

Southend Borough Council

**Southend Central Area Action Plan (SCAAP)
Hearing Statement - Matter 8: The Policy
Areas**

May 2017

Southend Borough Council – Southend Central Area Action Plan Examination
Hearing Statement – Matter 8: The Policy Areas

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References

Sustainability Appraisal	http://www.southend.gov.uk/downloads/file/4545/scaap_revised_proposed_submission_sustainability_appraisal
Southend Corporate Plan 2016	http://www.southend.gov.uk/info/200403/information_centre/453/about_southend-on-sea_borough_council/2
Consultation Statement	http://www.southend.gov.uk/downloads/file/4728/sd4_scaap_consultation_statement_reg_22
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Matter 8: The Policy Areas

8.1 Are the following policies setting out the development principles, including Opportunity Sites, where appropriate, in relation to the following policy areas, justified and deliverable within the plan period?

8.1.1 The development principles for each of the policy areas and opportunity sites are justified and deliverable within the SCAAP plan period.

(i) Policy PA1: High Street Policy Area

8.1.2 Policy PA1 includes development principles aimed at achieving a vibrant and viable town centre, complemented by a variety of uses to enhance the experience for visitors, residents and workers through the day and into the evening, including public realm enhancements. This approach has been informed through the preparation of the SCAAP, and has been appraised as part of the sustainability appraisal which identifies that the policy should help to make sure the High Street is an attractive place to visit.

8.1.3 The development principles are justified and deliverable within the plan period, for example in relation to policy criterion PA1.4.a, the Southend Central Area Transport Scheme (S-CATS) has a Local Growth Fund allocation of £7 million to take forward public realm and transport infrastructure seen as necessary to support growth in the central area. This includes a focus on improving the public realm and access to / from Victoria Circus, programmed for delivery in 2017/18.

(ii) Policy PA2: London Road Policy Area

8.1.4 Policy PA2 includes development principles aimed at creating a vibrant gateway to the town centre, providing a mix of uses, together with public realm enhancements. This approach has been informed through the preparation of the SCAAP, and has been appraised as part of the sustainability appraisal, which identifies that the policy should help improve the character of the area and make the site more accessible.

8.1.5 The development principles are justified and deliverable within the plan period, for example in relation to policy criterion PA2.2.a, the Southend Central Area Transport Scheme (S-CATS), includes improvements to London Road from Queensway to Victoria Circus, to enhance the experience for visitors, residents and workers through public realm enhancements to create a pedestrian-priority area and improvements for pedestrians and cyclists.

(iii) Policy PA3: Elmer Square Policy Area

8.1.6 Policy PA3, which includes Opportunity Site PA3.1 Elmer Square Phase 2, includes development principles aimed at securing Elmer Square as the heart of the educational hub in Southend, to complement existing development including The Forum. This approach has been informed through the preparation of the SCAAP, and has been appraised as part of the sustainability appraisal, which identifies that the policy has potential for benefits to the built environment that will have a positive impact on the image of the Central Area.

8.1.7 The development principles are justified and deliverable within the plan period, and will be delivered as part of the delivery of Opportunity Site PA3.1: Elmer Square Phase 2. Further details are set out in response to Matter 6.4.

(iv) Policy PA4: Queensway Policy Area

8.1.8 Policy PA4, which includes Opportunity Site PA4.1 Better Queensway, includes development principles aimed at securing the regeneration of the area to create a balanced community, supported by social and community infrastructure, complemented by an enhanced public realm and enhancements to the Queensway dual carriageway. This approach has been informed through the preparation of the SCAAP, and has been appraised as part of the sustainability appraisal, which identifies that the policy should help to 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.

8.1.9 The development principles are justified and deliverable within the plan period, including for Opportunity Site PA4.1, which is identified in the Borough Council's Corporate Plan 2016 as a corporate priority action. Further details are set out in response to Matter 6.4.

(v) Policy PA5: Warrior Square Policy Area

8.1.10 Policy PA5 sets out development principles aimed at providing an area focused on the predominately small-scale residential character of the Conservation Area and the green character of Warrior Square Gardens, including landscaping and urban greening techniques to complement the character of the area, and enhanced access to neighbouring policy areas and residential neighbourhoods. This approach has been informed through the preparation of the SCAAP, and has been appraised as part of the sustainability appraisal, which identifies that the principles of the policy are compatible with more sustainable transport access and are also likely to help deliver nature conservation benefits through implementation of improvements to urban greening.

8.1.11 The development principles are justified and deliverable within the plan period. In relation to policy criterion PA5.2.b for example, the Better Queensway project will facilitate improved links between the policy area and the Queensway Policy Area.

(vi) Policy PA6: Clifftown Policy Area

8.1.12 Policy PA6 sets out development principles to conserve and enhance the distinctive character and appearance of the Clifftown Conservation Area, creating an area with a strong cultural identity, and undertaking public realm improvements to enhance the setting and experience for pedestrians and cyclists. This approach has been informed through the preparation of the SCAAP, and appraised by the Sustainability Appraisal, which highlighted that the policy supports the future role of Clifftown as an area of strong cultural identity.

8.1.13 The development principles are justified and deliverable within the plan period. In regard to policy criterion PA6.2.c for example, pre-application planning discussions have taken place regarding the future development of the empire theatre site.

(vii) Policy PA7: Tylers Policy Area

8.1.14 Policy PA7, which includes Opportunity Site PA7.1, includes development principles aimed at creating a quality public realm, creating opportunities for shared public spaces, and the provision of mixed use development. This approach has been informed through the preparation of the SCAAP, and appraised by the Sustainability Appraisal, which highlighted that the policy intends to see the area made more permeable to the public, and that this can enhance connectivity in the area, providing clearer links to the seafront.

8.1.15 The development principles are justified and deliverable within the plan period. The Better Queensway project for example will facilitate improvements to Queensway dual carriageway and Chichester Road to enhance access, in accordance with PA7.2, and Opportunity Site PA7.1 Tylers is considered to be deliverable during the plan period, further details are set out in response to Matter 6.4.

(viii) Policy CS1: Central Seafront Policy Area

8.1.16 Policy CS1, which includes Opportunity Sites CS1.1, CS1.2, CS1.3 and CS1.4, sets out development principles for rejuvenating Southend Pier, creating a thriving and vibrant tourism, leisure, recreational and cultural destination. These are all considered to be deliverable during the plan period, see response to Matter 6.4. This will be complemented by mixed use schemes, conservation and enhancement of natural and heritage assets, and improvements to the public realm and connections with the

High Street and neighbouring policy areas. The approach was informed through the preparation of the SCAAP, and appraised by the Sustainability Appraisal, which commented that the policy should have a largely beneficial impact on securing sustainable development in the Central Seafront.

8.1.17 The development principles are justified and deliverable within the plan period. In relation to policy criterion CS1.1.a for example, the Council has allocated £50,000 in its capital programme for additional resort assets (see Topic Paper 3), including provision of additional commercial space in the form of beach hut buildings on the Pier, rickshaw bikes and a shelter on City Beach. It is, however, proposed to delete reference to Policy CS1.3.f 'provision of a more permeable boundary to Adventure Island to provide views in and through the site'¹ as the criteria is not considered critical to the objectives for the area and there is no evidence that the provision will be delivered during the plan period.

(ix) Policy CS2: Nature Conservation and Biodiversity

8.1.18 Policy CS2 seeks to appropriately conserve nature and biodiversity interests in the central seafront area. Following discussion between the Council and Natural England, as set out in the Consultation Statement, Natural England have identified that this approach is acceptable, with suggested amendments provided in the Schedule of Suggested Amendments.

8.1.19 The approach was informed through the preparation of the SCAAP, and appraised by the Sustainability Appraisal, which commented that the policy should help in protecting the nature conservation assets in this area. The policy is justified and deliverable in the plan period.

(x) Policy CS3: The Waterfront

8.1.20 Policy CS3 seeks to promote the waterfront for a range of sport, recreation and leisure activities, as well as respecting the natural environment. The approach was informed through the preparation of the SCAAP, and appraised by the Sustainability Appraisal, which commented that there is much in the policy to help improve the area.

8.1.21 The policy is justified and deliverable within the plan period. In relation to policy criterion CS3.1.a for example, £1.25m from the Coastal Community Fund and matched by public and private sector funding was secured to deliver a new lagoon on the seafront (see Topic Paper 3).

(xi) Policy PA8: Victoria Gateway Neighbourhood Policy Area

¹ Proposed in SD3 - Schedule of Suggested Amendments

8.1.22 Policy PA8, which includes Opportunity Sites PA8.1 and PA8.2, sets out development principles aimed at regenerating Victoria Avenue to create an attractive and vibrant gateway to the town centre, including improved connections and accessibility, urban greening, and residential led development. The approach was informed through the preparation of the SCAAP, and appraised by the Sustainability Appraisal, which commented that the policy should help to deliver sustainable development in the area.

8.1.23 The development principles are justified and deliverable. The Southend Central Area Transport Scheme (S-CATS) includes junction improvement works for Victoria Avenue, including improvements to Carnarvon / Victoria Avenue junction, Great Eastern Avenue / Victoria Avenue junction, and East Street / Victoria Avenue junction, together with improvements to the public realm and cycling facilities at Victoria Avenue.

(xii) Policy PA9: Sutton gateway Neighbourhood Policy Area

8.1.24 Policy PA9, which includes Opportunity Sites PA9.1 and PA9.2, sets out development principles to promote the regeneration of Sutton Gateway Neighbourhood, including residential and employment generating development, together with improvements to the public realm and accessibility. The approach has been informed through the preparation of the SCAAP, and appraised by the Sustainability Appraisal, which commented that the policy should help to deliver sustainable development in the area.

8.1.25 The development principles are justified and deliverable. The Better Queensway project for example will enhance connections between the neighbourhood and Queensway for pedestrians and cyclists.