

PART TWO

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- AIM 3 -** to promote the development of those functions which will secure a sound economic future for the town in the retail, leisure, commercial and industrial business sectors, by exploiting the town's unique seaside location, sub-regional shopping centre and proximity to London whilst creating an attractive environment for people living in or visiting the town.

CHAPTER 4

Employment and Business

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CHAPTER 4

Employment and Business

Introduction

- 4.1 For many years a key planning issue in Essex has been the imbalance between the number of residents and the availability of local employment. In South Essex development has been led by growth in population and housing, resulting in a considerable shortfall in local jobs and a correspondingly high level of outward commuting. Since the expansion of 'High Tech' industries, large-scale economic development in the South-East region has tended to locate in areas south and west of London. In the light of these circumstances, the Essex Structure Plan First Alteration gives priority to the expansion of existing employment and the promotion of new investment in the County.
- 4.2 This is a strategy which has had some success and which the Borough Council firmly supports. Southend has attracted a number of successful industrial and commercial developments in recent years. As a result of this development, together with major residential, shopping and leisure schemes, Southend now has a labour supply of over 74,000 people geared particularly to the service sector and containing above average levels of managerial and professional skills. However, local job opportunities do not meet the needs of this labour supply. As a result, Southend continues to have an unemployment rate consistently above the regional and County averages, a high dependence on outward commuting and seasonal variations in local job opportunities, a situation being exacerbated by current national and international economic conditions. Some 24,000 residents travel to work outside the Borough, 30% of whom work in London at rates of pay which generally cannot be matched in Southend. There will, therefore, always be a substantial movement of resident workers to jobs elsewhere, particularly in London.
- 4.3 Looking to the future, forecasts of economic growth are uncertain but the challenges offered by the single European Market will undoubtedly include both increased competition and increased opportunities. There will be a need to retain established local employers, as well as the potential to attract new sources of business and develop new markets. It is the Council's view, therefore, that priority should continue to be given to the expansion of the local employment base, to maintain the economic vitality of the town and to retain a reasonable balance between workers and jobs.

Development Potential

- 4.4 The scope for direct action by the Council in promoting economic growth and attracting new business is limited. National and international economic conditions are likely to have the greatest influence on the availability of local job opportunities. Nevertheless, powers and resources are available to the Council and will be used wherever practicable to ensure that, when employment opportunities do arise, they are not lost. Securing the necessary services and infrastructure, and providing up-to-date information regarding the attractions of the area and the availability of sites, premises and development opportunities will therefore be priorities and will form part of the Borough Council's Economic Development Strategy which is reviewed annually.
- 4.5 In the past, Council-owned land with potential for development has provided opportunities both for 'partnership' schemes with the private sector and for the provision of appropriately sized and costed accommodation. For example, small 'seedbed' and nursery units suitable for

the start-up of new businesses have been successfully developed at Shoeburyness. The Council can also act as a source of information with regard to the financial incentives and advice available elsewhere to assist local enterprise.

- 4.6 The expansion of business within the town will, however, become increasingly difficult in the future. Land availability is already limited, and will become more so as existing opportunities are developed. Most of Southend's industrial estates and the town centre office zone, centred on Victoria Avenue, are now fully developed and remaining sites have valid planning permissions. As well as safeguarding established employment centres, it will increasingly be necessary to look to the re-cycling or more intensive use of employment land in the Borough, the expansion of other employment generating uses, and to the opportunities available elsewhere in South East Essex to meet future needs.
- 4.7 In addition to the need for land to accommodate traditional stand-alone factories and offices, there are a number of new businesses which blur the distinction between conventional industrial and commercial land-use classes, and which have particular site requirements. With its large labour pool and established commercial base, convenient regional airport and rapid access to London, Southend has potential for attracting such modern Class B1* uses. These technology-based office and industrial uses require attractively landscaped business park developments, where environmentally and visually intrusive industrial operations are excluded.
- 4.8 The development of the town's leisure function probably offers one of the greatest opportunities to improve the local economy. However, it is also strongly related to development of one particular area of the town, i.e. the seafront, where special considerations apply. This aspect of the town's economy and future development is therefore given separate consideration in Chapter 6. The availability of accommodation suitable for business visitors is also important to the economic development of the town, supporting the Council's policies to promote the provision of new accommodation and to retain and improve the existing hotel stock, (see Policies L6 and L7 - Chapter 6, pages 107 and 108). Shopping is also an important source of jobs for local residents, but the amount of shopping provided needs to relate to the level of population in the catchment area and the amount of potential expenditure available. This topic is therefore dealt with separately in Chapter 5. The present chapter concentrates on employment issues relating to industry, warehousing, offices and other business uses.

Objectives

(see Introduction, Aim 3)

- 4.9
1. To promote employment opportunities in the Borough and give priority to the expansion of the local employment base.
 2. To seek to retain a reasonable balance between workers and jobs.
 3. To identify sites and areas in the Borough suitable for future office, industry and commercial developments.
 4. To ensure that adequate provision is made in South-East Essex to meet satisfactorily Southend's future employment land requirements.
 5. To safeguard office and industrial premises and land from inappropriate development.

6. To ensure that new commercial and non-residential development does not have an adverse impact on the environment and amenities of residential areas.
7. To improve the environment of residential areas by seeking to achieve the relocation/redevelopment of inappropriately sited commercial premises.

Employment Promotion

- 4.10 In order to promote employment opportunities in the Borough, the Council will have regard to the following policy:

POLICY E1 - EMPLOYMENT PROMOTION

The Borough Council will promote the introduction of new employment to Southend and the expansion of existing businesses where these are compatible with the aims of the Council's Environmental Charter. This will be achieved by:

- (i) providing up-to-date information and advice on the attractions of the area for new business, the availability of sites and premises and on sources of assistance;**
- (ii) giving priority to those planning application applications involving employment generating development;**
- (iii) encouraging greater efficiency in the re-use, adaptation or redevelopment of older industrial premises, subject to the need to safeguard local environmental conditions;**
- (iv) seeking opportunities for the development of land or premises (including Council-owned land or premises) for employment generating uses, where appropriate.**

Offices

- 4.11 Southend is identified in the Essex Structure Plan First Alteration as a suitable location for new offices, with particular reference to Southend town centre as a 'target' for large-scale developments. The concentration of offices in major centres clearly has advantages - a wide range of business and professional services, good communications (particularly by public transport) and a variety of leisure and retail facilities on the doorstep. The concentration of office jobs within a short distance of High Street shops also benefits lunch-time retail trade and contributes to the overall success of the centre. In the recent past, office development has turned Southend into a major commercial centre, with banking, insurance and Government services prominent. Approximately 160,000m² have been developed in the town centre since the 1960's.
- 4.12 Since 1986, planning permission has been granted for approximately 61,000m² of office space (over 1,000m²) which already exceeds the Structure Plan provision of 60,000m² for the period 1986-2001 (see Appendix 5, Table 8 page 201). As a result it is not the Council's intention to extend the area covered by the Central Business District to enable further large schemes to be undertaken, because of the impact that this would have upon adjoining residential side

streets. With the exception of Elmer Avenue and parts of Whitegate Road, the Council is proposing measures to improve the environment of housing areas on the fringes of the town centre, and any new large-scale office proposal will be encouraged to locate on identified sites within the existing Central Business District as delineated on the Proposals Map (Town Centre Inset).

Victoria Avenue, Southend-on-Sea : a thriving business and commercial area adjacent to the town centre. The area is designated an "Area of Special Control" with regard to the display of advertisements in order to maintain a high quality of townscape (see pages 27 and 179).

- 4.13 There is scope to incorporate office space within the four remaining retail proposal sites discussed in Chapter 5 (P5a, P5b, P5c and P5d, pages 96 and 97), a site in Baxter Avenue with outstanding permission for offices (Proposal Site P4a), and within Proposal Sites P4c, P4d and P4k (pages 77 to 79) at Whitegate Road, Pitman Close and adjacent to the Central Station, Clifftown Road respectively (see also Proposal P6f - Chapter 6, page 111). Proposal Site P9j on the corner of Clarence Road and Alexandra Street is proposed for development as a multi-storey car park and could include a small office element on the Alexandra Street frontage (see Chapter 9, page 159). It is not considered necessary to place floorspace limits on the office element of any town centre scheme, but proposals will be subject to the consideration of their effects on the highway network and its capacity to accommodate traffic generated, as well as other normal design criteria such as the arrangements for car parking and servicing. Outside the town centre, the former Queens Hotel site at the southern end of Hamlet Court Road and adjoining Westcliff Station is considered an appropriate location for

a major office development (Proposal P4b, page 77).

- 4.14 Elsewhere major office proposals are unlikely to be considered appropriate unless they form part of a business park development on land allocated for the purpose. However, the Council may consider sympathetically proposals for office development on vacant or under-used land where there is no over-riding need for which the site is appropriate, where there is no adverse effect on residential amenities, and provided that the proposals do not conflict with other policies in the Plan. Additionally, proposals involving the loss of existing major office floorspace will be resisted unless there are clear benefits to the town arising from the proposed alternative use.

POLICY E2 - MAJOR OFFICE DEVELOPMENT

Proposals for major office developments within schemes for Proposal Sites P4a, P4b, P4c, P4d, P4k, P5a, P5b, P5c, P5d and P6f will normally be permitted. Elsewhere major office developments are unlikely to be considered appropriate except where they form part of a business park proposal or where vacant or under-used land is brought into use, provided that there is no over-riding need for which the site is appropriate, and that there is no adverse effect on residential amenities.

In addition, the loss of existing major office floorspace by redevelopment or change of use will not normally be permitted unless alternative development is proposed which would bring clear benefits to the town in terms of facilities provided and jobs created.

Note: For the purpose of this policy, major office developments are regarded as those involving a gross floorspace in excess of 1,000m².

Policy Cross References : Proposals P4a (Baxter Avenue), P4b (Former Queens Hotel, Hamlet Court Road), P4c (Whitegate Road), P4d (Ptman's Close), P4k (Central Station, Clifftown Road), pages 77 to 79; P5a (Former Municipal College Site, London Road), P5b (Warrior Square and Whitegate Road), P5c (Tylers Avenue and York Road), P5d (Alexandra Street, High Street and York Road), page 96 and 97; and P6f (Land at London Road and to the Rear of Imperial Avenue), page 111.

Secondary Offices

- 4.15 Whilst purpose-built office developments account for the majority of office jobs in the town, there are many small companies and local professional services which require more modest accommodation but in aggregate are an equally important source of local employment. In the past, small office users have tended to occupy the upper floors of shop premises - particularly in the town centre - or have sought accommodation in side streets on the fringes of local shopping centres. Because of the need to preserve the viability of certain shopping frontages and of the Council's policy to resist the loss of residential accommodation, support for the establishment of new small office suites in converted property has been limited.
- 4.16 It is proposed, therefore, that in certain specified locations, changes of use to offices (both at ground floor level and above) and small redevelopment schemes will be given favourable consideration, subject to there being no conflict with other policies or proposals in the Plan. This should help to consolidate the provision of secondary office uses and reduce the pressure elsewhere for changes of use from residential accommodation. Properties in Elmer Avenue

and at the western end of Whitegate Road have been designated as secondary office frontages because it is considered that there is little potential for improving the present residential environment, and small-scale commercial uses would be more appropriate. With the exception of the southern part of Hamlet Court Road, all secondary office frontages are within the town centre.

- 4.17 Proposals for secondary offices outside the designated secondary office frontages will also be encouraged at ground floor level within the town's fringe commercial areas (see Policy S6, Chapter 5, page 92) which offer the potential for increasing employment opportunities. Elsewhere, secondary office proposals may be considered appropriate above primary and secondary shopping frontages and above properties in fringe commercial areas provided that they would not harm the amenities of adjoining residential premises, and subject to the conditions concerning the loss of residential accommodation contained in Policy H4 in Chapter 3 (page 49) and the environmental considerations of Policy E5 (page 74). In these locations residential use will also be encouraged at first floor level and above in accordance with Policy H2 (Chapter 3, page 47) having regard to the suitability of the building for the particular use proposed. All secondary office proposals will be required to provide appropriate car parking and servicing facilities.

POLICY E3 - SECONDARY OFFICES

Proposals for office uses of less than 1,000m² will be encouraged at ground floor level and above within Secondary Office Frontages and at ground floor level within Fringe Commercial Areas as delineated on the Proposals Map. Additionally, secondary offices may be considered appropriate above Primary and Secondary Shopping Frontages and above properties in Fringe Commercial Areas, except where this would result in an unacceptable impact on or loss of residential amenities and subject to Policies H4 and E5 (see also Policies H2 and S5). All proposals for secondary offices will be required to provide appropriate car parking and servicing facilities.

Policy Cross References : H2 Future Housing Needs, page 47; H4 Preservation of Residential Uses, page 49; E5 Non-Residential Houses Located Close to Housing, page 74; and S5 Non-Retail Uses, page 90.

Industry and Warehousing

- 4.18 In the recent past the Council has had a measure of success in attracting new industrial development to the town and at the same time reducing the number of long-established businesses operating from less than ideal premises within the older residential parts of the Borough. There are still some industrial activities which the Council regards as inappropriately sited, and measures are proposed in this Plan to encourage their relocation. The majority of the town's industry is now located on purpose-built industrial estates at Eastwood, Shoeburyness and central Southend. Together they cover an area in excess of 100 hectares gross and provide a wide range of employment opportunities. With the implementation of existing commitments at Temple Farm Industrial Estate (2.2 hectares), however, no further land on identified sites will be available for development.
- 4.19 The Essex Structure Plan First Alteration provides for new industrial land principally on the basis of the amount of land developed over recent years. However, for certain Districts, including Southend, this provision has been adjusted downwards because of the perceived

limited scope for expansion due to Green Belt considerations. Strategic guidance therefore indicates a need for an additional 15 hectares of industrial land in Southend over the Plan period 1986 to 2001. Of this total, approximately eight hectares has already been developed since 1986 and, with some 2.2 hectares still outstanding at the Temple Farm Estate, a residual requirement of only 4.8 hectares is indicated for the remainder of the Plan period (see Appendix 5, Table 9 page 202). In approving the First Alteration to the Structure Plan, the Secretary of State emphasised that such strategic guidance was indicative only and should not be regarded as quotas.

- 4.20 This level of provision would not enable the local economy to meet previous development rates in the Borough. These have varied with fluctuations in the general economic climate, but over the last fifteen years the average take-up of industrial land in Southend has been approximately 2.0 hectares per annum. This would indicate that the Structure Plan level of provision would only provide for two and a half years' supply of industrial land.
- 4.21 Clearly, this Structure Plan provision is inadequate if Southend is to continue to prosper, to meet effectively the challenges offered by the Single European Market throughout the 1990's, and to redress the imbalance between workers and jobs. In order to meet the Borough Council's employment policy objectives and the guidance contained in Planning Policy Guidance Note 4 (PPG4 - Industrial and Commercial Development and Small Firms, November 1992), it is estimated that a total of about 20 hectares of land will be required during the remainder of the Plan period, based on projected development rates and the potential requirement to relocate some existing industrial activities in the town which the Council regards as being inappropriately sited (Proposals P3f to P3t and Policy E6, pages 64 and 75 respectively). However, as recognised in Chapter 1, Southend has reached the limits of its development potential, and the need to protect the town's limited rural hinterland and Green Belt restricts the opportunities for providing land for new industrial development to those suitable sites within the existing built up areas.
- 4.22 Three sites have been identified within the existing urban area which abut industrial areas and which would contribute 2.75 hectares towards future industrial land requirements. These comprise 1.6 hectares adjoining the Liverpool Street railway line and formerly a coal and minerals depot, 0.8 hectares adjoining Prittlewell Station, and 0.35 hectares adjoining the Comet Way Industrial Estate at Eastwood - see Proposals P4f, P4g and P4j. Land between Eastern Avenue and the Council's Highway Depot (Proposal P4e - 0.9 hectares) is also identified as being suitable for light industrial development although the site has outstanding planning permissions for an office village and more recently a non-food retail warehouse. In addition, approximately three hectares of agricultural land north of Prince Avenue, forming part of a larger area of smallholdings and declared surplus to requirements by the landowner, is proposed for development as a business park (Proposal P4h). To ensure adequate highway capacity to accommodate this scheme, the development of land at Prince Avenue may need to be programmed in conjunction with the construction of the proposed Southend/Rochford Outer By-Pass (see paragraph 9.3, Chapter 9, page 139) and might not, therefore, be available for development until at least the latter part of the Plan period.
- 4.23 At recent rates of development, the above identified sites would provide for only some three years' supply of land suitable for industrial development beyond 1992. This highlights the need to identify additional land which can contribute to the employment needs of Southend in the future. However, in view of the extent to which Southend has already been intensively developed, it is unlikely that further land within the built-up area of the town will become available during the Plan period which could be considered appropriate for industrial development. This, combined with Green Belt restraints, means that if Southend is to continue to meet satisfactorily its future employment needs, it must look to the provision of appropriate sites outside its boundaries.

- 4.24 Rochford District Council has excluded 16 hectares of land west of Aviation Way, Eastwood immediately to the north of the Borough boundary, from the Green Belt and allocated it in the approved Rochford District Local Plan as an "Area of Special Restraint" reserved for long-term (i.e. post 1991) development. As part of the review of this plan, the Rochford District Council is now proposing to designate the site for industrial purposes and has indicated that ten hectares of this land can be regarded as contributing to the employment needs of Southend. The Borough Council supports this allocation and will continue to liaise with neighbouring District Councils and the County Council to identify appropriate opportunities.
- 4.25 Although the above proposals, both within and adjoining the Borough, would exceed the Structure Plan requirements for Southend in terms of land area, this is considered to be in accordance with the objectives of the Structure Plan in ensuring that the Green Belt is safeguarded from inappropriate development and that no job opportunity is lost because of a lack of appropriate facilities or land.
- 4.26 With so few opportunities available to provide for the Borough's continuing industrial and warehousing land needs, there must be a strong presumption against the loss of those existing industrial premises which provide a valuable source of employment and are satisfactorily located. Such loss could only serve to increase the pressure on Green Belt or good quality agricultural land for development or result in insufficient land being available for employment generating activities in the future. Any loss of industrial land to retail use could, in addition, divert trade and development away from the town's established shopping centres, in direct contravention of the Council's shopping strategy and policies.
- 4.27 In the past, the use of industrial land or premises for warehousing was sometimes restricted because of the relatively low number of jobs generated by such activities. Warehousing is now recognised as a valuable source of employment, being a growth sector of the economy, and with recent changes in legislation is less strictly controlled. Changes of use to all forms of retail warehousing would, however, contravene Policy S1 in this Plan (see page 85) and will be strenuously resisted by the Council. Only where there would be clear benefits to the town, in terms of facilities provided and jobs created, or the removal of an activity inappropriate or intrusive to the surrounding area, could the loss of an existing industrial use be contemplated.
- 4.28 Where an existing industrial use is not identified on the Proposals Map as being subject to Policy E4, the Council may be prepared to consider an alternative use for the site, particularly where redevelopment is proposed. In a number of locations alternative proposals are being promoted in this Plan (see Chapter 3 and Policies E5 and E6 in this Chapter). Set out below are those existing industrial sites which were identified on the published draft local plans as being suitable for industry but which the Council no longer wishes to remain subject to the considerations of Policy E4:
1. Woodgrange Timber Yard, Woodgrange Drive
 2. Albany Laundry, Nelson Road
 3. Barham Timber, Fairfax Drive
 4. Howards, Railway Terrace, East Street
 5. Premises at corner of Fairfax Drive and Prittlewell Chase
 6. Factory at corner of Somerton Avenue and Prince Avenue
 7. Industrial premises 245-285 Sutton Road and 27-28 Redstock Road
 8. Old Leigh Cocklesheds - these are adequately and more properly protected by Policy C5 - Leigh Old Town (see page 26).

POLICY E4 - INDUSTRY AND WAREHOUSING

Permission will not be granted for proposals involving the loss of industrial, warehousing or other business uses on land identified for such uses on the Proposals Map. Elsewhere permission will only be granted where this would bring clear benefits to the town in terms of jobs created or facilities provided; would result in the relocation or extinguishment of a use which is incompatible with the amenity or proper development of the surrounding area; or where it can clearly be demonstrated that the premises are no longer suitable for industrial or warehouse use. The use or development of industrial or warehousing premises (or land allocated for such uses) for retail purposes of any kind will not normally be permitted.

Non-Residential Uses Located Close to Housing

- 4.29 Some existing small-scale industries and business activities located within or adjoining residential streets have operated successfully with few environmental consequences. Many community-based services, such as doctors' surgeries, also benefit from being located close to peoples' homes. Their contribution to employment, local services and the well-being of local residents is recognised. In other cases, however, the continuation or expansion of non-residential activities within or close to housing areas is incompatible with local amenity, residential character or the proper planning of an area. The environmental consequences can include air pollution, noise, vibration, storage of hazardous materials close to homes, unsocial working hours, on-street parking congestion and danger from commercial vehicles.
- 4.30 For many years the Council has maintained a policy to prevent the establishment or expansion of nuisance industries and other intrusive activities in residential areas, and has encouraged their relocation to more suitable premises. An assessment of the environmental impact of existing poorly-located non-residential uses has identified three sites which generate significant problems and constitute a serious nuisance to adjoining residents. These are:-
1. H F A Dolman, Station Avenue - Scrapmetal yard and haulage depot
 2. H F A Dolman, North Road - Scrapmetal yard
 3. E B Raven, 151 East Street - Car breakers.

Subject to the availability of resources and suitable alternative premises, the Council proposes to seek measures which will bring about the cessation or relocation of these uses as soon as possible, and redevelopment of the sites for housing (see Chapter 3, Proposals P3f, P3g and P3h, page 64).

- 4.31 A great many other sites have also been identified as containing industrial activities which to different degrees, can be regarded as incompatible with local amenities or the proper planning of the area in which they are situated. Glendale Gardens, Leigh-on-Sea is an example of a street which is predominantly residential in character but which is adversely affected by poorly located non-residential uses along part of its length. In these cases, when premises become vacant or when redevelopment proposals are being considered, the Council will encourage the extinguishment of industrial activities and the provision of appropriate alternative uses. The redevelopment of some sites requires the inclusion of adjoining land or premises to provide satisfactory design solutions. A number of possible sites which have development potential for residential use and where the Council has identified opportunities for improving the environment are included as Proposal Sites in Chapter 3 (Proposals P3j to

P3t, see page 64) and defined more precisely on the Proposals Map.

- 4.32 Development proposals for new businesses or non-residential uses within or close to residential streets which are likely to result in the loss of existing residential units (see Policy H4, Chapter 3, page 49) or to be detrimental to the amenities or the character of an area, will be resisted by the Borough Council. Furthermore, applications for permission to extend or intensify the use of existing non-residential premises which generate environmental problems in predominantly residential streets will normally be refused (see also Policies H12, Chapter 3, page 61, and E6 in this Chapter).
- 4.33 However, in order to meet certain community based needs such as doctors' surgeries and day nurseries, there will be a general presumption in favour of such proposals within the town's residential areas provided the provisions of Policies H4, L6 (Chapter 6, page 107) or U6, U8, U9 and U10 (Chapter 8, pages 132 to 137) can be satisfactorily met. In addition, where small businesses are operated from within residential accommodation as an ancillary use, and where these are managed in a way which causes no disturbance or loss of amenity to neighbours, the Council will normally regard them as acceptable, subject to the character of the premises remaining residential in nature, in accordance with the guidelines set out in Appendix 5 (see page 203).
- 4.34 In addition, where a particular community facility or other non-residential use is proposed in a residential street, the Council will seek to ensure that it does not result in the undue concentration of such facilities in an area. Planning permission may, therefore, be refused if it is considered that the cumulative impact of several non-residential uses on the character of a residential street would be unacceptable.
- 4.35 Having regard to all the above factors, the following policy will apply:

POLICY E5 - NON-RESIDENTIAL USES LOCATED CLOSE TO HOUSING

In order to safeguard the character and amenities of residential streets and to retain an adequate housing stock, proposals (including proposed changes of use) to establish, continue, intensify or expand a business or other non-residential activity within or adjoining a housing area will normally only be permitted where the proposal respects the character of the locality, satisfactorily meets the adopted design and layout criteria set out in Policies H5 and C11, and would not:-

- (i) adversely affect residential amenity in terms of appearance, overlooking, noise, smell, parking, traffic or other activity;**
- (ii) result in the undue clustering of such uses within a residential street; or**
- (iii) result in the loss of residential accommodation except in accordance with the provisions of Policy H4 (see also Policies L6, U6, U8, U9 and U10).**

Before granting permission the Borough Council will consider the need to prohibit subsequent changes to a particular use or uses (which would otherwise be permitted by virtue of the Use Classes Order or the General Development Order) in order to protect residential streets in the future from serious adverse effects on their character or amenity.

The use of residential premises for ancillary business activities which accord with the guidelines set out in Appendix 5 will normally be regarded as acceptable provided they are not detrimental to the residential amenities of adjoining occupiers or the character of the area.

Proposals which fail to meet the above criteria will normally be refused permission and the Council will seek to direct such activities to more appropriate locations in the Borough.

Policy Cross References : C11 New Buildings, Extensions and Alterations, page 30, H4 Preservation of Residential Uses, page 49; H5 Residential Design and Layout Considerations, page 51; L6 Hotels and Guest Houses, page 107; U6 Non-Residential Health Care Facilities, page 132; U8 Provision of New Education Facilities, page 134; U9 Child Minding Facilities, page 135; U10 Provision of Other Community Facilities, page 136; and Appendix 5 Non-Residential Policy Guidance, page 203.

North Road/Salisbury Avenue Area

- 4.36 The North Road/Salisbury Avenue area contains a number of long-established industrial, storage and other commercial uses in close proximity to residential property (see Map 2 overleaf). Whilst these uses contribute to the local economy, the neighbouring residential environment suffers significantly from traffic, parking, unsocial operating hours and other adverse effects. The further consolidation or spread of these activities, and the consequent further loss of residential properties or amenity is not acceptable and will no longer be permitted. The Borough Council will actively seek the redevelopment of such premises for residential purposes, although it is recognised that resource constraints will not permit their acquisition by direct Council action in the short term. Other measures to ease traffic and parking stress will be considered.

POLICY E6 - NORTH ROAD/SALISBURY AVENUE

Within the North Road/Salisbury Avenue Area, as delineated on the Proposals Map, the Borough Council will seek the improvement of the environment and the amenities of local residents by:

- (i) refusing all applications for the consolidation, redevelopment or extension of existing or proposed industrial, commercial or warehouse premises, except in very special circumstances.**
- (ii) actively seeking the relocation of such activities and the redevelopment of their premises for residential purposes;**

- (iii) **considering the acquisition by the Council of industrial, commercial or warehouse premises which become vacant, for residential redevelopment, having regard to the circumstances at the time.**
- (iv) **exploring all sources of funding for such relocation, acquisition and residential redevelopment as part of the Council's on-going programme of action with regard to inappropriately located industrial or other non-residential uses;**
- (v) **considering the introduction of other measures to ease traffic and parking stress in the area.**

Proposals

- 4.37 In order to help meet Southend's business land needs during the Plan period, the following proposal sites are identified:

PROPOSAL P4a - BAXTER AVENUE (see Town Centre Inset Map)

In July 1989, planning permission was granted for the erection of a five storey office block comprising 5,925m² over ground floor and basement parking on land fronting Baxter Avenue to the rear of Thamesgate House. This permission has yet to be implemented, and the site is therefore confirmed as appropriate for office use. Any development will be required to comply with the Council's normal height limit of five storeys where orientated at right angles to Baxter Avenue and only three storeys where parallel to the street. The site area is approximately 0.3 hectares.

PROPOSAL P4b - FORMER QUEENS HOTEL, HAMLET COURT ROAD

A vacant site comprising approximately 0.4 hectares, formerly occupied by the Queens's Hotel, at the southern end of Hamlet Court Road and adjoining the Westcliff-on-Sea railway station. In November 1991 the Council agreed to grant outline planning permission, subject to the completion of a legal agreement relating to infrastructure provision, for the erection of a part two/five/eight storey 120 bedroom hotel and five-storey block comprising 2,000m² of office floorspace with ground and basement level parking. This site would benefit from such a development and is therefore confirmed as appropriate for office and/or hotel use. The form and scale of buildings in any development scheme should have regard to the height and outlook of residential properties in Ditton Court Road and should achieve an attractive and interesting end feature to the district centre. Regard will also need to be had to the existing trees on the southern and western frontages of the site, which are affected by a Tree Preservation Order.

PROPOSAL P4c - WHITEGATE ROAD (see Town Centre Inset Map)

In 1988 the Council granted outline planning permission (now expired) for a four storey building comprising restaurant and approximately 1,100m² of offices, on the corner of Whitegate Road and Chichester Road. The site is vacant and the townscape of this area would benefit from its development. The site area is approximately 0.08 hectares.

PROPOSAL P4d - PITMANS CLOSE (see Town Centre Inset Map)

A largely vacant site on the corner of Tylers Avenue and Chichester Road, partly used for car parking. There are no outstanding planning permissions for development of this site, but it offers potential for a well designed office development, subject to the provision of appropriate

parking and servicing facilities. The proposal would make a significant improvement to this part of the town centre. The site area is approximately 0.09 hectares.

PROPOSAL P4e - EASTERN AVENUE

An area of approximately 0.9 hectares between Eastern Avenue and the Council's Highways Depot, as defined more precisely on the Proposals Map. There are a number of mature trees on the site at present which give it an attractive appearance and which are subject to a Tree Preservation Order. The Council has agreed to grant permission for an office village, subject to a legal agreement being completed. Whilst this development would be welcomed, its implementation now appears unlikely, at least in the foreseeable future. As an alternative, the Council would support its development for light industrial or other Class B1 uses. Although these remain the Council's preferred uses for the site, other uses (excluding food retailing) may be acceptable, and will be considered on their individual merits, where they would bring about the early development of the site for employment generating purposes. In furtherance of this objective, the Borough Council granted outline planning permission in October 1993 for a non-food retail warehouse development on the site. Any development will require a high standard of design and landscaping on the Eastern Avenue frontage to retain its pleasant appearance and to safeguard the amenities of residential properties on the opposite side of Eastern Avenue. In particular, any development will be required to safeguard the preserved trees on this frontage and, as far as possible, other such trees within the site, and to enhance them with additional planting and landscaping.*

PROPOSAL P4f - FORMER COAL DEPOT, KENWAY

An area of approximately 1.6 hectares east of the Southend (Victoria) to Liverpool Street railway line, formerly a coal and minerals depot and defined more precisely on the Proposals Map. Most of the site adjoins the Grainger Road Industrial Estate but access is at present via Vale Avenue. It would be necessary to provide an access to the site from Short Street via a section of private road in the ownership of British Rail which with their agreement would obviate the need for vehicles servicing the site to use Vale Avenue. This access improvement would permit the site to be used for Class B1 uses and could also provide an opportunity to relocate general and special industrial uses within Classes B2-B7* which cause environmental problems in residential areas, to a site with few, if any, environmental implications.*

PROPOSAL P4g - PRITTLEWELL STATION GOODS YARD, STATION APPROACH

This former railway goods yard is partly in use as a station car park and partly vacant. The northern part of the site (0.8 hectares) would benefit from, and is therefore allocated for, development for light industrial or other Class B1 uses, subject to a properly laid-out station car park and improved access arrangements at the junction of Station Approach with East Street to the satisfaction of the Highway Authority.*

PROPOSAL P4h - LAND NORTH OF PRINCE AVENUE

Approximately three hectares of agricultural land, forming part of a larger area of smallholdings declared surplus to requirements by the owner, is proposed for development as a business park. This proposal will form part of a wider integrated development for which a detailed planning brief will be prepared in accordance with Policy C20 (see page 37). Development of the site would be dependent upon;

- (a) *the implementation of all those elements of the proposed B1013 Access to Southend Scheme south of Eastwoodbury Lane;*
- (b) *junction improvements at the Bell and Kent Elms on the A127; and*

- (c) *the Southend/Rochford Outer By-Pass (if this is justified in highway terms) (Policies T2 and T4).*

Prior or parallel implementation of adjoining public open space (Proposal P7g) will also be required to safeguard the environment of residential areas to the east. Extensive use of planting to the boundaries of the site will be required to ensure its satisfactory integration into the townscape. This site is also close to the Public Safety Zone for runway 06 at Southend Airport, which will restrict the height of buildings in this location and the type of planting considered appropriate. Uses within Class B1 and B8 will be considered appropriate.*

Policy Cross References : C20 Planning Briefs, page 37; T2 A127, page 144; T4 B1013 Link and Eastwoodbury Lane, page 145; and Proposal P7g (Land North of Prince Avenue), page 125.

PROPOSAL P4j - EASTWOODBURY LANE

An area of approximately 0.35 hectares of land, identified on the Proposals Map, and currently occupied by a vicarage and church hall, is proposed as an extension to the Comet Way Industrial Estate, should the site become available (Class B1 and B8 uses). Access to the site will be required to be provided from Comet Way. The layout of buildings should have regard to the existing mature trees which border the site and which are subject to Tree Preservation Orders.*

PROPOSAL P4k - CENTRAL STATION, CLIFFTOWN ROAD (see Town Centre Inset Map)

An appropriately designed office development on 0.4 hectares north of Clifftown Road between Nelson Street and the southern entrance to Central Station could be supported by the Council if improvements to the station approach are achieved, and subject to the majority of existing public parking spaces being retained.