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## HOCKLEY AREA ACTION PLAN

### 1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report seeks Members' approval to adopt the Hockley Area Action Plan (HAAP) (Appendix 1) as a Development Plan Document forming part of the Development Plan for Rochford District.
- 1.2 Once adopted the Hockley Area Action Plan will form part of the Development Plan (alongside other Development Plan Documents, including the Rochford Core Strategy). Under Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 applications for planning permission must be taken in accordance with the development plan, unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise.

### 2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Rochford District Council is committed to preparing Area Action Plans (AAPs) for its three main centres of Rayleigh, Rochford and Hockley. The AAPs will form part of the statutory development plan for Rochford District.
- 2.2 The HAAP focuses on guiding the development of Hockley centre, as well as adjoining light industrial areas and the railway station, during the current plan period to 2026.
- 2.3 The Rochford Core Strategy states that the Hockley Area Action Plan will deliver the following:-
  - A safe and high quality environment for residents;
  - Enhanced retail offer for Hockley;
  - Re-development of Eldon Way/Foundry for a variety of uses more appropriate for a town centre location, including residential, commercial, employment and leisure;
  - A public space within a defined centre;
  - Improved connectivity between retail focus and train station;
  - Re-development of industrial uses for retail, leisure and residential development; and
  - Green landscaping along Main Road, Spa road and Southend Road to enhance the visual amenity.
- 2.4 Once adopted, the HAAP will be used as a framework for the future development of Hockley and in the determination of planning applications. It will be subject to the normal processes of monitoring and review.

### 3 PREPARATION OF THE PLAN

- 3.1 The draft HAAP has been through a number of iterations, and been the subject of community involvement throughout its production.

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- 3.2 In 2009 an Issues and Options Report was published. This provided a baseline urban design analysis and described Hockley's strengths and weaknesses. A number of options for future change in Hockley were considered. The Issues and Options report was subject to consultation and community involvement, the results of which indicated there was some concern as to the proposed level of intervention for the centre of Hockley, and the impact this would have on the village character of the settlement.
- 3.3 Having regard to the feedback received in 2009, an Options Report was produced in 2010, which proposed a range of options for the future of Hockley, varying in degree of intervention. The three options were:-
1. Low intervention: A series of minimal interventions, with a focus on improving pedestrian links, car parking, the public realm and shop fronts, as well as the replacement of some poor quality buildings with new shops.
  2. Medium intervention: A programme of higher level interventions, which would involve the replacement of poor quality buildings, including some existing light industrial uses, consolidation and expansion of leisure uses on Eldon Way industrial estate, re-development of retail uses on Main Road, and a strong pedestrian link between the railway station and the Hockley Trading Estate.
  3. High intervention: The highest level of interventions, including substantial re-development of the Eldon Way and adjoining buildings fronting Spa Road to create a new leisure and retail space, the relocation of the existing health centre to form a community hub on Southend Road, and new housing north of the rail line
- 3.4 Transport options were also considered.
- 3.5 The 2010 Options Report was subject to consultation and community involvement. A summary of the results of this consultation was published on the Council's website. Views were mixed, but in general there was, again, a strong view that it was important to retain the character of Hockley and there were concerns that the higher levels of intervention would not achieve this, in addition to concerns in respect of infrastructure.
- 3.6 The 2010 Options Report was subject to a Sustainability Appraisal (the role of Sustainability Appraisal is discussed in greater detail below). In short, the Sustainability Appraisal of the 2010 Options Report found that medium intervention option, and the high intervention option, will have the strongest positive effects for communities and the economy through providing for a higher level of intervention and therefore regeneration of the centre, provided that phasing and other mitigation measures could be built-in to minimise disruption through noise and traffic congestion during the construction of any new developments.
- 3.7 Allies and Morrison Urban Practitioners – a specialist planning and regeneration consultancy practice – were commissioned to produce the draft

pre-submission version of the Plan, having regard to the results of community involvement and appraisal of previous iterations of the Plan. As part of the production of this draft, further community involvement was undertaken and the results fed into the production of the Plan.

- 3.8 The pre-submission draft of the HAAP was accepted for pre-submission consultation, to be followed by submission to the Secretary of State, by Council on 27 November 2012 (250/2012).
- 3.9 Pre-submission consultation took place between 29 November 2012 and 25 January 2013 (a period in excess of the required six weeks, to account for the Christmas period and ensure interested parties had sufficient time to respond).
- 3.10 A total of 3,298 representations were made at this stage in respect of the soundness of the Plan. These representations were subsequently submitted to the Government for consideration as part of the examination of the Plan.

#### **4 THE ROLE OF SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL**

- 4.1 Sustainability Appraisal is an important part of the plan making process. It assesses the environmental, economic and social implications of policies and options in the production of plans. The Sustainability Appraisal forms part of the evidence base for the development of the HAAP and has been used, alongside other evidence, to aid decision-making.
- 4.2 Sustainability Appraisal of the HAAP that was submitted for examination found that, overall, the Plan would Overall the will help to resolve a number of key sustainability issues in Hockley Centre and will also play a role in improving sustainability in the wider Rochford District
- 4.3 An addendum to the Sustainability Appraisal was produced that considered the impact of the Schedule of Modifications. The conclusion of this addendum was as follows:

“The proposed modification to the policy would have a positive impact on the balanced communities and accessibility SA objectives over the plan period through providing clarity on development of the Eldon Way Opportunity Site, and the relationship and the proposed integration between the Opportunity Site and the wider area”.
- 4.4 Sustainability Appraisal of the HAAP Submission Document is provided as Appendix 2. Sustainability Appraisal of the Schedule of Modifications is provided as Appendix 3.

**5 EXAMINATION AND INSPECTOR'S REPORT**

- 5.1 Following pre-submission consultation, the Plan was submitted – together with the results of the consultation – on 18 April 2013 to the Secretary of State for examination by an independent Planning Inspector.
- 5.2 The Council may only adopt the Plan if the Inspector conducting the examination recommends adoption.
- 5.3 Examination hearing sessions took place on 17 and 18 September 2013. Following these hearing sessions, the Inspector prepared an interim report into the soundness of the HAAP, which included a number of suggested modifications.
- 5.4 A Schedule of Modifications to the HAAP was prepared in response to the Inspector's interim report, and agreed by Council to be subject to public consultation as part of the examination process, with the results submitted to the Planning Inspector for his consideration (Minute 240/2013)
- 5.5 The Planning Inspector has issued his report (Appendix 4) on the soundness of the HAAP. This reports states that the HAAP is sound, subject to the modifications proposed, meaning that following the examination and consideration of all the evidence, the plan has been found to be:
- Positively prepared (its meets objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements)
  - Justified (the plan is informed by evidence and is the most appropriate strategy when considered against the reasonable alternatives)
  - Effective (the plan is deliverable over its period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities)
  - Consistent with national policy (the plan will enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework)
- 5.6 As such, the Council may adopt the HAAP with the proposed modifications.

**6 ADOPTION**

- 6.1 Once adopted the HAAP will form part of the Development Plan (alongside other Development Plan Documents, including the Rochford Core Strategy). Under Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 applications for planning permission must be taken in accordance with the development plan, unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise.

- 6.2 Any person who is aggrieved by the decision of the Council to adopt the Plan may make an application to the High Court under Section 113 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 on the ground that:-

- (a) the document is not within the appropriate power;
- (b) a procedural requirement has not been complied with.

Any application to the High Court must be made not later than six weeks from the date of adoption.

## **7 RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 Failure to have an up-to-date adopted plan in place that addresses Hockley centre may leave the Council in a position whereby it finds it difficult to resist planning applications for development, even if the Council does not consider such proposals appropriate – Government policy (as contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)) states (para.14):-

“At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking....

“...For decision-taking this means:....

“....where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting permission unless:-

- any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this [National Planning Policy] Framework taken as a whole; or
- specific policies in this [National Planning Policy] Framework indicate development should be restricted.”

- 7.2 Conversely, failure to provide certainty as to what forms of development would be considered acceptable in Hockley centre through adoption of the HAAP may discourage future investment in Hockley.

## **8 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 The HAAP would impact on the local environment, in particular in the centre of Hockley, as set out within the Plan itself and appraised through the Sustainability Appraisal.

**9 RECOMMENDATION**

- 9.1 It is proposed that Council **RESOLVES** to adopt the Hockley Area Action Plan.

Shaun Scrutton

Head of Planning and Transportation

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**Background Papers:-**

None.

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Allies and Morrison  
Urban Practitioners

## **Rochford District Council – Hockley Area Action Plan Adopted Version**





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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 The big picture

Rochford District Council is committed to preparing Area Action Plans (AAP) for its three main centres of Rayleigh, Rochford and Hockley. The AAPs will form part of the statutory development plan for Rochford District. This document focuses on guiding the development of Hockley centre, as well as adjoining light industrial areas and the rail station, during the current plan period to 2025.

The Rochford Core Strategy identifies Hockley as an area for change and improvement, and it is envisaged that the settlement will benefit from a higher quality environment and public spaces, with improved landscaping, an enhanced retail offer and better connectivity. It is also planned that Hockley will experience housing growth, in part through a mixed-use redevelopment of its existing light industrial areas.

Balancing the need to protect the Hockley's village character against the need to attract new investment is critical to its economic success. It is also central to this AAP.

The AAP will, if adopted, form a part of Rochford District's Development Plan. Alongside the adopted Rochford Core Strategy and other key planning documents, the AAP will eventually replace the existing Replacement Local Plan (2006).

The next step is for this submission version of the AAP to be published and placed on deposit for a six-week period, during which interested parties will be invited to make representations. It will then be submitted, alongside any representations received and other supporting documents, to the Secretary of State who will make arrangements for an Examination in Public by an Independent Planning Inspector. The AAP will be measured against the established tests of soundness and the Inspectorate will then issue a report with findings and decision. If it is found sound – with or without modifications – the AAP will then be adopted.

Once adopted, the AAP will be used as a framework for the development of Hockley and in the determination of planning applications. It will be subject to the normal processes of monitoring and review.

Any representations on this pre-submission version of the Hockley AAP should be sent to Rochford District Council.

## 1.2 Working with our community

In recent years a number of community engagement and consultation exercises have been undertaken in relation to Hockley. These have been in support of the production of the Hockley Parish Plan, the Hockley AAP and the Rochford Core Strategy. The AAP has been informed through its various stages by the responses received to these exercises, which were:

- The Hockley Parish Plan residents' questionnaire.
- The Placecheck undertaken in support of the Hockley AAP Issues and Options Document.
- A drop-in consultation session for around 60 local residents on 2 August 2010 that was carried out to help develop the alternatives presented in the Options Report.
- Consultations on the Hockley AAP Issues and Options Document and Options Report.
- A consultation on the Rochford Core Strategy Submission Document that

yielded feedback specifically related to Hockley.

Most recently a further stage of consultation was held on the planning policy framework for Hockley that had emerged following the Options Report. This was a public exhibition, which was held between 14 and 24 August 2012. A range of responses was received as a result of the consultation and the key messages were that:

- Hockley is a village and its character should be maintained.
- There is a great deal of concern about the current traffic situation and the impact that any development would have on congestion in Hockley.
- Highways and other infrastructure should be improved in line with any new development.
- The Spa Road mini-roundabout, the junction at the railway bridge and the pedestrian crossings on Spa Road and Southend Road should all be improved.
- There is a distinct need for additional parking provision in the centre.

- Additional public transport is required, as well as new and improved pedestrian and cycle routes, given that all of these measures would serve to reduce the congestion levels in the centre.
- Affordable housing should be a priority, provided that a high standard of architecture and design would be delivered.
- There is a need to retain existing shops and services within the area.
- Retail development in Hockley should be of an appropriate scale.
- A range of views have been expressed regarding proposals for the redevelopment of the Hockley Trading Centre. In particular, whilst there is support for the use of previously developed land for housing, there are concerns over the loss of employment and leisure uses.

## 1.3 Working with our partners

Rochford District Council is working closely with its partners to ensure that the strategic and cross-boundary implications

of the Hockley AAP are being fully explored and that any discussions will feed into its positive preparation. The Localism Act 2011 sets out a 'duty to co-operate', which requires such a process.

The main partner in relation to the AAP is Essex County Council (ECC), in relation to its role as Highways Authority for Rochford District and much of the wider area. In particular, conversations with ECC officers have allowed for the project team to identify new or proposed developments with a significant highways impact.

#### **1.4 The AAP area**

The core area for the Hockley AAP covers the rail station and its surrounds, the Hockley Trading Centre and Foundry Business Park, Spa Road, and the central sections of Main Road and Southend Road. This area is broadly considered to be Hockley's centre.

The retail offer in the AAP area is relatively limited in comparison with other nearby towns, with few high-street multiples but a reasonable selection of independent

comparison shops. A collection of community uses, comprising a library, Health Surgery, a number of places of worship and the Parish Council can currently be found at the southern end of the area.

Between the central retail area and rail station there is a relatively recent, mixed use housing and office development. . Notwithstanding the location of the offices next to the established Foundry Business Park, demand for office space in the area is weak. The Hockley Trading Centre has seen some approvals for the conversion of employment units to leisure uses in recent years. These are currently located amongst the remaining light industrial uses. These have proved popular with local people and are a valued local amenity.

Established suburban neighbourhoods encircle the Hockley AAP area. The relationship between the central area and these successful suburbs is an important consideration for the AAP.



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**Figure 1 Hockley AAP area**

## 2. Hockley in context

### 2.1 The Hockley Context

This chapter sets out the planning and policy context within which the Hockley AAP will operate, including a review of key sections of the local planning evidence base.

### 2.2 Place profile

#### Strategic location and local setting

Hockley is located approximately five miles to the north west of Southend-on-Sea, on a peninsula bound by the River Thames to the south, the River Crouch to the north and the North Sea to the east. This gives the settlement a unique landscape setting. This is further enhanced by the ancient Hockley Woods immediately to its south, which forms part of the Upper Roach Valley special and historic landscape areas. Hockley is also surrounded by Metropolitan Green Belt, which has helped to conserve the area's rural feel.

Within Rochford District, Hockley sits between the larger town centres of Rochford, to the south east, and Rayleigh to the south west. It is located on the Great Eastern rail connection between Southend-on-Sea and London Liverpool Street, which supports commuting into London.

Hockley is located centrally between Rochford and Rayleigh, and is connected to both by the B1013. The strategic road network is a few minute's drive away, west of Rayleigh, where the A127, A13 and A130 meet. Local attractors for car journeys are Southend-on-Sea to the south east, Basildon to the west and Chelmsford to the north-west.

#### Historical evolution

Hockley has a long history, with evidence of Roman activity at Plumberow Mount, as well as a strong early Saxon presence. The settlement was mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086. Parts of the current Church of St Peter and St Paul building dates form to the twelfth century, though earlier church buildings are believed to have existed prior to this on the site.

Hockley Spa, established in 1843, represented a high point in the popularity and profile of the settlement, though this was short-lived as visitors to the Spa soon opted to head to coastal resorts instead.

The rail line from Liverpool Street, London, was extended and in 1889 began stopping at Hockley on its way to Southend-on-Sea. This had a significant impact on Hockley and stimulated the residential expansion of the town, though Hockley did not experience the scale of expansion seen in some other parts of the country around the same period.





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**Figure 2 Rochford's regional context**



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**Figure 3 Rochford's district context**





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**Figure 4 Character areas in Hockley**

## **Character areas**

The Hockley AAP area has five discernible character areas, each with its own distinctive qualities. The differences between these areas relate to their prevailing patterns of land use, their built form and other factors such as landscaping and the movement network for pedestrians and vehicles.

### **1) Hockley Trading Centre and Foundry Business Park**

This part of Hockley is defined largely by the area's light industrial uses together with the office and commercial leisure uses that are also present. The buildings here are commercial in character, mainly taking the form of bulky, two to three storey industrial sheds. The public realm and building frontages are dominated by parking and service areas. There is poor connectivity through and within the area, with two access points off Spa Road and no direct link between the two separate industrial estates.

### **2) Rail station**

The station building and line dominate this area. Spa Road, over which the rail line

passes, is the principal axis through the town. The public realm in this area is dominated by surface car parking and a roundabout, which also provides access to the Foundry Business Park and is congested at peak times due to pressure resulting from dropping off and picking up rail passengers. The area is well vegetated around Spa Road and there are some areas of open land that provide potential for the reorganisation of car parking arrangements and the road layout. The buildings to the south of the rail line include the station and some recent residential developments. To the north of the rail line there is a row of bungalows.

### **3) Spa Road (central residential area)**

The uses along this part of Spa Road are mainly residential, including some sheltered housing, and it shares the same low-rise, suburban character that dominates Hockley. The varied building line and wide range of building types contribute to an informal urban character in this area. However, a number of the buildings contribute strongly to Hockley's character and have an intrinsic historic value. In particular, the former Hockley Spa

building is a Grade II Listed Building and a local landmark.

### **4) Spa Road (main shopping area)**

Most of the settlement's retail offer can be found within the shopping parades along this section of Spa Road. The majority of buildings located in this area are single or two storey, though there is a prominent three storey development of shops with maisonettes above. With the exception of one or two buildings, including The Spa public house, the buildings make little positive contribution to Hockley's character, beyond their important role in anchoring the centre with active commercial uses at ground floor level. Although the footway along this part of Spa Road is relatively wide, a long retaining wall and metal railings act as a significant barrier to pedestrian movement. There is also a concentration of on-street car parking in this area.



Figure 5 Hockley Trading Centre and Foundry Business Park character area





Figure 6 Railway Station character area



Figure 7 Spa Road (central residential area) character area





Figure 8 Spa Road (main shopping area) character area



Figure 9 Spa Road service and community area

## 5) Main Road / Southend Road

This area is focused around the Spa Road mini-roundabout at the junction of Main, Spa, Southend and Woodlands Roads. These roads are busy due to their role in carrying vehicular traffic from the surrounding area to Southend, Chelmsford and Basildon and this causes congestion at Hockley's core. With the notable exception of The Spa Public House, the buildings that front this roundabout fail to respond positively to their prominent corner locations and the position of the roundabout as a gateway to Hockley's main retailing area along Spa Road. The uses in this area are more diverse than elsewhere in the settlement and, as well as shops, include services and community facilities, such as a library, Hockley Parish Council's offices, places of worship, a dental surgery, a pharmacy, banks, estate agents and solicitors.

## 2.3 Policy context

The Hockley AAP has been produced taking into account national, regional and local planning policy, in addition to the

various studies that supplement and inform this framework. This is to ensure that the AAP provides a robust policy framework for the future development of Hockley.

### National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

The Coalition Government replaced previous national planning policy documents and guidance notes with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in March 2012. The NPPF was intended to help streamline the planning system and, at its core, has a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This is expanded upon by a number of core planning principles and more detailed policies.

In particular it is noted that the NPPF (Section 2) emphasises the importance of ensuring that local planning policies support the vitality and viability of town centres, and their role at the heart of communities. Practically this means that local planning authorities should promote a diverse retail offer and adopt a town centres first approach, which requires retail, leisure and entertainment, office,

and arts, culture and tourism uses to locate in centres ahead of other alternatives.

### East of England Plan

Although the Coalition Government has announced that the revocation of Regional Spatial Strategies is imminent, the East of England Plan remains part of Rochford District Council's Development Plan. As such, other planning documents must be in 'general conformity' with the Plan, and it continues to provide a policy context for the Hockley AAP.

The Plan allocates a 4,600 new homes target to Rochford District, with a policy steer supporting mixed-use economies in which centres help to attract investment and avoid the need for Green Belt land to be developed, where at all possible.

### Rochford Core Strategy (2011)

Rochford District Council adopted a Core Strategy document in December 2011. This document seeks to prioritise new development on brownfield land, with some limited urban extensions to accommodate new housing. In particular, Policy H1 seeks the redevelopment of the



Hockley Trading Centre and Foundry Business Park, which should also include a mix of employment uses appropriate to the sites' central location.

The Core Strategy's approach to centres and retail development is set out in policies RTC1 and RTC2. Respectively, these seek to strengthen and improve the retail offer of the District's main centres, including Hockley, and direct new retail development and other main town centre uses towards these locations through a sequential, town centres first approach.

The key Core Strategy policy in relation to the AAP is Policy RTC6. This states that Rochford District Council, with partner organisations and landowners, will produce an AAP for Hockley's centre, to deliver the following:

- A safe and high quality environment for residents.
- An enhanced retail offer.
- The redevelopment of Hockley Trading Centre and Foundry Business Park, and its existing light industrial uses, for a variety of uses more appropriate for a centre location, including retail,

residential, commercial, employment and leisure.

- A public space within a defined centre.
- Improved connectivity between the retail focus and rail station.
- Green landscaping along Main Road, Spa road and Southend Road to enhance the visual amenity.

#### **Hockley Area Action Plan Issues and Options Document (2009) & Options Report (2010)**

A Hockley AAP Issues and Options document was produced in 2009. This provides a baseline urban design analysis and describes Hockley's strengths and weaknesses. A number of options for future change in Hockley are considered.

A subsequent Options Report built on the work that had already been undertaken by the earlier 2009 document and presents a revised range of alternatives for improvement. The document proposes a series of general principles to guide land uses, the design of buildings and the public realm, and pedestrian movement, transport and car parking.

In addition, three spatial options that provide different responses to the overarching general principles are presented. Each of these represented a different level of intervention aimed at identifying the particular areas that require either change and investment or protection. The three options were:

1. A series of minimal interventions, with a focus on improving pedestrian links, car parking, the public realm and shop fronts, as well as the replacement of some poor quality buildings with new shops.
2. A programme of higher level interventions, which would involve the replacement of poor quality buildings, including some existing light industrial uses, consolidation and expansion of leisure uses on the Hockley Trading Estate, redevelopment of retail uses on Main Road, and a strong pedestrian link between the rail station and the Hockley Trading Estate.
3. The highest level of interventions, including substantial redevelopment of the Hockley Trading Estate and adjoining buildings fronting Spa Road to create a new leisure and retail space,

the relocation of the existing health centre to form a community hub on Southend Road, and new housing north of the rail line.

A number of alternatives for transport are also set out by the Options Report. These centre on proposed junction improvements to alleviate traffic congestion at the Spa Road mini-roundabout and along Spa Road, which could include increasing capacity or creating a shared surface; the provision of improved on-street car parking, in either a parallel or echelon arrangement; and, better drop-off and pick up arrangements at the rail station through the removal of the existing roundabout and its replacement with a straightforward junction and circulation area.

### **Emerging Allocations (2010) & Development Management documents (2011)**

The Council is in the process of preparing its Allocations and Development Management documents. The Allocations document was last published as an issues and options document in February 2010 and the Development Management

document was last published as a preferred options document in December 2011.

The Allocations document includes a range of options for Hockley centre and explores various possibilities for retaining, enlarging or shrinking the current centre designation.

The Development Management document includes draft policies that deal with the development of centres. These include policies that seek to control the mix of uses, as well as the conversion of upper floors to residential accommodation.

### **Hockley Parish Plan (2007)**

The Hockley Parish Plan was developed in 2007, following detailed consultation with local residents. The Plan promotes a greening of Hockley's centre, with more planting and trees and enhancement of the public realm, with shop front improvements and additional seating and lighting.

The plan emphasises the importance of avoiding coalescence between Hockley and neighbouring urban areas by protecting Green Belt land from

development. The local community stressed during consultation that they would prefer to see any new development on previously developed land, and would like to limit the overall level of new housing in the area, and ensure that affordable starter homes are provided as a part of any new development.

## **2.4 Retail issues**

A Retail & Leisure Study for Rochford District was produced in August 2008 to form part of the local planning policy evidence base. This study found Hockley to be the smallest of the District's three main centres and did not consider it to meet the definition of a town centre as set out in PPS6. It should be noted that PPS6 has since been replaced by the NPPF. Notwithstanding this, Hockley's centre was considered to benefit from a strong comparison goods sector and a mix of independent shops.

The report highlighted that Hockley retains just 8.1% of its food expenditure, as a result of the limited range of convenience goods on offer within the centre, but is

used for top-up food spending. The report also drew attention to the lack of larger retail unit sizes in Hockley to attract national retailers, and the lack of leisure service operators in the centre.

The report identified potential to enhance the frontages in Hockley to create a high quality centre and advised the encouragement of specialist businesses to create a 'boutique' retail centre, whilst acknowledging economic challenges presented by this approach. The report also recommended the extension and improvement of the existing retail offer through the development of new, larger scale retail units, and the reclassification of Hockley to District Centre status, which could be reviewed at a later date.

## **2.5 Employment issues**

An Employment Land Study was produced for Rochford District in September 2008. This considered the current supply and quality of, and future need and demand for, employment space within the District. It forms part of the evidence base for

Rochford District Council's local planning policies.

The report considered the Hockley Trading Centre to be strategically well placed with adequate vehicular access, very good public transport access and good proximity to the centre. The report recommended that the land use here only change if office space is provided as part of a replacement mixed-use scheme, to ensure that jobs are not lost in the centre of Hockley. The buildings on the Hockley Trading Centre were generally considered to be in good condition. Approximately 25% were identified as being in poor condition, though the exact identity of these buildings was not specified.

## **2.6 Land ownership context**

Freehold land ownership within the AAP area is relatively fragmented, though it is noted that the Hockley Trading Estate is largely controlled by a single landowner. Even here however, there are a range of occupiers with varied lease terms.

The implication of this is that Rochford District Council may have to assist in land assembly to fully realise the vision set out within the AAP. In the shorter-term there may also be the complication of occupiers having to be relocated to other premises whilst development takes place.

## **2.7 Property market overview**

Despite general market uncertainty since the 2007 "credit crunch", more recently there have been some encouraging signs, especially in London and the South-east, where developers and investors are beginning to re-enter the market place. Progress does, however, remain slow in the context of limited growth and continued restricted bank lending, and investment is currently being focussed on lower-risk locations.

The headline findings from a comprehensive review of Hockley's property market were that:

- The Eldon Way Opportunity Site offers a good opportunity for residential development.

- There is little demand for flats, but that residential schemes comprising predominately family housing are likely to be viable.
- Office development would only be viable with a cross-subsidy from higher value uses or public sector funding.
- Demand to locate in the centre from national multiple retailers, including those in the food and beverage sector, is very weak.
- There is steady demand from independent retailers for accommodation within the centre.
- There may be demand from operators for a food store of between 2,000 and 3,000m<sup>2</sup> (net) within the *centre*. If the market were unconstrained by land availability and planning policy, then there is a possibility that there might be demand for a larger store.
- Hockley centre's catchment is too small to attract development interest from most key leisure sectors, such as cinemas.

## 2.8 Movement issues

Hockley centre is located largely along Spa Road, between the junction with the B1013 (Main Road / Southend Road) and the rail line. The centre is relatively well-served by public transport, with the rail station giving access to regular services terminating at either Southend Victoria or London Liverpool Street, and with four regular bus services stopping along Spa Road and the B1013. However, there is potential for improvements, including the provision of more frequent services, real-time bus information, shelters at some stops, and improved walking routes between the rail station, bus stops and key destinations.

The B1013 acts as the principal vehicular route through the district, particularly for commuters from the area travelling to and from Southend, Chelmsford and Basildon, as well as forming a strategic route between Rochford and Rayleigh. Congestion in the village centre is a particular concern of local residents, and is focused on the busy Spa Road mini-roundabout, which experiences queuing back towards Rayleigh in the evening peak hours, possibly due to a high proportion of right-turning traffic from Southend Road

into Spa Road. Further north along Spa Road, the signalised junction with Plumberow Avenue has been flagged as having some safety issues due to poor sightlines around the adjacent rail underpass.

Hockley centre has a fair amount of parking available to the public. However, much of this is scattered in private back-of-property lots along Spa Road. These appear to be well-used, but there is anecdotal evidence that cars circulating to find spaces here cause some of the congestion in the centre. The main public car park is south of Southend Road, behind the library. It is a pay and display facility, but is not ideally located for short shopping trips. Formal on-street parking in the centre is concentrated along the south side of Spa Road. It is free, but limited to short stays of 1 hour (or 3 hours for disabled bays). There is a large amount of free off-street and informal on-street parking space available in Eldon Way, which is also well-used and is likely to be a preference for many longer-stay visitors. Commuter parking at the rail station is also well-used. It is a pay and display facility, run by NCP.

There is limited provision of cycling facilities, apart from at the station. The lack of permeability across the settlement, due to the railway lines and a number of cul-de-sac streets, forces cyclists onto busy traffic routes and does not help to encourage cycling for short journeys.

Pedestrian facilities, whilst not in a poor state, could certainly be improved. In particular, enhanced crossing facilities could be provided along Spa Road at the roundabout, at the entrance to Eldon Way and at Station Approach. There could be some street clutter and guardrail removal along Spa Road at key locations, and secondary walking routes could be improved or new links created across the centre to improve permeability.

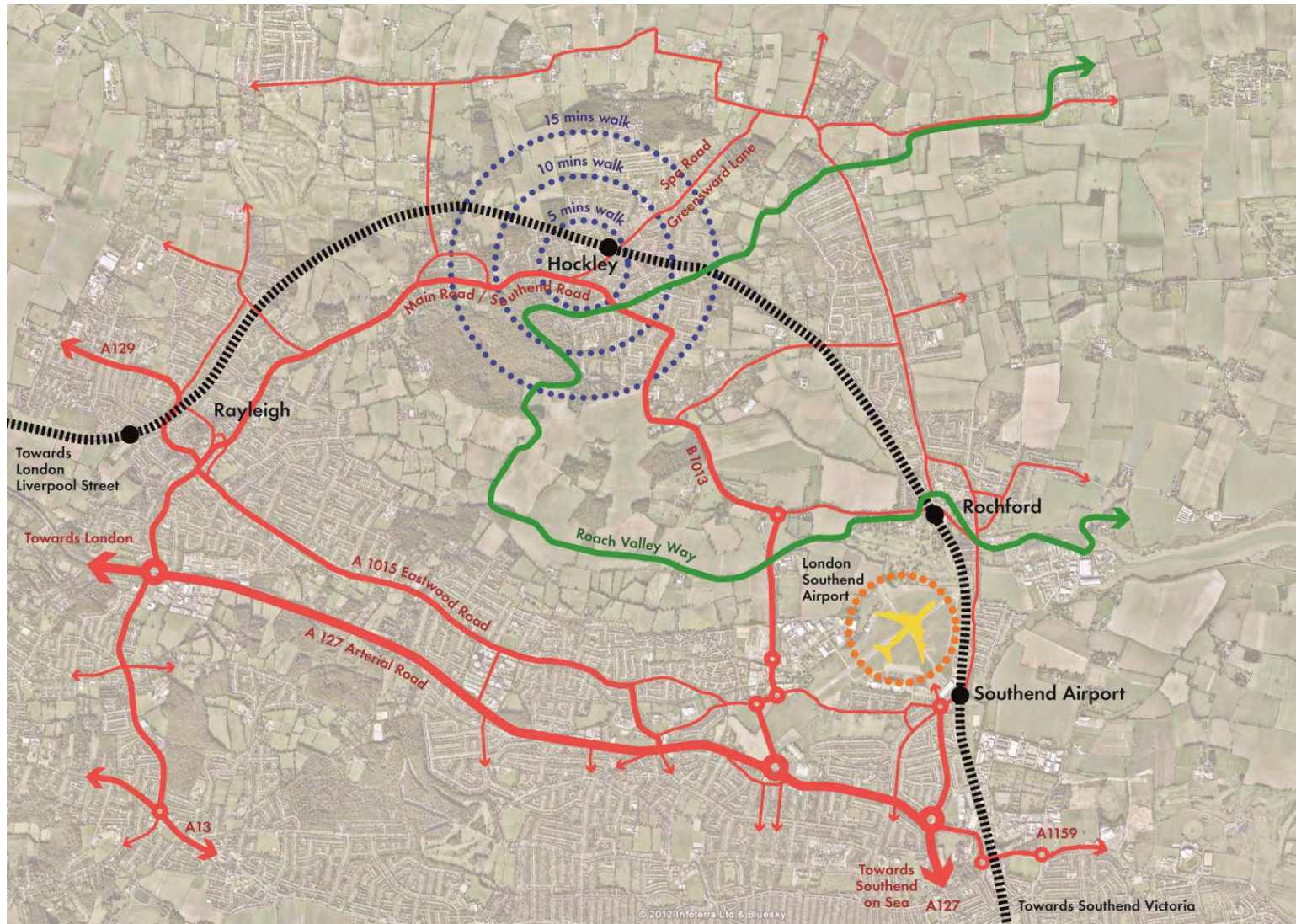
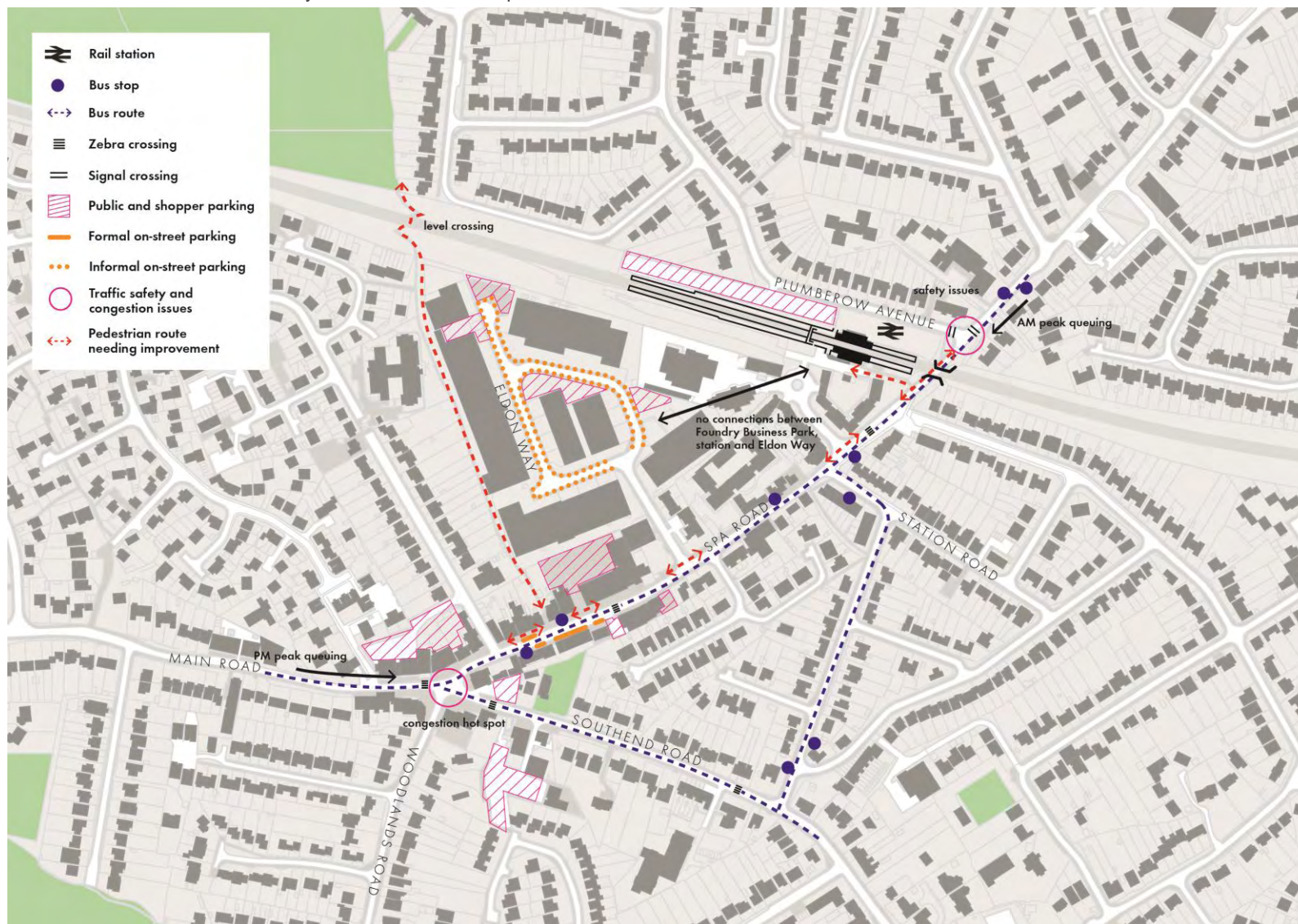


Figure 10 Movement context





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**Figure 11 Movement issues**

## 2.9 The Sustainability Appraisal

The Hockley AAP has been subject to the Sustainability Appraisal process, as required by the European SEA Directive. A report was published in August 2012 documenting this process and assessing the alternatives set out within the 2010 Options Report in relation to their impact on the environmental, social and economic strands of sustainability. A scoping report was prepared prior to this, in July 2012.

The August 2012 report acknowledges that a 'do nothing' option is not appropriate, given the regeneration aims of Core Strategy Policy RTC6 and the need to ensure positive outcomes through the creation of a sustainable community with good access to housing and jobs. Of the three spatial alternatives proposed in the Options Report, it was found that all would have a number of positive impacts. However, the medium and higher levels of intervention were considered preferable from a regeneration and economy perspective, provided that phasing and other mitigation measures could be built-in to minimise disruption through noise and traffic congestion during the construction of new any developments.

The transport and movement options are also considered and it is recommended that further traffic modelling is carried out to assess the impact of making changes to the roundabout at the junction of Main, Spa, Southend and Woodlands Roads. In relation to the potential of increased on-street car parking, it is advised that negative effects on the environmental and social aspects of sustainability could be off-set through good design and landscaping, and simultaneous investment in facilities for pedestrians and cyclists.

The outputs of the Sustainability Appraisal have helped to shape the policy options selected. The Council will continue to assess the AAP through the Sustainability Appraisal process and will document this process.



### 3. A framework for a better Hockley

#### 3.1 What makes for a sustainable Hockley?

Hockley is an established settlement within the Essex countryside, and a sustainable location for homes, shops, jobs, leisure and other services. The AAP seeks to ensure that a positive planning policy framework that protects this function is put in place. It recognises that sustainable development must be delivered in a joined-up fashion, with economic, social and environmental benefits being sought concurrently. In this context, the following factors are considered important:

**Provision to meet local shopping need** – Hockley’s centre provides opportunities for local residents and those employed within the area to easily and sustainably access goods and services. The retail offer should be retained and enhanced to make Hockley centre the first choice for its residents when doing their shopping.

**Excellent public realm** – There are a number of attractive places and buildings within Hockley. The character of the settlement should be further enhanced, and the arrival of new commercial and residential development should be used to deliver new and improved public spaces.

**A high quality natural environment** – Hockley benefits from being surrounded by the Metropolitan Green Belt, which prevents urban sprawl, but also allows local people access to significant areas of high quality, open space. This open space should be safeguarded through the efficient use of previously developed sites within the settlement’s existing boundaries.

**Housing for local people** – Hockley provides choice in terms of living accommodation, with a large number of family houses. There should be an emphasis on the provision of homes for local people throughout all stages of life.

**Local employment opportunities** – the Hockley Trading Centre and Foundry Business Park provide a range of premises

for small, local businesses. The accommodation needs of such businesses should be met, and balanced against the competing requirements for other uses within Hockley’s existing boundaries.

The AAP is a planning policy document that, primarily, seeks to assist in the management of planned changes and developments in the centre of Hockley. Therefore, whilst its remit is limited, its reach is wide. Alongside the Core Strategy and other key policy documents, the AAP will help to attract and encourage new investment and co-ordinate change.

#### 3.2 Vision & objectives

The future development of Hockley provides an opportunity for change that will deliver a high quality of life for local residents, who will have an improved environment, as well as better access to homes, shops, jobs, leisure and other services.

The AAP sets a vision for the settlement’s future based on an understanding of the unique context that drives change and

development in Hockley. It translates this vision into implementation objectives, policies and guidance that will act as a robust framework for delivery.

### **The vision for Hockley is:**

By 2025, Hockley will have a centre that is defined by the high quality of its public realm and the opportunities on offer for local people to access homes, shops, jobs, leisure and other services without having to travel far afield. These changes will be delivered in a manner that makes the most of land that has been previously developed, and all new development will respect and enhance the existing suburban, low-density character of the settlement.

The four key objectives that support this vision and are vital in its delivery are to:

#### **1) Provide greater shopping choice for local people.**

Most food shopping undertaken by Hockley's residents involves a drive to another town centre or location. Improving the range of shops in Hockley will help to encourage more local people to do their shopping closer to home. This should help

existing businesses in the centre, benefit the environment and help to build stronger communities.

#### **2) Identify and deliver environmental improvements.**

The redevelopment of light industrial uses and existing buildings presents a major opportunity to help deliver a range of environmental improvements to the centre, including improvements at key road junctions and the creation of a new public space in the heart of the Hockley.

#### **3) Recycle previously developed land for housing.**

There is a pressing need for new housing across Rochford District. The District is required to provide 250 new dwellings per year. Making efficient use of brownfield land for housing means that less greenfield land in and around Hockley will have to be used for housing development. Hockley is a sustainable residential location and provides opportunities for affordable and market housing to improve housing choice and address local housing need.

#### **4) Protect local employment.**

The strategy for Hockley needs to balance the importance of protecting local jobs with attracting new investment to strengthen the vitality of the centre. In particular, some of the employment uses on the Hockley Trading Centre and Foundry Business Park should be retained, alongside some of the leisure uses on these sites that also provide employment and recreational opportunities.

### **3.3 Arriving at a framework**

Hockley's form and structure was analysed in detail as part of the 2009 Issues & Options Document that was prepared to inform the AAP. This process resulted in clear ideas about the types of change that would help move the town forward, as well as a preferred spatial framework, which was produced as part of the 2010 Options Report and set out a direction of travel in terms of the main proposed interventions.

The 2010 framework included general areas for focusing main town centre and employment uses; a site for a new retail anchor; a range of public realm

improvements, including the creation of prominent public spaces throughout the town centre; the introduction of clear linkages between important sites; and, improved car parking facilities. Figure 12 is the 2010 framework plan.



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**Figure 12 2010 Hockley framework plan**

Since 2010 a number of important changes have taken place, and in response the framework has been updated. The key changes are that:

- Today's economic climate is significantly more challenging than when the AAP process first commenced.
- There would need to be a greater focus on food retail as the anchor investment opportunity, to help ensure that a greater proportion of future shopping would take place within Hockley, and thereby protect the centre from further out of town retail expansion. At the same time, it is important that any food store would be of an appropriate size, such that it would complement other retail uses in the centre, and not dominate Hockley centre.
- The Foundry Business Park has recently benefitted from upgrades and the development of new modern accommodation, whilst the older accommodation is still occupied by a range of small enterprises. This would,

therefore, represent a strong location for employment uses.

- Housing provision needs to be balanced with other uses to help meet pressing local housing needs, including that proposed for Hockley centre. Hockley is generally considered to be a sustainable location for new housing development, and the use of previously development land here would help protect Green Belt land around Hockley. Housing on previously developed land would also enhance the vitality of Hockley centre. At the same time, it is important that a range of other uses would be provided within Hockley centre, including commercial, retail and leisure. As such, fewer dwellings are now proposed than in some of the previous options considered.

The AAP sets out a framework that responds to these changes and takes into account previous stages of analysis and consultation.

## **Policy 1 – Hockley Area Action Plan framework**

**Hockley will have an enhanced public realm and its residents will have improved access to nearby homes, shops, jobs, leisure facilities and other services. Development will take place in a manner that makes efficient use of previously developed land and that will respect the settlement's character.**

**The Eldon Way Opportunity Site will deliver a mixed-use development, which will include homes, shops, leisure facilities, offices, car parking and new public spaces. Figure 13 provides a general overview of the framework for development in Hockley. It sets out the individual elements of the AAP and provides a spatial perspective on what kind of development the Council would like to see coming forward. In particular Figure 13 shows the extent to which the Council wishes to integrate the Eldon Way Opportunity Site into the wider centre of Hockley.**

**All new development within the Hockley AAP area should contribute towards the delivery of the spatial**

**framework. The key elements of this framework are:**

- a. New and improved public spaces throughout the centre, in accordance with Policy 2, including a public open space associated with the redevelopment of the Eldon Way Opportunity Site and improvements to Spa Road mini-roundabout.**
- b. New and enhanced routes linking the centre with the rail station and the surrounding area. These routes are shown in Figure 13. They show how the Council wishes to see the Eldon Way Opportunity Site become more accessible and integrated into the rest of Hockley centre.**
- c. Enhanced car parking that will serve the centre as a whole.**
- d. Opportunities for new housing as part of the Eldon Way Opportunity Site redevelopment.**
- e. The focus of retail uses in the centre, with an opportunity for a new retail development within**

**the Eldon Way Opportunity Site, in accordance with Policy 6. The appropriate locations for these uses are shown in Figure 13.**

- f. The protection of some existing employment and leisure uses within the Eldon Way Opportunity Site and on the Foundry Business Park.**

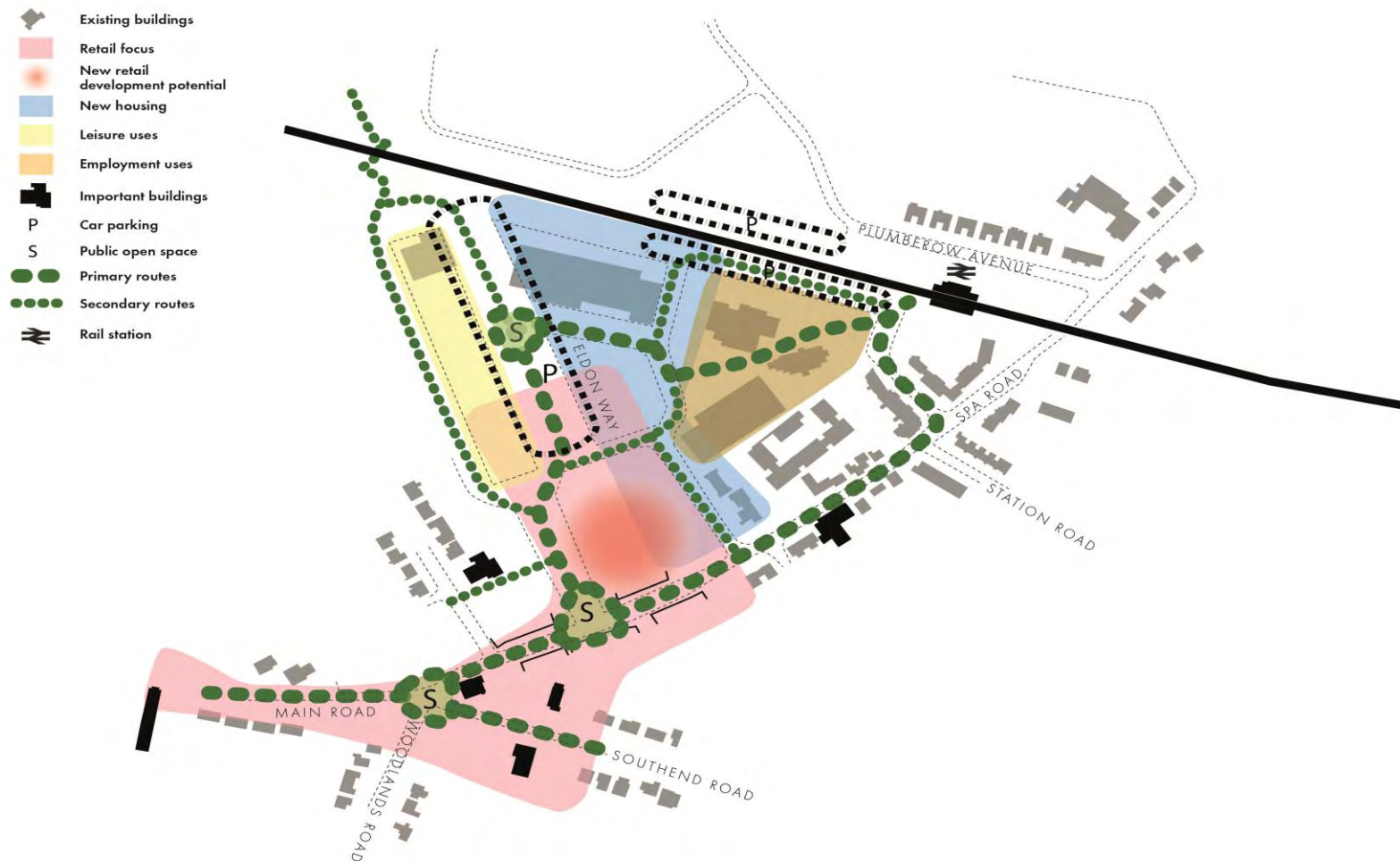
Figure 13 presents an overview of the framework and provides a broad indication of where development should take place.

The delivery of many of the elements set out within the framework is contingent on the successful mixed-use redevelopment of the Eldon Way Opportunity Site. This site would help to deliver new homes and shops, improved car parking facilities for the whole centre, an enhanced public realm and opportunities for better connectivity.

The creation of a sustainable Hockley with enhanced access for local residents to homes, shops, jobs, leisure and other services is dependent on the quality of the development proposals that come

forward. The AAP sets out further policies that are intended to deliver high quality development that is in accordance with its vision, objectives and framework.

The council does not own or control the majority of the land within the Eldon Way opportunity area. Its redevelopment is therefore largely dependent on private land owners and developers bringing the land forward.



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**Figure 13 Hockley AAP framework plan**



## 4. Proposals plan & area-wide policies

Figure 14 is a proposals plan for Hockley town centre. It relates directly to the AAP's policies and shows the locations in which these policies will apply to development proposals. It also relates to certain policies set out within the Council's Core Strategy and emerging Development Management documents.

Specifically, the proposals plan shows:

- A revised town centre boundary.
- Shopping frontages.
- A revised Hockley Employment Area.
- The Eldon Way Opportunity Site.

The reasoned justification for these location boundaries will be explained in the text following the AAP policies that deal with retail, employment and the other various elements of the mixed-use scheme proposed for the Eldon Way Opportunity

Site. This text will also flag up where the proposals plan is relevant to policies contained within the Council's other planning policy documents.



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**Figure 14 Hockley AAP Proposals Map**



## **Policy 2 – Delivering environmental improvements**

**The Council will seek to deliver environmental improvements to Hockley centre and the wider AAP area. All development proposals should either incorporate or contribute towards the schemes identified in the AAP, which are:**

- a. A new public space as part of the mixed-use redevelopment of the Eldon Way Opportunity Site, which should be fully integrated with Spa Road and any new retail floorspace delivered as part of this scheme.**
- b. Raised entry treatments on the Woodlands Road arm of the Spa Road mini-roundabout and the side roads along Spa Road.**
- c. New and improved pedestrian signage for key destinations and attractors, including the rail station, the centre's primary shopping frontage, the library, the health centre and Hockley Woods.**

- d. Other physical interventions, including the replacement of poor quality paving, the removal of street clutter, the improvement of the lighting for pedestrian routes, and the planting of native street trees.**

New development within the Hockley AAP area would bring opportunities for the delivery of environmental improvements, which could be integrated within new development or funded through it. Core Strategy Policy RTC6 states that the AAP should secure a safe and high quality environment for Hockley's residents and a new public space within the centre.

The requirements of Policy 2 are explained in more detail as follows:

### **A new public space**

A new public space is one of the key elements of the proposed redevelopment of the Eldon Way Opportunity Site. This would provide a focal point for the centre, and would also help to link Spa Road and the centre with new homes, shops, jobs,

leisure opportunities and other services delivered through regeneration.

There will be other opportunities to create new areas of public space throughout the AAP area. In particular, there may be scope to facilitate the creation of small areas of inviting public space, through improved soft landscaping and seating. Elsewhere, there may be the potential to soften new development at the Eldon Way Opportunity Site through the introduction of areas of public space.

### **Raised entry treatments on the Woodlands Road**

The busy Spa Road mini-roundabout and numerous side roads along Spa Road currently act as barriers to pedestrian movement around Hockley centre. Raised entry treatments would help to prioritise pedestrian movements and enhance the centre's public realm.

The introduction of raised entry treatments to these roads would not have a significant negative impact on vehicular traffic flows through Hockley centre. Most of the vehicles that pass through Hockley use the B1013 (Main Road / Southend Road) and

would not use the routes that would be affected, which mainly accommodate local traffic.

The experience of pedestrians at the Spa Road mini-roundabout could be further improved through other relatively minor alterations to the surrounding areas of pavement, which could be incorporated as part of a scheme that would increase the roundabout's capacity and raise the Woodlands Road arm. Notably, it may be possible to widen the pavement around the Spa public house by undertaking a slight build-out on the north side of Southend Road.

### **New and improved pedestrian signage**

Improved signage would help people to easily and safely find their way around Hockley. This would encourage those visiting the centre to leave their cars at home or in the centre's car parks and to walk between its main destinations.

### **Other physical interventions**

It is important that the overall quality of the public realm within the centre is improved to attract visitors and encourage people to walk. Poor quality paving and

street clutter act as barriers to safe and effective pedestrian movement.

Improved lighting for pedestrian routes would help improve safety and reduce the fear of crime; it would also encourage more people to visit the centre during the evening and at night, and so encourage a safe and attractive evening economy. The planting of native tree species would generally help to make the public realm more inviting and improve visual amenity.



Figure 15 Opportunities for environmental improvements in Hockley

### **Policy 3 – Promoting better movement**

The Council will seek to deliver transport improvements that promote improved movement through and within the AAP area and enhanced linkages with other parts of Hockley and its surrounds. All development proposals should either incorporate or contribute towards the schemes identified in the AAP, which are:

- a. **Strengthening pedestrian links within the AAP area, particularly between the rail station and the Eldon Way Opportunity Site; the rail station and the centre; and Spa Road and the Eldon Way Opportunity Site.**
- b. **Creating new and enhancing existing pedestrian links across Hockley, including the existing route linking Spa Road to the surrounding countryside, which runs adjacent to Eldon Way; and potential routes from the centre to Hockley Woods.**
- c. **Improving the profile and accessibility of Hockley train**

**station through enhancements to make the rail station entrance more legible.**

- d. **The provision of enhanced cycle parking facilities at the rail station and suitable locations throughout the centre and the Eldon Way Opportunity Site.**
- e. **Improvements to bus facilities, including improved shelters and seating provision at key locations, such as the rail station and at stops in the centre; and real-time bus information.**
- f. **Consolidated car parking located on the Eldon Way Opportunity Site, which should serve the centre; new mixed-use development, including residential, retail, leisure and office uses; and the rail station.**
- g. **Increasing the capacity of the Spa Road mini-roundabout junction, without detriment to existing pedestrian amenity or local character.**

**Planning applications for new development should be supported by a**

**Transport Assessment and Travel Plan, in accordance with the Department for Transport's (DfT) Guidance on Transport Assessment (2007). Travel Plans should encourage residents and businesses to live and operate in a more sustainable way, reducing the number and length of car trips generated in the area, whilst promoting more sustainable modes of travel, such as public transport, walking and cycling.**

New development brings with it opportunities to increase investment in movement infrastructure such as highways, foot and cycle ways, car and cycle parking spaces, and public transport services. However, managing the impacts of increased movement that comes with new development is critical to ensuring that places work successfully.

Core Strategy Policy RTC6 sets out improved connectivity as a priority. Policies T3 and T6 of the same document support this priority and emphasise the importance of new development contributing towards improved public transport, and cycling and walking, respectively.

Figure 17 is a more detailed movement framework plan. The requirements of Policy 2 are explained in more detail as follows:

### **Strengthening pedestrian links:**

Redevelopment provides the opportunity to open up previously closed potential pedestrian routes within Hockley centre. In particular, the comprehensive redevelopment of the Eldon Way Opportunity Site could help to create new links from the rail station to Spa Road.

Direct, legible and safe connections are crucial to improving travel choice, reducing reliance on the car and promoting more sustainable modes of travel. This is especially the case given that there are opportunities to increase the accessibility of the rail station. Good pedestrian links can also help to create more successful places that people can easily find their way around.

There are also opportunities to improve existing links between the centre, rail station and Eldon Way Opportunity Site and the rest of Hockley and its surrounding countryside.

Again, it is considered that better access into the centre will help to encourage visitors and residents to use other more sustainable modes of travel. Moreover, the links proposed would also allow those living in the centre to easily access the surrounding countryside and make use of this valuable resource.

### **Improving Hockley train station**

The entrances to the rail station currently lack prominence. More legible entrances would improve its profile and appearance and help encourage people to become less reliant on their cars and to use rail as an alternative. Such enhancements would also complement the new links proposed in and around the centre of Hockley.

### **The provision of enhanced cycle parking**

Improvements to cycle parking facilities would help to encourage people to cycle for local journeys and as part of longer rail journeys. Further, cyclists would be encouraged to use new links within the centre, across the town and with the surrounding countryside.

### **Improvements to bus facilities**

The improvement of bus facilities, such as improved shelters and seating, would help to encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport and reduce reliance on cars. In particular, real-time bus information would provide more certainty about service performance and help people to plan journeys. ECC made a commitment to the delivery of real-time bus information technology in its Bus Information Strategy (2006-2011) and the AAP supports this commitment.

### **Consolidated car parking located on the Eldon Way Opportunity Site**

The comprehensive redevelopment of the Eldon Way Opportunity Site would create the opportunity for the provision of new and improved public parking facilities in the centre. Parking facilities are currently scattered around the centre and a reasonable amount of informal car parking takes place to the rear of properties and on Eldon Way.



Figure 16 Transport issues in Hockley



New consolidated car parking facilities could serve the existing centre and rail station, as well as development delivered as part of the proposals for the Eldon Way Opportunity Site. This would encourage visitors into the centre and the use of rail for longer journeys. A central car parking facility close to a variety of facilities and services may also help to promote linked trips.

The Parking Standards Design and Good Practice Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (2010) sets out the level of car parking space provision that the Council would expect alongside development proposals. Within the AAP area car parking should be provided in line with the standards set out by this document. However, it should be noted that a lower level of provision may be appropriate in urban locations, such as Hockley centre.

### **Improvements to Spa Road mini-roundabout junction**

Core Strategy Policy T1 states that the Council will require contributions from developments towards highways improvements to help mitigate any impact

on local roads, and Policy T2 of the same document identifies the Spa Road mini-roundabout as a priority location.

It is considered that the incorporation of two-lane approaches on the three principle arms (Spa Road, Southend Road and Main Road) of this mini-roundabout would achieve improvements to traffic flows through the centre without having significant negative impacts on the pedestrian environment. Indeed, this approach would allow for the incorporation of public realm improvements, as proposed in Policy 2.

The improvement of traffic flows through the centre is necessary, given queuing that takes place on account of the Spa Road mini-roundabout at peak times. It is considered that this has a negative impact on the character of the centre.

It should be noted that the implementation of such a scheme should not take place prior to more detailed design and testing.

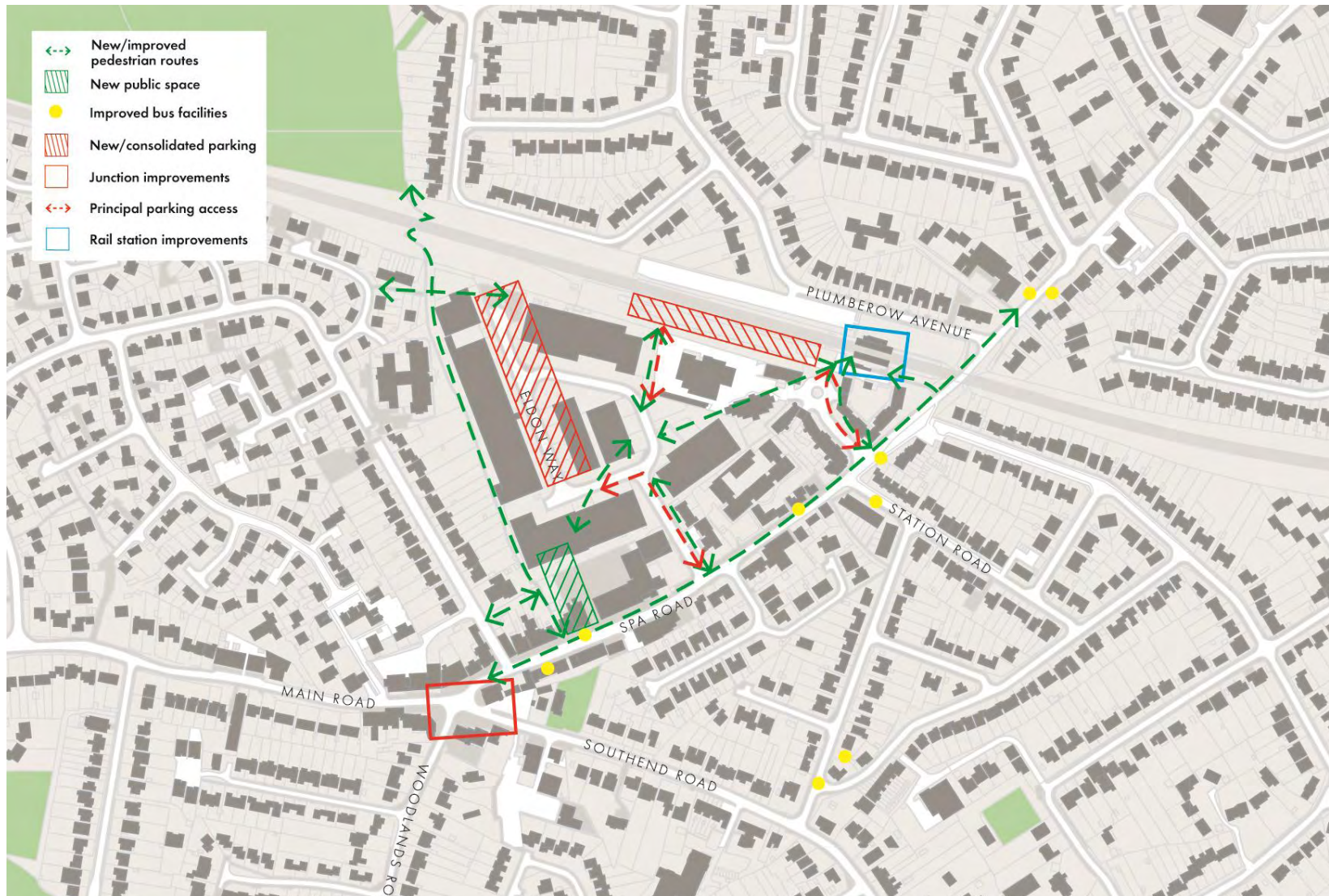
### **Transport Assessments and Travel Plans**

Core Strategy Policy T5 generally requires the submission of Travel Plans in support

of development proposals. In addition any strategic planning applications will be required by Essex County Council Highways Department to be accompanied by a Transport Assessment. – in particular, those that might come forward as part of the mixed-use redevelopment of the Eldon Way Opportunity Site – and ensure that adequate mitigation measures would be put in place. This approach would help to encourage the use of sustainable modes of travel and reduce the impact of new development on Hockley's roads and transport network.

Appendix B of the DfT's 2007 Guidance on Transport Assessment sets out detailed development thresholds, above which a Transport Assessment and / or Travel Plan should be submitted in support of a planning application. The Council will expect that developers have regard to these thresholds when preparing an application for submission.





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**Figure 17 Hockley Movement Framework**





Figure 18 Housing environments in Hockley

## **Policy 4 – Increasing the availability of housing**

**The Council will support development proposals for additional homes on previously developed land within the AAP area.**

**Residential (C3) development will be permitted within the Eldon Way Opportunity Site (see Figure 14) where it would:**

- a. Not lead to the development of more than 50% of the total area of the Eldon Way Opportunity Site for new dwellings (see Figure 13).**
- b. Achieve a density of approximately 50 dwellings per hectare.**
- c. Contribute positively towards the redevelopment of the Eldon Way Opportunity Site for a mix of uses, including residential, retail, leisure and office.**

Hockley is identified as a tier one settlement in Rochford District's Core Strategy, and should, therefore, play a critical role in the provision of the

Council's housing target of 250 new dwellings per year. Core Strategy Policy H1 identifies the Hockley Trading Centre and Foundry Business Park sites as presenting a redevelopment opportunity that will allow for the delivery of some of this new housing on a previously developed site.

A capacity study for the Eldon Way Opportunity Site has been carried out to examine how the full mix of uses envisaged for this site within the AAP could be accommodated. It demonstrates that approximately 100 new dwellings could be delivered on site. Figure 13 shows the area of the Eldon Way Opportunity Site that the Council would wish to see developed for housing. Development of the area shown in Figure 13 for uses other than housing would not be supported by the Council.

It is likely that a mix of housing unit sizes could come forward, which might include a proportion of smaller, one-bedroom units, given the nature of housing need within the District. The HAAP does not prescribe densities for new residential development, but encourages proposals for schemes that make efficient use of land and respond to their context. The Eldon

Way Opportunity Site, identified in Core Strategy Policy H1 is suitable for medium density development due to its accessible location between the centre and rail station, as well as the prevailing character of the surrounding area.

There are also other opportunities for housing within and adjoining the AAP area. In terms of potential sites, the development of a new rail station car park as part of the Eldon Way Opportunity Site would allow for some or all of the existing rail station car park north of the rail line to be redeveloped for housing. Other areas of land immediately to the north of the rail line may also be suitable for residential development, provided that viability would not be adversely affected by site shape and topography.



Figure 19 Employment land in Hockley

The conversion of upper floors within centres such as Hockley for residential purposes is appropriate. This is on the proviso that such development would not result in a net loss of leisure or commercial uses within the centre and that any new residential accommodation is self-contained and has separate access from the street.

All housing proposals within the AAP area should also meet planning policy requirements as set out within the Council's Core Strategy and emerging Development Management documents; the Housing Design SDP; the Parking Standards Design and Good Practice SPD (2010); the Essex Design Guide (2005) and Urban Place Supplement (2005); and any other relevant policy documents.

## **Policy 5 – Protecting jobs**

**The Council will support the development of office (B1a) uses within the Eldon Way Opportunity Site, provided that such uses contribute positively towards its redevelopment for a mix of uses, including residential, retail, leisure and office.**

The Core Strategy includes the relocation of some employment sites – and their subsequent redevelopment for other uses – within its vision and objectives for economic development. The Hockley Trading Centre and Foundry Business Park site is included as one of these locations.

The Eldon Way Opportunity Site currently includes a mix of employment uses. The 2008 Employment Land Study recognised these uses as strategically well-placed and, therefore, recommended that the redevelopment of the site for other uses only be allowed on the basis that the redevelopment would include provision for office uses within the overall mix.

The capacity study that was undertaken to inform the AAP allows space for up to 1,200 square metres (gross) of offices as

part of the redeveloped Eldon Way Opportunity Site.

Offices are classified by the NPPF as a main town centre use. As such, offices should normally be located within a centre or at an edge of centre location. It is considered that the Eldon Way Opportunity Site is an appropriate, sustainable centre / edge of centre site for an office use, given its accessible position between Spa Road and the rail station.

As shown on the proposals plan, the Hockley employment site has been rationalised to allow for the designation of the Eldon Way Opportunity Site for mixed-use development. The extent of the employment site has been reduced and now greater focus is placed on the Foundry Business Park. Given that the Foundry Business Park has recently benefited from upgrades and new accommodation, it should be retained as an employment site. Development proposals for land within this site would be subject to Core Strategy Policy ED3 and ED4, which both seek to protect employment sites for employment generating uses and increase office use within Hockley centre.



Drawing from these policies the Council seeks to ensure that employment land is predominantly of use classes B1 (Business) and B2 (General Industrial).

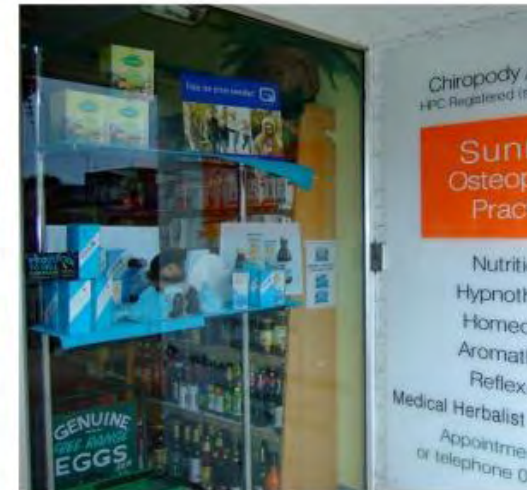


Figure 20 Shopping environments in Hockley

## **Policy 6 – Improving retail choice for local people**

**The Council will support development proposals that seek to improve Hockley’s retail offer and strengthen the role of its centre as a shopping destination for local residents.**

**New retail (A1) development within the Eldon Way Opportunity Site (see Figure 13) will be permitted where it would:**

- a. Provide a range of unit sizes, including smaller units.**
- b. Not exceed a maximum overall additional retail capacity for the centre of 3,000 sq m (gross).**
- c. Fully integrate with Spa Road, and allow for direct pedestrian links through the site to the redeveloped Eldon Way Opportunity Site, rail station and other areas of Hockley.**
- d. Contribute positively towards the redevelopment of the Eldon Way Opportunity Site for a mix of uses, including residential, retail, leisure and office.**

**The Council will favour smaller developments and the expansion of existing retail units in Hockley centre. However if a proposal for a larger single store comes forward such an application would be considered favourably, provided it meets the criteria set out above, is able to demonstrate that ‘clawback’ of expenditure from other centres would be achieved and assesses the implications for them.**

**Such a scheme should also demonstrate that a development of this size would not harm the overall vitality of Hockley.**

Hockley centre is one of Rochford District’s three main centres. Core Strategy Policies RTC1 and RTC2 require that retail development is first directed towards these centres, in accordance with a sequential approach to retail development, which prioritises such locations ahead of edge of centre and then out of centre locations.

The proposals plan shows an expanded Hockley centre, which includes an area of the Eldon Way Opportunity Site. This expanded area is primarily intended to

guide any new retail development that takes place as a part of the mixed-use redevelopment of the Site, so that it is located in a way that would fully integrate with Spa Road. This would ensure that Hockley’s additional convenience floorspace capacity can be absorbed in a manner that strengthens its centre and increases footfall along Spa Road’s existing primary shopping frontage.

The 2008 Retail & Leisure Study recommends that Hockley’s retail offer should be strengthened. It also highlights that there is capacity for up to 890m<sup>2</sup> (net) of convenience floorspace to 2026. This is within the context of an overall convenience floorspace capacity for up to 3,000m<sup>2</sup> (net) to 2026 across the whole of the District.

Within this context, then, the Council will set a 3000sq m (gross) floor space maximum within the centre. This is reasonable on account of the limited overall level of convenience capacity and the desire to strengthen Hockley centre and the need to claw back local trade currently lost to other locations.

The Retail & Leisure Study also recognises that Hockley has a good mix of small, but high quality independent traders. It recommends that this offer is enhanced and the centre promoted as a boutique shopping destination. The Eldon Way Opportunity Site offers the potential for a range of different sized retail units , including smaller units suitable for independent traders. As such, it is considered that new development could build on Hockley's existing strengths and character and the provision of additional retail through development of smaller units will be favoured.

A large retail unit has the potential to act as an anchor store, encouraging additional shoppers into Hockley centre, and may help Hockley clawback some of the expenditure currently being lost to other centres. However, conversely, there is also concern that a large retail unit would have a negative impact on the vitality of Hockley centre by, for example, marginalising existing units. As such, the development of a large retail unit will not be favoured but proposals for such a development may be acceptable provided it can be demonstrated that it will not

harm the overall vitality of Hockley centre, would help ensure clawback of retail expenditure currently lost to other centres, and considers the impact on other centres.

The development of additional retail on the Eldon Way Opportunity Site could also help to facilitate a new public space. This should provide new linkages between Spa Road and the mixed-used development proposed for the Site.

## **Policy 7 – Ensuring a healthy centre**

**The Council will encourage development within Hockley centre that supports its vitality and viability.**

**Within the centre's primary and secondary shopping frontages, as defined on the Hockley APP Proposals Map, a proposed change of use for non-retail (non-A1) purposes will be permitted where it would:**

**Not have a detrimental impact on, or undermine, the predominance of A1 uses, both within the centre as a whole and within the primary shopping frontage.**

- a. not create a cluster of similar non-A1 uses of the same use class within a locality that undermines the retail character of the centre.**
- b. entail the provision of a non-A1 use which is considered to positively contribute to the overall offer and encourage people into the centre.**

The proposals plan shows primary and secondary shopping frontages within Hockley centre. These have been retained as existing, with the only changes from the Rochford District Replacement Local Plan (2006) proposals map being the infilling of gaps between areas of designated frontage. This would allow the Council to deal appropriately with all proposals for the development of centre ground-floor units with a street frontage.

An appropriate balance of uses is necessary to support the health of Hockley centre, and it is essential that retail uses which are considered to make a positive contribution to the centre are supported by non-retail uses, such as cafes, restaurants, pubs, leisure uses, community facilities and professional services (such as banks, building societies and estate agents).

To ensure this balance the Council will not permit a cluster of any more than two immediately adjacent non-retail uses of the same Use Class. More than two Sui Generis uses adjacent to one another may not necessarily be considered a cluster, provided they are distinct and different uses.

However there are uses of which the provision of additional units in Hockley centre would not be considered to positively contribute to the overall offer of the centre. Such uses will not generally be supported.

Some land uses associated with town centre locations have the potential to raise amenity issues for nearby residents. Such uses might include, but are not necessarily limited to, those falling in Use Classes A3, A4 and A5 or other, Sui Generis uses such as night clubs. The impact of such non-retail uses on the amenity of those living within or nearby the centre will be an important consideration in determining relevant planning applications, and applicants will be expected to demonstrate how negative impacts arising from such proposals will be mitigated, if applications are to be permitted.

The 2008 Retail & Leisure Study assessed the vitality and viability of Hockley centre and no changes to retail frontages were put forward. As such, the Council will continue to assess proposals that relate to either primary or secondary shopping frontages on a similar basis to that set out within the Local Plan.

The Council recognises the dynamic nature of centres and the need for flexibility. Nevertheless, it wishes to ensure that the majority of uses both within the centre as a whole and within the primary shopping frontage are in A1 use. Currently 58% of the primary and 44% of the secondary frontages are in retail uses. However, the target for Hockley is to increase this to 75% and 50% respectively.

## **Policy 8 – Encouraging leisure opportunities**

**The Council will support the location of leisure (D2) uses within the Eldon Way Opportunity Site (see Figure 13), provided that such uses contribute positively towards its redevelopment for a mix of uses, including residential, retail, leisure and office.**

It is noted that a bowling facility is currently located within the Eldon Way Opportunity Site. The 2008 Retail & Leisure Study identified this as the most popular ten pin bowling facility amongst Rochford District's residents. The Site also currently includes a children's adventure play facility and a gym. The Council will support the retention of these uses and recognises the important role that they play in providing leisure opportunities for the District's residents.

Although the Retail & Leisure Study did not identify a strong need for additional leisure facilities within the District, and especially Hockley, there may also be some potential for new leisure uses to

locate within the Eldon Way Opportunity Site. The presence of existing uses could provide an opportunity for the sustainable location of other complimentary facilities.

The capacity study undertaken in respect of the Eldon Way Opportunity Site builds in sufficient space for the retention of existing leisure uses and the possible development of new leisure uses.

The AAP proposals plan shows that the Hockley centre designation has been expanded to include land within the Eldon Way Opportunity Site and, specifically, capture CJ's Bowling within this designation.

The NPPF states that leisure facilities are main town centre uses, which should normally be located within centres. It is considered that the Eldon Way Opportunity Site represents an appropriate centre / edge of centre location for existing and new leisure uses, given that it is sustainably located between the Spa Road, which is the heart of the centre, and the rail station. The introduction of new linkages, as proposed by the AAP, will further enhance the suitability and sustainability of this location.





Figure 21 Leisure uses in Hockley

## **5. Delivering a better Hockley**

### **5.1 Working in partnership**

The Council will continue to work closely with partners, landowners and other stakeholders to realise the implementation of the policies in the AAP.

The key landowners will ultimately be responsible for delivering the envisaged changes. The Eldon Way Opportunity Site is largely controlled by a single landowner. The AAP provides certainty with regards to the Council's vision for this land and also sets out a basis for the Council to aid the development process through assisting with any necessary land assembly.

The Council will also continue to engage with the community. Future planning applications and the development management process will determine the details of individual development schemes that come forward as a result of the AAP. The community will be given the

opportunity to have further input into the design of developments.

### **Working with ECC**

A further key partner is ECC, the Highways Authority. In its role as highway network manager, ECC will consider the movement framework identified in this AAP and will take this forward as part of its strategic planning process. In doing so, they will take into consideration the policies set out above.

ECC will also be responsible for reviewing and approving Transport Assessments and Travel Plans submitted as part of any future planning applications for significant development in the AAP area. They will need to be satisfied that any transport impacts identified have been appropriately mitigated and that the movement-related elements of any scheme are in accordance with the AAP policies.

The Council will continue to be proactive in its engagement with ECC through the Local Highways Panel, which is made up of members and officers from both authorities and decides on which highway

and public realm improvements monies will be spent.

### **5.2 Financial viability**

The Council has taken into account information regarding national and local trends in the property market, as well as high-level viability advice in respect of individual development schemes. This is to ensure that the proposals set out within this AAP are robust and based in commercial realism.

### **Eldon Way Opportunity Site**

A site-specific viability analysis has been undertaken for the Eldon Way Opportunity Site development scenario generated through the capacity study, which was carried out to test the proposed scheme's layout and design. This analysis adopts realistic and robust assumptions, including construction costs based on standard building indices and the project team's knowledge of comparable schemes, and takes into account the potential cost of land assembly. It also relates to a scheme that would help to meet the Council's aspirations for the AAP area.

Broadly speaking, the viability analysis demonstrates that the proposed redevelopment of the Eldon Way Opportunity Site is currently financially viable. Clearly, financial viability is sensitive and can be easily impacted on over time by fluctuations in prices and land assembly costs and, crucially, variations in planning policy requirements.

### **Affordable housing**

Given the likely importance of housing as part of the proposed mixed-use redevelopment of the Eldon Way Opportunity site, the provision of affordable housing would impact significantly on any scheme's overall financial viability. Core Strategy Policy H4 states that 'at least 35% of dwellings on all developments of 15 or more units, or on sites greater than 0.5 hectares, shall be affordable'. It goes on to highlight that the Council will aim for 80% of this provision to be social housing, and 20% percent to be intermediate housing.

However, the Policy goes on to say that the Council will continually review the affordable housing needs of the District and that developers should consult with

the Council's Housing Strategy Team to ensure that their proposals meet the Council's needs before submitting planning applications. It also states that the requirements for the provision of affordable housing might be relaxed in exceptional circumstances; for example, where constraints would make on-site provision impossible, or where a developer could demonstrate that 35% provision would be economically unviable. In such cases the Council will negotiate the proportion of affordable dwellings based on evidence regarding financial viability.

### **5.3 Community infrastructure**

The Council, in line with Core Strategy Policy CLT1, requires that developers provide on-site infrastructure to mitigate specific issues relating to their development scheme. Developers will also be required to contribute towards off-site, strategic infrastructure, which would help to mitigate the cumulative impact of new development.

The Core Strategy sets out the types of strategic infrastructure that should be

funded by contributions arising from new development. These include highway and public transport improvements, alongside a number of other important types of infrastructure.

The AAP sets out priorities for delivering environmental improvements and highways schemes. The Council will expect that new development within the AAP area contributes towards these identified priorities, in accordance with the Core Strategy.

Table 1 gives further detail in relation to major improvements and schemes. It should be noted that this is not exhaustive and development may be required to contribute towards other enhancements as identified in the AAP or through the development management process.

<b>Table 1 – Major environmental improvements and highways schemes</b>					
<b>Environmental improvement / highways scheme</b>	<b>Lead partner</b>	<b>Other partners</b>	<b>Estimated cost</b>	<b>Potential funding stream(s)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Spa Road public realm enhancements	ECC	Rochford District Council / developers	£1,200,000 - £1,500,000	Pooled financial contributions / ECC budget	These improvements should be funded from pooled contributions
Eldon Way Opportunity Site public realm enhancements	ECC	Rochford District Council / developers	£400,000 - £500,000	Section 106 agreement(s), made in relation to the redevelopment of Eldon Way Opportunity Site	These improvements should be delivered as part of the redevelopment of the Eldon Way Opportunity Site
New and enhanced pedestrian links	ECC	Rochford District Council / developers	£150,000 - £200,000	Pooled financial contributions / ECC budget	Any of these proposed new or improved links directly associated with the Eldon Way Opportunity Site should be delivered alongside its redevelopment.  Other new or improved links should be funded from pooled contributions.
Spa Road mini-roundabout upgrade	ECC	Rochford District Council / developers	£200,000 - £300,000	Section 106 agreement(s), made in relation to the redevelopment of Eldon Way Opportunity Site	This improvement should be delivered alongside the redevelopment of the Eldon Way Opportunity Site and / or, if it is delivered separately, any new

## **5.4 Monitoring change**

The importance of monitoring is recognised in both legislation and local policy. The Localism Act 2011 requires that the Council produces regular monitoring reports to assess the delivery of its planning documents and implementation of its policies. The Core Strategy sets out the Council's commitment to the production of monitoring reports and explains how each of its policies will be monitored.

Whilst the AAP's progress can be tracked to some extent against the Core Strategy's monitoring framework, there are several instances where a monitoring framework specific to the Hockley AAP is required. Table 2 sets out how the AAP will be monitored.

The Council's monitoring report will document whether or not the AAP's objectives are being met and will set out the necessary actions to aid the delivery of the AAP.



<b>Table 2 – Implementation, delivery and monitoring</b>				
<b>Policy</b>	<b>Implementation and delivery</b>	<b>Potential risk</b>	<b>Risk mitigation</b>	<b>Monitoring</b>
Policy 1 – Hockley Area Action Plan area framework	Development within the Hockley AAP area will be guided by the framework.	The development set out within the Hockley AAP area framework is not delivered or does not meet the needs of Hockley and its residents.	<p>The Council has engaged with landowners and developers and carried out a robust financial appraisal of the Eldon Way Opportunity Site scheme.</p> <p>The Council has also worked with its partners, such as ECC, to ensure that the scheme has the full backing of these organisations.</p> <p>The Council has also carried out thorough public engagement and baseline analysis to ensure that the framework addresses the appropriate issues.</p>	The Council will record development through monitoring reports, keeping track of commitments and completions.
Policy 2 – Delivering environmental improvements	<p>Environmental improvements that come forward as a result of developments within the AAP area will be guided by this Policy.</p> <p>The spending of contributions towards environmental improvements received as a result of centre schemes will</p>	Economic viability consideration may threaten the delivery of environmental improvements.	The viability of development on the Eldon Way Opportunity Site has been subjected to a robust financial appraisal, which has included robust and reasonable assumptions about contributions towards environmental improvements.	The Council will record the receipt and spending of contributions through monitoring reports.

	also be guided by this Policy.			
Policy 3 – Promoting better movement	<p>Highways and transport improvements that come forward as a result of developments within the AAP area will be guided by this Policy.</p> <p>The spending of contributions towards Highways and transport improvements received as a result of centre schemes will also be guided by this Policy.</p>	<p>Economic viability consideration may threaten the delivery of highways and transport improvements.</p> <p>ECC and other transport service providers may change their spending priorities and decide not to deliver the identified schemes.</p>	<p>The viability of development on the Eldon Way Opportunity Site has been subjected to a robust financial appraisal, which has included robust and reasonable assumptions about contributions towards highways and transport improvements.</p> <p>The Council has also worked with ECC to ensure that the scheme has the full backing of this organisation.</p>	<p>The Council will record the receipt and spending of contributions through monitoring reports.</p>
Policy 4 – Increasing the availability of housing	<p>The Council will prioritise the development of previously developed land for housing within Hockley, in particular the Eldon Way Opportunity Site. The Council will continue to work proactively with developers and landowners.</p>	<p>Residential development on previously developed land, in particular the Eldon Way Opportunity Site, is not delivered.</p>	<p>Previously developed sites for housing development have been identified in consultation with landowners and developers. Engagement on this basis will continue throughout the plan-period.</p> <p>The viability of residential development on the Eldon Way Opportunity Site has been subjected to a robust financial appraisal.</p>	<p>The Council will record housing commitments and completions within Hockley and the Eldon Way Opportunity Site through monitoring reports. The number of commitments and completions on previously developed</p>

				land will be recorded.
Policy 5 – Protecting jobs	The Council will encourage office uses	Offices may not be delivered as part of the mixed uses redevelopment of the Eldon Way Opportunity Site	<p>The Council will use the development management process to steer development towards sequentially preferable sites, including centre and edge of centre sites within the Eldon Way Opportunity Site.</p> <p>The Council has engaged with landowners and developers and carried out a robust financial appraisal of the Eldon Way Opportunity Site scheme.</p>	Office commitments and completions will be recorded as part of the monitoring report.
Policy 6 – Improving retail choice for local people	New retail development will be directed towards sequentially preferable sites within Hockley centre, including those on the Eldon Way Opportunity Site.	The role of Hockley's centre is not strengthened and an improved retail offer is not delivered.	<p>The Council will use the development management process to steer development towards sequentially preferable sites, including those on the Eldon Way Opportunity Site.</p> <p>The Council has engaged with landowners and developers and carried out a robust financial appraisal of the Eldon Way Opportunity Site scheme.</p>	Hockley centre's uses will be recorded as part of the monitoring report, as will retail commitments and completions.
Policy 7 – Ensuring an healthy centre	A healthy mix of retail (A1) and non-retail (non-A1) uses will be maintained within the centre's shopping frontages.	The health of the centre declines.	The Council will use the development management process to steer development to appropriate sites within the centre.	Uses within the centre's shopping frontages will be recorded as part of the monitoring report.

Policy 8 – Encouraging leisure opportunities	Leisure uses will be encouraged within the Eldon Way Opportunity Site.	Leisure uses may not be delivered as part of the mixed uses redevelopment of the Eldon Way Opportunity Site and / or existing uses may not remain in this location.	<p>The Council will use the development management process to steer development towards sequentially preferable sites, including centre and edge of centre sites within the Eldon Way Opportunity Site.</p> <p>The Council has engaged with landowners and developers and carried out a robust financial appraisal of the Eldon Way Opportunity Site scheme.</p>	Leisure commitments and completions will be recorded as part of the monitoring report.
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## NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

### INTRODUCTION

- 0.1 This is the summary of the Sustainability Appraisal Report for Rochford District Council's Hockley Area Action Plan (AAP) Development Planning Document (DPD): Pre-submission Document. It describes how the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) process was used to assist in the preparation of the Area Action Plan, as required by planning legislation and Government guidance.

### SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL & STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

- 0.2 The purpose of Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is to promote sustainable development through the integration of environmental, social and economic considerations in the preparation of Local Development Documents (LDDs). This requirement is set out in Section 39 (2) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004 and the National Planning Policy Framework. Sustainability Appraisal incorporates the requirements of Strategic Environmental Assessment<sup>12</sup> (SEA), a requirement of European and UK Legislation. Government guidance advises a number of stages of SA work that need to be carried out as a Local Development Document is being prepared:

Stage A: Setting Context & Scope  
 Stage B: Developing Options & Assessing Effects  
 Stage C: Preparing the SA Report  
 Stage D: Consulting on the Plan & the SA  
 Stage E: Monitoring Implementation of the Plan

- 0.3 The SA/SEA of the Hockley Area Action Plan has been prepared in accordance with these requirements for SA/SEA.

### THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND HOCKLEY AAP

- 0.4 The Council is in the process of preparing its Local Development Plan (LDP) (previously known as the Local Development Framework), which will set out how the District will develop in the future. The LDP will gradually replace the Rochford District Replacement Local Plan which was adopted in 2006. The Rochford Local Development Plan comprises the following Local Development Documents:

- Core Strategy DPD (also known as the Local Plan)
- Development Management DPD
- Site Allocations DPD
- Area Action Plans (DPDs) for Rochford Town Centre, Hockley Town Centre, Rayleigh Town Centre and London Southend Airport (with Southend-on-Sea Borough Council).

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<sup>1</sup> EU Directive 2001/42/EC

<sup>2</sup> Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

- 0.5 The Hockley Area Action Plan (AAP) creates the framework for development sites and planning policies in Hockley. It will act as the focal point for the coordination of other public policies and programmes and will guide public and private investment in the area. The AAP sets out a vision for how growth and change can be managed within Hockley and how regeneration of the area might be stimulated through this development.

### THE CHARACTER OF HOCKLEY

- 0.6 Hockley is a small town located in Rochford District; approximately 5 miles north-west of Southend-on-Sea, between the larger centres of Rochford, to the south-east and Rayleigh to the south west. The town does not have the same level of retail and services facilities as Rayleigh or Rochford and has been classified as a 'minor local centre'.
- 0.7 Hockley has a centrally-located train station, which is on the Liverpool Street line-providing easy access to London. The linear town centre stretches from the railway station to the junction of Spa Road and Southend / Main Roads. Community facilities, including the library, surgery and old fire station are located in the southern part of the AAP area. The town centre is relatively compact and well-connected to surrounding residential areas.

### SA SCOPING & ISSUES FOR SUSTAINABILITY

- 0.8 A SA scoping process was undertaken to help ensure that the SA covers the key sustainability issues that are relevant to Hockley. This included the development of an SA Framework of objectives to comprise the basis for appraisal. An SA Scoping Report was prepared to summarise the findings of the scoping process and was sent to statutory consultees for consultation in July 2012. As part of the scoping process plans and programmes were reviewed and information was collated relating to the current and predicted social, environmental and economic characteristics of Hockley.
- 0.9 From these studies, the key sustainability issues and opportunities for the AAP and the SA were identified, as follows:

Key Sustainability Issues for Hockley AAP	
■	The provision of quality and affordable housing to meet housing needs in Hockley.
■	Improving connectivity between the town centre and train station.
■	Taking account of environmental and physical constraints when accommodating new development.
■	Opportunity to improve the public realm by providing a more defined centre as well as through enhanced pedestrian crossing facilities and green landscaping.
■	The protection of Hockley's biodiversity (Hockley Woods SSSI & LNR), heritage, landscape and character.
■	High levels of car ownership and travelling to work using a private vehicle.
■	High levels of out-commuting and difficulties in competing with economies in surrounding areas.
■	Opportunity to improve retail and stimulate the local economy,

whilst recognising difficulties in competing with the retail pull of Southend, Basildon and Chelmsford.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Climate change is a significant issue facing all communities and the AAP will need to consider issues around energy efficiency, renewables and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.</li> </ul>

## SA FRAMEWORK

- 0.10 An SA Framework was compiled and included SA Objectives that aim to resolve the issues and problems identified; these are used to test the draft plan as it is being prepared. The SA Framework for Hockley AAP is based on that developed for the Rochford Core Strategy. A list of the SA objective headings follows:

SA Objective headings	
1. Balanced Communities	8. Landscape & Townscape
2. Healthy & Safe Communities	9. Climate Change & Energy
3. Housing	10. Water
4. Economy & Employment	11. Land & Soil
5. Accessibility	12. Air Quality
6. Biodiversity	13. Sustainable Design & Construction
7. Cultural Heritage	

## SA OF THE HOCKLEY AAP

- 0.11 Each stage of the preparation of the AAP was appraised using the SA Objectives. Where significant negative effects, including environmental effects, were predicted, the SA sought where possible to identify means of offsetting these effects. Where it was considered that there were opportunities to enhance the sustainability of the proposals, recommendations were made. The appraisal recognised 6 categories of predicted effects, as illustrated in the following key.

Categories of sustainability effects	
Colour	Impact
++	Major Positive
+	Positive
0	No Impact
?	Uncertain
-	Negative
--	Major Negative

## CONSIDERATION AND APPRAISAL OF ALTERNATIVES

- 0.12 The SA of the options (alternatives) was undertaken in July 2012. The purpose and key objectives of the AAP have been set at a higher level; therefore it was considered that the alternatives available to the plan-maker in preparing the AAP were limited to the level and type of intervention/development that should be accommodated in the Town Centre. Three spatial options were considered:
- Spatial Option 1: A low level of intervention
  - Spatial Option 2: A medium level of intervention, with increased housing, retail and office provision
  - Spatial Options 3: A high level of intervention, similar to Option 2, but with a higher level again of housing and office provision.
- 0.13 A further 3 options were considered around more detailed transport interventions; looking at Spa roundabout, on-street parking provision and drop-off provision at Hockley Railway station.
- 0.14 For social and economic reasons, the SA found that spatial options 2 and 3 would have the most sustainability benefits, but it also recognised that these 2 options were more likely to cause increased disruption (noise and congestion) and air pollution during the construction phase of development. The SA includes recommendations to mitigate any adverse impacts and also considered the various transport options in more detail. Alongside consultation responses, the Council considered the SA findings in its decision making and subsequently chose an amalgamation of spatial options 2 and 3.

## APPRAISAL OF THE AAP VISION AND POLICIES

- 0.15 A compatibility analysis of the Pre-Submission AAP Vision and Objectives was carried out using the SA framework in October 2012. Overall the vision and objectives were found to be compatible with the majority of SA objectives.
- 0.16 The Pre-Submission policies were subject to detailed SA in October 2012. On the whole, the findings of the SA suggest that the emerging AAP policies will make significant contributions to the progression of SA objectives. Throughout the development of the AAP and the Sustainability Appraisal process, data gaps and uncertainties were uncovered and these have been acknowledged in the appraisal matrices, where applicable.

## SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS IDENTIFIED

- 0.17 The majority of policies were found to have significant positive sustainability benefits. The following table summarises the key positive effects identified:

<b>Significant positive effects of the emerging Hockley AAP</b>	
<b>Key relevant SA Objective:</b>	<b>Positive effects identified:</b>
1.Balanced communities & 2.Healthy and Safe Communities	The AAP will have positive effects on communities through providing a mix of uses in the town centre, including housing, retail, leisure facilities and new public spaces. New areas for recreation and encouraging walking and cycling through enhanced networks and public realm will have positive benefits for health.
3.Housing	Positive effects for housing, including new affordable housing, through provision of housing as part of the Eldon Way Opportunity Site redevelopment.
4.Economy & Employment	A significant positive effect on the local economy is likely through enhanced opportunities for retail, leisure and offices. Increase housing will have positive indirect effects through increasing the use of local service and shops. New employment will be created in the short-term (construction) and longer term.
5. Accessibility	Significant cumulative effects for accessibility are likely through a range of improvements to the public realm, bus services, access to the train station and increased accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists.
6.Landscape and Townscape	The overall effect on the local townscape will be positive due to increased public realm works and landscaping proposed in the plan.
9. Climate Change and Energy	The focus on improving local accessibility and access to public transport throughout the plan, combined with a focus on mixed-use development is likely to help mitigate greenhouse gas emissions caused by car travel.

- 0.18 Alongside the many positive effects of the plan, potential negative sustainability effects were also identified, although the effect is uncertain at this stage of the assessment and it is considered likely that these effects can be mitigated at a more detailed planning stage. These are summarised below:

<b>Potentially significant effects of the emerging Hockley AAP</b>	
<b>Key relevant SA Objective:</b>	<b>Negative Effects identified:</b>
7. Cultural Heritage	Some potential for negative effects on cultural heritage was identified, with potential for historic buildings along Spa Road to be affected by development at the Eldon Way Opportunity Site. Adverse effects can be mitigated through

	sensitive design and development.
12. Air quality	Potential localised air quality pollution is possible during the construction stage of development, however this can be mitigated through development controls. The plan has sought to minimise congestion and air and noise pollution through having a strong focus on public transport, walking and cycling, however there remains some uncertainty about future air quality, and ongoing monitoring should be undertaken.

## MITIGATION, ENHANCEMENT AND MONITORING

- 0.19 An important role of the SA process is to provide recommendations for the mitigation of negative effects and enhancement of the positive effects identified in the appraisal process. In preparing the AAP, Rochford District Council has already sought to address many of the sustainability problems in Hockley, and consequently the majority of the SA findings were positive. A small number of recommendations have been made and these will be considered by the Council in finalising the plan.
- 0.20 Local planning authorities are required to produce Annual Monitoring Reports to monitor the progress of the Local Development Plan. There is also a requirement to monitor the predictions made in the SA. Rochford District Council prepares an Annual Monitoring report each year, and in preparing the report, considers any recommendations made through the SA process. The indicators and targets suggested for the SA monitoring of the Core Strategy are considered appropriate for the monitoring of the Hockley AAP, with additional specific suggestions made during the preparation of the Hockley AAP. This SA has also made further suggestions, which are detailed in the main SA report.

## CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

- 0.21 The SA of the Hockley Area Action Plan has appraised the effects of individual policies, as well as the overall effect of the plan, including cumulative and incremental effects. It has also considered and appraised reasonable alternatives to the plan itself; and this information has been made available to the Council to help in the selection of the preferred plan. Overall the SA has found that the AAP will help to resolve a number of key sustainability issues in Hockley Town Centre and will also play a role in improving sustainability in the wider Rochford District. Significant positive effects were identified for communities, the economy and employment, meeting housing needs, accessibility, landscape/townscape, and climate change. Possible adverse effects were identified for cultural heritage, water resources and air and noise pollution but these can be mitigated and managed through further detailed planning, development management policies and monitoring.
- 0.22 The Council has considered the recommendations made throughout the Sustainability Appraisal process, and amended the plan where appropriate.



This has contributed to further enhancing the positive sustainability effects of the AAP.

- 0.23 This SA Report will accompany the AAP on pre-submission consultation for 6 weeks, during which time interested parties are invited to make representations on the AAP or the SA. The SA will form part of the evidence base during the Examination of the AAP and if any further significant changes are made to the plan the SA Report will be updated accordingly. A finalised report will accompany the adopted DPD when it is published.

# **Sustainability Appraisal of the Hockley Area Action Plan Submission Document – Schedule of Modifications**

**October 2013**

### **Sustainability Appraisal of the Hockley Area Action Plan Schedule of Modifications**

This report forms an addendum to the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) technical report that accompanied the Hockley Area Action Plan on submission in April 2013. This report seeks to undertake an SA of Rochford District Council's Hockley Area Action Plan Schedule of Modifications. The Schedule of Modifications sets out proposed modifications to the Hockley Area Action Plan Submission Document in light of the hearing sessions that have taken place and the Inspector's recommendations. The SA of proposed modifications does not seek to repeat the assessment carried out for the SA of the Hockley Area Action Submission Document, but rather seeks to assess the modifications made to the policies themselves. This report should therefore be read in conjunction with the SA technical report (April 2013) that accompanied the Hockley Area Action Plan on Submission.

### **The Sustainability Appraisal Process**

Throughout the development of the Hockley Area Action Plan the SA process has been used to assist in planning for the development and the use of land, as required by planning legislation and Government guidance, within Hockley centre. SA assists sustainable development through an ongoing dialogue and assessment during the preparation of LDF Development Planning Documents (DPDs), and considers the implications of social, economic and environmental demands on land use planning.

A SA scoping process was undertaken to help ensure that the SA covers the key sustainability issues that are relevant to Hockley. This included the development of an SA Framework of objectives to comprise the basis for appraisal. An SA Scoping Report was prepared to summarise the findings of the scoping process and was sent to statutory consultees for consultation in July 2012. As part of the scoping process plans and programmes were reviewed and information was collated relating to the current and predicted social, environmental and economic characteristics of Hockley. The SA Framework for the Hockley Area Action Plan is based on that developed for the Rochford Core Strategy.

### **Consideration and Appraisal of Alternatives – Options Report 2010**

The SA of the options (alternatives) was undertaken in July 2012. The purpose and key objectives of the AAP have been set at a higher level; therefore it was considered that the alternatives available to the plan-maker in preparing the AAP were limited to the level and type of intervention/development that should be accommodated in the Town Centre. Three spatial options were considered:

- Spatial Option 1: A low level of intervention
- Spatial Option 2: A medium level of intervention, with increased housing, retail and office provision

- Spatial Option 3: A high level of intervention, similar to Option 2, but with a higher level again of housing and office provision.

A further 3 options were considered around more detailed transport interventions; looking at Spa roundabout, on-street parking provision and drop-off provision at Hockley Railway station.

For social and economic reasons, the SA found that spatial options 2 and 3 would have the most sustainability benefits, but it also recognised that these 2 options were more likely to cause increased disruption (noise and congestion) and air pollution during the construction phase of development. The SA includes recommendations to mitigate any adverse impacts and also considered the various transport options in more detail. Alongside consultation responses, the Council considered the SA findings in its decision making and subsequently chose an amalgamation of spatial options 2 and 3.

### **Appraisal of the AAP Vision and Policies – Pre-Submission Document 2012**

A compatibility analysis of the Pre-Submission AAP Vision and Objectives was carried out using the SA framework in October 2012. Overall the vision and objectives were found to be compatible with the majority of SA objectives.

The Pre-Submission policies were subject to detailed SA in October 2012. On the whole, the findings of the SA suggest that the emerging Area Action Plan policies will make significant contributions to the progression of SA objectives. Throughout the development of the Area Action Plan and the Sustainability Appraisal process, data gaps and uncertainties were uncovered and these have been acknowledged in the appraisal matrices, where applicable.

### **Uncertainties and Data Gaps**

Throughout the development of the AAP and the Sustainability Appraisal process, data gaps and uncertainties were uncovered. It is not always possible to accurately predict sustainability effects when considering plans at this scale. Impacts on cultural heritage, for example, will depend on more detailed information and studies at a site-level. It is also difficult to predict air quality effects and future traffic levels based on interventions. These uncertainties have been acknowledged in the appraisal matrices, where applicable.

### **Sustainability Appraisal Update**

The Hockley Area Action Plan Submission Document was submitted to the Secretary of State on 18 April 2013. The examination hearings began on 17 September 2013 and following the discussions and consideration of the representations received a number of modifications to

## Rochford District Council – Local Development Framework Hockley Area Action Plan Submission Document

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the Hockley Area Action Plan Submission Document have been proposed. This report appraises the modifications proposed within the Submission Document. The key modifications relate to policies 1, 4, 6, 7 and 8.

As per the SA of the Hockley Area Action Plan Submission Document, the appraisal recognised six categories of predicted effects, as illustrated in the key below. For further information on the method used for the SA, please refer to the SA technical report for the Hockley Area Action Plan Submission Document.

Categories of sustainability effects	
Colour	Impact
++	Major Positive
+	Positive
0	No Impact
?	Uncertain
-	Negative
--	Major Negative

A scoping exercise of the Schedule of Modifications was undertaken to determine which of the proposed modifications to the Plan would likely have an impact on the SA objectives. It was determined as a result that an appraisal of the potential sustainability effects of the proposed modifications to the policies, as opposed to the accompanying text, should be undertaken. In addition, it should be noted that the following includes an assessment of the effects of the proposed amendments to the policy, as opposed to simply the amended policies themselves. As such, it should be read in conjunction with the SA of the Submission Document.



Policy 1 – Hockley Area Action Plan Framework (MM3, MM4 and MM5)

SA Objective	Assessment of Effects	
	Nature of the predicted sustainability effect (positive/negative, short/medium/long term, cumulative, scale, reversibility, likelihood)	
<b>1. Balanced Communities</b>	The modifications to the policy would have a positive medium-long term impact on regeneration in the centre through clarifying how the Council foresees the development of the Eldon Way Opportunity Site.	<b>+</b>
<b>2. Healthy &amp; Safe Communities</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>3. Housing</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>4. Economy &amp; Employment</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>5. Accessibility</b>	The modifications would clarify the relationship and the proposed integration between the Opportunity Site and the wider area of Hockley centre over the plan period, helping to ensure accessibility of future development.	<b>+</b>
<b>6. Biodiversity</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>7. Cultural Heritage</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>8. Landscape &amp; Townscape</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>9. Climate Change &amp; Energy</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>

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SA Objective	Assessment of Effects	
	Nature of the predicted sustainability effect (positive/negative, short/medium/long term, cumulative, scale, reversibility, likelihood)	
10. Water	No significant effects identified.	0
11. Land & Soil	No significant effects identified.	0
12. Air Quality	No significant effects identified.	0
13. Sustainable Design & Construction	No significant effects identified.	0

### Policy 4 – Increasing availability of housing (MM8 and MM9)

SA Objective	Assessment of Effects	
	Nature of the predicted sustainability effect (positive/negative, short/medium/long term, cumulative, scale, reversibility, likelihood)	
1. Balanced Communities	No significant effects identified.	0
2. Healthy & Safe Communities	No significant effects identified.	0
3. Housing	No significant effects identified.	0
4. Economy &	No significant effects identified.	0

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SA Objective	Assessment of Effects	
	Nature of the predicted sustainability effect (positive/negative, short/medium/long term, cumulative, scale, reversibility, likelihood)	
<b>Employment</b>		
<b>5. Accessibility</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>6. Biodiversity</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>7. Cultural Heritage</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>8. Landscape &amp; Townscape</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>9. Climate Change &amp; Energy</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>10. Water</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>11. Land &amp; Soil</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>12. Air Quality</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>13. Sustainable Design &amp; Construction</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>

**Policy 6 – Improving retail choice for local people (MM14)**

SA Objective	Assessment of Effects Nature of the predicted sustainability effect (positive/negative, short/medium/long term, cumulative, scale, reversibility, likelihood)	
<b>1. Balanced Communities</b>	<p>The proposed modification would have a positive impact on the regeneration of Hockley centre through encouraging additional retail capacity within the Eldon Way Opportunity Site whilst favouring the development of smaller units and the expansion of existing units. The policy would still enable the development of a larger retail unit, provided it can be demonstrated that the proposal would ensure retention of retail expenditure within the centre.</p> <p>The policy would seek to improve Hockley's retail offer and strengthen the role of its centre as a shopping destination for local residents. This will have a long-term positive effect on this SA objective by enhancing consumer choice and improving accessibility for all the community.</p>	<b>+</b>
<b>2. Healthy &amp; Safe Communities</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>3. Housing</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>4. Economy &amp; Employment</b>	Favouring smaller units and the expansion of existing units could have a positive impact on local businesses through encouraging a mix of uses within the centre. However, the policy modification would still enable the development of a larger retail unit, provided it can be demonstrated that the proposal would ensure retention of retail expenditure within Hockley. Consumer choice would be enhanced.	<b>+</b>
<b>5. Accessibility</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>6. Biodiversity</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>7. Cultural Heritage</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>

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SA Objective	Assessment of Effects	
	Nature of the predicted sustainability effect (positive/negative, short/medium/long term, cumulative, scale, reversibility, likelihood)	
<b>8. Landscape &amp; Townscape</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>9. Climate Change &amp; Energy</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>10. Water</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>11. Land &amp; Soil</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>12. Air Quality</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>13. Sustainable Design &amp; Construction</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>

### Policy 7 – Ensuring a healthy centre (MM23)

SA Objective	Assessment of Effects	
	Nature of the predicted sustainability effect (positive/negative, short/medium/long term, cumulative, scale, reversibility, likelihood)	
<b>1. Balanced Communities</b>	The proposed modification would clarify the circumstances when a non-retail use would be appropriate within the centre, particularly in the primary shopping frontage, which would have a positive impact on the mix of uses within Hockley and the vitality of the centre.	<b>+</b>



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SA Objective	Assessment of Effects	
	Nature of the predicted sustainability effect (positive/negative, short/medium/long term, cumulative, scale, reversibility, likelihood)	
<b>2. Healthy &amp; Safe Communities</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>3. Housing</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>4. Economy &amp; Employment</b>	The modification to the policy would help to support the vitality and viability of Hockley by encouraging an appropriate mix of uses within the centre, particularly within the primary shopping frontage.	<b>+</b>
<b>5. Accessibility</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>6. Biodiversity</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>7. Cultural Heritage</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>8. Landscape &amp; Townscape</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>9. Climate Change &amp; Energy</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>10. Water</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>11. Land &amp; Soil</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>12. Air Quality</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>

SA Objective	Assessment of Effects	
	Nature of the predicted sustainability effect (positive/negative, short/medium/long term, cumulative, scale, reversibility, likelihood)	
<b>13. Sustainable Design &amp; Construction</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>

**Policy 8 – Encouraging leisure opportunities (MM25)**

SA Objective	Assessment of Effects	
	Nature of the predicted sustainability effect (positive/negative, short/medium/long term, cumulative, scale, reversibility, likelihood)	
<b>1. Balanced Communities</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>2. Healthy &amp; Safe Communities</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>3. Housing</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>4. Economy &amp; Employment</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>5. Accessibility</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>6. Biodiversity</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>

SA Objective	Assessment of Effects Nature of the predicted sustainability effect (positive/negative, short/medium/long term, cumulative, scale, reversibility, likelihood)	
<b>7. Cultural Heritage</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>8. Landscape &amp; Townscape</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>9. Climate Change &amp; Energy</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>10. Water</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>11. Land &amp; Soil</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>12. Air Quality</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>
<b>13. Sustainable Design &amp; Construction</b>	No significant effects identified.	<b>0</b>

### Summary:

The aims of the Plan, set out in Policy 1, were found to be consistent with the SA Framework objectives developed for the Hockley Area Action Plan, and the predicted overall result is one that is very positive for sustainability. The proposed modification to the policy would have a positive impact on the balanced communities and accessibility SA objectives over the plan period through providing clarity on development of the Eldon Way Opportunity Site, and the relationship and the proposed integration between the Opportunity Site and the wider area.

The alternative wording proposed for Policies 6 and 7 would ensure a greater positive impact on the balanced communities and economy and employment SA objectives than currently worded. Favouring smaller units and the extension of existing units within Policy 6 would have positive impacts for regeneration, consumer choice and local businesses, although proposals for a larger retail unit would still be considered. The amendments proposed for Policy 7 would clarify when a non-retail use would be appropriate, which would encourage an appropriate mix of uses within the centre of Hockley and would have a positive impact on the vitality and viability of the centre.

The proposed modifications to policies 4 and 8 are not predicted to have any significant effects on the SA objectives, and so the policies would continue to have a positive effect on a number of the objectives as detailed in the SA technical report for the Submission Document.

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# Report to Rochford District Council

**by David Smith BA (Hons) DMS MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government**

**Date: 14<sup>th</sup> February 2014**

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PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT 2004 (AS AMENDED)

SECTION 20

## **REPORT ON THE EXAMINATION INTO THE HOCKLEY AREA ACTION PLAN**

Document submitted for examination on 18 April 2013

Examination hearings held on 17 and 18 September 2013

File Ref: PINS/B1550/429/10

## **Abbreviations Used in this Report**

CS	Core Strategy
EWOS	Eldon Way Opportunity Site
HAAP	Hockley Area Action Plan
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
LDS	Local Development Scheme
MM	Main Modification
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
RLS	Retail and Leisure Study 2008
SA	Sustainability Appraisal
SCI	Statement of Community Involvement
SCS	Sustainable Community Strategy



### **Non-Technical Summary**

This report concludes that the Hockley Area Action Plan provides an appropriate basis for the planning of the centre of Hockley until 2025 so long as a number of modifications are made to the Plan. The Council has specifically requested that necessary modifications are recommended to enable it to adopt the Plan.

The modifications can be summarised as follows:

- Linking the plan period to that of the Core Strategy;
- Making clear reference to the framework plan and proposals map;
- Removing mention of the Local Plan and the emerging development management policies;
- Clarifying the extent of the housing area within the Eldon Way Opportunity Site;
- Amending Policy 6 to remove reference to a food store but giving priority to smaller shops or the expansion of existing stores whilst setting parameters for a large single store up to a maximum of 3,000 sq m (gross); and
- Adjusting Policy 7 to make it clear and effective in the interests of the health of Hockley centre.

## Introduction

1. This report contains my assessment of the Hockley Area Action Plan (HAAP) in terms of Section 20(5) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). It **considers first whether the Plan's preparation has complied with** the duty to co-operate and then whether the Plan is sound and compliant with the legal requirements. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (paragraph 182) makes clear that to be sound, a local plan should be positively prepared; justified; effective and consistent with national policy.
2. The starting point for the examination is the assumption that the local authority has submitted what it considers to be a sound plan. The basis for my examination is the Submission Document of November 2012 which is the same as the document published for pre-submission consultation between 29 November 2012 and 25 January 2013.
3. In accordance with section 20(7C) of the 2004 Act the Council has requested that I should make any modifications needed to rectify matters that make the Plan unsound or not legally compliant and thus incapable of being adopted<sup>1</sup>. The main modifications required to make the Plan sound and legally compliant are identified in bold in the report (**MM**) and are set out in the Appendix. They have been subject to public consultation and Sustainability Appraisal (SA). The Council may also make additional modifications which do not materially affect the policies but these are not covered by this report.
4. In accordance with Regulation 23 I have given consideration to the written representations made under Regulation 20. I have also taken account of the oral contributions made during the hearing sessions and the consultation responses to the main modifications including the large number received in relation to **MM7**, **MM14** and **MM16**. However, this report does not deal with all of these individually but rather concentrates on whether the various aspects of the HAAP are sound and legally compliant.

## Duty to Co-operate

5. The key strategic matters relating to sustainable development in the District were settled in the Core Strategy (CS) adopted in December 2011. Furthermore, because of its central location within Rochford, the sustainable development or use of land in Hockley would not have a significant impact on any other local planning authority area. As a result the duty to co-operate imposed by section 33A of the 2004 Act is not engaged. The Council has nevertheless continued to liaise with Essex County Council as Highway Authority in a constructive way as detailed in the Consultation Statement<sup>2</sup>.

## Consultation

6. Section 20(5)(a) of the 2004 Act requires that I consider whether the Council has complied with their statement of community involvement as set out in
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<sup>1</sup> Examination Document EXH138

<sup>2</sup> Document SUBDOC4

section 19(3). In addition, Regulation 18 states that local planning authorities must take into account any representation made to them during the preparation of a local plan.

7. The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is dated January 2007<sup>3</sup>. It confirms that the Council will use a number of techniques at various stages of the development plan process. The objectives of the SCI are, briefly, to engage effectively with all sections of the community; to use appropriate techniques; and to improve the quality of decision-making. The Council has provided copious details of the steps taken since 2008 to inform people about the HAAP. The receipt of over 3,000 representations indicates that local people are well aware of the document. Although there are quibbles about how this was undertaken including the categorisation and reporting of representations, I am satisfied that the Council has carried out the relevant techniques listed in the SCI. Furthermore, the nature of the HAAP has changed over time in response to comments made so that the process was a meaningful one. Therefore my conclusion is that the steps undertaken in relation to consultation are both sound and legally compliant.

## **Assessment of Soundness**

### **Main Issues**

8. Taking account of all the representations, written evidence, site visits and the discussions that took place at the examination hearings I have identified 4 main issues upon which the soundness of the Plan depends.

### **Issue 1**

**Is the overall strategy for development sound having regard to the needs and demands of the area; the relationship with other plans, national policy and Government objectives, the evidence base and preparatory processes?**

9. In broad terms the HAAP seeks the incremental growth of the centre of Hockley in a manner that is consistent with its "village character" whilst at the same time improving the quality and safety of the environment. Earlier consultation **versions of the HAAP were more radical whereas a 'do nothing' approach would have further weakened the role of the centre and missed out on the opportunities offered by its location. Indeed the Core Strategy (CS) refers to its "great potential"** and representors refer to the important position of Hockley at the "hub" of the District.
10. By including policies that seek to enhance the retail offer; identify an Eldon Way Opportunity Site (EWOS) for mixed use re-development; provide for a public space and improved connectivity and environmental improvements, the aims of CS Policy RTC6 would be met. A considerable proportion of the buildings within the Plan area would be demolished but these make little positive contribution to the character of the village and re-development would bring about visual enhancement. Furthermore, the provision of additional housing on previously-developed land close to the facilities of Hockley and

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<sup>3</sup> Document SUBDOC11

public transport links would be sustainable in line with the NPPF. At the same time the retention of the Foundry Business Park for commercial uses would strike a reasonable balance between employment and housing.

11. It was argued that consideration should be given to a retirement village given the age profile of the population and the locational advantages of Hockley. This is not precluded by the HAAP but limiting new accommodation to one section of the community would deny those in need of affordable housing. Furthermore, the application of Lifetime Homes Standards in accordance with Policy H6 of the CS should ensure that units are **able to adapt to residents'** changing circumstances. As a result, this suggested change is not warranted.
12. Various modifications are required to make the policies and supporting text effective. These comprise linking the plan period to that of the CS (**MM1** and **MM2**); making clear references to Figures 13 and 14 which show the framework plan and the proposals map (**MM3, MM4, MM5, MM6, MM8, MM9, MM10, MM14** and **MM25**); and removing mention of the Local Plan as potentially out-of-date and the emerging development management policies as they are of little weight (**MM7, MM11, MM12** and **MM13**).

## **Issue 2**

### **Is the policy for better movement (Policy 3) justified, deliverable within the plan period and consistent with national policy?**

13. There is criticism that the overall impact on highway capacity in and around Hockley has not been addressed. The County Council, as Highway Authority, is confident that the proposed development arising through the HAAP could be accommodated and any necessary mitigation measures implemented. Rather than a District-wide transport model the use of more detailed, individual junction models is preferred. These could take into account existing, permitted and planned development.
14. However, the view that travel demands arising from future development can be adequately accommodated is not based on survey information. There is stress on the network and residents are sensitive to congestion. The role of the B1013 that runs through the heart of the District and the Spa Road junction are particular concerns. Given the lack of detailed evidence about the implications some are unconvinced by the **County Council's approach**.
15. That said, there is **no other assessment to contradict the Highway Authority's** position that both the network as a whole and the junction should be able to cope. It should also be borne in mind that the 100 housing units and the retail development proposed in Hockley would replace existing commercial and leisure uses so the actual increase in traffic might not be as much as it would appear. Furthermore, the CS has identified Eldon Way as an area of change and the principle of future growth is not open to challenge through the HAAP given the need for consistency with the CS.
16. The provisions of Policy 3 illustrated in Figure 17 provide for improved pedestrian links and measures to increase use of the train station and cycling and improved bus facilities. It is also proposed to increase station parking immediately to the south of the railway line and within the EWOS. Finally, criterion g. refers to increasing the capacity of the mini roundabout which

could entail 2-lane approaches in order to improve flow. The policy therefore contains measures to promote safety as well as sustainable transport in accordance with the NPPF. Deliverability is likely to be contingent on the EWOS but other improvements and schemes may come forward through the Local Highway Panel. Including detailed proposals in the HAAP is likely to assist in highlighting priorities and securing funds.

17. Policy 3 stipulates that planning applications should be supported by Transport Assessments having regard to the *Guidance on Transport Assessment* (DoT, 2007). The supporting text should reflect this requirement and hence **MM7** is necessary to make it effective. I have, however, omitted the word "strategic" suggested by the Council to avoid possible confusion with the terms of Policy 3 itself. This also states that all development proposals should either incorporate or contribute towards the schemes identified in the HAAP. The provisions of the policy should therefore put the Council in a strong position to properly assess schemes affecting the EWOS and to ensure that achieving the planned improvements is not 'by-passed' by a series of smaller developments. Overall I am satisfied that this policy is sound.

### **Issue 3**

#### **Are the policies for the Eldon Way Opportunity Site justified, deliverable within the plan period and consistent with national policy?**

18. The EWOS is largely controlled by a single land owner but there are several long leases and other freehold interests. However, there are a number of vacancies; the location has been earmarked for change in the CS and it represents a clear re-development opportunity. Moreover, the recent application for 27-29 Eldon Way<sup>4</sup> indicates interest 'on the ground'.
19. The Hockley Viability Note<sup>5</sup> refers to a residual land value which is a well established way of dealing with land cost in valuations. It also concludes that there is a realistic prospect of proposals being delivered during the life of the Plan although this assessment was predominantly based on residential and food retailing uses. In the circumstances set out in paragraph 18 above it is nevertheless right that the HAAP should provide long-term and comprehensive guidance on the form that development should take. Although the entire site is unlikely to come forward in the near future the policies allow for the EWOS to be developed in phases if necessary.
20. The site incorporates premises along the Spa Road frontage including the Co-op which has a long-term lease. In my view its extent is justified by the expressed aim of fully integrating any re-development with Spa Road to ensure that it forms part of Hockley and facilitates links to other parts of the village. Including the Co-op within the EWOS also means that the store would benefit from its provisions. Therefore the site boundaries are appropriate.
21. I am satisfied that the references to a new public space, better movement, and housing in relation to the EWOS in Policies 2, 3 and 4 are sound subject to

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<sup>4</sup> Examination Documents EXH133 & EXH134

<sup>5</sup> Evidence Base Document 82.EB33

confirmation of the area to be developed for housing (**MM10**). The HAAP does not designate Hockley as a "prime" office location as such. Policy ED4 of the CS has nevertheless already confirmed that the projected demand for office space in the District will be directed to Hockley as well as to Rayleigh. This form of development would currently only be viable with a cross-subsidy from higher value uses or public sector funding but it is sensible to make allowance for Class B1a uses within the EWOS. Policy 5 is therefore sound.

22. Policy 6 and the supporting text indicate that the Council would allow a new food store with up to 3,000 sq m (gross) of new floorspace. In order to ensure the vitality of town centres the NPPF enjoins local planning authorities to allocate a range of suitable sites to meet the scale and type of retail development *needed* [my emphasis] in town centres. Although the final bullet point of paragraph 23 refers to encouraging economic activity there is no firm **evidence that the centre is "in decline"**.
23. **That said, I appreciate the Council's desire to bolster** the fortunes of Hockley by strengthening the town centre **so that it does not just "tick along"**. This is **particularly in the light of the 'leakage' of expenditure away from Hockley with** only 8% of main food shopping spend retained in Zone 3 according to the Retail and Leisure Study (RLS) of 2008<sup>6</sup>. This Study also identifies the lack of suitable larger premises for prospective traders as a weakness although what is meant by this in terms of size is not explained<sup>7</sup>. Demand has, however, been identified in the Property Market Overview of 2012 for a food store in the range of 2,000 – 3,000 sq m<sup>8</sup>. In the light of this the Council also wishes to set a maximum additional capacity for a new food store.
24. Set against this, the CS does not establish a quantitative need for further retail development or for food shopping. Moreover, the strategy of enhancing the role of Hockley was not addressed at that stage. The RLS found a need for up to 890 sq m of further convenience floorspace in Hockley by 2026 due to overtrading and based on current market shares. It also commented that the scale of need does not lend itself to a food store capable of retaining a significant proportion of main food shopping expenditure<sup>9</sup>. The Study went on to recommend that the focus for Hockley should be on developing its existing strengths rather than retail expansion. Since then the number of convenience stores has increased.
25. Although the RLS is somewhat dated it paints a recognisable picture of Hockley and there is no evidence that its findings are seriously flawed. For the HAAP to 'fly in its face' by accepting a medium-sized food store would require compelling evidence that this is now the most suitable strategy. In theory, **'clawing back' expenditure lost to other centres outside the District is** attractive in economic, environmental and social terms as journeys would be reduced and choice for Hockley residents would increase. However, there is no assessment of the extent to which this could be achieved or the consequential impact on Hockley itself or on other centres.

<sup>6</sup> Evidence Base Document 61.EB12 (p38)

<sup>7</sup> Evidence Base Document 61.EB12 (Table 6.3 p58)

<sup>8</sup> Evidence Base Document 85.EB36

<sup>9</sup> Evidence Base Document 61.EB12 (p120)



26. The Viability Note confirms that food retailing and residential use will be the main value drivers for Eldon Way. If a store of the size envisaged were the only way that development of the EWOS would be triggered then that might have been a reason to accept it. However, whilst retail development is financially attractive **there is no evidence on viability that 'unlocking the door'** to re-development is dependent on a 3,000 sq m food retailer. This argument does not therefore justify the policy which is unsound.
27. The drawbacks outlined above are largely **overcome by the Council's proposed changes (MM14, MM15, MM16, MM17, MM18, MM19 and MM20)** which include specific guidance for a single store. These modifications involve setting a maximum overall additional retail capacity of 3,000 sq m (gross); removing reference to food (although this would not preclude an individual proposal from coming forward) and giving priority to smaller shops or the expansion of existing stores. They also establish that any proposal for a large **single store should demonstrate that 'clawback' of expenditure from other** centres would be achieved, assess the implications for them and also show that the overall vitality of Hockley would not be harmed. The references to **"convenience capacity" and a "food store" suggested by the Council in MM15 and MM16** should be clarified and removed respectively. Subject to these necessary modifications the policy is justified.
28. As the precise mix of uses is not specified the viability of re-development cannot be tested and the financial implications of excluding a food store are unknown. Given that the EWOS has previously been identified as such the role of the HAAP is to set parameters for re-development prior to 2025. Costs and values will vary over time and the success of any scheme ultimately depends on whether public sector bodies take a positive attitude and whether the private sector is willing to invest. From the information available I am confident that there is a reasonable prospect of development on at least part of the EWOS being delivered during the plan period especially as there is sufficient flexibility to allow for various permutations of use. Therefore, following the modifications outlined above, Policy 6 is sound.

#### **Issue 4**

#### **Is Policy 7 (ensuring a healthy centre) justified, likely to be effective and consistent with national policy?**

29. The NPPF indicates that local plans should identify areas where it may be necessary to limit freedom to change the use of buildings if such restrictions are supported by a clear explanation. Moreover, policies should provide a clear indication of how a decision maker should react to a development proposal. Paragraph 23 also refers to the setting of policies that make clear which uses will be permitted in primary and secondary frontages. Policy 7 fails to accord with these principles in a number of respects.
30. In particular, there is a lack of clarity about what is meant by the phrases **"predominance", "cluster" and "positively contribute"**. Furthermore, the text refers to the aim of retaining 75% and 50% of retail (A1) uses within the primary and secondary shopping frontages respectively but contains no proposals to achieve this especially as the existing proportions are lower. The modifications to the policy and the supporting text have gone through a number of iterations but I am satisfied that the shortcomings have now been

remedied by, amongst other things, further explanation and that criterion d. is also necessary to protect the amenity and character of the centre.

31. The proposed modifications (**MM21**, **MM22**, **MM23** and **MM24**) are therefore necessary to make the HAAP coherent and effective in order to secure an appropriate balance of uses that supports the health of Hockley centre.

## Assessment of Legal Compliance

32. My examination of the compliance of the Plan with the legal requirements is summarised in the table below. I conclude that the Plan meets them all.

<b>LEGAL REQUIREMENTS</b>	
Local Development Scheme (LDS)	The HAAP is identified within the approved LDS of April 2013. Its content and timing are compliant with the LDS.
Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and 2012 Regulations	The SCI was adopted in January 2007 and consultation has been compliant with its requirements, including that on the <b>Council's</b> proposed changes.
Sustainability Appraisal (SA)	SA has been carried out <b>including SA of the Council's</b> proposed changes and is adequate.
Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)	The HRA has been carried out and has been approved by Natural England.
National Policy	The HAAP complies with national policy except where indicated and modifications are recommended.
Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS)	Satisfactory regard has been paid to the SCS.
2004 Act (as amended) and 2012 Regulations.	The HAAP complies with the Act and the Regulations.

## Overall Conclusion and Recommendation

33. The Plan has a number of deficiencies in relation to soundness which have been explained under the main issues set out above. This means that, as submitted, I recommend non-adoption of the Hockley Area Action Plan in accordance with Section 20(7A) of the Act.
34. The Council has nevertheless requested that I recommend main modifications to make the Plan sound and capable of adoption. I conclude that with the recommended main modifications set out in the Appendix the Hockley Area Action Plan satisfies the requirements of Section 20(5) of the 2004 Act and meets the criteria for soundness in the National Planning Policy Framework.

*David Smith*

INSPECTOR

## Appendix – Main Modifications

The modifications below are expressed either in the conventional form of ~~striketrough~~ for deletions and underlining for additions of text when paragraphs are amended or by specifying the modification in full.

The page numbers and paragraph numbering below refer to the submission HAAP and do not take account of the deletion or addition of text.

Ref	Page	Policy/ Paragraph	Proposed change
MM1	4	Paragraph one	Rochford District Council is committed to preparing Area Action Plans (AAP) for its three main centres of Rayleigh, Rochford and Hockley. The AAPs will form part of the statutory development plan for Rochford District. This document focuses on guiding the development of Hockley centre, as well as adjoining light industrial areas and the rail station, during the current plan period to <del>2026</del> <u>2025</u> .
MM2	28	Paragraph two (after 'The vision for Hockley is:')	By <del>2026</del> <u>2025</u> , Hockley will have a centre that is defined by the high quality of its public realm and the opportunities on offer for local people to access homes, shops, jobs, leisure and other services without having to travel far afield. These changes will be delivered in a manner that makes the most of land that has been previously developed, and all new development will respect and enhance the existing suburban, low-density character of the settlement.
MM3	31	Policy 1	The Eldon Way Opportunity Site will deliver a mixed-use development, which will include homes, shops, leisure facilities, offices, car parking and new public spaces. <u>Figure 13 provides a general overview of the framework for development in Hockley. It sets out the individual elements of the AAP and provides a spatial perspective on what kind of development the Council would like to see coming forward. In particular Figure 13 shows the extent to which the Council wishes to integrate the Eldon Way Opportunity Site into the wider centre of Hockley.</u>
MM4	32	Policy 1	b. <u>New and enhanced routes linking the centre with the rail station and the surrounding area. These routes are shown in Figure 13. They show how the Council wishes to see the Eldon Way Opportunity Site become more accessible and integrated into the rest of Hockley centre.</u>

Ref	Page	Policy/ Paragraph	Proposed change
MM5	32	Policy 1	e. The focus of retail uses in the centre, with an opportunity for a new retail development within the Eldon Way Opportunity Site, in accordance with Policy 6. <u>The appropriate locations for these uses are shown in Figure 13.</u>
MM6	33	Figure 13	<b><i>Amend to plan attached to this Appendix.</i></b>
MM7	41	Transport Assessment and Travel Plans (first paragraph)	Core Strategy Policy T56 generally requires the submission of Travel Plans in support of development proposals. <u>In addition planning applications will be required by Essex County Council Highways Department to be accompanied by a Transport Assessment, where necessary.</u> <del>This requirement is increased, in accordance with Draft Policy DM28, to also include the submission of a Transport Assessment, which would be necessary to assess the impact of proposed large developments—</del>
MM8	44	Policy 4	Residential (C3) development will be permitted within the Eldon Way Opportunity Site <u>(see Figure 14)</u> where it would:
MM9	44	Policy 4	a. Not lead to the development of more than 50% of the total area of the Eldon Way Opportunity Site for new dwellings <u>(see Figure 13).</u>
MM10	44	Second paragraph	A capacity study for the Eldon Way Opportunity Site has been carried out to examine how the full mix of uses envisaged for this site within the AAP could be accommodated. It demonstrates that approximately 100 new dwellings could be delivered on site. <u>Figure 13 shows the area of the Eldon Way Opportunity Site that the Council would wish to see developed for housing. Development of the area shown in Figure 13 for uses other than housing would not be supported by the Council.</u>
MM11	44	Third Paragraph	It is likely that a mix of housing unit sizes could come forward, which might include a proportion of smaller, one-bedroom units, given the nature of housing need within the District <del>Borough</del> . <del>Draft Policy DM2</del> <u>The HAAP</u> does not prescribe densities for new residential development, but encourages proposals for schemes that make efficient use of land and respond to their context. The Eldon Way Opportunity Site, <u>identified in Core Strategy Policy H1,</u> is suitable for medium density development due to its accessible location between the centre and rail station, as well as the prevailing character of the surrounding area.

Ref	Page	Policy/ Paragraph	Proposed change
MM12	46	First Paragraph	<p><del>Draft Policy DM32 allows for the conversion of upper floors within centres, such as Hockley, to be converted for residential purposes.</del></p> <p>The conversion of upper floors within centres such as Hockley for residential purposes is appropriate. This is on the proviso that such development would not result in a net loss of leisure or commercial uses within the centre and <del>seeks to protect the residential amenity of future occupiers, in particular by requiring</del> that any new residential accommodation is self-contained and has separate access from the street.</p>
MM13	46	Seventh Paragraph	<p>As shown on the proposals plan, the Hockley employment site has been rationalised to allow for the designation of the Eldon Way Opportunity Site for mixed-use development. The extent of the employment site has been reduced and now greater focus is placed on the Foundry Business Park. Given that the Foundry Business Park has recently benefited from upgrades and new accommodation, it should be retained as an employment site. Development proposals for land within this site would be subject to Core Strategy Policy <u>ED3 and ED4</u> and <del>Draft Policy DM29</del>, which seek to protect employment sites for employment generating uses, <u>and increase office use within Hockley centre.</u> <del>in particular those within classes B1 and B2.</del></p> <p><u>Drawing from these policies the Council seeks to ensure that employment land is predominantly of Use Classes B1 (Business) and B2 (General Industrial).</u></p>

Ref	Page	Policy/ Paragraph	Proposed change
MM14	48	Policy 6	<p>New retail (A1) development within the Eldon Way Opportunity Site <u>(see Figure 13)</u> will be permitted where it would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Provide a range of unit sizes, including smaller units.</li> <li><del>b. In relation to a new food store on the site, be of a size that would not exceed 3,000m<sup>2</sup> (gross) of new floorspace.</del></li> <li>b. <u>Not exceed a maximum overall additional retail capacity for the centre of 3,000 sq m (gross).</u></li> <li>c. Fully integrate with Spa Road, and allow for direct pedestrian links through the site to the redeveloped Eldon Way Opportunity Site, rail station and other areas of Hockley.</li> <li>d. Contribute positively towards the redevelopment of the Eldon Way Opportunity Site for a mix of uses, including residential, retail, leisure and office.</li> </ul> <p><u>The Council will give priority to smaller developments and the expansion of existing retail units in Hockley centre. However if a proposal for a larger single store comes forward such an application would be considered favourably, provided it meets the criteria set out above, is able to demonstrate that 'clawback' of expenditure from other centres would be achieved and assesses the implications for them. Such a scheme should also demonstrate that a development of this size would not harm the overall vitality of Hockley.</u></p>
MM15	48	Fourth Paragraph	<p><del>Within this context, then, the Council would allow a new food store with up to 3,000m<sup>2</sup> (gross) of new floorspace within Hockley centre, as part of the mixed-use redevelopment of the Eldon Way Opportunity Site.</del> <u>Within this context, then, the Council will set a 3000sq m (gross) floor space maximum within the centre.</u> This is reasonable on account of the <u>limited</u> overall level of convenience capacity; <del>and</del> the desire to strengthen Hockley centre and the need to claw back local trade currently lost to other locations.</p>



Ref	Page	Policy/ Paragraph	Proposed change
MM16	48	Following paragraph four	<p><i>Insert paragraph between paragraphs four and five as follows:</i></p> <p><u>The Retail &amp; Leisure Study also recognises that Hockley has a good mix of small, but high quality independent traders. It recommends that this offer is enhanced and the centre promoted as a boutique shopping destination. The Eldon Way Opportunity Site offers the potential for a range of different sized retail units including smaller units suitable for independent traders. As such, it is considered that new development could build on Hockley's existing strengths and character and the provision of additional retail through development of smaller units will be favoured.</u></p>
MM17	48	Fifth Paragraph	<p><del>Furthermore, the capacity study that has been undertaken in relation to the Eldon Way Opportunity Site establishes that a food store with up to 3,000m<sup>2</sup> (gross) of new floorspace would be the largest that could be accommodated. A larger food store would threaten the delivery of the mix of other uses that would be needed to help deliver the Council's vision for Hockley Centre.</del></p>
MM18	48	Following the fifth paragraph	<p><i>Insert text as follows:</i></p> <p><u>A large retail unit has the potential to act as an anchor store, encouraging additional shoppers into Hockley centre, and may help Hockley clawback some of the expenditure currently being lost to other centres. However, conversely, there is also concern that a large retail unit would have a negative impact on the vitality of Hockley centre by, for example, marginalising existing units. As such, the development of a large retail unit is not the preferred option but proposals for such a development may be acceptable provided it can be demonstrated that it will not harm the overall vitality of Hockley centre, would help ensure clawback of retail expenditure currently lost to other centres, and considers the impact on other centres.</u></p>
MM19	48	Final paragraph	<p><u>The development of a new food store additional retail on the Eldon Way Opportunity Site could also help to facilitate a new public space. This should provide new linkages between Spa Road and the mixed-used development proposed for the Site.</u></p>

Ref	Page	Policy/ Paragraph	Proposed change
MM20	49	Paragraph beginning " The Retail & Leisure Study"	<del>The Retail &amp; Leisure Study also recognises that Hockley has a good mix of small, but high quality independent traders. It recommends that this offer is enhanced and the centre promoted as a boutique shopping destination. The Eldon Way Opportunity Site offers the potential for a range of different sized retail units alongside any food store, including smaller units suitable for independent traders. As such, it is considered that new development could build on Hockley's existing strengths and character</del>
MM21	49	Second paragraph after Policy 7	An appropriate balance of uses is necessary to support the health of Hockley centre, and it is essential that retail uses are supported by non-retail uses <u>which are considered to make a positive contribution to the centre, such as cafes, restaurants, pubs, leisure uses, community facilities and professional services (such as banks, building societies and estate agents).</u> <del>are supported by non-retail uses such as cafes, pubs and banks.</del>
MM22	49	Following second paragraph after Policy 7	<u>To ensure this balance the Council will not permit a cluster of any more than two immediately adjacent non-retail uses of the same Use Class. More than two Sui Generis uses adjacent to one another may not necessarily be considered a cluster, provided they are distinct and different uses.</u>  <u>Uses which would not contribute positively to the overall offer of the centre will not generally be supported.</u>  <u>Some land uses associated with town centre locations have the potential to raise amenity issues for nearby residents. Such uses might include, but are not necessarily limited to, those falling in Use Classes A3, A4 and A5 or other, Sui Generis uses such as night clubs. The impact of such non-retail uses on the amenity of those living within or nearby the centre will be an important consideration in determining relevant planning applications, and applicants will be expected to demonstrate how negative impacts arising from such proposals will be mitigated, if applications are to be permitted.</u>
MM23	49	Policy 7	The Council will encourage appropriate development within Hockley centre that supports its vitality and viability.  <b>Within the centre's primary and secondary shopping frontages, as defined on the Hockley AAP</b>

Ref	Page	Policy/ Paragraph	Proposed change
			<p>Proposals Map, a proposed change of use for non-retail (non-A1) purposes will be permitted where it would:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not have a detrimental impact on, or undermine, the predominance of A1 uses <del>within the centre,</del> <u>both within the centre as a whole and within the primary shopping frontage.</u></li> <li><del>Not</del> create a cluster of non-A1 uses <u>of the same use class</u> within a locality that undermines the retail character of the centre.</li> <li><del>P</del>positively contribute to the overall offer and encourage people into the centre.</li> <li><u>have regard to the amenity and character of Hockley</u></li> </ol>
MM24	49	The final paragraph of page 49	<p>The Council recognises the dynamic nature of centres and the need for flexibility. <u>Nevertheless, it wishes to ensure that the majority of uses both within the centre as a whole and within the primary shopping frontage are in A1 use. Currently 58% of the primary and 44% of the secondary frontages are in retail uses. However, the target for Hockley is to increase this to 75% and 50% respectively.</u> <del>However, as a guide and whilst wishing to avoid being overly prescriptive, the Council will generally seek to retain 75% of Hockley's primary shopping frontage and 50% of its secondary shopping frontage in retail (A1) use.</del></p>
MM25	50	Policy 8	<p>The Council will support the location of leisure (D2) uses within the Eldon Way Opportunity Site (<u>see Figure 13</u>), provided that such uses contribute positively towards its redevelopment for a mix of uses, including residential, retail, leisure and office.</p>

## HAAP Submission Document Examination: Amendment to Figure 13 (MM6)

