

## **DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT (DPD) PROGRESSION**

### **1 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 In March and April 2010 the Council carried out a public consultation on a discussion and consultation version of the development management DPD. Following consideration of these responses (and appraisal of the development management DPD options) the next iteration of the development management DPD has been drafted. Given the importance of the document in determining planning applications and in the interests of ensuring effective community involvement in the production process of the document, a draft preferred policy options version has been prepared for further consultation. This consultation will then inform the development of the final pre-submission version of the development management DPD before proceeding to submission. Copies of the development management DPD discussion and consultation document: consultation summary, development management DPD potential policy options document and summary of findings of the sustainability appraisal have been sent out to Members of this Sub-Committee under separate cover and also placed in the Members' Library.

### **2 ROLE OF THE DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT DPD**

- 2.1 The Local Development Framework (LDF) is a collection of documents that will set out how the District will develop in the future. The main document of the LDF is the Core Strategy, which provides the strategic vision and policies for the future development of the District.
- 2.2 A key component of the LDF is the development management DPD, which will sit below the Core Strategy and must conform to the general strategic approach set out within it. The development management DPD will contain the detailed day-to-day planning policies that planning applications will be determined against such as, for example, design considerations and parking standards.

### **3 PREPARATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT DPD**

- 3.1 The development management DPD will be produced in three stages: the discussion and consultation document, the preferred policy options document and the pre-submission document.
- 3.2 The initial stage (the discussion and consultation document) was prepared for community involvement in February 2010. This document set out the Council's range of development management issues not addressed within the Core Strategy and a range of alternative options, where appropriate. The development management DPD addresses the following themes:-

- Housing, Character of Place and Residential Amenity

- The Green Belt and Countryside
- Environmental Issues
- Transport
- Economic Development
- Retail and Town Centres

3.3 Comments were invited on the discussion and consultation document between 17 March 2010 and 30 April 2010.

3.4 The next stage (the potential policy options document) has been prepared.

3.5 As the development management DPD is required to conform to the Core Strategy, delays in the Government examination of the latter have resulted in delays to progression of the former.

#### **4 CONSULTATION RESULTS**

4.1 During the six week public consultation in 2010, a total 209 representations were received from 37 different respondents.

4.2 Consultation letters were sent to all contacts on the Council's Local Development Framework mailing list – which comprises statutory consultees, along with groups and organisations who may have an interest in the development of the District, and members of the public who have requested to be kept updated with opportunities to participate.

4.3 A press release was placed in the Evening Echo prior to the consultation via the Council's Corporate Communications Officer and an advertisement was placed in the Council's quarterly newspaper *Rochford District Matters* (Spring 2010 edition).

4.4 The consultation featured as a 'hot topic' on the Council's website and the information screens in Rochford and Rayleigh Council receptions contained rolling information on the consultation

4.5 Posters were distributed to all Parish and Town Councils to be placed in parish and town notice boards. Summary leaflets explaining the purpose of the development management DPD and how to respond to the consultation were also made available during public meetings.

4.6 A summary of the consultation responses received has been prepared with officer comments to address the issues raised. Suggested amendments to the document have also been made where appropriate.

- 4.7 The full representations received can be viewed online at <http://rochford.jdi-consult.net/ldf/>.

In addition to the consultation results, the Council should be mindful of potential for Regional Spatial Strategies to be revoked and the potential policy gap that could ensue. Accordingly, a brief paper has been produced (Additional Policies for Inclusion – Potential RSS Revocation), which identifies the inclusion of an additional policy in the development management DPD ABOUT WHAT to account for the fact that this issue may not be addressed at higher tiers of policy in the future.

## **5 SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL**

- 5.1 A sustainability appraisal (SA) assesses the environmental, economic and social implications of options and policies in plan making.
- 5.2 The SA framework that sets out the objectives and associated questions to be considered in the assessment was initially agreed during the preparation of the Core Strategy. The SA of the Core Strategy (undertaken at each stage in the production of the document and culminating in the Core Strategy submission SA) is the overarching SA for the Rochford District Local Development Framework. The SA framework used to appraise the discussion and consultation version of the development management DPD was derived from the Core Strategy SA framework, and statutory consultees (Natural England, English Heritage and the Environment Agency) were consulted on its content in March 2009. Amendments to the SA framework for the development management DPD were made accordingly.
- 5.3 The SA of the development management DPD has been prepared using the revised SA framework. The SA has assessed each preferred and alternative option set out in the discussion and consultation document and, where appropriate, has recommended amendments to the next iteration. The SA is an integral part of developing the development management DPD.

## **6 FURTHER COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

- 6.1 The preferred policy options version of the development management DPD has now been prepared taking into consideration the consultation responses received at the discussion and consultation stage and the findings of the SA.
- 6.2 This is an interim stage prior to the publication of the pre-submission document. It sets out the preferred draft policies for managing development in the District. The preferred policy options document requires further community involvement to determine the appropriateness of the policies before the document is progressed to the pre-submission stage.

**7 RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 An additional round of consultation is required to ensure that the policies within the development management DPD are appropriate and fit for purpose before the final pre-submission version of the document is prepared. If policies within the pre-submission version of the development management DPD differed significantly from the options presented within the discussion and consultation document, there would be a risk that community involvement in the DPD would be less effective. This would also introduce a risk that the development management DPD ultimately submitted to the Government for examination would not be found sound.

**8 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 The development management DPD, once adopted, will be important for the determination of planning applications and will therefore have an impact on the environment through taking into consideration impact on the Green Belt, landscape character, air quality, light pollution, and the retention of important landscape features.

**9 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The costs of publishing the document for consultation, and undertaking community involvement can be met through existing Council budgets.

**10 RECOMMENDATION**

- 10.1 It is proposed that the Sub-Committee **RESOLVES**

That the preferred policy options version of the development management DPD be published for a consultation period of six weeks and that the Council undertake community involvement on the document.

Shaun Scrutton

Head of Planning and Transportation

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For further information please contact Samuel Hollingworth on:-

Phone: 01702 318191

Email: [planning.policy@rochford.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@rochford.gov.uk)

If you would like this report in large print, Braille or another language please contact 01702 318111.

### Summary of Representation

The purpose of the Development Management Development Plan Document (DPD) is to set out detailed policies against which planning applications will be assessed such as the design of new development and parking standards. The initial version of the Development Management DPD, called the Discussion and Consultation Document, was consulted on between 17 March and 30 April 2010 with the intention to generate discussion and feedback on the issues included within it and the options identified to address these.

Community involvement is an important part of the planning process, and the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out how the community will be involved in the production of planning policy documents. To encourage responses to the consultation a number of initiatives were undertaken in accordance with the SCI, as appropriate. A press release was placed in the Evening Echo prior to the consultation, an advertisement was placed in the Council's quarterly newspaper Rochford District Matters (Spring 2010 edition), and the consultation featured as a 'hot topic' on the Council's website. Further to this the information screens in Rochford and Rayleigh Council receptions contained rolling information on the consultation, posters were distributed to all Parish and Town Councils to be placed in parish and town notice boards and summary leaflets explaining the purpose of the Development Management DPD and how to respond were made available during public meetings.

In total 209 representations were received during the public consultation.

This document provides a concise summary of the issues raised during the consultation. In response to these, initial officer comments are provided to address the issues raised, provide feedback and clarity on specific points and provide initial recommendations for the development of the next version of the Development Management DPD.

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p><b>Introduction</b></p> <p>Essex County Fire and Rescue Service referred to relevant national planning policy guidance and legislation. They stated that they have certain expectations of the Council in respect of planning, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Requirement for the relevant inclusion of planning conditions requiring compliance with applicable design criteria to mitigate risk of fire; and</li> <li>(2) Section 106 developer contributions/planning obligations to be provided for the provision of additional/expanded infrastructure required to meet the increase in demand based upon assessments.</li> </ul> <p>The Preferred Option is supported in all cases by the East of England Local Government Association.</p> <p>Essex County Council suggested that there should be an additional description of Figure 1 to aid understanding of the relevance of documents within the Local Development Framework in consideration of particular planning proposals, topics and issues.</p> <p>Essex County Council suggested additional relevant strategies to be referenced within the 'Relationship to other strategies' section.</p>	<p>Appropriate conditions, in accordance with Circular 11/95: The Use of Conditions in Planning Permissions<sup>1</sup>, are attached to those planning applications which are granted permission. This is determined at the planning application stage. The overarching approach to planning obligations and standard charges is contained within the Core Strategy Submission Document (page 88-89 and Appendix CLT1; page 99-100). Alongside this, the Council are producing a Standard Charges document which will form part of the Local Development Framework and will provide guidance on the monetary contributions required to accompany sites coming forward for development.</p> <p>Comment noted.</p> <p>Comment noted. Additional explanatory text may be provided within the next version of this document.</p> <p>Comment noted.</p>

<sup>1</sup> Circular 11/95: The Use of Conditions in Planning Permissions:  
[www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/324923.pdf](http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/324923.pdf)

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>A respondent suggested that the terms “stakeholder” and “local communities” should be defined in a glossary. It was also commented that Parish Councils and local action groups in particular should be identified. These groups should be worked closely with and their roles defined.</p> <p>A respondent questioned what the non day-to-day planning policies are and where are they set out.</p> <p>It was noted that the development management policies must not repeat the policies in the Core Strategy and should be read in conjunction with them; however, the justification for this approach was questioned and it was suggested that people may not look in both documents.</p> <p>It was questioned how the Council can prove that all the policies in the Core Strategy have been used in this document. It was commented that this does not promote effective communication and participation.</p> <p>With regard to cross-referencing, it was stated that the Core Strategy has not been adopted, so the Council are not sure what changes may be made to it. Cross referencing would enable the Council to see the impact of those changes upon other documents and enable the relevant changes to be made.</p>	<p>Suggestion and comments noted. Parish Councils and local action groups have been consulted throughout the preparation of the Local Development Framework.</p> <p>The non day-to-day planning policies refer to the strategic policies such as those in the Core Strategy Submission Document and the emerging Allocations DPD.</p> <p>Prior to 2004, Local Planning Authorities were required to prepare a document called a ‘Local Plan’ which set out the future development for the area. The current adopted development plan for the District is the Replacement Local Plan 2006. In 2004 a new planning system was introduced called the Local Development Framework which changed how development plans are produced. This new system promotes the development of numerous development plan documents (e.g. the Core Strategy, Allocations and Development Management documents) which relate to each other and should be read in conjunction with other when planning applications are determined. These documents together will replace the existing Local Plan.</p> <p>Only those policies in the Core Strategy Submission Document which require further detail have been incorporated into this discussion and consultation document.</p> <p>When the discussion and consultation document was being prepared, the submission version of the Core Strategy had been subject to public consultation (September to November 2009) and submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for independent examination (January 2010). The general approach and preferred options for the topics identified in the document were therefore based on the Council’s overarching approach to the future development of the District.</p>



Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>It was suggested that a glossary should be provided in order to comply with the Statement of Community Involvement. It was questioned what a Supplementary Planning Document is.</p>	<p>Suggestion noted. The Statement of Community Involvement does not require a glossary to be produced. Indeed, the Council aims to use plain English and explain other terms within the document, to save the reader having to return to a glossary. A Supplementary Planning Document provides advice and guidance on the determination of planning applications such as design guidance specifically focusing on Conservation Areas. Further information can be found on the Council's website<sup>2</sup>.</p>
<p>Concern regarding the length of the document, timing of the consultation and the length of the consultation period was raised by several respondents.</p>	<p>The discussion and consultation document has been prepared to encourage discussion on a range of issues relating to the management of development i.e. the determination of planning applications at a detailed level. As such the document provides numerous alternative options which have been considered alongside the preferred options for the issues discussed. The consultation period lasted six weeks between 17 March 2010 and 30 April 2010. Six weeks is the minimum statutory consultation period.</p>
<p>It was also commented that following a consultation, respondents should be informed as to how the strategy is being changed to meet their wishes.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The purpose of the consultation summary is to identify the issues raised by respondents during the consultation, and provide officer comments on these and recommendations to address them, where necessary.</p>

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<sup>2</sup> Supplementary Planning Documents:  
[www.rochford.gov.uk/planning\\_and\\_building\\_control/policy/local\\_development\\_framework/supplementary\\_planning\\_documen.aspx](http://www.rochford.gov.uk/planning_and_building_control/policy/local_development_framework/supplementary_planning_documen.aspx)

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>A respondent questioned how the Council are going to improve the communication and enhance public participation.</p> <p>It was suggested that the document should be written in plain English or a glossary should be provided.</p> <p>It was questioned where there is a statement of the aim of this document relating to the public.</p> <p>A respondent questioned whose preferred options the document contains.</p> <p>A respondent questioned what a sustainability appraisal is, who conducted it, when, and where are the results. It was suggested that this should be at the front of the document.</p>	<p>The Council has complied with the Statement of Community Involvement throughout the preparation of the Local Development Framework, which goes beyond the statutory requirements for encouraging community involvement in the plan making process.</p> <p>Comment noted.</p> <p>The role of the Development Management DPD, once it is adopted, is outlined in the introduction (page 1) and the purpose of the discussion and consultation document is detailed on pages 2-3.</p> <p>The preferred options are those of the Council, having regard to the strategic approach set out in the Core Strategy.</p> <p>A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) assesses the environmental, economic and social impacts of the options or policies within a document (depending on which stage of production the document is at). Guidance on the development of SAs can be found within Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Spatial Planning (PPS12)<sup>3</sup>. SAs are produced in accordance with the guidance both in-house and through external consultants. They are produced alongside the document which they assess, and are an independent assessment of the document.</p>

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<sup>3</sup> Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Spatial Planning (PPS12):  
[www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/pps12lsp.pdf](http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/pps12lsp.pdf)

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>It was also questioned how a document that relies on another document's policies be written, when that document has not been adopted.</p>	<p>When the discussion and consultation document was being prepared, the submission version of the Core Strategy had been subject to public consultation (September to November 2009) and submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for independent examination (January 2010). The general approach and preferred options for the topics identified in the document were therefore based on the Council's overarching approach to the future development of the District.</p>
<p>A respondent questioned who would agree the final version of the document.</p>	<p>The next stage of this document will be the preferred policy options version. This is not the final version (it will suggest the draft policies to be taken forward to the pre-submission stage) and comments will be invited on it. The final version (the pre-submission version) will then be prepared. It will be subject to further public consultation and then submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for independent examination. The Planning Inspectorate will appoint an inspector to examine the document and will determine whether it is 'sound' or not. If it is found to be 'sound' the Council may then adopt the document.</p>
<p>A respondent questioned who the Local Strategic Partnership is.</p>	<p>The Local Strategic Partnership is a representative group of key stakeholders such as the Essex Police, District Council and Essex County Council who work together to achieve common aims. Further information can be found on the Council's website<sup>4</sup>.</p>
<p>A respondent questioned what corporate objectives are and whether there are any other objectives.</p>	<p>Corporate objectives are the aspirations underpinning what the Council does. These can be found on page 3 of the discussion and consultation document.</p>

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<sup>4</sup> Rochford Local Strategic Partnership:  
[www.rochford.gov.uk/council\\_amp\\_democracy/partnerships/local\\_strategic\\_partnership.aspx](http://www.rochford.gov.uk/council_amp_democracy/partnerships/local_strategic_partnership.aspx)

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>Go East commented that Sustainability Appraisal has been listed in the document and it was suggested that the Habitats Regulations Assessment might also be included.</p> <p>A respondent questioned whether the alternative options have regard to the community involvement exercises.</p> <p>A respondent questioned what Planning Policy Statements, Planning Policy Guidance Notes and Circulars are and how they have shaped the document.</p> <p>In relation to the third sector it was questioned what sectors one and two are.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Habitats Regulations Assessment is being produced alongside, and will inform, the Development Management DPD.</p> <p>The alternative options in the Discussion and Consultation document have been developed having regard to representations received throughout the preparation of the emerging Core Strategy DPD and other documents forming the Local Development Framework. The preferred options have also been based upon the strategic approach outlined in the Core Strategy Submission Document. The reason why the alternative options are not preferred has been clearly identified in the document.</p> <p>Planning Policy Statements and Planning Policy Guidance Notes set the national planning framework which regional and local planning policy must comply with. Circulars are documents produced by the Government to provide additional clarity and explanation on national policies or regulations. Further information on these can be found on the Department for Communities and Local Government website<sup>5</sup>.</p> <p>The third sector includes voluntary organisations, charities, non-government organisations and other not-for-profit organisations. It is therefore distinct from public and private – the other two sectors.</p>

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<sup>5</sup> Planning Policy Statements and Planning Policy Guidance Notes:  
[www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/planningsystem/planningpolicy/planningpolicystatements/](http://www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/planningsystem/planningpolicy/planningpolicystatements/)

Circulars:  
[www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/planningsystem/circulars/](http://www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/planningsystem/circulars/)

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>It was questioned how an assessment, plan, guide or supplement is a strategy.</p> <p>Several questions relating to the evidence base were raised such as where can it be found, how often it is reviewed and how updates are reflected in the document.</p> <p><b>Housing, Character of Place and Residential Amenity:</b> Vision</p> <p>A respondent questioned what 'well related' means in terms of accessibility, and how the sustainability of developments is defined.</p>	<p>'Strategies' is the generic term which has been used to describe the numerous documents which form the Local Development Framework Evidence Base. These are detailed on page 4-6 of the Discussion and Consultation Document.</p> <p>The evidence base for the Local Development Framework can be found on the Council's website<sup>6</sup>. It is also available to view in paper form upon request. The documents within the evidence base are updated as necessary, and changes are made accordingly as the document progresses towards adoption.</p> <p>'Well related' means that something is easily accessible either in terms of distance (i.e. it is close by) or transport connections. The sustainability of a development can be defined by numerous factors such as its environmental performance (e.g. whether the development uses renewable energy), and its proximity to local services and facilities (e.g. whether it is close to shops or a bus route). The sustainability of sites considered in the Allocations DPD: Discussion and Consultation Document for example have been subject to a Sustainability Appraisal which assesses the environmental, economic and social impact of each one according to numerous questions.</p>

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<sup>6</sup> Local Development Framework Evidence Base:  
[www.rochford.gov.uk/planning\\_\\_building\\_control/policy/local\\_development\\_framework/evidence\\_base.aspx](http://www.rochford.gov.uk/planning__building_control/policy/local_development_framework/evidence_base.aspx)

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
It was questioned what infrastructure means.	The term 'infrastructure' refers to the transportation network (e.g. road and rail), the communications network (e.g. phone masts), the water and sewerage network, and community facilities (e.g. doctor's surgeries, schools, etc.).
It was questioned what the Local List is and what it will achieve.	An explanation of the Local List can be found on page 22 of the discussion and consultation document. Further information can be found on page 62 of the Core Strategy Submission Document and on the Council's website <sup>7</sup> .
A respondent questioned what defines a dwelling as being high quality and sustainable.	This will be determined at the planning application stage. Dwellings will have to comply with the policies contained within the Local Development Framework, such as the Code for Sustainable Homes policy in the Core Strategy Submission Document.
With reference to the vision: "The vast majority of the District's Green Belt remains undeveloped" it was questioned how 'vast' is defined.	The revision of the Green Belt boundary is a strategic issue which has been addressed within the Core Strategy, and the specific sites will be identified in the Allocations DPD.
It was questioned where there is a statement about being green as is in the Sustainable Community Strategy (page 15) and why National Indicators are not listed.	Climate change is a strategic issue which has been addressed within the Core Strategy Submission Document. The role that the Core Strategy will play in achieving the Sustainable Community Strategy's objective 'Promoting a Greener District' can be found on page 16 of the Submission Document. Applicable National Indicators have been listed within the 'Implementation, Delivery and Monitoring' chapter of the Submission Document (page 132-168).

<sup>7</sup> Local List Supplementary Planning Document Discussion and Consultation Document:  
[www.rochford.gov.uk/planning/policy/local\\_development\\_framework/supplementary\\_planning\\_documen/local\\_list\\_supplementary\\_plann.aspx](http://www.rochford.gov.uk/planning/policy/local_development_framework/supplementary_planning_documen/local_list_supplementary_plann.aspx)

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>A respondent objected to development in Rawreth.</p> <p><b>Housing, Character of Place and Residential Amenity: Objectives</b></p> <p>It was suggested that 'by re-developing vacant existing properties and then building new homes' should be inserted into objective 1.</p> <p>It was suggested that 'cost effective' should be inserted into objective 2.</p> <p>A respondent questioned the definition of "a balanced strategy".</p>	<p>This document does not address site-specific issues such as the location of new development. This is addressed within the Core Strategy Submission Document and the emerging Allocations Development Plan Document.</p> <p>Any brownfield sites (sites which have been previously developed), including dwellings within the existing residential area, may be redeveloped during the plan period. However, the Local Planning Authority must demonstrate that there is a constant five year supply of housing land within the District, in accordance with national planning guidance (Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing – PPS3). In addition to this, the Local Planning Authority must ensure that sites identified in the five year housing land supply are deliverable and 'windfall' sites cannot be taken into account in the first 10 years of the plan period, as stated within paragraph 59 of PPS3. 'Windfall' sites comprise, as defined within PPS3, "previously-developed sites that have unexpectedly become available" (page 21).</p> <p>It is important that any requirements are economically viable for developers, but this is encapsulated in this with reference to economic considerations. It would not be appropriate to emphasise cost effective in particular within this objective.</p> <p>A balanced strategy refers to the Council's approach to the distribution of housing. The balanced strategy also has regard to the four tiers of settlement identified in the Core Strategy Submission Document (page 40).</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>It was suggested that in some settlements rural services are not viable. It was questioned how it is determined that settlements are not viable (objective 3).</p> <p>A respondent suggested that objective 4 is not precise enough and additional wording was suggested: "Ensure the redevelopment of all brownfield sites is done before the release of Green Belt land and to not change the status of Green Belt land till 1 year before the planned development on that land."</p> <p>It was suggested that social needs should be included within objective 5.</p> <p>In relation to objective 6 a respondent questioned what 'appropriate infrastructure' means. It was questioned where it is specifically stated what is required for a housing development without this and how it can be ensured.</p>	<p>Symptoms of a settlement not being viable include withdrawal of public transport by private providers, significant underuse of services within the settlements (e.g. schools), to the point that the operator may not be able to keep them open, and the closure of shops with premises being left vacant.</p> <p>The vision and objectives contained within the discussion and consultation document are the same as those in the Core Strategy Submission Document. The revision of the Green Belt boundary is a strategic issue which has been addressed within the Core Strategy, and the specific sites will be identified in the Allocations DPD. Notwithstanding the above, it is important to note that it will not always be appropriate or deliverable to deliver brownfield sites ahead of sites on land currently allocated as Green Belt.</p> <p>Suggestion noted. The term "needs" used in the document includes social needs and it would not be appropriate to attempt to highlight different needs.</p> <p>The term 'infrastructure' refers to the transportation network (e.g. road and rail), the communications network (e.g. phone masts), the water and sewerage network, and community facilities (e.g. doctor's surgeries, schools, etc.). Whether it is appropriate or not depends on the needs of an area. The list on page 11 identifies features which would need to be considered in the design of new developments. Improvements to existing infrastructure with major development coming forward through the Local Development Framework can be found in Appendix H1 of the Core Strategy Submission Document.</p>



Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>It was questioned where in the document it details how something can be evaluated as having a positive or negative contribution towards the built environment (objective 7).</p> <p>In relation to objective 8 it was questioned why the word built has been included and how 'local' is defined.</p> <p><b>Housing, Character of Place and Residential Amenity: Introduction</b></p> <p>It was questioned what 'residential envelope' and 'appropriate sustainable extensions' mean. It was questioned how it is determined whether something is appropriate or not.</p> <p>It was questioned what 'quantum', 'demographic needs' and 'partnership working' mean.</p>	<p>Whether a proposed development would have a positive or negative contribution towards the built environment will be determined through the planning application process, having regard to the policies contained within the Local Development Framework DPDs (e.g. the Core Strategy and Development Management DPD), and relevant Supplementary Planning Documents providing design guidance etc.</p> <p>This chapter relates to housing, character of place and residential amenity. The enhancement of local built heritage has been included as this chapter seeks to ensure the appropriate approach towards buildings included on the emerging Local List and within Conservation Areas. "Local" will usually mean within the District, as the Council is the Local Planning Authority. Occasionally development on the edge of the District may have the potential to impact on local heritage within a neighbouring District.</p> <p>'Residential envelope' refers to the area currently defined as residential development in the Replacement Local Plan 2006. 'Appropriate sustainable extensions' means extending the area currently defined as residential development in a sustainable manner. The 'appropriateness' in terms of the size of these extensions will be determined through the Allocations DPD.</p> <p>'Quantum' means number, for example the number of dwellings. 'Demographic needs' refers to the needs of the population depending on its character/composition. With reference to the introduction, this means ensuring that the dwellings provided in the future reflect the needs of the population. 'Partnership working' means working together with different organisations.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>With reference to the Lifetime Homes Standard it was suggested that the version and/or publication date should be stated.</p> <p>A respondent questioned what the Council's Housing Strategy Team does and their relevance to the document. It was also questioned what other teams will have a role in development management and what their roles are.</p> <p>A respondent questioned what local design guidance is and where this can be found.</p>	<p>The documents within the Local Development Framework must be read in conjunction with each other. The Lifestyles Homes Standard is addressed within the Core Strategy Submission Document (page 48 and 49). There is only one Lifetime Homes Standard.</p> <p>The Housing Strategy Team are responsible for a range of housing issues such as maximising the number of affordable homes in the District and producing and monitoring the Council's Housing Strategy. The Housing Strategy (2009) as noted on page 6 of the discussion and consultation document is a key District strategy which has informed, alongside other strategies and evidence base documents, the development of the emerging Core Strategy and subsequently this document. Further information on the role of the Housing Strategy Team can be found on the Council's website<sup>8</sup>. Numerous other departments of the Council, Essex County Council and statutory consultees such as Natural England and the Environment Agency are involved in the planning application process.</p> <p>Local design guidance is currently contained with Supplementary Planning Documents which have been produced by the Council – specifically SPD2 – Housing design and SPD6 – Design guidelines for conservation areas. These documents do not set policy but provide advice and guidance. Further information can be found on the Council's website<sup>9</sup>.</p>

<sup>8</sup> Housing Strategy Team:  
[www.rochford.gov.uk/housing/housing\\_strategy.aspx](http://www.rochford.gov.uk/housing/housing_strategy.aspx)

<sup>9</sup> Supplementary Planning Documents (Adopted Versions):  
[www.rochford.gov.uk/planning\\_\\_building\\_control/policy/local\\_development\\_framework/supplementary\\_planning\\_documen.aspx](http://www.rochford.gov.uk/planning__building_control/policy/local_development_framework/supplementary_planning_documen.aspx)

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>A respondent questioned what happened to the Local List and what steps are planned to ensure it does not have to be reintroduced. It was also questioned how the Local List has been compiled and how it will be maintained.</p> <p>It was questioned what ‘coherent and interesting character’ means, and the meaning of text on page 10 was questioned in general.</p>	<p>The Local List formed part of the 1995 Local Plan but was not taken forward in the production of the 2006 Replacement Local Plan as Government guidance at the time indicated that such lists were not considered to be of value. Furthermore the Inspector’s Report for the Replacement Local Plan 2006 noted that many of the buildings or items of street furniture included on the list were protected through Conservation Area status which would afford them greater protection than local listing. The Inspector therefore did not make “any recommendation in favour of reinstating the Local List or of supporting it with a Policy in the Plan” (paragraph 7.3)<sup>10</sup>. However subsequent guidance has been issued encouraging the production of Local Lists, and as such the Local List is being reintroduced through the Local Development Framework. A policy for the Local List has been included within the Core Strategy Submission Document and will be integrated into the Development Management DPD to ensure that it is given appropriate consideration in the planning application process. The Local List will be a Supplementary Planning Document to be considered in the determination of planning applications. A draft version has been prepared and consulted upon. The final Local List will be reviewed periodically.</p> <p>‘Coherent and interesting character’ refers to features and traits which are consistent to a degree (e.g. they share similar features), whilst at the same time are not so similar as to appear bland or to stifle innovation.</p>

<sup>10</sup> Rochford District Replacement Local Plan Inspector’s Report:  
[www.rochford.gov.uk/PDF/planning\\_local\\_plan\\_2006\\_inspectors\\_report.pdf](http://www.rochford.gov.uk/PDF/planning_local_plan_2006_inspectors_report.pdf)

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>A respondent questioned what the sustainability objectives are and where are they listed.</p>	<p>An example of sustainability objectives can be found within Appendix 1 of the Allocations DPD: Discussion and Consultation Document.</p>
<p>A respondent questioned where the individual identities of the District's settlements are listed.</p>	<p>A lot of information on the distinctiveness of the District's towns and villages is contained within the Council's evidence base. For example information on the different historic character of settlements is detailed within the Rochford District Historic Environment Characterisation Project (2006), and information on the built and natural environment of the District is set out within a document called the Strategic Environmental Assessment Baseline Information Profile which is updated annually. These documents form part of the evidence base and can be view on the Council's website<sup>11</sup>.</p>
<p>It was questioned what 'streetscene' means.</p>	<p>'Streetscene' refers to the appearance and character of the street.</p>
<p>A respondent questioned what the Sustainable Community Strategy (2009) is and where is it reflected in the emerging Core Strategy.</p>	<p>The 'Relationship with other strategies' section of the discussion and consultation document (page 4) explains what the Sustainable Community Strategy (2009) is, what it seeks to achieve and the role of the Core Strategy in aiding its delivery. The seven key priorities of the Sustainable Community Strategy, in conjunction with other documents in the Council's evidence base, underpins the policies contained within the Core Strategy Submission Document as well as other emerging Local Development Framework documents such as the Development Management and Allocations DPDs, and the Area Action Plans. How the Sustainable Community Strategy (2009) is reflected within the Core Strategy is specifically illustrated on pages 9-16 of the Submission Document.</p>

<sup>11</sup> Local Development Framework Evidence Base:  
[www.rochford.gov.uk/planning\\_\\_building\\_control/policy/local\\_development\\_framework/evidence\\_base.aspx](http://www.rochford.gov.uk/planning__building_control/policy/local_development_framework/evidence_base.aspx)

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>It was questioned why the statement of increasing the energy efficiency only refers to existing dwellings and why there is not a statement alongside stating that all new developments must comply with the energy efficiency standards.</p> <p>A respondent suggested that the last paragraph on page 10 should follow along behind chapter 3 because it relates to the historic environment. It was stated that the introduction must be properly constructed with a logical order.</p> <p>A respondent made representations querying the projected population numbers in the Core Strategy. It was suggested that the Core Strategy should be updated.</p> <p>It was questioned whether an accommodation needs assessment for Gypsies and Travellers has been undertaken and what the results were.</p>	<p>The Environmental Issues chapter of the Core Strategy Submission Document sets out the overarching approach to ensuring that new dwellings are energy efficient, for example complying with the Code for Sustainable Homes is promoted (page 83-84). As this issue is sufficiently addressed within the Core Strategy it is not appropriate to repeat this policy within the Development Management DPD.</p> <p>The third chapter of the discussion and consultation document (Environmental Issues) relates to the natural environment, whereas the first chapter (Housing, Character of Place and Residential Amenity) relates to the built environment. It is therefore appropriate to include the last paragraph on page 10 which refers to the historic environment as well as the options relating to the Local List and Conservation Areas within this chapter.</p> <p>This is a Core Strategy issue.</p> <p>The 'Evidence Base' section of the discussion and consultation document identifies that a needs assessment was undertaken in 2006 ('Looking Back, Moving Forward – Assessing the housing needs of Gypsies and Travellers in Essex'). A further needs assessment was under taken in 2009 ('Essex Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment'). These documents are available to view on the Council's website<sup>12</sup>.</p>

<sup>12</sup> Local Development Framework Evidence Base:  
[www.rochford.gov.uk/planning\\_building\\_control/policy/local\\_development\\_framework/evidence\\_base.aspx](http://www.rochford.gov.uk/planning_building_control/policy/local_development_framework/evidence_base.aspx)

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p><b>Housing, Character of Place and Residential Amenity:</b> Design of New Developments</p> <p>Essex County Council suggested that the supporting text for Policy DM1 should be augmented to emphasise the role of the wider historic environment, including archaeological sites and historic landscapes.</p> <p>It was questioned where the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) (Amendment) (England) Order 2006 can be found.</p> <p>A respondent questioned where the distinctiveness of the District's towns and villages is listed.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p> <p>This is a piece of legislation which can be found on the UK legislation website<sup>13</sup>.</p> <p>A lot of information on the distinctiveness of the District's towns and villages is contained within the Council's evidence base. For example information on the different historic character of settlements is detailed within the Rochford District Historic Environment Characterisation Project (2006), and information on the built and natural environment of the District is set out within a document called the Strategic Environmental Assessment Baseline Information Profile which is updated annually. These documents form part of the evidence base and can be view on the Council's website<sup>14</sup>.</p>

<sup>13</sup> Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) (Amendment) (England) Order 2006:  
[www.legislation.gov.uk/ukSI/2006/1062/contents/made](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukSI/2006/1062/contents/made)

<sup>14</sup> Local Development Framework Evidence Base:  
[www.rochford.gov.uk/planning\\_\\_building\\_control/policy/local\\_development\\_framework/evidence\\_base.aspx](http://www.rochford.gov.uk/planning__building_control/policy/local_development_framework/evidence_base.aspx)

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>A respondent questioned when a village becomes a town.</p>	<p>Towns generally contain town centres. The definition of a town centre is contained within Planning policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth (PPS4). It states that “Town centres will usually be the second level of centres after city centres and, in many cases, they will be the principal centre or centres in a local authority’s area. In rural areas they are likely to be market towns and other centres of similar size and role which function as important service centres, providing a range of facilities and services for extensive rural catchment areas” (page 25). It also states that “In rural areas, large villages may perform the role of a local centre” (page 25).</p>
<p>It was questioned where a complete list of requirements for new developments can be found.</p>	<p>Any planning application for any new development regardless of the size of the site would need to comply with the relevant policies contained within the Core Strategy, Allocations and Development Management DPDs. Depending on the location of the proposed development the policies contained within the Area Action Plans would need to be considered, as appropriate.</p>
<p>It was questioned where a statement about developments cost impact upon the community can be found. It was also commented that any development must not be approved if the cost to the community financially is too expensive and how this will be ensured.</p>	<p>The Development Management Development Plan Document – and planning policy within the Local Development Framework more widely – manages development undertaken by developers. It is important that policies do not render development unviable, and this has been considered within the Core Strategy.</p>
<p>A respondent questioned whether a need for wider pavements on the main route(s) to school has been identified. It was commented that existing pavements are inadequate in some places.</p>	<p>Comment noted. Rochford District Council is not responsible for the maintenance of pavements – this is split between Essex County Council and Parish Councils. Essex County Council also examines access to schools. Rochford District Council will raise this issue with Essex County Council. In addition, it is important to note that Rochford District Council will be working closely with Essex County Council to ensure that all new schools have safe access for pupils.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>It was questioned whether the list on page 11 paragraph 2 relates to the integration of existing or new infrastructure, or both. It was also questioned where the definitions of those listed can be found.</p>	<p>The list relates to features which would need to be considered in the design of new developments. Improvements to existing infrastructure with major development coming forward through the Local Development Framework can be found in Appendix H1 of the Core Strategy Submission Document.</p>
<p>A respondent questioned what the Open Space Study is and where it can be found.</p>	<p>The Open Space Study 2009 forms part of the evidence base for the Local Development framework. It assesses the quantity, quality and accessibility of the different types of open spaces within the District, and recommends improvements as appropriate. Further information can be found on the Council's website<sup>15</sup>.</p>
<p>It was questioned where further information on geographical areas and landscape character areas can be found.</p>	<p>The Strategic Environmental Assessment Baseline Information Profile document forms part of the Council's evidence base underpinning the development of the Local Development Framework. It contains a considerable amount of environmental, social and economic information relating to the District. The document is annually updated and the various iterations can be found on the Council's website<sup>16</sup>.</p>
<p>It was questioned what a 'distinct sense of place' means and how a local area is defined.</p>	<p>Knowing where you are due to the character and individuality of an area describes what a 'distinct sense of place' means. The definition of a local area will depend on the context.</p>

<sup>15</sup> Local Development Framework Evidence Base:  
[www.rochford.gov.uk/planning\\_\\_building\\_control/policy/local\\_development\\_framework/evidence\\_base.aspx](http://www.rochford.gov.uk/planning__building_control/policy/local_development_framework/evidence_base.aspx)

<sup>16</sup> Strategic Environmental Assessment Baseline Information Profile:  
[www.rochford.gov.uk/planning/policy/local\\_development\\_framework/evidence\\_base/strategic\\_environmental\\_assess.aspx](http://www.rochford.gov.uk/planning/policy/local_development_framework/evidence_base/strategic_environmental_assess.aspx)



Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>In relation to Village Design Statements it was questioned what body in the council must give their endorsement and where guidelines for their production can be found. It was also questioned whether there are any town design statements.</p>	<p>Village Design Statements are addressed in paragraph 5.6 of the Core Strategy Submission Document. The planning department will be the main body of the Council responsible for endorsing these statements, although other departments may be involved. Further information on Village Design Statements may be obtained from the Rural Community Council of Essex<sup>17</sup>. In terms of town design statements, Hockley, Rochford and Rayleigh will have dedicated Area Action Plans which will determine their future design.</p>
<p>A respondent questioned where the Historic Environment Characterisation Project (2006) can be found and whether it will be updated.</p>	<p>The Rochford District Historic Environment Characterisation Project (2006) forms part of the evidence base for the Local Development Framework and can be found on the Council's website<sup>18</sup>. Any documents within the evidence base will be updated as appropriate.</p>
<p>It was questioned why mitigation in relation to climate change only refers to new developments. It was suggested that this should also include redevelopment.</p>	<p>Redevelopment is new development, and mitigation therefore applies to all development.</p>
<p>A respondent questioned whether the Council has obtained a list of minimum requirements for eliminating the impact of housing etc., from the relevant government body.</p>	<p>The options have been developed having regard to guidance produced by various government departments, and government planning policies (Planning Policy Statements and Planning Policy Guidance Notes). The final Development Plan Document is required to be consistent with national policy before it can be adopted by the Council. This is tested through examination by the Planning Inspectorate.</p>

<sup>17</sup> Rural Community Council of Essex:  
[www.essexrcc.org.uk/community\\_led\\_planning-villagedesign.asp](http://www.essexrcc.org.uk/community_led_planning-villagedesign.asp)

<sup>18</sup> Local Development Framework Evidence Base:  
[www.rochford.gov.uk/planning\\_\\_building\\_control/policy/local\\_development\\_framework/evidence\\_base.aspx](http://www.rochford.gov.uk/planning__building_control/policy/local_development_framework/evidence_base.aspx)

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>The use of the term ‘global warming’ was questioned.</p> <p>It was suggested that using ‘dwellings’ and ‘non-domestic buildings’ in the same sentence causes confusion.</p> <p>It was questioned what the difference between a development and a scheme is.</p> <p>A respondent suggested that the impact of a proposed development on existing infrastructure must be demonstrated, including the roads through other communities.</p> <p>In relation to Concept Statements it was questioned when these would be applicable.</p> <p>It was commented that large scale development has been favoured over small scale developments.</p> <p><b>Housing, Character of Place and Residential Amenity:</b> DM1 Design of New Developments – Preferred Option</p> <p>Essex County Council suggested that section (i) should be amended to ‘accessibility by all forms of transport’.</p>	<p>Comment noted. ‘Global warming’ is a widely used term within government policy now for the increase in the temperature of the Earth’s surface within recent decades, and its projected further increase. Alternative terms that could be used include climate change, or anthropogenic climate change if one wishes to specify the human cause.</p> <p>Suggestion noted.</p> <p>‘Development’ has a legal definition within planning which can be split into two parts: the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operations in, on, over or under land; and material change in the use of any buildings or land. ‘Scheme’ can include development, but can also go beyond the legal definition and include activities that are not development, e.g. hours of use.</p> <p>This issue has been addressed within the Core Strategy Submission Document.</p> <p>Textual Concept Statements will be developed specifically for those sites where Green Belt land is to be reallocated for residential development. This should be further explained in the next iteration of the document.</p> <p>This is a Core Strategy issue.</p> <p>Suggestion noted.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>Essex County Council suggested that section (ii) should be amended to 'boundary treatment and landscaping within the development'.</p>	<p>Suggestion noted.</p>
<p>Essex County Council suggested that section (vi) should be amended to 'impact on the historic environment including designated sites, Conservation Areas and Listed Building archaeological sites and the historic landscape'.</p>	<p>Suggestion noted.</p>
<p>It was suggested that concept statements should be prepared in consultation with landowners and developers.</p>	<p>Textual Concept Statements will be developed by the Planning Policy team and subject to community involvement, including consultation with landowners and developers.</p>
<p>It was suggested that there is a significant degree of duplication of design requirements throughout various policy documents.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Council have sought not to duplicate policy, but at the same time, include relevant information within documents for the reader.</p>
<p>It was commented that design is best developed on a site by site basis and the list in Preferred Option DM1 is largely arbitrary by default. It was also commented that this option does not inform applicants on what design principles are likely to be found appropriate.</p>	<p>The Development Management DPD does not seek to be overly descriptive in terms of design but provides guidance on the issues which need to be carefully considered when preparing a planning application. Detailed design guidance as at present will be set out within Supplementary Planning Documents as at present, or within the Concept Statements, as appropriate.</p>
<p>In relation to 'residential amenity' it was questioned whether this should be amenities.</p>	<p>Amenity refers to the pleasant or normally satisfactory aspects of a location which contribute to its overall character and the enjoyment of residents. The singular form of the word captures all these aspects and is therefore appropriate in this context.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>A respondent questioned why all the requirements are not detailed in one place and why there always has to be a connection with other documents.</p> <p>It was suggested that developments in the past have not been in keeping with local character and, despite the text in the policy, developers may not have regard to design guidance.</p> <p>A respondent considered that the list proposed is comprehensive and should ensure that developments are appropriately designed.</p> <p>The Highways Agency consider that DM1 should include a criteria relating to housing being sited in areas where access to day to day facilities are available by public transport, walking and cycling, thereby reducing the need to travel by private car.</p>	<p>Prior to 2004, Local Planning Authorities were required to prepare a document called a 'Local Plan' which set out the future development for the area. The current adopted development plan for the District is the Replacement Local Plan 2006. In 2004 a new planning system was introduced called the Local Development Framework which changed how development plans are produced. This new system promotes the development of numerous development plan documents (e.g. the Core Strategy, Allocations and Development Management documents) which relate to each other and should be read in conjunction with each other when planning applications are determined. These documents together will replace the existing Local Plan.</p> <p>Developers will be required to comply with the policies contained in the Development Plan Documents e.g. the Core Strategy, Development Management DPD and Area Action Plans (if applicable) once they are finalised. Additional guidance of acceptable design may also be provided in Supplementary Planning Documents, and where appropriate Textual Concept Statements. All of the above will be important in determining planning applications.</p> <p>Comment noted.</p> <p>We agree with these requirements but it is not necessary for specific criteria to be included within the Development Management DPD as it is covered elsewhere in the LDF. Policy T3 – Public Transport in the Core Strategy Submission Document is considered to sufficiently address this issue. These planning principles are also contained within Planning Policy Guidance 13 – Transport (PPG13)<sup>19</sup> which was reissued in January 2011.</p>

<sup>19</sup> Planning Policy Guidance 13 – Transport (PPG13):  
[www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/1758358.pdf](http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/1758358.pdf)

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>A respondent suggested that references to 'reflecting' local character/identity should be replaced with "considering". It was commented that the list of considerations will vary with different types of application and that flexibility is needed for different forms of recycling.</p> <p>A respondent objected commenting that they agree that the character of a locality is a relevant consideration in the formulation of development proposals, but disagree that it is always necessary to "reflect" the character or identity of an existing area in new development schemes (reference was made to paragraph 3 page 11). This is particularly the case for major development proposals, where it is possible to create new character areas and distinctive architectural styles, but even smaller scale development or infill proposals can successfully adopt new approaches. In some cases of course, the identity of the existing built environment may not necessarily warrant repetition.</p> <p>It was suggested that there is some repetition between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraphs (page 11), and the word "reflect" should be deleted from both, or the 1st paragraph should be deleted. It was commented that they do not disagree that the list of items in the 2nd paragraph are relevant issues, but state that different types of application will require different considerations, and not all of the factors will apply in every case.</p> <p>It was further noted that the 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph relates to the Council's recycling scheme. They agree that recycling is an important design consideration, but concern was expressed that the application of the Policy must not lead to overly prescriptive solutions.</p> <p>A respondent commented that there should be none or very little new development in Hawkwell.</p>	<p>It is felt that the weight applied to 'reflect' as opposed to 'consider' is appropriate in this instance.</p> <p>Whilst it is recognised that new developments can create new character areas, residents have expressed concerns that these can have a detrimental impact on the existing character of an area. It is therefore important to sensitively consider the characteristics of local places as identified in the document and design developments that ensure a distinct sense of place to a particular area. In addition to the existing character of the area, it is also important that the points in Preferred Option DM1 are carefully considered in the design of new developments.</p> <p>Suggestion noted. The points in Preferred Option DM1 are considered to be a comprehensive list as stated on page 13. It is recognised that these may not be applicable in all cases but it is important that they are included in a policy to be considered in the design of any development.</p> <p>The reference to the Council's recycling scheme is not intended to be overly prescriptive. It is, however, important to the Council that this is factored into the design of any development to ensure that it can run efficiently and effectively.</p> <p>This document does not address site-specific issues such as the location of new development. This is addressed within the Core Strategy Submission Document and the emerging Allocations Development Plan Document.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>A respondent suggested that infrastructure, health facilities and school (if major development) should be included within DM1.</p> <p><b>Housing, Character of Place and Residential Amenity: DM1 Design of New Developments – Alternative Options</b></p> <p>It was suggested that for the Council to not prefer this option is inappropriate, and that the list may not have captured everything.</p> <p>It was commented that high quality building materials should be used and developments should be well designed and built.</p> <p>It was suggested that the following may be included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ease of access to electricity, gas, water and other services to minimise disruption when these need maintenance;</li> <li>• vulnerability to flooding or storm damage and countermeasure designed to minimise any risk.</li> </ul>	<p>These are strategic issues which have been considered within the Core Strategy Submission Document. Infrastructure, including the provision of healthcare facilities is addressed within the 'Community Infrastructure, Leisure and Tourism' chapter of the Core Strategy Submission Document (page 86-100). Transport infrastructure is considered within the 'Transport' chapter (page 101-110). The specific infrastructure required to accommodate major developments coming forward on both Green Belt and brownfield sites (sites which are already developed) have been identified within Appendix H1 of the Core Strategy Submission Document (page 51-54). Their inclusion within the Development Management DPD is therefore not considered to be appropriate.</p> <p>As stated within the accompanying explanation, the preferred option is considered to be a comprehensive list of issues. Additional issues to be considered for inclusion have been raised by respondents and will be considered for inclusion in the next iteration of the document.</p> <p>Comment noted. The Development Management DPD, along with other policies within the Local Development Framework, seeks to achieve this.</p> <p>Suggestions noted.</p> <p>The ability to connect to existing services such as gas and water would need to be considered with any development coming forward. Service providers are required to be consulted.</p> <p>Flooding, both fluvial and surface water, has been addressed within the Core Strategy Submission Document (page 78-80). Flood mitigation, where necessary, is required by national policy (PPS25) and therefore is not repeated in this document.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>A respondent also suggested that plans for undertaking the development should demonstrate how they will minimise disruption to the local community (noise, dirt, traffic, etc) while the building work is being carried out.</p> <p>It was suggested that the overall impact on infrastructure of all proposed development has not been considered.</p> <p><b>Housing, Character of Place and Residential Amenity:</b> Density of New Developments</p> <p>It was suggested that if a new development or redevelopment is significantly more compact than that of an existing community it will create an, us and them divide. It was suggested that existing community density should be included.</p>	<p>Conditions can be attached to a planning application to ensure that disruption to the community is minimised when development is taking place on a site.</p> <p>The impact on infrastructure with any development is a strategic issue which has been addressed within the Core Strategy Submission Document.</p> <p>Existing community density has been included and it is important that this is considered when assessing a proposal; however, other factors need to be taken into consideration when determining the appropriate density of a site. As stated within the text the Council “will encourage appropriate densities which reflect the character, scale and form of the locality to create cohesive, sustainable environments” (page 13). Furthermore preferred option DM2 states that “The precise density for any individual site will be determined by its immediate context, on-site constraints, the type of development proposed and the need to provide an appropriate mix of dwellings to meet the community’s needs.” The next version of the document would benefit from the inclusion in the preamble of an example of the varying densities across the District within the existing residential areas.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>It was questioned what PPS3 is and where it can be found. It was suggested that as this is guidance it does not have to be complied with and it should be stated exactly what needs to be complied with.</p> <p>With regard to the proposed flexible approach to setting density a respondent suggested that this is not appropriate. Maximums and minimums should be stated.</p> <p>In terms of sustainable locations identified in the Core Strategy for higher density development, it was questioned where they are and how they have been identified.</p> <p>It was questioned whether there are to be rules on the density of developments and, if not, then it was questioned why this section has been included. It was commented that density affects communities and should therefore be governed by rules.</p>	<p>PPS3 is the national planning policy on housing which sets the general principles which the Council have to follow in the development of local planning policy. Although it is guidance, the Council must comply with it. PPS3 can be found on the Department for Communities and Local Government website<sup>20</sup>.</p> <p>The appropriate density of a site will be determined on a site by site basis, taking into account the on-site constraints, infrastructure requirements and the mix of dwelling types required. This will enable flexibility to ensure that the efficient and effective use of land is balanced against minimising Green Belt reallocation and infilling.</p> <p>The sustainable locations identified for high density development are town centres. This is stated within Policy H1 of the Core Strategy Submission Document.</p> <p>The minimum density for development was removed from Planning Policy Statement 3 – Housing (PPS3) in June 2010. It is therefore important that there is a local policy which sets out the Council's approach to density and enables the Local Planning Authority to have regard to the appropriate density for a development on a site-by-site basis.</p>

<sup>20</sup> Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing (PPS3):  
[www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/pps3housing](http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/pps3housing)



Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>A respondent stated that density cannot be open to interpretation and that the key to planning a good development is making it fit with what already exists.</p> <p>A respondent commented that density of new developments is a major concern in a part of the County that is already densely populated.</p> <p><b>Housing, Character of Place and Residential Amenity:</b> DM2 Density of New Developments – Preferred Option</p> <p>A respondent supported this approach and suggested that the Council are seeking high density development on reallocated sites. Furthermore it was suggested that the Development Management DPD should adopt an approach to bring it in line with both the Core Strategy and emerging Allocations DPD.</p> <p>A respondent suggested that terms such as ‘community’, ‘immediate context’ and ‘type of development’ should be defined.</p> <p>It was questioned where the analysis of the demand for housing in the District can be found.</p> <p>It was questioned how the precise density of a development will be measured.</p>	<p>The need for developments to consider the density of the immediate area is recognised within Preferred Option DM2 of the Discussion and Consultation Document. However it is also important to balance this against other considerations such as the size of the site, infrastructure requirements and the mix of dwelling types required. This will enable flexibility to ensure that the efficient and effective use of land is balanced against minimising Green Belt reallocation and infilling.</p> <p>Comment noted.</p> <p>The density of developments will be determined on a site by site basis as identified in the document. As noted in the Core Strategy Submission Document, high density development will be encouraged within town centres where this is considered to be appropriate (see Policy H1). The approach to density set out in the discussion and consultation document is in line with the Core Strategy Submission Document and the emerging Allocations DPD</p> <p>Comment noted. However, it would not be possible for the document to include definitions of every word/term used without making the document extremely large and off-putting to the reader.</p> <p>This is a Core Strategy issue.</p> <p>The approach to density is set out on page 13 of the discussion and consultation document.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>A respondent suggested that PPS3 wants land to provide enough buildings, but families need gardens.</p> <p>A respondent commented that it should be recognised that housing should meet the needs of the whole housing market and that includes the demand for both smaller and larger dwellings, which would have an impact on the densities.</p> <p>It was suggested that those sites in the most sustainable locations (within town centres and transport corridors), which have the ability to access services by means other than private car (public transport, cycling and walking) are maximised and should seek to have a net density of 50 dwellings per hectare or more.</p> <p>A respondent supported the non-prescriptive approach to density.</p> <p>It was suggested that the two paragraphs overlap and alternative wording was proposed.</p> <p>A respondent commented that there should be none or very little new development in Hawkwell.</p> <p>It was commented that there should be maximum and minimum density figures. There was concern expressed that too much reliance is being placed on opinion.</p>	<p>Comment noted. Private open spaces such as gardens are included within Preferred Option DM1. Whether the amount of open space incorporated into a development is appropriate is determined at the planning application stage.</p> <p>It is recognised that the dwelling mix will impact on the densities of development. This is noted in the preferred option on page 13. Applicants are encouraged to consult the Council's Housing Strategy team in determining the appropriate mix of dwellings. This further supports the case that densities be examined on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>As noted in the Core Strategy Submission Document, high density development will be encouraged within town centres where this is considered to be appropriate (see Policy H1).</p> <p>Comment noted.</p> <p>The two paragraphs in Preferred Option DM2 are not considered to overlap.</p> <p>This document does not address site-specific issues such as the location of new development. This is addressed within the Core Strategy Submission Document and the Allocations Consultation Development Plan Document.</p> <p>The density of developments will be determined on a site by site basis as identified in the document taking into consideration a number of different factors. The reasons that alternative options such as prescriptive density are not preferred are set out on page 14 of the discussion and consultation document.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p><b>Housing, Character of Place and Residential Amenity:</b> DM2 Density of New Developments – Alternative Options</p> <p>It was suggested that ‘Prescriptive density’ should be changed to ‘Prescriptive density for the District’.</p> <p>It was questioned what ‘quantum’ means.</p> <p>A respondent commented that they would support a more prescriptive approach. It was suggested that, similar to the supporting text of preferred option DM4, the document should set out how much external space should be provided based on the expected occupancy of the dwelling.</p> <p><b>Housing, Character of Place and Residential Amenity:</b> Infilling and Residential Intensification</p> <p>A respondent questioned how infilling development differs from new development and whether other criteria will be considered as per Preferred Option DM1.</p> <p>The appropriate level of residential intensification within town centres was queried.</p> <p>A respondent questioned the meaning of ‘town cramming’.</p> <p>It was commented that ‘village cramming’ is the same as town cramming except for a smaller community classified as a village.</p>	<p>This document will set out policies to be considered in the determination of planning applications throughout the whole of the District.</p> <p>‘Quantum’ means number, for example the number of dwellings.</p> <p>Comment noted.</p> <p>Infilling development is new development, and as such it must comply with the same planning regulations. This would include compliance with all the appropriate policies within the Development Management DPD, once it is adopted.</p> <p>This is set out within Policy H1 of the Core Strategy Submission Document.</p> <p>Town cramming refers to too much infill development in the existing residential area, to the detriment of the area's character.</p> <p>Comment noted.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>A respondent suggested that the document does not reflect that the development of new houses etc., needs to be reviewed at district and county level. In relation to traffic increases, a bypass and improvements to the A127 were suggested.</p> <p>It was commented that the District's town centres are used as a cut through. Regardless of the development locations (central or on the edge) traffic will increase. However, it was noted that town centre developments have the potential to encourage use of the train network rather than cars.</p> <p>A respondent questioned how infilling would affect the overall strategic plan. It was questioned whether if, for example, applications are granted for 50 infill dwellings in an area will any strategic allocation for the area be reduced accordingly.</p> <p>A respondent questioned whether Hockley is considered to be a Town Centre.</p> <p>A respondent commented that they agree that there should be no replacement of individual dwellings with flats.</p> <p><b>Housing, Character of Place and Residential Amenity: DM3 Infilling and Residential Intensification – Preferred Option</b></p> <p>A respondent questioned whether infilling, residential intensification and "backland" developments differs from new development. If not, then it was suggested that one term should be used.</p>	<p>This is a Core Strategy issue.</p> <p>The high level of car ownership in the District is recognised and addressed within the Core Strategy Submission Document. The potential for development within town centres to utilise the public transport connections is also recognised in the document.</p> <p>The Council are seeking to adopt the 'Plan Monitor Manage' approach which will monitor the amount of development on an annual basis. Through this approach the Council will ensure that the minimum amount of Green Belt necessary will be reallocated to meet the District's needs. This approach will also ensure that a constant five year supply of housing land can be provided in accordance with PPS3.</p> <p>Hockley centre is currently designated a town centre in the Replacement Local Plan 2006. It was also designated a town centre in the 1995 and 1988 Local Plans.</p> <p>Comment noted.</p> <p>These refer to new development proposed within the existing residential area.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>With regard to criteria (ii) it was questioned what specific criteria is used to decide whether something is appropriate.</p> <p>It was questioned who the Housing Strategy Team is.</p> <p>With regard to criteria (iv) it was questioned who will perform and deliver the assessment and what specific criteria will be used.</p> <p>A respondent suggested that criteria (vi) is covered within (vii).</p> <p>A respondent commented that the replacement of one dwelling with flats has occurred in the past.</p> <p>It was suggested in relation to the Hockley Area Action Plan that if development does not take place on Eldon Way then density will be intensified within Hockley (e.g. with the replacement of 1 dwelling with 2).</p>	<p>The number and type of dwellings appropriate to a site would be determined at the planning application stage in consultation with the Council's Housing Strategy team.</p> <p>The Housing Strategy Team are responsible for a range of housing issues such as maximising the number of affordable homes in the District and producing and monitoring the Council's Housing Strategy.</p> <p>Planning Officers in the Council's Development Management team conduct assessments and make recommendations to the Head of Service. This includes consideration for issues set out in Supplementary Planning Document 2: Housing Design, as well as other guidance such as that contained within the Essex Design Guide, as per Preferred Option DM1.</p> <p>Point (vi) relates to the loss of existing private amenity space for neighbours for example where a development is proposed as infill/backland development. Point (vii) seeks to ensure that new dwellings have adequate private amenity space themselves in accordance with the Council's guidance.</p> <p>Comment noted.</p> <p>Any development of Eldon Way Industrial Estate will be determined through the Hockley Area Action Plan. Planning applications are determined on the individual merits, and the preferred approach to density is set out on page 13.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>A respondent suggested that this option is far too restrictive, makes change impossible and is contrary to the aims of Central Government policy to maximise the use of land in sustainable locations. It was commented that Rayleigh, Rochford and Hockley are ideal locations for intensification, subject to the reasonable protection of the amenities of existing occupiers. The blanket protection of these areas, that have no particular architectural merit is unjustified and will do nothing to promote inclusive communities containing a mix of house types.</p> <p><b>Housing, Character of Place and Residential Amenity:</b> Habitable Floorspace for New Developments</p> <p>A respondent suggested that further floorspace standards in addition to the Housing Quality Indicators (HQI) are not required as proposed in Table 1 preceding Preferred Policy DM4. It was also commented that the HQI standards are currently only applicable to affordable housing schemes, however, the standards can easily be used in parallel for privately funded scheme rather than introducing duplicate standards.</p> <p>It was questioned whether there is an existing definition of habitable floorspace by government bodies, organisations or Essex County Council that can dictate to the Council about floorspace requirements, if so then that is what must be used.</p> <p>It was questioned who decides whether something is of an appropriate size and layout and what criteria they use to make that decision.</p>	<p>The Council's approach seeks to maximise development within the existing residential area whilst balancing this against residents concerns regarding over intensification and 'town cramming'. This was highlighted in the Core Strategy Preferred Options for example. Appropriate development in Rayleigh, Rochford and Hockley will be determined through the Area Action Plans. It is important to remember, however, that the centre of Rayleigh and Rochford are protected through Conservation Area status.</p> <p>This policy and supporting tables seek to ensure that all dwellings (not just those which are purposely constructed affordable dwellings) are of a reasonable size and layout, and have the flexibility to be transferred into affordable dwellings if appropriate. HQI refers to number of bedspaces, which, when compared to number of bedrooms, is difficult to regulate through development management.</p> <p>The Council is seeking to implement the habitable floorspace standards of the Homes and Communities Agency as set out on pages 16-18 of the Discussion and Consultation Document to ensure that both market and affordable dwellings comply with the same standards, and enable greater flexibility within the District's housing stock.</p> <p>The section on 'Habitable Floorspace for New Developments' and Preferred Option DM 4 seek to aid the decision making for the development management team who are responsible for determining planning applications.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>A respondent questioned what modern living is, why it is stated, and what clarification it brings to the statement (paragraph 2 page 16).</p> <p>In relation to paragraph 3 (page 16), it was questioned where the potential number of inhabitants comes from. It was also questioned what defines an adequate size and height.</p> <p>A respondent questioned how plentiful natural light can be defined (paragraph 3 page 16).</p> <p>With regard to the Lifetime Homes Standard, it was questioned what version this refers to. It was also questioned what features of the Lifetime Homes Standard are referred to (paragraph 3 page 16).</p> <p>In relation to the sentence “The internal floor area of a dwelling should comply with the minimum guidance standards set by the Homes and Communities Agency”, it was suggested that this should say ‘must’ instead of ‘should’.</p> <p>It was questioned whether the Council will use the HQI’s, why and what the impact would be.</p> <p>A respondent questioned what the National Affordable Housing Programme is and how it relates to the Council and the Homes and Communities Agency.</p>	<p>Modern living refers to living in the present day. The term acknowledges that accommodation requirements may vary through time, depending on different social conditions and demands.</p> <p>These are derived from the Homes and Communities Agency, as explained within the text.</p> <p>‘Plentiful natural light’ would be a judgement. The Homes and Communities Agency standards are designed to help achieve what is judged to be plentiful natural light for occupiers of dwellings.</p> <p>Policy H6 of the Core Strategy Submission Document sets out the Lifetime Homes requirement for new dwellings.</p> <p>Comment noted.</p> <p>The Council propose to use aspects of the HQI, as set out in the Development Management DPD Discussion and Consultation Document.</p> <p>Information on the National Affordable Housing Programme (NAHP) can be found on the Homes and Communities Agency’s website<sup>21</sup>.</p>

<sup>21</sup> National Affordable Housing Programme:  
[www.homesandcommunities.co.uk/national\\_affordable\\_housing\\_programme](http://www.homesandcommunities.co.uk/national_affordable_housing_programme)

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>It was suggested that setting space requirements according to bedrooms rather than bedspaces would not ensure that a dwelling is adaptable and flexible.</p> <p>It was questioned that if English Partnerships produced a document back in 2007 and they are now part of the HCA does this not mean that the HCA have adopted their standards. If the HCA have adopted their standards would they not add/amend the HQL's accordingly.</p> <p>A respondent questioned the purpose of Table 1.</p> <p>A respondent commented that the conversion of the standards is not clear and it was questioned whether the HCA has approved this.</p> <p>With reference to paragraph 1 (page 18) it was questioned why the standards should only be aspired to, whose minimum approved standards should be used and why it says 'should' and not 'must'.</p> <p>In relation to Table 2, it was questioned what the Minimum Internal Floor Area refers to.</p> <p>With reference to the minimum floor to ceiling height, it was questioned what the proposed uses/function are, why height is defined and not the width, what is an appropriate width for each use/function. It was also questioned why it says 'should' and not 'must'.</p>	<p>Basing size requirements on number of bedrooms would not restrict future occupants from making internal changes to meet their needs. It should be borne in mind that dwellings will also be required to meet the Lifetime Homes Standards, which will ensure they are flexible and adaptable.</p> <p>The HQL postdates the English Partnerships Standards. The English Partnership Standards have been referenced in the document as, unlike the HQL, they make reference to bedroom numbers (as opposed to bedspaces). Number of bedspaces is difficult to regulate through development management, and policies based on bedspaces are unlikely to be enforceable.</p> <p>The purpose of Table 1 is set out within the document – it is intended to help explain how the standards in Table 2 have been derived.</p> <p>The HCA have been consulted on the proposals.</p> <p>The suggested minimum standards are set out in Table 2. The word 'must' could be used instead of 'should' in the next iteration of the document to give the policy greater strength, although it should be noted that planning policies are not supposed to be draconian or inflexible.</p> <p>Minimum internal floor area refers to the total internal floor area of dwellings, as set out in Tables 1 and 2.</p> <p>The proposed use of each room would depend upon the applicant, e.g. bedrooms, living rooms etc. Width is not stipulated as this would be too onerous, constraining and inflexible for applicants and would be unjustifiable. With minimum floor areas this enables applicants a degree of flexibility within their designs whilst ensuring that dwellings are of an appropriate size for potential occupants.</p>



Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>A respondent questioned what a non-habitable room is, and how could an adequate size, height and shape defined.</p> <p>It was questioned how it will be determined if the internal layout is fit for purpose and appropriate, or not.</p> <p>A respondent suggested that car parking facilities for each dwelling needs to be considered in this document, and the number provided should be dependent on the number of bedrooms.</p> <p><b>Housing, Character of Place and Residential Amenity:</b> DM4 Habitable Floorspace for New Developments – Preferred Option</p> <p>The East of England Local Government Association commented that preferred option DM4 supports the East of England Housing Statement 2010-2014.</p> <p>A respondent suggested that 6/7 bedspace or two plus storey accommodation is not needed within a village environment.</p> <p>Several respondents agreed with the minimum standards for new dwellings.</p> <p>Although supporting the option, one respondent commented that there would need to be mechanisms in place to review these standards in light of any guidance changes.</p>	<p>It is stated on page 16 of the document what a ‘habitable room’ does and does not include. Whether an application proposes an adequate size, height and shape for a dwelling would be determined using the criteria and considerations set out in this section.</p> <p>This would be determined using the criteria and considerations set out in this section.</p> <p>The overarching approach to car parking provision is outlined within policy T8 of the Core Strategy Submission Document.</p> <p>Comment noted.</p> <p>Comment noted. Separate to Development Management, the Council propose, through the Core Strategy, that developers be required to have regard to housing need and to consult with the Council’s Housing Strategy team in order to determine the required mix of house types prior to submitting planning applications.</p> <p>Comment noted.</p> <p>Comment noted. The development management team use the most up to date guidance available when determining planning applications.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>Another respondent agreed that new housing should be planned and suitable for modern living, however, they disagreed that it is the purpose of the planning system to dictate what that is, given that accommodation needs have changed markedly over time, and will continue to change in the future. It was suggested that a more appropriate approach would be to retain the first part of DM4, but to produce Supplementary Guidance (which can be amended and updated more quickly) if the Council wish to include specific floor sizes.</p> <p>It was commented that the habitable floorspace standards may not be adequate to accommodate all sections of the community. It was also questioned what proportion of developments are going to be made with larger habitable floorspace to accommodate the needs of those less fortunate to be able to live independently.</p> <p><b>Housing, Character of Place and Residential Amenity:</b> DM4 Habitable Floorspace for New Developments – Alternative Option</p> <p>A respondent stated that it is important that dwellings are of a sufficient quality. It was questioned why ‘should’ is used as opposed to ‘must’ which does not make things mandatory.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The justification for the inclusion of floorspace standards depending on the type of dwellings proposed is provided in the document. This document does not, however, seek to dictate the mix of dwellings to be provided within a development. This should be determined in consultation with the Council’s Housing Strategy team. The document is therefore not considered to be overly restrictive in this regard.</p> <p>In addition to the minimum internal floor areas, developers would also need to take into consideration policy H6 of the Core Strategy Submission Document. This policy states that all dwellings should be built to the Lifetime Homes Standard<sup>22</sup> and on some developments (depending on the proposed number of dwellings) a proportion of dwellings are required to comply with full wheelchair accessibility standards.</p> <p>Simply because the word ‘should’ is used, does not mean that the Council would be prevented from refusing an application that failed to deliver the subject of the ‘should’ within the policy. However, the word ‘must’ could be used instead of ‘should’ in the next iteration of the document to give the policy greater strength, although it should be borne in mind that planning policies are not supposed to be draconian or inflexible.</p>

<sup>22</sup> [www.lifetimehomes.org.uk/](http://www.lifetimehomes.org.uk/)

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p><b>Housing, Character of Place and Residential Amenity: Light Pollution</b></p> <p>In relation to the three forms of light pollution identified, it was questioned whether this is a comprehensive list. It was suggested that the Council could use the same description/explanation/prevention criteria as the organisation 'Environmental Protection UK'<sup>23</sup>.</p> <p>A respondent suggested that Green Belt development will create light pollution which will have a detrimental impact on ecology and wildlife, obscuring vision of the stars, and introducing a suburban feel into rural areas which will thus affect local character and cause stress and anxiety for all those adversely affected.</p> <p>It was commented that any proposed lighting schemes should be required to have timing features to switch off some or all of the lights when there are unlikely to be people out and about. It was suggested that this will both reduce light pollution during those hours but also the energy used.</p>	<p>Suggestion noted. The next iteration will be amended so that it is inline with the Environmental Protection UK criteria. 'Light trespass' will be changed to 'intrusive lighting' and 'glare' will be changed to 'poor lighting to include glare, energy wastage, ecological effects and aesthetics'.</p> <p>Policies are proposed within the Development Management DPD to mitigate light pollution. It is important to note that the Core Strategy only proposes a very small (approximately 1%) of the Green Belt is allowed to be developed. Furthermore, these areas adjoin existing built environments, and sites of ecological importance will not be adversely affected.</p> <p>This suggestion is not considered feasible/suitable in all instances. However, the pre-amble may be further developed to include light thresholds as a guide for different environmental zones (for example between the defined residential and commercial areas, and the countryside). This would therefore make a distinction between these zones and stipulate appropriate lighting levels accordingly.</p>

<sup>23</sup> [www.environmental-protection.org.uk/neighbourhood-nuisance/light-pollution/#wa762](http://www.environmental-protection.org.uk/neighbourhood-nuisance/light-pollution/#wa762)

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p><b>Housing, Character of Place and Residential Amenity: DM5 Light Pollution – Preferred Option</b></p> <p>A respondent stated that they do not see the need for the inclusion of DM5 in the Development Management DPD. It was stated that in line with national guidance the Council's application validation checklist should adequately control the need for a lighting scheme commensurate to the scale of the proposed development.</p> <p>With regard to the first sentence of DM5, it was questioned whether the lighting requirements are relevant to redevelopments, and if not, then it was suggested that this is a missed opportunity to improve existing poor lighting.</p> <p>Another respondent suggested that this option may enable existing problems with light spillage into people's properties to be rectified.</p>	<p>DM5 is intended to ensure that a lighting scheme, if required, is considered as part of the development proposal, and not simply tagged on afterwards. It does not say that details must be submitted together, simply that they form part of the application – if a lighting scheme came in during the life of the application this would not mean that the application would be automatically refused. A separate application for a lighting scheme could still be made after to supersede the one that accompanied the original application – and this would have to be judged on its own merits. For major applications it may be preferable to require the submission of a lighting strategy with an outline application with a lighting scheme provided at the Revised Matters stage. The draft policy may therefore be revised to include reference to a lighting strategy, as above.</p> <p>The lighting requirements within preferred option DM5 would need to be considered as part of the assessment of any planning applications received.</p> <p>The lighting requirements within preferred option DM5 would need to be considered as part of the assessment of any planning applications received.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>A respondent objected to the option stating that it is important to ensure that the information required with any particular planning application is proportionate and relevant to the application being submitted. It was stated that it is impractical as part of a major development scheme, and particularly one made in outline, to submit detailed lighting information. Unless there are significant lighting issues that need to be determined as part of the application itself, it should normally be sufficient to deal with lighting details by condition, and for major schemes to be accompanied by a lighting strategy rather than detailed lighting schemes.</p> <p><b>Housing, Character of Place and Residential Amenity:</b> Telecommunications</p> <p>With respect to paragraph 3 (page 20) it was questioned what ‘other town and village centres’ there are outside Conservation Areas.</p> <p>With respect to paragraph 4 (page 20) it was questioned how ‘substantial masts’, ‘sensitive areas’ and ‘loss of residential or visual amenity’ can be defined.</p> <p>In relation to the siting of masts, it was commented that the decision should be with the community. It was further stated that if the community do not want improved telecommunications they should be able to say no to masts, and that whether the improvement is needed by the community should be considered. The telecommunications companies must provide proof that the majority of residents have requested the improvement. If the telecommunications improvement is required to support emergency services then this must be factored into the evaluation.</p>	<p>It is considered that the best stage to address potential light pollution is at the planning stage. It is acknowledged that any requirement for information to be submitted along with a planning application should be proportional to the proposed development in question. It is not necessarily the case that a detailed lighting scheme will need to accompany an outline application. Therefore a proportionally detailed lighting strategy at the outline stage would be appropriate, and a more detailed lighting scheme should be provided at the Reserved Matters stage when submitting a detailed (full) planning application, as appropriate.</p> <p>There are 10 Conservation Areas in the District as detailed within the Core Strategy Submission Document (page 61). Other town and village centres outside these areas include Hockley, Hullbridge and Rawreth for example.</p> <p>Sensitive areas have been defined within paragraph 5 (page 20) of the document. ‘Substantial’ and ‘loss of residential or visual amenity’ will vary dependent on individual circumstances and context of a proposal.</p> <p>The suitability of locating telecommunication masts in a particular area is determined at the planning application stage. Residents are consulted as per any other planning application, and their views will help determine the outcome of any application.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>With reference to 'their siting should be avoided in the sensitive areas' (paragraph 5 page 20) it was questioned why 'should' is used instead of 'must'.</p> <p>It was suggested that the most important place where a mast should not be erected is in the middle of a village community, near a school, public meeting place etc.</p> <p>It was stated that 'telecommunication' should be inserted into paragraph 6 (page 20) to provide clarification.</p> <p>A respondent suggested that there may be technology constraints on siting such facilities at the time of application, but technology is constantly improving. It was therefore suggested that any application which is granted because of such existing limitations should be given only temporary permission (say 5 years) after which a new permission should be sought based on the then state of technology.</p>	<p>The use of 'should' is generally considered strong enough to resist inappropriate development, and the use of 'must' somewhat draconian. However, the concern is noted and the use of 'must' in future iterations would be appropriate in this case, as it is not envisaged there will be any possible circumstances where siting of masts could be justified in sensitive areas unless there were highly exceptional circumstances.</p> <p>Comment noted. Overarching guidance for telecommunications masts is contained in Planning Policy Guidance 8: Telecommunications (PPG8)<sup>24</sup>.</p> <p>Comment noted.</p> <p>This may be considered to be unreasonable. Overarching guidance for telecommunications masts is contained in Planning Policy Guidance 8: Telecommunications (PPG8).</p>

<sup>24</sup> Planning Policy Guidance 8: Telecommunications (PPG8):  
[www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/ppg8](http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/ppg8)

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p><b>Housing, Character of Place and Residential Amenity: DM6</b> Telecommunications – Preferred Option</p> <p>With reference to criteria (ii) it was suggested that "it is to the benefit of the local community" should be replaced with "it is to the benefit and is requested by the local community". It was also suggested that "to the Council's satisfaction" should be amended to "to the Council's and local community's satisfaction".</p> <p>It was questioned why the community cannot have a say through their Parish Council and Action Groups.</p> <p>In relation to the last paragraph of DM6, a respondent commented that they do not believe the Council will have the amount of detailed knowledge about the telecommunications development to make a sound judgement on operational requirements and technical limitations of the technology. It was suggested that the Council must consult a specialist that is not connected to any telecommunications company who has or potentially will make presentation for development. Furthermore it was commented that the cost of this consultation should be handed over to the proposer to pay.</p> <p>The Mobile Operators Association commented that they note the inclusion of DM6 as a preferred option. They commented that they both welcome the inclusion of this policy to facilitate telecommunications development and support its provisions which they find to be generally in accordance with PPG8.</p>	<p>The suitability of locating telecommunication masts in a particular area is determined at the planning application stage. Residents are consulted as per any other planning application.</p> <p>The community are welcome to express their views on planning applications either individually, or through their Parish Council, residents association or other local action groups.</p> <p>Appropriate technical information must be provided with all applications for telecommunications development which require planning permission. This technical information must be accompanied by an ICNIRP (International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection) certificate, which confirms that the emissions for the proposed installation are in compliance with the ICNIRP exposure guidelines. Additional text may therefore be provided within the next iteration of the document to explain this.</p> <p>Comment noted.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p><b>Housing, Character of Place and Residential Amenity: Local List</b></p> <p>Go-East suggested that the Council might consider that an economic use of an historic building might best secure its long-term care and maintenance.</p> <p>A respondent questioned whether the Council has a list of locally important buildings.</p> <p><b>Housing, Character of Place and Residential Amenity: DM7 Local List – Preferred Option</b></p> <p>A respondent commented that although the policy is being drafted for the Local List, at present there is isn't one in place. It was commented that the sooner the Council reintroduce the Local List the better.</p> <p>It was commented that locally important historic buildings have been lost in the past, with specific reference to Hockley.</p> <p>The value of the Local List was questioned given that it was dropped from Rochford District's development plan in the past, and some buildings have since been lost.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p> <p>The Council is currently preparing the Local List Supplementary Planning Document. Further information can be found on the Council's website.</p> <p>The Council is currently preparing the Local List Supplementary Planning Document. Further information can be found on the Council's website.</p> <p>Comment noted.</p> <p>The Local List formed part of the 1995 Local Plan but was not taken forward in the production of the 2006 Replacement Local Plan as Government guidance at the time indicated that such lists were not considered to be of value. This guidance has since been revised and consequently the Local List is being reintroduced.</p>



Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>Preferred option DM7 was compared to policy UC8 of the 1995 Local Plan, given that it stated that the List would be reviewed on a regular basis and every opportunity would be taken to promote buildings to full Listed status under provision of Planning Act 1990. It was suggested that the option is ambiguous in comparison.</p> <p>A respondent suggested that all 19<sup>th</sup> Century buildings in central Hockley should be saved. It was also commented that the new Local List would be consulted upon, but that this has not yet happened.</p> <p><b>Housing, Character of Place and Residential Amenity: DM7 Local List – Alternative Options</b></p> <p>A respondent commented that they would support a less restrictive approach. It was commented that if a building has real historic or architectural merit then it should be protected under the existing listing mechanisms. Major changes to a building such as an extension can already be controlled through the planning process. It was suggested that attempting to control minor changes will increase costs to the Council and therefore the Council taxpayer and probably increase the costs of the changes to the owner. It was suggested that this could have the perverse affect of repairs and maintenance not being carried out and buildings losing the attraction that they would otherwise have.</p>	<p>The Development Management DPD can only address, and is concerned with, policies which will manage and regulate development coming through planning applications, rather than approaches to be taken outside of this process. Buildings or items of street furniture which are considered to be heritage assets of national importance can be nominated via the English Heritage website<sup>25</sup>.</p> <p>The Council is currently preparing the Local List Supplementary Planning Document. Further information can be found on the Council's website.</p> <p>Although some buildings in the District do not merit being on the national list of buildings, it is recognised that there are numerous buildings and items of street furniture that are locally important to residents in the District. The Local List is therefore being reintroduced.</p>

<sup>25</sup> Nominate a Heritage Asset:  
[www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/protection/process/online-application-form](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/protection/process/online-application-form)

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p><b>Housing, Character of Place and Residential Amenity:</b> Demolition within Conservation Areas</p> <p>A respondent commented that they agree with control over demolition of buildings within Conservation Areas.</p> <p><b>Housing, Character of Place and Residential Amenity:</b> DM9 Development on the edge of Conservation Areas – Preferred Option</p> <p>A respondent objected to this option stating that it will result in unnecessary 'creep' of the Conservation Area. It was questioned how the Council will define how far the edge extends and it was suggested that if areas at the edge need such protection they should be included in the Conservation Area.</p> <p>A respondent commented that development on the edge of Conservation Areas must be restricted.</p> <p><b>Housing, Character of Place and Residential Amenity:</b> Are there any other issues which should be addressed within the Housing, Character of Place and Residential Amenity chapter?</p> <p>A respondent suggested that this chapter should include a policy on community facilities rather than the list proposed in the Allocations DPD. It should also include a policy to deter future applications that have not been agreed as part of the overall plan set.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p> <p>Concerns are noted in respect of the potential for Conservation Areas to 'creep' and it is appreciated that this does raise the issue as to where a line is drawn. However, this policy does not require proposals adjacent to Conservation Areas to meet the same standards as those within the Conservation Area. It simply seeks to ensure that development on the boundary of Conservation Areas has regard to the character of the particular Conservation Area. It is noted, however, that the area this preferred option relates to should be more defined within the next iteration of the document.</p> <p>Comment noted. The preferred option seeks to not simply restrict development on the edge of Conservation Areas, but ensure that Conservation Areas' character is not adversely affected by adjacent development.</p> <p>The protection of existing facilities and the provision of new facilities is a strategic issue which has been addressed within the Core Strategy Submission Document (see the Community Infrastructure, Leisure and Tourism chapter).</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>A respondent commented that the District is already fully developed and new housing should be severely restricted.</p>	<p>The quantity of dwellings to be provided in the future is a strategic issue which has been addressed within the Core Strategy.</p>
<p>A respondent commented that residents of the District do not want Gypsy and Travellers sites in the area.</p>	<p>Gypsy and Traveller accommodation provision is a strategic issue which has been addressed within the Core Strategy, and the specific sites will be identified in the Allocations DPD.</p>
<p><b>The Green Belt and Countryside:</b> Vision</p>	
<p>Essex County Council suggested amendments to the vision.</p>	<p>Suggestions noted. Appropriate amendments may be made in the next iteration of the document.</p>
<p>A respondent commented that the Green Belt areas identified in the Core Strategy for future development are large, and that alternative non-Green Belt should be considered.</p>	<p>The revision of the Green Belt boundary is a strategic issue which has been addressed within the Core Strategy, and the specific sites will be identified in the Allocations DPD.</p>
<p>In relation to the first vision, it was commented that "small areas" should be defined and that not many small locations have been identified.</p>	<p>The location of new development is generally addressed within the Core Strategy Submission Document and more specifically in the Allocations Consultation DPD.</p>
<p>A respondent commented that we must defend and preserve our green open spaces.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
<p>A respondent questioned why Green Belt land should be used for the creation of new jobs (2017), and how Rochford can be suitable for tourists if there is such a high population density (2025).</p>	<p>The submitted Core Strategy proposes that a small proportion of Green Belt land (approximately 1% of the District's total) be reallocated for housing/employment. In the case of employment land, this follows the recommendation of the Employment Land Study. It should be noted that this is being determined through the Core Strategy for Rochford District.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p><b>The Green Belt and Countryside: Objectives</b></p> <p>Essex County Council suggested amendments to the objectives.</p> <p>Comments were made with regard to the identification of sites in the West Rochford general location for development.</p> <p>One respondent objected stating that the objective in relation to Green Belt land-take should be amended to accord with PPG2 requirements for Green Belt reviews.</p> <p>Another respondent commented that there should be a commitment to protecting and extending public footpaths.</p> <p><b>The Green Belt and Countryside: Introduction</b></p> <p>A respondent commented that they agree with comments on pages 28 and 29. It was also commented that the importance of agricultural land in rural areas must be remembered and land should be used for agriculture.</p>	<p>Suggestions noted. Appropriate amendments may be made in the next iteration of the document.</p> <p>The revision of the Green Belt boundary is a strategic issue which has been addressed within the Core Strategy, and the specific sites will be identified in the Allocations DPD.</p> <p>The revision of the Green Belt boundary is a strategic issue which has been addressed within the Core Strategy, and the specific sites will be identified in the Allocations DPD.</p> <p>Comment noted. Essex County Council is responsible for public footpaths.</p> <p>Comment noted.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p><b>The Green Belt and Countryside:</b> The Green Belt and Countryside</p> <p>A respondent commented that it is recognised in both the Core Strategy and emerging Site Allocations document that the release of some Green Belt land will be necessary in order to meet the District's housing requirements. This is currently not reflected in the Development Management DPD. Whilst it is understood that the contents of the Core Strategy and the strategic housing sites identified in the document provides the overarching policies direction for Green Belt management in the District the Development Management DPD needs to be brought in line with these policies in order to reflect the changes that are proposed to the Green Belt.</p> <p>A respondent commented that they agree with comments on pages 28 and 29. It was also commented that the importance of agricultural land in rural areas must be remembered and land should be used for agriculture.</p> <p><b>The Green Belt and Countryside:</b> Landscape Character</p> <p>A respondent commented that they agree with comments on pages 28 and 29. It was also commented that the importance of agricultural land in rural areas must be remembered and land should be used for agriculture.</p>	<p>The reallocation of Green Belt land for new development is addressed within the Core Strategy Submission Document and the Allocations Consultation DPD.</p> <p>Comment noted</p> <p>Comment noted</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p><b>The Green Belt and Countryside:</b> DM10 Existing Businesses in the Green Belt – Preferred Option</p> <p>Go East commented that for DM10 (i)., the Council might reconsider replacing the term 'valuable' agricultural land with 'best and most versatile' and include a clear link to Paragraph.28 of PPS7 Sustainable Development in Rural Areas.</p> <p>Rochford Chamber of Trade supports the preferred option.</p> <p>Natural England is generally supportive of Policy DM10. However, it was commented that in addition to considering the effects of additional generated traffic on the highway network, the council may wish to consider the possible effects on the capacity of other infrastructure, especially sewerage and power supply. Increased numbers of persons living or working at rural locations may exceed the capacity of existing sewage treatment systems, thus resulting in pollution or a need for upgrading. Increased power demands may require upgrading of local transformers and supply cables. Such upgrades may themselves have significant landscape or ecological impacts.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The term 'valuable' could be amended as suggested in the next iteration of the document. However, it is not considered to be appropriate to reference specific paragraphs of, or repeat, national policy within local policies. The guidance within national policy would have to be considered in any case in the determination of planning applications, as appropriate. In terms of expanding on national planning policy in the interests of conserving agricultural land and the openness of the Green Belt as far as practicable, however, it may be appropriate to insert an additional point in the draft policy to ensure that the availability of vacant units in relation to the business proposing an extension should be taken into consideration.</p> <p>Comment noted.</p> <p>Comments noted. Service providers will be consulted on individual proposals.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p><b>The Green Belt and Countryside:</b> Rural Diversification</p> <p>In relation to green tourism a respondent commented that at present Hall Road provides an attractive gateway to one of the most picturesque historic towns in South East Essex and the proposals for large scale development in Hall Road does not accord with the Green Tourism aims.</p> <p><b>The Green Belt and Countryside:</b> DM11 Rural Diversification – Preferred Option</p> <p>Rochford Chamber of Trade supports the preferred option.</p> <p>A respondent objected to this option, and commented that there is no firm policy for the protection of agricultural land. The existing policy in the Local Plan 2006 at paragraph 8.16 states that the Council recognises that the best and most versatile agricultural land defined as Grades 1, 2 or 3a is a valuable natural resource for the future. It is important that as a natural resource it is protected for the future. It was further commented that this policy should be retained, and the proposed wording in DM11 and DM13 is inadequate to ensure the safeguarding of agricultural land falling into the best and most versatile category.</p> <p>Natural England is generally supportive of Policy DM11. However, it was commented that in addition to considering the effects of additional generated traffic on the highway network, the council may wish to consider the possible effects on the capacity of other infrastructure, especially sewerage and power supply. Increased numbers of persons living or working at rural locations may exceed the capacity of existing sewage treatment systems, thus resulting in pollution or a need for upgrading. Increased power demands may require upgrading of local transformers and supply cables. Such upgrades may themselves have significant landscape or ecological impacts.</p>	<p>The revision of the Green Belt boundary is a strategic issue which has been addressed within the Core Strategy, and the specific sites will be identified in the Allocations DPD.</p> <p>Comment noted.</p> <p>Policy DM11 requires consideration be given to the impact on the agricultural potential of land when assessing proposals. Additional explanatory text could be provided in the next iteration to make clear that this consideration is related to Agricultural Land Classification. A policy that seeks to restrict any development on Grade 1, 2 or 3a agricultural land, regardless of other factors, is considered an overly restrictive and draconian approach. It would also be contrary to government policy seeking to promote agricultural diversification (e.g. PPS4).</p> <p>Comments noted. Service providers will be consulted on individual proposals.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p><b>The Green Belt and Countryside:</b> DM12 Conversion of Existing Agricultural Buildings in the Green Belt – Preferred Option</p> <p>Go-East commented in respect of DM12, that the Council might consider whether there is a relationship with Policy DM7 Local List.</p> <p>Rochford Chamber of Trade commented that whilst the Council refer to PPS4 and PPG2, current policy seems to ignore PPG7. Policy PPG7 does not rule out the conversion of agricultural premises for business or residential use. Therefore, to encourage skills and growth in the rural economy, we support a less restrictive approach as above. We see this as being potentially good for the local economy both in terms of new business and providing local work for construction and building supplies. It was further commented that with regard to listed buildings, each case should be judged on its merits.</p>	<p>DM12 considers the conversion of agricultural buildings in the Green Belt, whereas DM7 considers how buildings contained on the Local List Supplementary Planning Document (once it is adopted) will be managed through the planning process. It is acknowledged that some agricultural buildings may be on the adopted Local List, and as such, these two policies (once the Development Management DPD is adopted) would need to be considered and balanced in the determination of any planning applications, as appropriate. However, it may be appropriate to include a reference to locally listed buildings in the next iteration of the document.</p> <p>Planning Policy Statement 4 (PPS4) published in December 2009 replaces the economic development sections of Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas (PPS7).<sup>26</sup></p>

<sup>26</sup> Further information can be found at [www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/planningpolicystatement4](http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/planningpolicystatement4)



Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>A respondent commented that whilst it is recognised that changes in height may be necessary, there needs to be some way of controlling such changes. Additional text was suggested: "the proposed change will not be to the detriment of the wider local landscape". In this way a change which would affect people's enjoyment of a particular vista could be controlled whereas a change without such a backdrop would be allowed. The key aspect is the impact on the wider landscape rather than the building itself.</p> <p>Natural England is generally supportive of Policy DM12. However, it was commented that in addition to considering the effects of additional generated traffic on the highway network, the council may wish to consider the possible effects on the capacity of other infrastructure, especially sewerage and power supply. Increased numbers of persons living or working at rural locations may exceed the capacity of existing sewage treatment systems, thus resulting in pollution or a need for upgrading. Increased power demands may require upgrading of local transformers and supply cables. Such upgrades may themselves have significant landscape or ecological impacts.</p> <p><b>The Green Belt and Countryside:</b> DM13 Green Tourism – Preferred Option</p> <p>Essex County Council noted that under Tourism Opportunities in the Green Belt and Countryside the historic environment is not mentioned. The Historic Environment is as important as the impact on the natural environment by the tourism opportunities. It is recommended that an additional point is added to DM13 Green Tourism – Preferred Option which states the impact on the historic environment.</p>	<p>Whilst the option does not explicitly refer to the impact of a change in height of an agricultural building on the local landscape, the impact that any increase in height would have on the openness of the Green Belt, as per Planning Policy Guidance 2: Green Belts (PPG2), would need to be considered in any case.</p> <p>Comments noted. Service providers will be consulted on individual proposals.</p> <p>Comment noted. It is recognised that the historic environment is an important consideration in the promotion of green tourism in the District, and that the sensitivity of the different areas should be taken into consideration in the determination of planning applications. The historic environment, and in particular the findings of the Rochford District Historic Environment Characterisation Project (2006), would be appropriate additions to the next iteration of the document.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>Rochford Chamber of Trade commented that text of the last paragraph of this option: "appropriate locations should not result in agglomeration of similar facilities" could result in uneconomically viable and restricted businesses. It was further stated that if the Council is serious about encouraging green tourism, it must let the market decide e.g. Southend Sea Front is known for Hotels and B&amp;B accommodation. This grouping ensures its economic viability. Restrictive policy constrains it.</p> <p>A respondent commented that at present Hall Road provides an attractive gateway to one of the most picturesque historic towns in South East Essex and the proposals for large scale development in Hall Road does not accord with the green tourism aims.</p> <p>Natural England is generally supportive of Policy DM13. However, it was commented that the council may wish to consider the possible effects of additional generated traffic on the highway network and effects on the capacity of other infrastructure, especially sewerage and power supply, as per Policies DM10, DM11 and DM12. Increased numbers of persons living or working at rural locations may exceed the capacity of existing sewage treatment systems, thus resulting in pollution or a need for upgrading. Increased power demands may require upgrading of local transformers and supply cables. Such upgrades may themselves have significant landscape or ecological impacts.</p>	<p>Concerns are acknowledged. However, green tourism – in particular the type of green tourism that is being promoted through the Council's Local Development Framework – is fundamentally different from the more intensive forms of tourism development such as Southend Sea Front. It is important that tourism development does not undermine the very reasons for it being attractive for tourism in the first place, i.e. it does not adversely affect the rural character of the area. Furthermore, it is necessary to balance policies promoting tourism, with those that protect the openness of the Green Belt, bearing in mind that the vast majority of the District's rural land is within the Green Belt.</p> <p>Any development in West Rochford will be required to have regard to the character of the surrounding area, and impact on the landscape.</p> <p>Comments noted. Service providers will be consulted on individual proposals.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p><b>The Green Belt and Countryside:</b> DM14 Equestrian Facilities – Preferred Option</p> <p>A respondent commented that they would favour equestrian developments in the Green Belt rather than residential developments. It was commented that there are much greater restrictions on the number of horses and stables that can be put on a Green Belt location, whereas residential development in the Green Belt is proposed.</p> <p>A respondent supported this option stating that they generally support controls over such developments. However, it was suggested that additional text should be added so that such developments would not result in horses needing to use main roads to reach bridleways, etc. This will reduce the risks to horses and riders from traffic as well as delays to traffic using the main roads.</p> <p><b>The Green Belt and Countryside:</b> Playing Pitches and Other Leisure and Recreational Activities</p> <p>Sport England objected to this section of the document. They stated that while reference to using Sport England's design guidance for informing the assessments of planning applications is welcomed it is considered that the reference to ancillary facilities not exceeding the minimum size in Sport England's current guidance is too prescriptive and not futureproof. They stated that their guidance is guidance, not standards or regulations and is subject to change over time as individual sports change their requirements. Furthermore, there may be cases where the provision of larger than minimum sized facility is of benefit to the user/community and can meet the criteria in DM15. The last sentence should be deleted therefore.</p>	<p>The revision of the Green Belt boundary to meet the District's future housing needs is a strategic issue which has been addressed within the Core Strategy, and the specific sites will be identified in the Allocations DPD.</p> <p>Comments and suggestions noted. However, point v) of the preferred option would take this into consideration. It states that "the proposal is well related to existing or proposed bridleways and will not cause conflicts between equestrians, and have no adverse effect on the road or highway safety of the area".</p> <p>The use of the Sport England minimum standards for ancillary facilities as a maximum is considered appropriate as there is a need to balance the need for development of ancillary facilities with the need to preserve the openness of the Green Belt and character of the countryside. In respect of the potential for guidance to change, whilst the preamble makes reference to specific guidance for the purposes of information, the Preferred Option does not make such reference. Therefore, if adopted in such a form, policy could be implemented having regard to whatever the most up-to-date guidance at the time of application was. This could be more explicit in the next iteration of the document.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p><b>The Green Belt and Countryside:</b> DM15 Playing Pitches and Other Leisure and Recreational Activities – Preferred Option</p> <p>Sport England objected to this option. They stated that if the policy is to use the Playing Pitch Strategy SPD for informing the acceptability of proposals it is important that it is kept up-to-date. To provide more flexibility, it is requested that criterion (i) be amended to allow applicants to be able to satisfactorily demonstrate that there is a deficit in supply to address the potential scenario that the areas of deficit identified in the PPS are no longer up-to-date. Without this, the policy will not be flexible enough to address changing circumstances if the PPS is not kept up-to-date.</p> <p><b>The Green Belt and Countryside:</b> Extensions to Dwellings in the Green Belt</p> <p>A respondent objected to this section. They stated that by imposing this 25% increase in floorspace proposal RDC will be encouraging Green Belt property owners to exercise the permitted development rights rather than applying for planning permission which allows the Council an element of control over design. Unless a more generous approach is adopted the Council will have less say in the design of extensions.</p>	<p>It is acknowledged that it is important that policy allows for the applicant to demonstrate there is a deficit in supply, to allow for cases where the Playing Pitch Strategy may be out of date. Criterion (i) of the Preferred Option already allows for this with the wording “they are proposed where a deficit in supply has been identified”. Explanatory text could be added to clarify the opportunity for applicants to demonstrate a deficit in supply themselves.</p> <p>Comment noted. The difficulty the Local Planning Authority face in this instance is that changes to Permitted Development Rights in 2008 now allow for extensions to be added to dwellings in the Green Belt which are contrary to local and national planning policy on development in Green Belts (PPG2), without the need to obtain planning permission. However, there are other factors in addition to floorspace which will result in extensions requiring planning permission. Where planning permission is required, it is important that the Local Planning Authority have due consideration to the impact of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p><b>The Green Belt and Countryside:</b> DM16 Extensions to Dwellings in the Green Belt – Preferred Option</p> <p>A respondent objected to this option. It was suggested that the policy should be to extend dwellings up to maximum floor area achievable with permitted development rights. This policy is counterproductive as it will encourage owners to use their Permitted Development Rights to build flat roofed extensions. This will result in buildings with vastly increased floorspace and of unsightly appearance. Dwellings with smaller footprints and steeper pitched roofs are far more traditional, far more attractive visually and less detrimental to the Green Belt.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The difficulty the Local Planning Authority face in this instance is that changes to Permitted Development Rights in 2008 now allow for extensions to be added to dwellings in the Green Belt which are contrary to local and national planning policy on development in Green Belts (PPG2), without the need to obtain planning permission. However, there are other factors in addition to volume which will result in extensions requiring planning permission. Where planning permission is required, it is important that the Local Planning Authority have due consideration to the impact of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt. In a recent case (APP/B1550/A/11/2146618), an appeal which involved the replacement of a bungalow with a much larger bungalow than permitted under current local policy was dismissed, as significant weight was attached to the harm the proposal would have on the openness and visual amenity of the Green Belt and to the character and appearance of the area generally. However, in relation to the fallback position of the applicant (where the existing bungalow could be extended through permitted development rights), it was considered that the appeal scheme would not have any less impact on openness than the fallback position. Moreover, the appeal scheme would result in greater harm to the visual amenity of the Green Belt than would result from the fallback position. The fallback position is not therefore a factor which weighs in support of the appeal. The appeal was therefore dismissed.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>A respondent objected to this option, stating that the rules are so disproportionate – existing dwellings in the Green Belt can't extend more than 25% but we have a number of new builds in the Green Belt that have very large footprints to start with. There is no consistency in any areas of our District's Green Belt dwellings.</p> <p>Another respondent objected to this option, stating that 25% is less than the current policy and so it will encourage people to use their permitted development rights rather than apply for planning permission. It was also commented that it will encourage extensions as opposed to using roof space, which means a bigger footprint on the ground.</p> <p><b>The Green Belt and Countryside:</b> DM16 Extensions to Dwellings in the Green Belt – Alternative Options</p> <p>A respondent supported the second option for the reason given in the first paragraph. It was commented that to then say that there is potential for immeasurable extensions has no basis. The Council should concentrate on ensuring that dwellings are of a good standard of design and that high quality finishing materials are used as this would serve to protect the character of the Green Belt more effectively than blanket restrictive policies.</p>	<p>National planning policy on development within the Green Belt (PPG2) states that an extension to a dwelling in the Green Belt is not inappropriate provided it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. As such, it is considered appropriate to have a policy which refers to percentage floorspace of the original dwelling. The impact on the openness of the Green Belt would have to be taken into consideration in any case.</p> <p>The difficulty the Local Planning Authority face in this instance is that changes to Permitted Development Rights in 2008 now allow for extensions to be added to dwellings in the Green Belt which are contrary to local and national planning policy on development in Green Belts (PPG2), without the need to obtain planning permission. However, there are other factors in addition to volume which will result in extensions requiring planning permission. Where planning permission is required, it is important that the Local Planning Authority give due consideration to the impact of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt. It is considered unlikely that this policy will result in owners choosing to add additional footprint to dwellings in the Green Belt instead of utilising existing roofspace.</p> <p>The Council acknowledge the need to ensure dwellings are of a good standard and a good design. However, it must also seek to preserve the openness of the Green Belt.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p><b>The Green Belt and Countryside:</b> Agricultural, Forestry and Other Occupational Dwellings</p> <p>Go-East (page 43) suggest that the Council might include a reference to Annex A of PPS7 Sustainable Development in Rural Areas when describing the functional and viability tests for determining applications for agricultural dwellings.</p> <p>Go East (page 44) note that the Council have recognised the national policy requirement for dwellings to be commensurate with functional requirements. It was suggested that the Council might explain how the figure of 175sq.m has been derived.</p> <p><b>The Green Belt and Countryside:</b> DM20 The Replacement or Rebuild of Existing Dwellings in the Green Belt – Preferred Option</p> <p>A respondent objected to this option stating that they strongly disagree with wording contained in the pre-amble that a dwelling with an unsound roof constitutes a derelict property. The Council view would not be upheld by case law. It was suggested that it would be more beneficial to the appearance of the Green Belt if the Council was less restrictive in terms of increase in floorspace and roof height. Steeper pitched roofs are more typical of the Essex vernacular and far more attractive visually.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p> <p>The reasoning behind the 175sq.m. figure is given in the first paragraph of page 44. This may, however, be explained further in the next iteration of the document.</p> <p>The use of an unsound roof as an example of what constitutes dereliction does not exclude other factors which would render a property derelict. As summarised by Blackhall (2005, p.113) in <i>Trustees of the Earl of Lichfield's Estate v Secretary of State</i> [1985] JPL 251, "it was found that there must be a structure which is sufficiently intact to warrant the description of a dwelling, and not merely ruins of a former dwelling. If there is insufficient structure at the outset, it will take more than the permitted development works of 'enlargement, improvement or other alteration' to make it into a dwelling". Furthermore Blackhall notes that "the problem of dereliction is inextricably linked to the question of abandonment" (2005, p.115). The question of what constitutes abandonment was tested in <i>Hartley v Minister of Housing and Local Government</i> [1970] 1 QB 413. In this case it was held that a building or</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>Another respondent objected to this option, stating that it is not clear enough to provide meaningful feedback and just raises lots of questions.</p> <p><b>The Green Belt and Countryside:</b> DM21 Extension of Domestic Gardens in the Green Belt – Preferred Option</p> <p>One respondent objected to this option. Two respondents questioned the reasoning behind restricting the use of Green Belt/agricultural land for garden areas when residential development is proposed.</p> <p><b>The Green Belt and Countryside:</b> Are there any other issues which should be addressed within the Green Belt and Countryside chapter?</p>	<p>land becomes abandoned when it “has remained unused for a considerable period of time, in such circumstances that a reasonable man might conclude that the previous use had been abandoned”. The test of whether a building or land becomes abandoned is a question of ‘fact and degree’. Furthermore as set out in the appeal for refusal of a planning application (04/01103/FUL) which was subsequently dismissed, it was stated that “The Courts have generally held that, in determining whether or not a use has been abandoned, there are four relevant matters to take into account: (1) the physical condition of the building; (2) how long ago the use ceased; (3) whether there has been an intervening use; and (4) evidence as to the owner’s intentions regarding the resumption of the use”. In addition, roofs pitched at about 50 degrees are in keeping with the Essex vernacular. This issue must be weighed with the need to protect the openness of the Green Belt. The Preferred Option does not require a reduction in height for replacement buildings, and so there is no reason why a replacement building of the same height should be of an inferior design that responds less well to its surroundings. It would be appropriate for this position to be further explained in the next iteration of the document.</p> <p>The proposed approach to replacement buildings is considered to be clear.</p> <p>As set out within the document, garden extensions can be harmful to the visual appearance and openness of the Green Belt, particularly where it leads to the erection of additional domestic buildings, fences, structures and other domestic paraphernalia.</p>



Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>A respondent objected, stating that an additional policy is required to deal with major developed sites in the Green Belt, including Baltic Wharf (and adjoining areas). That policy to provide a flexible and pragmatic policy framework for the future development/redevelopment of the site in accordance with Annex C of PPG2.</p> <p>A respondent commented that Green Belt land must be protected and that agricultural land must remain as agricultural land.</p> <p><b>Environmental Issues: Vision</b></p> <p>Essex County Council suggested amendments to the vision with reference to the historic environment.</p> <p>A respondent stated that they have addressed the matter of realistic and achievable BREEAM/CSH objectives in their representations to the Core Strategy, and that any amendments to the Core Strategy arising from the Inspector's findings on these matters should be reflected in a revised vision.</p> <p><b>Environmental Issues: Objectives</b></p> <p>A respondent questioned whether the cumulative effects of developments can be accounted for so that traffic generated by all developments (small and large) that may pass through a particular junction/street can be mitigated before an AQMA is ever needed.</p>	<p>The Council's approach to Baltic Wharf as a Major Developed Site in the Green Belt has been set out in the Core Strategy Submission Document and subject to independent examination. The Core Strategy will set out the strategic approach to Baltic Wharf.</p> <p>Comment noted.</p> <p>Suggestions noted. However, historic environment is covered elsewhere.</p> <p>Comment noted. The Development Management DPD will be required to conform to the Core Strategy.</p> <p>Comment noted. It is considered appropriate to insert an additional policy within the Development Management DPD in relation to air quality. This policy should refer to the submission of an air quality assessment alongside a transport assessment for developments over a certain number of units to take into account the cumulative impact of development during the plan period on air quality.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>It was suggested that economic development not supported by infrastructure (transport) and in conflict with Government policy (80% reduction in carbon emissions) needs to be modified.</p> <p>A respondent objected, questioning how it will be known if the objective of reducing carbon emissions has been achieved. If they are not already available, baseline measurements need to be made at various locations throughout the District (including near the airport), and repeated and reported annually. These measurements should include noise, air quality and carbon emissions. A commitment to the Government's carbon emission targets should be given.</p> <p><b>Environmental Issues: Introduction</b></p> <p>A respondent requested an increase in the height of the sea wall and corresponding defences.</p> <p>Go East commented that the Council's commitment to direct development away from areas of flood risk is welcome. National policy directs development to sites of lowest probability of flooding. It was suggested that the Council might take advice from the Environment Agency whether the Council's proposed construction of policy (especially inclusion of "as far as practicable") is in conformity with PPS25.</p>	<p>Comment noted. It is important that there is a balance between environmental, social and economic issues and Sustainability Appraisals are used to consider such issues.</p> <p>Noise mapping and air quality monitoring is currently undertaken throughout the District. House condition surveys are also undertaken. In relation to carbon emissions the Council has signed up to the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change<sup>27</sup>. By signing this Local Authorities will seek to address the causes and potential effects of climate change. Furthermore the emerging Core Strategy includes a policy relating to Code for Sustainable Homes Standards (which is a strategic issue) and seeks to implement standards above the minimum required.</p> <p>This is not a development management issue. The Council is not responsible for the management of sea defences along the coast. This is the responsibility of the Environment Agency.</p> <p>Comment noted. It should be recognised that PPS25<sup>28</sup> seeks to direct development away from areas of flood risk, but does not seek to prevent all forms of development within any such areas.</p>

<sup>27</sup> The Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change:  
[www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/nottingham](http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/nottingham)

<sup>28</sup> Planning Policy Statement 25: Development and Flood Risk (PPS25):  
[www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/planningsystem/planningpolicy/planningpolicystatements/pps25/](http://www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/planningsystem/planningpolicy/planningpolicystatements/pps25/)

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>A respondent commented that they agree with the statements regarding Environmental Issues on pages 51 – 56.</p> <p><b>Environmental Issues:</b> DM24 Other Important Landscape Features – Preferred Option</p> <p>A respondent objected to this option stating that it is too weak to ensure the protection of valuable habitats. It should have a requirement for developers to provide full environmental impact and protected species surveys to ensure adequate protection and such surveys must not be carried out during winter months. It should also include a requirement that where a development abuts a protected hedgerow that an appropriate buffer zone is provided. An example of the need for this requirement is Ironwell Lane.</p> <p>It was commented that old Orchards/Fruit trees is not included, and it was commented that it is recognised that there is a need to preserve these, as so few now remain. Concern was expressed regarding the loss of rarer varieties of apple and pear trees, and it was stated that fruit trees are not subject to tree preservation orders, so they have no real protection in the planning system, but old established fruit trees can be very valuable for wildlife.</p> <p>It was commented that within the townscape there are features which can be valuable visually, as well as to flora and fauna. Concern was expressed that there is no protection e.g. within old established gardens for habitats/features which can have wildlife value other than TPOs when redevelopment takes places. It was suggested that thought should be given to how such features might be retained within a new development.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p> <p>National policy (PPS9 and its companion guide) makes clear that applicants are required to submit adequate information on ecological impacts with planning applications, and that Local Planning Authorities may refuse applications if information provided is inadequate. It is also important to note that the policy in question is concerned with landscape features – areas of ecological importance are protected through other policies, primarily within the emerging Core Strategy, as well as national/international legislation.</p> <p>Orchards/fruit trees may fall into the bracket of plantations and woodland (criterion (iii)) or potentially linear tree belts (criterion (ii)). It is not recommended that the Local Planning Authority attempts to list particular species of trees, as firstly, they will not always constitute important landscape features and, secondly, listing certain species will imply those not listed are not capable of being important landscape features themselves. However, it may be appropriate to insert an additional policy in relation to trees and woodlands to ensure their conservation, where appropriate and practicable, and suitable mitigation measures.</p> <p>Comment noted. It is not uncommon for individual features within existing domestic gardens (e.g. trees) to be protected by planning conditions on planning applications. This could be incorporated into the policy for the next iteration of the plan.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>A respondent supported this option. It was commented that in developing proposals for a site it is important to consider the various landscape elements and consider the contribution to the landscape but also the potential impact to develop a site efficiently (e.g. a single tree could affect access on to a site and its development potential). Therefore, the development of sites should consider the importance of landscape features (e.g. hedgerows), which could be removed in order to improve the layout and design of the resultant development. However, the loss of any landscape feature should be mitigated by the inclusion of additional landscape features, which should include a range of native species to enhance the areas flora and fauna. This will ensure that development have a positive affect on the landscape character of the area.</p> <p>A respondent objected to the option. The second sentence of this policy seems to imply that all of the features that follow are necessarily of importance for fauna or flora, which of course will not always be the case e.g. not all hedgerows or ponds are necessarily always of material nature conservation interest. If the intention of the policy is to protect these features where they are of nature conservation importance, then to avoid ambiguity the sentence should state ... "The Council will protect the following landscape features from loss or damage where they are of importance for fauna and flora, when considering proposals:" There is potentially a contradiction between the first and the second paragraphs, with the first paragraph appearing to state a categorical position on protection from loss or damage, and the second paragraph (correctly in our view) noting that an exception will exist where there is appropriate mitigation. To aid clarity, it may in fact be easiest to delete the second sentence in the first paragraph entirely, and place the list of features after the second paragraph. Policy could usefully be amended to avoid repetition and aid clarity.</p>	<p>Comments noted.</p> <p>It is not the intention of the policy to imply that all examples of all the features listed are of equal importance to the character of the landscape. As set out in the second paragraph, there will be exceptions where mitigation measures are appropriate. The wording in the next iteration should ensure that no contradiction is implied.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p><b>Environmental Issues:</b> Are there any other issues which should be addressed within the Environmental chapter?</p> <p>The Environment Agency objected commenting that they think that the Council should consider a policy setting out requirements for on-site environmental enhancements including opportunities to create/enhance/restore habitats.</p> <p>Natural England commented that in the first bullet point under "By 2025" in the vision, it should be noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Natural England's PSA target (set by Defra) is to achieve &gt;95% by area of SSSI land in 'favourable' or 'unfavourable recovering' condition by the end of 2010, therefore they would expect the stated target to have been achieved well before 2025;</li> <li>(2) 'favourable' is the 'best' condition – there is no 'better condition'.</li> </ul> <p><b>Transport: Vision</b></p> <p>Rochford Chamber of Trade noted that on page 57 there is mention of the Transport Strategy Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). This document has not been issued as a consultation or in draft form. The timetable for this document was queried.</p> <p>A respondent suggested that with respect to the first vision for 2025, public transport requires investment annually and it was suggested that developers would not be willing to do this.</p>	<p>Although draft Policy ENV1 of the Core Strategy Submission Document seeks to “maintain, restore and enhance sites of international, national and local nature conservation importance” (page 77) as a strategic document it does not refer to local biodiversity (with the exception of designated Local Wildlife Sites). As such it would be appropriate for the next iteration of DM24 to include requirements for on-site environmental enhancements including opportunities to create/enhance/restore habitats.</p> <p>Comments noted.</p> <p>The Transport Strategy SPD will be prepared and consulted upon. The timetable for this will be contained within an updated Local Development Scheme.</p> <p>Comment noted. It is important to note that not all development will take place at once, and it will in fact be phased over time.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>A respondent questioned what the South Essex Rapid Transit System is (2017).</p> <p><b>Transport: Objectives</b></p> <p>A respondent questioned whether the cumulative effects of developments can be accounted for so that traffic generated by all developments (small and large) that may pass through a particular junction/street can be mitigated before an AQMA is ever needed.</p> <p>A respondent objected and questioned what actions are to be taken to reduce lorry traffic particularly in busy periods?</p>	<p>Essex County Council, in partnership with the unitary authorities of Southend and Thurrock, have developed a programme for the delivery of a rapid transit system for South Essex – South Essex Rapid Transit (SERT). SERT will comprise a network of corridors connecting the four main hubs, key development sites, major services and providing connections between the radial routes. The four main hubs are Basildon, Thurrock, Southend and London Gateway Port. It involves bus-based vehicles travelling on a combination of specially dedicated routes and existing roads where SERT vehicles are given priority over other traffic. Further information can be found within the Core Strategy Submission Document (page 106).</p> <p>Strategic impacts of development on highways is considered through the Core Strategy in conjunction with Essex County Council Highways. In addition Supplementary Planning Documents are being produced to provide further details on guidance. However, it is considered appropriate to insert an additional policy within the Development Management DPD in relation to air quality. This policy should refer to the submission of an air quality assessment alongside a transport assessment for developments over a certain number of units to take into account the cumulative impact of development during the plan period on air quality</p> <p>The reduction of lorry traffic is not a matter for the Local Planning Authority per se. However, the Core Strategy proposes new employment areas be developed in areas with good access to the A127, thereby reducing the need for commercial traffic to travel through the local highway network. As this matter is addressed in the Core Strategy, it is not repeated in the Development Management DPD.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>A respondent objected and questioned in what way can the rail network that runs through RDC be utilised to reduce car and lorry usage?</p>	<p>The Core Strategy proposes to direct development to areas with good access to the District's train stations, includes plans for enhancements to be made to the District's town centres which contain three of the District's train stations. A new train station has been developed at London Southend Airport. The London Southend Airport and Environs Joint Area Action Plan (JAAP) will set out how development will take place to ensure this station is appropriately utilised. As these matters are all addressed within the Core Strategy or JAAP, they are not repeated in the Development Management DPD.</p>
<p>A respondent objected and questioned what financial incentives to use public transport (including rail) can be given e.g. subsidies to fares at peak period?</p>	<p>Public transport fares are not an issue over which the Local Planning Authority has control. However, the Local Planning Authority may require developers to make financial contributions towards the infrastructure for which their developments generate a need. The Core Strategy proposes that developers be required to make financial contributions towards public transport enhancements. As this matter is addressed in the Core Strategy, it is not repeated in the Development Management DPD.</p>
<p>A respondent objected and questioned what other methods, as well as action against house and town centre parking, might be adopted to make car usage more difficult e.g. toll, congestion charge etc.</p>	<p>The Council, through various proposed policies in the Local Development Framework, is focussed on making alternatives to the private car more viable, as opposed to making car use more difficult. The Local Planning Authority does not have the power to introduce charges for using the highway network and such an approach would be unlikely to be appropriate in Rochford District (where reliance on the private car is high) in any case.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p><b>Transport:</b> Introduction</p> <p>Essex County Council commented that the Document would benefit from an additional section of supporting text together with an additional policy that specifically addresses the creation of safe direct walking and cycling routes to schools and other community facilities. Essex County Council would welcome early discussion with the District Council with the aim of producing jointly agreed text for such a section.</p> <p>Essex County Council commented that the supporting text should be expanded to note that they are the local highway authority and they have a set of highways and transport specific Development Management policies. They also commented that the supporting text to DM25 should note that Essex County Council's 'Parking Standards: Design and Good Practice (2009)' includes guidance related not only to private cars but also to 'Blue Badge' users, cyclists, motorcyclists and commercial vehicles.</p> <p>A respondent questioned where funding will come from for important transport issues.</p> <p><b>Transport:</b> DM25 Parking Standards – Preferred Option</p> <p>Rochford Chamber of Trade commented that in order to attract and keep business in the district, maximum car parking standards for key trip destinations should be relaxed. It was commented that by enforcing this restriction we are directing shoppers out of the district, and that the public will go where there is car parking. This policy is driving out business development to neighbouring districts, increases car use and congestion.</p>	<p>Comment noted. Whilst the Council may not repeat national policies within its own Local Development Framework, there may be opportunity to include text specific to the District. The Council will discuss work with Essex County Council to explore such possibilities.</p> <p>Comment noted. The introductory text for the chapter and the preamble to the Preferred Option DM25 on parking standards will be amended accordingly within the next iteration of the document.</p> <p>The Core Strategy addresses the issue of funding for infrastructure.</p> <p>A balance needs to be struck between the provision of adequate car parking and encouraging people to use public transport. The overarching guidance contained within national planning policy must also be considered. The approach set out in this discussion and consultation document conforms with the approach outlined in the Core Strategy Submission Document (page109-110) and Planning Policy Guidance 13: Transport reissued on 3 January 2011<sup>29</sup>.</p>

<sup>29</sup> Planning Policy Guidance 13: Transport:  
[www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/ppg13](http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/ppg13)



Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>A respondent commented that the parking standard for flatted development of one space per flat is inadequate. It was suggested that the planning authority should lobby the County Council and the government to produce a more generous parking standard for flats (at least one and a half spaces per flat).</p>	<p>As stated within the discussion and consultation document (page 59-60), the Council expressed its intention to adopt the parking standards document produced by Essex County Council which accords with the Council's approach to car parking provision as set out in the Core Strategy Submission Document (page 109-110). The Council has now adopted the 'Parking Standards Design and Good Practice Supplementary Planning Document (Adopted December 2010)' which states that "Dwellings are predominantly travel origins as opposed to destinations. Previously parking standards have attempted to reduce car use by restricting parking spaces at origin and destinations. It is now recognised that providing a reduced number of parking spaces at a travel origin does not discourage people from owning a car. Therefore parking standards for origins should be used as a minimum standard. For travel destinations the standard will continue to be a maximum" (page 63). Further information can be found on the Council's website<sup>30</sup>.</p>

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<sup>30</sup> Parking Standards Design and Good Practice Supplementary Planning Document (Adopted December 2010):  
[www.rochford.gov.uk/planning/policy/local\\_development\\_framework/supplementary\\_planning\\_document/parking\\_standards\\_design.aspx](http://www.rochford.gov.uk/planning/policy/local_development_framework/supplementary_planning_document/parking_standards_design.aspx)

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>A respondent objected stating that although developments which are located in sustainable locations will be well related to public transport, and ensure that it is accessible by means other than private car. However, the provision of too many parking spaces will be counter productive as it encourages people to use private cars ahead of other means of transport. It was stated that the use of minimum parking standards for residential developments is contrary to the advice contained within PPG13, which states that maximum parking standards should be used, and also contradicts the aim to reduce reliance on private vehicle, by encouraging residents to have more cars. It was stated that it is not considered to be sufficient to just limit parking at destinations, as residents will drive from their homes to the town centre, work place etc, which have maximum parking standards. This will put undue stress on these spaces and result in people parking elsewhere, including on-street and illegally, which could adversely affect traffic flows and road safety. Therefore, maximum parking standards should be applied to all forms of development, however, within accessible locations (e.g. town centres or areas that have high levels of public transport accessibility), a relaxation of these standards may be appropriate.</p>	<p>The approach set out in this discussion and consultation document conforms with the approach outlined in the Core Strategy Submission Document (page 109-110) and Planning Policy Guidance 13: Transport reissued on 3 January 2011<sup>31</sup>. As stated within the discussion and consultation document (page 59-60), the Council expressed its intention to adopt the parking standards document produced by Essex County Council which accords with the Council's approach to car parking provision as set out in the Core Strategy Submission Document (page 109-110). The Council has now adopted the 'Parking Standards Design and Good Practice Supplementary Planning Document (Adopted December 2010)' which states that "Dwellings are predominantly travel origins as opposed to destinations. Previously parking standards have attempted to reduce car use by restricting parking spaces at origin and destinations. It is now recognised that providing a reduced number of parking spaces at a travel origin does not discourage people from owning a car. Therefore parking standards for origins should be used as a minimum standard. For travel destinations the standard will continue to be a maximum" (page 63). Further information can be found on the Council's website<sup>32</sup>.</p>

<sup>31</sup> Planning Policy Guidance 13: Transport:  
[www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/ppg13](http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/ppg13)

<sup>32</sup> Parking Standards Design and Good Practice Supplementary Planning Document (Adopted December 2010):  
[www.rochford.gov.uk/planning/policy/local\\_development\\_framework/supplementary\\_planning\\_documen/parking\\_standards\\_design.aspx](http://www.rochford.gov.uk/planning/policy/local_development_framework/supplementary_planning_documen/parking_standards_design.aspx)

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>A respondent objected stating that the application of minimum parking standards is contrary to PPG13. Excessive parking provision will encourage car ownership and usage, and is therefore unsustainable. Large areas of parking will also blight the setting of new development. Minimum standards should only be applied in exceptional cases where a lower level of parking can be shown to cause clear-cut highway safety or access problems.</p> <p>A respondent objected stating that they support the provision of appropriate car parking in new development. There may however be other instances where flexibility on the minimum standard is appropriate (e.g. as part of a major development scheme where there is a comprehensive package of non-car travel proposals alongside complimentary parking restraint measures). This would ensure consistency with DM26 which includes demand management measures as part of traffic management in new development. Amended wording of the option was suggested to refer to other appropriate circumstances when variation of minimum parking standards may be appropriate.</p> <p><b>Transport:</b> DM26 Traffic Management – Preferred Option</p> <p>Rochford Chamber of Trade commented that there is no policy to support the increase in traffic generated by the proposed, planned developments. It was further commented that we should at least have a contingency plan in the event of gridlock.</p>	<p>The approach set out in the discussion and consultation document and the Core Strategy Submission Document are in accordance with Planning Policy Guidance 13: Transport reissued on 3 January 2011<sup>33</sup>.</p> <p>It is important that policies include a degree of flexibility so as to be able to respond to different circumstances. Essex County Council's <i>Parking Standards: Design and Good Practice (2009)</i>, which the Preferred Option proposes the Council adopts, states that minimum parking standards for residential development may be relaxed for residential development proposed within an urban area (including town centre locations) that has good links to sustainable transport (See Parking Standards in Urban Areas section). This could be further explained in the next iteration of the Development Management DPD.</p> <p>Policies which address the traffic impacts of proposed additional development are set out in the Core Strategy and are therefore not repeated in the Development Management DPD.</p>

<sup>33</sup> Planning Policy Guidance 13: Transport:  
[www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/ppg13](http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/ppg13)

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>A respondent commented that safe cycling could be promoted through ensuring that at least the spine road of any new development, and/or preferably all of the new side roads as well, has a separate cycle lane. It was commented that it is easier to design in a cycle lane from the start, rather than try to add one to a road at a later date.</p> <p>A respondent supported this option stating that developments should be well related to public transport, and/or accessible by means other than the private car, in order to encourage the use of public transport, together with cycling and walking. The provision of a safe and convenient network of cycle and pedestrian routes linking homes with workplace, services and town centres will assist in the safe movement of people around the area.</p> <p>The Highways Agency commented that the District does suffer from high levels of private car ownership and dependency, which results in congestion and pollution. The Highways Agency therefore consider that DM26 would be enhanced by the inclusion of a requirement for an assessment of the potential impact of development on the highway network, together with mitigation measures that may be required. The supporting text should include reference to the Department for Transport Guidance on Transport Assessment (2007). The Highways Agency also considers that DM26 could be further enhanced by the requirement for a Travel Plan to be considered as part of traffic management.</p>	<p>Comment noted. Cycling is an important aspect of a range of alternatives to car use which are being promoted through planning. The Core Strategy proposes that cycling links accompany a number of new developments. It is important that these are planned from the start, incorporated within comprehensive plans for new developments, and not simply retro-fitted. However, requiring all spine roads and/or other minor roads within new development to include a separate cycle lane is somewhat draconian and inflexible. For example, there may be cases where cycle lanes will be more appropriate to be separate from roads within a development.</p> <p>Comment noted.</p> <p>Comments noted. The Core Strategy proposes that developers be required to undertake Transport Impact Assessments, and for mitigation to be provided. As such, this is not repeated within this document. However, the next iteration of the Development Management Document could expand further on this, and include reference to the Department for Transport guidance (although it is not appropriate to repeat national policy within local documents). In respect of Travel Plans, the Core Strategy proposes New schools, visitor attractions, leisure uses and larger employment developments, and residential developments of 50 or more units will be required to devise and implement a travel plan, which aims to reduce private, single occupancy car use. Existing schools and employers will be encouraged to implement travel plans. As this issue is addressed in the Core Strategy, it is not repeated in the Development Management Document.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p><b>Economic Development: Vision</b></p> <p>A respondent questioned what phases of enhancement have been implemented in Hockley.</p> <p>A respondent commented that Southend Airport will not provide significant employment due to current and future financial constraints. People living in Leigh will not have a better quality of life due to being in flight path.</p> <p>A respondent questioned where the Eco-Enterprise Centre and new Employment Park will be located.</p>	<p>The enhancement of Hockley centre will be determined through the Hockley Area Action Plan, which has yet to be completed. The vision within the Development Management Document states that the first phases of enhancements to Hockley, Rochford and Rayleigh town centres will occur within five years.</p> <p>The planning policy for the airport will be set out in the London Southend Airport and Environs Joint Area Action Plan which is being produced in conjunction with Southend Borough Council. As such the Development Management DPD will not set specific policies for this area, but reflects the vision and objectives set out in the Core Strategy Submission Document.</p> <p>Specific policies for the Eco-Enterprise Centre will not be contained in the Development Management DPD. The strategic approach to the Eco-Enterprise Centre is contained within the Core Strategy Submission Document which infers that it will be located in the vicinity of London Southend Airport (page 115-116; 122-123). As such specific policies for the Eco-Enterprise Centre will be contained within the London Southend Airport and Environs Joint Area Action Plan (JAAP). The location of new employment land is not a development management issue, and will be allocated within the Allocations DPD and London Southend Airport and Environs Joint Area Action Plan, as appropriate.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p><b>Economic Development: Objectives</b></p> <p>A respondent commented that they dispute plans to move "bad neighbour" industrial estates (e.g. Eldon Way) to a new employment park west of the District, in favour of residential development. The estate has several leisure facilities providing for the local population. It was commented that moving these facilities would have a negative impact on the businesses, and should be decided under Stage 2 of Hockley Area Action Plan, but is pre-empted by the Core Strategy.</p> <p><b>Economic Development: Introduction</b></p> <p>The Highways Agency commented that the District does suffer from high levels of private car ownership and dependency, which results in congestion and pollution. The Highways Agency therefore consider that DM26 would be enhanced by the inclusion of a requirement for an assessment of the potential impact of development on the highway network, together with mitigation measures that may be required. The supporting text should include reference to the Department for Transport Guidance on Transport Assessment (2007). The Highways Agency also considers that DM26 could be further enhanced by the requirement for a Travel Plan to be considered as part of traffic management.</p> <p>A respondent objected suggesting that the proposals for Hockley Town Centre, Eldon way and Foundry Industrial estate are pre-empting the outcome of the Core Strategy; and the concurrent Allocations DPD (which asks residents to choose between a town and village). It also contradicts the council's own evidence base where the Retail and Leisure Study 2008 recommends reclassifying Hockley as a village and states it will not support further shops.</p>	<p>The reallocation of existing employment sites is a strategic issue which has been addressed within the Core Strategy. Any development of Eldon Way Industrial Estate will be determined through the Hockley Area Action Plan.</p> <p>We agree with the comments from the Highways Agency, and these issues have been addressed within the Transport chapter of the Core Strategy Submission Document.</p> <p>Any development of Hockley centre will be determined through the Hockley Area Action Plan. Furthermore the status of Hockley centre will be determined through the Allocations DPD.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p><b>Economic Development:</b> DM27 Employment Land – Preferred Option</p> <p>With regard to DM27 it was stated that this appears to be yet another restriction, driving people out of the area for retail activity. (See DM25.) Cases should be judged according to their merits.</p> <p>It was commented that in accordance with the sequential policies contained within PPS4, it is important that new locations for commercial uses are sustainable and have access to public transport (to discourage employees driving to work), and ensure that employees have access to a range services and facilities.</p> <p>A respondent objected to this option and suggested alternative wording. It was suggested that this would make it clear that B1 and B2 uses are favoured uses, but avoids problems of interpretation, and would still makes possible for other employment generating uses to come forward that comply with the criteria listed. The option should be amended to assist interpretation and provide a more positive and flexible approach to new employment generating development.</p> <p><b>Economic Development:</b> Are there any other issues which should be addressed within this chapter?</p> <p>A respondent commented that the high hopes of economic development plans for Southend Airport may have to be toned down due to the economic climate.</p>	<p>It is not appropriate for retail development to be permitted on areas designated as employment land. It is more appropriate for retail uses to be directed towards town centre locations (see the Retail and Town Centres chapter).</p> <p>Comment noted.</p> <p>The preference for B1 and B2 uses on new and existing employment land is stated within preferred option DM27. However, the text could be amended to make this more explicit. The criteria which alternative uses would be determined against is clearly stated within this option.</p> <p>The planning policy for the airport will be set out in the London Southend Airport and Environs Joint Area Action Plan which is being produced in conjunction with Southend Borough Council. As such the Development Management DPD will not set specific policies for this area, but reflects the vision and objectives set out in the Core Strategy Submission Document.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p><b>Retail and Town Centres: Vision</b></p> <p>A respondent commented that they do not want the “vast majority of new retail development directed to Hockley”. It was stated that they want lower business rates to enable basic local retail to survive in central Hockley. It was agreed that development "must respect the character of the locality and local businesses currently operating there". Therefore, no "regeneration", particularly of listable buildings.</p> <p>The Theatres Trust stated that they note and support the Vision of the first bullet point that by 2025 our town centres will contain a range of services and facilities that meet local demand. This is reflected in the third bullet point which states that shoppers will remain in the District's town centres because of the range of activities etc. Unfortunately there are no policies to introduce a range of facilities and services for our town centres, other than related to retail, as expressed in PPS4. They queried the use of the word 'shoppers' as visitors to our town centres who are attracted by a 'range of activities' may not primarily be 'shoppers'.</p>	<p>This vision sets out the aspirations for the retail and town centres chapter. It states that by 2025 most of the new retail development is directed towards the main centres in the District – Rayleigh, Rochford and Hockley. This will ensure that services which meet the needs of the local community can be retained within these centres and that they are busy and vibrant places. Specific policies for the future development of these centres will be determined through the Area Action Plans. Also the Council is seeking to provide additional protection for buildings of local importance through the preparation of the Local List. Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings have been included as specific considerations in the discussion and consultation document, however, it may be appropriate to include reference to locally listed buildings within the next iteration of the Retail and Town Centres chapter as well.</p> <p>Specific policies for the future development of these centres will be determined through the Area Action Plans. The comment regarding 'shoppers' is noted.</p>



Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>A respondent commented that as the 'green' part of Thames Gateway South East, the town centres of Rayleigh and Rochford should stand out for their environmental credentials – air quality (traffic management) and sustainability in particular. There is a particular issue with 'through traffic' adding to local traffic.</p> <p>A respondent stated that 'regeneration' should mean the replacement of ugly/tacky premises with the highest quality stone/brickwork/timber constructions. It was stated that Hockley must never degenerate into another Wickford/Rayleigh/ Billericay. Building design should reflect existing historic buildings like The Spa/Spa House. Aesthetics and quality matter as much as calling a place a 'district', 'village' or 'town'.</p> <p>A respondent objected suggesting that the proposals for Hockley Town Centre, Eldon Way and Foundry Industrial estate are pre-empting the outcome of the Core Strategy; and the concurrent Allocations DPD (which asks residents to choose between a town and village). It also contradicts the Council's own evidence base where the Retail and Leisure Study 2008 recommends reclassifying Hockley as a village and states it will not support further shops.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Council is looking to address the issue of air quality through a number of mechanisms (including through the establishment of Air Quality Management Areas and the actions that will follow these). In addition, this is an issue that is addressed at the Core Strategy level specifically, including as one of the considerations in determining where new development is located. Area Action Plans for the District's centres are another vehicle through which this issue can be addressed. An additional development management policy may also be considered for the next iteration of the document to ensure that the cumulative impact of new development on air quality is taken into consideration in the determination of planning applications.</p> <p>Any development of Hockley centre will be determined through the Hockley Area Action Plan. Regard would also need to be had to the policies contained within the Core Strategy and Development Management DPDs when determining planning applications.</p> <p>This is not a development management issue. The future development of the centre of Hockley will be determined through the Hockley Area Action Plan which the Council is preparing. This plan will sit below the Core Strategy and will therefore have to conform to the policies contained within it. Hockley is currently designated a town centre in the Replacement Local Plan 2006. It was also designated a town centre in the 1995 and 1988 Local Plans. Whether Hockley is designated a town or district centre in the Local Development Framework is not a development management issue. This will be addressed within the Allocations DPD.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p><b>Retail and Town Centres: Objectives</b></p> <p>Essex County Council commented that an additional objective should be included to read, 'Improve the public realm of the Town Centres and village and neighbourhood centres by implementing landscape and access schemes which include street trees to provide urban greening'.</p> <p>The Theatres Trust stated that although the Rayleigh and Rochford AAPs may discuss town centre uses other than retail, the deferring of development implementations to subsequent planning documents places the reliance on these other documents to make the important decisions. Unfortunately there is no guidance in the Core Strategy for the Development Management document to provide policies to support the development of cultural facilities in town centres. The Development Management document should contain a policy in this section that seeks to promote the provision of community, recreation and leisure facilities within the key centres for development, including local service centre villages. It should also confirm that key local services and facilities are to be protected from development proposals that would result in their loss unless specified criteria to demonstrate a clear lack of viability of the facility can be met.</p> <p>A respondent objected commenting that suggestions for West Rochford ignore all four objectives. From these locations Tesco is far more attractive than a long walk into Rochford town centre. It was also commented that it does nothing for Rochford town – merely an example of urban sprawl.</p>	<p>Suggestion noted.</p> <p>The purpose of the Area Action Plans being developed for Rayleigh, Hockley and Rochford is to provide specific policies for these centres. It is therefore not appropriate to duplicate policies for uses other than retail in these centres within the Development Management DPD.</p> <p>The location of future residential development is a strategic issue which has been addressed within the Core Strategy, and the specific sites will be identified in the Allocations DPD.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>It was commented that it would be great to see all of our District's shops accessible to wheelchair users. It was questioned whether there is any consideration being given to this in any of the Area Action Plans. Especially considering that wheelchair users have no independent access to buses or trains and rely very much on local provisions and services.</p> <p>A respondent objected, commenting that as the Council has been advised on many occasions by residents, Hockley considers itself a village and not a town. All reference to it should be changed to District Centre. The statement, 'A change of use should not result in a net loss of leisure use,' should be remembered when considering all the leisure facilities in Eldon Way.</p>	<p>Area Action Plans for Rochford, Rayleigh and Hockley centres will include measures to improve accessibility of shops and services for all.</p> <p>National legislation, in the form of the Equality Act 2010, includes the requirement for service providers to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people in the way they deliver services. The government include putting in a ramp at the entrance to a building which has steps as an example of a reasonable adjustment. The government has published guidance for small businesses and other service providers on making access to goods and service easier.<sup>34</sup> As this is a legal requirement, it is not appropriate for it to be repeated within local planning policy. However, it would still be appropriate to reiterate the importance of facilities and services being accessible within the next iteration of the Development Management DPD.</p> <p>Hockley is currently designated a town centre in the Replacement Local Plan 2006. It was also designated a town centre in the 1995 and 1988 Local Plans. Whether Hockley is designated a town or district centre is not a development management issue. This will be addressed within the Allocations DPD. Any development of Eldon Way Industrial Estate will be determined through the Hockley Area Action Plan.</p>

<sup>34</sup> Making access to goods and services easier for disabled customers – A practical guide for small businesses and other small service providers  
[www.direct.gov.uk/prod\\_consum\\_dg/groups/dg\\_digitalassets/@dg/@en/documents/digitalasset/dg\\_070741.pdf](http://www.direct.gov.uk/prod_consum_dg/groups/dg_digitalassets/@dg/@en/documents/digitalasset/dg_070741.pdf)

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p><b>Retail and Town Centres:</b> Town Centre Shopping Frontages</p> <p>A respondent commented that whilst they agree that tables on the pavement outside a restaurant can be nice, there perhaps needs to be guidance available to prevent these becoming an obstruction to wheelchair users or pushchairs.</p> <p>A respondent commented that there is already a strong cluster of restaurants and cafes in Hockley.</p> <p><b>Retail and Town Centres:</b> DM29 Town Centre Shopping Frontages – Preferred Option</p> <p>With regard to DM29, Rochford Chamber of Trade commented that the 75% rule (Guidance) for retail outlets in town centres should be enforced. The authority should not be in the business of micro managing the market. Shoppers like choice, any vibrant, retail centre will provide choice which is often clustered.</p> <p><b>Retail and Town Centres:</b> DM30 Upper Floor Locations in Town Centres – Preferred Option</p> <p>Rochford Chamber of Trade commented that they agree with the preferred option.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p> <p>Comment noted.</p> <p>Comments noted. The Preferred Option seeks to provide a balance between ensuring that town centres comprises mainly retail uses, but at the same time providing flexibility and acknowledging that shifts in the market and consumer preferences will affect the demand for different uses. The definition of ‘clusters’ may be included within the next iteration of the document.</p> <p>Comment noted.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p><b>Retail and Town Centres: DM30 Upper Floor Locations in Town Centres – Alternative Option</b></p> <p>A respondent commented that there are distinct advantages to having residential accommodation above shops and commercial premises in town centres. People living very close to, or in, town centres tend to use the shops rather than go out of town, because it is convenient to do so. This helps to ensure the town centre shops have a source of custom. Also, it helps to ensure town centres do not become "dead areas" after the shops' closing times. Residents are inclined to report vandalism/rowdy behaviour to the police, because it is in their interests to do so. In addition, town centre residential use reduces pressure to build new residential development on the edges of towns, thus preserving the Green Belt, and preventing urban sprawl. It was commented that for these reasons the alternative DM30 option is supported, rather than the preferred option, to get as much accommodation as possible. The question of parking provision is not mentioned in the text. However, it is important to consider this aspect in relation to town centre accommodation.</p> <p><b>Retail and Town Centres: DM31 Village and Neighbourhood Shops – Preferred Option</b></p> <p>Rochford Chamber of Trade commented that they agree that "retail use is important to ensure the vitality and vibrancy of any shopping frontage and to meet the needs of local communities".</p>	<p>The Council recognises the benefits of encouraging residential development within town centres. However it is important to ensure that the right balance is struck between the provision of residential development on upper floors in town centres, and other uses which contribute to the vitality and vibrancy of the town centres. The issue of parking is considered separately in the document (see DM1, DM3 and DM25 for example).</p> <p>Comment noted.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p><b>Retail and Town Centres:</b> Advertisements</p> <p>Essex County Council commented that the first paragraph of the supporting text should be amended by insertion of the word 'access' to read '...is not detrimental to the access, appearance or value of a particular streetscape or buildings(s).' It was commented that additional supporting text should note that some forms of advertising, for instance, advertising boards can cause uncontrolled clutter which tends to restrict and obstruct access and provide tripping obstacles for people who are blind or partially sighted.</p> <p>A respondent commented that they agree with advertisement paragraph 2 and 3. Recently a highly "inappropriate signage", "excessively illuminated" has spoiled the aspect of an otherwise pleasing 19<sup>th</sup> Century, successful, store. Concern was expressed that some signage is confusing, distracting and a hazard.</p> <p><b>Retail and Town Centres:</b> DM32 Advertisements – Preferred Option</p> <p>Rochford Chamber of Trade commented that effective guidelines are needed rather than the subjective judgments which are not user friendly and are unhelpful.</p>	<p>Comments noted. The next iteration may be amended as appropriate to reflect this consideration.</p> <p>Comment noted.</p> <p>Whilst a more rigid approach would be easier to implement, such an approach would not be able to account for all circumstances and would be overly draconian. Guidance on many aspects of adverts is already available and set out in SPD4 – Shop Fronts Security and Design. However, this does not mean that additional guidance could not be provided in the future. For example the guidance contained within 'Outdoor advertisements and signs: a guide for advertisers'<sup>35</sup> may be referred to.</p>

<sup>35</sup> [www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/326679.pdf](http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/326679.pdf)

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>Essex County Council commented that in DM32 – the first sentence should be amended by insertion of the words 'access and' to read, 'The design and siting of advertisements throughout the District must have regard to access and the visual impact of the building(s) ...'</p> <p>A respondent expressed support for this option. It was commented that whilst the respondent supports the approach they would suggest adding a further proviso that they "are not of a size or content or positioned so that they might distract drivers". Signs are designed to draw people's attention to them and if a driver's concentration is distracted accidents will occur.</p> <p><b>Retail and Town Centres:</b> DM33 Advertisements affecting Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings – Preferred Option</p> <p>Rochford Chamber of Trade commented that effective guidelines are needed rather than the subjective judgments which are not user friendly and are unhelpful.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The next iteration may be amended as appropriate to reflect this consideration.</p> <p>Suggestion noted, although it does state in the accompanying text that "Inappropriate signage which is poorly located, designed or excessively illuminated within the context of the surrounding area can detract from the visual amenity, character and quality of the local environment and may present, particularly with inappropriate illumination, a road safety hazard." (page 70)</p> <p>Whilst a more rigid approach would be easier to implement, such an approach would not be able to account for all circumstances and would be overly draconian. Guidance on many aspects of adverts is already available and set out in SPD4 – Shop Fronts Security and Design, with a particular focus on adverts in Conservation Areas. More guidance can be provided in the future if required, and could work alongside the Development Management policy. For example the guidance contained within 'Outdoor advertisements and signs: a guide for advertisers'<sup>36</sup> may be referred to.</p>

<sup>36</sup> 'Outdoor advertisements and signs: a guide for advertisers':  
[www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/326679.pdf](http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/326679.pdf)

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>Essex County Council commented that in DM33 – the second sentence should be amended by insertion of the words 'not cause an access problem,' to read '... and should be sensitive to the character of the area, visually unobtrusive, not cause an access problem, well designed and well located.'</p> <p><b>Retail and Town Centres:</b> Are there any other issues which should be addressed within this chapter?</p> <p>A respondent commented that every effort must be made to fill vacant shops in places like Hockley before any grandiose plans are contemplated.</p> <p><b>Public Involvement</b></p> <p>A respondent commented that the document focuses primarily on new developments. It was questioned why it does not also consider redevelopments, and why they are not the same with regard to design, density, infilling, habitable floorspace etc.</p> <p>A respondent questioned who prepared the document; who proof read it; who has reviewed; what version this is; and what has changed as a result of the proof reading and review.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The next iteration may be amended as appropriate to reflect this consideration.</p> <p>Comment noted.</p> <p>Redevelopments are a form of new development. Whenever reference is made to new development, this encompasses redevelopment.</p> <p>The document was prepared within the Planning Policy team.</p>



Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>A respondent commented that insurance companies are constantly re assessing the risks on houses around the country, and that only recently they have been informed that some maps are published showing the flood risk of surface water. It is these types of surveys that determine the risk levels and these are then reflected in the premiums of the householders. It was suggested that it would be prudent to involve within the planning process such surveys and experts in evaluating the risks on any development over 50 houses. It was further commented that if the insurance companies consider a site at risk this means affordable housing or not the premiums will be higher than elsewhere, which will impact the residents in existing and new additions to a community.</p> <p>A respondent suggested that it would be easier for the reader if there is a single point in this document listing all publications that have been used in making it and where they can be found.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Local Planning Authority consults the Environment Agency when flood risk is a potential issue. As part of the Council's Annual Monitoring Report, the Council record the number of applications approved contrary to advice from the Environment Agency on flooding, and explain the justification for such decisions. In terms of surface water flooding, Essex County Council is now the body responsible for this issue, and as a statutory consultee, like the Environment Agency they are consulted during the decision making process.</p> <p>The introduction (page 1-8) outlines the relationship between the Development Management DPD and other documents which together will form the Local Development Framework for the District. The introduction also identifies a number of plans and strategies which have informed the development of the document. This is referred to as the 'evidence base' and further information can be found on the Council's website<sup>37</sup>.</p>

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<sup>37</sup> Local Development Framework Evidence Base:  
[www.rochford.gov.uk/planning\\_\\_building\\_control/policy/local\\_development\\_framework/evidence\\_base.aspx](http://www.rochford.gov.uk/planning__building_control/policy/local_development_framework/evidence_base.aspx)

## **Additional Policies for Inclusion – Potential RSS Revocation**

An additional section on trees and woodlands has been included within the Environmental Issues chapter of the preferred policy options version of the Development Management DPD.

During the public consultation on the initial version of the document (the Discussion and Consultation Document) concern was raised that existing trees which are not currently protected through nature conservation designations, such as Ancient Woodland and Local Wildlife Sites, or through Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs), require additional protection through the planning system.

Furthermore the East of England Plan 2008<sup>1</sup> provides, at regional level, a policy (policy ENV5: Woodlands) which seeks to minimise the loss or deterioration of existing woodland and achieve an increase in cover.

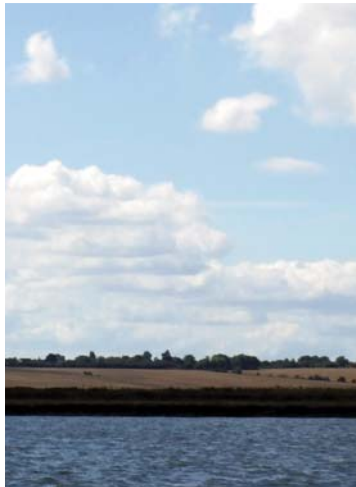
A more localised policy combining the concerns of retaining individual and small groups of trees as well as larger wooded areas which are not explicitly protected through the planning system have been included within the next version of the Development Management DPD – the preferred policy options document.

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<sup>1</sup> East of England Plan 2008 available from <http://www.eera.gov.uk/What-we-do/developing-regional-strategies/east-of-england-plan/east-of-england-plan-2001-2021/>

## Local Development Framework

# Development Management DPD Preferred Policy Options Document



# LDF

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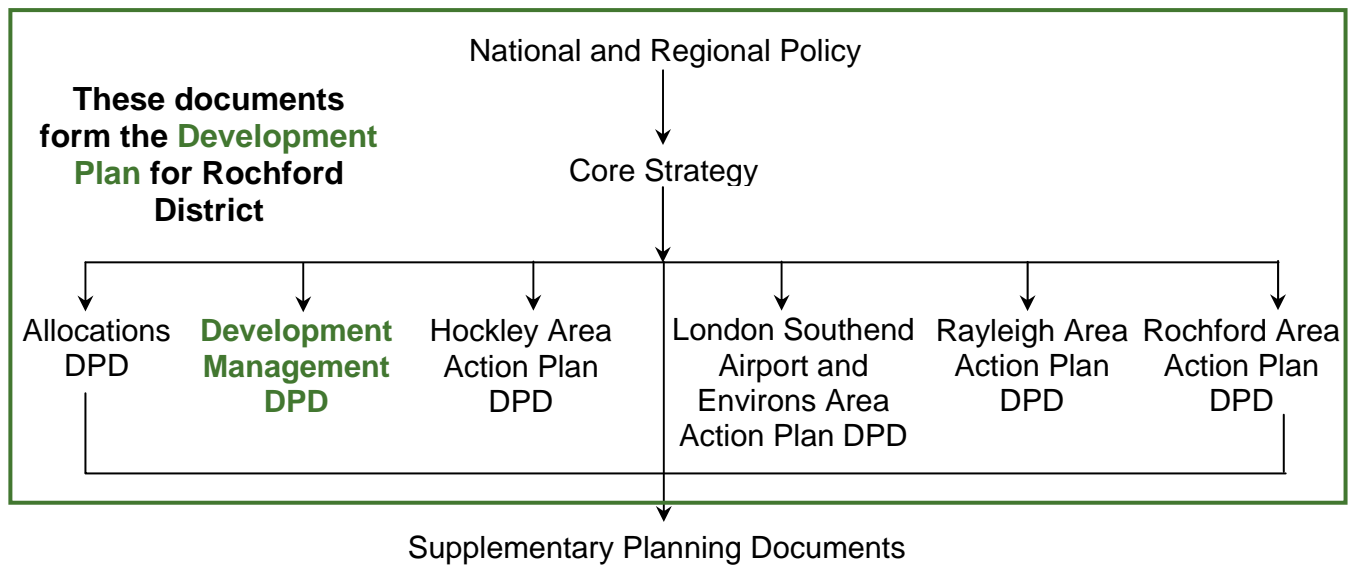
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**If you would like this information in large print, Braille or another language, please contact 01702 318111.**

## **1 Introduction**

### **The Role of the Development Management Development Plan Document**

- 1.1 The planning application process is moving towards a more positive and proactive approach to shaping, considering, determining and delivering development proposals, called development management. It is led by the Local Planning Authority working closely with those proposing developments and other stakeholders (ranging from national bodies such as Natural England and the Environment Agency to parish/town council's and local communities). Development management is undertaken in the spirit of partnership and inclusiveness, and seeks to facilitate the delivery of key priorities within the District.
- 1.2 Adopting the development management approach will enable us, in conjunction with local communities and a wide range of other stakeholders, to promote and achieve the vision and objectives set out in the Core Strategy (which filters down through the other documents forming the Local Development Framework) and the Sustainable Community Strategy, as well as to deliver relevant local, regional and national objectives. This will assist us in shaping sustainable, prosperous, attractive and safe places where people want to live, work and relax.
- 1.3 The Development Management Development Plan Document (DMDPD) will set out the detailed day-to-day planning policies through which development within the District will be delivered. It is a document which will form part of the collection of documents shaping the future of the District, known as the Local Development Framework (or LDF). The LDF once completed will be the Development Plan for the District.
- 1.4 There are a number of different documents which together will set out the Development Plan for the District. The diagram below (Figure 1) shows what these documents are and how they fit together. Planning applications will be determined in accordance with the Development Plan. Development Plan Documents will set the blueprint for the future development of the District through planning policies. Supplementary Planning Documents, however, do not contain policies and as such are not part of the Development Plan. These documents will sit below the policy documents and provide additional advice and guidance, where appropriate, to assist officers in the determination of planning applications.



**Figure 1 – The Development Plan**

- 1.5 The Core Strategy DPD is the overarching planning policy document of the LDF, which sets out our main issues for the future and the policies which will shape the future development of the District. The Development Management DPD will sit below the Core Strategy in the LDF and must conform to the approach set out in it in order to be found 'Sound' through independent examination and to deliver our vision. The Development Management DPD must not repeat the policies in the Core Strategy and should be read in conjunction with them. Therefore both these documents will be used in the determination of planning applications for the development and use of land and buildings in the District.
- 1.6 The other DPDs which will form the LDF of the District play an important role in shaping what the District will look in the future. The Allocations DPD will set out how land will be used in future, for example for residential development, community facilities and important nature designations to name but a few. The four Area Actions Plans will provide policies specific to the areas they cover (the three main shopping areas, and the airport and its surrounding area). Together these DPDs will form the Development Plan for the District.
- 1.7 The Development Management DPD will be subject to several stages of public consultation, which will help shape its preparation. This consultation document is the second stage in the process and has been developed having regard to our approach to future development as set out in the Core Strategy, and comments received during public consultation on the first version of the Development Management DPD (the Discussion and Consultation Document) in 2010.
- 1.8 The Core Strategy was submitted to the Secretary of State responsible for planning in January 2010, and from May 2010 to date it has been subject to public examination to determine whether it is 'Sound'. If it is found to be 'Sound' then the Council may adopt it and it will become Council policy. The Development Management DPD will need to be adapted to reflect the approach of the adopted Core Strategy, as appropriate.



- 1.9 This document, although not the final version, should be read in conjunction with the approach outlined in the Core Strategy.

### **The Role of the preferred policy options version of the Development Management DPD**

- 1.10 This document is a public consultation document which sets out the preferred draft policies for managing the future development within the District. This approach reflects the priorities set out in the Core Strategy, and has taken into account comments submitted during the public consultation on the Discussion and Consultation version of the Development Management DPD as well as the findings of the Sustainability Appraisal. This document has also been subject to further Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment.
- 1.11 This is the second stage in the preparation of the Development Management DPD. Following the initial round of community involvement in 2010 and the consultation on this preferred policy options version, the pre-submission version will be prepared, having regard to these findings. It will then be subject to another six week period of consultation where the public will be invited to submit their comments, and another Sustainability Appraisal before a final version of the document is agreed. The Development Management DPD itself will then be submitted, along with the results of this final consultation and other evidence, to the government. The document will then be subject to an independent examination by the Planning Inspectorate on behalf of the Secretary of State responsible for planning, and if found to be 'Sound' the Council may adopt it and it will become Council policy.
- 1.12 The Development Management DPD is divided into six chapters containing the preferred draft policies for managing development in the District to be taken forward to the pre-submission version of the document. These draft policies are detailed within the following chapters:
- Housing, Character of Place and Residential Amenity
  - The Green Belt and Countryside
  - Environmental Issues
  - Transport
  - Economic Development
  - Retail and Town Centres
- 1.13 We want your views on these draft policies for development management in the District. Views submitted at this stage will be used to inform the production of the next draft Development Management DPD – the pre-submission version. The key stages in the development of this document are as follows:
- Preferred Options public consultation (17 March 2010 – 30 April 2010);
  - Preferred Policy Options public consultation;



- Pre-Submission public consultation;
- Examination in Public; and
- Adoption.

1.14 The dates for the development of the document will be set out in an updated Local Development Scheme (the timetable for the Local Development Framework).

## **Vision**

1.15 Our vision is shared with that of the Local Strategic Partnership:

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

1.16 To support this, we have four main corporate objectives. These are:

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

1.17 The strategic vision for the District during the plan period is set out in the Core Strategy. The Core Strategy and Development Management DPD have a key role to play in the delivery of the vision for Rochford District. For each theme of development management, the vision and objectives for that topic as determined in the Core Strategy have been set out. The Development Management DPD will contribute to the vision and objectives in conjunction with the Core Strategy. Together, these all contribute to the overall vision for the District. The vision and objectives for the plan period have been adapted from those in the Core Strategy to reflect changing circumstances, emerging initiatives and suggestions from community involvement.

## **Sustainability Appraisal**

1.18 The preparation of a Sustainability Appraisal is a mandatory requirement under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 for the production of the documents which together form the Local Development Framework. The integration of this document into the development of planning policy ensures that the wider social, environmental and economic effects of the draft policies and proposals contained within Development Plan Documents (such as the Core Strategy DPD, Development Management DPD and the Allocations DPD) are fully assessed. The draft policies contained in this document have been the subject of a Sustainability Appraisal. As such, the Sustainability Appraisal forms part of the evidence base of the Local Development Framework.

## **Community Involvement**

- 1.19 Community involvement is an important and integral part of the development of the Local Development Framework. The preparation of this preferred policy options document has taken into account the findings of community involvement exercises from the various public consultation stages which have informed the development of the Core Strategy, as well as at the Discussion and Consultation version of the Development Management DPD. Comments on this document have also been invited during a six week public consultation period, and this will inform the final pre-submission version of the Development Management DPD.

## **Relationship with Other Strategies**

- 1.20 As stated above, the Development Management DPD will have to conform to the Core Strategy. The Core Strategy has been developed having regard to a wealth of other strategies, at higher and lower tiers to the District (i.e. regional, sub-regional, county and sub-district level strategies). The Development Management DPD should also take into account these other strategies, and contribute towards their delivery.
- 1.21 The Sustainable Community Strategy (2009) is the long-term vision for the District and sets out the priorities for improvement intended to deliver the vision. It is developed by the Local Strategic Partnership which is a partnership of local public, private and voluntary sector organisations who play a key part in the provision of services within the District.
- 1.22 Our Local Development Framework should aid the delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy and act as an umbrella for all other strategies developed for the area.
- 1.23 The Sustainable Community Strategy identifies seven key priorities:
- Supporting the Ageing Population
  - Fostering Greater Community Cohesion
  - Strengthening the Third Sector (voluntary sector)
  - Increasing Accessibility to Services
  - Keeping Rochford Safe
  - Encouraging Economic Development: Skills, Employment and Enterprise
  - Promoting a Greener District
- 1.24 The Core Strategy, as the main planning policy document of the District's Local Development Framework, has a key role to play in delivering all of the above. The Development Management DPD will address the Sustainable Community Strategy priorities primarily through aiding the delivery of the Core Strategy.
- 1.25 In addition to the Sustainable Community Strategy, there are a number of other strategies which influence our Local Development Framework, as outlined below.

## **Regional Strategies**

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

## **Sub-Regional Strategies**

Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership:

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

## **County Strategies**

Essex County Council:

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

### **District Strategies**

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

### **Sub-District Strategies**

Hockley Parish Plan Group:

- Hockley Parish Plan

Rawreth Parish Council:

- Rawreth Parish Plan

Rochford Parish Council:

- 2004 Vision Statement

- 1.26 In addition to conforming to the approach to managing development as set out in the Core Strategy, national planning policy in the form of Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs), Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) and circulars, have also shaped the production of the Development Management DPD.

## Evidence Base

- 1.27 This consultation document, where appropriate, has also drawn upon the extensive evidence base which has informed the development of the Core Strategy. The evidence base contains numerous plans, studies and strategies which support the emerging policies and proposals in the Local Development Framework. These key documents are as follows:
- **Affordable Housing Viability Study (2010)** assesses the viability of the affordable housing policy in the Core Strategy.
  - **Annual Monitoring Reports** report on a range of indicators on an annual basis since 2004.
  - **Call for Sites** was carried out in early 2007 and resulted in the submission of a number of sites from developers, land-owners and agents for consideration by the Council.
  - **Community Involvement** carried out at each stage of the development of the Core Strategy (i.e. Issues and Options, Preferred Options, Revised Preferred Options, and Pre-Submission). Comments on the Discussion and Consultation version of the Development Management DPD were invited in March/April 2010.
  - **Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans (2007)** assess the characteristics of the District's Conservation Areas, as well as proposing action to ensure their value is retained or enhanced.
  - **Design Guidance Notes: Pavilions and Club Houses** developed by Sport England provides advice and guidance on the suitable design and layout of pavilions and clubhouses.
  - **Development Control: Planning for Air Quality (2010 Update)** sets out how air quality can be properly accounted for in the planning application process.
  - **Employment Land Study (2008)** examines the supply and demand for various forms of employment land and compares this to the current and projected future economic profile of the District in order to determine the spatial requirements for future employment. The 2010 update provides an ...
  - **Essex and South Suffolk Shoreline Management Plan** identifies the best ways to manage flood and erosion risk to people and to the developed, historic and natural environment along the Essex and South Suffolk coast. It also identifies opportunities where shoreline management can work with others to make improvements.
  - **Essex County Council Development Management Policies (February 2011)** provides policies relating to highways and transport infrastructure.
  - **Essex Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (2009)** provides an update assessment of the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers.

- **Essex Landscape Character Assessment (2003)** outlines the extent of the three broad landscape character types within the District, and includes an assessment of their sensitivity to different forms of development.
- **Essex Thames Gateway Water Cycle Study – Scoping Study (2009)** a sub-regional review of the existing condition of both the natural water environment and the water infrastructure which serves the population of the South Essex
- **Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light (2005)** developed by The Institution of Lighting Engineers identifies environmental zones and corresponding light thresholds.
- **Guidelines for the Keeping of Horses: Stable Sizes, Pasture and Fencing** developed by the British Horse Society recommends appropriate standards for the keeping of horses.
- **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (2008)** details a wealth of data around health and well-being issues in Essex.
- **Local Wildlife Site Review (2007)** is an assessment of existing and potential local wildlife sites to determine their importance as natural habitats.
- **Looking Back and Moving Forward – Assessing the Housing Needs of Gypsies and Travellers in Essex (2006)** provides an assessment of the projected future accommodation needs for Gypsies and Travellers up until 2016.
- **Open Space Study (2009)** examines the current provision and quality of a variety of open spaces throughout the District.
- **Retail and Leisure Study (2008)** examines the shopping and leisure use habits of the District's residents, and the spatial implications of these for the future development of the area.
- **Rochford Biodiversity Action Plan** sets out actions and targets to enhance biodiversity in the District.
- **Rochford District Historic Environment Characterisation Project (2006)** provides a wealth of evidence on the importance of the historic environment within the District and facilitates the integration of management and conservation principles within the planning process.
- **Rochford Futures Report** profiles the social, economic and environmental characteristics of Rochford District at a District and Ward level.
- **Standing Advice for Ancient Woodland (2011)** produced by Natural England seeks to aid the Local Planning Authority in the determination of planning applications affecting ancient woodland.

- **Strategic Environmental Assessment Baseline Information Profile** presents a plethora of secondary data about the social, physical, environmental and demographic characteristics of the District.
- **Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 1 & 2 Final Report (February 2011)** provides a revision to the previous Thames Gateway South Essex Strategic Flood Risk Assessment report, and has been progressed following the scoping report in 2009. This is a combined Level 1 and Level 2 report, which includes a strategic overview of all potential sources of flooding which is sufficiently detailed to enable the application of the Sequential Test within the District (Level 1), and provides more detail of flood risk where there is development pressure in areas that are at Medium and High risk and to facilitate the application of the Exception Test where necessary (Level 2).
- **Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment** determines the availability, suitability and achievability of housing development sites within the District.
- **Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2008** provides data on housing supply and demand at the sub-regional level. The **Strategic Housing Market Assessment: Update Report 2010** provides a review of the situation in order to reflect changes to the Thames Gateway South Essex housing market in the period from October 2008 to February 2010.
- **Sustainability Appraisals and Strategic Environmental Assessments** are an integral part of the development of the planning policy documents forming the Local Development Framework. A Sustainability Appraisal was carried out at each stage in the development of the Core Strategy, assessing the social, economic and environmental impacts of proposed policies. The Sustainability Appraisals have influenced the development of the Core Strategy and thus the strategic approach to future development. This has subsequently shaped the approach of the emerging Development Management DPD. Furthermore the findings of the Sustainability Appraisal assessing the Discussion and Consultation Document (the first stage in the production of the Development Management DPD) has been incorporated into this document. An appraisal of this document has also been undertaken.
- **Thames Gateway South Essex Strategic Flood Risk Assessment** determined the areas at risk of flooding across the sub-region, and calculated the probability of their flooding, enabling land across the sub-region to be categorised as Flood Zone 1, 2, 3 depending on the risk.
- **Thames Gateway South Essex Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Review – Scoping Report (2009)** provides a review of the Thames Gateway South Essex Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) which was published in 2006.
- **Urban Capacity Study (2007)** examines the capacity to accommodate development within the District on existing appropriate sites. This study has been superseded by the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.



## **2 Housing, Character of Place and Residential Amenity**

### **Vision**

#### **Short Term**

- New sustainable, residential developments are planned that are well related to infrastructure, community facilities, and play space. These have begun to be implemented. A number of residential developments, along with additional infrastructure, have been completed and are meeting the needs of local communities.
- The Council has adopted a Local List which has afforded additional protection to locally significant buildings.
- Work continues on implementing the Conservation Area Management Plans which is having a positive impact on the character and appearance of the District's Conservation Areas.

#### **Medium/Long Term**

- A range of high-quality, sustainable new dwellings that meet the needs of local people of all social groups are in place and integrated into communities that have a strong sense of place.
- The vast majority of the District's Green Belt remains undeveloped.
- New infrastructure has accompanied new residential development, meeting the needs of local communities.
- The District's distinctive character and historical built environment has been retained.
- New development has been implemented which contributes positively towards the District's character.

### **Objectives**

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



6. Ensure that appropriate infrastructure accompanies new housing development.
7. Ensure that new development respect and make a positive contribution towards the built environment.
8. Support and enhance the local built heritage.

## **Introduction**

- 2.1 The Core Strategy contains key policies to ensure the efficient and effective use of available land for housing through the utilisation of previously developed land, and identifies general locations which could accommodate appropriate sustainable extensions to the residential envelope to ensure at least a 15 year supply of housing. Whilst ensuring that the required quantum of housing and gypsy and traveller sites in the District are sustainably delivered, the Core Strategy also seeks to ensure the appropriate mix of housing tenure and dwelling types, and requires compliance with the Lifetime Homes Standard to ensure that new dwellings are capable of meeting the District's changing demographic needs (i.e. the character and composition of the population). Partnership working with a range of stakeholders, including Essex County Council, the Environment Agency and Natural England, and consultation with the Council's Housing Strategy Team amongst other Council departments is required to ensure that this is achieved.
- 2.2 The protection and enhancement of the District's distinct settlement characteristics are also key issues which are covered in the Core Strategy. Information relating to the distinctiveness of the District is contained within the Local Development Framework evidence base. It is important to ensure the high quality design of new developments and that local design guidance is taken into account within development proposals in order to create a strong sense of place. The Core Strategy also recognises the importance of protecting locally significant buildings which are of historic and architectural importance (Listed Buildings), through the appropriate management of the District's Conservation Areas, and the reintroduction of a Local List of important buildings and structures.
- 2.3 This chapter elaborates on the core strategic issues by providing policies on specific housing issues and the protection and enhancement of the historic environment. The design, scale and form of new dwellings, or modifications to existing dwellings within existing settlements can impact on the character of the streetscene (i.e. the appearance and character of the street) and the surrounding built environment. It is important to ensure a positive impact on the surrounding environment and a coherent and interesting character through following good design principles and using locally distinct settlement characteristics. The design of new developments must also be considered with respect to the wider implications of such development on the form, flow and character of the built environment and its impact on sustainability objectives.
- 2.4 Protecting and enhancing the existing character and individual identities of the District's settlements is a key objective of the Core Strategy, as set out within the **Housing and Character of Place** chapters of this plan. Therefore new development both within, and on the periphery of, existing settlements is encouraged to take into consideration the character of the established streetscene, in addition to the District's dwelling type requirements.

- 2.5 Reducing the District's carbon emissions and planning to adapt to climate change is an important theme running through the Sustainable Community Strategy (2009), and this is reflected in the Core Strategy (specifically within the **Environmental Issues** chapter of the Core Strategy). Planning can play an important role through ensuring the sustainability of new developments and alterations to existing buildings, whilst seeking to increase the energy efficiency of existing dwellings, as appropriate. The Core Strategy, for example, promotes the development of new dwellings to the Codes for Sustainable Homes and Lifetime Homes Standards, and supports both small and large scale renewable energy projects.
- 2.6 The historic environment of the District contributes to the unique character and history of individual settlements, as well as the established local streetscene. The significant historic townscapes, village centres and other smaller areas which merit statutory protection are protected through Conservation Area designations, and the most nationally important buildings and items of street furniture of 'special interest' are protected through Listed Building status. It is, however, also important to consider the impact of development and change on the wider area beyond the boundary of protected areas and on locally important unlisted buildings which are cherished by the local community.

## **Housing**

### **Design of New Developments**

- 2.7 The design of new developments, whether major<sup>1</sup> or small-scale, can impact on the character of an area. It is important that additions or alterations to the residential envelope are in-keeping with the local characteristics and reflect the distinctiveness of the District's towns and villages to ensure the cohesion of new communities into existing settlements.
- 2.8 The planning of sustainable extensions to the residential envelope will be design-led and community focused to secure high quality sustainable development. This will require the appropriate integration of the means of access for pedestrians, cyclists, cars etc. and allowing sufficient functioning of the Council's recycling scheme. This will also require the integration of public open space, historic features, landscaping, public art and habitat creation, recreational facilities and educational provision, community facilities, including the provision of primary health care, as appropriate, and dwellings of mixed size and tenure within the new and adjoining communities. The provision of public open space within any proposed development should have regard to the findings of the most up-to-date Open Space Study.
- 2.9 It is also important to promote and support the enhancement of the environmental quality of the District's countryside and settlements. As such, regard should be had to the landscape character areas, which define the different geographical regions with a recognisable pattern of landscape characteristics, which create a distinct sense of place. We will also encourage the preparation of Village Design Statements and Parish Plans by local community groups throughout the District, which will provide

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<sup>1</sup> The Council considers major development as defined within the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) (Amendment) (England) Order 2006

developers with guidance on the local character of individual settlements and help ensure that developments are sensitive to the local area and designed in a way that would be acceptable to the local population. Village Design Statements will be expected to have been produced in consultation with the public to ensure that they reflect local opinions, and they must be endorsed by the Council before they can be used. It is also important to take into consideration the findings of the Rochford District Historic Environment Characterisation Project (2006); this provides a wealth of information on the importance of the historic environment within the District, depicting how historic patterns of development have influenced the variability of the historic environment, for example, in terms of archaeological conservation and value. This will enable the sensitivity of landscapes and the characteristics of local places to be fully considered in the context of individual planning applications.

- 2.10 We are concerned about the potential impact of climate change and will therefore expect developers to implement appropriate initiatives to mitigate the impact of new developments. The design and construction of buildings can directly affect the environment in terms of energy use and the generation of greenhouse gases, and the subsequent impact on climate change through global warming. This will also affect the consumption of non-renewable natural materials. The implementation of appropriate measures to reduce the consumption of energy and natural resources will help achieve the wider objective of securing more sustainable forms of development within the District.
- 2.11 We will therefore expect that all new buildings are well designed, fit-for-purpose, appropriate for the site and its setting, and adaptable for long-term use. New buildings should achieve high environmental standards through energy and resource efficient sustainable design and make best use of sustainable construction techniques. All dwellings (i.e. domestic buildings) must achieve the required Code for Sustainable Homes and Lifetime Homes Standards and non-domestic buildings must aspire to achieve the appropriate BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) rating. Further information on the Code for Sustainable Homes Standard, Lifetime Homes Standard and the BREEAM rating can be found in the **Environmental Issues** chapter of the Core Strategy.
- 2.12 Whilst aspiring for sustainable construction of new buildings, we also actively encourage the provision of well designed high quality places, which is pivotal for both major and small-scale developments. Schemes should have a safe, inclusive layout with legible and well planned routes, blocks and spaces, integrated residential, commercial and community activity, safe public spaces and pedestrian routes without traffic conflict, secure private areas, attractive buildings and landscaped spaces. Security principles set out in the national guidance 'Secured By Design'<sup>2</sup> should be taken into account in the formulation of development proposals.

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<sup>2</sup> 'Secured By Design' information available from <http://www.securedbydesign.com/index.aspx>

- 2.13 Textual Concept Statements will be prepared by the Local Planning Authority for major developments proposed on Green Belt sites which are to be reallocated for residential use in the emerging Allocations DPD to facilitate sustainable extensions to the existing residential envelope. These documents will be subject to community involvement and produced in consultation with landowners and developers, and will outline the appropriate design principles for a particular site in order to deliver the best possible social, economic and environmental benefits for the community. All proposals for sustainable extensions to the existing residential envelope should therefore take into consideration the advice, guidance and visions set out in the Textual Concept Statements.

#### **Draft Policy DM1 – Design of New Developments**

The design of new developments should reflect the character of the locality to ensure a positive contribution to the surrounding built environment and residential amenity.

The design and layout of proposed development should take into account the following:

- (i) Accessibility, particularly alternatives to the private car;
- (ii) Boundary treatment and landscaping within the development;
- (iii) Retention of trees;
- (iv) Car parking;
- (v) Density;
- (vi) Local open space requirements including the provision of greenspace, play space, private and communal gardens, allotments and other types of open space, as appropriate, based on the most up-to-date Open Space Study;
- (vii) Impact on the natural environment including sites of nature conservation importance, and on the historic environment including Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings, archaeological sites and the wider historic landscape;
- (viii) Overlooking, privacy and visual amenity;
- (ix) Relationship to existing and nearby buildings;
- (x) Scale and form;
- (xi) Textual Concept Statements; and
- (xii) Village Design Statements and Parish Plans, where applicable.

Design briefs for major developments must show that they consider and reflect the identity of the surrounding area, and must allow for the effective running of the Council's recycling scheme.

Proposals should have regard to the detailed advice and guidance on the design and layout of new developments as set out in Supplementary Planning Document 2 – Housing Design, as well as to guidance in the Essex Design Guide for Residential and Mixed Use Areas, and the most up-to-date Open Space Study for open space provision.

## Density of New Developments

- 2.14 The density of new developments is critical to the efficient and effective use of available land in accessible and sustainable locations. However, it is also important to create high quality environments with sufficient public open space, parking and other amenities to promote good quality of life for new and existing communities.
- 2.15 Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3 – Housing) provides guidance on the provision of high quality, sustainable housing, with a mix of housing tenures which reflects local needs, ensuring the effective use of existing housing stock, and providing enough homes in appropriate locations through the efficient and effective use of land. It gives the Local Planning Authority flexibility in setting appropriate densities to specific localities, particularly since the deletion of the minimum density threshold of 30 dwellings per hectare in June 2010. However, it is still imperative that land contributing towards the District's housing land supply is appropriately utilised.
- 2.16 The density of dwellings within the existing residential area varies across the District, both between individual settlements and within each settlement. Density was randomly sampled within the existing residential area of each ward to illustrate this disparity, however, it is important to emphasise that this is a purely indicative exercise and does **not** in any way represent the average density for each ward, or suggest appropriate densities for each area; It is simply a guide. The densities presented on the map below by ward (Figure 2) were determined through sampling the number of dwellings within two separate one hectare areas which were selected at random, and working out the average of these. Figure 2 depicts the average gross density of dwellings (in that it doesn't account for the presence of roads etc.) within the areas sampled in each ward.

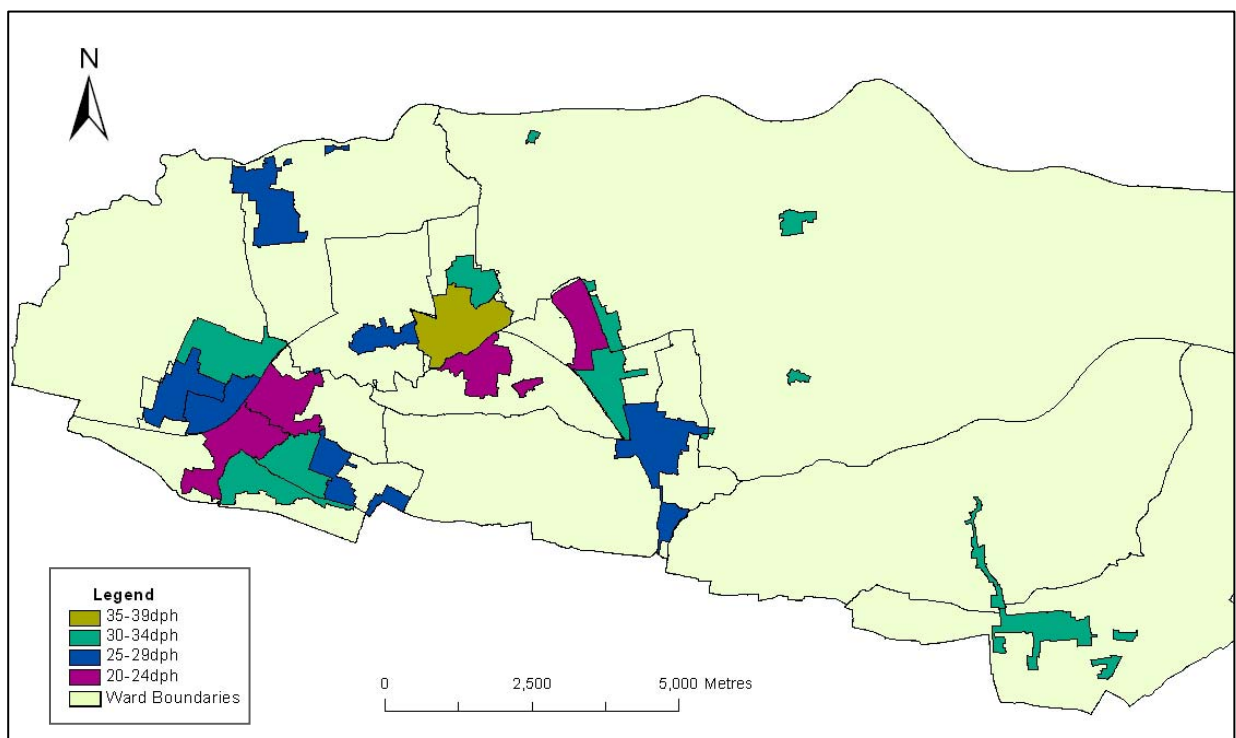


Figure 2 – Average gross density of one hectare random samples by ward



- 2.17 Density can impact on the character and form of development, and as such, we will maintain a flexible approach towards the appropriate density of new developments to reflect the individual identities of each area. However, it is recognised within Policy H1 (The efficient use of land for housing) of the Core Strategy that some locations, namely town centres, are more sustainable in terms of infrastructure provision and access to amenities, and can thus accommodate higher density development.
- 2.18 We therefore do not seek to be overly prescriptive with regard to density but will encourage appropriate densities which reflect the character, scale and form of the locality to create cohesive, sustainable environments.

#### **Draft Policy DM2 – Density of New Developments**

Proposals for residential development must make efficient use of the site area in a manner that is compatible with the use, intensity, scale and character of the surrounding area and the size of the site.

The precise density for any individual site, however, will be determined by its immediate context, on-site constraints, the type of development proposed and the need to provide an appropriate mix of dwellings to meet the community's needs.

#### **Infilling and Residential Intensification**

- 2.19 Infilling can be defined as filling the small gaps between existing groups of dwellings with new development. We consider the limited infilling of settlements to be acceptable where the development conforms to the existing street pattern and density of the immediate locality. We will also permit an appropriate level of residential intensification within town centre areas where densities are higher due to their sustainable locations; this will help safeguard Green Belt land in the District. The suitable density for town centre locations is 75 dwellings per hectare as set out in Policy H1 (The efficient use of land for housing) of the Core Strategy. However, the appropriateness of infilling in residential areas will be determined on a case by case basis primarily having regard to residential intensification, 'town cramming' (i.e. where too much infill development in the existing residential area would be detrimental to the area's character) and the impact on the character of the streetscene.
- 2.20 A restrictive approach is appropriate as infilling and residential intensification can have a negative impact on the amenity and character of settlements, and lead to increased traffic generation, and 'town cramming'. As such, we will seek to avoid these adverse effects.
- 2.21 'Backland' development is where development is proposed to the rear of existing residential dwellings in large back gardens, or where several smaller plots can be amalgamated into one. 'Backland' development may be inappropriate due to the creation of a tandem relationship<sup>3</sup> between dwellings, loss of private amenity space,

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<sup>3</sup> A tandem relationship between dwellings, where one dwelling directly faces the rear of another, should be avoided. This relationship is considered to be unacceptable as it can generate overlooking and privacy problems and can therefore be detrimental to the amenity of existing, and future, residents.

residential intensification, the detrimental impact on the character of the streetscene and the amenity of neighbouring dwellings. Such development can often create problems of overlooking and loss of privacy as well as issues with inadequate access and parking. Generally such development is undesirable, although it may be considered appropriate in some circumstances. Thus the suitability of proposals will be determined on a case by case basis.

- 2.22 Whilst providing a mix of dwelling types within new developments is supported in the Core Strategy, we will seek to resist the loss of existing dwelling types, which can impact on the character of the streetscene in the District's existing settlements. Therefore the replacement of dwellings should usually be on a like for like basis, as appropriate. However, if it can be demonstrated that an alternative dwelling type would be more appropriate and ensure better utilisation of a site, without creating undue residential intensification and 'town cramming' e.g. the replacement of one bungalow on a wide plot of land with a pair of semi-detached houses, then this may be considered acceptable. We will determine whether the loss of an existing dwelling type is appropriate and applicants should consult the Council's Housing Strategy Team for advice and guidance. The demolition of individual dwellings to be replaced by multiple dwellings e.g. the replacement of a bungalow with flats, is not generally supported. Resisting the intensification of smaller sites within residential areas will protect the character of existing settlements. However, limited infilling is considered acceptable, and will continue to contribute towards housing supply, provided it relates well to the existing street pattern, density and character of the locality. An appropriate level of residential intensification within town centre areas, where higher density schemes (75+ dwellings per hectare) may be appropriate will be encouraged.

#### **Draft Policy DM3 – Infilling and Residential Intensification**

Proposals for infilling, residential intensification or 'backland' development should consider:

- (i) the design of the proposed development in relation to the existing street pattern and density of the locality;
- (ii) whether the number and type of dwellings being proposed are appropriate to the locality;
- (iii) the contribution to housing need, taking into account the advice and guidance of the Housing Strategy Team;
- (iv) an assessment of the proposal's impact on residential amenity;
- (v) the loss of important open space which provides a community benefit and visual focus in the streetscene;
- (vi) the loss of private amenity space for neighbouring dwellings;
- (vii) the adequate provision of private amenity space for the proposed dwelling as set out in Supplementary Planning Document 2: Housing Design;
- (viii) the availability of sufficient access to the site and adequate parking provision; and
- (ix) avoiding a tandem relationship between dwellings.

## **Habitable Floorspace for New Developments**

- 2.23 The habitable floorspace of a dwelling is considered by the Council as encompassing the floor area of bedrooms, living rooms, dining rooms, kitchens and spare rooms. The term 'habitable floorspace' in this context also encompasses large rooms greater than 20sq.m, which could be subdivided, and as such, will be counted as two habitable rooms. Habitable floorspace, however, does not include any bathrooms, separate toilet facilities, cupboards, landings, hallways, or conservatories.
- 2.24 We recognise the importance of ensuring high quality development in addition to providing enough dwellings to meet the District's housing needs. Dwellings, whether comprising housing or flats, which are market or affordable, should be of an appropriate size and layout to provide suitable and comfortable accommodation for modern living.
- 2.25 Dwelling size must be proportionate and sufficient to meet the needs of the potential number of inhabitants and all habitable rooms must have an adequate size, height, and shape, with plentiful natural lighting and ventilation. An adequate dwelling size can also increase the adaptability and flexibility of the District's housing stock, accommodate features of the Lifetimes Homes Standard and give greater choice, whilst supporting the needs of the population. The requirement to comply with the Lifetime Homes Standard within proposals for new developments can be found within the Core Strategy (Policy H6 – Lifetime Homes).
- 2.26 The internal floor area of a dwelling must comply with the minimum guidance standards set by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)<sup>4</sup> to ensure that the District's future housing stock is flexible and that all dwellings are of an adequate size to be utilised for affordable housing as appropriate. The HCA use Housing Quality Indicators (HQIs) to measure the quality of housing schemes funded through the National Affordable Housing Programme, however, these indicators score the internal dwelling area by bedspace rather than number of bedrooms, which from a development management perspective is considered to be impractical to implement. As such other standards have been sought, by number of bedrooms, which would meet the HCA's requirements. In 2007, English Partnerships (which is now part of the HCA) produced a quality standards document<sup>5</sup> which identified minimum internal floor areas according to the number of bedrooms and occupancy.
- 2.27 The table below sets out English Partnership's minimum internal floor area according to the HCA standards based on bedspaces. As such, the former standards are considered to comply with the current standards of the HCA.

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<sup>4</sup> Housing Quality Indicators (HQIs) available from <http://www.homesandcommunities.co.uk/>

<sup>5</sup> Place, Homes, People Policy Guidance – English Partnership's Quality Standards Delivering Quality Places. Revised: from November 2007 available from <http://www.englishpartnerships.co.uk/qualityandinnovationpublications.htm>



**Table 1 – Homes and Communities Agency floorspace standards compared with those of English Partnership**

<b>Unit Type (Number of bedspaces and storeys)</b>	<b>Homes and Communities Agency: Internal Floor Area</b>	<b>English Partnerships: Minimum Internal Floor Area</b>
1 bedspace	30 to 35 sq.m	
2 bedspace	45 to 50 sq.m	51 sq.m (1 bedroom/2 person homes)
3 bedspace	57 to 67 sq.m	66 sq.m (2 bedroom/3 person homes)
4 bedspace	67 to 75 sq.m	77 sq.m (2 bedroom/4 person homes)
5 bedspace (1 storey)	75 to 85 sq.m	93 sq.m (3 bedroom/5 person homes)
5 bedspace (2 storey)	82 to 85 sq.m	
5 bedspace (3 storey)	85 to 95 sq.m	
6 bedspace (1 storey)	85 to 95 sq.m	106 sq.m (4 bedroom/6 person homes)
6 bedspace (2 storey)	95 to 100 sq.m	
6 bedspace (3 storey)	100 to 105 sq.m	
7 bedspace (2+ storey)	108 to 115 sq.m	
7+ bedspace	add 10 sq.m per bedspace	

2.28 It is possible, not to mention desirable in respect of implementation, to translate standards relative to bedspaces into standards relative to number of bedrooms.

2.29 Table 2 combines standards set by HCA with those of English Partnerships to provide a workable and relevant standard for development management.

2.30 Both market and affordable housing should aspire to meet minimum approved standards for internal floor area. Each dwelling should comply with the minimum acceptable floorspace standards as defined below in Table 2.

**Table 2 – Minimum Floorspace Standards**

<b>Unit Type (Number of bedrooms)</b>	<b>Minimum Internal Floor Area (sq.m.)</b>
Studio flat	32.5 sq.m
1 bedroom flat	51 sq.m
2 bedroom flat	66 sq.m
2 bedroom house	77 sq.m
3 bedroom dwelling	93 sq.m
4 bedroom dwelling	106 sq.m

- 2.31 In addition to the minimum floorspace standards above, it is also important to take into account the functionality of the space within dwellings in that they are well planned and useable, particularly for habitable rooms. All habitable rooms should have a minimum floor to ceiling height of 2.5 metres<sup>6</sup> (8.2 feet) and be of an appropriate width to accommodate their proposed uses/function. All non-habitable rooms should be of an adequate size, height and shape, with sufficient natural lighting, and be ventilated directly by external air via a window. These standards will apply to all dwelling types, and both market and affordable housing.
- 2.32 Whilst dwellings should be reasonably sized, they must also have a suitably designed internal layout to ensure comfortable habitation for potential occupants. Therefore we will not only have regard to whether the minimum standard has been applied to all dwellings within the development, but will also determine if the internal layout is appropriate and fit for purpose. In determining the appropriate design and layout of dwellings, the need to comply with the Lifetime Homes Standard as per Policy H6 of the Core Strategy must be taken into consideration. The 16 Design Criteria (5 July 2010)<sup>7</sup> for the Lifetime Homes Standard, or the most up to date criteria, should be applied to all new developments.

#### **Draft Policy DM4 – Habitable Floorspace for New Developments**

New dwellings (both market and affordable housing) must adhere to the minimum habitable floorspace standards set out in Table 2. They should have a good internal layout with reasonably sized habitable and non-habitable rooms that are well-designed and planned, taking into account the Lifetime Homes Standard criteria, and are suitable for modern living.

### **Light Pollution**

- 2.33 Inappropriate lighting can create light pollution which can affect rural, coastal and urban areas. This type of pollution can have a detrimental impact on ecology and wildlife, obscure vision of the stars, and introduce a suburban feel into rural areas which can thus affect local character and cause stress and anxiety for those adversely affected.
- 2.34 Light pollution, as defined by Environmental Protection UK<sup>8</sup>, can take several forms including:
- Intrusive lighting – overly bright lighting or light spilling beyond an area intended to be lit.

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<sup>6</sup> Housing Quality Indicators Form (updated April 2008) which identifies design and quality standards for affordable dwellings – available from <http://www.homesandcommunities.co.uk/>

<sup>7</sup> 16 Design Criteria from 5 July 2010 (REVISED) for the Lifetime Homes Standard available from <http://www.lifetimehomes.org.uk>

<sup>8</sup> Environmental Protection UK (Light Pollution Criteria) available from <http://www.environmental-protection.org.uk/neighbourhood-nuisance/light-pollution/>

- Sky glow – the glow seen above urban areas caused by stray artificial light being scattered by dust particles and water droplets in the sky.
- Poor lighting – lighting which is set inconsiderately or incorrectly including glare, energy wastage, ecological effects and aesthetics.

- 2.35 There is a need to minimise the adverse impacts of illumination (which is the process of lighting an object or surface) by avoiding unnecessary lighting, ensuring the level of lighting in new developments (including roads) is the minimum necessary for public safety, is energy efficient and respects the character of the locality. In some cases, full horizontal cut-off (the prevention of light spillage into adjoining areas) and other forms of containment of the light source may be required to prevent spillage and glare.
- 2.36 The District has three distinguishable areas which have varying sensitivity in terms landscape character, impact on the Green Belt, nature conservation importance, and visual amenity. It is therefore considered appropriate to set out different lighting thresholds for external artificial lighting for these different areas. These different areas are referred to as environmental zones. Three distinguishable environmental zones have been identified below, based on those defined by the Institute of Lighting Engineers<sup>9</sup> (with the exception of Environmental Zone 4 which encompasses town/city centres with high levels of night-time activity, and is therefore not considered to be applicable to the District) taking into account the characteristics of the District:
- 2.37 Environmental Zone 1: Lighting proposals that neighbour or are near enough to significantly affect areas of nature conservation importance, e.g. Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Special Protection Areas and Local Wildlife Sites and habitats serving key foraging and/or habitat connectivity functions will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances. External artificial lighting can have severe implications for the natural behaviour patterns (such as eating and sleeping patterns) of a range of animals and plants, and therefore sites and habitats which are deemed important in terms of their provision of wildlife should not be in anyway adversely affected. When determining the potential impact of a lighting proposal on areas of nature conservation importance the Proposals Map in the emerging Allocations Development Plan Document and the most up-to-date Strategic Environmental Assessment Baseline Information Profile should be referred to. Consultation with statutory bodies e.g. Natural England would also be undertaken and would need to be taken into consideration.
- 2.38 Environmental Zone 2: Outside development boundaries in the Green Belt and wider countryside – Lighting proposals within the open countryside will only be permitted if the applicant can demonstrate to the Local Planning Authority that the scheme proposed is the minimum needed for security and/or working purposes and that it minimises the potential for obtrusive light from glare or light intrusion to an acceptable level. Artificial lighting in the open countryside can have a demonstrable effect on 'dark skies', one of the special qualities of the rural landscape.

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<sup>9</sup> The Institution of Lighting Engineers (Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light) available from <http://www.theilp.org.uk/uploads/File/Technical/RLP%202005.pdf>

- 2.39 Environmental Zone 3: Within development boundaries – Lighting proposals that are within or adjoining residential or commercial areas will only be permitted if the applicant can demonstrate to the Local Planning Authority that the scheme proposed is the minimum needed for security and/or working purposes and that it minimises the potential obtrusive light from glare or light intrusion to an acceptable level. Obtrusive light can have a significant impact on the amenity of residential areas in towns and villages. Where large scale lighting proposals are adjacent to a settlement boundary, regard will also be had to any detrimental impact on the surrounding countryside. Consultation with statutory bodies e.g. English Heritage, particularly where lighting is proposed within Conservation Areas or in proximity to Listed Buildings, would also be undertaken and would need to be taken into consideration.
- 2.40 The guidance produced by the Institute of Lighting Engineers<sup>10</sup> recommends the setting of lighting limits before and after curfews (an agreed time, usually late evening, at which the level of artificial lighting should be reduced) within these environmental zones. However, the lower thresholds which would be applicable after curfews is not considered to be reasonable or appropriate as we will seek to ensure that lighting is the minimum needed for security and working purposes in any case. Therefore the upper thresholds for each applicable environmental zone should be the maximum illumination permitted. Within the three environmental zones defined above the following thresholds should apply:

**Table 3 – Obtrusive Light Limitations for External Lighting Installations**  
**(amended from the guidance provided by The Institute of Lighting Engineers)**

Environmental Zone	Sky Glow ULR (Max. %)	Light Trespass (into Windows) Ev (lux)	Source Intensity I (kcd)*	Building Luminance L (cd/m <sup>2</sup> )**
1	0	2	2.5	0
2	2.5	5	7.5	5
3	5	10	10	10

**Notes:** 'ULR' or Upward Light Ratio is the maximum permitted percentage of luminaire flux that goes directly into the sky.

'Ev' is Vertical Illuminance in Lux and is measured flat on the glazing at the centre of the window. Lux is the unit of measurement of illuminance (the amount of light falling on an object). One Lux equals one lumen per square metre. A lumen is the unit of luminous flux (light) emitted by a light source or falling on a surface or object.

'I' is light Intensity in Candelas. Candela is the unit of luminous intensity of a light source in a given direction.

'L' is luminance (the intensity of the light emitted) in Candelas per square metre.

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<sup>10</sup> The Institution of Lighting Engineers (Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light) available from <http://www.theilp.org.uk/uploads/File/Technical/RLP%202005.pdf>

Further information on the application of these standards can be found within 'Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light' developed by the Institute of Lighting Engineers.

- 2.41 Any lighting proposed should be the minimum necessary for safety and working purposes, and should be appropriately designed and installed in order to avoid unnecessary light spillage and trespass. The design, appearance and scale (i.e. the height) of proposed lighting and the impact on the character and appearance of an area will be carefully considered. In particular careful consideration will be given to lighting installations which may affect buildings, features and areas which are recognised for their historic and/or architectural importance (for example Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) where government advice is that the special character of these areas, buildings and their settings should be protected from inappropriate development. The impact on locally listed buildings should also be carefully considered. The guidance produced by the Institute of Lighting Engineers<sup>11</sup> should be taken into consideration in the development and installation of any lighting proposals.
- 2.42 An appropriately detailed lighting scheme should accompany all full planning applications; however, the submission of a detailed lighting scheme may not always be necessary. When submitting an outline planning application, it is considered that an appropriately detailed lighting strategy should accompany the application. The level of detail required should be determined in consultation with the Council's Development Management team. It may therefore be necessary to submit a more detailed lighting scheme at a later date. However, depending on the level of detail provided within the lighting strategy, a scheme may not be considered necessary.

#### **Draft Policy DM5 – Light Pollution**

Applicants should take into consideration the environmental zone where a development is being proposed and the corresponding lighting thresholds as set out in Table 3.

Applicants making an outline planning application must submit an appropriately detailed lighting strategy which is proportional to the application. This should be determined in consultation with the Council's Development Management team. A more detailed lighting scheme should be submitted at the Reserved Matters stage when making a full planning application, as appropriate

Proposed schemes must demonstrate that they will not have an adverse impact in terms of light pollution on residential and commercial areas, important areas of nature conservation interest, highway safety and/or the night sky.

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<sup>11</sup> The Institution of Lighting Engineers (Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light) available from <http://www.theilp.org.uk/uploads/File/Technical/RLP%202005.pdf>

## **Telecommunications**

- 2.43 The implementation and maintenance of effective telecommunications networks such as telephone and radio masts within the District are essential to the development of the local economy and for the benefit of the local community.
- 2.44 Planning Policy Guidance 8 (PPG8 – Telecommunications) recognises the need to ensure the continued functioning and extension of existing telecommunications systems and the development of new networks whilst balancing the need to protect visual amenity and minimise environmental impacts. As such, we will seek to ensure that, particularly in the more rural areas of the District, there are adequate telecommunications systems (either through the maintenance or extension of existing networks, or the provision of new networks). Adequate provision will be balanced against ensuring that there are no unacceptable effects on the natural and built environment, in particular sites of local, national and international nature conservation importance (including Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), the Coastal Protection Belt, Ancient Woodland, Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Landscape Areas (SLAs), Local Wildlife Sites (LoWS) and the Upper Roach Valley) or sites of historic significance (such as Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings), and the impact on visual and residential amenity is minimal.
- 2.45 Where environmental improvements are to be encouraged, especially in the District's Conservation Areas, and other town and village centres, we will seek the co-operation of telecommunication providers in ensuring wherever possible that telephone cables are provided underground and that telephone boxes are sensitively designed and appropriately sited. Providers will be encouraged to dismantle all disused overhead lines.
- 2.46 The siting of substantial masts, which are essential to the operations of the various mobile phone companies, must be carried out with great care to ensure that sensitive areas do not suffer a loss of residential or visual amenity. Regard must be had however, to the limitations imposed by the nature of the telecommunications network and the technology that can constrain operators' choice of sites. A balance, therefore, needs to be struck.
- 2.47 Where the erection of a mast requires planning permission, their siting must be avoided in the sensitive areas of the District, as far as practicable. These areas include Conservation Areas, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), the Coastal Protection Belt, Ancient Woodland, Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Landscape Areas (SLAs), the Upper Roach Valley and Local Wildlife Sites (LoWS). There is also a need to assess whether masts will affect any bird migration patterns and consultation will be undertaken with Natural England to assess this risk.
- 2.48 It is noted that planning permission is not required for all forms of telecommunications development. However, technical information supporting an application for planning permission must be accompanied by an ICNIRP (International Commission on Non-ionizing Radiation Protection) certificate, which confirms that the emissions for the proposed installation are in compliance with the ICNIRP exposure guidelines. This ensures that the potential impact on amenity is taken into consideration.



- 2.49 Furthermore, there is a clear need to ensure communication between the different telecommunication companies to avoid the need for the erection of duplicate masts. Careful consideration needs to be given to the potential for mast sharing and also the placing of masts on existing buildings where their overall impact can be less than for a freestanding structure.

#### **Draft Policy DM6 – Telecommunications**

Where planning permission is required, proposals for the development of telecommunications networks, including the proposed equipment and associated structures, will be considered acceptable provided that:

- (i) if located on an existing building, mast or other structure, telecommunications equipment is sited and designed to ensure that there is minimal impact to the external appearance of the structure;
- (ii) if sited in an undesirable location (such as an area designated for its nature conservation or historic importance), it has been clearly demonstrated that there are no suitable alternative sites for the development of telecommunications systems available in the locality, the development is essential, it is to the benefit of the local community and it would not have a negative impact on local landscape character. Such evidence should accompany any application made;
- (iii) evidence is provided along with applications which propose the siting of a new mast, to demonstrate that the possibility of erecting telecommunications equipment on existing buildings, masts or other structures has been fully explored. Where it can be proved that this is not possible, telecommunications development requiring an application for prior approval of siting and appearance will only be considered acceptable where the equipment is of a design, height, material and colour, and where appropriate is screened, so as to minimise visual intrusion. Proposals should also consider the impact on:
  - the topography and natural vegetation;
  - the proximity to areas of nature conservation interest or other sensitive areas;
  - its relationship with other existing masts, structures or buildings; and
  - its relationship to residential property, educational and healthcare facilities, employment and recreational sites; and
- (iv) if proposing development in a sensitive location, it should be clearly demonstrated there would not be a negative impact on these areas. Such evidence should accompany any application made.

When considering applications for telecommunications development, we will take into consideration the operational requirements of telecommunications networks and the technical limitations of the technology. Additionally, arrangements will be put in place to ensure that, if such development falls into disuse, any structures are removed and the land restored to its condition before development took place or other agreed beneficial use.

## **Character of Place**

### **Local List**

- 2.50 The new Local List, which is being reintroduced through the Core Strategy, identifies individual buildings, groups of buildings or items of street furniture which are of local historic, architectural or visual importance, are locally distinctive or are considered to be character enhancing.
- 2.51 We recognise the importance of such buildings which contribute to the distinctive character of each area within the District and enhance the local environment. The setting of such buildings is considered to be of particular importance. We do not want to be overly restrictive but aim to provide guidance and criteria which will help to protect special characteristics of locally listed buildings or items of street furniture and encourage sensitive alterations and modifications, where appropriate.
- 2.52 We will work with owners of buildings included in the Local List at all stages of the planning process, and encourage them to avoid proposals for demolition, unsympathetic alterations or changes which will diminish the value of their buildings in historic, architectural or townscape terms.

#### **Draft Policy DM7 – Local List**

Alterations to buildings included on the Local List must complement the individual character of the building or group of buildings and retain important features or characteristics which make the building(s) worthy of local listing. The descriptions of the buildings which highlight the important features should be taken into consideration when alterations are proposed.

Extensions should be sensitive to the character and visual balance of the building, unless circumstances exist which outweigh the need to conserve the original building. Items of street furniture should not be altered unless this would improve their condition.

Owners should consider the retention, restoration and/or replacement of:

- (i) Important architectural and character features such as weatherboarding, modillions, bargeboards, existing roof material, cornerstones and ridge tiles, although this is not an exhaustive list; and
- (ii) Original windows for example sash windows should be retained and replaced with similar windows. The use of plastic PVC windows should be avoided.

If the building is part of a group then alterations should be consistent with the character or uniform appearance of the group.

### **Demolition within Conservation Areas**

- 2.53 Conservation Areas, as designated by the Council, are areas of special architectural or historic interest where we have a statutory duty to preserve or enhance their character and appearance. The character of an area derives from a number of elements; these can include the siting and design of its buildings, open spaces, views and features such as walls, the landscape, streetscene, materials and the activities that take place there.



- 2.54 We have control over the demolition of most buildings (including walls and structures) within Conservation Areas by virtue of Section 74 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
- 2.55 The prime consideration when assessing such applications will be the desirability of preserving or enhancing the appearance of the area. The contribution made by the building to the architectural and/or historical interest of the area, and the wider implications of the building's demolition on its surroundings and on the Conservation Area as a whole will be taken into consideration.
- 2.56 Consent for the demolition of any building will not be granted unless there are acceptable plans for the future use of the site. In cases where redevelopment of the site is proposed, consent for the demolition will not be granted until full planning permission has been approved for the redevelopment scheme, and no demolition may occur until a legal agreement between Rochford District Council and the developers for redevelopment is in place.

#### **Draft Policy DM8 – Demolition within Conservation Areas**

Consent for the demolition of a building in a Conservation Area will only be granted in cases where all of the following criteria are met:

- (i) the building to be demolished is of no architectural or historical interest and does not make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area;
- (ii) detailed plans for the after-use of the site have been submitted to, and approved by, the Local Planning Authority. (In cases where the after-use of the site includes development requiring planning permission, such permission must have been applied for and granted in order that the terms of this criterion be met).

Additionally we will require the signing of a legal agreement between Rochford District Council and the developers before permission for demolition is granted, requiring the redevelopment of the site within an agreed timeframe, and no demolition may occur without a contract to redevelop the site.

#### **Development outside, but close to the boundary of, Conservation Areas**

- 2.57 Conservation Areas are designated to protect the character and important value of particular townscapes. Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plans have been produced to aid their protection and enhancement, and Conservation Areas are protected through national guidance and legislation.
- 2.58 Development in areas which are outside, but adjacent to, Conservation Areas can have an impact on the visual amenity, character and value of those areas which are protected and so will seek to ensure that they do not have a negative impact on the Conservation Area. The impact a proposed development may have on a Conservation Area will be determined on a site-by-site basis.

**Draft Policy DM9 – Development outside, but close to the boundary of, Conservation Areas**

Proposals for developments which are outside, but close to the boundary of, Conservation Areas must have regard to their impact on the overall streetscene, individual buildings or groups of buildings within and on the edge of the Conservation Areas.

Proposals for developments which would alter the appearance of a building should carefully consider the impact of the changes proposed on the character and appearance of the adjacent Conservation Area. Account should be taken of all changes proposed including (but not limited to) changing building materials, altering the positioning and design of fenestration and extensions and other alterations.

### **3 The Green Belt and Countryside**

#### **Vision**

##### **Short Term**

- The openness and character of the Rochford Green Belt continues to be protected, though small areas next to settlements have been released for development.
- Existing businesses in the Green Belt which are important to the local economy continue to be supported.
- Redevelopment of unattractive buildings in Battlesbridge Conservation Area is taking place, enhancing the character and appearance of the Conservation Area whilst respecting the objectives of the Green Belt.
- A number of rural buildings have been converted to enable and support green tourism projects and rural diversification.
- New strategies for improving access to the countryside particularly within the Upper Roach Valley Special Landscape Area (the area encompassing Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park and Hockley Woods) are being implemented.,
- New visitor facilities at the RSPB nature reserve at Wallasea Island are being developed.

##### **Medium Term**

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

## **Long Term**

- The Green Belt remains predominantly undeveloped and open in character.
- Rochford District continues to be recognised as the green part of the Thames Gateway South Essex.
- The second phase of sustainable urban extensions is completed.
- Rochford is recognised as a tourist destination, with good access to the rivers and waterways and many visitors to the nationally recognised wetlands at Wallasea.,and the sub-regional greenspaces located within the Upper Roach Valley Special Landscape Area and in the area to the south of the River Roach.

## **Objectives**

1. Continue to protect the openness and character of the District's Green Belt.
2. Ensure the minimum amount of Green Belt is allocated to meet the District's housing and employment needs, and that extensions to the residential envelope are in sustainable locations, which retain the individual identities of settlements and prevent coalescence.
3. Ensure existing lawful businesses in the Green Belt are able to continue to function and contribute to the local economy, as appropriate, having regard to the impact on the openness and character of the Green Belt.
4. Ensure appropriate forms of diversification are encouraged to support the local rural economy and help achieve the vision of developing green tourism in the District.
5. Ensure that appropriate activities are encouraged within the Green Belt such as areas of greenspace with facilities suitable for a wide range of activities including recreation, education, and nature study.
6. Improve access to the countryside through a range of mechanisms including the delivery of viable aspects of the Thames Gateway Green Grid Strategy and the Parklands Vision, alongside Essex County Council and neighbouring authorities.

## **Introduction**

- 3.1 Rochford District is predominantly rural, and the majority of land within the District is designated as Metropolitan Green Belt. In addition, there are areas of countryside at the eastern extremity of the District which are isolated, undeveloped and rural in character but sit outside of the Green Belt. The Core Strategy notes that the Council envisages Rochford District will continue to be the green part of the Thames Gateway. National policy on the Green Belt is contained within Planning Policy Guidance Note 2 (PPG2 – Green Belts). The most important aspect of the Green Belt is its openness.

PPG2 states that the five purposes of including land within the Green Belt are as follows:

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

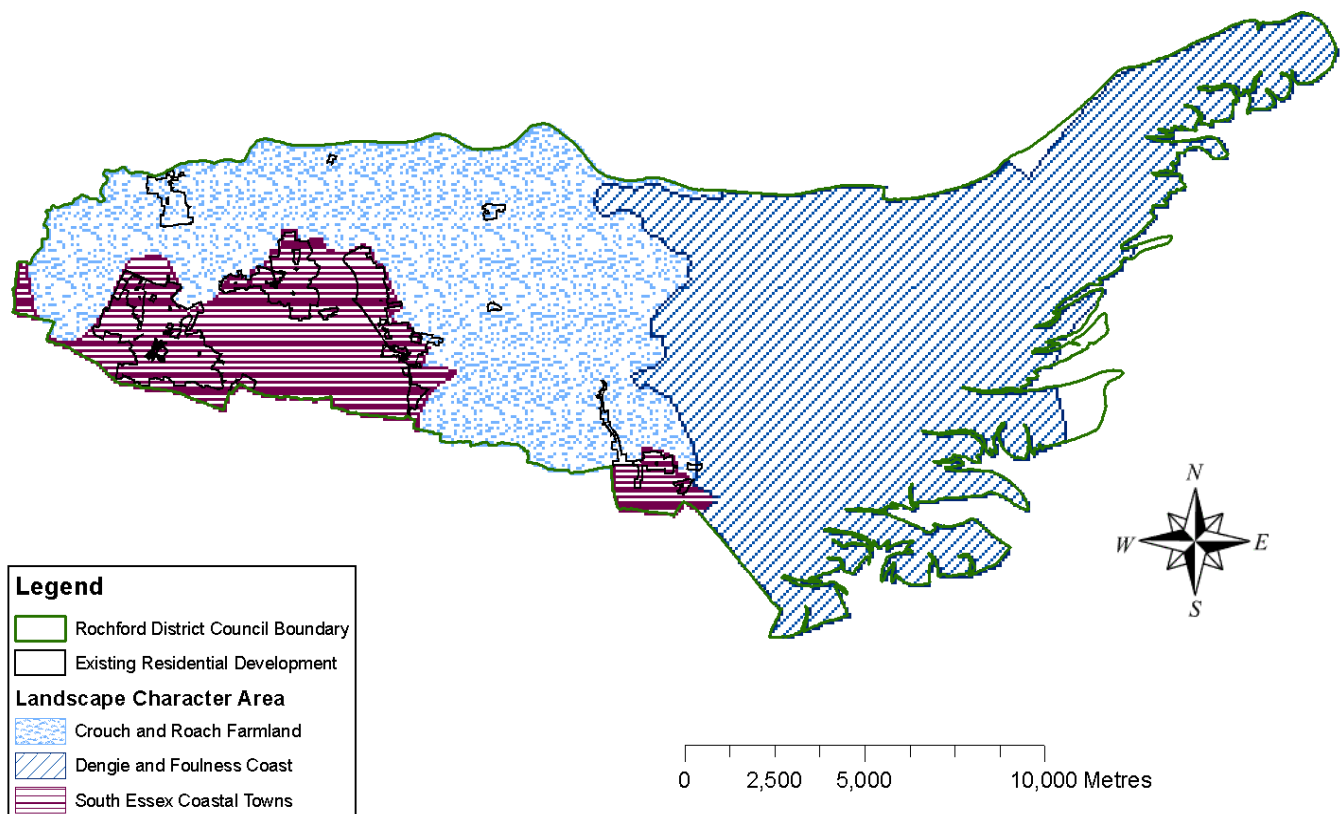
- 3.2 The Core Strategy continues to maintain the restrictive approach towards development within the Green Belt to protect its openness. It is, however, recognised that the minimum amount of Green Belt necessary will need to be reallocated for appropriate alternative uses to meet the district's housing and employment needs.
- 3.3 It is recognised nationally (e.g. Planning Policy Statement 4 – Planning for Sustainable Economic Development) that rural diversification, including non-agricultural activities, is important for the rural economy. However, it is also necessary to consider the impact of diversification on the character of rural areas, economic development in urban areas, and wider sustainability issues. It should also be noted that much of the District's countryside is designated as Green Belt, and as such is expected to perform an important role as described above. Accordingly rural diversification is encouraged in the Core Strategy (e.g. the conversion of buildings to bed and breakfasts/small-scale hotels) which will enhance the rural economy whilst respecting the principles set out in PPG2.
- 3.4 Rural diversification is considered within the **Green Belt** chapter of the Core Strategy, however, specific planning issues with respect to development within the Green Belt and wider countryside, including the impact of permitted development rights and tourism, needs further elaboration.
- 3.5 The classification of land as 'Green Belt' is a planning designation, rather than a description of the land itself; nevertheless its designation is fundamental in maintaining the green open character of the District and preventing the coalescence of settlements. It is recognised, however, that not all areas of the Green Belt are of the same character; rural diversification will be more appropriate in some parts than others. Such areas are no less worthy of Green Belt designation and continue to perform an important role in preserving the character and openness of the District but they may also afford tourism, rural diversification and leisure and recreational opportunities, where appropriate.

## **The Green Belt and Countryside**

- 3.6 It is recognised that whilst the majority of the District is designated Metropolitan Green Belt, a proportion of the land mass to the east is open countryside which is not afforded this designation. This area around Foulness is encompassed by the Coastal Protection Belt and other nature conservation designations (further information can be found in the SEA Baseline Information Profile). Accordingly it is important to have policies which relate to both the Green Belt and the wider countryside as appropriate.
- 3.7 Some of the issues and policies set out in this chapter are applicable to Green Belt and not the countryside, whilst others apply to both. Text within the sections themselves explain whether they are applicable to just the Green Belt, or the Green Belt and wider countryside.

## **Landscape Character**

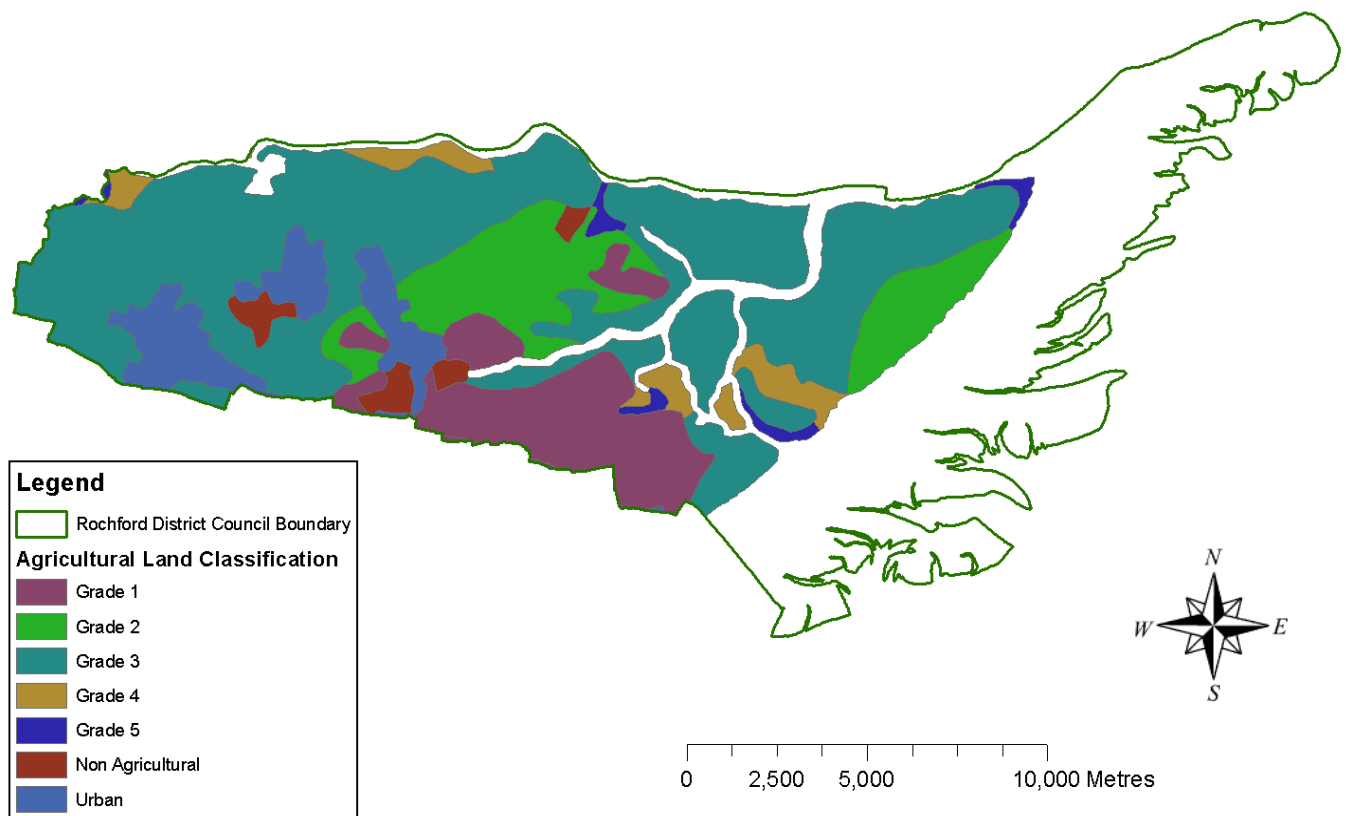
- 3.8 Rochford District is divided into three landscape character areas (see Figure 3):
- Crouch and Roach Farmland - The coastal character of the area is defined by the narrow estuaries which penetrate far inland, with associated low lying mudflats, salt marsh and reclaimed marshlands, including grazing marsh. The land between the estuaries and their immediate margins is undulating arable farmland.
  - Dengie and Foulness Coast - This is an extensive, remote area of reclaimed marshland, tidal mudflat sands and fringing salt marshes (which is rich in wildlife) beyond the sea wall; and
  - South Essex Coastal Towns - An area of very mixed character, but unified by the overall dominance of urban development, with frequent views of an urban skyline.
- 3.9 The sensitivity of these landscape character areas to change is quite variable. The most sensitive area is the Dengie and Foulness Coast. The South Essex Coastal Towns landscape area is generally the least susceptible, although there are important nature conservation designations within this area (e.g. the Upper Roach Valley) which will need to be considered. This landscape is also highly sensitive to infrastructure development (for example, masts and pylons) and to a decline in countryside management.



**Figure 3 – Landscape character areas of Rochford District**  
(Source: Essex County Council)

### Agricultural Land

- 3.10 Over half of the agricultural land located within Rochford District is classified as Grade 3. The majority of Grade 1 agricultural land is located to the south and south east of the District. The majority of Grade 2 agricultural land is centrally located in the District, as well as there being a small isolated area present to the east (see Figure 4).



**Figure 4 – Agricultural land classification of Rochford District**  
(Source: Essex County Council)

### Employment Opportunities in the Green Belt and Countryside

- 3.11 The Council supports the sustainable economic development of the District, including through developing existing spatial patterns of employment as outlined in the Core Strategy, and seeking to ensure the continued functioning and growth of small and medium sized businesses. These businesses play an important role, particularly in the sustainability of rural economies in creating local employment opportunities within the District; however, the Council recognises that it is imperative to balance the potential for economic growth with the protection of the District's countryside, and Green Belt land in particular.
- 3.12 There are a number of issues in respect of economic development in rural areas outside of the Green Belt which are adequately addressed by national planning policies and as such should not be repeated in the District's own policies. However, it is recognised that there is a potential conflict between national planning policies promoting economic development in rural areas, and those that seek to protect the Green Belt. Policies DM10 and DM12 below relate, as detailed in the text and options, only to the Green Belt and seek to address this potential conflict. With regards to rural diversification the Council believes that further elaboration on national planning policy is required; Policy DM11 looks at rural diversification in the Green Belt and in non-Green Belt countryside.



### **Existing Businesses in the Green Belt**

- 3.13 There is already a diverse range of businesses operating within the Green Belt, for a variety of historical and operational reasons. These locations are not designated as employment land because they are not appropriate for intensification or additional business uses, as these would negatively impact on the character of the area and would be unsustainable. The Council acknowledges that these businesses make an important contribution to the local rural economy; however, their location still merits Green Belt designation.
- 3.14 The Council recognises the importance of encouraging and sustaining local economic growth throughout the District, but this needs to be weighed against the impact of business operations on the objectives of the Green Belt, in particular its openness as well as wider sustainability objectives. The Council will support lawfully established businesses in appropriate and accessible locations to encourage the vitality of the local economy and to fulfil the potential of local businesses. To preserve openness as far as possible and to protect the character of the Green Belt, existing lawfully established businesses will in principle be allowed to increase the gross floorspace of the original building where existing business operations are taking place. The 'original building' in this case refers to the floor area as at 1948 or later (depending on when the building was constructed). However, if no original plans or plans for extensions are evident in the planning records, then we will assume that the current building is original. The size and scale of proposed extensions must be proportionate and will be determined on a case by case basis taking into consideration PPG2.
- 3.15 Extensions to buildings for lawfully established businesses in the Green Belt, however, may be permitted provided that there are no available vacant units either on the site or close to the business in question. Where there are suitable units which are available then, in the interests of preserving the openness of the Green Belt whilst supporting lawfully established businesses, an extension will not be permitted. Existing units should be utilised, as far as practicable, before extensions are permitted.
- 3.16 The growth of the business should not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of nearby residential dwellings through a significant increase in traffic generation (either on the rural highway network or through the provision of additional car parking), or pollution (through noise, lighting, or other forms of emissions).

### **Draft Policy DM10 – Existing Businesses in the Green Belt**

The Council will support existing lawfully established businesses in the Green Belt, allowing extensions to existing business premises and changes of use to enable diversification, where appropriate, subject to the following:

- (i) extensions and/or changes of use relate to an existing business which is lawfully established and would not be detrimental to nature conservation interests, landscape character, the historic environment, the best and most versatile agricultural land or residential amenity;
- (ii) the availability of vacant units on the site/close to the business in question;
- (iii) where an extension is proposed it would not result in a disproportionate increase in gross floorspace over that of the original building;
- (iv) it can be demonstrated that the proposal is necessary for the functioning of the existing business, and the proposed development would not be better situated in a deliverable and available location elsewhere in the District;
- (v) the development has been designed to minimise impact on the character, appearance and openness of the Green Belt;
- (vi) the scale, design and materials of the original building is respected;
- (vii) the development would not undermine town centre regeneration; and
- (viii) the type or volume of generated traffic, particularly heavy goods vehicles, would be appropriate to the rural highway network, would not have an unacceptable adverse effect on highway safety, the amenity of nearby residential occupiers or important wildlife habitats.

### **Rural Diversification**

- 3.17 Supporting rural diversification is important to ensure the prosperity of the local economy. As identified in the Core Strategy, the Council supports activities which would complement the current functioning of agricultural establishments, the conversion of existing agricultural and rural buildings for small-scale B1 employment use, green tourism, conversion of farm buildings to bed and breakfasts/small-scale hotels and outdoor recreation and leisure activities. Retail and residential development, however, are not considered acceptable forms of rural diversification in the Green Belt or rural areas outside the Green Belt.
- 3.18 The use of existing agricultural and rural buildings for bed and breakfasts is acceptable within the Green Belt and wider countryside because they can make a positive contribution to the local rural economy and support the development of local green tourism initiatives. However, the use of existing agricultural and rural buildings for residential use is not considered appropriate, as such a use does not in itself generate economic activity within the Green Belt or wider countryside and would not make a positive contribution to the rural economy. Even if a bed and breakfast venture becomes economically unviable, the conversion of such a use for residential purposes is not supported. Residential uses would not positively contribute to the local rural economy and green tourism, and therefore would not be considered appropriate.

- 3.19 Permission for development within the Green Belt and wider countryside must have regard to the landscape character, and the sensitivity of such a landscape to the development proposed, and the grade of agricultural land. It is recognised that the landscape areas less sensitive to development are also those that are generally less isolated and are more accessible. These areas tend to offer more viable and sustainable opportunities for rural diversification.
- 3.20 It is, however, recognised that agricultural establishments looking to diversify their activities are often located within Crouch and Roach Farmland and Dengie and Foulness Coast landscape character areas. Established agricultural and rural buildings already have an impact on the openness of the Green Belt and character of the countryside. As such these have the potential to still benefit from rural diversification opportunities, where appropriate, without further undue harm to the openness of the Green Belt or character of the countryside. Proposals should also take into consideration the value of agricultural land (in terms of the agricultural land classification as set out in Figure 4) that may be impacted through rural diversification.

#### **Draft Policy DM11 – Rural Diversification**

Rural diversification will be supported so long as it involves an appropriate form of rural activity, as outlined in the Core Strategy, and having regard to the following:

- (i) the need to ensure that the proposed use would not have an undue impact on the openness of the Green Belt, character of the countryside, nature conservation interests, the historic environment, visual amenity or residential amenity;
- (ii) the need to ensure that the proposed use would not introduce additional activity or traffic movements likely to materially and adversely affect the openness of the Green Belt or character of the countryside, or place unacceptable pressures on the surrounding highway network;
- (iii) the sensitivity of the landscape character area in which the proposal is situated to the development proposed;
- (iv) the impact of the proposal on the agricultural value of the land; and
- (v) where rural diversification for employment opportunities is proposed, the area should have good links to the highway network.

#### **Conversion of Existing Agricultural and Rural Buildings in the Green Belt**

- 3.21 Planning Policy Statement 4 (PPS4 – Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth) sets out the government's planning policies for economic development in rural areas, including country towns and villages and the wider, largely undeveloped countryside up to the fringes of larger urban areas. The guidance encourages the reuse of existing farm buildings in the interest of rural diversification where practicable. The Council supports this objective and the conversion of existing agricultural and rural buildings in the countryside, and Green Belt where this is appropriate and compatible with PPG2. As such, it is necessary to set out a policy for the conversion of agricultural and rural buildings in the Green Belt which balances the guidance in PPS4 with that in PPG2. Where the 'original building' is mentioned, this refers to the floor area as at 1948 or later (depending on when the building was constructed). However, if no original plans or plans for extensions are evident in the planning records, then we will assume that the current building is original.

- 3.22 Residential conversion of existing agricultural and rural buildings is not considered appropriate in the Green Belt or the wider countryside because it will undermine the Council's strategic approach to residential development and overarching sustainability objectives as detailed in the Core Strategy. Further to this, and pertinent to the matter of employment opportunities in the Green Belt and wider countryside, business uses in the Green Belt have the potential to support economic development and employment in rural areas, whereas residential conversion does not.
- 3.23 The Council does not wish to see listed agricultural and rural buildings (either those with Listed Building status or those locally important building on the emerging Local List) such as outbuildings, barns and stables, which contribute to the heritage of the District to become neglected through a restrictive approach to their use. These buildings may be capable of serving a useful purpose in the rural environment and can contribute to the functioning of the local economy. As such, rural diversification of listed agricultural and rural buildings will be accepted, however, significant alterations will only be considered if they do not have an adverse impact on the integrity of the existing structure. Supporting evidence from a structural engineer should accompany any application for the conversion of listed agricultural and rural buildings. Whilst appropriate rural diversification opportunities would be supported, the purpose of this draft policy is not to resurrect derelict agricultural or rural buildings, but to support rural diversification, and its ensuing economic benefits through the use of existing buildings.

#### **Draft Policy DM12 – Conversion of Existing Agricultural and Rural Buildings in the Green Belt**

The reuse or adaptation of existing agricultural and rural buildings will be supported provided that:

- (i) the application relates to an existing building with a form, bulk and general design in-keeping with its surroundings;
- (ii) the application relates to an existing building of permanent and substantial construction;
- (iii) the proposed use would not introduce additional activity or traffic movements likely to materially and adversely affect the openness of the Green Belt, or place unacceptable pressures on the surrounding highway network;
- (iv) the proposal does not exceed the existing footprint of the original building, with the exception of an allowance for additions that would be permitted in accordance with **Draft Policy DM10**;
- (v) there would be no detrimental impact on nature conservation interests;
- (vi) where the conversion of listed agricultural and rural buildings is proposed it should:
  - (a) not negatively impact on the quality of the listed structure; and
  - (b) not affect the integrity of the existing structure. A structural engineers report should accompany any application for conversion of a Listed Building.

Where conversion incorporates additions in accordance with **Draft Policy DM10**, further extensions will be restricted.

The conversion of existing agricultural and rural buildings for residential uses is not supported.

## **Tourism Opportunities in the Green Belt and Countryside**

### **Green Tourism**

- 3.24 The potential for the development of tourism within the District has been recognised as an avenue for enhancing the local economy, particularly in rural areas. The Council aims to encourage the promotion of green tourism which would benefit the local population through rural diversification and promote the District's green open spaces. There is the possibility of exploring landscape tourism based upon the differing landscape characteristics across the District.
- 3.25 Green tourism refers to sustainable tourism activities which can be promoted within the countryside (including within the Green Belt) and are sensitive to the both the natural and historic environment, and are sustainable in terms of stimulating rural economic growth and encouraging diversification of rural activities. Small-scale outdoor recreational and leisure activities such as walking and small-scale fishing lakes are considered appropriate forms of green tourism. Proposed activities should have a positive impact on the local environment and visual amenity of the surrounding area, and when considering the potential impact on the historic environment, the sensitivity of the different Historic Environment Character Zones set out in the Rochford District Historic Environment Characterisation Project (2006) should be taken into consideration. Furthermore the promotion of green tourism must respect nature conservation interests and proposals must not adversely affect sites of ecological importance.
- 3.26 The majority of the District is designated Green Belt land, and as such, the impact of this must be considered within the promotion of green tourism. Activities should not impact on the openness of the Green Belt, and where ancillary facilities may be needed, existing rural buildings should be utilised, where appropriate. In considering proposals for a tourism activity, the landscape character and quality of the agricultural land affected will be considerations.

### **Draft Policy DM13 – Green Tourism**

Green tourism will be permitted having regard to:

- (i) the impact on the openness of the Green Belt (if applicable) and character of the countryside;
- (ii) the impact on the visual amenity of the surrounding area;
- (iii) the impact on important areas of nature conservation, including any potential disturbance to nearby sites;
- (iv) the sensitivity of the landscape character area in which the proposal is situated to the development proposed;
- (v) the impact on the historic environment through taking into consideration the sensitivity of the different Historic Environment Character Zones set out in the Rochford District Historic Environment Characterisation Project (2006);
- (vi) the impact of the proposal on the agricultural value of the land; and
- (vii) the impact of the proposal on the highway network, having regard to the likely scale of tourism that the proposal would generate.

Where ancillary facilities are proposed for the purposes of green tourism, it must be demonstrated that such facilities are necessary for the functioning of the activity. Existing agricultural and rural buildings should be reused and converted for the accompanying uses, wherever possible and appropriate. Any new structures must be the minimum size, height and bulk to accommodate the proposed use. Ancillary facilities should not have an undue impact on the openness of the Green Belt or character of the countryside.

The conversion of existing agricultural and rural buildings to bed and breakfasts/small-scale hotels will be permitted in appropriate locations provided that this will not result in an agglomeration of similar facilities.

### **Leisure and Recreational Opportunities in the Green Belt and Countryside**

- 3.27 The Council recognises that the District's countryside offers the opportunity for numerous leisure and recreational activities as outlined in the Core Strategy. Equestrian facilities and playing pitches, in particular, are supported as appropriate forms of rural diversification for leisure and recreational purposes in the countryside. However, other forms of small-scale leisure and recreation activities may be considered appropriate providing that they do not have an undue impact on the openness of the Green Belt and character of the countryside.

#### **Equestrian Facilities**

- 3.28 The provision of equestrian facilities is a popular form of rural diversification. Increasing demand for equestrian facilities within the District, however, reinforces the need to ensure a balanced approach through weighing the need for adequate recreational facilities for equestrian activities against the protection of the Green Belt and countryside, and wide-ranging nature conservation interests throughout the District. Equestrian development can appear as 'creeping urbanism', blurring the boundaries between urban areas and the open countryside. PPS4 sets out the government's approach to development in rural areas. It recognises that such facilities



can be integrated with current farming activities and can make an important contribution to sustaining local rural economies. The vast majority of the District's rural areas are designated as Green Belt and, as such, advice and guidance in PPG2 must also be considered.

- 3.29 The Council support the diversification of rural economies and as such encourage diversification into equine activities, in appropriate circumstances, where the proposal is suitably located and would not negatively impact on the environmental quality of the local area, openness of the Green Belt or the character of the countryside. As such, proposals should have regard to landscape character, biodiversity, impact on the openness of the Green Belt (where applicable), and nature conservation value of the area in which it is proposed.
- 3.30 PPS4 takes a positive approach to equine development but does not specifically cover what scale of development is appropriate. In this case PPS7 is still applicable. Small-scale equestrian proposals (offering stabling for up to 10 horses<sup>12</sup>) and large-scale proposals (proposing stables for 10 horses or more), where permitted, should ensure full reuse of existing agricultural and rural buildings before proposals for new development are considered. Where it is demonstrated that existing agricultural and rural buildings are inappropriate or insufficient for the purposes of the enterprise, new equestrian development may be permitted, providing it is closely located and related to existing development and not sited in remote or isolated rural locations. Isolated development can often appear intrusive in open countryside and can lead to the intensification of uses once established. As such, equine development may be more favourable within the South Essex Coastal Towns landscape character area. Furthermore, proposals should seek to minimise the impact of proposed development on the openness of the Green Belt and character of the countryside by ensuring that any new buildings are of a modest design and scale, which is appropriate and the minimum size necessary for their intended purpose. Facilities should be located within one building, if appropriate, or in close proximity to other buildings to ensure visual intrusion is minimised. The Council considers that large-scale development of stables is inappropriate because such an enterprise would materially affect the landscape character and the integrity of the countryside and have an undue impact on the openness of the District's Green Belt.
- 3.31 It is important to ensure that the welfare of horses through the provision of equestrian facilities is balanced against the potential impact on the openness of the Green Belt and character of the countryside. Therefore any proposed stable facility will have regard to the British Horse Society Standards in terms of stable size and grazing area as set out in 'Guidelines for the Keeping of Horses: Stable Sizes, Pasture and Fencing'<sup>13</sup> or the most up-to-date guidance. The Society, for example recommends 0.4 hectares (approximately 1 acre) of grazing land per horse.

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<sup>12</sup> As defined in PPS7

<sup>13</sup> 'Guidelines for the Keeping of Horses: Stable Sizes, Pasture and Fencing' available from [https://www.bhs.org.uk/sitecore/content/mss\\_content/Websites/MainSite/Horse\\_Care/Horse\\_Care\\_Advice/Publications/Download.aspx](https://www.bhs.org.uk/sitecore/content/mss_content/Websites/MainSite/Horse_Care/Horse_Care_Advice/Publications/Download.aspx)

### **Draft Policy DM14 – Equestrian Facilities**

Applications for equestrian development with essential ancillary facilities will be supported, provided that:

- (i) the proposal is for small-scale equestrian development (fewer than 10 stables) which does not create a proliferation of similar businesses in the same locality;
- (ii) proposals for equestrian establishments whether for private use or as a commercial livery will need to demonstrate that there is adequate land within the curtilage of the site to allow for the proper care of horses, including stabling, grazing and exercise, in accordance with the British Horse Society Standards or equivalent;
- (iii) buildings to serve private or commercial livery use are located near to existing settlements and in a sustainable location, unless justification for alternative siting is demonstrated;
- (iv) the proposal utilises redundant agricultural and rural buildings, where possible. Where it can be demonstrated that existing buildings are inappropriate or insufficient for the proposed use, new buildings will be permitted provided that they are the minimum size necessary for their intended purpose and facilities are proposed to be sited in one location/building, if appropriate;
- (v) the proposal is well related to existing or proposed bridleways and will not cause conflicts between equestrians, and have no adverse effect on the road or highway safety of the area;
- (vi) the proposed stabling and other small-scale essential facilities is modest and appropriate in scale and designed to minimise the potential detrimental impact on the openness of the Green Belt, character of the countryside, the different landscape character areas, the best and most versatile agricultural land, the historic environment or important areas of nature conservation interest; and
- (vii) there will not be a detrimental effect on the amenity of the local area by virtue of noise, light, smell or disturbance.

### **Playing Pitches and Other Leisure and Recreational Activities**

- 3.32 Playing pitches are an important community facility, and as such they should be sited within locations which are accessible to the general population. Their siting should also be considerate to the landscape character area, the historic environment, areas of nature conservation interest, and quality of the agricultural land in which they are proposed. Such facilities are an acceptable form of leisure and recreational development within the Green Belt and wider countryside, and will thus be supported in principle subject to the provisions set out in the Core Strategy.
- 3.33 The current supply and demand for playing pitches within the District is monitored within the Playing Pitch Strategy Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). This SPD also provides recommendations for future provision of these facilities, and as such, the provision within new developments should have regard to these findings. Playing pitches for the purpose of the study, however, only encompasses facilities for football, rugby, cricket and hockey. The Playing Pitch Strategy SPD should be used to identify where there are deficits in the supply of pitches for these sports. However, where



there is more up-to-date evidence and it can be demonstrated that there is a deficit in supply in a particular sport in an area not identified in the SPD, or it can be demonstrated that facilities cannot be shared or other existing facilities cannot be utilised, or it can be demonstrated that the deficit location would not meet the teams/activities needs (e.g. the pitch should be closer to where the majority of players originate); then diversion from the Playing Pitch Strategy SPD may be considered appropriate.

- 3.34 The Council recognises the importance of other sport and recreational activities, in addition to the provision of playing pitches (for the sports defined above) and equestrian facilities within the District, which can make an important contribution to resident's quality of life. The provision of such facilities is preferable within the South Essex Coastal Towns landscape character area to maximise the benefits for existing and new communities and to reduce the need to travel, thus enhancing their sustainability. However, other areas of the District may be more appropriate locations depending on the level of supply and demand for particular leisure and recreational activities. The Council will keep such supply and demand under review. When proposing other leisure and recreational activities, regard will be had to the Open Space Study evidence base document, as recommended within Planning Policy Guidance Notes 17 (Assessing needs and opportunities: a companion guide to PPG17), which identifies the spatial distribution of key open spaces, leisure and recreational activities within the District.
- 3.35 Leisure and recreational activities are often accompanied by permanent structures, which can impact on the openness of the Green Belt and character and appearance of the countryside. Ancillary facilities will be supported within the Green Belt and wider countryside provided that they are in accordance with the Core Strategy, are small-scale and essential to the functioning of the sport or leisure activity, and seek to minimise the potential impact on the Green Belt and on nature conservation interests. The facilities should be the minimum size necessary for the functioning of the activity which will be determined on a case by case basis, with regard to the guidance published by Sport England in 'Design Guidance Notes: Pavilions and Club Houses'<sup>14</sup>. The development of such facilities must not exceed the minimum size as stated within the Sport England guidance, or the most up-to-date guidance available. In any case the impact of proposed ancillary facilities on the openness of the Green Belt and character of the countryside would need to be carefully considered.

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<sup>14</sup> Sport England guidance document available from: <http://www.sportengland.org/>

### **Draft Policy DM15 – Playing Pitches and Other Leisure and Recreational Activities**

Proposals for football, rugby, cricket or hockey playing pitches will normally be expected to be located within an area where a deficit in supply has been identified in the Playing Pitch Strategy SPD. Proposals for the siting of these playing pitches and other leisure and recreational activities will be permitted provided that:

- (i) they are proposed in an area where a deficit in supply has been identified. Alternative locations where a deficit has not been identified may be acceptable where more up-to-date evidence on supply and demand is available, or where it can be demonstrated that it is not feasible to share facilities or utilise other existing facilities in the locality, for example school playing fields; or where it can be demonstrated that the deficit location would not be viable to meet the teams/activities needs;
- (ii) they are located on the edge of residential settlements. Regard must be had to the potential impact on the best and most versatile agricultural land, and the landscape character area in which the proposed pitches reside. Such leisure and recreational activities may be considered more appropriate in the South Essex Coastal Towns landscape character area, however, their location should be determined by demand, where appropriate;
- (iii) they are accessible via a variety of alternative transport options such as cycle and bus routes, as well as ensuring opportunities for walking. Provision for cycling routes alongside footpaths and roads will need to be considered; and
- (iv) the proposal would not impact on the openness of the Green Belt, character of the countryside, the historic environment, generate undue levels of noise, be detrimental to residential amenity, have an undue impact on nature conservation interests or have an adverse impact on the visual amenities of the area.

Where additional permanent facilities associated with the provision of playing pitches will be required, they will be permitted provided that:

- (a) they are small-scale and it can be demonstrated that such facilities are essential for the functioning of the activity;
- (b) they are suitably located so as to minimise the impact on amenity for neighbouring properties; and
- (c) ancillary facilities are modest in size, bulk and height to ensure minimal impact on the Green Belt.

Planning permission for a change of use to playing pitches and other leisure and recreational activities will be subject to conditions restricting the siting of containers and/or portable buildings.

### **Residential Uses in the Green Belt**

#### **Extensions to Dwellings in the Green Belt**

- 3.36 There are many dwellings in the Green Belt, for a variety of historical reasons. It is entirely reasonable for those living within the Green Belt to be able to extend their homes to meet changing circumstances. However, it is equally reasonable that the scale of such extensions be managed to ensure they do not undermine the objectives of the Green Belt.

- 3.37 Planning Policy Guidance 2 (PPG2 – Green Belts) acknowledges this situation and states that limited extension, alteration or replacement of existing dwellings within the Green Belt is not inappropriate provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. In this instance, this is determined based on the footprint of the original building as at 1<sup>st</sup> July 1948 or, when it was first constructed, if this is later.
- 3.38 Permitted development rights enable some development to be undertaken without the need to obtain planning permission. The permitted development rights introduced in October 2008 (Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (No. 2) (England) Order 2008) provide, in some circumstances, greater flexibility for extensions to dwellings in the Green Belt, setting aside the test of what is a 'reasonable' extension for the purposes of PPG2. Accordingly the Council considers that the previous 35sq.m of additional habitable floorspace as set out in the 2006 Rochford District Replacement Local Plan no longer relates appropriately to the permitted development rights; a revised approach is required.
- 3.39 Given that PPG2 states that extensions to dwellings in the Green Belt should not result in disproportionate additions over and above the original size of the dwelling, a policy which allows additions proportional to the original external floor area of dwellings is considered more appropriate. Proposed extensions to dwellings in the Green Belt that would result in a greater than 25% increase in the external floor area above that of the original building are considered disproportionate. Proposals for extensions to dwellings in the Green Belt should be designed to avoid impact on the character and appearance of the Green Belt through its scale, mass and orientation, as any increase in the volume of a dwelling will inevitably, by its very presence, impact upon the openness of the Green Belt.

#### **Draft Policy DM16 – Extensions to Dwellings in the Green Belt**

Applications for extensions to dwellings in the Green Belt will be permitted provided that the proposal would result in no more than a 25% increase in floorspace of the original dwelling, and provided that:

- (i) the proposal does not involve a material increase in the overall height of the dwelling; and
- (ii) the proposal has been designed so as to avoid impact on the character and appearance of the Green Belt through its scale, mass and orientation.

Any grant of planning permission will be conditioned to remove permitted development rights which would allow the dwelling to be extended in order to control their scale, appearance and impact.

#### **Agricultural, Forestry and Other Occupational Dwellings**

- 3.40 The provision of new dwellings in the Green Belt and wider countryside, where it can be demonstrated that the existence of on-site accommodation is crucial to the success of an agricultural or forestry business, is considered appropriate. Planning Policy Guidance 2 (PPG2 – Green Belts), which applies to much of rural land within the District, also allows the construction of new buildings for the purposes of agriculture and forestry in the Green Belt, unless permitted development rights have been withdrawn.

- 3.41 However, given the need to balance rural activities with protecting the character of the countryside and openness of the Green Belt, it is important to establish whether there is a functional need for someone to live on the site, whether the enterprise is, or will become financially viable, and whether such viability is likely to be sustainable in the long term. Applications for agricultural or forestry uses which may give rise to the need for a permanent dwelling to be situated on the site should be accompanied by full business plans and/or appraisals carried out by suitably qualified people (e.g. agricultural consultants) and, in respect of applications for dwellinghouses, fully audited accounts for the three years preceding the application. Applicants will be expected to be able to demonstrate that the enterprise provides sufficient income for investment in the business (e.g. money for buildings, machinery, livestock, etc.) in line with the business plan, in addition to income for the construction of the house, personal/family and other needs.
- 3.42 Before permission can be granted for a permanent dwellinghouse, it is imperative for an applicant to demonstrate that their business is economically viable, and has every prospect of remaining so in the longer term. Therefore, where a new business is proposed, an application should first be made for the stationing of a mobile home, or another type of temporary accommodation. Permission for a temporary mobile home will usually be granted for a period of three years, providing it meets the criteria set out in the policy, to give the applicant sufficient time to establish their business, and so meet these objectives. If it can be demonstrated that the business is successful, consideration can then be given to the provision of a permanent dwellinghouse. Permission for the siting of a mobile home will not, however, be granted for a period exceeding three years, nor will permissions normally be renewed if, at the end of the temporary period, the business is still not viable.
- 3.43 Careful consideration should be given to the siting of new dwellings to ensure that they meet the identified functional need, but are also well-related to existing buildings. Such consideration should also extend to the siting of temporary mobile homes, as it will not normally be appropriate to grant permission for a mobile home in a location where a permanent dwelling would not be permitted. Planting schemes will be required to further reduce the visual impact of dwellings in the landscape.
- 3.44 The size of new dwellings should be proportionate to the functioning of the business in accordance with PPS7, and as such, it should be determined by the needs of the business rather than those of the owner or occupier. Given the District's predominant Green Belt designation, and the Council's previous agricultural dwelling policy and Green Belt extensions policy set out in the 2006 Rochford District Replacement Local Plan, it is considered reasonable to apply approach to new agricultural, forestry and other occupational dwellings.
- 3.45 In the 2006 Replacement Local Plan, new agricultural dwellings were permitted a total floorspace of 140sq.m plus 35sq.m Green Belt extension, which permits agricultural dwellings to be extended by the same amount as other dwellings in the Green Belt. The Council's 'one size fits all' approach to extensions to dwellings in the Green Belt is still considered appropriate to ensure that dwellings within the Green Belt and wider countryside are reasonably sized and to protect the openness of the Green Belt in accordance with PPG2, as well as the character of the countryside. **Draft Policy DM16** advocates a 25% increase in floorspace of the original dwelling be permitted.

Therefore new agricultural or forestry dwellings will be permitted a maximum floor area of 175sq.m (140sq.m plus 35sq.m) which coincides with the Council's previous policy in the 2006 Replacement Local Plan (as 35sq.m. is equal to 25% of 140sq.m.). Planning permission will be conditioned withdrawing permitted development rights from the new dwelling to restrict further extension, and to further limit undue impact on the openness of the Green Belt and character of the countryside. Greater floorspace will be permitted only in exceptional circumstances where it can be sufficiently demonstrated to the Council that the functional need of the business truly requires a larger dwelling.

- 3.46 Planning conditions will be imposed to limit the occupation of all new dwellings to persons employed, or last employed, in agriculture in the locality. This will ensure that dwellings are kept available to meet the needs of other agricultural businesses in the area as a whole if, for whatever reason, a dwelling is no longer required to meet the needs of the original business. That being the case, applications for the removal of agricultural occupancy conditions will not, therefore, be permitted except in the most exceptional circumstances.

#### **Draft Policy DM17 – Agricultural, Forestry and Other Occupational Dwellings**

Within the Green Belt and wider countryside, applications for permanent dwellings for agricultural and forestry workers will be considered favourably if it can be adequately demonstrated that:

- (i) it is essential for the proper functioning of the enterprise for at least one person to be present on the holding at most times of the day and night;
- (ii) the functional need relates to a full-time agricultural/horticultural worker;
- (iii) the unit and the agricultural enterprise in question, have been established for at least three years, have been profitable for at least one of them, are currently financially sound and have every prospect of remaining so in the long term;
- (iv) the functional need could not be fulfilled by another existing dwelling on the unit, or any other accommodation in the area as a whole that is suitable for, and available to, the worker(s) concerned;
- (v) no dwelling or other building suitable for conversion to a dwelling has recently (generally considered to be within the past two years) been sold or let by the applicant that would have otherwise met the functional need; and
- (vi) the size of the dwelling is commensurate with the established functional requirement of the unit (dwellings will normally be expected to be bungalows or chalets and should not, in any case, accommodate in excess of 175sq.m of floorspace).

Planning permission for new farm dwellings will be subject to conditions, *inter alia*, to restrict their occupation to persons solely or mainly employed, or last employed, in agriculture in the locality and remove permitted development rights in order to control their scale, appearance and impact on the openness of the Green Belt and character of the countryside.



### Draft Policy DM18 – Temporary Agricultural Dwellings

Applications for the stationing of mobile homes for agricultural workers in the Green Belt and wider countryside will be permitted provided it can be demonstrated that:

- (i) it is essential for the proper functioning of the enterprise for at least one person to be present on the holding at most times of the day and night;
- (ii) the functional need relates to a full-time agricultural/horticultural worker;
- (iii) there is clear evidence of a firm intention and ability to develop the enterprise concerned;
- (iv) there is clear evidence that the proposed enterprise has been planned on a sound financial basis;
- (v) no dwelling or other existing building suitable for conversion to a dwelling has recently (generally considered to be within the past two years) been sold or let by the applicant that would have otherwise met the functional need; and
- (vi) the functional need could not be fulfilled by another dwelling on the unit, or any other accommodation in the area as a whole that is suitable for, and available to, the worker(s) concerned.

Permissions for mobile homes will be subject to conditions, *inter alia*, to restrict their occupation to persons solely or mainly employed, or last employed, in agriculture in the locality and require their removal from the holding after a maximum period of three years.

### Basements in the Green Belt

- 3.47 The construction of dwellings in the Green Belt with basements would not generally result in overly intrusive, bulky or high dwellings, or impact on the openness of the Green Belt, in terms of the physical presence. However, such alterations to a dwelling can pose problems of residential intensification, by introducing further residential activity to the Green Belt.
- 3.48 Single storey basements will be permitted as part of the 25% increase in floorspace of the dwelling permitted within **Draft Policy DM16**, however, such structures must not exceed the footprint of the original dwelling (based on the footprint of the original building as at 1<sup>st</sup> July 1948 or, when it was first constructed, if this is later). Therefore the floorspace which forms the basements extension will be deducted from the overall allowance for above-ground extensions. In addition where a basement is accepted, permitted development rights for extensions to dwellings in the Green Belt will be removed to prevent unreasonably sized dwellings (by controlling their scale and appearance) and to prevent any potential negative impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

### **Draft Policy DM19 – Basements in the Green Belt**

The development of basements for a dwelling will be permitted provided that:

- (i) the proposal does not exceed the footprint of the original dwelling;
- (ii) the proposal does not give rise to the formation of a self-contained unit of accommodation such as a 'granny flat'; and
- (iii) the proposal does not impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

Where a basement extension is permitted, planning permission shall be conditioned to remove permitted development rights which would allow the dwelling to be extended in order to control their scale, appearance and impact.

### **The Replacement or Rebuild of Existing Dwellings in the Green Belt**

- 3.49 The replacement or rebuild of existing dwellings in the Green Belt will be permitted with an additional extension no greater than 25% floorspace over that of the original dwelling to ensure consistency between the extension policies in this chapter. It will be necessary to impose a planning condition withdrawing permitted development rights for extensions in appropriate circumstances. This includes the conversion of roof and garage space to habitable rooms in order to ensure that alterations cannot be made to the new dwelling without the consent of the Local Planning Authority.
- 3.50 The Council will favour the utilisation of low pitched roofs, which ensures that a roof area cannot be converted into habitable accommodation thus rendering the roof space unusable for such purposes. The use of a low pitch roof has the additional benefit that the overall visual impact of the dwelling is reduced thus reducing the impact on the Green Belt. Indeed, the visual impact of a dwelling may be reduced further still if a hipped roof is used instead of a gabled roof. However, the appropriateness of requiring the low pitch roof design in order to control the scale and floor area of the dwelling in question, in addition to providing visual benefits, will be considered for replacement dwelling applications and applicants will be advised accordingly. A low pitch roof design is considered, for example, to be much less satisfactory in heritage design terms and so in certain circumstances a high pitch roof may be acceptable.
- 3.51 Permitting the replacement or rebuild of existing dwellings offers the opportunity to achieve an improvement in the appearance of many dwellings in the Green Belt. The type of materials, design, location within the plot and landscaping of the site are all matters which will be examined in great detail to ensure that the completion of the dwelling is to a very high standard.
- 3.52 As a consequence of the demand for housing, the majority of dwellings in the Green Belt have been maintained in a reasonable condition. However, a number of former dwellings in the Green Belt are derelict or abandoned. In this context, derelict refers to properties that are in an advanced state of disrepair, with insufficient structure to be considered a dwelling and/or are not fit for habitation without treatment, e.g. they have unsound roofs. Derelict properties are those which would require works to make them habitable (in particular, but not exclusively, the rebuilding of the property), and any such works are so significant, such as works to the structure of the building which

would require planning permission or building regulation consent. In considering whether or not a dwelling has been abandoned it is necessary to consider how long ago the use ceased; whether there has been an intervening use; and evidence as to the owner's intentions regarding the resumption of the use. Derelict or abandoned dwellings can no longer be considered part of the housing stock and, as such, their development for housing in the Green Belt would be inappropriate.

#### **Draft Policy DM20 – The Replacement or Rebuild of Existing Dwellings in the Green Belt**

The replacement or rebuild of existing dwellings in the Green Belt will be permitted, taking into consideration:

- (i) the total size of the dwelling, provided that it would result in no more than a 25% increase in floorspace of the original dwelling;
- (ii) the condition of the original dwelling;
- (iii) the visual mass of the new dwelling should be no greater than that of the existing dwelling (taking into consideration any additional mass allowed for in respect of criterion (i) above). The overall height of the replacement dwelling should not exceed that of the existing dwelling, unless a modest increase in height can be justified on design or visual amenity grounds. Where the existing dwelling is a bungalow it should be replaced by a bungalow; and
- (iv) the proposed siting of the replacement dwelling. A replacement dwelling should be sited in the same location within the plot as the original dwelling, unless an alternative siting is proposed where it can be demonstrated that it would be a more appropriate siting in the Green Belt in terms of the impact on openness or amenity;

Where resiting is agreed, arrangements must be secured to ensure the demolition of the replaced dwelling and its outbuildings.

Planning permission for a replacement or rebuild of an existing dwelling will be conditioned withdrawing further permitted development rights relating to the extension of the dwellinghouse or provision of outbuildings within the curtilage of the dwellinghouse.

#### **Extension of Domestic Gardens in the Green Belt**

- 3.53 A domestic garden is categorised in Planning Policy Guidance 17<sup>15</sup> (PPG17 – Planning for open space, sport and recreation) as amenity greenspace, generally found within the residential area, and as such, it can be defined as a private or semi-private area of open space normally attached to a dwelling(s).
- 3.54 Garden extensions can be harmful to the visual appearance and openness of the Green Belt, particularly given the permitted development rules allowing to the erection of additional domestic buildings, structures and other domestic paraphernalia.

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<sup>15</sup> PG17 Annex



Although garden extensions, where exceptionally permitted, would become part of the curtilage of the dwellinghouse, the construction of additional buildings or development through the exercise of permitted development rights, which would impact on the openness of the Green Belt, will be restricted. The development of fences can also impact on openness, and would only be appropriate where, for example the proposed extension would bring the garden area inline with neighbouring dwellings and where this form of boundary treatment already exists.

- 3.55 Applications to extend domestic gardens beyond the current designation of the residential fringe will be considered and permitted only where the impact on the surrounding environment, or visual amenity (the value, attractiveness or desirability of a particular view) for neighbours or the public is minimal. The size of the proposed garden extension will also be taken into consideration. The proposed extension should not be out of proportion with the size of the existing garden, for example it should not be more than double the size of the existing garden area.
- 3.56 Proposals for extensions to domestic gardens in the Green Belt should not impinge on the openness of the Green Belt through the erection of fences, additional buildings and other built structures, encroach on other areas of open space, consume valuable agricultural land (particularly that which is Grade 1 or 2), or cause unnecessary disturbance to areas which are of nature conservation importance or the historic environment. The design of fences or boundary markers should not impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

#### **Draft Policy DM21 – Extension of Domestic Gardens in the Green Belt**

Extensions to domestic gardens which currently reside within, or would encroach onto the designated Green Belt land, will only be permitted provided that:

- (i) the proposal includes appropriate boundary treatment and would ensure a defensible and robust Green Belt boundary, for example where the extension would infill the residential fringe inline with other gardens adjacent to the dwelling;
- (ii) the size of the proposed garden extension is appropriate;
- (iii) the proposal would not impact on the openness or undeveloped character of the Green Belt;
- (iv) the proposal would not encroach on high quality agricultural land (particularly Grade 1 or 2);
- (v) the proposal would not adversely impact on other areas of open space; and
- (vi) the proposal would not adversely impact on the conservation value or protection of natural areas of local wildlife value, or sites of national and international importance, or the historic environment.

Planning permission for a garden extension into the Green Belt will be conditioned withdrawing permitted development rights relating to the provision of buildings and other structures within the curtilage of the dwellinghouse.

## **Conservation Areas and the Green Belt**

- 3.57 It is important to protect and enhance the character of Conservation Areas. Where a Conservation Area is situated within the Green Belt there is the potential for this objective to conflict with Green Belt objectives. A balance needs to be struck which allows for enhancements to the Conservation Area, whilst maintaining the openness of the Green Belt. As such, some redevelopment will be permitted in Conservation Areas within the Green Belt, provided this enhances the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 3.58 The Council has produced Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan documents for the District's ten Conservation Areas and any development within the Conservation Areas that lie in the Green Belt will be expected to contribute towards the recommendations within these, whilst seeking to minimise any impact on the openness of the Green Belt.
- 3.59 Replacement buildings should only be permitted where the existing structure is unsound, or the existing structure detracts from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Where a replacement is proposed, the building should be not be materially larger than the existing building, and should be consistent with the character and appearance of surrounding buildings in the Conservation Area.
- 3.60 In the case of employment operations, redevelopment should retain existing uses, where appropriate, or propose alternative employment uses if the new use would complement the surrounding land uses and have a positive impact on the appearance and value of the Conservation Area.

### **Draft Policy DM22 – Conservation Areas and the Green Belt**

Redevelopment will be considered acceptable within Conservation Areas situated in the Green Belt, provided that:

- It will make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and will contribute to the recommendations of the relevant Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan;
- The use of the previous building is retained or is changed to one which is more appropriate in the Green Belt; and
- The proposal does not undermine the purpose of including the land within the Green Belt and is such that the impact on the openness of the Green Belt has been minimised.

## **4 Environmental Issues**

### **Vision**

#### **Short Term**

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

#### **Medium Term**

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

#### **Long Term**

- The protection of Sites of Special Scientific Interest has resulted in improvements to the percentage of which, by area, are in 'favourable' or better condition.
- The proportion of the District's energy supply from renewable and low carbon sources has been increased.
- Existing dwellings incorporate renewable energy technologies to reduce their carbon emissions and energy costs.
- New residential and non-residential developments, as appropriate, obtain a proportion of their energy needs from renewable or low carbon sources produced on-site.

- New sustainable dwellings that meet the needs of local people of all social groups are in place and integrated into communities.

## **Objectives**

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

## **Introduction**

- 4.1 Many of the environmental issues facing the District are detailed within the Core Strategy, as these are considered to be of critical importance to the future sustainable development of the District. The Core Strategy explores the wide range of environmental challenges and opportunities faced within the District primarily through the protection and enhancement of the natural environment and reducing the environmental impact of new development.
- 4.2 The Core Strategy goes a long way to delivering the environmental objectives of the District, and the Council's vision in this regard. The Core Strategy covers the following key environmental issues, including:
  - Local Wildlife Sites (LoWSs);
  - Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs);
  - The Crouch and Roach estuaries;
  - Special Protection Areas (SPAs);
  - Special Areas of Conservation (SAC);
  - Ramsar Sites (Wetlands of International Importance);

- Historical and archaeological sites;
- The Coastal Protection Belt;
- Flood risk;
- Air Quality Management Areas;
- Renewable energy (including large and small scale renewable energy projects and on-site renewable and low carbon energy generation);
- Code for Sustainable Homes;
- BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method); and
- Contaminated land.

- 4.3 The Council is committed to improving the biodiversity and wildlife value of the District and to protect and enhance, where appropriate, local, national and international sites of nature conservation importance, as well as the Coastal Protection Belt. The importance of protecting local historical and archaeological sites is also recognised within the Core Strategy.
- 4.4 Some areas, particularly towards the less populated, rural east of the District are vulnerable to flooding. Flooding is therefore a key environmental issue which is addressed within the Core Strategy. Development will be directed away from areas most at risk of flooding (Flood Zone 2 and 3), as far as practicable, and flood risk will be appraised, managed and reduced in accordance with Planning Policy Statement 25 (PPS25 – Development and Flood Risk).
- 4.5 The Core Strategy also seeks to reduce the impact of new development on the District, for example through requiring the inclusion of sustainable drainage systems (SUDS) to reduce flood risk, the designation of air quality management areas (AQMAs), as appropriate, and encouraging the use of renewable energy technologies. Appropriate sustainable construction standards are required to ensure that schemes are deliverable through compliance with the Code for Sustainable Homes standard for new residential development and BREEAM assessment criteria for new non-residential development.
- 4.6 The remediation of contaminated land is important to ensure the deliverability and efficient and effective use of previously developed land in the District to meet government guidance and objectives. The Core Strategy therefore encourages the reuse of all brownfield sites including the remediation of contaminated land and the mitigation of potential risks to ensure the appropriate and efficient use of available land within the District.

- 4.7 This chapter covers more specific issues concerning the protection and enhancement of the local environment relating to the Crouch and Roach estuaries, trees, woodlands and other important landscape features and air quality.

### **Uses within the Natural Environment**

#### **Houseboats**

- 4.8 The Crouch and Roach estuaries are ecologically important environs which encompass some of the most sensitive habitats within Rochford District. The national and international importance of the estuaries is detailed within the Core Strategy. The estuaries are therefore significant habitats for wildlife and are a valuable environment of ecological significance, which the Council wants to protect from any undue disturbance that may not have a positive effect. Further information on the constraints surrounding the Crouch and Roach estuaries can be found in the Council's Strategic Environmental Assessment Baseline Information Profile. Permanent houseboats have the potential to have a negative impact on these sensitive environments.
- 4.9 Houseboats which have a permanent mooring are considered to be a form of residential development within the District, because the occupation of such dwellings would require the implementation of infrastructure necessary for permanent occupation, which is associated with traditional permanent housing, including roads, car parks and toilets. This would not only impact on the wildlife and the nature conservation importance of the estuaries, but also undermine the Council's housing strategy, because the Council promotes the development of residential dwellings within sustainable locations with good access to local services and community facilities. Such development would also conflict with the Council's Green Belt policy, and is unlikely to be considered appropriate.

#### **Draft Policy DM23 – Houseboats**

Permanent moorings of houseboats are not normally considered to be appropriate within the Crouch and Roach estuaries, but will be permitted if it can be demonstrated that they will not have a negative impact on the:

- Conservation or wildlife value of the estuaries which fall within a designated Ramsar site; Special Areas of Conservation; Special Protection Areas or Sites of Special Scientific Interest, or other nature conservation interests;
- Coastal Protection Belt;
- Openness of the Green Belt;
- Conservation Areas and the wider historic environment;
- Visual amenity of the area;
- Water and air quality; and
- Other users of the estuaries.

Permanent moorings, where permitted, should not cause disturbance or pollution to the surrounding environment, and associated infrastructure, should not impact on the appearance of the local area or the objectives of the Green Belt.

## **Nature Conservation**

### **Trees and Woodlands**

- 4.10 Trees (both individual and groups including linear tree belts and plantations) and woodlands provide a wide range of economic, social and environmental benefits<sup>16</sup>. There are 14 areas of Ancient Woodland in the District, predominantly clustered around the settlement of Hockley. Ancient Woodland in England, as set out in the 'Standing Advice for Ancient Woodland'<sup>17</sup> by Natural England, is an area of woodland that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD. However, continuously wooded in this context does not require there to have been a continuous physical cover of trees and shrubs across the entirety of a site. Open space, both temporary and permanent, is an important component of woodlands. Hockley Woods is a large expanse of Ancient Woodland located within the Upper Roach Valley and is an important ecological, as well as recreational, resource. The location of Ancient Woodland in the District, as well as in neighbouring local authority areas in proximity to the District's boundary, is set out in the Strategic Environmental Assessment Baseline Information Profile. There are also numerous pockets of other woodland throughout the District which are of local importance, many of which are designated as Local Wildlife Sites or areas of public open space. Some individual or groups of trees are protected through Tree Preservation Orders or TPOs<sup>18</sup>.
- 4.11 Development which would result in the loss or deterioration of groups and/or individual trees of local importance should be avoided (even if they are not afforded a nature conservation designation). Where this is unavoidable, appropriate mitigation measures to offset any detrimental impact will be sought through replacing those lost or damaged of equivalent value. Aged or veteran trees in particular should be conserved, although the conservation of individual trees (whether younger or not) should be determined on their individual merits.
- 4.12 The loss or deterioration of ancient woodland and/or other woodlands as a result of development should be avoided (even if areas of woodland are not afforded a nature conservation designation). The conversion of woodland to other land uses will be resisted unless there are overriding public and ecological benefits. Woodland unavoidably lost to development or damaged should be replaced with new woodland of at least equivalent area and composition, preferably in the same landscape character area.

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<sup>16</sup> Realising the benefits of trees, woods and forests in the East of England (A Woodlandforlife Publication) available from [http://www.woodlandforlife.net/PDFs/WFL\\_RealisingtheBenefits.pdf](http://www.woodlandforlife.net/PDFs/WFL_RealisingtheBenefits.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> Standing Advice for Ancient Woodland (Issued 23 February 2011) available from [http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/Images/aw\\_standing\\_advice\\_tcm6-25315.pdf](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/Images/aw_standing_advice_tcm6-25315.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> Information on Tree Preservation Orders available from [http://www.rochford.gov.uk/environment/wildlife\\_and\\_trees/tree\\_preservation.aspx](http://www.rochford.gov.uk/environment/wildlife_and_trees/tree_preservation.aspx)



- 4.13 Woodland cover in the District should be increased through protecting and achieving better management of existing woodland, and promoting new planting where this is consistent with landscape character. The different landscape characters and their differing habitats, as defined within the **Green Belt** chapter of this preferred policy options document, and the findings of the Rochford District Historic Environment Characterisation Project (2006) should be taken into consideration. The biodiversity targets set out in the most up-to-date local biodiversity strategy (the Rochford Biodiversity Action Plan or BAP) should also be considered.

#### **Draft Policy DM24 – Trees and Woodlands**

Development should seek to conserve and enhance existing trees and woodlands. Where development would result in the loss or deterioration of existing trees and/or woodlands, then appropriate mitigation measures should be implemented to offset any detrimental impact through the replacement of equivalent value and/or area as appropriate. Consideration should be given to the impact on landscape character when considering the potential loss of trees and/or woodland, and the replacement of these.

New woodland creation should be sought, where appropriate. In particular this should be encouraged within:

- schemes for the restoration of derelict or contaminated land and sites formerly used for mineral-extraction or industry;
- green infrastructure projects, particularly in areas where sustainable development is promoted;
- planting schemes along transport corridors; and
- schemes to expand and link areas of native woodland taking into account the most up-to-date Rochford Biodiversity Action Plan targets.

Conditions will also be attached to planning permissions to encourage the proper management of these important trees and woodlands, where appropriate. In addition to, or instead of, the completion of a legal agreement will be required to secure the provision of a replacement trees and woodlands of equivalent value and/or area as appropriate, and to ensure the future management of these features.

#### **Other Important Landscape Features**

- 4.14 Existing landscape features such as ponds, hedgerows and tree belts have a vital role to play both in supporting local biodiversity and contributing to the quality and appearance of the local environment. Some important hedgerows are also protected by the Hedgerow Regulations 19.

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<sup>19</sup> Information on the Hedgerow Regulations available from  
[http://www.rochford.gov.uk/environment/wildlife\\_and\\_trees/hedgerow\\_regulations.aspx](http://www.rochford.gov.uk/environment/wildlife_and_trees/hedgerow_regulations.aspx)



- 4.15 The Council will require developers to integrate existing features such as these into development schemes and to provide replacement features, using appropriate native species, in cases where the removal of existing features proves unavoidable. Developers must have regard to the different landscape characters and their differing habitats as defined within the **Green Belt** chapter of this preferred policy options document and the findings of the Rochford District Historic Environment Characterisation Project (2006).
- 4.16 On-site environmental enhancements including opportunities to create/enhance/restore habitats will be sought to improve the ecological value of the development site.

#### **Draft Policy DM25 – Other Important Landscape Features**

When considering proposals for development, it must be shown that consideration has been given to the landscape character of the area and the findings of the Rochford District Historic Environment Characterisation Project (2006).

The Council will protect the following landscape features when considering proposals, where they are of importance for fauna and flora, from loss or damage:

- (i) Hedgerows;
- (ii) Semi-natural grasslands;
- (iii) Marshes;
- (iv) Watercourses;
- (v) Reservoirs;
- (vi) Lakes;
- (vii) Ponds; and
- (viii) Networks or patterns of other locally important habitats.

Development which would adversely affect, directly or indirectly, the landscape features listed above will only be permitted if it can be proven that the reasons for the development outweigh the need to retain the feature and that mitigating measures can be provided for, which would reinstate the nature conservation value of the features.

Where a particular landscape feature is of ecological or landscape importance and should be retained, planning permission will be conditioned to ensure the retention and continued maintenance/management, where appropriate, of this landscape feature. On-site environmental enhancements including opportunities to create/enhance/restore habitats will also be sought.

Conditions will also be attached to planning permissions to encourage the proper management of these important landscape features, where appropriate. In addition to, or instead of, the completion of a legal agreement will be required to secure the provision of a replacement landscape feature of equivalent value, and to ensure the future management of this feature.

## **Environmental Protection**

### **Air Quality**

- 4.17 Air pollution can have wide ranging impacts on human health and the natural environment, and it is the responsibility of the Local Authority to monitor local air quality, develop action plans and designate Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs). Further information can be found in 'Air Quality and Climate Change: Integrating Policy Within Local Authorities'<sup>20</sup> produced by Environmental Protection UK.
- 4.18 Air quality, specifically particulate matter (PM10) and Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), is monitored at 10 significant road junctions throughout the District. In some instances the levels recorded have the potential to exceed national air quality targets. Where this is the case the need to designate an AQMA is then considered.
- 4.19 New development, as proposed in the Core Strategy, if not managed appropriately has the potential to have an adverse impact on air quality through increased transport movements and congestion at potentially significant road junctions. A potentially significant road junction is a junction identified by the Environmental Health Team as being such, based on air quality monitoring. In isolation a development may not have a significant impact on local air quality 'hot spots' but in conjunction with a neighbouring development, there may be a cumulative negative effect on air quality levels. Whilst an earlier development may decrease air quality but within acceptable levels, a later development may decrease air quality beyond this acceptable level. It is therefore appropriate that the cumulative and proportional impact of any development on local air quality should be considered in the determination of planning applications.
- 4.20 Air quality assessments will be required to accompany all major planning applications to assess the cumulative impact on local air quality. The guidance produced by Environmental Protection UK in 'Development Control: Planning for Air Quality (2010 Update)'<sup>21</sup>, or the most up to date guidance, should be referred to in the development of air quality assessments. Planning obligations should be sought to either mitigate the impact of development on local air quality or support the future monitoring of potentially significant road junctions, as appropriate. The approach taken should be proportional with the scale of the development and should be determined in consultation with the Council's Environmental Health team.

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<sup>20</sup> 'Air Quality and Climate Change: Integrating Policy Within Local Authorities' available from [http://www.environmental-protection.org.uk/assets/library/documents/Air\\_Quality\\_Climate\\_Change\\_Report.pdf](http://www.environmental-protection.org.uk/assets/library/documents/Air_Quality_Climate_Change_Report.pdf)

<sup>21</sup> 'Development Control: Planning for Air Quality (2010 Update)' available from [http://www.environmental-protection.org.uk/assets/library/documents/Air\\_Quality\\_Guidance\\_2010\\_\(final2\).pdf](http://www.environmental-protection.org.uk/assets/library/documents/Air_Quality_Guidance_2010_(final2).pdf)

**Draft Policy DM26 – Air Quality**

Alongside the provision of transport assessments, major developments will be required to submit an air quality assessment with their planning application to determine the potential cumulative impact of additional transport movements on potentially significant road junctions. This assessment should be produced having regard to the guidance developed by Environmental Protection UK.

Planning permission may be conditioned to contribute proportionately to offset the impact of the development on local air quality (either through mitigation or supporting future air quality monitoring). This should be determined in consultation with the Council's Environmental Health team.

## **5 Transport**

### **Vision**

#### **Short Term**

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

#### **Medium Term**

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

#### **Long Term**

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

## **Objectives**

1. Deliver developments that will reduce reliance on the private car, and that are well related to the public transport network.
2. Deliver online improvements on the east to west road networks in partnership with the Highways Authority, Essex County Council.
3. Identify and assess locations in the District that currently suffer from poor highway connectivity and congestion, and work with the Highways Authority to identify solutions.
4. Work alongside Essex County Council and other Thames Gateway authorities to support the implementation of the South Essex Rapid Transit system, in particular ensuring that SERT connects the residential areas with the employment areas within Rochford District.
5. Ensure that all new developments including residential, employment, education and leisure, implement travel plans to reduce the reliance on the private car.
6. Work with Essex County Council and other organisations, such as Sustrans, to ensure that a safe, accessible and convenient network of cycle and pedestrian routes is implemented across the District.
7. Aid the delivery of greenways identified in the Thames Gateway Green Grid Strategy, alongside Essex County Council and neighbouring authorities.
8. Ensure appropriate car parking provisions accompanies development at a level which strikes a balance between meeting the needs of motorists, ensuring that parking does not take up excessive amounts of developable land, and encouraging alternatives to car use.

## **Introduction**

- 5.1 The District is predominantly rural with poor accessibility, particularly to the east, which, coupled with a lack of public transport provision, has resulted in high levels of private vehicle ownership, and associated congestion and pollution. Reducing dependency on private vehicles is an aspiration for future sustainability, through planning and promoting alternative forms of transport to the car, such as public transport, walking and cycling.

- 5.2 Essex County Council, the local highway authority, has produced development management policies<sup>22</sup> for highways and other transport related aspects of development. The County, as a statutory consultee, is consulted on all planning applications and would have regard to their development management policies in any response. That being the case, it is advisable that regard is had to these policies in the development of proposals.
- 5.3 The Core Strategy considers a variety of important transport issues across the District, relating to:
- improvements to the current highways network, where appropriate;
  - ensuring new developments are suitably located in proximity to public transport;
  - supporting the development of South Essex Rapid Transit System (SERT)
  - requiring the provision of travel plans for both residential and non-residential development;
  - working with other organisations to provide additional walking and cycling opportunities throughout the District;
  - supporting the delivery of greenways, along with partners, as part of the Green Grid Strategy; and
  - stipulating the general approach to parking standards within the District.
- 5.4 This chapter elaborates on the implementation of appropriate parking standards and seeks to require improvements to traffic management alongside development.

## **Transport Issues**

### **Parking Standards**

- 5.5 The Council will apply maximum car parking standards for key trip destinations to discourage private vehicle use for these destinations, ease congestion and encourage the use of more sustainable transport modes. Such development will still be required to include adequate parking provision. Seeking to restrict the numbers of parking spaces at trip origins does not limit car use, particularly within a rural area such as Rochford District where levels of car usage are relatively high. As such, minimum parking standards will be applied to residential development, including visitor parking, to ensure that sufficient parking spaces are provided within new developments. However the minimum parking standards may be relaxed for residential development proposed within an urban area (including town centre locations) with good links to public transport.

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<sup>22</sup> Essex County Council's Development Management Policies available from <http://www.essex.gov.uk/Environment%20Planning/Planning/Transport-planning/Information-for-developers/Documents/Development%20Management%20Policies%20Feb%202011.pdf>

- 5.6 It is important to have regard to countywide standards to ensure the consistency between approaches and the viability of developments through the area. The Council adopted 'Parking Standards Design and Good Practice' as a Supplementary Planning Document in December 2010, replacing the previous supplementary advice and guidance. This document was prepared by a working group of representatives from Essex County Council and District Councils and conforms to the approach the Council want to apply throughout the District, as outlined in the Core Strategy. Aside from guidance relating to private cars, this document also contains guidance for 'Blue Badge' users, cyclists, motorcyclists and commercial vehicles.

#### **Draft Policy DM27 – Parking Standards**

The parking standards contained within 'Parking Standards Design and Good Practice Supplementary Planning Document (Adopted December 2010)' will be applied for all new developments. This document applies minimum parking standards for residential development (although this may be relaxed in residential areas near town centres and train stations), and appropriate maximum parking standard for trip destinations.

### **Traffic Management**

- 5.7 New development may have an impact on the District's highways network, and where this is the case effective traffic management is essential to create thriving sustainable communities, to improve road safety and reduce air pollution, noise, severance and visual impacts caused by transport and transport infrastructure. This is important in both the highly populated west of the District, and the sparsely populated, comparatively inaccessible east. Developers must have regard to the management and mitigation of additional traffic generation which may be a consequence of development. Opportunities will be sought to reduce the impact of traffic in sensitive areas including those which suffer from through traffic. Proposals should also take into consideration the potential impact on the natural, built and historic environment.
- 5.8 Proposed developments should be accompanied by a Transport Impact Assessment (including appropriate mitigation measures) as set out in the Core Strategy. The guidance produced by the Department for Transport (2007)<sup>23</sup> 'Guidance on Transport Assessment' should be taken into consideration in the development of these assessments. The guidance produced by the Department for Transport (2011)<sup>24</sup> 'Design Manual for Roads and Bridges' should also be taken into account in the design of traffic management measures.

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<sup>23</sup> Department for Transport (2007) 'Guidance on Transport Assessment' available from <http://www2.dft.gov.uk/pgr/regional/transportassessments/>

<sup>24</sup> Department for Transport (2011) 'Design Manual for Roads and Bridges' available from <http://www.dft.gov.uk/ha/standards/dmrb/index.htm>



**Draft Policy DM28 – Traffic Management**

Any new developments must include appropriate traffic management measures to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people and goods by all modes whilst protecting and enhancing the quality of life within communities, facilitating the appropriate use of different types of road and environment, and achieving a clear, consistent and understandable road, cycle and pedestrian network. These measures will comprise, amongst others, reducing the impact of motorised traffic, traffic calming measures to assist public transport, cycling, and walking, horse riders, congestion relief and other speed and demand management measures.

Potential impact on the natural, built and historic environment should also be taken into consideration.

## **6 Economic Development**

### **Vision**

#### **Short Term**

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

#### **Medium Term**

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

- A new airport terminal building at London Southend Airport has been completed and is operational following the implementation of an agreed surface access strategy.
- A new employment park in the west of the District with good links to the main access networks has been developed which caters for a range of employment types in a flexible manner that adapts to changes in the economy.

### **Long Term**

- Old, poorly located, “bad neighbour” industrial estates have been relocated to fit-for-purpose sites in sustainable locations which meet the needs of businesses and benefits residential amenity.
- The new employment park is accompanied by a travel plan and is accessible to workers by a range of transport options.
- At least 3000 jobs have been provided by 2021, and additional employment which meets local need continues to be generated.

### **Objectives**

1. Ensure the growth of local employment opportunities and deliver an additional net 3000 local jobs by 2021.
2. Enhance the local skills base in the District through providing additional training and support.
3. Implement the London Southend Airport and Environs Joint Area Action Plan to realise the potential of this local resource.
4. Ensure the delivery of an Eco-Enterprise Centre which will provide valuable support for new businesses within the District.
5. Support the continued functioning and growth of small and medium sized businesses, and encourage flexible practices such as home-working to enhance the range of local employment opportunities in the District.
6. Implement Area Action Plans for the commercial centres of Rayleigh, Rochford and Hockley to enhance their attractiveness and increase spending retention within the District.
7. Support projects within the District such as Cherry Orchard Jubilee County Park and aid the delivery of priorities in the Economic Development Strategy.
8. Ensure the protection of existing employment land in sustainable locations, and reallocate “bad neighbour” industrial estates for more appropriate uses, such as residential, to meet the District’s housing needs.
9. Allocate the minimum amount of Green Belt necessary for additional employment land, as appropriate, and fully utilise the office space potential of Rayleigh and Hockley centres.

## **Introduction**

- 6.1 The overarching approach to economic development in the District is detailed within the Core Strategy. There are four key strategic economic issues identified seeking to enhance the growth, adaptability and flexibility of the local economy. These are employment growth, London Southend Airport, existing employment land and future employment allocations.
- 6.2 The Core Strategy identifies several important areas which can encourage the growth of local employment opportunities including the development of the Wallasea Island Wild Coast Project, the enhancement of the District's commercial centres and the development and growth of home-working. The Core Strategy also supports the Economic Development Strategy.
- 6.3 London Southend Airport is recognised as an important employment generator in the District with the potential to become a catalyst for economic growth and employment generation in the sub-region. It is recognised that the development of this local facility needs to be weighed against any detrimental impacts on the local environment and residential amenity. As such, specific policies regarding London Southend Airport and its surrounding area will be determined through the Joint Area Action Plan (or JAAP) produced in conjunction with Southend-on-Sea Borough Council.
- 6.4 The Core Strategy also seeks to protect important employment land and reallocate "bad neighbour" employment land, having regard to the Employment Land Study (2008). Where new allocations for employment land are proposed to meet local employment and economic needs, the sites will be expected to be of high quality and to incorporate appropriate environmental controls.
- 6.5 This chapter elaborates on the appropriate use of employment land and the encouragement of home working in the District.

## **Employment Land**

- 6.6 There are numerous areas in the District designated as employment land and the strategic approach to the future of new and existing employment land is set out in the Core Strategy. The allocation of new employment land and the reallocation of existing employment land will be set out in the Allocations DPD and the Area Action Plans, as appropriate.
- 6.7 It is important to maintain the viability and vibrancy of employment land within the District. Appropriate uses on designated employment land should be within classes B1 (Business) and B2 (General Industrial) as defined by the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 and as amended by the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Order 2006. B1 and B2 uses generally create higher job densities than B8 (Storage and Distribution) uses. These two classes are preferred over B8 uses as there is a limited supply of developable land, as identified in the Employment Land Study, and it is important to ensure an efficient and effective use of land within the District. Employment land should also be designed to ensure that it is high quality, safe and inclusive and any associated infrastructure should be appropriately phased. Potential noise and light pollution should be adequately mitigated against. In terms of light pollution in particular, the criteria set out in **Draft Policy DM5** should be considered.

- 6.8 However, we recognise the necessity of maintaining a flexible approach to employment uses to reflect the current economic and employment situation and ensure that employment land remains vibrant with minimal vacancies. Alternative use classes will be permitted if they are an appropriate use which does not undermine existing employment uses and positively contributes to the viability of the employment land, and are compatible with existing employment uses in terms of, for example, health and safety considerations.

#### **Draft Policy DM29 – Employment Land**

New and existing employment land should have a predominance of B1 (Business) and/or B2 (General Industrial) employment uses. New employment development will be expected to be B1 (Business) and/or B2 (General Industrial) employment uses. Alternative uses will be considered having regard to:

- (i) the number of jobs likely to be provided;
- (ii) the viability of retaining B1 and B2 uses;
- (iii) the compatibility with existing uses;
- (iv) the impact on the vitality and vibrancy of the District's town centres;
- (v) the proportion of alternative uses present; and
- (vi) wider sustainability issues (such as available transport methods),

New and existing employment land should be of a high quality, safe and inclusive design and any associated infrastructure should be appropriately phased. Potential noise and light pollution generated by proposed uses should be adequately mitigated against.

Retail use is not normally permitted on employment land. However where the proposal passes our sequential approach to the location of retail development, then permission may be granted for businesses selling bulky goods.

#### **Working from Home**

- 6.9 Advancements in technology mean that there is more scope for residents to work from home. This can enable people to become economically active who may otherwise be denied the opportunity. However, whilst there are economic and social benefits to working from home it is important to ensure that proposals do not have a detrimental impact upon the character or amenity of the surrounding residential area.
- 6.10 Some forms of home working do not require planning consent, but permission will be required where there is material change from the main residential use. Whilst mixed use properties may be acceptable in some instances, the main issue in considering the acceptability of a proposal will be to assess the impact on the character and appearance of the area.
- 6.11 It is not, however, appropriate to restrict businesses proposed in a dwelling to class B1 (Business) uses as it is recognised that other uses may be compatible with the dominant residential use. The appropriateness of the proposed use of a dwelling should be determined on a case-by-case basis taking into consideration suitable criteria to ensure the uses would not have an undue impact on the neighbours, for example in terms of amenity, traffic, etc.

**Draft Policy DM30 – Working From Home**

Proposals for uses operating businesses from dwellings, which require planning permission, will be supported provided that the use:

- (i) remains linked to the residential use, such that it does not become a separate commercial unit;
- (ii) will not have a significant adverse effect on residential amenity;
- (iii) will not have a detrimental effect upon the visual character of the surrounding residential area; and
- (iv) will not create on street parking or unacceptable highway problems.

Where such uses are approved they will be subject to appropriate conditions, for example controlling the size and frequencies of delivery vehicles, times of deliveries, visits, etc. as well as a condition relating the use solely to the person who occupies the dwelling and undertakes the activity.

## **7 Retail and Town Centres**

### **Vision**

#### **Short Term**

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

#### **Medium/Long term**

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

### **Objectives**

1. Direct retail development to the District's town centres of Rochford, Rayleigh and Hockley.
2. Enhance the centres of Rochford, Rayleigh and Hockley ensuring they are vital and vibrant places containing a range of uses and activities for all.
3. Reduce the leakage of retail expenditure out of the District.
4. Ensure that village and neighbourhood shops provide a service for local communities, particularly for those with limited access to transport.
5. Improve the public realm of the town centres, villages and neighbourhood centres by implementing landscape and access schemes which include street trees to provide urban greening.

### **Introduction**

- 7.1 Creating the appropriate retail mix in the District's commercial centres to enhance the retail offer and increase spending retention, whilst ensuring the needs of all local communities are met, is a challenge. The Core Strategy details the Council's overarching approach to retail enhancement within town, village and neighbourhood centres. In particular it focuses on the current performance of the District's three main



town centres and the potential opportunities that they present. Rayleigh, Hockley and Rochford are important local commercial centres with distinct characteristics and different retail offers, which would significantly benefit from some enhancements. The Core Strategy identifies the general outcomes which should be delivered within these three areas through the emerging Area Action Plans.

- 7.2 In addition to retail, it is important that town centres contain a variety of uses, such as leisure, residential and community development, in order to ensure that they are vital and vibrant spaces. Whilst it is important for town centres to contain a core of attractive retail uses, it is recognised that town centres are dynamic environments and their management should reflect changing local circumstances, for example changes in consumer demand and the local economy.
- 7.3 This chapter considers the management of retail development within the District, with regard to the mix of appropriate uses, meeting the needs of local communities and respecting the character of the built environment. Thriving and sustainable town centres are important within the District to retain local expenditure and prevent leakages into other neighbouring town centres, thus, it is crucial that they have at their core a predominance of attractive retail uses. The Council seeks to support the continued vitality of the District's commercial centres through the development and implementation of Area Action Plans.
- 7.4 Development of the commercial centres, however, must respect the character of the locality and the local businesses currently operating there, and the siting of advertisements must have regard to the appearance and desirability to preserve and enhance Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings and locally listed buildings, as appropriate.

## **Town Centres**

### **Town Centre Shopping Frontages**

- 7.5 We are currently preparing Area Action Plans for each of the District's town centres. These Plans will be site specific and contain detailed policies to ensure the balance of appropriate uses and direct positive enhancements for each commercial centre, including specifying the suitable mix of retail and non-retail uses and enhancing accessibility to ensure vibrancy and vitality. However, whilst the town centre Area Action Plans will have specific planning policies it is necessary to have an overarching policy which ensures the appropriate mix of retail and non-retail uses within each of the town centres.
- 7.6 It is considered necessary to retain and encourage a balanced mix of uses within the District's town centres to cater for a variety of user needs. Whilst we want to retain the dominance of A1 uses (retail) with some A2 uses (financial and professional services) within core shopping frontage areas, we also want to encourage other complementary uses to ensure a greater combination of uses and enhance the local appeal of these retail centres. To ensure the right balance between retail and non-retail uses is achieved regard must be had to shifts in consumer preferences and market changes.

- 7.7 If a unit within a town centre is vacant for a length of time and cannot be used for retail purposes, either through a lack of demand for that retail use or economic viability reasons, then an alternative use may be appropriate. Other complementary uses may include A3 uses (restaurants and cafes) which will enhance the day and evening economy within town centres and better use of the public realm.
- 7.8 Whilst encouraging appropriate non-retail uses within the District, such as banks, building societies and restaurants, we will endeavour to ensure that the effect of dead frontage is minimised by requiring that such premises continue to use shop windows for display purposes. Where a non-retail use is proposed (such as A2, A3, A4, A5, sui generis or B1 uses) for ground floor locations in core shopping frontages, we will have regard to the appropriateness of the use and the uses already present in the frontage. The proposal should not lead to or add to a concentration of non-retail uses in an individual frontage or parade. As a guide there should be no more than three non-retail uses within a single frontage to create a cluster of uses.
- 7.9 Non-retail uses should not result in the loss of any independent means of accessing the upper floors of the building, and so preventing their beneficial use as self-contained living accommodation, or for other appropriate purposes.
- 7.10 In considering the appropriate mix of retail and non-retail development, we will have regard to evidence provided by the most up-to-date Retail and Leisure Study for the District available. Where an up-to-date Retail and Leisure Study is not available, then generally 75% retail development should be maintained.

#### **Draft Policy DM31 – Town Centre Shopping Frontages**

The frontages within Rayleigh, Hockley and Rochford's Primary Shopping Areas will comprise predominantly A1 retail use.

The change of use of shopping frontages for non-retail purposes (in particular A3 use which includes restaurants and cafes), which make a positive contribution to the vibrancy and vitality of the town centres will be permitted providing that:

- (i) the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on, or undermine, the dominance of A1 use businesses within the retail centre;
- (ii) the proposal would not create a cluster of similar non-retail businesses within the locality; and
- (iii) the proposal would positively contribute to the retail/non-retail offer and encourage people into the town centre.

#### **Upper Floor Locations in Town Centres**

- 7.11 Town centres are important focal points for the local community which can provide both commercial and residential functions. Commercial premises in town centres with vacant units above present an ideal opportunity to increase the numbers of people living within sustainable locations, contributing towards the District's housing requirements. The conversion of upper floors in town centre locations, however, should have regard to potential additional leisure or retail uses which could be suitably

located within the unit. Where such uses are not appropriate or it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that there is a lack of demand within the local area, then residential conversion should be permitted. A change of use should not result in a net loss of leisure or retail use within the town centre. A net loss would occur where a change of use is proposed and the loss of leisure or retail use is not planned to be compensated for elsewhere in the town centre.

- 7.12 Encouraging the use of units above shops for residential purposes, where appropriate, has the benefit of providing additional housing in appropriate locations, increases natural surveillance, contributes to regeneration, and promotes sustainable utilisation of town centres which reduces the pressure on greenfield sites, whilst satisfying the demand for such locations. It is important, however, to ensure that the use of upper floors of commercial buildings in town centres for residential accommodation is within a suitable location with adequate access and servicing and does not negatively impact on the surrounding uses. Regard should be had to the air quality within town centre locations when proposing residential development, in particular to the designation of any Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs).

#### **Draft Policy DM32 – Upper Floor Locations in Town Centres**

We will permit the use of the upper floors of shops and other commercial premises for residential purposes. However, residential development will only be permitted where this would not result in a net loss of leisure or commercial uses within town centre locations. Permission will be granted, where appropriate, to ensure that accommodation is self-contained and suitably located with separate access from the street and that such accommodation provides a satisfactory standard of residential convenience and amenity.

Where an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) is designated, residential conversion of upper floor town centre locations will be restricted until the applicable air quality target is achieved.

### **Village and Neighbourhood Shops**

#### **Village and Neighbourhood Shopping Frontages**

- 7.13 The retention and enhancement of existing village and neighbourhood shops is essential within the District's smaller settlements to ensure that the day-to-day needs of the local population are served. It may be appropriate, however, to change the use of premises to a use that would provide a similar service for local residents, or convert premises for alternative uses, where a lack of demand for the current use has been demonstrated. The proposed new use must be compatible with its location, due to their typically close proximity to residential properties. For example a change of use to A5 (hot food takeaways) may not be considered appropriate if adjacent to residential development.
- 7.14 We consider that it is important to retain and enhance small rows of shops in addition to parades of shops which perform the same function within the defined settlements.

### **Draft Policy DM33 – Village and Neighbourhood Shops**

We will seek to ensure that retail premises in village and neighbourhood shopping frontage areas outside town centres are retained.

The change of use of the ground floor of existing retail premises to non-retail use outside town centres will be permitted providing that the following conditions are met:

- (i) the loss of the retail unit is justified because the unit is vacant or that an A1 retail use is not financially viable. In either case, applicants should be able to demonstrate that all reasonable attempts have been made to sell or let the premises for retail use, but without success;
- (ii) the proposed use would serve the day-to-day needs of local residents;
- (iii) the proposed use would not reduce the quality of life of residents living in the immediate vicinity of the premises, as a result of noise, on-street parking, disturbance, cooking smells, litter or other factors;
- (iv) the proposal would not result in the removal of any independent means of accessing the upper floor(s) of the premises or otherwise prevent an effective use being made of the upper floor(s); and
- (v) where the proposal relates to premises with an existing shopfront, the shop window would continue to be used for display purposes.

## **Advertisements in the District**

### **Advertisements**

- 7.15 Advertising is necessary for the promotion and functioning of the District's commercial activities, but a balance needs to be struck to ensure that this is not detrimental to the accessibility, appearance or value of a particular streetscape or building(s).
- 7.16 Inappropriate signage which is poorly located, designed or excessively illuminated within the context of the surrounding area can detract from the visual amenity, character and quality of the local environment and may present, particularly with inappropriate illumination, a road safety hazard. A proliferation of signage on one building or along one street can create a cluttered streetscene which can cause distractions and confusion for the general public. Furthermore some forms of advertising, such as advertising boards, when clustered can cause uncontrolled clutter in the public realm (i.e. along pavements) and can have the potential to restrict and obstruct access, and provide obstacles for people who are blind or partially sighted. The potential for proposed advertising to create access issues will therefore be carefully considered.

- 7.17 The siting, design, scale, proportion, colour and materials of advertisements should therefore have regard to the character of, and impact on, the streetscene, individual building(s) or the wider area, and should make a positive contribution to the overall appearance of the streetscene. In terms of illumination and the potential to cause light pollution, the different environmental zones identified and the guidance contained within 'Outdoor advertisements and signs: a guide for advertisers'<sup>25</sup>, or the most up-to-date guidance available, should be taken into consideration.

#### **Draft Policy DM34 – Advertisements**

The design and siting of advertisements throughout the District must have regard to the access and visual impact of the building(s) on which they will be displayed and the character of the surrounding area. Advertisements will be permitted, provided that they:

- (i) do not add to visual clutter or detract from the visual amenity of the area;
- (ii) are appropriately designed and sited within the context of the area and well related to the building(s) to which they are attached;
- (iii) have had regard to the use of appropriate materials;
- (iv) do not generate an excess of signage which creates a cluttered streetscene;
- (v) are of an appropriate size in relation to the building(s) or other advertisements within the area;
- (vi) are suitably illuminated without adding to light pollution or whose intensity does not affect visual amenity or road safety; and
- (vii) respect the architectural features of locally listed buildings.

#### **Advertisements affecting Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings**

- 7.18 Conservation Areas tend to relate to town and village centres, whose appearance is worthy of retention<sup>26</sup>. Several of Rochford District's designated Conservation Areas are valuable commercial centres, where significant commercial activities take place. These areas are, however, more sensitive to the presence, and in particular, the style of advertising employed. Many Conservation Areas encompass Listed Buildings whose character it is important to preserve and enhance as appropriate.
- 7.19 Advertisements will be kept to a minimum within Conservation Areas to ensure that they do not detract from the overall appearance of the Conservation Area and character of individual buildings. Advertisements proposed to be sited on Listed Buildings should have a positive impact on the character and appearance of the building and the wider area.

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<sup>25</sup> Outdoor advertisements and signs: a guide for advertisers available from <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/326679.pdf>

<sup>26</sup> Conservation Areas in Rochford District available from [http://www.rochford.gov.uk/planning\\_and\\_building\\_control/environment/conservation\\_areas.aspx](http://www.rochford.gov.uk/planning_and_building_control/environment/conservation_areas.aspx)

- 7.20 The appropriateness of advertisements such as illuminated signs, lettering and coloured fascias, window stickers and window displays in Conservation Areas, and on or near Listed Buildings, or within the overall context of the streetscene where it may create visual clutter, will be carefully assessed. Other external items which can impact on the character of Listed Buildings and buildings in Conservation Areas such as external roller shutters or illuminated signs are unlikely to be acceptable.
- 7.21 Furthermore some forms of advertising, such as advertising boards, when clustered can cause uncontrolled clutter in the public realm (i.e. along pavements) and can have the potential to restrict and obstruct access, and provide obstacles for people who are blind or partially sighted. The potential for proposed advertising to create access issues will therefore be carefully considered.

#### **Draft Policy DM35 – Advertisements affecting Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings**

Advertisements will be permitted on Listed Buildings, in appropriate circumstances, where it can be demonstrated that adverse harm to the character or structure of the building would not result. Where permitted on Listed Buildings and in Conservation Areas, advertisements should adhere to the general preferred option as outlined above, and should be sensitive to the character of the area, visually unobtrusive, well designed, well located and should not create access issues. Traditional wooden, painted fascias and hanging signs for example will be preferred to coloured plastic fascias and boxes.

Advertisements will be allowed provided that they respect the character of the building(s) on which they are to be sited and the surrounding area, and do not include:

- prominent lettering, lighting, symbols, material or colour of fascia displays, window stickers, pavements signs and other signage;
- internally illuminated or other projecting fascia signs;
- prominent externally illuminated signs;
- prominent blinds (especially external roller shutters) or window/door canopies.

Advertisements and other external items (especially illuminated signs, where permitted) should be unobtrusive and benefit rather than detract from the value of the Conservation Area and character of the Listed Building, such as spot lighting of hanging signs or other discreet forms of lighting.

The quantity of advertisements within Conservation Areas and on Listed Buildings will be kept to the minimum necessary to identify the building and its function in order to protect the appearance of the area and individual buildings as appropriate.



## **8 Public Involvement**

- 8.1 As a statutory Development Plan Document (DPD) within the Local Development Framework the Development Management DPD is being prepared in accordance with Government Regulations.
- 8.2 The procedure for the production of the Development Management DPD is as follows:
- Discussion and Consultation Document (this version of the DPD was consulted upon between 17 March 2010 and 30 April 2010)
  - Preferred Policy Options Document
  - Pre-Submission Document
  - Submission to the Secretary of State
  - Examination in Public
  - Adoption
- 8.3 The first stage in the production of the Development Management DPD outlined above was the culmination of research and analysis that had taken place which involved public consultation throughout the preparation of the Core Strategy, working with key stakeholders, and evidence gathering.
- 8.4 This document is the second stage in the process which has been prepared taking into consideration the responses received during the public consultation undertaken in 2010.
- 8.5 We are now seeking your views on this preferred policy options version of the Development Management DPD in order to feed into the next stage of the document: the Pre-Submission version and, as such, the feedback received from this round of public consultation will help to shape the final document.

### **How to Make Comments**

- 8.6 Comments are invited on this document between ... and ...
- 8.7 An online facility has been set up in order to enable respondents to put forward their views quickly and easily with confirmation of receipt. This is a simple process requiring a valid email address. The online facility can be found at: <http://rochford.jdi-consult.net/ldf/>
- 8.8 Did you know that you can access the internet at your local library?
- 8.9 We do, however, recognise that not everyone will have access to the internet and if you are unable to do so, please contact the Planning Policy team on 01702 318191 to obtain paper representation forms to make your comments on this document.





**Rochford District Council**  
Council Offices South Street  
Rochford Essex SS4 1BW  
Phone: 01702 546366  
customerservices@rochford.gov.uk  
Website: [www.rochford.gov.uk](http://www.rochford.gov.uk)



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## **Summary of the Sustainability Appraisal for the Options within the Development Management DPD: Discussion and Consultation Document**

A summary of the findings following the appraisal of the options is set out below.

### **DM1 – Design of New Developments**

Through specifying a range of matters which should be taken into consideration in the determination of planning applications, the criteria based approach within the preferred option would have a positive impact on a number of sustainability objectives. This includes the regeneration and enhancement of existing communities, meeting the needs of an aging population, the delivery of high quality, safe and inclusive design, and enabling access to green infrastructure and the wider natural environment. Impact on landscape character would also be considered.

The alternative option, to add to or delete criteria from the preferred option would have a varied impact. Whilst the addition of further criteria may strengthen the objectives of the option, the preferred option is, on the whole, considered to provide a balance between ensuring that development is suitable in the context of its surroundings without being overly onerous or prescriptive in its requirements.

A minor addition to the preferred option is recommended. On the other hand to remove criteria would have a significant negative impact on sustainability objectives through eliminating the key requirements to ensure that developments are well-planned and fit-for-purpose.

#### *Proposed amendments*

1. A minor addition to the preferred option to include reference to the retention of trees is recommended to ensure that this is factored into the design of developments and the determination of applications. This would have a greater positive impact on the conservation and enhancement of natural/semi natural habitats and species diversity in particular.
2. A minor amendment to the preferred option should be made to the wording of the text within the preferred option to replace 'in particular, consider' with 'take into account the following' to make it clear that all the points should be considered, as appropriate.
3. The purpose of Concept Statements should be also expanded upon in the preamble.

### **DM2 – Density of New Developments**

A flexible approach to density as set out in the preferred option would have a positive impact on balanced communities through enabling a number of local factors to be taken into consideration. This has the potential to ensure that all sections of the community are catered for in terms of the number and mix of dwellings provided within a development, to ensure that it is appropriate to its location.

Such an approach would also have a positive impact on design, and townscape character and value through being sensitive to the surrounding area. It would also ensure that high density developments are directed towards locations where this is most appropriate, such as town centres, which generally have good accessibility to local services, facilities and sustainable transport modes, and would direct development away from areas of nature conservation importance, and take the pressure off Green Belt and agricultural land for development.

However, undertaking a prescriptive approach, a market driven approach or setting a higher minimum density is likely to have a negative impact on balanced communities through potentially encouraging densities which are inappropriate to the proposed development location and restricting the range of densities or mix of housing types to meet the community's needs. This would also likely have a negative impact on townscape character and value, the delivery of high quality, safe and inclusive design, access to services, facilities and sustainable transport modes, and the protection and enhancement of the natural environment through potentially directing high density development away from town centre locations, and increasing pressure to develop on Green Belt and agricultural land.

#### *Proposed amendments*

1. It is recommended that a minor amendment is made to the text within the preferred option to replace 'optimise the capacity of the site' in the first paragraph of the option with 'make efficient use of the site area' to ensure this requirement is clear.
2. It is also suggested that the varying density across the District is illustrated in the accompanying text.

### **DM3 – Infilling and Residential Intensification**

Assessing proposals for infilling, residential intensification and 'backland' development against the criteria specified within the preferred option would generally have a positive impact on balanced and healthy and safe communities through encouraging such development in appropriate locations.

The criteria listed has the potential to help ensure the delivery of high quality, safe and inclusive design, increase the range and affordability of housing for all social groups and promote a mix of housing types and tenures. Permitting such development would likely enhance accessibility through promoting development within the existing residential area where there is good access to services, facilities and sustainable modes of transportation. This preferred option would direct development away from areas of nature conservation importance, and take the pressure off Green Belt and agricultural land for development. It would also likely have a positive impact on landscape and townscape, and land and soil.

Allowing 'backland' development in all circumstances, however, would have a negative impact on the regeneration and enhancement of existing rural and urban communities, the delivery of high quality, safe and inclusive design, and the range, mix and affordability of housing delivered. This approach to 'backland' development would potentially result in a lack of control over the type and location of such development, which could lead to inappropriate development and overdevelopment in certain locations. Such development could be encouraged in more rural areas, where services, facilities and sustainable modes of transportation are less accessible.

Whilst potentially encouraging the revitalisation of derelict, degraded and underused land, the alternative option has the potential to have a negative impact on natural and semi-natural habitats, townscape character, and the historic environment. Uncontrolled 'backland' development may increase the pressure to develop Green Belt and agricultural land through intensifying development on the urban fringe.

#### *Proposed amendments*

1. It is advised that the first sentence of the preferred option is reworded to make sure that all of the criteria specified are taken into account, as appropriate.
2. To further promote good design it is recommended that an additional criterion is included in relation to the avoidance of tandem relationships between dwellings.

### **DM4 – Habitable Floorspace for New Developments**

Setting habitable floorspace standards for different types of dwellings would ensure that they are fit-for-purpose with greater flexibility and adaptability for the future. Dwellings would therefore have the potential to be used for both affordable and market housing and would promote a mix of housing types and tenures. Taking into consideration the design and layout of dwellings would also positively contribute to the delivery of high quality, safe and inclusive design.

However, the adaptability and flexibility of the housing stock for the future, particularly the conversion of market housing to affordable housing, would be undermined if habitable floorspace standards are not set. This could also have a negative impact on the mix of dwellings provided and design in terms of ensuring that developments are high quality, safe and inclusive.

#### *Proposed amendments*

1. To enhance the outcome of the preferred option, it is recommended that reference to the Lifetime Homes Standard is made to ensure that the need to meet this requirement is also taken into consideration in the design of developments and the determination of applications.
2. The text within the preferred option should be amended to avoid duplication and misinterpretation.

### **DM5 – Light Pollution**

Taking into account the potential for light pollution to be generated within new developments would have a positive impact on the delivery of high quality, safe and inclusive design, light pollution, social inclusion and the quality of the public realm through ensuring that street lighting is appropriate to the locality and the minimum necessary for public safety.

#### *Proposed amendments*

1. It is recommended that the preferred option is further expanded upon to include reference to the acceptability of the design/appearance/scale (i.e. the height) of proposed lighting and the impact on the character and appearance of an area to ensure that this is taken into consideration.

## **DM6 – Telecommunications**

Supporting the appropriate development of telecommunications networks would likely have a positive impact on the delivery of such infrastructure to meet ongoing and future needs, and the regeneration and enhancement of existing rural and urban communities through ensuring that they are appropriately implemented and maintained for the benefit of local communities. Setting localised criteria for the delivery of such networks would positively contribute to high quality, safe and inclusive design. Supporting such development also has the potential to have a positive impact on business development. Consideration would be given to the potential impact of telecommunications development on sites of nature conservation importance. This option also includes within it a consideration of the design, height, material and colour of the proposed telecommunications development in order to minimise visual intrusion. This has the potential to have a positive impact on townscape character and value.

### *Proposed amendments*

1. It is recommended that explicit reference is made to the importance of local, national and international sites in the determination of applications both within the preferred option and accompanying text. This has the potential to ensure a greater positive impact on the conservation of natural/semi natural habitats and species diversity.
2. To ensure a greater positive impact on the historic environment, it is recommended that reference is made to the historic environment (such as Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings) being an undesirable location for telecommunications development.
3. It is recommended that 'and should be to the Council's satisfaction' is removed from the preferred option to ensure clarity and avoid misinterpretation.

## **DM7 – Local List**

The preparation of a Local List would ensure that buildings and items of street furniture of particular historic and/or architectural importance to the local area are offered additional protection through the planning system, and that proposals take into consideration the important qualities that make the building or item of street furniture worthy of local listing. This would help to ensure the regeneration and enhancement of existing communities, and would have a positive impact on the delivery of high quality, safe and inclusive design.

The preferred option would have a positive impact on the historic environment as the purpose of the option is to offer additional protection to those buildings or structures on the list. It would aid the preservation and/or enhancement of townscape character and value and local character/vernacular through ensuring that any alterations are sympathetic, and that important features are retained, restored or replaced as appropriate. Stricter controls over redevelopment and extensions to certain buildings could hinder their adaptation to meet residents' needs.

On other hand, a less restrictive approach to the Local List would have a negative impact on the regeneration and enhancement of existing communities, the delivery of high quality, safe and inclusive design, townscape character and value and local character/vernacular, as it may result in significant buildings or street furniture being lost or altered in a way that may be negative to the local character or vernacular. This alternative option would therefore offer less protection for the historic environment.

Conversely, a more restrictive approach may be inappropriate as the buildings and items cannot be offered the same level of protection as those on the national list of Listed Buildings. This alternative option may have a negative impact on design through potentially leading to restrictions on the restoration and replacement of important architectural and character features. Although a more restrictive approach would offer more protection for the historic environment with the potential to preserve local character/vernacular and townscape character and value, such an approach may not permit enhancement. An overly restrictive approach could therefore be detrimental.

Conclusively the preferred option is generally considered to balance the desire to encourage the retention and enhancement of buildings and items of local architectural and/or historic important without being over onerous or prescriptive in its requirements.

#### *Proposed amendments*

1. It is recommended that in the first sentence of the preferred option should be amended to make the requirement to take into consideration the existing character of the building more flexible in design terms.
2. An amendment to the second paragraph of the preferred option is recommended to bring it in line with national guidance.
3. It is suggested that the third paragraph is moved from the preferred option to the supporting text.
4. It is also suggested that 'We expect owners' in the fourth paragraph is replaced with 'Owners should' to reflect the lack of statutory protection for buildings and structures on the Local List.

#### **DM8 – Demolition within Conservation Areas**

Allowing the demolition of buildings within a Conservation Area may help to regenerate and enhance rural and urban communities as the preferred option would ensure that only buildings that are of no value in architectural or historical terms are lost and any replacement buildings are agreed by the Council prior to demolition. This option also has the potential to ensure the delivery of high quality, safe and inclusive design, contribute towards the needs of an aging population and promote different types, tenures and affordability of dwellings to meet needs, through permitting appropriate development which, if residential, would need to comply with the Lifetime Homes Standard for example.

Permitting the appropriate replacement of buildings within a Conservation Area, where this encompasses a town centre, would promote and enhance existing centres by focusing development in such centres. This option would protect and enhance sites, features and areas of historical, archaeological and cultural value in both rural and urban areas, and would also have a positive impact on townscape character and value, local character/vernacular and the public realm through ensuring the retention of important buildings within a Conservation Area. Allowing the demolition of buildings that are of no architectural or historical interest could also potentially reduce pressure to develop on Green Belt and agricultural land.

However the alternative option, to permit demolition if the replacement is of significant architectural quality, may not ensure the regeneration and enhancement of rural and urban communities as the demolished structure could have a greater positive contribution to the character of an area and the sense of place which would then be lost. This option may, if residential, afford the opportunity to construct replacement buildings that are Lifetime Homes compliant, but in design terms there may be a negative impact on the Conservation Area as although the replacement may be of significant architectural quality compared to the building it replaces, many buildings within Conservation Areas have group value. This could have a negative impact on the public realm, townscape character and value, local character/vernacular and would not protect the historic environment.

On the other hand such an option, like the preferred option, may promote different types, tenures and affordability of dwellings to meet local needs. It may also, where a Conservation Area encompasses a town centre, promote and enhance existing centres by focusing development in such centres, as well as potentially reducing pressure to develop on Green Belt and agricultural land.

#### *Proposed amendments*

No suggested amendments.

### **DM9 – Development on the edge of Conservation Areas**

Allowing development on the edge of Conservation Areas may help to regenerate and enhance existing communities, and contribute towards good design particularly given the considerations set out in the preferred option.

Within the preferred option there is potential to increase the type, tenure and affordability of dwellings on the edge of Conservation Areas. Permitting appropriate development on the edge of a Conservation Area, where this encompasses a town centre, would promote and enhance existing centres by focusing development in close proximity to such centres. This option has the potential to have a positive impact on the historic environment, townscape character and value, local character/vernacular and the public realm through controlling the type of development taking place. It would ensure the re-use of previously-developed land and therefore take the pressure off Green Belt and agricultural land.

However, restricting development on the edge of a Conservation Area may hinder the regeneration and enhancement of existing communities, the delivery of high quality, safe and inclusive design, the delivery of dwellings to meet the needs of an aging population, and the type, tenure and affordability of dwellings provided. This approach may not promote and enhance existing centres by directing development away from such centres, but may protect the historic environment, public realm, townscape character and value and local character/vernacular. Restricting development would not ensure the re-use of previously-developed land. It is unlikely that this option would take the pressure off Green Belt and agricultural land.

#### *Proposed amendments*

1. It is recommended that the section heading, supporting text and preferred option heading are amended to make it clear what exactly this option relates to – this would ensure clarity and avoid misinterpretation.
2. It is recommended that the second paragraph of the preferred option is amended to make this clearer and to avoid misinterpretation.



## **DM10 – Existing Businesses in the Green Belt**

Permitting the appropriate extension of existing lawfully established businesses in the Green Belt has the potential to have a positive impact on balanced communities through supporting the development of businesses, and local skills and employment opportunities. The criteria included within the preferred option would positively contribute to the delivery of high quality design in the development of extensions, accessibility and ensure that local character/vernacular is protected, and if possible, enhanced. Business development would be supported through encouraging the expansion of businesses and employment generation in the Green Belt, where they are appropriately sited.

This option would seek to avoid negative impacts on the natural environment, including areas of nature conservation importance, landscape character and areas of valuable agricultural land. However, depending on the size of the original building there is potential for the extension of business premises to have a significant impact on landscape character, particularly in more sensitive areas, and the openness, which is a key consideration for the assessment of the acceptability of development in the Green Belt.

Like the preferred option, a less restrictive approach to extensions has the potential to have a positive impact on balanced communities through supporting the development of businesses, and local skills and employment opportunities. This option could still positively contribute to the delivery of high quality design in the development of extensions and promote accessibility; however, depending on the size of the proposed extension, local character/vernacular could be impacted.

Whilst business development would be promoted, a less restrictive approach to extensions, depending on the size of the building in question, may have a negative impact on the natural environment including sites designated for their nature conservation importance and agricultural land. This option would have a significant negative impact on landscape character, particularly in more sensitive areas, and the openness of the Green Belt.

However, a more restrictive approach to extensions would not encourage business development, enhance skills and local employment opportunities, or promote high quality design through restricting the growth potential of appropriately sited, lawfully established businesses in the Green Belt. Local character/vernacular would, however, be preserved. Such an approach would direct business development towards existing urban centres and potentially limit access to employment in more rural areas through restricting local opportunities. This option would nevertheless ensure a greater positive impact on the natural environment, particularly landscape character and the openness of the Green Belt, though restricting development and the expansion of business operations.

### *Proposed amendments*

1. Rather than supporting potentially significant extensions to existing business premises in the Green Belt for all original buildings regardless of their size, it is recommended that the supporting text of the preferred option is amended to remove the 25% allowance and include text on determining such applications on a case by case basis. This would ensure that there is a greater positive impact on landscape character and the openness of the Green Belt through balancing this against the needs of the business in question, the potential size of the building with an extension and PPG2.

2. It is recommended that additional supporting text is added to explain what the 'original building' in the preferred option refers to. This would make this clearer and avoid misinterpretation.
3. It is also suggested that the impact on the historic environment is included within the preferred option.

## **DM11 – Rural Diversification**

Supporting rural diversification, where appropriate, would positively contribute to balanced communities through promoting the regeneration and enhancement of existing communities, potentially enhancing qualifications, skills, and income and quality of life equalities. This option seeks to ensure that existing buildings are utilised rather than encourage the development of new buildings in the Green Belt. It does have the potential to increase business development in more rural areas, and promote access to local employment opportunities.

This option could have a negative impact on noise and light pollution, but criteria within the option and policies elsewhere in the LDF would address these issues. The criteria within this option would seek to ensure a positive impact on the natural environment, and townscape and landscape through taking into consideration the impact on landscape character and agricultural land as well as potentially promoting appropriate development on the urban fringe.

Disregarding the different grades of agricultural land may direct development away from natural/semi natural habitats and areas of species diversity. Potential impact of proposals on sites of nature conservation importance would continue to be taken into consideration. This option may not protect the historic environment (without the recommended addition to the preferred option), and would not ensure that the best and most versatile agricultural land is protected.

Similarly, disregarding the different landscape character areas may not have a negative impact on natural/semi natural habitats, species diversity and sites of nature conservation importance, as the potential impact on the openness of the Green Belt, character of the countryside and nature conservation interests would still be considered. This option may also not protect the historic environment (without the recommended addition to the preferred option), and would not help to conserve the different landscape character areas, and may as a consequent result in a detrimental impact, particularly in more sensitive areas.

### *Proposed amendments*

1. Whilst the preferred option seeks to take into consideration potential impact on the different grades of agricultural land, the term 'agricultural potential' should be amended to 'agricultural value' to make this clearer.
2. It is recommended that 'agricultural buildings' within the supporting text should be amended to 'agricultural and rural buildings' to ensure that this option encompasses a range of agricultural and non-agricultural buildings.
3. Where 'agricultural and farm buildings' is referred to elsewhere in the plan, these should also be amended accordingly to ensure consistency.
4. It is also recommended that the historic environment is included to ensure this is considered in the preferred option.

## **DM12 – Conversion of Existing Agricultural Buildings in the Green Belt**

Allowing the reuse or adaptation of existing agricultural buildings in the Green Belt may positively contribute to the regeneration and enhancement of existing rural communities through potentially supporting additional business uses in rural areas, and the delivery of good design. There may be some impact on noise and light pollution but criteria within the option and policies elsewhere in the LDF would address these issues. This option has the potential to improve business development, local employment opportunities and access to employment, through supporting additional business opportunities. The impact of proposals on nature conservation interests and species diversity would be taken into consideration.

This option may also reduce the amount of derelict, degraded and underused land, and previously developed land. Although landscape character is not set out within this option, existing buildings would already affect the landscape character, and the impact of the proposed use, including in terms of its size would be taken into consideration in the determination of applications. This could ensure a positive impact on landscape character.

Allowing buildings in the Green Belt of the same height or less than existing has the potential to have a negative impact on the regeneration and enhancement of existing rural communities, as restricting the height of the building, in particular, may place restrictions as to the type of alternative use of the building. Similarly this option has the potential to improve business development and access to local employment opportunities but such opportunities may be more limited if there were to be a restriction on the height of converted buildings. Permitting the lowering of heights for agricultural and rural buildings could have a negative impact on the character of the buildings. Like the preferred option, however, this option may also reduce the amount of derelict, degraded and underused land, and previously developed land. The specifications within the preferred option (to ensure that proposals do not exceed the original footprint and the impact on highways is considered), may ensure that landscape and townscape character and value are preserved and/or enhanced. Furthermore restrictions on the height of the buildings within the Green Belt would assist in maintaining the openness of the Green Belt.

### *Proposed amendments*

1. The preferred option does not support the conversion of existing agricultural buildings for residential use, however, this should be further explained and set out in the preferred option to make it clearer and avoid misinterpretation.
2. Whilst the historic environment would be considered, reference should also be made to locally listed buildings in the supporting text to strengthen this.
3. It should be further reinforced in the supporting text that the preferred option complements the potential for rural diversification in the Green Belt, but it does not support the resurrection of redundant agricultural and rural buildings.
4. It is recommended that 'original building' referred to in the preferred option should have the same definition as elsewhere in the plan (relating to agricultural or rural buildings) to ensure consistency and avoid misinterpretation.

## **DM13 – Green Tourism**

The promotion of green tourism would positively contribute towards the regeneration and enhancement of existing communities, income and quality-of-life disparities, business development, health and health inequalities and informal recreation through encouraging more recreational and leisure activities and providing more local employment opportunities in rural areas.

It is likely that this option would conserve and enhance natural and semi natural habitats, species diversity and sites of nature conservation interest, although this would need to be well managed with regards to increased visitors and increased usage of footpaths and the wider natural area. Such proposals may positively impact on green infrastructure, the creation of new habitats and landscape and townscape. It could ensure appropriate uses within the urban fringe and the utilisation of derelict, degraded and underused land and previously developed land. The potential impact on landscape character, agricultural land and local character/vernacular would also be taken into consideration.

On the other hand, disregarding the different grades of agricultural land would likely have a negative impact on the regeneration and enhancement of existing communities, the appropriate use of land on the urban fringe and derelict, degraded and underused land, through potentially encouraging the development of the highest quality agricultural land. It could, however, have a positive impact on natural and semi natural habitats, species diversity and areas of nature conservation interest through potentially directing such development away from these areas. This alternative option could ensure a greater impact on soil quality and a loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land.

However, disregarding the different landscape character areas would likely have a negative impact on the regeneration and enhancement of existing communities through not taking into consideration the sensitivity of different areas to change. Although this option could potentially have a detrimental impact on natural and semi natural habitats, species diversity and areas of nature conservation interest through not restricting development on more sensitive landscape character areas, any impact on nature conservation would still be considered. Disregarding landscape character could also have the potential to negatively impact on the historic environment, and may direct development towards more rural areas where landscape character is more sensitive as opposed to the urban fringe. This option may not positively contribute to soil quality or protect valuable agricultural land.

#### *Proposed amendments*

1. Reference to the historic environment should be included within the preferred option to ensure that the impact of proposals is fully considered.
2. Whilst the preferred option seeks to take into consideration potential impact on the different grades of agricultural land, the term 'agricultural potential' should be amended to 'agricultural value' to make this clearer.

#### **DM14 – Equestrian Facilities**

The preferred option would support the development of small-scale equestrian facilities which could positively contribute towards the enhancement of rural communities, income and quality-of-life equalities, business development and potentially local employment opportunities. The criteria within the option would promote good design through taking into consideration the form and scale of proposals.

Although such development has the potential to encourage healthy, active lifestyles and promote additional green infrastructure, it may increase noise and light pollution within more rural areas. Noise is a consideration within this option. These types of facilities have the potential to be located in more rural areas which could impact on access; however, this option seeks to encourage such development near existing settlements in sustainable locations. This would encourage appropriate development on the urban fringe, potentially encouraging the utilisation of previously developed land.

This option seeks to take into consideration the potential impact of small-scale proposals on areas of nature conservation interest, which could ensure that natural/semi natural habitats, species diversity and sites designated for their nature conservation interest are conserved. This option does not consider the potential impact of equestrian development on the historic environment or agricultural land, and although landscape character is considered in the supporting text it is not included within the option.

Permitting large-scale equestrian development may have greater positive impact on the enhancement of rural communities, income and quality-of-life equalities, business development and local employment opportunities. Such facilities are also likely to have a greater impact on the surrounding area in terms of scale and form. It is likely there would be more opportunities for recreation and healthy, active lifestyles may be encouraged with the development of larger facilities. Additional green infrastructure may be promoted. Large-scale equestrian development would also have a greater impact through noise and light pollution than smaller scale facilities. These types of facilities have the potential to be located in more rural areas which could impact on access; however, the preferred option as existing seeks to encourage such development near existing settlements in sustainable locations. This would encourage appropriate development on the urban fringe, potentially encouraging the utilisation of previously developed land.

Larger scale proposals would likely have a greater impact on natural/semi natural habitats, species diversity and nature conservation interests than small-scale proposals. However, the potential impact on areas of nature conservation interest would be taken into consideration. They would also likely have a greater impact on the historic environment, soil quality, landscape character and the Green Belt due to the potential scale of such facilities.

#### *Proposed amendments*

1. Noise is a consideration within the preferred option; however, this option could be further strengthened through including specific reference to light.
2. It is recommended that the second criterion should be amended as other potentially more rural areas may be suitable for such development.
3. It is recommended that reference to the historic environment, landscape character areas and agricultural land is included within the preferred option.

### **DM15 – Playing Pitches and Other Leisure and Recreational Facilities**

Supporting the appropriate development of playing pitches and other leisure and recreational facilities would have a positive impact on the provision of public open space and balanced communities through ensuring the provision of community facilities to meet needs, where appropriate. This option would ensure that facilities are appropriate to their location for example in terms of design, and would positively impact on health, health inequalities, informal recreation and healthy, active lifestyles. It could also have a positive impact on the local economy. Leisure facilities should be located in areas where there is currently a deficit; which could have an impact on accessibility, however, this option seeks to ensure that such facilities are accessible by a range of alternative transport methods and are located on the edge of settlements. Such development could impact on soil quality.

Proposals for the provision of such facilities would need to consider potential impact on nature conservation interests which could ensure that natural/semi natural habitats, species diversity and sites designated for their nature conservation interest are conserved. It also considers the potential impact on landscape character areas. This option seeks to take into consideration the potential impact of a proposal on visual amenity which may ensure that townscape character

and value, and local character/vernacular is preserved and/or enhanced, where possible. There is potential for such development to impact on air quality, however, this option seeks to ensure that such facilities are located in sustainable areas on the edge of settlements (where possible) which are accessible by a range of transport methods to ensure that the reliance on transport is not focused heavily on the private car.

The alternative option could ensure a positive impact on balanced communities through enabling the provision of larger scale ancillary facilities to meet the needs of the proposed activity. It could have a positive impact on health, health inequalities, informal recreation and healthy, active lifestyles. Leisure facilities should be located in areas where there is currently a deficit; which could have an impact on accessibility, however, the preferred option seeks to ensure that such facilities are accessible by a range of alternative transport methods and are located on the edge of settlements. Proposals for the provision of such facilities would need to consider potential impact on nature conservation interests as set out in the preferred option which could ensure that natural/semi natural habitats, species diversity and sites designated for their nature conservation interest are conserved.

Permitting large-scale ancillary facilities for playing pitches and other leisure and recreational activities would likely have a greater impact on the historic environment, the urban fringe, townscape character and value, and local character/vernacular, and may detract from the natural character of the area. It would also likely have a greater impact on the different landscape character areas, and in particular the openness of the Green Belt and character of the countryside.

#### *Proposed amendments*

1. It is recommended that the impact on the historic environment and agricultural land is also included within the preferred option.

### **DM16 – Extensions to Dwellings in the Green Belt**

The option to permit extensions of up to 25% increase in floorspace of the original dwelling would have a positive impact on delivery of high quality, safe and inclusive design.

Limiting extensions to dwellings in the Green Belt to a specific floor area has the potential to restrict the delivery of high quality, safe and inclusive design through restricting the flexibility of the increased space through extension. This option would likely help preserve townscape character and value, as proposals could impact on the urban fringe, and local character/vernacular.

Permitting extensions in accordance with the floor area allowed under permitted development rights would enable flexibility to ensure that high quality design is delivered, however, this would need to be weighed against the detrimental impact on the openness of the Green Belt. It is likely that this option would not help preserve townscape character and value or local character/vernacular, due to the potential size of such extensions.

#### *Proposed amendments*

1. It is recommended that the second criterion of the preferred option is amended to include reference to the scale, mass and orientation, as any extension to an existing dwelling would impact on openness. This would also help to ensure the preservation and/or enhancement of townscape character, as proposals could impact on the urban fringe, and the value and local character/vernacular.

2. The last sentence of the preferred option should be amended to generic wording about permitted development rights, and this should be amended elsewhere in the plan to ensure consistency.
3. The supporting text to of the preferred option should also state whether the floorspace refers to internal or external floorspace to make this clear.

### **DM17 – Agricultural, Forestry and Other Occupational Dwellings**

Implementation of the preferred option would positively contribute to balanced communities through ensuring the appropriate provision of accommodation for agricultural and forestry workers. This option generally seeks to consider the need for, and size of, the proposed agricultural, forestry and other occupational dwellings, which could ensure a positive impact on local character/vernacular. Providing specific accommodation for such workers would have a positive impact on the range, affordability, type and tenure of the District's housing stock, and has the potential to improve business development and local employment opportunities through enabling workers in a particular sector who need to reside "on-site" to do so.

There is potential for the development of permanent dwellings in the Green Belt and wider countryside for agricultural and forestry workers to impact on landscape character depending on the location of the proposed development and the sensitivity of the landscape. Such development, which could be located in more rural areas, may impact on the openness of the Green Belt and character of the countryside. This option has the potential to ensure the re-use of previously developed land, but may also impact on soil quality and agricultural land depending on the proposed location.

#### *Proposed amendments*

No suggested amendments.

### **DM18 – Temporary Agricultural Dwellings**

Permitting the stationing of mobile homes may positively impact on the regeneration and enhancement of existing rural and urban communities, ensure equal opportunities and that all sections of the community are catered through providing accommodation which has the potential to impact on the availability of local employment opportunities. Providing specific accommodation for agricultural workers would have a positive impact on the range, affordability, type and tenure of the District's housing stock, and has the potential to improve business development and local employment opportunities.

There is potential for the siting of temporary accommodation for agricultural workers in the Green Belt and wider countryside to impact on landscape character depending on the location of the proposed development and the sensitivity of the landscape. Such development, which could be located in more rural areas, may impact on the openness of the Green Belt and character of the countryside. This option has the potential to ensure the re-use of previously developed land, but may also impact on soil quality and agricultural land depending on the proposed location.

#### *Proposed amendments*

No suggested amendments.

## **DM19 – Basements in the Green Belt**

The preferred option seeks to ensure that the proposal does not exceed the footprint of the dwelling, or give rise to the formation of a self-contained unit which could have a positive impact on design. However, by not including the floorspace of basements within the Green Belt allowance, there is potential for additional development to take place above ground – up to 25% increase in floorspace of the original building. This would therefore have a negative impact on landscape character, particularly in more sensitive areas, the openness of the Green Belt and character of the countryside. This option would support the development of basements up to the size of the existing footprint of the original dwelling.

However, through not including such development within the 25% increase in floorspace for dwellings within the Green Belt, this option could encourage above ground extensions (on greenfield land) in addition to potentially large below ground extensions. This would have a greater negative impact on the openness of the Green Belt and character of the countryside than the alternative option to include basement extensions within the Green Belt extension allowance. Local character/vernacular may not be preserved as above ground extensions could be permitted in addition to below ground extensions, but it may be enhanced, depending on the design of the proposal.

On the other hand, including basements within the Green Belt extension allowance could potentially ensure the re-use of previously-developed land in preference to greenfield land through restricting above ground extensions within garden areas (i.e. greenfield land). This option would also have a positive impact on the openness of the Green Belt and character of the countryside than the preferred option. This option would preserve local character/vernacular through restricting above ground extensions; however, the opportunity to enhance local character/vernacular in certain cases would be lost. This option would restrict further development above ground which would have a greater positive impact on landscape character, particularly in more sensitive areas, the openness of the Green Belt and character of the countryside than the preferred option.

The alternative option to refuse all applications for basements would be a missed opportunity to ensure that extensions to dwellings in the Green Belt have less of an impact on the openness of the Green Belt and character of the countryside. It would encourage the extension of dwellings above ground which would likely entail development of garden areas (i.e. greenfield land) which would have a negative impact on the openness of the Green Belt and character of the countryside. This option has the potential to have an impact on local character/vernacular through encouraging the development of above ground extensions. This does, however, afford the opportunity of enhancing local character/vernacular in certain cases.

### *Proposed amendments*

1. It is recommended that 'original' is included within the first point of the preferred option to ensure this is clear.
2. The last sentence within the preferred option should be amended to generic wording about permitted development rights, and this should be amended elsewhere in the plan to ensure consistency.
3. It is recommended that the supporting text to the preferred option is amended to include basement extensions within the 25% increase in floorspace allowance for dwellings in the Green Belt.



## **DM20 – The Replacement or Rebuild of Existing Dwellings in the Green Belt**

Allowing the replacement or rebuild of existing dwellings in the Green Belt would positively contribute to balanced communities through allowing buildings to be modernised, made more sustainable, and built to certain design standards such as Lifetime Homes. Permitting such development would have a positive impact on the District's housing stock potentially in terms of the range, type, tenure and affordability. It has the potential to reduce the number of unfit homes; however, this option does not support the redevelopment of derelict or abandoned dwellings.

This option does not consider the impact of proposals for the replacement or rebuild of existing dwelling in the Green Belt on the historic environment. Some rural buildings may have Listed Building status or be included on the Local List. This is, however, covered elsewhere in the LDF. It would take into consideration the overall visual mass of the building (including any proposed extension) which could ensure that the impact on landscape character is considered. There is potential for this option to have a positive impact on local character/vernacular through improving visual amenity and adopting good design. This option also has the potential to have a negative impact on local character/vernacular through affecting character and the sense of place.

Conversely not allowing the replacement of existing dwellings in the Green Belt could have a negative impact on the regeneration and enhancement of existing communities and would not help to meet the needs of an ageing population in terms of the quality of rural housing stock. This option could impact on the District's housing stock potentially in terms of the range, type, tenure and affordability of dwellings provided, and would not help to reduce the number of unfit homes. Not allowing the replacement of existing dwellings in the Green Belt would also preserve local character/vernacular, as the extent of alterations would be limited.

### *Proposed amendments*

1. It is recommended, however, that 'to the Council's satisfaction' is removed from this option to ensure clarity and avoid misinterpretation
2. The last sentence should be amended to generic wording about permitted development rights, and this should be amended elsewhere in the plan to ensure consistency.

## **DM21 – Extension of Domestic Gardens in the Green Belt**

Proposals for the extension of domestic gardens in the Green Belt would take into consideration the potential impact on sites of nature conservation importance, which could have a positive impact on natural/semi natural habitats, species diversity and nature conservation. Potential impact on the different grades of agricultural land would also be taken into consideration. This option does not, however, consider the potential impact on sites, features or areas of historical, archaeological and cultural value. This option could impact on the urban fringe and the amount of derelict, degraded and underused land. Although this option does not expressly refer to landscape character areas, there are criteria within it which has the potential to ensure that landscape character is conserved.

### *Proposed amendments*

1. It is recommended that the historic environment is referred to in the preferred option.
2. It is recommended that reference to the appropriateness of the boundary treatment proposed for the extended garden area is included within the preferred option to ensure that this is considered and to minimise the impact of the proposed extension.
3. Reference to potential encroachment onto other areas of open space should also be included to ensure this is considered.
4. It is recommended that reference to the size of the proposed extension is included within the preferred option to ensure that this is considered and to minimise the impact of the proposed extension.
5. It is recommended that another sentence is included within the preferred option in relation to permitted development rights to limit the amount of additional development of buildings and other structures within the garden area.

### **DM22 – Conservation Areas and the Green Belt**

Allowing for appropriate redevelopment in Conservation Areas situated in the Green Belt would ensure a positive impact on balanced communities through supporting the changing needs of the local area and potentially permitting alternative employment uses. High quality, safe and inclusive design would be delivered through Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans, and design requirements covered elsewhere in the LDF. This option could reduce the number of unfit dwellings as these can then be redeveloped to meet current standards. The District's Conservation Areas are primarily located within town and village centres, and permitting appropriate replacement of buildings has the potential to promote and enhance existing centres, for example the village of Battlesbridge. Allowing a change of use to an alternative more appropriate use could also have a positive impact on business development and local employment opportunities. This option, through considering the potential impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, has the potential to have a positive impact on the historic environment, the quality of the public realm, townscape character and value and local character/vernacular.

Restricting development to a "one to one" basis could have a negative impact on balanced communities through not permitting alternative uses and restricting new businesses to operate as existing business types. As with the preferred option, the delivery of high quality, safe and inclusive design could be ensured. The preferred option is, however, considered to provide a balance between enabling some redevelopment within Conservation Areas situated in the Green Belt without being overly onerous or prescriptive in its requirements. This option could also reduce the number of unfit homes and enable the development of dwellings to the Lifetime Homes Standard. Enhancement of existing centres, business development and local employment opportunities may be negatively impacted by this option through restricting development opportunities. However, this option could have a positive impact on the historic environment, the quality of the public realm, townscape character and value and local character/vernacular.

Allowing no redevelopment within Conservation Areas situated in the Green Belt could have a negative impact on balanced communities through potentially limiting opportunities for business development. This option may impede the delivery of good design by restricting potential opportunities to improve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area in terms of the

quality of the built environment. It is unlikely that the number of unfit homes would be reduced and it would not enable the development of dwellings built to the Lifetime Homes Standard. Enhancement of existing centres, business development and local employment opportunities may be negatively impacted by this option through restricting development opportunities. This option could have a negative impact in terms of enhancement opportunities on the historic environment, the quality of the public realm, townscape character and value and local character/vernacular.

#### *Proposed amendments*

No suggested amendments.

### **DM23 – Houseboats**

Allowing the permanent mooring of houseboats would have a positive impact on social inclusion, and help to ensure equal opportunities and that all sections of the community are catered for through increasing the range of housing type, where appropriate. It is unlikely that there would be sustainable access to key services through the provision of permanent moorings of houseboats as potentially the moorings could be located away from the main settlements, and as such the associated services. Existing centres may also not have facilities to support permanent houseboat moorings.

Criteria within this option would ensure that the natural and semi natural habitats, including the estuaries and salt marshes, species diversity, and sites designated for their nature conservation interest are not adversely impacted by such development. It also seeks to take into consideration the potential impact of such development on Conservation Areas. Permitting permanent moorings in appropriate locations has the potential to conserve landscape character.

The alternative option to not allow for the permanent or temporary mooring of houseboats may not encourage equal opportunities and ensure that all sections of the community are catered for, and would not increase the range of housing as those residents living in houseboats would be unable to live permanently in the District. This option would also not increase the mix of housing types. It does, however, have the potential to ensure the protection of the historic environment and conservation of landscape character.

#### *Proposed amendments*

1. The preferred option could be further strengthened by the inclusion of reference to potential impact on the wider historic environment.

### **DM24 – Other Important Landscape Features**

Some of the landscape features listed within the preferred option could positively contribute towards the creation and retention of green networks such as wildlife corridors, and it has the potential to promote good design where appropriate. The implementation of this option, and the conservation of natural and semi natural habitats, would help to ensure that species diversity is conserved. There is potential that sites designated for their nature conservation interest would be maintained and enhanced, and sites, features and areas of historical, archaeological and cultural value would be protected and enhanced through the implementation of this option. This option also has the potential to preserve townscape character and value, landscape character and local character/vernacular through the retention of important landscape features. It may also enhance the range and quality of the public realm and open spaces.

On the other hand, alternative criteria, in addition to those already included within the preferred option, has the potential to negatively impact on the range and affordability of housing delivered and business development, as it may restrict such development within the District.

#### *Proposed amendments*

1. There is an opportunity to strengthen the preferred option through the inclusion of additional criteria to encourage the creation of new habitats with new development.

### **DM25 – Parking Standards**

Failing to have countywide parking standards gives rise to the potential for development with inappropriate and inconsistent parking standards to occur, which may deter development from certain areas, and thus undermine regeneration and enhancement. The "Parking Standards: Design and Good Practice 2009" document (it is noted that this document has now been adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document) would ensure the delivery of high quality, safe and inclusive design, and would ensure parking standards within development meet the Lifetime Homes Standard through specifications within the plan.

Through implementing minimum parking standards at trip origins and maximum parking standards at trip destinations it is likely that other forms of transport may be considered as an alternative to the private car. Maximum parking standards at trip destinations may reduce the opportunity to travel, and may result in improved air quality. Alone, this option would not increase the availability of sustainable transport modes, but it would help ensure such modes are likely to be more viable in the future. Requiring businesses to adhere to parking standards introduces a requirement which has the potential to discourage the provision of new business development. However, this is outweighed by the longer term benefits to business development from ensuring consistent and appropriate parking provision is made.

Not having regard to countywide parking standards may result in inappropriate parking commensurate with development in rural and urban communities and thus would not ensure the regeneration and enhancement of the areas, and may result in inappropriate parking spaces that do not meet the needs of the residents, and that do not cater for all sections of the community. This option may also result in sub-standard design being delivered that is not inclusive to all, as there will be no parking standards set, and this has the potential to result in development which does not meet resident's needs in terms of sheltered or lifetime homes.

Green infrastructure and networks may not be promoted and/or enhanced as there would be no set parking standards at trip origins or destinations to try to minimise car usage. This alternative option would allow business development greater flexibility, which may encourage new business development. However, this would be undermined in the longer-term by the lack of appropriate parking and a consistent approach. It is likely that the use of alternative modes of transportation to the private car will not be promoted and/or enhanced, and the need to travel will not be reduced, as there will be no set parking standards at trip origins or destinations to try to minimise car usage. It is unlikely that air quality will be improved as a result of reduced emissions.

#### *Proposed amendments*

No suggested amendments.

## **DM26 – Traffic Management**

The implementation of this option would help to ensure that infrastructure is phased, the community has facilities that meet ongoing and future needs, the reduction of income and quality of life issues and that all sections of the community are catered for through appropriate traffic management. This option would help to ensure the regeneration and enhancement of existing communities through the protection of the existing characteristics (both the urban form and environmental aspects) through the conditions noted within the option.

This option would result in greater use of healthy forms of transport, and less use of forms of transport which have the potential to have a detrimental impact on health, in terms of issues pertaining to air quality. It would also encourage healthy and active lifestyles, contribute to social inclusion, potentially improve accessibility for all sections of the community, encourage people to use alternative modes of transportation and potentially reduce the need to travel. This option could ensure that the public realm is enhanced, emissions and energy consumption are reduced, potentially improve air quality and direct transport movements away from Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs).

The implementation of this option would help to ensure that green infrastructure, including non-vehicular infrastructure routes and links, will be promoted, through the conditions imposed within it. The availability of sustainable transport modes would be increased through the implementation of this option, as a key factor within it is the facilitation of appropriate uses of different types of road and environment. Traffic management has the potential to reduce noise and light pollution. This option does not consider the impact on the natural or historic environment.

### *Proposed amendments*

1. There is an opportunity to strengthen the preferred option through the addition of conditions to ensure the protection and enhancement of the environment.
2. It is recommended that reference is made to the natural and historic environment within the preferred option to ensure that these are taken into consideration.
3. It is also recommended that additional criteria is inserted to ensure the delivery of high quality, safe and inclusive design through making reference to the Highways Agency guidance 'Design Manual for Roads and Bridges' and to Transport Impact Assessments and associated guidance.

## **DM27 – Employment Land**

Through facilitating new employment land, and changes to existing employment land, there is the opportunity to enhance and regenerate existing communities. The preferred option would ensure a flexible approach to the provision of employment uses, helping to meet the employment needs of all sections of the community, and could enhance the qualifications and skills of the local community, and reduce income disparities. This could have a positive impact on social inclusion. It would ensure that the impact on town centres is considered, support a range of employment uses (as appropriate), improve business development, promote local employment opportunities, and aid the realisation of London Southend Airport's economic potential.

This option favours the development of B1 and B2 business uses but supports alternative uses in appropriate circumstances. It requires wider sustainability issues to be taken into account, which could include sustainable transport issues. Whilst this option could be strengthened through the inclusion of criteria for siting new employment land and include environmental design criteria, these are covered elsewhere in the LDF.

#### *Proposed amendments*

1. It is recommended that criteria is added to the preferred option to ensure that any infrastructure commensurate with new employment land, or existing employment land, is phased to meet ongoing and future community needs, the design of any additional employment structures is of a high quality, safe and inclusive design, and noise and light pollution is considered.
2. It is recommended that the reasons for preferring the predominance of B1 and B2 uses are explained further within the supporting text.
3. It is also recommended that the compatibility of alternative uses with existing uses is included within this option.

### **DM28 – Working from Home**

Allowing the proposals for B1 business uses operating from dwellings may help to ensure the regeneration and enhancement of existing communities through encouraging business in the area, reducing the need to travel, and therefore helping to reduce the spending leakage from the District. Taking a positive approach to the provision of employment at home would help to support local employment opportunities, improve business development, reduce income and quality of life disparities, enhance the skills and qualifications of the local community, ensure equal opportunities and that all sections of the community are catered for, as it will allow people who cannot travel far, or those that are otherwise not working, the opportunity to work from their own home.

This option, however, has the potential to draw employment generating uses away from existing centres, but the scale of such impact is likely to be nominal. Local employment opportunities would reduce the need to commute which may actively encourage people to use alternative methods of transportation to the private car. This option seeks to ensure that the potential impact of proposals on the visual character of the surrounding residential area is taken into consideration, which could ensure that townscape character and value and local character/vernacular are preserved. The implementation of this option may help to reduce emissions (through reduced car travel) as there would be less need for commuting and therefore less need to use the private car.

#### *Proposed amendments*

1. It is recommended that the first point within this option is amended from 'is ancillary to the residential use' to 'remains linked to the residential use' to make this clearer.
2. It is recommended that this option should not restrict uses within dwellings to B1 as other uses may be compatible with residential uses which do not fall within this class.

## DM29 – Town Centre Shopping Frontages

Allowing for the change of use of shopping frontages for non-retail purposes would have a positive impact on balanced communities through focusing development, ensuring the appropriate mix of retail and non retail uses within town centres and promoting accessibility. This option would promote the delivery of high quality, safe and inclusive design, promote and enhance existing centres and ensure business development.

This option would help to enhance consumer choice through the provision of an increased range of services within the primary shopping areas of the District, promote mixed use development and a wide variety of, and increase, local employment opportunities within urban centres. Concentrating retail uses and appropriate non-retail uses within the town centre would have a positive impact on the viability of public transport, ensuring access to services and facilities, focusing uses within a single location and reducing the number of trips generated. This option would concentrate trip destinations within one location, which in terms of local air quality, may lead to some negative effects in very localised areas.

Whilst there may be an opportunity to strengthen this option in terms of the historic environment, landscape character, townscape character and value and local character/vernacular, these are covered elsewhere in the LDF. This option would ensure that the range and quality of the public realm and open spaces are enhanced, the re-use of previously developed land and urban areas, the protection of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and potentially direct additional movements towards AQMAs, where AQMAs are in town centres. Failure to accommodate retail uses within town centres could lead to them directed to less appropriate locations, including the urban fringe. Sustainable design principles will also be encouraged.

Restricting non-retail uses within the town centres in the alternative option will not help to ensure their vibrancy as there will be little or no opportunity to diversify, which may lead to fewer facilities within the town centre, forcing other services to locate to potentially less accessible locations, increasing inequalities and potentially reducing opportunities for passive surveillance in town centres. This option would have a negative impact on the promotion and enhancement of existing centres, business development, consumer choice, mixed use development, and the variety of local employment opportunities. Such an approach may lead to pressure for the development of retail, services, and facilities to be dispersed over a wider area. This could lead to a greater need to travel, a greater impact on air quality and potentially greater pressure on the urban fringe. This option may ensure that the range and quality of the public realm and open spaces are enhanced and may ensure the re-use of previously developed land and urban areas. It may direct movements away from town centre AQMAs, but may lead to greater impact on AQMAs through additional traffic, depending on the location of dispersed development. Sustainable design principles may not be encouraged.

Conversely, although allowing the market to define the mix of town centre uses may promote existing centres through allowing businesses to locate there, it will not help to aid the regeneration and enhancement of town centres as a combination of uses that is not coordinated will effectively undermine the vitality and vibrancy of the centres. This option may lead to facilities, services and retail being located in locations less accessible for an ageing population, and in locations only accessible by car. It may increase pressure on the urban fringe. By dispersing such development over a wider area, this could lead to a greater need to travel, undermine accessibility and ensure a greater impact on air quality. It would, however, help to improve business development, enhance consumer choice, promote mixed use development within town centres, and promote a wide variety of, and increase, local employment opportunities. This option may ensure that the range and quality of the public realm and open spaces are enhanced and may ensure the re-use of previously developed land and urban areas. It may direct movements away from town centre AQMAs, but may lead to greater impact

on AQMAs through additional traffic, depending on the location of dispersed development. Sustainable design principles will also be encouraged, although this potentially uncoordinated approach may not ensure it is provided as a matter of course.

### *Proposed amendments*

1. It is recommended that an explanation of what constitutes a cluster of uses is provided to ensure clarity and avoid misinterpretation.
2. Additional text on what threshold for retail use should be applied if the Retail and Leisure Study is not up to date should be provided.

### **DM30 – Upper Floor Locations in Town Centres**

Allowing for the upper floors of shops and other commercial buildings to be used for residential purposes will help to ensure the regeneration and enhancement of existing communities through the increased footfall and natural surveillance offered by residential dwellings. This option would have a positive impact on housing in terms of potentially increasing the range and affordability of housing for all social groups, promoting a mix of housing types and tenures, promoting high quality design, and ensuring sustainable access to key services. Compliance with the Lifetime Homes Standard may be more challenging however. There would be no loss of commercial uses or businesses from the town centre through the implementation of this option. Increased footfall into the area will improve business development in these areas.

It is unlikely that this option would enhance consumer choice. Nevertheless it would promote mixed use and high density development in appropriate locations, encourage development where large volumes of people and/or transport movements are located in sustainable accessible locations, enhance accessibility, particularly for those without access to a private car and ensure the retention of space available for leisure uses, which could potentially include cultural activities. Whilst there may be an opportunity to strengthen this option in terms of the historic environment, townscape character and value and local character/vernacular, these are covered elsewhere in the LDF. It would ensure the re-use of previously developed land and urban areas.

On the other hand, allowing for the upper floors of shops and commercial premises to be converted into residential dwellings notwithstanding the loss of leisure uses will not help to ensure the regeneration and enhancement of existing communities as an appropriate mix of uses to maintain and enhance the vibrancy and vitality of town centres is required. This option would have a positive impact on housing in terms of potentially increasing the range and affordability of housing for all social groups, promoting a mix of housing types and tenures, promoting high quality design, and ensuring sustainable access to key services. Compliance with the Lifetime Homes Standard may be more challenging however. Development will be focused in existing centres thus helping to promote and enhance these centres.

However, there is the potential for loss of business through the implementation of this option which will not aid business development, nor promote an appropriate mix of uses within the town centres. This option would have a negative impact on consumer choice and a mix of uses as leisure uses could be lost. Whilst it would encourage development where large volumes of people and/or transport movements are located in sustainable accessible locations, encourage higher density developments in appropriate locations and enhance accessibility, particularly for those without access to a private car, there may be a loss of local employment opportunities. This option ensures the re-use of previously developed land and urban areas but may not ensure a mix of uses within the town centres.



### *Proposed amendments*

1. In the supporting text it is recommended that what constitutes a net loss is explained further.

### **DM31 – Village and Neighbourhood Shops**

The criteria-based approach within the preferred option would have a positive impact on balanced communities through supporting the provision and continued retention of local retail facilities that serve the local community in more rural areas, particularly the needs of an ageing population. Retention of retail facilities may help prevent an increase in the rural-urban divide in the District. There is some potential, however, for the option to prevent conversion of rural retail uses to other uses which have the potential to further enhance the rural economy. This option would ensure that high quality, safe and inclusive design is delivered.

The implementation of this option will result in a much needed retail unit remaining in a rural area, thus promoting and enhancing the existing area. The option is unlikely to promote business development due to the nature of the rural areas. However the option does seek to protect businesses that are already in existence and ensure a range of retail within rural areas. This option made be strengthened by adding in criteria to ensure that the townscape character and value and local character/vernacular are preserved and/or enhanced. However, this issue is addressed elsewhere in the LDF.

However, taking a more permissive approach to the loss of A1 uses in rural areas as advocated by the alternative option would result in a loss of services in rural areas, and therefore fewer community facilities to meet ongoing and future needs. This option would not ensure the regeneration and enhancement of existing communities, and it would have a negative impact on access to retail facilities for some sections of the community in rural areas, particularly the ageing population, and may increase the rural-urban divide in the District. The criteria within the preferred option would ensure that high quality, safe and inclusive design is delivered. This option, however, would potentially have a negative impact on the promotion and enhancement of existing centres, business development, and local consumer choice.

### *Proposed amendments*

1. It is recommended that on-street parking is included to ensure that this is taken into consideration in the determination of applications for non-retail uses.

### **DM32 – Advertisements**

Whilst there is a risk that advertisements can create light pollution, assessing applications for the design and siting of advertisements according to the criteria listed within the preferred option would ensure that this will not be the case. Placing advertising signs in appropriate locations may help to improve business development through advertising the different services on offer in an area, and the criteria in the option would also ensure that the range and quality of the public realm and open spaces are not worsened by the construction of advertising signs. It would ensure that the townscape character and value are preserved and that local advertisements respect local character and vernacular.

Conversely not having regard to the lighting of advertisements may result in an increase in light pollution. Placing advertising signs may help to improve business development through advertising the different services on offer in an area. However if the location of the sign is inappropriate, or the sign itself is inappropriate it may eventually hinder business development.

The quality and range of the public realm and open spaces would also not be enhanced without specific criteria to control the siting, size, lighting etc. of advertisements. Without the criteria listed in the preferred option, townscape character may not be preserved and it may lead to advertisements which are of detriment to the local character/vernacular.

#### *Proposed amendments*

1. The potential for incorrect illumination of advertisements to cause light pollution should be set out within the supporting text to the preferred option.
2. Appropriate guidance on advertisements should also be referred to.

### **DM33 – Advertisements affecting Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings**

There is a risk that advertisements can create light pollution; however the preferred option has criteria within it to ensure that this will not be the case. Placing advertising signs in appropriate locations may help to improve business development through advertising the different services on offer in an area, and the criteria in the option would ensure that the range and quality of the public realm and open spaces are not worsened by the construction of advertising signs. It would ensure that the townscape character and value are preserved and that local advertisements respect local character and vernacular.

With reference to the alternative option, not having regard to the lighting of advertisements, however, may result in an increase in light pollution. Placing advertising signs across the District may help to improve business development through advertising the different services on offer in an area. However if the location of the sign is inappropriate, or the sign itself is inappropriate it may eventually hinder business development. The quality and range of the public realm and open spaces will not be enhanced without specific criteria to control the siting, size, lighting etc. of advertisements. The alternative option may not preserve townscape character and could potentially lead to advertisements which are of detriment to the local character/vernacular in areas where the local character strongly merits preservation and enhancement.

#### *Proposed amendments*

No suggested amendments.