

Rochford District Core Strategy
Approach to Transport within Local Development Framework
by Rochford District Council and Essex County Council

Rochford District Council (RDC) has worked closely with Essex County Council (ECC) throughout the process of producing the Rochford District Core Strategy. Essex County Council is the local highway authority. The two authorities are satisfied that the submitted Core Strategy addresses the strategic transport issues within the District by setting out an adequate policy context for the future development requirements and transport needs of Rochford District. The two authorities are also liaising on production of the other policy documents that will form part of the Local Development Framework. This note briefly reviews the production of the Rochford Local Development Framework in terms of the overall approach to transport; the proposed development locations of the Core Strategy; and the other Development Planning Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents.

Overall Approach to Transport

The Core Strategy sets out an overall approach to Transport in ‘Chapter 10: Transport’ through a Vision and Objectives for Transport which are supported by the proposed 8 policies for Transport. These 8 policies cover a range of appropriate and sustainable transport measures in support of, and directly related to, the Spatial Vision and the future development strategy for Rochford District.

The emphasis of the overall approach to Transport is to set the strategic context for emergence of a package of practical measures to enable use of alternative means of travel and to reduce dependence on use of the private car, whilst acknowledging that some complementary highway improvements continue to be required. Specifically the policies are designed to enable,

- reduced reliance on the private car and mitigation of development impacts whilst sustaining access to employment locations and managing congestion – Policy T1 (Highways);
- prioritisation of highway improvements to address specific issues on identified road links – Policy T2 (Highways Improvements);
- extended and improved passenger transport links for existing and proposed development areas - Policy T3 (Public Transport) and Policy T4 (South Essex Rapid Transit (SERT));
- consideration of alternative and sustainable means of transport alongside new development proposals and for existing establishments - Policy T5 (Travel Plans);
- a network of cycle and pedestrian routes – Policy T6 (Cycling and Walking) – that are also linked to leisure opportunities – Policy T7 (Greenways);
- parking standards that maintain residential amenity and recognise the access and safety requirements for specific types of user and vehicle

without encouraging excessive car trips to facilities and services – Policy T8 (Parking Standards).

The overall approach to Transport of the Core Strategy aligns with the current operative Local Transport Plan (LTP) for Essex (Examination Core Document 22.C12). Particularly relevant are,

- the LTP Policy Framework which identifies the strength of the relationship between each LTP objective and the 6 identified policy intervention themes (pages 116 and 117);
- the LTP Policy Toolbox which identifies the mixture of initiatives and types of interventions that make up the broad packages and their relationship with the LTP's objectives (pages 117 and 118);
- the linking of the LTP objectives to Essex County Council's supporting policy documents (page 119).

The Essex Local Transport Plan is currently being reviewed, with the Review Plan becoming operative from April 2011. The Review is being undertaken by Essex County Council in consultation with key stakeholders, including Rochford District Council. This process is maintaining the alignment between the approach and content of the submitted Core Strategy and the emerging LTP.

Both the Core Strategy and the LTP will be supported by other policy and guidance documents. The County Council has a range of policy documents as referenced on page 119 of the LTP. Of particular relevance to the Rochford Core Strategy are,

- Essex County Council documents, produced in association with the Essex Planning Officers Association, that present guidance on Parking Standards, Highways and Transport Development Management and Developer Contributions for ECC Infrastructure Requirements;
- the District Council LDF documents on Development Management DPD, Parking Standards SPD and Transport SPD.

Proposed Development Locations of Core Strategy

The proposed development locations of the Core Strategy present opportunities to introduce measures in accordance with Policies T1 to T8 of the Core Strategy. Specifically, measures which would be in accordance with the principles of reducing the need to travel; encouraging use of sustainable means of travel; and linking development to passenger transport.

Each of the locations identified for development in the Core Strategy has been assessed against Essex County Council's Highways and Transportation Development Control Policies. The County Council is satisfied that impacts on the highway and transport network can be mitigated through technically feasible measures that may be funded through developer contributions without adversely affecting the viability of the proposed development. The measures would include localised highway improvements and improvements

to the passenger transport, walking and cycling networks. Topic Paper 1: Indicative Core Strategy Infrastructure Costs (Examination Core Document SUBDOC3) sets out the currently anticipated costs and funding arrangements.

Development Planning Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents

Rochford District Council and Essex County Council continue to liaise on the range of Development Planning Documents (DPD) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) which will support the Core Strategy. Essex County Council is specifically assisting the District Council on the transport aspects of the following Documents,

- Allocations DPD
- Development Management DPD
- Rayleigh Town Centre Area Action Plan
- Rochford Town Centre Area Action Plan
- Hockley Town Centre Area Action Plan
- Transportation Strategy SPD

In addition, the County Council is contributing to the production of the London Southend Airport and Environs Joint Area Action Plan, which is being jointly produced by Rochford DC and Southend-on-Sea BC. The technical aspects of the Plan are subject to a consultancy study, for which Essex County Council contributes to the Steering Group. It should be noted that Essex County Council was a signatory to the Section 106 agreement accompanying the recent planning permission for extension of the runway at the Airport.

In its role as Local Highway Authority, Essex County Council is instrumental in producing, in association with the Essex Planning Officers Association, a number of policy and guidance documents. The purpose of these documents is to set out the Highway Authority's approach to assessment of development proposals. They include,

- Parking Standards: Design and Good Practice
- Highways and Transportation Development Control Policies
- Developers' Guide to Infrastructure Contributions

The Highways and Transportation Development Control Policies are appended to the adopted Local Transport Strategy. The other two documents listed above have been subject to recent review, including public consultation and Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment and the Essex Planning Officers Association has commended them as suitable for adoption as SPDs or incorporation within SPDs.

The County Council has also published Transport Assessment Guidelines to support the Development Management process for applicants and authorities.