

Topic Paper 5

Transport



SOUTHEND-ON-SEA
NEW LOCAL PLAN

Planning for Growth and Change

Topic Paper	Local Plan Issue/s covered
Topic Paper 1 Housing	Covers issue 2 of the Southend New Local Plan
Topic Paper 2 Economy	Covers issue 3 of the Southend New Local Plan
Topic Paper 3 Tourism	Covers issue 4 of the Southend New Local Plan
Topic Paper 4 Retail and Town Centres	Covers issue 5 of the Southend New Local Plan
Topic Paper 5 Providing for a Sustainable Transport System	Covers issue 6 of the Southend New Local Plan
Topic Paper 6 Design, Healthy Living & Built Heritage	Covers issue 7 of the Southend New Local Plan
Topic Paper 7 Social & Community Infrastructure Needs	Covers issue 8 of the Southend New Local Plan
Topic Paper 8 Green & Blue Infrastructure & Climate Change	Covers issues 9 & 10 of the Southend New Local Plan

Transport Topic Paper

What is this topic paper about?

The Council is making a new Local Plan that will cover the period up to 2038. As a comprehensive and up to date evidence base is essential for plan preparation, the Council has undertaken a range of studies, both in house and with external consultants to support this process. The Transport topic paper summarises the latest available evidence on transport and accessibility. Reflecting the wide scope of this topic there are a number of overlaps between this paper and others including the Environment paper.

To view all the topic papers and the latest update on the Local Plan evidence base please visit our website.

localplan.southend.gov.uk

Can I comment on this document?

The Local Plan topic papers are factual in nature and set out the national planning policy context, current situation in Southend, and some potential ways of dealing with the local issues raised, but they do not include any planning policies or site allocations. As such we are not seeking comment on these publications.

However, there will be opportunities to comment on the content of the New Southend Local Plan at various stages of its development. The Council will be undertaking public consultation on the **New Southend Local Plan Issues and Options** during early 2019. This will be followed by public consultation on **Preferred Options** and **Proposed Submission**. See our website for more details localplan.southend.gov.uk

If you wish to be kept informed of forthcoming consultations you can email planningpolicy@southend.gov.uk with your contact details.

Transport

Introduction

Planning policies for transport are essential to achieve sustainable development by identifying and co-ordinating the provision of infrastructure to support economic growth, fostering a well-designed and safe built environment with accessible local services and supporting health, social and cultural wellbeing, making best use of natural resources, protecting the natural and historic environment and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

The Southend New Local Plan should seek to achieve all these aims. It must also ensure that the existing transport network within the Borough will be adequate to support the anticipated level of population and housing growth that is expected over the plan period. Planning policies for transport provision in wider South Essex will be developed as part of the preparation of the Joint Strategic Plan (JSP) being prepared by the Association of South Essex Local Authorities¹.

National Planning Policy

Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan making having regard to the potential impacts of development on the transport network, and in order to make the most of opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure.

Significant development should be focussed on locations which are, or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes, including walking and cycling. This can also have positive benefits for air quality and public health.

Planning should also address the strategic priorities of an area and any cross-boundary issues.

Future Transport Pressures

Calculation of housing needs in the Borough will be based on a new national method of calculating objectively assessed housing need (OAN). For Southend the level of housing requirement has been calculated as between 909 and 1,176 new dwellings per annum. This

¹ Basildon, Brentwood, Castle Point, Rochford, Southend, Thurrock, together with Essex County Council

would be a significant uplift from the rate of housing delivery in the current Core Strategy, and would equate to roughly a tripling of the rate of annual dwelling completions (between 2001 and 2014).

In terms of jobs, the Economic Development Needs Assessment 2017 includes a baseline job forecast which would see around 375 new full time equivalent jobs created within Southend-on-Sea per annum, an increase of 10%. Taking account of a combined scenario based on the economic growth drivers presented in the EDNA, job growth is forecast to rise to around 550 jobs per annum.

This level of development is likely to put unprecedented pressure on the local transport network, which is already struggling to cope with existing transport demands. It will therefore be essential that the levels of growth put forward in the Southend New Local Plan can be facilitated by the transport system to enable economic prosperity.

Transport Characteristics

Connectivity

Connectivity to and from the Borough is restricted by its geography, due to the Borough's eastern and southern borders being bound by the River Thames and North Sea. The main corridors to the west are the A13 and the A127 to London and the national motorway network, and the A130, which is outside the Borough boundary but provides access to Chelmsford and East Anglia region. The M25 runs north-south to the west of the region and is at present the only strategic link with Kent via the Dartford crossing. The area is served by rail links from Central London on two lines (c2c and Greater Anglia) mirroring the east-west strategic road pattern.

Driving distances to neighbouring towns are relatively short as reflected by average driving times². Congestion is a considerable problem for longer distance journeys on the A13 and A127, particularly during peak times. While rail links are particularly important for commuting to London, about half of all journeys starting or ending in the Borough are made by car³. Current forecasts suggest that, with the level of planned development in Southend, congestion will increase, with particular issues on the A127 at principal junctions.

² Source: LTP3 Evidence Base – Southend Borough Council (2010) and LTP3 (2015)

³ Source: Figure 18 Integrated Impact Assessment Scoping Report – Southend Borough Council (2017)

Southend is a net exporter of jobs with a higher than national or regional level of people commuting between 40km (25 miles) and 60km (37 miles) to work. However the number of people travelling less than 5km (3 miles) is also greater than the national and regional averages. This reflects the disparities in the job market between high paid jobs in and around central London and lower skilled, lower paid jobs in parts of the local economy.

Figure 1: Travel to Work Flows (2011)

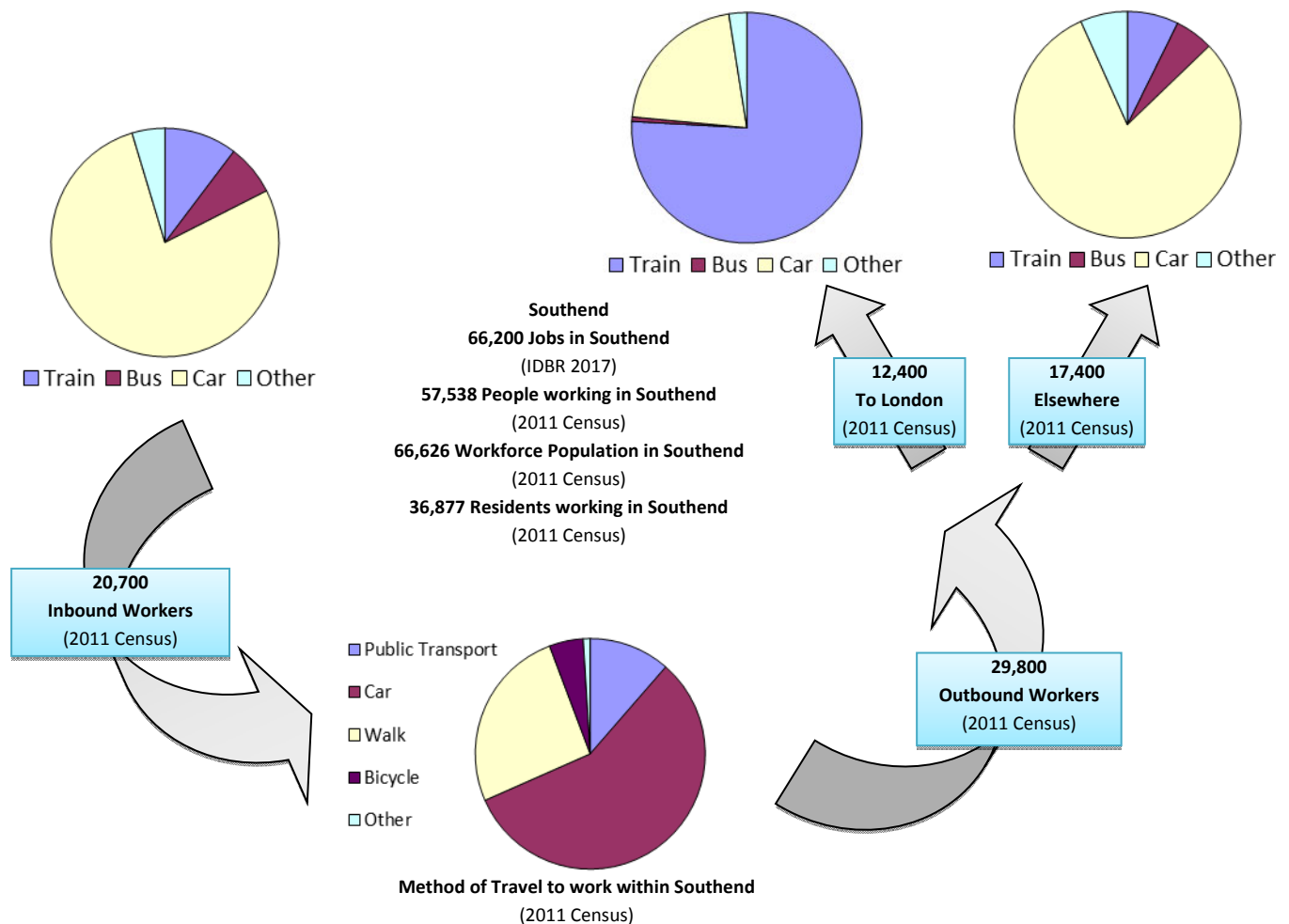
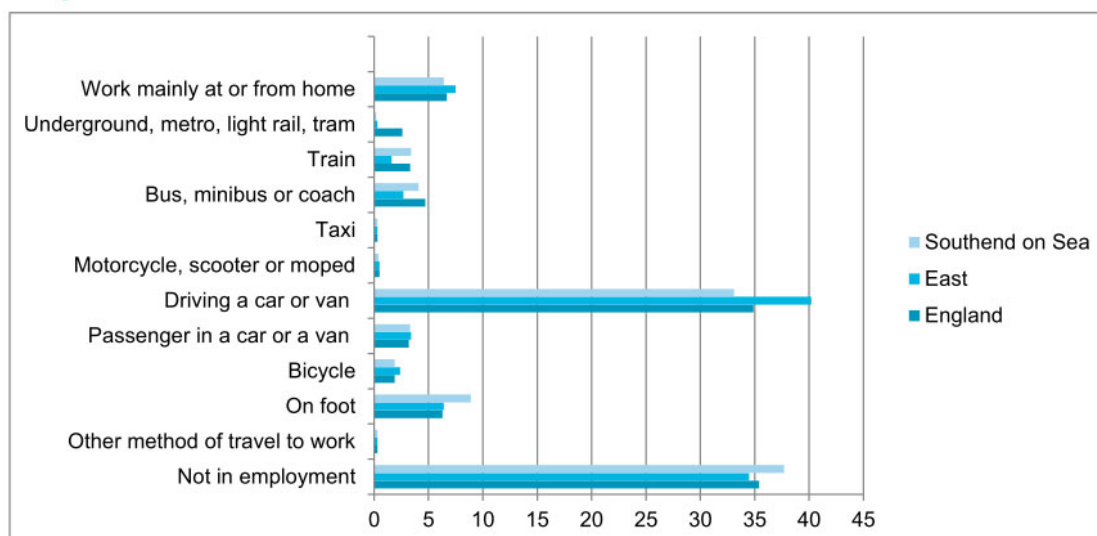


Figure 18: Method of travel to work



Allocating land to accommodate economic growth and new jobs and matching these to local training and skills development will help to reduce the need for residents to commute to jobs elsewhere in the region.

Southend was founded on tourism and the town continues to have a vibrant visitor economy with over seven million day visitors per annum. Much of this is focussed around the seafront and the pier area with a high proportion of day trippers travelling by car. During summer weekends the volume of visitor numbers can place considerable strain on the A127 in particular as well as the Borough's rail network.

Air Travel

London Southend Airport provides the Borough with national and international connectivity. The Terminal and runway were expanded in 2012 and the number of passengers has increased from 617 000 at that time to nearly 1.1 million in 2017. The Airport aims to increase numbers to 2 million by 2020.

Although the airport is well served by rail and bus services, surface access is generally poor and is an issue that needs to be addressed in the new local plan.

Modal Choice

As most journeys within the Borough are less than 3 miles, there is huge potential for increasing modal share of non-car modes.

This is particularly important given 25%⁴ of households in Southend do not have access to a car or van. There are generally good levels of accessibility to key services, schools, employment sites and leisure facilities by public transport, although the location of some services such as Southend University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (Southend Hospital) do result in poorer accessibility from some parts of the Borough. In addition, north - south accessibility in the west of the Borough is affected by severance by the A13 and A127 distributor roads. The Local Plan must ensure the provision of a wide quality choice of transport modes and that the location of new development does not create or perpetuate severance, and that it will be well integrated with the existing and potential future transport networks. The Government in the National Planning Policy Framework is encouraging higher densities of development around locations well served by public transport.

The promotion of increased levels of active travel on foot, by cycle and combinations of these with public transport use can result in healthier lifestyles for residents, leading to lower rates of obesity and improved mental health. In this way promoting sustainable transport can help to address health inequalities and narrow the health gap between disadvantaged groups and communities, both within the Borough itself and between the Borough and the rest of the country. The physical design of new development can help to promote active lifestyles by providing attractive, direct and safe walking and cycling routes. The Local Plan should support these objectives by locating major new development in areas that are or can be made accessible to all.

Encouraging modal shift will also benefit the local economy, by reducing the number of car trips and reducing traffic congestion. This will result in more reliable journey times and increase productivity. It will also reduce carbon emissions and noise levels from traffic, and improve air quality. 17% of CO₂ emissions in the Borough are from transport with an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) located around The Bell junction. The Borough's per capita road transport CO₂ emissions are significantly lower than both the regional and national averages, but there is scope for further reductions from the transport sector.

Car and Road Freight Travel

Whilst it will be important to promote non car modes of travel to widen choice for all users, the car and road freight will continue to be an integral part of travel and essential to local businesses. The South Essex Development Needs Assessment (EDNA 2018) sets the context for future economic growth and notes that the economic opportunities for South

⁴ 2011 Census (ONS)

Essex are considerable. However, the provision of strong infrastructure connections and continued adequate investment into road conditions and the public transport network is regarded as essential for supporting economic development and employment activities across South Essex. Without this investment it will not be possible to achieve the economic growth potential. It will be essential that the Local Plan and wider South Essex Joint Spatial Plan embrace these needs.

The car is an essential means of travel for a number of users particularly the disabled and it will be important to make adequate car parking provision for such users and provision for taxi services. Encouraging car share as an integral part of Travel Plans for local businesses will also be an important element in promoting more sustainable means of travel.

The increasing use of electric cars will have beneficial impacts on air quality. Electric Vehicle charging points have already been installed on London Road in the Town centre and adjacent to the Hamlet Court Road local centre. As the growth of Electric vehicles continues it will be necessary to expand this provision. This could include converting lampposts so they are able to perform a dual function as charging points and making provision for charging points in new residential and commercial development.

Parking provision, particularly around the town centre and along the seafront is important and the Southend Central Area Action Plan (SCAAP) seeks to maintain key car parks in the town centre to ensure the viability and vitality of the town's tourism offer. The Southend Borough-wide Parking and Access Strategy emphasises the importance of effective management and signage, real time travel information and the potential of park and ride provision. Building upon these documents the Council will be undertaking an Access, Parking and Transport Strategy and reviewing its Local Transport Plan. These provisions will need to be incorporated in the new local Plan.

In older residential areas of the Borough with no provision of off-street parking spaces on-street spaces are at a premium. In some areas on the fringes of the town centre residents only parking zones have been introduced. Nevertheless parking will continue to be an issue and is likely to become more so as car ownership increases and housing densities increase and will require careful management.

Rail

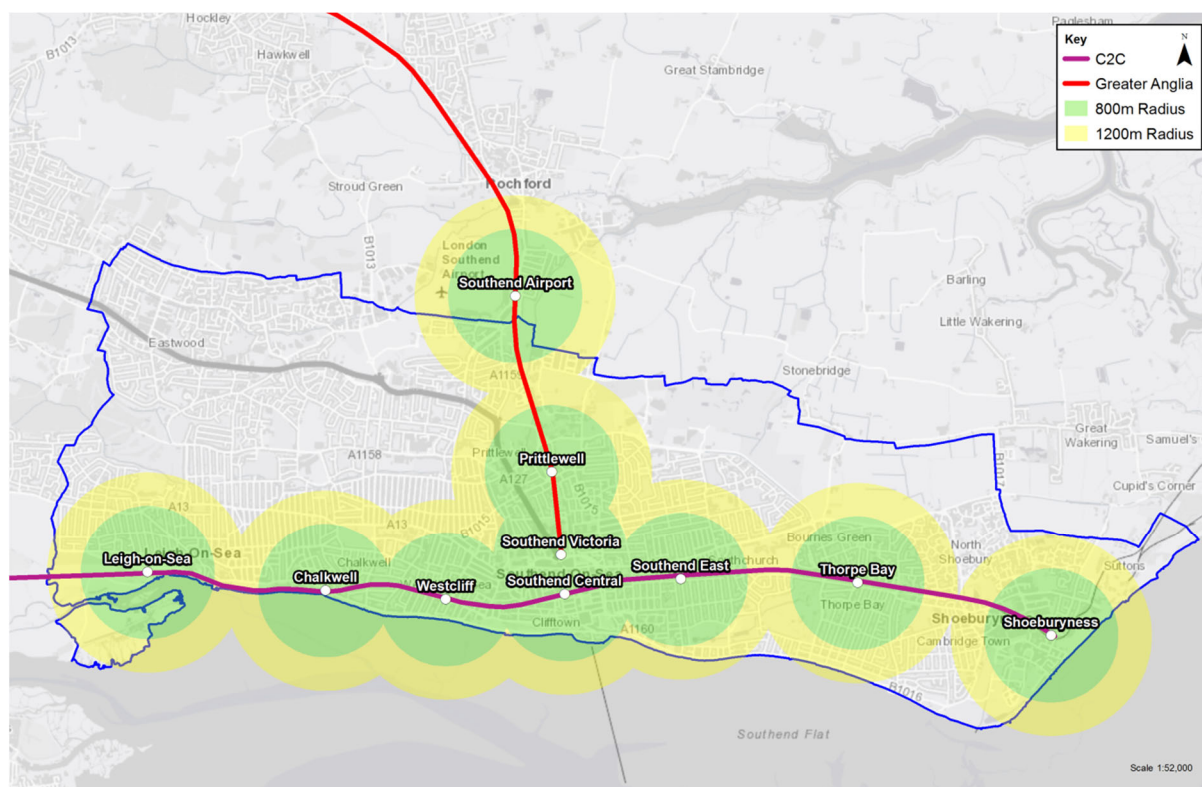
There is excellent rail connectivity and frequency both within the Borough, through its nine railway stations, and to London, via two different railway lines. A new railway station has also been built just over the border in Rochford to serve London Southend Airport. Approximately 9% of all journeys are made by rail, which is above the national average. This reflects both the east-west linear nature of the Borough and the high level of out-commuting to London by residents. Although rail use has risen for much of the last two decades, the use of rail nationally has declined for the last two years. There has also been a continuing trend for remote and flexible working, as a response to technological advances, accompanied by a demand for more flexible ticketing.⁵ Nevertheless, rail is likely to continue to form a key component of journeys to work for Southend's residents.

Using a buffer zones of 800 metres and 1 200 metres around railway stations (approximately 10 and 15 minute walk respectively) provides an indication of accessibility by rail. The Government in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) encourages higher densities of development close to rail stations. The nine rail stations in the Borough are easily accessible by residents in the south of the Borough and within a central north-south corridor. The north western and north eastern parts are not so accessible.

Figure 2 indicates that of the 82,000 households within the Borough, around 36,000 are within 800m walk of a railway station; and nearly 58,000 (70%) are within a 1,200 metre walk. If access to local businesses is measured over 5,100 of the 6,300 businesses (80%) are within a 1,200 metres walk of a railway station.

⁵ Source: Office of Rail and Road (June 2018)

Figure 2: Accessibility to Railway Stations by distance.



Total Rail patronage has grown significantly over the last 20 years but in the last three or four years has largely stabilised. 2017/18 however showed an increase. The 2017/18 figures for each of the Stations are listed below. Leigh on Sea and Prittlewell both showed drops on the previous year while Shoeburyness was stable. The highest growth was at Chalkwell showing an increase of around 25% on the previous year. Overall the total patronage increase on 2016/17 was nearly 10%.

Table 1: Number of Journeys per train station (2017/18)⁶

Station	Number of Journeys
Chalkwell	1 968 412
Leigh-On-Sea	2 232 070
Prittlewell	188 044
Shoeburyness	746 526
Southend Central	3 396 032
Southend East	1 926 844

⁶ Office of Rail and Road Regulation December 2018

Southend Victoria	2 098 654
Thorpe Bay	885 608
Westcliff	1 299 104
Total	14 741 294

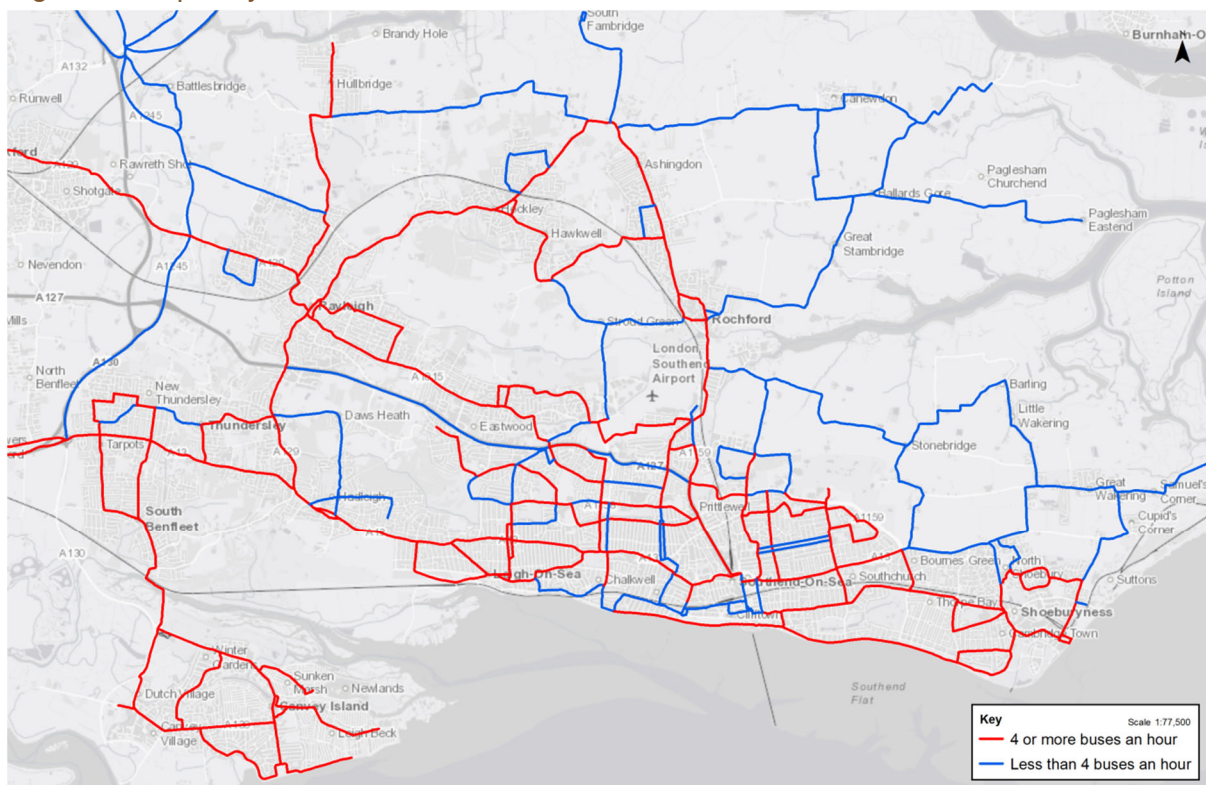
Southend Airport Station is just outside the Borough and had 466,512 passengers in 2017/18, an increase of nearly 18% on the previous year.

The high accessibility to rail services provides the Borough with a major opportunity to achieve further modal shift to sustainable modes of transport.

Bus

Bus use in Southend is at about 3.5% of modal share and there is scope to increase bus use for regular journeys to reduce the number of cars on the road.

Figure 3: Frequency of Bus services within Southend⁷



Key bus corridors include the A13 Passenger Transport Corridor and Victoria Avenue northwards. The frequency of buses on these routes is around every 10 minutes or less

⁷ Based on published timetable information (December 2018)

during the day and can largely be seen as “turn up and go”. Other high frequency routes would be those with a 15 minute service or equivalent. On average people are generally willing to walk around 400m (5 minutes) for a bus.

Cycling

The national and regional Sustrans cycle network runs through the Borough, including along the seafront. Since 2011 a number of infrastructure projects were funded by a successful Cycle Southend funding bid which released around £6 million for new cycling infrastructure and supporting projects. A new segregated cycle route has been created along Western Esplanade, resulting in a continuous seafront cycle path from Shoeburyness to Chalkwell Esplanade, and a new 2Km shared use pedestrian and cycle path has also been installed from Fossetts Way to Thorpe Hall Avenue, via Cecil Jones School and Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre at Garons. Cycle routes have also been upgraded along Prittle Brook Greenway, Southend Seafront along Western Esplanade, Royal Artillery Way and Southend Victoria Station to Pleasant Road via Queenway.

In addition Cycle Southend has been successful in increasing cycling in Southend through various projects including Bikeability training in Southend schools, group rides, low cost re-conditioned bikes from the ReCycle centre. These measures, together with investment in infrastructure, have led to an increase of 17% in the number of people cycling for work or leisure in the Borough in the first three years of the project, albeit this increase was from a relatively low starting point of about 1.5% of modal share. The Local Plan should continue to support this increase in travel by bike by protecting routes for new cycle paths and requiring secure and covered cycle parking provision in new developments.

Walking

The relatively high proportion of residents who walk to work reflects the density of development in Southend, its relatively flat topography and the location of major employers within the town centre. Investment in public realm, including along London Road and Victoria Circus has improved the walking environment at the western edge of the town centre but the Queensway roundabout and underpass continues to be a significant barrier for both pedestrians and cyclists accessing the town from the east. The Better Queensway regeneration project will include proposals for increasing permeability within this area and improving the quality of the public realm. This will assist in making journeys on foot or by bicycle more attractive.

The recently adopted Southend Central Area Action Plan proposed a number public realm enhancements in the town centre. These will be integral to improving the walking environment to provide quality design, safe and secure environments, The new Local Plan will need to continue to promote such provision particularly in the main retail/commercial centres of the borough.

Existing Policy

Core Strategy

The Southend on Sea Core Strategy⁸ adopted in 2007 aims to secure a major refocus of function and the long term sustainability of Southend as a significant urban area which serves local people and the Thames Gateway. To do this it stated that there is a need to release the potential of Southend's land and buildings. This would help to achieve measurable improvements in the town's economic prosperity, transportation networks, infrastructure and facilities; and the quality of life of all its citizens. This will include safeguarding and improving the standards of the town's amenities and improving the quality of the natural and built environment.

In terms of transport the Core Strategy seeks to:

- Secure a 'step change' in the provision of transport infrastructure as an essential part of new development;
- Maximise the effectiveness and integration of key transport corridors and interchanges as a principle focus for development in the urban area;
- Secure the regeneration of London Southend Airport to enable it to reach its potential to function as a local regional airport providing for significant new employment opportunities and improved surface access subject to environmental safeguards; and
- Secure the sustainable use of the River Thames and its Estuary as an asset for transport, leisure and business.

⁸ Southend on Sea Borough Council Core Strategy (adopted 2007)

The London Southend Airport & its Environs Joint Area Action Plan (JAAP)

London Southend Airport has undergone significant development and renewal in recent years. A railway station directly serving the Airport opened in 2011, followed by an expanded passenger terminal in 2012. Other improvements include a new air traffic control tower, runway extension, hotel and freight handling facilities. The Airport currently serves over one million business and leisure passengers each year, serving destinations in the UK and Europe, and planning permission has been granted to increase the airport through-put to up to 3 million passengers per annum (mppa), with a target of 2 million mppa by 2020. However, the road network surrounding the Airport is at or near capacity⁹.

The JAAP (Joint Area Action Plan), prepared by Southend-on-Sea Borough Council and Rochford District Council, seeks to integrate land use, transport, environmental and regeneration proposals for Airport related development with clear mechanisms for delivery.

The key principles of the JAAP are to:

- Direct development to sustainable locations;
- Minimise travel demand (through the implementation of travel plans); manage residual demand to constrain flows within the existing capacity of the highway network;
- Direct traffic generated by JAAP development to the principal routes and discourage use of local access roads; and
- Implement capacity enhancement only as a final measure, delivered through the Plan-making process.

Local Transport Plan 3

The Local Transport Plan 3 is a 15 year transport strategy for the Borough to 2026. It aims to provide the Borough with a 21st century transport system that delivers sustainable economic growth, prosperity and helps to achieve the vision of a vibrant coastal town and a prosperous centre where people enjoy living, working and visiting.

⁹ Source: Local Transport Plan 3 – Southend Borough Council

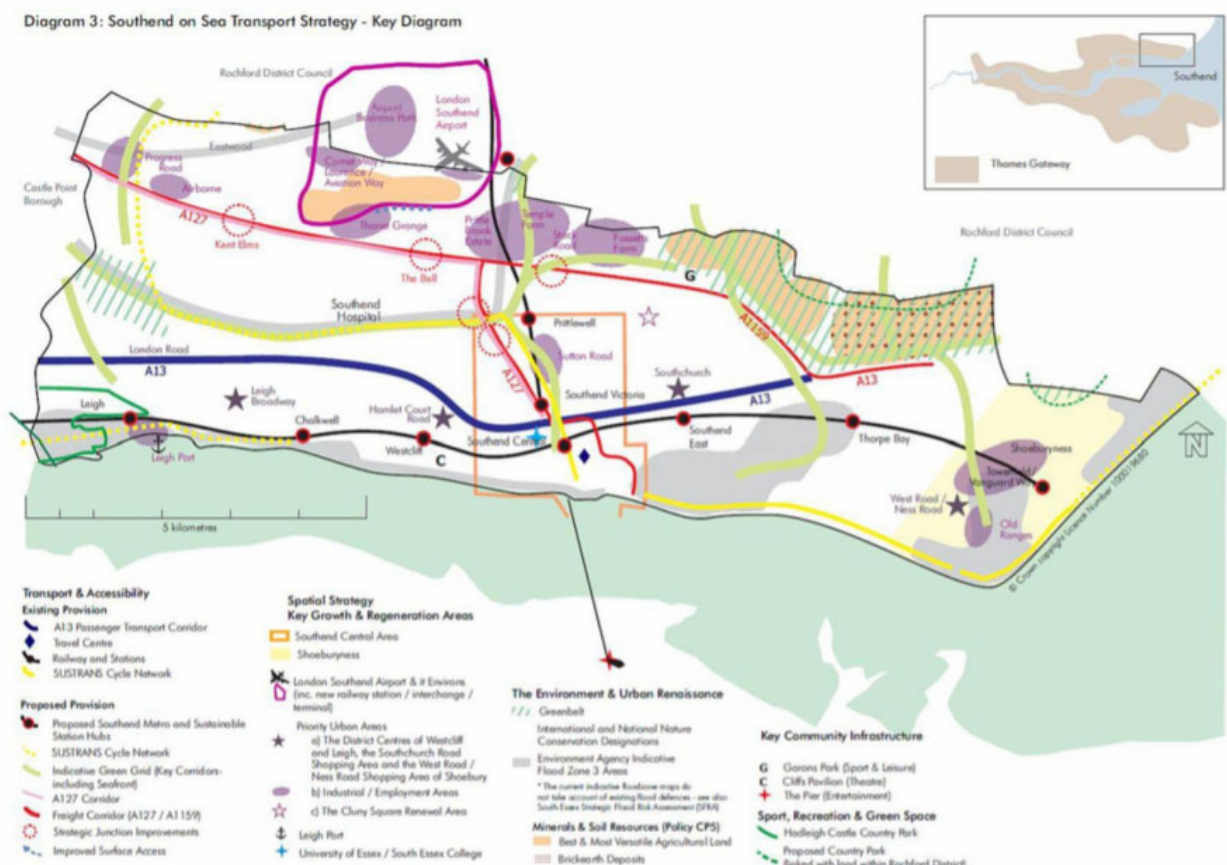
https://www.southend.gov.uk/info/200242/transport_policies_and_traffic_regulation_orders/343/local_transport_plans

Key challenges for the LTP3 are to:

- Accommodate the proposed growth in jobs and homes in the Borough;
- Reduce congestion on all routes, initially focussing on routes to the town centre, and make use of technology particularly during the peak periods;
- Encourage and facilitate shorter journeys, primarily to the town centre, to be undertaken by sustainable modes such as public transport, walking and cycling including identifying mechanisms by which this can be achieved.

The Map below depicts some of the key transport and junction improvements to facilitate the adopted Core Strategy growth targets by 2021, identified within two iterations of the Southend Local Transport Plan.

Figure 4: LTP3 Transport Strategy (2015)



Current Position

We received £25 million from central government via LTP3 and other funding packages to use on key projects to help regenerate and redevelop the town. Major network enhancements are either complete or underway at all key junctions on the A127 within the Borough. £4.82m in funding from the Department for Transport (DfT) Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF), supported by the Better Bus Area Fund and section 106 funding has also provided a package of sustainable travel measures, to reduce the current and future demand for short distance car journeys and encourage walking, cycling and public transport use.

Completed projects

- A127 Tesco's Junction improvements
- A127 Progress Road Junction improvements
- A127 Priory Crescent junction improvements
- City Beach Pedestrian Crossing Enhancements
- Victoria Gateway improvements
- SaMERU (Safer Mobility for Elderly) European Partnership

Current projects

- A127 Kent Elms junction improvements – works underway
- A127 The Bell junction improvements – at consultation stage
- A127 Essential Bridge & Highway Maintenance
- Implementation of Surface Water and Flooding Strategies

Future Priorities and Issues

With the potential for significant growth in housing and population over the next Plan period together with growth aspirations for the London Southend Airport and tourism, in the longer term it may be necessary to build more capacity into the network. As such there is an urgent need to assess the transport infrastructure in the Borough, including the adequacy of the strategic routes serving Southend (the A127, A130 and rail network), and the extent to which it can be improved to ensure it is fit for purpose to cope with the level of growth anticipated.

The A127 is essential for the economic prosperity and growth aspirations of south Essex and Southend. The South East Local Economic Partnership (SELEP) has identified twelve transport 'growth corridors', which include the A13 and A127 in South Essex, and £35.6m of Local Growth Fund (LGF) has been allocated to a programme of capacity enhancements to the A127 in Essex and Southend. This will be supported by a comprehensive asset

management plan developed by Southend Borough Council and Essex County Council. Works within the wider area that will be essential for supporting growth in the Borough are road safety and resilience works on the A127 and junction improvements at the Fairglens interchange with the A130. A working group has been established comprising of all the authorities along the A127 to raise the profile for more strategic improvements along this corridor, including suggestions that it should be enhanced to Motorway standard. There are however considerable physical constraints that would make this challenging to achieve, including the location of dwellings close to the existing carriageway along sections of the A127 within the Borough. The levels of housing and employment growth envisaged in the Southend Local Plan and in those of neighbouring authorities will require very large scale interventions that will require major levels of additional Government funding.

The opening of the new Elizabeth Line (Crossrail) in 2020 from Reading and Heathrow to Shenfield in Brentwood District will open up new journey opportunities for Southend residents albeit a change of train will be needed. If the line was extended to Southend Victoria this would have additional potential benefits for the Borough.

During the last quarter of 2018 Highways England consulted on a proposed Lower Thames Crossing road tunnel between East Tilbury in Thurrock to the M2 in Kent. If this receives the go ahead completion would be expected by the late 2020's. While not located in Southend it has the potential to generate closer links between the area and North Kent.

The Thames Estuary 2050 Growth Commission Report (2018) recommends that by 2050 consideration should be given to constructing a new railway crossing of the River Thames to the west of Southend.

At present the river is only used for Pierhead summer leisure trips including to North Kent and sometimes London. There are not currently any firm plans to introduce a commercial passenger transport service along the river but the potential remains to introduce services across to Kent and possibly to London and these will be subject to further investigation.

The growth of electric cars, with no new petrol/diesel vehicles expected to be sold by the end of the Plan period, will have infrastructure implications for the provision of new electric charging points, both on new development and in public locations. The effects of introducing autonomous vehicles are as yet unknown but is not necessarily expected to reduce traffic congestion.

Should large scale new development be pursued options such as bus rapid transit systems and dedicated infrastructure will require consideration.

Issues the Local Plan needs to address

Address the cumulative impacts of the potential growth aspirations for Southend on the local transport network
Promote the need for a quality sustainable transport network/system
The local plan should make clear, for at least the first 5 years, what infrastructure is required, who is going to fund and provide it, and how it relates to the anticipated rate and phasing of development.
Identify and protect, where there is robust evidence, sites and routes which could be critical in developing infrastructure to widen transport choice and realise opportunities for large scale development
Integrate active travel into the design of new developments
Facilitate the growth potential of London Southend Airport in an environmentally sustainable manner
Recognise and mitigate transport impacts on air quality
Manage parking capacity, especially in the town centre, more effectively to improve prospects for regeneration and the growth of tourism
Address and facilitate cross-border strategic transport issues
Facilitate the use of new technologies such as electric cars and autonomous vehicles

Evidence Base/Reference Documents	
Southend Local Transport Plan (LTP) 2011-2026 Evidence Base (2010) LTP3 Revision (2015)	https://www.southend.gov.uk/info/200242/transport_policies_and_traffic_regulation_orders/343/local_transport_plans
Southend Parking and Access Strategy (2018)	www.southend.gov.uk/
Southend on Sea Annual Monitoring Report 2017	www.southend.gov.uk/
National Planning Policy Framework (2018) Section 9 – Paragraphs 102 to 107	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2
South Essex Economic Development Needs	www.southend.gov.uk/

Assessment (2017)	
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