

CHAPTER 9 - EMPLOYMENT

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9.1 **INTRODUCTION**

- 9.1.1 More than 25,000 people are employed in the Borough and over 85% of them work in the service sector, particularly in retailing, the professional services and the social and public services. Nearly 55% of the resident work force travel outside the Borough to work, principally to Central and South-West London, whilst over 49% of the Borough's jobs are filled by workers commuting into the Borough, principally from South-West London and elsewhere in Surrey.
- 9.1.2 The Borough shared fully in the prosperity of the South East in the 1980's, but was seriously affected by the recession of the early 1990's. However, the unemployment rate in the Borough remained below 2% throughout 1999.
- 9.1.3 Epsom town centre is the main centre for employment in the Borough. There is approximately 113,570 sq. metres (1.22 million sq. feet) of office floorspace in the town centre, of which some 75% has been constructed within the last 30 years. There is 7,520 sq. metres (80,951 sq. feet) in the pipeline in the form of planning permissions awaiting commencement or completion and some 7,193 sq. metres (76,842 sq. feet) is currently vacant. Not all of the currently vacant office floorspace is suitable for modern users. In addition, the town centre provides a wide range of shopping, business, financial and professional services for the visiting public.
- 9.1.4 Provision for industrial land in the Borough is made within two employment areas, at Longmead and Nonsuch. Together these cover an area of 20.8 ha. (51.5 acres) and provide 67,000 sq. metres (723,000 sq. feet) of floorspace, most of which comprises small units.
- 9.1.5 Outside Epsom town centre and the two employment areas, employment provision is more widely dispersed amongst the local shopping centres, schools and health and community facilities, although there are concentrations of jobs at the Epsom General Hospital, the North East Surrey College of Technology, at Woodcote Grove and in the two psychiatric hospitals which remain operational.
- 9.1.6 The policies in this Chapter are concerned with employment in offices, industry, research and development and in storage or distribution also known as warehousing, for convenience.

9.2 **POLICY CONTEXT**

Government Policy

- 9.2.1 One of the Government's key aims is to encourage continued economic development in a way which is compatible with its stated environmental objectives. Economic growth and a higher quality environment have to be pursued together. Sound economic performance generates wealth and resources which are a key factor in maintaining and protecting the quality of the region's environment. A good environment in turn represents a major asset to the region's economy and the way of life of its people.

- 9.2.2 The Regional Planning Guidance for the South East published by the Secretary of State in March 1994 seeks to foster economic growth within the environmental constraints of the region. In particular it encourages economic growth in opportunity areas to the east and north of the region. Epsom and Ewell lies in the region's western sector where the guidance indicates that a reducing rate of development is appropriate to enable the infrastructure and services in the area to catch up with the rapid growth of the recent past.
- 9.2.3 The western sector has been, and continues to be, the subject of considerable pressure for new development and it is important to ensure that the best of the environment is protected for future generations. Existing planning commitments and redevelopment opportunities in urban areas will make an important contribution to restoring and maintaining the buoyancy of the economy of the western sector.

County Structure Plan Policy

- 9.2.4 The Surrey Structure Plan seeks to maintain and renew an economy based on high value and wealth creating sectors of the economy, which support full employment, while accepting the labour, land, infrastructure and environmental constraints on the County. Commercial companies increasingly value a good quality environment in which to operate and it is important to take a long term view of what is needed to sustain a healthy economy within Surrey and not to be tempted by short term gains which will merely store up economic as well as environmental problems for the future. Economic success should be consistent with the need to safeguard the County's environmental and other resources. Unfettered economic growth would not only irrevocably damage the environment but could not be sustained.
- 9.2.5 The Structure Plan emphasises the need to recycle commercial and industrial land and to make provision for development to meet the particular needs of a range of businesses, but recognises that some additional land might be necessary.
- 9.2.6 Many of the most important aspects of supporting a successful economy, such as the provision of a highly qualified labour force, lie outside the scope of the Development Plan. The role of the County Council in supporting the Surrey economy is set out in an Economic strategy for the County.
- 9.2.7 The Surrey Economic Strategy was adopted in 1993 by the County Council. It emphasises the need to attract certain types of business into Surrey, particularly the headquarters of major firms, and to promote actively the County's assets to ensure its economic well-being. The aim is to maintain an economy which enhances the quality of life and particularly the environment for the people of Surrey.
- 9.2.8 Surrey County Council, in conjunction with the Surrey Training and Enterprise Council (TEC) and the local business community has set up "Surrey First" to market the County to attract inward investment, stimulate existing business and encourage wealth creation.

9.3 **OBJECTIVES**

9.3.1 The Borough is the most densely populated in Surrey and, given the existing environmental constraints and the commitment to sustainable development, there is little scope for allocating new sites for employment uses. However, it is recognised that within these constraints, there is a need to ensure that land and opportunities are available for industrial and commercial development to support the local and wider economy.

9.3.2 The Council has therefore identified the following objectives:

- (i) Within the limited scope available for additional development, to secure a supply and range of employment opportunities for the Borough's residents, including people with special needs, that will encourage them to take jobs within the Borough;
- (ii) Subject to environmental considerations, to retain and encourage the efficient use of existing land and buildings which provide employment, and to support provision for new small firms, the expansion needs of existing locally based firms, and services to meet local needs;
- (iii) To safeguard residential and other sensitive areas from inappropriate commercial developments.

9.4 **GENERAL POLICY**

9.4.1 For many years planning policies have sought to limit the level of employment growth in Surrey, reflecting the Green Belt status of much of the County. During that time the local and national economies have been through cycles of growth and recession. The Surrey economy experienced a period of rapid growth in the second half of the 1980's, notwithstanding planning policies of restraint. A great deal of development took place through the renewal of outworn industrial and commercial land in built-up areas.

9.4.2 The recession of the early 1990's severely affected the service sector in Surrey and in the South East. However, given the cyclical nature of the economy, it may well be the case that policies drawn up in a period of slow economic recovery will need to be applied during a phase of economic growth over the longer timescale of the Plan.

9.4.3 As part of the Council's overall strategy for the Borough, of which 42% is within the Green Belt, there is a need to safeguard developed and allocated land for housing, open space, shops, community facilities and other uses serving local needs and demands. Given the environmental constraints, the current levels of unemployment in the Borough, the amount of vacant floorspace and unimplemented permissions for employment uses and the scope for the redevelopment of existing sites occupied by employment uses, the Council considers that it would not be appropriate to make provision for a major expansion

of job opportunities within the Borough and that the emphasis should be placed on recycling industrial and commercial land, making the best use of existing sites.

9.4.4 Whilst additional job opportunities suitable for the local population are desirable as they help to reduce work associated journeys, they can also increase inward commuting and place unplanned for demands on local housing resources. The Council will, however, monitor and review the employment situation and the performance of the policies of the Plan in minimising the imbalance between employment opportunities and the resident work force.

9.4.5 The Council recognises the need to make provision for the increasing variety of jobs and the needs of all sections of the adult population including people with disabilities and for the retention and modest expansion of job opportunities in the Borough. The needs of small firms must also be recognised if a wide range of employment opportunities is to be retained in the Borough. In general, proposals will be judged in relation to the availability of premises and employment opportunities, the supply of labour and housing and the constraints of the environmental and other policies of the Plan.

EMP1 APPLICATIONS FOR NEW EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT WILL BE DETERMINED HAVING REGARD TO:-

- (I) THE AVAILABILITY OF EXISTING LAND AND PREMISES AND THE LEVEL AND TAKE UP OF OUTSTANDING PERMISSIONS AND COMMITMENTS;**
- (II) THE AVAILABILITY OF LABOUR AND HOUSING AND THE NEED FOR AN APPROPRIATE SUPPLY AND RANGE OF EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE BOROUGH'S RESIDENT WORK-FORCE;**
- (III) THE NEED TO AVOID EMPLOYMENT GENERATING DEMANDS FOR ADDITIONAL HOUSING WHICH WOULD EXCEED THE BOROUGH'S HOUSING FIGURES AS GIVEN IN POLICY HSG2;**
- (IV) THE NEEDS OF SMALL FIRMS AND FOR SERVICES FOR THE LOCAL COMMUNITY;**
- (V) THE NEED TO RETAIN AND ATTRACT NEW FIRMS AND ACTIVITIES WHICH MEET THE NEEDS OF THE LOCAL ECONOMY; AND**
- (VI) HIGHWAY SAFETY AND EFFICIENCY AND THE PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT.**

9.5

LOCATION OF EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT

9.5.1

The Council is concerned to protect the environmental quality of the Borough and of the residential and open space areas in particular and to safeguard the amenities of local residents. Having regard to the housing demands in the Borough, it is considered important that there should be no net loss of residential accommodation to business and other uses and that leisure, shopping and community facilities should be retained to serve the Borough's residents. Apart, therefore, from sites identified in this Plan, employment development will be considered to be appropriate only on sites with an existing established use including such sites within the hospitals cluster or in an area which is predominantly in office, industrial, warehouse uses or other use apart from those which are excluded by this policy.

9.5.2

It is essential to safeguard the Green Belt from inappropriate forms of development and there will therefore be a presumption against proposals for new industrial, office or warehouse development in Green Belt locations except as may be appropriate in accordance with Green Belt policies. Proposals of this nature will be resisted and directed to locations in the built-up area where the Council has made provision for office and industrial development and where there is scope for the use and renewal of existing sites and buildings. New employment partly replacing the existing major development at West Park Hospital may form an appropriate use for land no longer required by the health authorities, provided that the development complies with Green Belt policies and could not be accommodated in existing Employment Areas or in Epsom town centre. However, proposals for the use and renewal of existing sites in the Green Belt, including non conforming industrial and storage sites, will be resisted unless they are appropriate to the function and character of the Green Belt.

EMP2 INDUSTRIAL (CLASS B2), BUSINESS (CLASS B1), AND STORAGE OR DISTRIBUTION (CLASS B8) DEVELOPMENT WILL BE PERMITTED ON LAND IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP OR ON A SITE WITH ESTABLISHED USE RIGHTS FOR THESE PURPOSES. EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT WILL NOT BE PERMITTED ELSEWHERE IN THE BOROUGH INCLUDING:

- (I) WITHIN THE METROPOLITAN GREEN BELT EXCEPT AS MAY BE APPROPRIATE IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICIES GB1-GB9;**
- (II) ON OPEN LAND WITHIN THE URBAN AREA;**
- (III) WITHIN PREDOMINANTLY RESIDENTIAL AREAS;**
- (IV) WHERE IT WOULD INVOLVE A NET LOSS OF RESIDENTIAL, LEISURE, SHOPPING OR COMMUNITY USES.**

Epsom Town Centre Business Areas

9.5.3 Epsom town centre provides a range of office accommodation to meet varying business needs. The business activity they generate contributes to the vitality of the centre, promotes custom for the shops and provides local jobs.

9.5.4 Policy EMP3 below provides for new business development to take place within the business areas defined on the Proposals Map. Such development should be of a scale, type and design appropriate to the character of the town centre and incorporate mixed uses, particularly residential. This is important not only in safeguarding the character and enhancing the vitality of the town centres, but also in limiting the demands for new housing throughout the Borough which is strictly constrained by the Green Belt.

~~EMP3 DEVELOPMENT FOR BUSINESS (CLASS B1) PURPOSES IN THE BUSINESS AREAS OF EPSOM TOWN CENTRE, AS DEFINED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP, WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDING IT:~~

~~(I) IS OF A SCALE, TYPE AND DESIGN APPROPRIATE TO THE CHARACTER OF THE TOWN CENTRE;~~

~~(II) IN THE CASE OF MAJOR PROPOSALS OF OVER 1,000 SQ. METRES (10,756 SQ. FT) GROSS FLOORSPACE, PROVIDES A MIX OF USES, INCLUDING ADDITIONAL RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION WHERE APPROPRIATE, WHICH MAKE A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TO THE CHARACTER OF THE TOWN CENTRE;~~

~~(III) DOES NOT RESULT IN THE NET LOSS OF A DESIRABLE USE WHICH OTHER POLICIES IN THIS PLAN SEEK TO RETAIN;~~

~~(IV) MAKES APPROPRIATE PROVISION FOR CAR PARKING AND HAS NO ADVERSE EFFECT ON HIGHWAY SAFETY AND EFFICIENCY; AND~~

~~THE COUNCIL WILL IMPOSE CONDITIONS ON ANY PERMISSION GRANTED, OR WILL SEEK TO NEGOTIATE PLANNING OBLIGATIONS THAT WILL SATISFY THE NEED FOR PARTICULAR FACILITIES, OR WILL MITIGATE ANY HARM TO THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT, THAT IS CREATED BY THE DEVELOPMENT.~~

Shopping Centres

9.5.5 Within the Borough's shopping centres, planning policy is primarily aimed at retaining and promoting retail facilities and improvements to the shopping

environment. However within these areas there already exists a significant amount of business use within purpose-built and converted accommodation. Changes of use and redevelopment schemes which will make replacement or new provision for business use will be acceptable where there is no loss of existing and proposed retail floorspace or where the retail function will not be harmed.

9.5.6

To maintain a stock of residential accommodation centrally, the Borough Council will resist the loss of residential units in the Borough's shopping centres. The loss of uses which contribute to the vitality of shopping centres such as those of a community, recreation and leisure or entertainment nature will also be resisted.

EMP4 WITHIN THE SHOPPING CENTRES AS SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP, PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT, REDEVELOPMENT, EXTENSION OR CHANGE OF USE FOR BUSINESS (CLASS B1) USE WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED IT:

- (I) IS OF A SCALE, TYPE AND DESIGN APPROPRIATE TO THE CHARACTER OF THE CENTRE;**
- (II) IN THE CASE OF MAJOR PROPOSALS OF OVER 1,000 SQ METRES (10,756 SQ FT) GROSS FLOORSPACE PROVIDES A MIX OF USES, WHICH MAKE A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TO THE CHARACTER OF THE CENTRE;**
- (III) DOES NOT RESULT IN THE NET LOSS OF RETAIL (CLASS A1), RESIDENTIAL AND COMMUNITY USES AND ANY OTHER EXISTING USE THAT CONTRIBUTES SIGNIFICANTLY TO THE VITALITY AND VIABILITY OF THE CENTRE;**
- (IV) DOES NOT RESULT IN THE LOSS OF EXISTING OR PROPOSED SHOPPING FLOORSPACE SUCH AS TO HARM THE VITALITY AND VIABILITY OF THE CENTRE AS A WHOLE; AND**
- (V) MAKES APPROPRIATE PROVISION FOR CAR PARKING AND HAS NO ADVERSE EFFECT ON HIGHWAY SAFETY AND EFFICIENCY.**

THE COUNCIL WILL IMPOSE CONDITIONS ON ANY PERMISSION GRANTED, OR WILL SEEK TO NEGOTIATE PLANNING OBLIGATIONS THAT WILL SATISFY THE NEED FOR PARTICULAR FACILITIES, OR WILL MITIGATE ANY HARM TO THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT, THAT IS CREATED BY THE DEVELOPMENT.

Longmead and Nonsuch Employment Areas

9.5.7 The Longmead and Nonsuch Employment Areas are intended to be the primary location for light and general industrial and warehouse development within the Borough. Although there are no undeveloped plots remaining, there is potential for the redevelopment of a number of the older premises particularly in the case of Longmead. Whilst recognising the flexibility of use conferred by the Use Classes Order 1987 and General Permitted Development Order 1995, the Council will expect, mainly for environmental reasons, uses of a general industrial nature to locate in the Longmead Employment Area. The Council will expect B1 developments to be genuinely suitable for all uses within that Class without the need for alterations requiring planning permission. Furthermore, supplies of industrial land in the Borough are limited and it is important to maintain opportunities for employment in industry and warehousing given that they provide only 10% of the jobs in the Borough. Because of the implications for parking and traffic generated by offices it is necessary to avoid worsening the congestion on the roads within the employment areas.

9.5.8 Because of lack of provision in development plans in past years for warehouse uses, the Council has been prepared to permit such development within employment areas suitable for industry or warehousing. However, having enabled storage or distribution businesses to obtain suitable premises in the Borough, the Council will seek to avoid the loss or displacement of industrial employment opportunities or a predominance of warehouse use when assessing new employment development.

EMP5 WITHIN THE LONGMEAD AND NONSUCH EMPLOYMENT AREAS AS IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP PERMISSION WILL BE GIVEN FOR LIGHT AND GENERAL INDUSTRIAL USES (WITHIN CLASSES B1 AND B2) AND STORAGE AND DISTRIBUTION USES (CLASS B8). PROPOSALS WHICH WOULD RESULT IN THE LOSS OF LAND FOR THESE USES WILL NOT BE PERMITTED. PERMISSION WILL BE GRANTED FOR PROPOSALS FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF OUTWORN PREMISES AND THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE EMPLOYMENT AREAS PROVIDED THAT:-

- (I) THE NEEDS OF EXISTING FIRMS EXPANDING OR RELOCATING FROM ELSEWHERE IN THE BOROUGH ARE NOT PREJUDICED;**
- (II) THERE IS AN ADEQUATE NUMBER OF SMALL UNITS UNLESS THE COUNCIL IS SATISFIED THAT SMALL UNITS ARE NOT APPROPRIATE OR PRACTICAL;**
- (III) PROPOSALS WOULD NOT RESULT INDIVIDUALLY OR CUMULATIVELY IN THE LOSS OR DISPLACEMENT OF INDUSTRIAL OR STORAGE (WITHIN CLASSES B1, B2 AND B8) EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN THE EMPLOYMENT AREA;**

(IV) PROPOSALS WOULD NOT RESULT INDIVIDUALLY OR CUMULATIVELY IN A PREDOMINANCE (BASED ON FLOORSPACE) OF WAREHOUSE (CLASS B8) USE;

(V) THE AMENITY OF THOSE RESIDENTIAL AREAS ADJOINING THE EMPLOYMENT AREAS WOULD NOT BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED; AND

(VI) ENVIRONMENTAL, ON SITE PARKING, TRAFFIC AND ACCESS CONSIDERATIONS ARE SATISFACTORY.

The Rest of the Borough

9.5.9 The Council will support the retention, improvement and modernisation of existing suitably located industrial, office and warehouse premises particularly if proposals make provision for the needs of existing local firms or for new small firms. Because of the concerns over the possible consequences of employment growth, however, and the effect on the local environment, the Council will seek to limit the amount of new floorspace especially in relation to proposals for office development.

9.5.10 Proposals for new buildings, or extensions up to 300 sq. metres (3,229 sq. ft.) floorspace (or 10% addition to existing floorspace, whichever is the lower) will be supported provided they have no adverse impact on amenity and satisfy other relevant criteria and policies.

9.5.11 Proposals which are greater than 300 sq. metres (3,229 sq. feet) will also be assessed against all appropriate criteria and policies including site characteristics and the existing levels of floorspace and intensity of use. They are more likely to have a greater impact on the environment and amenity than smaller proposals. Floorspace could be a critical factor particularly with office development, given that it normally results in a higher density of employment than industry or warehousing. Therefore the wider implications for housing, transport, labour and the environment could be significant, in addition to the effects on local amenity including nearby residential properties.

9.5.12 The Council will seek to overcome environmental problems where they exist and are due to site activities and site conditions and will assess the opportunities for planning gains. The latter could include the introduction of other uses where a mixed form of land use would be more appropriate in the circumstances.

EMP6 PROPOSALS FOR INDUSTRIAL (CLASS B2), BUSINESS (CLASS B1) AND STORAGE OR DISTRIBUTION (CLASS B8) DEVELOPMENT OF SITES IN URBAN AREAS CURRENTLY IN THOSE USES OUTSIDE EPSOM TOWN CENTRE BUSINESS AREAS, THE SHOPPING CENTRES AND THE LONGMEAD AND NONSUCH EMPLOYMENT AREAS, WILL BE PERMITTED WHERE THEY:-

- (I) **PROVIDE FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF EXISTING OUTWORN PREMISES IN EXISTING SITES; OR**
- (II) **PROVIDE FOR SMALL SCALE BUILDINGS, OR EXTENSIONS TO EXISTING OR INDIVIDUAL UNITS UP TO 300 SQ. METRES FLOORSPACE; OR**
- (III) **PROVIDE FOR SMALL BUSINESSES;**
- (IV) **IN THE CASE OF MAJOR PROPOSALS OF OVER 1,000 SQ. METRES (10,756 SQ FT) GROSS FLOORSPACE PROVIDES A MIX OF USES, INCLUDING ADDITIONAL RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION WHERE APPROPRIATE, WHICH MAKE A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TO THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA;**
- (V) **HAVE NO SERIOUS ADVERSE EFFECTS INDIVIDUALLY OR CUMULATIVELY ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITY, ESPECIALLY OF NEARBY RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES, BY REASON OF THEIR SCALE, HEIGHT, APPEARANCE OR THE GENERATION OF NOISE, DUST, FUMES, EFFLUENT OR TRAFFIC;**
- (VI) **SATISFY ON-SITE PARKING, VEHICULAR ACCESS AND SERVICING REQUIREMENTS AND DO NOT GENERATE EXTRA TRAFFIC IN EXCESS OF ROAD CAPACITY OR WHICH COULD BE DETRIMENTAL TO HIGHWAY SAFETY;**
- (VII) **PROVIDE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS AND PLANNING BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY WHICH ARE DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE.**

THE REDEVELOPMENT OF EXISTING SITES FOR BUSINESS USE CLASS B1 WHERE NO UNIT EXCEEDS 300 SQ. METRES (3,229 SQ. FT) WILL NORMALLY BE ACCEPTABLE IF IT SATISFIES CRITERIA (I), (II) OR (III) AND (IV) - (VII) AND IS DESIGNED FOR ALL USES WITHIN THE USE CLASS B1.

9.6 LARGE SCALE WAREHOUSES FOR STORAGE OR DISTRIBUTION

- 9.6.1 Large scale warehouses for storage or distribution can create difficult environmental and traffic problems not only in and around their sites but also on routes traversing the Borough, which happens to be on a direct route between Heathrow and Gatwick airports. Epsom and Ewell is the most densely populated Surrey District and is the worst problem area for traffic congestion in the County. Furthermore, the land requirements of large scale warehouses cannot be

accommodated in this Borough without seriously reducing the opportunities to maintain a range of employment development and industrial land supplies in particular.

- 9.6.2 The Structure Plan defines these large warehouses as being of the order of 5,000 sq. metres (53,000 sq. feet) or more, which suggests a site requirement in excess of 0.8 hectares (2.0 acres). This definition is considered to be too high a threshold for conditions prevailing in this Borough. Therefore each case, including changes of use, will be considered on its merits, but as the Council considers that the Borough is not an appropriate location for large scale storage or distribution warehouses, it will not permit this type of development. For this purpose the Council considers that a threshold of about 2,000 sq. metres (21,500 sq. feet) would be more suitable in this Borough.

EMP7 PERMISSION FOR LARGE SCALE STORAGE OR DISTRIBUTION WAREHOUSES (CLASS B8) IN THE BOROUGH WILL BE GRANTED ONLY EXCEPTIONALLY. APPLICATIONS FOR SUCH DEVELOPMENT WILL BE DETERMINED HAVING REGARD TO:-

- (I) ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS;**
- (II) TRAFFIC, HIGHWAY AND ACCESS IMPLICATIONS;**
- (III) THE AVAILABILITY OF SUITABLE SITES AND LOCATIONS; AND**
- (IV) LAND REQUIREMENTS OF LARGE SPACE CONSUMING USES.**

9.7 SMALL BUSINESSES

- 9.7.1 The Council recognises the important contributions which small businesses make to the economy of the Borough. The employment policies of the Local Plan are intended among other things, to support proposals which will provide for the accommodation needs of small businesses. Therefore the Council will permit proposals which provide for the needs of small units of up to 300 sq. metres (3,229 sq. feet).
- 9.7.2 Given that all relevant criteria and policies should be satisfied, including the wider implications for housing, transport and environment, when planning permission is given for employment development, the need for occupancy controls will arise only rarely, in exceptional circumstances. There may be occasions when the relaxation of strict compliance with policies and criteria will be justified to enable the particular needs of small business units to be met. In order to ensure that a permission given in these circumstances is not abused and remains to serve the intended needs, conditions will be imposed to this effect. If appropriate, legal agreements will be sought. A precedent will not be created for any general relaxation of policies.

EMP8 PERMISSION WILL BE GRANTED FOR PROPOSALS WHICH PROVIDE FOR THE NEEDS OF SMALL BUSINESSES AND SMALL UNITS UP TO 300 SQ. METRES (3,229 SQ. FT) FLOORSPACE. EXCEPTIONALLY, WHERE THESE NEEDS ARE CONSIDERED TO BE PARAMOUNT OVER OTHER POLICIES AND ENVIRONMENTAL AND TRANSPORT CRITERIA, CONDITIONS WILL BE IMPOSED WHEN GRANTING PERMISSION TO ENSURE THAT THOSE NEEDS CONTINUE TO BE MET.

9.8 WORKING FROM HOME

- 9.8.1 Many small businesses and other non-residential uses are started by people working in their own homes, and technological innovations are likely to increase the incidence of home-working. Permission is not normally required where the use of part of a dwelling-house for business purposes does not change the overall character of the property's use as a single dwelling, the use does not count as development and planning permission is not normally required. Where the business is to become the main use of the property, or external changes to the property are to be undertaken, a planning application should be submitted. Detailed guidance on working from home is set out in section 14.17 and Policy DC21 of Chapter 14 - Control of Development.

~~**EMP9 WHERE PROPOSALS INVOLVING WORKING FROM HOME CONSTITUTE DEVELOPMENT, PERMISSION WILL BE GRANTED FOR A BUSINESS TO OPERATE FROM A RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY WHICH REMAINS IN RESIDENTIAL USE PROVIDED THAT THE PROPOSALS HAVE NO ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE AMENITIES OF THE OCCUPANTS OF NEIGHBOURING PROPERTIES OR ON HIGHWAY SAFETY OR EFFICIENCY.**~~

9.9 EXISTING EMPLOYMENT USES

Retention and Improvement of Existing Land and Buildings

- 9.9.1 Whilst the Council does not consider it appropriate to seek a significant increase in employment provision within the Borough, it recognises the role of industrial, office and warehouse development in providing adequate of employment opportunities and for the needs and services of the local area. The Council will therefore not permit the redevelopment or change of use of industrial land or buildings for other uses outside permitted development rights.

~~**EMP10 PERMISSION WILL NOT BE GRANTED FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OR CHANGE OF USE OF SUITABLY LOCATED EXISTING OR IDENTIFIED INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL LAND AND BUILDINGS (WITHIN CLASSES B1,**~~

~~**B2 & B8) FOR OTHER USES. THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE THE IMPROVEMENT OF EXISTING OUTWORN PREMISES OR THOSE UNSUITED TO MODERN PROCESSES.**~~

Upper Floors in Shopping Centres

9.9.2

A particular form of change of use is that relating to upper floors above shops in shopping centres. Where these are in residential use and are capable of providing an adequate housing unit, then Housing Policy HSG13 provides that a change of use to non-residential use will not normally be permitted. Where, however, upper floors are already in non-residential use or the Council is satisfied that the accommodation cannot still be used for housing purposes, then change of use to B1 (Business) may be permitted subject to compliance with the environmental and other policies of the Plan, in particular, the provision of adequate access and parking, and providing that the viability of any ground floor retail use is not prejudiced.

EMP11 WITHIN SHOPPING CENTRES, PERMISSION WILL BE GRANTED FOR THE CHANGE OF USE OF UPPER FLOORS IN NON-RESIDENTIAL USE TO BUSINESS (CLASS B1) USES, WHERE THE VIABILITY OF A GROUND FLOOR RETAIL USE, INCLUDING THE NEED FOR STORAGE AND ANCILLARY, SPACE WOULD NOT BE PREJUDICED, SUBJECT TO THERE BEING NO LOSS OF RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION CAPABLE OF PROVIDING AN ADEQUATE HOUSING UNIT.