

# Chapter 6

## The Economy

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## Chapter 6

### The Economy

#### Introduction

- 6.1 The location of economic development and the consequent travel patterns generated by the development can have consequences on the environment. Employment developments such as industrial buildings, offices, shops and tourist facilities will generate traffic if not located near and well served by public transport. This chapter recognises the impact such employment uses can have on sustainable development.
- 6.2 Even though not perhaps commonly perceived as an industrial or commercial area, the Borough can boast a diverse and successful economic base employing thousands of people. Statistics show 1.2% of the population working in agriculture, 17.8% in manufacturing and 25.5% in distribution and catering (Source: 1991 Census 10% Sample). Major employers include British Aerospace, Normalair Garrett and Penny & Giles. Companies are located across the Borough on industrial estates, the largest area being Bournemouth International Airport at Hurn. The Borough's importance as a tourist centre means that tourism is a valuable industry.
- 6.3 Christchurch Town Centre supports a number of retail outlets providing employment. Retail parks and offices are in evidence across the Borough and a buoyant tourism market also contributes to the economy.
- 6.4 Christchurch is included in the Bournemouth Travel to Work Area and, indeed the movement of workers across local authority boundaries is commonplace. The Local Plan is concerned with retaining and providing a sustainable level of economic activity, and policies highlight constraints as well as opportunities for future economic development. Key economic sectors, namely industry, offices, shopping and tourism are dealt with separately in this chapter.

#### National Planning Guidance

- 6.5 The Government has published a number of Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG) concerned with the issue of employment across a wide field.
- 6.6 PPG 4: Industrial and Commercial Development and Small Firms (1992), emphasises the importance of industrial and commercial activities to the economy and contains a particular emphasis on how local authorities can help small firms through the planning system. The concept of sustainability is reiterated in that locational demands of development need to be carefully balanced against environmental issues. PPG4 states "careful attention to environmental issues makes good economic sense for business and industry".
- 6.7 PPG 6: Town Centres and Retail Developments (1996), attempts to satisfy a number of objectives. These can be summarised as sustaining and enhancing the vitality and

viability of town centres, maximising the use of locations to help competition and reduce the use of cars, encouraging the use of other means of transport and maintaining an efficient, competitive and innovative retail sector.

- 6.8 PPG 7: The Countryside, Environmental Quality and Economic and Social Development (1997) gives advice on how the objective of pursuing sustainable development should be integrated into establishing a diverse rural economy while protecting landscape, wildlife and historic features.
- 6.9 PPG 13: Transport (1994), provides advice on how local authorities should integrate transport and land-use planning. Of particular relevance to this chapter is the advice given on employment generating development and shopping centres.
- 6.10 PPG 21: Tourism (1992) outlines the importance of tourism to the economy and its effect on the environment. It recognises the importance of planning in balancing pressures for tourism use against safeguarding the environment.

### **Regional Planning Guidance**

- 6.11 The Regional Planning Guidance for the South - West advises that Development Plans should provide a framework within which economic development can be encouraged. The guidance relates to various topics which could have an influence on the local economy, for example, tourism, airports and roads. The Plan encourages new business and enterprise in the south - west and Local Plans are encouraged to ensure a supply of employment land is available. Emphasis is given to recognising the potential of smaller towns to provide employment for their own populations, and encouraging rural diversification where compatible with conservation objectives. The importance of tourism to the economy is identified.

### **Structure Plan Policies**

- 6.12 The Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Structure Plan contains policies attempting to encourage employment creation and the development of the economy. Policies are concerned with, for example, industry and commerce, transportation, shopping and tourism. The relevant policies are assessed in more detail in the following sections of this chapter.
- 6.13 Dorset County Council produce an Economic Development Strategy setting out a number of objectives and a programme for action, under the overall aim of securing and promoting the prosperity of the economy and people of Dorset while conserving the environmental quality of the county.

### **The Borough Council Economic Development Strategy**

- 6.14 The Borough Council is committed to encouraging the sustainable development of Christchurch having respect to social, economic and environmental considerations. Realising the overall economic climate will ultimately constitute the main effect on the local economy, the Council is taking a realistic approach to promoting economic development. The Council does not have an economic development budget to develop

land and infrastructure for employment use. However, economic activity is encouraged through the achievement of objectives using a number of initiatives.

6.15 In an attempt to instigate an economic development strategy a series of workshops involving the public sector and members of the local business community have been held. These seminars have established the aspirations of the local business community and established a joint public/private sector dialogue to feed into an economic development strategy along with other researched information. The Council's Economic Development Strategy for 1999/2000 identifies the following seven Action Programmes which comprise main areas of economic development activity:

- Enhancing Christchurch Town Centre
- Anti-Poverty/Social Inclusion
- Tourism Promotion
- Support for Existing Businesses
- Support for New Start Businesses
- Inward Investment
- Europe

6.16 Policies throughout this Local Plan where appropriate reflect the general emphasis of the Economic Development Strategy and act as a major tool in the implementation of economic objectives.

## **Industry**

### **Introduction**

6.17 A floor space survey (Spring 1997) indicates there are over 3.1 million sq ft of industrial premises in the Borough, housing 252 businesses employing a total of over 6,200 staff with the top 20 largest employers accounting for 60% of the employees.

6.18 The survey showed that the major employment sector is "high technology" (electronics and software design, engineering and manufacturing companies – Class B1) with 18 companies collectively employing over 2,000 staff, virtually all whom are at Bournemouth International Airport. The remaining business base is to be found on the industrial sites, the majority of which are located in South Christchurch. Companies cover a wide range of categories including engineering, motor repairs, double glazing, food wholesale, building and many others.

### **Structure Plan Policies**

6.19 The Structure Plan's main strategy for industry and commerce is "to provide for the restructuring of Dorset's economy and the development of local enterprise". In an attempt to forecast the level of employment land provision, forecasts of labour supply resultant from housing provisions have been examined. Economy Policy A identifies Christchurch as providing 49 hectares of employment land to meet the forecast increase in the workforce for the period 1994 to 2011. Economy Policies B, C and D set out

locational criteria and specify a need to provide for high quality sites. Economy Policy E specifically looks at the Bournemouth International Airport. It recognises it as a growth point for employment in South - East Dorset having potential for 80 hectares of development or redevelopment for employment uses. The justification stresses this area will contribute to other Borough's / Districts employment land needs, although it suggests the take up is unlikely to exceed 40 hectares by 2011. It stresses the figure in Economy Policy A includes the figure for the Airport. Economy Policy H encourages a diverse and buoyant rural economy by recognising the need to diversify employment practices, in locations to minimise commuting by cars. Settlement Policy C states the role of Christchurch as a local service centre will be supported by the development of employment facilities.

### Employment Land Availability

- 6.20 Until recently the Borough Council has published an annual 'Industrial Land Availability Document' which identifies land with planning permission and allocated land for industrial development. This was basically an extract from the Dorset County Council's 'Land for Industrial Development' series. However, since 1993 DCC have changed the format to monitor the availability of employment land (use classes B1 – B8 and A2 office schemes) rather than strictly 'Industrial land'. The following table indicates employment land in Christchurch as of March 1998:

SITE	AREA (hectares)	USE CLASS INTENDED
Bournemouth International Airport	80.00	Mixed
OPCS Building, Wilverley Road	1.80	B1
419 Lymington Road	0.20	A2, B1
Industrial Premises, Stony Lane	1.60	B1
Land between Bridge St, Stony Lane & Civic Offices	2.20	Mixed
64 – 70 Bridge Street	0.16	A2, B1
Car Sales/RMC Site, Bargates	0.77	B1
Land between Stour Road and Railway North of Station Approach	0.58	B1
Old Railway Goods Yard, Fairmile	0.60	B1
Defence Research Agency Site, Barrack Rd	2.64	B1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>90.55</b>	

Source: DCC, Employment Land in Dorset 1998.

### Protecting Existing Employment Uses

- 6.21 In addition to the monitoring of employment land availability, the Council has and continues to monitor occupation rates of existing commercial and business premises and the future requirements of existing businesses. It is essential that throughout the Plan area, existing employment generating industrial and commercial uses are not lost. There is a need to retain land in such use to provide for the future economic needs of the Borough and to relieve the pressure on greenfield sites, unless such uses cause environmental and amenity problems. As mentioned in Paragraph 6.19 the Structure Plan allocation of 49 hectares of employment land resulted from an analysis of future

labour supply resultant from future housing provision in the Borough. In calculating how many jobs would need to be accommodated on employment land, it was necessary to subtract from this figure the number that could be accommodated in vacant premises and within occupied premises which were below full capacity. The resultant 49 hectare allocation assumes employment land and buildings in use, underused or vacant would remain in such use. In an attempt to reduce the need to travel to work by private car to improve energy efficiency and reduce pollution it is in the interest of sustainable development to retain work places near to homes, providing other environmental adverse effects are not apparent. Where redevelopment of industrial sites are permitted by policies in this plan such proposals are subject to the relocation of existing uses.

- EI 1 IN ORDER TO PRESERVE THE AVAILABILITY OF EMPLOYMENT-GENERATING LAND AND BUILDINGS, PLANNING PERMISSION INVOLVING THE LOSS OF EXISTING INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL USES, INCLUDING THOSE WITHIN USE CLASSES B1, B2 AND B8, WILL NOT BE PERMITTED UNLESS THEY ARE SITUATED IN RESIDENTIAL AREAS CAUSING ENVIRONMENTAL AND AMENITY PROBLEMS TO THE LOCALITY.**

#### **Sites for Industrial Redevelopment**

- 6.22 Throughout the plan area are buildings in which the floorspace is not utilised to its full potential, either buildings have outlived their intended use or their design falls short of present day requirements. There is a need to identify sites where redevelopment could offer a sustained approach to employment generation by offering employment on brown field sites, relatively near to residential areas, therefore minimising the need to travel.
- 6.23 At Wilverley Road in Somerford there still remain parts of the former aircraft factory. Due to the original use, these buildings are large wide-spanning structures and not in prime condition. In the main they are currently in warehouse use and cover an area under-used in employment generating terms. The redevelopment of these buildings as small industrial units would be a far more economic use of the land and could provide space for relocation of uses from other sites. The following policy will apply to those buildings in government occupation only if the property is surplus to official requirements and if there is no demand or use of the building in its present form.
- EI 2 THE FORMER AIRCRAFT FACTORY BUILDINGS AT SOMERFORD AND WILVERLEY ROAD, AS INDICATED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP ARE ALLOCATED FOR REDEVELOPMENT FOR INDUSTRIAL UNITS (CLASS B1 BUSINESS).**
- 6.24 Improvements are also required to the industrial area at Stony Lane. Visually unpleasing buildings, minimal building lines, frontage car parking and servicing, outside storage and display and lack of landscaping do little to enhance the street scene. This however can only be remedied to any significant degree by redevelopment or by acquiring additional land. Additional land to the east of this area is considered suitable as an extension to the

industrial sites subject to the provision of an adequate landscaped buffer to adjoining residential properties.

**EI 3 THE INDUSTRIAL/COMMERCIAL PREMISES AT STONY LANE, AS INDICATED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP ARE ALLOCATED FOR DEVELOPMENT OR REDEVELOPMENT FOR CLASS B1 BUSINESS USES PROVIDED THAT THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA ARE SATISFIED:**

- 1) THERE IS A PROVISION OF REAR SERVICING AND PARKING.**
- 2) THERE ARE LANDSCAPING IMPROVEMENTS TO THE STONY LANE FRONTAGE AND EASTERN BOUNDARY TO THE RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES IN AVON VILLAGE.**

### **Expansion and Infill**

6.25 Much of the Local Plan area is residential in nature and over the years commercial and industrial uses have evolved in these areas, helping to reduce the need to drive longer distances to work and being commonly accessible by public transport. Many such uses cause no problems to residents, although some cause unacceptable disturbance through increased traffic, noise etc. In some cases infrastructure, roads and services may not be adequate to serve industrial and commercial premises and therefore expansion of premises could add to the problems experienced by local residents. Expansion on existing industrial estates should not have these problems.

**EI 4 A PROPOSAL FOR A DEVELOPMENT OR REDEVELOPMENT FOR INDUSTRIAL OR COMMERCIAL USE (CLASSES B1, B2 OR B8) TO BE LOCATED IN AN AREA NOT ALLOCATED FOR SUCH A PURPOSE WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THE AMENITIES OF OCCUPIERS OR USERS OF ADJACENT PROPERTIES ARE NOT HARMED BY VISUAL INTRUSION, NOISE, DISTURBANCE OR BY LOSS OF LIGHT OR PRIVACY.**

6.26 As mentioned above many industrial and commercial uses are not developed to present day standards in, for example, locational, access and design terms. Even though offering local communities accessible job opportunities, arguably a sustainable approach to employment in locational terms, many 'backyard' industries are poor neighbours with associated problems of congestion and noise. It is difficult through the planning system to secure improvements to these sites unless planning applications are submitted for development. At such a time, if approved, the access and landscape could be improved. An option other than improvement is to encourage relocation of the use to gain significant environmental improvements. The Local Plan will not identify small sites where there may be a conflict in residential areas, although it is felt justifiable to identify particular industrial and commercial sites where significant improvements could be made to the amenities of the local areas.

- 6.27 Throughout the local plan policies identify industrial land as suitable for redevelopment of alternative uses. Smaller sites will be assessed on their merits. Redevelopment of a site will be subject to the satisfactory relocation of the existing uses. Sites referred to in the list below are presently in industrial and commercial use and their relocation is to be encouraged by re-zoning:
- (i) The area south of the railway and east of Bargates currently occupied by the car sales area and concrete batching plant (redevelopment for housing or for offices) See EO 1).
  - (ii) The land between Stour Road/Railway, north of Station Approach (redevelopment for offices) (See EO 2).
- 6.28 In one case in particular the Local Planning Authority may wish to pursue the option to exercise compulsory purchase powers in the absence of an agreement to relocate: the car sales premises and the concrete batching plant in Bargates, adjoining the railway. In view of the fact that this site represents a major eyesore and substantially affects the amenities of residential properties in Fairfield, the Local Planning Authority attaches a high priority to its redevelopment for residential or office purposes. It is recognised however that an alternative site for the concrete batching plant is likely to be a pre-requisite for any compulsory purchase proceedings.

### **Major Employment Opportunities**

#### ***Bournemouth International Airport***

- 6.29 During the 1960s Bournemouth International Airport, then known as Hurn Airport, was a major site for employment with almost 6,000 people being employed in aircraft manufacture and related activities. Since then it has suffered a steady decline with the workforce being reduced by two thirds to a present figure of some 2,000 employees.
- 6.30 The potential for employment growth at the airport has long been recognised. It has a convenient location in relation to the strategic highway network and has substantial areas of land available for development within its boundaries. The Structure Plan includes a policy which identifies the airport as a major growth point for employment. About 80 hectares of land is available for employment uses (B1, B2 and B8), the Structure Plan recognises that the take up during the Local Plan period is unlikely to exceed 40 hectares.
- 6.31 For a number of years the Council has considered that to realise the true potential of the airport without placing unacceptable pressure on the general locality a comprehensive strategy needed to be devised. This was recognised by the owners of the airport who commissioned specialist consultants and in November 1993 the Bournemouth International Airport Master Plan was published.
- 6.32 The Master Plan covers improvements to operation facilities at the airport and promotes a phased release of land for employment generating uses both in aerospace and for general business activity. It also promotes the environmentally responsible management of the airport estates and improvements to the physical environment and landscape.

6.33 The Council supports the general principles of the Master Plan, however this document has no planning status. In order to progress and update the strategies contained within the Master Plan it is proposed that a comprehensive planning brief be drafted for the airport's development. The brief will incorporate the principles of the Master Plan, including details of a phasing programme for infrastructure improvements, including improvement works to local roads culminating in the provision of a new link to the A338 Bournemouth Spur Road, improvements to public transport and for cyclists, nature conservation considerations and amenity issues affecting the immediate area of Hurn and wider communities. Other Local Plan policies will be considered for example those regarding Sites of Nature Conservation Interest found within the airport boundary, Sites of Special Scientific Interest and internationally designated sites abutting the airport boundary and policies controlling the development of potentially polluting development. The planning brief will be subject to public consultation, with a view to its adoption as Supplementary Planning Guidance.



*Employment Development at Bournemouth International Airport*

**EI 5 LAND WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF BOURNEMOUTH INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, AS DELINEATED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP, IS IDENTIFIED FOR A COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT OR REDEVELOPMENT SCHEME FOR EMPLOYMENT USES (CLASSES B1, B2 OR B8). DEVELOPMENT WILL BE PERMITTED SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF A COMPREHENSIVE BRIEF TO GUIDE THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT. THE DEVELOPMENT BRIEF SHALL INCLUDE:**

- 1) A PROGRAMME FOR THE PHASED RELEASE OF DEVELOPMENT LAND.**
- 2) THE SEQUENCE OF ON-SITE/OFF-SITE INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS.**
- 3) THE TIMING OF HIGHWAY/TRANSPORT IMPROVEMENTS WHICH SHALL INCLUDE IMPROVEMENTS TO THE B3073 COUNTY DISTRIBUTOR ROAD BETWEEN PARLEY CROSS ROADS AND BLACKWATER JUNCTION, THE PROVISION OF A LINK ROAD TO THE A338 BOURNEMOUTH/RINGWOOD SPUR ROAD, THE CLOSURE OF THE EXISTING ACCESS ONTO MATCHAMS LANE AND PROVISION FOR CYCLISTS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT.**
- 4) WHERE APPROPRIATE MEASURES TO PROTECT NEIGHBOURING SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST.**

**LAND WITH AIRSIDE ACCESS SHALL PREDOMINANTLY BE USED FOR AVIATION-RELATED ACTIVITIES REQUIRING SUCH A FACILITY.**

6.34 In the short-term it is considered that it would be unrealistic to resist all development at the airport until the criteria of Policy EI 5 are satisfied. It is recognised that with improvements to the existing highway network there is capacity to permit some further development at the airport. Highway improvements including signalisation to Blackwater Junction and works to improving Parley Cross Junction have already been carried out. There is further scope for improvement adjacent to and including Hurn Bridge Roundabout, B3073 Bournemouth International Airport, Chapel Gate, Parley Lane/Airport terminal access road junction and at A338 Blackwater Junction. These road improvements should also incorporate the provision of facilities for cyclists and horseriders. Prior to the approval of any further development the Council will therefore need to be satisfied that the existing highway network has acceptable capacity to cater for the increase of traffic flows with the provision of any necessary highway improvements and that no unacceptable pressure is placed upon the local environment.

**EI 6 LIMITED DEVELOPMENT FOR EITHER EMPLOYMENT USES, USE CLASSES B1, B2 AND B8, OR OPERATIONAL AIRPORT ACTIVITIES SHALL BE PERMITTED AT BOURNEMOUTH INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT PROVIDING THAT THE DEVELOPMENT DOES NOT PREJUDICE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY EI 5.**

### ***Safeguarding Zone for Bournemouth International Airport***

- 6.35 Civil and military aerodromes are normally subject to safeguarding zones controlling the heights of buildings in the vicinity. Bournemouth International Airport is such an airport. The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) issue a safeguarding map for the airport which indicates the types of planning application to be the subject of consultations with the CAA. The majority of Christchurch, and certain areas beyond the Borough boundary are subject to the safeguarding zone. The airport is also subject to a Public Safety Zone policy as required by Circular 2/92 'Safeguarding aerodromes, technical sites and explosive storage areas'. Local Authorities are advised that within Public Safety Zones there should be no significant increase in the number of people living, working or congregating. The CAA are consulted on planning applications within a Public Safety Zone as indicated on the Proposals Map. The following policy will apply:

- EI 7 APPLICATIONS FOR PLANNING PERMISSION WITHIN THE BOURNEMOUTH INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT PUBLIC SAFETY ZONE AS IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP THAT WILL RESULT IN A SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN THE NUMBERS OF PEOPLE LIVING, WORKING OR CONGREGATING IN THAT AREA WILL NOT BE GRANTED.**

### **Defence Research Agency Site, Barrack Road**

- 6.36 Some 2 hectares of land has been retained by the MOD together with a small workforce of around 6 people at the former Defence Research Agency, Barrack Road. This area therefore has potential for redevelopment for more intensive employment uses and public open space (see Policy L12) should it also become surplus to MOD requirements at a later date. The development of a substantial part of the surplus land and retention of the majority of the retained land for employment uses is considered essential to contribute to the future employment needs of the Borough. The development will revitalise a vacant brown field site in a location accessible to a variety of means of transport. The following policy will apply:

- EI 8 LAND AT AND ADJOINING THE FORMER DEFENCE RESEARCH AGENCY SITE AS INDICATED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP SHALL BE RESERVED FOR CLASS B1 EMPLOYMENT USES.**

### **Maritime Industry**

- 6.37 Traditionally Christchurch has been associated with boat building and related maritime industry, although this has declined over the years. Elkins Boatyard in Convent Meadows undertakes boat repairs and has a storage yard and moorings but Rossiters Yachts Ltd, Bridge Street, is the only boat building yard left in Christchurch. In view of the important contribution made to the essential character of Christchurch and to local employment needs, it is considered essential to encourage the retention of existing and resist the further loss of maritime industry, and therefore the following Policy is proposed:

**EI 9 PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE CHANGE OF USE OR REDEVELOPMENT AT EXISTING BOATYARD FACILITIES OR MARITIME INDUSTRY SITES AND PREMISES WILL NOT BE PERMITTED UNLESS IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED THAT:**

- 1) THE CONTINUANCE OF SUCH USES WOULD SIGNIFICANTLY AFFECT THE AMENITIES OF THE SURROUNDING AREA; OR**
- 2) THE PROPOSAL IS NECESSARY FOR EFFECTIVE OPERATION OF THE EXISTING USE OR TO ENSURE ITS VIABILITY.**

### **Working from Home**

6.38 Advancements in technology have meant many people find it more convenient to work from home. This reduces the need to travel and can help reduce CO<sup>2</sup> emissions. Such uses do not necessarily cause inconvenience or adversely affect neighbours. Providing the business use is incidental to the main use of the house as a dwelling and does not materially change its overall character, planning permission is not normally required. However, before commencing work from home occupants are advised to seek the advice of the Planning Authority for the issue can be complex. The Local Authority are aware that people working from home can help alleviate unemployment, but in assessing proposals which come within the ambit of planning control conditions may be applied to limit activities in the property.

### **Child Care Facilities**

6.39 Many people with childcare responsibilities are deterred from working because of the lack of childcare facilities. These people may have particular skills that are going untapped, facilities could benefit local employers by giving them a wider employment base, as well as possibly retaining staff. The provision of childcare facilities will be encouraged in conjunction with employment developments.

### **Telecommunications**

6.40 The Government has encouraged competition in the telecommunications industry. Numerous companies now operate telecommunication operations resulting in increased pressure for the construction of antenna and masts. PPG 8 (1992) stresses Local Authorities should not question the need for development and should respond positively to telecommunications development proposals, especially where the proposed location is constrained by technical considerations. However it is reasonable to expect telecommunication operators to keep new masts and antennae to a minimum, sharing masts wherever possible and erecting antennae on existing buildings. The Council will have to be satisfied that all possibilities have been explored before planning permission for new development is granted. Care will also have to be taken over the location and siting of new installations to reduce any adverse effects on the visual amenity of the area. The following Policy will apply:

**EI 10 PROPOSALS FOR TELECOMMUNICATIONS DEVELOPMENT WILL BE PERMITTED, PROVIDED THAT IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED THAT:**

- 1) SHARING EXISTING FACILITIES IS NOT PRACTICABLE FOR OPERATIONAL OR TECHNICAL REASONS.**
- 2) THE DEVELOPMENT IS SITED SO AS TO MINIMISE ITS EFFECT ON THE VISUAL AMENITIES OF THE AREA, SUBJECT TO TECHNICAL OR OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS.**
- 3) IN THE CASE OF MASTS, THERE ARE NO ALTERNATIVE EXISTING BUILDINGS OR STRUCTURES SUITABLE FOR THE ERECTION OF THE DEVELOPMENT.**
- 4) IN THE CASE OF DEVELOPMENT AFFIXED TO EXISTING BUILDINGS THE DEVELOPMENT IS SITED SO AS TO MINIMISE ITS EFFECT ON THE EXTERNAL APPEARANCE OF THE BUILDING TO WHICH IT IS TO BE FIXED SUBJECT TO TECHNICAL OR OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS.**

## **Offices**

### **Introduction**

- 6.41 The characteristics of the Plan area are such that only a modest quantity of office use not associated with industrial premises exists outside the main Town Centre and Highcliffe Centre. Analysis indicates that the great majority of those in the two shopping centres are activities which are normally incidental to a town centre, for example, solicitors, building societies, banks and estate agents. Major office development does exist in the industrial areas across the Borough although these are usually closely associated with a large company.

### **Structure Plan Policies**

- 6.42 One of the objectives of the Structure Plan is to create greater job opportunities in Dorset and to ensure the availability of commercial land and premises. Policies aim to concentrate major office development in specified centres in identified towns. New employment development should be located so as to reduce commuting by car and sites should be protected from other uses. Settlement Policy C states the role of Christchurch as a local service centre will be supported by the development of employment facilities.

### **Local Office Policies**

- 6.43 As mentioned above particular areas of the Borough have obvious concentrations of offices. One of the measures necessary to achieve the employment objective of the Plan is to increase the amount of office floorspace either by new development, redevelopment or change of use. In land terms it is clearly appropriate to locate such an increase either in existing commercial areas or in areas considered to be suitable as future commercial areas for example due to the proximity of a variety of modes of transport. The following

policies encourage development to areas already served by public transport. The following will identify areas for office uses:

### **Areas for Office Development and Redevelopment**

#### ***Car Sales/RMC at Bargates***

- 6.44 Over the past few years one of the most contentious sites in the Borough has been the car sales premises and concrete batching plant in Bargates, adjoining the railway. These uses particularly affect the residential area to the south, causing problems with noise and dust as well as being a major eyesore. A high priority has been given to securing the redevelopment of the site for office or residential use. It is recognised however, that an alternative site for the concrete batching plant is likely to be a pre-requisite for any redevelopment.

**EO 1 THE LAND PRESENTLY USED FOR CAR SALES, AND THE READY MIXED CONCRETE SITE, ADJOINING 129 BARGATES IS ALLOCATED FOR OFFICE REDEVELOPMENT (CLASS B1).**

#### ***Area between Stour Road/Railway North of the Station Approach***

- 6.45 The present mix of uses on this site is particularly unfortunate in visual, environmental and traffic hazard terms. Redevelopment would permit rationalisation of the land use and at the same time allow planning benefits. Due to the proximity of the site to the railway station there is an opportunity to provide a transportation facility offering a public transport interchange. It is envisaged this facility could be provided as part of a mixed scheme incorporating Class B1 office uses. Therefore the following policy will apply:

**EO 2 THE AREA BETWEEN STOUR ROAD/RAILWAY, NORTH OF STATION APPROACH, IS ALLOCATED FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE REDEVELOPMENT FOR OFFICE USE (CLASS B1) INCORPORATING A TRANSPORTATION FACILITY LINKING AND BEING COMPLEMENTARY TO THE RAILWAY STATION.**

- 6.46 The above Policy does not rule out the possibility of phased development of suitable sized parcels of land within the area, allowing for a single access to serve the whole site.

#### ***Land South of the A35***

- 6.47 A number of constraints to increasing offices exist in the main town centre south of the A35, these are:

- (i) The policy for maintaining retail premises at ground floor level (ES 2).
- (ii) The policy for restricting the loss of residential accommodation (H 11).

- (iii) The large number of listed buildings which may inhibit conversion to modern office suites and particularly inhibit redevelopment.
- (iv) The lack of vacant land or suitable sites for redevelopment.

However, two significant sites can be identified:

- 6.48 The present use of the car sales premises and adjoining poster hoarding site, numbers 62 – 70 Bridge Street leaves a great deal to be desired in terms of aesthetic appearance. Planning permission for redevelopment for offices on a building line similar to that of the existing residential properties has been granted. This will be an improvement to the environment of an area, which forms one of the entrances to the Town Centre.
- 6.49 The area bounded by Bridge Street, Stony Lane South and the Civic Offices is at present occupied by a petrol filling station and car repair workshop, a light industrial factory and a Gas Board Depot. The existing occupiers give rise to relative under-use of the land, the site is visually unattractive and there is little prospect of improvement in the absence of major redevelopment (see also Policy EI 1). In an attempt to stimulate development, the land is identified as having potential for a mixed redevelopment incorporating leisure and recreation, business and commercial (Class B1), residential and transportation uses. The frontage to Bridge Street would benefit from a development which either through landscaping or design would enhance the existing character of the street. The site is surrounded by a variety of uses and offers an opportunity to provide leisure facilities and employment uses in a central location, taking advantage of existing public transport routes. Part of the site should be utilised for public transport. Prior to any planning permission being granted a planning brief for the area shall be prepared and subjected to public consultation before its adoption.

**EO 3 LAND BETWEEN BRIDGE STREET, STONY LANE SOUTH AND THE CIVIC OFFICES, AS IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP, IS ALLOCATED FOR A MIXED DEVELOPMENT CONSISTING OF LEISURE AND RECREATION, BUSINESS AND COMMERCIAL (CLASS B1), RESIDENTIAL AND TRANSPORTATION USES.**

***Redevelopment in Highcliffe***

- 6.50 The characteristics of Highcliffe are such that little office use exists in the area and nearly all that does exist is located within the commercial core of Highcliffe Shopping Centre, for example solicitors, building societies and banks. However, the following site is considered suitable for an office development.

**EO 4 PLANNING PERMISSION FOR OFFICE DEVELOPMENT (CLASS A2 AND B1) ON THE SITE OF 419 LYMINGTON ROAD AS INDICATED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP WILL BE PERMITTED.**

## **General Criteria**

6.51 The sites being identified for development will also have to satisfy the following Policy:

**EO 5 PROPOSALS FOR THE OFFICE REDEVELOPMENT (CLASSES A2 AND B1) AND OTHER USES OF THE SITES SPECIFIED IN POLICIES EO1, EO2, EO3 AND EO4 WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA ARE SATISFIED:**

- 1) BE COMPREHENSIVE IN THAT THEY SHOULD INCLUDE ALL LAND AND PROPERTY WITHIN THE DEFINED AREAS. IF THIS IS IMPRACTICABLE FOR REASONS OF LAND ASSEMBLY/OWNERSHIP THEN REDEVELOPMENT OF PART SHALL NOT IN ANY WAY PREJUDICE THE SUBSEQUENT REDEVELOPMENT OF THE REMAINDER OF THE SITE.**
- 2) PROVIDE A HIGH LEVEL OF DESIGN WHICH IS APPROPRIATE IN SCALE, MASS, HEIGHT AND COVERAGE TO THE SITE ITSELF AND IN RELATION TO ADJOINING BULDINGS.**
- 3) THE AMENITIES OF EXISTING OR FUTURE RESIDENTS ARE NOT PREJUDICED BY NOISE OR DISTURBANCE, OR BY LOSS OF LIGHT OR PRIVACY.**

6.52 In addition to these requirements the Council will require compliance with the adopted car parking guidelines and will encourage appropriate landscaping of frontages and parking areas.

## **Shopping**

### **Introduction**

6.53 Throughout Christchurch there exists a diverse retail base. Shopping facilities exist at various local shopping parades throughout the Borough. These compact shopping areas offer the local community convenience 'local needs', shopping, selling 'low order' goods of an essential nature. It is important that local communities are served by local shops while Christchurch Town Centre and major retail outlets provide those goods not being found more locally. The existing centres have established themselves as popular and viable facilities, although the economic situation and competition with other centres in adjoining Local Authority areas will eventually determine overall numbers and types of outlets. This has become apparent with the closure of some shops in recent years and the pressure for change of use from shops to office uses. At present most residential areas would seem to be adequately served with local shopping facilities, which will assist in the minimisation of car journeys and emission of pollutants.

## **Structure Plan Policies**

- 6.54 The Structure Plan in Shopping Policy A encourages new shopping development to be concentrated in Christchurch Town Centre, within or adjacent to the existing shopping centre. Major shopping development or redevelopment outside the Town Centre will be permitted only where it does not adversely affect the vitality and viability of other centres or would not prejudice the availability of employment land. Shopping developments are required to be compatible in character, maintaining the vitality and viability and not affecting that of neighbouring centres. Provision should be made to retain and improve local shopping facilities. Settlement Policy C states the role of Christchurch as a local centre will be supported by the development of shopping facilities.

## **Retail Warehouses/Large Convenience Stores**

- 6.55 The majority of the Borough's large retail warehouses are located in the south of the Plan area with a concentration of units at Stony Lane and the eastern end of Somerford Road. These sites are ideally located with good road access and car parking and thus cause no significant environmental problems. Legal agreements are also in force which restrict the types of goods sold and thereby minimise the effect on major shopping centres. Planning applications for large convenience stores and retail warehouses shall be assessed having regard to the Structure Plan requirements. In addition current national advice in PPG 6 and 13 encourages town centre locations and edge of centre sites wherever practicable, using the sequential approach, accordingly applicants for out of town facilities will need to demonstrate why their development can only be accommodated in their chosen location. The Council will have particular regard from the advice in PPG 13 to accessibility issues including proximity to surrounding housing and public transport facilities. Therefore the following Policy shall apply:

### **ES 1 OUTSIDE THE CORE, SECONDARY AND LOCAL SHOPPING AREAS, IDENTIFIED UNDER POLICIES ES2 – ES8, NEW SHOPPING DEVELOPMENT OR EXTENSION TO AN EXISTING SHOPPING DEVELOPMENT OR NEW LEISURE DEVELOPMENT WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED IF:**

- 1) THE NEED FOR THE ADDITIONAL FACILITY IS DEMONSTRATED.**
- 2) IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED THAT ALL POTENTIAL SITES FALLING WITHIN THE POLICIES ES2 – ES8 AREAS HAVE BEEN THOROUGHLY ASSESSED BY THE SEQUENTIAL APPROACH.**
- 3) IT CAN BE SHOWN THAT EITHER ALONE OR COMBINED WITH OTHER EXISTING OR PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT IT WILL SUSTAIN AND ENHANCE THE VITALITY AND VIABILITY OF THE CORE, SECONDARY AND LOCAL AREAS AS A WHOLE.**
- 4) THE DEVELOPMENT WILL BE READILY ACCESSIBLE FROM EXISTING OR PROPOSED PUBLIC TRANSPORT ROUTE(S), AND WILL BE READILY ACCESSIBLE BY BICYCLE AND TO PEDESTRIANS.**

- 5) THE ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES OF USERS AND OCCUPANTS OF NEARBY LAND OR PREMISES ARE NOT ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY NOISE OR DISTURBANCE OR BY LOSS OF PRIVACY OR LIGHT.

UNDER THE SEQUENTIAL APPROACH FIRST PREFERENCE IS GIVEN TO SITES WITHIN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY CORE AREAS, WHERE SUITABLE SITES OR BUILDINGS SUITABLE FOR CONVERSION ARE AVAILABLE, FOLLOWED BY LOCAL SHOPPING AREAS.

### Shopping Core Areas

- 6.56 The overall aim of the Council is to ensure that Christchurch Town Centre, as its main shopping area, remains viable and competitive. Existing policies are designed to retain a strong retail presence in the Town Centre, whilst ensuring an adequate number of retail outlets throughout the Borough to serve local needs. Important shopping cores can be identified at numerous locations across the Borough where retail activities dominate and it would be desirable to consolidate commercial activities and maintain viability and vitality as follows:

- (i) Saxon Square/High Street/Church Street/Castle Street
- (ii) Bargates
- (iii) Barrack Road
- (iv) Purewell
- (v) Highcliffe

**(i) Saxon Square/High Street/Church Street/Castle Street**

- 6.57 This is the main shopping centre, not only for the resident population but also for extensive areas outside Christchurch. The existing shopping core is well defined by the A35 in the case of the High Street, by the Priory grounds in Church Street and by the properties numbered 11 and 14 – 16 in Castle Street.

- 6.58 The retail frontage is occasionally interrupted by other uses that contribute to and complement the primary shopping functions of the core areas. The Saxon Square development completed in 1982 has provided valuable additions to the range of good quality, 'high order' goods on sale in the town centre. There are indications that this has been to the advantage, rather than to the detriment, of the remainder of the shopping centre as more shoppers appear to have been attracted to both the High Street and Saxon Square.

- 6.59 Church Street, in close proximity to the tourist attractions of the Castle ruins and Priory, shows a heavy bias towards the retailing of tourist goods and the provision of restaurant facilities.

**(ii) Bargates**

6.60 Shopping provision occurs sporadically along the full length of Bargates, but is interspersed with offices and residential accommodation. The railway line to the north and the by-pass to the south are the obvious boundaries to the centre.

6.61 With the exception of the Pioneer store and adjoining premises which have recently been redeveloped, Bargates is a relatively 'low order' shopping centre, i.e. it serves a locally based need for convenience goods shopping. Analysis of planning applications in recent years reveals that the demand for offices is steady, and this is in part no doubt due to the restrictive policies applied south of the by-pass.

**(iii) Barrack Road**

6.62 The greatest concentration of shops in North Christchurch are located along Barrack Road. There are three main shopping areas flanking Barrack Road, located at the junctions with Burnett Road, Elizabeth Avenue and Jumpers Road. Other shops and garages are located along Barrack Road without any obvious grouping pattern. Some of the trade along Barrack Road is generated by passing traffic, and the provision of parking bays along the road has gone some way to providing convenient parking. Even so some shops do not have the advantage of lay-bys, and therefore do not benefit so much from passing trade. The possibility of the need to provide more parking areas shall continue to be assessed by the Council, and if possible implemented.

**(iv) Purewell**

6.63 An important local core can be identified at Purewell Cross, offering residents a variety of convenience goods. Greater demand has been placed on these shops with the completion of the Purewell Meadows development. Car parking is available at the Buttery development and outside the shopping parade at Nos 1 – 11 Stanpit for a total of 44 vehicles. Public conveniences are also situated at Purewell Cross. In order to maintain the vitality of the area, a secondary shopping core is defined.

**(v) Highcliffe**

6.64 Highcliffe provides a range of durable goods shops catering for other than daily needs (for example furniture stores, clothes shops, gift and craft shops, etc), together with essential services such as banks, building societies and hairdressers. In addition to providing for local residents, Highcliffe shopping centre also serves the high number of tourists who visit the area in the summer months. Highcliffe competes for its custom with both New Milton and Christchurch Town Centres. Competing shopping centres are rarely static in terms of their investment and patronage and therefore tend to expand or decline.



*Highcliffe Shopping Centre*

### **Shopping Core Policies**

- 6.65 Primary shopping cores are identified at Christchurch Town Centre, Bargates and Highcliffe. Within these areas a mix of ground floor uses contribute to lively and healthy shopping cores. The main function of the cores is that of providing a range of retail outlets, however other uses contribute to diverse, buoyant centres offering visitors a range of services associated with shopping cores. Town Centre and Bargates shopping cores were previously identified in the Christchurch Town Centre Local Plan which contained policies restricting the loss of any existing ground floor retail premises sited within them. The Highcliffe core, however, was previously identified in the Highcliffe and District Local Plan. This included a policy which sought to restrict non-retail uses within the core to no more than 20% of each 'street block'. From regular monitoring it has been apparent that this policy has been successful in allowing flexibility in offering a range of services whilst maintaining a strong retail presence essential to the vitality and viability of the centre. It is considered that this flexibility should be extended to the Town Centre and Bargates cores but for ease of interpretation and to avoid confusion over the definition of 'street blocks', the 20% figure will apply to the whole area of each of the shopping cores rather than apply to different sections within them. It is recognised that retail patterns do change and therefore regular monitoring of the health and vitality of these cores will take place. This monitoring will assist in determining whether the present policies are effective or are in need of future review.

6.66 Where change of use from retail occurs the Council will take into account the need to retain lengths of continuous retail frontages to encourage the free movement and interest of people over the whole shopping core. A shop-front appearance should also be retained to reflect the character of a shopping area.

**ES 2 WITHIN THE SAXON SQUARE, CHURCH STREET, WICK LANE, AND HIGH STREET CORE, AND THE CORES AT BARGATES AND HIGHCLIFFE, PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE CHANGE OF USE OF EXISTING GROUND FLOOR RETAIL PREMISES (CLASS A1) TO NON-RETAIL USES WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT:**

- 1) THE PROPOSED USE IS FOR A FINANCIAL OR PROFESSIONAL SERVICE USE (CLASS A2), OR FOR A FOOD AND DRINKS USE (CLASS A3) OR FOR NON-RESIDENTIAL INSTITUTIONS FALLING WITHIN CLASS D1 AND LEISURE AND ENTERTAINMENT USES FALLING WITHIN CLASS D2.**
- 2) NON-RETAIL USES (OTHER THAN CLASS A1) WILL NOT CUMULATIVELY AMOUNT TO MORE THAN 20% OF ALL GROUND FLOOR UNITS IN EACH OF THE IDENTIFIED AREAS.**
- 3) THE PROPOSAL WILL NOT RESULT IN MORE THAN THREE CONTINUOUS FRONTAGES IN NON-RETAIL USE (OTHER THAN CLASS A1).**
- 4) A SHOP FRONT APPEARANCE WILL BE RETAINED.**



*High Street Shopping Centre*

6.67 The above Policy should be read in conjunction with office and further shopping policies that attempt to encourage viability within and outside these cores to consolidate the shopping area.

6.68 Other areas of the Borough are considered from a land use and environmental viewpoint to also have greater potential for an increased diversity of commercial uses and hence the provision of additional employment opportunities. The cores identified at Bargates, the Town Centre, Saxon Square and Highcliffe emphasise the retention of retail uses, although areas outside the cores forming a secondary frontage have more potential for a variety of ground floor uses. This is also the case along Barrack Road and Purewell where a commercial frontage can be identified. The following Policy identifies areas suitable for the conversion between a variety of uses in order to encourage a variety and mixture of facilities to retain viability and vitality.

**ES 3 PROPOSALS FOR THE CHANGE OF USE OF EXISTING NON-RESIDENTIAL PREMISES LOCATED WITHIN THE SECONDARY CORES AT HIGHCLIFFE, BARGATES, CASTLE STREET, BRIDGE STREET, BARRACK ROAD AND PUREWELL, AS IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA ARE SATISFIED:**

- 1) THE PROPOSED USE IS FOR A FINANCIAL OR PROFESSIONAL SERVICE USE (CLASS A2), OR FOR A FOOD AND DRINK USE (CLASS A3) OR FOR NON-RESIDENTIAL INSTITUTIONS FALLING WITHIN CLASS D1 AND LEISURE AND ENTERTAINMENT USES FALLING WITHIN CLASS D2, AND
- 2) THE AMENITIES OF THE LOCAL RESIDENTS ARE NOT ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY NOISE OR DISTURBANCE, OR BY LOSS OF LIGHT AND PRIVACY.

**Local Shopping Areas**

6.69 The other smaller shopping facilities within the Plan area provide a good range of convenience shops for local day-to-day needs. These shops help reduce the need for travel and are convenient for the less mobile in the community. The present level and range of retail provision in the centres is considered sufficient and accordingly no increase has been proposed. Moreover, it is considered that any reduction in the centres may jeopardise their economic well-being. Hence the following Policy applies:

**ES 4 PROPOSALS FOR THE CHANGE OF USE OF EXISTING RETAIL PREMISES TO NON-RETAIL USES IN THE FOLLOWING LOCAL SHOPPING AREAS WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE:**

- 1) IN THE ABSENCE OF A PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE LAND USE THEY WOULD NOT BE LIKELY TO CONTINUE TO OPERATE AND THE LOSS WOULD NOT RESULT IN A SUBSTANTIAL DECLINE IN THE RANGE AND QUALITY OF SERVICES FOR LOCAL PEOPLE AND VISITORS.

**2) IF SATISFYING (1) ABOVE THE PREMISES SHALL REMAIN IN A COMMERCIAL USE.**

- i) 88 – 98 MUDEFORD**
- ii) 2 – 10 FALCON DRIVE**
- iii) 172 – 190 SOMERFORD ROAD**
- iv) 42 – 44 HUNT ROAD**
- v) 27 – 45 SOMERFORD ROAD**
- vi) 22 & 28 JELICOE DRIVE**
- vii) 111, 98 – 112 RINGWOOD ROAD AND 2 GLENVILLE ROAD**
- viii) 15 – 22 LAKEWOOD ROAD**
- ix) 5 – 11 SAULFLAND PLACE**
- x) BURE LANE ARCADE**
- xi) 111 – 113 BURTON GREEN, SALISBURY ROAD**
- xii) 1 – 11 AVON VIEW PARADE**
- xiii) 1 – 5 FAIRMILE PARADE**
- xiv) ST CATHERINES PARADE, FAIRMILE ROAD**
- xv) 32 – 60 THE GROVE**
- xvi) 1 – 15 MARLOW DRIVE**
- xvii) 108 – 116 STOUR ROAD**
- xviii) HURN VILLAGE SHOP**

**Other Town Centre Policies**

- 6.70 Shopping studies indicate that additional shopping provision of an appropriate type will be necessary to maintain Christchurch Town Centre's position and status, vis-à-vis competing centres in the shopping centre hierarchy of the conurbation. Shopping centres rarely stand still, they are constantly expanding or contracting in patronage relative to their neighbours. It is essential to look ahead and anticipate the public's demands and preferences whilst at the same time being careful not to over-provide in terms of quantity of floor-space. The Council have sought advice and guidance from shopping consultants on this matter. The location of new facilities should be such as to be accessible to public car parking, to link well with the High Street, and to achieve the greatest possible number of other objectives of the Plan.
- 6.71 Central amongst these objectives is the need to maintain the character of Christchurch and this suggests that new shopping provision may well need to take the form of smaller scale developments than say Saxon Square. Retail units in such developments may well be specialist quality shops rather than national multiples.
- 6.72 However, the economies of retail development often dictate that there needs to be a minimum area of floor-space which needs to be provided if viability is to be achieved. Moreover a co-ordinated development is essential if both the financial and environmental improvements of new development are to be obtained. For example funding for additional environmental improvements is unlikely to be available if new shopping is permitted on a piecemeal basis.

6.73 In view of the constraints of the historic town centre it would appear that space for new development is limited to the land on the west side of the High Street (more particularly in the lanes and courtyard which lie between and to the rear of the frontage premises). The location is, moreover, ideal for the vitality of the High Street as a shopping centre as acting as a counter balance to Saxon Square it would increase pedestrian movement between the two shopping centres and improve trade in the High Street shops. It is envisaged that the redevelopment scheme will consist mainly of shopping uses at ground floor level. However to enhance the vitality and viability of the development other use classes could be incorporated. For example offices, restaurants, leisure, entertainment uses and in particular residential accommodation at first floor level.

6.74 Although they have been the subject of improvements in recent years, the existing shopping facilities at the corner of the High Street and Wick Lane centred on the covered arcade leading to the Post Office are considered to be well below the appropriate standards for a Conservation Area in environmental layout and design terms. Accordingly this site was included within the area of a Planning Brief published for consultation and could be subject to a re-development scheme more in accordance with the Conservation Area whilst providing improved shopping facilities. The following Policy will apply:

**ES 5 LAND WEST OF THE HIGH STREET, AS IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP, IS ALLOCATED FOR DEVELOPMENT OR REDEVELOPMENT, FOR MAINLY SHOPPING (CLASS A1) PURPOSES BUT TO INCLUDE RESIDENTIAL (CLASS C3), FINANCIAL OR PROFESSIONAL SERVICE USE (CLASS A2), FOOD AND DRINK USE (CLASS A3), NON-RESIDENTIAL INSTITUTIONS FALLING WITHIN CLASS D1 AND LEISURE AND ENTERTAINMENT USES, FALLING WITHIN CLASS D2.**

6.75 It will be noted that the area identified on the Proposals Map under policy ES 5 includes the Royal Mail Sorting Office. If a satisfactory alternative site for this facility can be found these premises should be included in the redevelopment, but failing this the redevelopment of the remainder of the site could proceed.

6.76 Mention has been made above of the Saxon Square development. On the south side of Saxon Square the shop units take the form of small kiosks which came about because the adjoining landowners were unwilling to participate in the redevelopment scheme. However, it is considered important in both commercial and aesthetic terms for the land adjoining the south side of Saxon Square to be redeveloped as an integral part of the existing scheme. In this way the provision of a 'fourth side' to Saxon Square would greatly increase the intimacy, aesthetic appeal and atmosphere of Saxon Square whilst at the same time using the available area to provide new retail units of a viable size. The design of shop-fronts and advertisements will need to accord with the Council's guidelines referred to in paragraph (6.82) where the status of these guidelines as Supplementary Planning Guidance will be explained. The following Policy is proposed:

**ES 6 LAND ON AND ADJOINING THE SOUTHERN SIDE OF SAXON SQUARE IS ALLOCATED FOR DEVELOPMENT OR REDEVELOPMENT, FOR MAINLY SHOPPING (CLASS A1) PURPOSES BUT TO INCLUDE RESIDENTIAL (CLASS C3), FINANCIAL OR PROFESSIONAL SERVICE USE (CLASS A2), FOOD AND DRINK USE (CLASS A3), NON-RESIDENTIAL INSTITUTIONS FALLING WITHIN CLASS D1 AND LEISURE AND ENTERTAINMENT USES, FALLING WITHIN CLASS D2.**

6.77 Elsewhere within the Town Centre area, shopping provision is very limited and sporadic, but the existing retail outlets in Stour Road are worthy of mention. In order to consolidate this shopping area it is proposed to concentrate retail use between N<sup>o</sup>s 108 – 116 Stour Road. This would require the change of use of the existing garage at N<sup>o</sup> 116 to retail use.

**ES 7 ADDITIONAL RETAIL FACILITIES SERVING LOCAL NEEDS WILL BE PERMITTED ON STOUR ROAD BETWEEN NUMBERS 108 – 116, AS INDICATED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP.**

#### **Bargates Shopping Development**

6.78 In order to fulfil the objectives of the Plan, it is considered desirable to recognise and consolidate the role of Bargates as primarily a local centre serving the nearby residential areas. The reasons for this are twofold. Firstly, it is considered important to consolidate new shopping provision south of the A35 as the public prefer to shop in compact rather than strung out centres. This leads to greater spending and thus to a preponderance of better quality shops. There is a danger that a policy of unrestricted retail development in the Bargates area could prejudice this goal. If, for example, a large new supermarket were proposed this could create a new 'magnet' and pull trade and investment away from the High Street area. Secondly an analysis of present land uses indicates sporadic retail provision, a lack of identity and a possible over-provision leading to the possible occurrence of 'fringe' shopping centre uses characterised by low investment, low rents, poor appearance and a high rate in turnover in the occupation of premises.

6.79 With its role recognised as a local centre, shopping provision in Bargates should ideally be compact and of a good range and quality. An opportunity presents itself for a limited retail development in the vicinity of the Royalty Inn. This could be combined with a new pedestrian link to the enlarged Magistrates' Court car park (Policy P2). Even though situated outside of a Conservation Area the immediate area around the proposed site is of a distinct built character that should be respected by any development proposals. It is envisaged that the floor-space of such a development should be in the range of 10,000 to 12,000 sq. ft.

**ES 8 PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT FOR SHOPPING OF LAND ADJOINING THE ROYALTY INN AS INDICATED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA ARE SATISFIED:**

- 1) **THE DEVELOPMENT IS IN KEEPING WITH THE LOCALITY IN TERMS OF SCALE, DESIGN, MATERIALS, LAYOUT AND SITING.**
- 2) **A PEDESTRIAN LINK WITH THE ENLARGED CAR PARK TO THE REAR IS INCLUDED (SEE POLICY P2).**

**Food and Drink Uses (Class A3)**

6.80 Food and Drink (Class A3) uses usually comprise of public houses, restaurants and take away food and drink shops. Experience across the Borough has shown that such uses can cause harm to the immediate locality, seriously affecting the amenity of local residents with smells, increased traffic and noise disturbances for example. It is recognised that Class A3 uses have a place within shopping areas, although as stated above circumstances can arise where such a use is of detriment. The following Policy will apply apart from in those areas identified as retail cores in the Town Centre, Bargates and Highcliffe in Policy ES2.

**ES 9 FOOD AND DRINK USES (CLASS A3) WILL ONLY BE GRANTED PLANNING PERMISSION PROVIDED THAT THE RESIDENTIAL AMENITIES OF LOCAL RESIDENTS ARE NOT ADVERSELY AFFECTED.**

6.81 The Council recognises the valuable local social and community facility that a public house offers to the local residents of an area and indeed to visitors to the Borough. Pressure will always exist for the redevelopment of some of these public house uses not only for reasons of declining viability but also due to possible enhanced values arising from possible alternative uses. However, PPG12 stresses the importance of providing for social and community facilities whilst PPG1 and PPG13 encourage the need to plan in a sustainable manner reducing the environmental impacts of reliance on the private car and by encouraging a range of different types of development in accessible locations. It is considered therefore that public houses well situated to local communities can contribute to more sustainable land use. For these reasons the following Policy applies:

**ES 10 PLANNING PERMISSION RESULTING IN THE LOSS OF PUBLIC HOUSES WILL NOT BE PERMITTED WHERE IN THE ABSENCE OF A PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE LAND USE IT WOULD BE LIKELY THAT A PUBLIC HOUSE WOULD CONTINUE TO OPERATE AND THE LOSS WOULD RESULT IN:**

- 1) **EITHER AN UNACCEPTABLY ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA, OR**
- 2) **A SUBSTANTIAL DECLINE IN THE RANGE AND QUALITY OF SERVICES FOR LOCAL PEOPLE AND VISITORS.**

## **Shop-fronts and Advertisements**

- 6.82 The Council will pay particular regard to planning applications for shop-fronts and advertisements, by assessing the application against its adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance in the form of 'Guidelines for Advertisements and Shop Fronts'. It must be clarified that these guidelines are Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) which is of a lower status than Local Plan policies. SPG does not have the special status that is given by Section 54A of the Planning and Compensation Act 1991 to Local Plan Policies when determining planning applications (See Paragraph 1.4).

## **Tourism**

### **Introduction**

- 6.83 The Borough with its unique historic assets, including the Priory and Castle Ruins, together with the rivers, harbour and beaches, is not only enjoyed by local residents but is of particular importance as a tourist centre within south - east Dorset. The Council have attempted to promote the area for tourism, whilst at the same time safeguarding the quality amenities which make it a popular place to live and visit. This section of the Local Plan will set out policies and proposals aimed at encouraging a buoyant tourism industry in Christchurch. The development of tourist accommodation and facilities will be assessed in the light of Policies in this section and other Policies in the Local Plan.

### **Structure Plan Policies**

- 6.84 The Structure Plan in Tourism Policy A encourages development for tourism and recreation which will contribute to regeneration and/or the extension of the tourist season particularly in the main coastal resorts including Christchurch. Tourism Policy C encourages the development or extension of serviced tourist accommodation within the built up area of south east Dorset and other settlements specified. Tourism Policy D states that within Christchurch and other parts of the County the development of new, or extension of existing sites, for chalets, caravans or tents should be permitted where it does not conflict with other Structure Plan policies and where it will not result in an undesirable concentration in any one area.

### **The Borough Council Tourism Policy and Strategy**

- 6.85 In recognition of the considerable benefits of tourism to the local economy, communities and employment the Council has adopted a number of documents aimed at encouraging and promoting tourism in the Borough. In consultation with the Southern Tourist Board and the Christchurch Tourism Association, a Tourism Strategy was produced to ensure the area benefits fully from the new and growing tourism markets. The Strategy recognises tourism is a major generator of wealth in the Borough and assesses ways of promoting the Borough to specific market segments. Research from the Dorset Tourism Data Project 1995 estimates that expenditure by visitors was over £35 million in 1995. The 1991 Census of Employment identifies the total number of employees employed in tourism in Christchurch Borough as 1,590. This includes employees in the hotel trade, other tourist/short stay accommodation, cultural and recreational services, restaurants etc, public houses, bars and nightclubs.

## Holiday Accommodation

### *Resisting Loss of Accommodation*

- 6.86 It is important to maintain a variety of tourist accommodation through the Borough. With tourism playing an important part in the local economy and its land use being a vital component of the character of the Plan area it is important to avoid the loss of any established significant tourist facilities. The term 'significant' will be a matter of fact and degree in any particular instance but the Council's interpretation will be consistent with its broad policy objective of maintaining the Borough as an important centre for holiday visitors. An applicant will be required to satisfy the Council that no reasonable demand exists for the present use. Applications for redevelopment or change of use of holiday accommodation will be required to be supported by a statement of the efforts which have been made to secure the present use (in terms of marketing).

**ET 1 THE CHANGE OF USE OR REDEVELOPMENT OF HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION OR TOURIST FACILITIES TO OTHER USES WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT:**

- 1) THERE IS NO REASONABLE DEMAND FOR SUCH ACCOMMODATION OR FACILITY FOR HOLIDAY OR TOURIST USE, AND**
- 2) THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT WOULD NOT RESULT IN THE LOSS OF ACCOMMODATION OR TOURIST FACILITY CONTRIBUTING SIGNIFICANTLY TO THE STOCK OF SUCH ACCOMMODATION OR TO THE HOLIDAY CHARACTER OF THE AREA UNLESS SUITABLE PROVISION IS MADE TO COMPENSATE FOR SUCH LOSS.**



*Friars Cliff Beach*

6.87 In order to fulfil the Borough's role as a tourist centre it is important that a supply of holiday accommodation is available. Accommodation within the Plan area consists of a variety of establishments including hotels, guest houses, self-catering accommodation, static caravan parks and touring caravan and camping parks. Increased provision of holiday accommodation would benefit Christchurch as a tourism centre and benefit the local economy.

#### ***Hotels and Guest Houses***

6.88 As stated above increased provision of holiday accommodation can benefit the local economy by increasing numbers of visitors to the area. The following Policy identifies criteria by which proposals for hotels and guest houses will be assessed:

**ET 2 PROPOSALS FOR HOTELS AND GUEST HOUSES WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA ARE SATISFIED:**

- 1) THAT THEY DO NOT DETRACT FROM THE VISUAL AMENITIES AND/OR CHARACTER OF THE LOCALITY.**
- 2) THAT THEY DO NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE AMENITIES OF LOCAL RESIDENTS BY WAY OF NOISE OR DISTURBANCE, OR BY LOSS OF LIGHT OR PRIVACY.**

#### ***Caravan and Camping Sites***

6.89 A number of caravan and camping parks exist along Matchams Lane in the north of the Borough. Some problems can occur with the location of these sites, for example the effect on the landscape, nature conservation and access, detracting from the qualities of the Borough which make it a popular holiday destination. Elsewhere sites exist for static caravans and touring caravans and tents. Development of new, or extension of existing caravan and camping sites are inappropriate in the Green Belt, elsewhere such development will be permitted provided the following Policy is satisfied:

**ET 3 DEVELOPMENT OF NEW, OR EXTENSION OF EXISTING CARAVAN AND CAMPING SITES WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE:**

- 1) IT DOES NOT DETRACT FROM THE VISUAL AMENITIES AND/OR CHARACTER OF THE LOCALITY.**
- 2) IT DOES NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE AMENITIES LOCALLY BY INCREASED NOISE, TRAFFIC GENERATION OR OTHER DISTURBANCE.**

## **Countryside Tourism Activities**

- 6.90 Tourism can play an important role in the diversification of the rural economy although pressure in the Christchurch area is being experienced due to the proximity of the main conurbation which attracts thousands of visitors a year. As with other types of tourism, uses can take place in the countryside without detriment to the environment. However, it is important to balance rural considerations such as Green Belt, SSSI and landscape issues against the need to provide for tourism developments and the benefits they can bring to an area. Countryside tourism activities will only be permitted if satisfying Green Belt policies.

## **Site Specific Policies**

### ***Wick Ferry Holiday Parc***

- 6.91 Even though Policies in the Plan are aimed at preventing the reduction of the existing stock of visitor accommodation, it is recognised that in the case of the Wick Ferry Holiday Parc a change in the patterns of national tourism could lead to a decline in the profitability of this operation. This in turn may lead to pressure being exerted upon the Local Planning Authority to allow change of use and redevelopment of the premises. If this were to be the case the Local Planning Authority would seek to accommodate such market pressures by allowing a new form of development which either provides alternative holiday accommodation or a new tourist facility. It is considered appropriate to ensure the provision of public access to the river frontage and provide for public open space in the most popular tourist areas in the Borough. The definitive footpath Number 10 exists along the river frontage to the site, this will be maintained. Therefore the following Policy will apply:

#### **ET 4 PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE EXISTING WICK FERRY HOLIDAY PARC PREMISES AS A RECREATION AND TOURISM FACILITY WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA ARE SATISFIED:**

- 1) THAT PROVISION IS MADE FOR PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE RIVER FRONTAGE TOGETHER WITH AN APPROPRIATE AREA OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACE.**
- 2) IT DOES NOT DETRACT FROM THE VISUAL AMENITIES AND/OR CHARACTER OF THE LOCALITY.**
- 3) IT DOES NOT UNACCEPTABLY ADVERSELY AFFECT THE AMENITIES LOCALLY BY INCREASED NOISE, TRAFFIC GENERATION OR OTHER DISTURBANCE.**

### ***Former Riverside Amusements, Christchurch Quay***

- 6.92 The Quomps area adjoining Christchurch Quay is intensively used for recreational purposes as would be expected due to its riverside access. Improvements need to be

made to the area and tourist facilities extended compatible with its Green Belt status to secure its popularity with visitors. The site of the former Riverside Amusements, now owned by the Council, is essential to any strategy attempting to encourage the Quomps as a tourist attraction, which in turn is essential for the vitality of the town. Therefore the following Policy will apply:

- ET 5 PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE ALTERNATIVE USE OF THE FORMER RIVERSIDE AMUSEMENTS FOR RECREATION OR TOURISM PURPOSES WILL BE PERMITTED, PROVIDED THAT THE LAND ADJOINING THE FORMER AMUSEMENTS SHALL REMAIN OPEN. ITS USE FOR CAR PARKING WILL NOT BE PERMITTED IN ORDER TO PRESERVE THE VISUAL AMENITY AND RECREATIONAL USE OF THE AREA.**

## **Chapter 6: The Economy**

### **Industry**

#### **POLICY EI 1**

Seeks to retain industrial and commercial uses, unless they are causing environmental problems to a residential area.

#### **POLICY EI 2**

Identifies former aircraft factory buildings at Somerford Road and Wilverley Road as being suitable for redevelopment in the form of industrial units.

#### **POLICY EI 3**

Sets out criteria for any development/redevelopment of the industrial/commercial premises at Stony Lane.

#### **POLICY EI 4**

Sets out criteria for industrial and commercial development or redevelopment.

#### **POLICY EI 5**

Identifies criteria for development or redevelopment of land for employment uses within the boundaries at Bournemouth International Airport.

#### **POLICY EI 6**

Identifies criteria for limited development for employment uses or operational airport activities at Bournemouth International Airport.

#### **POLICY EI 7**

Sets out criteria for development within the Bournemouth International Airport Public Safety Zone.

#### **POLICY EI 8**

Identifies land at and adjoining the former Defence Research Agency site for Class B1 Employment Uses.

#### **POLICY EI 9**

Seeks to resist the further loss of existing boatyard facilities or maritime industry sites.

#### **POLICY EI 10**

Sets out criteria for the development of telecommunications facilities.

## **Offices**

### **POLICY EO 1**

Identifies Ready Mixed Concrete Site and land presently used for car sales adjoining 129 Bargates as suitable for office redevelopment.

### **POLICY EO 2**

Identifies area between Stour Road/Railway, north of Station Approach as suitable for comprehensive redevelopment for office use.

### **POLICY EO 3**

Identifies land between Bridge Street, Stony Lane South and the Civic Offices as being suitable for mixed use development.

### **POLICY EO 4**

Identifies a site in Lymington Road, Highcliffe as suitable for office development.

### **POLICY EO 5**

Sets out general criteria for office redevelopment.

## **Shopping**

### **POLICY ES 1**

Sets out criteria for shopping and leisure development and redevelopment proposals.

### **POLICY ES 2**

Resists the loss of ground floor retail uses in the identified shopping cores at the Town Centre, Bargates and Highcliffe.

### **POLICY ES 3**

Sets out criteria for the change of use of non-residential premises in the secondary shopping cores at the Town Centre, Highcliffe, Bargates, Barrack Road and Purewell.

### **POLICY ES 4**

Sets out criteria for the change of use of retail premises to non-retail uses in the identified local shopping areas.

### **POLICY ES 5**

Sets out criteria for new shopping and mixed use development on land west of the High Street.

### **POLICY ES 6**

Identifies land on and adjoining the southern side of Saxon Square as suitable for redevelopment.

### **POLICY ES 7**

Encourages consolidation of local retail facilities between Nos. 108 - 116 Stour Road.

**POLICY ES 8**

Sets out criteria for shopping development on land adjoining the Royalty Inn at Bargates.

**POLICY ES 9**

Sets out criteria for food and drink uses (Class A3).

**POLICY ES 10**

Sets out criteria for the change of use of public houses to other uses.

**Tourism****POLICY ET 1**

Resists the loss of existing significant holiday accommodation and tourist facilities.

**POLICY ET 2**

Sets out criteria for proposals for hotels and guest houses.

**POLICY ET 3**

Sets out criteria for development of new or extension of existing caravan and camping sites.

**POLICY ET 4**

Suggests a recreational and tourism facility as a suitable alternative use for the existing Wick Ferry Holiday Parc premises.

**POLICY ET 5**

Seeks the retention of the former Riverside Amusements site at Christchurch Quay for recreational or tourism use.