

Chapter Four Housing and Population

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Housing and Population

Introduction

- 4.1. The population of the Borough increased rapidly in the forty year period between 1951 and 1991, rising from approximately 31,000 to 86,500, primarily as a result of people entering the Borough. Whilst population levels are not now increasing as rapidly as in previous years, the average size of households is falling, resulting in the creation of more households and hence a continuing demand for more housing in the Borough.
- 4.2. The Structure Plan strategy seeks to restrain residential development in this part of Essex. It is therefore likely that population levels will become static or decline in the future.
- 4.3. The following chapter examines housing land supply in the Borough compared to Structure Plan requirements and sets out the Council's policies in respect of the supply of residential land within the Plan period and beyond, in the light of strategic limitations. It also provides detailed policies in respect of the siting of new residential development, and the provisions in respect of special accommodation such as Sheltered Housing, Affordable Housing, and Mobility Housing. Detailed guidance on design and layout is contained in **Appendix 12**.

Objectives

1. To ensure a continuous supply of housing land is available throughout the plan period and beyond.
2. To protect and enhance residential amenities and to make the best use of the existing housing resources.
3. To seek the provision of a wide range of housing types to meet the needs of all sections of the community.

Housing Strategy

- 4.4. The Essex Structure Plan (1st Alteration) made provision for 2300 new dwellings (gross) in the Borough between 1986 and 2001. The Second Alteration of the Structure Plan translated this provision into an equivalent of 1600 net new dwellings.
- 4.5. In accordance with Aim 4 of the Local Plan, it is considered that, in the light of the restrictions placed on new development by the Green Belt, the need to avoid 'town cramming', the serious imbalance that exists between the population of the area and the number of jobs in the locality, and the strain that would be placed on existing infrastructure by further population growth, it is appropriate in principle to seek to limit the extent of new residential development in the Borough to that required to meet the Structure Plan provision only. Aim 5 however, also provides exceptionally for the allocation of new sites for residential purposes where such an allocation would have significant environmental advantages.
- 4.6. Table 1 shows that between 1986 and 1996, approximately 1742 dwellings (net) were completed.

TABLE 1

Dwelling Provision April 1986 - March 1996

Completions	2664
No. of Units lost	922-
TOTAL	<u>1742</u>

- 4.7. Table 2 indicates that sufficient land exists on sites committed for residential development for a further 733 dwellings. This figure includes sites currently benefiting from a planning permission or on which the principle of residential development has otherwise been established.

TABLE 2

	Additional Dwellings	Lost Units	Net
Large Sites with Permission	359	0	359
Identified Sites*	98	4	94
Intensification ¹	500	240	260
Windfall Allowance ¹	40	0	40
Units lost to non-residential ¹ development	-	20	-20
Future Provision	997	264	733

¹ These figures have been rounded to the nearest ten units.

*Identified sites are large sites without planning permission within areas allocated for residential use.

- 4.8. Within this table, an allowance has been made for intensification of development within existing urban areas on small unidentified sites (i.e. excluding those currently with permission), an area of land supply which continues to make an important contribution to the number of dwellings completed each year. An allowance is also made for the contribution to the residential land supply which may come from 'windfall' sites in the plan period; these are large unidentified sites which may come forward on sites not allocated for residential development in the Plan. Finally, an allowance is made for the number of residential units which may be lost through change of use to non-residential purposes which may occur over the remainder of the plan period. Each of these estimates is based on the projection of past rates of development.
- 4.9. Table 2 shows that at the 1st April, 1996, land existed or was likely to come forward within the remainder of the Plan period for the development of approximately 733 new dwellings.
- 4.10. In the light of the above data on completions and land availability, there is no need for the allocation of additional sites for residential purposes in the Local Plan to meet the requirements of the Structure Plan.
- 4.11. With the exception of those sites identified under **Policy H3**, therefore, no new residential allocations have been made within the Plan period.
- 4.12. The strategy in the adopted Essex Structure Plan, Second Alteration, states that future housing land supply in south-east Essex should be restrained. The Council recognises the need to limit the supply of new housing in the future in the light of the restrictions on further population growth identified in Paragraph 4.5. However, even if in overall terms the population of Castle Point remains static or declines slightly beyond the Plan period, national and regional trends are likely to result in a rise in the number of households

thereby increasing the likelihood for locally generated housing needs which may not be capable of being met within the present urban fabric, because of the tight constraints of the Green Belt, the boundaries which have to be maintained long after the end of the Plan period. The Plan will therefore identify sites which could be considered for release for housing purposes after 2001, but this would only be achieved, should the need arise, following a review of the Structure Plan and Local Plan. In the meantime, other specific policies, relevant to those sites, will continue to be implemented rigorously.

- 4.13. Within those areas allocated for residential use on the Proposals Map, the Council will permit applications for new residential development, provided such development accords with the relevant guidance set out in **Appendix 4** and **Appendix 12** to the Plan, and any relevant policy in the Plan.
- 4.14. Although sufficient land has been identified within the existing urban areas of the Borough to satisfy Structure Plan requirements up to the end of the plan period, it is essential that land which is allocated for residential use in the Local Plan be retained primarily for that purpose. If released for an alternative use, it is possible that the supply of land for housing will be diminished, resulting in increased pressure for the development of new greenfield sites for housing purposes.

POLICY H1 - RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

PROVISION IS MADE FOR 1,600 ADDITIONAL DWELLINGS IN THE BOROUGH BETWEEN 1986 AND 2001. IN ORDER TO ENSURE THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THAT PROVISION, HOUSING LAND AVAILABILITY WILL BE REGULARLY MONITORED. RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT WILL, IN PRINCIPLE, BE PERMITTED WITHIN THOSE AREAS ALLOCATED PRIMARILY FOR RESIDENTIAL PURPOSES, SUBJECT TO SUCH DEVELOPMENT BEING IN ACCORDANCE WITH ADOPTED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT CONTROL POLICIES AS CONTAINED IN THIS PLAN.

POLICY H2 - RESIDENTIAL LAND

LAND ALLOCATED FOR RESIDENTIAL PURPOSES WITHIN THE LOCAL PLAN SHALL BE RETAINED PRIMARILY FOR THAT PURPOSE. DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD RESULT IN THE LOSS OF LARGE SITES ALLOCATED FOR RESIDENTIAL PURPOSES WILL BE REFUSED.

Land Allocated for Residential Purposes within the Plan Period

- 4.15. Although sufficient land is available to meet the requirements of the Structure Plan, Aim 5 of the Local Plan makes provision for the allocation of new residential sites in circumstances where residential development would replace a use which has, or would have, a significant adverse impact on local amenities. Four sites have been identified as suitable for allocation under this Policy. These are:-
- (i) **Land at Point Road, Canvey Island.**
This site is currently used for industrial purposes, but it is considered that its redevelopment for residential purposes would lead to significant environmental benefits for surrounding residents and would decrease the volume of heavy traffic travelling to the eastern end of the Island. It is anticipated that the site could accommodate approximately 50 dwellings.
 - (ii) **Land at the BSC Site, Kingsley Lane, Thundersley.**
This site was formerly allocated for industrial purposes on the Approved Review Development Plan, but has been redeveloped for residential purposes. The site is therefore allocated for residential purposes on the Proposals Map.
 - (iii) **203-223 London Road, Thundersley.**

The site is currently used for commercial uses but it is considered that its future redevelopment for residential purposes would offer significant advantages in terms of reducing noise and disturbance for surrounding residents.

(iv) **Land to the south of Thorney Bay Road, Canvey Island.**

This site has been identified as having extant consent for residential development. In view of this consent it is appropriate to allocate the land for residential purposes.

POLICY H3 - NEW DEVELOPMENT SITES

LAND IS ALLOCATED AT POINT ROAD (CANVEY ISLAND), AT THE BSC SITE, KINGSLEY LANE (THUNDERSLEY), AT 203-223 LONDON ROAD (THUNDERSLEY), AND TO THE SOUTH OF THORNEY BAY ROAD, (CANVEY ISLAND), AS IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP, FOR RESIDENTIAL USE.

Land Allocated for Long Term Housing Needs

- 4.16. Paragraph 4.12 indicates that, even with a static or declining population, demographic trends point to a continued tendency for the number of small households to grow, giving a distinct possibility that land for new homes will be required after 2001. Sites should therefore be identified as being preferred for release for housing purposes, should the need arise, by means of a Local Plan review.
- 4.17. Both Thorney Bay Holiday Camp and King's Holiday Camp, Canvey Island, benefit from consent for permanent residential occupation across most of their areas and it is considered that comprehensive development of the sites could potentially lead to significant advantages over the use of caravans for full-time occupation. Their release after 2001 could take place when highway improvements proposed for Canvey Island may have been carried out and when proposals for a significant expansion of employment land on Canvey Island should have been put into effect.
- 4.18. Both sites have been allocated as land safeguarded for long-term housing needs for development beyond the Plan period. The retention of these sites for future development will allow flexibility in the provision of housing in the post Plan period and could reduce pressure for development within existing residential areas in the longer term.
- 4.19. Land to the south of The Chase and east of Wensley Road contains a number of existing dwellings and is adjoined on three sides by land allocated for residential development by **Policy H1**. As a consequence, its future development for housing would be an efficient use of the land, well integrated with existing development.
- 4.20. The site has therefore been allocated as land safeguarded for long-term housing needs for development beyond the Plan period. Identification of this site to meet possible long-term future housing needs could reduce pressure for the release of other Green Belt land on the mainland after 2001, since the Green Belt boundary has otherwise been tightly drawn around existing urban areas.
- 4.21. In addition to the above sites, land to the south of Scrub Lane, which previously formed part of the School playing field, has been declared surplus to requirements. An opportunity exists to provide a new area of Public Open Space on part of this land, such provision to be achieved, in part, through the development of part of the frontage to Scrub Lane, with residential development, to meet identified needs in the post Plan period. Development of the site will be the subject of a Development Brief to be produced in due course.

POLICY H4 - SAFEGUARDING OF LAND FOR LONG-TERM HOUSING NEEDS

LAND AT KING'S CAMP AND THORNEY BAY CARAVAN SITE, AS SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP, IS SAFEGUARDED FOR THE LONG-TERM PROVISION OF

HOUSING. THIS IS AN AREA OF SPECIAL RESERVE TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT NEEDS BEYOND THE CURRENT PLAN PERIOD. UNTIL SUCH TIME AS REVIEWS OF THE STRUCTURE PLAN AND LOCAL PLAN SHOW THAT THE LAND NEEDS TO BE RELEASED FOR HOUSING, POLICIES FOR CARAVAN SITES AND THE GREEN LUNG WILL BE APPLIED, AS APPROPRIATE.

POLICY H5 - SAFEGUARDING OF LAND FOR LONG-TERM HOUSING NEEDS

LAND TO THE SOUTH OF THE CHASE AND EAST OF WENSLEY ROAD, THUNDERSLEY IS SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP AS SAFEGUARDED FOR THE LONG-TERM PROVISION OF HOUSING. THIS IS AN AREA OF SPECIAL RESERVE TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT NEEDS BEYOND THE CURRENT PLAN PERIOD. UNTIL SUCH TIME AS REVIEWS OF THE STRUCTURE PLAN AND LOCAL PLAN SHOW THAT THE LAND NEEDS TO BE RELEASED FOR HOUSING, THE LAND WILL BE KEPT FREE OF DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD PREJUDICE LATER COMPREHENSIVE TREATMENT. VALUABLE LANDSCAPE AND WILDLIFE FEATURES WILL BE PROTECTED.

POLICY H6 - SAFEGUARDING OF LAND FOR LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT NEEDS

LAND TO THE SOUTH OF SCRUB LANE, IS SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP AS SAFEGUARDED LAND FOR LONG-TERM RESIDENTIAL, AND OPEN SPACE PURPOSES. THIS IS AN AREA OF SPECIAL RESERVE TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT NEEDS BEYOND THE CURRENT PLAN PERIOD. UNTIL SUCH TIME AS REVIEWS OF THE STRUCTURE PLAN AND LOCAL PLAN SHOW THAT THE LAND NEEDS TO BE RELEASED FOR RESIDENTIAL PURPOSES, THE LAND WILL BE KEPT FREE OF DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD PREJUDICE LATER COMPREHENSIVE TREATMENT OF THE SITE. DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE WILL BE SUBJECT TO THE PREPARATION AND APPROVAL OF A DEVELOPMENT BRIEF, TO BE PREPARED FOR ALL OF THE LAND IN QUESTION, SUCH BRIEF WILL ESTABLISH THE PRECISE BOUNDARY BETWEEN THE PROPOSED PUBLIC OPEN SPACE, SCHOOL PLAYING FIELD AND RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AND WILL INDICATE THE GENERAL PATTERN OF HOUSING.

Affordable Housing

- 4.22. Recent Government guidance has stated that a community's need for affordable housing is a material planning consideration which may properly be taken into account when formulating planning policies. Where a need for affordable housing exists, it is appropriate for local authorities to include policies in their plans specifying the authority's intention to seek the provision of affordable housing and the mechanisms for achieving that objective.
- 4.23. In the context of the Local Plan, "Affordable Housing" is comprised of subsidised and low cost market housing. Subsidised housing is defined as new housing provided with a subsidy to enable the asking price/rent of the property to be lower than the prevailing market prices/rents in the locality, and which is subject to arrangements that will ensure its availability in perpetuity Low Cost housing is defined as housing provided on the open market where no subsidy is involved but where the rent or price of the property is lower than the average for the locality.
- 4.24. Most low cost housing is comprised of smaller one or two bedroom flats or dwellings. The main provisions for low cost housing are contained in **Policies H13** (Flats) and **H14** (Living over the shop) and in the Supplementary Planning Guidance contained in **Appendix 12**.
- 4.25. The Council's Housing Strategy Statement (1994/1995) states that there is evidence to suggest that there are difficulties in access to home-ownership for some households. House prices are relatively higher in Castle Point than in many surrounding areas, posing particular problems of access for first time buyers. With the lack of alternative forms of

accommodation, and with the restrictions on future development imposed by the general housing strategy for Castle Point (Paragraphs 4.4 to 4.12), there will be a continuing need for households to seek accommodation outside the Borough.

- 4.26. Based on evidence from the Council's Waiting List and from the 1991 Census, it is believed that there is considerable unmet demand for low cost and subsidised housing in the Borough (**Appendix 13** gives details of this assessment).
- 4.27. In view of the Housing Strategy described in Paragraphs 4.4 to 4.12, it will obviously not be possible for the Council to satisfy the general demand for housing in the Borough in the future. However, it is considered reasonable that, where possible, the provision of subsidised and low cost housing should be sought to facilitate access to housing for those households in special need.
- 4.28. The Council will therefore seek to negotiate with developers to provide up to 20% of all dwellings built on large sites as affordable housing, where appropriate. Not all sites will necessarily be suitable for affordable housing, and in determining whether or not to seek such provision, and the extent of provision the Council will have regard to the following factors:

(i) The size of the site

Below a certain size it may be unreasonable or unrealistic to negotiate with developers for the provision of affordable housing since the financial return on the development of the site would not be sufficient to subsidise the provision of the affordable dwellings. Circular 13/96 indicates that it would be inappropriate to seek any affordable housing in developments of less than 40 dwellings, or on sites of less than 1.5 ha. The requirements for other necessary social and physical infrastructure may also affect the viability of the provision of affordable housing on a site.

(ii) The Location of the Site

The preferred location for affordable housing is close to facilities such as shops, public transport networks, educational facilities and health care facilities because of the likely requirements of the occupants. On sites which accord closely with these criteria, the Council will negotiate a higher proportion of affordable housing.

- 4.29. The principle mechanism by which the Council will seek to secure subsidised housing is by the free or subsidised transfer of land to a housing trust or housing association which will then have the opportunity to build and manage that part of the development scheme. Where appropriate, the Council will investigate the use of alternative mechanisms, such as occupation restrictions where the dwellings provided are for outright sale rather than management by another agency, which would enable subsidised housing to be made available in perpetuity.

POLICY H7 - AFFORDABLE HOUSING

WHERE APPROPRIATE THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO NEGOTIATE A PROPORTION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR RENT, SHARED OWNERSHIP, OR OUTRIGHT SALE, WHERE APPROPRIATE TO THE SCALE OF DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES. THE NUMBER OF AFFORDABLE DWELLINGS TO BE PROVIDED WILL BE DEPENDANT UPON THE SIZE OF THE SITE, ITS LOCATION, AND ANY SUBSTANTIAL COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROVISION OF OTHER NECESSARY INFRASTRUCTURE, AND WILL BE DETERMINED BY THE COUNCIL, FOLLOWING NEGOTIATION WITH THE APPLICANT.

IN ORDER TO FACILITATE THE PROVISION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING THE COUNCIL'S NORMAL REQUIREMENT OF 9.1m (30') FRONTAGES FOR ALL DWELLINGS MAY BE DISPENSED WITH IN RESPECT OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING ONLY. THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK THE ACHIEVEMENT OF ALL OTHER STANDARDS, INCLUDING CAR PARKING PROVISION, AS SET OUT IN SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE IN **APPENDIX 4** AND **APPENDIX 12** OF THIS PLAN.

Hostels

- 4.30. Hostels are likely to be occupied by the homeless, young people at risk, and the handicapped. The needs of these people are more likely to be met in locations close to community facilities and services. Sites close to, or within, town centres would appear therefore to be potentially suitable for such development.
- 4.31. However, the primary purpose of the town centres is to provide a focal point for retail and associated activities in order to maintain their viability and vitality and to make the best use of existing infrastructure and resources. These centres are important in terms of meeting local shopping needs, and it is imperative that they continue to perform this function.
- 4.32. In order to strengthen the retail activity in town centres, a number of Primary Shopping Frontages have been identified within which only uses within Class A of the Use Classes Order would be permitted at ground floor level. In order to maintain this principle, hostel provision within Primary Shopping Frontages is considered unacceptable.
- 4.33. However, beyond the Primary Shopping Frontages (including the first floor and above, of premises within a Primary Shopping Frontage) there are often extensive areas of retail and associated uses. In recent years, such areas have suffered from changes within the retail industry and as a consequence can have difficulty obtaining and maintaining a viable retail basis. Within such areas opportunities may exist for the provision of hostel accommodation. Opportunities may also exist within areas allocated for residential purposes close to town centres.
- 4.34. In dealing with any application for hostel accommodation the Council will apply the following policy:-

POLICY H8 - HOSTEL ACCOMMODATION

PROPOSALS FOR HOSTEL ACCOMMODATION COMPRISED PRIMARILY OF BEDROOMS AND CATERING FOR THE TEMPORARY HOUSING NEEDS OF THE HOMELESS, YOUNG PEOPLE AT RISK AND THE DISABLED, WILL BE PERMITTED WITHIN RESIDENTIAL AREAS AND WITHIN THOSE AREAS OF THE IDENTIFIED TOWN CENTRES BEYOND THE PRIMARY SHOPPING FRONTAGES, SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:-

- (i) THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED SHALL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE AMENITY OF ADJOINING RESIDENTS OR CHARACTER OF THE AREA BY REASON OF TRAFFIC GENERATION, NOISE OR GENERAL DISTURBANCE;
- (ii) THE SCALE, SITING AND DESIGN OF THE PROPOSED BUILDING SHOULD NOT HAVE AN ADVERSE EFFECT UPON THE CHARACTER OR APPEARANCE OF THE AREA;
- (iii) THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED SHALL PROVIDE APPROPRIATE BUILDING LINES, SETTING AND SPACE AROUND THE BUILDING, CAR PARKING, ACCESS, AMENITY SPACE, AND LANDSCAPING PROVISION, AND SHALL ACCORD WITH ALL OTHER POLICIES CONTAINED IN THIS PLAN.

- (iv) THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED SHALL BE LOCATED CLOSE TO AREAS WHERE PUBLIC TRANSPORT, SHOPPING AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES ARE READILY AVAILABLE;
- (v) WITHIN TOWN CENTRES THE PROPOSED HOSTEL SHALL NOT UNDERMINE THE PRIMARY FUNCTION OF THE SHOPPING PARADE.

4.35. Detailed Guidance on car parking, amenity area and privacy standards are contained in **Appendices 4 and 12.**

Development Control Policies

Density of Development

4.36. Because there is a practical limit to the supply of land and a need to protect the Green Belt from development, it is important that the best use is made of land identified as available or suitable for housebuilding. To achieve this, the density of new development should be the highest compatible with the creation of a high quality, built environment, a high standard of residential amenity and a balanced community, whilst not damaging the character of established residential areas.

POLICY H9 - NEW HOUSING DENSITIES

THE OPTIMUM DENSITY FOR ANY SITE WILL BE THE NUMBER OF DWELLINGS CAPABLE OF BEING ACCOMMODATED WHILST ENSURING THAT:-

- (i) THE DEVELOPMENT WILL NOT BE HARMFUL TO THE CHARACTER OF THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS INCLUDING ANY NATURAL FEATURES AND ATTRIBUTES;
- (ii) THE LAYOUT IS BOTH FUNCTIONAL AND ATTRACTIVE WITH ADEQUATE BUILDING LINES, LANDSCAPING, SETTING FOR THE BUILDING, AND SPACE AROUND THE BUILDINGS; (Contd).
- (iii) THE DEVELOPMENT ACCORDS WITH ALL OF THE APPROPRIATE POLICIES CONTAINED IN THE LOCAL PLAN.

PROPOSALS WHICH DO NOT ACHIEVE THESE CRITERIA WILL BE REFUSED.

The Mix of Development

4.37. In the period 1981 to 1991, the number of one person households in the Borough rose from 16.1% of all households to 20.3%. In the same period the number of two person households rose from 32.5% to 34.6%. Over 55% of all households in the Borough may therefore be classified as small. It is anticipated that in the future this proportion will rise still further, primarily as a result of the growth in one person households. A growing demand for small dwellings may therefore be anticipated.

4.38. Despite the high proportion of small households, smaller dwellings accommodate only 11.2% of households. There would therefore appear to be a mismatch between household and dwelling size.

4.39. In order to provide an opportunity for this mismatch to be remedied, the Council will encourage all proposals for residential development to provide an appropriate range of dwelling type to meet the full range of housing needs.

POLICY H10 - MIX OF DEVELOPMENT

IN ALL PROPOSALS FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT, THE COUNCIL WILL EXPECT THE PROVISION OF AN APPROPRIATE RANGE OF DWELLING TYPES IN ORDER TO SATISFY A VARIETY OF HOUSING REQUIREMENTS.

Accessible And Wheelchair Housing

- 4.40. An estimate of the number of disabled people in the Borough indicates that some 6,837 people over the age of 16 are likely to have a locomotive form of physical disability. In an ageing population it is anticipated that the number of people with such disabilities will grow and consequently the demand for specially designed dwellings to accommodate the needs of disabled people will grow.
- 4.41. The number of dwellings specifically designed for occupation by people with disabilities is extremely limited. In order to improve this provision the Council will encourage developers to design all new dwellings to a standard capable of accommodating people with disabilities.

POLICY H11 - ACCESSIBLE AND WHEELCHAIR HOUSING

THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE ALL DWELLINGS TO BE DESIGNED SO THAT THEY ARE ACCESSIBLE FOR VISITORS IN WHEELCHAIRS AND CAPABLE OF ADAPTATION FOR OCCUPATION BY MOST PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES. IN LARGE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS, THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO NEGOTIATE A PROPORTION OF DWELLINGS SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED TO BE CAPABLE, WITHOUT FURTHER STRUCTURAL ALTERATIONS, OF BEING OCCUPIED BY INDEPENDENT WHEELCHAIR USERS.

- 4.42. The extent of provision will be determined in the light of identified needs and the suitability of the site, and will be established in negotiation with the developer in each case. Where provision is made, these units should be evenly distributed through the development and cater for a varying number of occupants.
- 4.43. Advice on appropriate design, setting out the principle features required to achieve accessibility in residential development, is contained in the documents "Designing for Accessibility - An Introductory Guide" (Centre for Accessible Environments, 1993) and "Revised Guidance for Reducing Mobility Handicaps - towards a barrier free environment" (Institute of Highways and Transportation, 1991).

Piecemeal Development

- 4.44. In parts of the Borough it will be possible to undertake development on a larger scale. The House Builders Federation and the Essex County Council both recognise a site capable of providing twelve or more dwellings as a large site. On such sites, it is considered that a more spacious form of development may be achieved than on small infill sites.
- 4.45. In order to be successful in its contribution to the urban environment, comprehensive development and development in depth needs to be undertaken on a sufficiently large scale to achieve appropriate vehicle access, space around the building and landscaping.
- 4.46. Where it appears to the Council that comprehensive development of a larger site may be prejudiced by piecemeal development, permission will be refused.

POLICY H12- PIECEMEAL DEVELOPMENT

WHERE IT APPEARS TO THE COUNCIL THAT THE COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT OF A LARGE SITE OR DEVELOPMENT IN DEPTH WOULD BE PREJUDICED BY PIECEMEAL DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS, PLANNING PERMISSION WILL BE REFUSED.

Policies Applicable to Particular Forms of Residential Development

Flats, Sheltered Accommodation And Nursing And Rest Homes

- 4.47. Small dwellings in the form of 1 and 2 bedroomed flats and sheltered accommodation for the elderly make a significant contribution to the provision of low-cost housing and may be achieved either through the conversion of existing dwellings to flats, or through the provision of purpose-built units. The Council would wish to encourage the provision of flats and sheltered accommodation, and Nursing and Rest Homes which also contribute to housing needs. However, the location and layout of such developments must be carefully controlled if it is not to have an adverse impact on the amenities of adjoining residents or the character of the area.

POLICY H13 - LOCATION OF DEVELOPMENT

PROPOSALS FOR FLATS AND SHELTERED ACCOMMODATION, NURSING AND REST HOMES WILL BE PERMITTED WITHIN AREAS ALLOCATED FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT, SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:-

- (i) THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED SHALL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE AMENITY OF ADJOINING RESIDENTS OR CHARACTER OF THE AREA BY REASON OF TRAFFIC GENERATION:
- (ii) THE SCALE, SITING AND DESIGN OF THE PROPOSED BUILDING SHOULD NOT HAVE AN ADVERSE EFFECT UPON THE CHARACTER OR APPEARANCE OF THE AREA;
- (Contd)
- (iii) THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED SHALL PROVIDE APPROPRIATE BUILDING LINES, SETTING AND SPACE AROUND THE BUILDING, CAR PARKING, ACCESS, AMENITY SPACE, AND LANDSCAPING PROVISION, AND SHALL ACCORD WITH ALL OTHER POLICIES CONTAINED IN THIS PLAN;
- (iv) IN THE CASE OF SHELTERED ACCOMMODATION, NURSING AND REST HOMES, THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED SHALL BE LOCATED CLOSE TO AREAS WHERE PUBLIC TRANSPORT, SHOPPING AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES ARE READILY AVAILABLE.

THE DEVELOPMENT SHALL BE LOCATED ON OR NEAR A MAIN ROAD SITE.

- 4.48. Detailed Guidance on the provision of appropriate car parking, space standards and design is contained in **Appendices 4 and 12**.

Residential Uses in Town Centres

- 4.49. In addition to the provision of flats within residential areas, significant potential for the expansion of the housing stock exists in the use of vacant accommodation above shops. In addition to providing smaller housing units, such schemes offer environmental benefits and livelier and safer town centres. In many cases, the use of premises above shops and above units used for professional and financial services as a single flat will not require planning permission. Elsewhere, except where the change of use gives rise to unacceptable overlooking of existing residential property, such development will be approved.

POLICY H14 - LIVING OVER THE SHOP

WHERE IT CAN BE SHOWN THAT PREMISES ABOVE EXISTING COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES ARE UNSUITABLE FOR COMMERCIAL/EMPLOYMENT PURPOSES, THE

USE OF THE PROPERTY FOR RESIDENTIAL PURPOSES SHALL BE GRANTED PLANNING PERMISSION EXCEPT WHERE IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED THAT THIS WOULD GIVE RISE TO THE UNACCEPTABLE OVERLOOKING OF EXISTING RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES.

Gypsy Sites

- 4.50. Traditionally Castle Point has a comparatively low gypsy population relative to other areas in Essex, and consequently there has not been a significant demand for site provision within the Borough.
- 4.51. In the absence of an identified need, no sites are allocated for use as caravan sites for gypsies. Applications for such development will be considered in the light of the following policy:

POLICY H15 GYPSY SITES

WHEN CONSIDERING PROPOSALS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF GYPSY SITES THE COUNCIL WILL HAVE REGARD TO:

- (i) THE IMPACT UPON THE APPEARANCE AND CHARACTER OF THE LANDSCAPE;
 - (ii) THE IMPACT UPON THE AMENITY OF OTHER LAND USERS IN THE AREA;
 - (iii) THE IMPACT OF THE PROPOSALS ON TRAFFIC FLOWS ON THE ADJOINING HIGHWAY.
- (Contd).

PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF GYPSY SITES WITHIN THE GREEN BELT WILL BE REFUSED.

Policies Applicable in Particular Areas

The Winter Gardens

- 4.52. The Winter Gardens area of Canvey Island, is characterised by dwellings on deep plots, stretching between east-west orientated roads. In this area, the majority of dwellings front onto unmade green 'roads', with segregated vehicular access provided from made-up roads to the rear of the property. This pattern of development has provided a unique character in this area which will be maintained in any proposals for further residential development. All proposals for development within this area will therefore be considered within the following context:

POLICY H16 - WINTER GARDENS

WITHIN THE WINTER GARDENS SPECIAL POLICY AREA, AS DEFINED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP, THE COUNCIL WILL MAINTAIN ITS POLICY OF ACHIEVING SEGREGATED PEDESTRIAN AND VEHICULAR TRAFFIC FLOWS AND WILL SEEK AGREEMENTS WITH LOCAL RESIDENTS TO ENSURE THE PROPER PROVISION AND MAINTENANCE OF PEDESTRIAN ACCESS TO DWELLINGS.

Residential Areas - Design and Layout Considerations

- 4.53. Castle Point is characterised by a high density of residential development and more will be built in the future. In order to ensure the provision and maintenance of a satisfactory residential environment, the Planning Authority has evolved a series of guidelines, within

the framework established by the Essex Design Guide, Design Brief DB32 and other Government guidance, for the control of development.

- 4.54. In considering any application for development, the Council will also take account of the advice contained within the South East Region Senior Crime Prevention Officers Conference publication "Secured by Design", and the provisions of **Policy EC5**.
- 4.55. The principles of governing residential development are set out in **Policies H1-H18** of this Local Plan. However, additional guidance is set out in **Appendix 4** and **Appendix 12**. This guidance includes provisions on the relationships between adjoining properties, extensions, access and garden sizes.
- 4.56. The extent to which proposals for residential development follow the guidance set out in **Appendices 4** and **12** will be a material consideration in the determination of any planning application.

POLICY H17- HOUSING DEVELOPMENT - DESIGN AND LAYOUT

IN ASSESSING THE DESIGN ASPECTS OF PROPOSALS FOR HOUSING DEVELOPMENT, THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY WILL HAVE REGARD TO IT'S ADOPTED DESIGN GUIDELINES AS CONTAINED IN **APPENDICES 4** AND **12** OF THIS PLAN.

Car Parking

- 4.57. In all proposals for new development, it is essential to achieve on-site car parking facilities in the interests of highway safety and the free flow of traffic, appropriate to the amount of residential accommodation provided and convenient for the occupiers of the dwelling
- 4.58. Detailed car parking standards are contained at **Appendices 4** and **12**
- 4.59. Once the minimum car parking provision has been achieved in respect of any development (including non-residential development), it is imperative that it is permanently maintained. In all proposals therefore the Council will apply the following policy:-

POLICY H18 - RETENTION OF CAR PARKING

IN ALL CASES, PROPOSALS WHICH REDUCE CAR PARKING PROVISION BELOW THE MINIMUM REQUIREMENT AS SET OUT IN **APPENDICES 4** AND **12** OR WHICH CREATE ADDITIONAL DEMANDS THAT CANNOT BE ACCOMMODATED ON THE SITE, WILL BE REFUSED.

WHERE CONVERSION WOULD DEPRIVE A DWELLING OF APPROPRIATE GARAGING PROVISION THE COUNCIL WILL IMPOSE CONDITIONS ON NEW DEVELOPMENT, RESTRICTING THE CONVERSION OF GARAGES AND CARPORTS TO OTHER USES.