

**Southend-on-Sea
Seafront Area Action Plan**

Development Plan Document 4

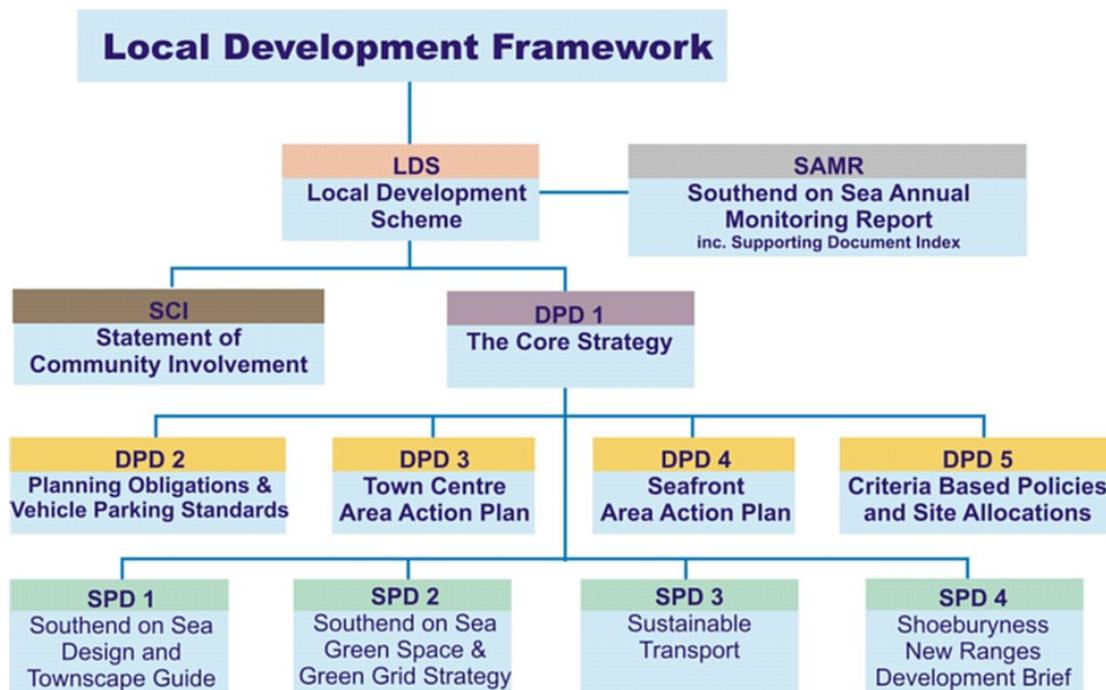
Stage 1
Pre-Submission Consultation on
Issues and Options Report



southend on sea borough council
local development framework

delivering regeneration and growth

Southend Local Development Framework



For further information about the Local Development Framework and a definition of terms see “Southend on Sea Local Development Scheme” (LDS)

Details of this Local Development Document

Title: [Seafront Area Action Plan - Development Plan Document \(DPD4\)](#)

Subject: This document will contain detailed policies and site-specific proposals aimed at strengthening the role of Southend’s Seafront area as a successful leisure and tourist attraction, and place to live. At the same time as this DPD is adopted, the adopted proposals map will be revised in order to illustrate geographically the application of the policies in this DPD.

Geographical Coverage: Seafront Foreshore, Seafront and associated land area.

Status: Development Plan Document (DPD)

Accompanying Documents: Initial Sustainability Appraisal Report including Draft Environmental Report for further consultation

Chain of Conformity: Conformity with Core Strategy Development Plan Document

Stage in Timetable for Production:

Options Consultation Regulation (25)	January to February 2007
Preferred Options Consultation Regulation (26)	July 2007
Submission to Secretary of State	January 2008
Target date for Examination	September – October 2008
Proposed date for adoption	February – March 2009

Availability of the Document: This stage is a wide public consultation. This document is available to download on the Council Web Site or available for viewing at the Civic Centre. See next page for availability of alternative formats.

Foreword

As part of the new statutory Development Plan for Southend-on-Sea, the Borough Council is producing an Area Action Plan for the Seafront.

This document sets out how the Area Action Plan will form part of the wider planning framework and the issues and options so far considered to guide future development decisions in the area.

Your views and comment on the content, and on any other considerations you think should be included, are requested. Please send them to the following address by no later than 21st March 2007.

**Department of Enterprise, Tourism and the Environment
Strategic Planning
Southend on Sea Borough Council
Po Box 5557
Civic Centre
Southend on Sea
SS2 6ZF**

Please Note:

This Issues and Options Report was prepared having regard to the Draft East of England Plan (Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the East of England) December 2004. Consultation is currently being undertaken on the Secretary of State's proposed changes to the Plan. The final version of the RSS will be published in mid-2007. Preparation of this Area Action Plan DPD will take into account any consequent policy changes to the RSS as appropriate.

Contents

Section 1. Introduction

Purpose of this document

The need for change

National and Regional Priorities

- Sustainable Communities: Building for the future (2003)
- National Planning Policy
- Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS14) and the Thames Gateway

Local Priorities

- Southend Together LSP – Community Plan
- The Corporate Plan
- Local Transport Plan 2 (2006)

Relationship between the Seafront Area Action Plan and other plans

- Core Strategy DPD
- The Design and Townscape Guide (SPD)
- Southend Together's Community Plan

Delivery

- Role of the Local Planning Authority
- Role of Renaissance Southend Ltd

Evidence Base

Community Involvement

Section 2. Introduction to the Area Action Plan

Seafront Character Zones

Boundary of Seafront Area Action Plan

Cross-cutting Issues

Section 3. Cross-cutting Issues

Introduction

Flood risk, sea defences including beach and cliffs unstable land

- Flood risk and sea defences
- Unstable land and the Cliffs

Nature conservation and biodiversity

Public realm and open space

Economic development

Housing development

Movement and access

Section 4. Seafront Character Zones

- Zone 1:** Two Tree Island, Leigh Marshes and Belton Hills
- Zone 2:** Leigh Port and Old Town
- Zone 3:** The Cinder Path (Leigh Old Town to Chalkwell Station)
- Zone 4:** Chalkwell Station to Palmeira Avenue
- Zone 5:** Central Seafront Area (Palmeira Avenue to former Corporation Jetty)
- Zone 6:** Former Corporation Loading Jetty to Thorpe Hall Avenue
- Zone 7:** Thorpe Hall Avenue to Ness Road
- Zone 8:** Shoeburyness (excluding the New Ranges)

Section 5. What else the Council would like to know

- Site-specific issues
- 'Saved' adopted Borough Local Plan Policies
- Any other comments or further issues

Section 6. What happens next?

Maps and Diagrams

- Map 1:** Context: Southend Seafront
- Map 2:** Seafront Area Action Plan – Character Zones
- Map 3:** Town Centre and Seafront Area Action Plans – Boundary Options

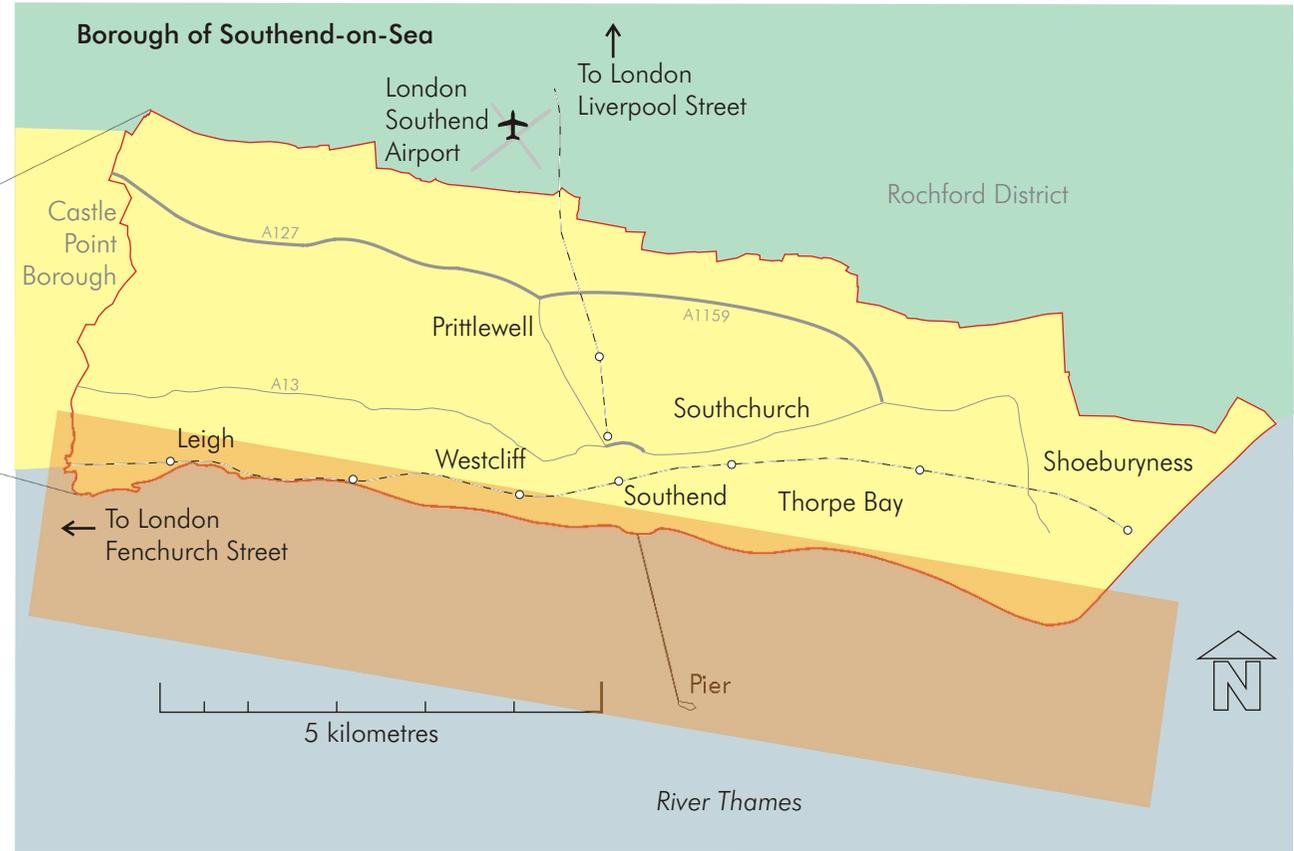
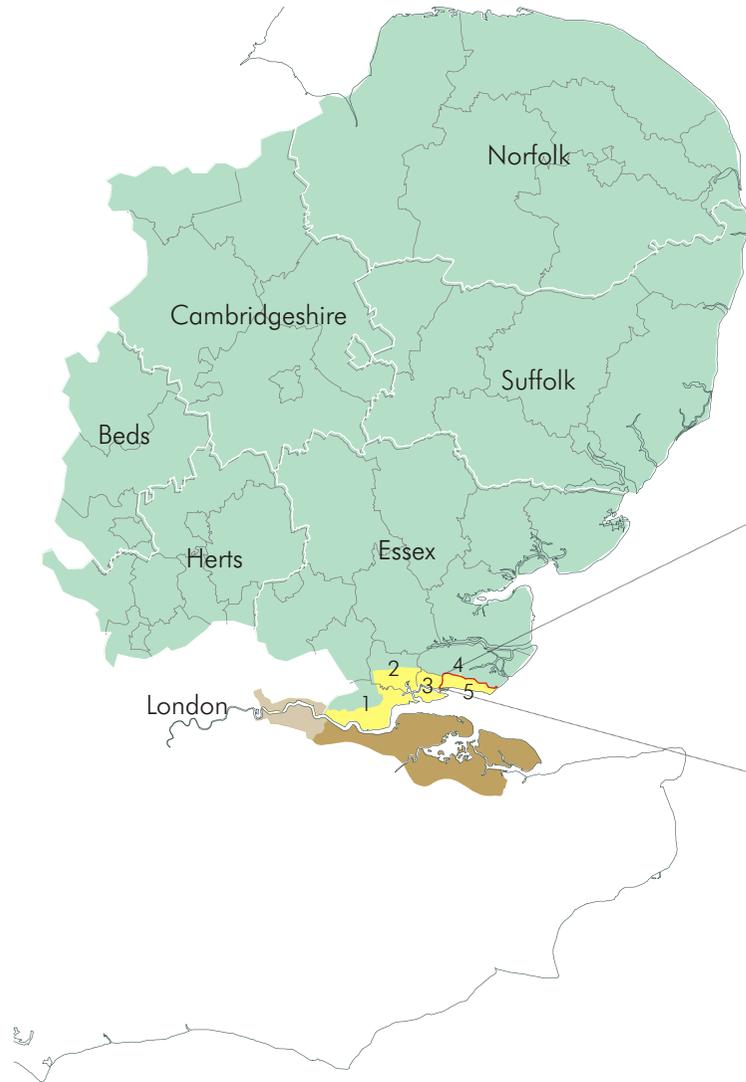
Diagram 1: Southend on Sea Local Development Framework - Content

Diagram 2: Policy Framework

Diagram 3: Timetable and consultation: Central Area Masterplan and Town Centre and Seafront Area Action Plans

- Zone 1:** Two Tree Island, Leigh Marshes and Belton Hills
- Zone 2:** Leigh Port and Old Town
- Zone 3:** The Cinder Path (Leigh Old Town to Chalkwell Station)
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- Zone 5:** Central Seafront Area (Palmeira Avenue to former Corporation Jetty)
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- Zone 7:** Thorpe Hall Avenue to Ness Road
- Zone 8:** Shoeburyness (excluding the New Ranges)

Map 1: Context: Southend Seafront



- East of England Region
- Thames Gateway
- South Essex Partnership (TGSE)
1 Thurrock (Unitary Authority), 2 Basildon, 3 Castle Point, 4 Rochford, 5 Southend (Unitary Authority)
- North Kent Partnership
- London Partnership

Southend Seafront

Section 1. Introduction

Purpose of this document

- 1.1 This document is the 'issues and options' report for the Southend on Sea Seafront Area Action Plan (AAP). The Seafront Area Action Plan is being prepared as the fourth Development Plan Document (DPD 4) along with the Town Centre Area Action Plan (DPD 3) which together, once adopted, comprise part of the Southend on Sea Local Development Framework.
- 1.2 This Area Action Plan Issues and Option Report has been written in accordance with the Core Strategy DPD 1 (and associated Sustainability Appraisal) which was submitted to the Secretary of State on 31st August 2006. It has also taken into account relevant national, regional and sub regional planning policy guidance and initiatives, to ensure that there is an integrated and sustainable approach to the delivery of regeneration and growth in the Borough.
- 1.3 The regeneration of the seafront is a key objective of the Borough Council as part of wider initiatives for the Thames Gateway¹, the Government's national and regional priority for regeneration and growth as set out in the current Regional Spatial Strategy (Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG 9, 2001). These provisions are reinforced in the Government's Sustainable Communities Plan of 2003² (**See Map 1 Context: Southend Seafront**).
- 1.4 When adopted, it will contain detailed policies and proposals aimed at strengthening the role of Southend's seafront area as a successful leisure and tourist attraction and place to live. It will cover the area of Southend seafront and associated land area and foreshore. At the same time as this DPD is adopted, the adopted proposals map will be revised in order to illustrate geographically the application of the policies in this DPD.
- 1.5 This is the first stage in the consultation process; it therefore does not indicate preferred options or set out policies. The intention at this stage is to seek consultees and stakeholders' views on the issues and options set out in this document and develop an agreed approach to the preparation of the planning policy framework for the Seafront.
- 1.6 In addition, in light of the legal requirements for Authorities under the Habitats Directive and its subsidiary Conservation (Natural Habitats &c) Regulations 1994 (as amended) and the Appropriate Assessment of the Core Strategy, a further Appropriate Assessment of the policies and proposals in the Area Action Plan will be carried out as an integral part of their preparation to ensure that account is taken of the objectives of international and European significant adverse effects on

¹ The Thames Gateway extends from East London to Southend on the north bank of the River Thames and Sheerness in Kent to the south of the River. That part of Thames Gateway located in South Essex lies within the East of England Region.

² Sustainable Communities Plan: Building for the Future, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, February 2003
Southend on Sea Local Development Framework

the Benfleet and Southend Marshes and Foulness Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Essex Estuaries Special Area of Conservation (SAC) are avoided. The scope and nature of the Appropriate Assessment will be determined at an early stage to inform the Area Action Plan as it is being considered.

The need for change

- 1.7 The current planning policy framework for the Seafront area is set out in the adopted *Southend on Sea Borough Local Plan*. This is now over ten years old and in urgent need of updating to reflect the rapidly changing development scene.
- 1.8 In addition, there have been a number of significant changes in national, regional and sub-regional planning policy and in local circumstances that require the planning policy for the seafront area to be brought up to date.

National and regional priorities

Sustainable Communities: Building for the Future (2003)

- 1.9 Sustainable Communities: Building for the Future was published in 2003. This document does not contain specific guidance for seafront and coastal areas, rather it sets out the policies, resources and partnerships that will help achieve sustainable development and sustainable communities in all areas of the UK. Its aims and objectives should be taken into account when planning for all new and additional development. Generally, these include:
- a need for a 'step-change' in housing supply to tackle serious shortages that exist, particularly in the London and the South East
 - a need for decent, affordable housing and a good quality local environment with well-designed public and green spaces
 - a better use of existing valuable residential stock, especially empty properties and higher densities
 - a preference for the use of previously developed land over greenfield land
 - the application of sustainable development practices such as sustainable construction and energy efficiency
 - a sustained effort to regeneration of cities to make them again preferred places to live
 - regeneration of the Thames Gateway - with a needs to tackle brownfield development, economic growth, environmental improvement and urban renewal in an integrated way
 - identified zones of change as the focus for development planning and regeneration
 - allowing local authorities to acquire land for regeneration to achieve the social, environmental or economic well being

National Planning Policy

- 1.10 Sustainable development is the core principle underpinning planning. At the heart of sustainable development is the idea of ensuring a better quality of life for

everyone now and for future generations. Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (PPS1) sets out four aims:

- social progress which recognises the needs of everyone
- effective protection of the environment
- the prudent use of natural resources
- the maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment

1.11 These aims should be pursued in an integrated way through a sustainable, innovative and productive economy that delivers high levels of employment and promotes social inclusion and sustainable communities while protecting and enhancing the physical environment.

1.12 **Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation** (PPS9), includes the broad aim that planning development and regeneration should have minimal impacts on biodiversity. Sustainable development should be promoted by ensuring that biodiversity is conserved and enhanced as an integral part of social, environmental and economic development and that policies should take a strategic approach to the conservation, improvement and restoration of biodiversity when considering the form and location of development.

1.13 **The European Union Habitats and Birds³ Directives** are international obligations which set out a number of actions to be taken for nature conservation. The Habitats Directive aims to promote the maintenance of biodiversity, taking account of economic, social, cultural and regional requirements. The Birds Directive protects all wild birds and their habitats within the European Union, and there are special measures for migratory birds and those that are considered rare or vulnerable.

1.14 The Habitats and Birds Directive include requirements for the designation of conservation areas, these are Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) which support certain natural habitats or species, and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) which support wild birds of European Union interest respectively. These sites form a network of conservation areas across the EU to be known as "Natura 2000". Where these consist of areas continuously or intermittently covered by tidal waters or any part of the sea in or adjacent to Great Britain up to the limit of territorial waters, they are referred to as European Marine Sites. Conservation objectives at a site level focus on maintaining the condition of the habitats used by the qualifying species.

1.15 Under the **Habitats Directive** and its subsidiary **Conservation (Natural Habitats &c) Regulations 1994** (as amended), there is a legal requirement for Authorities to assess whether significant effects are likely on Natura 2000 sites and, if so, to carry out an Appropriate Assessment of the policies and proposals in their Development Strategies to ensure that account is taken of the objectives of

³ Council Directive 79/409/EEC on conservation of wild birds
Southend on Sea Local Development Framework
Seafront Area Action Plan
Development Plan Document – January 2007

National and European designations, and significant adverse effects on European Marine Site are avoided.

- 1.16 In order to deliver broader government objectives, **Planning Policy Guidance Note 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation** (PPG17) states that local planning authorities should plan positively for the provision and enhancement of well designed recreational and sporting facilities and green spaces that meet local needs. Planning policy should deliver local networks of high quality, accessible and well managed and maintained open spaces, sports and recreational facilities as well as having regard to the natural environment and promote better use of such areas.
- 1.17 Coastal areas have certain natural and historic landscapes and habitats as well as a range of economic and social activities that also require coastal locations. This has to be balanced with concerns about rising sea levels and the need for development to be sustainable. **Planning Policy Guidance Note: 20 Coastal Planning** (PPG20), states that Development plans should implement policies that protect, conserve and acknowledge the special character and wildlife qualities of the coastal environments (including international and national designated areas) while also improving the environmental quality, landscape and recreational opportunities of the coast. Local planning authorities need to consider how best to define the coastal zone based on local circumstances, key coast related issues and should recognise that on shore development can often have an impact off- shore.
- 1.18 Planning Policy Guidance Note: 21 Tourism (PPG21) was cancelled on 1st September 2006. National planning guidance concerning tourism is contained within the **Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism** (May 2006). It seeks to ensure that local authorities understand and take account of the importance of tourism during development plan preparation and ensure that new tourism development is facilitated, promoted and delivered in a sustainable manner.
- 1.19 A key policy aim of **Planning Policy Guidance Note 25: Development and Flood Risk** (PPG25) is to reduce the risk to people and the developed and natural environment from flooding and coast erosion by encouraging the provision of technically, environmentally and economically sound and sustainable defence measures. Local planning authorities should ensure that development is in accordance with the requirements of the sequential test and that there is co ordination between land use and development planning and delivery of flood and coastal defence strategies.

Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS14) and the Thames Gateway

- 1.20 The East of England Plan (RSS14) sets out sub regional policy concerning the Thames Gateway/South Essex (TG/SE) regeneration and growth area. The key objective for the sub region is to achieve regeneration through job-led growth and Policy TG/SE 1 'Zones of change and influence' identifies Southend as one of three

complementary regeneration hubs with a focus of a cultural and intellectual hub and educational centre of excellence.

- 1.21 Southend is required to provide not less than 13 000 net additional jobs during the period 2001 to 2021 (Policy TG/SE 2 'Employment Generating Development'). These additional jobs will be secured through a number of specified means, including enhanced use of the River Thames as an asset for leisure business (and also increased opportunity for transport) and through the improvement of opportunities for small and medium sized enterprises in economic sectors especially transport, tourism and leisure (Policy TG/SE 3 'Transport infrastructure' and Policy TG/SE 4 'The environment and urban renaissance').
- 1.22 There is a requirement to create a 'green grid'- defined as areas of high quality open space that are linked and publicly accessible which enhance biodiversity across the Thames Gateway South Essex (Policy TG/SE 4). 'Greening the gateway' (2005) is a strategy which aims to implement the green grid within the sub region and recognises the needs to ensure a functional green infrastructure to provide a sense of place, environmental protection and to enhance the quality of life for communities within the gateway.
- 1.23 Policy TG/SE 5 'Community Infrastructure' also requires that provision should be made for sites and facilities for sport and culture and opportunity for regeneration through sport and the 2012 London Olympics should be promoted.
- 1.24 Thematic policies in the East of England Plan relevant to this Area Action Plan are discussed in Section 3 where relevant and include:
- Policy SS14: Development and flood risk
 - Policy SS15: The Coast
 - Policy E13: Tourism.
 - Policy ENV3: Biodiversity and earth heritage
 - Policy C1: Cultural Development
 - Policy C2: Provision and location of strategic leisure, sport, recreation, arts and tourism facilities
 - Policy C3: The Arts
 - Policy C5: Recreation and natural resources.

Local Priorities

Southend Together LSP – Community Plan

- 1.25 'Southend Together' is the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) for Southend and has the following ambition for the town "A vibrant coastal town and prosperous regional centre where people enjoy living, working and visiting" and consider that this is important for the following reasons:
- quality of life
 - attractiveness for investment and development
 - quality of opportunities, services, amenities and environment

- good and inclusive accessibility to those opportunities, services, amenities and environment
- 1.26 Southend Together has six high level objectives relevant to this document. These are:
- sustainable development,
 - address equality of opportunity
 - promote social inclusion
 - regularly consult with the community
 - develop Southend Together's Local Area Agreement
 - develop Southend Together's Community Strategy
- 1.27 The local community, clearly consider that the town's location on the Thames Estuary is key to its identity and this coastal position endows Southend with a significant asset. Yet they also know that the town is more than a seaside resort - it is a large urban community with all the problems and aspirations of any large 'city' which needs to grow and prosper.
- 1.28 Southend is just very fortunate to have approximately 10 kilometres of accessible seafront for recreation, leisure and tourism with stunning open vistas and internationally important wildlife habitats. This seafront also provides a unique location for housing and commercial activity ranging from amusements to a working port. Central to all of this is the icon of Southend on Sea – its pier – at one and a third miles long it is the longest pleasure pier in the country.
- 1.29 Any land use planning policy framework for the seafront will need to keep the LSP's ambition and objectives at its heart.

The Corporate Plan

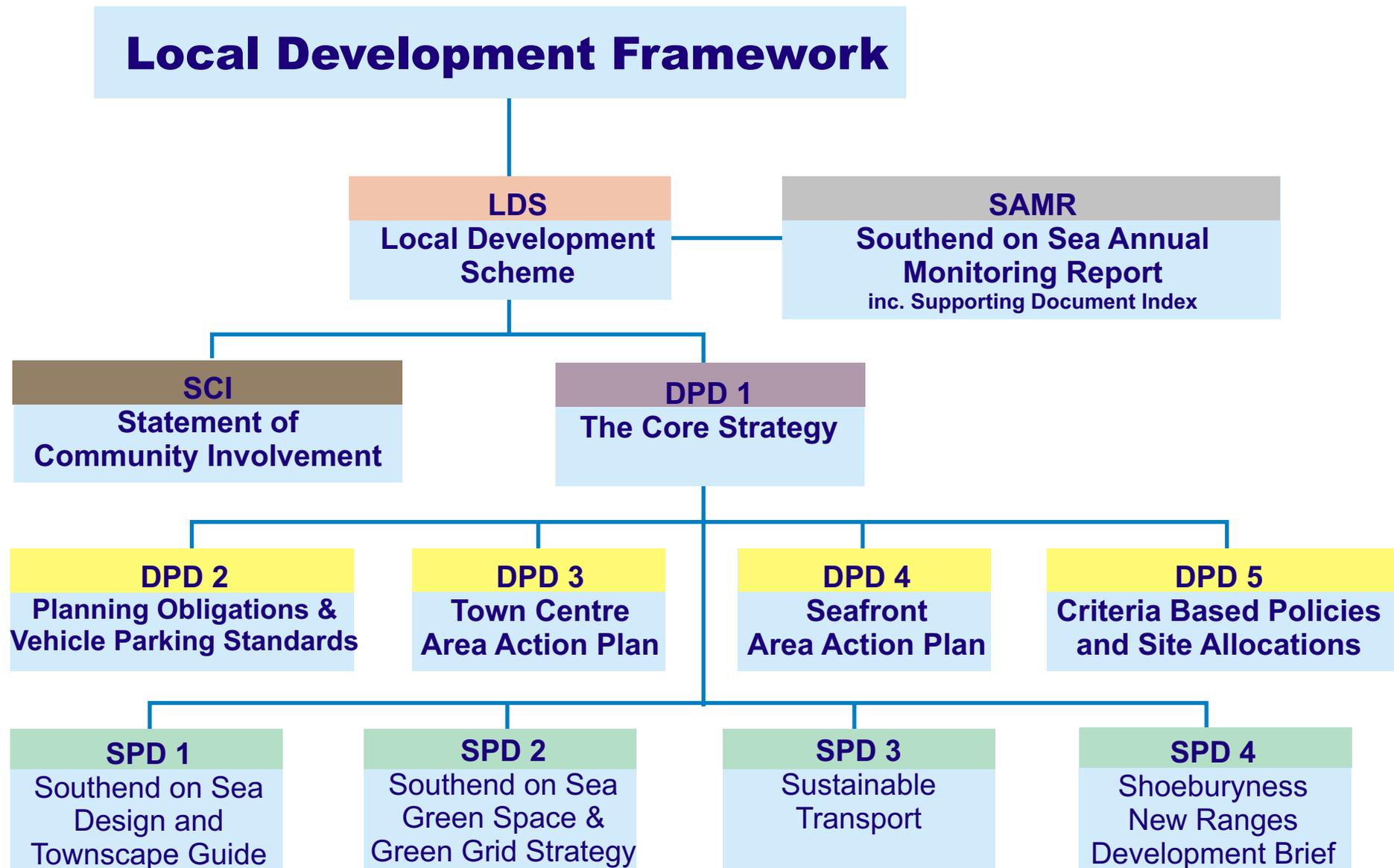
- 1.30 The Corporate Plan sets the future direction for the Borough Council. It commits the Council to working with its partners in the public, business, voluntary and community sectors to meeting its vision of 'creating a better Southend' and contributes to the objectives in Southend's Community Plan.
- 1.31 The Plan has 7 critical corporate priorities these are:
- Community safety and anti-social behaviour
 - Housing – ALMO moving forwards to achieve two stars
 - Looked after children – improve outcomes
 - Waste disposal and refuse collection
 - Improving public satisfaction
 - Economic well being
 - Organisational development.
- 1.32 The community safety and anti-social behaviour priority reflects the duty under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and subsequent amendments in the Police Reform Act 2002 to do all it reasonably can to reduce and prevent

further crime and disorder in its area. The Borough Council has therefore prepared the Southend-on-Sea Crime, Disorder and Drugs Strategy 2005-2008 and will, through the Southend Crime and Disorder Partnership, seek to combat the problems of crime and disorder through the implementation of strategic priorities and measured by the annual assessment of identified action point. This Area Action Plan needs to embrace this issue and the other critical corporate priorities listed above. In particular, it should promote and facilitate the development of high quality, attractive and successful environments, in both the public and private domains, thereby improving community safety and reducing anti-social behaviour, improving public satisfaction, and promoting and improving the economic well-being of Southend.

Local Transport Plan 2 (2006)

- 1.33 The local implementation plan and framework for transport infrastructure is presented in the Southend Local Transport Plan (LTP) 2006 to 2011. It recognises the need and requirement for high quality, well designed and accessible transport infrastructure and its contribution towards creating an improved travel environment and aiding the delivery of an urban renaissance. Indeed creating an efficient transport system which reduces congestion and ensures key regeneration area (including the Seafront) may be accessed by alternative modes, will help to promote sustainable communities.
- 1.34 It makes reference to the seafront area in respect to:
- a lack of accessibility with barriers to the movement of people and goods (highlighted in the London to Southend Movement Study (LOTS))
 - the need for a 'step change' in the provision of transportation infrastructure and accessibility as a pre-condition for achieving regeneration (including the need to extend the A13 passenger transport corridor beyond "Phase 2" so that it, inter alia, links with the central seafront area)
 - a need to produce the Local Development Framework 'Area Action Plans' as a key to framing traffic management and other detailed transport improvements within these areas as part of comprehensive regeneration proposals
 - a comprehensive cycle network (which is currently under construction) with two 'flagship' projects currently being designed for Prittle Brook Greenway and Southend Seafront (both Sustrans routes)
 - controlled parking zones around Southend Town Centre and Seafront
 - the development of the Green Grid Strategy (which are corridors offering a pleasant environment for walkers and cyclists) - the Seafront is designated as a core part of the network
 - proposals for a new railway station at the airport on the Southend Victoria to Liverpool Street line which will provide for an interchange serving both bus and rail linking with the town centre and Seafront
 - introduction of a hovercraft /river service

Diagram 1: Southend on Sea Local Development Framework - Content



Relationship between the Seafront Area Action Plan and other Plans

Core Strategy DPD

- 1.35 To meet the opportunities and challenges presented by the regeneration of Thames Gateway and the priorities identified by Southend's Community Plan, the Council has brought forward as a priority the Core Strategy Development Plan Document. The role of the Core Strategy DPD is to provide clarity about what the Council will require of new development, and to ensure that the right development comes forward in the right place and at the right time to deliver an agreed Aim and set of Strategic Objectives. The Core Strategy was submitted to the Secretary of State on the 31st August 2006 and will be subject to an Examination in Public during February and March 2007.
- 1.36 The key spatial and development policies and the core thematic policies contained in the submission Core Strategy DPD set out the primary planning framework for the town. As such it will be used as a basis for making decisions on all planning matters and for guiding the investment decisions of the public and private sectors over the next decade and beyond.
- 1.37 The Council recognises that implementation of key aspects of its Core Strategy will need to be taken forward and facilitated by the preparation of more detailed local development documents also to be included in the Local Development Framework. **Diagram 1** shows the documents that will comprise the Southend on Sea Local Development Framework. These include, *inter alia*, the following Local Development Documents:
- Area Action Plans for the Town Centre and Seafront, These are now being prepared in parallel and will give more detailed consideration to how and where employment-led regeneration and growth can sustainably be accommodated in these areas.
 - A Design and Townscape Guide SPD, providing a 'toolkit' for good design in the Borough to promote high quality development and assist resistance to poor quality development – now adopted
 - Further SPD guidance on Sustainable Transport, a Green Space and Green Grid Strategy, and Shoeburyness New Ranges;
- 1.38 The Seafront Area Action Plan once adopted must conform to the policy framework and targets set out in the adopted Core Strategy DPD. Of particular relevance to this Area Action Plan will be Key Policy KP1 Spatial Strategy which proposes, in the submission Core Strategy DPD, that the Seafront along with other specified priority areas in the Borough (including the town centre) should be "the primary focus of regeneration and growth within Southend..." and in particular proposes:

Seafront⁴ - including the regeneration of the Seafront's role as a successful leisure and tourist attraction and place to live, and making the best use of the River Thames, but subject to the safeguarding of the biodiversity importance of the foreshore. Appropriate sea defences will be provided as part of a comprehensive shoreline management strategy.

⁴Seafront': Subject to the safeguarding of the biodiversity importance of the foreshore
Southend on Sea Local Development Framework

- 1.39 It is important to note that the Core Strategy DPD policies will have primacy over policies in other development plan documents where there is doubt. However, it is intended that the Seafront Area Action Plan will provide the detailed policy framework necessary to promote quality development on the seafront, in line with the Core Strategy DPD and will not repeat or contradict its core policies.
- 1.40 The policies set out in the submission Core Strategy DPD may be clarified and / or reinforced, particularly with regard to ensuring that European and international sites for nature conservation on the Southend foreshore are not adversely affected and in light of the Inspectors Report following the Examination of the Core Strategy DPD.

The Design and Townscape Guide (SPD)

- 1.41 The recently adopted Design and Townscape Guide SPD gives clear guidance in contextual development and design and should be referenced for any future development within the Borough of Southend on Sea.

Southend Together's 'Community Plan'

- 1.42 The Government consider that Local Development Documents should be a key component in the delivery of the Local Community Plan and that, when preparing local development documents, local planning authorities should liaise closely with their Local Strategic Partnership to ensure that the community strategy contains realistic assumptions about the statutory constraints and the resources available to the local planning authority.
- 1.43 The Community Strategy sets out how the Southend Local Strategic Partnership will strive to achieve its agreed priorities and targets to help bring about a better Southend. This Strategy was developed through consultation with the community. Seven themes with measurable targets were identified to make progress towards the overriding vision:
- A prosperous community – a prosperous local economy
 - Learning community – opportunities for learning for all a highly skilled workforce
 - Safer community – crime, disorder and offending reduced
 - Healthy community – improved health and well being
 - Environmentally aware – improved transport infrastructure and a quality environment
 - Supportive community – better life chances for vulnerable people
 - Cultural community – a cultural capital of the East of England by 2010
- 1.44 Therefore, all the Local Development Documents that make up the Southend on Sea Local Development Framework should express those elements of the community strategy that relate to the development and use of land. **Appendix 2** sets out the high level objectives, actions and required outcomes for each theme which are relevant to the preparation of the Seafront Area Action Plan.

Delivery

Role of the Local Planning Authority

- 1.45 The Council is the Local Planning Authority (LPA) for the Southend on Sea. As such it has a statutory duty under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to prepare a Local Development Framework for the Borough. Local Development Framework's are made up of Local Development Documents (i.e. Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents) which provide the framework for planning for sustainable development and for that development to be managed effectively. This is through the development control process where planning applications are considered against adopted Council planning policies set out in its Development Plan Documents. In preparing Local Development Documents LPA's must take account of National and Regional Policies as well as local priorities as determined by the Local Strategic Partnership's Community Plan (and associated Local Area Agreement) and other Strategies particularly the Local Transport Plan (LTP). **Diagram 2** illustrates the Policy Framework and its inter-relationships.

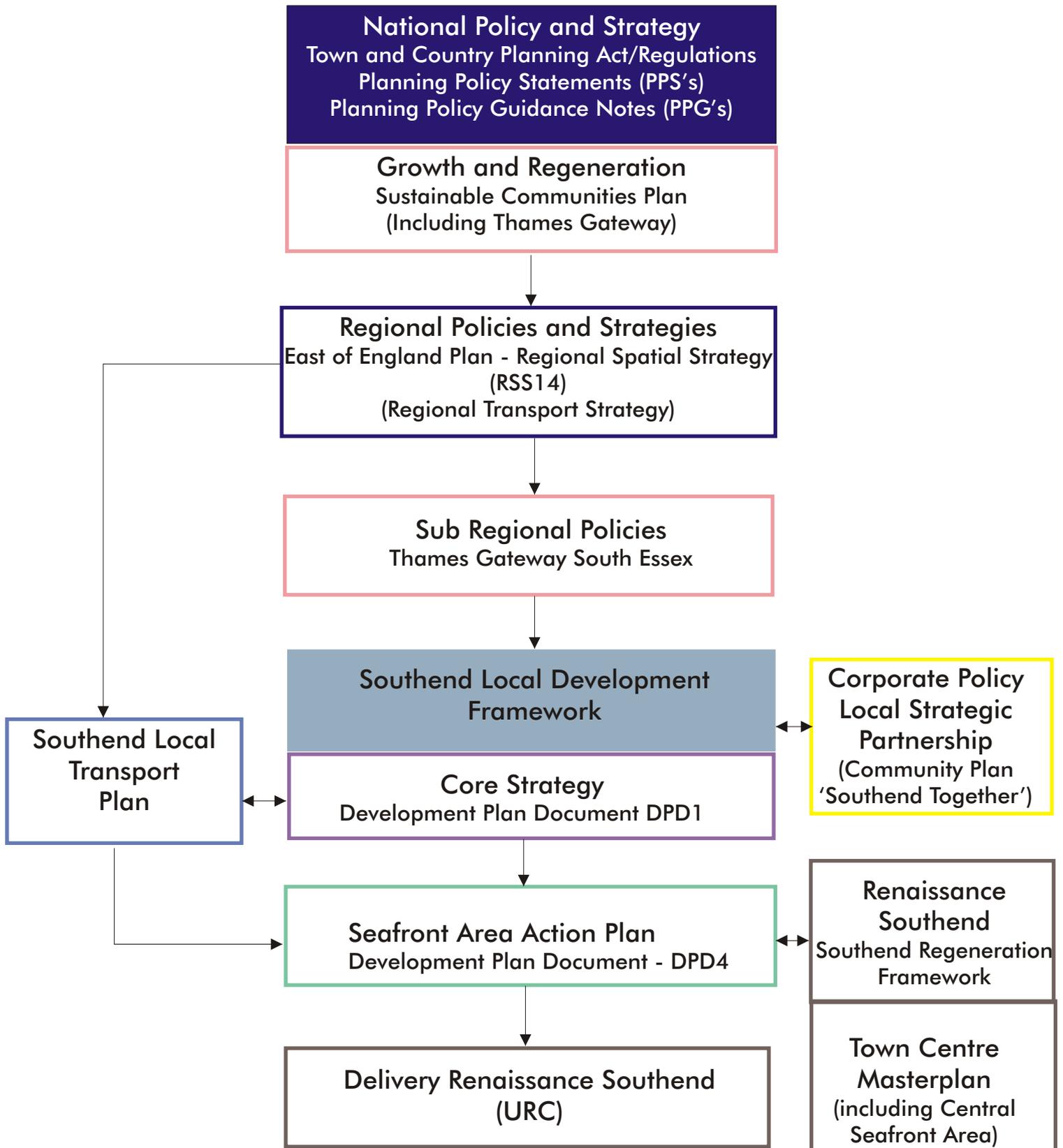
Role of Renaissance Southend Ltd

- 1.46 As part of the Government's Sustainable Communities Agenda, a number of Urban Regeneration Companies (URC's) have been established for key towns and cities to promote and deliver regeneration and growth. A URC for Southend, '*Renaissance Southend Limited*', was established in late 2005.
- 1.47 Renaissance Southend Ltd is required to produce a '*Framework Document*' for the whole Borough to guide its work. Initially the Company will focus its attention on particular areas of the Borough to deliver real change. This includes the town centre and central seafront area and the Company has already commissioned consultants to work on the preparation of a detailed Masterplan for the town centre including the central seafront area. As part of the preparation process of the Masterplan, separate consultation has been undertaken during 2006 to gain the views of key stakeholders and other interested parties. Details of this work can be viewed on the URC's web site, namely www.renaissancesouthend.co.uk.
- 1.48 It will be crucial that this Area Action Plan and the Masterplan are co-ordinated as the Area Action Plan will put in place the planning policies needed to deliver the Masterplan.

Evidence base

- 1.49 The following documents were used to inform the issues and options in this Seafront Area Action Plan:
- Southend Commercial Seafront: Regeneration Principles (2005) EDAW

Diagram 2: Policy Framework



- Southend on Sea Town Centre: Implementation Plan and Financial Framework (2003) Burro Happold Part One & Two (*where relates to seafront*)
- TGSE Waterfront Strategy (2006) ODPM *et al*
- TGSE Green Grid Strategy: greening the gateway (2005) TGSE Green Grid Partnership
- Essex Shoreline Management Plan (1997) Southend-on-Sea Borough Council and Mouchel & Partners Ltd
- Southend Fishing Strategy (2002) VantagePoint Consultants
- Shoebury Garrison Planning Brief (1999) Southend Borough Council & Secretary of State for Defence
- South Essex Catchment Flood Management Plan (2006) Environment Agency
- Southend on Sea Borough Council Shoreline Strategy Plan (1998) Mouchel Consulting Limited Volumes I, II & III
- Southend Pier and Foreshore Study (2000) Mori Social Research
- Policy Statement of Flood and Coastal Defence 2003-2008
- Southend Local Biodiversity Action Plan (2003?) Southend Borough Council
- Southend Conservation Areas – Chapman’s Lord, Clifftown, Crowstone, Eastern Esplanade, Leigh Cliff, Leigh, Leigh Old Town, Seafront, Shoebury Garrison, Shorefields, The Kursaal, The Leas
- London to Southend Movement Study (LOTS) (2003) Hyder Consulting (UK) Ltd
- Southend Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 (2006) Southend Borough Council and Atkins

Community Involvement

1.50 The Borough Council is committed to engaging the community in developing the planning policy approach for the Seafront Area and encourage the widest debate possible. As such it acknowledges that there are several consultation processes taking place during 2006/7 including work being undertaken by Renaissance Southend Ltd. and the Council’s own Economic Scrutiny Committee. These are as follows:

Southend on Sea Borough Council in depth scrutiny projects:

- a. Regeneration of the seafront, including economic and environmental considerations
- b. Future Development of Southend Pier

Southend Renaissance

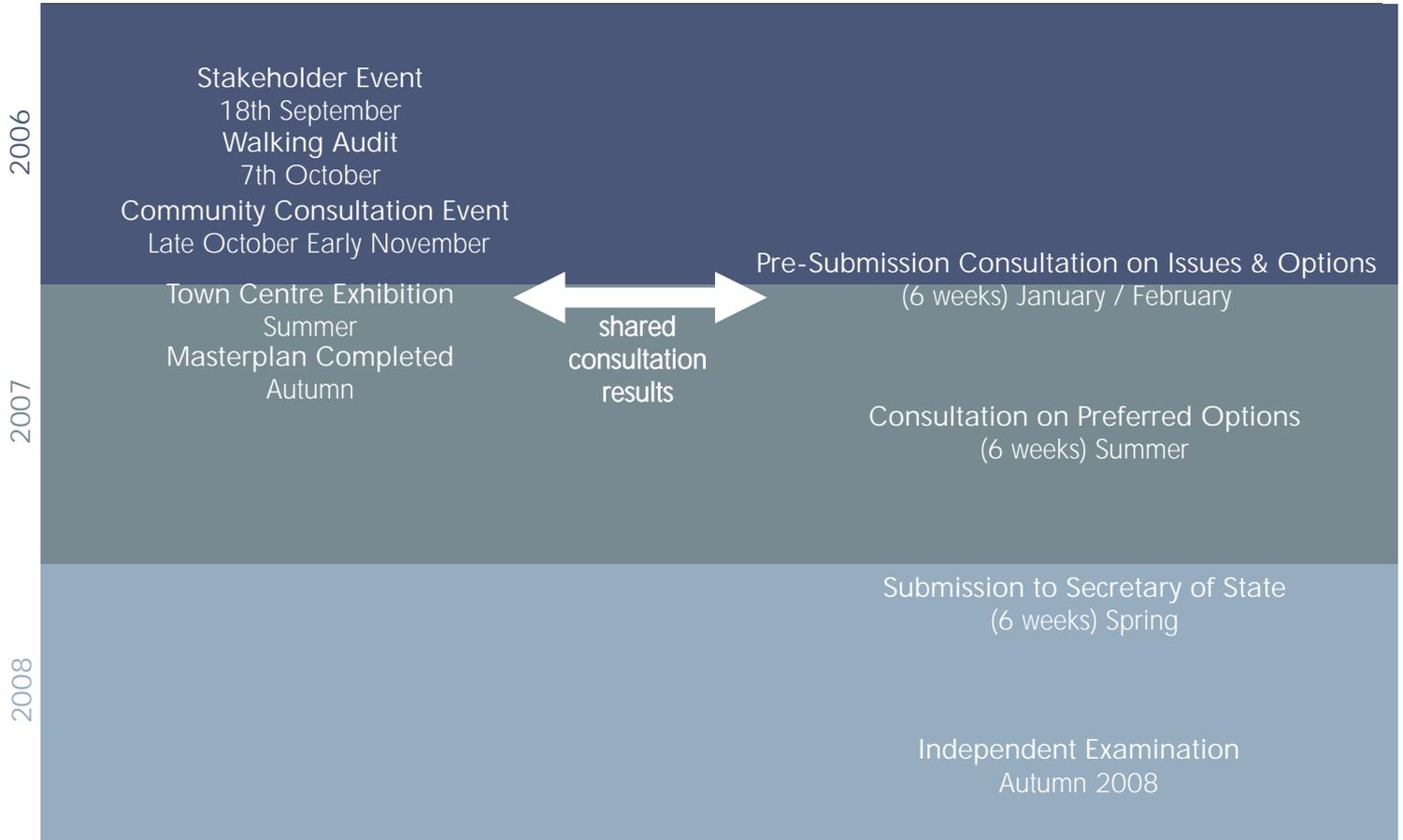
- a. Regeneration Framework which covers the whole Borough
- b. Central Area Master plan (covering the town centre and central seafront area)

- 1.51 The responses and outcomes from the above will feed into and be considered, where they relate to the Seafront Area Action Plan, in addition to representations received as part of the statutory consultation on this Development Plan Document. **Diagram 3** shows the production timetables and consultation periods for the Area Action Plan and the URC's Masterplan. This statutory process will end with an examination in public by an independent inspector who will publish a binding report on the content of the Area Action Plan. See also Section 6: What happens next for more information about the stages in the production of the Seafront Area Action Plan.

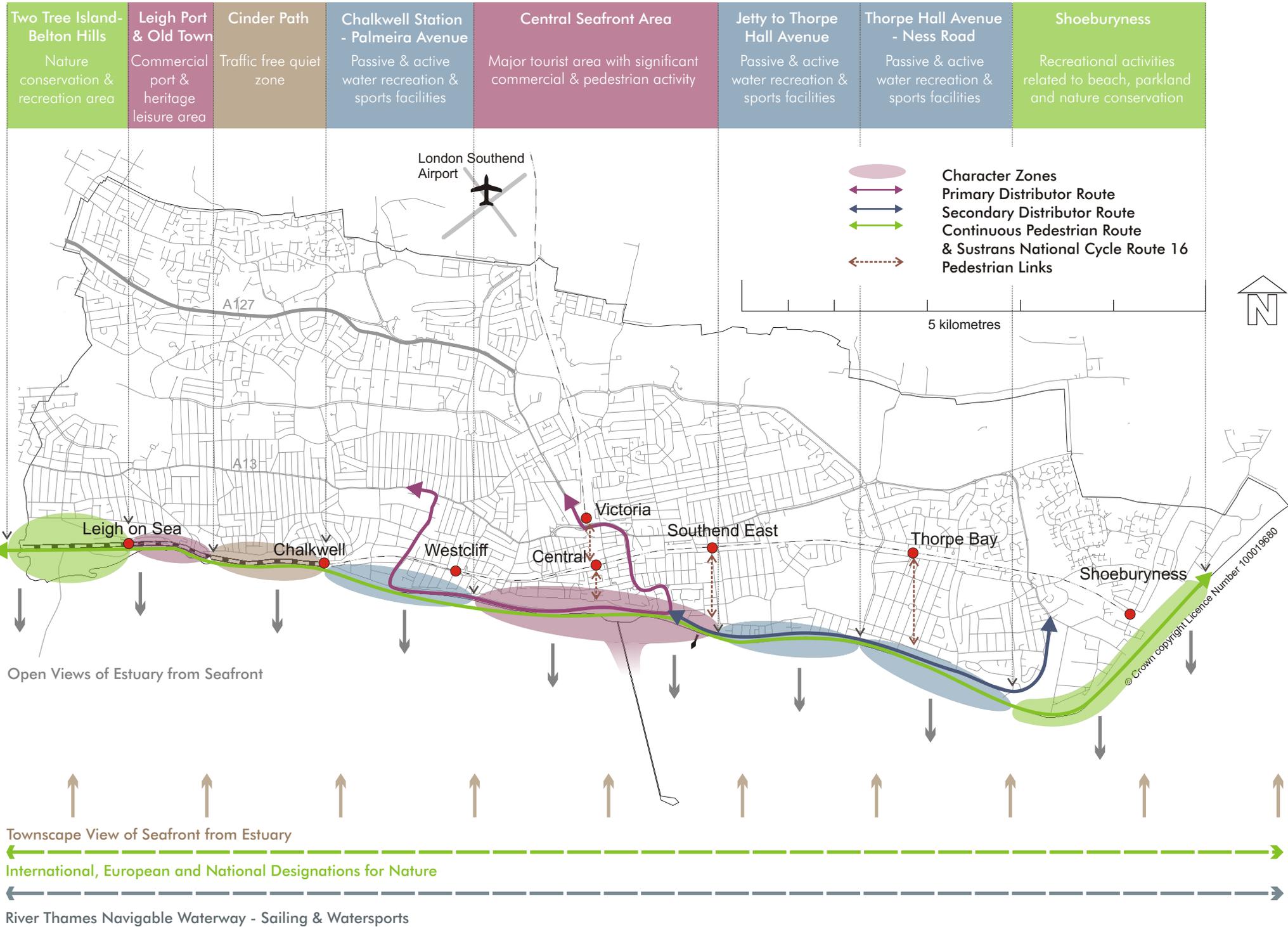
Diagram 3: Central Area Masterplan & Town Centre & Seafront Area Action Plans Timetable & Consultation

Renaissance Southend
Central Area Masterplan

Southend Borough Council
Town Centre & Seafront Area Action Plans



Map 2: Southend-on-Sea Seafront Area Action Plan - Character Zones



Section 2. Introduction to the Area Action Plan

Seafront Character Zones

2.1 The approach taken in this Area Action Plan is to recognise that the Seafront has several different zones with distinctive characteristics, issues and opportunities (See **Map 2: Seafront Area Action Plan – Character Zones**). Section 4 describes their character, identifies any related issues and puts forward options for future planning approaches. The zones are:

1. Two Tree Island, Leigh Marshes and Belton Hills
2. Leigh Port and Old Town
3. The Cinder Path (Old Leigh to Chalkwell Station including Marine and Grand Parade and Undercliff Gardens)
4. Chalkwell Station to Palmeira Avenue
5. Central Seafront Area (Palmeira Avenue to former Corporation Loading Jetty)
6. Former Corporation Loading Jetty to Thorpe Hall Avenue
7. Thorpe Hall Avenue to Ness Road
8. Shoeburyness

Issue 2 [1]

Please let us know if you feel these zones do not reflect a sensible way of planning for their future

Boundary of Seafront Area Action Plan

- 2.2 It is important to ensure that the boundary of the Seafront Area Action Plan acknowledges functional linkages, particularly with the town centre, and allows any policy framework to maximise the opportunities to improve the environment and visitor offer afforded by this important part of the town.
- 2.3 It is proposed that the northern boundary of the Area Action Plan will include the cliffs and either the railway line or first block of built development. The southern boundary includes the entire foreshore. A more detailed illustration of the proposed boundary is proposed in the sections for each Character Zone. It is proposed that the Seafront Area Action Plan includes the central seafront area. Accordingly the Town Centre Area Action Plan (subject to consultation at the same time as this document) does not include the central seafront area within its boundary (**See Map 3**).
- 2.4 Renaissance Southend Ltd have included in their Central Area Master Plan the central seafront area from the Cliffs Pavilion to the former corporation loading jetty. However, there are issues that need to be planned for related to flood risk, sea defences and the cliffs unstable land, nature conservation, movement - particularly in relation to the function of the seafront road, and tourism, that would merit the central area remaining in the Seafront Area Action Plan as proposed in this

Map3 :Town Centre & Seafront Area Action Plans - Boundary Options



document rather than be included in the Town Centre Area Action Plan. Whichever approach is taken the functional and movement linkages and contribution of strategic development areas to regeneration will need to be recognised in both area action plans and there should be no discernable boundary in the outcomes.

Issue 2 [2]

Is this the right approach to the boundary? In particular is the boundary between Seafront and Town Centre Area Action Plans the right approach?

Cross-cutting issues

2.5 It is recognised that there are issues relevant to the whole of the seafront area that require attention and resolution in terms of what the main objectives should be and the policy approach for achieving these objectives. The following cross cutting issues have been identified as key to the seafront:

1. Flood risk, sea defences, including beach and the cliffs unstable land
2. Nature conservation and biodiversity
3. Public realm including foreshore and open space
4. Economic development
5. Housing development
6. Movement and access

Issue 2 [3]

Do you consider these are matters of equal importance or are any of the above issues not relevant?

2.6 The principle issues that need to be taken into account in policy development for these supporting themes are discussed in Section 3. It is recognised, however, that the detailed policy approach and delivery mechanisms maybe different along the seafront therefore where appropriate they are considered further under each zone.

2.7 Throughout Section 3 and 4 reference is made to 'saved' policies in the Borough Local Plan which are subject to review as part of the preparation of the Seafront Area Action Plan DPD. These are listed in detail in **Appendix 1** and are not, therefore, set out within the body of this document.

2.8 In addition the objectives, action and outcomes of the Local Strategic Partnership's Community Plan, which are relevant to the development of policy within the Seafront Area Action Plan, are set out in detail in **Appendix 2** and again are not repeated in this document.

Section 3. Cross-cutting issues

Introduction

- 3.1 The River Thames is a major natural asset flowing from the North Sea through the heart of London. At Southend it is estuarine in character and remains a major highway for shipping. It is also a dominant feature in the low-lying flat landscape where marshes and mud flats constitute an important wildlife habitat and ecological resource.
- 3.2 The Thames Estuary extends from the tidal limit at Teddington Lock in the west, through the heart of London, and flows into the North Sea. Throughout its extent, the tidal Thames is subject to coastal processes, tidal surges and sea level rise as well as the inflow of freshwater rivers and urban drainage. All of these elements are a potential source of flood risk to people and property in the Thames estuary floodplain. In addition, Benfleet and Southend Marshes and Foulness Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Essex Estuaries Special Area of Conservation (SAC) are a European marine site known as “Natura 2000” site.
- 3.3 Opportunities exist, particularly in the Thames Gateway regeneration and growth area and Southend in particular, to maximise the potential of the Thames, to enhance the quality of the riverside environment, to improve the standard of urban design and to ensure that the best use is made of such a unique environment for the benefit of residents, visitors and the business community in a sustainable manner.
- 3.4 The main functions of the river may be categorised as follows:
- drainage and water supply;
 - a setting for development;
 - an open space and ecological resource;
 - a transport artery; and
 - a recreational, leisure and tourism facility
- 3.5 It is proposed that the Seafront Area Action Plan should be guided by the following principles:
- maintain and improve the quality of the built environment;
 - restore and promote the vitality of the riverside in areas of development opportunity;
 - conserve and enhance the character of the natural and historic environments; and
 - encourage and facilitate the use of the Riverside for transport and recreational purposes.

Question 3 [1]

Do you consider these principles of equal importance or are any of the above not relevant?

Flood risk, sea defences, including beach and the cliffs unstable land

Flood risk and sea defences

- 3.6 Government policy emphasises the need for flood risk to influence the location of development, and for development plans to follow a ‘sequential test’ in relation to the level of flood risk, directing development away from areas at risk of flooding. In addition, the Environment Agency recommends that Strategic Flood Risk Assessments (SFRAs) should be carried out to produce more accurate maps of local flood risk. Accordingly a Thames Gateway South Essex SFRA has recently been completed. In addition, the Environment Agency is currently consulting on The Thames Estuary 2100 (TE2100) Project, an initiative to develop a Flood Risk Management Plan for London and the Thames Estuary for the next 100 years.
- 3.7 Within Southend, the Environment Agency’s current indicative floodplain maps identify a number of areas in the Borough to be ‘at risk’, mainly from tidal flooding. However, these maps do not take account of existing flood defences, which in Southend have been regularly and systematically improved to meet perceived levels of risk. The level of actual risk, and the areas actually remaining at risk, are therefore likely to be much lower than is indicated by these maps – subject to the structural integrity of the defences being maintained.
- 3.8 The recently completed Thames Gateway South Essex SFRA, provides more detailed and up-to-date information on actual levels and locations of flood risk in Southend. It indicates that flood defences within and adjacent to Southend are mainly in good overall condition.
- 3.9 In addition major beach replenishment east of the Pier (Jubilee Beach) has been completed. This was provided primarily to protect the failing revetment but also to provide a significant amenity for local residents and visitors.
- 3.10 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. For example there remain significant concerns relating to the MOD controlled defences north of Shoebury East Beach. A similar situation arose in Shoeburyness Old Ranges, which is now being successfully regenerated and redeveloped, incorporating effective sea defence improvements giving a high level of long-term protection.
- 3.11 Policy SS14 ‘Development and Flood Risk’ in the East of England Plan (RSS14) states that the priority is to defend existing properties from flooding, and where possible locate new development in locations with little or no risk of flooding. It promotes the use of SFRAs to guide development in this regard. Where land at lower risk from flooding is not available and where there is significant over-riding need for the development any risk must be fully mitigated by design or engineering measures.

3.12 Southend Seafront is already highly developed along most of its length. Key Policy KP1 'Spatial Strategy' in the Core Strategy DPD identifies the Seafront as a focus of regeneration and growth and emphasises the need to regenerate the seafront's role as a successful leisure and tourist attraction and place to live. This Policy also states that "appropriate sea defences will be provided as part of a comprehensive shoreline management strategy". It also requires that where a risk of flooding remains all development proposals shall need to be accompanied by a detailed flood risk assessments appropriate to the scale and nature of the development and the risk. Development will only be permitted where that assessment clearly demonstrates that it is appropriate in terms of type, siting and the mitigation measures proposed, including where necessary enhancement of flood defences and or effective sustainable drainage measures.

Issues

3.13 Due to the economic and social importance of the seafront and its already developed nature, it is considered that the main issue is one of maintaining the structural integrity of the sea defences. This could be done in ways that significantly enhances leisure and tourist facilities in a manner that reflects the particular nature and role within the different Character Zones. An example of such an approach is the major beach replenishment east of the Pier (Jubilee Beach) which not only addressed environmental issues related to improving the sea defences but also had social and economic regeneration benefits.

Question 3 [2]

Is there a reason why continuing to maintain the integrity of the sea defences in a way that brings about social and economic benefits, now and in the future, is not an appropriate way forward?

3.14 The programme of improvement or maintenance of the sea defences is set out in the Southend-on-Sea Shoreline Management Strategy Plan (and subsequent updates) and could address regeneration priorities (social and economic) alongside flood risk (environmental) priorities.

Question 3 [3]

Should the Area Action Plan include further guidance on the approach to implementing an up to date Southend on Sea Shoreline Management Plan over and above that set out in the Core Strategy DPD Key Policies KP1 and KP2?

3.15 It is considered that restrictions on future development or redevelopment in the built up area would be inappropriate given the importance of the seafront for tourism, leisure, recreation, and residential purposes. However, any development proposals within areas of risk will require detailed flood risk assessment, appropriate mitigation measures, and agreement with the Environment Agency. These principles are already set out in the Core Strategy, DPD Key Policy 1 'Spatial Strategy', and Key Policy KP2 'Development Principles, to which all development in the Borough must comply.

Question 3 [4]

Is there a need to amplify within the Seafront Area Action Plan the core development principles set out in the Core Strategy DPD Policy KP1, KP2 and Policy CP4 relating to mitigation measures required for development in areas of residual flood risk?

Unstable land and the Cliffs

3.16 The Thames Estuary frontage of the Borough is backed by cliffs from the west boundary to the Marine Parade area. The cliffs over the great majority of this length are significantly steeper than the natural stable gradient for the material(s) of which they are composed and therefore there is an on-going history of movement of the cliffs ranging from small scale slumping to major rotational and transitional movements such as that seen below the Bandstand in 2002.

Issues

3.17 Left to their own devices the cliffs, over a significant period of time, would degrade to a stable profile. However, such a situation does not accord with the built environment of the Borough and thus measures must be introduced to prevent and or reduce the movement or accommodate it. Before any significant works are undertaken it will be essential to monitor existing movement to identify the nature and extent of the problems that the cliffs present.

3.18 Two measures that should be considered are drainage systems which would assist in alleviating small scale slumping but the larger rotational and or transitional movements can only be addressed by cutting the slip plane, requiring significant engineering intervention. Such engineering could be utilised not only to stabilise the cliff but also form part of a structure designed to give added value – for example to provide amenities and facilities for residents and visitors alike whilst improving the tourism offer and providing commercial opportunities and employment. An in-house exercise has proved the feasibility of this option.

3.19 Given the urgent requirement for remedial work in areas of the cliffs there is a duty to explore investment opportunities that would assist remedial work required and stabilise other areas under threat - including Belton Hills (specific development opportunities are explored in Character Zone 5. Central Seafront Area).

Question 3 [5]

Is there a reason why the approach proposed for stabilising areas of the Cliffs is not appropriate?

Nature conservation and biodiversity

3.20 Government Policy requires that a high level of protection should be given to most valued landscapes, wildlife habitats and natural resources and those with national and international designations should receive the highest level of protection. The East of England Plan (RSS14) Policy ENV3 - Biodiversity and earth heritage states

that Local authorities should ensure that international, European and national designated environmental sites are given protection in accordance with map 9.2 contained in RSS14

- 3.21 The Southend foreshore is the town's most valuable amenity, biodiversity and natural resource and is recognised as such by international, national European and local designations. These designations are:
- RAMSAR site;
 - Special Protection Area (SPA) i.e Benfleet and Southend Marshes and Foulness SPA and Special Area of Conservation (SAC) i.e Essex Estuaries SAC (European Marine Site and "Natura 2000" site);
 - Site of Special Scientific Interest;
 - Leigh National Nature Reserve (part): and
 - Southend Foreshore Local Nature Reserve
- 3.22 The Thames Estuary and Marshes SPAs and SAC is a European marine site. European marine sites are defined in the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994⁴ as any part of a European site covered (continuously or intermittently) by tidal waters or any part of the sea in or adjacent to Great Britain up to the seaward limit of territorial waters. European sites include Special Protection Areas (designated under the Birds Directive, which support significant numbers of internationally important wild birds) and Special Areas of Conservation (designated under the Habitats Directive, which support certain natural habitats and species of European importance),
- 3.23 A major aim of the Birds Directive is to take special measures to conserve the habitats of qualifying birds in order to ensure their survival and reproduction within the European Union. Conservation objectives at a site level, therefore, focus on maintaining the condition of the habitats used by the qualifying species. In addition to focusing on avoiding deterioration to the habitats of the qualifying species, the Birds Directive also requires that actions are taken to avoid significant disturbance to the species for which the site was designated. The Habitats Directive aims to promote the maintenance of biodiversity, taking account of economic, social, cultural and regional requirements.
- 3.24 In addition to the importance of the natural environment which is an attraction in its own right, there are many demands on the seafront for leisure and tourism, as well as sea defences (discussed in paras 3.6 – 3.15 above). Southend is a major tourism destination and has leisure and cultural infrastructure of regional significance, including the Pier. Much of these are a direct result of the attraction of the foreshore for its beach and water recreation activities and attractive environment in which to spend leisure time. The Southend Local Strategic Partnership recognises the importance of the seafront in achieving its ambition of Southend being a cultural Capital of the East of England (see Appendix 2 for relevant extracts for the Community Plan's Action Plan which impact on the

⁴ Draft Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) (Amendment) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006
Southend on Sea Local Development Framework
Seafront Area Action Plan
Development Plan Document – January 2007

Seafront). This priority is reflected in the Core Strategy DPD which at its heart sees the Seafront as a focus for regeneration.

- 3.25 Policy SS15 'The Coast' in the East of England Plan (RSS14) requires that an integrated approach should be provided towards management of coastal areas in order to achieve both economic and social regeneration as well as conservation of the coastal environment especially the character, waters and historical environments. Any new development should be in line with the shoreline management strategy and have regard to future flood management so not to increase the need for new sea defences as well as enabling the protection of important environmental assets. It recognises that sustainable tourism development can create opportunities to boost local economies, enhance natural and built environments, contribute to the social well being of an area, and encourage growth in other employment areas.

Issues

- 3.26 Under the Habitats Directive and by implication the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c) Regulations 1994 (as amended), there is a legal requirement for Authorities to assess whether significant effects are likely on 'Natura 2000' sites and, if so, to carry out an Appropriate Assessment of the policies and proposals in their Development Strategies to ensure that account is taken of the objectives of international and European designations, and significant adverse effects on the Benfleet and Southend Marshes and Foulness European Marine Sites are avoided. The scope and nature of the Appropriate Assessment will be determined at an early stage to inform the Area Action Plan as it is being considered.
- 3.27 The current planning policy framework approach to nature conservation and biodiversity is set out in the following 'saved' policies in the adopted Borough Local Plan (these are set out in detail in Appendix 1):
- Policy G6 - Nature Conservation
 - Policy G7 - Coastal Protection
- 3.28 It is considered that these 'saved' policies are to some degree being superseded by the emerging policy framework in the Core Strategy DPD which, in promoting the regeneration of the seafront as a key element in its spatial strategy, recognises the importance of the natural environment by requiring that such regeneration must be subject to the safeguarding of the biodiversity importance of the foreshore (Key Policy KP1). In addition Core Policy CP4 'The Environment and Urban Renaissance' sets out the development principles that will need to be addresses in relation to safeguarding, protecting and enhancing nature conservation sites of international, national and local importance.
- 3.29 Informal recreational use of the foreshore (and water when the tide is in) takes place along almost the entire length of the seafront. It co-exists with nature conservation value, and has done for many years. It is important, however, to ensure that regeneration issues and the increased opportunities and impetus to

improve the tourism and recreational offer and environment along the seafront does not have an adverse impact on biodiversity and natural resources which are at the heart of the seafronts attractiveness.

Question 3 [6]

Is there a need for further detailed policy in the Area Action Plan, in addition to that provided in the Core Strategy DPD Key Policy 1 and Core Policy CP4, in order to protect biodiversity and nature conservation areas?

If so should existing 'saved' Policies G6 - Nature Conservation and G7 - Coastal Protection in the adopted Borough Local be carried forward into the Area Action Plan?

OR

Should the key principles of these policies be amalgamated into a criteria based approach to how development proposals which will impact on biodiversity and the natural habitat will be considered?

Public realm and open space

3.30 The Estuary coastline and associated setting already has a distinctive character, sense of place and activities along the seafront. The horizontal nature of the landscape is well suited for enjoyment, rest and recuperation. The following description is based on the identified Character Zones discussed later in this document. Significant improvement of the Seafront public realm is critical to the changing the offer and perception of Southend on Sea as a cultural and tourist destination and 'the place to be' within Thames Gateway.

Issues

3.31 The Western Esplanade, the area to the west of the Pier including the Cliff Gardens, is open and spacious in character. This part of the seafront is a slower pace and a quieter atmosphere. Essentially this area is a large formal landscape which has buildings in the form of landscape pavilions and small retail outlets almost as incidental follies. The form of these structures is integral to both the scale of the gardens and the cliffscape whilst not penetrating above the surface level of Clifftown Road. Any future regeneration principles should seek to enhance this. To the east of the Pier, Eastern Esplanade is more diverse and commercially active. The Promenade is much wider but significantly lacking in any quality surface treatment, landscaping and street furniture. Improving the public realm within this area is paramount and should capitalise on the commercial activities up to and including Jubilee Beach.

3.32 Many residents and visitors view the seafront from the river, including the thousands of passengers on the ferries that travel to Kent and London terminals. Southend, therefore, has a unique opportunity to broadcast its presence by creating a visually stunning 'entrance' to the Thames Gateway and London world city. This should include elements of the spectacular within the panorama when viewed from the sea.

- 3.33 The potential to create a 'Green Corridor' for pedestrians, cyclists, joggers, skaters etc with a series of smaller spaces and squares providing nodal points of activities either commercial or leisure would provide focus, identity and a unique place for residents and visitors to enjoy. Such an approach should link local parks and gardens both on the seafront and adjacent to the north (such as Southchurch Park) and would be a key element of the 'green grid' within Southend.
- 3.34 Interspersed at regular distances, street furniture and public art could be included to demarcate both areas of different character and the actual distances between points. This will not only allow for easy navigation and a mark for a range of leisure activities but will also reinforce Southend's Seafront as a high quality environment.
- 3.35 There is specific design guidance for Chalkwell Avenue and Burgess Estate as defined on the Borough Local Plan Proposals Map and set out in the Appendix to the Borough Local Plan ('saved' policy C11 'New buildings, extensions and alterations'). These high quality design standards have since been incorporated within the newly adopted Design and Townscape Guide SPD and expanded to ensure that the same standard of design and attention to the environment is taken on board across the whole Borough.
- 3.36 The overall public realm strategy should be driven by the following principles:
- the importance of high quality of public realm;
 - the need for a broader range of activities and experiences for all sectors of the community;
 - the inclusion of a network of high quality activity spaces connected through a 'Green Corridor' along the Esplanade to include distinctive street furniture, lighting and illumination and Public Art.
 - the creation of distinctive characters for each Zone both when experience on land and from the sea.
- 3.37 In summary options for a public realm policy framework could include:
- I. Creative and distinctive soft landscaping and planting, unique street furnishing, lighting, high quality materials and hard surfacing that reflects the distinctive characters of each Zone along the entirety of the foreshore
 - II. Protection of foreshore views and open aspect of the estuary
 - III. Enhancement of Cliff Gardens
 - IV. Creation of an Urban Beach, inclusive of a range of leisure activities and a few new pavilions, to the east of Pier;
 - V. Widening of promenade to improve the importance of pedestrians along the seafront including the creation a more attractive and co-ordinated public space including a composite Public Art strategy
 - VI. Creation of a Green Corridor improving pedestrian connections and building on the Green Grid approach of attractive connected open spaces
 - VII. Promotion of visually stunning landmarks at this 'entrance' to the Thames Gateway and London

- VIII. Introduce Design Codes specific to the nature and potential of each Character Zone.

Question 3 [7]

Is there any reason why the principles set out above should not be promoted in a policy framework for the public realm in the Seafront Area Action Plan?

- 3.38 Many of the options put forward above would involve specific proposals in the different Character Zones, however, it will be necessary to provide an overall policy framework for the public realm to guide more detailed proposals in the Area Action Plan.

Economic Development

- 3.39 The East of England Plan (RSS14) contains a suite of policies relating to the provision of recreational, leisure and tourism facilities particularly in coastal areas. Development that encourages sustainable tourism including the re use of buildings, enhancement of existing facilities, urban renaissance and regeneration of seaside resorts is promoted in its Policy E13 'Tourism'. It encourages investment in the maintenance, improvement and appropriate diversification of the regions tourism industry that should be based on maximising benefits and minimises the negative effects on the natural and built environment, local distinctiveness and the host community.
- 3.40 Cultural policy C1 'Cultural Development' encourages authorities in the TGSE priority area to take advantage of the contribution that can be made by the cultural sectors in promoting regeneration and urban renaissance. The government identifies that casino development, if acceptable on planning grounds, may help to address the regeneration needs of a town and Policy C2 'Provision and location of strategic leisure, sports, recreation, arts or tourism facilities' cites Southend on Sea and Great Yarmouth as examples of coastal resorts which could be appropriate locations for such development. In addition Policy C3 'The arts' states that Local authorities should ensure promotion of regeneration and community and social inclusion by exploiting the potential of the arts by improving the provision of facilities for arts and cultural use.
- 3.41 The Council's approach to delivering job-led regeneration and growth takes account of the priorities set out in RSS14 and its Sub-regional strategy for the Thames Gateway South Essex area including the need to provide for 13,000 net additional jobs during the period 2001 to 2021. The Core Strategy DPD Policy CP1 'Employment Generating Development' reflects the Spatial Strategy set out in the Core Strategy DPD in terms of distribution of economic growth in the Borough. It is based on a clear requirement to protect and enhance existing, and make provision for new, employment land and premises. It recognises that sustainable economic prosperity will depend on building on existing strengths and seizing new opportunities. This includes maximising the contribution of existing employment

areas, the Town Centre and Seafront 'zones of change' and other 'Priority Urban Areas', as well as 'Key Employment Sites', and helping businesses to grow locally.

- 3.42 The Core Strategy DPD sets a target of at least 250 additional jobs by 2021 related to seafront tourism and cultural industries. The contribution that the Seafront tourism and leisure offer makes to the town's economy is crucial and in line with the priorities of the Local Strategic Partnership is reflected in the Core Strategy's economic framework in Policy CP1 'Employment Generating Development' is based on the following approach:
- Securing a vibrant and well served culture and tourism industry within the town, including the consideration of promoting and developing the town as a Hotel and Conference Resort with high quality hotels, casinos and associated facilities, providing broad-based leisure and tourism facilities
 - Maximising the role of the Town Centre as a catalyst in the town's regeneration through the implementation of a town centre renewal package with emphasis on refocusing of retail opportunities, a major expansion of town centre housing and an expansion of the town's leisure and cultural provision, including the renaissance of the sea frontage.
 - Securing the best use of the River Thames as an asset for transport, leisure and business.
 - Harnessing Southend's existing entrepreneurial culture, build on existing sectoral strengths such as tourism and culture etc.

Issues

- 3.43 The strategic policies on regeneration and employment generating development in the emerging Core Strategy DPD are currently supported by 'saved' policies in the adopted Borough Local Plan which relate in more detail to leisure and tourism industries on the seafront. These are:
- Policy L1 - Facilities for Tourism
 - Policy L2 - Central Seafront Area
 - Policy L4 - Water Recreation
 - Policy L5 - Entertainment and the Arts
- 3.44 These policies seek to encourage and facilitate the provision of facilities and attractions for leisure, recreation, tourism and culture in the town. However, they also set out clear and definite circumstances where development will not be permitted and/ or restricted unless certain environmental considerations can be met.
- 3.45 The Core Strategy sets out the strategic approach to economic development which includes promoting a thriving tourist and leisure offer on the Seafront. It is considered that the main issues for the Area Action Plan in respect of economic development are related to the detailed areas of opportunity and how that should be promoted through a new policy framework. Details of specific opportunities are discussed under each Character Zone, however, the question remains about how to proceed with the 'saved' policies in the adopted Borough Local Plan.

Question 3 [8]

Is it appropriate to delete the existing 'saved' Policies L1 - Facilities for Tourism; L2 - Central Seafront Area; L4 - Water Recreation; L5 - Entertainment and the Arts and address outstanding issues not covered by policies in the Core Strategy DPD in each Character Zone?

OR

Should the principles within the saved policies be amalgamated and included within a criteria based approach to how development proposals for new development contributing to regeneration will be considered within seafront locations?

3.46 In addition there are a suite of 'saved' policies which seek to promote the provision of visitor accommodation and restrict the loss of such facilities within designated areas defined on the proposals map. It is considered that the latter designations are no longer applicable or necessary. In some cases there has been a significant if not total loss of hotels and guest houses in some of these areas. In addition new hotels have been developed or proposed in other locations. The protection of existing stock that is unviable or outmoded has also been unsuccessful. However, the provision of modern hotel, self catering and conferencing facilities is seen as crucial to the town's development as a visitor destination and the continued promotion and support of such facilities should be maintained. These 'saved' policies are:

- Policy L6 - Hotels and Guest Houses
- Policy L7 - Retention of Hotel and Guest House Uses
- Policy L8 - Self-Catering Accommodation

Question 3 [9]

Is it still appropriate to encourage the provision of new, and restrict the loss of existing, hotels and guest houses to the central seafront area and those areas defined as visitor accommodation areas on the adopted borough Local Plan's Proposals Map?

OR

Should the approach to additional and improved visitor accommodation be part of a strategy that relates to the merits of a particular scheme and its contribution to the wider seafront regeneration strategy?

Housing development

3.47 The Council's approach to delivering the dwelling provision required by the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS14) is set out in the Core Strategy DPD Key Policy KP1 'Spatial Strategy' and Policy CP8 'Dwelling Provision'. The spatial strategy seeks to provide for strategic housing requirements as much as possible within the existing urban area, by making best use of existing land and buildings with a particular focus on a major expansion of town centre and seafront⁵ housing. Core Strategy Policy CP8 - 'Dwelling Provision', therefore, proposes that provision should

⁵ 'Seafront': subject to the safeguarding of the biodiversity importance of the foreshore

be made for 6,000 net additional dwellings required during the period 2001 to 2021 and that the Seafront area should provide for 400 net additional dwellings as part of the overall requirements and sets out the Council's requirements with regard to the provision of affordable housing within residential development schemes.

Issues

- 3.48 The Core Strategy DPD Policy CP 8 seeks to 'resist development proposals that involve the loss of existing valuable residential resources' having regard to the limited land resources in the Borough and the need to protect the character and amenities of residential areas.
- 3.49 This principle follows a well-established policy framework set out in the Borough Local Plan ('saved' Policy H4) which seeks to safeguard residential uses subject to certain exceptions. In addition, 'saved' Policy H3 in the Borough Local Plan seeks to safeguard small family dwelling houses (of 125m² or less) from conversion to flats in order to retain an adequate stock of such family housing to meet specific needs). Within the Seafront Area the nature of residential accommodation varies within each of the Character Zones and it may no longer be appropriate to apply this criterion to the whole seafront. For example, large detached family houses within large plots characterise the zone between Thorpe Hall Avenue and Ness Road. Where as, no one type or scale of property typifies some zones to the west. It may be appropriate, therefore, to approach the type of development and redevelopment that may be permitted within each zone through a combination of design codes and, where appropriate, specific requirements to restrict loss of dwellings over a certain size.

Question 3 [10]

Is there any reason why the approach to restricting the loss of small family dwelling houses as set out in Saved Policy H3 should not be deleted and replaced by an approach which reflects the particular context of the different Character Zones?

Or

Should the policy approach set out in Saved policy H3 be carried forward into the Area Action Plan?

OR

Should all schemes involving the loss of residential uses be treated on their merits having regard to housing needs, design and other related criteria?

- 3.50 Whilst the Core Strategy does not identify particular sites for residential development, historically, additional dwelling units have been provided by 'windfall' redevelopment and conversion schemes that have provided several 'flatted' development schemes along the Seafront.
- 3.51 Current 'saved' policies in the Borough Local Plan seek to control the amount of flat development across the Borough, including sheltered housing and non-self contained flat development (Houses in Multiple Occupation). This is to ensure that

the character and amenities of residential areas is protected and that they remain attractive for single family housing use (saved policies H6 (First Alteration), H7, H8 and H9 (First Alteration)). This is principally achieved by limiting flat development to 10% of the street frontage.

- 3.52 The potential of different zones within the Seafront Area Action Plan to contribute to the Core Strategy's dwelling provision will depend on the nature of each zone, its primary function and the priorities identifies for particular areas with development potential. As with the approach to the loss of dwelling houses discussed above, whether the amount of flat development should be controlled to retain the character of residential street may not be appropriate in the Seafront. Again it may be more appropriate to set a policy framework based more on specific Design Codes for each Character Zone.
- 3.53 Borough wide residential design and layout considerations have been incorporated within the Core Strategy DPD. The relevant policies are Policy KP2 – Development Principles and CP 4 – The Environment and Urban Renaissance. In addition all development will be required to have regard to the Council's recently adopted Design and Townscape Guide SPD. This guidance replaces Appendix 4 of the adopted Borough Local Plan. The Character of each Zone is unique and varied and it is considered that there is a greater opportunity to enhance the built environment by applying appropriate and individual design codes in each Character Area to enhance and or protect the existing quality and character of the area, particularly in respect of Conservation Area issues, roof lines and heights of buildings, and where there are frontages of larger single family dwellings that should be protected from redevelopment.

Question 3 [11]

Is there any reason why the approach to limiting flat development etc as set out in 'saved policies H6 (First Alteration), H7, H8 and H9 (First Alteration)) should not be deleted and replaced by an approach which reflects the particular context of the different Character Zones?

OR

Should the policy approach set out in the 'saved' policies be carried forward into the Area Action Plan?

OR

Should all schemes involving flat development be treated on their merits having regard to housing needs and the Design and Townscape Guide SPD?

Movement and access

- 3.54 The highway along the seafront is some five miles in length stretching from the old coast guard station at Shoebury in the east to Chalkwell Avenue in the west. This road, along with the Shoeburyness to Fenchurch street railway line (C2C), provides significant east west communications across the town and to London and the Thames Gateway South Essex sub region. As such they have a role to play in

movement through the town. Nevertheless, the road in particular also provides direct access to most areas along the seafront.

- 3.55 The route has a continuous promenade along its entire length providing extensive foreshore views and access to beach and water recreation activities. The entire route is designated as a national cycle route by Sustrans (Route 16) and segregated cycle ways have been provided at its eastern end and indicative on road sections at its western end.
- 3.56 The character and function of the highway varies along its length being a single carriageway at its eastern end serving predominantly local traffic and changing to a dual carriageway in the central seafront area providing access to extensive leisure and commercial activities with high volumes of pedestrian and vehicular movement. The route then reverts to a single carriageway at its eastern end serving through traffic movements with reduced pedestrian movement associated with its more passive leisure activities.
- 3.57 These characteristics are reflected in the Second Local Transport Plan (LTP 2) in its 'route hierarchy'. LTP 2 identifies that stretch of highway from Camper Road eastwards as a 'Secondary Distributor Route' where the predominant activities are scheduled bus services and local traffic. The remainder of the highway is designated as the 'Central Seafront Corridor' reflecting the special characteristics of this section of the route related to its leisure and special events activities. The Local Transport Plan also proposes the introduction of a hovercraft/river service as part of its adopted strategy.

Issues

- 3.58 Despite the changes in character along its length and high volumes of pedestrian activity, the highway is currently designed in such a way that vehicular movement is the predominant use.
- 3.59 The main issues in relation to this highway corridor are:
- The role of the seafront road for 'through' traffic
 - pedestrian/vehicular conflict, particularly in the central seafront area;
 - providing good accessibility into and within the area;
 - creating a better public realm / environment;
 - providing a better balance between car, public transport and pedestrians / cyclists;
 - improving facilities for pedestrians and cyclists;
 - providing improved public transport and coach facilities;
 - whether the road space should be rationalised to improve conditions on the Esplanade.
- 3.60 The seafront highway is an important artery serving the leisure and tourism core and providing access to water recreation and more passive leisure activities such as

walking and bird watching. In planning for the future of the area it will be important to ensure that these various needs are adequately catered for.

- 3.61 The width of the carriageway, particularly within the central seafront area, provides for extensive opportunities to reconfigure and rationalise the road space to meet these needs and provide for an improved environment. This does not mean that car parking on the seafront should be reduced, but one option could be to relocate certain areas of car parking from the seafront to more suitable locations nearby to achieve environmental, road safety and traffic movement improvements.
- 3.62 To the west of the town centre stations on the C2C line are adjacent to or have easy access to the seafront such as Leigh, Chalkwell and Central stations. Further east the distances from the stations to the seafront increase and access is not as easy or apparent. There could be a greater role for these stations to provide public transport access to the seafront and attractive, well signposted pedestrian routes may encourage this role. In addition Leigh Station has been identified in the LTP as a key interchange with potential to act as a park and ride facility for visitors from outside the town to access the railway for movement across Southend or for direct walking access to Leigh Old Town.
- 3.63 The LTP also seeks to implement the Sustrans Cycle Route 16 along the seafront. Work has been either completed or planned for a section of this continuous segregated cycle route east of the Corporation Loading Jetty and as part of the Shoebury Old Ranges development proposals. Further work to complete the route westwards to the Borough boundary at Leigh will be hindered by issues relating to the stretch known as the cinder path adjacent to the Chalkwell station buildings and railway line. Here the land available is very narrow and some form of extended platform will be required to accommodate an attractive footway and cycle path. This would require engineering intervention. Such engineering could be utilised to not only provide extra width to the Cinder Path but also form part of a structure designed to give added value.
- 3.64 In summary options relating to movement could include:
 - I. rationalisation of road space to create pedestrian piazzas, leisure opportunities and environmental improvements in the central seafront area;
 - II. rationalisation of seafront parking west of the Pier;
 - III. consideration of car parking as part of Cliff Gardens stabilisation works;
 - IV. re-provision of car parking in conjunction with the redevelopment of the Seaway Car Park (to include parking displaced from the seafront);
 - V. relocation of parking lost at Dizzyland Car Park to a new facility to be provided as part of the redevelopment of the Dizzyland site;
 - VI. promote park and ride facility at Leigh Station to encourage visitors to travel to the central area by train;
 - VII. improvements to existing Variable Message Signs (VMS) and signage systems to enhance traffic management and optimisation of car parks;

- VIII. creation of a 'hoppa' bus circuit, linking the two mainline rail stations and the bus station / travel centre with the seafront;
- IX. development of a bus service and route along the Esplanade;
- X. investigate the potential to licence and accommodate a 'tuctuc' service (like Brighton and Hove's) of automated rickshaws serving the length of the seafront and rail stations and car parks;
- XI. promote the effective delivery of a quality pedestrian esplanade and segregated cycleway as part of the Sustrans National Cycle Route.

3.65 Many of the options put forward above would involve specific proposals in the different Character Zones, however, it will be necessary provide an overall policy framework for movement and access to and within the Area Action Plan.

Question 3 [12]

Is there any reason why the improvements suggested for transport and movement improvements to and along the seafront road and public transport options should not be supported and promoted by the policy framework in the Area Action Plan particularly in respect of the necessary proposals within each Character Zone?