

CHAPTER 7: EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION 3/4

- 7.1. This chapter sets out the Plan's policies relating to business (class B1), industrial (class B2) and warehousing (class B8) premises and proposed developments within the Borough. The Chapter also contains a policy on hotel development. The retail, leisure and community services sectors also provide a significant proportion of employment within the Borough and policies covering these uses are dealt with elsewhere within the Plan. The term "employment uses" referred to in this chapter does not include the retail, leisure and community services sectors.

DESCRIPTION OF THE BOROUGH AND RECENT TRENDS

- 7.2. Woking's offices, industrial units and warehouses tend to be concentrated within the urban areas of the Borough. The majority of the Borough's larger office premises are located in the Town centre with a secondary centre in West Byfleet. Many of the larger industrial and warehouse buildings are located within estates such as Woking Business Park and Genesis Business Park in Sheerwater, the Lansbury Estate in Knaphill, Oyster Lane/Abbott Close in Byfleet and the Goldsworth Park Trading Estate. In addition to these larger employment generating premises there are a variety of other employment generating properties in other locations across the Borough.
- 7.3. Census of Population figures show that between 1981 and 1991 the number of economically active residents within Woking increased from 39,550 to 45,500, an increase of nearly 13%. Over the same period the number of people that worked in Woking increased from 30,160 to 38,390, an increase of over 27 %. This growth comprises of an increase in local economic activity and a large amount of additional in-commuting into the Borough. A high proportion of this commuting (approximately 80 %) is by car and this puts intense pressure on the local infrastructure.
- 7.4. During the recession period between 1991 and 1993 the number of people that work in the Borough fell to approximately 36,800. Unemployment during this time reached a peak of 7 %. The adverse effects of the recession brought to light the need to positively address issues facing the local economy and resulted in the Council initiating various projects relating to economic development. Since 1993 there has been a very significant fall in the local and county unemployment rates. The figure for Woking in May 1999 was 0.9 %. This suggests that the number working within the Borough is currently rising. Whilst, the unemployment rate for the Borough is generally low, the rate remains higher in the Central & Maybury and Sheerwater wards.

- 7.5 The Woking economy is very much dependant upon office based employment. Within the Town Centre there has been a net increase of some 81,000 sq. metres of office space between 1981 and 1991. During the recessionary period the rate of new development declined and the amount of vacant space rose. However as the economy recovered during the mid 1990's the amount of vacant stock fell and the pressure to develop new accommodation is expected to rise in the late 1990s. In addition The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order allows the change of use of B2 (industrial) and B8 (warehousing) floorspace to B1 use without the need for planning permission.
- 7.6 There are a number of sites in the Borough, particularly within the Town Centre which currently have, or have had, the benefit of planning permission for office development. In additional there are sites for which a resolution has been made to grant consent subject to a legal agreement being entered into. If these sites were to be developed they would provide an additional 23,000 sq. metres of B1(a) floorspace with the potential to generate approximately 950 office based jobs. As at November 1998 there is also approximately 46,000 sq. metres of employment generating premises (B1, B2 and B8) on the market which could accommodate approximately 1,700 workers.
- 7.7 In summary, Woking has fared well in providing job generating properties during the 1980's and early 90's. Whilst the recession had an adverse effect, the economy has been improving since 1993. Forecasts predict that the economically activity population for Woking will rise from 45,200 in 1991 to a figure of 46,000 in the year 2001 and fall back to 45,200 in 2006. Bearing in mind the insignificant increase in the economically active population, the amount of available floorspace and unimplemented planning consents, there would appear to be no justification to allow for a significant amount of employment generating development. An over provision of floor space, particularly office property, is likely to encourage in-commuting and increase pressure on the local infrastructure. However there remains a need to safeguard employment provision and to provide a flexible and diverse range of employment opportunities to serve the local population. There is a need to encourage the provision of small starter units particularly in areas where unemployment is relatively high such as Maybury and Sheerwater.

NATIONAL/REGIONAL CONTEXT

- 7.8 The policies in this Plan are guided by Government guidance in the form of Regional Planning Guidance (RPG's) and Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG's). Those of relevance to the Employment and Economic Development Chapter are listed below.
- 7.9 *RPG9 - Regional Planning Guidance for the South East* advocates planning policies to make work places more accessible and advises that policies should ensure that new, non-traditional work activities can be accommodated. In the case of Surrey, RPG9 recommends that a reducing rate of economic development is appropriate bearing in mind the needs of the market and changes to the local economy since the late 1980's.
- 7.10 *PPG4 - Industrial and Commercial Development and Small Firms* encourages continued economic development in a way that is compatible with environmental objectives including the need to minimise car trips. It states that development plan policies should provide for choice and flexibility and aim to ensure that there is sufficient land available which is readily capable of development and well served by infrastructure. In relation to small firms the Guidance stresses that development plans should not seek unreasonably to restrict commercial and industrial developments of an appropriate scale in residential areas provided they do not adversely effect residential amenity.
- 7.11 *PPG12 - Development Plans and Regional Planning Guidance* stresses the importance of economic considerations such as revitalising and broadening the local economy when drawing up local plan policies. Other factors should include socio-economic factors, such as car-ownership and unemployment levels plus the move in economic activity from a manufacturing to a service base.
- 7.12. *PPG13 - Transport* is concerned with reducing the need to travel and recommends measures such as directing new employment intensive uses in urban centres well served by public transport and seeking the juxtaposition of employment and residential uses so people have increasing opportunities to work near their homes.

COUNTY PLANNING CONTEXT

- 7.13. The Surrey Structure Plan 1994 contains six policies relating to industrial and commercial development provision that provides the strategic framework for the Borough. These policies state that the economy of the County will be maintained and renewed primarily through the re-use of land already in industrial/commercial use. As such the Plan seeks to safeguard suitably located existing industrial/commercial land. The Structure Plan also requires local planning authorities to keep under review the need for land to maintain and renew the economy and to identify land for development where necessary. The policies of the Structure Plan also highlight the need to consider issues such as

housing provision and demands on infrastructure when assessing whether industrial/commercial development is sustainable. Support is also given to the development needs of business which can benefit the County's economy.

- 7.14 *The County Council's Economic Strategy* echoes the Structure Plan in seeking the maintenance and renewal of a sustainable economy.

OTHER COUNCIL POLICIES

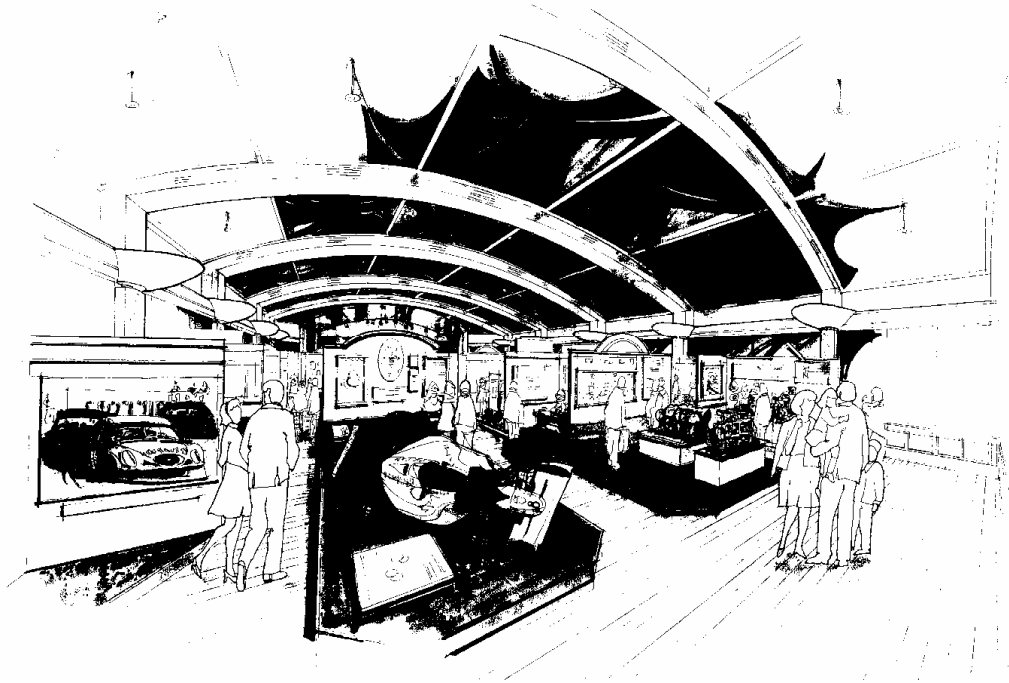
Economic Development Plan

- 7.15 The Council's Economic Development Plan for Woking is a document that has been produced since 1993 and which is annually reviewed. The Plan sets out the Council's strategy in relation to economic development and contains aims and policies that constitute material considerations when dealing with planning applications and appeals. The current Plan includes the following aims: to support and diversify the Borough's economic basis, to provide help and support to small firms and to develop measures which alleviate the problems of the economically disadvantaged. The Plan does not seek to encourage significant growth in employment for its own sake, but rather a diversification of the economy. The Plan also includes a review of the economic situation of the Borough which provides information useful for monitoring purposes.

OBJECTIVES FOR EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- 7.16 The Council's overall strategy for the provision of employment generating development and economic development needs to reflect the above policy context. The planning objectives must also be drawn up in the light of recent trends and provide for the future needs of the Borough.
- 7.17 The growth of Woking as an employment centre during the 1980's assisted in providing jobs for a growing local economically active population. It is envisaged that during the 1990's the economically active population will rise slightly and then fall back to current levels by 2006. Without an adequate local labour supply, significant amounts of new employment generating floor space could lead to increasing in-commuting. This would put undue pressure on local infrastructure, increase demand for local housing and subsequently threaten open space sites within the urban area and the Green Belt. Consequently, there is considered to be little justification to provide for large scale economic growth.
- 7.18 The Local Planning Authority has a responsibility to maintain and renew the local economy where appropriate. In Woking where the economy is highly reliant on office based businesses, the Council considers that the encouragement of job diversification will provide a healthier, more recession resistant economy. This diversification will mean the provision of a range of size and type of employment generating property. It is important to note that

policies within other chapters of the Plan (e.g. Leisure, Recreation and the Arts) will assist in the diversification of the economy.



COMMERCE 1996

- 7.19 The diversification of the economy, its maintenance and renewal needs to be achieved without harm to the environment and, where possible, with the benefit of environmental and/or townscape improvements. It is recognised that the re-use and redevelopment of existing sites is a way in which the aims for the economy can be most successfully achieved. The redevelopment of well located commercial/industrial properties that are, by reason of their nature, difficult to let or sell, will generally be regarded as prime development sites.
- 7.20 The above factors and aspirations are recognised in the following key objective:

The Council will seek to secure a healthy and more diverse local economy, principally through making the best use of existing industrial and commercial land, and will not make provision for significant employment growth.

- 7.21 The policies within this chapter have been developed in the light of this aim and seek to achieve the following objectives:
1. to enable economic growth compatible with the Council's economic strategy, environmental and transport policies;

2. to permit development on existing suitably located commercial, industrial and warehousing sites that assists in the diversification, maintenance or renewal of the local economy;
 3. to resist the loss of suitably located commercial, industrial and warehouse land to other uses;
 4. to help small firms by seeking the provision of appropriately located small business/industrial units, starter units and managed workspace premises.
- 7.22 In additional to this chapter, policies are included within the Natural Environment, Built Environment and Movement chapters which address the first and third of these objectives relating to environmental considerations. The Town Centre Chapter contains site specific policies on employment generating developments.

POLICIES

3/4

EMP1 GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE URBAN AREA WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED:

- (i) THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT WOULD BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICIES EMP2-5, AND WTC9; AND
- (ii) THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT WOULD NOT RESULT IN A MATERIALLY ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE ENVIRONMENT OR AMENITY OF AN AREA DUE TO

- § NOISE GENERATION; OR
- § AIR OR WATER POLLUTION; OR
- § GLARE FROM ASSOCIATED LIGHT SOURCES; OR
- § VIBRATION; OR
- § DUST AND SOOT GENERATION; OR
- § ON-STREET PARKING; OR
- § TRAFFIC GENERATION.

DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD EXACERBATE ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH AN EXISTING B1, B2 OR B8 SITE WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.

JUSTIFICATION

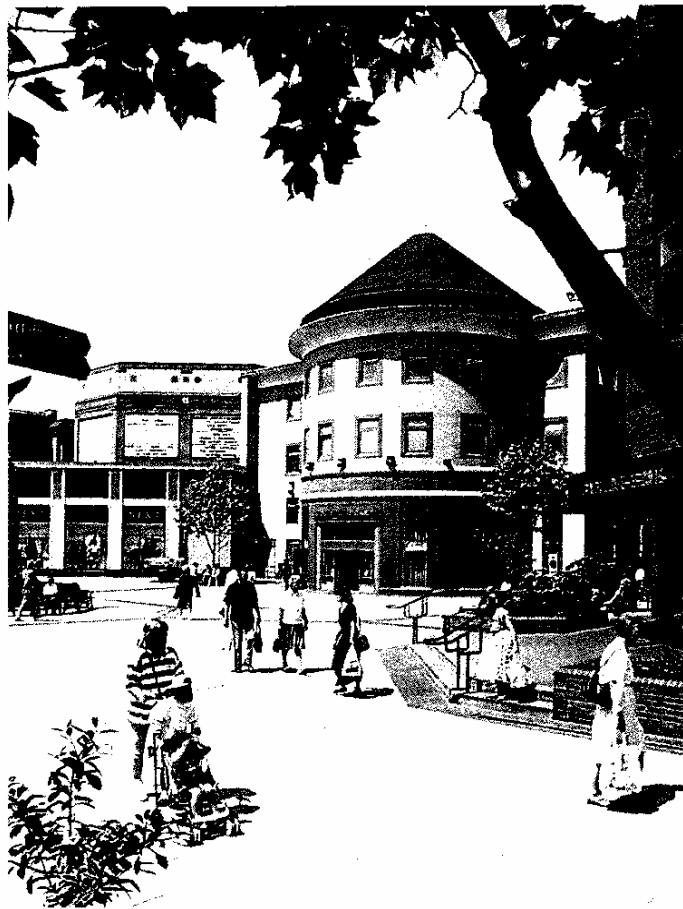
- 7.23 This policy sets out factors that will be general considerations when dealing with any planning proposal for employment development within the urban area which is taken to include all uses in Classes B1 - B8 of the Use Classes Order 1987 (as amended). A need exists to allow development that maintains or renews the economy and this policy permits this whilst resisting development that would cause harm to environment or amenity of the Borough. This policy also seeks to ensure that applications fulfil the Council's aspirations in promoting sustainable development and minimising the effects of development on the environment.
- 7.24 When assessing applications the Council will seek advice on, and take account of, the environmental implications of proposals. In order to assist in the assessment of the environmental impact of proposals, the Council will, where appropriate, request an Environmental Assessment to accompany applications. The Council will refer to the provisions of the Town and Country Planning

(Assessment of Environmental Effects) Regulations 1988 (as amended and extended) when deciding on the need for an Environmental Assessment.

- 7.25 Where it is considered that detrimental effects will occur as a result of a proposed development the Council will firstly investigate whether appropriate planning conditions could overcome the problems. Such conditions could include a restriction on operating hours or the provision of adequate sound proofing. Also legal agreements entered into under the provisions of Town and Country Planning legislation may assist in overcoming problems associated with a proposed scheme.

WOKING TOWN CENTRE

- 7.26 Employment policies relating to development in the town centre are set out in policies WTC9 to WTC12 of Chapter 12, 'Woking Town Centre'.



TOWN CENTRE

DEVELOPMENT OUTSIDE WOKING TOWN CENTRE

EMP2 Ľ NEW BUSINESS (CLASS B1) DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE DISTRICT AND LOCAL CENTRES

LIMITED BUSINESS (CLASS B1) DEVELOPMENT WILL BE PERMITTED IN THE DISTRICT AND LOCAL CENTRES PROVIDED:

- (i) IT WOULD NOT CAUSE DEMONSTRABLE HARM TO THE CHARACTER OR AMENITY OF THE CENTRE; AND
- (ii) IT WOULD COMPLY WITH THE GENERAL DESIGN CRITERIA AS SET OUT IN POLICY BE1; AND
- (iii) IT WOULD BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RELEVANT POLICIES ON CHANGE OF USE WITHIN THE SHOPPING CHAPTER.
- (iv) THE PROPOSAL DOES NOT RESULT IN THE LOSS OF LAND OR BUILDINGS PROTECTED BY OTHER POLICIES IN THIS PLAN

JUSTIFICATION

7.27 The District and Local Centres as designated on the Proposals Map are suitable locations for a limited amount of B1 development. These areas are generally well served by public transport and the provision of new business premises can assist in improving the vitality of the Centres. However, the policy does not allow large scale office development as this is likely to have an adverse effect on the character of the centres and would act against the Council's objective to reduce reliance on office based employment. Whilst 300 sq. m. of new floorspace will generally be the upper limit of what is acceptable in District Centres, development to provide larger areas of floorspace may exceptionally be appropriate in Knaphill or West Byfleet provided there is no adverse effect on the character of the village.

7.28 The local centres are smaller and contain a more limited range of services and consequently have less potential for additional B1 development. None the less B1 development can make a positive economic contribution to the diversification of these centres and limited additional floorspace will be supported although it is unlikely that development above 150 sq. m. would be appropriate.

EMP3 Y NEW BUSINESS (CLASS B1) DEVELOPMENT IN THE URBAN AREA

OUTSIDE WOKING TOWN CENTRE AND THE DISTRICT AND LOCAL CENTRES DEVELOPMENT TO PROVIDE BUSINESS (CLASS B1) FLOORSPACE WILL BE PERMITTED IN THE INDUSTRIAL AREAS AS SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP OR ON SITES IN THE URBAN AREA WITH ESTABLISHED EMPLOYMENT USE RIGHTS PROVIDED THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA ARE MET :-

- (i) ANY INCREASE IN FLOORSPACE IS SMALL SCALE AND;
- (ii) DEVELOPMENT GENERATING A SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN VISITOR NUMBERS OVER THAT GENERATED BY THE EXISTING USE WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE THE SITE IS WELL LOCATED NEAR PUBLIC TRANSPORT, OR ADEQUATE ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION INITIATIVES ARE PROVIDED AS PART OF THE DEVELOPMENT.

JUSTIFICATION

- 7.29 The Plan aims to allow development which assists with the maintenance and renewal of the economy. This policy allows for small scale extensions to, or redevelopment of, sites with established B1, B2 or B8 use rights for B1 development to allow the re-use of existing land in employment use. However, this policy only allows a small increase in floorspace through this type of development. The amount of additional floorspace that is created needs to be limited to protect the Borough from overheating and to reduce the reliance on office floorspace. Policies EMP2 and WTC9 aim to direct new development to areas that are well served by public transport. For this reason the policy only allows small scale increases in floorspace in the industrial areas and elsewhere in the urban area. Any proposals for increases in floorspace of over 300 sq. m. will be critically examined to ensure that they do not conflict with this objective.
- 7.30 This policy will allow the redevelopment of sites with an existing employment use or within the industrial areas as identified on the Proposals Map. The industrial areas are generally less accessible by public transport than the town and village centres and the establishment of new employment developments likely to generate a significant number of visitors would be at odds with a fundamental objective of this plan to direct such development to areas readily accessible by public transport. In accordance with policy MV3 where development would result in many additional journeys, the Council will seek information on how companies will encourage their staff to use alternative modes of transport, for example requesting company transport plans.

- 7.31 The Council also recognises the important benefits that existing businesses bring to the local economy and proposals for the expansion of existing firms will be considered sympathetically where this can be achieved without detriment to the environment or amenity of an area.

EMP4 ÿ INDUSTRIAL (CLASS B2) DEVELOPMENT

WITHIN THE INDUSTRIAL AREAS AS SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP, DEVELOPMENT TO PROVIDE INDUSTRIAL (CLASS B2) FLOORSPACE WILL BE PERMITTED, SUBJECT TO THERE BEING NO RESULTANT DEMONSTRABLE HARM TO THE ENVIRONMENT OR THE AMENITY OF THE INDUSTRIAL AREA OR ADJACENT LAND.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS ELSEWHERE IN THE URBAN AREA WILL NOT BE PERMITTED UNLESS THERE IS NO AVAILABLE SITE WITHIN A DESIGNATED INDUSTRIAL AREA AND THE CRITERIA IN POLICY EMP1 ARE MET.

JUSTIFICATION

- 7.32 The Borough, in common with the country as a whole, has seen a reduction in the dependence upon industrial sector businesses to provide employment. However in order to achieve a diverse economy it is important to encourage the provision of a range of industrial premises in suitable locations. It is envisaged that most industrial development within the Plan period will be in the industrial areas as designated on the Proposals Map and the Plan will generally allow industrial development on these sites. Elsewhere B2 development is unlikely to be allowed unless on sites currently occupied by industrial property and where amenity impact problems would not be created or exacerbated, as set out in Policy EMP1.

EMP5 ÿ WAREHOUSING AND DISTRIBUTION (CLASS B8) DEVELOPMENT

DEVELOPMENT TO PROVIDE NEW WAREHOUSING AND DISTRIBUTION FLOORSPACE (CLASS B8), INCLUDING REDEVELOPMENT AND THE PROVISION OF EXTENSIONS, WILL BE PERMITTED IN THE INDUSTRIAL AREAS AS SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP PROVIDED:

- (i) THE PROPOSAL WOULD CREATE LESS THAN 5000 SQ. M. OF FLOORSPACE; AND

- (ii) THE SITE IS SUITABLY LOCATED IN RELATION TO THE MAIN ROAD NETWORK AND THAT ADDITIONAL TRAFFIC CAN BE SATISFACTORILY ACCOMMODATED ON THE EXISTING ROAD NETWORK; AND
- (iii) THERE WOULD BE NO DEMONSTRABLE HARM TO THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE AMENITY OF THE AREA.

WAREHOUSE AND DISTRIBUTION (CLASS B8) DEVELOPMENT OUTSIDE THE INDUSTRIAL AREAS WILL NOT BE PERMITTED EXCEPT ON SITES CURRENTLY OCCUPIED AND USED FOR B8 PURPOSES.

JUSTIFICATION

- 7.33 It is recognised that warehousing and distribution floorspace can assist in diversifying the local economy. However such uses tend to generate a large number of trips by heavy goods vehicles and the Plan seeks to restrict new warehouse developments to areas which are adequately served by communication links. New warehousing proposals will also be required to comply with the environmental criteria contained in policy EMP1 and will generally only be suitable in industrial areas. It is unlikely that new warehousing developments would be acceptable in residential areas. There is no site within the Borough that is adequately served by transport links to provide for a warehouse/distribution property of over 5,000 sq. m.

EMP6 ÿ BROADOAKS

THE COUNCIL HAS IDENTIFIED BROADOAKS, PARVIS ROAD, WEST BYFLEET AS A MAJOR DEVELOPED SITE IN THE GREEN BELT

WITHIN THIS SITE, IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP, PROPOSALS FOR INFILLING OR REDEVELOPMENT WILL BE CONSIDERED APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT WHERE THEY WOULD:-

INFILLING

- (i) HAVE NO GREATER IMPACT ON THE GREEN BELT THAN THE EXISTING DEVELOPMENT, AND
- (ii) NOT EXCEED THE HEIGHT OF EXISTING BUILDINGS, AND
- (iii) NOT LEAD TO MAJOR INCREASES IN THE DEVELOPED PROPORTION OF THE SITE.

REDEVELOPMENT

- (i) HAVE NO GREATER IMPACT ON THE GREEN BELT THAN THE EXISTING DEVELOPMENT AND WHERE POSSIBLE HAVE LESS, AND
- (ii) CONTRIBUTE TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE OBJECTIVES FOR THE USE OF LAND IN THE GREEN BELT, AND
- (iii) NOT EXCEED THE HEIGHT OF EXISTING BUILDINGS, AND
- (iv) NOT OCCUPY A LARGER AREA OF THE SITE THAN THE EXISTING BUILDINGS (UNLESS THIS WOULD ACHIEVE A REDUCTION IN HEIGHT WHICH WOULD BENEFIT VISUAL AMENITY).

JUSTIFICATION

- 7.34 Planning Policy Guidance Note 2: Green Belts (PPG2) established the concept of Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt where infilling and/or redevelopment may not be inappropriate development. This policy sets out the criteria against which such proposals will be assessed in accordance with this guidance.
- 7.35 The Borough contains a number of employment generating sites in the Green Belt. However, apart from the site of Broadoaks designated above, none were considered suitable to be designated as Major Developed Sites. The site of Broadoaks covers an area of approximately 12.7 hectares (31.4 acres) and contains a number of buildings with a total floor area of over 15,000 sq. m. (161,460 sq. ft) including two Listed Buildings. It has also recently been vacated by the MoD and offers the potential for redevelopment and/or infilling by another occupier. The designation as a major developed site therefore enables the Council to control the future development of the site in line with Green Belt policy and provides the potential to secure environmental improvements.
- 7.36 In accordance with policy EMP7 the most appropriate use for the site would be an alternative employment use, any other uses would need to be considered in the light of other policies in the Plan. Any development proposal would be expected to comply with policy MV4 and the provision of planning benefits will be encouraged in accordance with policy IMP3. Additionally, in view of the well treed nature of the site and the presence of Listed Buildings, proposals would be expected to comply with policies NE9 and BE10 - BE13. Any infilling or redevelopment of the site, including the formation of hardstanding, will be expected to occupy the existing developed area only. In particular any development should not extend into the open land to the south.

EMP7 Y LOSS OF B1, B2 AND B8 USES

DEVELOPMENT THAT RESULTS IN THE LOSS OF ESTABLISHED B1, B2, OR B8 FLOOR SPACE OR SITE AREA TO A NON EMPLOYMENT USE WILL NOT BE PERMITTED UNLESS:

- (i) THE EXISTING USE OF THE SITE CAUSES DEMONSTRABLE HARM TO THE AMENITY OF THE AREA AND/OR LOCAL RESIDENTS; OR
- (ii) IT INVOLVES THE CONVERSION OF SELF-CONTAINED OFFICES ABOVE SHOPS TO PROVIDE RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION AND IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF POLICY HSG 11.

WHERE THE EXISTING USE OF THE SITE IS CONSIDERED UNACCEPTABLE DUE TO THE PROVISIONS OF CLAUSE (i) THE COUNCIL WILL INITIALLY SEEK A REDUCTION IN EMPLOYMENT GENERATING ACTIVITY TO A LEVEL APPROPRIATE TO THE SITE. WHERE THE LOSS OF EMPLOYMENT USE IS ACCEPTABLE THE REDEVELOPMENT FOR RESIDENTIAL PURPOSES WILL NORMALLY BE ENCOURAGED

JUSTIFICATION

- 7.37 The loss of existing employment generating sites to other uses does not help in maintaining or renewing the economy. As such development proposals resulting in the loss of commercial, industrial or warehousing use to other non-employment generating uses will generally be resisted.
- 7.38 An exception to this rule is where it can be clearly demonstrated that the utilisation of the site for its established use causes unacceptable detriment to the amenity of the area including the amenity of residences. In such cases redevelopment or changes of use will normally be considered acceptable and residential use will be the Council's preferred option. In some cases it will be possible to overcome the environmental problems associated with existing sites by reducing the level of business activity. When assessing applications the Council will initially seek the provision of a mixed use redevelopment scheme containing residential accommodation and a level of B1 activity appropriate to the site. The retention of some business use will assist in minimising the effect on the job generating potential of the Borough.
- 7.39 Policy HSG11 allows conversion of self-contained offices above retail units to residential units. It is consider that the loss of offices in these circumstances is acceptable as often the floorspace is difficult to let and can be utilised to promote vitality in a Village Centre. The Council does not want to unnecessarily prevent the use of floor space provided it is shown that the premises have been marketed unsuccessfully for at least twelve months.

EMP8 Ÿ DEVELOPMENT TO PROVIDE FOR SMALL FIRMS AND MIXED DEVELOPMENT

WHEN DETERMINING APPLICATIONS FOR B1, B2 AND B8 DEVELOPMENTS AND WHERE APPROPRIATE THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK:

- (i) THE PROVISION OF PREMISES DESIGNED TO BE USED FOR SMALL FIRMS PARTICULARLY WITHIN AREAS OF RELATIVELY HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT; AND
- (ii) THE PROVISION OF MANAGED WORKSPACE; AND
- (iii) ON LARGE SITES, THE PROVISION OF UNITS FOR A MIXTURE OF EMPLOYMENT USES INCLUDING B1C, B2 AND/OR B8.

JUSTIFICATION

- 7.40 In order to encourage and assist in the setting up of local businesses the Plan seeks to ensure that there is adequate provision of starter units. Small B1 units are often capable of being located in residential areas without detriment to amenity and will generally be acceptable in most locations. Premises specially designed for small businesses or capable of adaptation to allow the use by small firms, will be encouraged. In particular, the Council will seek the provision of small 'starter units' and managed workspace located in areas where unemployment is recognised as being a problem, such as Sheerwater and Maybury.
- 7.41 The Council will, where appropriate, seek redevelopment and development proposals which provide a mixture of properties to help diversification of the local economy. Development proposals on larger sites in particular will be encouraged to provide a range of unit types.

EMP9 Ÿ HOTEL DEVELOPMENT

PROPOSALS TO PROVIDE HOTEL DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN THE URBAN AREA WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED :-

- (i) THE PROPOSAL WOULD BE OF A SCALE AND CHARACTER APPROPRIATE TO THE AREA; AND
- (ii) THE SITE IS LOCATED WITHIN THE TOWN CENTRE OR IS OTHERWISE WELL SERVED BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT; AND
- (iii) THE PROPOSAL WOULD NOT GIVE RISE TO LOSS OF AMENITY; AND

- (iv) SATISFACTORY PROVISION IS MADE FOR ACCESS AND PARKING; AND
- (v) THE PROPOSAL DOES NOT RESULT IN THE LOSS OF LAND OR BUILDINGS PROTECTED BY OTHER POLICIES IN THIS PLAN.

JUSTIFICATION

- 7.42 It is recognised by the Council that the provision of hotels within the Borough would provide many benefits. Studies have shown there to be a demand for high standard hotel accommodation within the Borough aimed at serving, in particular business persons. Hotels could also provide overnight accommodation to be used by travellers and people passing through Woking in general. Hotels would also assist in providing additional jobs and in diversifying the economy.
- 7.43 Because of their nature, it is considered that the Town Centre is a preferred location for larger hotel development incorporating conference and other facilities. Elsewhere hotel development will only be permitted where it is well located in relation to major public transport links, so as to promote sustainable development and to make the hotel accessible to as many people as possible. Applications proposing larger hotel schemes will need to comply with Policy WTC12 of the Local Plan. Hotels will need to be of a scale and character appropriate to the area and also the design criteria contained within policy BE1. The change of use of buildings to hotel accommodation within the Green Belt will be subject to policy GRB3.

EMP10 Ĳ CHANGE OF USE OF RESIDENTIAL UNITS TO OVERNIGHT ACCOMMODATION

THE CHANGE OF USE OF RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES FOR THE PROVISION OF OVERNIGHT ACCOMMODATION WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED:

- (i) AN ELEMENT OF SELF-CONTAINED RESIDENTIAL USE IS RETAINED WITHIN THE DEVELOPMENT; AND
- (ii) THERE WOULD BE NO DETRIMENTAL IMPACT ON THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA AND THAT OF THE BUILDING ITSELF;
- (iii) ANY PROPOSED ALTERATIONS, EXTENSIONS OR ADDITIONAL AREAS OF HARD SURFACING REQUIRED TO ENABLE THE CONVERSION OF THE DWELLING ARE APPROPRIATE IN SCALE, FORM AND EXTENT TO THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS;
- (iv) MAXIMUM TREE COVER AND SCREENING IS RETAINED;
- (v) BOUNDARY TREATMENT TO THE STREET FRONTAGE AND ADJACENT PROPERTIES IS RETAINED AND A SUFFICIENT

AREA OF LANDSCAPED AMENITY IS RETAINED OR PROVIDED;

- (vi) ACCESS IS ACCEPTABLE AND PARKING IS PROVIDED ON SITE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COUNCIL'S STANDARDS. CAR PARKING WILL NOT NORMALLY BE PERMITTED IN REAR GARDENS OR IN LOCATIONS WHICH MIGHT CAUSE A NUISANCE TO ADJOINING RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES.
- (vii) THE INTERNAL LAYOUT OF ROOMS WITHIN THE PROPOSED CONVERSION WILL NOT CAUSE UNDUE DISTURBANCE TO ADJOINING RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES WITHIN THE BUILDING.

JUSTIFICATION

- 7.44 The provision of small hotels, guest houses, bed and breakfast and self catering accommodation can assist in diversifying the economy without normally causing undue harm to the environment or amenity of an area. Such facilities can be beneficial to the economy and their provision is to be generally encouraged particularly in village centres. In order to maintain the Borough's housing stock the Council will not want to see the total replacement of a residential unit with a hotel or guest house and will only permit developments that retain a element of residential use. The Council may also consider the re-use of other buildings subject to compliance with other policies of the Plan. When assessing the environmental impact of a proposal the Council will pay particular regard to the effects of car parking and the movement of vehicles and how these effect residential amenity.