

SOUTHEND ON SEA
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Sustainability Appraisal
of the Central Southend
Area Action Plan
Submission Version

July 2011



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Baker Associates and Roger Tym & Partners have merged to become part of Peter Brett Associates LLP.



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Baker Associates and Roger Tym & Partners have merged to become part of Peter Brett Associates LLP.

Non-technical summary

1 Introduction

This report is the non-technical summary of the combined sustainability appraisal (SA) and strategic environmental assessment, of the submission version of the Southend Central Area, Area Action Plan (AAP).

This non-technical summary intended to provide an overview of the findings of the appraisal, with more detail of the process and outputs included in main report.

The main purpose of carrying out an SA is to assess what the impacts of development proposed in the AAP might be on the economy, the environment and society. Where potential negative effects are identified the SA then makes recommendations for how the AAP can be modified, or controls put on development, to avoid or mitigate against these. This is part of a process where successive stages of the emerging AAP are appraised to inform the plan preparation process.

The full SA report is a public document and its purpose is to show the relationship between sustainability development and the content of the AAP. The SA report allows readers of the plan to:

- get an idea of how effective the AAP might be in delivering more sustainable development
- where there might be adverse impacts and
- where there is potential for the AAP to go further in seeking sustainable development.

2 Sustainability appraisal stages

The SA is a process that continues throughout the preparation of the AAP. So far, the appraisal has included several stages and reports. These demonstrate the feedback process between plan making and the sustainability appraisal, allowing sustainability considerations to be integrated into the AAP during preparation.

The SA reports from earlier stages of appraisal are available on the Southend-on-Sea Borough Council Local Development Framework (LDF) website.

Scoping report: A combined scoping report was prepared for the Southend LDF to provide a picture of the background sustainability issues in the Borough. This is available on the Council's website. The scoping was supplemented with additional work on area specific detail for the AAP of the central area and seafront.

SA of Issues and Options: The SA at this stage provided an opportunity to appraise the emerging options and approach to development of the area. The consideration of alternatives, and identifying the relative sustainability impacts of these approaches is important for the SA and an SEA requirement.

SA of the Submission version: This is the current stage of the SA and it is a full appraisal of the objective, policies and proposals of the AAP.

3 The sustainability objectives

A set of sustainability objectives have been developed for the SA. These objectives are based on agreed national definitions of sustainable development, but adapted using the information gathered at scoping to tailor them to the needs of this SA. They cover a range of sustainability issues related to the protection of the environment and natural resource, the economy and society.

The purpose of the objectives is to provide a consistent definition of sustainable development for the SA process. The emerging objectives, policies and proposals of the AAP are then be tested against them as part of a process of systematic appraisal. Table 1 shows the sustainability objectives.

Table 1: Sustainability objectives for the SA of the Southend Central Area AAP

Concern	Objective
Social progress which recognises the needs of everyone	
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> enable all to have similar and sufficient levels of access to services, facilities and opportunities
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to provide the opportunity for people to meet their housing need
Education & Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to assist people in gaining the skills to fulfil their potential and increase their contribution to the community
Health, safety and security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to improve overall levels of health, reduce the disparities between different groups and different areas, and reduce crime and the fear of crime
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to value and nurture a sense of belonging in a cohesive community, whilst respecting diversity
Effective protection of the environment	
Biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to maintain and enhance the diversity and abundance of species, and safeguard these areas of significant nature conservation value
Landscape character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to maintain and enhance the quality and character and cultural significance of the landscape, including the setting and character of the settlement
Built environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to maintain and enhance the quality, safety and distinctiveness of the built environment and the cultural heritage
Prudent use of natural resources	
Air	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to reduce all forms of air pollution in the interests of local air quality and the integrity of the atmosphere
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to maintain and improve the quantity and quality of ground, sea and river waters, and minimise the risk of flooding
Land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to use land efficiently, retaining undeveloped land and bringing contaminated land back into use
Soil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to maintain the resource of productive soil
Minerals and other raw materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to maintain the stock of minerals and other raw materials
Energy sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to increase the opportunities for energy generation from renewable energy sources, maintain the stock of non renewable energy sources and make the best use of the materials, energy and effort embodied in the product of previous activity
Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment	
Local economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to achieve a clear connection between effort and benefit, by making the most of local strengths, seeking community regeneration, and fostering economic activity
Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to maintain and enhance employment opportunities matched to the size of the local labour force and its various skills, and to reduce the disparities arising from unequal access to jobs

Wealth creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to retain and enhance the factors which are conducive to wealth creation, including personal creativity, infrastructure, accessibility and the local strengths and qualities that are attractive to visitors and investors
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4 Findings of the sustainability appraisal

4.1 Introduction

The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) has recognised that the Central Southend AAP has an important role to play in the sustainable development of this area and the wider Borough.

The overall spatial strategy for the Borough is set in the Core Strategy Development Plan Document (part of the Southend-on-Sea Local Development Framework (LDF)). This AAP has been prepared to deliver the provisions of this spatial strategy for Southend's central area. The Core Strategy and options for delivering development have already undergone SA. Therefore, the principles of growth in this part of the Borough have already been decided on, and appraised. This SA of the AAP does not repeat this appraisal and instead, concentrates on assessing how this growth will be provided for in the central area, including the locations of growth. The full SA of the Core Strategy is available on the Council's LDF website.

The proposed AAP objectives provide the foundation for the development of policies and proposals for the central area. However, these objectives are stronger for some areas, such as built design enhancement, than for other areas such the role of the central area in the context of Southend as a whole.

The SA has identified that the objectives, policies and proposals of the AAP have the potential to deliver sustainability development in central Southend and beyond. The AAP contains much that is very compatible with achieving sustainable development. There are many positive aspects of the plan in relation to delivering sustainable development that include:

- securing more sustainable transport access to town centre, with emphasis on walking and cycling as well as public transport, with the result of fewer car trips and more equitable access for all
- building better quality development through designing places and buildings that fit the context of the area and provide for a vibrant town centre
- supporting the economy of the town through providing new spaces for a diverse range of businesses, including offices, retail and strong emphasis on the growing the tourism economy
- protecting the assets of the central area, including historic and cultural heritage of the built environment and protecting the high quality natural environment and seafront
- supporting new mixed communities in the central area through the provision of new homes and community services, including schools, health centres and open space

- continuing to expand the university and college facilities in the town centre to support a thriving education sector, which will help create a vibrant town, skilled workforce and opportunities for business growth.

The SA of the submission AAP reveals some other sustainability issues. The SA makes recommendations on how some aspects of the AAP could be improved to enhance the sustainability performance of the plan.

4.2 Transport and movement

To successfully achieve a modal shift away from car use, there is a need to ensure transport, movement and parking strategy presents a proactive and joined up approach to managing traffic in the town centre. Without this the regeneration of central Southend could be adversely affected by increasing congestion, with negative health and environmental impacts.

The policies of the AAP show a clear intention to make the town centre a better place with improvement to the pedestrian environment to encourage more people to walk. Improved links to the central area will also help reduce car use in the town centre, with benefits for the natural and residential environment.

The SA of policies makes some recommendations on how some changes could be made to make the policy intentions more clear, and it is hoped more easy to implement. These are:

- A single policy on mixed-mode shared priority routes, giving details on design and layout and the proposed routes through the town centre.
- A single Queensway enhancement policy to avoid repetition, with indicative layouts of the 'urban forest', linear park, crossing points and possible narrowing.
- Details of the development of public open space and links from the St John's Church area to the Eastern Esplanade/Marine Parade could be more succinctly present in a single policy, avoiding repetition between policies for different quarters.
- More detail on the anticipated physical infrastructure improvement needs for public transport interchanges as one policy for the central area.

4.3 Residential development

The policies of the AAP go some way toward helping development in the central area make a suitable contribution to meeting Southend's housing needs. An appendix to the AAP sets out the indicative housing numbers on each of the housing development sites. This quantification allows for an understanding of the distribution of new housing within the central area. It shows where residential development is a priority on a redevelopment site and that housing growth can be delivered to meet the requirement set in the spatial strategy.

In seeking more equitable access to housing the AAP could also consider policies that go beyond Core Policy affordable housing targets. Current affordable housing policy

is very unlikely to yield many new affordable homes in the town centre due to the size of development sites.

The AAP could also contain some more detail on where new community facilities should be located. This could include a text or policy more clearly setting out the location of the new primary school and health centre, as well the scale, location and type of open space required.

4.4 The built environment

The principle focus of AAP is how improvements can be made to the built environment of the central area, through new development and enhancement. This will have positive sustainability impacts related to improving the image of the centre. A better 'sense of place' can help support the community's pride in the place in the place where they live, which can have positive impacts on social sustainability. The town centre is also the showcase for the rest of the town, and therefore if this area has a high quality image it can encourage local and national investment in the whole town.

The policies of the AAP are not very detailed on the precise design details for new development. To ensure that development is delivered to the high quality standards the Council or others may need to prepare development briefs, masterplans and/or design codes for specific areas. This will help provide the fine grain guidance that will developers deliver good quality development.

4.5 Education and culture

Support for education in the town centre will have positive sustainability impacts, not only from improving availability of learning sites but also from the vibrancy a student population can bring to the central area.

The AAP could consider making it a requirement for larger new employment developments in the town centre to contribute to training associated with the university, to improve the skills of local residents and access to newly created employment.

Many sites are proposed for new education facilities, it will be important to make sure that sufficient sites come forward. However, it will also be important to ensure that this type of development does not prevent other town centre uses being brought forward. For example, some locations may be preferable for new homes rather than student accommodation. Concentration of student accommodation can also have detrimental impacts on neighbourhoods from a high transient population, although there can be benefits of creating vibrancy.

4.6 Employment and retail

The AAP recognises the primacy of central Southend for new retail and office development. This is compatible with sustainability objectives relating to supporting a thriving economy in Southend, and as the most sustainable location in terms of travel impacts in the Borough.

The AAP shows a clear intention to provide for economic growth in the central area. Economic and employment growth will be delivered through provision of new office space, improved retail offer, tourism and protection of existing employment areas.

However, there is a need to make sure that existing office and business space is not lost in favour of other uses, such as residential or education use. A quality office provision needs to be maintained in the town centre. Existing land that is currently in employment use should not be lost if no replacement is provided. For instance, if the Sainsbury's does not relocate and is therefore not available, alternative space for new offices will need to be identified in a similarly accessible location. There is the possibility that this may need to include Victoria Avenue sites suitable for demolition and redevelopment.

The central area is the most sustainable place for high trip generating office uses, based on transport and accessibility considerations. Also, other employment such as small industrial uses are an important source of local jobs and local services. Land availability in the Borough is limited, raising the importance of protecting what resources there are.

Through working with the university there is the potential to deliver wider benefits to the whole Borough. For instance, training in conjunction with the university to help local people access newly created local jobs. This can help ensure that the advantages of inward investment in physical employment infrastructure also supports local enterprise, provides jobs for local peoples and raises local skill levels.

4.7 Leisure, recreation and open space

The APP policies relating to leisure and recreation are compatible with sustainable development and should help deliver the benefits created by new and existing recreation and leisure facilities. This will have benefits for local communities as well as visitors.

The AAP is not very detailed on the need to deliver new hotels and conference facilities in the central area, although it is acknowledged that this is a need. Sites for this type of development could be identified to bring economic benefits to the town from increasing tourism and businesses spend.

New seafront and waterfront leisure and recreation development will need to take into account the potential conflict of uses. There will be different demands on the area from areas of quiet enjoyment of the natural environment to places for active water-sports. For everyone's enjoyment different uses will need to be managed to ensure high quality leisure opportunities for all.

These is also the potential for waterfront tourism and leisure to conflict with the nature conservation interest of the site, that will need to be managed to ensure no harm comes to internationally designated sites.

4.8 Sustainable construction

To reduce natural resource consumption created by the large scale of proposed restoration and redevelopment an area wide energy strategy could be included as part of the AAP.

The policy is unlikely to have any negative impacts on sustainable development. However, the SA queries whether all opportunities have been taken to secure high levels of sustainable construction and low carbon development in the central area.

The large mixed use and landmark sites proposed have real potential to deliver buildings to exemplar sustainability standards, both in construction and use of resources. Building

to high standards can have benefits for the resource use of the individual buildings as well as providing an example of standards that can be achieved. This can help guide the delivery of other development in the Borough, helping guide the way for sustainable construction.

The AAP could also contain more on the need to provide lower carbon energy throughout the central area. For instance, though using district heat and power networks in neighbourhood enhancement areas, or the potential of the seafront location for certain types of renewable energy generation. However, further evidence of the viability and feasibility of any such schemes on specific sites may be necessary.

There could be greater consistency in the AAP in the way flood issues are managed. The control of flood is covered through several different policies in the LDF. Some sites development principles policies refer to the need to manage surface water flooding and other do not. For sites where flood is not mentioned it is not clear if this is because there is little risk there, or an omission to policy. This may require clarification in the AAP.

4.9 Natural environment

The policies of the AAP are likely to be beneficial in protecting the natural environment, particularly areas of high designated quality. However, there may be potential for more detail to be included on some aspects of protection and enhancement.

The plan could contain greater detail on how some of the elements of urban greening will be achieved. For example the 'urban forest' at Queensway has the potential to bring the natural environment into the heart of the town. A design strategy should be prepared for the 'urban forest' so contributions can be sought from local developers.

Policies could contain more detail on how the 'green grid' strategy for the central area will work to alleviate pressure on the foreshore. New open space is expected to help provide an alternative for recreation to the foreshore, to help reduce visitor pressure in the designated area. However, to successfully achieve this there is a need detail in the AAP on how the 'green grid' and new open space will support this. Currently the policies on open space in the AAP are not joined-up and do not present an overall picture of how the green grid will work to relieve pressure. Additional information could include the design of new open spaces so they provide a suitable alternative, for instance reducing the number of dog walkers.

In providing new open space in the urban environment emphasis should be put on providing soft landscape rather than hard landscaping. This will help bring nature into the town with many benefits for sustainable development, including biodiversity protection and enhancement as well as reducing urban heating effects.

There is repeated reference to lighting strategies in the AAP. These can help create a more attractive night-time environment and lighting of 'green grid' links could help improve safety. However, for nocturnal wildlife lighting can create barriers to movement. Therefore, lighting schemes need to take potential impacts into account, using suitable wattage, timings and low level lighting to avoid adverse impacts.

4.10 Implementation

It is evident that no sustainability benefits can be realised if development cannot be implemented. The implementation section of the AAP shows how the policies and proposals might be secured, and includes details of funding streams and delivery partners. However, not all the proposed AAP proposal projects are covered in funding details, indicating that some schemes may need further work to demonstrate deliverability and may be more long-term in their implementation.

The SA also identifies the potential for some simplification of AAP policies to remove some repetition and therefore help clarify the expectations for new development in helping deliver sustainable development. New policies are suggested, such as on improved walking and cycling routes and Queensway enhancements. Other suggestions are to remove repetition from some site proposal policies (Part C), relying instead on the generic policies of Part B.

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Appendix 1: Sustainability appraisal of the Area Action Plan Objectives

Appendix 2: Sustainability and Area Action Plan Policies

Appendix 3: Indicative Sustainability Appraisal monitoring framework

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Southend-on-Sea Borough Council is currently preparing a Local Development Framework (LDF) for the Borough. This will outline the development strategy of the Borough for the next 20 years.
- 1.2 This report sets out the basis for the sustainability appraisal (SA), including Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of one of the 'Development Plan Documents' (DPD) that forms part of the LDF - the Southend-on-Sea Central Area Action Plan (DPD3).
- 1.3 The purpose of the SA report is to set out a brief description of existing sustainability issues in the Central area, the sustainability objectives that will be used for appraisal and a brief overview of the sustainability issues raised in the Proposed Submission version of the DPD.
- 1.4 This SA builds on early work carried out on the SA/SEA of the Core Strategy of the LDF. The SA Report accompanying the submission versions of the Core Strategy should be read in a conjunction with this SA report in order to get a full picture of the issues in the plan area and the objectives used, as well as the sustainability implications of the Core Strategy of the LDF that have already been identified.
- 1.5 This SA of the Central Area AAP follows on from two earlier appraisal stages on Issues and Options for the area, one completed in 2007 and the second March 2010. The first SA report was of the 2007 version of the Town Centre Area Action Plan Issues and Options version, covering largely the same area as the Central Area AAP. The second was Issues and Options for the whole central area, covering the same area as the submission version. The SA report repeats much from the original reports as this remains valid.
- 1.6 Sustainability appraisals are being undertaken of the whole LDF, with SAs already undertaken of all component LDF documents to date, these have reached various stage of completion, they are:
- the Core Strategy Development Plan Document
 - the Development Management Policies Development Plan Document
 - the joint Southend Airport and Environs Area Action Plan
 - Design and Townscape Guide Supplementary Planning Document
 - the Planning Obligations Supplementary Plan Document
- 1.7 The SA of the LDF is being carried out as the LDF is prepared, and the process is being applied to each of the constituent Local Development Documents, in this case the Area Action Plans. The SA of the LDF is being prepared in order to fulfil the statutory requirement from the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, including the requirement set out in paragraph 4.24 of Planning Policy Statement

12, stating that to meet the test of 'soundness' Development Plan Documents must have met the procedural requirement that: '*the plan and its policies have been subjected to sustainability appraisal*'. However, the main purpose of the SA is to help create a better plan and one that takes full account of the potential for impacts on sustainable development. This aims to avoid and mitigate the potential for adverse impacts and maximise the benefits for greater sustainability.

2 The approach to the sustainability appraisal of the Area Action Plans

- 2.1 As noted in the introductory section of this report, the purpose of this stage is to ascertain what issues should be considered in undertaking an SA of the Central Area Action Plan (AAP) and to complete an initial assessment of options.
- 2.2 The first stage of the appraisal is gathering baseline information on the characteristics of the area (section 3) and identifying the other plans and programmes relevant of the SA of the area (section 4). From this and previous SA stages the sustainability objectives that form the basis of appraisal are developed (section 5). This stages leads onto the appraisal stages in sections 7-15, summary and conclusions are in section 18.

Sustainability appraisal of the LDF

- 2.3 The initial stage of information gathering for the sustainability appraisal (SA) builds on work already undertaken for the SA of the Southend-on-Sea LDF Core Strategy. The early SA of the Core Strategy, reported in August 2006, provides a useful basis for this appraisal and could be read in conjunction with this scoping document for a better understanding of the process.

Collation of baseline information

- 2.4 The baseline data for the SA of the Area Action Plan outlined below has been specifically chosen to inform the SA of this DPD. It draws upon work carried out by Southend-on-Sea Borough Council (SBC) during the preparation of the plan and Baker Associates work carried out for the SA of the Core Strategy.
- 2.5 The primary sources of information for the baseline data collation are :
- Southend-on-Sea Town Centre Area Action Plan Key Statistics, SBC
 - Town Centre Area Actions Plan Issues and Options paper, SBC
 - Baker Associates, Sustainability Appraisal, for Southend on Sea, Local Development Framework, Core Strategy Development Plan Document, SBC
- 2.6 In addition, relevant plans and programmes containing sustainability objectives or goals that will be important influences on the SA and AAP have also been identified. Again, these are referenced from those identified by those producing the AAP, as well as those identified in the SA of the Core Strategy. In identifying the relevant plans and programmes it has been important to restrict this to those plans and programmes with real relevance to the area, in order that there is a clear purpose for their recognition.
- 2.7 The baseline information descriptions and identification of key sustainability issues is shown in Section 4.

Sustainability appraisal of the AAP

- 2.8 The SA of the AAP is a continual process during preparation from an early stage up to submission. Part of this included appraising the alternatives put forward for implementing the strategy of the AAP.
- 2.9 At this stage in AAP preparation it is necessary to consider the sustainability impacts of the policies that have been proposed for delivering development, contained in the proposed submission version. This follows the earlier stage where the options for delivering development were appraised. Early involvement in the process helps make sure that sustainability considerations can be taken into account and implications can be incorporated into policy and proposal preparation from the outset. Sections 7 to 15 contain this appraisal, with Section 18 summarising findings and recommendations.
- 2.10 This is the third consultation on the AAP, following two Issues and Options consultation stages for the central area of Southend. The two early Issues and Options did differ quite considerably, requiring re-appraisal. From the 2007 to 2010 the Issues and Options were comprehensively revised to help implement the town centre masterplan¹. This included a change in the area defined as the central Southend to accommodate a larger part of the urban area, including part of the seafront previously part of the Seafront AAP area. The area covered by the submission version of the AAP remains the same as that of the 2010 Issues and Options version.
- 2.11 **SA of Issues and Options:** The SA at this stage provided an opportunity to appraise the emerging options and approach to development of the area. The consideration of alternatives, and identifying the relative sustainability impacts of these approaches is important for the SA and an SEA requirement. At this early stage the alternatives, or options, presented were very broad with decisions still to be made about the type and number of policies to be included, as well as on specific sites for development. Therefore, the approach taken to appraisal, although based on the sustainability objectives, was only intended to provide an overview of relative methods of implementation as a commentary rather than using systematic appraisal matrices. More rigorous testing is a feature of later stages of the appraisal when the structure of the plan allows this approach and more detailed identification of impacts can be carried out.
- 2.12 **SA of the Submission Version:** This is an SA of the full plan including policies and site allocations. The purpose of the SA at this stage is to identify what the implications might be for achieving more sustainable development from implementation of the AAP. The SA looks at the detail of the policies as well as the overall principles for sustainable development. The SA also is used to evaluate the 'usability' of the AAP and if it is likely to be successful in implementing the objectives of the Plan.

¹ Southend Central Area Master Plan – Consultation Draft September 2007

Timetable

- 2.13 The timetable for the SA work has entirely been directed by the programme by which the AAP is prepared and goes through successive stages of consultation, development, examination and adoption in early 2012.

Meeting the requirements of the Strategy Environmental Assessment Regulations

- 2.14 In order to satisfy the Strategic Environmental Assessment Regulations it is necessary for the SA report to fulfil certain requirements. Table 2.1 shows how these requirements are being met through this SA report, both as part of the main text and thorough appendices. For further detail on some matters, such as the full baseline, the SA reports from other parts of the LDF and original scoping will also provide a useful resource.

Table 2.1: Requirements of the SEA Regulations and how they are met through the SA report

SEA Requirements	Covered in the SA report at:
a) An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programme and relationships with other relevant plans and programmes.	Section 1 Appendix 1
b) The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme	Section 4 Appendix 2 LDF Scoping Report
c) The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected.	Section 4 Appendix 2
d) Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC.	Section 4
e) The environmental protection objectives, established at international, community or national level which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation.	Section 3
f) The likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as: biodiversity; population; human health; fauna; flora; soil; water; air; climatic factors; material assets; cultural heritage, including architectural and archaeological heritage; landscape; and the interrelationship between the above factors. These effects should include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long term, permanent and temporary, positive and negative	Section 6-15 Appendix 2
g) The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and, as fully as possible, offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme.	Section 16 Appendix 2
h) An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with and a description of how the assessment was undertaken, including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information.	Section 6 (SA report on Issues and Options, March 2010)
i) A description of measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with Article 10.	Section 17
j) A non-technical summary of the information provided under the above headings.	Non-technical summary

3 Other plans and strategies

- 3.1 A more comprehensive summary of other relevant plans and programmes can be found in the issues and options and Core Strategy SA Report. This section is intended to draw out the specific issues relating to the AAP as is updated to 2009.
- 3.2 The **Habitats Directive** and **Conservation (Natural Habitats &c) Regulations 1994** (as amended), have relevance to the AAP. This is because the area covered by the AAP is in close proximity, and in some instances overlapping, with areas designated as being of international significance for nature conservation. These designated areas are collectively known under European legislation as Natura 2000 sites. Any potential impact of planning policy, or specific proposals, on these areas needs assessment to determine the nature of these impacts to ensure that they will mitigate or avoid completely harm to the designated features on the site.
- 3.3 Planning Policy Statements/Guidance: Of particular relevance are:
- PPS4 Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth
 - PPG20: Coastal planning.
- 3.4 Other PPS are also important guides for development such as PPS1: Delivery Sustainable development.
- 3.5 PPS4 (2009) stipulates the need to ensure that employment needs are based on a strong evidence base. This evidence should include the detailed floorspace needs for economic development, including for all main town centre uses (EC1.3). An evidence base should be used to identify deficiencies in provision of shopping and other facilities which serve people's day-to-day needs. Quantification of floorspace should also be identified for leisure uses, in addition to identifying the qualitative needs.
- 3.6 To deliver more sustainable economic growth the PPS calls for positive planning of growth sector clusters, and this could be a role for offices in Southend town centre. A specific policy of the PPS, EC3, deals with planning for centres. At a local level this policy calls for residential or office development above ground floor retail, leisure or other facilities within centres. Also, plans should identify sites or buildings within existing centres suitable for development, conversion or change of use.
- 3.7 Policy EC4 covers planning for consumer choice and promoting competitive town centres, including planning for a diverse range of uses throughout centres. For retail development a strong mix is encouraged, recognising the importance of smaller shops to enhance the character and vibrancy of centres. Of relevance to plans for Southend centre the PPS states existing markets should be retained and enhanced, where appropriate. Overall plans for the town centres should aim to *'enhance the established character and diversity of their town centre.'* Overall, there is also the need to ensure development in main urban centres does not

adversely impact on the economy of other nearby centres. It should be noted that PPS4 (2009) replaces for former town centre guidance on PPS6.

- 3.8 PPG20 (1992) is the national guidance note on coastal planning. Its primary aims are:
- to protect the undeveloped coasts
 - managing appropriate development, particularly that which requires a coastal location
 - managing risk, including flooding and erosion, and
 - improving the environment particularly in urbanised or despoiled areas.
- 3.9 PPG20 recognises that the developed coast may provide opportunities for economic restructuring and regeneration of existing urban areas, thereby improving their appearance and environment and notes that this approach can be particularly effective for buildings and areas of historic interest.
- 3.10 The **Sustainable Communities** plan published in 2003, set out the Government's agenda for sustainable development and urban renaissance across England. As part of the plan the Urban White Paper outlined key growth areas in the north and south of the country. A key part of delivering this agenda is the planned development of four identified growth areas, the first priority being the growth of the Thames Gateway stretching along the Thames estuary from London to the sea and including Southend-on-Sea.
- 3.11 This plan sets out an approach to creating new communities in the UK that provide sustainable places in which to live. The key aim of the approach is a step change in housing delivery increasing housing levels about the existing growth rate. These new homes will include homes to meet the needs of all groups, and be integrated with economic growth and provision of new services and greenspaces to create desirable places to live.
- 3.12 The **Thames Gateway** area is a co-ordinated effort to develop and regenerate fifteen local authority areas, across three regions along the Thames estuary and north Kent coast. Renaissance Southend Limited is an integral part of the overall strategy of regenerated polycentric retail and service centres. The role played by Southend-on-Sea and the south Essex sub area is reflected in the Regional Spatial Strategy and discussed in the Sustainability Appraisal of the Core Strategy.
- 3.13 The Thames Gateways and the south Essex towns which comprise part of it are a key national objective, the economic and housing growth outlined in the Thames Gateway area should be supported by the Area Action Plans. The AAPs should consider Southend-on-Sea's coast and town centre within the wider sub regional context.
- 3.14 **Thames Gateway Strategic Partnership:** The Thames Gateway Strategic Partnership produced a document specifically for South Essex. This presents an *'opportunity for driving forward regeneration and achieving growth and prosperity*

in South Essex as a key part of Thames Gateway. The material in this document has been reflected in the East of England Plan.

- 3.15 A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Water Cycle Study and Surface Water Management Plan are also being produced and will be part of the background material defining and guiding land use planning in the Borough.
- 3.16 The East of England **Regional Spatial Strategy** (RSS) was prepared to provide the direct planning context for the preparation of the LDF. However, in 2010 RSS were abolished by government. The content of the RSS are still in place as a planning consideration but no longer have the status of setting planning policy for local authority areas. The East of England RSS is not contested by Southend-on-Sea Borough Council as the growth and regeneration policies it contained for the Essex Thames Gateway have been endorsed by Council and adopted in the Core Strategy.
- 3.17 The RSS set out the role that Southend-on-Sea is expected to perform and its contribution to the region, the level of employment and housing development that the LDF is to make provision for, and various objectives that the LDF is expected to contribute to.
- 3.18 The key objective of the RSS for the sub-region was to achieve regeneration through jobs-led growth, higher levels of local economic performance and employment, and a more sustainable balance of local jobs and workers.
- 3.19 Policy SS5 in the RSS outlined town centre policy for the region. The RSS promotes the creation of ‘thriving, vibrant’ town centres, which will continue to be the focus of investment and regeneration. Each local authority should produce a strategy for each town centre to promote successful mixed use economies, manage change and support cultural heritage. Local Authorities should also protect and enhance existing neighbourhood centres.
- 3.20 The RSS outlined that local Planning Authorities and local agencies should work towards achieving the regeneration of coastal towns and communities and the conservation of the environment of the coast and coastal waters.
- 3.21 In the RSS Local Development Documents were expected to ensure that the in the region’s coastal areas:
- town centres continue to provide for local and visitor needs;
 - the interrelationship and linkages between town centres and leisure areas are facilitated for their mutual benefit; and
 - retailing in leisure areas where viable, so long as it does not adversely affect town centres.
- 3.22 Specific Essex Thames Gateway policies were ETG1 and ETG4 that set out the major zones of change in the Thames Gateway/South Essex sub-region and including Southend Town centre as a ‘*cultural and intellectual hub and a higher education centre of excellence*’. Policy included specific provisions for upgrading the university campus (much of which is already complete or underway) and

improving local passenger transport accessibility. The expected job and housing growth is also specified in the policy.

- 3.23 The **Community Strategy** and SBC **Corporate plan** are both important parts of local policy . Under the new provision for making development plans as explained in PPS12: Local Development Frameworks, *‘the local development framework should be a key component in the delivery of the community strategy setting out its spatial aspects where appropriate and providing a long term spatial vision.’*
- 3.24 The **Community Plan** for Southend sets the vision for Southend-on-Sea as ‘a vibrant coastal town and prosperous regional centre where people enjoy living, working and visiting’. This vision is to be achieved through inter-linked themes detailed in the plan.
- *prosperous community – a prosperous local economy*
 - *learning community – opportunities for learning for all and a highly skilled workforce*
 - *safer community – crime, disorder and offending reduced*
 - *healthy community – improved health and well-being*
 - *environmentally aware community – improved transport infrastructure and a quality environment*
 - *supportive community – better life chances for vulnerable people*
 - *cultural community – a cultural capital.*
- 3.25 Key themes relating to the AAP includes; improving the centre and attracting conferences to the town, amongst 21 objectives.
- 3.26 Transport issues for the area are covered in the **Local Transport Plan 3** (2011/12 – 2014/15). This reinforces need for a high quality public transport infrastructure as part of creating the sustainable communities. The town centre in particular is the focus of parking, pedestrian improvements, traffic management systems, reducing severance impacts of the A127 and public transport improvements.
- 3.27 The **Southend on Sea Core Strategy** is the overarching part of the LDF that has implications for the AAP. This contains policies that cover all development in the Borough, and sets goals for housing and job development in the town centre and sea front areas. Further information on the appraisal of the policies relating to the two areas can be found in Section 6. Other component parts of the LDF are of relevance to the AAP as well as additional SPD still to be prepared on Sustainable Transport and the Green Space and Green Grid Strategies for the Borough.
- 3.28 **South Essex Green Grid Strategy:** this is a long-term project to deliver a network of open spaces and green links throughout Thames Gateway South Essex, as part of The Thames Gateway regeneration area. This aims to bring significant environmental improvements to this part of Essex, through the

provision of combined recreational open spaces, wildlife corridors and improving the appearance of the landscape. The purpose of the Greengrid strategy is to:

- Provide a holistic and long-term vision for the sustainable future development and management of the south Essex area
- Define an environmental infrastructure that promotes the establishment and managements of appropriate character settings
- Provide the context for development over the long term.

3.29 Therefore, the Greengrid strategy will have particular implications for the LDF by ensuring improvements to the 'green' character of the Borough are taken into account in a strategic way – with long term planning for this change and how development can contribute to this.

3.30 A masterplan has been prepared for the regeneration and renewal of the town centre. This is the **Southend Central Area Masterplan**. The purpose of the masterplan is to set a vision for central Southend and the seafront, as part of the major scheme for Renaissance Southend. The aim is to:

- act as a catalyst for realising the vision and objectives for the revitalisation of the area
- to help develop confidence amongst landowners and therefore encourage investment
- to help deliver civic pride.

3.31 This document forms the basis of the AAP. The AAP takes forward many of the projects and proposals of the masterplan so they become planning policy, rather than a more open framework for delivery. However, the masterplan area only extends up Victoria Avenue to Harcourt Avenue, and none of the 'Sutton' Gateway.

4 Baseline characterisation of the Borough and Central Area

- 4.1 During preparation of the SA of the Core Strategy information was collected on sustainability issues on a Borough-wide basis. At this stage in scoping for the SA of the AAP it is necessary to add to layer of detail to the more generic information collected previously in order to better inform the SA of issues of significance to central area.
- 4.2 The SEA Directive is concerned with the assessment of '*the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan*', and this requires where possible some understanding of the 'baseline' situation so that the change that might arise from the influence of the plan can be considered.
- 4.3 The SA Report of the Core Strategy submission draft contains as Appendix 3 baseline information for the Borough. Repeated here are the identified key sustainability issues for the Borough.

Summary of issues

- 4.4 Overall the gathering of data on the environmental baseline has served to identify a few key issues in the Plan area:
- the area is under quite high risk of flood, although direct tidal inundation is largely mitigated for through sea flood defences. However, tidal effects on the rivers in the Borough may present a greater risk to the central area, and effects of climate change will only serve to increase this
 - habitats of international significance are located within the Borough, although outside the built development boundary. These must be protected not only from direct disturbance from development but also change that would threaten their integrity, such as increased pollution or changes in water availability. However the key threat is largely beyond the control of the LDF is caused by built development limiting the natural movement of the coastal mudflats inland. These effects of 'coastal squeeze' will be exacerbated by climate change and sea level rise
 - the constrained boundaries of the Borough and the need for new housing is putting pressure on open space within the built up area for development, as well as on the high quality agricultural land on the built up area boundary, maximising the need to make best use of urban land including in the town centre
 - nature conservation and biodiversity assets within the built up area are limited, and every attempt should be made to conserve and enhance existing assets, and create new ones, as well as the protection and enhancement of wildlife corridors
 - there are increasing traffic levels in the Borough, with consequences for air quality, and new development must help to limit any increase in this, by endeavouring to suggest a change to travel patterns (number, length and mode), through the spatial strategy

- studies have identified limits to the availability and accessibility of open space of different types and standard, especially in central Southend-on-Sea
- the East of England, and south Essex in particular is, and will be, experiencing a shortage of potable water supply, therefore this must be taken into account in new development, and every attempt made to include water efficient design into new development
- the quality of the built environment is important, not only with the effect of new building in 'mending the fabric', but also in affecting existing areas of identifiable character. Parts of central Southend are characterised by a current low quality in the built environment, although the underlying quality of the natural and built environment is high in many areas.

4.5 The key social and economic impacts are the:

- current high levels of out commuting to London, due to relatively low house prices in Southend compared to the other local authority areas around London, and lack of appropriate employment opportunities in the Borough
- an identified need for affordable housing
- if there is not diversification of the economy this could lead to economic downturn in the area as the traditional employment base of the Borough is in decline
- relatively high levels of deprivation in some parts of the Borough, according to the Indices of Deprivation 2007, which identifies that some wards contain areas of significant deprivation, especially in the central area. For example, most of the Kursaal ward and parts of the Milton and Southchurch wards are in the 10% most deprived nationally. This includes areas with high levels of income, health and disability related deprivation.

4.6 An additional matter not addressed in the Core Strategy SA, but of importance to the AAP, is the impacts of climate change. Most recent predictions of the climate change for the East of England come from the UK Climate Projections (UKCP09). The predictions are all shown for the 2050s under a medium emissions scenarios, under low or higher scenarios emissions will be correspondingly lower and higher:

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

4.7 Predictions of sea level rise in the London area are included in the UK Climate Projections *Marine and Coastal Projections Report* (June, 2009). These show that by 2050 sea level rise could be up to 25.8cm (high emissions scenarios) but even under low scenarios could be 18.4cm.

- 4.8 Sea level rise could lead to issues such as:
- water resource deficiencies, which may lead to serious issues in the area particularly with the levels of development set for the Thames Gateway
 - increased flood risk, including for sea defence overtopping, and also from rivers
 - a risk of subsidence through changing soil moisture levels.

Baseline information for the Centre Area Action Plan

- 4.9 Several other key pieces of evidence are sources of information, these are:
- The Southend-on-Sea Local Economic Assessment (November 2010)
 - Southend-on-Sea Town Centre Masterplan
 - Southend on Sea Retail and Office Study 2010
- 4.10 For the purposes of collecting further evidence for the LDF, the council have defined the boundary of the town centre as the in the masterplan, to include administrative wards of Milton and Victoria. The SA uses data from these two wards as the basis for data collection on the social and economic characteristics of the area.

Role of the town centre

- 4.11 Southend-on-Sea town centre is a major retail, employment and commercial centre serving a catchment population of over 325,000 people. It lies at the heart of the Borough of Southend-on-Sea. The Town Centre is the Borough's most important commercial area and largest shopping centre, providing nearly 40% of the jobs in the Borough.
- 4.12 Retail is an important role of the town centre, with the shops focused on the High Street, forming a central spine through the centre from north to south. The High Street is pedestrianised linking the Victoria Plaza (1960s) and Royals (1980s) retail centres. On the periphery of the northern part of the High Street is the town centres only large food retailer and a major retail outlet offering non food goods. There is some question about the future of Sainsbury's at this site, with the possibility to of the supermarket relocating to an edge of centre location.
- 4.13 The college and new university complex is adjacent to the High Street, with more development planned. Development of a multi-screen cinema, restaurants, café's and bars mainly along High Street side streets has given the town centre a complimentary leisure offer.
- 4.14 Victoria Avenue is the main area for office accommodation. The Council views that Victoria Avenue has a number of 1960's office developments, some of which are outmoded for modern requirements and are long-term vacant.
- 4.15 The central area of the town also is the focus for much of the seaside leisure activity. With the entrance to the Pier at Pier Hill at the southern end of the High

Street as well as the Adventure Island ‘fun park’. The seafront area also includes the eastern and western esplanades and formal parks of the Southend cliffs.

Housing

- 4.16 Extensive areas of high density housing providing homes for some 18,000 people (11% of the Borough total) in 10,000 households adjoin the centre. Housing areas around the high street are of historic and architectural quality and are designated as conservation areas².

Travel and transport

- 4.17 The town centre is accessed by two railway stations, Southend Victoria at the north end of the High Street and Central Station in the main shopping area. The newly refurbished bus station is also in the town centre, adjacent to the High Street. The main access by car is the A127 dual carriageway via Victoria Avenue and the A13 London Road, which has smaller and independent retail along it. The town centre has parking facilities for around 5,000 cars in surface and multi-storey car parks, Council owned car parking encourages short stay shoppers, but attempts to deter commuters through its pricing structure.
- 4.18 Cycling and walking routes are adequate, although there is potential for greater connectivity. The relatively flat character of the Southend topography means there is very good potential for more trips to be made by this mode. The seafront provides a particularly valuable connection of coastal neighbourhoods to the central Southend.
- 4.19 As previously noted in Section 3 there are also various schemes proposed through the Local Transport Plan 3 to bring enhancements to the public transport provision of the area.
- 4.20 All new development needs to support walking and cycling in the town centre, as well as the smooth flow of public transport and good quality interchange facilities. Linking the town centre to the seafront is also a key issue, and this will include linking the proposals and approach of this AAP and that for the seafront.
- 4.21 Studies show that Southend performs favourably in terms of walk / public transport accessibility to other East of England towns, with 84% of the population able to access employment in this way.

Population

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

² SBC, Town Centre AAP, Issues and Options Report

Resident Population

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

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

Employment and Economy

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

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

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

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

Unemployment rates

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

Source: 2008/09 Unemployment Monitor Summary Statistics – Issue 127 May 2009³

- 4.26 Despite the recession constraining consumer spending and trading conditions needing some time to recover, regeneration activity is improving the investment potential of the town centre. This is expected to partially counter the effects of lost income from public sector employees and the 2011 Vat increase. In the long term, Southend's retail sector is robust, and provides an important sub-regional focus, through its growth potential is constrained by the proximity of Lakeside and Bluewater shopping centres.
- 4.27 Employment in the town centre is diverse. There is strong retail economy the town centre ranks 192 out of 711 UK retail centres, though this has fallen from a high of 102 in 2009. Tourism brings in around 5 million visitors a year (2009) who spend around £330 million. Southend also has a strong role as a provider of business services and public administration, including contact centres. Southend town centre is identified as having clusters of cultural, creation and digital employment activities in the South Essex sub-region.

Social characteristics

- 4.28 Education rates show that although the rate of adults with no qualifications are higher in central Southend than for the Borough as a whole, there are also more residents with higher level qualifications. This may be as a result of younger professional people with qualifications living close to or in the town centre juxtaposed with pockets of deprivation, although without further investigation this cannot be confirmed.
- 4.29 There have been changes in the skills set of Southend residents in terms of post GCSE qualification, with a significant improvement in the number of people acquiring level NVQ4+ qualifications. A reason for this is the improvements to the Higher and Further Education providers in central Southend.
- 4.30 The Town Centre is made up of Milton and Victoria wards, and also includes some parts of the Kursaal ward. The Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2004 indicate that where these three ward areas overlap with the commercial and retail centre of the Town Centre area there are high levels of deprivation, with sub-ward areas being in the 10% most deprived nationally, and others in the majority of the town

³ The data used are claimant count levels collected by the Department for Work and Pensions. These data are a by-product of the administrative records of all people claiming benefits at Jobcentre Plus offices. The claimant count rate is calculated by expressing the number of people claiming unemployment-related benefits as a percentage of the estimated resident working-age population of the area. This figure is produced by the ONS Population Estimates Unit. Note, that the claimant count data relates to the number of benefit claimants only and therefore does not provide a comprehensive measure of unemployment.

centre, with the exception of some residential areas, being in the most deprived 30% nationally.

- 4.31 The number of cars per household in central Southend is significantly lower (0.72) than for the rest of the Borough (1.09). This may reflect good transport connections but is also likely to be characteristic of income deprivation in parts of the centre.

Built environment quality

- 4.32 Some of the town centre is currently of poor architectural quality, for example the low quality of the Farringdon multi-storey car park, although this is soon to be demolished. There is also recent regeneration, including the South East Essex College and University of Essex buildings, Pier Hill and the first phase of the Travel Centre have improved this, there is scope for further environmental improvements and making land available for alternatives uses.
- 4.33 The new Victoria Gateway Scheme provides a considerable uplift to the public realm at this important entrance to the town centre and also supports a more integrated approach to public transport and surface access across a major thoroughfare into the town centre. In addition along the seafront, the City Beach scheme has realigned the carriageway to create wider pavements and space for cafes, activities and created attractive features such as fountains and lighting within a new public space.
- 4.34 There exists a large concentration of poor quality commercial stock in the centre of Southend, particularly around Victoria Avenue.
- 4.35 The town centre area also contains many listed buildings and four conservation areas of consisting Prittlewell in the north, Milton and Clifftown in the south west, and Warrior Square located in the middle of the centre. The conservation areas are all predominantly residential neighbourhoods, and Clifftown directly borders the retail core of the town as well as the seafront. Listed buildings are within the town centre, particularly within the conservation areas, although are also found beyond the boundaries of these areas. Many of the listed buildings reflect Southend's heritage as a seaside holiday destination.

Open space

- 4.36 There are only very limited areas of public open space, particularly green space, in the town centre. The seafront to the south of the town centre area does have high quality open spaces, in particular the Southend Cliffs formal gardens.
- 4.37 However, within the main commercial and retail areas of the town centre green space provision is poor, and includes the recently improved cemetery / open space at St. John's church behind the Royals shopping centre and Warrior Square and Prittlewell Square Gardens – a high quality formal garden set within a conservation area in the south west of the central area. A major enhancement scheme for Warrior Square Gardens has recently been completed including the provision of an architecturally designed café and remodelled public green space.

- 4.38 Churchill Gardens in the north of the town centre area provides additional open space, although is part of a more residential neighbourhood. Green spaces are needed throughout the urban area as demand will increase with a warming climate and these areas can help cool built urban areas, preventing 'heat island' impacts. Therefore, provision of green open spaces may be a matter to be addressed by the AAP.
- 4.39 Redevelopment of the centre and proposals of the AAP should take into account ways in which open spaces in this location can contribute to the Thames Gateway and South Essex Green Grid strategy.

Flood

- 4.40 Although there is a risk of flood along the seafront south of the town centre. There is also the risk of surface water flooding throughout the town centre area, which will need to be managed through design and drainage of new development. There is also increased fluvial flood risk at the Kursaal area east of Southchurch Avenue which is at greater risk of flood according to Environment Agency maps.

Air quality

- 4.41 The Essex Air Quality Consortium identifies that current air quality in Southend is below action levels. The main source of air pollution in Southend is road transport on busy road links such as the A127, A13 and A1159, and therefore in the Town Centre controlling traffic levels will be key to maintaining air quality. There are currently about 35 small scale industrial processes which are authorised by the Borough Council. These are not considered to emit significant quantities of air pollution.
- 4.42 Congestion is a challenge in the centre particularly on the A127 near the town centre, as is a key barrier to accessing employment.

Nature conservation

- 4.43 There are no sites of identified nature conservation importance in the central area. However, the potential for nature conservation enhancement should be a consideration of all development sites in the area.
- 4.44 The Town Centre is also near the internationally designated Natura 2000 sites, as referred to in Section 3. Therefore, development in these areas will have to ensure it will not have an adverse impact on these nature conservation sites. Potential impact pathways include sewerage, rainwater run-off, or pollution impacts of large scale new development, as well as any direct impact on the birds for which these areas are designated.

Key issues

- 4.45 The additional baseline material gathered for the Central Area AAP identifies several matters that may need to be addressed by the SA. These are:

- development should help in the continued enhancement of the built environment in the town centre, with new buildings of high quality and developed to sound urban design principles
- new urban open space, including new green space, could be provided in the town centre, this may be particularly important given the changing climate and the likelihood of even greater demand for outdoor social space
- the area is currently experiencing high levels of deprivation, and this should be addressed through the AAP
- the town centre is a focus of employment for the Borough, and this role needs to be maintained, while also ensuring a range of employment opportunities are maintained in a variety of employment sectors. It will also be necessary to ensure high quality jobs are provided
- air quality of the town centre should be maintained
- every attempt should be made to bring biodiversity enhancements to the Town Centre, and also to ensure development in this area does not harm the nearby Natura 2000 sites
- much of the Town Centre is used for car parking, the AAP needs to set out plans for the rationalisation of town centre parking in order to allow land to be released for other uses and create a higher quality urban environment. In addition, establishing residents parking schemes in the neighbourhoods in proximity to commercial and office areas is necessary to reduce car commuting, in tandem with delivery of the Local Transport Plan proposals for improved public transport in and around the town centre.

5 Sustainability Framework

- 5.1 The framework below is based upon that in the Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal framework, however it has been altered to reflect the specific needs of the AAP area. These changes are based upon the wider policy context, the baseline data and the issues and options reports for the area covered by the AAP.
- 5.2 Further detail on the derivation of the objectives of the sustainability framework are shown in the Core Strategy SA report, including the Scoping stage report.

Figure 5.1: Sustainability appraisal framework for the SA of Southend on Sea LDF AAPs

Concern	Explanation and desirable direction of change	Objectives	Means of identifying and reporting impact and contribution of the proposals and policies in the LDF
Social progress which recognises the needs of everyone			
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> enable all to have similar and sufficient levels of access to services, facilities and opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> maintain Southend town centre as services, as the most accessible location improve accessibility to the town centre improvement in public transport accessibility along the entire length of the seafront 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> doc – likelihood of increase in facilities and mix of uses
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to provide the opportunity for people to meet their housing need 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure a sufficient number of dwellings encourage a suitable mix of dwellings, including tenure and size 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> quan – no of dws created quan – no of affordable dws (by different types) likely to arise
Education & Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to assist people in gaining the skills to fulfil their potential and increase their contribution to the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> improve accessibility to employment and education facilities support continued development of the University campus in the town centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> doc – but little reliability of prediction
Health, safety and security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to improve overall levels of health, reduce the disparities between different groups and different areas, and reduce crime and the fear of crime 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> improvements to reduce fear of crime in the town centre, especially at night improve pedestrian routes through the town centre and seafront to help design out crime 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> quan – area and population subject to increased or decreased risk of flooding doc – likelihood of increased or decreased health standards (but little reliability of prediction)
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to value and nurture a sense of belonging in a cohesive community, whilst respecting diversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> improve the viability and distinctive character of Southend-on-Sea town centre provide public art and improvements to the design of seafront tourist buildings, such as beach huts and kiosks to provide a recognisable unified approach for Southend provide new community open spaces in the town centre and seafront 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> doc – but little reliability of prediction

Effective protection of the environment			
Biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to maintain and enhance the diversity and abundance of species, and safeguard these areas of significant nature conservation value 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> protect undeveloped parts of the coastline protect key habitats directly or indirectly from developments which may harm them ensure new development brings enhancements to the built environment where appropriate ensure 'appropriate assessment' of all development is carried out where appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> quan – area of significant habitat affected quan – potential area of significant habitat created / better managed doc – likelihood of increase in biodiversity from creation of opportunities
Landscape character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to maintain and enhance the quality and character and cultural significance of the landscape, including the setting and character of the settlement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> protect undeveloped parts of the coastline retain notable features and areas of open space along the coast line protect views of the estuary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> quan – area of open land affected quan – area of designated landscape affected doc – likelihood of harmful change to character of landscape creating setting of the urban area
Built environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to maintain and enhance the quality, safety and distinctiveness of the built environment and the cultural heritage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> enhance and protect land mark and listed buildings on the sea front enhance and protect listed buildings and those of interest in the town centre improve urban design quality through the AAPs protect existing and create new open and green space on the sea front and in the town centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> quan – area of useable and amenity open space affected quan – potential area of useable and amenity open space created quan – area of valued townscape harmed by change doc – likelihood of increase in urban quality through new provision and investment doc – likelihood of increase in urban quality through emphasis on quality

Prudent use of natural resources			
Air	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to reduce all forms of air pollution in the interests of local air quality and the integrity of the atmosphere 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> reduce traffic congestion in the town centre encourage freight modal shift and encourage a reduction in emissions of new buildings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> doc – likelihood of increase or decrease in emissions. Regional target is for stabilising car traffic levels in Southend at 1999 levels and to increase the proportion of freight carried to and from ports by rail to 30% by 2020. Regional target to increase the proportion of energy met from renewable sources (on-shore + off-shore) to 44% by 2020.
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to maintain and improve the quantity and quality of ground, sea and river waters, and minimise the risk of flooding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure no increased risk of coastal flooding in the AAP acknowledge the risk to water quality from on-shore developments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> doc – likelihood of increase or decrease in emissions quan – number of planning applications granted contrary to Environment Agency advice on flood risk.
Land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to use land efficiently, retaining undeveloped land and bringing contaminated land back into use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> protect undeveloped coastline in the Borough encourage development on previously developed land encourage high density residential development and mixed use development in the town centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> quan – area of open land affected irreversibly by development. quan – area of damaged land likely to be brought back into use - national and regional previously developed land target is 60% and minimum dwelling densities at 30 dwellings per hectare.
Soil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to maintain the resource of productive soil 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect productive soil where applicable (little overall impact likely) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> quan – area of productive land affected
Minerals and other raw materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to maintain the stock of minerals and other raw materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimise use of aggregates for new development (relevance to sea defences) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> quan – area of potential minerals extraction put beyond viable exploitation by development doc – efficiency of the use of primary and secondary materials doc – likely affect on reuse and recycling of materials - regional target to recover 70% of household waste by 2015
Energy sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to increase the opportunities for energy generation from renewable energy sources, maintain the stock of non renewable energy sources and make the best use of the materials, energy and effort embodied in the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce the growth in car use and congestion within the two AAP areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> quan – contribution likely from energy generation from renewable source schemes quan – contribution likely from energy generation within new buildings

	product of previous activity		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • doc – likelihood of increase in efficiency of energy use in new development
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Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment			
Local economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to achieve a clear connection between effort and benefit, by making the most of local strengths, seeking community regeneration, and fostering economic activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the viability and vitality of the town centre as economic hub for the Borough • Improve the viability and vitality of the seafront as a major and flexible tourist destination • Identify sites for local business start ups in the town centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • doc – likelihood of increase in desirable economic characteristics
Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to maintain and enhance employment opportunities matched to the size of the local labour force and its various skills, and to reduce the disparities arising from unequal access to jobs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work to create new jobs in a range of sectors within the two AAP areas • Work to make the coast a major destination for conferences (as in Community Strategy) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • quan – potential number of new jobs in different sectors and match to predicted needs of workforce
Wealth creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to retain and enhance the factors which are conducive to wealth creation, including personal creativity, infrastructure, accessibility and the local strengths and qualities that are attractive to visitors and investors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to creating attractive environment for business to flourish • Improve access for all residents to a range of jobs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • doc – likelihood of increase in desirable economic characteristics

Notes: **doc** – matter where prediction of outcome likely to be presented in terms of ‘likely direction of change’
quan – matter where prediction of outcome likely to be presented in quantified terms

6 Sustainability Appraisal of the Southend Central Area Action Plan

- 6.1 Sustainability appraisal is an iterative process that aims to help guide plan making to deliver more sustainable development. The SA is therefore an ongoing process that will inform the AAP process throughout its preparation.
- 6.2 The task at this stage is to appraise the objectives developed for the AAP and then test the content of the AAP to examine whether it is likely to be able to help in the delivery of sustainable development. This will include recommendations of where sustainability performance could be improved or where additional matters could be considered.
- 6.3 The aims are to ask to the following questions:
- Could these effects be of special significance?
 - Are there way of reducing or mitigating adverse effects?
 - Can any beneficial effects be further enhanced by positive planning?

Issues arising from the core strategy

- 6.4 This SA process follows on from the SA carried out on the Core Strategy, which already identified key implications for the LDF on sustainability in Southend, and provides a basis for this appraisal. There are no specific Core Strategy policies relating solely to the AAP area although several policies contain relevant criteria. Most specific is Policy KP1: Spatial Strategy which sets out the following provisions for the two areas:

'Southend Town Centre and Central Area – to regenerate the existing town centre, led by the development of the University campus, and securing a full range of quality sub-regional services and providing 6500 new jobs and 2000 additional homes, and the upgrading of strategic and local passenger transport accessibility, including development of Southend Central and Southend Victoria Stations as strategic transport interchanges and related travel centres.'

- 6.5 The SA of the Core Strategy supported this policy, in particular the emphasis given to continued improvement of the town centre as the focus for growth in the Borough and improved accessibility by non-car modes. The central area is the most accessible location to most people in the Borough. It is already being the focus for much of the employment, retail and leisure facilities makes it suitable for growth. Continued development here will support public transport accessibility for all, and walking and cycling improvements, with the overall aim of achieving a modal shift from car use to more sustainable travel, in addition to equitable access for all. The central location of the University campus also helps improve physical access to higher education and the other education and skills training the university may offer. Providing a mix of uses in a relatively compact areas is also welcomed as part of achieving sustainable development, with the continued improvement to the vitality of the town centre at all times of day.

- 6.6 There were some concerns in the sustainability appraisal of the Core Strategy over development in areas at risk of flood, and that continued maintenance or development of new flood defences may adversely impact on the biodiversity value of the foreshore.

Sustainability appraisal of the objectives

- 6.7 The starting point of the sustainability appraisal was to assess whether the objectives developed for the AAP provided a sustainable basis for developing policies and setting allocations. To assess this, the sustainability framework developed for the appraisal is used as a standard definition of what sustainability might mean in central Southend. This appraisal is shown as Appendix 1.
- 6.8 This appraisal of objectives was completed at the Issue and Options stage and is repeated here for those of the submission. Despite some wording changes between the drafts the two sets of objectives remain largely the same, as do the SA findings.
- 6.9 The AAP sets out the ambition, aim and objectives for the AAP. These are:

*Our **ambition** for Southend Central Area, including the Central Seafront, is for it to be a prosperous and thriving regional centre that is vibrant, safe and hospitable and rich in commerce, learning and culture.*

*Our **aim** is to transform the image of Southend through sustainable economic growth, development and social provision, and for it to be independently recognised as a popular location for businesses, residents and visitors.*

1. *To improve and transform the economic vitality, viability and diversity of Southend Town Centre by encouraging the establishment of a wider range of homes, businesses and shops whilst providing new opportunities for recreation and leisure;*
2. *To improve the buildings and public realm, including accessible green space, within the Central Area, to manage traffic and improve cycling and walking facilities so that Southend becomes a place that is more pleasant to experience and move around in;*
3. *To always have full regard to the unique assets of Southend Town Centre and in particular its spectacular coastal setting, rich social and built heritage, its excellent rail links to London, and its airport;*
4. *To always have regard to the significant biodiversity assets and environmental quality of the Central Area, help meet obligations on carbon emissions and adopt an approach to climate change through measures that mitigate against, or adapt to change, including managing flood risk and water efficiency;*
5. *to promote design excellence in all things and to ensure that this quality standard is also expressed within the actions of our delivery partners;*
6. *To expand the presence of the University of Essex and the South Essex College and establish Southend as an important regional centre for learning;*

7. *To encourage the establishment and expansion of all businesses in Southend Town Centre by identifying, promoting or by actively bringing forward suitable sites for development to meet modern user and investor requirements;*
8. *To increase the number and diversity of people living within the town centre and adjoining residential areas by bringing into use empty or underused floorspace and by building more homes and making efforts to ensure that living in the Town Centre becomes appealing to more families with children.*
- 6.10 The appraisal of the objectives (Appendix 1) finds that there is good coverage of sustainability issues related to improving the built environment and economic regeneration of the town centre. This should have positive benefits for the social and economic sustainability by creating a good place to live, visit and do business.
- 6.11 The focus on the town centre should also have benefits relating to the sustainable use of land, as all sites are previously developed.
- 6.12 The appraisal does identify where the objectives could be improved to ensure that they are guiding development in a clear coherent way that addresses all aspects of sustainable delivery. These are:
- the role of the town centre in a wider Southend context could be elaborated recognised to show how development in this location is anticipated to be complementary to the development objectives of other areas, especially the seafront and airport;
 - the role of central Southend as a visitor and leisure destination is not addressed in much detail the objectives. This tourism role is an essential part of the Southend economy including a relevant objective could help support and expand this role;
 - there could be an objective for retail growth to ensure that development plans for the area consider the need to provide a range of retail premises. These premises should cater to the need of large multiple-stores as well as areas of smaller units for independent and boutique shops.
- 6.13 Implementation of the aims and objectives for the AAP will inevitably create some tensions. The key areas where this might arise are:
- **Shift in transport mode:** The AAP supports a lot of new development in central Southend. There is the risk that this will lead to increase demand for car travel to access these new services, despite these being in a location that could support the most sustainable travel options. Therefore, it needs to be shown how traffic, transport and accessibility proposals will need to successfully secure a mode shift away from car use. The aim will need to be to get a greater proportion of people to choose not to use their cars to access central Southend.

There is a great deal of potential for this mode shift in Southend as there are already good public transport services and few hills so cycling and walking is easy. Improvements to legibility, road safety, car parking management and connected public transport all playing a role. The impact of existing road traffic may need to be taken into account, possibly requiring transport

modelling for the area, especially cumulative impacts with other new development e.g. possible airport expansion and at Shoeburyness.

- **New development equals additional resources:** New development will inevitably result in the consumption of additional natural resources. In particular energy, building materials and water. The objectives could recognise this point, despite all proposals also needing to comply with Core Strategy and national policy relating to these issues. As this AAP identifies actual locations for development the document may have provided an opportunity for specific policies on low carbon energy. For instance community heat and power networks, based on viability and feasibility at particular sites.
- **Relationship with wider Southend:** There is the risk development in central Southend may have adverse impacts on the objectives for other parts of the Borough. However, this location is the most sustainable as it has good access by a variety of types of transport. Therefore, the centre is a good location for high trip generating uses, such as offices, shops and educational establishments. Consideration could be given to the impacts on economic objectives for the airport environs and other proposed business locations – including those in neighbouring authorities.
- **The natural environment:** There is a high quality natural environment in Southend, particularly on the seafront that is internationally designated for its nature conservation value. Development in the centre and throughout Southend has the potential to have adverse impacts on this foreshore protected area. Impacts could include pollution from water run-off and sewerage, direct disturbance and gradual beach erosion. The potential for impacts and the need to avoid harm to protected areas is recognised in Objective 4 and development management sections of the AAP.

Testing the spatial options

- 6.14 Testing options for development is an important part of an SA and a regulatory requirement of SEA.
- 6.15 Considering alternatives is an obligation of the Sustainability Appraisal (SA), and particularly the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) process. That requires, *'reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme' (paragraph 12(2)), are appraised and documented in the SA report'*.
- 6.16 The Issues and Options AAP presented three possible options for managing the development of central Southend, each with an increasing level of intervention and change. One option is presented as the preferred approach following an evaluation of all three by the plan making team. Each of the three options were briefly assessed to determine, in general terms, what the sustainability differences between them might be.
- 6.17 The three spatial options are:
- Option 1: Strengthening the status quo

- Option 2: Reinforcing the urban circuits
- Option 3: City by the Sea (the preferred option)

6.18 There is only a limited amount of information available on which to base an assessment of the relative sustainability merits. Therefore, the SA was kept brief with an identification of the main sustainability issues that might arise from pursuing each option. However, there is question on whether Options 1 and 2 are realistic given that some proposals for enhancement mentioned in Option 3 are already progressing. This meant there was no real alternative but to include these development options.

Option 1: Strengthening the status quo

This would see the High Street remain the focus for all retail development in the centre, although some improvements will also take place in nearby areas. This is commensurate with a 'do-nothing' approach as it is what would occur without the AAP, relying on Core Strategy policy only.

- This option would focus on the High Street and this focus of resources may help in better securing improvements in the this area. However, this option does not take advantages of wider environmental improvements that could help raise the overall image of Southend to potential investors (local and national), with wider benefits for the town. The option therefore may be too limited to successfully attract new inward investment.
- This option would also miss opportunities for more mixed use regeneration of the town centre, including additional education and cultural facilities and new housing.
- The overall scale of development may reduce impacts on natural resource use and on the natural environment.
- Lack of enhancement to public transport and improved movement routes is unlikely to encourage people to choose more sustainable modes. This option is unlikely to help promote Southend as a retail destination, with people choosing to make longer trips elsewhere for their shopping needs. However, fewer attractions in the town centre may reduce overall traffic volumes and avoid additional congestion.
- This option is unlikely to have any great benefit for the economic sustainability of the town, nor will help in meeting social sustainability objectives.

Option 2: Enhance urban circuits

This option would widen the central Southend regeneration and improvement to a larger area than Option 1. Chichester Road, London Road, Clifftown, Farringdon all be the focus for specific regeneration proposals. This option also includes Seaway car park as a new linking feature at the south east end of the High Street, although not a destination in itself.

- This option would help create a High Street of a quality to attract national retailers, and improving links to adjacent streets could help

increase the attractiveness of the town centre for shopping and support retail businesses of the existing main route.

- This option does not include a residential element therefore not meeting objectives of delivering new homes or supporting a more mixed use and vibrant town centre.
- This option allows for growth of the education role of the town centre, supporting skills training, higher education and the related benefits this can bring to the town centre
- This option may risk not being bold enough in seeking a regeneration potential, therefore missing opportunities to create a high quality town centre, which is successful in improving the image of Southend as a place to live, visit or do business.

Option 3: City by the Sea

This is the most far reaching option seeking the greatest amount of regeneration of the town centre, surrounding area and mix of uses. It is taken forward as the preferred option for the AAP.

- This option would see the largest amount of redevelopment and therefore require the greatest use of natural resources. However, if new buildings use water and energy more efficiently than older ones it could have net benefits in the medium or longer term.
- This option is for comprehensive redevelopment of the town centre over a wide area, although with specific uses for different zones. It has the potential to have a positive benefit for Southend as a whole, improving its image as a place to live, visit and do business.
- This option may be the most risky to implement, particularly in a recession. However, having a joined up approach for the central area that sets out all development potential is likely to be beneficial in the long-term in ensuring a coherent redevelopment of the area. Implementation and funding schemes will need to be fully developed to ensure full delivery.
- Given the large amount of change this option may bring about, there is a need to ensure it is delivered in conjunction with other plans and strategies for the area to avoid adverse impacts. This could include travel and parking management, South Essex Rapid Transit (SERT) improvements and tourism strategies. This option does recognise the need for transport and movement improvements in the town centre, especially making walking a more attractive option.
- This option is for a large scale redevelopment of areas of the town centre, for a range of uses including employment. There is a risk that this will have an impact on regeneration and growth options for other parts of the Borough. Therefore, the plan makers should ensure the objective for growth in central Southend do not adversely impact on the objectives for growth in other locations.

- 6.19 The third option was one investigated in further detail through the Issues and Options Report as the preferred approach. Within this broad spatial option there remained more detailed policy or site specific options to be determined and appeared for the first time in the submission version AAP.
- 6.20 In the Issues and Options version of the AAP, options for land uses were also presented for most of the Quarters and Key Sites proposals. The SA at that stage integrated an assessment of these options into the general commentary about each themes identified for the SA (see section 6). The appraisal did not seek to assess these options separately, rather where alternatives would have different sustainability impacts these were noted and where relevant recommendations were made on the more sustainable approach. This SA of options can be seen in the Sustainability Appraisal of Central Southend AAP – Issues and Options (March, 2010), which is available on the Southend LDF website.

7 Sustainability appraisal of the Area Action Plan Policies and Proposals

- 7.1 The regeneration of central Southend is proposed through delivery of a number of redevelopment, renewal and enhancement schemes. These are made up of specific development sites, as well as proposals for improving the unique qualities of specific areas or 'Quarters'. The Areas Action Plan (AAP) also includes a number of 'development management' policies to help guide the way development is delivered in each Quarter.
- 7.2 The purpose of the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is to identify what the sustainability issues may be of delivering development as proposed, looking for positive and potentially negative impacts. Where the potential for negative impacts are identified the SA makes recommendations on how these could be avoided or mitigated against.
- 7.3 The appraisal is based around several sustainable development themes based on the Area Action Plan (AAP) objectives for the town centre. These themes relate to the issues identified during the identification of baseline information and other plans and programmes, as in sections 3 and 4. The themes have been 'scoped' as being those most pertinent to sustainable development in the Central Area.
- 7.4 The themes are:
- Travel and movement
 - Residential development and communities
 - The built environment
 - Education and culture
 - Employment development and retail
 - Leisure and recreation and open space
 - Sustainable design, construction and flooding
 - The natural environment.
- 7.5 The sustainability appraisal identifies the relationship of the AAP development management and site specific policies on delivering the sustainable development themes. The aim is to find where the AAP is likely to contribute to achieving sustainable development and also make recommendations to enhance the sustainability performance.
- 7.6 The Quarters and Key Sites identified for enhancement and development are:
- The High Street
 - Queensway and London Road / Broadway
 - Elmer Square
 - Queensway and Southchurch Road

- Warrior Square
- Clifftown
- Tylers Avenue
- Central Seafront Strategy
- Victoria Gateway Neighbourhood
- Sutton Gateway Neighbourhood

7.7 The full appraisal of policies is shown in Appendix 2 and this should be read for the detailed comments and recommendations on the generic policies and in particular the site specific policies. Sections 8 to 14 show the outcomes of the sustainability appraisal, considering how each theme is covered in the AAP policies. The text of these sections also discusses the relationship of the AAP with delivering sustainable development.

8 Transport and movement routes

- 8.1 One of the principle aims for the town centre is to improve connectivity for pedestrian movement.
- 8.2 The central Southend area is a transport hub, containing Southend Victoria Station, Central Station and the bus station with proposed links to the SERT system. This connects centre to the wider Borough, as well as other south Essex towns and London. The centre is also in easy walking distance from a large number of Southend's residents, including those residential neighbourhoods included as part of the central area.
- 8.3 However, non-car travel access to the centre could be improved, with particular emphasis on providing better quality walking routes. Currently there are areas where permeability of the streets is poor and/or routes are unattractive or car dominated, this discourages walking even for local residents. In these areas the natural flow of routes round the centre is disrupted or where poor physical built quality and cars taking priority means walking is not always a safe or attractive option.
- 8.4 Roads also create barriers to people travelling by foot and bicycle, and can even have adverse impacts on the character of neighbourhoods by cutting them off from the central area. Queensway is the greatest barrier, it forms a obstacle to access from residential neighbourhoods to the east, the 'Sutton' Gateway Neighbourhood to the north as well as Victoria Avenue and Victoria Station.
- 8.5 Improvements to non-car travel in the central area could help meet sustainability objectives relating to social sustainability, such as accessibility and health, and environmental sustainability including air quality and use of resources.
- 8.6 Specific improvement schemes identified in the AAP will help encourage walking and cycling. These include:
- Identification of routes for cycling and walking improvements and links in all of the development Quarters and the majority of proposal sites
 - Public realm improvements to make built environment more attractive for those on foot
 - Changes to car parking – with fewer car trips through the town centre to reach the car parks and fewer surface car parks
 - Improvements to pedestrian access around the stations (especially Victoria)
 - Improved signage, active road frontages with shops, cafes and bars on ground floor levels
 - Pedestrianisation
 - Greater permeability such as improved links to the seafront through Seaway and Tyler Avenue, and Victoria Avenue to retail offer at London Road.

- 8.7 The aim of the AAP is to achieve a mode shift to non-car travel. This shift is essential to ensure the new development proposed by the AAP does not result in additional car use in the centre, as well as helping to reducing current car use.
- 8.8 Achieving this modal shift will also be essential to prevent the adverse impacts that may result from more office development, shops and services being available in central Southend. At the moment it is likely that many people who live more than about a fifteen minute walking distance from the town centre will choose to travel there by car. This must be avoided by making other forms of transport more attractive and competitive option, including cost and ease of use. The design and layout of development can help reduce car dependence also. For instance, new residential development in very accessible locations, such as next to the stations, could be built as car free instead relying on car club cars to reduce use.
- 8.9 Reducing commuting by car is also essential and will help reduce the environmental and social impacts of congestion at peak times. This means new office or other employment and commercial development should only have very limited employee parking, following the standards set out in the Development Management DPD, Policy 16.
- 8.10 To deliver the 'City by the Sea' objective for central Southend there needs to be improvements to travel and transport. This will be in tandem with the Local Transport Plan and Regional Transport Strategy planned 'Town Centre and Seafront Integrated Transport Plan' and Phase 2 of the City Beach. The transport and travel policies of the AAP include criteria that relate to these and other plans and strategies. Policy criteria includes those that are not necessarily matters that can delivered directly through planning policy. However, the AAP brings together diverse threads of transport planning helping to integrate the strategy for improvements in the town centre. This should help identify and secure funding for schemes, for example through developer contributions or public funding.
- 8.11 There are also policies to help deliver changes to the parking in the town centre to help make better use of land and stop so many trips being made across the central area simply to access parking.
- 8.12 New multi-storey car parks completed at University Square and proposed at Warrior Square and Seaway Car Park sites. These will replace some of the many surface car parks in an around the centre. This will bring built environment benefits to the town centre, helping make better use of land and removing barriers between different parts of the centre. However, to secure sustainable development it will be important to ensure that the quantity of car parking levels is not increased. This is important to encourage more sustainable transport choices. New multi-storey car parks will also need to be well designed, as the scale and design of these buildings can often have an negative impact on built environment quality. The design of buildings could include 'green' walls of natural vegetation and/or lighting schemes to make them attractive features after dark, so soften their appearance.
- 8.13 There is also a risk to in delivering car park sites as several are reliant on private developers and funding or replacement parking being provided elsewhere in the

town centre. The AAP could set out how new car parking revision is linked to release of car parks for development on specific sites.

- 8.14 To help achieve a modal shift a long-term strategy of reducing the overall level of parking must be implemented. However, it will be important that a level of parking is maintained to ensure people do not abandon the town centre in favour of out-of-town shopping, which can be detrimental to community character and economic performance of the town. Parking in new office and other high trip generating development also needs to be controlled to strict maximums, as set out in the Development Management DPD, to reducing work commuting by car.
- 8.15 Development in the Central Area will need to be considered in the context of the wider area, ensuring schemes for central Southend do not adversely impact on other parts of the Borough e.g. more on-street car parking on residential streets around the centre.
- 8.16 Other proposed improvements in the AAP include improved walking and cycling routes, all of which will have a positive benefit relating to sustainability benefits of reduced car use. Safety will also be improved with greater segregation of pedestrians/cyclists and cars.
- 8.17 The AAP is going some way to showing that pedestrians are being given priority within much of the area bounded by Queensway to the north and east and within the area of Farringdon and non-residential Clifftown.
- 8.18 The AAP contains policies to help better prioritise access by pedestrians and cyclist. New walking and cycling priority 'mixed-mode' routes are suggested for several areas. Other changes to the built environment promoted through the AAP will also help improve the walking environment, including more town centre pedestrianisation, active frontages on new development and 'green grid' linked open space. Other larger development proposals include improvements to the character and crossing points at Queensway and better access to the seafront at St John's Church / Seaway car park.

Policy coverage

- 8.19 Travel and movement is one of the main themes of the AAP, with many policies and sites specific proposals relating to improvements. These policies cover two distinct, although related, aspects of this theme. These are:
- Making the town centre a more pleasant place for pedestrians
 - Improving access to the town centre for everyone by all modes of transport.
- 8.20 Policies relevant to the public realm and improved walkability are:
- DS2 and PR3 both address the need for visually attractive frontages to new development to make the walking environment a more pleasant and safer place.
 - PR2 this policies relates to public realm improvements and permeability of the urban environment.

- There is a strategy to improve pedestrian routes from the end of the High Street to the seafront at the Eastern Esplanade. Several policies include criteria to address this, these include: DP7 Tylers Avenue
- Improving the High Street retail circuits by improving walking routes and joining up retail frontages, DP1
- The possibility for improvements to public transport, including the bus station in policy DP7 Tylers Avenue, TA1a refers to the need to improve access to Victoria Station and PS6 improvements to Central Station.
- The parking strategy covered in detail in numerous policies and in summary as TA4 should help reduce the traffic in the town centre, making a safer walking environment.
- Specific improvements to the public realm that will improve walking routes includes:
 - enhancing Victoria Circus for public events
 - Queensway crossing points
 - 'City Beach' Phase 2 improvements covered under several policies including TA1 and the specific policy TA1b
 - Warrior Square town centre access improvements DP5
 - Better links from Tylers Avenue through Seaways car park to the seafront. Including new public open space and stepped or terraced access to overcome gradient change, CS6 and CS6b.

8.21 Policies on access to the central area are:

- TA1 sets the main provisions for sustainable travel and road improvements in the town centre. This will help ensure more sustainable access.
- TA2 relates to general public transport improvements for better access to the town centre. However, both TA1 and TA2 contain measures that can not be directly implemented through the AAP. Instead, relying on the implementation of partner organisations that are beyond the direct control of the AAP, such as new signage and mobile technology.
- Access to the town centre from the wider urban area and gateway neighbourhoods requires better access across Queensway. This is covered in numerous policies, including TA1a, TA3, PR2, DP2, DP4, DP5 and DP7.
- PR1 these policies aim to help create linked green spaces as part of a 'green grid' helping to connect open spaces in the Borough, aiding cycle and pedestrian access.
- Improvements to the SERT access at the Victorias, DP8
- Promoting 'mixed-mode' routes through many policies should help encourage walking and cycling access for short and medium length trips to the central area. These routes should also help improve the town centre walking environment. These routes are covered by numerous policies, including DP2, DP4, DP5 and DP7.

- TA3 addressing walking and cycling. This policy could include more information on the design and location of the 'mixed-mode' shared priority routes. All proposed and needed walking and cycling route improvements should be shown on a central area map.

Recommendations and impacts

- 8.22 The policies of the AAP show a clear intention to make the town centre a better place with improvement to the pedestrian environment to encourage more people to walk. Improved links to the central area will also help reduce car use in the town centre, with benefits for the natural and residential environment.
- 8.23 The SA of policies makes some recommendations on how some changes could be made to make the policy intentions more clear, and it is hoped more easy to implement. These are:
- A single policy on mixed-mode shared priority routes, giving details on design and layout and the proposed routes through the town centre.
 - A single Queensway enhancement policy to avoid repetition, with indicative layouts of the 'urban forest', linear park, crossing points and possible narrowing.
 - Details of the development of public open space and links from the St John's Church area to the Eastern Esplanade/Marine Parade could be more succinctly present in a single policy, avoiding repetition between policies for different quarters.
 - More detail on the anticipated physical infrastructure improvement needs for public transport interchanges as one policy for the central area.

9 Residential development and communities

- 9.1 Southend central area is identified as needing to accommodate around 2,000 new homes between 2001 and 2021, this is around 30% of the total requirement for the Borough. Taking into account the completed housing in the centre since 2001 and looking forward to 2031 the Plan still requires space to be found for even more new homes. This demonstrates the significant role central Southend has to play in achieving target housing figures to meet identified needs.
- 9.2 Housing is proposed to be distributed throughout the central area, with several of the site specific schemes stated as including a residential element. This includes at London Road, Victorias, Warrior Square, Clifftown Quarter and Seafront areas. Despite the role of the central area in providing for residential development there is surprisingly little detail within the AAP policies as to the type of development needed and the location. An Appendix to the AAP gives some indicative breakdown of anticipated yields allowing for some flexibility in implementation.
- 9.3 The majority of new housing would be part of mixed use development areas. This applies to where new houses could be built, particularly outside the town centre, and residential development over other uses in town central and High Street locations. Some areas would see large scale renewal with the potential to create new sustainable communities, containing homes, offices, open space and community uses.
- 9.4 To make sure housing delivered is of the type needed and in the right location the AAP policy could include more detail on residential development. For many areas the AAP states residential development should be delivered as 'flats over shops', although there are some areas such as Seaways and at Warrior Square where a mix of housing types may be most suitable. The AAP does recognise the need to help deliver housing to meet a variety of needs. This includes the need to provide family sized homes and not only small flats that typify recent residential development in many town centres.
- 9.5 To help achieve delivery of this mix of housing types the AAP could identify locations where different types of homes would be suitable. For instance, family homes in the Neighbourhood Gateways and in other locations that have good access to schools and playspace (new or planned). Some parts of the central area are likely to remain most suited to one and two bedroom flats.
- 9.6 The AAP contains some detail on the need to provide community facilities and services to meet the needs of existing and future town centre residents. This will include provision of health services, community centres, schools (particularly nurseries and primaries) and open space and play space for children and others.
- 9.7 Various policies of the plan set out where possible locations for this new community development might be. The AAP may need to more consistent in policies directing the location of these new community facilities. For instance, policy DP5 suggests a new primary school be delivered in proposal site PS9a: The Victoria Office Area Site. This requirement is repeated in PS9a, but is not part of the development principles in DP9. Conversely, DP9 refers to the need for a new health centre in this

location, but it is not repeated in any of the Victoria Avenue Gateway site proposals. Similarly, supporting text for Warrior Square development suggests the site may be suitable for a Primary Healthcare Facility, but this is not referred to in any policy.

- 9.8 A need for new public open space is recognised in the AAP, with areas identified as the possible location for this new space. However, the AAP does not contain details of what type of open space should be delivered in each location or a breakdown of the types needed. To achieve more sustainable development it will be important to match new provision with the needs of existing and future residents.
- 9.9 If homes and services are not provided to meet the needs of the population there can be adverse impacts related to delivering sustainable development. Impacts could be on the health of residents from lack of access to outdoor recreation space, playspace and health services, as well as from living in unsuitable or overcrowded housing. There may also be impacts on communities if the range of housing is not suitable to support a mix of residents including families.
- 9.10 To help support local communities there will also be the need to deliver a proportion of the housing as affordable. The Core Strategy only requires affordable housing be delivered on sites of 50 or more units (Policy CS8). Many developments in the town centre will not meet this threshold, therefore reducing the quantity of affordable housing that will be provided. To achieve sustainable and equitable development affordable homes must be provided, and the appraisal recommends including a higher target (based on a lower threshold) for affordable housing in the town centre. Targets should be set as low as possible, although a assessment may be necessary to demonstrate financial viability.
- 9.11 Site or central area specific polices on how affordable homes are delivered could also be included in the Plan, adding detail to Core Strategy Policy CS8 where necessary. Area specific detail could include where affordable housing should be co-located with private market homes to integrate the two, to help avoid issues of social isolation that can characterise larger areas of social housing.
- 9.12 Several areas of housing renewal are also identified in the AAP. These are areas that currently contain large levels of social housing that is in a poor condition and in need of replacing. Site specific policies cover the possible renewal of these areas. However, it will be necessary to work with housing and development partners to bring these schemes forward for development. The overall quantity of affordable homes should not change, although it may be possible to investigate supplying a greater range of affordable tenures.
- 9.13 The AAP presents the potential for the character of the Gateway Neighbourhoods and other central residential areas to be enhanced. Queensway creates a physical and perceived barrier between areas and the town centre and seafront. AAP proposes to improve the links across the dual carriageway to help people move more freely between these residential areas and the town centre. There are sustainability advantages of physically and psychological connecting the two areas, helping people feel more part of the town and able to access services and facilities without driving and reduce social isolation.

- 9.14 There will be general benefits of less traffic in the central area for residential amenity. Reduced on-street parking, traffic and congestion will help improve the quality of the urban environment and reduce health impacts of car exhaust. Specific benefits may include the creation of new 'Home Zones' in the Tylers Avenue area, in association with car park changes.

Policy coverage

- 9.15 Provision of new residential development is integrated throughout the AAP. Development principles sections sets out the need for residential and community development in the area and proposals policies set the detail.
- 9.16 Policies that will help deliver residential development include:
- DS8 set the main principles for delivering housing, including major new residential development at Victoria Avenue PS9a and Sutton Road PS10b
 - Residential development is a component of the development in most of the Quarters.
 - Housing renewal areas are covered in policies PS4a: Queensway House and adjacent buildings; CS8a Woodgrange Drive Estate; and PS10c Coleman Street.
- 9.17 Policies that support community development include:
- Policies and proposals for Victoria Gateway (PS9a) would see this out-dated office area redeveloped for housing and community uses, including a school, open space and a possible Community Heat and Power development.
 - DS5 identifies the need for a new primary school, and DP9 identifies the Victorias might be a suitable location
 - DS7 lists the need for new community facilities however the policy does repeat matters addressed better in site specific policies.
 - Policy IF1 relates to new infrastructure and IF2 section 106 agreements. These include social infrastructure, however, the policy adds little beyond what is already covered in other parts of the LDF.
 - New and existing residential development needs access to healthy food, a new foodstore promoted in the Sutton Gateway Neighbourhood PS10a and in policy DS1.

Recommendations and impacts

- 9.18 The policies of the AAP go some way toward helping development in the central area make a suitable contribution to meeting Southend's housing needs. An appendix to the AAP sets out the indicative housing numbers on each of the housing development sites. This quantification allows for an understanding of the distribution of new housing within the central area. It shows where residential development is a priority on a redevelopment site and that housing growth can be delivered to meet the requirement set in the spatial strategy.

- 9.19 In seeking more equitable access to housing the AAP could also consider policies that go beyond Core Policy affordable housing targets. Current affordable housing policy is very unlikely to yield many new affordable homes in the town centre due to the size of development sites.
- 9.20 The AAP could also contain some more detail on where new community facilities should be located. This could include a text or policy more clearly setting out the location of the new primary school and health centre, as well the scale, location and type of open space required.

10 The built environment

- 10.1 Alongside transport improvements one of the main themes of the AAP is to bring improvements to the built environment quality of central Southend. This ranges from small change to the built environment, such as new public art or lighting to the regeneration of whole areas through rebuilding.
- 10.2 Improvements to the built environment will help to enhance the image of the area, which will have a variety of sustainability benefits for the town. This is not only in terms of meeting objectives relating to protection and enhancement of the built environment, but also vibrant communities and economic prosperity.
- 10.3 There are likely to be positive impacts for the Southend economy.
- 10.4 Tourism in Southend is already a strong contributor to the town's economy, and an improved quality environment can only enhance this, drawing in a broader range of visitors and more people for longer stays. This will be helped not only from new leisure and cultural facilities and improvements to hotels in the town, but also the perception of the town as a place to visit. The regeneration of the Palace Hotel in the central seafront is an example of how the existing assets of the town can be well used to encourage tourism.
- 10.5 There are specific proposed improvements that should aid tourism, including seafront enhancements such as Phase 2 of 'City Beach', enhancing the Western Esplanade and building a new museum. There are specific development proposals to help achieve this with new links proposed between the seafront and High Street via Seaways Car Park site and St John's Church.
- 10.6 Improvements to the High Street and other shopping areas will also help encourage visitors. This will be especially effective when paired with improvements to areas that contain locally owned independent shops, boutiques and businesses, such as are planned for the Clifftown area.
- 10.7 Other built environment improvements will be beneficial to different aspects of the economy such as improved office space along Victoria Avenue and new live/work neighbourhoods in the Clifftown Area. New higher and further education facilities will also make the town attractive as a place of learning, with positive benefits for the perception and vibrancy of the town centre.
- 10.8 In addition to the direct benefits to the economy of the central area there may also be economic benefits to the wider Borough. These benefits can come from enhancing the image of Southend, making it a place that people want to live and invest in.
- 10.9 Peoples' pride in the place where they live can also be improved through a high quality environment, fostering community identity and cohesion, with social sustainability benefits. Improving the appearance of the town and fostering its image as 'City by the Sea', can help people identify better with the place where they live and pride in their home town. The urban layout, design of streets and provision

of good quality outdoor space for informal recreation also helps in creating a healthy place to live.

- 10.10 The AAP includes the possibility of new tall buildings or other landmark buildings to be developed as part of the centre regeneration. There are potential positive benefits of creating new distinctive urban features. However, there are also the possibility of adverse sustainability impacts on built heritage for buildings that are radically different than the existing character of the area. Any new large or tall buildings will need to be carefully designed to compliment the town centre. This needs to take into account how appropriate high densities are for the location, the need to avoid overshadowing and create vibrant street-spaces with activities at ground level. The AAP is clear in its intention that all new buildings are designed to have active frontages and All new enhance the streetscene of the central area, for example by avoiding blank walls and buildings ‘facing away’ from any areas where people may walk.
- 10.11 The AAP promotes the retention of all buildings and structures in the central area. These should be kept and enhanced where they contribute to the character of the area and its heritage as a seaside resort. This can have benefits in terms of resource use and providing a mix of building types and styles that respects its heritage. Many parts of the urban area have an underlying high quality, although in many locations this has become degraded over time and needs attention to be an asset again for the town. An example is the Western Esplanade here the cliffs and the promenade have the potential to be great asset to the town as an area of traditional seaside character. The AAP sets out a scheme for the renewal of the area which has the potential to create a really exceptional places, with benefits for the image of the seafront and for Southend as whole.
- 10.12 Other areas where regeneration can help enhance areas of underlying quality are at Warrior Square, Clifftown Conservation Areas and in Victoria Avenue. In both the Conservation Areas recent development, or poor use of land, as detracted from the wider setting of these historic heritage areas. At Clifftown there is the opportunity to make this area a high quality visitor asset that supports the cultural life of the town, with new buildings, and improving small shop, office and workshop space. Warrior Square improvements will bring the land in this area back into good use, with new development complementing the existing formal park. In Victoria Avenue some office buildings have been long-term vacant and have become eyesores attracting vandalism and a general reduction in built environment quality.
- 10.13 Policies also cover the built environment heritage of the central area. There are several Conservation Areas within the central area, the majority of which are in need of enhancement. Specific and generic policies are given for the retention and enhancement of these assets, responding to the current character and use of the area. In addition, frontages of townscape value are also to be preserved from harm, with restoration and design of new development needing to complement these.
- 10.14 Reducing car dominance in some areas by improving the quality of roads and streets through planting, reduced on street car parking and a reduction in traffic speeds could all help improve the built environment. This will include areas east

and west of the High Street, such as St John's and Clifftown, as well as on the seafront.

- 10.15 Car Park reorganisation will also result in less traffic travelling through the town. This will have benefits for built environment quality and access, and if successful may reduce car travel with associated environmental and health improvements. Parking and modal shift policies should result in fewer cars parked on the street and road congestion bringing enhancements to areas currently dominated by cars. . However, new multi-storey cars parks need to be designed to complement and enhance the built environment character and not adversely dominate it.
- 10.16 To help deliver development Southend centre an area specific seafront design guide could be prepared. This would aid in securing a unified design style to the whole area, and could specific measures to make each Quarter have a unique character. Development Briefs or masterplans for the Quarters or larger development sites would also be part of this. For instance, as part of delivering the High Street 'episodes' or for the Queensway enhancements.

Policy coverage

- 10.17 Improvements to the built environment are part of most of the policies of the AAP. This ranges from specific criteria for the development of proposals sites to general requirements for the enhancing the quality of the wider built environment.
- 10.18 Policies on general improvements to the built environment include:
- PR2 on the public realm, this includes criteria on streetscape, public art, new lighting schemes, general design of buildings.
 - These policies are supported by Supplementary Planning Guidance on design.
 - There is a clear intention in many of the policies for the Quarters to retain the active frontages in new development, this is led by policy PR3. This will help improve the attractiveness and vibrancy of the central area.
 - Several areas identified as having the potential to accommodate a landmark building. Design criteria of policies aim to ensure that these complement their position and positively add to the character of the area. There is also policy to ensure existing landmark buildings and features are retained. General policy criteria are given in policy PR5 and CS1 contains criteria for a Seafront landmark.
 - Open space and civic spaces are an important part of a quality urban environment. Policies aim to protect existing spaces and several Quarters are identified as being the location of new open space or public squares, this includes Elmer Square PS3 and Tylers Avenue DP7. There is also the intention for urban greening of areas, which will help improve their quality.
 - Several policies relate to protecting heritage assets, including policies for the Conservation Area, HE1 to HE4, and policies on frontages of townscape merit HE5.

- Policy HE6 sets specific criteria for the conservation of heritage assets to allow them to be restored for alternative uses to the original purpose.
- Site proposals contain specific criteria for improving the built environment. Some of the larger schemes include:
 - Enhancing the quality of the seafront in City Beach Phase 2 (TA1b) and other Central Seafront design principles including use of public art and lighting schemes, urban greening and the design of new buildings in CS8.
 - Improving the quality of the High Street, including public art, pedestrianisation, and use of distinct character 'episodes' along its length (DP1)
 - Redevelopment of the Sainsbury's at Queensway and London Road, including urban greening and public art (DP2 and PS2a)
 - Wholesale redevelopment of the Victoria Office Area (PS9a) for a mix of uses
 - Redevelopment of car park and swimming pool site at Warrior Square, to include public art and careful use of landscaping (PS5a)
 - Improving links from the High Street to the Seafront as part of the Seaway Car Park and Marine Parade improvements (CS6b and CS2)
 - Housing renewal areas including CS8a Woodgrange Drive.

Recommendations and impacts

- 10.19 There is much in the AAP that will help bring improvements to the built environment and sustainable development if it is fully implemented and funding sources found. This includes the economic benefits of an improved urban environment, helping the tourism economy and the image of Southend. There are also social benefits from fostering community pride and identity and supporting healthy lifestyle choices by creating an urban environment people want to walk in.
- 10.20 The policies of the AAP are not very detailed on the precise design details for new development. To ensure that development is delivered to the high quality standards the Council or others may need to prepare development briefs, masterplans and/or design codes for specific areas. This will help provide the fine grain guidance that will developers deliver good quality development.

11 Education and culture

- 11.1 The delivery of new higher education and learning facilities can only be positive for the town centre. Not only will these help enhance the perception of Southend as a place of learning but also will encourage students into the town centre supporting local services and creating a vibrant area. However, avoiding conflicting land uses will be important and maintaining a balance in the type of facilities and retail offer available. This may include the potential incompatibility of a night-time economy in the town centre and delivery of new residential development.
- 11.2 New cultural facilities can also be of great benefit in developing sustainable communities. For new cultural venues to be successful local people and visitors will need to be supportive of what is on offer. Any new facilities will need to work with existing communities and visitor representatives to identify needs. Successful schemes can have positive impacts for the whole town encouraging visitors and investment. Whereas, high budget schemes that do not provide what people want can have negative effects, especially in times where public money is scarce. However, those that are a failure can damage a town's image and be a bad use of public money.
- 11.3 Education related to new and existing residents of the central area is also addressed through policy. The AAP identifies the need for a new primary school to accommodate new families living in the central area. A possible location for a new school is given in policy in the Victoria's Gateway. However, parts of this neighbourhood are some distance from the town centre, it will be important to make sure schools are easily accessible by walking from all existing and new residential neighbourhoods of the central area.
- 11.4 The AAP also supports the regeneration of parts of the Clifftown Quarter. The aim is to create a new cultural area, using the existing historic character combined with new development to create a tourism location west of the High Street.
- 11.5 The development of a new museum related to the Saxon King finds as part of the Seafront Development at the Western Esplanade could deliver sustainability benefits for the town. The museum has the potential to show the importance of a town at Southend since early times, these links to the past can help people feel pride in the place where they live and foster community cohesion.
- 11.6 These aims combine well with those on employment and new leisure facilities to help support Southend's economy.

Policy coverage

- 11.7 The AAP makes specific reference to the importance of this area for education, especial further and higher education. There is also reference to the importance of protecting and retaining cultural facilities.
- Policy DS5 sets the main policy for central Southend as a focus for higher and further education as well as the need to provide a new primary school

- The Elmer Square development area is to be the main focus of new higher and further education facilities, addressed in policy DP3
- Several policies on different Quarters say they could be the location of new higher and further education facilities, this includes DP2 Queensway London Road, DP5 Warrior Square, DP9 Victoria Gateway Neighbourhood and DP10 Sutton Gateway Neighbourhood.
- Clifftown (DP6 and DS6) is identified as the a key area for enhancing Southend's cultural life. There is an aim for this are to be the location of new galleries, cafés, shops and workshops.
- The focus of cultural and leisure facilities is set in policy DS6 that sets out the need to diversify the entertainment, cultural, art and recreation facilities in the area. The policy refers to creation of a cultural centre and museum and cultural use at the Suffolk Water Board site in the Victoria Gateway.
- The site for the new museum is identified for proposal CS7 at the Cliffs and the re-use of buildings at the Suffolk Water Board site in the Victoria Gateway (PS9b).
- Heritage and archaeology are an important part of the cultural identity of the town. Policies on protecting the heritage assets should help their protection (HE1- HE6) and archaeological assets (HE7) as should policies protecting specific assets such as the pier (CS6a).

Recommendations and impacts

- 11.8 The education policies should help in securing education development in the central area to meet the needs of existing and future residents.
- 11.9 Many sites are proposed for new education facilities, it will be important to make sure that sufficient sites come forward. However, it will also be important to ensure that this type of development does not prevent other town centre uses being brought forward. For example, some locations may be preferable for new homes rather than student accommodation. Concentration of student accommodation can also have detrimental impacts on neighbourhoods from a high transient population, although there can be benefits of creating vibrancy.
- 11.10 The policies that support cultural life in Southend should have a positive benefit for local people and the economy of the Borough.

12 Employment development and retail

- 12.1 The town centre is the most sustainable place to locate new office development in Southend, based on reducing impacts of travel to work, and creating a central hub of employment development.
- 12.2 The town centre has the greatest potential for access by sustainable travel modes. The centre contains two railway stations, a bus station and is within easy walking and cycling distance of a large proportion of the town's residents. Offices generate a high number of trips everyday, therefore locating these uses in accessible locations has a positive relationship in terms of equitable access to employment and opportunities for reducing the social and environmental impacts of car travel.
- 12.3 The AAP puts a strong emphasis on employment growth in the town centre. With an expectation coming from the Core Strategy that this area will be the focus of 6,500 new jobs between 2001 and 2021. This job figure is half of the total anticipated growth for the whole of Southend set out in the Core Strategy.
- 12.4 Currently much of the employment office space is on Victoria Avenue, although a large amount is long-term vacant. The AAP is aiming for office space to move from this area to the Sainsbury's site (PS2a) and Warrior Square (DP5, PS5a), which will also provide replacement employment land relocated from Clifftown. This does mean that the Sainsbury's site must become available to make sure there is no reduction in the overall availability of land for employment purposes.
- 12.5 Removing some of the perceived surplus office space on Victoria Avenue may help secure delivery of better quality new space. Economic assessment have identified the poor quality of the supply on Victoria Avenue may be pushing down office rental value in the area, meaning provision of new office space to meet modern demands can not be made viable.
- 12.6 The AAP also stipulates the need to protect and enhance the existing Industrial Estates. Two such estates at Grainger Road and Short Street that are part of the Sutton Gateway (DP10) are named in policy. The policy should help protect and enhance employment opportunities in the area and secure these uses in the long-term.
- 12.7 Different types of employment growth are also anticipated in other parts of the centre, including in a new cultural and creative quarter in Clifftown and near Southend Central Station. These locations in particular could be tailored to the needs of small local businesses.
- 12.8 The plan proposes that existing office space on Victoria Avenue is replaced with residential and community uses. For sustainable development, it will be important for the town centre to have sufficient office floorspace to meet needs and achieve employment growth now and in the long-term. Redevelopment of current employment floorspace should make sure that it does not push-out this use to less sustainable peripheral locations. Displacement is likely to result in more commuting trips for work being made by car than would be the case if it were located centrally.

- 12.9 In the Sutton Gateway the Sutton Road (PS10b) employment uses are allocated for alternative uses. This land has been shown to be surplus to existing employment needs in Southend in the Employment Land Review and Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.
- 12.10 In some parts of central Southend there competing land uses on some sites. It needs to be the role of the AAP to clearly address what type of use is more suitable in which location, rather than solely rely on the market. Controlling land uses is an important part of securing the long-term mix of uses in the town centre, helping creating sustainable and vibrant places.
- 12.11 New retail will contribute to the additional employment in the town centre. The retail study sets out the potential for this type of development. As well as supporting the continued role of the High Street and Pavilions as a retail focus there are also proposals to deliver more smaller retail units to support independent and local retailers. This includes new development in the Clifftown area as well as in association neighbourhood centres. Smaller, locally owned business can have a positive benefit for the economy by improving the range of retail on offer, or promoting specialist retailers and supporting independent business.
- 12.12 Improved retail circuits are proposed around the High Street, including at Chichester Road and at London Road. These will improve links between shopping areas encouraging people to visit more of the town centre, with potential to broaden the retail offer.
- 12.13 The introductory sections of the AAP mention the need to improve the conference facilities in the town to help achieve more business revenue in Southend. The AAP does not elaborate on the role of the town for these uses and the potential of any new sites. Recent refurbishments and development, such as the refit of the Palace Hotel or the Kursaal and the new University of Essex campus, may have reduced this demand, although there remains no single large conference venue in the town. The former gas works could also be the location for this use, but the site is not identified as a proposal site.
- 12.14 There are also other potential benefits to the local economy in the AAP. This includes the creation of a skilled workforce and business links with the university. General improvements to equitable and cheap access to the centre through improved walking and cycle links, as well as public transport improvements.

Policy coverage

- 12.15 The AAP includes many policies that will help create a stronger local economy and reinforce the retail role of the central area.
- 12.16 New employment uses are promoted at several sites and in general design principles. Policies include:
- DS4 is the principle policy for employment setting the overall requirement for the creation of new jobs in the central area and the main locations for this, as well as the redevelopment of existing office locations to sustainable neighbourhoods

- The focus for business growth include London Road if Sainsbury's moves (PS2a), in Warrior Square (DP5, PS5a), as well at Queensway/Southchurch Road (PS4a).
- Existing industrial estates in Sutton Gateway will be protected (DP10), although at Sutton Road some existing uses will be lost (PS10b).
- The tourism economy is addressed in DS6 this policy relates to the need to prevent the loss and deliver new cultural and tourism facilities, covering hotels, the pier, museum and development at Seaway Car Park.

12.17 The retail areas of the centre are to be enhanced and primary and secondary retails areas protected from change. Policies relating to retail include:

- DS1 sets the requirement for new retail in the centre.
- DS2 aims to protect existing primary shopping areas from change and the High Street is also specifically protected as a retail area DP1.
- Several areas are identified as locations where retail circuits and retail offer could be improved, both through development at specific sites and general enhancement. Policies include DP7 and PS7a Tyler's Avenue retail circuit and Pavilions improvement; DP6 (PS6a and b) new retail units in the Clifftown Quarter, a new Sainsbury's at the B&Q site (DP10).

Recommendations and impacts

- 12.18 The AAP shows a clear intention to provide for economic growth in the central area. Economic and employment growth will be delivered through provision of new office space, improved retail offer, tourism and protection of existing employment areas.
- 12.19 However, there is a need to make sure that existing office and business space is not lost in favour of other uses, such as residential or education use. A quality office provision needs to be maintained in the town centre. Existing land that is currently in employment use should not be lost if no replacement is provided. For instance, if the Sainsbury's does not relocate and is therefore not available, alternative space for new offices will need to be identified in a similarly accessible location. There is the possibility that this may need to include Victoria Avenue sites suitable for demolition and redevelopment.
- 12.20 The central area is the most sustainable place for high trip generating office uses, based on transport and accessibility considerations. Also, other employment such as small industrial uses are an important source of local jobs and local services. Land availability in the Borough is limited, raising the importance of protecting what resources there are.
- 12.21 Through working with the university there is the potential to deliver wider benefits to the whole Borough. For instance, training in conjunction with the university to help local people access newly created local jobs This can help ensure that the advantages of inward investment in physical employment infrastructure also supports local enterprise, provides jobs for local peoples and raises local skill levels.

13 Leisure, recreation and open space

- 13.1 Central Southend has a continued importance as a leisure destination for the people of Southend as well as visitors from other parts of the UK. This provides an important economic income for the town. This is covered in greater detail in the SA section on employment and retail.
- 13.2 Several schemes are proposed to bring improvements to the built environment that should help enhance the image of the town to visitors. Schemes include City Beach, Cliffs Gardens improvements, new museum site and links between the High Street and Seafront.
- 13.3 Areas that currently make an important contribution to leisure facilities are to be protected through implementation of the AAP. This includes the Kursaal, Marine Parade, Adventure Island and the pier. The AAP also seeks to improve access to the sea and seafront through improvements to jetties and slipways. These measure should help secure the better recreation access at the seafront, a leisure resource for residents and visitors. However, any such development needs to take place in a way that protects the nature conservation interests of the area, and the quality of the natural environment that is part of the attraction of the area.
- 13.4 The seafront, especially the central seafront (including the pier), and Eastern and Western Esplanades, are the major tourism assets of the town. The AAP includes proposals for how these areas can be further improved to aid tourism in the long-term. One of the major improvements to this area is the potential to reduce car dominance on the Esplanade road and create more legible access to the town centre. This includes improvements at the end of the High Street, including at Seaways car park and through the Cliff Gardens.
- 13.5 The potential for new hotels or conference centres could also be included in area specific proposals, or schemes put in place to prioritise hotels in some locations. Maintaining a range of hotels to cater for diverse needs is an important part of delivering sustainable tourism in Southend. Good quality hotels can encourage visitors to stay longer and therefore spend more. Additional income from existing visitor numbers is more sustainable than increasing overall visitor quantity due to the environmental burden of increased trips and overcrowding from higher numbers. The former gas site on the Eastern Esplanade is identified in text as a possible location.
- 13.6 In addition to meeting the leisure and recreation needs of the wider Southend population and visitors to the area, consideration may also need to be given to the more everyday needs of central Southend residents. New and existing housing in the area means open space is needed for formal and informal recreation. This will need to be incorporated into development on larger regeneration sites or through a general increase to accommodate the needs of small developments. Several sites are put forward where there is the potential for new open space.
- 13.7 The plan is not very specific on types of open space provision, for instance children's play-space or opportunities to create areas for informal recreation,

providing a quiet outdoor space, or shared semi-private communal areas for new residents. The AAP does make reference to the need to supply new space for informal recreation to help alleviate pressure on the important foreshore nature conservation sites. This is part of the 'green grid' strategy. However, the AAP is not specific on what the characteristics of such sites should be or the features that would make them attractive alternative to the foreshore.

- 13.8 There may be the opportunity to create new areas of public open space suitable for community events such as live performances or the venue for small cultural festivals. These sites could also be used as the venue for periodic local produce or farmers markets, and could include some permanent market stalls. Retaining space for markets is mentioned as important in PPS4. This type of use should be in an accessible location in an area of high footfall, perhaps associated with seafront to maximise the use of the space and ensure plenty of visitors.

Policy coverage

- 13.9 The AAP includes many policies that will help deliver new and protect existing leisure and recreation development in the Central Area. Policies include:
- DS6 this policy relates to the need to prevent the loss and deliver new cultural and tourism facilities, covering hotels, the pier, museum and development at Seaway Car Park.
 - PR Policy PR1 relates to the provision of new open space. However, the AAP does not include a list of all of the locations where new open space should be a part of new development, nor a break-down of the types of space needed.
 - The 'City Beach' and Seaways development should help deliver new public open space, including at St John's Church (DP7, CS8, TA1b) and there is also open space proposed along Queensway (DP2 and DP4), a new public square at Elmer Square (PS3a), improved open space at Cliff Gardens (CS7)
 - Better recreational access to the seafront is addressed in policy CS5 as well as CS6, specific seafront proposals include Southend Pier (CS6a), Seaway Car Park (CS6b) and at the Western Esplanade (CS8) that could be the location for new tourism facilities including hotels and a lido.
 - Open space will be part of Gateway Neighbourhoods at DP9 and DP10.

Recommendations and impacts

- 13.10 The APP policies relating to leisure and recreation are compatible with sustainable development and should help deliver the benefits created by new and existing recreation and leisure facilities. This will have benefits for local communities as well as visitors.
- 13.11 New seafront and waterfront leisure and recreation development will need to take into account the potential conflict of uses. There will be different demands on the area from areas of quiet enjoyment of the natural environment to places for active water-sports. For everyone's enjoyment different uses will need to be managed to ensure high quality leisure opportunities for all.

- 13.12 The AAP is not very detailed on the need to deliver new hotels and conference facilities in the central area, although it is acknowledged that this is a need. Sites for this type of development could be identified to bring economic benefits to the town from increasing tourism and businesses spend.
- 13.13 These is also the possibility that new development for waterfront tourism and leisure to conflict with the nature conservation interest of the site. This will need to be managed to ensure no harm comes to internationally designated sites.

14 Sustainable design, construction and flooding

- 14.1 The large amount of redevelopment proposed through the AAP will require substantial use of natural resource during construction and in operation. To reduce these impacts it is essential that new development is designed in such a way to reduce overall natural resource demands.
- 14.2 Many older buildings in the town centre are unlikely to be energy efficient, therefore upgrading or redevelopment has the potential to deliver energy savings in the long-term. In terms of overall resource uses, and protection of heritage, upgrading and refurbishment is likely to be preferable over demolition and new development. However, where this is not possible new buildings should be constructed to high standards of sustainability.
- 14.3 As well as energy savings through efficiency there is also the possibility in larger development schemes or networks of schemes some of the energy used on-site could be generated on sites from local low carbon sources. This could include community heat and power schemes, that may be suitable as part of larger redevelopment areas, including University Campuses, mixed use or new office developments.
- 14.4 Water resources in the east of England can be limited, especially in times of low rainfall. Therefore, new buildings and refurbishments must incorporate water efficiency measures, including re-use of rainwater or grey water.
- 14.5 It may be possible to set specific requirement where higher sustainable construction standards and carbon reduction targets have to be met on some of the larger mixed use sites. In these locations the size and development layout options may present opportunities for more sustainable design. Setting carbon reduction or sustainable construction targets above national targets has the potential to deliver sustainability benefits for the Borough. However, moving beyond government targets will require an evidence base to prove it will be financially viable and not stall the delivery of needed development.
- 14.6 In terms of securing more sustainable development any district based energy scheme and local energy generation is strongly supported. Making more efficient use of fossil fuels, or using renewable resources, can help mitigate against climate change and help protect natural resources.
- 14.7 Therefore, as the SA suggested at Issues and Options stage, a scheme for district energy supply could be established for central Southend. This could make use of wind turbines, potential suitable due the coastal location or combined heat and power using a renewable or low carbon energy source.
- 14.8 District based energy generation is preferable to national grid schemes as it reduces the inefficiencies of distribution. Local supply is also likely to be more efficient than site specific renewable energy technologies, with micro-turbines and domestic photovoltaic generation shown to be of limited viability. Combined heat and power is also a sustainable option as it makes use of heat that would otherwise be wasted in power generation.

- 14.9 The SA of policies for the majority of proposal sites suggest that the potential for low carbon development is considered. If the AAP does not require that better standards of energy performance met at these 'landmark' development sites, then opportunities may be lost. Policy could also ensure all new buildings in the central area are 'future-proofed' by ensuring they area built with the potential to be connected to district heat and power supplies, even if the supply does not yet exist.
- 14.10 The AAP identifies two sites only where it includes a specific policy reference to sustainable construction or low carbon energy. These are CS6b Seaways Car park where it refers to sustainable construction and CS8a: Woodgrange Drive (Kursaal) Estate. The Core Strategy and Development Management DPDs contain policies setting sustainable construction criteria for all new development. It is therefore not clear why the two proposal areas have been singled out where there is already a requirement for the whole Borough and these criteria do not seek to go beyond them.
- 14.11 The potential for a combined heat and power plant is suggested as part of the Victoria Gateway development, a positive step to improving energy efficiency. New development in this area will need to be designed to allow connection to this type of network.
- 14.12 Part of sustainable construction is making sure new development does not put existing and future residents at increased risk of flood. Flood risk can occur from new development being located in areas identified as being at danger of being inundated from rivers or the sea. There is also flood risk created by surface water during heavy rainfall. There is an increasing risk from intense storms due to a changing climate and therefore this risk needs to be factored into the design of new development.
- 14.13 The AAP addresses flood risk, and includes a policy to manage this risk in the seafront area where tidal inundation is a real possibility. Several sites have also been identified that are at particular risk of surface flooding.

Policy coverage

- 14.14 There is some coverage of the need to ensure sustainable construction in the policies of the AAP.
- Policy DS8 addressed the need for development to follow policies from other parts of the LDF on the need to build resource efficient homes. However, there is no cross reference in other policies for the need for all new development to be resource efficient.
 - Two seafront development areas are identified as needing to deliver sustainable construction these are CS8a and CS6b Woodgrange Drive and Seaways car park.
- 14.15 Policies on flood risk include:
- IF3 that sets the flood control measure that will need to be part of any new development, influencing a requirement for Flood Risk Assessment and sustainable drainage systems.

- CS3 relates to managing the particular flood risk in the seafront where there is danger of tidal inundation. The policy relates to controls on development and design to be resilient to risk.
- Sites including DP4 Queensway and Southchurch Avenue, DP6 Clifftown, DP7 Tylers Avenue, PS9a Victoria Office Area

Recommendations and impacts

- 14.16 The policy is unlikely to have any negative impacts on sustainable development. However, the SA queries whether all opportunities have been taken to secure high levels of sustainable construction and low carbon development in the central area.
- 14.17 The large mixed use and landmark sites proposed have real potential to deliver buildings to exemplar sustainability standards, both in construction and use of resources. Building to high standards can have benefits for the resource use of the individual buildings as well as providing an example of standards that can be achieved. This can help guide the delivery of other development in the Borough, helping guide the way for sustainable construction.
- 14.18 The AAP could also contain more on the need to provide lower carbon energy throughout the central area. For instance, though using district heat and power networks in neighbourhood enhancement areas, or the potential of the seafront location for certain types of renewable energy generation. However, further evidence of the viability and feasibility of any such schemes on specific sites may be necessary.
- 14.19 There could be greater consistency in the AAP in the way flood issues are managed. The control of flood is covered through several different policies in the LDF. Some sites development principles policies refer to the need to manage surface water flooding and other do not. For sites where flood is not mentioned it is not clear if this is because there is little risk there, or an omission to policy. This may require clarification in the AAP.

15 The natural environment

- 15.1 The AAP recognises the importance of protecting the biodiversity assets of the area. Of particular importance is the foreshore area that is the location of internationally important areas designated for their nature conservation value.
- 15.2 The natural environment is also a major asset to the Borough in terms of the character of the area and value this gives to the visitor economy and local people. The central area also contains areas of water, open space, trees and landscaping that all contribute to the natural environment quality.
- 15.3 These areas have statutory protection for harm. New development in central Southend must not adversely impact on the internationally designated nature conservation sites, evidence needs to be in place to demonstrate this has been addressed. A Habitats Regulations screening assessment will be needed to show how impacts on biodiversity have been taken into account.
- 15.4 Policies at the seafront specifically recognise the potential for impacts, requiring new development to take this into account. The policies do refer to the possible need of development in the seafront area to undergo appropriate assessment under the Habitats Directive. However, development the AAP could recognise that development throughout the central area has the potential to have an impact. For instance, drainage of new development needs to ensure that storm water runoff does not harm the protected site, or sufficient open space is provided as part of new development to reduce visitor pressure on the foreshore.
- 15.5 Policies of the central seafront include a criteria that could require new information and interpretation opportunities on the nature conservation value of the seafront. This is a positive step in helping visitors and residents the unique value of the foreshore and may also help protect these assets from unintentional harm.
- 15.6 The town centre currently has poor provision of public open space, with the exception of the seafront. Site specific proposals for the Quarters proposal sites set out how new green open space can be integrated into development. This includes a new park in near St John's Church as part of the Seaways/Tyler Avenue improvements. There is also a scheme to deliver a new linear park along Queensway to include new planting to create an 'urban forest'. Delivering parks such as this can be positive in helping secure more sustainable urban environments.
- 15.7 The AAP includes proposals to improve the quality of existing areas, such as at Cliff Gardens. However, open space should not be treated simply as an aesthetic asset but also the biodiversity value. For this reason it may be beneficial to leave areas of the Gardens that have become more 'wild' in character to remain this way, creating patches of seaside meadow.
- 15.8 There are several instances in policy for the 'greening' of the urban environment. This can have benefits in terms of introducing the natural environment into urban spaces. Planting and trees also have an important role to play in reducing urban heating effects. Similarly patches of planting and urban trees should be protected.

Shading can reduce the uncomfortably hot temperatures that can occur in heavily urbanised areas, which may get worse with a changing climate.

- 15.9 Areas of green space within the urban context can have multiple sustainability benefits. This will include:
- supporting wildlife
 - providing open space for rest and relaxation of residents, workers and visitors to the town centre
 - providing shading and reducing urban heat island effects caused by the sun reflecting off hard surfaces on hot days that make outdoor spaces uncomfortably hot
 - views of trees and green spaces have been shown to have positive benefits for mental wellbeing
 - planting can make a valuable contribution to the quality of the built environment, such as tree lined avenues and pocket parks.
- 15.10 There are also potential positive impacts of the proposals on the protection of the natural environment elsewhere in the Borough and region. This comes from the intensification of use of land in the central area, meaning more development can be accommodated on previously developed land rather than requiring greenfield sites. The redevelopment of surface car parking to multi-storey means land becomes available for alternative uses. In addition, redevelopment of redundant office and business sites in the Victoria and Sutton Gateways allows these accessible sites to be bought back into good use.

Policy coverage

- 15.11 The natural environment is covered in several policies of the AAP. These include:
- PR1 addresses the 'green grid' and urban greening. The intention of the 'green grid' is to link the urban open spaces and help alleviate pressure on the internationally designated foreshore area. The policy also identifies the need to plant the right type of new species that are characteristic of natural habitats.
 - PR3 sets the need for development to have visually attractive frontage of new development and this could include urban 'greening' such as greenwalls
 - DP2 relates to the development of the linear park at Queensway, including planting to create a new 'urban forest'.
 - CS4 relates to the particular nature conservation interests of the waterfront and foreshore, also referred to in CS2 and CS5
 - CS5 on the waterfront refers to the potential for better integration and interpretation of the biodiversity importance of the area as part of the visitor experience. This could make use of new technology as well as more traditional methods.
 - CS7 is on the Cliff Gardens and refers to the need to improve this area, for biodiversity the SA suggest that the policy ensure that parts of the Gardens remain as wildflower meadow.

- Policies including DP9 refer to the need to need to green the urban environment through new parks and private open space.
- Policies that will help land be used more efficiently include DP5 (PS5a), DP5 (PS6a/b) on the Warrior Square and Clifftown car parks, and DP9 and DP10 on office and employment land redevelopment in the Gateway Neighbourhoods.

Recommendations and impacts

- 15.12 The policies of the AAP are a likely to be beneficial in protecting the natural environment, particularly areas of high designated quality. However, there may be potential for more detail to be included on some aspects of protection and enhancement.
- 15.13 The plan could contain greater detail on how some of the elements of urban greening will be achieved. For example the 'urban forest' at Queensway has the potential to bring the natural environment into the heart of the town. A design strategy should be prepared for the 'urban forest' so contributions can be sought from local developers.
- 15.14 Policies could contain more detail on how the 'green grid' strategy for the central area will work to alleviate pressure on the foreshore. New open space is expected to help provide an alternative for recreation to the foreshore, to help reduce visitor pressure in the designated area. However, to successfully achieve this there is a need detail in the AAP on how the 'green grid' and new open space will support this. Currently the policies on open space in the AAP are not joined-up and do not present an overall picture of how the green grid will work to relieve pressure. Additional information could include the design of new open spaces so they provide a suitable alternative, for instance reducing the number of dog walkers.
- 15.15 In providing new open space in the urban environment emphasis should be put on providing soft landscape rather than hard landscaping. This will help bring nature into the town with many benefits for sustainable development, including biodiversity protection and enhancement as well as reducing urban heating effects.
- 15.16 There is repeated reference to lighting strategies in the AAP. These can help create a more attractive night-time environment and lighting of 'green grid' links could help improve safety. However, for nocturnal wildlife lighting can create barriers to movement. Therefore, lighting schemes need to take potential impacts into account, using suitable wattage, timings and low level lighting to avoid adverse impacts.

16 Implementing the Area Action Plan

- 16.1 For any of the plans, policies and proposals of the Area Action Plan (AAP) to be achieved and sustainable development delivered, they must be implemented. This section of the SA report considers how the effective the AAP might be in securing implementation and delivery of sustainable development.
- 16.2 This assessment does not consider issues such as viability and availability of sites, as this is matter to be determined by plan makers. However, it will be necessary to have reasonable certainty that any of the projects and proposal of the AAP have can be delivered. Without this certainty there is little value in including them in the AAP.

Implementation

- 16.3 The AAP has an essential role to play in showing how the multiple proposals and regeneration schemes for central Southend will be delivered and how they will be implemented. The AAP includes policies on matters that go beyond basic control of planning and land-use. The Plan acts a co-ordination document to join-up the schemes of various delivery partners, with the intention of creating a better and more sustainable Southend.
- 16.4 The 'Implementation and Monitoring' framework of the AAP contains several aspects that help demonstrate that the AAP could be delivered. This includes:
- **Identification of the delivery partners for policies:** Delivery partners include public and private bodies, including: developers, property owners, infrastructure providers, transport providers, the university. The Council also are a major stakeholder in the central area as they manage the town centre.
 - **Identification of ownership or responsible agencies for proposal sites:** The majority of the sites are in Council ownership, demonstrating that these sites will be available for development as set out in the AAP. The other land owners are also identified. Using the AAP to co-ordinate work with the others should help development to be bought forward in a unified way. The particular complexities of sites in multiple ownerships are identified.
 - **Details of proposals:** Summaries of the main proposal sites and what it hoped will be achieved through delivery.
 - **Timeframes and milestones:** These allow for monitoring on whether proposals are on-track. Where millstones or target dates are not met it may then be possible to put in place review procedures for delivery and identify any knock-on effects on other development.
- 16.5 The monitoring and implementation framework should identify where schemes are interdependent. For example, several of the proposal sites are reliant on existing uses moving elsewhere. Such as Warrior Square new multi-storey car park will release land at Warrior Square and Tylers Avenue for development, or the new Sainsbury's at the football ground will release the existing site for development. This would allow for development to be co-ordinated and limitations of delivery understood.

- 16.6 The monitoring framework will help demonstrate how effectively the AAP is being implemented. The relationship of the framework with possible SA monitoring is shown in Appendix 3.

The usability of the AAP

- 16.7 For the AAP to be successfully implemented it needs to be a usable document.
- 16.8 As this SA report shows there the majority of AAP objectives, policies and proposals are highly compatible with achieving sustainable development for central Southend and beyond. However, the SA of policies raises some queries over the clarity of the AAP and whether there could be opportunities to simplify the plan.
- 16.9 The AAP as it is currently written contains repetition. There is duplication with other policies of the LDF, including Core Strategy policy and Development Management policy, as well as internal repetition of policy criteria and development principles. The result is quite a lengthy plan where policy guidance on how a site should be delivered is spread amongst many different policies and proposals. This results in some of key objectives for development becoming obscured, which could result in poorer quality planning applications and possibly poorer outcomes for sustainable development.
- 16.10 Some issues that the SA specifically identifies where there is potential for simplification includes:
- **Mixed-mode and shared priority routes:** Several policies of the AAP contain policy criteria on better walking and cycling routes. A single policy and supporting map of the new routes may help clarify exactly where these routes are expected and detail of their design.
 - **Historic environment:** The AAP contains policies HE1 to HE4 on areas of heritage importance and conservation areas. Each of these areas is also part of a development quarter, with design principles policies also covering heritage issues. It may be possible combine these two types of policy.
 - **Protection of frontages / visually active frontages:** There are quite a few policies that refer to the need to retain active frontages or protect existing frontages. General policies are in DS2 and PR3 (Heritage Frontages HE5), however, the criteria are repeated in area specific policies. Relying solely on the generic policies could simplify the development proposal site policies.
 - **Proposal sites:** The need to deliver regeneration and new development in some locations is repeated between the policies and supporting text for more than one development quarter. This creates duplication of wording where a single policy for areas may more succinctly set out the criteria for delivering new development. Examples of where this may be case are Victoria Circus (currently in policies TA1a, DP2 and DP1) and Seaways Car Park / St John's regeneration area appearing in Tylers Avenue and Central Seafront polices and descriptive text.
 - **Queensway linear park and urban forest:** Proposals for the new park, planting, crossing points and possible road narrowing are covered in multiple policies (PR2, TA1a, TA3, DP2, DP4, DS5 and DP7). Replacing these with a

single 'Queensway' policy may be beneficial for delivering a co-ordinated scheme by improving the clarity of the vision for the area. This policy would have to be complied with for all new development along the Queensway Road.

- **Central Seafront:** The Central Seafront policies break from the style of other policies and do not fit that easily within the plan.
- **Flooding:** Some policies contain specific reference to the need to manage flooding on the site, whereas others do not. There is also a generic flooding policy as well as one from the seafront. Some of these policies could be combined to shorten the AAP.
- **Design principles:** All of the policies on the development quarters contain a development principle policy. These policies repeat elements of generic policies in the 'policies' section of the AAP, combining these would shorten the AAP. Generic policies could set out the general principles for all development, with the area principles adding site specific detail where it is needed.
- **Managing development:** The policies of section B need not be repeated in the policy criteria of section C policies.

17 Mitigation

- 17.1 The SEA Directive requires that consideration be given to how any significant impacts identified during the SA process could be mitigated.
- 17.2 Mitigation of the potential adverse impacts of the strategy can be achieved in a number of ways. Each policy in the policy appraisal (Appendix 2) gives examples of how the potential adverse impacts of the policy could be mitigated against.
- 17.3 There are several ways mitigation of possible impacts can take place, these are shown in paragraphs 17.4 to 17.10.
- 17.4 **Implementing other planning policies** - many potential impacts will be mitigated through the use of other policies including those of the LDF and national policy. This has a particular role to play in avoiding the adverse impacts from the quantity of development to be delivered through the strategy. Policies that will help mitigate impacts include those on natural environment protection, community infrastructure provision, design and flood control.
- 17.5 **Adjusting wording** to fine tune AAP policy can help to implement successfully more sustainable development. This could include, clarifying or making wording less ambiguous or more positive for some policies to help deliver the desired policy output.
- 17.6 **Requirements for developers** to show how they have addressed environmental and sustainability concerns through their development. This could include green travel plans, meeting sustainable construction criteria, infrastructure delivery, biodiversity enhancement and design and access statements. There may also be site-by-site planning application requirements including further ecological assessment, flood risk assessment and travel planning.
- 17.7 The **phased release** of employment and car park sites could help delivery of allocations to help secure sustainable development. There is also the need to ensure that social and physical infrastructure is phased into development, to make sure it is in place prior to occupation. This will help ensure that delivery of different land-uses are matched and facilities are in place as part of helping to make more sustainable communities and to help reduce reliance on car travel.
- 17.8 Up-to-date **Development Briefs** or **Masterplans** for all of the larger development sites, or groups of small sites in the same area. These will help implement a cohesive development strategy for whole areas. This has greater potential to deliver high quality and sustainable development rather than a piecemeal approach. It should cover issues such as:
- design protocols and the layout of development
 - biodiversity protection or enhancement measures
 - the sustainable construction standards that should be met
 - the proportion of energy used on site that should be generated by, on or near site renewables and low carbon targets

- public transport, walking or cycling links between individual site elements.
- 17.9 The delivery of infrastructure improvements to mitigate some impacts, such as loss of public open space and public transport enhancement, will also be dependent on developer **contributions or obligations**. These will be used to deliver sustainability benefits associated with new development.
- 17.10 Implementation of **other strategies and plans** in the plan area, which will include measures such as the transport improvement strategies, delivery of SERT, tourism strategies, 'City Beach', and other regeneration strategies, as well as the plans of neighbouring local authorities.

18 Monitoring

- 18.1 There is a requirement for monitoring the sustainability appraisal. The intention is to provide a check of Area Action Plan (AAP) implementation on sustainable development, and if negative impacts are occurring. Monitoring will need to consider positive and negative impacts, triggering a review if necessary.
- 18.2 The specific requirements of the SEA Regulations on monitoring are to:
*“Monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation...with the purpose of identifying unforeseen adverse effects at an early stage”
 (Regulation 17(1))*
- 18.3 The sustainability appraisal (SA) sustainability framework is a good starting point for developing targets and indicators for monitoring. Monitoring for the SA can be part of the wider monitoring process for the LDF and the AAP, with the SA using a subset of the overall monitoring objectives. The SEA Regulations specifically state that monitoring for SEA can be incorporated into other monitoring arrangements (Regulation 17(2)), and therefore it may be possible to combine with AAP monitoring.
- 18.4 Monitoring need only begin once the AAP has been adopted and implementation begun. Therefore, a monitoring framework for the SA need not be agreed until the final monitoring framework for the AAP is in place.
- 18.5 Many of the proposed indicators for the AAP set out in the submission version of the LDP could be used to monitor sustainability issues. Appendix 3 shows the relationship of LDP monitoring indicators as they appear in implementation and monitoring framework of the AAP and sustainability objectives. This is intended as indication of how the monitoring and SA process are interlinked.
- 18.6 For a successful AAP monitoring framework the Council must ensure that the indicators they choose for monitoring are manageable, really measure the effects of AAP implementation, and are matters over which the AAP can have a direct influence. The indicators should also only address matters that are required through policy and not set indicators that exceed policy expectations.
- 18.7 In setting a monitoring framework for the AAP the chosen indicators and targets need to be:
- **specific** – in that it relates to policy objectives, indicators used for the LDP reflect what is set out in policy and strategy, and do not appear to be defining requirements that go beyond, or differ from, policy
 - **attributable** – monitoring the indicator must give results that can be directly related to the LDP policies, and should not be issues that are influenced or are more likely to be influenced by matters outside the control of the LDP
 - **measurable** – it must be the case that data or information can realistically be gathered on the indicators, including whether this is possible given time and resources. Indicators could be linked to data already been gathered by other bodies, besides the planning authority.

- **timescale** – the indicator must be capable of being monitored on a regular basis, usually annually, to be an effective part of a monitoring programme.

19 Summary and recommendations

- 19.1 The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) has recognised that the Central Southend AAP has an important role to play in the sustainable development of this area and the wider Borough.
- 19.2 The proposed AAP objectives provide the foundation for the development of policies and proposals for the central area. However, these objectives are stronger for some areas, such as built design enhancement, than for other areas such the role of the central area in the context of Southend as a whole.
- 19.3 The SA has identified that the objectives, policies and proposals of the AAP have the potential to deliver sustainability development in central Southend and beyond. The AAP contains much that is very compatible with achieving sustainable development. There are many positive aspects of the plan in relation to delivering sustainable development that include:
- securing more sustainable transport access to town centre, with emphasis on walking and cycling as well as public transport, with the result of fewer car trips and more equitable access for all
 - building better quality development through designing places and buildings that fit the context of the area and provide for a vibrant town centre
 - supporting the economy of the town through providing new spaces for a diverse range of businesses, including offices, retail and strong emphasis on the growing the tourism economy
 - protecting the assets of the central area, including historic and cultural heritage of the built environment and protecting the high quality natural environment and seafront
 - supporting new mixed communities in the central area through the provision of new homes and community services, including schools, health centres and open space
 - continuing to expand the university and college facilities in the town centre to support a thriving education sector, which will help create a vibrant town, skilled workforce and opportunities for business growth.
- 19.4 The SA of the submission AAP reveals some other sustainability issues. The SA makes recommendations on how some aspects of the AAP could be improve the sustainability performance of the plan.
- 19.5 **Transport and movement:** To successfully achieve a modal shift away from car use, there is a need to ensure transport, movement and parking strategy presents a proactive and joined up approach to managing traffic in the town centre. Without this the regeneration of central Southend could be adversely affected by increasing congestion, with negative health and environmental impacts.
- 19.6 The policies of the AAP show a clear intention to make the town centre a better place with improvement to the pedestrian environment to encourage more people to

walk. Improved links to the central area will also help reduce car use in the town centre, with benefits for the natural and residential environment.

- 19.7 The SA of policies makes some recommendations on how some changes could be made to make the policy intentions more clear, and it is hoped more easy to implement. These are:
- A single policy on mixed-mode shared priority routes, giving details on design and layout and the proposed routes through the town centre.
 - A single Queensway enhancement policy to avoid repetition, with indicative layouts of the 'urban forest', linear park, crossing points and possible narrowing.
 - Details of the development of public open space and links from the St John's Church area to the Eastern Esplanade/Marine Parade could be more succinctly present in a single policy, avoiding repetition between policies for different quarters.
 - More detail on the anticipated physical infrastructure improvement needs for public transport interchanges as one policy for the central area.
- 19.8 **Residential development:** Central Southend has a significant role to play in delivering new residential development for the Borough. The requirement is set through the Core Strategy for Southend.
- 19.9 The policies of the AAP go some way toward helping development in the central area make a suitable contribution to meeting Southend's housing needs. An appendix to the AAP sets out the indicative housing numbers on each of the housing development sites. This quantification allows for an understanding of the distribution of new housing within the central area. It shows where residential development is a priority on a redevelopment site and that housing growth can be delivered to meet the requirement set in the spatial strategy.
- 19.10 In seeking more equitable access to housing the AAP could also consider policies that go beyond Core Policy affordable housing targets. Current affordable housing policy is very unlikely to yield many new affordable homes in the town centre due to the size of development sites.
- 19.11 The AAP could also contain some more detail on where new community facilities should be located. This could include a text or policy more clearly setting out the location of the new primary school and health centre, as well the scale, location and type of open space required.
- 19.12 **The built environment:** The principle focus of AAP is how improvements can be made to the built environment of the central area, through new development and enhancement. This will have positive sustainability impacts related to improving the image of the centre. A better 'sense of place' can help support the community's pride in the place in the place where there live, which can have positive impacts on social sustainability. The town centre is also the showcase for the rest of the town, and therefore if this area has a high quality image it can encourage local and national investment in the whole town.

- 19.13 The policies of the AAP are not very detailed on the precise design details for new development. To ensure that development is delivered to the high quality standards the Council or others may need to prepare development briefs, masterplans and/or design codes for specific areas. This will help provide the fine grain guidance that will developers deliver good quality development.
- 19.14 **Education and culture:** Support for education in the town centre will have positive sustainability impacts, not only from improving availability of learning sites but also from the vibrancy a student population can bring to the central area.
- 19.15 The AAP could consider making it a requirement for larger new employment developments in the town centre to contribute to training associated with the university, to improve the skills of local residents and access to newly created employment.
- 19.16 Many sites are proposed for new education facilities, it will be important to make sure that sufficient sites come forward. However, it will also be important to ensure that this type of development does not prevent other town centre uses being bought forward. For example, some locations may be preferable for new homes rather than student accommodation. Concentration of student accommodation can also have detrimental impacts on neighbourhoods from a high transient population, although there can be benefits of creating vibrancy.
- 19.17 **Employment and retail:** The AAP recognises the primacy of central Southend for new retail and office development. This is compatible with sustainability objectives relating to supporting a thriving economy in Southend, and as the most sustainable location in terms of travel impacts in the Borough.
- 19.18 The AAP shows a clear intention to provide for economic growth in the central area. Economic and employment growth will be delivered through provision of new office space, improved retail offer, tourism and protection of existing employment areas.
- 19.19 However, there is a need to make sure that existing office and business space is not lost in favour of other uses, such as residential or education use. A quality office provision needs to be maintained in the town centre. Existing land that is currently in employment use should not be lost if no replacement is provided. For instance, if the Sainsbury's does not relocate and is therefore not available, alternative space for new offices will need to be identified in a similarly accessible location. There is the possibility that this may need to include Victoria Avenue sites suitable for demolition and redevelopment.
- 19.20 The central area is the most sustainable place for high trip generating office uses, based on transport and accessibility considerations. Also, other employment such as small industrial uses are an important source of local jobs and local services. Land availability in the Borough is limited, raising the importance of protecting what resources there are.
- 19.21 Through working with the university there is the potential to deliver wider benefits to the whole Borough. For instance, training in conjunction with the university to help local people access newly created local jobs This can help ensure that the

advantages of inward investment in physical employment infrastructure also supports local enterprise, provides jobs for local peoples and raises local skill levels.

- 19.22 **Leisure, recreation and open space:** The APP policies relating to leisure and recreation are compatible with sustainable development and should help deliver the benefits created by new and existing recreation and leisure facilities. This will have benefits for local communities as well as visitors.
- 19.23 The AAP is not very detailed on the need to deliver new hotels and conference facilities in the central area, although it is acknowledged that this is a need. Sites for this type of development could be identified to bring economic benefits to the town from increasing tourism and businesses spend.
- 19.24 New seafront and waterfront leisure and recreation development will need to take into account the potential conflict of uses. There will be different demands on the area from areas of quiet enjoyment of the natural environment to places for active water-sports. For everyone's enjoyment different uses will need to be managed to ensure high quality leisure opportunities for all.
- 19.25 There is also the potential for waterfront tourism and leisure to conflict with the nature conservation interest of the site, that will need to be managed to ensure no harm comes to internationally designated sites.
- 19.26 **Sustainable construction:** To reduce natural resource consumption created by the large scale of proposed restoration and redevelopment an area wide energy strategy could be included as part of the AAP.
- 19.27 The policy is unlikely to have any negative impacts on sustainable development. However, the SA queries whether all opportunities have been taken to secure high levels of sustainable construction and low carbon development in the central area.
- 19.28 The large mixed use and landmark sites proposed have real potential to deliver buildings to exemplar sustainability standards, both in construction and use of resources. Building to high standards can have benefits for the resource use of the individual buildings as well as providing an example of standards that can be achieved. This can help guide the delivery of other development in the Borough, helping guide the way for sustainable construction.
- 19.29 The AAP could also contain more on the need to provide lower carbon energy throughout the central area. For instance, though using district heat and power networks in neighbourhood enhancement areas, or the potential of the seafront location for certain types of renewable energy generation. However, further evidence of the viability and feasibility of any such schemes on specific sites may be necessary.
- 19.30 There could be greater consistency in the AAP in the way flood issues are managed. The control of flood is covered through several different policies in the LDF. Some sites development principles policies refer to the need to manage surface water flooding and other do not. For sites where flood is not mentioned it is not clear if this is because there is little risk there, or an omission to policy. This may require clarification in the AAP.

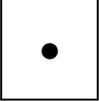
- 19.31 **Natural environment:** The policies of the AAP are likely to be beneficial in protecting the natural environment, particularly areas of high designated quality. However, there may be potential for more detail to be included on some aspects of protection and enhancement.
- 19.32 The plan could contain greater detail on how some of the elements of urban greening will be achieved. For example the 'urban forest' at Queensway has the potential to bring the natural environment into the heart of the town. A design strategy should be prepared for the 'urban forest' so contributions can be sought from local developers.
- 19.33 Policies could contain more detail on how the 'green grid' strategy for the central area will work to alleviate pressure on the foreshore. New open space is expected to help provide an alternative for recreation to the foreshore, to help reduce visitor pressure in the designated area. However, to successfully achieve this there is a need for detail in the AAP on how the 'green grid' and new open space will support this. Currently the policies on open space in the AAP are not joined-up and do not present an overall picture of how the green grid will work to relieve pressure. Additional information could include the design of new open spaces so they provide a suitable alternative, for instance reducing the number of dog walkers.
- 19.34 In providing new open space in the urban environment emphasis should be put on providing soft landscape rather than hard landscaping. This will help bring nature into the town with many benefits for sustainable development, including biodiversity protection and enhancement as well as reducing urban heating effects.
- 19.35 There is repeated reference to lighting strategies in the AAP. These can help create a more attractive night-time environment and lighting of 'green grid' links could help improve safety. However, for nocturnal wildlife lighting can create barriers to movement. Therefore, lighting schemes need to take potential impacts into account, using suitable wattage, timings and low level lighting to avoid adverse impacts.
- 19.36 **Implementation:** It is evident that no sustainability benefits can be realised if development cannot be implemented. The implementation section of the AAP shows how the policies and proposals might be secured, and includes details of timescales, targets and delivery partners.
- 19.37 The SA also identifies the potential for some simplification of AAP policies to remove some repetition and therefore help clarify the expectations for new development in helping deliver sustainable development. New policies are suggested, such as on improved walking and cycling routes and Queensway enhancements. Other suggestions are to remove repetition from some site proposal policies (Part C), relying instead on the generic policies of Part B.

Appendix 2

Sustainability appraisal of Area Action Plan policies

These matrices show an appraisal of the policies submission version against the full set of sustainability objectives developed for the SA process, as shown in the SA Report, Section 4.

Key to appraisal symbols

Likely to contribute to the achievement of greater sustainability according to the identified objective	
Likely to detract from the achievement of greater sustainability according to the identified objective	
Likely effect but too unpredictable to specify, or multiple impacts potentially both positive and negative	
No identifiable relationship between the topic covered in the policy and the sustainability concern	

Concern		Explanation and desirable direction of change
Social progress which recognises the needs of everyone		
Accessibility	SP1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> enable all to have similar and sufficient levels of access to services, facilities and opportunities
Housing	SP2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to provide the opportunity for people to meet their housing need
Education & Skills	SP3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to assist people in gaining the skills to fulfil their potential and increase their contribution to the community
Health, safety and security	SP4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to improve overall levels of health, reduce the disparities between different groups and different areas, and reduce crime and the fear of crime
Community	SP5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to value and nurture a sense of belonging in a cohesive community, whilst respecting diversity
Effective protection of the environment		
Biodiversity	EP1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to maintain and enhance the diversity and abundance of species, and safeguard these areas of significant nature conservation value
Landscape character	EP2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to maintain and enhance the quality and character and cultural significance of the landscape, including the setting and character of the settlement
Built environment	EP3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to maintain and enhance the quality, safety and distinctiveness of the built environment and the cultural heritage
Prudent use of natural resources		
Air	NR1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to reduce all forms of air pollution in the interests of local air quality and the integrity of the atmosphere
Water	NR2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to maintain and improve the quantity and quality of ground, sea and river waters, and minimise the risk of flooding
Land	NR3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to use land efficiently, retaining undeveloped land and bringing contaminated land back into use
Soil	NR4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to maintain the resource of productive soil
Minerals and other raw materials	NR5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to maintain the stock of minerals and other raw materials
Energy sources	NR6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to increase the opportunities for energy generation from renewable energy sources, maintain the stock of non renewable energy sources and make the best use of the materials, energy and effort embodied in the product of previous activity
Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment		
Local economy	EG1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to achieve a clear connection between effort and benefit, by making the most of local strengths, seeking community regeneration, and fostering economic activity
Employment	EG2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to maintain and enhance employment opportunities matched to the size of the local labour force and its various skills, and to reduce the disparities arising from unequal access to jobs
Wealth creation	EG3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to retain and enhance the factors which are conducive to wealth creation, including personal creativity, infrastructure, accessibility and the local strengths and qualities that are attractive to visitors and investors

Development strategy for key uses

Policy DS1: New and enhanced shopping facilities

Policy summary

The policy sets the principle for 50,000m² of new retail floorspace in the central area by 2020. Several sites are identified to meet the diverse floorspace needs of different types of retail development. New retail development should include a new supermarket in the central area.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

Focused shopping facilities in one central location can help reduce peoples' need to travel. There will be benefits related to reduced car use, aided by the fact the central area has good public transport access and is within easy walking and cycling distance from many peoples' homes. A diverse retail offer can also make the area attractive to visitors and be part of the tourism economy. However, retail should be compatible with the size of the town and ideally not harm nearby towns ability to a retain viable retail offer.

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

Sustainability appraisal comment

The policy is positive in supporting new retail growth in the central area of Southend. The policy is clear that the anticipated level of growth will need to be matched with improvements to the transport infrastructure and this will have benefits related to reducing congestion and car use in the central area.

Retail development proposed in the policy will help in the regeneration of the built environment in some parts of the plan area. For example along Southchurch and London Roads and through re-use of the car park sites.

A new supermarket will help ensure residents of central Southend have good access to a range of healthy food, without needing to travel to the edge-of-centre and out-of-town foodstores.

New small and boutique shops in the Clifftown Quarter will help support establishing Southend as a cultural destination with a range of shops possibly linked with other cultural offer.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

This policy is likely to have a positive impact on achieving sustainable development. This is as long as the retail offer remains appropriate to the size of the town and other built environment improvements are achieved.

The difference between aspects of part (i) and (ii) of the policy is not clear with both addressing the need to develop the Tyler's Road, Clarence Road and Alexandra Road car parks, and the two could be combined.

To achieve the most sustainable retail development this will need to be matched by a reduction in car use in the central area. Improvements to public transport interchanges and pedestrian links across Queensway will help link up different parts of the town centre.

Policy DS2: Shopping frontages and use of floors above shops

Policy summary

The policy sets out the proportion of non-shop uses allowed in the primary and secondary centres.

The policy also sets the standards for the design of new shopping frontages, and re-use of upper floors.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

Retaining a strong retail provision within the central area can help contribute to sustainable development by providing a focus for visitors to meet all retail needs in one place. The town centre, as one of the most accessible places in the Borough, should be the retail focus as many people can access the area without using a car. A strong retail core is also essential to the vibrancy of the town. A large number of people attracted to this location is part of the character of the area with benefits for the economy.

A well designed shopping area can help make Southend town centre unique, differentiating it from other generic shopping areas.

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

Sustainability appraisal comment

The policy should help protect those areas of primary importance for shopping from alternative uses. Focused retail development may be required to protect the viability of shopping areas. In more peripheral locations other uses, such as financial services, restaurants and bars can complement shopping uses.

The policy makes provision for active frontages to be retained. This will help enhance the walking environment and help to join-up different parts of the centre and retail circuits, removing blank frontages or spaces can create perceived barriers. Making walking more attractive is also an essential part of helping reduce car use.

Following this policy and other policies on active frontages and the design of storefronts can help improve the quality of the built environment.

Allowing other uses above shops, such as flat, will help make best use of available land.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

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

There is some repetition of this policy with Development Management policy on store fronts and shopping areas. For a simpler plan and to avoid potential conflict policy criteria should not be repeated, especially as the development management policy is referenced in this policy.

The policy also repeats elements of PR3 'visually active frontages'. Duplication could be removed.

Policy DS3: Retail markets

Policy summary

The policy sets the criteria for developing a new market area in the town centre.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

Permanent and temporary markets have a role to play in supporting small retail business and providing a diverse range of retail offer. Markets can also add to the vibrancy of an area. Temporary market space, for instance for farmers or Christmas markets, can also be an important part of a cultural identity to a town.

However, markets will need to be in locations where they do not harm the viability or amenity of other shopping uses, for instance during the time when stalls are being set-up and taken down.

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

Sustainability appraisal comment

This policy should help to control the development of markets in unsuitable locations. The policy could recognise the potential for permanent and temporary (although regular) markets sites.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

This policy is compatible with sustainable development.

Policy DS4: Employment development within the central area

Policy summary

The policy sets the principles for new job provision in the town centre, New jobs will be provided on existing employment sites as well as in new employment floorspace. Office and business use will be promoted in the town centre.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

As the most accessible location in the Borough by a choice of transport modes the town centre is the ideal place for high trip generating business uses. Jobs in these locations can be accessed by public transport from throughout the Borough and beyond, helping to reduce car use and the adverse impacts this can have on sustainable development.

More jobs focused on the town centre will help improve the vibrancy of the town centre, supporting additional shops and services.

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

Sustainability appraisal comment

This policy should help in supporting the role of the town centre as the major employment location in the Borough. This is compatible with objectives of reducing car use as these locations are likely to be most accessible by a variety of modes of transport.

Existing Industrial Estate areas are to be retained, as set out in the policy. This is essential in keeping a mix of employment in the town centre and Gateway Neighbourhood areas. Protecting existing employment is also essential in Southend due to the limited land resources and the need to maintain the economy of the whole Borough.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

The policy is compatible with achieving sustainable development objectives.

The retail policy includes a clause to ensure retail development comes forward in association with public transport improvements. This requirement could be included for employment growth.

Transport access will be important both as part of the overall strategy to ensure a move away from car use and to make sure this volume of workers can easily access the town centre at peak times.

It may be difficult to apply criteria 3(ii) as many applications may be able to prove that the meet

some of the aspects of the other AAP objectives. This may result in the loss of employment land.

Policy DS5: Education and higher and further education

Policy summary

The policy sets out the needs for new education facilities in the central area. New education facilities include a primary schools and the expansion of higher and future education facilities.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

Access to education for people of all ages is essential. New homes are planned in the central area and there is a need to provide for local primary schools to accommodate the demand this will create. Higher and further education can have a variety of benefits, not only for increasing qualification and skills level but also direct links to creating a stronger knowledge-based economy. More people studying in central Southend can also help the town's tourism and leisure economy.

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

Sustainability appraisal comment

This policy is compatible with the aims for sustainable development. The policy identifies sites that may be suitable for a new primary school or new higher education facilities. However, the policy can do little but control the implementation of these uses, and their delivery will be reliant on the strategies and funding plans.

Keeping higher and further education facilities focused in the town centre is important to secure their accessibility to students. Current campus sites are very near the train station and therefore accessible to students from within and outside the Borough.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

The policy is compatible with sustainable development objectives. However, its delivery will be dependent on other strategies of the education authority and university

Policy DS6: Provision of facilities for culture, leisure, tourism and entertainment

Policy summary

This policy sets out the general principles for determining planning applications for cultural, leisure, tourism and entertainment facilities. The policy also lists existing and future schemes that contribute to the cultural, leisure and tourism life of Southend central area.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

This type of facility can have benefits for the society and the economy of the whole of Southend. These features will be an essential part of the tourism and visitor economy of the town. These features can also be part of the identity of the area, helping people connect with the place where they live, fostering community identity. Maintaining and improving these facilities can also help to bring improvements to the built environment.

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

Sustainability appraisal comment

The policy sets out what the expectations are for this type of development. Listing the development opportunities or initiatives helps clarify what the potential is for cultural, leisure and recreational improvements in the central area, and which schemes the Council are already be supportive of. However, for many of these other implementation plans will need to be put in place and funding sources found.

New, high quality hotels will have benefits for the economy. This will be through encouraging a greater range of tourism in the town and also be important for business travellers and to support Southend as a location for conventions.

Care will need to be taken to ensure that use of the foreshore does not harm the nature conservation value of these areas, as set out in the policy.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

This policy is compatible with achieving objectives for sustainable development.

However, the implementation of the schemes listed in this policy will be dependent on funding and decisions for development from other sources, these cannot be directly controlled by the AAP.

Policy DS7: Social and community infrastructure**Policy summary**

The policy sets criteria to support the development of health, social care, faith and community facilities.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

Access to health facilities has a clear link with social sustainability objectives. The policy also has potential to help support communities.

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

Sustainability appraisal comment

This policy simply supports the development of new facilities to meet social and community infrastructure needs. It will be important to deliver these facilities to match the growth in housing in the central area and ensure everyone has access to local healthcare services. In addition, space for community halls or gathering places is important for communities. Much focus is on the wider role of the central area for leisure and recreation. However, the needs of people living in the area should be considered through providing local facilities.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

The policy is compatible with social sustainability objectives.

The policy could set out locations where a new primary care centre should be located, so that it can be incorporated into development briefs or masterplans for the area, as is the case for the school.

Policy DS8: Housing

Policy summary

The policy identifies the quantity of housing to be delivered in the central area. The policy also identifies locations where much of this housing will be focussed. Cross-reference to other policies should help make sure that relevant policies are complied with.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

Housing in town centres can help provide a vibrancy to areas. Where the housing is of a type that supports a diverse community it can help make the town centre a vibrant space all through the day. Housing in these locations will also have good walkable access to all the jobs, services and retail opportunities of the central location. This can help reduce reliance on car use and reduce the trips people make.

Development of previously developed land for residential purposes also helps ensure the good use of land. Housing can also be used in the physical regeneration of the town centre.

To help deliver communities a mix of housing types and tenures will need to be provided, as well as associated community facilities, such as schools, health centres, open space and meeting places.

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

Sustainability appraisal comment

The town centre is to be focus of a large proportion of new homes needed in the Borough. The policy sets the general principles for delivering this housing, identifying the sites that will be the focus of much of the growth.

To ensure that the town centre housing helps create new communities it is important that a range of housing types are provided that really meet the needs of residents. Efforts will need to be made to ensure that new homes are not simply bought for the rental market, as this can have adverse impact on the vibrancy of residential areas. The visual appearance of residential areas of high rental turnover can also become quickly degraded and can also make places feel unsafe. Affordable housing will also need to be provided in locations and of a quality comparable to market housing.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

Policies of the LDF that promote a mix of dwelling types will need to be enforced in the central area. It may be suitable for specific policies or development criteria to be created to ensure a mix on specific development sites.

Affordable housing policies will also need to be implemented.

Community uses will need to be provided to meet the needs of residents and to ensure that new residents can access local services.

The Public Realm

Policy PR1: Open Space Provision and the environment

Policy summary

The policy sets out criteria on how development will need to contribute to the open space network in the region. This includes identifying the locations that need to be the focus for new open space provision and the need to protect biodiversity.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

There are numerous benefits of open space and green space in the urban environment. This includes providing space for formal and informal recreation, helping adaptation to climate change, and as a biodiversity asset and to improve the quality of the urban environment. The policy can help address deficiencies in central Southend.

There is a risk that if green spaces are not planned into development from the outset there could be detrimental impacts to the character and sustainability of the town centre.

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

Sustainability appraisal comment

There will be many benefits of implementing this policy for sustainable development. Benefits will include helping people choose healthy lifestyles, protecting and enhancing biodiversity, helping reduce car use and congestion.

Planting of locally appropriate species may help in create habitats to support greater local biodiversity. Planting can help mitigate against the heat impacts of climate change, species will need to chosen that can withstand periods of drought.

The policy does include the need to for these spaces to be well lit at night. This could be contrary to some aspects of biodiversity protection, as lit areas can create barriers to nocturnal foraging of many species. Lighting can also adversely impact on the night sky and patches of darkness. It will also require additional energy demands.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

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

New open space is expected to help provide an alternative for recreation to the foreshore, to help reduce visitor pressure in the designated area. However, to successfully achieve this there is a need for more information and policy the AAP on how the 'green grid' and new open space will support this. Currently the policies on open space in the AAP are not very joined up and do not present an overall picture of how the green grid will work to relieve pressure.

Lighting of open spaces should be planned and implemented to ensure it will not have adverse impacts on biodiversity, energy efficiency or the night sky.

New event space can have benefits for the communities and economy of the Borough. Spaces for occasional or regular events can be important to the character of the area and attractiveness as a visitor destination. These spaces should be of a type of support different types of events, such as open air music, food festivals and community events.

Policy PR2: Public realm enhancements

Policy summary

This policy covers two elements of good design, firstly aesthetically pleasing design and also design to promote legibility and promote walking/cycling.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

A well designed area has the potential to support communities and encourage visitors. Creating places that feel unique can help foster community pride and connect people to where they live, this in turn can lead to benefits for community cohesion. There can also be economic benefits.

Creating a more attractive place can also encourage people away from their cars, supporting walking and cycling.

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

Sustainability appraisal comment

The policy should have positive benefits for sustainable development. Public art should be integrated into development and serve a clear purpose, this can be aesthetic, but also could be signage, street furniture or have a community connection. Poorly conceived public art, can have an adverse impact on the relationship of people with the place where they live.

Public realm improvements can have a range of benefits for the central area, not only in visual quality but also in encourage sustainable travel, tourism and community identity.

The public realm also has a part to play in improving the connectivity between places. Currently busy or dual carriageway roads, such as Queensway, can physically separate areas, especially for those on foot. Improving links will help spread regeneration potential up the High Street and to areas such as the ‘Sutton Gateway’, it will also further help encourage people from their cars.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

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

To create a succinct DPD policies should avoid repetition of criteria that appear in this document or higher tier plans or matters better addressed on a site specific level.

Policy PR3: Visually active frontages

Policy summary

The policy seeks to improve the character of areas through encourage more attractive frontages.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

Active frontages can help improve the public realm. They can make walking more interesting and can help improve perceptions of safety.

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

Sustainability appraisal comment

The policy could set an expectation for all new development to have active ground floor uses,

rather than simply encourage this. Good quality ground floor appearance is essential on all main routes from public transport interchanges and also on the anticipated retail circuits to encourage walking and support the retail economy. Active frontages in areas identified as important for tourism will also be essential, to maintain the feel of a vibrant holiday town.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

The policy is likely to have a positive impact on sustainable development.
The policy could encourage active frontage in all new development.

Policy PR4: Protection of Visually Important Views

Policy summary

This policy aims to protect the identified views.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

Views can be an important part of the character of an area. Relating the community and visitors to the unique features of the town.

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

Sustainability appraisal comment

The policy should help in protecting the character of the area. However, every application should be judged on its merit, particularly where new development makes innovative use of views or provide other sustainability benefits.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

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

Policy PR5: Landmark buildings

Policy summary

This policy seeks to protect landmark buildings and set criteria for developing new ones.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

Landmark buildings can help give an area character, supporting a unique local built character that people can have pride in. These buildings are also important in creating a legible town, providing focal points for navigation around the town.

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

Sustainability appraisal comment

The policy is compatible with achieving sustainable development. However, it should not be applied in an overly restrictive way that prevents needed development coming forward, for instance objectors to any new tall buildings. The policy title could also reflect that it is not only buildings that can be (or are) landmarks, and can include built or natural features.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

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

The Historic Environment

Policy HE1: The Clifftown Quarter
Policy HE2: The Central Seafront Area
Policy HE3: Prittlewell Gateway
Policy HE4: The High Street

Policy summary

These policies address the specific elements of these four areas that will help protect and conserve the unique character of each area.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

The historic character of any area can be an important part of what makes a place unique. Conserving and enhancing areas of special quality can help people take pride in where they live, helping to create a community identity that can help foster community cohesion. The character of historic areas are also important for making the place an attractive place to live, work and visit, with economic and social benefits.

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

Sustainability appraisal comment

The policy should help make sure the character of these four areas is respected in any new development proposals. The particular characteristics and development needs of each area is identified. There is the potential for a range of benefits, such as improving the local visitor and retail economy, protecting the built environment and open space.

Protecting views to the sea and historic buildings can also help retain the unique qualities of Southend, including its heritage as a tourism destination and fishing port.

Benefits will also come from making a more attractive place for walking. Encouraging more people to walk in the town centre may play a part in reducing car use.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

These policies are likely to have a positive impact on sustainable development.

One of the greatest impacts on most of these areas will be from car use. Busy and congested streets, road signs and parked cars, can all detract from historic character. Implementation of parking and transport strategies for the town centre will help reduce these impacts, as will promoting walking and public transport access.

Policies will need to be implemented through development management decisions, but other strategies to reduce visual clutter, such as changes in road signs, will also be necessary.

The criteria of the policies are supported by the Heritage for Southend Central Evidence Base, which can be used to help inform developers on decision makers on the suitability of new development.

Policy HE5: Frontages of Townscape Merit																
Policy summary																
The policy requires that 'Frontages of Townscape Merit' are preserved and restored as part of new development proposals. The policy also requires that shopfronts and signage respect historic character of buildings.																
Relationship of policy with sustainable development																
Preserving areas of historic importance will help protect and enhance the built environment. It can also help preserve local identity of central areas, differentiating Southend town centre from other generic town centres. This can have positive benefits for the economy and community identity. Well designed shopfronts can also add character to the town centre.																
SP1	SP2	SP3	SP4	SP5	EP1	EP2	EP3	NR1	NR2	NR3	NR4	NR5	NR6	EG1	EG2	EG3
?	-	-	-	?	-	-	●	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	●
Sustainability appraisal comment																
This policy should help in enhancing the historic quality of central Southend. There should be social and economic benefits for the central areas as the wider perception of Southend as an attractive place to visit.																
Recommendations and potential for significant impacts																
The policy is likely to have a positive impact on sustainable development.																
The policy could clarify if it is all shopfronts and signage that would have to be appropriate to the building, or only in 'Frontages of Townscape Merit' areas.																

Policy HE6: Conversion of Heritage Assets in the Central Area																
Policy summary																
The policy sets the criteria for allowing the conversion of heritage assets.																
Relationship of policy with sustainable development																
To prevent the irreplaceable loss of heritage assets it may be necessary to allow their conversion to alternative uses. Conversion needs to be sensitive, taking into account internal as well as external features of importance. Preservation of heritage assets are important for the character of the central area, with benefits for the economy and community identity.																
SP1	SP2	SP3	SP4	SP5	EP1	EP2	EP3	NR1	NR2	NR3	NR4	NR5	NR6	EG1	EG2	EG3
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	●	-	-	?	-	?	-	-	-	?
Sustainability appraisal comment																
The policy appears to be suitable in protecting heritage assets from inappropriate re-use. The policy allows conversion where buildings are in need of repair.																
Recommendations and potential for significant impacts																
The policy is compatible with achieving sustainable development objectives.																
To further help the loss of heritage assets that are at risk or in a poor state of repair the policy																

could allow conservation without the need to demonstrate existing use cannot be retained. Decisions could be made simply on the quality of the proposal.

The policy wording could include clarification that plans for re-use must respect internal as well as external appearance of these buildings.

Policy HE7: Areas of Archaeological Potential in the Central Area

Policy summary

The policy sets out the need to establish an assessment and evaluation process for development in the areas specified.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

Archaeological heritage is finite and can be destroyed through development. Ensuring that archaeological potential is assessed and recorded can be of national and international importance, it can aid historical understanding of the origins of people in the Southend area. Links to the past help people feel a connection and pride in the place where they live.

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

Sustainability appraisal comment

This policy should help protect buried archaeological from loss before it is properly recorded/excavated. The policy sets out where archaeological evaluation will be needed making it clear to developers from the outset what will be expected from them, so these considerations can be included in financial viability considerations. This can help prevent against development being stalled and not coming forward as anticipated as well as protecting archaeology.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

This policy should have positive impacts on sustainable development.

Central Areas Transport and Access Strategy

Policy TA1: Town centre and central area Highway Network

Policy summary

The policy sets out various schemes that the Council will pursue through partnership working and through decisions on planning applications to manage traffic and transport in central Southend.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

Reducing the number of trips people make by car can have many benefits for sustainable development. These benefits include helping mitigate against climate change, improving air quality, reducing the amenity and economic impacts of congestion and encouraging more healthy transport choices.

Making sure more people can easily get to central Southend by alternatives to car travel is also a positive step towards greater equity in access to jobs and services.

There are also benefits to the built environment from fewer parked cars and cars on the roads.

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

+	-	-	●	?	-	-	●	?	-	-	-	-	?	-	?	●
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Sustainability appraisal comment

The policy shows a clear intention to improve the choice of modes of transport in the town centre. There will be a focus on improvements for all visitors to the town centre, as the majority of people visiting will spend at least part of their trip on foot. Improved links to public transport interchanges and edge of centre car parks will improve the walking environment.

Reducing congestion in the central area is essential. Schemes to achieve this include having fewer people travel through the centre to reach car parks. Measures such as the delivery of new car parks off the 'feeder' highway network will help achieve this.

The policy will have various benefits in increased travel safety, including for pedestrians and cyclists through new routes and management of servicing of retail units.

Allowing cycling within pedestrianised areas can help encourage this mode of transport. Careful use of shared surfaces and dedicated routes can improve safety, protecting pedestrians from illegal cyclists. It will also give cyclists an advantage over car users of being able to get quickly right to their destination.

Built environment improvements can be achieved through improved signage, removing the clutter from roadsides created by vehicle signage.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

The policy is compatible with sustainable development objectives and the majority of criteria will have a positive impact on achieving sustainable development.

The intention of the first criteria of the policy is not entirely clear. It may be better to specify here that the intention is to reduce overall car use in and around the town centre, not only to seek a balance with the needs of other users.

Specific schemes for the design of new roads, including how pedestrian and cyclists will be catered for, plans for signage and street furniture or planting could be developed by the Council. These plans would help provide a cohesive vision for the main access routes and gateways to the central area, helping to improve the image of the area.

Policy TA1a: 'The Victorias' Phases 2, 3, and 4 Traffic and Public Realm Scheme

Policy summary

The policy sets out the criteria to guide improvements to the three parts of 'The Victorias'

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

Improvements to pedestrian and cycling access can remove perceived barriers created by the dual carriageway. Where walking and cycling routes are made more attractive more people may choose this mode of transport, especially where it links to public transport nodes. Removal of perceived barriers can also help stretch the economic benefits of the centre out to more peripheral locations. There will also be safety benefits from providing better crossing points.

The schemes can also enhance public space with the potential for benefits to the built environment and community identity.

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

Sustainability appraisal comment

The policy sets out in the clear way what will be expected from transport improvements to this part of the central area. The policy should help encourage walking and cycling and could widen the economic benefits of the central area to more peripheral locations.

Public realm and built environment improvements will help enhance this area, which currently experiences a lack of distinct character and a clear 'gateway' to Central Southend.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

This policy should help in delivering more sustainable transport access and built environmental improvements to central Southend.

The policy will need to be taken forward through development proposals and public improvement schemes, as alone the AAP can do little to achieve these outcomes.

Policy TA1b: 'City Beach' Phase 2: Traffic and Public Realm Scheme

Policy summary

The policy sets out the aims for public realm and traffic improvements as part of Phase 2 of the 'City Beach' scheme.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

Improving the quality of the this area can help enhance the character of the seafront and its attractiveness to visitors. Improvements can also support more waking and cycling, this will have benefits related to reducing car use and in promoting healthy activity.

Public realm improvements and space for new leisure and tourism development will have positive impacts on economic sustainability. New public spaces can also help provide community meeting spaces and community identity.

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

Sustainability appraisal comment

The policy sets quite ambitious targets for road and public realm improvements on the seafront. The aims of the policy could result in a diverse range of sustainable development benefits. These benefits especially relate to improving the tourism economy, helping to provide more space for leisure and visitor activity, providing better links to the seafront from the central area and making the seafront more attractive. There is also the potential that this could help encourage improvements to parts of the town behind the Eastern Esplanade.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

The policy should have positive impacts on achieving sustainable development.

Developing a unified approach to the appearance of this part of the seafront will help in delivering the scheme. Also, this scheme could be used to help encourage improvements in the existing built-up area to the east of the town centre.

Phase 2 will require funding from outside sources, with the AAP having a limited role in its implementation.

Care will need to be taken to ensure any changes to the seafront area do not have an adverse

impact on the nature conservation assets in the area.

Policy TA2: Public transport

Policy summary

The policy sets out a number of measures that need to be implemented to help improve public transport access to central Southend.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

Public transport access to the central area has a major role to play in reducing car use throughout the Borough. Reduced car use will have environmental benefits related to helping mitigate climate change, improve air quality and reduce congestion. Health impacts will also be secured through improvements to air quality and reduced stress. Using public transport also normally includes some increase in walking, with benefits for personal health. There will be economic benefits from lower levels of congestion and better public transport links, making trips for business quicker and by helping the visitor economy by increasing the attractiveness of the town centre.

Public transport improvements will also allow more equitable access to the town centre for those who do not travel by car.

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

Sustainability appraisal comment

There is real potential to achieve a modal shift in the way people access central Southend. As the destination point for many buses and a local train network in the Borough it should be possible for the majority of people who work, shop or spend their leisure time in the centre to travel by public transport.

The policy contains very little that can be directly achieved through the AAP. However, it does set out the aspirations for public transport improvements in the central area and indicate what all development will need to help work towards.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

The policy is compatible with objectives for sustainable development.

Many of the aims of the policy will be reliant on the delivery of other strategies and plans for implementation. These include the plans of the Punctuality Improvement Partnership and the Advanced Vehicle Location system. Funding for improvements will need to be secured.

Improvements in public transport technology can improve access and usability, including integrated ticketing and mobile real-time timetables.

Many people would choose to make trips under 3 miles by bus or train, the policy on increasing use of public transport should cater for these groups too.

Policy TA3: Walking and cycling

Policy summary

The policy sets out the proposals to help improve walking and cycling routes and facilities in and around central area.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

To encourage more people to travel to the town centre by foot on by cycle, as well as by public transport, improvements need to be made to the walking and cycling environment. Currently people may be put off visiting the central area due to the poor quality of many of the streets for walking, with busy roads creating actual and perceived barriers to cycling and walking.

Good walking and cycling routes that provide an attractive alternative will be an important part of achieving a modal shift away from car use. Reduced car use will have environmental benefits related to helping mitigate climate change, improve air quality and reduce congestion. Health impacts will also be secured through improvements to air quality and the physical benefits of exercise. There will be economic benefits from lower levels of congestion and better public transport links, making trips for business quicker and by helping the visitor economy by increasing the attractiveness of the town centre as an attractive place spend time.

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

Sustainability appraisal comment

The policy contains much that will help in bring improvements to the walking and cycling environments of central Southend. Of particular importance in getting more people to choose to walk or cycle will be removing actual and perceived barriers. This includes the need to provide better crossing places from residential areas to the town centre, such as across Queensway in several different locations. Cycle routes also need to be suitably segregated or on clearly marked shared surfaces for the safety of all road uses. Existing routes into the town centre/High Street area have very little provision for cyclists and on-road clutter, parked cars and one-way systems will make cycling unsafe and indirect.

To encourage people making medium length trips (1-5km) to use cycles more instead of their cars, it needs to be clearly demonstrated that their needs have been taken into account. This includes safe routes as well as secure parking.

Better links across Queensway can also help to make the communities of Southend feel more connected. There is the potential for this to have positive impacts related to urban renewal, encouraging regeneration. For instance the development of Chichester Road to make it more attractive to pedestrians will improve the overall appearance of this area.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

The policy should have positive sustainability impacts.

Much of the policy will be reliant on the delivery of other strategies and plans for implementation. However, setting out the priorities for walking and cycling will help make sure that these considerations are integrated into development proposals for central Southend.

Policy TA4: Town Centre Parking Management

Policy summary

The policy sets out the principles for managing car parking in the central area.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

Controlling the quantity of car parking at destinations is an important way to manage travel choices. Parking needs to be provided at levels that help encourage fewer people to use their cars and choose alternative ways of accessing the central area, following standards set out in the

Development Management DPD. This need to be combined with management of car park pricing to help other modes be financially more attractive. However, levels of car parking must be sufficient to meet the needs to those with mobility difficulties and to not push trade and business out of the centre to less sustainable edge-of-centre locations.

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

Sustainability appraisal comment

The policy should help keep parking on the periphery of the town centre, reducing the quantity of vehicles that have to cross the central area to park. There will be benefits from reduce congestion in the town centre. Benefits will include lower air pollution impacts and reducing the adverse amenity impacts of traffic and cars. This will also help in implementing other schemes, such as further pedestrianisation of the central area and allow space for bike and bus lanes.

The reorganisation of car parks also makes the better use of land, replacing surface level parking with multi-storey or basement parking. New multi-storey car parks need to be carefully designed to play a role in enhancing and respecting local character, for example though the use of green walls or other planting.

Management of signage and reduction in on-street parking will all help improve the visual appearance of the central area. These measure may also increase safety for cyclists and pedestrians by removing hazards and increasing visibility. Less on-street parking will also free space for bus and cycle lanes.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

The policy is compatible with many sustainable development objectives.

Some elements of the policy could be removed to avoid repetition between policies.

Keeping the car parking under review is essential, as it is hoped in the medium to long term the overall level of people accessing the town centre by car will be reduced, therefore less parking will be needed.

The policy is not clear on whether there is a strategy to reduce the overall level of parking in the central area. As part of integrated traffic and transport management it will be important to make other forms of travel to the centre an attractive option. This will be though meeting maximum parking standards and through appropriate pricing. However, it will be important to make sure other travel choices are in place so as not to push people to out-of-town shopping facilities, where parking can often be free and plentiful.

New car parking signage needs to be controlled to manage visual clutter, especially in areas of high heritage value.

The policy makes no reference to private car parking. It should be ensured that all new development in the town centre sticks to maximum car parking standards set in the Development Management DPD, reducing office parking is one of the best ways to reduce car commuting and town centre congestion at peak times.

Policy TA5: Other measures to improve accessibility

Policy summary

The policy sets out ways of further promoting more sustainable travel choices in the central area, including the use of the MoveEasy brand.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

Reduced car use will have environmental benefits related to helping mitigate climate change, improve air quality and reduce congestion. Health impacts will also be secured through improvements to air quality and the physical benefits of exercise. There will be economic benefits from lower levels of congestion and better public transport links, making trips for business quicker and by helping the visitor economy by increasing the attractiveness of the town centre as an attractive place spend time.

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

Sustainability appraisal comment

These schemes are all part of helping to reduce car use in central Southend by making alternatives attractive and easy to use.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

This policy is compatible with sustainable development objectives.

The measures set out in the policy are unlikely to be implemented through delivering development as part of the AAP, and may be presented better as part of the supporting text. There is little set out in the policy that is enforceable through development decisions.

Greater emphasis could be put on what may be a requirement for new development. For instance, specific residential development schemes in the central area could be required to provide a car club car.

Infrastructure provision and flood risk

Policy IF1: Central area infrastructure

Policy summary

The policy states that the need to community facilities and infrastructure will be kept under review. The policy also clarifies that a new health centre and primary school are required.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

It is important that infrastructure is in place prior to occupation of development. This is essential to create useable places and protect natural resources and environmental quality. Community infrastructure is also necessary to provide accessible facilities for local people and create a good place to live.

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

Sustainability appraisal comment

The policy simply sets out that needs will be monitored and infrastructure must be delivered accordingly.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

The policy is compatible with sustainable development objectives.

The policy may be better shown as supporting text. The policy criteria do not form the basis for development management decisions and repeat matters already addressed through other policies.

Additional information on how infrastructure should be provided could be given in the policy. For instance, there will be a need to ensure all types of infrastructure are phased into development to include not only utilities services but also to ensure community facilities are in place.

Locations for new health facilities and primary school could be given.

Policy IF2: s106 planning obligations and developer contributions

Policy summary

This policy simply refers to the need for development to make contributions and fulfil obligations set through other policies, which are cross referenced.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

Development releases value in land. Requiring that part of this value goes towards creating a better place that caters to the needs of an area and future users of the development is essential. Fully securing these contributions can have a wide variety of sustainability benefits, including transport, community infrastructure, biodiversity and housing to meet all needs.

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

Sustainability appraisal comment

As this policy does not necessarily guarantee the delivery of any particular obligations or contributions the certainty of sustainability impacts can not be defined. However, the policy is likely to help play a role in creating sustainable places.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

The policy should help support the delivery of sustainable development.

The policy may not be required and instead by supporting text, cross-referencing other relevant policies and guidance.

Consideration may need to be given to the evolution of contributions as part of a Community Infrastructure Levy.

Policy IF3: Flood Risk Management

Policy summary

The policy sets the requirements for Flood Risk Assessments and provision of sustainable urban drainage.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

Managing flood water is an essential part of providing a safe place to live and work, protecting homes and businesses. With increasing erratic weather as a result of a changing climate there is a need for new development to be able to manage heavy rainfall events through the use of sustainable drainage.

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

Sustainability appraisal comment

The policy is clear that all new development with impermeable surfaces includes SUDS measures. This will help prevent fluvial flooding in times of intense rainfall. The policy also makes clear who will be responsible for the long-term maintenance of SuDS on different types of development.

Requiring Flood Risk Assessments should help make sure that new development fully takes into account the potential impact of flooding. Development will need to be designed to ensure it does not increase flood risk on or off-site, protecting people and property from harm.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

The policy may have positive impacts on meeting sustainability objectives relating to safety and the water environment.

The policy may need to clarify what types of development the SuDS requirements apply to, to ensure it is required for all new built development and not only housing. Also, it is not clear if Flood Risk Assessments will be needed for all new development in the central area, or only certain types or locations of development.

QUARTERS AND PROPOSAL SITE POLICIES

The High Street

Policy DP1: The High Street Development Principles																
Policy summary																
The policy sets the criteria for developing and regeneration of the High Street. This includes re-defining the High Street as a sequence of ‘episodes’.																
Relationship of policy with sustainable development																
The High Street is a high trip generating focus for the central area. Built environment improvements can help encourage more people to spend more time in the area, and pedestrianisation will also help encourage non-car travel and make all visitors experience better.																
SP1	SP2	SP3	SP4	SP5	EP1	EP2	EP3	NR1	NR2	NR3	NR4	NR5	NR6	EG1	EG2	EG3
●	?	-	●	●	?	-	●	-	-	-	-	-	-	?	?	●
DP1: Sustainability appraisal comment																
The High Street is the core of the central area, providing a range of shopping and leisure uses. This policy should help to make sure the High Street is an attractive place to visit. The policy sets out how public realm improvements and protection of heritage can be used to improve the quality of the area.																
There is also a strong emphasis on increased pedestrianisation will also bring improvements to the quality of the area and can play a role in encouraging non-car travel. Cycling improvements are also essential to encourage this form of travel, that can easily replace car trips for medium length journeys.																
The policy contains a requirement to include new planting in the High Street. Trees and shrubs in amongst the hard surfaces and landscapes of the High Street will bring visual diversity and can help cool these areas during hot spells.																
Better use of the currently under-utilised Victoria Circus and other public spaces can have many benefits, including for community events and for the tourism economy.																
Recommendations and potential for significant impacts																
The policy is likely to help deliver sustainable development in this area.																
Parts of the policy that repeat other policy requirements, such as loss of A1 retail uses or protection of Frontages of Townscape Merit should be removed from the policy to make for a clearer and more succinct plan.																

Queensway and London Road / Broadway Development

Policy DP2: Queensway and London Road / Broadway Development	
Proposal Site Policy PS2a: Sainsbury’s and adjacent buildings, London Road Proposal Site	
Policy summaries	
These set the general principles for the enhancing the Queensway and London Road/Broadway area. The proposal site is the large area of land currently occupied by Sainsbury’s, a car park and other buildings.	

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

This part of the central area contains a large building that dominates the area. There is little active frontage and the built environment is of a poor quality with little provision for cyclists and pedestrians. Regeneration of the area through wholesale redevelopment or partial renewal of the area could have substantial benefits to its quality and attractiveness to visitors. Enhancing Victoria Circus will have benefits for the character of this currently underutilised space so that it can actively contribute to the attractiveness of the area and the local economy.

DP2: Sustainability appraisal summary and comment

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

The policy should help improve the character of the area, while retaining some of the existing uses such as car parking. Much of the improvements relate to better links across the site and to other parts of the central area for cyclists and pedestrians. This will help make the site more accessible including links across Queensway to Victoria Rail Station.

The principles for development also contain some other positive aspects, such as promoting urban greening, the potential for a street market, potential for higher/further education use, permitting a mix of uses including residential.

PS2a: Sustainability appraisal summary and comment

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

If the site is redeveloped the proposals sets out the criteria that should be met in its redevelopment. Redevelopment would see the better use of land as a mixed use area incorporating offices, residential on upper floors and shops/bars/restaurants at ground level.

A large part of the proposal would also be access improvements through the site providing better links for pedestrians from Queensway. The current building is of a poor quality and presents a blank face to main 'gateway' routes into the centre. Redevelopment is expected to make substantial improvements to the built quality and the new building should be a gateway landmark. Public realm will be further improved through use of public art and new signage.

If the site is not redeveloped there remains an expectation for improvements to the area, including partial redevelopment to make better use of the land at this site.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

The policy should help deliver more sustainable development in this area.

As with all the redevelopment sites consideration could be given to the potential of the site to deliver lower carbon energy.

Parts of the policy that repeat other policy requirements, such as requirements for active frontages.

A map of mixed mode, cycle and pedestrian improvement routes should be given in the AAP. A single policy on new mixed mode – shared priority' routes may be suitable, instead of repeating proposals in different policies, such as the 'mixed mode – pedestrian and cycle priority' for Queensway to Luker Road.

Elmer Square

Policy DP3: Elmer Square Development Principles Proposal Site Policy PS3a: Elmer Square Proposal Site

Policy summaries

The policies set out the general principles and specifics for development in and around Elmer Square.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

This is an important site near the High Street already associated with further and higher education. Enhancing this education role, as well as public realm improvements, will improve the attractiveness of Southend for those choosing a place to study. These improvements will also aid the image of a town as a place to do business due to the links with a modern university.

As well as benefits for those studying the proposals are also likely to benefit the community and businesses through shared use facilities, including the new Central Library and exhibition space.

A new public square will also benefit those who live, work and visit the central area. There will be good access from the High Street giving shoppers a place to relax.

DP3: Sustainability appraisal summary and comment

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

The policy clearly sets out the anticipated improvements to the area through the redevelopment of the Farringdon Road car park and the surrounding area. There is the potential for benefits to the built environment that will have a positive impact on the image of the central area. The result of improvements are likely to have economic benefits for Southend through improvements to the image and attractiveness of the central area, and links to a modern university.

Access upgrades will help encourage walking and cycling access, this will be part of securing a mode shift away from car use, with benefits for the wider central area.

New community uses and meeting spaces will have positive impacts on related sustainability objectives.

The policy also identifies the particular importance of addressing flooding issues in the design of new development.

PS3a: Sustainability appraisal summary and comment

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

The specific development proposals are quite specific and relate to the future use of the development site. Development will include education space, community space and a new public square. There are also proposals for changes to the highways that relate primarily to enhancing connectivity for pedestrians as well as detailed considerations of rear servicing.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

The policy should help deliver more sustainable development in this area.

The preparation of a Development Brief or adoption of the masterplan as SPD will help deliver the regeneration of the area in a unified way.

The development proposals site policy could include more information on the use of planting and

landscaping to create an attractive space or 'refuge' from the busy High Street area.

A map of mixed mode, cycle and pedestrian improvement routes should be given in the AAP. A single policy on new mixed mode – shared priority' routes may be suitable, instead of repeating proposals in different policies.

As with all the redevelopment sites consideration could be given to the potential of the site to deliver lower carbon energy.

Queensway and Southchurch Avenue

Policy DP4: Queensway and Southchurch Avenue Development Principles Proposal Site Policy PS4a: Queensway House and adjacent buildings

Policy summaries

This policy sets the general principles for the redevelopment and enhancements to the Queensway and Southchurch Avenue area. The proposal policy sets the principles for redevelopment of the Queensway House site.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

Queensway currently creates a barrier for those walking or cycling to the town centre from the north and east. New and improved cycle and foot links can have environmental benefits from reduced car use, perceptions of access will also change allowing people to feel more linked to the central area that can have social regeneration benefits.

The poor quality of the built environment here can be enhanced through the design of new spaces and other changes such as new public art.

There is the potential for new planting and open space to bring nature into the central area, with benefits for the visual appearance, biodiversity and wellbeing created through access to 'green' infrastructure.

DP4: Sustainability appraisal summary and comment

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

This area is to be partially redeveloped to provide new and housing, office and secondary retail space. This will help meet objectives for the central area of providing development to meet the needs of existing and future residents, as well as encouraging economic growth in the area.

Changes in access are promoted through the policy. This should help overcome the barrier created by Queensway. There is also potential for new mixed mode – shared priority access from this area to other parts of the central area.

The 'urban forest' scheme could have many benefits for sustainable development from bringing nature into a heavily built-up area. Benefits will not only be for wildlife but also the well-being of residents.

The policy recognises the surface water flood potential in this area.

PS4a: Sustainability appraisal summary and comment

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

PS4a: Sustainability appraisal comment

The proposal site is to be the location of new housing and commercial development. The way that this

new space is provided is not dictated by policy and it could include refurbishing the existing residential tower. In terms of seeking more sustainable development it may be suitable to prioritise refurbishment over demolition and redevelopment as this can help reduce the use of primary materials.

The site may need to include some public parking as the location on Queensway makes parking access more straightforward and reduce congestion. Parking should be managed to make the best use of land, for instance basement of multi-storey. Parking should only be provided where there is an identified shortfall, and public parking over the whole central area should aim for a reduction against current levels.

New open space provision will have benefits for residents, providing space for outdoor leisure and relaxation. Design of these spaces should make them useable by residents, visitors and local workers and not simply be grassed areas as the setting for buildings. Well landscaped areas should also enhance the character of this area. New open space should have 'soft' landscaping wherever possible as this can have greater sustainability benefits than hard landscaped areas, for instance for wildlife and to help absorb water and heat.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

The policy should help deliver more sustainable development in this area.

The preparation of a Development Brief or adoption of the masterplan as SPD will help deliver the regeneration of the area in a unified way.

A map of mixed mode, cycle and pedestrian improvement routes should be given in the AAP. A single policy on new mixed mode – shared priority' routes may be suitable, instead of repeating proposals in different policies.

This area was the site of a health centre. It should be made clear if this use should be replaced in this location, as other parts of the AAP make clear a new primary healthcare facility is required in the central area.

The policy criteria should avoid repeating issues that are covered through other policies. A particular example in this case is both policies unnecessarily repeat the text on flooding.

As with all the redevelopment sites consideration could be given to the potential of the site to deliver lower carbon energy.

Warrior Square

Policy DP5: Warrior Square Development Principles

Proposal Site Policy PS5a: Warrior Square Car Park

Proposal Site Policy PS5b: Whitegate Road

Policy summaries

The policies set out the general principles for development at Warrior Square. Specific development requirements for the two allocated sites are outlined in the site proposal policies.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

The land at Warrior Square is currently underutilised as a surface car park, office space and a recently demolished swimming pool, which detracts from the quality of the conservation area and Warrior Square open space. Development here is well linked to the High Street and has the potential to deliver a variety of benefits in the central area, including housing and office space. Re-organisation of the car park, including vehicle and pedestrian access will improve movements to and from the site, increasing the attractiveness of routes for walkers and reducing town centre traffic congestion.

The new housing in this location can be built to link to existing housing, enhancing the character of the

conservation area.

DP5: Sustainability appraisal summary and comment

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

The policy sets the principles for delivering development in this location. The policy does set out a wide range of uses that the site could be redeveloped for. This includes higher and further education facilities. However, any uses will need to ensure they do not result in a loss of housing land to meet identified requirements and needs, and space to provide new offices. The Council may need to decide the priorities for the space to ensure delivery of needed development and set this out in a development brief.

The principles of the policy are compatible with more sustainable transport access and also are likely to help deliver nature conservation benefits through implementation of the 'urban forest' scheme.

The policy should give greater emphasis to other aspects of 'greening' the environment, particularly given the location of the site adjacent to the Warrior Square park. The site could be used to link the 'urban forest' with the park and the railway line embankments, creating routes for wildlife movement.

PS5a: Sustainability appraisal summary and comment

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

This policy sets out what is expected development on the Warrior Square allocation. The first criteria sets the mix of uses that should be delivered. Some changes in wording could help make it clear what the mix of uses need to be in this location, and what uses should be a priority. At present it appears that the main use will be a new car park that integrates the other development types.

From other sections of the AAP it appears that residential development is supposed to be a major component of development in this location, however, there is little information on how this should be delivered to meet needs. The policy could give an indication of the quantity of new homes to be provided, as well as the mix of uses. For instance family homes may be suitable on this site due to the existing type of development nearby.

Development here could include a nine-storey building and this could have an impact on the built environment in the area and would need to carefully designed to relate to the street-scene.

The plans for the site could include the provision of additional open space to complement the existing open space on Warrior Square.

The policy requires access and exits from the car park to avoid local streets, helping to reduce town centre congestion and large amounts of cars on local roads. The car park will need to be designed and located on the allocation site so as to respect the character of the conservation area. It may be possible to use vertical planting to reduce the visual impact on the car park and complement its setting next to the Warrior Square open space.

Pedestrian links to the High Street and other parts of the centre are required from this site to help provide safe access and make the area a pleasant place to visit.

Other policies of on proposals site contain greater detail on the appearance of new development, for instance use of public art, design features or urban greening. To ensure a clear vision for this development area these requirements could be include in the policies.

PS5b: Sustainability appraisal summary and comment

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

•	?	?	?	?	-	-	•	?	-	•	-	?	-	?	?	•
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

This policy contains little information on the future use of this site. However, its development will need to be in keeping with the development principles for this area.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

The policy should help deliver more sustainable development in this area.

The preparation of a Development Brief or adoption of the masterplan as SPD will help deliver the regeneration of the area in a unified way.

A map of mixed mode, cycle and pedestrian improvement routes should be given in the AAP. A single policy on new mixed mode – shared priority’ routes may be suitable, instead of repeating proposals in different policies.

The supporting text raises the potential for a new health centre in this location. This requirement could be included in policy to help secure its delivery.

The policy criteria should avoid repeating issues that are covered through other policies of the AAP or of the section. A particular example in this case is both policies unnecessarily the design of the car park.

Due to the limited amount of open space in the central area it may be suitable to require additional open space to be provided as part of the development proposals. For instance, as new open space on the southern side of Warrior Square.

Hard landscaping of any existing or new open space must be avoided in this location.

As with all the redevelopment sites consideration could be given to the potential of the site to deliver lower carbon energy.

Clifftown

**Policy DP6: Clifftown Development Principles
Proposal Site Policy PS6a: Clarence Road Car Park
Proposal Site Policy PS6b: Alexandra Street Car Park**

Policy summaries

These policies set the general vision for the continued enhancement of the Clifftown and its role as a cultural quarter for Southend. Two development sites are identified where specific proposals are set out for their development.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

These policies relate to enhancing the Clifftown Area. The proposals include two development sites that are currently used as car parks. These areas are currently appear as gaps in the relatively dense network of streets in the Clifftown quarter. Redevelopment could bring benefits to the character of this urban area, and the setting of the conservation area.

The area has the potential to bring benefits to the Southend tourism and visitor economy. The area provides a link to the main seafront areas and the town. Continued built environment enhancements and a diversification of cultural and retail options are an important part of the Southend as a high quality visitor destination

Securing good walking and cycling links to the town centre could help to encourage non-car access to the central area from those who live to the east. This will have benefits in reducing town centre congestion and the adverse impacts this causes.

DP6: Sustainability appraisal summary and comment

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

The policy supports the future role of Clifftown as an area of strong cultural identity. The policy includes criteria to make sure that the historic and heritage character of the area is taken into account in new development. There is also the need to restore areas that have become degraded.

Access improvements are promoted. This includes changes to car access to a single new car park on one of the development sites, so that less traffic is created on streets of the area. Other improvements are to the retail circuits in the area, linking to the Central Station, Cliff Gardens and Pier Hill. This will help support the economy through tourism and visitor spend. Shops in this area are more likely to be independent and therefore these retail circuits will aid the local economy especially.

Regenerating the Empire Theatre will also add to the cultural character of the area. Other cultural uses should be promoted such as galleries and performance spaces.

The policy identifies the importance of taking surface water flooding into account in new development, and the need to incorporate sustainability drainage measures.

Central House is identified for redevelopment, for more information it could be included as a separate allocation, especially as this is identified as the site of a possible tall building.

(NB there appears to be something missing from point (g))

PS6a: Sustainability appraisal summary and comment

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

Proposals for this site are to see it enhanced as a space that will encourage the role of this area as a cultural quarter and a place that will attract visitors. This will help add to the unique character of the area. The policy also would require part of this site to retained as a car park, this could make better use of the space available, for instance basement parking. Design of new car parks should help better integrate them with the surrounding area. This could be through use of boundary treatments and planting, removing the uncharacteristic feeling of 'openness' created by existing car parks.

The visual appearance of the site and relationship with the surroundings is highlighted in the policy. The policy includes criteria to help create new views from the site and ensure that signage is controlled so it does not adversely impact on the character and reinforces the quality built environment feel of the area.

The feasibility of replacing the car park use elsewhere is yet to be identified, and this may hamper meeting development objectives for this site.

PS6b: Sustainability appraisal summary and comment

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

This policy sets out the principles for the renewal of this site. Future uses could include new small retail/food/drink unit and some residential use. This could incorporate features to encourage outdoor dining, helping to meet aims for the area.

The policy also allows for the site to be used for extension to High Street units. This use would be less positive in terms of reinforcing the cultural quarter role of this area, and could be detrimental to the urban character. Extensions would have to demonstrate design that would complement the character of the area and not create unattractive 'service' parts of larger stores. However, allowing this use could

encourage larger retailers to this part of the High Street.

The feasibility of replacing the car park use elsewhere is yet to be identified, and this may hamper meeting development objectives for this site.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

The policy should help deliver more sustainable development in this area.

The preparation of a Development Brief or adoption of the masterplan as SPD will help deliver the regeneration of the area in a unified way.

The policy criteria should avoid repeating issues that are covered through other policies of the AAP or of the section.

The policies do not mention any ‘greening’ of the urban environment. As with other parts of the Central Area it is important to integrate new planting to soften the impact of new development and create more visually and physically attractive urban spaces.

Central House could be identified as a site specific proposal as policy DS6 identifies this as the possible location of a new tall landmark building.

The policy or supporting text may need to be clearer that it is not yet shown that there are alternative sites available for replace car parking at Clarence Road or Alexandra Street. This lack of alternative sites may hamper delivery of new development at these sites.

Tylers Avenue

Policy DP7: Tylers Avenue Development Principles

Proposal Site Policy PS7a: Tylers Avenue

Proposal Site Policy PS7b: Pitman’s Close

Policy summaries

These policies set out the principles for developing this area on the southern eastern side of the High Street. The area includes two site allocations.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

This part of the central area currently contains a mix of uses that includes a large surface car park as well as residential development and The Royals shopping centre. The area provides the potential to link the town and end of the High Street with the Eastern Esplanade and create improved retail circuits at the bottom of the High Street.

Changes to the car park and the quality of walking routes have the potential to enhance the built environment quality in the area. These improvements will make the area more attractive to shoppers and visitors, as well as make it a more attractive place to live. Fewer cars on the streets will help improve the attractiveness of the area for residents and has the potential to deliver improved road safety for existing residents.

Re-use of the car park site will ensure the more efficient use of land, with parking moved to an alternative site, reducing traffic in the town centre.

There is risk from surface water flooding at this site.

DP7: Sustainability appraisal summary and comment

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

The policy sets out the desired changes to the area that would help enhance the built environment

quality and non-car access. There is not a specific re-use for the area, although it could be used for education purposes, given its location near the existing college campus. However, residential and retail is most likely.

Of particular importance will be bringing built environment and road safety enhancements to Chichester Avenue that currently provides an unattractive link route to the east of the High Street. Also, improved crossing points over Queensway will help improve the connectivity of the area to the wider residential areas to the east.

Open space and natural environment changes are also proposed, enhancing the quality of space at St. John's Church and as part of the greening of Queensway. The policy sets out a number of road improvement schemes that may be dependent on the car park being redeveloped, such as creation of 'home-zones' or mixed-mode routes. The delivery of these schemes, or similar, should be considered even if the car park is to stay. This will help make the area more attractive for visitors and residents.

Specific schemes have the potential to deliver economic benefits of to the area, including expansion of retail units at the south of the High Street. Design will need to be of a high quality to complement the existing area and the importance of the location for attracting visitors and tourists.

The intention is to see the area made much more permeable to the public. This change will help enhance connectivity in the area, providing clearer links to the seafront and development proposals as part of the 'Central Seafront' quarter.

PS7a: Sustainability appraisal summary and comment

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

There is an intention to secure the re-use of the Tylers car park site. However, this is dependent on securing suitable alternative car park sites in the Central Area (most likely Warrior Square), and redevelopment is not a certainty. The policy or text could refer to the Strategic Opportunity/Development Site topic paper on the feasibility of car park development and site release.

The policy may have benefits for the economy not only from improved built environment quality but also from the provision of new office and retail development. The anticipated housing yield on this site could be included in the policy, to help demonstrate how this site is supposed to contribute to the overall housing requirement for the central area.

The principles policy DP7 mentions the importance of improving access routes to the site, these changes could be referred to in this site specific policy.

PS7b: Sustainability appraisal summary and comment

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

This is a small site could be redeveloped to improve the attractiveness of Chichester Road.

If the public toilets are lost at this site they should be replaced nearby.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

The policy should help deliver more sustainable development in this area. Creating a more permeable area attractive to all visitors and residents.

The supporting text of the policy needs to focus on the specific quarter. Much of the text here relates to the seafront area. Although making connections between the two is important overemphasis on characteristics of other areas confuses the aims for this area. Supporting text for this area needs could draw out the aims for the area in a more succinct way.

How the redevelopment of this area will be phased into wider development proposals for the central area is not clear. Two aspects of the policy, the loss of car parking and the creation of a street market, will be reliant development coming forward or not coming forward in other locations. This may mean that development of the area can not occur until late in the plan period and is effected by issues beyond its control.

Regardless of if parking remains or not improvements could be made to surrounding streets to make them more friendly for other road uses, including walkers, cyclists and residents.

A map of mixed mode, cycle and pedestrian improvement routes should be given in the AAP. A single policy on new mixed mode – shared priority’ routes may be suitable, instead of repeating proposals in different policies.

The preparation of a Development Brief or adoption of the masterplan as SPD will help deliver the regeneration of the area in a unified way.

As with all the redevelopment sites consideration could be given to the potential of the site to deliver lower carbon energy.

The Central Seafront

The Central Seafront

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

The central Seafront is Southend's major asset. The area makes a significant contribution to the Borough's economy as a prime tourism destination, the character and buildings also give the town its distinctive character. Continued change is necessary in this location to keep Southend as a modern tourism destination for day trippers and with an aim of increasing overnight visitors for leisure and business. Change needs to take place in a way that protects and enhances the best of its historic and new heritage, and redeveloping those areas that have become degraded or were poorly planned.

The quality of the Seafront also raises the potential for it draw more people into other parts of the central area, such as the High Street and Clifftown, aided by access and public realm improvements in these areas.

Development in the Seafront area needs to protect the high quality natural/semi-natural environment. The foreshore areas are internationally designated due to their importance for nature conservation, and this asset must be protected for its own sake and the value it gives the area and attractiveness to tourists.

Development in this location also needs to take into account flood risk. The seafront is protected by flood defences, however, the risk needs to be taken into account and development delivered appropriately.

Policy CS1: Landmark Buildings and Key Spaces

Policy summary

The policy seeks to protect these existing features.

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

Sustainability comment

Landmark buildings and open spaces make the Seafront what it is and give the Southend seafront a

unique character. Protecting and enhancing these features will help in the long-term maintenance of this character and their importance for the tourism economy and community identity.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

This policy has a positive relationship with sustainable development.

The policy could be integrated into other policies. It is unlikely that this policy would any greater protection than relying on other AAP or LDF policies.

Policy CS2: Central Seafront Strategy – Key Principles
Policy CS6: Central Seafront Development Principles

Policies summary

These policies set out a number of principles for delivering development in this area. The principles in CS2 are arranged around several themes including delivering high quality design, promoting better pedestrian access, and protecting assets.

Policy CS6 contains more principles, some of which wholly or partially repeat those from CS2.

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

Sustainability comment

The policies address many issues of importance to delivering sustainable development. This includes improving the quality of the built environment, protection heritage and biodiversity, improving non-car access and enhancing the potential for the tourism economy.

The policies set out what is anticipated from development in the Central Seafront area. The principles set general aspirations for development, with some generic statements of what is desired from development in the area, and some more specific criteria – such as where new access routes are required and the names of development sites.

However, there may be an advantage in combining the two policies to allow for more simple statements of what the vision for the area will be, avoiding both internal repetition within and between policies. There may also be elements of the policies that are already sufficiently covered elsewhere in the AAP and do not need repeating here, such as on flooding and nature conservation.

Some criteria of policy CS2 set positive steps for the future of the area that need to be implemented by the Council or other public / community groups. This includes an Urban Green Strategy, Art Trail, and Creative Lighting Scheme. However, there are other parts of the policy that set useful criteria for the policy to meet. This includes required all development proposals to prepare a ‘visual impact assessment’. This will help to make sure development takes into account its context and views to and from the site.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

The policy is compatible with delivering more sustainable development.

The policies for the Central Seafront are very detailed. To make clear the main principles to be followed in developing the Seafront area policies CS2 and CS6 could be combined. Other repetition could be removed where elements of this policy are already addressed by others.

Some elements of the policy will be difficult to directly implement and simply set out objectives for the area.

Preparation of a design code or other unified scheme for the whole seafront and in particular the Central Seafront could help make sure that development is delivered in a joined-up way. This would cover

issues such as colour-schemes, materials and other design element. Such an approach would help the visual quality at the end of the High Street/Pier Hill that can be overly cluttered with visual elements. Public art as part of the cohesive scheme could also help integrate 'seaside' elements higher-up the High Street.

Redevelopment will need to be guided through a masterplan, development brief or SPD.

A map of mixed mode, cycle and pedestrian improvement routes should be given in the AAP. A single policy on new mixed mode – shared priority' routes may be suitable, instead of repeating proposals in different policies.

As with all the redevelopment sites consideration could be given to the potential of the site to deliver lower carbon energy.

Policy CS3: Flood Risk

Policy summary

This policy set the area specific flood policy for development in this Central Seafront.

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

Sustainability comment

Protecting property and people from undue risk of flood is essential, with benefits for safety, wellbeing, communities and the economy. However, preventing development coming forward in some locations simply because of flood risk may have harmful effects on meeting sustainable development needs. This policy follows the advice of the Southend Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, and advice of the Environment Agency and the government.

The policy sets out the specific flood management measures for the Central Seafront area, as it is recognised that regeneration must happen in this location. Some policy criteria repeat national policy and may not need to be repeated here. However for development in Flood Risk Zone 3a and 2 specific guidance is given on the design of new development to ensure it is resistant and resilient to flood if it does occur. This includes making sure future residents are safe from the risks of flood, and should help reduce the costs and time taken for buildings to be useable following a flood event.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

This policy is compatible with achieving sustainable development. The policy should help ensuring land is used efficiently while protecting people and property from flood risk.

Parts of the policy that repeat national and LDF policy may not need to be repeated here.

CS4: Nature conservation and biodiversity

Policy summary

The policy sets the criteria that will be used to make sure development in the Central Seafront does not harm the nature conservation assets in the area.

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

Sustainability comment

The policy should help in protecting the high quality nature conservation assets in this area. More information could be given to where new open space as part of the 'green grid' will be provided in the Central Seafront area.

It is not clear if all new development proposals will need an appropriate assessment and this may need to be determined through site-by-site screening.

A new visitor interpretation site to help people be aware of the value of the foreshore. Improved understanding can help in protecting the area and aid visitors recognition of how they can help avoid adverse impacts.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

The policy is compatible with sustainable development and the need to protect the high quality nature conservation assets of the area.

The policy repeats some aspects of national policy and elements of other policies of the AAP. This repetition is unnecessary and may lead to an overly long plan. A overarching policy for the whole AAP area may be suitable, as it is not only sites within the central area that may have an impact on the internationally and nationally designated nature conservation sites on the foreshore and / or require appropriate assessment.

The policy could also contain more on the landscaping and other provisions new development could make to help enhance biodiversity in this area.

The policy could also recognise the potential for conflict of uses to have an impact on the nature conservation value of the area.

CS5: The Waterfront

Policy summary

The policy sets the criteria for developing the waterfront area and the mix of uses that need to be accommodated.

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

Sustainability comment

The waterfront area is a community and economic asset for Southend. Enhancing the quality of the public realm and peoples' enjoyment of the area can have substantial sustainability benefits for the town. There is much in this policy that should help improve the area, including development of allocated sites and other programmes that will need to be implemented alongside development.

Development must ensure it does not harm the biodiversity assets of the foreshore. Especially where development gives rise to an increase in visitor pressure in this area, for example new jetties and slipways.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

This policy is comparable with achieving more sustainable development in the waterfront area.

To simplify the AAP and its policy intentions this policy could be made more succinct, removing parts that are already covered by other AAP or LDF policies.

There is a need to recognise the potential conflicts between different waterfront uses and the need to identify a strategy to manage this.

Much of this policy will be reliant on the plans and strategies of other parts of the Council and other

groups and organisations. For instance through new tourism strategies for the area and investment by private businesses.

CS5: The Waterfront

Policy summary

The policy sets the criteria for developing the waterfront area and the mix of uses that need to be accommodated.

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

Sustainability comment

The waterfront area is a community and economic asset for Southend. Enhancing the quality of the public realm and peoples' enjoyment of the area can have substantial sustainability benefits for the town. There is much in this policy that should help improve the area, including development of allocated sites and other programmes that will need to be implemented alongside development.

Development must ensure it does not harm the biodiversity assets of the foreshore. Especially where development gives rise to an increase in visitor pressure in this area, for example new jetties and slipways.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

This policy is compatible with achieving more sustainable development in the waterfront area.

To simplify the AAP and its policy intentions this policy could be made more succinct, removing parts that are already covered by other AAP or LDF policies.

There is a need to recognise the potential conflicts between different waterfront uses and the need to identify a strategy to manage this.

Much of this policy will be reliant on the plans and strategies of other parts of the Council and other groups and organisations. For instance through new tourism strategies for the area and investment by private businesses.

Central Seafront Proposal Sites

Policy summaries

These are policies for the specific development areas within the Central Seafront area. Some of these relate to general public realm improvements in these areas, others to more comprehensive re-development. The most significant proposal site is on Seaway Car Park.

CS6a: Southend Pier

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

Sustainability comment

This policy sets the principles for the continued enhancement of the Pier. This is one of the most characteristic features of the seafront and a major tourist attraction.

The proposals will sets of plans for general improvements to the tourism offer at the Pier, although much will need to be funded through working with partners and private business. The most significant change could be the development of a new pavilion at the land end, this could be a new landmark

feature for the seafront location.

As the Pier extends into the internationally protected nature conservation areas it is essential that changes do not conflict with their nature conservation objectives. New development, including minor changes, are likely to require appropriate assessment to demonstrate no significant harm. It is very unlikely that development here would be permitted if harm is identified, as it will not fit the 'overriding' need criteria.

CS6b: Seaway Car Park and Marine Parade

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

Sustainability comment

This site links well with The Royals, High Street and Tylers Avenue area to the north. There is significant potential for redevelopment of this site to make better use of the available land and contribute to improved connects between the seafront and the rest of the central area.

The car park is higher than the rest of the seafront so the design of development will have to be innovative to encourage people to walk upwards to the town centre. However, there are also advantages in the elevation as it allows views over the estuary.

Supporting text identifies that redevelopment here may contain residential development, however, the policy only makes passing reference to this use. Some indication should be given on the anticipated contribution this site would make to meeting the residential needs of the central area.

New buildings on the site, especially new tall buildings, will be highly visible and therefore it is essential that they are delivered of a high visual quality and to provide a legacy building for the future.

The measures proposed in the policy are likely to increase pedestrian movements in this area. This will have benefits as part of a strategy to reduce car use and also is an important part of encouraging more healthy lifestyles.

Development here has the opportunity to open up the historic heritage of St John's Church.

New open space will also benefit the area especially if it has good access to the residential neighbourhoods to the north.

This policy is the only one that specifically refers to the need to use sustainable construction techniques, implying this will only be a requirement here. Singling out areas to deliver this type of development should be avoided and all new development should be encouraged to use high standards of sustainable construction.

CS7: Western Esplanade, The Cliffs and Shrubbery

CS7a: Cultural centre and new Southend Museum

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

Sustainability comment

This site has the potential to offer a high grade cultural resource for the Borough. This site is proposed to be the location of a new museum related to Southend's archaeological heritage that could be a significant tourism attraction for the town. This can be associated with new routes through the Cliff Gardens to encourage access to the park and green spaces.

New development will need to be a high quality design as it will be associated with the Clifftown conservation area, which in this location is characterised by large Victorian villas.

There is potential to bring about improvements to this area without losing its intrinsic characteristics of

area as a quiet area of calm along the seafront.

Development in this location can rationalise car parking, and new car parking should replace existing on-street car parking to enhance the built character. New car parking should also not increase the overall level of parking in the area, no new road traffic should be encouraged to this part of the Esplanade in order to maintain the character.

Cliff stabilisation will mean that this land can be bought back into good use.

New development will need to retain the open feel of this area and ensure that new planting is a high quality, making use of species that are appropriate for the location. The biodiversity potential of all of the open space at Cliff Gardens should be considered, moving away from the more formal planting and mowed grass character in some areas.

This site allocated for the cultural centre contains less heavily managed areas of open space than elsewhere on the cliff gardens. This area is likely to support greater biodiversity than the more manicured parkland of other parts of the cliffs. Losing this more 'wild' habitat will be detrimental to local nature conservation.

Opportunities for low carbon energy could be considered at this location, as could the design of the new cultural facilities to incorporate best practice in design and environmental performance.

Policy CS8: Eastern Esplanade and City Beach Gateway

Policy CS8a: Woodgrange Drive (Kursaal) Estate

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

Sustainability comment

The Eastern Esplanade is a vibrant area, although where it meets Marine Parade the road and complicated junction dominate the area. Other parts of the area lack a cohesive character with buildings and frontages of many different styles, including the Sealife Centre and colourful retail/amusement frontages. The seafront car park also dominates the area. However, there are parts of the area that are of a high quality, including the Kursaal and Eastern Esplanade conservation areas. There is also the potential for City Beach improvements to be extended to the east to reduce car dominance.

The policy for the whole area would see more active frontages encouraged, moving away from some of the past development that has been isolated and inward looking. Improvements of a similar type to the City Beach are favoured, including better management of pedestrian routes and flows. Some of the policy criteria are quite aspirational with little detail on how they will be achieved, for example the development of a lido.

There is potential for new high quality development to improve parts of this area. On the seafront there is a need to fill the large redundant site left by the removal of the gasworks. This currently significantly detracts from the quality of the area but has the potential to bring substantial benefits subject to suitable new use being found. To deliver sustainability benefits it is essential that the design of a new building at this site is of a very high quality, to create a new seafront landmark that respects the conservation areas, seaside location and becomes part of Southend's future heritage.

There is one redevelopment site identified in the area and this is the Woodgrange Drive (Kursaal) Estate. This is a general policy that seeks the improvement of the area, which could have benefits for the community, built environment and sustainable use of resources. However, there is no implementation plan yet in place so at the present time achieving these objectives may be a longer term aspiration.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

Some allocations include the need to deliver residential development.

New areas of public open space should help to deliver multiple benefits for sustainability. For this reason it is suggested site specific and other policies make clear that green landscaping will be favoured over hard landscaping. This can have benefits, for health, communities, nature conservation, flood control and managing the impacts of climate change. Green landscaping should also incorporate a mix of habitat types, for instance areas of shrubs or wildflower meadows, avoiding homogenous areas of short grass with sporadic trees.

All development in the Central Seafront will need to ensure that there is no adverse impact on the internationally designated nature conservation assets.

Design Briefs for the each major development area, or group of development area, should be prepared to give design guidance as part of creating a unified character to the Central Seafront. Design Briefs for specific areas, including the gas site and Kursaal Estate would also be beneficial.

As with all the redevelopment sites consideration could be given to the potential for sites to deliver lower carbon energy, especially large development areas.

Singling out areas where new buildings should make use of sustainable construction techniques should be avoided. All new development should be encouraged to use high standards of sustainable construction.

Policy DP9: ‘Victoria’ Gateway Neighbourhood

Policy summaries

These policies address the redevelopment potential of the ‘Victoria’ Gateway. Proposals include a substantial mixed use redevelopment site along Victoria Avenue, a new use for the football ground and the smaller water board site.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

There is a substantial potential for comprehensive redevelopment of this part of the town. Redevelopment will make better use of the limited available land resources in the Borough and can help create a new sustainable mixed use community. There is potential for a new sustainable residential neighbourhood with good links to the town centre, as well as good public transport access to a wider area. New development should also continue to promote the establishment of good pedestrian and cycle links to the town centre through enhancing Victoria Avenue.

Development will also help bring improvements to the built environment by removing poor quality office space, some of which is long-term vacant and has been vandalised.

As part of making new communities it will be important to ensure there are good access and sufficient capacity in accessible community facilities. Therefore, development could consider its contribution to providing a new primary school, health centre and / or open space.

New development in this area has the potential to enhance the historic heritage value of the Prittlewell conservation area, which has become degraded in some parts. Other heritage should be protected such as the brick built buildings of the water board.

Policy DP9: Victoria Gateway Neighbourhood Development Principles

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

The policy contains many design principles that should help make sure redevelopment makes this area more sustainable. There are specific proposals to bring enhancements to the built and historic environment, such as redevelopment of the water board and stadium sites.

The policy also contains provisions to improve the transport and travel access through the area, including making use of Victoria Avenue as a transport corridor.

It will be important that new development does not harm the nature conservation value of any existing sites, and new landscaping and open spaces help encourage increased local biodiversity. The role of new open space in this area to help mitigate visitor pressure on the foreshore should be considered, as part of the Southend 'green grid'.

The policy includes the need to deliver more community facilities in the area. A new health centre, primary school and open space could be located in this part of the development area.

Development may also include a new combined heat and power plant to provide more efficient energy to new mixed use development.

As well providing employment as part of the neighbourhood redevelopment in this location could have benefits to the provision of new modern offices in other parts of the centre. This may be achieved by removing a poor quality office stock that hinders the office development market.

Proposal site policy PS9a: The Victoria Office Area Site

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

This is an area allocated for comprehensive renewal. An SPD for the site is to be prepared and this will help make sure development is delivered in a unified way and a way that promotes sustainability. The policy also require that if development does come forward in a piecemeal way, developers demonstrate how their scheme will aid the delivery of adjacent sites. This requirement is essential in creating a cohesive area, of linked development including . The SPD will help to manage delivery as a whole.

There are many aspects of the delivery of the site that are compatible with sustainable development. Redevelopment will see this area of under-occupied land in central Southend bought back into use. In Southend making the most of available land is essential as the urbanised area almost reaches Borough boundaries in all directions. The main aim is to create a more sustainable community in this area, integrating residential, offices, community facilities and open space.

New development should be developed to a high sustainable construction standard. This could include considering how the site can make more efficient use of energy or generate low carbon power. Connection to district heat/power network could be a requirement of new development in this location.

There is a need to ensure that any lost office space is replaced in to meet needs either in this area or in another central area location. Office development should be located in the central area where there is the greatest potential for non-car access. Peripheral office development and business parks are likely to increase car use and congestion on local roads.

Proposal site policy PS9b: Former Essex and Suffolk Water Board

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

This is a small development site that is allocated for cultural facilities and creative uses and some residential use. This type of reuse of the site will have economic benefits for the area and provide a community resource. The policy requires that development capitalises on merits of the existing building that will protect this heritage resource.

Proposal site policy PS9c: Roots Hall Football Ground and Environs

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

Development proposals for this site are reliant on a new site being secured for the football ground, although there is an intention for this to happen. New uses for the site area likely to include housing and associated open space, new foodstore (possible to the relocation of Sainsbury's from London Road), changed access and landscaping.

Redevelopment has the potential to help meet the Borough's housing needs as well as changed road access to help pedestrian safety. However, a supermarket on the site is likely to increase car trips in the area, these will need to be managed to avoid adverse amenity and environmental impacts.

The supporting text refers the need for low carbon and sustainable construction, this is not repeated in the policy.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

The policy should help deliver more sustainable development in this area.

The supporting and policy text needs to ensure any repetition is minimised to create a usable and succinct plan.

Residential development is to be a major component of development in this area. The policies could contain details on the anticipated yield of housing development site. Some direction could also be given on the mix of homes anticipated for all the site to give an understanding on what type of housing is required in this location. An indication of the suitability of the site for affordable housing could also be set in policy.

A map of mixed mode, cycle and pedestrian improvement routes should be given in the AAP. A single policy on new mixed mode – shared priority' routes or other pedestrian/cycle links may be suitable, instead of repeating proposals in different policies.

The preparation of a Development Brief or masterplan for the proposal sites would help deliver the regeneration of the areas in a unified way. An SPD is being prepared for the Victoria Avenue site.

As with all the redevelopment sites consideration could be given to the potential of the site to deliver lower carbon energy. The Victoria Avenue redevelopment may present a particular opportunity due to its size.

Policy DP10: 'Sutton Gateway Neighbourhood

Policy summaries

These policies address the redevelopment potential of the Sutton Gateway Neighbourhood, currently mix use area including a substantial residential area as well as large employment areas. The proposal sites include possible locations for a new foodstore, residential development and social housing.

Relationship of policy with sustainable development

This is one of the 'gateway' neighbourhoods to Southend central area. The area contains a mix of uses that do not necessarily work well together and have resulted in a degraded townscape.

There are opportunities through the upgrading of some sites to help improve the overall quality of this gateway neighbourhood. This will involve making sure the economic and residential uses do not conflict, yet retaining both these uses in the area.

There is also the potential to help overcome the access barriers to the town centre through improvements to Queensway and pedestrian and cycle crossings. This will help the residential areas in the gateway feel more part of Southend's centre, as currently the area is cut-off to the west and south by the railway line and road respectively.

Policy DP10: Sutton Gateway Neighbourhood Development Principles

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

●	●	?	?	●	?	-	●	-	?	?	-	-	-	?	?	?
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

The policy sets out succinctly the principles that will guide the redevelopment of the area. The majority of changes related to the three allocated sites as well that need to improve access through the area, including changes to Sutton Road and safe walking and cycling routes along Short Street to Queensway.

The site will also need to accommodate some addition open space and this is likely to be in the north of the area at the Sutton Road proposal site.

As with many of the quarters this area could accommodate new higher and further education facilities if required.

Planning briefs are to be prepared for the two employment areas and this should help their renewal over time in a coordinated way.

Proposal site policy PS10a: Former B&Q site

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

There is a risk that a new supermarket at this site will draw business from the nearby High Street. Therefore, the scale of the supermarket should be suitable to its setting, for instance not containing large clothing, hardware or homeware sections.

Part of delivering this site will need to be improving access by foot and cycle. From the north and east these improvements should be relatively easy to achieve. However, there is also the need to provide better crossings over Queensway and from the west there needs to be safe and direct routes avoiding the busy Queensway round-a-bout.

A building in this location will need to be of a high quality design as the area is already suffers a low quality built character that is in need of enhancing.

The replacement of the youth facilities will need to be of a better quality and a suitable floor are to compensate for their loss. Temporary premises will also need to be secured.

Proposal site policy PS10b – Sutton Road

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

This is a linear allocation that covers the business and industrial units facing onto Sutton Road. Many of these units are dilapidated and several are empty. The units face onto a largely residential neighbourhood and many of the buildings on the opposite side of the road contain shops.

The policy promotes redevelopment of this area for housing. This will involve the loss of existing employment use, although assessment has shown that this is surplus to current needs in the Borough, and its loss will not result in the overall loss of jobs.

There is the possibility that redevelopment may result in the loss of some local services in the immediate area.

New housing should respect the context of the area and actively engage with properties on the opposite side of the road. However, new development could be of a higher quality than some of the more recent nearby development as a way of enhancing the built environment character.

New open space in this location could make up for a general shortfall in this quarter of the town. The role of new open space as part of the Southend ‘green grid’ could be recognised in policy or supporting text.

Proposal site policy PS10c: Coleman Street

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

This is an allocated site bordering on Queensway in the south of this gateway area. This site consists of poor quality social housing predominantly arranged in large tower blocks, in a similar style to that of site PS4a. This site is in need of regeneration to provide a higher quality living environment and better open space for residents.

Refurbishment of one or all of the tower blocks may be possible to improve their quality and retain the landmark features. Re-use may also be preferable in terms of making best use of available resources than demolition and re-building.

As part of seeking greater equity in housing offer it may be that some of the social housing could be moved to other redevelopment sites, avoiding large areas only characterised by social housing. These concentrated areas of social housing can be detrimental to wellbeing of some communities. However, the overall quantity of affordable housing must remain in the central area in order to meet the housing needs of new and future residents.

Renewal of the site will need to be achieved in partnership with other funding streams and regeneration projects.

Recommendations and potential for significant impacts

The policy should help deliver more sustainable development in this area.

A map of mixed mode, cycle and pedestrian improvement routes should be given in the AAP. A single policy on new mixed mode – shared priority’ routes may be suitable, instead of repeating proposals in different policies.

Any loss of existing employment land should ensure that this will not result in a loss of locally accessible jobs for the resident workforce of the Borough. Similarly, prior to development any economic uses that need a central location should have had suitable new premises secured. The Sutton Road site could include development of new small scale business premises.

Hard landscape of any of the existing open space must be avoided in this location. New open space should consider its role in reducing visitor pressure impacts on the foreshore as part of the ‘green grid’.

As with all the redevelopment sites consideration could be given to the potential of the site to deliver lower carbon energy.

Development Briefs will help to ensure development at each of these locations is developed in a co-ordinated and cohesive way, making the most of opportunities for sustainable development.

12, stating that to meet the test of 'soundness' Development Plan Documents must have met the procedural requirement that: *'the plan and its policies have been subjected to sustainability appraisal'*. However, the main purpose of the SA is to help create a better plan and one that takes full account of the potential for impacts on sustainable development. This aims to avoid and mitigate the potential for adverse impacts and maximise the benefits for greater sustainability.

2 The approach to the sustainability appraisal of the Area Action Plans

- 2.1 As noted in the introductory section of this report, the purpose of this stage is to ascertain what issues should be considered in undertaking an SA of the Central Area Action Plan (AAP) and to complete an initial assessment of options.
- 2.2 The first stage of the appraisal is gathering baseline information on the characteristics of the area (section 3) and identifying the other plans and programmes relevant of the SA of the area (section 4). From this and previous SA stages the sustainability objectives that form the basis of appraisal are developed (section 5). This stages leads onto the appraisal stages in sections 7-15, summary and conclusions are in section 18.

Sustainability appraisal of the LDF

- 2.3 The initial stage of information gathering for the sustainability appraisal (SA) builds on work already undertaken for the SA of the Southend-on-Sea LDF Core Strategy. The early SA of the Core Strategy, reported in August 2006, provides a useful basis for this appraisal and could be read in conjunction with this scoping document for a better understanding of the process.

Collation of baseline information

- 2.4 The baseline data for the SA of the Area Action Plan outlined below has been specifically chosen to inform the SA of this DPD. It draws upon work carried out by Southend-on-Sea Borough Council (SBC) during the preparation of the plan and Baker Associates work carried out for the SA of the Core Strategy.
- 2.5 The primary sources of information for the baseline data collation are :
- Southend-on-Sea Town Centre Area Action Plan Key Statistics, SBC
 - Town Centre Area Actions Plan Issues and Options paper, SBC
 - Baker Associates, Sustainability Appraisal, for Southend on Sea, Local Development Framework, Core Strategy Development Plan Document, SBC
- 2.6 In addition, relevant plans and programmes containing sustainability objectives or goals that will be important influences on the SA and AAP have also been identified. Again, these are referenced from those identified by those producing the AAP, as well as those identified in the SA of the Core Strategy. In identifying the relevant plans and programmes it has been important to restrict this to those plans and programmes with real relevance to the area, in order that there is a clear purpose for their recognition.
- 2.7 The baseline information descriptions and identification of key sustainability issues is shown in Section 4.

Sustainability appraisal of the AAP

- 2.8 The SA of the AAP is a continual process during preparation from an early stage up to submission. Part of this included appraising the alternatives put forward for implementing the strategy of the AAP.
- 2.9 At this stage in AAP preparation it is necessary to consider the sustainability impacts of the policies that have been proposed for delivering development, contained in the proposed submission version. This follows the earlier stage where the options for delivering development were appraised. Early involvement in the process helps make sure that sustainability considerations can be taken into account and implications can be incorporated into policy and proposal preparation from the outset. Sections 7 to 15 contain this appraisal, with Section 18 summarising findings and recommendations.
- 2.10 This is the third consultation on the AAP, following two Issues and Options consultation stages for the central area of Southend. The two early Issues and Options did differ quite considerably, requiring re-appraisal. From the 2007 to 2010 the Issues and Options were comprehensively revised to help implement the town centre masterplan¹. This included a change in the area defined as the central Southend to accommodate a larger part of the urban area, including part of the seafront previously part of the Seafront AAP area. The area covered by the submission version of the AAP remains the same as that of the 2010 Issues and Options version.
- 2.11 **SA of Issues and Options:** The SA at this stage provided an opportunity to appraise the emerging options and approach to development of the area. The consideration of alternatives, and identifying the relative sustainability impacts of these approaches is important for the SA and an SEA requirement. At this early stage the alternatives, or options, presented were very broad with decisions still to be made about the type and number of policies to be included, as well as on specific sites for development. Therefore, the approach taken to appraisal, although based on the sustainability objectives, was only intended to provide an overview of relative methods of implementation as a commentary rather than using systematic appraisal matrices. More rigorous testing is a feature of later stages of the appraisal when the structure of the plan allows this approach and more detailed identification of impacts can be carried out.
- 2.12 **SA of the Submission Version:** This is an SA of the full plan including policies and site allocations. The purpose of the SA at this stage is to identify what the implications might be for achieving more sustainable development from implementation of the AAP. The SA looks at the detail of the policies as well as the overall principles for sustainable development. The SA also is used to evaluate the 'usability' of the AAP and if it is likely to be successful in implementing the objectives of the Plan.

¹ Southend Central Area Master Plan – Consultation Draft September 2007

Timetable

- 2.13 The timetable for the SA work has entirely been directed by the programme by which the AAP is prepared and goes through successive stages of consultation, development, examination and adoption in early 2012.

Meeting the requirements of the Strategy Environmental Assessment Regulations

- 2.14 In order to satisfy the Strategic Environmental Assessment Regulations it is necessary for the SA report to fulfil certain requirements. Table 2.1 shows how these requirements are being met through this SA report, both as part of the main text and thorough appendices. For further detail on some matters, such as the full baseline, the SA reports from other parts of the LDF and original scoping will also provide a useful resource.

Table 2.1: Requirements of the SEA Regulations and how they are met through the SA report

SEA Requirements	Covered in the SA report at:
a) An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programme and relationships with other relevant plans and programmes.	Section 1 Appendix 1
b) The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme	Section 4 Appendix 2 LDF Scoping Report
c) The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected.	Section 4 Appendix 2
d) Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC.	Section 4
e) The environmental protection objectives, established at international, community or national level which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation.	Section 3
f) The likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as: biodiversity; population; human health; fauna; flora; soil; water; air; climatic factors; material assets; cultural heritage, including architectural and archaeological heritage; landscape; and the interrelationship between the above factors. These effects should include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long term, permanent and temporary, positive and negative	Section 6-15 Appendix 2
g) The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and, as fully as possible, offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme.	Section 16 Appendix 2
h) An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with and a description of how the assessment was undertaken, including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information.	Section 6 (SA report on Issues and Options, March 2010)
i) A description of measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with Article 10.	Section 17
j) A non-technical summary of the information provided under the above headings.	Non-technical summary

3 Other plans and strategies

- 3.1 A more comprehensive summary of other relevant plans and programmes can be found in the issues and options and Core Strategy SA Report. This section is intended to draw out the specific issues relating to the AAP as is updated to 2009.
- 3.2 The **Habitats Directive** and **Conservation (Natural Habitats &c) Regulations 1994** (as amended), have relevance to the AAP. This is because the area covered by the AAP is in close proximity, and in some instances overlapping, with areas designated as being of international significance for nature conservation. These designated areas are collectively known under European legislation as Natura 2000 sites. Any potential impact of planning policy, or specific proposals, on these areas needs assessment to determine the nature of these impacts to ensure that they will mitigate or avoid completely harm to the designated features on the site.
- 3.3 Planning Policy Statements/Guidance: Of particular relevance are:
- PPS4 Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth
 - PPG20: Coastal planning.
- 3.4 Other PPS are also important guides for development such as PPS1: Delivery Sustainable development.
- 3.5 PPS4 (2009) stipulates the need to ensure that employment needs are based on a strong evidence base. This evidence should include the detailed floorspace needs for economic development, including for all main town centre uses (EC1.3). An evidence base should be used to identify deficiencies in provision of shopping and other facilities which serve people's day-to-day needs. Quantification of floorspace should also be identified for leisure uses, in addition to identifying the qualitative needs.
- 3.6 To deliver more sustainable economic growth the PPS calls for positive planning of growth sector clusters, and this could be a role for offices in Southend town centre. A specific policy of the PPS, EC3, deals with planning for centres. At a local level this policy calls for residential or office development above ground floor retail, leisure or other facilities within centres. Also, plans should identify sites or buildings within existing centres suitable for development, conversion or change of use.
- 3.7 Policy EC4 covers planning for consumer choice and promoting competitive town centres, including planning for a diverse range of uses throughout centres. For retail development a strong mix is encouraged, recognising the importance of smaller shops to enhance the character and vibrancy of centres. Of relevance to plans for Southend centre the PPS states existing markets should be retained and enhanced, where appropriate. Overall plans for the town centres should aim to '*enhance the established character and diversity of their town centre.*' Overall, there is also the need to ensure development in main urban centres does not

adversely impact on the economy of other nearby centres. It should be noted that PPS4 (2009) replaces for former town centre guidance on PPS6.

- 3.8 PPG20 (1992) is the national guidance note on coastal planning. Its primary aims are:
- to protect the undeveloped coasts
 - managing appropriate development, particularly that which requires a coastal location
 - managing risk, including flooding and erosion, and
 - improving the environment particularly in urbanised or despoiled areas.
- 3.9 PPG20 recognises that the developed coast may provide opportunities for economic restructuring and regeneration of existing urban areas, thereby improving their appearance and environment and notes that this approach can be particularly effective for buildings and areas of historic interest.
- 3.10 The **Sustainable Communities** plan published in 2003, set out the Government's agenda for sustainable development and urban renaissance across England. As part of the plan the Urban White Paper outlined key growth areas in the north and south of the country. A key part of delivering this agenda is the planned development of four identified growth areas, the first priority being the growth of the Thames Gateway stretching along the Thames estuary from London to the sea and including Southend-on-Sea.
- 3.11 This plan sets out an approach to creating new communities in the UK that provide sustainable places in which to live. The key aim of the approach is a step change in housing delivery increasing housing levels about the existing growth rate. These new homes will include homes to meet the needs of all groups, and be integrated with economic growth and provision of new services and greenspaces to create desirable places to live.
- 3.12 The **Thames Gateway** area is a co-ordinated effort to develop and regenerate fifteen local authority areas, across three regions along the Thames estuary and north Kent coast. Renaissance Southend Limited is an integral part of the overall strategy of regenerated polycentric retail and service centres. The role played by Southend-on-Sea and the south Essex sub area is reflected in the Regional Spatial Strategy and discussed in the Sustainability Appraisal of the Core Strategy.
- 3.13 The Thames Gateways and the south Essex towns which comprise part of it are a key national objective, the economic and housing growth outlined in the Thames Gateway area should be supported by the Area Action Plans. The AAPs should consider Southend-on-Sea's coast and town centre within the wider sub regional context.
- 3.14 **Thames Gateway Strategic Partnership:** The Thames Gateway Strategic Partnership produced a document specifically for South Essex. This presents an *'opportunity for driving forward regeneration and achieving growth and prosperity*

in South Essex as a key part of Thames Gateway. The material in this document has been reflected in the East of England Plan.

- 3.15 A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Water Cycle Study and Surface Water Management Plan are also being produced and will be part of the background material defining and guiding land use planning in the Borough.
- 3.16 The East of England **Regional Spatial Strategy** (RSS) was prepared to provide the direct planning context for the preparation of the LDF. However, in 2010 RSS were abolished by government. The content of the RSS are still in place as a planning consideration but no longer have the status of setting planning policy for local authority areas. The East of England RSS is not contested by Southend-on-Sea Borough Council as the growth and regeneration policies it contained for the Essex Thames Gateway have been endorsed by Council and adopted in the Core Strategy.
- 3.17 The RSS set out the role that Southend-on-Sea is expected to perform and its contribution to the region, the level of employment and housing development that the LDF is to make provision for, and various objectives that the LDF is expected to contribute to.
- 3.18 The key objective of the RSS for the sub-region was to achieve regeneration through jobs-led growth, higher levels of local economic performance and employment, and a more sustainable balance of local jobs and workers.
- 3.19 Policy SS5 in the RSS outlined town centre policy for the region. The RSS promotes the creation of 'thriving, vibrant' town centres, which will continue to be the focus of investment and regeneration. Each local authority should produce a strategy for each town centre to promote successful mixed use economies, manage change and support cultural heritage. Local Authorities should also protect and enhance existing neighbourhood centres.
- 3.20 The RSS outlined that local Planning Authorities and local agencies should work towards achieving the regeneration of coastal towns and communities and the conservation of the environment of the coast and coastal waters.
- 3.21 In the RSS Local Development Documents were expected to ensure that the in the region's coastal areas:
- town centres continue to provide for local and visitor needs;
 - the interrelationship and linkages between town centres and leisure areas are facilitated for their mutual benefit; and
 - retailing in leisure areas where viable, so long as it does not adversely affect town centres.
- 3.22 Specific Essex Thames Gateway policies were ETG1 and ETG4 that set out the major zones of change in the Thames Gateway/South Essex sub-region and including Southend Town centre as a '*cultural and intellectual hub and a higher education centre of excellence*'. Policy included specific provisions for upgrading the university campus (much of which is already complete or underway) and

improving local passenger transport accessibility. The expected job and housing growth is also specified in the policy.

- 3.23 The **Community Strategy** and SBC **Corporate plan** are both important parts of local policy . Under the new provision for making development plans as explained in PPS12: Local Development Frameworks, *‘the local development framework should be a key component in the delivery of the community strategy setting out its spatial aspects where appropriate and providing a long term spatial vision.’*
- 3.24 The **Community Plan** for Southend sets the vision for Southend-on-Sea as ‘a vibrant coastal town and prosperous regional centre where people enjoy living, working and visiting’. This vision is to be achieved through inter-linked themes detailed in the plan.
- *prosperous community – a prosperous local economy*
 - *learning community – opportunities for learning for all and a highly skilled workforce*
 - *safer community – crime, disorder and offending reduced*
 - *healthy community – improved health and well-being*
 - *environmentally aware community – improved transport infrastructure and a quality environment*
 - *supportive community – better life chances for vulnerable people*
 - *cultural community – a cultural capital.*
- 3.25 Key themes relating to the AAP includes; improving the centre and attracting conferences to the town, amongst 21 objectives.
- 3.26 Transport issues for the area are covered in the **Local Transport Plan 3** (2011/12 – 2014/15). This reinforces need for a high quality public transport infrastructure as part of creating the sustainable communities. The town centre in particular is the focus of parking, pedestrian improvements, traffic management systems, reducing severance impacts of the A127 and public transport improvements.
- 3.27 The **Southend on Sea Core Strategy** is the overarching part of the LDF that has implications for the AAP. This contains policies that cover all development in the Borough, and sets goals for housing and job development in the town centre and sea front areas. Further information on the appraisal of the policies relating to the two areas can be found in Section 6. Other component parts of the LDF are of relevance to the AAP as well as additional SPD still to be prepared on Sustainable Transport and the Green Space and Green Grid Strategies for the Borough.
- 3.28 **South Essex Green Grid Strategy:** this is a long-term project to deliver a network of open spaces and green links throughout Thames Gateway South Essex, as part of The Thames Gateway regeneration area. This aims to bring significant environmental improvements to this part of Essex, through the

provision of combined recreational open spaces, wildlife corridors and improving the appearance of the landscape. The purpose of the Greengrid strategy is to:

- Provide a holistic and long-term vision for the sustainable future development and management of the south Essex area
- Define an environmental infrastructure that promotes the establishment and managements of appropriate character settings
- Provide the context for development over the long term.

3.29 Therefore, the Greengrid strategy will have particular implications for the LDF by ensuring improvements to the 'green' character of the Borough are taken into account in a strategic way – with long term planning for this change and how development can contribute to this.

3.30 A masterplan has been prepared for the regeneration and renewal of the town centre. This is the **Southend Central Area Masterplan**. The purpose of the masterplan is to set a vision for central Southend and the seafront, as part of the major scheme for Renaissance Southend. The aim is to:

- act as a catalyst for realising the vision and objectives for the revitalisation of the area
- to help develop confidence amongst landowners and therefore encourage investment
- to help deliver civic pride.

3.31 This document forms the basis of the AAP. The AAP takes forward many of the projects and proposals of the masterplan so they become planning policy, rather than a more open framework for delivery. However, the masterplan area only extends up Victoria Avenue to Harcourt Avenue, and none of the 'Sutton' Gateway.

4 Baseline characterisation of the Borough and Central Area

- 4.1 During preparation of the SA of the Core Strategy information was collected on sustainability issues on a Borough-wide basis. At this stage in scoping for the SA of the AAP it is necessary to add to layer of detail to the more generic information collected previously in order to better inform the SA of issues of significance to central area.
- 4.2 The SEA Directive is concerned with the assessment of '*the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan*', and this requires where possible some understanding of the 'baseline' situation so that the change that might arise from the influence of the plan can be considered.
- 4.3 The SA Report of the Core Strategy submission draft contains as Appendix 3 baseline information for the Borough. Repeated here are the identified key sustainability issues for the Borough.

Summary of issues

- 4.4 Overall the gathering of data on the environmental baseline has served to identify a few key issues in the Plan area:
- the area is under quite high risk of flood, although direct tidal inundation is largely mitigated for through sea flood defences. However, tidal effects on the rivers in the Borough may present a greater risk to the central area, and effects of climate change will only serve to increase this
 - habitats of international significance are located within the Borough, although outside the built development boundary. These must be protected not only from direct disturbance from development but also change that would threaten their integrity, such as increased pollution or changes in water availability. However the key threat is largely beyond the control of the LDF is caused by built development limiting the natural movement of the coastal mudflats inland. These effects of 'coastal squeeze' will be exacerbated by climate change and sea level rise
 - the constrained boundaries of the Borough and the need for new housing is putting pressure on open space within the built up area for development, as well as on the high quality agricultural land on the built up area boundary, maximising the need to make best use of urban land including in the town centre
 - nature conservation and biodiversity assets within the built up area are limited, and every attempt should be made to conserve and enhance existing assets, and create new ones, as well as the protection and enhancement of wildlife corridors
 - there are increasing traffic levels in the Borough, with consequences for air quality, and new development must help to limit any increase in this, by endeavouring to suggest a change to travel patterns (number, length and mode), through the spatial strategy

- studies have identified limits to the availability and accessibility of open space of different types and standard, especially in central Southend-on-Sea
- the East of England, and south Essex in particular is, and will be, experiencing a shortage of potable water supply, therefore this must be taken into account in new development, and every attempt made to include water efficient design into new development
- the quality of the built environment is important, not only with the effect of new building in 'mending the fabric', but also in affecting existing areas of identifiable character. Parts of central Southend are characterised by a current low quality in the built environment, although the underlying quality of the natural and built environment is high in many areas.

4.5 The key social and economic impacts are the:

- current high levels of out commuting to London, due to relatively low house prices in Southend compared to the other local authority areas around London, and lack of appropriate employment opportunities in the Borough
- an identified need for affordable housing
- if there is not diversification of the economy this could lead to economic downturn in the area as the traditional employment base of the Borough is in decline
- relatively high levels of deprivation in some parts of the Borough, according to the Indices of Deprivation 2007, which identifies that some wards contain areas of significant deprivation, especially in the central area. For example, most of the Kursaal ward and parts of the Milton and Southchurch wards are in the 10% most deprived nationally. This includes areas with high levels of income, health and disability related deprivation.

4.6 An additional matter not addressed in the Core Strategy SA, but of importance to the AAP, is the impacts of climate change. Most recent predictions of the climate change for the East of England come from the UK Climate Projections (UKCP09). The predictions are all shown for the 2050s under a medium emissions scenarios, under low or higher scenarios emissions will be correspondingly lower and higher:

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

4.7 Predictions of sea level rise in the London area are included in the UK Climate Projections *Marine and Coastal Projections Report* (June, 2009). These show that by 2050 sea level rise could be up to 25.8cm (high emissions scenarios) but even under low scenarios could be 18.4cm.

- 4.8 Sea level rise could lead to issues such as:
- water resource deficiencies, which may lead to serious issues in the area particularly with the levels of development set for the Thames Gateway
 - increased flood risk, including for sea defence overtopping, and also from rivers
 - a risk of subsidence through changing soil moisture levels.

Baseline information for the Centre Area Action Plan

- 4.9 Several other key pieces of evidence are sources of information, these are:
- The Southend-on-Sea Local Economic Assessment (November 2010)
 - Southend-on-Sea Town Centre Masterplan
 - Southend on Sea Retail and Office Study 2010
- 4.10 For the purposes of collecting further evidence for the LDF, the council have defined the boundary of the town centre as the in the masterplan, to include administrative wards of Milton and Victoria. The SA uses data from these two wards as the basis for data collection on the social and economic characteristics of the area.

Role of the town centre

- 4.11 Southend-on-Sea town centre is a major retail, employment and commercial centre serving a catchment population of over 325,000 people. It lies at the heart of the Borough of Southend-on-Sea. The Town Centre is the Borough's most important commercial area and largest shopping centre, providing nearly 40% of the jobs in the Borough.
- 4.12 Retail is an important role of the town centre, with the shops focused on the High Street, forming a central spine through the centre from north to south. The High Street is pedestrianised linking the Victoria Plaza (1960s) and Royals (1980s) retail centres. On the periphery of the northern part of the High Street is the town centres only large food retailer and a major retail outlet offering non food goods. There is some question about the future of Sainsbury's at this site, with the possibility to of the supermarket relocating to an edge of centre location.
- 4.13 The college and new university complex is adjacent to the High Street, with more development planned. Development of a multi-screen cinema, restaurants, café's and bars mainly along High Street side streets has given the town centre a complimentary leisure offer.
- 4.14 Victoria Avenue is the main area for office accommodation. The Council views that Victoria Avenue has a number of 1960's office developments, some of which are outmoded for modern requirements and are long-term vacant.
- 4.15 The central area of the town also is the focus for much of the seaside leisure activity. With the entrance to the Pier at Pier Hill at the southern end of the High

Street as well as the Adventure Island ‘fun park’. The seafront area also includes the eastern and western esplanades and formal parks of the Southend cliffs.

Housing

- 4.16 Extensive areas of high density housing providing homes for some 18,000 people (11% of the Borough total) in 10,000 households adjoin the centre. Housing areas around the high street are of historic and architectural quality and are designated as conservation areas².

Travel and transport

- 4.17 The town centre is accessed by two railway stations, Southend Victoria at the north end of the High Street and Central Station in the main shopping area. The newly refurbished bus station is also in the town centre, adjacent to the High Street. The main access by car is the A127 dual carriageway via Victoria Avenue and the A13 London Road, which has smaller and independent retail along it. The town centre has parking facilities for around 5,000 cars in surface and multi-storey car parks, Council owned car parking encourages short stay shoppers, but attempts to deter commuters through its pricing structure.
- 4.18 Cycling and walking routes are adequate, although there is potential for greater connectivity. The relatively flat character of the Southend topography means there is very good potential for more trips to be made by this mode. The seafront provides a particularly valuable connection of coastal neighbourhoods to the central Southend.
- 4.19 As previously noted in Section 3 there are also various schemes proposed through the Local Transport Plan 3 to bring enhancements to the public transport provision of the area.
- 4.20 All new development needs to support walking and cycling in the town centre, as well as the smooth flow of public transport and good quality interchange facilities. Linking the town centre to the seafront is also a key issue, and this will include linking the proposals and approach of this AAP and that for the seafront.
- 4.21 Studies show that Southend performs favourably in terms of walk / public transport accessibility to other East of England towns, with 84% of the population able to access employment in this way.

Population

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

² SBC, Town Centre AAP, Issues and Options Report

Resident Population

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

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

Employment and Economy

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

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

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

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

Unemployment rates

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

Source: 2008/09 Unemployment Monitor Summary Statistics – Issue 127 May 2009³

- 4.26 Despite the recession constraining consumer spending and trading conditions needing some time to recover, regeneration activity is improving the investment potential of the town centre. This is expected to partially counter the effects of lost income from public sector employees and the 2011 Vat increase. In the long term, Southend's retail sector is robust, and provides an important sub-regional focus, through its growth potential is constrained by the proximity of Lakeside and Bluewater shopping centres.
- 4.27 Employment in the town centre is diverse. There is strong retail economy the town centre ranks 192 out of 711 UK retail centres, though this has fallen from a high of 102 in 2009. Tourism brings in around 5 million visitors a year (2009) who spend around £330 million. Southend also has a strong role as a provider of business services and public administration, including contact centres. Southend town centre is identified as having clusters of cultural, creation and digital employment activities in the South Essex sub-region.

Social characteristics

- 4.28 Education rates show that although the rate of adults with no qualifications are higher in central Southend than for the Borough as a whole, there are also more residents with higher level qualifications. This may be as a result of younger professional people with qualifications living close to or in the town centre juxtaposed with pockets of deprivation, although without further investigation this cannot be confirmed.
- 4.29 There have been changes in the skills set of Southend residents in terms of post GCSE qualification, with a significant improvement in the number of people acquiring level NVQ4+ qualifications. A reason for this is the improvements to the Higher and Further Education providers in central Southend.
- 4.30 The Town Centre is made up of Milton and Victoria wards, and also includes some parts of the Kursaal ward. The Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2004 indicate that where these three ward areas overlap with the commercial and retail centre of the Town Centre area there are high levels of deprivation, with sub-ward areas being in the 10% most deprived nationally, and others in the majority of the town

³ The data used are claimant count levels collected by the Department for Work and Pensions. These data are a by-product of the administrative records of all people claiming benefits at Jobcentre Plus offices. The claimant count rate is calculated by expressing the number of people claiming unemployment-related benefits as a percentage of the estimated resident working-age population of the area. This figure is produced by the ONS Population Estimates Unit. Note, that the claimant count data relates to the number of benefit claimants only and therefore does not provide a comprehensive measure of unemployment.

centre, with the exception of some residential areas, being in the most deprived 30% nationally.

- 4.31 The number of cars per household in central Southend is significantly lower (0.72) than for the rest of the Borough (1.09). This may reflect good transport connections but is also likely to be characteristic of income deprivation in parts of the centre.

Built environment quality

- 4.32 Some of the town centre is currently of poor architectural quality, for example the low quality of the Farringdon multi-storey car park, although this is soon to be demolished. There is also recent regeneration, including the South East Essex College and University of Essex buildings, Pier Hill and the first phase of the Travel Centre have improved this, there is scope for further environmental improvements and making land available for alternatives uses.
- 4.33 The new Victoria Gateway Scheme provides a considerable uplift to the public realm at this important entrance to the town centre and also supports a more integrated approach to public transport and surface access across a major thoroughfare into the town centre. In addition along the seafront, the City Beach scheme has realigned the carriageway to create wider pavements and space for cafes, activities and created attractive features such as fountains and lighting within a new public space.
- 4.34 There exists a large concentration of poor quality commercial stock in the centre of Southend, particularly around Victoria Avenue.
- 4.35 The town centre area also contains many listed buildings and four conservation areas of consisting Prittlewell in the north, Milton and Clifftown in the south west, and Warrior Square located in the middle of the centre. The conservation areas are all predominantly residential neighbourhoods, and Clifftown directly borders the retail core of the town as well as the seafront. Listed buildings are within the town centre, particularly within the conservation areas, although are also found beyond the boundaries of these areas. Many of the listed buildings reflect Southend's heritage as a seaside holiday destination.

Open space

- 4.36 There are only very limited areas of public open space, particularly green space, in the town centre. The seafront to the south of the town centre area does have high quality open spaces, in particular the Southend Cliffs formal gardens.
- 4.37 However, within the main commercial and retail areas of the town centre green space provision is poor, and includes the recently improved cemetery / open space at St. John's church behind the Royals shopping centre and Warrior Square and Prittlewell Square Gardens – a high quality formal garden set within a conservation area in the south west of the central area. A major enhancement scheme for Warrior Square Gardens has recently been completed including the provision of an architecturally designed café and remodelled public green space.

- 4.38 Churchill Gardens in the north of the town centre area provides additional open space, although is part of a more residential neighbourhood. Green spaces are needed throughout the urban area as demand will increase with a warming climate and these areas can help cool built urban areas, preventing 'heat island' impacts. Therefore, provision of green open spaces may be a matter to be addressed by the AAP.
- 4.39 Redevelopment of the centre and proposals of the AAP should take into account ways in which open spaces in this location can contribute to the Thames Gateway and South Essex Green Grid strategy.

Flood

- 4.40 Although there is a risk of flood along the seafront south of the town centre. There is also the risk of surface water flooding throughout the town centre area, which will need to be managed through design and drainage of new development. There is also increased fluvial flood risk at the Kursaal area east of Southchurch Avenue which is at greater risk of flood according to Environment Agency maps.

Air quality

- 4.41 The Essex Air Quality Consortium identifies that current air quality in Southend is below action levels. The main source of air pollution in Southend is road transport on busy road links such as the A127, A13 and A1159, and therefore in the Town Centre controlling traffic levels will be key to maintaining air quality. There are currently about 35 small scale industrial processes which are authorised by the Borough Council. These are not considered to emit significant quantities of air pollution.
- 4.42 Congestion is a challenge in the centre particularly on the A127 near the town centre, as is a key barrier to accessing employment.

Nature conservation

- 4.43 There are no sites of identified nature conservation importance in the central area. However, the potential for nature conservation enhancement should be a consideration of all development sites in the area.
- 4.44 The Town Centre is also near the internationally designated Natura 2000 sites, as referred to in Section 3. Therefore, development in these areas will have to ensure it will not have an adverse impact on these nature conservation sites. Potential impact pathways include sewerage, rainwater run-off, or pollution impacts of large scale new development, as well as any direct impact on the birds for which these areas are designated.

Key issues

- 4.45 The additional baseline material gathered for the Central Area AAP identifies several matters that may need to be addressed by the SA. These are:

- development should help in the continued enhancement of the built environment in the town centre, with new buildings of high quality and developed to sound urban design principles
- new urban open space, including new green space, could be provided in the town centre, this may be particularly important given the changing climate and the likelihood of even greater demand for outdoor social space
- the area is currently experiencing high levels of deprivation, and this should be addressed through the AAP
- the town centre is a focus of employment for the Borough, and this role needs to be maintained, while also ensuring a range of employment opportunities are maintained in a variety of employment sectors. It will also be necessary to ensure high quality jobs are provided
- air quality of the town centre should be maintained
- every attempt should be made to bring biodiversity enhancements to the Town Centre, and also to ensure development in this area does not harm the nearby Natura 2000 sites
- much of the Town Centre is used for car parking, the AAP needs to set out plans for the rationalisation of town centre parking in order to allow land to be released for other uses and create a higher quality urban environment. In addition, establishing residents parking schemes in the neighbourhoods in proximity to commercial and office areas is necessary to reduce car commuting, in tandem with delivery of the Local Transport Plan proposals for improved public transport in and around the town centre.

5 Sustainability Framework

- 5.1 The framework below is based upon that in the Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal framework, however it has been altered to reflect the specific needs of the AAP area. These changes are based upon the wider policy context, the baseline data and the issues and options reports for the area covered by the AAP.
- 5.2 Further detail on the derivation of the objectives of the sustainability framework are shown in the Core Strategy SA report, including the Scoping stage report.