

Local Development Framework

Core Strategy Preferred Options



If you require a copy of this leaflet in large print, Braille or translated into another language, please contact:

**The Planning Department
Rochford District Council**

Tel: 01702 318191

Email:

planning.enquiries@rochford.gov.uk

or visit the website:

<http://www.rochford.gov.uk>

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'Making Rochford District the place of choice in the County to live, work and visit.'

Introduction

The Role of the Core Strategy

The Core Strategy is the main, overarching document of the Rochford District Local Development Framework – a collection of documents that will determine how the District develops in the future. It will set out the overall strategy for the District until 2021 and, where appropriate, beyond.

The Core Strategy explains how we will deliver the spatial aspects of our vision and the Sustainable Community Strategy, as well as how regional and national policies, such as those contained within the East of England Plan, will be applied locally.

The Core Strategy is also intrinsically linked with our corporate plan and vision.

The Core Strategy does not include detailed development control policies, allocate land, or specify the boundaries of development sites. This information will be included within other Development Plan Documents that form part of the Local Development Framework. These Development Plan Documents must conform to the policies within the Core Strategy.

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

The Role of the Core Strategy Preferred Options

This document is not the final version of the Core Strategy; it is the Core Strategy Preferred Options. As such, it sets out what our current preferred options for tackling the challenges the District faces and for taking advantage of the District's opportunities in spatial terms. For each strategy and action we have stated our preferred option and, where appropriate, an alternative option, which will be subject to public participation and appraisal before a final version of the document is agreed.

The Core Strategy Preferred Options document comprises the following:

1. **Characteristics, Issues and Opportunities** – A summary of the physical and social characteristics of the District of relevance to its future planning, alongside the main challenges and opportunities.
2. **Vision** – Our vision for the development of the District over five years, and the periods to 2017 and 2021.

3. **Strategies, Activities and Actions** – What we propose to do to address the identified problems, challenges and opportunities that will deliver our vision.

Within this section we have listed our preferred options (green boxes) and alternative options (yellow boxes) for tackling the issues facing the District.

This chapter is broken down into the following sub-sections:

- Housing
 - Green Belt
 - Employment
 - Environmental Issues
 - Transport
 - Retail and Town Centres
 - Character of Place
 - Community Infrastructure, Leisure and Tourism
 - Upper Roach Valley and Wallasea Island
4. **Implementation, Delivery and Monitoring** – How we will implement the strategies, activities and actions and measure success.
 5. **Key Diagram** – Visual representation of our Preferred Options. The Key Diagram is not a Proposals Map and does not allocate land.

Community Involvement

This is the second version of our Core Strategy Preferred Options. The first version was subject to public participation in June and July 2007. Having regard to the results of consultation, we determined to revisit the Preferred Options stage.

We now wish to hear the views of the local community and other stakeholders on this revised version of the preferred options.

In addition to consultation carried out on the initial version of the Core Strategy Preferred Options, we undertook a number of community involvement exercises in 2006 when looking at the issues and options for the District. These included public exhibitions / meetings, questionnaires, online consultation and workshops for young people held in two of the District's schools.

Community involvement has also been undertaken in relation to aspects of the evidence base, particularly in respect of the 'call for sites' and Rochford Futures report.

The Core Strategy will be subject to continued community involvement which

will shape the document as it progresses towards adoption.

Listening To Your Views

The Core Strategy has evolved through its production to take on board the concerns, comments and suggestions that have been submitted by members of the public and other stakeholders at various stages.

As stated in the previous section, the need to revisit the Core Strategy Preferred Options has emanated from concerns expressed over the initial version of the Core Strategy. The following table summarises some of the main concerns expressed by the public, and explains how we have addressed these:

What you told us previously	What we have done this time
There is too much residential development proposed for our village / town.	We have reconsidered the issue of housing distribution having regard to the updated evidence base together with the implementation of other new strategies / developments since last year.
Why do we need to accommodate any more houses in the District?	<p>The East of England Plan requires Rochford District to ensure at least 4,600 additional dwellings are built in the District between 2001 and 2021.</p> <p>Rochford's allocation is based on meeting current and future need.</p> <p>Current need encompasses the number of people in the District who are living within a household wanting to move to their own accommodation and form a separate household but unable to do so (e.g. adult children).</p> <p>Projected need is derived from the supposition that the population is projected to increase from 81,300 in 2007 to 87,000 by 2021.</p>
It is not clear where new development is proposed to go.	The purpose of the Core Strategy is not to identify specific locations but indicate general areas for development. More precise locations, submitted as part of our 'call for sites' exercise, will be appraised within the Allocations Development Plan Document.

What you told us previously	What we have done this time
Green Belt land should not be developed.	We strongly support the protection of the Green Belt. However, there are insufficient Brownfield sites within the District to meet projected housing needs, therefore some Green Belt land will need to be released.
Intensification of existing residential areas (e.g. replacing one house with many, within the same space) is unpopular.	We recognise this concern and propose, as far as practicable, to limit the intensification of existing residential areas, preventing redevelopment which is not in keeping with the density or character of the area.
There is not enough infrastructure to support more housing.	We recognise the need to provide additional infrastructure and improve existing infrastructure where necessary. The Core Strategy outlines in broad terms what infrastructure will be required and how this will be delivered.
Our roads are too congested.	In determining areas of future development, the fact that accessibility to public transport and the reliance on the use of the car is unequally distributed across the District has been taken into consideration. Actions to promote alternatives to the car such as walking and cycling are proposed.
We like the District's green, open spaces.	Green spaces within urban areas are part of the social fabric of the community and will be protected. The District itself is predominantly rural and we aim to minimise the development of Green Belt land. Where the release of Green Belt land is unavoidable, Green Belt land which contributes least towards the purposes of the Green Belt will be favoured for development over other Green Belt locations.
We are concerned about anti-social behaviour.	Anti-social behaviour is a complex issue but we recognise that planning has an important role to play. From the design of new developments to ensure that natural surveillance deters anti-social behaviour, to the redevelopment of

What you told us previously	What we have done this time
We are concerned about anti-social behaviour (continued)	Rochford and Hockley town centres incorporating more community and youth facilities, to providing environments that all of the community can take pride in and ownership of, concerns regarding anti-social behaviour have been incorporated.
There needs to be more for young people to do.	We propose additional youth facilities. Young people will be consulted on what facilities they require, and their views will be incorporated into the development of these facilities where a need has been identified.
Any new accommodation should be affordable.	We propose that a proportion of housing provided within new residential development is affordable housing - housing that is available to buy or rent below the normal market value. It is, however, not feasible to require developers to provide 100% affordable housing on any one site.
We like the character of the District. The historic character, in particular, needs to be protected.	We are committed to the preservation of the District's historic towns and villages. Provisions such as the extension of certain Conservation Areas and the reintroduction of a Local List of important buildings aim to prevent insensitive alterations to important areas.
We like our local shops / our village needs more shops.	We will support the development and preservation of shops within villages which serve everyday needs. The main focus of retail enhancement will be within Rayleigh, Hockley and Rochford town centres.
There is a good community spirit in our town / village.	'Sustainability' is the key vision for the future. To achieve this, it is essential that settlements are developed as necessary to maintain a vibrant and prosperous environment for future generations. We recognise the importance of community and this has been considered in all aspects of the Core Strategy, from the proposed housing distribution, to retail and town centre policies, to the proposed community facilities and leisure policies.

What you told us previously	What we have done this time
New development should be environmentally friendly.	We propose to require high environmental standards from new developments. Proposed policies within the Core Strategy address this, for example by requiring developments to meet certain standards of the Code for Sustainable Homes.

Key Documents, the Evidence Base and their influence upon the Core Strategy

There are a number of documents that have a significant influence on Rochford District's Core Strategy: Rochford District Sustainable Community Strategy and the East of England Plan.

Sustainable Community Strategy

The Sustainable Community Strategy is the long-term vision for the District which sets out the priorities for improvement and how these will be achieved. It is developed by the Local Strategic Partnership – a partnership of local public, private and voluntary sector organisations who play a key part in the provision of services within the District. Our Core Strategy is required to have regard to the Sustainable Community Strategy.

The Sustainable Community Strategy and the Core Strategy are more closely linked than simply having regard to one another, in particular they share parts of the evidence base.

The emerging Sustainable Community Strategy sets out the following vision for Rochford District:

“a place that is vibrant, inclusive, safe, sustainable and modern whilst communities retain their distinctiveness, foster civic pride and where all have access to quality accessible services.”

From this vision, the Local Strategic Partnership has developed four priority areas, three, of which, can realistically be addressed within the planning process:

- *Supporting the ageing population* – It is important to ensure that as people get older, and life expectancies increase, they can live independently for longer, for example through good housing design and that high quality services are available to the target population should the need arise.
- *Fostering greater community cohesion* – The sense of community is vital for eliminating social exclusion and encouraging cohesion. Planning can be utilised to design out crime and anti-social

behaviour from communities, and encourage equal opportunities within new developments through providing a mix of housing.

- *Increasing accessibility to services* – With a distinct east to west divide across the District in terms of accessibility to services, improvements are necessary, which can be implemented through the planning process, for example transport improvements.

It has been emphasised that planning has a role to play in achieving these three priorities, and as such, these are themes which run throughout the Core Strategy.

Vision to Reality

We have also adopted a document stating our key aspirations – Vision to Reality. This, along with our Corporate Plan, details our vision and key objectives over the next 5 years, by 2017 and 2021. The Local Development Framework aims to help deliver the spatial aspects of this vision and, as such, the Core Strategy has an important role to play in this respect.

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

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

The priorities identified in the LAA and how the Core Strategy will contribute towards their achievement is set out below. It must be stressed, however, that planning is not an individual entity and achievement of these objectives requires the combined operations of different departments and organisations.

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

Priority	Role of Core Strategy in achieving priority
Priority 1: Fewer children and young people missing education or not in education, employment or training.	We will ensure that the educational needs of the District are met through the provision of educational facilities in accessible locations. Our approach to ensuring employment provision is identified in the Employment section of the Core Strategy.

Priority	Role of Core Strategy in achieving priority
Priority 2: More people supported to live independently in their own homes with better support for carers.	We support the inclusion of the Lifetime Homes Standard on new developments, as outlined in the Core Strategy, to enable people to stay independent in their homes for longer. We also recognise the importance of ensuring the adequate provision of affordable homes within the District to meet the needs of the population.
Priority 3: Better public health and longer lives.	We are working with the South East Essex Primary Care Trust and other partners, to ensure that adequate facilities are provided to meet the changing population and their needs.
Priority 4: Children and young people realise their potential in education.	The Core Strategy has outlined our plans for providing adequate educational facilities within the District.
Priority 5: Essex roads are safer, less congested and everyone has access to essential services.	The transport section of the Core Strategy acknowledges that whilst some infrastructure improvements are required to improve east to west connections, greater emphasis should be on reducing the populations' reliance on the private car. Sustainable alternatives such as walking and cycling are encouraged.
Priority 6: More participation in sports, culture and volunteering for the benefit of the whole community.	We are committed to improving access to sporting facilities such as informal open space, playing pitches and leisure facilities where a need has been identified, as reinforced within the Core Strategy.
Priority 7: Essex is a safe place to live.	<p>New development will be implemented having regard to the need to design out crime.</p> <p>Proposed Town Centre Area Actions Plans for Rochford and Hockley in the Core Strategy will tackle the issue of safety and crime, for example anti-social behaviour, to ensure a safer environment for residents.</p>
Priority 8: Essex has a strong and competitive economy.	Employment opportunities for the District are outlined within the Employment, as well as the Retail and Town Centre sections of the Core Strategy. Opportunities include London Southend Airport and its Environs, and regeneration of the town centres.
Priority 9: A smaller carbon footprint with less waste.	The Core Strategy outlines how new dwellings will be made more energy efficient and sustainable through implementing the sustainable criteria. The Strategy also promotes the development of small and large scale renewable energy schemes.
Priority 10: A well managed environment.	We support the preservation of the District's valuable natural and historic environment through the Core Strategy.

East of England Plan

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

- Provision of 4,600 additional dwellings between 2001 and 2021.
- Creation of no less than 3,000 additional jobs.
- Provision of an additional 15 authorised pitches for Gypsy and Traveller caravans by 2011.
- London Southend Airport as a driver for economic development.

Additional Relevant Strategies

We have a number of other strategies currently in place whose spatial elements are expressed within this Core Strategy. However, we recognise that we cannot deliver our objectives alone and must work in partnership with other organisations. Their strategies also influence this document (and, once finalised, in many cases vice versa).

The strategies at regional, sub-regional, county, district and sub-district levels include the following (* indicates an emerging strategy):

Regional Strategies

- East of England Plan (2008)
- Framework for Regional Employment and Skills Action (FRESA)
- A Better Life (New Cultural Strategy)
- Regional Economic Strategy (2001)
- 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)
- Sub-regional Housing Strategy*

County Strategies

Essex County Council:

- Essex and Southend Waste Local Plan (2001)
- Essex Biodiversity Strategy (1999) and the Essex Biodiversity Project
- Essex Strategy 2008-2018
- Local Area Agreement 2 2008-2011
- Local Transport Plan 2006-2011
- Renewable Strategy for Essex (2002)
- School Organisation Plan 2007-2012

District Strategies

Rochford District Council:

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

Sub-District Strategies

Hockley Parish Plan Group:

- Hockley Parish Plan

Rawreth Parish Council:

- Rawreth Parish Plan

Rochford Parish Council:

- 2004 Vision Statement

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

Evidence Base

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

- **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 us. The results of these have contributed towards examining site deliverability.
- **Community Involvement** carried out on the Issues and Options version of the Core Strategy in 2006 and the first version of the Core Strategy Preferred Options in 2007. As well as reports on the results of the consultation of the general public and specific stakeholders, this includes reports on the results of workshops at King Edmund School and Greensward College undertaken to ascertain the views of young people in the District.
- **Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans (2007)** assess the characteristics of the District's Conservation Areas, as well as proposing action to ensure their value is retained or enhanced.
- **Employment Land Study (2008)** examines the supply and demand for various forms of employment land and compares this to the current and projected future economic profile of the District in order to determine the spatial requirements for future employment.
- **Essex Landscape Character Assessment (2003)** outlines the extent of the three broad landscape character types within the District, and includes an assessment of their sensitivity to different forms of development.
- **Housing Needs Survey (2004)** ascertained the housing need for Rochford District residents. This will soon be superseded to a large degree by the Strategic Housing Market Needs Assessment.
- **Joint Strategies 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.
- **Retail and Leisure Study (2008)** examines the shopping and leisure use habits of the District's residents, and the spatial implications of these for the future development of the area.
- **Rochford District Historic Environment Characterisation Project (2006)** provides a wealth of evidence on the importance of the historic environment within the District and facilitates the integration of management and conservation principles within the planning process.
- **Rochford Futures Report** profiles the social, economic and environmental characteristics of Rochford District at a district and ward level.
- **Strategic Environmental Assessment Baseline Information Profile 2007-2008** presents a plethora of secondary data about the social, physical, environmental and demographic characteristics of the District.
- **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.
- **Strategic Housing Market Assessment** provides data on housing supply and demand at the sub-regional level.
- **Sustainability Appraisals and Strategic Environmental Assessments** were carried out on previous documents, assessing the social, economic and environmental impacts of proposed policies. The results of these have been incorporated into this document. Appraisals of this document have also been undertaken.
- **Urban Capacity Study (2007)** examines the capacity to accommodate development within the District on existing appropriate sites. The study was published shortly before guidance was issued by the government on the production of Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments – the successor to Urban Capacity Studies. Notwithstanding this, the Urban Capacity Study conforms to the principals within the latest guidance and provides the necessary data, as explained in detail in the document entitled *Urban Capacity Study and Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments Practical Guidance* available at www.rochford.gov.uk.

Characteristics, Issues and Opportunities

The District of Rochford is situated within a peninsula between the Rivers Thames and Crouch, and is bounded to the east by the North Sea. The District has land boundaries with Basildon and Castle Point District and Southend-on-Sea Borough Councils. It also has marine boundaries with Maldon and Chelmsford Districts. The District has linkages to the M25 via the A127 and the A13 and direct rail links to London.

The Rochford District covers an area of 65 square miles. It is rich in heritage and natural beauty, with many miles of unspoilt coastline and attractive countryside. There are more than 200 sites of archaeological interest, 14 ancient woodlands and several nature reserves across the District.

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

Environment

The landscape of the character of the District has been broadly identified as being made up of three types: Crouch and Roach Farmland; Dengie and Foulness Coastal; and South Essex Coastal Towns. The latter of these three is least sensitive to development.

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

Issues and Opportunities

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

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

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

Characteristics, Issues and Opportunities

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

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

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

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

Population

The last Census in 2001 recorded the District as having a population of 78,489. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) estimates that the population of the District in 2008 is 81,700, and projects that this will rise to 87,000 by 2021.

Rochford District is home to a relatively large number of families, raising the average household size. This is particularly the case in the western part of the District, perhaps indicating that the higher levels of in-migration in these parts are due to parents seeking the quality of life and prosperity needed to support families.

Issues and Opportunities

Rochford District has a higher proportion of older residents than the national and regional averages. The under-20 population of the District is expected to fall between 2008 and 2021, with the population of those aged 20 to 64 remaining relatively stable. The over-65 population is expected to increase considerably by 2021, outnumbering the under-20's by 2015, and leading to an overall increase in the District's population.

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

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

Housing

As at September 2008, there were 35,623 households within Rochford District. The average price of a detached dwelling in July 2008 was £300,000 in Rochford District, which is lower than the average price for the same property type in Essex (£397,967, source: www.home.co.uk)

The Regional Spatial Strategy (known as the East of England Plan) has given an allocation of 4600 dwellings to be built in Rochford District between 2001 and 2021. This figure is based on meeting the needs of the current and the future population of the District. As at 31st March 2006, 810 dwellings had been completed since 2001.

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

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

Issues and Opportunities

There is a high-level of home ownership in the District. However, concealed households (person or persons living within a household wanting to move to their own accommodation and form a separate household, e.g. adult children living with their parents) are largely unable to afford to enter the local housing market due to the gap between house prices and income. There is a limited supply of affordable housing in the District and the development of additional affordable units across the region is not keeping pace with demand.

The development of additional housing will impact upon all forms of physical and social infrastructure. This impact will have to be addressed through planning obligations and other forms of developer contributions.

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

Outside of the District's main settlements, the majority of undeveloped land is designated as Metropolitan Green Belt. However, there is a limit to how much

infilling and intensification existing settlements can sustain without their character being adversely affected.

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

The release of land for housing provides an opportunity to ensure that infrastructure is developed alongside it that benefits residents of both existing dwellings and those that will be developed. Planning obligations and the community infrastructure levy provide a mechanism to ensure that the required infrastructure accompanies all new development.

Economy

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

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

Issues and Opportunities

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

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

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

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

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

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

A higher than average proportion of the workforce are employed in manufacturing. However, in recent years this sector has seen a greater loss in jobs than any other sector in the District.

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

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

London Southend Airport is located within the District and has the potential to be a focus for economic growth around aviation-related industries.

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

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

Transport

Rochford has 3 strategic trunk routes in or around its boundary, namely the A130, A127 and A13. The A127 and A13 run directly to London, a main commuter and employment destination. There are also 3 train stations located in the District, which provide a direct service to London Liverpool Street.

Issues and Opportunities

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

Car dependency within the District is high, particularly outside of the three main urban areas. Congestion and environmental impacts will continue to worsen with population growth if this trend is not reversed.

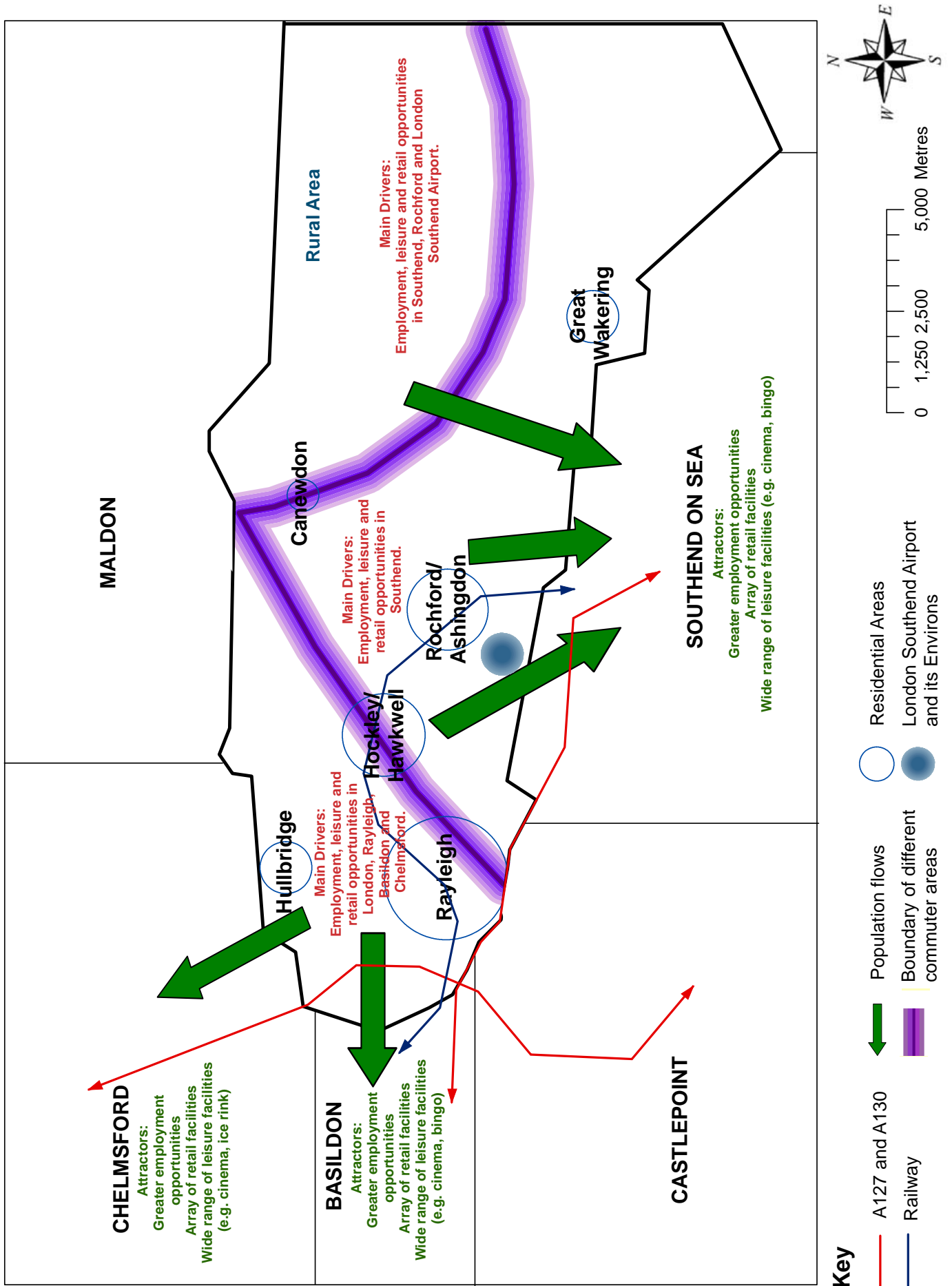
The lack of public transport provision throughout most of the District is an obstacle to reducing car dependency. There is, however, some opportunity to utilise public transport, particularly within the three main settlements which contain rail links between each other, Southend and London.

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

Settlements

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

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



Issues and Opportunities

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

Of the first tier settlements, Rayleigh is the only one which is classed as a principal town centre. Rayleigh also has the best access to services within the District. Rochford and Hockley contain local town centres catering for local need.

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

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

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

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

The District contains three town centres but there is a significant amount of leakage of spending to locations outside of the District, in particular to Southend. There is data, however, that suggests that an increasingly significant proportion of the District's spending is being retained in Rayleigh.

Further details on the character of the District are included within the annual Strategic Environmental Assessment Baseline Information Profile.

Vision

From March 2008 we adopted a vision for the District, which is outlined in *Vision to Reality*. The Local Development Framework, including the Core Strategy, has a key role to play in delivering that vision.

We want to create an environment that is vibrant, inclusive, safe, sustainable and modern while retaining the essential characteristics of the salt marshes, rivers, woodland, open countryside, villages and market towns that make Rochford what it is today. We see the District as a place with high quality natural and built environments that retain their distinctiveness, foster civic pride and where all have access to quality accessible services.

Our overarching vision is to make Rochford District the place of choice in the county to live, work and visit.

We will:

- Build on the heritage, cultural and economic strengths of our area and the sense of identity and civic pride of our people.
- Improve the quality of life for people in our communities and play a full role in the sustainable growth and prosperity of our County.
- Utilise our position within Thames Gateway South Essex to promote the District as the 'green part' of the sub region.

Our key planning objectives include:

- To work towards sustainable development by making the most effective and efficient use of land.
- To improve the quality of life of the inhabitants of the District by providing the best possible environment, and satisfying social needs by making accessible provision for the necessary health, housing, educational, community and leisure facilities in the interests of the total well being of all groups within the population.
- To ensure the availability of land in appropriate locations for housing, commercial and industrial uses.
- To retain, conserve and enhance the built and natural environments, including the architectural and historical heritage, flora, fauna and their habitats, throughout the District.
- To make provision for transportation improvements to effect the most environmentally sustainable, efficient, convenient movement of goods and people.
- To define and protect the Metropolitan Green Belt, the undeveloped coast and areas of ecological interest by directing development towards the District's established settlements.
- To enable the existing business community to function as efficiently as possible and to support economic and regeneration development throughout the District.

Vision

The *Vision to Reality* document details what we wish to see happen in the District in five years, by 2017 and by 2021. *Vision to Reality* is available to view at www.rochford.gov.uk. Within the Strategies, Activities and Actions section of this Core Strategy Preferred Options document the relevant aspects of our vision are listed in the blue margin in italics.

Housing

Introduction

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

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

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

The East of England Plan notes the provision of housing within local authorities between 2001 and 2006, and states the remaining provision between 2006 and 2021.

We monitor and record projected future residential completions based on planning permissions and known sites and publish this information as part of our Annual Monitoring Report. In addition, in 2007 we produced an Urban Capacity Study for the District.

The Urban Capacity Study identified a capacity of 1301 units. This figure was based on extant planning permissions, existing allocated sites not yet developed, projected residential development above ground-floor retail units, projected sub-division, and re-development of deliverable and appropriate brownfield sites.

The remaining balance to be allocated is 2489.

The components from which this figure is derived is summarised in the following table.

The Vision: In five years...

New sustainable, residential developments are planned that are well related to infrastructure, community facilities and play space.

Rochford Housing Association is delivering, on average, 50 affordable dwellings per year which meet the needs of local communities.



The Vision: By 2017...

A range of new mixed housing developments well related to infrastructure and open space have been implemented, providing housing to meet the needs of local communities.

The dwellings are of high quality, sustainable design which minimises their impact on the environment.

The Vision: By 2021....

Sustainable new dwellings that meet the needs of local people of all social groups are in place and integrated into communities.



Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3) sets out the government’s planning policies in relation to housing development and should be read in conjunction with this section of the Core Strategy.



It is important that new housing is sustainably designed and strategically situated in locations which support the objectives of the Sustainable Community Strategy.

RSS min requirement 2001-2021	4600
Completions 2001-2006	810
RSS minimum requirement 2006-2021	3790
Projected housing completions and urban capacity at 31 st March 2006	1301
Remaining minimum balance 2006-2021	2489
RSS minimum requirement 2021-2025	1000
Total remaining minimum balance 2006-2025	3489

The Core Strategy’s role is to set out the general locations for housing development and approach to delivery. The precise boundaries of housing sites will be detailed in the Allocations Development Plan Document.

Decisions regarding the location, type and timing of housing development must be based on sound evidence and principals of sustainable planning. This will involve weighing up issues of need/demand with the social, environmental and economic impacts of development.

It is not intended that all of this development should come forward together. Sites will be phased having regard to the resources, infrastructure etc required to enable development, whilst ensuring that there is a constant adequate five-year supply of housing to meet need.

Distribution

In order to fulfil the requirements of the East of England Plan and to meet the housing need of the District, we will allocate land for housing development in the general locations shown in the key diagram.

We recognise the importance of making best use of urban land, and the Urban Capacity Study completed in 2007 identifies a realistic and deliverable level of provision. Of this figure of 1301, the majority – 805 – is anticipated to be completed by 2015, with the remainder by 2021.

However, we are concerned about the impact ‘town cramming’ is having on the attractiveness and character of many neighbourhoods across the district. It is therefore concluded that the government’s target of providing 60% of new housing development on previously developed land has become unrealistic for Rochford.

It is proposed, taking account of the findings of the Urban Capacity Study 2007 and concerns about town cramming, that 30% of new housing development be provided on previously developed land and 70% be on green field sites as sustainable extensions to existing settlements within the plan period 2001-2021.

H1 Distribution – Preferred Option

We will prioritise the reuse of previously developed land identified as being appropriate as part of our Urban Capacity Study, having regard to the need to protect sites of ecological importance. Areas coming forward for residential development identified within the Urban Capacity Study will be required to conform to all policies within the Core Strategy, particularly in relation to infrastructure, and larger sites will be required to be comprehensively planned.

In order to protect the character of existing settlements, we will resist the intensification of smaller sites within residential areas. Limited infilling will be acceptable if it corresponds to the existing street pattern and density of the locality. We will encourage an appropriate level of residential intensification within town centre areas, where higher density schemes (60+ dwellings per hectare) may be appropriate. The remaining housing requirement will be met through the allocation of land on the edge of existing settlements as outlined in H2.

72% of new dwellings in the District completed in 2006-2007 were built on previously developed land.



H1 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
Resist the development of previously developed land on larger sites in urban areas for housing, and instead seek alternative uses for such land.	This will require greater areas of Metropolitan Green Belt to be released for housing development.
Seek to intensify smaller sites, including through the use of compulsory purchase powers.	The intensification of smaller sites will be harmful to the character of the District. It may also require widespread use of compulsory purchase powers to achieve, resulting in harm to communities.

Community involvement exercises undertaken in recent years have established that the intensification of existing residential areas is unpopular and that people are concerned about the impact of “town cramming”.



The term ‘brownfield’ refers to an area of land which has previously been developed, and may be suitable for alternative uses in the future i.e. redevelopment.

‘Greenfield’, however, encapsulates land which has not been developed in the past.



Between April 2001 and March 2008 there were a total of 1429 net dwelling completions in Rochford District, equating to an average of 204 per year.



The release of land for housing provides an opportunity to ensure that infrastructure is developed alongside it that benefits residents of both existing dwellings and those that will be developed.

General Locations

It is not the purpose of the Core Strategy to set out the precise locations for new development – this is done through the Allocations Development Plan Document. Instead, the Core Strategy will set out the general approach for the Allocations document.

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

As described in the **Characteristics** chapter of this document, the District’s settlements can be divided into four tiers, with the settlements in the higher tiers being generally more suitable to accommodate additional housing development for the reasons described above. The settlement hierarchy is as follows:

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

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

The strategy for the location of housing also involves a balance between directing additional housing to areas with a close relationship to Southend, and those with a closer relationship to Chelmsford and Basildon.

In short, our approach to the location of housing development can be described as a balanced strategy.

None of the preferred options within this document should be read in isolation from one another and this is very much the case when looking at the preferred distribution of housing. The preferred distribution is based not simply on which areas are the most sustainable at present, but also on how residential development can contribute to, and marry with, other strategies – particularly in relation to town centre vitality, environmental issues and employment – to ensure long term sustainable development within the District.

Development coming forward within these areas will have to conform to other strategies outlined within the Core Strategy, notably those discussed in the **Transport** and **Community Infrastructure, Leisure and Tourism** chapters.

The remaining allocation of dwellings that cannot be provided through the reuse of appropriate brownfield land, as discussed in **H1** will be accommodated within the general locations as described in **H2** and illustrated on the **Key Diagram**, with detailed locations determined through the Allocations Development Plan Document.

It is neither possible, nor desirable, for all sites that are ultimately allocated for housing to be delivered simultaneously. A number of factors have been considered when drawing up the proposed general phasing of development, including the availability of infrastructure and deliverability of potential sites within the areas.

It is also important that, where necessary and appropriate, alternative land is available for any employment uses displaced by residential redevelopment.

A further consideration in phasing is the requirement to maintain a five-year supply of housing land.

The required annual average for Rochford District is 250. Phasing as stipulated in **H2**, and taking account of the Urban Capacity Study, will deliver an annual average of 261.7 units 2006-2015, and 249 units 2015-2021. These figures do not make allowance for the contribution that is, based on historical trends, still likely to come forward through windfall despite a more restrictive approach to intensification.

We have adopted a Supplementary Planning Document which provides guidance on design that developers will be expected to adhere to. In addition, we intend to adopt the Essex Design Guidance Urban Place Supplement to provide further guidance. Good design will be an important part of new housing developments.



Developers wishing to implement new housing will be required to produce schemes that adhere to the Core Strategy as a whole, not just the Housing chapter.



A large proportion of the District's land is subject to physical constraints which restrict its potential to accommodate housing.

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



Many of the schools within the District's smaller settlements are projected to have large surpluses of places in the near future, bringing into question their long-term viability.



H2 General Locations and Phasing – Preferred Option

We will extend the residential envelope of existing settlements for the purposes of residential development in the following areas to deliver the following approximate number of units by 2015 or between 2015 and 2021, as stipulated below and indicated on the **Key Diagram**.

Area	No. of units by 2015	No. units 2015-2021
North of London Road, Rayleigh	450	200
South West Rayleigh	100	0
West Rochford	300	100
West Hockley	50	0
South Hawkwell	100	100
East Ashingdon	120	0
South East Ashingdon	120	0
South West Hullbridge	0	450
South West Great Wakering	100	100
West Great Wakering	50	100
South Canewdon	60	0
Total	1450	1050

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

Development within the above areas will be required to be comprehensively planned. A range of other uses and infrastructure (including off-site infrastructure), having regard to the requirements of the Core Strategy, will be required to be developed and implemented in a timely manner alongside housing. **H Appendix 1** outlines the infrastructure that will be required for each residential area, and should be read in conjunction with Preferred Option **CLT1**.

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

H2 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
Greater number of dwellings to be accommodated in and around Rayleigh.	Although the largest settlement in the District with the best access to services, we have had regard to recent levels of development within Rayleigh and the location of significant proposed employment growth and town centre enhancement elsewhere in the District in determining the figure for Rayleigh.
Less development within smaller settlements – focus more on District’s towns.	We believe it is important to provide housing within smaller settlements as well as the District’s towns to ensure that village communities continue to thrive. In addition, less development within smaller settlements would necessitate greater development with larger settlements to compensate. This approach has the potential to harm the character of towns and put undue burden on their infrastructure.
North Rayleigh as alternative to other Rayleigh locations	An additional release of green belt land in this area would result in undue encroachment into open countryside, and result in residential areas distant from the town centre. In addition, there is a need to avoid the coalescence of Rayleigh with Hullbridge.
Additional housing to South West Rayleigh as alternative to other Rayleigh locations	This location benefits from being in relative proximity to Rayleigh town centre. However, the topography of the land in the location would hinder development. In addition, a highway access to the west is not viable, and is constrained to the east by existing development, making greater quantities of housing development to that proposed unviable.
East Rayleigh as alternative to other Rayleigh locations	Possible development to the east of Rayleigh is constrained by special landscape areas and the need to avoid coalescence with the neighbouring settlement of Hockley.
South / South East Rayleigh as alternative to other Rayleigh locations	In order to protect the town’s identity, there is a need to avoid the coalescence of Rayleigh with Southend. Development to the south of Rayleigh has the potential to undermine this approach. In addition, it is considered that north of London Road is a more suitable location in terms of accessibility.
South Rochford as alternative to other Rochford locations	Areas of development to the south are constrained by areas of flood risk together with the need to avoid coalescence with Southend in order to protect Rochford’s identity. It is considered that west Rochford is a more suitable location given its proximity to the train station, town centre and its relationship with area of significant employment growth potential at and around the airport.
<i>Continued</i>	

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



The East of England Plan requires Rochford District to provide an average of 250 dwellings per year between 2006 and 2021.

Between 2006 and 2008 the actual annual average was 309. However, the District’s housing trajectory – which projects the future housing completions based on available sites – shows that the average will fall dramatically without the allocation of additional land for housing.

The average household size in Rochford District is greater than the national average. This is particularly the case in the western part of the District.

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



Local services must be accessible from new developments to make them sustainable, and to facilitate achievement of the objective 'increasing accessibility to services' as outlined in the Sustainable Community Strategy.



H2 – Alternative Options (continued)

Option	Why is it not preferred?
East Rochford as alternative to other Rochford locations	It is considered that west Rochford is a more suitable location given its proximity to the train station, town centre and its relationship with area of significant employment growth potential at London Southend Airport and its environs. Traffic flows from new development to the east of Rochford would be predominantly be through the centre of the town centre resulting in significant congestion.
North Ashingdon as alternative to other Ashingdon locations	North of Ashingdon is located away from services and facilities, and, as such, is not considered as sustainable a location for residential development as other areas.
North East Hockley as alternative to other Hockley / Hawkwell locations	Whilst in relative proximity to the town centre and train station, the impact on the highway network from traffic heading through Hockley, or out of Hockley and subsequently along Ashingdon Road, is considered to render the location unviable. Development to the south of Hawkwell is considered better placed in relation to the highway network and the proposed employment growth around London Southend Airport.
Greater quantum of development in Rochford, less in Ashingdon	We believe there are opportunities for development to go ahead in Ashingdon that would bring wider community benefits, particularly in relation to King Edmund School.
Alternative timing of development as outlined.	The proposed timing of development is based on the need to ensure adequate infrastructure, employment and other services, as outlined in other sections of the Core Strategy, are in place in a timely manner relative to residential development.

General locations post-2021

We are required to ensure there is an adequate 15-year housing supply. As such, it is necessary for the Core Strategy to consider appropriate areas for development between 2021 and 2025.

In considering the general development locations for post 2021 development, we have had regard to the same issues as in H2 above but

have included areas which may not be immediately deliverable, or where the situation vis-à-vis infrastructure and the impact on existing communities is such that their delivery earlier would not be appropriate. The figures, with an annual average of 250 units, meet the East of England Plan’s minimum in the period 2021-2025 and do not make allowance for any contribution through windfall. The figures are approximates at this stage. The exact figures will need to be determined through the Allocations Development Plan Document process or, where appropriate, Area Action Plans at a later date. Sites for post-2021 development will not be delineated within the next Allocations Development Plan Document, but will be examined in a future review. As with the pre-2021 development areas, it is important to note that development coming forward within the areas outlined in **H3** will have to conform to the other policies within the Core Strategy.

H3 General Locations Post-2021 – Preferred Option

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

Area	No. of units post-2021
West Rochford	150
South Hawkwell	130
South East Ashingdon	380
South West Hullbridge	90
South West Great Wakering	160
South Canewdon	90
Total	1000

The detailed location and development will be articulated within the Allocations Development Plan Document and, where appropriate, Area Action Plans.

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

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

Affordable housing does not mean housing that is of inferior quality. When we talk about affordable housing, we mean housing that the District’s residents (e.g. young couples, key workers) can either buy or rent for less money than it would cost on the open market.



There is an acute shortage of affordable housing in Rochford District.

Recent studies carried out as part of a Strategic Housing Market Assessment for the sub-region indicate that as much as half of the housing Rochford District is required to develop would have to be affordable housing to meet need.



The Strategic Housing Market Assessment found that half of all the District's households without existing equity in their homes could not afford to rent, and two-thirds could not afford to buy, properties in the District.



Following the transfer of our housing stock to Rochford Housing Association in September 2007, we no longer own or manage properties.

Instead, we work with Rochford Housing Association, other housing associations in the District and private landlords to provide a stock of homes that meets the needs of our community.



H3 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
Bring forward development in such areas prior to 2021	To bring forward development in the above locations would give rise to the potential of an over-supply of housing, particularly as alternative post-2021 areas would still have to be found. We wish to ensure that adequate infrastructure, employment and other services, as outlined in other sections of the Core Strategy, are in place in a timely manner relative to residential development.

Affordable Housing

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

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

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

We currently negotiate with developers for a provision of affordable housing to accompany new residential developments, secured through the imposition of a legal agreement. The Annual Monitoring Report shows, however, that this approach will still not deliver enough affordable dwellings to meet the needs of local communities.

Local authorities within Thames Gateway South Essex commissioned a Strategic Housing Market Assessment for the area. This found an acute need for affordable housing within Rochford District, equating to 131 net additional affordable dwellings per year. This amounts to 52% of Rochford's annual target. However, it is important that viability is considered – we recognise the need to not set a requirement that would prevent the provision of housing. As such, 35%, being the indicative aim for the region as a whole as set out in the East of England Plan is considered appropriate as a local requirement. We recognise that thresholds in the past have been set too high and have hindered the delivery of affordable housing.

H4 Affordable Housing – Preferred Option

At least 35% of dwellings on all developments of 15 or more units, or on sites greater than 0.5 hectares, shall be affordable. These affordable dwellings shall be spread (“pepper potted”) throughout larger developments. Affordable dwellings shall be required to remain affordable in perpetuity - this will be secured through legal agreements.

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

Providing a mix of housing within all new developments will comply with the Sustainable Community Strategy.



Providing a mix of housing within new developments aims to encourage equal opportunities within communities.



Well designed developments can foster greater community cohesion through designing out crime and anti-social behaviour.



H4 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
Higher percentage, with a higher threshold to ensure that overall provision remains approximately 35%.	This would lead to an uncertain provision of affordable housing. In addition, it may prove overly onerous on developers of large sites making development undeliverable, leading to a shortfall in housing.
No threshold – 35% of all residential developments must be affordable dwellings.	This would place an unfair burden on small developments and may discourage intensification in appropriate places.
The need for affordable housing is so great in Rochford District that the percentage developers are required to provide should be greater.	Although there is a significant need for affordable housing in the District, if the requirement is set at greater than 35% development may become undeliverable, leading to a shortfall in housing provision. In addition, this approach would be detrimental to creating mixed communities.
Different affordable housing percentages applied to different areas throughout the District, particularly to rural settlements, to reflect demand.	This approach would make development less viable in certain areas, possibly leading to uneven development across the District and an overall shortfall of housing.

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment recommends that Local Authorities do not set rigid requirements for the size of dwellings to be constructed, particularly in relation to market housing. The market itself is adept at matching the size of dwellings to market demand at a local level.



The presence of high performing schools within Rochford District has influenced the demand for family housing in the area.



Dwelling Types

It is not enough that housing development meets projected need simply in terms of the pure numbers of dwellings provided. The type of dwellings provided is also important.

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

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

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

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

H5 Dwelling Types – Preferred Option

New developments shall contain a mix of dwelling types to ensure they cater for all people within the community, whatever their housing needs. The development of both affordable and market housing should have regard to local need by, for example, referring to the Strategic Housing Market Assessment.

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

Developers should consult with our Strategic Housing Team in order to determine the required mix of house types prior to submitting planning applications.

H5 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
Future residential developments continue to provide larger housing at the higher end of the market, with Rochford District providing housing for the higher end of the market within the sub-region.	This option will be harmful to the District's communities, as local people's housing needs will not be met.
Future developments seek to redress the balance of dwellings in the District by providing only smaller accommodation.	This will create developments which will only cater for one section of the community. Such developments will not meet everyone's needs or engender mixed communities.

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

Lifetime Homes

The ageing population of the District is an issue that is particularly pertinent to the subject of housing provision. It is important that housing is designed to be flexible to changes in people's circumstances.

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

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

Rochford District contains an ageing population. The District has a higher proportion of older people than regional and national averages, and relatively fewer young people.



The number of residents over 65 is expected to increase, whilst the numbers of those aged 0 to 19 decreases and the population of the 20 to 64 cohort remains relatively stable. In addition, the population of those aged over 85 in the District is projected to increase dramatically in future years.



Requiring new housing to comply with the Lifetime Homes Standard will help support the ageing population of the District.

Implementation of the Lifetime Homes Standard will enable residents to live independently in their homes for longer, which is an objective within the Sustainable Community Strategy.



There are 16 criteria which must be met in order for a dwelling to meet the Lifetime Homes Standard. These cover a range of issues from the width of car parking, to the layout of the bathroom, to ensuring there is a route for a hoist to be installed from the bedroom to the bathroom if required.



As at 21st July 2008 there were six pitches containing a total of seven caravans on authorised, privately owned Gypsy and Traveller sites. At the same time there were 15 caravans on unauthorised developments.

Lifetime Homes are suitable for people throughout their lives and by ensuring that homes meet this standard, residents will be able to remain independent as they get older, or develop physical disabilities.

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

H6 Lifetime Homes - Preferred Option

We will normally require all new housing developments to comply with the Lifetime Homes Standard from 2010. Exceptions will be made where such a requirement threatens the viability of developments, in which case we will seek a proportion of units to comply with the standard.

H6 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
We will require a proportion of housing development to meet the Lifetime Homes Standard within all new housing developments. This proportion will be determined on a case-by-case basis having regard to local trends.	All residents will age and anyone's circumstances can change. It would not be appropriate for only a proportion of new housing development to be flexible to meet people's changing circumstances.

Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation

Planning should meet the accommodation needs of all communities, including Gypsies and Travellers. The need and demand for Gypsy and Traveller sites in the District has, historically, been very low, especially when compared with other areas of Essex. However, we have struggled to meet this need in the past – this has been reflected in appeal decisions on unauthorised sites in recent years.

It is important that appropriate locations are identified for sites in order to meet Gypsy and Traveller needs as well as to enable action to be taken against unauthorised sites in inappropriate locations.

The East of England Regional Assembly have prepared a single-issue review on Gypsy and Travellers accommodation that has resulted in the allocation within the East of England Plan of 15 pitches to be provided in Rochford District by 2011. There is concern amongst authorities in Essex that the method used to ascertain the required provision was overly simplistic, that relying on simple mathematical formulas to assume the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers may not provide an accurate assessment. As such, authorities in Essex are in the process of

preparing a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) for the county to try and determine an accurate figure for requirements.

Notwithstanding this, we take the view that it would be appropriate to accept the allocation of 15 pitches at this stage in the Local Development Framework process, but will review this figure following the results of the GTAA and the outcome of the examination into the Regional Spatial Strategy, in particular with regards to the post-2011 provision.

H7 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation – Preferred Option

We will allocate 15 pitches by 2011, as per the East of England Regional Assembly's single-issue review. We will review this figure having regard to the outcome of the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment and the inquiry into the Regional Spatial Strategy.

In allocating pitches we will examine the potential of current unauthorised sites to meet this need and will consider granting them planning consent subject to advice in *Circular 1/2006 – Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites*, in particular consideration will include:

- The promotion of peaceful and integrated co-existence between the site and the local community;
- The wider benefits of easier access to GP and other health services;
- Children attending school on a regular basis;
- The provision of a settled base that reduces the need for long-distance travelling and possible environmental damage caused by unauthorised encampment on alternative sites and,
- Not locating sites in areas at high risk of flooding, including functional floodplains, given the particular vulnerability of caravans.

H7 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
With regard to the concerns over the accuracy of the current projections on need, not to specify the number of allocations until the outcome of the inquiry into the Regional Spatial Strategy.	This will not necessarily meet the need for sites.
Continue enforcement action against unauthorised sites, and look to allocate alternative sites.	By excluding unauthorised sites from consideration, we may miss an opportunity to deliver sites that are potentially in appropriate locations.

The East of England Plan requires at least 1,187 net additional residential pitches in the region for Gypsy and Traveller Caravans over the period 2006 to 2011, 15 of which are to be provided within Rochford District.



'Gypsy and Travellers' are defined as "Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling show people or circus people travelling together as such." (Source: Office of the Deputy Prime Minister; Circular 01/2006 – Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites).



H Appendix 1

The following outlines the infrastructure that will be required to accompany residential development as proposed in Preferred Option **H2** and **H3**. The list is not exclusive or exhaustive, and should be read in conjunction with the Core Strategy as a whole, in particular the **Community Infrastructure, Leisure and Tourism** section. This list only relates to location specific infrastructure requirements. **CLT1** and **CLT Appendix 1** detail infrastructure required at a wider level. The results of stakeholder consultation and community involvement (both on the Core Strategy and other appropriate Development Plan Documents) will be used to refine and detail the infrastructure requirements for individual locations.

General location	Parish	Infrastructure required
North of London Road, Rayleigh	Rawreth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary school • Primary Care Centre • Link to Green Grid Greenway No.13 • Public transport enhancements • Sustainable drainage systems • Public park land to provide buffer between built environment and agricultural land to the west • Play space • Youth facilities • Community facilities
South West Rayleigh	Rayleigh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public transport enhancements • Sustainable drainage systems • Public open space • Play space • Youth facilities • Community facilities
West Rochford	Rochford Hawkwell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary school • Public transport enhancements • Sustainable drainage systems • Public open space • Play space • Youth facilities • Community facilities • Link to cycle network
West Hockley	Hockley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable drainage systems • Public open space • Play space • Link to cycle network
South Hawkwell	Hawkwell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link to cycle network • Public transport enhancements • Sustainable drainage systems • Play space

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth facilities • Community facilities • Public open space
East Ashingdon	Rochford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public transport enhancements • Access to King Edmund School • Land made available for the expansion of King Edmund School • Sustainable drainage systems • Public open space • Play space • Youth facilities • Community facilities • Leisure facilities
South East Ashingdon	Rochford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public transport enhancements • Land made available for the expansion of King Edmund School • Sustainable drainage systems • Public open space • Play space • Youth facilities • Community facilities
South West Hullbridge	Hullbridge Rawreth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public transport enhancements • Sustainable drainage systems • Public open space • Play space • Youth facilities • Community facilities • Leisure facilities • Link to cycle network
South West Great Wakering*	Great Wakering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public transport enhancements • Sustainable drainage systems • Public open space • Play space • Youth facilities • Community facilities
West Great Wakering*	Great Wakering Barling Magna	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public transport enhancements • Sustainable drainage systems • Public open space • Play space • Youth facilities • Community facilities
South Canewdon	Canewdon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public transport enhancements • Sustainable drainage systems • Public open space • Play space

*In the case of South West Great Wakering and West Great Wakering it is possible that some community infrastructure requirements arising from the development of both locations will be met by development at a single location, e.g. community facilities and youth facilities.

The Green Belt

Protection of the Green Belt

The District is predominantly Green Belt. National policy on the Green Belt is contained within Planning Policy Guidance Note 2 – Green Belts (PPG2). This states that the five purposes of including land within the Green Belt are as follows:

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

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

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

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

We recognise that diverting development and population growth away from rural areas to existing urban areas can also assist in achieving sustainability objectives.

We will continue to apply a restrictive suite of policies to preserve the character of its countryside. However, a small proportion of the District's land that is currently allocated as Green Belt will have to have its designation reviewed due to the requirements to develop additional housing and employment, together with the limited opportunity to accommodate development outside of the Green Belt, as identified in our 2007 Urban Capacity Study.

The Vision

One of our key objectives, in line with the Vision, is to 'define and protect the inner and outer boundaries of the Metropolitan Green Belt, the undeveloped coast and areas of ecological interest by directing development towards the District's established settlements'.



The Vision: By 2017...

Green tourism initiatives have been developed which provide sustainable opportunities for rural businesses whilst maintaining a high quality environment.

Rural diversification has seen a number of bed and breakfasts and hotels appear, facilitating stays in the countryside for visitors to the area.



Over 12,700 hectares of Rochford District is designated as Metropolitan Green Belt.



‘Green Belt’ is a planning designation, not a description of land. Land can be brownfield, i.e. it has been developed in the past, but is still part of the Metropolitan Green Belt.



Previous community involvement has established that local people are, in the main, opposed to the release of Green Belt land for development. However, in general people are also opposed to additional development within the established settlements.

Previous community involvement exercises have made it clear to us that the District’s residents consider the protection of the Green Belt to be very important. We acknowledge this and will seek to minimise the amount of Green Belt land released by prioritising land outside of the Green Belt for development, and, where Green Belt release is unavoidable, ensuring that developments occur at a reasonably high density to limit the amount of Green Belt land developed.

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

We consider that there are a number of strategic buffers that are particularly worthy of mention as they play a key role in preventing the coalescence of settlements and thus help preserve the identity of the District’s towns and villages.

GB1 Green Belt Protection – Preferred Option

We will seek to direct development away from the Green Belt, minimise the reallocation of Green Belt land and will prioritise the protection of Green Belt land based on how well the land helps achieve the purposes of the Green Belt.

The need to prevent the coalescence of individual settlements, in order to help preserve their identities, will be given particular consideration.

Rural Diversification, Green Tourism and Recreational Uses

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

GB2 Rural Diversification and Recreational Uses – Preferred Option

We will continue our restrictive approach to development within the Green Belt, but with some relaxation for rural diversification. Forms of rural diversification that will be considered acceptable in appropriate circumstances in the Green Belt include:

- Conversion of existing buildings for small-scale employment use
- Green tourism
- Outdoor recreation and leisure activities
- Conversion of buildings to bed and breakfasts / hotels

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

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

The Green Belt provides leisure opportunities for the District, and we will allow development that is essential for outdoor sport and recreation activities considered appropriate in the Green Belt, e.g. changing rooms connected with a sports use. Such essential facilities will be expected to have a minimal impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

Much of the District's Green Belt land has (in addition to the characteristics which warrant its designation as such) other constraints which make its development even less appropriate.

Parts of the Green Belt, for example, are of ecological importance, have special landscape qualities, and / or are at risk of flooding.



GB2 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
Allow greater diversification of existing businesses in rural areas.	To allow greater diversification would require relaxation of Green Belt policy to a degree that it would have a negative impact on the character of the Green Belt. It may also undermine sustainability objectives.

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



The Vision: In five years....

An Employment Land Review has been carried out and we are using the findings of this to ascertain future employment provision to meet the District's needs, and to assist in identifying alternative locations for old and poorly located employment parks which are no longer fit for purpose.



The Vision: In five years....

The long term future of the wharfage at Baltic Wharf as an employment area has been secured.

The potential of London Southend Airport and its environs is beginning to take shape through provision of a Joint Area Action Plan in partnership with Southend Borough Council.



Economic Development

Introduction

Our approach to economic development is focused on developing existing spatial patterns of employment, providing higher level employment and seeking to realise the economic potential of London Southend Airport.

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

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

In the past, employment allocations for the District were quantified in terms of the amount of land to be set aside for employment purposes. The East of England Plan instead specifies the number of jobs each sub-region must provide. Rochford District is within the Thames Gateway sub-region and must provide 3000 new jobs during the plan period. It is anticipated that a significant proportion of these jobs can be accommodated as part of the growth around London Southend Airport and the District is in the process of producing a Joint Area Action Plan with Southend Borough Council to ensure that the airport's potential is fully realised.

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

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

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

An assessment of current and future demand for different types of employment land.

- An assessment of the current supply of existing employment land including analysis of the quality of existing employment land allocated in the Rochford District Replacement Local Plan 2006.
- An assessment of the appropriateness of potential additional sites for use as employment land.

London Southend Airport and Environs

The East of England Plan identifies London Southend Airport as having an important role to play in the economic development of the area. As such we are producing a Joint Area Action Plan in conjunction with Southend Borough Council and other stakeholders in order to identify how the airport's economic potential is realised.

We are mindful of concerns regarding the potential impact of the airport's development on the environment and on the amenity of local residents. These are issues that will be accounted for as part of the Joint Area Action Plan.

The airport is surrounded by employment uses, many of which complement the airport. We believe that there is also an opportunity for economic development through the expansion of other employment uses around the airport, including those that are not directly linked or reliant on the aviation industry.

ED1 London Southend Airport – Preferred Option

We will work with Southend Borough Council to prepare a Joint Area Action Plan for land to the west of Rochford – including the area encompassing London Southend Airport – and will work with partners to see the airport's economic potential realised, whilst having regard to local amenity and environmental issues.

The Vision: By 2017...

London Southend Airport and environs provide a range of jobs for the local population.

A new terminal building has been completed and is operational following the implementation of an agreed surface access strategy.



The Vision: By 2021...

Old, poorly located, "bad neighbour" industrial estates have been relocated to fit-for-purpose sites away from residential areas.

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

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

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



The key aim of the Economic Development Strategy is to work with partners and colleagues to maximise opportunities for economic development within the District and encourage a thriving local economy.



ED1 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
Focus employment development around the airport purely on aviation related industries.	Whilst there will be benefits to the agglomeration of aviation related industries around the airport, we believe there is also opportunity to provide appropriate land for alternative employment uses in the vicinity. We believe that it would not be beneficial to the District economy's robustness to rely solely on aviation related industries.

Employment Growth

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

The Employment Land Study has identified the economic characteristics and opportunities for the District as a whole, excluding the area around London Southend Airport.

The study notes that the supply of employment land within the District is tight, with little available land. Rochford District is currently a stronger industrial than office location. However, net additional demand for industrial land is very limited over the planning period. The study recommends that an additional 2 hectares of land suitable for office use is allocated.

The Employment Land Study also emphasises the potential for office uses to thrive within Rayleigh town centre, given its strategic location.

The economic potential of the town centres of Rayleigh, Rochford and Hockley is acknowledged, particularly with regard to the latter two's redevelopment opportunities. This is discussed in more detail in the **Retail and Town Centres** section of this document.

ED2 Employment Growth – Preferred Option

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

We will ensure our Economic Development Strategy and planning policies are linked, and that planning enables the spatial aspects of the Economic Development Strategy.

The provision of office space within Rayleigh town centre will be encouraged.

Area Action Plans for Rochford and Hockley town centres will seek to achieve economic, as well as social and environmental, benefits.

We will enhance and protect the role of small and medium sized commercial enterprises within the District’s economy, including rural businesses.

Over one in five people commute to London for work in South Essex as a whole. Rochford has a slightly lower level, with 18% of the District’s workforce commuting to the capital.



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

ED2 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
Focus purely on London Southend Airport and its environs as an economic catalyst.	Whilst London Southend Airport is an economic driver for the area, it is important to provide a diverse range of employment uses across the District and to ensure there are employment opportunities in locations accessible to all communities.

Existing Employment Land

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

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

We will consider the location and condition of existing industrial estates and will consider the creation of new employment areas in more sustainable locations. We will need to consider the relocation of existing bad neighbour uses to more appropriate locations.



The number of VAT based local units registered within Rochford District was recorded as 2,660 in March 2007. (Source: ONS).

In 2005, job density in the District was 0.53, while regional and national levels were 0.82 and 0.84 respectively, it therefore shows that there are not enough jobs within our District.



Jobs density figures refer to the number of jobs per residents of working age, e.g. if the job density level is 1.0, this would mean that there is one job for every resident (of the working age) in the District. (Source: ONS).



London Southend Airport is located within the District and has the potential to be a focus for economic growth around aviation-related industries.

ED3 Existing Employment Land – Preferred Option

We will review existing employment land through the Employment Land Study and consider reallocation for housing where appropriate.

Existing employment sites which are well used and sustainable will be protected from uses that would undermine their role as employment generators. In addition, we will work with our partners to ensure their viability by ensuring adequate infrastructure is in place. In particular, we will seek improvements to the highways serving Baltic Wharf in order to sustain employment in this rural part of the District.

ED3 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
Notwithstanding the outcome of the Employment Land Study, maintain existing employment allocations.	This would, potentially, result in an inefficient use of land.

Future Employment Allocations

The Employment Land Study has identified land to the west of Rayleigh as a suitable strategic location for additional employment land provision. The study recommends that land in this location comes forward for office development.

It is also important to consider environmental and social considerations. Additional employment areas will not be directed towards areas with landscape or ecological value. In addition, new employment developments must be accessible to all sections of the community by a range of transport opportunities and should be of a type that meets local skills.

ED4 Future Employment Allocations – Preferred Option

We will allocate land to the south of London Road, Rayleigh to accommodate a new employment park, and work with partners to secure its delivery. It will have the following characteristics:

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

We will also encourage the development of employment generating use within existing settlements, particularly town centres, where appropriate.

Although the District relies on a greater than average proportion of manufacturing jobs and this is the sector which is shrinking the most due to changes in the economy, Rochford District contains specialist manufacturing which continues to perform well.

ED4 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
Allocate specific employment types to specific land areas in order to ensure uses match local skills.	Such an approach is considered far too inflexible and unlikely to be implemented by businesses. In addition, it would not allow employment uses to adapt to changes in the economy or changes in local employment needs.
Seek to concentrate future employment uses within existing settlements.	We consider it unlikely that an adequate number of jobs can be provided within existing settlements. In addition, some forms of employment use, particularly industrial uses, are inappropriate within residential areas.
Alternative location for additional employment land to the west of Rayleigh.	The preferred location is felt to be well related to the existing highway network and residential areas, without being so close to residential areas as to have a negative impact on amenity.



The leading authority for business incubation in the United Kingdom is UKBI and they define incubation as “a unique and highly flexible combination of business development processes, infrastructure and people designed to nurture new and small businesses by helping them to survive and grow through the difficult and vulnerable early stages of development.” (© UK Business Incubation Limited 2008).

Eco-Enterprise Centre

Enterprise, or business incubation, centres provide an ideal structured environment in which new businesses can grow. They differ from other types of business support because they offer comprehensive, responsive and custom services to early stage businesses at the most vulnerable point in their lifecycle. Additionally, quality support can be delivered at varying degrees to a greater number of businesses.

The resources made available through an incubation or enterprise



Business enterprise in the District is largely made up of smaller firms, with nearly three-quarters of businesses employing between 0 and 4 people. This is above the national average.



An Eco-Enterprise Centre would:

- act as an inward investment draw
- be a tool to help generate higher value jobs
- help to instigate change in the standards of other commercial premises in the District
- directly tackle issues of business sustainability
- be located in an environmentally friendly, sustainable building.



environment are provided by an internal team as well as sought from external networks and key partners providing relevant services. Incubation is a resource-intensive activity not intended to support businesses indefinitely. Incubation services help businesses to survive the particularly difficult first few years before they move on with increased chances of future sustainability.

We believe that the establishment of an incubation or enterprise centre would help to reduce the consistently high number of business closures in the District, increase the chances of sustainability for the high number of indigenous start up businesses and act as a much needed inward investment draw, bringing new businesses to the area. The physical building would become a focal point for businesses in the District offering access to information, guidance, mentoring and involvement with the local business network.

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

The enterprise centre will be incorporated into employment allocations or an area action plan that includes increased employment opportunities.

ED5 Eco-Enterprise Centre – Preferred Option

We will work with the private sector to secure the delivery of an Eco-Enterprise Centre within an employment allocation or area action plan incorporating employment uses.

The Eco-Enterprise Centre will be built to high environmental standards, meeting the BREEAM excellent standard for sustainable development.

ED5 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
Not to require the Eco-Enterprise Centre to be built to high environmental standards, only to conform to same standards as any form of employment development.	The Eco-Enterprise Centre has the potential to act as a flagship to not only economic development in District, but also as an exempla of sustainable construction. New businesses will also benefit from the reduced energy costs of operating in a building built to high environmental specifications. We hope that businesses starting in such a sustainable building will be encouraged to seek similar accommodation once they leave the incubation centre.

Environmental Issues

Introduction

Planning has a key role in the protection and enhancement of the District's natural resources and its environment. We will endeavour to ensure that the District's landscape, historic character, agricultural land, wildlife habitats, undeveloped coast and other natural resources are not adversely affected. In cases where an impact is unavoidable we will ensure that measures are in place to mitigate any negative effects.

Sustainable development requires effective protection of the environment and careful use of natural resources. It involves accommodating necessary change while maintaining and, where possible, enhancing the quality of the environment for visitors and local residents.

We will seek high standards of development in all circumstances, including the location, siting, design and materials used, as well as ensuring that the proposal will contribute to the enhancement or, where appropriate, improvement of the character of the area in which it is proposed. Tree planting and landscaping schemes using native species appropriate to their location will be an important part of new development.

Protection and enhancement of the natural landscape and habitats

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

Local Wildlife Sites (LoWSs)

Local Wildlife Sites (LoWSs) are areas which, despite their lack of national or international statutory protection, are of significant local wildlife value. Rochford District contains 39 LoWSs. These are predominantly woodland, but there are also significant areas of grassland, mosaic coastal and freshwater habitat types. In 1992 the UK signed the Convention on Biological Diversity which led to the production of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan. However, it is at the local level where the success of biodiversity depends.

The Vision: In five years...

New sustainable, residential developments are being planned.

The Council has supported the RSPB in securing the Wallasea Island wetlands project for bird watching and other recreation.

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

The Park is accessible by a variety of transport methods from surrounding residential areas.



The Vision: By 2017...

The Roach Valley is a vast 'green lung' surrounded by Southend, Rayleigh, Hockley and Rochford and provides a substantial informal area of recreation.

The Vision: By 2017...

Conditions have been put into place for wildlife to thrive in the Roach Valley. The area's size and layout allow for people and wildlife to utilise the space with minimum conflict.



The Vision: By 2021...

Sustainable new dwellings that meet the needs of local people of all social groups are in place and integrated into communities.

An area of Wallasea Island has been transformed by the RSPB back into marshland and is a large, important coastal habitat.



Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)

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

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

- i. Hockley Woods SSSI – A site predominantly owned by us. The site is of national importance as ancient woodland.
- ii. Foulness SSSI – This comprises extensive sand-silt flats, saltmarsh, beaches, grazing marshes, rough grass and scrubland, covering the areas of Maplin Sands, part of Foulness Island plus adjacent creeks, islands and marshes. This is a site of national and international importance.
- iii. Crouch and Roach Estuaries SSSI – (previously known as River Crouch Marshes). This covers a network of sites (salt marsh, intertidal mud, grazing marsh, a fresh water reservoir) including Brandy Hole and Lion Creek, Paglesham Pool, Bridgemarsh Island and marshes near Upper Raypits. This site is of national and international importance.

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

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

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

Crouch and Roach

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

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

- Have regard to and promote the need for sustainability of the estuary system;
- Seek to ensure that the natural landscape and wildlife is properly protected;
- Seek to ensure sustainable public transport to and from the estuary;
- Encourage eco-tourism through the delivery of a sustainable tourism package;
- Disseminate and deliver information on water quality and raise awareness about improving water and air quality and promote a healthier environment;
- Seek to ensure that the historic environment is conserved and enhanced.

Special Protection Areas (SPAs)

Rochford has two sites that have been confirmed as SPAs, they are the Foulness (classified in 1996) and Crouch and Roach Estuaries (classified in 1998), see Annex1.

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

Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)

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

Ramsar Sites (Wetlands of International Importance)

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

The Crouch and Roach estuaries support internationally important assemblages of waterfowl and internationally important populations of regularly occurring migratory species.



Sites with Special Protection Area status are safeguarded specifically for their importance to wild birds. SPAs are protected under European law - the Wild Birds Directive (79/409/EEC on the Conservation of Wild Birds) to prevent the degradation of wild birds' natural habitat.



Guidance on the designation and conservation of protected areas are outlined in PPS 9 (Biodiversity and Geological Conservation).

The EU Habitats Directive requires the designation of Special Areas of Conservation. These are designed to protect ecologically important areas which harbour a diverse array of natural habitats and animal species.



There are currently 611 designated SACs in the UK covering over 2,504,016 hectares.

We are required to “indicate the location of designated sites” and “identify any areas or sites for the restoration or creation of new priority habitats” within the LDF process.



The character of the District is split, having a clear east-west divide. The District’s areas at risk of flooding and areas of ecological importance are predominantly situated in the sparsely populated, relatively inaccessible east.

ENV1 Protection and Enhancement of the Natural Landscape and Habitats – Preferred Option

We will seek to maintain, restore and enhance sites of international, national and local natural conservation importance. These will include Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Ramsar Sites, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's), Ancient Woodlands, Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) and Local Wildlife Sites (LoWSs).

In particular, we will support the implementation of the Crouch and Roach Management Plan.

Coastal Protection Belt

The undeveloped coast is one of the most important landscape assets of the District, matching the special landscape areas. It has long been our policy to promote the control of development along the coast and estuaries due to the fact that the coast is an irreplaceable natural resource. Views of the coast, across river valleys and from one part of the boundary to another are important elements of the Coastal Protection Belt, and largely contributed to the drawing up of the boundary, demonstrating the coastal character of the whole area.

The District's coast and estuaries are of great importance recognised through national and international designations for their wildlife and natural habitats.

At the national level, PPG20 (Coastal Planning) provides guidance to Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) on planning for development and protecting the coastal environment (paragraph 1.2). This document is clear on the need to protect the undeveloped coast and this is especially true for the Rochford District, where much of the coast is covered by international and national nature conservation designations.

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

ENV2 Coastal Protection Belt – Preferred Option

We will:

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

Flood Risk

Development opportunities on the undeveloped coastline are limited by physical circumstances in the District, such as risk of flooding, erosion and land instability, as well as conservation policies. Climate change and related sea-level rises will have an impact on flood risk.

Flooding can result in significant damage to properties and threaten human life. Planning Policy Statement 25 (PPS 25) requires that flood risk is taken into account at all stages of the planning process. We will avoid inappropriate development by appraising, managing and reducing the risk in the areas prone to flooding.

1) Appraising risk

We will apply the sequential test and direct development to areas least at risk of flooding. We will apply the exceptions test, as per PPS25, when the sequential test has shown that there are no available locations for necessary development other than within areas at risk of flooding, and will only allow development within such areas if the benefits of the development clearly outweigh the risks from flooding. When development is permitted, significant levels of flood risk management (e.g. surface water management plans, conveyance and Sustainable Drainage Systems) will be required.

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

Areas at risk of flooding (Flood Zone 3) within the District are unevenly distributed, being concentrated towards the east of the District in predominantly undeveloped, rural areas. The majority of the District settlements where new development is appropriate lie outside of flood

The west of the District, however, contains the majority of the District's population, has better access to services and fewer physical constraints.



Areas designated as Flood Zone 3 have a 1% annual probability of fluvial flooding and / or a 0.5% annual probability of tidal flooding.

The Environment Agency has calculated that over 7,000 hectares of the eastern region of Rochford District are within Flood Zone 3.



Development is preferable within Flood Zone 1, where the annual probability of flooding is less than 0.1%.

Areas for development are limited by physical constraints, including areas at risk of flooding, areas protected for their landscape value, areas protected for their ecological value to name but a few.



How these SUDS techniques work (Sources: Environment Agency, CIRIA):

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

Green roofs and rainwater use – “Green roofs can improve water quality and reduce the peak flow and the total volume discharged from a roof.”



risk areas. As such, it is envisaged that the vast majority of new development necessary within the District can be accommodated within Flood Zone 1 (areas least at risk of flooding), although there may be exceptions involving previously developed land.

2) Managing risk

PPS 25 states that Local Authorities should consider moving existing development away from areas at risk of flooding. Parts of Great Wakering and other existing settlements, are in areas at risk of flooding. We believe it would not be appropriate to relocate these affected areas due to the detrimental impact this would have on community cohesion and the viability of such an approach. Nonetheless, we are working closely with other partners to safeguard the flood risk area. For instance, the Environment Agency, which has statutory responsibility for flood management and defence, is proposing to improve the flood defences in the Great Wakering area. The Great Wakering Flood Risk Management Scheme identifies the environmental issues and introduces management solutions for the area. The proposed flood risk management solution involves improvements along the line of the existing flood defenses.

3) Reducing risk

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

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) offer an alternative approach to drainage in developed area. The SUDS approach to drainage management includes a range of techniques to manage surface water as close to its source as possible to minimise potential flood risk. To produce a workable and effective scheme SUDS must be incorporated into developments at the earliest site planning stage. The Environment Agency has identified 5 techniques:

- Permeable pavement
- Green roofs and rainwater use
- Swales and basins
- Infiltration trenches and filter drains
- Ponds and wetlands

ENV3 Flood Risk – Preferred Option

We will seek to direct development away from areas at risk of flooding by applying the sequential test and, where necessary, the exceptions test, as per PPS25. The vast majority of development will be accommodated within Flood Zone 1.

We will continue to work with the Environment Agency, scrutinising and monitoring the impact of the technical advice on flood risk provided by the Agency. We will continue working with the Environment Agency to maintain sustainable flood defences in order to reduce the risk of flooding.

ENV3 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
Relocate existing development in Great Wakering and other residential areas away from areas of flood risk.	The relocation will have a negative impact on community cohesion.

ENV4 Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) – Preferred Option

All large scale development will be required to incorporate runoff control via SUDS to ensure runoff and infiltration rates do not increase the likelihood of flooding.

SUDS will be required in all new development sites, unless there is evidence showing the system is not viable on the site. In such cases developers will be required to implement alternative forms of drainage.

ENV4 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) will be encouraged on all development sites.	There is a possibility such an approach will not ensure environmental quality or reduce the risk of flooding.

How these SUDS techniques work (continued):

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

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

Ponds and wetlands – “Ponds or wetlands can be designed to accommodate considerable variations in water levels during storms, thereby enhancing flood-storage capacity. Only specially constructed wetlands should be used to treat surface water – the use of existing, natural wetlands is unlikely to be acceptable.”



Air quality standards are outlined within The Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland 2007 (Volume 1) which states that the annual mean concentrations for particulate matter and Nitrogen Dioxide should not exceed $40\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$.



In 2005 it is estimated that Rochford District produced a total of 5.8 tonnes of CO₂ emissions per capita, which was significantly below the East of England average of 8.7 tonnes. (Source: DEFRA).



There are currently 10 AQMAs within the county, 8 of which were newly introduced in 2005.

Air Quality Management Areas

Local air quality is affected by emissions from industrial activity, airports, power stations and natural sources, but road transport accounts for around 40% of UK Nitrogen Dioxide emissions. The growing dependence on the car in the district has led to increased air pollution, although continuing improvements in technology may counter this.

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

Local Authorities are required to carry out periodic reviews of air quality in their areas, and to assess present and likely future quality against statutory air quality standards. An Updating and Screening Assessment (USA) needs to be produced to identify those aspects that have changed since the previous round of reviews and which may require further assessment. For any pollutants and specific locations that have been identified as requiring further investigation by way of monitoring and/or modelling, a Detailed Assessment (DA) will then need to be carried out.

Where the results of a DA indicate the exceedance of an objective, we are required to designate an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA), consult with local stakeholders and make an Action Plan for improving air quality in that area.

Air quality tests showed that there may be exceedances of particulate matter (PM₁₀) and Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) in Rawreth Industrial Estate and Rayleigh High Street respectively, we have factored such issues into the determining of its preferred options, in particular those around housing locations (see **Housing** chapter).

We aim to reduce the carbon emission produced by vehicles by encouraging the use of public transport. The delivery of South Essex Rapid Transport (SERT) will be one of the potential possibilities. SERT will link residential areas with employment, retail areas and stations and become an alternative of the car (please see the **Transport** chapter for details). This eco-bus will emit fewer harmful emissions and help to minimise the impact on the District's air quality.

ENV5 Air Quality – Preferred Option

We will prevent new development in AQMAs that will result in additional public exposure to poor air quality by setting extra constraints within Development Control policies. Additional residential development will, in particular, be restricted in AQMAs until it has been demonstrated that such area's air quality has improved to a degree that they no longer warrant AQMA status.

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

ENV5 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
Only seek to reduce impact upon receptors, e.g. by design in areas of poor air quality.	This is a passive way of controlling air quality, and the outcome is vague and uncertain.

Renewable Energy

Addressing climate change is a major priority of ours. One of our corporate aims is to provide a greener and more sustainable environment and to be the 'green' part of the Thames Gateway. There is a need to reduce energy and water consumption not only for the benefit of the local environment, but also for the global environment. As being part of the strategy, we are keen to reduce impacts of development on the environment by applying the Code for Sustainable Homes and BREEAM standards.

Whilst recognising the contribution renewable energy can make, there are currently no plans for developing large-scale renewable energy projects within the district. If such schemes were to be proposed, the impact of such development on the character of the landscape would be a primary concern, particularly in areas designated for their landscape and nature conservation value. We will seek to reduce carbon emissions through supporting the development of small-scale renewable energy projects and through its commitment towards zero carbon for all new housing developments (see the Code for Sustainable Homes section for details).

As mentioned above, we will encourage the delivery of small-scale renewable energy projects where appropriate including additions to

Car dependency within the District is high, particularly outside of the three main urban areas. Congestion and environmental impacts will continue to worsen with population growth if this trend is not reversed.



The lack of public transport provision throughout most of the District is an obstacle to reducing car dependency.

Rochford District has the 3rd lowest energy consumption in the County out of 12 Districts/Boroughs.



The greatest consumer of energy in the District is domestic (52%), consuming 855.9 Giga watts per hour (Gwh) and the smallest consumer is industry and commercial (23%).

Rochford District currently produces just 0.1% of its total energy production from renewable sources, which is the third lowest figure in the County.



Cavity wall insulation is one of the best ways to reduce heating bills as it increases the energy efficiency of homes.



We encourage residents to improve their energy efficiency through Warm Front Grants, which are a Government funded scheme, and other initiatives including the Affordable Energy Scheme.

domestic properties; these projects and schemes (utilising technologies such as solar panels, biomass heating, small scale wind turbines, photovoltaic cells and combined heat and power schemes, etc) have the potential to make a positive contribution towards renewable energy provision.

ENV6 Large Scale Renewable Energy Projects – Preferred Option

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

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

ENV7 Small Scale Renewable Energy Projects – Preferred Option

We will favourably consider small-scale renewable energy projects in both new and existing development, ensuring the location, scale, designs and other measures, including ecological impact, are carefully considered.

ENV6 and ENV7 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
We will actively encourage both large and small-scale renewable energy development.	The large-scale renewable development may have significant adverse landscape and visual impact.
We will be more restrictive on small-scale projects/schemes due to character, impact on neighbours.	Small-scale projects/schemes can provide a limited but valuable contribution to overall outputs of renewable energy. National policy statement PPS22, notes that Local Authorities should consider the opportunity to incorporate renewable energy schemes both into new developments and some existing buildings.

Code for Sustainable Homes / BREEAM

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

The Code for Sustainable Homes, a new national standard for sustainable design and construction of new homes was launched in December 2006. The Code is an environmental assessment method for new homes based on a scoring system of six levels. The different levels are reached by achieving both the appropriate mandatory minimum standards together with a proportion of the 'flexible' standards. Since April 2007 the developer of any new home in England can choose to be assessed against the Code.

The Code uses a sustainability rating system³ – indicated by 'stars', to communicate the overall sustainability performance of a home. A home can achieve a sustainability rating from one to six stars depending on the extent to which it has achieved the Code's standards.

The Code for Sustainable Homes provides this all-round measure of the sustainability of new homes, ensuring that sustainable homes deliver real improvements in key areas such as carbon dioxide emissions and water use. The new mandatory minimum levels of performance have been introduced across 6 key issues⁴. The Government's ambition for the Code is that it becomes the single national standard for the design and construction of sustainable homes, and that it drives a step-change in sustainable home building practice.

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

Energy conservation generating energy from renewable sources and effective usage of energy are ways to contribute towards the achievement of more sustainable forms of development. In 2003, Merton became the first local authority in the UK to require all new industrial, warehousing and office development outside conservation areas and above a threshold of 1,000 sqm to incorporate renewable power generation equipment to provide at least 10% of predicted energy requirements, the "Merton Rule".

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

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

Homes built according to the Code can have numerous benefits such as improved energy efficiency, reduced running costs, and, for developers, recognition of quality building.



A one star (★) home can improve on the standard Target Emission Rate (TER) outlined in Part L of the 2006 Building Regulations (Conservation of Fuel and Power) by around 10%. (Source: Communities and Local Government).



Developing well designed, sustainable housing for the community can support the ageing population and encourage greater community cohesion.

The Government defines ‘zero carbon homes’ as those where “over a year, the net carbon emissions from all energy use in the home are zero.”

(Source: Homes for the future: more affordable, more sustainable - Housing Green Paper, 2007)



Homes which successfully apply for a zero carbon home certificate are exempt from Stamp Duty under the Stamp Duty Land Tax (Zero-Carbon Homes Relief) Regulations, 2007.



BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) is the world's most widely used environmental assessment method for buildings. BREEAM covers a wide range of building types (e.g. BREEAM Offices, BREEAM Retail, BREEAM Industrial), they assesses these buildings against a set criteria and there are 4 level of rating (Pass, Good, Very good, Excellent) for all non-domestic development to achieve.

We will require all non-domestic development to meet the relevant BREEAM assessment criteria. This is felt to be a more holistic approach than the Merton Rule, as it covers a wider range of issues other than just energy use. Whilst the importance of sustainable design is acknowledged, we do not want to make development unviable through the imposition of overly onerous standards. As such, whilst a BREEAM rating of excellent will be encouraged, a rating of at least ‘good’ will be required.

ENV8 Code for Sustainable Homes – Preferred Option

For all new domestic developments, we will ensure that there are real improvements in key areas such as carbon dioxide emissions and water use. Development will be required to reach a code level 3 (see Annex 4) of the Code for Sustainable Homes for all new homes by 2010 and eventually code level 6 by 2013.

ENV8 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
We will require a higher level of the Sustainable Code for Homes to be met by 2010.	There is a possibility that this standard would undermine deliverability.
We will require only the entry level of the Sustainable Code for Homes to be met.	This would not meet the need for more sustainable housing to be developed.

ENV9 BREEAM – Preferred Option

We will require new non-domestic buildings, as a minimum, to meet the BREEAM rating of ‘Very good’. We will encourage developers to attain a BREEAM rating of ‘Excellent’ in all non-domestic developments.

ENV9 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
We will require all non-residential buildings to assess a minimum BREEAM rating of 'Excellent'.	This target is considered to be too high as a minimum, placing an undue burden on businesses in the District.
We will implement the "Merton Rule" in all new major non-domestic developments. At least 10% of energy estimated to be used by new development will be required to be produced by on-site renewable energy generation.	The BREEAM standard represents a more holistic approach to sustainable development.

Alongside housing meeting sustainable criteria of the Code for Sustainable Homes and BREEAM, developments must be well located providing good accessibility to services and well designed to ensure a harmonious and welcoming environment for all. Developments will therefore help to achieve the objectives of the Sustainable Community Strategy.

Contaminated Land

Contaminated land is land that has been polluted with hazardous materials. This may, for example, be due to past industrial uses or storage of industrial substances on land. As such, the issue of contaminated land has the potential to impact upon the reuse of previously developed, brownfield sites.

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

We are continuing to inspect our area in order to identify contaminated land, as outlined in the Contaminated Land Strategy (August 2004). The Strategy clearly sets out how land which merits detailed individual inspection within the contaminated land regime, will be identified in an ordered, rational and efficient manner.

In light of our desire to encourage the reuse of Brownfield sites over greenfield land, identifying and mitigating the impact of contaminated land is paramount.



We adopted a contaminated land strategy in 2004.



In developing a strategic approach it is necessary to consider:

- The extent to which any specified receptors are likely to be found in the District;
- The history, scale and nature of industrial or other potentially contaminative uses.



Who is responsible for the cost of dealing with contaminated land?

The legislation seeks to use the 'polluter pays' principle, where the cost of dealing with contamination rests with the original polluter, where they can be found, or the landowner/occupier when the polluter no longer exists.



We do not wish to resist the development of appropriate sites solely because of land contamination, as contaminated land can be remediated and made 'fit for purpose'.



ENV10 Contaminated Land – Preferred Option

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

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

ENV10 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
Prevent development on contaminated land	Given that contaminated land can be remediated, such an approach would unnecessarily restrict opportunities to develop previously developed land in potentially appropriate locations, thus necessitating greater loss of greenfield land.

Transport

Introduction

The District currently has high-levels of car ownership, high levels of out-commuting and limited public transport, particularly in rural areas.

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

We will continue to work with Essex County Council – the Highway Authority – to ensure that the road network is maintained and upgraded where necessary. The addition of any major new highway infrastructure during the plan period is unlikely. However, highway improvements to serve new developments and to mitigate their impacts will be required to come forward in a timely manner, along with improvements to existing east-west routes.

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

Highways

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

It is important that new development be accompanied by the requisite highway infrastructure improvements to mitigate their impact on the existing network. We will ensure that such highway improvements are delivered through a combination of planning obligations and standard charges for developers (see Preferred Option **CLT1** for further details), and by working in partnership with Essex County Council. In addition, we believe that existing connections between the west, where the population is focussed, and the more rural east which nevertheless contains a number of local employment uses, is inadequate. We will work with Essex County Council to seek online improvements to east-west

The Vision: In five years...

Improved access to Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park has been implemented from Cherry Orchard link road, including footpath and cycle access.

The Country Park is accessible by a variety of transport methods from surrounding residential areas.

Several 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.



The Vision: By 2017...

A walking, cycling and bridleway network across the District has been implemented, and access along the District's rivers has been opened up.



The Vision: By 2021...

The South Essex Rapid Transport system has been implemented giving people a genuine alternative to the private car.

Developer contributions have ensured that new developments are well integrated with public transport. Cycle and pedestrian networks have been developed, linking important areas.

Online improvements to existing road networks have improved east to west connections.

highways in order to help sustain employment uses in the east of the District.

T1 Highways – Preferred Option

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

We will work with the Highways Authority to deliver online improvements to east to west road networks, in particular, we will seek improvements to the highways serving Baltic Wharf in order to sustain employment in this rural part of the District.

T1 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
No highway improvements. Concentrate solely on alternatives to the car.	Whilst it is important that we seek to reduce car dependency it is also crucial that development meets current needs. Realistically, given the nature of the District, this will entail some highway improvements.

Public Transport

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

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

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

T2 Public Transport – Preferred Option

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

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

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

South Essex Rapid Transport (SERT)

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 Transport (SERT). SERT will comprise of a network of corridors connecting the four main hubs, key development sites, major services and providing connections between the radial routes. The four main hubs are Basildon, Thurrock, Southend and London Gateway Port. While the initial route does not directly serve the District, future phases have the potential to do so.

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

T3 South Essex Rapid Transport (SERT) – Preferred Option

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

New Developments must be located near to and be well served by an efficient and sustainable public transport system. Links to the public transport network must be an integral part of development design.



Accessibility, or lack of, is a key issue within the District, largely due to its rural nature. Improving resident's accessibility to services is a key objective of the Sustainable Community Strategy.



A rapid transit system connecting the south of Essex, aims to reduce congestion and alleviate the high car usage issue seen within the region.

Future phases of the SERT system may link into the District, thus increasing accessibility to Rochford, and also increasing the number of places accessible from Rochford.

A high level of car ownership and limited public transport within the District result in congested routes, and areas that suffer from accessibility issues.



Improvements to the transport and public transport networks cannot provide the ultimate solution to transport issues seen in the District.

Other options need to be provided, and the implementation of travel plans is seen as an excellent method of reducing car usage.



With lift share schemes, “walking buses”, and travel plans being implemented by a variety of businesses, single car occupancy will be reduced, and will help to alleviate congestion in the area.

T3 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
We will not endeavour to see a form of SERT implemented that serves Rochford District, and will instead use alternative mechanisms for reducing car dependency.	SERT presents a potential opportunity for the District. By endeavouring to see SERT benefit the District we are not relying solely on SERT to reduce car dependency, but can still continue to seek to implement a range of measures.

Travel Plans

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

T4 Travel Plans – Preferred Option

Focus the requirement of travel planning on destinations – schools, workplaces, hospitals, health centres and visitor attractions. New schools, visitor attractions, leisure uses and larger employment developments will be required to devise and implement a travel plan which aims to reduce private, single-occupancy car use. Existing schools and employers will be encouraged to implement travel plans.

Residential plans will be encouraged, but will not be compulsory due to the difficulties in applying them to such development.

T4– Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
In addition to workplaces and schools, residential development will be accompanied with travel plans.	The pattern of journeys originating from residents' homes is more varied, with residents having multiple destinations and different needs and travel choices over time. This, coupled with there being no single company or institution to provide continuity and a common point of interest for residents, means that such plans are unlikely to be sustainable in the long-term. Notwithstanding the above, we will take a positive approach to innovative forms of development which aim to reduce car dependency through the implementation of travel plans which are shown to be viable and sustainable.
Require all new employment development to be accompanied by a travel plan.	This would be overly burdensome on small employers.

64% of the working population commute out of the District to work elsewhere.

With high car ownership and a high proportion of car usage in the District, several different opportunities of travel must be offered in order to encourage a higher use of more sustainable transport methods.



Cycling and Walking

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

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

Transport plans have been successfully implemented in other areas of the County, and have succeeded in reducing single occupancy in vehicles, thus decreasing the number of cars on the roads. 60% of all schools in the County have adopted a successful travel plan.

In light of the District's ageing population, it is important that access to services (e.g. doctors surgeries and shops) is enhanced and maintained, and to help achieve the aims of the Sustainable Community Strategy.

T5 Cycling and Walking – Preferred Option

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

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

Facts about car and van ownership in the District (Office of National Statistics):

- 16.4% of the population do not own a car or van
- 42.18% own one vehicle
- 31.56% own two cars or vans
- 7.27% own three vehicles
- 2.59% of the population own four or more cars or vans



38.97% of the Districts residents drive a car or van to get to work. This is higher than the national figure (34.68%) and is comparable to the East of England (39.10%).



Only 17.22% of the resident population of Rochford use a bus, bike, train or walk to get to work. This is higher than the regional figure of 15.26% and is higher than the national figure of 15.51%.

T5 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
We will concentrate on ensuring destinations provide facilities for cyclists, but will not actively pursue the implementation of improved cycle, bridleway or walking networks.	Ensuring destinations include facilities for cyclists will not, alone, encourage or give people the realistic option of cycling to destinations.

Greenways

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

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

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

T6 Greenways – Preferred Option

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

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

Parking Standards

National government policy has made it clear that parking policies should be used as part of a range of measures to promote sustainable transport and reduce reliance on the private car, stating that Local Authorities should not apply minimum parking standards to development. However, we have always been concerned that limiting parking at the origin of trips, i.e. homes, may lead to excessive on-street parking, to the detriment of highway safety and efficiency. As such we have sought to maintain minimum standards in certain cases.

Our current parking standards are set out in SPD5 – Vehicle Parking Standards. This seeks to limit the level of parking at trip destinations and residential development in certain circumstances, whilst applying minimum parking standards to residential schemes within other situations.

The Essex Planning Officers Association is currently reviewing the impacts of parking policies across the County.

We believe that limiting parking provision at trip destinations can have a positive impact on sustainability and reduce congestion. However, we also believe that limiting car parking for residential development has little impact on the number of cars people use, and has predominantly negative effects. In such cases, a minimum standard is appropriate, although residential development within town centre locations or within close proximity to one of the District's train stations may not require such levels of parking.

T7 Parking Standards – Preferred Option

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

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

High levels of car ownership (only 16.4% of the residents of Rochford District do not own a car) mean that sufficient parking spaces are required within new developments.



The application of maximum parking standards at key trip destinations will ensure that congestion is reduced and more sustainable transport modes will be utilised. In contrast, due to the nature of the District, minimum standards will be adopted for residential areas.



The implementation of parking standards across the District will help to reduce congestion, a major issue in the area.

Rochford is a predominantly rural District, yet as a result of this, it suffers from poor accessibility. The more urban areas suffer from congestion.

The lack of public transport provision throughout most of the District is an obstacle to reducing car dependency.



There is, however, some opportunity to utilise public transport, particularly within the three main settlements which contain rail links between each other, Southend and London.



An integrated approach is required to tackle these issues of accessibility and congestion, and ensure that Rochford District is the place of choice in the County to live, work and visit.

T7 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
Apply maximum parking standards for residential development within all urban areas and / or areas with good public transport links.	Our view is that this would not reduce car usage significantly but would cause harm to highway safety and efficiency.

Retail and Town Centres

Retail

We have an important role to play in enhancing the District's town centres, ensuring they are vibrant places. Our retail strategy focuses on strengthening the role of the District's town centres, whilst ensuring that villages services are sustained.

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

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

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

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

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

National policy on town centres (Planning Policy Statement 6 – Planning for Town Centres (PPS6)) states that Local Authorities should identify the need for additional retail development and then identify locations for such development by applying a sequential approach which prioritises town centre locations.

The Vision: In five years....

Rochford and Hockley town centre masterplans have been finalised and the first phase of enhancement opportunities are being implemented.

The retail and leisure study has identified the District's needs and opportunities which have begun to be addressed.



The Vision: By 2017...

The District's town centres are vibrant places containing a range of shops, services and facilities that meet local demand and retail expenditure leakage has been reduced.

Masterplans for Rochford and Hockley have instigated the regeneration of these town centres in particular.



The top twenty retailers in the UK are:

- 1) Boots
- 2) Marks & Spencer
- 3) Argos
- 4) Woolworths
- 5) Debenhams
- 6) John Lewis
- 7) W.H. Smith
- 8) BHS
- 9) Next
- 10) Dixons
- 11) Superdrug
- 12) Lloyds Pharmacy
- 13) Wilkinson
- 14) CO-OP
- 15) Primark
- 16) New Look
- 17) HMV
- 18) Dorothy Perkins
- 19) Rosebys
- 20) Waterstones



The presence of these retailers is typically associated with well functioning, higher tier centres due to their often large format, although this is a generality rather than a rule.



The District supports this approach as a means of ensuring the vitality and vibrancy of Rayleigh, Rochford and Hockley town centres.

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

RTC1 Retail – Preferred Option

We will direct retail development towards its town centres of Rayleigh, Rochford and Hockley, seeking to maintain and enhance their market share of retail spending.

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

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

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

RTC1 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
Not to treat Rayleigh, Rochford and Hockley as distinct areas when applying the sequential test, but to look at need on a District wide basis.	The District's settlements are functionally separate and we do not believe that need for retail in one can be met by development in another.

Village and Neighbourhood Shops

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

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

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

Existing neighbourhood and village shops are an important asset to the local community. The retention of such facilities supports the Sustainable Community Strategy objectives as outlined in the introduction.



The secondary (village) centres such as Canewdon, Hullbridge and Great Wakering play an important role in providing top-up convenience facilities to their immediate hinterland, and enabling local residents to meet their day-to-day convenience and leisure needs without travelling to more distant town centres.



The District's towns and villages are diverse in character reflecting their history, location and size.

RTC2 Village and Neighbourhood Shops – Preferred Option

We will seek to protect existing retail uses within residential areas outside of the defined town centres.

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

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

RTC2 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
Protect existing retail within villages, but adopt a more flexible approach to neighbourhood shops within settlements that have a town centre.	Within the District's settlements with a town centre (Rochford, Hockley and Rayleigh) neighbourhood shops outside of their centres still have an important role to play in meeting day-to-day needs of local residents.

On a Saturday in February 2008, 'Placecheck' events took place in Rochford and Hockley.

These events were held to help inform ideas and options for future improvement in the town centres of Rochford and Hockley, thus ensuring that the views and opinions of local residents are considered in the formation of potential options.



The views of participants will be fed into the work on the Rochford and Hockley town centre masterplans.



Southend is the largest retail centre in the sub-region, attracting consumer expenditure from a wider area and contributing to the leakage of spending out of the District.

Town Centres

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

People make town centres vibrant. We will encourage people to visit town centres, by ensuring they are attractive, accessible and contain a variety of uses, but we will also enable people to live in the District's town centres by taking a positive approach to the residential conversion of

buildings above ground floor level, residential intensification within town centres, and by incorporating residential development into large town centre schemes. This also has the advantage of reducing the need to develop greenfield sites or intensify non-central residential areas, whilst providing adequate residential development.

Rayleigh Town Centre

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

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

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

The October 2007 Focus Report indicated that since the date of the report, 20 retailers expressed demand to locate within Rayleigh, indicating that Rayleigh is a favourable retailing location.

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

Rayleigh town centre has a number of strengths: a strong convenience and comparison sector; a high amenity built environment; low proportion of vacant units; high retail demand; and a range of unit sizes thereby catering for a range of retailers, including national multiples; and it has undergone recent town centre improvement works.

In addition, the Employment Land Study has identified Rayleigh town centre as having potential to accommodate additional office space, due to its strategic location.

Rayleigh is the principal town within the Rochford District; it has a low proportion of vacant units and maintains a generally high level of town centre amenity and accessibility.

Outside Rayleigh, the level of accessibility to services notably declines. Enhancing resident's accessibility to services is an important component of the Sustainable Community Strategy.



20 retailers have expressed demand to locate within Rayleigh, this includes Card Factory, Majestic Wine, Gamestation and Travelodge, to name but a few.



Rayleigh is ranked 600th out of 7,000 shopping venues surveyed, which places it within the top 9% of all UK shopping venues.

There is a significant amount of leakage of spending to locations outside of the District, however, data suggests, that an increasingly significant proportion of the District's spending is being retained in Rayleigh.

Compared to the town centres of Rochford and Hockley, Rayleigh has the best access to services within the District.



Rochford is a predominantly local town centre which caters for local need.



Four retailers registered demand for sites within Rochford town centre. These included Barefruit Juice, Dominos Pizza Group, Subway and the Factory Shop.

Given the current state of Rayleigh town centre and its ability to meet projected future demand, radical changes to the town centre are not considered necessary.

RTC3 Rayleigh Town Centre – Preferred Option

We will maintain the existing boundary and take a positive approach to intensification of retail uses within the town centre.

We will maintain a restrictive approach to non-retail uses at ground-floor level within the town centre area. Primary and secondary shopping areas will be designated, and a more permissive approach to leisure uses (including cafés and restaurants) will be taken in the secondary areas.

We will take a positive approach to the creation of office space within the town centre, as well as to the residential conversion of buildings above ground floor level.

RTC3 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
Prepare an Area Action Plan for Rayleigh town centre which seeks to provide additional retail and leisure development.	Rayleigh town centre is performing well in its current form and does not require radical changes to its form or layout.

Rochford Town Centre

Rochford town centre is the second largest within the District and is classified as a local centre. Although it has a relatively strong convenience sector, the Retail and Leisure Study found the comparison sector to be limited. There is a significant leakage of spending out of the Rochford area for all forms of retailing.

Rochford town centre is part of the Rochford Conservation Area and its unique character and layout is an asset.

There is an absence of national multiples with Rochford and the majority of units are of a small size, limiting their attractiveness to retailers. The presence of additional national multiples would act as an 'anchor' and draw in additional shoppers and retailers. The October 2007 Focus Report indicated that since the date of the report, only 4 retailers expressed demand to locate within Rochford.

Notwithstanding the above, and the fact that there is a limited retention of spending, the Retail and Leisure Study has identified capacity for additional convenience and comparison retail floor space.

Work, including community involvement, has been undertaken in preparation for a masterplan for Rochford town centre. This, in conjunction with the Retail and Leisure Study, has identified a number of opportunities for the town centre.

The unique, historic character is one such opportunity that can be utilised to encourage visitors to the town centre. There are a number of opportunities to enhance this and, at the same time, improve connectivity and access around the centre particularly from the train station.

The market square is currently used for parking. The considerable potential for town centre enhancements through the pedestrianisation of the market square, thereby providing a focal point for town centre activities and encouraging a local 'café culture' complementary to other uses with the town, has been identified. There are, however, concerns over the impact on local businesses of the loss of parking and changes will have to be considered carefully, and alternative free parking provided.

In addition, the current town centre boundary covers a considerable area beyond the key retail area. It is felt that the reduction of this will focus future retail development more centrally, reducing the dilution of retail activity within the town centre and improving its vitality and vibrancy.

Previous community involvement exercises have identified demand for community facilities. Current policies are restrictive towards non-retail uses within the town centre area and, whilst it is important that retail uses continue to dominate the town centre area, a more permissive approach to A3 (restaurant, cafes etc) and A4 (bars, pubs etc), would benefit the town centre, particularly if focussed around the market square. The introduction of evening activities within the town centre would also increase natural surveillance and help quell concerns regarding anti-social behaviour in Rochford.

Redevelopment within Rochford town centre also has the potential to provide additional residential units, as identified as part of work on the town centre masterplan. This would not only contribute towards meeting the local housing requirement, but also enhance the town centre's vibrancy and create demand for facilities.

A high proportion of small units and a lack of comparison goods floor space, to a certain extent, restricts the range of potential occupiers in Rochford town centre.



Vehicles queuing along West Street and parking in the market square create a difficult environment for pedestrians to negotiate and has an adverse effect on amenity in the square.



Both the emerging town centre masterplan and the Retail and Leisure Study suggest that Rochford market square has the potential to be either fully or partially pedestrianised.

Full or partial pedestrianisation of the market square would help develop a 'café culture', thus providing a focal point for town centre activities.



Hockley is the smallest and weakest town centre in terms of market share. We will look into the opportunities recommended by the consultants to make Hockley a better place to shop.



Like Rochford, Hockley is a predominantly local town centre which caters for local need.

RTC4 Rochford Town Centre – Preferred Option

We will produce an Area Action Plan for Rochford town centre which will deliver the following:

- A safe and high quality environment for residents
- A market square area that encourages visitors
- Enhanced retail offer for Rochford
- Provides town centre residential development
- Provides evening leisure activities
- Promotes community facilities for the youth
- Improves accessibility to and within the town centre

We will work with landowners and its partners to deliver the Area Action Plan.

RTC4 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
Produce a Supplementary Planning Document for Rochford, rather than an Area Action Plan.	A Supplementary Planning Document provides further information on existing policies, and would not be able to deliver actions in a way that an Area Action Plan could.

Hockley Town Centre

Hockley is the smallest town centre in the District and there is less retention of spending within the Hockley area than Rayleigh or Rochford.

As with Rochford, Hockley retains very little expenditure.

It has a good mix of independent traders and a well maintained pedestrian environment. The size of Hockley itself and its location relative to the larger town centres of Rochford, Rayleigh and Southend, lessen its attractiveness to national multiples.

The Retail and Leisure study indicates that Hockley has great potential. Hockley has been identified as having a need for additional convenience floorspace, and with the housing target in the area, we will look at the opportunities for more valuable and appropriate uses of the industrial land between Hockley railway station and the town centre, potentially a mixed development. This would enhance the retail and leisure offer of

the town centre whilst at the same time provide an opportunity for a better linkage between the centre and the station.

RTC5 Hockley Town Centre – Preferred Option

We will produce an Area Action Plan for Hockley town centre which will deliver the following:

- A safe and high quality environment for residents
- Enhanced retail offer for Hockley
- Additional opportunities for town centre living through the provision of residential development.
- A public space within a defined centre
- Improved connectivity between retail focus and train station
- Redevelopment of industrial uses for retail, leisure and residential development
- Green landscaping along Main Road, Spa road and Southend Road to enhance the visual amenity

We will work with landowners and our partners to deliver the Area Action Plan.

According to the ‘Placecheck’ event undertaken by consultants in February 2008, local residents suggested that a new heart is needed for Hockley town centre.



Two businesses have registered their demand to start businesses in Hockley; they are Barefruit Juice and LA Fitness.

RTC5 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
Produce a Supplementary Planning Document for Hockley, rather than an Area Action Plan.	A Supplementary Planning Document provides further information on existing policies, and would not be able to deliver actions in a way that an Area Action Plan could.



The Retail and Leisure Study has recognised that Hockley lacks suitable larger retail premises for prospective traders and is unlikely to, at present, attract national multiples due to its size and proximity to larger centres. However, our emerging Hockley town centre masterplan and forthcoming Area Action Plan will aim to drive forward change and regeneration.

The Vision: In five years....

The built heritage of the District continues to be supported and enhanced.



The Vision: By 2017...

The quality of the District's built environment has been enhanced through the implementation of heritage initiatives, which has provided an additional incentive for tourism.

New mixed housing developments which are of a high quality, sustainable design have been completed.



Character of Place

Introduction

The District has a distinctive character we need to protect. We are committed to both maintaining and enhancing environmental quality in the District.

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

Government policy contained in Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1) – Delivering sustainable development, makes it clear that good design should be the aim of all those involved in the development process. PPS3 – Housing, also emphasises the need to create places, streets and spaces which meet the needs of people, are visually attractive, safe, accessible, functional, inclusive, have their own distinctive identity and maintain and improve local character.

Design

Rochford District has a unique character and appearance, much of which stems from the traditional buildings that still dominate the towns and villages. However, more recently the adoption of modern standardised building materials and building design has, in some cases, begun to erode the character of the District. We aim to follow the principles of good urban design set out in national policies and ensure the design of all new and existing development is consistent with the local character.

Design will be expected to enhance local identity by being sympathetic to local needs and by building on local opportunities. Corporate identities, and in-house building styles, will be expected to be adapted to the local setting and not the other way around.

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

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

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

CP1 Design – Preferred Option

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

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

CP1 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
Prescriptive design guidance to ensure uniform design and high standards.	Good design is essential, but uniform design is not viable and stifles innovative design.

Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas

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

Listed Buildings

A 'Listed Building' is a building, object or structure that has been judged to be of national importance in terms of architectural or historic interest and is included on a special register, called the List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest.

Type of Listed Building	Total Number
Grade I	1
Grade II*	18
Grade II	310
Total	329

Table 1 – Number of Listed Buildings within Rochford District

Our Design, Heritage and Conservation Awards aim to promote good design and sensitive developments within the District.



The Essex Design Guide gives advice on:

- Suitable criteria for a variety of developments
- Building forms
- Services and access

Good design can encourage community cohesion (a key objective in the Sustainable Community Strategy) by designing out crime and anti-social behaviour, and reducing inequalities.



Listed Buildings are graded according to their relative importance. Grade I buildings are of exceptional interest. Grade II buildings are of special interest and some particularly important buildings in Grade II are classified as Grade II*.

No Listed Buildings or Scheduled Monuments situated within Rochford District are listed in the *Heritage at Risk Register 2008* compiled by English Heritage.

There are 10 Conservation Areas within the Rochford District.



Living in a Conservation Area may mean that planning permission is needed to carry out certain works on your home. This is particularly so if an Article 4 direction has been applied. An Article 4 direction means that permitted development rights are withdrawn.



Permitted development rights give you the opportunity to make some changes to your home without seeking planning permission. If an Article 4 direction is applied, these works will require planning permission.

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

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

Conservation Areas

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

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

Table 2 – Conservation Areas within Rochford District

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

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

CP2 Conservation Areas – Preferred Option

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

CP2 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
We will not take a positive approach to enhancing Conservation Areas, and will simply continue our reactive approach to proposals.	We believe Conservation Areas can be enhanced by taking a positive approach.

Local Lists

We believe that many buildings in the District, despite not being listed, are of local distinctiveness and form part of a familiar and cherished local scene.

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

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

We will carry out a survey, using criteria set out in paragraph 6.10 to 6.12 of Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 15 to determine in consultation with local communities, the buildings that will comprise the Local List.

Responses to our initial consultation made it clear that respondents value their local environment and believe that the historic character of the District must be protected. We will not normally approve any unsympathetic alterations, including replacement of traditional windows or alterations to the external cladding, to buildings included in the Local

An example of the type of work that will need planning permission in a Conservation Area, and not in any other area is the alteration of any window fronting a highway, re-roofing with different materials and the painting of external walls fronting a highway.



The National list of Listed Buildings includes all buildings considered to be of national importance or interest. The Local List currently being prepared by us will identify all buildings considered to be of local interest or importance.

The buildings on the list will not be subject to statutory protection, but will however be noted as being worthy of retention.



Criteria for inclusion on a Local List is set out in PPG 15: Planning and the Historic Environment.

There were more than 200 buildings in Rochford District that were included on the previous Local List.



Locally specific criteria will be used to assess whether a building is worthy for inclusion on the revised Local List.

The District's towns and villages are diverse in character reflecting their history, location and size.



The character, layout and form of groups of buildings, streets and spaces make a significant contribution to providing a sense of place and adding to the quality of life in town and country.

Residents have a strong sense of identity with their own settlement.

List – specific design guidance and advice will be included in the Development Control Development Plan Document and appropriate SPDs.

CP3 Local List – Preferred Option

We will prepare a Local List to give protection to local buildings with special architectural and historic value.

Community Infrastructure, Leisure and Tourism

Introduction

It is vital that new development is accompanied with appropriate infrastructure to make the District sustainable.

The term 'infrastructure' encompasses a wide range of issues, from roads and sewers to education and healthcare.

Infrastructure is provided by a range of groups, including both private and public organisations. It is imperative that we work with such organisations in order to ensure the requisite infrastructure is delivered when required.

Planning Obligations and the Standard Charges

The planning system has, for a number of years, enabled councils to require developers to make payments or undertake additional works to mitigate the impacts of new development, using a system known as planning obligations involving a legal agreement between developers and local authorities. Government guidance on planning obligations is set out in Circular 05/2005 and we have used this to secure the provision of infrastructure improvements, such as highway improvements, and to ensure affordable housing is delivered.

There are concerns that planning obligations cannot address all the infrastructure deficiencies that will be caused by new development, particularly the incremental impact of smaller developments which individually do not warrant the provision of planning obligations, but have a significant cumulative impact.

The government is introducing an additional mechanism for securing necessary infrastructure known as the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). This will enable councils to apply a levy on all new developments in their areas to support infrastructure delivery. The CIL will be a standard charge levied on each new development that has an impact on infrastructure. It cannot be used to address existing infrastructure deficiencies, but it can be used to address such issues where the new development will aggravate problems. The CIL is intended to operate alongside, rather than replace, the current system of planning obligations.

We will produce a document setting out standard charges to be imposed on developers to contribute towards infrastructure provision. This document will be subject to consultation and independent examination before adoption. The document will detail what infrastructure is needed, how much this will cost, and detail how much contribution each development will be required to make based on a simple formula which

The Vision: In five years...

New sustainable, residential developments are being planned that are well related to infrastructure, community facilities and play space.

The expansion of Sweyne Park now incorporates land to the rear of Rayleigh Leisure Centre, which also provides additional playing pitch provision.

Other parks and open spaces continue to be improved through a rolling programme of open space refurbishment.

Initiatives have been implemented, which provide more facilities for young people and at least one new facility a year is being developed.



The Vision: By 2017...

A new satellite health facility in Rayleigh is now fully operational.

The Vision: By 2017...

A new suitably located recycling and waste management centre is now operational.

Green tourism initiatives and rural diversification have been encouraged providing sustainable opportunities for rural businesses whilst maintaining a high quality environment.

The District's tourism offer has been further enhanced through the implementation of heritage initiatives.



The Vision: By 2021...

An area of Wallasea Island has been transformed by the RSPB back into marshland and is a large, important coastal habitat.



relates to the size and impact of the development on infrastructure. It will ensure that standard charges are used to deliver the requisite infrastructure in a manner which is fair and provides clarity for developers.

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

CLT1 Planning Obligations and Standard Charges – Preferred Option

We will ensure, through the use of planning contributions, that all new development meets the necessary on and off-site infrastructure requirements which are required in order to ensure the development meets the needs of future communities and that the impact on existing communities is mitigated.

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

In addition, we will impose standard charges on development for financial contributions towards required off-site and strategic infrastructure in order to ensure all development make a reasonable and appropriate contribution towards the cost of such provision. The contribution required will be based on a standard formula which will be determined in conjunction with key stakeholders, including developers and service providers, having regard to the size of the impact of developments.

The details of the standard charges will be stated in a separate Infrastructure and Standard Charges Document, which will be subject to consultation and independent examination. It will cover the following general areas: highways; public transport; cycle paths and greenways; education; healthcare; leisure; open space; youth and community facilities; recycling facilities. This list may be expanded following consultation with service providers.

CLT Appendix 1 provides further details at the end of this chapter as to what infrastructure residential and employment development will be required to contribute to through Standard Charges.

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

CLT1 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
Cost all infrastructure on a District wide basis and require all developments anywhere within the District to make a contribution to the District's overall infrastructure needs.	The settlements within the District are functionally separate and development within one part will not have the same impact on infrastructure in other parts. A District wide approach would involve developments in, for example Rayleigh, having to make a contribution to infrastructure required in Rochford. Such an approach is not considered reasonable.
To continue to require planning obligations from developers, but not to impose standard charges.	This approach would not deliver the requisite infrastructure, to the detriment of existing and future communities.

Planning obligations and the community infrastructure levy provide a mechanism to ensure that the required infrastructure accompanies new housing.

Standard charges for development in the Rochford District will be detailed in an Infrastructure and Standard Charges Document.



Education

It is crucial that planning addresses accessibility to education.

Essex County Council is the education authority for Rochford District and produces an annual plan on how education is to be provided within the area. The report includes an analysis of supply and demand for school places within Rochford District which is examined in greater depth within **Evidence Base Summary Document – School Places**. In short, recent data has demonstrated there is no direct correlation between estimated total population increase and the numbers of pupils in schools (the overall population increase has been largely due to an increase in the numbers of elderly people, with the youth population shrinking).

In determining the likely impact on school place supply and demand from future housing allocations it will be necessary to take a more sophisticated approach than purely looking at population projections. It will be more appropriate to look at developments on a case-by-case basis to determine their likely impact upon school place provision.

Notwithstanding this, the distribution of housing proposed in the **Housing** section of the Core Strategy makes it clear that new single-form entry primary schools will be required in Rayleigh and Rochford as a minimum. At least 1.1 hectares of land within areas allocated for residential development will be required for a primary school in Rayleigh and Rochford. In addition, the existing secondary school in Rochford – King Edmund School – will be allocated the necessary 3 hectares to allow the required expansion to meet additional need. Residential development in Hockley is not considered to generate a requirement for any additional

Capacity figures for 2007 indicate that on a District wide basis there are enough primary school places for 2008, however there is a shortfall of 20 pupils for secondary schools.



78.3% of students in 2005 -2006 attained 5 or more A*-C grades, which was significantly above the East of England average.

There are 26 primary schools and 4 secondary schools in Rochford District.

In 2001 there were 11,346 enrolments in Rochford District schools between September 2006 to August 2007.



Over half of primary schools and nearly all secondary schools in the District are within 30 minutes public transport time of residential development.



New residential developments will result in more people living in the District. With a shortfall of places in secondary schools it is imperative that more school places be provided, to provide for current and future generations.

significant educational development, but we will continue to monitor the situation and demand contributions from developers when required.

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

As set out in the **Transportation** section of the Core Strategy, new schools will be required to produce a travel plan that demonstrates how use of the private car will be minimised.

CLT2 Primary Education, Early Years and Childcare Facilities – Preferred Option

We will ensure that at least 1.1 hectares of land within the new residential areas of both Rayleigh and East Rochford, arising from the allocation of land in the general areas indicated in **Preferred Option H2**, is reserved for new single-form entry primary schools with commensurate early years and childcare facilities.

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

In conjunction with Essex County Council, we will carefully monitor the supply and demand of primary school places. Developer contributions will be sought to increase the capacities of existing primary schools where required. Standard charges will be applied as part of the remit of **CLT1**.

CLT2 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
Not to set aside land within residential areas for additional primary schools, but to use financial contributions from developers to assist in the construction of new primary schools elsewhere within existing settlements.	Such an approach would be less likely to deliver the requisite primary school provision, as sites within existing built-up areas may not be available.
Alternative area for new Rochford primary school.	A new primary school is needed to support proposed development in west Rochford, with access from the proposed development location to other existing schools problematic.

The present and future provision of school places in the County is monitored within *The Essex School Organisation Plan* by Essex County Council.



Essex County Council has identified that: “Pressure on the [secondary] schools from primary schools is easing as slightly smaller cohorts move through, but there is still pressure caused where children of secondary school age move into the area.” (Source: *The Essex School Organisation Plan 2007-2012*).

CLT3 Secondary Education – Preferred Option

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

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

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

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



Two secondary schools in the District have post-16 educational facilities, with 380 pupils aged 16-19 on roll (as at January 2007 – Essex County Council).

Not all children of school age living in the District attend their local school.

It is recognised, that there is a transitional relationship between Southend and other surrounding districts and boroughs, and the Rochford District, in terms of supply and demand of education.



67.17% of Rochford residents thought that over the last three years health services within the District had improved or stayed the same.



There are fourteen Doctors within Rochford District that are registered with the National Health Service. The distribution of these is centred heavily on the main urban areas, namely Rayleigh, Hockley and Rochford.

CLT3 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
Not to focus on specific schools, but to require contributions from developers to be provided and used by Essex County Council for the provision of education services.	The Essex Schools Organisation Plan indicates that King Edmund, Fitzwimarc and Sweyne Park schools will require physical expansion in order to meet future need.

Healthcare

Healthcare facilities are a crucial component of community infrastructure. Although we cannot provide healthcare facilities ourselves, it is crucial that we work with our partners – particularly the South East Essex Primary Care Trust – to ensure that adequate healthcare facilities are in place to meet the needs of the District’s growing, and ageing, population.

Accessibility of healthcare services is vital and facilities must be well located in relation to the District’s population, and accessible by a range of transport options to ensure that no one is excluded. We propose to take a two-pronged approach to ensuring this: firstly, new residential development will be located in areas from which healthcare facilities are accessible, or will be of a scale to ensure that new facilities are viable (see **Housing** chapter); secondly, we will support the Primary Care Trust in identifying appropriate sites for additional facilities in appropriate locations.

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

CLT4 Healthcare – Preferred Option

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

- Ensure that a new Primary Care Centre accompanies new residential development in Rayleigh, through the use of planning obligations where necessary.
- Require new developments to be accompanied by a Health Impact Assessment and an assessment of their impact on healthcare facilities. Where significant impacts are identified, developers will be required to address negative effects prior to the implementation of development.
- Assist the Primary Care Trust in identifying sites for additional healthcare facilities in the District where required.
- Take a positive approach towards proposals for healthcare facilities within accessible locations and to the renovation or replacement of those that become outdated.

CLT4 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
Forgo the requirement for development to be accompanied by a Health Impact Assessment and rely on the Primary Care Trust to react to new developments.	Health Impact Assessments and assessments of the impact of development on healthcare facilities are a vital tool in ensuring that the health of the future and existing communities is not adversely affected by development, and that any potential negative impacts on health or inequalities are mitigated.

Open Space

The District contains numerous open spaces within built up areas, both privately and publicly owned, formal and informal. These contribute towards the character of the District’s settlements and form green links, as well as providing recreation and sports opportunities.

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

There are also 7 dentists in Rochford District registered with the NHS, or specifically registered to the South East Essex Primary Care Trust. The dental surgeries are again concentrated in the 3 most urban areas of the District.

It is important that accessibility to such services is improved, especially given the District’s ageing population, as addressed within the Sustainable Community Strategy.



90.29% of residents, in a study by the Audit Commission (2007), thought that the availability of parks and open spaces had got better or stayed the same in the last 3 years.



There are 3 nationally recognised Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in the Rochford District. These are the Crouch and Roach estuaries, Hockley Woods and Foulness.

Public open spaces, particularly in urban areas, are important for social cohesion and community well-being.



Foulness and the Crouch and Roach estuaries are also internationally designated Special Protection Areas (SPA). This means that the areas are protected sites, classified for rare, vulnerable, and regularly migrating birds.



We recognise the importance of public art.

CLT5 Open Space – Preferred Option

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

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

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

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

New forms of the above will be promoted.

CLT5 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
To delete some of the above forms of open space from the list of those that will be protected.	We consider that all of the above perform important roles for the District's communities and are worthy of protection.

Community Facilities

A comprehensive range of community facilities, including meeting halls, places of worship and social clubs exist throughout the District. These are well used and provide an important role for communities. We will seek to safeguard the use of community facilities, and to ensure they continue to provide a useful function to the communities they serve. Additional community facilities will also be encouraged where a need is shown.

The Local Strategic Partnership has, as articulated within the Sustainable Community Strategy, identified a need for a multi-agency centre within Great Wakering. A need for additional community facilities elsewhere within the District is likely to arise as a result of residential development and we will, in conjunction with our partners, need to ensure that community facilities meet changing needs.

CLT6 Community Facilities – Preferred Option

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

New community facilities will be promoted in new and existing residential areas where a need is shown. We may require such facilities to be accommodated within new residential development schemes. In particular, we will seek the provision of a multi-agency centre within Great Wakering. Standard Charges may be applied as necessary in order to facilitate the delivery and enhancement of community facilities, as per **CLT1**.

CLT6 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
Not to include a specific policy on protecting community facilities, and maintain a flexible approach to how spaces currently used are used in the future.	This would represent a failure to appreciate the importance of community facilities and may lead to their loss for alternative uses.

Play Space

With higher densities of residential development being required in order to reduce the amount of greenfield land lost to housing, it has become increasingly difficult to ensure that dwellings are accompanied with large garden areas that can be utilised by children as play space. As such, communal play space will play an important function in new residential developments. Communal space can help foster a sense of community within new developments, providing a space where neighbours interact. Accessibility of play space is key, and it should be provided within new residential developments. It is crucial that parents and children feel safe within such space; therefore play space should be located in areas that are subject to natural surveillance – i.e. are overlooked and / or are subject to a number of passers-by.

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

Also recognised is the need for community space. We are a partner of Thames Gateway South Essex, and as such supports the GreenGrid Strategy.



This strategy has the main objective of developing open spaces and green links throughout the south Essex Thames Gateway region, developing a GreenGrid network.

An Audit Commission Report in 2004 found that 87.3% of Rochford residents thought that community activities have got better or stayed the same.



The same study found that 84.85% of Rochford residents thought that cultural facilities in the District had got better or stayed the same.

80% of residents thought that facilities for children had got better or stayed the same and 54.26% thought that facilities for teenagers in the District had got better or stayed the same.



A lack of facilities for young people is a current weakness in the District.



Despite the ageing population (which could lead to an increased demand for health and social care, rather than services for youth), it is important that the needs of young people are catered for to avoid the isolation of the existing pockets of young people in the area.

CLT7 Play Space – Preferred Option

New residential developments will incorporate appropriate communal play space which is accessible and subject to natural surveillance. Play space within developments must be maintained in perpetuity by developers or an appropriate management company.

We will seek to protect existing play spaces and enhance them through the provision of additional fixed play equipment.

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

CLT7 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
Not to require developments to incorporate play spaces, but to ensure play spaces are provided off-site in locations accessible to residents.	This would create play spaces which are less well integrated with residential developments.

Youth Facilities

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

There have been efforts in recent years by various organisations to create facilities for young people, but concerns have been expressed that existing planning policies have hindered their development.

We believe a more positive approach is now required towards such facilities. In particular, we are looking at the provision of teen shelters in areas of the District where a need for spaces for youths is shown, and the provision of a skate park in Great Wakering.

CLT8 Youth Facilities – Preferred Option

We will encourage the provision of additional facilities for young people within appropriate locations where a need has been identified and which are accessible by a range of transport options. Such facilities should be appropriate to the target age-group, should be well managed and flexible to meet changing needs. Any development of youth facilities will be required to show that the views of young people have been incorporated into the development.

Standard Charges will be applied to aid the delivery of youth facilities, as per **CLT1**.

CLT8 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
Allocate specific land for youth facilities.	This approach is considered too inflexible. Demand – quantity, type and location – of facilities is likely to fluctuate considerably within the plan period.

Leisure Facilities

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

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

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

Accessibility of leisure and recreation facilities is an important issue and we will require future leisure developments to be in locations accessible by a range of transport options.

The demand for leisure facilities can be estimated using Sport England's *Sports Facility Calculator*. This calculates the demand for various leisure

Rochford District is recognised as an area for developing leisure, recreation and tourism activities.

The total leisure floor space completed in 2006-2007 was 3,100m².



We recognise leisure facilities as playing an important role in social inclusion, and community cohesion. It is therefore important that leisure facilities in the District are easily accessed by all residents, and that there is a good selection of facilities to choose from.



The Retail and Leisure Study 2008, examines the retail and leisure habits of residents in the District.

In 2005/06 Sport England reported that 6.95% of the residents in Rochford were within 20 minutes of a range of 3 different sports facilities, at least one of which has achieved a quality mark. This is something we will strive to improve, so that good leisure facilities are accessible to all.



The Playing Pitch Strategy, based on current Sport England guidance, will aid us in determining the future provision of playing pitches with the Rochford District.



Football, cricket, rugby and hockey clubs playing in the District have been consulted and are participating in the Strategy.

facilities in an area based on local population profiles together with a profile of usage. Sport England use data from National Halls and Pools Survey, Benchmarking Service, Indoor Bowls User Survey and General Household Survey¹.

The demand is an estimate and it should be noted that the District does not sit in a vacuum and that the development of leisure facilities outside of the District and the movement of people between districts will influence the demand for leisure services of a particular locality. The relationship with Southend in particular needs to be considered.

CLT9 Leisure Facilities – Preferred Option

We will work with our partners to ensure that leisure facilities across the District are maintained and enhanced.

In particular, we will seek to enhance recreational opportunities at Rayleigh Leisure Centre through the provision of mini and junior football pitches and to look at opportunities to further develop leisure uses at Great Wakering Leisure Centre.

We will monitor the supply and demand of leisure facilities. Standard Charges will be applied to secure the enhancement of leisure facilities, as per **CLT1**.

CLT9 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
Not to apply Standard Charges, but to seek contributions on an ad-hoc basis to secure the provision of leisure facilities.	This would be less likely to deliver requisite leisure development, and place an unfair burden on a minority of developers.

Playing Pitches

In addition to other leisure facilities as discussed above, playing pitches are considered worthy of specific mention within the Core Strategy. Playing pitches are areas of formal open space available to the public and used specifically for the playing of sports such as football, rugby, hockey and cricket.

The District has a role to play within the wider area with regards to playing pitch provision. Whilst the District relies, to a degree, on the more urban neighbouring centres for jobs, facilities and retail, there is a

¹ Available to view online at www.sportengland.org/sportsfc

reciprocal reliance from these areas on Rochford to provide open space and recreational opportunities.

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

Opportunities to accommodate playing pitches outside of the Green Belt are welcomed, as this will often provide facilities in more accessible locations, particularly if pitches are accompanying other visitor-generating activities. In this respect, we believe there is an opportunity to accommodate additional playing pitches to the rear of Rayleigh Leisure Centre. When considering proposals for playing pitches outside of the Green Belt, many of the same issues (e.g. accessibility, residential amenity etc) will still apply.

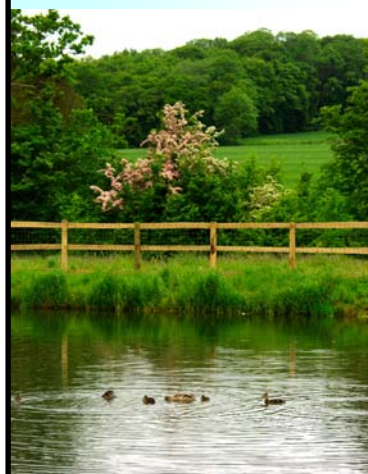
Sport England has published detailed guidance for the provision of essential built facilities to accompany playing pitches within *Design Guidance Notes: Pavilions and Club Houses*. Within the Green Belt, we will expect any accompanying facilities not to exceed the minimum size as recommended within such guidance.

We will produce a Supplementary Planning Document on playing pitch provision which will include an analysis of the supply and demand of pitches, together with a quantitative and qualitative assessment of future need.

Nearly 20% of residents in Rochford District regularly participate in moderate intensity sport and active recreation, 3 days a week for 30 minutes, according to Sport England.



The Playing Pitch Strategy carried out in 2002 (which is currently being updated) found that football was the most popular team sport pursued within the District.



Five playing fields in the Rochford District have been protected by Fields in Trust (FIT) which replaced the National Playing Field Association.

These playing fields are: Doggetts Close Recreation Ground, Rochford Recreation Ground, Grove Road Playing Field, Turrett House Farm, and Holly Tree Gardens.



There are approximately 35 grass and artificial playing fields in the Rochford District. 17 of these are on school sites.



The physical geography and built heritage of the District gives rise to the potential to explore opportunities to attract tourism.

The potential impact of such tourism on the environment must be carefully considered.

CLT10 Playing Pitches – Preferred Option

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

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

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

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

CLT10 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
Allow playing pitches within Green Belt regardless of whether a need can be shown.	Although one of the purposes of the Green Belt is to provide opportunities for outdoor sport within proximity to residential areas, the over provision of pitches would be harmful to the character of the Green Belt.

Tourism

In recent years we have been exploring the possibility of enhancing the District’s economy through the promotion of tourism. The District has been identified as the ‘green’ part of the Thames Gateway and as having the potential to be the arts and cultural opportunities area for the sub-region. We have begun to actively promote the area as a tourism destination, having produced and circulated a District tourism guide.

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

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

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

Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park is set in 100 acres of the Roach Valley. The beautiful wildlife park provides unique recreational facilities for residents and tourists alike.



An avenue of 200 oak trees was planted to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar. 28,000 other trees have also been planted within the park, including the native species of Ash, Hornbeam and Oak.



There are numerous public rights of way, helping to make the vision of a public open space for all to enjoy the countryside reality.

CLT11 Tourism – Preferred Option

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

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

CLT11 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
Resist tourism proposals unless they can be readily accessed by a variety of forms of transport other than the car.	This would severely restrict the potential to develop small-scale tourism within the District and is not considered sustainable as it fails to account for economic needs.

CLT Appendix 1

Infrastructure required	Standard Charges to be used		Planning obligations to be used where appropriate	Other issues / comment
	Residential development	Employment development		
Highway improvements	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Public transport improvements	Yes	Yes	Yes	
South Essex Rapid Transport	Yes	Yes	No	
Cycle network	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Greenways	Yes	No	Yes	
Recycling facilities	Yes	No	Yes	
Primary education, early years and childcare facilities general improvements	Yes	No	Yes	
Secondary education general improvements	Yes	No	No	Land to be allocated within new residential areas, as appropriate.
New primary school, Rayleigh	Yes	No	Yes	Land to be allocated within new residential areas, as appropriate.
New primary school, West Rochford	Yes	No	Yes	Land to be allocated within new residential areas, as appropriate.
Expansion and improvement of access at King Edmund School	Yes	No	Yes	Land to be allocated within new residential areas, as appropriate.
Expansion of Fitzwimarc and Sweyne Park Schools	Yes	No	No	
Flood Protection Measures	No	No	Yes	
Sustainable drainage systems	No	No	Yes	

Strategies, Activities and Actions – CLT Appendix 1

Youth facilities	Yes	No	Yes	Standard charges applied to secure enhancements. Planning obligations applied to secure on-site provision where appropriate.
Community facilities	Yes	No	Yes	Standard charges applied to secure enhancements. Planning obligations applied to secure on-site provision where appropriate.
Leisure facilities	Yes	No	Yes	Standard charges applied to secure enhancements. Planning obligations applied to secure on-site provision where appropriate.
Healthcare improvements	Yes	No	Yes	Standard charges to secure delivery of new facilities. Planning obligations to require mitigation measures identified by healthcare impact assessment to be undertaken.
New healthcare centre, Rayleigh	Yes	No	Yes	Land to be allocated within new residential areas, as appropriate.
Open space	No	No	Yes	Open space to be provided alongside new residential development.
Play Space (new and enhancement of existing)	Yes	No	Yes	Standard charges applied to secure enhancements. Planning obligations applied to secure on-site provision where appropriate.

The Vision: In five years....

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

We have supported the RSPB in securing the Wallasea Island wetlands project for bird watching and other recreation.



The Vision: By 2017...

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



The Upper Roach Valley and Wallasea Island

Upper Roach Valley

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

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

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

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

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

We are carrying out works to improve access to the Country Park and are currently looking at providing car-parking facilities in a manner that minimises the impact on the landscape.

To the north-west of the Country Park lies Hockley Woods - and to the south-west of Hockley Woods is an area designated as a special and historic landscape area. Currently these areas are not connected, but there is potential to do so to enhance informal recreational opportunities.

URV1 Upper Roach Valley – Preferred Option

We will strive to see the Upper Roach Valley become a vast ‘green lung’ providing informal recreational opportunities for local residents. We will protect the area from development and continue the approach of creating the right conditions for flora and fauna to flourish, with the minimum of interference.

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

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

URV1 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
We will seek to protect the Upper Roach Valley, but will not take a proactive role in expanding informal recreational opportunities in the area.	Whilst this may ensure the protection of this landscape, it would represent a missed opportunity to provide local residents with a substantial recreational resource in an accessible location.

Wallasea Island

The RSPB’s proposed Wallasea Island Wild Coast Project has potential for tourism and leisure, as well as ecological, benefits. This project is adjacent to the recently realigned coast of Wallasea Island and involves the RSPB working in partnership with the Environment Agency to turn a vast area of arable land into an area comprising a plethora of wildlife habitats comprising 320 ha of mudflats, 160 ha of saltmarsh, 96 ha shallow saline lagoons, 64 ha of brackish grazing marsh and 129 ha of pasture. The project also aims to incorporate improved access into the new landscape which will allow visitors to appreciate the area without adversely affecting wildlife.

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

The Vision: By 2017...

The conditions have been put into place for wildlife to thrive and the area is becoming increasingly ecologically important. The area’s size and layout allow for people and wildlife to utilise the space with the minimum of conflict.

A walking, cycling and bridleway network has been implemented across the District and access along the District’s rivers has been opened up.



The Vision: By 2021...

An area of Wallasea Island has been transformed by the RSPB back into marshland and is a large, important coastal habitat.

Further marina development on the River Crouch has been secured and is operational.

The Upper Roach Valley represents an opportunity to provide recreational activities in close proximity to the main residential settlements.

Sustainable access to such areas (for example linked cycling networks) can be improved and implemented through the new planning process.



The Wallasea Island Wild Coast Project, adjacent to the realigned coast of Wallasea Island, is a tourism opportunity – one which will have to be carefully managed given the area’s ecological importance.



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

URV2 Wallasea Island – Preferred Option

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

We will also promote recreational use and additional marina facilities in the area, along with access improvements. Such development will be supported provided there are no adverse impacts on ecological interests.

URV2 – Alternative Options

Option	Why is it not preferred?
Support the delivery of the Wallasea Island Wild Coast project, without promoting recreational opportunities in the area.	We would be overlooking an opportunity to promote green tourism and enhance local recreational opportunities.

Implementation, Delivery and Monitoring

Introduction

The Local Development Framework is meaningless unless the strategies, policies and actions contained within it are realised.

This section of the Core Strategy outlines how each of the Core Strategy Preferred Options will be implemented and delivered. It also outlines how we will monitor the success of the Core Strategy to ensure it is having the desired impact on the development of the District.

Implementation, Delivery and Monitoring of the Preferred Options

We will ensure a number of the Core Strategy's actions are delivered through its development control process, i.e. through the handling of planning applications. However, the Core Strategy covers spatial issues which are beyond the direct influence of development control and, as such, partnership working – with public, private and voluntary organisations – will be key to delivering the successful development of the District.

The following table identifies how each of our Preferred Options will be implemented, delivered and monitored:

Preferred Option	Implementation and Delivery	Monitoring
Housing		
H1 Distribution	<p>We will prioritise the use of previously developed land (PDL) and use of town centres for development, whilst resisting the intensification of residential areas through the allocation of land as part of the Local Development Framework and by exercising development control.</p> <p>Deliverability of alternative development locations will be assured through consultation with land owners and agents, including the 2007 'call for sites' exercise, in addition to other evidence base documents such as the Urban Capacity Study.</p>	<p>The proportion of dwellings developed on PDL is recorded by us and will be included in the Annual Monitoring Report, as is the density of residential developments.</p>
H2 General Locations and Phasing	<p>We will work with local landowners, agents and developers to ensure that development in these areas is viable. The 'call for sites' exercises has ascertained that there are sites within these locations which developers are willing to develop.</p> <p>We have worked with service providers and its partners to ensure that development within these locations is feasible.</p> <p>The completion of dwellings will be carried out by developers having regard to our adopted policies in the Local Development Framework, enforced through the Development Control process.</p> <p>The phasing will be controlled through the Development Control process and delivered by working with developers and landowners to ensure there is a constant five-year supply of available land that will be delivered.</p>	<p>As part of the Annual Monitoring Report, we record planning permissions granted and completions of residential development. This is translated into a housing trajectory which includes an assessment of the five-year supply of land. In the event that sites can no longer be delivered, alternative sites scheduled to be developed later will be brought forward.</p>

Preferred Option	Implementation and Delivery	Monitoring
H3 General Locations Post-2021	<p>Land will not be allocated for development until post-2021. Land will be prevented from development until an appropriate time through the Development Control process.</p> <p>Post 2021, The completion of dwellings will be carried out by developers having regard to our adopted policies in the Local Development Framework, enforced through the Development Control process.</p>	<p>As part of the Annual Monitoring Report, we record planning permissions granted and completions of residential development.</p>
H4 Affordable Housing	<p>Affordable housing will be delivered in conjunction with developers, who will be required to enter into legal agreement with us to ensure that the requisite proportion of affordable units come forward as part of a development.</p> <p>In addition, we have an agreement with Rochford Housing Association whereby they will aim to provide at least 50 additional affordable units per year.</p> <p>The policy makes allowances to ensure that this approach does not undermine the deliverability of schemes.</p>	<p>As part of the Annual Monitoring Report, we record the tenure of dwellings completed, allowing us to ascertain whether the target for affordable housing is being met.</p> <p>In the event that insufficient affordable housing is being developed, we will have to consider revising its policies.</p>
H5 Dwelling Types	<p>The mix of dwelling types will be delivered by developers and enforced through the Development Control process.</p>	<p>The size of dwellings (in terms of the number of bedrooms they contain) is recorded as part of the Annual Monitoring Report, enabling an assessment of the mix of house types coming forward</p>

Preferred Option	Implementation and Delivery	Monitoring
H6 Lifetime Homes	<p>The delivery of dwellings meeting the Lifetime Homes standard will be through developers, enforced by the Development Control process.</p> <p>The policy makes allowances to ensure that this approach does not undermine the deliverability of schemes.</p>	We will monitor the proportion of dwellings meeting the Lifetime Homes standard as part of the Annual Monitoring Report.
H7 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation	Gypsy and Travellers sites will be allocated by us but developed by private landowners. The development of sites will be enforced through the Development Control process.	We will monitor the granting of planning permission for Gypsy and Traveller sites, and their development, as part of the Annual Monitoring Report.
Green Belt		
GB1 Green Belt Protection	The Green Belt will be protected through the allocation of land and enforced through the Development Control process.	The proportion of the District allocated as Metropolitan Green Belt can be ascertained through examination of allocations.
GB2 Rural Diversification and Recreational Uses	Rural diversification will be undertaken by landowners and enabled through a more permissive Development Control process.	The number of change of use applications permitted on land designated as Metropolitan Green Belt, and the nature of those uses, will indicate whether rural diversification is being undertaken.

Preferred Option	Implementation and Delivery	Monitoring
Economic Development		
ED1 London Southend Airport and Environs	We will produce a Joint Area Action Plan in conjunction with Southend Borough Council that will set out how we will ensure the airport’s economic potential is realised in a manner that balances environmental and social considerations. Stakeholders will be engaged with as part of the Joint Area Action Plan.	Employment uses developed in and around the airport will be recorded by us.
ED2 Employment Growth	We will work with landowners and businesses representatives and will produce an updated Economic Development Strategy which, in conjunction with land use policies, will ensure economic development in appropriate locations.	Employment levels in the District will be used as an indication of success. The proportion of employment development within 30 minutes public transport time is recorded as part of the Annual Monitoring Report.
ED3 Existing Employment Land	Existing employment allocations will be protected from inappropriate development which would undermine their function in providing job opportunities through the Development Control process.	The use and development of employment land is monitored as part of the Annual Monitoring Report.

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Preferred Option	Implementation and Delivery	Monitoring
ED4 Future Employment Allocations	We will allocate future employment land through the Allocations Development Plan Document. We will work with landowners, developers, business representatives and other stakeholders (including infrastructure providers) to ensure the successful delivery of employment development.	The development of future allocations with appropriate employment-generating uses will be monitored by us as part of the Annual Monitoring Report. Employment levels within the District will be used to indicate success.
ED5 Eco-Enterprise Centre	<p>Land within an employment allocation will be allocated specifically for the business incubation centre.</p> <p>We will secure public funding which in turn will be used to lever private sector investment. In terms of delivering services on an ongoing basis, we will work in partnership with other key stakeholders and partners whose remit is to support and develop businesses in the District.</p>	The number of businesses within the centre, and the proportion of these sustained within the District once they have left the centre, will be used to measure the success of the Eco-Enterprise Centre.
Environmental Issues		
ENV1 Protection and Enhancement of the Natural Landscape and Habitats	<p>We will prevent development that would be of harm to areas of international, national and local nature conservation importance through the Development Control process.</p> <p>The enhancement of existing sites owned by us will be achieved by the positive management of them. In the case of other sites, we will encourage owners to do likewise.</p> <p>The Crouch and Roach Estuary Management Plan will be delivered in partnership with stakeholders.</p>	As part of the Annual Monitoring Report, we record the condition of the District's SSSIs, enabling us to review whether the PSA target is being met.

Preferred Option	Implementation and Delivery	Monitoring
ENV2 Coastal Protection Belt	The Coastal Protection Belt will be protected from harmful development through the Development Control process.	The success of this approach will be measured by the quality of the landscape in the Coastal Protection Belt, as well as its biodiversity. We will include reports on development within the Coastal Protection Belt in the Annual Monitoring Report.
ENV3 Flood Risk	The Environment Agency (EA) is a statutory consultee on all planning applications where potential flood risk or water quality issues may arise. We will work with the Environment Agency to ensure that flood risk is reduced.	As part of the Annual Monitoring Report, we monitor its performance against flood protection targets.
ENV4 Sustainable Drainage Systems	We will work with developers to ensure sustainable drainage systems are incorporated into new developments. This will be enforced through the Development Control process.	The Annual Monitoring Report will record the proportion of applications in which sustainable drainage systems are incorporated.
ENV5 Air Quality	AQMA's will be designated where necessary. Development within AQMA's will be restricted through the Development Control process. AQMA status will be removed once the air quality is deemed acceptable.	Air quality will be monitored by us, as required by the 1995 Environment Act, on a periodic basis. Air quality and development within AQMA's will be recorded.

Preferred Option	Implementation and Delivery	Monitoring
ENV6 Large Scale Renewable Energy Projects	The development of large scale renewable energy projects will be regulated through the Development Control process.	The development of large scale renewable energy projects will be monitored as part of the Annual Monitoring Report.
ENV7 Small Scale Renewable Energy Projects	Some small scale renewable projects such as domestic photovoltaic cells do not require consent from us. However, those that do require approval will be regulated through the Development Control process.	Where possible, we will monitor the implementation of small scale renewable energy projects in the Annual Monitoring Report.
ENV8 Code for Sustainable Homes	This will be delivered in partnership with developers and enforced through the Development Control process.	We will monitor the proportion of dwellings meeting the Code for Sustainable Homes standard as part of the Annual Monitoring Report.
ENV9 BREEAM	This will be delivered in partnership with developers and enforced through the Development Control process and building regulations.	We will monitor the proportion of dwellings meeting the BREEAM standard as part of the Annual Monitoring Report.
ENV10 Contaminated Land	Development on contaminated and suspected contaminated land will be controlled through the Development Control process.	Development on contaminated land, together with measures to mitigate decontamination, will be recorded in the Annual Monitoring Report.

Preferred Option	Implementation and Delivery	Monitoring
Transport		
T1 Highways	We will work with the Highways Authority to improve sustainable alternatives to the car, and improve network connections across the District.	Annual Progress Reports/Delivery Report – gives km of cycleways delivered, footpaths enhanced etc. May need to contact ECC for district data.
T2 Public Transport	We will work with developers and service providers to ensure public transport provision is in place. We will ensure development is well located in relation to public transport provision through the Local Development Framework and enforce this through the Development Control process.	The proportion of new development within 30 minutes public transport time of various facilities is recorded and reported in the Annual Monitoring Report.
T3 South Essex Rapid Transport (SERT)	We will work closely with Essex County Council to ensure the smooth implementation of SERT.	The implementation of SERT will be monitored by Essex County Council, and Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership (Rochford District Council is one of the partners).
T4 Travel plans	We will work with developers to ensure travel plans are implemented where required. This will be enforced through the Development Control process.	We will report on the number of planning applications accompanied by travel plans as part of the Annual Monitoring Report

Preferred Option	Implementation and Delivery	Monitoring
T5 Cycling and Walking	We will work with developers, Essex County Council and Sustrans to ensure, through the use of contributions and the designing in of facilities at the planning stage, cycling and walking provision is delivered.	In conjunction with Essex County Council, we will monitor the provision of cycling and walking infrastructure.
T6 Greenways	Greenways will be implemented by us in conjunction with landowners and Essex County Council.	The delivery of Greenways identified in the Core Strategy will be recorded by us and reported in the Annual Monitoring Report.
T7 Parking Standards	We will enforce the provision of the requisite parking provision through the Development Control process.	We monitor the provision of car parking on completed developments within the District as part of the Annual Monitoring Report.
Retail and Town Centres		
RTC1 Retail	<p>Development will be directed towards the District's town centres through the allocations process and by making the town centres more attractive to shoppers (see other RTC options).</p> <p>Small-scale retail development in out of town centres will be delivered in partnership with developers as part of the Allocations process.</p>	The retail use of the town centres is included as part of the Annual Monitoring Report. Success of the policy will be indicated by a high proportion of retail uses and new retail development being located in town centres.
RTC2 Village and Neighbourhood Shops	The loss of village and neighbourhood shops will be resisted through the Development Control process. We will help maintain the viability of village and neighbourhood shops by ensuring that village communities continue to thrive – this will be achieved through a variety of actions, including ensuring there is adequate housing and service provision to support smaller settlements.	Annual surveys of the retail units within villages will be undertaken and reported in the Annual Monitoring Report.

Preferred Option	Implementation and Delivery	Monitoring
RTC3 Rayleigh Town Centre	Intensification of existing retail areas will be delivered through partnership working with developers and retailers, and enabled through the Development Control process.	Surveys of retail areas are carried out on an annual basis and will be reported in the Annual Monitoring Report.
RTC4 Rochford Town Centre	<p>The Area Action Plan for Rochford town centre will be produced by us with the input of specialist consultants, using masterplanning work already undertaken, and taking on board the views of local stakeholders.</p> <p>The Area Action Plan will be implemented in partnership with local developers and landowners. We will consider using a specialist delivery body to assist redevelopment if, depending on the exact nature of the Area Action Plan, it is required.</p> <p>Compulsory purchase is a tool that is available to us, but we will seek to avoid using it. Compulsory purchase will only be used to enable development that will deliver significant benefits to the community and all other alternatives have been exhausted.</p>	<p>Surveys of retail areas are carried out on an annual basis. A drop in the number of vacant units and a rise in the total number of shops and facilities will indicate success.</p> <p>Revised retail and leisure studies will be carried out. Improvements in the town centre's health assessment will be seen as an indicator of success.</p> <p>Other indicators of the performance of the Town Centre Area Action Plan will include levels of anti-social behaviour reported in the area.</p>

Preferred Option	Implementation and Delivery	Monitoring
<p>RTC5 Hockley Town Centre</p>	<p>The Area Action Plan for Hockley town centre will be produced by us with the input of specialist consultants, using masterplanning work already undertaken, and taking on board the views of local stakeholders.</p> <p>The Area Action Plan will be implemented in partnership with local developers and landowners. We will consider using a specialist delivery body to assist redevelopment if, depending on the exact nature of the Area Action Plan, it is required.</p> <p>Compulsory purchase is a tool that is available to us, but we will seek to avoid using it. Compulsory purchase will only be used to enable development that will deliver significant benefits to the community and all other alternatives have been exhausted.</p>	<p>Surveys of retail areas are carried out on an annual basis. A drop in the number of vacant units and a rise in the total number of shops and facilities will indicate success.</p> <p>Revised retail and leisure studies will be carried out. Improvements in the town centre's health assessment will be seen as an indicator of success.</p> <p>Other indicators of the performance of the Town Centre Area Action Plan will include levels of anti-social behaviour reported in the area.</p>

Preferred Option	Implementation and Delivery	Monitoring
Character of Place		
CP1 Design	<p>The design of developments will be regulated through the Development Control process.</p> <p>Developers will be expected to utilise, where relevant, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) • Village Design Statements (VDSs) • the Essex Design Guide, and • the Urban Place Supplement <p>as guidance for good design.</p>	<p>The success of the implementation of this policy will be monitored by recording the proportion of appeals of our decision to refuse planning applications based on character of place which are dismissed.</p>
CP2 Conservation Areas	<p>Recommendations within the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plans will be implemented through a collaborative approach with our partners, and seeking legal advice and acquiring consent from the Secretary of State.</p>	<p>The Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plans will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis to ensure conservation boundaries are preserved and continue to enhance the local character.</p>
CP3 Local List	<p>The Local List SPD is currently being updated, and will be adopted. Buildings listed within this document will be protected by us through Development Control policies.</p>	<p>The Local List will be updated on a regular basis and the buildings contained within it examined as part of the update to ensure they are being protected.</p>

Preferred Option	Implementation and Delivery	Monitoring
Community Infrastructure, Leisure and Tourism		
CLT1 Planning Obligations and Standard Charges	Planning obligations and standard charges will be imposed on developers, where necessary, and regulated through the Development Control process.	We will monitor the provision of contributions and, together with service providers, the infrastructure that is being delivered.
CLT2 Primary Education	<p>Increased primary school provision will be delivered, where necessary, in partnership with Essex Country Council and developers, and enforced through the Development Control process.</p> <p>Planning obligations and standard charges will be used to deliver the requisite educational provision.</p>	<p>We will work with Essex Country Council to monitor the balance between the supply and demand of schools in the District.</p> <p>Essex County Council monitors the present and future provision of school places within the County within <i>The Essex School Organisation Plan</i> which has been updated on an annual basis since 2003.</p>

Preferred Option	Implementation and Delivery	Monitoring
CLT3 Secondary Education	<p>Additional land for the expansion of school sites (for example the King Edmund school) may be identified within the Allocations Development Plan Document.</p> <p>Secondary school expansion will be delivered in partnership with Essex Country Council and developers, and enforced through the Development Control process.</p> <p>Planning obligations and standard charges will be used to deliver the requisite educational provision.</p>	<p>We will work with Essex Country Council to monitor the balance between the supply and demand of schools in the District.</p> <p>Essex County Council monitors the present and future provision of school places within the County within <i>The Essex School Organisation Plan</i> which has been updated on an annual basis since 2003.</p>
CLT4 Healthcare	<p>Developers will be required to work with us, Primary Care Trust and other stakeholders to address any deficiencies identified by the Health Impact Assessment.</p> <p>New healthcare facilities will be delivered in partnership with the South East Essex Primary Care Trust and developers, and regulated through the Development Control process.</p> <p>We will use contributions from developers, through standard charges to provide healthcare facilities where necessary.</p>	<p>The provision of adequate healthcare facilities will be reported by us using data from the Primary Care Trust.</p>
CLT5 Open Space	<p>The provision of new open space and the protection of existing open space will be regulated through the Development Control process.</p>	<p>The provision of open space will be monitored by us.</p>

Preferred Option	Implementation and Delivery	Monitoring
CLT6 Community Facilities	<p>Additional community facilities will be delivered by working in partnership with service providers, including the voluntary sector, and developers.</p> <p>Planning obligations and standard charges will be used to finance the implementation of community facilities.</p>	<p>The needs for community facilities will be monitored using the 'barriers to housing and service domain' as an indicator from the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD).</p>
CLT7 Play Space	<p>We will deliver additional play space where required, in conjunction with developers as part of new residential sites where necessary. We will use planning contributions from developers to implement play space where necessary.</p> <p>The protection of existing facilities will be regulated through the Development Control process.</p>	<p>The implementation of play space will be monitored and recorded as part of the Annual Monitoring Report.</p>
CLT8 Youth Facilities	<p>We will engage with young people through existing community groups and schools to ascertain their needs.</p> <p>We will work with other partners, including within the voluntary sector, and developers to ensure the delivering of appropriate facilities. We will use planning contributions from developers to implement play space where necessary.</p>	<p>The provision of youth facilities, together with measure to ensure their long-term viability, will be recorded by us.</p>

Preferred Option	Implementation and Delivery	Monitoring
CLT9 Leisure Facilities	<p>We have adopted the ‘Play Strategy 2007-2012’ which will focus the resources available, and in turn create, a successful play ‘offer’ are captured in the acronym VITAL - Value based, In the right place, Top quality, Appropriate and Long term.</p> <p>We will use contributions from developers, through standard charges to provide leisure facilities where necessary.</p>	<p>The provision of leisure facilities may be monitored using the Sport England <i>Sports Facility Calculator</i>.</p> <p>The proportion (m²) of both completed and outstanding leisure development within the District is recorded within the Annual Monitoring Report.</p>
CLT10 Playing Pitches	<p>The Playing Pitch Strategy SPD is currently being updated, using the guidance created by Sport England, the purpose of the SPD is to assess current playing pitch supply and demand so that an adequate supply can be maintained.</p> <p>The provision of playing pitches within the Green belt will be regulated through the enforcement of Development Control policies.</p> <p>Sport England is a statutory consultee on all planning applications which have an impact on playing pitch provision (i.e. development of playing fields) and, as such, advise us on relevant issues.</p>	<p>Our evidence base work on the Playing Pitch Strategy will be updated on a regular basis.</p> <p>Planning applications regarding playing fields are monitored by Sport England. We will report on these as part of the Annual Monitoring Report.</p>
CLT11 Tourism	<p>Appropriate tourism opportunities will be regulated through the Development Control process.</p>	<p>The number of visitors is monitored as part of the “Economic impact of tourism” report by the East of England Tourist Board. We will report on relevant District matters as part of the Annual Monitoring Report.</p>

Preferred Option	Implementation and Delivery	Monitoring
Upper Roach Valley and Wallasea Island		
URV1 Upper Roach Valley	We will expand Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park through the use of land owned by us and the acquisition of land where necessary. We will only use compulsory purchase powers as a last resort where all other alternatives have been exhausted.	The expansion of Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park will be monitored as part of the Annual Monitoring Report.
URV2 Wallasea Island	We will work with RSPB to deliver the Wallasea Island Wild Coast Project. Other stakeholders will also be engaged, including Essex County Council with regards to the sites accessibility, and the Environment Agency, given the physical constraints in the locality.	The delivery of the Wallasea Island Wild Coast Project will be monitored as part of the Annual Monitoring Report.

Key Diagram

