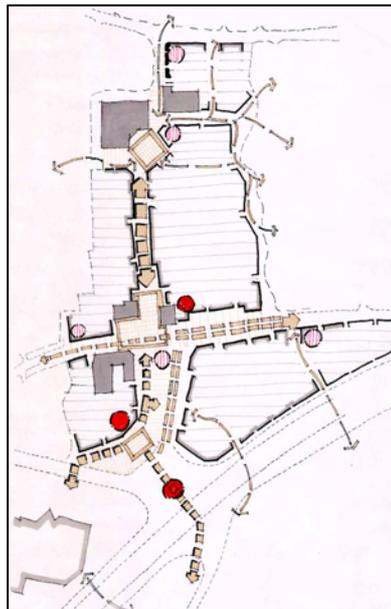
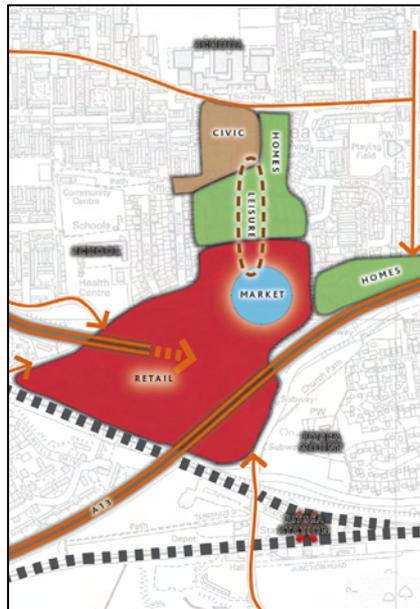


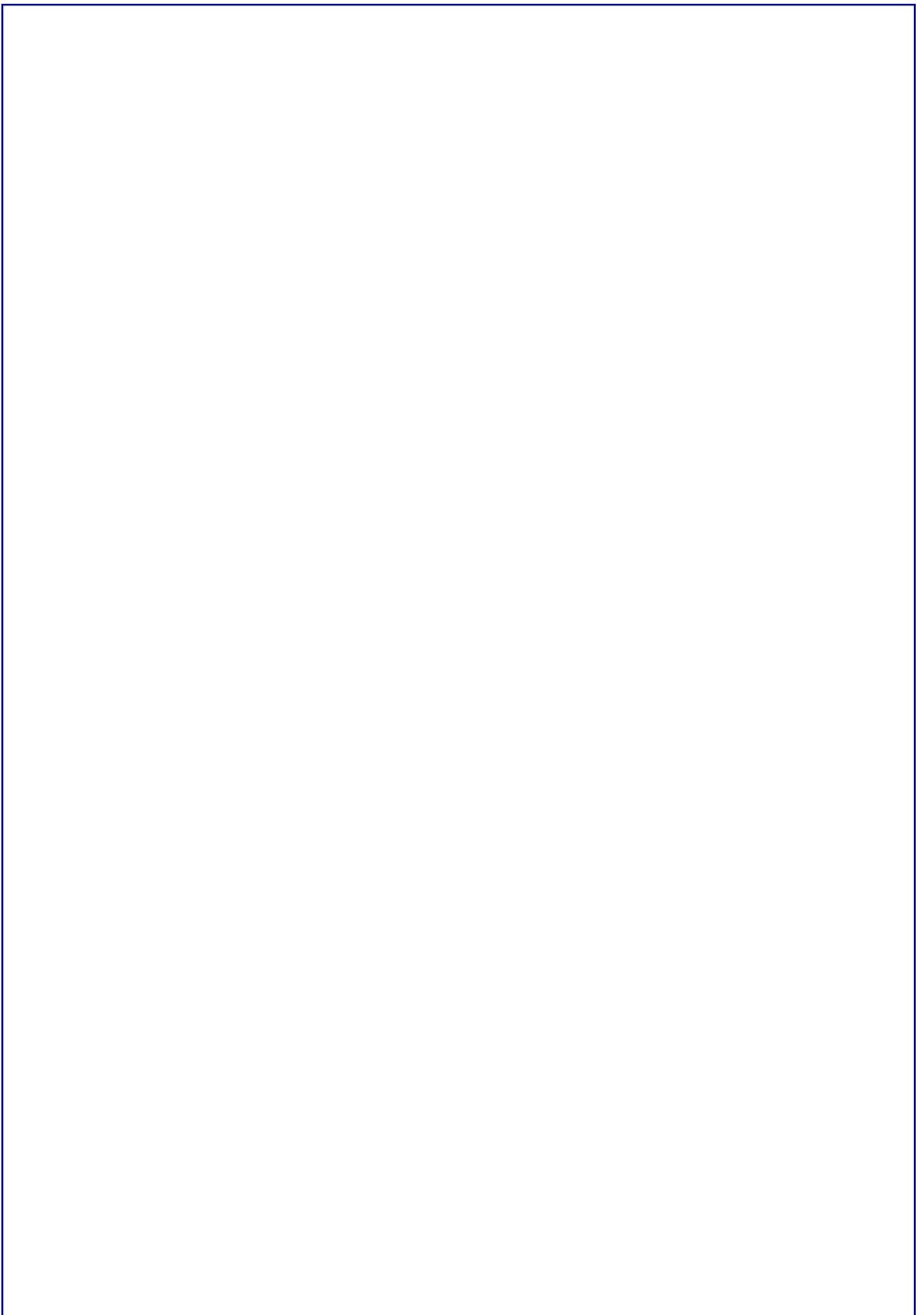
Pitsea Town Centre Masterplan

March 2007



i.contents

Chapter One Introduction	1
Chapter Two Context	7
Chapter Three Vision	23
Chapter Four Projects	26
Chapter Five Public Realm Strategy	48
Chapter Six Transport	54
Chapter Seven Delivery	59



1.introduction

This is an exciting time for Pitsea Town Centre. The Masterplan prepared by GVA Grimley LLP's Planning, Development and Regeneration (PDR) team on behalf of Basildon District Council and Basildon Renaissance Partnership will provide the development and investment framework for the future evolution and sustainable growth of Pitsea Town Centre.

Over recent years, the centre has failed to maintain growth and has struggled to fulfil its role as one of the second tier centres in the Basildon District. However, there is now a renewed effort amongst the public, private and community sectors to transform the fortunes of the town. Political support for change along with a willingness amongst the private sector to invest in the centre are creating the conditions for positive change.

There is now an opportunity to plan ahead for the next stage of the town's evolution; ensuring the that the centre is able to fully serve its growing hinterland and provide the quality in range and choice of services expected of a thriving town centre in the heart of the Thames Gateway growth area. If Basildon is to sustainably accommodate housing and employment growth as part of the Sustainable Communities growth agenda, it will need Pitsea to improve its range of services and facilities, and complement the other town centres including Basildon, Billericay, Laindon and Wickford.

PURPOSE OF THE MASTERPLAN

The purpose of the Pitsea Town Centre Masterplan is to provide a long-term framework to guide the development and regeneration of the town centre over the next 15 – 20 years. There are many elements that make a successful town centre, including a variety of uses including retail, leisure, employment, community services and facilities, transport infrastructure and quality public realm. The Masterplan seeks to bring each of these elements together to create a cohesive and holistic plan for Pitsea that meets the needs of its residents, workers and visitors.

The Masterplan provides a vision for the future of the Town Centre based on an understanding of the stakeholders' aspirations for change. To achieve the vision, the Masterplan sets out objectives and principles that will guide regeneration and identifies a number of inter-related development and public realm projects that will help to transform the centre.

The projects and principles contained within the Masterplan are not intended to be overly prescriptive, but to guide the Council and developers in terms of the land use, scale and form of development that should be acceptable. The Masterplan is flexible to enable developments to be brought forward that may not exactly replicate the proposals contained within this document, providing they adhere to the regeneration principles.

The masterplan seeks to enhance the town's character and identity and provide a clear framework for future development and investment. The overriding aim is to promote a contemporary, prosperous, accessible and sustainable town centre, underpinned by a diverse range of activities and uses that will effectively serve its local community and wider catchment.



Provide a Framework for Investment Opportunities

Importantly, the masterplan provides a robust framework for change and presents an agreed way forward among the wide community members, many of the private sector bodies and key local statutory bodies including Basildon District Council and Essex County Council. This agreement amongst stakeholders will help to guide investment and inform delivery decision-making by the Council and its partners.

The role of the Masterplan can be summarised as follows:

- To articulate a vision for Pitsea;
- To establish a robust & flexible framework that connects aspirations to community needs;
- To provide a comprehensive and integrated spatial strategy;

- To maximise capacity / potential for sustainable development
- To guide design and development; and
- To set an implementation programme.

THE NEED FOR CHANGE

Pitsea Town Centre is located in the south east of the Basildon conurbation and is one of five town centres within the District. The town is identified as a town centre within the Local Plan retail hierarchy along with Basildon, Billericay, Wickford and Laindon.

In recent years Pitsea has failed to attract any significant investment – other than the expansion of the Tesco food store and the redevelopment of the Old Market site for an out-of-town style retail development. Whilst these retail extensions and developments have helped to increase the quantum of floorspace in the centre as a whole, they have not improved the overall quality of the town centre's environment, or the range of its retail and leisure offer. At the same time, other retail stock has struggled and there are a number of vacancies.



Poor quality retail environment

This has meant that Pitsea has not managed to achieve the level, type and distribution of spend needed to sustain the whole town centre. The current quality of the town centre, its retailing and leisure facilities, range of entertainment uses and central living offer, are all below the standard required for a Town Centre at the heart of the Thames Gateway growth area to be successful.



Outdated Leisure Facilities

There is now a real need for Pitsea to undergo dramatic change to halt the recent decline in the Town Centre's fortunes, and help redefine its position as a contemporary town centre. Comprehensive regeneration proposals are already being brought forward in Basildon town centre, which will ensure the centre provides a retail offer with associated services and facilities expected of a sub-regional centre. There is an opportunity for Pitsea to build on this momentum, focus upon the District, strengthen its role as a second centre to Basildon and offer a distinctive yet complementary town centre offer to that found in Basildon Town Centre.

THE PROJECT AREA

Although no specific project area was identified, the Masterplan largely covers the Pitsea Town Centre, stretching from Wickford Avenue in the north to the railway station in the

south. To the east the Masterplan includes up to the retail park and to the west as far as furthest boundary of the Tesco supermarket.

Key uses and activities included within the masterplan area include:

- **Leisure and community uses** – the leisure centre, swimming pool and library facilities at the northern end of Northlands Pavement;
- **Market area** - open-air market located along the southern part of Northlands Pavement;
- **Shopping area** – small independent retail units with a medium-sized foodstore located along The Broadway and surrounding the surface car park at Northlands Pavement;
- **Retail Park** – retail warehousing and fast food drive-thru centres to the south of High Road; and
- **Tesco** – large hypermarket located between A13 and South Mayne.



Leisure Centre in the North of Project Area



Railway Station in the South of the Project Area

Whilst the Masterplan largely concentrate on these areas, the linkages and impacts upon the surrounding areas have also been considered, particularly the strategic linkages and benefits that can arise from the neighbouring Wat Tyler Country Park and a new high quality and accessible landscape at the RSPB's South Essex Marshes.

STATUS OF THE MASTERPLAN

At present, the planning policy framework for Pitsea Town Centre is contained within the Basildon District Local Plan adopted in 1998. The Plan establishes the planning boundary of the Town Centre and contains general policies setting out development and design principles in relation to it, and site specific policies allocating land for retail, commercial and residential uses.

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduced new procedures in respect of reviewing local planning policy. Under the new arrangements, Basildon District Council will be preparing a Local Development Framework (LDF) for the District. The LDF includes the Regional Spatial Strategy and a portfolio of local documents that will set out the local planning framework applicable to 2021.

Basildon's LDF will comprise three principal policy documents:

- The Core Strategy will set out the spatial vision and strategic objectives for addressing key planning issues facing the development of the District;
- Site-Specific Allocations will identify specific parcels of land for major development and change of use; and
- Development Control Policies will contain technical policies against which planning applications will be assessed.

The Pitsea Town Centre Masterplan was developed when the Core Strategy was in its infancy. In the absence of an up-to-date statutory framework, the Masterplan will be regarded as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications relating to the town centre. Its role in the emerging LDF is to inform, where appropriate, the development of spatial policy options for the town centre.

PREPARATION OF THE MASTERPLAN

The preparation of the masterplan has been an intensive process and has involved technical research at the national, regional and local level, looking at key subjects regarding sustainability, transport and movement, urban design and built form and community infrastructure. This high level research has been supplemented by detailed analysis of the local Pitsea area, including built form, public realm, land usage, property, transport and the environment.



Prepared through a Collaborative Process

A comprehensive programme of stakeholder consultation has been an integral part of the masterplan preparation; helping to set the direction and then influence the evolution of the projects and proposals. The consultation programme has enabled a wide variety of stakeholders to contribute to the process, including members of the local community, the District and County Councils, public sector agencies, land owners, employers and prospective developers. The involvement throughout the process of these stakeholders has ensured that the Masterplan and its recommendations are transparent, and reflect the views and aspirations of those it will ultimately affect.

The consultation programme has included:

- Walking tours with local leaders and key council staff to identify key issues and priorities;
- Stakeholder interviews with business, resident and institutional interests to establish their aspirations and future plans;
- Steering Group Meetings to confirm the project approach and review findings and recommendations at key points in the schedule;

- Stakeholder Workshops to test development, transport and public realm and open space options for the Town Centre;
- A public exhibition on the Issues and Options for change as well as the emerging Preferred Option; and
- Wider publicity and marketing of the key stages and outcomes of the process via the Council's web site and local press coverage, supported by the Council's public relations and publicity infrastructure.



Stakeholder Meetings



Walking tours of the Centre to Highlight Issues



Consultation through Workshops



Public Consultation at Exhibition

The District Council and its partners recognise the invaluable contribution stakeholder consultation has made to the development of the Masterplan, and are committed to on-going partnership working with all stakeholders in delivering the Masterplan proposals.

The outputs of the consultation events along with baseline technical work undertaken during the preparation of the masterplan is included within the Baseline Evidence for the Preferred Option Report, December 2006.

MASTERPLAN STRUCTURE

The Masterplan is divided into the following sections:

Chapter Two | Context – outlines the analysis of the project area, summarising the key challenges and opportunities;

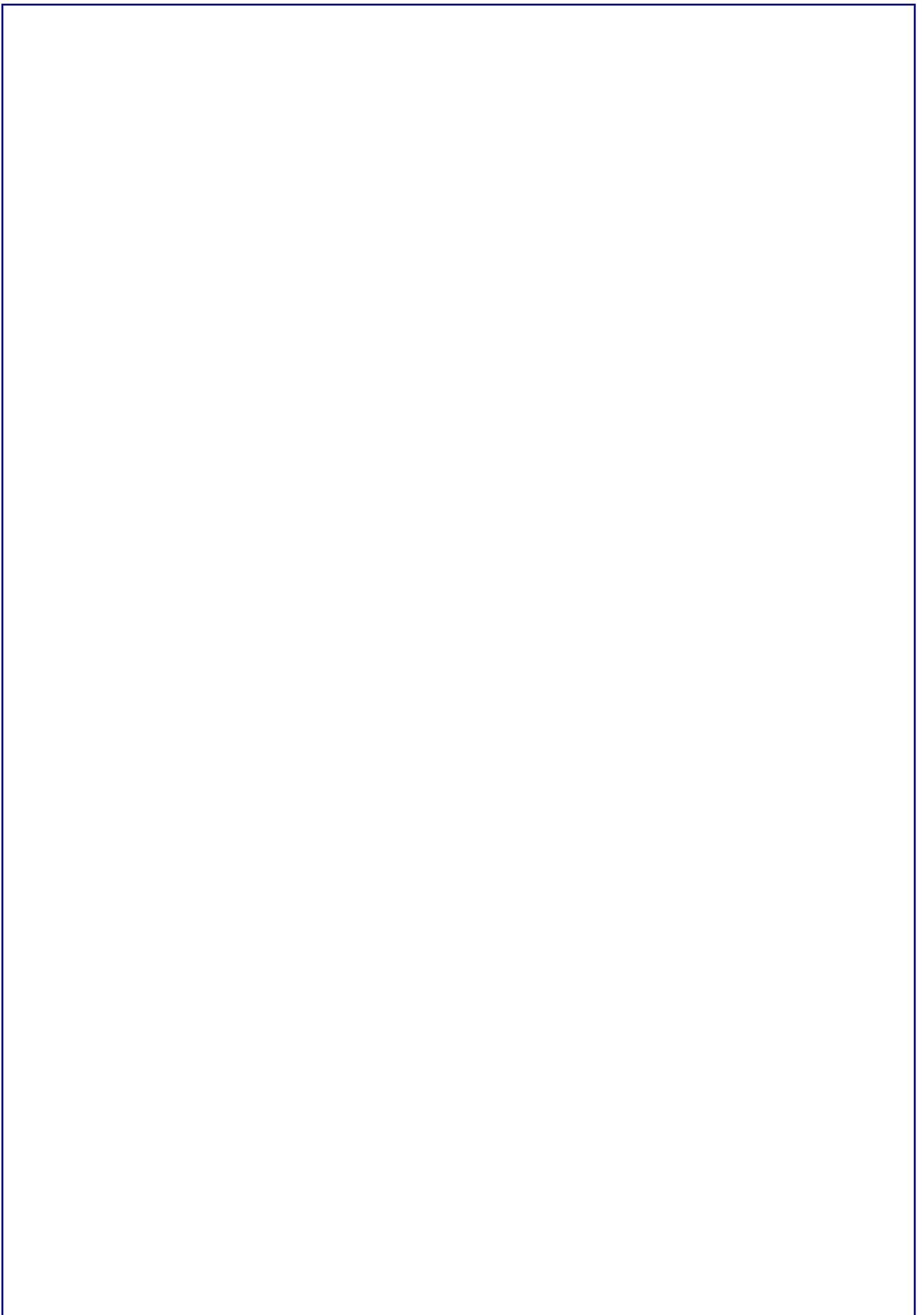
Chapter Three | Vision – establishes the vision and objectives that will guide the masterplan;

Chapter Four | Projects – describes the masterplan framework and key development projects;

Chapter Five | Public Realm Strategy – outlines the public realm strategy for public and open spaces;

Chapter Six | Transport – describes the key transport and movement proposals; and

Chapter Seven | Action Plan – outlines the key points for delivery and phasing.



2.context

The Masterplan proposals are based upon an understanding of the current problems that are preventing Pitsea from fulfilling its potential as a modern and vibrant mixed-use town centre. Technical research and analysis has identified the town's weaknesses as well its strengths and opportunities, with the comprehensive programme of consultation helping to validate the conclusions.

This section of the Masterplan sets out the key issues and priorities that need to be addressed, as well as identifying the inherent strengths and opportunities that that can help to drive change. This has involved the following:

- **Physical appraisal** – analysis of the built form and townscape, land use and public realm and environment;
- **Commercial appraisal** – a review of the current property market conditions;
- **Transport and infrastructure** – an appraisal of the existing movement network; and
- **Assets and opportunities** – a review of the key strengths that can help drive the regeneration of the town centre.

PHYSICAL APPRAISAL

A high quality of urban design is key to raising the profile and perception of Pitsea Town Centre, helping to increase investor confidence and civic pride.

Built Form and Townscape

The centre's only buildings of any particular architectural merit or interest are the collection of mock Tudor buildings located on the junction of Station Lane and High Road, including Ann Boleyn Mansions, the currently vacant public house and the Tudor Mansions. There is much support amongst residents and users of Pitsea Town Centre to see these buildings retained, as they provide the only distinctive piece of townscape character in the centre.



Anne Boleyn Mansions

Other than the mock Tudor buildings, there are few buildings of any merit, with many of the retail focussed buildings along the High Road and Northlands Pavement comprising large 1960s/'70s developments with little distinctive character. The existing mixed-use retail

development along Northlands Pavement provides a large dominant building of poor quality. The scale and form of the building is out of context with its locality, providing an inflexible built form that now suffers from high vacancy, providing out-dated retail and office space.



Northlands Pavement Development

The perception amongst town centre users is that the current open-air market located in the south of Northlands Pavement dominates the townscape environment. The market is formed by permanent steel-framed structures that remain standing when the market is not in operation. The stall structures create a 'harsh' environment, and restrict permeability through the area.



Market Infrastructure Dominates Environment

The townscape in the centre is dominated by highway infrastructure. Elevated roads, gyratories and roundabouts create barriers

within the Town Centre, both visual and physical.

The dominance of the highways infrastructure impacts heavily upon the permeability and legibility within the town centre. The raised carriageways (The A13 and the A132), which run east west across the town centre, restrict long distance views of the town centre, and therefore reduce legibility for those travelling towards the town.

The key route between the railway station and the town centre is a key indicator of these issues. On leaving the railway station, there is no signage or appropriate 'way-finding' measures to guide visitors into the heart of the town, and with limited views of the centre due to gradient changes and the raised carriageways, there is little to draw visitors towards the centre. The quality of this route is further weakened through the lack of built form, with no development fronting onto the pedestrian routes and busy roads.



Lack of Active Uses Along Pedestrian Routes

Whilst many of the users of the railway station will be residents of Pitsea familiar with the route between the station and the centre, if Pitsea is to become a high quality town centre there is a need to enhance the legibility of this route for visitors to town, and make the railway station an integrated component of the town centre.

Land use and activities

The current town centre is characterised by strong land use clusters, largely influenced by the phased development of the town centre and the highways infrastructure network. There are four distinct areas within the town centre, which are not strongly linked to each other. These broad cluster areas comprise the following and are shown in Figure 2.1 below:

- Tesco Superstore
- Mock-Tudor Core
- Retail Park
- Northlands Pavement

Tesco Supermarket

The retail offer within Pitsea town centre is dominated by the Tesco Extra hypermarket, located to the south of the town centre between the A13 and South Meyne. This Tesco store accounts for over half of the retail floor-space within the town centre. Whilst the store is highly successful and provides a modern and efficient shopping experience for its users, it is disconnected from the rest of the town centre, which has seen a decline in trade and activity in the past 10 – 15 years.

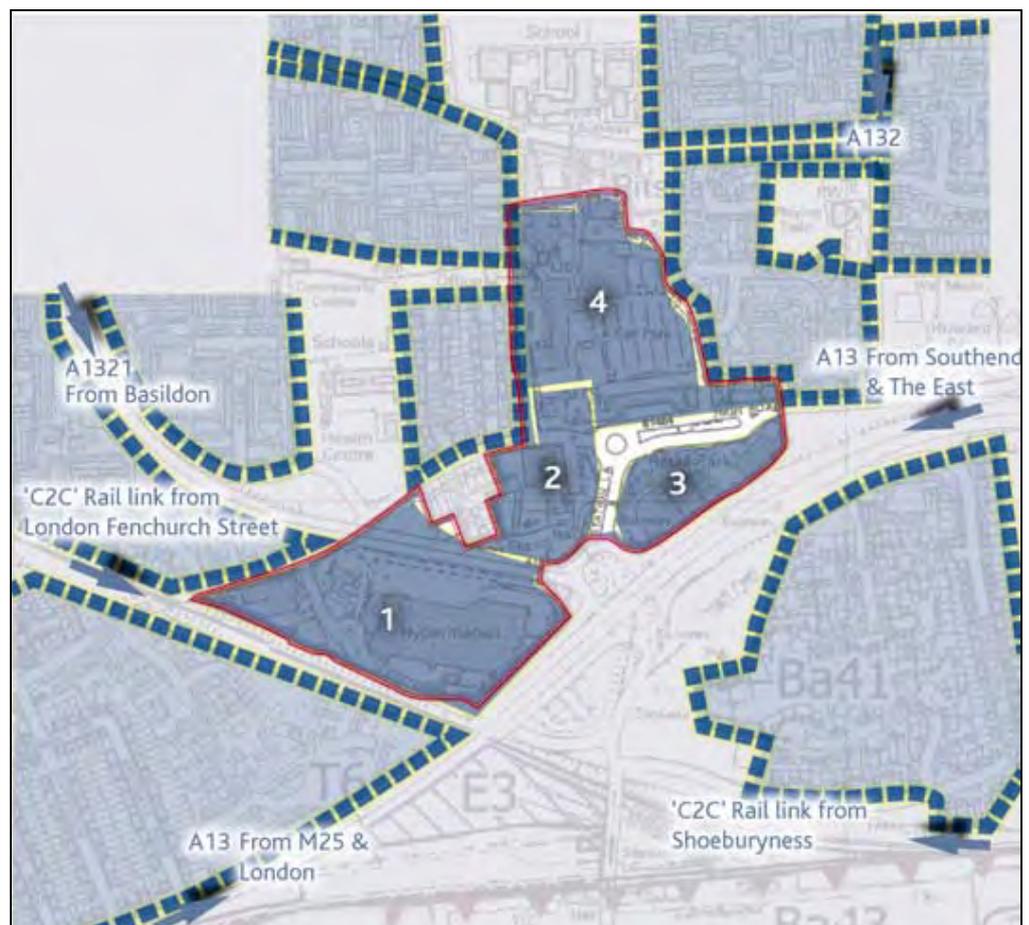


Figure 2.1 Broad Land Use Clusters

1. Tesco Superstore
2. Mock-Tudor Core
3. Retail Park
4. Pitsea Community Hub

The Tesco store now offers a wide variety of services and facilities above and beyond those offered by traditional large food stores. The store now accommodates the town centre's Post Office, as well offering a newsagents, pharmacy, optician, shoe repairs, clothing, home furnishings, kitchenware and electrical goods. Many of these services and facilities would traditionally be offered on high streets in most town centres.

Mock-Tudor Core

This central site currently comprises the mixed use Broadway South Tudor Mansion building. The building comprises a mix of ground floor uses including fast food take-away and restaurant uses, a taxi rank, travel agents and small retail units, with residential apartments on the upper floors. To the rear of the Mansion building is a strategic development site that is key to enhancing the sense of arrival into the town centre for those arriving on foot from the railway station. Adjacent to the building is the Mecca bingo hall within the old cinema building, and on the opposite side of South Mayne is the now vacant Railway Hotel public house.



Mixed-use Mock Tudor Development

Retail Park

Located on the Old Market site, this part of the town centre is focussed on providing out-of-town format shopping, with large warehouse

retail units and drive-thru fast food restaurants. The design of the retail park is focussed upon car orientated shopping, and the development does little to integrate with the wider town centre site. All of the units are set back from the street edge, severed from the traditional 'high street' along High Road by surface car parking. The expanse of surface level car parking isolates the retail from the wider town centre functions, and fails to provide a frontage onto High Road, providing a weak gateway for those accessing the centre from the east.



Retail Park Severed from Wider Town Centre

However, the stores do help to broaden the retail offer within the town centre, and generate a high numbers of trips. The challenge for the masterplan is to help integrate the retail developments with the wider town centre, attempting to encourage people visiting the units by car to leave the retail park and walk around the wider town centre area.

The recent fire damage to several of the large retail units and subsequent demolition – B'Wise, Farm Foods and Petsmart – creates an opportunity co-ordinate any re-investment within this retail park with the proposals within the masterplan, and attempt to reintegrate the area with the wider town centre fabric.



Redevelopment Opportunity at Retail Park

Northlands Pavement

The Northlands Pavement area comprises all land uses to the north of High Road and includes:

- The Broadway shopping precinct;
- The pedestrianised shopping precinct with small retail units and upper floor commercial office space;
- An Aldi food store and large retail units;
- The leisure and community hub incorporating Pitsea Library, the leisure centre and the local swimming pool;
- The Pitsea open-air market; and
- Surface car parking.



Surface Car Parking at Northlands Pavement

The Northlands Pavement shopping precinct has several vacant units. The retail offer is focussed on value retailing and does little to enhance the perception of Pitsea as a quality retailing destination. Several of the occupied retail units only open on market days, which weakens the retail offer on non-market days. On the upper floor levels of the retail units are commercial offices.

The location of the library, civic centre and swimming pool create an established civic and community hub within the town centre. There is strong support amongst residents to retain this area as the civic focus, and strengthen the role of this area. These uses are crucial to fostering community spirit and sense of civic pride within a town, and the masterplan needs to ensure that any proposals within this part of the town centre contribute to enhancing the environment and access to these facilities.

The open-air market that operates on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays adds vibrancy to the town centre, generating activity and urban street animation. The market plays a key role in the overall town centre offer although it is largely low value goods orientated. When not in use, the empty market stands detract from the environment and add to a sense of dis-investment.

Public Realm and Environment

The overall quality of the public realm in the Town Centre is weak. Whilst there appears to be many green open spaces, they are largely incidental with no focus or use and relatively uncoordinated with few linkages between them.

The pedestrian connection from the railway station is impacted by highway infrastructure and heavy traffic. The quality of walking routes under elevated roads, and through subways

have declined. While green in parts, grassed verges and incidental tree planting have not been maintained.

Street furniture, such as benches and signage, is in poor condition. There is limited designated pedestrian lighting along key pedestrian routes. This reduces the perception of safety for those moving outside of daytime hours.

The public realm along the main high street and within the retail precinct does little to create the perception of a quality destination. There are no public realm elements that help to brand or identify Pitsea.

A key weakness highlighted by residents is that the town centre offers no designated quality civic or public space, where users can either sit and relax or meet. This is a key priority to residents, to create a public meeting space that can form a new 'heart' to the town centre.



Poor Quality Public Realm

Whilst not within the Masterplan area, there is a key strategic open space opportunity to the south of the centre at Wat Tyler Country Park and the RSPB's South Essex Marshes. Over the next 10 years, the Country Park will undergo continued investment, with proposals to radically enhance the attraction and visitor facilities within the Park.

The Masterplan must address the overall framework of public spaces and connections, and the quality of the public realm in terms of landscape and streetscape elements, such as paving, lights, signs and planting. This will be essential to complement new development proposals, raising the quality agenda within the town centre, transforming perceptions of Pitsea and creating a new context for investment.

COMMERCIAL APPRAISAL

It is clear from purely a visual analysis that underlying property market context shows a recent history of low investment in the town centre, with little confidence or co-ordinated strategy to drive change.

At present, Pitsea does not have the necessary critical mass or quality of retail and other town centre uses to generate the necessary trips, footfall and spend needed to sustain its long term vitality and viability as a retail destination. Whilst the Tesco supermarket provides a very significant proportion of retail, its failure to link with the wider town centre reduces the benefits of such a large retail anchor.

The current quality of the town centre, its retailing and leisure facilities, range of entertainment uses and central living offer, are all below the standard required for a successful town centre at the heart of the Thames Gateway growth area.

It is apparent that there is a real need for Pitsea to undergo dramatic change in the quality of its retail, leisure and civic offer to halt the recent decline in its fortunes, and help redefine its position as a modern and viable town centre.

As described in the Physical Appraisal, there are a number of different clusters of retail and

commercial uses and activity in the town centre. Set out below is a market commentary on some of the key developments within these clusters.

Northlands Pavement

The Northlands Pavement retail area owned by a single investor. Their ownership includes:

the block of outlets to the west of Northlands (nos.1-12), which comprise approximately 2,230 sq.m gross (Experian Goad Audit 200*) and include Greggs Bakers and a range of smaller convenience and comparison outlets;

the three larger units to the north (including Aldi and Discount Land Furniture), which comprise c.3,140 sq.m gross. These units were formerly occupied by J.Sainsbury, which closed in the 1990s; and

450 space surface car park.



Northlands Pavement Retail

It is apparent that this 'shopping centre' in the heart of the town is relatively busy and vibrant on market days (specifically Wednesdays), but is 'dead' for much of the week. This is evident by the limited footfall through the centre on non-market days and that a number of the businesses on Northlands Pavement do not open throughout the week. The 'shopping centre' clearly lacks the critical mass of retail and leisure facilities to draw shoppers from its

immediate hinterland and wider catchment, or to even generate linked trips with the Tesco Hypermarket to the south of the town centre.

Furthermore, as outlined in the Physical Appraisal, the shopping environment in this part of the centre is also blighted on non-market days by the market stalls and cargo containers cluttering the length of Northlands Pavement.

The current owners of the retail area have indicated their willingness to bring forward comprehensive redevelopment proposals for this site. This masterplanning process provides the opportunity to bring forward a new modern retail-led mixed-use scheme that can help transform the offer and perception of Pitsea as a retail destination.

Street Market

The open-air market operates on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. It provides much needed activity, vibrancy, footfall and spend to the town centre, particularly on Wednesdays. It plays a key role in the town centre's retail role and offer, differentiating Pitsea from other town centres in the District and beyond, as well as from the Tesco Hypermarket and other businesses in the town itself.

The products and items sold at the market are focussed on low value items. On non-market days the empty market stalls and storage units detract from the overall town centre environment.

Consultation has highlighted the importance of the market to the town's overall role and function, and the difficulties involved in sustaining a healthy and viable market operation. Some of the issues identified ranged from the need for market operators to

be able to 'park up' close to their stalls to unload their products for sale, to the impact of 'boot sales' across the District on the future viability of the market in Pitsea town centre.

The Broadway

The Broadway has a number of smaller outlets, including Corals and Ladbrokes Betting Offices, Subway, Abbey Bank, a dry cleaners, off licence and chemists. It also includes the town centre's limited choice of restaurants and take-aways, specifically a Chinese take-away, Indian and Fish & Chip take-away.

The Broadway comprises c.1,740 sq.m gross (Goad 200*) of floorspace, in small units of c.110 sq.m gross, and is served by 30 short-term parking spaces. The town's Post Office was formerly located in this area, until it relocated to the Tesco Hypermarket.

Both Lloyds TSB and Barclays Bank are important anchors to the west and east of The Broadway, as they generate trips to the centre and footfall throughout the week.

Retail Park

The Retail Park High on Road is located on the Old Market site. Prior to the fire damage that took place during the summer of 2006, the retail park comprised Pets at Home, B'Wise, and Farmfoods (frozen food), along with KFC and McDonalds drive thru restaurants. The total (Goad) floorspace is 3,160 sq.m gross, although a planning application has granted to replace the three retail units (floorspace of c.2,530 sq.m gross).

Although essentially an out-of centre retail park in a town centre location, the larger format stores do broaden the town centre's overall retail offer and generate a high numbers of trips throughout the week. However, there are

limited linked trips between the retail park and the rest of the town centre, as it essentially functions as a car-borne shopping and eating destination, physically separated from the wider town centre.

To the east of the site is a Lidl discount foodstore (c.1,240 sq.m gross), which shares the c.250 parking spaces operated by Euro Car Parks. Based on our observations, there appear to be limited linked trips between Lidl and the rest of the town centre.



Discount Foodstore on Retail Park

Tesco Supermarket

Pitsea's retail offer and floorspace is clearly dominated by Tesco, located to the south of the town centre between the A13 and South Mayne.

The store is highly successful and provides a modern and efficient shopping experience for its users, served by c.550 car parking spaces. The recent extension to its non-food floorspace in addition to the development of a mezzanine (which did not require planning permission) has significantly increased its share of retail floorspace and spend to the town centre.

Tesco offer a wide variety of services and facilities above and beyond those generally offered by traditional large food stores. It now comprises the town centre's Post Office, a

newsagents, pharmacy, optician, Timpson shoe repairers and Johnson dry cleaners, and its recently extended range of clothing, home furnishings, kitchenware and electrical goods.

Many of Tesco's services and facilities would traditionally be offered on high streets in most town centres. There is limited evidence of linked trips between Tesco and the rest of the town centre, with most of Tesco's shoppers being car-borne and able to fulfil almost all of their food and non-food needs in the store, as well as 'dwelling' for longer in the café and restaurant.

Further to the west of Tesco, on Hazelmere, is a Homebase DIY and Garden Centre, comprising c.1,230 sq.m gross (Goad).

Property Market Headlines

Based on audits of the town centre, and drawing on supporting research evidence (e.g. Experian Goad), Pitsea town centre's commercial property market has highlighted the following key headlines:

- The town centre comprises 72 retail, leisure, financial and business service outlets;
- It has a total (Goad) floorspace of c.357,000 sq.ft;
- There are 13 convenience retailers in the town centre, but the three main foodstores – namely Tesco, Aldi and Lidl – account for c.43% of total floorspace. This share will have increased to c.60% following the recent opening of the mezzanine floor in Tesco.

- Apart from the foods stores operators, there are no other major multiple retailers represented in the town centre;
- J.Sainsbury did have a store on Northlands Pavement, but this closed following the opening of their Nevendon Store in the early 1990's.
- There are currently only 21 comparison goods outlets in Pitsea, trading from c.8,175 sq.m gross (Goad).
- There is currently a high vacancy rate for the units along Northlands Pavement, although the units along The Broadway are fully occupied.
- None of the major multiple retailers are represented, such as Boots, WH Smith, Wilkinson, Woolworths, Top Man, Top Shop, Clintons, Superdrug, Primark and others.
- The overall quality of Pitsea's comparison goods offer is poor and is characterised by discount and charity shops.
- The town centre is under-represented in all comparison good retail categories apart from carpets & flooring; DIY & Home Improvement; furniture; hardware and household goods.
- There is a limited clothing, fashion and footwear offer in the town centre. Tesco has significantly increased its market share of fashion spend following the recent opening of its mezzanine floor.
- There are 20 retail and financial service outlets in the centre and they account for over 28% of all outlets in Pitsea (compared

to the national average of 24%). They currently underpin the viability of the town centre on non-market days and help to generate regular trips to the town centre, particularly the banks and hairdressers. However, research shows that travel agents, financial services and the banking sector are particularly vulnerable to the long-term growth of E-tailing.

- There is an under-representation of public houses, cafés and restaurants in the centre, benchmarked against national averages.
- There are no bars/wines bars, cinema, clubs, nightclubs, and hotels/guest houses in the town centre.
- Pitsea's main leisure offer is concentrated to the north in the Leisure Centre and the Swimming Pool, although the building housing the swimming pool is in need of major investment/redevelopment.

TRANSPORT AND MOVEMENT

The Transport and Movement audit for Pitsea town centre considers all major modes of travel (car, rail, bus, cycling, walking) within the town and its surroundings and provides details of both local and strategic access.

Highway Network

Pitsea is very accessible by road, lying as it does adjacent to the A13, which leads westbound to the M25 (junction 30) and Central London. Eastbound, the A13 leads to Southend-on-Sea and Shoeburyness. The section of the A13 running through Pitsea is elevated which serves as an effective bypass of the town. This has the benefit of removing a large amount of traffic from the town but also

has negative impacts in terms of aesthetics and permeability.



A13 Infrastructure Dominates Environment

To the north, the A127 also runs to the M25 (junction 29) and Southend-on-Sea. Pitsea is close to the A130 (accessed via the A13) which leads to the county town of Chelmsford.

Within Pitsea there are 3 key distributor roads. The A132 is a dual carriageway road which links Pitsea to Basildon and the A127.

The B1464 is sometimes referred to locally as the 'Old A13'. The road runs parallel with the A13 and leads to the Sadlers Farm roundabout to the east of Pitsea. In the opposite direction, the B1464 heads south west towards Corringham and Stanford-le-Hope. The B1464 to the south of Pitsea town centre forms a dominant piece of infrastructure. The road takes the form of a gyratory that is up to 5 lanes wide at one point.

Pitsea Hall Lane leads from the roundabout junction with the A13 to Pitsea Wharf in the south. Despite being a single carriageway road, and of limited capacity, the road is of strategic importance, providing a route to Pitsea station, Wat Tyler Country Park, the RSPB's South Essex Marshes and a major Waste Facility. Pitsea Hall Lane features a level crossing where it meets the London to Shoeburyness railway line, which can cause delays on this

road. The road is also used by a large proportion of heavy goods vehicles, as access is provided to a refuse tip and sewage works.

There is one significant highway improvement scheme which is likely to have an impact on the local area. To the east of Pitsea, the Sadlers Farm Junction is a key junction on the A13, linking with the A130 and also serving as an access to Canvey Island. The junction is very congested at peak times, so a proposal has been developed to build a new underpass link between the A13 and the A130 (northbound). This means that a large flow of through traffic will be removed from the roundabout junction.

Incorporated within these improvements would be improved access for buses, and crossing points for cyclists and pedestrians.

Any improvements would be likely to see a widening of the A13 carriageway between Sadlers Farm and Pitsea. The scheme has approved been by Essex County Council and the Department for Transport however construction is not yet underway. The estimated cost of the project is around £63 million.

Bus network

Pitsea town centre is well connected by bus services, primarily running to Basildon and Southend-on-Sea. The main local bus operator is First group, although there are additional services provided by Arriva and Nibs.

- The bus routes (operated by First Group unless stated) serving Pitsea town centre are as follows:
- Service 1/1A from Pitsea to Basildon (2 buses per hour);

- Service 2 from Southend to Basildon (2 buses per hour);
- Service 5 from Pitsea Tesco to Basildon (4 buses per hour);
- Service 5 (Arriva) from Basildon to Southend (2 buses per hour)
- Service 8/8A/8B/8C circular loop from Pitsea to Laindon (6 buses per hour);
- Service 12 from Thundersley to Basildon (Hourly);
- Service 15/15A/15B from Southend to Basildon (Hourly);
- Service 21 (Nibs) from Basildon to North Benfleet (Hourly);
- Service 22 from Canvey Island to Lakeside (2 buses per hour); and
- Service 42 from Basildon to Pipp's Hill (Daily).

The frequencies quoted are for Monday-Friday; with many services more limited or not running on Sundays / Bank Holidays.



Pedestrian Route Between Station and Centre

The distance between Pitsea rail station and The Broadway (where the majority of services board and alight) is approximately 600m and so does not provide a particularly attractive interchange between rail and bus. Pedestrian links between the rail station and the main bus stop also need improvements in respect of lighting, signage and personal security.

The main bus interchange is to the south of Pitsea Market, Leisure Centre and swimming pool, and bus passengers looking to access these services need to cross the B1464 (discussed in Highway Network section) using two separate pelican crossings.

Nearby, Basildon bus station provides increased connections with other towns in Essex, such as Brentwood and Chelmsford. The average bus journey from Pitsea to Basildon is between 20 and 30 minutes.

Passengers using The Broadway bus stops have the benefit of electronic real time information boards at the bus stops.

Rail network

Pitsea rail station is located about 600m south of the main town centre area. The station is

served by the London Fenchurch Street to Shoeburyness line, which is operated by c2c. The frequency of the services to central London make the station popular with commuters. Pitsea is located on two branches of this line, the northern branch routing via Basildon and the southern branch via Grays and Tilbury.

The station design is modern and is comfortable for passengers to use, however there are no bus services running to the station (despite the presence of a suitable lay by and turning area), and pedestrian and cycle connections to the town centre are poorly signed.

These routes take pedestrians over a poor roadbridge, across Pitsea Hall Lane (see above), and through a network of underpasses to the town centre. This inadequate route encourages pedestrians to use a more direct route to Tesco, deterring commuters from using the town centre.

Train frequencies and approximate journey times are as follows:

Pitsea Rail Service

Station	Approx journey Time	Weekday peak fqcy	Weekday off-peak fqcy	Sat fqcy	Sun fqcy
London Fenchurch Street	45 mins	8 trains / hr	1 train / hr	1 train / hr	1 train / hr
West Ham	40 mins	1 train / hr	1 train / hr	1 train / hr	1 train / hr
Basildon	4 mins	4 trains / hr	1 train / hr	1 train / hr	1 train / hr
Southend Central	16 mins	4 trains / hr	1 train / hr	1 train / hr	1 train / hr
Shoeburyness	27 mins	4 trains / hr	1 train / hr	1 train / hr	1 train / hr

Cycling

There are over 30 kilometres of shared and segregated cycle track in the Basildon District, with plans to extend the network. Cycle routes in the District can take the form of a mixture of dedicated cycle tracks, shared or segregated pedestrian path and quieter roads. Together these are signed to produce routes which link popular destinations with residential areas.

Pitsea itself is well served with suitable cycle routes. There are official routes running from Pitsea into Basildon allowing cyclists to bypass the A132, as well as advisory routes around the Leisure Centre and Swimming Pool. These routes are documented in "*Basildon by Bike*", a leaflet produced by Basildon District Council.

Both existing and future cycle routes in and around Pitsea would benefit from improved signage.

Walking

Pitsea town centre is linked to the rail station by a pedestrian subway which underpasses the A13. The A13 serves as a major barrier to north-south movements in Pitsea. The A13 is a key highway corridor on a strategic level and as such it would be unreasonable to expect any major reworking of this interchange.



The subway could be made more attractive to pedestrians. It is of fairly narrow width with dim lighting, and visibility of the subway from outside is limited. The subway also features a number of blind corners which exacerbate the perception that is unsafe for many pedestrians.

As mentioned in the Highway Network section previously, the B1464 also provides a barrier to pedestrians. When crossing the pedestrian must use two individual pelican crossings. Priority should be given to focus on the provision of safe and direct links across this corridor for pedestrians.

There is an additional subway which connects the Retail Park and the residential area to the north of Pitsea station, around Brackendale Avenue. This subway is fairly well lit however it is secluded by trees on the southern side and by the A13 flyover on the northern side. Personal security for subway users is an issue.

North of the B1464, much of the town centre area is more pedestrian friendly, in particular the central areas around the Leisure Centre and Swimming Pool. Even in this part of the town, there is still inadequate signage in order to assist and encourage pedestrian movements.

Pedestrians are forced to use a subway to cross Wickford Lane to the north of the town centre to access Chalvedon School, the areas' comprehensive school, which has just been awarded Academy status. This subway has been constructed despite the relatively low level of vehicle movements in Wickford Lane. The similarity in land levels across Wickford Lane provide an opportunity to remove this subway and replace it with an at-grade crossing.

ASSETS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Over recent years there has been relatively limited investment in the centre, and little direction or guidance in terms of how Pitsea should change. Through this masterplan process, there is the opportunity to set out a framework for change. There is strong commitment by public sector agencies, landowners and potential investors and the local communities to regenerate Pitsea Town Centre. As well as stakeholder commitment, the centre has a number of strategic assets and opportunities that can act as a catalyst for change.

Whilst the retail offer is rather limited when not including the Tesco store, the centre does benefit from a good range of community and leisure facilities in the north of the centre. As the role and focus of many smaller town centres has changed over time, many have suffered from the loss of such facilities in large town centre locations. However, Pitsea has managed to retain these vital services that can help to foster a sense of civic and community pride, and provide the catalyst for strengthening and growing the sense of community.

The transport and in particular the highways infrastructure impacts negatively upon the visual and townscape quality of the town at present. However, this infrastructure ensures that Pitsea is an accessible destination, and provides the opportunity to attract users from a wider catchment, as well as provide an attractive location a short travel from the heart of Central London. As Pitsea improves over time through the delivery of the masterplan proposals, an increasing number of people will be drawn by the excellent transport links the centre offers.

As set out earlier, there are strategic proposals to significantly enhance Wat Tyler Country Park, creating a regional and national focussed visitor attraction. This will provide the opportunity to attract more users to Pitsea town centre, increasing the footfall and therefore spend. To maximise this opportunity, the town centre needs to offer a broad range of services and facilities, that serve both local communities and residents.

As well as these assets, the town offers a variety available development sites on which regeneration can take place. Many areas in need of regeneration are hampered by land assembly issues and the lack of developable sites. However, in Pitsea town there are a number of opportunity sites and areas that could be suitable, viable and available for development over the next 5,10 and 15 years. These opportunity sites are described in detail below:

- **Northlands Pavement and Car Park** – this site is located at the ‘heart’ of the town centre and is blighted by a poor offer and mix of uses, as well as a poor environment and buildings. Although popular with local residents, the street market also has a negative impact on the shopping environment on non-market days. Following preliminary meetings and discussions with the owners, it is clear that there is a significant opportunity for investment and redevelopment in this key town centre site. Redevelopment would help to balance the significant pull of Tesco to the south, by providing larger more modern retail units with frontages either side of Northlands Pavement. There has been interest shown by major national foodstore operators and other retailers have indicated an early interest in the

development potential of this area. However, initial discussions have identified that they would require an equivalent critical of mass of retailing, car parking and ease of access as Tesco.

- **The Railway Public House** – this building has a prominent frontage on to High Road and has recently been purchased. This building and/or site would provide a significant opportunity for a landmark development, preferably as part of the comprehensive redevelopment of Northlands Pavement.
- **Retail Park** – planning permission was recently granted to replace the units that were destroyed and demolished due to fire damage. The Retail Park, including the Lidl store, represents a significant opportunity site in the town centre to create a frontage development that complements The Broadway.



Land Off Station Lane

- **Land off Station Lane** – the owners of the site are currently formulating plans to

develop the vacant corner site on Station Lane for a residential-led mixed use scheme. The owners and their consultants have been involved in the Masterplan consultation process to date, and have stated that they are seeking to help deliver the most suitable and viable mixed use development on this key site.

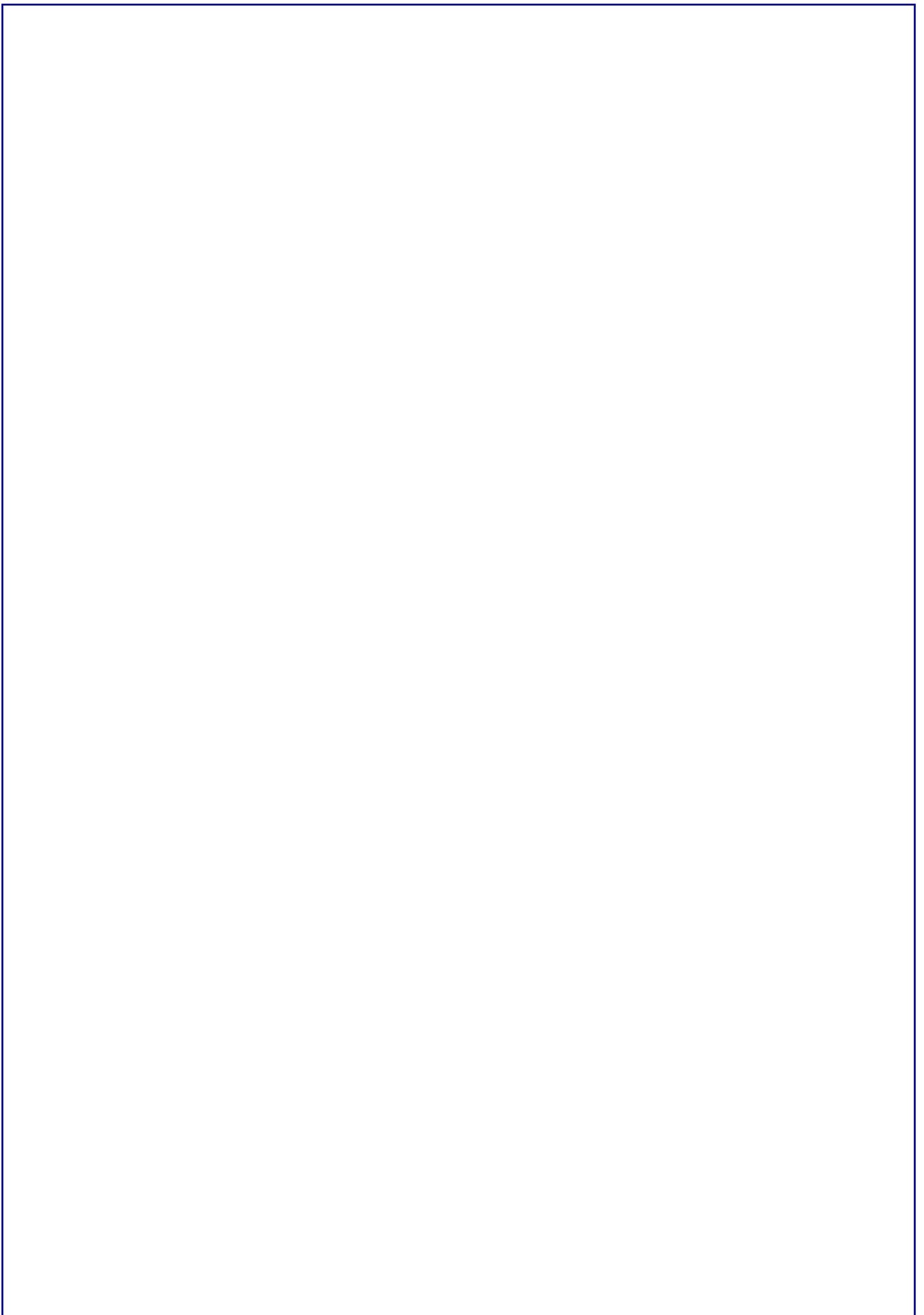
- **The Broadway** – There is a long term opportunity to redevelop this site, as part of the potential comprehensive redevelopment of the town centre. However we have not, at this stage, been able to speak to the owners of The Broadway to discuss their longer term plans for this building.

Based on an assessment of the opportunity sites, discussions with landowners (where possible) and market testing with retailers and developers, there are a number of commercially viable development opportunities in the town centre that could be brought forward over the short, medium and longer term.

The commercial interest and formulation of development projects on key sites indicate that landowners, developers and investors are increasingly recognising the considerable opportunities and potential within Pitsea town centre. The Masterplan seeks to incorporate these emerging proposals and establish principles and guidelines to ensure that development is brought forward in the early stages of a comprehensive and long-term regeneration programme.

Pitsea must now build on these assets opportunities to deliver long-term sustainable change that will improve the quality of life for

the future generations of residents and visitors
to the town.



3.the vision

THE VISION: 2022

“Pitsea is an attractive, thriving, exciting and modern centre serving a diverse and growing community.

It is a place where people of all ages are proud to live, learn, work, shop and visit for a variety of different uses and activities throughout the day and evening.

At its heart is a vibrant high quality market that gives the centre its distinctive character and appeal, attracting both local residents and those living further afield, throughout the week.

The centre’s high quality buildings and environment are home to a diverse mix of retail, leisure, business, residential, civic and cultural uses that combine to create a vital, viable and sustainable centre.

The centre is safe, easily accessible and well connected. It is characterised by a network of ‘green’ streets, footpaths and public spaces linking the town to the busy station and its attractive parks, schools and residential areas.”

THE CHALLENGE

Pitsea town centre is faced with a significant challenge of how to transform itself in the face of increased competition from other town centre and out-of-centre shopping and leisure locations in Basildon District and the wider sub-region.

Looking forward over the next 5, 10 and 15 years, the challenge for the town centre, its key stakeholders and the Council is to promote and strengthen the role and function of the town centre in Basildon’s existing network of centres, and enhance its overall vitality and viability. To achieve this will require the identification and realisation of the potential of its main assets and development opportunities.

Developing the vision for Pitsea town centre has involved the careful consideration of the changes required to transform the image and perception of the centre as a place to live, work, shop and visit for a range of activities and uses. This has been underpinned by extensive consultation and market testing with existing town centre stakeholders and the community, as well as other developers and investors.

The background to the consultation process, leading to the development of the vision and the identification of the Preferred Option, is described in more detail in the December 2006 *Baseline Evidence* report.

Working in partnership with Basildon District Council and Basildon Renaissance

Partnership, the consultation events helped to establish a better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of Pitsea town centre, as well as the potential opportunities for growth and the likely threats to its future vitality and viability. Through consultation we have therefore been able to identify the key issues and themes that the Final Draft Masterplan needs to address.

The Visioning Workshop held with the client group and key stakeholders specifically helped to identify and reach agreement on a realistic and achievable vision for the town centre.

The vision provides a strong, credible and robust view of the future of Pitsea town centre. It sets out the town centre's role in the District's network of centres, its identity, mix of uses, distinctive character and the qualities of its attractions that will help to underpin its viability.

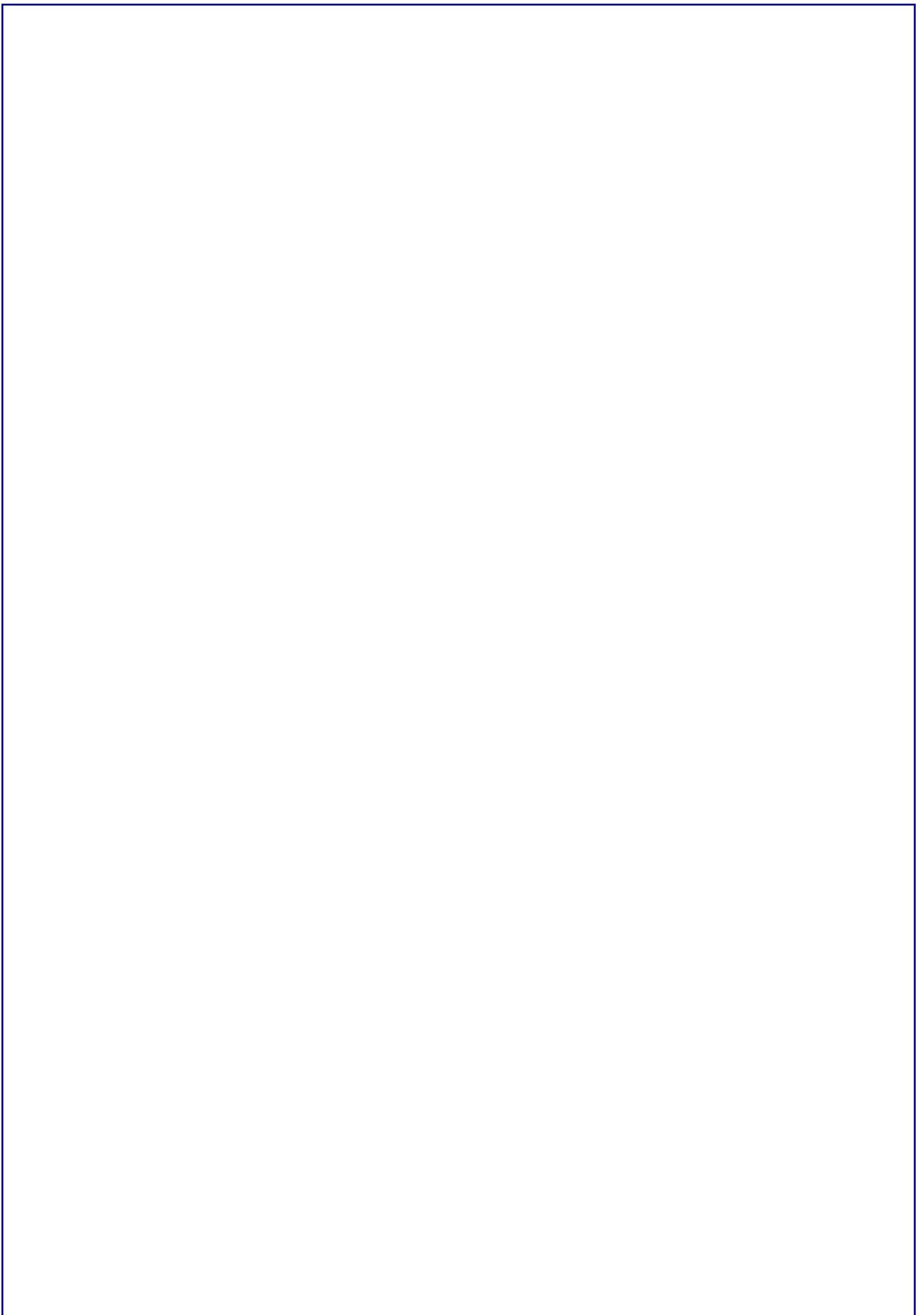
The clear message from the consultation process is that there is agreement that a significant transformation of Pitsea's environment and offer is needed. In particular, there was a significant concern across all stakeholder groups and the community with regard to a perceived and real decline in the quality of its environment and facilities.

The visioning consultation specifically identified a number of key issues and themes for the transformation of Pitsea, specifically highlighting the need to create:

- **An Attractive Centre** – through the enhancement of the urban environment and the provision of high quality public realm. The need for a new “public square” at the heart of the town centre was identified to act as a focal point for the local community and visitors.
- **A Commercial Centre** – currently the Tesco store caters for much of the town's retailing needs. The consultation process identified the opportunity to strengthen the range and quality of the town centre's retail offer, focusing on the retail core and a better defined retail circuit. The street market was specifically identified as providing an important and complementary attraction to the more traditional retailing in the town as a whole and the Tesco store. However, a step change is required in terms of the quality of the market's offer and environment so that it does not “blight” the town centre on non-market days.
- **A ‘Lifestyle’ Centre** – there is an identified gap in the town centre's commercial leisure offer, and specifically its eating and drinking uses. Any new mixed use development in the centre will provide an opportunity to introduce new cafés and restaurants. This would also help to create a more active and vibrant area in the evenings, and encourage visitors to the town centre outside of normal shopping hours. Over the longer term an opportunity was identified to link the town centre to the Wat Tyler Country Park.
- **A Business Centre** – depending on the demand for office uses, whether from the public, non-profit or private sectors, an opportunity was identified to radically rethink and redevelop the existing town centre offer to provide a new mixed use development comprising flexible office and ‘live-work’ space. This would also help to improve the town's overall character, vibrancy and mix of uses.

- **A Liveable Centre** – the consultation process identified a significant opportunity to provide new residential accommodation in the town centre to meet some of the demand for new housing across the District. New residential development would help to add vibrancy to the town centre, by increasing footfall, available spend and supporting local retailing and businesses during the daytime and evening. This could have a significant impact on the town centre's environment and character. For example, it would help to address real and perceived concerns with regard to crime and safety, with people living over more active streets.
- **A Civic & Community Centre** – building on the existing library, leisure centre and swimming pool at the northern end of Northlands Pavement, the consultation process highlighted the potential to build on the town's important civic and community offer.
- **A Well Connected Centre** – a need was identified for stronger, active, attractive and safer pedestrian links between different parts of the town centre, as well as to the surrounding residential areas and, most importantly, the railway station.
- **An Accessible Centre for All** – the need to address issues of traffic, parking and the provision of new/improved public transport facilities was identified to promote more sustainable modes of transport. The importance of the train station as a catalyst for regeneration and development was specifically identified, providing good access to the City.

Consultation with stakeholders and the local community highlighted a significant number of issues and opportunities for the transformation of Pitsea town centre. These have been taken into account to develop an aspirational, but realistic, vision. This in turn has helped to underpin the preparation of the Final Draft Masterplan for the town centre.



4.projects

The Masterplan provides a framework for the transformation of Pitsea over the next 15 – 20 years. Delivering both physical and social change, the implementation of the Masterplan will ensure that Pitsea Town Centre becomes a place where people will want to live, work, shop, invest and enjoy. Importantly, it will become a centre that reinstalls a sense of pride amongst its resident and business communities.

The Masterplan and key projects have been identified and the proposals formulated through careful consideration of the Vision for the town centre and the objectives and principles which have guided the Masterplan, as well as through a programme of comprehensive consultation. The proposals should be seen as a carefully considered range of proposals, which collectively will transform the central area. They are not simply a series of land use proposals for individual areas and sites within the town centre.

These discrete projects will build on existing uses and will substantially enhance the range and scale of facilities that Pitsea town centre is able to offer to its residents and users of the town. Each project addresses a number of the components that make a thriving and sustainable urban centre. Each will make an important contribution to the regeneration of the town centre and contribute to achieving the overall Masterplan that will deliver long

lasting change, ensuring that Pitsea is able to meet the aspirations and challenges of its next phase of growth.

MASTERPLAN FRAMEWORK

The Masterplan Framework comprises four character areas that each provides a distinct land use focus in the centre. Set out below is an overview of each of these character areas and the development projects contained within them. Figure 4.1 illustrates these character areas.

Healthy Living Quarter – located in the north of the town centre from the existing Aldi foodstore northwards to Wickford Avenue, the Healthy Living Quarter will provide a wide range of upgraded community, health and leisure uses set within a high quality urban environment. The Quarter will be supported by retail and café uses as well as new town centre living opportunities. The main projects within the Healthy Living Quarter include:

- **Leisure and Learning Focus** – enhancement of existing facilities to provide a wide range of leisure activities, with an upgraded library facility to ensure the centre offers the latest in library and learning services.
- **Swimming Pool** – a new modern designed building making use of the existing swimming pool.

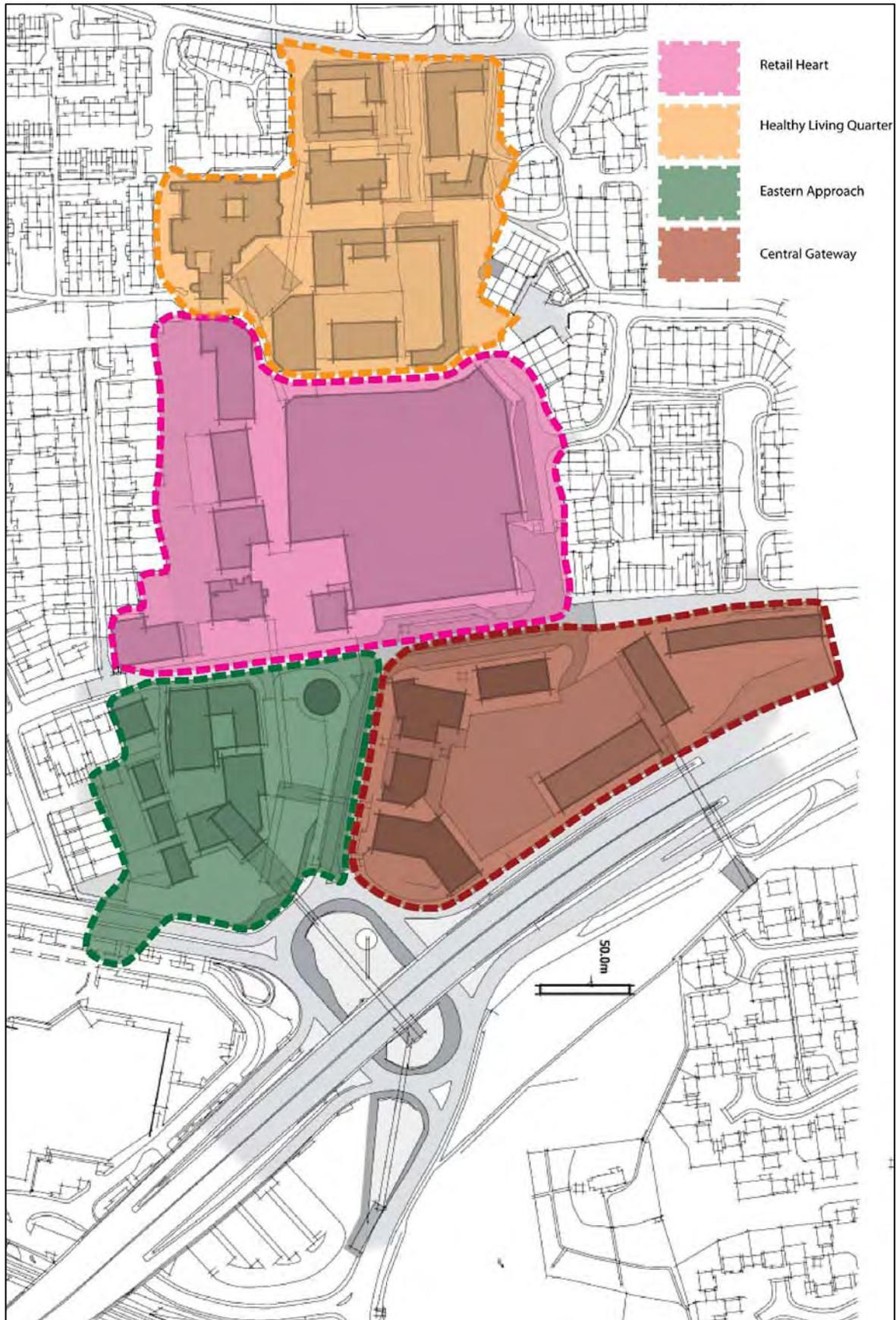


Figure 4.1 Character Areas

- **Community Health** – a new replacement multi-purpose health facility, with direct linkages to the associated sports and leisure services.
- **Northlands Square** – new retail, café and restaurant uses fronting onto an enhanced public square.
- **Town Centre Living** – new housing opportunities for a range of townhouses, and apartments within a high quality residential environment of streets and spaces to link with the wider town.

Retail Heart– located along the north side of the High Road and including Northlands Pavement, the Pitsea Market and the surface level car park. The Retail Heart will be the focus for Pitsea’s new retail offer, comprising a range of larger modern retail units to accommodate the requirements of high street retailers, balanced by a specialist niche retail offer. The revitalised Pitsea Market will be located along the southern approaches of Northlands Pavement and will make a major contribution to the overall vibrancy and vitality of the Retail Heart. The main projects within the Retail Heart include:

- **Central Retail Focus** – new large scale retail development on existing car park and market area, including a replacement car park.
- **Northlands Pavement** – redevelopment to create new modern retail units and business space on the groundfloor with upper floor residential apartments.
- **The Broadway** – Longer term opportunity to develop modern new retailing units that front on to the High Road with upperfloor business space

- **Mixed Use Scheme** - conversion of existing Railway Hotel Pub to provide for a mix of retail, café and restaurant uses. To the east and south will be an enhanced public realm that can accommodate a modernised Pitsea Market.

Central Gateway – through the remodelling of Station Lane, a new public space will be created that will accommodate part of the Pitsea Market. Fronting onto this space will be a new landmark residential-led mixed-use development and an enhanced Broadway Tudor building. The main projects within the Central Gateway include:

- **Station Lane Gateway Development** – strategic site to be developed as a mixed-use scheme with active groundfloor containing a mix of uses and upper floor residential units, providing town centre living opportunities.
- **South of High Road** - In the longer term there is the opportunity to introduce residential development on the existing surface car park and yard, providing town centre living within a high quality environment.
- **Station Lane** – through remodelling the highway, land can be reclaimed to provide a formal public space on which an expanded Pitsea Market can operate. On non-market days, there is the potential to use the space for additional car parking. The area will provide enhanced links to Tesco, which will be overlooked by new residential units.

Eastern Approach – located on the High Road Retail Park, this area will be remodelled to provide new larger footprint

retail units that front on to the high street. These units, with residential above, would be able to accommodate stores the size of those currently on the Retail Park sites. These stores generally trade well and attract additional visitors to Pitsea. To not provide for their space requirements, or the needs of potential similar sized retailers could undermine the longer term performance of the town centre. This will provide a more attractive and better defined gateway into the centre, with enhanced pedestrian linkages. There will be opportunities to introduce new residential development in the eastern part of the site. The main projects within the Eastern Approach area include:

- **High Road Retail** – in the medium to long term, opportunity to develop new large footprint retail units that front onto the street with rear car parking of around 250 spaces.
- **Eastern Gateway Living** – at the eastern end of the retail park site, new residential development will front onto High Road, with mixed use employment opportunities to the west.

SUSTAINABLE PROJECTS

The Council is fully committed to ensuring that the regeneration of Pitsea is brought forward in a sustainable manner. The Council will expect any prospective developers to achieve high levels of sustainable design and it will pay particular attention to the following:

- **Buildings materials** – developers where possible should source local and sustainable building materials. Residential developments should seek to

adopt BRE Green Guide standards for housing.

- **Adaptability** – buildings should be designed to be flexible enough to accommodate changes in use over time.
- **Sustainable Homes** – residential developments should achieve Buildings for Life Silver Standards (as a minimum), Lifetime Homes standards and Ecohomes – Very good and above ratings regarding sustainability.
- **Sustainable Employment** - the BREEAM assessment method will be used to determine the environmental standard of commercial office uses in the centre .
- **Energy Efficiency** – new developments should seek to make efficient use of energy through generation, use and conservation.
- **Recycling** – new developments should provide a choice of recycling facilities.
- **Inclusive Design** – developments and their surrounding environments should be designed to encroach and allow access for all.
- **Secured By Design** – developments should meet the standards set out in the Secured By Design guidance published by the Association of Chief Police Officers.

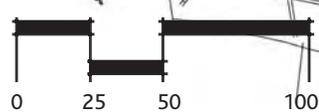


LEGEND

-  Residential Buildings
-  Existing Buildings
-  Mixed Use Buildings
-  Retail Buildings
-  Private Space
-  Public Realm Street Improvements
-  Highways Improvements
-  Surface Car Parking
-  Service Areas
-  Market Stall Areas

- A** Leisure & learning focus enhanced facilities
- B** Health centre
- C** Improved swimming pool
- D** Northlands Square with cafes & restaurants facing it
- E** Mixed-use incorporating large format retail
- F** Landmark building
- G** Market Square - a flexible urban space
- H** Safe & secure link to station, with landmark building
- I** Narrowed highways to create 'street'
- J** Robust high quality urban space

IMPROVED LINKS TO TRAIN STATION & WAT TYLER PARK



SCALE: As Shown	
DRAWING TITLE: Illustrative Masterplan	
PROJECT NAME: Pitsea Town Centre	
CLIENT: Basildon Renaissance Partnership	
PITSEA LAYOUT 502 070302 DW	

HEALTHY LIVING QUARTER



Whilst the northern part of the town centre currently offers a wide range of community facilities, it provides an unattractive entrance into the town centre. Some of the community uses are accommodated in out-dated building structures that detract from the townscape quality, and the public realm is uncoordinated and of a poor quality. Whilst these uses are spatially clustered together, the built form and the design of the environment around them fails to create a sense of community hub.

The Masterplan provides the opportunity to transform this northern area; creating an attractive arrival experience into the centre that helps to change the image and identity of the town. Through selective redevelopment, renovation and public realm enhancements, the Healthy Living Quarter will provide a northern anchor within the town centre,

providing a range of community-focused services to complement the enhanced retail offer elsewhere in the town centre.

Supporting the regeneration of the town and serving the new and existing residents of Pitsea will be a healthy living hub in the north of the town centre. The focus in this area will be upon enhancing the existing community facilities, including the library, leisure and swimming pool facilities along with the potential for an expanded multi-purpose health centre.

These new and enhanced community uses will be focussed around a formal public space that will help to integrate these various public facilities. The space will provide a meeting place in the north of the town centre, and will be fronted by complimentary retail, restaurant

and café uses; creating a new focus of activity in the north of the town centre.

As part of the remodelling of this area, there is the opportunity to bring forward new town centre residential development as an integral part of a comprehensive redevelopment. New housing will help to support the town centre economy, with the population using the shops, restaurants and cafes in the centre. The introduction of a range of housing types and tenures in the central area will ensure that the new town centre community is mixed, which in turn will support a broad range of facilities.

LEISURE AND LEARNING FOCUS

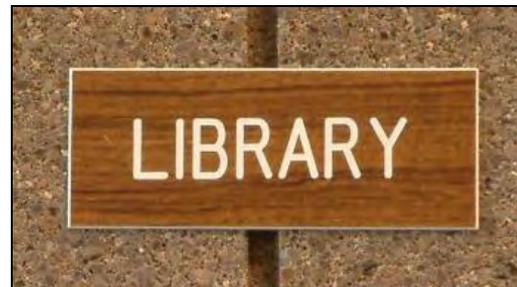
The existing leisure centre and adjoining library provide a valued service to the Pitsea community; providing one of the key attractions in the centre. However, whilst the current leisure facility is well used by certain age groups in the community, most notably children and elderly residents, the range of activities that can be accommodated within the structure is limited.

Whilst the Masterplan does not propose significant change to the leisure facility, it does promote the opportunity to investigate modernising the centre to provide more flexible space to enable a wider range of activities to take place. Exploring the potential to modify the building to accommodate more activities will broaden the offer of the centre, making the centre attractive to a wider audience.

Supporting the more intensive leisure activities, the centre should continue to focus on providing flexible space for use by local groups.

Any enhancements to the centre should seek to increase operational links and connections with the swimming pool facility to the east. These two facilities, whilst physically separated, should be perceived by users as a co-ordinated facility.

Any modification proposals for the centre will need to be brought forward as part of a wider strategy for sports provision in the District, as there may be priorities to deliver new leisure services in areas that are more deficient in provision. However, as the role and function of Pitsea changes, with the regeneration of the centre increasing the numbers of residents within Pitsea and strengthening its draw within its catchment, there will be increasing pressure for the centre to broaden its offer.



As an integral part of the community offer, the library should provide a focus as a modern learning resource centre and help to create a focus for lifelong learning and community development.

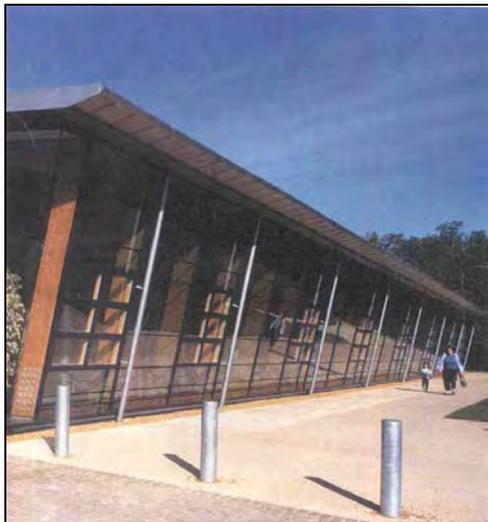
Within the facility should be flexible space available for voluntary sector and community groups to use, providing meeting space for all. Included within this could be exhibition and interpretation space – enabling the community to celebrate Pitsea's identity, understand its past and think collectively about its future. The facility could also exhibit progress on the implementation of

Masterplan, acting as an information centre for the regeneration of the Town Centre.

Consolidating community uses within these adjoining buildings will help to establish a Pitsea-wide focus for active civic and community functions, strengthening the role they play within the town.

SWIMMING POOL

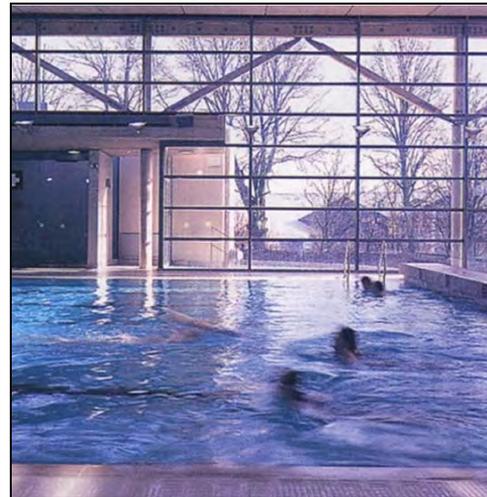
Whilst the existing swimming pool itself is operationally and structurally sound and meets modern standards, the centre fails in urban design terms. The centre itself is a very unattractive building, with a lack of animation and interaction with the surrounding complementing uses. The building provides a very poor piece of townscape at the northern entrance to the town with inactive and blank facades, and does little for the profile of the town.



New Swimming Pool Structure to Front onto Street

Over time there is the potential to upgrade the external building shell, creating a new and modern designed structure that befits a regenerated Pitsea town centre. Any redevelopment of the structure should seek to positively respond to the frontage along

Northlands Pavement, creating a more welcoming aspect for visitors. The design of the structure should complement the new health facility that will be developed directly to the north.



Modernised Swimming Pool Building

A modernised swimming pool building in conjunction with on-going enhancements proposed for the adjacent leisure centre and library, will offer the potential to refocus sport, leisure and recreation provision in the southern part of Basildon, complementing the Sporting Village in Gloucester Park and drawing in additional visitors to the town. It is also a very tangible commitment to investment and change in Pitsea – with positive messages to local people and to the wider business and investor community.

HEALTH COMMUNITY CENTRE

Located at the northern of Northlands Pavement, adjacent to the swimming pool, is the Health centre. The centre already provides an important role in the delivery of primary care health in Pitsea, with around 12 doctors operating from the centre. However, the current building is out-dated and fails to meet the needs of a modern health care

facility. The age and configuration of the building does not lend itself to being renovated and upgraded. Furthermore, the existing building form does not make the most efficient use of land, with the development set back considerably from the high street, sitting within a very poor quality, harsh landscape setting.



New Modern Health Centre

The occupiers of the surgery have identified an urgent need to develop a replacement facility within three years, and have been proactively involved in formulating masterplan proposals. This provides an opportunity to develop a new modern primary care facility within the town centre, serving the health and social needs of the existing and future Pitsea communities.

Any redevelopment of the centre should be of a high quality of design, serving as a key gateway building for those approaching from the north. The development should address the street, and have a direct frontage onto Northlands Pavement. Any associated car parking should be to the rear of the building.

Located adjacent to the swimming pool and leisure centre, there is the opportunity to foster links between these three facilities and promote healthy living, enhancing the understanding of health issues within Pitsea.

The redevelopment of this site and wider area will need to ensure that adequate car parking provision is provided to meet the needs generated by the town centre uses in this part of the centre.

NORTHLANDS SQUARE

One of the principal weaknesses of the public space at the entrance to the library and leisure facilities is the lack of active frontages on the perimeter of this public space. At present, the entire eastern aspect of the square is formed by the western boundary wall of a large retail store, which comprises a continuous breeze block blank façade. This detracts from the quality and amenity of one of the centre's only public spaces.

As part of wider proposals to redevelop the retail units along Northlands Pavement, there is the opportunity to introduce a new high quality mixed-use town centre development that fronts onto the Square. The ground floor of the development should incorporate active uses, with new retail, café and restaurant units helping to create vibrancy and activity in the area. The retail units could accommodate small and niche retailers, whilst the restaurants and cafes will help to attract users to the centre in the evenings, and start to create an evening economy within the centre.



Café / Restaurant Uses Supporting Evening Economy

On the upper floors of the developments fronting onto Northlands Square will be quality urban apartments, providing living space for those wanting to be close to town centre services and facilities. The residential will help to provide passive surveillance in this part of the centre, ensuring a safer town centre environment in the evenings.

A more detailed description of the public realm proposals associated with Northlands Square are set out within Section 5: Public Realm Strategy.

TOWN CENTRE LIVING

In the northern part of the town centre adjacent to existing residential, there is the opportunity to develop a high quality mixed residential quarter. The development will provide terraced townhouses and apartment living opportunities, with the area offering the capacity for around 70 dwellings to be developed. Housing densities will generally be higher towards to core retail area, with more family style housing in the northern part. The scheme will offer a mix of sized units, meeting a range of housing needs for both Pitsea residents and those wanting to come into the area.



Town Centre Living within Quality Environment

The developments will be set within a quality streetscape environment and will offer attractive housing for those people coming to

the town to find modern homes and apartments that offer value for money, are set within a high quality environment and offer excellent town centre amenities within close proximity.



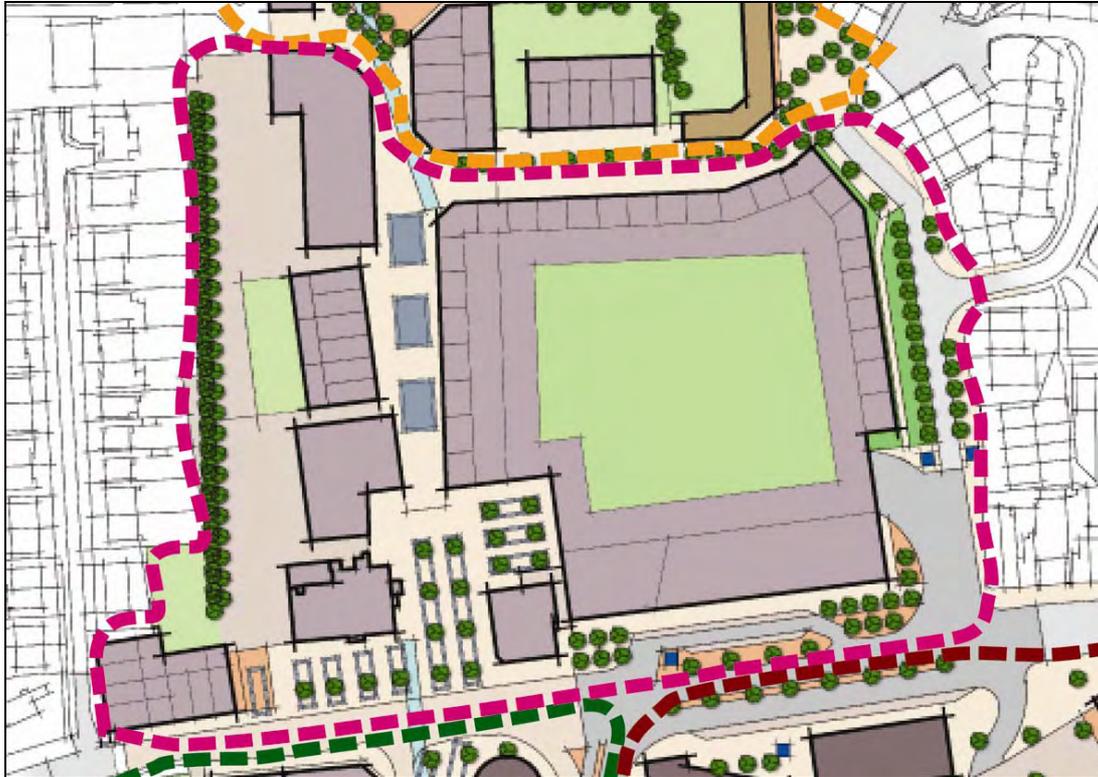
Town Centre Living for all

The development will be designed to increase the overall permeability across the town centre, for the surrounding residential communities to the east and north. These pedestrian links will offer safe and attractive routes for users, with the new houses providing passive surveillance and a high quality streetscape including pedestrian focussed lighting for these routes.

Creating the opportunity for this residential quarter will require the development of the existing open space to the south of Wickford Avenue. The development of the new homes on the existing open space site will help to realise the value of the land and support regeneration development of the retail core. The open space is of limited ecological or visual amenity and does not provide an appropriate form of space for a town centre location. However, the space ensures that the residential dwellings that border it do not suffer from overlooking; therefore, any development proposals in this area will need to respect the privacy and views of the existing dwellings. To justify the development

of this space, a replacement space or significant enhancements to existing space will need to be made in the local area.

RETAIL HEART



The area to the north of the High Road and along Northlands Pavement will form the heart of the new high street retail offer within Pitsea.

At present, this area provides a low quality shopping experience, with the retail offer dominated by low value retailers and non-retail units, such as betting shops and fast food units. The urban environment is also poor, with the Northlands Pavement retail area dominated by the market stalls. This poor retail offer and shopping environment, combined with the significant draw of the Tesco hypermarket, has resulted in the loss of potential consumer spend to other centres, and has largely contributed to Pitsea's failings over recent years. However, the implementation of the Masterplan will address this decline.

At the heart of the regeneration of the town centre will be the dramatic transformation of the Pitsea's retail offer through the development of modern new retailing space and the strengthening and upgrading of the open-air market. To meet changing retailing needs and improve the competitiveness of the town centre, the comprehensive redevelopment of this area will be promoted to enable modern and flexible new retailing space to be introduced to meet a wide range of retailing requirements.

The aspiration is for the core retail area to be comprehensively redeveloped to provide a large new modern food store, with complimentary retail space offering a range of small to medium sized units. However, if this primary objective can not be achieved due to viability and changes in the market, retail

transformation will take place through a finer grain retail-led mixed-use redevelopment of the area.

Along an upgraded Northlands Pavement will be a high quality pedestrianised street that will host Pitsea Market on market days and provide a quality public realm space when it is not in operation.



Market as an Alternative Retail Offer

The Railway Hotel Pub will be retained as a key Pitsea landmark and upgraded for mixed-use development.

Through these retail focussed projects, Pitsea will offer a broad range of retailing opportunities, appealing to differ a variety of consumer demands.

CENTRAL RETAIL FOCUS

The centre of Pitsea currently lacks any modern retail units, with much of the existing retail space out-dated and inflexible, and not able to meet the requirements of high street occupiers. If Pitsea is to fulfil its role as a second centre within Basildon, and sustainably serve its catchment area, it needs to increase the range and quality of retail on offer, bringing forward new development that offers a distinct yet complementary offer to Basildon town centre.

Basildon District Council is currently undertaking a retail needs study to determine the level of retail growth that can be sustainably accommodated amongst each of the town centres within the District. The findings of this study will help to inform the appropriate scale of any future retail development in the centre.

The findings of the retail needs study are yet to be published, the Masterplan is unable to robustly guide the level of new retail space that should be brought forward. To provide the Masterplan with the flexibility to respond to the findings of the study, as well as respond varying degrees of confidence in the retail investment market, two options for the Central Retail Focus area are proposed:

- **Option A | Large scale retail development**
 - comprehensive new retail development providing space for a large retail occupier, supported by small and medium sized retail units.
- **Option B | Finer grain retail development**
 - a smaller scale retail proposal that introduces new small to medium sized retail developments within the existing urban form.

Option A | Large Scale Retail Development

The existing centre does not offer the sites or conditions within which to attract a new large retail anchor tenant. To create the critical mass of retail to bring about a step-change in the retail provision of Pitsea, there will need to be a comprehensive redevelopment of the existing retail infrastructure. After analysing the landownerships in the centre, as well as urban design considerations such as urban form, townscape and legibility; the Masterplan

proposes to radically remodel the retail area to the north of High Road.

Incorporating the Broadway retail parade, the existing market area along Northlands Pavement and the surface level car park, the Large Scale Retail Development Option proposes to introduce a significant new retail development that can accommodate an anchor retail store, with associated car parking, and complimentary retail units providing small to medium sized space. Market testing has identified that there is interest amongst national foodstore operators to invest within a sizeable food store within the heart of Pitsea town centre, developing a foodstore comparable to the existing Tesco store.



Example of Large Foodstore above Retail
Source: Bridge Hall Developments + Warner Estate Holdings

Initial design feasibility work has identified that locating the anchor store at first floor level ensures that the appropriate quantum of servicing and car parking can be accommodated on-site, utilising surface and lower ground levels. Furthermore, locating the anchor store at first floor level enables a range of small to medium sized retail units to be accommodated on the ground floor, strengthening the retail frontage and offer along High Road and Northlands Pavement.

With a prominent first floor frontage onto High Road and a better urban design quality, the store would benefit from a high degree of

visibility to vehicular traffic travelling along the A13, raising the profile and prominence of the store as well as signalling to visitors that quality change and investment is taking place within Pitsea.

Located on the groundfloor of this redevelopment will be a range of small to medium sized retail units, which would have a primary frontage onto the upgraded Northlands Pavement and High Road. The flexible retail units would be able to accommodate a wide range of operators, from independent to high street retailers.



Example of Large Foodstore above Retail
Source: Bridge Hall Developments + Warner Estate Holdings

The comprehensive redevelopment of this area will help to rebalance the retail offer within Pitsea that is currently skewed towards Tesco, helping to refocus retail activity back in the heart of the town centre. The modern retailing space will accommodate higher value high street occupiers that will raise Pitsea's profile as the second centre of Basildon, increasing footfall into the town centre and strengthening the town centre economy.

Option B | Finer Grain Retail Development

Whilst the Pitsea Masterplan promotes the comprehensive redevelopment of the retail heart as outlined in Option A, to retain

flexibility and ensure that the plan can respond to changes either in the retail market or retail policy, an alternative Option B is proposed. This option provides for a reduced quantum and scale of retail development, and can be delivered on an incremental and phased manner, bringing forward smaller schemes as opposed to a single large retail development.



Option B with Smaller Scale Retail Development

Option B comprises a smaller scale of redevelopment, with new retail units developed on the existing surface level car park and market area to the east of Northlands Pavement. The retail units would be able to accommodate a range of small to medium sized occupiers, with the potential to attract a medium sized anchor store in the north.

These new retail developments should help to strengthen east-west permeability through the centre, and as can be seen in the inset, the proposed development could include a new street that runs east west connecting Northlands Pavement with Rectory Drive. Developments along this new street should provide active groundfloor uses along the route. It is not envisaged that this new street

would accommodate vehicular traffic to allow for servicing.

Under this option, the form of the Broadway retail precinct would be retained, ensuring a retail offer that fronts onto the High Road. The sizes of the current units lend themselves to small-scale niche and bespoke retailers. Early proposals would see the refurbishment and upgrading of the existing retail units to provide better quality retail space and a more attractive shopping environment. These works will ensure that this retail area is able to compete with other more modern retail developments that will be brought forward in the centre.



Smaller Scale Retail on Ground Floor

In the longer term, there could be the potential to redevelop the Broadway precinct as a stand-alone development, maximising the development potential of a prime high street location. Any redevelopment of this building should provide a mixed-use development that responds positively to the High Road, with active retail-led groundfloor uses, with the potential for alternative leisure and evening economy uses. On upper ground levels, there is the opportunity to introduce new urban apartment living.

NORTHLANDS PAVEMENT

Northlands Pavement currently comprises a large single mixed-use development comprising retail units, commercial office space and infrastructure to service the market. The retail units provide dated floorspace, with little opportunity for upgrading due to the deep form of the units. There is currently high vacancy in the units, with several of the occupied units only trading on market days.



Town Centre Mixed Use Development

The commercial office space occupies floors one to three of this four-storey building, and in line with the age and form of the building provides low quality office space. However, there are several businesses operating from the building.

Whilst the building provides a mixed-use development, the likes of which are being promoted elsewhere in the town centre, it fails in urban design terms. The large building dominates the environment in this area, with the tired 1970s façade projecting a negative landmark within the overall townscape of the centre. The large single development block provides an inflexible form, with little opportunity to redevelop the dated and mostly vacant retail units whilst parts of the upper floors remain in occupation. It is these vacant units on the groundfloor that visually dominate

the townscape for visitors, strengthening an image of a dated and declining centre.



Residential above Retail

It is envisaged that this single development can be redeveloped to provide a series of mixed-use development blocks that create a more robust and flexible form. Retail uses should be the predominant land use on the groundfloor, supported by a mix of café, restaurant and employment uses. These groundfloor uses will front onto an enhanced pedestrian retail street along Northlands Pavement, which will accommodate a section of the rejuvenated Pitsea Market on market days.

Café and restaurant uses should be promoted along the frontage to Northlands Square. Operators should be encouraged to help animate the space, providing seating areas where shoppers and visitors can sit and relax, particularly on the western edge making best use of the afternoon and evening sun.

To ensure the vitality and viability of this part of the town centre, residential uses are proposed on upper floor levels. Urban apartment living above the groundfloor will contribute to the vibrancy and vitality of the town centre outside shopping hours, and provide passive surveillance over Northlands Pavement during the evenings.

NEW MARKET SQUARE

Located at the crossroad at the heart of the town centre linking the north – south axis of Station Lane and Northlands Pavement with the east-west running High Road; the currently vacant Railway Hotel pub provides an opportunity to reuse one of the centres more well established landmarks. Although currently in a state of disrepair, the mock-Tudor pub is identified by local residents as one of the more important buildings within the centre, providing a reminder of some of Pitsea's heritage and original character.

As the role and function of Pitsea changes, it will become an increasingly attractive opportunity in which to bring forward a modern yet sympathetic reuse of the landmark building. At this stage, the Masterplan is not prescriptive over the uses that could be accommodated within the building, although any use must be compatible with a prime town centre location.

Any reuse of the building must retain its character, and create a more positive relationship with the neighbouring uses and buildings. It must seek to create a more attractive environment on the existing surface level car park that currently isolates the site from the rest of the town centre. It is understood that underground utilities infrastructure restricts the development of this part of the site and therefore quality landscaping proposals may provide the only solution.

CENTRAL GATEWAY



The Central Gateway area sits between High Road to the north and the Tesco store to the south; located at the gateway into the centre it provides the first impression for visitors to the town centre arriving rail or car from the A13.

At present, there is no form of gateway development or landmark to announce your arrival into Pitsea for visitors arriving by road or train. Currently, the first impressions of the centre are large pieces of highways infrastructure and expansive areas of poor quality landscaping. There is little to inform visitors that they are entering a town centre,

providing a weak entrance into the town and poor image.

The area provides the key link between the dominant Tesco food store to the south and the traditional town centre to the north. The quality of the environment and built form along this link is very poor and does nothing to encourage shoppers to travel into the town centre from the superstore. This reduces the number of linked trips and therefore reduces the potential spend that could be captured in the centre.

The Masterplan envisages that this area will be transformed through quality environmental and landscaping improvements and the introduction of new quality developments of the highest architectural quality. Introducing residential-led mixed-use development will help to bring activity and vibrancy into the area.

A remodelled highway will provide the opportunity to reclaim under-utilised highway space to accommodate part of a revitalised Pitsea Market on market days, and provide a high quality piece of urban landscape when the market is not in operation.

STATION LANE GATEWAY DEVELOPMENT

Located at the key juncture between the principal routes linking the town centre with the Railway Station and the Tesco store, the Station Gateway site provides a key strategic opportunity to help repair the urban form in the centre, improving the townscape quality, legibility and permeability.



Town Centre Apartment Living

The current site has been vacant for many years, with the boarding around it providing a dead frontage onto the principal pedestrian route connecting the various components of the town centre, creating an extremely poor and intimidating environment for users. The lack of active frontages and therefore surveillance along this approach, combined with the poor lighting, heightens the sense of isolation for users, raising concerns over safety.

The development of this site provides the opportunity for a new residential-led mixed-use gateway development. This should include a mix of uses, with active frontages at groundfloor level helping to animate the street in this area. Potential uses could include cafés or small scale niche retail or community uses such as health or crèche facilities.



Landmark Quality Town Centre Living

The active frontages at groundfloor level will help to activate Station Lane, improving the pedestrian experience by creating a more human-scale and active environment in which to move. These activities will help to draw visitors arriving from the station towards the town centre, providing a focus of activity that

can be seen from the entrance to the A13 gyratory.



Modern Designed Sustainable Housing

Any development of this site will need to be of the highest architectural design, with a key landmark building on the south eastern part of the site, with active frontages onto Station Lane. This will aid legibility for visitors improving the overall experience of arrival in the town. The development will need to be of a significant scale to create the sense of a physical gateway and for this reason it is appropriate to introduce a taller building that helps to define the entrance to Pitsea. Any proposals for tall buildings will need to be supported by a strong design rationale outlining the urban design and regeneration benefits of such a proposal and an assessment of the impact on nearby lower rise homes.

The residential development will primarily offer urban apartments, building on the proximity to the railway station and the wide range of quality town centre services and facilities that a regenerated Pitsea will offer. The residential element will help to broaden the town centre living offer in Pitsea, providing high quality living space in the heart of the town. Importantly, residential living in this area, combined with the active groundfloor uses, will help to increase activity and

surveillance, making the pedestrian route between the centre, railway station and Tesco more attractive and safe. This will help to reduce the impact of severance caused by the highways infrastructure in the area.

Redevelopment of this site, combined with the road realignment along Station Lane and subsequent public realm enhancements will greatly enhance the principal gateway into Pitsea. It will help to create a quality arrival and departure point from the centre, providing Pitsea with a strong presence and identity.

STATION LANE

Station Lane currently provides the primary pedestrian link between the town centre, the Tesco store and the route that links to the Railway Station. It is a poor quality route; with little development fronting onto it to offer surveillance, and the landscape environment is of poor quality, with an uncoordinated and poorly maintained landscape screen bounding the carriageway.

As part of wider highway proposals to reduce the impact of Station Lane (subject to detailed technical testing), the existing six lane carriageway will be downgraded to four lanes, to create a carriageway more akin in scale to a town centre street. However, whilst it is proposed to reduce the overall width of this carriageway, the carrying capacity will not be reduced, with the same number of vehicles still able to be accommodated.

The reduction in the highway infrastructure will enable land to be reclaimed, creating an expanded pedestrian public realm to the west of the road. This enlarged public space will be subject to quality public realm enhancements that will provide a flexible hard

landscaped area capable of accommodating part of the upgraded Pitsea Market. Located along this route the market, when operational, will provide an active and animated link between the Tesco and the town centre.



Flexible Hard Landscaping

Through the careful design and choice of streetscape treatments, there is potential for this public space to provide additional car parking when the market is not in operation, or host special events including local festivals, special market days and seasonal events.

The proposals for Station Lane are described in more detail in the Public Realm Strategy in Section 5.

WESTERN EDGE

In the longer term there is the opportunity to introduce residential development on the existing surface car park to the south of High Road and the vacant yard to the rear of the properties along Tennyson Drive.

The current uses do not make the most efficient use of town centre sites, and their redevelopment will allow for the introduction of further town centre living in a sustainable location, close to a wide range of town centre services and facilities and enhance the quality of the existing homes.



Mix of Housing Forms

There is the opportunity to introduce a mix of development forms, including townhouses and urban apartments. The developments will need to be set within a high quality streetscape environment. As part of these proposals, the development form should promote new pedestrian links between the Tesco store to the south and the High Road to the north. This will improve permeability in the area, helping to strengthen links with the foodstore and the rest of the town centre.

EASTERN APPROACH



The Eastern Approach lies to the south of the High Road and to the north of the A13, bound to the west by Station Lane. The area is isolated from the rest of the town centre by this highway infrastructure, and the uses and built form on-site have exacerbated this severance.

The area currently comprises two drive-thru fast food restaurants and a value foodstore. These units sit back from the High Road, surrounded by surface car parking. Until a recent fire accident, there were three out-of-town retail units on site, focussing upon value clothing and a pet store.

Through the comprehensive redevelopment of this area, new modern retailing opportunities will be introduced that better integrate with the rest of the town centre and enhance the overall townscape quality of Pitsea.

There will also be opportunities to introduce new employment space and residential living opportunities, as part of wider mixed-use regeneration proposals.

HIGH ROAD RETAIL

In the medium to long term, as other retail developments in the centre are developed and completed, there is the opportunity to remodel the Retail Park, creating an urban form that better integrates with the wider town centre. Whilst permission has recently been granted for the redevelopment of the former out of town retail units that were destroyed due to fire damage, the replacement of like-for-like units will not provide the quality or configuration of retail space to meet modern and future retail requirements.

In time, as the regeneration of Pitsea gathers momentum, there may be the demand for the development of larger and more modern flexible retail units, to meet the needs of the next generation of high street retailing. Following proposals to reduce the highways infrastructure associated with the High Road and the B1464 gyratory, such as the downsizing of the boulevard that currently forms the central reservation between the flows of traffic, additional development capacity can be created on the retail park site. This will enable an increased quantum of retail floorspace to be developed compared to what is achievable within the existing site layout.

Any redevelopment of these retail units should seek to reconfigure the existing form, with retailing units fronting directly onto High Road. Creating development that fronts onto High Road with active frontages at groundfloor level will help to urbanise the street, improving the pedestrian experience by creating a more human-scale environment in which to move. Furthermore, introducing retail that aligns both sides of the street will help to improve the setting of High Road, and help to re-establish the 'traditional retail high street' character.

The retail developments will need to be of a high quality of design that reflects the strategic location at the eastern approach into the centre. A quality gateway retail development or series of development blocks at the eastern approach into Pitsea should help to announce arrival into the town centre. This will aid legibility for visitors, improving the overall experience of people both visiting and passing through the town.

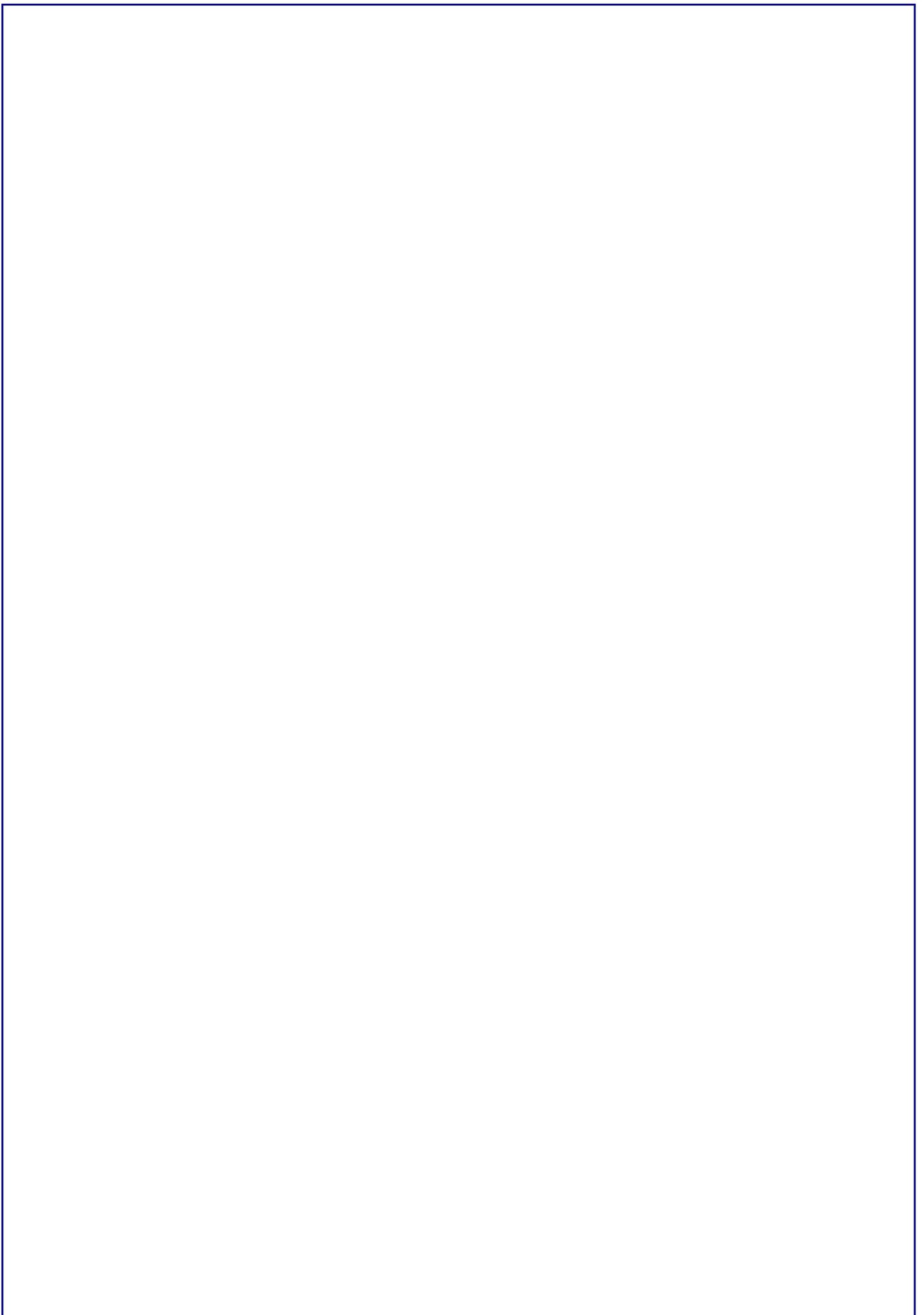
Through the reconfiguration of the site, there is the potential to introduce some employment uses onto the site. Located along the boundary of the A13, an employment focussed development can be brought forward, providing commercial space to ensure that the regenerated town centre is able to offer range of investment opportunities, providing the wide range of services and facilities required of a thriving mixed-use town centre.

As part of proposals to remodel the carriageway, replacement upgraded bus facilities will need to be installed, providing for the potential for enhanced links to the railway station.

Car parking and servicing for these units should be to the rear of the developments, set within an attractive hard landscaped environment that does detract from the overall quality of the redevelopment.

EASTERN APPROACH LIVING

At the eastern end of the retail park site, new residential development can be introduced, that addresses the High Road frontage. These residential developments will provide the opportunity to improve the pedestrian environment along High Road, improving the urban setting for the surrounding residential communities. The development of residential units will improve surveillance and safety along this town centre street, enhancing its role in the pedestrian street hierarchy. This is also focussed on improving the quality of environment for those living in Pitsea.



5. public realm

The public realm is defined as the space that surrounds the various buildings and developments; incorporating streets, squares, and parks. The quality of these spaces has a major impact on the way towns and cities are perceived. As important as the buildings that form the centre, the quality of the public realm determines how attractive, safe and welcoming a place feels.

The new development brought forward within the centre through the implementation of the Masterplan provides the opportunity to improve the overall physical quality of the town, through new built development but also through investment in the public realm. The public realm within the Masterplan area needs improvement to encourage a sense of pride and place for the residents and visitors to the area, helping to create a distinctive image and identity for the town.

It is important that public realm enhancements are brought forward in parallel with development, with the private sector helping to deliver quality new spaces as part of their development proposals. Much of the value of the new development will be dependent on securing a quality physical environment.

PUBLIC REALM FRAMEWORK

At the heart of the public realm strategy is a framework for the streets and spaces that link the various town centre functions and uses together. The framework is based upon

creating a series of connected spaces along the north south axis of the town, running from the railway station in the south to Wickford Avenue in the north, and east-west along the High Road.

Within the overarching framework are a series of both newly proposed and upgraded focal activity spaces. These spaces will provide attractive settings for new development, as well as act as a catalyst for introducing activity and vibrancy within the centre. The series of focal spaces includes:

- **Northlands Square** – a new public square providing a vibrant and animated meeting place at the heart of the northern hub.
- **Northlands Pavement** – an upgraded retail high street that accommodates part of the market on market days.
- **Station Lane** – an expanded pedestrianised area that will enhance links to the Tesco store as well as accommodate part of the Pitsea Market.
- **A13 Gyratory** – located in the middle of the gyratory, this area will be transformed into a more attractive urban setting with informal recreation space.
- **Station Link** – the pedestrian route to the station will be upgraded and enhanced.
- **Wat Tyler Link** – streetscape enhancements connecting the Country Park to the Railway Station and town centre.

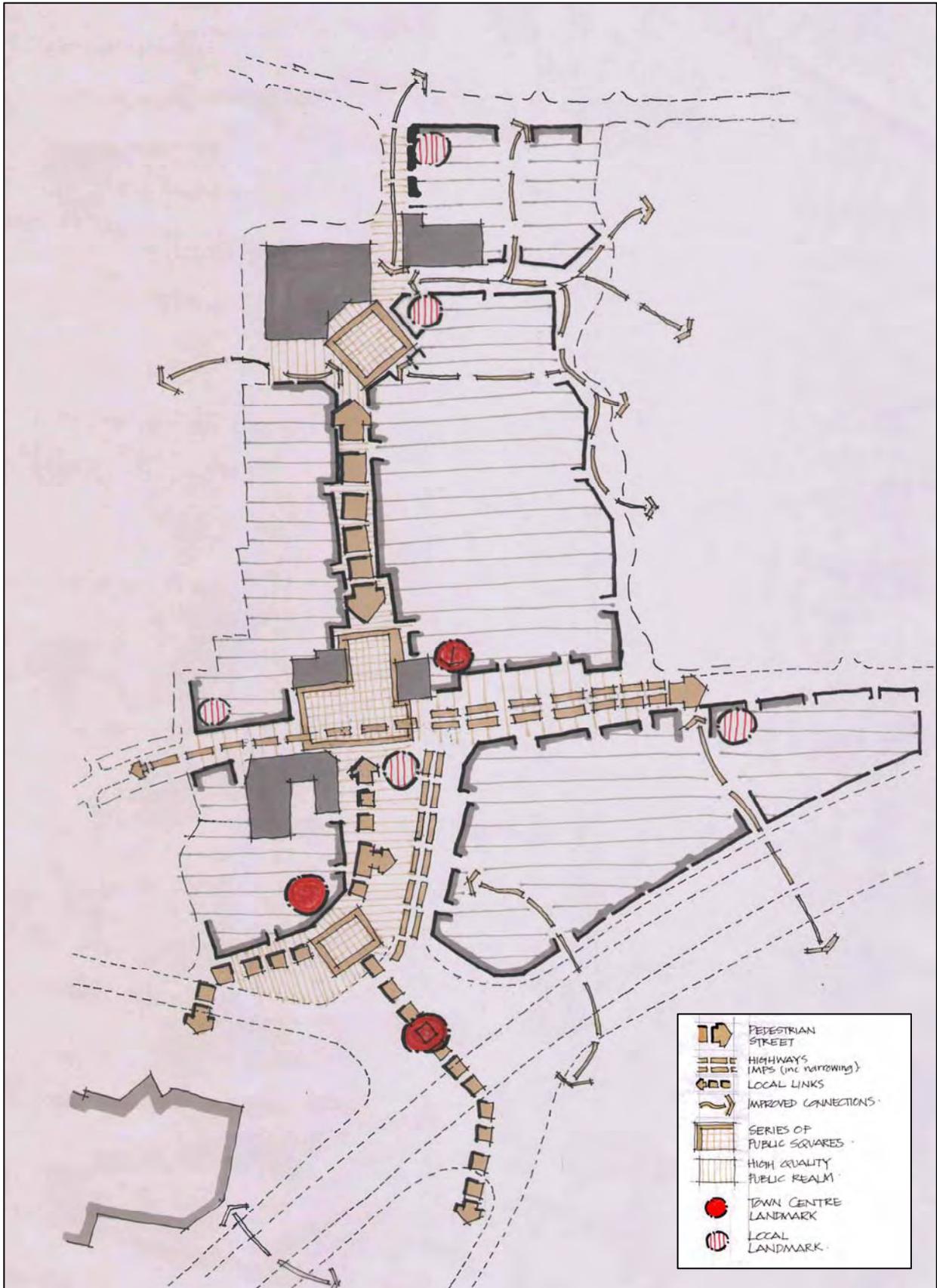
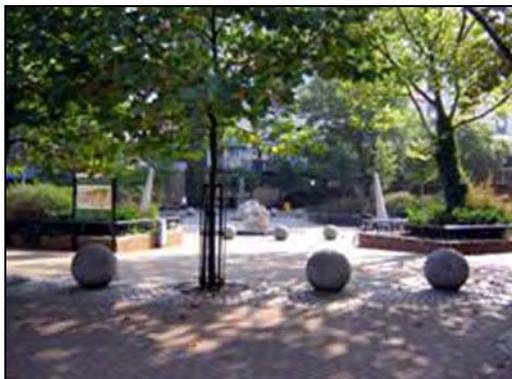


Figure 6.1 Public Realm Framework

NORTHLANDS SQUARE

Northlands Square, as an important part of the public realm along Northlands Pavement, will provide a public space that will act as the key focus in the northern end of the town centre. The current space at the frontage to the leisure centre and library is of a poor quality, with limited landscape features or street furniture. The square operates purely as a space to move through, providing little activity or amenity.

The enhanced square will sit at the heart of the leisure and learning focus, helping to connect the various public buildings together. There should be a common palette of streetscape materials used in this area, helping to brand and identify the space.



Example of Quality Public Space

An important feature of the design of the square will be its interface with the leisure, and learning facilities on the west and northern frontages. The square needs to provide unobstructed access to these buildings, providing a welcoming setting these community facilities.

On the eastern and southern perimeter of the square will be active café / restaurant and commercial leisure uses on the groundfloor. Fronting onto the square, these uses will generate activity and vibrancy.

NORTHLANDS PAVEMENT

Northlands Pavement is the principal retail street running north-south through the heart of town centre. It will offer a quality public space linking the northern end of the town centre to the High Road. It will be a pedestrian-oriented route, with street furniture and tree planting reinforcing the existing thoroughfare.



Pedestrian-orientated Retail Street at Night

Along this route will be smaller public realm interventions focussed upon street furniture, planting, lighting and the use of quality materials, and although only small in scale, will significantly add to quality of experience as part of an integrated strategy. Any public realm interventions should not obstruct this main retail thoroughfare, allowing easy movement for shoppers along the street, as well as providing clear views to the north when viewed from the High Road.

The southern section of Northlands Pavement will accommodate part of the Pitsea Market on market days. A reconfigured market area will comprise temporary market stall structures that can be quickly assembled on market days, ensuring that when the market is not in operation it does not negatively impact and dominate the pedestrian environment. The layout of the stalls needs to ensure easy

circulation for shoppers between the retail units fronting onto Northlands Pavement and the market stalls. Through the redevelopment of the existing mixed-use building on Northlands Pavement, storage facilities will need to be incorporated for the market infrastructure. Vehicular access to service the stalls by traders will need to take place before normal working hours and at the end of the market trading day.



Market Stalls Fronting the Street

STATION LANE

Station Lane provides a key strategic pedestrian route linking the heart of the town centre with the Tesco Store and principal route to the railway station. At present this link is of a poor environmental and streetscape quality, with low quality landscaping framing it to the east and limited active uses on the western frontage.

Through the remodelling of the Station Lane dual carriageway to the east, this area of public realm will be significantly expanded, enabling more formal streetscape uses to be accommodated. Once the pedestrian area has been expanded and the redevelopment of Northlands Pavement to the north has been undertaken, this area will accommodate part of the Pitsea Market. On market days this will help to provide a continuous link of activity between Station Lane and Northlands

Pavement, providing a strong spine through the heart of the town, reconnecting these two areas of the centre together. Again, the market stalls will be high quality temporary structures, capable of being removed and stored when not in use.

In the northern part of the Lane, fronting onto High Road at the heart of the centre, it is proposed to introduce a permanent structure that can accommodate small kiosks comprising a mix of small retail and / or café uses. This well designed kiosk will provide a focal point at the heart of Pitsea, and help to anchor this area.



Example of Market Integrating with Pedestrian Route

When not in operation, there is the opportunity to include surface car parking in this area when the market is in operation, subject to the detailed highways solution required to remodel Station Lane. Any car parking will need to be carefully designed, with innovative forms of signage and identification. The marking of individual spaces should be through quality hardscape materials and not white lanes, so that when not in use the car park spaces do not dominate the public realm.

This route will provide an important role in helping to strengthen the quality of the link between to the town centre and the Tesco store, encouraging shoppers to visit both

destinations. The route will be enhanced through new active uses being incorporated on the groundfloor of the Station Lane Gateway development.

A13 GYRATORY

Comprising a large under-utilised and inactive space under the A13, the public space at the heart of the gyratory provides an unattractive and unwelcoming public space to move through for those travelling between the railway station and the town centre. This popular route raises safety concerns for users with the lack of surveillance and activity increasing the sense of isolation. As much of the highways infrastructure is above ground level, there are little long distance views to the centre, which severely weakens legibility for visitors.

One of the early initiatives should be to introduce better quality pedestrian-orientated street lighting. At present, the street lighting is gained from the large lights designed to illuminate the highways infrastructure, with the pedestrian realm benefiting from secondary lighting only.

A key priority is also to enhance the subways at the two entrance points to this space. These narrow subways are poorly lit, and even during daylight hours they offer an intimidating environment. Whilst it is not possible to widen these subways to create wider more open spaces, through a comprehensive lighting strategy the experience of walking through these subways can be greatly enhanced. Clear lighting and signage will ensure that these subways are seen as places to head towards, greatly enhancing legibility through this space. It may also be possible to introduce a structure that helps to frame the entrances to the subways,

The most successful way of improving the pedestrian experience through this large, enclosed and isolated public space is to introduce activity in the area through new development. However, there would be little interest in operators for either café/restaurant uses or small retail units to locate in this space due to the low level of footfall needed to sustain such commercial interests.

To introduce activity, there is the opportunity to increase the level of surface floorspace in the gyratory by minimising the impact of the landscaped embankments and creating areas for informal urban sports and recreation activities. This could include skateboarding, basketball or any other sports capable of being played in a hard urban environment. This would require careful design however, to ensure that the sporting activities do not impinge upon the quality of experience for pedestrians travelling through the space.



Public Art and Lighting to Improve Environment



Opportunity to Introduce Recreational Activities Under Highways Infrastructure

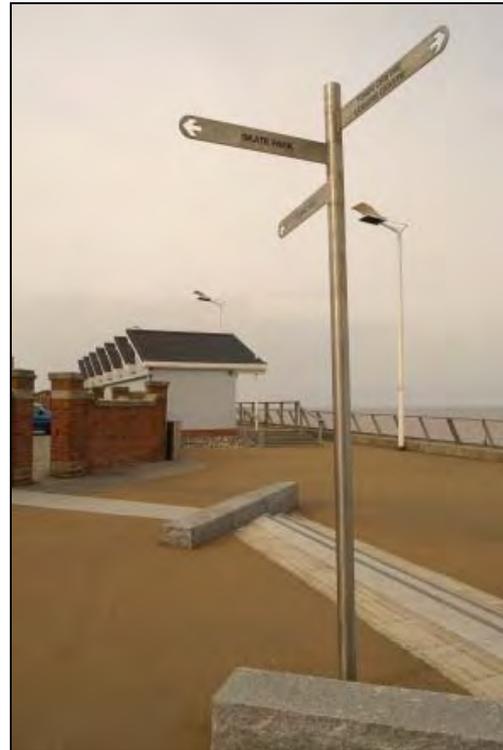
One of the weaknesses identified through the consultation process is that Pitsea lacks any visual identity, particularly when viewed from the A13. This gyratory area provides the opportunity to introduce a large scale public art form that can provide a landmark for Pitsea, advertising the centre to commuters on the A13. Such an art piece could be in the form of a tall sculpture that can be viewed from afar around, acting as a beacon that signals the change within Pitsea Town Centre.

STATION LINK

Covering the route from the railway station forecourt to the regenerated A13 gyratory area, Station Link will be subject to public realm enhancements to improve the experience and legibility for visitors travelling to the centre. There is very limited signage and way finding at present at the station to direct visitors to the centre, and with the topography and highways infrastructure blocking all long distance views, there is no way of knowing how close and in which direction the centre is, which is only a five minute walk away to Station Lane.

Early improvements to this route could comprise implementing a way-finding and signage strategy, covering the route between the station and town centre.

The legibility of this link could be improved through the use of a similar palette of materials along the entire length of the route, with the branding and design helping to improve legibility and orientation.

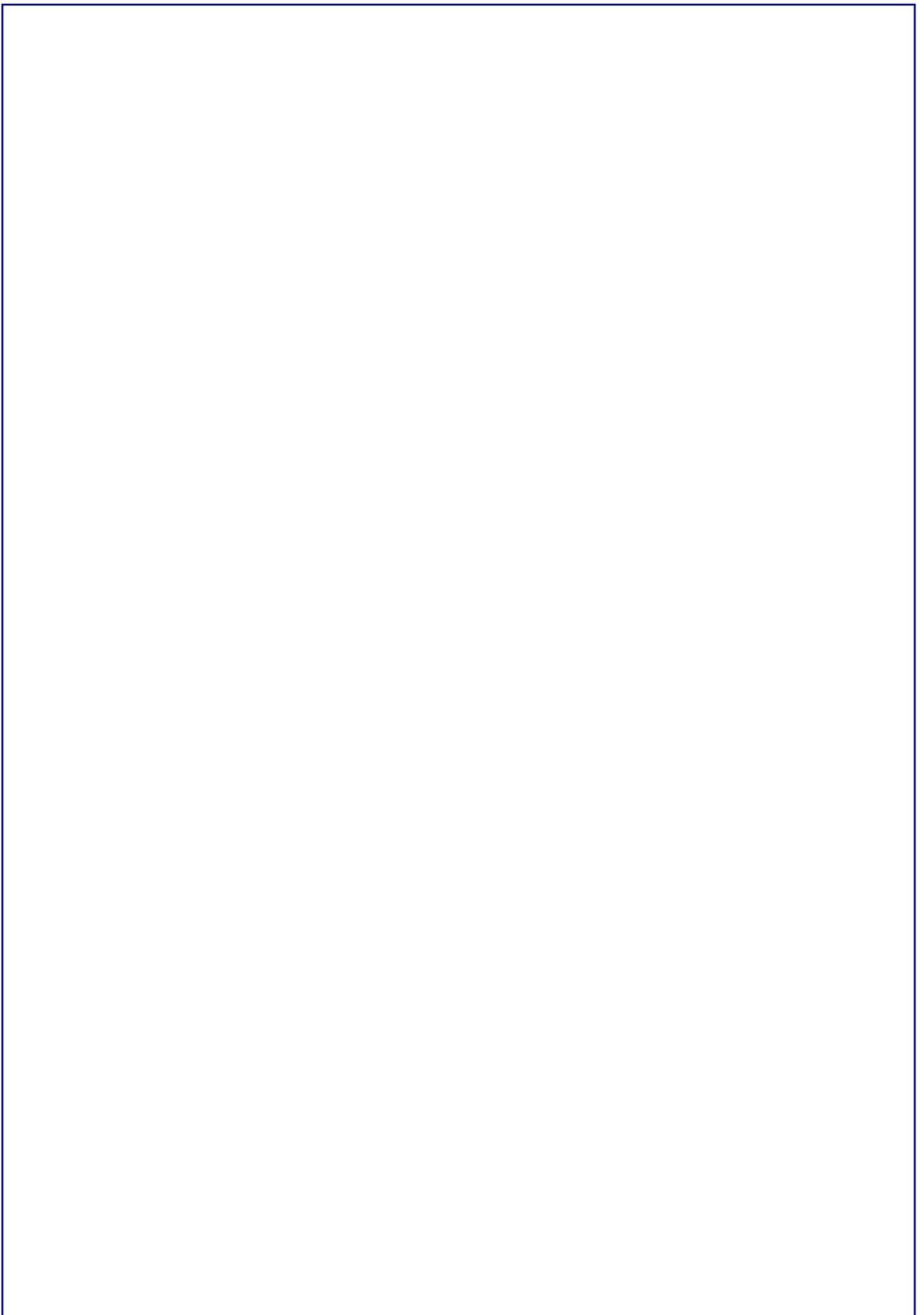


Example of Quality Signposting

WAT TYLER LINK

The strategic proposals being delivered at Wat Tyler Country Park and the development of the RSPB's South Essex Marshes landscape over the next 10 – 15 years provides an opportunity to attract further footfall and spend in to the town centre through the increased number of visitors generated by the attraction. If Pitsea Town Centre is to maximise the benefit from this opportunity, there needs to be a streetscape and branding strategy implemented between the Country Park and the station area. This will help to draw visitors from the Park into the town centre.

Such a strategy should focus upon incorporating pieces of public art and street furniture / materials that are themed to replicate the attractions in the Park. This will help to draw visitors along this route into the centre, and enhance the overall experience for visitors.



7.delivery

The Final Draft Masterplan for Pitsea town centre provides a series of innovative, visionary and realistic proposals for the future transformation of the town centre over the short, medium and longer term.

Town centre regeneration and development takes time. The step change in the quantum and quality of Pitsea's town centre offer will need to be achieved using a mix of different delivery mechanisms. Its successful transformation will depend on the extent to which the private sector can be expected to deliver a number of the key projects and developments identified. It will also depend on the scale of public sector intervention required. Deliverability depends on many factors, including land ownership, viability and phasing, but the attitude and commitment of Basildon District Council (BDC) and Basildon Renaissance Partnership (BRP) to lead the process, working in partnership with the private sector and other key stakeholders, will be crucial to delivering change.

This final section therefore draws together the key findings of the Final Draft Masterplan and sets out high level recommendations for delivering the renaissance and transformation of Pitsea town centre as a place to live, work, shop and visit for a wider range of leisure, entertainment, cultural and other activities.

ESTABLISHING A CLEAR AND EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE

In the case of Pitsea town centre we consider that BDC/BRP have an important leadership and delivery role to play. Together they will need to provide a new focus and credibility for inspiring confidence in the private sector in the investment potential of Pitsea Town Centre.

Successful execution of the masterplan's vision and specific projects will require strong joined-up leadership and project management across the Council and BRP. Based on our experience of successful regeneration initiatives for other UK centres, we recommend that a strong figurehead or project champion for the Masterplan is identified immediately to act as a spokesperson and bridge to stakeholders. The identified "champion" for Pitsea will start from a strong base. The extensive consultation carried out during the Masterplan process has helped to engage and build relationships with key stakeholders, as well as identify and understand their requirements. This has provided a fundamental "building block" for the preparation of the Final Draft Masterplan. Continued consultation with existing landowners and key occupiers will be fundamental in helping to bring forward new development.

One of the key roles of the "champion" will be to develop and sustain the Masterplan's momentum. The regeneration of the town centre will extend over a number of years and it is critical that there is a consistent driving force to achieve delivery. The leadership should be

at a senior level within BDC/BRP, with sufficient standing and reputation to co-ordinate across departments and allocate resources, as well as to gain the respect and trust of stakeholders.

In addition, there is a significant opportunity to reposition, brand and market the town centre to a wider audience. The development of a dynamic marketing strategy and re-branding campaign should be an early priority as this has the potential to create a transformational shift in the way Pitsea is currently perceived by the community, landowners and the wider investment and development market.

DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE PLANNING STRATEGY

The Final Draft Masterplan provides a strategic and co-ordinated approach to redevelopment and regeneration of Pitsea town centre. Establishing the planning policy context for the Final Draft Masterplan will be a key step in ensuring delivery. As part of the Masterplan consultation process, developers and landowners have told us that, above all else, it is the certainty of the plan that is the key driver of investment and that this is just as important as the degree of public sector investment.

The use of planning as a positive tool to promote sustainable development is an important element of current government thinking. Current planning policy is set out in the adopted Basildon Local Plan. Current planning policy is set out in the Basildon District Local Plan adopted in 1998. The preparation, independent examination and adoption of the principal LDF documents are programmed to take place over the next four years. Key considerations for the Council will include:

- Using the Masterplan, where appropriate, to inform the merging LDF.
- The securing of community benefits through the use of Section 106 / 278 agreements. Including, for example, improvements to public realm and open space; education and community facilities; highway improvements and traffic management; and contributions to public transport facilities.
- Creating the rationale for the use of the Council's Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) powers in appropriate circumstances to achieve regeneration and planning objectives.

Within the context of the changing town planning system, we recommend that planning and development briefs be prepared to provide the framework for development on certain key sites. These will provide developers with certainty and guidance.

In this case we recommend that briefs should be prepared for the 'Town Centre Living' project in the northern part of the town centre. Over the longer term, a planning and development brief for the 'Eastern Approach', incorporating the remodelling of the High Road Retail Park, will provide the framework for an urban form that better integrates with the new development proposed for the rest of the town centre.

These will need to build on the Final Draft Masterplan to provide more detailed site-specific advice on a range of considerations, including commercial viability (through development and financial appraisals); design (including scale, massing and principles of the design of buildings and public realm); and

transport and car parking issues, and if adopted, policies in the Council's LDF documents.

As with the Final Draft Masterplan, these Briefs should not be prescriptive, but should be flexible enough to attract and respond to changing market trends and demand in the key town centre opportunity sites. Crucially, the preparation of planning and development briefs will provide the opportunity for follow-up consultation work and market testing with key landowners, stakeholders, developers and investors.

The Briefs will also need to outline the contributions expected of individual developments to support improving the quality of the public realm and generating activity, together with parking, transportation provision and strengthening pedestrian linkages across the town centre. The process will enable the Final Draft Masterplan to be taken forward in an appropriate manner that will serve to meet the regeneration and development objectives of the Council, BRP and other interested parties.

REVIEW OF THE MASTERPLAN

Over time, as the Council progresses the formulation and then adoption of its LDF documents, the proposals within the masterplan will need to be reviewed and updated to ensure that they accord with the latest Development Plan policy.

A COMMITMENT TO PARTNERSHIP-WORKING

The success of BDC/BRP will depend on serious partner commitment and resources (particularly in terms of land, planning, CPO, access to grant regimes, management and revenue costs). Its ability to drive change will

rest on its ability to acquire or use assets, deliver public sector funding and investors, and to use the Final Draft Masterplan in tandem with existing planning controls, to realise development of the highest quality.

Based on experience elsewhere the public sector has a critical role over the near and medium term in helping to promote and deliver new investment and development. There are a number of different options for public sector intervention and some of these are outlined below. To varying degrees, these are generally required to bridge the gap between current and future market conditions, and create commercially viable opportunities.

- **Local strategy confirmation** – through the Local Strategic Partnership and the LDF
- **Public sector resource development and funding** – other potential sources to support market led redevelopment include Central Government; Government office of the East; English Partnerships; East of England Development Agency.
- **Site marketing and promotion** – to identify potential private sector partners
- **Voluntary land assembly** - to acquire land or assemble a group of small sites into a more marketable larger site better suited for current and future employment needs.
- **Compulsory land assembly** – the use of Council CPO powers, combined with other public and private sector funding, to acquire or assemble land for redevelopment.

- **Site Clearance** - to demolish any existing development on a site, removing what could be a significant abnormal cost to the development market.
- **Remediation** - to undertake any necessary environmental remediation works, removing what could be a significant abnormal cost to the development market.
- **Provision of Site Services and Infrastructure** - funding the installation of necessary site services, utilities and associated infrastructure, which could also represent a significant abnormal cost to the development market.

These actions can be considered as cumulative steps. The greater the intervention on the part of the public sector, the more likely that current market constraints can be overcome for individual sites. Taken collectively across a number of sites, these actions will also send a clear message to the development market regarding the preferred and expected future use of these sites.

BDC/BRP therefore have a fundamental role to play in the planning and delivery of some of the catalytic projects in the town centre.

In the case of Pitsea, however, the Council does not have major land ownership interest. Without land ownership it will therefore have limited potential to directly influence the development process (including timing issues), mix of uses, scheme design and delivery, over and above its planning authority role and function. The future regeneration and development of the town centre will therefore depend on establishing partnership-working

with the private sector, to help guarantee the funding and deliverability of key projects.

Nevertheless BDC/BRP will have a key role to play in helping to create certainty in the market place and reduce risk for the private sector. One of the key delivery roles for the Council, as highlighted above, will be through voluntary and/or compulsory land assembly. There are a number of individual land ownerships and interests within the town centre and, although private treaty negotiation with individual landowners is preferred, it may be appropriate and necessary for the Council to use its CPO powers to help assemble development sites and/or create larger development parcels.

This is specifically the case if the option for the comprehensive redevelopment of the 'Retail Heart' is to be achieved. BDC/BRP will therefore need, as an important first step, to establish and confirm that the Council has a commitment to use its CPO Powers. This will ensure that the interests of individual parties do not obstruct or delay this important catalytic project, which we consider will be a key driver of the transformation and revitalisation of the town centre as a whole.

One outcome of the Council using its CPO powers will be to demonstrate to the market that the public sector is backing the development of the site and the regeneration of the town centre, in accordance with the draft Final Draft Masterplan.

An additional outcome of the potential CPO of the Broadway is that it would provide BDC/BRP a clear opportunity to work in partnership with the current land owners - London & Cambridge Properties - to help achieve development of the 'Retail Heart' that best meets the objectives of the Final Draft Masterplan.

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING

A key objective for BDC/BRP will be to maximise funding opportunities and investment through a co-ordinated strategy. The strategic themes and ideas set out in the Final Draft Masterplan inevitably represent a series of opportunities and challenges, which will require resourcing.

A large part of the funding and investment for Pitsea town centre's transformation will necessarily come from the private sector. There are already positive signs from current planning applications, permissions and developer/market testing carried out as part of the masterplan process, of growing confidence in the investment potential of the town centre.

BDC/BRP has a significant on-going role to play in engaging with key landowners at an early stage and marketing the opportunities to a wider audience, to ensure that the benefits identified by the Final Draft Masterplan are taken forward. In this context the Final Draft Masterplan has been specifically prepared to be flexible enough to respond and adapt to the changing requirements of developers, investors and businesses.

Apart from direct private sector investment, the public sector will need to provide funding support for certain projects and to encourage other developments to come forward. In the case of Pitsea funding for wider town centre initiatives (such as improvements to the shopping environment, public realm, community facilities, public transport and related infrastructure projects) can also be linked directly to specific developments through S106 / S278 contributions. Establishing clear policy guidance on the level of contributions will

be key to maximising developer contributions to the Masterplan.

There may, however, in some cases be a lag in the timing of these contributions and the time when the development is required. In these cases it will require some forward funding by the public sector. Given that the Council has no land ownership interest, then there is no potential in this case to raise additional funding through land sales.

The provision of a "base level" of funding from public sources will encourage investors and existing businesses to contribute towards the regeneration and renaissance of Pitsea town centre. This will improve the town centre's attraction, performance and competitive edge. Furthermore, new development will also enhance the value of existing individual property holdings.

LONG TERM TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT

In addition to public and private sector investment, BDC/BRP has the opportunity to consider and put in place long-term sustainable funding initiatives for the town centre. For example, the setting up of a Business Improvement District (BID) as an integral part of the redevelopment of the Retail Heart could provide future long term funding streams for the town centre. The funding derived from BIDS could be used for a range of initiatives (such as, for example, investment in the public realm, marketing, CCTV, street cleaning, etc.). The success of the BID will be dependent on generating mandatory payments from businesses in the town centre (generally agreed to be no more than a 1% additional levy on business rates) and voluntary contributions from property owners. To kick-start the BID process there will probably need to be a degree

of pump-priming from BDC/BRP to help launch the BID and to demonstrate to the private sector that this is a serious commitment to the long term future of Pitsea town centre.

BDC/BRP will be able to learn from the lessons of other pilot BIDs across the UK and specifically the work carried out by the Association of Town Centre Management (ATCM). The key to a successful BID will be underpinned by a series of key actions, many of which have already been initiated through the masterplan process. BDC's/BRP's role could include:

- Preparing a Business Plan for the BID.
- Establishing baseline information for the BID area.
- Organising local consultation events to start to win the confidence of local businesses and other groups.
- Providing technical support on issues such as the collection of the levy.
- Arranging and conducting the local referendum.

In addition to the above there could also be an opportunity to attract other sources of 'enabling' capital funding into Pitsea town centre. For example, EEDA could provide one funding source.

DELIVERY RISKS

There are a number of key risks to the delivery of the Final Draft Masterplan. Some of these general and more site specific risks to implementation include the following:

- **Lack of Leadership** – many of the opportunities which the Final Draft Masterplan offers will be lost if the Council and its partners do not continue to build on the joint working approach which is a critical part of the delivery process. As explained above, the key objective of the Final Draft Masterplan is to create the conditions whereby developers and investors are confident in Pitsea as a place to invest and develop.
- **Muddled Planning Policy Context** – Preparation of the LDF must provide an appropriate policy context for the delivery of the Masterplan. Failure to do so will lead to uncertainty and increased risk for future development and regeneration of the town centre.
- **Lack of Flexibility** – Due to the longer term nature of some of the projects identified, it is not possible to guarantee scheme viability over the life of the Masterplan. Proposals therefore need to be sufficiently flexible, both in terms of use and programme, to be able to respond to changes in the property market. This provides an important context for our consideration of two potential development options for the Retail Heart.
- **Lack of Commitment to Land Assembly** – The Council and its partners must be willing to use CPO Powers where necessary to ensure development and to signal that it is committed to supporting the proposals.
- **'Hidden' Development Costs** – Unknown and high development costs associated with land assembly and remediation could have an adverse impact on development

viability. The developer may therefore require public sector funding support. This also highlights the need for feasibility studies at an early stage in the development process.

- **Poor Design Quality** – The Council and its Partners should not compromise on the design quality aims of the Masterplan.
- **Failure to Optimise Planning Contributions** – A structured approach to planning contributions is required to help bring forward key public realm and infrastructure projects.
- **Constraints on Public Sector Funding** – financial constraints on public sector funding could impact on the delivery of certain elements of the Final Draft Masterplan.

PHASING

The overall timescale to develop the town centre ‘vision’, encapsulated within the masterplan, will extend over a number of years. Some elements of the plan are more suited to short (1-3 years) and medium (4-10 years) term goals, whereas others are more appropriate to development over the longer term (11+ years).

In terms of delivery of specific development opportunities, Pitsea town centre is in the strong position of having a number of projects either proposed or planned. These “early wins”, underpinned by a mix of public and private sector investment, will act as catalysts for the wider regeneration and renaissance of the town centre. The main projects that we anticipate can be delivered over the short to medium term include the following:

- **‘Central Gateway’** – this area, comprising the Station Lane Gateway development at its heart, should be capable of being delivered over a five year period. It would significantly transform the town centre’s environment and offer, through high quality residential-led mixed use development.
- **‘Retail Heart’** – The provision of modern retailing, with an improved street market, will be critical to the future vitality and viability of the town centre. The major landowners - London & Cambridge Properties (L&CP) – have taken an active role in the consultation process as part of the preparation of the Final Draft Masterplan. It is therefore crucial that BDC/BRP build on this and work in partnership with L&CP on the redevelopment of the Retail Heart. The option for a more comprehensive redevelopment, incorporating the Broadway, will provide the Council with a significant opportunity to help deliver and shape the scale and type of mixed use development in this area. Although the potential need for the Council to use its CPO powers could lengthen the timescales for the delivery of development, we nevertheless consider that a new scheme could be open and trading on this site within 5-8 years.
- **‘Healthy Living Quarter’** – redevelopment in this area will anchor the northern area of the town centre, providing a high quality environment and gateway to Pitsea. The Council has a significant role to play in promoting and delivering new development in this area which is carefully integrated with other key project areas, such as the Retail Heart and Central Gateway. Development and transformation of this

area would represent an ‘early win’ for BDC/BRP and could potentially be delivered within 3-5 years. It will demonstrate to local businesses, the community and investors that the town centre is “under new management” and will help to kick start the wider regeneration of the town centre.

The timescales for the development of these catalytic projects are indicative only. Detailed phasing of projects will need to be refined and reviewed on a regular basis to reflect developer and owner aspirations, changing market opportunities and to ensure that the elements of the ‘public good’ have due priority. Above all, the transformation needs to start in more than one place.

We understand that the priority for the Council is the redevelopment of the ‘Retail Heart’ over the short/medium term. However, the phasing of this development will be influenced by several factors including the planning process, market appetite and land assembly issues. As mentioned previously, land assembly could be crucial to the delivery of a comprehensive redevelopment of the Retail Heart. Whilst this can be a lengthy and complex process, the Council and its partners are in a strong position to deliver this development option either through negotiated purchase or the use of its CPO powers.

There is also a significant opportunity for the BDC/BRP to build on the momentum and interest generated by the preparation of, and consultation on, the Masterplan. Specifically, we strongly recommend that BDC/BRP engage with major landowners in the town centre at an early stage in the delivery of the Masterplan’s strategy and vision.

OUTPUTS AND MEASURING SUCCESS

The following summarises the broad outputs that could be achieved through the delivery of the Final Draft Masterplan.

- A total range of between 10,000 – 15,000 sq m retail floorspace is proposed. Improving the quantum and quality of retail floorspace is essential to the transformation of the town centre as a whole.
- Providing opportunities for leisure and promoting an evening economy is an essential component in creating a vital and viable town centre. We estimate between around 4,500 sqm of commercial leisure floorspace could potentially be developed across the town centre as part of the Final Draft Masterplan. The type of commercial leisure floorspace provided will differ throughout the centre, but will predominantly comprise an increase in the quality of Pitsea’s eating and drinking offer, catering for the different needs of its residents.
- Between 300 – 400 new dwellings could potentially be developed across the town centre. Encouraging new residential development will be a key driver of Pitsea town centre’s regeneration and transformation, helping to create an active, safe and more viable town centre throughout the day and evenings. A range of dwelling types is envisaged across the town centre to promote the development of a mixed community, with apartments and higher density development proposed near the heart of the town centre.

Finally, we recommend that BDC/BRP use some of the key performance indicators (KPIs) identified as part of the baseline evidence to help monitor and measure its progress towards achieving the main aims of the Final Draft Masterplan.

Apart from the visible successes of new development and private sector investment, the impact of BDC/BRP on the regeneration of the town centre could be measured using a number of different targets, including the following:

- Raising Pitsea's ranking as a UK shopping centre;
- Achieving growth in Prime Zone A rental levels of c.50% by to 2012, assuming the development of the Retail Heart is delivered.
- Reducing crime levels and perceptions of crime by 2010.

6.transport

The Masterplan seeks to transform Pitsea into a more accessible town; a destination that is easy to reach by all modes of transport and for all members of the community, a place that is legible and simple to move around and, a centre that is well connected to its hinterland and natural catchment.

The widely recognised dominance of the highway infrastructure will be addressed without compromise to the benefits brought through Pitsea's good local and strategic road connections. At the same time the town's role as a local bus hub will be retained with the potential for improved integration with rail services and the flexibility to accommodate new rapid transit connections in the future.



Highways Dominated Environment

New and enhanced links will create an improved environment for pedestrians and cyclists with particular emphasis placed on upgrading the route to the railway station and the creation of more controlled road crossing points.

HIGH ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

The Masterplan includes a proposal to remodel the High Road between Station Lane and Parkhurst Road with the aim of replacing the current gyratory system with a more conventional two-way road layout. Such an improvement could help reduce severance between the town centre and the Eastern Gateway site. It will provide for new, more extensive kerbside stopping arrangements for bus services and create the opportunity for enhanced pedestrian links across the main road. It would also lend itself to the construction of frontage development on the north side of the High Road.

To be undertaken in conjunction with these works although not necessarily at the same time, there is the opportunity to reduce the amount of land that accommodates Station Lane. This six lane carriageway provides an over-engineered solution with its capacity far exceeding the number of vehicles at any given time. Through further feasibility and design working, it is possible to remove a traffic lane from either side of the carriageway. This 'regained' highways land will provide an extension to the public realm area along Station Lane.

At the detailed level there are a number of potential remodelling options that need to be evaluated in consultation with the local authorities, in particular Essex County Council.

Whilst the overall aim will be to reduce the dominance of the highway, there will also be a strong focus on ensuring that the High Road continues to serve the operational needs of all road users.

A potential solution for the remodelling of the highway network through the centre of Pitsea is set out in Figure 6.1. The illustration provides a design-led approach of what the reconfigured highway network may comprise, with key features including:

- Removal of the roundabout at Station Lane / High Road, with a replacement junction;
- Reduction of a traffic lane on either side of the carriageway on Station Lane;
- Reduction in the scale of the landscaped boulevard that runs along the central reservation on High Road;
- New in / out access and egress into the retail park;
- New bus stop facilities and lay-by; and
- New pedestrian road crossing.



View Looking Across High Road and Central Boulevard

The form of the masterplan as proposed is flexible enough to accommodate any future improvements and changes to the A13.

PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS

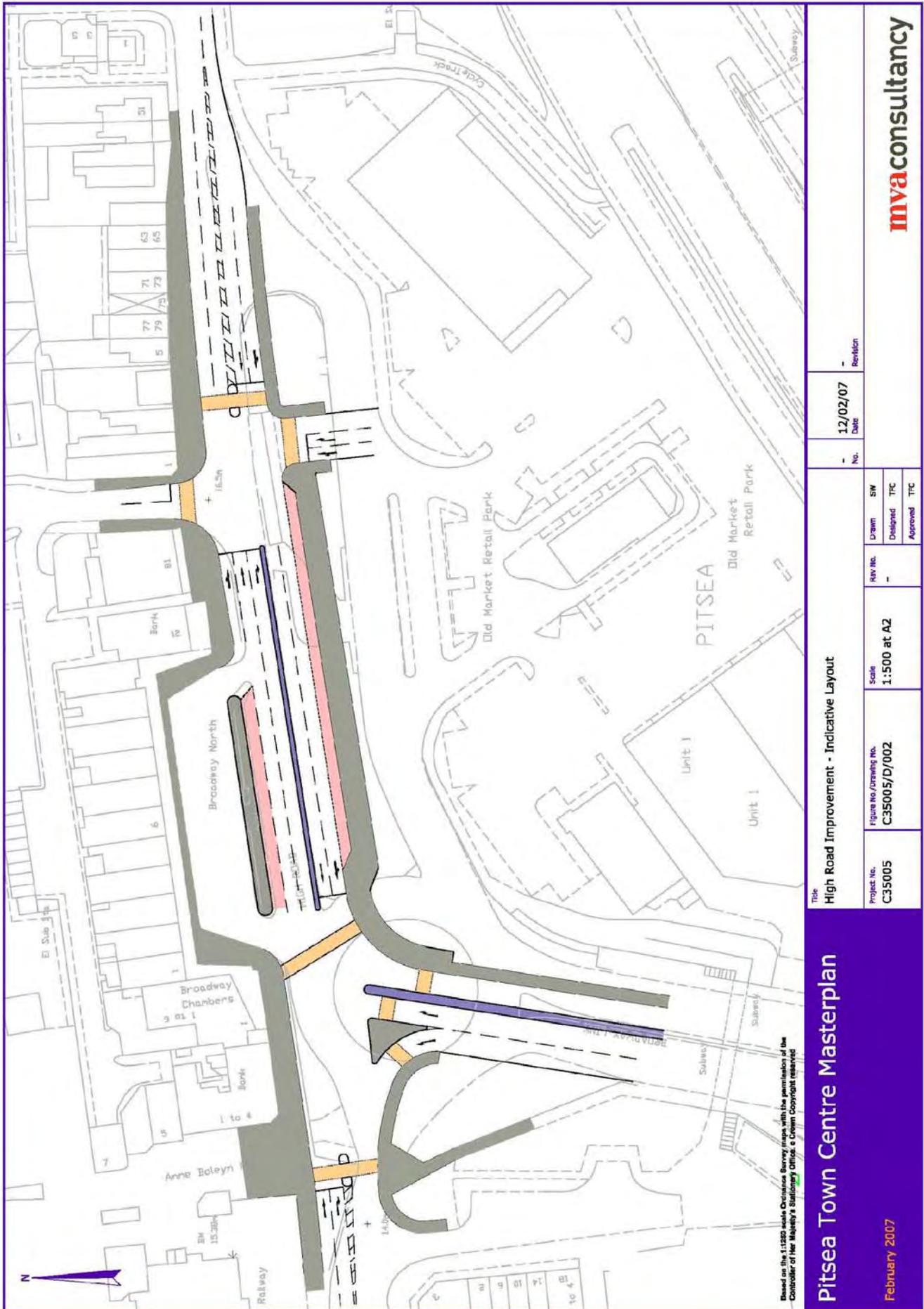
The link between the railway station and the town centre is a priority for improvement. Measures to enhance the existing route will be explored including better lighting, new signing CCTV monitoring and the creation of natural surveillance through the built environment. At the same time the potential for an 'at-grade' route via the eastern side of the Broadway link will be investigated.

Location maps and finger post signing will be provided within the core area of the town to assist navigation.



Example of Some of Better Signing in Pitsea

In and around the town centre, gaps in the cycle network will be filled to create a more continuous network of routes. New and secure cycle parking will be introduced at key destinations.



Based on the 1:1250 scale Ordnance Survey maps with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown Copyright reserved

Pitsea Town Centre Masterplan

February 2007

High Road Improvement - Indicative Layout

Project No. C35005	Figure No./Drawing No. C35005/D/002	Scale 1:500 at A2	Rev No. -	D'rawn Designed Approved	SW TTC TTC
-----------------------	--	----------------------	--------------	--------------------------------	------------------

No.	Date	Revision
-	12/02/07	-

mvaconsultancy

Figure 6.1

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

The Masterplan recognises the important role that buses play in moving people to and from Pitsea. Existing facilities will be retained and enhanced where appropriate and, as the town centre is redeveloped, bus routes and the location of stops will be reviewed to ensure that they are convenient for shoppers, visitors and workers. A particular aspiration is to reinstate a bus link between the railway station and the town centre.

Pitsea is an important node for public transport a role that it will continue to play, being at a major rail and road gateway into Basildon. Accordingly it could benefit from the proposed South Essex Rapid Transport System (SERT) which is due to connect Pitsea with Benfleet, Basildon and Wickford. The real benefit of such a system will come if it is provided along off-line routes or under-utilised roads.



Pitsea Rail Links to Shoeburyness and London

PARKING

As the town centre is redeveloped the amount and location of public car parking will be reviewed in line with current parking policies, taking into account the fluctuations in demand created by the presence of the market. Charging levels will also be reviewed. The aim will be to provide appropriate parking to meet the needs of the town without deterring travel

on foot, by bicycle or by public transport. New car parking associated with development should aim to attain the Park Mark standard.

A town-wide approach will be adopted to ensure that all car parks are accessible and well signed from the main approaches. The Masterplan provides an indication of where parking may be provided subject to more detailed plans being prepared.

Private non-residential parking will be provided on individual sites in accordance with local standards.

TAKING PROPOSALS FORWARD

Whilst the transport concepts have been developed integrally with the spatial options, at the current level of detail, only the broad principles of the transport strategy have been identified.

The next stage will be to work up the transport proposals in more detail, for example the remodelling of High Road, and to undertake capacity assessments of the highway and public transport networks together with analysis of parking supply and demand. The more detailed work will form the basis of a Transport Assessment that will ultimately support any forthcoming transport proposals. A key consideration when evaluating proposal will need to be the impact upon key issues such as accidents and casualty rates, personal safety, delays to vehicles, queuing and accessibility.

Any detailed assessment will need to take account of the impact of other developments being brought forward elsewhere on the highway network.

