

**Chapter Five****Economic Development**

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**Economic Development**

## Introduction

- 5.1. Between 1981 and 1991, the proportion of people employed in the service and construction sectors in Castle Point increased, whilst the proportion employed in manufacturing showed a constant decline. These changes are largely consistent with changes in the employment structure of Essex as a whole over this period.
- 5.2. Unemployment in the Borough has increased in recent years and in February, 1992, the rate of unemployment exceeded the average for Essex. Since May 1993, unemployment has decreased slowly but steadily. The 1991 Census reveals that the average unemployment rate for Castle Point masks a considerable variation within the Borough with wards on Canvey Island consistently displaying the highest rates.
- 5.3. The Borough also suffers from high levels of out-commuting, resulting in congestion, delay and environmental pollution. Levels of out-commuting are particularly high on the mainland, where the proportion of the labour force working outside the district exceeds that recorded in any complete district in the County. Levels of out-commuting are also relatively high on Canvey Island.

## Objectives

1. To seek to reduce unemployment in the Borough and reduce unnecessary travel by car for work purposes by encouraging the provision of new jobs.
2. To seek the replacement of lost employment opportunities and the retention of the jobs and firms existing in the Borough by identifying land for the expansion of local businesses and the establishment of new businesses.
3. To seek to relocate non-conforming uses to areas allocated for employment purposes.
4. To seek to retain industrially allocated land for employment purposes and to resist retail uses on such sites.

## Employment Strategy

- 5.4. The Essex Structure Plan makes provision for 14 hectares, or 34.6 acres, of industrial/warehousing land in Castle Point between 1986 and 2001. Between 1986 and 1991, 1.9ha (4.7 acres) of land were developed for industrial purposes. At September, 1991, a further 0.68ha (1.7 acres) of land were available. In order to satisfy the Structure Plan provision 11.4ha (28.2 acres) of land remain to allocated.
- 5.5. The Structure Plan provision is effectively a gross figure, and does not take account of employment land lost to other uses. Since 1986, a total of 5.9ha (14.6 acres) of industrial land has been redeveloped for other purposes (see **Appendix 14**). In order to meet the level of employment growth envisaged by the Structure Plan in real terms a total of approximately 20.2 ha (50 acres) is required.
- 5.6. In view of the Council's objectives to reduce unemployment and reduce the necessity for people to travel out of the Borough for work purposes, an assessment has also been made of the likely needs of the Borough in terms of the extent of land required to meet reasonable targets based on those objectives. This analysis reveals that a total of 28.3 ha (70 acres) could be required in the Borough to meet the targets specified (see **Appendix 14**). The

allocation of 28.3ha (70 acres) would obviously allow the Council to meet the provision of the Structure Plan, and would also allow the extent of employment land allocation to reflect the particular needs of the Borough and the economic objectives of the Council.

- 5.7. The Council acknowledges that it is not possible to designate sufficient land to meet in full the amount of employment land set out in Paragraph 5.6 above, in view of the short time to the end of the Plan period. However, the Local Plan should allocate sufficient employment land to meet the Structure Plan requirement and it should make a substantial contribution towards employment land lost to other uses since 1986, and that likely to be lost up to 2001. In pursuance of Aim 6 of the Local Plan and Objectives 1 and 2 of this Chapter, and based on the past take up of employment land, and allowing for a long recent period when little development for commercial purposes has taken place, 20.2ha (50 acres) of land is allocated for employment purposes.
- 5.8. The allocation of further land to satisfy needs beyond 2001 is dependant upon the identification of need and the provision of adequate infrastructure.

### **Allocation of Employment Land**

- 5.9. In view of the lack of alternative greenfield employment land on the mainland, because of the important contribution potential sites make to the effectiveness of the Green Belt in preventing the merging of settlements, 20.2ha ( 50 acres) of land has been allocated for employment purposes on land to the south of Northwick Road, Canvey Island, as shown on the Proposals Map. The development of this site will be subject to the provisions of a Development Brief.

#### **POLICY ED1 - PROVISION OF EMPLOYMENT LAND TO THE SOUTH OF NORTHWICK ROAD.**

20.2ha (50 ACRES) OF LAND IS ALLOCATED FOR EMPLOYMENT PURPOSES TO THE SOUTH OF NORTHWICK ROAD, AS SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP. DEVELOPMENT OF THIS SITE WILL BE SUBJECT TO THE PROVISIONS OF A DEVELOPMENT BRIEF TO BE PREPARED IN DUE COURSE. NO DEVELOPMENT SHALL TAKE PLACE ON THE SITE PRIOR TO THE COMPLETION OF A RELIEF ROAD LINKING CANVEY ROAD WITH NORTHWICK ROAD.

### **Long Term Employment Needs**

- 5.10. In order to ensure the availability of employment land in the future, land to the south of Charfleets Industrial Estate has been allocated as land safeguarded for long term employment needs, for development beyond the plan period. Release of this land for employment purposes will be considered within the context of a review of the Local Plan. Until required for employment purposes, the land will be kept free of development which would prejudice later comprehensive development.

#### **POLICY ED2 LONG TERM EMPLOYMENT NEEDS**

10.1ha (25 ACRES) OF LAND TO THE SOUTH OF CHARFLEETS INDUSTRIAL ESTATE IS SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP AS SAFEGUARDED FOR LONG TERM EMPLOYMENT 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

THE LOCAL PLAN SHOW THAT THE LAND NEEDS TO BE RELEASED FOR EMPLOYMENT PURPOSES, THE LAND WILL BE KEPT FREE OF DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD PREJUDICE LATER COMPREHENSIVE TREATMENT, VALUABLE WILDLIFE FEATURES WILL BE PROTECTED.

### Protection of Employment Areas

- 5.11. Whilst **Policy ED1** above provides for an increase in employment land in the Borough, the availability of suitable sites for employment purposes in Castle Point remains extremely limited, being restricted to three Employment Areas located at The Manor Trading Estate, Rayleigh Weir Industrial Estate, and Charfleets Industrial Estate.
- 5.12. Land at The Point, Canvey Island, at the BSC site, Thundersley, and at 203 to 233 London Road, Thundersley, was allocated for employment use on the Approved Review Development Plan, but has been allocated in this Plan for residential use on the grounds that such an allocation would offer significant environmental advantages (see **Policy H3**).
- 5.13. In view of the limited capacity of existing employment areas for further development, it is considered essential that land which is allocated for employment purposes, be retained for such use. It is therefore intended to restrict any new development on existing sites to industrial/warehousing uses only, as defined by Classes B1, B2 and B8 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order, 1987, or any subsequent amendment of that Order (see **Appendix 15**) 'Sui generis' uses may, however, be permitted, and will be judged on their individual merits having regard to the objectives of this chapter and any other relevant policies of the Local Plan. Retail uses, leisure uses, community uses and other non-industrial/business uses will not be considered acceptable in order that the Borough's limited availability of land suitable for industrial purposes is not further diminished.
- 5.14. When considering applications for industrial or warehousing development within the defined employment areas, the Council will pay particular attention to the need to protect the amenities of nearby residential areas (see **Policy EC3**).

#### **POLICY ED3- PROTECTION OF EMPLOYMENT AREAS**

WITHIN THE MANOR TRADING ESTATE, RAYLEIGH WEIR INDUSTRIAL ESTATE AND CHARFLEETS INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, APPLICATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT FALLING WITHIN CLASSES B1 B2 OR B8 OF THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (USE CLASSES) ORDER, 1987, OR ANY SUBSEQUENT AMENDMENT OF THAT ORDER WILL BE PERMITTED, SUBJECT TO COMPLIANCE WITH ANY OTHER RELEVANT POLICY OF THE LOCAL PLAN.

'SUI GENERIS' USES WILL BE CONSIDERED ON THEIR INDIVIDUAL MERITS, HAVING REGARD TO THE RELEVANT OBJECTIVES OF THE LOCAL PLAN AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT POLICY OF THE PLAN.

USES FALLING OUTSIDE THOSE CLASSES SPECIFIED IN THIS POLICY WILL BE REFUSED.

(Contd.)

IN THE CASE OF EXISTING INAPPROPRIATE USES, THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE MEASURES TO MITIGATE THE EFFECT OF SUCH USES AND WHERE NECESSARY ENCOURAGE THEIR RELOCATION TO MORE APPROPRIATE SITES.

- 5.15. Within the context of **Policy ED3**, an "inappropriate use" is a use which is unacceptable in its present location because of its impact on the area, and not necessarily because the use does not accord with the primary land use allocation for the area.

### Office And Business Park Developments

- 5.16. Office development, (as defined by Classes A2 and B1a of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order, 1987, as amended), will be concentrated in the defined town centres (see **Policy S3** and **S4**), in order to maintain and enhance their roles as the main administrative and commercial centres of the Borough and to make the best possible use of existing infrastructure and transport networks. New office development will not therefore be permitted outside Town Centres. However, small scale office uses may exceptionally be permitted elsewhere in the Borough where they accord with the provisions of **Policy ED8**.
- 5.17. 'Business Park' type developments of low-rise, flexible use buildings can accommodate offices and are of a scale that is more suitable to industrial estates rather than town centres. These developments tend to be of low density and often do not have a significant impact in traffic terms, over and above traditional industrial and commercial uses. This type of building and use offers a range of employment opportunities and thus offers the opportunity to retain a larger proportion of the out-commuting population within the Borough. It also has the added advantage of providing an opportunity to generate a better quality environment than is generally found in industrial and commercial areas.

#### **POLICY ED4- OFFICE AND BUSINESS PARK DEVELOPMENTS**

- i. OFFICE DEVELOPMENT WILL BE REFUSED OUTSIDE TOWN CENTRES EXCEPT WHERE IT IS ANCILLARY TO AN EMPLOYMENT USE ON THE SITE OR WHERE SUCH A DEVELOPMENT WOULD ACCORD WITH THE PROVISIONS OF POLICY ED8.
- ii. 'BUSINESS PARK' TYPE DEVELOPMENT WILL BE ACCEPTABLE IN PRINCIPLE WITHIN EMPLOYMENT AREAS.

### Piecemeal Development

- 5.18. When considering proposals for major redevelopment within existing employment areas, or where considering applications for development within the proposed employment area specified in **Policy ED1**, it is important to ensure that development is undertaken on a comprehensive basis in order to achieve appropriate vehicular access, space around buildings, landscaping and infrastructure to serve the needs of the site as a whole. Where it appears to the Council that comprehensive development of a larger site may be prejudiced by piecemeal development, permission will be refused.

#### **POLICY ED5 - PIECEMEAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

### Parking And Servicing

- 5.19. In order to function effectively, it is essential that Business and Industrial premises are appropriately served with on-site vehicle parking and servicing facilities.
- 5.20. Approximately 3% of the Borough's population are orange badge holders who have specific requirements in terms of the design of parking spaces. Within new industrial and commercial development, provision should be made to accommodate the requirements of this group. Advice on the appropriate design of such provision is contained within the Institute of Highways and Transportation's publication "*Reducing Mobility Handicaps* -

*Towards a Barrier Free Environment*" (1993) which is available for inspection at the Council's Planning Department.

5.21. **Appendix 4** contains the Council's adopted vehicle parking standards.

#### **POLICY ED6 - PARKING AND SERVICING**

THE COUNCIL WILL REQUIRE THE PROVISION OF ON-SITE VEHICLE PARKING AND SERVICING IN ALL NEW EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ADOPTED VEHICLE PARKING STANDARDS OF THE COUNCIL AND WILL ENCOURAGE THE PROVISION OF NEW OR IMPROVED OFF-STREET SERVICING FACILITIES. 3% OF CAR PARKING SPACES PROVIDED, WITH A MINIMUM OF 1 SPACE, SHALL BE ACCESSIBLE TO ORANGE BADGE HOLDERS.

### **Environmental Improvements**

5.22. In order to improve the physical environment and encourage investment in employment areas, the Council will also seek to encourage environmental improvements including the provision of appropriate hard and soft landscaping, tree planting, other appropriate screening measures, and the resiting of buildings where possible and where such measures would enhance the local area.

#### **POLICY ED7 - ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS**

THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO ENCOURAGE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS WITHIN EMPLOYMENT AREAS.

### **Small Scale Business Development**

5.23. Many small businesses can be carried out in residential areas without causing unacceptable disturbance to surrounding residents. Indeed, many small businesses are started by people working from home. The Council recognises the importance of encouraging local enterprise and jobs, and the benefits of locating employment opportunities in proximity to residential areas in the interests of decreasing dependence on extensive travel to work by car.

5.24. However, some small scale business uses can be detrimental to the amenity of residential areas, and the Council will need to be satisfied that any new development proposed will not harm the character or appearance of a residential area or cause undue disturbance to residents before granting permission. In appropriate cases, temporary consents may be granted to allow the impact of proposed schemes to be fully assessed before any final decision is made.

5.25. The following policy is primarily applicable to light industrial uses, but may also be applicable to small scale office development proposals falling within class B1a or A2 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order, 1987, as amended. **Policy ED4** gives further guidance in respect of office developments.

#### **POLICY ED8 - SMALL SCALE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**

APPLICATIONS FOR SMALL SCALE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OUTSIDE IDENTIFIED EMPLOYMENT AREAS OR TOWN CENTRES WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE IT CAN BE SHOWN THAT:

- (i) THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED, ITS SCALE, LOCATION AND LIKELY TRAFFIC GENERATION WILL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE CHARACTER OF THE SURROUNDING AREA;
- (ii) IT WILL NOT DETRACT FROM THE AMENITIES OF THE SURROUNDING AREA OR ADJOINING RESIDENTS BY REASON OF NOISE, VIBRATION, SMELL, FUMES, SMOKE, SOOT, ASH, DUST, GRIT, OR OTHER FORM OF DISTURBANCE;
- (iii) IT WILL NOT GIVE RISE TO PROBLEMS OF ACCESS, ROAD SAFETY, TRAFFIC GENERATION OR CONGESTION;
- (iv) ADEQUATE PROVISION HAS BEEN MADE FOR ON-SITE VEHICLE PARKING AND SERVICING IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY ED6;
- (v) WHERE A CHANGE OF USE FROM RESIDENTIAL IS PROPOSED, THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE DWELLINGHOUSE SHOULD BE MAINTAINED;
- (vi) IT WILL NOT CONFLICT WITH ANY OTHER POLICY CONTAINED WITHIN THE LOCAL PLAN.

IN THE CASE OF EXISTING INAPPROPRIATE USES, THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE MEASURES TO MITIGATE THE EFFECT OF SUCH USES AND WHERE NECESSARY ENCOURAGE THEIR RELOCATION TO MORE APPROPRIATE SITES.

5.26. "Inappropriate uses" in the context of this policy are those that are unacceptable in locational terms because they fail to meet one or more of the criteria specified in the policy.

### **Hazardous Installations**

5.27. Under the system of control over hazardous development and development within the vicinity of hazardous installations, the activities, substances and quantities to which the policy of the Local Plan applies are those defined by the Planning (Hazardous Substances) Regulations 1992.

5.28. Canvey Island has two large installations handling hazardous substances; the former British Gas Methane Terminal and the OIKOS facility at the former London and Coastal Oil Wharves.

5.29. In view of the high levels of population on Canvey Island, and the proximity of hazardous installations to areas of population concentration, it is considered prudent to seek to restrict the expansion and intensification of such operations, where it is considered that such expansion could have an adverse effect on the health and safety of the population. In dealing with such applications, the Council will seek the advice of the Health and Safety Executive.

5.30. Any proposals for the provision of nuclear waste installations will be firmly resisted.

### **POLICY ED9 HAZARDOUS INSTALLATIONS**

EXCEPT FOR CASES WHERE EXPANSION OF EXISTING HAZARDOUS INSTALLATIONS IS REQUIRED IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST, THE COUNCIL WILL

REFUSE PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE EXPANSION OR INTENSIFICATION OF SUCH USES ON CANVEY ISLAND.

***Development In Close Proximity To A Hazardous Installation***

- 5.31. The area covered by the Local Plan contains a number of installations handling notifiable substances, including high pressure natural gas transmission pipelines and an LPG pipe line. Whilst they are subject to stringent controls under existing Health and Safety legislation, it is considered prudent to control the kinds of development permitted in the vicinity of these installations. For this reason the Planning Authority has been advised by the Health and Safety Executive of consultation distances for each of these installations. In determining whether or not to grant permission for a proposed development on land within those consultation distances the Planning Authority will take account of the advice it receives from the Health and Safety Executive about risks to the proposed development from the notifiable installation.
- 5.32. Past experience of the advice received from the Health and Safety Executive suggests that it is unlikely that:
- (i) residential development, or
  - (ii) development of a sensitive nature such as schools, nursing homes or hospitals or
  - (i) large retail or community developments
  - (ii) will be granted permission within the Middle Zone, i.e. Cordon Sanitaire, of the notifiable installations and pipelines.
- 5.33. The following factors will be taken into account in arriving at a decision:
- (i) the inherent vulnerability of the proposed population;
  - (ii) the proportion of time spent by any particular individual in the development;
  - (iii) the number of people who may be present at the development;
  - (iv) whether people are likely to be indoors or out-of-doors, and if outdoors, how easily/quickly they could seek shelter;
  - (v) the ease with which evacuation or other emergency measures could be implemented;
  - (vi) the type of construction, fire resistance, height, method of ventilation of buildings at the development.
- 5.34. The extent of the Cordons Sanitaire and Consultation Zones are shown on Maps 1 and 2. ( See **Appendix 19**).



