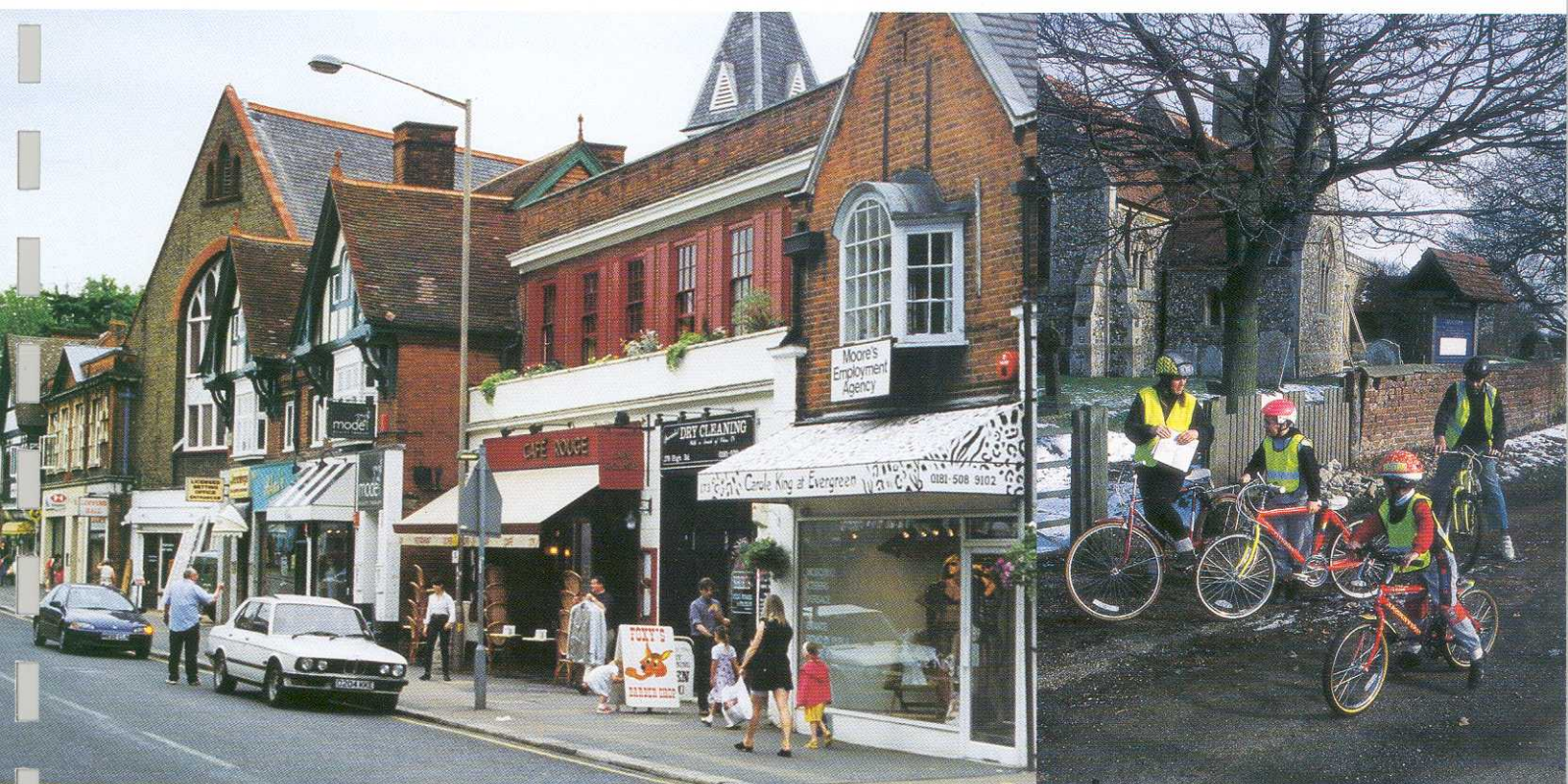


# EPPING FOREST DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN



**EPPING FOREST  
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**ADOPTED  
JANUARY 1998**



**FOREWORD**

Under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 this Council has a duty to prepare a Local Plan covering the whole District.

The Plan sets out a comprehensive framework of policies to enable the Council to control most forms of development for the foreseeable future. This control is needed not to resist any changes but to guide proposals so that the quality of the local environment is protected and enhanced whenever possible.

There are considerable and continuous pressures for residential and commercial development, mainly due to proximity to London. The District lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt, however, and the relevant policies will continue to be rigorously implemented.

The Plan incorporates the principle of “sustainable development” and therefore encourages, or aims to accommodate, new buildings or land uses which are necessary or in the public interest, while protecting the District’s environment for the benefit of present and future generations. In my view and that of the Council the Plan will succeed in this complex role.

This Plan has been the subject of extensive public consultation. This culminated in a Public Inquiry, which ran for several months, and resulted in modifications which were made available again for public comment. Final amendments have consequently been made.

The statutorily adopted Local Plan for Epping Forest District therefore properly belongs to the community and I commend it to you.

Ron Heath

Chairman of Development Committee

Epping Forest District Council.

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# CONTEXT

**“This material should show the wider context and not just the development site and its immediately adjacent buildings.”**

**PPG1 General Policy and Principles  
DOE 1997**

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# **1. Legal Background**

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### **Background to the Plan**

**1.1** This Local Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Planning and Compensation Act 1991). District Councils are now, for the first time, under a statutory duty to prepare Local Plans (it was not an obligation previously) and in the form of a single Plan covering the whole of their District.

**1.2** Epping Forest District Council previously had full Local Plan coverage of the District, in the form of three statutorily-adopted Local Plans covering different areas. These have therefore been replaced by a District-wide Local Plan. The previous Plans only looked forward to 1991 because that was the end date of what was then the Structure Plan. This Local Plan looks forward to 2001, in conjunction with the current Structure Plan. Once adopted it will continue to form part of the Development Plan for the District until it is superseded by any alterations to the Plan or a replacement Plan.

### **Function of the Plan**

**1.3** This Local Plan is intended to:-

- set out the Council's policies for the control of development (and hence guide most planning decisions); and
- make proposals for the development and use of land, and allocate land for specific purposes.

**1.4** It is identified in the Council's Corporate Plan as a means of influencing the infrastructure and future economic development of the District to try and meet the needs of the local community. The Council saw the emerging Local Plan as a major opportunity to:-

- (i) anticipate changing economic and infrastructure needs and promote the role of "enabling" development;
- (ii) ensure that development respects the essential character of the area; and
- (iii) consult local communities.

### **Significance of the Plan**

**1.5** The Government guidance given in PPG1 makes it clear that applications for planning permission shall be determined in accordance with the Local Plan policies unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Conversely, applications which are not in accordance with relevant policies in the Plan should not be allowed unless material considerations justify

the granting of planning permission. Where the Development Plan is not relevant (through, for example, not containing a policy relating to a particular development proposal) it follows that the planning application/appeal should be determined on its merits.

**1.6** The importance of Local Plans in the determination of planning decisions was made paramount by the Planning and Compensation Act 1991 which introduced a new Section 54A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. That states:-

"Where, in making any determination under the Planning Acts, regard is to be had to the Development Plan, the determination shall be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise."

**1.7** Prior to that, a Local Plan was merely only one of the "material considerations" and had no greater weight than any others.

**1.8** This Plan is therefore a very significant tool in determining the amount, type and location of development that will take place in the District for the foreseeable future. As a consequence, it seeks to be comprehensive in dealing with the types of development proposal that might be expected to come forward during the Plan period.

### **Relationship with the Structure Plan**

**1.9** In the District, the 'Development Plan' comprises both the Structure Plan and Local Plans. The Structure Plan is a strategic, County-wide plan produced by Essex County Council. It is intended, amongst other things, to provide the strategic policy framework for planning and development control locally. The District-wide Local Plan then develops these strategic policies and transposes them into more detailed policies relevant to the District, identifying specific sites for development.

**1.10** The Local Plan is required to be "... in general conformity ..." with the Structure Plan when it is 'adopted'. The County Council has provided a statement that the Plan is in general conformity with the current Structure Plan (see Appendix 1).

**1.11** Two other Local Plans which constitute Development Plans are prepared by the County Council and relate to the whole of Essex. These are the Waste Local Plan (currently in the course of preparation) and the Minerals Local Plan.

### **Relationship with the Lee Valley Park Plan**

**1.12** That part of the District around Waltham Abbey, Sewardstone, Roydon and Nazeing is a substantial part

**Figure 1: - Local Plan Process.**

Preparation of Consultation Draft Local Plan	1990 – 1993
Publication of Consultation Draft Local Plan	July 1993
Publicity of Consultation Draft Local Plan	August 1993 – November 1993
Council assesses response to consultation and preparation of Deposit Copy	January 1994 – April 1994
County Council Issues Statement of Conformity	May 1994
Local Plan placed on Deposit – 6 week period in which to make formal representations (i.e. objections/support)	June 1994 – August 1994
Council considers nature of objections	Autumn 1994
Public Local Inquiry	Autumn 1995 – Spring 1996
Inspector submits report/recommendations	December 1996
Council considers Inspector's recommendations	March 1997
Proposed modifications placed on Deposit – 6 week period in which to make formal representation	August 1997 – September 1997
Council considers response to representations and on proposed modifications	October 1997
Adoption of Local Plan	January 1998

of the Lee Valley Regional Park. The area of land within the statutory boundaries of the Park is affected by the proposals contained in the Lee Valley Park Plan 1986 which are included in this Local Plan by virtue of Section 14(2) of the Lee Valley Regional Park Act 1966. The Lee Valley Park Plan is being reviewed with a view to adoption in 1998.

### **Government Planning Guidance**

**1.13** This is set out clearly at the beginning of each chapter in the other sections. It takes the form of Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs - a current schedule of relevant PPGs is given in the glossary) and Ministerial Circulars. Although these have no formally binding legal force, every local planning authority is under a statutory obligation to have regard to them at every stage when formulating its proposals in a Local Plan. If a local planning authority wishes to depart from national guidance expressed in PPGs and Circulars the authority must set out clearly the justification for the departure. Local circumstances, properly surveyed and analysed, may be the basis for a departure depending on degree, and on any relevant provisions of the Structure Plan.

### **Stages in Local Plan preparation**

**1.14** The Local Plan represents the culmination of a lengthy preparation process (see Figure 1). At various stages in its preparation the Plan has been the subject of widespread consultation with a range of bodies including Government departments, statutory undertakers, parish councils, interest groups and the public at large. The Council has amended the Plan as a consequence of some of the responses received and to reflect changing circumstances.

**1.15** Over 1000 formal objections were made to the Deposit Copy Local Plan in 1994. Whilst 260 were conditionally withdrawn following discussions with objectors, all the objections were considered at a Public Local Inquiry which ran from October 1995 to April 1996. The Inquiry was chaired by an independent inspector approved by the Department of the Environment. The Council subsequently accepted the vast majority of his recommendations and published its Proposed Modifications accordingly.

**1.16** Given the length of time that has elapsed since the preparation of the Plan commenced it will now be subject to review as and when necessary (see Chapter 19).

### **Format of the Plan**

**1.17** The Plan comprises the Written Statement and the Proposals Map which should be read together. The Written Statement sets out the Council's policies

(in bold capitals) together with their justification. Generally, each chapter sets the scene and indicates the Government guidance and the County policy before putting forward the Plan policies. The chapters are grouped into sections each of which deals with similar sorts of issues. The final chapter looks at individual settlements in the District to indicate how the Plan will affect them.

#### **1.18**

The Proposals Map indicates the areas to which each of the policies applies and the sites subject to specific policies. The Proposals Map features a series of 'inset' maps of certain areas in order to enable them to be shown in sufficient detail.

#### **1.19**

The areas of the District covered by each of the component sheets of the Proposals Map are as follows:-

##### Sheet A

Map 1                      Map of whole District

##### Sheet B

Map 2                      Loughton, Buckhurst Hill, Chigwell  
Map 2a                    Loughton (High Road) Town Centre  
Map 2b                    Loughton (Broadway) Town Centre  
Map 2c                    Buckhurst Hill Town Centre

##### Sheet C

Map 3                      Waltham Abbey  
Map 3a                    Waltham Abbey Town Centre  
Map 4                      Epping  
Map 4a                    Epping Town Centre  
Map 5                      Chipping Ongar  
Map 5a                    Chipping Ongar Town Centre

##### Sheet D

Map 6                      Roydon/Nazeing

##### Sheet E

Map 7                      Sheering  
Map 8                      Fyfield  
Map 9                      Sewardstone  
Map 10                    Theydon Bois  
Map 11                    North Weald Bassett/Thornwood  
Map 12                    Chigwell Row  
Map 13                    Abridge  
Map 14                    Stapleford Abbots

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## **2. Epping Forest District**



Figure 2: Location of Epping Forest District.

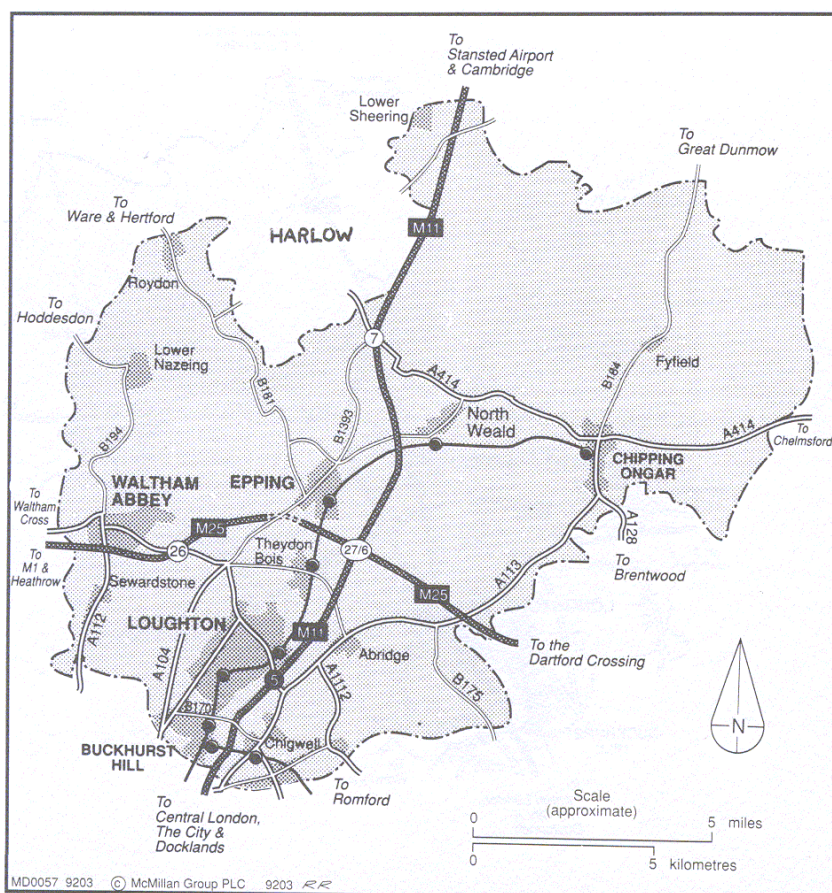
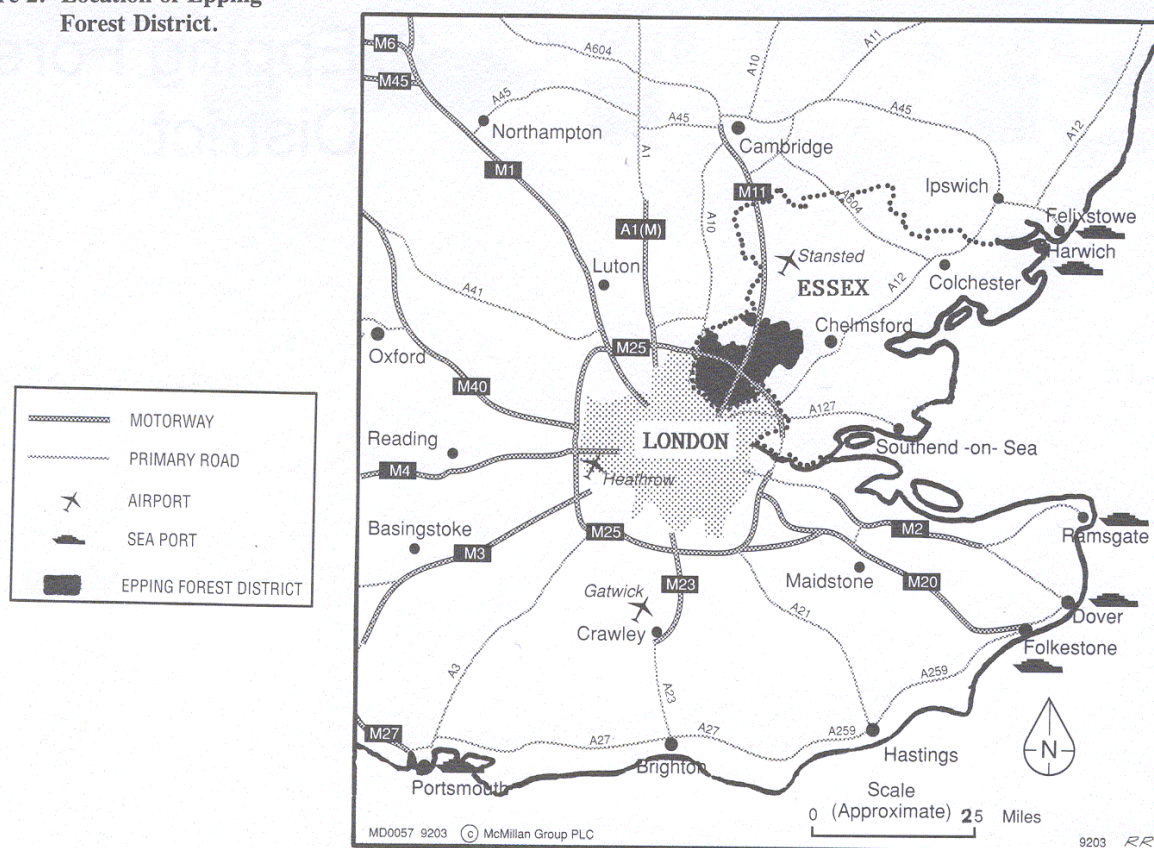


Figure 3: Epping Forest District.

## **Introduction**

**2.1** Epping Forest District is situated within the Metropolitan Green Belt, abutting the north-east edge of London, in the south west corner of Essex (see Figure 2). It comprises the towns of Loughton/Buckhurst Hill (36,500), Waltham Abbey (16,000), Chigwell (12,000), Epping (10,000) and Chipping Ongar (6,000) together with villages, the largest of which are Theydon Bois, North Weald Bassett, Roydon and Nazeing (see Figure 3). Many of the towns and villages are historic but those close to London grew rapidly as commuter towns. This was particularly in connection with the coming of what is now the Central Line of London Underground.

## **2.2**

The District has an important position in the national motorway network. The M11 runs north-south almost through the centre of the District with local road connections at Hastingwood (just south of Harlow) and Loughton (currently only for south-bound traffic). The M25 crosses the District east-west with a local road junction at Waltham Abbey and an interchange with the M11. The Central Line of the

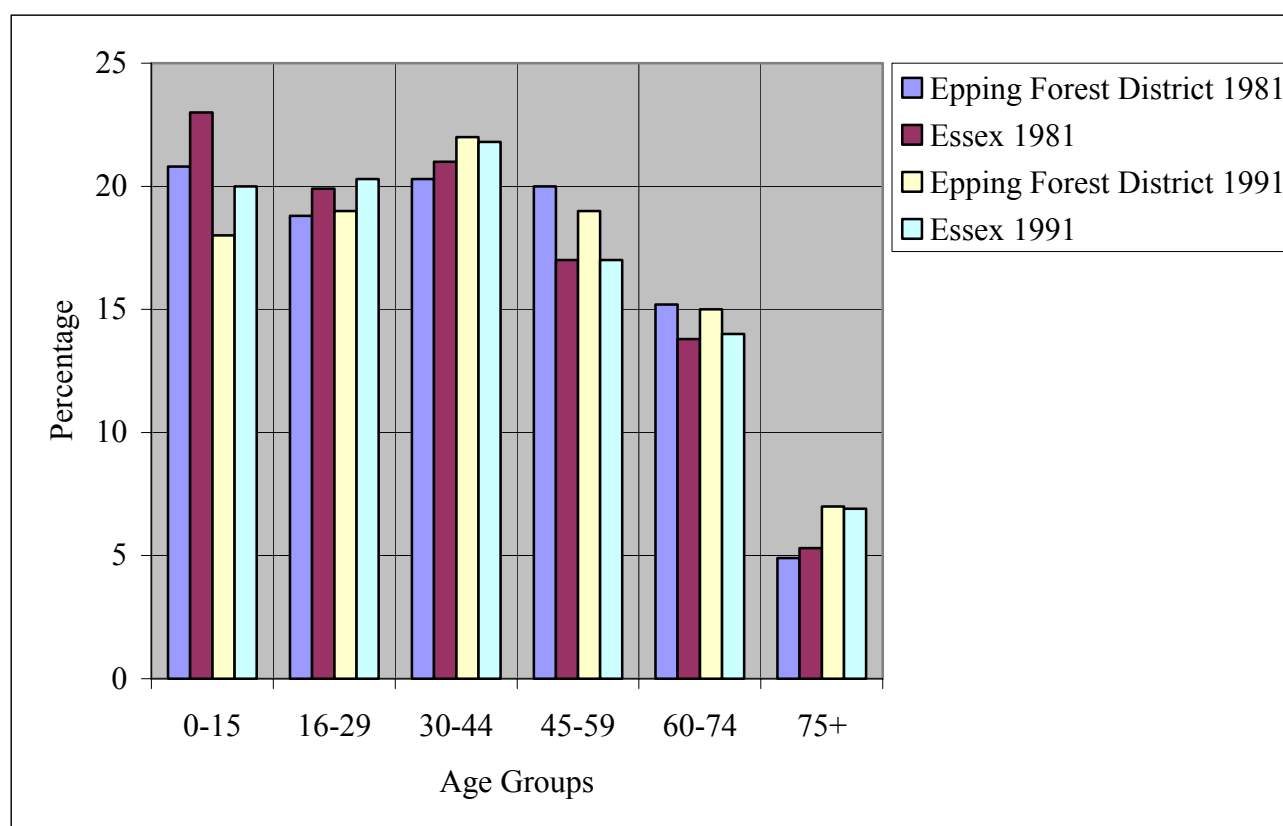
London Underground has stations at Buckhurst Hill, Loughton, Debden, Theydon Bois and Epping. Roydon is the only British Rail station in the District - on the line between Liverpool Street and Cambridge.

**2.3** With the exception of the towns and larger villages the District is entirely within the Metropolitan Green Belt. The consistent application of Green Belt policies has meant that some 90% of the District's 130 square miles is still open and undeveloped comprising generally attractive countryside.

## **Population Structure**

**2.4** The District's population is 116,000 (1991 Census), having remained relatively static since 1981. Figure 4 shows that the age of the population is high for the County average (with a below average number of 0-15 and 16-29 year olds and an above average number of 49-59 and 60-74 year olds).

**Figure 4: Population Structure of Epping Forest District Council and Essex (1981 and 1991).**



Source - Census



**2.5** It also shows that the age structure of the population is changing, in line with the County trend, in that during the 1980s there has been a marked reduction in the numbers of 0-15 year olds in the District in combination with a marked increase in the number of elderly (75+). This is assumed to result from a falling birth-rate in combination with people having an increased life-expectancy. The high cost of local house prices (as a consequence of the attractiveness of the District and its proximity to London) also has a bearing upon the changing age structure by obliging many young people to move elsewhere in search of cheaper accommodation.

**2.6** Average household size has been in sharp decline in line with that of the County as a whole (see Table 1). This decline stems from a combination of social and economic reasons including an increase in single-person households, young couples moving away, a fall in the birth-rate and people living longer.

**Table 1**  
**Average household size**

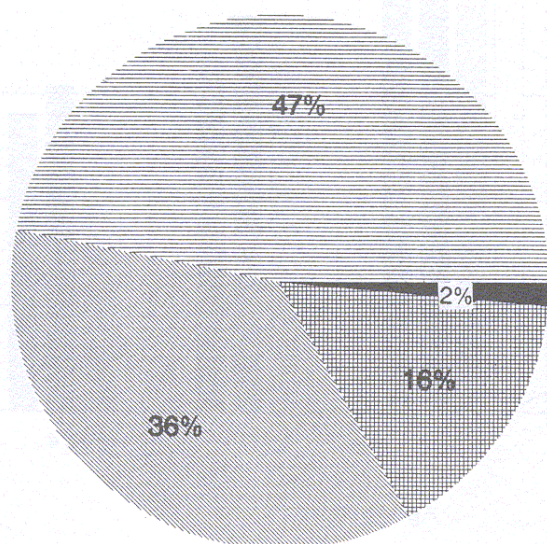
	1981	1991
Epping Forest District	2.74	2.54
Essex	2.75	2.55

### Socio-Economic Characteristics

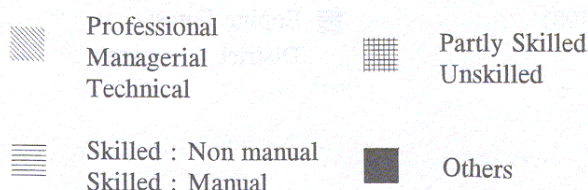
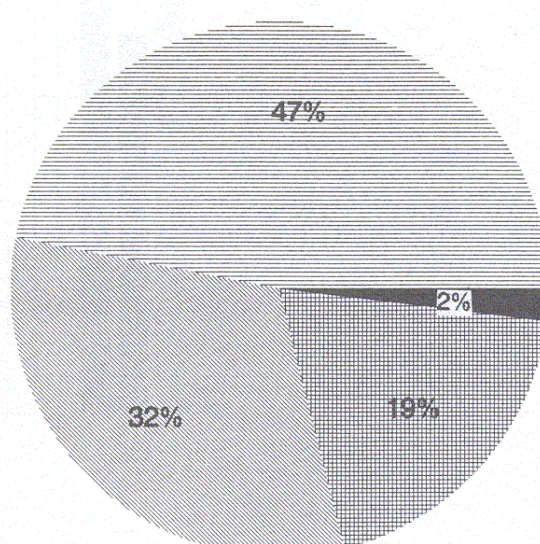
**2.7** In general terms, Epping Forest District is a prosperous area. During the late 1980s incomes were 30% above the national average and the number of high earners was twice the national average. This is a reflection of the District's accessibility to Central London and its attractiveness as a place to live. This itself is reflected in the fact that an above average proportion of the workforce is in professional/ management/ technical occupations (see Figure 5) with most of these people commuting to work. By contrast the District has a lower than average proportion of semi- and unskilled workers, compared to the County as a whole, but an average proportion of skilled workers (see Figure 5).

**Figure 5: Social Class by Occupation (Epping Forest District and Essex).**

(a) Epping Forest District



(b) Essex



Source: 1991 Census

**2.8** Unemployment in the District is consistently well below the County figure. Both rose as a consequence of the economic recession and subsequently fell back to their previous levels (see Figure 15). The figure for the District was 3.9% (as at April 1997). Whilst there are no figures which are directly comparable it seems, on the basis of the information available, that the District is below both the regional and national figures (see Figures 14 and 15). Current economic indicators also suggest that the present trend in all these figures is downwards.

**2.9** The relative affluence of the District's population in general is also reflected in the high level of car ownership. Table 2(a) shows the extent to which car ownership has grown in the District during the 1980s and how this compares with the average County figure. Table 2(b) indicates the proportion of households who have more than one car.

**Table 2: Car Ownership**

**(a) Proportion of households with car(s).**

	1981	1991
Epping Forest District	75%	80%
Essex	70%	75%

**(b) Proportion of households with more than one car.**

	1981	1991
Epping Forest District	29%	38%
Essex	21%	30%

**2.10** Whilst this gives the impression that the District is relatively prosperous this does not apply across the whole of its area. There are still significant parts of the urban areas that cannot be described as prosperous although the deprivation they experience is very much less than that in the major conurbations.

**The Countryside**

**2.11** The west and south of the District are characterised by gently rolling countryside dissected by river valleys. The main topographical features are the Epping Long Green and Epping Forest ridges, running generally south-west to north-east and separated by the Cobbins Brook valley. The Lee Valley forms much of the western boundary of the District. The east and north are dominated by the

broad valleys of Cripsey Brook and the upper reaches of the River Roding. Generally, the land there is flatter and more open.

**2.12** Arable agriculture is the main rural land use and this has been more intensive in the north and east. The consequent loss of many hedgerows and trees has added to the 'openness' of the countryside. Horse-keeping is quite an important land use in the south and the Lee Valley still supports glasshouse horticulture. There is only a small amount of pasture.

**2.13** The District includes numerous small woodlands which greatly enhance the character and wildlife interest of the countryside. Many of these are ancient although Epping Forest, owned and managed by the Corporation of London, is easily the most significant remnant of the original Forest of Essex.

**The Importance of the Local Environment**

**2.14** The quality of the local environment, the continuing decline in average household size (see Table 1) and the closeness and accessibility to London mean that the District is always under pressure for residential, industrial and commercial development. Opportunities to satisfy these demands are necessarily limited by the requirements of Green Belt policy.

**2.15** Conservation of the local environment, which includes management and enhancement, is a particular and continuing priority for the Council. This has resulted in:-

- (i) strict adherence to the objectives of Green Belt policy;
- (ii) the establishment of the Countryside project as a full-time service (to carry out small-scale countryside management projects throughout the District);
- (iii) the designation of 25 Conservation Areas and the introduction of a Partnership Scheme;
- (iv) the implementation of Town Schemes in Waltham Abbey and Ongar;
- (v) a continuing budget to grant-aid repairs to some of the District's numerous Listed Buildings; and
- (vi) the establishment of effective policies and procedures for tree protection and management.

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### **3. Environmental Context**

**"This Common Inheritance": Appropriate Action**

**Land Use**

- the production of District-wide Local Plans;
- enabling effective action over contravention of planning laws;
- ensuring that new development protects and enhances the environment;
- greater emphasis on environmental assessment.

**The Countryside**

- giving greater encouragement to farmers to manage land for the benefit of wildlife and the landscape;
- encourage landowners and farmers to manage and protect key landscape features which are under particular pressure from visitors;
- endorsing the Countryside Commission's target to bring all public footpaths and bridleways into good order by the end of the century;
- better management of, and access to, common land;
- greater local authority control over the siting and appearance of new farm and forestry buildings;
- a new hedgerow protection scheme;
- guidance on planning issues relating to wildlife;
- continued support for English Nature.

**Towns and Cities**

- encourage the provision of good recreational land;
- ensure the viability and vitality of town centres;
- promote measures to 'civilise' traffic and reduce congestion;
- provide by-passes to relieve towns of through traffic where needed;
- encourage good design;
- ensure urban projects help the local economy and the environment.

**Heritage**

- increasing support for and guidance on historic buildings and historic town centres;
- better protection for Scheduled Monuments;
- register of historic landscape sites;
- ensuring minimal environmental damage by tourists;
- promoting public interest and involvement.



### **Towards Sustainability**

**3.1** Environmental issues such as depletion of the ozone layer, the finite nature of the resources of the earth, and global warming now receive much media publicity and are the subject of public concern. This concern is likely to continue to grow into the next century as people become more aware of the environmental consequences of activities and life-styles both at home and abroad. Tackling these problems requires international and national co-operation. Obligations and agreements are now being introduced to operate at all appropriate levels of Governmental responsibility. The Council is able, however, to implement its own initiatives - albeit at a small scale by comparison - to affect activities and lifestyles in the District.

**3.2** The World Commission on Environment and Development (known as The Brundtland Commission), introduced the concept of 'sustainable development' in its 1987 report 'Our Common Future'. This is defined as that which 'meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'. This may be considered to mean:-

- ensuring the efficient use of land and other resources in environmental terms; and
- minimising developments that are harmful to the environment and human health.

**3.3** Sustainable development makes the use of resources, the development of new technology, the direction of investments and changes in Governmental responsibilities consistent with future as well as present needs. This will require the integration of economic goals with the conservation of the environment. It is a long term objective:- the challenge now is to identify practical methods of implementing the concept at national and local levels.

**3.4** The European Community endeavours to promote sustainability via the harmonisation of environmental policy across all member states. It does this by issuing Directives to be implemented by the laws or regulations of member states within a specified timescale. One such Directive requires an Environmental Assessment to be undertaken as part of local authorities' consideration of planning applications for specified major developments. A document entitled "The Essex Guide to Environmental Assessment", produced by the Essex Planning Officers' Association, promotes a consistent approach to environmental assessment across the County and provides guidance to those involved in the development process.

### **The Government's Response**

**3.5** The Government has responded to the growing public awareness and concern about national and international environmental issues by publishing a White Paper "This Common Inheritance" in 1990. It places a responsibility on Development Plans "... to take environmental considerations comprehensively and consistently into account." It also puts forward appropriate action under the headings of land use, the countryside, towns and cities, and heritage (see opposite).

**3.6** The White Paper also refers to the need to control pollution and looks at the scope for action in terms of air, noise, water and hazardous substances. It also encourages recycling, particularly from domestic waste.

**3.7** Government guidance on environmental matters in planning is set out in several PPGs. PPG1 specifies that sustainable development seeks to achieve "economic development to secure higher living standards while protecting and enhancing the environment". PPG12 calls upon local authorities to reflect the new environmental concerns (such as global warming and the consumption of non-renewable resources) in the assessment of policies. It goes on to state that "conservation and development should not be seen as necessarily in conflict" but that "policies for land use must weigh and reconcile priorities in the public interest".

**3.8** Local authorities are now required to include policies to secure the conservation of natural beauty and amenity of land in drawing up Development Plans. These should reflect the practical measures needed to protect and improve natural features in town and country.

**3.9** Plans must, however, make adequate provision for development. They are also able to contribute to the Government's objective of ensuring that development and growth are sustainable. This is explained as meaning that development decisions ".....should not deny future generations the best of today's environment."

**3.10** PPG12 gives particular emphasis to energy conservation. One of the ways this can be addressed is in the location of new development. It may be possible to guide development to locations which reduce the need for car journeys and the distance driven, or which permit the choice of more energy-efficient public transport or cycling or walking. Such travel patterns would not only reduce energy consumption but also reduce emissions of carbon dioxide. PPG17 contains relevant advice as well in this respect.

**3.11** The environmental implications of Plan policies should be appraised as part of the Plan preparation process, and the outcome set out in the reasoned justification. This Plan does this through a section entitled 'Environmental Implications' in each topic chapter which identifies:-

- (i) the Plan's environmental aims upon which the policies will have a bearing; and
- (ii) whether the policies will have an impact on key environmental criteria (set out in Appendix 2).

**3.12** PPG13 calls upon local authorities, in preparing their Development Plans, to co-ordinate their policies for transport and other forms of development. It states that Development Plans should aim to reduce the need to travel, especially by car, by:

- influencing the location of different types of development relative to transport provision (and vice versa); and
- fostering forms of development which encourage walking, cycling and public transport use.

PPG13 goes on to say that to meet these aims local authorities should adopt planning and land-use policies which:

- promote development within urban areas at locations highly accessible by means other than the private car;
- locate major generators of travel demand in existing centres;
- strengthen existing local centres;
- maintain and improve choices for alternative means of transport to the car; and
- limit parking provision to discourage reliance on the car for work and other journeys where there are effective alternatives.

### **The Council's Response**

**3.13** Epping Forest District Council has always acknowledged the importance of environmental protection. Laws have been rigorously enforced and the Green Belt vigorously defended. The Council has adopted its 'Environmental Charter' as a continuing commitment to environmental protection and reflecting the importance attributed to it. The Charter outlines the Council's achievements and intentions under the headings of health, pollution, energy conservation,

recycling and a strategy for town and countryside. These cover a range of activities including:-

- outlining the scope of services provided;
- adopting bye-laws;
- adopting appropriate management practices;
- participating in recycling schemes;
- assisting relevant voluntary bodies; and
- formulating and implementing appropriate planning policies.

**3.14** Whilst it is the planning policies which are particularly relevant to this Local Plan, several of the other initiatives have potential land use implications. The approaches which the Council has adopted, and which are pursued, or reinforced, in this Plan are:-

- the continued protection of the local environment by protection of the Green Belt from adverse development;
- protecting and improving townscapes by preserving open spaces worthy of retention and preventing town cramming;
- securing higher standards of estate layouts and building design;
- scrutinising the environmental impact of road proposals and major developments;
- protecting existing trees and shrubs and requiring appropriate additional landscaping;
- environmentally conscious management of Council-owned land;
- providing design advice in sensitive areas;
- protecting historic buildings from further deterioration;
- accommodating 'banks' for the collection of recyclable materials;
- minimising certain types of pollution.

**3.15** This Local Plan is the vehicle by which the new initiatives will become 'formal' land use planning policies. The Council intends that the overall approach and policies of this Local Plan will adhere to the concept of sustainable development. This will be put into practice in the context of:-

- (i) dealing with land use and development issues; and
- (ii) managing the environmental resources of the District.

### **Implications for the Local Plan**

**3.16** From the foregoing it might appear that the environmental consequences of planning decisions change from being only one of, to THE most important, determining factors. However, this is not to say that the potential contributory effect of, for example, road building upon matters of global concern will hold sway over local considerations. This would not be 'sustainable' unless local needs were met. Given that the character and quality of the environment of this District will remain of paramount importance then this, in itself, will contribute to broader-scale sustainable development.

**3.17** This Local Plan will enhance the environment of the District by:-

- locating new development so as to minimise the need for private transport - hence minimising emissions of environmentally damaging gases from vehicles;
- protecting and enhancing the built environment;
- protecting and enhancing open spaces (in both town and country); and
- protecting and enhancing the natural environment (comprising both wildlife and its habitats).

**3.18** It should be borne in mind, however, that some of these measures may conflict with one another. For example, potential development sites which are conveniently located for public transport facilities offering ready access to employment foci (e.g. Central Line stations) may also provide valuable open space and an important wildlife habitat. Similarly, the Green Belt policy, which applies to the countryside areas of this District, already has the effect of preserving the open countryside and concentrating maximum appropriate use on available urban sites. However, it also results in land-owners being unable to develop sites in a way which would reduce commuters' trips to work. This, in turn, may lead to more energy consumption and generate more CO<sub>2</sub> than if commuters were able to live on the edge of the metropolitan area.

**3.19** Where there is apparent conflict between various measures in this fashion the Plan resolves them by

giving priority to improving the local environment in conjunction with meeting the recognised needs in the locality. The Council considers that this approach will result in sustainable development being achieved. It is unlikely, however, that such an approach will lead to any significant changes in the pattern of land use and development from that which has resulted from previous policies.

**3.20** The opportunities for increased environmental emphasis in this Plan relate particularly to:-

- the detailed nature of the development (as distinct from the generalised land use);
- enhancing what is already of merit;
- minimising pollution; and
- enabling and encouraging recycling and the efficient use of resources.

These opportunities are pursued in the relevant chapters in the Plan.

**3.18** The Council will work closely with the Environment Agency to promote integrated environmental management. The Environment Agency intends to publish Local Environment Agency Plans (LEAPs) based on discrete natural surface water drainage areas. The LEAPs will deal with all issues affecting the quality of air, land and water and the Agency hopes to involve all interested parties in their production. LEAPs will gradually replace Catchment Management Plans which were prepared by the National Rivers Authority.

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## **4. Objectives, Strategy and Performance Indicators**

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**4.1** The Council is looking to produce, in accordance with its targets, a practical and realistic land use and development plan for the District which takes appropriate account of the District's current planning context, the Council's Environmental Charter and Strategies and which, as far as possible, meets the needs and aspirations of local residents and businesses.

### **Objectives**

**4.2** This chapter sets out what the Plan is trying to achieve and how it will do it. It does so by specifying, first of all, the Plan's strategic objectives. There are broad statements of intent derived primarily from the Council's Corporate Plan. They represent what the Council considers to be the principles of importance when considering how the District should change in the future:-

- (1) To safeguard and, where possible, enhance the health, safety, welfare and living standards of all persons residing in, working in, or visiting the District.
- (2) To maintain and, where possible, enhance the quality and nature of the environment in both urban and rural areas.
- (3) To conserve and, where possible, enhance those features of heritage or nature conservation significance which are worthy of retention.
- (4) To ensure that the Plan has due regard to global environmental issues.
- (5) To ensure that the District's economic development meets the needs of local residents and workers, whilst respecting the essential character of the area.
- (6) To meet the District's housing and community service needs, so far as possible.
- (7) To provide activities, facilities and opportunities to enable the public to derive the maximum enjoyment and benefit from their leisure time.
- (8) To ensure that the transport infrastructure provides a convenient, safe and clean means of travel for all users, respecting the essential character of the area.
- (9) To take account of Government planning guidance, regional planning advice and the Essex Structure Plan, but striking an acceptable balance between local character and development needs and recognising the

opportunities presented by change and enabling development.

**4.3** From these a set of more detailed aims has been drawn-up. These are intended to:-

- provide a tangible framework within which to formulate the Plan policies or strategies; and
- represent the targets against which the success of policies can be assessed via performance indicators.

**4.4** They are set out on pages 24 and 25. It will be apparent that the aims usually stem from several objectives. They are categorised according to whether they are social, economic or environmental. The environmental aims are further subdivided according to whether they relate to aspects of amenity or conservation.

**4.5** Some of the aims are conflicting. Where this occurs, the policies either resolve this conflict by compromise or reflect the relative importance of the particular aims.

**4.6** The objectives and aims also enable an overall strategy for the Plan to be identified. This gives a broad indication of the general approach to development within the District, where it might be permitted, and what the Plan may expect to achieve in practice. Sustainable development should result from the achievement of the Plan's stated aims and objectives.

### **The Strategy**

**4.7** Strategic development 'needs' identified in the Structure Plan are relatively modest and result primarily from the limited availability of land rather than the true 'demand', which is high. This limit on the amount of development stems from the area being one of restraint, in view of its situation in the Green Belt. The strategy to emerge is therefore one of protecting and enhancing those features which are of merit in the District, which include its character and appearance.

**4.8** The built development that does take place will therefore be concentrated in the urban areas rather than the countryside. This is in order to achieve the key environmental aims of protecting the Green Belt from inappropriate development which could threaten its character and undermine its functions. However, this does not preclude appropriate developments which would enhance both the appearance and role of the Green Belt.



**Aims**

		<b>Relevant Objective(s)</b>
<b>SOCIAL</b>		
(i)	To promote and secure the optimum type and distribution of educational, health and social facilities to meet the needs of the District's residents both now and in the future.	1, 7, 8
(ii)	To facilitate modern-day living requirements.	1, 7, 8
(iii)	To accommodate, where possible, the special needs of the disadvantaged	1, 6, 7, 8
(iv)	To meet the needs of disabled people who live, or work, in the District or who visit it.	1, 6, 8
(v)	To meet the shopping needs of residents, workers and other visitors.	1, 8
(vi)	To ensure, as much as possible, that new housing meets the needs of residents.	1, 6
(vii)	To retain the existing housing stock.	6
(viii)	To identify and meet the leisure needs of residents, particularly in the south of the District.	7
(ix)	To increase the scope of appropriate recreational activities in the countryside.	2, 7
(x)	To secure an appropriate standard of public transport provision.	1, 4, 8
(xi)	To secure the reuse of the former Epping-Chipping Ongar branch line.	1, 4, 8
<b>ECONOMIC</b>		
(xii)	To facilitate the establishment of employment opportunities which match the needs of residents seeking work locally.	1, 5
(xiii)	To provide sufficient land for employment-generating uses.	5, 9
(xiv)	To provide a range of sites for employment-generating uses in terms of size and location.	5, 9
(xv)	To provide sufficient land for new housing.	6, 9
(xvi)	To ensure a continuing supply of land for new housing.	9
(xvii)	To maintain the retail function of the existing town centres.	1, 2, 8
(xviii)	To ensure that new development has adequate infrastructure.	1
(xix)	To attract visitors to appropriate recreational/tourist facilities in the District.	2, 7, 8

**ENVIRONMENTAL (AMENITY)**

(xx)	To ensure that any new development does not have an unacceptable impact both in environmental terms and in the provision of local facilities.	1, 2, 3, 4, 8
(xxi)	To protect and, where possible, enhance the environmental qualities of existing residential areas.	1, 2, 4
(xxii)	To secure a high standard of design in all new development.	1, 2, 4
(xxiii)	To protect and, where possible, enhance the character and environmental qualities of the countryside.	2, 3, 4, 7
(xxiv)	To secure the optimum use of available road space.	1, 2, 4, 8
(xxv)	To reduce traffic congestion, where possible.	1, 2, 4, 8
(xxvi)	To secure the provision of adequate, appropriately-located car parking facilities.	2, 8
(xxvii)	To minimise on-street parking in residential areas.	1, 2
(xxviii)	To reduce the impact of, but make adequate provision for, heavy goods vehicles with business in the District.	2, 4, 5, 8
(xxix)	To undertake appropriate action against breaches of planning control.	1, 2

**ENVIRONMENTAL (Conservation)**

(xxx)	To protect the Green Belt from development which is unnecessary or undesirable.	2, 9
(xxxi)	To safeguard and, where possible, enhance the District's historical and archaeological heritage.	2, 3, 4
(xxxii)	To safeguard and, where possible, enhance the landscape.	3, 4
(xxxiii)	To safeguard and, where possible, enhance the District's tree cover, flora and wildlife.	2, 3, 4
(xxxiv)	To make the most efficient use of land and buildings wherever practicable.	1, 4
(xxxv)	To promote the efficient use of natural resources.	4
(xxxvi)	To minimise all forms of pollution, where possible.	1, 4
(xxxvii)	To integrate public and private transport facilities to secure optimum use of both.	1, 4, 8
(xxxviii)	To enable the continued implementation of the Council's Environmental Charter.	2, 3, 4, 8
(xxxix)	To enable the implementation of the Council's Recycling Plan.	8

**4.9** The continued protection of the Green Belt does not mean, however, that all urban sites will automatically be considered suitable for development. The need to maintain and enhance the character of these sites (particularly sensitive ones such as residential and Conservation Areas) is equally important. It is a key environmental objective with tangible implications for urban sites and may well result in existing open spaces being retained as such, and their appearance and function improved accordingly.

**4.10** Overall, the strategy is therefore one of restraining development but recognising local needs and ensuring that the development that does take place (be it new build, landscaping, change of use or extension) results, either directly or indirectly, in a better environment.

**4.11** Implementation of the Plan will be by both public and, more particularly, private sector schemes, in combination with appropriate controls over development. It is acknowledged, however, that schemes may be slow in reaching fruition due to continuing tight financial constraints. This applies to both private and public sector schemes. Whilst the Government may be able to fund major capital schemes (e.g. motorway improvements), local authority schemes are currently subject to severe spending constraints (be they new roads, car parking provision, or paving schemes) which may well result in their being deferred. Should this situation change then the Council will take the opportunity to undertake appropriate schemes which will improve the local environment as soon as practicable.

### **Performance Indicators**

**4.12** The performance indicators against which the Plan will be assessed are as follows:-

- the extent to which its objectives and aims are being met;
- the impact of the policies on identified environmental criteria;
- whether the policies are being properly applied in determining planning applications;
- whether planning applications are determined in a reasonable manner in the opinion of Councillors and the general public;
- whether planning decisions are being upheld at appeal;
- whether planning decisions are being "called-in" by the Secretary of State; and

- the extent to which the Plan remains up-to-date and therefore relevant in the determination of planning applications during the Plan period.

**4.13** This assessment will take place on a regular (probably annual) basis. It will be undertaken through monitoring not just of the Plan policies but also of the guidance and policies with which it must comply, new planning issues and the appropriateness of the objectives and aims of the Plan (see also Chapter 19 'Monitoring and Review').

**4.14** This monitoring will, in turn, lead to a further assessment of whether there is a need for:-

- existing policies to be amended or deleted;
- further policies to address new issues;
- modification of the objectives and/or aims of the Plan.

## **5. Green Belt**

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## **Introduction**

**5.1** Epping Forest District comprises towns and villages set in attractive countryside on the edge of the metropolitan area. Given its proximity to London and the motorway network, the whole District is subject to intense pressure for development. The Council, and its predecessors, have, for the most part, been able to successfully resist this pressure to develop within the countryside. Hence, both the extent and the character and appearance of the countryside have remained relatively unscathed by development. The reason that the Council has been able to defend this area so successfully is because it forms a part of the Metropolitan Green Belt.

**5.2** The Metropolitan Green Belt has been a central feature of planning policy in the Home Counties since it was first formally approved in 1957. The concept of a Green Belt around London originated before the Second World War in response to the need to control the outward spread of London. The first Green Belt was defined by the London County Council in the Greater London Plan of 1944. Soon after, the Town and Country Planning Act 1947 led to the designation of a Green Belt by the councils around London. It has proved the most popular and successful regional planning policy of post-war Britain.

**5.3** The Green Belt soon proved to be very effective in limiting the extent of development. So much so that, in 1955, the Government published a Circular (No 42/55) setting out the purposes of the Green Belt and encouraging other cities to follow London's example and consider establishing a Green Belt. This Circular suggested that local authorities prepare policies to ensure that new development (a) was only permitted where it would lead to a rounding off of, or infilling within, a settlement in the Green Belt, or (b) was for the purposes of agriculture, recreation, cemeteries, institutions standing in large grounds or other uses appropriate to a rural area. The basic objectives of Green Belt policy have remained unchanged since that time.

## **Government Guidance**

**5.4** The current Government stance on Green Belts is set out primarily in PPG2. This points out that the Government attaches great importance to Green Belts, the purposes of which are:-

- to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- to prevent neighbouring towns from merging

into one another

- to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- to assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

**5.5** The PPG states that the use of land in Green Belts has a positive role to play in:-

- providing opportunities for access to the open countryside for the urban population;
- providing opportunities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation near urban areas;
- retaining attractive landscapes, and enhancing landscapes near to where people live;
- improving damaged and derelict land around towns;
- securing nature conservation interests; and
- retaining land in agricultural, forestry and related uses.

**5.6** PPG2 makes it clear that the quality of the rural landscape is not a material factor in Green Belt designations or in their continued protection. Neither should development be allowed in the Green Belt merely because the land has become derelict.

**5.7** In preparing Development Plans, planning authorities are called upon to relate proposals affecting Green Belts to a time scale longer than that normally adopted for other aspects of the Plan. This is in order that the boundaries reflect the permanence of the Green Belt and do not have to be altered at the end of the Plan period. When the detailed boundaries have been defined they should be altered only exceptionally (eg as a consequence of an alteration to the Structure Plan).

**5.8** The general policies controlling development in the countryside apply with equal force in the Green Belt but there is, in addition, a general presumption against inappropriate development. The development of new buildings, even for only a limited range of uses, should not be allowed except in very special circumstances. The PPG states that the reuse of buildings is not inappropriate development subject to criteria relating to the impact of the development on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land in it.

**5.9** The Guidance also makes it clear that the visual amenities of the Green Belt should not be injured by development either within or conspicuous from the Green Belt.

### **County Council Policy**

**5.10** This is set out in the current Essex Structure Plan. It is Structure Plan policy that:-

- the entire rural area of Epping Forest District will form part of the Metropolitan Green Belt;
- the Green Belt boundaries around towns and villages will be defined according to the foreseeable long-term expansion of their built-up areas; and
- within the Green Belt permission will not be given, except in very special circumstances, for either:
  - the construction of new buildings; or
  - the change of use or extension of existing buildings (other than reasonable extensions to existing dwellings);
- for purposes other than agriculture, mineral extraction or forestry, small-scale facilities for outdoor participatory sport and recreation, institutions requiring large grounds, cemeteries or similar uses which are open in character;
- dwellings for agricultural workers may be permitted in conjunction with farms if it can be shown that the worker must be resident on the agricultural holding; and
- any development which is permitted shall be of a scale, design and siting such that the appearance of the countryside is not impaired.

**5.11** The County Council recognises the Green Belt as an area of planning restraint. Therefore, it does not look to promote development in the Green Belt unless there are exceptional circumstances. As a consequence of this, the housing guideline for the District, which is incorporated in the Structure Plan, is based upon the supply of, rather than the need for, sites.

### **District Council's Approach**

**5.12** The Council attributes very great importance to the character and appearance of the Green Belt, as well as its functions. The Green Belt has been very successful in restricting the urbanisation of the countryside around London. This has been achieved through strict adherence to policy by way of:-

- refusing planning permission for developments contrary to policy; and
- these decisions being upheld at appeal in the vast majority of cases.

**5.13** In accordance with Government guidance, the Council does not look to amend the Green Belt's boundaries as a matter of course when Local Plans are prepared or reviewed. This is in order for the Green Belt to retain its permanence. Furthermore PPG2 states that boundaries should not be changed unless alterations to the Structure Plan have been approved, or other exceptional circumstances exist. The Council has therefore only countenanced making a change to the boundary under one of the following circumstances:-

- there is a need to release land to meet the guidelines (for housing and/or employment-generating uses) identified in the Structure Plan; or
- there is a significant change in circumstances (eg the site has been developed); or
- there is an exceptional and urgent reason for the change (eg the site is the most appropriate one to accommodate a necessary development).

**5.14** A comprehensive review of the Green Belt boundaries in the District will be undertaken in the context of reviewing the Local Plan. Such a review would look to address when and where the long term development needs of the District should be met and safeguard land accordingly. The current approach of the County Council, in producing the Structure Plan is to avoid this course of action (see para 5.11). These questions will therefore be more appropriately addressed in the first review of this Local Plan with alterations being made in response to the Replacement Structure Plan.

**5.15** In view of:-

- the fact that the Green Belt boundary in the District was formalised in the previous Local Plans, adopted relatively recently;



- the anticipated surfeit of land to meet the identified housing need according to the Structure Plan (see paras 9.18 and 9.19); and
- the restraint on commercial development within the District,

changes to the Green Belt boundary are minimal and occur only as a result of exceptional circumstances.

## **POLICY GB1**

### **THE BOUNDARY OF THE METROPOLITAN GREEN BELT IN THIS DISTRICT IS AS DEFINED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP.**

**5.16** PPG2 and PPG12 make it clear that detailed Green Belt boundaries, defined in adopted Local Plans, should be altered only exceptionally. The four changes that this Plan makes to the boundary, and the reasons for them, are set out below.

#### **1. Brookfield, Thornwood (see Figure 6).**

**5.17** This site is immediately adjacent to Thornwood which is itself outside the Green Belt. It has been taken out of the Green Belt on the grounds that it is now a housing estate. Planning permission was granted for environmental reasons comprising the extinguishment of various unneighbourly uses and hence the cessation of heavy lorries using Weald Hall Lane to gain access to the site. To leave the site in the Green Belt would result in any subsequent extensions to the houses being subject to Policy GB14. This would be an anomaly given that the new estate is now an integral part of Thornwood in terms of both its location and the density of development.

#### **2. Land at Langston Road, Loughton (see Figure 7).**

**5.18** The Loughton area has the largest concentration of employment land, and the greatest potential demand, within the District (see para 10.41). This site is wedged between the existing Langston Road/Oakwood Hill employment area and the M11, and contributes little to Green Belt objectives. Its development would, however, provide a worthwhile addition to the existing Langston Road/Oakwood Hill employment area (see Policy E2) with only limited detriment to the Green Belt and its potential is considered to outweigh the normal need for restraint. The Langston Road site falls within the 1947 flood plain as designated by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. Any future proposals for the site will have to prove to the Council and the Environment Agency, through the use of a hydraulic model, that the

development will not lead to an increase in the risk of flooding elsewhere.

**5.19** The development of the site would be in accordance with the Council's Employment Strategy (paras 10.25 - 10.31). It accepts that the Green Belt places great constraint on the amount of new employment land that can be allocated. However, it also recognises the need to provide local employment opportunities throughout the District where this can be achieved without detriment to the Green Belt.

#### **3. Land at North Weald Airfield (see Figure 8).**

**5.20** This site mainly comprises a concrete apron and has been removed from the Green Belt to allow an extension to the existing employment area adjacent (see Policy E6). This is in accordance with the District Council's Employment Strategy (paras. 10.25 to 10.31) which seeks to identify a range of attractive and accessible sites throughout the District. The site is considered suitable because:-

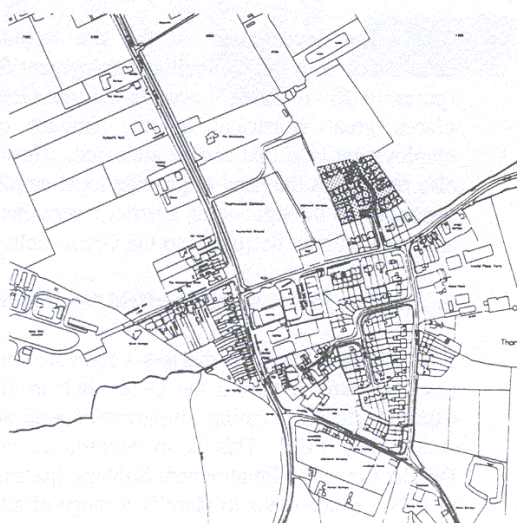
- the large area of concrete makes only a limited contribution to the Green Belt objectives and is adjacent to an existing employment area. In view of the nature and scale of the adjacent buildings, and the nature of the Green Belt boundary, its development would not be a noticeable intrusion into the Green Belt;
- it is in a central position within the District and is easily accessible to the M11 and motorway network via the A414. As such, the site will be accessible and attractive to developers/occupiers.

**5.21** Any potential detriment to the Green Belt must also be balanced against the fact that the industrial land allocation is a replacement for that at Hallsford Bridge, Chipping Ongar. It was allocated in the Local Plan for Epping and Ongar but has not been developed. Unlike the site at North Weald Airfield, the Hallsford Bridge site is on the edge of the District and has poor vehicular access.

#### **4. Land at the rear of High Street, Chipping Ongar (see Figure 9)**

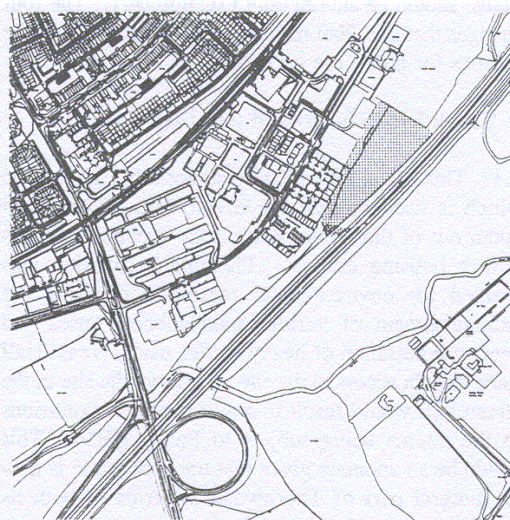
**5.22** This small area of land was to have been removed from the Green Belt in the preparation of the Epping and Ongar Local Plan. This was because it forms part of a larger site, the whole of which has planning permission for development. The piece of land remained in the Green Belt due to a cartographic error. The Council is therefore now taking the opportunity to rectify this earlier error.

**Land removed from the Green Belt**

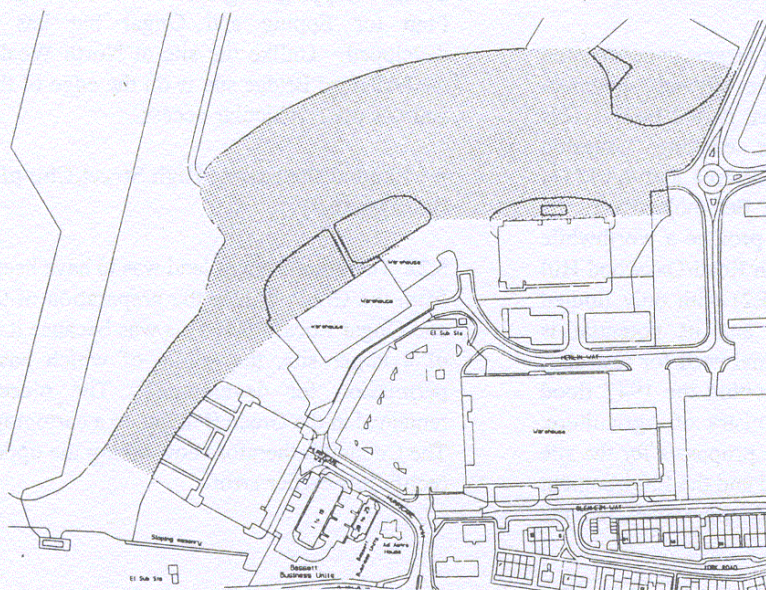


**Figure 6 Brookfield, Thornwood (1:10,000)**  
(see also sheet E(11) of the Proposals Map)

**Figure 7 Langston Road, Loughton (1:15,000)**  
(see also sheet B(2) of the Proposals Map)

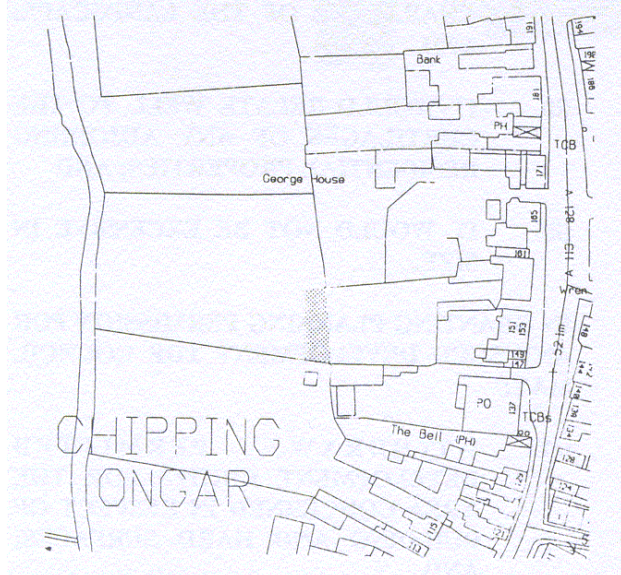


**Figure 8 North Weald Airfield (1:5,000)**  
(see also sheet E(11) of the Proposals Map)





**Figure 9 Rear of 151/153 High Street, Chipping Ongar (1:2,500) (see also sheet C(5a) of the Proposals Map)**



### **Urban Fringe**

**5.23** The existence of the Green Belt creates a sharp divide between the relatively high value land outside the Green Belt and low value land within the Green Belt where there is virtually no prospect of development taking place within the foreseeable future. Any additional "hope value" would therefore be long term only.

**5.24** The relatively sharp divide between the town and the country does not, unfortunately, rule out all the problems associated with the zone of transition between the two. The "urban fringe" is less prominent in this District than in non-Green Belt locations but still features the characteristic problems of trespass, litter, vandalism and derelict land.

**5.25** The Urban Fringe Special Advisory Group has suggested that the key to tackling the problems of the urban fringe in Green Belt areas is to develop its recreational role in ways that improve access but which, at the same time, protect and enhance the countryside. This approach is logical, in fact, increasingly so as progressively more land is being "taken out" of agricultural use and the demand for recreational activities continues to grow. Given this and the purposes of the Green Belt (see paras. 5.4 and 5.5), it is appropriate to adopt a more positive stance towards the use of land on the urban fringe which has been identified as subject to the related problems. This need for a positive approach is reflected in the policies contained in the Recreation, Sport and Tourism chapter although it is imperative that it should not be allowed to weaken the role of the Green Belt.

### **GENERAL APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT**

**5.26** In order for the Green Belt to continue to achieve its objectives (see para. 5.4) development within it must continue to be strictly controlled.

### **POLICY GB2**

**PLANNING PERMISSION WILL NOT BE GRANTED FOR THE USE OF LAND OR THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW BUILDINGS OR THE CHANGE OF USE OR EXTENSION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS IN THE GREEN BELT UNLESS IT IS APPROPRIATE IN THAT IT IS:-**

- i) FOR THE PURPOSES OF AGRICULTURE, HORTICULTURE, OR FORESTRY; OR**
- ii) FOR THE PURPOSES OF OUTDOOR PARTICIPATORY SPORT AND RECREATION OR ASSOCIATED ESSENTIAL SMALL-SCALE BUILDINGS; OR**
- iii) FOR THE PURPOSES OF A CEMETERY; OR**
- iv) FOR OTHER USES WHICH PRESERVE THE OPENNESS OF THE GREEN BELT AND WHICH DO NOT CONFLICT WITH THE PURPOSES OF INCLUDING LAND IN THE GREEN BELT; OR**
- v) A DWELLING FOR AN AGRICULTURAL, HORTICULTURAL OR FORESTRY WORKER IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY GB17; OR**
- vi) A REPLACEMENT FOR AN EXISTING DWELLING AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY GB15; OR**
- vii) A LIMITED EXTENSION TO AN EXISTING DWELLING THAT IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY GB14; OR**
- viii) IN ACCORDANCE WITH ANOTHER GREEN BELT POLICY.**

**5.27** Proposed changes of use of existing buildings will be assessed in the light of Policy GB8. In order to be acceptable, any proposal must also comply with all other relevant Plan policies, including DBE1, DBE4, LL2, LL3, LL10, LL11, T14 and T17.

**5.28** The Council will seek legal agreements, where

necessary, (in accordance with Policy I1) in order to restrict the range of goods for sale at farm shops (see Policy GB12) and any garden centres that may be permitted.

**5.29** Any development which is not in accordance with this policy would be inappropriate in the Green Belt.

#### Built Recreational Developments

**5.30** Recreational uses which are open in character will often be appropriate in the Green Belt (see Policy GB2). However, recreational schemes which involve the construction of large buildings in the Green Belt will not normally be acceptable because of the intrusive impact that they would have. Any such developments will therefore be expected to be located in the built-up areas and not in the Green Belt.

#### POLICY GB3

**WITHIN THE GREEN BELT THE COUNCIL WILL NOT GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR INDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES AND OTHER LARGE BUILDINGS INTENDED PRIMARILY FOR LEISURE USE.**

**5.31** In the event that the Council considers that there are very special circumstances which would outweigh the harm to the Green Belt any proposal must also comply with other relevant Plan policies. This applies particularly to design (Policies DBE1 and DBE4), landscape (Policies LL2 and LL3), landscaping (Policies LL10 and LL11), car parking (Policy T14) and traffic impact (Policy T17). Development proposals in or adjacent to rural settlements will also be considered in the light of Policy RST15. Proposals on North Weald Airfield or in or adjacent to the Lee Valley Regional Park should comply with Policies RST29 and RST24 respectively. Outside the Green Belt, any such facilities will be considered on their merits in the context of other relevant policies of the Plan

#### Extensions to Residential Curtilages

**5.32** Extensions of residential curtilages into the Green Belt are likely to alter its character and appearance and therefore be contrary to Green Belt policy. There may, however, be very special circumstances which warrant planning permission being granted as an exception to the normal policy.

#### POLICY GB4

**THE EXTENSION OF THE CURTILAGE OF A RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY WHICH INVOLVES AN INCURSION INTO THE GREEN BELT**

**WILL BE PERMITTED ONLY WHERE THE COUNCIL IS SATISFIED THAT;**

- (i) **IT WOULD NOT HAVE AN ADVERSE EFFECT UPON THE OPEN CHARACTER OF THE LANDSCAPE; AND**
- (ii) **IT WOULD RELATE WELL TO THE CURTILAGES OF ANY ADJOINING RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES; AND**
- (iii) **IT WOULD NOT BE EXCESSIVE IN SIZE.**

**IN GRANTING PLANNING PERMISSION FOR ANY SUCH DEVELOPMENT THE COUNCIL MAY:**

- (a) **WITHDRAW PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS FOR THE AREA CONCERNED IN RESPECT OF BUILDING AND HARD SURFACES; AND**
- (b) **IMPOSE APPROPRIATE PLANNING CONDITIONS.**

#### Non-permanent dwellings

**5.33** The use of moorings for permanent residential development can raise a number of problems in the countryside:-

- (a) the use would be contrary to Green Belt policies intended to restrict new residential development;
- (b) permanent uses will bring pressures for other developments (e.g. car parking, storage sheds etc.) which can detract from the open character of the countryside;
- (c) permanent berths will restrict the use of moorings for leisure and recreational purposes.

**5.34** The non-permanent dwellings comprising individual mobile homes, caravans, residential narrow boats and house boats are a problem to the Council. They are no more acceptable in the Green Belt than permanent dwellings.

**5.35** There are six recognised mobile home parks in the District:-

- (1) The Elms, Lippitts Hill, High Beech;
- (2) The Owl, Lippitts Hill, High Beech;

- (3) Woodbine Close, Honey Lane, Waltham Abbey;
- (4) Breach Barns, Galleyhill Road, Waltham Abbey;
- (5) Abridge Caravan Park, London Road, Abridge;  
and
- (6) Roydon Mill Leisure Park.

**5.36** All of the sites are in the Green Belt, however, and consequently the Council will not permit them to expand beyond their existing limits.

#### **POLICY GB5**

**WITHIN THE GREEN BELT, THE COUNCIL WILL REFUSE PLANNING PERMISSION FOR:-**

- (i) **THE CREATION, OR USE, OF MOORINGS FOR PERMANENT RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION; OR**
- (ii) **NON-PERMANENT DWELLINGS, INCLUDING MOBILE HOMES AND CARAVANS, EXCEPT AS REPLACEMENTS WITHIN THE EXISTING RESIDENTIAL CARAVAN SITES SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP.**

**5.37** In the mobile home parks identified on the Proposals Map, the replacement of existing residential caravans or mobile homes will normally be permitted.

**5.38** The Council may permit the siting of a mobile home or caravan where it is to be used on a strictly temporary basis eg: during the period of rebuilding or renovating an existing dwelling, or the period needed to establish an agricultural holding. In all such cases, the permitted home or caravan must be removed at the end of the temporary permission.

#### **Garden Centres**

**5.39** The term "garden centre" has no specific definition, but may be taken to be "premises retailing plants, gardening and horticultural materials, supplies and equipment, including garden furniture and, as an ancillary use, supplies for pet animals." Garden centres generally have a particular character because their primary function is as a retail outlet for horticultural produce not grown at the site, and goods associated with gardens and gardening. Their overall character derives primarily from their links with horticulture.

**5.40** Any intensification of the use of garden centres will, by its nature, tend to damage the overall character of the Green Belt. This is in terms of their impact upon the landscape and traffic generated.

#### **POLICY GB6**

**WITHIN THE GREEN BELT THE COUNCIL WILL NOT GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE USE OF LAND FOR, OR ERECTION OF BUILDINGS FOR USE AS, A GARDEN CENTRE.**

**5.41** Where garden centres already exist with the benefit of planning permission, the Council will continue to recognise their activities and may allow them to intensify their operations. There will, however, be a presumption against their expansion further into the Green Belt. Proposals which would ensure the retention and future maintenance of buildings of architectural or historic significance will be assessed in accordance with the requirements of Policy HC13.

#### **Conspicuous urban development**

**5.42** As well as protecting the character and openness of the Green Belt it is also necessary to maintain and protect its role as a recreational resource. This could be severely damaged by inappropriate developments even though they are within the urban area such as new buildings which are inadequately landscaped. It is therefore necessary to control any such developments in the light of their impact on the Green Belt and in accordance with PPG2 (see paras. 5.4 and 5.5).

#### **POLICY GB7**

**THE COUNCIL WILL REFUSE PLANNING PERMISSION FOR DEVELOPMENT CONSPICUOUS FROM THE GREEN BELT WHICH WOULD HAVE AN EXCESSIVE ADVERSE IMPACT UPON THE AMENITIES OF THE GREEN BELT.**

**5.43** In implementing this policy the Council may also seek the enhancement of the visual amenity of the Green Belt where necessary and appropriate. This will apply to sites which are visually prominent from public rights of way used for recreational purposes (e.g. footpaths, bridleways and towpaths). Such improvements will be sought by legal agreement in accordance with Policy I1.

#### **PERMISSIBLE DEVELOPMENT**

**5.44** The location of the District on the edge of the metropolitan area is such that it does not experience to

the same degree the problems typically associated with more remote rural areas, particularly the need to find alternative jobs for redundant farm workers. The "rural economy" does not present a special problem by comparison with the need to protect the character of the Green Belt countryside from the adverse consequences of cumulative change of use of a large number of agricultural or horticultural buildings typical of the urban fringe.

# **POLICY GB8**

**THE COUNCIL WILL GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE CHANGE OF USE OF A BUILDING IN THE GREEN BELT, PROVIDED:**

- (i) THE BUILDING IS:**
  - (a) OF PERMANENT AND SUBSTANTIAL CONSTRUCTION; AND**
  - (b) CAPABLE OF CONVERSION WITHOUT MAJOR OR COMPLETE RECONSTRUCTION; AND**
  - (c) IN KEEPING WITH ITS SURROUNDINGS BY WAY OF FORM, BULK AND GENERAL DESIGN;**
- (ii) THE PROPOSED USE IS:**
  - (a) IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY GB2; OR**
  - (b) RECREATIONAL OR TOURISM RELATED; OR**
  - (c) BUSINESS OR STORAGE AND WOULD NOT INVOLVE OPEN STORAGE OR A SIGNIFICANT AMOUNT OF VEHICLE PARKING; OR**
  - (d) RESIDENTIAL, WHERE THE BUILDING IS UNSUITABLE FOR ANY OF THE USES IN (ii) (a), (b) OR (c) BUT WHERE THE COUNCIL CONSIDERS IT DESIRABLE THAT THE BUILDING BE BROUGHT BACK INTO BENEFICIAL USE; OR**
  - (e) IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY RST24 WHERE THE**

**BUILDING IS SITUATED IN OR ADJACENT TO THE LEE VALLEY REGIONAL PARK;**

**AND WOULD NOT RESULT IN TRAFFIC GENERATION WHICH IS DETRIMENTAL TO THE CHARACTER OR AMENITIES OF THE COUNTRYSIDE;**

- (iii) THE PROPOSAL ENTAILS APPROPRIATE BENEFITS TO GREEN BELT OR COUNTRYSIDE OBJECTIVES IN CIRCUMSTANCES WHERE THE COUNCIL CONSIDERS IT NECESSARY OR DESIRABLE;**
- (iv) THE COUNCIL IS SATISFIED THAT IN THE CASE OF A RELATIVELY NEW BUILDING, IT WAS NOT CONSTRUCTED WITH A VIEW TO SECURING A USE OTHER THAN THAT FOR WHICH IT WAS OSTENSIBLY BUILT;**
- (v) THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF THE 'HERITAGE SITES' IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH:-**
  - (a) POLICY HC14 (COPPED HALL, EPPING); OR**
  - (b) POLICY HC15 (HILL HALL, THEYDON MOUNT); OR**
  - (c) POLICY HC16 (ROYAL GUNPOWDER FACTORY SITE, WALTHAM ABBEY).**

**5.45** The restoration and/or reuse of any of the heritage sites will need to be in accordance with the specified policies.

**5.46** The new use should not detract from the public amenities of the rural area and should not result in the cessation of any public rights of way or diminish their enjoyment. The potential impacts of traffic generation, noise, fumes, dust, illumination and security measures will therefore be considered. The private amenities of residential properties in close proximity will be similarly assessed.

**5.47** Where a change of use, extension or alteration to a Listed Building in the Green Belt would be essential for, or contribute significantly to, ensuring a viable future for the Building or for maintaining it in good order, this could constitute or contribute to the 'very special circumstances' which can justify inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Proposals would have to be of a high standard of

design to complement or enhance their surroundings, and any proposal would need Listed Building Consent as well as planning permission.

**5.48** A minimum of alteration or change should be required to accommodate the new use. Any necessary alterations to the building should not adversely affect its character. The building should be of permanent construction materials and in sound condition. The change of use of glasshouses will not be in accordance with this policy. Restrictions may be imposed upon further changes of use or user which would not otherwise require the express consent of the local planning authority. The owner may also be required to enter into a planning obligation whereby the change of use proposed would not subsequently result in the need for replacement buildings. Proposals which require significant alteration to the building to enable environmental improvements to the Green Belt to be achieved will be considered on their merits.

**5.49** The Council wishes to restrict the change of use of buildings in the countryside to residential use because of the adverse effect that this could have upon the character of the countryside by changes to the appearance of buildings, the associated paraphernalia of modern living accommodation (eg flower gardens, garages, play equipment, lines of washing) and traffic generation. The types of benefits to Green Belt or countryside objectives which the Council would expect are landscaping and clearance of part of a group of buildings. Any landscaping scheme should be appropriate and effective (see Policy LL11) and will be required to be implemented during the first available planting season.

**5.50** The amount and type of traffic generated by the new use must:-

- be safely accommodated on the existing roads and lanes providing vehicular access to the site;
- not result in a significant reduction in the quality of the environment of the areas through which it passes (e.g. in terms of overall character, the residential environment or the condition of banks and vegetation at the roadside) (Policy T17); and
- not adversely affect the character of Protected Lanes(Policy HC4).

**5.51** The requirements of other relevant policies of the Plan including adequate on-site parking (Policy T14), traffic generation and highway safety (Policy T17) will also apply. The potential cumulative or aggregated effects of individual proposals will also be

taken into account.

#### **Extension of non-residential buildings**

**5.52** In determining the extent to which an extension might have an impact on the Green Belt the Council will have regard to factors including the anticipated amount of any additional on-site parking and the amount of any additional traffic generation.

**5.53** Further guidance regarding the acceptability, or otherwise, of horticultural glasshouses is given in Policy E13. Extensions to residential properties in the Green Belt are the subject of policy GB14.

#### **POLICY GB9**

#### **THE COUNCIL WILL GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE EXTENSION OF NON-RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS IN THE GREEN BELT, PROVIDED:**

- (i) **THE EXISTING DEVELOPMENT:**
  - (a) **HAS EXISTING USE RIGHTS;**
  - (b) **DOES NOT HAVE A SIGNIFICANTLY ADVERSE IMPACT UPON THE OPENNESS AND CHARACTER OF THE GREEN BELT;**
  - (c) **IS IN KEEPING WITH ITS SURROUNDINGS; AND**
- (ii) **THE PROPOSED EXTENSION:**
  - (a) **DEMONSTRABLY NECESSARY FOR THE SATISFACTORY CONTINUATION OR CONSOLIDATION OF THE EXISTING USE; AND**
  - (b) **WILL NOT RESULT IN A DISPROPORTIONATE ADDITION OVER AND ABOVE THE SIZE OF THE ORIGINAL BUILDING; AND**
  - (c) **IS OF A FORM, BULK AND GENERAL DESIGN APPROPRIATE TO ITS SURROUNDINGS; AND**
  - (d) **WILL NOT EXTEND BEYOND THE ORIGINAL CURTILAGE OF THE SITE**

- (e) **WOULD NOT, TOGETHER WITH ANY NECESSARY CONSEQUENTIAL WORKS, BE LIKELY TO RESULT IN ANY SIGNIFICANT IMPACT UPON THE OPENNESS, CHARACTER OR APPEARANCE OF THE GREEN BELT.**

#### **Development within the Lee Valley Regional Park**

**5.54** The provisions of the Lee Valley Regional Park Act 1966 require that different considerations apply to those parts of the Metropolitan Green Belt covered by the Park. Moreover the character and appearance of those parts of the Park within the District are different from other parts of the District's Green Belt in that some areas are despoiled or derelict in appearance, although they may still have nature conservation value. In particular, certain existing and proposed developments within the Park would not be appropriate elsewhere in the Green Belt.

#### **POLICY GB10**

**WITHIN THE AREA OF GREEN BELT WHICH LIES IN THE LEE VALLEY REGIONAL PARK, USES WHICH ARE NECESSARY TO ENHANCE THE FUNCTION AND ENJOYMENT OF THE PARK FOR ITS USERS WILL BE GRANTED PLANNING PERMISSION PROVIDED THAT:-**

- (i) **THE DEVELOPER SHOWS, TO THE SATISFACTION OF THE COUNCIL, THAT THE PROPOSED SITE IS THE MOST APPROPRIATE ONE FOR THAT ACTIVITY;**
- (ii) **ANY BUILT DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROVISION OF RECREATION OR NATURE CONSERVATION FACILITIES WILL BE KEPT TO THE MINIMUM NECESSARY.**

**5.55** In order to be acceptable, a proposal must also comply with other relevant Plan policies, including design (Policies DBE1 and DBE4, landscaping (Policies LL10 and LL11), car parking (Policy T14) and traffic impact (Policy T17).

#### **Agricultural Buildings**

**5.56** Planning permission is needed for all but minor developments on agricultural holdings of between 0.4 ha. and 5 ha. For larger units generous permitted development rights apply and planning permission is only required for very large buildings (over 465 square metres). These rights only apply if the parcel

of land is:-

- (a) not less than 1 ha in area;
- (b) included in an agricultural unit of 5ha or more;
- (c) in use for agriculture;
- (d) used for the purpose of a trade or business.

The area of any development on the unit within the past two years and within a certain distance of the new proposal must also be taken into account in establishing whether permitted development rights apply. Full details of the differing requirements are given in the General Permitted Development Order 1995.

#### **POLICY GB11**

**PLANNING PERMISSION WILL BE GRANTED FOR AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS PROVIDED THAT THE PROPOSALS:-**

- (i) **ARE DEMONSTRABLY NECESSARY FOR THE PURPOSES OF AGRICULTURE WITHIN THAT UNIT;**
- (ii) **WOULD NOT BE DETRIMENTAL TO THE CHARACTER OR APPEARANCE OF THE LOCALITY OR TO THE AMENITIES OF NEARBY RESIDENTS;**
- (iii) **WOULD NOT HAVE AN UNACCEPTABLE ADVERSE EFFECT ON HIGHWAY SAFETY OR, WITH REGARD TO WATER QUALITY AND SUPPLY, ANY WATERCOURSE IN THE VICINITY OF THE SITE;**
- (iv) **WOULD NOT SIGNIFICANTLY THREATEN ANY SITES OF IMPORTANCE FOR NATURE CONSERVATION.**

**5.57** The policy also applies to any excavation or engineering operations required for agriculture within the holding but wholly excludes any building, structure or other works not designed for agricultural purposes. Proposals which are not dependent upon the agricultural use of the holding, or which may be dependent upon agriculture but need not take place on the unit or other agricultural land, will be refused.

**5.58** The General Permitted Development Order also includes a system of discretionary control over the siting, design and external appearance of agricultural (and forestry) buildings, including proposals for extension or alteration, and for farm and forestry roads and other engineering operations. This is dealt with in paragraphs 16.22 - 16.24 and Policy LL4.



### **Farm Shops**

**5.59** Although there is a general presumption against retailing activities in the rural areas (except where an essential local service is being provided), there are instances where farm produce is sold directly to the public at source. This is perfectly legitimate and acceptable (in accordance with Policy GB2) in that it develops the recreational function of the Green Belt and also helps to diversify the rural economy. These activities are usually only on a small scale, often relying on passing trade. In a few cases farm shops have been established. Planning permission is not required for these outlets where the goods are produced on the farm or holding.

**5.60** However, outlets in the countryside selling produce grown elsewhere do require planning permission which will normally be resisted in accordance with Policy GB2. The following policy will therefore apply.

### **POLICY GB12**

**THE COUNCIL WILL PERMIT THE DEVELOPMENT OF FARM SHOPS PROVIDED THAT:-**

- (i) **THE GOODS SOLD ARE REASONABLY LIMITED TO THOSE PRODUCED ON THE FARM OR HOLDING;**
- (ii) **THE SCALE OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH (i) ABOVE;**
- (iii) **THE SCALE, LOCATION AND DESIGN OF ANY NEW BUILDING IS IN KEEPING WITH THE CHARACTER OF THE SURROUNDING AREA; AND**
- (iv) **THE NATURE OF THE UNDERTAKING IS UNLIKELY TO EITHER CREATE A ROAD SAFETY HAZARD OR RESULT IN THE TRAFFIC CAPACITY OF ANY ROAD OR LANE BEING EXCEEDED.**

**5.61** In implementing this policy, the Council will be likely to look more favourably upon the conversion of existing buildings rather than the construction of new ones (provided this is unlikely to result in subsequent pressure for a replacement building).

### **Housing**

#### **(i) Subdivision**

**5.62** The Council is anxious to prevent the

establishment of further dwellings in the Green Belt where this would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the countryside. It is, however, also keen to ensure that existing buildings are utilised to the full, provided any consequences of this are acceptable.

### **POLICY GB13**

**THE COUNCIL MAY PERMIT THE SUBDIVISION OF EXISTING LARGE HOUSES IN THE GREEN BELT INTO TWO OR MORE DWELLINGS. IN SO DOING THE COUNCIL MAY TAKE INTO ACCOUNT:-**

- (i) **THE SUITABILITY OF THE PROPOSED NEW UNITS AND THEIR CURTILAGES IN TERMS OF LIVING SPACE, GARDEN SPACE, PRIVACY, ACCESS, CAR PARKING, AND OTHER RESIDENTIAL AMENITIES;**
- (ii) **THE DESIRABILITY OF PRESERVING A BUILDING OF HISTORIC OR ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST WHICH IS OTHERWISE SHOWN TO FACE IMMINENT DERELICTION OR DEMOLITION;**
- (iii) **WHETHER THE APPEARANCE OF THE COUNTRYSIDE WOULD BE IMPAIRED; AND**
- (iv) **ACCESSIBILITY TO EMPLOYMENT, SCHOOLS, SHOPS, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT.**

**THE COUNCIL WILL REMOVE CERTAIN PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS FROM THE RESULTING DWELLINGS.**

**5.63** The subdivision of existing large houses may, therefore, be countenanced but the Council will remove certain permitted development rights from the resulting dwellings, so as to inhibit further residential development in the Green Belt.

**5.64** There can be no presumption in favour of subdivisions but the appropriateness of the development will be assessed against the criteria set out in the policy.

**5.65** In considering the suitability of the existing building and its curtilage it will be necessary for any proposals to satisfy all other relevant policies of the Plan including those relating to amenity space (policy DBE8), car parking (policy T14) etc.

**(ii) Residential extensions**

**5.66** PPG2 specifies that limited extensions to existing dwellings are not inappropriate in the Green Belt provided that they do "not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building."

**5.67** The Structure Plan introduced the concept of "reasonable extensions to existing dwellings" but did not define "reasonable". The concept is considered to be acceptable to the Council since built development will already exist and the additional impact of an extension might be minimal.

**5.68** Nevertheless, since it is only in very special circumstances that new dwellings can be built in the Green Belt, it would be illogical to allow unlimited extensions which have scarcely less visual impact than new dwellings or result in premises which might later be proposed for subdivision. There is a need, then, to restrict extensions to those of a reasonable size, whether attached to or detached from the existing properties.

**5.69** Extensions will only be approved if the Council is satisfied that the existing living space is inadequate by contemporary standards and that there is no conflict with other Green Belt objectives or creation of an undesirable precedent. The appearance of the countryside must not be impaired. The Council will, therefore, attach particular importance to the scale, size and design of proposed extensions to dwellings. Extensions which are out of scale with the existing dwelling, or where the appearance of the countryside is not being safeguarded, will be resisted and the full lawful extent of the premises (including the open space incidental to the enjoyment of the dwelling) will be regarded as part of the countryside. It is important that the Green Belt should be kept free of new building generally and reasonableness will not solely be determined in relation to visual impact.

**POLICY GB14**

**WITHIN THE GREEN BELT, LIMITED EXTENSIONS TO EXISTING DWELLINGS MAY BE PERMITTED WHERE:-**

- (i) THE OPEN CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE GREEN BELT WILL NOT BE IMPAIRED; AND**
- (ii) THEY WILL NOT RESULT IN DISPROPORTIONATE ADDITIONS OVER AND ABOVE THE SIZE OF THE ORIGINAL BUILDING; AND**
- (iii) THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE**

**OF THE BUILDINGS IN THEIR SETTINGS WILL BE ENHANCED OR NOT UNDULY HARMED; AND**

- (iv) THE EXTENSIONS ARE REASONABLY NECESSARY IN ORDER TO PROVIDE CONTEMPORARY LIVING STANDARDS.**

**5.70** In considering the impact and reasonableness of an extension the Council will have regard to:

- (a) its appearance when viewed from the surrounding rural area. The impact is likely to be proportionately less when the dwelling is within a built-up enclave or when additional floorspace is largely contained within the existing roof space of the dwelling, or when the existing dwelling is very large (over 500 sq.m) and the extension does not result in a spread of building into the countryside;
- (b) the size of the existing house in relation to the character of the plot and its proximity to its boundaries;
- (c) the cumulative effect of similar extensions and the likelihood of an undesirable precedent being set;
- (d) the impact of the development upon the rural character; and
- (e) the need to retain a range of small accommodation and rural housing consistent with the character of the Green Belt as a whole and affordable to as many of the residents of the District as possible.

**5.71** Reasonableness of need will be judged in terms of the adequacy of the internal living space for a residential unit rather than the requirements of a particular existing or prospective occupier. More specifically the Council:-

- (a) will be inclined to look favourably upon extensions the main aim of which is to rectify an unsatisfactory layout of rooms (e.g. where one bedroom is only accessible through another one), or remedying a lack of basic amenities, especially in small dwellings;
- (b) considers that it would be appropriate to permit additions which have a direct relevance to contemporary living standards, e.g. improved kitchen and bathroom facilities, or the provision of a conservatory. A single room extension, particularly at

ground floor level, may also be acceptable where criteria (i) and (ii) of policy GB14 are satisfied;

- (c) will take account of the extent to which the property has been extended already (whether by permitted development or otherwise);
- (d) will take account of any existing building being removed from the site, or if the extension will rectify a particularly unattractive feature of the existing dwelling;
- (e) will give special consideration to extensions to dwellings of those agricultural workers whose continuing occupation of the dwelling is essential to the operation of a bona fide agricultural unit, but would not result in a dwelling of a size inappropriate to the agricultural housing stock, and where criteria (i) and (ii) of policy GB14 are satisfied; and
- (f) considers that personal circumstances, including the need for a "granny annex", will only rarely outweigh general planning considerations, but may tip the balance in an otherwise finely balanced case.

**5.72** Detached outbuildings such as garages (where it is necessary to apply for planning permission) will be treated on their merits but particular importance will be attached to their design, size and prominence in the countryside, and to the number of outbuildings on a site.

**5.73** Where extensions which are likely to gain approval would be screened by trees or bushes on the site, planning conditions are likely to be imposed requiring the retention of the screening.

**5.74** There is a presumption against extensions to, or the refurbishment of:-

- dwellings that are not in permanent residential use (subject to other policies of the Local Plan);
- temporary buildings; and
- dwellings nearing the end of their lives on sites where replacement would be inappropriate.

### **(iii) Replacement dwellings**

#### **POLICY GB15**

**THE REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING PERMANENT DWELLINGS IN THE GREEN BELT, ON A ONE FOR ONE BASIS, MAY BE PERMITTED WHERE THE NEW DWELLING WILL:-**

- (i) NOT BE MATERIALLY LARGER THAN THAT WHICH IT WOULD REPLACE; AND**
- (ii) ENHANCE THE APPEARANCE OF THE COUNTRYSIDE; AND**
- (iii) NOT CONSTITUTE AN ISOLATED OR SPORADIC DEVELOPMENT UNLESS A REPLACEMENT DWELLING WOULD SIGNIFICANTLY ENHANCE THE APPEARANCE OF THE COUNTRYSIDE.**

**5.75** Proposals for enlarged dwellings will be viewed in the same way as extensions within the Green Belt (see policy GB14). Where the existing dwelling has been extended, permitted development rights on the new dwelling may be removed to prevent further extensions.

**5.76** Isolated dwellings are those which may be regarded as being totally unrelated, in visual terms, to any group of dwellings.

**5.77** Where a replacement dwelling would be capable of occupation independently of the existing dwelling, planning permission will be conditional upon the demolition of the existing dwelling upon completion of its replacement.

**5.78** In order to be acceptable, development proposals should also comply with the policies relating to design and location (DBE1 and DBE4), landscape (LL2 )and landscaping (LL10 and LL11) and car parking (T14). This policy is also subject to compliance with Policy RST 9 which relates to the chalet estates at Carthagena and Riverside.

### **(iv) Affordable Housing**

**5.79** The lack of housing which is "affordable" to rent or buy, may often result in villagers (particularly those starting new households) being obliged to move away in search of accommodation and work. This has a severe effect upon the community with those who are able to afford the housing available on the open market often being from elsewhere.

**5.80** The Government has, however, recognised the need for affordable rural housing. PPG3 points out that Green Belts are not typical of the generality of rural areas intended for affordable housing, but it acknowledges that special circumstances may arise. It therefore concludes that it is for local planning authorities to judge whether affordable housing, to meet local community needs, is appropriate in such areas. PPG2 acknowledges that limited affordable housing for local community needs may be appropriate in the Green Belt.

## **POLICY GB16**

**PLANNING PERMISSION MAY BE GRANTED FOR SMALL-SCALE "AFFORDABLE" HOUSING SCHEMES WITHIN THE SMALLER SETTLEMENTS, AS AN EXCEPTION TO THE NORMAL POLICY OF RESTRAINT, WHERE THE COUNCIL IS SATISFIED THAT:-**

- (i) THERE IS A DEMONSTRABLE SOCIAL OR ECONOMIC NEED FOR THE ACCOMMODATION IN THE LOCALITY WHICH CANNOT BE MET IN ANY OTHER WAY AND WHICH CAN REASONABLY BE EXPECTED TO PERSIST IN THE LONG TERM. AN APPLICATION WOULD BE EXPECTED TO BE SUPPORTED BY THE LOCAL PARISH COUNCIL AND A PROPER APPRAISAL OF NEED;**
- (ii) THE DEVELOPMENT IS WELL-RELATED TO THE EXISTING SETTLEMENT AND THERE IS NO DETRIMENT TO THE CHARACTER OF THE VILLAGE OR THE COUNTRYSIDE, OR TO GREEN BELT OBJECTIVES. PROPOSALS INVOLVING EXTENSIONS INTO THE OPEN COUNTRYSIDE OR THE CREATION OF RIBBONS OR ISOLATED POCKETS OF DEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE AVOIDED. THERE SHOULD BE NO SIGNIFICANT GROUNDS FOR OBJECTION ON HIGHWAYS, INFRASTRUCTURE OR OTHER PLANNING GROUNDS; AND**
- (iii) SUITABLY SECURE ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE MADE TO ENSURE THE AVAILABILITY OF THE ACCOMMODATION, AS BUILT, FOR INITIAL AND SUBSEQUENT LOCAL NEEDS HOUSEHOLDS WHOSE TOTAL INCOME IS INSUFFICIENT TO ENABLE THEM TO AFFORD TO RENT**

## **OR BUY A DWELLING OF A SUFFICIENT SIZE ON THE OPEN MARKET.**

**5.81** Not all settlements are appropriate for an affordable housing scheme, however. To be suitable they are likely:-

- to have a recognisable community which is distinct and separate from that on the edge of the metropolitan area; and
- to be too small to be capable of offering sufficient alternative housing to meet local needs.

**5.82** Settlements which could therefore be suitable include Epping Green, Matching Tye, Matching Green, Moreton, Sheering, Fyfield, Willingale, Toot Hill, Little End and Stapleford Abbots. Those which would not be appropriate include Lower Nazeing, Theydon Bois, Chigwell Row, North Weald Bassett, Sewardstone and Chipping Ongar.

**5.83** A scheme will only be acceptable, however, if it can be proven, to the satisfaction of the Council, that any would-be occupiers of an affordable housing scheme actually need to live in the village in question or a neighbouring village. The policy is not intended to provide cheap housing in the Green Belt for those who might happen to live there already and could perhaps live in a nearby town just as readily. Prospective occupiers should therefore comprise some or all of the following:

- (a) long-established local residents (ie those who have lived in the village for at least five of the preceding ten years) requiring separate accommodation (including new households);
- (b) immediate family dependents of long-established local residents;
- (c) former long-established local residents;
- (d) households living elsewhere where the main earner cannot otherwise take up an offer of a permanent, full-time job in a local service or continue in such an existing job.

**5.84** In accordance with Government guidelines no sites are identified and, before planning permission is granted, the Council will need to be satisfied that secure arrangements will be made to ensure that the dwellings remain available to the local households in need in perpetuity. This will be through the involvement of a Housing Association or Village Trust, covenants, or legal agreements under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (see

Policy 11). Satisfactory evidence that the cost of the rent or rent/mortgage is affordable by the potential occupiers will also be needed in order for the scheme to be acceptable.

**5.85** It will be necessary to remove "permitted development" rights in order to ensure that the size and therefore cost to future occupiers does not become excessive.

**5.86** Whilst the policy is in line with the "enabling" role, the Council does not countenance the development of other sites, which would not otherwise receive planning permission, to cross-subsidise the development of affordable housing. This is in order to minimise any incursions into the Green Belt and avoid undesirable precedents.

**5.87** In the application of this policy, favourable consideration will be given to new dwellings only in the most exceptional circumstances and there can be no presumption in favour of development. Any affordable housing which is provided in this way will be in addition to the needs identified in the Structure Plan.

**5.88** Developments will also be required to comply with other Plan policies relating to the disabled (Policies H8 and H9), design, location and layout (Policies DBE1, DBE4 and DBE5), landscape (Policies LL2 and LL3), landscaping (LL10 and LL11) and car parking provision (T14), although that relating to amenity space (DBE8) may be relaxed.

**(v) Agricultural, horticultural and forestry workers' dwellings**

#### **POLICY GB17**

**THE COUNCIL MAY GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR A DWELLING FOR AN AGRICULTURAL, HORTICULTURAL OR FORESTRY WORKER ONLY WHERE IT IS COMPLETELY SATISFIED THAT:-**

- (i) THE DWELLING IS ESSENTIAL, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE NATURE OF THE ENTERPRISE (E.G. PRESENCE OR OTHERWISE OF LIVESTOCK), POSSIBLE REORGANISATION OF THE EXISTING LABOUR FORCE, THE POTENTIAL OFFERED BY EXISTING RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION ON THE FARM OR HOLDING, AND THE OUTCOME OF ANY APPROACH MADE TO THE COUNCIL AS HOUSING AUTHORITY UNDER THE RENT (AGRICULTURE) ACT 1976;**

- (ii) IF (i) IS INCONCLUSIVE, THERE IS FIRM EVIDENCE OF VIABILITY OF THE AGRICULTURAL, HORTICULTURAL OR FORESTRY ENTERPRISE CONCERNED AT THE TIME OF THE APPLICATION AND OF CONTINUED VIABILITY IN THE LONG TERM;**

- (iii) GENUINE AND SUSTAINED EFFORTS TO FIND ALTERNATIVE ACCOMMODATION WITHIN REASONABLE TRAVELLING DISTANCE HAVE PROVED UNSUCCESSFUL (UNLESS THE ACCOMMODATION IS REQUIRED TO HOUSE A SPECIALIST WORKER WHO, BY THE NATURE OF HIS OR HER JOB, NEEDS TO LIVE ON THE FARM OR HOLDING);**

- (iv) THE FLOOR AREA OF THE LIVING ACCOMMODATION DOES NOT EXCEED 150 SQUARE METRES (MEASURED EXTERNALLY); AND**

**PLANNING PERMISSION FOR SUCH A PERMANENT DWELLING WILL ONLY BE GRANTED SUBJECT TO:-**

- (a) A PLANNING CONDITION TO ENSURE THAT THE DWELLING IS OCCUPIED BY A PERSON EMPLOYED LOCALLY IN AGRICULTURE, HORTICULTURE OR FORESTRY. THAT CONDITION WILL NOT NORMALLY BE REMOVED ON A SUBSEQUENT APPLICATION UNLESS IT IS SHOWN THAT THE LONG-TERM NEEDS FOR DWELLINGS FOR AGRICULTURAL WORKERS, BOTH ON THE PARTICULAR FARM OR HOLDING AND IN THE LOCALITY, NO LONGER WARRANT ITS RESERVATION FOR THAT PURPOSE; AND**
- (b) THE MAKING, IN APPROPRIATE CIRCUMSTANCES, OF A LEGAL AGREEMENT ENSURING THAT THE DWELLING SHALL NOT BE SOLD OR LEASED SEPARATELY FROM THE**

## **HOLDING.**

### **TEMPORARY DWELLINGS MAY BE PERMITTED WHILST THE LONG-TERM VIABILITY OF THE ENTERPRISE IS BEING ESTABLISHED.**

**5.89** The Council will require evidence of need (in terms of the enterprise rather than of the owner or occupier) and will expect an application to be supported by a technical and, where appropriate, a financial appraisal from a suitably qualified agricultural consultant.

**5.90** The Council is particularly concerned about the size of this type of dwelling. This is to ensure that the dwellings can be kept available to meet the needs of the types of worker for whom they are intended. Size has a bearing on cost of construction, the rent or mortgage, the cost of upkeep, and the future selling price. In practice, where larger units have been granted permission and extended and made more luxurious, pressure arises to remove occupancy conditions because farmworkers, whose wages/salaries have historically been low, cannot afford the property. Thus, restricting the size of such properties has become necessary and reflects the need to protect the Green Belt and the countryside.

**5.91** Agricultural workers' dwellings will retain permitted development rights. These provide scope for limited extension without the need for planning permission. Beyond that, any application for permission for an extension will be assessed with regard to both the considerations set out in para 5.69 above and Policy GB14 relating to residential extensions in the Green Belt.

**5.92** The Council will not consider sympathetically an application for a dwelling for an agricultural or horticultural worker unless it is completely satisfied that the proposed development is entirely appropriate to the appearance of the countryside and the character of the Green Belt. The potential aggregated effect of previous permissions and similar proposals will be taken into account.

**5.93** There is a presumption against proposals for a dwelling where a holding has been sold off without its previously associated dwelling, unless special circumstances exist.

**5.94** In order to be acceptable, development proposals should also comply with the policies relating to design and location (DBE1 and DBE4), landscape (LL2), landscaping (LL10 and LL11), car parking (T14) and road safety and traffic generation (Policy T17).

**5.95** Planning permission for a permanent dwelling

will be given only if an agreement is made, under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (see Policy I1), with the effect that the proposed dwelling cannot be sold separately from or severed from its associated holdings, and will always be subject to the following condition:-

"The occupation of the dwelling shall be limited to a person solely or mainly employed, or last employed, in the locality in agriculture as defined in Section 336 (1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, or in forestry, or a dependant of such a person residing with him/or her, or a widow or widower of such a person".

**5.96** In considering an application for the removal of such a condition the Council will have regard to:-

- the current demand for houses for farmers or farmworkers in the locality;
- whether there are any vacant agricultural dwellings in the neighbourhood;
- whether there have been recent applications by agricultural workers for council houses;
- details of efforts to dispose of the dwelling subject to the occupancy condition, e.g. whether it has been advertised, how frequently and for how long;
- what the asking price or rent was, and whether this reflected the reduction in value arising from the occupancy condition; and
- whether there have been other recent applications nearby for agricultural dwellings.

**5.97** The removal of an agricultural occupancy condition is not justified merely because the siting of a dwelling adjacent to a village envelope leads to its subsequent inclusion within the village envelope (and exclusion from the Green Belt). The special circumstances which have allowed the effective extension of the village into the Green Belt must still be acknowledged.

**5.98** Any granting of planning permission may also be subject to a condition requiring the dwelling to be completed to the level of the roof timbers within two years. This is to ensure that implementation reflects an immediate need for the new dwelling and thus satisfies criterion (i) of the policy.

**5.99** Only in exceptional circumstances is temporary caravan or mobile home accommodation likely to be acceptable. Where this is expected to lead in due course to an application for a permanent dwelling (e.g.

where long-term viability of an agricultural enterprise is maintained), the Council will not permit the temporary accommodation if permission would not subsequently be given for a permanent dwelling. Permission for temporary accommodation will be granted for a limited period only, which will not normally be extended, and will be conditional upon restricted occupancy.

#### **The former Radio Station site at North Weald Bassett**

**5.100** This site was used for radio transmission from the 1920s to the mid 1980s. Despite the station buildings (which remain) and the masts (which have been removed) the area retained its rural character by staying mainly in agricultural use. The site is also important for walking and riding and its network of definitive and informal rights of way is an amenity greatly valued by the local community.

**5.101** The Local Plan for Epping and Ongar proposed part of the site as a public golf course. This was on the basis of there being no public golf course in the District at the time, the central location of the site within the District, and its topography. The Council subsequently endorsed a leisure, recreation and tourism strategy for the Epping/North Weald Bassett/Chipping Ongar area (see para 12.107). A 'leisure corridor' was proposed between Epping and Chipping Ongar with the radio station site being seen as suitable for an informal 'country park'. In essence, this meant promoting public access and enjoyment rather than the more formal designation of such a substantial site. A 'pay-and-play' golf course, a picnic area with interpretation at the Redoubt, and an extended network of footpaths and bridleways, were seen as the main elements. The golf course would be a self financing commercial venture.

**5.102** The site forms the northern half of Ongar Great Park, which is believed to be the earliest recorded Deer Park in this country (references date from 1045). The best surviving feature of the Park is its boundary, which is still recognisable as a hedge. The Park has now been designated an "Ancient Landscape" (see paras 6.11 and 6.12).

**5.103** The Council is anxious to seize the opportunity which the site offers. It is therefore looking for a comprehensive scheme for the whole in preference to piecemeal proposals. In furtherance of its strategy for the area the Council is looking to achieve:-

- a substantial recreational element (including a country park);
- either the retention of the bowling club or its replacement (either on-site or elsewhere); and

- the dedication of an appropriate amount of suitably-located land for the village hall.

The Council's strategy for the area is to enhance the amenity of the local environment through realising opportunities for improvement but also to protect the Green Belt from development which is undesirable. The strategy set out below represents what is considered to be important for the future interest of the area.

**5.104** Following the Council's refusal to grant planning permission for a redevelopment scheme comprising a hotel, business park, residential hamlet and golf courses, a Public Inquiry was held in 1992. In determining the outcome the Secretary of State for the Environment concluded that:-

Green Belt objectives were of paramount importance and were sufficient grounds to reject the hotel, business park and hamlet;

- (i) the setting of Essex Redoubt (a Scheduled Ancient Monument) and the various Listed Buildings at Ongar Park Hall had to be protected. Demolition of the radio station buildings was therefore favoured. This also meant that the development of a private golf course, in addition to the public course proposed in the Epping and Ongar Local Plan, was considered unacceptable because it would extinguish agricultural use of the site. This, in turn, would make Ongar Park Farm redundant, resulting in pressure for loss or conversion of buildings, with consequential detrimental effects for the setting of the Listed Buildings; and
- (ii) the 'pleasant rural ambience' of the area was specifically recognised and it was acknowledged that the appearance of the countryside would be improved by the clearance of the radio station buildings, several of which are in close proximity to the Essex Redoubt and considered to be detrimental to its setting.

**5.105** The Council looks to secure the clearance of the buildings and would be prepared to consider limited replacement development (on an equal footprint/comparable curtilage basis) on part of the site immediately east of Station Road as part of a modest 'package' of Green Belt benefits. The character and dispersal of the proposed redevelopment will need to be considered as well as its footprint, as the curtilage area may be unacceptable if it results in a greater adverse impact on the character of the Green Belt than the current development. The proposed development will need to have regard to the amenity of existing

residents and the surrounding landscape as well as its impact on Green Belt objectives. That part of the site on which built development is permitted will subsequently be taken out of the Green Belt when the appropriate opportunity arises. A consequence of this is that an area of land behind the Kings Head PH will be deleted from the Green Belt should redevelopment take place. This will, however, strengthen the need to retain open space and the Green Belt boundary on land west of Station Road and to protect the "green wedge" leading from the station into the village. Green Belt benefits will be in the form of providing new statutory public access, basic management of the Redoubt and provision for a pay and play golf course in the context of long term protection of the rural agricultural character of the whole site. Among the other benefits which the Council is looking to achieve to further the Green Belt objectives outlined above are the retention or replacement of the bowling club and the dedication of an appropriate amount of land for the village hall. A popular new concept for developing open space is the pocket park which can be managed in partnership with local groups. The securing of such improvements by positive land management will protect the area from further development.

#### **POLICY GB18**

#### **PROPOSALS FOR THE REUSE AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE OF THE FORMER RADIO STATION AT NORTH WEALD BASSETT WILL BE REQUIRED TO:-**

- (i) **MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE PUBLIC ACCESS FOR WALKERS AND HORSE-RIDERS;**
- (ii) **MAINTAIN THE OPENNESS, RURALITY AND TRANQUILLITY OF THE AREA, AND MAKE PROVISION FOR A POCKET PARK WITHIN EASY ACCESS OF THE VILLAGE;**
- (iii) **(RESPECT THE SETTING OF THE SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENT (INCLUDING THE DEMOLITION AND REMOVAL OF THE ADJACENT RADIO STATION BUILDINGS) WITH LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS;**
- (iv) **MAKE PROVISION FOR A PAY-AND-PLAY GOLF COURSE;**
- (v) **MAKE PROVISION FOR ANY NECESSARY FLOOD ALLEVIATION SCHEME;**
- (vi) **RETAIN THE BOWLING CLUB AND ITS FACILITIES OR ENSURE THEIR**

#### **REPLACEMENT;**

- (vii) **MAINTAIN THE GREEN WEDGE LEADING TOWARDS NORTH WEALD STATION.**

**THE COUNCIL MAY GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR DEVELOPMENT EAST OF STATION ROAD, AS REPLACEMENT FOR THE FORMER RADIO STATION BUILDINGS, IN THE CONTEXT OF AN ACCEPTABLE SCHEME FOR THE WHOLE SITE WHICH SATISFIED CRITERIA (i)-(vii) ABOVE.**

**5.106** The Council will apply Policy I1 in order to offset the impact of replacement development. In order to be acceptable any development proposals would have to comply with all other relevant policies. These include those relating to the location and design of any buildings (Policies DBE1, DBE4 and DBE5) amenity provision (Policies DBE8 and DEB9), landscape (Policies LL2 and LL3), landscaping (Policies LL10 and LL11), the amount and location of car parking (Policies DBE6 and T14) and traffic generation (Policy T17). Any proposals will also be required to have due regard to the Scheduled Ancient Monument and any features of archaeological interest (Policy HC1) and the area of Ancient Landscape (Policy HC2).

#### **Existing Commitments**

**5.107** There are two sites in the Green Belt which already have planning permission for residential development. These are North Farm, High Road, Loughton and the former fat factory at Stapleford Abbots. Planning permission was granted on both sites because of the substantial environmental benefits that would accrue. Both sites are therefore allocated for development in Policy H2 which reflects the existing commitment rather than a change in policy.

#### **Grange Farm, Chigwell**

**5.108** Grange Farm is an important site (lying just outside Chigwell Conservation Area) which has been an important recreational amenity with more than just a local catchment. It is now vacant and has deteriorated over recent years.

**5.109** The proximity of the site to the urban area calls for a sensitive development or redevelopment, which would probably rely on significant private expenditure. Planning permission was granted on appeal in September 1995 for the replacement of the holiday caravan and camping centre with a Christian place of worship and instruction for non-residential weekend use incorporating a meeting hall for informal fellowship, nature conservation areas, car parking and



4 flats. A Section 106 Obligation accompanies the permission which includes the provision of an interpretation centre for the Roding Valley Meadows Nature Reserve, and allows for public access to most of the open area of the site, and for management and maintenance of the land.

# **POLICY GB19**

**THE COUNCIL MAY GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE OF GRANGE FARM, CHIGWELL (IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP) PROVIDED THAT:-**

- (i) **ANY NEW OR REPLACEMENT DEVELOPMENT IS LIMITED TO THE EXISTING AREA OF BUILT DEVELOPMENT;**
- (ii) **THE REMAINDER OF THE SITE REMAINS GENERALLY OPEN IN NATURE;**
- (iii) **A SUITABLE AREA FOR NATURE CONSERVATION WITH OPEN PUBLIC ACCESS FOR INFORMAL RECREATION IS PROVIDED;**
- (iv) **THE SCHEME INCORPORATES:-**
  - (a) **A PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY THROUGH THE SITE AS PART OF A ROUTE ACROSS THE RODING VALLEY; AND**
  - (b) **ADEQUATE AND APPROPRIATE FACILITIES FOR THE INTERPRETATION OF THE RODING VALLEY LOCAL NATURE RESERVE.**

**5.110** The Council will require planning applications to relate to the whole site whether or not it is proposed to redevelop all of the existing buildings.

**5.111** The site is a very important one for great crested newts. Any planning application should therefore include provision of adequate and appropriate terrestrial habitat (immediately adjacent to the aquatic one) within the curtilage of the site. In order to be acceptable, any proposal must also comply with all other relevant Plan policies, including design (Policies DBE1 and DBE4), landscaping (Policies LL10 and LL11), car parking (Policy T14) and traffic impact (Policy T17).

## **Former Royal Ordnance Site, Waltham Abbey**

**5.112** The only other Green Belt site in the District where there is some commitment to development is the former Royal Ordnance site, off Sewardstone Road, Waltham Abbey. The Local Plan for Roydon, Nazeing and Waltham Abbey proposed that a planning brief would be prepared for the site. This was in accordance with the recommendations of the Inspector at the Public Inquiry in whose view the circumstances which led to the inclusion of the site in the Green Belt had changed significantly and exceptionally since the approval of the County Development Plan (in 1957). This stemmed from the owners' commitment to vacate the site and the number and spread of buildings.

**5.113** The Inspector preferred a planned approach to the future of the area which should refer to the approved development brief for its future development and would retain the site within the Green Belt for the present. The Inspector recommended that the line of trees across the site broadly following the line of Black Ditch Road should be the basis of a lasting and defensible boundary for the Green Belt. His recommendations have been incorporated in the approved brief.

# **POLICY GB20**

**THE COUNCIL MAY GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FORMER ROYAL ORDNANCE SITE AT WALTHAM ABBEY (IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP) PROVIDED THAT:-**

- (i) **THE WHOLE SITE IS SUBJECT TO SATISFACTORY DECONTAMINATION MEASURES;**
- (ii) **THE LINE OF TREES ADJACENT TO BLACK DITCH ROAD GENERALLY FORMS THE SOUTHERN BOUNDARY OF ANY BUILT DEVELOPMENT (UNLESS A PROPOSAL IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH OTHER PLAN POLICIES); AND**
- (iii) **A NEW ROAD (THE LINE OF WHICH IS INDICATED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP) IS CONSTRUCTED THROUGH THE SITE TO LINK THE M25 (AT JUNCTION 26, WALTHAM ABBEY) WITH HIGHBRIDGE STREET.**

**5.114** The Council will require any planning applications to relate to the context of an agreed remediation strategy for the whole of the site.

**5.115** In order to be acceptable, any development

proposals would have to comply with the agreed development brief for the site and all other relevant policies of the Plan, notably the development of 250 houses (Policy H2), their phasing (Policy I2) and the associated design policies (DBE1 and DBE4-8), and business and/or general industrial development (Policy E7). Other policies to which regard should be given include Green Belt (Policies GB1 and GB2), development affecting Epping Forest (Policy HC5), car parking (Policy T14) and traffic impact (Policy T17).

**5.116** Proposals will also be required to comply with appropriate landscape and landscaping policies (notably LL2, LL10 and LL11). It will be particularly important to ensure that the open, landscape-dominated vistas along Sewardstone Road, the flood relief channel and to the south of Quinton Hill Ridge are maintained. The new landscape should include features of amenity and nature conservation interest which respect and enhance the existing character of the river valley and the setting of the Lee Valley Regional Park.

**5.117** The site involves a number of problems for the water environment (such as flooding, contamination and run off). Any future proposals to develop the site will have to incorporate suitable measures. Prior consultation with the Environment Agency is advised.

**5.118** The site is the subject of a comprehensive development proposal by Lee Valley Developments (a joint venture company between Trafalgar House and British Aerospace).

**5.119** The feasibility of developing an east-west road link between the proposed new access road and the north-south route (outside the District to the west) is currently being examined. Any firm proposals for such a road link would be assessed in accordance with Policy T5 which specifies the appropriate criteria.

**5.120** Following its completion, that part of the site on which the built development will take place will be taken out of the Green Belt when the opportunity arises. The remainder of the site will then be subject to all other Green Belt policies as appropriate.

### **Environmental Implications**

**5.121** The implementation of the policies in this chapter will contribute to the achievement of the following Plan aims (see pages 24 and 25):-

(ix) To increase the scope of appropriate recreational activities in the countryside.

(xx) To ensure that any new development does not have an unacceptable impact both in

environmental terms and in the provision of local facilities.

(xxiii) To protect and, where possible, enhance the character and environmental qualities of the countryside.

(xxx) To protect the Green Belt from development which is unnecessary or undesirable.

(xxxii) To safeguard and, where possible, enhance the landscape.

(xxxiii) To safeguard and, where possible, enhance the District's tree cover, flora and wildlife.

(xxxiv) To make the most efficient use of land and buildings wherever practicable.

(xxxviii) To enable the continued implementation of the Council's Environmental Charter.

**5.122** The extent to which the policies have regard to, and are likely to impact upon, environmental considerations is set out in Appendix 2. This indicates that, on the national scale, the countryside will be protected which, transposed to the local scale, means the Green Belt. The general restraint on development in the Green Belt will protect the local environment. The concentration of development in the urban areas should, in conjunction with other policies, enhance the urban environment.

**5.123** However, at the wider scale, it means that much additional housing required at the sub-regional scale (ie to meet the needs of London) is deflected beyond the Green Belt to growth points (eg Bishop's Stortford). This may mean that the residents of these new houses have to travel to work to the major employment focus of London. Various factors may, however, contribute to the increase in journeys being on public, rather than private, transport.

**5.124** This approach may seem to conflict with the concept of sustainability in terms of travel. However, the alternative would be to develop housing, to contribute to London's needs, in the Green Belt rather than beyond it. Such an approach would not be sustainable in that the Green Belt, and the important functions which it fulfils, would be eroded. In view of this, the Council's approach is to protect the Green Belt. It also seeks to provide local employment opportunities to minimise the journey to work.

# CONSERVATION

**“The Houses that he makes last ‘til doomsday”**

First Clown, Act 5, Scene 1  
Hamlet William Shakespeare

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## **6. Heritage Conservation**

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## **Introduction**

**6.1** The Council appreciates the importance of conserving the historic character and features of both the town and countryside. Urban and rural landscapes, while continuously evolving, are an important source of information about the workings of past societies. With knowledge and interpretation, many features can be identified which can give insights into local social history and the cultural heritage of the area.

**6.2** This chapter contains those policies relating to heritage conservation matters and covers Scheduled Monuments and other archaeological sites; Ancient Landscapes; Historic Parks and Gardens; Protected Lanes; common land and village greens; Epping Forest; Conservation Areas; and Listed Buildings.

## **Government Guidance**

**6.3** Current legislation concerning heritage conservation is mainly contained in the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. PPGs 15 and 16 also provide guidance and advice to local planning authorities in dealing with such matters.

## **County Policy**

**6.4** An outline of the Structure Plan policies which relate to the matters dealt with in this chapter is given below:

- the protection and enhancement of the character of Conservation Areas;
- the protection of buildings of architectural, historic and townscape importance from demolition and unsympathetic change, and the safeguarding of their settings;
- the appropriate conversion of buildings of architectural or historic interest where necessary, in order to preserve such buildings;
- the protection and conservation of all areas and sites of archaeological interest.

## **SCHEDULED MONUMENTS AND OTHER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES**

**6.5** Archaeological remains vary greatly in their physical condition and in terms of their appeal to the public - the historical period which can be included is vast and current records only reveal a partial picture. It has, therefore, to be accepted that

historical remains are not of equal importance and that a hierarchy of protective and management measures needs to be adopted. Allowance will also have to be made for as yet unidentified areas of archaeological potential where evaluations may be required. The approach taken by the Council broadly follows that of PPG16 which advises:-

"Archaeological remains should be seen as finite and non-renewable resources, in many cases highly fragile and vulnerable to damage and destruction. They can contain irreplaceable information about our past and the potential for increase in future knowledge. They are part of our sense of national identity and are valuable both for their own sake and for their role in education, leisure and tourism."

## **Nationally Important Remains**

**6.6** In the context of dealing with development proposals, PPG16 states that there should be a presumption in favour of the physical preservation of nationally important archaeological remains and their settings. Some of these structures and sites have been designated as Scheduled Ancient Monuments by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport - there are currently 14 in the District. The consent of the Secretary of State is required for any works which may affect or alter a Scheduled Ancient Monument. While these controls are operated by Central Government, PPG16 advises that Local Plan policies should seek to protect, preserve and enhance sites of archaeological interest and their settings.

## **Other Archaeological Sites**

**6.7** Essex County Council maintains a "Sites and Monuments Record" (SMR) for the County which identifies several hundred sites of archaeological interest. The majority of these sites are not considered to be of national importance, but they still have a heritage value and should, therefore, receive careful consideration within the planning process. The SMR is not a complete record and is reviewed and updated regularly by the County Council. The County Archaeologist should be consulted about sites of potential interest, whether or not they are included in the SMR. PPG16 specifically advises early consultation on these matters to try to ensure that the needs of development and archaeology are reconciled.

## **POLICY HC1**

**ON SITES OF KNOWN OR POTENTIAL  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTEREST, PLANNING  
PERMISSION WILL ONLY BE GRANTED FOR  
DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD NOT**

**ADVERSELY AFFECT NATIONALLY IMPORTANT REMAINS, WHETHER SCHEDULED OR NOT, OR THEIR SETTINGS. THE COUNCIL WILL ALSO REQUIRE:**

- (i) **THE RESULTS OF AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION TO BE SUBMITTED AS PART OF ANY APPLICATION;**
- (ii) **THE PRESERVATION IN SITU, AND PROVISION FOR APPROPRIATE MANAGEMENT, OF THOSE REMAINS AND THEIR SETTINGS CONSIDERED TO BE OF PARTICULAR IMPORTANCE;**
- (iii) **PROVISION FOR RECORDING AND/OR EXCAVATION BY A COMPETENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL ORGANISATION PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT, WHERE IN SITU PRESERVATION IS NOT JUSTIFIED.**

**6.8** All Ancient Monuments scheduled at the time of the publication of this Plan are shown on the Proposals Map. Policy HC1 will also apply to any remains or sites which may subsequently be identified as nationally important, or scheduled as Ancient Monuments. In the case of criterion (ii), the Council may also seek statutory protection (i.e Scheduling). An Environmental Assessment may be necessary where such remains could be affected by development proposals.

**6.9** In implementing Policy HC1 the Council will use the specialist advice of the County Archaeologist and will follow the latest Code of Practice of the British Archaeologists' and Developers' Liaison Group. In the case of criterion (i), the Council will consider refusing permission if applications are not supported by adequate documentation. Paragraphs 19 to 22 of PPG16 give advice about evaluation techniques and the appropriate levels of detail.

**6.10** PPG16 also advises that appropriate management is essential to ensure that remains survive in good condition. The Council will encourage and, where practicable, assist owners of Scheduled Monuments and other important archaeological sites to maintain them in good condition and to adopt sympathetic management regimes. The Council will investigate the desirability of entering into management agreements with the owners of Scheduled Monuments. These may include provisions covering maintenance and preservation, carrying out works, public access,

restricting or prohibiting uses, and the making of grants.

#### **ANCIENT LANDSCAPES**

**6.11** It is intended to try to identify and protect any substantial tracts of ancient landscapes so that their significant historic features can be retained and managed for the future. A list of criteria for defining areas of "Ancient Landscape" has been prepared by the County Council and this has helped in the identification of those areas shown on the Proposals Map.

**6.12** Features should predate 1600 (this date accords with that used by English Nature for their identification of Ancient Woodland) and can be semi-natural (eg woodland, old pasture, individual trees) or man-made (eg buildings, trackways, field boundaries). Identification of the areas will be primarily for advisory purposes so that potential changes can be considered in the light of the historic interest of the area. Priority should also be given to interpretation, public access and the use of other protective measures (eg Tree Preservation Orders, Building Preservation Notices) where necessary. The areas could also be used as a focus for grant-aid from the Council and other relevant bodies.

#### **POLICY HC2**

**THE COUNCIL WILL NOT GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR DEVELOPMENT WHICH COULD ADVERSELY AFFECT THE NATURE AND PHYSICAL APPEARANCE OF ANCIENT LANDSCAPES (IDENTIFIED AS SUCH ON THE PROPOSALS MAP).**

**6.13** This policy will also be applied to any Ancient Landscapes identified subsequently.

#### **REGISTERED PARKS AND GARDENS**

**6.14** A Register of parks and gardens of special historic interest has been compiled by English Heritage with similar grading to that for Listed Buildings. Inclusion on the Register does not confer statutory protection but it is intended to draw attention to the most important parks and gardens which are seen as being an essential part of the nation's heritage.

**6.15** Three areas of parkland wholly within the District are included on the Register; Copped Hall (Grade II\*), Blake Hall and Hill Hall (both Grade II). These are shown on the Proposals Map.



### **POLICY HC3**

**THE COUNCIL WILL NOT GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR DEVELOPMENT WHICH COULD ADVERSELY AFFECT THE AREAS OF REGISTERED PARKLAND (IDENTIFIED AS SUCH ON THE PROPOSALS MAP).**

**6.16** This policy will also apply to any historic parkland registered subsequently.

### **PROTECTED LANES, COMMONS AND GREENS**

#### **Protected Lanes**

**6.17** Several lanes have been designated by the County Council as "Protected Lanes". These have been identified and selected because of their significant contribution to the character of the countryside and their particular historic value. Their preservation and proper management are seen as desirable.

### **POLICY HC4**

**THE COUNCIL WILL NOT GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR ANY DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD DAMAGE OR BE DETRIMENTAL TO THE HISTORIC OR LANDSCAPE CHARACTER OF PROTECTED LANES (IDENTIFIED AS SUCH ON THE PROPOSALS MAP), COMMONS OR VILLAGE GREENS.**

**6.18** The main features which comprise the Lanes are banks, ditches, verges and hedgerows. Public involvement with the management of such features is often indirect and can be subject to conflicting public objectives (e.g. road safety). Many of the features are not in public ownership and there are only limited powers of statutory control (e.g. the use of Tree Preservation Orders where trees or hedgerows may be established on the banks or verges). Management for valid private purposes (usually agriculture) may also occasionally conflict with the aim of retaining the landscape and historic value of the Lanes. Designation should therefore be seen as achieving primarily an advisory role - to ensure that the importance of the Lanes is taken into account when applications for development or works to the highway are being considered.

**6.19** The Council will seek to co-operate with adjoining landowners through Countryside (see para 7.29) to ensure that management practices fully take into account the importance of the Lanes. The use of protective measures, such as Tree Preservation

Orders, will be considered in appropriate cases.

**6.20** The Council may introduce traffic management measures to control or restrict traffic movements when this is felt to be in the long term interest of the Lanes. Similarly, the need for other highway schemes (e.g. resurfacing, road widening) will be balanced against the importance of protecting and managing the historic and landscape value of the Lanes.

#### **Commons and Greens**

**6.21** The legal aspects of Registered Commons and Village Greens are discussed in paragraphs 12.94 and 12.95. Landscape assessment, as described in paragraph 16.1, will help to identify the remnants of other commons and greens in the District. These features are useful in helping to explain the development of the present day landscape, showing how the land was traditionally used and how the pattern and layout of settlements were established. The very significant changes in agricultural practice and escalating pressures for more development or change of use have tended to obscure, or gradually to destroy, the commons and greens of the District. Despite protection given by registration under the Commons Registration Act 1965, it is possible that a number of commons and greens may be affected by such changes. Place names, and any associated features of local historic interest, may either be lost or will lose their meaning.

**6.22** The historic and landscape significance of, and the need to preserve, all commons and greens will be treated as material considerations in the determination of planning applications and in the production of management plans as described in paragraph 19.7. The County Council maintains Registers of Common Land and Village Greens which should be checked by applicants to ensure that development proposals will not adversely affect these features of the historic landscape.

### **EPPING FOREST**

**6.23** Epping Forest is a particularly important component of the historic landscape of the District, this value being all the greater because of its public accessibility. The protection afforded by the Epping Forest Act 1878 has meant that a substantial area of the original Forest of Essex remains virtually intact. The greater part of this lies within the District, running northeast from Sewardstonebury to Wintry Wood just north of Epping. There are numerous outlying greens, green lanes and verges - as far north as Galleyhill Green and Epping Long Green - which are also Epping Forest land. In terms of its scientific interest, the Forest is of European

importance. It is one of a few remaining large scale examples of ancient wood-pasture in England and retains a variety of habitats of high nature conservation value. These include ancient semi-natural woodland, scrub, grassland, heathland, marsh and open water.

**6.24** The 1878 Act requires the Corporation of London (as owners and Conservators of the Forest) to:-

- (i) keep the Forest unenclosed and unbuilt on as an open space for the recreation and enjoyment of the public;
- (ii) protect the Forest's vegetation in all its various forms;
- (iii) preserve as far as possible the Forest's natural aspect;
- (iv) protect the Forest's ancient earthworks and remains;
- (v) preserve the Forest's deer.

**6.25** The interpretation (especially of the phrase "natural aspect") and implementation of the provisions of the Act have created several problems in the light of continuous and growing public pressure for recreational use of the Forest. Some areas show signs of overuse with ground compaction (preventing the growth of ground vegetation), soil erosion and litter being particularly obvious.

**6.26** The District Council has no statutory role in the day-to-day management of the Forest, or in determining its long term objectives. It is nevertheless concerned to ensure that its activities as a local authority will help in protecting, interpreting and even enhancing this most important historic and natural feature (see paragraph 12.92). It will continue to (a) monitor traffic movements within the Forest in its role as agents of the County Highway Authority, and (b) introduce traffic management measures to protect the environment and physical fabric of the Forest where necessary. The likely impact on the management and use of rides and open spaces in the Forest will also be considered when assessing proposals to use land for private or commercial horsekeeping.

## **POLICY HC5**

**THE COUNCIL WILL NOT GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR ANY DEVELOPMENT OR USE WHICH COULD PREJUDICE THE HISTORIC NATURE AND WILDLIFE VALUE OF EPPING FOREST**

**(IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP) OR ITS FUNCTION AS OPEN SPACE FOR THE PURPOSES OF PUBLIC ENJOYMENT.**

**6.27** The District Council will continue to consult, and co-operate with, the Conservators of Epping Forest on any proposals which could affect land covered by, or in proximity to land covered by, the Epping Forest Act 1878. The intention of this is to ensure that the unique character of the Forest will continue to be protected and enhanced. Most of Epping Forest is shown on the Proposals Map, although some areas are too small to be included. Policy HC5 will also apply to any land which may be subsequently added to the Forest by the Conservators.

## **CONSERVATION AREAS**

**6.28** The concept of Conservation Areas was first introduced in the Civic Amenities Act of 1967. It was the first piece of legislation to recognise the importance of conserving the character of entire areas and to acknowledge the civic design values of whole groups of buildings and their settings.

**6.29** A Conservation Area is defined as :- "an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance".

**6.30** These Areas are naturally likely to be of many different kinds. They may be large or small, from town centres to terraces, squares or smaller groups of buildings. They are often centred on Listed Buildings, but this is not a requirement. Pleasant groups of other buildings, open spaces, trees, an historic street or field pattern, village green or features of historic or archaeological interest may also contribute to the special character of an Area. The key point that must be stressed is that it is the character of areas, rather than individual buildings, which the legislation seeks to preserve or enhance.

**6.31** Government advice on the policies and procedures to be adopted by local planning authorities concerning historic buildings and Conservation Areas is contained in PPG15. It acknowledges that historic buildings and Conservation Areas are of great importance for the contribution which they make to our knowledge of the past, and to the character of our environment. PPG15 also states:- "The cumulative character and interest of relatively minor historic buildings, in a street or a village square or a residential neighbourhood, are particularly important in times when much new development no longer reflects local building traditions."

**6.32** The designation of a Conservation Area places a duty on the Council to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of Conservation Areas in the exercise of its planning functions, and it also introduces special controls, including the requirement of consent from the Council to demolish any building or part of a building or to carry out works on unprotected trees.

**6.33** The Council's intention is that development in Conservation Areas should be of a high standard and that it should not have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of a Conservation Area.

**6.34** Reassessment of the boundaries of each of the existing Conservation Areas in the District, and assessments of other areas of special architectural or historic interest, were carried out in 1994/95. As a result, amendments were made to the boundaries of several Conservation Areas, and new Conservation Areas were designated at Blake Hall, Bobbingworth; Hill Hall, Theydon Mount; High Ongar; and Great Stony School, Chipping Ongar.

**6.35** Draft 'character appraisals' of all the Conservation Areas, together with a statement of the measures the Council considers appropriate for maintaining and enhancing their special qualities, have been prepared for public consultation. Final versions of these documents will be produced as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

#### **Development in Conservation Areas**

**6.36** PPG15 advises that, in deciding whether development should or should not be permitted in Conservation Areas, the emphasis should be on controlled and positive management of change rather than prevention. The aim should be to allow the Area to "remain alive and prosperous" but at the same time to ensure that any new development accords with its special architectural and visual qualities. New buildings should not be designed as separate entities, but should form part of the wider townscape which already has a well established character and appearance of its own.

**6.37** The District Council accepts that new development will take place in Conservation Areas and that such change can be an acceptable part of their developing character. The design of any development in a Conservation Area requires careful consideration. Close attention to the setting of the site and the massing, detailing and materials of the proposed development is essential. An understanding of the wider impact of the development in townscape terms is also required.

#### **POLICY HC6**

**WITHIN OR ADJACENT TO A CONSERVATION AREA, THE COUNCIL WILL NOT GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR ANY DEVELOPMENT, OR GIVE LISTED BUILDING CONSENT OR CONSENT FOR WORKS TO TREES, WHICH COULD BE DETRIMENTAL TO THE CHARACTER, APPEARANCE OR SETTING OF THE CONSERVATION AREA.**

#### **POLICY HC7**

**WITHIN CONSERVATION AREAS, ALL DEVELOPMENT AND MATERIALS WILL BE REQUIRED TO BE OF A PARTICULARLY HIGH STANDARD TO REFLECT THE QUALITY OF THE ENVIRONMENT. DEVELOPMENT SHOULD:-**

- (i) BE SYMPATHETIC TO THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE CONSERVATION AREA IN TERMS OF SCALE, DENSITY, MASSING, HEIGHT, LAYOUT, BUILDING LINE, LANDSCAPE AND ACCESS;**
- (ii) HAVE TRADITIONAL PITCHED ROOFS AND CREATE A ROOFSCAPE WITH SUFFICIENT FEATURES TO PROVIDE AN APPROPRIATE DEGREE OF VISUAL INTEREST IN KEEPING WITH THE CHARACTER OF THE CONSERVATION AREA;**
- (iii) BE COMPOSED OF FACING MATERIALS CHOSEN FROM THE TRADITIONAL RANGE USED IN THE DISTRICT;**
- (iv) HAVE FACADES WHICH:**
  - (a) PROVIDE AN APPROPRIATE BALANCE BETWEEN HORIZONTAL AND VERTICAL ELEMENTS, AND PROPORTIONS OF WALL TO WINDOW AREA;**
  - (b) INCORPORATE A SUBSTANTIAL DEGREE OF VISUAL INTRICACY, COMPATIBLE WITH THAT OF THE FACADES OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS; AND**
- (v) WHERE APPLICABLE, BE OF A**

**SCALE COMPATIBLE WITH ANY  
ADJACENT HISTORIC BUILDINGS.**

**6.38** In order to implement these policies the Council will strongly encourage the submission of fully detailed applications for development and encourage applicants to consult its specialist officers before formulating development proposals.

**6.39** The designation of a Conservation Area is intended to bring the special architectural and historic interest of an area to the attention of all agencies and other organisations who carry out works or have an interest in the Area, including the District Council. By doing this it is hoped to ensure that due care is taken by all who carry out works in Conservation Areas to help preserve and enhance their character.

**POLICY HC8**

**THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO ENSURE THAT ALL PUBLIC UTILITY COMPANIES AND THE HIGHWAY AUTHORITY HAVE REGARD TO THE NEED TO PRESERVE THE CHARACTER OF CONSERVATION AREAS WHEN CONSIDERING WORKS WITHIN THEM.**

**6.40** Public utility companies are urged to discuss any major proposals for new plant, services or equipment in Conservation Areas with the District Council at an early stage. Whilst it is recognised that such bodies do not require planning permission for much of this work, the Council hopes that early consultation will enable closer working relationships to be established.

**Demolition in a Conservation Area**

**6.41** Conservation Area designation requires consent to be sought for the demolition of almost all unlisted buildings in the Area - such consent is known as "Conservation Area Consent".

**6.42** There is a presumption against demolition in a Conservation Area. Buildings which are not "Listed" (see para 6.51) may make a significant contribution to Conservation Areas as part of a larger group of buildings, or because of their own intrinsic qualities. They may also occupy a key site. It is therefore important that the District Council exercises very strict control over the demolition of all buildings in Conservation Areas.

**6.43** The decision as to whether an unlisted building in a Conservation Area should be retained depends primarily upon the contribution which it makes to the character or appearance of the Area, and

whether any redevelopment proposal preserves or enhances that character and appearance.

**POLICY HC9**

**THE COUNCIL WILL ONLY GRANT CONSENT FOR THE DEMOLITION OF A BUILDING IN A CONSERVATION AREA WHERE THE BUILDING DOES NOT MAKE A SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THAT AREA, OR WHERE THE REDEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL PRESERVES OR ENHANCES THAT CHARACTER OR APPEARANCE. ANY CONSENT MAY BE SUBJECT TO:**

- (i) PLANNING PERMISSION HAVING ALREADY BEEN GRANTED FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE;  
AND,**
- (ii) A LEGAL AGREEMENT THAT THE BUILDING IS NOT DEMOLISHED BEFORE A CONTRACT FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE HAS BEEN MADE.**

**6.44** The District Council may decide that such an agreement is not essential, but only in exceptional cases where the building to be demolished or the site which it occupies does not make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area.

**Alterations to Buildings in Conservation Areas**

**6.45** Single dwelling houses do not normally require consent from the Council for certain types of "permitted" alterations, such as the installation of replacement doors and windows, unless the building in question is Listed. In this context, the term "dwellinghouse" does not include a building containing one or more flats, or a flat contained within such a building. Such alterations can, however, easily erode the character and visual quality of a Conservation Area if they are of inappropriate design or material. This is particularly true when the building forms part of a terrace or group.

**6.46** Where alterations or extensions requiring planning permission or Listed Building Consent are being proposed, the Council, as planning authority, can control the appearance of the development. Such works must not be detrimental to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, and should also be sympathetic to the massing, materials and detailing of the building of which they form part. Owners and occupiers of property in Conservation Areas are encouraged to contact the Council for

guidance and assistance when contemplating development works - even though they may not require planning permission or Listed Building Consent.

**6.47** Article 4 Directions, limiting the extent of development which does not require planning permission, will be sought where the character of Conservation Areas is being eroded by "permitted" alterations.

#### **Trees in Conservation Areas**

**6.48** Trees which are covered by Tree Preservation Orders will be subject to the policies contained in the "Landscape and Landscaping" chapter of this Plan.

**6.49** Anyone proposing to carry out works to any other trees in Conservation Areas must give 6 weeks' notice in writing to the District Council. The purpose of this duty is to enable the Council to serve a Tree Preservation Order, should it be considered necessary, before the proposed works are carried out. If the works are not completed within 2 years of giving notice, a further notice (of 6 weeks) is required.

**6.50** Anyone proposing to carry out works to trees in Conservation Areas is strongly advised therefore to contact the District Council before carrying out such works.

#### **BUILDINGS OF SPECIAL ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC INTEREST**

##### **Listed Buildings**

**6.51** Buildings of special architectural or historic interest which are included in a list maintained by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport are known as "Listed Buildings". A decision to list a building is taken solely on the grounds of its architectural or historic interest. The principles of selection for buildings to be included in the list are set out in Appendix 3. Epping Forest District contains over 1,300 Listed Buildings and other structures. (A guidance leaflet on Listed Buildings is available from Council Offices.)

##### **The Grading of Listed Buildings**

**6.52** Listed Buildings are classified in grades to show their relative importance as follows:

Grade I - buildings of exceptional interest;

Grade II\* - particularly important buildings of more

than special interest;

Grade II - buildings of special interest, which warrant every effort being made to preserve them.

##### **Listed Building Consent**

**6.53** The presumption is in favour of the preservation of Listed Buildings, but this does not mean they must be preserved unaltered at all costs. The majority of Listed Buildings are still capable of beneficial use and, with skill and understanding, new work can usually be made to blend in with the old.

**6.54** Once a building is Listed, or the subject of a Building Preservation Notice it is a criminal offence to carry out works for its demolition or for its alteration or extension in a way which would affect its character, without first obtaining "Listed Building Consent". Such Consent is granted by the Council and is in addition to any planning permission which may also be required. It is required for all demolition works to a Listed Building, inside or out - including the replacement of windows and doors, removal of internal walls, fireplaces, staircases etc. even if they are not "original".

##### **POLICY HC10**

**THE COUNCIL WILL NOT GIVE CONSENT FOR WORKS TO THE INTERIOR OR EXTERIOR OF A LISTED BUILDING WHICH COULD DETRACT FROM ITS HISTORIC INTEREST OR ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE.**

##### **POLICY HC11**

**THE COUNCIL WILL NOT GIVE CONSENT FOR THE DEMOLITION OF A LISTED BUILDING UNLESS IT CAN BE SHOWN, TO THE SATISFACTION OF THE COUNCIL, THAT THERE ARE VERY EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES AS TO WHY THE BUILDING CANNOT BE RETAINED AND RETURNED TO AN APPROPRIATE USE.**

**6.55** The number of buildings of special architectural and historic interest is limited. Accordingly, the Council is of the view that the presumption should be in favour of preservation except where a strong case can be made for granting consent. The factors which will be taken into account are:-

- (a) the relative importance of the Building and its contribution to the character of the area;

- (b) the architectural merit and historic interest of the Building - including historical associations, design, plan form, materials or the development of a particular style or technology;
- (c) the condition of the Building, the cost of repairing and maintaining it in relation to its importance, and whether it has already received or been promised grants from public funds. In estimating cost, however, account must be taken of the economic value of the repaired Building and of any saving through not having to provide alternative accommodation in a new building; and
- (d) the importance of any alternative use for the site and whether the use of the site for some public purpose would make it possible to enhance the environment and especially other Listed Buildings in the area.

**6.56** Specialist advice is available from the Council and should be sought before applications are made for Consent to alter or demolish Listed Buildings.

**6.57** The painting of the exterior may also require Listed Building Consent if it affects the character of the building, as may the repointing or painting of brickwork. Sand blasting as a method of cleaning old timbers or brickwork also requires Listed Building Consent and is rarely permitted because of the irreversible damage which it causes to the historic fabric of the Building.

**6.58** In considering any application for Listed Building Consent, the District Council is required to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the Building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

#### **POLICY HC12**

**THE COUNCIL WILL NOT GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR DEVELOPMENT WHICH COULD ADVERSELY AFFECT THE SETTING OF A LISTED BUILDING.**

**6.59** Development affecting the setting of a Listed Building need not be close to it. Work could be proposed some distance from it, but still be such as to significantly affect the way the Building would be seen, or the way it relates to other buildings and features.

**6.60** The advice of the District Council should

always be sought for proposals in the vicinity of Listed Buildings.

#### **The Adaptation or Change of Use of Listed Buildings**

**6.61** Many Listed Buildings, because of their design or structure, can no longer be used efficiently for the purposes for which they were built. In extreme cases, some have become redundant. Where it is essential to the retention of a Listed Building, the Council may give favourable consideration to new uses as an exception to general policies. Any conversion or change of use should involve minimum adaptation of the original structure or fabric and should detract as little as possible from the special architectural or historic interest of the Building.

**6.62** The Council will pay strict attention to the curtilage and setting of Listed Buildings and, consequently, permitted development rights under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 may be withdrawn. Where Listed Buildings are within the Green Belt, Policy GB8 and para 5.47 will also apply.

#### **POLICY HC13**

**THE ADAPTATION OR CONVERSION OF A LISTED BUILDING TO A NEW USE MAY BE PERMITTED WHERE:**

- (i) **THIS CAN BE SHOWN TO BE THE ONLY WAY TO RETAIN THE SPECIAL ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC INTEREST OF THE BUILDING; AND**
- (iii) **ANY PROPOSED ALTERATIONS RESPECT AND CONSERVE THE INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BUILDING AND DO NOT DIMINISH ITS SPECIAL ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC INTEREST; AND**
- (iv) **THE IMMEDIATE AND WIDER LANDSCAPE SETTINGS OF THE BUILDING ARE RESPECTED.**

**SUBSTANTIAL RECONSTRUCTIONS OR EXTENSIONS, AND SUB-DIVISIONS INTO MORE THAN ONE UNIT WILL NOT BE PERMITTED. CONDITIONS MAY BE IMPOSED TO CONTROL LAND USE OR DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE CONVERTED BUILDING.**

**6.63** The internal and external characteristics referred to in criterion (ii) include:

- (a) the original structure, cladding materials and external openings;
- (b) the internal spatial character;
- (c) the skyline silhouette and roof plans.

**6.64** In order to implement this policy the Council will strongly encourage the submission of fully detailed applications for development. In particular cases, uses such as offices, storage or manufacturing may be preferable to residential conversions, subject to amenity and highway considerations. The conversion of rural buildings, especially barns, should not conflict with the agricultural interests of the area.

**6.65** Sometimes it will be impossible to provide for a new use without more substantial alterations. Decisions will be made by assessing whether it is more important to retain a Building in its existing form, but perhaps risking its eventual loss through lack of maintenance, or whether to accept that retention and upkeep can only be guaranteed if alterations are made which may lessen the overall architectural or historic interest of the Building.

#### HERITAGE SITES

##### Copped Hall, Epping.

**6.66** Copped Hall is an ancient hunting park and rural estate dating from the 12th century or earlier and has long-standing associations with Waltham Abbey. It is one of the most important historic sites in the District. The Hall, its outbuildings and surrounding parkland are a major feature of the Epping/Waltham Abbey area. The site was designated a Conservation Area in 1984. It contains the remains of a magnificent mid-eighteenth century mansion (which was gutted by fire in 1917), and the site of two previous halls. The mansion, rackets court, garden pavilions and other structures, and kitchen garden wall, are all Grade II Listed Buildings. The Gate Lodges (London Entrance Drive) are Grade II\* Listed Buildings.

**6.67** The location of Copped Hall within the Green Belt, and its special historic, architectural and heritage importance, are the overriding policy considerations relating to the future use of the site.

#### POLICY HC14

**THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE PROPOSALS FOR THE RESTORATION**

**AND/OR REUSE OF COPPED HALL AND ITS OUTBUILDINGS (IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP) PROVIDED THAT:-**

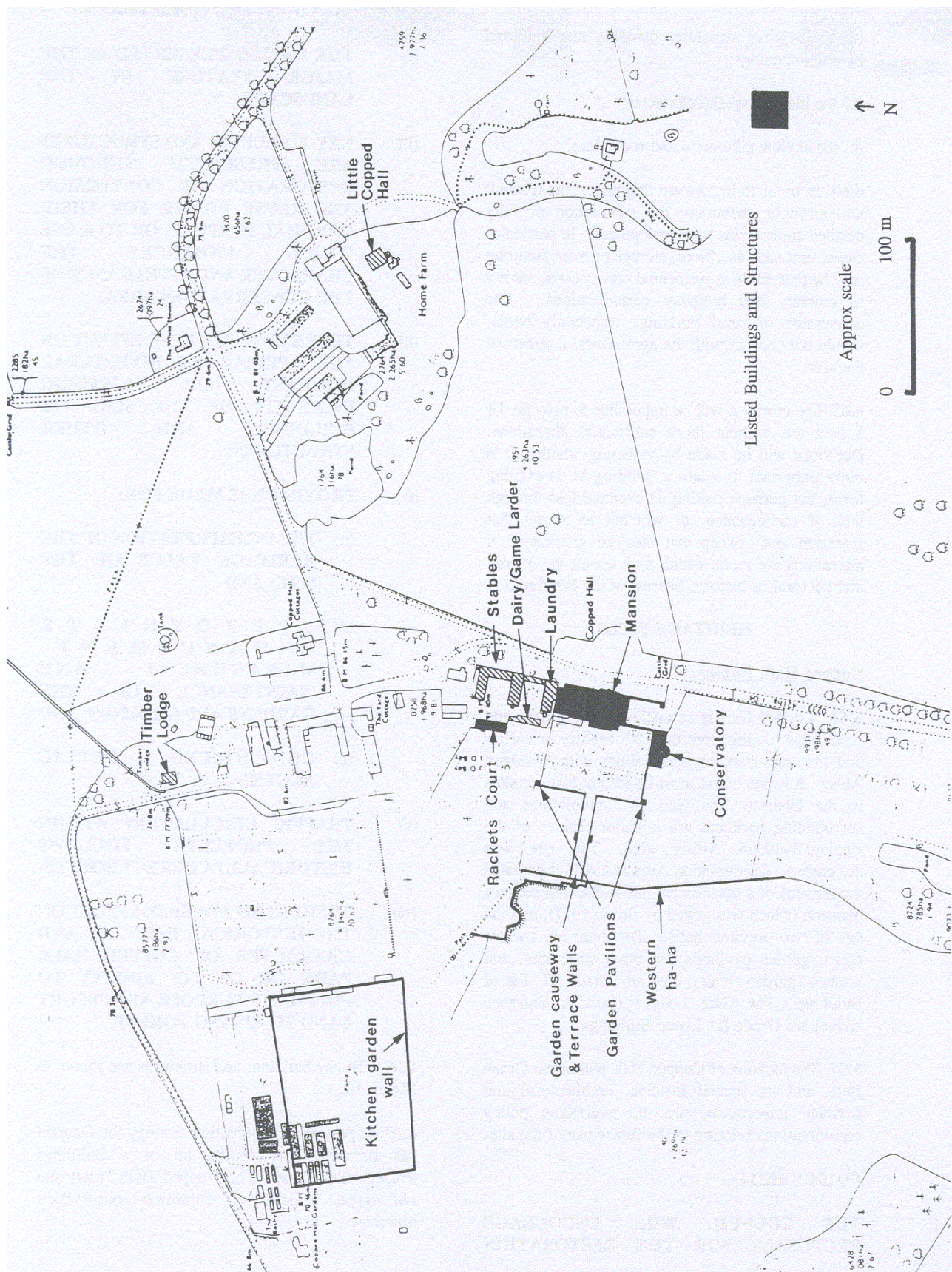
- (i) **THE HALL IS PRESERVED AS THE MAJOR FEATURE IN THE LANDSCAPE;**
- (ii) **KEY BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES ARE PRESERVED THROUGH RESTORATION OR CONVERSION AND REUSE EITHER FOR THEIR ORIGINAL PURPOSE, OR TO A USE WHICH ENHANCES THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE CONSERVATION AREA;**
- (iii) **THERE IS NO ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE SPECIAL ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST OR HISTORIC INTEGRITY OF THE SITE, ITS BUILDINGS AND OTHER STRUCTURES;**
- (iv) **PROVISION IS MADE FOR:**
  - (a) **THE INTERPRETATION OF THE HERITAGE VALUE OF THE SITE; AND**
  - (b) **APPROPRIATE ENHANCEMENT, MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF THE GARDENS AND GROUNDS; AND**
  - (c) **CONTROLLED PUBLIC ACCESS;**
- (v) **TRAFFIC CIRCULATION WITHIN THE PROPERTY FOLLOWS HISTORICALLY CORRECT ROUTES;**
- (vi) **THERE IS NO ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE HISTORICAL INTEREST AND CHARACTER OF COPPED HALL PARK OR ON ITS ABILITY TO FULFIL ITS PURPOSE AS SUPPORT LAND TO EPPING FOREST.**

**6.68** The key buildings and structures are shown in Figure 10.

**6.69** As part of a conservation strategy, the Council has promoted the setting up of a Buildings Preservation Trust (The Copped Hall Trust) and has agreed a series of minimum conservation objectives.

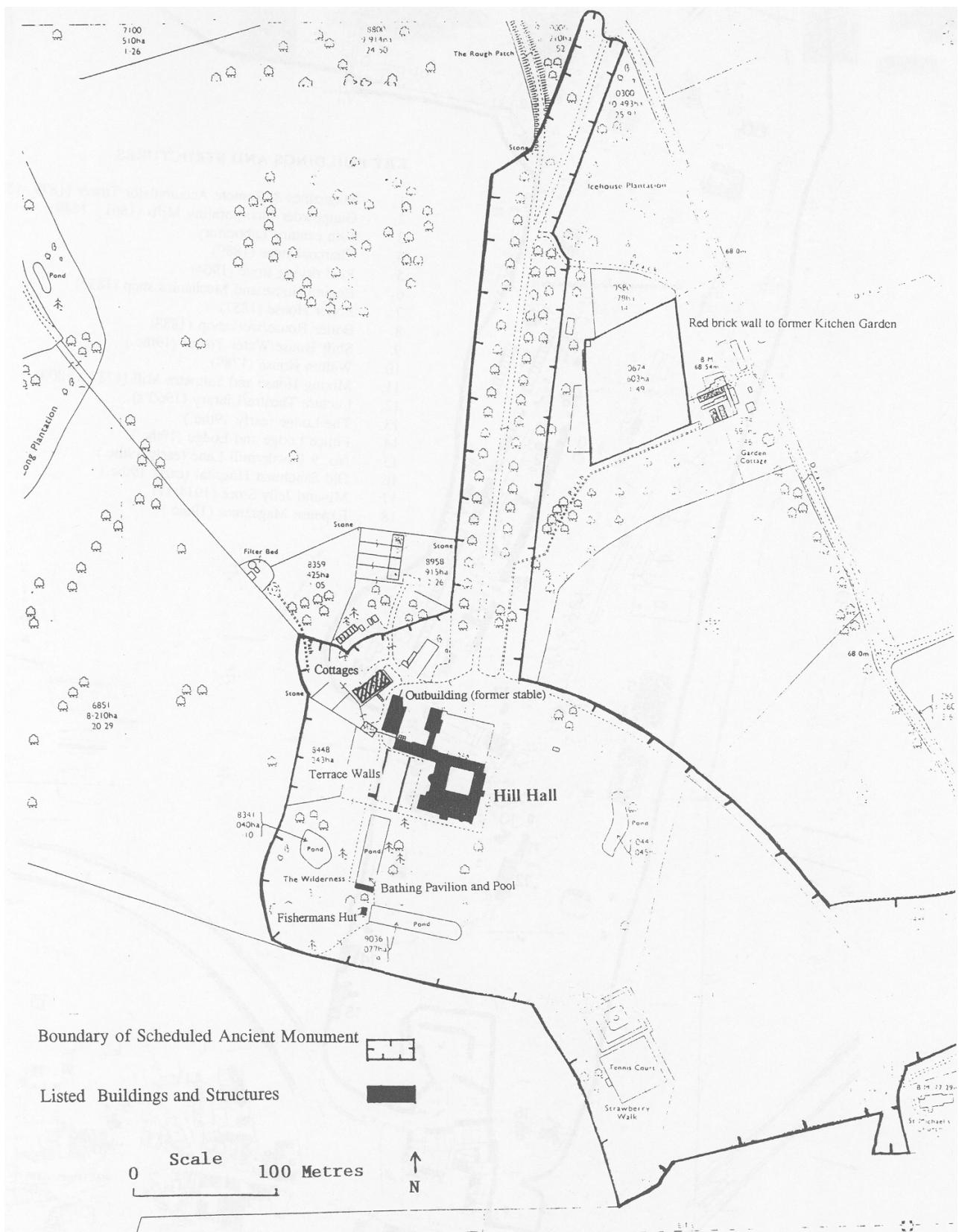


Figure 10 : Copped Hall - Key buildings and structures

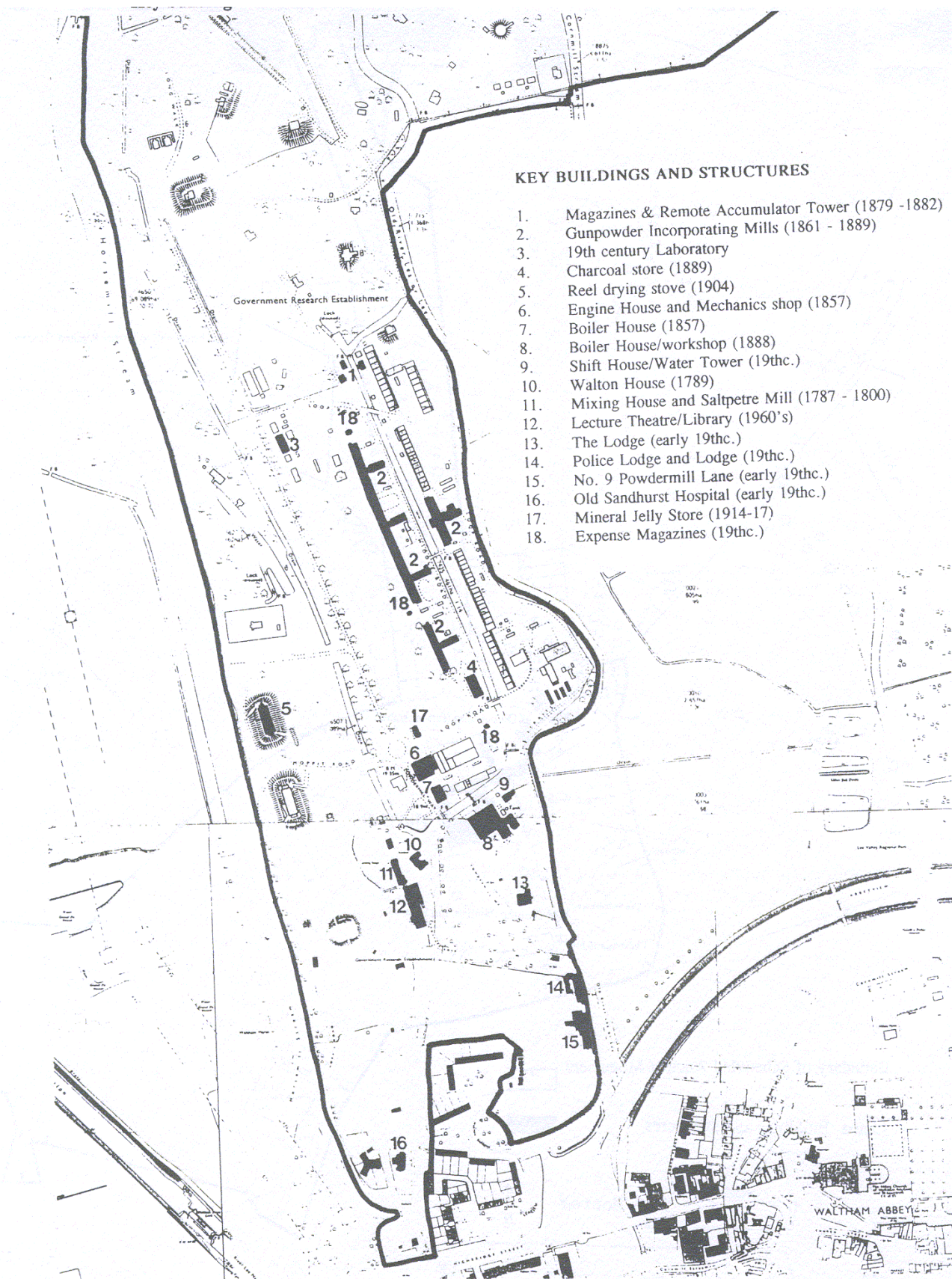




**Figure 11 : Hill Hall - Key buildings and structures**



**Figure 12 : Former Gunpowder Factory site - Key buildings and structures**



It should be noted, however, that this strategy does not preclude the possible restoration and reuse of the mansion in the longer term. The objectives are as follows:-

- (a) to preserve the mansion as a ruin in the landscape in a structurally stable and secure condition;
- (b) to preserve the other key buildings and structures on the site through their restoration/conversion and reuse either for their original purpose, or to a use which enhances the character and appearance of the Conservation Area;
- (c) in conjunction with (b) above, the establishment of a permanent physical presence on the site to provide security and deter further vandalism;
- (d) to enhance, manage and maintain the gardens and grounds to allow for controlled public access; and
- (e) to seek the unification of the mansion, outbuildings and gardens and their management as a single historic unit.

#### **Hill Hall, Theydon Mount.**

**6.70** Hill Hall is a substantial country house, now largely ruined following a fire in 1969. The Hall is a Grade I Listed, Early Renaissance brick house built between 1569-75, possibly replacing an earlier house, occupied since the 12th century, on the same site. Hill Hall represents a landmark in the introduction of Renaissance Forms into English Architecture. The site is also a Registered Historic Park and Garden (Grade II) covering over 50 hectares, substantial parts of which were designed by Repton in 1791.

**6.71** The House still contains late 16th century wall-paintings which have been described as "the most important survival of Elizabethan decorative figure painting in England." The site is also a Scheduled Ancient Monument on account of its special archaeological interest.

**6.72** Hill Hall is currently owned by the Crown and is in the custody of English Heritage. The location of the property within the Green Belt, its outstanding historic importance and international architectural significance, are the over-riding policy considerations relating to the future use of the site. A Conservation Area was designated in December 1996.

#### **POLICY HC15**

**THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE PROPOSALS FOR THE RESTORATION AND REUSE OF HILL HALL (IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP) PROVIDED THAT:-**

- (i) **THE HALL IS PRESERVED AS THE MAJOR FEATURE IN THE LANDSCAPE;**
- (ii) **THE KEY BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES ARE PRESERVED THROUGH SENSITIVE CONVERSION AND REUSE;**
- (iii) **THE SCHEME DOES NOT DETRACT FROM THE SETTING OF THE HALL OR OTHER LISTED BUILDINGS ON THE SITE;**
- (iv) **THE SCHEME INCORPORATES ADEQUATE PROVISION FOR PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE SIGNIFICANT PARTS OF THE BUILDING;**
- (v) **TRAFFIC CIRCULATION WITHIN THE PROPERTY FOLLOWS HISTORICALLY CORRECT ROUTES.**

**6.73** The Council will shortly be publishing a Planning Brief for the site. Any proposals for its future use will need to comply with the Brief. Acceptable uses may include: hotel and associated leisure facilities; multiple residential; healthcare; leisure; and cultural/educational. The key buildings and structures are shown in Figure 11. The "significant parts of the building" are the exterior, courtyard, great hall and the north range rooms containing the wall paintings.

#### **The Royal Gunpowder Factory (RARDE) Site, Waltham Abbey.**

**6.74** This extensive site represents the finest example of gunpowder and explosives development and manufacturing in Britain. The site has been continuously used for explosives production since Tudor times, and was an early example of "nationalisation" when it became the Government's Royal Powder Mills in 1787. The site supplied powder for the guns of Trafalgar and Waterloo, and, it is alleged, both sides in the American Civil War.

**6.75** The site contains a wide variety of buildings and structures, including former steam-powered gunpowder mills, a rare example of a water-powered gunpowder press, a two-level waterway

system and other artefacts. The northern half of the site comprises the largest area of Alder woodland in the country and is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) supporting the largest heronry in Essex. The site is also a designated Conservation Area.

**6.76** In December 1992 planning permission (subject to a legal agreement) was granted for the residential redevelopment of that part of the site which lies outside the Green Belt. The remainder of the site lies wholly within the Green Belt.

**6.77** The Waltham Abbey Royal Gunpowder Mills (W.A.R.G.M.) Charitable Foundation was established in March 1997 and now holds the freehold of the site with the exception of the 3.64 ha. of housing land on the western flank (as shown on the Proposals Map). Outline planning permission was granted in March 1997 for the use of the site (63 ha.) for heritage, leisure and recreation uses with supporting commercial uses (as well as the 3.64 ha. of residential development).

**6.78** The purpose of the W.A.R.G.M. Charitable Foundation is to manage and preserve the historical and archaeological heritage of the site and its natural features and wildlife. An operating charitable company has also been established which will be responsible for the development of the site. This will involve running a museum and interpretation centre as well as educational and fund raising activities.

## POLICY HC16

**THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE PROPOSALS FOR THE RESTORATION AND REUSE OF THE BUILDINGS ON THE FORMER ROYAL GUNPOWDER FACTORY SITE (IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP) PROVIDED THAT:-**

- (i) **THE PROPOSALS RELATE TO THE USE OF THE WHOLE SITE AND RECOGNISE ITS UNIQUE HERITAGE AND NATURE CONSERVATION VALUE;**
- (ii) **THE KEY BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES ARE PRESERVED THROUGH SENSITIVE CONVERSION AND REUSE;**
- (iii) **THE PROPOSALS INCORPORATE SATISFACTORY DECONTAMINATION MEASURES;**
- (iv) **A GUNPOWDER HERITAGE MUSEUM/INTERPRETATION**

**CENTRE IS CREATED WITH ASSOCIATED VISITOR/EDUCATION FACILITIES ON SITE; AND**

- (v) **THE AMOUNT AND LOCATION OF ANY NEW DEVELOPMENT IS JUSTIFIED, TO THE COUNCIL'S SATISFACTION, AS EITHER:-**

- (a) **REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING BUILDINGS NOT SUBJECT TO (ii) ABOVE; OR**
- (b) **AN ESSENTIAL COMPONENT OF AN ACCEPTABLE PLAN FOR THE WHOLE SITE.**

**6.79** The key buildings and structures are shown in Figure 12. Prior to the commencement of any development, discussions should take place with the Environment Agency to ensure that adequate protection measures (involving river corridors, potential contamination of ground and surface water, and flooding) are incorporated in any future scheme.

## APPROVAL OF DETAILS OF DEMOLITION

**6.80** In addition to demolition of Listed Buildings and buildings in a Conservation Area other demolition has now been brought under planning control. At the present time, this additional control is only able to be exercised over the demolition of dwellings and buildings attached to dwellings. Even then permitted development rights apply and in those cases a developer is required to apply to the local planning authority for a determination as to whether prior approval is necessary for certain aspects of the demolition - namely the method of demolition and the restoration of the site.

**6.81** This control will serve primarily to enable the Council to control:-

- . **the demolition of houses in areas in which other properties remain occupied;**
- . **the occurrence of gap sites; and,**
- . **the appearance of any gap sites created.**

**6.82** It is anticipated that such controls will need to be exercised infrequently in view of the limited circumstances in which demolition is subject to control. Only in cases where it is considered that a specific proposal is likely to have a significant impact upon local amenity will it be necessary to require the formal submission of the appropriate details for consideration.

**6.83** The following policy will therefore apply:-

**POLICY HC17**

**IN DECIDING WHETHER TO REQUIRE AN APPLICATION FOR DEMOLITION WORK AND IN DETERMINING SUCH AN APPLICATION THE COUNCIL WILL HAVE REGARD TO:-**

**(i) THE VISUAL SENSITIVITY AND PROMINENCE OF THE SITE IN ITS SURROUNDINGS;**

**(ii) THE PROXIMITY TO DWELLINGS AND LIKELY NOISE OR OTHER NUISANCES; AND**

**(iii) ANY OTHER SITE-SPECIFIC CIRCUMSTANCES.**

**6.84** "Proximity to dwellings" relates essentially to the amount of noise that is likely to result. This will be controlled by a planning condition on the hours of operation of the demolition and clearance works.

**6.85** Applications for approval of the appropriate details submitted as a result of this policy will be considered in accordance with normal development control criteria.

**Environmental Implications**

**6.86** The policies in this chapter will achieve these aims (see pages 24 and 25):-

(xix) To attract visitors to appropriate recreational/tourist facilities in the District.

(xxi) To protect and where possible enhance the character of existing residential areas.

(xxii) To secure a high standard of design in all new development.

(xxiii) To protect and where possible enhance the character and environmental qualities of the countryside.

(xxx) To protect the Green Belt from development which is unnecessary or undesirable.

(xxxi) To safeguard and, where possible, enhance the District's historical and archaeological heritage.

(xxxiv) To make the most efficient use of land and buildings wherever practicable.

**6.87** The environmental implications of these policies will be concentrated upon the retention and enhancement of the cultural heritage (in the form of sites, buildings and features) at both the global/national and the local scales (see Appendix 2). In view of this the character of both the urban and rural environments will benefit accordingly.

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## **7. Nature Conservation**

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## **Introduction**

**7.1** Nature conservation deals with the protection and management of:-

- a) plant and animal species; and in some circumstances
- b) geological features and land form.

**7.2** It should be seen as an extension of the concept of sustainable development because, as well as ensuring that current levels of resources are maintained for the benefit of future generations, it is also concerned with enhancement of the natural environment.

**7.3** Effective nature conservation requires three approaches, which do not work satisfactorily in isolation from each other. These are:-

- a) protecting, managing and enhancing sites of recognised importance;
- b) implementing policies and land management practices which will help to maintain or improve the ecological value and variety of the District; and
- c) ensuring that proper account is taken of species which are protected by law.

**7.4** Inevitably these approaches involve issues which sometimes extend beyond the scope of the planning system. The Council intends to prepare a corporate Nature Conservation Strategy and will publish Supplementary Planning Guidance as appropriate.

## **Policy Context**

**7.5** Government guidance is given in PPG9 'Nature Conservation'. The main points are:-

- a) to emphasise a commitment to sustainable development and to conserving national wildlife diversity;
- b) to note the increasing significance of international law (especially EC objectives) and, in particular, the need to include policies encouraging management of important habitats;
- c) to highlight the importance of both statutory sites (e.g. Sites of Special Scientific Interest) and local sites (e.g. County Wildlife Sites) as long as identification of the latter has been based on adequate surveys;

- d) to propose a hierarchical planning policy approach which will reflect the relative importance of sites;
- e) to establish development control criteria, particularly for nationally and internationally important sites;
- f) to consider the implications for species (rather than site) protection;
- g) to recognise the importance of wildlife for local communities.

**7.6** Policies in the Structure Plan differentiate between National Nature Reserves (none in this District), Sites of Special Scientific Interest, nature reserves and 'important wildlife habitats'. They are generally reactive although proposals for new nature reserves will be encouraged. The importance of the inter-relationship of habitats is highlighted.

## **SITE AND HABITAT PROTECTION**

### **Special Protection Areas (SPAs)**

**7.7** The EC "Birds Directive" requires member states to preserve a sufficient diversity of habitats (the SPAs) for all species of wild birds naturally occurring within their territories.

**7.8** SPAs are designated by the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions using advice from English Nature. The Government is required to take appropriate steps to avoid any significant pollution or deterioration of these habitats, or any other similarly significant disturbance to the birds, except where there is an 'over-riding' public interest. Parts of the Lee Valley are currently proposed for designation - a formal recognition of its outstanding importance for waterfowl. One of these areas is within the District (the Royal Gunpowder Factory woodlands at Waltham Abbey) and one (King George's Reservoir) directly abuts the District boundary with the London Borough of Enfield.

### **Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)**

**7.9** These also originate from the EC (the 'Habitats Directive') and will be similarly designated. SACs include natural and semi-natural habitats and other sites containing species of Community importance. Member states will be required to take measures to maintain or restore such habitats and species at or to safe levels for conservation. The main area of Epping Forest has been proposed as a SAC although formal designation is not expected until the latter part of the decade.

**7.10** SPAs and SACs together are intended to create a network of key sites throughout the Community to be known as Natura 2000. The sites that will form the British contribution to this network will almost invariably be of national importance and will already have been notified as Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

### **Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)**

**7.11** SSSIs are designated by English Nature and are selected for their value in terms of flora or fauna, or their geological or physiographical (i.e. landform) features. The designation will include a list of operations which are likely to cause damage to the Sites - this extends well beyond any works which may require planning permission. Owners and occupiers are obliged to notify English Nature before carrying out any of the specified operations.

**7.12** In nature conservation terms, the significance of SSSIs cannot be overstated. Taken as a whole, these sites represent only the minimum diversity of habitats of identified value. Individually, each site makes its own unique contribution to the whole. Damage to, or destruction of, any of the sites must inevitably have consequences for the success of nature conservation policy at a national level. For these reasons the District Council will operate a very strong presumption against inappropriate development in or near SSSIs. As SSSIs are notified to all owners and occupiers and registered as local land charges, anybody wishing to submit a planning application will be made aware of the status of the land.

**7.13** The District currently contains 8 notified SSSIs. These are:-

- a) Epping Forest (including Wintry Wood, Epping; Garnon Bushes, Coopersale; Yardley Hill, Sewardstonebury; and Lord's Bushes, Buckhurst Hill);
- b) Hainault Forest (only partly within the District);
- c) Royal Gunpowder Factory Woodlands, Waltham Abbey (the proposed SPA);
- d) Roding Valley Meadows (between Loughton and Chigwell);
- e) Cornmill Stream and Old River Lea, Waltham Abbey;
- f) Hunsdon Mead, Roydon (only partly within the District);

g) Turnford and Cheshunt Pits; and

h) River Lee Diversion (a very small part of the Chingford Reservoirs SSSI).

**7.14** Planning authorities are now required to consult English Nature about proposed developments in SSSIs. The DETR withdrew permitted development rights for temporary recreational uses within SSSIs. Planning permission is therefore now required for war (paint-ball) games, motorsports or clay pigeon shooting.

**7.15** Proposals outside but close to identified SSSIs may also have serious repercussions. English Nature is to define 'consultation areas' around the most important sites. The Council will then be required to consult English Nature about development proposals in these areas.

**7.16** Three SSSIs abut the District boundary. These are Curtismill Green (near Stapleford Abbots); Hospital Wood, Harlow; and King George's Reservoir, Chingford. Two SSSIs are very close to, but do not abut, the District. These are Parndon Wood, Harlow and Rye Meads meadows and lagoons near Stanstead Abbots. The latter site is also a proposed SPA.

### **POLICY NC1**

**THE COUNCIL WILL REFUSE PLANNING PERMISSION FOR ANY DEVELOPMENT OR LAND USE CHANGE WHICH COULD DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY DESTROY OR ADVERSELY AFFECT A SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST. THE COUNCIL WILL COMPLY WITH THE U.K.'s INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS FOR THOSE SSSIs DESIGNATED OR PROPOSED AS SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS OR SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION.**

**7.17** The 8 SSSIs notified at the time of publication of this Plan are shown on the Proposals Map. The policy will also apply to any SSSIs which may subsequently be proposed and designated.

### **County Wildlife Sites (CoWSs) - previously known as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs)**

**7.18** Designation of sites for European and national purposes does not ensure that a minimum diversity of habitats is identified at regional, county or local levels. The Council is therefore justified in identifying sufficient habitats on a local basis to ensure that a local minimum diversity can be protected and maintained.

**7.19** Essex Wildlife Trust has carried out and published a habitat survey of the District, using guidelines established by English Nature. The survey provides definitive information on the location of all remaining semi-natural habitats in the District and therefore complements the details of those sites already singled out for their importance at international or national levels. It enabled the Trust to identify CoWSs which are the best examples of semi-natural habitats and which represent the full range of such habitats throughout the District (and, eventually, the County). Policy NC2 applies to those CoWSs which do not have statutory protection.

## **POLICY NC2**

**DEVELOPMENT OR LAND USE CHANGE WHICH COULD DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY DESTROY OR HAVE AN ADVERSE EFFECT UPON A COUNTY WILDLIFE SITE WILL BE REFUSED UNLESS IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED THAT THE REASONS FOR THE PROPOSAL CLEARLY OUTWEIGH THE NEED TO SAFEGUARD THE INTRINSIC NATURE CONSERVATION VALUE OF THE SITE OR FEATURE.**

**7.20** The Proposals Map shows all the CoWSs identified by the Wildlife Trust from the survey in the early 1990s and from a partial re-survey in 1996 which both added and deleted some sites. It is inevitable that some habitats will decline in importance because of unavoidable changes of use or management. Other sites of value will also be discovered. The register of CoWSs will therefore be monitored and updated as necessary in consultation with the Trust. Within the context of these changes the Council considers that the protection of CoWSs is critical to the success of nature conservation policies at District and County levels. The policy will not apply to any sites which may be deleted, but will apply to sites which are subsequently designated.

**7.21** It is not considered feasible to designate 'consultation zones' around each of the CoWSs but the Council will endeavour to ensure that the potential impact of proposals close to any of the sites is properly assessed. This will also apply to applications which may affect CoWSs abutting or close to the District boundary.

**7.22** In determining relevant planning applications the Council will implement policies NC1 and NC2 by:-

- a) requiring an environmental statement in all cases where a statutorily protected site is affected and in those cases where other CoWSs may be adversely affected;

- b) consulting the appropriate body on the likely ecological impact of the proposals;
- c) taking into account the context of the designation of the site in relation to the reasons or justifications for the proposal;
- d) considering whether there are alternative suitable sites, of less wildlife value, available for the proposal; and
- e) considering whether there are other options which would significantly lessen or minimise the ecological costs.

**7.23** There may be circumstances where the public need or justification for a development over-rides the nature conservation value of a site or feature. The Council, in consultation with other authoritative bodies, will need to be satisfied that no other more acceptable alternatives exist. On those rare occasions where the Council is obliged to grant permission for a development likely to affect a site subject to Policy NC1, provision to alleviate the loss will be required. The need to replace habitat protected by Policy NC2 will be decided by assessing:-

- i). the particular value of the affected site; and
- ii). the potential impact of the loss of the site on the total of the remaining stock of similar CoWSs.

## **POLICY NC3**

**IN CASES WHERE A COUNTY WILDLIFE SITE WILL BE HARMED BY, OR LOST TO, DEVELOPMENT, THE COUNCIL WILL EXPECT SATISFACTORY ARRANGEMENTS TO BE MADE FOR AN ALTERNATIVE HABITAT OF AT LEAST EQUIVALENT WILDLIFE VALUE.**

**7.24** This policy will be implemented using appropriate legal agreements, in accordance with Policy I1. Creating or recreating habitats may necessitate using relatively large areas to ensure that established habitat can be adequately replaced in the long term.

### **Established features of local interest**

**7.25** The retention of established habitat is almost always preferable to the creation of new or replacement features. It can take many years for

new habitats, however carefully designed, to settle and become colonised by appropriate local species and consequently to develop local importance for wildlife. For these reasons, the Council is keen to ensure that established features of local interest for nature conservation are taken properly into account when development proposals are being prepared and considered.

#### **POLICY NC4**

**DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS WILL BE EXPECTED TO MAKE ADEQUATE PROVISION FOR THE PROTECTION, ENHANCEMENT AND SUITABLE MANAGEMENT OF ESTABLISHED HABITATS OF LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE FOR WILDLIFE. SUCH PROVISION MAY BE MORE STRINGENT WHEN THERE ARE KNOWN TO BE PROTECTED SPECIES EITHER ON THE SITE OR LIKELY TO BE AFFECTED BY THE DEVELOPMENT.**

**7.26** Habitats covered by this policy include, but are not limited to:-

- (a) semi-natural woodland - i.e. that which does not obviously originate from planting;
- (b) secondary woodland - i.e. areas not continuously wooded since 1600 and which have acquired tree cover on sites known to have been grazing land, open fields or heathland;
- (c) hedgerows and other natural boundaries;
- (d) green lanes, other public rights of way and road verges;
- (e) permanent pasture or unimproved grassland;
- (f) water meadows and marshes;
- (g) ponds and watercourses (including rivers, navigable waterways, ditches and streams);
- (h) disturbed or recently restored land such as gravel pits;
- (i) unused and semi-derelict land which is being colonised by scrub and other invasive plants;
- (j) individual features such as pollarded trees;
- (k) churchyards and allotments.

**7.27** The Council will implement this policy using appropriate planning conditions and by looking to

enter into legal agreements with the developer in accordance with Policy I1.

**7.28** The Wildlife and Countryside Acts protect named species of plants and animals from being intentionally killed, damaged or taken from the wild. The lists of these species are regularly updated. The Acts also protect the nests or places of shelter and protection of the named animals.

#### **HABITAT MANAGEMENT AND CREATION**

##### **Countryside**

**7.29** Management of habitats aimed at maintaining or improving wildlife value and variety is an essential tool of nature conservation. The successful introduction of the Countryside project in 1986, and its establishment as a permanent service, is an indication of the Council's interest and concern about this issue. Countryside works with landowners, local Councils and voluntary organisations and individuals to improve public access to the countryside and to introduce and explain management techniques which are of benefit to wildlife and the landscape. The use of management plans for sites or individual tasks is an increasingly important part of the activities of Countryside.

##### **Management of Council-owned land**

**7.30** The Environmental Charter indicates that the Council will be pursuing 'environmentally conscious management of land within its care'. Recent examples of this include:-

- a) the reintroduction of coppice management in the woodland adjoining Chigwell Row Recreation Ground and that part of Roughalloy's Wood, North Weald which is north of the former Central Line railway;
- b) management of Roding Valley Meadows (see para 7.31) and Linder's (Field, Buckhurst Hill to enhance their wildlife interest wetland meadow as and grassland respectively;
- c) the creation and management of a wet meadow and pond off Church Lane, North Weald which also acts as a flood alleviation scheme for the village.

##### **Nature Reserves**

**7.31** These can be established either by English Nature or by local authorities (after consultation with English Nature). The purpose of their designation is to promote study of the natural

features and to encourage their preservation either by agreement or by the use of bye-laws. The Council has exercised this power once so that, in 1986, the Roding Valley Meadows Local Nature Reserve was established. A management agreement with Essex Wildlife Trust was entered into and this runs for 21 years from the date of establishment. The Council will use this power again as appropriate.

### **Management Agreements**

**7.32** The Council may seek to enter into agreements with owners or occupiers of land to conserve or enhance the natural beauty or amenity of that land and to promote its enjoyment by the public. The relevant power is included in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

### **Other initiatives**

**7.33** Grant schemes and other incentives which promote nature conservation have been, or are being, introduced by a number of public bodies. The Council believes that nature conservation in the District would benefit significantly from wider public uptake of, and involvement in, these schemes.

## **POLICY NC5**

**THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE OWNERS AND OCCUPIERS OF LAND TO PARTICIPATE IN SCHEMES WHICH PROMOTE THE AIMS OF NATURE CONSERVATION BY:-**

- (i) ADOPTING LESS INTENSIVE FORMS OF LAND MANAGEMENT;**
- (ii) RE-INTRODUCING TRADITIONAL MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES FOR EXISTING WILDLIFE HABITATS; AND**
- (iii) CREATING NEW HABITATS-**

### **Environmental Implications**

**7.34** The policies in this chapter will make a significant contribution to the achievement of the following aims of the Plan (see pages 24 and 25):-

(xxiii) To protect and, where possible, enhance the character and environmental qualities of the countryside.

(xxxiii) To safeguard and, where possible, enhance the District's tree cover, flora and wildlife.

(xxxviii) To enable the continued implementation of the Council's Environmental Charter.

**7.35** The extent to which the policies have regard to, and are likely to impact upon, environmental considerations is set out in Appendix 2. This broadly indicates that the policies are likely to have a two-fold effect.

**7.36** The first is on wildlife habitats and sites safeguarded because of the habitats they provide or their geological or geomorphological interest. These sites will be subject to varying degrees of protection and, if habitats are to be lost to development, adequate alternatives required. Successful implementation will also result in an improvement in the amount and type of habitats provided and consequently the variety and success of wildlife in the District.

**7.37** The second effect will be upon the appearance of the landscape in both urban and rural areas. The overall result of successful implementation will generally be an enhancement of the amount of trees and hedges which will diversify and enhance the character of the towns and the countryside.

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# LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

“The local plan sets out detailed policies and specific proposals for the development and use of land.....”

PPG12 “Development Plans and Regional Planning Guidance”  
Department of the Environment, February 1992

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## 9. Housing

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## **Introduction**

**9.1** There is consistent demand for further housing in the District because of:-

- its proximity to central London and other major employment centres (e.g. Harlow and Stansted Airport);
- the accessibility of the urban areas to the motorway network and to the London Underground;
- the attractiveness of the surrounding countryside and villages; and
- the generally high standard of housing.

**9.2** House prices are consequently high, with Epping Forest District being the most expensive area in Essex. This means that many young people, whilst having been brought-up in the District, cannot afford to buy property and are therefore obliged to either rent locally instead or move out of the District (eg to Harlow). This may have a bearing upon the population structure of the District (see Figure 4) and the level of occupancy.

**9.3** There are approximately 48,900 dwellings in the District (as at March 1991), the tenure of which is as follows:-

**Table 3: Dwellings in District by Tenure Type:**

Private Sector	39,990	(81.8%)
Local Authority	8,040	(16.4%)
Housing Associations	730	(1.5%)
Other public authorities	140	(0.3%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>48,900</b>	

**Source: 1991 Census adjusted by electoral registration data.**

**9.4** There are more large dwellings than average for the County in the private sector, although there are several areas of older, poorer housing in both urban and rural areas. The use of the dwellings compares well with the County average for overcrowding, although the incidence of under-occupation is higher than both the County and national average. The increasing number of one and two person households, especially of retirement age, means that under-occupation is likely to increase since there is a general shortage of suitable small units of accommodation in the private sector stock. The percentage of private sector rented accommodation is low, with a high proportion tending to be detached or semi-detached houses rented to local businesses, etc.

**9.5** A sample survey of the private sector housing stock during 1992/93 revealed that on average:-

- 27% of private dwellings meet a "target standard" relating to state of repair, basic amenities and a prospective life of at least 30 years; and
- 11.5% of properties were found to be 'unfit'. This figure is twice that previously assumed using data from the National House Condition Survey, as related to the south eastern region of the country.

**9.6** The stock of Council housing is in a generally sound condition although it does feature a number of properties of pre-cast reinforced concrete (PRC) and non-traditional construction that need substantial repairs and improvements. The good condition of the Council's stock is due to the operation of a planned maintenance approach.

## **Government Guidance**

**9.7** Government guidance is given in PPG3 and Circular 13/96 "Planning and Affordable Housing." The essence, insofar as it relates to this District, is as follows:-

- sufficient land should be made available to meet the Structure Plan guideline for additional housing;
- authorities should aim to ensure the availability of five years' supply of housing land;
- Plans should make full and effective use of land in urban areas and achieve a reasonable balance between the need to make adequate provision for development, and the need to protect open land from development;
- sites for new housing should be well-related, in scale and location, to existing development; and
- authorities may include policies seeking to negotiate the provision of "affordable" housing in perpetuity, subject to demonstrable need.

**9.8** Circular 13/96 supplements PPG3 by amplifying the Government's preferred approach to planning and affordable housing. It states that authorities should:-

- define what they regard as affordable housing;
- indicate the number of affordable dwellings needed, set targets for suitable sites and indicate the intention to negotiate; and

- include policies to meet the need (through conversions etc.)

**9.9** The statutory duty of local authorities to provide sites for gypsies was removed by the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994. Circular 1/94 Gypsy Sites and Planning re-emphasised the need for local planning authorities to make adequate gypsy site provision in their Development Plans following the repeal of the Caravan Sites Act of 1968. It does, however, state that "gypsy sites are not regarded as being amongst those uses of land which are normally appropriate in Green Belts."

### **County Policy**

**9.10** The Essex Structure Plan Second Alteration states that the general distribution of new dwellings in Essex, between 1986 and 2001, should involve 4,300 (gross) (4,100 net) in Epping Forest District. The figure has been increased from 3,650 (gross) to take account of revised household projections indicating a greater requirement for new dwellings, particularly due to Stansted-related growth. The suggested revised strategy increases the overall supply by 14,050 across the County, including a further 650 in this District.

**9.11** The general programming of the previous figure is set out below:-

**Table 4: General Programme of Housing Development**

1986-1991	1991-1996	1996-2001	1986-2001
1,750	1,400	500	3,650

### **Source: Essex Structure Plan: First Alteration**

It shows that the distribution is 'front-loaded' with the emphasis upon development taking place in the first ten years of the Structure Plan period.

**9.12** It is Structure Plan policy to make provision for gypsy caravan sites and that all proposals will be assessed against:-

- the total number of gypsy families to be accommodated in Essex;
- migratory habits and areas of seasonal or permanent employment; and
- requirements in respect of permanent sites, transit sites and temporary stopping places in each District.

### **District Council Policy**

**9.13** The Council, in its role as housing authority, takes account of the needs of the resident population in its Housing Strategy. The policies of this Plan reflect this approach but also take account of the environmental consequences of development. These aim to:-

- (i) protect the character and appearance of the Green Belt;
- (ii) ensure that the quality of the urban environment is not adversely affected;
- (iii) reduce under-occupation of the existing stock; and
- (iv) improve sub-standard accommodation.

**9.14** Traditionally, the Council has been the main provider and developer of affordable rented housing in the District. However, legislative changes have resulted in the Council being effectively no longer able to provide new social housing itself. In order, to ensure that affordable housing is provided in the District, the Council has embraced the 'enabling' role advocated by the Government and is undertaking various initiatives and partnerships accordingly.

**9.15** The enabling role pursued by the Council to meet the District's housing needs takes different forms including the following:

- partnerships with Housing Associations for development;
- provision of Council land at nil cost to Housing Associations as a subsidy;
- provision of Local Authority Housing Association Grant;
- provision of guarantees for Housing Association private loans;
- use of planning powers to secure social housing;
- use of managing agents for single homelessness projects;
- partial Voluntary Stock Transfers to Housing Associations.

### **Housing Land Availability**

**9.16** In 1991, the Council took part in a tripartite study of housing land supply in the District over the period 1990-1995 with Essex County Council and the

House Builders' Federation. Although the study was undertaken in the light of the Essex Structure Plan: First Alteration (with its guideline of 3,650 (gross)), it concluded that there was a vast surplus of available land in both absolute and relative terms.

**9.17** According to the Second Alteration Structure Plan, the proposed guideline for new housing provision in Epping Forest District over the period 1986-2001 has been increased to 4,300 (gross) (4,100 net) (see para 9.10). Even with this revised guideline, the oversupply would still have been very substantial.

**9.18** The current anticipated "supply" of sites over the same period totals approximately 4,990 (see Table 5 below). The manner in which this relates to the sites allocated in Policy H2 below is set out in Appendix 4.

**Table 5: Land Requirement and Supply - Epping Forest District (1986-2001) as at 1 April 1995.**

	Dwellings (net)
(a) Requirement	
Housing Land Requirement 1986-2001	4,100
(b) Housing Land Supply 1986-95	
Dwelling Completions 1986-1995	3,291
(c) Housing Land Supply 1995-2001	
Planning consents on large sites, (12 or more units, including those subject to planning agreements)	978
Likely completions on small sites, (less than 12 units).	1801
Royal Ordnance site.	250
Other large sites with consent or likely to be granted planning permission.	295
Total (b) and (c)	4,994

1 Assumes 30 dwellings per year

**9.19** It will be apparent from the Table that there is a potential oversupply of some 890 dwellings (22%) over the guideline of 4,100, on the basis of existing commitments. This discrepancy between the potential supply and the identified 'need' is considered realistic, however, bearing in mind the need for some flexibility in land supply in a Green Belt district.

**9.20** SERPLAN's proposed additional provision for 80,000 additional dwellings in Essex between 1991 and 2006 has now been incorporated into RPG9. The distribution of future housing development in Essex will be a major aspect of the Replacement Structure Plan. However, the emphasis given to the continued protection of the Green Belt from inappropriate development is such that any future guideline for this District is likely to result from the availability of suitable sites rather than an actual perceived need.

**9.21** Consequently, it will not be necessary to release any further land in the Green Belt for development (besides the Royal Ordnance site (see Policy GB20)) during the Plan period. Indeed the current supply is such that the development of the available large (1 hectare or over) sites would have to be phased in order to ensure that it is not all taken up prior to 2001 for the reasons set out in para 18.15. The release of large sites for housing is therefore subject to phasing, in accordance with Policy I2.

## **POLICY H1**

**PROVISION IS MADE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN ADDITIONAL 4,100 DWELLINGS (NET) DURING THE PERIOD 1986-2001.**

### **Suitable Sites**

## **POLICY H2**

**THE COUNCIL WILL GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT FOR RESIDENTIAL PURPOSES OF THE FOLLOWING SITES (IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP) IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ESTIMATED (NET) DWELLING CAPACITIES SHOWN:-**

(i)	<b>LAND SOUTH OF PIKE WAY/PARK CLOSE,</b>	<b>40</b>
(ii)	<b>NORTH WEALD BASSETT FORMER 'FAT FACTORY', STAPLEFORD</b>	<b>20</b>
(iii)	<b>ABBOTTS NORTH FARM,</b>	
(iv)	<b>HIGH ROAD, LOUGHTON</b>	<b>160</b>
(v)	<b>LAND TO R/O HONEY LANE, WALTHAM ABBEY</b>	<b>145</b>
(vi)	<b>FORMER FAIRMEAD ANNEXE, PYRLES LANE, LOUGHTON</b>	<b>120</b>
(vii)	<b>FORMER BROOK SECONDARY SCHOOL, LOUGHTON</b>	<b>180</b>
	<b>FORMER EPPING FOREST HIGH SCHOOL</b>	

	<b>HEMECROFT GARDENS, LOUGHTON</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>(viii)</b>	<b>ROYAL ORDNANCE SITE, WALTHAM ABBEY</b>	<b>250</b>
<b>(ix)</b>	<b>POWDERMILL LANE (PART OF FORMER ROYAL GUNPOWDER SITE), WALTHAM ABBEY</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>(x)</b>	<b>BRENTWOOD ROAD, CHIPPING ONGAR</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>(xi)</b>	<b>SOUTH OF SHEERING MILL LANE, LOWER SHEERING; AND</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>(xii)</b>	<b>R.A.R.D.E. SITE, WALTHAM ABBAY</b>	<b>50</b>

**SUBJECT TO:-**

- (a) APPROPRIATE PHASING, IN  
ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY I2;**
- (b) ADEQUATE PROVISION OF  
APPROPRIATE "AFFORDABLE"  
DWELLINGS, IN ACCORDANCE  
WITH POLICY H5; AND**
- (c) COMPLIANCE WITH ALL OTHER  
RELEVANT PLAN POLICIES.**

**9.22** These sites are allocated for residential development because they fall into at least one of the following categories:-

- previously allocated for residential development in a Local Plan;
- already granted planning permission for residential development;
- redundant, or expected to become so within the Plan period, and would be suitable for residential development.

**9.23** In addition to the sites identified in this policy, others are likely to come forward during the Plan period. These "windfall sites" include:-

- smaller housing sites, less than 0.4 hectares (1 acre) in area which due to their size, are not shown on the Proposals Map although an allowance is made for them (see Table 5)
- larger sites for which no allowance is made in view of the tight constraint on the development of land in the District.

**9.24** All the identified school sites have been declared surplus to requirements by the education authority (i.e. the County Council). The District Council is prepared to see them developed for housing (see Policy CF6)

but this will not automatically apply to any other surplus school sites that may come forward.

**9.25** Sites (x) and (xi) are situated on the edge of the existing urban area and were identified for long term development for housing in the Epping and Ongar Local Plan. Had they not been considered appropriate for housing development in the long term, the sites would have previously been included within the Green Belt.

**9.26** The site at Sheering Mill Lane is part of a larger site which extends into the Green Belt. This larger site contains a number of derelict buildings and glasshouses, some of which are in the Green Belt. Also within this part of the site are moorings and a boatyard along the River Stort. A Development Brief on how the site should be developed has been approved. This covers highway and drainage/flooding aspects, particularly with regard to the site's access and the floodplain area and states that consultation with the Highway Authority, Environment Agency and British Waterways should take place. The Council may look favourably upon the early development of a housing scheme if appropriate benefits were to be achieved in conjunction with Policy I1. The Development Brief advises in detail on the nature of appropriate landscaping and the removal of the remaining buildings to protect the character and appearance of the Green Belt.

**9.27** In preparing development briefs and/or considering planning applications for sites which incorporate urban open space, due regard will be given to the extent to which this should be retained.

**9.28** Whilst the dwelling capacity of each identified site is estimated in the policy, the number of dwellings on each site may well have to be varied considerably to reflect the character of both the site and its surroundings and have regard to issues such as traffic and drainage as advised by the relevant authorities. In considering planning applications for the identified sites the Council will have particular regard to the following policies:- the phased release of large sites (Policy I2), affordable housing (Policies H4, H5 and H6), design and layout of new development (Policies DBE1-DBE9), mobility housing (Policies H8 and H9), and car parking provision (Policy T14).

**9.29** Whilst there is currently sufficient housing land likely to be available to meet the Structure Plan requirement, the prospect of more dwellings being built is acceptable because:-

- the provision of housing land required by the Structure Plan is a target as distinct from an upper limit which cannot be broken (although it is necessary to phase the release of the large sites (see Policy I2));

- the phased development of suitable sites for housing will minimise the pressure on the Green Belt;
  - there is a heavy demand for additional dwellings in the District and housing would not exacerbate the "overheating" of the local economy to the same degree as retail or other commercial uses; and
  - new dwellings may be tailored to the particular living space and care requirements of existing residents. This could include sheltered housing for the elderly (i.e. self-contained units together with a warden). Such units may also result in other under-used property, more appropriate for families, being made available. Their development or subdivision would be strictly controlled, however, to ensure that they do not have an excessive detrimental effect upon the surrounding area in terms of character, design and overlooking (see Policy DBE11).
- This applies particularly to existing younger residents wishing to leave the family home to start a new household. The high cost of housing also serves to deter people coming into the District to fill jobs, some of whom (e.g. nurses and teachers) provide very important services. In this District there is therefore an acute shortage of "affordable housing" (i.e. that which is designed for those people whose incomes generally deny them the opportunity to buy or rent houses on the open market as a result of high prices locally).

### **POLICY H3**

#### **THE COUNCIL WILL GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ON SITES OUTSIDE THE GREEN BELT SUBJECT TO:-**

- (i) **THE SITE NOT BEING ALLOCATED FOR ANOTHER USE IN THIS PLAN;**
- (ii) **COMPLIANCE WITH ALL OTHER RELEVANT PLAN POLICIES.**

**9.30** This policy covers all "windfall" sites outside the Green Belt (see para 9.23).

**9.31** In considering planning applications on appropriate sites, the Council will have regard to mobility housing (Policies H7, H8 and H9), the design and layout of new development (Policies DBE1-DBE9), car parking provision (Policy T14), traffic generation (Policy T17), "affordable" housing provision (Policies H4, H5 and H6), and, in the case of sites of 1 hectare or over, the supply of housing land prevailing at the time (Policy I2). Where the site is a school, the Council will have regard to the extent to which it may be considered surplus (Policy CF6).

#### **Affordable Housing**

##### **Background**

**9.32** House prices in Epping Forest District are among the highest in the country and have been for many years. The cost of private residential accommodation, either to buy or rent, is therefore well beyond the means of many existing residents.

**9.33** The high cost of property stems from the District's popularity as a housing location. The lack of "affordable" housing has been exacerbated by the reduction in the amount of Council housing, which has traditionally been relatively cheap, as a result of the Government's "Right to Buy" policy. The Council has sold about 4050 dwellings under the scheme over the period 1981-1996 which has resulted in a marked reduction of Council-owned houses from approximately 23% to 16% of the District's total stock.

**9.34** The financial constraints that the Government has imposed on local authorities are such that the Council is effectively no longer able to build Council houses. However, this has taken place in conjunction with the role of local authorities having changed from one of "providing" to "enabling" affordable housing. This changing role is applied through appropriate housing and planning policies. The role of "provider" is now filled largely by Housing Associations who are, in the main, dependent on funding from the Housing Corporation. Whilst they have provided some 593 new dwellings in the District over the period 1989 to 1996 this clearly in no way compensates for the marked reduction in Council housing. However the Council must continue to look to Housing Associations to provide "affordable" housing.

**9.35** There is, however, no definitive figure which constitutes "local needs". The only quantifiable figure of housing need in the District is provided by the Council's housing waiting and transfer lists. The Council does not currently have sufficient resources to be able to prioritise a comprehensive assessment of housing need. It will, however, monitor the situation and carry out a survey should the opportunity arise. In order to be eligible for inclusion on the waiting list applicants have to comply with several criteria (which include being already resident in the District).

**9.36** The Council's housing lists are divided into two parts comprising:-

- those households with an identifiable housing need (e.g. due to medical reasons, sharing accommodation, etc.); and
- those households with no identifiable housing

need (e.g. those already resident in the District and adequately housed or those in tied accommodation).

**9.37** Those people who qualify for inclusion on the Council's housing list and who are considered to be in "housing need" are therefore regarded as representing the absolute minimum figure of that which constitutes the actual local housing need. The number of households in this category stood at 840 in 1996.

**9.38** Figure 13 illustrates how this figure compares with those in recent years although the increase (from 1991/92-1992/93) may be due, at least in part, to a reduction in the minimum age limit for entry on the list. It may therefore be concluded that no consistent trend has emerged and that the number of households in "housing need" in the District has remained in the order of 500 over the period 1987/88 to 1995/96. Despite this, individual households on the list have changed with many people having been offered accommodation and others, who have 'qualified', having been added to the list.

**9.39** The further surge in demand from 1995 to 1996 is believed to be a consequence of reducing the minimum age for single people (from 25 to 21) seeking Council housing. This reduction was made possible by a number of Housing Association schemes being completed in 1994/95 enabling the number of people on the list to be reduced.

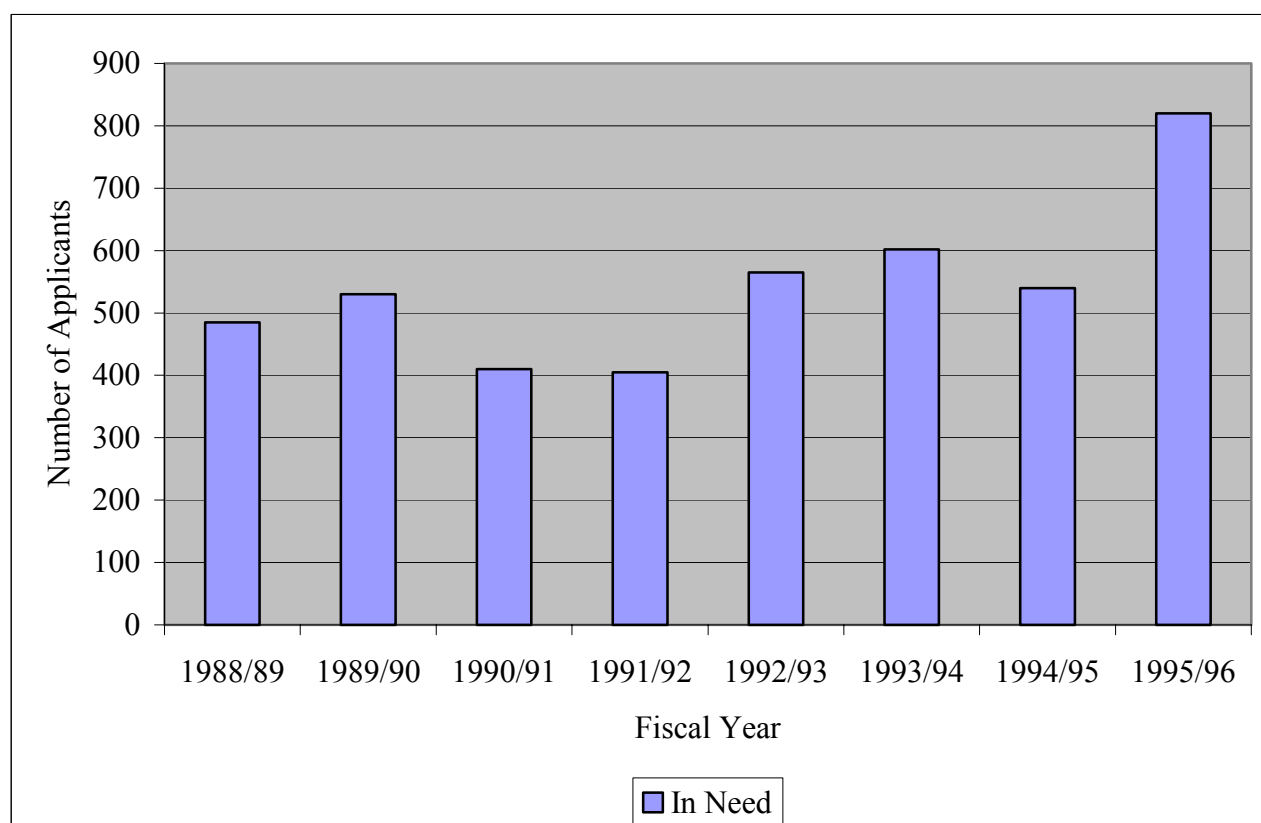
**Table 6 Applicants on the Council's Housing Waiting List, by bedroom requirement.**

	April 1995	April 1996
Bedsit/1 bed	372 (68%)	621 (74%)
2 bed	106 (19%)	151 (18%)
3/4 bed	66 (12%)	68 (8%)
Total	544	840

**9.40** Need in terms of size of property in recent years is set out in Table 6 above. This shows that:-

- the absolute number of large (ie: 3/4 bed) properties required has remained static; and

**Figure 13 Households in Need 1988-1996**





- there has been a substantial increase in the absolute number of small and two bed properties required (67% and 42% respectively), over the period 1995-96, which is a direct result of the lowering of the minimum age.

**9.41** Whilst 500 may be seen as the absolute minimum number of affordable dwellings needed in the District, the Council does not consider it appropriate to set this figure as a target to be achieved within a particular period of time. This is because:-

- the real figure of need may well be considerably higher, and
- even if affordable housing is provided, the figure may well remain of that order (as the waiting list criteria are relaxed and / or more people enter the list).

**9.42** The Council will therefore continue to seek to secure the provision of affordable housing whilst it has households in need.

#### Meeting the Need

#### **POLICY H4**

**THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO ACHIEVE THE PROVISION OF "AFFORDABLE" HOUSING IN THE URBAN AREAS TO MEET AT LEAST THE DISTRICT'S HOUSING NEED AT ANY GIVEN TIME.**

**9.43** "Affordable housing" is defined in para 9.32. The District's housing need is taken as those households on the Council's waiting list at any given time who are designated as being "in housing need" (see paras 9.36 and 9.37).

**9.44** It may well be that the Council undertakes a housing needs survey within the Plan period. If it does, then the Council will amend its affordable housing policies to reflect the findings.

#### **POLICY H5**

**THE COUNCIL MAY SEEK TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE LANDOWNERS AND/OR DEVELOPERS OF SITES FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN ORDER TO SECURE THE INCLUSION OF AN APPROPRIATE NUMBER AND TYPE OF "AFFORDABLE" DWELLINGS. NEGOTIATIONS WILL BE UNDERTAKEN HAVING REGARD TO:-**

- (i) **THE OVERALL LEVEL OF HOUSING NEED IN THE DISTRICT;**

- (ii) **THE DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSING NEED ACROSS THE DISTRICT;**
- (iii) **THE SIZE AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SITE;**
- (iv) **THE TYPE OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING REQUIRED AND THE TYPE OF DWELLINGS PROPOSED ON THE SITE;**
- (v) **THE NATURE OF ANY ADJACENT HOUSING; AND**
- (vi) **THE ACCESSIBILITY OF THE SITE TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT FACILITIES.**

**9.45** The overall level of minimum housing need will be monitored and reviewed by the Council on a regular basis. This also applies to the distribution of housing need which is derived from the locational preferences of those on the housing waiting list.

**9.46** The Council will normally look to achieve of the order of 20% "affordable" dwellings on each site in which affordable housing is sought. It will, however, have regard to any constraints which the size of the site imposes on the viability of providing affordable housing as part of the scheme. It may not require affordable housing to be provided on a site where it might be totally out of keeping with the character of the surrounding area. However, it may be that a particular part of a site would lend itself to affordable housing provision more readily than others. The Council will have regard to this in considering the amount, type and phasing of any affordable housing.

**9.47** Government guidance enables local authorities to indicate targets for the provision of affordable housing on specific sites (based on evidence of need and site suitability). On the basis of their size, location and character, appropriate targets on the sites currently available are as follows:-

**Table7 : Affordable Housing: Site Targets**

Site	Target No. of affordable dwellings
R.A.R.D.E., Waltham Abbey	14
Royal Ordnance Site, Waltham Abbey	50
Thomas Willingale School, Loughton	30
Great Stony School, Chipping Ongar	16
Sheering Mill Lane, Sheering	5
	115

**9.48** Where, for whatever reason, the Council is unable to meet its targets on the various sites that are developed this will have no bearing upon the targets for any other sites. The target for each site will not be increased to reflect any shortfall that occurs on other sites. Neither will they be reduced to reflect any provision on windfall sites. The targets may, however, be amended as necessary to reflect any change in the District-wide housing need resulting from a survey.

**9.49** There are two basic methods of funding the construction of affordable housing. It can be done by either a Housing Association (using Housing Corporation or Local Authority Housing Association Grant) or the developer. Both entail the developer making the land available at little or no cost. However, where the developer builds the affordable units his costs are obviously increased. Consequently, it would not be reasonable to expect a developer to build as many affordable units as a Housing Association would provide. In such cases the number of units, and the amount of land, would be reduced accordingly.

**9.50** In order to secure as much affordable housing as possible, all such schemes should ideally be implemented by Housing Associations. However this District is not seen as an area of particular housing stress by the Housing Corporation. The funds it makes available in this District are therefore somewhat limited. This, in turn, may mean that units of affordable housing cannot be built despite agreement about numbers having been reached with the landowner/developer. In instances where the requisite funding is unlikely to be forthcoming it may therefore be preferable to accept fewer affordable units provided that the developer builds them at little or no cost to a Housing Association. The developers' effective financial contribution to the community should ideally be the same, be it either land or land and buildings.

**9.51** If the provision of affordable housing is to be effective it is imperative that it is occupied by those for whom it was intended and that it remains available for those in housing need. The following policy will therefore apply:-

#### **POLICY H6**

**THE COUNCIL WILL REQUIRE THAT ANY PROPOSED "AFFORDABLE" HOUSING IS SUBJECT TO:-**

- (i) **SUITABLY SECURE ARRANGEMENTS TO ENSURE THAT IT IS SATISFACTORILY PHASED AS PART OF THE OVERALL DEVELOPMENT; AND**

- (ii) **IT BEING AVAILABLE ONLY TO THOSE HOUSEHOLDS WHICH WOULD OTHERWISE NOT BE ABLE TO AFFORD TO RENT OR BUY A DWELLING ON THE OPEN MARKET OF SUFFICIENT SIZE IN THE DISTRICT; AND**

- (iii) **SUITABLY SECURE ARRANGEMENTS TO ENSURE THAT THE ACCOMMODATION REMAINS AVAILABLE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF SUCH HOUSEHOLDS BEYOND THE FIRST OCCUPIER.**

**9.52** The phasing of affordable housing either throughout or at a relatively early stage during construction may be necessary to ensure that it is built. This will be secured by a legal agreement and/or planning condition, as appropriate.

**9.53** The means by which the housing remains available as affordable accommodation for successive occupiers will be, for example, by the involvement of a Housing Association or Village Trust, the use of covenants, and agreements under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (see policy I1). It will also be possible for the applicant to come forward at an early stage with a prospective "social landlord" who would have responsibility for ensuring that the requirements are met.

**9.54** It is anticipated that the preferences and resources of those requiring affordable housing will be such that the dwellings provided will be for rent, or possibly shared ownership, rather than for sale. The outright purchase of a property would, in any event, mean that it could be sold on the open market and would not therefore remain available for those "in need" beyond the initial occupier(s), contrary to requirement (iii).

#### **Mobility Housing**

**9.55** There is a growing need for 'mobility housing' which is "general needs housing modified to a minor extent to make it accessible for most people with disabilities". This stems from the number of elderly people increasing, as people live longer, and a relatively high proportion of elderly people being disabled - their disability having developed in old age. Consequently it is necessary to cater increasingly for the disabled in new residential developments in order to ensure that (a) the available housing stock matches the needs of the District's residents; (b) people are not obliged to leave their existing home because they become disabled; and (c) the disabled are as free as possible to integrate fully into society by having a range of suitable places in which to live.

**9.56** There are three types of 'mobility housing':-

- (i) new housing - specifically designed for the disabled;
- (ii) adaptable housing - featuring greater floor area, wider door openings, downstairs toilet and washing facility, stairs capable of taking a lift etc;
- (iii) visitable housing - featuring an accessible route from car to house, a reasonably wide entrance and hall, and a toilet and at least one bedroom at entrance level.

**9.57** The Government has issued specific planning guidance in PPG3 which states that:-

- "developers should already be considering whether the internal design of housing, and access to it, can meet the needs of the disabled, whether as residents or visitors"; and
- "where there is a clear evidence of local need, a local planning authority can include in a Local Plan a policy indicating that it would seek to negotiate elements of housing, accessible to the disabled, on suitable sites".

**9.58** In view of the foregoing, the policies are as follows:-

#### **POLICY H7**

**THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO ACHIEVE THE PROVISION OF "MOBILITY HOUSING" TO MEET BOTH THE EXISTING AND FUTURE NEEDS OF THE DISTRICT'S RESIDENTS WITH MOBILITY DIFFICULTIES.**

**9.59** It is not considered reasonable to require the provision of housing specifically designed for the disabled. This is in view of the high cost of such provision and the limited need for such units. It is, however, much more important to enable housing to be adapted to accommodate a disabled person should the need arise.

**9.60** The following policy will therefore apply:-

#### **POLICY H8**

**THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO NEGOTIATE WITH DEVELOPERS OF SITES FOR RESIDENTIAL PURPOSES IN ORDER TO SECURE THE PROVISION OF "ADAPTABLE HOUSING" WHERE:-**

- (i) **THE SIZE AND TYPE OF DWELLINGS PROPOSED ARE SUCH THAT THE**

**ADDITIONAL FEATURES REQUIRED WOULD MAKE LITTLE DIFFERENCE TO THE OVERALL COST OF CONSTRUCTION; AND**

- (ii) **THE TOPOGRAPHY OF THE SITE IS SUCH THAT ACCESS TO THE PROPOSED DWELLINGS WOULD NOT BE PARTICULARLY PROBLEMATIC FOR PEOPLE WITH MOBILITY DIFFICULTIES.**

**9.61** Suitable dwellings could range from studio flats (with appropriate access) to good-sized three and most four bed houses and above.

**9.62** The policy will apply to all private sector and "affordable" housing having regard to identified needs in the District.

**9.63** It is also important to try and ensure that dwellings can be visited by people with mobility difficulties be it someone in a wheelchair or someone pushing a pram. This should be sought wherever practicable.

#### **POLICY H9**

**THE COUNCIL WILL EXPECT ALL NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS TO BE CAPABLE OF BEING VISITED BY PEOPLE WITH MOBILITY DIFFICULTIES.**

**9.64** This means that all newly-built dwellings, and those created by conversion, should have a readily-accessible route from a parked car, a level entrance through the front door, an entrance hall and access (all at least 900 mm wide) to reception rooms and no change of level between the access and the main living area. It may not be practical to require a bedroom at entrance level in view of the substantial increase in size, and therefore cost, that this would have for small dwellings. The policy will apply to all private sector and "affordable" housing although the size of the latter is often such that a downstairs toilet and bedroom will not be essential.

**9.65** This policy will also apply to the creation of replacement entrances (e.g. front extensions and porches) to houses where the existing house is 'visitable'.

**9.66** The circumstances in which the policy will not be applied include where the topography of the site makes this impractical or where flats are proposed which are not at ground level and have no lift.

### **Conversions**

**9.67** There is a high level of demand for accommodation to rent locally, especially in town centres. The use of otherwise vacant or under-used upper floors over shops as flats introduces "life" back into town centres out of shopping hours, so meeting this demand is considered desirable (see paras. 11.47 & 11.53).

### **POLICY H10**

#### **THE COUNCIL WILL:-**

- (i) **GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE CONVERSION OF; AND**
- (ii) **PROMOTE THE USE OF SUITABLE VACANT OR UNDER-USED**

### **UPPER STOREYS IN PREMISES IN TOWN CENTRES (IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP) FOR RESIDENTIAL USE.**

**9.68** There may be intrinsic problems in introducing, or re-introducing flats above shops and offices, however. These could be associated with access, security, parking provision etc. When resources are available, the Council will examine the situation in particular blocks on a comprehensive basis where there is clear scope for action but where progress cannot be readily made by owners individually. This will be with a view to the Council suggesting an overall solution.

**9.69** In order to make any suggested schemes feasible the Council would be prepared to relax its policy on car parking provision (T14), where this will not result in undue parking problems, and on amenity space provision (DBE8).

### **Gypsies**

**9.70** Gypsies are defined as "persons of nomadic habit of life, whatever their race or origin", and their travelling lifestyle must be for economic purposes rather than moving from place to place for the sake of it. Gypsies will have to demonstrate that they continue to enjoy a travelling lifestyle in order to come within such a definition. Epping Forest District, in common with many rural areas, has been a traditional location for gypsies to resort to for work as seasonal agricultural labourers.

**9.71** There is one local authority owned and operated gypsy site in the District with a capacity of 16 pitches. Many other private sites have also been granted planning permission, usually on appeal, despite the Council's concern to uphold Green Belt objectives. Other gypsies have been allowed to reside where the

family concerned has strong local connections and is not causing a nuisance.

**9.72** Following the repeal of the Caravan Sites Act 1968 there is no longer a statutory duty on the local authority to provide accommodation on caravan sites for gypsies residing in, or resorting to, their area. Nevertheless, it is anticipated that applications for private gypsy sites will continue to be made. In determining such applications the Council will have regard to both the policy which follows and the Code of Practice for the Treatment of Gypsies which has been agreed by the Council and Essex County Council.

**9.73** National policy set out in Circular 1/94 Gypsy Sites and Planning states that gypsy sites are not among land uses which are appropriate in the Green Belt. Because of the built-up nature of the urban areas in the District, the Council cannot readily identify locations for additional gypsy sites. The most suitable approach to adopt must, therefore, be a reactive one in which the local authority will be willing to discuss the needs of individual gypsy families and the suitability of the site which they themselves have identified. The Council will have regard to the location, highways considerations, potential noise and disturbance from vehicles, and any proposed on-site business activities.

### **POLICY H11**

#### **IN DETERMINING PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR GYPSY CARAVAN SITES WITHIN THE GREEN BELT, THE COUNCIL WILL HAVE REGARD TO:**

- (i) **WHETHER THERE ARE ANY SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH WOULD JUSTIFY AN EXCEPTION TO THE GREEN BELT POLICIES OF RESTRAINT, AND;**
- (ii) **THE IMPACT ON THE OPENNESS OF THE GREEN BELT AND THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE COUNTRYSIDE.**

**9.74** Applications for gypsy caravan sites within the urban area (i.e outside the Green Belt) will be considered in the light of other policies in the Plan, in particular Policy RP5 (i).

**9.75** Applicants will need to demonstrate firm evidence that they comply with the legal definition of a gypsy on a continuing basis and either reside in or resort to the District or, exceptionally, other parts of Essex.

**9.76** In order to be successful, applicants will also have to demonstrate that both touring caravans and any left on the site all year comply with the following

locational criteria. The sites should:

- (a) be within reasonable distance of a settlement for access to schools, shops, etc;
- (b) not be in close proximity to residential properties;
- (c) have a minimum impact upon the appearance of the countryside;
- (d) have, or be capable of having, convenient and safe access to the main road network;
- (e) be capable of providing an acceptable living environment, and;
- (f) be in close proximity to an area frequented by gypsies.

**9.77** Any permission will relate only to the stationing of a caravan and not to any employment activities. Applications for such activities will be considered in the context of their acceptability in the Green Belt (in accordance with Policies GB2, GB5, RP5(i)). Policies E12 and RP5(i) will apply outside the Green Belt.

### **Travelling Showpeople**

**9.78** Department of the Environment Circular 22/91 "Travelling Showpeople" expects this Plan to consider the needs of travelling showpeople, for what are called "winter quarters" in particular. These are the bases to which showpeople, most of whom are members of the Showmen's Guild of Great Britain, return when summer fairs end.

**9.79** These bases need to accommodate caravans, heavy touring vehicles and equipment, and to provide facilities for their maintenance and repair. The bases also allow children to receive uninterrupted education, and are places for older showmen and show-women to retire to. They have a different function from temporary fairgrounds, and raise awkward amenity issues and locational factors.

**9.80** The District has three sites of note at Pedlars End Farm, Moreton; Warlies Park Farm, Waltham Abbey; and The Retreat, Thornwood - each of which plays a different role. Pedlars End Farm is closest to the full base described above, whilst Warlies Park Farm site is predominantly for the winter storage of equipment, and The Retreat is simply retirement accommodation. Each is subject to conditional planning control.

**9.81** In the light of current Government guidance, and the current provision for the local needs of travelling showpeople the following policy will apply.

### **POLICY H12**

**THE COUNCIL WILL NOT ALLOW THE DEVELOPMENT OF ANY FURTHER "WINTER QUARTERS" FOR TRAVELLING SHOWPEOPLE IN THE DISTRICT UNLESS THE APPLICANTS ARE ABLE TO**

**DEMONSTRATE, TO THE SATISFACTION OF THE COUNCIL, THAT:-**

- (i) **THERE IS A DEMONSTRABLE LOCAL NEED FOR THIS FACILITY WHICH CANNOT BE MET ELSEWHERE; AND**
- (ii) **THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT WOULD NOT LEAD TO AN EXCESSIVE ADVERSE EFFECT UPON THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE GREEN BELT.**

### **Measures to Optimise Use**

**9.82** It is anticipated that the limited scope for new residential development will induce considerable pressures for change in the existing housing stock. In principle, this is to be welcomed as a means of reducing the mismatch between average dwelling size and average household size. The subdivision of large properties which are under-occupied or have become unmanageable is one way of adapting the existing stock to meet the demands of the rising number of smaller households.

**9.83** Unfortunately, many old properties tend to be difficult to convert or have a limited ability to provide essential features such as off-street parking. The Council will need to take such factors into account when determining individual development proposals. Where it is able to, the Council will usually support proposals to improve, modernise and repair old houses because it is clearly important to maintain the quality of the existing stock. Notwithstanding, regard will be given to the effect of the juxtaposition of living rooms and bedrooms upon the amenities of the occupiers of adjoining properties. Planning approval for such conversion will not be given unless the Council is satisfied that the occupiers of a dwelling (both existing and proposed) will enjoy a satisfactory level of amenity which is not likely to be affected unduly by noise or other disturbances.

**9.84** Any such proposals will also need to comply with the other policies of this Plan, particularly those relating to the provision of adequate amenity space (Policy DBE8) and car parking facilities (Policy T14).

### **POLICY H13**

**THE COUNCIL WILL NOT GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR EITHER:-**

- (i) **THE CHANGE OF USE OF ANY RESIDENTIAL UNIT ABLE TO SUPPORT CONTINUED RESIDENTIAL USE, WITH REASONABLE ADAPTATION WHERE NECESSARY, OR**

**(ii) THE LOSS OF RESIDENTIAL LAND TO ANOTHER USE,**

**EXCEPT WHERE THE PROPOSED USE OR DEVELOPMENT IS THE ONLY MEANS OF SECURING THE RETENTION OF A BUILDING OF ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC INTEREST OR WOULD BENEFIT THE COMMERCIAL FUNCTION OF A TOWN CENTRE.**

**9.85** The Council will not normally permit the conversion of residential accommodation to another use. There is a basic presumption against the loss of existing residential accommodation because of the high demand and need for housing in the District. This is particularly so in the town centres where accommodation above shops and offices provides an invaluable source of rented accommodation, particularly flats, which are much sought after by young one and two person households.

**9.86** An exception may be made where a proposed change of use is the only means of securing the retention of a building of architectural or historic interest. In some cases a non-residential use may benefit the commercial function of a town centre and may be permitted e.g. if:-

- (1) it is the provision of an essential local service - such as a doctor's surgery, which cannot otherwise be provided at ground floor level (see Policies STC7, STC9 and STC10); or
- (2) separate entrances cannot be provided for the residential and non-residential parts of a building and are essential; or
- (3) it is to meet essential business needs allied to a ground floor use.

**Environmental Implications**

**9.87** The policies in this chapter will contribute to the achievement of the following aims of the Plan (see pages 24 and 25):-

- (ii) To facilitate modern-day living requirements.
- (iii) to accommodate, where possible, the special needs of the disadvantaged.
- (iv) To meet the needs of disabled people who live, or work, in the District or who visit it.
- (vi) To ensure, as much as possible, that new housing meets the needs of residents.
- (vii) To retain the existing housing stock.

(xv) To provide sufficient land for new housing.

(xx) To ensure that any new development does not have an unacceptable impact both in environmental terms and in the provision of local facilities.

(xxi) To protect and, where possible, enhance the environmental qualities of existing residential areas.

(xxxiv) To make the most efficient use of land and buildings wherever practicable.

(xxxviii) To enable the continued implementation of the Council's Environmental Charter.

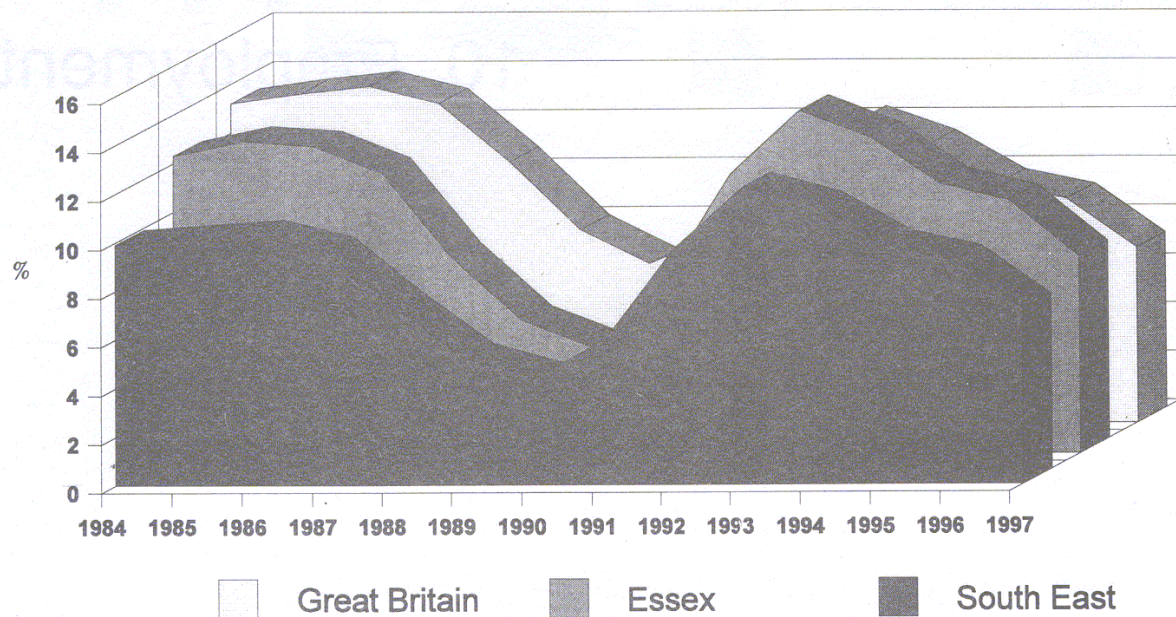
**9.88** The policies do not have any significant impact in environmental terms (see Appendix 2). This is because they tend to be either site-specific (with sites generally determined by factors such as the Green Belt and the need to retain urban open spaces) or relate to the nature of the dwellings, the consequences of which are essentially social rather than environmental. The location of sites will, however, have implications for efficient transport systems but the extent to which this is the case varies according to the site.



## **10. Employment**

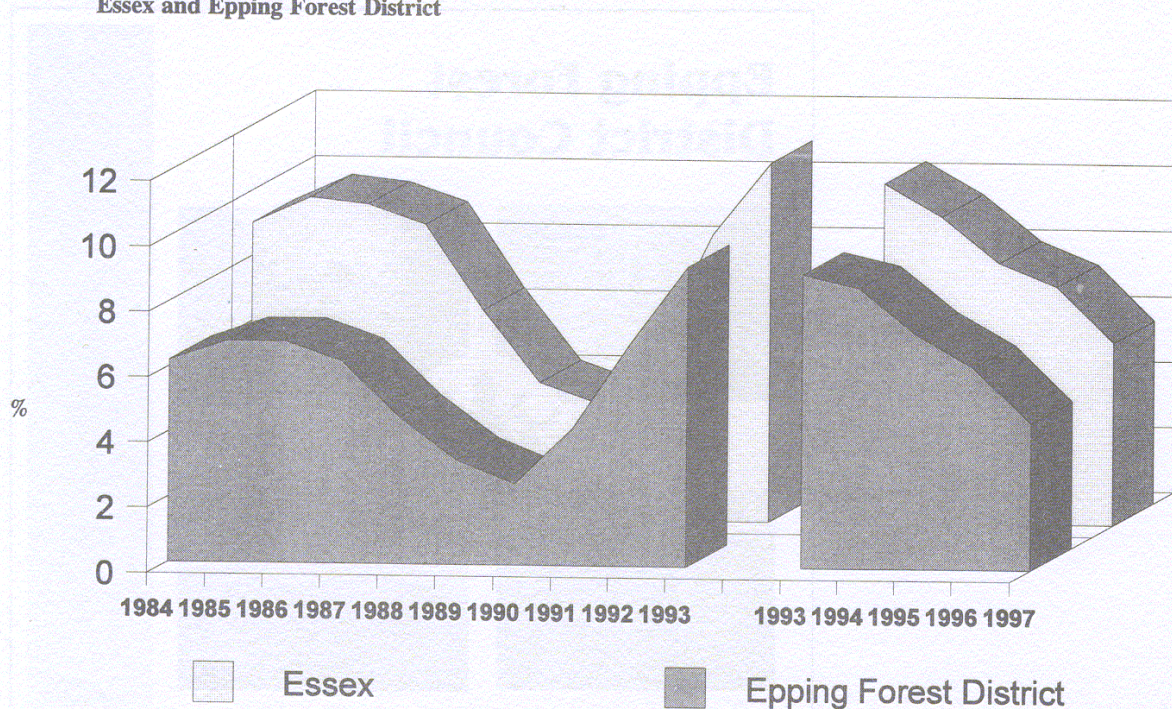


**Figure 14 Unemployment Rates -  
Country, Region and County**



Source - Department of Employment

**Figure 15 Unemployment Rates -  
Essex and Epping Forest District**



Source - Essex County Council

## **Introduction**

**10.1** This chapter sets out the situation regarding the employment characteristics of the resident workforce and the local economy. The resulting policies deal with the land use issues relating to industrial and commercial developments. It is these types of use to which the aims relating to employment-generating uses refer (see pages 24 and 25). Other employment-generating uses (e.g. education, transport, retailing) are dealt with in other chapters. These other types of use are considered from the point of view of the services which they provide for residents. The amount and type of employment opportunities they create are of secondary importance though they may be beneficial locally.

**10.2** Whilst the national economy has been in deep recession during the late 1980s and early 1990s this Plan will cover the rest of the decade. Consequently, it is not unduly influenced by either the effects of the recession or how best to recover from it. It does, however, take a long-term view in determining what form industrial and commercial development should take if the local economy is to benefit.

**10.3** The Government regards the encouragement of industrial and commercial development as an important contributor to national economic prosperity. This is particularly when technological and other requirements of modern businesses are changing rapidly. Economic development should, however, take place in a manner which is compatible with the Government's environmental objectives (see paras 3.5 to 3.12).

**10.4** In the context of the long-standing constraints imposed by the Green Belt, the opportunities for economic growth in the District are limited. The strategic objectives of local sustainable development, and of safeguarding the standards of people working in the District, must be placed in the proper context. Epping Forest District is part of a much wider labour market. Over 60% of the 55,000 workforce commute out - mainly to Central London - whilst 30% of the 35,000 who work in the District travel in from elsewhere. Special attention is given in the Structure Plan to land allocated for industry in urban areas. The needs of agriculture (including horticulture) in the light of competition and regulations from the E.C. are also reflected in this Plan.

## **The National Economy**

**10.5** The U.K. experienced considerable economic growth during the mid to late 1980s with the fastest rate in the South, particularly in the South East. This resulted from major structural changes in the economy with a growth in service industries (particularly banking and financial services) at a time of decline in traditional manufacturing industries especially in the North and Midlands. Whilst the South East, including Epping

Forest, undoubtedly benefited from this relative economic 'boom' it also brought a degree of 'economic overheating'.

**10.6** However, the rapid economic growth did not sustain itself into the 1990s as the national economy peaked and then went into recession. This had its greatest effect on the service industry/ financial sector i.e. in the South, that had experienced greatest growth in the 1980s. The unemployment rates in the southern regions, which were usually below the national level, were now moving closer to it. In the early 1990s the rate for Essex overtook that for Great Britain (see Figure 14).

**10.7** Despite the recession, the long term economic forecast for the South East is for renewed growth, albeit not at the same rate as in the 1980s. Factors which would further stimulate the region's economy are :- the single European Market; a Stratford interchange with the Channel Tunnel Rail Link ;and take-up of the current spare capacity of Stansted Airport.

## **The Local Economy**

### **(i) Economic Development**

**10.8** There is a slight bias in the District's economy towards service employment (which accounted for 72% of jobs in 1991 compared to the national average of 70%). More significantly, however, only 17% of jobs are in manufacturing - compared with 21% nationally.

**10.9** The local economy is now such that manufacturing and industry remain an important part of a diversified employment base. The firms in this sector are often either long-established in the area or have moved out from central or inner London. Those in the south of the District (particularly in the Loughton area) continue to trade extensively in the Greater London area. This is reflected in the preponderance of small and medium sized companies serving local or specialised needs. These firms have a continuing requirement for a location within the District's urban centres. Other local firms may have a more localised market (e.g. Loughton or Waltham Abbey). Research indicates that economic growth in the area will derive from the continuing growth of the smaller manufacturing, distribution and business service sector firms.

**10.10** There has been a continuing demand for employment land and premises with appropriate infrastructure, although the level of demand did decline during the recession. As a consequence, premises and development land are in relatively restricted supply.

**10.11** At the sub-regional level the District forms part of a wider property market (based on the M25 and M11) where larger companies will consider a range of suitable alternative locations (e.g. Harlow). This does not apply



to most smaller companies though as they require a more specific location in the District to enable them to relocate and/or expand. The workforce of these smaller local firms also tends to be drawn from within the District.

## (ii) Employment

**10.12** Some 62% of the District's population is of working age - slightly above the County average - although the proportion that is economically active is virtually the same. A high proportion of residents (36%) are in professional/managerial and technical employment compared to the County figure (32%) (see Figure 5).

**10.13** During the 1980s the size and structure of the resident workforce underwent significant changes in that:-

- the number of those economically active increased (from 57,500 to 59,600) despite the population falling slightly;
- the number of economically active women increased sharply (from 21,800 to 24,950);
- there was a significant increase in part-time employment (from 60% to 78% of the total); and
- the number of people of school-leaving age (16-19 years) has dropped (from 7,600 to 5,800).

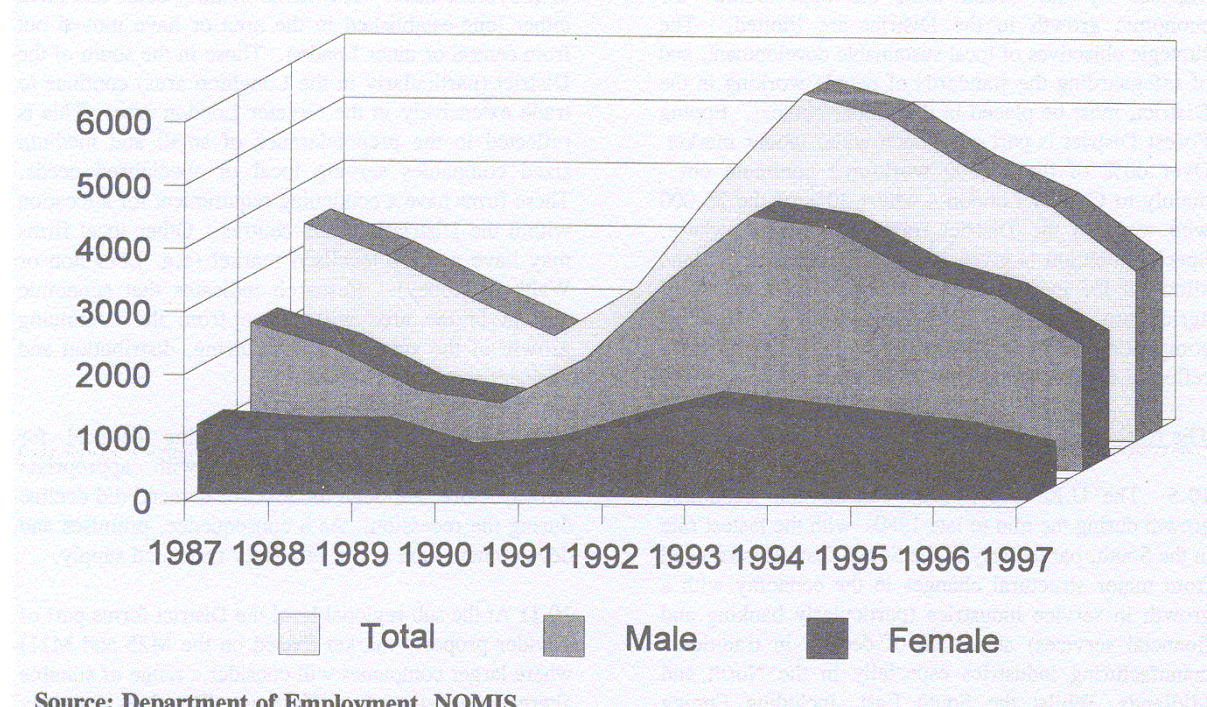
**10.14** These trends have continued through the 1990s with an increased emphasis on women to help compensate for the reduced number of school-leavers. This has enabled more flexible working practices and requires a greater emphasis on staff training as does the introduction of further new technology.

**10.15** Unemployment in the District is traditionally below that of the County average (see Figure 15). The local rate has remained below the County figure but has changed at a similar pace. If data directly comparable with that in Figure 14 were available they would be expected to indicate that the local rate is now moving away from the regional figure.

**10.16** The recession had a disproportionate effect on unemployment amongst males (see Figure 16). This reflected both the gender distribution of employment and the structural changes in the economy (with traditionally male-dominated manual manufacturing jobs declining as a result of increased productivity and new technology). However these trends reversed as unemployment has since fallen.

**10.17** Most job vacancies in the District are for part-time service sector staff, with full-time posts typically in retailing and catering (which are more attractive to females). In contrast, 40% of the unemployed are highly skilled which is, in part, a reflection of male full-time workers having been most affected by the increase in unemployment. There is therefore a marked mis-match between the types of jobs that are typically most readily available and the skills of the unemployed who live, and would be likely to work, locally.

**Figure 16 Unemployment in Epping Forest District by Gender, 1987-1997**



### **Central Government Advice**

**10.18** PPG4 advises that Plans should contain clear policies as to where different types of business development may be permitted and positive policies to provide for the needs of small businesses. Plans should also ensure that sufficient land is available, that there is a variety of sites to meet different needs, and that the location of the sites ensures sustainable development. Authorities are also called upon to consider whether proposals for other types of development may be incompatible with (and therefore eventually place pressure upon) existing industrial and commercial activities.

**10.19** RPG9 links the need for economic growth to the other strategic objectives of revitalising areas of decline and conserving the countryside. It therefore limits the scope for redevelopment in Green Belt areas such as this District and takes account of the Government's White Paper ("This Common Inheritance") and SERPLAN's "New Strategy for the South East" (published in September 1990) by directing development to the inner city areas and the East Thames Corridor. This is supported by PPG2 which incorporates a general presumption against inappropriate development within Green Belts. Epping Forest District, as an area of such restraint, is not expected to contribute significantly to the region's development needs.

**10.20** Nevertheless, PPG7 and PPG12 urge local planning authorities to make provision in Development Plans, appropriate to the needs of the area, for commercial and industrial development which can be accommodated without serious planning problems.

**10.21** PPG6 states that retail development should not normally be allowed on land designated for other uses in a Development Plan (and vice versa). This applies especially to industrial land where retail development might limit the type of industry. The Guidance also points out that the development for retail purposes of some of this land allocated for non-retail uses might be acceptable if retail land is scarce and the preferred development had not taken place and was unlikely to do so.

### **County Council Policy**

**10.22** Government advice is interpreted in the current Structure Plan which specifies that provision be made in the period 1986-2001 for the development of:

- 8 ha. of new land for industry and warehousing, concentrated in the urban area; and
- up to 5,000 sq. m. of office floorspace in schemes of 1,000 sq m or above.

**10.23** These guidelines are modest as they are based on

the scope considered to be available in 1986 within overriding Green Belt constraints. 6.8 ha. of new employment land had already been developed by October 1996. However a former industrial site of 2.3 ha. has since been lost to residential use and will need to be adequately compensated for in allocating industrial sites. The office guideline has also been exceeded. The Structure Plan does, however, allow for other limited development opportunities:

- small scale offices (of less than 1,000 sq. m.) on appropriate sites, serving local needs; and
- small-scale industrial activities within urban areas, but outside areas reserved for employment uses.

**10.24** In addition the Structure Plan allows local planning authorities to allocate appropriate village sites for employment related development, to help meet local needs. As with the small scale developments outlined in para 10.23, such allocations are in addition to sites identified to meet the Structure Plan guidelines. This is on the grounds that they address local needs but remain small enough to avoid detriment to the Green Belt given the overriding need for restraint.

### **District Council Policy**

**10.25** The Council's Employment Strategy is assessed and updated each year in its Economic Development Statement. Its overall aim is to: "Optimise local business development within fundamental environmental and strategic planning constraints to assist local businesses, local employment and the national economy." The Local Plan furthers land use aspects within the context of Central Government advice and the current Structure Plan.

**10.26** Given the modest Structure Plan guidelines for new development land and the limited scope for other opportunities, it becomes imperative that existing employment land in attractive/accessible locations is retained as such. This has not, however, always been successful as a number of employment sites (such as the former Pantins site at Centre Drive, Epping) have been lost on appeal to other uses. As a result the pressure to retain remaining sites becomes even greater.

**10.27** New allocated sites need to be in locations that are attractive to both developers and prospective occupiers. This usually means in, or adjoining, urban areas and large villages, with good road access and few planning constraints.

**10.28** Experience has shown that sites allocated in the rural area in the hope of providing local employment often remain undeveloped or if in existing buildings, provide only for small firms seeking cheaper accommodation. This has sometimes resulted in non-

conforming activities in the countryside. The Council has therefore adopted an approach of allocating urban and village sites to meet the needs of the District as a whole, within the overriding need for Green Belt constraint. This has resulted in a total allocation beyond the Structure Plan guidelines but helps to compensate for sites lost to other uses since 1986.

**10.29** Given, however, that the Structure Plan guidelines are based on the 1986 situation and that a limited number of sites are available a purely quantified approach to allocation of development land is not tenable. The Strategy is therefore a qualitative one based on the retention of existing employment sites with good access to the primary road network and provision of similarly attractive new sites, where this is possible within the overriding need for restraint. This Local Plan therefore allocates a range of sites throughout the District but contains fewer isolated sites in the rural area than had been the case in the Council's previous Local Plans. This is compensated by the identification of more land in accessible locations. In accordance with the Strategy, the allocated sites:-

- are spread across the District;
- offer a range of sizes;
- are likely to be readily available and attractive to developers/industrialists;
- will not, when developed, give rise to overriding planning objections, eg impact adversely on residential areas.

**10.30** The preparation of this Local Plan provides the opportunity to suggest ways of overcoming the mis-match between local needs and land supply and to accommodate the types of jobs sought by residents needing to work locally. In addition the Local Plan seeks to:-

- (i) accommodate those businesses which need a local situation (as distinct from those which can readily be located elsewhere);
- (ii) facilitate small units to accommodate new businesses;
- (iii) allow limited office schemes in town centres;
- (iv) enable working from home in certain circumstances; and
- (v) relocate or discontinue those uses detrimental to local amenity.

**10.31** The Council will continue to monitor development trends to assess the impact of these employment policies on the identified needs. Whilst more local job opportunities were required during recession conditions such as the early 1990s, a less

permissive approach is now appropriate in order to limit the threat of economic 'overheating'.

### **Existing Employment Areas**

**10.32** In this section 'business', 'general industry' and 'warehousing' are as defined in classes B1, B2 and B8 of the Town and Country Planning Use Classes Order 1987.

**10.33** The success of the Plan's employment policies is dependent upon retention of the existing employment sites in both the urban and rural areas of the District. There will be no net gain and associated economic benefit if new sites merely replace any lost to alternative uses. In view of the restraint policies for the District imposed by the Green Belt, the retention and encouragement of industry has prime importance particularly given the widespread distribution of employment areas across the District and the proximity to the workforce.

**10.34** There are less than 100 ha. of land in the District in industrial, business and warehousing/distribution uses. This is a low base and a scarce resource. The largest such areas are at:

- Oakwood Hill and Langston Road, Loughton
- Brooker Road/Sewardstone Road, Waltham Abbey
- The North Weald Airfield Industrial Estate
- The Maltings, Station Road, Lower Sheering
- The Rhone Poulenc site, Chipping Ongar

**10.35** During the recession trends indicated a significant number of job losses in local firms, particularly in the manufacturing sector, which was already modest in terms of numbers employed. This led to a reduction in the variety of local job opportunities. Available industrial floorspace is relatively limited, and was even in the recession.. This shortage will be further aggravated as the economy progressively improves. The Council can help to alleviate this by resisting pressure for the development of other uses on existing employment sites. The retention of the existing employment areas across the District will also ensure that the journey to work is minimised thereby promoting sustainable development.

### **POLICY E1**

**WITHIN THE EXISTING EMPLOYMENT AREAS  
SUBJECT TO THIS POLICY (AS IDENTIFIED ON  
THE PROPOSALS MAP) THE COUNCIL WILL  
GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE  
REDEVELOPMENT OR EXTENSION OF**

**EXISTING PREMISES FOR BUSINESS, GENERAL INDUSTRIAL AND WAREHOUSE USES. THE REDEVELOPMENT OF EXISTING SITES OR PREMISES OR THEIR CHANGE OF USE TO USES OTHER THAN BUSINESS, GENERAL INDUSTRY OR WAREHOUSING WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.**

**10.36** These areas are considered suitable for this range of uses on the grounds that they are the types of uses that would normally be located there and there are no extenuating circumstances to widen or restrict this range. Any development would, however, have to be acceptable in terms of its design (Policies DBE1, DBE3, DBE4), landscape (Policies LL2 and LL3), landscaping (Policies LL10 and LL11), car parking (Policy T14), and traffic generation (Policy T17).

**10.37** Within the existing employment area at Bower Hill, Epping only 'business' uses will be acceptable because of its proximity to a residential area.

**10.38** This policy will also apply to the new employment areas identified in Policies E6 to E8, when developed. Despite being a large employment area the Rhone Poulenc site is not identified as such because the site is in the Green Belt in which the policies of restraint generally over-ride those of employment-generation.

**10.39** The circumstances in which the Council may consider making an exception to this policy include where a site or building has been marketed for a considerable period, at a reasonable price for the uses concerned, and where no suitable development has come forward or is likely to in the foreseeable future. This will not be undertaken lightly, however. Sites will be retained for employment purposes until it is quite apparent that site is not attractive to industrialists. Any development proposals within the Lee Valley Regional Park must comply with Policy RST24.

**10.40** The Council is looking to make full and effective use of available urban land rather than accept its loss for some inappropriate use merely to ensure that land is developed. To accept the loss of such sites in this way would be to ignore the economic and employment needs of the District and to reduce even further the scope for meeting them.

**10.41** The established industrial and distribution areas at Langston Road and Oakwood Hill in Loughton are particularly important to the local economy. This is because of the number and type of job opportunities which they offer, these being predominantly in manufacturing industry. It is these types of jobs for which there is the greatest need in the District (see para. 10.17).

**10.42** Research has shown that many firms in the Loughton area have considerable links both with the local area and London. This is to the extent that they would be reluctant to consider a more distant location, regarding those such as Harlow and North Weald as 'too far out'.

**10.43** The existing employment areas in Loughton are therefore very important to local businesses. These businesses are, in turn, very important to the local economy and the local workforce. These areas are, however, also very attractive to many types of commercial undertaking and not necessarily local ones. This is because of:-

- being the only significant locations for industrial development in the Loughton area;
- the lack of nearby residential premises which may curtail certain types of commercial undertakings, or their hours of operation;
- the size and configuration of the sites;
- their proximity to London;
- the skills of the local workforce;
- their access by road (which will be enhanced dramatically by the provision of the proposed north-facing slip roads at junction 5 of the M11 (see Policy T6)); and
- their accessibility by public transport.

**10.44** Consequently, these areas are likely to be subject to considerable pressure for developments that are not in keeping with the main intentions of the Council's employment policies (see para. 10.30). This may apply particularly to the Langston Road area in view of its prominence from the M11. The Council has, however, successfully opposed a superstore proposal on the former GEC site at Langston Road. In dismissing the appeal, in Spring 1994, the Secretary of State accepted the Council's case about the scarcity of employment land in the locality and effectively implemented Government policy (see para 10.21).

**10.45** In formulating the policy for these two major employment areas in Loughton the Council considered the suitability of uses in each of the 'business', 'general industry' and 'warehousing' use classes. This was because of the importance of these industrial estates to the local economy and the scarcity of industrial land locally. All three types of use would typically be located on industrial estates, as witnessed by Policy E1.

**10.46** However, warehousing (B8) was considered inappropriate on the grounds that some types of modern distribution facility (the larger ones) have a low

employment density. Such developments would also not be in accordance with the intentions of the Plan in that, in contrast to many local firms, they would not need to locate in the Loughton area (see para. 10.43).

**10.47** B1 'business' uses include offices as well as light industry. Whilst light industry would be quite acceptable in these locations, office uses may not need to locate there and may be better placed elsewhere (e.g. town centres). This could enhance the economy and function of the town centres and leave space on the industrial estates for industry. Permitting only certain types of 'business' use would conflict with Government guidance which states that Development Plans should not generally contain policies advocating the imposition of general restrictions on the flexibility provided by the Use Classes Order.

**10.48** Given this, and the acceptability of 'general industrial' uses the following policy is preferred:-

**POLICY E2**

**WITHIN THE EXISTING EMPLOYMENT AREAS SUBJECT TO THIS POLICY (AS IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP) THE COUNCIL WILL GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OR EXTENSION OF EXISTING PREMISES FOR BUSINESS AND GENERAL INDUSTRIAL USES. THE REDEVELOPMENT OF EXISTING SITES OR PREMISES OR THEIR CHANGE OF USE TO USES OTHER THAN BUSINESS AND GENERAL INDUSTRY WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.**

**10.49** In order to be acceptable any proposal would also have to comply with all other relevant Plan policies, particularly those relating to design (Policies DBE1 and DBE3), landscape (Policy LL3), landscaping (Policy LL11), car parking (Policy T14) and traffic generation (Policy T17).

**10.50** In order to facilitate the development of more modest warehouse and distribution uses that may be appropriate in these areas, the following policy will apply:-

**POLICY E3**

**IN THE AREAS SUBJECT TO POLICY E2, THE COUNCIL MAY GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR WAREHOUSING OR DISTRIBUTION USES PROVIDED THAT IT IS SATISFIED THAT THE FIRM CAN DEMONSTRATE:-**

- (i) A PARTICULAR NEED TO LOCATE THERE BECAUSE OF ITS EXISTING OR POTENTIAL TRADING LINKS LOCALLY; AND**

- (ii) THAT THERE ARE NO SUITABLE ALTERNATIVE SITES AVAILABLE.**

**10.51** Any developments would have to be acceptable in terms of design (Policies DBE1 and DBE3), landscape (Policy LL3), landscaping (Policy LL11), parking (Policy T14) and traffic generation (Policy T17).

**10.52** It is also preferable to retain those established employment uses which are outside the defined employment areas/town centre commercial areas, provided they do not have a severe adverse effect on local amenity.

**POLICY E4**

**WHERE AUTHORISED BUSINESS, GENERAL INDUSTRIAL AND WAREHOUSING USES ARE WITHIN THE BUILT-UP AREA, BUT OUTSIDE THE DEFINED EMPLOYMENT AREAS, THE COUNCIL WILL:**

- (i) GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OR EXTENSION OF EXISTING SITES OR PREMISES FOR BUSINESS, GENERAL INDUSTRIAL AND/OR WAREHOUSING USES PROVIDED IT WOULD NOT RESULT IN A SIGNIFICANTLY ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE AMENITY OF THE AREA;**
- (ii) GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OR CHANGE OF USE OF EXISTING SITES OR PREMISES TO OTHER USES IF THIS RESULTS IN THE REMOVAL OF ACTIVITIES CAUSING A SIGNIFICANTLY ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE LOCAL AMENITY.**

**10.53** Uses which have a severe adverse effect upon the amenity of the area are those which feature in the Council's current list of non-conforming uses (see para. 10.106).

**10.54** The circumstances in which the Council may consider making an exception to this policy by granting planning permission for uses other than business, general industry and warehousing are where a site or building has been marketed for a considerable period, at a reasonable price for the use concerned, and where no suitable development proposal has come forward, or is likely to do so in the foreseeable future.

**10.55** Part of the site of the former Ongar Comprehensive School was allocated for housing development in the Consultation Draft. The premises are now in various uses including B1 (Business) and

adult education and operating successfully without detriment to the local amenity. The buildings are continuing to deteriorate, however, such that redevelopment of at least part of the site may eventually be necessary. The future development of this site will be assessed in the light of Policy CF7.

**10.56** Within the Green Belt, amenity and environmental considerations are such that the District Council applies stricter control on all forms of development (see Chapter 5). Any developments would have to be acceptable in terms of design (Policies DBE1 and DBE4), landscape (Policies LL2 and LL3), landscaping (Policy LL10 and LL11), car parking (Policy T14) and traffic generation (Policy T17).

**10.57** An increasing number of present day employment activities can be carried out in mixed use or residential areas without a significant adverse impact on local amenity. This is reflected in the interpretation of Policy E4 above. However it is also important (as highlighted in PPG4) to protect existing businesses from potentially incompatible development in close proximity. This may occur, for example, where a new residential development is in close proximity to an existing employment-generating use. The employment-generating use may cause problems for the new residents through noise and disturbance and the presence of the housing may place pressure on the nature of the operation and result in residents having a valid objection to any intensification or extension. This may ultimately result in the employment-generating use being obliged to relocate, possibly out of the District to the detriment of the local economy.

**10.58** The following policy will therefore apply:-

#### **POLICY E5**

**IN DETERMINING PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT IN THE PROXIMITY OF ESTABLISHED OR PROPOSED BUSINESS, GENERAL INDUSTRIAL AND WAREHOUSING USES THE COUNCIL WILL HAVE REGARD TO:-**

- (i) **ANY PLANNING CONSTRAINTS THAT MAY EVENTUALLY BE PLACED ON THE USE, OR ITS SUCCESSOR, AS A CONSEQUENCE OF THE DEVELOPMENT GOING AHEAD; AND**
- (ii) **THE DESIRABILITY OF THE ESTABLISHED USE BEING RETAINED.**

#### **New Employment Sites**

**10.59** In order to ensure that an appropriate number and range of job opportunities are available for the local

workforce, it is desirable to provide a suitable range of sites in terms of both size and location. This is to meet the future needs of local businesses in accordance with Government guidance (see para 10.18). This is particularly the case in the main urban areas. A widespread distribution would also reduce the journey to work and provide additional scope for more energy-efficient methods of travel (e.g. walking, cycling, public transport).

**10.60** The following policies are intended to supplement the opportunities presented by the existing employment areas and thereby secure this appropriate range of sites. Policies also indicate which types of activity would be acceptable in each location.

#### **POLICY E6**

**THE FOLLOWING SITES (IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP) ARE ALLOCATED FOR DEVELOPMENT FOR BUSINESS AND/OR GENERAL INDUSTRIAL AND/OR WAREHOUSING OR DISTRIBUTION PURPOSES:-**

- (i) **FORMER PARADE GROUND AND EXTENSION OF EXISTING EMPLOYMENT AREA AT NORTH WEALD AIRFIELD; AND**
- (ii) **DOE'S SITE, FYFIELD.**

#### **POLICY E7**

**THE FOLLOWING SITES (IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP) ARE ALLOCATED FOR BUSINESS AND/OR GENERAL INDUSTRIAL USE:-**

- (i) **PART OF THE FORMER ROYAL ORDNANCE SITE, WALTHAM ABBEY. ANY DEVELOPMENT WILL NEED TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE DETAILED DEVELOPMENT BRIEF FOR THE WHOLE SITE; AND**
- (ii) **LAND AT LANGSTON ROAD, LOUGHTON.**

**10.61** For the purposes of interpreting these policies, 'business', 'general industrial' and 'warehousing and distribution' uses are those which fall within Use Classes B1, B2 and B8 respectively of the Use Classes Order 1987.

**10.62** Early redevelopment of the derelict and contaminated Royal Ordnance Site is desirable, and the flexibility of the policy should help to facilitate this.

**10.63** Part of the Council's Employment Strategy is to provide a range of sites across the District. This site



differs from all the others because of its location adjacent to the M25 motorway, its potential direct link to the motorway and its relative inaccessibility to local markets. These factors combine to make the site suitable for commercial operations which are regional in scale, particularly warehousing. Allowing such uses to be located on this site relieves pressure on other sites in the District which are more suited to B1 and B2 uses, especially Langston Road.

**10.64** The Royal Ordnance site is important, both on a local and strategic scale, for employment in the local area and for the quality of the local environment. Consequently, a Development Brief has been prepared with the aim of maximising benefits locally by ensuring appropriate types and distribution of land uses on the site. Although flexibility is the keyword of the Brief, it aims to maximise the benefits of redeveloping the site by addressing the following issues:

- (i) the completion of a comprehensive marketing strategy in order to achieve the best possible balance of uses on the site, both in terms of local needs and wider strategic interests;
- (ii) the relocation of the Upshire Road Vehicle Service Centre to the site (see Policy E9);
- (iii) the provision of business starter units/ workspace to meet demand into the 2000s;
- (iv) the possibility of creating a lorry park; and
- (v) ensuring that development proceeds in accordance with an agreed master plan for the whole of the site, taking account of environmental, landscape and local amenity issues.

**10.65** The Parade Ground site at North Weald Airfield is part of an existing industrial allocation within the urban area. It is considered appropriate for uses including warehousing because of its proximity to, and accessibility from, the M11. Its extension to include the concrete apron on the airfield was as a replacement for a similar-sized allocation at Hallsford Bridge, Chipping Ongar made in the Epping and Ongar Local Plan. The airfield site is preferred for the reasons set out in paras. 5.20 and 5.21.

**10.66** It will also provide scope for alternative local employment opportunities following the closure of the Leca works at High Ongar. The hardstanding at the Leca works had been identified as a site for industrial development but this was dependent upon its environmental impact in the long term. The County Council, as minerals and waste planning authority, was opposed to the site being redeveloped because of the terms of the current planning permission (granted on

appeal) which require the restoration of the site to agriculture following the clearance of the buildings. That draft proposal has therefore been deleted.

**10.67** Doe's site at Fyfield has been identified as suitable for the relocation of 'non-conforming' industries (see para 10.106) although this may depend upon the likelihood of take-up (see para 10.107).

**10.68** All proposals will be assessed in the context of approved Development Briefs. In order to be acceptable development will have to comply with other relevant policies, including those relating to design (Policies DBE1, DBE3 and DBE4), landscape (Policies LL2 and LL3), landscaping (Policy LL10 and LL11), car parking (Policy T14), and traffic generation (Policy T17). Where there is a risk of flooding, developers will have to satisfy the Council and the Environment Agency, through the use of a hydraulic model, that proposals will not cause flooding on the site or lead to an increased risk of flooding elsewhere.

**10.69** Structural changes in the national economy over the past decade have placed a greater emphasis on small firms, particularly those in the service sector. Subject to the availability of suitable sites, it should be possible to accommodate a number of small firms within the urban area without increasing pressure on the Green Belt or causing economic overheating.

**10.70** The Council is anxious to assist small/new businesses where possible. Sites have therefore been identified for the development of starter units for workshops/light industry, or any use in Class B1 of the 1987 Use Classes Order.

**10.71** The additional sites identified below are expected to supplement the small units already in existence at Loughton, Waltham Abbey and North Weald Bassett. Any further demand for such units can be addressed in the Development Briefs of those parts of sites (identified in Policies E6 and E7) which are still available.

## **POLICY E8**

**THE FOLLOWING SITES (IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP) ARE ALLOCATED FOR THE PROVISION OF SMALL WORKSHOP UNITS, FOR BUSINESS AND GENERAL INDUSTRIAL USES:-**

- i). **LAND AT OAKWOOD HILL, LOUGHTON; AND**
- ii). **PART OF THE FORMER COUNCIL DEPOT, RECTORY LANE, LOUGHTON.**

**10.72** The units will be expected to be between 300 and 1,500 sq. m. in size with appropriate car parking and

servicing facilities (see Policy T14). The sites identified in the policy are owned by the Council and are available for sale. It is anticipated that private developers would implement their own schemes and both arrange and manage the letting of individual units.

**10.73** Any development would have to be in accordance with other relevant policies in the Plan, including those relating to design (Policies DBE1 and DBE3), car-parking (Policy T14) and traffic generation (Policy T17).

**10.74** In 1996 the Secretary of State for the Environment refused to grant planning permission for the relocation of the Upshire vehicle service station to Metropolitan Green Belt land immediately to the east of Waltham Abbey. He found that the proposal was inappropriate development and that the very special circumstances necessary to justify planning permission did not exist. However, he did acknowledge problems at the existing site in Upshire Road but considered the benefits of relocation to be outweighed by the disadvantages of introducing an unneighbourly urban use to undeveloped Green Belt land, albeit on a site adjacent to the M25. He stated that Waltham Abbey has a clearly defined eastern edge at Old Shire Lane, and that the appeal site is part of a predominantly rural area. Two major purposes of the Green Belt would be infringed - by extending Waltham Abbey beyond its built-up limits and by encroaching upon the countryside.

**10.75** The possibility of a more suitable site for relocation emerging elsewhere in the town, in the medium term, has not been precluded by this decision and is addressed as follows:

#### **POLICY E9**

**THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE THE RELOCATION OF THE VEHICLE SERVICE CENTRE FROM THE UPSHIRE ROAD/MAPLE SPRINGS JUNCTION, WALTHAM ABBEY (IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP) PROVIDED THAT THE PROPOSED SITE IS:**

- i). IN AN APPROPRIATE INDUSTRIAL/COMMERCIAL AREA; OR**
- ii). ON A SITE WHICH IS WELL-RELATED TO THE MAIN ROAD NETWORK AND THE BUILT-UP AREA, AND WHICH WOULD NOT SIGNIFICANTLY HARM RESIDENTIAL AMENITY.**

**10.76** Although the provision of offices is adequate in Structure Plan terms (see paras.10.22 and 10.23), it may be possible to permit further offices, of an appropriate scale, within the commercial centres without adding to the potential for economic 'over-heating'. This is in

view of the increasing significance of the office sector in creating employment and the needs of the local workforce.

#### **POLICY E10**

**THE COUNCIL WILL GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR OFFICES WITHIN TOWN CENTRES (IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP) PROVIDED THAT THE DEVELOPMENT, IN TERMS OF THE FLOOR SPACE PROPOSED, IS APPROPRIATE TO ITS LOCATION AND SURROUNDINGS.**

**10.77** Any town centre office developments would be considered in the light of the Structure Plan guidance on the floorspace of individual office developments (see para 10.23). Relevant policies with which a scheme would have to comply to be acceptable include those relating to non-retail frontage (Policies STC7 and STC9) and car parking provision (Policy T14).

**10.78** In the light of the adequacy of the existing provision of industrial land and office floorspace, together with the need to protect the environment of both the Green Belt and the urban area, further industrial uses might be considered unacceptable elsewhere.

#### **POLICY E11**

**THE COUNCIL WILL NOT GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR BUSINESS, INDUSTRIAL AND WAREHOUSE AND DISTRIBUTION DEVELOPMENT OUTSIDE SITES EITHER ALLOCATED FOR, OR WITH ESTABLISHED USE RIGHTS FOR, SUCH PURPOSES (UNLESS IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY E12).**

**10.79** For the purpose of interpreting this policy 'business', 'industrial' and 'warehousing or distribution' uses are those which fall within Part B of the Town and Country Planning Use Classes Order 1987.

**10.80** In order to be acceptable, any development proposal would also have to comply with all other relevant Plan policies, including those relating to nuisance (Policy RP5), car parking (Policy T14) and traffic generation (Policy T17). For changes of use of existing buildings to be acceptable within the Green Belt the proposals must be in accordance with Policy GB8.

**10.81** Despite the limited amount of land for further employment-generating uses there may be scope to provide increased employment opportunities in residential areas in certain limited instances.

**10.82** Working from home has become more common in recent years stemming partly from technological

innovations (such as personal computers and fax machines). People can therefore set up a business at home, maintain domestic commitments, and not have to travel to work. This is a means of enabling people to become economically active who could otherwise be denied the opportunity.

**10.83** Although there are potential economic and social benefits of working from home it is essential that this does not have a detrimental effect upon either the character or the amenity of the surrounding residential area. 'Business' uses can, by definition, be carried out in any residential area without detriment to the amenity of that area from noise, vibration, smell, fumes, smoke, soot, ash, dust or grit, but this leaves aside any effect of any visiting traffic, parking or even lighting. The use of one or more buildings exclusively for 'business' would undoubtedly change the character of the area to some degree. This would also reduce the number of available dwellings which is contrary to Policy H13. Consequently, the scale as well as the type of undertaking are matters of concern. In view of this, where the scale of the undertaking is such that planning permission is necessary, the following policy will apply:-

**POLICY E12**

**THE COUNCIL WILL GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR SMALL SCALE BUSINESS ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE GREEN BELT, INCLUDING (WHERE NECESSARY) CONSENT FOR WORKING FROM HOME, PROVIDED THAT THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:**

- (i) **WILL NOT HAVE A SIGNIFICANTLY ADVERSE EFFECT ON EITHER:**
  - (a) **THE AMENITIES OF ANY NEARBY PROPERTY; OR**
  - (b) **THE CHARACTER OF THE SURROUNDING AREA.**

**ANY PLANNING PERMISSION GRANTED FOR WORKING FROM HOME WILL:**

- (ii) **BE SUBJECT TO THE DEVELOPMENT REMAINING SUBSIDIARY TO THE RESIDENTIAL USE; AND**
- (iii) **RELATE SOLELY TO THE PERSON WHO OCCUPIES THE DWELLING AND CARRIES OUT THE ACTIVITY.**

**10.84** Potentially acceptable uses are those which fall within Class B1 'Business' use of the Use Classes Order 1987.

**10.85** The character of the area may be affected where,

for example, the activity generates a large number of vehicle movements, or visits by certain types of vehicle, or results in excessive on-street car parking. The extent of this effect will vary from area to area.

**10.86** Where the effect of the proposed development on the surroundings is not fully known, permission may be granted for a limited period to enable the situation to be assessed.

**10.87** In order to be acceptable, any development proposal would also have to comply with all other relevant Plan policies, including those relating to nuisance (Policy RP5), car parking (Policy T14) and traffic generation (T17).

**Lea Valley Glasshouse Industry**

**10.88** The Lea Valley is one of the most important areas of the glasshouse industry in the country. It comprised some 136 ha in 1988 of which 85 ha were in Epping Forest District in the Roydon, Nazeing, Waltham Abbey area.

**10.89** This important, long established industry was in decline and very much behind the rest of the glasshouse industry in updating its facilities and equipment, until about 1985. The Lea Valley was late in utilising the available grants but redeemed the situation in the late 1980s. Since then the amount of glass has been generally stable but with a slight upward trend.

**10.90** The main crops in the Lea Valley are cucumbers, lettuces and bedding plants which account for 75% of the production area. Production is highly specialised with many crops now cultivated using inert materials (such as mineral wool or perlite) as the rooting mediums or culture solutions. Local soil characteristics are therefore not important in these instances.

**10.91** The replacement facilities now built are generally designed as fully integrated production units with microprocessor-based control systems and, in some cases, with computer-based, programmable control and monitoring systems. The local industry is now more capital-intensive and has a higher potential output per unit area than the national average.

**10.92** Almost all businesses are family-run and therefore more resilient in adverse economic conditions. This has been a major factor in the turn-around and revival of the industry in recent years.

**10.93** A new method of marketing local produce, involving growers combining their distribution function at selected sites, was introduced in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Some 90% of the produce is now sold to supermarket operators, which is a consequence of the capital investment necessary to produce consistent, high quality produce.

**10.94** The future of the industry is likely to depend upon changes in both foreign competition and Government assistance by way of grants. The competitive pressures upon Lea Valley growers are likely to intensify as a result of:-

- less restrictions on the importation of some fruit and vegetables (particularly tomatoes and lettuce) from EC countries (especially Spain);
- political changes in Eastern Europe; and
- a further weakening of the price support mechanisms resulting from reforms to the Common Agricultural Policy.

**10.95** Given the large investments that have been made in recent years the limited amount of derelict glass in this District is not a general problem, particularly outside the Regional Park. However, it is not possible to predict whether it will increase. This will depend upon the profitability of the industry, the cost of replacement (which, in turn, depends on the nature of the existing structure and the amount of Government grant), any "hope value" and whether the business can survive a period of non-production.

**10.96** It has been estimated that, if no grant aid was available, the rate of rebuilding would be greatly reduced - perhaps to only 10% of recent rates. The most important aspect in this respect, however, is the profitability of the industry. Glass has a "technical" life of about 12 years so there would need to be a steady rebuilding programme if the industry is to keep its fixed assets up to date and dereliction avoided.

**10.97** There are isolated examples of horticultural holdings deliberately left in a derelict state in the hope that eventually housing, or some other type of urban development, will be seen as a "better" use for the land. The Council will resist all such schemes and adhere to the guidance in PPG2 which states that "..... development (should not be) allowed merely because the land has become derelict."

**10.98** There is little or no demand or justification for more land for glasshouses unless this involves the redevelopment of existing derelict glasshouse sites. The scope for bringing derelict glasshouse sites back into other beneficial use is likely to be limited to L.V.R.P.A. projects, woodland or horse-related uses.

**10.99** The following policies are therefore intended to facilitate the continued well-being of the Lea Valley glasshouse industry and limit any new glass to the area in which the industry is now concentrated.

## **POLICY E13**

**PLANNING PERMISSION WILL BE GRANTED FOR THE ERECTION OR RE-ERECTION OF HORTICULTURAL GLASSHOUSES WITHIN THAT PART OF THE LEA VALLEY IDENTIFIED AS SUCH ON THE PROPOSALS MAP. HORTICULTURAL GLASSHOUSES WILL NOT BE PERMITTED OUTSIDE THE AREAS SUBJECT TO THE POLICY UNLESS THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:**

- (i) **IS IMMEDIATELY ADJACENT TO AN EXISTING GLASSHOUSE (BE IT WITHIN AN AREA SUBJECT TO THIS POLICY OR OUTSIDE); AND**
- (ii) **IS NECESSARY FOR THE EXPANSION OF AN EXISTING HORTICULTURAL UNDERTAKING WHICH, IF IT IS WITHIN AN AREA SUBJECT TO THIS POLICY, IS UNABLE TO EXPAND BECAUSE ALL THE AVAILABLE SPACE IS OCCUPIED BY VIABLE GLASSHOUSE UNDERTAKINGS; AND**
- (iii) **WILL NOT HAVE A SIGNIFICANTLY ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE OPEN CHARACTER OR THE APPEARANCE OF THE COUNTRYSIDE.**

**10.100** This policy allows extensions to existing glasshouses to take place outside, but immediately adjacent to, the identified glasshouse areas provided that the criteria are met. It also facilitates the extension of existing glasshouses which are remote from the identified glasshouse areas. However, in considering such applications the Council will look very carefully at the potential impact on the countryside. This is because it will need to be convinced that the impact is acceptable outside the areas in which the glasshouses are considered appropriate. Extensions to glasshouses on these remote sites are, therefore, less likely to gain approval than on sites adjacent to glasshouse areas. This policy will not apply, however, where the grower or developer proposes to erect permitted development and has given the requisite notice as set out in Annex E of PPG7 - The Countryside - Environmental Quality and Economic and Social Development.

**10.101** Proposals for new glasshouses will also be assessed in the context of other policies in the Plan, particularly those relating to their impact on the landscape (Policies LL2, LL10 and LL11) the adequacy of the existing road network (Policy T17) and design (Policies DBE4 and DBE9).

**10.102** Planning applications for houses associated with new or existing glasshouses will be assessed in the light of Policy GB17. It is unlikely, however, that any such

dwelling are likely to be acceptable, especially given the high level of technology typical of modern glasshouses.

**10.103** Planning applications for the change of use of existing glasshouses will be determined in the context of Policy GB8. The use of the land for horse-keeping, and the construction of stables, may well be a suitable alternative to derelict glasshouses, especially in or in close proximity to the Lee Valley Regional Park.

**10.104** The Council recognises that the glasshouse industry may need support services (eg: distribution depots) in reasonably close proximity and will therefore determine any planning applications for such developments on the basis of their merits in the light of other Plan policies. However, such developments are inappropriate in the Green Belt, according to Government guidance, and therefore can only be justified in very special circumstances.

#### **Non-Conforming Uses**

**10.105** There are a number of instances throughout the District where an established industrial/commercial site is causing a particular nuisance to neighbours, either through the activities undertaken or the operation of heavy goods vehicles or other commercial traffic. The Council has a long-standing commitment to the relocation of such operations or, in exceptional circumstances, their discontinuance.

#### **POLICY E14**

**THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK THE RELOCATION OR DISCONTINUANCE OF THOSE INDUSTRIAL OR OTHER COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES WHICH HAVE A SEVERE ADVERSE EFFECT UPON THE AMENITY OF THE AREA.**

**10.106** The Council has prepared a Schedule of 'non-conforming' industrial firms and operations which it would like to see discontinued or relocated. The Schedule is very selective, incorporating only those activities which present particularly severe problems.

**10.107** Discontinuance of a use, and/or the purchase of a site is potentially very costly. In view of this the emphasis is placed upon relocation as an alternative. However progress in relocating has generally been slow during the recessionary conditions of the late 1980s and early 1990s. This, coupled with Government advice on bringing vacant land into productive use, means that the Council can no longer justify keeping any of its own employment land in reserve for the purpose of relocating these uses (except for part of the land at Langston Road employment area which is already committed for the relocation of a small business from Smarts Lane).

**10.108** The Council may, where circumstances are considered to warrant it, grant planning permission for development likely to secure an environmental gain. One such example is the site of the former Council depot, and adjacent cottage at Weald Hall Lane, Thornwood which is to be utilised for residential development in preference to its reuse for commercial purposes.

**10.109** Even if no progress was made on relocation or discontinuance, it would be counter-productive if businesses identified on the Schedule were allowed to consolidate on their present sites.

#### **POLICY E15**

**PLANNING PERMISSION WILL NOT BE GRANTED FOR DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS WHICH WOULD CONSOLIDATE, INTENSIFY OR EXTEND THE ON-SITE ACTIVITIES OF ANY INDUSTRIAL OR OTHER COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES WHICH HAVE, OR ARE LIKELY TO RESULT IN, A SEVERE ADVERSE EFFECT UPON THE AMENITY OF THE AREA.**

**10.110** The firms subject to this policy are those featured on the Council's current 'non-conforming uses' Schedule. Any development proposals which are acceptable would have to comply with all other relevant Plan policies including those relating to design (Policies DBE1, DBE3 and DBE4), landscape (Policies LL2 and LL3), landscaping (Policy LL10 and LL11), car parking (Policy T14) and traffic generation (Policy T17).

#### **Environmental Implications**

**10.111** The policies in this chapter will contribute to the achievement of the following aims of the Plan (see pages 24 and 25):-

- (ii) To facilitate modern-day living requirements.
- (xii) To facilitate the establishment of employment opportunities which match the needs of residents seeking work locally.
- (xiii) To provide sufficient land for employment-generating uses.
- (xiv) To provide a range of sites for employment-generating uses in terms of size and location.
- (xx) To ensure that any new development does not have an unacceptable impact both in environmental terms and in the provision of local facilities.
- (xxviii) To reduce the impact of, but make adequate provision for, heavy goods vehicles with business in the District.

(xxxiv) To make the most efficient use of land and buildings wherever practicable.

**10.112** Appendix 2, which indicates the environmental implications of the policies in each chapter, shows what effect the employment policies will have upon the urban and rural environment, through control over the location and type of development. The provision of a range of sites across the District offers scope for minimising the journey to work. The exclusion of "special industries" will also protect the environment.

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## **11. Shopping and Town Centres**



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## **Retail Trends**

**11.1** The nature of shopping has changed considerably over recent decades and is continuing to do so. Food shopping is generally no longer a daily chore but is now likely to be a weekly or less frequent outing to a major store supplemented by more frequent visits to local, smaller shops. Shopping for durable/comparison goods has also changed considerably with the development of large stores providing a wide range of goods with parking close at hand.

**11.2** This trend has been facilitated by increased personal mobility, an increase in the amount of disposable income and the continually advancing technological innovations (e.g. domestic freezers, microwaves) which facilitate 'bulk' purchases. 'One-stop' shopping at a store which is able to supply virtually all requirements under one roof has therefore become accepted practice and is now a common aspect of modern shopping.

**11.3** New stores have become progressively larger in order to provide a wider range of goods and achieve economies of scale. The size of these new stores, the need for them to be on one level and the requirement to provide surface parking to cater for the car-borne customer mean that they require large sites. The scale of their requirements is often such that there is no scope to accommodate them within town centres. Consequently, these stores are often located on the edge of existing shopping centres (e.g. Tesco at Epping and Sainsbury's in Romford) or elsewhere in the urban area (e.g. Tesco at Gallows Corner, Romford and Sainsbury's in Chelmsford). New out-of-town shopping centres on green field or other sites, such as Lakeside at Thurrock have also gained approval.

**11.4** For these reasons the importance of the traditional high street in shopping terms has been reduced. The general pattern has been one of more services and more specialist clothes shops but fewer independent food shops. The new types of large stores have effectively introduced new tiers into the pre-existing hierarchy of shops and shopping centres.

**11.5** Recent years have also witnessed the growth of another kind of retailing by way of 'car boot' sales. The main facility of a similar nature in this District is the Saturday Market at North Weald Airfield.

**11.6** This growth in the number and type of shopping facilities results in greater competition for customers. This was exacerbated by the downturn in consumer spending as a consequence of the

recession of the late 1980s and early 1990s. The growth in retail expenditure fell to between a third and a half that of the latter half of the late 1980s. Forecasts of consumer spending reflect the long term low rates of growth rather than the higher trends to emerge in the early to mid 1980s.

## **Government Guidance**

**11.7** This is reflected in PPG6 the essence of which is to:-

- emphasise a Plan-led approach to promoting development in town centres;
- emphasise the sequential approach to selecting sites for development (ie: consider town centre sites first, then edge-of-centre sites and, only then, out-of-centre sites);
- support local centres;
- promote mixed-use development;
- emphasise the importance of a coherent parking strategy;
- promote town centre management;
- promote good urban design; and
- clarify how to assess new retail developments ( according to their nature, scale and location).

## **County Policy**

**11.8** The County Council's retailing strategy is to adapt and modernise the shopping structure to meet demands by concentrating development on the existing centres. The strategic planning background is set out in the current Structure Plan. Relevant policies are summarised below:-

- concentrate retail development in existing centres, allowing exceptions only in accordance with other policies;
- retail development is not permitted outside the built-up area (except for the sale of produce from an individual agricultural or horticultural holding);
- allow large foodstores in built-up areas outside town centres, only where no suitable town centre sites are available, where the vitality and viability of an existing town centre would not be affected, and other specific criteria are met;

- large new retail stores should not be developed on industrial/warehousing sites; and
- allow retail warehouses in or adjoining town centres and elsewhere in the built-up area provided the vitality and viability of an existing town centre would not be affected, and other specific criteria are met.

### **The District Council's Approach**

**11.9** The Council developed a Shopping Strategy in the context of publicising the Consultation Draft Local Plan. The Strategy takes a broad perspective and looks to consolidate the existing town centre facilities, to provide the greatest range of services, and to ensure ready access by users of private and especially public transport. This will be within the constraints imposed by other planning policies, particularly the need to protect both the Green Belt and existing industrial land.

**11.10** In essence, the Strategy is one of:-

- (i) maintaining and, where possible, strengthening the current role of the existing town centres within the District's shopping hierarchy;
- (ii) ensuring that the District's shopping facilities are conveniently located and readily accessible, particularly by public transport;
- (iii) maintaining and enhancing the character and appearance of the District;
- (iv) providing a range of shopping facilities to meet the essential needs (and, where possible, the desirable needs) of residents; and
- (v) maintaining consistency with other planning policies.

**11.11** It is intended that the Strategy will take a long-term view. Implementation would be in keeping with the Government's intention of establishing a 'Plan-led' system. Any retail development proposals will be judged against policies within the context of the Strategy. Proposals which might prejudice its successful implementation will therefore be resisted.

### **Current Situation**

**11.12** Shopping facilities in the District comprise:-

- the main town centres (ie the "district centres" as defined in the Structure Plan) of Loughton (High Road), Epping and Waltham Abbey;
- the smaller "local" centres (Chipping Ongar, Loughton (Broadway) and Buckhurst Hill);
- shopping parades; and
- corner or village shops.

**11.13** Town centres generally serve only those people living or working locally. The range of both shops and goods available is not sufficient to fulfil all the needs of local residents many of whom also shop elsewhere. Despite this, the existing shops fulfil a vitally important function in meeting the needs of all residents to some degree by offering a particular range of goods and services that is convenient and therefore regularly used with consequent reductions in the distances travelled. This applies particularly to the less affluent or less mobile members of the community (which may include the elderly, the disabled or those people with young children). It is therefore important that these centres are able to continue to develop to reflect changing trends in shopping.

### **POLICY STC1**

**THE COUNCIL WILL GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR RETAIL DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES WITHIN THE EXISTING TOWN CENTRES AND SHOPPING PARADES (IDENTIFIED AS SUCH ON THE PROPOSALS MAP) WHERE THEY ARE APPROPRIATE TO THE FUNCTION AND CHARACTER OF THE CENTRES OR PARADES.**

**11.14** This policy will secure the most fundamental component of the Council's Shopping Strategy (see para. 11.10). The 'function' of the existing shopping centre or parade is determined by its role in meeting the needs of the community. Its 'character' relates to the extent to which the proposed development could be readily accommodated in visual and architectural terms as well as general environmental terms (e.g. the amount and type of traffic generation). Retail proposals outside existing centres or parades must also satisfy the criteria set out in Policy STC3.

**11.15** It is essential that the role of existing shopping centres, parades and individual shops is improved and enhanced, wherever possible, but not undermined.

## **POLICY STC2**

**THE COUNCIL WILL NOT GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR NEW RETAIL DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD BE LIKELY TO:-**

- (i) ADVERSELY AFFECT, TO A SIGNIFICANT DEGREE, THE VITALITY AND VIABILITY; OR**
- (ii) PREJUDICE THE IMPROVEMENT,**

**OF ANY TOWN CENTRE IN THE DISTRICT.**

**11.16** The maintenance of the existing hierarchy of shopping centres is all important given their role in both social and economic terms. It is, however, acknowledged that the retail industry is continuing to change and that this may present opportunities to enhance the District's shopping facilities. Any development proposals will be assessed in the light of the new Shopping Strategy.

**11.17** In implementing this policy, the Council will also have regard to the impact of any development proposals upon shopping centres outside the District.

**11.18** Commercial competition is not a planning consideration and therefore will not be a relevant factor in the determination of planning applications. However, where significant retail developments are outside town centres their potential impact upon any nearby centres will be taken into account. Factors to be considered include:-

- probable changes to the quality, attractiveness and character of the centre;
- a change in the centre's role in the economic and social life of the community;
- a reduction in the range of services which the centre will be able to support;
- an increase in the number of vacant retail premises;
- the likelihood of adverse changes in the physical condition of a centre; and
- the prospect of any investment being forthcoming in order to sustain the vitality and viability of a centre.

These are pursued in the subsequent policy on retail stores (STC 3).

## **Retail Stores**

**11.19** The policies of the Council's previous Local Plans generally sought to resist large new stores because of the foreseen physical and environmental difficulties in existing shopping centres, incompatibility of out-of-town sites with other planning policies and the protection of the established shopping hierarchy. Nevertheless, it has been possible to give permission for new food stores of comparatively modest size in Loughton, Buckhurst Hill and Epping in the 1980s. There is evidence of commercial interest in further food store development at Chipping Ongar and Waltham Abbey, and particularly in the Loughton area.

**11.20** The thrust of the latest Government guidance as set out in Revised PPG6 (June 1996) and County policies is included in paras 11.7 to 11.8. These advise that the Local Plan should seek to secure a balance between centres and out-of-centre developments, with a presumption in favour of the former. The following policy will therefore apply:-

## **POLICY STC3**

**THE COUNCIL WILL GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION WITHIN THE URBAN AREA FOR RETAIL STORES WHICH MEET THE COUNCIL'S SHOPPING OBJECTIVES PROVIDED THAT:-**

- i). THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENTS IS ACCEPTABLE IN TERMS OF THE CHARACTER AND LOCAL AMENITIES OF THE AREA;**
- ii). THEY DO NOT HAVE A SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE PROVISION OF OTHER MAJOR LAND USES, PARTICULARLY THE SUPPLY OF LAND FOR BUSINESS, GENERAL INDUSTRY AND WAREHOUSING USES;**
- iii). THEY ARE WELL LOCATED TO MEET THE SHOPPING NEEDS OF THE RESIDENTS OF THE DISTRICT IN TERMS OF CONVENIENCE AND ACCESSIBILITY BY BOTH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE TRANSPORT;**
- iv). THEY DO NOT LEAD TO A SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN THE NUMBER AND LENGTH OF TRIPS MADE BY PRIVATE CAR;**
- v). LOCAL ROADS AND JUNCTIONS**

**ARE ADEQUATE TO COPE WITH THE ADDITIONAL TRAFFIC LIKELY TO BE GENERATED BY THE DEVELOPMENT;**

- vi). **THE IMPACT OF THE TRAFFIC LIKELY TO BE GENERATED AND ASSOCIATED HIGHWAY WORKS IS NOT EXCESSIVE IN ENVIRONMENTAL TERMS;**
- vii). **THE PROPOSED CAR PARKING PROVISION AND ARRANGEMENTS ARE ADEQUATE; AND**
- viii). **THE PROPOSED SERVICING ARRANGEMENTS ARE ADEQUATE AND THEIR USE WILL NOT BE LIKELY TO INTERFERE WITH THE FREE FLOW OF TRAFFIC BOTH ON THE SITE AND IN THE LOCAL ROAD NETWORK.**

**11.21** The Council's shopping objectives are set out in para. 11.10. The Council will be looking to protect existing shopping centres if their function is likely to be adversely affected to a significant degree, in accordance with Policy STC2. It will therefore carefully consider the probable impact of the proposed development upon the vitality and viability of any nearby shopping centres. This applies particularly to their role as a centre for food shopping in view of the importance of this function to a shopping centre as a whole and the need to maintain nearby facilities for those people for whom travelling may present a problem.

**11.22** In the case of food stores, their impact on other shops within the centre is unlikely to be a material issue provided that they meet the criteria in STC3. However, in the case of such development proposals which are outside town centres, developers will be expected to demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the Council, that their proposals will not undermine the convenience goods function of any shopping centre.

**11.23** The protection of other major land uses refers to proposed as well as existing provision and is in accordance with other policies of this Plan and the 'needs' of the District. The particular protection afforded to land for industry-related uses (as distinct from, for example, housing) stems from the acute shortage of land available for such purposes (see para 10.26). Developments which are seriously at odds with other policies and likely to inhibit the Plan's objectives will be resisted.

**11.24** In order to be acceptable, any development

scheme would also be required to comply with all other relevant Plan policies including those relating to design (Policies DBE1, DBE2, DBE3 and DBE9), landscaping (Policies LL10 and LL11), accessibility by public transport (Policy T17), car parking (Policy T14) and access for the disabled (Policy CF9). Applicants will also be required to enter into appropriate legal agreements, in accordance with Policy I1, to make any necessary or replacement facilities available or to make a financial contribution towards a body capable of providing those facilities.

**11.25** Ideally every village ought to have at least one shop which provides for essential local needs. The Council considers that a permanent shop performs a more complete role for the local community than alternatives such as the mobile shop and will therefore seek to facilitate the establishment of village shops in appropriate circumstances.

#### **POLICY STC4**

**THE COUNCIL WILL GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR NEW VILLAGE SHOPS PROVIDED THAT THE PROPOSAL:-**

- (i) **IS FOR A RETAIL UNIT OF LESS THAN 200 SQUARE METRES GROSS FLOORSPACE;**
- (ii) **IS WITHIN THE BUILT-UP AREA OF A VILLAGE; AND**
- (iii) **WILL ASSIST IN THE PROVISION OF A POST OFFICE OR OTHER ESSENTIAL LOCAL NEED.**

#### **Town Centres**

**11.26** The most important shopping centres in the District are:- Loughton (High Road), Epping, Waltham Abbey, Loughton (Broadway), Chipping Ongar and Buckhurst Hill (Queens Road). Each of these fulfils an important local function within the shopping hierarchy. This should be continued, in accordance with Policy STC2, in order to maintain both a choice of shopping facilities and a convenient facility for those who wish to shop locally or those for whom travelling presents a problem.

**11.27** Shopping centres continually evolve in terms of the area they occupy and the range and nature of the facilities they provide. This is in response to changing demands. It is therefore important that they can continue to change to meet the new demands and to take advantage of local opportunities. This is with the proviso that they do

so within the constraints of the existing hierarchy and that any impact upon both the centre and its surroundings is acceptable.

**11.28** The remainder of this section focuses upon the extent of the scope for retail development in each of the town centres. Sites are allocated as appropriate.

**(i) Loughton/Buckhurst Hill**

**11.29** This area is currently served by three shopping centres - Buckhurst Hill, Loughton (Broadway) and Loughton (High Road) each of which has an 'anchor' food store of moderate size. Loughton (High Road), whilst having a somewhat limited range of facilities for a town of its size, is the largest centre and the main focus of public transport. It is therefore the most important and draws people from throughout the area. Loughton (Broadway) and Buckhurst Hill are considerably smaller and have more localised catchments. In view of the importance of all three centres in social terms and the importance of their food stores in economic terms (i.e. through generating spin-off trade), the Council will seek to protect and, where possible, enhance their long-term shopping function. Any major new out-of-centre shopping proposal will therefore be considered in that context.

**11.30** Research on convenience goods shopping in the Loughton area in the early 1990s found that:-

- 87% of respondents to a Household Interview Survey were satisfied with existing facilities (although there were localised areas of greater dissatisfaction);
- existing food retail facilities in the area (and in Loughton town centre in particular) fall well below current retailers' standards and it would be desirable to seek to improve/expand the range and quality of food shopping provision;
- the existing food stores are successfully attracting a significant proportion of bulk weekly food shopping trips from residents;
- some of the existing food stores are achieving turnover levels significantly above company averages (such that scope may exist for additional food retailing provision in the area);
- many of the existing food stores fall below modern requirements (in terms of size, products on offer or car parking facilities);

- there is scope for additional food retailing within the Loughton area over the Plan period;
- the public's general satisfaction with the existing level of provision would not be expected to change materially, even if no new retail development took place.

**11.31** From this, it was concluded that, despite the relatively high levels of satisfaction with convenience shopping facilities locally, it is desirable that they be improved both in the High Road and The Broadway. This applies particularly to the High Road which is a 'district centre' whereas The Broadway is a 'local centre' and already has a reasonably good range of facilities.

**11.32** Three possible sites were identified for improving and expanding the existing food shopping provision in or adjacent to Loughton town centre. These are:-

- the car park and swimming pool at Traps Hill;
- an extension of the existing Safeway store and car park; and
- the site of the former Council Offices on Old Station Road.

**11.33** In retailing terms, any one of them would be feasible and would significantly enhance the range of existing facilities. Following extensive public consultation, in the context of publishing the Consultation Draft, the Council has decided to:-

- retain the Traps Hill site for community facilities (see Policy CF1);and
- not allocate the site of the former Council Offices on Old Station Road for a supermarket.

The extension of Safeway's store was granted on appeal.

**11.34** The site of the former Chigwell UDC offices at Old Station Road, Loughton is an extensive area of vacant land. No overriding case for a particular form of development on the site has been identified in this Plan. However, the location of the site (immediately adjacent to the town centre) is such that it may well be subject to development pressure during the Plan period. In considering proposals it will be important to ensure that:-

- the effect upon the character or amenities

of the neighbouring residential properties is acceptable;

- the environmental impact of traffic generated will be acceptable;
- optimum use is made of the accessibility of the site by public transport and opportunity is taken to reduce car usage; and
- any use would be beneficial to the function of the adjacent town centre and not detrimental to any other town centres in the vicinity.

**11.35** A proposal for any part of the site should not preclude the satisfactory development of the remainder and will be required to comply with all other relevant Plan policies.

**(ii) Waltham Abbey**

**11.36** There is an accepted need within Waltham Abbey town centre for a small supermarket. This will enhance its role as a convenience centre and help to reduce the loss of trade to larger adjoining centres. To provide a spin-off benefit it should be within (or immediately adjoining) the town centre but, unfortunately, no suitable site is currently available. If, however, an alternative site were to become available during the Plan period, the Council would consider it in the light of Policy STC3.

**11.37** There is an extensive area of vacant and potentially vacant land to the south of Highbridge Street. It comprises a mix of uses including vacant sites, offices and workshops. The western part of the site fronts onto the roundabout at the western end of the town centre. It is therefore potentially a very prominent site in the street-scene and could form part of a visual gateway to this attractive and historic town centre. The form of any development of the site is therefore critical to the character of the Conservation Area.

**POLICY STC5**

**THE COUNCIL MAY GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF PART OR ALL OF THE SITE (IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP) SOUTH OF HIGHBRIDGE STREET, WALTHAM ABBEY PROVIDED THAT:-**

**THE DESIGN OF THE DEVELOPMENT RESPECTS AND ENHANCES THE SITE'S PROMINENT POSITION ON THE**

**(i) APPROACH TO THE TOWN CENTRE AND ADJACENT TO THE CONSERVATION AREA; AND**

**(ii) THE DEVELOPMENT OF PART OF THE SITE DOES NOT PREJUDICE THE SUCCESSFUL DEVELOPMENT OF THE REMAINDER IN TERMS OF EITHER:-**

**(a) THE USE OF LAND; OR**

**(b) THE ACHIEVEMENT OF AN APPROPRIATE DESIGN; OR**

**(c) THE ACHIEVEMENT OF AN ADEQUATE PEDESTRIAN OR VEHICULAR ACCESS.**

**11.38** The whole of the area which may eventually be subject to development interest is included because of its proximity to the Conservation Area and the Abbey. The Council will prepare a Development Brief for the site. In order to be acceptable, any proposal must also comply with all other relevant Plan policies including design (Policies DBE1 and DBE3), landscaping (Policies LL10 and LL11), car parking (T14) and traffic impact (T17).

**(iii) Epping**

**11.39** In Epping, the enlarged Coop supermarket is due to open shortly. If the need for further shopping facilities were to emerge, then the most appropriate site (and probably the only one potentially suitable) would be that of the eastern car park and adjacent properties at Baker's Lane. The need for, and acceptability of, such a scheme will be considered in the context of a review of the Plan. Any development on that site would necessitate associated traffic management measures to overcome the access problems, and replacement car parking.

**(iv) Chipping Ongar**

**11.40** There is a recognised need for a store in Chipping Ongar and interest has been expressed by a retail developer. The only possible site is allocated accordingly (see Policy STC6).

**Sites for Development**

**11.41** As a consequence of the foregoing the following two sites are allocated.

## POLICY STC6

**THE FOLLOWING SITES (IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP) ARE ALLOCATED FOR RETAIL DEVELOPMENT AS FOLLOWS:-**

- (i) **PART OF THE FORMER LAMB'S GARAGE, HIGH ROAD, LOUGHTON; AND**
- (ii) **A SUPERMARKET ON THE SITE OF THE LIBRARY AND FORMER INFANTS SCHOOL AT BANSONS LANE, CHIPPING ONGAR.**

**11.42** The Lamb's garage site would not be sufficiently large to accommodate a supermarket of any significance. It is anticipated that it would be developed as a series of shop units (as distinct from a single store). Any scheme would need to be in accordance with relevant policies of the Plan, in particular those relating to design (DBE1 and DBE3) and non-retail uses (STC7). Car parking provision would be required (in accordance with Policy T14) although it may be possible for the developer to enter into an appropriate legal agreement and pay a commuted sum towards the provision of alternative parking elsewhere (see Policy I1).

**11.43** The library/school site in Chipping Ongar is allocated in response to the demand for a new supermarket locally (see para. 11.40) and to this being the preferred site for it.

**11.44** Unfortunately that part of the site within the urban area is not large enough to be able to accommodate an appropriately-sized supermarket with the requisite car parking. The part within the urban area would be expected to accommodate the built development while, as a justifiable exception to the normal policy of restraint, that part within the Green Belt would accommodate the car park. The car park would therefore have to be particularly well-screened in order to minimise its impact upon the Green Belt.

**11.45** In order to be acceptable, any development proposal would have to comply with the Council's Development and Design Brief and also incorporate a satisfactory traffic impact appraisal. It would also have to comply with other relevant policies of this Plan including those relating to design (DBE1), car parking provision (T14), access for the disabled (CF9) and legal agreements to secure benefits made necessary or desirable by the development (I1). The latter could include the provision of, or a financial contribution towards, the improvement of Banson's

Lane and an improved junction with the High Street.

### 'Non-Retail' Uses

**11.46** PPG6 urges local authorities to encourage diversification of town centre uses. This is because different but complementary uses can widen the range and quality of activities, thereby making town centres more attractive to local residents, shoppers and visitors and hence contributing to their vitality and viability.

**11.47** Any such diversification should, however, supplement and not undermine the retail function of town centres. This can be achieved by:-

- permitting the establishment of service uses which are not strictly retail, but controlling their location;
- retaining a strong retail core in which the amount and location of these service (or 'non-retail' uses) will be strictly controlled;
- bringing vacant or underused floorspace on upper floors into more productive use (see paras 9.67 to 9.69); and
- introducing more 'life' into town centres, outside normal shop hours, by permitting residential accommodation and recreational uses.

**11.48** This section deals with the provision for 'non-retail' commercial uses in town centres. 'Non-retail' uses can undermine the retail function of town centres by:-

- reducing the amount of retail floorspace;
- attracting fewer people than shops; and
- attracting people to the centre for only that one purpose.

There are two types:-

- (a) those which "... will generally be found in shopping areas" (Circular 13/87) and currently defined as Class A2 (financial and professional services) and A3 (food and drink) in the Use Classes Order 1987. They comprise banks, building societies, estate agents' offices, betting shops, restaurants, public houses, hot food take-aways and wine bars;
- (b) all other non-retail uses.



**11.49** Uses in type (a) complement and enhance the function of, and are therefore appropriate in, a shopping centre. But, in order to ensure that they establish to optimum effect, it is necessary to control their extent and location whilst also allowing sufficient scope for non-retail uses in order to both cater for market demand and diversify the function of town centres.

**POLICY STC7**

**THE COUNCIL WILL GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF:**

- **FINANCIAL, PROFESSIONAL OR OTHER SERVICES WHICH IT IS APPROPRIATE TO PROVIDE IN A SHOPPING AREA; AND**
- **ESTABLISHMENTS FOR THE SALE OF FOOD OR DRINK FOR CONSUMPTION ON THE PREMISES AND OF HOT FOOD FOR CONSUMPTION OFF THE PREMISES;**

**IN TOWN CENTRES, PROVIDED:**

- (A) THE PREMISES ARE:-**
  - (i) AT GROUND FLOOR LEVEL IN A PRIMARY SHOPPING FRONTAGE (IDENTIFIED AS SUCH ON THE PROPOSALS MAP) AND DEVELOPMENT WOULD NOT RESULT IN:-**
    - (A) THE AMOUNT OF NON-RETAIL FRONTAGE IN THE PRIMARY SHOPPING FRONTAGE EXCEEDING 20%; OR**
    - (B) MORE THAN TWO ADJACENT UNITS (OF NOT GREATER THAN THE NORMAL FRONTAGE WIDTH OF PROPERTIES IN THE STREET) BEING IN NON-RETAIL USE; OR**

**AT GROUND FLOOR LEVEL IN A SECONDARY SHOPPING FRONTAGE (IDENTIFIED AS SUCH ON THE PROPOSALS MAP) AND THE DEVELOPMENT WOULD NOT RESULT IN THE AMOUNT OF NON-RETAIL FRONTAGE IN THE**

- (ii) SECONDARY FRONTAGE EXCEEDING 60%; OR**
- (iii) NOT AT GROUND FLOOR LEVEL AND WOULD NOT RESULT IN THE LOSS OF A RESIDENTIAL UNIT WHICH IS INDEPENDENT OF A GROUND FLOOR COMMERCIAL USE; AND**
- (B) THE PROPOSED USE WOULD NOT BE LIKELY TO RESULT IN A CHANGE IN PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENTS WHICH WOULD HAVE AN ADVERSE EFFECT UPON THE VITALITY OF A PARTICULAR SHOPPING FRONTAGE; AND**
- (C) THE PROPOSED USE WOULD NOT BE LIKELY TO HAVE AN EXCESSIVE ADVERSE EFFECT UPON THE AMENITIES OF NEARBY PREMISES BY WAY OF NOISE, SMELL OR OTHER NUISANCE.**

**11.50** This policy permits the establishment of uses which are currently defined as Classes A2 (financial and professional services) and A3 (food and drink) in the Use Classes Order 1987. It is anticipated that there will be a continued demand for the development of these uses although the nature of this demand may change somewhat. The policy is intended to retain predominantly retail frontage in the primary shopping areas whilst also preventing the establishment of non-retail "ghettos" in the secondary areas. It is nevertheless considered that the policy offers sufficient scope for the continued influx of non-retail uses into the town centres.

**11.51** In calculating the existing amount of non-retail frontage, all non-retail uses will be taken into account as will outstanding planning permissions and any vacant premises with authorised non-retail uses. If a single non-retail use (e.g. a bank) already occupies what had originally been two adjacent properties then this will be regarded as two units in non-retail use. Regard will also be had to the specific location of the premises within the town centre.

**11.52** The policy may be relaxed in certain instances where, for example, visitor potential warrants a number of tourist-related facilities such as tea shops. One centre where this may occur is Waltham Abbey. However, the General Permitted Development Order, 1995 allows A3 (food and drink) uses to change to A2 (financial and

professional services) uses without the need for planning permission although the converse does not apply. When granting planning permission for A3 uses the Council may therefore seek to control any subsequent change to A2 where special circumstances exist.

**11.53** The use of vacant or underused space on upper floors for residential accommodation is to be encouraged (see Policy H10). However, this would not preclude the change or intensification of use of existing commercial floorspace for other uses provided they are in accordance with Policy STC7.

**11.54** In order to be acceptable, proposals will need to comply with all other relevant Plan policies, particularly those relating to car parking (T14), shopfronts and advertisements (DBE12 & DBE13).

**11.55** Circumstances in which developments would be resisted include, for example, where there would be likely to be excessive nuisance to nearby residents from noise or smell.

**11.56** Where new uses are permitted at ground floor level in town centres, in accordance with Policy STC7, it is important that they contribute to the vitality of the street scene. This can usually be achieved through a window display although it is not always necessary (eg restaurants). The following policy will therefore apply:-

#### **POLICY STC8**

**THE COUNCIL WILL REQUIRE NON-RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS AT GROUND FLOOR LEVEL IN TOWN CENTRES (IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP) TO INCORPORATE A WINDOW DISPLAY OR GENERAL APPEARANCE WHICH SERVES TO MAINTAIN OR, WHERE APPROPRIATE, ENHANCE THE RETAIL CHARACTER OR VITALITY OF THE CENTRE.**

**11.57** This policy will apply to all uses except dwellings. It will therefore apply to new shop units, some of which (particularly supermarkets) have a very drab appearance, often totally lacking interest or life.

**11.58** Office developments are generally acceptable in town centres (in accordance with Policy E10). However, only those which provide a service principally to visiting members of the public, and therefore need to be readily accessible, will be permitted at ground floor level in shopping

frontages. Such uses are the subject of Policy STC7. Apart from those, non-retail uses at ground floor level generally undermine the retail function of town centres (for the reasons outlined in para. 11.48). The following policy will therefore apply:-

#### **POLICY STC9**

**THE COUNCIL WILL NOT GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NON-RETAIL USES AT GROUND FLOOR LEVEL IN TOWN CENTRES (IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP) UNLESS THEY ARE IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY STC7.**

**11.59** The types of use that may be acceptable, as an exception to this policy, will vary according to the function of the centre but could include launderettes, cinemas and libraries. Other uses, such as churches or houses will not be acceptable unless, for example, the change to an otherwise unacceptable use is desirable in order to protect a building of architectural or historic interest (see paras 6.61 to 6.65 and Policy HC13)

#### **Local Shopping Parades, Corner Shops and Village Shops**

**11.60** These serve a useful function in meeting shopping needs. They are particularly important and provide a convenient service for those who are less mobile, especially elderly and disabled people, and families with small children. The closure of such shops in recent years has resulted from the changes in the nature of retailing methods and the influence of increased personal mobility. The Council has limited influence over the type of goods which a particular shop sells but can prevent the change to a different class of use and hence resist the loss of a shopping unit. The following policy will therefore be applied to protect the existing shopping facilities for the benefit of local residents.

#### **POLICY STC10**

**THE COUNCIL WILL NOT GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE CHANGE OF USE TO ANY NON-RETAIL USE, OF:-**

- (i) **CORNER SHOPS;**
- (ii) **VILLAGE SHOPS;**
- (iii) **AND SHOP PREMISES WHICH ARE IN THE SHOPPING PARADES IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP,**

**UNLESS IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED THAT THERE IS NO MARKET DEMAND FOR A RETAIL USE OR THAT THE SERVICE PROVIDED IS TO BE CONTINUED IN ANOTHER LOCATION IN THE VILLAGE OR LOCALITY.**

**11.61** Where a service use (e.g. a doctors' surgery which is in accordance with Policy CF2) is proposed, the Council will expect evidence of local need or other exceptional circumstances (such as the premises having been vacant and on the market for retail use at an appropriate price, and with no takers for a long period) to be submitted in support of the application before it may be considered acceptable.

**Environmental Implications**

**11.62** The implementation of the following policies shall help achieve these aims (see pages 24 and 25):-

- (ii) To facilitate modern-day living requirements.
- (v) To meet the shopping needs of residents, workers and other visitors.
- (xvii) To maintain the retail function of the existing town centres.
- (xx) To ensure that any new development does not have an unacceptable impact both in environmental terms and in the provision of local facilities.
- (xxviii) To reduce the impact of, but make adequate provision for, heavy goods vehicles with business in the District.
- (xxxiv) To make the most efficient use of land and buildings wherever practicable.

**11.63** The main environmental consequences of the policies (see Appendix 2) will be in terms of enhancing the role of shopping centres (and therefore the character of the urban environment). They will also minimise the number and length of shopping journeys and readily facilitate the use of public transport.

## **12. Recreation, Sport and Tourism**

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## **Introduction**

**12.1** The District is very attractive for recreational activities not only to residents but also to a wider catchment, particularly North East London and Harlow. This is because of:-

- its location on the edge of the metropolitan area;
- the predominance of open countryside;
- the landscape and wildlife importance of the countryside; and
- existing major recreational facilities such as Epping Forest, the Lee Valley Park and North Weald Airfield.

**12.2** The District is therefore subject to heavy pressure for recreational activities. It is necessary to control this pressure and direct it to the most appropriate places. This is to ensure that:-

- (i) there are adequate facilities available (particularly for residents) in reasonably close proximity;
- (ii) existing main attractions are not over-used either to their detriment or to the extent that the enjoyment of visitors is reduced;
- (iii) the character and appearance of the Green Belt is not impaired; and
- (iv) other values (e.g. nature conservation and the amenities of local residents) are taken properly into account.

## **Government Guidance**

**12.3** According to PPG17, one of the functions of Development Plans is to allocate adequate land and water resources both for organised sport and for informal recreation. Local Plans are identified as the appropriate context in which to:-

- assess local needs - for mainstream and specialist sports facilities, and of the elderly and disabled;
- identify the adequacy of public open space provision;
- protect open space and other land with recreational or amenity value; and
- encourage the development of sites for additional sport and recreation.

**12.4** The Guidance states that sport and recreation in the countryside should be appropriate and in harmony with it. "Outdoor sport" is one of the uses of land which, in accordance with PPG2, will normally be appropriate on Green Belt land. PPG17 specifies that this may involve the suitable conversion of buildings and, in very special circumstances, the construction of small ancillary buildings.

**12.5** This encouragement of recreational facilities does not imply that such development will always take precedence. Local authorities are required to justify the amount and location of open space and recreation provision against other competing pressures for the use of land. A balance between the various demands should be sought.

**12.6** The basic principle embodied in PPG21 is that tourism should respond to market demand but should not damage the environmental qualities that attract tourists. It refers specifically to maintaining the established policies for the protection of the countryside. It also states that tourism which is properly managed can help to achieve the preservation or enhancement of historic towns.

**12.7** The Countryside Commission works both to conserve and enhance the beauty of the countryside and to help people enjoy it. The Commission is promoting the improvement of the rights of way network. To this end, it is encouraging local authorities to stimulate local improvement schemes.

## **County Policy and Strategy**

**12.8** The relevant policies of the current Structure Plan are summarised below:-

- new recreational developments will normally be approved;
- the development and management of an appropriate range and standard of sports facilities will be encouraged;
- substantial buildings in the countryside will not normally be permitted;
- the development of recreational facilities in the Lee Valley Park will be encouraged;
- the encouragement, where appropriate, of informal countryside recreation in the Roding Valley;
- the rights of way network will be safeguarded and improved;
- development of leisure plots will not be

permitted;

- recreational use of inland water and enhancement of navigable waterways will be encouraged; and
- existing tourist attractions are to be safeguarded and improved.

**12.9** The County Council has been operating the "Ways Through Essex" rights of way project since 1987 with grant aid from the Countryside Commission.

### **Eastern Council for Sport and Recreation**

**12.10** The Eastern Council for Sport and Recreation (ECSR) document "Sport in the East: Partnership in Action" promotes equality of opportunity in sport. The particular areas of inequity in the region relate to gender, disability, ethnicity and age. The document therefore incorporates policies aimed at redressing this imbalance by taking positive action to ensure that women, disabled people, people from black and ethnic minorities and young people have equal opportunities to be involved in sport.

**12.11** The document promotes the provision of facilities in appropriate locations to meet identified needs as well as the upgrading and enhancement of existing facilities to meet modern day needs. It also advocates the promotion of:-

- facilities for water recreation in appropriate locations;
- using the countryside for sport, where appropriate;
- reconciling sport and environmental interests, wherever possible;
- outdoor activities; and
- opportunities to take part in sport in rural areas.

**12.12** The E.C.S.R.'s document "The Supply and Demand for Water Sports on Enclosed Water Bodies within the Eastern Region" identifies the need to:-

- increase the overall provision for water sports throughout the Region; and
- address the shortfall in provision for particular water sports (including water skiing and personal water craft at Glen Faba).

### **District Council Leisure Strategy**

**12.13** The Council's specific intentions for the

provision and management of recreational facilities were set out in the Epping Forest District Leisure Strategy 1993-1997. That document was intended to ensure that the full potential for maintaining existing leisure opportunities, and for generating new and better facilities, was developed. It also aimed to attract various "target groups" to participate. This Local Plan complements that document by specifying particular land use policies and development proposals that could facilitate its successful implementation. The Leisure Strategy will be reviewed in the near future.

**12.14** Libraries and museums are considered in Chapter 13 and restaurants and amusement centres are addressed in Chapter 11. The extent to which it is necessary to provide and protect urban open spaces is dealt with in Chapter 16.

### **General Approach**

**12.15** The Council will, in accordance with its objectives and both national and County planning policy, support proposals for leisure and recreation facilities provided that they are not likely to create any over-riding problems.

**12.16** Many of the leisure facilities and clubs in the District currently have spare capacity to accommodate more users in off-peak times. Consequently, at least in the short term, the Council intends to stimulate greater usage of existing leisure facilities during these periods. It has adopted an enabling approach towards the construction of new facilities.

**12.17** The Council is anxious to ensure that the successful attraction of tourists, and any related developments that this entails, is not detrimental to either the continued quality of the facility or the character of the District.

### **POLICY RST1**

**THE COUNCIL WILL PERMIT THE DEVELOPMENT OF ADDITIONAL RECREATIONAL, SPORTING AND TOURIST FACILITIES WHERE IT IS SATISFIED THAT THESE ARE:**

- (i) **IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY; AND**
- (ii) **UNLIKELY TO RESULT, EITHER DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY, IN THE CHARACTER OF THE SURROUNDING AREA BEING AFFECTED ADVERSELY.**

**12.18** By "best interests of the local community" this policy means that a proposal will normally be refused if, in the opinion of the Council, any adverse environmental impact that would result outweighs any improvement in local facilities. This could occur when a new facility is proposed which replicates existing provision in the vicinity.

**12.19** The extent to which indoor sports facilities may be acceptable in the Green Belt will be determined in the context of Policies GB3 and RST24. Proposals will also have to comply with other relevant policies particularly those relating to design (Policies DBE1, DBE3 and DBE4), landscape (Policies LL2 and LL3), landscaping (Policy LL10 and LL11), car parking (Policy T14) and traffic generation (Policy T17).

**12.20** The District and County Councils own many large buildings which are already in use for leisure purposes. These include sports centres, school halls, gymnasias and swimming pools. The residents of the District also benefit from the facilities provided by the Park Authority.

**12.21** Large purpose-built leisure complexes are expensive and difficult to find sites for, and may partially duplicate the facilities already in existence. This Council considers that resources should be used as efficiently as possible, that more use should be made of existing facilities, and that, when new public buildings are proposed which involve leisure facilities, the involvement of other authorities should be sought in partnership arrangements with regard to the financing, management and use of the buildings.

**12.22** Greater use of existing facilities would reduce the need for new ones. The Council will, as and when appropriate, make representations to other authorities owning facilities which could be used by local people for leisure purposes. It will also seek involvement in the management of such facilities where this would enable local residents to gain access to additional leisure opportunities (e.g. Roding Valley High School).

### INFORMAL LEISURE ACTIVITIES

**12.23** Informal recreation is that which requires little organisation or any element of competition and therefore usually excludes sporting activities.

#### Access to the Countryside

**12.24** The rights of way network is identified by the Countryside Commission as being the most important facility for informal recreation in the countryside. One of the Commission's objectives is to have the national network defined, fully open, maintained and

well publicised by the year 2000. The network includes footpaths, bridleways and byways. These rights of way are public highways which it is the Highway Authority's responsibility to maintain. Duties also include maintaining a correct "Definitive Map", showing all rights of way, and providing and maintaining signs where rights of way leave or join public roads. The Council will continue to work towards fully defining, keeping open, maintaining, waymarking, publicising and promoting the considerate use of the rights of way network in accordance with the objective of the Countryside Commission and to ensure maximum opportunity for public access to the countryside.

**12.25** Ideally the rights of way network should be easily accessible to, and usable by, all members of the public. This means that provision should be made for people with limited mobility or with other disabilities. It will not be possible for the entire network to be made so accessible and it is therefore necessary to select certain paths and routes so that they can be designed and maintained to meet particular needs. In so doing, attention will be paid to the drainage, gradient, camber and surface of the selected paths, the frequency of their maintenance, and the design of gates and stiles. The walks should be immediately and easily accessible from car parks or public transport routes.

**12.26** The distribution of bridleways is such that they are often isolated and only rarely combine to form a reasonable local network. The consequence of this is that horse-riders frequently have to resort to roads - a very unsatisfactory situation because of the obvious danger involved. The Council therefore acknowledges that there is a great need for extensive additions to the bridleway network but recognises that there will be significant difficulties in meeting this demand - not least being a negative reaction from some landowners.

**12.27** Opportunities to consolidate and expand the rights of way network, especially bridleways, will be actively pursued by the Council where this would not unduly conflict or interfere with other interests or land uses. The potential for permissive routes and for more extensive use of canal towpaths will also be explored. In dealing with planning applications the Council is keen to negotiate with landowners and developers and increase liaison with users and interest groups to improve public access to the countryside. Better public access to the River Roding (especially between Passingford Bridge and Abridge and further southwards to connect to other paths) is a long-standing aim of the Council and is known to be supported by local councils and other groups. Such a footpath could also be linked to the Essex Way.



## **POLICY RST2**

### **IN DETERMINING PLANNING APPLICATIONS THE COUNCIL MAY SEEK:-**

- (i) **THE APPROPRIATE EXPANSION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE RIGHTS OF WAY NETWORK; AND**
- (ii) **TO SECURE PUBLIC ACCESS ONTO PRIVATELY-OWNED LAND FOR INFORMAL LEISURE PURPOSES.**

**12.28** This policy will be implemented by negotiation in the context of a planning application and/or entering into a legal agreement (in accordance with Policy I1).

**12.29** Public interest in access to the countryside is expected to grow and the value of the rights of way network as a recreational resource is therefore likely to increase. It is necessary to ensure that footpaths and bridleways are adequately protected against pressures for built development or for inappropriate changes in land use.

## **POLICY RST3**

### **THE COUNCIL WILL NOT GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS WHICH ENTAIL THE LOSS, STOPPING-UP, OR UNREASONABLE DIVERSION OF PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY.**

#### **Horse-keeping**

**12.30** The keeping of horses for recreational purposes is a growing activity in the urban fringe of London. There is considerable demand for agricultural land to be given over to horses in the District. Factors to be taken into account include surplus agricultural land, the need for farm diversification, and proximity to Epping Forest.

**12.31** Several problems are associated with horse-based activities, and these are likely to intensify as the demand for horse-keeping and horse-riding facilities increases. Examples include:-

- (a) Increased pressure on the already inadequate bridleway network. Some areas, including parts of Epping Forest, show signs of over-use such as ground compaction and soil erosion which prevent the regrowth of vegetation;
- (b) Conflict between horses and vehicles where stables are distant from bridleways necessitating riding on the roads;

- (c) Too many horses in too small an area. This means inadequate food and exercise areas for the horses and creates quagmires because of overgrazing and trampling.

**12.32** As a result of these problems the Council may wish to limit the amount and location of additional land released for horse-keeping in areas, especially those in close proximity to Epping Forest, where their siting could exacerbate problems outlined in para. 12.31(a). Particularly vulnerable areas are to be protected from further pressure for horse-keeping. In other areas the Council will, in principle, have no objection to horse-keeping or exercising facilities.

## **POLICY RST4**

### **THE USE OF LAND FOR THE KEEPING OF HORSES OR PONIES FOR DOMESTIC OR COMMERCIAL USE (OTHER THAN AGRICULTURAL) WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT:**

- (i) **THE DEVELOPMENT WOULD NOT HAVE A SIGNIFICANTLY ADVERSE IMPACT UPON THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE LANDSCAPE; AND**
- (ii) **THE AMOUNT OF HORSERIDING THAT IS LIKELY TO RESULT WOULD NOT LEAD TO EXCESSIVE HIGHWAY DANGER ON OR ACROSS ROADS; AND**
- (iii) **THE AMOUNT OF HORSERIDING THAT IS LIKELY TO RESULT WOULD NOT HAVE A SIGNIFICANTLY ADVERSE IMPACT UPON THE MANAGEMENT, ECOLOGY OR PUBLIC USE OF OPEN SPACES (eg EPPING FOREST) AND RIGHTS OF WAY; AND**
- (iv) **THE AMOUNT OF LAND IS ADEQUATE FOR THE WELFARE REQUIREMENTS OF THE NUMBER OF HORSES INTENDED TO USE IT; AND**
- (v) **APPROPRIATE FENCING OR OTHER MEANS OF ENCLOSURE IS PROVIDED.**

## **POLICY RST5**

### **STABLES WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT:**

- (i) **THEY DO NOT HAVE A SIGNIFICANTLY ADVERSE IMPACT UPON THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE LANDSCAPE AND ARE APPROPRIATE IN SCALE, LOCATION, DESIGN, MATERIALS**

**AND LANDSCAPING; AND**

- (ii) **THE AMOUNT OF HORSERIDING THAT IS LIKELY TO RESULT WOULD NOT LEAD TO EXCESSIVE HIGHWAY DANGER ON AND ACROSS ROADS; AND**
- (iii) **THE AMOUNT OF HORSERIDING THAT IS LIKELY TO RESULT WOULD NOT HAVE A SIGNIFICANTLY ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE MANAGEMENT, ECOLOGY OR PUBLIC USE OF OPEN SPACES (eg EPPING FOREST) AND RIGHTS OF WAY; AND**
- (iv) **THEY ARE OF A SIZE ADEQUATE TO MEET THE WELFARE REQUIREMENTS OF THE NUMBER OF HORSES INTENDED TO USE THEM; AND**
- (v) **ADEQUATE CAR PARKING IS PROVIDED.**

**12.33** The Conservators of Epping Forest will be consulted where it appears likely that a proposal for horsekeeping or stables may have an impact upon the management, ecology or public use of Epping Forest. In these circumstances Policy HC5 will also apply and the potential cumulative effect of increased horseriding on the floor of the Forest will be a material consideration.

**12.34** These policies will apply to private horse-keeping and livery stables, riding schools, stud farms, trekking centres, horse training stables, racing stables etc. Reference may be made to the British Horse Society's Basic Requirements for a Riding Centre; Advice for Local Planning Authorities 1988.

**12.35** The area of land that is necessary on which to keep a horse satisfactorily will depend upon:-

- the extent to which any grazing is relied upon for food;
- the number of horses kept or exercised on it; and
- the nature of the surface.

**12.36** The British Horse Society proposes minimum land requirements based on the area of pasture needed for grazing through the summer months. The Council may consider it necessary to enter into a legal agreement (in accordance with Policy I1) to ensure that any grassland used for grazing and exercise is

properly managed.

**12.37** The Council will take into account the suitability of existing rights of way when considering planning applications for horsekeeping facilities. Where dangerous roads would have to be negotiated or existing rights of way are grossly inadequate, applicants may be asked to contribute to maintenance costs or encouraged to negotiate permissive routes with landowners. Where potential problems cannot be satisfactorily overcome in this manner, planning permission is likely to be refused.

**12.38** To be acceptable, stables should normally be 3.7m x 3.7m x 3.1m high (12 ft x 12 ft x 11 ft) and unobstructed internally.

**12.39** Whilst there is an acknowledged lack of competition facilities for horses, the scale of buildings required is likely to make them unacceptable in Green Belt terms (see Policy GB3). However, the conversion of existing buildings to accommodate this use may be acceptable (see Policy GB8).

**Water-related Activities**

**12.40** The Water Recreation Strategy Zone 4 produced by the Eastern Council for Sport and Recreation makes the following recommendations:-

- the River Roding is only suitable for quiet forms of recreation, not in conflict with nature conservation policies;
- support for, and the updating of, the Lee Valley Park Plan (see para 12.97) together with the preparation of a comprehensive Water Management Strategy for the Park;
- various proposals for the River Lea and Lee Navigation including exploiting the recreational opportunities of the Royal Ordnance site (see Policy GB20);
- various proposals for the River Stort including considering the impact of any further developments on wildlife; and
- local authorities should review their policies for the after-use of mineral extraction areas in the light of the need for water recreation (particularly specialised sports) on enclosed waters.

In taking these recommendations into account regard will also be given to integrated management of the water environment (see para. 3.21)

## **Watersports**

**12.41** Provision for the development of a watersports centre, and associated leisure chalets, at Glen Faba in the Lee Valley Regional Park, is made in Policies RST25 and RST26.

## **Fishing**

12.42 There are various rivers and lakes across the District where fishing is enjoyed. There is pressure for more facilities including the creation of new fishing lakes. Whilst such developments may form a suitable alternative use for unused agricultural land, and help diversify the local economy, their acceptability will be assessed against their probable impact upon the Green Belt as well as other normal planning criteria. All such applications will also be referred to the Environment Agency from whom applicants are advised to seek advice at the outset.

## **POLICY RST6**

**IN DETERMINING PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR FISHING LAKES AND ASSOCIATED DEVELOPMENTS THE COUNCIL WILL HAVE REGARD TO THE IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT UPON:-**

- (i) **THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE SURROUNDING AREA;**
- (ii) **TRAFFIC FLOWS ON ACCESS ROADS AND THEIR CAPACITY FOR ACCOMMODATING ANY INCREASE;**
- (iii) **AMENITIES OF NEARBY RESIDENTS; AND**
- (iv) **THE POTENTIAL IMPACT UPON ANY GROUND OR SURFACE WATER ABSTRACTION POINT.**
- (i) **IN APPROVING ANY SUCH APPLICATIONS, THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO ENSURE THAT**
  - (a) **CAR PARKING PROVISION IS ADEQUATE TO CATER FOR THE AMOUNT OF TRAFFIC GENERATED; AND**
  - (b) **AN APPROPRIATE SCHEME OF LANDSCAPING IS CARRIED OUT.**

**12.43** Any such controls may be imposed by planning conditions and/or legal agreements. The Council may also seek to limit the number of fishing rods in use in a lake at any one time.

## **Waterways**

**12.44** The Lee and Stort navigations are primarily used for leisure and recreational pursuits, although the former retains its status as a Commercial Waterway under the Transport Act 1968. Any built development or intensification of use in association with leisure and recreation must be within the context of the overall policy of restraint in the Green Belt. Appropriate facilities (e.g. a marina) may be acceptable provided that the buildings are limited to those incidental to open air recreational use. At present there are problems with water management on the upper reaches of the River Stort due to low levels of rainfall in recent years. The Council will therefore generally direct increased demand for water related leisure facilities towards the River Lee and Lower Stort systems. The River Roding is also not suited to intensive use due to the impact that new development may have on the environmental integrity of the watercourse.

## **POLICY RST7**

**THE COUNCIL WILL GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR DEVELOPMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE RECREATIONAL FUNCTION OF THE LEE AND STORT NAVIGATIONS PROVIDED THAT:-**

- (i) **THERE IS NO ADVERSE IMPACT UPON THE CHARACTER OR APPEARANCE OF THE GREEN BELT; AND**
- (ii) **THERE IS NO ADVERSE IMPACT UPON RIVER WATER LEVELS.**

**12.45** In order for development in the Green Belt to be acceptable in principle, it would be required to comply with Policy GB2. Any proposal must also comply with all other relevant Plan policies. This applies particularly to design (Policies DBE1, DBE3 and DBE4), landscape (Policies LL2 and LL3), landscaping (Policy LL10 and LL11), car parking (Policy T14), and traffic impact (Policy T17).

## **Play Areas**

**12.46** It is important for children and their carers to be within easy reach of play areas, otherwise they may be unable or unwilling to visit them. For this reason there is a presumption (a) in favour of the retention of all play areas within the District, and (b) to extend the provision to areas which are currently poorly served.

**12.47** Town and Parish Councils are responsible for the provision of children's playgrounds. The District Council fulfils this function on some Council housing estates. At present the Council is carrying out a

survey of its existing facilities and the condition of the equipment and surfaces within them. This is with a view to replacing all equipment and surfaces which are inappropriate to modern day requirements.

**12.48** Fencing and self-closing gates have already been installed at the majority of play areas in order to deter dogs (see para 8.26). It is intended that all playgrounds will be designated dog exclusion zones.

**12.49** The Council also proposes to carry out a study of play area distribution to identify any areas of shortfall in towns and villages. New residential developments may create their own demand for such facilities. Where this is the case, large sites will be expected to incorporate facilities as part of the development (see Policy DBE7).

## POLICY RST8

### THE COUNCIL WILL:-

- (i) **PROTECT EXISTING PLAY AREAS FROM BUILT DEVELOPMENT;**
- (ii) **ONLY PERMIT DEVELOPMENTS RESULTING IN A LOSS OF PLAY AREAS WHERE:-**
  - (a) **THE DEVELOPER WILL PROVIDE APPROPRIATE REPLACEMENT FACILITIES IN THE IMMEDIATE VICINITY; OR, WHERE THIS IS IMPRACTICABLE,**
  - (b) **THE DEVELOPER WILL CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS THE UPGRADING OR MAINTENANCE COSTS OF EXISTING FACILITIES;**
- (iii) **SEEK TO ENSURE THE PROVISION OF NEW PLAY AREAS AND EQUIPMENT IN OR CLOSE TO LOUGHTON TOWN CENTRE;**
- (iv) **REQUIRE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS ON LARGE SITES TO INCORPORATE PLAY AREAS OF AN APPROPRIATE SIZE AND LOCATION ON THE BASIS OF:-**
  - (a) **ANY EXISTING SHORTFALL IN THE LOCALITY; AND**
  - (b) **ANY NEED GENERATED BY THE DEVELOPMENT; AND**
- (v) **REQUIRE THAT ALL NEW PLAY AREAS:-**

- (a) **ARE SUITABLY EQUIPPED;**
- (b) **INCORPORATE SAFETY SURFACES;**
- (c) **ARE MAINTAINED IN A SAFE CONDITION; AND**
- (d) **ARE SURROUNDED BY DOG-PROOF FENCING AND GATES.**

**12.50** Large sites are those, or parts of those, of 1 ha. or more. The Council will seek to enter into a planning agreement with the developer about management and maintenance of the facility (see Policy I1).

**12.51** The Council is looking to ensure the provision of unsupervised play areas equipped for children of early school age. These are the local equipped areas for play (LEAPs) as defined by the National Playing Fields Association. They should be within five minutes' walk (i.e. 400m) of the area they will serve, comprising some 3,600 sq.m. with an "activity zone" of 400 sq.m. which is 20m from the property boundary of the nearest house. Such play areas would be characterised by a small games area and about five types of play equipment. The Council will seek to enter into planning agreements with developers with regard to the management and maintenance of any such play facilities (see Policy I1).

### Leisure Plots and Chalets

**12.52** Leisure plots and chalet estates have existed in the District for most of the century. Some, such as those at Toot Hill, Dobbs Weir, and Riverside Avenue, Nazeing, have been developed into permanent residential areas. Others have remained predominantly as leisure chalets for weekend/holiday use by the owners (e.g. Roydon Lodge and Curtis Mill Lane, Stapleford Abbots). Some have been closed down either by compulsory acquisition (e.g. Glen Faba) or by refusal to renew licences or permissions (e.g. the Moors, Harlow Road, Roydon).

**12.53** The Carthagen and Riverside chalet estates adjacent to the River Lee Navigation at Nazeing are situated within the Lee Valley Park (see para 12.96). The Park Plan proposes that the area which includes these two sites be developed as informal open space. This will necessitate the clearance of these two chalet estates and will entail significant amounts of structural landscaping and tree planting as well as the provision of picnic sites and other public facilities. The Council will assist the Park Authority in implementing the Park Plan by resisting developments in these chalet estates which would prejudice the Park Authority's ability to carry out its proposals as soon as possible and at minimum cost.

**POLICY RST9**

**THE COUNCIL WILL NOT GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR ANY DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE CHALET ESTATES AT CARTHAGENA AND RIVERSIDE WHERE THIS WOULD PREJUDICE THE LEE VALLEY REGIONAL PARK AUTHORITY'S PROPOSALS FOR THE AREA.**

**12.54** The implementation of this policy does not preclude the granting of permission to renew the use of these chalets, for a limited period, in certain instances. This will not always be acceptable, however, as the Park Authority is currently acquiring chalets and plots in these areas as and when the opportunity arises.

**12.55** There is a well-established chalet estate at Roydon Lodge and its continuation would be acceptable provided that the chalets continue in recreational use and do not become permanent dwellings. The following policy will therefore apply:-

**POLICY RST10**

**WITHIN THE CHALET ESTATE AT ROYDON LODGE THE COUNCIL WILL:-**

- (i) **ALLOW THE CONSTRUCTION OF LEISURE CHALETS; AND**
- (ii) **ALLOW THE STATIONING OF CARAVANS AND MOBILE HOMES; AND**
- (iii) **ALLOW LIMITED EXTENSIONS TO LONG-ESTABLISHED CHALETS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THEIR LEISURE FUNCTION; AND**
- (iv) **REQUIRE THE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS OF ANY NEW OR EXTENDED CHALETS, CARAVANS AND MOBILE HOMES TO BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CHARACTER OF THE ESTATE; AND**
- (v) **RESTRICT THE USE OF ALL CHALETS, CARAVANS AND MOBILE HOMES TO WEEKENDS AND HOLIDAYS DURING THE MONTHS OF APRIL TO OCTOBER INCLUSIVE.**

**12.56** The chalet estates at Theydon Park Road, Theydon Bois and Curtis Mill Lane, Stapleford Abbots are each much smaller than that at Roydon Lodge and more incongruous in the Green Belt.

Whilst a number of permanent dwellings did become established on these estates some time ago, the Council will, in accordance with Policy GB2, seek to prevent the establishment of further permanent dwellings in the Green Belt. This will be undertaken by controlling the function of the chalets through applying the following policy.

**POLICY RST11**

**WITHIN THE EXISTING LEISURE PLOTS IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP AT THEYDON PARK ROAD, THEYDON BOIS, AND CURTIS MILL LANE, STAPLEFORD ABBOTTS THE COUNCIL WILL:-**

- (i) **REFUSE PLANNING PERMISSION FOR ANY NEW LEISURE CHALET; AND**
- (ii) **REFUSE ANY PROPOSALS TO EXTEND AN EXISTING CHALET; AND**
- (iii) **NOT GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE CONTINUED USE OF A CHALET FOR A PERIOD OF MORE THAN THREE YEARS; AND**
- (iv) **NOT GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE USE, OR CONTINUED USE, OF A CHALET UNLESS IT IS IN A GOOD STATE OF REPAIR; AND**
- (v) **RESTRICT THE USE OF ALL CHALETS TO WEEKENDS AND HOLIDAYS DURING THE MONTHS OF APRIL TO OCTOBER INCLUSIVE.**

**12.57** The Council will raise no objection, in principle, to the surfacing of the section of Theydon Park Road covered by this policy (at the frontagers' expense) or to the provision of sewers and other services.

**12.58** Leisure plots have a detrimental impact upon the openness of the Green Belt and lead to pressure for the establishment of permanent dwellings in the Green Belt. It is also necessary (a) to ensure that they continue to fulfil their function effectively in the context of their Green Belt setting, and, (b) to resist the establishment of inappropriate uses for the benefit of those utilising the chalets.

**POLICY RST12**

**THE COUNCIL WILL NOT GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR:**

- (i) **THE DEVELOPMENT OF LAND AS**

**LEISURE PLOTS OTHER THAN THOSE PROVIDED IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY RST26; OR**

- (ii) **ANY DEVELOPMENTS ON LEISURE PLOTS OTHER THAN THOSE WHICH ARE PERMITTED BY POLICIES RST9, RST10, RST11 AND RST26.**

**Allotments**

**12.59** Allotments fulfil an important recreational function although the demand for, and use of, them varies through time. It is intended to provide land to meet the demand for allotments as far as possible. It is therefore important to retain the existing sites, improve the facilities (particularly the water supply) and monitor future demand. However, even if there is no demand for the existing allotments they will not normally be built on because of the cyclic demand for them. Appropriate alternative uses could include other forms of informal recreation and/or a refuge for urban wildlife.

**POLICY RST13**

**THE COUNCIL WILL:-**

- (i) **NOT PERMIT THE DEVELOPMENT, OR CHANGE OF USE, OF EXISTING ALLOTMENT SITES UNLESS ADEQUATE REPLACEMENT FACILITIES ARE PROVIDED IN CLOSE PROXIMITY; AND**
- (ii) **SEEK TO PROVIDE CONVENIENTLY-LOCATED ALLOTMENTS SHOULD THERE BE A SATISFACTORY DEMAND.**

**FORMAL LEISURE ACTIVITIES**

**12.60** This section covers those activities which are undertaken on a more organised or formal basis. As such, it deals with the need for facilities to accommodate football, rugby, cricket, golf, tennis, squash, badminton, bowls, lacrosse, hockey, netball etc. It therefore relates to the adequacy of provision of both outdoor and indoor facilities.

**12.61** It is also necessary to have regard to the accessibility and the location of any new facilities to be provided. It may therefore be possible to justify a specific need in a particular town, or in part of it. However, this may not be the case in a rural area where, despite a need, a particular facility may not be viable. In such instances, the necessary facilities may best be provided through the dual use of school facilities, the provision of village halls, or the appropriate conversion of farm buildings.

**Playing Fields**

**12.62** Playing fields are important not only because of the scope for recreation which they offer, but also because of their amenity value. They can, even if not properly maintained, make an important contribution to the green space of an urban environment.

**12.63** The ECSR has adopted the National Playing Fields Association's standard for the minimum recommended level of playing field provision of 2.4 hectares for 1,000 people (including 1.8 hectares of pitches, courts and greens). It serves also as a broad index but takes no account of local variations in levels of demand. The Council is undertaking a supply and demand survey of existing pitches based on the quantity and quality of facilities, and on current and potential levels of use.

**POLICY RST14**

**THE COUNCIL WILL NOT GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR DEVELOPMENT WHICH INVOLVES THE LOSS OF ANY PLAYING FIELDS UNLESS:-**

- (i) **ADEQUATE ALTERNATIVE PROVISION OF EQUIVALENT COMMUNITY BENEFIT IS MADE AVAILABLE IN AN APPROPRIATE LOCATION; OR**
- (ii) **THERE IS AN EXCESS OF SPORTS PITCH PROVISION AND PUBLIC OPEN SPACE IN THE LOCALITY; OR**
- (iii) **SPORT AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES CAN BEST BE RETAINED AND ENHANCED THROUGH THE REDEVELOPMENT OF A SMALL PART OF THE SITE;**

**AND THE OPEN NATURE OF THE SITE DOES NOT CONTRIBUTE SIGNIFICANTLY TO ITS SURROUNDINGS. ANY DEVELOPMENT WILL ALSO NEED TO BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY LL6.**

**12.64** The Council may, in the context of large development schemes, seek new playing pitches as a "planning gain". This would be on the basis of a particular need for such facilities within the locality. Their provision could be either on the site or in close proximity on a readily accessible site. The Council would look to secure any such provision by the appropriate legal agreements (see Policy I1). It also seeks to obtain some degree of public access to otherwise private facilities in the award of grant aid to sports clubs.

### **Sports Halls and Swimming Pools**

**12.65** There are three public sports centres in the District (at Epping, Chipping Ongar and Waltham Abbey). These meet with the standards adopted by the ECSR. However, both the Council and the Sports Council acknowledge that the particularly high density of population in the Loughton/Buckhurst Hill/Chigwell area does justify the provision of a further dry leisure centre. This is proposed at Traps Hill, Loughton as part of the continued development of a site for community facilities (see Policy CF1).

**12.66** The existing provision of three pools in the District is also in line with the ECSR's standard although the Council has identified the need for a teaching pool in the Chipping Ongar area. Whilst the existing pool at Traps Hill, Loughton is in need of major refurbishment it is to remain as an integral part of this site allocated for community facilities (see Policy CF1).

### **Facilities in Rural Settlements**

**12.67** The Council, together with the E.C.S.R., places a premium on the need for sport and recreational facilities in rural areas. Whilst the Council is willing to accept the ECSR's guidelines for the minimum level of provision of facilities in rural areas in principle, it will not be prepared to either undermine the sanctity of the Green Belt or allow the proliferation of such facilities in each and every settlement in order to achieve it. Any such facilities to be provided should therefore have regard to the catchment area they are likely to serve and any other facilities within it.

### **POLICY RST15**

**IN DETERMINING PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR SPORTS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES IN OR IMMEDIATELY ADJACENT TO RURAL SETTLEMENTS, THE COUNCIL WILL NEED TO SATISFY ITSELF THAT:**

- (i) THE NUMBER AND LOCATION OF EXISTING FACILITIES WITHIN THE SETTLEMENT OR IN NEARBY SETTLEMENTS DO NOT NEGATE THE DEMAND LOCALLY; AND**
- (ii) THERE ARE NO EXISTING BUILDINGS AVAILABLE WHICH WOULD BE SUITABLE FOR CONVERSION TO ACCOMMODATE THE PROPOSED USES.**

**IN CIRCUMSTANCES WHERE THE COUNCIL IS SO SATISFIED, IT WILL THEN HAVE REGARD TO:**

- (iii) THE EFFECT UPON THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF BOTH THE SETTLEMENT AND THE COUNTRYSIDE; AND**
- (iv) THE TOTAL USER POTENTIAL OF THE FACILITIES IN RELATION TO THE SIZE OF THE SETTLEMENT.**

**12.68** Any development proposal will be considered in the light of Policy GB3. Development proposals will also have to comply with all other relevant Plan policies. This applies particularly to design (Policies DBE1, DBE3 and DBE4), landscape (Policies LL2 and LL3), landscaping (Policies LL10 and LL11), car parking (Policy T14) and traffic impact (Policy T17).

### **Golf Courses and Driving Ranges**

**12.69** During the late 1980s there was intense pressure for the development of golf courses and golf-related development (such as club-houses and driving ranges). This stemmed from the number of people wanting to play golf having risen rapidly, this District being readily accessible from north east London and featuring extensive amounts of countryside, and farmers looking for alternative uses for their land given recent changes in the agricultural economy. Whilst this District may therefore seem ideally placed to accommodate golf, the prospect raises a series of concerns:-

- the impact of golf courses upon the overall appearance of the countryside;
- the scale of any built development associated with the course;
- the amount of traffic generation and the suitability of the access roads;
- the consequences of an "over-provision" of golf courses - particularly in terms of finding an appropriate alternative use for any subsequently redundant buildings in the Green Belt;
- the impact upon wildlife and semi-natural habitats;
- the loss of high quality agricultural land;
- the effect on archaeological sites;
- the consequences for rights of way;
- the associated demand for water;
- the overall need for more golf courses; and
- intrusive lighting associated with driving ranges.

**12.70** With regard to the level of need in 1991 the E.C.S.R. identified a minimum guideline of one 18 hole course for 20,000 population in Essex and Hertfordshire. This was based on waiting lists, normal activity rates and demand from the metropolitan area. It was also borne out by the findings of The Essex Golf Report (April 1992). This District already more than meets the E.C.S.R.'s recommended guideline. However, this is not considered sufficient reason to resist all other courses because:-

- the figures serve as a guideline only;
- they are a "minimum" requirement; and
- the location of the District is such that golf courses will also cater for the needs of north east London.

**12.71** Consequently, planning applications for golf courses (and driving ranges) will continue to be considered on merit in the light of the policies below. Any unimplemented planning permissions that are re-submitted for approval will also need to comply with these policies. Renewal of permission cannot, therefore, be assumed to be automatic.

#### **POLICY RST16**

**PROPOSED GOLF COURSES AND DRIVING RANGES SHOULD BE LOCATED SUCH THAT THEY:-**

- (i) **WOULD NOT HAVE AN ADVERSE EFFECT UPON THE CHARACTER OR APPEARANCE OF HIGHLY VISIBLE LANDSCAPE;**
- (ii) **HAVE SAFE AND CONVENIENT ACCESS;**
- (iii) **WOULD NOT INVOLVE WORKS WHICH COULD PREVENT THE BEST AND MOST VERSATILE AGRICULTURAL LAND FROM SUBSEQUENTLY REVERTING BACK TO AGRICULTURAL USE AT ITS ORIGINAL QUALITY;**
- (iv) **DO NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST, SITES OF IMPORTANCE FOR NATURE CONSERVATION OR OTHER SITES OF ECOLOGICAL VALUE; AND**
- (v) **HAVE REGARD TO BOTH THE AVAILABILITY OF WATER RESOURCES FOR IRRIGATION AND THE PROTECTION OF WATER QUALITY.**

**12.72** "The best and most versatile" agricultural land

is that classed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food as Grades 1, 2 and 3a. The types of works which would not be acceptable on such land include substantial earth movements and the creation of water features.

**12.73** Golf course developers should consult with the Environment Agency prior to submitting an application.

#### **POLICY RST17**

**THE DEVELOPMENT OF GOLF COURSES IN AREAS OF DERELICT OR DESPOILED LAND WILL BE PERMITTED WHERE SUCH DEVELOPMENT WOULD:-**

- (i) **RESULT IN A MATERIAL IMPROVEMENT IN THE APPEARANCE OF THE LANDSCAPE; AND**
- (ii) **NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE ESTABLISHED ECOLOGICAL VALUE OF SUCH LAND TO A SIGNIFICANT DEGREE.**

**12.74** Despite the overall demand for more golf courses, it is widely acknowledged that the greatest "need" is for more "pay and play" courses. This would make the game more affordable to a greater number of would-be players. There is a particular need for more simple courses (i.e. less hazards, shorter and generally easier to play) operating on a pay and play basis. This would attract more participants to the game (particularly women and young people).

**12.75** Simple courses are likely to have much less impact on the landscape than traditional golf courses in that they will involve less earth-shaping, fewer bunkers, etc. They are therefore likely to be more acceptable than traditional courses in landscape terms (see Policy RST16).

#### **POLICY RST18**

**IN DETERMINING PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR GOLF COURSES, THE LOCAL NEED FOR "PAY AND PLAY" AND SIMPLE COURSES (CATERING FOR BEGINNERS AND THOSE WHO ARE NOT CLUB MEMBERS) WILL BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT.**

**12.76** As a pre-requisite to granting permission for either "pay and play" or simple courses the Council will seek a planning obligation to ensure that they are developed and managed in this manner in accordance with Policy 11.



**12.77** Previous Local Plans proposed golf courses with public access (i.e. "pay and play") for the eastern side of Waltham Abbey and on the Radio Station site at North Weald Bassett. Neither proposal has yet come to fruition although applications including golf-related developments were submitted in respect of the Radio Station site. This site (which is the subject of Policy GB18) is particularly well-suited to such a use in view of its topography and its central location in the District.

**12.78** The Council wishes to ensure that at least one such course is developed in the locality of North Weald Bassett, and is financially viable. It may therefore grant permission for a "pay and play" course on the Radio Station site should an application come forward. The detailed nature of the course, the particular type of facility it offers, and the likelihood of its implementation may therefore be important considerations in determining an application.

#### **POLICY RST19**

**THE DESIGN, LAYOUT AND LANDSCAPING OF GOLF COURSES AND GOLF DRIVING RANGES SHOULD BE SUCH THAT:-**

- (i) THEY ARE DEMONSTRABLY BASED ON A THOROUGH APPRAISAL OF ALL EXISTING SITE FEATURES AND THE SITE'S CONTEXT IN THE SURROUNDING LANDSCAPE;**
- (ii) THE ADVERSE VISUAL IMPACT OF ANY BUNKERS, ARTIFICIAL MOUNDING, WATER FEATURES AND OTHER FEATURES POTENTIALLY ALIEN TO THE LANDSCAPE IS MINIMAL;**
- (iii) ANY BUILDINGS AND CAR PARKS SHALL BE WELL SCREENED FROM THE ADJACENT COUNTRYSIDE BY EITHER EXISTING OR PROPOSED LANDSCAPING AND/OR EARTH FORMS;**
- (iv) AS MANY AS POSSIBLE OF THE EXISTING LANDSCAPE FEATURES (EG HEDGEROWS, WOODLANDS AND WATERCOURSES) ARE RETAINED AND INCORPORATED INTO THE DESIGN OF THE COURSE;**
- (v) ANY SITES OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTEREST ARE NOT DISTURBED, DAMAGED OR DESTROYED;**
- (vi) NEW LANDSCAPING MUST BE ADEQUATELY DESIGNED TO ENHANCE THE ECOLOGICAL**

- (vii) VALUE OF THE AREA;**
- (viii) THE PROPOSAL RESPECTS AND TAKES ACCOUNT OF THE EXISTING LANDSCAPE CONTEXT INCLUDING ITS HISTORY AND ANY EXISTING FEATURES OF HISTORIC INTEREST;**
- (ix) EXISTING FOOTPATHS AND BRIDLEWAYS SHALL BE SAFEGUARDED UNLESS ADEQUATE AND APPROPRIATE DIVERSIONS ARE AGREED WITH THE COUNCIL;**
- (x) NEW OR IMPROVED FOOTPATHS AND BRIDLEWAYS ARE PROVIDED IN APPROPRIATE INSTANCES; AND**
- (xi) THE LAYOUT OF THE FAIRWAYS SHALL BE SUCH THAT NO DANGER FROM STRAY GOLF BALLS IS LIKELY TO OCCUR TO USERS OF ADJACENT HIGHWAYS AND RIGHTS OF WAY OR TO RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES.**

**12.79** Planning applications must include details of (i) the layout of the course; (ii) the siting and size of the buildings and in sensitive areas, their design (see also Policy RST20 below); (iii) the location and layout of car parks; and (iv) landscaping. These will not be treated as reserved matters for later approval.

**12.80** Applicants should be able to demonstrate that the proposal is based on a thorough appraisal of all existing site features and the site's context in the surrounding landscape. A vegetation survey and ecological assessment are necessary and this may also apply to an archaeological assessment. Landscape proposals should first be submitted in the form of a Landscape Master Plan, which must indicate how it is intended that the landscape will develop with time. The fully detailed scheme of landscaping must precisely specify how the aims and objectives of the Landscape Master Plan will, in each instance, be achieved over time.

**12.81** Applications need to be accompanied by Ecological Statements which demonstrate that existing habitats are fully safeguarded by the proposals. Applicants will be expected to provide opportunities for the creation of a variety of new habitats. New planting needs to be ecologically effective. The size, structure and inter-relationship of each new landscape area should be properly considered within the context of existing landscape features. Ecological Statements must also show how the new habitats will be managed to benefit wildlife conservation.

**12.82** There is a presumption in favour of preserving archaeological sites. Preference will be given to course layouts which accommodate such features in situ. In other circumstances, conditions covering investigation and recording of archaeological remains will always be used. Developers will be expected to contribute towards the costs of these investigations.

**12.83** The design of golf courses should make due allowance for, inter alia, landscaped parkland, the setting of historic buildings, commons, existing public rights of way, green lanes and other routes, and estate and administrative boundaries. Permission will be refused if any feature of known historic significance will be adversely affected by the proposals.

**12.84** The retention of, and extensions to, the existing footpath and bridleway networks are to be encouraged and will be sought in certain instances (in accordance with Policies RST2 and RST3). Prior discussions with countryside interest groups are recommended.

**12.85** The use of high fencing should be avoided.

**12.86** There has been widespread concern associated with golf course proposals about the "Trojan horse" phenomenon. This is where the establishment of a building for recreational use in the countryside paves the way for other uses (and ultimately other buildings) not directly related to golf.

## **POLICY RST20**

**ANY PROPOSED NEW BUILDINGS ASSOCIATED WITH GOLF COURSES OR DRIVING RANGES SHOULD:-**

- (i) BE ESSENTIAL FOR THE FUNCTIONING OF THE GOLF COURSE OR DRIVING RANGE;**
- (ii) NOT HAVE AN ADVERSE EFFECT UPON THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE COUNTRYSIDE; AND**
- (iii) BE APPROPRIATE TO THEIR RURAL SETTING IN TERMS OF SCALE, DESIGN, MATERIALS AND SITING.**

**12.87** Planning permission will only be granted for facilities considered essential for the course. These may include clubhouse (including changing rooms, office and refreshment facilities), maintenance buildings and possibly staff accommodation. There is a strong presumption against other buildings in the countryside not essentially related to the use of the land for golf purposes, e.g. hotels, conference centres, sports halls, large scale restaurants, health and beauty parlours, etc. Proposals for private residential

development or holiday accommodation in association with golf courses in rural areas will be firmly resisted.

**12.88** The conversion of existing buildings is preferred to new development.

## **POLICY RST21**

**THE POSITION, HEIGHT, DIRECTION AND BRILLIANCE OF LIGHTING ASSOCIATED WITH GOLF DRIVING RANGES SHOULD NEITHER SPOIL THE CHARACTER OF THE COUNTRYSIDE NOR BE INTRUSIVE IN THE URBAN AREA. THE BRILLIANCE OF THE LIGHTING SHOULD BE LIMITED TO THE MINIMAL FUNCTIONAL LEVEL.**

**12.89** Many matters relating to both the design of the course and restrictions on further development will be pursued by entering into planning obligations under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Obligations may also be sought to ensure that:-

- at least the first 9 holes of a course are constructed prior to the clubhouse; and
- proposed "pay and play" and simple courses are developed and managed as such.

## **Potentially Intrusive Activities**

**12.90** There are a number of recreational activities which may have a detrimental effect upon either the site itself (eg trampling, erosion or loss of habitat) or the surroundings (eg excessive noise) or both. Examples of such activities include clay-pigeon shooting, water skiing, motor cycle scrambling, "off-roading" mountain biking and war games. Activities of this nature should therefore be directed to sites where their impact is acceptable on both the site itself and the surroundings.

## **POLICY RST22**

**THE COUNCIL WILL NOT GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR POTENTIALLY INTRUSIVE RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES UNLESS IT IS SATISFIED THAT:-**

- (i) THERE WOULD BE NO EXCESSIVE ADVERSE EFFECT UPON THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE GREEN BELT; AND**
- (ii) THERE WOULD BE NO EXCESSIVE NOISE OR OTHER DISTURBANCE TO NEARBY RESIDENTS OR THOSE SEEKING QUIET RECREATION; AND**

- (iii) **THEY WOULD NOT NECESSITATE THE STOPPING UP OR EXCESSIVE DIVERSION OF RIGHTS OF WAY; AND**
- (iv) **THERE WOULD BE NO EXCESSIVE IMPACT UPON THE FLORA AND FAUNA OF BOTH THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS; AND**
- (v) **THE SAFETY OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC WOULD NOT BE THREATENED.**

12.91 In all instances it will be a matter for the developer to satisfy the Council that the proposal will be acceptable in environmental terms (see Chapter 7 in particular). The developer will then be expected to supply detailed information on the intended use of the facility including matters such as:-

- the number and type of boats/motorbikes/guns etc.;
- any noise attenuation measures proposed; and
- the anticipated number of visitors/car trips generated.

#### **MAJOR RECREATIONAL FACILITIES**

##### **Epping Forest Land**

**12.92** The Corporation of London owns an extensive area of land under the Epping Forest Act 1878 (see paras 6.23 to 6.26). Although the Forest forms the main bulk, there are numerous outlying greens, green lanes, and verges as far north as Galleyhill Green and Epping Long Green which are also Epping Forest land. The 1878 Act requires that the Forest is to be kept un-enclosed as an open space for the recreation and enjoyment of the public. The Forest cannot be used for any other purpose without Parliamentary consent and is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (see para 7.11). The Forest is used by people from a large catchment area who come to enjoy its natural beauty, and to walk, run, cycle, horse-ride or picnic. In the summer months the Forest on its north-west side near High Beach is congested as most people visiting the Forest do so by car.

**12.93** Policy HC5 of this Plan resists development which would prejudice the value or function of the Forest.

##### **Commons and Village Greens**

**12.94** Commons are areas of land where certain people (commoners) have special rights, usually to graze cattle or horses, less frequently to turn out pigs, to cut turf or peat or to take sand or gravel for household use. Commoners usually have a right to

remove any obstructions from their common and the parking of motor vehicles or caravans is not normally permitted. There is no automatic right of public access to common land except along public rights of way.

Common land and village greens are registered under the Commons Registration Act 1965.

**12.95** Village greens are areas of land where local people have registered their legal or customary rights to use the land for sports, recreation or other pastimes. Modern village recreational grounds are often registered as village greens as well as older more traditional greens. Para 6.22 indicates what issues will be considered when commons and village greens are affected by development proposals.

##### **The Lee Valley Regional Park**

**12.96** The Lee Valley Regional Park forms the western edge of the District. It comprises open water and land providing a range of facilities for informal and formal leisure pursuits. The Park is run by the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority (the Park Authority). Its main objectives are:

- to provide facilities to satisfy the deficiencies for all sections of these communities on both a local and regional basis;
- to seek improvements in access to and within the Park by foot, bicycle, horse, car and public transport;
- to make use of educational opportunities for heritage and environmental interpretation;
- to conserve, enhance and improve the landscape; and
- to seek to enhance the ecological value of the Park especially in areas of nature conservation interest.

**12.97** The Lee Valley Regional Park Act 1966 introduced two special legal provisions regarding the relationship between the Park Authority and the local planning authority. These are as follows:-

- (a) the Council must notify the Park Authority of any planning application which is likely to affect any part of the Park. If the Council is minded to grant permission for any development which would conflict with the Park Authority's proposals for that land, the Authority can ask the Secretary of State to intervene. The Secretary of State has powers to request the application to be referred to him for his determination.
- (b) the Authority's land use and development proposals are contained in the Lee Valley Park

Plan 1986 (as amended) with which the Council is generally in favour. This Local Plan must include relevant proposals whether or not the Council will subsequently be prepared to grant them planning permission. The Park Plan is being reviewed in 1998.

**12.98** Some of the proposals of the Park Plan will not be implemented during the period of this Local Plan, whilst others will rely on site acquisition by the Park Authority or Section 106 agreements. It is therefore important to have regard to potential land-use throughout the Park.

#### **POLICY RST23**

**WITHIN THE LEE VALLEY REGIONAL PARK (IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP) OUTDOOR LEISURE USES WILL BE PERMITTED, UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED IN THIS LOCAL PLAN.**

#### **POLICY RST24**

**ALL DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN OR ADJACENT TO THE LEE VALLEY REGIONAL PARK SHOULD:-**

- (i) **HAVE REGARD TO THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PARK FOR LEISURE, RECREATION AND NATURE CONSERVATION AND MAKE PROVISION, WHERE APPROPRIATE, FOR IMPROVED PUBLIC ACCESS AND LANDSCAPING;**
- (ii) **SAFEGUARD THE AMENITY AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PARK; AND**
- (iii) **CONSERVE AND, WHERE POSSIBLE, ENHANCE THE LANDSCAPE OF THE PARK OR ITS SETTING.**

**DEVELOPMENTS WHICH ARE LIKELY TO RESULT IN A SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE IMPACT UPON THE CHARACTER OR FUNCTION OF THE PARK WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.**

**12.99** Most open water in the District is the result of previous gravel extraction and is in the Park. These areas provide great potential for recreational activities and also provide habitats for a diverse range of flora and fauna although the two do not always sit in harmony.

**12.100** One particularly important site in this respect is Glen Faba. It features extensive stretches of water

created from gravel extraction. Mineral extraction is still continuing elsewhere on the site but is nearing completion. The reinstatement of the gravel pits has generally been to a high standard and the site is maturing and returning to an area of some beauty. Consequently, the site will be attractive to many visitors in addition to those seeking water-based activities. A country park development would provide an opportunity for the public to gain regular access to the site and enjoy the area and at the same time gain access to the wider countryside via the footpath and towpath network.

**12.101** It is envisaged that the lake could accommodate a range of watersports (including waterskiing, canoeing, windsurfing and dingy sailing) together with a marina off the River Lee Navigation, subject to British Waterways approval. Research has shown a local and regional demand for water-skiing. A further lake is suitable for specialist angling for which there is a particular local demand. Glen Faba is very close to Rye Meads (a designated SSSI and proposed SPA) and partly falls within a consultation zone identified by English Nature (see para. 7.15). Any proposals for recreational development will therefore need to be assessed partly in terms of their potential impact on Rye Meads.

#### **POLICY RST25**

**THE COUNCIL WILL PERMIT THE DEVELOPMENT OF GLEN FABFA AND ROYDON MILL LEISURE PARK LAKE (IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP) AS A WATERSPORTS CENTRE PROVIDED THAT:-**

- (i) **THE PROPOSED ACTIVITIES WOULD NOT BE UNDULY INTRUSIVE (IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY RST22);**
- (ii) **THIS WOULD NOT RESULT IN ANY BUILDINGS THAT ARE OUT OF CHARACTER WITH THE SURROUNDINGS BY VIRTUE OF SCALE, LOCATION OR DESIGN (IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICIES GB3, GB10, DBE1 AND DBE4);**
- (iii) **IT CAN BE PROVED, TO THE SATISFACTION OF THE COUNCIL, THAT IT IS APPROPRIATE IN TERMS OF NATURE CONSERVATION.**

**12.102** Part of the site once featured a shanty-type collection of small, privately-owned permanent and seasonal residential accommodation. This was compulsorily acquired in 1968 for redevelopment as a municipal holiday camp. In confirming the CPO, the Inspector required the Council to:-

- re-house all permanent residents; and
- make alternative holiday accommodation available on the site to the then existing holidaymakers.

**12.103** The first of these conditions has been met but the second has been delayed because of the flood relief channel and on-site gravel extraction.

**12.104** In view of the history of the site, its location within the Lee Valley Park and the proposals for its future development, it would be appropriate for its development to incorporate a number of recreational chalets that complement their setting in both functional and visual terms with camping a further possibility. In order to be acceptable any development proposal will also have to comply with all other relevant Plan policies. This applies particularly to those relating to design (Policies DBE1 and DBE4), landscaping (Policies LL10 and LL11), car parking (Policy T14) and traffic impact (Policy T17).

## **POLICY RST26**

**THE COUNCIL WILL PERMIT THE DEVELOPMENT OF LEISURE CHALETs ON PART OF THE SITE AT GLEN FABA IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF A WATERSPORTS CENTRE. IN GRANTING PLANNING PERMISSION FOR ANY SUCH DEVELOPMENT THE COUNCIL WILL REQUIRE THE SCALE, LOCATION AND DESIGN OF THE CHALETs TO BE IN KEEPING WITH THEIR SETTING.**

**12.105** The proposed development is in accordance with the objectives and proposals of the Park Authority. There are current access problems pending the completion of the gravel extraction.

### **The M11-Chipping Ongar Corridor**

**12.106** The area between the M11 and Chipping Ongar comprises a number of important existing and potential recreational and tourist facilities. These are:-

- North Weald Airfield;
- the Epping to Chipping Ongar branch line.
- the former Radio Station site at North Weald Bassett;
- the historic town of Chipping Ongar; and
- part of the Essex Way footpath.

**12.107** The Council has adopted an integrated leisure, recreation and tourism strategy to develop this whole area as a "corridor" of leisure facilities. This is in order to:-

- (i) help establish a consistent framework within which to deal with the opportunities identified above;
- (ii) provide recreational facilities for the local community;
- (iii) encourage visitors to the District to the extent needed to contribute some economic benefit; and
- (iv) reinstate the use of the Epping to Chipping Ongar branch line, if possible.

**12.108** Any associated development would be required to be in accordance with the overall objective of maintaining and enhancing the Green Belt.

**12.109** The current situation regarding three of the key sites and the strategy for their development is set out below.

### **(1) North Weald Airfield**

**12.110** This 155 hectare site is located adjacent to the M11. The main approach to the airfield is via the A414 which leads directly to the Hastingwood junction of the M11. 1.3 million people live within 30 minutes and 6.9 million within 60 minutes drive time of the airfield.

**12.111** The Council purchased the airfield in 1980 with the intention of developing it as a multi-use recreation facility serving a large catchment area. Since then a wide range of activities have been successfully promoted on the airfield including gliding, paragliding, air displays, motor shows and a large open air market. As well as a wide variety of sporting activities (including gymnastics and archery), an aircraft museum and various light industrial and business uses are also located on the site. Over one million visitors per annum are attracted to the airfield. The range of activities is currently being reviewed.

**12.112** The strategy which was adopted is as follows:-

- continue a gradual progression of development towards a working airfield on its western side;
- continue to actively promote the number and range of air shows, displays and other events;
- continue the markets;

- permit more aircraft parking on selected sites;
- seek general storage or aircraft-related use for hangar 2;
- promote and facilitate the use of the airfield as a venue for corporate hospitality and other related events;
- consider the means of achieving the development of an indoor and outdoor bowls centre on the Siskin Way site;
- consider business units on land near Siskin Way; and
- investigate the possibility of a golf centre on Merlin Way.

**12.113** Whilst the strategy for the continued role of the airfield as a leisure facility is acceptable in overall terms, the Siskin Way site is considered inappropriate for industrial/commercial units because of the impact upon the Green Belt. It is desirable, however, to accommodate industrial/commercial development in this locality because of its excellent access and the need to find an alternative to the site allocated in the Epping and Ongar Local Plan at Hallsford Bridge, Chipping Ongar (see para 5.20). The ideal site is that of the concrete apron adjacent to the existing industrial site (see Policy E6). This will necessitate the relocation of the Saturday markets to either the eastern section of the east-west runway or the site now occupied by the golf driving range.

**12.114** The development of a large recreational building (such as a bowls centre) would, however, be appropriate on the Siskin Way site. This is because it would link in with the existing recreational facilities along the eastern side of the airfield.

#### **POLICY RST27**

##### **THE COUNCIL WILL:-**

- (i) **CONTINUE TO PROMOTE AND ENABLE THE USE AND DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH WEALD AIRFIELD (IDENTIFIED AS SUCH ON THE PROPOSALS MAP) AS A MAJOR MULTI-FUNCTIONAL RECREATION AND LEISURE CENTRE AND SHOWGROUND; AND**
- (ii) **PROMOTE AND ENABLE THE USE OF THE WESTERN PART OF THE AIRFIELD (IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP) AS A WORKING AIRFIELD.**

**12.115** Facilities associated with a 'multi-functional

recreation and leisure centre' include the various sports and games facilities referred to above (see para. 12.111) as well as those related to airports. Use as a 'showground' includes air shows and air-displays but generally relates to the area east of the safety fence. The need for a working airfield has arisen partly as a consequence of the closure of a number of small airfields around London. A 'working airfield' relates to the land west of the safety fence and could include aircraft parking on the pans and grass, facilities to repair, service and store aircraft and helicopters and the continued availability of the runways to accommodate a wide range of aircraft. The Council will attach great importance to amenity considerations (particularly noise) in dealing with planning applications for development on the airfield or, in its capacity as land-owner, leasing any sites or premises.

**12.116** The Council is concerned that the airfield's intrinsic character and interest as a former RAF airfield should be protected as far as possible. As an important Second World War airfield it is clearly of considerable historic interest. Its layout and associated structures are of great significance in this respect. It is also an aim of the Council to encourage the development of a limited museum facility on the airfield with an air transport theme. The Council will therefore encourage the retention of buildings or structures which make a significant contribution to the overall historic character of the airfield.

#### **POLICY RST28**

##### **THE COUNCIL WILL PROTECT THE EXISTING OPEN CHARACTER AND HISTORIC INTEREST OF NORTH WEALD AIRFIELD.**

**12.117** In order for the airfield to reach its full potential as a working airfield and multi-use recreation facility it may be necessary for additional, appropriately-sited large buildings to be developed. This is considered to amount to the very special circumstances which would warrant development in the Green Belt. Any such buildings should, however, have regard to the need to protect the character of the airfield. The following policy will therefore apply:

#### **POLICY RST29**

##### **THE COUNCIL MAY GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR FURTHER MAJOR BUILDINGS ON NORTH WEALD AIRFIELD WITHIN:-**

- (i) **THE SOUTH EAST CORNER; AND**
- (ii) **THE AREA ADJACENT TO THE M11 MOTORWAY,**

**(WHICH ARE IDENTIFIED AS SUCH ON THE PROPOSALS MAP), PROVIDED THAT ANY SUCH BUILDINGS:-**

- (a) ARE NECESSARY AND APPROPRIATE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AIRFIELD AS EITHER A MAJOR MULTI-FUNCTIONAL RECREATION AND LEISURE CENTRE OR A WORKING AIRFIELD; AND**
- (b) WOULD NOT CREATE ANY AIR SAFETY HAZARDS; AND**
- (c) WOULD NOT LEAD TO PRESSURE FOR BUILDING FOR RECREATIONAL OR AIRFIELD-RELATED USES ON ANY OTHER PART OF THE AIRFIELD.**

**12.118** It is intended that any buildings in the south east corner would be for indoor sports and leisure facilities. These would be in close proximity to the existing gymnasium, shooting range and the golf driving range thereby extending the corridor of active recreational pursuits along the eastern edge of the airfield.

**12.119** It is anticipated that any new buildings on the western side of the airfield would either be for recreational use or relate directly to its function as an airfield. Any such buildings would therefore be expected to be of a similar size and form to the existing hangars or similar in design to other original buildings on the airfield.

**12.120** The construction of these buildings, in accordance with this policy, will ensure that they will:-

- be of a scale in keeping with the character of other large or original buildings in the vicinity;
- be in keeping with the open character of the airfield;
- have no adverse effect upon the historic interest of the airfield;
- have no adverse effect upon the character and appearance of the Green Belt; and
- not prejudice the development of any of the intended functions of the airfield.

In order to be acceptable any development proposal would also have to comply with all other relevant Plan policies. This applies particularly to those relating to design (Policies DBE1 and DBE4), landscape (Policy LL3), landscaping (Policies LL10 and LL11), car

parking (Policy T14) and traffic impact (Policy T17).

**12.121** In order to facilitate the continued maintenance of the airfield to an appropriate standard it will be necessary for the uses to be self-financing as far as possible. In view of the variable nature of the demand for these uses, it may be necessary to accommodate other uses in order to enable the airfield to continue to function. Hangar 2 has been in commercial use for warehousing since the mid-1970s and it is therefore appropriate to allow this to continue, thereby enabling the airfield to continue to operate.

### **POLICY RST30**

**THE COUNCIL MAY PERMIT THE USE OF HANGAR 2 AT NORTH WEALD AIRFIELD (IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP) EITHER AS A WAREHOUSE OR FOR AIR-RELATED USES.**

**12.122** Air-related uses are preferred but, in the absence of any appropriate viable uses coming forward, warehousing will be acceptable. Any such development will, however, be subject to stringent controls regarding open storage, and the parking and servicing of any vehicles outside the hangar.

### **(2) Leisure Line Proposal**

**12.123** Although the Council strongly supports the reintroduction of conventional rail services on the former LUL branch line between Chipping Ongar and Epping, the Secretary of State's closure decision of September 1994 allows for the implementation of a "leisure line" by a railway preservation society. A leisure line between Chipping Ongar and Epping is a means of rail travel using locomotives, including steam locomotives, and rolling stock from a particular era. In the longer term it might even prove to be a base from which to reintroduce conventional public transport operations. The Council supports such services and will resist development proposals which would prevent this. Appropriate measures are dealt with in Policy T2 in Chapter 17.

### **(3) Former Radio Station site, North Weald Bassett**

**12.124** This site is addressed by paras 5.100 to 5.105 and Policy GB18.

### **TOURIST ACCOMMODATION**

**12.125** The District features attractive countryside and various visitor-attractions (such as Epping Forest, the Lee Valley Park, North Weald Airfield and Waltham Abbey). However, the nature of the attractions is such that people tend to visit for a day or a half-day.

Consequently, the demand for overnight accommodation in the District is largely from people either passing through or with business locally, rather than holiday-makers on long-stay visits. That said, many short-stay visits are likely to stem from holiday-makers passing through the District possibly going (or returning from) abroad. This is because of its proximity to London, the national motorway network, the East Anglian ports and Stansted Airport. The District can be expected to continue to fulfil this role in the future.

**12.126** Whilst current demand for hotel accommodation is catered for largely by the Post House Hotel at Epping and the Swallow Hotel at Waltham Abbey, they are not affordable to many potential visitors. Other facilities, including bed and breakfast accommodation, and a youth hostel, already exist in the District but to a limited degree which is unlikely to satisfy the real demand. The provision of any such additional facilities would therefore be welcomed as enhancing the scope for, and therefore the economic potential of, tourism. This is, of course, provided the developments are in accordance with other policies of the Plan.

#### **POLICY RST31**

**DEVELOPMENTS WHICH WILL RESULT IN ADDITIONAL TOURIST ACCOMMODATION WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THEY ARE UNLIKELY TO LEAD TO AN EXCESSIVE ADVERSE CHANGE IN THE CHARACTER OF THE LOCALITY.**

**12.127** The conversion of appropriate buildings in the Green Belt would normally be acceptable (see Policy GB8) provided it was unlikely to result in subsequent pressure to change the use of a new building. Any such developments would, however, have to comply with relevant policies with regard to landscape, parking, etc.

**12.128** Applications for changes of use in residential streets will be assessed on their merits although the retention of the quality and character of the residential environment will be of paramount importance.

**12.129** This policy is not intended to permit the development of green-field sites in the Green Belt. In order to be acceptable any development proposal would also have to comply with other relevant Plan policies. This applies particularly to those relating to design (Policies DBE1, DBE3 and DBE4), landscape (Policy LL2), landscaping (Policy LL10 and LL11), car parking (Policy T14) and traffic impact (Policy T17).

#### **Caravan and Camping Sites**

**12.130** Although camping and caravan sites play a positive role in providing tourist accommodation in the Green Belt they tend to be conspicuous and can therefore be ill suited to the open nature of the District's countryside. Proposals in the Upshire/High Beech area will be resisted due to the area's high landscape quality and very poor road access.

**12.131** The Eastern Council for Sport and Recreation (ECSR) has identified a possible need for a camping site to serve those using the River Stort and Lee Navigation. The Council has agreed to consider using part of the Riverfields/Glen Faba area (see para 12.104) for this purpose once gravel extraction has ceased and if consumer research demonstrates a need for the facility.

#### **POLICY RST32**

**THE STATIONING OF TOURING OR STATIC CARAVANS, AND THE USE OF LAND FOR CAMPING, WILL BE PERMITTED IN THE AREAS IDENTIFIED AS SUCH ON THE PROPOSALS MAP. SUCH DEVELOPMENT WILL NOT NORMALLY BE PERMITTED IN ANY OTHER PART OF THE DISTRICT.**

#### **Environmental Implications**

**12.132** The implementation of the policies in this chapter will achieve the following aims (see pages 24 and 25):-

- (ii) To facilitate modern-day living requirements.
- (iii) To accommodate, where possible, the special needs of the disadvantaged.
- (iv) To meet the needs of disabled people who live or work in the District, or who visit it.
- (viii) To identify and meet the leisure needs of residents, particularly in the south of the District.
- (ix) To increase the scope of appropriate recreational activities in the countryside.
- (xix) To attract visitors to appropriate recreational/tourist facilities in the District.
- (xx) To ensure that any new development does not have an unacceptable impact both in environmental terms and in the provision of local facilities.
- (xxiii) To protect and, where possible, enhance the



character and environmental qualities of the countryside.

(xxx) To protect the Green Belt from development which is unnecessary or undesirable.

(xxxii) To safeguard and, where possible, enhance the landscape.

(xxxiii) To safeguard and, where possible, enhance the District's tree cover, flora and wildlife.

(xxxiv) To make the most efficient use of land and buildings wherever practicable.

**12.133** The policies will have limited environmental implications (see Appendix 2) although they will be beneficial (largely as a consequence of Green Belt constraints). The promotion of recreational uses in the countryside is in accordance with its Green Belt function. This is considered acceptable despite such uses being likely to generate more travel by private, rather than public, transport because of the relative remoteness of the location. The urban environment would be expected to benefit from the provision of children's play facilities associated with appropriate new development.

## **13. Community Facilities**

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## **Introduction**

**13.1** This chapter deals with health, social services, education, library, museum, fire, police and ambulance facilities together with public halls and churches in so far as they will have an impact upon changing land uses in the District. Other related facilities, eg for recreation, are dealt with under the appropriate chapters elsewhere in the Plan.

**13.2** The standard of provision of community services and facilities is a very important issue. The services are increasingly coming to the attention of the public as a result of the cash limits placed on the public bodies responsible for providing them and 'deregulation'.

## **General**

**13.3** In the Roding Valley Local Plan a site at Traps Hill, Loughton was allocated for public services. The site already comprises a public swimming pool, branch library, information office, luncheon club and public car park. In view of its scale and location it was included as one of three possible sites for a new/improved supermarket(see para 11.32). The three sites were the subject of a questionnaire survey in the context of publicising the Consultation Draft Local Plan. The public's overwhelming response was that the Traps Hill site should not be developed as a supermarket because they wished the existing facilities to be retained and, where appropriate, improved.

**13.4** The following policy will therefore apply:-

### **POLICY CF1**

**THE SITE AT TRAPS HILL, LOUGHTON (IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP) IS ALLOCATED FOR COMMUNITY FACILITIES INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING:-**

- (i) **WET AND DRY SPORTS LEISURE CENTRE;**
- (ii) **LUNCHEON CLUB;**
- (iii) **CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA;**
- (iv) **LIBRARY;**
- (v) **INFORMATION OFFICE;**
- (vi) **PUBLIC CAR PARK; AND**
- (vii) **FACILITIES FOR THE COLLECTION OF DOMESTIC MATERIALS FOR RECYCLING.**

## **ARTS AND SOCIAL FACILITIES MAY ALSO BE CONSIDERED APPROPRIATE ON THIS SITE.**

**13.5** The proposed wet and dry sports facility could entail either refurbishment of the existing pool, and associated development, or total redevelopment.

## **Health**

**13.6** There are currently two National Health Service hospitals and a private one in the District:-

- St. Margaret's Hospital, Epping - which provides a range of hospital facilities;
- Ongar War Memorial Hospital, Chipping Ongar - which offers limited hospital facilities (including a physiotherapy department and geriatrics);
- a private hospital at Holly House, High Road, Buckhurst Hill.

**13.7** Hospital and community health care services in the District are administered by the North Essex Health Authority. The Authority "purchases" these services from a range of "providers". NHS providers include Princess Alexandra Hospital Unit, Essex and Herts Community Services, the Essex Ambulance Service, NHS Trust and Forest Health Care. Other providers are from the independent sector. Primary health care services are provided by a wide range of GPs, dentists, opticians and pharmacists.

**13.8** Health authorities continually review the health needs of the population in the light of new medical technology and practices, and changing Government policy. There is a long term trend throughout the NHS for an increase in community-based care and a reduction in emphasis on hospital in-patient services. This feature of Government policy has been evident for some years now from the closure of specialist hospitals providing for the elderly, people with learning difficulties or the mentally ill, and their replacement by residential and other support services in the community. It is also becoming increasingly evident through an expanding role for primary care and out-patient facilities. This will have an impact on health authorities' requirements in terms of land and buildings. They will therefore look to meet anticipated needs for land in the long term from their premises which are, or are expected to be, surplus to requirements.

**13.9** Over the years the catchment areas of individual health facilities have changed but have become less rigid. This is in part a consequence of the introduction of the latest NHS reforms where the

previous function of Health Authorities is now split between purchasing and providing health-care facilities. Consequently, patients may well go to the nearest hospital for certain services but go elsewhere for others, as well as making use of services provided by primary care practitioners.

**13.10** This District now looks primarily to the hospitals at Epping and Harlow (Princess Alexandra). The Health Authority has long intended that the major hospital serving its area should be centralised at the Princess Alexandra Hospital where all local acute, accident and emergency, and maternity in-patient services would be provided. It would become the Main Acute Hospital and be supported by "Community Hospitals". This strategy has now been confirmed by the Secretary of State for Health, despite the total opposition of the Council to this approach.

**(i) St. Margaret's Hospital, Epping**

**13.11** St Margaret's features a range of accommodation much of which is in need of replacement. The Health Authority intends there to be a "community hospital" in the District and consolidation on this site is to take place. The facilities at St Margaret's are therefore being downgraded accordingly. In its new capacity, the hospital would provide a range of out-patient clinics, diagnostic and rehabilitation services, and a day hospital with medium and long term accommodation for the elderly. It already provides a service for people with learning disabilities and additional facilities are to be provided for people with mental health problems. This new service is to replace that previously provided by Claybury Hospital. The Green Belt boundary had previously been adjusted to allow for the planned development of the St. Margaret's site.

**13.12** Whilst its development as a community hospital may result in the replacement or upgrading of existing buildings it has already resulted in St. Margaret's losing its Accident and Emergency service. The Council has always opposed any reduction in the existing level of services at St. Margaret's. This is because it is concerned that the concentration of major hospital services in Harlow could be to the detriment of the health care of those who live in the District from :-

- (i) the extra distance, the additional journey time and cost as well as the paucity of public transport links between the Princess Alexandra Hospital and Loughton, Debden and Epping;
- (ii) an increasing trend in the south of the District of making use of facilities at Whippes Cross Hospital rather than Princess

Alexandra due to travel problems (see (i) above);

- (iii) the need for "walking wounded" facilities intermediate between GP care and accident and emergency treatment; and
- (iv) general concern about underfunding and lack of facilities.

**13.13** The Council has not changed its stance on this issue. It will therefore continue to press the Health Authority to provide a full range of acute in-patient and 24 hour accident and emergency services on the site.

**(ii) War Memorial Hospital, Chipping Ongar**

**13.14** Although providing only a limited range of services, this hospital fulfils an important local function. The Health Authority intends that this should continue to provide "community health care".

**(iii) Clinics**

**13.15** Limes Farm Community Clinic is being redeveloped. The clinics at Debden and Chipping Ongar are unsatisfactory and the Epping clinic has now been reprovided on the St Margaret's hospital site. The Health Authority has intentions of:-

- transferring the Chipping Ongar clinic to a nearby primary care facility;
- utilising the site of the Epping clinic for a residential care hostel; and
- redeveloping the Debden site to provide a replacement clinic together with day hospital facilities for people with mental health problems.

**(iv) Special Needs**

**13.16** The County's Social Services Department has identified the following needs:-

- a new elderly persons' home (part III accommodation);
- residential and day care facilities for people with mental health problems to meet local needs following the closure of Claybury Hospital; and
- group homes for people with learning disabilities and those with mental health problems.

**13.17** The Council will therefore continue to press the relevant Health-care Authorities to provide a full range of appropriately-located community-based facilities in the District to meet the needs of its residents. The Council acknowledges that the Health Authorities have their own objectives and policies, but will need to be satisfied that proposals for the development of new sites, or the change of use of existing ones, are justifiable and comply with planning policies. The Council also expects the Health Authorities to undertake proper consultation when determining how best to meet health needs, including a community hospital on part of the St Margaret's Hospital site which offers services for the general population as well as specialised services for specific client groups.

**13.18** The Council recognises that there will be a requirement for additional sites to improve and extend the range of primary health care and other community-based facilities. When proposals for changes of use, of land or buildings, to health facilities are made, the Council will seek to balance the needs of the NHS against the community's requirements for other land uses. Primary and community care facilities are, in principle, acceptable uses in shopping frontages and residential areas depending on the precise use proposed.

**13.19** In the light of the foregoing, in exercising its planning function, the Council will apply the following policies.

#### **POLICY CF2**

**THE COUNCIL WILL GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR PROPOSALS TO DEVELOP OR EXTEND EXISTING HEALTH CARE FACILITIES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE RESIDENTS OF THE DISTRICT PROVIDED THAT:-**

- (i) **THE DEVELOPMENT WILL NOT RESULT IN ANY EXCESSIVE ENVIRONMENTAL OR AMENITY PROBLEMS;**
- (ii) **THE SITE IS READILY ACCESSIBLE BY CAR AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT; AND**
- (iii) **THE SITE IS NOT IN THE GREEN BELT (UNLESS IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICIES GB2 OR GB8).**

#### **POLICY CF3**

**THE COUNCIL WILL NOT GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT**

**FOR OTHER USES OF SITES USED FOR PUBLIC HEALTH CARE FACILITIES UNLESS IT IS SATISFIED THAT THE RELEVANT HEALTH AUTHORITY HAS THOROUGHLY INVESTIGATED THE LOCAL NEEDS AND HAS CLEARLY DEMONSTRATED THAT THE SITE IS NOT NECESSARY TO MEET THE HEALTH CARE REQUIREMENTS OF THE RESIDENTS OF THE DISTRICT.**

**13.20** The Council will consider applications for the development of private health care facilities within the District in the light of Policy CF2. In order to be acceptable any proposal must also comply with other relevant Plan policies, in particular, those relating to design (Policies DBE1, DBE3 and DBE4), landscape (Policy LL3), landscaping (Policy LL10 and LL11), car parking (Policy T14) and traffic impact (Policy T17) and any other site specific policies.

#### **Ambulance Service**

**13.21** The Essex Ambulance Service is seeking to:-

- (i) relocate Harlow Ambulance Station; and
- (ii) relocate Waltham Abbey Ambulance Station should the need arise.

**13.22** A preferred location for a new Harlow Ambulance Station is out of the town, to the south east, to a site with easy access to the M11. The ideal site would be approximately a fifth of a hectare in order to accommodate a 10 bay ambulance station. If the development were to be accommodated in this District, as distinct from Harlow, then it would be in the Green Belt. The development of a "green field" site would be contrary to Policy GB2 and therefore inappropriate. However the redevelopment or change of use of an existing building may be acceptable provided it complies with other Plan policies (notably Policy GB8). In view of the fact that the ambulance service has not yet earmarked a site, this Plan makes no provision for a new Harlow Ambulance Station. Any future proposals would therefore be considered on their merits in the context of the policies of the Plan.

**13.23** The Ambulance Service had previously contemplated relocating the Waltham Abbey Ambulance Station to the site of the former Honey Lane Hospital which has since been developed for housing. It was anticipated that a new ambulance station would not be required until the late 1990s at the earliest. In the absence, therefore, of any specified requirement, in terms of both location and size, this Plan does not make any provision for a replacement ambulance station in Waltham Abbey. However, it cannot be assumed that any site which is available and potentially suitable when required will automatically

gain planning approval.

**13.24** It is possible that the ambulance station at Epping could become surplus to requirements in the Plan period. The Health Authority may be interested in acquiring the site, which adjoins St. Margaret's Hospital.

#### **POLICY CF4**

**IN THE EVENT OF THE WALTHAM ABBEY OR EPPING AMBULANCE STATIONS BECOMING SURPLUS TO REQUIREMENTS, ANY REDEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS WILL BE EXPECTED TO HAVE REGARD TO THE CURRENT LOCAL NEED FOR COMMUNITY FACILITIES.**

#### **Education**

**13.25** The Council is anxious to assist the development of additional or replacement educational facilities which are required to meet the needs of the residents of the District. To this end it will seek to enable the development of such facilities within the urban areas.

**13.26** It is anticipated that these developments will be sought either on, or immediately adjacent to, the sites of existing schools and colleges. However, many of these sites are important areas of urban open space and the Council does not wish to jeopardise that function. The following policy will therefore apply:

#### **POLICY CF5**

**THE COUNCIL WILL GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR REPLACEMENT OR ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL BUILDINGS ON EXISTING SCHOOL OR COLLEGE SITES OUTSIDE THE GREEN BELT IF IT IS SATISFIED THAT:**

**(i) THE LOSS OF ANY ASSOCIATED OPEN SPACE WOULD NOT HAVE AN EXCESSIVELY ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE TOWNSCAPE IN THE VICINITY (IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY LL5); AND**

**(ii) IT DOES NOT INVOLVE THE LOSS OF ANY PLAYING FIELDS (UNLESS THIS IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY RST14).**

**13.27** In order to be acceptable the proposed development will be required to be in accordance with other relevant policies of the Plan, particularly those relating to design (DBE1 and DBE3), landscaping (LL10 and LL11) and car parking (T14). Where the proposed development is on an area of protected urban open space (i.e. subject to Policy LL5) it will also be

required to comply with Policy LL6.

**13.28** In recent years, a number of schools, particularly those in Loughton, have been declared surplus to requirements by Essex County Council, the Education Authority for the District, and have been redeveloped for residential purposes.

**13.29** The surplus of schools results from falling rolls. The numbers of pupils fell during the 1980s as a consequence of a declining population and a reduction in the birth rate (see Figure 4). This led the County Council to close the Fairmead, Brook and Hereward Infants' Schools in Loughton and the Ongar Comprehensive School. The closure of the Loughton schools also involved the amalgamation of Epping Forest, Loughton and Buckhurst Hill High Schools to form Roding Valley High School. Some of the closures, particularly Ongar Comprehensive, were in the face of strong local opposition. There is no uniform pattern of spare capacity in the existing schools across the District. In some schools there are places available whereas others are operating at or near capacity.

**13.30** The County Council is required, by current legislation, to obtain the maximum income from the assets which it no longer requires. Because the schools lie in predominantly residential areas the County Council has mostly looked to dispose of its surplus sites for residential purposes.

**13.31** The District Council is concerned about the continued release of surplus educational facilities in urban areas for redevelopment for other uses for the following reasons:

- in the short and medium term, schools achieving grant maintained status may change their admission arrangements to the detriment of school children resident in the District. The Council will therefore look to the Education Authority to have contingency plans which may involve the retention of existing school sites, even if they are currently considered to be surplus to requirements;
- once the existing sites have been lost to development any increase in demand would (unless suitable alternative urban sites become available) result in a demand for new schools on the edge of the urban area thereby placing pressure on the Green Belt;
- many of the sites (particularly those in Loughton) provide urban space which contributes to the townscape; and
- the playing fields and playgrounds may provide an important recreational facility. The buildings may be used, or have potential, for recreational or other community uses.

**13.32** The Government adopts a similar stance in seeking to protect playing fields (irrespective of current use or ownership). This is reflected in PPG17 - Sport and Recreation, which refers to consideration being given by the Department of Education and Science to advising local education authorities not to dispose of any school playing fields unless they have investigated and established that the sites will not be required in the longer term for educational or community use. In the light of the above, the following policy will apply:

**POLICY CF6**

**THE COUNCIL WILL GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OR CHANGE OF USE OF EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES OUTSIDE THE GREEN BELT ONLY WHEN IT IS SATISFIED THAT:**

- (i) **ANY FACILITIES WHICH ARE CURRENTLY, OR WILL BE, SURPLUS TO REQUIREMENTS WILL NOT BE NEEDED FOR EDUCATIONAL USE IN THE MEDIUM TO LONG TERM;**
- (ii) **THE LOSS OF ANY ASSOCIATED OPEN SPACE WOULD NOT HAVE AN EXCESSIVE EFFECT ON THE TOWNSCAPE IN THE VICINITY; AND**
- (iii) **THE EXISTING FACILITIES DO NOT OFFER POTENTIAL FOR ANY RECREATIONAL OR COMMUNITY FACILITY FOR WHICH THERE IS A RECOGNISED NEED IN THE LOCALITY AND WHICH IS UNLIKELY TO BE MET IN ANY OTHER WAY.**

**13.33** This policy applies to all schools (whether local authority, grant maintained or private) and colleges in urban areas.

**13.34** "Medium to long term" is taken to mean not less than 10 years from when a proposal is made. Before granting planning permission in the context of this policy, the Council will require the relevant educational body (be it education authority or governing body of the school or college) to be able to demonstrate clearly that the land or buildings will not be needed in the medium to long term, in accordance with criterion (i). In considering whether sites which are currently surplus to requirements will be needed in the medium to long term the Council will have regard to:

- current school rolls;
- projected school rolls;
- capacity of the school buildings (including any

development proposals);

- adequacy of the school playing fields; and
- anticipated local population changes

**13.35** Sites over 1 hectare which either already have planning permission for development for housing or which are considered acceptable for housing and have satisfied the criteria of this policy are identified in Policy H2. All sites are subject to the affordable housing policies (H5 and H6) and those sites which are more than 1 hectare will also be subject to the phasing policy (I2). In assessing any further planning applications for the redevelopment of education facilities for other uses these policies will be applied together with others in the Plan, in particular those relating to the protection of urban open space (LL5 and LL6) and the protection of playing fields (RST14), where appropriate. Policies relating to car parking (T14) and traffic generation (T17) will also be relevant.

**13.36** The Council is particularly anxious to ensure that the County Council, as Education Authority, retains in its ownership sufficient appropriately located sites within the District to accommodate any new local authority schools which may be needed in the future. In the event that any such developments are proposed in the Green Belt they will be assessed in the context of the overall policy of restraint. For those sites, or parts of sites, within the Green Belt, Policies GB2 and GB7 will apply.

**Site of the former Ongar Comprehensive School**

**13.37** The former Ongar Comprehensive School closed in 1989. The site is owned by the County Council and is now occupied by a mix of uses, some temporary, others long term. These include the Ongar Leisure Centre, adult education, the Ongar Enterprise Centre (comprising managed workspace and support facilities) and the Essex Youth Service. All the accommodation, other than the front block which is occupied by the adult education and youth services, is surplus to the requirements of the County's Education Department.

**13.38** The long term uses on the site now fulfil an important community function which the Council would wish to see retained in order to further its leisure and employment strategies. Some of the buildings, however, are in need of repair if their useful life is to be continued. Their poor state stems from a lack of investment once they became surplus to the County Council's requirements.

**13.39** Both Councils are committed to the retention of the Ongar Enterprise Centre although it may involve the relocation or rationalisation of the existing



uses elsewhere on the site. The Council is also investigating the desirability and feasibility of further recreational facilities being added to the Leisure Centre. The proximity of the Green Belt to the Leisure Centre may cause problems but it does not preclude the development of leisure facilities in the Green Belt should very special circumstances warrant it.

**13.40** The amount, location and usage of the current on-site parking facilities create problems in that demand sometimes exceeds supply. Any comprehensive proposals for the site would, therefore, have to address this issue.

**13.41** The County Council is looking to develop part of the site for housing purposes on the basis that some land will be surplus to requirements and that residential development would be most appropriate given the uses to be retained on the site, the nature of the surrounding area (which is predominantly residential) and the current market.

#### **POLICY CF7**

**WITHIN THE BUILT-UP AREA OF THE FORMER ONGAR COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL SITE (IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP), THE COUNCIL MAY GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR:**

- (i) **THE CONTINUATION OF COMMUNITY USES, INCLUDING THE WET AND DRY SPORTS LEISURE CENTRE (IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE ADJOINING PLAYING FIELDS), AND THE ADULT EDUCATION AND YOUTH FACILITIES;**
- (ii) **THE CONTINUATION OF THE ONGAR ENTERPRISE CENTRE FOR B1 BUSINESS USES;**
- (iii) **THE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF ANY SURPLUS AREA.**

**13.42** The implementation of this policy is dependent on the County Council devoting the available proceeds from the disposal of the site to the improvement of the long term facilities.

#### **Libraries**

**13.43** Essex County Council is the body responsible for the provision of public library services in the District. The present service consists of a Central Library at Loughton with major branches at Epping and Waltham Abbey and smaller branches at Buckhurst Hill, Debden, Chigwell, North Weald

Bassett and Chipping Ongar. Mobile libraries serve a large number of communities in the District.

#### **Museums**

**13.44** The Epping Forest District Museum Service, which is provided by the District Council, is housed in Sun Street, Waltham Abbey adjacent to the library. Facilities include a series of permanent and temporary exhibition areas, a visual arts gallery and a shop. The Museum Service also has a specially equipped store in Loughton for its reserve collection. Whilst the existing buildings are adequate for current requirements they are less than ideal.

**13.45** There are also a number of local history clubs which often provide a valuable link between the Museum Service and the local community. Some clubs also manage unique collections themselves, e.g. the North Weald Airfield Memorial Collection, thereby making a positive contribution to the preservation of the District's heritage.

**13.46** The Museum building does not offer particularly easy access to those people with restricted mobility but its physical characteristics and the fact that it is also 'Listed' preclude any significant adaptations. Consequently the 'outreach' community programme (comprising community projects, touring exhibitions, talks, special events etc.) is a particularly important aspect of its commitments.

**13.47** It is intended that the reinstatement into beneficial use of the former Royal Gunpowder Factory site (see Policy HC16) will include the establishment of a gunpowder museum and possibly a natural history museum, each of which would merit an interpretation centre. The facility would be provided by either the developer or a Trust which is being formed to consider the development of the site. Should the Council wish to relocate its existing museum to the site then this would be subject to appropriate accommodation being provided by the developer.

#### **Public Halls and Places of Religious Worship**

**13.48** Public halls are an important community facility in both towns and villages in that they provide a local venue for meetings, recreational activities, parties, wedding receptions and places of religious worship, etc. The Council is therefore anxious to ensure that adequate provision of such facilities exists throughout the District. Most of the halls are affiliated to Parish or Town Councils or church bodies.

#### **POLICY CF8**

**THE COUNCIL WILL FACILITATE THE**

**ESTABLISHMENT, IMPROVEMENT, OR APPROPRIATE REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING PUBLIC HALLS AND PLACES OF RELIGIOUS WORSHIP WHERE THIS IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH OTHER POLICIES OF THIS PLAN.**

**13.49** In the case of villages that are either part of, or surrounded by, the Green Belt, any new hall or place of religious worship would be subject to the criteria set out in Policy RST15 which relates to recreational facilities in or immediately adjacent to rural settlements.

**The Needs of People with Mobility Difficulties**

**13.50** People with mobility difficulties may include the physically disabled, the elderly and people with young children in a pram or a pushchair. Mobility may present a problem to such people in terms of:-

- getting around their living accommodation (although this will not apply in the case of people with young children);
- the access to their dwelling, and other people's;
- getting around other people's houses;
- the access to public buildings; and
- transportation.

**13.51** The Government's guidance in PPG1 states that:-

- "development ... provides the opportunity to secure a more accessible environment for everyone, including wheelchair users and other people with disabilities, elderly people, and people with toddlers or infants in pushchairs"; and
- "where the public are to have access to the building, the local planning authority should consider the extent to which the securing of provision for disabled people can be justified on planning grounds."

**13.52** The remainder of this section deals with access to public buildings. Access to, and mobility within, houses is dealt with in the Housing Chapter (see Policies H7, H8 and H9) and aspects relating to transportation by Policy T1.

**POLICY CF9**

**THE COUNCIL WILL REQUIRE ALL NEW**

**PUBLIC BUILDINGS, WHETHER PURPOSE-BUILT OR CREATED BY CONVERSION, TO PROVIDE APPROPRIATE ACCESS FACILITIES INTO AND WITHIN THE BUILDING FOR PEOPLE WITH MOBILITY DIFFICULTIES. FACILITIES THAT WILL NORMALLY BE SOUGHT INCLUDE:-**

- **CAR PARKING PROVISION (ON A LEVEL SURFACE) FOR THE DISABLED; AND**
- **WHERE POSSIBLE, AN AUTOMATICALLY CONTROLLED ENTRANCE TO THE BUILDING.**

**13.53** Public buildings include all District and County Council offices, other community facilities, shops, leisure centres, places of entertainment, hotels and guest houses, places of worship, places of education and, in line with the Disabled Persons (Employment) Acts (1944 and 1958), work places with more than 20 employees.

**13.54** There are also Building Control requirements which contain detailed Regulations on the standard of access to, and within, the buildings, and the provision of sanitary accommodation.

**13.55** Parking spaces for disabled persons' vehicles will be required to be 5m x at least 3.5m wide (see para. 17.78 and Policy T14).

**13.56** The circumstances in which such facilities might not be sought include where the building is converted and either it cannot practicably accommodate the requisite facilities or it is 'Listed' (see para. 6.51) and the necessary works would be out-of-keeping with the appearance of the Building or its setting (see Policies HC10 and HC12).

**Public Art**

**13.57** The Council considers that visual art and craft, incorporated as integral parts of a development, can significantly enhance the public's appreciation of the development. Art and craft also serve to provide a sense of place thereby building upon the character or heritage of a particular area or site and perhaps even that of the District as a whole.

**13.58** The incorporation of an element of art could take the form of a sculpture, mural or other work such as specially designed walls, railings or paving. It is not intended that this should be a particular burden on developers but rather a means of enhancing a particular proposal. This is in similar fashion to the way in which appropriate landscaping is required in order to complement a development and integrate it

within the street-scene.

**13.59** The following policy will therefore be applied:-

**POLICY CF10**

**THE COUNCIL WILL, IN APPROPRIATE CASES, SEEK THE PROVISION OF NEW WORKS OF VISUAL ART AND CRAFT AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES.**

**13.60** "Appropriate cases" will normally be considered to be those where the development would:-

- (i) be particularly prominent in the street-scene; or
- (ii) incorporate facilities for the public (be it a public building or public open space); or
- (iii) create a residential area through which non-residents would be likely to walk.

**13.61** The cost of any associated new works of art will be expected to represent at least 1% of the cost of the scheme in accordance with the Arts Council's "Percent for Art" scheme. Applicants will be expected to enter into an appropriate legal agreement to guarantee that the works will be provided, in accordance with Policy I1.

**Fire and Rescue Service**

**13.62** The only possible requirement of this service is a further residential house in close proximity to the station at Waltham Abbey. One possible site is that of the existing ambulance station should it become surplus to requirement (see para 13.23).

**13.63** It is not anticipated that any land or buildings will become surplus to requirements in the Plan period.

**Police**

**13.64** The District is covered by the Essex and Metropolitan Police Forces with the Metropolitan Police being responsible for the south west area and Essex Police the remainder. Both Forces have particular needs in terms of accommodation.

**13.65** The Sub-Divisional H.Q. in Epping is less than ideal in that the building is too small and inappropriate for its current uses, access by car is difficult, car parking is inadequate and there is inadequate security at the rear. There is no scope for extension other than an expansion into the Magistrates' Court (which is situated at the rear) should it relocate (see para.

13.68). Whilst there are various possible options for the location and size of any replacement facilities, the necessary finance is unlikely to be forthcoming during the Plan period. This is particularly the case if the new accommodation is to be purpose-built rather than the conversion of an existing building. In view of the above, no provision for a replacement Sub-Divisional H.Q. is made in the Plan.

**13.66** Essex Police are also looking to relocate their office out of the police station in North Weald Bassett to another location in the village. The County Council considers that extending the local library, to incorporate a police office, would be the optimum solution. The existing building could then become an ordinary house.

**POLICY CF11**

**THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO ACCOMMODATE THE DEVELOPMENT OF A REPLACEMENT POLICE OFFICE IN NORTH WEALD BASSETT SUBJECT TO OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES IN THIS PLAN.**

**13.67** The proposed development will be required to comply with all relevant plan policies. The Council will encourage proposals for the residential use of 216 High Road, North Weald Bassett.

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**13.68** The Magistrates' Court in Epping is located in the building immediately to the rear of the police station. The existing facilities are inadequate, but the Home Office considers that any replacement should serve a much wider area and be situated in Great Dunmow. No final decision has yet been made but, even if it is, the Council is firmly opposed to the relocation of the existing Magistrates' Court to Great Dunmow.

**13.69** The Probation Office in Epping currently shares Crown Building in Crows Road with the Registrar. Should the Magistrates' Court eventually move out of Epping, the Probation Office will seek to relocate to Loughton and Crown Building will be vacated.

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**13.70** The Metropolitan Police consider that their existing station in Sun Street, Waltham Abbey is sufficient for their current requirements. However, it is anticipated that a replacement facility will be required by the end of the century and this is programmed accordingly. A site at Highbridge Street has long since been acquired for this purpose. Whilst its location is now no longer considered appropriate, the site has not been declared surplus to requirements

and no decision has yet been taken as to which area is preferred. Consequently this Plan makes no provision for a replacement police station at Waltham Abbey. In the event that a site is required during the Plan period it cannot, therefore, be assumed that any potentially suitable sites will be available. The site at Highbridge Street is considered appropriate for development for residential or business purposes. However, its prominent location at the entrance to Waltham Abbey from the west is such that the design of any development would have to be in keeping with the character of the Conservation Area (see Policy STC5)

hospital. The retention and improvement of existing facilities will also lead to the maintenance of buildings and, therefore, enhanced townscape quality.

**13.71** In the event that the police station in Sun Street becomes surplus to requirements any proposed changes of use will be determined in the light of Policy STC7.

### **Environmental Implications**

**13.72** The implementation of the policies in this chapter will contribute to the achievement of the following aims (see pages 24 and 25):-

(i) To promote and secure the optimum type and distribution of educational, health and social facilities to meet the needs of the District's residents both now and in the future.

(ii) To facilitate modern-day living requirements.

(iii) To accommodate, where possible, the special needs of the disadvantaged.

(iv) To meet the needs of disabled people who live or work in the District, or who visit it.

(viii) To identify and meet the leisure needs of residents, particularly in the south of the District.

(xx) To ensure that any new development does not have an unacceptable impact both in environmental terms and in the provision of local facilities.

(xxxii) To safeguard and, where possible, enhance the District's tree cover, flora and wildlife.

**13.73** The environmental implications of the policies in this chapter are set out in Appendix 2. They will impact, primarily, upon the quality of the local environment, through both protecting urban open spaces (in the form of school playing fields) from unjustifiable development whilst, at the same time, protecting the Green Belt from future development pressures. One further important aspect is minimising the number and length of trips by car to school and

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## **14. Utilities**

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## **Introduction**

**14.1** This chapter deals essentially with ensuring that there is adequate provision of utilities infrastructure (i.e. electricity, gas and water supply, and sewerage) to accommodate new development. It then goes on to address the Council's approach to sites for waste disposal in the District. It concludes with telecommunications, namely satellite dishes, masts and aerials.

## **Government Guidance**

**14.2** PPG12 states that the preparation of Development Plans should take into account:-

- the capacity of existing utilities infrastructure and the need for additional facilities;
- the land requirements of the utility companies to enable them to meet the demands that will be placed upon them; and
- the environmental effects of additional facilities required by the utility companies.

**14.3** Circular 30/92 'Development and Flood Risk' states that Development Plans should:-

- include policies relating to development in flood risk areas;
- not provide for any development on land at high risk from flooding which is not currently protected unless a developer is willing to protect the land to the appropriate standard; and
- take into account the potential risk of pollution associated with inundation of a site containing harmful materials which could be leached out.

## **County Policy**

**14.4** The current Structure Plan incorporates the following policies:-

- land will only be released for development when the necessary resources to provide the essential services and facilities are likely to be available;
- proposals for development within the floodplains of watercourses will not normally be permitted; and
- waste disposal sites will not be permitted unless there is an identified need, adequate

restoration, appropriate after-use and no likely adverse effect in terms of safety, pollution, amenity or conservation.

## **Infrastructure Provision**

**14.5** The current development proposals in this Plan are not expected to create operational or programming problems for the utility companies. The adequacy of infrastructure can be a material consideration in deciding whether planning permission should be granted. The right to connect to a sewer is a matter to be agreed between the developer and Water Companies.

## **POLICY U1**

**BEFORE GRANTING PLANNING PERMISSION FOR DEVELOPMENT ON LARGE SITES THE COUNCIL WILL HAVE REGARD TO THE ADEQUACY OF THE EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE. IF THE EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE PROVISION IS INADEQUATE THE COUNCIL WILL EITHER:-**

- (i) **SEEK TO PHASE OR POSTPONE THE DEVELOPMENT UNTIL ADEQUATE INFRASTRUCTURE PROVISION IS LIKELY TO BE AVAILABLE; OR**
- (ii) **REFUSE PLANNING PERMISSION WHERE APPROPRIATE PHASING OR POSTPONEMENT CANNOT BE AGREED.**

**14.6** Large sites will be regarded as those of at least 1 hectare. This policy will be implemented by consulting the relevant bodies prior to determining an application. In some instances, where the lack of adequate infrastructure is likely to result in the delay of an otherwise acceptable development, it may be possible for the developer to enter into a legal agreement to fund the requisite facility (in accordance with Policy I1) and thereby bring forward the development.

## **Flooding and Surface Water Drainage**

**14.7** New development in a floodplain is likely to be at risk from flooding. Development can also have the effect of reducing the storage capacity of the floodplain and/or impeding the flow of water, thereby increasing the risk of flooding elsewhere. The Council will also have regard to Catchment Management Plans, and their replacements - Local Environment Agency Plans (see paras. 3.21 and 8.11).

**14.8** At sites suspected of being at risk from flooding but where no adequate flood risk information is



available, developers will be required to carry out detailed technical investigations to evaluate the extent of the risk and to implement any necessary agreed measures. The areas at risk from flooding are indicated on the Proposals Map. The following policies will therefore apply:-

## **POLICY U2**

**THE COUNCIL WILL NOT PERMIT DEVELOPMENT IN AREAS AT RISK FROM FLOODING UNLESS IT IS SATISFIED THAT EITHER:-**

- (i) **THERE WILL BE NO INCREASED RISK OF FLOODING, EITHER ON-SITE OR ELSEWHERE; OR**
- (ii) **ADEQUATE AND APPROPRIATE FLOOD-PREVENTION MEASURES ARE INCORPORATED AS PART OF THE DEVELOPMENT.**

**14.9** Unless carefully sited and designed, development can result in problems associated with additional surface water run-off. This could lead to an increased risk of flooding downstream and/or damage to the receiving watercourse, such as erosion, silt deposition and increased pollutant loads caused by the increased volume of water and changes to the pattern of flows.

## **POLICY U3**

**THE COUNCIL WILL NOT PERMIT DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD RESULT IN EITHER:-**

- (i) **INCREASED RISK OF FLOODING; OR**
- (ii) **SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE EFFECTS UPON A WATERCOURSE, NAVIGABLE WATERWAY OR SEWER,**

**UNLESS IT IS SATISFIED THAT ADEQUATE AND APPROPRIATE ATTENUATION MEASURES TO MINIMISE THE RISK OF FLOODING ARE INCORPORATED AS PART OF THE DEVELOPMENT.**

**14.10** These policies will be implemented through consultations with the Environment Agency (in the case of main rivers), the Council's Land Drainage Service (in the case of non-main rivers with reference to Local Byelaws), Thames Water Utilities and, in appropriate instances, British Waterways and English Nature. Surface water discharge into the Rivers Lee and Stort (where navigable) requires the consent of British Waterways.

## **Waste Disposal**

**14.11** As the authority responsible for waste planning and management, Essex County Council is required to prepare a Local Plan dealing with waste management in the County. That Plan, which is currently being prepared, is required to set out detailed land use policies for the treatment and disposal of waste. The Waste Local Plan addresses the land-use implications of existing waste policies. It is required to have regard to, and complement, the County's Waste Disposal Plan. In order to ensure that the Plan is properly implemented the District Council is anxious to ensure that it is consulted on all applications relating to the disposal of waste within the District.

**14.12** The only existing major site for waste disposal in the District is that of the Leca (Lightweight Expanded Clay Aggregate) Works at High Ongar. The clay was extracted and treated on-site and the resultant hole is being filled with waste with the intention that it will be reinstated to a beneficial use. Planning permission for clay extraction expired in 1994 and all plant and buildings connected with clay treatment have been removed. The site is to be restored as a Parish Park. All tipping and waste disposal is to cease by the end of 2004 and the area that has been filled restored to agriculture.

**14.13** There are currently three civic amenity sites in the District. These are managed by the County Council and are situated at:-

- Luxborough Lane, Chigwell;
- Mill Lane, Ongar; and
- Brooker Road, Waltham Abbey.

**14.14** The Council will continue to assess the adequacy of these, and other nearby sites, in catering for the needs of the District and will press the County Council to improve or retain facilities as necessary.

## **Telecommunications**

**14.15** The Government's telecommunications policy is contained within PPG8. Its aim is to ensure that people have a choice as to who provides their telecommunications service and that there is a range of services from which to choose. Telecommunications include fixed link, (e.g. telephones and cable television), cellular mobile telephone systems (e.g. Racal Vodafone and BT Cellnet), personal communications networks (e.g. Mercury, Unitel, and Microtel), and satellite television broadcasting.

**14.16** There is continuing technological progress

in this growing industry, and Government guidance is that local authorities should seek to encourage, and avoid hindering, telecommunications development whilst protecting the best and most sensitive environments. To help achieve this balance the guidance encourages the various operators to share facilities where possible.

**14.17** The main impact of telecommunications in the District, in planning terms, is in respect of cellular systems and personal communications networks (both of which require a number of aerials at intervals throughout the area) and, more particularly, satellite television dishes.

**14.18** Satellite television microwave dishes have an adverse effect upon the street-scene in terms of both their impact upon the appearance of individual buildings and the numbers involved. However, many enjoy permitted development rights.

#### **POLICY U4**

**THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO ENSURE AND, WHEN DETERMINING PLANNING APPLICATIONS, MAY REQUIRE THAT SATELLITE TELEVISION 'DISHES' ARE:-**

- (i) **SITED AT THE REAR OF BUILDINGS WHEREVER POSSIBLE, AND PREFERABLY AT GROUND LEVEL;**
- (ii) **NOT INSTALLED ON FRONT ELEVATIONS, CHIMNEY STACKS OR IN FRONT GARDENS;**
- (iii) **REMOVED WHEN NO LONGER REQUIRED; AND**
- (iv) **COMMUNAL IN THE CASE OF MULTI-OCCUPIED BUILDINGS.**

**14.19** Possible exceptions to this policy include where the 'dish' needs to be sited in a particular location for operational reasons. Consent will be required if the building is 'Listed' (see Policies HC10 and HC12), and special considerations will apply in Conservation Areas (see Policies HC6 and HC7).

**14.20** The aerials required by cellular systems and personal communications networks may be located either on high buildings or on free standing pylons. In most cases these works are permitted development within the terms of the Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order 1995. Only masts over 15m high require planning permission. However, proposals for masts 15m and less in height are still notified to the Council to determine whether

an application is required for their siting and appearance. Apparatus for telecommunications may be free-standing or attached to buildings or other structures. Installation is permitted development in many cases but the Regulations are complicated. Full details are given in the General Permitted Development Order 1995 (Articles 24 and 25) and in the document Telecommunications Prior Approval Procedures - Code of Best Practice, published by the DoE in May 1996.

**14.21** The Council believes that it will be helpful to specify those cases where prior approval will always be required. This is on the understanding that such approval may also be needed in other specific cases. Unobtrusive locations on existing buildings or structures will be preferable to free standing installations. However, where free standing installations are necessary for operational reasons, they should not be sited in sensitive locations such as Conservation Areas, in close proximity to Listed Buildings or in areas of attractive landscape. The siting should take account of existing and proposed buildings, trees and hedgerows to provide some screening to the new feature, together with any special factors such as proximity to aerodromes. Sharing the facility will reduce their number and therefore their impact upon the landscape. The prior approval procedure for masts under 15m is intended to give the Council limited discretionary control. It has a maximum period of 28 days both to determine whether to require prior approval, and to give or refuse such approval.

#### **POLICY U5**

**PRIOR APPROVAL FOR THE SITING AND APPEARANCE OF NEW MASTS UNDER 15m TALL WILL BE REQUIRED WITHIN CONSERVATION AREAS, OR WHERE THEY MAY AFFECT THE SETTING OF LISTED BUILDINGS, OR IN OTHER LOCATIONS WHERE THERE IS LIKELY TO BE A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON AMENITY. FACTORS TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT INCLUDE:-**

- (i) **TOPOGRAPHICAL FEATURES, INCLUDING THE HEIGHT OF THE SITE IN RELATION TO SURROUNDING LAND;**
- (ii) **VIEWS OF THE SITE FROM ADJOINING LAND, BOTH WITHIN AND OUTSIDE THE DISTRICT, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE EFFECT ON THE SKYLINE OR HORIZON;**

(iii) <b>IMPACT ON, AND POSSIBLE SCREENING BY, EXISTING VEGETATION;</b>	<b>PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE EFFECT ON THE SKYLINE OR HORIZON;</b>
(iv) <b>PROXIMITY TO RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY;</b>	(iii) <b>THE IMPACT ON, AND POSSIBLE SCREENING BY, EXISTING VEGETATION;</b>
(v) <b>OTHER MASTS, BUILDINGS OR STRUCTURES IN THE LOCALITY; AND</b>	(iv) <b>PROXIMITY TO RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY;</b>
(vi) <b>PROMINENCE FROM PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY USED FOR RECREATIONAL PURPOSES (E.G. FOOTPATHS, BRIDLEWAYS AND TOWPATHS).</b>	(v) <b>OTHER MASTS, BUILDINGS OR STRUCTURES IN THE LOCALITY;</b>  (vi) <b>THE PROMINENCE OF THE SITE FROM PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY USED FOR RECREATIONAL PURPOSES (e.g. FOOTPATHS, BRIDLEWAYS AND TOWPATHS).</b>

**14.22** Design, colour and materials are the main factors to be included in the assessment of the appearance of a mast. The Council may wish to consider features such as height, other dimensions, overall shape, whether the mast is solid or an open frame, the number of antennas and their arrangement, and the existence of any lateral extensions.

**14.23** Where the installation requires planning permission, the advice of the Government (in PPG8 - Telecommunications) is that the growth of new and existing systems should be facilitated within the context of the protection of the countryside and urban areas. Local authorities are encouraged to respond positively to such development proposals, especially where the proposed location is constrained by technical considerations. The Council may consult with the appropriate authority to be satisfied that new installations will not create problems of interference for existing apparatus and will seek to understand any constraints the operator faces due to the nature of the technology or the legal requirement to provide a service.

## **POLICY U6**

**THE COUNCIL WILL GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR NEW TELECOMMUNICATIONS MASTS AND ANTENNAS PROVIDED THAT THE CHARACTER OR APPEARANCE OF THE BUILDING OR AREA IS NOT SERIOUSLY HARMED. FACTORS TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT INCLUDE:**

- (i) **TOPOGRAPHICAL FEATURES, INCLUDING THE HEIGHT OF THE SITE IN RELATION TO THE SURROUNDING LAND;**
- (ii) **VIEWS OF THE SITE FROM ADJOINING LAND, BOTH WITHIN AND OUTSIDE THE DISTRICT, WITH**

**OPERATORS WILL BE EXPECTED TO SHARE MASTS OR USE EXISTING BUILDINGS OR STRUCTURES. MASTS WILL BE REFUSED PERMISSION WHERE THE COUNCIL IS NOT SATISFIED THAT THE POSSIBILITY OF USING EXISTING APPARATUS, BUILDINGS OR STRUCTURES HAS BEEN FULLY EXPLORED.**

### **Unstable Land**

**14.24** PPG14 refers to the need for local authorities to take into account the possibility of ground instability in preparing their Development Plans. Structure Plans should indicate any major areas of ground which are known to be unstable and any policies that are intended to apply. Local Plans should then give more detailed policies, setting out the criteria to be used in determining planning applications and the types of conditions normally expected to be applied.

**14.25** The Structure Plan does not indicate any such areas, nor are any known. However, the District Council is undertaking a landslide hazard assessment with a view to identifying any specific areas or types of area which may be prone to landslips so that appropriate policies may be formulated as necessary.

**14.26** Where new development is proposed, the responsibility for assessing the ground conditions of a particular site rests with the landowner or developer. In those instances where there are grounds for believing that there is active or potential landsliding which may affect development, the developer will be required to prove that these concerns can be overcome. This may require the submission of a slope stability report which adequately demonstrates that the potential problem will be resolved.

**Environmental Implications**

**14.27** The policies in this chapter should, if implemented successfully, contribute to the achievement of the following aims of the Plan (see pages 24 and 25):-

(ii) To facilitate modern-day living requirements.

(xviii) To ensure that new development has adequate infrastructure.

(xx) To ensure that any new development does not have an unacceptable impact both in environmental terms and in the provision of local facilities.

(xxxix) To enable the implementation of the Council's Recycling Plan.

**14.28** The policies in this chapter relate to a mixed bag of issues. Consequently, their environmental implications (set out in Appendix 2) are wide-ranging. The policies dealing with infrastructure provision and flooding will have greatest impact upon water conservation and quality, but also upon the condition of land. The main effect of telecommunications policies will be on the quality of the townscape and rural landscape through controlling the location of masts and satellite 'dishes'

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# **DESIGN AND LANDSCAPE**

**“For the sake of civic virtue  
they’re got fountains there to squirt you”**

“Windy City” by Paul Francis Webster  
from Calamity Jane

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## **15. Design and the Built Environment**



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## **Introduction**

**15.1** This chapter introduces a comprehensive set of policies aimed at protecting and enhancing the quality of the built environment of the District.

**15.2** The first section examines the design of new buildings in their context. It then considers the nature of spaces created around new buildings and the character of any new street system that is created. Both these ideas are then applied to new residential development. The chapter also deals with the quality of amenity space (both public and private) to be provided within residential developments and the amenity aspects of new, extended and subdivided dwellings. It concludes with a section examining shopfronts and advertisements.

## **Government Guidance**

**15.3** PPG1 (Revised February 1997) states that authorities should reject obviously poor designs and that these may include those inappropriate to their context (eg those clearly out of scale or incompatible with their surroundings). However, authorities should not impose their particular taste or style arbitrarily. Most importantly the PPG acknowledges that "...the appearance of proposed development and its relationship to its surrounding are ... material considerations..." Such considerations relate to the design of buildings and to urban design (which includes landscape design as an integral part).

**15.4** The Guidance Note also suggests that Development Plans and other guidance should give a clear indication of planning authorities' design expectations for particular areas or sites. These should concentrate on broad matters of layout, scale, density, height, massing, landscape and access, rather than detail unless the setting justifies it.

**15.5** The PPG emphasises that the appearance and treatment of the spaces between and around buildings are of great importance. This is the fundamental tenet on which the principles and several of the policies contained in this chapter are based.

## **County Council Policy**

**15.6** The relevant policies of the Structure Plan are summarised below:-

- new buildings should be appropriate to their setting;
- building materials should be in keeping with the surrounding area;
- the layout of new residential areas should

provide satisfactory living conditions;

- all modes of movement within new residential areas should be safe and convenient; and
- the density of residential development should be as high as possible provided it is compatible with the surroundings.

## **The District Council's Approach**

**15.7** The Council's Environmental Charter identifies the need to secure higher standards of estate layout and design from developers and the need to prevent the worst effects of "town-cramming".

## **BUILDING IN CONTEXT**

**15.8** This section examines those aspects of the design and layout of buildings which can have a significant impact on the quality and vitality of the spaces between them.

**15.9** The "context" of individual sites will be determined to a large extent by the nature and character of the location in which the development takes place. Careful consideration must be given to the setting of all new buildings at an early stage in the development process. It is possible to design a modern building using traditional proportions, materials and detailing, so that it blends easily with its setting.

## **POLICY DBE1**

### **THE COUNCIL WILL REQUIRE THAT NEW BUILDINGS:**

- (i) **RESPECT THEIR SETTING IN TERMS OF SCALE, PROPORTION, SITING, MASSING, HEIGHT, ORIENTATION, ROOF-LINE AND DETAILING;**
- (ii) **ARE OF A SIZE AND POSITION SUCH THAT THEY ADOPT A SIGNIFICANCE IN THE STREETSCENE WHICH IS APPROPRIATE TO THEIR USE OR FUNCTION; AND**
- (iii) **ONLY EMPLOY EXTERNAL MATERIALS WHICH ARE SYMPATHETIC IN COLOUR AND TEXTURE TO THE VERNACULAR RANGE OF MATERIALS.**

## **POLICY DBE2**

### **PLANNING PERMISSION WILL NOT BE**

**GRANTED FOR NEW BUILDINGS WHICH HAVE A DETRIMENTAL EFFECT UPON EXISTING NEIGHBOURING OR SURROUNDING PROPERTIES IN EITHER AMENITY OR FUNCTIONAL TERMS.**

**Scale**

**15.10** The scale of new building is important in terms of the context of established urban areas, particularly on "infill" sites i.e. sites which form a gap in an existing built frontage. Attention must be paid to such issues as plot sizes (width of frontage and depth of site); the nature and type of public space network; and the character of the streetscene (which is influenced by such matters as the uniformity of the building line, the height of buildings, the width of frontages, the distance of buildings from the street, elevational features, materials and roofscape).

**Proportion**

**15.11** Older building styles followed traditional systems of proportion (such as floor to ceiling heights and window to wall areas) - some modern buildings do not. This difference may be a problem, but it should be possible to emulate traditional proportions.

**Siting**

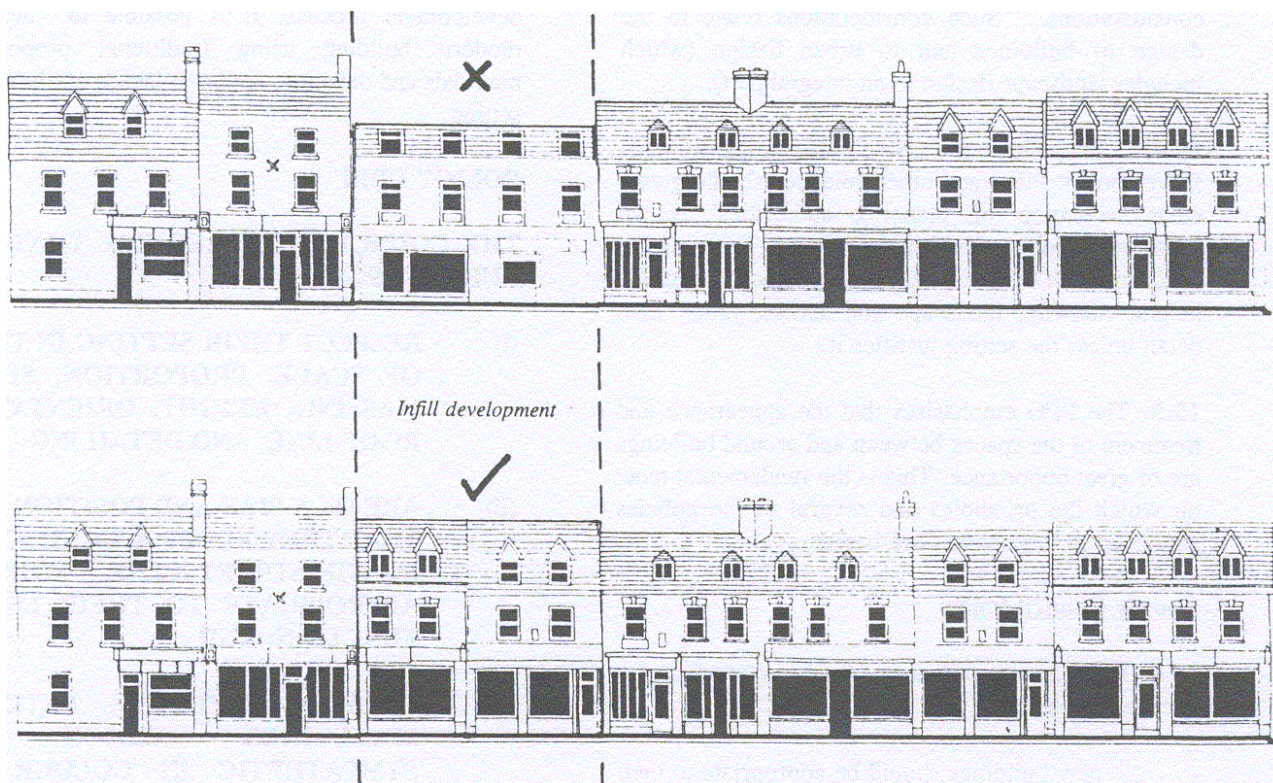
**15.12** Frontage development will usually be required to conform to the existing street pattern and little deviation from the general building line will be permitted. A projection or recess in the building line of a few inches may however be a useful design feature. Characteristic features at upper floor levels may also be incorporated.

**Detailing**

**15.13** The Council will seek to control the detailed design of buildings where the sensitive character of the setting justifies it. In particular, this will apply to development:-

- within Conservation Areas;
- adjoining, within the curtilage of, or affecting the setting of a Listed Building;
- within the Green Belt;

of sites which have a particular prominence or importance in the townscape, landscape or streetscene.

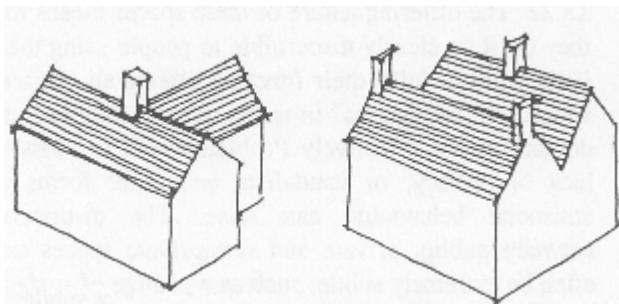


*Inappropriate design (top) – no respect for plot width, building height, roofline or detailing. Building has horizontal emphasis and squat form contrary to character of streetscene.*

*Appropriate design (bottom) – building respects plot width, follows established roofscape and detailing*

## Roof-line

**15.14** Height and shape of roof are very important factors in ensuring that new buildings blend in with their surroundings. Flat roofs are unattractive and uncharacteristic. Most new buildings will require pitched roofs reflecting the degree of pitch characteristic of the locality. In most cases, and particularly with new housing, the ridge of the roof should always be parallel to the longest sides of the building (or terrace of buildings).



*Typically, traditional buildings have a narrow span depth and steeply pitched roofs in the order of at least 45°*

## Significance in the street-scene

**15.15** New buildings can be designed so that they either "blend" into the surrounding area, or are prominent within it. Rarely will the use or function of a particular building justify a particular significance or bearing in the townscape. Notable exceptions include important public buildings, such as town halls, libraries, theatres, churches and sports centres. Buildings for non-public uses should not dominate the townscape of established urban areas, but blend carefully into it. The size and scale of new buildings should be related to their public importance. However, it is acknowledged that minor changes in scale or massing may be useful in townscape terms.

## Materials

**15.16** Building materials are a key factor in determining local character. The choice of materials should reinforce the traditional materials predominating in the area, i.e. plain clay tiles, red brick, horizontal weatherboarding and render. Where it is not possible to use traditional materials, new products may be acceptable provided they will be in harmony with traditional materials. Colour, texture and detailing are the most important factors in the choice of materials. The use of brightly coloured, ridged, concrete roof tiles will, for example, be out of place in areas of Victorian buildings where slate predominates. It is, of course, also practical to use building materials recycled from demolished buildings (e.g. second-hand yellow stock bricks). The reuse of materials is particularly important in alterations and

extensions to existing buildings and is also sound environmental practice.

## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BUILDINGS AND SPACES

**15.17** Most people tend to judge the character of particular places by the quality of what they see and experience around them. They are more concerned with the function and attractiveness of places as a whole, rather than the appearance of individual buildings. The spaces between buildings, the channels of pedestrian and vehicular movement and the edges of those channels are of fundamental concern, not just the buildings themselves. The level and type of activity, the scale of the buildings and the nature of the spaces between them also play a fundamental part in determining the character and attractiveness of places.

## POLICY DBE3

**OUTSIDE THE GREEN BELT, NEW DEVELOPMENT WILL BE REQUIRED TO ENSURE THAT:**

- (i) **ALL SPACES BETWEEN AND AROUND BUILDINGS ARE DELIBERATELY CREATED TO BE FUNCTIONAL, ATTRACTIVE AND SAFE FOR THEIR INTENDED USERS;**
- (ii) **SPACES ARE OF INDIVIDUAL IDENTITY AND CHARACTER AND ARE SATISFACTORILY ENCLOSED;**
- (iii) **PUBLIC, PRIVATE AND SEMI-PRIVATE SPACES ARE CLEARLY DISCERNIBLE TO THEIR INTENDED USERS;**
- (iv) **THE INFORMAL SUPERVISION OF PUBLIC AND SEMI-PRIVATE SPACES AROUND BUILDINGS BY THEIR OCCUPIERS IS ENCOURAGED; AND**
- (v) **FRONT ELEVATIONS FACE OUTWARDS ONTO PUBLIC SPACES AND CONTAIN THE MAIN ENTRANCES.**

## Types of Space

**15.18** Spaces may be categorised according to how they are used, and generally fall within one of three groups:- public; private; or semiprivate. Public spaces, such as streets, footpaths, squares, parks and other open areas can, by their nature, be used by everyone. This makes them the most important spaces in urban design terms. Private spaces, such as rear

gardens of houses and flats, are only used by the occupants of the buildings to which they relate. They provide valuable areas for private outdoor activities. Semiprivate spaces may be residents' parking areas, courtyards, driveways or the front gardens of houses and flats. Such areas often form the "buffer zone" between public spaces and the edges of that space (i.e. the buildings) and provide the gradation between the two which is useful to maintain privacy.

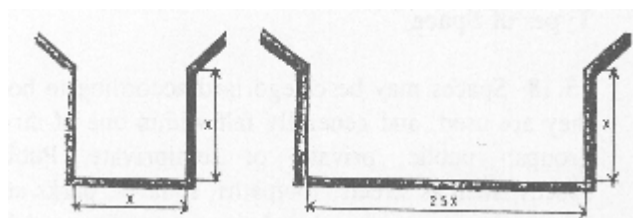
## Enclosure of Space

**15.19** One of the prime underlying design principles of urban places is the enclosure of space by buildings.

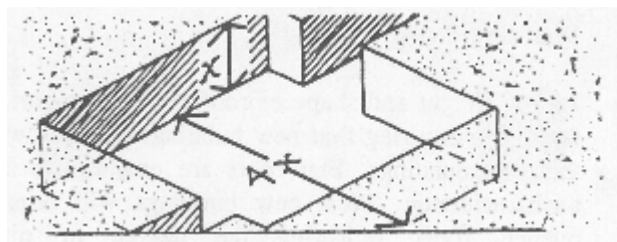
**15.20** "Enclosed" spaces can often :-

- create a safer, more secure built environment;
- be more "comfortable" at the pedestrian scale;
- be visually pleasing, and lead to a sense of "belonging" or community;
- increase variety and provide visual interest; and
- influence drivers' perception of speed in residential streets.

**15.21** The relationship between the height of buildings and the width of spaces is critical if satisfactorily enclosed places are to be created. The actual height-width ratio which can successfully achieve enclosure will depend upon the type of space. For spaces which channel movement ("dynamic" spaces), such as streets, the height/width ratio should normally be between 1:1 and 1:2.5. For a "static" space such as a square, the ratio should not exceed 1:4, since above this level the buildings are of insufficient height to enclose the space satisfactorily. The degree of enclosure achieved in public spaces within the site should therefore be designed according to the type of space provided. Individual identity and character within these spaces can be achieved through varying the treatment of that space and the edges of the space.



*Height/width proportions for dynamic spaces (eg streets).....*



*.....and for static spaces such as squares.*

## Discernible Space

**15.22** The differing nature of these spaces means that they must be clearly discernible to people using them if they are to fulfil their function effectively. Spaces which are "ambiguous" in terms of their intended use do not function effectively. Problems such as a loss or lack of privacy, or vandalism and other forms of antisocial behaviour, can arise. The distinction between public, private and semiprivate spaces can often be extremely subtle, such as a change of surface texture, or quite deliberate, such as a wall or fence. Changes in level, the use of building edges, and hard and soft landscaping can all help to define the threshold between these areas in a way which is discernible to users.



*Landscaped space without any clearly defined ownership.*



*Flats redesigned to look onto all frontages with shrubs set back to allow clear vision around corner*

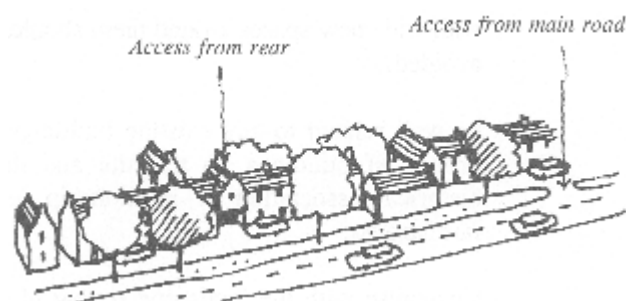


*A courtyard creates a feeling of private space especially if there is an entrance feature.*

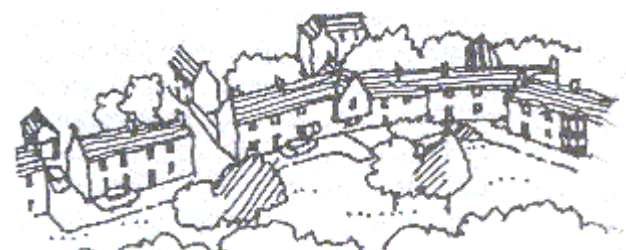


## Supervision of Space

**15.23** The need for supervision relates directly to the type of space. Public spaces must feel safe and secure for users and so require the greatest amount of informal supervision. This is best achieved by ensuring that buildings front onto these spaces. Certain types of semiprivate space, such as car parking areas, may require a similar degree of supervision. The informal supervision of public and semiprivate spaces is an important concept which is also recognised by the Police initiative - "Secured by Design". It can best be achieved by making sure that buildings front onto these spaces, and that these elevations contain the main entrances. Other design details such as changes in level and the introduction of specific features (e.g. bay windows) can also aid such informal supervision. Further details can be found in Circular 5/94 - Planning out Crime, and in the Essex Design Guide(1997) - see para. 15.31.



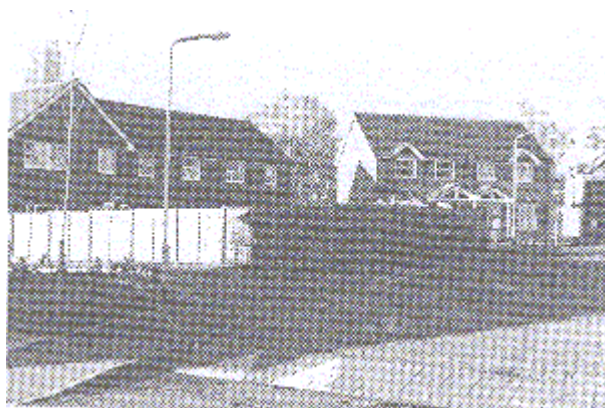
*An edge onto a major road*



*An edge onto a public open space*

**15.24** Front gardens and other semiprivate spaces should be supervised by the occupants of adjoining buildings. Private spaces, on the other hand, should not be compromised by overlooking and consequently require screening to minimise or prevent supervision from adjacent buildings. Such screening, of course, is not desirable immediately adjacent to public spaces because it;

- prevents informal supervision of public and semiprivate spaces;
- reduces the security of private spaces; and
- creates a "deadening" effect on public spaces.



*Back gardens fronting onto public space and streets are not desirable.*

**15.25** All buildings therefore need two "faces" :-  
(i) a front onto public space, for entrances and other public activities; and (ii) a back, where private activities can take place.

## Urban Design Analysis

**15.26** The process of designing a particular development for a site logically follows an assessment of the physical nature of the site itself. This should include an "urban design analysis" in the case of all sites over 1 hectare, and those smaller sites which are within designated Conservation Areas or occupy a particularly prominent location in the townscape or landscape. The analysis should cover issues such as;

- the relationship of the site to the surrounding area;
- the location and nature of existing links to and through the site and an assessment of their relative importance;
- any existing features of relevance (e.g. trees, hedgerows, buildings);
- features which form the edges of the site;
- important views within and out of the site;
- potential points of access; and
- "landmarks" visible outside the site which may aid orientation.

## POLICY DBE4

**WITHIN THE GREEN BELT, NEW BUILDINGS WILL BE REQUIRED TO ENSURE THAT:-**

- (i) **THEIR LOCATION RESPECTS THE WIDER LANDSCAPE SETTING OF THE SITE; AND**

(ii) **THEY ARE OF A DESIGN WHICH RESPECTS LOCAL CHARACTER IN TERMS OF TRADITIONAL PLAN FORM AND DETAILING.**

respect local character and the use of traditional forms, detailing and materials.

**Landscape Setting**

**15.27** One of the prime underlying design principles of rural areas is the dominance of the landscape in providing the setting for isolated buildings or small groups of buildings. Such a setting is apparent from both within the building(s) as well as when viewed from a distance. The design and layout of new development should ensure that the landscape is the dominant feature and space must therefore be made available within the layout to reinforce any existing landscaping. Consequently densities will be low - i.e. not normally in excess of 14 houses to the hectare. This is particularly relevant where the proposed site is a sensitive one within the context of its rural setting.



*Low density housing layout set within dominant landscape framework.*

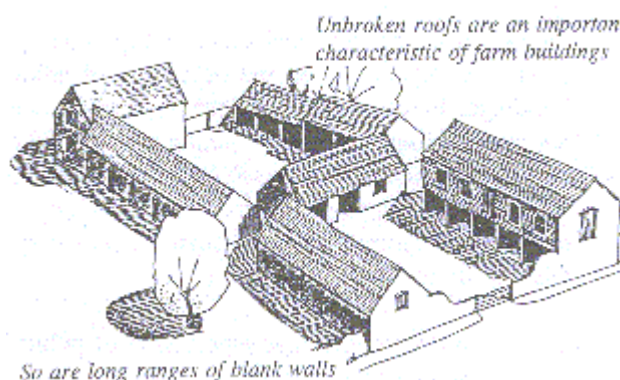
**15.28** Higher densities may be permitted on sites which are intended for removal from the Green Belt following their development - particularly those which are adjacent to the existing urban area. The Royal Ordnance site at Waltham Abbey and the site which may be used for housing to the east of Station Road, North Weald Bassett fit these categories.

**Local Character**

**15.29** In order to ensure that any new buildings in rural areas are seen as natural additions to the landscape, it is essential that wherever possible, they

**15.30** In order to comply with this policy new buildings should:

- avoid "skyline" locations (i.e. ridges or hilltops) and use existing background features if possible (e.g. woodland copses and other tree belts);
- respect the lie of the land and be built into and with contours, not against them (i.e. set into slopes or stepped down slopes);
- be carefully located with respect to views from local roads and public footpaths;
- be sited so that approaches to them protect or enhance local features (direct approaches with wide new spaces around them should be avoided);
- be well related to any existing buildings or groups of buildings on the site and their historical association or relationship (e.g. farmsteads);
- harmonise with the landscape setting of the site and existing nearby buildings through the use of dark colours;
- follow traditional building forms wherever possible in terms of :- their plan form (i.e. generally rectangular, not square); the use of pitched roofs (across the narrower plan dimension); and the incorporation of traditional features (e.g. dormers, gable ends, window-to-wall proportions, chimneys, low eaves, placing of openings etc.).



*Traditional rural buildings*

## **STRUCTURING NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS**

**15.31** The purpose of the policies outlined in this section is to secure the creation of residential areas which are both attractive as well as safe and convenient for all their intended users. In addition, attention should be given to the Essex Planning Officers Association publication - "The Essex Design Guide for Residential and Mixed Use Areas" (1997) which the Council has adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

**15.32** New residential developments should be structured by a street system made up of spaces formed according to the urban design principles set out in Policy DBE3. The following policy will also apply:

### **POLICY DBE5**

**WHERE NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS INVOLVE THE CREATION OF A NEW STREET SYSTEM, OR AN EXTENSION TO AN EXISTING SYSTEM, THE DESIGN AND LAYOUT WILL BE REQUIRED TO:**

- (i) **BE BASED ON A PATTERN OF BUILDINGS FRONTING PUBLIC SPACES;**
- (ii) **ALLOW FOR THE CONVENIENT MOVEMENT OF PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS WITHIN THE DEVELOPMENT; AND**
- (iii) **ENCOURAGE USERS TO FORM CLEAR, ACCURATE IMAGES OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND THE ROUTES THROUGH IT.**

**IN ADDITION, WHERE THE SITE IS OF APPROPRIATE SIZE, THE DESIGN AND LAYOUT SHOULD;**

- a) **CREATE A SERIES OF CONTRASTING PUBLIC SPACES; AND**
- b) **COMPRISE A SERIES OF INTERLINKING ROUTES FOCUSING ON A CORE AREA.**

**15.33** Sites of an "appropriate size" are those in excess of 1 hectare. Any development proposal would also need to feature appropriate traffic management measures (see Policy T13).

## **The Street System**

**15.34** The design of the street system must start from the need to establish a coherent, easily understood structure for the area. The street system can then be designed for pedestrian use, cycleways and traffic circulation after its general layout and form have been established by urban design principles. It should also have regard to the layout and type of routes in adjoining areas and take advantage of potential links.

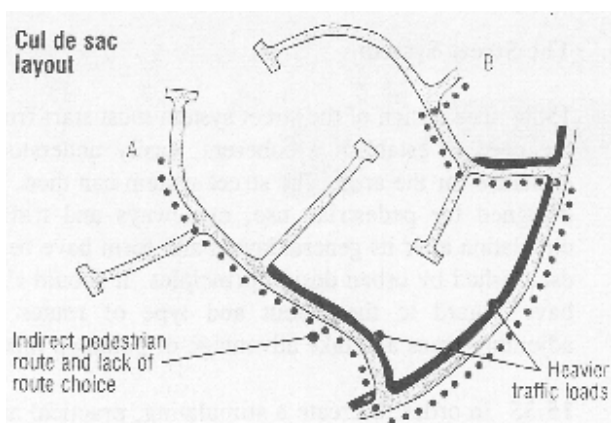
**15.35** In order to create a stimulating, practical and safe environment, the street system must also be based on a pattern of buildings fronting and enclosing public spaces rather than a pattern of freestanding buildings/blocks set in undefined, poorly-used space. The layout should be designed so that the fronts of dwellings (not gable walls, fences or garages) face onto most stretches of road (see Policy DBE3). This applies particularly to local distributors as they do not provide direct access to dwellings (i.e. individual driveways). For example, the residential road layout may need to be extended to provide an access road (or shared driveway) adjacent to and running parallel with the major road. The access road may also be connected to the major road in certain circumstances.

### **Convenient Pedestrian/Cyclist Routes**

**15.36** The street system must also allow for pedestrians and cyclists to move conveniently between particular spaces within the development. It should also respect the importance of any existing pedestrian routes through the site. Layouts should incorporate footpath and cycle track links between roads where they would provide shorter routes than those along the residential roads. Such links should be kept as short as possible, preferably with the roads being visible from each end. The total segregation of footpaths and cycle tracks along different routes from the roads serving residential developments should be avoided whenever possible, since such routes tend to be less secure and more inconvenient for users.

**15.37** Residential developments are often criticised for an over-reliance on cul-de-sac layouts which disorientate visitors, offer indirect routes between different parts of the development (thereby encouraging the use of cars) and reduce route choice for pedestrians. Residential developments based solely on cul-de-sac layouts therefore lessen the convenience of pedestrian and cycle routes and confuse people's understanding of the layout. This can be to the detriment of both residents and visitors alike.





*Cul-de-sac layouts are disorientating for their users and lead to higher traffic levels along feeder roads.*

### Understanding the Layout

**15.38** It is important that people should be able to form clear, accurate images of the development and the routes through it, in order to encourage walking as a means of reaching local destinations. In this way, the linkages deliberately created will be well-used by residents and visitors to the area. There are several ways in which this understanding of the layout may be enhanced. These include;

- the creation of an identifiable character within and along different types of public spaces (e.g. through the use of common architectural features or materials);
- the formation of "nodes" or focal places at key junctions within the layout (such as the entrance to the development or at major intersections of streets and paths);
- the use of "landmarks" (such as distinctive buildings or uses) placed at points in the layout where they can aid orientation.



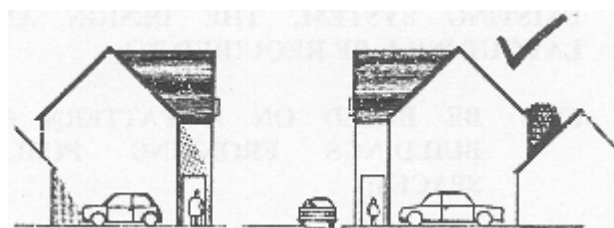
*"Legible" street system allowing convenient movement for pedestrians and cyclists throughout the layout.*

### Contrasting Space

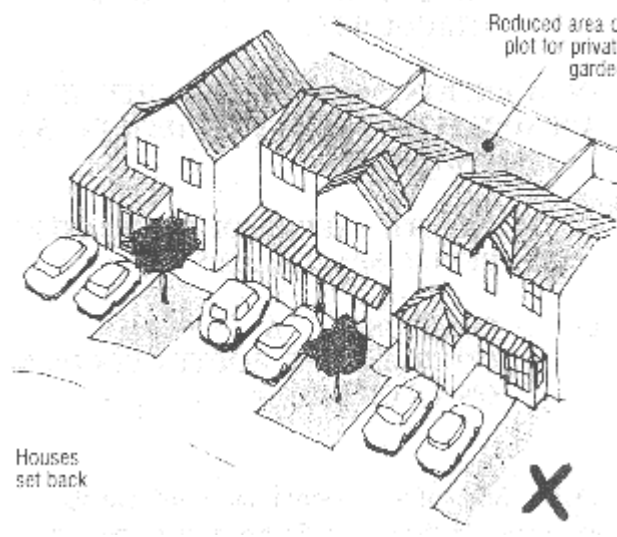
**15.39** The street pattern may be composed of both static and dynamic spaces set out to create a series of contrasting spaces. These must be proportioned to give the appropriate degree of spatial enclosure, and be related to the scale of the pedestrian. Buildings will therefore need to be close to the footpath with car parking spaces (or garages) between dwellings or beneath upper storey structures, or within garages to the rear. This also has the advantage of reducing the visual impact of parked cars and increasing the amount of site area available for private rear gardens.

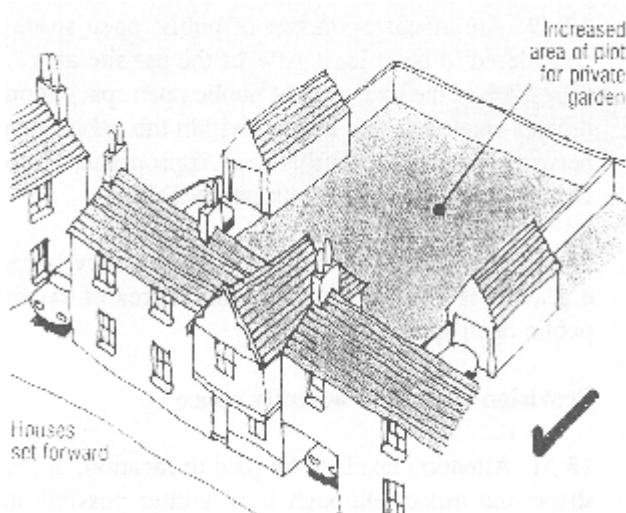


*Houses all set back some distance from road – lack of enclosure and streetscene dominated by parked cars*



*Strong enclosure created by bringing houses forward to road, with parking between.*





### Interlinking Routes

**15.40** The overall layout must be structured as a series of interlinking routes (partly vehicular, partly pedestrian and/or cycleway), focused on a core area of pedestrian activity (such as public open space, shop or other community facility). This area should be directly accessible from the edges of the development.

### PARKING

**15.41** All residential developments must make effective provision for on-street parking in accordance with the Council's standards (see Policy T14).

**15.42** Few drivers are prepared to use parking spaces more than a few metres away from their destination, and there are increased risks of theft and vandalism when cars are parked out of sight some distance away. Car parking should therefore be provided in a convenient and visually satisfactory manner for both residents and visitors. Making each small group of dwellings self-sufficient with regard to its off-street parking provision would help to achieve convenience and surveillance.

### POLICY DBE6

**THE COUNCIL WILL REQUIRE THAT CAR PARKING FOR NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS IS:-**

- (i) **CONVENIENTLY SITUATED FOR ITS INTENDED USERS AND ADEQUATELY LIT; AND**
- (ii) **LOCATED SUCH THAT PARKED CARS DO NOT VISUALLY DOMINATE THE STREETSCENE.**

**15.43** In this policy 'streetscene' includes residential roads and all other public routes such as waterways.

To make parking spaces sufficiently convenient to use, the design of the development should seek to:-

- (a) provide off-street parking spaces for residents' cars either within house curtilages or in close proximity to the dwellings they serve (this may be to the rear of small groups of dwellings - i.e. no more than four - provided such spaces are overlooked by kitchen or living room windows and incorporate a defined entrance feature to indicate the semi-private nature of the space);
- (b) locate parking spaces for callers in proximity to the dwellings they serve - either on or immediately adjacent to the carriageway (for flats, these spaces may be part of the unassigned provision in communal areas);
- (c) meet the access requirements of disabled people; and,
- (d) provide sufficient space for drivers to manoeuvre with ease into and out of garages, car-ports and hardstandings, and allow access to vehicles for drivers and passengers.

(e)



*Set back of house to provide car parking in front of garages reduces enclosure to the street.*



*Car parking to the rear of the house enables building to be brought forward increasing enclosure of the street.*

**15.44** In residential developments of an urban character which are designed according to the principles set out in policy DBE5, the satisfactory

enclosure of public spaces is made impossible where the fronts of dwellings are all set back from the road sufficiently to accommodate a parking space in front. This problem can be exacerbated by the extensive use of integral garage house types which results in houses all being set back the same distance from the pavement (or shared surface road). There is a consequent loss of spatial enclosure and this creates a monotonous environment dominated by garage doors on front elevations and rows of parked cars on driveways. For this reason, only sparing use of integral garage house types should be made. Freestanding or attached garages, or parking spaces between dwellings, offer a greater variety of design solutions compatible with the objectives outlined in this chapter.

**15.45** In the case of terraced housing, visitor parking should be located at the end of the terrace or behind, unless there is a suitably enclosed parking court or square in front of the terrace.

### AMENITY CONSIDERATIONS

**15.46** New residential developments should deal with three aspects:-

- (i) the provision of adequate public amenity space in large new residential developments;
- (ii) the provision of adequate private amenity space outside the dwelling (house or flat);
- (iii) the protection of the enjoyment of the dwelling and the private amenity space.

### Provision of public amenity space

**15.47** This is considered an essential in the design of new residential areas because it enables the creation of contrasting public open spaces which can enhance the attractiveness of new developments. It may also fulfil other functions - notably children's play space.

### POLICY DBE7

**NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS ON LARGE SITES WILL BE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE PUBLIC OPEN SPACE WHICH IS:-**

- (i) **APPROPRIATE TO THE SCALE OF THE DEVELOPMENT; AND,**
- (ii) **OF ADEQUATE SIZE AND SUITABLY LOCATED WITHIN THE PUBLIC SPACE NETWORK.**

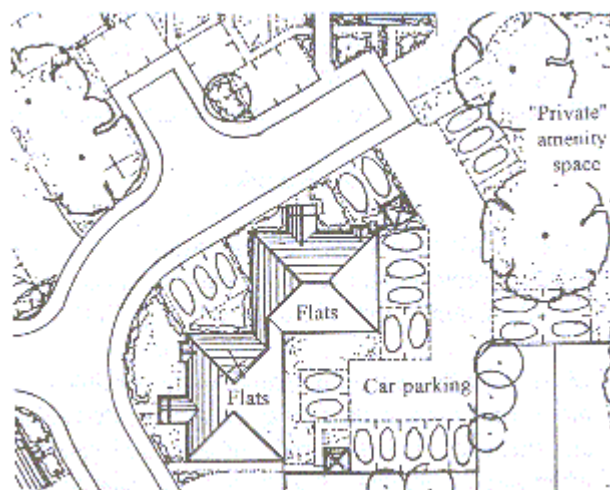
**15.48** Large sites are defined as those in excess of one hectare.

**15.49** An adequate amount of public open space is considered to be at least 10% of the net site area. At least 50% of the total area of public open space should be on a single site and located within the public space network where it fulfils an appropriate design function, in accordance with policy DBE3.

**15.50** Exceptions may be made to this policy where e.g. a site is adjacent to a substantial area of existing public open space.

### Provision of private amenity space

**15.51** Attention needs to be paid to location, access, shape and aspect although it is neither possible nor practical to define minimum standards for any of these factors. Rear gardens will normally be the main outside amenity space for dwellings. Flats will have communal areas of similar function. These should again be located at the back of the buildings for the reasons given in the preceding sections.



*Provision of private amenity space which would not meet the requirements of Policy DBE8.*

### POLICY DBE8

**NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS WILL BE EXPECTED TO PROVIDE PRIVATE AMENITY SPACE. THIS WILL USUALLY:-**

- (i) **BE AT THE REAR OF DWELLINGS OR FLATS;**
- (ii) **BE DIRECTLY ADJACENT TO AND EASILY ACCESSIBLE FROM THE RELEVANT BUILDINGS;**
- (iii) **BE OF A SIZE, SHAPE AND NATURE WHICH ENABLES REASONABLE USE;**
- (iv) **HAVE AN ASPECT WHICH ENSURES THAT REASONABLE PARTS RECEIVE SUNLIGHT THROUGHOUT THE YEAR;**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>(v) <b>NOT HAVE AN EXCESSIVE SLOPE IN ITS FINISHED FORM;AND</b></p> <p>(vi) <b>ACHIEVE PRIVACY ON A CONTINUING BASIS.</b></p> | <p><b>AMENITY FOR NEIGHBOURING PROPERTIES. THE FACTORS WHICH WILL BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT ARE:-</b></p> |
|--|---|

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>(i) <b>VISUAL IMPACT;</b></p> <p>(ii) <b>OVERLOOKING;</b></p> <p>(iii) <b>LOSS OF DAYLIGHT/SUNLIGHT; AND</b></p> <p>(iv) <b>NOISE, SMELL OR OTHER DISTURBANCE.</b></p> |  |
|---|--|

**15.52** Subject to the character of adjacent residential areas, and the advice in PPG3 that the sizes of private gardens are for the most part matters for the marketing judgement of developers, the District Council will expect rear gardens of new dwellings to have a minimum area of 20 square metres for each habitable room - this being defined as a living room, bedroom or kitchen/dining room where the floor area exceeds 13 square metres - so as to provide a reasonable area of outside amenity space and ensure the development is not out of scale or character with its surroundings. Communal areas for flats should allow at least 25 square metres for each unit. Inevitably there will be exceptions and the Council may be prepared to relax these standards in certain circumstances. These may include where;

- (i) the housing is "affordable" (see Policies H5 and GB16) and the amount of land available is likely to be at a premium;
- (ii) a plot is so narrow that a garden of minimum area would be inordinately long;
- (iii) the size and/or disposition of a plot does not quite facilitate what, in all other terms, would be an acceptable form of development.
- (iv) the development comprises sheltered housing for the elderly where the amenity space will be a visual amenity rather than an area required for active recreation.

**Protection of the enjoyment of dwellings and their amenity spaces**

**15.53** It is vital to design new dwellings and extensions to existing houses so that potential adverse effects on neighbouring or adjoining properties are minimised. These effects generally fall within four categories - (i) excessive visual impact; (ii) overlooking; (iii) loss of daylight/sunlight; and (iv) noise, smell or other disturbance. It is again unrealistic or impossible to introduce absolute standards for any of these factors.

**POLICY DBE9**

**THE COUNCIL WILL REQUIRE THAT A CHANGE OR INTENSIFICATION OF USE, EXTENSION OR NEW DEVELOPMENT DOES NOT RESULT IN AN EXCESSIVE LOSS OF**

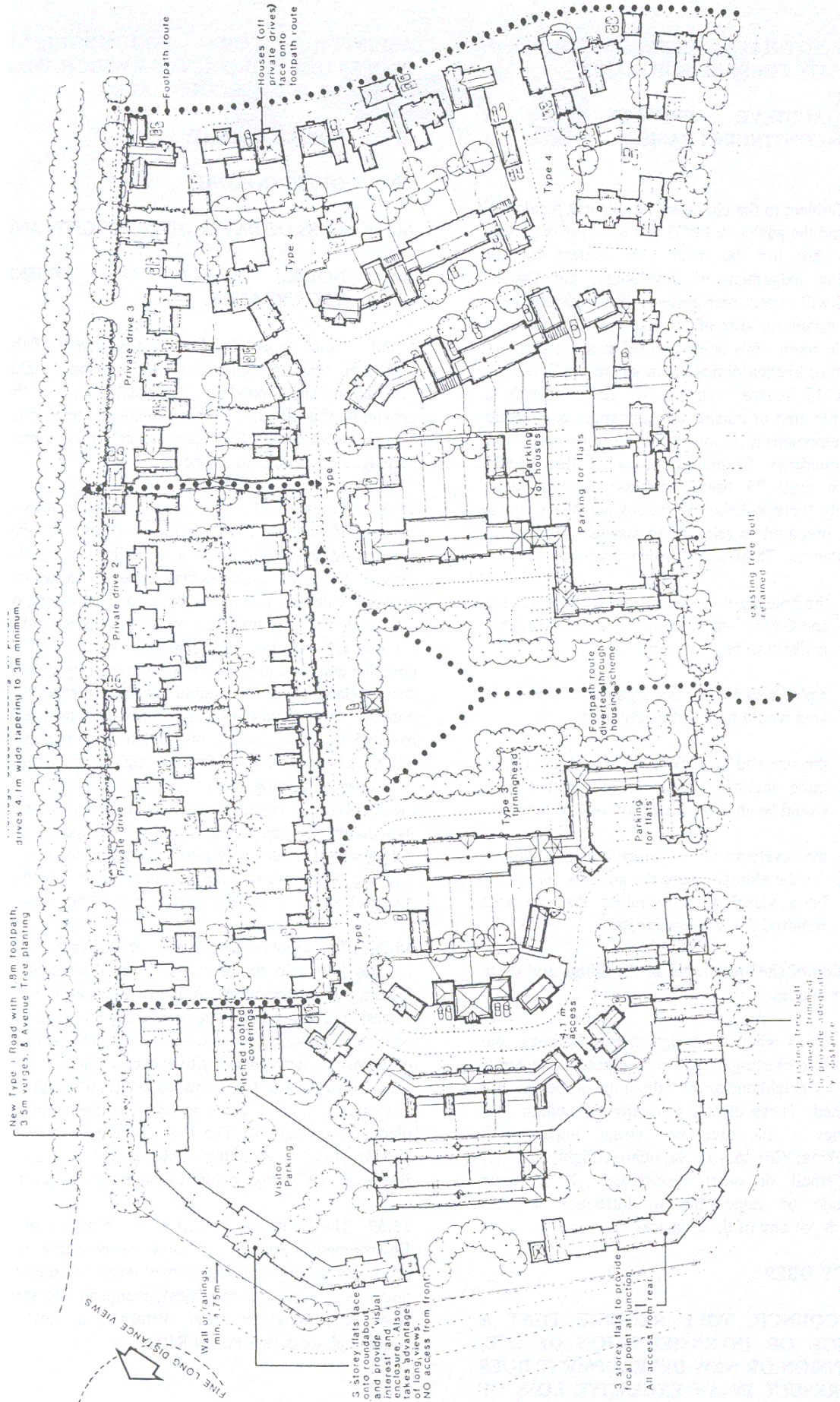
**15.54** Visual impact involves an assessment of the effects of scale, proportion, siting, massing, height, orientation and roof-line. Consideration of the proximity of a new development to existing residential areas is also required. Each case can realistically only be judged on its individual merits.

**15.55** The extent of overlooking is influenced by a number of factors. These include - (i) the relative positioning and height of adjacent buildings; (ii) the proximity to plot boundaries and degree of separation between buildings; (iii) the existence of landscaping or solid screening; (iv) the siting of windows in habitable rooms; and (v) the provision of balconies. This complex subject can normally be resolved by careful design. Habitable rooms should not have to rely upon windows in an elevation facing properties sensitive to overlooking. Where this is unavoidable, the windows will only be acceptable if they are high level or fitted with obscure glazing and of specific design to avoid the possibility of overlooking. Secondary windows of these habitable rooms or the windows of other rooms facing sensitive sites may also be required to be non-opening. Windows will not normally be permitted in a side elevation where this is on the plot boundary.

**15.56** The amount of sunlight or daylight which reaches habitable rooms or gardens is affected by factors such as the height, bulk and orientation of an extension or new house. The design, and in the case of new developments, layout, should also take account of disposition and proximity to existing buildings. This is not normally a difficult issue to assess although it is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The DoE guidelines (Sunlight and Daylight - Planning Criteria and Design of Buildings, 1971) may be used in appropriate cases.

**15.57** The Council will also seek the advice of its Environmental Services in those cases where it is dealing with proposals which may result in excessive noise (e.g. industrial activities), inappropriate smell (e.g. restaurants) or other disturbances close to residential areas (see Policy RP5).





**Example of housing layout designed according to urban design principles (see facing page), and in accordance with Policies DBE3, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9.**

The layout illustrates:

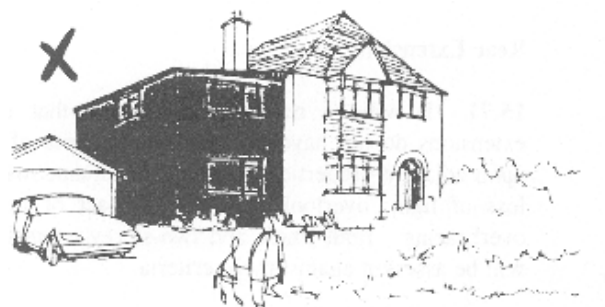
- \* strong enclosure of public spaces;
- \* varying character of public spaces;
- \* clearly discernible public, semi-private and private spaces;
- \* informal supervision of public and semi-private spaces encouraged;
- \* front elevations face outwards onto public spaces and contain the main entrances;
- \* use of treeplanting to define and enhance public spaces;
- \* footpath links through the site to the surrounding area and focused on area of public open space;
- \* strong edge treatment at focal points;
- \* incorporation of "landmark" buildings and features to aid orientation;
- \* secure parking areas overlooked by houses and flats;
- \* minimal visual impact of parked cars;
- \* variety of road, footpath and parking arrangements;
- \* well located, easily accessible, adequate and usable private amenity space.

**EXTENSIONS TO DWELLINGS**

**Principles**

**15.58** The design of an extension should follow from a detailed appraisal of the existing building. The aim should be to produce an addition which is in harmony with the original but which does not necessarily copy exactly every feature.

**15.59** Where a building has already been extended in an unsympathetic fashion any further extensions should, where possible, seek to rectify the situation. This must not be taken to mean that an extension can be justified only on the grounds that it is rectifying earlier mistakes.



*Extension which does not respect design of original house.*



*Extension designed to complement house*

**15.60** It should be understood that the grant of planning permission for a single storey extension does not automatically mean that permission will subsequently be given for a first floor extension. The Council will need to be satisfied that full consideration has been given to matters of detail at the outset.

**POLICY DBE10**

**A RESIDENTIAL EXTENSION WILL BE REQUIRED TO COMPLEMENT AND, WHERE APPROPRIATE, ENHANCE THE APPEARANCE OF:-**

- (i) **THE STREETSCENE;**
- (ii) **THE EXISTING BUILDING; AND**
- (iii) **THE GREEN BELT.**

**THIS WILL BE ACHIEVED BY CLOSE ATTENTION TO:-**

- (a) **THE SCALE, FORM, DETAIL, ELEVATIONS, MATERIALS, ROOF TREATMENT AND FENESTRATION OF THE EXISTING BUILDING; AND**
- (b) **SEPARATION FROM ANY NEIGHBOURING BUILDINGS; AND**
- (c) **THE EXISTENCE OF ANY LANDSCAPING IN THE LOCALITY.**

**15.61** "Streetscene" is defined in para 15.43. The following guidelines for extensions will be used to implement this policy. Those which would result in either:-

- (i) the dwelling having inadequate private amenity space (as defined in Policy DBE8 and para. 15.52); or
- (ii) an excessive adverse effect upon the amenity

of neighbouring properties (as defined in Policy DBE9 and paras. 15.53-15.57),

will not normally be permitted..

**15.62** It must be understood, however, that other factors need to be taken into account in assessing the acceptability of extensions. Relevant policies include those relating to location within the Green Belt (GB14), landscaping (see Chapter 16), and car parking (T14).

### Front Extensions

**15.63** Porches and other front extensions will normally be required to be of a scale, form and design which is in character with the existing building. They should not project to an intrusive degree into the street scene.

**15.64** Where a front extension projects more than one metre from the original main wall, greater scrutiny will be needed to assess its impact. Exceptions may arise when:-

- one house of a pair of semi-detached houses already has a similar extension, and that proposed would be no worse in visual terms; or
- there is already an irregular building line.

### Side Extensions

**15.65** Where the original building has a pitched roof, the Council will normally require that the roof pitch of two-storey and first-floor side extensions matches that of the existing roof. It is also preferable for single storey extensions to have pitched roofs similar to the existing building where possible.



*Roof of extension pitched to match main roof of house.*



*Large, flat-roofed side extensions are unacceptable*

### (a) End of terrace houses.

**15.66** Two storey extensions may be permitted to extend to the plot boundary particularly if any visual gap in the streetscene is maintained. Single storey extensions will normally be acceptable.

### (b) Semi-detached houses.

**15.67** Two-storey extensions will not normally be allowed to extend to the plot boundary because they remove the visual break between adjoining properties. In order to maintain the visual balance between adjoining houses it will often be appropriate for extensions to be set back from the main frontage of the building.

### (c) Detached Houses.

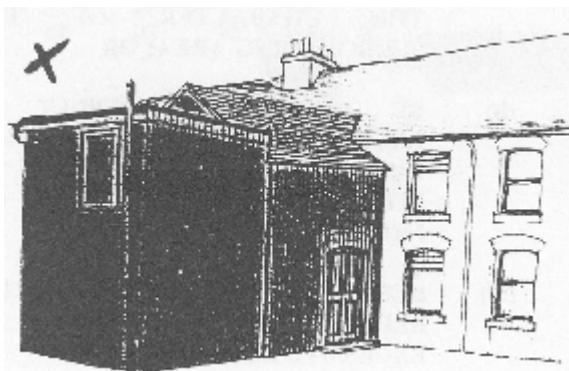
**15.68** It is essential to maintain visual gaps between such houses if the character of an area is to be retained.

**15.69** This is likely to entail the retention of a gap of at least one metre between any extension and the plot boundary (although this minimum distance may be increased according to the character of the area). The Council accepts that it may, however, be necessary for a proposed garage to extend within one metre of the boundary but only on one side of the property.

**15.70** The use of flat roofs as balconies will only be permitted where it would not result in overlooking of neighbouring properties. (See para. 15.55).

### Rear Extensions

**15.71** It will be necessary to ensure that rear extensions do not have an excessive adverse effect upon adjacent properties in terms of overshadowing, loss of light, overlooking, visual impact or being overbearing. Both single and two-storey extensions will be assessed against these criteria.



*Over-large rear extensions can give rise to an oppressive environment.*

**15.72** Practice shows that single-storey rear extensions in the order of three metres in depth are likely to be acceptable. Two-storey extensions are unlikely to be acceptable on terraced properties, however, and will only be allowed on detached and semi-detached properties where any adverse effect upon adjacent properties is not considered excessive.

**15.73** The use of flat roofs as balconies will only be permitted where it would not result in overlooking of neighbouring properties (see para. 15.55).

#### **Loft Conversions**

**15.74** The conversion of loft space to habitable rooms may involve the introduction of a dormer window into a pitched roof, an extension of the existing roof ridge (e.g. to change a hipped roof to a gable end or create a "half-hip"), a window flush with the roof, or some combination of all three. Much of this type of work is not permitted development and attention is drawn particularly to Classes A and B of Schedule 2 of the General Permitted Development Order 1995. The nature of the works necessary, particularly to gain access to the loft via a new staircase, may often have a severe adverse effect upon the appearance of the building to the detriment of the surrounding area. This is particularly the case with some semi-detached houses, through spoiling the balanced appearance. However, certain conversions may be acceptable if their impact is minimised by factors such as:-

- the house not being prominent in the streetscene; or
- the housing being on a hill such that the overall roof-line is stepped.

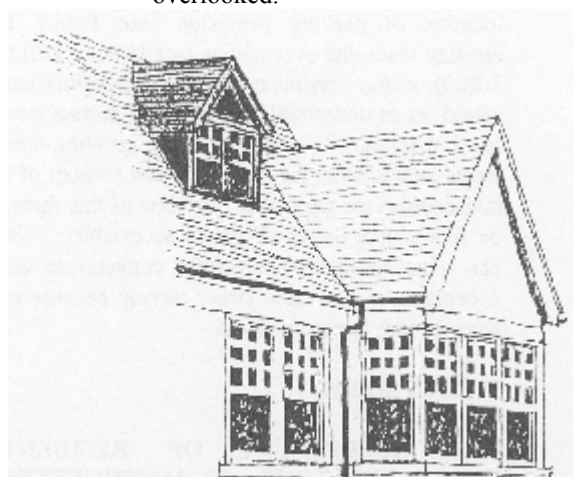
**15.75** A loft conversion is often less problematic in detached houses because it tends not to spoil any architectural rhythm unless the houses are close together and virtually identical



*Box-like roof additions are detrimental to visual amenity and will be resisted.*

**15.76** Many forms of loft conversion do not require planning permission. Where permission is required the acceptability of a particular proposal may vary according to the nature of the area. Each will be judged on its merits but, in order to be acceptable, dormers should:-

- be below the level of the existing ridge ;
- be subordinate to, and set into, the roof;
- be well proportioned;
- normally be situated in the rear;
- not result in the overlooking of any private gardens which are not, otherwise, overlooked.



*Small, vertically proportioned dormer windows, designed to respect the character of the original house, are acceptable.*

**15.77** Whilst extending a hipped roof to accommodate a staircase may offer the greatest scope to utilize internal space, the effect that such developments have upon the overall streetscene and the roofscape is such that they will not normally be acceptable.



## Subdivision

**15.78** The residential environment of much of the District is of a very high standard and the character of areas and individual roads varies considerably. The character and quality of these areas are, for the most part, worthy of retention because of their attractiveness and because they fulfil an important function by providing family accommodation. An influx of flats or bedsits as a result of property subdivision would be likely to change this character as a result of:-

- increased traffic flows;
- increased on-street parking;
- extensions and alterations to the property which may be detrimental to the overall street scene;
- increased overlooking and a consequent decline in the level of residential amenity;
- the loss of landscaping to accommodate off-street car parking;
- an overall decline in the level of property maintenance; and
- an overall decline in the maintenance of gardens.

**15.79** Whilst, therefore, a proposed subdivision might meet the relevant criteria in terms of the amount and location of parking provision (see Policy T14), amenity space and overlooking (see Policies DBE8 and DBE9), it may nonetheless be refused permission if it would set an undesirable precedent or detract from the local character. This is despite the growing need for small units to meet the increase in the number of small households (see para. 2.6). In view of this there may be few proposals which prove acceptable. Neither can it be assumed that further conversions will be acceptable in the same street merely because others have already been approved.

## POLICY DBE11

**THE SUBDIVISION OF RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES TO FLATS, MAISONNETTES OR SOME OTHER FORM OF MULTIPLE OCCUPATION WILL BE GRANTED PLANNING PERMISSION PROVIDED THE DEVELOPMENT WILL NOT:-**

- (i) **BE LIKELY TO RESULT IN SUCH AN INTENSIFICATION OF USE WHICH WOULD CREATE AN UNDESIRABLE**

**PRECEDENT OR DETRACT FROM THE CHARACTER OF THE SURROUNDING AREA; OR**

- (ii) **BE LIKELY TO RESULT IN EXCESSIVE NOISE AND/OR DISTURBANCE TO RESIDENTS OF EITHER THE NEW DWELLINGS OR NEIGHBOURING ONES; OR**
- (iii) **RESULT IN ADJACENT PROPERTIES BEING OVERLOOKED TO AN EXCESSIVE DEGREE; OR**
- (iv) **INVOLVE THE LOSS OF IMPORTANT GARDEN SPACE IN ORDER TO CREATE THE REQUISITE NUMBER OF CAR PARKING SPACES.**

**15.80** In order to be acceptable, proposals for subdivision should also comply with other policies of the Plan, particularly those relating to the provision of amenity space (DBE8) and the amount and location of car parking provision (T14).

**15.81** Regard will also be given to the effect of the juxtaposition of living rooms and bedrooms upon the amenities of the occupiers of adjoining properties. Planning approval will not be given unless the Council is satisfied that the occupiers of a dwelling (both existing and proposed) will enjoy a satisfactory level of amenity which is not likely to be affected unduly by noise or other disturbances.

## Shopfronts

**15.82** Historic streets are both rich and diverse in traditional shopfront design. Some modern shopfronts and fascias are totally out of character with their surroundings in terms of scale and proportions, and the use of inappropriate or brashly coloured materials. In particular, there is a need to reconcile the use of corporate images, which employ identifiable colours and styles, with the conservation and enhancement of the individual character of each historic shopping centre. It is important to observe certain basic principles if the character and appearance of the District's historic shopping streets are to be retained along with their vitality.

**15.83** Very few early shopfronts or fascias survive but where they do, the Council will seek to ensure that they are preserved or restored in a sensitive manner. Some of the more recent examples can also be of interest. Interwar designs incorporating Art Nouveau or Art Deco detailing are often of high quality. However, many modern shopfronts do not incorporate the traditional features of shopfront design. Shopfronts which have large plate glass windows,

excessively deep fascias, crude joinery or unsuitable materials such as unpainted tropical hardwood or self-coloured aluminium, will normally detract from the character of the building and the shopping street.

**15.84** Where an existing shopfront or fascia is to be replaced, the design of its replacement must be carefully considered. The shopfront should not be designed in isolation but respect the period and style of the building in which it is to be fitted. It must be historically accurate and appropriate to the building and to the locality.

**15.85** Attention should also be paid to the details of the elevations of adjoining properties and the design of the shopfront should take into account the rhythm and characteristics of the street as a whole. Sameness of design is generally not appropriate in streets which have a variety of different building styles. An exception might be made where a terraced building, which has been designed as a single composition, now contains a number of shops.

**15.86** Most shopfronts incorporate a fascia to denote the name and/or type of shop. Fascia design should be appropriate to the character and period of the building, and in particular, to the shopfront.

**15.87** Solid security shutters have a most deadening effect on the character of shopping streets. Where security is a problem there are more acceptable ways of safeguarding the contents of the shop, e.g. the use of laminated glass or internal lattice grilles. If these solutions are not practical, roller grilles should always be used instead of solid shutters.

#### **POLICY DBE12**

**THE COUNCIL WILL REQUIRE THAT:-**

- (i) **NEW SHOPFRONTS ARE IN KEEPING WITH THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE UPPER ELEVATIONS OF THE BUILDINGS ON WHICH THEY WILL BE SITUATED;**
- (ii) **NEW SHOPFRONTS SHOULD NOT RESULT IN THE REMOVAL OR CONCEALMENT OF FEATURES WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO THE CHARACTER OF THE BUILDING;**
- (iii) **NEW SHOP FASCIAS ARE APPROPRIATE TO THE BUILDING (IN**

**TERMS OF LENGTH, DEPTH AND MATERIALS);**

- (iv) **NEW SHOP FASCIAS SHOULD NOT EXTEND UNINTERRUPTED ACROSS MORE THAN ONE SHOP UNIT; AND**
- (v) **IN CONSERVATION AREAS, ORIGINAL SHOPFRONTS AND THEIR SURROUNDS ARE RETAINED.**

#### **Advertisements**

**15.88** Sensitively designed and located advertisements can make a significant contribution to the character of shopping streets, but poorly designed incongruous signs can detract from the character. Similarly, advertisements on industrial and other commercial properties can add to the interest of the area. Any advertisement should complement the design of the building although too many signs will detract from the appearance of a building.

**15.89** Dutch blinds or 'balloon' canopies are usually added as a means of increasing advertising space. Their structure tends to obscure the fascia, and introduces a prominent shape which is out of character with the street.

**15.90** Building sites or other unused sites awaiting new occupants or developers should be visually improved by sympathetic use of advertisements in the short-term. Elsewhere they would be an intrusive element in the townscape.

#### **POLICY DBE13**

**THE COUNCIL WILL NOT GIVE ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT FOR:-**

- (i) **THE INSTALLATION OF INTERNALLY-ILLUMINATED BOX-FASCIAS, PROJECTING BOX SIGNS AND OTHER ILLUMINATED SIGNS WHICH WOULD;**
  - (a) **ADVERSELY AFFECT THE CHARACTER OF HISTORIC TOWN CENTRES; OR**
  - (b) **BE OUT-OF-KEEPING WITH THE BUILDING OF WHICH THEY WOULD FORM PART BY REASON OF THEIR MATERIALS, COLOURS OR PROPORTIONS; OR**

- |       |   |   |
|-------|---|---|
| (c)   | <b>BE LOCATED OUTSIDE TOWN CENTRES OR SHOPPING PARADES; OR</b>  | new development.  |
| (d)   | <b>ADVERSELY AFFECT THE AMENITIES OF NEARBY RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES; OR</b>  | (xxiii) To protect and, where possible, enhance the character and environmental qualities of the countryside.   |
| (e)   | <b>APPEAR INCONGRUOUS IN, OR ADJACENT TO, THE GREEN BELT; OR</b>  | (xxxi) To safeguard and, where possible, enhance the District's historical and archaeological heritage.<br><br>(xxxiii) To safeguard and, where possible, enhance the District's tree cover, flora and wildlife.  |
| (ii)  | <b>MORE THAN ONE FASCIA AND ONE PROJECTING OR HANGING SIGN PER SHOPFRONT; OR</b>  | <b>15.94</b> The successful implementation of the following policies will have a significant bearing upon the environment of both the urban and rural areas (see Appendix 2). This will be through ensuring that all new buildings and extensions are designed to a high standard. They will also be required to have an acceptable impact upon their surroundings in terms of both appearance and amenity. |
| (iii) | <b>THE INSTALLATION OF FIXED ('DUTCH') BLINDS WHICH ADVERSELY AFFECT THE CHARACTER OF BUILDINGS OR CONSERVATION AREAS; OR</b> | <b>15.95</b> The layout of large new residential developments should also facilitate and encourage pedestrians thereby reducing reliance on the private car.  |
| (iv)  | <b>ADVERTISEMENT HOARDINGS EXCEPT ON A TIME-LIMITED BASIS ON SITES WHERE NEW DEVELOPMENT IS TO TAKE PLACE; OR</b>             |   |
| (v)   | <b>ANY ADVERTISEMENT WHICH WOULD CONSTITUTE A HAZARD TO ROAD SAFETY.</b>  |   |

**15.91** In general, externally-illuminated signs will normally be acceptable, although some internally-illuminated signs on shopfronts do not require consent.

**15.92** Further guidance regarding the principles of good shopfront and advertisement design is given in the Council's leaflet 'Shopfronts and Advertisements: Design Guidelines'.

#### Environmental Implications

**15.93** The policies in this chapter will contribute to the achievement of the following aims of the Plan (see pages 24 and 25):-

(xx) To ensure that any new development does not have an unacceptable impact both in environmental terms and in the provision of local facilities.

(xxi) To protect and, where possible, enhance the environmental qualities of existing residential areas.

(xxii) To secure a high standard of design in all

## **16. Landscape and Landscaping**

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## **Introduction**

**16.1** 90% of the District is countryside, the appearance of which is highly valued by local residents. Proximity to London and Harlow means that the countryside is also an important regional resource for visitors, but this creates pressures for over-use, inappropriate development or dereliction. It is therefore important to ensure that the quality and character of the rural landscape are maintained and enhanced, rather than threatened by the demands being placed upon the rural area. A detailed and, where possible, objective assessment of the landscape, and of the impact of development proposals, will be necessary to secure appropriate conservation and management of the countryside.

**16.2** Landscape in towns and villages includes:-

- (a) all deliberately undeveloped or 'green' sites which have actual or potential public use;
- (b) all planted areas and other natural features which contribute to the public character of a town or village (including private gardens and river corridors);
- (c) countryside fringes;
- (d) unused or derelict sites which are being colonised by vegetation and are developing a value for nature conservation.

This landscape is valued by its condition and its public accessibility, visibility and use.

**16.3** Development and change are inevitable and necessary processes in towns and villages. The influence and impact of these activities within settlements are probably greater where they are tightly constrained elsewhere by Metropolitan Green Belt policies. In this District therefore, development proposals need to be seen and used as opportunities for examining how the landscape in urban areas, in all its constituent parts, can be retained, managed, enhanced and extended.

**16.4** Trees are especially important to the landscape and are widely appreciated for enhancing the rural and urban environment. They provide living links with the past and have come to symbolise the importance of the natural world and its vulnerability to human activities. This partly explains the public desire to retain mature trees, particularly in urban areas. Practical policies and efficient procedures which give attention to the long-term needs of trees should help to ensure that the quality of the landscape is maintained and enhanced. The importance of younger established trees should not

be underestimated as they are often more suitable for retention within building sites.

**16.5** Development also provides opportunities for new planting and landscaping (although this seldom compensates adequately for the loss of existing trees). Landscape provision ranges in scale from a small extension being 'softened' by a single tree or shrub to a new golf course altering the appearance of many hectares of countryside, and requiring new hedgerows, woodland and varied types of grassland. Although it may be many years before the benefit of new landscaping can be fully appreciated, a good scheme of whatever scale is an investment in the future.

## **Policy Context**

**16.6** PPG7 outlines the changes in farming policy and the processes of diversification in the countryside which are likely to continue. Land being taken out of agricultural production creates opportunities for landowners to follow other options such as "non-food crops, planting more woodland, recreation and leisure enterprises, the management of land to provide environmental benefits, and the restoration of damaged landscapes and habitats". The planning system helps to integrate this development (which may be necessary to sustain the rural economy) with "protection of the countryside for the sake of its beauty, the diversity of its landscape and historic character, the wealth of its natural resources and its ecological, agricultural, recreational and archaeological value." The Council will continue to respond realistically and positively to these issues and will endeavour to ensure that a flexible approach is adopted towards further changes.

**16.7** The Government also attaches importance to the retention of recreational and amenity open space in built-up areas. PPG17 advises that "..... Plans will need to distinguish on the Proposals Map between: (i) open spaces which in the Authority's view will need to be protected from development for as far ahead as can be foreseen; (ii) sites which are temporarily allocated to recreational use; and (iii) unused open land which may be suitable for development." Planning decisions resulting in the development of open space should, therefore, take into account the long-term impact of the loss of such space.

**16.8** The Council has a duty under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to:

ensure, wherever it is appropriate, that, in granting planning permission for any development, adequate provision is made

for the preservation or planting of trees by the imposition of conditions; and

- (a) make Tree Preservation Orders, where appropriate, in connection with any permission.

**16.9** Circular 36/78 (Trees and Forestry) is the most recent Government advice dealing with trees. It acknowledges "the increasing public awareness of the value of trees ..... as an important element in the quality and enjoyment of the environment. Trees ..... soften and add character to built-up areas." It also recognises that "the impact of new building development is generally enhanced (or mitigated) where adequate landscaping proposals are implemented" and therefore stresses that "this aspect should be given due consideration when applications for planning permission are submitted". Paragraph 14 of PPG1 (February 1997) states that "...As the appearance and treatment of the spaces between and around buildings is often of comparable importance to the design of the buildings themselves, landscape design should be considered as an integral part of urban design."

**16.10** "Tree Preservation Orders: A Guide to the Law and Good Practice" (D.o.E. 1994) stresses that local planning authorities should ensure that policies should "reflect the practical measures needed to protect trees and other natural features and provide for new tree planting and landscaping". Applicants "should ensure that applications [for planning permission] are properly presented, containing all the information necessary for a decision". Specific advice is given on the factors governing realistic integration of trees within proposed development.

**16.11** The Hedgerow Regulations 1997, enacted under Section 97 of the Environment Act 1995, give the Council responsibilities which may allow it to prevent the removal of important hedgerows.

**16.12** Policies in the current Structure Plan cover issues such as:-

- protecting the natural beauty, amenity and traditional quality of the Essex landscape;
- protection of grades 1, 2 and 3a agricultural land;
- not normally permitting the displacement of open land uses from within built-up areas;
- satisfactory provision for the location and amount of open land;

- the safeguarding of natural features of townscape value and of areas of open space in towns and villages;
- the retention and management of important wildlife habitats; and
- the retention of woods, trees and hedgerows.

**16.13** The 1986 County Council Countryside Conservation Plan includes nearly half the District in Special Landscape Areas ( "Epping Ridges" and "Roding Valley") within which development should accord with their special character. The Conservation Plan also includes the "Lea Valley" as a Landscape Improvement Area in which the County Council intends that "emphasis will be given to measures that will help to restore and enhance damaged landscapes".

**16.14** The District Council's Environmental Charter proposes that "towns and villages will have new policies to prevent the worst of town cramming, preserve open spaces, and protect and improve townscapes". The Charter refers in particular to:-

- (a) the Council setting a good example by the environmentally conscious management of land within its care;
- (b) ensuring that developers give proper thought to landscaping, and to the use of the most appropriate species of trees and shrubs; and
- (c) ensuring that trees on development sites are properly protected.

### **Protection of the Rural Landscape**

**16.15** The visual quality and wildlife value of the local countryside have declined over many years for a number of reasons. Government policies and economic pressures led to evermore intensive forms of arable agriculture with the consequent loss of a very large number of individual trees and many miles of hedgerows. The widespread use of fertilisers and herbicides continues to restrict the habitat diversity of the rural areas and can result in the pollution of water courses. Extensive field drainage schemes introduced again to increase cereal production resulted in the loss of wetland, meadows and many small ponds. Traditional forms of land management declined at the same time, again because of the prevalent national policies and economic circumstances. Woodlands, in particular, became neglected and gradually overgrown with

deterioration in their visual and ecological value.

**16.16** Dutch Elm disease effectively wiped out the entire population of mature elm trees in the District and still continues to prevent the younger trees from reaching maturity. Through lack of knowledge rather than deliberate vandalism many public schemes (eg new roads or improvements to roads and rivers) have damaged landscape features or have had an unfortunate visual impact in the countryside. Temporary but long-term uses such as gravel extraction cause significant disturbance for many years. The decline or dereliction of buildings is a continuing problem, particularly as the economic circumstances facing agriculture and glasshouse horticulture change.

**16.17** The countryside is not a museum and must not be treated as such. The uses that are made of its resources, and consequently its appearance, will inevitably change in response to development needs and pressures and other economic circumstances, and to public interest in or concern about its condition. Set-aside of agricultural land will also have an impact, although specific effects are still hard to predict. As planning authority, the role of the District Council is to attempt to guide these changes in an effort to reconcile the frequently conflicting needs or demands of the various interests. In line with policy NR2 of the Essex County Structure Plan it will remain a priority to protect the best and most versatile agricultural land (ie grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Classification) from irreversible loss.

**16.18** The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 directs that a Local Plan shall include policies to cover, amongst other issues:-

- (a) the conservation of the natural beauty and amenity of the land; and
- (b) the improvement of the physical environment.

The Council believes that the protection and sympathetic management of the rural landscape are fundamental to the success of this Local Plan.

#### **POLICY LL1**

#### **THE COUNCIL WILL CONTINUE TO ACT TO:**

- (i) **CONSERVE AND ENHANCE THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE COUNTRYSIDE; AND**

- (ii) **ENCOURAGE THE CONSIDERATE USE AND ENJOYMENT OF THE COUNTRYSIDE BY THE PUBLIC.**

#### **SUBJECT TO SPECIFIC CIRCUMSTANCES, PARTICULAR ATTENTION WILL BE PAID TO:**

- (a) **THE NEEDS OF AGRICULTURE, WOODLAND PLANTING AND MANAGEMENT, AND OTHER HABITAT AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION;**
- (b) **THE PROVISION OF FACILITIES FOR PUBLIC ACCESS AND INFORMAL RECREATION AND TO ENABLE QUIET ENJOYMENT;**
- (c) **THE PROTECTION OF HISTORIC FEATURES AND THEIR SETTINGS; AND**
- (d) **THE ACHIEVEMENT AND CONSERVATION OF VISUALLY ATTRACTIVE LANDSCAPES.**

**16.19** The planning activities which will implement this policy include:-

- (i) producing and using specific management plans;
- (ii) direct action on Council-owned sites and on land in other ownerships subject to prior agreement;
- (iii) promoting and publicising good practices and management techniques;
- (iv) rigorous use of development control and enforcement powers - especially to achieve basic standards and environmental gains from development proposals;
- (v) implementing, evaluating and, where necessary, modifying relevant policies and procedures; and
- (vi) enforcement of the Hedgerow Regulations 1997, under S.97 of the Environment Act 1995.

**16.20** It is therefore essential that development proposals identify, and make allowance for, the general character, appearance and special interests of the countryside and its landscape. The Council intends to try to ensure that these aspects are respected or enhanced by any new development.



**POLICY LL2**

**THE COUNCIL WILL NOT GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR DEVELOPMENT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE UNLESS IT IS SATISFIED THAT THE PROPOSAL WILL:-**

- (a) **RESPECT THE CHARACTER OF THE LANDSCAPE; AND/OR**
- (b) **ENHANCE THE APPEARANCE OF THE LANDSCAPE; AND**
- (c) **WHERE APPROPRIATE, INVOLVE THE MANAGEMENT OF PART OR ALL OF THE REMAINDER OF THE SITE TO ENHANCE ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE LANDSCAPE.**

**16.21** Some locations are especially sensitive to development because of their prominence in the landscape. The Council is particularly keen to ensure that new building on the edge of villages and towns will not result in an abrupt or hard jarring boundary with the adjoining countryside. The evidence of poorly designed edges to inter-war and early post-war housing estates persists to this day. The Council intends to make sure that any new schemes are more sympathetic to their setting.

**POLICY LL3**

**THE COUNCIL WILL REQUIRE PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT ON THE EDGES OF SETTLEMENTS TO SHOW A SENSITIVE APPRECIATION OF THEIR EFFECT UPON THE LANDSCAPE BY:-**

- (i) **EXTENSIVE LANDSCAPING; AND/OR**
- (ii) **REDUCED DEVELOPMENT DENSITIES; AND/OR**
- (iii) **THE USE OF SUBDUED MATERIALS AND COLOURS; AND/OR**
- (iv) **OTHER TECHNIQUES AIMED AT SOFTENING OR IMPROVING THEIR IMPACT.**

**16.22** There is now a requirement for a landowner or developer to apply for a determination as to whether the prior approval of the planning authority is required for certain details of some agricultural and forestry developments. The details are:-

- (a) the siting, design and external appearance of a new, or an extended, building;
- (b) the siting and means of construction of a private roadway;
- (c) the siting of any excavation;
- (d) the appearance of a tank or cage in water (for fish farming).

**16.23** The Council has 28 days to determine whether the formal submission of any of these details is required. It is not open to the authority to refuse permission for the principle where it is satisfied that the proposal fully complies with all the requirements for permitted development rights (see para 5.56). The Council can only comment on the details and it is considered that this will only be necessary in a relatively small number of cases - the Government has indicated that delay in carrying out bona fide agricultural projects should be avoided.

**POLICY LL4**

**IN DECIDING WHETHER TO REQUIRE DETAILS OF AN AGRICULTURAL OR FORESTRY-RELATED DEVELOPMENT, THE COUNCIL WILL HAVE REGARD TO:-**

- (i) **THE VISUAL SENSITIVITY OF THE SITE IN THE LANDSCAPE;**
- (ii) **THE PROXIMITY TO BUILDINGS OR FEATURES OF HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST OR SITES OF NATURE CONSERVATION VALUE;**
- (iii) **THE DESIGN AND APPEARANCE OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF ITS SETTING; AND**
- (iv) **ANY OTHER SPECIAL SITE-SPECIFIC CIRCUMSTANCES.**

**16.24** Applications for approval of the appropriate details submitted as a result of this policy will be considered in accordance with normal development control criteria.

**16.25** Other action by the Council to protect the rural landscape is dependent on partnership and co-operation with landowners, local councils, voluntary bodies, and other public agencies. The establishment of Epping Forest Countrycare as a permanent service has been the Council's main initiative in achieving these objectives. Countrycare

works with volunteer labour to:-

- (i) conserve the attractiveness and amenity of the countryside;
- (ii) conserve wildlife habitat;
- (iii) improve public access to the countryside; and
- (iv) improve public awareness of, and respect for, the countryside.

This work is supplemented by guided walks, the development of a series of circular rights of way, establishing contacts with schools, giving talks and offering advice on conservation matters, and taking part in exhibitions. The growing success and popularity of the scheme derives from its emphasis on co-operation with farmers and landowners.

**16.26** Equipment, buildings and other structures of public utility companies and statutory undertakers are frequently prominent features in the countryside. Some of these structures do not require planning permission and the Council therefore has little influence over their introduction into the landscape. They are often incongruous in their rural setting - electricity pylons, masts and aërials being especially prominent examples. While the need for their existence cannot be questioned, the companies will be encouraged to ensure that their environmental impact is minimised. Measures which can be adopted include relocation to less prominent or sensitive sites, careful siting within selected areas, the provision of effective landscaping schemes, sympathetic choices of types or colours of materials, painting of existing structures to reduce their impact, and even the undergrounding of overhead lines.

**16.27** Public bodies responsible for countryside matters (including MAFF) have started to introduce an evolving series of grant-aid schemes mainly as a result of the change in national policies towards food production. The schemes are aimed at encouraging less exclusive or intensive forms of land use and at promoting the importance of landscape and wildlife conservation. The Council is keen to endorse and promote these important initiatives and will do so through the continuing work of Countryside and by the production, subject to resources being available, of various leaflets on countryside management and landscape conservation.

#### **Protection of the Urban Landscape**

**16.28** The sites identified as urban open spaces on the Proposals Map are significant landscape

elements of the built-up areas and are worthy of retention as such. Their public value includes:-

- (a) visual amenity;
  - (b) nature conservation, historic or other cultural interest;
  - (c) use for relaxation, recreation or education.
- This value applies even if, by virtue of their current management, the potential of any of the sites is not being fully realised.

#### **POLICY LL5**

**THE COUNCIL WILL NOT GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD RESULT IN EITHER:-**

- (i) **THE TOTAL LOSS OF; OR**
- (ii) **ANY EXCESSIVE ADVERSE EFFECT UPON,**

**ANY URBAN OPEN SPACES (INCLUDING THOSE IDENTIFIED AS SUCH ON THE PROPOSALS MAP) WHICH CONTRIBUTE, OR HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO CONTRIBUTE, SIGNIFICANTLY TO THE AMENITY OF THE LOCALITY.**

#### **POLICY LL6**

**IN GRANTING PLANNING PERMISSION FOR PARTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF ANY AREA OF URBAN OPEN SPACE (INCLUDING THOSE IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP) THE COUNCIL WILL NEED TO BE SATISFIED THAT:-**

- (i) **THE PREDOMINANTLY OPEN NATURE OF THE REMAINDER OF THE SITE IS RETAINED; AND**
- (ii) **THE SCHEME PROVIDES FOR THE APPROPRIATE MANAGEMENT OF THE REMAINDER OF THE SITE TO ENHANCE ITS:-**
  - (a) **VISUAL IMPORTANCE; AND/OR**
  - (b) **NATURE CONSERVATION INTEREST; AND/OR**
  - (c) **RECREATIONAL POTENTIAL.**

**WHERE THE DEVELOPMENT INVOLVES**

**PLAYING FIELDS, POLICY RST14 WILL ALSO APPLY.**

**16.29** Other urban open spaces, including roadside verges and areas of amenity space, particularly those in residential estates, can be of considerable value to the community but are too small to be shown on the Proposals Map.

**16.30** Adverse effects can include:-

- (a) blocking of views of or from the space;
- (b) increasing noise to reduce enjoyment of the site; or
- (c) making public access more difficult or dangerous.

**16.31** The Council accepts that there may be rare occasions where the need for a particular development will over-ride the public value of an area of open space. The general principle which will be applied in these instances is that there should be no aggregate loss to the community. This may mean the provision of, or a financial contribution towards, replacement open space of at least equal community benefit. Any such replacement could be on-site or elsewhere and the Council may seek the use of appropriate legal agreements (see Policy I1). Factors to be included in assessing the value of replacement land are location, public accessibility, size, convenience, condition and potential use. Any such development proposals should comply with all other relevant policies of the Plan.

**16.32** The more significant open sites in towns and villages are generally either school playing fields or planned areas associated with institutional buildings, flats and the larger residential estates. The functions of the planned areas include:-

- (i) providing visual contrast with the buildings;
- (ii) presenting opportunities for the establishment of public landscaping; and
- (iii) in the case of the housing areas, allowing informal and formal recreational uses close to home.

**16.33** With some of the larger open sites on the older residential estates, however, it appears as if the provision of open space was seen as an end in itself. Mown grass predominates and the rather drab uniformity of many of these areas is only occasionally relieved by tree planting. This lack of variety limits the visual interest of the sites and also

means that they have minimal wildlife value. The sites do allow for much informal recreational use but there is little doubt that their full potential in contributing to the landscape is not being achieved. Many of the smaller open sites are either too isolated or of a size or shape which similarly limits their landscape value. While, therefore, it is important to protect open space because of its contribution to the landscape, it is equally important to define carefully the objectives of management and to implement appropriate practices.

**16.34** The issue needs more detailed study in consultation with local residents. The Council therefore intends to carry out a survey of open space within towns and villages to establish or identify:-

- (a) the use currently being made of sites and the cost of management;
- (b) what problems or conflicts of use there are;
- (c) what community value is placed on the sites;
- (d) the potential for other uses which protect the landscape and meet other community objectives; (eg the creation of parks by amended mowing regimes, increased planting and furniture provision);
- (e) the cost of new management practices.

**16.35** It is possible that limited development on, or a change of use of, some open spaces will satisfy local needs and wishes, but the Council will need to ensure that other environmental factors are being taken fully into account.

**Trees of Public Amenity Value**

**16.36** All parts of the District benefit from the presence of trees and woodland and the Council will therefore take appropriate action to encourage continuity and enhancement of the tree cover. The Council has adopted a strategy for trees until the year 2,000, "Trees Please". It commits the Council to working with Town and Parish Councils, local groups and individuals to "help [Epping Forest District] become even 'greener' in the future". In partnership it is proposed to work towards ensuring that:- existing trees are well looked-after; special attention is given to the District's most valuable trees; and the right kind of trees are planted in the right place and the right care provided for them.

**16.37** In addition to its duties with regard to the protection and planting of trees in considering development proposals (see para 16.8), the Council

is empowered to make Tree Preservation Orders when it is expedient in the interests of amenity. It will, therefore, use this power where it considers that there will be a clear benefit to public amenity through bringing trees and woodland under planning control.

#### **POLICY LL7**

##### **THE COUNCIL WILL:**

- (i) **PROMOTE TREE AND WOODLAND PLANTING WHERE IT IS CONSIDERED THAT THIS WILL LEAD TO SIGNIFICANT AMENITY BENEFIT;**
- (ii) **SEEK TO PROTECT TREES AND WOODLAND OF AMENITY VALUE; AND**
- (iii) **PROMOTE GOOD STANDARDS OF TREE CARE AND WOODLAND MANAGEMENT.**

**16.38** Where the amenity value of trees has been recognised by the service of a Tree Preservation Order, it is desirable that they be allowed to live out their full lifespans, enhanced by careful management where appropriate. Major pruning or felling however should be seen as a last resort, only to be undertaken when demonstrated to be fully justified. Minor works, carefully specified, which resolve particular problems without harm to health or appearance, will normally be accepted as beneficial to long term retention.

**16.39** It is unlikely that the Council will be faced with applications for the clearance of a preserved woodland. However, any such proposals will be considered in the light of (a) the historic significance and (b) the present or potential landscape, amenity and wildlife interest of the woodland. Policies LL1 and NC1 - NC5 will be used where they are relevant or appropriate.

**16.40** The Council will establish a programme, which will include community involvement, to recognise trees which make a special, unique, or irreplaceable contribution to local amenity. These will be designated as "Landmark Trees" and priority will be given to their protection and management.

#### **POLICY LL8**

##### **THE COUNCIL WILL GIVE CONSENT FOR WORKS TO A TREE OR WOODLAND PROTECTED BY A TREE PRESERVATION ORDER PROVIDED IT IS SATISFIED THAT:-**

- (i) **THE HEALTH AND APPEARANCE OF THE TREE WILL NOT BE IMPAIRED; AND**
- (ii) **THE WORKS WILL NOT UNJUSTIFIABLY INHIBIT OR PREVENT THE FULL AND NATURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE TREE; OR**
- (iii) **THE WORKS ARE NECESSARY TO ITS CONTINUED RETENTION AND CONSISTENT WITH GOOD ARBORICULTURAL PRACTICE; OR**
- (iv) **IN THE CASE OF A WOODLAND, THE PROPOSED WORKS ARE CONSISTENT WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF SOUND WOODLAND MANAGEMENT.**

**16.41** For the purposes of this policy, "works" is defined as comprising the cutting of any part of the tree (including the roots). The types of works that will normally be approved therefore include minor lifting or thinning of the crown, removal of suckers and formative pruning but not major reductions in the overall height or spread of a tree.

**16.42** The circumstances in which the major pruning of such a tree might be appropriate include:-

- (a) where the current form of the tree and permitted use of the site have become incompatible so the tree cannot reasonably be retained without major pruning; or
- (b) where the form of the tree is causing a danger or other significant problems and where no other reasonable solution exists.

#### **POLICY LL9**

##### **THE COUNCIL WILL NOT GIVE CONSENT TO FELL A TREE OR WOODLAND PROTECTED BY A TREE PRESERVATION ORDER UNLESS IT IS SATISFIED THAT THIS IS NECESSARY AND JUSTIFIED. OTHER THAN FOR WOODLAND ANY SUCH CONSENT WILL BE CONDITIONAL UPON APPROPRIATE REPLACEMENT OF THE TREE.**

**16.43** The Council believes that good design of new development, and sensible management of trees (both of which it promotes) will normally be sufficient to allow long-term retention of preserved trees. However it accepts that in certain circumstances it will be reasonable to allow preserved trees to be replaced.

**16.44** These circumstances will normally be limited to:-

- (a) where the retention of the tree and the permitted use of the site have become incompatible, and pruning is not a reasonable alternative; or
- (b) where the tree is causing a danger or other significant problems and where no other reasonable solution exists; or
- (c) where the tree is of limited value and replanting can at least adequately compensate for its loss.

The Council will give priority to the retention of existing or potential Landmark Trees.

**Landscaping - protecting existing features**

**16.45** The Council will expect development proposals to make adequate provision for the retention of trees which it considers to be of significant or potential amenity value. Although trees may be visually dominant, other vegetation features can be of equal or greater importance ecologically and contribute visually to the landscape. Man-made features such as ponds may provide a valuable habitat and be of historical or archaeological significance. It is vital therefore that the design of development makes due allowance for the value and significance of such features, and retains them in an appropriate context.

**16.46** Developers will be expected to provide a comprehensive site survey identifying the trees and other natural and landscape features of the site as part of a planning application. Accurate site plans, indicating the true positions and sizes of trees, hedges, shrubs and other vegetation, and physical features such as changes of level, ponds, streams, ditches, mounds etc are essential. The information submitted must clearly distinguish trees or other features to be removed from those to be retained. The Council will expect applications to recognise where trees or other features on adjacent land will be significant in the consideration of the application and will, therefore, expect surveys to include consideration of the adjacent area. In appropriate cases, where applications are on highly visible sites or have a potentially significant impact, the Council will expect submission of a landscape, ecological or heritage appraisal and assessment and may also require arboricultural, landscape or ecological impact studies, and related method statements. These will assist in accurate assessment of the effects of the proposed development and will describe how features shown to be retained or created

will be safeguarded.

**POLICY LL10**

**THE COUNCIL WILL REFUSE TO GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR ANY DEVELOPMENT WHICH IT CONSIDERS MAKES INADEQUATE PROVISION FOR THE RETENTION OF:-**

- (i) **TREES; OR**
- (ii) **NATURAL FEATURES, PARTICULARLY WILDLIFE HABITATS SUCH AS WOODLANDS, HEDGEROWS, PONDS AND WATERCOURSES; OR**
- (iii) **MAN-MADE FEATURES OF HISTORICAL, ARCHAEOLOGICAL OR LANDSCAPE SIGNIFICANCE.**

**16.47** Lack of information, or misleading or inaccurate details, may prejudice an application. Information should include:-

- (i) features on or adjacent to the site; and
- (ii) relevant assessments or evaluations - eg: impact studies and method statements.

The Council will have no alternative but to presume that failure or inability to provide such details indicates that landscape proposals are at least unlikely to be effective, and as such are unacceptable.

**16.48** The policy applies to any trees affected by development, irrespective of whether they are situated on the application site. With trees shown to be retained, the Council will need to consider whether the proposal represents a threat from:-

- (a) direct or indirect damage which could affect the health or appearance of the trees; or
- (b) undue limitation on their future growth or potential for continued natural development, arising from insufficient regard to the future enjoyment or use of the site by owners and occupiers.

**16.49** Those "retained" trees which die following development have normally suffered physical damage to their root systems. It is a mistake, therefore, to see the issue of tree protection as being primarily one concerned with the trunk or crown. The symptoms of root damage are seldom dramatic.

The injury may involve no direct damage but be caused by compaction of the soil due to construction activity or by operations which are apparently minor, such as excavation for footpaths, car parking areas, or trenches to carry services etc.

**16.50** Fencing which protects the trunk alone is, therefore, insufficient. As a minimum, the main rooting area needs to be safeguarded. The fencing should enclose the complete crown spread on a normally shaped tree but may need to extend significantly further and this area must be left wholly undisturbed until completion of development. The remainder of the site should, therefore, be capable of accommodating all of the operations associated with the implementation of any consent for development, without the need to intrude into the protected areas. Rigorous application of this requirement may detract from the development potential of a site. All encroachment within the main rooting area carries a risk of serious damage to the tree, and the Council will take account of any such risk in determining an application.

**16.51** It is short sighted to allow insufficient space for trees in relation to the development. If mature trees have to be cut back, or if younger trees have no room to grow, this existing or potential value will be forfeited. The relationship of trees to buildings must therefore take full account of the potential interception of sunlight, the shading of habitable rooms and gardens, the existing or potential height and spread of particular trees, and people's natural fears concerning their safety. The design of new development must normally be such that the retention or protection of trees is not achieved at the expense of the owners' or users' natural enjoyment or use of their property, including gardens and amenity areas.

**16.52** The British Standard "Guide to Trees in Relation to Construction" BS5837(1991) deals with the entire process from initial strategy to post-development operations. It sets out to assist those concerned with trees and building to form balanced judgements by defining the elements of successful tree retention. It therefore makes it possible to weigh objectively the realism of proposals to retain trees. The Council will have regard to the advice and recommendations which it contains.

### **Landscaping - new planting**

**16.53** To be satisfactory most new developments require comprehensive landscaping - for which adequate space must be given in the layout. The basis for an acceptable scheme of landscaping is the use of adequate areas of planting in the right location. The landscaping must then be designed to

be appropriate and effective, in relation to the development itself and to its wider context. An adequate scheme will be one which is likely to succeed in achieving necessary screening, softening, the definition of space, or enclosure etc. The Council will give particular attention to the use of landscaping and tree planting to enhance the public areas of a development. An appropriate scheme will be suitable for its location in terms of style, form and content. It will take into account its setting and the intended use of the development. The Council will be satisfied that a scheme is effective when it considers that the problems inherent in the successful retention of trees or other landscape features, or the long-term establishment of new planting, have been recognised, addressed and resolved. The Council may therefore also require the submission of a landscape method statement.

**16.54** A good landscaping scheme can only be based on a thorough survey and analysis of the features of the site, and an appreciation of its significance in its wider setting. To be complete, a scheme must also be supported by details of:

1. preparation of the planting environment;
2. planting procedures; and
3. aftercare and maintenance.

**16.55** Although it may be possible to finalise details at a later date, the scheme of landscaping cannot therefore be an afterthought to be added on when everything else is agreed.

**16.56** In the countryside it will normally be necessary to use predominantly indigenous species of trees, shrubs (or other plants). Attention must also be given to the scale, extent, form and arrangement of planting, and to the achievement of a suitable mix of species. There are also special rural landscape types (such as later Parkland) where appropriate planting will only be achieved by the use of non-native species and by forms of planting which are formal rather than informal.

**16.57** In urban areas, greater benefits will normally be gained by using the wider range of non-native species which is available.

### **POLICY LL11**

#### **THE COUNCIL WILL:**

- (i) **REFUSE PLANNING PERMISSION FOR ANY DEVELOPMENT WHICH MAKES INADEQUATE PROVISION FOR LANDSCAPING;**

- (ii) **NOT APPROVE LANDSCAPING SCHEMES WHICH:-**
- (a) **ARE INAPPROPRIATE BECAUSE THEY FAIL TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE SETTING OR INTENDED USE OF THE DEVELOPMENT; OR**
- (b) **ARE INEFFECTIVE BECAUSE THEY WOULD BE UNLIKELY TO RETAIN TREES AND OTHER EXISTING LANDSCAPE FEATURES OR TO ESTABLISH NEW LONG-TERM PLANTING.**

**16.58** Detailed landscaping schemes should normally be submitted concurrently with other details to allow the Council to evaluate them. It is recognised, however, that an outline scheme is sometimes sufficient to allow proposals to be fully evaluated. Such circumstances include:

1. the early stages of major applications;
2. many outline applications, although where the site contains trees, a full layout of the landscape scheme will normally be essential; and
3. certain special areas such as golf courses where a "landscape master-plan" is appropriate, giving clear guidelines on the aims and extent of landscaping, and vegetation types and management. Details may be finalised under a planning condition.

**16.59** Where a planning permission requires the submission of a landscaping scheme, conditions intended to secure the long-term success of the scheme will be imposed. The Council may also in appropriate cases make planning permission conditional upon agreement to enter into a legal obligation (see Policy I1) designed to:

- (i) secure submission of and adherence to a landscape management plan; or
- (ii) provide a landscaped area to be transferred to the Council, with a commuted sum payment to cover future maintenance.

**16.60** Where it is appropriate, some elements of the planting will be required to be undertaken in advance of development. Examples of such "structural" planting would be:-

- (i) large-scale screening, in advance of a building which would otherwise be visually intrusive; or
- (ii) major planting along the highway structure of a major residential development.

**16.61** The Council is particularly concerned that major projects should incorporate landscaping which is designed to enhance the overall character and appearance of the development and to create a pleasant environment. In a residential development this may, in particular, require the provision of street trees. The layout must then make adequate allowance for their future growth and take sufficient account of underground services in consultation with the appropriate undertaker.

## **POLICY LL12**

**THE COUNCIL WILL REQUIRE THE DESIGN OF NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT TO INCLUDE, IN APPROPRIATE CASES, PROVISION FOR THE PLANTING OF STREET TREES.**

### **Landscaping associated with highways**

**16.62** Alterations, improvements and additions to the highway network proceed continuously. These works are primarily the responsibility of the County Council (as Highway Authority) with the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions responsible for motorway schemes. Highway works, especially new roads or major improvements, can have a significant impact upon the appearance of the countryside or the character of the landscape. While public safety has to be the main priority, it is also important that the visual impact, and other landscape implications, of new highway projects are taken fully into account.

**16.63** The building of the M11 and the M25 have had the most direct visual impact on the District's countryside in the last twenty years. Neither road has yet been satisfactorily integrated into the landscape. It is not just the sheer size and scale of the motorways which have caused the problems. It is also the cumulative effects of vehicle noise, of lighting and other structures associated with the roads, and of disproportionately large quantities of moving traffic. These factors may have been underestimated when the projects originally received public consideration. Unless these problems are now seriously addressed, the motorways will remain as significant disruptions in the countryside for the foreseeable future.

# **POLICY LL13**

**THE COUNCIL WILL OPPOSE ANY NEW, IMPROVED OR ALTERED HIGHWAY OR MOTORWAY PROPOSAL UNLESS THE ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPING SCHEME (INCLUDING EARTH-MOUNDING AND PLANTING) WILL:-**

- (i) USE APPROPRIATE SPECIES;**
- (ii) MAKE EFFECTIVE VISUAL SCREENS;**
- (iii) CREATE EFFECTIVE SOUND BARRIERS; AND**
- (iv) ADEQUATELY REPLACE TREES, HEDGEROWS AND WOODLANDS WHICH WILL BE LOST TO THE DEVELOPMENT.**

**THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO ENSURE THAT, WHERE FEASIBLE, APPROPRIATE LANDSCAPING WILL BE UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF CONSTRUCTION WORKS.**

**16.64** A programme of screen planting was implemented at the time of construction of the motorways, but this was restricted to land in the ownership of the then Department of Transport. It is now appropriate to monitor the progress and success of this planting, and to investigate whether more planting, perhaps on adjoining land in different ownerships, would help. This can only be a very long-term approach and it will at best reduce, but not eliminate, the undesired impacts of the motorways.

## **Derelict and degraded landscapes**

**16.65** Landscape decline affects urban and rural locations and is believed to be a particular issue on the edge of towns and some villages. Where the visual quality of the landscape is already poor, additional problems of litter, trespass, vandalism or unauthorised use can also occur. The complexity, scale and variety of the subject mean that further research is needed to identify possible solutions. Individual but extensive sites such as Bobbingworth Tip require specific attention.

**16.66** Flexibility and sensitivity are needed if the problem is to be practically addressed. The Council is keen to promote partnership and co-operation with landowners and to attract grant aid from other public bodies and agencies.

**16.67** Potential solutions are likely to include:-

- (i) the clearance of derelict buildings and other eyesores;
- (ii) tree and shrub planting, and habitat management;
- (iii) the promotion of informal recreation; and
- (iv) the identification of suitable new uses for land and buildings.

## **Environmental Implications**

**16.68** The successful implementation of the policies in this chapter will contribute to the achievement of the following Plan aims (see pages 24 and 25):-

(xx) To ensure that any new development does not have an unacceptable impact both in environmental terms and in the provision of local facilities.

(xxi) To protect and, where possible, enhance the environmental qualities of existing residential areas.

(xxii) To secure a high standard of design in all new development.

(xxiii) To protect and, where possible, enhance the character and environmental qualities of the countryside.

(xxxii) To safeguard and, where possible, enhance the landscape.

(xxxiii) To safeguard and, where possible, enhance the District's tree cover, flora and wildlife.

(xxxviii) To enable the continued implementation of the Council's Environmental Charter.

**16.69** The extent to which the policies have regard to, and are likely to affect, the environment is set out in Appendix 2. Their main impact in urban and rural areas will result from the protection and enhancement of the existing landscape and from ensuring appropriate landscaping of new development.

**16.70** The policies are likely to have other benefits through maintaining, improving and creating wildlife habitats. The establishment of more greenery will also contribute to improved air quality.



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## **17. Transport**

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## **Introduction**

**17.1** Transport systems in the District are strongly influenced by its location on the edge of the metropolitan area. Travel to work patterns are now diffused as a consequence of the high level of personal mobility provided by the private car (see Table 2). However, most of the local workforce commute to work and the majority of those work either in central or north east London. Consequently, road and rail (particularly underground) routes into London are vitally important to the District and its residents.

**17.2** The local settlement pattern consists of a number of medium-sized and small towns around London with villages and hamlets beyond. The transport system is therefore important not only in terms of the journey to work but also for most other activities including shopping and leisure. The system comprises both the historic road and rail networks and the more recent motorways.

**17.3** The main transport arteries in the District are the M11, the M25, the Central Line and the principal road network (e.g. A414). The motorways bring through traffic into the District and are therefore detrimental to the local environment, and the amenity of residents and local businesses, in terms of noise, pollution, safety, visual impact and congestion. On the other hand, however, they channel non-local traffic (which might otherwise travel through the District on other roads) onto purpose-built routes and take some local traffic off other roads (where there is access to the motorways).

**17.4** The transport of people and goods on the scale and in the manner in which it occurs (i.e. with the current heavy emphasis on private cars and lorries) is particularly damaging to the environment, both locally and on a global scale. This situation is unlikely to change in the foreseeable future, given that the level of car ownership and usage nationwide is forecast to continue to grow. The continued growth in CO2 emissions is clearly at odds with international environmental concerns about global warming. However, in view of:-

- increasing car ownership and use;
- the Government's intention to improve the motorway system in this District; and
- the Council's wish to see some new and improved roads to meet local needs in the District,

this Plan cannot and does not attempt to curtail all road improvements or new road building, both of which are likely to generate some additional road

traffic. Nor does the Plan attempt to make car journeys more arduous by, for example, adopting a laissez faire attitude towards traffic congestion or not looking to provide adequate, convenient, reasonably-priced car parking facilities at major destinations (e.g. town centres and railway stations).

**17.5** Instead, the Plan looks to solve local traffic and environmental problems whilst not creating others as a result of attracting more through traffic into the District, especially on new routes. This approach is adopted in the knowledge that reliance on the private car will remain, and indeed grow, but that the scope for development (thereby influencing the relationship between land uses and travel) is limited in this District. All that the Plan can seek to achieve, in these terms, is to minimise the extent to which the current situation worsens and provide development sites in a range of sizes and locations accordingly.

**17.6** The environmental implications of the policies in this chapter are explored more fully in paras 17.95 and 17.96.

## **Government Guidance**

**17.7** According to PPG12 Local Plans should:-

- include land use policies relating to the development of the transport network and related services (e.g. public transport interchange facilities);
- include new roads proposals and improvements (if likely to be commenced in 10 years) and indicate the time-scale, safeguard land where necessary, and list abandoned schemes previously safeguarded;
- reflect national guidance on transport and environmental considerations; and
- include land use policies related to the management of traffic (including the co-ordination of public transport services, the movement of freight, the control of car and lorry parking and the improvement of cyclist and pedestrian safety).

**17.8** The environmental considerations are further expanded upon by the PPG urging Development Plans to take account of energy conservation by having regard to:-

- the relationship between new development and public transport networks;
- locating housing so as to minimise car use;

- limiting town centre parking;
- interchange opportunities between major public transport networks; and
- facilities to assist walking and cycling.

**17.9** This environmental emphasis is reiterated in PPG13, the key aims of which are to:-

- reduce growth in the length and number of motorised journeys;
- encourage alternative means of transport which have less environmental impact (e.g. the carriage of freight by water wherever it can be a viable alternative), thereby reducing reliance on the private car and other vehicles.

**17.10** In order to achieve this authorities are urged to:

- . promote development (especially major generators of travel demand) in urban areas at locations readily accessible by means other than the private car;
- . strengthen existing local centres;
- . maintain and improve choice of transport (by other than the private car);
- . limit parking provision where effective alternatives to the car exist.

The Council supports the principle of Central Government grants to assist the provision of facilities for freight haulage by inland waterway (under s.140 of the Railways Act 1993).

**17.11** With regard to the provision of motorway service areas, the Government considers that the minimum gap between any two MSAs should normally be 15 miles. Approval should not be given within the Green Belt, except in very special circumstances. Developers are urged to avoid Green Belts where possible but, where there is no suitable alternative, to minimise their impact.

#### **County Council Policy**

**17.12** This is set out in the Structure Plan, the Transport Policies and Programme (T.P.P.), the Public Transport Plan (P.T.P.) and the Road Safety Plan.

**17.13** The main thrust of the Structure Plan policies is to:-

- promote and protect the functional hierarchy

of roads and support specific motorway, trunk road and major road proposals (some of which will have an impact upon this District);

- ensure that roads comply with requirements of road safety, local traffic and highway maintenance;
- ensure that development has regard to the road system;
- implement traffic management measures to improve both the operational conditions for public transport and the safety and efficiency of roads;
- provide adequate and appropriate car parking;
- encourage safe and convenient conditions for cyclists and pedestrians;
- implement traffic restraint;
- promote a reliable public transport service to meet the public's needs; and
- direct heavy goods vehicles to suitable routes.

**17.14** Essex County Council is responsible for highways across the County. The T.P.P. is its statement on capital spending on highways over the forthcoming five years and is reviewed annually. It enables the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions to assess the need for highway improvements in Essex against those across the country and to allocate resources accordingly. The P.T.P. and the Road Safety Plan complement the T.P.P. The P.T.P. also has a five year financial programme and accompanies the T.P.P. submission to the DETR. Details of these documents are given as and when appropriate.

#### **District Council Policy**

**17.15** This chapter, and its policies, complement the Council's emerging Transportation Strategy. The two share common objectives, the most fundamental of which is the provision of levels of accessibility that meet people's requirements (provided they are consistent with public safety and take account of other environmental factors). The Strategy incorporates the basic transportation policies for the District and will subsequently incorporate project programmes to be regularly reviewed. The policies in this chapter address the land use aspects of the Strategy.

**17.16** The Council's Environmental Charter refers to all new road proposals being carefully scrutinised for their environmental impact.

## **PUBLIC TRANSPORT**

**17.17** The District is served by a complex network of public transport operations including the London Underground Central Line, West Anglia and Great Northern Trains, and various bus routes. The Council has no direct responsibility for public transport beyond its concessionary travel scheme for elderly and handicapped residents (although it has initiated some innovative bus schemes). However, it is keen to see public transport recognised as a viable alternative to the use of private cars.

**17.18** The Central Line provides an important commuting link to Central London as well as a valuable local service. London Underground Limited (LUL) is currently implementing a modernisation project ("Towards 2000"). This aims to provide improved track, trains and signalling to create a better level of service.

**17.19** In order for public transport to offer the optimum service to users and to attract more passengers it is imperative that the various systems are as integrated as possible. The means not only that there are bus stops at LUL and Railtrack stations but that the buses serve the origin and destination of commuters and other passengers and their timetables are closely linked to those of the trains.

**17.20** Whilst the time-tabling and reliability of buses and trains are critical to an effective public transport system, the waiting environment for passengers is also important. It could benefit, in appropriate instances, from the provision of shelters, seats, time-tables and lighting. The Council is particularly anxious to see improvements to Railtrack and LUL stations and their interchange facilities (eg the provision of waiting rooms and toilets) which will provide a better environment for passengers and make the services more attractive. The Council also considers that stations should be staffed full time for safety and security reasons.

## **POLICY T1**

**THE COUNCIL WILL PROMOTE ENHANCEMENTS TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT FACILITIES INCLUDING:-**

- (i) **PROVISION OF APPROPRIATE ROUTES INCLUDING THE RETENTION AND UPGRADING OF THE CENTRAL LINE WITH PARTICULAR REGARD TO THE**

**EPHING TO CHIPPING ONGAR BRANCH LINE;**

- (ii) **A RELIABLE SERVICE AT A FREQUENCY SUFFICIENT TO MEET THE NEEDS OF POTENTIAL USERS;**

- (iii) **BUS STOPS WHICH:-**

- (a) **ARE CLOSE TO LOCAL AMENITIES AND RESIDENTIAL AREAS;**

- (b) **ARE CONVENIENTLY LOCATED FOR BUS PASSENGERS; AND**

- (c) **DO NOT CREATE A ROAD SAFETY HAZARD;**

- (iv) **A SAFE, SHELTERED, WAITING ENVIRONMENT WITH COMPREHENSIVE INFORMATION;**

- (v) **ENHANCING EXISTING AND PROVIDING NEW TRANSPORT INTERCHANGE FACILITIES;**

- (vi) **APPROPRIATE SPECIAL PROVISION FOR:-**

- (a) **PEOPLE WITH MOBILITY DIFFICULTIES; AND**

- (b) **PEOPLE RESIDENT IN RURAL AREAS WHO MAY NOT OTHERWISE HAVE READY ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE TRANSPORT FACILITIES.**

**17.21** The policy will be applied to all forms of public transport (including taxis).

**17.22** In view of the Council having very limited responsibility for public transport (see para 17.17) the policy will be implemented mainly through negotiation and persuasion. The Council will:-

- promote the staffing of Railtrack and London Underground stations (a) to retain inter-modal ticketing and (b) for safety reasons;
- promote an appropriate level of bus services across the County boundary particularly into Hertfordshire and Greater London together with co-ordinated train and bus services in order to secure an appropriate standard of service. This will have regard to important destinations (e.g. hospitals) and day and time of travel (e.g. Sundays).

- retain essential bus and rail services (ie those which are socially necessary but which may not otherwise be commercially provided or retained );
- seek to secure improved use of the Central Line and its associated facilities (e.g. station car parks) by, for example, a limited range of fares increases on the outer fringes, the introduction of express services (stopping only at stations with good interchange facilities), and improved "feeder" bus routes;
- promote the reopening of Roydon Station on Sundays; and
- promote improved waiting facilities for taxis in shopping areas and encourage better provision for them as part of any improvement to interchange facilities at LUL stations (subject to satisfactory arrangements for traffic circulation, road safety and space for other uses eg bus stops and car parking).

**17.23** The Council will also continue to contribute financially to appropriate small scale schemes (eg the provision of vehicles able to readily accommodate those people with mobility difficulties) and in carrying out its responsibilities (eg the provision and maintenance of bus shelters and waste bins at bus stops). It will also have regard to the requirements of buses in the design and implementation of road schemes and traffic management measures (see Policy T13)

#### **Epping-Chipping Ongar Line**

**17.24** In September 1994 the Secretary of State for Transport decided to grant consent for the withdrawal of services operated by LUL along the Epping-Chipping Ongar branch line. In this decision he considered that there may be some interest from private organisations in the possibility of operating a rail service on this line and therefore attached three conditions. These were that:

- (i) LUL should seek to contract out the service to a private operator at no additional material cost to LUL;
- (ii) if this is not feasible, LUL should offer the line to a railway preservation society; and
- (iii) LUL should refrain from dismantling or disposing of the track, track bed, structures and associated land or property, for a period of three years from the date of the decision.

Since it is the policy of the Council to promote public transport, particularly the retention of the Epping-

Chipping Ongar branch line and the leisure potential of the M11-Chipping Ongar corridor, the operational infrastructure will be protected from other uses until there is no longer a reasonable prospect of rail use. An appropriate protective policy is therefore justified. Retention of the property and tracks would facilitate the use of the line for leisure purposes as described previously in paragraph 12.123. In the event of the infrastructure being dismantled, the railway line and property should contribute to the M11-Chipping Ongar leisure strategy by allowing interim public access for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders.

#### **POLICY T2**

- (i) **THE COUNCIL WILL GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD BE APPROPRIATE TO RAIL BASED OPERATIONS ON THE FORMER EPPING - CHIPPING ONGAR BRANCH LINE AT CHIPPING ONGAR OR NORTH WEALD BASSETT STATIONS, AS IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP. IN THIS CONTEXT PERMISSION MAY BE GRANTED AT CHIPPING ONGAR FOR OTHER DEVELOPMENT ON ANY RESIDUAL LAND, PROVIDED THAT AMENITY CONSIDERATIONS AND LONG TERM RAIL OPERATIONS WOULD NOT BE PREJUDICED.**
- (ii) **IF RAIL OPERATIONS ARE NOT IN PLACE BY SEPTEMBER 1997, OR WHATEVER EXTENDED PERIOD MAY BE AGREED BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE, PERMISSION MAY NOT BE GRANTED FOR ANY DEVELOPMENT LIKELY TO BE PREJUDICIAL DURING THE PLAN PERIOD IN ORDER TO PROTECT THE TRANSPORT ROUTE BETWEEN EPPING AND CHIPPING ONGAR.**
- (iii) **IN THE EVENT OF THE RAILWAY TRACK BEING DISMANTLED THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE INTERIM PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE RAILWAY ROUTE BETWEEN EPPING AND CHIPPING ONGAR BY PEDESTRIANS, CYCLISTS AND HORSE RIDERS, SUBJECT TO REQUIREMENTS OF (ii) ABOVE.**

## PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS

### Pedestrians

**17.25** Walking is perhaps the most important means of transport in that all journeys involve it to some degree. It should be encouraged because it is generally beneficial to health and is the environmentally friendly form of transport. It is important, therefore, to provide footways and crossing facilities which are safe and convenient for pedestrians to use. This will entail:-

- footways of adequate width for the anticipated flow of pedestrians;
- footways which are properly maintained;
- ensuring that street furniture does not block footways, particularly for those people who are partially sighted or have mobility difficulties (i.e. the elderly, the disabled, and parents with young children);
- preventing vehicles from parking on footways where they could cause an obstruction;
- providing an appropriate network of footways and crossings;
- ensuring that important destinations (e.g. town centres, railway stations and bus stops) are well served by footways;
- providing drop kerbs at crossings to facilitate ready use by people in wheelchairs and using prams/pushchairs;
- ensuring adequate priority is given to pedestrians at some crossings; and possibly
- the removal of through traffic from some residential or shopping streets.

### **POLICY T3**

**THE COUNCIL WILL ENDEAVOUR TO ENSURE THE PROVISION OF FOOTWAYS AND CROSSING FACILITIES WHICH ARE:-**

- (i) **APPROPRIATELY LOCATED TO MEET PEDESTRIAN REQUIREMENTS;**
- (ii) **ADEQUATE, IN TERMS OF THE NUMBER OF PEDESTRIANS;**
- (iii) **SAFE; AND**
- (iv) **CONVENIENT TO USE,**

## **ESPECIALLY FOR THOSE PEOPLE WITH MOBILITY DIFFICULTIES.**

**17.26** The implementation of this policy will primarily depend on funding by the County Council although the District Council may make additional funds available in Conservation Areas to secure schemes of an appropriately high standard. The District Council will also seek to liaise with statutory undertakers to ensure that their works do not conflict with and, where possible, improve upon the current situation.

### **Cyclists**

**17.27** Cycling is an efficient, environmentally-friendly and healthy means of transport. The sale of bicycles is increasing, but their increased use is only for leisure purposes. The number of people cycling to work has declined partly because of the risk of accident or theft. Cycling offers scope to complement motorised transport on relatively short journeys. Its continued expansion will help to ease congestion and contribute towards the realisation of the Plan's aims (see pages 24 and 25). It is therefore to be encouraged although problems about safety, and of conflict with other traffic, need to be addressed.

### **POLICY T4**

**THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO PROVIDE:**

- (i) **A CYCLE NETWORK TO MEET THE NEEDS OF CYCLISTS;**
- (ii) **SAFE CYCLE ROUTES IN THE DESIGN OF HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT, TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT AND PEDESTRIANISATION SCHEMES; AND**
- (iii) **SECURE PUBLIC CYCLE PARKING FACILITIES.**

**17.28** This policy will be put into practice by the Council in the design of its own schemes, by commenting on those proposed by the County Council and the DETR, and through the introduction of permissive paths. Permissive paths are made with the consent of the landowner but do not imply a legal right of way and may therefore be withdrawn at any time. A cycle route has been identified to link the Princesfield/ Ninefields/ Parklands/ King Harold School area with Waltham Abbey Town Centre and Waltham Cross. There is also a cycle path between Epping and Loughton and a cycle network will be developed as a result of the Council's Cycling Policy and Plan.



## HIGHWAYS

**17.29** The County Council has defined a functional hierarchy of roads to ensure that traffic uses those best-suited to particular journeys and to secure the most economic and environmentally sensible way of providing for vehicle movements. It also serves to indicate the relative importance of roads, for planning and investment purposes, and to promote their use at the appropriate level in the hierarchy.

**17.30** The hierarchy is as follows:-

Strategic Routes - roads of national importance (classified as motorways by the DETR ie M11 and M25).

Regional Primary Routes - these routes join the main urban areas and form links to the strategic network.

Principal County Distributors - roads carrying relatively large amounts of vehicular traffic which act as feeder roads to towns and as distribution networks within towns.

Secondary Distributors - act as distributors within the districts of urban areas and serve as the main access to rural areas.

Local Roads - through roads to distribute traffic within environmental areas and serving as secondary access to small rural communities.

Access Roads - all remaining roads.

**17.31** The hierarchy of roads within the District is shown in Figure 17.

**17.32** The District Council will press the DETR, which is responsible for improvements to the motorway network, and the County Council, to improve those roads within their jurisdiction. Where necessary it will also press the County Council to provide appropriate signing to assist in the proper use of the roads, according to their status. In order to ensure that the hierarchy functions effectively, the Council will require that the traffic generated by new development is in keeping with the function and capacity of the local road network (see Policy T17).

**17.33** New road building may result in severe adverse environmental effects in terms of its appearance as well as the amount and type of traffic attracted onto the route. Schemes may also have beneficial effects, by removing through traffic from sensitive areas (e.g. residential areas and Conservation Areas). However, it will still be necessary to ensure that the adverse effects of any new roads schemes are minimised as much as possible.

## POLICY T5

**THE COUNCIL WILL RESPOND TO ANY SCHEMES TO EXTEND OR IMPROVE THE EXISTING HIGHWAY AND MOTORWAY NETWORK HAVING REGARD TO:-**

- (i) THEIR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT IN SENSITIVE AREAS (INCLUDING CONSERVATION AREAS) ESPECIALLY IN TERMS OF:-**
  - (a) VISUAL INTRUSION INTO OPEN COUNTRYSIDE, POLLUTION, NOISE, SMELL OR VIBRATION; AND**
  - (b) THE ADEQUACY OF THE ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPING SCHEME;**
- (ii) ANY LIKELY BENEFITS OR DISBENEFITS TO THE LOCAL HIGHWAY NETWORK IN TRAFFIC TERMS; AND**
- (iii) THEIR LIKELY IMPACT UPON THE MAINTENANCE OF A DEFENSIBLE GREEN BELT BOUNDARY; AND**
- (iv) ANY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS, PARTICULARLY WITH REGARD TO THE REDUCTION IN WIDTH OF MOTORWAY LANES OR LOSS OF HARD SHOULDERS.**

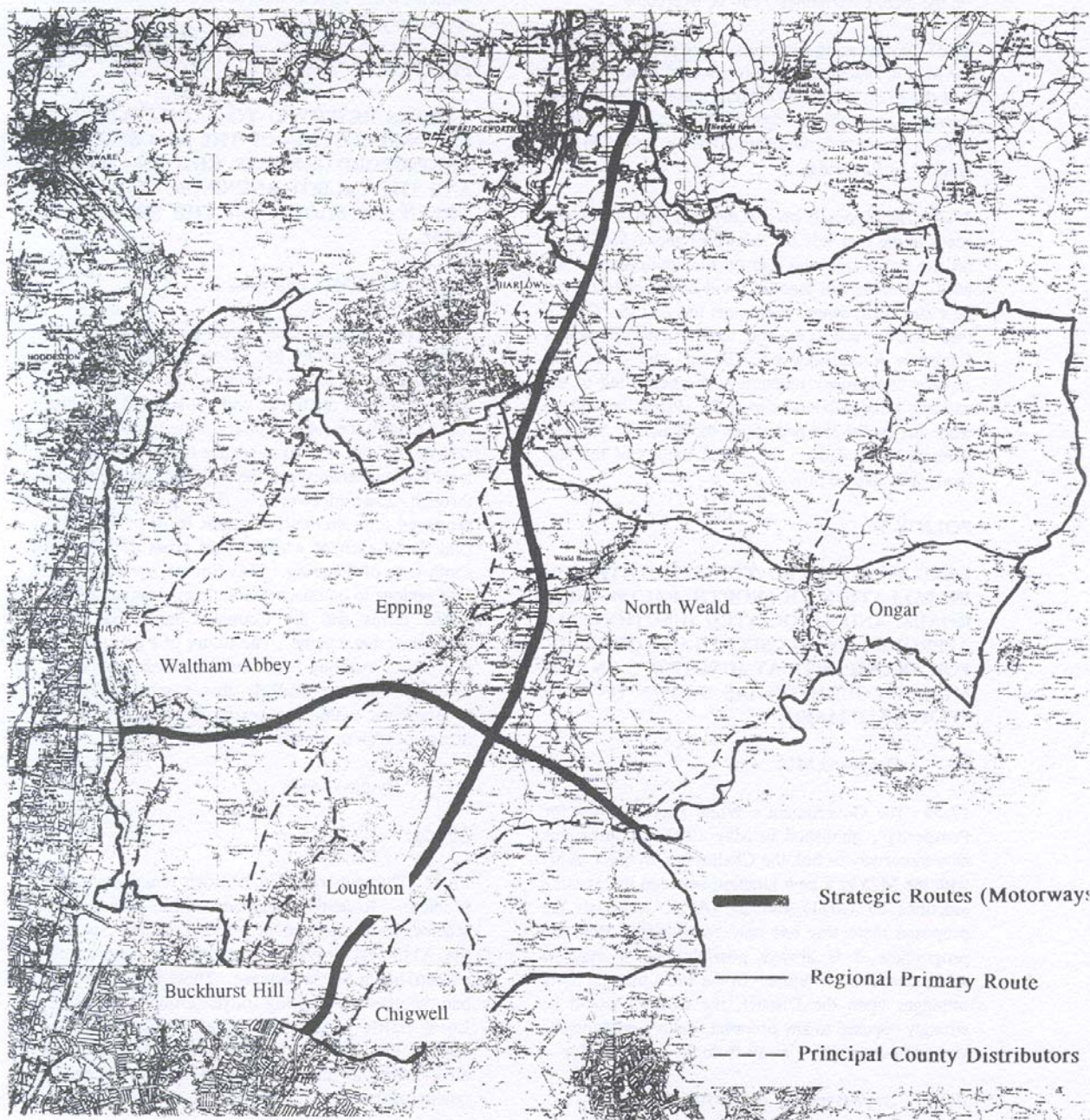
**17.34** The Council will implement criterion (i)(a) by encouraging the use of road surfaces which minimise traffic noise and the installation of downward pointing lights which significantly reduce glare and glow at night. Policy LL13 will be used to implement (i)(b).

**17.35** Schemes which will be subject to policy T5 include the following, which also have specific policies where relevant:-

### **(i) Proposed north-facing slip roads at Junction 5 (Loughton) on the M11**

**17.36** These slip roads were not included in the design of this junction in 1969 as there was insufficient traffic demand at that time to justify them. A subsequent study by Essex County Council in 1986 identified a strong case for their provision. The White Paper 'Policy for Roads in England: 1987' announced that a scheme to provide these slip roads would be added to the national road programme. This was confirmed in the DoT's 1990 report, 'Trunk Roads, England into the 1990s'. The scheme is therefore

Figure 17 : Road hierarchy.



expected to be included in the DETR's Trunk Roads Review, due for publication in mid-1998. Despite the outcome of the 1994 Public Inquiry the Council remains opposed to the scheme unless various objections (relating to the impact of additional traffic on the local environment) can be overcome.

**17.37** North-facing slip roads would provide access to the M11 at Junction 5 for travel to and from the north and the M25. Vehicles currently use the local roads through Loughton, Abridge and Epping to gain access either to the M25 at Waltham Abbey or to the M11 at Harlow or Redbridge.

**17.38** The proposals involve the provision of new slip roads to the east side of Chigwell Lane (A1168), one on the north side and one on the south side of the M11. Roundabout junctions will be provided for the new slip roads where they meet the A1168. One of these will replace an existing traffic signal junction at Langston Road/Oakwood Hill and the other will replace the priority junction at the beginning of the existing London-bound slip road. Provision will be made for cyclist and pedestrian movements. Suitable landscaping to reduce the visual impact of the slip roads will also be provided.

#### **POLICY T6**

**LAND IS RESERVED TO FACILITATE THE INSTALLATION OF NORTH FACING SLIP ROADS, AND ASSOCIATED JUNCTIONS (AS APPROVED BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT), AT JUNCTION 5 ON THE M11 AT LOUGHTON (AS SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP).**

#### **(ii) Proposed M12**

**17.39** The Government's White Paper "Roads for Prosperity", published in May 1989, proposed this new motorway to link the Chelmsford by-pass (A12) with the M25 at a new junction between the existing junctions 27 (M11) and 28 (A12). Although the proposed motorway has now been deleted from the programme it is always possible that it may be reintroduced in the future. In the event that the route impinges upon the District, the Council would be strongly opposed to any proposal which would intrude into open countryside away from the A12 corridor.

#### **(iii) Improvements to the A414**

**17.40** The improvement of the A414, which has a Regional Primary Route status, has high priority. The programme for its continued improvement between Chelmsford and Harlow has however been subject to significant and repeated slippage in the T.P.P. Although improvements have been

implemented, the Aukingford Gardens, Chipping Ongar to the Talbot Roundabout, Tylers Green section remains outstanding. The scheme has been agreed following a Public Inquiry and the District Council will continue to press the County Council to implement the current scheme at the earliest possible opportunity.

#### **POLICY T7**

**LAND IS RESERVED TO FACILITATE THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE A414 BETWEEN AUKINGFORD GARDENS, CHIPPING ONGAR AND THE TALBOT ROUNDABOUT, TYLERS GREEN (AS SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP).**

#### **(iv) A414-M11 link road**

**17.41** This proposed link formed part of the highway strategy put forward by Essex and Hertfordshire County Councils (a) to provide a high quality link to Stansted Airport for traffic within the A414 corridor; (b) to remove the A414 primary route from the urban area of Harlow; and (c) to reduce traffic levels to the local Harlow network and the A1184 north of Harlow through Sawbridgeworth. The County Council produced four alternative options for the A414/M11 Link Road each of which would cross this District south west of Sheering. This Council considered all four options to be unacceptable in environmental and traffic terms and the County Council has since abandoned this scheme. The future of a possible link is to be reviewed by Essex and Hertfordshire County Councils but it is unlikely that a scheme will be programmed within the period of the Replacement Structure Plan up to 2011.

#### **(v) By-pass roads**

##### **Abridge**

**17.42** Through traffic in Abridge remains a major problem. Recently completed traffic management schemes have improved the junction of Hoe Lane with the A113 and provided safe crossing facilities for pedestrians in Market Square. These initiatives have had the effect of slowing traffic through the village. Local traffic congestion, large vehicles travelling through the village and insufficient parking facilities all combine to the detriment of the environmental quality of the village.

**17.43** Despite the known problems of the village the County Council has formally abandoned a scheme to build a bypass. It has also consistently opposed any move to ban lorries on the A113 through Abridge. Whilst the District Council can continue to press the County Council to reinstate the bypass it is not



appropriate to pursue the road in this Local Plan. In any future scheme the Council will also press for the provision of a lorry ban through Abridge. This problem has clearly been caused to some extent by imposing lorry bans in Theydon Bois and the Roding Valley.

### **Epping**

**17.44** The Epping by-pass currently features in the T.P.P. on the reserve list of major capital schemes. Estimates as to when it may be built range from between 2006 and the late 2020s, dependent upon annual expenditure levels. Any such scheme should be extended to incorporate a bypass for Thornwood. The need for this scheme may need to be reassessed, however, in view of the reduction in traffic through Epping that would be likely to result from the construction of the north-facing slip roads onto the M11 at Junction 5, Loughton (see Policy T6).

### **Chipping Ongar**

**17.45** Both the District and County Councils acknowledge the need for a Chipping Ongar by-pass in environmental terms. Such a scheme would also provide the catalyst for further environmental improvements to be carried out in the town centre. The Adopted Local Plan for Epping and Ongar, incorporated a policy (T8) to press the County Council, as Highway Authority, to programme and construct an eastern by-pass to Chipping Ongar at the earliest practical time. The road had, in fact, been provisionally scheduled in the County's T.P.P. for construction in the late 1990s based on the priorities and expenditure rates at that time. However, the County Council has now relegated it to the 'reserve list' in the T.P.P. and, following a recent review of the priorities of major schemes, the possible timing of the by-pass varies from between 15 to almost 40 years, i.e. 2007 to 2030. This is on the basis of alternative assumed rates of expenditure and that the County Council remains the Highway Authority. It is reasonable to conclude that the road will not be built at public expense within the foreseeable future.

**17.46** The Council has been presented with two independent schemes by local landowners which would enable the early construction of the road by the release of land for housing. Both would entail major incursions of residential development into the Green Belt. This is contrary to the Structure Plan and Government policy, and not in accordance with current DETR guidance on 'planning obligations' (see paras 18.6 to 18.8).

**17.47** A survey was conducted in 1992 by a landowner looking to promote an 'enabling' scheme (whereby a substantial financial contribution is made

towards the by-pass in exchange for the release of Green Belt land for housing). From the public's response to the scheme it was concluded that, whilst there was a recognised wish to get traffic out of the High Street (which was presumed to mean a by-pass), there was an equally strong opinion that development should be resisted and the Green Belt protected. It should be borne in mind, however, that the questionnaire indicated that the by-pass would be likely to be built between the late 1990s and 2010 if left to the County Council. That situation has since changed with current estimates being between 2007 and 2030 (see para 17.45).

**17.48** Chipping Ongar Parish Council does not feel able to support a by-pass at present. Nor would it wish Green Belt land to be released for housing, particularly if, like that proposed, it is poorly-related to the existing built-up area and could have an adverse effect on the Roding Valley.

**17.49** The Council has decided not to agree to either of the schemes put forward at least for the time-being. However, the scope for an enabling development to bring forward the construction of the Chipping Ongar by-pass will be reconsidered when this Plan is reviewed. This will be in the light of:-

- the continuing need for a by-pass;
- the likely programming of the by-pass if it is to be publicly funded;
- the prevailing need for additional land for housing (both in Chipping Ongar and the District as a whole);
- Government guidance as to the acceptability of such an enabling scheme;
- the acceptability, in landscape and Green Belt terms, of any other possible sites for housing and the extent to which they would bring the by-pass forward; and
- the views of the general public.

### **(vi) M25 (Junction 26) - Highbridge Street (Waltham Abbey) link road**

**17.50** The proposed redevelopment of the Royal Ordnance site to the south of the town (see Policy GB20) includes an access road linking Junction 26 on the M25 (at Honey Lane, Waltham Abbey) with Highbridge Street. The proposed line of this road is shown on the Proposals Map - its construction would effectively serve as a southern bypass for Waltham Abbey. This may be welcomed in reducing traffic in the town centre, but such a route would, by

virtue of its existence, attract other traffic.

**17.51** Upshire is subject to traffic management problems as a consequence of traffic searching for a route to or from the M25 and traffic seeking to avoid the A121. The Council has therefore previously stated that it views the construction of a link road (Old Shire Lane) between Upshire Road and the M25/A121 junction (junction 26) as an essential step in the proper management of traffic in the area. Such a road has already been partially built in association with the development of the former Honey Lane Hospital site for housing.

**17.52** The construction of this road would, however, serve to attract more traffic onto Upshire Road to the detriment of the residential environment of the area. It is therefore preferable for a new road in the vicinity to be continued around the northern edge of Waltham Abbey to link in with the existing highway network at an appropriate point thereby discouraging through traffic from using residential streets. These two roads would then effectively form a northern and eastern bypass to the town.

**17.53** In view of the traffic implications of the section between Upshire Road and the M25 junction it is important that it is not operational before the northern section. However, any such northern section would be unlikely to be given a high priority by the County Council and therefore not be built during the 1990s at the very least. It should also be borne in mind that the new road through the Royal Ordnance site, serving as a southern bypass to the town (see para 17.50), may mean that a bypass around the north and east is either not necessary or should at least be delayed considerably.

**17.54** The need for any such road will be fully examined in a subsequent review of the Plan. This will be in the context of a southern bypass being in operation and future anticipated traffic flows.

**(vii) East-west link between the North-South Road (Enfield) and the proposed M25 - Highbridge Street link road (see (vi) above)**

**17.55** The London Borough of Enfield is promoting the development of an 'east-west link' (known as the Northern Gateway Access Road) from the proposed access road through the Royal Ordnance site to the North-South Road. This is in accordance with its support for the concept of either a direct or indirect link between the North-South Road and the M25. Such a road would be parallel to and therefore serve as a collector/distributor for the M25 in so far as local traffic is concerned (which may eventually be proposed by the DETR). This Council is concerned

about the impact this particular road proposal would have upon the Waltham Abbey area in general.

**(viii) B194 Crooked Mile improvement, Waltham Abbey**

**17.56** The replacement of this stretch of road had been indicated in the County's T.P.P. It has now been deleted. However, the District Council considers that more modest improvements to the existing road would rectify the current danger to road safety.

### **Service Roads**

**17.57** The provision of adequate servicing facilities is integral to the successful operation of town centres. Deliveries to shops via the front entrance may be problematic in that there may not be space for the delivery vehicles to park and heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) are likely to traffic congestion. It is therefore preferable for shops to be serviced from the rear wherever possible, especially where the goods delivered are bulky, or the delivery is by an HGV. The Council will also look to ensure that both new and existing service roads are appropriately used in order to ensure maximum benefits (see Policy T15).

### **POLICY T8**

**THE COUNCIL WILL PROMOTE THE PROVISION AND USE OF REAR SERVICE ROADS TO TOWN CENTRE SHOPS WHEREVER NECESSARY AND PRACTICABLE.**

**17.58** The provision of rear service roads is often made problematic by a combination of lack of available land (without demolition), multiple ownership (making site acquisition lengthy), lack of scope for access and the cost of construction. These problems can be greater in historic settlements where street patterns and boundary layouts add interest to the area - particular care is therefore needed in such centres. The Council has, however, been successful in installing a rear service road on the eastern side of Queens Road, Buckhurst Hill, together with part construction of a facility to serve the west side of Epping in the vicinity of Bakers Lane.

### **MOTORWAY SERVICE AREAS AND LORRY PARKS**

#### **Motorway Service Areas**

**17.59** Annex A of PPG13 sets out the then Department of Transport (DoT) approach to motorway and roadside service areas. With regard to motorway service areas (MSAs), the DoT was seeking a balance between the necessary provision of opportunities for

motorway travellers to stop and obtain essential services at reasonable intervals, and the avoidance of unnecessary traffic movements on and off the motorway. The DETR generally does not expect to provide signs or to allow access to the motorway for any services less than 15 miles from the nearest existing MSA or MSA site with planning consent. Exceptions may be agreed where existing sites are a little less than 30 miles apart and additional services are proposed approximately half-way between them.

**17.60** The Annex sets out the minimum facilities that MSAs should provide. It also acknowledges that many existing ones offer a much wider range of services but indicates a preference for a mix of existing and new MSAs, some of which may be smaller and offer fewer facilities than recent DETR schemes.

**17.61** The Annex also incorporates planning guidance. The essence of this is that local planning authorities should:-

- consider the need for MSAs for motorway users in the context of wider planning policy;
- take into account both existing MSAs and alternative facilities close by and the extent to which they could cope with likely demand;
- have regard to PPG7 and ensure that MSA sites should be unobtrusive in the landscape; and
- not give approval for MSAs in the Green Belt, except in very special circumstances, in accordance with PPG2.

#### **POLICY T9**

**THE COUNCIL WILL CONSIDER ANY PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF MOTORWAY SERVICE AREAS AGAINST THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:**

- (i) **THE PROXIMITY OF SIGNED MSAS AND THE DISTRIBUTION OF EXISTING OR PROSPECTIVE FACILITIES FOR MOTORWAY USERS ON OR CLOSE TO THE MOTORWAY NETWORK;**
- (ii) **EVIDENCE OF NEEDS OF MOTORWAY USERS;**
- (iii) **EFFECT UPON GREEN BELT AND LANDSCAPE OBJECTIVES; AND**

#### **(iv) EFFECT OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND GENERATED TRAFFIC UPON THE AMENITIES AND CHARACTER OF THE LOCALITY.**

**17.62** Whilst the former Balloon site on the M11 at Chigwell was proposed as an MSA when the motorway was constructed it is not now considered appropriate for development as such. This is because of its proximity to Junction 5 at Loughton with the distance not meeting the DETR's current standards.

**17.63** In granting planning permission for an MSA the Council will be looking to ensure that any such facility incorporates the provision of adequate parking facilities for lorries using the motorway (including overnight stay and associated facilities). In order to be acceptable any development proposal will also have to comply with all other relevant Plan policies. This applies particularly to those relating to design (Policies DBE1, DBE3 and DBE4), landscape (Policies LL2 and LL3), landscaping (Policies LL10 and LL11), car parking (Policy T14) and traffic impact (Policy T17)

#### **Lorry Parks**

**17.64** The need for lorry parks stems from lorry drivers who live locally and long distance drivers who wish or need to break their journeys. It is intended that any future provision of motorway service areas on the M11 and M25 (Policy T9) will cater for the demands of the latter.

**17.65** In the event of any lorry parks being proposed individually, the following policy will apply:-

#### **POLICY T10**

**THE COUNCIL WILL GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR A LORRY PARK PROVIDED IT IS SATISFIED THAT:**

- (i) **THE PROPOSAL WILL CATER FOR EITHER:**
  - (a) **THE LORRIES OF LOCAL DRIVERS OR FIRMS, OR**
  - (b) **LONG DISTANCE LORRIES,**
- FOR WHICH THERE IS A DEMONSTRABLE NEED, HAVING REGARD TO EXISTING OR PROSPECTIVE ALTERNATIVE FACILITIES;**
- (ii) **THE SITE IS CONVENIENTLY**

**LOCATED FOR THE FUNCTION IT IS INTENDED TO FULFIL;**

Loughton, which is the subject of a confirmed Discontinuance Order.

- (iii) **THE DEVELOPMENT AND GENERATED TRAFFIC WOULD NOT HAVE AN EXCESSIVE ADVERSE EFFECT UPON THE AMENITIES AND CHARACTER OF THE LOCALITY;**

**17.70** The lorry park at The Borough, Chipping Ongar is too large for local needs and detracts from an otherwise attractive street-scene, despite a degree of landscaping. There are no suitable alternative sites available in the immediate vicinity.

- (iv) **THE DEVELOPMENT WOULD NOT HAVE AN UNACCEPTABLE EFFECT UPON GREEN BELT AND LANDSCAPE OBJECTIVES (WHERE APPLICABLE).**

**POLICY T12**

**THE COUNCIL WILL RESIST THE LOSS OF THE EXISTING LORRY PARK AT THE BOROUGH, CHIPPING ONGAR UNTIL AN ADEQUATE, SUITABLY-LOCATED ALTERNATIVE IS AVAILABLE.**

**17.66** Overnight lorry parking in residential streets detracts from the street scene, often causes obstructions, and frequently causes a nuisance to residents. The Council considers, therefore, that adequate off-street parking facilities should be available locally for HGVs and, that, once these are in existence, it may then consider the introduction of overnight bans on lorry parking in residential areas.

**17.67** The Council presently operates two lorry parks, one at Langston Road, Loughton, the other at The Borough, Chipping Ongar. These are considered adequate in terms of both their location and the level of need locally. However, the future of both is currently uncertain.

**17.68** The lorry park at Langston Road, Loughton is in the line of the proposed north-facing slip roads to the M11 which were approved by the Secretaries of State for the Environment and for Transport in 1995 (Policy T6). The importance of the lorry park is such that an alternative site must be found. The only possibility in the vicinity is the nearby site in Langston Road which has hitherto been available for the relocation of 'non-conforming' industrial uses.

**POLICY T11**

**THE SITE AT LANGSTON ROAD, LOUGHTON (AS IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP) IS ALLOCATED FOR DEVELOPMENT AS A LORRY PARK IN THE EVENT OF THE NORTH FACING SLIP ROADS BEING INSTALLED ON THE M11 AT JUNCTION 5.**

**17.69** The use of the site as a lorry park is, however, at odds with the Council's Economic Development Strategy given the demand for, but limited supply of, available land for industry in the vicinity. It may well be, therefore, that the site would be retained for industrial purposes in the event that a suitable alternative site is found for a lorry park consistent with Policy T10. In any event, an opportunity will have to be protected within the industrial area for the relocation of a small business from Smarts Lane,

**TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT**

**17.71** The need to manage the amount, type, speed or direction of traffic flow stems from environmental, capacity and safety problems on certain roads in the context of their position within the hierarchy (see paras. 17.29 to 17.31). There are several traffic management measures which can help to alleviate, or indeed to eradicate, particular problems. These include:-

- route planning - e.g. direction signs, road numbering;
- traffic regulation - e.g. speed limits, parking restrictions, one-way streets, weight limits, lorry bans;
- pedestrian and cycling facilities - e.g. subways, crossings, separate footways and cycling paths;
- road improvements - e.g. reduction/removal of bends, road widening;
- junction control - e.g. traffic lights, roundabouts, control of turning and access;
- signs and markings - e.g. warning signs, edge/centre-of-road markings; and
- "traffic calming" - e.g. pinch points and speed humps.

**POLICY T13**

**THE COUNCIL WILL PROMOTE TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT MEASURES THAT, WHERE APPROPRIATE:-**

- (i) **INCREASE TRAFFIC CAPACITY;**

- (ii) **IMPROVE BUS SERVICES;**
- (iii) **PROVIDE ON-STREET PARKING;**
- (iv) **IMPROVE ROAD SAFETY;**
- (v) **HAVE SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS;**
- (vi) **REMOVE HEAVY GOODS VEHICLES FROM ROADS UNSUITABLE IN TERMS OF:-**
  - (a) **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ON ADJACENT USES;**
  - (b) **THE INTENDED FUNCTION OF THE ROAD WITHIN THE ROAD HIERARCHY OF THE DISTRICT;**
  - (c) **THE PHYSICAL CAPACITY OF THE ROAD TO ACCOMMODATE THE VEHICLES; AND**
  - (d) **ROAD SAFETY.**

**17.72** Traffic regulation and "traffic calming" measures may be particularly appropriate in environmentally-sensitive streets such as residential or shopping streets and Conservation Areas.

**17.73** The objectives of traffic management relate equally to the routing of lorries (HGVs). These can detract considerably from the quality of the residential environment and the character of town centres and the countryside as well as cause traffic congestion. For this reason environmental lorry bans are pursued, particularly where HGVs are common in sensitive areas, and where suitable alternative routes of a higher ranking are available.

### **CAR PARKING**

**17.74** The high level of personal mobility which the private car provides also creates a heavy demand for car parking - in residential areas, town centres and associated with railway stations (particularly the Tube). This may result in conflict between various would-be users for the limited amount of parking spaces available (e.g. commuter parking in residential areas which may oblige residents to park elsewhere, detract from the street-scene, or be detrimental to road safety). Other factors come into play, however, in determining where people park. These can include the number and location of parking spaces, the cost of parking there, the cost of travel from a particular Tube station, and the relative safety of the driver and car.

**17.75** Although preferring people to use public

transport, walk or cycle where possible, the Council does not intend to inhibit the use of the private car by not enabling drivers to park. It will, however, seek to control when and where they park and at what cost. It will also seek to accommodate the demand for parking provision by:-

- making optimum use of existing off-street and on-street spaces;
- providing additional car parks where necessary and practicable;
- ensuring that development (comprising new build, extensions and changes of use) incorporates adequate parking provision; and

**17.76** Any provision of additional car parks will, however, have regard to the adequacy of the local road network to cater for the increase in traffic generated by the availability of parking.

### **POLICY T14**

**IN DETERMINING PLANNING APPLICATIONS THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO ENSURE THAT ADEQUATE AND APPROPRIATE CAR PARKING FACILITIES ARE PROVIDED ON-SITE.**

**17.77** The policy will be implemented through the application of car parking standards set out in Appendix 5. The standards are based on those published by Essex County Council in 1987. They are advisory and intended to form a consistent basis for discussion between applicants and the District Council.

**17.78** Spaces should be approximately 5m x 2.5m although those for the disabled should be at least 3.5m. wide.

**17.79** Circumstances in which these standards will not necessarily be adhered to include where:-

- in the case of a commercial development, the applicant can demonstrate that adequate off-street parking facilities already exist and are likely to be available when required;
- in the case of a commercial development in a town centre, there is no scope for on-site spaces but the developer makes an appropriate financial contribution to the Council to enable it to provide nearby identifiable public facilities in the foreseeable future;
- in the case of a Listed Building or a building in a Conservation Area, the standards may



have to be relaxed in order to achieve a development which is sympathetic to the character of the Building or Area;

- the District or County Council has since revised their standard; and
- in the case of a commercial development there would be good access to other means of travel than the private car.
- in the case of a commercial development there would be good access to other means of travel than the private car.

### **Town Centre Parking**

17.80 It is important that the needs of both short-stay (eg shoppers) and long-stay(eg workers) visitors are catered for, as much as possible, and in a manner which does not result in on-street parking where it would be detrimental to the service arrangements of the shops, the amenity of nearby residential areas, or road safety.

### **POLICY T15**

**THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO PROVIDE CAR PARKING FACILITIES IN TOWN CENTRES (DEFINED AS SUCH ON THE PROPOSALS MAP) WHICH:**

- (i) **ARE ADEQUATE AND APPROPRIATE FOR USERS' NEEDS;**
- (ii) **ARE CONVENIENTLY LOCATED;**
- (iii) **WILL NOT ENDANGER ROAD USERS OR PEDESTRIANS;**
- (iv) **WILL NOT BE LIKELY TO LEAD TO AN EXCESSIVE DEGREE OF TRAFFIC CONGESTION; AND**
- (v) **WILL HAVE REGARD TO THE NEEDS OF THOSE PEOPLE WITH MOBILITY DIFFICULTIES.**

17.81 The implementation of this policy will entail the continued operation of long- and short-stay car parks. Charges will be levelled to ensure the maximum possible use of the car parks, and not to maximise income at the expense of reducing the patronage thereby forcing users to go elsewhere. The effective operation of such a pricing policy may be enforced by prohibiting parking, where appropriate, in the residential streets immediately surrounding the town centres. The amount of additional car parking required and the location of the potential spaces (both on-street

and off-street) will be determined in the context of the town centre strategies (see paragraph 19.7) and applications for developments in each of the town centres.

17.82 This policy does not preclude the provision of on-street parking provided that it is necessary and that it is available for shoppers rather than, for example, commuters. This could be ensured by placing a restriction on the period of parking or a limited prohibition (as at Queens Road, Buckhurst Hill).

17.83 In instances where there is scope to provide a car park in the future, the Council may seek to implement this policy with commuted sums from developers, in lieu of them providing the requisite on-site parking facilities (see para. 18.12(x)). This would be sought in accordance with policy 11.

17.84 The Council will also seek to implement this policy by encouraging the owners of private car parks (including the staff/visitor car parks for institutional uses such as Council and Central Government offices) to make them available for the public whenever possible (e.g. Saturdays in the case of certain office uses).

17.85 Having regard to the needs of those people with mobility difficulties will entail providing a sufficient number of suitably-located, appropriately-sized spaces for disabled drivers and ensuring that pedestrian access to and from car parks is available without having to use steps or steep slopes.

### **Other Parking**

17.86 Many commuters into London drive to a Tube station, park their car and take the train. It is therefore necessary to provide and retain an adequate amount of appropriately-located, suitably-priced, off-street car parking. This is preferable to commuters parking their cars all day on streets near the station to the detriment of (a) the amenity of residents, shoppers or shop-keepers and, possibly (b) road safety.

17.87 This may be particularly annoying to residents when it is practised by people who have no business in the area other than to visit nearby shops or go to work. The Council is aware of this and its consequences which are:-

- the inability of residents to park outside their houses, or even gain access to their drives;
- an adverse impact upon the appearance of the street-scene; and
- a possible reduction in the level of road safety.

**17.88** It may therefore be appropriate to provide improved facilities in some instances. In others, it may be preferable to make the existing facilities (which may be perfectly adequate) more attractive to ensure their optimal use.

**17.89** In order to provide an adequate facility, it may, in some instances, be necessary to provide additional car parking, subject to environmental considerations. The Council will continue to lobby LUL accordingly.

#### **POLICY T16**

##### **THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO:-**

- (i) **MINIMISE THE AMOUNT OF ON-STREET PARKING IN RESIDENTIAL STREETS BY NON-RESIDENTS OR VISITORS; AND**
- (ii) **ENSURE THAT THERE ARE ADEQUATE STATION CAR PARKS APPROPRIATE FOR THE NEEDS OF RAIL USERS.**

**17.90** The Council will seek to implement this policy through prohibiting on-street parking in the vicinity of stations and persuading LUL to adopt various measures. These could include:-

- cheaper pricing of parking; and/or
- the introduction of express train services (i.e. not stopping at certain stations and hence making those where they do stop more attractive); and/or
- amendments to the pricing zones such that the fares from certain stations become cheaper and hence the stations, and their facilities, more attractive.

These measures would help to alleviate 'rail-heading' with all the associated problems of traffic congestion and inefficient use of resources (whereby the car park at one station is unused while on-street parking is rife at the next).

**17.91** The Council will also give consideration to specific schemes which could include restricting on-street parking at certain times of the day or residents-only parking schemes. Any such schemes must, however, have due regard to the cost of introduction and the cost of enforcement.

**17.92** Consideration will also be given to the scope for providing off-street parking schemes on Council housing estates. Any such provision would be funded by the Council.

#### **NEW DEVELOPMENT**

**17.93** New development inevitably creates additional traffic which results in greater pressures on the local environment and, more particularly, the transport system. It is therefore important to ensure that all the implications of new developments are fully addressed. The following policy will therefore apply:-

#### **POLICY T17**

##### **THE COUNCIL WILL GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR DEVELOPMENT ONLY WHEN THE PROPOSAL:-**

- (i) **IS WELL RELATED TO THE ROAD HIERARCHY;**
- (ii) **IS READILY ACCESSIBLE BY EXISTING OR POTENTIAL PUBLIC TRANSPORT FACILITIES;**
- (iii) **IS UNLIKELY TO LEAD TO AN EXCESSIVE DEGREE OF TRAFFIC CONGESTION;**
- (iv) **WILL NOT BE DETRIMENTAL TO HIGHWAY SAFETY; AND**
- (v) **IS NOT LIKELY TO RESULT IN THE TRAFFIC GENERATED BEING SEVERELY DETRIMENTAL TO THE CHARACTER OR ENVIRONMENT OF ANY PART OF THE AREA THROUGH WHICH IT CAN BE EXPECTED TO TRAVEL.**

**17.94** In those instances where a development proposal would be acceptable, apart from the adequacy of the local road network, the Council may grant permission subject to the applicant entering into an appropriate legal agreement to fund the necessary road improvements (see Policy I1).

#### **Environmental Implications**

**17.95** The policies in this chapter will contribute to the achievement of the following aims of the Plan (see pages 24 and 25):-

- (ii) To facilitate modern-day living requirements.
- (x) To secure an appropriate standard of public transport provision.
- (xi) To secure the retention of the Epping-Chipping Ongar branch line.
- (xviii) To ensure that new development has adequate

infrastructure.

(xx) To ensure that any new development does not have an unacceptable impact both in environmental terms and in the provision of local facilities.

(xxi) To protect and, where possible, enhance the environmental qualities of existing residential areas.

(xxiv) To secure the optimum use of available road space.

(xxv) To reduce traffic congestion where possible.

(xxvi) To secure the provision of adequate, appropriately-located car parking facilities.

(xxvii) To minimise on-street parking in residential areas.

(xxviii) To reduce the impact of, but make adequate provision for, heavy goods vehicles with business in the District.

(xxxv) To promote the efficient use of natural resources.

(xxxvii) To integrate public and private transport facilities to secure optimum use of both.

(xxxviii) To enable the continued implementation of the Council's Environmental Charter.

**17.96** The main environmental impact of the successful implementation of the transport policies will be through the use of more energy-efficient modes of transport (ie bus, train, cycle, walking). This will have secondary benefits of reducing both pollution and the consumption of fossil fuels. Traffic reduction would also benefit the urban environment in particular. New road building would also reduce traffic in urban areas but at the expense of building, or widening, roads or motorways in the countryside. Any such new or improved roads may then attract more traffic with consequent increases in atmospheric and noise pollution, and in the consumption of fossil fuels.

# **ACTION**

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## **18. Implementation**

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## **Introduction**

**18.1** The implementation of Plan policies is dealt with, for the most part, by the explanatory text after each policy. It identifies, for example, which body is expected to fund the development, when it is likely to occur, and the nature of any planning constraints that might exist. This chapter serves essentially to introduce planning policies which relate solely to, and are crucial to, the successful implementation of this Plan. They deal with:-

- planning obligations;
- phasing large housing developments; and
- enforcement of planning control.

## **Government Guidance**

**18.2** Guidance about the implementation of Local Plans is set out in PPG12. Plans are required to:-

- have regard to the likely availability of resources (by taking account of national economic policies, the financial policies of the implementing agencies and the likely availability of land, labour and other resources);
- take account of the capacity of existing infrastructure and the need for additional facilities;
- incorporate an appropriate policy where an authority expects developers to enter into planning obligations on a regular basis;
- assess development requirements over the whole Plan period in the light of projections and national and regional policy guidance.

## **Planning Obligations**

**18.3** The Council can seek modifications or improvements to development proposals in order to have regard to the interest of the local environment and other planning considerations. This is generally known as "planning gain" although this term has no statutory significance.

**18.4** "Planning gain" can be achieved through planning obligations. These comprise both legal agreements (between the Council and the developer) or 'unilateral undertakings' (whereby a developer, independently, commits himself to a legally-binding obligation). Such obligations may:-

- restrict development or use of the land;

- require operations or activities to be carried out;
- require the land to be used in a specified way; or
- require payments to be made to the authority either in a single sum or periodically.

**18.5** PPG12 states that "... where a planning authority expects developers to enter into planning obligations on a regular basis ...it should set out its policy in the Local Plan."

**18.6** Government guidance on the proper use of planning obligations is contained in Circular 1/97 "Planning Obligations". It sets out the circumstances in which certain types of benefit can reasonably be sought. The Circular states that the tests to apply for the use of planning obligations are that "...they should be necessary, relevant to planning, directly related to the proposed development, fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development, and reasonable in all other respects."

**18.7** The guidance continues "... Acceptable development should never be refused because an applicant is unwilling or unable to offer benefits" and "Unacceptable development should never be permitted because of unnecessary or unrelated benefits offered by the applicant."

**18.8** According to the guidance, in general it will be reasonable to seek, or take account of, a planning obligation if what is sought or offered is:-

- needed to enable the development to go ahead and, in the case of a financial payment, will meet or contribute towards the cost of providing such necessary facilities in the near future: or
- necessary from a planning point of view and is so directly related to the proposed development and to the use of land after its completion that the development ought not to be permitted without it.

**18.9** The District Council welcomes the opportunities created by the guidance to bring about the implementation of the Local Plan in appropriate circumstances. It will consider the obligations put forward by developers in the light of its planning objectives. The scope offered is seen as enhancing the Council's 'enabling' role. The following policy will therefore apply:-



## POLICY 11

**IN APPROPRIATE CIRCUMSTANCES AND PRIOR TO GRANTING PLANNING PERMISSION, THE COUNCIL WILL REQUIRE DEVELOPERS TO ENTER INTO AN APPROPRIATE LEGAL AGREEMENT IN ORDER TO SECURE THE PROVISION OF, OR AN APPROPRIATE FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS:-**

- (i) **THE REPLACEMENT OF ANY FACILITIES DISPLACED BY THE DEVELOPMENT;**
- (ii) **ANY INFRASTRUCTURE NECESSARY TO ENABLE THE DEVELOPMENT TO PROCEED;**
- (iii) **AFFORDABLE HOUSING BEING MADE AVAILABLE IN PERPETUITY TO THOSE IN HOUSING NEED;**
- (iv) **THE PROVISION OF NEW WORKS OF VISUAL ART AND CRAFTS;**
- (v) **THE REPLACEMENT OF OPEN SPACE OF AT LEAST EQUIVALENT COMMUNITY BENEFIT TO ANY LOST TO THE DEVELOPMENT;**
- (vi) **NEW PLAYING PITCHES, PLAY AREAS AND ANCILLARY FACILITIES FOR WHICH THERE IS A RECOGNISED LOCAL NEED;**
- (vii) **ANY OTHER COMMUNITY BENEFITS THAT ARE MADE NECESSARY BY THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT;**
- (viii) **THE PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT, OR ADEQUATE ALTERNATIVE PROVISION, OF FEATURES OF NATURE CONSERVATION INTEREST;**
- (ix) **ANY OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS THAT ARE MADE NECESSARY BY THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT;**
- (x) **ANY ADDITIONAL PUBLIC CAR AND CYCLE PARKING FACILITIES MADE NECESSARY BY THE DEVELOPMENT; AND**
- (xi) **DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS APPROPRIATELY PHASED.**

**18.10** The legal agreements sought will be 'planning obligations' made under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compensation Act 1991 or its replacement.

**18.11** It is not possible to specify all the circumstances under which the Council will seek such agreements although standard documentation is readily available on request. Neither is it possible to indicate exactly what the obligation would be. The requirement will vary according to the scale of the proposed development, the particular circumstances associated with it, and its anticipated impact upon the community and the local environment. Developers should also bear in mind that the Council may seek agreements on more than one of the criteria set out in the policy.

**18.12** The following examples, though not exhaustive, will, however, give some indication of the nature of the agreements that may be sought. They relate directly to the criteria set out in the policy:-

- (i) the replacement of any facilities either on the site or elsewhere;
- where it is not possible to replace the facility (e.g. through the loss of a major industrial site or other employment-generating use), a financial contribution towards an appropriate body which is in a position to help remedy the losses incurred (e.g. Forest Enterprise Agency Trust (FEAT));
- (ii) the partial or total funding of any new or improved roads, street furniture, traffic management arrangements and sewers;
- (iv) a financial contribution to a community arts facility;
- (vi) commitment to the provision of a facility for which there is an agreed scheme and an available site to meet a recognised need in the locality;
- in the case of a major residential development, the provision of a community hall and, where appropriate, children's play facilities;
- the provision of on-site and off-site recreational facilities related to the development or a contribution to nearby sport and recreation or open space provision.
- contributions towards the work of

- Countrycare on relevant sites;
- the protection, enhancement and suitable management of established habitats of local wildlife significance;
- the provision of alternative wildlife habitats where existing SINC's will be damaged or lost;
- (ix) the agreement of, and adherence to, a landscape management plan.
- providing land or premises for the relocation of a 'non-conforming industry' (see para 10.106);
- in the case of large retail development, a financial contribution towards the upgrading of a town centre likely to be most affected by it;
- (x) in the case of modest town centre developments, unable to provide adequate car and cycle parking facilities, a financial contribution towards the provision of the requisite number of public spaces elsewhere in the town centre;
- (xi) phasing in the case of development of large housing sites (see Policy I2).

#### **Phasing Large Housing Developments**

**18.13** PPG12 allows for a broad measure of phasing of development, particularly in areas under severe pressure for development. In such areas phasing may be warranted by evidence that market demand would exhaust the total planned provision in the early years of the Plan.

**18.14** According to PPG12, phasing should be clearly justified by practical considerations. It should allow for a reasonable degree of choice and flexibility and not amount to an artificial constraint. Very precise specification of the numbers of houses to be provided on a year-by-year basis is not appropriate. Phasing may need to be adjusted where the land supply either falls significantly short of requirements or exceeds expectations. Any such excesses may lead to some postponement of the release of land.

**18.15** Epping Forest District is undoubtedly an area in which pressure for housing development is intense. Although the supply of land for housing in the District is likely to be more than adequate in terms of the identified "need" (see para. 9.19) it is not appropriate to release all the available land for

development immediately. This is because:-

- such an approach could result in the development of all available sites such that a five year land supply (see para. 9.7) could not be maintained throughout the Plan period;
- the loss of most sites to development would result in pressure to release yet more sites to maintain the building rate which would inevitably place more pressure on the Green Belt where the release of land for housing would be contrary to policy;
- it is necessary to try and meet the programming in the Structure Plan which although being "front-loaded" requires that some land is not developed until the latter part of the 1990s.

**18.16** As a consequence, the aim must be to ensure that the available sites are not taken up too quickly. It is therefore necessary to phase the release of housing land in order to avoid premature exhaustion of the available supply prior to the end of the Plan period.

#### **POLICY I2**

**BEFORE GRANTING PLANNING PERMISSION FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ON LARGE SITES, THE COUNCIL WILL HAVE TO BE SATISFIED THAT APPROVAL WOULD NOT RESULT IN THE SUPPLY OF HOUSING LAND SIGNIFICANTLY EXCEEDING THE IDENTIFIED HOUSING NEED FOR THE ENSUING FIVE YEAR PERIOD. WHERE APPROVAL WOULD LEAD TO SUCH AN EXCESS IN THE SUPPLY OF HOUSING LAND THE COUNCIL WILL EITHER:-**

- (i) **SEEK TO PHASE THE DEVELOPMENT SUCH THAT THE HOUSING LAND SUPPLY FOR THE ENSUING FIVE YEAR PERIOD IS NOT EXCEEDED SIGNIFICANTLY; OR**
- (ii) **REFUSE PLANNING PERMISSION WHERE APPROPRIATE PHASING CANNOT BE AGREED.**

**18.17** Large sites are those which are 1 hectare or more. The policy will also be applied to sites of this size which would be appropriate for housing development but which are sub-divided into sites of less than 1 hectare through, e.g. either being sold off in parts, or the development proposals being phased.

**18.18** The identified housing need is that derived from the suggested programming in the Structure Plan: First Alteration (see Appendix 6) plus the increased provision in the current Structure Plan, spread over the remainder of the Structure Plan period (see Appendix 6). It will also include any unmet needs from previous years.

**18.19** The housing land supply comprises:-

- outstanding planning permissions on sites with a capacity for 12 or more dwellings although any known impediments to development will be taken into account;
- other potentially acceptable sites with capacity for 12 or more dwellings which are currently the subject of a planning application; and
- the anticipated supply from sites with scope for less than 12 dwellings, based on current experience.

**18.20** The anticipated supply will not be allowed to exceed the need for the ensuing six years. The six year supply is obtained from combining the assumed annual needs for the relevant period (derived from the five year periods identified in the Structure Plan) and the needs not met in previous years. A period of six years is utilised in order that annual reviews will ensure that the minimum period against which the supply is assessed will be five years. It will also facilitate up to a 20% excess over the five year supply. Beyond that, any excess will be considered as significant.

**18.21** Both the housing need and the housing land supply will be monitored on a regular basis. In determining the commencement and/or rate of development to be permitted, the Council will have regard to the extent to which the scheme, and any associated enabling development, will contribute to the achievement of the Plan's aims and the implementation of other policies.

**18.22** It is anticipated that any phasing agreements would be made under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (see policy I1).

**18.23** In considering planning applications for appropriate sites the Council will have regard to the policies relating to "affordable" housing provision (H4-H6), mobility housing (H7-H9), design, amenity space and car parking provision (DBE1 to DBE9).

### **Replacement Facilities**

**18.24** When the replacement or relocation of facilities (eg libraries, clinics, sports grounds and buildings) takes place it is important to ensure that the provision of the facilities is maintained throughout the transition period. Consequently, the existing facility should be retained until the new one is in place.

### **POLICY I3**

**THE COUNCIL WILL, WHERE PRACTICABLE, SEEK TO ENSURE THAT, WHERE REPLACEMENT FACILITIES ARE BEING PROVIDED, THE NEW FACILITY IS OPERATIONAL PRIOR TO THE CLOSURE OF THE EXISTING ONE.**

**18.25** This policy will be applied unless the Council is satisfied that there are adequate reasons for not insisting upon the continued provision of facilities and that adequate and appropriate replacement will be provided within an agreed period.

### **Planning Enforcement**

**18.26** Epping Forest District is a very pleasant area in which to live and work. The people who do so clearly attach a great deal of importance to the quality of the local environment. This is apparent from their concern to protect its attributes and to comment, enquire and complain when undesirable activity or change takes place without an appropriate level of environmental protection.

**18.27** The Council places great store on the opinions of local people about what they consider to be unacceptable development. Communication is most important on what may be complex or technical issues, and some local residents do not wish their remarks to be made public. Confidentiality will be respected as far as possible. The over-riding priority is to ascertain the relevant facts so that a judgement can be made on what is expedient in terms of planning enforcement.

**18.28** PPG18 points out that local planning authorities "... have a general discretion to take enforcement action, when they regard it as expedient." It is also stated that:-

- the ombudsman may accuse the authority of "maladministration" if it fails to take effective enforcement action which was plainly necessary;
- in considering action, the decisive issue should be whether the breach of control

- would unacceptably affect public amenity or the public interest; and
- negotiations should not be allowed to hamper or delay whatever formal enforcement action may be required.

**18.29** It also gives guidance for authorities where unauthorised development:-

- can be made acceptable by the imposition of conditions; or
- is unacceptable on the site and relocation is, or is not, feasible;
- is unacceptable and immediate remedial action is required;
- is by small businesses or the self-employed; and
- is by private householders.

**18.30** In view of the importance which the Council attributes to the proper enforcement of planning control it will adhere rigidly to the following policy:-

#### **POLICY I4**

**IN DETERMINING WHAT, IF ANY, ENFORCEMENT ACTION TO TAKE WHERE DEVELOPMENT HAS BEEN UNDERTAKEN EITHER WITHOUT THE REQUISITE PLANNING PERMISSION OR CONSENT OR IN BREACH OF A PLANNING CONDITION THE COUNCIL WILL:-**

- (i) **TAKE PROMPT, APPROPRIATE ENFORCEMENT ACTION IN CASES WHERE:-**
  - (a) **IT CONSIDERS THE DEVELOPMENT TO BE DEMONSTRABLY HARMFUL TO PUBLIC AMENITY OR PUBLIC INTEREST AND WOULD NOT GAIN APPROVAL EVEN WITH THE IMPOSITION OF ANY PLANNING CONDITIONS; OR**
  - (b) **A PLANNING APPLICATION HAS BEEN INVITED BUT HAS NOT BEEN SUBMITTED;**
- (ii) **SERVE A BREACH OF CONDITION NOTICE IN CASES WHERE IT CONSIDERS THAT THE BREACH IS**

**DEMONSTRABLY HARMFUL TO PUBLIC AMENITY OR PUBLIC INTEREST;**

- (iii) **SERVE A PLANNING CONTRAVENTION NOTICE OR SEEK A PROMPT PLANNING APPLICATION IN CASES WHERE IT CONSIDERS THAT THE DEVELOPMENT IS DEMONSTRABLY HARMFUL TO PUBLIC AMENITY OR PUBLIC INTEREST BUT COULD BE MADE ACCEPTABLE BY IMPOSING APPROPRIATE PLANNING CONDITIONS;**

- (iv) **ALLOW AN APPROPRIATE AND REASONABLE PERIOD OF TIME FOR COMPLIANCE WITH ITS REQUIREMENTS WHILE ENSURING THAT GOOD PLANNING IS NOT PREJUDICED BY VIRTUE OF THE DEVELOPMENT HAVING BEEN UNDERTAKEN;**

- (v) **WHERE POSSIBLE, ISSUE A STOP NOTICE IN CASES WHERE IT CONSIDERS THE DEVELOPMENT TO BE EXCEPTIONALLY HARMFUL TO PUBLIC AMENITY OR PUBLIC INTEREST;**

- (vi) **COMMENCE APPROPRIATE LEGAL PROCEEDINGS IN CASES WHERE THERE IS EVIDENCE THAT AN OFFENCE HAS BEEN COMMITTED.**

**18.31** The approach is intended to be a step-by-step one using the relevant powers in sequence, if need be, until the breach of control is resolved.

**18.32** The Council currently deals with unauthorised activities by responding to complaints. It does not, as yet, monitor new schemes to any substantial degree to ascertain whether planning conditions have been adhered to. It does, however, intend to do so in line with Audit Commission advice, subject to the availability of finance.

#### **Environmental Implications**

**18.33** The implementation of the policies in this chapter will contribute to the achievements of the following aims of the Plan (see pages 24 and 25):-

- (i) To promote and secure the optimum type and distribution of educational, health and social facilities to meet the needs of the District's residents both now and in the

future.

(xviii) To ensure that new development has adequate infrastructure.

(xxix) To undertake appropriate action against breaches of planning control.

**18.34** Appendix 2 indicates the extent to which the policies will have an effect in environmental terms. I1 and I4 are expected to benefit both the urban and rural environments whereas I2, which addresses the phased release of land for housing, will protect the Green Belt

## **19. Monitoring and Review**

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**19.1** Local planning authorities are required to keep under review the matters which may be expected to affect the development of their area. They are also advised to ensure that their Local Plans have clearly defined aims and objectives against which the effectiveness of the Plan policies can be assessed.

**19.2** The objectives and aims of this plan are set out in Chapter 4. The Plan will be monitored regularly to ensure that the policies are still the most appropriate for the prevailing situation. If they are found not to be, for any reason, then there will need to be new or replacement policies. Supplementary planning guidance may be issued in the meantime in view of the lengthy time-periods that formal alterations would involve.

**19.3** The circumstances which may prompt the need for change include:-

- new development pressures;
- appeal decisions;
- changing local circumstances (e.g. a major site becoming available or new information coming to light);
- changing national circumstances (e.g. fluctuations in the economy);
- new legislation/guidance;
- revised regional planning guidance; or
- revised Structure Plan policy.

**19.4** To ensure the successful implementation of this Plan, the following matters will be kept under review:-

- the 'Buildings at Risk' register of 'Listed Buildings' which are in need of attention;
- the extent of the Council's housing waiting list (and hence the target for the provision of affordable housing);
- the likelihood of Housing Association Grant (HAG) being made available for affordable housing schemes;
- the extent to which the 'supply' of housing land meets the identified 'need';
- the number and distribution of 'non-retail' frontages in primary and secondary shopping areas;

- the rate of unemployment and the skills and requirements of the unemployed;
- the amount of land in, and available for, industrial, business and warehousing uses;
- the need for recreational and community facilities across the District;
- the extent to which the Council's Countryside service is achieving its aims; and
- the need for additional town centre and car parking facilities.

**19.5** The Council already monitors the current situation relating to a range of planning matters by publishing the following documents annually:-

- Housing Bulletin;
- Housing Strategy Statement (incorporating its Housing Investment Programme bid); and
- Economic Development Statement (incorporating an Economic Bulletin).

**19.6** An annual monitoring report will therefore be published, and appropriate action taken as necessary, in the light of:-

- the extent to which the objectives and aims are being met; and
- changing circumstances.

**19.7** It is also intended to undertake the following work to progress implementation of the Plan:-

- the monitoring of the Tree Strategy;
- the production of management plans to conserve and enhance the character, appearance and appropriate use of sites in the countryside;
- the study of the scope for the re-use( for residential use) of vacant upper floors in commercial premises ; and
- the development of a comprehensive strategy for each town centre.

**19.8** Government guidance is that Plans should be reviewed "regularly". Whilst there are no hard and fast rules, this is expected to mean at least once every 5 years. Depending on circumstances, these



formal reviews may well involve either an alteration to the Plan or the preparation of a replacement.

## **20. POLICIES BY AREA**

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## **Introduction**

**20.1** This chapter summarises the main policies as they relate to specific areas. It is meant to give an indication of the developments that are likely to occur. The relevant policy numbers are given in brackets.

**20.2** This section should not be taken as being comprehensive. It serves only to give the broad outline of the detail which is in the other chapters.

## **EPHING**

**20.3** Epping is tightly constrained by the Green Belt and has few sites available for development.

## **Development Possibilities**

**20.4** The shopping centre is considered to be relatively successful and not suffering very badly from the effects of the recession. The overall street-scene is attractive although it would benefit from the completion of the improvement scheme.

**20.5** The extent of primary shopping frontage has been reduced in conjunction with a tightening of the amount of non-retail frontage permitted within it to 20%. A limit of 60% has been imposed on the amount of non-retail frontage in the secondary frontages (STC7).

**20.6** Industrial areas at Centre Drive and Bower Hill are to be retained as such (E1).

**20.7** The Plan refers to the likelihood of St. Margaret's Hospital becoming a 'community hospital' under the Health Authority's proposals. The on-site facilities have already been down-graded quite markedly with the closure of the Accident and Emergency Service. Redevelopment for other uses will be resisted unless it is clearly demonstrated that the site will not be necessary for health care facilities (CF3).

**20.8** If the existing ambulance station becomes surplus to requirements it may be incorporated into the St. Margaret's site. Failing that, any redevelopment proposals will be expected to have regard to the current local need for community facilities (CF4).

## **The Central Line**

**20.9** In 1994 London Underground Limited (LUL) closed the Epping to Chipping Ongar branch of the Central Line. The Council opposed this on the grounds that it provided an important local service. However, the Council will endeavour to secure its

future by promoting its use for leisure purposes (e.g. a steam railway) (T2).

## **LOUGHTON/BUCKHURST HILL/CHIGWELL**

## **Shopping Facilities**

**20.10** A Shopping Strategy for the District has been formulated in the context of the preparation of this Plan. The Plan includes policies aimed at maintaining and enhancing the shopping function of the existing town centres (STC1 and 2). It also incorporates a policy which sets out criteria against which proposals for retail stores will be assessed (STC3).

**20.11** The Council commissioned consultants to examine the scope for additional food retailing provision in the area. They concluded that:-

- both the amount and quality of shopping provision in the Loughton area is adequate;
- there may be scope for a superstore in the area without an excessive adverse impact on Loughton town centre;
- there are three possible sites for additional food shopping provision in, or on the edge of, the town centre:-
  - (a) an extension to the existing Safeway's store;
  - (b) development on the site of the Traps Hill car park; and
  - (c) development on the site of the former Council Offices (and adjoining land) at Old Station Road.

**20.12** The consultants found that any one of these options would be likely to satisfy the inadequacies in the town centre for the period of the Plan and that two most certainly would. An extensive public consultation took place on the basis of these possibilities. It also had regard to Tesco's proposed superstore at Langston Road, Loughton - an appeal on which was then outstanding. On the basis of the findings, the appeal being dismissed by the Secretary of State, and the subsequent granting of planning permission (on appeal) for Safeway's expansion, the Council has decided to:-

- (a) allocate the Traps Hill site for community facilities (CF1); and
- (b) not allocate the site at Old Station Road for retail development.

**20.13** The site of the former Lamb's Garage is allocated for retail development (STC6). The limit on the extent of non-retail frontage in the primary shopping frontages has been tightened to 20% and a 60% limit introduced to the secondary frontages. (STC7)

### **Employment**

**20.14** The main reason for the Council's successful opposition to Tesco's proposed superstore was the loss of this important Langston Road site from industrial use. Land for industry is at a premium in this District, particularly in the Loughton area. Although a superstore would create job opportunities, the local economy would not benefit to anything like the extent it would if the site were put to industrial use - even if it was not developed immediately.

**20.15** The site is very attractive for commercial development. It will become even more so when the north-facing slip roads are installed at junction 5 on the M11 (T6). The types of use that will be permitted on the Langston Road and Oakwood Hill industrial estates are therefore industry and offices (E2). In view of the site's attractiveness and the fact that modern large warehouses employ relatively few people, the Council has decided to resist proposals for new warehouses unless they trade locally and there are no suitable alternatives (E3). A further site, between the existing industrial area and the M11, has been taken out of the Green Belt for development for industrial/commercial purposes as an extension of the Langston Road industrial estate.

**20.16** The Council is working with some adjoining authorities to establish a 'material sorting facility' for the collection and recycling of dry household waste. Part of the Council's Langston Road depot has been identified as an appropriate site and is being promoted as such (RP2). Its development would, however, be subject to appropriate conditions on the hours of operation and the types of material handled (i.e. only solid and non-toxic substances).

### **School Sites**

**20.17** The Plan incorporates a policy reflecting the Council's concern about the loss and development of school sites (CF6). It is concerned because:-

- the sites may be needed again in the foreseeable future (when the school rolls increase or schools change their admission arrangements (as a possible consequence of gaining grant-maintained status);
- once the sites are lost any future demand would place pressure on the Green Belt;
- many of the sites provide open spaces contributing to the townscape; and
- the playing fields and playgrounds provide an important recreational facility.

**20.18** The sites of several former schools have been released for housing (H2), incorporating the provision of affordable housing, as required by the Council (H4 - H6). These are:-

- the Brook School and B.R. sports field adjacent to Roding Road;
- Epping Forest High School (site of buildings only), Homecroft Gardens; and
- Fairmead Annexe, Pyrles Lane.

### **Urban Open Spaces**

**20.19** There are a number of important, major areas of urban open space in the south and east of Loughton, although many are little more than major expanses of grass. Many of these are protected spaces at the moment although some have witnessed development. In view of both some of the spaces having been lost (either in whole or in part) and the current function of those remaining, the Council is looking to establish a more positive approach to these areas (LL5 and LL6).

**20.20** Such an approach would entail:-

- continued protection from development (although limited building might be acceptable if the open nature of the site is retained and there are resulting landscaping benefits); and
- management of the spaces to enable wider uses. This could include tree and shrub planting or creating flower rich meadows in certain areas. More attractive areas which are of greater benefit to wildlife would result.

### **Motorways**

**20.21** The DETR intends to install the north-facing slip roads on the M11 at junction 5 (T6). The Council opposed the scheme on the grounds of the effect of the increase in traffic upon the residential amenity of the area (T5). It is therefore looking to the DETR and the County Council to fund the necessary improvements that would make this impact acceptable.

**20.22** The DETR recently changed its guidelines regarding the development of motorway service areas (MSAs). The minimum gap between them has been reduced from 30 to 15 miles opening up the prospect of demand for such a facility on the M11 in this area. Scope for an MSA on the M11 is very limited but proposals will be assessed against appropriate criteria (T9).

## **NORTH WEALD BASSETT**

### **Radio Station Site**

**20.23** The Radio Station site is identified for predominantly recreational development of an open nature which has no adverse effect upon its Green Belt status. Those buildings and other features which are of historic or archaeological interest on the site are to be protected and enhanced (GB18). The bowling club will be either retained on site or replaced elsewhere (e.g. the Airfield) and additional land is to be dedicated for the village hall. Those buildings on the site which are to be cleared may be replaced, possibly by some different form of development (e.g. housing) on the edge of the site adjacent to Station Road.

### **Airfield**

**20.24** The airfield is to continue to be developed as a recreation and leisure centre, and a showground (RST27). This means continuing the air shows/displays and the Saturday markets and enabling more indoor sports facilities. The western part (i.e. next to the safety fence) is to be promoted as a 'working airfield'. That will involve aircraft parking and the provision of facilities to repair, service and store aircraft and helicopters.

**20.25** To enable the airfield to continue to function it should be self-financing, if at all possible. Existing uses will therefore be allowed to continue. This means that Hangar 2 (adjacent to the M11) will continue as a warehouse, if necessary, although air-related uses are preferred (RST30). It may also be appropriate to permit further development on the airfield if its full potential is to be realised within its intended role (RST29). Consequently it is proposed that further major buildings may be permitted in two areas:-

- (i) in the area south of the gymnasium and shooting ranges - this would be for further recreational activities; and
- (ii) adjacent to the M11, west of the perimeter road - this would be for recreational or airfield-related use.

**20.26** Any new development would, however, respect the existing character and historic interest of the airfield which is to be retained (RST28).

### **Scope for Development**

**20.27** This Local Plan makes only four changes to the Green Belt boundary in the District, the main one of which is at North Weald Airfield. It takes the concrete apron (on which the Saturday markets are now held) out of the Green Belt and allocates the site for industrial purposes (E6). This is in the context of implementing the Council's Employment Strategy. It also serves as an alternative for the existing industrial allocation at Hallsford Bridge, Chipping Ongar which is set in the countryside and poorly served by existing roads. By contrast, the site at the Airfield is adjacent to an existing commercial area and has ready access to the A414 and the M11. The Saturday markets will be relocated to the eastern section of the east-west runway which is now closed and which is being widened to accommodate the market.

**20.28** The existing residential land allocations at Pike Way/Park Close adjacent the railway are retained (H2).

**20.29** Essex Police are looking to extend the library to accommodate a police office. The existing office on the High Road may then become an ordinary house (CF11).

**20.30** The Canes Lane improvement of the A414 has already been completed. The section between the Talbot Roundabout at Tylers Green and Aukingford Gardens, Chipping Ongar is still the subject of an improvement scheme (T7).

### **Central Line**

**20.31** London Underground Limited (LUL) closed the Epping to Chipping Ongar branch of the Central Line including the station at North Weald Bassett. The Council opposed the closure on the grounds that the line provided an important local service. The Council will now endeavour to secure its future by promoting its use for leisure purposes (e.g. a steam railway). To this end, the site of the station and the land adjacent will be protected from development which would prevent this occurring (T2).

## **CHIPPING ONGAR**

### **The Bypass**

**20.32** The Plan reiterates the long-established need for the Chipping Ongar by-pass on the eastern side of the town. The County Council, as the highway

authority, is responsible for building the road. However, given the limited financial resources available and other priorities elsewhere in the County, it has been estimated that construction is still at least 15 years away and possibly almost 40 (i.e. 2030).

**20.33** It is as a consequence of the by-pass being unlikely to be built in the foreseeable future that two 'enabling' schemes have been put before the Council by private landowners. One of these is the 'Fresh Face for Ongar' (which has been widely publicised locally). The other is 'An Alternative Development for Ongar'. Both involve the developer making a substantial financial contribution to the by-pass (thereby 'enabling' the by-pass to be brought forward) in exchange for planning permission to build houses on approximately 30 acres of Green Belt land adjacent to the town. Both schemes have been rejected for the following reasons:-

- there is no current "need" for additional private housing in Ongar;
- the sites identified for development are not suitable; and
- the schemes appear contrary to current Government guidance and are therefore likely to be unacceptable.

**20.34** However, the situation will be reconsidered when the Plan is reviewed (in about 5 years). It may be that, by that time, circumstances will have changed and there may be scope for such a scheme.  
Town Centre Development

**20.35** It is proposed that the site of the former infants school at Basons Lane be developed as a supermarket in response to local demand (STC6). The site is not large enough on its own, however, and consequently the car park is to be located on the former school playing fields in the Green Belt.

### **Central Line**

**20.36** London Underground Limited (LUL) has closed the Epping to Ongar branch of the Central Line. The Council opposed this on the grounds that it provided an important local service. However, the Council will endeavour to secure its future to promote rail based transport and its use for leisure purposes (e.g. a steam railway). To this end, the site of the station yard will be protected from development which would prevent this occurring (T2).

### **Other Development Sites**

**20.37** The site of the former Ongar Comprehensive School is in mixed-use (including B1 (business) and adult education). That part of the site which is outside the Green Belt is allocated for community uses (including the continuation of the leisure centre, enterprise centre, adult education and youth facilities) with any surplus land being available for residential development (CF7)

**20.38** All plant and buildings at the Leca Works have now been removed from the site. There are proposals for the creation of a Parish Park. Tipping and waste disposal on the adjacent site will continue although that is to cease by 2004 and the filled area returned to agricultural use.

**20.39** The previous allocation of land for industrial development at Hallsford Bridge is removed. An alternative allocation is made at North Weald Airfield (E6).

### **ROYDON/NAZEING/SHEERING**

#### **Land Allocations**

**20.40** The northern part of the District is virtually all Green Belt, with the only exceptions being these three main settlements which it surrounds tightly. There is consequently little scope for development in this area with the Lee Valley Regional Park being likely to witness the greatest change.

**20.41** South of Sheering Mill Lane, Lower Sheering retains its allocation for residential development (H2). The Maltings at Lower Sheering are to remain in industrial/commercial uses together with the sites of the Nazeing glassworks and Marshgate works (E1).

#### **Residential Extensions**

**20.42** The policy covering the nature of residential extensions that will be permitted in the Green Belt (GB14) is somewhat less restrictive than previously. This is in order to be more responsive to changing living standards in recognition of people's expectations of progressively more living space. Extensions will, however, continue to be tightly controlled. They will be considered in the light of their effect on the character and appearance of both the building and the countryside as well as the adequacy of the living accommodation.

#### **Shops**

**20.43** The Plan seeks to protect corner shops and village shops from changing to other types of use

(STC10) and promotes the development of small village shops (STC4). This applies particularly to those which provide a post office or other essential local need.

**20.44** Farm shops are permitted, subject to strict criteria about the origin of the goods sold, the nature of the building and traffic generation (GB12). New buildings to be used as garden centres will, however, not be permitted. (GB6).

#### **Lee Valley Park**

**20.45** The Plan incorporates a presumption in favour of outdoor leisure uses in the Park (GB10) and permits built development subject to criteria including scale, location, design and landscaping (RST24). One such development is a possible watersports centre at Glen Faba (RST25) which could incorporate leisure chalets (RST26).

**20.46** Development within the chalet estates at Carthage and Riverside will not be permitted where this would prejudice the Park Authority's intentions (RST9).

#### **Roads**

**20.47** Whilst scope for any Motorway Service Area to serve the M11 is very limited in this locality, any proposals will be assessed against appropriate criteria. (T9).

**20.48** Essex and Hertfordshire County Councils have previously considered link roads between the A414 and M11. Four possible routes were considered, each one crossing the District south west of Sheering. The District Council considers all four to be unacceptable in environmental and traffic terms and the scheme has been abandoned. In the event of the scheme being resurrected the District Council will consider any proposal in the light of appropriate criteria (T5).

#### **WALTHAM ABBEY**

#### **Key Sites**

**20.49** Waltham Abbey includes some of the key development sites in the District following the demise of the armaments and explosives industry locally. There are two such sites, both of which are mainly, if not entirely in the Green Belt. Development of the sites is justified, despite their Green Belt status, as the only means of bringing them back into some form of beneficial use given that they are heavily contaminated with explosive material. Each site is the subject of a specific policy in the Plan. The main points relating to each site

are set out below:-

#### **(i) Former Royal Ordnance Site**

**20.50** This is the site immediately south of the M25. The proposals entail industrial uses and housing on the area north of Black Ditch Road. To the south of that land outdoor recreational uses and/or other 'open air' uses will be sought - e.g. a golf course (GB20).

**20.51** Proposals also incorporate a new road linking junction 26 on the M25 with Highbridge Street. This will effectively form a southern by-pass to the town. The London Borough of Enfield is promoting a new 'east-west' link road (NGAR) between this by-pass and the North-South road in Enfield. The District Council will consider such a link road in terms of its impact upon both traffic locally and the appearance of the landscape (T5).

#### **(ii) Former Royal Gunpowder Factory Site**

**20.52** This site is a Conservation Area and the greater part of it is also a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Emphasis must be placed on preserving and enhancing that which is of merit on the site. Its development potential is therefore limited with the scope focusing on tourism and heritage-related facilities including the establishment of a gunpowder museum and possibly a natural history museum. There will, however, be some scope for business/residential/leisure development (HC16).

#### **Other Development Sites**

**20.53** Scope for additional retail development in or adjacent to the town centre is very limited.

**20.54** There is a potentially extensive site, currently in multiple-ownership, on the south side of Highbridge Street. Its prominent location at the approach to the town from the west is such that its development would have to be in keeping with the character of the Conservation Area (STC5).

**20.55** Part of the former Honey Lane site was earmarked for a replacement ambulance station but was declared surplus to NHS requirements as a whole. The Ambulance Service does not consider this to be a problem and does not anticipate a new station being necessary until the late 1990s at the earliest. It has not specified a need in terms of either size or location and, consequently, this Plan makes no provision for a new ambulance station.

**20.56** The existing housing allocation at Honey Lane (on the site of the former hospital) is



maintained (H2). This follows the Health Authority having declared it surplus to requirements despite 2 hectares having been reserved for health care facilities when the hospital was closed.

### **Open Spaces**

**20.57** The existing major open spaces within the Ninefields estates are to be protected from development. However, the Council will consider alternative management schemes for them. This could entail tree and/or shrub planting to promote more attractive and functional areas, similar to a park (LL5 and LL6).

### **Motorway**

**20.58** The DETR currently has no intentions to widen the M25 in this vicinity. However if any widening is considered in the future it is likely to entail incorporating an additional (fourth) lane by:-

- (1) minor widening of the existing carriageway;
- (2) narrowing the existing lanes;
- (3) utilising the existing hard shoulder; or
- (4) some combination of (1), (2) and (3).

**20.59** The minimum gap between motorway service areas has been reduced from 30 to 15 miles. This means that there is potential for an MSA on the M25 between Waltham Abbey and Theydon Mount, although 4 applications on 3 sites were dismissed following a Public Inquiry. The Council will therefore consider applications for MSAs in that vicinity having regard to the extent of the need for the MSA and the effect it would have upon the landscape and the Green Belt (T9).

### **Other Roads**

**20.60** The Council has previously stated that it views the construction of a link road between Upshire Road and the M25/A121 junction (junction 26) as an essential step in the proper management of traffic in the area. Such a road (Old Shire Lane) has already been partially built. However, its completion would attract more traffic onto Upshire Road to the detriment of the residential environment. Consequently, a new road around the northern edge of the town would also be desirable at the same time as the completion of Old Shire Lane. The County's priorities mean that this is unlikely in the foreseeable future, by which time a bypass may have been created around the southern side of the town.

**20.61** The B194 (Crooked Mile) has previously been earmarked for improvement by the County Council. The scheme has now been abandoned but the District Council considers that more modest improvements should be undertaken to rectify the current danger to road safety.

# APPENDICES

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**APPENDIX 1(a)**

**STATEMENT OF GENERAL CONFORMITY OF THE DEPOSIT PLAN**

Essex County Council  
Chief Executive and Clerk's Department  
PO Box 11, County Hall, Chelmsford CM1 1LX

Telephone: Chelmsford (0245) 492211 extension 20451  
Telex: 995910 DX: 3315  
Fax: (0245) 352710  
Legal Services Division Fax: (0245) 346994

Your ref PL/AS/PG/JJS/17.9/100  
Our ref KMJ/ENV.82/44  
Date 27 May 1994  
Enquiries to: Mrs K Johnson  
Direct telephone line: (0245)



Essex County Council

Robert W Adcock CBE DL  
Chief Executive and Clerk

K W S Ashurst  
Deputy Chief Executive and Clerk

Dear Sir

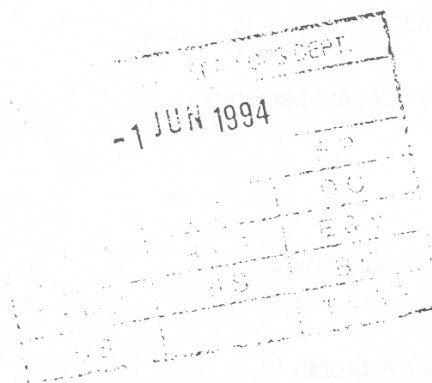
Epping Forest District Local Plan Draft Deposit Copy: April 1994

I write to advise you that the above matter was considered by this Authority's Development Control Sub-Committee at its meeting on 27 May 1994, when it was resolved that a statement of general conformity with the unaltered Structure Plan, the First Alteration approved by the Secretary of State, and the Second Alteration as recently approved, be issued to the Epping Forest District Local Plan Draft Deposit Copy.

A copy of the report considered by members is attached for your information.

Yours faithfully

for Chief Executive and Clerk



Mr A Storah  
Epping Forest District Council  
Civic Offices  
EPHING  
Essex  
CM16 4BZ

**APPENDIX 1(b)**

**STATEMENT OF GENERAL CONFORMITY OF MODIFICATIONS TO THE DEPOSIT PLAN**

Essex County Council  
County Secretary's Department  
PO Box 11, County Hall, Chelmsford CM1 1LX

Telephone: Direct Line: (01245) 430451  
Switchboard: (01245) 492211 ext.

Fax: (01245) 280180  
DX: 123300 Chelmsford 7

Your ref

Our ref KMJ/ENV.82/44

Date 26 September 1997

Enquiries to: Karen Johnson



C J Trowhill LLB, Honorary Solicitor  
County Secretary

Dear Sir

Epping Forest District Draft Local Plan - Proposed Modifications

I refer to your letter dated 8 August 1997 in respect of the Proposed Modifications to the Epping Forest District Local Plan.

The attached report was considered by this Authority's Development Control Sub-Committee at its meeting on 26 September 1997 when it was resolved that no strategic objections should be raised to the proposed modifications.

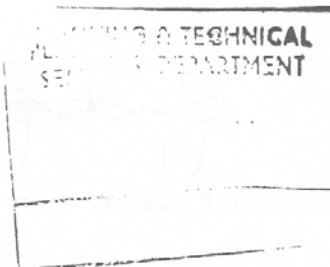
Yours faithfully

*Karen Johnson*

for County Secretary

cc County Planner

Mr A Storah  
Epping Forest District Council  
Planning Services  
Civic Offices  
Epping  
Essex CM16 4BZ



**APPENDIX 2****ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS OF POLICIES****Global/National sustainability**

	Green Belt	Heritage Conservation	Nature Conservation	Recycling & Pollution	Housing	Employment	Shopping & Town Centres	Recreation, Sport & Tourism	Community Facilities	Utilities	Design & the Built Environment	Landscape & Landscaping	Transport	Implementation
1. Air quality	✓					✓							✓	
2. Water quality				✓						✓				
3. CO <sub>2</sub> reduction			✓									✓		
4. Fuel conservation	X					✓	✓	?	✓		✓		✓✓	
5. Other mineral conservation				✓✓										
6. Countryside	✓✓				✓	✓	✓							✓
7. Wildlife habitats	✓		✓✓					✓				✓		
8. Cultural heritage		✓✓												

**Local environmental considerations**

9. Air quality	✓					✓							✓	
10. Water quality				✓✓						✓				
11. Water conservation								✓		✓				
12. Land/soil quality				✓						✓				
13. Wildlife habitats	✓		✓✓					✓				✓		✓
14. Cultural heritage		✓✓												
15. Green Belt	✓✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓
16. Rural environment	✓✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓✓	✓✓	?	✓
17. Urban environment	?	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓

**Key**

✓ Positive Impact

✓✓ Strong Positive Impact

X Negative Impact

? Mixed/Unknown Impact

### **APPENDIX 3**

#### **BUILDINGS OF SPECIAL ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC INTEREST: PRINCIPLES OF SELECTION**

The principles of selection for the lists were drawn up by the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission and approved by the Secretary of State. They cover four main groups:

- i) All buildings built before 1700 which survive in anything like their original condition are listed;
- ii) Most buildings of 1700 to 1840 are listed, though selection is necessary;
- iii) For buildings built between 1840 and 1914 only those of definite quality and character are listed, and the selection is designed to include the principal works of the principal architects;
- iv) Only selected inter-war buildings of high quality are listed covering three main styles -modern, classical and others.

After 1939 a few outstanding buildings are listed and there is an ongoing review of the listing of modern buildings provided they are over thirty years old.

A decision to list a building is taken solely on the grounds of its architectural or historic interest. There is no formal right of appeal against this decision, at the moment of listing, but an owner may at any time put to the Secretary of State evidence that the building does not possess the architectural or historic interest identified. If it is accepted that the original assessment of a building's interest was wrong in this way, and that it does not possess special interest, the building may then be "de-listed".

In choosing buildings, particular attention is paid to:

- \* **Special value within certain types, either for architectural or planning reasons or as illustrating social and economic history (for instance, industrial buildings, railway stations, schools, hospitals, theatres, town halls, markets, exchanges, almshouses, prisons, lock-ups, mills etc);**
- \* **Technical innovation or virtuosity (for instance cast iron, prefabrication, or the early use of concrete);**
- \* **Association with well-known characters or events;**
- \* **Group value, especially as examples of town planning (for instance, squares, terraces or model villages).**

There is no such thing as a "listed facade" or "listed interior" - all of the building is covered by the Listing. The description in the official list is not intended to provide a comprehensive record of all the features of importance - but merely to identify the building.

Any object or structure fixed to a Listed Building or forming part of the land comprised within the curtilage of a Listed Building (even if it is not attached to the building) is also listed. This may, for example, include boundary and garden walls and gates.

**APPENDIX 4 - HOUSING LAND SUPPLY AS AT 1 APRIL 1995**

		<b>Dwellings (net)</b>
(a)	Completions 1986-1995	3,291
(b)	Outstanding capacity on large sites with planning permission (12 or more dwellings) :-	
	(i) Lawrence Moorings, Sheering.	7
	(ii) North Farm, Loughton.	137
	(iii) Fairmead Annexe, Loughton.	120
	(iv) 100-102 Princes Road, Buckhurst Hill	17
	(v) Grove Wood House/2 Manor Road, Chigwell.	13
	(vi) Centre Drive, Epping.	90
	(vii) Green Close, Epping Upland.	25
	(viii) 1-36 The Mead/Pancroft, Abridge.	14
	(ix) VAG Garage site, Abridge.	28
	(x) Hyde Mead House, Nazeing.	16
	(xi) Upshire Service Station.	18
	(xii) Littlebrook, Harlow Rd, Roydon.	21
	(xiii) Lawence House, Sun Street, Sheering.	12
	(xiv) R/o Honey Lane, Waltham Abbey.	25
	(xv) R/o 155-161 High St, Chipping Ongar.	31
	(xvi) Former Motor Depot, Chipping Ongar.	17
	(xvii) Fat Factory, Stapleford Abbots.	20
	(xviii) Honey Lane, Waltham Abbey.	48
	(xix) Brook School, Loughton.	180
	(xx) Powdermill Lane, Waltham Abbey.	83
	(xxi) Hereward School, Loughton.	37
	(xxii) Cripsey Avenue, Chipping Ongar.	19
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>978</b>
(c)	Allocated sites with planning permission	
	(i) Land south of Pike Way, North Weald Bassett.	40
	(ii) Sheering Mill Lane, Sheering.	30
	(iii) Former Epping Forest High School, Loughton.	100
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>170</b>
(d)	Likely supply from sites without permission	
	(i) St Lukes School site, Loughton.	28
	(ii) RARDE site, Waltham Abbey.	50
	(iii) Masons Way, Waltham Abbey.	12
	(iv) 36-46 Highbridge Street, Waltham Abbey.	20
	(v) Brentwood Road, Chipping Ongar	15
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>125</b>
(e)	Small sites	180 <sub>1</sub>
(f)	Royal Ordnance site	250
	<b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>	<b>4994</b>

<sub>1</sub> Assumes 30 dwellings per year.



## **APPENDIX 5**

### **CAR PARKING STANDARDS\***

Type of Development	Number of car parking spaces
Residential dwellings:-	
3 bedrooms or less	2
4 bedrooms or more	3
Sheltered housing for elderly persons	1+1 visitor's space for resident warden and 1 per 2 sheltered units.
Community homes	2 per unit of resident staff accommodation + 1 per 4 other bedspaces.
Industry	2 + 1 per 50m gross (except where office element exceeds 200m <sup>2</sup> ).
Warehousing	3+1 per 280m <sup>2</sup> gross but on merit where more than 5,500m <sup>2</sup> or according to needs of a specified client.
Cash and Carry Wholesale Warehouses	8 + 1 per 280m <sup>2</sup> gross for staff + 1 per 100m <sup>2</sup> for customers but on merit where more than 5,500m <sup>2</sup> .
High technology industry	1 per 35m <sup>2</sup> gross.
Offices:-	
providing services direct to the public	2 + 1 per 25m <sup>2</sup> gross.
others	2 + 1 per 30m <sup>2</sup> gross.
Shops:-	
0-499m <sup>2</sup> gross	1 + 1 per 25m <sup>2</sup>
500m <sup>2</sup> - 1,999m <sup>2</sup> gross	1 + 1 per 20m <sup>2</sup>
2,000m <sup>2</sup> gross +	1 + 1 per 10m <sup>2</sup>
Retail Warehouse:-	
D.I.Y.	1 per 15m <sup>2</sup>
Other	1 per 30m <sup>2</sup>
Retail Parks	Depending upon expected composition.
Petrol Filling Stations	To meet staff requirements + additional if shop.
Service Garages	4 + 1 per 35m <sup>2</sup> or 1 per employee.
Car Sales Showrooms	2 + 1 per 45m <sup>2</sup> (net).
Hotels	1 per bedroom (guests and staff).
Public Houses	1 per 3m <sup>2</sup> of covered public floor area.
Restaurants	1 per 5m <sup>2</sup> of dining area.
Places of Worship	1 per 10 seats or 1 per 10m <sup>2</sup> whichever is the greater or as for 'Places of Assembly' if used as such.
Hospitals	1 per doctor + 2 per 3 beds or rooms.
Health Centres, Surgeries & Clinics	1 per practitioner + 1 per 2 members of staff (at busiest time)

	+ 2 per consulting room.
Day Care Centres:-	
Physically handicapped	1 per 2 staff + 1 per 4 persons attending.
Elderly	1 per 2 staff + 1 per 8 persons attending + provision for 'meals on wheels'.
Others	1 per 2 staff.
Places of Assembly	1 per 3 staff + 1 per 4m <sup>2</sup> of public floorspace.
Cultural Buildings	2 + 1 per 30m <sup>2</sup> of public floorspace.
Public Entertainment Buildings	1 per 4m <sup>2</sup> (net) of public floorspace.
Sports Grounds	1 per 2 people expected to attend at any one time.
Indoor Sports/Leisure Centres	1 per 10m <sup>2</sup> of public floorspace or according to specialised sports.
Schools and Colleges of Further Education:-	
Primary and Infant	1 per teaching staff + 1 per classroom (to 10 maximum).
Secondary	1 per teaching staff + 1 per classroom (to 20 maximum).
Colleges of Further Education	1 per teaching staff + 1 per 6 students.
Day Nurseries	1 per teaching staff + appropriate waiting and turning areas.

All other uses will be in accordance with the County Council's document 'Standards for Car Parking in Essex'.

\*These standards are advisory and intended to form a consistent basis for discussion between applicants and the District Council.

## **APPENDIX 6**

### **HOUSING NEED FOR A 5-YEAR PERIOD**

Government guidance (PPG3: Annex C) puts forward 'the residual method' as the normal way of determining a five years' land requirement. It entails identifying the specific need for each of the 5 years and totalling them. This approach will be utilised in future Annual Housing Bulletins. As at 1 April 1994 the implied 5 year requirement was 930 dwellings.

The Structure Plan: Approved First Alteration puts forward a general programming of housing development. This is "... in order to achieve the orderly development of the County". The programming for Epping Forest District is set out below:-

<b>1986-1991</b>	<b>1991-1996</b>	<b>1996-2001</b>	<b>1986-2001</b>
1,750	1,400	500	3,650

Source: Essex Structure Plan: Approved First Alteration - Explanatory Memorandum

The current Structure Plan has increased the overall housing requirement in this District by a further 650 dwellings (ie from 3,650 to 4,300 dwellings (gross) (4,100 net)). No indication of any suggested phasing has been given. It has therefore been assumed that the 650 dwellings will be spread evenly through the remaining period (1994/95 - 2000/01), ie approximately 80 dwellings per annum. The transfer of the Enfield island site to the London Borough of Enfield will result in both the overall housing requirement in the District and the five years' land requirement being reduced accordingly.

It was anticipated that sites (i) - (vii) and (ix) in Policy H2 would be amongst the first to be developed whereas site (viii) - the former Royal Ordnance site at Waltham Abbey - would not come forward until the problems associated mainly with decontamination were resolved.

The housing need for a 5 year period in the Plan may therefore be calculated from the following table. It may, however, be either increased or decreased (to reflect either unmet need or excessive supply in previous years). Any such variations will be determined by regular monitoring.

#### Annual Housing Needs

<b>Year</b>	<b>General Programming<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Assumed annual increase<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Total<sup>3</sup></b>
1994/95	280	80	360
1995/96	280	80	360
1996/97	100	80	180
1997/98	100	80	180
1998/99	100	80	180
1999/2000	100	80	180
2000/2001	100	80	180

Source: EFDC April 1994

<sup>1</sup> 5 year programme broken down (ie 1991-96 - 1,400/5).

<sup>2</sup> Additional 650 dwellings equally spread through 7 years.

<sup>3</sup> Excludes any unmet need or excess supply.

## **APPENDIX 7**

### **GLOSSARY**

**AFFORDABLE HOUSING** - housing provided with a subsidy to enable the asking prices/rents to be lower than the prevailing market prices/rents in the locality. It is available to those whose incomes would deny them the opportunity to buy or rent on the open market, and is subject to arrangements to ensure its availability in perpetuity.

**ALLOCATED SITES** - those identified for specific uses in Local Plans or other published policy documents.

**ANCIENT LANDSCAPE** - A landscape designation by the County Council that must contain a significant assemblage of visible features, both man-made and semi-natural, of pre-1600 origin.

**ANCIENT MONUMENT** - Archaeological remains scheduled under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 and afforded special protection.

**ANCIENT WOODLAND** - Woods which have had a continuous history of tree cover since at least 1600 to the present and which now bear stands of native trees which were not obviously planted (designated by English Nature).

**ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION** - A provision of the General Permitted Development Order 1995 (see below) that allows for the removal of permitted development rights in certain areas.

**BRIDLEWAYS** - Use is permitted for walkers, horse-riders (including led horses), cyclists pushing or riding pedal cycles and invalid carriages. Apart from the latter, no powered vehicles are permitted.

**BUSINESS USE (CLASS B1)** - Use for the purposes of offices, research and development or industry, providing that such a use can be carried out in a residential area without detriment to the amenity of that area.

**BUILDING PRESERVATION NOTICE** - The Council has powers to serve a Building Preservation Notice to protect buildings of special architectural or historic interest which are not "listed" if they are considered worthy of "listing" and thought to be under threat. The notice "lists" the building for six months, making it subject to Listed Building controls.

**BYWAYS** - (roads used as public paths) - vehicles, carts and carriages (whether powered or not) are permitted, having regard to the state or condition of the routes and their use in the past. Otherwise the rights are the same as for users of bridleways.

**CENSUS** - A ten year population count carried out by The Office of Population Censuses and Surveys (OPCS). The 1991 Census is the most recent and accurate population count.

**CHANGE OF USE** - The use of a building or other land for a different purpose. In considering a change of use it is normally necessary to establish whether the change is "material" and whether by virtue of the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 development requiring planning permission is involved.

**COMMONS** - Commoners have particular rights - usually to graze cattle or horses, or to cut turf or peat, or to take sand or gravel for domestic use (Common Land is registered under the Commons Registration Act 1965).

**CONDITIONS** - Clauses attached to a planning permission considered necessary, relevant, enforceable, precise and reasonable to enable a development to proceed where it might otherwise be necessary to refuse permission.

**CONSERVATION AREA** - An area designated under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as an area where it is desirable to preserve or enhance the character of its special architectural or historic interest.

**CONVENIENCE GOODS** - Those often bought on a daily basis (eg food, newspapers, cigarettes, etc).

**COUNTY WILDLIFE SITES** - Sites identified as important habitats by the Essex Wildlife Trust in accordance with guidelines laid down by English Nature's Habitat Mapping Manual (1990). Previously known as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation.

**CURRENT STRUCTURE PLAN** - Essex Structure Plan - Approved by the Secretary of State in 1982; and Essex Structure Plan: First Alteration - approved by the Secretary of State in 1991; and Essex Structure Plan: Second Alteration as adopted by Essex County Council in June 1994.

**DEVELOPMENT** - The carrying out of building, engineering, mining, or other operations in, on, and over or under land or the making of a material change in the use of any buildings or other land.

**DEVELOPMENT BRIEFS** - guides to the amount, type and design of development that will be permitted on specific sites.

**DEVELOPMENT PLAN** - A term covering a wide variety of statutory plans which show the disposition of land uses expected to materialise at some time in the future. Development Plans include Structure Plans, District - wide Local Plans, Waste Local Plans, Minerals Local Plans and Unitary Development Plans .

**DURABLE GOODS** - Those bought on an irregular basis (eg clothes, furniture, electrical goods, DIY equipment).

**ECONOMIC OVERHEATING** - This is the situation whereby the pressure for certain types of buoyant commercial development (ie finance-related offices and high-tech) result in:-

- the displacement of other 'more traditional' uses which provide certain types of job opportunities;
- increasing unemployment amongst those people without the sought-after skills;
- skill shortages and consequential recruitment difficulties;
- more people wanting to live in the District;
- inflated house prices;
- increased pressure for housing;
- increased pressure for the release of land for housing and therefore more pressure on the Green Belt;
- increased traffic and increased traffic congestion;
- an overall deterioration in general living conditions.

**EDGE-OF-CENTRE (or edge-of-town)** - A location within reasonable walking distance of the centre, and providing parking facilities that serve the centre as well as the store, thus enabling one trip to serve several purposes.

**EMPLOYMENT DENSITY** - The number of persons employed per unit of floor area.

**EMPLOYMENT-GENERATING USE** - A use primarily for business, industrial or warehousing purposes (B1-B8 Use Classes) - not including retail uses, waste disposal, or financial and professional services (A2 Use).

**ENABLING DEVELOPMENT** - Development which enables the Council to secure a planning benefit which would not otherwise be immediately forthcoming.

**ENFORCEMENT ACTION** - A procedure used to seek the remedying of a breach of planning control involving either (a) unauthorised development or (b) non-compliance with conditions or limitations subject to which planning permission was granted.

**ENGLISH HERITAGE** - The Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Commission for England - a body established by the National Heritage Act 1983 (i) to advise the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions on (a) the preservation of ancient monuments and historic buildings, and (b) the preservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas and (ii) to promote the public enjoyment of the above.

**ENGLISH NATURE** - the Nature Conservancy Council for England (established by the Environmental Protection Act 1990).

**ESTABLISHED USE** - The Planning and Compensation Act 1991 (below) introduced a new provision which means that a use can be "established" if it has been in operation for a ten year period.

**FARM SHOPS** - The retailing of farm produce direct to the public at the farm on which it was grown.

**FOOTPATHS** - The public have a right of way on foot only. Prams, pushchairs and invalid carriages are permissible, but the condition of many paths may preclude such use. Walkers can be accompanied by dogs but may not lead horses.

**FRONTAGE** - The ground floor front of a building.

**GARDEN CENTRE** - Premises retailing plants, gardening and horticultural materials, supplies and equipment, including garden furniture and pet foods.

**GENERAL PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT ORDER 1995** - This sets out those categories of development which may be carried out without the need to apply for planning permission (called "permitted development"). The local authority can make legal directions requiring planning permission to be obtained for particular types of development which would normally be allowed by an Order (eg planning condition or Article 4 direction).

**GENERAL INDUSTRIAL USE (CLASS B2)** - An industrial use which cannot be carried out in any residential area without detriment to the amenity of that area, and which is not a heavy or special industry (Classes B3-B7) of the Use Classes Order (see below).

**GLASSHOUSES** - Those built for commercial horticultural undertakings.

**GREEN BELT** - An area of open space around major town and cities within which development will not normally be permitted for uses other than those appropriate to a rural area.

**GYPSIES** - persons of nomadic habit of life, whatever their race or origin.

**HABITABLE ROOM** - A room within a dwelling the primary purposes of which is for living, sleeping or dining - including kitchens (where the total area is more than 13 sq.m including fittings) or where the dining space is divided from the working area by a moveable partition. Rooms exceeding 20 sq.m readily capable of division will be counted as two.

**HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES** - A comprehensive list is given in Schedule 1 of The Planning (Hazardous Substances) Regulations 1992.

**HEAVY OR SPECIAL INDUSTRY (B3-B7)** - One of a number of manufacturing processes which cause particular nuisances because of the nature of the produce manufactured or the process carried out. Described under Classes B3-B7 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987. Often called "bad neighbour" industries.

**HISTORIC PARKS AND GARDENS** - Those on a Register (produced by English Heritage) of parks and gardens considered to be essential to an understanding of the history of the landscape.

**HOUSING ASSOCIATION** - A non-profit making organisation registered with the Housing Corporation whose purpose is the providing, constructing, improving or managing of houses for sale or rent.

**HOUSING INVESTMENT PROGRAMME (H.I.P.)** - Government requirements of the District Council for public sector housing provision.

**INFRASTRUCTURE** - The physical services necessary for buildings to be useable, e.g. roads, sewers, water, electricity and gas.

**INTENSIFICATION** - Increasing densities within existing residential areas through the bringing forward of development of unidentified sites.

**LEISURE PLOTS** - Small areas originally developed for recreational and/or holiday use which often involved the construction of a chalet.

**LISTED BUILDING** - A building included in a list compiled by the Secretary of State as a building of special architectural or historic interest.

**LOCAL ENVIRONMENT AGENCY PLANS** - Non-statutory plans prepared by the Environment Agency, based on river catchment areas and dealing with all issues which could influence the quality of air, land or water.

**LOCAL EQUIPPED AREAS FOR PLAY** - Unsupervised play areas suitable for young children (defined by the National Playing Fields Association).

**LOCAL PLANS** - (a) Detailed land use plans for specific areas, produced by District Councils; (b) Plans dealing with minerals and waste, produced by the County Council. Local Plans are required to be in accordance with the STRUCTURE PLAN (see below).

**LOCAL ROADS** - Through roads to distribute traffic within environmental areas and serving as secondary access to small rural communities.

**LOW COST HOUSING** - See **AFFORDABLE HOUSING**.

**MOBILITY HOUSING** - Dwellings suitable for easy adaptation, without structural alteration, for disabled people, including those confined to wheelchairs. The buildings must have suitable sized rooms, doors and external access.

**MONITORING** - The process of collecting and checking information about what actually happens once a Plan or policy is implemented, to see whether changes need to be made to the Plan in response to changing circumstances.

**NON-CONFORMING USES** - Established industrial/commercial uses which cause a particular nuisance to neighbours (through either the activities undertaken or the amount or type of traffic generated).

**NON-RETAIL USE** - Any use which is not covered in Class A1 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, including uses in the Food and Drink Use Class.

**OVERCROWDING** - This is statutorily defined as occurring when two people over 18 of differing sexes not living together as man and wife must sleep in the same room; or when the number of people sleeping in a house is more than that permitted in Section 326 of the 1985 Housing Act.

**PARK AND RIDE** - Parking typically at the edge of a town and making the journey to the centre by a connecting bus or rail service.

**PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT** - The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order, 1995 grants planning permission for a number of specified developments subject to certain conditions. This is known as "permitted development".

**PERPETUITY** - Legal term meaning "for ever".

**PLANNING AGREEMENT** - Legal agreement made between a developer and the local authority under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, by which the developer may carry out works, make payments, or agree to certain conditions covering matters which are outside the scope of a planning permission and which may include off-site works.

**PLANNING GAIN** - The benefits (either physical or financial) that may be provided in addition to, or made necessary by development proposals (see also PLANNING AGREEMENT and PLANNING OBLIGATION).

**PLANNING OBLIGATION** - The legal agreement, or unilateral undertaking whereby "planning gain" is secured.

**PLANNING PERMISSION** - A permit, usually issued by a local planning authority, under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to carry out development. The Secretary of State may also issue planning permission following an appeal against a refusal or otherwise.

**PLANNING POLICY GUIDANCE NOTES (PPGs)** - Guidance issued by the Government on various aspects of planning. PPGs relevant to this District comprise:-

PPG 1(Revised)	General Policy and Principles (Feb 97)
PPG 2(Revised)	Green Belts (Jan 95)
PPG 3	Housing (March 92)
PPG 4	Industrial and Commercial Development and Small Firms (Nov 92)
PPG 6(Revised)	Town Centres and Retail Developments (June 96)
PPG 7(Revised)	The Countryside - Environmental Quality and Economic and Social Development (Feb 97)
PPG 8	Telecommunications (Dec 92)
PPG 9	Nature Conservation (Oct 94)
PPG 12	Development Plans and Regional Planning Guidance (Feb 92)
PPG 13	Transport (March 1994)
PPG 14	Development on Unstable Land (April 90)
PPG 14(Annex 1)	Development on Unstable Land: Landslides And Planning (March 1996)
PPG 15	Planning and the Historic Environment (Sept 94)
PPG 16	Archaeology and Planning (Nov 90)
PPG 17	Sport and Recreation (Sept 91)
PPG 18	Enforcing Planning Control (Dec 91)
PPG 19	Outdoor Advertisement Control (Mar 92)
PPG 21	Tourism (Nov 92)
PPG 22	Renewable Energy (Feb 93) (Annex Oct 1994)
PPG 23	Planning and Pollution Control (July 1994)
PPG 24	Planning and Noise (Sept 1994)
RPG 9	Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (March 1994)

**PLAY AREA** - Piece of land reserved and laid out for children's play, either forming part of a larger open space (e.g. a park) or in a residential area. Usually provided with purpose-designed play equipment.

**PRINCIPAL COUNTY DISTRIBUTOR** - Roads carrying relatively large amounts of traffic and acting as feeder roads to towns and as distribution networks within towns.

**PRIVATE OPEN SPACE** - Privately owned open land, generally used for recreation or leisure activities (including active or passive uses), but restricted by owner to certain groups (e.g. private sports grounds, grounds of large institutions).

**PRIVATE SPACES** - Normally rear gardens of houses and flats which are only used by the occupants of the buildings to which they relate. They provide valuable areas for private outdoor activities.

**PROPOSALS MAP** - A statutory part of a Local Plan showing, in map form, where policies apply.

**PROTECTED LANES** - Lanes designated by the County Council as either making a significant contribution to the character of the countryside or having a particular historic value.

**PUBLIC OPEN SPACE** - Outdoor areas which are open to the public for general enjoyment and recreation.

**PUBLIC SPACES** - Areas such as streets, footpaths, squares, parks and other open areas which can, by their nature, be used by everyone.

**PUBLIC TRANSPORT PLAN** - A document published by the County Council setting out its policies and proposals for the provision of public transport. The PTP is published in full once every four years. It comprises a detailed statement of policies (Part 1) and an implementation review (Part 2). The latter is updated annually and



published in each of the three intervening years. The PTP complements, and is published simultaneously with, the submission of the TPP for the five-year period to which the TPP relates.

**RAILHEADING** - Commuters driving not to the nearest underground station but to one nearer to their destination which offers them the optimum in terms of ease, safety, cost and location of parking and length and cost of rail journey.

**REGIONAL PRIMARY ROUTES** - These link the main urban areas and the strategic network (motorways).

**RESIDENTIAL DENSITY** - The existing or proposed number of habitable rooms in a given area - usually expressed in terms of habitable rooms per hectare or acre.

**RETAIL WAREHOUSES** - Large single-level stores specialising in the sale of household goods (such as carpets, furniture, electrical goods and bulky DIY items) and catering mainly for car-borne customers and often in out-of-centre locations.

**SECONDARY DISTRIBUTORS** - These link districts within urban areas and are the main access to rural areas.

**SERPLAN** - The London and South East Regional Planning Conference - a planning and transportation organisation which includes the London Borough Councils and the County, Unitary and District Councils for Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, East Sussex, Essex, Hampshire, Hertfordshire, the Isle of Wight, Kent, Oxfordshire, Surrey and West Sussex.

**SHELTERED HOUSING** - Housing purpose-built or converted exclusively for the elderly. Usually grouped, self-contained accommodation with an emergency alarm system, other communal facilities and a resident warden.

**SITES OF IMPORTANCE FOR NATURE CONSERVATION (S.I.N.C.s)** - See **County Wildlife Sites**.

**SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST (S.S.S.I.)** - An area designated as such by English Nature, under the Wildlife and Countryside Acts 1981 and 1985, in view of its particular value and interest as a wildlife habitat.

**SOCIAL HOUSING** - See **AFFORDABLE HOUSING**.

**SPECIAL AREA OF CONSERVATION (S.A.C.)** - Natural and semi-natural habitats supporting species of European importance. Designated by the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions using advice from English Nature. The power to designate derives from the European Communities' Council Directive on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (1992). Member states are required to establish the necessary conservation measures to maintain or restore habitats or populations at or to sustainable levels. Appropriate steps must be taken to avoid deterioration of habitats or disturbance to species.

**SPECIAL PROTECTION AREA (S.P.A.)** - Designated in a similar fashion to S.A.C.s under the EC Directive on the conservation of wild birds (1979). Member states must take measures to maintain populations at safe levels and to preserve, maintain or re-establish a sufficient diversity and area of habitat for particular bird species.

**STRATEGIC ROUTES** - Roads of national importance - particularly motorways.

**STRUCTURE PLAN** - A strategic land use plan produced by the County Council, and covering the County. It is not site-specific and forms a framework for local plans. (See also **CURRENT STRUCTURE PLAN**.)

**SUPERMARKETS** - Single level, self-service stores selling mainly food, with a gross trading floorspace of between about 500 and 2,500 square metres, often with their own car parks.

**SUPERSTORES** - Single level, self-service stores selling mainly food, or food and non-food goods, usually with at least 2,500 square metres gross trading floorspace with dedicated car parks at surface level.

**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT** - Development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the

ability of future generations to meet their own needs. To be sustainable, development should:-  
· ensure the efficient use of land and other resources in environmental terms; and  
· minimise harm to the environment and human health.

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990** - The current statutory basis for town planning in England and Wales, relating to the preparation of Development Plans and to general planning control.

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING DEVELOPMENT ORDERS** - Provision is made in the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990 for the Secretary of State to make Development Orders which amongst other things grant planning permission for certain classes of development, thus obviating the need for a planning application to the Local Planning Authority. The most recent consolidated Development Order was the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development Order) 1995.

**TOWN CRAMMING** - The excessive development or intensification of use of urban areas.

**TRAFFIC CALMING** - The reduction of intrusive effects of motor vehicles, especially speed, by a co-ordinated series of measures including road humps, widening footways/pedestrian areas, planting trees and bushes, speed limits, etc.

**TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SCHEME** - A scheme to promote more efficient traffic movement in a given area, and/or improve the area's environment, by rearranging traffic flows, controlling intersections and regulating times and places for parking.

**TRANSPORT POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES** - A capital spending programme on transport, produced annually by the County Council, for submission to the Government.

**TRAVELLING SHOWPEOPLE** - Self-employed business people who travel the country holding fairs, chiefly during the summer months.

**TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS** - Statutory protection for individual trees, groups, areas or woodlands. Any works to preserved trees require the consent of the planning authority.

**TURNOVER** - The total trading receipts for the year from the sale of goods.

**UNFIT HOUSING** - Those dwellings which are unfit in terms of the Housing Act 1985 and Circular 6/90 'Area Renewal, Unfitness, Slum Clearance and Enforcement Action'.

**URBAN FRINGE** - Area immediately outside the built-up area of a city lying between the suburbs and open countryside. Generally **under most pressure for new development**.

**USE CLASSES ORDER** - The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, which groups land uses into categories (called "use classes"). Changes of use between the classes requires planning permission, with certain exceptions defined by the General Permitted Development Order (see above).

**VILLAGE GREENS** - Areas of land which have been registered for use for sports, recreation or other pastimes. The Commons Registration Act 1965 consolidates all previous legislation.

**VISITABILITY** - The capability for wheelchair users to visit premises including homes other than their own - achieved by specific design criteria.

**WAREHOUSE (B8)** - A building, and/or land, used primarily for the purpose of storage and/or distribution of goods.

**"WINDFALL" SITES** - Sites suitable for housing which come forward during the period of the Plan but which have not been identified during its preparation.

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