

Consultation Statement

Developing the Rochford Area Action Plan Submission Document – the role of Community Involvement and Stakeholder Engagement

This statement satisfies the requirements of Regulation 22 (c) of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

Rochford District Council – Local Development Framework Rochford Area Action Plan: Consultation Statement

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Rochford Area Action Plan is a Development Plan Document (DPD) which sets out detailed policies for Rochford town centre. The Rochford Area Action Plan sits below the Core Strategy in the Local Development Framework and must conform to the overarching approach and policies set out within it, and in particular Policy RTC5. The Core Strategy was adopted by the Council on 13 December 2011.
- 1.2 The development of the Rochford Area Action Plan has been an iterative process and each stage has been subject to public consultation. This Consultation Statement sets out how local communities and other key partners have been involved in its preparation. It has been prepared in accordance with Regulation 22 (c) of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, which requires the local planning authority to prepare a statement to accompany the proposed Rochford Area Action Plan Submission Document, setting out the following:
- (i). which bodies and persons the local planning authority invited to make representations under regulation 18,
 - (ii). how those bodies and persons were invited to make representations under regulation 18,
 - (iii). a summary of the main issues raised by the representations made pursuant to regulation 18,
 - (iv). how any representations made pursuant to regulation 18 have been taken into account;
 - (v). if representations were made pursuant to regulation 20, the number of representations made and a summary of the main issues raised in those representations; and
 - (vi). if no representations were made in regulation 20, that no such representations were made;
- 1.3 As such, for each stage in the production of the Rochford Area Action Plan, this document sets out: the methods the Council employed to ensure community involvement; groups, organisations and bodies invited to make representation; a summary of the main issues raised; and how representations have influenced the plan-making process. It should be noted that this statement does not contain the detailed content of all the representations, but copies of all the representations are available on request.
- 1.4 There were three key stages of the Rochford Area Action Plan where representations were invited:
- Initial public participation prior to drafting of the Issues and Options (February 2008);
 - Issues and Options (September 2009); and

- Pre-Submission which includes consultation prior to the drafting of pre-submission document itself (July 2013)

2 Statement of Community Involvement

- 2.1 Rochford District Council has an adopted Statement of Community Involvement. This sets out how the Council will involve the local community in the preparation of the Local Development Framework. Since the adoption of the Statement of Community Involvement in 2007, new regulations came into force which amended the consultation requirements for Local Development Documents, including the stages at which consultation is undertaken.
- 2.2 Although the Statement of Community Involvement was prepared when different regulations were in place, the principles for community involvement and consultation set out in the Statement of Community Involvement are nevertheless still relevant and have been adhered to.
- 2.3 In addition to that undertaken specifically on the Rochford Area Action Plan, it is important to note that community involvement and consultation on various elements of the evidence base and other strategies which have influenced Rochford Area Action Plan has also taken place.

3 Initial Public Participation and Consultation

- 3.1 Early public participation and consultation began in 2008. This included a Placecheck event which was held on 23 February 2008 to give residents and interested parties an option to participate in the HAAP from the very earliest stages of the process and to make the public participation and consultation process an integral part the HAAP's development. The event included a walking tour around Rochford town centre where residents could offer their views and aspirations for the town centre. The Placecheck event was held so that the council could hear the public's views, ideas and concerns about the future of Rochford.
- 3.2 The Placecheck was a way of assessing the qualities of a place, showing what improvements are needed, and focusing people on working together to achieve them. The event involved a group tour of Rochford town centre where participants had the opportunity to point out what they liked and did not like, and what improvements they thought should be made. This was followed by a feedback session (Figure 1).



Figure 1 – The Placecheck event involved a feedback session for the interested parties

- 3.3 Invitations to the Placecheck were sent to all residents on the Council’s Citizens Panel who had expressed an interest in planning for the town centres.
- 3.4 The Placecheck event was held to help inform ideas and options for future change and improvement in Rochford town centres, ensuring that the views and opinions of local residents help generate these options. The feedback received from the Placecheck event in Rochford is summarised in Table 1. Ultimately the Placecheck event was used to help facilitate the development of the 2009 Issues and Options Document.

Table 1 – Comments received during the Placecheck event

Questions	Comments
What do you like about Rochford?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Historic Buildings ● Local Character ● The Market ● Variety of local shops ● Reservoir and Green Space ● New development when viewed from station exit
What do you dislike about Rochford?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Too many retirement homes – unsold: is there a need for so many? ● Unattractive arrival experience into the town (but see comment above) ● High-speed of traffic on all town centre streets, but mainly on North Street ● Buses on West Street cause traffic delays

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Questions	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Somerfield development has generated HGV movement in town centre ● Change has been incremental and un-coordinated rather than planned ● Lack of community facilities (and anti-social behaviour of youths due to lack of facilities) ● Unsafe at night ● Difficult to cross road outside Council Offices ● Narrow pavements on West Street ● Spar building very unattractive ● Public lavatories feel unsafe ● Virgin Active facility expensive to hire ● Concern that local shops will close due to competition from new larger food stores
<p>What can be changed / improved?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● New buildings should be in-keeping with the character of the town ● More youth and other community facilities are needed ● Need better signage/local information, especially for car parking ● Historic walks could be introduced to make Rochford a destination for people ● Need affordable housing, particularly for young ● Introduction of an evening economy, including a new restaurant in the Market Square ● Extend offer in Market, with stalls on different days (Farmers Market / French Market) ● Market Square could potentially be pedestrianised ● Short-stay parking could be moved to Back Lane car park, with dedicated spaces closest to the Square and long-stay parking closest to station ● More legible and direct link from the station into the town centre ● Needs an overall plan for future change ● Improve access to green spaces: improve links across Bradley Way ● Improve lighting and safety of car parks ● Events are needed to instill and promote civic pride – better street cleaning and recycling facilities needed ● Earlier buses to serve the station ● Better interchange with the station needed

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- 3.5 Following the Placecheck event an online consultation system was provided, inviting people to submit their views and suggestions for improvements on the town centre. The consultation made use of a generalised series of questions, shown below, with the intention of gathering as wide a selection of viewpoints as possible.
- 3.6 Questions asked in the consultation were as follows;
- What do you like about the town centre?
 - What do you think about the range of shops, cafes, restaurants and other facilities in the town centre?
 - What do you think is missing?
 - How do you think things could be improved?
 - What do you think about traffic and parking in the town centre?
 - Is the town centre accessible?
- 3.7 This system was successful and consequently the same online system was used throughout the Rochford Area Action Plan consultation process. This had the beneficial effect of ensuring that members of the public were given many opportunities to use the online system and raise any issues or technical problems at the earliest possible stage. Further to this, members of the public who submitted their initial comments were automatically alerted to further developments as part of the Council's on-going commitment to public participation and consultation throughout the evolution of the Rochford Area Action Plan.
- 3.8 The detailed responses from this initial consultation are available to view on the Council's online consultation system¹. The responses can be summarised as follows:
- There were varying views on whether or not the Market Square should be pedestrianised. Those against felt it would negatively affect retail and encourage anti social behaviour. Those in favour felt that it would create a better atmosphere and safer environment.
 - There was a suggestion for a war memorial / other kind of memorial in the Market Square.
 - There were suggestions for a café / bar in the Market Square.
 - It was stated that there should be crossings near to Market Square to make pedestrian movement easier.
 - Measures should be taken to ensure that the town centre is still used for shopping (even if Tesco and Sainsbury were to move into the area) and to promote local business. One suggestion was to stop charging for car parking in order to encourage

¹ Direct link: <http://rochford.jdi-consult.net/ldf/readdoc.php?docid=160&chapter=1&docitemid=d24104#d24104>

people to continue to park in the town centre (rather than use the inevitable free parking at the supermarkets).

- There were suggestions for a landmark development over the Spar store at the eastern end of the Square.
- It was stated that more entertainment and leisure facilities are needed (particularly for under 18s).
- It was stated that more affordable housing is needed.
- It was stated that the Green Belt should be protected.
- It was stated that there should be shelter at bus stops and the position of the bus stops should be better thought through.
- There were concerns over speeding in all four streets of the town centre and the dominance of vehicles (and suggestions for better signage).
- Better signage was suggested for around the one way system to make the town centre more legible.
- There were many remarks about keeping the historic character of Rochford intact.

3.9 The above were all fed into the process of producing the 2009 Issues and Options iteration of the Rochford Area Action Plan.

4 Issues and Options Document

4.1 The initial stage of the Rochford Area Action Plan set out site specific options for a number of identified potential opportunity sites. This document was prepared by consultants, Urban Initiatives, and published for a formal ten-week consultation period between 21 September 2009 and 30 November 2009. The purpose of this document was to provide residents, landowners and other interested parties with the opportunity to consider and comment upon the issues and options that had been identified within Rochford town centre.

4.2 The Council engaged the community and other stakeholders through the actions set out in Table 2 below. A wide range of organisations and individuals were consulted on the Issues and Options Document. A list of the specific and general consultation bodies contacted is provided in Appendix 1.

Table 2 – Encouraging Public Participation on the Issues and Options Document

Consultation Method	Details
Public exhibitions	Two manned public exhibitions were held by officers in the Women’s Institute in the Market Square during the day, where the public could drop-in and view the proposals. The public could question officers and

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Consultation Method	Details
	provide comments on the proposals (Figure 2). These events sought to maximise public awareness.
Consultation letters to stakeholders	<p>Letters and emails were sent to key stakeholders, including all relevant bodies listed within Planning Policy Statement 12 (which has since been superseded by the National Planning Policy Framework in March 2012). Key stakeholders are now set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.</p> <p>Those on the Council's Local Development Framework mailing list – which comprises specific and general consultation bodies along with groups and organisations who may have interest in the development of the District, and members of the public who have requested to be kept updated with opportunities to participate – were written to informing them of the consultation period and encouraging them to submit views using the online system. Groups written to inviting comment included those representing sections of the society who have traditionally been underrepresented in the planning process. Mindful that the over-reliance on electronic communication may exclude some sections of society, the opportunity to comment via written correspondence was also made available.</p> <p>In total 1884 letters and emails were sent to individuals and organisations informing them of the Issues and Options consultation and their opportunity to comment at this stage. This included a number of local businesses and residents in and around the town centre.</p> <p>A list of the specific and general consultation bodies consulted is provided in Appendix 1.</p>
Rochford District Matters	An article highlighting the consultation was contained within the Council's free newsletter which is sent to all households in the District.
Press release	A press release was issued to local media.
Online consultation system	The Council utilised its online consultation system for consultation on the Issues and Options Document. The system allows respondents to submit and view comments online. A link to the system was placed on the Council's website.
Posters	Posters were sent to the local parish council promoting the opportunity to participate in the plan-making process.
Information boards	Information outlining the consultation and how the public can be involved was displayed on the electronic information boards in both the Rayleigh and Rochford receptions.

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- 4.3 Two manned public exhibitions took place on 9 and 16 November 2009. The public were provided with an opportunity to view the potential opportunity sites identified in the Issues and Options Document and comment on each of the options considered for the proposed sites. Examples of the exhibition material and some of the comments received is provided in Figure 2. These events sought to maximise public awareness and were quite well received in the town.
- 4.4 A summary of the responses received during the exhibition are set out in Appendix 2.

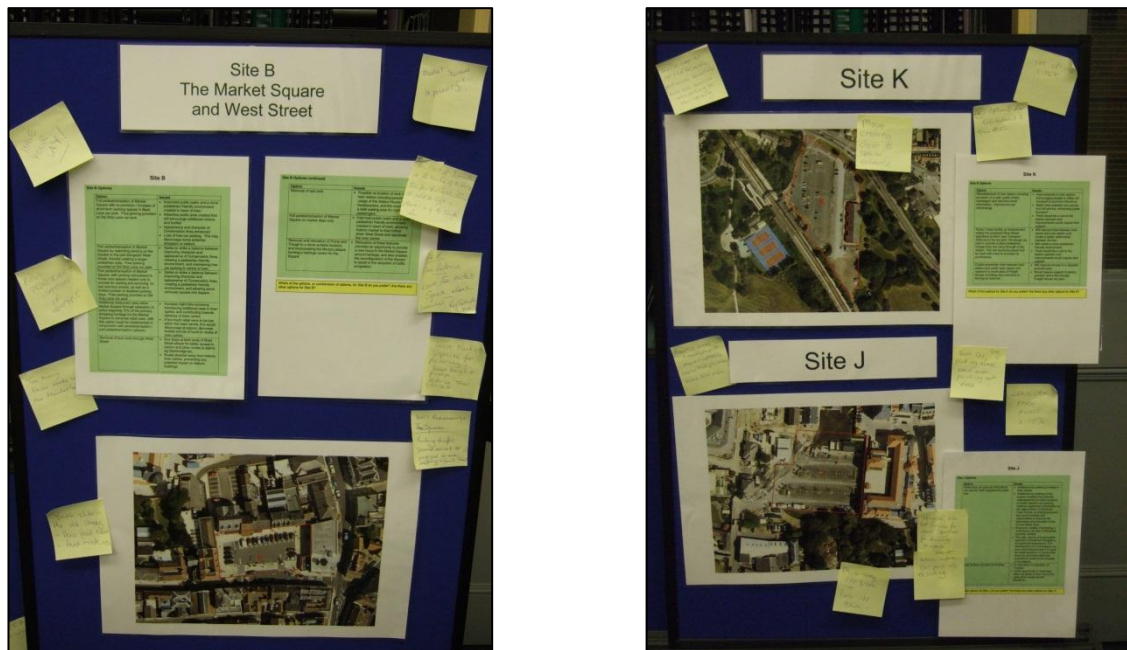


Figure 2 – An example of the exhibitions held at the W.I Hall in the Market Square and some of the comments received during these events

- 4.5 A total of 349 representations were made at the Issues and Options stage by 48 different respondents. Table 3 provides a numerical break down of representations by subject.

Table 3 – Numerical Breakdown of Initial Consultation Responses

Section Name	Respondents	Objectors	Support	Object	Comment	Representations
Rochford Town Centre Area Action Plan – Issues and Options	48	6	44	16	289	349
Rochford Town Centre Area Action Plan – Issues and Options	48	6	44	16	289	349
WHAT IS AN AREA ACTION PLAN, AND WHAT IS AN ISSUES AND OPTIONS REPORT?	1	0	0	0	1	1
1.2	1	0	0	0	1	1
WHAT DOES THIS AREA ACTION PLAN COVER?	1	0	0	0	1	1
1.4	2	0	0	0	2	2
1.6	1	0	0	0	1	1

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Section Name	Respondents	Objectors	Support	Object	Comment	Representations
1.7	2	0	0	0	2	2
1.9	2	0	0	0	2	2
1.10	2	0	0	0	2	2
1.13	1	0	1	0	0	1
1.14	2	0	0	0	2	2
WHAT YOU TOLD US	1	0	0	0	1	1
2.2	3	0	0	0	3	3
2.3	1	0	0	0	1	1
URBAN DESIGN ANALYSIS	1	0	0	0	1	1
2.4	1	0	0	0	1	1
2.6	1	0	0	0	1	1
2.7	1	0	0	0	1	1
LAND USES	1	0	0	0	1	1
FORM AND STRUCTURE	1	0	0	0	1	1
2.13	2	0	0	0	2	2
2.14	1	0	0	0	1	1
CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE	1	0	0	0	2	2
2.15	2	0	0	0	2	2
2.16	2	0	0	0	2	2
2.17	2	0	0	0	2	2
2.21	1	0	0	0	1	1
2.24	1	0	0	0	1	1
2.26	1	0	0	0	1	1
2.27	1	0	0	0	1	1
2.28	1	0	0	0	1	1
2.29	2	1	0	1	1	2
PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE NETWORK	1	0	0	0	1	1
2.31	1	0	0	0	1	1
2.33	2	0	0	0	2	2
2.34	1	0	0	0	1	1
2.35	1	0	0	0	1	1
2.36	1	0	0	0	1	1
2.37	2	0	0	0	2	2
2.39	2	0	1	0	1	2
2.40	1	0	1	0	0	1
SUMMARY OF ISSUES	1	0	0	0	2	2
2.42	2	0	0	0	2	2
Do you agree that these are the main issues facing Rochford Town Centre?	5	0	1	0	4	5
Are there any other issues that you think should be considered?	3	0	0	0	3	3

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Section Name	Respondents	Objectors	Support	Object	Comment	Representations
VISON	3	0	0	0	3	3
OBJECTIVES	2	0	0	0	2	2
3.3	2	0	0	0	2	2
Do you agree with the vision and objectives for Rochford Town Centre?	5	0	2	0	3	5
POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITY SITES AND DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS	2	0	0	0	2	2
3.7	1	0	0	0	1	1
Which of the options, or combination of options for Site A do you prefer?	15	0	5	0	11	16
Are there any other options for Site A?	6	1	0	1	5	6
3.8	2	0	0	0	2	2
Which of the options, or combination of options for Site B do you prefer?	20	2	2	2	17	21
Are there any other options for Site B?	5	0	0	0	5	5
3.10	1	0	0	0	1	1
3.12	1	0	0	0	1	1
Which of the options for Site C do you prefer?	13	1	3	1	9	13
Are there any other options for Site C?	3	0	0	0	3	3
Which of the options for Site D do you prefer?	14	0	2	0	12	14
Are there any other options for Site D?	3	0	0	0	3	3
Which of the options for Site E do you prefer?	18	3	1	3	14	18
Area there any other options for Site E?	1	0	0	0	1	1
Which of the options for Site F do you prefer?	13	1	2	1	10	13
Are there any other options for Site F?	2	0	0	0	2	2
Which of the options for Site G do you prefer?	16	0	2	0	14	16
Are there any other options for Site G?	3	0	0	0	3	3
Which of the options for Site H do you prefer?	13	0	2	0	11	13
Are there any other options for Site H?	1	0	0	0	1	1
Which of the options for Site J do you prefer?	16	2	2	2	12	16

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Section Name	Respondents	Objectors	Support	Object	Comment	Representations
Are there any other options for Site J?	2	0	0	0	2	2
Which of the options for Site K do you prefer?	15	0	3	0	12	15
Are there any other options for Site K?	1	0	0	0	1	1
Are there other sites with potential for redevelopment which would enhance the town centre in Rochford?	1	0	0	0	1	1
TRANSPORT OPTIONS	2	0	0	0	2	2
Parking and travel demand management – Which options do you agree/disagree with?	6	1	2	1	3	6
Parking and travel demand management – Are there any other options regarding parking that you would like to be considered?	1	0	0	0	1	1
3.28	1	1	0	1	0	1
North and South Streets – Which options do you agree/disagree with?	9	0	2	0	7	9
North and South Streets – Are there any other options that you would like to be considered?	2	0	0	0	2	2
Weir Pond Road – Which options do you agree/disagree with?	9	0	1	0	8	9
Weir Pond Road – Are there any other options that you would like to be considered?	2	0	1	0	1	2
Bradley Way – Which options do you agree/disagree with?	12	3	1	3	8	12
Bradley Way – Are there any other options that you would like to be considered?	1	0	0	0	1	1
3.33	1	0	0	0	1	1
West Street – Which options do you agree/disagree with?	12	0	3	0	9	12
West Street – Are there any other options that you would like to be considered?	2	0	0	0	3	3
West Street – Are junction improvements required?	2	0	0	0	2	2
Bus routing and facilities – Do you agree with this approach?	8	0	4	0	4	8
Bus routing and facilities – What do you think about the current routing of buses?	1	0	0	0	1	1
SENDING IN YOUR VIEWS	1	0	0	0	1	1
APPENDIX A: PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT	3	0	0	0	3	3

Section Name	Respondents	Objectors	Support	Object	Comment	Representations
APPENDIX C: GLOSSARY	3	0	0	0	3	3

5 Main Issues Raised at the Issues and Options Stage and How They Have Been Addressed

5.1 The themes addressed within the Issues and Options Document elicited a substantial response from a wide range of stakeholders, including members of the public, developers, landowners and specific consultation bodies.

5.2 There were a number of pertinent issues raised during the consultation. These have been addressed as follows:

- The importance and improvement of the heritage and character of the town, which included support for the redevelopment of Site A (the Spar building)

The importance of the heritage and character of the town has been reinforced and appropriately addressed within the Submission Document as set out in the vision and objectives for Rochford. More emphasis has been placed on the Rochford Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan with the town centre being divided into appropriate Character Areas based on those in the Management Plan (Figure 9) and specific policies which respond to the character of those individual areas (Policies 5 – 9).

With regard to Site A identified in the Issues and Options Document, this site continues to be identified as an opportunity site for potential redevelopment within the Submission Document during the plan period (Figure 6). This site falls within Character Area A and has been included within the criteria of Policy 6 for potential redevelopment that is sensitive to the character of the Market Square.

- Concern in relation to full pedestrianisation of Site B (the Market Square)

As noted within the Submission Document, both the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan and the Retail and Leisure Study recommend that the parking arrangement in the Market Square should be reviewed, with a view to giving pedestrians greater priority. This is reflected within Policy 6 of the Submission Document, which proposes that public realm enhancements within the Square include the rationalisation and reduction in car parking spaces and the potential relocation of the taxi rank. Two options investigated are set out in Figures 11 and 12 of the Plan, both of which seek to retain some car parking within the Square.

Figure 11 proposes to widen the pavements around the Square, extend the paving across West Street, retain the bus stop and rationalise the car parking and taxi spaces. The number of parking bays is proposed to be reduced from 18 to 15, and the number of taxi bays from four to three.

Figure 12 also proposes to widen the pavements around the Square, retain the bus stop and rationalise the car parking and taxi spaces. Much of the Market

Square would be pedestrianised however it is proposed to retain capacity for up to 10 parking spaces and the bus stop. The taxi rank is proposed to be relocated possibly to Back Lane car park.

- Impact of redevelopment proposals on existing businesses (particularly at Site A, C and D)

As above, Site A has been identified as an opportunity site for potential redevelopment within the Submission Document during the plan period (Figure 6) and Policy 6 sets out criteria for any development of this site. It seeks to retain A1, A3 or A4 uses on the ground floor, with office or residential uses on the upper floors should this site come forward for redevelopment.

Site C has not been identified as an opportunity site within the Submission Document, however, it has been recognised as being a key arrival point for the town as it is located towards the western end of West Street (Figure 6). This site is located within Character Area A which sets out criteria should any redevelopment be proposed in this location (Policy 6).

Site D has been identified as an opportunity site for redevelopment within the Submission Document (Figure 6), and Policy 7 (Character Area B) sets out the criteria for new development should this site come forward. It is likely that any development of this site would be mixed use and housing-led.

Although the Plan identifies some opportunity sites for potential redevelopment, it provides a framework for Rochford town centre. The Plan is less interventionist than the previous iteration and does not insist on development.

In addition, existing office uses at Locks Hill have been recognised as employment land to be protected within the Submission Document (Figure 6 and 8) and the Plan sets out principles to address any proposed development in this location during the plan period (Policy 4).

- Opposition to proposed option for the redevelopment Site E (Whittingham's Garage)

This site has not been identified as an opportunity site for potential redevelopment within the Submission Document (Figure 6). However, this site is located within Character Area D which sets out appropriate criteria for any new development in this specific area should a site come forward (Policy 9).

As above, the Plan is less interventionist than the previous iteration and does not insist on development.

- Although development at Site F may create a stronger frontage, this would result in the loss of this open space

This site is located within Character Area C. It has not been identified as an opportunity site for potential redevelopment (Figure 6). However, Policy 8 sets out appropriate principles should this site, or any other site not specifically identified in the Plan, come forward for development.

As above, the Plan is less interventionist than the previous iteration and does not insist on development.

- Concern in relation to the potential loss of car parking and facilities at Site G and H (Back Lane car park and doctor's surgery)

These sites are identified for car parking within the Submission Document and have not been identified as opportunity sites for redevelopment (Figure 6). However should any development come forward on these sites there are policies within the Submission Document to address such proposals.

- Concern in relation to the development of a multi-storey car park (Site J)

The current hospital car park has not been identified as an opportunity site for redevelopment (Figure 6). The option to develop a multi-storey car park on this site has not been taken forward in the Submission Document.

- Improved access/signage to the train station and reservoir from the town is needed (Site K)

Improving accessibility throughout the town is an objective of the Plan, and Figure 7 sets out the movement framework which underpins it. Principles for improving access and signage have been included within a number of policies (for example Policies 5, 6 and 8).

- Concern in relation to traffic congestion, speeding and parking around the town, and re-routing of buses to avoid the Market Square

New and enhanced routes and key junctions are identified as a key element of the spatial framework for the AAP area within Policy 1 of the Submission Document. Figure 7 (the movement framework plan) identifies the key locations within the AAP area where junction improvements would be needed over the plan period; which includes all key arrival points into the town (Figure 6). Proposed improvements to these junctions are set out in Table 1 of the Plan. Policy 6 in particular seeks to address issues in and around the Market Square, for example through considering options to rationalise car parking and taxi spaces, and providing raised crossings across West Street.

The Sustainability Appraisal for the Issues and Options Document which considered the potential impact of removal of the bus route and taxi rank from the Market Square and West Street would have the potential for a negative effect on elderly and disabled members of the community.

Policy 5 of the Submission Document supports the upgrading of bus facilities which suggests possible route alterations to enhance the pedestrian as a potential improvement. However, this would require further consultation and support from Essex County Council and bus operators. As such, the Council is committed to continuing to work with partners at Essex County Council and the bus operators to keep the bus network – its routes, timetables and supporting infrastructure – under

review. It should be noted that Figure 11 and 12 which have considered two options for the Market Square.

In relation to provision of a taxi rank, two options have been considered in the Plan; a modest proposal (Figure 11) and a more comprehensive approach (Figure 12). The former proposes to rationalise the number of taxi spaces within the Market Square, whereas the latter proposes to relocate the taxi rank to Back Lane car park.

- 5.3 A summary of the issues raised at the Issues and Options stage, together with initial officer comments on these, is detailed in Appendix 2.

6 Pre-Submission Document

- 6.1 Given the delay between consultation on the Issues and Options Document and the preparation of the Submission Document, and the subsequent material changes that have taken place in the meantime (different economic climate and new developments constructed within the town), it was considered appropriate to consult on the emerging framework in light of these prior to formal pre-submission consultation.
- 6.2 With the assistance of consultants Allies and Morrison Urban Practitioners (AMUP), Rochford District Council undertook an additional stage of consultation on the Rochford Area Action Plan, which involved an unmanned public exhibition held at Rochford Library between 15 and 29 January 2013 (Figure 3).
- 6.3 A number of those on the Council's mailing list, including specific and general consultation bodies, parish/town councils, Ward Members and those who had previously commented on the Issues and Options Document were directly informed of the exhibition and invited to participate (a total of 188 individuals and organisations).
- 6.4 The poster provided the background to the preparation of the Rochford Area Action Plan and the emerging framework for the final stage of the document. Interested parties could provide comments on the questionnaire accompanying the exhibition.



Figure 3 – Unmanned exhibition in the foyer of Rochford library

- 6.5 Key messages that emerged from the informal consultation can be summarised as follows:
- Providing a good range of uses, activities and facilities for local people should be the planning policy framework's main priority.
 - There was strong support for the protection of the town centre's existing employment land.
 - The introduction of regular specialist markets and other temporary uses in the town centre was suggested.
 - Improvements to Market Square were supported and measures such as the rerouting of buses, a decrease in the size of the taxi rank, a reduction in the number of cafés, pubs, restaurants and charity shops, and better lighting and signage on nearby pedestrian routes were promoted.
 - Adequate customer car parking should be retained in the town centre.
 - There were mixed views in relation to the effect that any increased economic activity in the evening might have on the town centre; one response stated that such an increase could result in the opening of more takeaway food outlets.
 - The Highways Agency supported the emerging planning policy framework, although one response expressed concerns that the potential improvements to Bradley Way would result in traffic problems.
 - There was support for the principle of mixed-use development, however some of those that responded expressed reservations about the cumulative impact of more development, especially housing, on infrastructure.
- 6.6 Officers also attended a Rochford Chamber of Trade meeting on 7 March 2013 to discuss the proposed framework with local business representatives, explain the next steps in the preparation of the Plan and how to comment in the future.
- 6.7 The comments received from the exhibition, in addition to comments received at the Issues and Options stage, were used to inform the preparation of the Submission Document.
- 6.8 The Rochford Area Action Plan Submission Document was prepared by consultants AMUP taking into account comments received at previous stages and was subject to an eight-week pre-submission consultation period from 3 July to 29 August 2013.
- 6.9 The Council consulted the community and other stakeholders through the actions set out in Table 4 below.

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Table 4 – Consultation Methods at the Pre-Submission Stage

Consultation Method	Details
Consultation letters to stakeholders	<p>Letters and emails were sent to key stakeholders, including all relevant bodies listed within the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.</p> <p>Those on the Council’s Local Development Framework mailing list – which comprises specific and general consultation bodies along with groups and organisations who may have interest in the development of the District, and members of the public who have requested to be kept updated with opportunities to participate – were written to informing them of the consultation period and encouraging them to submit views using the online system. Groups written to inviting comment included those representing sections of the society who have traditionally been underrepresented in the planning process. Mindful that the over-reliance on electronic communication may exclude some sections of society, the opportunity to comment via written correspondence was also made available.</p> <p>In total 5854 letters and emails were sent to individuals and organisations informing them of the pre-submission consultation and their opportunity to comment at this stage. This included a number of local businesses and residents in and around the town centre.</p> <p>A list of the specific and general consultation bodies consulted is provided in Appendix 1.</p>
Drop-in event	<p>A drop-in event was held in the evening of 29 July 2013 at Rochford Parish Council offices in West Street. This event was arranged by the Parish Council with officers in attendance to answer questions. Leaflets were handed out by the Parish Council at the monthly farmers market in the Square to advertise the event. A poster was displayed on the Parish Council notice board and a notice was placed on the Council’s website.</p> <p>A petition relating to pedestrianisation of the Market Square and the option to relocate the taxi rank was shown to officers at the drop-in event. Officers were informed that the petition would be submitted to the Council before the end of the consultation, but it never materialised. These issues, however, have been addressed within this consultation statement.</p>
Press release	Press coverage in local media.
Online consultation system	The Council utilised its online consultation system for consultation on the Submission Document. The system allows respondents to submit and view comments online. A link to the system was placed on the Council’s website.

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6.10 5854 letters / emails were sent out inviting comments on the pre-submission document. 31 representations were made at this stage by 17 different respondents. Of the 31 representations made, 22 objected to the Rochford Area Action Plan Submission Document on the grounds of soundness / legal compliance. Table 5 provides a numerical break down of representations by subject.

Table 5 – Numerical Breakdown of Pre-Submission Consultation Responses

Section Name	Respondents	Objectors	Support	Object	Comment	Representations
Rochford Area Action Plan Submission	17	11	9	22	0	31
1. Introduction	4	2	2	3	0	5
2. Rochford in context	2	2	0	2	0	2
3. A framework for a better Rochford	2	1	1	1	0	2
Figure 6	1	0	1	0	0	1
Policy 1 – Rochford Area Action Plan Framework	1	1	0	1	0	1
5. Rochford's character areas	4	4	0	4	0	4
Policy 5 – Rochford's Charter Areas	1	1	0	1	0	1
Policy 6 – Character Area A: Central Area	2	2	0	2	0	2
Figure 11	4	1	3	1	0	4
Figure 12	3	2	1	2	0	3
Policy 7 – Character Area B: Northern/Eastern Approach	1	0	1	0	0	1
Policy 8 – Character Area C: Southern Approach	2	2	0	2	0	2
Policy 9 – Character Area D: Western Approach	2	2	0	2	0	2
6. Delivering a better Rochford	1	1	0	1	0	1

6.11 A summary of the issues raised by specific and general consultation bodies at the pre-submission stage, together with initial officer comments on these, is detailed in Appendix 3. Issues raised by other respondents during the consultation are set out in Appendix 4.

6.12 In addition to such representations, a number of comments were also submitted which were not on the official form and/or did not refer to either soundness or legal compliance from specific and general consultation bodies (Anglian Water, Environment Agency, English Heritage, Highways Agency and James Duddridge MP) and one resident. These representations have not been included in Table 5 above but a summary of their responses to the consultation and officer's initial responses to these have been included within Appendix 3 and 4 respectively. The full representations are available to view separately in Appendix 5.

6.13 A proposed schedule of changes was subsequently drawn up taking into account these representations (Appendix 7).

7 Duty to Co-operate

7.1 Section 110 of the Localism Act sets out the duty to co-operate, which relates to sustainable development or use of land that would have a significant impact on at least two local planning areas or on a planning matter that falls within the remit of a county council. It requires councils to set out planning policies to address such issues, and consider joint approaches to plan making. It also requires councils to engage constructively, actively and on an on-going basis with other councils and public bodies in plan preparation.

7.2 The Core Strategy was produced in compliance with the now defunct Regional Spatial Strategy – the East of England Plan – which was approved by local authorities in the region.

7.3 Neighbouring authorities and Essex County Council were notified directly of the emerging Rochford Area Action Plan prior to formal consultation on it. No neighbouring authorities identified any issues of cross-boundary concern, which is perhaps not surprising given Rochford town centre's geographical position within the District and the fact that the objectives for the Rochford Area Action Plan had already been identified through the Rochford Core Strategy.

7.4 Highways are the principal strategic issue facing the District. Essex County Council is the highways authority for the District, and the Council has engaged with the highways authority throughout the preparation of both the Core Strategy and the Allocations Document.

7.5 Discussions with the highways authority during the preparation of the Rochford Area Action Plan have considered the cumulative, and individual, impact of the developments across Rochford on the highway network. A statement which sets out the approach to highways in the preparation of the three town centre Area Action Plans is included within the evidence base².

8 Summary and Overview

8.1 Rochford District Council is committed to preparing Area Action Plans for all of its main centres, including Rochford, Rayleigh and Hockley. It is the intention of the Council that any development proposed in the town centre over the plan period responds positively to the heritage and character of the area.

8.2 It is envisaged that under the guidance of the Area Action Plan, Rochford will benefit from a greater diversity of town centre uses which compliment the retail core; enhancements to the historic core and public realm; improved accessibility between key destinations and attractors including between the train station, town centre and

² 'Overview of the approach to Rochford's three Area Action Plans' available from http://www.rochford.gov.uk/sites/rochford.gov.uk/files/documents/files/evidence_base_happoverview.pdf

local green space; protection of local employment opportunities at Locks Hill; and promotion of redeveloping unused, underused, infill or unattractive sites.

- 8.3 The Council has consulted widely with members of the public, organisations and specific and general consultation bodies, and on several occasions the Council awareness raising events and library exhibitions.
- 8.4 Consultation on the Area Action Plan also sought the views of the public at an early stage. This allowed the Council to ensure that the views of the public were considered and assessed before documents were produced.

Appendix 1 – Specific and General Consultation Bodies

The following organisations were consulted on the Rochford Area Action Plan Submission Document.

Althorne Parish Council

Anglian Water Services Ltd

Arriva Southern Counties

Ashingdon Parish Council

Barling Magna Parish Council

Basildon Borough Council

Burnham on Crouch Town Council

c2c Rail & National Express East Anglia

Campaign to Protect Rural Essex

Canewdon Parish Council

Castle Point Borough Council

Chelmsford Borough Council

CPREssex

Crouch Harbour Authority

Croud Ace

Defence Estates

Department for Communities and Local Government

Disability Essex

DTZ Piedad Consulting

East of England Local Government Association

East of England Regional Animal Health Office

English Heritage

Environment Agency

Essex & Suffolk Water

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Essex Autistic Society

Essex Bridleways Association

Essex Chambers of Commerce

Essex County Council

Essex County Council (Highways)

Essex County Council (Schools Service)

Essex County Council Public Rights of Way

Essex Libraries

Essex no 1 Circuit of Jehovah's Witnesses

Essex Police

Essex Police Headquarters

Essex Wildlife Trust

Essex Wildlife Trust Rochford & Southend Area

Essex Youth Service

Estuary Housing Association

Federation of Small Businesses

First Essex Buses

Foulness Parish Council

Great Wakering Parish Council

Grove Park Residents Association

Hawkwell Parish Council

Hawkwell Residents Association

Health & Safety Executive

Highways Agency

Hockley Chamber of Trade

Hockley Parish Council

Hockley Residents Association

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Home Builders Federation

Homes & Communities Agency

Hullbridge Parish Council

Leigh Town Council

Little Burstead Parish Council

London Gypsy and Traveller Unit

London Southend Airport

Marine Management Organisation

Mobile Operators Association

National Federation of Gypsy Liaison Groups

National Grid Gas

National Wind Power

Natural England

Network Rail

NHS South East Essex

NHS South Essex

Noak Bridge Parish Council

North Fambridge Parish Council

Paglesham Parish Council

Purleigh Parish Council

Ramsden Bellhouse Parish Council

Ramsden Crays Parish Council

Rawreth Parish Council

Rayleigh Chamber of Trade

Rayleigh Mount Local Committee

Rayleigh Town Council

Renewable UK

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Roach Fairways and Conservation Committee

Rochford & District Chamber of Trade & Commerce

Rochford & Rayleigh CAB

Rochford Chamber of Trade

Rochford District Access Committee

Rochford District Council

Rochford District Residents

Rochford Hundred Amenity Society

Rochford Hundred Golf Club

Rochford Parish Council

Rochford Police Station

Runwell Parish Council

Sanctuary housing association

SE Essex Organic Gardeners

SEETEC

South East Essex Friends of the Earth

South East Essex Green Party

South East Local Enterprise Partnership

South Essex Natural History Society

South Essex NHS Trust

South Woodham Ferrers Town Council

Southend & Rochford Community Command

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Southminster Parish Council

Sport England (East Region)

St Peter & Paul Parish Church

Stambridge Parish Council

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Stow Maries Parish Council

Sustrans

Sutton Parish Council

Swan Housing Association

The National Federation of Gypsy Liaison Groups

The National Trust

The National Trust Rayleigh Mount Local Committee

The Planning Inspectorate

The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings

The Theatres Trust

The Woodland Trust

Traveller Law Reform Project

Treasurer Crouch Harbour Authority

West Rochford Action Group

Woodham Ferrers & Bicknacre Parish Council

Woodland Trust

Appendix 2 – Issues Raised during Consultation on the Issues and Options Document

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
Introduction	
The Coal Authority has no comments to make.	Noted.
Rochford's heritage should be highlighted for locals and visitors to enjoy e.g. town trail, visitors map.	The heritage assets around the town are recognised for their important contribution to local character. This will be explored further in the next iteration of the Plan.
The East of England Local Government Association noted that the Plan does not give rise to any general conformity issues.	Noted.
Sport England commented that the Plan should specify what aspects of community facility provision should be provided or enhanced in the area.	Noted, this will be considered further in the development of the Plan.
There should be more planting in the town.	Noted.
Greater variety of shops is needed, particularly for children/teenagers.	
Access around the town should be improved for pedestrians and traffic e.g. moving bike stands and bus stop.	The Plan explores options to improve access for both pedestrians particularly around the town, and between the town, the train station and the reservoir. It also considers options for improving the experience of drivers in and around the town. This will be considered further in the next stage of the Plan.
Go-East commented that the Plan identifies, correctly, the development requirements stated in the East of England Plan.	Noted.

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Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>Essex County Council commented that paragraph 1.7 should be amended: Thirdly, Rochford Town Centre is a designated Conservation Area (Policy BC1 of the Rochford District Replacement Local Plan) and has a strong historic character and a number of cultural and heritage assets that are important to preserve or manage. Thus any development that takes place will need to be extremely carefully managed.</p>	<p>Suggestion noted. This will be considered in the next iteration of the Plan.</p>
<p>Essex County Council commented that paragraph 1.9 should be amended: The focus for the AAP is the defined town centre boundary as illustrated on the current Local Plan Proposals Map. The historic heart of Rochford Town Centre is the Market Square...</p>	<p>Suggestion noted. This will be considered in the next iteration of the Plan.</p>
<p>Essex County Council commented that paragraph 1.10 should be amended: The town centre includes a high number listed buildings, sites of significant archaeological potential and it has a high intrinsic value.</p>	<p>Suggestion noted. This will be considered in the next iteration of the Plan.</p>
<p>Support pedestrianisation. It would encourage family-orientated businesses to the area, similar to Leigh Broadway.</p>	<p>Further considered will be given to the potential for pedestrianisation in the next iteration of the Plan.</p>
<p>Essex County Council commented that paragraph 1.14 should be amended to make reference to: Rochford Historic Town Assessment: Comprises an archaeological and historical assessment of Rochford, It forms part of the Essex Historic Towns Survey which is an extensive urban survey as defined by English Heritage.</p>	<p>Suggestion noted. This will be considered in the next iteration of the Plan.</p>
<p>The Issues</p>	
<p>Rochford's heritage should be exploited to encourage tourism.</p>	<p>The heritage assets around the town are recognised for their important contribution to local character. This will be explored further in the next iteration of the Plan.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
If the Square is pedestrianised, some short-term free parking must be left available nearby. The surface of the Square should be replaced.	The option to fully pedestrianise the Market Square (Site B) has been considered within the Plan. This option also included the potential to provide free parking at Old Ship Lane car park, should the Square be pedestrianised with the re-provision or an increase in short-term parking spaces in Back Lane.
No objection to a café / bar in the Square.	Noted.
All car parking charges should be removed.	The purpose of this Plan is to identify issues and opportunities for the centre of Rochford, and suggested potential ways to address these. Car park charging is not an issue that will be addressed within the Area Action Plan.
The Spar building should be removed / exterior improved.	The option to remove the Spar building (Site A) has been considered in the Plan. Options included replacing Site A with a two storey modern interpretation of the once existing market Hall, replacing the building with a three-storey land mark building, or removal of the building without replacement. Improvement to the façade may also be considered in the next stage of the Plan.
The weekly market should remain in the Square.	Noted. The Plan is not proposing to move the existing weekly market.
Speeding around the town and congestion is an issue.	Existing issues in relation to traffic movement in and around the town are considered in the Plan, and options have been considered.
Pedestrianisation would have a detrimental impact on the elderly and disabled.	The option to fully or part pedestrianise the Square will be considered further in the next iteration of the Plan.
Less signage needed.	Noted.

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>Essex County Council commented that 'The surrounding countryside encroaches into the town' should be amended by insertion of 'extends' and deletion of 'encroaches' which implies an unwanted intrusion. (Table 2)</p>	<p>Suggestion noted. This will be considered in the next iteration of the Plan.</p>
<p>Support main issues.</p>	<p>Support noted.</p>
<p>Essex County Council commented that 'The UPS is being adopted as a supplementary planning document by most district and borough councils in Essex' should be expanded to state whether Rochford itself has adopted the Supplement. (paragraph 2.6)</p>	<p>Noted. This will be considered in the next iteration of the Plan.</p>
<p>Essex County Council commented that Table 2 (Character) should be amended: “The town has developed about a medieval cruciform pattern of streets, which come together at Horners Corner to the east of the Market Square.”</p>	<p>Suggestion noted. This will be considered in the next iteration of the Plan.</p>
<p>Sport England commented that there should be reference to the potential for improving access to sport and recreation opportunities in and around the town centre, such as health and fitness club provision.</p>	<p>Suggestion noted. This will be considered in the next iteration of the Plan.</p>
<p>Essex County Council commented that paragraph 2.13 should be amended: 'Spar represents an unsympathetic response to West and North Streets' may be better expressed as 'The design of Spar is not sympathetic to the character of West and North Streets'.</p>	<p>Suggestion noted. This will be considered in the next iteration of the Plan.</p>
<p>Essex County Council commented that paragraph 2.14 should be amended: 'Opportunities may exist to stitch the different elements of the town together' should be expanded to clarify the meaning.</p>	<p>Suggestion noted. This will be considered in the next iteration of the Plan.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>Essex County Council commented that Figure 3 should include the extent of the historic core as identified in the Rochford HEC and Historic Environment Record.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Essex County Council commented that the Plan should have a composite map showing the locations of the potential opportunity sites (A-K) and a map with road names shown would be useful.</p>	<p>Suggestion noted. This will be considered in the next iteration of the Plan.</p>
<p>Essex County Council commented that paragraph 2.15 should be amended: 'historic context' should be changed to 'historic environment character'.</p>	<p>Suggestion noted. This will be considered in the next iteration of the Plan.</p>
<p>Essex County Council commented that paragraph 2.16 (1st and 3rd bullets) should be amended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A well preserved historic medieval market town centred on a cross roads and market place • A characteristic medieval and post medieval street plan comprising axial roads, infilled market, Back Lane and irregular frontages all of which illustrate the settlements medieval origins and high potential for surviving archaeological deposits. 	<p>Suggestion noted. This will be considered in the next iteration of the Plan.</p>
<p>Disagree with restricting on-street car parking.</p>	<p>On-street parking around the town, particularly commuter parking, is considered to be an issue. The Council does not consider that it is important to manage parking within the town, and as such included an option within the Plan to manage parking more strictly.</p>
<p>Support residents parking permits e.g. along East Street.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Support any improvements to the Railway Station e.g. utilising the empty offices, car park and approach to the station.</p>	<p>Support noted.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
Retain existing one-way system.	The Plan recognises that the existing pattern of one way traffic flow has led to problems within the town. Speeding around Rochford is noted as a particular issue. Consequently the potential option to make the whole of North Street two-way in the longer term was considered. Another short term option considered in the Plan includes potentially changing the layout of kerbs and public realm materials.
Essex County Council commented that more information on car parking in the town is needed to inform the Plan (paragraph 2.27).	Suggestion noted. This will be considered in the next iteration of the Plan.
Council employees should not have free parking.	Comment noted.
Concern about the location of fixed disabled bays.	The location of disabled parking bays will be considered further in the development of the Plan, should the options for full or part pedestrianisation be taken forward.
Object to pedestrianisation of Square.	Further considered will be given to the potential for pedestrianisation in the next iteration of the Plan.
Re-opened routes in the Rochford Hospital site could include : Pollards Close to Rochford Primary School; Pollards Close to Union Lane; Saint Luke's Place to Union Lane; South of Somerfield (Coop) to Union Lane; North of Somerfield (Coop) to Rochford Primary School	Noted.
Essex County Council commented that 'Cycling through Rochford is of a generally acceptable standard' should be expanded to clarify the meaning (Paragraph 2.33); and: 'Cycle racks are for persons using retail facilities and station and are therefore not covered' should be expanded to clarify why this is the case and whether any action is required (Paragraph 2.34). It was also commented that traffic calming endangers cyclists.	Suggestion noted. This will be considered in the next iteration of the Plan.

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>Arriva Southern Counties commented that in figure 6, it would be more useful to note bus route 7 as running approximately every 10 minutes rather than trying to split the service into routes 7 and 8. The light blue colour could then be removed from the map. Route 20x operates at school times only.</p>	<p>Comment noted. This will be considered in the next stage of the Plan.</p>
<p>Essex County Council commented that information should be included for the Express 20 route (paragraph 2.37).</p>	<p>Suggestion noted. This will be considered in the next iteration of the Plan.</p>
<p>No objection to more bus shelters.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Arriva Southern Counties would be keen to work with the Council to improve the legibility of the bus stop locations and bus stop information. Support measures to improve the walking route from East Street to the Station.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Essex County Council commented as follows: Table of Main Issues (page 33): - 'Street Network/ Management' - the statement in the fourth bullet that 'The parking area in Market Square is pressurised' uses odd phraseology. - 'Bus Service' - the distinction made between 'signs' instead of 'stops' is not clear.</p>	<p>Suggestion noted. This will be considered in the next iteration of the Plan.</p>
<p>General agreement with Table 3.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Essex County Council suggested an additional point for Table 3 (Conservation and Heritage): Any developments within the town centre and its immediate hinterland will need to fully consider the cultural assets and the high potential for the survival of significant archaeological deposits and the requirements for appropriate preservation or mitigation.</p>	<p>Suggestion noted. This will be considered in the next iteration of the Plan.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>Table 3 – include the following main issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of police presence to deter youths loitering – feeling unsafe • Lack of enforcement of drivers stopping in ‘Keep Clear’ box at the entrance to West Street causing congestion • Too many charity shops • More shops needed • Importance of centralised parking for businesses • Reduce speed within town centre • Retain car parks as existing • Consideration should be given to a pannier market • Free daytime parking (after 10am) 	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>The Opportunities</p>	
<p>Support for the vision and objectives.</p>	<p>Support noted.</p>
<p>The vision should recognise the need for development outside the AAP area as part of the wider strategy for Rochford.</p>	<p>The area covered by the Area Action Plan – Rochford town centre – is set out in the Plan. It is not the purpose of this Plan to consider the wider area.</p>
<p>GO-East commented that the vision could be strengthened by including a clear timescale in which it is expected to be achieved.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
<p>Essex County Council commented that it is not clear what measures would assist achievement of the suggested support of small and local businesses (paragraph 3.3).</p>	<p>Comment noted. This will be considered in the next iteration of the Plan.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
EEDA suggest that there should be a greater emphasis on town centre functions, including making the town centre an attractive location to secure and retain employers and business.	Suggestion noted.
Rochford Parish Council support the vision and objectives, but would like to see the entry and exit for vehicles into the Market Square revert back to the previous scheme.	Support noted. This will be considered further in the next stage of the Plan.
Site A	
Support replacement of the Spar building.	Support noted.
Suggest traditionally designed 2 or 3 storey building like others in the town.	Suggestion noted.
Hawkwell Parish Council support replacement with a 2 storey copy of the once existing Market Hall (retail with flats). Not replacing it would destroy the whole concept of the Square. Horner's Corner is the centre of a unique street system which must be retained.	Noted. The potential issues with both replacing the building and not replacing it have been identified in the Plan.
Support 2 storey building like the previous Market Hall, redevelopment with a landmark building and removal without replacement.	Noted. The potential issues with both replacing the building and not replacing it have been identified in the Plan.
Residential use is not appropriate due to lack of parking in the area.	Concern noted. Parking to accompany any proposed residential development would need to be considered further in the next stage of the Plan.
Support more restaurants but not more shops.	Support noted.
Essex County Council commented that a design brief would be needed. The height and scale of new building reflecting the other buildings in the Square. The potential for archaeological deposits would need to be considered.	A design brief would be required to accompany any development of this site, particularly as it is located within a Conservation Area.

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>Rochford Chamber of Trade comment that rather than replacing the existing building the façade should be improved instead as this would be more cost effective and less disruptive to existing businesses. An additional storey could be added. The building owner is reluctant to become involved with any improvements.</p>	<p>Comments noted. The potential options for this site will be considered further in the development of the Plan.</p>
<p>Environment Agency commented that Site A is situated within Flood Zone 1.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Need to consider impact on existing businesses.</p>	<p>The potential issues with both replacing the building and not replacing it have been identified in the Plan.</p>
<p>Site B</p>	
<p>The Theatres Trust support the suggestion at paragraph 3.8 that the Square should be town's focus for community activities but that nearby free parking is vital for residents and visitors to access existing retail and new leisure venues. Suggest establishment of a youth theatre.</p>	<p>The Council recognises the need to ensure replacement short-term parking facilities should the Square be pedestrianised. This includes providing equivalent parking at Old Ship Lane car park and re-provision or even increase of short-term parking spaces in the Back Lane car park.</p> <p>Suggestion in relation to the establishment of a youth theatre is noted.</p>
<p>Oppose pedestrianisation – concern about accessibility for the elderly and disabled.</p>	<p>Noted. The Council, however, has considered the potential for re-providing free short-term car parking nearby in proximity to the Square in the development of the options in the Plan. This will be considered further in the next stage of the Plan.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>Hawkwell Parish Council oppose pedestrianisation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Concern about antisocial behaviour and impact on businesses ● The entrance and exit should be reversed ● Reduce taxis in Square to 3 places ● More restaurants or bars are not needed ● Pump and trough should be retained ● Retain West Street bus route 	<p>Comments noted. Further considered will be given to the potential for pedestrianisation in the next iteration of the Plan.</p>
<p>Support part pedestrianisation with core parking spaces only.</p>	<p>Further considered will be given to the potential for pedestrianisation in the next iteration of the Plan.</p>
<p>Support for short term parking in Back Lane and having the taxi rank headquarters at the station.</p>	<p>Support noted.</p>
<p>Essex County Council commented that if pedestrianised, the Square needs facilities to encourage pedestrians to use it. Buses have caused damage to listed and other buildings and create traffic congestion. The full or part pedestrianisation of the Market Square would need to consider the potential for archaeological deposits.</p>	<p>Comments noted. Further considered will be given to the potential for pedestrianisation in the next iteration of the Plan.</p>
<p>Rochford Chamber of Trade oppose pedestrianisation, removal of bus route and relaxation of 75% rule. Fewer taxi spaces (provide a telephone), retain trough and pump, and reverse entrance/exit for Square.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Environment Agency commented that Site B is situated within Flood Zone 1.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
Support full or part pedestrianisation. Free parking should be provided elsewhere. The area should be resurfaced with cobblestones.	Noted. The Council, however, has considered the potential for re-providing free short-term car parking nearby in proximity to the Square in the development of the options in the Plan. This will be considered further in the next stage of the Plan.
Support retention of West Street bus route.	Support noted.
Support café or restaurant use with outdoor seating in Summer.	Support noted.
Oppose relaxing 75% rule.	The Council recognises that there is a balance that needs to be struck between the retention/encouragement of retail uses and opportunities to enhance the night time economy within the town. This will be explored further in the next iteration of the Plan.
Old Ship Lane does not have sufficient spaces to compensate for pedestrianisation of the Square.	Free parking provision at Old Ship Lane has been proposed in conjunction with short-term parking space provision in Back Lane car park as a potential option, should full pedestrianisation of the Square be taken forward in the Plan.
Cars should not be allowed to use West Street. Buses and pedestrians only.	Preventing cars from using West Street has not been considered as an option within the Plan as there are existing dwellings which require access and businesses which require servicing. Preventing cars from using West Street could also reduce passive surveillance within the town which could have a detrimental impact of safety and security.

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
The West Street bus route should be rerouted.	Whilst the Plan notes that diverting buses away from the town centre would prevent any potential impact on historic buildings – Essex County Council has acknowledged in their consultation response that buses have caused damage to listed and other buildings in the town – it also noted that bus stops at both ends of West Street allows for better access to station and other routes to different areas of the District. Arriva Southern Counties would be, as expressed in their representations, opposed to altering the bus route.
Reverse entrance and exit.	Such an option has been trialled in the past, without success. There were issues with this approach which would need to be resolved.
Support removal of taxi rank / reduction in number of taxi spaces.	Support noted. This option will be considered further in the next iteration of the Plan.
Rochford Parish Council support full pedestrianisation of the Square on Market Days only, plus one other day to facilitate other markets/events, and removal of the taxi rank in the car parking area.	Noted.
More facilities for young people are needed.	Comment noted.
Lack of enforcement of drivers stopping in 'Keep Clear' box at the entrance to West Street causing congestion. Congestion in the town centre needs to be addressed.	The issue of car queuing in West Street, and at times on other roads, is recognised in the Plan. Options such as full or part pedestrianisation have been considered.
The West Street / Bradley Way junction should be a gateway into the town.	Comment noted. Options in the Plan seek to enhance this entrance into the town.

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
Site C	
Arriva Southern Counties comment that they hope, whichever option is taken forward, to see alleviation of the current queuing traffic in West Street which delays bus services.	Noted. The issue of car queuing in West Street, and at times on other roads, is recognised in the Plan. Options such as full or part pedestrianisation have been considered.
The junction should be improved.	The Plan presents options for improving this site.
Hawkwell Parish Council commented that the restaurant and florist should be retained. However, the garage and former petrol station sites should be symmetrically developed up to 2.5 stories high, preferably residential.	The potential issues and opportunities for redevelopment in this location have been considered, and will be considered further in the development of the Plan.
The garage should be retained.	This will be considered further in the development of the Plan.
The old petrol station should be redeveloped.	A planning application has been approved for this site (08/00894/FUL) to construct a part two storey and part three storey building to provide a shop to the ground floor with six flats above with access and parking to front and parking at rear. This permission has been implemented.
Essex County Council commented that the restaurant and florist should be retained. The potential for archaeological deposits would need to be considered.	Comment noted. This will be considered further in the development of the Plan.
Rochford Chamber of Trade stated that the restaurant and florist should be retained, but the garage should be developed with retail on the ground floor. Part of the old petrol station could be used for junction improvements.	The Chamber's support for the retention of certain businesses at Site C is noted.
Environment Agency commented that the southern side of West Street (of the identified site) falls within Flood Zone 2, classed as medium probability risk in PPS25. Of the two options being considered for Site C, neither appears to be resulting in an increase in flood risk.	Noted.

Rochford District Council – Local Development Framework Rochford Area Action Plan: Consultation Statement

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
Support retention of restaurant and florist.	Support noted.
Support redevelopment on this site. Concern in relation to relocation of businesses.	Support noted.
Support creation of a heritage entrance.	Support noted.
Rochford Parish Council suggested the junction should be left as it is.	Noted.
Residential units should be affordable.	The Council are committed to providing affordable housing within the District. On sites with 15 or more units it is expected that 35% would be affordable, subject to viability considerations (Core Strategy Policy H4).
Site D	
Hawkwell Parish Council commented that the pub car park should be retained as such, but other parts of the site should be redeveloped for residential.	Noted. A range of options for this area have been set out in the Plan and will be considered further in the next iteration.
Support for redevelopment of shops/restaurant.	Support noted.
Support for development of vacant part of the site and car park for residential use.	Support noted.
Residential units should be in keeping with local character.	This site is situated towards the northern end of the Rochford Conservation Area. Local character would need to be carefully considered with any new development.

Rochford District Council – Local Development Framework Rochford Area Action Plan: Consultation Statement

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
Essex County Council commented that redevelopment of the site would fill the gap in the street scene and enhance the appearance of the town. The size and appearance of any buildings are important in Conservation Area terms. The potential for archaeological deposits would need to be considered.	The Plan notes that this area makes a poor contribution to the character of the town. Different options for filling in the gap in the street scene have been considered in the Plan.
Rochford Chamber of Trade commented that the shops/restaurant façade should be improved and commercial use retained. The car park provides views of the adjacent development, but if not overdeveloped it could be positive for the town.	Suggestion noted. As this site is within the Conservation Area, local character would need to be carefully considered with any new development.
Environment Agency commented that Site D is situated within Flood Zone 1.	Noted.
Existing businesses should be retained.	The potential for disruption to existing businesses with redevelopment of the shops and restaurant are recognised in the Plan.
Support development of shops/restaurant and the vacant land for housing.	Support noted.
Rochford Parish Council commented that redevelopment of shops/restaurant to include accommodation similar to the recent development in West Street.	Comment noted. As this site is also situated within the Rochford Conservation Area, local character would need to be carefully considered with any new development.
Support for redevelopment with work/live units to provide start up units to small businesses.	Suggestion noted.
Consideration should be given to extending the retail units onto the vacant land.	Suggestion noted.
Site E	
Hawkwell Parish Council commented that Whittingham's Garage is an iconic building and should be listed. It should be retained.	Noted. Essex County Council support the retention of this building.

Rochford District Council – Local Development Framework Rochford Area Action Plan: Consultation Statement

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
Some support for redevelopment for residential use.	Support noted.
Whittingham's Garage were unaware of these proposals.	The Council sought to engage with the public and encourage participation through a range of methods as set out in this consultation statement. This included public exhibitions.
Strong opposition to the redevelopment of the site.	Noted.
Essex County Council commented that this is an historic building and should remain. The potential for archaeological deposits would need to be considered.	The option for no redevelopment of this site has been included in the Plan.
Rochford Chamber of Trade support no redevelopment of the site. Potential redevelopment of the neighbouring Parish Council site was suggested. Concern in relation to potential loss of garages and hence trade in the town.	Comment noted.
Environment Agency commented that Site E is situated within Flood Zone 2. If identified for residential use, the Sequential Test would need to be demonstrated and passed.	Noted.
Site F	
Hawkwell Parish Council disagrees that this area has a weak frontage. Developing this site would detract from the appearance of the area. Lay-bys will cause congestion.	The option for no redevelopment of this site has been included in the Plan.
Opposition to redevelopment of the site.	Noted.
Other options for improving access to reservoir suggested e.g. information centre.	Suggestions noted.

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>Essex County Council commented that development could help create a stronger, continuous frontage on Bradley Way. The potential for archaeological deposits would need to be considered.</p>	<p>The potential for strengthening the frontage along Bradley Way at this site has been considered in the Plan and options to redevelop it for retail, residential or office use have been proposed.</p>
<p>Environment Agency commented that the majority of Site F is situated within Flood Zone 3 (high probability risk) with the remainder falling within Flood Zone 2 (medium probability risk).</p> <p>The Sequential Test would need to be demonstrated and passed for redevelopment of the site for retail/residential, or office use.</p> <p>The Exception Test would also need to be passed for residential development in Flood Zone 3a. Development of Flood Zone 3b would be contrary to national policy.</p> <p>If redeveloped, surface water would also need to be considered due to the loss of green space on the site.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Support for redevelopment of this site (retail/residential and office uses).</p>	<p>Support noted.</p>
<p>Site G</p>	
<p>Hawkwell Parish Council commented that Back Lane car park should be retained. The doctor's surgery should be retained. A new health centre would take too much car parking space as would residential or retail on the site.</p>	<p>Options considered include the retention of Back Lane or partial redevelopment. This issue will be considered further in the next stage of the Plan.</p>
<p>Support retention of Back Lane car park.</p>	<p>Support noted.</p>
<p>Back Lane and Old Ship Lane car parks are disconnected from the Square. Access is via alleyways.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
<p>Poor signage to Co-Op car park.</p>	<p>Improving signage around the town will be considered further in the preparation of the next stage of the Plan.</p>

Rochford District Council – Local Development Framework Rochford Area Action Plan: Consultation Statement

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
Essex County Council commented that the potential for archaeological deposits would need to be considered.	Comment noted.
Rochford Chamber of Trade support retention of Back Lane car park.	Support noted.
<p>Environment Agency commented that the western part of Site G is situated within Flood Zone 2.</p> <p>The Sequential Test would need to be demonstrated and passed for redevelopment of the site for residential use.</p>	Noted.
Some support for partial redevelopment.	Support noted.
Any redevelopment should not result in the loss of car parking, particularly if the car park in the Square could be lost.	Redevelopment of Site G would need to be considered in conjunction with the options for Site B and Site J.
The rear of buildings along Back Lane is not an issue.	Comment noted.
Site H	
Hawkwell Parish Council commented that there would be no benefit in relocating the doctor's surgery to near the hospital.	Comment noted.
Healthcare facilities could be extended. Rochford Parish Council supports this option. But it's unclear what type this will take and extension should not result in the loss of car parking.	This option was proposed in the Plan and will be considered further at the next stage.
Loss of most of Rochford hospital to residential has impacted the town.	Comment noted.
Support for retention of current doctor's surgery and car park.	Support noted.
Essex County Council commented that the potential for archaeological deposits would need to be considered.	Comment noted.

Rochford District Council – Local Development Framework Rochford Area Action Plan: Consultation Statement

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
Rochford Chamber of Trade support retention of the doctor's surgery and car park.	Support noted.
Environment Agency commented that Site H is situated within Flood Zone 1.	Noted.
Any redevelopment should not result in the loss of car parking, particularly if the car park in the Square could be lost.	Redevelopment of Site H would need to be considered in conjunction with the options for Site B and Site J.
Site J	
Hawkwell Parish Council commented that provision of a multi-storey car park in conjunction with the hospital car park is not practical. The hospital closed all footpaths through the site for security reasons.	The need to ensure the safe, secure and successful operation of Rochford Hospital is recognised in the Plan. A multi-storey car park would only be developed if it could be implemented in a manner that does not adversely affect the operational needs of the hospital. This point has been highlighted by the South Essex NHS Trust in their response to the consultation.
Support multi-storey car park, if viable.	Support noted.
South Essex NHS Trust the option to develop a multi-story car park would require further discussion to fully understand the implications such a development could have on the hospital. Security of the hospital would need to be considered. Support regeneration of the town centre. Discussions with the Council and the hospital are welcome.	The need to ensure the safe, secure and successful operation of Rochford Hospital is recognised in the Plan. A multi-storey car park would only be developed if it could be implemented in a manner that does not adversely affect the operational needs of the hospital.
Support for retention of the car park as existing.	Support noted.
Essex County Council commented that the potential for archaeological deposits would need to be considered.	Comment noted.

Rochford District Council – Local Development Framework Rochford Area Action Plan: Consultation Statement

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
Rochford Chamber of Trade commented that it is very unlikely that the hospital would agree to any development. They have strongly opposed suggestions in the past, even a footway. On this basis we would retain the doctors' surgery and car park in Back Lane.	The need to ensure the safe, secure and successful operation of Rochford Hospital is recognised in the Plan. A multi-storey car park would only be developed if it could be implemented in a manner that does not adversely affect the operational needs of the hospital. This point has been highlighted by the South Essex NHS Trust in their response to the consultation.
Environment Agency commented that Site J is situated within Flood Zone 1.	Noted.
This area should be opened up for pedestrian access and passing through the hospital site.	It is acknowledged in the Plan, however, that the safe, secure and successful operation of Rochford Hospital is of paramount importance. Pedestrian access through the site will be carefully considered in the development of the Plan.
Site K	
Hawkwell Parish Council commented that the Railway Station car park and Freight House car park should be left alone, both are needed to service these facilities.	The Plan considers options to refurbish the train station, improve bus-rail interchange, provide ramps/steps up the embankment from West Street to the car park, redesigning the car park and create pedestrian links between the train station and open space adjacent to the Freight House.
Support for refurbishment of train station.	Support noted.
Support for ramp/steps up the embankment from West Street to the car park.	Support noted.
Hawkwell Parish Council commented that there is a well-used footpath link from West Street/Back Lane via alley the side of the Hotel, steps set in bank would aid access to Freight House and Station.	The Plan proposes an option to provide ramps/steps up the embankment from West Street to the car park.
Suggestion that play space could be installed at the reservoir.	Suggestion noted.

Rochford District Council – Local Development Framework Rochford Area Action Plan: Consultation Statement

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
There should be improved access to the reservoir from the town and station.	The Plan seeks to improve access to the reservoir town and train station. This will be explored further in the development of the Plan.
Better pathways are needed around the reservoir. A kiosk and/or toilets are needed.	Suggestion noted.
The car park should be altered so that visitors are welcomed by a better vista than rows of cars.	The Plan proposes to redesign the car park to provide a direct pedestrian linkage between the proposed ramp/steps up the embankment and the station.
A map of Rochford (history and green spaces) should be provided.	Improving signage around the town will be considered further in the preparation of the next stage of the Plan.
<p>Rochford Chamber of Trade commented that free commuter/Council employee parking should be stopped and that there should be provision to allow businesses long term parking (for a fee).</p> <p>There should be improved links to the station, town and through the reservoir.</p> <p>There are opportunities for redeveloping the Old Station house.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p> <p>The Plan identifies opportunities to enhance links between the station, town and the reservoir to the south of Bradley Way.</p> <p>Refurbishment of the train station has been considered as an option for Site K in the Plan.</p>
Environment Agency commented that Site K is situated within Flood Zone 1.	Noted.
Support for improved bus-rail interchange.	Support noted.
Support for improved links between the station, town and reservoir.	Support noted.

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
Other Sites	
Rochford Parish Council commented that enhancements to area on Church Walk side of Station would be beneficial as a gateway into Rochford Town.	Comment noted.
Transport Options	
Essex County Council had no specific comment to make on transportation matters at this stage. However, of relevance are the transportation considerations which have informed preparation of the Core Strategy and assessment of development options for the Rochford and Ashingdon areas. More detailed consideration will be required of the transport implications of proposals as they emerge through the further stages of the Area Action Plan. The County Council, as Local Highway Authority, can offer further advice and guidance on transportation matters as proposals for the town centre evolve.	Noted.
Roads should be improved.	The Plan considers potential options for improvement to traffic flows in the AAP area. This will be considered further in the development of the Plan.
Parking and Travel Demand Management	
Support for both the options.	Support noted.
Parking should not be more restrictive.	The Plan seeks to strike a balance between provision of parking and potential for enhancements to the public realm. Managing parking more strictly within the town was one such option considered.
Rochford Parish Council support the proposal for increasing the size of the park and ride facility and comment that public transport should be more affordable.	Support noted.

Rochford District Council – Local Development Framework Rochford Area Action Plan: Consultation Statement

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
Buses should enter the station area as part of their route.	The retention of the existing bus route through the town is considered to be preferable.
North and South Streets	
Opposition to making North Street two-way. Hawkwell Parish Council and Rochford Chamber of Trade also do not support this.	The potential for North Street to become two-way has been considered as an option within the Plan. This will be considered further in the next iteration.
Support for measures to slow down traffic and improve crossings along North Street and South Street.	Support noted.
Opposition to installing traffic lights at the North Street / South Street junction. A mini-roundabout could be installed.	The installation of traffic lights where North Street meets South Street was considered as part of a longer term option for these roads. This will be considered further during the development of the next stage of the Plan.
Roadside parking slows down traffic, whereas yellow lines clear the road and make traffic speeds much higher. Areas should be used for parking instead.	The Plan seeks to strike a balance between provision of parking and potential for enhancements to the public realm. Managing parking more strictly within the town was one such option considered.
Rochford Parish Council support adoption of Roche Close and associated parking restrictions, and small scale improvements to reduce speed and improve crossings.	Support noted.
The Ashingdon Road / Dalys Road junction should be widened.	Comment noted, however, this area is outside the remit of the AAP.
The town centre should have a reduced speed limit.	Comment noted.

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
Weir Pond Road	
Hawkwell Parish Council commented that there is a lack of off street parking along this road. The traffic island at the junction with East Street could be removed.	Comment noted. Removal of the traffic island has been considered as an option and will be considered further.
Support for on street parking restrictions.	Support noted.
Rochford Chamber of Trade commented that there are opportunities along this road to improve this entrance to the town e.g. developing the BT site.	Comment noted.
Rochford Chamber of Trade commented that plans which have been drawn up with RDC in conjunction with Highways and a local group – this should be examined before any further plans and /or expense is incurred. This is an ideal project for further funding.	It is unclear what plans are being referred to.
Arriva Southern Counties support measures that would ease bus access to the town centre and remodelling or removal of the island would assist safe bus operation.	Support noted.
Support for enhancements to footpaths and additional crossings.	Support noted.
Support for remodelling the island and support for its retention.	Support noted.
Support for resident only parking scheme.	Support noted.
Bradley Way	
Rochford Parish Council does not support the proposed on street parking. Additional pedestrian access from Locks Hill to Bradley Way and the footpath between Back Lane car park and Bradley Way needs upgrading.	On-street parking has been considered as an option within the Plan for this road. This will be considered further in the next iteration.

Rochford District Council – Local Development Framework Rochford Area Action Plan: Consultation Statement

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
Hawkwell Parish Council disagrees with a signalised junction with West Street.	Potential signalisation of West Street has been considered as an option within the Plan for this road. This will be considered further in the development of the Plan.
Support for proposed on street parking on this road.	Support noted.
Improved signage to the town and the reservoir is needed.	Noted.
Rochford Chamber of Trade commented that more detail is needed.	These options will be considered further in the development of the Plan.
Traffic calming measures and yellow lines should be removed from around the town.	The Plan seeks to strike a balance between provision of parking and potential for enhancements to the public realm. Managing parking more strictly within the town was one such option considered.
Opposition to installation of traffic lights.	Potential signalisation of West Street has been considered as an option within the Plan for this road. This will be considered further in the development of the Plan.
Opposition to on street parking on this road.	On-street parking has been considered as an option within the Plan for this road. This will be considered further in the next iteration.
Short term parking in car parks should be free.	Comment noted.
Improved pedestrian crossing from the southern end of South Street to the reservoir is needed.	Comment noted.
West Street	
Rochford Parish Council is not in favour of either option.	Noted.

Rochford District Council – Local Development Framework Rochford Area Action Plan: Consultation Statement

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
Opposition to traffic signals at the West Street / Hall Road junction. Hawkwell Parish Council does not support this.	Potential signalisation of West Street / Hall Road junction has been considered as an option within the Plan for this road. This will be considered further in the development of the Plan.
Suggestion of reduced speed limit around the town.	Comment noted.
Arriva Southern Counties strongly agree with retaining bus access to West Street. This allows good access to both Rochford Town Centre and to the Station in this direction. Many journeys made on routes 7 & 8 are through riders across Rochford. A more circuitous route returning via South Street again would be very likely to deter through users and affect the viability of the services.	Noted.
Support for improvements to footpaths etc. including widening	Support noted.
Suggestion that buses should not use West Street. They could be rerouted via North Street, Weir Pond Road, South Street, Bradley Way and enter the station car park. Southend bound buses should reroute via Ashingdon Road to the station and up South Street to the town.	Suggestion noted, however, Arriva Southern Counties would not be in favour of revising the current route due to concerns in relation to accessibility.
There should be dedicated cycle routes throughout the town.	Comment noted.
Bus Routing and Facilities	
Rochford Chamber of Trade commented that the buses should not be rerouted.	Rerouting the bus service to avoid the Market Square has been considered as a potential option within the Plan. This will be considered further in the next iteration.
The buses need a route along West Street.	Noted.

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>Arriva Southern Counties commented that whilst they support and would be pleased to work with the Council to improve signage of the current bus stops in the town centre, they would not support diversion of services away from the Market Square. This is a very convenient stop for bus users accessing the town centre, many of whom have accessibility issues, and we would have deep concerns for the viability of the services if they could not continue to access the heart of the town centre.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
<p>Support for improving stop facilities.</p>	<p>Support noted.</p>
<p>Some support for rerouting the bus service to avoid the Market Square.</p>	<p>Support noted.</p>
<p>Rochford Parish Council prefer improving stop facilities and would like to see a bus service from both directions serving the railway station. All bus stops should have bus information.</p>	<p>Noted. This will be considered further in the development of the Plan.</p>
<p>Suggestion that the taxi rank should be relocated to North Street.</p>	<p>Suggestion noted. Potential relocation of the taxi rank has been considered as part of the options for the Market Square (Site B) which includes the potential for both full and part pedestrianisation.</p>
<p>Sending In Your Views</p>	
<p>Highways Agency commented that the AAP does not contain any proposals that would impact upon the strategic road network, and therefore they do not have any comments to make.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
<p>Appendix A: Planning Policy Context</p>	
<p>Go-East and the East of England Local Government Association commented that the East of England Plan 2008 established a regional housing target of 508,000 new units, not 421,500. It was also pointed out that the Essex Thames Gateway Sub-region has been set an indicative growth target of 55,000 net new jobs (not dwellings), of which 3000 are</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

Issue Raised	Initial Officer Comments
expected to come forward in Rochford.	
Essex County Council commented that the Rochford Historic Town Assessment should be included within Appendix A.	Noted.
Appendix C: Glossary	
Go-East pointed out that English Nature is incorporated within Natural England.	Noted.
Natural England had no comment on the Plan, but would like to advise that all references to English Nature should be changed to Natural England.	Noted.
Essex County Council commented that the further stages of the Area Action Plan should consider the improvement of walking and cycling routes to school because travel to school routes cross through the town centre. In addition, the definition of Infrastructure in the Glossary includes schools but not Early Years and Childcare. In order to capture all types of education use of the term 'Education' is preferred in this context.	Noted.

Rochford Area Action Plan Issues and Options Public Exhibition Responses (Monday 9 and 16 November 2009)

These exhibition days took place at the WI Hall, Market Square, Rochford between 9.30am-4.30pm. The following provides a summary of responses:

Site A

- Support replacement of the Spar building with a replica of the once existing Market Hall (x9)
- Support removal of the building without replacement (x2)
- Demolish the majority and erect “landmark” building
- This area should be redeveloped but should be in keeping with historical town centre

- Remove shops. Replace with Market Hall allow for widening and junction improvements (x2)
- Demolish Spar building
- Concern about where the bus stops would be moved to
- Leisure centre and gym is a good idea
- Connaught House is underused and not appropriately used or maintained. Could be restaurant with offices above
- At least part pedestrianisation is a good idea. The old Spa building needs re-developing
- Redevelop using old removed building as design basis as a landmark. No housing – only for commercial uses
- Do not agree with another leisure centre or gym

Site B

- Like the idea of a heritage centre/museum
- Too many taxi ranks in the Market Square – rank should be relocated to the station with a direct phone in the Square (x4)
- Support pedestrianisation of the Square (x6)
- Reduce taxi spaces – maximum two taxis at a time (x3)
- Maximum 3.5 ton vehicles on West Street (x2)
- Do not support pedestrianisation (x6)
- Keep pump and trough (x3)
- Removal of bus stop in Square probably good, but not for people with mobility problems (x3)
- Support rerouting buses
- Free parking
- Additional restaurants if possible
- Parking arrangement in the Square should revert to original to ease waiting in South Street (x3)
- Market Square is the centre of the town
- Better use of Connaught House
- Too much traffic going through West Street
- Café culture is a long term aspiration
- Narrower pavements either side of the square – no need for them to be so wide

Site C

- Concern about where the bus stop in the Square be moved to
- Keep florist and restaurant (x3)

- Attractive older fabric. No need to change roundabout
- Opposition to both option (x3)
- Bus shelter required at railway station
- Keep building on south side of West Street (x3)
- Garage site and old BP site could accommodate junction improvements/needs enhancing (x2)
- Widen and open up the corner create a heritage centre
- The information that this was a front “entrance” to Rochford is not relevant – South Street is the entrance to Rochford
- A bit confusing with the ‘2 way traffic’ to the car park – should be another way in and site C should be the exit

Site D

- There should be a youth club in the old library
- Re-develop shops/restaurant (x7)
- Keep car park for the pub (x3)
- More car parking is needed (x4)
- Redevelop the site as a car park (x2)
- Redevelop vacant land as a car park
- Keep buses for the elderly
- Car park provides interesting view of design of the new development to the west

Site E

- Should not be developed its an historic/iconic building (x3)
- It is an older building and continuous has been family-owned for many generations (x2)
- Do not support development of the site (x14)
- Make Whittinghams a listed building (x7)
- Keep some character and history of Rochford – it should not be all flats
- Older properties should be restored
- When you get off the train at Rochford and see the garage, you know you’re home
- Keep the buses for the elderly

Site F

- Site F is not a weak frontage, attractive shrubbery should remain with hotel

- Do not support redevelopment (x12)
- Could be a park with seating and green space (x4)
- No residential building on a busy main road
- Pedestrian crossing leading to the reservoir needed (x3)

Site G

- Keep the buses for the elderly (x2)
- Retain car parking (x5)
- Back Lane car park will be much needed especially if Market Square places go
- Pedestrian crossing leading to the reservoir and Freight House needed
- Need more spaces, especially short term (x2)
- Could have underground parking with park above
- Should be free parking to local residents

Site H

- Do not support development (x7)
- Replace surgery to different area of car park
- More healthcare needed (x4)
- Keep the buses
- Retain doctor's surgery (x6)
- Only very limited re-development
- More car parking needed
- Pedestrian crossing needed plus better access from station and to town

Site J

- Better entrance and exit to car park with option 1
- Do not support development of the car park (x4)
- Option 1 is unsuitable for security reasons
- Facilities at train station need updating and more facilities needed e.g. newsagents, encourage tourism (x2)
- More parking and a 'Rochford by-pass' would be a way of stopping the congestion in the town
- Support multi storey car park with a link into town/Co-Op to the east (x2)

- Keep the buses
- Support more parking
- This car park needs to be better signposted
- No more flats
- Young people need more facilities. The trial skateboard was a great success.
- Congestion around Rochford is an issue

Site K

- Support refurbishment of train station (x6)
- Support ramps/steps up the embankment to the station / improve access to the town (x4)
- Move crossing closer to station entrance
- Leave parking as it is – more car parking is needed(x2)
- Need toilets, café, travel information
- More zebra crossings and better bus-rail connections
- Better pedestrian access to Co-Op
- Retain Back Lane car parking
- Improve and control parking at Freight House
- No development of the station – this should be the responsibility of the rail operators

Appendix 3 – Issues Raised by Specific and General Consultation Bodies during Pre-Submission Consultation

The following specific and general consultation bodies responded to the pre-submission consultation on the Rochford Area Action Plan.

Anglian Water* English Heritage* Essex County Council Highways Agency* The Woodland Trust
 Chelmsford City Council Environment Agency* Hawkwell Parish Council Natural England

* These specific and general consultation bodies provided a response to the consultation but they were not input into the online consultation system as they were not provided on the official form and/or did not refer to either soundness or legal compliance. However, a summary of responses and officer’s initial response to these has been included below. The full representations from these consultees are available in Appendix 5.

It should also be noted that as of 1 January 2012, the Coal Authority’s response to any development plan consultations for the District is ‘No observation’.

	Issues Raised	Initial Officer Comments
Introduction		
1	Chelmsford City Council has no specific comments to make on this document.	Noted.
2	Natural England welcomes the objectives of the AAP including improved accessibility for all, recognising the need to enhance linkages to public open space such as the area adjacent to Bradley Way.	Support noted.
3	Natural England support policies which encourage developers to promote cycling and walking and improve links to the town centre and open space for non car users.	Support noted.

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	Issues Raised	Initial Officer Comments
4	Natural England generally welcomes the policies presented within the AAP particularly where these seek to improve the public realm and promote landscape and environmental enhancements including access to open space.	Support noted.
5	Natural England welcomes the promotion of unused, underused or unattractive sites for development; however, in line with the NPPF only those sites which are not of high environmental value should be developed.	Support noted.
6	Natural England commented that the AAP should also seek to ensure development contributes to improved access to the strategic green infrastructure beyond the Plan boundary wherever possible. As mentioned in their previous responses they would advise that the AAP should include suitable wording to ensure that development does not have an adverse effect on sites of local biodiversity importance and that the Plan should specify the requirement for detailed ecological assessment and identification of mitigation where development is likely to have an adverse effect on designated sites, habitats or species. Biodiversity enhancements should also be incorporated into development wherever possible, in accordance with the NPPF. Measures to enhance biodiversity could include the incorporation of green walls and roofs, setting up bird and bat boxes and sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS).	<p>It would not be appropriate to include reference to ensuring improved access to the strategic green infrastructure beyond the Plan boundary with the policies.</p> <p>There are no sites of biodiversity importance (whether local, national or international) within the Plan boundary.</p> <p>Open space will be protected and promoted alongside new development in accordance with the Core Strategy. Sustainable Drainage Systems will also be required, where appropriate.</p>

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	Issues Raised	Initial Officer Comments
Rochford in context		
7	<p>Essex County Council commented that overall the Area Action Plan well represents the above ground heritage assets within the town centre, including the listed buildings which are discussed within the context of the layout of the historic town. However, the below ground historic environment assets are not identified in the document.</p> <p>Essex County Council would like the following change made: Page 10, paragraph 1, 'Historical evolution and Conservation Area' - the paragraph should be extended by inclusion of new additional text, to read:</p> <p>'Archaeological deposits relating to the development of the medieval and post medieval town are likely to survive in particular around the central Market Square and its axial road system as described above. All new development should incorporate a mitigation strategy for the preservation and/recording of such deposits.'</p>	<p>Comment noted. The proposed additional text can be made to the Plan.</p>
A framework for a better Rochford		
8	<p>The Woodland Trust would like to see trees and woods mentioned as part of a sustainable Rochford.</p>	<p>As part of the proposed environmental improvements in the Plan (Table 1), tree planting and landscape enhancements would be required, where appropriate. Reference to the planting of street trees has also been included within Policy 1 (point 1).</p> <p>However text could be included within section 3.1 (2nd paragraph) to read:</p> <p>“The presence of trees and green open space in and around the town centre also contributes to the quality of the local environment for local people and visitors.”</p>

	Issues Raised	Initial Officer Comments
9	<p>Essex County Council commented that it is not clear how the Area Action Plan will ensure that development within Rochford will be sustainable and resilient to the effects from extreme weather patterns/events experienced now and from future changes to our climate, for example, surface water flooding.</p> <p>Essex County Council would like the following change made to ensure that the document fully complements the Core Strategy:</p> <p>Inclusion in Section 3.1, after the paragraph beginning 'Good accessibility -...', a new additional paragraph to read:</p> <p>'Rochford, like many other Towns, will be vulnerable to unavoidable climate change and extreme weather events in the future, such as surface water flooding and exposure to extremely high and cold temperatures. To ensure the sustainability of Rochford's economy, continued preservation of the historic fabric and protection of green-spaces in the long-term development proposals will be required to take account of, and be adaptable to, the expected changes in local climate conditions, throughout the proposed lifetime of the development. All new developments should reduce predicted CO2 emissions using a combination of building performance improvements, small scale on-site renewable energy and/or efficient supply of heat, cooling and power.'</p>	<p>Comment noted. The proposed additional text can be made to the Plan.</p>

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	Issues Raised	Initial Officer Comments
Policy 1		
10	<p>Essex County Council commented that to ensure that all heritage assets including archaeological deposits are appropriately considered, the Policy should be extended by addition of a further bullet point (number 7), to read,</p> <p>'Any new proposals must also ensure appropriate consideration of above ground heritage assets and below ground archaeological deposits.'</p>	<p>Comment noted. The proposed additional text can be made to the Plan.</p>
Figure 11		
11	<p>Hawkwell Parish Council commented that both proposals for pedestrianisation (Figures 11 &12) or modest improvements should be resisted. They will have a detrimental impact on trade. Widening the pavements around the square will be of no benefit and would impact on the Market layout. Traffic issues could be resolved by reversing the traffic flow as it used to be with cars entering at the bottom of square and exiting at the top by the Spar building.</p> <p>Hawkwell Parish Council suggest that Policy 6 point 4 should read: Public realm improvements will be enhanced by the reversal of traffic flow in Market Square with the relocation of three taxi places, possibly to Back Lane.</p>	<p>The proposed improvements to the Market Square are based on the Rochford Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan which recommends that the parking arrangement in the Square should be reviewed, with a view to giving pedestrians greater priority.</p> <p>Previous concerns raised in relation to pedestrianisation of the Market Square have been noted. The Plan sets out two potential levels of intervention – one modest (Figure 11) and one more comprehensive (Figure 12).</p> <p>The key principles underpinning these options include; greater priority for pedestrians, rationalisation of taxi provision, potential introduction of parking charges and maintaining existing servicing arrangements. Figure 12 does not propose full pedestrianisation per se but proposes to widen the pavements, rationalise public parking and the taxi rank whilst retaining the bus stop. The Plan does not favour one option over the other but presents potential options to be explored further over the longer term.</p>

	Issues Raised	Initial Officer Comments
Rochford's character areas		
12	Rochford Chamber of Trade commented that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The pavements should not be widened • Parking supports businesses. Pay and display should not be introduced • The town supports short shopping trips which is why parking in the Square for convenience is important 	The proposed improvements to the Market Square are based on the Rochford Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan which recommends that the parking arrangement in the Square should be reviewed, with a view to giving pedestrians greater priority.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There would be no benefit to promoting café culture due to the likelihood of adverse weather and existing restaurants/bars are shutting so it is unlikely to be supported 	The Area Action Plan seeks to enhance the offer of the town centre over the plan period (up to 2025). This includes encouraging a greater mix of uses such as restaurants, cafés and bars, as well as leisure uses and community facilities as set out in the vision for Rochford.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of taxis parking in the square should be reduced 	The Plan proposes to reduce parking for taxis.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better signage from the station and car parks to the town is needed 	Policy 5 (point 4) promotes improved signage to key destinations and attractors.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entrance and exit for the Square should be reversed 	Such an option has been trialled in the past, without success. There were issues with this approach which would need to be resolved.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus route should not be changed 	Policy 5 makes reference to the potential to improve bus facilities citing possible route improvements. This should be read within the context of the supporting text, in which the Council sets out its commitment to working with partners at Essex County Council and the bus operators to keep the bus network– its routes, timetables and supporting infrastructure – under review.

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	Issues Raised	Initial Officer Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unclear why the existing 75% retail threshold is being reduced to 65% 	The primary shopping frontage (Figure 8) has been reviewed and is proposed to focus around the Market Square. As such 65% is A1 retail uses is considered to be a realistic figure, given the current proportion of 65% within the area defined in Figure 8.
13	<p>Rochford Chamber of Trade suggested that:</p> <p>The Back Lane toilets could be moved to Old Ship Lane and replaced with modern ones</p> <p>The current building could be used as an office for taxis with a taxi waiting area nearby</p>	The Plan sets out two options for the Market Square, one of which includes reducing the number of car parking spaces and the potential relocation of the taxi rank to Back Lane car park. As such, these suggestions may be considered further when exploring the options for the Square in more detail.
14	Rochford Chamber of Trade commented that the document does not mention or reflect the Mary Portas Review.	The National Planning Policy Framework, as noted in the Government's response to the Mary Portas Review ¹ , "reflects the concerns raised by Mary and others, and clearly sets out strong policies for promoting town centres." (page 17, recommendation 14). The Area Action Plan conforms to the National Planning Policy Framework.
15	Rochford Chamber of Trade commented that on the whole, markets are not good trading days for shops, but they would like them to be retained.	Comment noted.

¹ High Streets at the Heart of our Communities: the Government's Response to the Mary Portas Review, available from: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7525/2120019.pdf

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	Issues Raised	Initial Officer Comments
16	<p>Rochford Chamber of Trade commented that ground floor retail units should not be lost to residential use and that consideration should be given for retail/office usage on the ground floors of dwellings in the town centre.</p>	<p>Policy 2 seeks to retain a predominance of retail uses within the Primary Shopping Frontage area (the Market Square) with other non-retail uses – A3 (Restaurants and cafés) and A4 (Drinking establishments) –complementing the retail core.</p> <p>Policy 3 proposes to permit A and D uses – which includes residential use – within the wider Secondary Shopping Frontage area (Figure 8) provided it would accord with the policy criteria. It is noted that some ground floor uses within this area are residential.</p> <p>Whilst it is important to ensure the vitality of town centres, the National Planning Policy Framework notes that residential uses can contribute to this vitality. As such a balance needs to be struck. Planning applications for a change of use within the town centre will be considered on a case-by-case basis having regard to the policies in the Plan.</p>
Policy 5		
17	<p>Essex County Council commented that to ensure that all heritage assets including archaeological deposits are appropriately considered, the Policy should be extended by addition of a further bullet point (number 5), to read,</p> <p>'Any new proposals must also ensure appropriate consideration of above ground heritage assets and below ground archaeological deposits.'</p>	<p>Comment noted. The proposed additional text can be made to the Plan.</p>

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	Issues Raised	Initial Officer Comments
Policy 6		
18	<p>Hawkwell Parish Council commented that point 4 should read: Public realm improvements will be enhanced by the reversal of traffic flow in Market Square with the relocation of three taxi places possibly to Back Lane.</p>	<p>The option to reverse the traffic flow into the Market Square has been trialled in the past, without success. There were issues with this approach which would need to be resolved.</p> <p>The potential relocation of the taxi rank to Back Lane car park will be considered further when exploring the options for the Square in more detail.</p>
Figure 11		
19	<p>Hawkwell Parish Council commented that both proposals for pedestrianisation (Figures 11 and 12) or modest improvements should be resisted. They will have a detrimental impact on trade.</p> <p>Widening the pavements around the Square will be of no benefit and would impact on the Market layout.</p> <p>Traffic issues could be resolved by reversing the traffic flow as it used to be with cars entering at the bottom of square and exiting at the top by the Spar building.</p>	<p>The proposed improvements to the Market Square are based on the Rochford Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan which recommends that the parking arrangement in the Square should be reviewed, with a view to giving pedestrians greater priority.</p> <p>Previous concerns raised in relation to pedestrianisation of the Market Square have been noted. The Plan sets out two potential levels of intervention – one modest (Figure 11) and one more comprehensive (Figure 12).</p> <p>The key principles underpinning these options include; greater priority for pedestrians, rationalisation of taxi provision, potential introduction of parking charges and maintaining existing servicing arrangements. Figure 12 does not propose full pedestrianisation per se but proposes to widen the pavements, rationalise public parking and the taxi rank whilst retaining the bus stop. The Plan does not favour one option over the other but presents potential options to be explored further over the longer term.</p>
Policy 7		
20	<p>Rochford Chamber of Trade support the creation of a pedestrian link from the Pollards Close area into the Square.</p>	<p>Support noted.</p>

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	Issues Raised	Initial Officer Comments
Policy 8		
21	Hawkwell Parish Council commented that new development in the southern approach into Rochford would have an adverse impact on South Street and Locks Hill. There is little room for development in Locks Hill without the loss of parking. The only area for possible development is behind the Police Station providing the Police Station is retained. The idea of a commercial land mark building at the junction of Bradley Way and South Street would ruin the approach from Southend.	<p>Policy 4 proposes to protect Locks Hill for employment use.</p> <p>Policy 8 seeks to retain the Police Station building through encouraging its reuse or conversion.</p> <p>Any development in this location would need to take into account the criteria within Policy 8, in particular the heritage and character of the area.</p>
22	Hawkwell Parish Council suggested that Point 4 should read: Improvements to the junction of Bradley Way and Southend Road will be supported. A landmark building at this location should be discouraged as it would spoil the Historic character of South Street.	Any development in this location would need to take into account the criteria within Policy 8, in particular the heritage and character of the area.
Policy 9		
23	<p>Hawkwell Parish Council commented that the proposal to develop the area around the Freight House would have a detrimental effect on this area. Any new building would be out of keeping and because of its elevated position, will be visible from all around.</p> <p>The loss of car parking will be another issue.</p>	<p>Any development in this location would need to take into account the criteria within Policy 9, in particular the heritage and character of the area.</p> <p>Any proposal for development on the Freight House site would need to consider loss of car parking. The majority of the car park would be retained (Figure 6).</p>

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	Issues Raised	Initial Officer Comments
24	Hawkwell Parish Council suggested that Point 4 should read: Freight House is an attractive commercial building and should be retained.	Policy 9 seeks to retain the Freight House building, whilst being flexible to enable intensification of these uses onsite, or take advantage of its accessibility benefits in terms of housing or employment provision during the plan period. Promoting the use of appropriate brownfield land in accessible locations ahead of greenfield land accords with national policy.
25	Signalled traffic lights at the junction of Hall Road and West Street will be out of keeping in Conservation Area. Hawkwell Parish Council suggested that Point 6 should read: Improvement to junctions at Hall Road and West Street should retain the mini roundabout.	<p>The junction of Hall Road / West Street is not itself within the Conservation Area, although it is on the boundary and it must be acknowledged that traffic lights on the West Street element of the junction may fall within the Conservation Area (depending on their precise position). However, signalised traffic lights are not considered to be intrinsically inappropriate within Conservation Areas. They are often found within Conservation Areas and would not have an adverse impact on the appearance or character of the Rochford Conservation Area if they were to be put in place at this junction.</p> <p>This improvement has been proposed in consultation with Essex County Council, the Highway Authority, to mitigate the impact of development on Hall Road over the plan period (Table 1). However, it should be noted that Policy 9, which covers the Hall Road/West Street/Ashingdon Road junction, requires improvements to be made over the plan period but does not specify the specific improvements.</p>
Delivering a better Rochford		
26	Essex County Council commented that whilst the reference to Community infrastructure in Section 6.4 of the Area Action Plan is welcomed, the text should be augmented with reference to specific types of community infrastructure, such as education and other community public services, for which funding contributions will be sought from new development. This would ensure that new development in the town centre was fully engaged and contributing to the Area Action Plan's	The emerging Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) for the District will set a standard charge for new development in the District in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CLT1. As such it is not considered appropriate to stipulate what community infrastructure any new development within the Area Action Plan area would need to contribute to. This will be set out in the standard charges document.

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	Issues Raised	Initial Officer Comments
	intention to enhance the role of the town centre as the focus for the local community.	

Representations received but not input into the online consultation system as they were not provided on the official form and/or did not refer to either soundness or legal compliance:

	Issues Raised	Initial Officer Comments
27	<p>Anglian Water commented that there is no mention of flood risk and climate change mitigation or foul and surface water drainage. Whilst these subjects may be covered in other documents that may have a bearing on this plan, inclusion would strengthen the importance of addressing these subjects.</p>	<p>Flooding is an important consideration. As noted in the Environment Agency's response to the Issues and Options consultation some of the town covered by the Area Action Plan is within flood zone 2 and 3. Any planning application for residential or other potentially vulnerable development proposed on land within flood zone 2 or 3 would need to pass both the Sequential Test and the Exceptions Test as required by national policy. None of the opportunity sites identified in the Plan are within flood zone 2 or 3.</p> <p>Any impact that future development may have on Rochford's public foul, surface water sewers within the Area Action Plan area will be considered in detail at the planning application stage.</p>
28	<p>Anglian Water commented that for all development an agreed foul and surface water drainage strategy should be in place and implemented before the site proceeds. Anglian Water encourages early developer engagement and provides pre planning service.</p>	<p>Any impact that future development may have on Rochford's public foul, surface water sewers within the Area Action Plan area will be considered in detail at the planning application stage.</p>

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	Issues Raised	Initial Officer Comments
29	Anglian Water commented that use of Sustainable Urban Drainage should be a requirement on all development (greenfield and brownfield).	Surface water flooding would need to be addressed through appropriate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) in accordance with the Core Strategy/Development Management Document at the planning application stage. There is no need to repeat policies within the Plan.
30	The Environment Agency commented that they are not raising any soundness issues to the document and will not be submitting any further comments.	Comment noted.
31	English Heritage welcomes the recognition in the adopted Core Strategy, and at the beginning of this document, of the unique historic character of Rochford. The early Place Check work conducted with the community and the District Council's strong historic environment evidence base provide an excellent foundation for the AAP. In particular, the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan provide helpful background analysis on which to take forward proposals in the AAP.	Comment noted.
32	English Heritage comments do not challenge the soundness of the plan.	Noted.
33	English Heritage strongly supports the Core Strategy objective of strengthening the vitality of the historic centre.	Support noted.
34	English Heritage commented that the Spar building on the east side of the Market Place detracts very significantly from the otherwise high quality townscape. Despite difficulties in redeveloping the site, a high quality replacement building would have positive benefits.	Comment noted.

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	Issues Raised	Initial Officer Comments
35	English Heritage commented that the proposals for relocation of the taxi rank from the Market Square are another step which could fundamentally improve the quality of the environment. They support the more ambitious of the proposals, as shown in Figure 12 of the AAP.	Support noted.
36	English Heritage suggested that the environmental improvements (Table 1) should be prioritised and an indication of the timescale for their achievement should be given.	Noted.
37	Highways Agency commented that the proposals are unlikely to have a material affect upon the strategic road network and therefore have nothing to further add at this time.	Noted.
38	James Duddridge MP commented that the history of the town should be maintained and protected, particularly the Market Square. However, the Spar building is not in character with its neighbours.	The importance of the heritage and character of the town is recognised in the Plan, as set out in the vision and objectives. The findings of the Rochford Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan have also been reflected within Policy 5 – 9 to ensure that the character of the local area is taken into account with any new development coming forward within the town centre. The Spar building in particular is identified as an opportunity site for potential redevelopment over the plan period (Figure 6).

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	Issues Raised	Initial Officer Comments
39	James Duddridge MP expressed concern in relation to the proposal to reduce the number of parking spaces in the Market Square as it will be detrimental for local businesses.	<p>The proposed improvements to the Market Square are based on the Rochford Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan which recommends that the parking arrangement in the Square should be reviewed, with a view to giving pedestrians greater priority.</p> <p>Two options have been considered in the Plan, one modest (Figure 11) and the other more comprehensive (Figure 12). Figure 12 does not propose full pedestrianisation per se but proposes to widen the pavements, rationalise public parking and the taxi rank whilst retaining the bus stop. The Plan does not favour one option over the other but presents potential options to be explored further over the longer term.</p>
40	James Duddridge MP does not object to the relocation or reduction in taxi spaces in the Market Square.	Noted.
41	James Duddridge MP expressed concern about the police station and in particular it becoming dilapidated and attracting anti-social behaviour. The Council and Essex Police should work closely to ensure that this building is maintained.	Comment noted. The Plan seeks to promote the reuse or conversion of the Police Station over the plan period.

Appendix 4 – Issues Raised during Pre-Submission Consultation

Issues Raised	Initial Officer Comments
Introduction	
Insufficient attention has been paid to recent changes in legislation.	The document has been prepared in accordance with national legislation and planning policy.
Approach roads to the town (Hall Road, Ashingdon Road and Southend Road) need to be considered.	Comment noted. These roads are, predominantly, outside the boundaries of the Area Action Plan as defined in Figure 1, and therefore policies do not specifically address them. However, the Council has worked with the Highways Authority and the impact on the highway network as a whole has been considered as part of the Area Action Plan. As such, improvements to junctions on Hall Road, Ashingdon Road and Southend Road are proposed (Table 1 of the Area Action Plan)
Flooding needs to be considered.	<p>Flooding is an important consideration. As noted in the Environment Agency’s response to the Issues and Options consultation some of the town covered by the Area Action Plan is within flood zone 2 and 3. Any planning application for residential or other potentially vulnerable development proposed on land within flood zone 2 or 3 would need to pass both the Sequential Test and the Exceptions Test as required by national policy. None of the opportunity sites identified in the Plan are within flood zone 2 or 3.</p> <p>In terms of surface water flooding, this would need to be addressed through appropriate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) in accordance with the Core Strategy/Development Management Document at the planning application stage</p>
Concern in relation to future growth in the District and infrastructure provision.	This is a strategic issue beyond the remit of the Area Action Plan for Rochford.

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Issues Raised	Initial Officer Comments
Figure 6	
Support proposal. However there is concern that the proposal for additional cafes etc. may result in additional fast food outlets.	Policy 2 (Rochford's Primary Shopping Frontage) does not support additional fast food takeaways within the core retail area which is predominantly in the Market Square. Policy 3 (Rochford's Secondary Shopping Frontage) does not specifically support takeaways but sets criteria against which applications for other appropriate town centre uses will be considered against. Since changes to the Use Class Order in 2006, the Local Planning Authority is now permitted to make a distinction between café / restaurant uses (A3 uses) and hot food takeaways (A5 uses). The Plan specifically promotes additional cafes within certain areas of the town centre, but does not support additional takeaways.
Figure 8	
Overall support for Figure 11.	Support noted.
This could improve traffic flow (particularly at the eastern end of West Street), improve the bus service and aid those with mobility problems.	Comment noted.
Local residents and businesses did not know about the Plan and have not been adequately consulted.	In total 5854 letters and emails were sent to individuals and organisations informing them of the pre-submission consultation and their opportunity to comment at this stage. This included a number of local businesses and residents in and around the town centre. Further details on this stage of consultation are set out in the Consultation Statement. There was also community involvement and public consultation prior to the pre-submission stage, as detailed in the Consultation Statement.
The public meeting was not well publicised.	The public drop-in event held during the consultation was arranged and advertised by the Parish Council. Leaflets were handed out by the Parish Council at the monthly farmers market in the Square to advertise the event.

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Issues Raised	Initial Officer Comments
	A poster was displayed on the Parish Council notice board and a notice was placed on the Council's website. Local District Councillors were also informed of the event. The public meeting was well attended.
Two disabled parking bays should be provided.	It is important to ensure that disabled parking is provided. Although not directly relevant to Figure 8, Figure 12 can be amended to make it clear that at least one disabled parking bay will be provided.
The bus route through West Street should continue but without the current congestion issues.	Policy 5 makes reference to the potential to improve bus facilities citing possible route improvements. This should be read within the context of the supporting text, in which the Council sets out its commitment to working with partners at Essex County Council and the bus operators to keep the bus network– its routes, timetables and supporting infrastructure – under review.
Pedestrianisation is not appropriate for the Market Square.	<p>The proposed improvements to the Market Square are based on the Rochford Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan and the Retail and Leisure Study which recommends that the parking arrangement in the Square should be reviewed, with a view to giving pedestrians greater priority.</p> <p>Previous concerns raised in relation to pedestrianisation of the Market Square have been noted. The Plan sets out two potential levels of intervention – one modest (Figure 11) and one more comprehensive (Figure 12).</p> <p>The key principles underpinning these options include; greater priority for pedestrians, rationalisation of taxi provision, potential introduction of parking charges and maintaining existing servicing arrangements. Figure 12 does not propose full pedestrianisation per se but proposes to widen the pavements, rationalise public parking and the taxi rank whilst retaining the bus stop. The Plan does not favour one option over the other but presents potential options to be explored further over the longer term.</p>

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Issues Raised	Initial Officer Comments
Rochford's character areas	
The taxi rank cannot be relocated to Back Lane as it is too narrow. The buildings from South Street to the toilets would need to be demolished which would create a new entrance to the car park and widen the road.	It is noted that Back Lane would not be an appropriate location for a relocated taxi rank. The Plan should clarify that the taxi rank could be relocated to Back Lane car park as opposed to the lane itself (Figure 12).
The coffee shops do not have wheelchair/pushchair access. Some of these are suffering.	The Area Action Plan seeks to enhance the offer of the town centre over the plan period (up to 2025). This includes encouraging a greater mix of uses such as restaurants, cafés and bars, as well as leisure uses and community facilities as set out in the vision for Rochford.
It was questioned whether Bradley Way can cope with increased traffic volumes associated with the airport expansion and residential developments around Rochford.	Each planning application would need to be accompanied by a transport assessment to determine the potential impact of the proposed development on the local transport network and suggest appropriate mitigation measures. In addition, traffic modelling has been undertaken as part of the development of the London Southend Airport and Environs Joint Area Action Plan which also includes Rochford town centre.
The evening economy should not be expanded without adequate policing.	Essex Police Authority are consulted on proposed planning policy. As such Essex Police have the opportunity to influence where development will take place and are also aware of potential areas of future development. Essex Police Authority has raised no concerns in respect of the Plan.
If any parking is lost in the town square all car parks in Rochford should have an initial 'free period' of up to 30 minutes.	The Council would need to consider the potential to provide additional short-term parking elsewhere in the town should any car parking spaces be lost within the town centre.
It was questioned why alteration to the Square is needed as each side of the Square has its own functions such as cafes, offices and shops.	Issues with the traffic flow in the area are recognised and have been commented on previously – particularly congestion around the Market Square. The key principles underpinning the two options for the Market Square includes; greater priority for pedestrians, rationalisation of taxi

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Issues Raised	Initial Officer Comments
	provision, potential introduction of parking charges and maintaining existing servicing arrangements.
Only three taxis should be allowed in the Square.	The modest option for the Market Square (Figure 11) proposes space for only three taxis.
Reverse the entrance and exit into the Square.	Such an option has been trialled in the past, without success. There were issues with this approach which would need to be resolved.
Maintain half hour free parking to retain customers for businesses.	The modest option for the Market Square (Figure 11) does not propose to change the current arrangement in terms of free parking. However, the more comprehensive option (Figure 12) combines fewer spaces with the potential to introduce charging to park.
Policy 6	
Pedestrianisation of Market Square should be resisted.	<p>The proposed improvements to the Market Square are supported by both the Rochford Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan and Retail and Leisure Study, which recommends that the parking arrangement in the Square should be reviewed, with a view to giving pedestrians greater priority.</p> <p>Previous concerns raised in relation to pedestrianisation of the Market Square have been noted. The Plan sets out two potential levels of intervention – one modest (Figure 11) and one more comprehensive (Figure 12).</p> <p>The key principles underpinning these options include; greater priority for pedestrians, rationalisation of taxi provision, potential introduction of parking charges and maintaining existing servicing arrangements. Figure 12 does not propose full pedestrianisation per se but proposes to widen the pavements, rationalise public parking and the taxi rank whilst retaining the bus stop. The Plan does not favour one option over the other but presents</p>
Both figures 11 and 12 would not result in a vibrant town centre.	
Independent shops rely on customers using the short stay parking to pop-in.	
Widening the pavements will only make it more difficult on market day.	

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Issues Raised	Initial Officer Comments
	potential options to be explored further over the longer term.
There are sufficient cafés in and around the Square.	The Area Action Plan seeks to enhance the offer of the town centre over the plan period (up to 2025). This includes encouraging a greater mix of uses such as restaurants, cafés and bars, as well as leisure uses and community facilities as set out in the vision for Rochford.
Paragraph 5 Policy 6 should read - the Market Square should be left as it is to maintain the vitality and viability of the town centre pay and display should not be introduced. Three taxi spaces should be relocated.	<p>The Retail and Leisure Study and the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan recommend that the parking arrangement in Market Square should be reviewed, with a view to giving pedestrians greater priority.</p> <p>Introducing pay and display parking is one option for the Market Square. Charging would ensure that there are spaces available for customers.</p>
Figure 11	
Overall support for Figure 11.	Support noted.
This could improve traffic flow (particularly at the eastern end of West Street), improve the bus service and aid those with mobility problems.	Comment noted.
Local residents and businesses did not know about the Plan and have not been adequately consulted.	In total 5854 letters and emails were sent to individuals and organisations informing them of the pre-submission consultation and their opportunity to comment at this stage. This included a number of local businesses and residents in and around the town centre. Further details on this stage of consultation are set out in the Consultation Statement. There was also community involvement and public consultation prior to the pre-submission stage, as detailed in the Consultation Statement.
The public meeting was not well publicised.	The public drop-in event held during the consultation was arranged and advertised by the Parish Council. Leaflets were handed out by the Parish

Rochford District Council – Local Development Framework Rochford Area Action Plan: Consultation Statement

Issues Raised	Initial Officer Comments
	Council at the monthly farmers market in the Square to advertise the event. A poster was displayed on the Parish Council notice board and a notice was placed on the Council's website. Local District Councillors were also informed of the event.
Two disabled parking bays should be provided.	It is important to ensure that disabled parking is provided. Although not directly relevant to Figure 8, Figure 12 can be amended to include a disabled parking bay.
The bus route through West Street should continue but without the current congestion issues.	Policy 5 makes reference to the potential to improve bus facilities citing possible route improvements. This should be read within the context of the supporting text, in which the Council sets out its commitment to working with partners at Essex County Council and the bus operators to keep the bus network– its routes, timetables and supporting infrastructure – under review.
Pedestrianisation is not appropriate for the Market Square.	<p>The proposed improvements to the Market Square are supported by both the Rochford Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan and Retail and Leisure Study, which recommends that the parking arrangement in the Square should be reviewed, with a view to giving pedestrians greater priority.</p> <p>Previous concerns raised in relation to pedestrianisation of the Market Square have been noted. The Plan sets out two potential levels of intervention – one modest (Figure 11) and one more comprehensive (Figure 12).</p> <p>The key principles underpinning these options include; greater priority for pedestrians, rationalisation of taxi provision, potential introduction of parking charges and maintaining existing servicing arrangements. Figure 12 does not propose full pedestrianisation per se but proposes to widen the pavements, rationalise public parking and the taxi rank whilst retaining the bus stop. The Plan does not favour one option over the other but presents</p>

Rochford District Council – Local Development Framework Rochford Area Action Plan: Consultation Statement

Issues Raised	Initial Officer Comments
	potential options to be explored further over the longer term.
It is unclear what 'raised tables' means.	'Raised tables' refer to areas raised to the height of footpaths across roads to enable easier pedestrian crossing.
The disabled parking space should be retained where it is currently.	Comment noted.
Figure 12	
Support Figure 12.	Support noted.
This proposal does not give enough consideration to the needs of elderly/disabled people etc.	It is important to ensure that disabled parking is provided. Figure 12 can be amended to make it clear that at least one disabled parking bay will be provided. The detail such as the surfacing of an area would be considered at the planning application stage.
There should be disabled parking bays.	
The convenience of parking in the Square for customers to pop-in to local shops is important.	The two options investigated (the modest option; Figure 11, and the more comprehensive approach; Figure 12) both seek to retain some car parking within the Square.
Some taxis are essential.	The more comprehensive approach suggests that the taxi rank could be relocated to Back Lane car park.
Traffic flow is important.	The proposed improvements to the Market Square are supported by both the Rochford Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan and Retail and Leisure Study, which recommends that the parking arrangement in the Square should be reviewed, with a view to giving pedestrians greater priority. Previous concerns raised in relation to pedestrianisation of the Market Square have been noted. The Plan sets out two potential levels of
Pedestrianisation is not appropriate for the Market Square.	

Rochford District Council – Local Development Framework Rochford Area Action Plan: Consultation Statement

Issues Raised	Initial Officer Comments
	<p>intervention – one modest (Figure 11) and one more comprehensive (Figure 12).</p> <p>The key principles underpinning these options include; greater priority for pedestrians, rationalisation of taxi provision, potential introduction of parking charges and maintaining existing servicing arrangements. Figure 12 does not propose full pedestrianisation per se but proposes to widen the pavements, rationalise public parking and the taxi rank whilst retaining the bus stop. The Plan does not favour one option over the other but presents potential options to be explored further over the longer term.</p>
Policy 8	
<p>A landmark building to the southern end of South Street would negatively impact the Conservation Area.</p>	<p>Any new development in this location would need to respond positively to local townscape character and protect and enhance the character of the Rochford Conservation Area as set out in the policy.</p>
<p>New development in Locks Hill would result in a loss of car parking.</p>	<p>Existing office uses at Locks Hill are proposed to be protected through Policy 4.</p>
<p>Support for Locks Hill being allocated for employment.</p>	<p>Support noted.</p>
<p>The Police Station building must be retained. There is a possibility for development to the rear providing it visible from South Street or Bradley Way.</p>	<p>The policy seeks to retain the Police Station building through encouraging its reuse or conversion.</p>
<p>The Policy should state that: improvements to the junction of Bradley Way, Southend Road and South Street should be supported. A land mark building would ruin the historic core of Rochford. Locks Hill should be zoned for employment, preferably office uses.</p>	<p>Any development in this location would need to take into account the criteria within Policy 8, in particular the heritage and character of the area.</p> <p>Policy 4 proposes to protect Locks Hill for employment use.</p>

Rochford District Council – Local Development Framework Rochford Area Action Plan: Consultation Statement

Issues Raised	Initial Officer Comments
Policy 9	
Any development around the Freight House would have a detrimental impact on the Conservation Area. It would also result in a loss of car parking.	Any development in this location would need to take into account the criteria within Policy 9, in particular the heritage and character of the area. Any proposal for development on the Freight House site would need to consider loss of car parking. The majority of the car park would be retained (Figure 6).
The proposed replacement at Hall Road/West Street junction with signalised traffic lights would be out of keeping in this Conservation Area. Point 5 should read: Hall Road, West Street junction should retain the mini roundabout.	<p>The junction of Hall Road / West Street is not itself within the Conservation Area, although it is on the boundary and it must be acknowledged that traffic lights on the West Street element of the junction may fall within the Conservation Area (depending on their precise position). However, signalised traffic lights are not considered to be intrinsically inappropriate within Conservation Areas. They are often found within Conservation Areas and would not have an adverse impact on the appearance or character of the Rochford Conservation Area if they were to be put in place at this junction.</p> <p>This improvement has been proposed in consultation with Essex County Council, the Highway Authority, to mitigate the impact of development on Hall Road over the plan period (Table 1). However, it should be noted that Policy 9, which covers the Hall Road/West Street/Ashingdon Road junction, requires improvements to be made over the plan period but does not specify the specific improvements.</p>
Point 4 should read: Freight House is an attractive building and should be retained.	The policy seeks to retain this building.

Representations received but not input into the online consultation system as they were not provided on the official form and/or did not refer to either soundness or legal compliance:

Issues Raised	Initial Officer Comments
<p>Pedestrianising the Market Square could create problems of anti-social behaviour and impact businesses.</p>	<p>Two options have been considered in the Plan, one modest (Figure 11) and the other more comprehensive (Figure 12). Figure 12 does not propose full pedestrianisation per se but proposes to widen the pavements, rationalise public parking and the taxi rank whilst retaining the bus stop. The Plan does not favour one option over the other but presents potential options to be explored further over the longer term.</p>

Appendix 5 – Representations received but not input into the online consultation system as they were not provided on the official form and/or did not refer to either soundness or legal compliance

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]@environment-agency.gov.uk>
Sent: 11 July 2013 09:56
To: Local Plans (Planning Policy)
Subject: Rochford Area Action Plan Proposed Submission Document

Dear Sir / Madam


Thank you for notifying us of this consultation. Please be advised we are not raising any soundness issues to the document and will not be submitting any further comments.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Anglian Eastern Area

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Iceni House, Cobham Road, Ipswich, Suffolk. IP3 9JD

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Registered in England No 2366656

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JAMES DUDDRIDGE MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Mr Paul Warren
Chief Executive
Rochford District Council
Council Offices
South Street
Rochford
Essex SS4 1BW

22nd August 2013

Dear Paul,

Re: Rochford Area Action Plan

Please take this letter as my formal submission for the Rochford Area Action Plan which is currently undergoing a consultation. I have read the consultation document with interest.

I firmly believe that the council should embrace the heritage of the Market Square and the listed buildings that are located in and around this area as outlined in the plan, a history that dates back to 1257.

I have three points that I would like to make regarding the plan. Firstly, as I have already mentioned, I firmly believe that the history should be maintained and protected. On page 25 of the consultation document it states

".....There are options for carefully targeted improvements to some of the surrounding buildings. The Market Square, in particular, could benefit from public realm enhancements and improvements to some of the surrounding buildings. This could help to attract visitors and strengthen the economic vitality of this primary retail area."

The Market Square and majority of buildings within the Square still have enormous character, history and heritage. However, the exception to this is the building currently occupied by SPAR. This building is not in keeping with the character of its neighbours and I personally feel it lets down the appearance of The Square, particularly as you turn into The Square from South Street.

Secondly, I am concerned regarding the proposal to reduce the number of parking spaces in the Market Square. I fear that it will be detrimental to the businesses

Member of Parliament for Rochford & Southend East

Tel: [REDACTED]

www.jamesduddridge.com



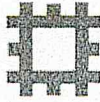
should these spaces be reduced. Currently you can park your car for 30 minutes for free. I agree that sometimes that cars waiting to park here can lead to congestion and this is compounded when a bus is trying to travel through, but removal of these will, I fear, be extremely damaging to local businesses.

I do not object to the relocation or reduction in taxi spaces that are located there should that alleviate the pressure of access to the Market Square from cars and buses.

Finally, as a broader point for consideration, whilst I appreciate the building is not owned by the council and is managed by Essex Police within their estates programme, I have concerns about the police station located in South Street. I do not want to see this building becoming dilapidated and attracting anti social behaviour. The council and Essex Police should work closely to ensure that this building is maintained. This is an iconic building and is one of the most noticeable properties when travelling to The Market Square and sets the tone for the rest of the area.

A dark, rectangular redacted area covering a signature.

James Duddridge MP



ENGLISH HERITAGE

EAST OF ENGLAND

Samuel Hollingworth
Planning Department
Rochford District Council
Council Offices
South Street
Essex
SS4 1BW

Direct Dial: [REDACTED]
Direct Fax: [REDACTED]

Our Ref: [REDACTED]
Your Ref: RayAAP2013

29 August 2013

Dear Mr Hollingworth

**Rochford Local Development Plan:
Rochford Area Action Plan (AAP) Submission Document**

Thank you for your consultation letter of 3 July 2013 inviting English Heritage to comment on above document, and for the opportunity to discuss the plan with you colleagues on 6 August 2013.

We welcome the recognition in the adopted Core Strategy, and at the beginning of this document, of the unique historic character of Rochford. The early Place Check work conducted with the community and the District Council's strong historic environment evidence base provide an excellent foundation for the AAP. In particular, the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan provide helpful background analysis on which to take forward proposals in the AAP.

We welcome the contents of the AAP and our comments are confined to areas where we feel the plan could be strengthened. These do not challenge the soundness of the plan. However, the requirement in paragraph 126 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) that local plans should set out a positive strategy for the historic environment does call for a proactive approach, and we would like to suggest ways in which the AAP might be more ambitious.

We strongly support the core strategy objective of strengthening the vitality of the historic centre. We consider that improving the physical environment and functionality of the Market Square is at the heart of achieving this. The Spar building on the east side of the Market Place detracts very significantly from the otherwise high quality townscape. The building is unfortunately viewed

[REDACTED]
Telephone [REDACTED] Facsimile [REDACTED]

www.english-heritage.org.uk

The National Monuments Record is the public archive of English Heritage

from many aspects – the west elevation on Market Place, the east elevation from North Street and the south elevation from South Street. The difficulties of redeveloping this building, which is in active use, are evident; however, the benefits that could be had from a high quality replacement would extend beyond the immediate environs, promoting an improved image for the historic town.

The proposals for relocation of the taxi rank from the Market Square are another step which could fundamentally improve the quality of the environment. We support the more ambitious of the proposals, as shown in Figure 12 of the AAP.

Finally, with regard to the environmental improvements proposed in Table 1, p29, we consider that it would be appropriate to prioritise these measures and give an indication of the timescale for their achievement. This would provide more focus and ensure there is a clear path plotted for these actions.

I hope these comments are useful.

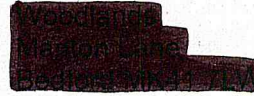
Yours sincerely

Katharine Fletcher
Historic Environment Planning Adviser, East of England

Our ref:
Your ref:

Mark Norman

Head Of Planning and Transportation
Rochford District Council
Council Offices
South Street
Rochford
Essex
SS4 1 BW



Direct Line:
Fax:



19 July 2013

For the attention of Samuel Hollingworth



Dear Sir

**PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT 2004
TOWN AND COUNTY (LOCAL PLANNING) REGULATIONS 2012 : REGULATION 19**

**Rochford Area Action Plan Submission Documentation – Invitation to respond to
Pre submission consultation**

Thank you for consulting the Highways Agency on the above document, we welcome the opportunity to comment.

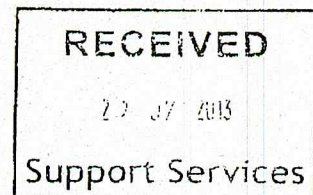
We have read the above documents and conclude that the proposals are unlikely to have a material affect upon the strategic road network and therefore have nothing further to add at this time.

 has retired please address all future correspondence to  here at woodlands. This will ensure that you get a timely response.

Yours sincerely



Mark Norman
Network Delivery & Development
Email: 





Rochford Council,
South Street,
Rochford,
Essex.

RECEIVED
21 08 2013
Support Services

19th August 2013.

Dear Sirs,

I am concerned to see that you are proposing making the square into a pedestrianised area, and getting rid of the parking.

If you do this then all that will happen is that the youths will hang out at night there with their skate boards and cause more problems to the area. I cannot see this is an improvement more a waste of our money. Surely it is hard enough for business at the moment without causing them more problems with no parking. If you do anything why don't you reverse the in and out of the square and put it back as it was before to stop the congestion of the buses which cannot turn.

Yours faithfully,

Yvonne Choppin (Mrs)

Local life

Compiled by Neil Hawkins



21 08 305

Support Services

Rayleigh and Rochford

CONTACT: neil.hawkins@nqe.com or call 01702 321143



Two Shoes at Blanco

■ Bar Blanco - Two Shoes
X-FACTOR duo Two Shoes will be appearing at Bar Blanco in Rayleigh this Thursday.

The Essex girls will be singing live and mingling with the crowd during the special cocktail evening. The night kicks off at 7.30pm.

Who let the dad's out?

BRANERTON Road Community Church, in Hockley, is hosting an event called "Who let the dad's out?"

The event offers an opportunity for dads, male carers and their children, aged seven years and under, to spend time with each other, meet other dads and give mums time off.

The day runs from 10-11.30am and includes refreshments.

Laughs on the way

THE Laughing Pod Comedy Club is coming back to Rayleigh on September 6.



■ Worries - Emma Woods, of Miss Daisy Cards, who is worried about the loss of parking in Rochford's Market Square

Parking fears in square

ROCHFORD'S popular Market Square is set to lose some of its parking spaces under improvement plans.

District Council Rochford wants to enlarge pedestrianised areas in the town square under plans for the development of the town centre and surrounding areas.

Proposals include paving over the majority of the square, which currently has 18 car parking spaces, with a smaller pay-and-display car park off West Street for ten cars, with the square's taxi

rank moving to Back Lane. A second plan suggests the pavement around the square being widened and informal crossings placed between the square and the other side of West Street. This plan would see the loss of three car spaces.

The schemes, part of the town's Area Action Plan (AAP), has met with disapproval from traders, who say any loss of parking in the square would kill trade in the town.

Carole Figg, manager of Bow Jangles Gifts on the square, said:

"I don't know why they would want to change it to be honest, I think it works well as it is."

"If I took a survey of all my customers they would all say no as well, because they wouldn't be able to park here."

Another trader, Emma Woods, who manages Miss Daisy Cards and Crafts, said the fact cars queue up to get in the square show its popularity.

She added: "This square needs to stay as it is, it's unique. Taking away spaces will affect trade. They've already taken some away in the past for more taxi spaces in."

Residents however, were keen on the idea of the extra pedestrian space.

Steve Ward, 52, who lives on the Square, said: "If they pedestrianised the square it would become a venue for the town. It would be nice to have a stage there where you could have live music."

"If you go about a lot of squares in Europe, they always have a community aspect about them which brings people to them."

Senior prefect team put in place for Rayleigh school

FTZWEMARC School in Rayleigh with school's management team. Newly appointed head boy Harry Moorhouse said: "It is such an honour to be appointed and I will do my best for the school."



Appendix 6 – Regulation 19 Notice

ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

**NOTICE OF THE PUBLICATION OF THE ROCHFORD AREA ACTION
PLAN (SUBMISSION DOCUMENT)**

**Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
Town and County Planning (Local Planning) Regulations 2012:
Regulation 19**

Rochford District Council has prepared a Rochford Area Action Plan Submission Document as part of its Local Development Framework which it proposes to submit to the Secretary of State under Regulation 22 of the above Regulations.

The Rochford Area Action Plan Submission Document and accompanying documents have been published in order for representations to be made prior to the submission of the Rochford Area Action Plan to the Secretary of State for examination.

The Plan provides the detailed planning policies and allocation of land for Rochford town centre. The area covered by the plan is Rochford town centre.

Representations can be made during the publication period which begins at noon on 3 July 2013 and ends at 5.00pm on 29 August 2013. Only representations received during this time will be considered. Late responses will not be accepted. Consultation representations will only be regarded as duly made if supplied on the representation form or made directly via the online consultation system.

The Plan, alongside a statement setting out how representations can be made, is available online via www.rochford.gov.uk; at Rochford Council Offices; and in the District's libraries.

Appendix 7 – Proposed Schedule of Changes to the Rochford Area Action Plan Submission Document

The changes below are expressed either in the conventional form of strikethrough for deletions and underlining for additions of text, or by specifying the change in words in *italics*.

The below proposed minor amendments relate to changes to the Rochford Area Action Plan Submission Document (July 2013).

The page numbers and paragraph numbering below refer to the Rochford Area Action Plan Submission Document (July 2013), and do not take account of the deletion or addition of text.

The colour-coding below highlights where proposed minor amendments are repeated throughout the Rochford Area Action Plan Submission Document (July 2013).

Page	Policy/ Paragraph	Minor Amendment	Justification
5	Figure 1	<i>Include key to Figure 1.</i>	Although not raised as an issue during the consultation, the key was omitted from Figure 1 in error.
10	Section 2.2; 1 st paragraph	<i>Insert new paragraph below 1st paragraph:</i> Archaeological deposits relating to the development of the medieval and post medieval town are likely to survive in particular around the central Market Square and its axial road system as described above. All new development should incorporate a mitigation strategy for the preservation and/recording of such deposits.	Issues raised by Essex County Council during pre-submission consultation (comment 7).
23	Section 3.1; paragraph	<i>Amend 2nd paragraph as follows:</i> Provision of an attractive town centre for local people and visitors – Rochford has good local retail offer, in line with its	Issue raised by The Woodland Trust during pre-submission consultation (comment 8).

Rochford District Council – Local Development Framework Rochford Area Action Plan: Consultation Statement

Page	Policy/ Paragraph	Minor Amendment	Justification
	2	position as a small market town. This should be enhanced through the encouragement of more supporting uses, including restaurants, cafés, and bars, and other leisure uses and community facilities, including those for young people. <u>The presence of trees and green open space in and around the town centre also contributes to the quality of the local environment for local people and visitors.</u>	
23	Section 3.1; paragraph 6	<i>Insert new paragraph below 6th paragraph:</i> Rochford, like many other Towns, will be vulnerable to unavoidable climate change and extreme weather events in the future, such as surface water flooding and exposure to extremely high and cold temperatures. To ensure the sustainability of Rochford's economy, continued preservation of the historic fabric and protection of green-spaces in the long-term development proposals will be required to take account of, and be adaptable to, the expected changes in local climate conditions, throughout the proposed lifetime of the development. All new developments should reduce predicted CO ₂ emissions using a combination of building performance improvements, small scale on-site renewable energy and/or efficient supply of heat, cooling and power.	Issues raised by Essex County Council during pre-submission consultation (comment 9).
23	Section 3.2; Vision	<i>Amend the vision as follows:</i> Rochford will develop its existing strengths as a small and attractive historic market town serving the needs of its local population and visitors. By 2025 2026, the town centre offer will be more mixed, and will include a greater diversity of town	This change would bring the plan period for the Area Action Plan in line with the Core Strategy.

Rochford District Council – Local Development Framework Rochford Area Action Plan: Consultation Statement

Page	Policy/ Paragraph	Minor Amendment	Justification
		<p>centre uses, such as restaurants, cafés, and bars, leisure uses and community facilities, whilst retaining its existing office stock. Environmental enhancements and new development will improve key spaces, build on the town’s historic character and make better use of unused or unattractive sites. Improvements to existing routes and the addition of new links will make the town more permeable and make travel by all modes of transport easier.</p>	
27	Policy 1	<p><i>Amend the second part of the policy as follows:</i></p> <p>All new development within the Rochford AAP area should contribute towards the delivery of the spatial framework as shown in Figure 6. The key elements of this framework are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The focus of retail uses in the centre, with the highest concentration of A1 uses in the Market Square area; 2. The creation of a more vibrant and attractive Market Square, with public realm improvements and the encouragement of additional restaurant and café uses; 3. The protection of office-based employment uses in the Locks Hill area; 4. Opportunities for new mixed-use development as sites become available; 5. New and enhanced routes and key junctions within the AAP area and linking the centre with the rail station and the surrounding area; 6. New and improved public realm and environmental 	<p>The additional bullet point is in response to issues raised by Essex County Council during pre-submission consultation (comment 10).</p> <p>The other changes would clarify that the elements together make up the framework.</p>

Rochford District Council – Local Development Framework Rochford Area Action Plan: Consultation Statement

Page	Policy/ Paragraph	Minor Amendment	Justification
		<p>improvements throughout the centre-; and</p> <p><u>7. Any new proposals must also ensure appropriate consideration of above ground heritage assets and below ground archaeological deposits.</u></p>	
33	Policy 2	<p><i>Amend policy as follows:</i></p> <p>Within Rochford’s Primary Shopping Frontage, as defined on the Rochford AAP Proposals Map (Figure 8), proposals for A1 retail uses will be acceptable. Proposals for A3 and A4 uses will also be considered acceptable where they would maintain A1 retail uses at 65% of defined primary shopping frontage. New A5 uses are not considered appropriate in the primary shopping frontage. Development for non-A1 uses will be permitted where it would:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not have a detrimental impact on, or undermine, the vitality and viability of Rochford town centre-; 2. Not create a cluster of similar uses within <u>the same use class in a locality that undermines the character of the centre-; and</u> 3. <u>Entail the provision of a non-A1 use which is considered to</u> positively contribute to the overall offer and encourage people into the centre. 	The changes would provide clarification for decision-makers.
33	Policy 3	<p><i>Amend policy as follows:</i></p> <p>Within Rochford’s Secondary Shopping Frontages, as defined on the Rochford AAP Proposals Map (Figure 8), new development for Class A and D uses and other uses considered appropriate in town centres will be acceptable. Development involving the loss of town centre uses will be permitted where it</p>	The changes would provide clarification for decision-makers.

Rochford District Council – Local Development Framework Rochford Area Action Plan: Consultation Statement

Page	Policy/ Paragraph	Minor Amendment	Justification
		<p>would:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not have a detrimental impact on, or undermine, the vitality, viability and retail character of Rochford’s Primary Shopping Frontage; 2. Not create a cluster of similar uses within <u>the same use class</u> in a locality that undermines the character of the centre; <u>and</u> 3. <u>Entail the provision of a non-A1 use which is considered to</u> positively contribute to the overall offer and encourage people into the centre. 	
35	5 th paragraph	<p><i>Insert new paragraphs below the 5th paragraph:</i></p> <p><u>However there are uses of which the provision of additional units in Rochford town centre would not be considered to positively contribute to the overall offer of the centre. Such uses include hot food takeaways (A5 uses), planning applications for which will not generally be supported, particularly within the Primary Shopping Frontage area.</u></p> <p><u>Some land uses associated with town centre locations have the potential to raise amenity issues for nearby residents. Such uses might include, but are not necessarily limited to, those falling in Use Classes A3, A4 and A5 or other, Sui Generis uses such as night clubs. The impact of such non-retail uses on the amenity of those living within or nearby the centre will be an important consideration in determining relevant planning applications, and applicants will be expected to demonstrate how negative impacts arising from such proposals will be</u></p>	<p>This change would clarify the types of uses that would raise concerns in respect of positively contributing to the overall offer of the town centre.</p>

Rochford District Council – Local Development Framework Rochford Area Action Plan: Consultation Statement

Page	Policy/ Paragraph	Minor Amendment	Justification
		<u>mitigated, if applications are to be permitted.</u>	
35	Policy 4	<p><i>Amend policy as follows:</i></p> <p>The Council will support new B1a (office) employment development within the Locks Hill employment site (<u>Figure 8</u>) and protect the area from uses that would undermine its role as an employment generator. Alternative uses will be considered having regard to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The number of jobs likely to be generated; 2. The compatibility with and impact on existing B1(a) uses; 3. The impact on the vitality and viability of Rochford town centre; <u>and</u> 4. Wider sustainability issues such as traffic generation considered against travel by sustainable modes. <p>Any new development at the Locks Hill employment site should be of a quality befitting this gateway location, safe and inclusive design which acts as a landmark and responds positively to its local context.</p>	<p>These changes would clarify that the criteria together would need to be demonstrated at the planning application stage.</p>
39	Policy 5	<p><i>Amend the second part of the policy as follows:</i></p> <p>Principles important in respect of development in all four of the character areas include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Public realm interventions should where possible be incorporated with proposals for new development, including the replacement of poor quality paving, the removal of street clutter, the improvement of lighting for pedestrian routes, and 	<p>The additional bullet point is in response to issues raised by Essex County Council during pre-submission consultation (comment 17).</p> <p>The other changes would clarify that the elements together make up the framework.</p>

Rochford District Council – Local Development Framework Rochford Area Action Plan: Consultation Statement

Page	Policy/ Paragraph	Minor Amendment	Justification
		<p>the planting of appropriate street trees;</p> <p>2. Enhanced cycle parking facilities should be provided at suitable locations throughout the centre;</p> <p>3. Bus facilities should be upgraded, with improvements including possible route alterations to enhance the pedestrian experience along West Street, better shelters and increased seating provision;</p> <p>4. New and improved pedestrian signage, appropriate for a conservation area, should be introduced for key destinations and attractors, including the rail station, the town centre and Market Square, the Council's offices, the hospital and the Locks Hill employment site; <u>and</u></p> <p>5. <u>Any new proposals must also ensure appropriate consideration of above ground heritage assets and below ground archaeological deposits.</u></p>	
41	Policy 6	<p><i>Amend policy as follows:</i></p> <p>Development in the central area will support and strengthen the retail function and character of the area.</p> <p>The Council will support environmental and traffic management improvements to the Market Square area which respond positively to the area's heritage assets, give greater priority for pedestrians and help relieve traffic problems in the town centre. The following principles are important:</p> <p>1. New development will respond positively to local townscape character and protect and enhance the character of the</p>	<p>These changes would clarify that the criteria together would need to be demonstrated at the planning application stage.</p>

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		<p>Rochford conservation area. Key elements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Development which provides an active edge of town centre uses around Market Square and along key streets in the area; b. A tight knit and organic urban grain with a varied roof line; c. Buildings typically between two and three storeys in height; and d. West Street presenting the public ‘front’ of buildings with Back Lane providing service access. <p>2. In accordance with Policy 2, primary shopping frontages should be in predominately retail uses supported by a limited number of restaurants and cafés and public houses/wine bars (A1, A3 and A4). Secondary shopping frontages should be in a mix of retail and other appropriate town centre uses;</p> <p>3. The redevelopment of the two storey building on the eastern side of Market Square would be supported provided that it is redeveloped in a style and form that contributes positively to the character of the area with A1, 3 or 4 uses addressing Market Square. Upper floors could be occupied by a range of uses including offices and residential;</p> <p>4. Public realm enhancements should be focused on the creation of an improved Market Square and include the rationalisation and reduction in the number of car parking spaces and the potential relocation of the taxi rank to an appropriately central and accessible location; and</p> <p>5. Pedestrian links within the AAP area, including those to Back Lane car park and Roche Close, and across Rochford, including</p>	

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		to the rail station and open space on the opposite side of Bradley Way, should be improved.	
43	Section 5.2; bullet point 2	<i>Change bullet point 2 as follows:</i> Consider the benefits of rationalisation of the taxi provision – it is currently on both sides of the 'central island' and could be rationalised. It may be necessary to allocate spaces in an alternative location, with Back Lane car park, Baxter Close and Roche Close potentially all providing viable alternatives.	This would clarify that the taxi rank could be relocated to Back Lane car park as opposed to Back Lane itself. Baxter Close is now part of Roche Close – this change would provide clarification.
45	Figure 12	<i>Include a disabled parking bay within Figure 12.</i>	Figure 12, for illustrative purposes, should include a disabled parking bay.
45	Figure 12	<i>Change 'Consider taxi rank relocation' as follows:</i> Consider taxi rank relocation <u>to Back Lane car park</u>	This would clarify that the taxi rank could be relocated to Back Lane car park as opposed to Back Lane itself.
47	Policy 7	<i>Amend the second part of the policy as follows:</i> The Council will support development in the northern/eastern approach area that would protect and enhance its existing character. The following principles are important: 1. New development will respond positively to local townscape character and protect and enhance the character of the Rochford conservation area. Key elements include: a. The mixed housing character of the area, with a predominance of traditional, weather-boarded housing along North Street and Weir Pond Road and more substantial, typically	These changes would clarify that the criteria together would need to be demonstrated at the planning application stage.

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		<p>Victorian properties, along the East Street approach;</p> <p>b. Building heights being typically two storeys with some higher density modern housing types; <u>and</u></p> <p>c. A varied building line that adds character and variety to the street but that becomes stronger along the back edge of the pavement as one approaches the town centre.</p> <p>2. New development will be acceptable on sites as they become available for development where they would lead to the creation of more residential units or community facilities, in particular those catering for young people;</p> <p>3. Pedestrian links within the AAP area, including those to the central area and Market Square, should be strengthened. If possible, a new pedestrian link from Pollards Close to Roche Close should be created; <u>and</u></p> <p>4. Improvements at the junction of Weir Pond Road and East Street will be supported.</p>	
49	Policy 8	<p><i>Amend the second part of the policy as follows:</i></p> <p>The Council will support development in the southern approach area that would protect and enhance its existing character. The following principles are important:</p> <p>1. New development will respond positively to local townscape character and protect and enhance the character of the Rochford conservation area. Key elements include:</p> <p>a. The high quality historic townscape along South Street, characterised by brick built two storey buildings with clay tiled</p>	<p>These changes would clarify that the criteria together would need to be demonstrated at the planning application stage.</p>

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		<p>roofs with varied building lines and roof forms which adds interest and character to the street; <u>and</u></p> <p>b. The landscape setting of Bradley Way which benefits from some prominent trees along its route, particularly at its southern end.</p> <p>2. New development will be acceptable where it would lead to the creation of more residential units or community facilities, in particular those catering for young people, except at the Locks Hill employment site, where only B1a uses will be acceptable, in accordance with Policy 4;:</p> <p>3. The Police Station building and site on South Street represents an important opportunity for reuse or conversion;:</p> <p>4. Pedestrian links within the AAP area, including those to the central area and Market Square, and across Rochford, including to the open space on the opposite side of Bradley Way, should be strengthened; <u>and</u></p> <p>5. Improvements at the junction of Bradley Way, South Street and Southend Road will be supported. This location acts as a gateway to the town from the south but currently lacks definition and, combined with a reworking of the junction, there may be an opportunity for a new landmark development to strengthen this gateway.</p>	
51	Policy 9	<p><i>Amend the second part of the policy as follows:</i></p> <p>The Council will support development in the western approach area that would protect and enhance its existing character. The</p>	<p>These changes would clarify that the criteria together would need to be demonstrated at the planning application stage.</p>

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		<p>following principles are important:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. New development will respond positively to local townscape character and protect and enhance the character of the Rochford conservation area. Key elements include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The small scale of the almshouses along West Street as you enter the town from the west; <u>and</u> b. The mixed commercial and residential character of the area where both long and recently established businesses sit comfortably adjacent to residential uses. 2. New development in this location is considered particularly appropriate given the opportunities for new development taking advantage of the good quality public transport facilities; 3. New development is acceptable where it would lead to the creation of more residential units, job opportunities or community facilities, in particular those catering for young people; 4. Freight House is an attractive commercial building and should be retained. However, there is considered to be an opportunity to intensify the uses on this site, either through a new building or an extension to the existing building. Housing and/or employment uses would be appropriate, with a particular opportunity to take advantage of the excellent public transport accessibility and the proximity and relationship to the open space to the east; 5. Pedestrian links within the AAP area, including those to the central area and Market Square, and across Rochford, including to the rail station and green open space south-west of Bradley 	

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		Way, should be strengthened.; <u>and</u> 6. Improvements at the junctions of Ashingdon Road, Hall Road and West Street, and West Street and Bradley Way will be supported.	