

- 3.39 In addition to B1 business, B2 industrial and B8 distribution and warehousing uses, other forms of activity such as retail, leisure and some sui generis uses are considered employment generating for the purposes of Policy EMP3 (Loss of Employment Land).

Development Outside the Town Centre Commercial Core and Existing Business Areas.

- 3.40 In view of the shortage of housing land in the Borough, permission will not be given for business uses on sites which are outside of the Town Centre Commercial Core Area or the Existing Recognised Business Areas unless it can be demonstrated that they are unsuitable for residential use. At the same time, in order to try to reduce the use of the private car for commuting to work in accordance with the principles of the Integrated Transport Strategy, major employment generating developments will not be permitted outside of the Existing Recognised Business Areas, unless they are easily accessible by public transport.
- 3.41 Existing firms often require land in situ for expansion purposes. The Borough Council's Economic Development Strategy seeks to encourage the development of the town's current employment and company base. Development within the site area of an existing firm will be permitted if it is required for the expansion of an existing firm, subject to development control considerations, including design and the site's accessibility.

Policy EMP4 (Development Outside of the Existing Business Areas)

Business developments upon sites outside of the Existing Recognised Business Areas or the Town Centre Commercial Core Area will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that all of the following criteria can be met:

- a) the site is not suitable for residential development;**
- b) there is no suitable alternative site available within the existing business areas or the town centre;**
- c) the proposed development is well served by public transport;**
- d) it would not harm the character or amenity of adjoining areas; and**
- e) the traffic from the proposed development can be accommodated upon the road network.**

Proposals for the expansion of an existing firm may be permitted as an exception to the above, provided it does not require land outside of the existing site boundary.

Town Centre

- 3.42 The Town Centre Commercial Core is the Local Plan's preferred location for employment proposals that attract a lot of people and is the focus for the Council's inward investment initiatives.
- 3.43 The town centre is an ideal location for office developments as it benefits from good bus and rail links, with the central bus station and also the railway station. The range and level of services in the town centre meets the needs of a working population, with access to retail units, public houses, cafes/restaurants and building societies/banks. In addition,