Southend-on-Sea Development Management Development Plan Document

Sustainability Appraisal of the Revised Proposed Submission

March 2014

On behalf of **Southend-on-Sea Borough Council**

Contents

Appendices

C:\Users\cpostan\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary
Internet Files\Content.Outlook\G0T8C81B\SA Revised Submission
DMDPD 140314 ISSUE.docx

iii

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DMDPD 140314 ISSUE.docx

iv

1   Introduction

1.1   The Sustainability Appraisal

1.1.1   This is the sustainability appraisal (SA) report of the Development Management Development Plan Document (DPD) Revised Proposed Submission for Southend. The DPD's purpose is to provide a set of detailed policies to guide delivery of development in the Southend-on-Sea borough. It is part of the Southend-on-Sea Local Development Framework (LDF), which sets out the land use planning framework. The SA has been prepared by Peter Brett Associates LLP (PBA), formally Baker Associates.

1.1.2   The purpose of the SA has been to inform the decision-making process during preparation of the DPD. This ensures that potential sustainable development implications of the DPD are identified and are incorporated into developing the policies. The SA method is in line with good practice on SA and the European Community Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

1.1.3   This SA report builds on work already completed for the SA of the Core Strategy DPD, which was adopted in December 2007.

1.1.4   The aim for this SA is to keep the scope of the work focused on those issues that this DPD could influence and be influenced by. More detailed information on the SA process can be found in the SA Core Strategy, which should be read alongside with this SA report. Therefore, the main SA report text is quite succinct.

1.1.5   The current stage of appraisal of the DPD follows the SA of the Development Management Issues and Options DPD in June 2010. This was the first version of the SA of the DPD and informed plan makers of the possible sustainability impacts of the policy choices. This early stage of the SA allowed sustainability concerns to be addressed as final policy wording for the submission version.

1.1.6   Following consultation on Issues and Options a proposed submission version of the DPD was prepared by Southend-on-Sea Borough Council (SBC) in March 2011. An SA was completed of this submission stage. However, following the change in national planning policy with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) replacing Planning Policy Statements and Planning Policy Guidance, amongst other matters, the proposed submission had to be revised.

1.1.7   The SA of the Issues and Option (June 2010) and the previous Submission version of the Development Management DPD (March 2011) are available on the Council's LDF website.

1.1.8   This SA report is of the Revised Proposed Submission version of the DPD. However, the SA report remains largely the same to that of the previous proposed submission version. The SA has been updated to take into account the alternations to the DPD between the original proposed submission and the revised proposed submission. The SA of the LDF is being prepared in order to fulfil the statutory requirement from the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. This is addressed in the NPPF (2012) paragraph 165 "*A sustainability appraisal which meets the requirements of the European Directive on strategic environmental assessment should be an integral part of the plan preparation process, and should consider all the likely significant effects on the environment, economic and social factors*". Therefore, this

SA has been undertaken to meet the requirements of the European Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive (2001/42/EC).

1.1.9 However, regardless of statutory requirements the main purpose of the SA is to help create a better plan and one that takes full account of sustainable development. It aims to avoid and mitigate the potential for adverse impacts and maximise the benefits for greater sustainability.

1.2 Habitats Regulations Assessment

1.2.1 In light of the European Habitats Directive and the 'Conservation (Natural Habitats, Etc.) (Amendment) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006', a brief assessment screening was undertaken of the submission Core Strategy DPD. This assesses whether the Core Strategy is likely to have an adverse effect on the integrity of any European or international site, either alone or in combination with other relevant plans or projects.

1.2.2 A Habitats Regulations Assessment was undertaken on the Development Management DPD. This is report is available separately as part of the evidence base and background for the DPD.

1.3 The Local Development Framework

1.3.1 The Development Management DPD was prepared to support the Core Strategy and other parts of the LDF. The policies provide the detailed criteria on which to base development management decisions. ,

1.3.2 Sustainability appraisals are being undertaken of the whole LDF, with SAs already undertaken of all component LDF documents to date. The adopted documents are:

- The Core Strategy Development Plan Document;
- The Planning Obligations Development Plan Document; and
- Design and Townscape Guide Supplementary Planning Document.

1.3.3 An SA was also completed for an Issues and Options paper for the Seafront AAP. The Council decided not to pursue this AAP and worked ceased. However, some aspects of the previous AAP now appear in this Development Management DPD.

1.3.4 There are two other LDF documents where SA is ongoing, these are:

- The Southend Central Area Action Plan; and
- The Joint Area Action Plan for London Southend Airport, being prepared by Rochford and Southend-on-Sea Borough Councils.

2 The sustainability appraisal process

2.1.1 The purpose of this stage of the SA is to identify what the sustainability issues may be of using the development management policies to help deliver development in Southend.

2.1.2 The process of appraisal consists of two main stages, these are:

- To define sustainable development in the context of development in Southend, through investigation of background material on sustainability and identifying the sustainability issues and context for the borough; and

- Using the definition of sustainable development to help assess if the policies would help contribute or detract from achieving it and identifying ways the performance could be improved.

2.1.3 The first stage of the appraisal is gathering baseline information on the characteristics of the area (**Section 3**) and identifying the other plans and programmes relevant of the SA of the area (**Section 4**). From these sources and the SA work completed for the Core Strategy a set of sustainability objectives were drawn up. These objectives provide the definition of sustainable development relating to the DPD giving a consistent basis for the appraisal (**Section 5**).

2.1.4 The initial stage of information gathering for the SA builds on work already undertaken for the SA of the Southend LDF Core Strategy, reported in August 2006. However, these have been updated to take into account changes in baseline since that time.

2.1.5 Following the review of the background, the SA will assess the proposed policies of the DPD contained in the Revised Proposed Submission DPD. The purpose is to identify how these are likely to impact on implementing development that will contribute to greater sustainability.

2.1.6 As part of the Issues and Options SA, there was an appraisal of alternative policy options. The findings are summarised in **Section 6**. Further detail on the appraisal of options is in the Issues and Options SA report (June 2010) on the Council's LDF website.

2.1.7 An appraisal of all the policies in the Revised Proposed Submission version is in **Appendix A**. This SA report summarises the main findings and recommendations of the policy appraisal (**Section 7**).

2.1.8 An initial SA and report were prepared for the Issues and Options version of the DPD in June 2010. The SA of the Issues and Options is available on the Council's website.

2.2 The Development Management DPD

2.2.1 The Development Management DPD provides the detailed implementation policies for the LDF, relevant to the local area. However, the Core Strategy also contains policies that will be used in making development management decisions and national policy is set in the NPPF. The Core Strategy contained two types of policies, strategic principles of delivering development in the borough in the 'Key Policies' and more detailed or area specific 'Core Policies'. The SA of the Core Strategy contains a full appraisal of these policies.

2.2.2   The Development Management policies of this new DPD need to fill in the gaps that remain in the Core Strategy policies. There is no need for the Development Management policies to repeat policy issues from the Core Strategy. Instead, these policies need to add the necessary detail to the plan to ensure that the local situation is taken into account, and the type and design of development helps respond to the particular needs of the borough.

2.2.3   For the SA this means it is not necessary for the Development Management policies to have full coverage of all sustainability issues, as some matters will be dealt with through the Core Strategy. A number of amendments have been made and reflected in the revised version of the Development Management DPD to ensure it is in conformity with the NPPF. A summary of the main changes is available on the Councils website.

2.3   Sustainability appraisal process

2.3.1   The SA of the DPD is a repeated process with successive appraisals being completed during preparation from the Issues and Options stage to submission. For far there have been published drafts of the Issues and Options SA and the first proposed submission version of the DPD, both of which are available on the Council's website.

2.3.2   At this stage in DPD preparation it is necessary to consider the sustainability impacts for the proposed policies of the Revised Proposed Submission version. The purpose is to ensure sustainability considerations can be taken into account in policy coverage and wording and identify what the sustainability implications of policies might be.

2.3.3   The earlier stage of appraisal at Issues and Options considered potential policy alternatives, or options. At the Issues and Options stage a decision was still to be made about the type and number of policies to be included. The consideration of alternatives and identifying the relative sustainability impacts of these approaches is an important part of the SA processes, as well as an SEA requirement.

2.4   Collation of baseline information

2.4.1   The level of detail in the baseline information for this DPD reflects the role of the plan in the LDF, focusing on those issues of importance and in proportion to the issues addressed. The DPD covers the whole plan area, although in some cases refers specifically to certain areas. Therefore, the broad coverage of issues in the baseline is in sufficient detail for the SA of this type of plan.

2.4.2   The Development Management contains policies specifically relating to the Seafront, baseline information has been collected in greater detail for this area. This information was initially collected as part of the SA of the Seafront Area Action Plan (AAP), although preparation has now ceased for this plan, with the seafront areas in the central area contained in the Central Southend AAP.

2.4.3   The baseline draws on work carried out by SBC during the preparation of the plan and work carried out for the SA of the Core Strategy. The SA scoping document prepared for the Core

Strategy provides more coverage of the process of scoping and background material gathering for the SA[1].

2.4.4   The primary sources of information for the baseline data collation are :

- Southend-on-Sea Town Centre AAP Key Statistics, SBC;

- Town Centre Area Actions Plan Issues and Options paper, SBC; and

- Baker Associates (now PBA), Sustainability Appraisal, for Southend on Sea, Local Development Framework, Core Strategy Development Plan Document, SBC.

2.4.5   In addition, relevant plans and programmes containing sustainability objectives or goals that will be important influences on the SA and DPD have also been identified. Again, these are referenced from those identified by those producing the DPD, as well as those identified in the SA of the Core Strategy. In identifying the relevant plans and programmes, it has been important to restrict this to those plans and programmes with real relevance to the DPD.

2.4.6   The baseline information descriptions and identification of key sustainability issues is shown in **Section 4** and in **Appendix B**.

2.5   Habitats Regulations Assessment

2.5.1   In addition to the SA, another type of environmental appraisal is necessary as part of developing the DPD. This requirement comes from the Habitats Directive (1995) and is part of the appraisal process of the LDF. The appraisal of the Core Strategy recognised that the LDF may have an impact on protected sites.

2.5.2   There are five European Sites relevant to the Local Development Framework. They are:

a)   Benfleet and Southend Marshes SPA;
b)   Foulness SPA;
c)   Essex Estuaries SPA; and
d)   Crouch and Road Estuaries SPA; and
e)   Thames Estuary & Marshes SPA.

2.5.3   The screening for potential impacts from the policies of the DPD is covered in the Habitats Regulations Assessment Scoping Report August 2011, available on the Council's website.

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[1] See also 'The Habitats Regulations Assessment' of the Core Strategy DPD also available on Southend on Sea Borough Council website

3   Other plans and strategies

3.1.1   A more comprehensive summary of other relevant plans and programmes can be found in the Issues and Options and Core Strategy SA Report. This section is intended to draw out the specific issues relating to the DPD. The plans and strategies identified have been updated for the Revised Proposed Submission SA, as some that have been identified earlier are now out of date.

3.1.2   The **Habitats Directive** and **Conservation (Natural Habitats &c) Regulations 1994** (as amended), have relevance to the DPD. This is because the borough is surrounded by areas designated as being of international significance for nature conservation. These designated areas are collectively known under European legislation as Natura 2000 sites. Any potential impact of planning policy, or specific proposals, on these areas needs assessment to determine the nature of these impacts to ensure that they will mitigate or avoid completely harm to the designated features on the site.

The National Planning Policy Framework 2012

3.1.3   The UK planning system is a plan led approach as imbedded in Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. This requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan and unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Thus, it is essential the planning policies covering Southend will have the delivery of sustainable development embedded within them. National policy is set through the **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF),** which was adopted in March 2012.

3.1.4   The NPPF therefore constitutes policy which planning authorities and developers must take into account in the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans and is a material consideration in planning decisions.

3.1.5   The NPPF does not change the statutory status for the development plan as the starting point for decision making. Proposed development that accords with an up to date local plan should be approved and proposed development which conflicts should be refused unless other material considerations indicate otherwise (Paragraph 12).

3.1.6   The document identifies that the purpose of planning is to help achieve sustainable development, with 'sustainable' meaning the need to ensure that securing better lives for current generations does not mean worse lives for future generations and 'development' meaning growth. The key objectives within the guidance that are relevant to the current development proposals are summarised as:

- A presumption in favour or sustainable development;

- Building a strong and competitive economy;

- Promoting sustainable transport;

- Climate change, flooding and coastal change;

- Conserve and enhance the natural environment; and

- Conserve and enhance the historic environment.

The Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

3.1.7   The NPPF identifies that at the heart of the planning system there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development which should be seen as the golden thread running through plan making and decision making.

3.1.8   The presumption means 'decision takers at every level should approve development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay' (Paragraph 14).

3.1.9   In the absence of an up-to-date local plan that conforms with the NPPF (or absent or silent plan), the focus should be on the test in paragraph 14, which says that planning permission should be granted unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the NPPF.

3.1.10   The three dimensions of sustainable development that give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles are identified in paragraph 7 as:

- **An economic role** – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy by ensuring sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and co-ordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure

- **A social role** – supporting strong vibrant and healthy communities providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of the present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the communities needs and support and its health, social and cultural wellbeing

- **An environmental role** – contributing to protecting and enhancing the natural built and historic environment and as part of this helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudential, minimise waste and pollution and mitigate and adapt climate change including moving to a lower carbon economy.

3.1.11   In achieving sustainable development the NPPF sets out the core land use planning principles underpinning both plan making and decision taking. These principles set out in paragraph 12 include: Pro-actively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs. Every effort should be made to identify and meet the housing, business and other developing needs of an area and respond positively to wider opportunities for growth.

Building a Strong Competitive Economy

3.1.12   The NPPF supports the growth agenda with the Government committed to securing economic growth in order to create jobs and prosperity and meet the challenges of global competition and of a low carbon agenda. The focus on economic growth has been one of the major drivers of the planning reforms in delivering an economic recovery.

3.1.13   The guidance states that 'planning should operate to encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth. Therefore significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system (paragraph 19).

Promoting Sustainable Transport

3.1.14   The guidance identifies that the transport system needs to be balanced in favour of sustainable transport modes giving people a real choice about the way they travel. However the government recognises that different policies and measures will be required in different communities and opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary from urban to rural areas (Paragraph 29).

3.1.15   In preparing local plans local authorities should therefore support a pattern of development which, where reasonable, facilitates the use of sustainable modes of travel.

3.1.16   The NPPF acknowledges that development which generates significant amounts of movement should be supported by a Transport Assessment or Statement (Paragraph 32) and a Travel Plan (Paragraph 36).

Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change

3.1.17   The NPPF recognises that planning plays a key role in reducing greenhouse gas, emissions, minimising the impacts of climatic change and supporting the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.

3.1.18   New development is also required to be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to a range of impacts arising from climate change (including factors such as flood risk, water supply and changes to biodiversity and landscape). New developments brought forward in areas which are vulnerable, therefore should ensure the risks can be managed through suitable adaption measures, including the planning of green infrastructure.

3.1.19   In relation to flood risk, the NPPF identifies that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk but where development is necessary, making it safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere.

3.1.20   When determining applications, local authorities should ensure that the flood risk is not increased elsewhere and only consider development appropriate in areas at risk of flooding where, informed by site specific flood risk assessment following the sequential test and, if required, the exception of test (Paragraph 103).

Conserve and Enhance the Natural Environment

3.1.21   The guidance sets out that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- Protecting and enhancing valued landscapes

- Recognising the wider benefits of the eco-system services; and

- Minimising impact on biodiversity and providing net gains and biodiversity where possible.

3.1.22   Areas of land designated as part of the Green Belt, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, National Parks and other protected sites will not be overridden by the presumption. The NPPF contains a provision to recognise the 'intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside', whether designated or otherwise.

3.1.23   The NPPF identifies that planning policies and decisions should also ensure that any site is suitable for the new use taking into account of ground conditions and land instability, including natural hazard and mitigated accordingly.

3.1.24   Similarly, planning policies and decisions should aim to avoid noise from giving rise to significant adverse effects and mitigate and reduce to a minimum other adverse impacts on health and quality of life arising from noise and new development including through the use of conditions.

Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

3.1.25   In determining applications the local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance that any heritage assets affected including any contribution made to their setting. The guidance highlights that the level of detail should be proportionate to the assets importance in no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance (Paragraph 128).

Technical Guidance

3.1.26   In March 2012 the Government published technical guidance for the NPPF to provide additional guidance to the Local Authority to ensure the effect of implementation of planning policy in areas of risk of flooding and in relation to mineral extraction.

3.1.27   The guidance retains key elements of Planning Policy Statement 25 of the existing minerals policy statements and mineral planning guidance notes. The retention of this guidance is in an interim measure pending a wider review of guidance to support planning policy.

3.1.28   The **Sustainable Communities** plan published in 2003, set out the Government's agenda for sustainable development and urban renaissance across England. As part of the plan the Urban White Paper outlined key growth areas in the north and south of the country. A key part of delivering this agenda is the planned development of four identified growth areas, the first priority being the growth of the Thames Gateway stretching along the Thames Estuary from London to the sea and including Southend.

3.1.29   This plan set out an approach to creating new communities in the UK that provide sustainable places in which to live. The key aim of the approach is a step change in housing delivery increasing housing levels above the existing growth rate. These new homes will include homes to meet the needs of all groups, and be integrated with economic growth and provision of new services and greenspaces to create desirable places to live.

3.1.30   The **Thames Gateway** area is a co-ordinated effort to develop and regenerate fifteen local authority areas, across three regions along the Thames estuary and north Kent coast. Renaissance Southend Limited is an integral part of the overall strategy of regenerated polycentric retail and service centres. The role played by Southend and the South Essex sub-area is reflected in the Regional Spatial Strategy and discussed in the Sustainability Appraisal of the Core Strategy.

3.1.31   Delivering development in the Thames Gateway, including the South Essex towns that make up part of it, are a key national objective. The economic and housing growth outlined in the Thames Gateway area should be supported by the LDF.

3.1.32 **Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership:** The Partnership was set up to deliver a better quality of life for all those who live and work in the area, including Southend. It is committed to helping deliver 55,000 new jobs and 43,800 new homes to the region by 2021 through regeneration. Originally the Partnership was an independent company but since April 2012 has operated as a partnership of relevant South Essex local authorities, including Southend.

3.1.33 The **Community Strategy** and **SBC Corporate Plan** are both important drivers for local planning policy.

3.1.1 The aspirations for the local community are set out in **The Southend-on-Sea Community Plan 2010-2020**, prepared by the Local Strategic Partnership. The strategy is intended to cover a full range of issues that cannot be fully addressed by planning policy, covering issues such as health care, community safety and education. However, the LDF will have an essential role to play in building the communities and delivering infrastructure to support more sustainable communities. The most recent community strategy sets out the 'key achievements since the previous community strategy, which was *Sustainable Community Strategy 2007-2017*. The new community strategy sets out the 10 ambitions of the old community strategy and sets four additional ones. These original ambitions include:

- To be a borough with decent housing, in safe and attractive residential area, that meets the needs of those who want to live here;

- To provide opportunities, support and information to people of all ages and abilities to enable them to take responsibility for their health and choose a healthy lifestyle;

- To be a borough that has safe, more accessible, and affordable means of getting about, which supports the potential for regeneration and growth;

- To protect the borough for current and future generations and to remain an attractive place for residents, businesses and visitors;

- To provide visionary leadership and enable inclusive, active and effective participation by individuals and organisations;

- To create a safer community for all;

- To be recognised as a cultural capital of the East of England; and

- To create a thriving and sustainable local economy, which extends opportunity for local residents and promotes prosperity throughout the borough.

- To provide visionary leadership and enable inclusive, active and effective participation by individuals and organisations;

- To create a safer community for all;

- To be recognised as a cultural capital of the East of England; and

- To create a thriving and sustainable local economy, which extends opportunity for local residents and promotes prosperity throughout the borough.

3.1.2 The four new ambitions are:

- Create a safer town, where people feel secure and confident to live;

- To reduce inequalities in health and wellbeing across Southend and support all ages to lead independent lives and choose a healthy lifestyle;

- To build strong, confident and proud communities who are empowered to take an active part in local decision making and have positive relationships with each other; and

- To create a thriving and sustainable local economy, which extends opportunity for local residents and promotes prosperity throughout the borough.

3.1.3   There are also three key local priorities:

- Developing the Local Economy

- Supporting Local Health and Wellbeing

- Local Community Safety

3.1.4   The **Southend Corporate Plan c**ontains 10 corporate priorities and related actions 2013/14. Relevant priorities for the Local Development Framework (LDF) include:

- Ensure a well-maintained and attractive street scene, parks and open spaces;

- Where possible minimise our impact on the natural environment;

- Encourage the prosperity of Southend and its residents; and

- Enable well planned housing and developments that meet the needs of Southend's residents and businesses.

3.1.5   Transport issues for the area are covered in the **Local Transport Plan 3** (2011-2026). The Plan builds on the existing long term strategy set out in the preceding Transport Plans and encompasses key local and national developments and changes in policy. The Plan also addresses the role of transport policy in reducing carbon emissions and encouraging more sustainable means of travel. The key objectives of the Plans are to ensure Southend can:

- Have a thriving and sustainable local economy;

- Minimise environmental impacts and promote sustainability;

- Create a safer Borough; and

- Reduce inequalities in health and wellbeing.

3.1.6   The **Southend on Sea Core Strategy** (December 2007) is the overarching part of the LDF that has implications for the DPD. This contains policies that cover all development in the borough, and sets goals for housing and job development in the town centre and seafront areas. It also has policies that cover the principles for development, covering issues such as the historic environment, use of resources and flooding. There are also more specific policies addressing matters in more detail, such as: the design of development; delivering open space and recreation space requirements; the town centre; minerals; and community infrastructure.

3.1.7   Further information on the appraisal of the policies of the Core Strategy is in the SA of the Core Strategy, available on the Southend website.

3.1.8   Other component parts of the LDF are of relevance to the DPD as well as additional SPDs include the Design and Townscape Guide and regarding Planning Obligations. As well as the AAP being prepared for the Southend Central Area and Southend Airport.

3.1.9   The **Economic Development & Tourism Strategy Refresh** (November 2010) updates the 2007-2013 Economic Development and Tourism Strategy. The revision contains a vision for the borough as:

"An innovative and resilient economy that attracts high quality businesses, retains knowledge and nurtures a diverse and sustainable economic base. A thriving and creative regional centre where people want to live, work and visit."

3.1.10   This refreshed, single economic vision reflects:

- The increasing need to innovate, evolve and diversify in order to succeed and mitigate the risks of macroeconomic events or fiscal policy;

- The retention of skills and knowledge to drive new business creation, building on Southend's entrepreneurship and educational assets;

- The required balance between encouraging and supporting start-ups, where Southend is traditionally strong, helping enterprise survive and grow, where is it not as strong, and securing its position in terms of large employers; and

- Southend's strength in terms of location, accessibility and quality of life.

3.1.11   The vision is supported by 13 objectives that will be used to implement the vision. The objectives include successfully delivering the Central Area Masterplan to enhance the retail offer and size of retail catchment.

3.1.12   **South Essex Green Grid Strategy** is a long-term project to deliver a network of open spaces and green links throughout Thames Gateway South Essex, as part of The Thames Gateway regeneration area. This aims to bring significant environmental improvements to this part of Essex, through the provision of combined recreational open spaces, wildlife corridors and improving the appearance of the landscape. The purpose of the Greengrid strategy is to:

- Provide a holistic and long-term vision for the sustainable future development and management of the south Essex area;

- Define an environmental infrastructure that promotes the establishment and managements of appropriate character settings; and

- Provide the context for development over the long term.

3.1.13   Therefore, the Greengrid strategy will have particular implications for the LDF by ensuring improvements to the 'green' character of the borough are taken into account in a strategic way – with long term planning for this change and how development can contribute to this.

3.1.14   The Greengrid scheme is part of the wider **Parklands South Essex** scheme, reported in *Thames Gateway Parklands – Delivering Environmental Transformation* (November 2010). This has government funding as part of the Maxigreen project for access and landscape improvements in the South Essex Marshes. The restored marshes will be part of the wider greengrid of public open space, greenspaces, footpaths and nature reserves that cover the area.

3.1.15   A masterplan has been prepared for the regeneration and renewal of the town centre. This is the **Southend Central Area Masterplan** (adopted in November 2008). The purpose of the

masterplan is to set a vision for central Southend and the seafront, as part of the major scheme for Renaissance Southend. The aim is to:

- Act as a catalyst for realising the vision and objectives for the revitalisation of the area;

- To help develop confidence amongst landowners and therefore encourage investment; and

- To help deliver civic pride.

3.1.16 **Essex Coast and Estuaries Coastal Habitat Management Plan (CHaMP) (2002)** provides a long-term strategic view on how the balance of losses and gains to habitats and species of European interest can be maintained (particularly intertidal and freshwater habitats in the coastal zone). This is in light of rising sea levels, and the flood defence response to it. The CHaMP concluded that the estuaries cannot be maintained in their present form. Maintaining the present levels of flood defences will lead to the loss of significant areas of salt marsh by 2050. It was recognised that ecological change is inevitable due to changes in the distribution and extent of habitats under a sea level rise scenario.

3.1.17 However, these findings relate more to locations where defences are protecting agricultural land. Where flood defences are protecting urban areas, such as Southend, defences should be maintained.

3.1.18 **Thames Gateway South Essex Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (September 2010)** was prepared by Scott Wilson Ltd on behalf of Southend-on-Sea Borough Council. The primary objective of the assessment was to enable Southend-on-Sea BC to undertaken the Sequential Test in line with the Government's flood risk and development policy document – Planning Policy Statement 25 (PPS25): *Development and Flood Risk*. This process is to inform the development of the Borough's Local Development Framework documents.

3.1.19 The document concludes that the Sequential Test should be undertaken for all land allocations within the Borough, steering development away from high risk areas. The document also recommends that site specific Flood Risk Assessments are prepared for all developments in identified flood zones in Southend that are over 1.0ha and for sites known to have critical drainage issues. Sustainable drainage systems should be included within development plans, and additional rest centres across the borough should also be identified and incorporated into the emerging Flood Emergency Plan for Southend-on-Sea BC.

3.1.20 **South Essex Catchment Flood Management Plan (December 2009)** has been published by the Environment Agency. The Plan outlines the preferred methods for sustainable flood risk management over the next 50 to 100 years in the South Essex catchment area. The Plan states that flood risk management planning needs to be linked closely with regeneration and redevelopment so that the location and layout of development can help to reduce flood risk. The plan identifies the cooperation between organisations as key to providing an integrated approach to urban drainage issues and surface water flooding.

3.1.21 **Essex and South Suffolk Shoreline Management Plan 2 (October 2010)** This provides a large-scale assessment of the risks associated with coastal evolution and presents a policy framework to address these risks to people and the developed, historic and natural environment in a sustainable manner. Organisations that are responsible for managing the shoreline outline their long term plans within the document, and identify opportunities to work with other organisations to make improvements. The Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) is a

high-level document that forms an important part of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) strategy for managing flooding and coastal erosion. The key aims of this strategy is to reduce the threat of flooding and erosion to people and their property and to benefit the environment, society and economy as far as possible in line with the Government's sustainable development principles.

3.1.22 The Thames Estuary 2100 group have prepared the **TE2100 Plan (November 2012).** This plan seeks to find ways of managing flood risk on the Thames Estuary, extending into central London and out to Southend. The plan states that the Southend area extending round the end of the estuary and including Leigh on Sea as a very different character to the rest of the estuary. Therefore, this area is treated separately (Action Zone 8). It states 'Southend-on-Sea is a seaside resort and Leigh has a strong fishing tradition. The policy unit has a long frontage and a narrow floodplain.' The flood risk management policy assigned to the area is: *'To ensure the communities and local economies in Canvey Island, Southend-on-Sea and Isle of Grain continue to thrive, we and others will need to do more to prevent flood risk increasing as a result of climate change'.*

3.1.23   Because of the fishing tradition and close links to the estuary at Leigh-on-Sea the defences are a low height and floodplain management is practised to avoid creating a barrier between the village and the estuary. Properties are built with raised thresholds and other resilience measures to protect against tidal flooding. More modern development may be at risk, where it has not been built to take account this need for resilience. The TE2100 would like to maintain low defences in this area in keeping with the traditional character. Resilience in all building will be essential.

3.1.24 Existing flood management includes:

- Tidal flood defences;

- Beaches with groynes and beach recharge;

- Drainage system outfalls; and

- Resilient buildings and rapid drainage measures.

3.1.25 Plans for future new raised defences on the Southend frontage should be designed so that:

- They do not encroach on the estuary;

- The raised part of the defences could consist of a new defence on a new alignment behind the sea front where space permits (for example park areas) so that the heights of the walls on the sea front are limited;

- Visual impacts upon Leigh Old Town are minimised by implementing further flood plain management;

- Walkways are raised to provide sea views and access points are improved; and

- Demountable defences and gated access points may be included in the design in some areas providing that satisfactory arrangements can be made for security of closure.

4   Baseline Characterisation of the Borough

4.1   Introduction

4.1.1   During preparation of the SA of the Core Strategy information was collected on sustainability issues on a borough-wide basis. The DPD also covers the whole plan area, therefore, baseline information gathered for the Core Strategy SA is applicable for this SA. This section of the scoping report updates the information from the previous SA.

4.1.2   The SEA Directive is concerned with the assessment of '*the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan*', and this requires where possible some understanding of the 'baseline' situation so that the change that might arise from the influence of the plan can be considered.

4.1.3   The SA Report of the Core Strategy submission draft contains as Appendix 2 baseline information for the borough, with relevant material included in **Appendix B** of this SA.

4.2   Summary of issues

4.2.1   Overall the gathering of data on the environmental baseline has served to identify a few key issues in the Plan area:

- Parts of the borough are under quite high risk of flood, although direct tidal inundation is largely mitigated for through sea flood defences. However, tidal effects on the rivers in the borough may present a greater risk to the central area, and effects of climate change will only serve to increase this.

- Habitats of international significance are located within the borough, although outside the built development boundary. These must be protected not only from direct disturbance from development but also change that would threaten their integrity, such as increased pollution or changes in water availability. However the key threat is largely beyond the control of the LDF is caused by built development limiting the natural movement of the coastal mudflats inland. These effects of 'coastal squeeze' will be exacerbated by climate change and sea level rise.

- The constrained boundaries of the borough and the need for new housing is putting pressure on open space within the built up area for development, as well as on the high quality agricultural land on the built up area boundary, maximising the need to make best use of urban land including in the town centre.

- Nature conservation and biodiversity assets within the built up area are limited, and every attempt should be made to conserve and enhance existing assets, and create new ones, as well as the protection and enhancement of wildlife corridors.

- There are increasing traffic levels in the borough, with consequences for air quality, and new development must help to limit any increase in this, by endeavouring to suggest a change to travel patterns (number, length and mode), through the spatial strategy.

- Studies have identified limits to the availability and accessibility of open space of different types and standard, especially in central Southend.

- The East of England, and south Essex in particular is, and will be, experiencing a shortage of potable water supply, therefore this must be taken into account in new development, and every attempt made to include water efficient design into new development.

- The quality of the built environment is important, not only with the effect of new building in 'mending the fabric', but also in affecting existing areas of identifiable character. Parts of central Southend are characterised by a current low quality in the built environment, although the underlying quality of the natural and built environment is high in many areas.

4.2.2 The key social and economic impacts are the:

- Current high levels of out commuting to London, due to relatively low house prices in Southend compared to the other local authority areas around London, and lack of appropriate employment opportunities in the borough.

- An identified need for affordable housing, suitably sized family houses as well as homes to meet the needs of single person households.

- If there is no diversification of the economy this could lead to economic downturn in the area as the traditional employment base of the borough is in decline, there is a need to support growing specialist sectors.

- Relatively high levels of deprivation in some parts of the borough, according to the Indices of Deprivation 2010, which identifies that some wards contain areas of significant deprivation, especially in the central area. For example, most of the Kursaal ward and parts of the Milton and Southchurch wards are in the 10% most deprived nationally. This includes areas with high levels of income, health and disability related deprivation.

- Development proposed in an around the airport will help in securing economic growth for the Borough and neighbouring authorities. However, development at the airport locations could compete with the town centre in terms of attracting inward investment.

4.2.3 An additional matter not addressed in the Core Strategy SA, but of importance to the DPD, is the impacts of climate change. Most recent predictions of the climate change for the East of England come from the UK Climate Projections (UKCP09). The predictions for changing climate for the East of England are all shown for the 2080s, relative to the 1961-1990 baseline. Predicted change is:

- Increase in winter temperatures by 1.6 to 4.2^0C;

- Increase in summer temperatures by 1.9 to 5.9^0C;

- Increase in winter precipitation from 4 to 44%; and

- Change in summer precipitation from a reduction of 45% to an increase in 6%.

4.2.4 Predictions of sea level rise in the London area are included in the UK Climate Projections *Marine and Coastal Projections Report* (June, 2009). These show that by 2050 sea level rise could be up to 25.8cm (high emissions scenarios) but even under low scenarios could be 18.4cm. Sea level around the UK rose by about 1mm/year in the 20th century, corrected for land movement. The rate for the 1990s and 2000s has been higher than this.

4.2.5 Sea level rise could lead to issues such as:

- Water resource deficiencies, which may lead to serious issues in the area particularly with the levels of development set for the Thames Gateway;

- Increased flood risk, including for sea defence overtopping, and also from rivers; and

- A risk of subsidence through changing soil moisture levels.

4.3 Additional information

4.3.1 Since the preparation of the Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal, additional information on the baseline was gathered as part of preparing the Southend Central AAP. Also, work was begun on a SA of a Seafront AAP. However, it was decided not to pursue the preparation of this AAP, with work therefore ceasing on the SA.

4.3.2 The information gathered for these two AAPs does provide a useful additional layer of up-to-date information for this SA. Both the Central Area (Town Centre) and Seafront are identified in DPD policies, with the Seafront specifically providing covered in detail through two of the suggested preferred policies. **Appendix B** contains the full background information collected for these two SAs, where relevant the information has been updated for the Revised Proposed Submission SA.

4.3.3 The additional scoping material gathered for the Seafront AAP identifies several matters that may need to be addressed by the SA. These are:

- Much of the Seafront is at risk of flood according to Environment Agency maps, however flood defences should protect against this. Therefore maintenance of these is essential, in addition to ensure all new development where necessary has appropriate flood risk assessment before proceeding;

- To protect public safety and existing built assets unstable cliffs needs to be engineered as appropriate to make stable;

- Air and bathing water quality of the Seafront should be maintained, or enhanced as necessary, through control of relevant development;

- Biodiversity and nature conservation is a key matter that needs to be considered and it will need to be ensured that new development does cause harm to European sites. New development should also help enhance the biodiversity quality of the Seafront area where appropriate;

- Reducing car use is a theme of planning in the borough, and this must include the Seafront roads, provision of alternatives is necessary, including better bus services west of the pier and completion of the Sustrans cycle route;

- Car parking in the Seafront area needs some reorganisation to reduce under-use of car parks at all times of year and encourage visitors to use improved public transport and cycle routes. Land made available after reorganisation can be used for other purposes, such as public spaces or other leisure uses;

- The built environment quality of the Seafront should be enhanced to provide a cohesive Seafront style, this will include regeneration of redundant sites but this must take into account impacts on biodiversity and take into account community views;

- The LDF must support the implementation of the Parklands and South Essex Greengrid Strategy;

- The LDF should make particular provision for improving the overnight visitor accommodation on the Seafront to encourage longer stays and higher visitor spend. This could also include new conference facilities; and

- Continued support needs to be given to employment provision and new housing in the Seafront area in order to meet objectives of the Core Strategy.

4.3.4 The additional baseline material gathered for the Southend Central Area AAP identifies several matters that may need to be addressed by the SA. These are:

- Development should help in the continued enhancement of the built environment in the town centre, with new buildings of high quality and developed to sound urban design principles;

- New urban open space, including new green space, could be provided in the town centre, this may be particularly important given the changing climate and the likelihood of even greater demand for outdoor social space;

- Parts of the central area are currently experiencing high levels of deprivation;

- The town centre is a focus of employment for the borough, and this role needs to be maintained, while also ensuring a range of employment opportunities are maintained in a variety of employment sectors. The town centre needs to be effectively competing with land being made available for employment development in the environs of London Southend Airport. It will also be necessary to ensure high quality jobs are provided;

- Air quality of the town centre must be maintained by reducing congestion and overall levels of cars;

- Every attempt should made to bring biodiversity enhancements to the Town Centre, and also to ensure development in this area does not harm the nearby Natura 2000 sites;

- Much of the Town Centre is used for car parking, the LDF and other plans set out strategies for the rationalisation of town centre parking in order to allow land to be released for other uses and create a higher quality urban environment. In addition, establishing residents parking schemes in the neighbourhoods in proximity to commercial and office areas is necessary to reduce car commuting, in tandem with delivery of the Local Transport Plan proposals for improved public transport in and around the town centre.

5 Sustainability Framework

5.1.1 In order to be able to test the emerging policies of the Development Management Development Plan Document (DPD) a set of sustainability framework has been prepared, **table 5.1**.

5.1.2 This framework is made up of a number of sustainable objectives that reflect the principle elements of sustainable development over which the Local Development Framework, as a whole, could have some influence. The framework below is based upon that in the Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Framework. Changes have been made to bring the framework up-to-date, based on the updated policy context, the baseline data and the issues and options reports for the area covered by the DPD.

5.1.3 The framework shows headline sustainability issues and how these could be expected to change to demonstrate more sustainable development. The objectives for each headline relate to the plan area. To help monitor the objectives the final column of the framework sets the type of indicator that could be used that would demonstrate change.

5.1.4 The framework has been derived from a general understanding of the principles of sustainable development. Information on the process used to decide on the framework is included in the Core Strategy SA report. In addition, the gathering of baseline information and review of plans and programmes (**sections 3** and **4**).

5.1.5 Further details on the derivation of the objectives of the sustainability framework are shown in the Core Strategy SA report, including the Scoping stage report.

Table 5.1: Sustainability Appraisal Framework for the SA of Southend-on-Sea LDF

Concern	Explanation and desirable direction of change	Objectives	Means of identifying and reporting impact and contribution of the proposals and policies in the LDF
Social progress which recognises the needs of everyone			
Accessibility	• enable all to have similar and sufficient levels of access to services, facilities and opportunities	• maintain Southend town centre as services, as the most accessible location • improve accessibility to the town centre • improvement in public transport accessibility along the entire length of the seafront	• doc – likelihood of increase in facilities and mix of uses
Housing	• to provide the opportunity for people to meet their housing need	• ensure a sufficient number of dwellings • encourage a suitable mix of dwellings, including tenure and size	• quan – no of dwellings created • quan – no of affordable dwellings (by different types) likely to arise
Education & Skills	• to assist people in gaining the skills to fulfil their potential and increase their contribution to the community	• improve accessibility to employment and education facilities • support continued development of the University campus in the town centre	• doc – but little reliability of prediction
Health, safety and security	• to improve overall levels of health, reduce the disparities between different groups and different areas, and reduce crime and the fear of crime	• improvements to reduce fear of crime in the town centre, especially at night • improve pedestrian routes through the town centre and seafront to help design out crime	• quan – area and population subject to increased or decreased risk of flooding • doc – likelihood of increased or decreased health standards (but little reliability of prediction)
Community	• to value and nurture a sense of belonging in a cohesive community, whilst respecting diversity	• improve the viability and distinctive character of Southend town centre • provide public art and improvements to the design of seafront tourist buildings, such as beach huts and kiosks to provide a recognisable unified approach for Southend • provide new community open spaces in the town centre and seafront	• doc – but little reliability of prediction

Effective protection of the environment			
Biodiversity	• to maintain and enhance the diversity and abundance of species, and safeguard these areas of significant nature conservation value	• protect undeveloped parts of the coastline • protect key habitats directly or indirectly from developments which may harm them • ensure new development brings enhancements to the built environment where appropriate • ensure 'appropriate assessment' of all development is carried out where appropriate	• quan – area of significant habitat affected • quan – potential area of significant habitat created / better managed • doc – likelihood of increase in biodiversity from creation of opportunities
Landscape character	• to maintain and enhance the quality and character and cultural significance of the landscape, including the setting and character of the settlement	• protect undeveloped parts of the coastline • retain notable features and areas of open space along the coast line • protect views of the estuary	• quan – area of open land affected • quan – area of designated landscape affected • doc – likelihood of harmful change to character of landscape creating setting of the urban area
Built environment	• to maintain and enhance the quality, safety and distinctiveness of the built environment and the cultural heritage	• enhance and protect land mark and listed buildings on the sea front • enhance and protect listed buildings and those of interest in the town centre • improve urban design quality through policy • protect existing and create new open and green space	• quan – area of useable and amenity open space affected • quan – potential area of useable and amenity open space created • quan – area of valued townscape harmed by change • doc – likelihood of increase in urban quality through new provision and investment • doc – likelihood of increase in urban quality through emphasis on quality

Prudent use of natural resources			
Air	• to reduce all forms of air pollution in the interests of local air quality and the integrity of the atmosphere	• reduce traffic congestion in the town centre • encourage freight modal shift and encourage a reduction in emissions of new buildings	• doc – likelihood of increase or decrease in emissions. Regional target is for stabilising car traffic levels in Southend at 1999 levels and to increase the proportion of freight carried to and from ports by rail to 30% by 2020. Regional target to increase the proportion of energy met from renewable sources (on-shore + off-shore) to 44% by 2020.
Water	• to maintain and improve the quantity and quality of ground, sea and river waters, and minimise the risk of flooding	• ensure no increased risk of coastal flooding • acknowledge the risk to water quality from on-shore developments	• doc – likelihood of increase or decrease in emissions • quan – number of planning applications granted contrary to Environment Agency advice on flood risk.
Land	• to use land efficiently, retaining undeveloped land and bringing contaminated land back into use	• protect undeveloped coastline in the borough • encourage development on previously developed land • encourage high density residential development and mixed use development in the town centre	• quan – area of open land affected irreversibly by development. • quan – area of damaged land likely to be brought back into use - national and regional previously developed land target is 60% and minimum dwelling densities at 30 dwellings per hectare.
Soil	• to maintain the resource of productive soil	• protect productive soil where applicable (little overall impact likely)	• quan – area of productive land affected
Minerals and other raw materials	• to maintain the stock of minerals and other raw materials	• minimise use of aggregates for new development (relevance to sea defences)	• quan – area of potential minerals extraction put beyond viable exploitation by development • doc – efficiency of the use of primary and secondary materials • doc – likely effect on reuse and recycling of materials - regional target to recover 70% of household waste by 2015
Energy sources	• to increase the opportunities for energy generation from renewable energy sources, maintain the stock of non-renewable energy sources and make the best use of the materials, energy and effort embodied in the product of previous activity	• reduce the growth in car use and congestion within borough	• quan – contribution likely from energy generation from renewable source schemes • quan – contribution likely from energy generation within new buildings • doc – likelihood of increase in efficiency of energy use in new development

Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment			
Local economy	• to achieve a clear connection between effort and benefit, by making the most of local strengths, seeking community regeneration, and fostering economic activity	• improve the viability and vitality of the town centre as economic hub for the borough • improve the viability and vitality of the seafront as a major and flexible tourist destination • identify sites for local business start-ups in accessible locations	• doc – likelihood of increase in desirable economic characteristics
Employment	• to maintain and enhance employment opportunities matched to the size of the local labour force and its various skills, and to reduce the disparities arising from unequal access to jobs	• work to create new jobs in a range of sectors within the borough • work to make the coast a major destination for conferences (as in Community Strategy) • support a diverse range of businesses premises to meet different needs, as well as supporting existing business clusters	• quan – potential number of new jobs in different sectors and match to predicted needs of workforce
Wealth creation	• to retain and enhance the factors which are conducive to wealth creation, including personal creativity, infrastructure, accessibility and the local strengths and qualities that are attractive to visitors and investors	• contribute to creating attractive environment for business to flourish • improve access for all residents to a range of jobs	• doc – likelihood of increase in desirable economic characteristics

Notes: **doc** – matter where prediction of outcome likely to be presented in terms of 'likely direction of change'
quan – matter where prediction of outcome likely to be presented in quantified terms

6 Assessment of Alternatives

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1   The SEA Directive requires that the environmental implications of 'alternatives' are assessed and reported. The Directive states assessment is needed to identify, *'the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme, and reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme'* (SEA Directive Article 5(1)).

6.2 Issues and Options Assessment

6.2.1   For the Development Management Development Plan Document (DPD) the Issues and Options version presented alternatives for all of the policy issues. One or more options were presented for policy wording or implementation. These options were appraised as part of the sustainability matrices of the Issues and Options version SA. In the majority of cases the suggested preferred option was found to be most compatible with sustainable development. However, in some instances the SA comments that the options presented identified that they were not really viable alternatives, examples included:

- where policy is set nationally therefore alternatives cannot be considered

- options were given that were not really either/or choices

- options were given that were not reasonable with one option clearly noticeably preferable and not pursing it would have no benefit.

6.2.2   The SA stated that where no options exist it would have been reasonable not to include any.

6.2.3   The SA at that time did suggest a further alternative, which looked at a different way of presenting the plan. The suggestion was that as part of making a comprehensive, but at the same time readily understandable, set of policies there may be an alternative way of creating a set of development management policies. In taking forward the policy areas identified as being important to tackling local issues this alternative approach may be effective in helping make a more usable plan for officers, applicants and consultees.

6.2.4   The approach taken to setting some of the policies of the Issues and Options DPD was to identify a development type, e.g. houses in multiple occupation, tall buildings, and then create a policy to set criteria for its delivery. This method is useful as it allows developers to find policies that directly relate to their needs. However, it created some repetition between policies, for example access and design. The repetition of similar criteria through multiple policies resulted in a long plan. It total this version of the plan contained 25 policy issues, meaning 25 potential policies. A long plan would be more difficult to use, for developers and development management officers. It would also risk some of the principle messages about delivering sustainable development becoming lost, therefore be of less benefit in securing sustainable development.

6.2.5   The alternative approach was suggested in the Issues and Option SA. The alternative, which has been used in other parts of the country, is to identify a limited number of topic based policies that act as a catch-all for all development.

6.2.6   Pursuing this 'catch-all' alternative method of developing policies would not have resulted in any major changes to the overall sustainability coverage of the Southend development management DPD. It is only an alternative way of presenting many of the development criteria that have been developed as part of the Issues and Options version DPD. The Issues and Options SA gave examples of the topics the DPD could cover.

6.3   Policy Iteration

6.3.1   In the Revised Proposed Submission version the policies the number of policies has been reduced. The policy on Tall Buildings remains, but additional policy detail means that the purpose of this policy is clearer, with guidance aimed directly at the form of these buildings. In many instances policies have been combined to simplify the DPD. This makes the DPD more usable helping people find the policies that they will need to take into account of with ease. This should help ensure that planning applications are of a good quality and can move smoothly through the application process.

6.3.2   The iteration of policies as the final Development Plan Document emerged also has allowed for amendment and refining of policy wording. This alternative policy wording can help ensure that the polices will help deliver more sustainable development. **Appendix A** shows the iteration of policies the implications for changes for policy's sustainability performance.

7 Sustainability appraisal of development management policies

7.1.1 The SA of the proposed policies is shown in the appraisal matrices of **Appendix A**. The matrices aim to assess how each policy will contribute to sustainable development by comparing them with the definition given in the sustainability framework (**Section 5**). The matrices also include recommendations on possible amendments to improve sustainability performance, if necessary. A brief summary of how the policy has developed from Issues and Options to submission versions is given in the final box of the matrix. This summary provides a policy audit trail from the point of view of sustainability.

7.1.2 The matrices of **Appendix A** are an integral part of the appraisal and should be read in conjunction with this main report. This section of the SA report summarises some of the main findings of the appraisal, but the matrices contain more detailed findings.

7.2 The policy hierarchy

7.2.1 The development management policies will not act alone in delivering sustainable development in Southend. Higher tiers of policy are set at a national level through the NPPF and the LDF must conform to this.

7.2.2 At a local level the Core Strategy[2] sets the strategic policies and overarching policy for development principles and implementation. These policies set:

- The general spatial strategy and the location of new development, such as the Seafront, Shoeburyness and the Priority Urban Areas (Policy KP1), and the level of development directed to each area (CP1: employment, CP8: dwelling provision);

- The fundamental principles on which development management decisions will be made (Policy KP2), and how policies will be implemented and enforced (Policy KP3); and

- More detailed policies on how development in some areas will be delivered (CP2: town centre and retail), this includes elements of sustainable development (CP3: transport and access, CP4: the environment and urban renaissance).

7.2.3 The Core Strategy has been subject of SA and this is available on the Council's website.

7.2.4 Other Local Development Framework policies will contain more detail and site specific matters. For instance, the Southend Central AAP will include site specific allocations and implementation policies.

7.2.5 It is the role of the Development Management policies of this DPD to provide the generic local detail to national and Core Strategy policies. This detail should be tailored to control implementation of all proposed development in Southend, including that set out in the spatial strategy and site allocations DPDs. The aim is to make sure all new development makes a contribution to more sustainable development in the borough, avoid adverse impacts and maximise sustainability benefits. To achieve this, the development management policies need to be comprehensive but at the same time readily understandable by being clear and concise. However, the DPD is not the only document that will provide more detailed policies, for

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[2] Southend-on-Sea LDF *DPD1: Core Strategy* (December, 2007)

instance the Central Area AAP and Airport and Environs Joint AAP will also provide spatially specific policy.

7.3 Sustainability appraisal recommendations from Core Strategy

7.3.1 The findings of the SA of the Core Strategy policies was that the policies should have a generally positive impact on achieve sustainable development. The SA assessed that the Core Strategy, subject to some controls over implementation and design of development due to the scale of development, could contribute to greater sustainability.

7.3.2 One of the ways of mitigating potential impacts identified in the Core Strategy SA Report[3] (**Section 6** and **Appendix A** matrices) is to put in place detailed policy criteria to help guide development and through the allocation of sites. The Development Management policies have a large part to play in establishing these policy criteria, with AAPs guiding the location of development through allocations.

7.3.3 Ways that policies can help mitigate impacts are identified as:

- Design policies to help maintain and enhance the built environment quality of the borough;

- Policies to help encourage walking and cycling by encourage new development to prioritise walkers and cyclists;

- Policies to set target for sustainable construction and energy use;

- Policies to help focus retail development on the town centre; and

- Recognition of the high biodiversity quality of parts of the borough, and the need to protect and enhance biodiversity wherever it is found.

7.3.4 The SA identifies that the issues listed in paragraph 7.3.3 are all well addressed by the Development Management DPD.

7.4 Role of Development Management policies in delivering sustainable development

7.4.1 Development management policies have a role in tailoring national and regional policies to respond to specific circumstances in the local area. These circumstances may include protecting and enhancing features of local importance, or controlling development to help address known environmental/social/economic problems in the area.

7.4.2 There are several fundamental issues that development management policies will cover relating to achieving more sustainable development. These include:

- The need for new buildings to be designed to enhance the built environment and protect built heritage;

- To reduce resource use;

- The need to protect the natural environment, and in particular avoid impact to the internationally designated nature conservation sites on the Southend foreshore;

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[3] Sustainability Appraisal for the Southend-on-Sea Local Development Framework: Core Strategy Development Plan Document (Submission Version), August 2006

- To lower people's dependence on car travel through the design of new development, links to public transport, walking and cycling routes, limiting car parking, providing a mix of land uses;

- Protecting people from potential safety risks, such as contamination or flood;

- Support the retail economy of the town both in local and neighbourhood centres, with each supported according to its role;

- Encourage the local economy through protecting and growth employment sites and supporting the tourism industry; and

- Make sure the types of development provided are suitable to meet people's needs, such as the type and tenure of housing and the location of visitor accommodation.

7.4.3 The SA of the Southend development management polices reveals that the policies are largely compatible with sustainable development. The appraisal identifies that many issues are well covered by the Development Management policies when considered along with higher tier policies. Sustainability objectives that are addressed well though the DPD are:

- Securing a high quality built environment through policies on design quality, tall buildings, and protection of built heritage. These policies support Core Strategy policies and are supported by Design and Townscape Guide Supplementary Planning Document;

- Providing good quality homes through policies on residential standards, dwelling mix and specialist residential accommodation. These support the Core Policies on housing growth and affordable housing targets;

- Creating a safe place, policies relating to protection from land contamination, avoiding risks from unstable land and avoiding flood risk areas are all an important part of helping protect residents and visitors from hazards;

- Good use of natural resources are covered by policies of the DPD, as well as Core Policies on renewable and low carbon energy;

- Supporting a sustainable economy is covered through policies on protection of employment sites and support to economic growth, support to local retail areas (although the central area will be covered through the Central Southend AAP) policies on tourism and public realm improvements will also help support this. Economic growth targets and strategic locations for this are covered by the Core Strategy.

7.4.4 The policies also have a generally positive impact on other sustainability objectives, although these are addressed in more detail by other tiers of policy. This includes, protection of designated sites for the natural and built environment, creating communities, accessibility and employment.

7.4.5 The SA is also supports how the DPD is written as it is succinct, focuses only on those issues that need to be addressed at this tier and therefore more likely to be easy to use and implementable. The amalgamation of policy issues from the Issues and Options version also helps reduce complexities and possible duplication of criteria. The clarity and the requirements for pre-application discussions should all help in making sure planning applications are of a good quality. Better applications are likely to help them progress more smoothly through the decision making process and may help secure more sustainable development.

7.5 Comments and recommendations

7.5.1 There are some sustainability issues where coverage could be improved by some changes to the policies. Detailed recommendations and possible ways to mitigate potential impacts of the policy are covered in the matrices of **Appendix A**. This appendix should be read for a complete picture of the SA of the DPD.

7.5.2 Through the iterations of policies as part of preparing the Revised Proposed Submission recommendations of the SA have played a role in forming the policy, alongside other consideration. For example:

- the need to reduce waste at construction stage of development has been incorporated into **Policy DM2;**

- **Policy DM5** has been amended to ensure architectural as well as historic heritage is considered when protecting the built environmental;

- Ensuring there is flexibility in the application of housing mix in **Policy DM7** to allow for the particular characteristics of the site to be taken into account; and

- Greater clarity has been provided in **Policy DM12** on how viability of visitor accommodation is tested to ensure that consideration is given to the viability of the hotel, this includes credible evidence to ensure the hotel is take measures to actively encourage visitor and that no one is willing to buy the hotel even after it has been marketed. These measures should help avoid change of use simply for financial purposes.

7.5.3 The plan makers have taken into account SA comments on the Issues and Options, original proposed submission and on this Revised Submission DPD. As a result there are few unresolved recommendations of the SA. There are some issues where the SA still identifies caution and the need to good decisions and enforcement of policy to ensure sustainability benefits. For instance, **Policy DM15** comments remain relevant from previous stages of the SA. This is that car parking needs to be carefully managed to ensure that it allows some provision in the town centre to meet the needs of those with limited mobility and compete with out of centre shopping and leisure facilities with large car parks. However, development in the town centre should aim to discourage trips made by car by reducing the number of spaces provided overall, as Southend Centre has good accessibility by train, bus, foot and cycle. As parking standards are set as a maximum achieve a reduction in car parking spaces should be possible to refuse development that would deliver too much car parking.

7.5.4 Standards are also set for cycle parking. The policy should help deliver secure cycle parking as part of development in the borough. In previous versions of the Development Management standards were set higher, although the standards set in the Revised Proposed Submission should provide sufficient space.

7.5.5 **Policy DM3** is called 'The efficient and effective use of land'. However, the policy primarily relates to controlling development at densities that would have an adverse impact on the site and its context. In terms of seeking greater sustainability, focusing more development in currently built-up areas can be positive, and may count towards the component of housing figures identified as 'intensification' in the Core Strategy. However, the policy also has clear benefits by providing the tools to refuse development that would result in the over-intensive

use of land, protecting amenity and open space and the residential character of neighbourhood.

7.5.6   Supporting text to **Policy DM3** contains details from the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) of the type of homes that characterise the area and the type of homes that may be required. The need to achieve the housing mix is covered by **Policy DM7**. The policy refers to the SHMA and the housing mix that should be provided. This policy must ensure that the housing mix proposed meets the needs of Southend. There may be a greater demand for smaller homes in the borough than in neighbouring local authorities in the SHMA area due to its urban characteristics, aging population and higher numbers of students. The information in this table should be updated periodically, where appropriate, with the SHMA or in line with monitoring of demand and supply to reflect any change in the housing mix that should be delivered.

7.5.7   **Policy DM6** is on the role of the seafront and how this can be enhanced to improve its quality and value to the borough, both in terms of a visual quality and as a tourism asset. Design codes for the seafront could also show how improved cycling will be achieved along the entire length as an important commuter and leisure routes. Protecting the role of the seafront for cycling is addressed in the policy and should help to ensure the long-term effectiveness of the schemes delivered under the 'Better Southend' project and Local Transport Plan.

7.5.8   The **Policy DM6** sets out criteria that relate to development on the foreshore. Due to its location and potential for harm to internationally designated nature conservation sites, this type of development may require screening or assessment under the Habitats Directive as is now recognised in the policy.

7.5.9   The tourism industry is an essential part of the borough's economy. **Policy DM12** seeks to protect existing visitor accommodation from change of use. The supporting text of the policy raises the importance of considering of the long-term potential of overnight accommodation in making decisions about viability before a change of use can be granted. This will be particularly important to purpose built hotels that are part of the character of the town.

7.5.10 Some issues, such as protection of landscape and biodiversity and managing flood risk are less thoroughly covered in this planning tier, but are covered in Core Strategy (Policy CP7 'Green Space and Green Grid Strategy') and NPPF. Plan makers will need to be satisfied coverage of issues is thorough and there are no gaps. It will be important to ensure the topics are covered in sufficient detail so as to respond to local needs and concerns.

7.5.11 One issue that may not be covered by the Core Strategy is setting densities for new residential development. For an urban area such as Southend this may be suitable as land is at a premium so densities are likely to be higher. Design policies and the policy on efficient use of land should help prevent against overly high densities. There could also be policy criteria to ensure that land in the most accessible locations is used efficiently, with higher densities required close to the town and district centres and transport interchanges.

7.5.12 District heat and power schemes are likely to have a greater role in future in supplying lower carbon energy to homes, businesses and public buildings. The policies or text could recognise the potential for this type of scheme where it is viable, for instance in large mixed use development such as at Shoeburyness. Consideration also could be given to how large-

scale low carbon or renewable energy projects would be addressed in making development management decisions.

8 Monitoring and Mitigation

8.1 Monitoring

8.1.1 There is a requirement for monitoring of the SA. This provides a check of DPD implementation on sustainability development. This will need to consider positive and negative impacts, triggering a review if necessary.

8.1.2 The specific requirements of the SEA Regulations on monitoring are to:

"Monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation…with the purpose of identifying unforeseen adverse effects at an early stage" (Regulation 17(1))

8.1.3 The sustainability framework is a good starting point for developing targets and indicators for monitoring. However, monitoring for the SA can be part of the wider monitoring process for the LDF as well as specifically for the DPD, using a subset of the overall monitoring objectives. The SEA Regulations specifically state that monitoring for SEA can be incorporated into other monitoring arrangements (Regulation 17(2)), and therefore it may be possible to combine with the annual monitoring proposals for the DPD.

8.1.4 Monitoring need only begin once the DPD has been adopted and implementation begun. Therefore, a monitoring framework for the SA can be integrated into the Southend Annual Monitoring Report indicators and targets.

8.1.5 Many of the proposed indicators for the DPD set out in the Revised Proposed Submission version of the plan could be used to monitor sustainability issues. The list below shows how the DPD specific indictors fit with monitoring for this SA. This is intended as indication of how the monitoring and SA process are interlinked.

Accessibility:

- Percentage Class A1 Retail street frontage in the Primary Frontage;

- Total number of off-street cycle parking spaces provided in major development for: (i) residential uses; (ii) other uses ; and

Number of planning permissions below parking standards .Housing:

- Proportion of applications of 10+ dwellings to achieve 9 'greens' or more based on Building for Life Assessment 12;

- Number and proportion of completed dwellings that: (i) meet the Lifetime Homes; (ii) provide 10% wheelchair housing;

- Mix of dwelling sizes provided by new developments;

- Total Number of Affordable Dwelling completions by Tenure; and

- Number of bungalows lost or gained; and

- Number of family homes lost or gained.

Built Environment:

- Number of new dwellings built to Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3, 4, 5, 6 as a proportion of total new build;

- Floorspace built to BREEAM Very Good, Excellence or Outstanding; and

- Changes in the number of designated heritage assets identified as being at risk as per Essex building at risk register.

Air:

- Number of new dwellings built to Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3, 4, 5, 6 as a proportion of total new build; and

- Floorspace built to BREEAM Very Good, Excellence or Outstanding

Water

- Number of existing dwellings that incorporate energy and water efficiency measures in accordance with BREEAM Domestic Refurbishment ;

- Number of applications granted contrary to advice of Environment Agency on flood defence grounds or water quality; and Number of new dwellings that limit water consumption to at least 105 l/p/d.

Minerals and other raw materials:

- Number of new dwellings built to Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3, 4, 5, 6 as a proportion of total new build ;

- Floorspace built to BREEAM Very Good, Excellence or Outstanding; and

- Amount of contaminated or degraded land brought back into beneficial long-term use.

Energy sources:

- Number of new dwellings built to Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3, 4, 5, 6 as a proportion of total new build;

- Floorspace built to BREEAM Very Good, Excellence or Outstanding.

Economy and Employment

- (i) Total number of jobs by sector, (ii) Amount of floorspace developed for employment by type, (iii) Amount of floorspace developed for employment by type, in employment or regeneration areas;

- Amount of additional (B Use) employment floorspace, by type, in Employment Areas;

- Vacancy rate within 'Employment Areas'; and

- Additions/ losses of new hotels/ visitor accommodation.

8.1.6 It is clear that the proposed indictors for the DPD fit will with the objectives for sustainable development. However, not all of the sustainability concerns for the SA have a related monitoring indicator and target. These gaps will be filled by monitoring for the whole LDF as part of the Annual Monitoring Framework.

8.1.7   For a successful DPD monitoring framework the Council must ensure that the indicators they choose for monitoring are a manageable, really measure the effects of plan implementation, and are matters over which the DPD have a direct influence. The indicators should also only address matters that are required through policy and not set indicators that exceed policy expectations.

8.2   Mitigation

8.2.1   The SEA Directive requires that consideration be given to how many significant impacts identified during the SA process could be mitigated.

8.2.2   For this DPD there is little that needs mitigating due to the type of issues the plan covers. This is because the policies themselves are part mitigating potential impacts of delivering development through the Core Strategy DPD.

8.2.3   For this SA the majority of suggested mitigation is suggested through adjusting wording to fine tune policy to help implement more sustainable development. These issues are addressed in the policy matrices of **Appendix A.**

8.2.4   Other forms of mitigation will be through implementing policies to avoid sensitive areas, such as European nature conservation sites, and directing non-allocated development to the most favourable sites.

8.2.5   Some of the mitigation will be secured through developers meeting their evidence requirements, to show how they have addressed environmental and sustainability concerns through their development. This could include the need to prepare Travel Plans, ecological assessments, flood risk assessments, appropriate assessment under the Habitats Regulations, and Code for Sustainable Homes.

8.2.6   There may also be some gaps in policy coverage indicated through the SA, where the DPD could go further in mitigating against some of the impacts of development. Gaps may have occurred due to the constraints on the issues the DPD can cover, either from the purpose of the DPD (for example the DPD is not site specific) and/or a lack of evidence. An example of a possible gap is ensuring that more of the energy used in the borough comes from low carbon or renewable energy sources, thereby helping mitigate peak oil and climate change impacts. As information becomes available or the preparation of other parts of the LDF progresses, such as area specific AAPs, it may be possible to address these omissions.

9   Summary

9.1.1   The Development Management Development Plan Document (DPD) provides an additional level of detail to Core Strategy and national planning policies that should help deliver more sustainable development in Southend.

9.1.2   The SA finds that in developing the submission version of the DPD from the Issues and Options version format, the plan is much improved. The DPD is only 15 policies long and clearly worded. The succinct document is likely to be user friendly and therefore help planning applications move through the decision making system. The smooth progression of the applications will aid delivery of development, helping to meet the social and economic needs of the borough.

9.1.3   There is much in the policies of the DPD that should help in delivering sustainable development. This includes addressing climate change through development, securing better quality design, retaining employment land and protecting the borough's natural and built assets.

9.1.4   Through the iteration of the DPD the SA recommendations of how to improve sustainability in the policies have been taken into account. The result is that there are few outstanding SA recommendations or concerns in the SA of the Revised Proposed Submission Development Management DPD.

9.1.5   The review of policies as part of the SA identifies the following sustainability implications of the Development Management DPD:

- Policies including **DM1** and **DM15** recognise the importance of helping create places that are attractive for non-car users and encourage walking and cycling and therefore have the potential to secure environmental and social sustainability benefits. Making sure car parking does not exceed maximum standards in the town centre and out-of-centre location will be essential as part of this, as will making sure all places are attractive to those arriving on foot.

- Policies **DM2** and **DM3** should help achieve more efficient use of resources, including water use and energy.

- The residential mix of housing types set out in **Policy DM8** should be regularly updated to reflect current needs and any update in the Strategy Housing Market Assessment, risk of oversupply of any one housing type should be monitored, taking into account the demographic structure of Southend.

- Policies of the plan are also clear on the need to protect the economy of the borough. The town centre focus for employment development (**Policy DM10/DM11**) is supported in securing sustainable development, as this is the most accessible location in the borough and has good potential to support objectives for reducing car use. **Policy DM13** also sets out how retail areas will be protected from change of use that would impact on viability.

- **Policy DM12** provides detail on how viability of visitor accommodation will be tested. The LDP now includes details that require the applicant to show how the hotel is marketed to secure visitor numbers and/or marketed for sale. This clarity may help protect visitor

accommodation in its current use where it is an important part of the character of the town.

- Several of the policies aim to protect and enhance the built character of the borough. For instance **Policy DM1** reference the standards and guidance that should be applied to the design of new development and **Policy DM5** sets the principles of protection of built heritage. In addition, **Policy DM6** covers the Seafront and the specific measures to manage this as one of the borough's greatest assets. The design of tall and large buildings is covered in **Policy DM4**, with the potential for ensuring these make a positive contribution to the townscape. .

Appendix A   Sustainability Appraisal of Proposed Submission Policies

KEY TO MATRICES

Policy Ref and Name

Policy summary
Short interpretation of the purpose of the policy.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development
Comment on how the principles of the proposed policy topic could contribute to sustainable development. However, this does not reflect the detailed policy wording.

SP1	SP2	SP3	SP4	SP5	EP1	EP2	EP3	NR1	NR2	NR3	NR4	NR5	NR6	EG1	EG2	EG3

Symbol summary of policy against the sustainability objectives	
●	Likely to contribute to the achievement of greater sustainability according to the identified objective
x	Likely to hinder the achievement of greater sustainability according to the identified objective
?	Likely effect but too unpredictable to specify, or multiple impacts which are potentially both positive and negative
-	No identifiable relationship between the topic covered in the policy and the sustainability concern

Sustainability appraisal comment
Comment on the specific policy criteria and wording and how this may help deliver or detract from achieving sustainable development. This comment includes suggestions for improvements to the policy where impacts are identified.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts
Identifies if the policy is likely to have a significant sustainability impact.
Recommendations of possible ways to mitigate impacts through changing the policy or through other plans and strategies.

Iteration of policy
This is a brief audit trail of the policy. The purpose is to briefly describe the changes in the policy from the Issues and Options version to the submission version and the sustainability implication of this change.

Sustainability framework and key to matrix		
Concern	**Explanation and desirable direction of change (main objective)**	**Ref**
Social progress which recognises the needs of everyone		
Accessibility	• enable all to have similar and sufficient levels of access to services, facilities and opportunities	SP1
Housing	• to provide the opportunity for people to meet their housing need	SP2
Education & Skills	• to assist people in gaining the skills to fulfil their potential and increase their contribution to the community	SP2
Health, safety and security	• to improve overall levels of health, reduce the disparities between different groups and different areas, and reduce crime and the fear of crime	SP4
Community	• to value and nurture a sense of belonging in a cohesive community, whilst respecting diversity	SP5
Effective protection of the environment		
Biodiversity	• to maintain and enhance the diversity and abundance of species, and safeguard these areas of significant nature conservation value	EP1
Landscape character	• to maintain and enhance the quality and character and cultural significance of the landscape, including the setting and character of the settlement	EP2
Built environment	• to maintain and enhance the quality, safety and distinctiveness of the built environment and the cultural heritage	EP3
Prudent use of natural resources		
Air	• to reduce all forms of air pollution in the interests of local air quality and the integrity of the atmosphere	NR1
Water	• to maintain and improve the quantity and quality of ground, sea and river waters, and minimise the risk of flooding	NR2
Land	• to use land efficiently, retaining undeveloped land and bringing contaminated land back into use	NR3
Soil	• to maintain the resource of productive soil	NR4
Minerals and other raw materials	• to maintain the stock of minerals and other raw materials	NR5
Energy sources	• to increase the opportunities for energy generation from renewable energy sources, maintain the stock of non-renewable energy sources and make the best use of the materials, energy and effort embodied in the product of previous activity	NR6
Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment		
Local economy	• to achieve a clear connection between effort and benefit, by making the most of local strengths, seeking community regeneration, and fostering economic activity	EP1
Employment	• to maintain and enhance employment opportunities matched to the size of the local labour force and its various skills, and to reduce the disparities arising from unequal access to jobs	EP2
Wealth creation	• to retain and enhance the factors which are conducive to wealth creation, including personal creativity, infrastructure, accessibility and the local strengths and qualities that are attractive to visitors and investors	EP3

Policy P1 – Sustainable Development

Policy summary

This policy reiterates national policy and that development will be determined according to policy and the provision that will be in place should no local policy exist.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

The intention of the policy is to ensure that new development is delivered in accordance with policy. This should help deliver sustainable development as the intention and purpose of a plan led system. This means that achieving sustainable development is dependent on the quality of the policies that will manage development, including those of the Development Management DPD itself.

SP1	SP2	SP3	SP4	SP5	EP1	EP2	EP3	NR1	NR2	NR3	NR4	NR5	NR6	EG1	EG2	EG3
?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?

Sustainability appraisal comment

This policy reiterates National Policy and the importance of a plan led system. The policy may help to deliver more sustainable development; however, this will depend on the policies in place. If these policies are compatible with sustainable development then the effects of this policy are positive.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

No recommendations or significant effects

Iteration of policy

March 2014: This is a new policy for this version and reflects national policy in the NPPF.

Policy DM1– Design Quality

Policy summary

This policy sets the criteria against which the design of all new development will be judged.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

Designing development has a role in delivering sustainable development through making a place attractive to those who live and work there. A high quality built environment also helps to attract visitors and investors to an area. It can also help people identify and feel proud of the place they live, which is part of creating community identity. Attractive places that respect those on foot can also help reduce car travel as more people are likely to choose walking as their first chose of travel, with safe, direct and attractive routes.

SP1	SP2	SP3	SP4	SP5	EP1	EP2	EP3	NR1	NR2	NR3	NR4	NR5	NR6	EG1	EG2	EG3
●	?	-	?	●	-	-	●	?	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	?

Sustainability appraisal comment

The policy is quite succinct and understandable, avoiding overly technical wording. The policy should help those making development management decisions by providing the tools to require developers to have shown that they have considered the design and context of a new development. The policy will be supported by national policy requirements, such as design and access statements. More detailed advice and background information is provided by the *Design and Townscape SPD*, *Southend Borough Wide Character Study* and the *Streetscape Manual SPD*, which developers can be directed to in order to gain an understanding of design in Southend.

Supporting text and the policy also highlights the potential for Design Review and expectations of the Council in relation to this.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

The policy is likely to have a positive impact on sustainable development.

The policy recognises the importance of helping create places that are attractive to non-car drivers, which could include active street frontages and access of pedestrian routes not car parks. This could help to secure wider benefits related to communities and reducing car travel, although stating that these users are the priority may help to secure greater benefits for sustainable development.

The policy is clear that it is promoting high quality design and that all development should achieve this.

Iteration of policy

March 2011: The clarity of the policy has been improved from the Issues and Options iteration (also DM1), removing overly detailed wording. The more succinct policy may be more straightforward to implement.

March 2014: The policy has been amended to further iterate the importance of good design in creating a sustainable place. This includes not only the appearance of the development but way it is designed to bring wider improvements such as considering all users, such as prioritising pedestrians. The reference to the Design Review is now included in the policy and should help secure well designed development in complex or sensitive locations.

Policy DM2 – Low carbon development and efficient use of resources

Policy summary

This policy addresses the need for development in the borough to help mitigate and adapt to a changing climate. The policy also covers the more efficient use of water in development and use of more sustainability sourced materials. Policy criteria apply to new development as well as retrofitting in existing buildings.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

To achieve sustainable development, it is essential to reduce the amount of resources consumed by new development. Resource use needs to be reduced in the construction and during occupation of new development. This includes reduced dependency on fossil fuel, more efficient water use, and reducing in material waste and use of new materials.

SP1	SP2	SP3	SP4	SP5	EP1	EP2	EP3	NR1	NR2	NR3	NR4	NR5	NR6	EG1	EG2	EG3
-	-	-	?	-	●	?	●	?	●	?	?	●	●	-	-	?

Sustainability appraisal comment

The aim of this policy is supported in the sustainability appraisal. The policy usefully sets out the range of criteria needed to ensure new development is built to reduce resource dependency and lower the overall increase in resource use that would result from new development.

An innovative aspect of the policy is the need to 'green' all new development and include these considerations for the outset of design. Incorporating planting into any development scheme has the potential to have benefits for sustainable development. The correct choice of species and location within development can help reduce climate change impacts, providing shading in summary. It can also provide habitats or refuges for wildlife in the urban area.

The South Essex area has experienced water shortages in the past. Ensuring all new development makes a positive contribution to reducing water use is essential. Setting the reduction target should help in managing the current resources, although more stringent targets may be necessary over the lifetime of the plan.

The policy requires development to meet certain sustainability standards. In terms of energy these are largely what would be required through Part L of the building regulations in any case. However, complying with the full standard may also have other sustainability benefits, including water, ecology, materials etc.

Requiring post completion certification is supported by the sustainability appraisal, as this will help ensure sustainable buildings are actually delivered and not just proposed. Consideration of the best use of materials at construction and demolition is also likely to have positive implications for sustainable use of resources as these phases of development can generate significant quantities of waste.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

The policy is likely to have a positive impact on sustainable development.

Iteration of policy

March 2011: The Issues and Options version of the policy (DM4) contained some additional material not covered in the Submission. These additional criteria included more detail on the re-use of construction waste. Including this criteria policy may be useful to secure more sustainable use of resources. Also, the previous version included a criteria on the need to generate part of the energy on-site from low carbon or

renewable sources. However, this is covered by the Core Strategy Policy KP2 (11a) sets a 10% requirement, which does not need to be repeated here.

March 2014: The policy has been substantially revised from the previous version, with more detailed criteria on use of materials, in part due to the comments of the previous version of the SA. This has improved the potential sustainability benefits of the policy.

Policy DM3 – The efficient and effective use of land

Policy summary

This policy sets out the need for effective use of land to ensure that new development is designed to protect the character of existing areas from harm, particularly through over intensification of residential uses. Priorities are to protect existing character and residential amenity.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

Backland development, sub-division of homes, intensification of bungalow use and changes to buildings all have the potential to make good use of available land and help meet housing and expansion needs on mostly previously developed sites. However, intensification of land use can be detrimental to the character of areas, impact on the quality of the urban environment and sub-division can result in over intensive use of space.

SP1	SP2	SP3	SP4	SP5	EP1	EP2	EP3	NR1	NR2	NR3	NR4	NR5	NR6	EG1	EG2	EG3
?	●	-	●	●	●	?	●	-	-	?	-	-	-	-	-	-

Sustainability appraisal comment

This policy should help in reducing the adverse impacts of intensification of development. This will include making new development fit with the existing character of the area and also recognise the biodiversity potential of some backland sites. The policy approach is compatible with sustainable development relating the protection of residential and environmental amenity.

Part of the housing calculation of the Core Strategy is made up of supply from 'intensification' (2,550 dwellings over the plan period). Therefore, it is likely that this includes housing from sources covered by this policy. It is important, therefore, that the Council continues to monitor housing delivery and the implementation of its policies.

There is an identified need for small homes in Southend due to the high number of single person households. There are clear sustainability benefits from the intensification of uses on existing developed sites. Some sub-division of some larger family homes can help supply the demand for flats and where these divisions are of a high quality can make attractive places to live in urban areas, although retention of some of this housing is important to protect demographically diverse local communities and the character of some areas.

There is also a shortfall of 3-bedroom and 4-bedroom properties in Southend as a result of sub-division. Therefore, a balance needs to be found between meeting demand for smaller properties and maintaining the supply of larger family homes.

The more efficient use of land (by prioritising PDL) and provision of homes are important aspects of delivering sustainable development in the borough, especially as available space is limited. This type of development can help reduce the need for development on greenfield sites.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

Using other policies of the LDF to manage delivery of these sites may achieve the same sustainability outputs as having this policy. For example, polices on design and biodiversity protection should help ensure that these matters are taken into account in making decisions about the suitability of development.

The policy is likely to be effective in retaining the character of areas. It should be applied with a reasonable level of flexibility where the proposed intensification is of a high quality and well-designed to fit with the prevailing character and provide good places to live.

Iteration of policy

March 2011: This policy is made up of three policy issues from the Issues and Options version. There policies were DM3 – Intensification of existing residential sites and areas; DM6 – Alterations and additions to existing policies and DM13 – Retention of residential house types.

March 2014: The policy has had some revisions to highlight the need for new development not to cause over intensification of the urban environment. This may help further protect the character of the built environment, although may not always be the best use of land. The policy wording has been revised to be more positive than the previous version, supporting good quality development. The policy is also expanded to permit development that makes sustainable and innovative use of resources.

Policy DM4 – Tall and large buildings

Policy summary

This policy sets out the specific criteria that will guide the delivery of buildings that have the potential to have a significant impact on the character and land-use of the borough.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

Tall buildings have the potential to create landmark features that can become part of the image of an area. These buildings can help make good use of land as they are very high density and can incorporate a mix of uses on a single footprint. However, if these buildings are not of a very high quality they can be an eyesore, detracting from the quality of the area and character of an area. In addition to being a visual landmark because of their status there is the potential for these buildings to be a landmark in construction quality and sustainable design.

SP1	SP2	SP3	SP4	SP5	EP1	EP2	EP3	NR1	NR2	NR3	NR4	NR5	NR6	EG1	EG2	EG3
●	?	-	?	?	?	●	●	?	-	●	●	-	?	-	-	●

Sustainability appraisal comment

This policy alongside those on the design of development should help make sure that tall buildings do not adversely impact on the borough. In Southend tall buildings have the potential to bring a focus to parts of the town that may need an improved sense of place. However, there is the potential for unsuitable or poorly designed buildings to create an adverse impact that could have a detrimental legacy for the area. It is therefore essential that these buildings are of a high quality design, both in their appearance from far away as well as their interaction at ground level with streets and people.

The policy is clear that this type of building would only be permitted where it would not have an adverse visual impact on areas or views of a high quality. Also, due to the high occupation of these buildings they must be in locations that have excellent public transport links and as set out in policy they must be in very accessible locations with services within walking distance.

The need for early discussion between the developer, Council and possibly a third party should help make sure the design is compatible with the location, and the building makes a positive contribution to its surroundings.

The policy includes a requirement for these buildings to meet high standards of energy efficiency but allows this not to be achieved where not financially viable or achievable. However, as these buildings could be landmark features it would be preferable for sustainable development if these buildings were required also to meet a high standard of sustainable design, including energy efficiency.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

Buildings of this type that will be notable and landmark features in the town centre should be required to meet high energy and sustainable design standards, without a viability caveat.

Iteration of policy

March 2011: In the Issues and Options version this was issue DM2. The revised policy includes new criteria that should help the sustainability performance of this type of buildings; this includes one on energy performance of these buildings, protecting views and public transport access. The policy previously stated that locations for these buildings would be set out in the Central Southend AAP, this is no longer the case. However, the policy criteria should be sufficient to control the development of this type of building in

inappropriate locations.

The previous appraisal included recommendations for early discussion on the design of these buildings and that tall buildings be defined, these now appear as part of the policy.

March 2014: The policy has been subject to minor revision, including a 'viability and feasibility' inclusion in criteria 1(v) that may undermine the development of these buildings as sustainable construction landmarks. An addition to 1(vii) now means that these buildings must be in locations that have accessible services within walking distance, as recommended by the previous SA.

Policy DM5 – Southend-on-Sea's Historic Environment

Policy summary

The policy sets the criteria by which development that may have an impact on the historic environment and Southend's heritage will be judged. The aim is to protect areas and features of importance nationally and locally from harm.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

The heritage of an area can provide a sense of place and links with the past. In Southend buildings and structures can provide an important part of the image of the town as a traditional holiday resort. Preserving heritage has positive sustainability benefits for helping protect community identity through pride in the unique characteristics of the town. Also, preserving built heritage is important also as an economic asset to the town.

SP1	SP2	SP3	SP4	SP5	EP1	EP2	EP3	NR1	NR2	NR3	NR4	NR5	NR6	EG1	EG2	EG3
-	-	-	-	●	-	?	●	-	-	-	-	?	-	-	-	●

Sustainability appraisal comment

The policy criteria should help in the protection of nationally and locally important historic and archaeological heritage in Southend. Recognising the importance of locally listed buildings can help in protecting features that may hold particular significance to local people and their identity with the town despite perhaps being of little national significance. When identifying locally important buildings it should be inclusive of potential heritage buildings of the future. Nationally, much architecturally unique 20th century architecture is undervalued in planning decisions. Usefully the policy allows for these assets to be considered by setting out that it is 'heritage' rather than 'historic' assets that should be protected and therefore this includes architectural merit as well as age.

Granting permission for modern buildings that are complementary in style to the existing character may be preferable to historical pastiche in most circumstances. This will help enhance the built environment quality of Southend and help make the town feel vibrant and forward looking.

The preservation of frontages, through this policy, is supported in seeking to retain the historic character of the urban area. However, where frontages are retained in isolation from the rest of a building new build behind should be clearly related in form and function to the retained frontage (i.e. locations of entrances and windows).

The policy also recognises the potential benefits of demolition and redevelopment of buildings that detract from the quality of conservation areas.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

This policy has a positive relationship with sustainable development.

The policy should help ensure that architectural as well as historical features are retained, especially where the unique quality and characteristic of the town's traditional heritage.

The policy should be clear that where only frontages are retained any new build complements these in form and function.

Iteration of policy

March 2011: This policy was Issues and Options DM5. The policy wording has been reduced since the issues and options version. This reduction in the length of the policy is unlikely to have any sustainability

implications as it was repeating national and core policy.

March 2014: The policy wording has been changed slightly to ensure that it is 'heritage' that is being protected and this may not necessary be 'historic', reflecting NPPF terminology change. This is welcomed by the sustainability appraisal as more modern features in the landscape can be an important component of the character of a place and future historic heritage. More detail is given on protecting shopfronts and this should help protect the character of the centre's retail areas, preventing them becoming a ubiquitous 'British High Street'.

Policy DM6 – The Seafront

Policy summary

This policy covers all issues relating to development in the seafront zone. The issues addressed include protecting and enhancing the character of the area, managing flood risk, water recreation and ensuring no harm comes to the high quality nature conservation assets of the area.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

The seafront is essential to the identity and character of Southend, it is a major asset to the borough. Making sure that this area is enhanced and utilised to its full potential is important in supporting the local economy and local identity. Foreshore parts of the borough are covered by international nature conservation designations, it is therefore essential that no development in this location causes harm to these assets.

The seafront has the potential for enhancement through encouraging new uses and protecting existing ones. Water recreation potential in the area is high, subject to avoiding conflict of uses and protecting the high quality natural environment assets.

Avoiding flood risk is essential to protect the wellbeing of residents and visitors, as well as the economy of the town.

Seafront character zones: The seven miles of Seafront has a varying role and function along its length. Setting the principles for development in specific zones helps to identify what is important in each area, this may help maximise benefits from development in each zone and wider benefits for Southend.

SP1	SP2	SP3	SP4	SP5	EP1	EP2	EP3	NR1	NR2	NR3	NR4	NR5	NR6	EG1	EG2	EG3
?	?	-	?	?	●	?	●	-	-	-	-	-	-	●	-	●

Sustainability appraisal comment

Public realm: This policy sets out principles for development on the seafront, not necessarily decision making criteria. The policy is compatible with achieving sustainable development.

Flood: The policy permits development in flood risk zones on the seafront. In Southend this is important as the seafront is a major development zone for the borough and preventing development where it could harm the potential of the area to provide homes and help sustain the economy. However, allowing development in these locations does increase the risk of flood for this new development. The policy proposes measures to deal with this risk, including maintenance of existing flood defences and designing new development to be resilient and resistant to flood.

However, where these defences include beach replenishment it will be important to consider the wider sustainability implications of this, including the source of the replenishment material and the suitability of this type of coastal protection. Risks to designated nature conservation sites also need to be monitored. For example coastal squeeze, where sea level rise and hard sea defences are causing the area of foreshore to narrow, resulting in a loss of areas of high environmental quality, it may be suitable to consider new options.

To minimise flood risks development should be 'resistant and resilient', which is an important part of managing these risks. Resistant development will be where flood defences are maintained. Resilient development is important to reduce the scale of risk and harm for the instances where flooding does occur – such as flood defences being overtopped in a sea surge or storm. Resilience will need to designed into development, such as buildings being raised off ground levels, internal drains, or be built of materials that can withstand prolonged submersion. It will also need to be part of general infrastructure such as drainage systems to allow water to drain away quickly following a flood.

Criteria 5 covers new water recreation and leisure facilities on the seafront. Any such development will need to screen for potential adverse impacts on internationally designated nature conservation sites in the area, as set out in the policy.

Seafront character zones: The seafront has been divided into separate zones. These zones help to highlight the particular needs in each area, identifying what elements need protecting or enhancing.

Two Tree Island, Leigh Marshes and Belton Hills: This area is identified as of local importance for outdoor recreation and will be maintained and improved for this use.

Leigh Port and Old Town: The policy suggests maintaining the marine industrial use of the Port. This is important in retaining the historic integrity of the area. The loss of these to alternative economic uses, with no connection to the Thames-front location, would be to the detriment of the character of the town. A design brief for this location could include guidance for design in the conservation area to allow development to respond to the particular characteristics of the area. Also, reducing traffic through the Old Town area would have positive benefits for its heritage value and peoples' enjoyment of the area, both for visitors and local residents. This may help support businesses in the area, such as restaurants, cafes and independent shops, by encouraging more visitors by providing a high quality historic environment and tourist destination.

The Cinder Path (Old Leigh to Chalkwell Station including Marine and Grand Parade and Undercliff Gardens): Development here will need to preserve the quality of development and open character of the area. This also includes the need to improve the footbridge and the Sustrans route, helping to support healthy lifestyles and sustainable travel.

Chalkwell Esplanade to San Remo Parade*:* The proposals in this area are to enhance the built environment by avoiding additional unsuitable building types. For sustainable development it will be important to insist on high design quality, although pastiche of existing styles should not be the only development option. Improvements to existing beach huts and resisting further huts will also help bring built environment benefits to the area.

Beach replenishment will need to be in keeping with shoreline management, ensuring that the dredging and replenishment have no unacceptable impacts on nature conservation assets.

Victoria Road to Cleveden Road: The policy includes the need to improve the beach structures in this location, which could have great benefits for the character of this area and encouraging visitors to this part of the Seafront. Other design proposals, such as protecting the roofline could help maintain the character of buildings in this part of the Seafront, although further design detail may be needed to prevent further erosion of built quality through inappropriate design, extensions and alterations.

Cleveden Road to Maplin Way: This is a low density area characterised by recreational use and beach huts on the front. The aim is to protect this area from further development and enhance the current beach and promenade buildings. This is likely to be suitable in this location, improvements to the seaside built quality could help leisure tourism in this less used part of the seafront.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

This policy has a positive relationship with sustainable development.

The role of the seafront as an important linear route to encourage walking and cycling for leisure and as a car alternative is covered in policy, with potentially important benefits for sustainable travel in and beyond the Borough. Design Brief(s) could be prepared for the zones and the Seafront as a whole as appropriate. This could include specific design guidance for each area, details of improving the Sustrans cycle route, identify notable leisure locations along the Seafront, biodiversity issues and guidance on street furniture and seafront structures. Together they should provide a unified plan for a cohesive Seafront.

The policy could stipulate the need for screening under the Habitats Directive. This would ensure that all new development that has the potential for an adverse impact on an internationally designated nature

conservation site is fully screened and assessed.

Iteration of policy

March 2011: This policy is made up of a number of different Issues and Options issues, combined into one more straightforward policy relating to this part of the borough. These issues were DM7 – Flood risk and water management, DM8 – Seafront and public realm and open space, DM9 – Seafront character zones, DM10 – Water recreation.

The sustainability implications of the change are unlikely to be significant as matters that were previously in the policies already, such as flooding, are already covered by national policy or in the Core Strategy.

Some changes to the policy reflect comments from previous SA. For example the policy now refers to new development being flood resistant **and** resilient, instead of resistant **or** resilient.

March 2014: The policy and Table 1 have had minor amendments, primarily to improve clarity. The changes are unlikely to have significant effects. However, as development criteria now include the potential for development on the foreshore to ensure they do not have an adverse impact on internationally designed nature conservation sites through requiring Habitats Regulations Assessment screening under the Habitats Directive. The role of the seafront as a key walking and cycling route is also identified.

Policy DM7 - Dwelling mix

Policy summary

This policy sets the targets for the mix of housing that needs to be provided in the borough, this is based on evidence from the South Essex Thames Gateway Strategic Housing Market Assessment.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

To support demographically mixed communities all housing sizes should be catered for. Provision should reflect the differing demands for housing across the borough, as in Southend there are a high proportion of single person households as well as a demand for family homes.

Provision of various types of affordable housing can help meet the differing demands of people on lower incomes. Social rented accommodation will always remain the most affordable for those with lowest incomes and intermediate housing plays an important function in helping people onto the housing ladder or live in locations that would otherwise be unaffordable.

SP1	SP2	SP3	SP4	SP5	EP1	EP2	EP3	NR1	NR2	NR3	NR4	NR5	NR6	EG1	EG2	EG3
?	●	?	-	●	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	?	?

Sustainability appraisal comment

This policy supports the Core Strategy policy CP8, which sets the overall proportion of affordable housing to be provided as part residential development sites. The policies will help provide homes to sustain demographically mixed communities, which in turn help retain viable services in the town and a varied workforce.

Evidence indicates that there may be a lack of family sized homes in Southend, although there are also a large number of single person households creating a demand for smaller homes. The policy seeks to ensure a mix in sizes of homes provided in the borough as set out in the Policy Table. This Policy Table will need to be kept up to date to reflect any change in need identified in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, or to reflect changing demands and supply. As noted the table should only be used as a starting point for negotiations as appropriate mix will depend on the site characteristics and location.

The policy proposes a 60:40 split social rented to intermediate housing. Social rented housing will remain affordable in the long-term and will be the most affordable type of home. In Southend there is a lack of social rented housing, with private rental market making up the shortfall. Background evidence to the DPD notes that private rental housing can be of a worse quality than modern affordable housing. To make up for the shortfall and improve quality the policy could set higher targets for social rented housing, helping to provide greater equity in access to good quality homes for all residents. Intermediate housing is also important as it helps lower income households enter the housing market, which can be particularly difficult for first time buyers and key workers.

This policy should help people in Southend meet their housing needs.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

The policy will need to be implemented flexibly to reflect the location of the development and the characteristics of the area.

The Policy Table should be reviewed periodically to ensure it still reflects needs.

Iteration of policy

March 2011: This policy was previously issues DM11 and DM12 of the Issues and Options version of the

DPD. The wording remains similar to the previous versions of the issues.

March 2014: There have been minor amendments to the policy relating to flexibility of application, this is in part related to the comments of the SA and to include the Policy Table showing housing mix.

Policy DM8 - Residential standards

Policy summary

This policy aims to make sure new homes are of a good quality and provide places to live that contribute to good health (including mental health), a place to live for life and help people live in a more environmentally sustainable way.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

Small living space can have impacts on quality of life. This includes adverse impacts on family life, such as space for different needs of family members and private or quiet areas for children to complete homework or to relax in. Small living spaces can also have adverse impacts on wellbeing for those without children.

Providing good quality housing is also essential for sustainable development. As is set out in the supporting text of the policy it can help reduce energy demand, by providing long-term accommodation, promoting working from home, recycling of materials and storage space. It can also help respond to climate change impact, for example more comfortable living spaces with access to outdoor space.

Providing amenity space is important for health and wellbeing, and storage space to allow more living space and can assist with the better use of resources.

SP1	SP2	SP3	SP4	SP5	EP1	EP2	EP3	NR1	NR2	NR3	NR4	NR5	NR6	EG1	EG2	EG3
-	●	●	●	●	-	-	?	?	-	-	-	●	?	-	?	●

Sustainability appraisal comment

This policy has a positive relationship with creating liveable and sustainable development.

It has positive implications for creating higher quality homes that provide a good place to live. The size standards should help avoid 'rabbit-hutch' style small homes and make sure homes with more bedrooms have an associated increased in communal space to provide rooms for families. In addition storage space, waste storage, amenity space and drying space are all important parts of creating more sustainable development – relating to health, and reducing resource consumption.

The policy also has a positive relationship with meeting education sustainability objectives as it provides more space for studying at home, as well as sufficient space for students to study.

The Council has prepared evidence as part of the Housing Study to show that it is possible to meet these standards in the majority of new homes. All bedroom sizes are currently meeting the standards with the exception of 10% of 2-bedroom flats. The policy will make a positive contribution to help avoid this type of overly cramped accommodation in future. Providing homes to meet the needs of wheelchair users will also help ensure homes for all are built in the Borough. .

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

None

Iteration of policy

March 2011: This policy was issueDM14 Residential space standards and DM15 Student accommodation space requirements. The new policy covers the same issues as the Issues and Options version although the space standards have been revised to provide a range and non-self-contained standards.

March 2014: The policy has had some minor revisions to improve clarity for implementation, although these will not change identified effects.

Policy DM9 - Specialist residential accommodation

Policy summary

This policy sets the criteria on which new applications for specialist residential accommodation will be decided. Much of the policy relates to ensuring there is a need for this type of development.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

Housing to meet the needs of specific parts of the community is essential in providing equitable access to homes and encourage health and wellbeing. However, it is possible that overprovision of this type of housing may alter the demographic make-up of the town or parts of the town. This will impact on the available workforce and community services in the area.

SP1	SP2	SP3	SP4	SP5	EP1	EP2	EP3	NR1	NR2	NR3	NR4	NR5	NR6	EG1	EG2	EG3
●	●	-	?	?	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	?	-	-

Sustainability appraisal comment

This policy is likely to have a largely positive relationship with delivering sustainable development.

This policy should help control the delivery of specialist residential accommodation. The criteria make clear that this type of application would only be permitted where there is a need that has to be met through a new or extended specialist residential care accommodation. Furthermore, the development must not lead to a concentration of these uses in any one location. It will be important when considering need to consider the precise location and quality of development, only comparing like with like. This will be to ensure that development does come forward if needed.

The policy stating that these developments should have access to public transport, local services and support networks is compatible with sustainable development. This access criteria should help to make sure residents of these homes can interact with local communities and live as independently as is possible.

The policy also contains criteria to protect existing land uses from change to specialist residential accommodation. This criteria may help loss of land uses important to the current or future economy of the area. For example, preventing the loss of hotels that have the potential to provide high quality visitor accommodation in the area.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

None.

Iteration of policy

March 2011: The policy was DM17 in the Issues and Options version.

The submission policy contains a few wording changes and additions. The policy now refers to the need for pre-application discussions and this is positive in making sure time is not wasted on unsuitable applications that have little chance of approval.

March 2014: The policy has had some minor policy amendments to improve clarity and implementation, which may better be able to secure the policy intention.

Policy DM10 – Employment sectors

Policy summary

This policy seeks to support the economy of the borough by focusing related industries in clusters to help foster specialisms within Southend. The policy has particular reference to the central area remaining the focus of economic growth.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

Businesses can thrive as part of linked clusters. Protecting sites from incompatible business may help the continued functioning and growth of these business clusters. Employment types that have a high job density, and therefore generate a high number of commuting trips, should be located in places that are accessible by a range of transport types to help reduce car use and associated adverse sustainability impacts.

SP1	SP2	SP3	SP4	SP5	EP1	EP2	EP3	NR1	NR2	NR3	NR4	NR5	NR6	EG1	EG2	EG3
●	-	-	-	-	-	-	?	-	-	-	-	-	-	●	●	●

Sustainability appraisal comment

The town centre remains the focus for much office types development and cultural, creative and education employment. This centralised approach is compatible with sustainable development. The central area is accessible by a variety of modes of transport, including by train, and therefore encouraging businesses with high employee densities here can reduce car travel associated with out-of-centre locations.

Employment with potentially greater amenity impacts, such as manufacturing, is located more on peripheral locations and on existing industrial estates. This location choice is compatible with sustainable development and protecting health and communities.

Specific business types, such as medical industries and aviation, are focused near existing uses of this type. The proposed policy could help support business clusters, protecting employment sites for associated business uses. This approach could help support the growth of these businesses, with Southend being associated with certain specialities.

This policy supports a diverse range of employment types throughout the borough; this should help provide a range of jobs in a range of locations to meet the needs of the workforce. Furthermore, the links of the university and medical industries may help match the skills of the workforce with the jobs available.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

The policy is likely to have a positive relationship with sustainable development.

Iteration of policy

March 2011: The policy was issue DM20 of the Issues and Options version. The revised policy is largely the same as the issues and options and sustainability implications are the same.

March 2014: The policy has been revised to more specifically state where employment growth and existing employment areas are, by reference to Table 7. However, this only adds clarity and does not alter the location that development is being directed. The reference to permitted business and financial services near to rail stations has been removed, which could have positive effects as not all rail stations are equally accessible and not all rail stations in the borough are in locations that could support sustainable growth. However, the policy provides greater clarity and certainty that the central area will be the focus of major economic growth, particularly those uses with higher employee density such as office development (NB this was always a proposed policy of the DPD but has been moved from policy DM11).

Policy DM11 – Industrial estates and employment areas

Policy summary

This policy sets the criteria to manage employment sites in the borough. This includes protecting existing sites from change of use from 'B' use class, unless defined criteria are met. The policy also directs employment to new growth areas. The policy is clear that only B uses, sui-generis employment uses and a limited amount of ancillary development to support main employment uses, will be permitted on the sites identified in Table 8. Other sites with a current (or most recent) employment use are also protected.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

A range of employment sites are necessary to support the diverse needs of business, including start-ups, SMEs and growing businesses. Protecting existing sites from being lost to alternative land uses is essential as competition for land may mean these sites cannot be replaced and could adversely affect a sustainable local economy. There is particular need to protect employment land use in Southend because the limited vacant land available and strong pressure from housing. Reducing out-commuting for employment can have positive benefits from the area in terms of reducing car travel, reducing congestion and air quality impacts.

SP1	SP2	SP3	SP4	SP5	EP1	EP2	EP3	NR1	NR2	NR3	NR4	NR5	NR6	EG1	EG2	EG3
?	-	?	-	?	-	-	-	-	-	●	-	-	-	●	●	●

Sustainability appraisal comment

Two main types of employment area are identified, those that can accommodate employment growth through intensification or new development, and those that are operating and should be protected. Therefore, this policy should help make sure existing employment sites are retained for employment use and employment floorspace. The quantity of employment in each growth area is not set through policy, although referred to in supporting text and will be set out in planning briefs for each site.

The policy is clear that there is a strong protection of the identified employment areas. As set out in the box above it is essential to retain these sites for the long-term viability of Southend's economy. Loss of these employment uses, such as to bulky retail, will need to be strictly controlled. In considering the viability of the site beyond its immediate prospects based on several years marketing, the Policy outlines a change of use may be acceptable where '*there is no long term or reasonable prospect of the site concerned being used for Class B purposes*' – Appendix 4 adds detail to this which includes a 2 year marketing exercise where the premises is vacant and/ or in exceptional circumstances (where less than 2 years marketing) a market demand analysis looking at current and future demand, which includes a 3-5 year outlook.. The UK economy is slowly recovering from recession and sites that were previously not viable have the potential to be bought back into use and this policy should be able to take this into account. Loss of these sites to an alternative use may sterilise employment land availability in the long-term adversely impacting recovery.

As with all other development that will attract a high number of trips access to all employment sites by public transport, and walking / cycling routes needs to be ensured. Not only will non-car access be good at reducing the impacts of car commuting, they also provide more equitable access by not excluding those who cannot or do not drive. Several of the identified existing and proposed employment areas in the wider central area of Southend, for instance Grainger Road and Short Street, have good accessibility from Southend Victoria Rail Station.

The policy also allows for other employment areas, not identified in Table 8, to be protected. These can help protect local jobs and the services necessary to serve communities. Change of use should only be in exceptional circumstances as often these local businesses are in important part of the character of local communities. Consideration should also be given through other policies to ensure that new development

that could be sensitive to these local employment sites (e.g. residential development near noisy employment areas) is not permitted. It would be unsustainable for the local economy if these new permissions resulted in the loss of employment areas through nuisance impacts, with owners finding is more easy to demonstrate that the B uses are incompatible with their location.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

The policy is likely to help in achieving sustainable economic development.

The policy requires new major redevelopment proposals to provide a range of flexible unit sizes. It will be important to ensure that this mix is matched to the location and type of businesses that are anticipated to make sure land is used as efficiently as possible, as noted in the policy.

The policy could make clear that redevelopment and employment growth sites must ensure good access to public transport and walking and cycling routes.

Iteration of policy

March 2011: This policy was previous issue DM21 Industrial estates and employment areas and DM22 Employment uses.

The policies have been combined into one more succinct policy. The revised policies remain very similar to the previous version, although several of the sites identified under criteria 3 have been removed (these relate to sites where non-employment uses could be located). These changes are based on the most up-to-date information about the area in the Employment Land Review 2010. The revised policy also is slightly more clear on the role of different employment sites, splitting them into two categories, those for growth and those to be protected. The sustainability implications have not changed.

March 2014: The policy has had some minor iteration to improve clarity on when employment sites can be lost to an alternative use, and the strong level of protection which they will be afforded. Some elements of the policy have been removed and are now included in Policy DM10. There is also reference to Table 8, which list employment growth areas and sites, within the policy and this clarifies the areas that the policy is referring to. The clarity has potential to more successfully secure sites' protection and therefore sustainable use of land. The loss of Class B employment uses within the Employment Areas requires a marketing exercise, providing more certainty to the applicant on when change of use might be considered and helping to protect employment sites where they still may be viable. This improves the potential for employment land to be retained and therefore supported by the SA.

Policy DM12 – Visitor accommodation

Policy summary

The policy sets the criteria for granting permission for new visitor accommodation or change of use of existing accommodation.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

Tourism is an essential part of the economy of Southend and one that is planned to grow. Encouraging more visitors to stay overnight, rather than make day trips, will reduce the overall impact that tourism trips can have on the environment, and encourage each visitor to spend more. Figures show that the overnight tourists are an extremely valuable component of the economy of Southend. Extending people's stay in the town is a positive step in achieving more sustainable tourism.

SP1	SP2	SP3	SP4	SP5	EP1	EP2	EP3	NR1	NR2	NR3	NR4	NR5	NR6	EG1	EG2	EG3
?	-	-	-	-	-	-	●	-	-	-	-	-	-	●	●	●

Sustainability appraisal comment

Focusing tourism accommodation in the town centre and seafront is likely to have the most positive impact on the character of the town. These locations have a good access to leisure facilities and restaurants for people on holiday and for business visitors. These locations also have good public transport access. Hotels to serve the airport and airport related businesses should be controlled. This is so their scale is in keeping with the demand created from these sources, rather than pull visitors out of the town centre and seafront locations.

Retaining visitor accommodation from change of use is essential, especially in parts of the town with strong links to the tourism economy. If old hotels, especially larger examples, are lost to residential accommodation this can adversely impact upon the character of the area, therefore, the policy criteria only permits the change of use if the accommodation is financial unviable. The policy and supporting text clearly set out that where a change of use from visitor accommodation is proposed developers will need to prove viability, and an 'open book' approach may be required. Viability will be considered in terms of checking that the accommodation is correctly marketed to encourage visitors as well as attempts to market the accommodation to new buyers. Proving that the accommodation is not viable may help protect the loss of these uses where there is the potential for it to make a positive contribution to the tourism economy and protect important features of Southend. The policy does not however consider the long-term viability as this is contrary to national policy of the NPPF. Criteria should also help to ensure the potential of the accommodation to be viable if the hotel is upgraded or renovated to meet an identified or changed demand.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

The policy is likely to have a positive relationship with sustainable development.

Iteration of policy

March 2011: The policy was issues DM23 of the Issues and Options report. The revised policy of the submission is more succinct than the issues and options version but is updated to reflect the changes to the LDF and avoid repetition with other policies. There are no real sustainable implications of the changes but the policy may now be more succinct and therefore easier to use.

March 2014: Some changes have been made to the policy and supporting text to provide more detail on how viability will be considered when considering change of use. The additional criteria should help protect existing visitor accommodation with benefits for the local economy and the 'resort' character of the town.

Policy DELETED DM13 – Southend-on-Sea Town Centre

Iteration of policy

March 2014: Former policy DM13 has been deleted to avoid repetition or conflict with other policies covering the same area. Removal of this policy will not have any impact on achieving sustainable development objectives as it is covered by the Southend Central AAP.

Policy DM13 – Shopping and Centre management outside the Town Centre

Policy summary

This policy covers a range of issues relating to protection of retail frontages within areas identified on the policies map. The policy sets out the type of uses permitted in centres as well as protecting the main 'A1' use in primary retail areas. The policy also sets general principles for the protection of frontages and the character of shopping areas and that new shopfronts will have to consider guidance in the Design and Townscape SPD.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

Managing the appearance of shop fronts can help create a high quality shopping environment. A good quality built environment enhances the character of the area and can help provide local character to often largely homogenous shopping areas. Protecting existing shopping areas from change of use can have many benefits for local communities, from helping to provide accessible services, reducing the need to travel by car, and as part of a high quality townscape. Loss of these uses can have adverse impacts on communities, in terms of available services and community identity and pride.

Creating a higher quality public realm reflects well on the perceived quality of the shopping experience. This can have positive benefits by supporting Southend's centres making it attractive to visitors and potential investors.

SP1	SP2	SP3	SP4	SP5	EP1	EP2	EP3	NR1	NR2	NR3	NR4	NR5	NR6	EG1	EG2	EG3
●	-	-	-	●	-	-	●	●	-	?	-	-	-	●	●	●

Sustainability appraisal comment

Specifying the range of potential acceptable uses in the different levels of service centres, as shown in the accompanying appendix to the policy should help encourage sustainable communities. The advantages of this policy are to support accessible local services for existing retail areas throughout the borough, including local centres.

Controlling the use of the retail areas to prioritise A1 uses is an important part of keeping the focus of retail on these shopping areas. Many of these primary and secondary shopping areas will have had a history of being a community focus for local people, providing local shops and services within walking distance of peoples' homes. Retaining this use is an essential part of retaining viable local neighbourhoods. Policy requirements will also help retain the character of these areas, even if the recession is having an adverse impact on the character and viability of shops at the current time. Retail is a high trip generating use and therefore concentrating it in the most accessible locations or as local clusters of shops will help reduce the transport impact. In addition, ensuring a critical mass of shops in these locations will help maintain the local centres as retail hubs.

Well-designed shop fronts that look attractive day and night will help maintain a high quality urban environment. It will be important to ensure that shop fronts, signage and fascia all make a positive contribution to the streetscape, avoiding development that is incompatible with the character of the area, the principles of good design, or encourage safety.

Allowing temporary uses of shops that have little chance of being let in the medium term can help improve the character of an area. 'Pop-up' shops and use as galleries can add vibrancy to a neighbourhood and area likely to positively help the image of an area without harm to the local economy.

The policy is realistic in the potential to retain active retail use and contains provision to at the very least maintaining active street frontages of these local centres to make a positive contribution to the character of the areas.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

None.

Iteration of policy

March 2011: This was issues DM18 Network of Centres and DM19 Shop Frontage Management of the Issues and Options version. The combination of the two policy issues into has made little change to the sustainability impacts of the policy.

March 2014: This policy has had some detail removed relating to the design of shopfronts. This loss should not have an impact on sustainable development as these matters are well covered elsewhere and the detail of this policy was incongruous with the other policies of the DPD. Appendix 4 of the revised Development Management DPD now provides information in relation to marketing of vacant floorspace. This provides clarification for the applicant and may help retail uses being lost without proper justification, it is therefore supported by the SA.

Policy DM14 – Environmental protection

Policy summary

The policy relates to two issues that will help protect people and the environment from contaminated land risks and risks of land instability.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

To make the best use of available land it may be necessary to bring sites into use that may have been previously contaminated. Ensuring that new development does not take place until it can be shown that contamination risks have been identified and appropriately dealt with is essential in protecting people's health and safety as well as the natural environment.

Protecting people and assets from the risks of landslip is essential for sustainable well-being and safety.

SP1	SP2	SP3	SP4	SP5	EP1	EP2	EP3	NR1	NR2	NR3	NR4	NR5	NR6	EG1	EG2	EG3
-	-	-	●	-	●	-	-	-	●	●	●	-	-	-	-	?

Sustainability appraisal comment

This policy addresses contaminated land and should help protect new users and the natural environment from the potentially harmful impacts of polluted soils. The policy may also help to use previously developed sites, making efficient use of land. The policy will also help protect water and biodiversity assets by ensuring that soil pollutants are not mobilised during construction and end up in surface or ground water.

This policy states that in the vicinity of cliff frontages where there may be a risk from land instability the applicant must take full account of the risk. The supporting text makes clear that early discussions should take place with the Council for all development near the cliff frontages. If identified as necessary the policy also requires that construction must take place to take into account land stability, this may require stabilisation works.

The policy may result in some housing or employment development being made unviable due to stabilisation costs. Protecting human safety is of overriding importance in these situations and the most sustainable option. The future Cliffs Management Strategy, when prepared, should help provide the needed certainty to developers on how their development will be viewed in terms land stability. There is the risk that prior to this being finalised developers are unsure of what is required of them and may be deterred from pursing development.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

The policy is likely to help in delivering sustainable development.

Iteration of policy

March 2011: This policy is issue EM24 Contaminated Land and DM25 Land instability combined into a single policy.

March: The policy has been amended to provide greater clarity on what is required from developers when proposing development in the vicinity of cliffs where land stability may be an issue. The change should be beneficial to developers and help in the delivery of development by removing some uncertainty.

Policy DM15 – Sustainable transport management

Policy summary

The policy sets the criteria to help deliver the LTP strategy of 'smarter choices'. The policy also sets out the need for new development to comply with vehicle parking standards.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

Sustainable transport and access can have a significant impact on achieving sustainable development. Schemes that help to reduce the number and need of trips by car can have a range of sustainability benefits. Benefits relate to:

- Reducing emissions to air, improving local air quality and contribution to climate change
- Improving health through better air quality and making walking and cycling an attractive option
- Helping equitable access to services for all, not putting those who cannot or do not drive at a disadvantage
- Reducing congestion on the road from car travel can have benefits for the economy.

Limiting car parking spaces can actively encourage more sustainable choices to be made on the need to travel and the choice of mode. Restricting residential spaces may be useful in some very accessible locations, but more importantly limiting spaces at destinations will encourage sustainable trips. Lower parking at office development or higher high density employment uses may be particularly useful in limiting work community, although this may need to be in tandem with parking management on streets in areas with a large amount of offices.

SP1	SP2	SP3	SP4	SP5	EP1	EP2	EP3	NR1	NR2	NR3	NR4	NR5	NR6	EG1	EG2	EG3
●	-	-	?	-	-	-	-	?	-	-	-	-	?	?	?	?

Sustainability appraisal comment

The aim of the policy to help people make 'smarter choices' is supported in seeking more sustainable development. The policy is clear that the priority access for development is pedestrians and others who do not travel by car. This is an important inclusion as it making places attractive for those arriving by foot will help play a role in encouraging walking. If a place is dominated by its car park and entrances from the car park people may automatically assume accessibility by other means is poor.

Vehicle parking standards: This policy sets out that car parking standards follow the guidance of the Essex Planning Officers Association (EPOA) 2009 Parking Standards Design and Good Practice Guide. However, in response to the approach set out within the 2009 EPOA standards, which recognises that lower standards of vehicle parking may be appropriate in urban areas including town centre locations, do deviate from these to allow flexibility to respond to specific circumstances. This includes allowing some underprovision in locations with good levels of non-car accessibility, such as in the Central Area of the Borough. These differences reflect the relative accessibility of this area by non-car modes. These lower levels of provision are positive in aiming to reduce car use in this location and reduce congestion and environmental impacts.

However, for some land use types the standards are the same for the central areas as for the rest of the borough. To achieve more sustainable transport more stringent standards could be achieved in accessible locations for uses such as higher education establishments, art galleries, theatres and museums. The central area has very good public transport access and not promoting the area to a greater extent as a non-car zone may be missing opportunities to push the 'smarter choices' of the LTP.

Cycle parking standards are also set out in the policy. This is useful as it emphasises the importance of providing cycle parking as part of new development. Large development is still occurring nationally where

cycle parking is well below demand and adversely impacting on people's choice of travel and leading to inappropriately parked bikes. Therefore, this policy needs to be rigorously implemented and enforced.

The standards for cycle provision are quite low for some land use types. Lack of secure cycle parking at destinations may put people off cycling given the relatively high theft risk of bicycles and riders unwilling to leave bikes improperly secured. It may also be better to tie cycle parking space provision to the visitors or staff of a development rather than the number of car parking spaces. Secure parking at people's homes is essential as bikes may be parked here for long durations making them more vulnerable to theft, as set out in policy.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

There may be scope for the policy to be changed to help better achieve more sustainable travel choices and reduce car use. However, the general aim of the policy to make sure all new development is connected to public transport and supports walking and cycling is positive.

A number of changes could be made to the policy to help secure more sustainable transport. These include:

- Some changes to policy wording to help provide firm policy backing to achieving 'smarter choices' objectives
- Possibly increasing minimum standards for cycle parking in some types of development.

Iteration of policy

March 2011: This policy combines two issues from the Issues and Options version; these are DM26 Sustainable Transport Management and DM27 Vehicle Parking Standards. There have been several changes to the policy including a reduction in the parking standards that may mean more parking is provided. Policy wording has changed and this has improved the clarity of the policy, although there may be scope for further changes.

March 2014: The policy has had some amendments for clarity and to improve the way that parking standards are referred to allow them to be applied flexibility (lower then specified) where suitable. This may help secure sustainability benefits related to reducing car use. The requirement for a supporting Transport Statement or Transport Assessment has been added to the policy to ensure that road capacity and alternative modes of travel to new development is properly assessed and addressed.

Appendix B   Baseline information

1   Introduction

1.1   Evidence base

1.1.1   This evidence base has evolved during the preparation of the sustainability appraisal (SA) to ensure that the information is relevant to the current stages of plan making.

1.1.2   The evidence presented reflects different stages of SA related to the various planned Development Plan Documents (DPD) and Area Action Plans (AAP) that will, or were, planned to make up the Local Development Framework (LDF). Over the course of preparing the LDF some AAPs are no longer being pursued, such as the Seafront AAP. However, information sourced as the evidence base for this remains relevant to other DPDs and APPs, including the Development Management DPD (DMDPD).

1.1.3   The information presented here was initially prepared for two different APs but is relevant to the DMDPD to the borough-wide coverage of this plan. These are:

- Seafront AAP;
- Central Southend AAP.

2 Baseline information for the Seafront

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The majority of the background information presented here was sourced initially from the 'Seafront Area Action Plan, Development Plan Document DPD4[4], Draft Background Information and Evidence Base'. This evidence base drew together key data and known information relevant to the Seafront. It was not intended to be exhaustive.

2.1.2 However, work ceased on the preparation of the DPD4 and the policies for the seafront incorporated into the Development Management DPD and Central Southend Area Action Plan.

2.1.3 The evidence base for the Seafront area has been reviewed by Southend-on-Sea Borough Council (SBC) to aid the preparation of the Development Management DPD. This evidence review covers the topics of:

- Food risk;
- The cliffs;
- Seafront air quality;
- Seafront water quality;
- Biodiversity;
- Developed coast;
- Travel, transport and movement;
- Built environment quality;
- Open space and landscape;
- Economy;
- Housing.

2.2 Flood Risk

2.2.1 Government policy emphasises the need to ensure new development is protected from flood risk, primarily through location, but also through engineered defences and design. In sustainability terms flooding is a risk to human health/safety and economic growth, and can contribute to pollution through sewerage overflow and contaminated land.

2.2.2 Current indicative flood plains show a number of locations in the borough that are 'at risk' from coastal flooding, including Two Tree island, and land north to Belton Hill, Leigh old town, Leigh old town to pier to the seafront road, inland areas east of through Southchurch Park and Thorpe Hall Golf Course, inland areas from Shoebury common through Gunners Park. The area in southern Southchurch, being heavily built up is especially significant.

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[4] NB: Preparation of DPD4 has been cancelled, Seafront issues are now to be dealt with through the Development Management DPD.

2.2.3   Flood risk in the AAP Seafront area extends the entire length of the coast, although existing flood and coastal defences protect against flood to a large extent, at times of severe storm and high water there is the risk that these defences could be over-topped causing flood. In most cases the flood risk area only extends a few meters inland impacting on roads and seafront development. However, east of the town centre near the Kursaal the flood risk extends into the residential areas near the cricket club and golf course to the railway line and beyond. Similarly, the redevelopment areas at Shoeburyness former MOD sites is also at a higher risk of flood.

2.2.4   Indicative flood plain maps do not take into account existing flood defences in Southend Borough. Therefore, as long as the defences are maintained the actual risk is likely to be much lower than the indicative flood risk maps suggest. However, there remain small, but significant, areas of the borough where a residual risk remains in the event of a breach in the tidal defences, or where issue with defence maintenance may cause them to fail.

2.2.5   The Thames Estuary 2100 plan identified that there are five schools, six care homes and 21 electricity sub stations within the flood risk area in the whole of Southend. This is an important amenity and recreation area, with a parallel road and footpaths along much of the frontage. The two main areas of floodplain are east of the town. The number of properties at risk is relative small, but the standard of protection is lower than elsewhere on the estuary, the flood risk is relatively high at 0.5% (or 1:200) per annum or greater (01.% for the rest of the estuary). Risks are of flood depths to 4m but this is very variable.

2.3   The Cliffs

2.3.1   The Cliffs are made up of London Clay. In the absence of other factors, slopes in London Clay will degrade naturally to a stable angle, which is between 8-10 degrees. The cliffs fronting the estuary at Southend vary from 12-30 degrees. Therefore it can be inferred that the cliffs are naturally unstable and would require man-made intervention that either lowers the angle or fixes the layers preventing deep seated movement. This instability has potential to impact on built development stability, as well as a potential risk to human health from subsidence and landslip.

2.4   Air Quality

2.4.1   The main issue surrounding air quality is the increasing emissions from traffic on roads. Recent monitoring has indicated that levels of particulates and nitrogen dioxide within the borough are currently within National Air Quality Strategy limits. The latest measurements at the Southend-on-Sea AURN (Automatic Urban and Rural Network) show that the nitrogen dioxide concentrations are well below the National Air Quality Objectives[5] . The Essex Air Quality Consortium does not identify any particular air quality impacts of the roads in the Seafront area.
http://www.essexair.org.uk/AQInEssex/Monitoring/Statistics.aspx?SiteCode=SD1&SiteName=Southend-on-Sea%20AURN&view

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[5] http://www.essexair.org.uk/AQInEssex/Monitoring/Statistics.aspx?SiteCode=SD1&SiteName=Southend-on-Sea AURN&view=)

2.5 Bathing Water Quality

2.5.1 Southend has seven miles of beaches and bathing waters . In 2011 five beaches where awarded Blue Flag status for quality and services, these were:

- East Beach , Shoeburyness
- Shoebury Common Beach
- Chalkwell Beach
- Jubilee Beach and
- Three Shells Beach

2.5.2 However, due to effects of high rainfall Chalkwell and Jubilee lost their status in 2012.

2.5.3 There are eight bathing water quality monitoring points along the seafront within the Borough. These are at Leigh Bell Wharf, Southend Chalkwell, Southend Westcliff Bay, Southend Jubilee, Three Shells, Thorpe Bay, and Shoeburyness. All of which showed 'higher' or 'minimum' water quality in the last 2012 monitoring, although all these monitoring points have shown similar water quality dating back to 1997.

2.5.4 Six monitoring points in the borough give data on water quality from 2003. With the exception of Leigh Bell Wharf, all of these achieved 'Excellent' standards in 2006. Since 2003 all of the monitoring areas have achieved 'Good' or 'Excellent' consistently.

2.5.5 The Environment Agency's '*State of the Environment Report' (2011)* for the Anglian region states that 95% of surface waters are at significant risk of failing to meet environmental objectives. Of these, 90% were at risk due to diffuse pollution. Land drainage and urbanisation of the catchment area are primary sources of diffuse pollution. The report also states that modifications to river channels and banks are adversely impacting ecological habitats.

2.5.6 The quality of water in the Thames Estuary is monitored under the Water Framework Directive, River Basin Management. This monitoring finds the ecological quality of the estuary is currently identified as 'moderate' and this is predicted for the future (2015). The chemical water quality is currently failing to meet identified standards, as is predicted to continue to do so in the future (2015). The reasons for failure include hazardous substances in the water, including organic benzoate compounds. The water of the North Sea just outside the Thames Estuary is identified under the Water Framework Directive, River Basin Management, Coastal Waters as being of moderate ecological quality. Chemical quality passes the tests as being acceptable.

2.6 Biodiversity

2.6.1 More comprehensive information on biodiversity can be found in the Sustainability Appraisal and the Habitats Assessment (including Appropriate Assessment) of the Core Strategy.

2.6.2 Although a predominantly urban authority area, the borough has a range of habitats and protected areas. The Southend and Benfleet Marshes in particular are covered by a number of designations including, SSSI, Ramsar and Special Protection Areas (SPA), and this runs along the coast from the western boundary of the borough to Shoeburyness. At Shoeburyness the nature conservation designations are the Foulness SPA as well as the

Essex Estuaries Special Area of Conservation (SAC) all of which are also internationally designated Ramsar sites. In addition consideration needs to be taken of the likely effects on the interest of the Crouch and Road Estuaries SPA and the Thames Estuary and Marshes SPA.

2.6.3   The Southend foreshore is a rich ecosystem that contains and supports a large number of invertebrate fauna including many species of Hydrobia snails, crabs, mudhopper crustations, molluscs, and worms. A number of microhabitats exist along the foreshore which is also an important habitat for birds.

2.6.4   As well as the foreshore, there are a number of lakes and ponds nearby, and water course and drainage ditches, these are important for their own wildlife functions, in urban areas ditches and rivers may act as wildlife corridors. Saltmarsh can be found to the south and east of Two Tree island and it is an important conservation value recognised by its inclusion in to a national nature reserve.

2.6.5   The borough also has a number of other habitats of relevance including; seagrass, eelgrass, hedgerows, cliff top grasslands, and unimproved coastal grasslands. There is very little agricultural land within the coastal area.

2.6.6   More information on species types can be found in the core strategy Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Assessment. Some important species of note include; Dark-Bellied Brent Goose, Skylark, Shrill Carder Bee, Stag Beetle, several species of bats, Dormouse, and a small Water Vole population.

2.6.7   All development in locations that may impact on the European sites will need to ensure it does not harm the integrity of these sites. Primarily by avoiding any impact, although it may also be possible for development to proceed where impacts can be full mitigated against.

2.7   Developed Coast

2.7.1   The coastline of Southend-on-Sea is heavily urbanised along its length, with the exception of the western edge near the boundary of the neighbouring authority Castle Point. Approximately 46% of the population of the borough living within 1km of the coastline and population density along the coast is higher than for the borough as a whole. Population density in this area (46 residents per hectare) is higher than for the borough as a whole (42 residents per hectare).

2.8   Travel, transport and movement

2.8.1   Many of the borough's main road transport routes travel alongside or near to the coast.

2.8.2   Road traffic counts show that from 2000-2005 road traffic has shown a steady increase on the Marine Parade, Chalkwell Esplanade, and Ness Road Shoeburyness, with levels increase by almost 37% on Chalkwell Esplanade, to 19,941 trips on average per day. This increase trend is unusual as many other roads in proximity to the foreshore have decreased. Cycle traffic has increased significantly on seafront cycle routes since 2000, up 55% particular as a result of the Sustrans route improvements, and the City Beach project which provided a segregated cycleway along the seafront.

2.8.3   Cycle traffic has increased significantly on seafront cycle routes since 2000, up 55% particular as a result of the Sustrans route improvements. The entire length of the coast is also popular with walkers, although in some instances the route is in need of improvement, such as west of Chalkwell station where the railway line runs along the seafront.

2.8.4   The entire length of the coast is also popular with walkers, and has been improved in parts with the City Beach project, which rationalised road space to give a greater area and priority to pedestrians and cyclists. Though, the route on the coast still needs some improvement, such as at the west of Chalkwell station where the railway line runs along the seafront.

2.8.5   There are a large amount of car parks on the seafront, ranging from the large Shoebury East Beach to smaller road side car parking for example at the Eastern Esplanade and Marine Parade. There may be scope to rationalise car parking in some areas to make land available for other uses, including public open space and meeting places, as some key car parks are underused although usage depends on time of year and purpose of parking.

2.8.6   The Third Local Transport Plan (LTP3) 2011/12 – 2025/26 provides a number of options to address the main transport issues in the area of the seafront. Since the previous SCAAP was consulted on, a number of the proposed changes within LTP3 have been implemented and there are some options which are being planned.

- The City Beach project has seen the rationalisation of road space to give a greater area and priority to pedestrians and cyclists. This project has improved the public realm of the central seafront area and has provided a segregated cycleway along the seafront as part of the SUSTRANS National Cycle Route.

- Planning permission has been granted for a museum to be constructed as part of the Cliff Garden stabilisation works, which will include a car park.

- There are proposals for coverage of CCTV, variable messaging signs (VMS) for travel and car park information on key routes to the town centre and the seafront to be further expanded.

- Proposals for re-provision of car parking in conjunction with the redevelopment of the Seaway Car Park.

- Proposals for the relocation of parking lost at Dizzyland Car Park to a new facility to be provided as part of the redevelopment of the Dizzyland site.

- Promote park and ride facility at Leigh Station to encourage visitors to travel to the central area by train.

- Creation of a 'hoppa' bus circuit, linking the two mainline rail stations and the bus station / travel centre with the seafront.

- Investigate the potential to licence and accommodate a 'tuctuc' service of automated rickshaws serving the length of the seafront and rail stations and car parks.

- To improve the quality of "door to door" travel by providing taxi ranks at key locations around the Borough including the seafront.

2.8.7   The whole Seafront is already well served by public transport. However the quality of this varies, with all of the seafront east of the pier and at Leigh being within 400m of regular and frequent bus services. Other parts of the Seafront west of the pier to Leigh are not so well serviced. All of the seafront is within 1 mile of a station.

2.9   Built environment quality

2.9.1   Many of the borough's key landmark building are in the Seafront area covered by the AAP, as well as 11 conservation areas and many listed buildings of national importance, as well as those of local importance. Landmark buildings include the Pier, Palace Hotel, Royal Terrace, Cliffs Pavilion, and Crowstone House. There are also three scheduled ancient monuments, the Cold War Defence Boom, Shoeburyness (Danish camp) and World War II cassion.

2.9.2   There have also been recent improvements to the Seafront area, including the redevelopment of the entrance to the Pier at Pier Hill (Central Southend AAP), which has been recognised for its built quality, two houses on Undercliff Gardens, Westcliffe Parade, the Kursaal restoration, development on The Leas and the Park Inn Palace Hotel. Other parts of the Seafront contain long term redundant or under-used spaces in need of regeneration, some of which have produced strong responses from the local community, based on the type of development proposed or impacts on the surrounding area including nature conservation.

2.9.3   In addition, buildings along the seafront and bordering on the foreshore also in some instances suffer from poor built quality, and detract from the overall character.

2.10   Open Space and landscape

2.10.1 In addition to the foreshore area the Seafront contains a range of public open spaces, predominantly used for informal recreation. This includes Gunners Park, Southend Cliffs and the Marine Parade Gardens. However, the continuing risk of landslips from the unstable cliffs means that it may be necessary to reconfigure some of the cliff parks.

Parks at the Seafront are noted for their landscape quality, for example the Hadleigh Marshes Special Landscape Area defined by the County. Although the purpose of the designation and the features protected require review as part of the LDF. Also of landscape value to the area is the open aspect onto the estuary from the coast, which gives Southend its distinctive characteristics and setting.

2.10.2 The Thames Gateway South Essex green grid strategy extends into Southend with the intention of linking up the green spaces of the area for various functions including recreation, biodiversity protection and enhancement, community connectivity, sustainable transport and creating high quality urban areas. Green spaces in Southend make up part of this.

2.11   Economy

2.11.1 With 5.5 million visitors in 2009, Tourism contributes about £330m to the local economy and supports 6,200 jobs (16% of employment in the borough), making tourism hugely important to the local economy6. Much of the development along the coast is specifically tailored to provide leisure and recreation facilities to tourists and visitors. The pier and amusement park, amusement arcades, and a theatre, amongst other attractions, are clustered on the Seafront. Tourism is part of the public perceptions of the Borough and is a major source of both full- and part- time employment, being directly responsible or nearly 5,600 jobs in 2008 (8.7% of the Borough's employment).

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[6] Economic Impact of Tourism: Southend - 2009, East of England Tourism 2010
http://www.southend.gov.uk/download/3202/southend_lea

2.11.2   In addition, some seafront properties are in use as overnight accommodation for visitors including bed and breakfast, hotels and self-catering accommodation. However, the quality of the hotel accommodation may be limiting the amount of overnight visits made for leisure, so improving the offer could raise the money spent by each visitor significantly. Figures produced in 2002 on the Economic Impact of Tourism is Southend revealed overnight visitors spend over £100 on average each, with day visitors spending under £25 each. Increasing spend through overnight stays is a more sustainable way of improving tourism revenue that encouraging more day visits. Improved summer weather may attract more people to holiday in the UK. Recent hotel developments and renovations, as well as ongoing improvements to the public realm at the seafront, will bring more of these overnight visitors, whose contribution to the local economy is highly significant[7].

2.11.3   There are three conference facilities in the town: Park Inn Palace (up to 220 delegates), Cliffs Pavilion (up to 1,600 delegates) and The Westcliff Hotel (up to 225 delegates).

2.11.4   There is pressure on the coast for leisure uses including, seven boating clubs, three public slipways and 1200 mooring sites. The Southend-on-Sea central area has a large amusement park (Adventure Island) and the Southend-on-Sea pier, two major tourist attractions and local landmarks.

2.11.5   Retail and other employment uses are also found in the coastal zone. There has also been recent public realm improvement at the Pier Hill Enhancement Project[8], this links the seafront with the High Street providing much improved access for pedestrians. It includes attractive pathways and a lift to provide access for all.

2.11.6   Figures from February 2013 show that unemployment varies in the coastal wards, with the majority having lower rates that the Southend average although Kursaal (11.4%) and Milton (9.2%) have significantly higher rates of unemployment than the borough average whilst West Leigh (1.8%), Thorpe (2.3%) and Leigh (2.6%) have very low rates in comparison[9].

2.12   Housing

2.12.1   Most of the buildings in the Seafront area are residential, apart from in the central area where uses are more for leisure. A target for residential development in this area is set in the Core Strategy and includes a requirement for affordable homes. Progress towards meeting the dwelling provision figures for the seafront in the Core Strategy is quite rapid.

2.13   Key issues in the Seafront AAP area

2.13.1   The additional scoping material gathered for the Seafront AAP identifies several matters that may need to be addressed by the SA. These are:

   ▪   Much of the Seafront is at risk of flood according to Environment Agency maps, however flood defences should protect against this. Therefore maintenance of these is essential, in addition to ensure all new development where necessary has appropriate flood risk assessment before proceeding;

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[7] Southend-on-Sea Local Economic Assessment, November 2010
www.southend.gov.uk/download/3202/southend_lea

[8] http://www.southend.gov.uk/info/200079/regeneration/543/regeneration_projects/7

[9] Nomis – Claimant Count

- To protect public safety and existing built assets unstable cliffs needs to be engineered as appropriate to make stable;

- Air and bathing water quality of the Seafront should be maintained, or enhanced as necessary, through control of relevant development;

- Biodiversity and nature conservation is a key matter that needs to be considered through the AAP, and it will need to be ensured that new development does cause harm to European sites. New development should also help enhance the biodiversity quality of the Seafront area where appropriate;

- Reducing car use is a theme of planning in the borough, and this must include the Seafront roads, provision of alternatives is necessary, including better bus services west of the pier and completion of the Sustrans cycle route;

- Car parking in the Seafront area needs some reorganisation to reduce under-use of car parks at all times of year and encourage visitors to use improved public transport and cycle routes. Land made available after reorganisation can be used for other purposes, such as public spaces or other leisure uses;

- the built environment quality of the Seafront should be enhanced to provide a cohesive Seafront style, this will include regeneration of redundant sites but this must take into account impacts on biodiversity and take into account community views;

- The AAP must support the South Essex Greengrid strategy;

- The AAP should make particular provision for improving the overnight visitor accommodation on the Seafront; and

- Continued support needs to be given to employment provision and new housing in the Seafront area in order to meet objectives of the Core Strategy.

3 Baseline information for the Town Centre Area Action Plan

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 This section considers the information gathered as part of the preparing the Town Centre Area Action Plan, now the Southend Central Area Action Plan.

3.1.2 Several key pieces of evidence are sources of information for this baseline section:

- Consultation Framework Document 'Town Centre Study and Master Plan' 2003 (Buro Happold/DTZ Pieda)

- Southend-on-Sea Retail study CB Richard Ellis, September 2003

- Southend Retail Study CBRE 2011[10]

- Retail and Town Centre Study, January 2011[11]

- Southend-on-Sea Local Economic Assessment, November 2010[12]

- The Southend-on-Sea gateway Town Centre Strategy 2002-2012

3.1.3 For the purposes of collecting further evidence for the LDF, the council have defined the boundary of the town centre as the in the masterplan, to include administrative wards of Milton and Victoria. The SA uses data from these two wards as the basis for data collection on the social and economic characteristics of the area.

3.2 Role of the town centre

3.2.1 Southend town centre is a major retail, employment and commercial centre serving a catchment population of approximately 415,000 people. It lies at the heart of the borough of Southend-on-Sea. The Town Centre is the borough's most important commercial area and largest shopping centre, providing 40% of the jobs in the borough.

3.2.2 CBRE (Southend Retail Study 2011) states that the population of the whole survey areas is currently approximately 415,000 and it is forecast to rise by 2.5% by 2015 to approximately 425,000 people.

3.2.3 Retail is an important role of the town centre, with the shops focused on the High Street, forming a central spine through the centre from north to south. The High Street is pedestrianised linking the Victoria Plaza (1960s) and Royals (1980s) retail centres. On the periphery of the northern part of the High Street is the town centres only large food retailer and a major retail outlet offering non-food goods. There is some question about the future of Sainsbury's at this site, with the possibility to of the supermarket relocating to an edge of centre location.

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[11] Southend Retail Study CBRE 2011: http://www.southend.gov.uk/downloads/download/595/retail_study

[12] Southend-on-Sea Local Economic Assessment, November 2010
www.southend.gov.uk/download/3202/southend_lea

3.2.4   The college and new university complex is adjacent to the High Street, with more development planned. Development of a multi-screen cinema, restaurants, cafés and bars mainly along High Street side streets has given the town centre a complimentary leisure offer.

3.2.5   Victoria Avenue is the main area for office accommodation. The Council views that Victoria Avenue has a number of 1960's office developments, some of which are outmoded for modern requirements.

3.2.6   The central area of the town also is the focus for much of the seaside leisure activity. With the entrance to the Pier at Pier Hill at the southern end of the High Street as well as the Adventure Island 'fun park'. The seafront area also includes the eastern and western esplanades and formal parks of the Southend cliffs.

3.3   Housing

3.3.1   More than 26,000 people live within or near to the Southend Central Area Action Plan (SCAAP) boundary which represents 15% of the total population in Southend. Over 13,000 dwellings are in this area, representing 17% of all the dwellings within the Borough. The density in and around the central area (69 people per hectare) is high compared to the entire Borough (42 people per hectare). The dwelling density is as well higher in the town centre (35 dwellings per hectare) than in the entire Borough (19 dwellings per hectare).

3.4   Travel and transport

3.4.1   The town centre is accessed by two railway stations, Southend Victoria at the north end of the High Street and Central Station in the main shopping area. The newly refurbished bus station is also in the town centre, adjacent to the High Street. The main access by car is the A127 dual carriageway via Victoria Avenue and the A13 London Road, which has smaller and independent retail along it. The town centre has parking facilities for around 3,500 cars (estimate) in surface and multi-storey car parks, Council owned car parking encourages short stay shoppers, but attempts to deter commuters through its pricing structure.

3.4.2   Cycling and walking routes are adequate, although there is potential for greater connectivity. The relatively flat character of the Southend topography means there is very good potential for more trips to be made by this mode. The seafront provides a particularly valuable connection of coastal neighbourhoods to the central Southend.

3.4.3   As previously noted in Section 3 there are also various schemes proposed through the Southend Local Transport Plan 3[13] to bring enhancements to the public transport provision of the area.

3.4.4   All new development needs to support walking and cycling in the town centre, as well as the smooth flow of public transport and good quality interchange facilities. Linking the town centre to the seafront is also a key issue, and this will include linking the proposals and approach of this AAP and that for the seafront.

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[13] http://www.southend.gov.uk/downloads/download/505/local_transport_plan_3

3.5 Population

3.5.1 The 2011 Census of resident population provides the best population record at Ward level. The Town Centre makes up 15 % (25,853) of the total borough's resident population.

Resident Population

Area	Census 2011
Southend-on-Sea	173,658
Central Area	25,853
Central Area %	*15%*

Source: Census 2011

3.6 Employment

3.6.1 In 2011, the Town Centre provided nearly 35% of all the jobs in the borough. The number of jobs in the borough itself has decreased by 2,700 between 2007 and 2011. This equates to a 13.8% decrease in jobs in the Town Centre between 2007 and 2011, compared to only a 4% decrease in the number of jobs for the rest of Southend-on-Sea.

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	%Change
Southend	63,500	64,000	63,000	60,700	60,800	4.4
Central Area	23,800	23,700	23,700	22,000	20,900	13.8
% jobs in TC	37%	37%	38%	36%	34%	

Source: IDBR. In the Central Area, Milton and Victoria wards are used. Figures rounded to the nearest 100

3.6.2 The Town Centre contains a mix of employment types, and some sectors are proportionately more significant than in the borough as a whole such as the information and communication sector (46% of businesses in the town centre) and Public administration and defence sector (67% of businesses in the town centre). In contrast, there are a number of sectors which are less important in the Town Centre than the borough as a whole such as education (17% of businesses in the town centre) manufacturing (17% of businesses in the town centre) and construction (14% of businesses in the town centre).

3.6.3 The unemployment rates reported in NOMIS from February 2013 show that the number of unemployed people is higher in Southend than in the Central Area only, but the proportion of unemployment is higher in the Central Area than in the whole borough.

Appendix B

Unemployment rates 2013

	Central Area	Southend
Claimant Count	1,492	5,167
usu resident population aged 16 to 64	17,510	109,823
% of usu resident population aged 16 to 64	9%	5%

Source: Nomis (February 2013)[14]

3.7   Social characteristics

3.7.1   Education rates show that although the rate of adults with no qualifications is higher in central Southend than for the borough as a whole, there are also more residents with higher level qualifications. This may be as a result of younger professional people with qualifications living close to or in the town centre juxtaposed with pockets of deprivation, although without further investigation this cannot be confirmed.

3.7.2   The Town Centre is made up of Milton and Victoria wards, and also includes some parts of the Kursaal ward. The Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2010 indicate that all LSOAs (Lower Layer Super Output Area) within or close to the central area are within the 40% most deprived areas of the UK. Of these, five LSOAs are within the 10% most deprived areas of the UK and an additional five are within the 20% most deprived areas of the UK.

3.7.3   The number of cars per household in central Southend is significantly lower (0.7) than for the rest of the borough (1.1). This may reflect good transport connections but is also likely to be characteristic of income deprivation in parts of the centre.

3.8   Built environment quality

3.8.1   Some of the town centre is currently of poor architectural quality, for example the low quality of the Farringdon multi-storey car park. Although recent regeneration, including the South East Essex College and University of Essex buildings, Pier Hill and the first phase of the Travel Centre have improved this, there is scope for further environmental improvements and making land available for alternatives uses.

3.8.2   The town centre area also contains many listed buildings and four conservation areas of consisting Prittlewell in the north, Milton and Clifftown in the south west, and Warrior Square located in the middle of the centre. The conservation areas are all predominantly residential neighbourhoods, and Clifftown directly borders the retail core of the town as well as the seafront. Listed buildings are within the town centre, particularly within the conservation areas, although are also found beyond the boundaries of these areas. Many of the listed buildings reflect Southend's heritage as a seaside holiday destination.

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[14] The data used are claimant count levels collected by the Department for Work and Pensions. These data are a by-product of the administrative records of all people claiming benefits at Jobcentre Plus offices. The claimant count rate is calculated by expressing the number of people claiming unemployment-related benefits as a percentage of the estimated resident working-age population of the area. This figure is produced by the ONS Population Estimates Unit. Note, that the claimant count data relates to the number of benefit claimants only and therefore does not provide a comprehensive measure of unemployment.

3.9　Open space

3.9.1　There are only very limited areas of public open space, particularly green space, in the town centre. The seafront to the south of the town centre area does have high quality open spaces, in particular the Southend Cliffs formal gardens. However, within the main commercial and retail areas of the town centre green space provision is poor, and only really includes the cemetery behind the Royals shopping centre and Warrior Square (0.5ha). Neither of these areas are suited to informal recreational use, or as a place to take a break from other activities in the town centre. Churchill Gardens in the north of the town centre area provides additional open space, although is part of a more residential neighbourhood. Green spaces are needed in urban areas as demand will increase with a warming climate and these areas can help cool built urban areas, preventing 'heat island' impacts. Therefore, provision of green open spaces may be a matter to be addressed by the AAP.

3.9.2　Redevelopment of the centre and proposals of the AAP should take into account ways in which open spaces in this location can contribute to the Thames Gateway and South Essex Green Grid strategy.

3.10　Flood

3.10.1　Although there is a risk of flood along the seafront south of the town centre, the town centre itself is at no particular risk of flood. This is with the exception of the Kursaal area east of Southchurch Avenue which is at greater risk of flood according to Environment Agency maps.

3.10.2　However, there could be potential for surface water flooding from run-off especially in storm events related to climate change.

3.11　Air quality

3.11.1　The Essex Air Quality Consortium identifies that current air quality in Southend is below action levels. The main source of air pollution in Southend is road transport on busy road links such as the A127, A13 and A1159, and therefore in the Town Centre controlling traffic levels will be important in maintaining air quality. There are currently about 35 small scale industrial processes which are authorised by the Borough Council. These are not considered to emit significant quantities of air pollution.

3.12　Nature conservation

3.12.1　There are no sites of identified nature conservation importance in the central area. However, the potential for nature conservation enhancement should be a consideration of all development sites in the area.

3.12.2　The Town Centre is also near the internationally designated Natura 2000 sites. Therefore, development in these areas will have to ensure it will not have an adverse impact on these nature conservation sites. Potential impact pathways include sewerage, rainwater run-off, or pollution impacts of large scale new development, as well as any direct impact on the birds for which these areas are designated.

3.13 Key issues

3.13.1 The additional baseline material gathered for the town centre AAP identifies several matters that may need to be addressed by the SA. These are:

- development should help in the continued enhancement of the built environment in the town centre, with new buildings of high quality and developed to sound urban design principles

- new urban open space, including new green space, could be provided in the town centre, this may be particularly important given the changing climate and the likelihood of even greater demand for outdoor social space

- the area is currently experiencing high levels of deprivation, and this should be addressed through the AAP

- the town centre is a focus of employment for the borough, and this role needs to be maintained, while also ensuring a range of employment opportunities are maintained in a variety of employment sectors. It will also be necessary to ensure high quality jobs are provided

- air quality of the town centre should be maintained

- every attempt should made to bring biodiversity enhancements to the Town Centre, and also to ensure development in this area does not harm the nearby Natura 2000 sites

- much of the Town Centre is used for car parking, the AAP should set out strategies for the rationalisation of town centre parking in order to allow land to be released for other uses and create a higher quality urban environment. In addition, establishing residents parking schemes in the neighbourhoods in proximity to commercial and office areas is necessary to reduce car commuting, in tandem with delivery of the Local Transport Plan proposals for improved public transport in and around the town centre.

4   Core Strategy

4.1   Introduction

4.1.1   This section extracts some key issues that may have implications for the whole borough that were originally collected for the Core Strategy SA. This information was updated in 2012 to reflect more up-to-date issues. This section only includes issues that have not already been addressed in information on the seafront or town centre.

4.1.2   A fuller summary of the borough can be found in the Core Strategy SA.

4.2   Biodiversity

4.2.1   The estuary environment to the south of Southend- is characterised by extensive mudflats and areas of saltmarsh, all of which are internationally important areas for nature conservation and biodiversity.

4.2.2   To the south of the town are the Benfleet and Southend Marshes. This is an internationally important protected wetland site under the Ramsar convention, a Special Protection Area (SPA), and a nationally important Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The SSSI is made up of various habitat types but predominantly mudflat and saltmarsh, particularly within and adjacent to the Borough. SSSI evaluation has shown that overall the condition of the SSSI is unfavourable and declining, worst effected habitat type is the littoral sediment, which is unfavourable and declining, as a result of coastal squeeze and water pollution due to discharges.

4.2.3   The area also has the non-statutory designation of an 'Important Bird Area', by Birdlife International, as it supports good populations of several types of bird including, Pied Avocet, Common Ringed Plover, Black-tailed Godwit, Red Knot and Dunlin. Pressures on this area have been identified by Birdlife International, as being predominantly from intensive recreation activity, aquaculture and the development of the marina area. Natural pressures also exist in the area, with the threat of rising sea levels being identified.

4.2.4   The other area of international importance for nature conservation is Foulness along the coast east of Shoeburyness. This consists of various types of habitat including the grassland of Shoebury Common, and an area of improved and unimproved grazing marsh on Foulness and Potton Islands. The largest habitat type is the littoral sediment that is an important feeding ground for Brent Geese, and the cockleshell spits supporting one of the largest colonies of Little Terns in Britain. This area is also designated a Ramsar site, a SPA and a SSSI, and in addition is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

4.2.5   The Foulness area also falls within the Mid-Essex Coast 'Important Bird Area' and this large area is of national importance for 17 named bird species. There are many pressures on this area listed by Birdlife International, however it is not clear which impacts are relevant for the Southend- area due to the size of the designated area. Threats/pressures may include agricultural intensification/extension; bird disturbance; industrialisation/urbanisation; recreation/tourism – but the main pressure is from rising sea levels resulting in loss of the saltmarsh habitat.

4.2.6   Immediately adjacent to the western side of the urban boundary, in the adjacent local authority area of Castle Point, are two further SSSIs.

4.2.7   Leigh Flats is designated a National Nature Reserve, and this largely coincides with part of the Benfleet and Southend Marshes. There are areas identified as (county) Wildlife Sites in the LDF area, and these will also be an important consideration in determining the location of new development. These areas despite being of more local importance only still provide an important local asset, as well as significance for wildlife in providing links between habitats of other designated importance.

4.2.8   Fresh water habitats in Southend-on-Sea include ponds and lakes, of which there are many examples throughout the Borough, including at Friars Park, Priory Park, Shoebury Park, and Churchill Gardens. Factors threatening the habitats here are loss and fragmentation from urban development, water abstraction, pollution, recreation use, and tipping.

4.2.9   Terrestrial habitats mentioned in the Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) include 'ancient' hedgerows in the Borough, with examples along the green lane north of Fossetts Camp, and running parallel to Eastwood Boulevard and in the boundaries of Edwards Hall Park. There are several woodland areas of importance in the Borough at Hadleigh Great Wood (in Belfairs NR), Belfairs Wood, Oakwood and Owl Wood.

4.2.10   Several areas of natural grassland exist in the Borough, including at Belton Hills LNR, in the grounds of Shoebury Coastguard Station, Shoebury Common, Shoebury Old Ranges Nature Reserve, former MOD land at Shoebury, and at Shoebury East Beach on the clifftop.

4.3   Agricultural Land

4.3.1   The Borough only contains a very limited amount of undeveloped land on the northern edge, some of which is used for agriculture. Studies have shown that over half of this agricultural land is soil of Grades I or 2, the highest quality, and therefore of national importance.

4.4   Climate Change

4.4.1   Average UK temperature has risen since the mid-20th century, as have average sea level and sea surface temperature around the UK coast. Over the same time period, trends in precipitation are harder to identify. However, in Central England temperature has risen since the 1970s, with 2006 being the warmest on record. All regions have experienced an increase in the average temperatures between 1961 and 2006. Largest increases have been in the south and east of England.

4.4.2   All regions of the UK have experienced more heavy precipitation events in winter, with rainfall decreasing in the summer for most of England.

4.4.3   Sea-surface temperatures around the UK coast have risen over the past three decades by about 0.7 ºC. Sea level around the UK rose by about 1mm/year in the 20th century, corrected for land movement. The rate for the 1990s and 2000s has been higher than this.

4.5   Landscape Character

4.5.1   A landscape character assessment was undertaken of Essex and Southend-on-Sea for the Structure Plan review (July 2002). This identified the characteristics of the area and

susceptibility to change. The Borough of Southend-on-Sea falls in two character areas, the Thames Estuary and South Essex Coastal Towns.

4.5.2   Characteristics of the T*h*ames Estuary are identified as:

- very wide estuary mouth extending to the open sea

- extensive tidal mudflats/sands and fringing saltmarsh

- large scale landscape with strong sense of exposure

- expansive views in which water and sky dominate, with outline of the Kent coast sometimes visible in the distance

- man-made development restricted to northern boundary, except distinctive landmark of the exceptionally long Southend Pier

- dynamic landscape due to tide and weather's influence

- rough low grazing marsh, rich wildlife

- with an overall character being undeveloped.

4.5.3   The artificial landscape features are:

- Southend Pier which is 2km long is a major landmark

- river traffic tankers and container ships and smaller boats

- concrete seawalls/promenades

- jetties and groynes

- some poor quality urban development just outside character area is visually intrusive, such as the tower blocks of Southend.

4.5.4   Past, present and future trends for change are identified as:

- natural coastal process - coastal squeeze

- demand for marinas and port development are possible pressures in the future which would be very difficult to absorb into the landscape.

4.5.5   Overall the landscape is identified as having a high level of sensitivity to change.

4.5.6   Southend urban area is identified as the characterisation in the category of 'South Essex Coastal towns'. Specifically it states that Southend on Sea and its associated neighbourhoods is the largest urban area on the South Essex coast, with a dominant grid pattern of streets running parallel and at right angles to the contours. It has a dense urban form, but with some large parks and open spaces.

4.5.7   The landscape condition is mixed, with poor quality commercial 'shed' development being common within the area. Several areas of the fringes of the town have been identified as 'landscape improvement areas' through the previous Local Plan, and therefore there is an opportunity for these areas to be significantly enhanced upon through appropriate schemes (which could in part include built development).

4.5.8   The identified pressure and likely future trends for change are:

- urban development pressure likely to be a significant ongoing trend

- areas where traditional landscape character survives will need particular attention

- recreational pressures are also likely to be considerable.

4.6   Connectivity

4.6.1   Southend is only around 40 miles from the centre of London, with road links via the dual carriageway A127 and A130 roads. The Borough is also well served by rail with two railway lines, and a total of nine stations within the town. One line goes from Shoeburyness, via Southend Central Station, and Basildon to London (Fenchurch Street), the other is from Southend Victoria Station via Billericay and Romford to London (Liverpool Street). Both journeys to London take under an hour. There are also many bus services serving Southend and linking to surrounding areas.

4.7   Cultural Heritage

4.7.1   There are five Scheduled Monuments in, or adjacent to, the boundary of Southend-on-Sea Borough. These sites are:

- Prittlewell Priory, these priory remains date from the 10th century

- a univallate hill fort 'Prittlewell Camp' found 500m east of Sutton Crematorium, dating back to the prehistoric Bronze Age

- Southchurch Hall moated site, 1.1km east of Southend Central Station, dating from the 13th century, the associated buildings now house a museum and remains in a generally good condition

- Defended prehistoric settlement at Shoeburyness, known as the Danish Camp, dating from the Iron Age, a rare example in south east England

- Cold War Defence boom, this is within the local authority boundary, but stretches out into the Thames Estuary, the boom was built in the 1950s during the Cold War and is the only example of this type of structure of this date in Britain.

4.7.2   Other notable features include the Southend pier, at over 2km long making it the longest pleasure pier in the world. The pier dates from 1889, when work was started, and was completed in its current form by 1929. Fire damage in October 2005 damaged buildings at the pierhead, however it remains open and a tourist attraction for the area.

4.7.3   There are also around 75 listed buildings and churches in the Borough, two of which are Grade II* and three Grade I. In addition there are many Buildings of Local Architectural or Historic Interest and Frontages of Townscape Merit. There are also fourteen designated Conservation Areas within the Borough.

4.8   Housing stock

4.8.1   The age profile has become younger and the increasing needs for housing, leisure facilities, employment, education opportunities, and health care facilities for local residents in a sustainable, focussed way, will be a real challenge for the future.

4.8.2   Southend has approximately 78,485 dwellings (2011). Due to limited land resources and environmental constraints, for the first time Southend will find it difficult to meet the housing needs of its own population. Housing needs and homelessness are becoming increasingly prominent issues in this area, particularly as pressure is put on the housing stock through the in-migration of people from the London Boroughs.

4.9   Employment position & economic potential

4.9.1   The Southend-on-Sea Local Economic Assessment (2010) showed that there were around 5,500 companies operating in Southend, with Southend having a 57% self-containment of work based employees. This is down from the 69% containment rate stated in the AEA 1998/NOMIS survey. Of the population employed outside of Southend, 12% were employed in London, 6.5% in Rochford and 5.4% in Basildon.

4.9.2   Jobs by sector in Southend are detailed in the Local Economic Assessment (2010) and are listed as:

- Public sector: (administration, education and health):   39.5%
- Distribution, Transport and Communication: 25.5%
- Financial and Business Services   23.7%
- Production   5.5%
- Construction   5.5%
- Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing   0.3%

4.9.3   The Southend Local Economic Assessment (2010) outlines the expected threats to growth and prosperity. High levels of future job losses are expected due to the high level of public sector employment in Southend. Continuing off-shoring of back office financial services and customer contact centres will also lead to a reduction in future employment levels. The location of Southend is highlighted as being a major constraint in attracting inward investment.

4.9.4   Southend-on-Sea is ranked at 117 (rank of average rank) in the Indices of Deprivation (ID2010 – local authority level) out of 354 English districts. Some wards contain areas that are in the worst 10% of super output areas (SOA) nationally, these wards being Kursaal (majority of the ward), Milton and Southchurch.