

BILLERICAY TOWN CENTRE

Appraisal Report 1974



DRAFT

Basildon District Council

County Council of Essex

BILLERICAY TOWN CENTRE APPRAISAL

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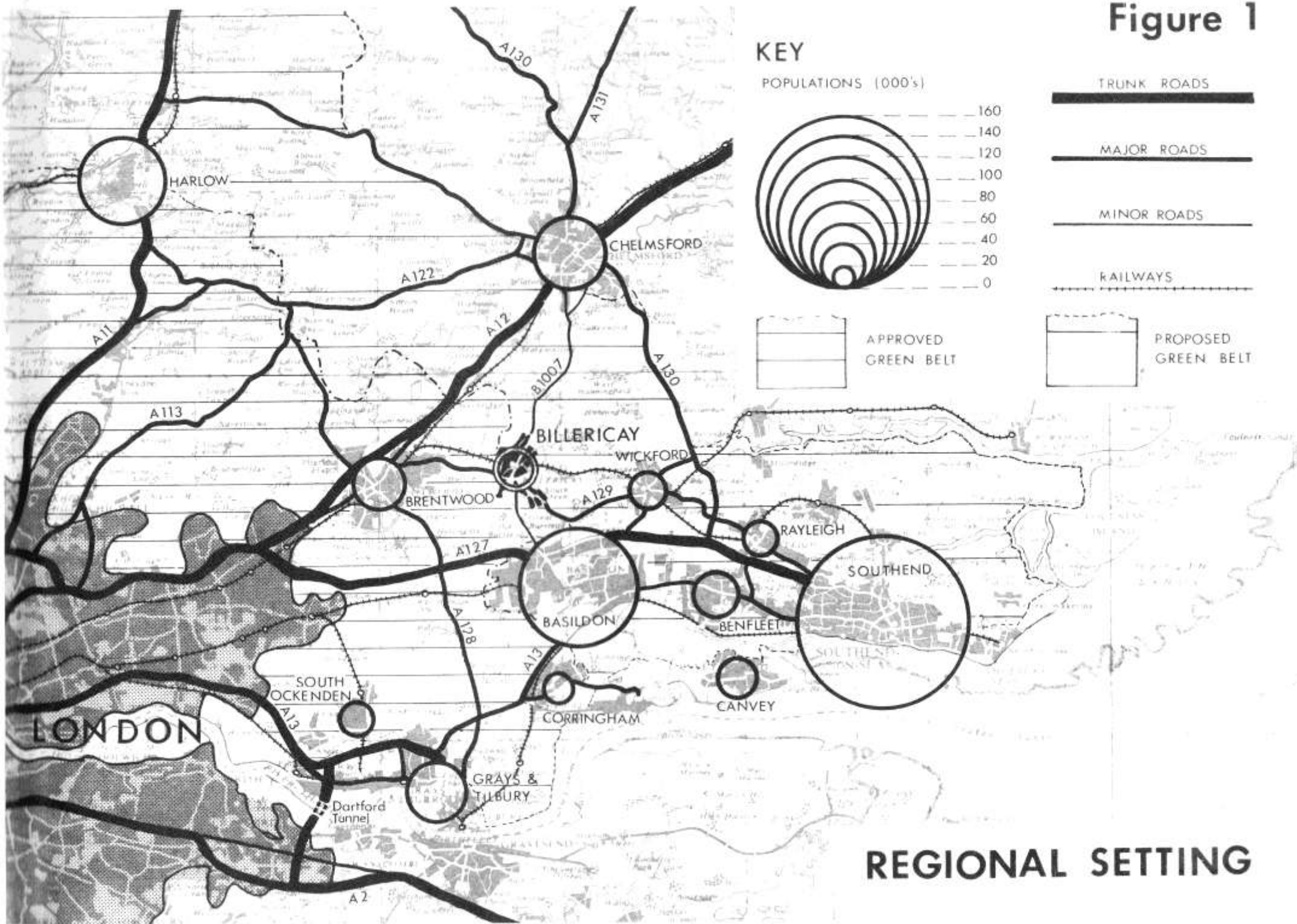
1. REGIONAL SETTING Fig. 1

- 1.1 Billericay, with a population of 28274 at the 1971 Census, lies 43km (27 miles) east of London and 14km (9 miles) south west of Chelmsford. It has grown rapidly in recent years from a population of 7400 in 1951, and there is now a gap of only 1 mile between the built-up areas of Billericay and Basildon to the south, and one of only 2 miles between Billericay and Brentwood to the west.
- 1.2 The town lies in an area of open undulating country and has spread outwards and downwards from the north/south ridge of Bagshot Gravel along which the High Street runs. The growth has been uneven. To the south the South Green area extends to over a mile from the town centre, as do residential areas to the north and north west. Large areas of open land extend almost into the town centre from the south west and south east, as do the extensive Norsey Woods

from the north east.

- 1.3 The A129 Brentwood to Rayleigh road passes from west to east through the southern part of the town. This is crossed by the B1007 Chelmsford to Basildon road, which for 0.8km ($\frac{1}{2}$ mile) north of the A129 forms the High Street. There are fairly frequent bus services on these roads to Chelmsford, Wickford, Basildon and Brentwood.
- 1.4 The northern limit of the High Street is marked by the Southend Victoria/Liverpool Street railway line. Billericay Station has a total of 71 trains departing for Liverpool Street each weekday. The journey time involved is approximately 43 minutes.
- 1.5 Billericay is readily accessible to the larger centres of Chelmsford, Southend 29km (18 miles), Basildon 8km (5 miles) and Romford 24km (15 miles), and the proximity of these affects the level of shopping activity

Figure 1



2.

in the town. It is unlikely that the relative powers of attraction of these centres will change markedly in the future.

- 1.6 Apart from its functions as a shopping centre Billericay has small amounts of office and industrial employment. The main function of the town is as a dormitory settlement, however, and more than half the population work outside the town.

3.

2. PLANNING POLICIES

2.1 The present planning policies for Billericay are largely contained in the First Review of the County of Essex Development Plan which was submitted to the then Minister of Housing and Local Government in 1965. This review plan has not yet been finally approved by the Secretary of State for the Environment, although it is accepted as the basis for planning decisions.

2.2 The 1965 Review Development Plan extended the Metropolitan Green Belt to include the whole of the rural area around Billericay and allocated land adjacent to the built-up areas for substantial residential development. The following objectives were set out with regard to the town centre:-

- (a) to provide safe, convenient and pleasant conditions for persons working in and visiting the area;

- (b) to separate the main flows of vehicular traffic from those of pedestrians;
- (c) to make greater provision for car parking and to provide for service roads and for the loading and unloading of vehicles off the highways;
- (d) to limit the extent of shopping frontages on the main through traffic routes.

2.3 In accordance with the first two of the above objectives and in order to make better provision for the main flows of through traffic, the route of an inner relief road to the east of the town centre was defined. This road received planning permission from the then Minister of Housing and Local Government following a public inquiry in 1968.

2.4 The Review Development Plan also stated that when considering proposals for new development in the High

Street, the local planning authority would have regard to the need to preserve the character of the street.

2.5 In 1967 local planning authorities received powers to define parts of their areas which were considered to be of architectural and historic interest as Conservation Areas. The aim is to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of these areas by the exercise of the planning authorities' powers. Billericay town centre was designated a Conservation Area in 1969.

2.6 Before 1981, the Review Development Plan will be replaced by the Structure Plan for the South of Essex, which will be prepared by the County Council within the framework of the Government's Strategic Plan for the South-East. The Structure Plan will set out the broad pattern of land use and activity and will in turn form the framework for Local Plans, most of which will be prepared by the District Councils.

2.7 Until the new Structure and Local Plans are ready, the Review Development Plan will remain the basis of planning policy. It has, however, been supplemented by additional policy statements, for example the designation of Conservation Areas and the adoption of 'non-statutory local plans'. The latter amplify the Review Development Plan proposals in the light of present circumstances.

2.8 This appraisal forms the first stage of the preparation of such a 'non-statutory local plan' and consists of a summary of the present circumstances and problems in the town centre.

3. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 Billericay is different from most of the small towns in Essex in that it is, in origin, a secondary settlement established within the ecclesiastical parish of an earlier Anglo-Saxon village. The present High Street and Chapel Street occupy the site of a small medieval town which grew up along a ridge in undulating country at the intersection of routes from London to Rochford Hundred and from Chelmsford and East Anglia to the Thames crossing at Tilbury.

3.2 Unusually for a small town, Billericay was not the centre of a parish until 1860 and prior to that date was a part of the parish centred on Great Burstead, the early settlement containing both Church and manor house.

3.3 In 1342 a chapel and chantry was established at Billericay and this formed the core of the medieval settlement which consisted chiefly of the High Street running north-south along the spine of the ridge. The 15th and 18th century chapel building is now the parish church, the brick tower of which is the dominant structure in the High Street. The fact that the Chapel did not become a parish church until 1860 is emphasised by its close physical relationship to the other buildings in the High Street and by the absence of a graveyard around it.

3.4 A market is recorded at Billericay as early as 1253 and this was almost certainly held in the space to the north of the Church where Chapel Street and the High Street converge. The 14th and 15th centuries were prosperous for the town as a trading centre; it had a population of about 12,000 persons during the period. Wool, cloth and hides were the major commodities handled

by the Billericay merchants. Records show that several of the oldest buildings which remain in the town centre were the homes and storehouses of traders: numbers 3, 5, 7 and 9 Chapel Street, dating from 1450, were originally one building which is believed to have been the house of a wool merchant.

3.5 During the 18th century the market function of the town declined although house building and renewal continued. The eighteenth century contributed many of the most attractive and interesting buildings which survive in Billericay. Decline continued during the nineteenth century until its latter decades when the opening of the railway (1889) introduced a new factor into the development of the town.

3.6 It became possible to live in the town and work elsewhere, often at some distance. Some late Victorian and early twentieth century residential development followed the construction of the railway for example in Southern Chapel Street, but it was not until after 1918 that major change occurred. During the period 1918-1939 Billericay ceased to be a small, compact country town and gradually became more suburban in character. Residential estates and single houses were constructed on the flanks of the ridge and along the roads leading out of the town centre. This process has continued during the past twenty five years, although the growth has been more orderly since the initiation of effective town planning in 1947.

- 3.7 The population of the town increased rapidly after 1951.

1951:	7,400
1961:	17,246
1971:	28,274

This increased population has given rise to a demand for shops, personal services, schools and other facilities which has been met partly by building on new sites and partly by the conversion of former houses and other properties along the High Street into offices and shops. A certain amount of re-development also took place before 1939 but the major physical changes in the town centre have occurred since 1945, old buildings being replaced by purpose built shops and offices.

- 3.8 The country town beginnings and twentieth century growth have given Billericay a distinctive urban structure. In the High Street modern shops and offices stand in a compact arrangement alongside houses, converted houses and other buildings built in the Essex

tradition and dating from the mid-fifteenth to the early nineteenth century. These different buildings are enclosed to the east and west by the closes and gardens of the former market town houses, some now occupied by new buildings or used for new purposes, for example for car parking. In turn these areas adjoin areas of low density suburban housing and other land uses, entirely different in layout and three dimensional form to the compact urban core.

4. POPULATION AND HOUSING

- 4.1 The population of Billericay and its surrounding area has risen four-fold over the past twenty years, from a total of 7,400 in 1951 to 28,274 for the combined wards of Billericay, Buttsbury and Burstead in 1971. This growth is due mainly to a gain by inward migration attracted by the situation of Billericay in relation to commuter routes to London, and to other employment centres in the area, notably Basildon New Town. Natural increase resulting from an excess of births over deaths has also contributed to the population increase in Billericay.
- 4.2 The 1971 Census also shows that there are 9,003 structurally separate dwellings in the three wards forming Billericay. The Review of the County Development Plan provides for an increase of 4,600 dwellings over the number existing in 1961 giving a total of some 10,000 dwellings by 1981. This latter figure is now

expected to be exceeded due to the greater density that has been achieved in existing residential areas by infilling and redevelopment and also in consequence of the further release of land for residential development allowed on appeal since the Review was submitted. The population of Billericay at 1981 is therefore expected to be above the Review estimation of 30,350. On present commitments alone the population by 1981 is likely to be in the order of 34,500.

- 4.3 The composition of the housing stock of Billericay is largely of post-war speculative estate development and some inter-war development. There are approximately 150 dwelling units within the historic town centre and this area is surrounded immediately by the twentieth century speculative development. Billericay does not display the concentric rings of Victorian and Edwardian building usually associated with the development of railway towns and thus does not have

10.

the problem of a ring of ageing dwellings surrounding
the town centre.

5. LAND USE Fig. 2

5.1 The major land uses in the town centre are shown in Fig. 2.

5.2 The principal central area elements are grouped along both frontages of the High Street which forms the main axis of the town centre. Whilst the main town centre uses occur between the railway in the north and Sun Street in the south, there is an extension south of Sun Street fronting Laindon Road comprising open space, public and community uses and emergency services which are all associated with the town centre and serve the town at large.

5.3 The form of development in the historic core of Billerica is typified by narrow building plots of considerable lengths, and these remain in the area between High Street and Chapel Street and also between High Street and Western Road. This form of development has

encouraged the use of Chapel Street as a service access for commercial uses with a High Street frontage and extending in depth as far as Chapel Street. This feature also occurs between High Street and Western Road.

5.4 The shopping area extends on both sides of the High Street from Western Road to St Ediths Lane on the west and Norsey Road to Sun Street on the east. There is little retail use in the town centre beyond these points.

5.5 Within the shopping area, other commercial, public and residential uses are interspaced with retail uses. Office uses including banks, estate agents, building societies and professional offices occur sporadically within the ground floor shopping uses and at first floor level above shops or as two storey offices. Of a total of approximately 9,290 square metres (100,000

Figure 2

LAND USE



square feet) of office space within the town centre, about one fifth is provided in Frizzell House, which is a purpose-built office block standing at the junction of High Street and St Ediths Lane. The area on the western side of the High Street from St Ediths Lane to London Road is allocated for office use on the Review Town Map and this area contains Frizzell House, the library and the Police Station.

- 5.6 There is a significant residential content within the historic core which forms the town centre with approximately 150 dwelling units including a number of houses in the High Street frontages. The historic central core is surrounded by twentieth century residential development, mainly modern housing estates. There is not the gradual progression through concentric rings of historic, Victorian and Edwardian development that is encountered in many established towns.

- 5.7 A considerable number of properties within the High Street frontage have been redeveloped in the last decade, and these, together with buildings listed as being of architectural or historic interest impose a limitation on the amount of change that can occur. Fig.6 shows these premises and the Inner Relief Road which together form the primary constraints to redevelopment in the town centre. The Conservation Area imposes the further constraint of unlisted buildings which have no architectural or historic value in themselves but which may contribute to the quality of the townscape. There is thus only limited scope for redevelopment within the High Street frontages to achieve greater efficiency in retail or commercial use.
- 5.8 There are areas to the rear of the High Street which have potential for future town centre development or for increasing efficiency of use. The principal area is

between the High Street and Western Road where much of the land is either unused or forms extensive areas of private gardens, often semi-woodland. The area between High Street and Chapel Street contains land which is at present under-used, primarily due to the fragmentation of ownerships into inconveniently shaped parcels. Greater efficiency of use can be achieved by the rationalisation of ownership patterns, as has been demonstrated by the service area to the rear of Nos. 56-68 High Street achieved by the amalgamation of a number of narrow plots on redevelopment on the frontage premises.

6. EMPLOYMENT:

- 6.1 The Town Centre contains about a quarter of the total employment of Billericay as a whole, namely about 1,500 of the 6,630 jobs. The dormitory role of Billericay is emphasised by the fact that of the total of 7,330 resident male workers, 3,959 or 67% commute to work in the Greater London Area. The total resident working population is 10,633, of whom 45% travel daily to Greater London.

- 6.2 Recent studies carried out in relation to the preparation of the County Structure Plan, South Essex Part, have indicated that the total number of jobs in the Town Centre is distributed among the major employment categories and between males and females as shown in the table below:-

- 6.3 From the table it can be seen that manufacturing industry provides only a small proportion of the total

SERVICES

Construction, Utilities & Communications

Retail Trade

Insurance, Banking & Finance

Other services

All Services

MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY

TOTAL

Male	Female	All	% of Total
104	17	121	7.8
177	209	386	24.9
170	282	452	29.2
175	234	409	26.4
626	742	1368	88.3
149	33	182	11.7
775	775	1550	100.0

employment and that service employment provides the vast majority of jobs. The largest sector of service employment is in the insurance, banking and finance services, mainly due to the employment provided in Frizzell House. Retail trade employment takes third place in the service sector with 386 jobs, closely following "other services" which comprise wholesale trades, professional and scientific services, public administration and miscellaneous services.

6.4 The town centre employment is evenly distributed between males and females, with the majority of female employment in shops and offices.

6.5 The amount of growth in employment in the town centre by 1981 will be dependent on the strategies adopted in respect of additional shopping and office development.

7. TOWNSCAPE Fig. 3

7.1 The Setting

The landscape setting contributes much to the present character of the town centre. It is sited on the spine of a ridge about 300 feet above sea level with a fall of about 100 feet to the east and west within half a mile. From a number of points in the High Street and Chapel Street attractive views can be had looking eastwards across undulating, wooded countryside. The view from the lane adjacent to the Chequers Inn is a good example.

7.2 Townscape Features

The High Street-Chapel Street area which forms the modern town centre of Billericay retains much of the scale and character of its country town origins, even though many new buildings have been constructed in recent years. The High Street is about half a mile

long but does not form a single vista. The street curves subtly so that it is impossible to see the full length of the street from one end. The late Gothic brick tower of the Church provides a dominant feature and a focal point in the High Street at its junction with Chapel Street.

In general the surviving pre-1900 houses are of two and occasionally three storeys, linked together in groups with only narrow gaps between them. Most new building has retained this scale and linkage though there are some exceptions, notably Frizzell House. The street width between buildings is generally about 50 to 60 feet but the space widens to 80 feet in front of the Chequers Public House and narrows to 38 feet outside the Church. Chapel Street at its northern end is only about 20 feet wide. It is the width of the streets in relation to the height of the buildings

TOWNSCAPE FEATURES

The old market place: the identity area of the town centre where its character is distinctive.

The scale of the buildings, their linkage into groups and the relative narrowness of the street combine to create a sense of enclosure.

The High Street has a gentle curve which adds much to its visual interest. The scene changes as the viewer moves along the street.

Burghstead Lodge

A number of attractive trees front the lodge.

WESTERN ROAD

ROAD

NORSEY ROAD

Chequers Inn

The Parish Church: the visual focus of the town centre

HILLSIDE ROAD

The old burial ground contains a number of fine trees.

Attractive views across undulating countryside.

SUN STREET

The street scene loses its quality at the crossroads: there is no sense of enclosure due to the open south western side.

NOTATION

Buildings of architectural and historic interest, included on the Statutory List. (with street number)

Other buildings also of local architectural and historic interest, not on Statutory List. (with street number)

Views within the town centre

Views from the town centre into the surrounding countryside

SCALE: 1: 2500



which gives the town centre its qualities of intimate scale and sense of enclosure. Buildings of too great a height or of a single storey reduce this quality by over-dominance or creating gaps in the street frontage.

A number of other features are also most important factors in giving the High Street its present character. The traditional town house was built on a fairly narrow plot which was end-on to the street. In Billericay the plots range from 12 to 100 feet in width with an average of about 20 feet. They vary from 100 to 300 and exceptionally 500 feet in depth. The pattern of land division and ownership has produced the generally short and varied frontages of the buildings along the High Street. This variety contributes much to the interest of the street scene. Many of the facades have a vertical emphasis because of their narrowness in relation to their height.

Most of the buildings in the High Street are set forward to the pavements, only occasionally is there a space or garden in between. Burghstead Lodge is a notable exception; the building is set back but the trees in front of it fill the gap in the street frontage and maintain the sense of enclosure. The Building line is irregular in much of the High Street, reflecting the narrow plots and the varied dates of construction.

Materials used in the traditional buildings are very important in giving the town centre a unified character. This aspect will be more fully examined in a later section.

It is the sum of the townscape characteristics described above, together with the architecture of the individual buildings, the character of the ground treatment and the trees which gives the town centre its individuality

and makes it an interesting and attractive area through which to walk or in which to work or go shopping.

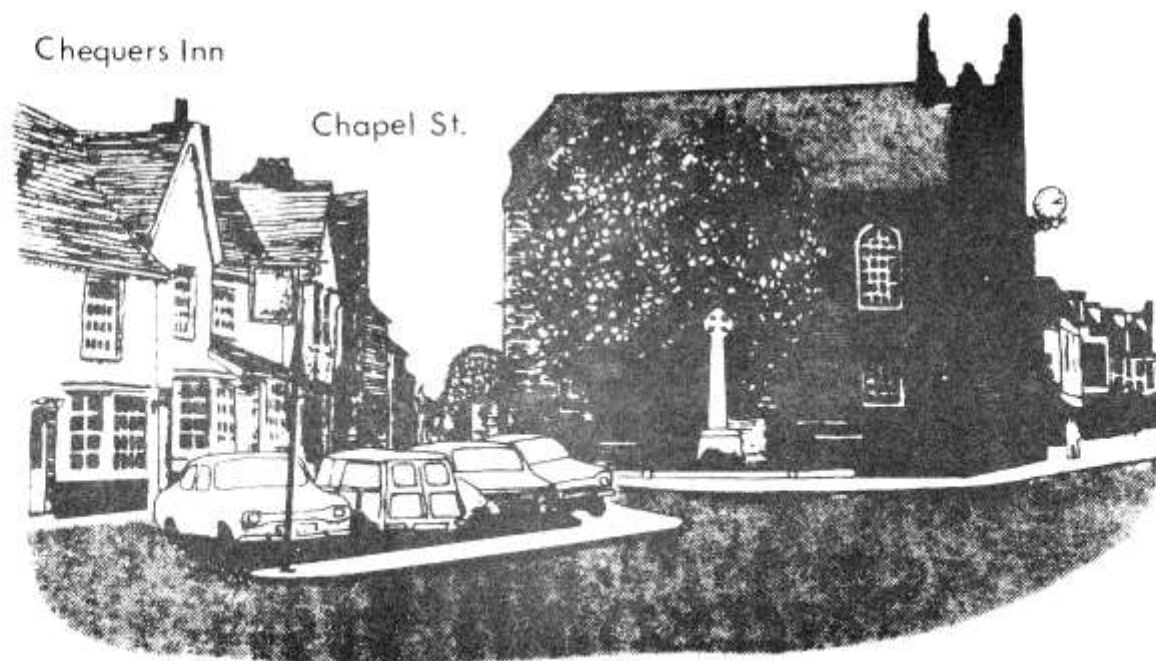
7.3 The identity area around the Church

The area around the parish church and the junction of the High Street with Chapel Street (the medieval market place) is a most distinctive part of the centre of Billericay, it has a particular identity.

Architecturally and historically the group of buildings is of great importance. It includes 3, 5, 7 and 9 Chapel Street, dating from 1450 with later additions; the Chequers Inn, dating from circa 1550; and the Church with its late 15th century brick tower and 18th century nave. The group as a whole and especially the Church provide a focus in the High Street, the line

of which is otherwise unbroken apart from the narrow lanes and alleyways.

The contrasts in the forms and materials of the traditional buildings are of interest. The north wall and tower of the church dominate the space. Both nave and tower are of red brick but of entirely different styles; the former classical, the latter gothic. The Chequers Inn is of typical 16th century form with a hall and gabled cross wings, timber framed with rendered walls and a roof of plain red clay tiles. 3, 5, 7 and 9 Chapel Street have been much remodelled externally although the medieval framework with hall and projecting gabled wing remains. No. 5, St. Aubyns, has a charming front of classical proportions with a pedimented doorcase with



The Parish Church: the townscape of the area to the north of the church is marred by the clutter of parked cars and dull road surface.

fan lights. Numbers 7 and 9 have attractive weather-boarded facades. Weatherboarding has also been used as a cladding on the north wall of the Chequers and the south wall of number 40 High Street, giving an attractive texture to the sides of the lane. The western side of the High Street in the vicinity of the Church is of importance in its scale as it encloses the space. It includes three buildings of merit, numbers 65-67, 63 and 57-61; number 63 is a converted Georgian house of red brick with a parapet and cornice, numbers 65-67 are early 17th century but much altered while 57-61 are all parts of an early 16th century house.

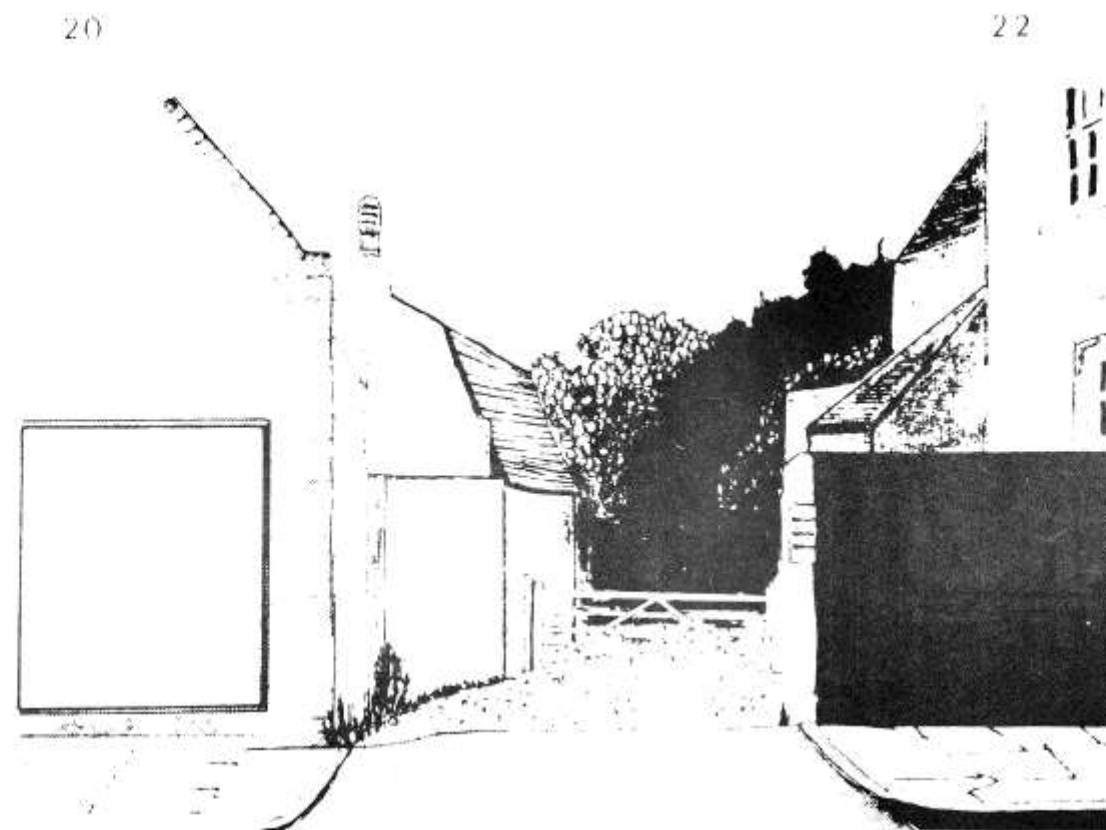
The trees adjacent to the war memorial and the church also provide contrast in the space; they give an element of 'softness' especially when in leaf which is pleasant in the otherwise 'hard' setting of buildings.

7.4 Alleys and lanes leading out of the High Street

The narrow gaps in the frontages of the High Street and the archways giving access to courtyards behind the main buildings are particularly attractive features of Billericay. Several of the alleyways when viewed from the High Street afford glimpses of gardens, trees and countryside beyond which contrast most effectively with the views within the High Street.

The lanes between 133 and 135, 20 and 22 and 89 and 91 High Street are particularly fine examples of alleyways with views into gardens or spaces with bushes and trees.

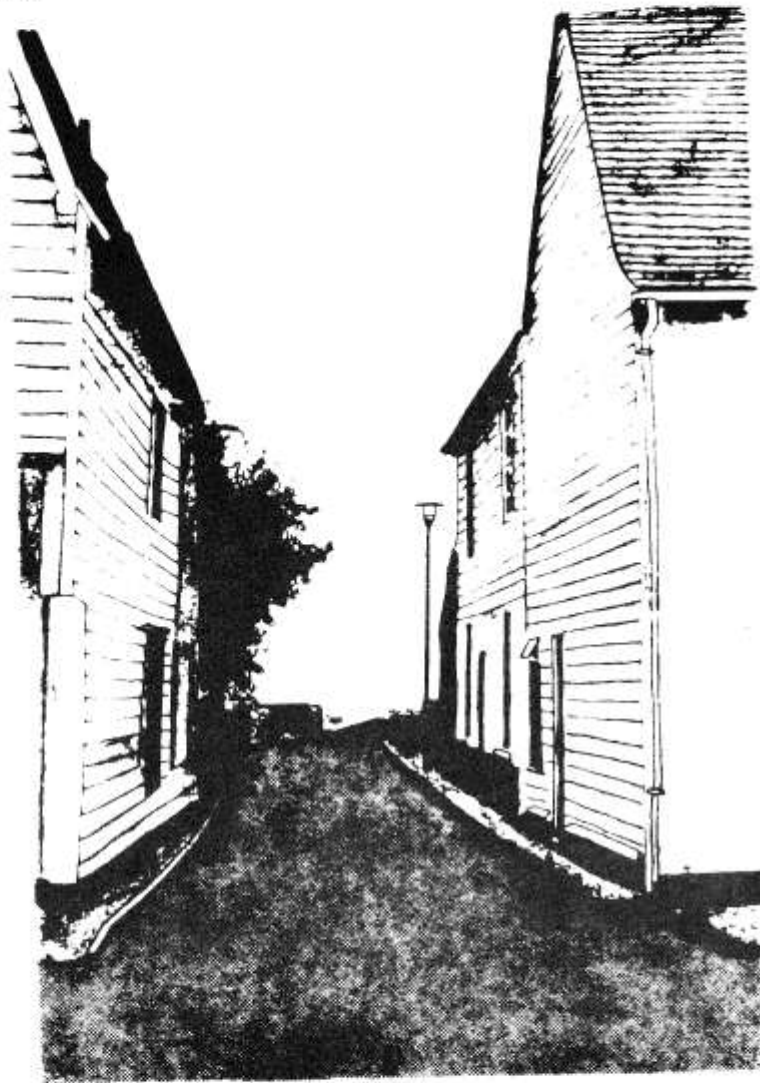
An archway in 51a - 51b High Street gives access to a delightful courtyard which is partly enclosed by one of the finest Georgian buildings in Billericay,



Lane adjacent to 20 High St.

40

Chequers



Lane between The Chequers and
40 High St.

number 51 High Street.

7.5 Chapel Street has some interest away from its most important northern end where it joins the High Street. The old Congregational burial ground contains a number of trees which are a pleasant feature of the street. Number 50 Chapel Street, on the northern side of the burial ground, is a large house of 1820-1830, set back from the road. It stands above the general level of the street and is approached by an iron gate and steps. A number of the Victorian and Edwardian buildings in the street are typical examples of their periods.

7.6 The Architecture of the High Street

There are two broad classes of building in Billericay town centre; firstly, the traditional or vernacular

buildings which have survived from the town of pre 1900. Secondly, the buildings constructed to perform specialised purposes in modern Billericay. Many of the latter date from 1950 onwards.

The traditional buildings have a number of common characteristics. Most fundamentally they are either timber framed structures with a cladding of boards or rendering or have load bearing walls of brick. The former are all of two storeys while the latter frequently have three storeys. The roofs are pitched and have either a simple slope (usually 40°) or are of mansard type. The roofs are of both hipped and gabled type and dormers are frequently incorporated. Most of the pre-18th century and Victorian buildings have overhanging eaves while the Georgian buildings have parapets in front of their pitched roofs. As already mentioned many of the vernacular buildings were constructed on narrow plots. Their facades often

therefore have a vertical emphasis and a variety which breaks up the horizontal nature of the street. Vertical emphasis is also given by the proportions of the elements which make up the facades. Visually, the traditional buildings consist of solid walls with rectangular voids - the door and window openings. These voids virtually always have vertical proportions, as have the smaller elements (panels and panes) within them.

The traditional buildings were constructed by local craftsmen from a limited range of local materials - restricted by the cost of transport and by the limitations of technology. Walls were almost always of either brick (usually red) or of rendering or weatherboarding on a timber frame. Roofs were of plain red clay tiles or of thatch, although none of the latter survives in Billericay. The use of Welsh grey slate followed the improvements in transport of the 19th



Traditional buildings and new development in the High Street.

Numbers 22 & 24 are listed Georgian Houses. Number 20 is a modern shop. The latter is sympathetic in its scale, form and materials to the 18th Century buildings

century and therefore is present as an original material in only the latest traditional buildings. The traditional materials were either self-coloured or were painted in a small range of black, white and light pastel shades.

Many modern buildings in the centre of Billericay have been constructed without regard to the overall character of the area or of the architectural tradition. The overall form, the detailing and the materials of a number of the modern High Street shops and offices are unsatisfactory. Some buildings are out of scale with the traditional street, both vertically and horizontally. It is important that new buildings should not exceed the height of the older ones so that they do not dominate the town centre and reduce its domestic scale. Horizontal scale is also of great importance and is more often overlooked in new development;

many new frontages in the High Street are much too long for their setting and fail to reflect the vertical proportions of the traditional facades. The horizontal nature of the modern shop fronts is emphasised by the lack in most cases of any attempt to break up the expanses of ground floor display windows into smaller elements.

Traditional buildings in the town centre have pitched roofs but unfortunately several new shop and office buildings have flat ones. A flat roof at the eaves level of adjacent buildings lowers the skyline seen from the street and reduces the sense of enclosure. A building with a flat roof at or above the ridge level of adjacent buildings dominates them because of the area of its facade.

Materials are a particular problem; there are a great many materials used to-day, contrasting with the limited range available to the craftsmen of pre-1900. The textures and colours of some modern building materials contrast unfavourably with those of the traditional brick, rendering, timber and tile.

Modern bricks are made in a variety of colours but in general only those similar in colour to the traditional ones are suitable. Uncoloured concrete is present in the facades of several of the modern shops but looks out of place in the street. Glazed and moulded tiles, plastics, large areas of metal such as copper or steel and mozaic are usually in-appropriate in a setting of traditional buildings. Examples of these materials occur in many of the new shop facades.

In contrast with the new buildings which have been

designed without regard to their setting some recent buildings successfully reflect the traditional architectural character of the street. Numbers 81-87 High Street make up a development which is sympathetic to the setting in its scale, form and materials. Number 20 High Street is also a successful modern building; the arcaded ground floor is a particularly pleasant feature.

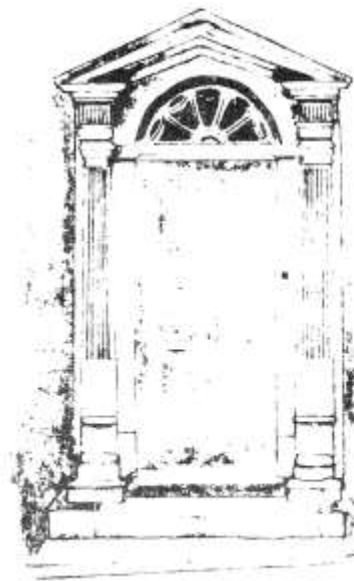
7.7 Architectural Details

The overall form and the materials are not the only features which give an individual building or a whole street a distinctive visual character. Architectural details are usually of considerable importance: the doorcases, window frames and cornices are essential elements in the Georgian buildings in the town centre. The pedimented and columned doorcase on number 22 High Street is a fine example.

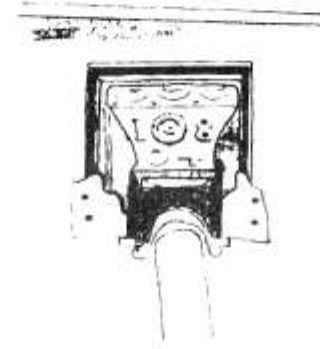
Number 108 High Street, a basically mid-17th century building, has a carriage arch which adds considerably to its visual and historical interest.

Several of the public houses have hanging signs suspended at right angles to their facades (the Chequers, White Hart and Red Lion) and these give added interest to the High Street. The clock on the church tower, with its decorative iron support, is a detail which increases the role of the building as a focal point.

The detailed surrounds of the buildings are often made up of attractive features - the iron railings and gate and the trees in front of Burghstead Lodge or the gate and steps approaching number 50 Chapel Street.



22 High Street
Georgian doorcase.



46 High Street
Decorated rainwater head.

Architectural Details.

7.8 Trees

Trees give additional interest to a street scene and provide a visual 'relief' as soft elements in a hard setting of buildings, tarmacadam and paving. There are very few trees in the High Street; two to the north of the Church and a group in front of Burghstead Lodge. In Chapel Street there is an attractive group of trees in the old burial ground while in the alleys and lanes leading from the High Street trees and bushes enhance the views looking out of the street.

An approach has been made to the Council by the Billericay Round Table to sponsor a tree planting scheme in the town centre, and three sites are at present under consideration.

7.9 Ground Treatment

This is an important townscape element and is often

overlooked: the gravel and cobbling on the alleyways and driveways within the town centre have an attractive colour and texture when compared with the dull tarmacadam of the carriageway which is the dominant ground cover in the High Street.

It is most unfortunate that the area around the war memorial and between it and the church is tarred, rather than paved or covered in stone setts. Such a ground cover, coupled with the removal of the wooden posts and broken chain, would do much to improve the appearance of this "identity area".

The Council are at present in negotiation with the Parochial Church Council, the British Legion and other local organisations with a view to tidying up this area. The proposals include the resiting of the War Memorial at Sun Corner, the provision of a new

door in the north wall of the church, the removal of the car parking area in front of the Chequers Public House, the tidying up of the present clutter of signs, lamp posts, GPO wires and posts, etc, and the re-surfacing with paving, setts, etc., of the sites of the War Memorial and car park.

7.10 Street Furniture

The street furniture in Billericay leaves much to be desired from the urban design viewpoint.

The need for maximum illumination has necessitated the use of column-mounted lights which are out of scale with the street; they are higher than many of the buildings. In addition the positioning of the columns for maximum illumination on such a through route takes precedence over the damaging visual effect

of the columns on adjacent structures. The opening of the Inner Relief Road may result in the High Street losing its present traffic status. This will enable the columns to be removed and a wall-mounted lighting system more sympathetic to the visual amenity to be installed. Alternatively, if the status of the High Street remains, it may be possible to provide high pressure sodium floodlighting giving the required high standard of lighting with slim lamp posts which can be properly and unobtrusively sited, preferably against front walls.

In addition to the street lighting, the GPO telephone posts and wires are obtrusive features which detract from the townscape quality of the area. The GPO are, however, gradually removing these from the town centre and placing the lines underground.

7.11 Advertisements and Lettering

Generally speaking control of these features on traditional and new buildings has avoided any adverse impact on the street scene. There is only one poorly placed large advertisement in the town centre - near the northern end of Chapel Street. It is unfortunately visible from the area in front of the Chequers Inn.

7.12 Vistas

Due to its siting on a ridge in undulating countryside, central Billericay contains a number of viewpoints which afford vistas across the surrounding landscape. Examples include the viewpoints behind the Chequers Inn, at the junction of Chapel Street and Hillside Road, and on the driveway of 'Longmead', off Chapel Street.

7.13 Townscape change: Problems in preserving and enhancing the character of the centre of Billericay

Commercial pressures generated by increased population, technological change and increased standards of living are a major force of change in present day central areas. The demolition of older buildings and their replacement by modern development has been prompted by a demand both for efficient shop and office units and for properties as investments. Often the conversion of traditional buildings for new purposes is expensive and the converted buildings are only suitable for a limited range of uses.

The design implications of such redevelopment have already been discussed. Billericay High Street illustrates sympathetic modern design as well as the destruction of townscape quality by buildings which are out of scale, wrongly detailed or constructed of inappropriate materials.

The decay of older structures also leads to redevelopment; buildings do wear out unless they are carefully maintained. This applies particularly to the timber framed buildings which are typical of the pre-1850 Essex tradition.

A third and most important cause of change is the widespread use of motor vehicles for personal shopping visits, journeys to work, the provision of public services and the supply of goods to shops and offices.

Motor vehicles, moving and stationary, are one of the most visually obtrusive and least pleasant features of the High Street. The relatively fast moving traffic splits the street in half and is a source of both danger

and annoyance (due to obstruction, fumes and noise) to pedestrians.

Parked vehicles line the High Street in an untidy clutter; in the area in front of the Chequers Inn a group of car parking places (usually occupied) do more than anything else to reduce the townscape quality of the space. Much car parking has, however, been provided in areas screened from view to the rear of the High Street frontages. The large car park to the rear of 96-100 High Street is particularly successful.

In addition to the traffic itself, the signs and road markings necessary to guide vehicle movement and restrict parking detract from the town centre's appearance.

7.14 Powers available for protecting the character of the town centre

Planning policies set out in local plans depend for their implementation on positive action by local authorities and on their use of the powers of planning control to guide private proposals. Most of the planning control in the town centre is the responsibility of the District Council.

Planning control of development can be used to ensure that change, when it occurs, does not lead to a further deterioration in the character of the town centre. Imaginative control, within the guidelines of a detailed local plan, can encourage the replacement of individually unimportant buildings by well-designed modern structures which can be of merit in themselves as well as being sympathetic to their townscape setting.

Advertisements on buildings or permanently placed in the street are subject to control under the Planning Acts, as is the lopping or felling of trees which have been protected by Tree Preservation Orders.

A particular control is exercised over the demolition or alteration of 'listed buildings'. These are buildings of special architectural or historic interest which have been included on statutory lists prepared by the Secretary of State for the Environment for the guidance of local planning authorities. Listed Building consent is required from the local planning authority before a Listed Building can be demolished or altered. This control exists in addition to the normal procedure of granting or refusing planning permission. Both planning permission and Listed Building consent may be required for certain proposals.

Within Conservation Areas, certain buildings, though not listed by the Secretary of State, may be scheduled by the local planning authority and cannot be demolished without the latter's consent.

Grants may be given for the repair and maintenance of buildings of architectural and historic interest.

In addition to these statutory powers, the planning authority can encourage the local highway authority and statutory undertakers to undertake their duties so as to enhance the appearance of the town centre. The gradual removal of the telephone posts and wires would be an example; these can be replaced by underground cables.

Appendix 1 at the end of the report lists the buildings of architectural and historic interest in the town centre.

Appendix 2 at the end of the report gives details of County Council booklets and pamphlets which deal with Conservation in Essex.

8. TRAFFIC

8.1 The B1007 road runs from north to south through the centre of the town, and for half a mile it forms the High Street. Here there is a certain amount of congestion, there is potentially dangerous conflict between pedestrians and traffic, and the noise, vibration, smoke and fumes detract seriously from the amenities of the shopping street. With the continued growth in car ownership and in the size of the town these conditions are likely to be exacerbated.

8.2 Two proposals initially included in the County Development Plan Review submitted to the then Minister of Housing and Local Government in 1965 were designed to alleviate these problems. The Western Bypass, linking the A127 and the A12 is now unlikely to be built before 1981. The Inner Relief Road, for which planning permission was granted in 1971 is not yet included in the road programme.

8.3 A traffic count was carried out in 1973 to establish the volume of traffic in the town, and estimates, based on these figures, were made of the number of vehicles that might be diverted from the B1007 to the proposed Western Bypass.

From these figures it appears that since only 25% of existing flows are likely to be diverted on to the proposed Western Bypass the need for the proposed Inner Relief Road is more pressing.

8.4 The proposed Inner Relief Road (and the associated Noak Hill Stage IV proposal likely to be in service in early 1975) will be required to deal with the remainder of the traffic flows. These will take traffic off the southern part of Stock Road, the High Street and Laindon Road.

8.5 The implementation of the Inner Relief Road proposal will present three basic alternative possibilities in respect of traffic in the High Street.

1. The whole of the High Street may remain open to servicing and/or parking traffic.
2. Part of the High Street may remain open to servicing and/or parking traffic.
3. The whole of the High Street may be closed to servicing and/or parking traffic.

8.6 All of these possibilities would result in an improvement in traffic conditions in the High Street. The choice of a particular alternative will not have to be made on traffic grounds alone however; rear service arrangements for shops, the costs of land acquisition and construction of rear service roads, disturbance to properties and visual effects within the High Street are all factors which need to be considered in such a choice.

8.7 Traffic Noise:

A survey of traffic noise levels at six sites in the Town Centre was made during the morning, noon and evening peak periods on a Friday in August 1973. The noise levels exceeded for 10% of the observation period (L₁₀) expressed in decibels (dBA) were as follows:-

Location	8-9am	12-2pm	5-6pm
1. Junction of High Street and Norsey Road	76	74	75
2. 1m from facade of No. 81 High Street	76	77	77
3. 1m from facade of Frizzell House	75	74	75
4. Junction of High Street and London Road	72	75	75
5. Rear of GPO Building, Chapel Street	69	72	72
6. 5m from facade of Ritz Bingo Hall, Chapel Street	68	69	70

8.8 In its Circular 10/73 "Planning and Noise", the Department of the Environment have recommended a strong presumption against permitting residential

development where the external noise level exceeds 70dBA on the L₁₀ (18 hour) scale (equivalent to 40-50dBA internally). This level of noise is the limit of what is acceptable rather than a standard of what is desirable. In fact the Wilson Committee on Noise (1963) recommended that the acceptable maximum external noise level should be 60dBA.

- 8.9 The perceived noise levels in the High Street during times of peak traffic movement are considerably higher than the Wilson Committee recommendations, since an increase of 10dB is equivalent to doubling the loudness of a noise. By this criterion, there is a traffic noise problem in the High Street area.
- 8.10 Traffic noise levels may be lowered by reducing traffic flows or by reducing the proportion of heavy vehicles in the total traffic movement. There is therefore likely to be a significant improvement when the Inner Relief

9. PUBLIC TRANSPORT - BUS SERVICES:

- 9.1 There are two major bus routes through Billericay connecting Canvey to London and Grays to Chelmsford, both of which travel via Basildon. This results in two major bus flows utilising the road system within Billericay itself - an east-west route along London Road - Sun Street - Southend Road; and a north-south route along Laindon Road - High Street - Stock Road.
- 9.2 Two other minor routes, both centering on Billericay Railway Station (the main terminus in Billericay) also stand out. The first runs north-eastwards along Norsey Road to Ramsden Heath and Wickford, and the second runs eastwards via Jacksons Lane to Outwood Common Road.
- 9.3 The net result is that the heaviest flows are along the High Street with the flows dividing at both ends along other roads e.g. along Norsey Road and Stock Road at

the northern end, and along Southend Road and Laindon Road at the southern end. A second major flow runs between Sun Corner and Mountnessing Road along the London Road, and there are fairly busy flows along Laindon Road and Southend Road to and from London and Chelmsford.

- 9.4 This funnelling of buses along the High Street is supplemented to a small extent by alternative flows. Firstly and the more important, a north-south flow using London Road, Mountnessing Road and Perry Street; and secondly a minor east-west flow (one direction only) along Hillside Road, Chapel Street and Sun Street.

- 9.5 There are no proposals at the present time for buses to use the Billericay Inner Relief Road. It is likely that the large volume of buses now using the High Street will continue to do so. If the whole or any part of

the High Street is pedestrianised in the future it would be possible to leave a bus lane.

9.6 The Relief Road will, by its alignment, affect those buses now using Chapel Street and Hillside Road, and the proposed circulatory system near the railway station will affect those buses using Stock Road. The likelihood of having a bus terminus in the vicinity of the railway station is also a matter demanding attention; it would not seem possible at first sight to have buses turning round in the High Street.

9.7 If in the long term it is necessary for buses to use the dual carriageway of the Inner Relief Road, then the most logical sites for bus lay-bys would seem to be in proximity to the proposed pedestrian underpasses, that is opposite the public convenience in Chapel Street, just north of Hillside Road, and at the back of the Chequers Public House.

RAIL SERVICES

9.8 The town of Billericay is served by the Liverpool Street to Southend Victoria line of British Railways Eastern Region. Services to London are via Shenfield where there are connections to Chelmsford and the East Coast. Services to Southend are via Wickford, Rayleigh, Hockley and Rochford.

9.9 A 20 minute service in each direction is provided during the daytime and evening off-peak periods. This service is supplemented by 16 additional commuter trains to London between 06.00 and 09.00 hours, and 13 additional trains from London between 17.00 and 20.00 hours.

9.10 The commuter services to and from London are well-used, but there is capacity for more reverse commuting to Southend. The 20 minute off-peak service provides a convenient level of service for Billericay

10. CAR PARKING Fig. 4

10.1 A car parking survey was carried out on Friday 13 July 1973. The town centre was divided into six survey areas as shown on figure 5 and consideration was given to both on-street and off-street car parking and to private car parks.

10.2 The survey showed a peak demand for 745 parking spaces. The car parking capacity then available was a total of 861 spaces; made up of 84 on-street; 303 public; 271 private and 203 private car parking spaces open to the public.

10.3 During the period of peak demand both the public car park to the rear of the Woolworth Store (80 spaces) - on the western side of the High Street, and the large public car park on the eastern side of the High Street (149 spaces), were used in excess of their capacity,

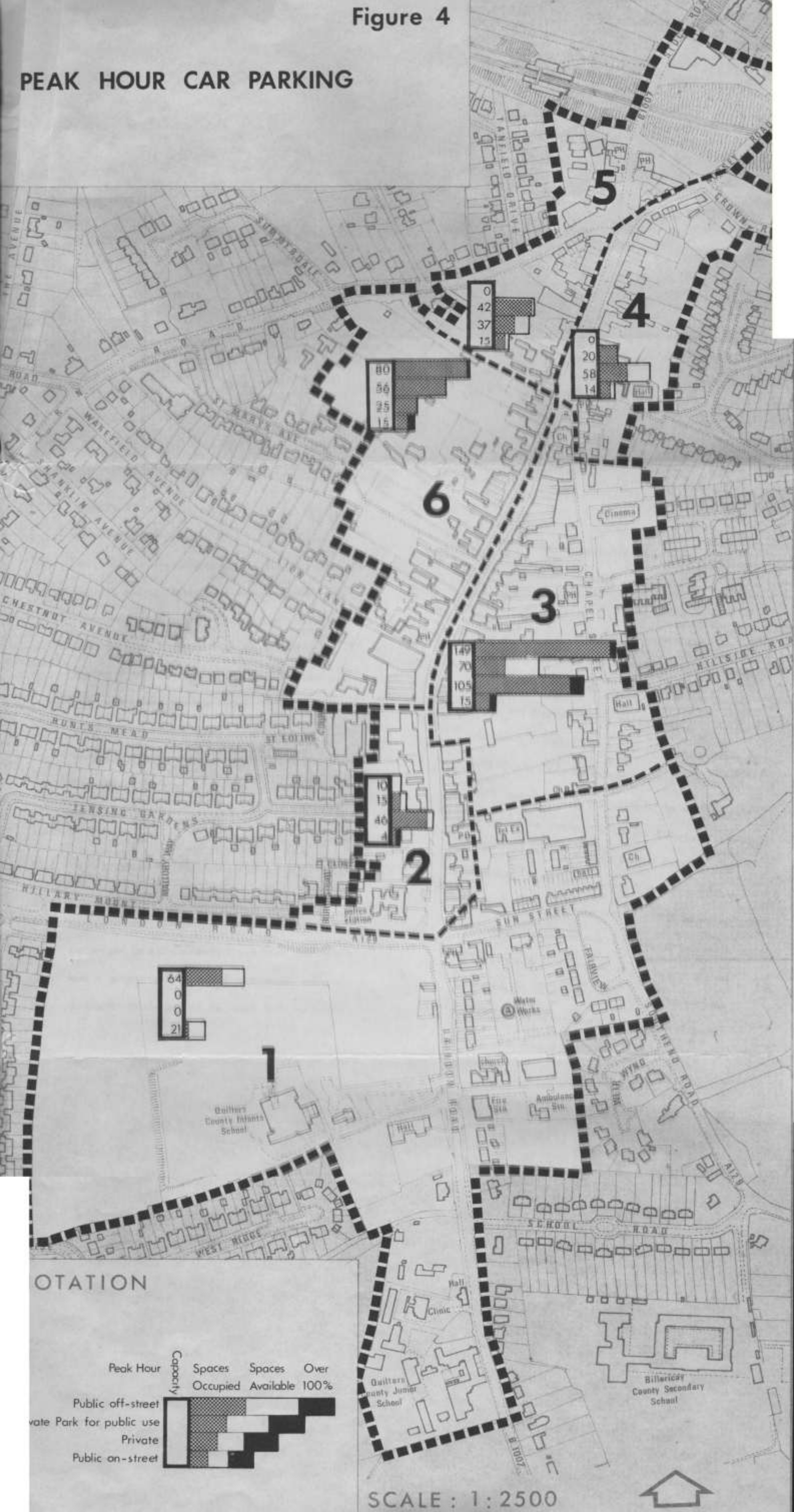
that is there were more cars in the car park than marked out spaces. In addition, the private car park open to the public at the rear of the Co-operative Store was also used to capacity for two periods during the afternoon. On average, the public car parks and the private car parks open to the public were only used to 60.0% of their capacity throughout the day. However, during the peak periods of 9.30 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. and 2.00 p.m. to 4.00 p.m. they were used to 86.5% and 77.5% of their capacity respectively.

10.4 There are spaces for 271 cars in purely private off-street parks, and a maximum of 234 spaces were used at the time of peak demand.

10.5 At the time of the survey about 86% of the cars parked on-street were there for one hour or less. The main problems revealed by the survey were the overparking

Figure 4

PEAK HOUR CAR PARKING



in the High Street and the uneven use of the public car parks throughout the day. With a 30 minute waiting restriction on the central part of the High Street (Areas 3 and 6), 16% of the vehicles parked were there for more than 30 minutes. The parking and waiting of cars along the High Street conflict with the heavy stream of traffic along the B1007, and at a point where there is greatest concentration of pedestrians. These unsatisfactory conditions are further complicated by commercial vehicles parking on the High Street because many of the shops lack rear service facilities.

- 10.6 Only 8.75% of the 1246 vehicles parked on the High Street during the period of the survey were commercial vehicles. However, in a preliminary survey carried out for a whole week, it was found that there was a greater percentage of commercial vehicles during the early part of the week than the latter;

with Tuesday being the day when the largest number of commercial vehicles were in the town centre.

- 10.7 The survey indicated that at certain peak periods during the day there is a need for extra off-street parking but that for the majority of the time there is sufficient capacity in the car parks for all vehicles that wish to park. The present situation, however, will be affected by the reorganisation of traffic movements and parking arrangements in the town centre following the construction of the Billericay Inner Relief Road and also with the general increase in car ownership. Extra parking capacity may be available for the future either on the area of land to the rear of the shops on the western side of the High Street, north of the present public car park, or on the area of land on the eastern side of the High Street, north of the Post Office; or alternatively on a number of smaller sites on both sides of the High Street.

- 10.8 Providing access to extra car parking areas on the Western side of the High Street will require either a breakage in the High Street frontage and consequent damage to the townscape, or an increase in traffic on Western Road, which is primarily a residential distributor. Neither of these possibilities are really desirable, but there is little doubt that such extra car parking areas will be required here.

11. SERVICING Fig. 5

11.1 The servicing of shops and other business premises in Billericay often conflicts with the car parking arrangements. The majority of shops in the High Street are served from the front but many of those which have rear service areas also have access to such areas from the High Street. These accesses are often very narrow and are barely wide enough for the large delivery vehicles now in common use and can thus cause delays in traffic on the High Street when trying to enter. Most of the rear service areas are also used for parking.

11.2 A rear service road would provide some solution to these problems, although it is neither practicable nor desirable to provide such a road for the full length of the High Street. There are too many and often conflicting interests involved in doing this. However, the western side of the High Street could be provided with a rear service road north of Lion Lane, with access to

the northern end either from the High Street or Western Road. Similarly a rear service road could be provided on the eastern side of the High Street south of the Church. This would give access to those rear service areas which at present are served directly from Chapel Street and will be cut off by the Billericay Inner Relief Road.

11.3 Rear service roads would also decrease the number of accesses needed onto the High Street itself, and provide for future pedestrianisation of the High Street around and to the south of the Church.

SERVICING

NOTATION

- Premises without rear serving facilities
- Premises with rear serving facilities
- Rear service areas
- P Private parking areas
- CP Public car parks

SCALE : 1 : 2500

NOTATION

	Premises without rear serving facilities
	Premises with rear serving facilities
	Rear service areas
	Private parking areas
	Public car parks

- # NOTATION
- | | |
|--|--|
|  | Premises without rear serving facilities |
|  | Premises with rear serving facilities |
|  | Rear service areas |
|  | Private parking areas |
|  | Public car parks |

SCALE : 1 : 2500

12. SHOPS - EXISTING DEVELOPMENT

- 12.1 The Town Centre serves the town of Billericay and its surrounding area both for day to day needs (convenience goods) and for consumer durables. However, a considerable proportion of the retail expenditure of Billericay residents is spent elsewhere at centres such as Basildon, Southend and London.

CONVENIENCE GOODS

Groceries & Provisions, Food, Confectionery, etc.

DURABLE GOODS

Clothing, Footwear, Household, General etc.

TOTAL RETAIL

SERVICE TRADES

Hairdressers, Catering, Laundry, Repairs, etc.

Gas & Electricity Showrooms

TOTAL RETAIL & SERVICE TRADES

Vacant Premises

TOTAL FLOORSPACE

- 12.2 A survey carried out in November 1972 established that there was a total gross shopping floorspace* of 17,714 square metres (190,690 sq.ft.) in the Town Centre. This total is made up as shown in the table below:-

No. of Shops	Gross Floorspace m ² (sq.ft.)	Net Floorspace m ² (sq.ft.)
22	4,889 (52,626)	3,011 (31,764)
59	8,067 (86,837)	4,866 (50,568)
81	12,956 (139,463)	7,877 (82,332)
20	4,026 (43,351)	
2	259 (2,786)	
103	17,241 (185,600)	
4	473 (5,090)	
107 units	17,714m ² (190,690sq.ft.) gross	

*Gross floorspace is the total floor area used in connection with retailing, including storage space, stairs, toilets, etc.
Net floorspace is the usable retail space measured internally, excluding storage space, stairs, toilets, etc.

12.3 The proportion of convenience goods to durables is lower than is generally found in towns having similar total retail floorspace, and this is emphasised when Billericay is compared with the neighbouring centres of Wickford and Rayleigh which have a similar total space provision.

12.4 In addition to the $17,714\text{m}^2$ of gross retail floorspace available in the town centre, there is another $1,340\text{m}^2$ committed in outstanding planning permissions, giving a total of $19,054\text{m}^2$.

PROJECTED NEEDS:

12.5 The projection of shopping floorspace needs in the Town Centre to 1981 is problematical because so many variables cannot be quantified in the calculations. Calculations of projected retail floorspace needs for a district centre such as Billericay which is subject to competition from other larger centres are at best only

indications of the order of change that may be expected, given certain assumptions as to the distribution of available floorspace among the various retail groups and the amount of trade lost to competing centres.

12.6 This loss of trade to other centres will be determined by a variety of factors relating to the position of the centre in the shopping hierarchy (i.e. regional, district or local) and the comparative advantages of the centre in relation to other available centres:

- (a) Accessibility to the centres by public and private transport for the resident population
- (b) Convenience of the centres in terms of car parking, vehicular and pedestrian movement, grouping of shops, etc.
- (c) The range of goods and services available and the competitiveness of prices
- (d) The ability of the centre to expand to meet

future needs will affect rates of relative growth of Billericay and other centres in the future

12.7 The existing rate of trade loss has been estimated for each retail group and projections have been made of shopping floorspace requirements at 1981 using four different assumptions as to the distribution between groups and the trade lost to other centres:

(a) No change in distribution between groups, existing rates of trade loss

Increase in floorspace:

Convenience Goods	50%
Durable Goods	30%
All Retail	37%

(b) No change in distribution between groups, higher rates of trade loss

Increase in floorspace:

Convenience Goods	33%
Durable Goods	15%
All Retail	22%

(c) Redistribution between groups to give greater emphasis to convenience goods

Increase in floorspace:

Convenience Goods	69%
Durable Goods	15%
All Retail	35%

(d) Lower rates of trade loss in convenience goods giving an overall redistribution between groups but no diminution of durable goods sales

Increase in floorspace:

Convenience Goods	69%
Durable Goods	30%
All retail	45%

12.8 These four assumptions have been chosen as being indicative of the range of options available for the future of the Town Centre as a district shopping centre, and these may be summarised in terms of the additional floorspace requirements at 1981 as follows:

Low rate of increase	- 20-30% (b)
Medium rate of increase	- 30-40% (a) & (c)
High rate of increase	- 40-50% (d)

- 12.9 There is capacity within the area allocated for shopping purposes in the Review Town Map for an extension to the present shopping floorspace of some 20-25% by intensification of shopping uses in the existing frontage development. If a greater increase is to be achieved, the additional floorspace can only be provided by development in depth or by backland development.

13. OFFICES - EXISTING DEVELOPMENT

13.1 The majority of office employment in Billericay is located in the Town Centre. Recent studies carried out in connection with the preparation of the County Structure Plan, South Essex Part have shown that the composition of office employment in the Town Centre, and the approximate floorspace provision in each employment group are as set out in the table below:-

13.2 The dominance of the insurance, banking and finance category in these totals is due to the presence of Frizzell House, which accommodates a firm of insurance brokers and accounts for just over 20% of the total office floorspace in the Town Centre.

13.3 With the exception of Frizzell House and the Public Offices, the office accommodation is largely composed

GROUP	EMPLOYMENT			% of Total	No. of establishments	FLOORSPACE		
	Male	Female	Total			m ²	(sq. ft.)	% of Total
Insurance, Banking & Finance	170	282	452	54	12	3,880	(41,800)	39
Professional & Scientific Services	43	119	162	19	21	2,580	(27,800)	26
Miscellaneous Services	58	97	155	18	13	1,840	(19,800)	18
Public Administration	65	9	74	9	5	1,740	(18,700)	17
TOTAL	336	507	843	100%	51	10,040m ²	(108,100)	100%

of small units of between 100 and 200m² (10,000-20,000 sq.ft.) floorspace. There are 21 office uses occupying ground floor premises within the shopping frontage, mainly comprising bankers and estate agents, sometimes with first floor offices above, whereas other types of offices are generally located above shops.

- 13.4 Redevelopment of shopping premises in the High Street has generally included purpose-built office development above. Approximately 40% of the total office accommodation is purpose built, the remainder being in converted premises.

FUTURE PROVISION:

- 13.5 Some expansion of office provision within the Town Centre is expected by 1981. There is a potential pool of office workers in Billericay created by the number of office workers resident in the town who commute to other employment centres, particularly London. To

date new office accommodation in the Town Centre has been let fairly quickly, and there is no reason to suppose that difficulty would arise in letting some additional office floorspace. However, the determining factor governing the amount of office development that can take place is the availability of sites within the structural framework to be provided by the Town Centre Plan.

- 13.6 The area between St Ediths Lane and London Road is allocated primarily for office use in the Review Town Map. Frizzell House has been built in this area and further office development could be permitted.

- 13.7 In the remainder of the Town Centre the amount of new office floorspace will be largely dependent on the strategy adopted for the provision of additional retail floorspace since the majority of any new office space is likely to be provided at first and second floor levels above shops.

14. SUMMARY Fig. 6

14.1 The County Development Plan Review, of which the Review Town Map for Basildon Urban District forms a constituent part, contains the following statement of principles which have provided clear guidelines for decisions relating to the control of development and redevelopment in the town:

- (a) To provide for a substantial growth of population in the Urban District outside Basildon New Town, mainly in Billericay and Wickford, from about 35,000 in 1961 to about 65,600 in 1981.
- (b) To maintain the surroundings of both towns and the intervening areas between them, and between each and the New Town, as part of the Metropolitan Green Belt.
- (c) To provide for a growth of employment concurrently with the growth of population.
- (d) To secure a more efficient use of land within the areas already generally or partly built-up,

including the redevelopment of areas of bad layout or obsolete development.

- (e) To make better provision for the main flows of through traffic.

14.2 The following statement of policy relating to the principal shopping and business areas at Billericay and Wickford is also incorporated in the County Development Plan Review:

- (a) To provide safe, convenient and pleasant conditions for persons working in and visiting the area;
- (b) To separate the main flows of vehicular traffic from those of pedestrians;
- (c) To make greater provision for car parking and to provide for service roads and for the loading and unloading of vehicles off the highways.
- (d) To limit the extent of shopping frontages on the main through traffic routes.

Figure 6

CONSTRAINTS



NOTATION

-  Buildings listed as being of Architectural or Historic interest
-  Redeveloped sites, sites cleared for Redevelopment & unimplemented Planning permissions
-  Inner Relief Road & Noak Hill Stage IV
-  Conservation Area

SCALE : 1 : 2500



14.3 It is the intention of both the County and District Councils that proposals for the town centre should, following full consultation with the general public, be formulated within the framework of the above principles and policy. The Town Centre Plan, which will eventually follow this Appraisal, will introduce a more detailed policy for the control of development in the central area. The plan will seek to provide solutions to the problems discussed in this report and the main points can be briefly summarised as follows:

14.4 SHOPPING

It is estimated that the amount of additional floorspace required by 1981 will be in the order of 20-50%. The new floorspace can be accommodated within the High Street frontage if growth does not exceed 25%. Above this there will be a need for development in depth or backland development.

14.5 OFFICES

Large scale office development is not anticipated, although some expansion of floorspace can be expected. Such expansion may be accommodated in the area to the south of St Ediths Lane, allocated primarily for office use in the Review Town Map, and the rest may be provided in association with shopping redevelopment in the High Street.

14.6 TRAFFIC

- (a) The present congestion in the High Street may be virtually eliminated by the construction of the Inner Relief Road.
- (b) The Inner Relief Road should also provide improved conditions for shoppers and will afford an opportunity for a revision of existing parking and servicing arrangements.

- (c) The future growth of traffic beyond the plan period could be dealt with by the proposed Western Bypass.

14.7 PARKING

- (a) Off-street public car parking is only just sufficient to meet present demands and at peak times public car parks are loaded beyond their capacity.
- (b) On-street parking and private car parks for public use are unlikely to be provided and it may be necessary for new public car parks to be made available in the near future.
- (c) Feasible locations for new public car parks are either an extension to the park on the eastern side of the High Street or a new park to the north of that to the west of the High Street.

14.8 SERVICING

- (a) There are considerable problems in providing rear servicing facilities.
- (b) Rear servicing facilities would require access from either the High Street, the northern end of Western Road or Chapel Street/Inner Relief Road. None of these would be entirely satisfactory.

APPENDIX 1

Buildings of architectural and historic interest in the town centre of Billericay

The townscape character of the centre of Billericay is founded upon the presence of a number of traditional buildings of quality. If it is desired to retain the character of the area it is not only important to ensure that new buildings are sympathetic to their setting. It is also essential to retain the traditional buildings as the basis of the street scene.

Additionally, of course, the vernacular buildings have an intrinsic historical and architectural interest.

1. Buildings included on the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural and Historic Interest compiled by the Secretary of State for the Environment.

These buildings are all protected from alteration or demolition. Any works involving the buildings require listed building con-

sent from the District Council.

Chapel Street

No. 1

16th century. Structurally a part of the Chequers Inn (No. 42 High St.).

Nos. 3, 5, 7 and 9.

Originally a single hall with gabled crosswing of about 1450. A group of properties of considerable interest and townscape value.

High Street

No. 12

Part of a 16th/17th century house.

No. 22

Original building of 16th century. External walls of brick added during the 18th century: the front is an attractive example of Georgian architecture with a pedimented porch

supported on attached Tuscan columns.

No. 24

Mid 18th century with a front in the 'Grecian' style of about 1800.

No. 38 and No. 40

Basically 16th century although the front has been much altered.

No. 41

17th century with an 18th century brick front.

No. 42

The Chequers Inn.

16th century. A good example of a central hall with projecting cross wings.

No. 43

The front is 18th century but the remainder of the building is modern.

No. 44

The Parish Church.

18th century nave with a fine late 15th century brick tower.

No. 51

Mid 18th century. A fine Georgian brick house setback from the High Street.

No. 57, No. 59, No. 61

16th/17th century: the three properties all form parts of a house of central hall type with gabled cross wings.

No. 63

16th/17th century with a Georgian front.

No. 72

16th century. A part of a larger house..

No. 74

18th/19th century. A Georgian bow shop front remains in the facade.

No. 91

Mid 16th century. Central hall and cross wings.

No. 98

Mid 18th century.

No. 100

18th century.

No. 106

Early 18th century.

2. Other buildings of architectural and historic interest
not included on the Statutory List.

High Street

14, 16, 18, 45, 46, 47, 65, 67, 75, 77, 79, 93, 95, 107,
 111, 113.

Chapel Street

11, 13, 50

Norsey Road

1, 3, 5; 2 to 18 (even)

Sun Street

19-39 (odd)

No. 108

Mid 17th century. Central block with cross wings and a
 carriage arch in the northern cross wing.

No. 133

18th century.

No. 138. White Hart Inn. 18th century.

Appendix 2

County Council publications dealing with Conservation in Essex.

1. 'Conservation in Essex'

A policy statement and an explanation of the purpose of Conservation Areas.

2. 'Action by Local Amenity Societies'

Sets out the ways in which the planning authority and local amenity groups can co-operate and gives a list of local, regional and national societies.

3. 'Street Furniture'

Examines the problem of street lighting, road signs, telephone posts, etc. in relation to urban design.

4. 'Historic Buildings'

Gives details of the 'listing' procedure, the protection given to historic buildings, etc. and contains some structural and design notes regarding historic buildings.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Basildon Urban District Council:

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Officers of the Engineer & Surveyor's Department.

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Plans are based upon the Ordnance Survey map with the sanction of the Controller of H.M. Stationery Office.

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April 1974.