eldon Way or Star Lane), to provide extra capacity, potentially in place of allocating new land.*
- *Working with partners to secure the delivery of ultra-fast connectivity across the District, including fibre-to-the-premises and mobile networks*

- *Working with neighbouring authorities to identify land for higher- or further education facilities where this would address current and future skills shortages*

3.26. These were accompanied by the following questions:

*Q23: With reference to the options listed above, or your own options, how do you feel we can best ensure that we meet our employment and skills needs through the plan?*

*Q24: With reference to Figure 30, do you consider the current employment site allocations to provide enough space to meet the District's employment needs through to 2040? Should we seek to formally protect any informal employment sites for commercial uses, including those in the Green Belt?*

*Q25: With reference to your preferred Strategy Option, are there opportunities for growth to deliver new employment facilities or improvements to existing employment facilities?*

*Q26: Are there any particular types of employment site or business accommodation that you consider Rochford District is lacking, or would benefit from?*

*Q27: Are there other measures we can take through the plan to lay the foundations for long-term economic growth, e.g. skills or connectivity?*

3.27. In addition, a related question was asked in the consultation to consider the future of London Southend Airport and how any future adaptation or growth should be managed in the Plan. This set out a series of options which included whether to prepare a new JAAP, or similar area action plan/masterplan, something which would likely consider the development of the employment sites surrounding the Airport and their integration with surrounding communities.

3.28. Across the six questions related to employment, skills and the Airport, 132 responses were received. Responses generally felt the Council should protect existing and designate new sites, based on local demand and up to date forecasting. Consultees supported close collaboration with local businesses to identify the types of business accommodation needed and where, including 'start-up' and 'grow-on space', whilst flagship sites such as the Airport Business Park should be ambitious in the types of businesses they attract. There was strong general sentiment that more skilled job opportunities should be provided within the District and that business space provision and skills strategy should be closely integrated to help attract more inward investors and support existing business start-ups and growth. Many also considered much of the District's business accommodation to be dated, poor quality and not suited to the needs of modern businesses. Representations considered that new and existing employment sites needed to be more flexible, allowing them to adapt to the latest trends and working practices and allowing businesses to easily scale up and down, something which could include co-working space to support start-ups and remote workers in an adaptable, social environment.

- 3.29. An option to require large-scale residential developments to include new employment space alongside new communities was popular, reducing the need for new residents to commute. Spatial Strategy Option 3 (Concentrated Growth) was seen as a way of achieving this, due to its large scale and potential to deliver significant infrastructure and amenities alongside housing. It was also noted that many large villages, such as Hullbridge and Great Wakering, lacked significant employment opportunities, leading to large-scale out-commuting.
- 3.30. A recognition of changing technological advances and work practices post-Covid ran through many comments, and measures supporting ultra-fast digital connectivity were seen as important, along with a flexible approach to those seeking to run businesses from home, provided they did not impact adversely on neighbours. However, whilst flexibility in employment space was widely supported, there was opposition to the conversion of existing space to residential uses, along with a mixed reception to the prospect of regularising 'informal' employment sites within the District's Green Belt.
- 3.31. Regarding the future of the Airport, most responses considered it should be protected as an important local resource and economic asset, attracting jobs and investment to the District, although there was some question as to how much further expansion was required, given the dramatic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on global aviation. It was generally agreed that the Airport's future development should be agreed jointly with Southend Borough Council and other key partners, recognising that the Airport is a major economic and transport asset not just for the District, but for wider South Essex. As part of a future Masterplan, the Airport itself suggested the creation of a new public transport interchange adjacent to the existing railway station, improving its sustainable travel connections and providing better connectivity to the local community.
- 3.32. A fuller summary which breaks down employment and skills question responses to the consultation is available in [Appendix A](#)

### **2023 Rochford Economic Development Needs Assessment (EDNA)<sup>32</sup>**

- 3.33. Carried out by Lichfields, the most recent EDNA informs the preparation of the emerging Local Plan, providing an up to date, robust and PPG-compliant economic evidence base to determine the District's employment land needs up to 2040. It builds on the evidence base and modelled scenarios set out in the 2017 South Essex EDNA, whilst reflecting the very different context influenced by macro-level events such as the COVID-19 Pandemic and the rise in remote working. The EDNA has the following key objectives:
- a. Review the South Essex Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA) and test its validity. The analysis will draw on data from the Office for National Statistics and evidence included within the 2017 South Essex EDNA, South Essex Joint Strategic Plan Scoping Report, Growth and Recovery Prospectus+ 2020 and

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<sup>32</sup>[Rochford District Council EDNA September 2023](#)

South East Local Industrial Strategy.

- b. Assess the economic needs by undertaking a series of future growth scenarios in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) for the Plan period to 2040. These scenarios will include a labour demand scenario, past trends and labour supply scenario.
- c. Identify the supply and demand balance of Rochford by drawing on the employment supply analysis undertaken for the purposes of the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment in 2021 and the latest available monitoring evidence on extant permissions.

3.34. The accompanying full EDNA should be referred to alongside this ELS for the full detail, however the key findings and conclusions are summarised in the following sections.

3.35. Market signals from the EDNA indicate Rochford District has a mid-sized industrial property submarket, which has seen a substantial growth in stock of 7.6% over the past 3 years. As indicated in Table 7, a significant amount of space has been added in the past 12 months (largely at Arterial Park), and rental growth has been healthy, almost in line with the wider Essex average. Although the vacancy rate appears high, this is due to the recent construction of new stock, with the 5-year average being only 3.5%. Conversely, the office market is very modest, having a negative stock absorption (more space vacated than occupied), with no new space delivered in the preceding year, although vacancy rates were below the Essex average.

**Table 7: Market signals**

Market Signals	Essex	Rochford
<b>Office Market</b>		
Rent per sq. ft	£18.90	£15.80
12 month rent growth	2.6%	2.3%
Vacancy levels	3.2%	2.2%
Absorption level (sq. m)	11,400	-580
12-month deliveries in sq. m	2,081	0
<b>Industrial Market</b>		
Rent per sq. ft	£12.00	£10.00
12 month rent growth	9.9%	9.0%
Vacancy levels	2.7%	11.3%

Absorption level (sq. m)	111,500	9,000
12-month deliveries in sq. m	111,500	8,788

Source: Rochford Economic Development Needs Assessment (2023)

Future Employment Space Requirements

3.36. The EDNA complies with the requirements set out in the NPPF and PPG to develop an understanding of future needs based on a range of data to consider sectoral and employment forecasts considering changes in labour demand; demographic assessments of current and future labour supply; and past take up of employment land and property. These have been translated into the following potential economic scenarios to consider how future employment land need may be influenced:

- Scenario 1 - Labour demand:** Using the Cambridge Econometrics (CE) March 2022 release (which considers the latest post-COVID-19 position and revised macroeconomic assumptions) and resultant implications for employment change, this scenario forecasts total workforce jobs to increase by 11% within the Plan period, resulting in an additional 3,070 workforce jobs in the District by 2040, of which 820 are expected to be in industries requiring floorspace in the ‘Employment’ use classes (Classes B2, B8 and E(g)(i-iii). About 26% of all job growth is expected to be within office, light industrial and distribution sectors, with office-based sectors driving the majority of employment growth. General industrial job growth is forecast to decline by 390 jobs, meanwhile light industrial jobs will increase by 430 jobs. It is expected that the workforce base will have recovered from the effects of the pandemic by 2024.

3.37. Table 8, below, identifies the fastest growing and declining sectors in the District in employment terms during the forecast period. The forecasts suggests that wider sectors such as health, construction and food & beverage services will also play a significant role in driving local job growth in future, alongside sectors whose activity is typically found in office and distribution space such as other professional services, IT services and warehousing and postal. Conversely, employment losses are forecast in sectors such as finance & insurance, manufacturing & repair services, and transport equipment, where factors such as technological change have impacted headcount.

**Table 8: Fastest Growing and Declining Employment Sectors in Rochford, 2020-2040**

Sector	Forecast change in workforce jobs 2020-2040	
	No.	%
<b>FASTEST GROWING EMPLOYMENT SECTORS</b>		
Health	960	54%
Construction	840	24%

Sector	Forecast change in workforce jobs 2020-2040	
	No.	%
Other Professional Services	340	28%
Food & Beverage Services	240	13%
IT Services	180	32%
Warehousing & Postal	160	18%
<b>FASTEST DECLINING EMPLOYMENT SECTORS</b>		
Financial & Insurance	-150	-34%
Other Manufacturing & Repair	-150	-35%
Other Transport Equipment	-145	-22%

Source: Rochford Economic Development Needs Assessment (2023)

3.38. Table 9, below, converts these employment projections into employment space requirements, using HCA guidance on job density ratios for different use classes, whilst applying assumptions to reflect normal levels of market vacancy in employment floorspace. Where a reduction in jobs is forecast, the associated negative floorspace is halved. This reflects that while there may be ongoing manufacturing job losses (e.g. as firms use more efficient production approaches), it does not automatically follow that all of the existing employment floorspace will be lost. Reflecting the employment projections, it is expected that there will be a requirement for 38,205 sq. m of employment space over the Plan period, the largest component being light industrial, with a need for 26,090 sq. m. Reflecting the forecast decline in sectors such as vehicle repair, there is a forecast decline in need for general industrial space of -7,400 sq. m. It is important to note that the CE model does not allocate any occupancy of employment space for certain sectors, notably construction, health and arts & entertainment<sup>33</sup>. As a result, it is important to consider there may be an element of additional demand on top of that forecast in this model.

**Table 9: Net Employment Space Requirements: Labour Demand, 2020 to 2040 (Scenario 1)**

Type of Space/Use Class	Net Employment Floorspace 2020-2040 (GEA sq. m)
Office E(g)(i)/(ii)	10,340

<sup>33</sup> [https://cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/EEFM\\_2019\\_technical\\_report\\_August2020.pdf](https://cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/EEFM_2019_technical_report_August2020.pdf) p30-31

Light Industrial E(g)(iii)	26,090
General Industrial B2	-7,400
Distribution B8	9,170
<b>Total</b>	<b>38,205</b>

Source: Rochford Economic Development Needs Assessment (2023)

- Scenario 2 - Labour demand (growth scenario):** This scenario provides a ‘policy on’ employment need estimation that aligns the future employment requirements with priority sectors identified from the 2017 EDNA which were anticipated to experience growth rates in excess of the baseline forecasts due to prioritisation, namely the development of Airport Business Park Southend within the Rochford District boundary. These comprise head offices & management consultancies; land transport; other professional services; and warehousing & postal. The scenario looks at longer-term historic growth rates for these sectors to provide a series of assumptions that the Airport Business Park’s development will enable these sectors to continue to grow at higher growth rates, with justification provided in the EDNA report. The combined effect of these adjustments results in an increase to the expected employment growth from 3,070 jobs across all sectors (i.e., baseline forecast) to 4,646 jobs (growth scenario), with the distribution of employment by use class shown in Table 10.

**Table 10: Future Jobs Growth per Type of Employment Space (Jobs) – Scenario 2**

Type of Space/Use Class	Future Jobs Growth (Growth Scenario 2020-2040)
Office E(g)(i)/(ii)	1,253
Light Industrial E(g)(iii)	428
General Industrial B2	-391
Distribution B8	623
Jobs in Other Sectors	2,733
Employment Jobs	1,912
Total Jobs (including all sectors of the economy)	4,646

Source: Rochford Economic Development Needs Assessment (2023)

3.39. Based on the employment density ratios, this is translated into floorspace requirements in Table 11, below. The resulting floorspace requirement of 85,241 sq. m is considerably greater than the baseline labour demand (Scenario 1) and

demonstrates considerable additional need for distribution and office space as a consequence:

**Table 11: Net Employment Space Requirements (sq. m) – Scenario 2**

Type of Space/Use Class	Future Jobs Growth (Growth Scenario 2020-2040)
Office E(g)(i)/(ii)	19,484
Light Industrial E(g)(iii)	26,093
General Industrial B2	-7,399
Distribution B8	47,063
<b>Employment Jobs</b>	<b>85,241</b>

Source: Rochford Economic Development Needs Assessment (2023)

- Scenario 3 - Past Development Rates:** Analysing past development rates for employment space can inform future space needs by reflecting actual market demand and development patterns, with analysis from the EDNA carried out for the financial years running from 2010/11 to 2021/22. This focuses on net completions – i.e., employment space completions minus employment space lost to other uses during that period.

3.40. Table 12 shows net delivery of employment space over this period (2010/11-2021/22), which overall represents a net gain of 12,050 sq. m, averaging 1,005 sq. m per annum. Gross completions were higher, at an average of 4,170 sq. m per annum or a total of 50,080 sq. m, indicating that significant loss of existing stock has occurred over the monitoring period – particularly in 2015/16, when two large industrial sites were lost to residential redevelopment and leisure use, respectively. Recent years have seen increases in development activity due to the completion of industrial and distribution space at Airport Business Park and Arterial Park, two of the allocated employment sites in the Core Strategy.

**Table 12: Net delivery of employment space from 2010/11 to 2021/22 (Scenario 3).**

Monitoring Year	Office	Light Industrial	General Industrial	Distribution
2010/11	0	-1,036	0	0
2011/12	0	-987	105	-5,940
2012/13	0	-510	0	0
2013/14	-1,525	0	0	0

Monitoring Year	Office	Light Industrial	General Industrial	Distribution
2014/15	-651	-73	0	0
2015/16	85	-8,571	-1,203	2,495
2016/17	-107	-1,655	-146	1,770
2017/18	194	873	-3,570	2,095
2018/19	-27	457	-503	3,036
2019/20	1,331	0	0	2,914
2020/21	5,578	2,774	11,642	987
2021/22	-238	0	-1,393	3,852
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,026</b>	<b>-8,727</b>	<b>4,932</b>	<b>11,210</b>

Source: Rochford Economic Development Needs Assessment (2023)

3.41. In overall terms, there has been a total net gain in employment floorspace, with distribution uses presenting the highest net gain of 11,210 sq. m over the monitoring period, followed by general industrial with a net gain of 4,930 sq. m. Mixed B developments (i.e. those with flexible permissions) have also seen an increase of 10,600 sq. m since 2010/11. To inform further this scenario, 'Mixed B' have been apportioned to office, industrial and distribution uses based on the annual delivery per type of space across the monitoring period.

3.42. One view of future growth in Rochford could assume that these past development trends will carry on in the future and as presented below (in Table 13), these would result in a moderate net requirement of 20,100 sq. m. The EDNA acknowledges that there are limitations to the robustness of this scenario to inform planning policy requirements, with further analysis of qualitative factors, including a market assessment, needed to contextualise these trends. For all these reasons, Scenario 3 is presented for sense-testing purposes.

**Table 13: Net Employment Space Requirements: Past Development Rates, 2020 to 2040 (Scenario 3)**

Use	Assumed Net Annual Floorspace Change (sq. m)	Net Floorspace Requirements 2020-2040 (GEA sq. m)
Office E(g)(i)/(ii)	390	7,740
Light Industrial E(g)(iii)	-730	-15,540

Use	Assumed Net Annual Floorspace Change (sq. m)	Net Floorspace Requirements 2020-2040 (GEA sq. m)
General Industrial B2	410	8,220
Distribution B8	930	18,680
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,005</b>	<b>20,100</b>

Source: Rochford Economic Development Needs Assessment (2023)

- Scenario 4 - Labour supply:** This scenario models the findings of the South Essex Housing Needs Assessment (SEHNA) (2022), which provides estimates of local labour supply and the supported jobs growth, based on demographic, housing and commuting assumptions. The SEHNA reports an increase in the jobs required to support the forecast population growth of those economically active in Rochford of 4,056 jobs. A sector mix is then determined based on the apportionment within the CE baseline forecast, with employment density assumptions then used to convert employment growth to floorspace requirements. These are shown in Table 14, indicating a total requirement over the Plan period of 71,090 sq. m. This forecasts growth in requirements for office, light industrial and distribution floorspace, but a reduction in general industrial.

**Table 14: Net Employment Floorspace Requirements in Rochford, 2020-2040 (GEA sq. m)**

Type of Space/Use Class	Employment (No. of Jobs)	Employment Floorspace (GEA sq. m)
Office E(g)(i)/(ii)	1,250	19,550
Light Industrial E(g)(iii)	810	49,320
General Industrial B2	-740	-15,100
Distribution B8	230	17,330
Total Employment Jobs	1,555	-
<b>Total (including non-employment jobs)</b>	<b>4,056</b>	<b>71,090</b>

Source: Rochford Economic Development Needs Assessment (2023)

3.43. The EDNA analysis converts these net floorspace requirements into gross requirements, building in a safety margin of additional employment floorspace to compensate for unforeseen issues, e.g., delays in employment space allocations coming forwards. The gross figures are displayed in Table 15. These have

subsequently been translated to employment land requirements for the Plan period, applying appropriate plot ratio assumptions. Table 16, below, sets these out.

**Table 15: Gross Employment Floorspace Requirements in Rochford 2020-2040 (sq. m)**

Type of Space/Use Class	Scenario 1: Labour Demand	Scenario 2: Growth Scenario	Scenario 3: Past Trends	Scenario 4 : Labour Supply
Office E(g)(i)/(ii)	11,120	20,260	5,510	20,320
Light Industrial E(g)(iii)	26,570	26,750	-13,890	49,970
General Industrial B2	-6,580	-6,580	9,040	-14,280
Distribution B8	11,040	48,930	20,550	19,200
Total	42,330	89,360	24,220	75,200

Source: Rochford Economic Development Needs Assessment (2023)

**Table 16: Gross Employment Land Requirements in Rochford 2020-2040 (ha)**

Type of Space/Use Class	Scenario 1: Labour Demand	Scenario 2: Growth Scenario	Scenario 3: Past Trends	Scenario 4 : Labour Supply
Office E(g)(i)/(ii)	1.7	3.0	1.3	3.1
Light Industrial E(g)(iii)	6.7	6.7	-3.5	12.5
General Industrial B2	-1.6	-1.6	2.3	-3.6
Distribution B8	2.8	12.2	5.1	4.8
Total	9.5	20.3	5.2	16.8

Source: Rochford Economic Development Needs Assessment (2023)

3.44. The EDNA acknowledges the potential requirements posed by the various scenarios differ considerably, and therefore compares the implied employment growth by scenario with historic employment growth data. This exercise indicates that Scenarios 1 and 3 significantly underestimate growth potential, whilst Scenarios 2 and 4 are more closely aligned. Scenario 4 (Labour Supply) is considered to be the most balanced view of future requirements, also aligning closely with the 73,300 sq. m requirement suggested the 2017 South Essex EDNA. The EDNA recommends that the new Local Plan seeks to accommodate the higher requirements, both to reflect longer term historic growth and to align better with the economic growth ambitions of both the Council and wider South Essex subregion.

3.45. Considering the EDNA position, it is suggested that the employment land requirements over the Plan period are for between 16.8 ha and 20.3 ha.

Demand and Supply Balance

3.46. Taking into account the above, the EDNA considers the known future employment supply position (as of September 2022) to identify existing permissions and future allocations and what they are likely to deliver, before comparing these against the demand scenarios. This allows for consideration of whether the identified supply of extant planning permissions, existing employment land and allocated sites (i.e., the employment supply position) is sufficient to meet demand, or whether the new Local Plan may need to deliver additional employment allocations to meet this need. Table 17, below, sets out the employment supply position as of September 2022, identifying this as 72,747 sq. m, largely from two large extant permissions on allocated sites (Airport Business Park and Arterial Park), with an unimplemented allocation at Star Lane, Great Wakering, also expected to account for at least 5,000 sq. m.

3.47. It should be noted that a significant proportion of supply is expected to come from the Airport Business Park, however the table reflects the position set out in the JAAP that half the floorspace provision at the Airport Business Park will be used to accommodate the needs of Southend-on-Sea.

**Table 17: Employment Supply Position (GEA) 2020-2040**

Source of Supply	Office (E(g)(i)/(ii))	Light Industrial E(g)(iii)	Industrial (B2)	Distribution (B8)	Total
Extant Permissions (excl. Airport Business Park related permissions)	1,974	1,060	13,849	13,530	30,412
Unimplemented Employment Allocations	-	-	5,000	-	5,000
Southend Airport Business Park Extant Permissions (*50%)	1,927	3,374	-	1,917	7,218

Source of Supply	Office (E(g)(i)/(ii))	Light Industrial E(g)(iii)	Industrial (B2)	Distribution (B8)	Total
Southend Airport Business Park Awaiting Decisions (*50%)	-	-	6,875	1,240	8,116
Southend Airport Business Park Remaining Outline Permission (*50%)	4,000	8,752	9,250	-	22,001
<i>Future Supply in Southend Airport Business Park (50%)</i>	<i>5,927</i>	<i>12,125</i>	<i>16,125</i>	<i>3,158</i>	<i>37,335</i>
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,901</b>	<b>13,185</b>	<b>34,974</b>	<b>16,687</b>	<b>72,747</b>

Source: Rochford Economic Development Needs Assessment (2023)

3.48. The EDNA provides forecasts for future employment need between 2020 and 2040, covering the Plan period. Therefore, it is necessary to factor in employment space completion figures for the first two years 2020-21 and 2021-22 and add these to the supply position, with this comprising 17,470 sq. m of space, once 50% of the 10,249 sq. m IPECO unit (B2 use) has been attributed to Southend. This produces a supply forecast of 90,220 sq. m of employment space delivery from 2020-2040. As Table 18 indicates, this is likely to mean the future supply is sufficient for all 4 scenarios, including Scenario 2 (Growth Scenario). However, it is important to acknowledge that the CE model does not account for sectors such as construction, health and arts & entertainment, all of which do have a presence on Rochford employment sites, and therefore it would be sensible to assume that any marginal surplus may not be enough. This is dealt with further in [Section 6](#).

**Table 18: Demand and Supply of Employment Space in Rochford**

	Scenario 1: Labour Demand	Scenario 2: Growth Scenario	Scenario 3: Past Trends	Scenario 4 : Labour Supply
Employment Requirements	42,330	89,360	24,220	75,200
Employment Supply	90,220			
Surplus (+) / Shortfall (-)	+47,890	+860	+66,000	+15,020

Source: Rochford Economic Development Needs Assessment (2023)

3.49. It is, however, important to consider how the employment space supply meets the needs of different employment sectors, alongside providing flexibility and choice for the market. As Table 19 demonstrates, the supply position is expected to deliver shortfalls in the identified more realistic Scenarios 2 and 4 across a number of unit types. For Scenario 2, this could see a shortfall of as much as -27,400 sq. m of B8 (Storage & Distribution); -10,790 sq. m; -10,790 sq. m E(g)(iii) (Light Industrial); and -7,020 sq. m E(g)(i) (Office), whereas for Scenario 4, it could mean shortfalls for E(g)(iii) of -34,010 sq. m; B2 (General Industrial) of -14,280 sq. m; and E(g)(i) of -7,080 sq. m.

**Table 19: Demand – Supply of Different Employment Uses**

	Scenario 1: Labour Demand	Scenario 2: Growth Scenario	Scenario 3: Past Trends	Scenario 4 : Labour Supply
<b>Office</b>				
Employment Requirements	11,120	20,260	5,510	20,320
Employment Supply	13,240			
Surplus (+)/Shortfall (-)	2,120	-7,020	7,730	-7,080
<b>Light Industrial</b>				
Employment Requirements	26,750	26,750	-13,890	49,970
Employment Supply	15,960			
Surplus (+)/Shortfall (-)	-10,790	-10,790	29,850	-34,010

	Scenario 1: Labour Demand	Scenario 2: Growth Scenario	Scenario 3: Past Trends	Scenario 4 : Labour Supply
Industrial				
Employment Requirements	-6,580	-6,580	9,040	-14,280
Employment Supply	39,490			
Surplus (+)/Shortfall (-)	46,070	46,070	30,450	53,770
Distribution				
Employment Requirements	11,040	48,930	20,550	19,200
Employment Supply	21,530			
Surplus (+)/Shortfall (-)	10,490	-27,400	980	2,330

Source: Rochford Economic Development Needs Assessment (2023)

- 3.50. When considering these shortfalls, it should be noted that, given surpluses have been identified across industrial uses as a whole, it is likely that future full or reserved matters applications on many of the sites in the supply could accommodate any particular shortfall identified by the market as being in demand. Similarly, flexible (E(g)/B2/B8) permissions on some schemes (for example, the recent ‘Quad’ development of 12 units on the Airport Business Park) have the potential to cater for a range of different uses, subject to occupier demand. The EDNA notes that this would help meet any future need for either office or light/general industrial or distribution uses. In appropriate circumstances, flexible allocations and permissions could be considered a potential solution to accommodate different types of needs that may arise under the different scenarios whilst managing uncertainty.
- 3.51. However, it should also be noted that this demand-supply balance analysis assumes that all outstanding planning permissions and the identified capacity on allocations will come forward in full during the Plan period. Any deviation from this assumption could potentially have an effect on the balance of space within Rochford to 2040.
- 3.52. Finally, the EDNA, in paragraph 3.48, acknowledges that the gross employment floorspace/land requirements set out above in Tables 16 and 17 assume no further loss of employment floorspace over the Plan period. In reality, it is likely that some existing floorspace, whether allocated or not, is likely to be redeveloped or lost to other uses. For a full consideration of whether any additional employment land is required within the District, it is necessary to consider the amount of employment floorspace likely to be lost over the Plan period to 2040. This is covered further in

Chapter 6. This also considers the amount of employment land required to account for anticipated losses of existing space.

- 3.53. The EDNA, therefore, recommends that this quantitative assessment of employment requirements is supplemented by qualitative factors to provide a fuller picture which most accurately reflects the Rochford context. These could include engaging with local employers, property professionals and other economic stakeholders and potential investors, along with considering wider economic relationships with Southend-on-Sea and wider South Essex, to fully understand how employment demand may be influenced.

## 4. Methodology

### Site Assessment Approach

- 4.1. The ELS methodology follows best practice set out in national Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), which provides guidance on how local planning authorities should approach both housing and employment land reviews, using a five-stage methodology. The ELS also draws upon techniques employed in both the preceding Rochford (2014) Employment Land Review and a number of studies from other local authorities, including Basildon, Stroud, Leeds and Wirral. The PPG methodology stages are shown in the table below, alongside the relevant ELS research components. In addition, the site visit methodology (including ‘traffic light’ categorisations) from the 2017 South Essex Economic Development Needs Assessment (EDNA) has been utilised, allowing for comparison with earlier site assessments undertaken in the District.
- 4.2. A list of existing and prospective employment sites were assessed against agreed criteria. The methodology follows Planning Practice Guidance on employment land reviews, as set out in Table 20, below.

**Table 20: How the Rochford ELS approach aligns with PPG Housing & Economic Needs Assessment Methodologies**

PPG Methodology stage	PPG Actions	RDC ELS Research Methods/Actions
1 - Site / Broad Location Identification	Determine assessment area and site size	Assessment area is entire Rochford District. Site sizes are minimum 0.25 ha, in accordance with PPG.
	Desktop review of existing information	Review of the policy position, socio-economic position, local/sub-regional property market and the potential employment land supply. To be supported by forthcoming studies, including 2022 EDNA and ELAA.
	Call for sites / broad locations	Call for Sites exercises completed internally by Rochford District Council to consider potential employment sites. Supplemented by list of employment allocations (and former allocations) in existing LDF, and list of previously-developed rural sites identified by Planning Policy Team. Relevant sites reviewed.

PPG Methodology stage	PPG Actions	RDC ELS Research Methods/Actions
	Site / broad location survey	Consideration of above list and review of available employment sites (existing and potential) through desktop analysis.
2 - Site / Broad Location Assessment	Estimating the development potential in parallel with assessing suitability, availability, achievability – including viability	Following desktop assessment, undertake site visits, record findings and analysis alongside evidence base, to identify broad locations to meet future employment land needs.
3 - Windfall Assessment	Determine housing / economic development potential of windfall sites (where justified)	N/A, although ELS will consider potential of significant previously-developed sites which are not presently allocated.
4 – Assessment Review	Review assessment and prepare draft trajectory; enough sites / broad locations?	Use findings to make recommendations re policy and site allocations. To be informed by EDNA.
5 – Final Evidence Base		Evidence base ready. Clarify monitoring arrangements. Apply to relevant LP policies.

Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

4.3. The site assessment process was divided into the following stages:

### Pre-Site Visit

#### Identification of sites for assessment:

4.4. A list of existing and prospective employment sites for visit and analysis was drawn up, using the following sources:

- Existing employment allocations (sites in use pre-2011-14 Local Development Framework)
- New employment allocations (allocated in 2014 Allocations Plan or Area Action Plans)
- Potential future employment sites (i.e., potentially suitable parcels of land submitted via the ‘Call for Sites’ process to inform the Council’s Strategic Housing & Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) and preparation of the new Local Plan).
- Existing informal/unallocated sites known to be in a lawful employment use

- Existing employment sites re-allocated for a residential use

4.5. This exercise resulted in the identification of 35 sites for consideration, categorised as follows:

**Table 21: Sites assessed within the ELS**

Site category	Site name	Site area (Ha)
1 - Existing employment sites (pre-2014 Allocations Plan)	Aviation Way Industrial Estate, Aviation Way, Southend	18.39 (14.74 in Rochford, 3.65 in Southend)
	Baltic Wharf, Creeksea Ferry Road, Wallasea Island	16.17
	Essex Marina, Creeksea Ferry Road, Wallasea Island	4.05
	Brook Road Industrial Estate, Brook Road, Rayleigh	13.2 (allocated) + 0.32 (unallocated, adjoining)
	Imperial Park Industrial Estate,	2.37
	Locks Hill, Rochford	0.76
	Riverside Industrial Estate, South Street, Rochford	0.34 (allocated) + 1.18 (unallocated)
	Rochford Business Park, Cherry Orchard Way, Southend	11.67
	Swaines Industrial Estate, Ashingdon Road, Rochford	0.46 (allocated) + 0.41 (unallocated)
	Purdeys Industrial Estate, Sutton Road, Rochford	37.51 (allocated) + 3.52 (unallocated)
Foundry Business Park, Station Approach, Hockley	0.67	
2 - New employment allocation (from	Arterial Park (formerly Michelins Farm), Chelmsford Road, Rayleigh	8.81

<b>Site category</b>	<b>Site name</b>	<b>Site area (Ha)</b>
2014 Allocations Plan)	New Employment Land, Star Lane, Great Wakering	3.20
	JAAP Site 1 (Former Cherry Orchard Brickworks), Cherry Orchard Lane, Rochford	6.2
	JAAP Sites 2 & 3 (Airport Business Park)	20.98
	JAAP Site 1 (Additional Expansion Land)	1.74
3 - Potential future employment sites (submitted for consideration in new Local Plan through Call for Sites process)	Fairlawns Farm, Arterial Road, Rayleigh	5.33
	Three Ashes, Sutton Road, Rochford	11.68
	Land west of Cherry Orchard Way and South of Cherry Orchard Lane, Hawkwell	15.85
	Land west of Cherry Orchard Way and east of Cherry Orchard Lane, Hawkwell	2.79
	Land East of Cherry Orchard Way, Rochford	5.63
	Land East and West of Sutton Road, Rochford	92.41
4 - Informal or unallocated sites in existing employment use (including rural / Green Belt estates)	Lubards Farm, Hullbridge Road, Rayleigh	5.03
	Crouchman's Yard/Court, Poynters Lane, Great Wakering	0.28
	The Mousery, Beeches Road, Battlesbridge	1.09

Site category	Site name	Site area (Ha)
	Dollyman's Farm, Doublegate Lane, Wickford	6.52
	Little Stambridge Hall Farm, Little Stambridge Hall Road, Rochford	1.97
	New Hockley Hall Farm, Lower Road, Hockley	2.36
	Clovelly Works, Chelmsford Road, Rawreth	1.67
	Magees Nurseries, Windsor Gardens, Hawkwell	1.89
	Former Chicken Sheds, Gusted Hall Lane, Hawkwell	0.50
	Battlesbridge Harbour, Hawk Hill, Battlesbridge	0.93
5 - Existing employment site re-allocated for residential use	Eldon Way Industrial Estate, Eldon Way, Hockley	3.84
	Star Lane Industrial Estate, Great Wakering	2.57
	Rawreth Industrial Estate, Rawreth Lane, Rayleigh	6.2

Source: Rochford District Council (2024).

Desk-based initial site analysis

4.6. Proformas for the sites were populated with data gathered from desk-based sources, namely:

- **Site planning history:** a search of relevant planning application records for the past 10 years.
- **Site type and location character:** selected from categorised lists of employment site types
- **Site area:** using a reputable source, where available (i.e. existing RDC shapefiles, or alternatively measurements using Google Maps satellite imagery).

- **Approximate number of units:** identified using ArcMap GIS software and Google Maps satellite images
  - Vacant units and vacancy rate
- 4.7. Alongside this, a spreadsheet was created to record the various data points in one place.

### **Site Visit and Post-Visit Activities**

#### Site visits and analysis by Strategic Planning team:

- 4.8. Each of the 35 sites was physically visited by member(s) of the team, who took notes/photographs and filled in site visit forms (see [Appendix C](#)), taking into account the various data fields and criteria set out in the site proforma, traffic light categorisation guidance (see paragraph 4.12) and scoring criteria.
- 4.9. Site visits were carried out between 19<sup>th</sup> December 2022 and 6<sup>th</sup> March 2023, with the vast majority taking place in January and February 2023.

#### Desk-based site assessments

- 4.10. Following the site visit, proformas were completed, based on notes and photographs , with the traffic light categorisation and criteria-based scoring of sites determined and recorded in an employment site assessment matrix spreadsheet.
- 4.11. Any outstanding questions (e.g., the nature of a site's use or occupiers) were resolved using the Council's planning records and use of Google search and Google Maps to supplement details recorded during visits.

#### Traffic Light Categorisation

- 4.12. To ensure consistency with the 2017 South Essex EDNA, a 'traffic light' assessment was undertaken of the sites, based on a series of characteristics. Sites were considered on a range of criteria, with the traffic light system considering green ratings as positives and red as disadvantageous. These were fed into the site assessment matrix and help form an indicative snapshot of the quality of sites for comparative purposes. It has also been used to inform the recommendations on future action for each employment site.
- 4.13. Table 22, below, sets out the categories covered by this assessment and shows how details recorded for each site were categorised into red, amber or green for 11 key criteria. Three further criteria are considered within the table, which consider vacant land, units and intensification opportunities, and instead receive a 'yes' or 'no'. Sites which were still undeveloped or unallocated were not given a score in categories which were not applicable (e.g., building age or on-site amenities), although partially-developed sites were assessed as normal.
- 4.14. It is important to note that in some cases the traffic light categorisations reflect the appropriateness and quality of sites for employment use 'on paper', but do not consider this in conjunction with their support and provision for current uses. Although

a site may not be ‘green’ in the traffic light categorisation within the matrix, and may not be appropriate for employment uses should the current occupier(s) leave, or seem like the most desirable employment site in terms of quality, it may accommodate a locally important business within the area, or may provide the only appropriate site for certain uses. It would therefore demonstrate its value as an employment site despite not ranking well in all criteria within the Site Assessment Matrix.

4.15. Similarly, not all occupiers require ‘grade A’ space, with certain occupiers, e.g., car repairs, scrap metal, waste transfer and disposal sites etc., more suited to lower grade space, and would seek to occupy this quality of space which would not necessarily score highly in the Site Assessment Matrix. Similarly, smaller or less profitable businesses may seek space which is more economical.

**Table 22: ‘Traffic Light’ Categorisation Criteria**

<b>Site visit - Traffic Light Criteria</b>			
<b>Site Assessment Question</b>	<b>Categorisation</b>	<b>Categorisation</b>	<b>Categorisation</b>
Location Character	Mainly residential with few commercial uses  Mainly residential or rural area with no other commercial uses	Mixed commercial and residential area	Well established commercial area
Building Age (predominant)	Pre 1940 - 1969	1970 - 1989	1990 -1999, 2000 - 2009 and 2010 onwards
Building Quality	Poor / Very Poor	Average Can also be used for mixed quality.	Good / Very Good
On-Site Amenities	None evident	Limited range of: retail (convenience and comparison), restaurant/café, gym/sports, bank, hotel, crèche, education and other	Wide range of: retail (convenience and comparison), restaurant/café, gym/sports, bank, hotel, crèche, education and other
Proportion of non B/E(g) Class Floorspace	50-100% non B class	25-49% non B class	0-24% non B class

Site visit - Traffic Light Criteria			
Site Assessment Question	Categorisation	Categorisation	Categorisation
Neighbouring Amenities	No services in close proximity	Close to one or two services Close to a limited range and quantity of basic services	Close to a local centre with a reasonable service range/quantity Close to a town centre with a wide range and quantity of services
Environment Quality for Current Use	Very poor / Poor	Average	Good / Very Good
Neighbouring Uses	Residential, Retail, Leisure and Town Centre	Mix of red and green Or: Airport, Rail, Higher Education & Further Education	Road, Industrial, Office & Warehousing
Evidence of Pollution	3 or more of the following: Noise, traffic, 24 hour operation, air, lighting	1 or 2 of the following: Noise, traffic, 24 hour operation, air, lighting	None evident
Adequate Access & Parking ~ Car ~ HGV ~ Public Transport ~ Servicing ~ Parking <sup>34</sup>	Not adequate for the majority of the 6 aspects	Potential Issues with adequacy, but not to the extent of the red categorisation	Adequate for the majority of the 6 aspects
Internal Circulation	Poor	Average	Good
Physical Opportunity for Intensification	Yes or No		
Vacant Land	Yes or No		
Vacant Buildings	Yes or No		

<sup>34</sup> The 'Adequate Access & Parking' criteria, is assessed both in terms of wider accessibility to the site (considering closest trunk road, rail access, bus routes and its location in the context of strategic routes within the authority area) and its immediate accessibility (considering the entrance and exit appropriateness)

Site visit - Traffic Light Criteria			
Site Assessment Question	Categorisation	Categorisation	Categorisation
Site visit - Traffic Light Criteria			
Site Assessment Question	Categorisation	Categorisation	Categorisation
Location Character	Mainly residential with few commercial uses  Mainly residential or rural area with no other commercial uses	Mixed commercial and residential area	Well established commercial area
Building Age (predominant)	Pre 1940 - 1969	1970 - 1989	1990 -1999, 2000 - 2009 and 2010 onwards
Building Quality	Poor / Very Poor	Average Can also be used for mixed quality.	Good / Very Good
On-Site Amenities	None evident	Limited range of: retail (convenience and comparison), restaurant/café, gym/sports, bank, hotel, crèche, education and other	Wide range of: retail (convenience and comparison), restaurant/café, gym/sports, bank, hotel, crèche, education and other
Proportion of non B/E(g) Class Floorspace	50-100% non B class	25-49% non B class	0-24% non B class
Neighbouring Amenities	No services in close proximity	Close to one or two services  Close to a limited range and quantity of basic services	Close to a local centre with a reasonable service range/quantity  Close to a town centre with a wide range and quantity of services

Site visit - Traffic Light Criteria			
Site Assessment Question	Categorisation	Categorisation	Categorisation
Environment Quality for Current Use	Very poor / Poor	Average	Good / Very Good
Neighbouring Uses	Residential, Retail, Leisure and Town Centre	Mix of red and green Or: Airport, Rail, Higher Education & Further Education	Road, Industrial, Office & Warehousing
Evidence of Pollution	3 or more of the following: Noise, traffic, 24 hour operation, air, lighting	1 or 2 of the following: Noise, traffic, 24 hour operation, air, lighting	None evident
Adequate Access & Parking ~ Car ~ HGV ~ Public Transport ~ Servicing ~ Parking <sup>35</sup>	Not adequate for the majority of the 6 aspects	Potential Issues with adequacy, but not to the extent of the red categorisation	Adequate for the majority of the 6 aspects
Internal Circulation	Poor	Average	Good
Physical Opportunity for Intensification	Yes or No		
Vacant Land	Yes or No		
Vacant Buildings	Yes or No		

Source: Rochford District Council (2024).

Qualitative Scored Criteria

4.16. To add a further dimension of detail to the information gathered on site visits, a series of five scored criteria were developed, focusing on the sites' quality for strategic access; local access; site quality, amenities and management; market attractiveness; and developmental/environmental constraints. These were assessed qualitatively during site visits<sup>36</sup>, with each category being assigned a 'score' of between 1 and 5,

<sup>35</sup> The 'Adequate Access & Parking' criteria, is assessed both in terms of wider accessibility to the site (considering closest trunk road, rail access, bus routes and its location in the context of strategic routes within the authority area) and its immediate accessibility (considering the entrance and exit appropriateness)

<sup>36</sup> Apart from calculation of distance for strategic access purposes, although a qualitative judgement was still required for this criterion to consider whether any other locational qualities of a site gave it a particular strategic advantage (e.g., a port or harbour location for a site specialising in maritime industries)

with these being aggregated to produce a score out of 25 and a percentage. The percentage ranges and corresponding quality ratings are detailed below in Table 23:

**Table 23: Quality Ratings by Percentage Score for Employment Sites**

% Score	Quality Rating
0-39	Poor
40-59	Fair
60-79	Good
80-100	Excellent

Source: Rochford District Council (2024).

- 4.17. These scorings were developed to help the Council identify employment/prospective employment sites which were deemed to be better/worse performing in terms of their functions, and subsequently fed into the assignment of each site within a category for future action.
- 4.18. Scorings were also given to undeveloped/unallocated sites, although these are only intended to be compared with other sites within these categories, rather than developed sites. They are coloured red in the site assessment matrix to indicate their different status.

**Table 24: Scored Criteria for Site Proforma (Qualitative)**

Scored Criteria (Qualitative)
Site assessments should be completed using the site assessment proforma, and include both a score and notes against each of the criteria below. Please assign a score from 1 (Very Poor) to 5 (Very Good) against each criterion.
<b>Strategic Access</b>
<p>Comment on distance/connection to the strategic road network in terms of proximity, quality of the linkage and adequacy for current/potential use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Very good: within 1km of junction of primary A-road access (A127/130). Good: within 2km of primary A road access.</li> <li>● Average: within 3 km of secondary A roads (e.g. A1159/1015/1245/A13 - East) or B roads. Access via wider, roads (e.g. Lower Road/Southend Road/Stambridge Road).</li> <li>● Poor: Within 3km of access to secondary A roads or B roads, via local roads.</li> <li>● Very poor: over 3 km from secondary A-road or B-road and/or through constrained or local roads, and/or through town centre or residential areas.</li> </ul>

<b>Scored Criteria (Qualitative)</b>
<p>Also, consider proximity to any strategic transport infrastructure that supports the function of the site (e.g., port/airport facilities).</p>
<b>Local Access</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Is local road access via free moving roads avoiding residential areas/difficult junctions? Is access/servicing adequate for occupiers?</li> <li>● Does site have regular public transport services to the site, or within an easy walk?</li> <li>● Is site within walking distance (c.800m) of residential areas and retail facilities?</li> <li>● Does site benefit from dedicated walking/cycling access routes and cycle parking?</li> <li>● Does parking appear relatively easy or are there difficulties (i.e., do premises benefit from dedicated parking, or is it reliant on constrained street parking?)</li> </ul>
<b>Site Quality, Amenities and Management</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Quality of site environment: is it well-maintained/landscaped and signposted, with high-quality environment and infrastructure?</li> <li>● Environmental setting: Very Good: modern, purpose-built business park; Poor/Very Poor: poor quality infill industrial estate or former agricultural yard.</li> <li>● Description of any on-site amenities, e.g. childcare, sitting out areas, catering/food &amp; drink, other services either on-site or within short walk.</li> <li>● For new allocations or prospective future sites, comment on servicing of site with utilities.</li> </ul>
<b>Market attractiveness</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Is site prominently-located for passing traffic?</li> <li>● Is site branded with a clear 'identity'?</li> <li>● Is there a 'critical mass' of occupiers on site? Higher-scoring sites will have larger number/diversity of occupiers, including prominent regional/national/international occupiers.</li> <li>● Is vacancy rate low?</li> <li>● Are any vacancies/development opportunities clearly marketed?</li> <li>● Are buildings/amenities in good repair?</li> </ul>

**Scored Criteria (Qualitative)**

- Evidence of a management company looking after site?
- For new sites, provide an indication of development progress (e.g. whether groundworks have started, services installed, number of units started/completed).
- For new/prospective sites, comment on whether any delay to site/units being available for occupation.

**Developmental and environmental constraints**

- Does site have planning permission? Are there any restrictions or conditions as a result of either national policy or the development plan?
- Does site contain/adjoin any restrictions or designations that would affect its development/operation, e.g. Green Belt, Local Wildlife Sites, SSIs, Air Quality Management Area, Conservation Area or Listed Buildings?
- Are adjoining uses compatible? Good/Very Good: no incompatible surrounding uses; Average: Office uses adjoining residential; Poor/Very Poor = B2/B8 adjoining residential or sensitive uses.

Source: Rochford District Council (2024).

Advising on Future Action

4.19. Following a site visit and subsequent completion of the proforma, one of the following categories was assigned to each site, along with justification. For the purpose of consistency, these align with the categories used in the 2017 South Essex EDNA.

**Protect and Maintain**

4.20. This category applies to sites which are suitable in their current form and are located in an appropriate location context where there is not likely to be significant long term change that affects their employment role or function. These sites should be protected. They may require some investment in stock and public realm to maintain their condition and quality over time, but should not require any significant investment or intervention.

**Protect and Enhance**

4.21. This applies to sites which are largely suitable in their current form, but may require some support over time to reinforce their employment strength, or may be located in areas which are not entirely supportive or appropriate, or where there may be significant change in the medium to long term as a result of regeneration and redevelopment activity. Whilst sites are likely to be healthy in the short to medium term (aside from requiring the maintenance of their condition and quality, as in the

above category) and should be protected, it should be understood that these sites may evolve over time and may require support in achieving this.

### **Significant Intervention Required**

4.22. This applies to sites which are of poor quality and in need of comprehensive change, or to sites which do not accommodate employment activity which is appropriate for their characteristics and location context. The required investment / improvement of these sites is not currently being led by the market so there may be a requirement for Council support to improve site quality and/or function to retain continued, appropriate employment activity on site.

### **Monitor and Manage**

4.23. This applies to sites which are of poor quality and/or are not identified to be functioning adequately as employment sites, based particularly on poor stock condition and lack of investment, non B class uses evident on site, location in areas with poor accessibility and amenity levels, and/or location in a context not supporting of employment activity. This categorisation is not intended to suggest a release from employment land designation or that the site does not meet the needs of occupiers. Instead it is intended to identify the weakest offer which may, over the long term, face challenges in terms of retaining existing or attracting new occupiers due to their limitations. The sites in this category should be kept under review over time and decisions on their future employment role be taken as and when they begin to experience significant vacancies, dilapidations etc. It may be that these sites are suitable for redevelopment as alternative employment sites, or could accommodate a different type of employment activity, or that over time they could be de-allocated to accommodate other uses. Each decision would need to be undertaken on a case by case basis having regard to the particular context of each site.

### **Recategorisation**

4.24. As above, but as a result of existing/forthcoming activity on site, it is no longer capable of functioning as an employment site and should be considered for a different allocation. Alternatively, a site which is not currently under a formal employment allocation (such as a site re-allocated for residential use in the 2014 Allocations Plan, or a rural site with a number of employment uses taking place in former agricultural buildings) may be considered for recategorisation to employment use.

4.25. In the study, this has usually been designated alongside another category (e.g., where a 'monitor and manage' site may require recategorisation if it continues to underperform for employment uses).

4.26. Within the Site Assessment Matrix, a column was included to allow for consideration of whether sites which are not presently allocated for employment should be considered for one as part of the emerging Local Plan. It should be emphasised that the presence of current employment activities on an unallocated site (e.g., previously-developed land in the Green Belt) does not necessarily mean the site is suitable for a

formal allocation. This requires a planning judgement around the importance of the site for employment uses, having regard to its quality and characteristics. In some cases, it may be appropriate that an informal unallocated site remains unallocated if it is not of strategic value to the District's economy or if non-employment uses could be a more appropriate use of the site in the long-term. This is particularly the case for some informal sites in the Green Belt which have resulted from rural diversification policies and / or permissive policies around the re-use of rural buildings. To allocate these sites may lead to a degree of formalisation or intensification which could result in greater harm to the Green Belt, the justification for which requires a judgement around exceptional circumstances which rely on the individual context of each site.

## 5. Review of Employment Land Provision and Findings

- 5.1. This section provides a summary of the key findings and observations from the employment site surveys undertaken, covering the entire portfolio of existing and prospective employment locations within the District (as listed in Section 4, Table 21). For brevity, this section provides summaries of the sites by their broad geographic **cluster**, outlining the key attributes relating to sites in the cluster. These comprise the following:
- Cluster geographical extent and combined site area
  - Breakdown of site types in the cluster by category
  - A ‘SWOT’ analysis setting out the main strengths and weaknesses of the cluster’s sites, along with the principal opportunities and threats.
  - A summary of recommendations for their future management
- 5.2. This analysis is based on the details recorded in the site survey proformas for each employment site. All site summaries, the full proformas and site assessment matrix are included as appendices to this Report (see [Appendix C](#)).
- 5.3. Following the cluster summaries, this section provides an overview of the sites surveyed, including their typology, quality assessment and classifications/ recommendations for future action. It then summarises each of the main site typologies, identifying significant opportunities for redevelopment, intensification, or re-allocation of employment land to help meet the District’s economic needs.

### Headline Conclusions on Future Site Action

- 5.4. Following the methodology in [Section 4](#), all ELS sites (as outlined in Table 20) have been evaluated, with a recommendation for future site action made based upon this assessment. Please see paragraph 5.5 and/or [Appendix C](#) for further details regarding site clusters, a breakdown of findings by site typology and individual site summaries.

**Table 25: Overall ELS site conclusions regarding future site action.**

Site ID			Site Name & Address	ELS Site Category (see Paragraph 4.4 for further details)	Headline Conclusion regarding Future Site Action (see Appendix C for further specific site details)
ELS (2024)	LDF/JAAP	CFS			
ELS01	Aviation Way	N.A.	Aviation Way Industrial Estate, Aviation Way, Southend	1 - Existing employment sites (pre-2014 Allocations Plan)	Protect & Enhance

Site ID			Site Name & Address	ELS Site Category (see Paragraph 4.4 for further details)	Headline Conclusion regarding Future Site Action (see Appendix C for further specific site details)
ELS (2024)	LDF/JAAP	CFS			
ELS02	EEL3	N.A.	Baltic Wharf, Creeksea Ferry Road, Wallasea Island	1 - Existing employment sites (pre-2014 Allocations Plan)	Monitor & Manage
ELS03	EEL3	N.A.	Essex Marina, Creeksea Ferry Road, Wallasea Island	1 - Existing employment sites (pre-2014 Allocations Plan)	Protect & Maintain
ELS04	EEL2	N.A.	Brook Road Industrial Estate, Brook Road, Rayleigh	1 - Existing employment sites (pre-2014 Allocations Plan)	Protect & Enhance
ELS05	EEL2	N.A.	Imperial Park Industrial Estate,	1 - Existing employment sites (pre-2014 Allocations Plan)	Protect & Enhance
ELS06	Locks Hill	N.A.	Locks Hill, Rochford	1 - Existing employment sites (pre-2014 Allocations Plan)	Protect & Maintain
ELS07	EEL1	COL03	Riverside Industrial Estate, South Street, Rochford	1 - Existing employment sites (pre-2014 Allocations Plan)	Protect & Enhance
ELS08	EEL1	N.A.	Rochford Business Park, Cherry Orchard Way, Southend	1 - Existing employment sites (pre-2014 Allocations Plan)	Protect & Enhance
ELS09	EEL1	N.A.	Swaines Industrial Estate, Ashingdon Road, Rochford	1 - Existing employment sites (pre-2014 Allocations Plan)	Monitor & Manage
ELS10	EEL1	N.A.	Purdeys Industrial Estate, Sutton Road, Rochford	1 - Existing employment sites (pre-2014 Allocations Plan)	Protect & Enhance
E:LR11	EEL1	N.A.	Arterial Park (formerly Michelins Farm), Chelmsford Road, Rayleigh	2 - New employment allocation (from 2014 Allocations Plan)	Protect & Maintain

Site ID			Site Name & Address	ELS Site Category (see Paragraph 4.4 for further details)	Headline Conclusion regarding Future Site Action (see Appendix C for further specific site details)
ELS (2024)	LDF/JAAP	CFS			
ELS12	NEL2	CFS057	New Employment Land, Star Lane, Great Wakering	2 - New employment allocation (from 2014 Allocations Plan)	Monitor & Manage
ELS13	Eldon Way	N.A.	Eldon Way Industrial Estate, Eldon Way, Hockley	5 - Existing employment site re-allocated for residential use	Protect & Enhance
ELS14	Foundry Business	N.A.	Foundry Business Park, Station Approach, Hockley	1 - Existing employment sites (pre-2014 Allocations Plan)	Monitor & Manage
ELS15	JAAP Site 1	N.A.	JAAP Site 1 (Former Cherry Orchard Brickworks), Cherry Orchard Lane, Rochford	2 - New employment allocation (from 2014 Allocations Plan)	Monitor & Manage
ELS16	N.A.	N.A.	JAAP Sites 2 & 3 (Airport Business Park)	2 - New employment allocation (from 2014 Allocations Plan)	Protect & Maintain
ELS17	N.A.	N.A.	JAAP Site 1 (Additional Expansion Land)	2 - New employment allocation (from 2014 Allocations Plan)	Protect & Enhance
ELS18	N.A.	CFS055	Fairlawns Farm, Arterial Road, Rayleigh	3 - Potential future employment sites (submitted for consideration in new Local Plan through Call for Sites process)	Monitor & Manage
ELS19	N.A.	CFS067	Three Ashes, Sutton Road, Rochford	3 - Potential future employment sites (submitted for consideration in new Local Plan through Call for Sites process)	Monitor & Manage

Site ID			Site Name & Address	ELS Site Category (see Paragraph 4.4 for further details)	Headline Conclusion regarding Future Site Action (see Appendix C for further specific site details)
ELS (2024)	LDF/JAAP	CFS			
ELS20	N.A.	CFS078	Land west of Cherry Orchard Way and South of Cherry Orchard Lane, Hawkwell	3 - Potential future employment sites (submitted for consideration in new Local Plan through Call for Sites process)	Monitor & Manage
ELS21	N.A.	CFS079	Land west of Cherry Orchard Way and east of Cherry Orchard Lane, Hawkwell	3 - Potential future employment sites (submitted for consideration in new Local Plan through Call for Sites process)	Monitor & Manage
ELS22	N.A.	CFS080	Land East of Cherry Orchard Way, Rochford	3 - Potential future employment sites (submitted for consideration in new Local Plan through Call for Sites process)	Monitor & Manage
ELS23	N.A.	CFS165 (and others)	Land East and West of Sutton Road, Rochford	3 - Potential future employment sites (submitted for consideration in new Local Plan through Call for Sites process)	Monitor & Manage
ELS24	BFR1	N.A.	Star Lane Industrial Estate, Great Wakering	5 - Existing employment site re-allocated for residential use	Protect & Maintain
ELS25	BFR4	N.A.	Rawreth Industrial Estate, Rawreth Lane, Rayleigh	5 - Existing employment site re-allocated for residential use	Significant Intervention Required/ Recategorise
ELS26	N.A.	CFS163	Lubards Farm, Hullbridge Road, Rayleigh	4 – Informal or unallocated sites in existing employment use (including rural / Green Belt estates)	Protect & Enhance/ Reallocate
ELS27	N.A.	N.A.	Crouchman's Yard/Court, Poynters Lane, Great Wakering	4 - Informal or unallocated sites in existing employment use (including rural / Green Belt estates)	Protect & Maintain

Site ID			Site Name & Address	ELS Site Category (see Paragraph 4.4 for further details)	Headline Conclusion regarding Future Site Action (see Appendix C for further specific site details)
ELS (2024)	LDF/JAAP	CFS			
ELS28	N.A.	N.A.	The Mousery, Beeches Road, Battlesbridge	4 - Informal or unallocated sites in existing employment use (including rural / Green Belt estates)	Monitor & Manage
ELS29	N.A.	CFS222	Dollyman's Farm, Doublegate Lane, Wickford	4 - Informal or unallocated sites in existing employment use (including rural / Green Belt estates)	Recategorise / Protect & Maintain
ELS30	N.A.	N.A.	Little Stambridge Hall Farm, Little Stambridge Hall Road, Rochford	4 - Informal or unallocated sites in existing employment use (including rural / Green Belt estates)	Monitor & Manage
ELS31	N.A.	N.A.	New Hockley Hall Farm, Lower Road, Hockley	4 - Informal or unallocated sites in existing employment use (including rural / Green Belt estates)	Monitor & Manage
ELS32	N/A	CFS137	Clovelly Works, Chelmsford Road, Rawreth	4 - Informal or unallocated sites in existing employment use (including rural / Green Belt estates)	Protect & Enhance/ Recategorise
ELS33	N.A.	N.A.	Magees Nurseries, Windsor Gardens, Hawkwell	4 - Informal or unallocated sites in existing employment use (including rural / Green Belt estates)	Monitor & Manage
ELS34	N.A.	N.A.	Former Chicken Sheds, Gusted Hall Lane, Hawkwell	4 - Informal or unallocated sites in existing employment use (including rural / Green Belt estates)	Monitor & Manage
ELS35	N.A.	N.A.	Battlesbridge Harbour, Hawk Hill, Battlesbridge	4 - Informal or unallocated sites in existing employment use (including rural / Green Belt estates)	Monitor & Manage

Source: Rochford District Council (2024).

**Site Clusters**

5.5. The sites assessed have been assigned broad geographical clusters, to allow for consideration of how they relate to their wider area and other nearby employment sites (see Table 25, below). These clusters differ somewhat from those assigned to Rochford sites in past evidence commissioned at a South Essex level, namely the 2017 Economic Development Needs Assessment (EDNA) and emerging Employment Land Availability Assessment (ELAA). This is to make them more relatable to the specific local geography of Rochford District (rather than a wider South Essex context) whilst also considering a number of additional sites not assessed under the South Essex studies. Cluster designations from the South Essex EDNA/ELAA are provided in an adjacent column to allow for comparison. Figure 2 maps the clusters across the District, showing how the individual sites relate to one another.

**Table 25: Sites by ELS (2024) Cluster**

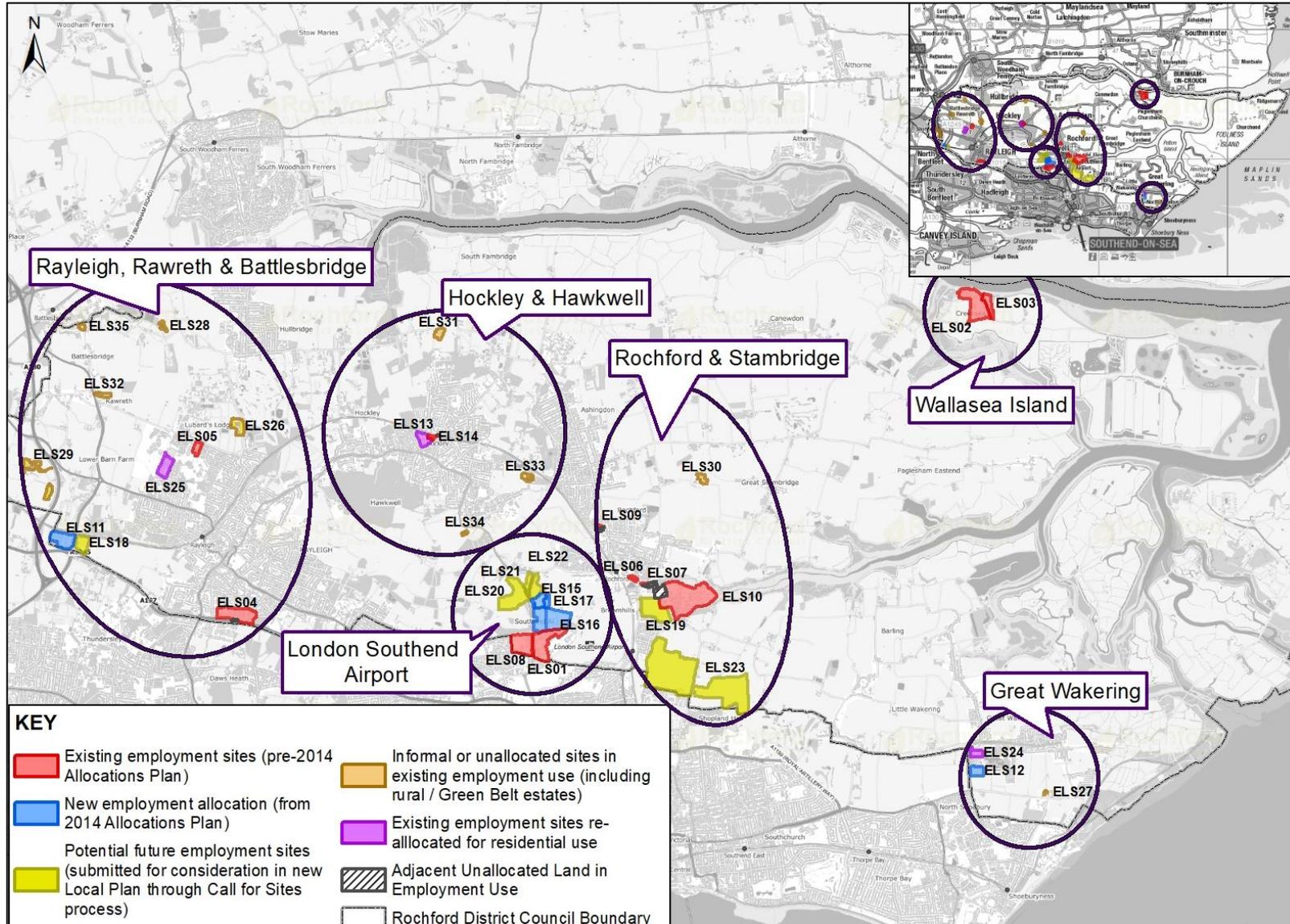
ELS 2024 Cluster	Site ID (ELS, 2024)	Site Name/Address	South Essex EDNA/ELAA Cluster
Hockley & Hawkwell	ELS13	Eldon Way Industrial Estate, Eldon Way, Hockley	Rayleigh, Hockley & Ashingdon
	ELS14	Foundry Business Park, Station Approach, Hockley	Rayleigh, Hockley & Ashingdon
	ELS31	New Hockley Hall Farm, Lower Road, Hockley	N/A (new site)
	ELS33	Magees Nurseries, Windsor Gardens, Hawkwell	N/A (new site)
	ELS34	Former Chicken Sheds, Gusted Hall Lane, Hawkwell	N/A (new site)
Great Wakering	ELS12	New Employment Land, Star Lane, Great Wakering	Great Wakering
	ELS24	Star Lane Industrial Estate, Great Wakering	Great Wakering
	ELS27	Crouchman's Yard/Court, Poynters Lane, Great Wakering	N/A (new site)
London Southend Airport	ELS1	Aviation Way Industrial Estate, Aviation Way, Southend	London Southend Airport
	ELS8	Rochford Business Park, Cherry Orchard Way, Southend	London Southend Airport

<b>ELS 2024 Cluster</b>	<b>Site ID (ELS, 2024)</b>	<b>Site Name/Address</b>	<b>South Essex EDNA/ELAA Cluster</b>
	ELS15	JAAP Site 1 (Former Cherry Orchard Brickworks), Cherry Orchard Lane, Rochford	London Southend Airport
	ELS16	JAAP Sites 2 & 3 (Airport Business Park)	London Southend Airport
	ELS17	JAAP Site 1 (Additional Expansion Land)	London Southend Airport
	ELS20	Land west of Cherry Orchard Way and South of Cherry Orchard Lane, Hawkwell	London Southend Airport
	ELS21	Land west of Cherry Orchard Way and east of Cherry Orchard Lane, Hawkwell	London Southend Airport
	ELS22	Land East of Cherry Orchard Way, Rochford	London Southend Airport
Rayleigh, Rawreth & Battlesbridge	ELS04	Brook Road Industrial Estate, Brook Road, Rayleigh	Southend Arterial Road
	ELS05	Imperial Park Industrial Estate,	Rayleigh, Hockley & Ashingdon
	ELS09	Swaines Industrial Estate, Ashingdon Road, Rochford	Rayleigh, Hockley & Ashingdon
	ELS11	Arterial Park (formerly Michelins Farm), Chelmsford Road, Rayleigh	Southend Arterial Road
	ELS18	Fairlawns Farm, Arterial Road, Rayleigh	Southend Arterial Road
	ELS25	Rawreth Industrial Estate, Rawreth Lane, Rayleigh	Rayleigh, Hockley & Ashingdon
	ELS26	Lubards Farm, Hullbridge Road, Rayleigh	N/A (new site)
	ELS28	The Mousery, Beeches Road, Battlesbridge	N/A (new site)

<b>ELS 2024 Cluster</b>	<b>Site ID (ELS, 2024)</b>	<b>Site Name/Address</b>	<b>South Essex EDNA/ELAA Cluster</b>
	ELS29	Dollyman's Farm, Doublegate Lane, Wickford	N/A (new site)
	ELS32	Clovelly Works, Chelmsford Road, Rawreth	N/A (new site)
	ELS35	Battlesbridge Harbour, Hawk Hill, Battlesbridge	N/A (new site)
Rochford & Stambridge	ELS06	Locks Hill, Rochford	Purdey's
	ELS07	Riverside Industrial Estate, South Street, Rochford	Purdey's
	ELS10	Purdeys Industrial Estate, Sutton Road, Rochford	Purdey's
	ELS19	Three Ashes, Sutton Road, Rochford	Purdey's
	ELS23	Land East and West of Sutton Road, Rochford	Purdey's
	ELS30	Little Stambridge Hall Farm, Little Stambridge Hall Road, Rochford	N/A
Wallasea Island	ELS02	Baltic Wharf, Creeksea Ferry Road, Wallasea Island	Wallasea Island
	ELS03	Essex Marina, Creeksea Ferry Road, Wallasea Island	Wallasea Island

Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

Figure 2: Map showing distribution of ELS employment land clusters in Rochford District



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

## Hockley & Hawkwell Cluster

Figure 3: Hockley & Hawkwell Cluster



Source: Rochford District Council (2024).

5.6. The Hockley & Hawkwell cluster comprises five sites, totalling 9.26ha of land in employment use. Two sit adjacent to Hockley Town Centre, whilst the remainder are rural. Of this, one site (Foundry Business Park) has an adopted employment allocation within the current LDF, whilst its larger neighbour (Eldon Way Industrial Estate) is a former allocated site with a policy designation for mixed-use redevelopment. The remaining three sites (Magees Nurseries, New Hockley Hall Farm and Former Chicken Sheds on Gusted Hall Lane) are unallocated sites, which sit within the Green Belt in former agricultural buildings. Accommodation is generally smaller, older units in varying states of repair, although Eldon Way has a number of larger warehouse/manufacturing units which have undergone refurbishment, whilst Foundry Business Park contains two modern office buildings constructed in the past decade. The urban sites have a fairly significant 10-15% of uses not in employment use classes, reflecting their town centre location and attractiveness to leisure occupiers. Vacancy rates range from 0% at Eldon Way Industrial Estate and Former Chicken Sheds, through to higher vacancies of c.15% at Magees Nurseries, 20% at Foundry Business Park and as much as 30% at New Hockley Hall Farm.

- 5.7. Strengths: The two urban sites are highly accessible by public transport and active travel, at a range of scales from small workshops/lock-ups through to larger offices and industrial units suited to larger enterprises. Across both urban and rural sites, many of the units are particularly suited to SMEs and start-up businesses, both due to the size and likely lower rents.
- 5.8. Weaknesses: Most of the units in this cluster are older, with some (e.g. Magees Nurseries) in a poor/dilapidated condition. The Hockley and Hawkwell area suffers from frequent traffic congestion, whilst many of the sites have narrow, constrained access arrangements, making them unsuitable for businesses seeking good road transport links or regular HGV access.
- 5.9. Opportunities: The Eldon Way Opportunity Area policy in the Hockley Area Action Plan (HAAP) could, in time, lead to redevelopment of Eldon Way to provide high-quality employment uses within a mixed-use scheme with good sustainable connections and a high-quality setting that attracts new, good quality occupiers to Hockley.
- 5.10. Threats: Given the age of the sites and high residential property values, there is a threat from residential redevelopment. The HAAP designation of Eldon Way as a mixed-use opportunity area means it is likely that in the medium-long term, a significant amount of employment space could be lost, whilst in the short term the site has seen significant amounts of leisure uses locating there. Recent permitted development applications on the modern office buildings at Foundry Business Park could result in the loss of good quality office space in a sustainable location .
- 5.11. Recommendations: The key recommendations for this cluster include one 'protect and enhance' (Eldon Way Industrial Estate), along with four 'monitor and manage' recommendations. This reflects the uncertain future of many of the sites within the cluster. Whilst the urban sites are largely well-used and fulfil a role, their importance as employment sites must be seen in the context of the reality of development pressure and the opportunity for mixed-use brownfield regeneration which could benefit the wider Hockley Town Centre and provide a wider range of uses and better connectivity. Key recommendations include:
- Proposals to enhance employment space on Foundry Business Park should be supported, whilst also considering other regeneration proposals which ensure that any loss of employment space is compensated for.
  - A flexible approach is recommended for Eldon Way Industrial Estate, recommending that employment uses should be retained, whilst any proposals for redevelopment of vacant large units on the site should be considered against opportunities to promote strategic regeneration of the Opportunity Area.
  - The rural sites provide important niches in their informal employment roles and the recommendations to monitor and manage reflect this, advocating for small scale improvements to the quality/range of stock, whilst being mindful of the sensitive

locations within Green Belt, constrained access and potential residential development pressures.

**Figure 4: Eldon Way Industrial Estate (ELS13).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure 5: Foundry Business Park (ELS14).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure 6: New Hockley Hall Farm (ELS31).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure 7: Magees Nurseries (ELS33).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

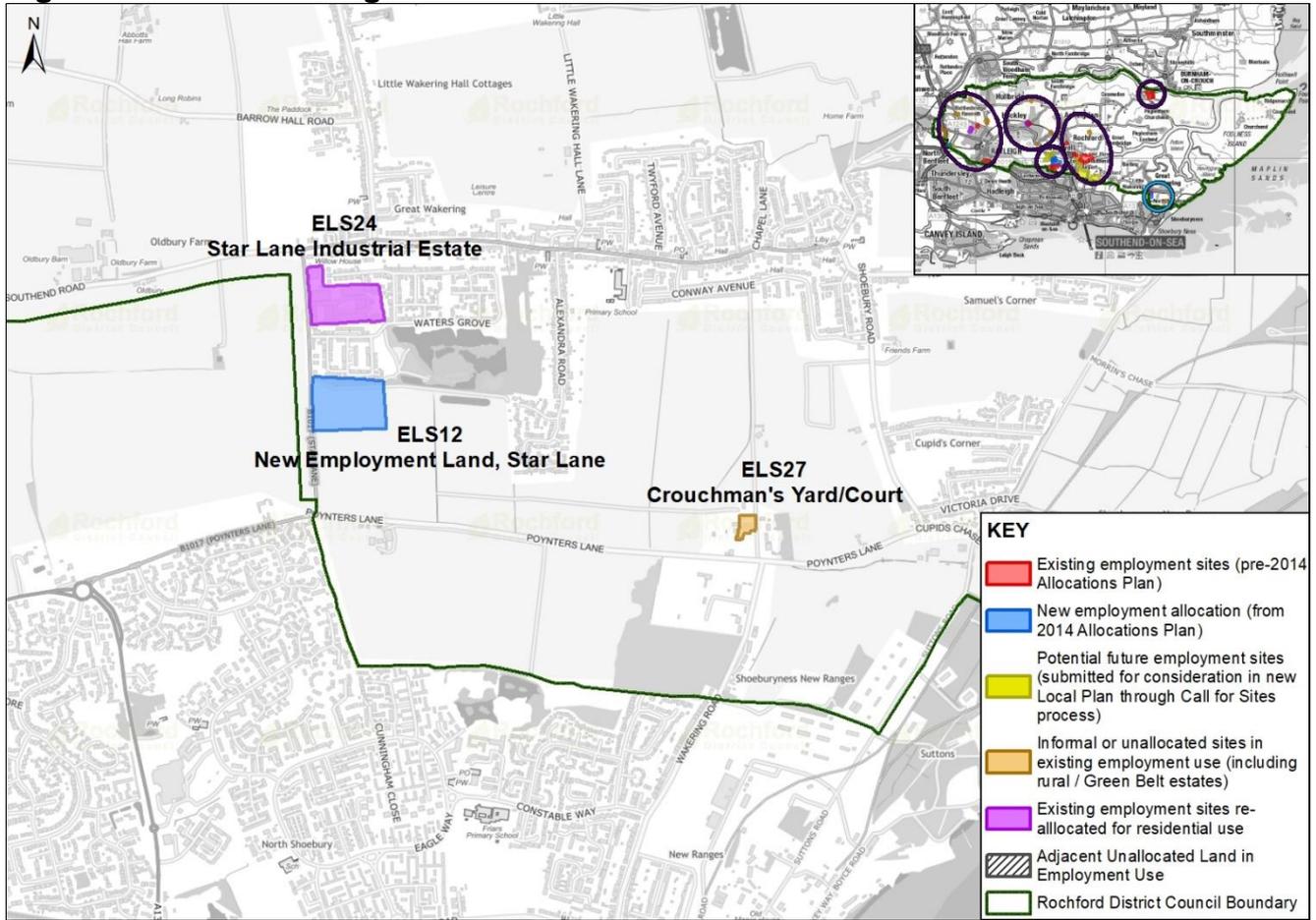
**Figure 8: Former Chicken Sheds (Gusted Hall Lane, ELS34).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

Great Waking Cluster

Figure 9: Great Waking Cluster



Source: Rochford District Council (2024).

5.12. The Great Waking Cluster is small, comprising three sites and 6.05ha land in employment use. Within this, there is one site which was newly allocated in the current LDF (New Employment Land, Star Lane), one which is a former employment site which is now allocated for housing (Star Lane Industrial Estate) and one unallocated rural site (Crouchman's Yard/Court). Approximately half of the former employment site (comprising an old brickworks) has been redeveloped for housing, leaving a mixed-use industrial estate and adjacent separate telephone exchange building. The nearby new employment land is, as yet, undeveloped. The Crouchman's site comprises former agricultural buildings which have been repurposed for use as small offices/studios in a rural setting. Vacancies across the two built-out sites are very low, whilst stock is of fair to good condition.

5.13. Strengths: Together, the two developed sites provide a good range of office/industrial accommodation for small and medium-sized enterprises. Their virtually nonexistent vacancy rates suggest a strong demand for business accommodation in this area, meaning there is likely to be good demand for the new employment land in future, as

and when it is developed. The location is also convenient for much of Southend-on-Sea, and can draw upon a substantial labour catchment.

- 5.14. Weaknesses: Whilst they serve their immediate locality, the location is not ideal for the strategic road network. The location of one site adjacent to residential and the other in the Green Belt means the types of use possible on the sites will be restricted.
- 5.15. Opportunities: The new employment land provides a suitable site both for growing local businesses on the existing sites, along with opportunities to attract new occupiers and employment to the area, by constructing modern, purpose-built accommodation. Given its location, it could also attract occupiers from Southend and provide an incentive to better connect both this site and Star Lane Industrial Estate by enhancing local walking and cycling links.
- 5.16. Threats: The allocation of Star Lane Industrial Estate for residential uses means a large number of established occupiers may be required to relocate. Uncertainty around any future timescales or phasing means it is uncertain that the new employment land would be developed at a point when it could accommodate any displaced businesses, which may have to leave the local area.
- 5.17. Recommendations: Star Lane Industrial Estate was assigned 'Protect and Enhance', whilst the remaining two sites were recommended to 'protect and maintain'. This reflects the opportunity presented by the new employment land and the useful small business accommodation provided by Crouchman's, whilst being mindful of the potential of Star Lane Industrial Estate to face redevelopment, something which would require management of the relocation process. Recommendations included:
- Given its very high occupancy, Star Lane Industrial Estate could be reallocated for employment use, particularly if significant alternative housing is allocated in the area through the Local Plan. Such allocation should consider ways to better integrate the site with its immediate surroundings (i.e. sustainable travel and better screening from neighbouring homes).
  - Development for employment use on the Star Lane New Employment Land site should be supported. The Council should work with any prospective developer to bring forward the types of uses that contemporary economic conditions suggest there may be a demand for (e.g., flexible starter/grow-on business units). Efforts should be made to integrate the site with its wider surroundings in terms of sustainable travel links.
  - The role of Crouchman's Court and Yard is important for local small businesses and it should be protected for small-scale employment, whilst remaining part of the surrounding Green Belt.

**Figure 10: New Employment Land, Star Lane (ELS12).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure 11: Star Lane Industrial Estate (ELS24).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

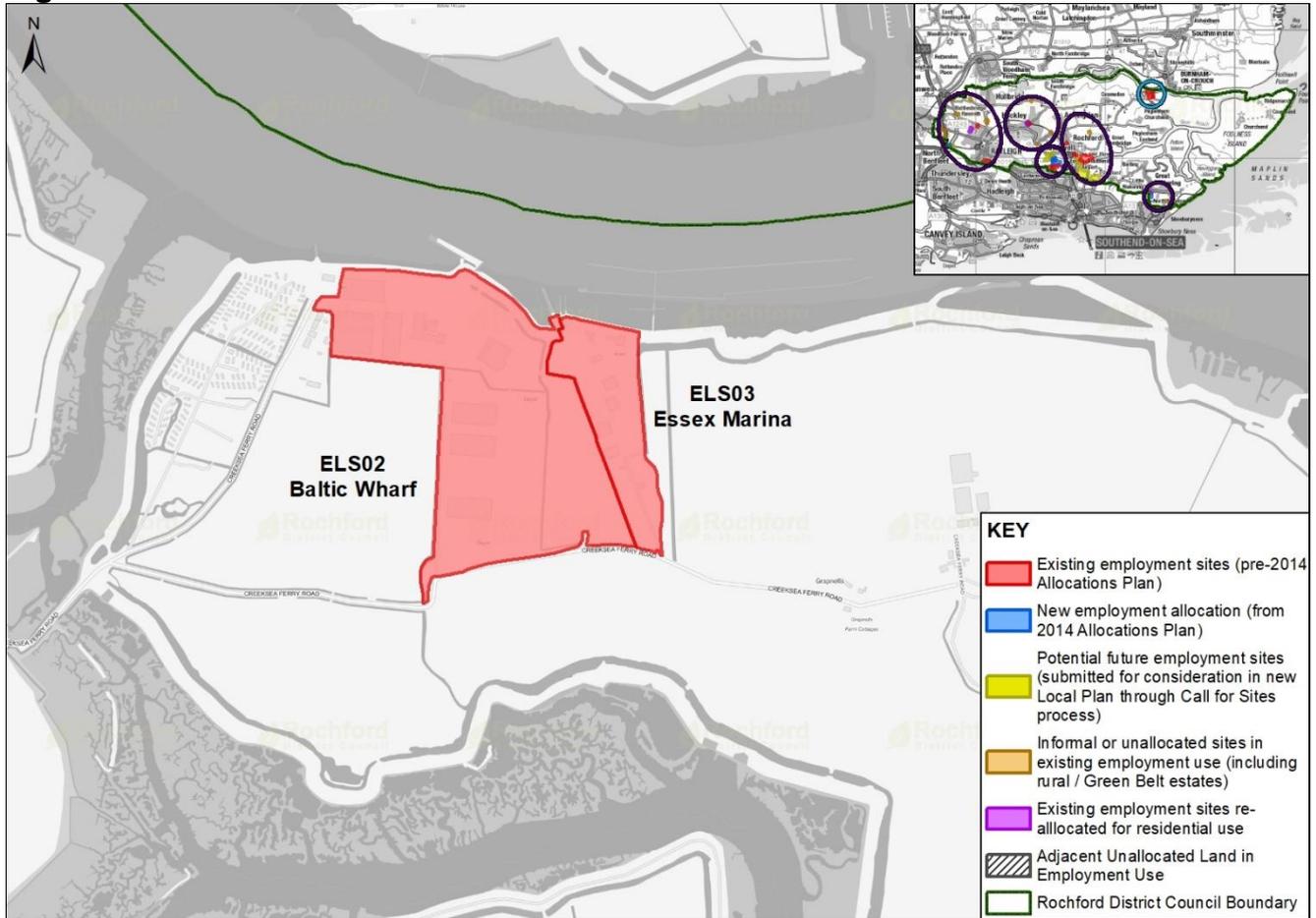
**Figure 12: Crouchman's Yard/Court (ELS27).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

Wallasea Island Cluster

Figure 13: Wallasea Island Cluster



Source: Rochford District Council (2024).

- 5.18. Wallasea Island is a very small cluster of just two sites on the Crouch Estuary, immediately adjacent to one another. It comprises 20.22ha of employment land, both of which are existing employment allocations. The first site, Baltic Wharf, is an area of warehousing and yards adjoining a commercial port, whilst Essex Marina consists of a series of small workshops and office/retail/catering facilities, along with a series of boat storage yards. Vacancy rates are low, at under 5%, whilst non-employment use classes are a very small proportion of the Essex Marina site. Industrial stock at Baltic Wharf comprises a series of large, older warehouses, some of which have been modernised, whilst others are showing signs of dilapidation. The units at Essex Marina are generally of a good standard throughout.
- 5.19. **Strengths:** The cluster is well-located for the maritime industries (shipping, logistics, boat maintenance and related services) that make up the majority of the occupiers, due to its location at the mouth of the River Crouch and opposite the important sailing hub of Burnham-on-Crouch, with which there is a ferry connection.
- 5.20. **Weaknesses:** The remote location is accessed only via narrow rural roads, which are unsuitable for the HGVs serving Baltic Wharf, whilst the access road to Wallasea

Island is prone to flooding. The cluster is also poorly-located for the strategic road network, whilst its setting adjacent to sensitive wetland habitats could restrict future proposals or risk environmental harm.

- 5.21. Opportunities: Essex Marina is well-placed to support maritime tourism and services related to the boating and leisure craft industries, including the RSPB Wallasea Island Wild Coast project, a birdwatching site of international importance.
- 5.22. Threats: The risk of flooding, either to the site itself or its sole access road, is a potential longer-term threat if the effects of climate change and sea level rise continue to manifest. Potential restrictions on future proposals and uses as a result of the sensitive habitats in the area is also a possibility.
- 5.23. Recommendations: Baltic Wharf has been assigned a ‘monitor and manage’ category, whilst Essex Marina has been designed ‘protect and maintain. The former is due to its good occupancy and important specialist maritime/shopping cluster of uses, which nevertheless are situated in a sub-optimal location in terms of access and ease of travel to work for employees. As a result, any proposed intensification or additional uses should be compatible with the site’s sensitive location. The latter is recognised as being an important maritime/boating hub with potential for additional diversification, both through additional tourism/leisure services on site and moored at the marina, and in units on the site (where some evidence of non-maritime businesses is already evident).

**Figure 14: Baltic Wharf (ELS02).**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

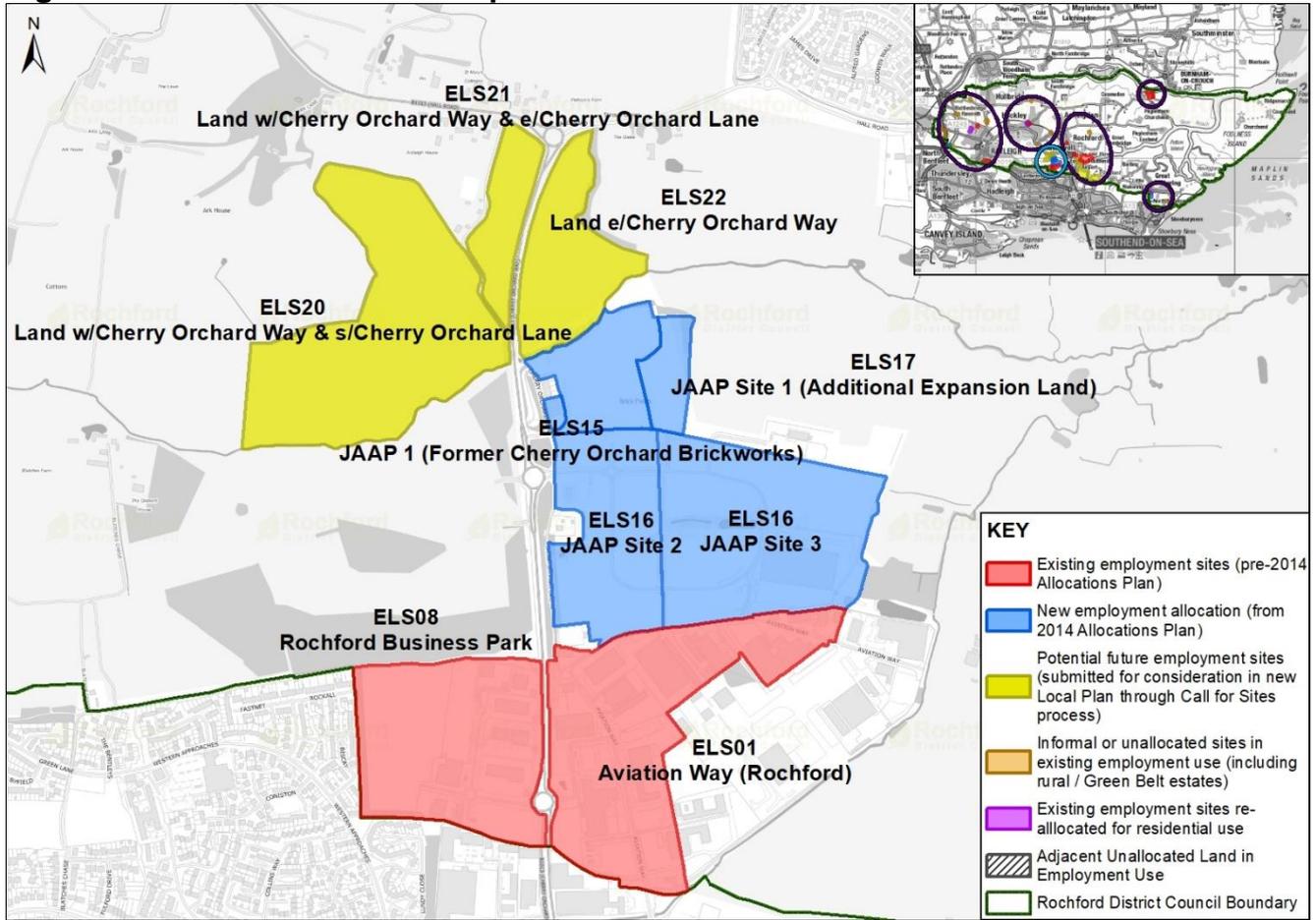
**Figure 15: Essex Marina (ELS03).**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

London Southend Airport Cluster

Figure 16: London Southend Airport Cluster



Source: Rochford District Council (2024).

5.24. This large cluster comprises eight sites, including some of the largest in the District. Collectively, it comprises 55.15ha of existing employment land, with a further 24.27ha of land comprising prospective sites which are not presently allocated or developed. The cluster includes two existing allocated sites, three which form part of new allocations within the 2011 LDF and three prospective sites which are currently undeveloped Green Belt plots, identified through the Call for Sites process for consideration in the new Local Plan. Whilst the site contains the established Aviation Way Industrial Estate, it also includes a substantial amount of undeveloped allocated sites (e.g. on the Airport Business Park (ABP), Rochford Business Park and Former Brickworks) and, together with undeveloped/underutilised plots, includes up to 19.89ha of allocated potential development land. Of the developed sites in the cluster, the stock ranges from older 1970s/1980s units on Aviation Way, through to modern and very modern showrooms, warehousing and manufacturing facilities on Rochford Business Park and the ABP. The cluster overlaps with the area allocated under the London Southend Airport Joint Area Action Plan (JAAP), and sites within it are considered integral to the strategic economic development of both Rochford District and the City of Southend-on-Sea. The cluster is home to a number of aviation and

aerospace-related businesses, most notably IPECO, and contains some of the largest buildings in employment use in the District. It also contains a sizeable concentration of car dealerships and servicing facilities, along with several non-employment use class occupiers, including a hotel, petrol station, health club and several food and beverage uses.

- 5.25. Strengths: The site is well-connected to the wider strategic road network, sitting along the Dual Carriageway Cherry Orchard Way, with good onward links to the A127. Its location adjacent to London Southend Airport has resulted in a strong cluster of aerospace, aviation, and air freight businesses in the cluster, with aircraft seat and galley insert manufacturer IPECO having a major presence across a series of buildings on Aviation Way and Airport Business Park. This presence includes a large, purpose-built manufacturing facility on the ABP, along with planning consent for the construction of a further building on an adjacent plot. In recent years, the development of parts of the JAAP sites have resulted in high-quality, modern industrial and office uses coming forward, including the new IPECO facility and the Launchpad Innovation Centre, a high-quality workspace for high-value start-up businesses. A series of amenities, including a coffee shop, bar/brewery, nursery, petrol station and take-away food outlets have increased in recent years, making the location more attractive for new occupiers.
- 5.26. Weaknesses: Large parts of the site are, as yet, undeveloped, including substantial areas of the older Rochford Business Park as well as the more recently-allocated JAAP sites. Within JAAP Site 1, part of the site has secured permission on appeal for a residential-led retirement village with only a limited quantum of employment space, meaning the majority of a site earmarked for up to 20,000 sq. m of Class E(g) office space is now unlikely to come forward. Overall, the cluster has a significant amount of non-employment use classes, most notably the series of car showrooms along Cherry Orchard Way, divided between Rochford Business Park and Aviation Way. The three unallocated prospective future employment land sites in the North of the cluster are in the Green Belt and would require significant justification through the evidence base if they were to be allocated.
- 5.27. Opportunities: With a significant amount of as-yet undeveloped, allocated employment land, the cluster has considerable potential to attract high-value, knowledge-based industries in the E(g), B2 and B8 sectors, whilst significant recent investments by high profile companies such as IPECO help to make the site more attractive to future occupiers. The Launchpad has the potential to act as an incubator space for high-growth businesses, who may then seek to expand onto other nearby sites, whilst its communal facilities and proposed events programme could act as a 'hub' for the ABP and wider cluster. The speculative development of a series of 12 smaller industrial units at the ABP suggests there is a demand for the 'grow-on space' category for growing SMEs that the evidence base (i.e., South Essex Grow-On Space Study 2020) suggests, and further development of good quality accommodation in this size band could be provided within the cluster. The development of the ABP is key to this, and progression of its accommodation, utilities, services and public realm is already catalysing investment into the neighbouring Aviation Way, where some adjacent

buildings have been recently modernised and attracted new tenants. In addition, Aviation Way is home to a number of under-utilised sites (e.g., open storage, surface parking and derelict/undeveloped land) which could be redeveloped for more employment-intensive uses, whilst the gradual transfer of IPECO operations to the ABP is likely to free up some of its existing estate for re-occupation or redevelopment. Redevelopment opportunities on Aviation Way provide significant opportunities to provide high-quality employment space to meet a range of different needs.

5.28. Threats: The cluster faces considerable development pressure from non-employment use classes, with the recent (2022) appeal decision in favour of a senior living care village on Site ELS15 (allocated through the LDF and JAAP for E(g) employment uses) likely to reduce the expected employment land supply from the cluster. The development of a residential community adjacent to other sites in the cluster could potentially limit the types of uses which may be permitted bordering the care village, to preserve residential amenity. Non-employment use pressure is also seen at Rochford Business Park which, despite having an employment allocation, has been largely developed for automotive dealerships and food & drink, something which could continue on the undeveloped portion of the site. In addition, the scattering of leisure uses on parts of Aviation Way, whilst providing some useful ancillary services for employees, could in future reach proportions where the employment-oriented character of the site is threatened.

5.29. Recommendations: Given the significant potential for the cluster to deliver new, high-quality employment space to cater for a large number of high-value jobs, it is recommended that, as far as possible, future policies protect employment land in this area. Of the sites in the cluster, one (JAAP Sites 2 & 3, Airport Business Park) has the 'protect and maintain' recommendation, three (Aviation Way; Rochford Business Park; and JAAP Site 1 (Additional Expansion Land) are designated 'protect and enhance', whilst the remaining four (Cherry Orchard Brickworks and the three unallocated Green Belt sites) are assigned 'monitor and manage'. Key recommendations for the cluster include:

- Protect allocated sites for uses which maximise potential for both quantity and quality of employment opportunities and provide a range of different unit types to enable businesses to expand/downsize across the site over time. This could include additional space for start-up and grow-on businesses. Prioritise the Airport Business Park in particular for high-value office and manufacturing-led uses, rather than uses which typically provide lower densities of employment and/or lower skilled employment opportunities (e.g. retail and storage/warehousing).
- Resist proliferation of uses which could lead to a more retail/leisure-led character, e.g. on Rochford Business Park.
- Support proposals for B8 space where they are a component of a wider E(g)/B2-led operation, or where individual B8 uses which provide significant quantities or quality of employment opportunities could also be considered for the site.

- Support better integration of the sites, both in terms of complementary uses and better sustainable connectivity/enhanced public realm (e.g. ABP & Aviation Way).
- Support intensification of Aviation Way through appropriate development of vacant/underutilised plots and engagement with key landowners on redevelopment opportunities for existing units (e.g. the older IPECO buildings).

**Figure 17: Aviation Way (ELS01).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure 18: Rochford Business Park (ELS08).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure 19: JAAP Site 1 (Former Cherry Orchard Brickworks, ELS15).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure 20: JAAP Sites 2 & 3 (ELS16).**



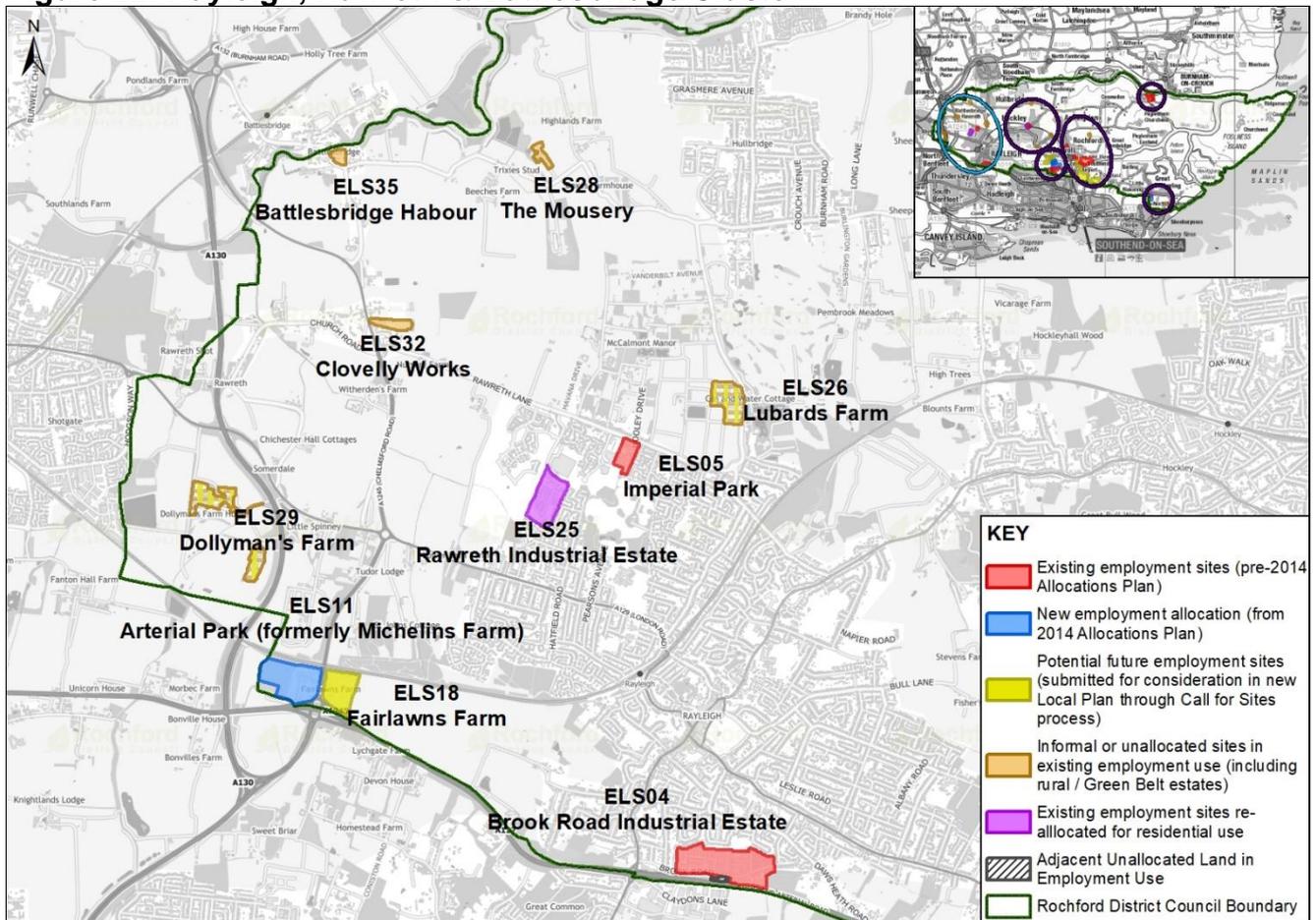
*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

Figure 21: JAAP Site 1 (additional Expansion Land, ELS17).



**Rayleigh, Rawreth & Battlesbridge Cluster**

Figure 22: Rayleigh, Rawreth & Battlesbridge Cluster



Source: Rochford District Council (2024).

5.30. This is a large and geographically disparate cluster, comprising 10 sites in the Western portion of the District, totalling 46.15ha of existing employment land, along with 5.33ha of prospective employment land, to be considered in the new Local Plan. It consists of two existing employment allocations (Brook Road and Imperial Park

Industrial Estates); one new employment site allocated in the present LDF (Arterial Park); one former employment site, now allocated for residential in the LDF (Rawreth Industrial Estate); five unallocated sites in employment use on previously-developed land in the Green Belt; and one prospective site being promoted for allocation within the new Local Plan.

- 5.31. Strengths: In general, the cluster is well-connected for the strategic road network, with many sites close or directly adjacent to roads such as the A127, A1245 and A130, and less reliant on slow-moving urban roads (e.g. Arterial Park, Dollyman's Farm and Fairlawns Farm. There is a wide variety of accommodation types and sizes, ranging from small workshops and converted agricultural buildings, through to large, modern distribution warehouses. Many sites are also well-located in relation to the main urban areas (e.g. Brook Road, Imperial Park and Rawreth Lane Industrial Estates), making it easy to attract a workforce and potential customer base. The large number of less formal rural sites means there is a particular offering for smaller businesses seeking cheaper accommodation, as well as those seeking an attractive semi-rural setting, with Dollymans Farm in particular having a good site environment.
- 5.32. Weaknesses: With the exception of Arterial Park, most sites have a fair to poor site environmental quality and very limited public realm which, combined with generally older stock, makes them less attractive to high-value businesses in growth industries. Existing allocated sites such as Brook Road and Imperial Park also suffer from significant parking problems and issues with circulation, as does Rawreth Industrial Estate. Whilst being well-located for road access, some sites, such as Arterial Park and Fairlawns Farm, are very difficult to access by public transport or active travel. Many of the sites have significant constraints on future development/modernisation, due to their Green Belt locations (and conservation area, in the case of Battlesbridge Harbour). Finally, the location of the more established employment sites close to residential areas could potentially restrict the types of uses which could take place in some parts of these sites.
- 5.33. Opportunities: The sole new allocation in the current LDF, Arterial Park, is progressing well in terms of development and occupancy on the first phase, with an additional phase having been granted planning permission. A corner of the South-West of the site is presently allocated for Gypsy & Traveller use, however there are questions regarding the likelihood of this being delivered. Should this not materialise, there is potential for additional employment development on the site. Given the strong demand for employment space and long-established nature of some of the rural sites, there is potential to formally allocate some of these for employment use, including Lubards Farm and Dollymans Farm. These could be allocated as stand-alone employment sites, or in conjunction with wider site allocations for residential use in the surrounding area, subject to full justification in the preparation of the Local Plan. Rawreth Lane Industrial has a very low vacancy rate and there has been no progress towards its redevelopment for residential purposes, there could be a case for re-allocating it for employment uses, with an aim to steer these over time to more intensive, higher-value uses of the site which provide more skilled employment and generate lower levels of noise, dust and fumes. Finally, given the strategic location and apparent initial

success of the adjacent Arterial Park site, Fairlawns Farm could be allocated for employment purposes, subject to consideration of the evidence.

- 5.34. **Threats:** There is potential for the site's well-occupied existing allocations to come under pressure for redevelopment or partial conversion through Class E to C3 permitted development, given their locations adjacent to residential areas, whilst the amount of non-employment uses on Brook Road in particular is high, affecting the potential for the site to provide a large amount of skilled employment into the future. Although the site is well-occupied, Rawreth Industrial Estate benefits from a residential allocation and is likely to come under development pressure, particularly as land values for the existing uses are likely to be low. The site also now adjoins residential developments on all sides, raising the prospect of neighbour issues with some of its more disruptive uses (e.g. waste recycling and construction machinery depots). In addition, some of the previously-developed sites in the Green Belt (e.g. Dollyman's Farm, Lubards Farm and Clovelly Works) are being promoted for residential development within the new Local Plan. The loss of these would remove a large quantum of accommodation suitable for smaller and earlier stage businesses, potentially negatively impacting entrepreneurship within the District.
- 5.35. **Recommendations:** Of the sites in this cluster, four were recommended for 'protect and enhance' (Brook Road Industrial Estate; Imperial Park; Arterial Park; and Clovelly Works); one for 'significant intervention' (Rawreth Industrial Estate); two for 'protect & maintain' with a recommendation to recategorise (Dollymans Farm and Lubards Farm); and three for 'monitor and manage' (The Mousery; Fairlawns Farm; and Battlesbridge Harbour). The cluster has several rural sites, some of which are recommended to be considered for allocation. Recommendations include:
- The established sites at Brook Road and Imperial Park should be protected and the quality of stock improved over time, to attract a greater proportion of employment uses and additional skilled employment opportunities. Redevelopment of older units and storage yards should be supported.
  - As a long-established previously-developed, lawful site in the Green Belt which provides a wide range of small business accommodation, Lubards Farm could be considered for allocation as an employment site. This would afford it greater protection from residential redevelopment pressures, allowing for an employment site close to residents in largely-residential North-West Rayleigh and Hullbridge. The allocation of any nearby sites within the new Local Plan would allow better integration and sustainable travel links with its surrounding urban area.
  - The employment areas of Dollyman's Farm constitute good quality, well-established sites which provide a range of accommodation catering to SME occupiers. It would benefit from better sustainable transport connections, both to Wickford and Eastwards to the rest of the District. It is being promoted in the new Local Plan for both employment and residential development. Allocating parts of this site for employment purposes could be considered in order to safeguard it, particularly if any further residential allocations are progressed in this area as part of the new Local Plan, as this would allow for the planning of a more sustainable

community with a range of local employment opportunities and better prospects for infrastructure.

- Future high-quality employment development should be supported at Arterial Park, should the gypsy & traveller site not be delivered. If deemed necessary to help meet employment needs, the adjacent promoted site at Fairlawns Farm could provide high-quality employment space, potentially including amenity to cater to staff and visitors across the sites. Any future development at these sites should be mindful of future major road works at the Fairglen Interchange, and should help enhance sustainable access to the sites through public transport and active travel.
- Given it has not yet progressed for residential development and is well-occupied, Rawreth Lane could be considered for re-allocation for employment purposes, or alternatively for part of the site to be re-allocated if only a portion of the site is developed for housing. However, any decision to do so should consider prioritising uses which do not impact unduly on neighbouring residential areas and encouraging more modern business units in place of open yards. The site would benefit from a masterplan approach.
- Clovelly Works is a site in the Green Belt which provides a range of small units which fill an identified need for small workshop/warehouse units for SME businesses in the construction industry, and its recent permission to extend the site points to the strong need for such space. Consideration of allocating or otherwise protecting this site would help safeguard small business accommodation whilst encouraging the long-term improvement of the older stock on the site.
- Whilst providing employment uses, Battlesbridge Harbour could be considered for other future mixed-use proposals which provide employment/commercial opportunities whilst seeking to relate the site to its historic riverside location.

**Figure 23: Brook Road Industrial Estate (ELS04).**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

**Figure 24: Imperial Park Industrial Estate (ELS05).**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

**Figure 25: Arterial Park (formerly Michelins Farm ELS11).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure 26: Rawreth Industrial Estate (ELS25).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure 27: Lubards Farm (ELS26)**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure 28: Dollyman's Farm (ELS29)**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure 29: Clovelly Works (ELS32).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

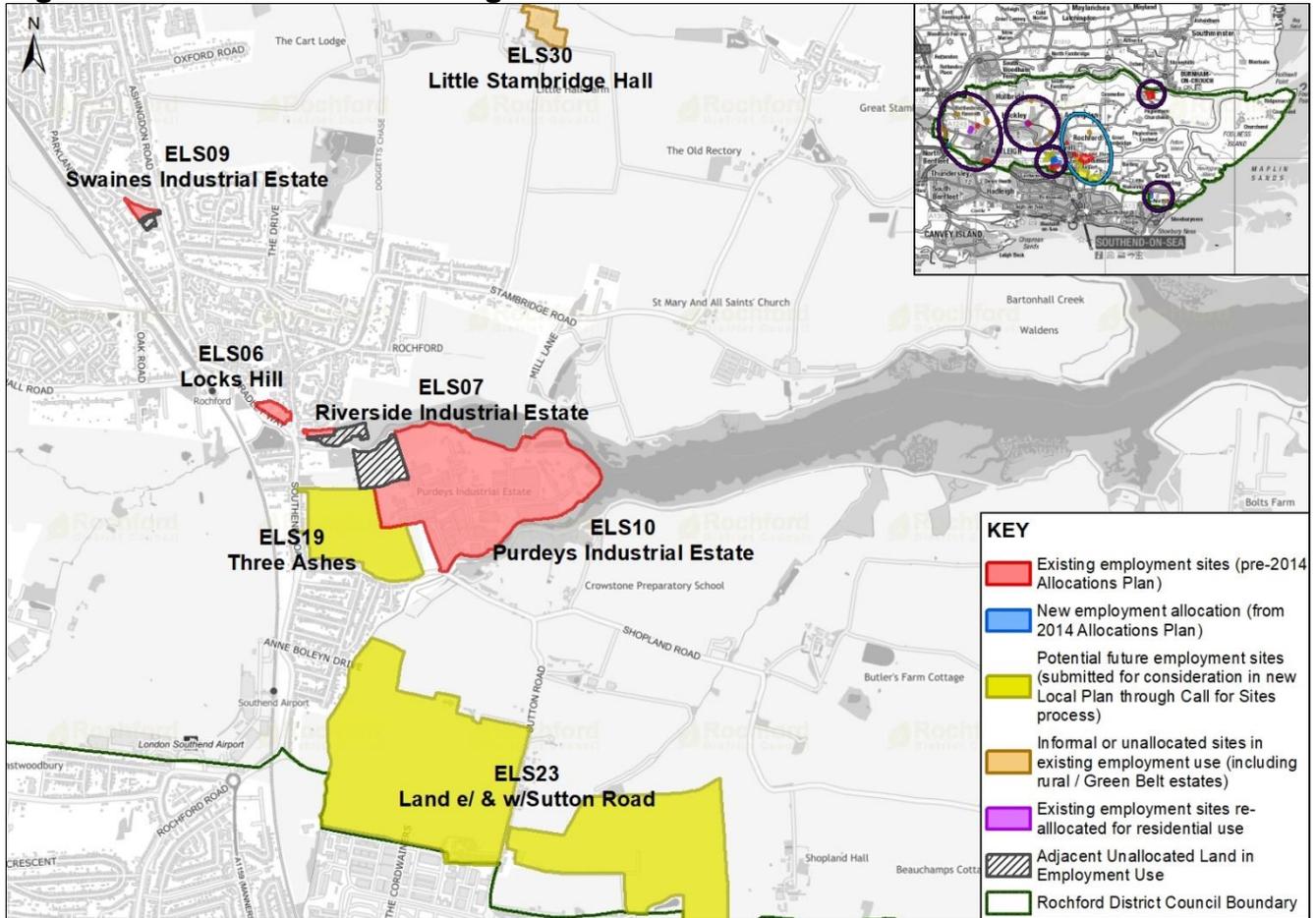
**Figure 30: Battlesbridge Harbour (ELS35)**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

## Rochford & Stambridge Cluster

Figure 31: Rochford & Stambridge Cluster



Source: Rochford District Council (2024).

5.36. The Rochford & Stambridge Cluster consists of seven sites, namely four existing employment sites (Locks Hill, Purdey’s Industrial Estate, Riverside Industrial Estate, and Swaines Industrial Estate); one unallocated rural site (Little Stambridge Hall Farm); and two unallocated prospective sites (Three Ashes and Land East and West of Sutton Road). In terms of land in use for employment purposes, this comprises 42.63ha, with an additional 106.09ha of prospective land being promoted for future allocation. The cluster is notable for Purdey’s Industrial Estate, one of the District’s largest and most important employment sites, which has its own unique set of challenges and opportunities.

5.37. **Strengths:** The cluster provides a wide range of unit types and sizes, including small workshops, storage yards, modern offices and larger manufacturing/warehouse units, catering to occupiers of all sizes and a range of sectors, with particular strengths in sectors such as advanced manufacturing, professional services, motor vehicle repair, printing and environmental/waste services. Vacancy rates are low. The geographical location of the cluster is well-located for the key population centres of Rochford and Southend, making it convenient for the local workforce and customers, whilst some

sites benefit from good walkability to town centre amenities (e.g., Locks Hill and Riverside Industrial Estate). The location of Swaines Industrial Estate in particular, amongst residential neighbourhoods, means it is well-placed to offer services catering for the local population (e.g., motor vehicle repair). Locks Hill offers good quality office space in a landscaped, urban setting, whilst Little Stambridge Hall Farm offers a range of basic employment space within a rural community.

- 5.38. Weaknesses: The Cluster is poorly-situated for the strategic road network, being accessed through busy urban areas and single carriageway roads, whilst the entrances to most of its sites are narrow or constrained, or have little parking. Purdey's Industrial Estate has particular access problems, with the sole site access via a mini roundabout resulting in significant congestion and delays at peak times, whilst public transport, walking and cycling links are inadequate. In addition, many of the existing sites have poor public realm, old/dilapidated stock and a concentration of uses which may not be considered 'good neighbours' (e.g., waste/recycling). The presence of leisure/retail uses on some sites can cause parking/access problems.
- 5.39. Opportunities: The generally older nature of stock in the cluster brings potential for redevelopment and enhancement, particularly on Purdey's Industrial Estate, the largest site. In recent years, there have been a number of modern units built on Purdey's, planning permission has been granted for a series of smaller industrial units on yard sites, whilst one of the site's main operators of tipper trucks and waste services is due to vacate. Given the large number of open storage compounds and scrap yards on the site, there is potential for further intensification of the estate over time, leading to higher value employment uses and increased employment as the site's image becomes 'cleaner'. A number of large sites being promoted for residential in the new Local Plan are close to Purdey's, and their development could be used to bring forward transport infrastructure improvements which also help address the existing site access issues.
- 5.40. The permission for a number of modern, purpose built, small industrial units at Little Stambridge Hall could help provide much-needed accommodation for start-up and SME businesses in a rural area, benefiting the rural economy. Should they be deemed suitable for allocation to help in meeting the District's Expansion land needs over the new Local Plan period, either of the two prospective sites could act as logical expansions to established employment sites (Purdey's in the case of Three Ashes, and Temple Farm Industrial Estate in Southend for Land East and West of Sutton Road), providing high quality new stock to suit demand, in addition to improving connectivity to the existing sites.
- 5.41. Threats: The poor connectivity, parking issues and site environment of several sites within this cluster risk pushing some of the more knowledge-intensive occupiers to relocate to more attractive settings, whilst some sites in the cluster have a high presence of non-employment uses, such as leisure, something which could continue. Sites sitting within urban areas, i.e., Swaines and Riverside Industrial Estates, contain a significant amount of poor quality stock and could be at risk of residential

redevelopment, particularly as both of these sites have areas of employment use which do not sit within the boundaries formally allocated for employment use.

5.42. Recommendations: Within the cluster, three sites (Locks Hill, Riverside Industrial Estate and Purdey's Industrial Estate) were assigned the 'protect and enhance' recommendation, whilst the remaining four (Swaines Industrial Estate, Three Ashes, Land East & West of Sutton Hall Road and Little Stambridge Hall Farm) were designated 'monitor and manage'. Key recommendations for this cluster include the following:

- Overall, the existing sites within the cluster should be protected for employment use through a general policy on protecting employment land within the new Local Plan, and proposals to replace the numerous older industrial units with more modern employment buildings suited to modern occupiers should be supported.
- As a key employment hub for the District, the gradual redevelopment, improvement and regeneration of Purdey's Industrial Estate should be supported, including through redevelopment of open yards and poorer quality older units into modern employment uses, along with the enhancement of the present inadequate road, active travel and public transport links, and improvements to the site environment. This could something which could be guided by a development brief or masterplan, which could also encompass adjacent land, should its allocation and development help deliver enhancements to the wider area.
- Given portions of Swaines and Riverside Industrial Estate are presently unallocated, the merits of allocating this within the Local Plan, versus encouraging the redevelopment of these for other purposes, should be considered.
- Both Swaines and Riverside Industrial Estates have potential for partial redevelopment to provide improved employment stock, potentially alongside other uses. A masterplan or development brief approach to ensure proposals for redevelopment of all or part of the site into the wider urban fabric could be considered.

**Figure 32: Locks Hill (ELS06).**



**Figure 33: Riverside Industrial Estate (ELS07).**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

**Figure 34: Swaines Industrial Estate (ELS09).**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

**Figure 35: Purdey's Industrial Estate (ELS10).**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

**Figure 36: Land East and West of Sutton Road (ELS23).**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

**Figure 37: Little Stambridge Hall Farm (ELS30)**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

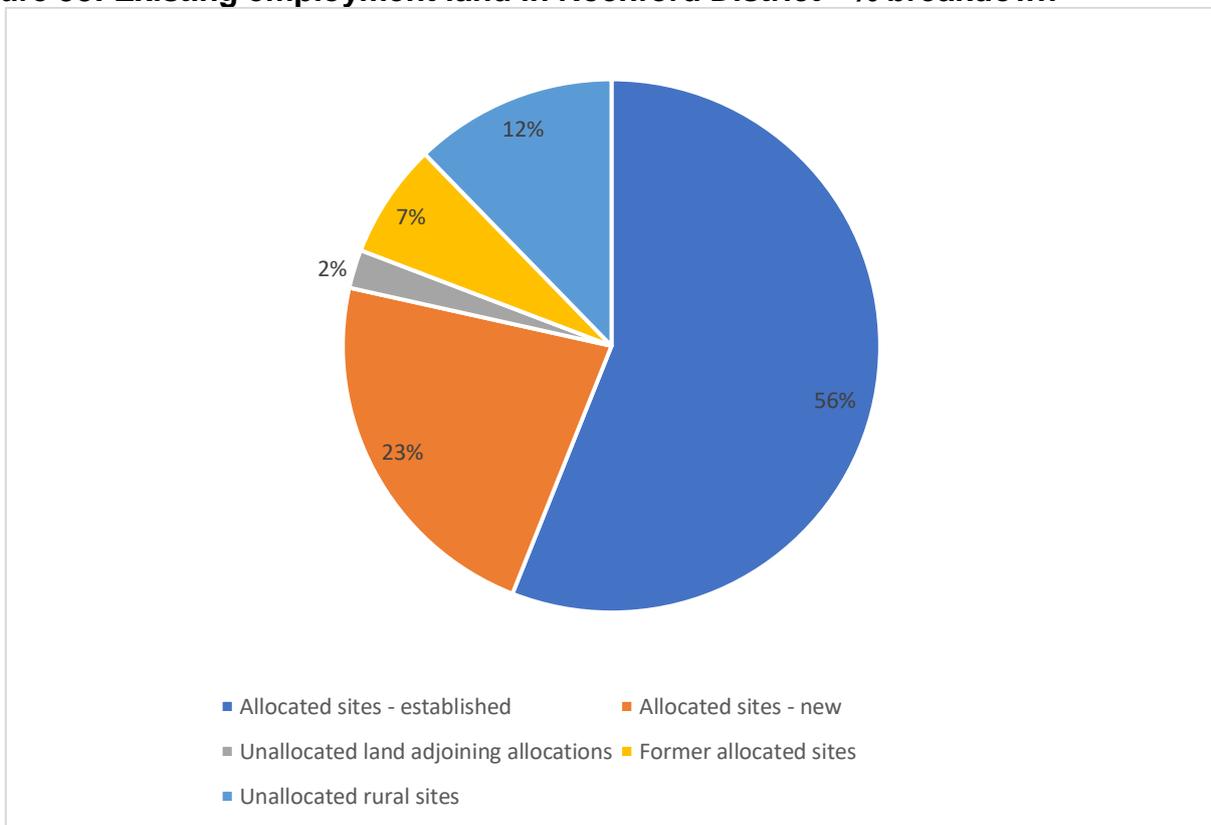
## Employment Sites Survey Summary

### Site Typology Breakdown

- 5.43. 35 individual sites were surveyed, with eleven (31%) of these comprising existing allocated employment sites; five (14%) being new employment sites allocated through the present Core Strategy; three (9%) consisting of former employment allocations which were re-allocated for residential use through the Core Strategy; ten (29%) being unallocated sites employment use in rural/Green Belt areas; and a further six (17%) being prospective future employment sites (currently Green Belt land promoted via the Call for Sites process in the new Local Plan).

- 5.44. Sites surveyed amounted to a total of 315.49 ha of land in employment use, or being promoted for employment use, in Rochford District<sup>37</sup>. Of this, 183.16 ha was either in employment use (whether formally allocated or not), or allocated to be developed for employment (excluding undeveloped prospective sites).
- 5.45. Of the 183.16 ha of current employment land identified, 142.96 ha currently has a formal allocation (comprising 101.93 ha of existing allocated land and 40.93 ha of new allocated land), whilst 39.12 ha does not. The latter category comprises unallocated rural sites (22.24 ha); unallocated land in employment use adjoining formal allocations (4.25 ha; effectively assumed to be part of those formal sites); and former employment allocations which have been allocated for residential but are still in employment use (12.63 ha). Figure 38 shows the breakdown of these types of employment land by percentage.

**Figure 38: Existing employment land in Rochford District - % breakdown**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024).

- 5.46. It should be noted that, whilst the surveyed sites constitute the vast majority of land in employment use within the District, this does not include employment uses taking place in locations such as town centres, neighbourhood parades and stand-alone buildings in employment use in residential and rural areas.

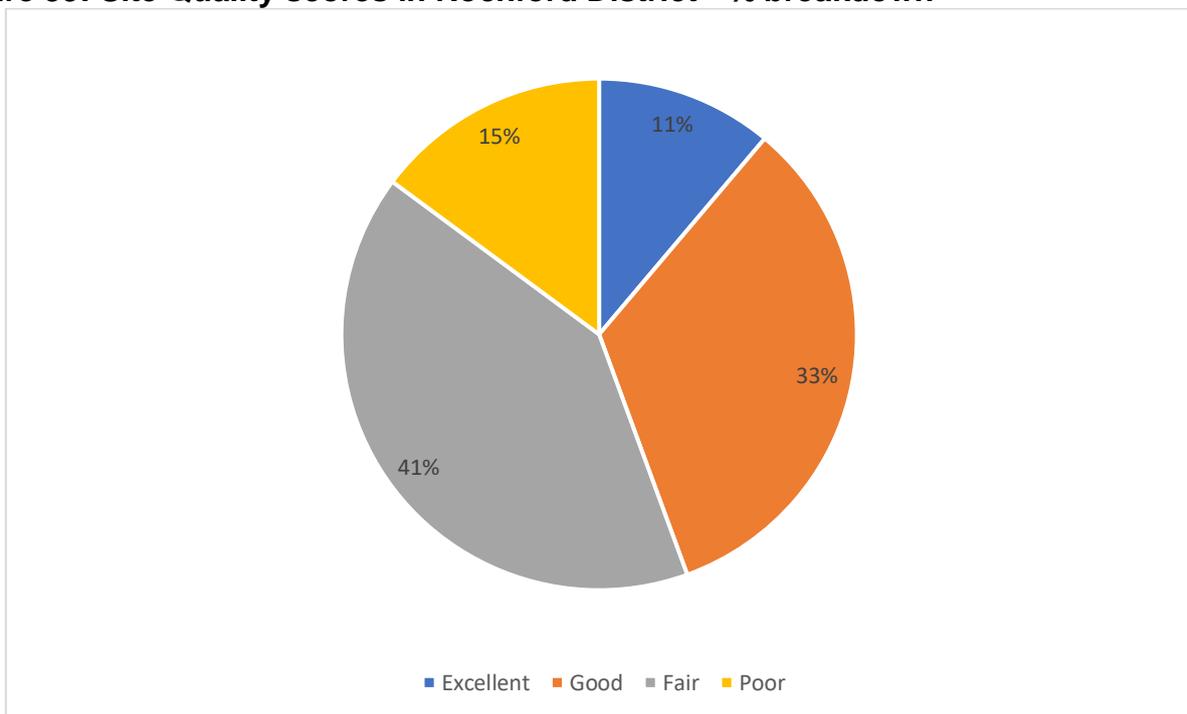
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<sup>37</sup> Site area is based upon GIS shapefiles (where available, in the case of allocated/promoted sites) and measurements of satellite imagery taken from Google Maps in the case of unallocated sites. Consequently, figures may differ slightly from earlier studies and other measurements of employment land.

### Site Quality

5.47. All sites surveyed were assigned a 'quality' score (from 'Poor' to 'Excellent'), based on the criteria set out in paragraph 5.18, with these being used to consider the overall functionality and attractiveness of the sites for employment uses. Of the 27 sites currently in employment allocation or use (discounting two allocated sites which are yet to receive any development), three were scored 'Excellent'; nine 'Good'; 11 'Fair'; and four 'Poor'. Figure 39, below, shows the breakdown of these site quality scores by percentage. As is evident, a minority of sites (44%) were of 'Excellent' or 'Good' quality, whereas 56% scored 'Fair' or 'Poor', indicating a substantial number of poor-quality sites which may impact on the District's potential, inhibiting the productivity or growth potential of existing businesses whilst discouraging new inward investment.

**Figure 39: Site Quality scores in Rochford District - % breakdown**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024).

5.48. Of currently allocated sites (comprising both existing allocations and new allocations from the Core Strategy), four (21%) were rated 'Excellent'; five (36%) were 'Good'; four (29%) were 'Fair'; with one (7%) being 'Poor'. In terms of unallocated developed sites (i.e., those in employment use in Green Belt/rural sites and those sites whose former employment allocation was removed in the last Core Strategy), none scored 'Excellent'; four (31%) were 'Good'; six (46%) 'Fair' and three (23%) 'Poor'. This indicates that, in general terms, sites with allocations tended to be more likely to be Excellent or Good (50%) than unallocated sites (31%), with the latter grouping having a much higher rate of 'Poor'-quality sites.

## Existing Employment Allocations

### Sites Overview

- 5.49. Existing allocated employment sites comprise those allocated in the existing Core Strategy and Allocations Plan, including in Area Action Plans. These do not include new site allocations or former employment allocations which may still be in employment use (see [Appendix B](#) for the full table of sites). These sites are typically long-established industrial estates, such as Purdey's, Brook Road and Swaines, with a minority of more specialised sites, including maritime facilities (Baltic Wharf and Essex Marina); an office park (Locks Hill); and a more modern site primarily used for automotive sales/servicing (Rochford Business Park).
- 5.50. 11 sites were surveyed, totalling 101.93 ha, along with a further 4.25 ha of land which is not formally allocated, but adjoins three of the sites (Riverside Industrial Estate, Swaines Industrial Estate and Purdeys Industrial Estate), and which effectively forms a continuation of the activities taking place on the allocated site. Based on the site surveys, the average vacancy across these sites was just under 4%, with the highest being Foundry Business Park, at c.30%. The average proportion of the sites which had been developed in the past five years was c.3.5% (the highest being Aviation Way at 15%), reflecting the generally older status of much of the stock.
- 5.51. In terms of site quality, only one site (Rochford Business Park) was rated 'excellent', whilst a further four were rated 'good', meaning 45% of sites were excellent/good and the majority were 'fair' or 'poor', with the older nature of many of the sites meaning stock, site environments and amenities were often of a low quality. Efforts to address these measures and improve the overall quality of sites is imperative if they are to remain attractive to the needs of new and existing occupiers.
- 5.52. Across the sites, an average of 34.5% of premises were in 'good' condition; 35.5% were 'fair'; and 30% 'poor'. The average score across sites for site quality, amenities and management was 2.7 out of 5.

### Further Development Potential

- 5.53. In terms of potential for accommodating additional employment development, surveys estimated the approximate amount of vacant, derelict or underutilised land to be between 12.24-12.99 ha, with the majority of the land on two sites; Rochford Business Park (c.5.86 ha), where around half the land is undeveloped; and Purdey's Industrial Estate (c.4.2 ha), where around 10% of the site comprises temporary open storage yards, a number of which have been redeveloped into employment space. Overall, the established nature of many of the sites meant most had little or no vacant land available in the short term.
- 5.54. There is considerable potential for redevelopment, intensification or refurbishment across these sites, many of which comprise significant quantities of older stock in poor condition. Across the sites, almost 31% of stock was assessed to be in a 'poor' condition. Whilst this could lead to potential for redevelopment for modern stock which is better-suited for modern occupier needs, it does also raise the risk of

redevelopment for alternative uses, particularly residential in areas of higher land values, and where sites adjoin existing residential areas or are in well-connected locations.

Site Recommendations

- 5.55. One site (Essex Marina) was assigned ‘protect and maintain’, being considered to perform well for its primary function. Seven sites (Aviation Way; Brook Road; Locks Hill; Riverside; Rochford Business Park; and Purdey’s) were rated ‘protect and enhance’, reflecting that they generally performed well as employment sites, but that there were some notable ways in which their functionality and attractiveness could be improved to maximise their employment potential. Three sites (Swaines Industrial Estate; Foundry Business Park; and Baltic Wharf) were assessed to have a ‘monitor and manage’ category, with issues such as poor-quality stock and potential development pressure potentially affecting their future ability to function as viable employment sites unless remedial action is taken. In the case of Baltic Wharf, the isolated location and sensitive surrounding environment were also factors which may inhibit the future improvement of the site.
- 5.56. As it stands, all sites remain in employment use. However, it is important to consider which sites are potentially at risk of loss to future redevelopment for residential or other uses – particularly those with a ‘monitor and manage’ recommendation. Considering the evidence in the site visit proformas, along with recent planning history, the following sites have some chance of losing employment space or this not being developed for employment use:
- ELS7 – Riverside Industrial Estate: although the site has an employment allocation, the adjacent waste and coach depots, along with former pumping station, do not. Part of this unallocated land is also being promoted for allocation in the new Local Plan. The unallocated parts of the site do not fall within the Green Belt, raising the potential for development for other uses. Up to 1.18 ha could be at risk of loss.
  - ELS8 – Rochford Business Park: given past patterns of development on the site (largely for automotive retail and food & drink), there is a risk that the remainder of the vacant land on the site (up to 5.86 ha) is not development for employment use.
  - ELS9 – Swaines Industrial Estate: although the site has an employment allocation, parts of the site do not (i.e. industrial buildings to the south of Leecon Way). Given the age and condition of this stock, they could come under pressure for redevelopment, which would result in a loss of 0.41 ha of employment land.
  - ELS14 – Foundry Business Park: the site is allocated for employment use within the Hockley Area Action Plan, but much of it is old and in poor condition, whilst the more modern office blocks have been the subject of permitted development proposals (as of September 2023). As a result, it is possible the site could be wholly or partly lost to employment use, which would amount to up to 0.67 ha.

- 5.57. Land at risk of loss could total **8.12 ha** and consideration should be given to potentially compensating this loss in the new Local Plan through future allocations. This is explored further in Section 6.

## **New Employment Allocations**

### Sites Overview

- 5.58. New allocated employment sites comprise those sites newly-allocated in the existing Core Strategy and Allocations Plan, including sites which fall within the boundaries of the London Southend Airport Joint Area Action Plan (JAAP). These sites are a mixture of partially-developed and undeveloped development plots at differing stages of development in terms of their planning status, servicing, infrastructure, stock and occupancy. Sites which have started to be developed and occupied include Airport Business Park and Arterial Park, whilst New Employment Land at Star Lane and much of the former Cherry Orchard Brickworks remain undeveloped.
- 5.59. Five sites were surveyed, totalling 40.93 ha. It should be noted that, for the purposes of this study, one site allocation (JAAP Site 1) has been divided into two components, reflecting their differing ownerships and development stages. However, in terms of planning policy designation, these are treated as one single unit. Given the early stage of development of most of the sites, along with considerable ongoing construction activity) vacancy rates were not recorded as they were considered to be inaccurate and likely to become quickly obsolete.
- 5.60. In terms of site quality, only the three sites where development of stock has already taken place were assessed, with two rated as 'excellent' and one scoring 'good'. The former two ratings (Airport Business Park and Arterial Park) reflect the high-quality accommodation, site infrastructure and business environment as far as it has been developed, whilst the 'good' site (JAAP Site 1 – Former Cherry Orchard Brickworks) reflects that a single high-quality mixed-use office/nursery building has been constructed, but that this is an isolated development and wider improvements to the site environment and accompanying infrastructure have not yet been delivered.

### Further Development Potential

- 5.61. Collectively, around 81% of the sites remained undeveloped, indicating the full potential of these employment sites is yet to be developed. Indeed, two sites (Star Lane New Employment Land and JAAP Site 1 Additional Expansion Land) are completely undeveloped. The sites under development (Airport Business Park and Arterial Park) appear to have achieved good occupancy on initial phases of development, with further phases underway. One site (JAAP Site 1 – Former Cherry Orchard Brickworks), having had limited mixed-use development including employment, has been the subject of a successful appeal for a policy non-compliant scheme for a retirement village. Whilst this is set to deliver some additional employment space, the vast majority of this site is likely to be residential/community uses, meaning only a small proportion of the site's employment floorspace potential is likely to be realised.

Site Recommendations

- 5.62. The Airport Business Park site was assigned a 'protect and maintain' status, reflecting that its development and occupancy appear to be progressing well, with a series of planning applications and construction projects in the pipeline. Alongside this, the site's infrastructure (e.g., utilities, access road, pedestrian/cycle links and landscaping) have been developed. In addition, Arterial Park was assigned the same status, reflecting that the first phase has been constructed and the majority of units are occupied, with works underway on a further phase.
- 5.63. JAAP Site 1 (Additional Expansion Land) was rated 'protect and enhance', which reflects the ambiguous nature of the site, which is in the same ownership as the adjoining Airport Business Park (ABP). Whilst the indicative masterplan on the ABP website envisages an industrial unit on the site, there has been no planning activity to date and the site should be protected and brought forward for employment use, something particularly important considering the majority of JAAP Site 1 is now set to deliver less employment space than anticipated. The new employment land at Star Lane was also given this status, reflecting a need to bring it forward for development, something which a recent outline planning application for employment as of September 2023) suggests there is interest in doing.
- 5.64. Given the loss of much of one new site for non-employment uses, it is important to ensure the remaining sites come forward to deliver employment uses. Whilst the remaining supply identified in paragraphs 3.41 is sufficient to cover much of the expected demand over the new Plan period, the loss of the majority of one site reduces the safety margin of overprovision, meaning that any delays in other sites coming forward for development, or significant losses of existing space, could lead to a shortage in supply in particular employment use classes.
- 5.65. Finally, a category of 'monitor and manage' was given to JAAP Site 1 (Former Cherry Orchard Brickworks), due to the appeal decision in favour of a residential-led mixed-use retirement village. Whilst the site has a small element of employment space, and proposals plan for some additional offices, the site is deemed to no longer make any strategic contribution to meeting the District's employment space needs, particularly when considered against the JAAP policy for Site 1 (of which this site makes up the larger part) of providing 20,000 sq. m of office/education space. As a result, it may be deemed appropriate for this site to be re-categorised for other purposes within the new Local Plan.

**Existing Unallocated and Informal Sites**

Sites Overview

- 5.66. These sites consist of ten unallocated and informal sites, typically in rural/Green Belt locations – mainly in former agricultural buildings – where lawful employment uses are already taking place. The sites vary considerably in terms of their quality of stock and amenities, with some also continuing to support agriculture, whilst others have been repurposed or redeveloped to provide good quality business accommodation.

Collectively, the sites total 21.31 ha<sup>38</sup>. Given the long-established nature of many of these sites, it may be appropriate to protect and formalise some of them through formal employment allocations or alternative policy provision, subject to Green Belt policies. These sites were identified as some of the most notable and established informal employment locations, however it is acknowledged that there are likely to be a range of other examples in the District where employment uses take place on Green Belt/agricultural sites and where similar approaches may be warranted.

- 5.67. In terms of overall site quality, most sites in this category were either 'fair' (5; 50%) or 'poor' (3; 30%), with only two (20%) assessed as being 'good'. These were Dollyman's Farm and Clovelly Works, both of which benefit from good strategic road access in the West of the District. Overall, premises were low-quality, reflecting that they tend to be older and not purpose-built, and very few had been built in the past 5 years. Across the sites, an average of 23.5% of premises were in 'good' condition; 50.5% were 'fair'; and 26% 'poor'. The average score across sites for site quality, amenities and management was 2.2 out of 5, reflecting that such sites usually have little in the way of a managed site environment and are often in isolated locations with few amenities. Factors such as strategic/local access and developmental/environmental constraints also tended to give sites low quality scores, reflecting the rural locations of most sites. Consequently, such sites usually attracted an occupier profile oriented towards small/micro businesses seeking smaller, more affordable units.

#### Further Development Potential

- 5.68. Many of the sites have undeveloped portions within them, which could conceivably be developed for additional employment use, with site visits and satellite mapping analysis identifying potentially 1.73-2.57 ha of such land. However, the location of all these sites within the Metropolitan Green Belt is likely to considerably restrict the ability of landowners and developers to extend existing levels of built form on the sites, meaning much of this is unlikely to be realised without sites either being allocated within the Local Plan or an exceptional need for employment space justifying development in the Green Belt.
- 5.69. A couple of sites which are notable exceptions are Little Stambridge Hall Farm (where planning permission has been granted to construct new small business units on the site of former poultry sheds (which had been in temporary storage use); and Clovelly Works, where an application was able to demonstrate that extending development to the rear of the site would be acceptable in Green Belt terms, including through providing a series of small business units deemed to be in short supply.

#### Site Recommendations

- 5.70. Three sites were assigned a 'protect and maintain' status, reflecting their established role in providing employment and commercial uses, with two of these recommended for possible allocation as employment sites, which would bring with it protection in the

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<sup>38</sup> Site area for these unallocated sites is an estimation based on site visit, aerial photography analysis and GIS mapping, as the sites did not have an existing set of established shapefiles. As a result, the actual areas in use for employment purposes may be greater or smaller.

new Local Plan. Firstly, Crouchman's Court/Yard was considered to play an important role in providing high-quality small business units in an attractive, rural setting and, although no recommendation was made for allocation, it was deemed worthy of protection. Lubards Farm is considered to play an important role in providing employment (along with associated retail/leisure) uses for north-west Rayleigh and Hullbridge, an area which has little allocated or unallocated employment space. Although the site is under potential development pressure through its promotion in the 'Call for Sites' process and inclusion on the Brownfield Land Register, it could potentially form the basis of a commercial/community hub which could be enhanced, should any surrounding sites be allocated for residential development. Should the site be redeveloped through a planning application or allocated for residential, consideration should be given to re-provisioning alternative space in the local area. The third site, Dollyman's Farm, benefits from good strategic road access and contains a range of good-quality business accommodation housing a range of local and regional businesses. It is currently a promoted site, and similarly to Lubards could either form a formal employment site at the heart of a surrounding community, or any loss of its space should be considered for reprovision elsewhere.

- 5.71. Clovelly Works was assessed for 'protect and enhance' status, based on its recent planning approval for additional small business units, focused in particular on the construction industry and related trades. The site benefits from good strategic road access and provides affordable accommodation for small businesses. Whilst its existing access and circulation arrangements are poor, it is hoped that the process of extending and enhancing the site will allow these issues to be addressed in due course. The site assessment also suggested this site could be considered for formal allocation, or otherwise some other degree of policy protection as an established site for employment activities within the Green Belt.
- 5.72. The remainder of the sites (The Mousery; Little Stambridge Hall Farm; New Hockley Hall Farm; Magees Nurseries; Former Chicken Sheds; and Battlesbridge Harbour) were designated 'monitor and manage'. Many of these sites provide important accommodation for small businesses, whilst some (e.g., Little Stambridge Hall) are improving the quality of their stock to suit identified occupier needs. However, overall, the location of these sites, either on country lanes away from the main road network or in a conservation area, mean they may not be suitable for formal allocation as employment sites. In addition, the poor condition and uncertainty over the future of some sites means they may not be viable to maintain/improve for employment purposes in the long term, and may instead come under pressure for alternative development, particularly for housing. Policies within the new Local Plan could seek to afford some degree of protection to unallocated employment sites which meet certain criteria. In addition, proposals to upgrade the accommodation, site environment and infrastructure associated with these sites should be supported where it is demonstrable that there will be local economic benefits, particularly in rural areas.

## Former Employment Allocations

### Sites Overview

- 5.73. This category covers three sites, i.e., employment sites which are still in use as such, acknowledging that the Core Strategy also released one further redundant site for which there is no prospect of employment use returning (Stambridge Mills). Together, they total 12.63 ha. Two of these sites were released for housing allocations (Rawreth Industrial Estate and Star Lane Industrial Estate), whilst Eldon Way was released and allocated as part of the 'Eldon Way Opportunity Area' under the Hockley Area Action Plan, with the intention of the site coming forward for mixed use development (residential, employment, retail and leisure) to complement and enhance the adjacent Hockley Town Centre. As of September 2023, all three sites remain fully operational as employment sites.
- 5.74. Two of the sites (Eldon Way and Star Lane Industrial Estates) were assessed as 'good' in terms of quality, due to good local access, nearby amenities and market attractiveness (good occupancy), whilst Rawreth Industrial Estate was rated as 'fair', scoring lower in terms of its site quality.

### Further Development Potential

- 5.75. All three sites are fully developed, with no vacant or derelict plots. However, Rawreth Industrial Estate has a number of open yards in the southern portion of the site which appear to have temporary or semi-permanent uses on them (waste/recycling, plant hire, vehicle storage, scaffolding) which could be redeveloped for more permanent/intensive employment uses relatively easily. These make up 5-10% of the overall site, accounting for up to 0.62ha. Given the site is presently allocated for housing, it is uncertain whether this land would come forward for new employment development.

### Site Recommendations

- 5.76. Eldon Way Industrial Estate was assigned a 'protect and enhance' status. This reflects the important role the estate plays in providing employment space in the Hockley area for a range of local and regional SMEs, with high levels of occupancy. Although the site's urban location does present some access and circulation issues for larger vehicles, the presence of a large quantum of employment space and a number of leisure occupiers in this location means it provides a complementary role to the adjacent town centre, supporting footfall to retail and hospitality businesses there. A 'protect and enhance' status indicates the site performs well, however it has a high proportion of dated stock in need of either refurbishment or replacement. It could also be improved through enhancing its pedestrian links to Hockley Town Centre and the station, whilst improving the site environment to make it more attractive to occupiers. The estate is designed as an 'opportunity area' for mixed-use redevelopment within the Hockley Area Action Plan, and it is recommended that any proposals for full or partial redevelopment are accompanied by a masterplan and seek to protect some of the employment accommodation which currently forms the mainstay of the site. One possible recommendation for the new Local Plan is that parts of the site deemed most

appropriate for long-term employment use are designated as such, whilst others could be earmarked for potential mixed-use redevelopment. This reflects the poor state of repair of much of neighbouring Foundry Business Park which, although allocated for retention as employment within the Area Action Plan, is under more immediate pressure for residential/mixed-use redevelopment than Eldon Way Industrial Estate.

- 5.77. Star Lane Industrial Estate was given a 'protect and maintain' status, due to its full occupancy at the time of visit and stock which was generally in decent condition, if somewhat dated. Although the site is allocated for housing, there appears to be no immediate move to seek its redevelopment and the site fills a clear role in providing accommodation in use classes E(g), B2 and B8 to local SMEs. Given increasing residential development in Great Wakering over the current plan period there is a strong need to retain local employment prospects and therefore there is a clear case for retaining the site. The site is now surrounded by recent residential development, and in the event of its eventual redevelopment, alternative provision should be made in the new Local Plan. Whilst the present Core Strategy envisages this for the new allocation to the south, a recent outline application to develop this whilst Star Lane Industrial Estate remains fully occupied indicates there is likely to be sufficient demand for two sites, and that the loss of the older estate should be compensated for with new provision. This is particularly important if the new Local Plan allocates additional residential development sites in Great Wakering.
- 5.78. Rawreth Industrial Estate is identified as 'significant intervention required'. This reflects that it is identified as a significant source of housing (c.222 units) within the present Core Strategy, but at present no progress has been seen on its development, with it being understood that there are complications relating to land assembly. The site remains well-occupied and home to a range of businesses, however has a poor quality site environment and a significant amount of ageing stock with little evidence of modernisation. Alongside this, the site contains a number of uses which are likely to produce noise, fumes and dust (e.g., waste & recycling; plant hire; scaffolding; open storage; and stonemasonry), which raises the likelihood of the site becoming a 'bad neighbour' to the significant amount of housing which has been developed on adjacent sites in recent years, with the estate now being surrounded by residential development. As a consequence, it is recommended that the site undergoes one of two options. Firstly, it could be expedited for full/partial redevelopment for residential uses, which could be focused on the lower-quality yard sites and older stock to the South, retaining aspects of the site such as the 'Makro' wholesale warehouse and other uses more compatible with residential neighbours. Alternatively, the site could be re-allocated for employment use, but with policies seeking to ensure appropriate screening is in place to neighbouring housing, whilst encouraging higher-value, more intensive employment uses on the site over time.
- 5.79. The present Core Strategy and Allocations Plan envisaged displaced businesses from Rawreth Lane could be accommodated on the new employment land allocation at Michelins Farm (now Arterial Park). However, given Rawreth Industrial Estate remains in place whilst Arterial Park has commenced development (and attracted a number of new occupiers from outside the District), it may be prudent to allocate alternative

employment allocations in the new Local Plan, should it be considered likely that Rawreth Industrial Estate is eventually redeveloped for residential.

## **Prospective Future Sites (Unallocated)**

### Sites Overview

- 5.80. This category covers undeveloped sites within the Green Belt which are being promoted through the 'Call for Sites' process for allocation in the Local Plan as employment land (although these sites may also be being promoted for allocation for other purposes, such as residential).
- 5.81. Six sites were assessed, totalling 133.51ha. The vast majority of these sites were agricultural land, although one site (Fairlawns Farm) was also used as a temporary events site, whilst small elements of Land East & West of Sutton Road are previously-developed, including both agricultural buildings and former agricultural buildings now in employment use. Due to the undeveloped nature of the sites, employment site quality assessments were not carried out using the same criteria as other sites assessed in the ELS, but instead on the limited basis of the sites' potential as prospective future development sites. Under this assessment, one site (Fairlawns Farm) was assessed as 'good' (largely due to its position for the strategic road network), whilst the remainder were considered to be 'fair'. The three sites adjoining Cherry Orchard Way received scores of 4 out of 5 for their strategic road access, whereas the sites situated away from dual carriageways on Sutton Road received lower scores. All sites had scored poorly (either 1 or 2) for development constraints, reflecting their positions within the Green Belt.

### Further Development Potential

- 5.82. Presently, there is little immediate development possible on these sites, given their Green Belt status, although the existing former agricultural buildings in commercial use on Land East and West of Sutton Road could conceivably be modernised, effectively forming an extension of the large Temple Farm Industrial Estate to the south, in the administrative area of Southend. Any move to allocate land for employment use on these sites would need to be subject to justification through the Local Plan process, demonstrating exceptional circumstances for new allocations in order to meet the District's employment needs. This is discussed further in Section 6, where the demand for employment space is balanced against existing supply, with the consideration of potential future losses also assessed.
- 5.83. The sites are located adjacent or close to existing employment sites, and have the potential to provide expansion land for businesses on these sites seeking larger or better quality premises, as and when these are deemed to be at capacity. In terms of adjacent established sites, Three Ashes sits adjacent to Purdeys Industrial Estate and could provide both new accommodation and space for additional access points to ease pressure on the single constrained existing entrance. Similarly, Land East & West of Sutton Road has the potential to form a logical extension to the large Temple Farm Industrial Estate, situated within Southend-on-Sea. The remaining sites are all

close to newer employment allocations, all of which (Cherry Orchard Brickworks and Airport Business Park, for the Cherry Orchard Way sites, and Arterial Park for Fairlawns Farm), are only partially developed and have considerable vacant land still remaining. Any prospective development to expand such sites would need to take a much longer-term view, expecting such sites to eventually fill to capacity.

- 5.84. It is important to note that all six sites are all also being promoted for residential, which may be a preferable end result for a landowner or developer, given the higher land value uplift and likely returns on investment that such an allocation would provide over employment. It is possible that some sites may lend themselves to a mixture of both uses, particularly where they are being promoted as part of a cluster of wider sites for a concentrated growth location (e.g. Land East and West of Sutton Road, which falls within a potential area of significant growth mooted during the Regulation 18 Spatial Options consultation).

#### Site Recommendations

- 5.85. Given the sites' locations within the Green Belt and the ongoing nature of the site selection process for the Local Plan at the time of publication, the ELS does not seek to recommend whether any particular site should be allocated, other than outlining the broad potential of the sites which can then inform this process. Some of these sites have the potential to expand existing clusters, take advantage of strategic road access or enhance/provide relief to adjacent sites in different ways.
- 5.86. When considering whether or where to allocate any new employment land, it is important to consider how the Local Plan's spatial strategy for meeting the District's housing and other growth needs might influence the demand for employment space – e.g., a decision for a significant allocation of homes in an area of the District may drive a need for employment space provision as part of that, in order to encourage a sustainable and balanced community. Promoted sites may have the potential to contribute to addressing these needs.
- 5.87. Accordingly, one option that could be considered is to allocate land for employment purposes within or adjacent to housing growth areas to provide sustainable and well-located employment provision, close to new homes. This could also help provide some of the specific types of space that may be needed in the District (e.g. flexible/co-working space; units for small/start-up businesses; or accommodation in the 'grow-on' size band). This option has not been assessed in detail as part of this process as it is dependent on housing coming forward under new Local plan site allocations on which no definitive decisions have yet been made (as of November 2023). Until firm decisions have been made on the Plan's wider strategy for meeting housing needs, it is considered that any indication of sites would be too speculative. It is recommended that the potential for employment land delivery alongside new housing is explored further as the Plan progresses.

## 6. Conclusions and Recommendations

### Demand and Supply Balance (EDNA 2023) Implications on Employment Space Need

- 6.1. With respect to whether the District's existing supply of employment land is sufficient to meet projected demand over the plan period, the 2023 EDNA findings, as set out in Section 3, provide a starting point for these considerations. This section takes its assessment of the demand/supply balance and provides further analysis and scenario testing to consider how any other planned or unplanned losses of employment space could influence the final demand and supply balance, and hence identify any potential shortfall of employment land over the plan period.
- 6.2. In projecting the demand for further employment floorspace during the plan period, the EDNA uses gross, rather than net, requirements in estimating the overall requirement of employment floorspace that should be planned for in allocating sites. This starts with the net floorspace requirements outlined in Section 3 (from paragraph 3.36 onwards), and also adds a 'safety margin' (i.e., a reasonable additional provision of space to allow for factors such as delays in some sites coming forward for development, building some flexibility into the supply).
- 6.3. It also includes an allowance for the replacement of losses of existing employment space that may be developed for other, non-employment uses. This allowance ensures that sufficient space is re-provided to account for employment space that is anticipated to be lost in the District. Estimation of losses is dealt with below.
- 6.4. As outlined in paragraph 3.41, this balance results in a demand/supply balance surplus of between +860 and +66,000 sq. m, dependent on which of the four scenarios are applied. The EDNA recommends the more ambitious Scenarios 2 (Growth Scenario) or 4 (Labour Supply) are the most closely aligned with historic growth patterns, with Scenario 2 reflecting policies in Rochford and South Essex to attract business growth and new inward investment. Scenario 2's projection of +860 sq. m over the plan period suggests existing supply is sufficient to account for expected growth, with a small surplus remaining.

#### Accounting for Floorspace Loss

- 6.5. Whilst the demand/supply balance set out in the EDNA considers likely changes to employment land supply as a consequence of extant permissions, it does not consider or seek to quantify the prospect of less predictable long-term losses of employment floorspace that could result from, for example, the re-allocation of unsuitable employment land to other uses, including residential.
- 6.6. The EDNA broadly suggests four different options for accounting for further losses:
  1. *Forecast the quantity of floorspace that will be lost in future and assume that a proportion of this space will need to be replaced. The issue here is that there is no definitive way of forecasting how much space will be lost, and the future*

*may be very different from the past. If this method is used, the Council needs to look carefully at past losses and use local knowledge to make a judgement on how the future might compare with the past.*

- 2. Make an overall adjustment to the preferred scenario to give an allowance for replacement. This is a simple approach but is likely to rely on making a fairly broad assumption.*
  - 3. Monitor the loss of employment space through regular reviews in the local plan thereby avoiding the need to make assumptions about the future loss of employment space. If these periodic reviews indicate a loss of high quality, occupied floorspace and vacancy rates continued to be low, the Council could take steps to replace this space by increasing the floorspace requirement accordingly. However, any Local Plan review reflecting the monitoring findings would take some time to come forward.*
  - 4. As part of the employment evidence the Council undertakes a qualitative assessment of existing employment sites, to identify those which could be lost to non-employment uses, either because they are no longer suitable or viable for employment, or because they are judged as being needed for an alternative use, such as housing. Based on this assessment the employment land calculation can develop different scenarios to illustrate possible futures, and plan for new sites accordingly.*
- 6.7. Based upon examples in adopted local plans elsewhere, along with ease of obtaining information, this Study takes elements of Options 1 and 4, coming up with a rough assumption of annual 'windfall' loss, whilst also identifying which of the employment sites assessed face a realistic chance of being lost to employment use.

### **Projecting Windfall Loss**

- 6.8. Based upon available data on loss of employment floorspace from 2010/11-2022/23, totalling 33,582.40 sq. m, averaging this per annum produces an average annual loss figure of 2,583.3 sq. m. As there are caveats with using this method to produce a long term forecast for the amount of employment space likely to be lost over the Plan period, the Study suggests following the example used in some other local authorities of forecasting for the first five years of the plan period. This would produce an expected windfall loss figure of 12,916 sq. m over five years, to be re-provided in the new Local Plan.
- 6.9. This can be split into different floorspace categories, based on the use class of space lost in the past. Table 27, below, provides annual averages for the different use classes of employment space, based on the previous 12 years, including a further breakdown of the sub-categories of Class E(g) (formerly B1), to distinguish between offices and light industrial.

**Table 27: Average Windfall Loss Projections**

Use class / type of space	Average annual loss 2010/11 – 2022/23 (sq. m)	Projected windfall loss over 5 years (sq. m)
All Class E(g) (formerly B1) Office & Light Industrial	1282.1	6410.5
E(g)(i) - Office	[258.6]	[1293.2]
E(g) (ii) & (iii) – Light Industrial / Research & Development	[579.5]	[2897.5]
Class E(g) – unknown split	[444]	[2220]
B2 - General Industrial	624.4	3121.9
B8 - Storage & Distribution	604.8	3023.8
E(g)/B1/B2/B8 – unknown split	72	360
<b>Total</b>	<b>2583.3</b>	<b>12916.5</b>

Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

- 6.10. It is, however, important to note that these figures are potentially skewed by a single large loss of 5,370 sq. m of E(g) (unknown, but likely light industrial) space for a housing redevelopment at 90 Main Road, Hawkwell, in 2015/16. Without this single loss, the annual windfall loss would be lower, at 2,170.2 sq. m, with a 5-year provision requirement of 10,850.9 sq. m. Whilst the unexpected loss of large, unallocated employment sites is undoubtedly something which should be mitigated against through future supply, for the purposes of this Study, this figure will be excluded as an outlier to generate a more proportionate figure for average windfall loss and replacement provision.
- 6.11. Table 28, below, shows the revised average annual losses and projected losses over 5 years based on this. It also translates these floorspace requirements to land requirements by applying appropriate plot ratio assumptions that reflect those used in the EDNA. These are as follows:
- Offices: it is assumed that 50% of new floorspace would be in lower density, business park developments with a plot ratio of 0.4, with 50% in higher density town centre locations at a plot ratio of 2.0; and
  - Light/general industrial and distribution: a plot ratio of 0.4 is applied.
- 6.12. This shows that, in order to account for windfall loss over the Plan’s initial 5 years, a further 2.28 ha of employment land could be allocated, with this quantum reflecting the different types of employment land and their assumptions for the amount of land required to provide the floorspace in different locations.

**Table 28: Average Windfall Loss Projections and Replacement Floorspace Requirements (Revised)**

Use class / type of space	Average annual loss 2010/11 – 2022/23 (sq. m)	Projected loss over 5 years (sq. m)	Land required to replace projected losses (ha)
All Class E(g) (formerly B1) Office & Light Industrial	869.0	4345.2	0.54 ha (out of town) + 0.11 ha (urban) = 0.65 ha
E(g)(i) - Office	[258.6]	[1293.2]	-
E(g) (ii) & (iii) – Light Industrial / Research & Development	[579.5]	[2897.7]	-
Class E(g) – unknown split	[30.8]	[154.2]	-
B2 - General Industrial	624.4	3121.9	0.78 ha
B8 - Storage & Distribution	604.8	3023.8	0.76 ha
E(g)/B1/B2/B8 – unknown split	72	360	0.09 ha
<b>Total</b>	<b>2170.2</b>	<b>10,850.9</b>	<b>2.28 ha</b>

Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

### Identifying Potential Future Losses

6.13. To mitigate against larger sites deemed at risk of loss to redevelopment, a qualitative assessment along the lines of Option 4 was undertaken. This considered all the assessed employment sites, identifying those where there was a likelihood of land being lost/redeveloped to other uses. Whilst this cannot be comprehensive or completely accurate, it gives an indication of which other larger floorspace losses the new Local Plan may wish to account for. The following criteria were applied when considering whether employment sites were at risk of being lost:

- Whether had its employment allocation removed in the current Core Strategy/Allocations Plan.
- Whether the site is presently on the Council’s Brownfield Land Register, for consideration for residential development/allocation.
- Where the site sits in the Green Belt and forms part of land promoted for residential allocation in the new Local Plan.

- Whether the site currently has planning permission or an active planning application proposing its redevelopment/change of use (as of September 2023).
- Where employment uses sit adjacent to an allocated employment site, but fall outside its allocation boundaries.
- Where a site was assessed as ‘Monitor and Manage’ or ‘Serious Intervention Required’, and the qualitative assessment considered the site to be in poor repair/condition and / or likely to be unviable for employment use in the long term.

6.14. Applying these criteria, the following sites, in Table 29, were identified as potentially being at risk of full or partial loss. Although these assessments identify future sites that may potentially come up for development, based on the condition of stock or planning history, it should be acknowledged that they provide a subjective view at a certain point in time (September 2023), and that there is no guarantee that any of these sites will be lost, either partially or wholly.

**Table 29: Assessment of site risk for full or partial employment land loss.**

Site reference & name	Site type	Recommendation status	Planning app / promoted site / Brownfield Register	Area at risk (ha)	Comments / timescales
ELS07 - Riverside Industrial Estate, Rochford (unallocated depots)	Existing employment land	Protect and enhance	Y	1.18	Although the industrial estate is allocated as an employment site, the allocation does not cover the majority of the wider site (comprising 2 depots and adjoining land), which is a promoted site in the new Local Plan process. The land does not fall within the Green Belt and therefore faces fewer barriers for development than many promoted sites. Medium-term

Site reference & name	Site type	Recommendation status	Planning app / promoted site / Brownfield Register	Area at risk (ha)	Comments / timescales
ELS09 – Swaines Industrial Estate, Rochford	Existing employment land	Monitor and manage	N	0.41-0.87	Although the industrial estate is allocated as an employment site, the allocation does not cover the employment uses south of Leecon Way, which therefore face fewer barriers to redevelopment. The wider site is in poor repair and part/all of it may be deemed unviable to maintain in future. Medium-term
ELS13 – Eldon Way Industrial Estate, Hockley	Former employment allocation	Protect and enhance	Y	3.84	Site is no longer an allocated employment site. Designated for mixed-use development within Hockley Area Action Plan; sits on Brownfield Land Register. Parts of site likely to be redeveloped or occupied by non-employment uses. Short-medium term.
ELS14 – Foundry Business Park, Hockley	Existing employment land	Monitor and manage	Y	0.67	Parts of the site (modern office blocks) are subject of planning applications and much of remaining site is in poor repair and likely

Site reference & name	Site type	Recommendation status	Planning app / promoted site / Brownfield Register	Area at risk (ha)	Comments / timescales
					to not be viable to maintain for employment uses when compared with return from residential. Site is on Brownfield Land Register. Short term.
ELS15 – JAAP Site 1 (Former Cherry Orchard Brickworks), Rochford	New employment land - LDF	Monitor and manage	Y	3.69 <sup>39</sup>	Site has planning permission through appeal for mixed-use residential-led scheme, although a small element of employment may come forward. Suggested to remove employment allocation from this part of wider JAAP Site 1. Short-medium term.
ELS24 - Star Lane Industrial Estate, Great Wakering	Former employment allocation	Protect and maintain	Y	2.57	The site is well-occupied, but has had its allocation removed, so its potential loss should be considered. Site is on Brownfield Land Register. Medium-long term.

<sup>39</sup> Limited employment space on site is accounted for in the supply analysis in the 2023 EDNA, therefore loss of this land to employment has already been considered.

Site reference & name	Site type	Recommendation status	Planning app / promoted site / Brownfield Register	Area at risk (ha)	Comments / timescales
ELS25 - Rawreth Industrial Estate, Rayleigh	Former employment allocation	Significant intervention required	Y	6.22	<p>Site is well-occupied, although some units are in poor repair and there are a number of yards in temporary use. Site is now surrounded by housing and some uses not likely to be good neighbours.</p> <p>Site is on Brownfield Land Register.</p> <p>Medium-long term.</p>
ELS26 – Lubards Farm, Rayleigh	Rural/ developed (unallocated) site	Protect and Maintain/ Recategorise	Y	5.03	<p>Site is well-occupied and fulfils a local employment/commercial role, however is promoted in new Local Plan (for both residential and employment) and, as previously-developed land, could be allocated to meet housing need.</p> <p>Medium-term</p>
ELS29 – Dollyman’s Farm, Rawreth/ Wickford	Rural/ developed (unallocated) site	Protect and Maintain/ Recategorise	Y	6.52	<p>Site is well-occupied and provides a wide range of employment space, however is promoted in new Local Plan (for both residential and employment) and, as previously-developed land, could be allocated to meet housing need.</p>

Site reference & name	Site type	Recommendation status	Planning app / promoted site / Brownfield Register	Area at risk (ha)	Comments / timescales
					<p>Although there is a large amount of previously-developed land, site is promoted in conjunction with surrounding Green Belt, so would likely take longer to come forward through the Plan process.</p> <p>Medium-long term</p>
<p>ELS31 – New Hockley Hall Farm, Hockley</p>	<p>Rural/developed (unallocated) site</p>	<p>Monitor and manage</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>Unknown</p>	<p>Site has been the subject of a permitted development conversion application and could attract more. Extent of employment uses on site (compared to agricultural) is unknown and contains many storage lock-ups, therefore site is not considered significant enough to need to plan for potential loss.</p> <p>Short term</p>
<p>ELS32 - Clovelly Works, Rawreth</p>	<p>Rural/developed (unallocated) site</p>	<p>Protect and enhance</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>1.67</p>	<p>Site is well-occupied, provides niche business accommodation and has planning permission for expansion. However, it is promoted in new Local Plan for residential</p>

Site reference & name	Site type	Recommendation status	Planning app / promoted site / Brownfield Register	Area at risk (ha)	Comments / timescales
					Medium-long term.
ELS33 – Magees Nurseries, Hawkwell	Rural/developed (unallocated) site			1.89	Site is not currently promoted for residential development, however it sits in an attractive semi-rural area and comprises a series of dilapidated buildings in poor repair, whilst site has significant constraints. It could come up for redevelopment in the future, given the significant maintenance that will be required to bring the units up to a modern standard. Medium-long term.

Source: Rochford District Council (2024).

- 6.15. Based on the site areas identified above, this could lead to a need to plan for the replacement of as much as **30.46 ha** over the plan period, assuming all the sites are lost to other uses, although the limitations in this broad assumption are acknowledged. It should be noted that the listing of a site in this table is not an indication of any preference on behalf of the Council for the allocation of any particular site for alternative uses, nor of its likelihood of securing planning permission for development.
- 6.16. In reality, there is little to no prospect that such significant losses would occur over the plan period and it is not necessary to plan on this basis. A more proportionate approach to anticipating the extent of losses is to consider those which may occur in the short/short-medium term, which would correspond with the windfall loss assumptions applied earlier in this section for the first five years of the plan period. This would require considering the loss of the following sites, which would collectively amount to **9.54ha**:

- Foundry Business Park (0.67ha)
- Eldon Way Industrial Estate (3.84ha)
- Lubards Farm (5.03ha)

6.17. As the preparation of the New Local Plan develops, the Council will need to continually monitor the risk of loss to existing employment floorspace and adjust these assumptions according to a contemporary assessment of such risks. This will need to be considered in the context of the wider Local Plan strategy and policy options, as expanded upon below.

### **Future Provision of Employment Space**

6.18. As above, whilst it is not considered necessary to plan to compensate for the loss of employment space where is little or no contemporary indication of this being likely, it is nevertheless considered prudent to plan for a sensible buffer that at least accounts for the 2.28ha of employment land that has been lost on average to windfall development in the past, plus an additional assumption around the prospect of other sites being lost to other uses. This also meets other needs in providing land which could be used for the District's economic development objectives, such as supporting a greater range of niche/specialist business accommodation (e.g. for start-up/grow-on stage businesses), and/or to support additional inward investment into the District.

6.19. Naturally, the exact amount of employment land that the New Local Plan will need to plan for will depend on wider strategy decisions that remain to be made. For example, if the New Local Plan seeks to re-allocate any further employment land to non-employment uses, it will need to take more exact measures to compensate this loss. For those sites which the New Local Plan seeks to retain in an employment use but which are nevertheless identified as being at risk of loss, the extent of new space that may need to be planned for can naturally never be as exact and may, in some circumstances, need to be addressed retroactively through plan reviews.

6.20. The amount of space that the Local Plan may need to plan also varies depending on the demand scenario used. Table 30, below, provides a breakdown of how the EDNA demand-supply balance (as set out in Section 3) across the four scenarios changes when accounting for different degrees of expected losses over the Plan period. These consider the windfall losses over the first 5 years of the Plan estimated in Table 27; the loss of existing employment sites that could be lost in the short-medium term (see Table 28); and a 'worst case' scenario, in which all sites potentially at risk of being lost over the plan period need to be replaced.

6.21. The EDNA recommendation is that Scenario 2 (Growth Scenario) is both more reflective of historic trends and aligned with economic growth ambitions, with Scenario 4 being an alternative more likely scenario (see paragraph 3.41 and Table 17). Scenario 2 suggests an initial demand/supply balance surplus of 2.26 ha which, when combined with the projected 5-year windfall loss of 10,850.9 sq. m, results in a shortfall of -0.02-0.24 ha, depending on whether planned replacement of lost office

space is expected to take place in town centres or out-of-town. Considering the employment sites identified as being potential losses in the short-medium term of the plan (see paragraph 6.16), planning for around 9-10 ha of employment space to replace expected losses and cater for niche growth requirements would make sense. If following Scenario 4, a figure of up to 6.28ha of replacement employment land should be planned for. The other issue to consider is that of sectors which are likely to be drivers of growth within the District, but which are not assumed to occupy floorspace in the CE forecasting model used by the 2023 EDNA. Construction and health jobs are difficult to ascribe employment space to, as many of these jobs are likely to either be decentralised (based in the community/from home), or at centralised facilities such as hospitals. **Whilst the ELS does not seek to calculate a figure for the amount of floorspace that such sectors might occupy, it would be prudent to plan for a modest margin of additional employment land on top of the expected losses the Plan will need to replace.**

6.22. Table 30, below, provides a breakdown of how replacing the expected amount of employment space that could be lost differs across the four scenarios set out in the EDNA.

**Table 30: Breakdown of employment space based upon the four scenarios set out in the EDNA**

	Employment land (ha)			
	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3	Scenario 4
<b>Baseline EDNA demand 2020-2040 (gross)</b>	9.5	20.3	5.2	16.8
<b>Demand-supply balance 2022-2040</b>	13.06	2.26	17.36	5.76
<b>Minus 2.28ha windfall loss assumption<sup>41</sup></b>	10.78	-0.02	15.08	3.48

<sup>40</sup>Calculated by subtracting the baseline EDNA demand for each scenario from a projected supply figure of 22.56 ha, calculated by applying a 0.4 ratio to the emerging supply position 2020-2040 of 92,220 sq m (or 9.022 ha). This was the supply position as of September 2022, plus completions 2020-2022 (excluding 50% of the completions on Airport Business Park during this period, which is split with Southend). Note that these figures differ slightly from the sq. m supply figures in Table 17, as they apply a broad assumption of all supply being of an out-of-town density.

<sup>41</sup> This windfall loss assumption draws from Table 27 to assume a similar proportion of Class E(g) space lost could be replaced in town centre locations, where a greater density can be applied.

	Employment land (ha)			
	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3	Scenario 4
<b>Minus 2.50ha windfall loss assumption<sup>42</sup></b>	10.56	-0.24	14.86	3.26
<b>Minus more probable losses of employment space<sup>43</sup></b>	1.02-1.24	-9.56-9.78	5.32-5.54	-6.06-6.28
<b>Minus 'worst case' losses (i.e., every at risk site)</b>	-17.4-17.62	-28.2-28.5	-13.1-13.23	-24.7-24.92

Source: EDNA (2023).

6.23. In practice, depending on the New Local Plan’s strategy and the exact quantum of employment land that needs to be planned for, some degree of the need for additional employment floorspace could be addressed through the following approaches:

- Locating some employment space (particularly offices) in urban locations such as town centres, where greater densities are possible, with higher plot ratios and multiple floors.
- Maximising vacant/underutilised plots on existing employment allocations (as identified in this Study in Section 4, Table 20).
- Allocating, or otherwise regularising, certain established employment sites on previously-developed land in the Green Belt, allowing for further intensification.

6.24. Where these approaches are not sufficient to address this employment land need, the Council may need to consider allocating new land for employment uses, which can be informed by the assessment of a range of sites as part of this Study.

6.25. Reflecting recent trends, it is recommended that the majority of this new space (except where in urban locations) would have a flexible E(g)/B2/B8 permission, allowing sites to respond quickly to market requirements.

### Qualitative Considerations

6.26. As outlined above, the EDNA identifies that it is likely that existing supply will meet the District’s employment needs over the plan period, based on scenarios modelling

<sup>42</sup> This windfall loss assumption is based on replacing all the lost space in out-of-town locations, where densities are typically lower.

<sup>43</sup> i.e. the 3 sites listed in paragraph 6.16, totalling 9.54 ha

growth in both labour supply and labour demand, however an element of future provision of 9-10 ha may be sensible in order to account for the potential loss of existing employment floorspace. The EDNA also suggests consideration should be given to other qualitative factors which may influence the types of employment space which are required. As highlighted, planning for some growth of the health, construction and arts & entertainment sectors (which are not reflected in the EDNA demand forecasting) would also be prudent.

#### Types of Floorspace

- 6.27. Alongside engagement with stakeholders and a fuller understanding of the local commercial property market, the South Essex Grow-on Space Study 2020 is important, painting a picture of a lack of supply at the smaller size bands for both office and industrial uses and suggesting the market is not delivering such accommodation in sufficient amounts. Similarly, the feedback from the 2021 Spatial Options consultation is relevant, providing additional qualitative commentary relating to employment land provision and the District's economic future (see [Appendix A](#)).
- 6.28. The majority of future employment space is expected to come forward on three sites, with the largest two of these being Airport Business Park and Arterial Park. Whilst these two sites have an existing track record of delivering employment space, there is always the potential risk of site allocations not delivering the amounts or types of employment space expected (or seeking to accommodate elements of non-employment uses), and it may be prudent to consider whether alternative sites (whether new allocations or intensification of existing sites) could help contribute to a greater security of employment space supply.

#### Diversity of Supply

- 6.29. Similarly, reliance on a small number of sites and developers may result in the types of floorspace coming forward being skewed overwhelmingly towards a particular use (e.g., modern, large floorplate distribution units), whilst the needs of occupiers seeking smaller, more flexible or more affordable space may not be considered. Engagement with the developers of both Airport Business Park and Arterial Park indicates a market preference for accommodating more B8 floorspace. Therefore, to encourage greater diversity of sources of employment space, alternative sites could be considered for their supply potential in the new Local Plan. This could include:
- allocation of new sites to fulfil specific or specialist employment land needs;
  - adopting employment land policies which support or require the provision of such workspace;
  - considering whether existing employment sites could benefit from greater intensification or redevelopment to accommodate such uses (which could be supported through masterplans or supplementary planning documents);
  - adopting a policy which seeks to regularise the District's existing lawful employment sites in rural/Green Belt locations and supports proportionate

improvements to stock, balancing the need for employment space with the importance of protecting openness in the Green Belt.

- 6.30. It is recommended that the New Local Plan includes policies that focus on addressing some of these issues by planning for dedicated employment space in areas of the District which are currently poorly served, or requiring new allocations to incorporate employment provision as an element. Additionally, these issues could be addressed through the provision of flexible workspace 'hubs' (potentially combining with community, leisure or retail space), or through policies which make it easier for residents to work/run a business from their homes (possibly including hybrid 'live/work' units).

New Site Allocations

- 6.31. Whilst no firm policy commitment to the spatial distribution of growth in the District over the plan period had been made when the Study was published, a number of options for meeting future housing need could include either concentrated growth across a number of sites, or a single site of sufficient scale, to enable the provision of accompanying employment space.
- 6.32. Small-scale flexible workspace provision should be encouraged and provided both in new communities (particularly larger-scale allocations as a condition of their development); as well as being encouraged in existing high streets and town/village centres. Providing employment and business opportunities closer to where people live and socialise (ideally linked by public transport and active travel routes) has the potential to improve both environmental and socio-economic outcomes for the District, supporting the 'Complete Communities' concept set out in the Spatial Options consultation paper.
- 6.33. Another reason for considering additional employment space allocations within the New Local Plan is to address geographic disparities in provision, reflecting feedback received in the Spatial Options consultation. Many existing areas of the District have little or no formal employment space provision, which increases the reliance of residents on commuting to other parts of the District, or beyond, whilst creating socio-economic barriers for those unable or unwilling to travel, particularly by car. It also discourages those seeking many types of skilled employment, or who wish to start a business, from living in the District, potentially impacting economic growth and productivity. Increasing the need to travel is also likely to generate additional negative effects, including congestion, air pollution and carbon emissions. This is particularly the case in settlements which had significant allocated housing sites in the Core Strategy and Allocations Plan, but no nearby employment sites. The principal example of this is Hullbridge, which has grown significantly over the current and previous plan periods, but which has little employment or commercial space to match this.
- 6.34. Although the ELS makes no specific recommendation as to whether any of the prospective sites assessed may be best suited for allocation, it does note that these site options have a good geographic spread which enables them to act as expansion sites for existing clusters. However, if there is a need to provide employment space to

cater for sustainable new residential communities, or to provide employment for currently underserved settlements, then consideration should also be given to an employment allocation on portions of land being promoted for residential purposes.

- 6.35. In addition, whilst the main focus of the ELS is identifying the capacity of existing supply to meet likely demand over the plan period, whilst also considering potential losses, it is important to take account of the potential for attracting new inward investment. The Airport Business Park and adjacent JAAP sites have considerable potential remaining to accommodate this, whereas the other significant new tract of employment land (Arterial Park) is currently already undergoing development of its second phase. Anecdotally, it is understood that this site has appeal to logistics and industrial occupiers seeking space in the wider Basildon A127 Corridor area, with good onward access to the M25, Thurrock Ports and Thames Crossings. Subject to future demand remaining strong, consideration could be given to the adjacent promoted site (Fairlawns Farm) helping to further contribute to attracting inward investment in this area.

Recommendations on Intensification of Existing Sites

- 6.36. The individual site assessments, along with the site category summaries set out in Chapter 6, identify vacant, undeveloped and underutilised land on sites in the District, discounting the largely undeveloped new employment sites (which are already accounted for in the EDNA demand/supply balance), and prospective sites, which are promoted for allocation in the new Local Plan but which currently sit in the Green Belt.
- 6.37. Considering land which is currently vacant or underutilised on existing employment sites, this amounts to c.12.24-12.99ha, with the majority comprising open storage sites on Purdeys Industrial Estate or as-yet undeveloped land on Rochford Business Park. This does not include undeveloped land on new employment allocations in the present Core Strategy (e.g. Airport Business Park). In terms of unallocated rural sites, these were identified to have vacant land of c.1.73-2.57 ha, which includes an approval for an expansion of Clovelly Works to provide 12 small workshop units. However, the location of these sites within the Green Belt restricts the potential for further intensification and development without proportionate consideration of wider impact on the openness of the surrounding areas. Additional intensification of yards on the former employment allocation of Rawreth Industrial Estate was also identified as having potential, which could amount to 0.62 ha. However, this is uncertain to come forward, due to the site's residential allocation which may eventually see it redeveloped.
- 6.38. This quantum of land does have the potential to largely meet the identified c.9-10 ha of employment land required to account for potential employment space losses over the early plan period. However, it is by no means certain that all this land will become available for development for employment uses in a way that will meet the expected need, as the intentions of individual landowners are not known. This is particularly the case with sites which have residential allocations (i.e., Rawreth Industrial Estate); those where non-employment uses have proliferated (e.g. Rochford Business Park);

or sites where landowners and occupiers may prefer to maintain lower-intensity employment uses, such as scrap metal or open storage.

- 6.39. It must be emphasised that these figures and opportunities do not cover the large quantum of older, often dilapidated, stock which exists across many sites in the District, which may come up for redevelopment in due course, providing opportunities for intensification and higher quality employment accommodation. Such instances should be generally supported and encouraged, and it is recommended that the general policies on existing employment land support this renewal and improvement of stock to increase employment opportunities, productivity and economic growth.

Recommendations on Allocating Unallocated or Rural Sites

- 6.40. Consideration could be given in the new Local Plan to allocating sites assessed in this Study where established and lawful employment activities take place, but which are not currently protected by a formal employment allocation. This would serve two purposes; firstly to protect sites which may provide important niche employment accommodation – e.g. for the rural economy, for small/start-up enterprises, or for businesses seeking a lower cost base for whom new employment sites are not affordable. In addition, allocation of sites could take place in order to encourage future redevelopment and intensification to provide a higher quantity/quality of employment space. It is, however, acknowledged this intensification would be a trade-off that would lead to an increase in activities that is detrimental to amenity and the purposes of including land in Green Belts. It would also involve the loss of previously-developed Green Belt land which may also have value for residential development. A number of unallocated sites were assessed as having potential to be considered for allocation. These fall into the following 2 categories:

- *Currently unallocated land in employment use adjacent to existing allocations:* land was identified at Riverside Industrial Estate, Swaines Industrial Estate and Brook Road Industrial Estate which, de facto, forms part of the employment site, but which does not fall within the boundary of its Local Plan allocation. These areas do not form part of the Green Belt and would likely be uncontroversial to allocate for employment uses, which would afford them greater protection. However, landowners may have other intentions on some sites – e.g. the depots at Riverside Industrial Estate, which are being promoted for allocation in the new Local Plan, and which could possibly be redeveloped for other purposes.
- *Currently unallocated land in the Green Belt:* some sites, often formed of former agricultural buildings, are long-established for employment and commercial uses, to the extent where their loss would have a marked impact upon the local economy. Such sites could be considered for a formal Local Plan allocation, which would afford them formal protection and potentially allow for their intensification for employment purposes. It is, however, recognised that some such sites are being promoted for either residential or mixed employment/residential allocation in the New Local Plan. Such sites could potentially help form the employment aspect of new residential allocations, or where they are to be lost for other uses, their loss could be compensated either through new provision on a residential/mixed-use site

allocation, or through an allocation elsewhere. Sites which potentially fall within this category comprise Lubards Farm; Dollyman's Farm; and Clovelly Works.

- 6.41. Even if sites are not allocated formally for employment use, there may be merit in 'regularising' their lawful status as places for employment activities. This would provide a policy framework for determining future applications at these sites, ensuring that new proposals seek to improve and enhance these sites, provide new and expanded employment opportunities, and do not negatively affect the operation of existing established businesses, whilst also maintaining harmony with the surrounding rural areas.

Recommendations on Former Employment Allocations

- 6.42. Three sites (Eldon Way Industrial Estate, Rawreth Lane Industrial Estate and Star Lane Industrial Estate) were allocated for residential use under the current Core Strategy and Allocations Plan, and as such they appear on the Council's Brownfield Land Register and Housing Trajectory. However, there are acknowledged land assembly issues with some of these sites, and landowner intentions may differ, particularly where sites remain well-occupied for employment purposes. Although there is no immediate indication these sites will not come forward for residential development at a point in time, it is recommended that their status is monitored and considered again when the New Local Plan is reviewed. Should the sites remain in long-term employment use with little prospect of residential development, formal re-allocation for employment uses could be considered, although employment uses which are considered better neighbours for nearby residential areas should be encouraged.

Specific Recommendations on Employment Sites and Class MA Permitted Development

- 6.43. As set out in the Study's Aims and Objectives (paragraph 1.4), in addition to its primary objectives, the ELS also sought to identify which employment sites in the District are considered important for *general or heavy industry, waste management, storage and distribution, or a mix of such uses*. This relates to changes to the General Permitted Development Order in 2021, introducing a new Class MA, allowing for change of use from Class E (commercial) uses to C3 (residential) without the need for planning permission (see Paragraphs 2.13-2.18 for further details). This legislation has potentially significant implications for the stock of employment sites within the District, as office and light industrial premises in town centres and employment sites could see changes of use through this process. with consideration of economic impacts no longer a factor for the local planning authority.
- 6.44. The prior approval process does, however, allow for consideration of the impacts on intended residential occupiers in areas considered *important for general or heavy industry, waste management, storage and distribution, or a mix of such uses*. Such locations are likely to have a range of factors which could impact negatively on residential amenity due to the uses present on these sites. These could include, but are not limited to; noise; fumes; dust and particulates; odours; heavy goods vehicles; contaminated land; 24-hour operations; and streetscapes which do not consider the

greater road safety requirements of a residential area (e.g., pavements, crossings and good visibility of pedestrians). Consequently, the Council has sought to identify employment sites within the District which, in their present guise, would be unsuitable for residential uses due to the activities taking place on site.

- 6.45. Whilst the primary aim is to ensure the safety of potential residents, this has a secondary advantage in protecting sites which are deemed important for general/heavy industry, waste management and storage & distribution, sectors which are employment generators for the District, but which are facing competition for land from residential developers, and which have seen a number of sites and buildings lost to residential use in recent years. A notable use falling within the 'General Industry' (B2) classification is vehicle repair garages. Whilst these are often found in residential areas or town centres, several sites in the District have been lost to redevelopment in recent years, reducing the amount of available premises with consent for B2 use. If this trend continues, it is important to ensure that the District's designated employment sites remain suitable locations for vehicle repair activities and that these are not jeopardised by unsuitable permitted development in their vicinity, given the role such businesses play both in providing a public service and employment.
- 6.46. It is important to draw the distinction between change-of-use permitted development and full planning applications, and that these recommendations do not seek to permanently block the partial or full redevelopment of employment sites where there is a full consideration of the benefits and disadvantages of doing so. Such proposals are likely to be best guided through a full planning application and/or supplementary planning documents, such as site-specific masterplans.
- 6.47. In identifying sites deemed important for the uses listed in the prior approval, a basic methodology was employed. Firstly, sites were excluded where they had any of the following characteristics:
- Site lies wholly/partly within the Metropolitan Green Belt.
  - Site has had its employment allocation removed and has been allocated for residential development.
  - Site was the subject of a live Permitted Development application (as of July 2023).
  - The full rationale for any excluded sites is listed in the relevant column within the Sites List in [Appendix B](#). Remaining sites were then assessed on the basis of the following:
    - Whether there was a significant presence of the listed uses on the site, either in terms of number of businesses/site coverage, or due to a significant occupier/occupiers.
    - Whether the site has a particular strategic significance which makes it suitable for future development/redevelopment for the listed uses (e.g., an extant permission, Supplementary Planning Document that envisages the use, or particularly relevant transport links/facilities).
    - Whether there is a specific adopted policy designation which earmarks a site for one of the listed uses (e.g., within the Minerals or Waste Local Plans).

6.48. Following site visits and assessments, the Study recommends that the following sites are deemed to be important for general or heavy industry, waste management, storage and distribution, or a mix of such uses, and that the relevant policies for the new Local Plan provide for this designation. Table 31, below, lists the sites, along with a rationale for their nomination:

**Table 31: Sites deemed important for the uses listed within Class MA Prior Approval**

Site ID	Site Name/Address	Listed uses identified	Rationale
ELS01	Aviation Way Industrial Estate, Aviation Way, Southend	General/heavy industry; storage & distribution	Site contains a wide range of uses within general manufacturing (including advanced manufacturing), and is of strategic significance within the JAAP. Parts of site are also closely related to London Southend Airport and are important for air cargo operations. Site also contains significant amounts of other storage and warehousing uses.
ELS02	Baltic Wharf, Creeksea Ferry Road, Wallasea Island	General/heavy industry; storage & distribution	Site is immediately adjacent to an international port and important for the storage and distribution of specialist metal and timber products, along with manufacturing operations which process imported materials.
ELS04	Brook Road Industrial Estate, Brook Road, Rayleigh	General industry; storage & distribution	The site contains a number of high-value general manufacturing operations as well as vehicle servicing/repair uses, whilst its strategic position adjacent to the A127 means it has attracted a number of smaller distribution/warehousing uses.
ELS05	Imperial Park Industrial Estate,	General industry	Although small, the site has a couple of vehicle servicing/repair operations which would be unsuitable neighbours for residential.
ELS07	Riverside Industrial Estate, South Street, Rochford	Storage & distribution; waste management	Although the allocated site comprises largely small-scale light industry and office uses, the adjacent depots contain important waste and logistics uses. The site should retain this designation as long as these uses are present.

Site ID	Site Name/Address	Listed uses identified	Rationale
ELS08	Rochford Business Park, Cherry Orchard Way, Southend	Waste management	The site is listed within ECC's Waste Local Plan as a potential future waste site.
ELS09	Swaines Industrial Estate, Ashingdon Road, Rochford	General industry	The allocated site (and adjacent unallocated industrial area) contain a series of vehicle servicing/repair activities.
ELS10	Purdeys Industrial Estate, Sutton Road, Rochford	General/heavy industry; waste management; storage & distribution	Site is an important centre for heavy and general industry, as well as a series of waste/recycling operations. These industries create a series of externalities which make the site unsuitable for residential changes of use. In addition, it has a designated Strategic Aggregate Recycling Site within the Essex Minerals Local Plan.
ELS11	Arterial Park (formerly Michelins Farm), Chelmsford Road, Rayleigh	Storage & Distribution; waste management	The site has a strategic location in the far West of the District, and is well-placed for the strategic road network (e.g. A127, A130 and onward links to the M25 and Thames Ports). The accommodation and location means it is a strategic site for distribution operations.
ELS16	JAAP Sites 2 & 3 (Airport Business Park)	General industry; storage & distribution	Site is of strategic importance for the District in terms of general/heavy industry and logistics, has attracted a number of occupiers in this field and has scope for further growth.

Source: Rochford District Council (2024).

## 7. Appendix

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## Appendix A: 2021 Local Plan Spatial Options – Employment & Skills.

7.1. The table below provides a summary of the representation raised during the 2021 Local Plan: Spatial Options consultation regarding employment and skills.

**Table A1: Responses to employment and skills questioned posed during the 2021 Local Plan: Spatial Options consultation.**

Section/ Question	Total Reps	No. Support/ Object/ Comment (if applicable)			Summary of main issues raised by representations
		Support	Object	Comment	
Q23. With reference to the options listed above, or your own options, how do you feel we can best ensure that we meet our employment and skills needs through the plan?	31	1	2	28	<p><b>Non-Exclusive Option 1</b> (designating sites for specific employment uses) was generally supported. There was also a degree of support for allowing employment sites to more flexible in repurposing uses to the needs of business.</p> <p>A number of comments felt the Council needed to protect existing and designate new sites, based on local demand and up to date forecasting. Numerous respondents felt RDC should work closely with local businesses to identify the types of business accommodation needed and where, including ‘start-up’ and ‘grow-on space’.</p> <p>Strong general sentiment that more skilled job opportunities should be provided within the District, and that business space provision and skills strategy should be integrated to help attract more inward investors and support existing business start-ups and growth.</p> <p>ECC comments recommended focusing on a mix of existing/new sites to support additional inward investment and reduce current high-rates out out-commuting from the District. Recommended these are accessible to communities across the District. Also cited evidence showing existing sites needed to provide higher-quality business accommodation, a greater proportion of B1 (office-based) jobs and plan effectively for ‘grow-on space’, enabling growing small &amp; medium-sized businesses to expand into more appropriate premises and increase productivity and job numbers. This should be accompanied by strategies to address skills challenges and improve digital connectivity.</p> <p><b>Non-Exclusive Option 4</b> attracted some support, with responses considering strategic housing developments should include space for start-up businesses, to cater for a growing population. Specific comments within this voiced support for creation of business hubs/co-working space or live/work units on such sites.</p>

Section/ Question	Total Reps	No. Support/ Object/ Comment (if applicable)			Summary of main issues raised by representations
		Support	Object	Comment	
					<p>ECC supported this, recommending a sequential test approach to apply NPPF paragraph 73b, ensuring larger developers provide access to employment opportunities on-site, or sufficient access to external employment sites.</p> <p>A recognition of technological advances that support home-working and home-based businesses ran through many comments, and <b>Non-Exclusive Option 10</b> (supporting ultra-fast digital connectivity) was cited as important, along with a flexible approach to those seeking to run businesses from home, provided they did not impact adversely on neighbours.</p> <p>Support for the continued role of the Airport to drive future inward investment and skills development, along with expansion of activities at Airport Business Park and other JAAP sites to provide new employment opportunities linked to this. ECC identified that current JAAP sites also meet much of SBC's employment needs, so a joint approach is required.</p> <p>Concern from one business regarding gradual downgrading of ambitions at Airport Business Park over time, shifting from aeronautical/medical innovation towards warehousing. Something that needs to be reversed if good quality local jobs are to be provided to reduce out-commuting.</p> <p>Several reps stated that employment sites (particularly town centres and industrial estates) should not be used for housing, with too many conversions having already taken place.</p> <p>Strong support for <b>Non-Exclusive Option 11</b>, identifying sites for further/higher education in the wider area. This was alongside strong support for a strategic skills-based approach to work with businesses, training providers, ECC and other stakeholders to identify skills shortages and provide appropriate employment/training opportunities to enable local residents to train, upskill or reskill and access higher-paid opportunities in the local area.</p> <p>Several responses felt RDC should meet identified employment and retail land needs in full over the LP period, allocating new sites accordingly, although one suggestion was that past modelling should be reviewed in light of Covid and resultant changes to employment patterns.</p> <p>The importance of transport connectivity for employment was raised, including the continuing importance of commuting elsewhere (especially London) to accessing high-quality employment. The unequal distribution of employment sites was also mentioned by one respondent, who felt the East of the District (Barling/Wakering) had few employment prospects, requiring travel further West on poor roads, or reliance on Southend for employment.</p>

Section/ Question	Total Reps	No. Support/ Object/ Comment (if applicable)			Summary of main issues raised by representations
		Support	Object	Comment	
Q24. With reference to Figure 30, do you consider the current employment site allocations to provide enough space to meet the District's employment needs through to 2040? Should we seek to formally protect any informal employment sites for commercial uses, including those in the Green Belt?	14	1	3	10	<p>Almost half responses felt existing allocations were insufficient in providing enough modern employment space to meet future needs.</p> <p>Although there was a general preference for developing brownfield sites for employment, there was some support for regularisation of existing informal sites in the Green Belt, with one comment highlighting how previously-developed sites were more likely to be developed for housing than employment.</p> <p>A number of respondents expressed concern at existing unauthorised commercial uses in Green Belt and rural areas, feeling these should be properly enforced against.</p> <p>Two parish councils felt regularisation of informal/farm employment sites would help provide employment in rural areas, whilst providing more control to unauthorised sites in the Green Belt. One felt rural employment would cut down on transport use and pollution, whilst another observed most informal sites were in the West of the District and questioned whether further farm sites could be identified in the East for diversification.</p> <p>A sympathetic approach to home-based businesses in rural areas was one option.</p> <p>A handful of comments opposed any use of Green Belt sites for any purpose, including commercial.</p> <p>Existing poor infrastructure was also mentioned as a barrier to business growth.</p>
Q25. With reference to your preferred Strategy Option, are there opportunities for growth to deliver new employment facilities or improvements to	18	2	1	15	<p><b>Spatial Strategy Option 3</b> (concentrated growth, or a 'garden village') was identified by the majority of respondents as being a good way to align with Employment Option 4 and deliver new employment and commercial facilities alongside new communities, reducing the need for commuting and attracting new businesses to the District.</p> <p><b>Spatial Strategy Options 3a, 3b and 3c</b> were all identified as possible sites to provide a range of different employment units, alongside appropriate transport infrastructure and complementary retail/leisure facilities. The accompanying community infrastructure (schools, surgeries, shops etc) coming with such facilities were also identified as additional generators of employment, along with the construction workforce required to build the housing.</p>

Section/ Question	Total Reps	No. Support/ Object/ Comment (if applicable)			Summary of main issues raised by representations
		Support	Object	Comment	
existing employment facilities?					<p><b>Option 3b</b> in particular was noted as complementary to the nearby Airport, whilst land North of Temple Farm Industrial Estate (e.g., CFS260Y) was promoted by one developer as a logical employment site within a concentrated growth option.</p> <p>A developer highlighted potential of an existing site allocation (NEL1 - Michelins Farm, to accommodate additional high-quality employment, currently constrained by an existing designation of part of the site as a Gypsy &amp; Traveller site.</p> <p>A couple of comments felt there was a need to think more flexibly beyond traditional industrial estates and consider how technology could enable London-based workers/businesses to locate in environments which would attract skilled professionals, e.g., in attractive town centres.</p> <p>Hullbridge was highlighted as a sizeable settlement with almost no employment opportunities and a consequent heavy reliance on out-commuting.</p>
Q26. Are there any particular types of employment site or business accommodation that you consider Rochford District is lacking, or would benefit from?	19	0	0	19	<p>Most comments felt the District had an opportunity in environmental/green industries, but that existing sites did not cater for these. This category included woodland conservation/management, local crafts, upcycling/repair facilities, sustainable food/lifestyle, commercial organic smallholdings and outdoor sports. Foulness Island mentioned as a future location for 'green' industries.</p> <p>Improved digital infrastructure was a key theme uniting many comments, as this will enable home working, flexible business hubs and increased automation in manufacturing industries. Some felt District requires flexible and affordable workspace and meeting rooms for small businesses to start up and grow. Libraries, Mill Hall or Freight House cited as possible locations.</p> <p>Comments that the District's market towns should build on their heritage and hold more seasonal/farmers markets. For Rochford Town Centre, banking facilities and a supermarket were given as uses that were lacking.</p> <p>Accommodation for high-tech manufacturing.</p> <p>Education/training facilities, including for HGV drivers.</p> <p>A comment felt the growth of homeworking would see less of a need for office space, but additional requirements for homes in rural areas equipped with live/work purposes in mind.</p>

Section/ Question	Total Reps	No. Support/ Object/ Comment (if applicable)			Summary of main issues raised by representations
		Support	Object	Comment	
Q27. Are there other measures we can take through the plan to lay the foundations for long-term economic growth, e.g., skills or connectivity?	18	0	0	18	<p>Digital connectivity was a major priority, supporting deployment of digital technology across the economy and everyday life. One example suggested of providing flexible 'hub' workspace in the District to enable workers usually commuting elsewhere to work within a professional environment in the local area, supporting local town centres.</p> <p>Skills priorities widely mentioned, including provision of further education and school facilities within the District (or working with neighbouring authorities on accessible provision, as highlighted in Employment <b>Option 11</b>). Working closely with education providers and businesses to enhance provision of apprenticeships, placements and training linked to jobs with skills shortages. Particular emphasis on STEM subjects to increase candidates with skills in fields such as engineering, information technology and biomedical.</p> <p>Improved road, public transport, walking and cycling links required to help people access work/education/training opportunities. Sustainable transport to both employment sites and schools/colleges seen as a way of stimulating growth and removing barriers for those without access to cars. Existing sites should be made more accessible by working with ECC and public transport providers.</p> <p>New employment or education schemes should be accessible by means other than car, and this should be a condition through the planning stage. Should preferably be close to residential areas, but need, however, to be mindful of NPPF para. 83 and impact on existing communities.</p> <p>Some interest in attracting new inward investors into the area, with improved skills seen as a key offer for this.</p> <p>A request to include social value policies in the new LP, obliging developers to produce Employment &amp; Skills Plans to ensure local communities benefit more directly from development.</p> <p>Initiatives to encourage more local start-ups, particularly high-tech manufacturing.</p> <p>Stop developing existing commercial land into housing.</p> <p>Providing affordable housing cited by a developer as a way of retaining local young people, along with creating jobs and upskilling workers during the construction phase.</p>

Section/ Question	Total Reps	No. Support/ Object/ Comment (if applicable)			Summary of main issues raised by representations
		Support	Object	Comment	
Q28. With reference to the options listed above, or your own options, how do you feel we can best manage the Airport's adaptations and growth through the planning system?	32	3	4	25	<p>Most felt LSA should be protected as an important local resource and economic asset, attracting jobs and investment, both to LSA itself but also surrounding employment sites. Some support for RDC to help LSA weather current challenges, including lobbying for Government support.</p> <p>Some support for <b>Options 1, 2, 3 and 4</b>. General agreement that the future of LSA should be developed jointly with SBC, and that the new LP should devise appropriate policies to cover LSA's recovery and growth within the plan period.</p> <p>SBC (also consulting at a similar stage to RDC on a new LP) suggested joint cooperation to develop consistent policies across both LPs to manage future growth, whilst also considering environmental and other sensitivities that had been associated with growth pre-Covid.</p> <p>Some question as to whether a new JAAP is currently needed, given the global downturn in aviation due to the Covid-19 pandemic and impact on LSA.</p> <p>Any future expansion should be accompanied by transport infrastructure improvements, both to the airport site itself, to surrounding employment sites and on key roads and public transport networks to enhance accessibility.</p> <p>ECC and other local authorities viewed LSA as an international gateway for South Essex for both passengers and freight, and should be viewed as a strategic, cross-boundary matter. Sub-regional connectivity to it should be enhanced and consideration given to development of a multi-modal transport hub adjacent to site, enhancing its links across South Essex and also serving local residents and employers. Any growth proposals should include improvements to the bus network and strategic roads (i.e., A127).</p> <p>LSA's own view that Airport should reach pre-Covid levels by 2026 and could serve 7-8m passengers/year by end of 2020s. Support for <b>Non-Exclusive Options 2 &amp; 3</b> and a need for new LP policies and joint approach with SBC to support growth within new LP period, including revisiting terms of current S106 agreement. Alongside this, LSA proposed restrictions to limit off-site parking and backed use of land adjoining railway station to provide transport interchange.</p> <p>Future policies relating to LSA should have regard for forthcoming Government <i>Aviation Strategy 2050</i>, DfT <i>Decarbonisation of Transport Plan</i>, DfT Jet Zero Consultation and requirements of Essex Climate Action Commission, considering context of climate change.</p>

Section/ Question	Total Reps	No. Support/ Object/ Comment (if applicable)			Summary of main issues raised by representations
		Support	Object	Comment	
					<p>Some concern about effects of any future expansion on what is largely a built-up surrounding area, in terms of noise, congestion, pollution and additional land requirements (i.e., LSA adjoins residential areas and a Grade I-listed church and has little scope to further expand its footprint).</p> <p>Given recent loss of commercial flights, question of whether any new policies are currently required to support growth. Review in 5 years when activity may have returned to pre-Covid levels.</p> <p>Some views that any revised JAAP (or similar policy) should bear the local community in mind and consider further restrictions on night flights, noise and air quality.</p> <p>Some suggested that, in light of loss of commercial flights, LSA site should be considered for alternative housing or employment developments.</p>

Source: Rochford District Council (2021).

## Appendix B: ELS Site Proforma Summary

7.2. Tables B1 and B2 provide a summary of the site proformas completed for the 35 sites identified for the 2024 Employment Land Study.

**Table B1: ELS Site Proforma Summary Part 1**

Site ID			Site Name & Address	ELS Designated Site Type	ELS (2024) Site Cluster	South Essex EDNA/ELAA Site Cluster	Location Character	Site Area (Ha)	Vacant/Derelict Land (%)	Approx Number Units	Approx. # vacant units	Vacancy Rate (%)	Premise Typology					Premises Condition			% Developed post 2018
ELS (2024)	LDF/JAAP	CFS											Primary (%)	Secondary (%)	Tertiary (%)	Quaternary (%)	Quinary (%)	Good (%)	Fair (%)	Poor (%)	
ELS01	Aviation Way	N.A.	Aviation Way Industrial Estate, Aviation Way, Southend	1 - Existing employment land	London Southend Airport	London Southend Airport	1 - Well established commercial area	14.74	5-10	50	2	4	30	25	20	15	10	25	70	5	15
ELS02	EEL3	N.A.	Baltic Wharf, Creeksea Ferry Road, Wallasea Island	1 - Existing employment land	Wallasea Island	Wallasea Island	4 - Mainly residential (rural) with few commercial uses	16.17	>5	10	0	0	75	25				35			0
ELS03	EEL3	N.A.	Essex Marina, Creeksea Ferry Road, Wallasea Island	1 - Existing employment land	Wallasea Island	Wallasea Island	2 - Established commercial area, with residential area nearby	4.05	5	10	0	0	90	10				60	40		0

Site ID			Site Name & Address	ELS Designated Site Type	ELS (2024) Site Cluster	South Essex EDNA/ELAA Site Cluster	Location Character	Site Area (Ha)	Vacant/Derelict Land (%)	Approx Number Units	Approx. # vacant units	Vacancy Rate (%)	Premise Typology					Premises Condition			% Developed post 2018
ELS (2024)	LDF/JAAP	CFS											Primary (%)	Secondary (%)	Tertiary (%)	Quaternary (%)	Quinary (%)	Good (%)	Fair (%)	Poor (%)	
ELS04	EEL2	N.A.	Brook Road Industrial Estate, Brook Road, Rayleigh	1 - Existing employment land	Rayleigh, Rawreth & Battlesbridge	Southend Arterial Road	2 - Established commercial area, with residential area nearby	13.2	0	96	3	3.1	100					10	35	55	5
ELS05	EEL2	N.A.	Imperial Park Industrial Estate,	1 - Existing employment land	Rayleigh, Rawreth & Battlesbridge	Rayleigh, Hockley & Ashingdon	2 - Established commercial area, with residential area nearby	2.36	0	24	0.5	2	100					5	70	25	0
ELS06	Locks Hill	N.A.	Locks Hill, Rochford	1 - Existing employment land	Rochford & Stambridge	Purdey's	2 - Established commercial area, with residential area nearby	0.76	0	4	0	0	100					100	0	0	0
ELS07	EEL1	COL03	Riverside Industrial Estate, South Street, Rochford	1 - Existing employment land	Rochford & Stambridge	Purdey's	2 - Established commercial area, with residential area nearby	1.52	20	20	0	0	30	35	35			10	40	50	5

Site ID			Site Name & Address	ELS Designated Site Type	ELS (2024) Site Cluster	South Essex EDNA/ELAA Site Cluster	Location Character	Site Area (Ha)	Vacant/Derelict Land (%)	Approx Number Units	Approx. # vacant units	Vacancy Rate (%)	Premise Typology					Premises Condition			% Developed post 2018
ELS (2024)	LDF/JAAP	CFS											Primary (%)	Secondary (%)	Tertiary (%)	Quaternary (%)	Quinary (%)	Good (%)	Fair (%)	Poor (%)	
ELS08	EEL1	N.A.	Rochford Business Park, Cherry Orchard Way, Southend	1 - Existing employment land	London Southend Airport	London Southend Airport	2 - Established commercial area, with residential area nearby	11.67		8	0	0	75	15	10			100			10
ELS09	EEL1	N.A.	Swaines Industrial Estate, Ashingdon Road, Rochford	1 - Existing employment land	Rochford & Stambridge	Rayleigh, Hockley & Ashingdon	2 - Established commercial area, with residential area nearby	0.87	0	12	0	0	100					10	25	65	0
ELS10	EEL1	N.A.	Purdeys Industrial Estate, Sutton Road, Rochford	1 - Existing employment land	Rochford & Stambridge	Purdey's	1 - Well established commercial area	41.03	10	120	3	2.5	50	30	10	10		5	50	45	
E;LR11	EEL1	N.A.	Arterial Park (formerly Michelins Farm), Chelmsford Road, Rayleigh	2- New employment land - LDF	Rayleigh, Rawreth & Battlesbridge	Southend Arterial Road	1 - Well established commercial area	8.81	55	9	2	22	50	50				100	0	0	100

Site ID			Site Name & Address	ELS Designated Site Type	ELS (2024) Site Cluster	South Essex EDNA/ELAA Site Cluster	Location Character	Site Area (Ha)	Vacant/Derelict Land (%)	Approx Number Units	Approx. # vacant units	Vacancy Rate (%)	Premise Typology					Premises Condition			% Developed post 2018	
ELS (2024)	LDF/JAAP	CFS											Primary (%)	Secondary (%)	Tertiary (%)	Quaternary (%)	Quinary (%)	Good (%)	Fair (%)	Poor (%)		
ELS12	NEL2	CFS057	New Employment Land, Star Lane, Great Wakering	2 - New employment land - LDF	Great Wakering	Great Wakering	5 - Mainly residential or rural area with no other commercial uses	3.20	100	0	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A
ELS13	Eldon Way		Eldon Way Industrial Estate, Eldon Way, Hockley	5 - Former employment allocation	Hockley & Hawkwell	Rayleigh, Hockley & Ashingdon	2 - Established commercial area, with residential area nearby	3.84	0	16	5	15	50	45	5			10	80	10	0	
ELS14	Foundry Business		Foundry Business Park, Station Approach, Hockley	1 - Existing employment land	Hockley & Hawkwell	Rayleigh, Hockley & Ashingdon	2 - Established commercial area, with residential area nearby	0.67	20	10	3	30	60	40				20	60	20	0	

Site ID			Site Name & Address	ELS Designated Site Type	ELS (2024) Site Cluster	South Essex EDNA/ELAA Site Cluster	Location Character	Site Area (Ha)	Vacant/Derelict Land (%)	Approx Number Units	Approx. # vacant units	Vacancy Rate (%)	Premise Typology					Premises Condition			% Developed post 2018
ELS (2024)	LDF/JAAP	CFS											Primary (%)	Secondary (%)	Tertiary (%)	Quaternary (%)	Quinary (%)	Good (%)	Fair (%)	Poor (%)	
ELS15	JAAP Site 1		JAAP Site 1 (Former Cherry Orchard Brickworks), Cherry Orchard Lane, Rochford	2 - New employment land - LDF	London Southend Airport	London Southend Airport	3 - Mixed commercial and residential area	6.20	90	1	0	0	95	5				100			100
ELS16	N/A		JAAP Sites 2 & 3 (Airport Business Park)	2 - New employment land - LDF	London Southend Airport	London Southend Airport	1 - Well established commercial area	20.98	60	15	N.A	N.A	90	10				100	0	0	
ELS17	N/A		JAAP Site 1 (Additional Expansion Land)	2 - New employment land - LDF	London Southend Airport	London Southend Airport	4 - Mixed commercial and residential area	1.74	100	0	N.A	N.A	100					N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A
ELS18	N/A	CFS055	Fairlawns Farm, Arterial Road, Rayleigh	3 - Prospective site (unallocated)	Rayleigh, Rawreth & Battlesbridge	Southend Arterial Road	1 - Well established commercial area	5.33	100	0	N.A	N.A	100					N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A

Site ID			Site Name & Address	ELS Designated Site Type	ELS (2024) Site Cluster	South Essex EDNA/ELAA Site Cluster	Location Character	Site Area (Ha)	Vacant/Derelict Land (%)	Approx Number Units	Approx. # vacant units	Vacancy Rate (%)	Premise Typology					Premises Condition			% Developed post 2018	
ELS (2024)	LDF/JAAP	CFS											Primary (%)	Secondary (%)	Tertiary (%)	Quaternary (%)	Quinary (%)	Good (%)	Fair (%)	Poor (%)		
ELS19	N/A	CFS067	Three Ashes, Sutton Road, Rochford	3 - Prospective site (unallocated )	Rochford & Stambridge	Purdey's	3 - Mixed commercial and residential area	11.68	100	0	N.A	N.A	100						N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A
ELS20	N/A	CFS078	Land west of Cherry Orchard Way and South of Cherry Orchard Lane, Hawkwell	3 - Prospective site (unallocated )	London Southend Airport	Southend Arterial Road	3 - Mixed commercial and residential area	15.85	100	0	N.A	N.A	100						N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A
ELS21	N/A	CFS079	Land west of Cherry Orchard Way and east of Cherry Orchard Lane, Hawkwell	3 - Prospective site (unallocated )	London Southend Airport	London Southend Airport	3 - Mixed commercial and residential area	2.79	100	0	N.A	N.A	100						N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A

Site ID			Site Name & Address	ELS Designated Site Type	ELS (2024) Site Cluster	South Essex EDNA/ELAA Site Cluster	Location Character	Site Area (Ha)	Vacant/Derelict Land (%)	Approx Number Units	Approx. # vacant units	Vacancy Rate (%)	Premise Typology					Premises Condition			% Developed post 2018
ELS (2024)	LDF/JAAP	CFS											Primary (%)	Secondary (%)	Tertiary (%)	Quaternary (%)	Quinary (%)	Good (%)	Fair (%)	Poor (%)	
ELS22	N/A	CFS080	Land East of Cherry Orchard Way, Rochford	3 - Prospective site (unallocated)	London Southend Airport	London Southend Airport	3 - Mixed commercial and residential area	5.63	100	2	N.A	N.A	100					N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A
ELS23	N/A	CFS165 (and others)	Land East and West of Sutton Road, Rochford	3 - Prospective site (unallocated)	Rochford & Stambridge	Purdey's	3 - Mixed commercial and residential area	92.41	95	7	N.A	N.A	95	5				0	15	85	
ELS24	BFR1		Star Lane Industrial Estate, Great Wakering	5 - Former employment allocation	Great Wakering	Great Wakering	2 - Established commercial area with residential nearby.	2.57	0	43	1	0	75	10	10	5		20	70	10	0

Site ID			Site Name & Address	ELS Designated Site Type	ELS (2024) Site Cluster	South Essex EDNA/ELAA Site Cluster	Location Character	Site Area (Ha)	Vacant/Derelict Land (%)	Approx Number Units	Approx. # vacant units	Vacancy Rate (%)	Premise Typology					Premises Condition			% Developed post 2018
ELS (2024)	LDF/JAAP	CFS											Primary (%)	Secondary (%)	Tertiary (%)	Quaternary (%)	Quinary (%)	Good (%)	Fair (%)	Poor (%)	
ELS25	BFR4		Rawreth Industrial Estate, Rawreth Lane, Rayleigh	5 - Former employment allocation	Rayleigh, Rawreth & Battlesbridge	Rayleigh, Hockley & Ashingdon	2 - Established commercial area with residential nearby.	6.22	0	50	1	2	65	25	10			25	55	20	0
ELS26	N.A	CFS163	Lubards Farm, Hullbridge Road, Rayleigh	4 - Rural/developed (unallocated) site	Rayleigh, Rawreth & Battlesbridge	N/A	5 - Mainly residential or rural area with no other commercial uses	5.03	0	37	0	0	100					40	50	10	0
ELS27	N/A		Crouchman's Yard/Court, Poynters Lane, Great Wakering	4 - Rural/developed (unallocated) site	Great Wakering	N/A	5 - Mainly residential or rural area with no other commercial uses	0.28	0	19	0	0	100					95	5	0	35
ELS28	N.A		The Mousery, Beeches Road, Battlesbridge	4 - Rural/developed (unallocated) site	Rayleigh, Rawreth & Battlesbridge	N/A	5 - Mainly residential or rural area with no other commercial uses	1.09	20	15	0	0	100					0	100	0	0

Site ID			Site Name & Address	ELS Designated Site Type	ELS (2024) Site Cluster	South Essex EDNA/ELAA Site Cluster	Location Character	Site Area (Ha)	Vacant/Derelict Land (%)	Approx Number Units	Approx. # vacant units	Vacancy Rate (%)	Premise Typology					Premises Condition			% Developed post 2018
ELS (2024)	LDF/JAAP	CFS											Primary (%)	Secondary (%)	Tertiary (%)	Quaternary (%)	Quinary (%)	Good (%)	Fair (%)	Poor (%)	
ELS29	N/A	CFS222	Dollyman's Farm, Doublegate Lane, Wickford	4 - Rural/developed (unallocated) site	Rayleigh, Rawreth & Battlesbridge	N/A	4 - Mainly residential (rural) with few commercial uses	6.52	5	29	0	0	100					75	25	0	0
ELS30	N/A		Little Stambridge Hall Farm, Little Stambridge Hall Road, Rochford	4 - Rural/developed (unallocated) site	Rochford & Stambridge	N/A	5 - Mainly residential or rural area with no other commercial uses	1.97	20	20-25	Unknown	0	100					0	50	50	0
ELS31	N/A		New Hockley Hall Farm, Lower Road, Hockley	4 - Rural/developed (unallocated) site	Hockley & Hawkwell	N/A	5 - Mainly residential or rural area with no other commercial uses	2.36	30	18	Unknown	Unknown	100					0	35	65	0
ELS32	N/A	CFS137	Clovelly Works, Chelmsford Road, Rawreth	4 - Rural/developed (unallocated) site	Rayleigh, Rawreth & Battlesbridge	N/A	3 - Mixed commercial and residential area	1.67	30	24	0	0	100					0	40	60	0

Site ID			Site Name & Address	ELS Designated Site Type	ELS (2024) Site Cluster	South Essex EDNA/ELAA Site Cluster	Location Character	Site Area (Ha)	Vacant/Derelict Land (%)	Approx Number Units	Approx. # vacant units	Vacancy Rate (%)	Premise Typology					Premises Condition			% Developed post 2018	
ELS (2024)	LDF/JAAP	CFS											Primary (%)	Secondary (%)	Tertiary (%)	Quaternary (%)	Quinary (%)	Good (%)	Fair (%)	Poor (%)		
ELS33	N/A		Magees Nurseries, Windsor Gardens, Hawkwell	4 - Rural/developed (unallocated) site	Hockley & Hawkwell	N/A	5 - Mainly residential or rural area with no other commercial uses	1.89	15	30-50	Unknown	Unknown	100					0	25	75	0	
ELS34	N/A		Former Chicken Sheds, Gusted Hall Lane, Hawkwell	4 - Rural/developed (unallocated) site	Hockley & Hawkwell	N/A	5 - Mainly residential or rural area with no other commercial uses	0.50	0	4	0	0.00%	100						100			100
ELS35	N/A		Battlesbridge Harbour, Hawk Hill, Battlesbridge	4 - Rural/developed (unallocated) site	Rayleigh, Rawreth & Battlesbridge	N/A	2 - Established commercial area with residential nearby.	0.93	<5	9	<1	<5	100					25	75	0	0	

Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

Figure B2: ELS Site Proforma Summary Part 2

ELS & Site Name	Traffic Light Categorisation (Red (R), Amber (A) and Green (G)).												Physical Opportunity for Intensification?	Vacant Land?	Vacant Buildings?	Qualitative Scored Criteria (1 – 5)					Future Action
	Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class	Neighbouring Amenities	Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation				Strategic Access	Local Access	Site Quality, Amenities & Market Attractiveness	Development Constraints		
ELS01 Aviation Way	G	A	A	A	G	A	A	G	R	A	A	G	Yes	Yes	Yes	4	3	3	3	3	Protect & Enhance
ELS02 Baltic Wharf	A	A	A	R	G	A	R	A	R	A	R	G	Yes	Yes	No	1	2	3	3	1	Monitor & Manage
ELS03 Essex Marina	A	G	G	A	G	R	G	A	A	G	A	A	Yes	Yes	No	2	2	4	4	3	Protect & Maintain
ELS04 Brook Road	G	A	R	A	G	G	R	A	R	A	A	A	No	No	Yes	5	4	2	3	2	Protect & Enhance
ELS05 Imperial Park	A	A	A	R	G	G	A	R	A	A	R	R	Limited	Yes	No	3	3	2	3	3	Protect & Enhance
ELS06 Locks Hill	A	A	G	R	G	G	A	R	A	A	G	G	No	No	No	3	4	4	4	2	Protect & Maintain
ELS07 Riverside Industrial Estate	A	A	A	R	G	A	R	R	A	A	A	R	Yes	Yes		3	3	2	3	1	Protect & Enhance

ELS & Site Name	Traffic Light Categorisation (Red (R), Amber (A) and Green (G)).												Physical Opportunity for Intensification?	Vacant Land?	Vacant Buildings?	Qualitative Scored Criteria (1 – 5)					Future Action
	Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class	Neighbouring Amenities	Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation				Strategic Access	Local Access	Site Quality, Amenities & Market Attractiveness	Development Constraints		
ELS08 Rochford Business Park	G	G	G	A	G	A	G	A	A	G	G	G	Yes	Yes	No	5	4	4	3	4	Protect & Enhance
ELS09 Swaines Industrial Estate	A	R	R	A	A	G	R	R	R	A	A	R	Yes	No	No	2	2	2	3	2	Monitor & Manage
ERL10 Purdeys Industrial Estate	G	A	A	A	A	R	R	A	R	A	R	R	Yes	Yes	Yes	3	2	2	3	3	Protect & Enhance
ELS11 Arterial Park	G	G	G	R	G	R	G	G	R	G	G	G	No	Yes	Yes	5	3	4	5	3	Protect & Maintain
ELS12 New Employment Land Star Lane	A	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	A	N.A.	R	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	Yes	Yes	No	3	3	2	3	3	Monitor & Manage
ELS13 Eldon Way	G	A	A	A	G	G	G	R	R	G	G	A	Yes	No	Yes	2	3	3	4	3	Protect & Enhance

ELS & Site Name	Traffic Light Categorisation (Red (R), Amber (A) and Green (G)).												Physical Opportunity for Intensification?	Vacant Land?	Vacant Buildings?	Qualitative Scored Criteria (1 – 5)					Future Action
	Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class	Neighbouring Amenities	Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation				Strategic Access	Local Access	Site Quality, Amenities & Market Attractiveness	Development Constraints		
ELS14 Foundry Business Park	A	A	A	A	G	G	A	A	G	G	A	R	No	No	Yes	2	3	3	3	3	Monitor & Manage
ELS15 JAAP Site 1 (Former Cherry Orchard Brickworks)	A	G	G	R	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	Yes	Yes	No	4	4	3	3	3	Monitor & Manage
ELS16 JAAP Sites 2 & 3	G	G	G	A	G	G	G	G	A	G	G	G	Yes	Yes	Yes	4	5	4	4	4	Protect & Maintain
ELS17 JAAP Site 1 (Additional Expansion Land)	A	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	A	N.A.	A	N.A.	N.A.	A	N.A.	Yes	Yes	No	4	3	2	3	3	Protect & Enhance
ELS18 Fairlawns Farm	A	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	R	N.A.	G	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	Yes	Yes	No	5	3	2	4	2	Monitor & Manage
ELS19 Three Ashes	A	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	A	N.A.	A	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	Yes	Yes	No	3	3	3	3	2	Monitor & Manage

ELS & Site Name	Traffic Light Categorisation (Red (R), Amber (A) and Green (G)).												Physical Opportunity for Intensification?	Vacant Land?	Vacant Buildings?	Qualitative Scored Criteria (1 – 5)					Future Action
	Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class	Neighbouring Amenities	Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation				Strategic Access	Local Access	Site Quality, Amenities & Market Attractiveness	Development Constraints		
ELS20 Land W. COW & S. COL	R	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	A	N.A.	R	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	Yes	Yes	N.A.	4	2	2	3	1	Monitor & Manage
ELS21 Land W. COW & E COL	A	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	A	N.A.	R	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	Yes	Yes	No	4	3	2	3	2	Monitor & Manage
ELS22 Land E COW	A	A	A	A	R	A	G	R	A	R	A	R	Yes	Yes	No	4	3	3	3	1	Monitor & Manage
ELS23 Land E & W. Sutton Road	A	R	R	R	A	A	N.A.	A	A	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	Yes	Yes	No	3	3	3	3	2	Monitor & Manage
ELS24 Star Lane Industrial Estate	A	A	G	R	G	A	G	R	A	G	G	G	No	No	Yes	3	4	3	3	2	Protect & Maintain
ELS25 Rawreth Industrial Estate	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	R	R	A	R	R	Yes	No	Yes	3	3	2	3	2	Significant Intervention Required/ Recategorise
ELS26 Lubards Farm	A	A	A	G	A	A	G	R	A	A	A	A	Yes	Yes	No	3	3	3	3	2	Protect & Enhance/ Reallocate

ELS & Site Name	Traffic Light Categorisation (Red (R), Amber (A) and Green (G)).												Physical Opportunity for Intensification?	Vacant Land?	Vacant Buildings?	Qualitative Scored Criteria (1 – 5)					Future Action
	Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class	Neighbouring Amenities	Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation				Strategic Access	Local Access	Site Quality, Amenities & Market Attractiveness	Development Constraints		
ELS27 Crouchman's Yard/Court	R	G	G	R	G	R	G	R	G	G	R	A	No	No	No	2	2	3	4	1	Protect & Maintain
ELS28 The Mousery	R	A	A	R	A	R	A	R	G	A	A	G	Yes	Yes	No	3	2	2	3	1	Monitor & Manage
ELS29 Dollyman's Farm	A	A	G	A	A	R	G	R	A	G	R	R	Yes	Yes	No	4	3	3	4	2	Recategorise / Protect & Maintain
ELS30 Little Stambridge Hall	R	A	A	R	A	R	R	R	A	R	R	R	Yes	Yes	No	1	1	1	2	2	Monitor & Manage
ELS31 New Hockley Hall Farm	R	R	R	R	A	A	R	A	A	A	R	R	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	1	1	1	2	Monitor & Manage
ELS32 Clovelly Works	A	A	R	R	G	A	A	A	A	A	R	R	Yes	Yes	No	4	3	2	3	3	Protect & Enhance/ Reallocate
ELS33 Magees Nurseries	R	R	R	R	G	R	R	R	A	A	R	R	Yes	Yes		1	2	2	2	2	Monitor & Manage

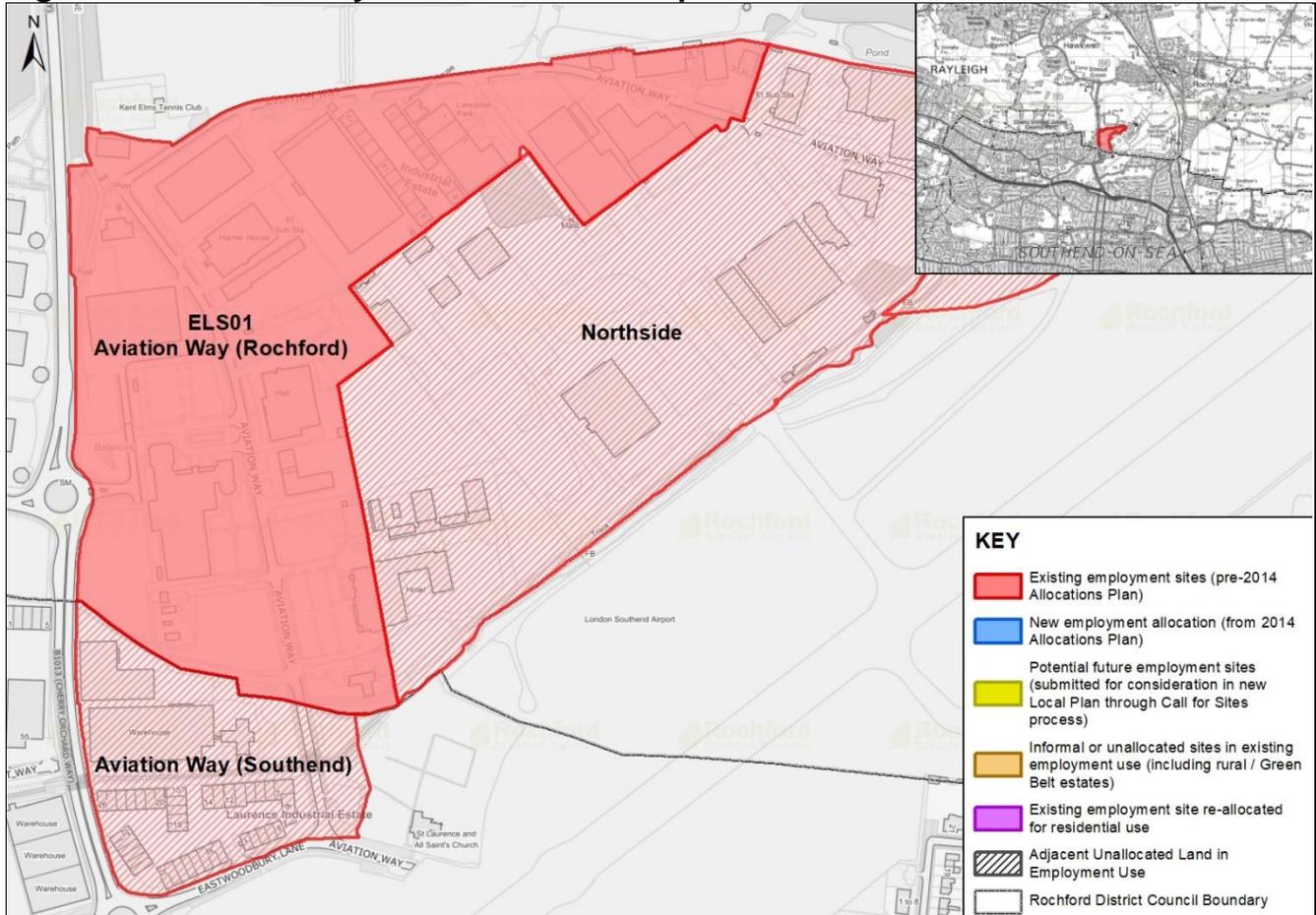
ELS & Site Name	Traffic Light Categorisation (Red (R), Amber (A) and Green (G)).												Physical Opportunity for Intensification?	Vacant Land?	Vacant Buildings?	Qualitative Scored Criteria (1 – 5)					Future Action
	Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class	Neighbouring Amenities	Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation				Strategic Access	Local Access	Site Quality, Amenities & Market Attractiveness	Development Constraints		
ELS34 Former Chicken Sheds	R	A	A	R	G	A	A	R	G	A	A	A	No	No	No	2	2	2	3	2	Monitor & Manage
ELS35 Battlesbridge Harbour	A	A	A	A	G	G	A	R	A	A	A	R	No	No	No	4	3	3	3	1	Monitor & Manage

## Appendix C: Employment Land Review Site Summaries

The site summaries below are organised by site category (i.e., established allocated sites; new allocations from the current Local Development Framework; prospective sites submitted for consideration for the merging Local Plan; Green Belt/rural sites on previously developed land or in agricultural buildings; and sites which were formerly allocated for employment use but allocated for an alternative use in the LDF).

### Aviation Way Industrial Estate (ELS01)

Figure C1: Aviation Way Industrial Estate Map



Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

Location:	Aviation Way Industrial Estate, Aviation Way, Southend
Site Area (Ha):	14.74
Site Category:	1 - Existing employment sites (pre-2014 Allocations Plan)
Site Cluster:	London Southend Airport

#### Site Description: -

7.3. Aviation Way Industrial Estate is a large-scale industrial estate in southern Rochford, on the border with Southend-on-Sea, with the smaller, southern portion of the site

lying within Southend’s administrative area. The site sits between London Southend Airport, the emerging Airport Business Park, and the B1013 Cherry Orchard Way. It is oriented around the main site road, Aviation Way, with smaller units provided in ‘courtyard’ developments accessed from Aviation Way (e.g., Lancaster Business Park and Robert Leonard Industrial Park).

- 7.4. The site provides warehouse and manufacturing units, storage facilities and offices of a variety of sizes for industries in a wide range of sectors, including those operating in travel and transportation; freight, logistics and the delivery of goods and services; food and drink, automotive and engineering; insurance and finance; IT systems and software development; urban design and construction; hospitality; self-storage; and health care facilities and services. The scale of operations ranges from small, locally oriented service businesses through to global manufacturing/engineering operations.
- 7.5. It has a close relationship with the adjacent Airport and has secure access to its service area. A number of uses on the site support aviation-related industries (e.g. aircraft maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO); aerospace engineering; and cargo). A major occupier is Ipeco, a manufacturer of specialist aircraft seating and components with a global presence, which occupies 5 large units on the estate (having recently vacated one) and has recently expanded to the adjoining Airport Business Park, occupying a large (1,200 sq. m) purpose-built unit. The site has a longstanding leisure component (e.g. a hotel, health club, tennis courts and recently-added brewery/taproom), and a relatively recently-built car showroom, which forms a cluster with the neighbouring Toomey Motor Group site on Rochford Business Park.
- 7.6. Accommodation stock on the site varies considerably in terms of quality and repair, with much development having taken place during the 1980s/90s. There are a significant number of older properties, with some dating back to the 1960s (e.g., some Ipeco units and the Robert Leonard Industrial Estate), although they have, for the most part, been well maintained.
- 7.7. Modernisation is occurring across the site, through new development and building refurbishment, particularly the Jaguar-Land Rover car showroom bordering Cherry Orchard Way and the cluster of modern office buildings on the northern edge of the site.

**Site Evaluation: -**

7.8. Traffic Light Categorisation: -

Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class Floorspace	Neighbouring Amenities
<b>Green</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Amber</b>

Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation

<b>Amber</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Green</b>
Physical Opportunity for Intensification: - <b>YES</b>		Vacant Land: - <b>YES</b>		Vacant Buildings: - <b>YES</b>	

7.9. Qualitative Scored Criteria: -

Strategic Access	Local Access	Site Quality, Amenities & Management	Market Attractiveness	Development & Environmental Constraints
<b>4 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>

**Strengths**

- 7.10. Proximity to London Southend Airport: It is clear that the major strength of the site is its proximity and access to the airport, enabling a number of businesses direct access to their market and client base. In addition, the site’s proximity to the emerging Airport Business Park site means there is potential for a significant cluster of high-profile businesses providing a range of skilled employment opportunities, alongside a larger range of local amenities for staff and visitors.
- 7.11. Strategic location: Strategic access to the site is good, with relatively direct onward links to the major road network; whilst internal circulation is also generally good.

**Weaknesses**

- 7.12. Environmental condition and site connectivity: The site is presently low-density, including several large engineering businesses and hangars, along with a series of under-utilised plots and varying quality of public realm, which detract from its potential to be a significant employment hub. Aviation Way also has few on-site amenities relative to its size, although this is beginning to change. It also has relatively poor public transport links, particularly to the North of the site, something which could contribute to parking problems if additional intensification of employment uses continues.
- 7.13. Relocation of industry to the Airport Business Park: The major presence of Ipeco on the site is a strength, however the likelihood of further relocation of operations to the ABP means there is a risk of large vacant or underoccupied buildings on the site for an extended period of time.
- 7.14. Pandemics and aviation sector volatility: The site’s close links to Southend Airport are an advantage, however the considerable presence of aviation-related businesses means a global downturn in aviation and demand for aircraft products and services (e.g., as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic) could lead to loss of employment and occupiers at the site. A strategy which involves close collaboration with the Airport and aviation industries should be supported, alongside opportunities to further diversify the site’s range of uses and occupiers.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

### Protect and Enhance

- 7.15. Aviation Way is one of the District's largest employment sites and one of its most important. Sitting at a gateway site to the District, between the Airport and emerging Airport Business Park (ABP), it is likely to continue to be a key driver in the District's economy in future. At present, however, much of the site is dominated by poor quality public realm and dated business accommodation, along with a lack of on-site amenities that would enhance the site's appeal.
- 7.16. The ongoing development of the adjacent ABP site represents an opportunity for Aviation Way, raising the profile of this part of the JAAP as a major business destination. There is already evidence of major refurbishment of 1980s offices (i.e. 18-19 Aviation Way) to provide a similarly high-quality design that reflects development on the neighbouring site and enhances the business environment for existing businesses, visiting clients and prospective occupiers. Additional proposals to upgrade or intensify existing stock on Aviation Way, particularly older buildings, should be supported.
- 7.17. Also key is the large Ipeco estate, occupying a series of large units in the northern half of Aviation Way, many of which are dated. The company is in the process of establishing new facilities on the ABP, already occupying one large facility, with planning permission granted for a further unit adjacent to it. Ipeco has already vacated one unit on Aviation Way (Unit 3), and over time is likely to consolidate many of its functions within its new buildings. This could free up additional buildings, providing opportunities for other occupiers to expand into these. There is also potential for some of these to be redeveloped to provide modern accommodation, either bespoke to an occupier's needs or a series of smaller business units for growing small and medium businesses. Proposals for such redevelopments should be supported, and it may be appropriate for the Council to engage with the leadership to identify any opportunities at an early stage.
- 7.18. The APB already integrates with Aviation Way through a pedestrian link, and development of new amenities on both sites is likely to benefit staff and visitors on both sites. This should be further supported. The resultant critical mass of occupiers, along with developer contributions, is also likely to improve the accessibility of the overall site by bringing new bus services and walking/cycling links to the surrounding area, e.g. Rochford and Cherry Orchard Country Park. Sustainable transport links should continue to be developed as part of any redevelopment on the estate.
- 7.19. There are several vacant and low-density sites which could be redeveloped to provide greater intensity or density of uses, supporting more employment, e.g., the Skylark Hotel and surrounding land, the storage container site to the north of Saxon Hall, the extensive Saxon Hall and Athenaeum car parks. Impact on Airport operations (along with potential for integration) would need to be considered with the development of many sites.

7.20. The linkages between Aviation Way and the Airport are important and should be supported wherever possible, in order to maintain a thriving local cluster of aerospace/aviation businesses, providing a range of skilled employment opportunities. Continued engagement with the Airport on its future plans could identify opportunities to ensure Aviation Way is configured in a way to support these activities.

**Figure C2: Aviation Way Industrial Estate**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure C3: Aviation Way Industrial Estate**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure C4: Aviation Way Industrial Estate**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

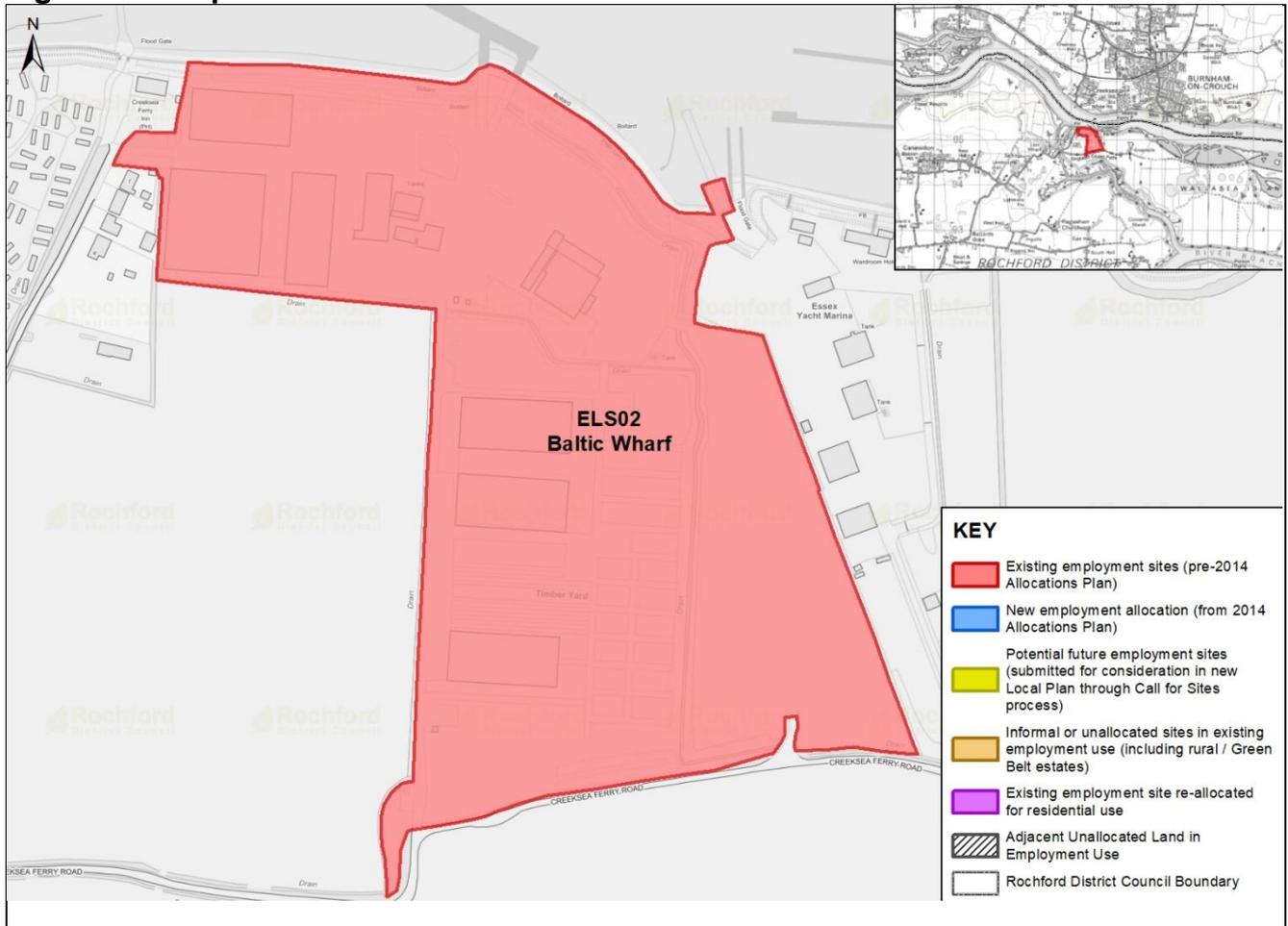
**Figure C5: Aviation Way Industrial Estate**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Baltic Wharf (ELS02)**

**Figure C6: Map of Baltic Wharf.**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

Location:	Baltic Wharf, Creeksea Ferry Road, Wallasea Island
Site Area (Ha):	16.17
Site Category:	1 - Existing employment sites (pre-2014 Allocations Plan)
Site Clusters:	Wallasea Island

**Site Description: -**

7.21. Baltic Wharf is a small port and distribution centre situated on Wallasea Island at the Port of Creeksea. Shipping and distribution operations have been conducted at Baltic Wharf since the 1920s, with the present operator taking over in 1998, and regular sailings still occur as of early-2023. As such, the site primarily provides storage facilities for raw materials (predominately timber and metal products) that are often imported. Beyond this Baltic Wharf also offers limited manufacturing services to produce commodities and/or process raw materials, providing a mix of B2 and B8 employment.

7.22. Adjoining the River Crouch, the environmental character of Baltic Wharf is rural- with the site surrounded by agricultural land within the Metropolitan Green Belt. The site is also bounded by Riverside Village Holiday Park to the west and Essex Marina (see ELS03) to the east. Site access is gained through the rural Creeksea Ferry Road, which is unsuitable for HGVs. The site itself consists predominately of industrial yards and single-storey warehouses, which are of varying levels of repair and quality. The newest warehouses, constructed/refurbished within the last 10-15 years, have a modern design and are in a good condition whilst older units are heavily weathered and show signs of rusting.

**Site Evaluation: -**

7.23. Traffic Light Categorisation: -

Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class Floorspace	Neighbouring Amenities
<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Amber</b>

Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation
<b>Red</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Green</b>

Physical Opportunity for Intensification: - **YES**

Vacant Land: - **YES**

Vacant Buildings: - **NO**

7.24. Qualitative Scored Criteria: -

Strategic Access	Local Access	Site Quality, Amenities & Management	Market Attractiveness	Development & Environmental Constraints
<b>1 / 5</b>	<b>2 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>1 / 5</b>

**Strengths: -**

7.25. Longstanding activity: Baltic Wharf has a history of shipping and distribution operations since the 1920s, with the present operator running the site since 1998. This longstanding activity indicates the site is well-established and serves a market.

7.26. Strategic location for shipping: The site's location on Wallasea Island, close to the River Crouch Estuary and the North Sea, makes it a strategic position for shipping and other river traffic, providing advantages for businesses involved in import and export, as well as other maritime industries.

- 7.27. Specialised supply chain: The site has attracted specialised businesses focused on the processing and distribution of timber and metal products brought in to the port, utilising the strategic advantages of the location for shipping and manufacturing. This indicates a linked supply chain and potential for synergy among occupiers.
- 7.28. Potential cost benefits: While the condition of some warehouses is weathered, the presence of older units and potential need for repairs may result in lower rental costs compared to newer facilities, potentially appealing to businesses seeking economical options.

**Weaknesses: -**

- 7.29. Limited accessibility: The site's inadequate access for HGVs and limited public transportation options pose challenges for logistics and employee commuting. The lack of regular bus services and proximity to residential areas could hinder the ability to attract a pool of potential labour.
- 7.30. Environmental constraints: Baltic Wharf's location within the Coastal Protection Belt and proximity to SSSIs/Ramsar sites indicates the sensitive habitats surrounding the site, which could constrain future growth. The site is also situated in Flood Zone 3, albeit with some defences, and the access road has occasionally flooded.
- 7.31. Poor environmental quality: The site's environment is characterised by limited green infrastructure and no landscaping, along with observed fly tipping, littering, and burning of industrial waste, indicating poor quality. This could negatively impact the work environment, deter occupiers and potentially invite regulatory enforcement.
- 7.32. Ageing infrastructure: Many older warehouses on the site are weathered and show signs of rusting. The condition of these buildings, along with potential repair needs, could lead to ongoing maintenance challenges and impact the overall image of the site.
- 7.33. Limited amenities: The lack of on-site amenities and nearby retail facilities beyond Essex Marina limits the convenience and quality of the work environment for employees and businesses operating on-site.
- 7.34. Limited growth opportunities: While Baltic Wharf has a history of activity, its potential for future growth might be constrained due to the site's existing layout, limited modern infrastructure, and challenges in accessibility for larger vehicles.

**Conclusions and Recommendations**

Monitor and Manage

- 7.35. Although Baltic Wharf has potential for intensification, the site's remote location limits its appeal for businesses beyond those linked to its current use. Any expansion must consider environmental impacts and the neighbouring habitats, wildlife and tourism sites. The site's importance to the rural economy merits careful monitoring to ensure

compatibility with the sensitive location. A demand study should accompany any new employment space.

**Figure C7: Baltic Wharf (ELS02).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure C8: Baltic Wharf (ELS02).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure C9: Baltic Wharf (ELS02).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

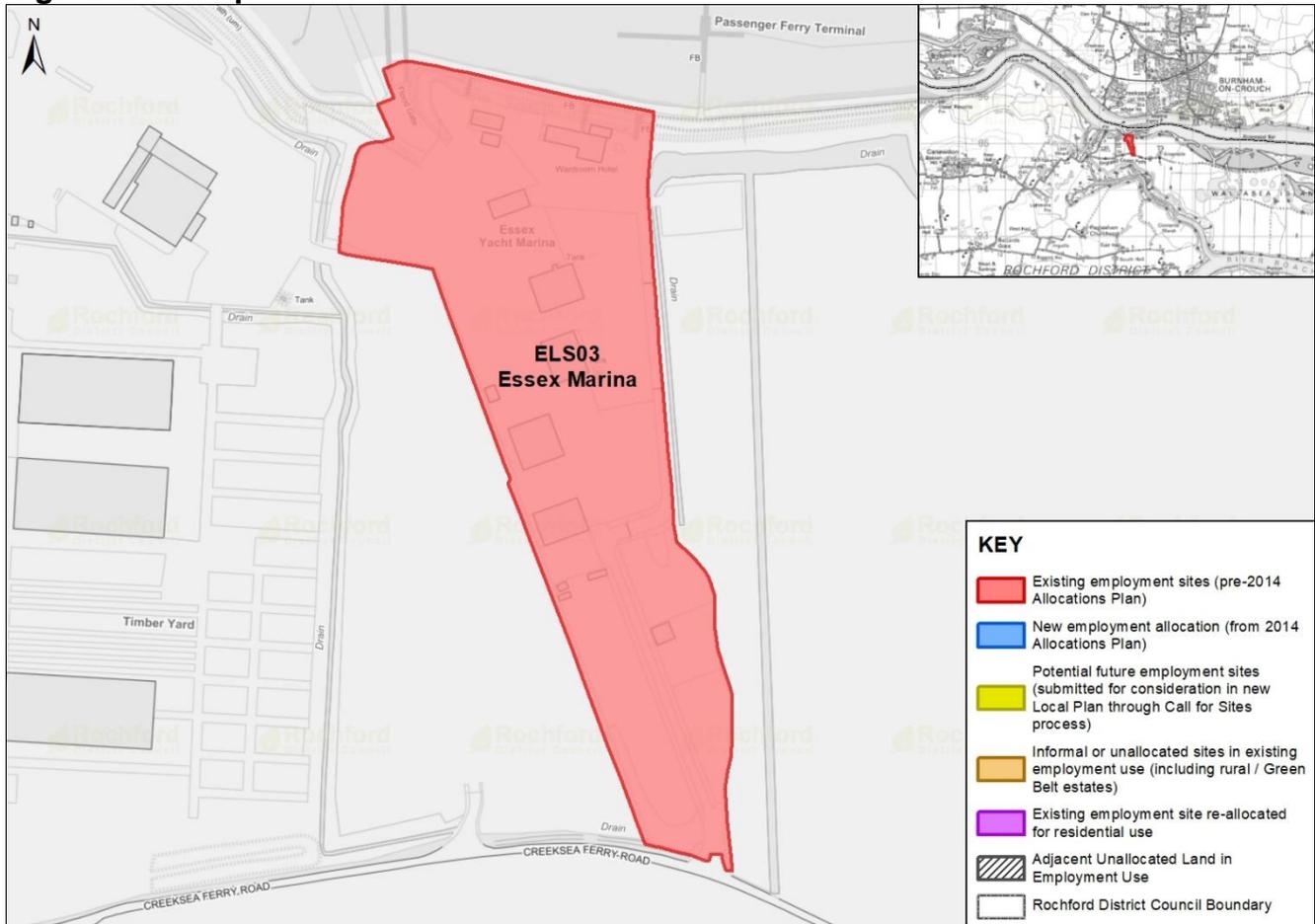
**Figure C10: Baltic Wharf (ELS02).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Essex Marina (Site ELS03)**

**Figure C11: Map of Essex Marina**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

Location:	Essex Marina, Creeksea Ferry Road, Wallasea Island
Site Area (Ha):	4.05
Site Category:	1 - Existing employment sites (pre-2014 Allocations Plan)
Site Cluster:	Wallasea Island

**Site Description: -**

7.36. Bordering Baltic Wharf (see ELS02), Essex Marina comprises several office and warehouse structures (predominately two-storey buildings of varying sizes) dedicated primarily to the sale and maintenance of boats, along with substantial amounts of yard/parking/hardstanding for the storage of boats.. It houses a number of related businesses, along with the Essex Marina Yacht Club. The marina has a series of pontoons extending to the north of the sea wall into the River Crouch, offering 500 deep sea moorings (including 50 swing moorings), which in theory can accommodate boats up to the size of large super yachts. On-site facilities include site/sales office, a

café/bar, and many amenities, such as toilets, showers, and laundry facilities. It is also the site of a ferry service to Burnham-on-Crouch.

7.37. The site's proximity to other maritime facilities and communities (such as those across the river in Burnham-on-Crouch) creates a cluster of related services in this area. The large gravel/grassed area running along the entire East of the site is utilised for the parking of visitors and owners of boats moored in peak summer months. Given the site is well-occupied and appears to function effectively for its intended purpose, the site is anticipated to continue with its activities and use in the long term.

**Site Evaluation: -**

7.38. Traffic Light Categorisation: -

Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class Floorspace	Neighbouring Amenities
<b>Amber</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Red</b>

Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation
<b>Green</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>

Physical Opportunity for Intensification: - **YES**

Vacant Land: - **YES**

Vacant Buildings: - **NO**

7.39. Qualitative Scored Criteria: -

Strategic Access	Local Access	Site Quality, Amenities & Management	Market Attractiveness	Development & Environmental Constraints
<b>2 / 5</b>	<b>2 / 5</b>	<b>4 / 5</b>	<b>4 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>

**Strengths: -**

7.40. Range of maritime facilities: Essex Marina offers a comprehensive range of facilities catering to maritime activities, including boat sales, maintenance, repair, and mooring/storage. The presence of a variety of amenities, such as office and warehouse structures, a sales office, café/bar, and facilities for boat users, contributes to its appeal as a hub for boating enthusiasts, as well as a number of specialist charter operators.

7.41. Strategic marine location: Situated on the Crouch Estuary and adjacent to Burnham-on-Crouch, with its major yacht harbour and sailing clubs, Essex Marina benefits from its proximity to a wider marine community. Its position fosters a maritime cluster,

making it an attractive destination for boat owners and related businesses. It has also diversified somewhat, with a car dealership and brewery noted on site.

- 7.42. Well-maintained environment: The site's overall well-maintained environment, including modern and attractively designed buildings, landscaping, and clear signage, enhances its visual appeal. The site's management maintains its upkeep and security, promoting a positive environment for both occupiers and visitors.
- 7.43. Extent of mooring facilities: With a series of pontoons extending into the River Crouch, Essex Marina provides ample mooring facilities for boats, including larger vessels. This direct access to the waterway adds value to the marina's offerings and supports its role as a maritime services centre. It also enhances its potential to support sectors such as tourism.
- 7.44. Online presence: The marina has established a strong online presence through its official website, providing potential customers and visitors with easy access to information about its services, amenities, and offerings. This digital presence aids in marketing and attracting clientele.

**Weaknesses: -**

- 7.45. Accessibility: The marina's remote location and access via local roads result in poor accessibility, particularly for vehicular traffic. Public transport options to the site are limited, with very infrequent bus services and seasonal ferry connections. The lack of alternatives to driving hinders accessibility for those without private vehicles.
- 7.46. Limited nearby amenities: Beyond the on-site café/bar and facilities, there are no other amenities within walking distance. This limitation may inconvenience occupiers, visitors and boat owners seeking a range of nearby services.
- 7.47. Environmental sensitivity: Situated within the Coastal Protection Belt and near ecologically significant areas like SSSIs/Ramsar sites, the marina's operations must be mindful of their environmental impact. The sensitivity of the environment poses challenges to expansion and development.

**Conclusions and Recommendations: -**

Protect and Maintain

- 7.48. The site operates effectively as a hub for maritime and boating-related activities, forming part of a larger network of maritime facilities alongside Baltic Wharf and the nearby yacht harbour at Burnham-on-Crouch. Though its location may not be optimal for modern businesses due to its rural access roads, its proximity to the mouth of the Crouch Estuary is strategically advantageous for both the maritime sector and recreational boating. It is expected that this advantage will continue over time, although the remote location may not appeal to some occupiers.

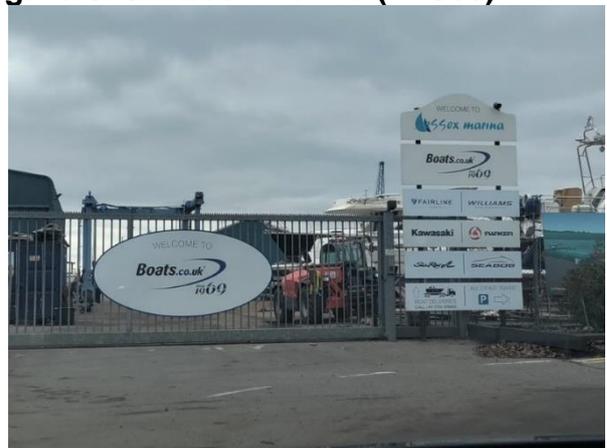
- 7.49. The site has sufficient space for expansion, with large vacant yards and parking areas that could be developed. However, any new employment space would need to be complementary to the current uses and supported by a demand study.
- 7.50. In addition to employment expansion, the site has the potential to diversify into tourism and leisure activities. Its ferry to Burnham-on-Crouch and proximity to the Riverside Village Holiday Park, Wallasea Wild Coast RSPB site, and the Essex/England Coastal Path makes it a suitable location for supporting additional excursions related to the natural environment or fishing, along with on-site refreshments/catering. Any new Local Plan policy catering for rural diversification could consider this, whilst also needing to consider opportunities for improving sustainable transport links.

**Figure C12: Essex Marina (ELS03)**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure C13: Essex Marina (ELS03)**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure C14: Essex Marina (ELS03)**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

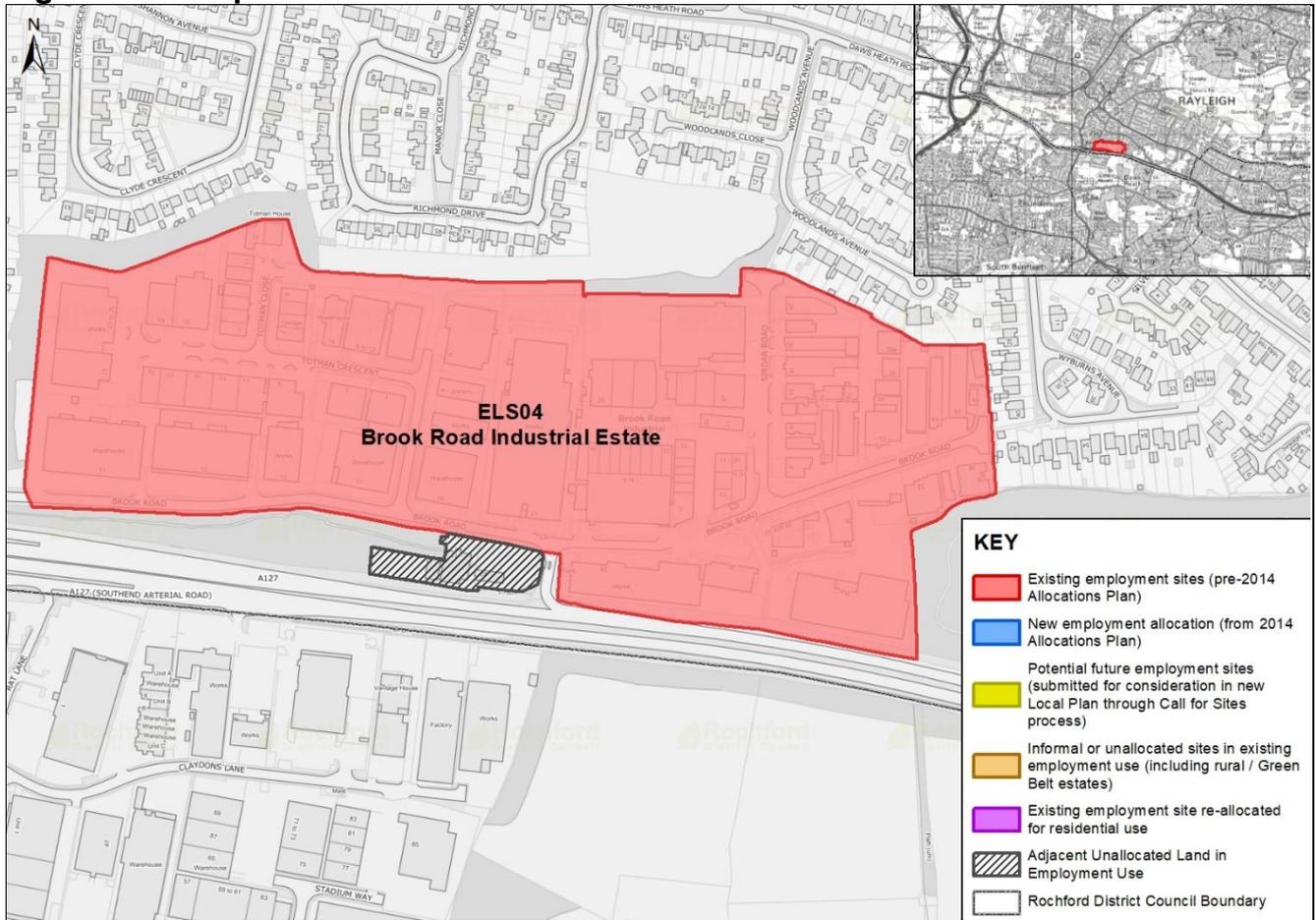
**Figure C15: Essex Marina (ELS03)**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Brook Road Industrial Estate (ELS04)**

**Figure C16: Map of Brook Road Industrial Estate**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024).

Location:	Brook Road Industrial Estate, Brook Road, Rayleigh
Site Area (Ha):	13.20
Site Category:	1 - Existing employment sites (pre-2014 Allocations Plan)
Site Cluster:	Rayleigh, Rawreth and Battlesbridge

**Site Description: -**

7.51. Brook Road Industrial Estate is a well-established employment site in the district, comprising various warehouses, offices, and commercial buildings of varying ages and quality. It borders the A127 Southend Arterial Road, residential areas in Southern Rayleigh, open spaces, a hotel and restaurant (Premier Inn/Harvester), and public open space in the Metropolitan Green Belt.

7.52. The majority of units on the site appear to date from the 1940s-1980s, with varying standards of stock across the site, although some have been modernised or

redeveloped in recent years. Most units are single or two-story properties housing businesses of varying sizes, scales and occupations. Whilst some non-B class uses (health and fitness, leisure, and performing arts) are present, the site is predominantly employment-led.

7.53. The site plays a significant role in employment provision in the district, given the breadth of industry on-site and the good access to the A127. It is a key location for future investment and employment opportunities. Whilst there are extremely limited site expansion opportunities, the modernisation of older premises, along with improvements to the site environment, could be undertaken to enhance the site.

**Site Evaluation: -**

7.54. Traffic Light Categorisation: -

Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class Floorspace	Neighbouring Amenities
Green	Amber	Red	Amber	Green	Green

Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation
Red	Amber	Red	Amber	Amber	Amber

Physical Opportunity for Intensification: - **NO**

Vacant Land: - **NO**

Vacant Buildings: - **YES**

7.55. Qualitative Scored Criteria: -

Strategic Access	Local Access	Site Quality, Amenities & Management	Market Attractiveness	Development & Environmental Constraints
<b>5 / 5</b>	<b>4 / 5</b>	<b>2 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>2 / 5</b>

**Strengths: -**

7.56. Variety of businesses: The estate hosts a diverse range of businesses, including head offices, and sectors such as automotive, engineering, information technology, education, recycling, public transportation, and construction. This diversity contributes to a dynamic economic environment.

7.57. Strategic Location: Situated adjacent to the A127 and with direct access to other significant roads like A129, the estate benefits from a strategic location that provides good connectivity for businesses, customers, and employees.

- 7.58. Good sustainable travel access: The estate benefits from regular bus services (Arriva Services 1 & 9) stopping at its entrance. The availability of public transportation options makes it convenient for employees and visitors to access the site. The site also benefits from a cycle path along the A127, connecting with Southend-on-Sea.
- 7.59. Potential for modernisation: Despite the presence of older and dated units, the estate offers potential for modernisation and redevelopment. This presents an opportunity to enhance the facilities and accommodate the needs of modern businesses, potentially attracting further investment.
- 7.60. Amenities on/near site: The site benefits from a range of amenities at Rayleigh Weir and Rayleigh Town Centre, within walking distance, whilst the presence of non-employment uses on site, including gyms, fitness studios, and performing arts institutions can contribute to creating a more vibrant environment, whilst providing amenities for employees.

**Weaknesses: -**

- 7.61. Poor building condition: Whilst building quality varies, the majority are dated and in poor condition. This could deter potential tenants looking for modern and well-maintained accommodation.
- 7.62. Limited green infrastructure: The estate lacks adequate green spaces and well-maintained landscaping. Poor environmental quality, pavement parking and the presence of fallen trees and weeds contribute to an unattractive visual environment.
- 7.63. Congestion and internal circulation: The site's surrounding area experiences significant traffic congestion during peak hours, particularly on the A129 and A127, inhibiting access to the site. In addition, significant parking constraints were observed on-site, with many units having limited parking bays, leading to street and pavement parking. This limits accessibility and internal circulation for larger vehicles on many of the estate's roads.
- 7.64. Unclear identity: The lack of a coherence brand identity and signage across the estate contributes to a visually cluttered appearance. A more cohesive branding approach could improve the estate's identity and enhance its attractiveness.
- 7.65. Non-employment uses on site: A significant proportion of the site's buildings are used for non-Class B/E(g) uses, e.g. gyms. Whilst the site is presently employment-led, the loss of additional units to such uses could undermine the site's identity as an employment hub and reduce the quantity/quality of employment opportunities available to residents.
- 7.66. Proximity to residential areas: The estate's location adjacent to residential areas could lead to conflicts between industrial activities and neighbours. While efforts have been made to screen parts of the estate, this proximity could still present challenges in terms of noise and other impacts (such as parking on surrounding streets).

## Conclusions and Recommendations: -

### Protect and Enhance

- 7.67. Brook Road Industrial Estate is a key employment site for the District, housing significant businesses in a highly accessible gateway location for employees and clients. However, the quality of accommodation stock and overall business environment needs improvement to maintain its attractiveness. While the site is generally well-occupied, a few empty units suggest a delay in finding new tenants, leading non-B-class businesses (e.g., gyms) to occupy older, subpar units. Attracting higher-value occupiers will require investment.
- 7.68. Policies should support redevelopment and regeneration proposals for all or part of the site, including development briefs or masterplans. This is particularly relevant if large buildings on the site become available for redevelopment or sale. Furthermore, enhancing the surrounding environment through improved landscaping, security, circulation, and branding/identity of the site could be supported through future proposals.

**Figure C17: Brook Road Industrial Estate (ELS04).**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024).

**Figure C18: Brook Road Industrial Estate (ELS04).**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024).

**Figure C19: Brook Road Industrial Estate (ELS04).**



**Figure C20: Brook Road Industrial Estate (ELS04).**

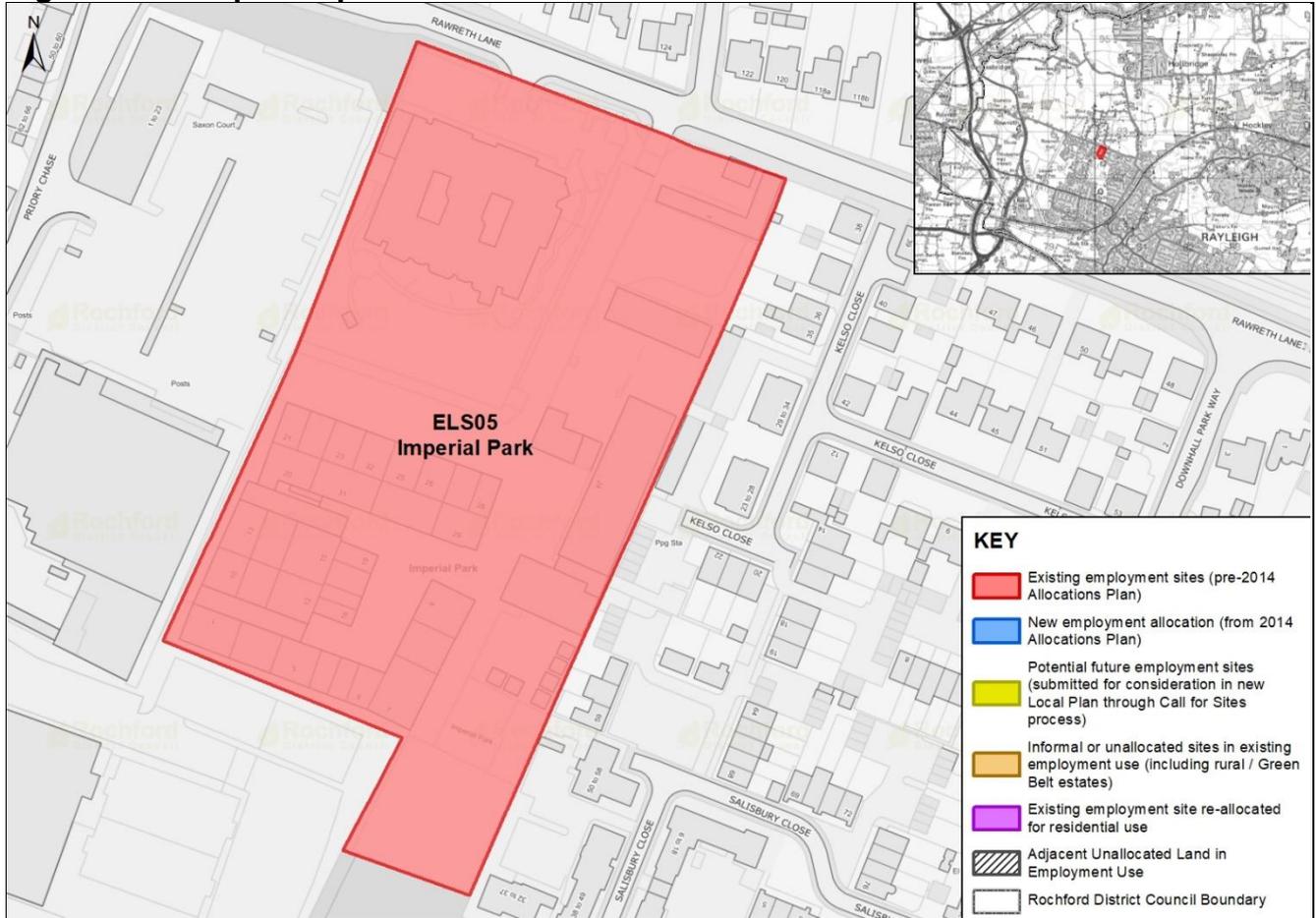


Source: Rochford District Council (2024).

Source: Rochford District Council (2024).

**Imperial Park Industrial Estate (ELS05)**

**Figure C21: Map of Imperial Park Industrial Estate**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024).

Location:	Imperial Park, Rawreth Lane, Rayleigh
Site Area (Ha):	2.36
Site Category:	1 - Existing employment sites (pre-2014 Allocations Plan)
Site Cluster:	Rayleigh, Rawreth and Battlesbridge

**Site Description: -**

7.69. Imperial Park Industrial Estate, situated in Rayleigh, is a compact infill commercial estate. Most of the industrial/warehouse units on the estate were constructed during the 1970s and 1980s. The majority of units are two-storey, vary in size, and are generally well-maintained. In addition to warehouses, there are a few fenced yards and lock-up storage units/containers on the site.

7.70. The site is largely bordered by housing. There are commercial facilities, leisure facilities (Rayleigh Leisure Centre and Fusion Lifestyle), and a public open space (Sweyne Park and Playground) within walking distance.

7.71. The site caters to a diverse range of industries, including automotive and engineering; information technology; light manufacturing; construction; catering; and haberdashery. The estate is well-occupied, serving as a good example of a well-managed older site in an urban location. It is anticipated that the site will continue current operations into the future.

**Site Evaluation: -**

7.72. Traffic Light Categorisation: -

Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class Floorspace	Neighbouring Amenities
<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Green</b>

Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation
<b>Amber</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Red</b>

Physical Opportunity for Intensification: - **LIMITED**

Vacant Land: - **YES**

Vacant Buildings: - **NO**

7.73. Qualitative Scored Criteria: -

Strategic Access	Local Access	Site Quality, Amenities & Management	Market Attractiveness	Development & Environmental Constraints
<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>2 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>

**Strengths: -**

7.74. Units in good condition: The majority of units on the estate are well-maintained and in decent condition, with some evidence of modernisation. This contributes to a positive working environment and appeals to businesses seeking functional spaces.

7.75. Range of occupiers: The estate accommodates a variety of business sectors, including automotive, engineering, information technology, light manufacturing, construction, catering, and haberdashery. This diversity indicates the site has a broad appeal, whilst the broad occupier profile can help foster collaboration and a supportive business ecosystem.

- 7.76. Convenient location: The estate is within close proximity to secondary and primary A-roads, providing good road connectivity to the broader region. This accessibility is beneficial for businesses, customers, and employees.
- 7.77. Local amenities and facilities: Neighbouring facilities and amenities, such as supermarkets, leisure centres, and retail services, are within walking distance. This convenience enhances the work-life balance for employees and provides essential services for businesses.
- 7.78. Sustainable and active travel access: The site has moderate access to local public transport, with nearby bus stops served by regular First Bus services. It is also within a short walk of a large swathe of residential areas, making it accessible on foot.

**Weaknesses: -**

- 7.79. Traffic circulation issues: The limited internal circulation on-site restricts HGV accessibility and movement, potentially posing challenges for larger vehicles and deliveries/logistics.
- 7.80. Environmental quality: Littering and insufficient commercial waste management impact the environmental quality of the estate negatively. Poor waste management practices can detract from the overall appearance and appeal of the site.
- 7.81. Limited brand identity: The estate lacks a clear and unified brand identity, which could affect its recognition and standing among potential tenants, customers, and stakeholders.
- 7.82. Limited on-site amenities: On-site amenities and facilities are limited, potentially affecting the convenience and well-being of employees. The absence of these amenities could make the site less attractive for businesses seeking a comprehensive work environment.

**Conclusions and Recommendations:-**

Protect and Enhance

- 7.83. As of early 2023, Imperial Park Industrial Estate appears fully occupied and provides accommodation for small businesses in the West Rayleigh area. Whilst parts of the complex are constrained and have very little circulation/parking space, overall, the site appears to function well. A sizeable proportion of units on the site have been modernised, with new cladding and windows.
- 7.84. The site likely has little room for additional development, although there is potential for an intensification of some of the yard spaces and storage on the Eastern side of the site (for which there is planning permission). The provision of more units in this size bracket would help meet Rochford's need for 'grow-on space', offering good quality premises for growing SME businesses. However, any new employment space would need to consider neighbouring residential uses and access to the site.

7.85. Given the location in a residential area, it is possible the site may eventually come up for residential redevelopment.

**Figure C22: Imperial Park (ELS05).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024).*

**Figure C23: Imperial Park (ELS05)**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024).*

**Figure C24: Imperial Park (ELS05)**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024).*

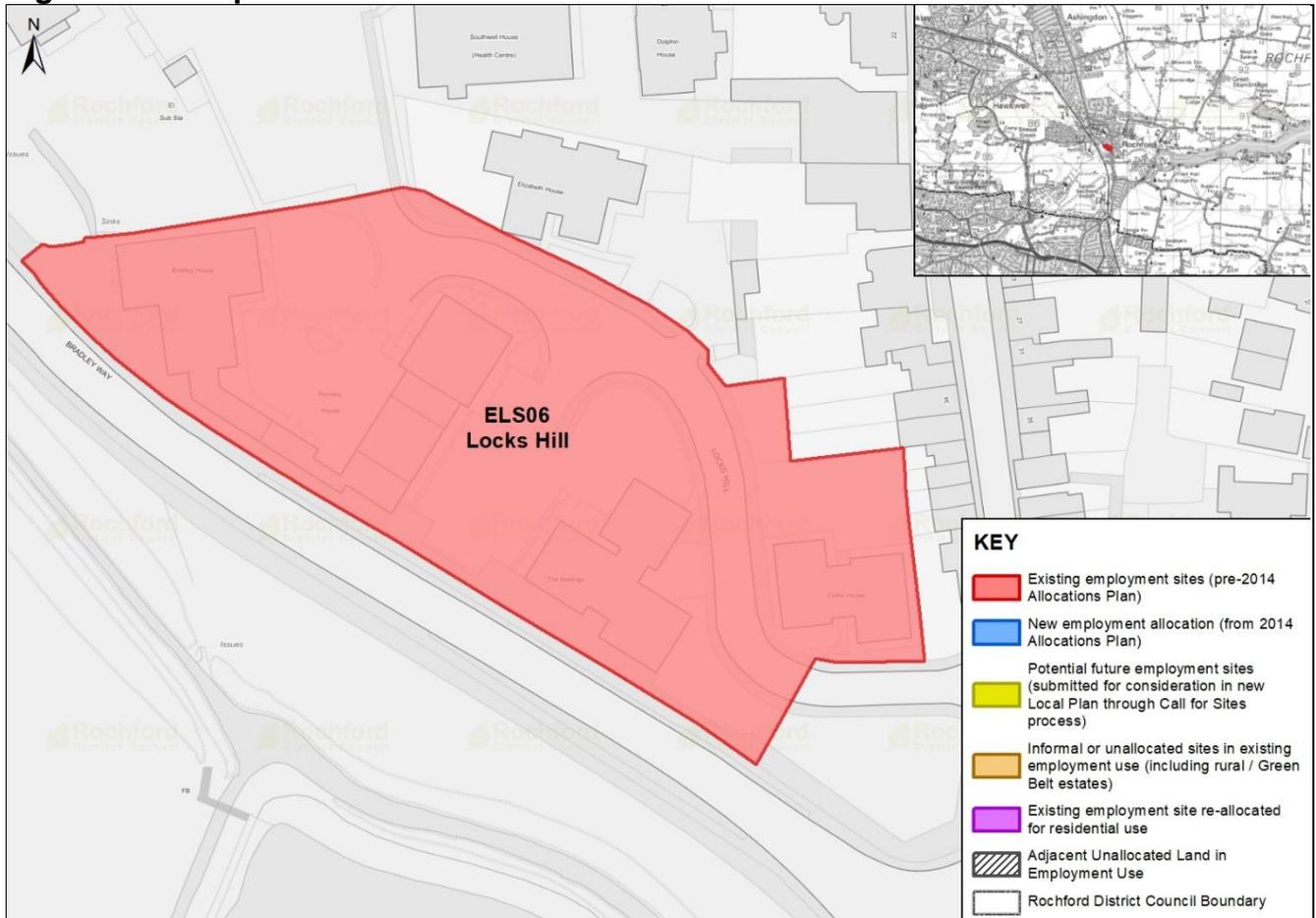
**Figure C25: Imperial Park (ELS05).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024).*

**Locks Hill (ELS06)**

**Figure C26: Map of Locks Hill**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024).

Location:	Locks Hill, Rochford
Site Area (Ha):	0.76
Site Category:	1 - Existing employment sites (pre-2014 Allocations Plan)
Site Cluster:	Rochford and Stambridge

**Site Description: -**

- 7.86. Located adjacent to Rochford Town Centre, Locks Hill is an established site consisting of a collection of office premises surrounded by residential properties. The site mainly comprises three-storey units built from the 1980s onwards, which are well-maintained and have been modernised. Surrounding green spaces and infrastructure also appear well managed and maintained. As of early 2023, no vacancies are present on site.
- 7.87. Whilst the site is will maintained, there are parking constraints within certain segments of the site (although a public car park is adjacent). In addition, there appears to be limited capacity and space for commercial waste storage.

7.88. Locks Hill does not cater to a specific industrial sector and is home to several professional services and ICT/digital businesses, along with Sanctuary Housing Association.

**Site Evaluation: -**

7.89. Traffic Light Categorisation: -

Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class Floorspace	Neighbouring Amenities
<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Green</b>

Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation
<b>Amber</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Green</b>

Physical Opportunity for Intensification: - **NO**

Vacant Land: - **NO**

Vacant Buildings: - **NO**

7.90. Qualitative Scored Criteria: -

<b>Strategic Access</b>	<b>Local Access</b>	<b>Site Quality, Amenities &amp; Management</b>	<b>Market Attractiveness</b>	<b>Development &amp; Environmental Constraints</b>
<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>4 / 5</b>	<b>4 / 5</b>	<b>4 / 5</b>	<b>2 / 5</b>

**Strengths: -**

7.91. Building quality: The buildings on Locks Hill have been well maintained and managed, with evidence of modernisation. This enhances the overall aesthetics of the site and creates a positive working environment.

7.92. Good connectivity: Locks Hill benefits from access to the A127 via Southend Road, and it is also close to Southend Airport. This connectivity is advantageous for businesses needing local and regional. The site is also well-connected through Arriva bus services and is within walking distance of Rochford train station. The site is in proximity to Rochford Town Centre, offering convenient access to amenities, facilities and services

7.93. Site environment: Locks Hill features well-managed green spaces and on-site green infrastructure, contributing to a visually appealing and pleasant environment.

**Weaknesses: -**

- 7.94. Parking constraints: Some areas of the site experience parking constraints, which might affect the convenience for businesses and employees. Limited capacity for commercial waste storage could also pose challenges.
- 7.95. Traffic congestion: Local roads are prone to congestion and not suitable for HGVs, which could impact logistics for businesses requiring the movement of goods.
- 7.96. Lack of cycle infrastructure: The absence of dedicated cycle routes to the site and on-site facilities limits active transportation options for employees.

**Conclusions and Recommendations: -**

Protect and Maintain

- 7.97. Locks Hill is at capacity and there is limited likelihood of surrounding residential dwellings being developed for further employment use. Whilst there are constraints regarding parking and waste storage, these are minor issues that could be easily addressed. The site provides good quality employment space that attracts a range of knowledge-intensive occupiers and in turn supports the wider Rochford Town Centre. Any future policies specific to Rochford should seek to protect and maintain the site.

**Figure C27: Locks Hill (ELS06)**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

**Figure C28: Locks Hill (ELS06)**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024).

**Figure C29: Locks Hill (ELS06).**



**Figure C30: Locks Hill (ELS06).**

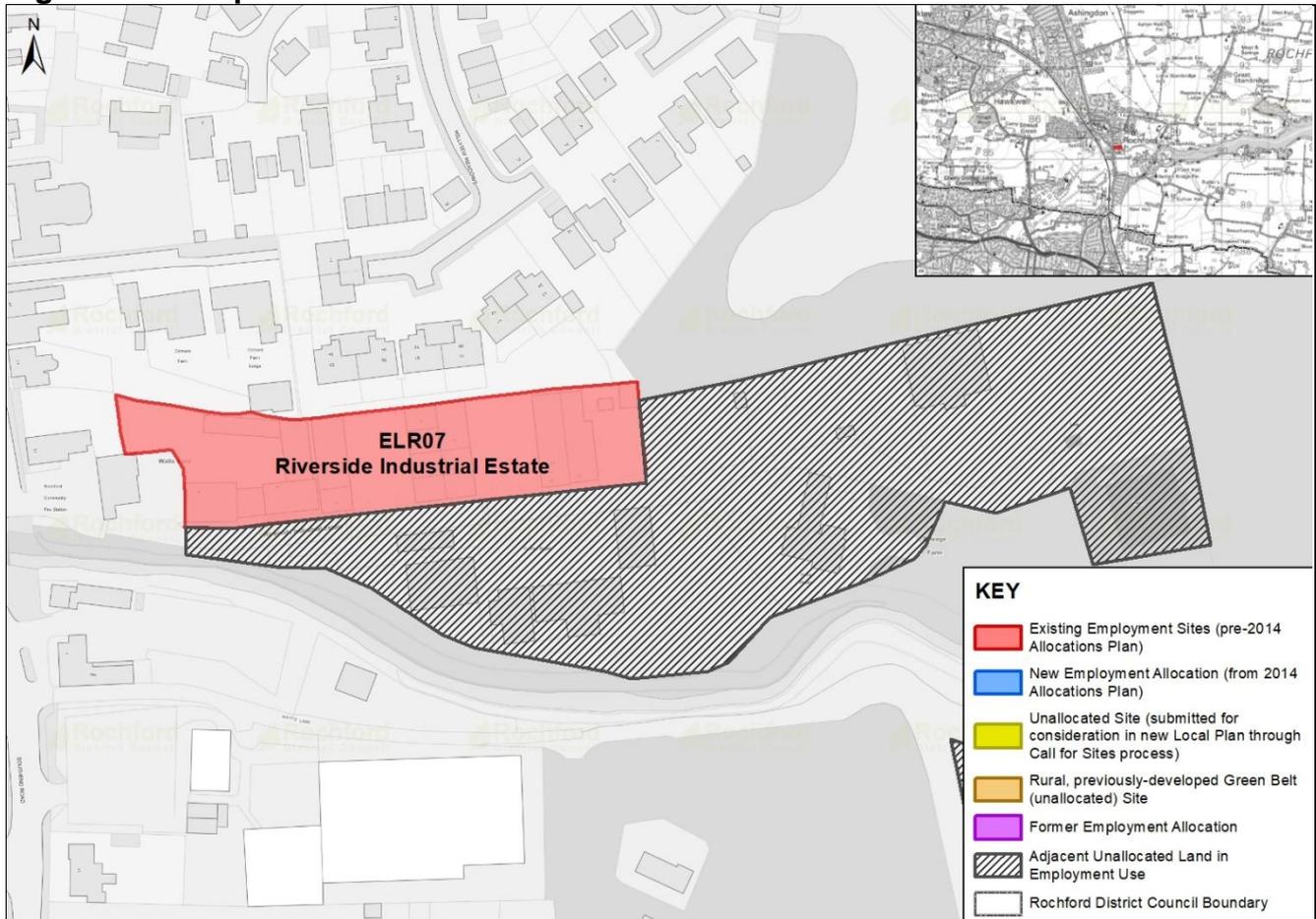


*Source: Rochford District Council (2024).*

*Source: Rochford District Council (2024).*

**Riverside Industrial Estate (ELS07)**

**Figure C31: Map of Riverside Industrial Estate**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

Location:	Riverside Industrial Estate, South Street, Rochford
Site Area:	1.52
Site Category:	Existing Employment Sites (pre-2014 Allocations Plan)
Site Cluster:	Rochford and Stambridge

**Site Description: -**

7.98. Adjacent to Rochford Town Centre, Riverside Industrial Estate is an established small employment site which contains a range of business accommodation. The site comprises two elements, firstly a series of small industrial/warehouse units (which are the formal employment allocation), north of the access road. Secondly, a series of depots, yards and a former pumping station (in a derelict state), to the South and East. These do not have an allocation, and also sit outside the Metropolitan Green Belt.

7.99. The site adjoins the River Roach and contains largely single-storey business units from the 1970s/80s, with some evidence of modernisation. Uses include E(g), B2 and B8, along with one community (F2) occupier. The depots provide accommodation for larger occupiers, namely the council waste depot and a coach depot.

**Site Evaluation: -**

7.100. Traffic Light Categorisation: -

Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class Floorspace	Neighbouring Amenities
<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Amber</b>

Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation
<b>Red</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Red</b>

Physical Opportunity for Intensification: - **YES**

Vacant Land: - **YES**

Vacant Buildings: - **POTENTIALLY**

7.101. Qualitative Scored Criteria: -

Strategic Access	Local Access	Site Quality, Amenities & Management	Market Attractiveness	Development & Environmental Constraints
<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>2 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>1 / 5</b>

**Strengths: -**

7.102. Rane of occupiers: The estate hosts a wide range of occupiers, including SME businesses and larger organisations such as the council waste depot and bus depot.

7.103. Proximity to town centre: The site's close proximity to Rochford Town Centre offers convenient access to local amenities, services, and transportation options, which can enhance the work-life balance for employees.

7.104. Accessibility: The site benefits from access to the A127 via Southend Road and is also near Southend Airport, providing good connectivity for businesses requiring regional and local access.

**Weaknesses: -**

7.105. Site appearance: The presence of numerous open storage yards and the semi-derelict nature of certain areas contribute to an untidy appearance, which could impact the overall image of the estate.

- 7.106. Constrained circulation: The site has a narrow access to South Street and limited room for large vehicles to manoeuvre on site, which may present problems for waste vehicles and coaches which serve the site.
- 7.107. Limited cyclist and pedestrian infrastructure: The lack of dedicated cycle routes, footpaths, and cycle parking facilities on-site might discourage cycling and limit pedestrian safety.
- 7.108. Environmental condition: Overgrown vegetation, lack of landscaping, and potentially a lack of maintenance contribute to an unfavourable environmental setting, which might impact the aesthetics and overall appeal of the estate.
- 7.109. Antisocial behaviour potential: Sections of the site, particularly those further from the road and close to the river, could be secluded and have poor surveillance, making them susceptible to antisocial behaviour.
- 7.110. Mixed building conditions: While some buildings are in good condition, others are in fair or poor condition. The disparity in building conditions could affect the overall appearance and functionality of the estate.

**Conclusions and Recommendations: -**

Protect and Enhance

- 7.111. Whilst the site does function well in its current format, there is the potential for redevelopment and for the intensification of parts, including the RDC and coach depots, storage yards and pumping station site. These could provide dedicated business accommodation for occupiers seeking a location in proximity to the town centre. However, any such development needs to consider the site's location and its proximity to the River Roach. Proximity to residential areas could bring residential development pressures to all or part of the site, particularly given large tracts of the wider site are unallocated, and potential for mixed-use development could be considered.

**Figure C32: Riverside Industrial Estate (ELS07).**



**Figure C33: Riverside Industrial Estate (ELS07).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure C34: Riverside Industrial Estate (ELS07).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024).*

*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

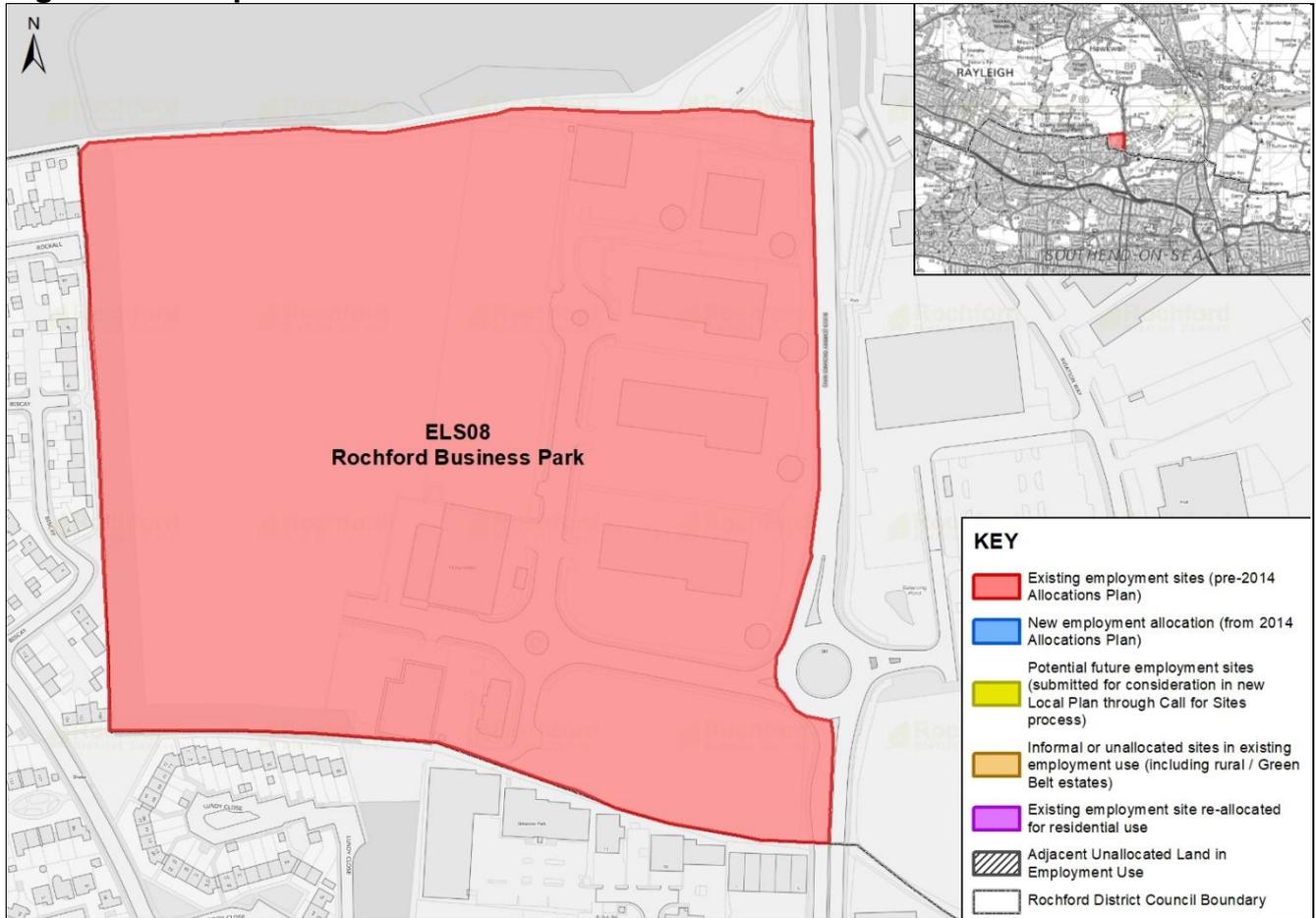
**Figure C35: Riverside Industrial Estate (ELS07).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Rochford Business Park (ELS08)**

**Figure C36: Map of Rochford Business Park.**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024).

Location:	Rochford Business Park, Cherry Orchard Way, Southend
Site Area:	11.67
Site Category:	1 - Existing employment sites (pre-2014 Allocations Plan)
Site Cluster:	London Southend Airport

**Site Description: -**

7.112. Rochford Business Park is a commercial site which houses a cluster of showrooms and commercial accommodation/land used primarily for businesses operating in the sale and servicing of automobiles, with the Toomey Motor Group being the main occupier. A prominent KFC drive-thru and petrol station (with ancillary retail/food services) are also present on site.

7.113. Envisaged as an employment site, the site’s evolution as a car showroom cluster means a significant proportion of the site is now in non-B-class uses, with the showrooms (Sui Generis) constituting around 75% of developed land.

**Site Evaluation: -**

7.114. Traffic Light Categorisation: -

Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class Floorspace	Neighbouring Amenities
<b>Green</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Amber</b>

Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation
<b>Green</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Green</b>

Physical Opportunity for Intensification: - **YES**

Vacant Land: - **YES**

Vacant Buildings: - **NO**

7.115. Qualitative Scored Criteria: -

<b>Strategic Access</b>	<b>Local Access</b>	<b>Site Quality, Amenities &amp; Management</b>	<b>Market Attractiveness</b>	<b>Development &amp; Environmental Constraints</b>
<b>5 / 5</b>	<b>4 / 5</b>	<b>4 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>4 / 5</b>

**Strengths: -**

- 7.116. Specialised business cluster: The park has developed as a specialised cluster for automotive-related businesses, particularly the sale, servicing, cleaning, and repair of motor vehicles, providing purpose-built accommodation for this sector, in an accessible location for motor traffic.
- 7.117. Prime location: Its location on a main route bordering London Southend Airport and visibility to passing traffic contribute to its prominence and potential for attracting customers and clients.
- 7.118. Proximity to amenities: The presence of amenities like a KFC drive-thru, convenience retail, and petrol station on-site enhances the convenience for both employees and visitors.
- 7.119. Good building quality: Most of the buildings on the site are in good condition, with some being more recently built. Modernisation efforts are evident, and commercial units appear well managed and maintained.
- 7.120. Accessibility: The site benefits from good road access, proximity to primary A roads (such as the A127), and connections to nearby towns and the city of Southend. It is also served by walking and cycling routes.

**Weaknesses: -**

- 7.121. Limited range of uses: The site's evolution as a car showroom cluster has resulted in a lack of diversity in the types of businesses operating on-site, potentially limiting its appeal to a broader range of industries. The site itself has few dedicated employment uses, and likely provides a lower density of employment than the equivalent amount of floorspace in uses such as Class E(g), or B2. Its role as an employment allocation is undermined.
- 7.122. Vacant and underdeveloped land: The presence of vacant and underdeveloped land areas on the site, along with temporary fencing, can detract from the overall appearance and quality of the estate. There has been little progress in recent years to develop this land, with no opportunities advertised.
- 7.123. Limited green infrastructure: Despite well-managed features, the site lacks significant green infrastructure and green spaces, affecting the overall environmental quality.
- 7.124. Limited amenities: While there are fast-food, convenience retail, and petrol amenities on-site, the availability of amenities beyond these categories is limited.
- 7.125. Lack of site identity: The identity of Rochford Business Park itself is not strongly evident on the site, and its online presence is limited, which might impact its recognition and visibility.

**Conclusions and Recommendations: -**

Protect and Enhance

- 7.126. The site forms a cluster for car sales and servicing for the wider Rochford/Southend area and is well-frequented, having grown over the years to accommodate more car brands and provide additional services. Alongside this, ancillary uses have grown up which benefit both from the cluster of automotive uses and the site's prominent location adjacent to a busy main road. Although the uses on the site are not what would have been envisaged when it was allocated, they do fill a commercial need and provide substantial local employment.
- 7.127. Significant amounts of land remains undeveloped on the site, which is prominently-situated at a major gateway to the District and adjacent to established clusters of employment uses at Comet Way/Britannia Business Park and Aviation Way. The site also benefits from good proximity to the Airport. The optimum situation would be the development of some of this for high-value employment uses which would benefit from the site's good transport links and on-site services. However, it is both possible and likely that additional automotive sales/servicing uses will cluster on the site. Such uses have the potential to generate additional skilled employment, particularly involving the maintenance and servicing of vehicles.
- 7.128. However, the presence of any further retail, dining and leisure uses are likely to tilt the site towards being an out-of-town retail destination, are not policy-compliant and should be subjected to a sequential test and impact assessment, given their potential

impact on existing town centres. The Council should work with the landowner to diversify uses on the site and promote opportunities for E(g), B2 and B8 development. Given it has taken some time for land to come forward on the rest of the site and it is not actively marketed, it may be prudent to engage with the landowner to identify barriers and solutions.

**Figure C37: Rochford Business Park (ELS08).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure C38: Rochford Business Park (ELS08).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024).*

**Figure C39: Rochford Business Park (ELS08).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

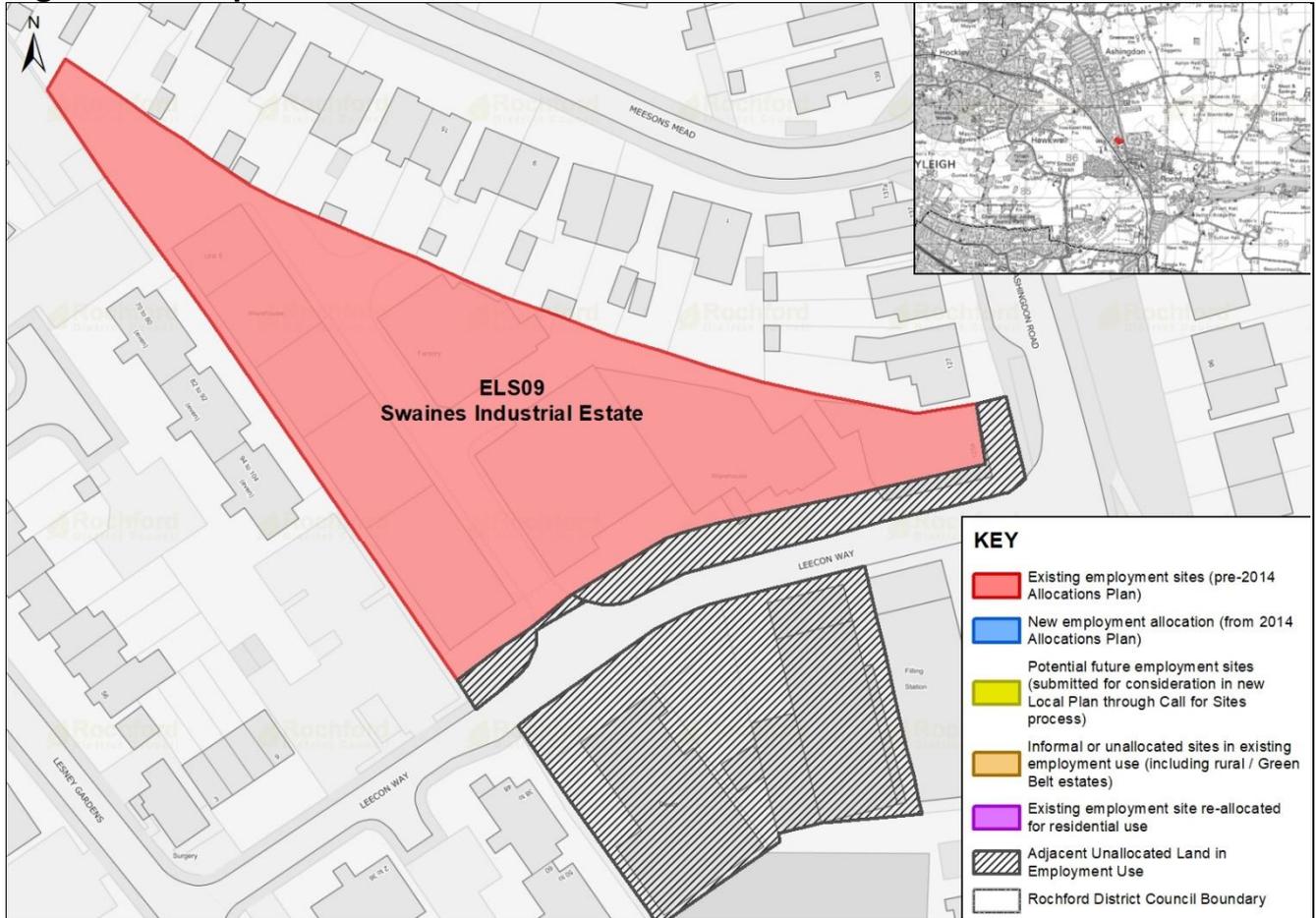
**Figure C40: Rochford Business Park (ELS08).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024).*

**Swaines Industrial Estate (ELS09)**

**Figure C41: Map of Swaines Industrial Estate**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024).

Location:	Swaines Industrial Estate, Ashington Road, Rochford
Site Area:	0.87
Site Category:	Existing Employment Sites (pre-2014 Allocations Plan)
Site Cluster:	Rochford and Stambridge

**Site Description: -**

7.129. Swaines Industrial Estate is an older industrial estate, comprising units constructed prior to the 1970s. The estate is surrounded by residential neighbourhoods and a petrol station and situated close to the busy Ashington Road. The allocated portion of the site sits North of the access road, Leecon Way, whilst a series of industrial units to the South of the road are not within an employment allocation.

7.130. The site caters for a range of local small businesses, including automotive uses, printing/media, light industrial and gyms. The quality of buildings on the site is generally poor, with the majority being old and unmodernised.

**Site Evaluation: -**

7.131. Traffic Light Categorisation: -

Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class Floorspace	Neighbouring Amenities
Amber	Red	Red	Amber	Amber	Green

Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation
Red	Red	Red	Amber	Amber	Red

Physical Opportunity for Intensification: - **YES**

Vacant Land: - **NO**

Vacant Buildings: - **NO**

7.132. Qualitative Scored Criteria: -

Strategic Access	Local Access	Site Quality, Amenities & Management	Market Attractiveness	Development & Environmental Constraints
2 / 5	2 / 5	2 / 5	3 / 5	2 / 5

**Strengths: -**

7.133. Proximity to amenities: The presence of a petrol station, convenience store, and other amenities within a short walk provides convenience for staff and visitors working on the site.

7.134. Good bus links and accessibility: The site benefits from good bus links on Ashingdon Road, along with a cycle route and easy walking access to residential neighbourhoods, Rochford Town Centre, Rochford Railway Station, and other amenities.

7.135. Prominent location: Situated off the busy Ashingdon Road, the site attracts a range of occupiers and customers, benefiting from its visibility and accessibility. It appears to have no vacancies.

7.136. Affordable accommodation: Comprising smaller, older units, the site likely provides a low-cost solution for small businesses, making it an attractive option for SMEs looking for affordable accommodation.

**Weaknesses: -**

- 7.137. Building condition: The condition of the estate and its units is generally poor, with evidence of dilapidation and outdated facilities on many units.
- 7.138. Limited parking and congestion: The site suffers from limited parking spaces and congestion issues, exacerbated by the presence of parked vehicles on streets, forecourts, and yards.
- 7.139. Site environment: The site environment is rated as very poor and unwelcoming due to the physical condition of buildings, roads, pavements, and boundaries, as well as the presence of litter, pollution, vandalism, and damaged vehicles.
- 7.140. Lack of management and identity: The absence of clear management practices and identity branding for the site might hinder its overall organisation and recognition.
- 7.141. Potential development constraints: Despite its employment allocation, potential development opportunities might be constrained by the presence of residential streets around the site, limiting expansion possibilities.

**Conclusions and Recommendations:-**

Monitor and Manage

- 7.142. The site is popular with businesses but is generally in poor condition and presents a visually unattractive environment, along with parking and circulation issues. Given its location and the state of much of the accommodation, it may come under pressure for residential development. Many units are in need of repair or refurbishment, and this may present an opportunity to support the redevelopment of sites to provide higher-quality, modern businesses premises and/or mixed-use accommodation, adding or making greater use of upper levels to maximise opportunities in an accessible location. The site is likely to appeal to a wide range of start-up/ SME businesses seeking proximity to customers, local transport links and services.
- 7.143. Any mixed-use development involving residential should not result in a net loss of employment space and would also need to have regard for the impact on the amenity of residents from existing businesses, to ensure existing activities (e.g. automotive) can continue to take place. In the event of any move to regenerate or redevelop the estate, a masterplan or development brief approach to ensure proposals for redevelopment of all or part of the site into the wider urban fabric should be considered. Given the Southern portion of the site is presently unallocated, the merits of allocating this, versus encouraging the redevelopment of older units adjoining housing, should be considered.

**Figure C42: Swaines Industrial Estate (ELS09).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure C43: Swaines Industrial Estate (ELS09).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure C44: Swaines Industrial Estate (ELS09).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

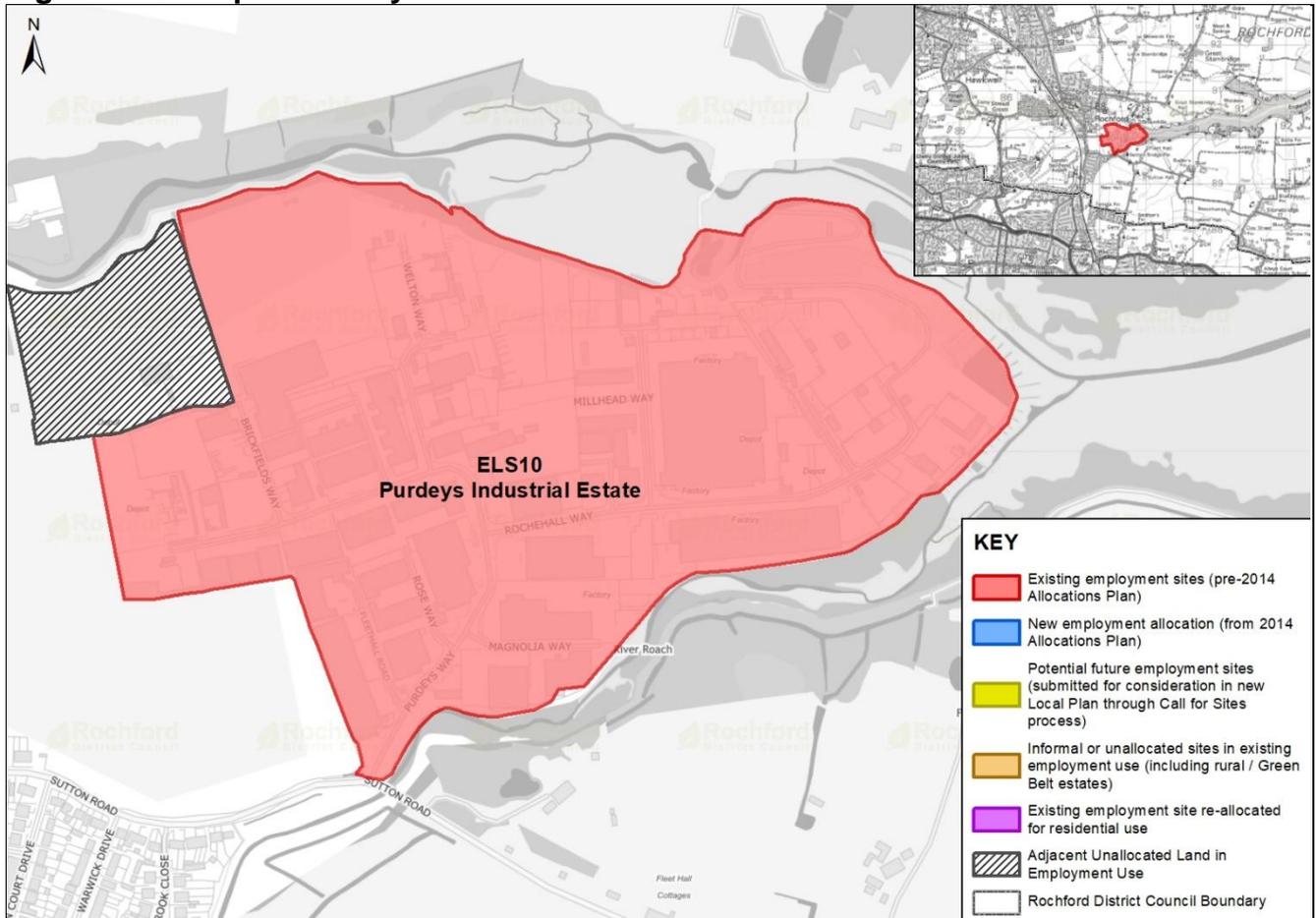
**Figure C45: Swaines Industrial Estate (ELS09).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Purdeys Industrial Estate (ELS10)**

**Figure C46: Map of Purdeys Industrial Estate**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

Location:	Purdeys Industrial Estate, Sutton Road, Rochford
Site Area:	41.03
Site Category:	1 - Existing employment sites (pre-2014 Allocations Plan)
Site Cluster:	Rochford and Stambridge

**Site Description: -**

7.144. Located on the peninsula adjacent to the River Roach Estuary, Purdeys Industrial Estate is a large established industrial estate which has grown organically over time. The site comprises of a large range of warehouses, manufacturing units, offices, and other commercial buildings, alongside a series of large and small storage compounds/yards. The site contains a number of high-bay warehouses with greater eaves heights suited for distribution or waste operations, as well as a boatyard and mooring facilities. Whilst there are significant variations in form and quality stock across the site, most units are single or two-storey properties, whilst many are in a

poor condition. One portion of the site (in the North-West corner) is not formally allocated for employment, but in use for open storage purposes.

7.145. The range of uses on the site varies considerably, ranging from heavy and light manufacturing, through to warehousing, trade counter and office uses, alongside a sizeable proportion of leisure and retail uses, including gyms and a roller-skating rink. In recent years, a number of yards have been developed to provide industrial accommodation. In addition, some leisure uses have closed in recent years and units have returned to B-class use. However, as of early 2023, there were still multiple vacancies and opportunities for development and intensification present on site.

7.146. Purdeys Industrial Estate is accessed through a mini roundabout on a semi-rural local road (Sutton Road). The site has a series of constraints relating to access and is likely to be at capacity and not suitable for further expansion without an additional site entrance. The adjoining land uses include agricultural land in the Metropolitan Green Belt, and a Local Wildlife Site (River Roach).

**Site Evaluation: -**

7.147. Traffic Light Categorisation: -

Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class Floorspace	Neighbouring Amenities
Green	Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber	Red

Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation
Red	Amber	Red	Amber	Red	Red

Physical Opportunity for Intensification: - **YES**

Vacant Land: - **YES**

Vacant Buildings: - **YES**

7.148. Qualitative Scored Criteria: -

Strategic Access	Local Access	Site Quality, Amenities & Management	Market Attractiveness	Development & Environmental Constraints
<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>2 / 5</b>	<b>2 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>

**Strengths: -**

7.149. Location character: Purdeys Industrial Estate is well known across the district, is an important business centre for regional and local businesses and is suitable for a wide range of employment activities, including heavy industry, waste recycling and marine-related sectors.

- 7.150. High occupancy rates: The estate has a large number of occupiers, and occupancy rates are generally high, indicating that it is a sought-after location for businesses in various sectors.
- 7.151. Size and flexibility: The estate's size and variety of units cater to a range of business sizes, from large-scale enterprises to local SMEs, providing flexibility in accommodation options.
- 7.152. Accessibility: Despite congestion on Sutton Road, the estate benefits from access to major roadways like the A127 and A1159, facilitating connections to wider transportation networks.

**Weaknesses: -**

- 7.153. Poor physical environment: The overall environment is rated as poor due to limited green infrastructure, lack of landscaping, litter, surface-water flooding, and unkempt areas, which could negatively impact the working conditions and aesthetics.
- 7.154. Dilapidated buildings: Many buildings on the estate are in poor condition, exhibiting signs of dilapidation, disrepair, and physical damage, which might affect the quality of accommodation for occupants.
- 7.155. Limited public transport access: The estate's accessibility by public transportation is limited, with infrequent bus services and distant bus stops, potentially affecting commuting options for workers and leading to greater road congestion.
- 7.156. Traffic congestion: Access roads to the estate, including Sutton Road and the mini roundabout, experience severe congestion during busy periods, impacting transportation flow.
- 7.157. Varying site quality: The estate's mix of uses, while diverse, also includes vacant units, closed leisure facilities, and areas with a general sense of untidiness (such as waste storage yard), which could detract from the overall appearance and functionality.
- 7.158. Constraints on Expansion: The estate's limited access points and congested roads constrain further expansion, potentially hindering its ability to accommodate new businesses or enhance existing facilities.

**Conclusions and Recommendations: -**

Protect and Enhance

- 7.159. Purdeys Industrial Estate provides a home for a wide variety of industries and businesses, it is well-occupied and clearly fulfils an important role both in Rochford District and the wider South Essex subregion. Given this, alongside the size and scale of the site, the employment allocation should continue moving forward. The success of the more recent developments on-site indicates that there is ample opportunity for the estate to be modernised, with older units upgraded to support modern business and enterprise. This could involve the redevelopment/refurbishment of older units,

alongside the construction of new, purpose-built business premises on yard/compound sites, which is likely to lead to a greater intensity of employment opportunities and accommodation for higher-value industries. There is a need for quality accommodation for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which some of these sites could provide. There is also the opportunity for these developers to contribute to the enhancement of the wider site environment.

7.160. Recognising the importance of the site to the District’s economy, it is recommended that in future consideration is given to producing a development brief or masterplan which could help guide the site’s enhancement, as and when redevelopment opportunities become available. This could also be linked to proposed junction enhancements to ease traffic access to Sutton Road, which would be delivered by Essex County Council, whilst improved public transport and active travel links are also a key concern. Any such access works could be combined with gateway enhancements to improve the initial impression on entering the estate through new signage and landscaping. In addition, whilst the current proportion of leisure/retail uses on the site is less than 25% (not including the boatyard), this situation should be monitored to ensure the site remains employment oriented.

**Figure C47: Purdeys Industrial Estate (ELS10).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure C48: Purdeys Industrial Estate (ELS10).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure C49: Purdeys Industrial Estate (ELS10).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024).*

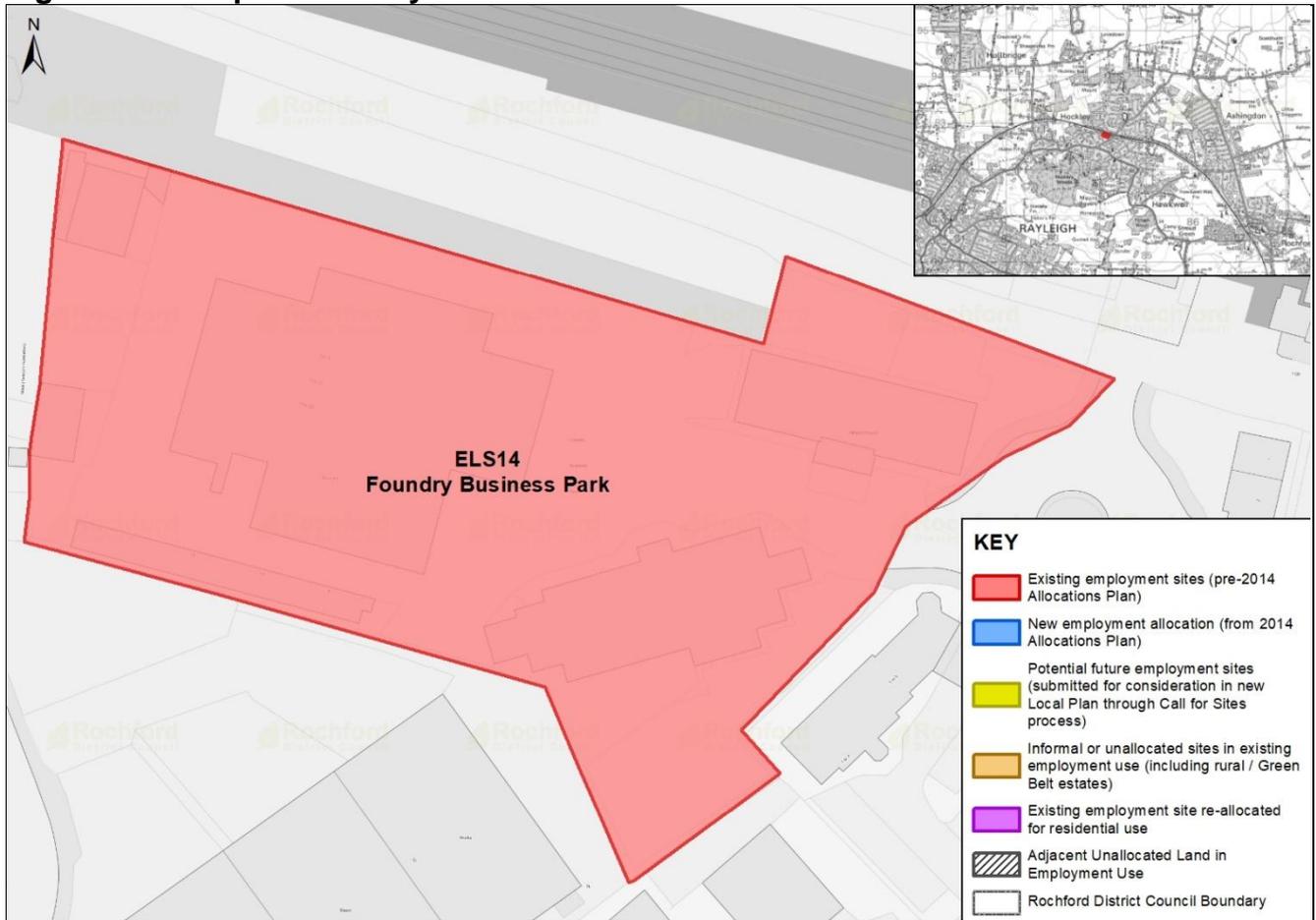
**Figure C50: Purdeys Industrial Estate (ELS10).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024).*

**Foundry Business Park (ELS14)**

**Figure C51: Map of Foundry Business Park**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

Location:	Foundry Business Park, Station Approach, Hockley
Site Area:	0.67
Site Category:	1 - Existing employment sites (pre-2014 Allocations Plan)
Site Cluster:	Hockley and Hawkwell

**Site Description: -**

7.161. Foundry Business Park is a small warehouse and office complex in Hockley, with the main site appearing to be an adaptation of an older industrial building. Two comparatively modern (although currently vacant) office units front the site, with the older industrial buildings behind these. Access is gained from a roundabout on an access road, leading to Spa Road. The adjoining land uses include residential development, Hockley Railway Station, and an existing employment site (Eldon Way Industrial Estate).

7.162. The site provides industrial space and accommodation for SME businesses operating in the following sectors: automotive services and engineering, retail services, furniture restoration, business services, tutoring, dressmaking, health care and physiotherapy, construction, and sports (martial arts).

7.163. Whilst this site is designated as an employment site in the Hockley Area Action Plan (2014), being retained for employment purposes alongside a mixed-use redevelopment of adjacent Eldon Way Industrial Estate, residential development could possibly occur in the short-medium term. This is due to the unit quality on-site, the higher-than-average vacancy levels, the surrounding residential land use, adjacent railway station and the recent sale and change in site ownership.

**Site Evaluation: -**

7.164. Traffic Light Categorisation: -

Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class Floorspace	Neighbouring Amenities
<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Green</b>

Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation
<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Red</b>

Physical Opportunity for Intensification: - **NO**

Vacant Land: - **NO**

Vacant Buildings: - **YES**

7.165. Qualitative Scored Criteria: -

Strategic Access	Local Access	Site Quality, Amenities & Management	Market Attractiveness	Development & Environmental Constraints
<b>2 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>

**Strengths: -**

7.166. Transport connectivity: The business park benefits from excellent local access due to its proximity to Hockley railway station, bus services, and local roads, providing good connectivity for both employees and customers.

7.167. Varied occupier mix: The park accommodates a wide range of businesses across various sectors, including automotive services, retail, healthcare, construction, and more, contributing to a dynamic and vibrant environment.

7.168. Location and identity: Situated on the border of Hockley Town Centre, the business park enjoys a central location with its own identity, including a sign at the approach roundabout, enhancing visibility and recognition.

**Weaknesses: -**

7.169. Vacancy and underutilisation: The presence of vacant and underutilised units, including vacant office blocks with boarded-up windows, indicates challenges in maintaining high occupancy and attractiveness to potential tenants.

7.170. Quality of stock: Despite the fair overall condition, the older warehouses and units exhibit signs of ageing and weathering, which might affect the aesthetic appeal and functionality of the site, as well as incurring additional maintenance obligations and costs.

7.171. Limited on-site amenities: The lack of on-site amenities and limited green spaces on the property could impact the working environment and convenience for employees and visitors.

7.172. Internal circulation: Circulation is extremely limited, with access beyond site entry constrained for private vehicles and HGVs

**Conclusions and Recommendations: -**

Monitor and Manage

7.173. The Council should continue to monitor this site over the short-medium term as the Local Plan preparation process continues. Whilst the site provides accommodation for small businesses in a convenient and sustainable location, adjacent to Hockley Town Centre and rail station, and is likely affordable, much of the site is dated and has limited circulation space. The more modern office blocks at the site entrance are now both vacant, with one showing signs of abandonment/disrepair.

7.174. Whilst proposals to improve the existing stock for employment purposes should be supported, consideration could be given to other proposals, provided they meet strategic priorities for sustainable development on a brownfield site. The site has recently changed ownership and it is likely there is interest in redeveloping all or part of the site for residential purposes, given proximity to the railway station and the presence of several fairly modern apartment blocks adjacent to the site entrance.

7.175. Any future loss of employment space should be accompanied by a consideration on whether to recategorise the site, whilst consideration should be given on how to compensate for lost employment space through provision elsewhere, ensuring Hockley retains a range of appropriate employment space. Any future redevelopment should also include consideration of how to integrate the site with the neighbouring Eldon Way Industrial Estate, which itself could be the subject of regeneration. A masterplan to integrate the development of the two sites would be beneficial.

**Figure C52: Foundry Business Park (ELS14).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024).*

**Figure C53: Foundry Business Park (ELS14).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024).*

**Figure C54: Foundry Business Park (ELS14).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024).*

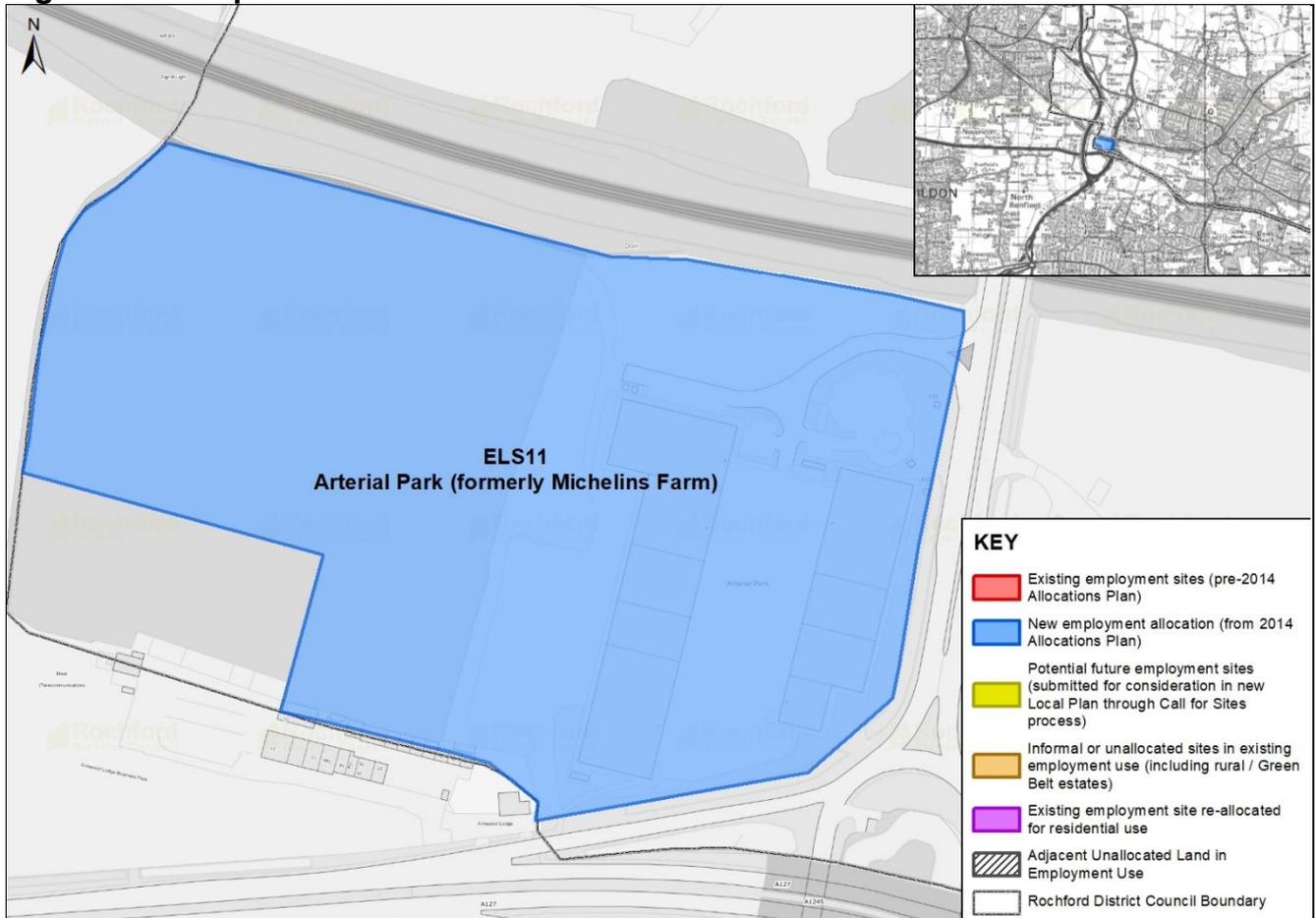
**Figure C55: Foundry Business Park (ELS14).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024).*

**Arterial Park (formerly Michelins Farm, ELS11)**

**Figure C56: Map of Arterial Park.**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

Location:	Arterial Park (formerly Michelins Farm), Chelmsford Road, Rayleigh
Site Area (Ha):	8.81
Site Category:	2 - New employment allocation (from 2014 Allocations Plan)
Site Cluster:	Rayleigh, Rawreth and Battlesbridge

**Site Description: -**

7.176. Arterial Park is a modern development comprising purpose-built warehouse and industrial units located in the far South-Western corner of Rochford District. It adjoins the A127 and A1245 roads and a railway line, along with agricultural land in the Green Belt and the Annwood Lodge Business Park, both in Basildon Borough. These units have been designed to cater to various industrial/distribution purposes and offer the advantage of flexible E(g), B2, and B8 permissions. They are notable for their height, featuring two-storey offices and mezzanine flooring.

7.177. The site is situated in proximity to the main industrial areas of Basildon and has easy access to the M25 motorway as well as the ports of Tilbury and DP World. This advantageous positioning makes it an attractive choice for logistics and manufacturing firms seeking convenient road access.

7.178. The initial phase of the development, comprising 9 units, has been successfully occupied within a short period, with only 2 units still vacant as of early 2023. Given this success, it is likely that the upcoming phase 2, consisting of an additional ten units, will experience a similar level of demand. The planning permission for E(g), B2, and B8 uses further widens the appeal of these units to a range of businesses in logistics and manufacturing. Part of the site contains an allocated Gypsy & Traveller site, under the Core Strategy.

**Site Evaluation: -**

7.179. Traffic Light Categorisation: -

Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class Floorspace	Neighbouring Amenities
Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Red

Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation
Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green

Physical Opportunity for Intensification: - **NO**

Vacant Land: -**YES**

Vacant Buildings: - **YES**

7.180. Qualitative Scored Criteria: -

Strategic Access	Local Access	Site Quality, Amenities & Management	Market Attractiveness	Development & Environmental Constraints
5 / 5	3 / 5	4 / 5	5 / 5	3 / 5

**Strengths: -**

7.181. Strategic location: Arterial Park's location adjacent to the A127/A130/A1245 Fairglen Interchange offers exceptional road connectivity to major transportation routes, including the M25 and nearby towns/cities such as Basildon, Southend and Chelmsford. Its convenience for multiple areas provides a broad customer base and labour pool within a short drive.

7.182. Modern infrastructure: The development features purpose-built warehouse and industrial units equipped with flexible E(g), B2, and B8 permissions. The modern

design, 2-storey offices, mezzanine flooring, consistent colour scheme, and landscaping contribute to a high-quality business environment.

- 7.183. Market attractiveness: The initial phase of Arterial Park saw rapid occupancy within a short timeframe, demonstrating market demand for such facilities. Planning permission for a forthcoming phase (Phase 2) indicates market confidence and the potential for further demand.
- 7.184. Prominent branding and visibility: The site's strong branding, large entrance sign, and clear visibility from major roads enhance its prominence and attractiveness to potential occupiers.
- 7.185. Access to key locations: The proximity to the main industrial areas of Basildon, easy access to ports such as Tilbury and DP World, and good road connections make Arterial Park an appealing location for logistics and manufacturing firms seeking strategic access.

**Weaknesses: -**

- 7.186. Limited sustainable travel options: The site's strong road connectivity contrasts with limited sustainable transportation options. Lack of public transport access, inadequate pedestrian and cycling routes, and no nearby train stations hinder sustainable travel to the site.
- 7.187. Lack of nearby amenities: Arterial Park lacks amenities within walking distance, requiring a drive for basic needs. This could be inconvenient for occupants and employees seeking services or retail facilities nearby.
- 7.188. Dependency on private vehicle access: The site's limited sustainable travel options mean a heavy dependence on private vehicles for access, potentially contributing to traffic congestion and environmental concerns.
- 7.189. Uncertainty regarding future development: The presence of a Gypsy and Traveller allocation on part of the site creates uncertainty about the site's full development potential and potential conflicts between different uses.

**Conclusions and Recommendations: -**

Protect and Maintain

- 7.190. The site is a strategic gateway to the District and provides modern warehouse/manufacturing space with good access to the strategic road network. As such, it shares many characteristics with other large scale, purpose-built industrial sites within Basildon District, westwards along the A127 Corridor. The site benefits from permission for a further 10 units within phase 2, the completion of which will make the site a significant employment centre within the District. The site should continue to be promoted and protected for uses within E(g), B2 and B8, reflecting its strategic role in providing high quality accommodation in the grow-on space category (150-500 sq m), a size band which is in short supply across South Essex.

7.191. As it stands, the development of Phase 2 will mark the full development of the site. However, the 1 ha Gypsy & Traveller site allocation GT1 (for 15 pitches), in the South-Western corner of the site, represents a potential issue or opportunity. Depending on the District’s future course of action regarding Gypsy & Traveller sites and whether alternative approaches are adopted as a consequence of the new Local Plan may mean the site is no longer required for this purpose. In this instance, it is likely the site could be developed for additional employment use as a third phase. Future development should retain the site’s high-quality landscape and identity and seek to provide additional sustainable/active travel linkages to the surrounding areas. Such improvements could be made in conjunction with the adjacent Fairlawns Farm site, should this be allocated in future. Any cross-boundary opportunities with adjacent sites in Basildon Borough could also be explored, should employment allocations be designated in the area through Basildon’s emerging Local Plan.

**Figure C57: Arterial Park (formerly Michelins Farm, ELS11).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024).*

**Figure C58: Arterial Park (formerly Michelins Farm, ELS11).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024).*

**Figure C59: Arterial Park (formerly Michelins Farm, ELS11).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024).*

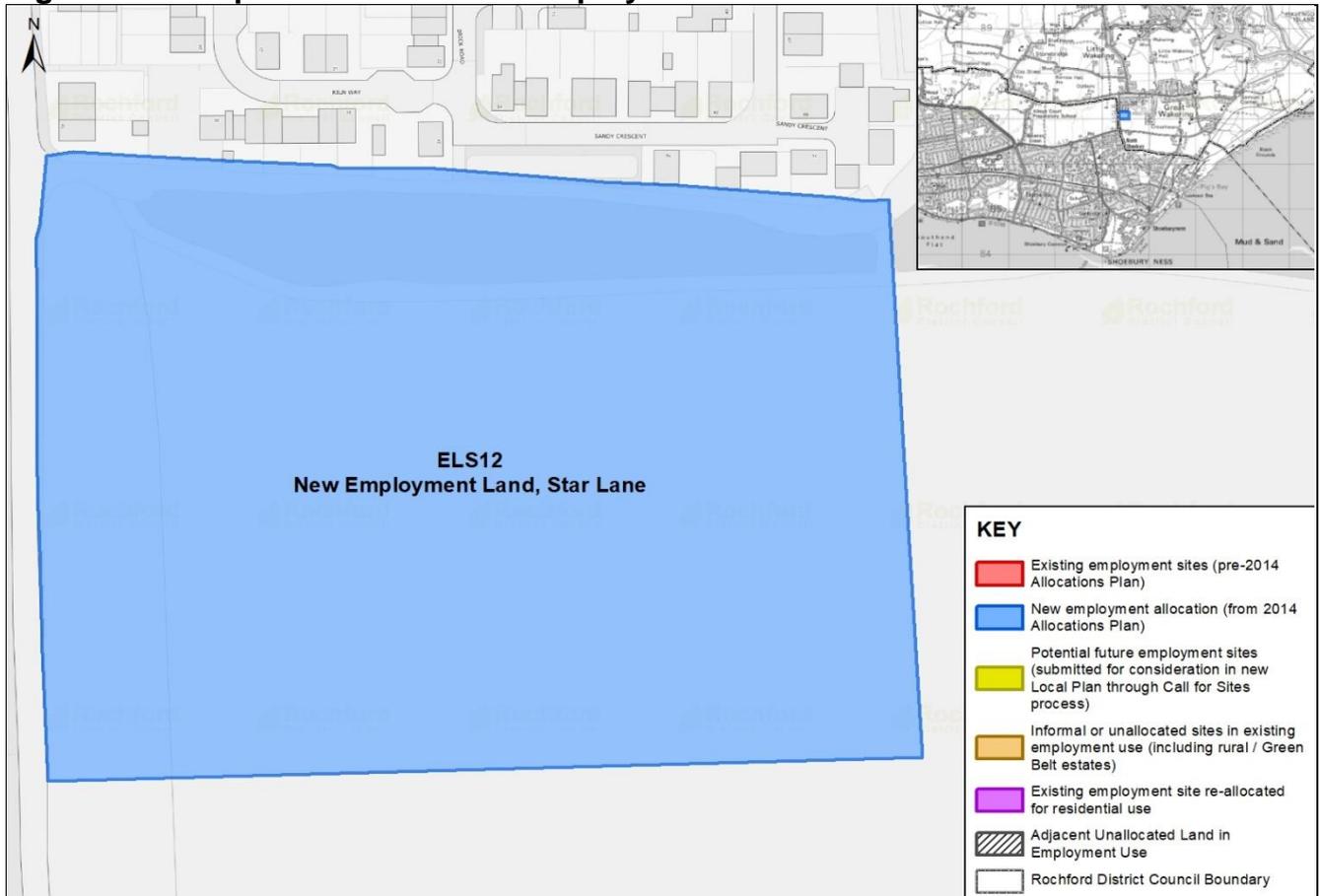
**Figure C60: Arterial Park (formerly Michelins Farm, ELS11).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024).*

**New Employment Land, Star Lane (ELS12)**

**Figure C61: Map of Star Lane New Employment Lane**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

Location:	New Employment Land, Star Lane, Great Wakering
Site Area (Ha):	3.20
Site Category:	New Employment Allocation (from 2014 Allocations Plan)
Site Cluster:	Great Wakering

**Site Description: -**

7.192. The site consists of undeveloped agricultural land in an average condition, with little evidence of pre-construction or site assessment works observed. As of Summer 2023, development on site is yet to commence, although an outline application for employment uses on the site has been received.

7.193. The site benefits from an employment allocation (Policy NEL2) under the 2014 Allocations Plan, part of the adopted Local Development Framework. NEL2 states that the land is not well related to the strategic road network but provides access to local employment opportunities for the settlement of Great Wakering and surrounding

communities. Its designation was intended to offset the designation of nearby Star Lane Industrial Estate for residential use, something which has yet to progress.

7.194. NEL2 states the types of uses permitted on site should be B1 (business – now E(g), B2 (industrial) and B8 (storage and distribution). The policy sets out a range of considerations should the site be developed, including sustainability criteria for buildings; provision of landscaped green buffers to provide defensible Green Belt boundaries; junction access improvements; and investment in public transport, footpath and cycle links.

7.195. It is important that any development of the site ensures nearby residential areas and Local Wildlife Site are well screened from the employment uses, whilst also being accessible by foot/bike.

**Site Evaluation: -**

7.196. Traffic Light Categorisation: -

Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class Floorspace	Neighbouring Amenities
<b>Amber</b>	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	<b>Amber</b>

Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation
N.A.	<b>Red</b>	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.

Physical Opportunity for Intensification: - **YES**

Vacant Land: - **YES**

Vacant Buildings: - **NO**

7.197. Qualitative Scored Criteria: -

Strategic Access	Local Access	Site Quality, Amenities & Management	Market Attractiveness	Development & Environmental Constraints
<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>2 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>

**Strengths: -**

7.198. Strategic location: The site's proximity to local roads, the A13, and nearby residential areas makes it well-located for potential occupiers. Regular bus services (Arriva Services 7 & 8) enhance its accessibility.

7.199. Demand potential: The full capacity of nearby industrial estates like Star Lane Industrial Estate and Crouchman's Yard/Court suggests potential demand for employment units in the location. The site's single ownership and greenfield nature are attractive to developers due to the lack of existing constraints.

7.200. Local amenities and utilities: The allocation benefits from close proximity to limited amenities on Star Lane Industrial Estate and in Great/Little Wakering. While the site is currently not serviced with utilities, its connection potential is favourable.

**Weaknesses: -**

7.201. Undeveloped status: As of mid-2023, the site remains undeveloped with limited evidence of pre-construction or assessment works. Its current condition raises uncertainties about the timeline and feasibility of development, although a recent planning application suggests some progress.

7.202. Lack of infrastructure: The lack of existing infrastructure, lighting, and security apparatus on-site may pose challenges to potential developers. The site's undeveloped nature requires significant investments in utilities, infrastructure, and facilities.

7.203. Land constraints: The allocation's potential is constrained by nearby factors like LoWS R35 Star Lane Pits to the north and surrounding Metropolitan Green Belt Land, along with recently developed housing to the north. Addressing these constraints, particularly through landscaping barriers, may be necessary for planning approval.

**Conclusions and Recommendations:-**

Protect and Enhance

7.204. At present, the site is undeveloped and benefits from an employment allocation under the 2014 Allocations Plan, part of the adopted Local Development Framework. The evidence base for employment land supply and demand, along with no vacancies on other employment sites in Great Wakering, suggests there is likely to be a demand for business accommodation on the site. A planning application was recently submitted (Summer 2023), and it is recommended that the site retains its employment allocation.

7.205. It is important to note that the site, along with its wider surroundings, form part of the promoted site CFS057 within the new Local Plan, meaning there may be interest in securing the site for residential development. In the event of CFS057 being allocated, site NEL2 should be protected for employment use and integrated with its wider surroundings, recognising that growth in the local residential population is likely to drive a need for additional employment activities. The situation should be closely monitored, and the Council should work with any prospective developer to bring forward the types of uses that contemporary economic conditions suggest there may be a demand for (e.g., flexible starter/grow-on business units).

**Figure C62: New Employment Land, Star Lane (ELS12).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024).*

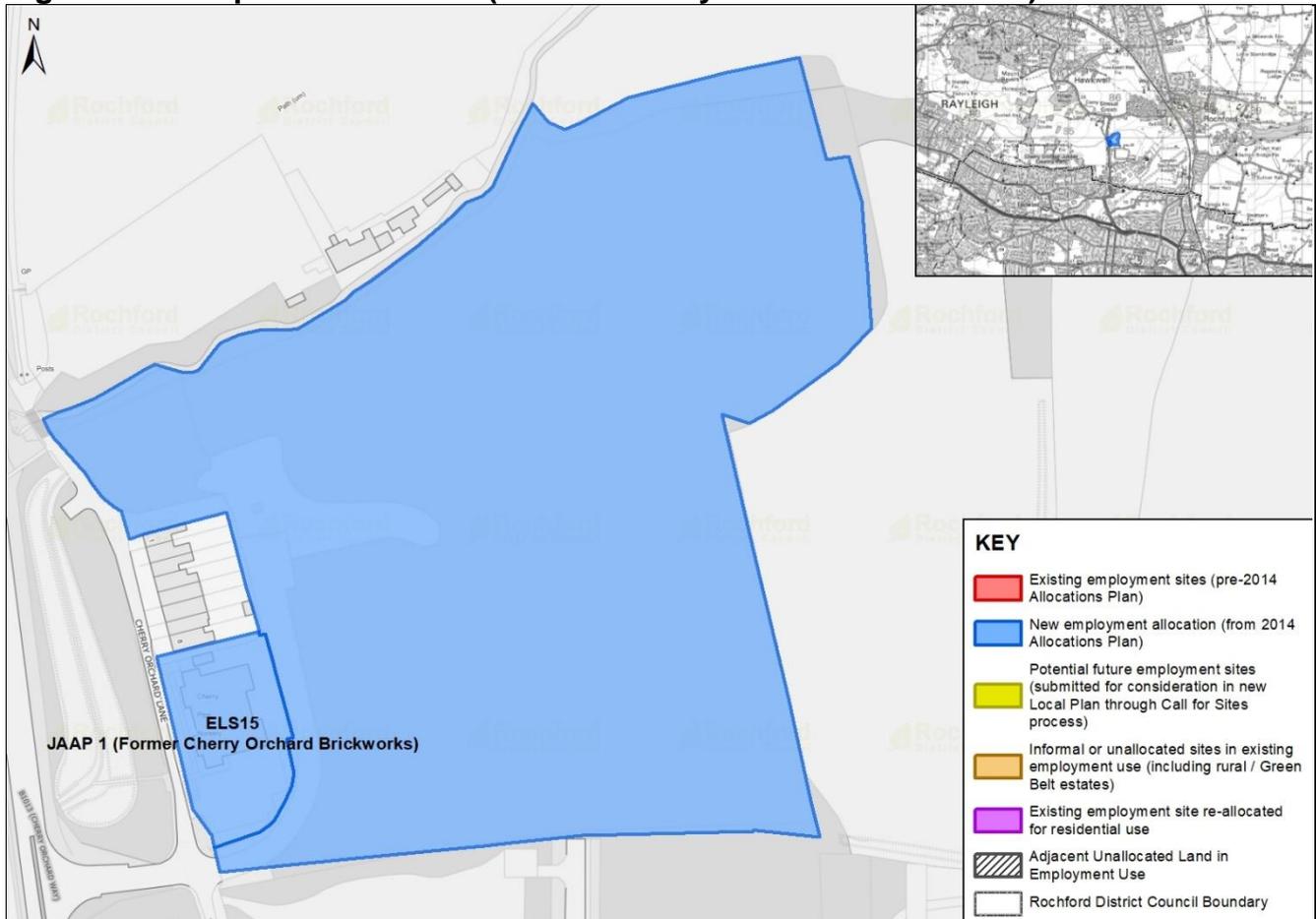
**Figure C63: New Employment Land, Star Lane (ELS12).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024).*

**JAAP Site 1 (Former Cherry Orchard Brickworks, ELS15)**

**Figure C64: Map of JAAP Site 1 (Former Cherry Orchard Brickworks).**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024).

Location:	JAAP Site 1 (Former Cherry Orchard Brickworks), Cherry Orchard Lane, Rochford
Site Area (Ha):	6.02
Site Category:	New Employment Allocation (from 2014 Allocations Plan)
Site Cluster:	London Southend Airport

**Site Description: -**

7.206. The site is a new employment land allocation under the current Local Development Framework, and forms part of the London Southend Airport Joint Area Action Plan (JAAP) strategic employment area. It fronts onto Cherry Orchard Lane, adjacent to an existing small row of terraced houses. The site adjoins the Airport Business Park to the South, football pitches to the North, Green Belt land to the North-East and additional undeveloped land with an employment designation to the East. In its current state, the undeveloped parts of the site comprise rough ground covered in vegetation,

along with an access road and a series of storage containers, parked vehicles and piles of building material/rubble/waste.

7.207. The site benefits from an employment allocation as part of Area 1 in the JAAP, with the relevant JAAP policy envisaging the site accommodating up to 20,000 sq. m of B1 (office) or education space (the remaining portion of Area 1 is under different ownership and is covered within this Study as Site ELS17). At present, only one portion of the site, fronting Cherry Orchard Lane, is developed as a two-storey building comprising a day nursery on the ground floor and small offices on the upper floor. This provides a degree of good quality space for small businesses, whilst the nursery serves as a useful amenity for the adjoining employment sites.

7.208. The site is subject of an appeal decision relating to the refused 20/00913/OUT care village scheme, which was allowed at appeal. Although it includes an element of E(g) office use, the majority of this is not policy-compliant and will not support employment uses, although any ancillary retail/café/leisure uses may provide useful amenities to the neighbouring sites. It is recommended that activity on this site is monitored to determine whether the appeal scheme is implemented, or whether alternative employment uses come forward in future.

**Site Evaluation: -**

7.209. Traffic Light Categorisation: -

Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class Floorspace	Neighbouring Amenities
Amber	Green	Green	Red	Amber	Amber

Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation
Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber

Physical Opportunity for Intensification: - **YES**

Vacant Land: - **YES**

Vacant Buildings: - **NO**

7.210. Qualitative Scored Criteria: -

Strategic Access	Local Access	Site Quality, Amenities & Management	Market Attractiveness	Development & Environmental Constraints
<b>4 / 5</b>	<b>4 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>

**Strengths: -**

- 7.211. Existing and future amenities: The site's existing nursery and proposed retail/café/healthcare elements could provide complementary amenities for workers and visitors at the neighbouring Airport Business Park, reducing their need to drive elsewhere and enhancing that site's appeal.
- 7.212. Employment provision: Although the majority of uses proposed for the appeal scheme are not in employment use classes, the scheme does still propose some office space, whilst it has delivered some existing accommodation above the nursery building.
- 7.213. Development of a derelict site: The site's development will likely result in a modern, landscaped scheme which will result in the redevelopment of a visually unattractive, overgrown plot of land. This will enhance the wider environmental quality of the Airport Business Park and increase its appeal.

**Weaknesses: -**

- 7.214. Undeveloped majority: Despite the existing building, a significant portion of the site remains undeveloped and is visually unattractive, showing evidence of waste storage. The undeveloped area requires attention to be brought up to the same standard as the developed portion.
- 7.215. Appeal scheme: The appeal decision allowing the development of a care village scheme deviates from the initial employment allocation policy. While this indicates market confidence, the mixed-use nature might not fully align with the original employment-focused intent. The residential portions of the scheme could result in conflict with employment uses on the adjoining sites, if this is not carefully managed through the planning process.
- 7.216. Remediation and flood zone: The site's former brickworks status requires remediation before development. Additionally, parts of the site are in Flood Zone 2, necessitating mitigation measures to address potential flood risks.
- 7.217. Access and traffic congestion: While the site's access is currently adequate for its current use, peak drop-off/pick-up times at the day nursery could lead to congestion. The introduction of a care village or other developments might increase traffic demands and will require infrastructure improvements.

**Conclusions and Recommendations: -**

Monitor and Manage

- 7.218. Given the refused scheme for a care village was allowed on appeal, it may no longer be realistic to expect a significant element of employment space to come forward on this site, and as such it may not be an appropriate employment allocation in the new Local Plan.
- 7.219. However, as work is yet to begin on the site it, it is prudent to monitor the situation and revisit in future whether or not the envisaged development will come forward as

expected. Should the site be developed for residential/community/care home purposes, a re-allocation for other purposes could be considered.

**7.220.** In any event, proposals to bring forward employment-led development on this site, whether as an element of a non-employment scheme (as set out in the appeal), or as a new proposal for all/part of the site, should continue to be supported.

**Figure C65: JAAP Site 1 (Former Cherry Orchard Brickworks, ELS15).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure C66: JAAP Site 1 (Former Cherry Orchard Brickworks, ELS15).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024).*

**Figure C67: JAAP Site 1 (Former Cherry Orchard Brickworks, ELS15).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

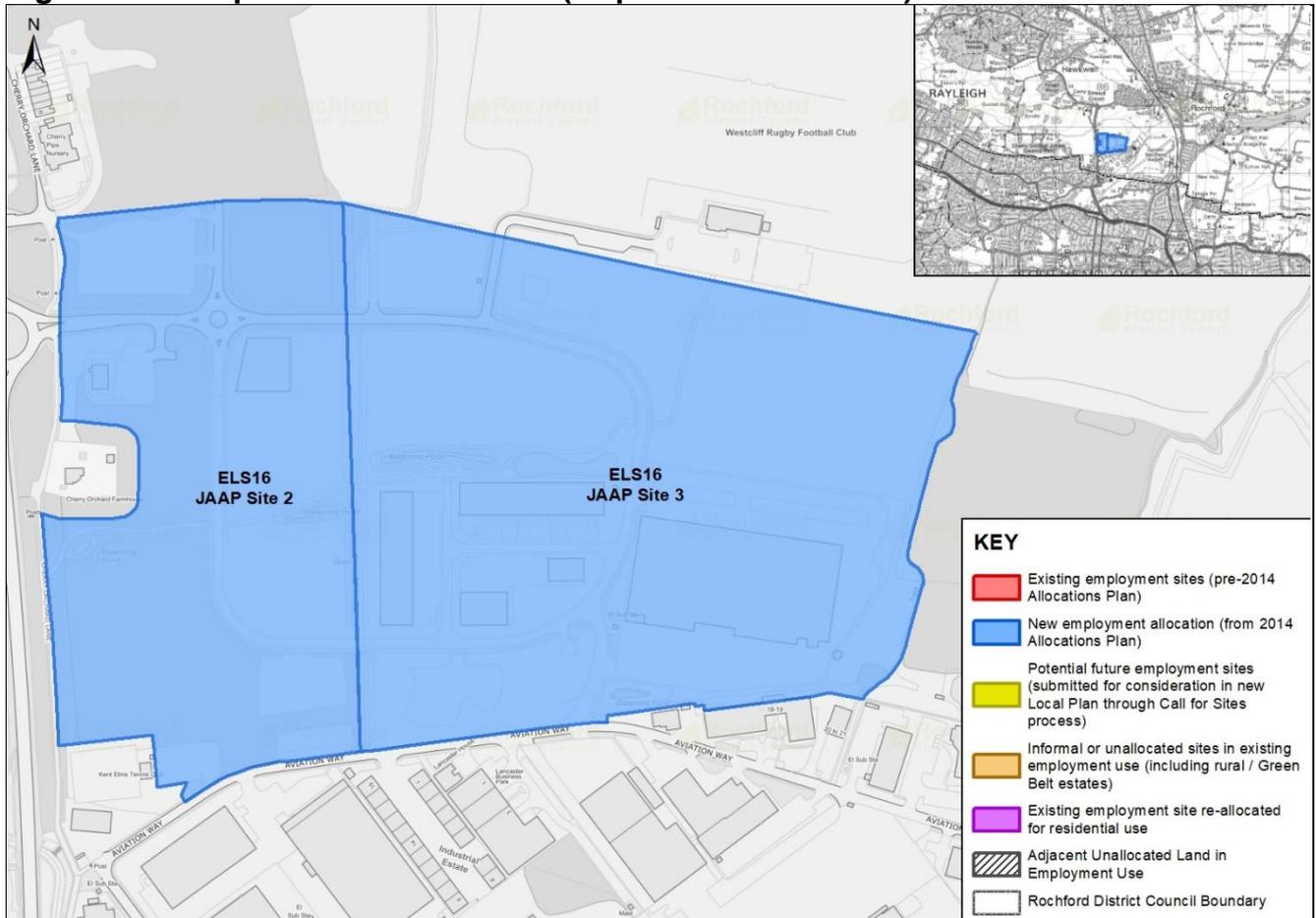
**Figure C68: JAAP Site 1 (Former Cherry Orchard Brickworks, ELS15).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024).*

**JAAP Site 2 & 3 (Airport Business Park, ELS16)**

**Figure C69: Map of JAAP Sites 2 & 3 (Airport Business Park).**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024).

Location:	Cherry Orchard Lane, Rochford
Site Area (Ha):	20.98
Site Category:	2 - New Employment Allocation (from 2014 Allocations Plan)
Site Cluster:	London Southend Airport

**Site Description: -**

7.221. The Airport Business Park (ABP) is a new, modern, high quality industrial estate in the south of Rochford District. At present, the site is partially-developed, with enabling works including the relocation of Westcliff Rugby Club and installation of utilities and a spine road having been followed by the construction of a new manufacturing unit by aerospace component manufacturer Ipeco, along with a drive-thru ‘Costa Coffee’ unit and the ‘Launchpad’ Innovation Centre, a building housing start-up businesses space, operated by Oxford Innovation on behalf of Southend-on-Sea City Council. Most recently, one plot has been developed into an estate of 12 smaller

industrial/warehouse units, known as the ‘Quad’. Units on the site vary in height between one and three storeys.

7.222. The site is still in an early stage of development and occupation, meaning the occupier profile needs more time to become established. All commercial buildings on-site have been constructed recently and are of an extremely high standard, along with extensive landscaping of the site. Design reflects that of best practice examples (as outlined within the Essex Design Guidance) and are modern, with facilities provided (such as localised EV charging facilities) to cater to a range of business and service needs.

7.223. Given the location of the Airport Business Park, the recent modernisation and development on-site and the surrounding commercial environment, it is expected that the site’s role in accommodating employment uses will continue to grow significantly in the short-medium term, and beyond.

**Site Evaluation: -**

7.224. Traffic Light Categorisation: -

Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class Floorspace	Neighbouring Amenities
Green	Green	Green	Amber	Green	Green

Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation
Green	Green	Amber	Green	Green	Green

Physical Opportunity for Intensification: - **YES**

Vacant Land: - **YES**

Vacant Buildings: - **YES**

7.225. Qualitative Scored Criteria: -

Strategic Access	Local Access	Site Quality, Amenities & Management	Market Attractiveness	Development & Environmental Constraints
4 / 5	5 / 5	4 / 5	4 / 5	4 / 5

**Strengths: -**

7.226. Strategic location and connectivity: The Airport Business Park benefits from its strategic location near London Southend Airport and main roads like Cherry Orchard Way and the A127. Its proximity to key transport routes facilitates easy access for businesses and employees.

- 7.227. High-quality development: The site features modern and high-quality commercial buildings constructed to best practice standards, reflecting Essex Design Guidance. These buildings offer a range of facilities, including EV charging points, to cater to various business needs.
- 7.228. Sustainable infrastructure: The Airport Business Park has been developed with sustainability in mind, with all units built to high energy efficiency standards and BREEAM ratings. This commitment to sustainability aligns with modern business practices and environmental concerns.
- 7.229. Occupier Profile: Although at an early stage of development, the site has attracted a mix of businesses, including aerospace manufacturing (Ipeco), coffee shops (Costa Coffee), and start-up spaces (Launchpad Innovation Centre). The 'Quad' scheme of 12 units is also fully-occupied. This diverse occupier profile will create a sense of vibrancy in the business park as it develops.
- 7.230. Future development opportunities: The site's masterplan and available plots indicate significant potential for future expansion and development. The fact that several plots have secured planning permission suggests ongoing growth and opportunities for businesses seeking new spaces.

**Weaknesses: -**

- 7.231. Limited Current Occupancy: While the site has attracted notable occupants like Ipeco and Costa Coffee, it is still in an early stage of development and not all available spaces have been occupied. This could impact the immediate vibrancy and sense of community within the park.
- 7.232. Limited on-site amenities: While amenities like Costa Coffee and Westcliff RFC are present, the current range of on-site amenities is limited. The need for more services may arise as the site's occupancy increases.
- 7.233. Connectivity challenges: While there are sustainable access options like cycle paths and footpaths, the site could benefit from improved public transport connections, especially given its potential for future growth. The present reliance on private transportation might limit accessibility for some employees and result in congestion as the site develops.

**Conclusions and Recommendations: -**

Protect and Maintain

- 7.234. Airport Business Park is one of the District's flagship employment sites, situated on a gateway site between Rochford and London Southend Airport. As a key component of the Southend Airport Joint Area Action Plan (JAAP), it is an important location on which to provide much-needed high-quality employment space to meet the needs of both growing Rochford and Southend businesses. It also represents a strategic opportunity to attract new inward investment and knowledge-intensive industries to South-East Essex, providing a greater number of skilled, well-paid jobs in the local

area and reducing the need for local residents to commute long distances to London and other parts of Essex. As such, the site should be protected and prioritised for uses which maximise potential for both quantity and quality of employment opportunities and should, where possible, provide a range of different unit types to enable businesses to expand/downsize across the site over time, as required

- 7.235. Measures to prioritise E(g)/B2 and high value uses should apply in particular to the most prominent plots which form a gateway to the site, where high-value/high-profile uses and occupiers would enhance the estate's attractiveness for skilled employment.
- 7.236. To support this attractiveness, ancillary uses which enhance the site's amenity and attractiveness to occupiers/visitors should be supported, e.g. a hotel, additional food & beverage or small-scale convenience retail, whilst proposals for supporting/ancillary uses on neighbouring sites (e.g. Aviation Way) should also be evaluated in how they could support the vitality of the Airport Business Park and the wider JAAP area.
- 7.237. Although the site benefits from good local connectivity, it is important that this continues to improve as the site develops, in order to reduce wider traffic congestion and enhance the attractiveness of the site and surrounding JAAP sites. Priority should be given to providing the bus service for which S106 funding was sought in the initial outline application for the business park's development, along with provision of enhanced pedestrian/cycle links connecting towards Rochford Railway Station and areas of Southend.
- 7.238. Further consideration could also be given to how the site could integrate better with surrounding JAAP sites, including the former Brickworks to the North and Aviation Way to the South. Many of the offers on these sites are complementary, whilst the gradual moving of elements of the Ipeco estate could lead to redevelopment opportunities on Aviation Way. Improvement of pedestrian/cycle links and establishment of a bus route through the sites should be sought as a result.
- 7.239. Careful consideration should be given to whether any specific policy references for this site (or the wider JAAP area) are required in the new Local Plan, whilst engagement and collaboration with existing landowners (including Ipeco) and developers, alongside Southend-on-Sea City Council, is recommended.

**Figure C70: JAAP Site 2 & 3 (Airport Business Park, ELS16).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024).*

**Figure C71: JAAP Site 2 & 3 (Airport Business Park, ELS16).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024).*

**Figure C72: JAAP Site 2 & 3 (Airport Business Park, ELS16).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024).*

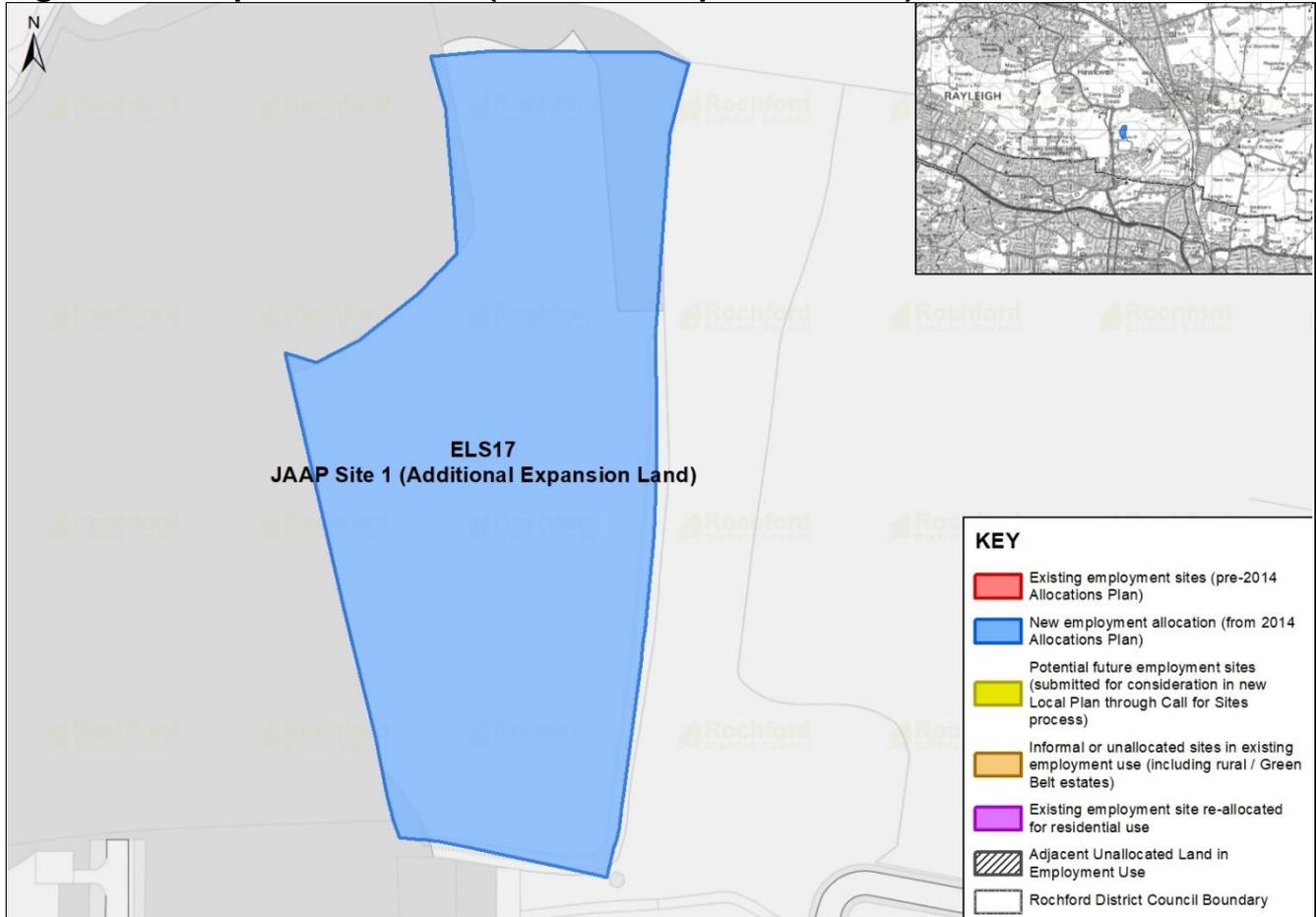
**Figure C73: JAAP Site 2 & 3 (Airport Business Park, ELS16).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024).*

**JAAP Site 1 (Additional Expansion Land, ELS17)**

**Figure C74: Map of JAAP Site 1 (Additional Expansion Land)**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

Location:	Cherry Orchard Lane, Rochford
Site Area (Ha):	1.74
Site Category:	2 - New Employment Allocation (from 2014 Allocations Plan)
Site Cluster:	London Southend Airport

**Site Description: -**

7.240. The site in question is an irregularly shaped plot of land situated to the north of the present Airport Business Park site. It is part of the former Brickworks site and shares its borders with the remaining portion of the Brickworks site to the west (ELS15), Westcliff Rugby Club to the east, and a field in the Green Belt to the north. Recently, a road/footpath has been constructed, extending from Airport Business Park to the southern perimeter of the site.

7.241. This particular area, together with the adjacent former Brickworks site, constitutes Area 1 in the Southend Airport Joint Area Action Plan (JAAP), originally designated for

potential office/education usage spanning up to 20,000 sq. m. Notably, the neighbouring site, presently housing a small office/nursery block, has been granted planning permission, following an appeal, to be developed into a residential care village with some office and ancillary retail/leisure facilities.

7.242. At present, the site is labelled as 'future development land' in the Airport Business Park brochure. However, on the website's 'Masterplan' section, which presents an illustrative floorplan of the business park, the site is depicted as accommodating a large industrial/warehouse unit with accompanying parking. It is important to note that this is likely a conceptual representation, providing an insight into potential future plans for the site.

7.243. The site shares common ownership with Airport Business Park, indicating the possibility of it being utilised for future expansion purposes. Additionally, a proposed 'greenway' pedestrian/cycle link, an integral part of the JAAP and Airport Business Park masterplan, is envisioned to extend from the business park towards Rochford Station, potentially passing through this site.

**Site Evaluation: -**

7.244. Traffic Light Categorisation: -

Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class Floorspace	Neighbouring Amenities
Amber	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	Amber

Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation
N.A.	Amber	N.A.	N.A.	Amber	N.A.

Physical Opportunity for Intensification: - **YES**

Vacant Land: - **YES**

Vacant Buildings: - **NO**

7.245. Qualitative Scored Criteria: -

Strategic Access	Local Access	Site Quality, Amenities & Management	Market Attractiveness	Development & Environmental Constraints
<b>4 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>2 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>

**Strengths: -**

7.246. Strategic location and connectivity: The site benefits from its proximity to Cherry Orchard Way, a free-flowing B-road that provides good links to Southend and Rochford. It is also close to a paved off-road cycle path and has potential for a future

'greenway' pedestrian/cycle link, enhancing connectivity to Rochford Town Centre and the rail station.

- 7.247. Potential for expansion: The site's ownership by Airport Business Park and its inclusion in the JAAP as Area 1 expansion land indicate its potential for future development. Being part of the larger business park will provide it with visibility and potential for shared amenities.
- 7.248. Attractive green landscape: The site's setting within a relatively attractive green landscape could be enhanced to create an appealing business environment. The planned 'greenway' pedestrian/cycle link will further contribute to its attractiveness.

**Weaknesses: -**

- 7.249. Limited amenities and public transport: The site currently lacks direct access to bus services and amenities, with the exception of the coffee shop on the adjacent Airport Business Park. While the planned 'greenway' link will improve access to Rochford's facilities, the site's present amenities are dependent on adjoining properties.
- 7.250. Proximity to care village: The appeal decision permitting a residential care village on the adjoining site could impact the permissible uses and development of JAAP Site 1. Careful planning will be needed to ensure compatibility and integration.
- 7.251. Remediation and flood risk: As former brickworks land, the site requires remediation before development. Parts of the site are in Flood Zone 2, necessitating mitigation to address potential flood risks, which could add complexities to its development.

**Conclusions and Recommendations: -**

Protect and Enhance

- 7.252. The site is located adjacent to the existing Airport Business Park (under construction) and could represent a future site for expansion as the main site begins to reach full occupancy, whilst the footpath which has been extended to the site boundaries and access road extended close to its South-Western perimeter indicates there may well be an intention to service the site, as well as build a sustainable travel corridor which connects to Rochford and enhances the accessibility of the wider ABP/JAAP area. It is expected that the site would come forward for development in the medium-longer term.
- 7.253. Given the adjoining, larger part of the former Brickworks in JAAP Area 1 is now unlikely to deliver significant office space as part of the permitted care village scheme, it is more important that this site continues to deliver high-value employment uses, to help achieve the strategic employment objectives of the JAAP. The irregular shape of the site means it is likely to be more suitable for smaller buildings, and could provide starter/grow-on business accommodation linked to the nearby Launchpad Innovation Centre, allowing small and medium-sized enterprises to grow on the ABP site.

7.254. Whilst the intention could be for an industrial/distribution unit on the site, if the care village is constructed, it is likely that uses here would either need to be well-screened from this, or be predominantly office/light industrial, in order to preserve residential amenity on the adjoining site. Any development of the site should seek to enhance sustainable travel links with Rochford.

**Figure C75: JAAP Site 1 (Additional Expansion Land, ELS17).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

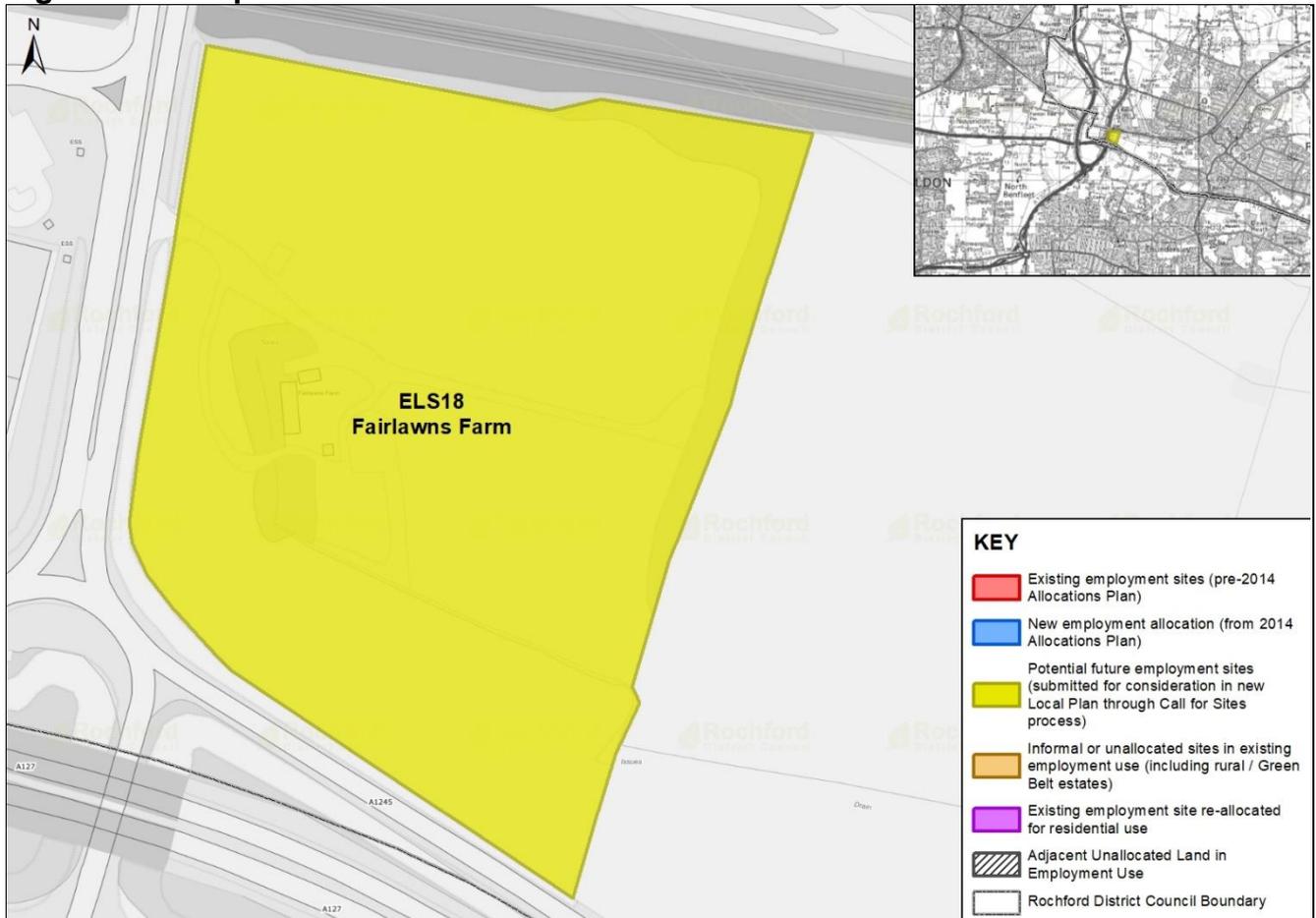
**Figure C76: JAAP Site 1 (Additional Expansion Land, ELS17).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2023)*

**Fairlawns Farm (ELS18)**

**Figure C77: Map of Fairlawns Farm**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

Location:	Fairlawns Farm, Arterial Road, Rayleigh
Site Area (Ha):	5.33
Site Category:	3 - Potential future employment sites (submitted for consideration in new Local Plan through Call for Sites process)
Site Cluster:	Rayleigh, Rawreth and Battlesbridge

**Site Description: -**

7.255. Fairlawns Farm (also known as Crouch Valley Showground) is a greenfield site with some agricultural storage, which also holds occasional events. It is located North-East of the A127/A1245 junction and is bound by roads to the west and south of the site, with the railway to the north and greenfield/agricultural land to the east. The site lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt.

7.256. The site is currently a promoted site to be considered for allocation as part of the new Local Plan, with both commercial and residential having been indicated as potential uses. It sits opposite Arterial Park (formerly known as Michelins Farm), an

employment allocation from the present Local Development Framework on which Phase 1 has recently been completed, with a phase 2 recently receiving approval. Arterial Park comprises a series of modern industrial/distribution units, the majority of which are occupied, despite being built speculatively. It is likely that a similar scheme could be suited to the Fairlawns Farm site.

**Site Evaluation: -**

7.257. Traffic Light Categorisation: -

Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class Floorspace	Neighbouring Amenities
Amber	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	Red	N.A.

Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation
N.A.	Green	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.

Physical Opportunity for Intensification: - **YES**

Vacant Land: - **YES**

Vacant Buildings: - **NO**

7.258. Qualitative Scored Criteria: -

Strategic Access	Local Access	Site Quality, Amenities & Management	Market Attractiveness	Development & Environmental Constraints
5 / 5	3 / 5	2 / 5	4 / 5	2 / 5

**Strengths: -**

7.259. Strategic location and road access: The site benefits from an excellent strategic location, being immediately adjacent to the A127/A1245 junction and close to the Fairglen Interchange. This provides easy access to major roads like the A127, A130, and A1245, enhancing connectivity for businesses and potential occupiers.

7.260. Development opportunity: As a greenfield site with some existing agricultural storage and occasional event use, Fairlawns Farm offers a clean slate for development. This can be advantageous for creating a high-quality business park without pre-existing built environment constraints.

7.261. Attractive business location: The site's prominence, proximity to the recently-built phase 1 of Arterial Park, and good road access make it an attractive location for businesses. It is likely to appeal to expanding or relocating businesses from the surrounding areas and potential investors seeking logistics sites along the A127 corridor.

**Weaknesses: -**

- 7.262. Limited non-vehicle access: The site's poor access without a motor vehicle is a significant drawback. Lack of footpath access, absence of public transport services, and no safe bicycle access can limit the accessibility for employees, customers, or visitors who rely on alternatives to cars.
- 7.263. Lack of amenities: The absence of amenities within the vicinity, with nothing easily walkable, detracts from the convenience and appeal of the site for potential occupants or employees seeking nearby facilities.
- 7.264. Green Belt constraint and development timeline: The site's location within the Metropolitan Green Belt and the need for allocation in a Local Plan present a significant barrier to development. This constraint means the site isn't suitable for businesses seeking short- to medium-term relocation options.
- 7.265. Other on-site constraints: The site has high-voltage power cables and electricity pylons traversing it, meaning negotiation with National Grid would be required to manage or reroute their assets and safely develop the site. It also lies adjacent to a railway line and the Fairglen Interchange (due to undergo major highways works), meaning significant cooperation from infrastructure providers would be necessary.

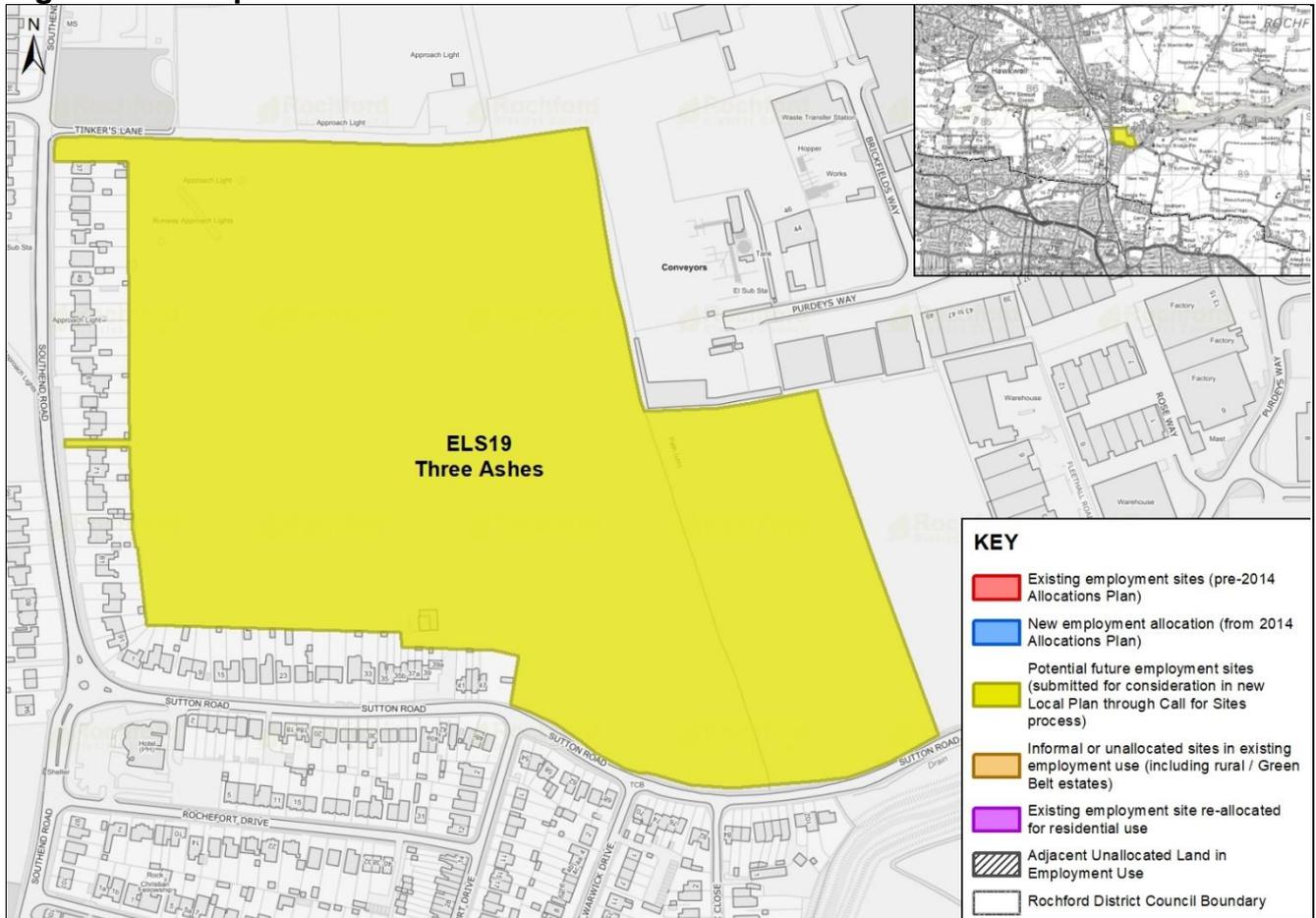
**Conclusions and Recommendations: -**

Monitor and Manage

- 7.266. The site in its current form sits within the Metropolitan Green Belt and is not suitable for development. The need for its allocation would need to be fully evidenced through the Local Plan-making process.
- 7.267. If the site were to be allocated, it would provide an opportunity for additional high-quality distribution/industrial accommodation in the area, building on the popularity of Arterial Park. The site has similar characteristics to Arterial Park in that it is far from populated areas of the District and is not accessible by means other than private car/motor vehicle, meaning there is a question over how much employment and economic benefits it would directly provide to Rochford District. Any allocation of the site should be accompanied by policy requirements that require it to help address existing sustainable travel issues, e.g., by providing a bus link and continuous footpath/cycleway connecting to both the A127 and residential areas of Rawreth/Rayleigh. In addition, any development of the site will need to have regard for proposed major highway works to improve the Fairglen Interchange, which will likely have implications for how the site is accessed.

**Three Ashes (ELS19)**

**Figure C78: Map of Three Ashes**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024).

Location:	Three Ashes, Sutton Road, Rochford
Site Area (Ha):	11.68
Site Category:	3 - Potential future employment sites (submitted for consideration in new Local Plan through Call for Sites process)
Site Cluster:	Rochford and Stambridge

**Site Description: -**

7.268. The site in its present form comprises an agricultural field within the Green Belt, lying adjacent to Purdeys Industrial Estate. It is bordered to the North-East by warehouse/industrial units. To the South, it is bordered by Sutton Road and residential dwellings, whilst to the West it is bordered by residential dwellings fronting Southend Road. To the North, it is bordered by Tinkers Lane, an unsurfaced access road. It also has an access point onto Southend Road. It does not include the field of grazing land immediately adjacent to the Purdeys site entrance.

7.269. It is a promoted site for consideration within the new Local Plan, and as such could represent expansion land for Purdeys Industrial Estate, providing new units to accommodate the needs of modern businesses uses, along with additional access points for the estate. However its designation would be subject to the plan-making process and will need to be fully evidenced to demonstrate exceptional circumstances for releasing Green Belt land

**Site Evaluation: -**

7.270. Traffic Light Categorisation: -

Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class	Neighbouring Amenities
<b>Amber</b>	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	<b>Amber</b>

Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation
N.A.	<b>Amber</b>	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.

Physical Opportunity for Intensification: - **YES**

Vacant Land: - **YES**

Vacant Buildings: - **NO**

7.271. Qualitative Scored Criteria: -

Strategic Access	Local Access	Site Quality, Amenities & Management	Market Attractiveness	Development & Environmental Constraints
<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>2 / 5</b>

**Strengths: -**

7.272. Strategic location: The site's strategic location adjacent to Purdeys Industrial Estate and its proximity to major road junctions (A1159 and A127) make it highly accessible for businesses and potential occupants, enhancing connectivity to key transportation routes.

7.273. Access and transportation: The potential for new access points onto Southend Road and Tinkers Lane, along with its adjacency to a frequent bus route and proximity to Rochford and Southend Airport stations, contribute to its strong accessibility by both road and public transport.

7.274. Existing infrastructure: Being adjacent to Purdeys Industrial Estate and located close to Rochford Town Centre, the site benefits from existing infrastructure, amenities, and an established environment for employment activities, which could be attractive to businesses seeking expansion or suitable premises.

**Weaknesses: -**

- 7.275. Green Belt constraint: The site's location within the Green Belt poses a significant constraint to its immediate development potential. Releasing Green Belt land requires a demonstrated need and exceptional circumstances, which is a hurdle for short- to medium-term development.
- 7.276. Timescales: While the site is promoted for consideration in the new Local Plan, the need for allocation and the comprehensive plan-making process mean that it's not suitable for businesses with immediate relocation plans. Development should align with the district's long-term economic needs and anticipated population growth.
- 7.277. Development uncertainty: While the site's greenfield nature and accessible location are advantageous, the uncertainty related to its future development due to Green Belt designation and the Local Plan process could deter businesses seeking more immediate relocation or expansion options.

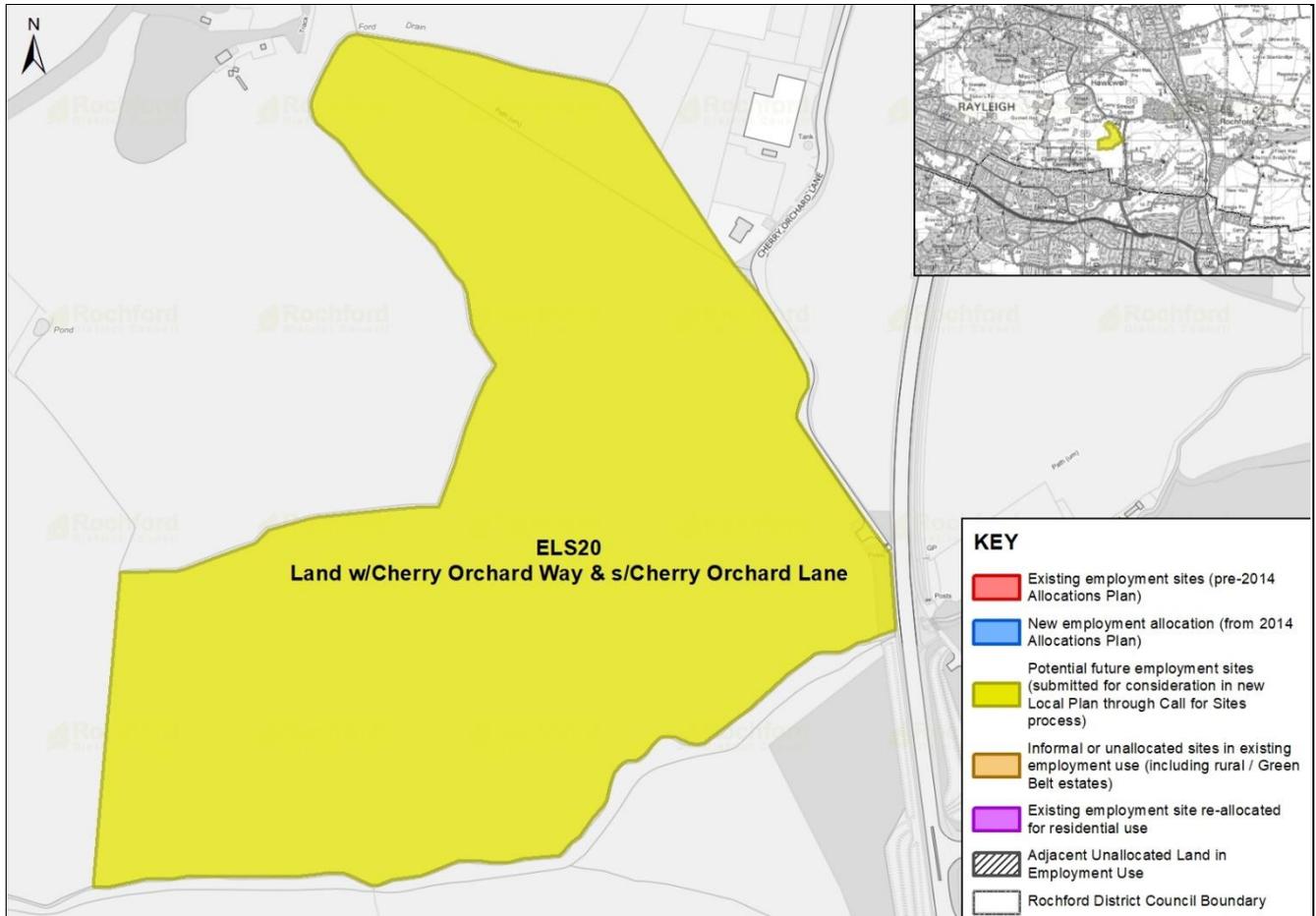
**Conclusions and Recommendations: -**

Monitor and Manage

- 7.278. The site in its current form sits within the Metropolitan Green Belt and is not suitable for development. The need for its allocation would need to be fully evidenced through the Local Plan-making process
- 7.279. Should the site secure allocation, it holds the potential not only to provide additional employment space, but also to address the existing challenges Purdey's experiences with site access. This could be achieved by introducing alternative access points that are better suited for the purpose. Utilising Tinkers Lane may also present an opportunity to establish a sustainable pedestrian and cycling access route, effectively connecting the site (and Purdey's) to Rochford Town Centre.
- 7.280. As a promoted site in the new Local Plan, the site promoter has indicated it is available for both employment and residential uses, so it is possible that in the event of an allocation in the Local Plan, the site becomes either a residential scheme or a mixed use development comprising both residential and commercial. Such manifestations would still have potential to deliver site access infrastructure and environmental enhancements which will benefit Purdeys Industrial Estate, even if little or no employment uses are delivered. Nevertheless, considering the presence of several heavy industry and waste-related enterprises on the western side of Purdeys, it's important to acknowledge that immediate residential development adjoining these areas might not be deemed appropriate.
- 7.281. Any allocation of the site and future proposals should require a masterplan to develop the site in a sustainable and coordinated way, ensuring that significant infrastructure improvements are delivered alongside its development in a way that also benefits existing businesses on Purdeys and residents in the neighbourhood.

**Land West of Cherry Orchard Way and South of Cherry Orchard Lane (ELS20)**

**Figure C79: Map of the Land West of Cherry Orchard Way and South of Cherry Orchard Lane.**



Location:	Land west of Cherry Orchard Way and south of Cherry Orchard Lane, Hawkwell.
Site Area (Ha):	15.85
Site Category:	3 - Potential future employment sites (submitted for consideration in new Local Plan through Call for Sites process)
Site Cluster:	London Southend Airport

**Site Description: -**

7.282. The area situated to the west of Cherry Orchard Road and south of Cherry Orchard Lane is an unallocated and undeveloped greenfield area. At present, the site is predominately agricultural. Located to the southwest of the Hall Road/B1013 roundabout, the site has an existing single track road access point from the north.

7.283. The surrounding land uses include Metropolitan Green Belt land, a garden centre/nursery located on Cherry Orchard Lane, and an allocated open space known

as Cherry Orchard County Park. In the vicinity, there are existing industrial sites, including those designated in the JAAP (Joint Area Action Plan) for employment, as well as Aviation Way Industrial Estate and Rochford Business Park. Additionally, there are other nearby unallocated employment sites being promoted, such as Land West of Cherry Orchard Way and East of Cherry Orchard Lane, and Land East of Cherry Orchard Way.

**Site Evaluation: -**

7.284. Traffic Light Categorisation: -

Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class Floorspace	Neighbouring Amenities
<b>Red</b>	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	<b>Amber</b>

Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation
N.A.	<b>Red</b>	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.

Physical Opportunity for Intensification: - **YES**

Vacant Land: - **YES**

Vacant Buildings: - **N.A**

7.285. Qualitative Scored Criteria: -

Strategic Access	Local Access	Site Quality, Amenities & Management	Market Attractiveness	Development & Environmental Constraints
<b>4 / 5</b>	<b>2 / 5</b>	<b>2 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>1 / 5</b>

**Strengths: -**

7.286. Rural environment: The site possesses a strong rural character, which could be advantageous for development schemes aiming to preserve or enhance the natural environment. This setting might attract occupants or residents seeking a quieter, more scenic location.

7.287. Proximity to amenities and accessibility: The site is relatively close to limited retail facilities and amenities on Cherry Orchard Way, the Airport Business Park, and a public house on Hall Road. Having these amenities within walking distance, could contribute to the convenience and attractiveness of the area.

7.288. Visibility and road network: The site benefits from good visibility from B1013 Cherry Orchard Way and is well-connected to the wider road network through Hall Road. This could be beneficial for businesses requiring exposure to passing traffic or for improved transportation access.

**Weaknesses: -**

- 7.289. Limited public transport access: The site's poor access to public transport, with the nearest bus stop located about 1.4km away, could deter potential occupiers or employees reliant on public transportation.
- 7.290. Flood risk and Special Landscape Area: A portion of the land falls within flood zones 2 & 3, indicating flood risk. Additionally, being within the Roach Valley Special Landscape Area could introduce additional considerations and constraints for development, affecting its suitability for certain types of projects.

**Conclusions and Recommendations: -**

Monitor and Manage

- 7.291. The site is currently designated as Green Belt, but it enjoys the advantage of being located close to the B1013 and Southend Airport. Despite its Green Belt status, the site has the potential to be suitable for employment uses, similar to those found in Southend Airport Business Park or businesses that thrive on excellent road connections and passing trade, while also appreciating the allure of a semi-rural environment. However, the development of the site would require the establishment of appropriate access points.
- 7.292. It is important to consider certain factors that may hinder development on the site, such as its position within flood zones and its location in the Roach Valley Special Landscape Area. These environmental considerations could present challenges to any potential development plans. In addition, the site lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt and its release for employment use would need to be fully justified.

**Figure C80: Land West of Cherry Orchard Way and South of Cherry Orchard Lane (ELS20).**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

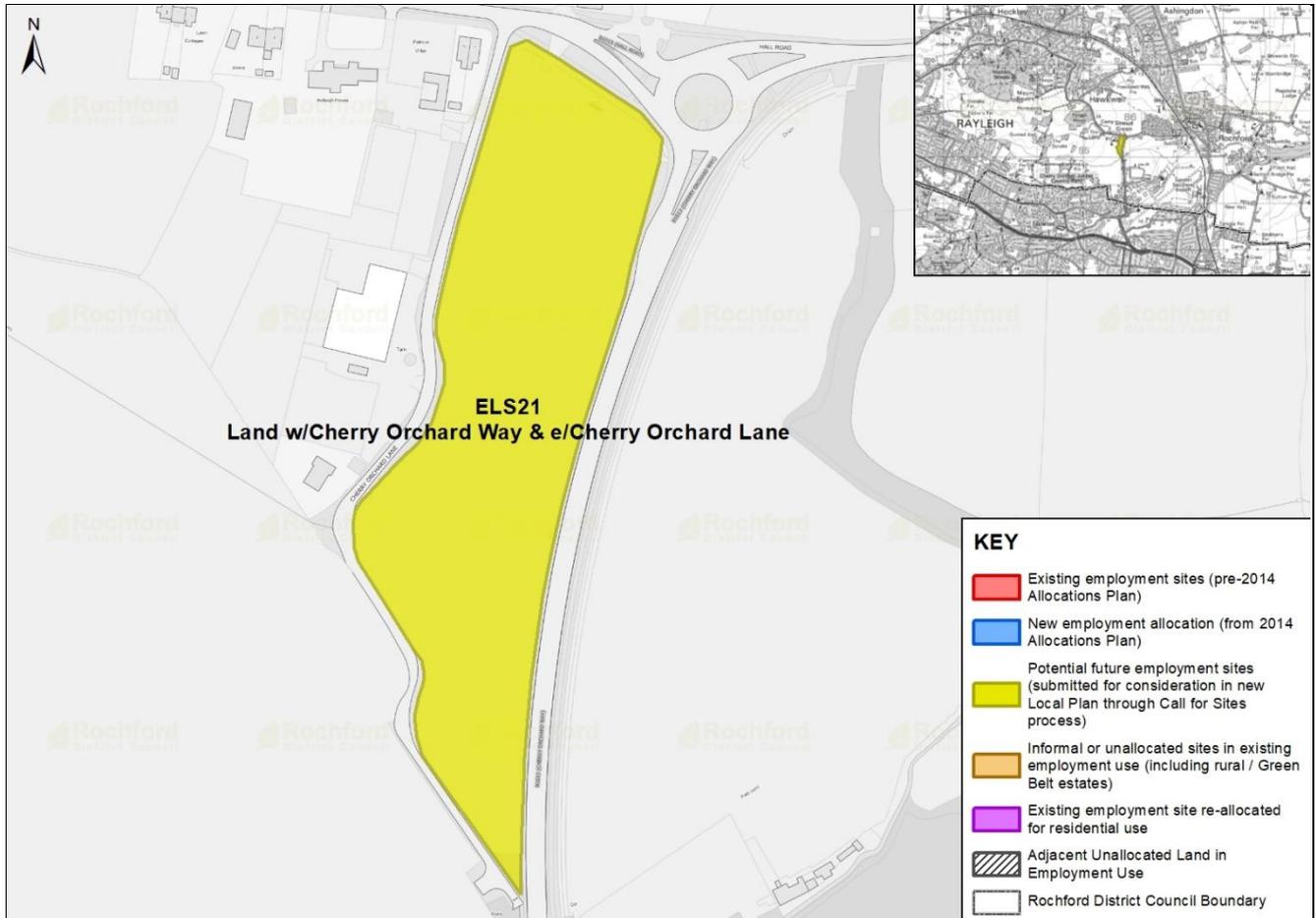
**Figure C81: Land West of Cherry Orchard Way and South of Cherry Orchard Lane (ELS20).**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

**Land West of Cherry Orchard Way and East of Cherry Orchard Lane (ELS21)**

**Figure C82: Map of Land West of Cherry Orchard Way and East of Cherry Orchard Lane.**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

Location:	Land west of Cherry Orchard Way and east of Cherry Orchard Lane, Hawkwell.
Site Area (Ha):	2.79
Site Category:	3 - Potential future employment sites (submitted for consideration in new Local Plan through Call for Sites process)
Site Cluster:	London Southend Airport

**Site Description: -**

7.293. The area situated to the west of Cherry Orchard Road and east of Cherry Orchard Lane is an unallocated and undeveloped greenfield area. At present, the site is predominately agricultural. Located to the southwest of the Hall Road/B1013 roundabout, the site has an existing single track road access point from the north (on

Hall Road). On the opposite side of Hall Road, there are agricultural buildings, some of which have been converted for commercial use.

7.294. The current adjoining land uses of the site include Metropolitan Green Belt land, a garden centre and plant nursery and residential properties, along with the B1013 Hall Road/Cherry Orchard Way. Other existing industrial sites (JAAP employment site allocations, Aviation Way Industrial Estate and Rochford Business Park) and other unallocated, promoted employment sites (Land West and South and, Land East of Cherry Orchard Way) are in close proximity of the site, as is an existing allocated open space (Cherry Orchard County Park).

**Site Evaluation: -**

7.295. Traffic Light Categorisation: -

Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class Floorspace	Neighbouring Amenities
Amber	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	Amber

Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation
N.A.	Red	N.A.	N.A.	N,A,	N.A.

Physical Opportunity for Intensification: - **YES**

Vacant Land: -**YES**

Vacant Buildings: - **NO**

7.296. Qualitative Scored Criteria: -

Strategic Access	Local Access	Site Quality, Amenities & Management	Market Attractiveness	Development & Environmental Constraints
<b>4 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>2 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>2 / 5</b>

**Strengths: -**

7.297. Proximity to amenities and access: The site is relatively close to limited retail facilities and amenities at Cherry Orchard Way and the Airport Business Park. Its location provides walking distance access to these amenities, making it convenient for potential occupants or residents.

7.298. Connectivity and Public Rights of Way: The site benefits from numerous public rights of way, including bridleways, footpaths, and a shared-use cycle route. These connections link the site to existing industrial sites, residential areas, and recreational spaces, enhancing its connectivity.

7.299. Environmental quality and agricultural use: The undeveloped land is currently utilised for agricultural production and maintains a good environmental quality. This natural aspect can be appealing for certain development types that seek to preserve green spaces or integrate them into their plans.

**Weaknesses: -**

7.300. Limited public transport access: The site has poor access to public transport, with the nearest bus stop located about 1.2km away. This lack of convenient public transportation could limit its attractiveness for certain commercial or residential developments.

7.301. Flood risk and Green Belt designation: A portion of the land in the southern area of the site falls within flood zone 2, indicating some flood risk. Additionally, being designated as Metropolitan Green Belt land places constraints on development possibilities, requiring exceptional circumstances for any significant development.

**Conclusions and Recommendations: -**

Monitor and Manage

7.302. Despite being currently designated as Green Belt, the site holds strategic advantages due to its close proximity to the B1013 and Southend Airport. Given the right demand, the site has the potential to serve well for employment purposes, akin to the successful Southend Airport Business Park or other businesses that thrive on easy access to major roads and passing trade, while also benefiting from an appealing semi-rural environment. However, it should be noted that proper access would need to be established for any development plans on the site.

7.303. The site's location within flood zones and its presence in the Roach Valley Special Landscape Area are essential factors that may present challenges and considerations in the process of development. These environmental aspects could influence the feasibility and approach of any potential projects on the site. In addition, the site lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt and its release for employment use would need to be fully justified.

**Figure C83: Land West of Cherry Orchard Way and East of Cherry Orchard Lane (ELS21).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

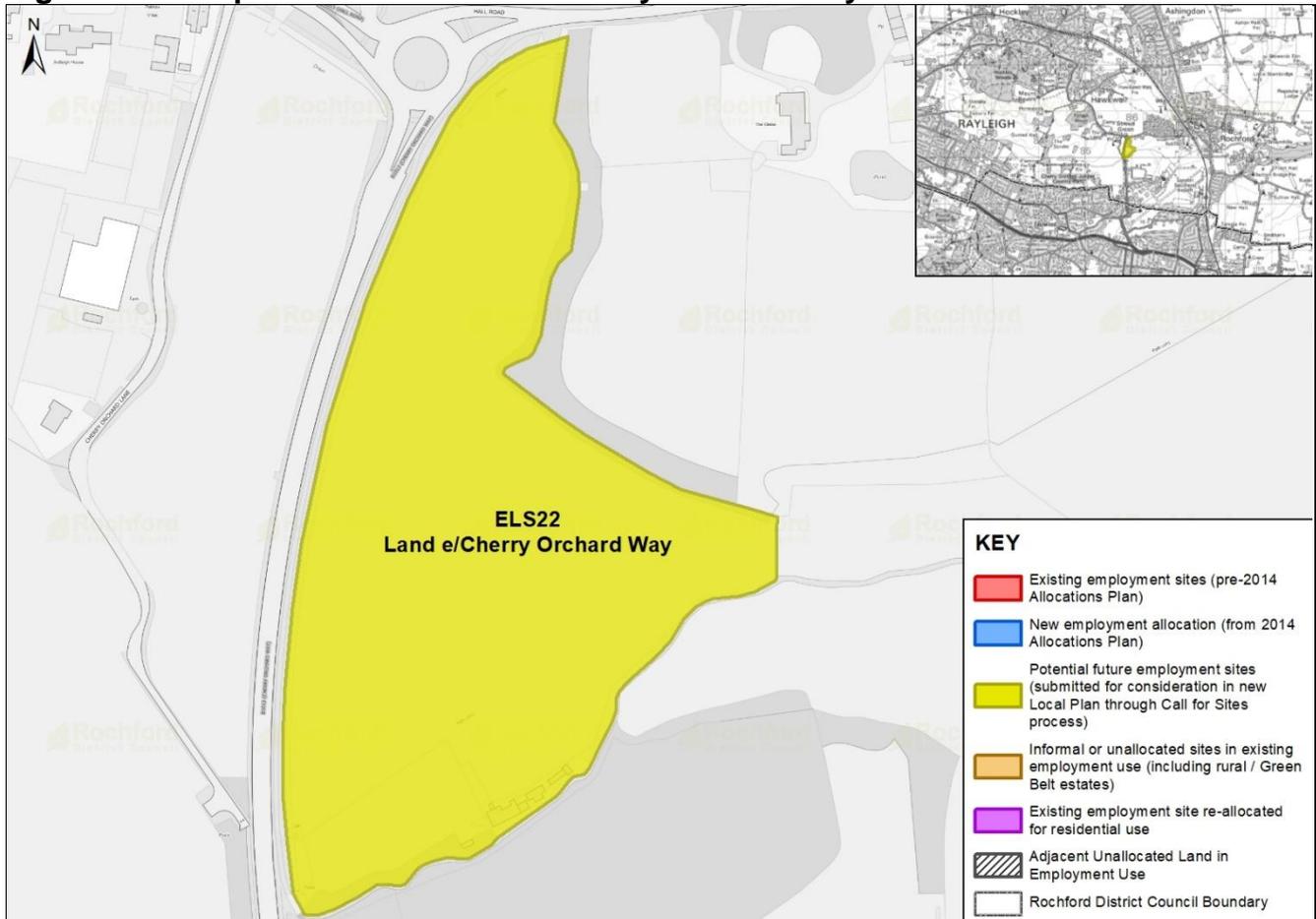
**Figure C84: Land West of Cherry Orchard Way and East of Cherry Orchard Lane (ELS21).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Land East of Cherry Orchard Way (ELS22)**

**Figure C85: Map of the Land East of Cherry Orchard Way.**



Location:	Land East of Cherry Orchard Way, Rochford
Site Area (Ha):	5.63
Site Category:	3 - Potential future employment sites (submitted for consideration in new Local Plan through Call for Sites process)
Site Cluster:	London Southend Airport

Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

**Site Description -**

7.304. The site is a Green Belt site, lying east of the B1013 and currently used for football pitches. The site is currently accessed from the south via Cherry Orchard Lane. with existing access into the site from the north. The site is largely laid out with pitches, whilst a number of small buildings (including clubhouse) and storage containers, along with hardstanding for parking, are found to the South of the site. The site is bounded to the West by a bridleway and hedgerow, separating it from the main road. It is not presently allocated, but is promoted for allocation within the New Local Plan.

**Site Evaluation: -**

7.305. Traffic Light Categorisation: -

Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class Floorspace	Neighbouring Amenities
<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Amber</b>

Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation
<b>Green</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Red</b>

Physical Opportunity for Intensification: - **YES**

Vacant Land: -**YES**

Vacant Buildings: - **NO**

7.306. Qualitative Scored Criteria: -

<b>Strategic Access</b>	<b>Local Access</b>	<b>Site Quality, Amenities &amp; Management</b>	<b>Market Attractiveness</b>	<b>Development &amp; Environmental Constraints</b>
<b>4 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>1 / 5</b>

**Strengths: -**

7.307. Proximity to amenities and facilities: The site is in relatively close proximity to limited retail facilities and amenities at Cherry Orchard Way and the Airport Business Park, including a coffee shop, take-away food options, and a country park. These amenities can enhance the appeal of the area for potential occupants or residents.

7.308. Connectivity and access: The site benefits from a good local road network via Cherry Orchard Way and has access to several public rights of way and a shared-use cycle route, connecting it to existing industrial sites, surrounding residential areas, and recreational spaces. This can make the site easily accessible for different user groups.

**Weaknesses: -**

7.309. Limited public transport access: The site has poor access to sustainable public transport, with the nearest bus stop approximately 1.2km away and a train station about 2km away. This lack of convenient public transportation may hinder its attractiveness for certain commercial developments.

7.310. Flood risk: A significant portion of the southern half of the site falls within flood zones 2 & 3, indicating a risk of flooding. This could impose constraints on development plans and increase costs for flood mitigation measures.

7.311. Current use and stakeholder engagement: The site is currently utilised by Ashingdon Youth Football Club and designated as Public Open Space, which could complicate efforts to develop it for other purposes. Any development plans would require careful engagement with Sport England and other stakeholders to address potential conflicts. In addition, the site lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt and its release for employment use would need to be fully justified.

**Conclusions and Recommendations: -**

Monitor and Manage

7.312. Site is currently Green Belt, however benefits from close proximity to the B1013, Rochford Town Centre and Southend Airport. Notwithstanding the Green Belt designation, and subject to demand, the site could be suitable for employment uses similar to Airport Business Park, or those which benefit from good road links, passing trade and/or an attractive semi-rural setting. However, a case would need to be made for whether sufficient demand was present in the area. Suitable access would need to be provided to this site, whilst consideration would need to be given to the relocation of the sports pitches to a suitable alternative location.

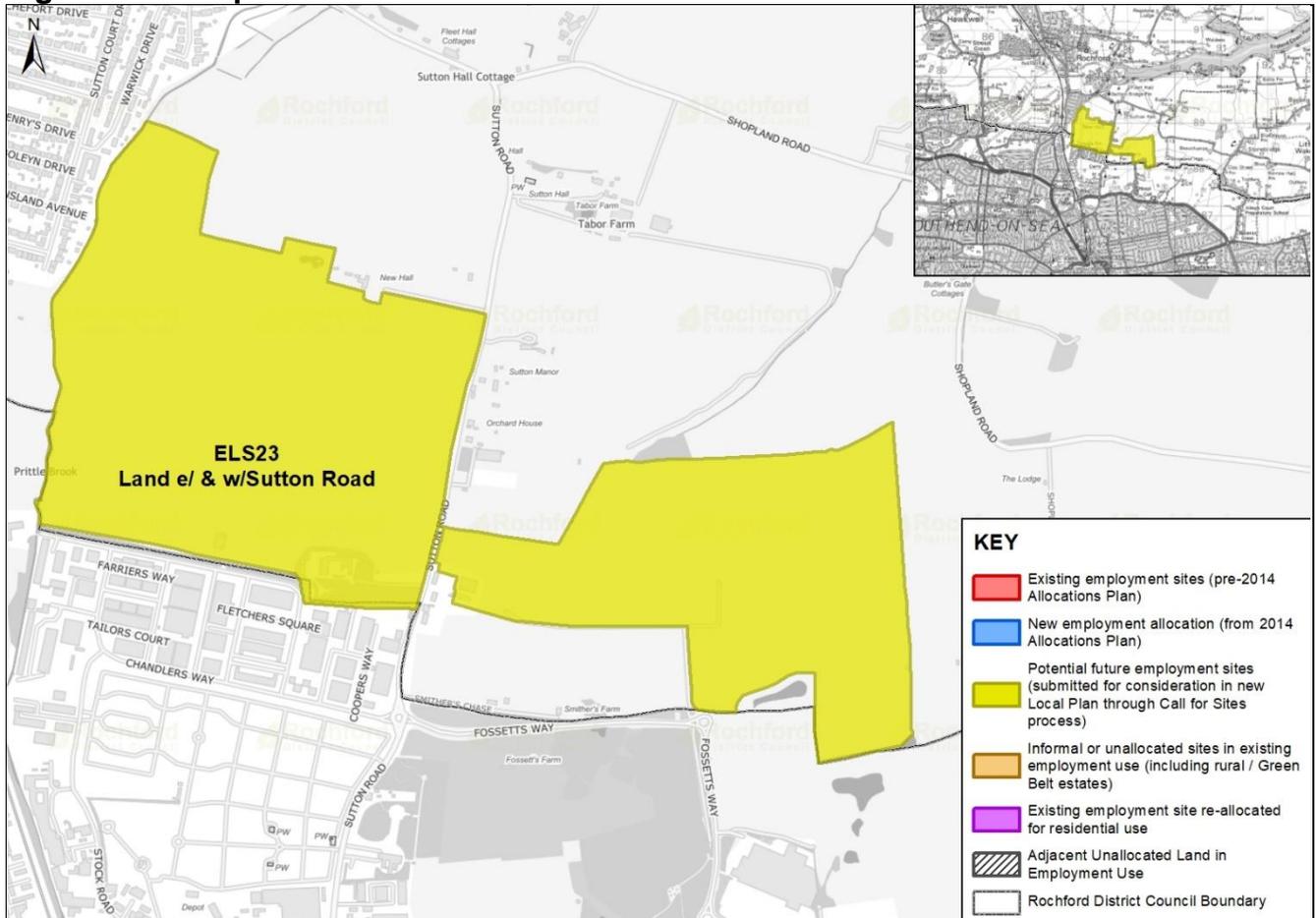
**Figure C86: Land East of Cherry Orchard Way (ELS22)**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Land East and West of Sutton Road (ELS23)**

**Figure C87: Map of the Land East and West of Sutton Road.**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

Location:	Land East and West of Sutton Road, Rochford
Site Area (Ha):	92.07
Site Category:	3 - Potential future employment sites (submitted for consideration in new Local Plan through Call for Sites process)
Site Cluster:	Rochford and Stambridge

**Site Description: -**

7.313. The site in its current form comprises a large tract of agricultural land on both sides of Sutton Road. The western portion adjoins Temple Farm Industrial Estate (in Southend-on-Sea) to the South; Sutton Road to the East; playing fields, Green Belt land and the Prittle Brook (bordered by residential properties) to the West; and agricultural land in the Green Belt to the North. On its southern edge, there are a number of agricultural buildings (Temple Farm), many of which are now in use for commercial purposes. The eastern portion of the site runs from an access point on Sutton Road on its western edge, behind residential properties to an expanse of

agricultural land in the Green Belt. This is bordered by Southend United FC’s training pitches to the South-West; by land under development for residential and a golf course to the South-East (and the boundary between Rochford District and Southend-on-Sea City) and by agricultural land in the Green Belt to the North and East. This contains one former agricultural building, situated close to Sutton Road, now used by a plastering business. The site to the South is undergoing development to deliver residential uses, alongside a new stadium for Southend United FC.

7.314. At present, the vast majority of the site is in use for agricultural purposes, although the South-Eastern edge has some commercial activity in former agricultural buildings adjoining Temple Farm Industrial Estate. A number of public rights of way run across the site. The site is within the Metropolitan Green Belt.

**Site Evaluation: -**

Traffic Light Categorisation: -

Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class Floorspace	Neighbouring Amenities
<b>Amber</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>

Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation
<b>N.A.</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>N.A.</b>	<b>N.A.</b>	<b>N.A.</b>

Physical Opportunity for Intensification: - **YES**

Vacant Land: - **YES**

Vacant Buildings: - **NO**

Qualitative Scored Criteria: -

Strategic Access	Local Access	Site Quality, Amenities & Management	Market Attractiveness	Development & Environmental Constraints
<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>2 / 5</b>

**Strengths: -**

7.315. Strategic location: The site benefits from a strategic location with good access to major roads, including the A1159 and A127, making it well-connected to Southend and Rochford areas. It is also conveniently situated in relation to Southend Airport, which could be advantageous for businesses requiring air transport links.

7.316. Proximity to employment and commercial sites: The western portion of the site adjoins Temple Farm Industrial Estate, which already features a variety of businesses, including prestigious national and multinational occupiers. This proximity could enable

existing businesses to expand, or attract new occupiers seeking established business locations.

- 7.317. Prominent location and passing trade: The site's location along Sutton Road provides it with a prominent position and good passing trade. This could be advantageous for commercial ventures, retail establishments, or businesses seeking visibility and motor/foot traffic.

**Weaknesses: -**

- 7.318. Green Belt status and development constraints: The site is currently designated as Green Belt land, which poses a significant obstacle to immediate development. Releasing Green Belt land requires demonstrating exceptional circumstances, making it challenging to secure planning permission for significant development in the short-medium term.
- 7.319. Poor public transport access: Existing bus services to the site are limited and infrequent, making public transport accessibility for potential occupants or residents less attractive. This could discourage businesses and residents reliant on public transportation.
- 7.320. Risk of surface flooding: Some parts of the site are at risk of surface flooding due to its proximity to Prittle Brook and drainage ditches. This could pose challenges for certain types of development or increase the costs associated with flood mitigation measures.

**Conclusions and Recommendations: -**

Monitor and Manage

- 7.321. The large size of the site and its proximity to established employment areas (Purdeys Industrial Estate, Temple Farm Industrial Estate and London Southend Airport) mean it could accommodate a large amount of employment activity in an established location. It is a promoted site for consideration within the new Local Plan, and as such could represent expansion land for Temple Farm Industrial Estate, providing new units to accommodate the needs of modern businesses uses. However, its designation would be subject to the plan-making process and will need to be fully evidenced to demonstrate exceptional circumstances for releasing Green Belt land.
- 7.322. Given the promotion of this site for housing allocation, along with adjoining sites, it is possible that they could be developed for alternative uses. Any housing allocation at scale should consider inclusion of a commercial/employment element, to allow for local employment opportunities. This could include service offices/hot-desking for start-up businesses and/or the integration and expansion of the existing Temple Farm as the small number of commercial/employment uses at Temple Farm are likely to continue (should the site remain in the Green Belt). Therefore, any efforts to improve the quality of the stock and its accessibility should be supported.

**Figure C88: Land East and West of Sutton Road (ELS23).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure C89: Land East and West of Sutton Road (ELS23).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure C90: Land East and West of Sutton Road (ELS23)**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

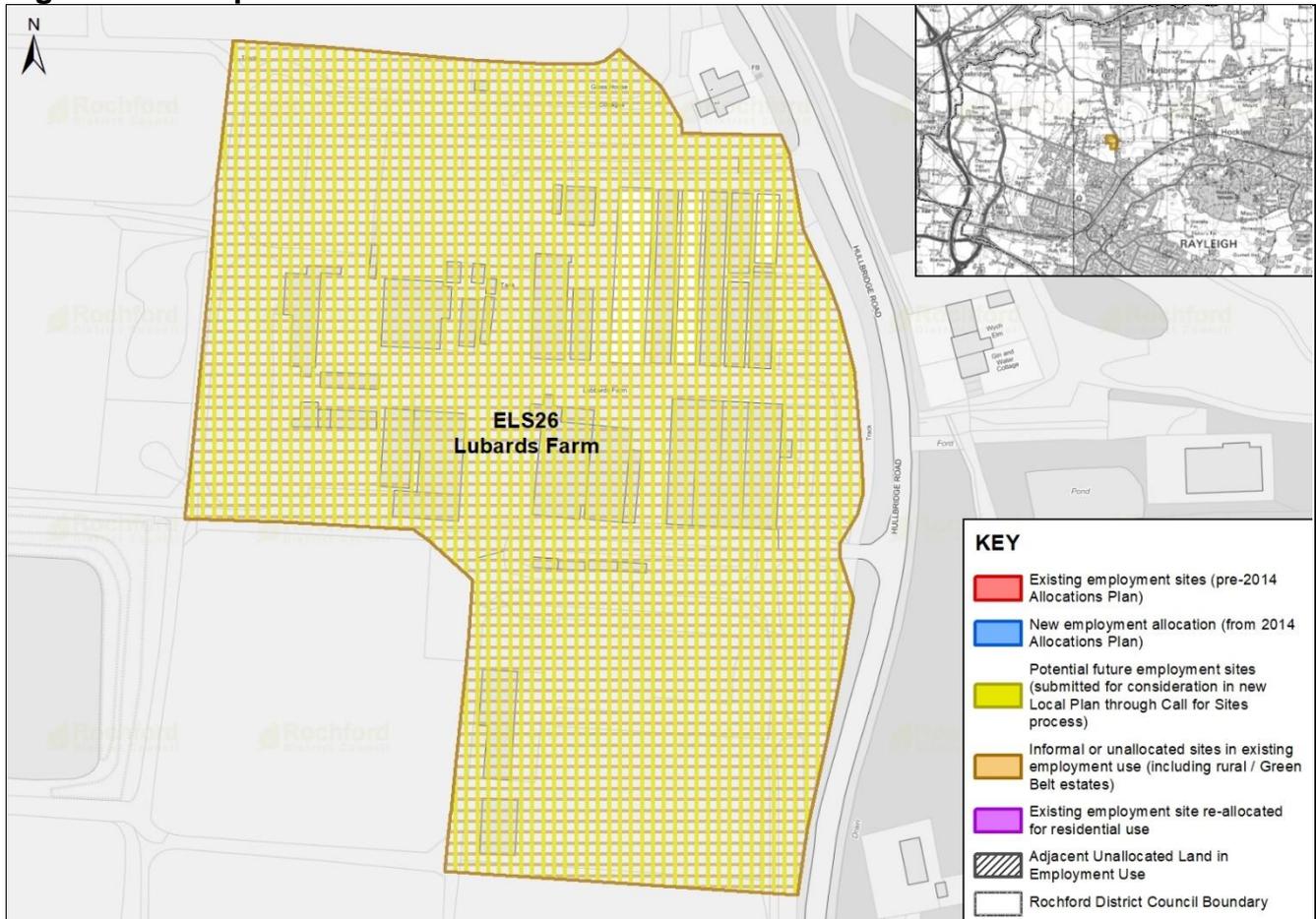
**Figure C91: Land East and West of Sutton Road (ELS23)**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Lubards Farm (ELS26)**

**Figure C92: Map of Lubards Farm.**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

Location:	Lubards Farm, Hullbridge Road, Rayleigh
Site Area (Ha):	5.03
Site Category:	3 - Potential future employment sites (submitted for consideration in new Local Plan through Call for Sites process) 4 - Informal or unallocated site in existing employment use (including rural/ Green Belt estates)
Site Cluster:	Rayleigh, Rawreth and Battlesbridge.

**Site Description: -**

7.323. Lubards Farm is a small commercial estate, where a series of single-storey barns and former agricultural buildings, supported with shipping containers, yards and a handful of custom commercial units, form an employment site. Situated between Hullbridge and Rawreth, the site lies on Metropolitan Green Belt land and is surrounded by agricultural land, a small number of residential properties and the existing open space of the Rayleigh Club.

7.324. Building quality is predominately fair. Many of these units show signs of weathering and aging despite being maintained and managed, whilst others have been recently re clad/refurbished. The main site is north of the access road and comprises a series of adapted agricultural buildings. South of the access road, there are a series of yard/compounds, along with some small ‘cabin’-type units.

**Site Evaluation: -**

7.325. Traffic Light Categorisation: -

Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class Floorspace	Neighbouring Amenities
<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>

Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation
<b>Green</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>

Physical Opportunity for Intensification: - **YES**

Vacant Land: - **YES**

Vacant Buildings: - **NO**

7.326. Qualitative Scored Criteria: -

Strategic Access	Local Access	Site Quality, Amenities & Management	Market Attractiveness	Development & Environmental Constraints
<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>2 / 5</b>

**Strengths: -**

7.327. Attractive green setting: The site is set in an attractive rural location with landscaped surroundings, manicured hedges, and a number of trees, creating a pleasant and visually appealing environment for businesses and visitors.

7.328. Diverse range of occupiers: Lubards Farm accommodates a wide range of small businesses operating in various sectors, such as automotive services, information technology, catering, retail, health and wellbeing, among others, creating a vibrant and diverse business community.

7.329. Adequate parking and amenities: The site provides sufficient parking and useful amenities, including a farm shop/butcher/café, gym, pet/country store, nursery, and public toilets, enhancing the convenience and appeal for businesses and visitors.

- 7.330. Efforts in branding and landscaping: The site management has made efforts to brand the site with signage and site plans, creating a sense of identity. Landscaping efforts have also been made to improve the overall appearance of the site.
- 7.331. Prominent and well-occupied location: Lubards Farm is prominently located on a busy local road, attracting a wide range of commercial tenants, particularly SMEs. It is fully occupied, indicating its appeal and suitability for businesses.

**Weaknesses: -**

- 7.332. Limited accessibility and circulation: While there is moderate sustainable travel access with a nearby bus stop and shared cycle path, the narrow road network restricts access and circulation for HGVs and large vehicles.
- 7.333. Quality of stock: Many of the converted barns and agricultural buildings show signs of weathering and ageing despite being maintained, potentially affecting their long-term durability and appeal. Substantial investment may be required.
- 7.334. Limited local amenities: Although the site has useful on-site amenities, nearby amenities within walking distance are fairly limited, which may be a drawback for employees and visitors seeking more options.
- 7.335. Secluded areas and limited lighting: Some parts of the site may be dark and secluded at night, potentially affecting safety and security for businesses and their employees.
- 7.336. Green Belt designation: The site's designation as Metropolitan Green Belt restricts any additional development, limiting the potential for expansion, modernisation or changes in land use within the site.

**Conclusions and Recommendations:-**

Protect and Enhance/ Reallocate

- 7.337. The complex of former agricultural buildings on this site serve as an important site for SME businesses, including many start-ups, due to the range of small, adaptable, and likely affordable, units available. Uses on the site are diverse, encompassing a range of retail/leisure/service/office uses in Class E, alongside elements of B2/B8. The diversity of uses means the site has a wide appeal both to businesses in the business-to-business and business-to-consumer spaces. Many units on the site have been enhanced or refurbished over time, whilst the site has been landscaped to provide a more attractive impression to visitors. Additional works to improve the business environment and stock should be supported, although the current location within the Green Belt would severely restrict any new/enlarged premises or proposals to intensify the site.
- 7.338. It should be noted the West of Rayleigh has relatively few/small employment sites in comparison to the large (and growing) expanse of residential neighbourhoods, and that nearby Hullbridge has no employment sites. Accordingly, it may be appropriate to regard Lubards as a suitable location for an employment/commercial hub servicing

these communities. The site may be appropriate for formal allocation as an employment site, although the site's additional role in supporting businesses in retail, leisure and personal services alongside employment uses should also be considered in relation to retail impact on Rayleigh Town Centre.

7.339. The site itself, along with the surrounding Green Belt agricultural land, are currently being promoted for allocation in the new Local Plan from 2025, as sites CFS163 and CFS164 respectively. In the event of CFS164 being allocated, the current Lubards site sits in a position at its heart which may make it appropriate to retain it as a commercial/employment site serving the surrounding new community, something which many of the Class E uses currently taking place on the site would be entirely appropriate for. A site masterplan could explore the best ways to integrate this site with its surroundings and deliver appropriate landscaping/public realm improvements or mixed-use redevelopments of part of the site to support this. As previously-developed land, it is possible the site could be allocated for residential development. In the event of this, given the site's long-established nature in providing employment uses, the new Local Plan should seek to allocate a suitable alternative site(s) in the West Rayleigh/Hullbridge area to accommodate displaced businesses and ensure the community retains a commercial hub.

**Figure C93: Lubards Farm (ELS26).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024).*

**Figure C94: Lubards Farm (ELS26).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024).*

**Figure C95: Lubards Farm (ELS26).**



**Figure C96: Lubards Farm (ELS26).**

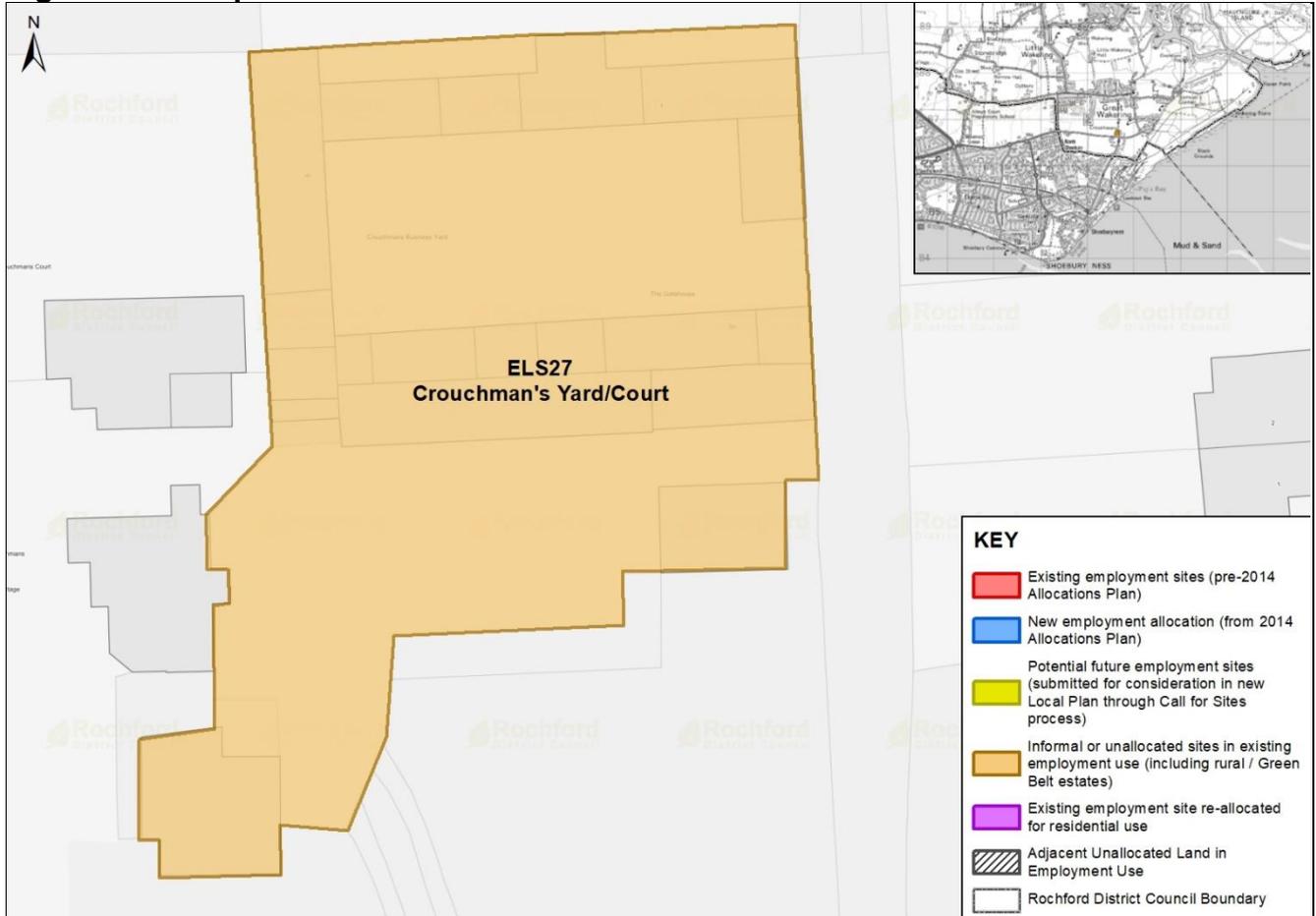


Source: Rochford District Council (2024).

Source: Rochford District Council (2024).

**Crouchman’s Yard/Court (ELS27)**

**Figure C97: Map of Crouchman’s Yard/Court.**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

Location:	Crouchman's Yard/Court, Poynters Lane, Great Wakering.
Site Area (Ha):	0.28
Site Category:	4 - Informal or unallocated site in existing employment use (including rural/ Green Belt estates)
Site Cluster:	Great Wakering

**Site Description: -**

7.340. Crouchman’s Yard and Court consists of converted barns/modernised historic farmyard buildings in a rural location situated between Great Wakering and Shoeburyness. It is understood that Crouchman’s Yard is the original redevelopment of the site, dating from the early 2000s, and that Crouchman’s Court represents an expansion in recent years with an additional 6 units created from stables and secured via a retrospective planning application in 2020. Access is gained via approximately

200m of private, single-track road which leads onto a local, rural road (Poynters Lane).

7.341. Units have been modernised and are in a good “like new” condition (though there are signs of weathering on properties, units and external walls located at the edge of the complex). Most units appear to be single or two-storey properties, mainly home to small professional businesses and services. No clear vacancies or advertisements for development were spotted on-site or online, indicating the site is functioning well in its current role.

**Site Evaluation: -**

7.342. Traffic Light Categorisation: -

Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class Floorspace	Neighbouring Amenities
<b>Red</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Red</b>

Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation
<b>Green</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Amber</b>

Physical Opportunity for Intensification: - **NO**

Vacant Land: - **NO**

Vacant Buildings: - **NO**

7.343. Qualitative Scored Criteria: -

Strategic Access	Local Access	Site Quality, Amenities & Management	Market Attractiveness	Development & Environmental Constraints
<b>2 / 5</b>	<b>2 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>4 / 5</b>	<b>1 / 5</b>

**Strengths:-**

7.344. Modern and well-maintained stock: The site consists of converted stables and modernised historic farmyard buildings that are in good condition, providing an attractive and professional environment for small businesses.

7.345. Diverse range of occupiers: Crouchman's Yard/Court accommodates a diverse range of small businesses, including health, wellbeing, beauty, photography, graphic design, construction, IT, technological services, and financial services. This variety of occupiers adds vibrancy and potential for collaboration on the site.

- 7.346. Attractive, rural setting: Situated in a rural location surrounded by attractive countryside and vegetation, the site provides a pleasant and peaceful work environment for businesses and their employees.
- 7.347. Site environmental quality: Although the site has limited green spaces and green infrastructure, the existing ones are well managed and maintained, contributing to the overall attractiveness of the site.
- 7.348. Clear brand identity and signposting: The site is branded with a clear identity and has clear signposting for access from Poynter's Lane, making it easily identifiable for visitors and potential tenants.

**Weaknesses: -**

- 7.349. Limited local access: The site's single-track private road access and lack of public transportation options make it difficult for employees and visitors to access the site without a car.
- 7.350. Limited on-Site facilities and amenities: There are no on-site facilities beyond the small business and enterprise operations, and no amenities or services are available within close proximity to the site.
- 7.351. Restricted potential for growth: Due to its location within the Green Belt and the presence of residential accommodation nearby, there is limited potential for significant expansion or development on the site.
- 7.352. Limited circulation and access for HGVs: The site's internal circulation is limited, and access for larger vehicles like HGVs would require major improvements to the access road, which is unlikely due to Green Belt restrictions.

**Conclusions and Recommendations: -**

Protect and Maintain

- 7.353. Crouchman's Yard and Court presents an effective and efficient use of space for small businesses and enterprises, however there is limited scope for change from the current operations. The site is situated within the Green Belt and further confined through the presence of residential accommodation at the eastern and western site boundaries. Significant improvements to access would have to occur to support the presence of larger business operations on-site and allow HGV access or increased parking. The site is best-suited to its current role in catering for small office or retail service-based businesses, and should continue to remain focused on this, given the limited capacity for accommodating larger vehicles or industrial processes.
- 7.354. Given the sensitive location of the site within the Green Belt and constrained access, it may be best to retain Crouchman's Yard/Court as a lawful site within the Green Belt rather than seeking employment allocation.

**Figure C98: Crouchman's Yard/Court (ELS27).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure C99: Crouchman's Yard/Court (ELS27).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure C100: Carouchman's Yard/Court (ELS27).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

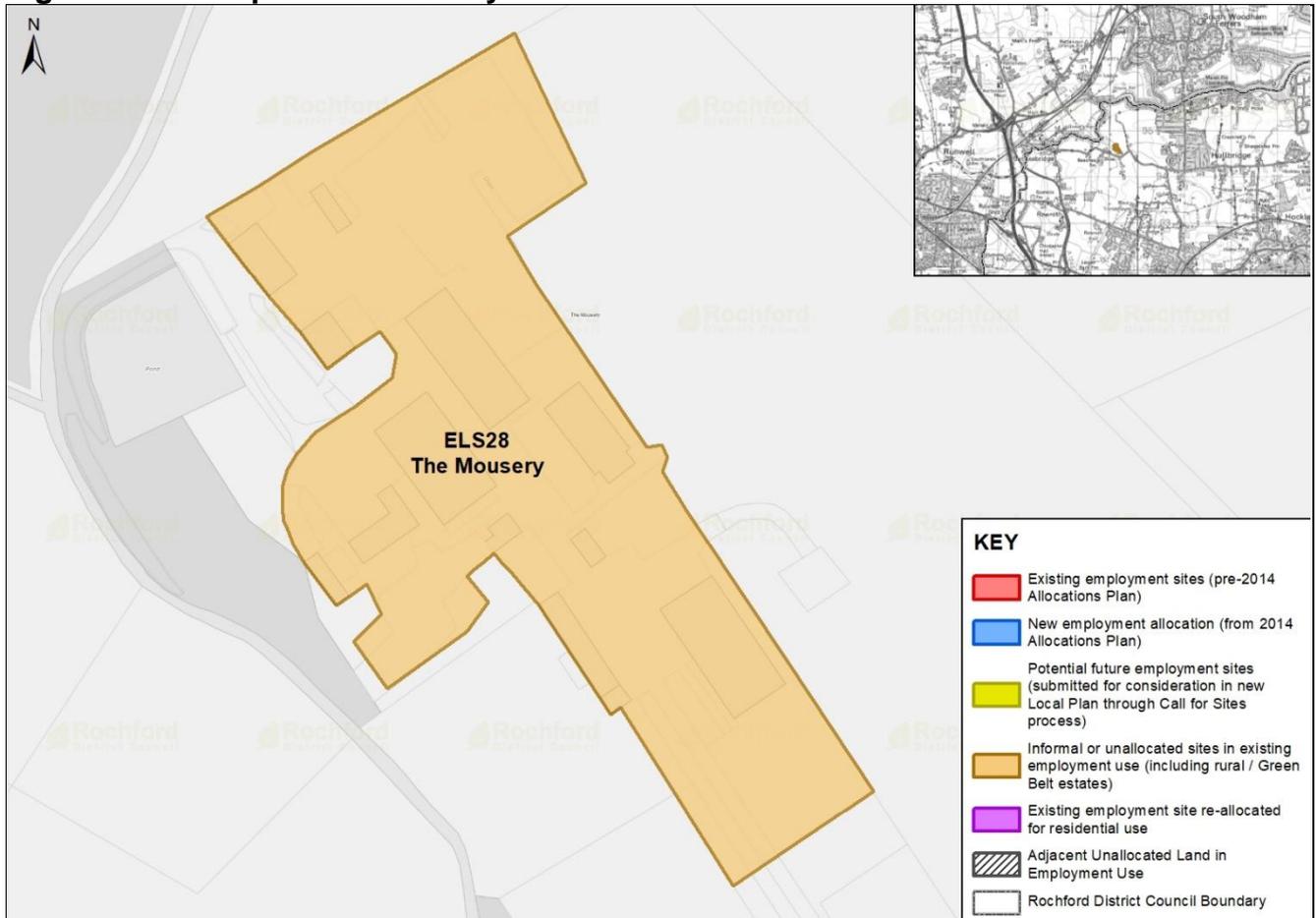
**Figure C101: Crouchman's Yard/Court (ELS27).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**The Mousery (ELS28)**

**Figure C102: Map of the Mousery.**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

Location:	The Mousery, Beeches Road, Battlesbridge.
Site Area (Ha):	1.09
Site Category:	4 - Informal or unallocated site in existing employment use (including rural/ Green Belt estates)
Site Cluster:	Rayleigh, Rawreth and Battlesbridge

**Site Description: -**

7.355. The Mousery comprises a series of small, single-storey office and warehouse/industrial units in a former animal research laboratory complex in a rural setting, set back from the main road and accessed via a narrow lane with a security gate. The site provides accommodation for a range of small businesses seeking small, affordable units on flexible terms, including occupiers in sectors such as IT; business services; printing; sports & leisure; construction; beauty treatment; fashion design/retail; and property services.

**Site Evaluation: -**

7.356. Traffic Light Categorisation: -

Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class Floorspace	Neighbouring Amenities
<b>Red</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Red</b>

Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation
<b>Amber</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Green</b>

Physical Opportunity for Intensification: - **YES**

Vacant Land: - **YES**

Vacant Buildings: - **NO**

7.357. Qualitative Scored Criteria: -

Strategic Access	Local Access	Site Quality, Amenities & Management	Market Attractiveness	Development & Environmental Constraints
<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>2 / 5</b>	<b>2 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>1 / 5</b>

**Strengths: -**

- 7.358. Fully-occupied: The site appears to be fully occupied, indicating a high demand for its small, affordable, and flexible units. This suggests a strong appeal to small businesses seeking commercial space.
- 7.359. Attractive rural setting: The Mousery is set in an attractive rural location, providing a pleasant and well-maintained environment for businesses. The site's setting may be appealing to professional and lifestyle-oriented businesses.
- 7.360. Wide range of business sectors: The Mousery accommodates a diverse range of business sectors, including IT, business services, printing, sports & leisure, construction, beauty treatment, fashion design/retail, and property services. This variety of businesses enhances the site's vibrancy and potential for collaboration.
- 7.361. Easy parking and access: Parking on site is reported to be easy and not oversubscribed, making it convenient for tenants and visitors. Road access is available via a narrow gated entrance, providing some level of security and control.
- 7.362. Brand identity and signage: The site has a prominent location on a busy rural road, with clear signage and a recognisable brand identity. This visibility and branding can attract potential tenants and reinforce the site's professional image.

**Weaknesses: -**

- 7.363. Limited transportation options: The lack of footpaths, cycle provision, and nearby bus routes makes accessing the site via public transport or on foot unsafe and inconvenient for tenants and employees. Access to the site therefore places additional pressures on a narrow country lane.
- 7.364. Underutilised hardstanding: Large areas of hardstanding on the site are underutilised for parking or storage purposes, indicating a potential missed opportunity for more intensive use or redevelopment (subject to planning permission in the Green Belt).
- 7.365. Limited on-site amenities: The site lacks on-site amenities, limiting the convenience and attractiveness of the location for businesses and their employees.
- 7.366. HGV access: HGV access may be challenging due to the narrow and winding nature of the road leading to the site, along with narrow site access, potentially restricting certain types of businesses.
- 7.367. Green Belt and flood zone constraints: The Mousery is situated within the Metropolitan Green Belt and Coastal Protection Belt, and it also lies within Flood Zone 3, which may impose limitations on future expansion and development opportunities.

**Conclusions and Recommendations: -**

Monitor and Manage

- 7.368. The Mousery appears to be providing useful accommodation for a number of small businesses in a rural area, close to settlements which do not currently have any formal employment allocations in the District – i.e. Hullbridge and Battlesbridge. However, the relatively small scale and isolation of the site means it is unlikely to be a suitable site for formal employment allocation and release from the Green Belt. Nevertheless, any proposals to modernise or redevelop the existing buildings (including the replacement of temporary structures) to provide purpose-built accommodation supporting SMEs should be supported to enhance the site's rural employment capabilities.
- 7.369. The site's attractive rural setting and number of units and areas of hardstanding mean it could potentially be redeveloped for other uses, such as residential, where Green Belt land has been previously developed. In the event that such a scenario coincides with the Local Plan preparation period, consideration could be given to compensating for a loss of this space by seeking to provide alternative accommodation locally, within the Hullbridge/Battlesbridge/Rawreth area through a wider site allocation. It should be noted, however, that the site is not presently being promoted through the Local Plan process.

Figure C103: The Mousery (ELS28).



Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

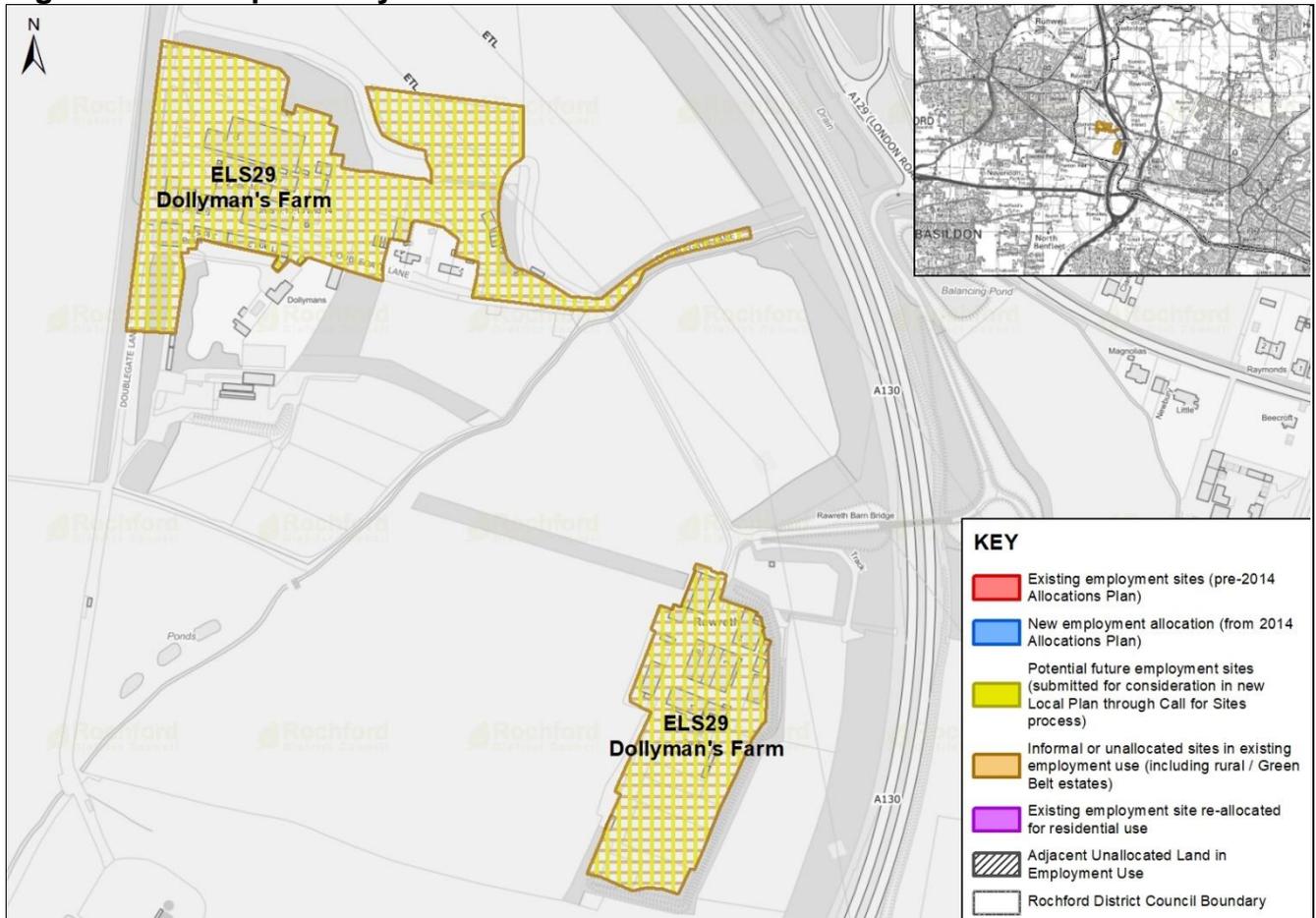
Figure C104: The Mousery (ELS28).



Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

**Dollyman’s Farm (ELS29)**

**Figure C105: Map of Dollyman’s Farm.**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024).

Location:	Dollyman's Farm, Doublegate Lane, Wickford.
Site Area (Ha):	6.52
Site Category:	3- Potential future employment sites (submitted for consideration in new Local Plan through Call for Sites process). 4 - Informal or unallocated site in existing employment use (including rural/ Green Belt estates).
Site Cluster:	Rayleigh, Rawreth and Battlesbridge

**Site Description: -**

**7.370.** Dollyman’s farm comprises a series of modernised converted agricultural units and barns in a rural location situated between Rayleigh and Wickford. The site comprises 2 clusters of buildings situated on Doublegate Lane, set amongst agricultural land, with the cluster to the South-West named ‘Rawreth Barns’. To the South an aggregates operation makes up part of the wider site. The wider site (including farmland) is bordered by the A130 road to the East, A129 road to the North, the

railway line to the South and by a reservoir, farmland, residential and industrial areas of Wickford/Shotgate to the West.

- 7.371.** Units consist predominately of modernised, converted agricultural units in a good condition, with many clad in black timber or green metal to provide a uniform finish across the site. Both large-scale warehouses and smaller units and office blocks appear well managed and maintained, with a modern design style embraced. A small proportion of the site is made up of shipping containers and temporary buildings which are in a fair condition. In addition, there are a series of compounds and yards used for storage, parking and driver training
- 7.372.** Whilst accommodation available is varied, the site’s location, which combines large amounts of yard space with good road access, has led to a cluster of businesses requiring space for activities such as commercial vehicle driver training, construction equipment hire, maintenance vehicle fleets and services to the entertainment industry (i.e., lighting/equipment hire and home cinema installation). The site is not wholly in employment use, with a large farmhouse set in gardens and two other residential properties within the main farm complex, whilst to the South of the farm complex there is a nursery in landscaped grounds.
- 7.373.** The site is an example of a rural site which has undergone considerable diversification and modernisation, and which is well-managed, with infrastructure/public realm which is superior to many farm-based commercial sites. Given the site location, the quality and range of employment infrastructure and the site operations observed, it is expected that employment land use will continue in the medium to long-term.

**Site Evaluation: -**

7.374. Traffic Light Categorisation: -

Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class Floorspace	Neighbouring Amenities
<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Red</b>

Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation
<b>Green</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>

Physical Opportunity for Intensification: - **YES**

Vacant Land: - **YES**

Vacant Buildings: - **NO**

7.375. Qualitative Scored Criteria: -

Strategic Access	Local Access	Site Quality, Amenities & Management	Market Attractiveness	Development & Environmental Constraints
4 / 5	3 / 5	3 / 5	4 / 5	2 / 5

**Strengths: -**

- 7.376. Well-managed and modernised: The site consists predominantly of modernised and converted agricultural units, warehouses, and office blocks, with good maintenance and a modern design style. This creates an attractive and well-managed work environment for businesses.
- 7.377. Strategic location: Situated between Rayleigh and Wickford with good road access via the A129 and A130, the site enjoys good connectivity to major routes, providing convenience for transportation and logistics-oriented businesses.
- 7.378. Diversification and versatility: Dollyman's Farm accommodates a wide range of businesses, including aggregates, automotive services, manufacturing, childcare, sports, health and fitness, services to the entertainment industry, and more. This versatility allows for various industries to coexist on the site, broadening its appeal.
- 7.379. Good environmental quality: The site is surrounded by agricultural land and well-screened with vegetation, creating a pleasant and visually appealing work environment. Landscaping and planting further enhance the environmental quality of the site.
- 7.380. Branding and online presence: Dollyman's Farm has a clear identity as a mixed-use industrial and office facility, with good signage and an online presence, making it more visible and attractive to potential occupants.

**Weaknesses: -**

- 7.381. Limited public transport access: The site has limited access to public transportation, with the nearest bus stop approximately 0.6km away. Lack of dedicated cycling routes further restricts alternative transportation options for employees.
- 7.382. Limited amenities: The site lacks nearby amenities within walking distance, requiring employees to drive for basic services and retail facilities. There is also limited accessibility to nearby residential areas.
- 7.383. Circulation and road condition: While the site has good road access, some internal roads surfaced with gravel are in poor condition, leading to potential issues with flooding and maintenance.
- 7.384. Green Belt constraints: The site's location within the Metropolitan Green Belt limits potential expansion and development opportunities, restricting the growth of employment operations.

- 7.385. Development constraints: Parts of the site are located within Flood Zone 3, potentially posing challenges for certain businesses. Additionally, the presence of Grade II-listed war memorials and electricity pylons could impose limitations on development or require careful planning.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations:-**

#### Recategorise/Protect and Maintain

- 7.386. The site provides a range of good quality accommodation for a range of small and medium-sized businesses, particularly those seeking a well-connected, high-quality environment or yard space. The site is likely to remain well-occupied given its strategic location, whilst it could potentially benefit from increased demand for space should future Rochford or Basildon Local Plans designate new housing within the Wickford/Shotgate or Rawreth areas. The Council should monitor the situation and ensure the site benefits from a range of accessibility options beyond car access, enhancing pedestrian, cycling and public transport connections to the site.
- 7.387. The site is in the Metropolitan Green Belt, which provides an important role in preventing the Eastward sprawl of Wickford. However, given the Dollymans Farm and Rawreth Barns sites are established as previously-developed land which support a range of employment uses, and the site environment and buildings are of a good quality, there may be scope to allocate these sections for employment use, or alternatively, regularise them as such. This would protect the important role of the site in providing a range of employment uses. It may also allow for the modernisation of premises and improvement of infrastructure and amenities on the site over time.
- 7.388. The site forms part of promoted site CFS222 within the emerging Local Plan process and could theoretically be allocated for residential or mixed-use development. In the event of the site being allocated, it is possible that redevelopment would take place in the long term (5+ years). Many of the existing structures in the farm complexes could potentially coexist with residential development and could form a local employment/service hub, whilst wider site development could provide additional amenities and access infrastructure for the employment units. The multi-site nature of Dollymans Farm means there is also potential for one or two component sites to be retained. However, it is likely that the heavier/noisier uses (e.g., HGV training or aggregates) would not be compatible with residential uses in the vicinity, and would either need to be screened or redeveloped for alternative uses. Any loss of all or some of the employment land on this site for brownfield/previously-developed land should be compensated by a proportionate provision of sites within the Western part of the District.

**Figure C106: Dollyman's Farm (ELS29).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure C107: Dollyman's Farm (ELS29).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024).*

**Figure C108: Dollyman's Farm (ELS29).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

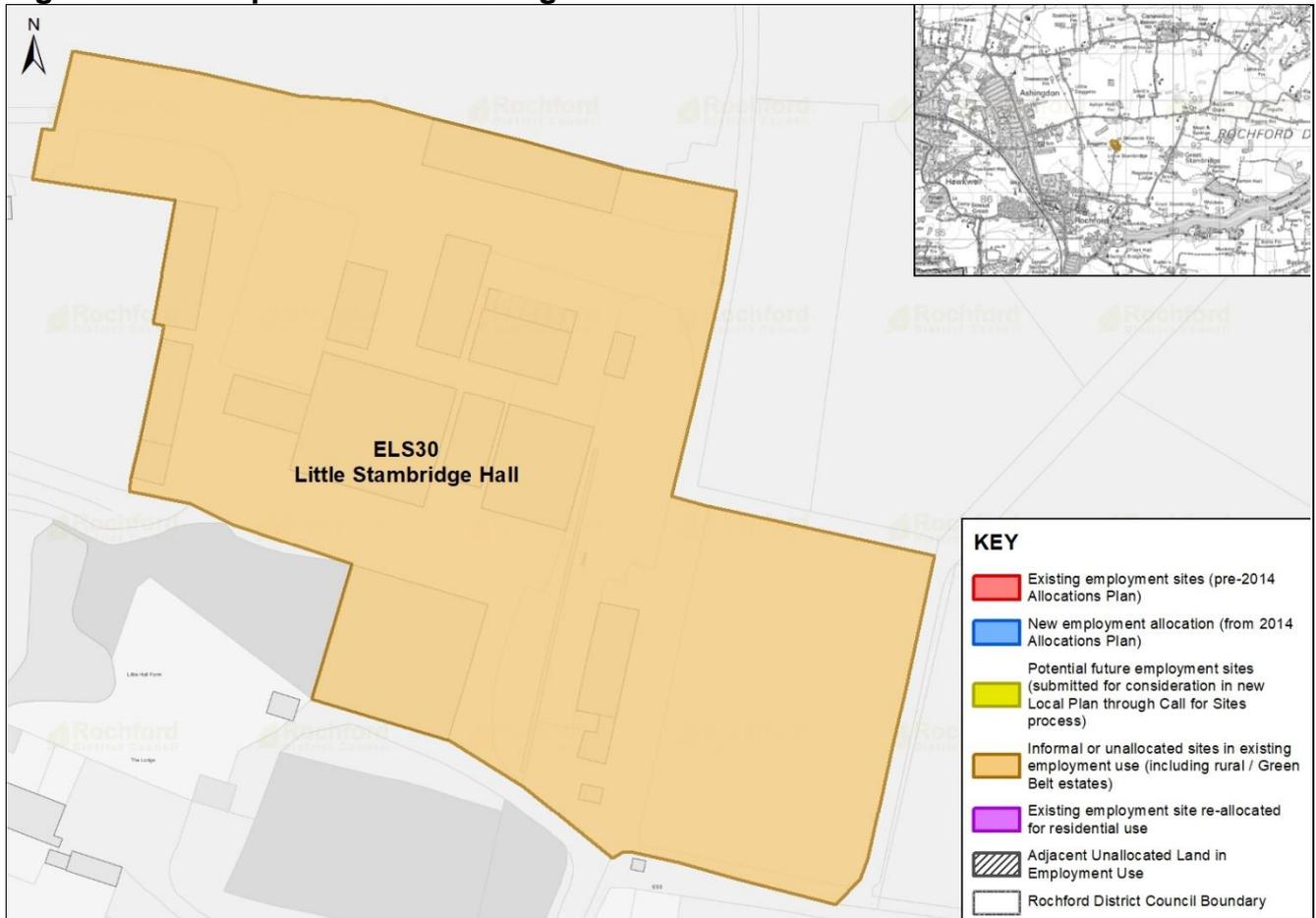
**Figure C109: Dollyman's Farm (ELS29).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024).*

**Little Stambridge Hall (ELS30)**

**Figure C110: Map of Little Stambridge Hall.**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024).

Location:	Little Stambridge Hall Farm, Little Stambridge Hall Road, Rochford
Site Area (Ha):	1.97
Site Category:	4 - Informal or unallocated site in existing employment use (including rural/ Green Belt estates)
Site Cluster:	Rochford and Stambridge

**Site Description: -**

7.389. The site forms part of a farm complex which has seen a series of agricultural buildings repurposed for small-scale storage and business activities over the years. This has led to a number of automotive businesses being located within the complex, along with storage areas/units for a range of business and personal items. There is also evidence of a leisure use (weight training) within one former agricultural building.

7.390. A significant proportion of the site was formerly occupied by timber poultry sheds, which had secured change of use planning permission for B8 storage. These have

recently been demolished and groundwork for a planning approval to construct a number of small business units was underway at time of visit. This is likely to provide a range of good-quality, purpose-built business accommodation to cater for a wider range of SME and start-up businesses at the site, providing rural employment opportunities. Although it reduces the floor area of this part of the site from 2,587m<sup>2</sup> to 1,820m<sup>2</sup>, the extra height and functionality over the chicken sheds (which were low in height and of poor condition) is likely to increase the amount of employment activity taking place at the site.

**7.391.** Alongside these activities, the site remains an active agricultural and residential location, housing agricultural machinery and a listed farmhouse.

**Site Evaluation: -**

7.392. Traffic Light Categorisation: -

Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class Floorspace	Neighbouring Amenities
<b>Red</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Red</b>

Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation
<b>Red</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Red</b>

Physical Opportunity for Intensification: - **YES**

Vacant Land: - **YES**

Vacant Buildings: - **NO**

7.393. Qualitative Scored Criteria: -

Strategic Access	Local Access	Site Quality, Amenities & Management	Market Attractiveness	Development & Environmental Constraints
<b>1 / 5</b>	<b>1 / 5</b>	<b>1 / 5</b>	<b>2 / 5</b>	<b>2 / 5</b>

**Strengths: -**

7.394. Planned redevelopment: The ongoing redevelopment of the site, with the demolition of former poultry sheds and the construction of purpose-built business units, indicates a commitment to improving the facilities and attracting a wider range of SMEs and start-up businesses. This planned development may enhance the site's attractiveness as an employment location.

7.395. Mixed-use: The site currently accommodates a mix of activities, including general storage, automotive businesses, and agricultural uses. This diversity appeals to a

wider range of potential occupiers and provides opportunities for different types of businesses to coexist and potentially collaborate.

- 7.396. Rural setting: The site's isolated rural location and attractive surrounding countryside may be appealing to certain businesses seeking a tranquil and picturesque working environment.
- 7.397. Planning permission and demand: The site already benefits from planning permission for the construction of new business units, and there seems to be good demand for such space in this location, as evidenced by the lack of vacancies and the ongoing progress with groundworks for the new units.

**Weaknesses: -**

- 7.398. Limited accessibility: The site's isolated location, narrow single track road access, and lack of nearby public transportation make it challenging for employees, customers, and suppliers to reach the site easily.
- 7.399. Poor circulation and parking: The unmade roads and potholes on-site, coupled with limited dedicated parking, create potential congestion and difficulties for businesses and visitors alike.
- 7.400. Lack of amenities: The absence of amenities within walking distance may be a disadvantage for businesses and their employees who prefer nearby facilities for convenience during work hours.
- 7.401. Seclusion and limited signage: The secluded nature of the site and the lack of prominent signage may make it less visible and accessible to potential clients and customers.
- 7.402. Development constraints: The site's location within the Green Belt and its proximity to a listed farmhouse complex with Grade II listed structures may present challenges for further development, requiring careful planning and adherence to regulations.

**Conclusions and Recommendations: -**

Monitor and Manage

- 7.403. The redevelopment of the poultry sheds site is likely to result in good quality, purpose-built starter business units, providing accommodation for a range of small businesses. If this is successful, there is potential for the redevelopment/refurbishment of other buildings on the site to support operations which are likely to create more employment than existing storage uses. Such provision is likely to meet a continuing need for small-scale business accommodation, whilst also acting as an important source of employment in a rural location.
- 7.404. However, any further redevelopment or intensification of the site would be subject to Green Belt policy, along with the impact on nearby heritage assets, whilst the existing isolated location, single track road, poor circulation and lack of public/sustainable travel routes could create an overly car-dependent site, and one to which large

numbers of HGVs would not be suited. Any future proposals will need to consider this balance.

7.405. It is also important to consider that storage provision does meet a market need and this may need to be accommodated elsewhere if displaced.

**Figure C111: Little Stambridge Hall (ELS30).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024).*

**Figure C112: Little Stambridge Hall (ELS30).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024).*

**Figure C113: Little Stambridge Hall (ELS30).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024).*

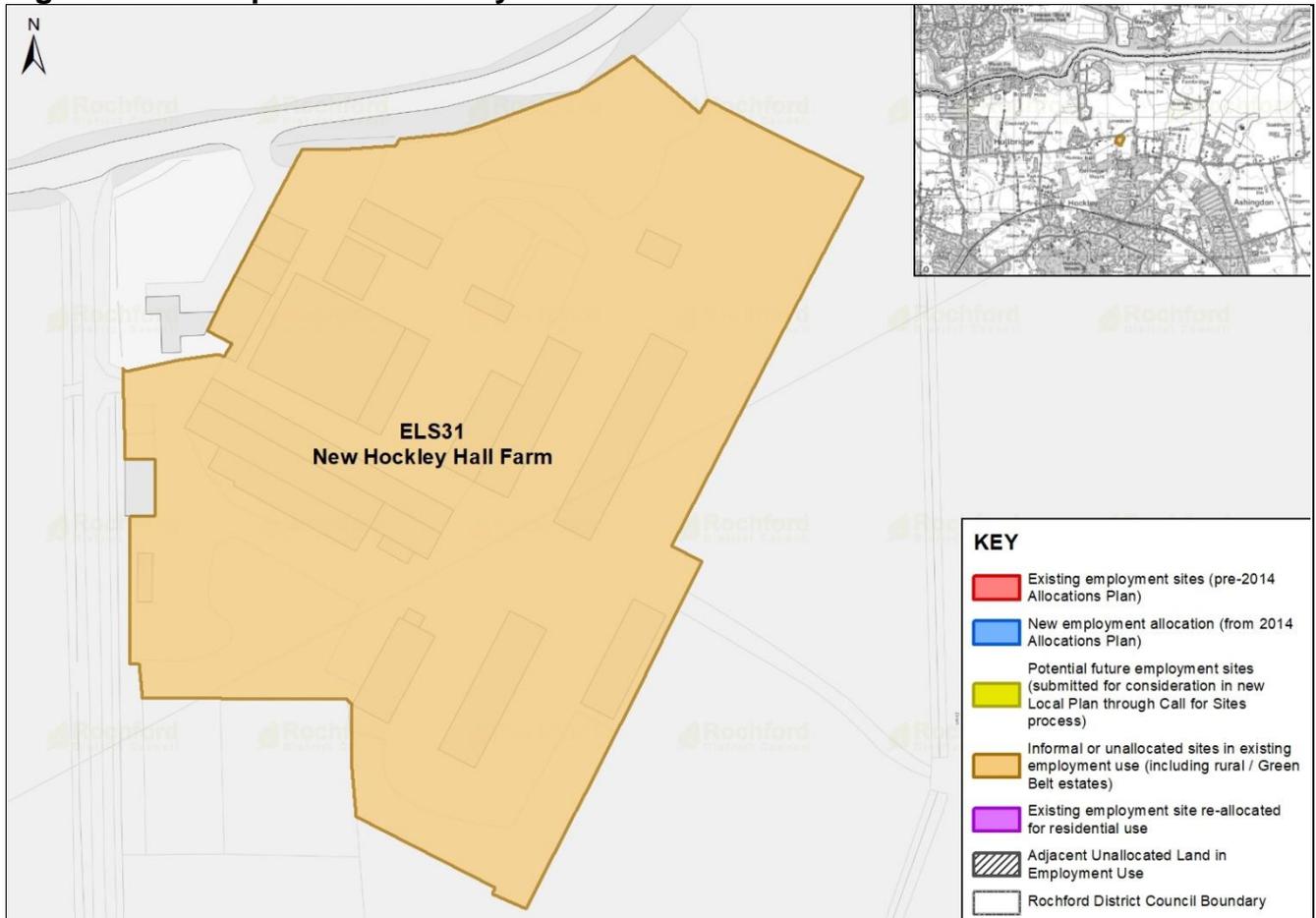
**Figure C114: Little Stambridge Hall (ELS30).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024).*

**New Hockley Hall Farm (ELS31)**

**Figure C115: Map of New Hockley Hall Farm.**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024).

Location:	New Hockley Hall Farm, Lower Road, Hockley
Site Area:	2.36
Site Category:	4 - Informal or unallocated site in existing employment use (including rural/ Green Belt estates)
Site Cluster:	Hockley and Hawkwell

**Site Description: -**

7.406. New Hockley Hall Farm is primarily a rural site comprising agricultural activity and limited commercial activity undertaken in industrial yards, converted agricultural buildings and shipping containers. The location character is rural, with access gained from the rural Lower Road. The adjoining land use is farmland in the Metropolitan Green Belt. A series of isolated residential and agricultural properties, along with the Local Wildlife Site R12 (The Dome Grasslands) and the Dome Village residential park are in the vicinity of the site.

7.407. Units are predominately converted old agricultural units or shipping containers. Whilst the long-term maintenance of these buildings is evident, the majority appear old, weathered, and have some degree of material damaged (including, but not limited to, signs of damp, impaired drainage/guttering and the loss of building bricks, roof tiles and doorways/gateways from properties).

7.408. The site provides warehouse/workshop units and storage facilities for industries in the sectors of transportation and home removals, haberdashery, upholstery, catering and, provides manufacturing services to produce commodities and/or process raw materials. Farmyard operations were also present on-site. Given the location of New Hockley Hall Farm, the ageing infrastructure and facilities, and the agricultural operations also observed on-site, it is expected that the existing commercial activity is unlikely to grow in the short-medium term.

**Site Evaluation: -**

7.409. Traffic Light Categorisation: -

Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class Floorspace	Neighbouring Amenities
<b>Red</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>

Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation
<b>Red</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Red</b>

Physical Opportunity for Intensification: - **YES**

Vacant Land: - **YES**

Vacant Buildings: - **YES**

7.410. Qualitative Scored Criteria: -

Strategic Access	Local Access	Site Quality, Amenities & Management	Market Attractiveness	Development & Environmental Constraints
<b>1 / 5</b>	<b>1 / 5</b>	<b>1 / 5</b>	<b>1 / 5</b>	<b>2 / 5</b>

**Strengths: -**

7.411. Rural location: The site's rural setting and proximity to farmland in the Metropolitan Green Belt create a peaceful and natural environment, which may appeal to certain businesses or individuals seeking a quiet and secluded location.

7.412. Security Measures: The presence of CCTV and warehouse building alarms enhances on-site security, providing a sense of safety and protection for businesses operating in the area.

**Weaknesses: -**

- 7.413. Poor accessibility: The site's limited local access, lack of regular public transportation, and inadequate access for HGVs make it challenging for businesses to attract customers, employees, and suppliers. The absence of paved footpaths and PRoW routes further hinders accessibility for those without a car.
- 7.414. Limited amenities: The site's lack of nearby amenities, retail facilities, and conveniences makes it less appealing for businesses and their employees, who may prefer easy access to services during work hours.
- 7.415. Ageing infrastructure and poor-quality stock: The majority of units are converted older agricultural units or shipping containers, with evidence of weathering and material damage. This could deter potential occupants seeking modern and well-maintained facilities.
- 7.416. Lack of site identity: The site's limited branding and online presence may hamper its visibility and ability to attract potential occupants or customers, as businesses often rely on digital platforms for promotion and marketing.
- 7.417. Uncertain development status: The site is unallocated in RDCs 2014 Allocations Plan and sits within the Green Belt, restricting the potential for future expansion and redevelopment of the existing poor-quality stock.

**Conclusions and Recommendations: -**

Monitor and Manage

- 7.418. The site provides some accommodation and storage for small businesses in an area of the District with little purpose-built accommodation, however it is on a poor-quality site that is shared with agricultural activities and is not at a scale which makes a significant contribution to the District's strategic economic ambitions.
- 7.419. The attractive rural setting could lend itself to new tenants, e.g., small offices and studios in converted farm buildings, similar to Crouchman's Court/Yard in Great Wakering. However, this would require significant investment and may not be likely in the short-medium term. Past planning history and an attempt to convert one unit to residential use suggests this is a route which is more likely, meaning over time fewer employment activities may take place at the site.
- 7.420. As such, the site should be monitored and any proposals to provide good quality business accommodation or improve the site environment supported on their merits. However, it is not deemed a site suitable for allocation for employment use.

**Figure C116: New Hockley Hall Farm (ELS31).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024).*

**Figure C117: New Hockley Hall Farm (ELS31).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024).*

**Figure C118: New Hockley Hall Farm (ELS31).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024).*

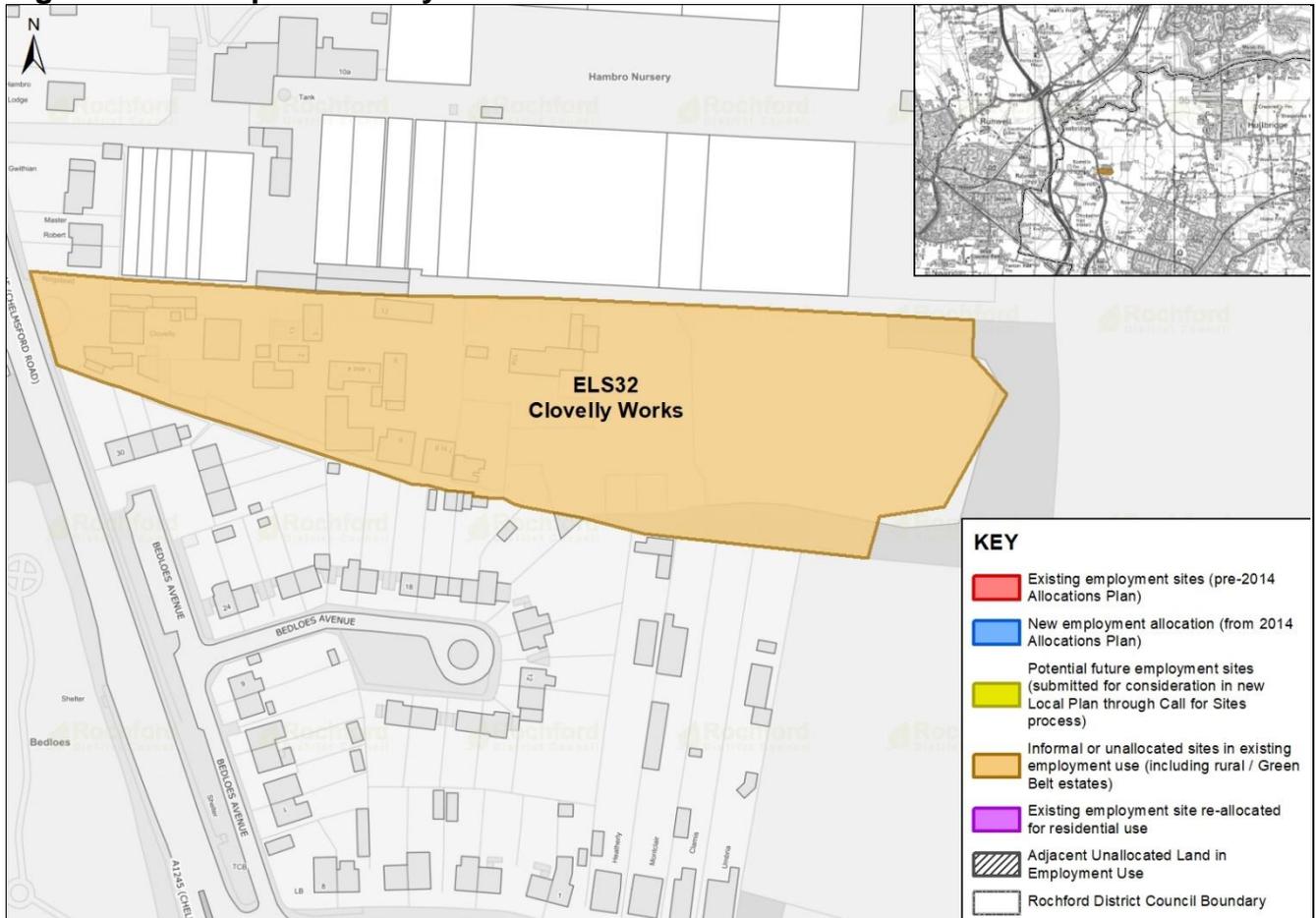
**Figure C119: New Hockley Hall Farm (ELS31).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024).*

**Clovelly Works (ELS32)**

**Figure C120: Map of Clovelly Works.**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

Location:	Clovelly Works, Chelmsford Road, Rawreth.
Site Area (Ha):	1.67
Site Category:	4 - Informal or unallocated site in existing employment use (including rural/ Green Belt estates)
Site Cluster:	Rayleigh, Rawreth and Battlesbridge.

**Site Description: -**

7.421. Clovelly Works is a small employment site situated within the village of Rawreth. It comprises a series of small, single-storey workshops, storage containers and yard areas, along with a portion of undeveloped land, which are accessed via a narrow driveway opening onto the A1245 (Chelmsford Road). The site is fronted by a residential bungalow, which also serves as the site office. It is bordered to the north by a plant nursery and residential properties, to the south by residential properties, and to the east by an existing open space (Rayleigh Cricket Club).

7.422. The site provides small-scale, affordable, and flexible workshop and storage that appeals in particular to small businesses in the construction; home improvement; automotive; and furniture industries. There are also several shipping containers, used for storage purposes by a range of businesses.

7.423. The site has an important role in providing small-scale accommodation and storage for SMEs and micro-businesses, particularly ‘one-man bands’, something reflected in the recent planning approval to provide additional purpose-built small business lock-up accommodation to the rear of the site. This proposal will add 12 new modern units and a total of 414 sq. m of floorspace to the site, with conditions to ensure these take into account future requirements for energy efficiency and EV charging points.

7.424. The further planned development of the site indicates it is likely to continue in use for employment purposes for the foreseeable future.

**Site Evaluation: -**

7.425. Traffic Light Categorisation: -

Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class Floorspace	Neighbouring Amenities
<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Amber</b>

Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation
<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Red</b>

Physical Opportunity for Intensification: - **YES**

Vacant Land: - **YES**

Vacant Buildings: - **NO**

7.426. Qualitative Scored Criteria: -

Strategic Access	Local Access	Site Quality, Amenities & Management	Market Attractiveness	Development & Environmental Constraints
<b>4 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>2 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>

**Strengths: -**

7.427. Strategic Location: The site benefits from a prominent location on the A1245 (Chelmsford Road), providing good road access across South Essex and convenient connections to nearby towns and cities like Rayleigh, Wickford, Chelmsford, Basildon, and Southend.

- 7.428. Small-scale accommodation: Clovelly Works offers small-scale, affordable, and flexible workshop and storage spaces that are particularly attractive to small businesses in the construction, home improvement, automotive, and furniture industries. This targeted accommodation meets the needs of SMEs and micro-businesses, helping to address an identified shortage.
- 7.429. Recent planning approval: The recent planning approval for the site's expansion with 12 new modern units and additional floorspace demonstrates a commitment to meeting future demand and adapting to evolving business requirements.
- 7.430. Adjacency to amenities: Despite limited local amenities, the site is within walking distance of some facilities, including a small park, cricket pitches, a day nursery, and a series of plant nurseries. Additionally, the nearby village of Battlesbridge offers retail and catering options.

**Weaknesses: -**

- 7.431. Unattractive environment: The site's appearance is negatively affected by dishevelled units, constrained parking, the presence of dismantled motor vehicles, and uneven surfaces, which may deter potential occupants and visitors.
- 7.432. Limited amenities and green infrastructure: The site lacks dedicated landscaping and green infrastructure, limiting the provision of outdoor spaces for staff or visitors. Additionally, the absence amenities within easy walking distance could be a drawback for potential occupiers.
- 7.433. Sustainable access: despite its good road access, the location is less convenient for those without a car, with an infrequent bus service and no safe cycle routes.
- 7.434. Constrained Parking and HGV Access: The tight and constrained parking situation on the site, combined with the inability to accommodate heavy goods vehicles (HGVs), might create logistical challenges for businesses that require frequent deliveries or collections.
- 7.435. Older buildings and site quality: The site's buildings are in fair or poor condition, and the overall site quality is low. This may require ongoing maintenance and repairs, which could affect the operational efficiency and attractiveness of the site.
- 7.436. Green Belt restrictions: Being within the Green Belt places limitations on further expansion and development. Although the recent planning approval is an advantage, complying with Green Belt regulations may restrict future development opportunities.

**Conclusions and Recommendations: -**

Protect and Enhance/Reallocate

- 7.437. The site provides a range of flexible, affordable small business workspace and storage accommodation which has been demonstrated to be in demand during a recent planning application. The recent securing of planning permission for expansion in the Green Belt, citing very special circumstances as a justification, highlights the

shortage of good quality small units servicing SMEs in sectors such as construction. The addition of 12 modern units, alongside EV charging points, will considerably raise the profile of the site as a business location, in turn attracting new business activity into Rawreth, on a site which is well-located for strategic road access.

7.438. Should the accompanying lawful development certificate also be approved, the whole extent of the site would be established for employment purposes and it may be appropriate to allocate the site formally for employment use within the new Local Plan. This would make it easier to upgrade the quality of stock on the existing portion of the site and ensure there is formal small business workspace provision in the Rawreth area, also supporting the rural economy. It would also protect the site from proposals to use previously-developed land for residential development.

7.439. Proposals to improve the quality of the older stock on site in future should be supported to create a more attractive business environment for occupiers.

**Figure C121: Clovelly Works (ELS32).**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

**Figure C122: Clovelly Works (ELS32).**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

**Figure C123: Clovelly Works (ELS32).**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

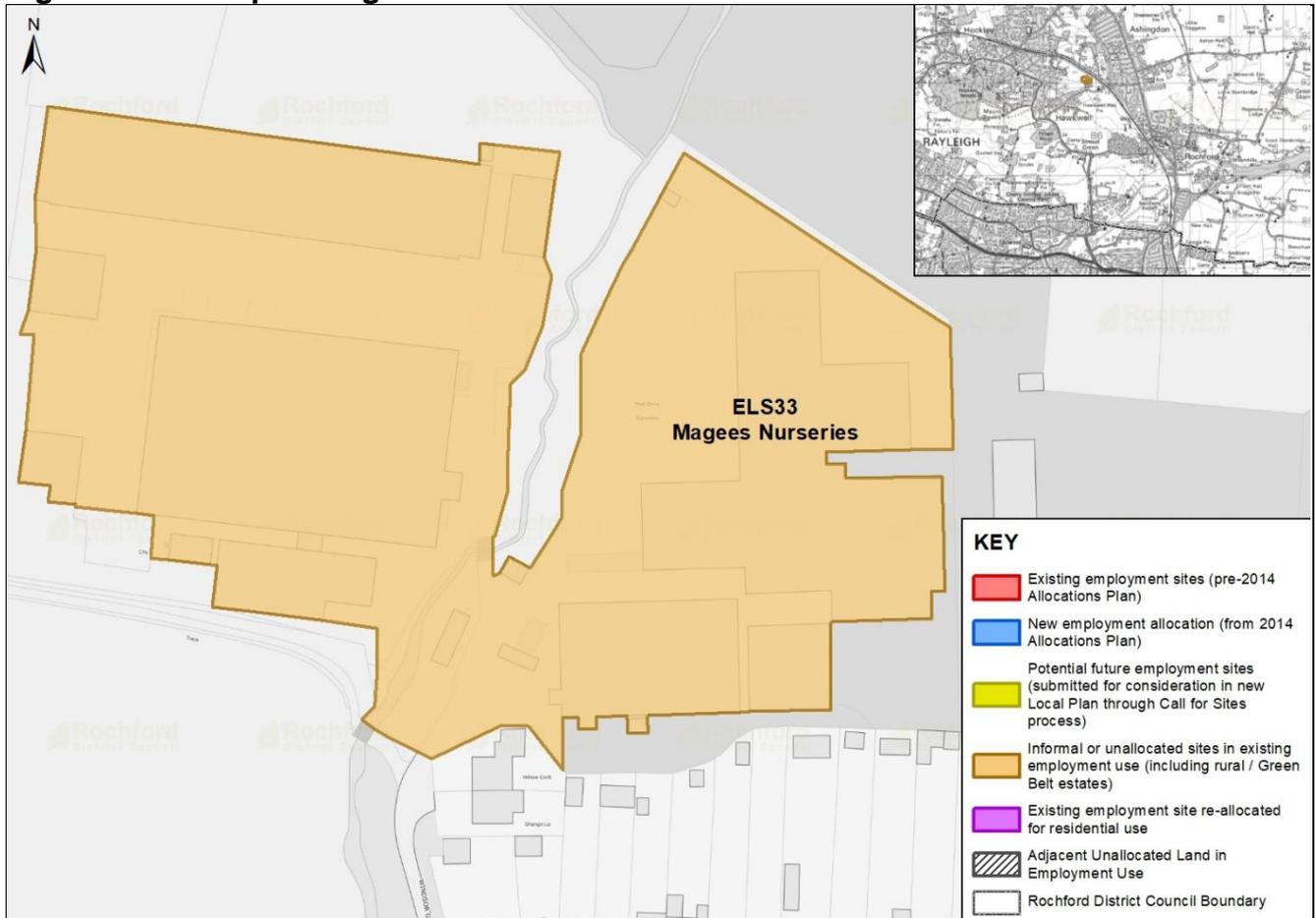
**Figure C124: Clovelly Works (ELS32).**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

**Magees Nurseries (ELS33)**

**Figure C125: Map of Magees Nurseries.**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024).

Location:	Magees Nurseries, Windsor Gardens, Hawkwell
Site Area (Ha):	1.89
Site Category:	4 - Informal or unallocated site in existing employment use (including rural/ Green Belt estates)
Site Cluster:	Hockley and Hawkwell

**Site Description: -**

7.440. The site comprises a former mushroom farming complex in a rural location outside Hawkwell, the buildings of which have been repurposed into a series of industrial and storage units of a range of sizes. Most structures are single storey, although a couple have an additional level. Many buildings are in poor condition, with few showing signs of modernisation. Much of the complex has seen little alteration from its previous use and some of the larger units to the East are open-sided, acting as covered storage. The site provides a wide range of basic units for small businesses in sectors such as construction, home improvement and automotive and is clearly well-occupied, with

most of the available space maximised. As a result, circulation space is very tight and the site is constrained for larger vehicles.

7.441. Although the standard of accommodation and access to the site is sub-optimal, the site fulfils a role in providing affordable small business accommodation. However, given the condition of most properties on the site, it is likely that it will require additional investment and modernisation to remain suitable in the medium term, whilst the site’s location within the Green Belt and narrow access are likely to be a barrier to any significant expansion.

**Site Evaluation: -**

7.442. Traffic Light Categorisation: -

Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class Floorspace	Neighbouring Amenities
<b>Red</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Red</b>

Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation
<b>Red</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Red</b>

Physical Opportunity for Intensification: - **YES**

Vacant Land: - **YES**

Vacant Buildings: - **UNKNOWN**

7.443. Qualitative Scored Criteria: -

Strategic Access	Local Access	Site Quality, Amenities & Management	Market Attractiveness	Development & Environmental Constraints
<b>1 / 5</b>	<b>2 / 5</b>	<b>2 / 5</b>	<b>2 / 5</b>	<b>2 / 5</b>

**Strengths: -**

7.444. Affordable small business accommodation: The site fulfils a role in providing affordable units for small businesses, particularly in sectors such as construction, home improvement, and automotive.

7.445. High occupancy rate: The site is well-occupied, with most of the available space in use, indicating its popularity among businesses seeking suitable accommodation.

7.446. Site office and security measures: The presence of a site office, security gate, and locked access outside working hours enhance security and management of the site.

7.447. Mixed-use potential: The site's repurposed former mushroom farming complex, with units and lock-ups of differing sizes, allows for various uses and adaptability to accommodate different types of businesses.

**Weaknesses: -**

7.448. Poor condition of buildings: Many units on the site show signs of dilapidation and wear, requiring additional investment and modernisation to remain suitable for medium-term use.

7.449. Limited access for larger vehicles: The site is constrained for larger vehicles, making circulation space tight and potentially limiting certain business activities.

7.450. Location within Green Belt: Being situated within the Green Belt imposes restrictions on any significant expansion or development on the site.

7.451. Constrained access routes: The site's access via narrow rural lanes and congested roads could pose challenges for delivery and transportation.

7.452. Lack of amenities and facilities: The site lacks on-site amenities and facilities, and there are no dedicated cycling routes or bike parking facilities.

**Conclusions and Recommendations: -**

Monitor and Manage

7.453. The site appears to fill an important niche in providing small business workspace, however a combination of poor environmental quality and severely constrained site access mean significant investment may be required to modernise the site and provide suitable workspace in future. Some of the poorer condition and under-utilised parts of the site (e.g. Factory Bathrooms) could potentially be redeveloped to provide additional small units for a range of small businesses, whilst any reduction in profile of the larger existing buildings could make such proposals more acceptable in Green Belt terms. The narrow site entrance and access via Windsor Gardens is a barrier to HGVs and larger vehicles, whilst large numbers of vehicles accessing the site is also likely to impact the amenity of local residents. As a result, any proposals for uses involving access by lighter vehicles and minimal need for HGV access are likely to be more beneficial to ensure the site remains a good neighbour. The impact of servicing/deliveries on the site, access road and neighbours should be considered closely as part of future proposals, and conditions could be applied to uses on the Eastern portion of the site (bordering residential properties) to ensure the site does not unduly impact neighbours in terms of noise or traffic.

7.454. Given the site's attractive rural setting, suboptimal role as an employment site and access via a rural lane past residential properties, it is possible that it could see future redevelopment proposals for residential uses (although it should be noted that it is not a promoted site in the New Local Plan process).

**Figure C126: Magees Nurseries (ELS33).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure C127: Magees Nurseries (ELS33).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure C128: Magees Nurseries (ELS33).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

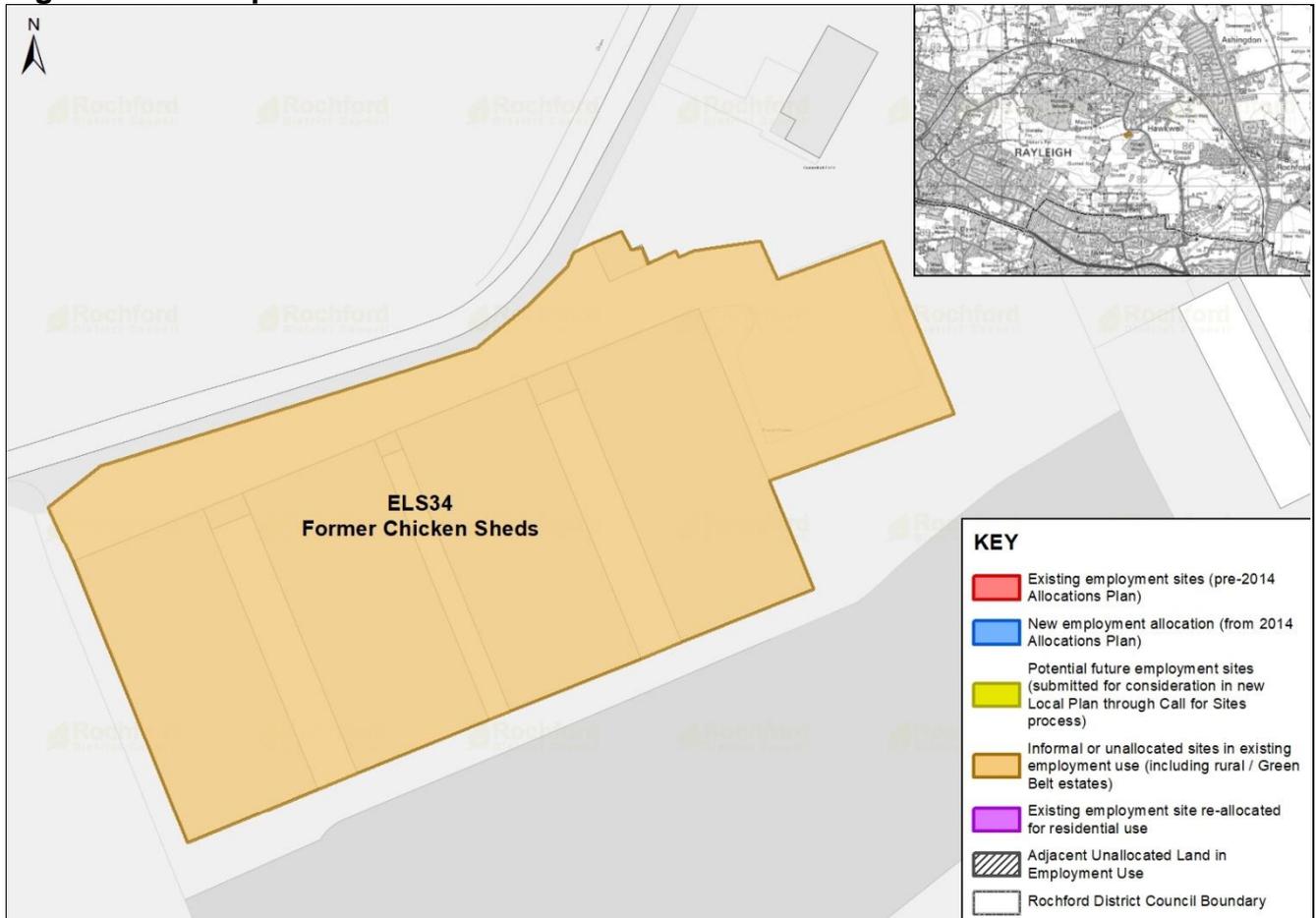
**Figure C129: Magees Nurseries (ELS33).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Former Chicken Sheds (ELS34)**

**Figure C130: Map of Former Chicken Sheds.**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

Location:	Former Chicken Sheds, Gusted Hall Lane, Hawkwell
Site Area (Ha):	0.50
Site Category:	4 - Informal or unallocated site in existing employment use (including rural/ Green Belt estates)
Site Cluster:	Hockley and Hawkwell

**Site Description: -**

7.455. The site comprises a series of 4 single storey former chicken sheds in a rural setting, which have been refurbished and reclad to provide warehouse accommodation for a single occupier, which has adapted the former agricultural buildings for its own use, and modernised them. The majority of the site is warehousing, with an element of office space and small yard/container storage area. The site is securely surrounded by palisade fencing, with gated access.

7.456. The site sits within the Green Belt, and it is unlikely that anything more than small-scale expansion would be permitted, although the units could potentially be subdivided in future to provide accommodation for smaller occupiers.

**Site Evaluation: -**

7.457. Traffic Light Categorisation: -

Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class Floorspace	Neighbouring Amenities
<b>Red</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Amber</b>

Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation
<b>Amber</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>

Physical Opportunity for Intensification: - **NO**

Vacant Land: - **NO**

Vacant Buildings: - **NO**

7.458. Qualitative Scored Criteria: -

<b>Strategic Access</b>	<b>Local Access</b>	<b>Site Quality, Amenities &amp; Management</b>	<b>Market Attractiveness</b>	<b>Development &amp; Environmental Constraints</b>
<b>2 / 5</b>	<b>2 / 5</b>	<b>2 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>2 / 5</b>

**Strengths: -**

7.459. Refurbished and modernised: The buildings have been recently refurbished and reclad to provide modern warehouse accommodation, making them suitable for a single occupier's specific needs.

7.460. Secure site: The site is securely surrounded by palisade fencing, with gated access, and features CCTV and lighting, providing a safe and protected working environment.

7.461. Adequate parking and circulation: The site has suitable parking and circulation space, with no observed issues in terms of access or servicing.

7.462. Attractive rural setting: The site's rural location and attractive surroundings create a pleasant working environment for employees.

7.463. Good condition and well-maintained: The premises appear to be in good condition and well-maintained, contributing to a professional and functional appearance.

**Weaknesses: -**

- 7.464. Green Belt restrictions: Being within the Green Belt, any significant expansion or alteration to the units is unlikely to be permitted, limiting future development possibilities.
- 7.465. Limited road access and congestion: Access to the site via a single-track country lane can present difficulties for larger vehicles, and the nearby B1013 experiences congestion issues.
- 7.466. Limited pedestrian and cycling facilities: The lack of dedicated pedestrian paths or cycling routes to the site may pose challenges for employees and visitors traveling on foot or by bicycle.
- 7.467. Limited amenities and services on-site: The site lacks additional on-site amenities, and while nearby garden centres and tea rooms are within walking distance, they may not be easily accessible on foot.
- 7.468. Landscape and residential constraints: The site's location in the Upper Roach Valley Landscape Character Area and adjacency to residential properties may impose limitations on potential expansion or development due to planning regulations and considerations.

**Conclusions and Recommendations: -**

Monitor and Manage

- 7.469. Site represents reuse of an existing rural site to provide business accommodation for a single occupier. It could be expected to provide a similar role for a future occupier or occupiers. However, site has a number of constraints, including proximity to residential property, poor non-car access along with vehicular access via single track country lane. Any future redevelopment of the site would be subject to Green Belt restrictions, along with consideration of impact on the Upper Roach Valley Landscape Character Area.
- 7.470. Although the site is in a potentially sensitive location for significant goods traffic, operating hours are managed by planning condition and no traffic or noise was observed on the site visit. Site appears to be functioning appropriately within its setting. However, this situation would need to be monitored in future, in the event that a change of activity or occupier at the site brought any complications which would make the surrounding setting less appropriate.

**Figure C131: Former Chicken Sheds (ELS34).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure C132: Former Chicken Sheds (ELS34).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure C133: Former Chicken Sheds (ELS34).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

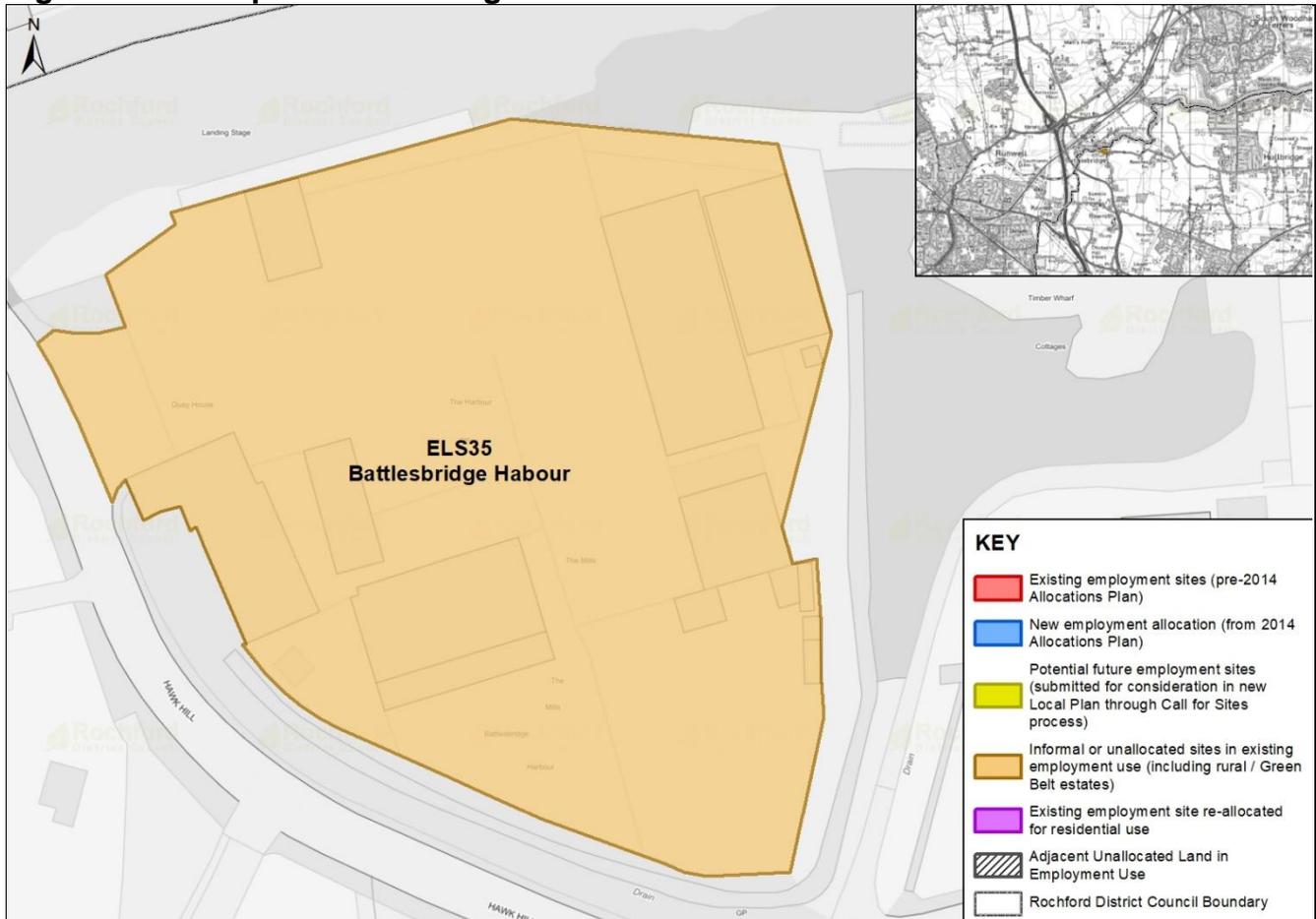
**Figure C134: Former Chicken Sheds (ELS34).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Battlesbridge Harbour (ELS35)**

**Figure C135: Map of Battlesbridge Harbour.**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

Location:	Battlesbridge Harbour, Hawk Hill, Battlesbridge.
Site Area (Ha):	0.93
Site Category:	4 - Informal or unallocated site in existing employment use (including rural/ Green Belt estates)
Site Cluster:	Rayleigh, Rawreth and Battlesbridge

**Site Description: -**

7.471. Set immediately South of the River Crouch, Battlesbridge Harbour is a small industrial complex, comprising two small office buildings, a series of one to two storey warehouses and workshop unit and industrial yards servicing an equestrian and country store and a roofing company. Further occupiers include those operating in financial and business; creative & digital; automotive; construction, home improvement and sail making sectors. As of Feb-2023, the site appeared well-occupied.

7.472. The site is surrounded by a palisade fence and is bordered to the East by residential uses. The main road, Hawk Hill, lies to the West. There are residential uses to the West and agricultural land to the South. The site lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt, as well as being in a Conservation Area. On the opposite bank of the Crouch, to the North, the Battlesbridge Antiques and Crafts Centre provides a range of specialist retail, along with food & beverage options. Given the popularity of the main portion of Battlesbridge, over the river, there may be scope for further consumer/leisure-focused uses on the site.

**Site Evaluation: -**

7.473. Traffic Light Categorisation: -

Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class Floorspace	Neighbouring Amenities
<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Green</b>

Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation
<b>Amber</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Red</b>

Physical Opportunity for Intensification: - **NO**

Vacant Land: - **NO**

Vacant Buildings: - **NO**

7.474. Qualitative Scored Criteria: -

Strategic Access	Local Access	Site Quality, Amenities & Management	Market Attractiveness	Development & Environmental Constraints
<b>4 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>1 / 5</b>

**Strengths: -**

7.475. Attractive semi-rural location: The site's location adjacent to the River Crouch and opposite the prominent Battlesbridge Antique & Craft Centre provides an attractive semi-rural setting, which may be appealing to businesses and visitors.

7.476. Well-occupied and diverse business sectors: The site houses a range of businesses from various sectors, including financial and business services, creative & digital, automotive, equestrian retail, sail making, and more, contributing to a diverse and vibrant business community.

7.477. Proximity to transportation links: The site benefits from good access to local roads, A-roads, and is within walking distance of Battlesbridge railway station and a bus stop, enhancing accessibility for employees and customers.

- 7.478. Close to amenities and retail facilities: Numerous cafes, public houses, and comparison retail options are within a short walk of the site, providing convenience for employees and visitors.
- 7.479. Screened and secured site: The site's metal palisade fence, locked gates out of hours, and CCTV contribute to its security and may be appealing to businesses seeking a safe and protected working environment.

**Weaknesses: -**

- 7.480. Limited on-site amenities: The site itself lacks a wide range of on-site amenities, which may impact the convenience and comfort of employees.
- 7.481. Constrained parking and difficult HGV access: The limited parking space and tight circulation areas on the site, along with difficult HGV access, may pose challenges for businesses and visitors.
- 7.482. Lack of a coherent identity: The site lacks a clear and unified identity, with buildings of varying ages and a shared yard used by different businesses, potentially causing confusion for visitors.
- 7.483. Limited green infrastructure and landscaping: While the site benefits from nearby attractive riverside and semi-rural surroundings, it lacks green infrastructure and landscaping on-site, potentially reducing the overall visual appeal.
- 7.484. Environmental constraints: Being within the Metropolitan Green Belt, Coastal Protection Belt, and a Conservation Area, along with being in Flood Zone 3, may impose limitations on potential developments and expansion opportunities for businesses on the site.

**Conclusions and Recommendations: -**

Monitor and Manage

- 7.485. The site provides a range of accommodation for a variety of small businesses, which it would be appropriate to protect. However, given the site's attractive/sensitive setting, possible incompatibility between uses and the surrounds, and constrained circulation on site, in the medium-long term it may be better suited to either small-scale uses focused on Class E, or mixed-use schemes involving an element of residential/leisure, rather than B2/B8 activities.
- 7.486. The site is unallocated and sits within the Green Belt. Given its location adjacent to the river and opposite the popular visitor attractions on the opposite riverbank within the City of Chelmsford, the site may be appropriate for full/partial mixed-use redevelopment to include retail/leisure, offices/workspaces and residential.
- 7.487. Any such proposals should reflect the site's sensitive location within the Green Belt and Conservation Area.

**Figure C136: Battlesbridge Harbour (ELS35).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure C137: Battlesbridge Harbour (ELS35).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure C138: Battlesbridge Harbour (ELS35).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

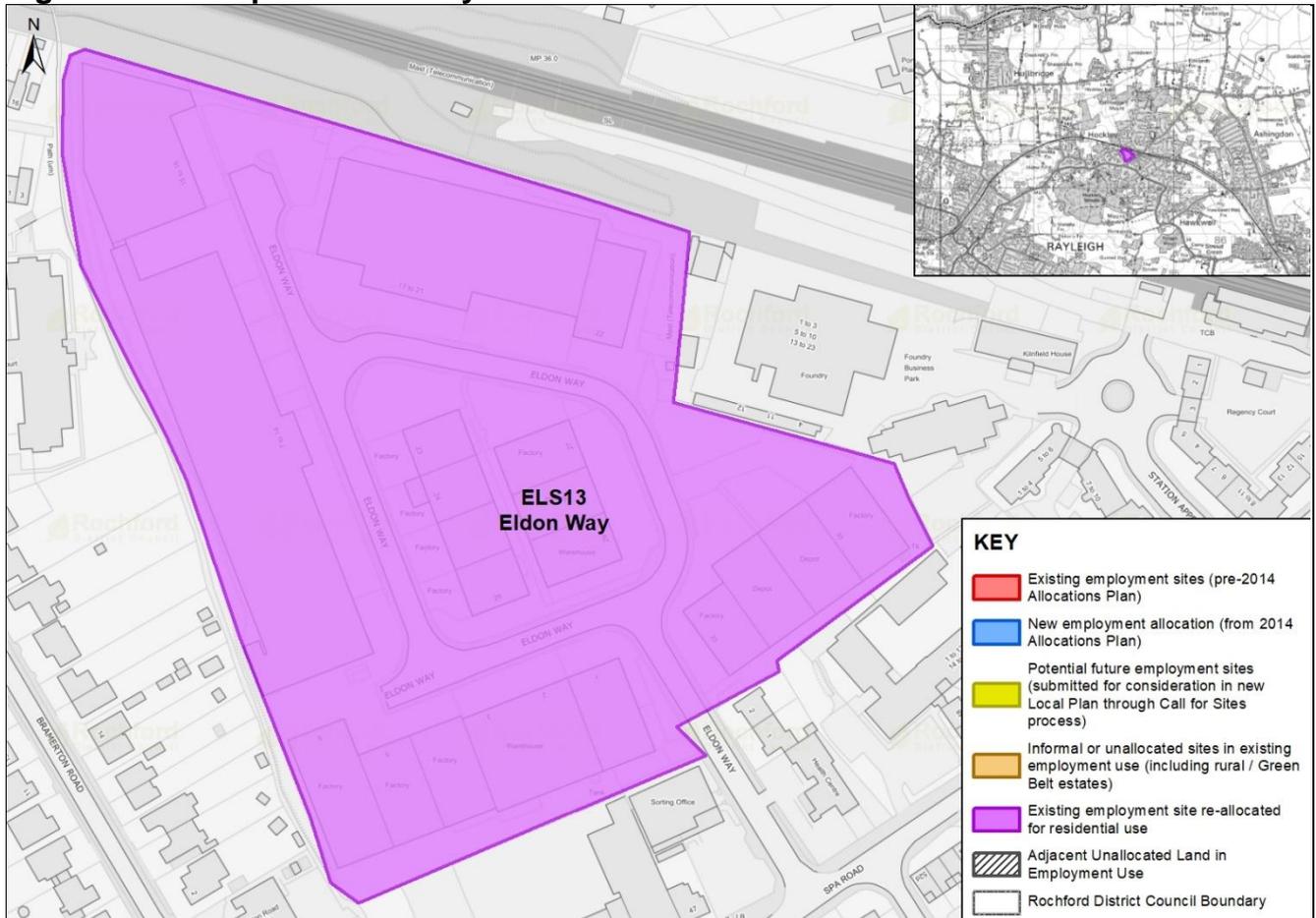
**Figure C139: Battlesbridge Harbour (ELS35).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Eldon Way Industrial Estate (ELS13)**

**Figure C140: Map of Eldon Way Industrial Estate.**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024)

Location:	Eldon Way Industrial Estate, Eldon Way, Hockley
Site Area (Ha):	3.84
Site Category:	5- Existing employment site re-allocated for residential use
Site Cluster:	Hockley and Hawkwell

**Site Description: -**

7.488. Eldon Way Industrial Estate consists primarily of warehouses for industrial and/or commercial use in Hockley. The site is generally well-occupied and is popular location for a range of SME and national businesses, including the head offices of a number of small businesses trading national and/or internationally. The majority of the estate is in use for employment purposes, with a minority of space in use for leisure purposes (c.15%). In addition, a number of warehouse units have ancillary retail/trade counter operations.

7.489. The site is designated brownfield residential land allocation BFR2 in the 2014 Allocations Plan, with the Core Strategy Policy RTC6 and Hockley Area Action Plan envisaging the estate redeveloped as a mixed-use site incorporating residential, employment, commercial and leisure, deemed as more appropriate.

7.490. As Eldon Way Industrial Estate is designated as an employment site in the Hockley Area Action Plan (2014), with its town centre location, prominent branding and accessibility (for HGVs, private vehicles and sustainable transport), it is expected that employment use will constitute a significant portion of the site in the long-term, even if some mixed-use redevelopment takes place.

**Site Evaluation: -**

7.491. Traffic Light Categorisation: -

Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class Floorspace	Neighbouring Amenities
<b>Green</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Green</b>

Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation
<b>Green</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Amber</b>

Physical Opportunity for Intensification: - **YES**

Vacant Land: - **NO**

Vacant Buildings: - **YES**

7.492. Qualitative Scored Criteria: -

Strategic Access	Local Access	Site Quality, Amenities & Management	Market Attractiveness	Development & Environmental Constraints
<b>2 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>4 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>

**Strengths: -**

7.493. Town centre location and accessibility: The estate's proximity to Hockley town centre and good access to transportation links, including a nearby railway station and bus stops, make it a convenient location for businesses and employees.

7.494. Diverse range of businesses and well-occupied: The estate accommodates a wide range of businesses from various sectors, including automotive, engineering, catering, home and commercial deliveries, fashion distribution, and more. Its popularity among both SMEs and national businesses indicates its attractiveness as an employment site.

- 7.495. Clear branding and identity: The estate is branded with a clear identity as an industrial and warehouse business park, creating a distinct image and impression of the site.
- 7.496. Potential for mixed-use redevelopment: The designation of the site for mixed-use redevelopment in the future, incorporating commercial, residential, retail, and leisure elements, presents development opportunities and potential for increased vibrancy, along with improved connections to the town centre and station.
- 7.497. Access to amenities and retail facilities: The estate's location within walking distance of numerous retail facilities and amenities in Hockley Town Centre adds to the convenience and quality of the working environment.

**Weaknesses: -**

- 7.498. Distance from primary A road: The site's location approximately 6.2km from a primary A road (A127) may limit its appeal to businesses seeking easier access to major transport routes.
- 7.499. Limited green infrastructure and amenity spaces: The estate lacks green spaces and accessible amenities on-site, potentially reducing the quality of the working environment for employees.
- 7.500. Limited modernisation and aging infrastructure: The majority of units are in a fair condition, but there is limited evidence of modernisation, and signs of ageing and weathering are apparent on older warehouse units and office blocks.
- 7.501. Traffic congestion and HGV access limitations: Access via the northern route is constrained by a railway bridge, affecting HGV access, and the nearby B1013 and Spa Road experience congestion during peak times, potentially impacting traffic flow to the estate.
- 7.502. Pedestrian Connectivity: Whilst Hockley Town Centre and numerous facilities and amenities are within walking distance of the site, Eldon Way Industrial Estate could benefit from improved pedestrian links to Hockley Town Centre, the railway station and surrounding streets, with Eldon Way forming the only current access point.

**Conclusions and Recommendations: -**

Protect and Enhance

- 7.503. Whilst the site is generally functioning well in its current form, units are dated and in need of investment and there are a few vacancies on site, along with leisure uses. Should additional large units become vacant, there may be an opportunity for proposals which see parts of the envisaged mixed-use redevelopment come forward. This situation should be monitored carefully and integrated with any future policies, masterplans or significant regeneration opportunities related to the wider Hockley Town Centre and adjoining Foundry Business Park.
- 7.504. Any future redevelopment of all or part of the site should include a masterplan, should improve accessibility to the town centre, and should seek to retain employment uses,

which will continue to play an important role in the economy and community of Hockley.

**Figure C141: Eldon Way Industrial Estate (ELS13).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure C142: Eldon Way Industrial Estate (ELS13).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure C143: Eldon Way Industrial Estate (ELS13).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

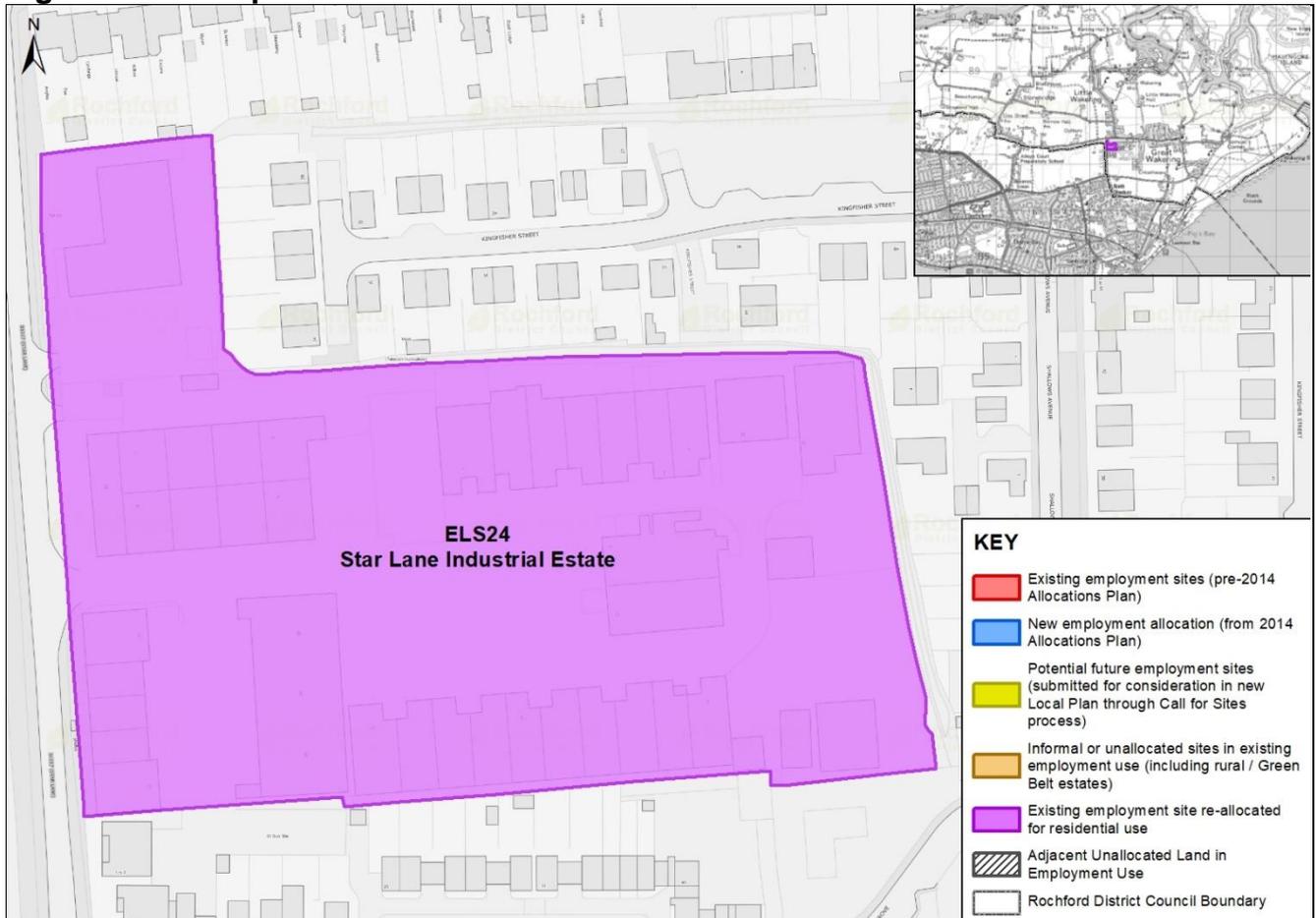
**Figure C144: Eldon Way Industrial Estate (ELS13).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Star Lane Industrial Estate (ELS24)**

**Figure C145: Map of Star Lane Industrial Estate.**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024).

Location:	Star Lane Industrial Estate, Great Waking
Site Area (Ha):	2.57
Site Category:	5 - Existing employment site re-allocated for residential use
Site Cluster:	Great Waking

**Site Description: -**

7.505. Star Road Industrial Estate consists of a range of warehouses, offices, and other commercial buildings. The site is accessed from the B1017 (Star Lane) which lies to the west of the site. Adjoining uses include residential development (including new Residential Land Allocation SER9 and Brownfield Residential Land Allocation BFR1), a Local Wildlife Site (R35 – Star Lane Pits) and agricultural land in the Metropolitan Green Belt.

7.506. The estate is fronted by a modernised office block (housing Essex Chambers of Commerce and Practical HR), which gives a positive impression of the site’s gateway.

This is adjoined by a BT Openreach site to the North (which appears to act as a local depot), and the main, multi-let industrial estate to the South/East, which comprises a series of industrial units with a circulation road and central communal parking area. Most units appear to be single or two-storey properties home to a range of businesses of varying sizes, scales, and occupations, particularly within the automotive sector. The site functions well as a location for local employment uses and whilst the site is allocated for Residential in the Allocations Plan with new build housing already built to the South, there is no evidence of any redevelopment taking place.

**Site Evaluation: -**

7.507. Traffic Light Categorisation: -

Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class Floorspace	Neighbouring Amenities
<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Amber</b>

Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation
<b>Green</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Green</b>

Physical Opportunity for Intensification: - **NO**

Vacant Land: - **NO**

Vacant Buildings: - **YES**

7.508. Qualitative Scored Criteria: -

Strategic Access	Local Access	Site Quality, Amenities & Management	Market Attractiveness	Development & Environmental Constraints
<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>4 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>2 / 5</b>

**Strengths: -**

7.509. Well-occupied with a diverse range of businesses: The estate is well-occupied with a mix of businesses operating in various sectors, including automotive, engineering, waste, construction, manufacturing, safety and security, self-storage, and professional services, creating a diverse and dynamic business environment.

7.510. Good accessibility and transportation links: The site benefits from easy access via a local B-road, with traffic generally free-flowing. It is also well-served by public transportation, with regular bus routes stopping nearby, providing convenient access for employees and visitors.

7.511. Building & environmental quality: - In general, the site’s environment is good and appropriate for an employment site, albeit slightly dated. Most commercial units date

from the 1960s-80s, however, many have seen significant modernisation, with the large majority in a fair condition.

- 7.512. Proximity to residential areas and local amenities: The estate is surrounded by residential developments, providing a potential customer base for businesses on-site. Additionally, amenities in Great and Little Wakering, including convenience stores and a public house, are within walking distance.
- 7.513. Site safety and security: - Star Lane Estate is well-lit from streetlights and buildings are arrayed in a way that provides good natural surveillance, whilst individual units have security systems.

**Weaknesses: -**

- 7.514. Limited appeal for businesses targeting larger markets: The estate's distance from strategic roads and larger settlements may limit its appeal to businesses looking to cater to a wider market beyond the local area.
- 7.515. Dated appearance and lack of a coherent identity: The site's appearance is slightly dated, and there is a variation in building design and quality, lacking a unified and consistent identity.
- 7.516. Limited green infrastructure and on-site amenities: While the estate adjoins a local wildlife site and fishing ponds, there is limited accessible green space for workers on-site. Moreover, there are limited amenities and facilities available beyond the businesses and enterprises operating on the estate.
- 7.517. Potential impact of residential development allocation: The allocation for residential development in the Allocations Plan and the surrounding residential developments may put pressure on the site's future as an industrial estate, potentially leading to changes in use or redevelopment.
- 7.518. Limited cycling infrastructure and bike parking: The absence of cycling routes and inadequate bike parking facilities may discourage employees from using bicycles as a means of transportation, impacting the site's sustainability and eco-friendliness.

**Conclusions and Recommendations: -**

Protect and Maintain

- 7.519. Star Lane Estate is well occupied, fulfils a clear role and functions well in its current form, although would benefit from minor public realm enhancements and general investment in some of the older stock over time, in order to maintain its attractiveness. New-build housing adjoins the site to the North, East and South. Whilst Northern and Eastern boundaries of the estate have a mature buffer with residential areas, the boundary with housing to the South would benefit from further enhancements to ensure the estate remains a 'good neighbour'.
- 7.520. Given the estate functions well, it is recommended that it could be considered for re-allocation for employment use, particularly if any further significant residential

allocations in the Wakering/Barling area are made in the new Local Plan. This would ensure Great Wakering, and surrounding villages, continue to have an amount of employment land that is proportionate to local population growth and to provide local employment opportunities for residents. It is important to ensure that the site is well-connected to both the existing community and any new housing areas, and opportunities to enhance existing footpaths/cycleways/bus links, or provide new ones, should be sought. The development of the new employment land, situated further South on Star Lane, would be a good catalyst for this.

**Figure C146: Star Lane Industrial Estate (ELS24).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure C147: Star Lane Industrial Estate (ELS24).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure C148: Star Lane Industrial Estate (ELS24).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

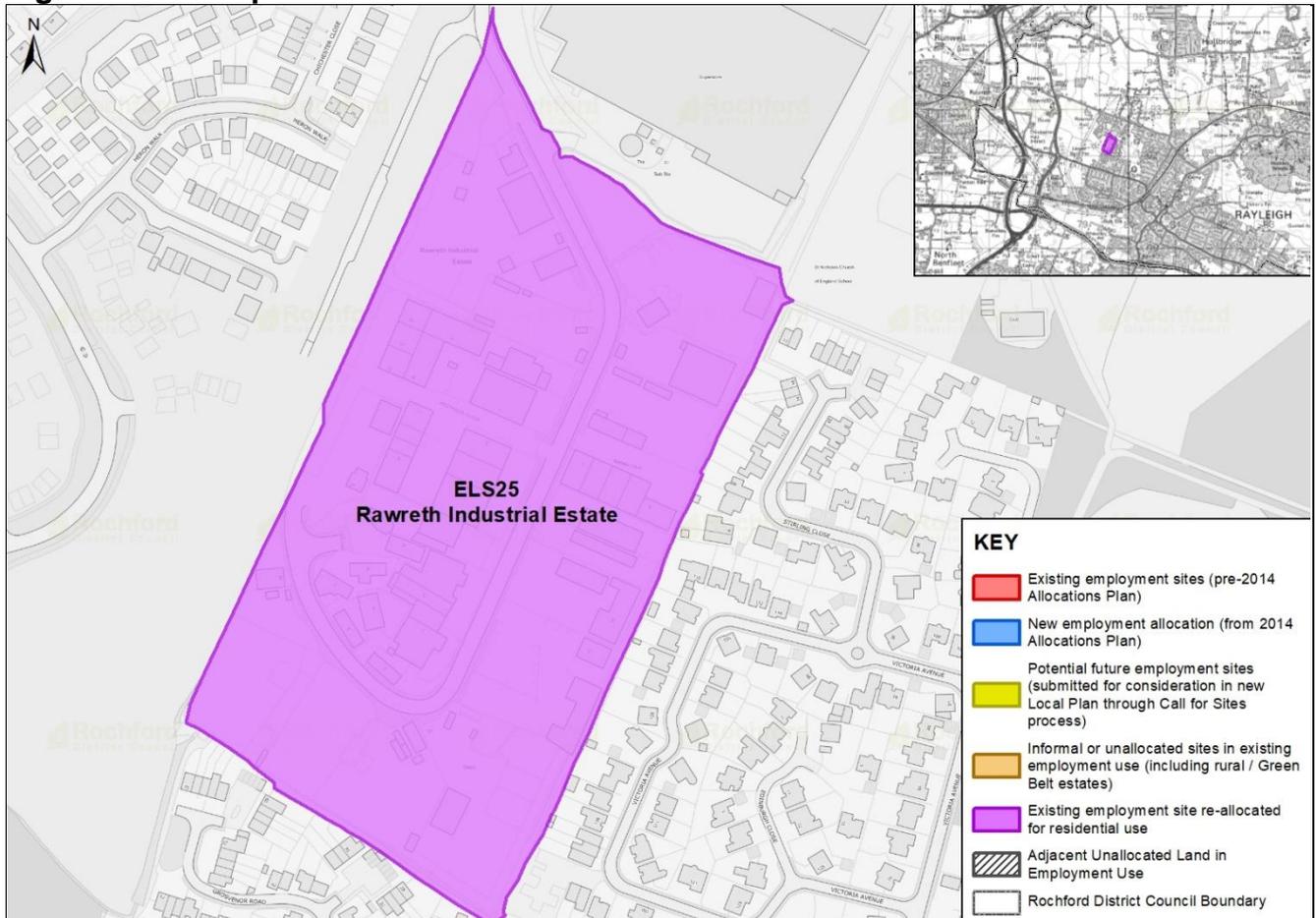
**Figure C149: Star Lane Industrial Estate (ELS24).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Rawreth Industrial Estate (ELS25)**

**Figure C150: Map of Rawreth Industrial Estate.**



Source: Rochford District Council (2024).

Location:	Rawreth Industrial Estate, Rawreth Lane, Rayleigh
Site Area (Ha):	6.22
Site Category:	5 - Existing employment site re-allocated for residential use
Cluster:	Rayleigh, Rawreth and Battlesbridge

**Site Description: -**

7.521. Rawreth Industrial Estate is a small commercial estate in Rayleigh. The surrounding location character is mainly residential, with few other commercial units. Whilst the site previously bordered open farmland to the West, this land is now undergoing development as part of residential allocation SER1 in the current Local Development Framework. The site itself is allocated as brownfield residential development land, although there have been no proposals for residential on the site. Access is gained via a junction on the main road “Rawreth Lane”. Following the completion of the Wolsey Park development, all adjoining site land will be residential development.

7.522. The site is dominated by the large Makro wholesale warehouse unit, which sits at the front of the site and accounts for a large proportion of the overall site area. Units are predominately two-storey of varying sizes. Building quality is predominately fair with units in a decent level of repair. There is limited evidence of modernisation on-site, with older warehouse units dominating. Whilst these units appear well maintained and managed, there are clear signs of aging and weathering (particularly on the larger, industrial warehouses). In addition, a significant proportion of the estate is taken up by yards, which are fenced, with some containing units and other structures.

7.523. The site is well occupied and is likely that in the short-medium term it will continue to provide local employment space that serves the needs of businesses requiring open yards and affordable accommodation, however the site’s allocation for residential development and surrounding of the site by housing may lead to pressure for uses to change over time.

**Site Evaluation: -**

7.524. Traffic Light Categorisation: -

Location Character	Building Age	Building Quality	On-Site Amenities	Proportion of non-B/E(g) Class Floorspace	Neighbouring Amenities
<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Amber</b>

Environmental Quality	Neighbouring Uses	Evidence of Pollution	Safety & Security	Adequate Access & Parking	Internal Circulation
<b>Amber</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Red</b>

Physical Opportunity for Intensification: - **YES**

Vacant Land: -**NO**

Vacant Buildings: - **YES**

7.525. Qualitative Scored Criteria: -

Strategic Access	Local Access	Site Quality, Amenities & Management	Market Attractiveness	Development & Environmental Constraints
<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>2 / 5</b>	<b>3 / 5</b>	<b>2 / 5</b>

**Strengths: -**

7.526. Well-occupied and providing local employment space: The estate is well-occupied, and its industrial space meets the needs of businesses requiring open yards and affordable accommodation, providing valuable employment opportunities for the local community.

- 7.527. Prominent location for passing traffic: The estate's prominent location along the main road (Rawreth Lane) makes it easily accessible and visible to passing traffic, potentially attracting customers and clients for businesses located there.
- 7.528. Proximity to residential areas and amenities: The estate is conveniently situated near numerous residential areas, offering easy access to a variety of amenities, including a supermarket, a shopping parade, a leisure centre, and a large park.
- 7.529. Diverse range of sectors and businesses: The estate accommodates businesses from various sectors, including automotive, manufacturing, catering, food and drink, recycling, and more, contributing to a varied business environment.
- 7.530. Existing infrastructure for security and lighting: The presence of security measures such as CCTV and building alarms, along with well-lit areas, enhances safety and security for businesses operating on the estate.

**Weaknesses: -**

- 7.531. Limited modernisation and ageing infrastructure: The estate predominantly comprises older warehouse units with signs of ageing and weathering, which may require significant investment for upgrades and maintenance.
- 7.532. Restricted access for HGVs and limited internal circulation: The estate's internal circulation is limited, restricting the movement of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) and potentially hindering the efficient operation of businesses.
- 7.533. Insufficient parking facilities and EV charging: The estate lacks adequate parking space, leading to double parking and on-street parking.
- 7.534. Untidy appearance and lack of coherent identity: Some yard sites on the estate appear untidy, contributing to a low-quality impression. The lack of a coherent identity and signage may make it challenging for visitors and customers to navigate the site.
- 7.535. Uncertain future due to residential development allocation: The estate's allocation as brownfield residential development land, combined with the surrounding residential developments, may lead to future pressure for change of use, potentially affecting the viability of existing businesses. More housing adjacent to the site could lead to conflicts between the uses taking place on site and the amenity of nearby residents.

**Conclusions and Recommendations: -**

Significant Intervention Required/ Recategorise

- 7.536. The site is well occupied and is likely that in the short-medium term it will continue to provide local employment space that services the needs of Rayleigh and the surrounding area. However, the surrounding of the site with housing brings many of the uses on the estate into potential conflict with residential amenity, with many uses generating loud noise, dust, pollution, or HGV movements.

7.537. In the longer term, given the residential allocation as residential, it is likely that the site will come forward for redevelopment. However, given the role the site does provide for local businesses, it is recommended that any loss of this site is mitigated, firstly – through provision/retention of some element of employment/commercial uses on the site, given it will sit at the heart of a large residential area which may be in need of a ‘hub’ facility for employment activities.

7.538. Should the site remain in employment use, there is scope for the open yards to be redeveloped for E(g)/B2/B8 uses in modern units, something which likely provide a greater number of jobs and reduce the amount of noise/pollution, allowing the estate to sit more harmoniously with its surroundings.

**Figure C151: Rawreth Industrial Estate (ELS25).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure C152: Rawreth Industrial Estate (ELS25).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure C153: Rawreth Industrial Estate (ELS25).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*

**Figure C154: Rawreth Industrial Estate (ELS25).**



*Source: Rochford District Council (2024)*