

Chapter 4

Economy and Employment

Introduction

- 4.1 One of the Government's key planning aims is to encourage sustainable economic development. In terms of new development, the District Council will need to weigh the importance of employment proposals against that of maintaining and improving environmental quality. The Local Plan has the important task of giving developers and local communities greater certainty about the types of development that will or will not be permitted in a given location.
- 4.2 The Babergh District is an economically diverse area that ranges from traditional retailing, in the market towns of Sudbury and Hadleigh, to a growing knowledge-based business sector. Traditionally, there have been active industrial sectors at Sudbury, Hadleigh, Brantham and on the western fringe of Ipswich. The internationally renowned areas of Constable country, and the medieval wool villages of Lavenham and Kersey, form the basis for a strong local tourism industry.
- 4.3 Despite significant sector change, the District continues to have a higher than expected reliance on manufacturing, directly employing around 31% of the 42,000 District's labourforce. Overall gross domestic product places the District as one of the most prosperous in the region. Unemployment is relatively low. At April 2001, there were just over 700 people unemployed in the District. This is equivalent to 2.1% of the economically active labour market.
- 4.4 However, the District is far from self-sufficient in employment levels with a significant amount of the economically active resident population commuting to work in London, Ipswich, Bury St Edmunds and Colchester. The latest Suffolk Learning Partnership Workforce Survey, conducted in April 2001, found that only 26% of the economically active population found employment in the Babergh District. This figure is far lower than comparable districts in the County.

- 4.5 The largest settlement in the Babergh District is Sudbury and Great Cornard. Despite having an apparently prosperous and pleasant façade, and in contrast to many other Suffolk market town communities, Sudbury and Great Cornard suffer from a combination of distinct economic and social disadvantages. There has been a general long-term lack of investment, as demonstrated by a particularly poor transportation network, lack of modern healthcare facilities and inadequate sewerage and drainage systems. Even during the current robust national economy, Sudbury and Great Cornard's economy remains extremely fragile and over-dependent on a large motor engineering sector.
- 4.6 The District's two market towns of Sudbury and Hadleigh continue to lose a growing market share of retail and leisure spending to the competing centres of Ipswich, Bury St. Edmunds and Colchester.
- 4.7 Agriculture has been of traditional importance to the District, but during the last two decades actual employment on the farm had fallen to below 7%, even before the latest livestock crises to befall the agricultural sector. Similarly, representation in the food processing industries, including animal feeds and primary processing have declined, most notably with the recent closure of the Sproughton sugar beet works. Agricultural support industries including engineering and supply companies have been strongly represented, particularly around Hadleigh, but continue to face uncertainty with the rapid sectoral change.
- 4.8 The rural economy has also declined in the face of severe competition from urban centres, and a change in social patterns has led to widespread closures of traditional village employers, including village shops, post offices, garages and pubs.

Objectives

1. To provide opportunities for the development of the local economy, by which employment can be sustained and new jobs created.
2. To accommodate the growth requirements of the local economy by providing an adequate supply of land and buildings for all employment purposes throughout the Plan period. This needs to be based upon a robust assessment of both quantitative and qualitative need/demand.
3. To regularly monitor and review the employment policies and establish a rolling programme of land supply.
4. To continue to make the main provision for employment in Sudbury and Hadleigh, and on the south-west fringe of Ipswich.

5. To support the use of redundant and under used buildings including those in the countryside where appropriate, and to ensure that suitable sites or buildings providing employment potential are not lost through demolition or re-development.
6. To encourage the development of appropriate new business “clusters” allowing businesses to benefit from proximity to each other and in particular, from sharing expertise in their own type of business.
7. To facilitate and promote a range of economic initiatives, such as the Haven Gateway partnership. This initiative has strategic importance to Babergh District by virtue of its proximity to the region’s transport gateways and its ports and the economic potential of these. This aim is a key priority of the Regional Economic Strategy (RES).

4.9 The most recent advice from Central Government is contained in PPG12: Development Plans, PPG4: Industrial and Commercial Development and Small Firms and Regional Planning Guidance for East Anglia (RPG6).

4.10 PPG12 states that:

“In preparing development plans, local authorities should take account of the need to revitalise and broaden the local economy, the need to stimulate employment opportunities, and the importance of encouraging industrial and commercial development, particularly in the growing knowledge driven sector”.

4.11 PPG4 advises that development plans should provide for choice, flexibility and competition. If local authorities ensure that there is sufficient land readily capable of development then this will stimulate competition between developers and help promote economic activity. It also states that *“in areas which are primarily residential, development plan policies should not seek to unrealistically restrict commercial and industrial activity of an appropriate scale – particularly in existing buildings – which would not adversely affect residential amenity”.*

4.12 One of the strategic aims of RPG6 is:

“to reduce imbalances and promote the appropriate development of the economy and social progress and thus improve the well being, prosperity and quality of life for the people in East Anglia”.

Policy Context

The guidance is designed to support economic growth across East Anglia both in areas with strong economic potential and in the priority areas for regeneration through a particular emphasis on improving their performance.

- 4.13 The Suffolk Structure Plan 2001 advises that new employment development should continue to be located in or near towns that are the focus of labour supply, service provision and communication networks. It suggests that many new employment opportunities likely to arise in Suffolk over the next 20 years will probably stem from changes on sites that are already used for employment purposes. Support is also given to the promotion of small-scale employment uses in suitable premises or locations in both urban and rural areas.
- 4.14 The regional development agency for the East of England, 'EEDA' (East of England Development Agency) recently produced the latest revision of the regional economic strategy (originally produced in 1999 and revised in 2001). The latest revision, entitled 'A Shared Vision' takes into account policy initiatives, data and research that post-date the 2001 strategy. The regional economic strategy aims to make the region a leading economy, founded on a world class knowledge base, the creativity and enterprise of its people in order to improve the quality of life of all who live and work in it. The strategy is a framework and focus for regional development that has been developed alongside the regional spatial strategy. It is subject to review every three years and covers the period up to 2021. The regional economic strategy contends that investment in people and infrastructure is vital, through education, improved transport provision, information and communications technology and the regeneration of disadvantaged areas.
- 4.15 If EEDA's vision for the region is to be realised and the Babergh District is to contribute to, and benefit from this, it will clearly have important land use implications. These are likely to include significant local employment development. The 'IP City' concept planned for Ipswich and the proposed Cambridge – Ipswich 'high technology corridor' could both act as the means to help deliver the prosperity for the eastern region that EEDA's economic strategy seeks. The District Council supports these initiatives in principle. Accordingly, this chapter aims to promote a positive and flexible approach towards accommodating sustainable employment development and local business needs.
- 4.16 In late 2002 the District Council received a comprehensive, independent consultants' employment land study. This study had the following primary aims:
- to review the supply of and demand for employment land in Babergh District (both quantitatively and qualitatively);

Babergh Employment Land Study (2002)

- to provide suitable recommendations in the light of an analysis of the two;
- to review the Plan’s employment policy approach (to 2016); and
- to inform the Plan review with recommendations for new land allocations if or where necessary.

4.17 This approach was designed to allow opportunities for the growth and development of the local economy, along with provision for regular monitoring and review. The establishment of a rolling programme of land supply was also necessary. The study’s main recommendations were that:

- the current supply of readily available employment land is insufficient to meet the District’s needs;
- therefore, there is a clear need to protect existing employment land, sites and premises, plus;
- a further 10-20 hectares of employment land needs to be allocated across Babergh District.

4.18 The following policies are designed to provide a clear and positive indication as to where the various kinds of industrial, economic and commercial activity will be encouraged. For the purposes of interpreting Policy EM01 and others in this chapter, “Employment related development” means development that provides a significant employment element, as dealt with in paragraph 4.20 below. This will not always fall into particular use classes of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended).

General

EM01 Employment related development proposals which are not covered by other policies will be judged, in particular, against the expected job creation, the potential effect on residential amenity, environmental quality, traffic generation and road safety, and site accessibility by a range of transport modes.

4.19 The District Council will seek to make maximum use of industrial / commercial and other employment land in order to create jobs and stimulate the economy, and in the interests of sustainable development.

General Employment Areas

4.20 Land allocated as General Employment Areas embraces all employment types defined in classes B1, B2 and B8 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended). Other types of land use outside classes B1, B2 and B8, such as retailing, leisure, financial and professional services, and food and drink uses are also important employment providers. However, these are dealt with elsewhere in this chapter and in Chapter 5: Shopping.

EM02 On the sites identified as General Employment Areas and new employment allocations, namely:

Lady Lane, Hadleigh
Land east of Lady Lane, Hadleigh (see Note 1)
Crowcroft Road, Nedging
Farthing Road, Sproughton
Ballingdon Hill Industrial Estate, Sudbury
Bulmer Road, Sudbury (see Note 2)
Chilton Industrial Estate, Sudbury
Church Field Road, Sudbury
Woodhall, Sudbury (including its proposed extension)
Brantham Industrial Estate (see Note 3)
Waldingfield Road, Chilton and
Former Sugar Beet Factory, Sproughton (see Note 4)

planning permission will be granted for employment related development in principle. This will include the relocation of existing businesses from residential areas where these would be better located alongside other employment generating activities. Exceptions to this policy will include proposals likely to have an adverse impact on town (or village) centre vitality and viability. Proposals able to demonstrate a positive effect on town (or village) centre vitality and viability will be permitted.

Note 1: Site part of mixed development package allocation, see Policy EM03.

Note 2: Subject to satisfactory Flood Risk Assessment.

Note 3: Subject to satisfactory Flood Risk Assessment. Wider proposals for site, see Policy EM06.

Note 4: See Policy EM04.

New Land for Employment Use

- 4.21 Consistent with its objectives, the District Council will monitor and regularly review the employment policies and establish a rolling programme to ensure a minimum of 5 years' supply of land for employment purposes at any one time. This review may need to be completed in advance of that for the Plan as a whole.

- 4.22 The former 'IFF' site, on the River Stour, near Long Melford, is a substantial manufacturing site. Until 2002 it provided rural employment opportunities for the Sudbury area and for residents in the Braintree District of north Essex. Its location and varied development constraints make any residential development on the site wholly inappropriate. Feasibility work to explore development options for the site would be necessary. In addition, any proposals for redevelopment should be the subject of a development brief. The Council will continue to work closely with Braintree District Council to discuss, advise and negotiate with the site owner, prospective developers, occupiers and tenants on suitable employment uses for this site and, as appropriate, the production of a development brief.
- 4.23 Hadleigh has a thriving and recently extended industrial area off Lady Lane. However, there now appears to be a shortage of available land and sites following a very quick take-up of the last extension. As one of the District's three main locations for employment development (Sudbury being the foremost) a new land allocation is required to serve the town. The best place for this is close to the existing employment site at Lady Lane.

EM03 Land to the south-east of Lady Lane (and south of the A1071) at Hadleigh (off Grays Close) is allocated for a mixed use development, comprising employment, housing and open space. This will incorporate:

- a minimum of 5.0 hectares of new land for general employment use, to be located on the eastern part of the site;
- a minimum area of 3.5 hectares of open space to be located at the southern end of the site;
- provision for substantial landscaping measures to create a new eastern boundary to the site and green/amenity and wildlife corridors within the development, particularly along the route of footpath 24;
- housing on the remainder of the site (see Policy HS15);
- a site within the general employment area for the establishment of a waste transfer station;
- provision for a new means of separate road access direct from the A1071 and junction improvements where these two roads will meet (see note below); and
- provision for a linked network of pedestrian and cycle ways through the site linking to Grays Close, Lady Lane and Tower Mill Lane.

Note: This policy needs to be read in conjunction with Policy HS15 (Housing and Settlement Policy chapter). Potential applicants are advised that detailed phasing provisions and infrastructure requirements apply to this site. Any comprehensive proposals (mixed use development of the whole site) must also comply with Policy HS15.

EM04 The former 'British Sugar' (sugar beet factory) site, Sroughton (Ipswich fringe) is allocated for retention in employment related use(s). Proposals for redevelopment or re-use of the site must be approached on a comprehensive basis, with full regard to the future of the entire site. A range of land uses will be required, as appropriate to the different parts of the site. Permission will only be granted subject to:

- protection of the biodiversity of the locality and any opportunities for enhancement;
- protection of the wider river environment in the locality and any opportunities for enhancement;
- retention of the natural area known as the island site and existing landscape tracts, together with proposals for further measures;
- no adverse impacts on residential amenity;
- provision for outdoor recreation on appropriate parts of the site;
- provision for improvement of the River Gipping Riverside Path;
- production of a green travel plan; and
- production of a Flood Risk Assessment.

Note: A development brief will be produced in co-operation with Ipswich Borough Council, the site owners/operators, the Environment Agency, the Greenways Countryside Project, the Gipping Valley Countryside Project and any other relevant parties.

- 4.24 The Wherstead Office Park (currently occupied by E.ON (UK) Plc), is a substantial employment location of 7.1 hectares on the southern edge of Ipswich. The site also has a range of complex development constraints, including its closeness to the A14 trunk road, a very poor road access, listed buildings, etc. Its location and these other constraints make residential development here wholly inappropriate. It is important to both Babergh and Ipswich that the site is retained for employment related purposes that also represent sustainable uses for the site.

EM05 At the existing Wherstead Office Park, Wherstead and a further 3.3hectares of land immediately to the west, proposals for B1 development, as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended), will be permitted. Residential development will not be considered acceptable at this site, apart from the conversion of the existing gatehouse buildings at the entrance of the Office Park from The Street. The new allocation must be developed in the context of proposals for its adjacent site. Permission will only be granted subject to:

- protection of the setting of the listed buildings;
- protection of the playing field;
- retention of mature landscaping belts;
- no adverse landscape impacts on the Suffolk Coasts and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
- provision of a new access from the A137 (designed and constructed to adoptable standards) to serve both the existing and new employment site, and closure of existing access from The Street to all but cyclists, pedestrians and emergency vehicles;
- no adverse impacts on neighbouring residential amenity;
- production of a green travel plan; and
- contribution(s) to provision of local bus services.

Note: A development brief will be produced in co-operation with Ipswich Borough Council, the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Unit, the site owners / operators, the Highways Agency and any other relevant parties.

4.25 The large industrial estate at Brantham is a very important employment location for the southern parts of Babergh District. The type of activity and employment provided at the site may change in future. However, it is important to ensure that as much employment and economic activity as possible is retained here by allocating the site for employment uses. This is a major brownfield site, although it has several development constraints. To address these issues, ensure that a viable scheme emerges to avoid any longterm dereliction and to ensure a satisfactory overall form of development, the District Council considers that both development feasibility analysis and the preparation of a site development brief are needed. Some flexibility may be necessary to allow for other forms of development that support and balance the predominant employment use(s) of the site. Policy EM06 sets out appropriate development guidelines.

EM06 Land at Brantham Industrial Area is identified as a special policy area where the retention of current and future employment uses is to be prioritised and the redevelopment of obsolete buildings and land achieves a balanced form of mixed-use development. Comprehensive redevelopment proposals for the whole of the allocated site will be informed and guided by a feasibility study and development brief which together will ensure the enhancement and balanced regeneration of the site; provide for retention and enhancement of local employment opportunities; deliver an appropriate level of residential development and community facilities; create new areas of public open space and enhancement of pedestrian and cycle links between the site and the settlement.

Permission will only be granted subject to:

- an appraisal of the nature, extent and means of remediation of any land contamination present on the site;
- production of a Flood Risk Assessment;
- protection of the biodiversity and wider river environment in the locality and any opportunities for enhancement;
- protection of the area's cultural heritage;
- retention of existing landscaping tracts, together with proposals for further measures;
- no adverse landscape impacts on the adjacent Dedham Vale and Suffolk Coast and Heaths Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
- no adverse impacts on neighbouring residential amenity;
- satisfactory improvements to and integration with the local road network, including vehicular access to the A137, separation of industrial and residential traffic within the site, the integration of pedestrian and cycle links, the production of a green travel plan, and contribution(s) to provision of local bus services.

Note: Permission will be subject to satisfactory Flood Risk Assessment. A development brief will be produced in co-operation with Tendring District Council, the site owners/operators, the Environment Agency, the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Unit, the Dedham Vale and Stour Valley Project and any other relevant parties.

4.26 The District Council has granted planning permission, or has resolved to grant permission on the prior completion of a Section 106 Planning Obligation, for virtually all the non-Policy EM23 sites allocated for employment use in the Babergh Local Plan Alteration No. 1. It is therefore unnecessary to reallocate those employment sites in this Plan. One of two exceptions relates to 0.40 hectares of land at Bures Road, Great Cornard. This therefore needs to be rolled forward as an allocation in this Plan.

EM07 0.40 hectares of land at Bures Road, Great Cornard are proposed for business use as defined in Class B1 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987(as amended). Proposals for development are expected to ensure that:

- access will be from a new road which will serve the adjacent housing area to the north of this allocation;
- the existing access to Bures Road is permanently and effectively stopped-up and landscaped;
- development is laid out, having regard to the Council's Guidance Note No.1 on Industrial Development;
- perimeter landscaping is provided; and
- appropriate measures are taken to control the water quality of all surface water discharges to the aquifer.

Note: Subject to satisfactory Flood Risk Assessment.

4.27 The Suffolk Structure Plan 2001 seeks to encourage economic growth across the county, particularly at the major settlements, but also at smaller towns, many of which have a concentration of employment in a small number of firms. It advises that local plans should seek to identify particularly vulnerable towns in this respect and consider means of encouraging diversification, leading to a wider range of opportunities.

4.28 Sudbury and the adjoining built-up area of Great Cornard has been identified as a vulnerable location. There is a significant shortage of employment land, and opportunities for the expansion of existing firms and the establishment of new incoming businesses are extremely limited. The Structure Plan identifies Sudbury and Great Cornard as an area where opportunities for sustainable development with some further growth exist.

- 4.29 The District Council considers that this shortage of employment land in the Sudbury area should be addressed by allocating a peripheral urban extension to the north of Sudbury. An integrated and sustainable mixed-use development is proposed which makes provision for 19.8 hectares of new employment land. The “Chilton Mixed-Use Development Package” is dealt with in Chapter 12. Policy CP01 sets out the framework and details for these proposals.
- 4.30 Policies EM03 – EM06 all cover ‘Key Employment’ sites, which are in some cases important to their locality. However, the Chilton proposals represent the lynchpin of the overall District strategy for providing new employment land. This is an appropriate location since the Sudbury area is the commercial and employment focus for most of Babergh.

General Employment Areas

Warehousing and Storage

- 4.31 Warehousing and storage (Class B8 Storage and Distribution uses) provide low levels of employment for the size of site used, but they are usually served by large numbers of vehicles. In addition, these are often heavy vehicles. As a result, B8 developments will often be inappropriate for some sites, particularly where a conflict with residential amenity arises. The District Council will normally encourage such developments to locate on the General Employment Areas, where there is generally good access to the primary highway network and the impact on residential amenities is likely to be minimised.

EM08 Proposals for warehousing, storage and distribution will be permitted at General Employment Areas and new employment allocations, subject to the acceptability of the location and characteristics of these sites. Proposals that take up an excessive amount of land, or are more appropriately located elsewhere, for example at ports or closer to trunk roads, will be refused.

Leisure and Sport at Employment Areas

EM09 Depending on individual circumstances, proposals for leisure or sporting uses will be permitted at General Employment Areas, new employment allocations and other industrial areas. However, applicants will be required to demonstrate a need for the facility and why the proposed use cannot be located in or on the edge of town centres. Permission will only be granted for proposals:

- offering a significant level of employment;
- that do not take up an excessive land area; and
- which represent a sustainable use for the location involved.

EM10 Office development, as defined in Class B1 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) will be permitted at General Employment Areas, new employment allocations and other industrial areas. Proposals in designated Mixed-Use Areas will also be permitted subject to their acceptability in relation to:

- residential and environmental amenity;
- traffic generation;
- car parking; and
- the suitability of the building for the proposed use.

4.32 There are, in addition to the General Employment Areas, other existing industrial areas to which specific policies will apply, or other areas suitable for employment use.

4.33 The Notley Enterprise Park occupies a small part of the former wartime Raydon Airfield, it has acquired a lawful use for storage and distribution (Class B8). The former airfield buildings provide accommodation for a significant number of employment uses in a rural area.

4.34 In landscape terms, the site is very exposed as a result of the loss of hedgerows during construction of the former airfield. There is therefore a need to improve perimeter landscaping to soften the visual impact of the existing and future development. The local roads serving this site are unsuitable for substantial traffic volumes and for heavy traffic in particular. Further afield, the nearest A12 junctions are also sub-standard. The site should be recognised and retained as a rural employment site, but the District Council considers that further development should be restricted unless these problems can be resolved.

EM11 Further employment related development at the Notley Enterprise Park will be strictly limited to the area shown on the Proposals Map. Development proposals will be considered in relation to landscape impacts and the need for improved perimeter landscaping. Proposals that have adverse traffic impacts will be refused unless they offer suitable mitigation measures, such as highways improvements. The need to encourage alternative modes of transport to the site will also be taken into account in considering any development proposals.

Rural Employment and Industrial Areas and Allocations

Notley Enterprise Park, Raydon/Great Wenham

Bull Lane/Acton Place

- 4.35 The Babergh Local Plan Alteration No.1 and Alteration No.2 First Deposit Draft made provision for possible extensions to the Bull Lane/Acton Place industrial area, subject to the improvement of the existing accesses. Suffolk County Council, as Transport Authority, has reappraised the highway implications of the proposed extension to the industrial area, and considers that additional highway improvements will be required in the interests of road safety. Consideration will need to be given to the desirability of improvements to the Bull Lane/Long Melford Bypass junction.
- 4.36 The relevant Local Plan policy will therefore need to be amended to reflect the Transport Authority's requirements. In addition, the overall site is recognised as an important rural employment site, and has a role in the wider local economy and the employment catchment of the Sudbury/Long Melford/Acton area. Largely for these reasons, a relatively small area of land, which has been informally used for industrial purposes in conjunction with an existing estate occupier, is allocated as an extension to the estate. This will offer the opportunity for the District Council to regularise use of the site, bringing it under planning control and to seek a planning application that employs a planned approach towards both the site and its context.

EM12 The existing industrial areas at Bull Lane/Acton Place are allocated for employment uses which fall within Classes B1 and B2 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended). No other uses will be permitted until improvements to vehicular access and internal road network, as set out below, are undertaken. Because of the existing constraints of the internal road network, parking, loading and unloading standards will be strictly applied within the industrial area. Any proposals for redevelopment within this area will be considered particularly in terms of likely traffic generation and the effects on parking, vehicular circulation and manoeuvring within the site.

An area of approximately 1.9 hectares of land to the south of the Acton Place Industrial Estate and an area of approximately 0.76 hectares of land to the west of the Bull Lane Industrial Estate are allocated as extensions to this industrial area. Proposals for development in these areas will not be permitted until the highway improvements set out below have been implemented. In addition, proposals for development will be required to include:

- in respect of the Acton Place Industrial Estate extension, a scheme of landscaping/reinforcement planting along the south-eastern and south-western boundaries of the site, and

- in respect of the Bull Lane Industrial Estate extension, a scheme of structural landscaping/ planting along the south-western and north-western boundaries of the site (as indicated on the Proposals Map – Inset 4)

Note: Necessary work includes improving the junction of the Acton Place estate with the C711 road, including widening and improving the structure of the existing narrow estate road and providing an internal connection between the two existing industrial areas.

- 4.37 The existing industrial estate at Pond Hall, Hadleigh, is relatively inaccessible from the primary road network. The traffic implications of all proposals will therefore be of great importance.

Pond Hall, Hadleigh

EM13 Proposals for development in Classes B1 and B2 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) at the Pond Hall Industrial Estate, Hadleigh will be permitted, provided they do not generate adverse levels/forms of traffic. Development must be strictly limited to the area shown on the Proposals Map.

- 4.38 The small industrial site closely related to Great Waldingfield provides valuable rural employment opportunities and wider benefits to the local economy. The site also lies in the Sudbury employment catchment area and is important to it. It is well located in relation to the village, but could cause local traffic impacts if employment uses are allowed on the site that generate high volumes of heavy goods vehicle movements. The site's local employment role needs to be safeguarded but subject to planning control to protect residential amenity, in particular.

Tentree Road, Great Waldingfield

EM14 The industrial/commercial site off Tentree Road, Great Waldingfield, is designated as a Rural Employment Area and is to be retained in employment-related uses only. An area of land covering approximately 2.50 hectares to the north of the existing site is allocated for a possible extension to this employment area. Development within Class B8 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) will not be permitted on either the existing site or the possible extension. Residential development will not be permitted on either site. Only development within the designated General Employment Area will be permitted.

Note: The extent of the newly designated General Employment Area and the possible extension area are shown on the Proposals Map. The provisions of Policy EM02 apply for this site, except for the preclusion of B8 development.

Glemsford

4.39 Glemsford is one of the District's 'sustainable' villages for the purposes of Suffolk Structure Plan 2001 Policy CS3(e). A key characteristic that gives Glemsford this status is that it has "a variety of employment opportunities (which have potential for further development)". This advantage needs to be safeguarded in the interests of local balance (including retention of the village's potential for any further sustainable residential development), local employment opportunities, and the local economy. No new employment allocation sites are proposed at present but for the reasons covered above and in line with the District's overall strategy, any sites already in employment related uses need to be safeguarded, in particular from residential development.

4.40 The existing 'EW Downs' site, currently used for manufacturing and storage operations, was partly allocated for workshop-scale employment in the last Local Plan, adopted in 1995. The remaining part of the site so designated was later developed and remains in active use. The site is the largest employment site in Glemsford and needs to be retained for employment purposes and its economic importance. It is well situated for access to residential areas for employees but also shares some boundaries with residential development. As a result, operations carried out on the site can be sensitive. If circumstances change during the Plan period making the site available for redevelopment this would present the opportunity to eliminate or reduce any adverse effects on neighbouring residential amenity by controlling the forms of commercial / employment permissible on the site and the details of site operations.

EM15 The existing employment-related site of 0.8 hectares located off Brook Street ('E W Downs'), Glemsford, is to be retained solely in employment-related use(s). Residential development will not be permitted. Development proposals within a range of uses (as defined by the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, as amended) will be permitted, in principle, including A1, A2, B1, C1, and D1. Proposals for sui generis uses will be considered on their own merits, (subject to all provisions in this policy). Development proposals will be subject to a thorough assessment in relation to the following criteria:

- the form and level of employment generated and any other local economic benefits;

- effects on residential amenity;
- highways safety, car parking and the level and type of traffic generated;
- the need to achieve a high quality design;
- landscape effects, in particular the need to retain existing mature trees and secure a high quality landscaping scheme; and
- any other environmental effects.

4.41 Capel St Mary is one of the District's largest villages and has a good range of local facilities and services, but it has few in local employment opportunities. In the interests of balance, the local economy and sustainable development, this problem needs to be resolved. Any sites already in employment related uses need to be safeguarded, in particular from residential development. The site currently occupied by a lorry park/depot, has been allocated for workshop-scale employment since the last Plan was adopted in 1995. This remains the case under Policy EM23 of this chapter. However, development proposals for a more comprehensive scheme including both sites would also be acceptable in principle.

Capel St Mary

EM16 The existing employment-related site between the A12 and London Road at Capel St Mary is to be retained solely in employment-related uses. This has an area of 2.3 hectares. Development proposals within a broad range of uses (as defined by the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended)) will be permitted, in principle, including A1, A2, A3, B1, B2, C1, D1 and D2. Proposals for sui generis uses will be considered on their own merits (subject to all provisions in this policy). Residential development will not be permitted. Although the adjacent lorry depot/park site (0.45 hectares) is allocated under Policy EM23 for workshop scale employment, proposals for a comprehensive scheme including both sites will also be permitted, in principle, subject to this policy's provisions on the larger site. In all cases, the following criteria will be taken into account in the determination of proposals:

- the form and level of employment generated;
- any other local economic benefits;
- impact on residential amenity;
- landscape impacts, in particular the need to protect the site's mature trees; and
- any other environmental impacts.

Land off Sprites Lane, Ipswich

- 4.42 The policy for General Employment Areas will not apply to 8.9 hectares of land bounded by London Road, Sprites Lane and Scrivener Drive. The land is in a key location on the approach to Ipswich and is close to residential estates. The site has planning permissions for employment use, for prestigious business development. This site was allocated for prestigious business development in the Babergh Local Plan Alteration No. 1, in 1995, but remains undeveloped. It is also suitable for high technology development and is likely to be important to any progress of the 'IP-City' concept. A comprehensive scheme for the site, such as a new business park, is greatly preferable to a piecemeal approach, which could prejudice its overall development. This allocation therefore needs to be rolled forward in the revised Plan. Policy EM17 was omitted from the First Deposit Draft so it is now proposed for re-inclusion. Its wording has been amended to make the policy clearer.

EM17 8.9 hectares of land bounded by Sprites Lane, London Road (A1214) and Scrivener Drive, on the Ipswich western fringe, is allocated for prestigious business / high technology development within Class B1 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended). Any proposals for development on the site must take into account the need to plan for the whole site and will be required to demonstrate this approach.

East Bank of the River Orwell

- 4.43 A small part of the Babergh District (approximately 4.2 hectares) is situated on the eastern bank of the River Orwell. This is mainly part of the ash disposal area associated with the now demolished Cliff Quay power station. The majority of this land (approximately 2.7 hectares) is considered suitable for port related activity only, with the remainder allocated for General Employment purposes (approximately 1.5 hectares).

EM18 Development proposals for port related activity will be permitted for 2.7 hectares of land on the eastern bank of the River Orwell, provided that adequate access arrangements are included and considerable reinforcement of the existing planting and earth mounding on the site perimeter takes place. The remaining 1.5 hectares of land are allocated for General Employment use and subject to Policy EM02 and the above provisions. Development proposals will be subject to the need for:

- a Flood Risk Assessment;
- a detailed site assessment in relation to any potential land contamination issues prior to the commencement of development; and

- ecological assessment to ensure that the adjacent Orwell estuary SSSI is not adversely affected.

High Technology Industry

- 4.44 The term “high technology” generally refers to companies which use new technologies or make products that advance technological developments (e.g. microelectronics, biotechnology). In most cases their premises resemble research laboratories or offices. Most high technology firms require an attractive working environment with clean air.
- 4.45 The creation of their products can involve research, development and/or manufacturing and the provision of their services can involve research or, more usually, office use. The establishment and development of high technology firms is to be encouraged.
- 4.46 In order that applicants do not see the following policy as a means of achieving unexceptional development, such as a change of use to any other industrial process, in “off-plan” locations where it would not normally be permitted, removal of permitted development rights will be considered.

EM19 Proposals for high technology employment provision will be granted planning permission. If it can be demonstrated that a company’s needs cannot be met on allocated sites, by other Local Plan policies, or where there is a demonstrable need for a company/organisation to co-locate with an existing high technology company/organisation, the proposed development will be considered as an exceptional “departure” from normal planning policy.

In considering potential departures of this kind, the following factors will be taken into account:

- the characteristics, needs and business development plans of the company/organisation;
- the impact on the environment, landscape, wildlife and residential amenity;
- employment potential and potential benefit(s) to the local economy;
- the quality of the environment to be created;
- the accessibility of the site by a variety of transport modes; and
- access and traffic generation issues.

4.47 The type of companies/organisations to which this policy applies include the following:

- new or existing companies involved in either research/development or production;
- companies involved in high technology production processes requiring skilled labour; and
- high technology office and service companies.

Expansion of Existing Employment Uses

4.48 Given a local economy where inward investment from outside firms (such as those that are foreign-based) is traditionally low, the protection and promotion of indigenous businesses takes on even greater importance. In the interests of providing further employment opportunities, safeguarding the future of local businesses and strengthening the local economy, there will be a strong presumption in favour of permitting the expansion of an existing firm or other employer. Proposals will be judged against Structure Plan Policy ECON1/Policy EM20.

EM20 Proposals for the expansion/extension of an existing employment use, site or premises will be permitted, provided there is no material conflict with residential and environmental amenity or highway safety.

Premises and New Sites in the Countryside

4.49 Some types of industrial and commercial uses, particularly those which have direct connections with the local agricultural economy, may be located in rural areas. However, this need to locate in the countryside will have to be clearly demonstrated. Planning applications for this type of development will be judged against Policy ENV4 of the Suffolk Structure Plan and Policy CR01 of the Countryside and Rural Economy chapter.

Redundant Airfields

4.50 Subject to environmental and traffic considerations, there may be opportunities to guide employment development to certain disused airfields. The development of many such sites in the country has proved acceptable.

4.51 There are three redundant airfields in the Babergh District. Raydon Airfield is referred to above. A large part of that site remains undeveloped. Chilton Airfield is subject to proposals for informal recreation as part of a community woodland associated with the Chilton Mixed-Use Development Package (see Chapter 12, Policy CP01). Although Alpheton Airfield is adjacent to the primary road network and in an area of relatively low landscape value, it is visually prominent.

Development would require a new road link to the A134 and there may be problems of water supply for fire fighting purposes. Wattisham airfield also lies partly in Babergh District, the majority being in Mid Suffolk District but is used as a military facility. A small part of Rattlesden Airfield is in the Babergh District.

- 4.52 Parts of the former airfields can be considered as previously developed land, but the sites are generally in unsustainable locations. So the District Council must take a very restrictive approach towards both the form and level of development it will permit on these sites. Disused airfields can also be associated with drainage problems, increasing the importance of proper sewage facilities to serve new development. Proposals affecting disused airfields are subject to the policies of the Countryside and Rural Economy chapter (Policy CR01 in particular) and to Policy EM21.

EM21 Development proposals affecting any undesignated parts of the District's former airfields will only be permitted for uses that need to be located in the countryside or for uses that can be demonstrated to benefit and sustain the vitality of the countryside. In this context local employment related uses and community facilities/services will be permitted in principle. Residential development will not be permitted. All proposals will be expected to re-use existing buildings wherever possible. Proposals to replace or redevelop buildings must not have any greater effect on the openness of the countryside and the landscape than those they replace. Proposals must also include adequate sewage facilities. All proposals will be assessed in relation to:

- whether the development/use proposed is sustainable, in terms of its location;
- traffic generation;
- residential amenity;
- generation of noise, vibration, smells or fumes;
- other forms of pollution risks;
- level and characteristics of employment generated;
- other local economic benefits;
- the need for provision of local community facilities/services;
- cultural heritage; and
- biodiversity.

Small-scale industry

- 4.53 In the towns and villages there is a need for economic activity to provide employment, protect services and reduce travel-to-work movements. There may be a number of sites available for economic use, often using existing vacant sites or buildings. Because such sites may be close to residential property, Class B1 uses are likely to be the most suitable, where there will be no adverse impact on residential amenity, by reason of noise, vibration, smell or fumes. Sites closely related to, but outside of the built-up area, may also be acceptable.

EM22 Proposals involving the establishment of businesses (or other employment generating development), either in existing premises or on sites in Towns and Villages, or which are well related to them, will be permitted, provided there is no material conflict with residential and environmental amenity or highway safety.

Workshop-scale sites

- 4.54 A number of small village sites are suitable for workshop-scale employment use and these have been selected primarily with the purpose of introducing employment opportunities to these centres. The sites listed in Policy EM23 are shown on the Proposals Map.

EM23 The sites listed below have been identified for 'workshop-scale' employment. Proposals for the development or use of units up to a maximum of approximately 111 sq. metres each will be permitted for business use as defined in Class B1 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended). Other types of economic activity will not be permitted on these sites.

- Brook Farm Garage, Bildeston (see note below);
- Swan Street, Boxford; and
- Haulage Depot, London Road, Capel St. Mary.

Note: Although this site is already largely developed, any further development here will only be permitted subject to a satisfactory Flood Risk Assessment.

- 4.55 In granting planning permission for new businesses and other employment related uses, the applicant's attention will be drawn to Policy ECON1 of the Suffolk Structure Plan 2001 and Policy EM20, which will be applied when considering proposals for further expansion.
- 4.56 In respect of Brook Farm Garage, Bildeston, in order to act as a catalyst for workshop-scale development, a small-scale residential development may be acceptable. In such circumstances a Planning Obligation under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) will be sought to secure implementation of at least a first phase of the business aspect of the scheme.

- 4.57 The District Council considers that in an area under pressure for residential development and where appropriate new employment sites in villages and towns are hard to find, there is as a general rule, a pressing need to protect existing employment, sites and premises.
- 4.58 Many proposals for re-using or redeveloping employment sites and premises come forward for determination. In such instances, in order to demonstrate that other forms of employment use have been fully explored, documentary evidence will be required to demonstrate that a proper and sustained marketing campaign, at current market value, for either continued or alternative employment purposes has been undertaken. Important factors in evaluating the appropriateness of such a campaign will be the length of time it has been pursued and the prevailing market conditions. Examination of documentation of enquiries and responses will be expected.
- 4.59 The marketing campaign will have to be agreed between the determining authority and applicant(s) before it begins. This will include the following:
- length of campaign;
 - asking price;
 - sales particulars; and
 - number, frequency and source of advertisements.
- 4.60 In agreeing the asking price, an independent valuation may be required, that the applicant will normally be expected to fund. The District Council will apply policy EM24 to all proposals affecting land, sites or premises in, formerly in, or allocated for employment use. This will be supported by supplementary planning guidance to help people with their planning applications. Proposals will be expected to keep to this guidance.

EM24 Planning applications to redevelop or use existing or vacant employment land, sites and premises for non-employment purposes, will only be permitted if the applicant can demonstrate that their retention for an appropriate employment use has been fully explored. This may be undertaken in one of the two following ways:

1. by an agreed and sustained marketing campaign, undertaken at a realistic asking price; or
2. where agreed in advance, the applicant can demonstrate that the land, site or premises are inherently unsuitable or not viable for all forms of employment related use.

This policy may not be applied where vacant business premises form a smaller (and subordinate) but integral part of an existing dwelling in the same ownership.

4.61 The use of the approach listed at 2. in Policy EM24 will only be considered acceptable when agreed in advance by the determining authority and the applicant. This approach will require the applicant to employ appropriate commercial expertise to demonstrate that the land, site or premises in question are inherently unsuitable or not viable for all conventional forms of employment related use. The District Council recognises that occasionally it may be appropriate to permit the re-use or redevelopment of some “bad neighbour” businesses, if these are accompanied by firm proposals to relocate the business in the Babergh District.

4.62 Note: Paragraph 6.87 in chapter 6 applies to public houses, and Policy CR20 applies to the retention of general village services and facilities, see Chapter 6: Countryside and Rural Economy.

Working from Home

4.63 Working from home may provide opportunities for new small businesses, particularly in villages and rural areas, but needs to be subject to strict safeguards. To achieve these planning permission will normally only be granted for a specific use and may be on a temporary basis if there is any doubt over its impact. Permission may be conditional to make sure the business is a good neighbour. An example of such a condition would be a ‘personal’ planning permission (one restricted to a particular individual or possibly specified members of a family). Permission may be granted to enable a home based business to expand, but at a certain stage re-location of a growing business is likely to be inevitable.

4.64 In many instances, planning permission is not required for working from home, such as where the use of part of a dwelling for business does not change the overall character of the property’s use as a single dwelling. The need for planning permission, however, depends on the type, scale and ‘intensity’ of activity being undertaken. Permission is likely to be required where the business is no longer ancillary to the use of a dwelling or where visitors, traffic, noise or fumes, etc. exceed what might be expected if the property was used as a single dwelling. Anyone considering working from home is therefore strongly advised to contact the local planning authority to discuss the situation in advance.

4.65 Working from home offers valuable sustainability benefits. Further, it can help greatly in the establishment of small businesses during their critical formative period. For such reasons, the District Council will apply a positive and flexible approach as far as possible, while protecting interests of acknowledged importance.

EM25 Conversions and changes of use of parts of dwellings or sites within the curtilage of a dwelling to small-scale business use will be permitted provided that there is no material detriment to residential amenity or material adverse impact on road safety or the environment generally.

