

GUIDELINES FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT

6. INDUSTRY AND EMPLOYMENT

6.1 Chapter 7 of the Local Plan sets the general framework for new industrial development. This section gives advice about the interpretation of those proposals.

- **Standards for New Commercial Development**

Chapter 1 of the Local Plan contains a number of proposals which apply Plan-wide and which are relevant to all new development. The proposals in Chapter 7 have a more specific application to employment developments, particularly those which are grouped together as Class B uses in the Use Classes Order. This class encompasses a range of uses, some of which may be quite acceptable within the residential environment Class (B1) which encompasses light industrial and office uses which should not cause disturbance to surrounding residential property. While others (B2 and B8) are normally segregated from it to varying degrees because the uses by their nature are intrusive. In line with Government Guidance set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 4 "Industrial and Commercial Development and Small Firms", the Borough Council wishes to support and encourage employment uses in the Local Plan Area. Nevertheless, within the closely built-up areas of the Borough, new commercial development, including changes of use, needs to be carefully controlled to ensure that the overall quality of the local environment is preserved and, if possible, enhanced.

Extensions or alterations to existing premises may also have an intrusive impact on a locality in terms of traffic generation or loss of important open space within a site. A use which is acceptable in the first instance may cease to be so if extended too close to neighbouring properties or if the use within the site is over-intensified. Planning permission for extensions or major alterations to commercial premises is unlikely to be granted where these are inappropriately sited and conflict with the character and land use of the surrounding area, or where it is not possible to make adequate provision for further parking and servicing facilities. **Employment Proposal 10 of the Local Plan** is concerned with the relationship between industrial development and nearby residential properties.

- **Provision for Parking and Servicing**

One of the major causes of concern relating to commercial premises is provision for parking and servicing facilities. Where there is insufficient on-site parking, the surrounding streets will be used for all-day parking by employees. This has caused a number of problems in the Borough, including making it difficult to access other premises. The Borough Council will have regard to **Transport Proposal 19 of the Oadby and Wigston Local Plan** when determining applications for commercial development and will refer to the parking standards set out by the Principal Highway Authority in the Leicestershire County Council "Highway Requirements for Development" for guidance. Regard will also be had for the advice set out in PPGN 13 that parking standards should be used flexibly in order to ensure that the parking provision required is appropriate to the needs of the specific development. For applications for B1 use, within which a range of commercial activities may take place, parking provision will normally be expected to comply with the higher office standard in order to avoid the need to limit the rights to change use which are conferred by the Use Classes Order 1987.

Highway congestion may also occur when loading and unloading takes place on the street. On occasions this can lead to a total blockage of vehicular traffic movements and can cause problems for access by emergency vehicles. Consequently, service vehicles should be able to load and manoeuvre in the site. Heavy goods vehicles should also be able to enter and leave a premises in a forward direction in the interests of public safety.

- **Open Storage**

The open storage of goods and materials can detract from the visual amenity of an otherwise acceptable development and will normally be discouraged by the Local Planning Authority. Where such storage is established as necessary, provision should be made in the application for adequate screening and conditions will be imposed to ensure that there is no adverse effect on amenity.

- **Hours of Business**

Employment Proposal 10 of the Local Plan refers to the need to protect the amenities of residential properties from the intrusive effects of industrial development. To satisfy these proposals in some locations it may be necessary to limit the hours of commercial activity. The Local Planning Authority will consider the merits of an individual application in relation to the site's location within the road network and the nature of the properties which reasonably could be affected, directly or indirectly, by the proposed development. The following guidelines indicate the range of limitations which may be appropriate at different locations.

In deciding to grant planning permission for commercial activities the Local Planning Authority will consider the need to impose limitations on business hours to protect the amenities of the adjoining area on the following basis:

- | | | |
|-----|--|---|
| (A) | within an industrial estate or business area which has direct access to the A6 and A50 and where the frontages are primarily in commercial use | Normally no restrictions |
| (B) | within other industrial estates and in areas of mixed land use, or on sites at the junctions of local distributor roads and main traffic routes (usually district or primary distributor roads) | 0730 - 1800 Mon-Sat |
| | additionally, where a service is provided to the general public which can be conducted without detriment to the amenity of residential properties and which does not include any industrial activity | 1800 - 2200 Mon-Sat
0900 - 2100 Sun |
| (C) | within predominantly residential areas | 0730 - 1800 Mon-Fri
0730 - 1200 Sat
at no time Sun and
Bank Holidays |

- **Quality of the Visual Environment**

It is just as important for industrial premises and areas to have a high quality environment as other parts of the urban fabric. The Borough Council, in considering applications for commercial development, will have regard to the design considerations set out in **Landscape Proposal 1** and **Paragraphs 7.5 and 7.6** in the Local Plan and where appropriate will give support to schemes to improve the appearance of existing industrial areas. Boundary treatments for commercial development are particularly important.

- **Boundary Treatments**

The quality of the urban street scene is just as important in the industrial areas of the Borough, particularly as many of the commercial premises adjoin well used roads and often face or back onto residential property. However the Borough Council recognises that security is a problem for these types of property particularly in areas like the Oadby Industrial estate where there is limited activity over the evening period.

- **The Need to have Regard to the Character of an Area**

Where new walls or fences are proposed which require planning permission, the Local Planning Authority will wish to ensure that the proposal will not have a detrimental impact on the visual environment. **Paragraphs 7.5 and 7.6 of the Local Plan** requires new development to have regard to the character and land use of the surrounding areas. This could mean, for example, that it would be inappropriate for new fencing to be installed adjoining the highway boundary in an area where all the nearby premises had walls/fences set back from the boundary.

- **Choice of Materials**

Where it is appropriate for new fencing or other boundary treatments to be granted planning permission the Council will wish to ensure that the impact of the new boundary treatment is as little damaging to the visual environment as possible. **Landscape Proposal 1 (2)** requires that the building design, scale, form and materials should contribute positively to the overall quality of the environment and that it should be carefully related to existing development.

The choice of materials is particularly important when fences or walls are constructed. The materials should be chosen to give a pleasant appearance and identity to the scheme. They should be of a permanent texture and colour and should be designed for external use. The use of materials like galvanised metal will not be appropriate. Metal fences will need to be painted, preferably by treatment before they are erected. Walls will not be acceptable in common brick and long expanses of brick wall will need the introduction of brick detailing features to provide visual interest.