

SOUTHEND ON SEA
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Sustainability Appraisal of the
Development Management
Development Plan Document

Proposed Submission

March 2011



NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report is the summary of the sustainability appraisal (SA) of the submission version of the Southend-on-Sea Development Management Development Plan Document (DPD). This DPD is part of the Local Development Framework that, together with national policy, sets the planning policy for the borough.
- 1.2 This summary is intended to provide an overview of the findings of the SA, with more detail of the process and outputs included in the main report.
- 1.3 The DPD sets the detailed policies to support the strategic policies and vision of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy DPD. The policies will be used to determine planning applications in the borough, setting out the criteria which will be used to determine whether or not development proposals are likely to be acceptable.
- 1.4 The purpose of the SA is to help promote sustainable development through the integration of social, environmental and economic considerations into the preparation of planning policy documents.
- 1.5 The SA report includes recommendations of where the policies might be refined or gaps filled to ensure good coverage of sustainability considerations. This is part of a process of SA where successive stages of the emerging DPD are appraised and findings fed into the next stage of plan preparation.
- 1.6 The full SA report is a public document and its purpose is to show how the sustainability considerations are integrated into preparing the DPD. The SA report is also intended to give readers of the plan an idea of how effective the DPD might be in delivering more sustainable development, and where there might be adverse impacts.
- 1.7 An initial SA report was prepared in June 2010 on an earlier version of the DPD. The previous version looked at a set of alternatives for policies that would be part of the DPD. The SA reviewed the preferred policy options and the relative sustainability implication of pursuing the options presented. The SA report was available for consultation alongside the Issues and Options version and helped inform the plan makers as part of the submission version preparation.
- 1.8 Sustainability appraisal consists of two main stages, these are:
- Defining sustainable development in the context of development in Southend-on-Sea, 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 Defining sustainable development

2.1 Defining sustainable development for the sustainability appraisal (SA) of the Development Management Development Plan Document (DPD) began with the scoping report prepared for the SA of the Core Strategy. The SA scoping stage involved gathering information about the borough and the existing sustainability issues that the LDF could address. The full scoping report is available on the Southend-on-Sea LDF website. Also, in addition to information gathering at scoping for the Core Strategy area specific details were collected for the town centre and the seafront. The reason for this is there are area specific policies in the DPD for these two areas.

2.2 As part of defining sustainable development, objectives of the other plans, programmes and strategies that cover the borough were also looked at. The SA involved a review of national, regional and local plans and strategies. Plans reviewed included:

- National Planning Policy
- South Essex and Thames Gateway plans
- Community Strategy
- Local Transport Plan 2
- Southend-on-Sea Core Strategy.

2.3 The output of the process is to set a 'sustainability framework' for use in the SA of the DPD. The framework includes 17 main concerns for the delivery of sustainable development.

- **Accessibility:** enable all to have similar and sufficient levels of access to services, facilities and opportunities;
- **Housing:** to provide the opportunity for people to meet their housing need;
- **Education and skills:** to assist people in gaining the skills to fulfil their potential and increase their contribution to the community;
- **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;
- **Community:** to value and nurture a sense of belonging in a cohesive community, whilst respecting diversity;
- **Biodiversity:** to maintain and enhance the diversity and abundance of species, and safeguard these areas of significant nature conservation value;
- **Landscape character:** to maintain and enhance the quality and character and cultural significance of the landscape, including the setting and character of the settlement;
- **Built environment:** to maintain and enhance the quality, safety and distinctiveness of the built environment and the cultural heritage;
- **Air:** to reduce all forms of air pollution in the interests of local air quality and the integrity of the atmosphere;

- **Water:** to maintain and improve the quantity and quality of ground, sea and river waters, and minimise the risk of flooding;
- **Land:** to use land efficiently, retaining undeveloped land and bringing contaminated land back into use;
- **Soil:** to maintain the resource of productive soil;
- **Minerals and other raw materials:** to maintain the stock of minerals and other raw materials;
- **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;
- **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;
- **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;
- **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.

3 The findings of the sustainability appraisal

- 3.1 The SA finds that the Development Management Development Plan Document (DPD) provides an additional level of detail for the Core Strategy and national planning polices that should help deliver more sustainable development in Southend-on-Sea.
- 3.2 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 16 policies long and clearly worded. The succinct document is likely to be easily used and therefore help planning applications move through the decision-making system. The smooth progression of applications will help development to be delivered and therefore meet the social and economic needs of the borough, as well as helping protection of the environment.
- 3.3 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.
- 3.4 The sustainability appraisal does raise some issues about where there may be scope for improvements to the sustainability performance. For instance, policies may be able to do more to help secure the 'smarter choices' agenda of the Local Transport Plan, to get more people out of their cars, and to choose more sustainable ways in which to travel.

- 3.5 Other, more minor, changes may be made to help get the best sustainability performance from new development. This could include protecting overnight visitor accommodation and making sure policies on the intensification of existing land use do not stifle the efficient use of land.
- 3.6 The SA also identifies where some matters are not yet fully addressed by policy. These omissions may be due to the purpose of the DPD and the role of the policies and/or a lack of evidence at the current time. An example of a possible gap is ensuring that more energy used in the borough comes from low carbon or renewable energy sources. As information becomes available or the preparation of other parts of the LDF progresses, such as area specific Area Action Plans, it may be possible to address these omissions.

Non- technical summary

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Appendix 1: Sustainability appraisal of proposed policies

Appendix 2: Baseline for Central Area and Seafront

1 Introduction

The sustainability appraisal

- 1.1 This is the sustainability appraisal (SA) report of the Development Management Development Plan Document (DPD) for Southend-on-Sea. 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.
- 1.2 The purpose of the SA has been to inform the decision-making process during preparation of the Development Plan Document (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 sustainability appraisal and the European Community Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).
- 1.3 This SA report builds on work already completed for the SA of the Core Strategy DPD.
- 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.
- 1.5 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 .
- 1.6 The SA of the LDF is being prepared in order to fulfil the statutory requirement from the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, including the requirements set out for sustainability appraisal in paragraphs 4.39 to 4.43 of Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Spatial Planning (2008). The way in which the SA has been undertaken meets the requirements of the European Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive (2001/42/EC).
- 1.7 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.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

- 1.8 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.

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

The Local Development Framework

- 1.10 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. ,
- 1.11 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.
- 1.12 The SA of the Southend-on-Sea Central Area AAP is also underway.
- 1.13 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.

2 The sustainability appraisal process

- 2.1 The purpose of this stage of the sustainability appraisal is to identify what the sustainability issues may be of using the development management policies to help deliver development in Southend-on-Sea.
- 2.2 The process of appraisal consists of two main stages, these are:
- To define sustainable development in the context of development in Southend-on-Sea, 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.
- 2.3 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).
- 2.4 The initial stage of information gathering for the sustainability appraisal (SA) builds on work already undertaken for the SA of the Southend-on-Sea LDF Core Strategy, reported in August 2006.
- 2.5 Following the review of the background, the SA will assess the proposed policies of the DPD contained in the submission version DPD. The purpose is to identify how these are likely to impact on implementing development that will contribute to greater sustainability.
- 2.6 As part of the Issues and Options SA, there was an appraisal of alternative policy options. The findings are summarised in Section 7. Further detail on the appraisal of options is in the Issues and Options SA report (June 2010) on the Council's LDF website.
- 2.7 An appraisal of all the policies in the submission version is in Appendix 1. This sustainability appraisal report summarises the main findings and recommendations of the policy appraisal (Section 7).
- 2.8 An initial SA and report were prepared for the Issues and Options version of the DPD in June 2010. Much of the current SA report remains the same as for the Issues and Options but has been updated to reflect the changes. The SA of the Issues and Options is available on the Council's website.

The Development Management DPD

- 2.9 The Development Management DPD provides the detailed implementation policies for the LDF. However, the Core Strategy also contained policies that will be used in making

development management decisions. 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 sustainability appraisal of these policies.

- 2.10 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.
- 2.11 For the sustainability appraisal 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.

Sustainability appraisal process

- 2.12 The SA of the DPD is a repeated process with successive appraisals being completed during preparation from the Issues and Options stage to submission.
- 2.13 At this stage in DPD preparation it is necessary to consider the sustainability impacts for the proposed policies of the 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.
- 2.14 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.

Collation of baseline information

- 2.15 The level of detail in the baseline information for this DPD reflect 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.
- 2.16 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, which has now been withdrawn.
- 2.17 The baseline draws on work carried out by Southend-on-Sea Borough Council (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 SA¹.

- 2.18 The primary sources of information for the baseline data collation are :
- Southend-on-Sea Town Centre Area Action Plan Key Statistics, SBC
 - Town Centre Area Actions Plan Issues and Options paper, SBC
 - Baker Associates, Sustainability Appraisal, for Southend on Sea, Local Development Framework, Core Strategy Development Plan Document, SBC
- 2.19 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.
- 2.20 The baseline information descriptions and identification of key sustainability issues is shown in Section 4 and in Appendix 2.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

- 2.21 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.
- 2.22 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.
- 2.23 The screening for potential impacts from the policies of the DPD is covered in the Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Report (Issues and Options) September 2010, available on the Council's website.

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 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.
- 3.2 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.
- 3.3 National planning policy is set out as Planning Policy Statements/Guidance². These will need to be taken into account in the DPD and SA, and form the basis for development management decisions nationally.
- 3.4 **PPS1: Delivery of Sustainable Development** sets the principles for delivering all new development, with the presumption in favour of delivering more sustainable development. There is also a new PPS 'Planning for a Low Carbon Future in a Changing Climate', consultation on an initial draft ended June 2010. This will combine planning policy on climate change and planning policy on new development into one.
- 3.5 **PPS4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth** (2009) stipulates the need to ensure that employment needs are based on a strong evidence base. To deliver more sustainable economic growth, the PPS calls for positive planning of growth sector clusters. Development Management policies and Area Action Plans can provide the context for this type of policy. A specific policy of the PPS, EC3, deals with planning for centres. At a local level, this policy calls for residential or office development above ground floor retail, leisure or other facilities within centres. Also, plans should identify sites or buildings within existing centres suitable for development, conversion or change of use.
- 3.6 Policy EC4 covers planning for consumer choice and promoting competitive town centres, including planning for a diverse range of uses throughout centres. For retail development, a strong mix is encouraged, recognising the importance of smaller shops to enhance the character and vibrancy of centres. Of relevance to plans for Southend centre the PPS states existing markets should be retained and enhanced, where appropriate. Overall, plans for the town centres should aim to 'enhance the established character and diversity of their town centre.' Overall, there is also the need to ensure development in main urban centres does not adversely impact on the economy of other nearby centres. It should be noted that PPS4 (2009) replaces former town centre guidance on PPS6.

² Under the new government all national planning policy guidance is under review. PPS and PPG are likely to be replaced by a National Planning Policy Framework in 2012.

- 3.7 are addressed in two PPSs. These are:
- 3.8 **PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment** (2010) covers the historic environment and archaeology. The PPS addresses the protection of both designated and non-designated heritage assets. The PPS stipulates that planning for heritage assets recognises that these resources are irreplaceable and can have a variety of social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits. The protection of an asset can vary according to its importance and its role in local character. Change is allowed if it is well managed.
- 3.9 Nature conservation is addressed in **PPS9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation** (2005), with the aim of planning to maintain, enhance and restore biodiversity conservation and geodiversity interest. Conservation and enhancement should be integrated into planning decisions.
- 3.10 **PPG20: Coastal Planning** (1992) is the national guidance note on coastal planning. Its primary aims are:
- To protect the undeveloped coasts;
 - Managing appropriate development, particularly that which requires a coastal location;
 - Managing risk, including flooding and erosion; and
 - improving the environment particularly in urbanised or despoiled areas.
- 3.11 PPG20 recognises that the developed coast may provide opportunities for economic restructuring and regeneration of existing urban areas, thereby improving their appearance and environment. PPG20 notes that this approach can be particularly effective for buildings and areas of historic interest.
- 3.12 PPS9 and PPG20 (with PPS7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas) are currently under review with the prospect of these documents being combined into a single PPS. Consultation on the new PPS: 'Planning for a Natural and Healthy Environment', ended at the beginning of June 2010.
- 3.13 Other PPS document are also important guides for development, such as, PPS1: Delivery Sustainable Development. There is also a new PPS 'Planning for a Low Carbon Future in a Changing Climate', consultation on an initial draft ended June 2010. This will combine planning policy on climate change and planning policy on new development into one.
- 3.14 PPS25 Development and Flood Risk sets the controls for developing in flood prone areas. Much of the seafront of Southend suffers from the risk of flood. Although much of the full length of the seafront is protected by coastal sea defences, it remains at risk from breaches.
- 3.15 A more detailed practice guide was published to accompany this PPS in December 2009. The revised guidance includes more information on:
- Site-specific flood risk assessment, including the need for a proportionate approach;

- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment;
 - Application of the Sequential and Exception Tests, including ‘what is safe’ (safe access and egress in times of flood); and
 - Surface water flood management, including sustainable drainage systems (SUDS).
- 3.16 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-on-Sea.
- 3.17 This plan sets 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.
- 3.18 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-on-Sea and the South Essex sub-area is reflected in the Regional Spatial Strategy and discussed in the Sustainability Appraisal of the Core Strategy.
- 3.19 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.
- 3.20 **Thames Gateway Strategic Partnership:** The Thames Gateway Strategic Partnership produced a document specifically for South Essex. This presents an ‘opportunity for driving forward regeneration and achieving growth and prosperity in South Essex as a key part of Thames Gateway’. The material in this document has been reflected in the East of England Plan.
- 3.21 A **Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Water Cycle Study and Surface Water Management Plan** are also being produced and as part of the background material defining and guiding land use planning in the borough.
- 3.22 Since work started on the Development Management DPD a significant change has occurred in land use planning policy. The East of England Plan (Regional Spatial Strategy) was adopted in 2008. This document remains part of the development plan under the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, however the Localism Bill 2010 will abolish regional spatial strategies when enacted.

- 3.23 The **Community Strategy** and **SBC Corporate Plan** are both important parts of local policy. Under the new provision for making development plans, as explained in PPS12: Local Spatial Planning, *'The vision should be in general conformity with the RSS and it should closely relate to any Sustainable Community Strategy for the area'*. (para. 4.2).
- 3.24 The Community Plan for Southend sets the vision for Southend-on-Sea as 'a vibrant coastal town and prosperous regional centre where people enjoy living, working and visiting'. This vision is to be achieved through inter-linked themes detailed in the plan.
- Prosperous community – *a prosperous local economy;*
 - Learning community – *opportunities for learning for all and a highly skilled workforce;*
 - Safer community – *crime, disorder and offending reduced;*
 - Healthy community – *improved health and well-being;*
 - Environmentally aware community – *improved transport infrastructure and a quality environment;*
 - Supportive community – *better life chances for vulnerable people; and*
 - Cultural community – *a cultural capital.*
- 3.25 A key theme relating to the DPD includes improving the centre and attracting conferences to the town.
- 3.26 Transport issues for the area are covered in the **Local Transport Plan 2** (2006-2011). This reinforces the approach set out in the RSS for the need for a high quality public transport infrastructure as part of creating the sustainable communities. The town centre in particular is the focus of many transport improvements in the borough, including to the two stations within this area and the new Travel Centre. Drafting of LTP3 (2011-2026) has now begun. The aims of local transport plans includes making 'environmental rooms' of residential and mixed use neighbourhoods bounded by the main travel routes around the borough. Also, the LTP has included the objective of 'smarter choices' to reduce peoples reliance on car travel and use more sustainable alternatives.
- 3.27 The **Southend on Sea Core Strategy** 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.
- 3.28 Further information on the appraisal of the policies of the Core Strategy is in the SA of the Core Strategy, available on the Southend-on-Sea website.
- 3.29 Other component parts of the LDF are of relevance to the DPD as well as additional SPD still to be prepared on Sustainable Transport and the Green Space and Green

Grid Strategies for the borough, and the Design Guidance. As well as the AAP being prepared for the Southend Central Area and Southend Airport.

- 3.30 **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.
- 3.31 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.
- 3.32 A masterplan has been prepared for the regeneration and renewal of the town centre. This is the **Southend Central Area Masterplan** (consultation draft September 2007). 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.
- 3.33 **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.
- 3.34 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.
- 3.35 **Essex Sea Wall Strategy (1998)** was undertaken to ensure that the flood defences on the estuaries and open coast of Essex are managed in an integrated manner. The strategy was developed to look at the economic viability of the existing defences within

each of a series of sectors of the shoreline, to address the environmental issues and habitat creation options, to review the requirements for hydraulic modelling and to identify areas where capital improvement works may be worthwhile.

- 3.36 **Essex Shoreline Management Plan (1997)** 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. In doing so, the Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) is a high-level document that forms an important part of the strategy for flood and coastal defence. The process of preparing an updated SMP is currently underway.
- 3.37 The Thames Estuary 2100 group have prepared the **TE2100 Plan (Consultation Document, April 2009)**. 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 keep up with climate change and keep flood risk at current levels, we and other will need to do more to manage and reduce both the likelihood and consequence of flooding’*.
- 3.38 Because of the fishing tradition and close links to the estuary at Leigh-on-Sea the defences are a low height and 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.
- 3.39 Existing flood management includes:
- Tidal flood defences;
 - Beaches with groyne and beach recharge;
 - Drainage system outfalls; and
 - Resilient buildings and rapid drainage measures.
- 3.40 Plans for future new raised defences on the Southend-on-Sea 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;
 - 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 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.
- 4.2 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.
- 4.3 The SA Report of the Core Strategy submission draft contains as Appendix 2 baseline information for the borough.

Summary of issues

- 4.4 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-on-Sea.
- 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.

4.5 The key social and economic impacts are the:

- Current high levels of out commuting to London, due to relatively low house prices in Southend-on-Sea 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 2007, 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.

4.6 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 are all shown for the 2050s under a medium emissions scenarios. Under low or higher scenarios emissions will be correspondingly lower and higher:

- Increased summer mean temperatures, with higher peak temperatures as well as prolonged periods of high temperature; and
- In summer there is likely to be at least a 17% reduction in rainfall (could be as much as a 38% reduction), but an increase of 14% winter precipitation levels (or as much as 31% increase)

4.7 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.

4.8 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.

Additional information

4.9 Since the preparation of the Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal, additional information on the baseline was gathered as part of preparing the Southend Central Area, Area Action Plan (AAP). Also, work was begun on a sustainability appraisal of a Seafront AAP. However, it was decided not to pursue the preparation of this AAP, with work therefore ceasing on the sustainability appraisal.

4.10 The information gathered for these two AAPs does provide a useful additional layer of up-to-date information for this sustainability appraisal. 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 2 contains the full background information collected for these two sustainability appraisals.

4.11 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 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.

4.12 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;
- The area is 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. It will also be necessary to ensure high quality jobs are provided;
- Air quality of the town centre should be maintained;
- Every attempt should be 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 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.

5 Sustainability Framework

- 5.1 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.
- 5.2 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 are covered by the DPD.
- 5.3 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.
- 5.4 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).
- 5.5 Further detail 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> enable all to have similar and sufficient levels of access to services, facilities and opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> doc – likelihood of increase in facilities and mix of uses
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to provide the opportunity for people to meet their housing need 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure a sufficient number of dwellings encourage a suitable mix of dwellings, including tenure and size 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> quan – no of dwellings created quan – no of affordable dwellings (by different types) likely to arise
Education & Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to assist people in gaining the skills to fulfil their potential and increase their contribution to the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> improve accessibility to employment and education facilities support continued development of the University campus in the town centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> doc – but little reliability of prediction
Health, safety and security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to improve overall levels of health, reduce the disparities between different groups and different areas, and reduce crime and the fear of crime 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to value and nurture a sense of belonging in a cohesive community, whilst respecting diversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> improve the viability and distinctive character of Southend-on-Sea 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> doc – but little reliability of prediction

Effective protection of the environment			
Biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to maintain and enhance the diversity and abundance of species, and safeguard these areas of significant nature conservation value 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to maintain and enhance the quality and character and cultural significance of the landscape, including the setting and character of the settlement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> protect undeveloped parts of the coastline retain notable features and areas of open space along the coast line protect views of the estuary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to maintain and enhance the quality, safety and distinctiveness of the built environment and the cultural heritage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to reduce all forms of air pollution in the interests of local air quality and the integrity of the atmosphere 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> reduce traffic congestion in the town centre encourage freight modal shift and encourage a reduction in emissions of new buildings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to maintain and improve the quantity and quality of ground, sea and river waters, and minimise the risk of flooding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure no increased risk of coastal flooding acknowledge the risk to water quality from on-shore developments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> doc – likelihood of increase or decrease in emissions quan – number of planning applications granted contrary to Environment Agency advice on flood risk.
Land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to use land efficiently, retaining undeveloped land and bringing contaminated land back into use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to maintain the resource of productive soil 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> protect productive soil where applicable (little overall impact likely) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> quan – area of productive land affected
Minerals and other raw materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to maintain the stock of minerals and other raw materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> minimise use of aggregates for new development (relevance to sea defences) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> quan – area of potential minerals extraction put beyond viable exploitation by development doc – efficiency of the use of primary and secondary materials doc – likely affect on reuse and recycling of materials - regional target to recover 70% of household waste by 2015
Energy sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> reduce the growth in car use and congestion within borough 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to achieve a clear connection between effort and benefit, by making the most of local strengths, seeking community regeneration, and fostering economic activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> doc – likelihood of increase in desirable economic characteristics
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify sites for local business start ups in accessible locations 	
Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • quan – potential number of new jobs in different sectors and match to predicted needs of workforce
Wealth creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contribute to creating attractive environment for business to flourish • improve access for all residents to a range of jobs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 The assessment of alternatives

- 6.1 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 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 sustainability appraisal comments that the options presented identified that they were not really viable alternatives, examples included:
- where policy is set nationally therefore alternatives can not 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 pursuing it would have no benefit.
- 6.3 The SA stated that where no options exist it would have been reasonable not to include any.
- 6.4 The Sustainability Appraisal 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.
- 6.5 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. In 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.
- 6.6 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.

- 6.7 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-on-Sea 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.
- 6.8 In the 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.

7 Sustainability appraisal of development management policies

7.1 The sustainability appraisal of the proposed policies is shown in the appraisal matrices of Appendix 1. 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 version is given in the final box of the matrix. This summary provides a policy audit trail from the point of view of sustainability.

7.2 The matrices of Appendix 1 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.

The policy hierarchy

7.3 The development management policies will not act alone in delivering sustainable development in Southend-on-Sea. Higher tiers of policy are set at a national level through Planning Policy Statements and Planning Policy Guidance³. The East of England Plan (Regional Spatial Strategy) was adopted in 2008. This document remains part of the development plan under the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. However, the Localism Bill 2010 will abolish regional spatial strategies when enacted.

7.4 At a local level the Core Strategy⁴ 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).

7.5 The Core Strategy have been subject of sustainability appraisal and this is available on the Council's LDF website.

³ Since the 2010 change of government all national policy is under review, a revised National Planning Policy Framework is due for completion in 2012

⁴ Southend-on-Sea LDF *DPD1: Core Strategy* (December, 2007)

- 7.6 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.
- 7.7 It is the role of the Development Management policies of this DPD to provide the local detail to national and Core Strategy policies. This detail should be tailored to control implementation of all proposed development in Southend-on-Sea, 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.

Sustainability appraisal recommendations from Core Strategy

- 7.8 The findings of the sustainability appraisal of the Core Strategy policies was that the policies should have a generally positive impact on achieving 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.
- 7.9 One of the ways of mitigating potential impacts identified in the Core Strategy SA Report⁵ (section 6 and Appendix 1 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.
- 7.10 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 encouraging 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.
- 7.11 The SA identifies that the issues listed in paragraph 7.10 are all well addressed by the Development Management DPD.

The role of Development Management policies in delivering sustainable development

- 7.12 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

⁵ Sustainability Appraisal for the Southend-on-Sea Local Development Framework: Core Strategy Development Plan Document (Submission Version), August 2006

development to help address known environmental/social/economic problems in the area.

7.13 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-on-Sea foreshore;
- 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
- Encouraging the local economy through protecting and growth employment sites and supporting the tourism industry; and
- Make sure the types of development provided is suitable to meet people's needs, such as the type and tenure of housing and the location of visitor accommodation.

7.14 The appraisal of the Southend-on-Sea development management policies reveal that the majority of the policies are 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 through the DPD are:

- Securing a high quality built environment through policies on design quality, tall buildings, protection of the historic environment. 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;
- Enhancing biodiversity of the urban area, policy of the DPD seeks to make sure all development proposals address the need to integrate new planting into the design of development from the outset, rather than as an afterthought; and
- Supporting a sustainable economy is covered through policies on protection of employment sites and support to economic growth, 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.

- 7.15 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.
- 7.16 The SA is also supports how the DPD is written. The plan is succinct and focuses only on those issues that need to be addressed at this tier. 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.

Comments and recommendations

- 7.17 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 1. This appendix should be read for a complete picture of the sustainability appraisal of the DPD.
- 7.18 One of the issues where there may be scope to improve the sustainability performance of the DPD policies is on sustainable transport. There is much in all tiers of policy, including the Core Strategy, which encourages people to choose more sustainable transport modes. There are also elements of the Development Management DPD that address this issue, such as Policy DM16 'Sustainable Transport Management'.
- 7.19 However, the SA of policies does identify some instances where changes could be made to support a greater reduction in car travel. In **Policy DM16** the SA suggests some changes to the policy to help promote access on foot as priority for the majority of new developments. Creating an attractive walking routes and planning the layout of development so the front entrance is off a footpath (rather than car park) can signal to users that pedestrians have the priority. This may have a positive benefit in encouraging walking and 'reward' people who choose not to drive. The importance of walking and cycling connections to development and movement routes through urban areas could also be one of the criteria in **Policy DM1** 'Design Quality'.
- 7.20 The SA of Policy DM16 also questions some of the choices that have been made on setting vehicle parking standards. Since the Issues and Options version of the DPD these standards have been relaxed. To achieve more sustainable development there needs to be control over car parking and encouragement of cycle use. Control of parking at destinations, such as at jobs, leisure facilities or shopping areas, may be more important than control over residential parking as a way of reducing trips, so getting these standards right is important. The SA strongly suggests that car parking, within the town centres is set at lower maximum standards for **all** land uses. Also, more development needs to be delivered that has good quality and very secure cycle parking, for instance at transport interchanges, town/district centres, leisure facilities and places of education. The policy may help to ensure a better standard of cycle

parking, this must be rigorously enforced and need for cycle parking monitored to ensure it is not in short supply.

- 7.21 Using the LDF to help people change the way they travel and not automatically choose to drive can have multiple benefits for sustainability. This includes aiding people in making healthy lifestyle choices and improve fitness.
- 7.22 **Policy DM3** is called 'The efficient and effective use of land'. However, the policy primarily relates to controlling development that would ensure the more intensive use of existing sites. 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 in helps provide the tools to refuse development that would result in the over-intensive use of land, protecting amenity and open space.
- 7.23 **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 an visual quality and as a tourism asset. The SA of the policy makes some suggestions related to securing the greatest sustainability benefits. This includes developing design briefs or a unified design brief for the whole seafront. This type of brief 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 could also be addressed in the policy to ensure the long-term effectiveness of the schemes delivered under the 'Better Southend' project and Local Transport Plan.
- 7.24 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 SA suggests that further details of how financial viability will need to be proved in the policy supporting text. The loss of overnight space could have an adverse impact on the resort character and economy of Southend. Therefore, it will be important that viability takes into account the long-term potential of a site, even if this may require renovation of existing accommodation space.
- 7.25 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 higher tiers. Plan makers will need to be satisfied coverage of issues in 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.
- 7.26 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.

- 7.27 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, setting a presumption in favour of this type of development as part of larger development projects, for example 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

Monitoring

- 8.1 There is a requirement for monitoring of the sustainability appraisal. This provides a check of DPD implementation on sustainability development. This will need to consider positive and negative impacts, triggering a review if necessary.
- 8.2 The specific requirements of the SEA Regulations on monitoring are to:
- 8.3 “Monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation...with the purpose of identifying unforeseen adverse effects at an early stage” (Regulation 17(1))
- 8.4 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.
- 8.5 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.
- 8.6 Many of the proposed indicators for the DPD set out in the submission version of the plan could be used to monitor sustainability issues. The list in paragraph 8.7 shows how the DPD specific indicators fit with monitoring for this SA. This is intended as an indication of how the monitoring and SA process are interlinked.

Accessibility:

- Percentage Class A1 Retail street frontage in the Primary Frontage
- Percentage number of planning applications contrary to parking standards

Housing:

- Net +/- family homes
- Total Number of Affordable Dwelling completions by Tenure
- Total number of dwelling completions by number of bedrooms and floor area meeting and/or above policy standards

Biodiversity

- Number of new dwellings built to Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3, 4 etc as a proportion of total new build
- Floorspace built to BREEAM

Built Environment:

- Number of planning applications affecting an historic asset
- % of Conservation Areas covered by an up to date Character Assessment

Air:

- Number of new dwellings built to Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3, 4 etc as a proportion of total new build
- Floorspace built to BREEAM

Water:

- Number of new dwellings built to Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3, 4 etc as a proportion of total new build
- Floorspace built to BREEAM
- Number of new dwellings that limit water consumption to at least 105 l/p/d
- Number of existing dwellings that incorporate energy and water efficiency measures as part of a planning application.

Minerals and other raw materials:

- Number of new dwellings built to Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3, 4 etc as a proportion of total new build
- Floorspace built to BREEAM

Energy sources:

- Number of new dwellings built to Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3, 4 etc as a proportion of total new build
- Floorspace built to BREEAM
- Number of existing dwellings that incorporate energy and water efficiency measures as part of a planning application.

8.7 It is clear that the proposed indicators for the DPD fit 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.

8.8 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.

Mitigation

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

- 8.10 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.
- 8.11 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 1.
- 8.12 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.
- 8.13 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.
- 8.14 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 Area Action Plans, it may be possible to address these omissions.

9 Conclusion

- 9.1 The Development Management Development Plan Document (DPD) provides an additional level of detail to Core Strategy and national planning polices that should help deliver more sustainable development in Southend-on-Sea.
- 9.2 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 16 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.
- 9.3 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.
- 9.4 The sustainability appraisal does raise some issues about where there may be scope for improvements to the sustainability performance. For instance, policies may be able to do more to help secure the 'smarter choices' agenda of the Local Transport Plan, to get more people out of their cars, and to choose more sustainable ways in which to travel.
- 9.5 Other, more minor, changes may be made to help get the best sustainability performance from new development. This could include protecting overnight visitor accommodation and making sure policies on the intensification of existing land use do not stifle the efficient use of land.
- 9.6 The SA also identifies where some matters are not yet fully addressed by policy. These omissions may be due to the purpose of the DPD and the role of the policies and/or a lack of evidence at the current time. An example of a possible gap is ensuring that more energy used in the borough comes from low carbon or renewable energy sources. As information becomes available or the preparation of other parts of the LDF progresses, such as area specific Area Action Plans, it may be possible to address these omissions.

Appendix 1: Sustainability appraisal of proposed 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															
✘	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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> enable all to have similar and sufficient levels of access to services, facilities and opportunities 	SP1
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to provide the opportunity for people to meet their housing need 	SP2
Education & Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to assist people in gaining the skills to fulfil their potential and increase their contribution to the community 	SP2
Health, safety and security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to value and nurture a sense of belonging in a cohesive community, whilst respecting diversity 	SP5
Effective protection of the environment		
Biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to maintain and enhance the diversity and abundance of species, and safeguard these areas of significant nature conservation value 	EP1
Landscape character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to maintain and enhance the quality, safety and distinctiveness of the built environment and the cultural heritage 	EP3
Prudent use of natural resources		
Air	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to reduce all forms of air pollution in the interests of local air quality and the integrity of the atmosphere 	NR1
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to maintain and improve the quantity and quality of ground, sea and river waters, and minimise the risk of flooding 	NR2
Land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to use land efficiently, retaining undeveloped land and bringing contaminated land back into use 	NR3
Soil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to maintain the resource of productive soil 	NR4
Minerals and other raw materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to maintain the stock of minerals and other raw materials 	NR5
Energy sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 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.

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 DPD* and *Southend Borough Wide Character Study*, which developers can be directed to in order to gain an understanding of design in Southend-on-Sea.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

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

The policy could include more detail urban design and its role on reducing car travel. Good urban design and the ground floor appearance of buildings can make places more pleasant for walking and cycling, as part of a cohesive strategy this can help reduce car dependence.

Iteration of policy

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.

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 summer. 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.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

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

The policy could address re-use of waste from demolition on site.

Criteria 1 of the policy may be difficult to use as it is not clear to what extent developments would have to prove that they had complied with the energy hierarchy.

Iteration of policy

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.

Policy DM3 – The efficient and effective use of land

Policy summary

This policy sets the principles by which backland infill, conversions of single dwellings to multiple dwellings and alternations will be decided. Priorities are to protect existing character and residential amenity.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

Backland development, the sub-division of homes 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), it is likely that includes housing from sources covered by this policy. Therefore, there is the risk that this policy if applied too strictly with adverse impacts on the delivery of homes to meet the housing needs of the borough. For instance, requiring that all conversions of houses to flats meet the full requirements of policy DM8 may restrict the potential for this type of development.

There is an identified need for small homes in Southend-on-Sea due to the high number of single person households. There are clear sustainability benefits from the intensification of uses on existing developed sites. 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.

However, there is also a shortfall of 3-bedroom and 4-bedroom properties in Southend-on-Sea 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 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 deliver 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.

Iteration of policy

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

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-on-Sea 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. However, improving on this to ensure that they will also have excellent access to local services accessible on foot, may also be beneficial in reducing car use.

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.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

New buildings of this type should have local services accessible by foot that are relevant to the proposed use (i.e. office or residential).

The policy could require that this type of development sets a benchmark standard for delivering sustainable construction and low carbon energy, due to its future status in the borough.

Iteration of policy

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.

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 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 historic heritage of an area can provide a sense of place and links with the past. In Southend-on-Sea 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-on-Sea. 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. Therefore, the policy may need to look beyond features of ‘historic’ importance and include architecturally unique features.

It will also be important to avoid the respect of heritage resulting in pastiche of old buildings, with new complementary but modern buildings permitted if of high quality design. Also, the preservation of frontages 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 the new building built behind should be clearly related in form and function (i.e. locations of entrances and windows) to the existing frontage so as to look natural in its setting.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

This policy has a positive relationship with sustainable development.

The policy could place greater emphasis on enhancing conservation areas. Criteria could be included to favour of the redevelopment of sites in conservation areas that currently detract from their character.

The policy should ensure that architectural as well as historical features are retained, especially where the unique quality may mean they are the heritage assets of the future even where they do not meet many peoples current aesthetic tastes.

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

Iteration of policy

This policy was Issues and Options DM5. The policy wording has been reduced to since issues and options. This reduction in the length of the policy is unlikely to have any sustainability implications as it was repeating national and core policy.

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-on-Sea, 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 internationally 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-on-Sea 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 provides 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 sea 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 risks development should be 'resistant and resilient', which is an important part of managing flood 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 sea 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.

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 Clivedon 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.

Clivedon 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 should be promoted more strongly in the policy. Cycling access should be a consideration of all public realm improvements.

The use of a design brief or design code for the seafront may help in delivering unified design for the area.

Design Brief(s) should be prepared for the zones and the Seafront as a whole. 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 contain more detail about the location of new development on the Seafront.

Iteration of policy

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.

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-on-Sea 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-on-Sea, although there are also a large number of single person households creating a demand for smaller homes. The policy seeks to ensure a mix of sizes of homes are provided in the borough. This requires all housing sites to provide a mix of sizes.

This policy should help deliver housing to meet the diverse needs of residents. The policy could be widened to cover market housing as well as affordable to secure a range of house types throughout the borough.

The policy proposes a 70:30 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-on-Sea 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-on-Sea meet their housing needs.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

The policy should set the same standards for market and affordable homes to provide a mix of homes to meet all parts of the community.

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

Iteration of policy

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.

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 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 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 housing evidence 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.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

None

Iteration of policy

This policy was issued with DM14 Residential space standards and DM15 Student accommodation space requirements in the Issues and Options version. 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 have been included.

Policy DM9 - Specialist residential accommodation

Policy summary

This policy sets the criteria on which new applications for 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 residential accommodation. Three of the policy criteria relate to making sure there is a need for this type of development and their repetition may be unnecessary and shows that this policy may be applied to restrict this type of development. 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 a criteria to protect existing land uses from change to 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

Consider revising the first three criteria to make the policy more clear.

Iteration of policy

The policy was issues 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.

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.

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 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-on-Sea 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.

Although encouraging clusters can have positive impacts on achieving economic growth care must be taken to avoid constricting economic growth if it does not fit the ideal location.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

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

There are no recommendations.

Iteration of policy

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.

Policy DM11 – Industrial estates and employment areas

Policy summary

This policy set the criteria to manage employment sites in the borough. This includes protecting existing sites from change of use and directing 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 sites.

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. There is particular need to protect employment land use in Southend-on-Sea 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 there is no loss in 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.

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.

The policy also allows for neighbourhood employment uses, even in predominantly residential areas. 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. Policies need to be clear that new housing will not be permitted in areas likely to be effected by the operation (noise, odour etc)of existing or future businesses. This is important to make sure the poor residential amenity of residents does not harm the availability of employment land in the borough (for example, businesses having to close due to impacts on new residential areas).

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 business that are anticipated to make sure land is used as efficiently as possible.

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

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.

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-on-Sea 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. Details of how viability will be proved may need to be given, for example time marketed or costs of upgrade and renovation against potential future income.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

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

More information could be provided on the test that would prove that existing accommodation is financially unviable. For example, costs of renovation versus long-term potential income.

The policy does not differentiate between types of accommodation. Different types may need to be managed in different ways, for example large 50+ room hotels, boutique hotels, static caravans and self-catering may all need to be considered against different priorities when making planning decisions.

Iteration of policy

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.

Policy DM13 – Southend-on-Sea Town Centre

Policy summary

The policy sets principles for retail development in the Southend-on-Sea town centre.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

Southend-on-Sea's town centre is already the focus of retail development in the borough, providing a range of high street shops in an accessible location. Train stations at the two ends of the main high street, as well as bus services, mean the area is well connected to public transport with many shoppers accessing the area by car alternatives. Strengthening the retail role will also encourage more local people to the area, instead of making longer trips to other nearby centre to meet their retail needs. Reducing travel has positive implications for achieving more sustainable development.

There is scope for enhancing the retail offer and some of the built quality of the town centre and this policy will play a role in this.

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

Sustainability appraisal comment

The policy simply sets out that new retail development in the existing town centre will be supported. The main focus will be on the main High Street but new retail development, appropriate to location, will be permitted south east and south west of the High Street. Supporting the role of the High Street will further reinforce the role of the area as the main shopping destination of the borough, and a key retail hub of South Essex.

The policy does lack some detail, and it is likely this will be filled by the Southend Central Area AAP when it is completed. At the current time some of the policy wording appears quite general, such as the matters new retail circuits will 'have to take account of'.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

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

The policy lacks some detail that may be added when the Southend Central Area AAP is complete.

This policy only relates to the retail role of the town centre, this could be reflected in the policy title.

Iteration of policy

This is a new policy that provides a direct link to the Southend Central Area Action Plan.

Policy DM14 – Shopping and centre management

Policy summary

This policy covers a range of issues relating to delivering retail and service centre development in Southend-on-Sea. 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 quite detailed criteria for the design of shopfronts to help enhance the urban environment.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

Providing a range of service centres with facilities to reflect their role and location can help provide accessible walkable neighbourhoods. In addition, the policy does not allow development that would generate high numbers of daily trips outside the town and district centres, in keeping with the need to ensure public transport accessibility and reduce car dependency.

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. Creating a higher quality public realm can reflect well on the perceived quality of the shopping experience. This can have positive benefits by supporting Southend-on-Sea'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 uses permitted 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 services for all in a range of centres, including local centres, while at the same time limiting the development of high trip generating uses such as large leisure facilities and offices. This policy approach should help to support more sustainable travel choices, as these locations are the most easily access by a variety of methods of travel, including train.

Controlling the use of the town centre to prioritise A1 uses is an important part of keeping the focus on the town centre for shopping. Retail is a high trip generating use and therefore concentrating it in the most accessible location will help reduce the transport impact. In addition, ensuring a critical mass of shops in these locations will help maintain the town centre as a retail hub, successfully competing with out-of-town centres and other nearby town centres and maintaining vibrancy in the town.

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 fascias 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 a vibrancy to a neighbourhood and area likely to positively help the image of an area without harm to the local economy.

This is a very detailed policy in comparison to many others of the DPD. This includes the detailed design of shop frontages, which along with other design issues could be incorporated into SPD. However, the criteria should help enhance the quality of retail centres and preserve existing features.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

The guidance criteria on shopfront design are very detailed and could be incorporated into design guidance and SPD.

Iteration of policy

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.

Policy DM15 – 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 wellbeing 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 areas where there may be a risk from land instability a assessment stability and analysis of how issues will be overcome will need to be submitted with a planning application. If necessary the policy also requires that construction must take place to take into account land stability, this may require stabilisation works if necessary.

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.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

The policy is likely to help in delivering sustainable development.

Iteration of policy

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

Policy DM16 – 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. However, the policy wording in some instances could be adjusted to make sure the policy does not miss opportunities for really pushing for more sustainable travel choices to be a feature of all new development. For example, criteria three should go beyond requirements that development ‘incorporate provision’ for walking. In almost all circumstances access a development by foot should be prioritised, this will have benefits relating to sustainable transport and may also be beneficial in securing good urban layout.

Criteria four could make more clear how ‘smarter choices’ will need to be demonstrated as part of a planning application. This could include the types and sizes of development and what type of provision they would be expected to make, including the need for transport assessments or full Travel Plans.

Vehicle parking standards: This policy sets out the very detailed suggested standards for car parking for different Use Classes in Southend-on-Sea. The standards follow the guidance of the Essex Planning Officers Association (EPOA), although do deviate from these to set slightly higher standards in some circumstances for the Central Area. 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 should 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.

Residential parking standards are given as a minimum for the wider borough. Minimum standards may not always be the most suitable in seeking to encourage lower car ownership and encourage people away from automatically choosing to travel by car. However, limiting parking availability at trip origins does not necessarily discourage car ownership and can push vehicle parking onto the adjacent public highway, diminishing the streetscape and potentially obstructing emergency and passenger transport vehicles.

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 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. The standards should specify that residential cycle parking is not only covered but extra secure as well. Secure parking at people's homes is essential as bikes may be parked here for long durations making them more vulnerable to theft.

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
- Setting out in policy what 'smarter choice' measures different sizes, locations and types of development would be expected to deliver
- Making the vehicle parking standards for some land use types (leisure in particular) more stringent in the town centre
- Possibly increasing minimum standards for cycle parking in some types of development
- The policy could help to ensure that public transport, walking and cycling access to new development is a real and viable alternative to car travel, rather than just an option.

Iteration of policy

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.

Appendix 2: Baseline for Central Area and Seafront

1 Baseline information for the Seafront Area Action Plan

1.1 The primary source of information is the document 'Seafront Area Action Plan, Development Plan Document DPD4⁶, Draft Background Information and Evidence Base' which is simply a document which draws together key data and known information relevant to the Seafront. It was not intended to be exhaustive.

1.2 Work has now ceased on this AAP, with the policies on the seafront to be incorporated into the Development Management DPD.

Flood Risk

1.3 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.

1.4 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.

1.5 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 Shoebury Ness former MOD sites is also at a higher risk of flood.

1.6 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.

1.7 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

⁶ NB: Preparation of DPD4 has been cancelled, Seafront issues are now to be dealt with through the Development Management DPD.

annum or greater (01.% for the rest of the estuary). Risks are of flood depths to 4m but this is very variable.

The Cliffs

- 1.8 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.

Air Quality

- 1.9 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 Essex Air Quality Consortium do not identify any particular air quality impacts of the roads in the Seafront area.

Bathing Water

- 1.10 Southend-on-Sea has seven miles of beaches and bathing waters including four areas which have achieved International Blue Flag Awards in 2006. The majority of the borough's bathing waters meet EU standards and are recognised as high quality. 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.
- 1.11 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 to continue in 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.

Biodiversity

- 1.12 More comprehensive information on biodiversity can be found in the Sustainability Appraisal and the Habitats Assessment (including Appropriate Assessment) of the Core Strategy.
- 1.13 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.

- 1.14 The Southend-on-Sea 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.
- 1.15 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 its a important conservation value is recognised by it inclusion in to a national nature reserve.
- 1.16 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.
- 1.17 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, Shriill Carder Bee, Stag Beetle, several species of bats, Dormouse, and a small Water Vole population.
- 1.18 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.

Developed Coast

- 1.19 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. The Area Action Plan does not stretch very far inland at any point, predominantly covering the promenade and road and seafront buildings and open spaces. However, the implications of the AAP are wide reaching with 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.

Travel, transport and movement

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

- 1.21 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.
- 1.22 There are some transport proposals for the seafront that will have positive impacts for more sustainable transport, including improved cycleways and bus links along the coast. However some measured included in the Local Transport Plan, such as hovercraft and other river services from Southend have more unpredictable sustainability impacts, particularly if new port facilities are required due to likely impacts on the Natura 2000 sites.
- 1.23 The whole Seafront is already well 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.

Built environment quality

- 1.24 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.
- 1.25 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 as been recognised for its built quality, two houses on Undercliff Gardens, Allocat House, Westcliffe Parade and the Kursaal restoration. 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.
- 1.26 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.

Open Space and landscape

- 1.27 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.

- 1.28 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 being protected by require review as part of the LDF. Also of landscape value to the area is the open aspect onto the estuary from the coast, that gives Southend its distinctive characteristics and setting.
- 1.29 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.

Economy

- 1.30 Tourism contributes about £255m to the local economy and supports 6,200 jobs (16% of employment in the borough). Over 6 million day visitors visit Southend-on-Sea annually, making tourism hugely important to the local economy. 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.
- 1.31 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 in 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 than encouraging more day visits. Improved summer weather may attract more people to holiday in the UK, and Southend should take advantage of these opportunities.
- 1.32 There are also no large conference facilities in the town and this may be an opportunity for the borough as part of new development.
- 1.33 There is of course 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.
- 1.34 Retail and other employment uses are also found in the coastal zone, although a highlighted issue is the poor connectivity between the coastal area and the retail core of Southend-on-Sea. Unemployment varies in the coastal wards, with the majority having lower rates than the Southend average although Kursaal and Milton have significantly higher rates of unemployment than the borough average whilst Leigh and West Leigh have very low rates in comparison.

Housing

- 1.35 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.

Key issues in the Seafront AAP area

- 1.36 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 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 to encourage longer stays and higher visitor spend. This could also include new conference facilities
 - 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.

2 Baseline information for the Town Centre Area Action Plan

- 2.1 Several other key pieces of evidence are sources of information, these are:
- The Southend-on-Sea gateway Town Centre Strategy 2002-2012
 - Consultation Framework Document 'Town Centre Study and Master Plan' Buro Happold/DTZ Pidea 2003
 - Southend-on-Sea Retail study CB Richard Ellis, September 2003.
- 2.2 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.

Role of the town centre

- 2.3 Southend-on-Sea town centre is a major retail, employment and commercial centre serving a catchment population of over 325,000 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 nearly 40% of the jobs in the borough.
- 2.4 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.
- 2.5 The college and new university complex is adjacent to the High Street, with more development planned. Development of a multi-screen cinema, restaurants, café's and bars mainly along High Street side streets has given the town centre a complimentary leisure offer.
- 2.6 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.
- 2.7 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.

Housing

- 2.8 Extensive areas of high density housing providing homes for some 18,000 people (11% of the borough total) in 10,000 households adjoin the centre. Housing areas

around the high street are of historic and architectural quality and are designated as conservation areas⁷.

Travel and transport

- 2.9 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 5,000 cars in surface and multi-storey car parks, Council owned car parking encourages short stay shoppers, but attempts to deter commuters through its pricing structure.
- 2.10 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.
- 2.11 As previously noted in Section 3 there are also various schemes proposed through the Local Transport Plan 2 to bring enhancements to the public transport provision of the area.
- 2.12 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.

Population

- 2.13 The 2001 Census of resident population provides the best population record at Ward level. There is some fluctuation in exact population dependant upon source. 2007 mid year population estimates form the ONS record a small increase in population. The Town Centre makes up 11.7 % (19,000) of the total borough's resident population.

Resident Population

Area	Census 2001	mid year estimate 2007
Southend-on-Sea	160,293	162,000
Town Centre	18,347	19,000
<i>Town Centre %</i>	<i>11.4</i>	<i>11.7</i>

Source: Census 2001 and Mid-year estimates (1981/2007) Southend-on-Sea Information Leaflets

⁷ SBC, Town Centre AAP, Issues and Options Report

Employment

- 2.14 In 2005, the Town Centre provided nearly 40% of all the jobs in the borough. The number of jobs in the borough itself has increased by 2,600 between 2002 and 2005, with 92% of this increase provided in the Town Centre. This equates to an 11.1% increase in jobs in the Town Centre between 2002-05 compared to only a 4% increase in the number of jobs for the rest of Southend-on-Sea.

	2002	2003	2004	2005	%Change
Southend	60,400	61,600	64,800	63,000	4.3
Town Centre	21,600	23,000	25,100	24,000	11.1
% jobs in TC	35.8	37.3	38.7	38.1	

Source: Jobs totals are compiled through the Southend Business directory, Annual Business Enquiry and local knowledge. The datasets provides the most accurate post-census figures.

- 2.15 The Town Centre contains a mix of employment types, and some sectors are proportionately more significant than in the borough as a whole. For example the financial sector (6.7% compared to 4.4%), real estate and business (20% compared to 17.2%) and 'other' (50.4% compared to 26.7%), retail is included in the 'other' category. In contrast, there are a number of sectors which are less important in the Town Centre than the borough as a whole such as health and social work (6.3% compared to 21.8%), which is dependent on the location of hospitals, and manufacturing (2.1% compared to 10%) as only one industrial site is found in the area.
- 2.16 The unemployment rates in Southend show a sharp increase from 2008 to 2009 reflecting the global recession. The town centre has suffered particularly badly with the rate jumping well over 2 points, while the rest of Southend the increase is under 2. Figures from earlier in the decade show rates of unemployment disparity are closing, as it was over twice as high as the percentage for the rest of borough.

Unemployment rates

	from May 2008	to May 2009
Town Centre	5.6	8.0
Rest of Southend	3.0	4.76

Source: 2008/09 Unemployment Monitor Summary Statistics – Issue 127 May 2009⁸

Social characteristics

- 2.17 Education rates show that although the rate of adults with no qualifications are 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

⁸ 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.

with qualifications living close to or in the town centre juxtaposed with pockets of deprivation, although without further investigation this cannot be confirmed.

- 2.18 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 2004 indicate that where these three ward areas overlap with the commercial and retail centre of the Town Centre area there are high levels of deprivation, with sub-ward areas being in the 10% most deprived nationally, and others in the majority of the town centre, with the exception of some residential areas, being in the most deprived 30% nationally.
- 2.19 The number of cars per household in central Southend is significantly lower (0.72) than for the rest of the borough (1.09). This may reflect good transport connections but is also likely to be characteristic of income deprivation in parts of the centre.

Built environment quality

- 2.20 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.
- 2.21 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.

Open space

- 2.22 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.
- 2.23 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.

Flood

- 2.24 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.

Air quality

- 2.25 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 key to 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.

Nature conservation

- 2.26 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.
- 2.27 The Town Centre is also near the internationally designated Natura 2000 sites, as referred to in Section 3. 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.

Key issues

- 2.28 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 be 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.