

KENT AND MEDWAY STRUCTURE PLAN: DEPOSIT PLAN, SEPTEMBER 2003

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Proposed Changes

Text proposed for deletion indicated by strikethrough

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CHAPTER 1: OUR VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Policy SP1: Conserving and enhancing Kent's environment and ensuring a sustainable pattern of development

The primary purpose of Kent's development and environmental strategy will be to protect and enhance the environment and achieve a sustainable pattern and form of development. This will be done principally by:

- Protecting the Kent countryside and its wildlife for future generations;
- Reducing reliance on greenfield sites to accommodate all forms of built development;
- Using and re-using land for development more efficiently;

- Protecting and enhancing features of importance in the natural and built environment ;
- Reducing the need to travel, encouraging the availability of a choice of transport, reducing growth in dependence on the road network and fostering good accessibility to jobs and services for all sections of the community;
- Encouraging high quality development and innovative design that reflects Kent's identity and local distinctiveness and promoting healthy, safe and secure living and working environments;
- Fostering balanced and timely provision of housing, employment, infrastructure and community services to meet the social needs of the community and to help maintain and develop well functioning settlements;
- Supporting the retention and growth of Kent's employment and investment in a manner that contributes to a sustainable pattern of development
- Fostering a prosperous rural economy which respects the character of the countryside and rural settlements
- Responding to the implications of long term climate change by:
 - advancing the conservation and prudent use of energy, water and other natural resources;
 - minimising pollution and assisting the control of greenhouse gas emissions;
 - safeguarding areas of potential flood risk from development

CHAPTER 2: THE SPATIAL STRATEGY FOR KENT AND MEDWAY

Policy SS1: Spatial Priorities for Development and Investment in Kent

Strategic policy in Kent will be focused upon the promotion of development and investment in Thames Gateway in North Kent, Ashford and East Kent (including Shepway) and on a general re-balancing of housing pressure from the west towards these areas.

Policy SS2: Role of Major Urban Areas, Other Principal Urban Areas and Rural Service Centres.

Further to Policy SS1, the development proposed in this Plan will be concentrated at the major urban areas, as shown on the Key Diagram:

- in North Kent at Kent Thameside (within Dartford and Gravesham Boroughs) and the Medway Towns;
- in the East Kent Triangle at the Thanet Towns;
- at Ashford as a regional growth point;
- at Maidstone and the urban areas of the Medway Gap and Kings Hill.

Elsewhere provision for development will be concentrated at the principal urban areas as shown on the Key Diagram.

Development at rural settlements, justified through Policy SS3, should be concentrated at the rural service centres identified on the Key Diagram. Proposals for development at other rural settlements, identified in Local Development Documents, should demonstrate that such development would be sustainable.

The primary emphasis will be upon the redevelopment of previously developed land including large-scale opportunities within the Thames Gateway and the Medway Gap and Kings Hill

The strategic development requirements of this Plan should be met in a manner that provides for balanced and timely residential, employment, retail, leisure and community development and infrastructure provision while at the same time conserving and enhancing the quality of Kent's environment.

Table SS1: Major and Principal Urban Areas in Kent

SUB AREA	MAJOR URBAN AREAS
North Kent	Kent Thameside (Dartford/Stone/ Greenhithe/ Swanscombe) (Gravesend / Northfleet) Medway Towns
East Kent Triangle	Thanet Towns (Margate, Ramsgate, Broadstairs)
Channel Corridor / West Kent	Ashford Maidstone / Medway Gap* and Kings Hill
	OTHER PRINCIPAL URBAN AREAS
North Kent	Sittingbourne Sheerness / Queensborough / Halfway / Minster Faversham
East Kent Triangle	Canterbury Herne Bay and Whitstable Dover Deal
Channel Corridor	Folkestone / Hythe
West Kent	Sevenoaks Swanley Tonbridge Tunbridge Wells

* including Aylesford, Ditton, Larkfield, New Hythe, Snodland and Leybourne

Table SS2: Rural Service Centres

Borough Green	New Romney
Cranbrook	Paddock Wood
Edenbridge	Sandwich
Hawkhurst	Staplehurst
Headcorn	Tenterden
Hoo St Werburgh	Westerham
Lydd	West Malling

Policy SS3: Priority for previously developed land and a sequential approach to the location of development

In the preparation of local plans or local development documents:

- (a) Development requirements, not met by sites with existing planning permission, should be provided through the consideration of, firstly, previously developed land or buildings and then greenfield land.

- (b) In each case assessment of development locations should reflect the sequential consideration of the county's major/principal urban areas, rural service centres and smaller rural settlements that can provide a sustainable form of development.

Policy SS4: Mixed use in town centres and inner urban areas

Development which assists Kent's town centres to be prosperous, safe, vibrant and with high standards of design and maintenance will be supported.

Within the core of town centres first priority should attach to retail, service and leisure uses. Office, community, cultural and residential uses should also be provided, where practicable, as part of mixed use developments.

Elsewhere within town centres and edge of town centre locations a diversity of land uses will be encouraged including residential development providing for a mix of dwelling type and size.

Alternative locations should be identified for the relocation of non-conforming uses which cause serious environmental disruption for residential use.

Policy SS5: Enhancing existing communities

Measures will be taken to improve the built and natural environment, functioning and appearance of the suburbs of the major/principal urban areas including landscaping, traffic management and the provision of services and facilities that serve local needs.

Policy SS6: Development at rural service centres and other rural settlements

Other than at Strategic Development Locations identified by this Plan, development at, but outside the built confines of rural settlements, should be small scale and :

- identified in a Local Development Document; or
 - be supported by a special local justification which may include the provision of affordable housing, community facilities or the expansion of an established business.
- a) Rural Service Centres, as identified on the Key Diagram, will be the focus for community services, improved public transport and small scale housing and employment serving their areas;
- b) Smaller rural settlements capable of functioning as Rural Service Centres may be identified in Local Development Documents as suitable for small scale development if they meet the following criteria:
- good road and public transport access and connectivity; and
 - an existing core of employment and community services
- (c) For large rural settlements which lack local services, a rural services standards assessment should be undertaken. The need for and provision for service improvements should be identified in community strategies and Local Development Documents.

Policy SS7: Development in the countryside

Housing development in the countryside will be subject to Policy HP6.

Non residential development in rural Kent other than at rural settlements should:

- (i) be demonstrated to be necessary to agriculture, forestry, the winning of minerals or other land uses for which a rural location is essential; or
- (ii) be the re-use, adaptation or redevelopment of an existing rural building or institution, where the change is acceptable on environmental, traffic and other planning grounds; or
- (iii) provide a public facility for which a rural location is justified; or
- (iv) allow for business development in accordance with Policy FP6(ii) or the business diversification of an existing farm in accordance with Policy FP7.

Policy SS8: Extent of the Metropolitan Green Belt in Kent

The Metropolitan Green Belt will extend about 15 miles from the edge of the built up area of Greater London, i.e. to the east of Gravesend, to the west of Rochester and West Malling, and to the east of Watlingbury and Nettlestead. It will also extend to the west of Paddock Wood and east of Tunbridge Wells. The detailed boundaries are established through local plans/development documents.

The boundary of the Green Belt at Dartford on the north side of the A2 is amended to exclude Eastern Quarry from the Green Belt. New boundaries are being defined through the Dartford Local Plan.

Policy SS9: Uses Appropriate within the Green Belt

Within the Metropolitan Green Belt there is a general presumption against inappropriate development. The construction of new buildings is inappropriate unless for:

- Agriculture or forestry;
- Essential facilities for sport and recreation outdoors, cemeteries, and other uses of land which preserve its openness and do not conflict with its established purposes;
- The limited extension, alteration or replacement of existing dwellings;
- Limited infilling (including affordable housing for local community needs) within existing villages identified in Local Plans/Local Development Documents as suitable for such development;
- Limited infilling or redevelopment of major existing developed sites identified in Local Plans/Local Development Documents as suitable for such development;
- Small scale composting facilities meeting a local need where these can be accommodated without severe impact on the purposes of the Green Belt.

The re-use of buildings is appropriate only where the openness of the Green Belt is maintained and other planning considerations are not prejudiced.

Proposals for mineral extraction must incorporate high quality environmental standards including restoration.

Any development permitted within the Green Belt should be designed and sited to maintain the open character of the area and should not conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt.

Policy SS10: Strategic Gaps

Strategic gaps are designated to maintain the separation of:

- the Maidstone and Medway Gap urban areas from the Medway Towns and from each other;
- settlements on the east and west sides of the River Medway;
- the Medway Towns and Sittingbourne urban areas including the separation of Iwade from Sittingbourne and from Ridham and Kemsley

Within these gaps any development proposals which would significantly extend settlements beyond their existing built confines or the areas identified for development in this Plan or current local plan allocations, will not be permitted. Detailed boundaries of the strategic gaps will be identified or revised through Local Plans/Local Development Documents.

CHAPTER 3: KENT AND MEDWAY: AREA BASED POLICIES

Policy NK1: Dartford and Gravesham

At, and between, the principal urban areas of Dartford and Gravesend/Northfleet major mixed use developments based on previously developed or other damaged land will be comprehensively planned, including appropriate measures to integrate new development with existing communities, and phased in conjunction with the provision of new highway and public transport infrastructure, community services and facilities, and air quality management initiatives.

Provision will be made for a bus-based public transport network (*Fastrack*) linking Dartford and Gravesend town centres, Bluewater and the main Strategic Developments identified by this Plan.

Opportunities for enhancing the economic, leisure, amenity and transport potential of the River Thames will be identified, including safeguarding of deep-water facilities and associated land at Northfleet Riverside.

A network of open land and green spaces ('Green Grid') will be identified and provided to link major areas of open space with the Thames and with existing and new communities, to connect existing and new wildlife habitats and to provide links between wildlife habitats and the wider countryside.

Proposals for the main Strategic Developments should contribute to enhancing the quality of the built, open and natural environment, including provision of elements of the Green Grid, and support a pattern, form and density of development that reflects accessibility to existing and planned public transport provision.

Strategic Developments will include those at:

- (a) Ebbsfleet Valley as the location for development of a combined domestic and international passenger station on the Channel Tunnel Rail Link, a new business centre, major residential development and community facilities. Development should reflect a high standard of civic design and landscaping and be integrated with new and improved transport networks including *Fastrack* and Crossrail;
- (b) Eastern Quarry for a series of linked and integrated communities with an emphasis on housing provision, together with social and community facilities and business development to be developed in accordance with a Master Plan and integrated with a new and improved public transport network (*Fastrack*);
- (c) North Dartford, to the west of the A282 for business, housing, leisure and recreation uses;
- (d) Crossways Business Park, to the east of the A282, for continued mixed commercial development involving office, industrial and distribution uses;

- (e) Swanscombe Peninsula (East and West) for a new mixed use community, predominantly for housing, taking full account of the area's relationship with the River Thames, the Channel Tunnel Rail Link, other physical constraints to development including ground conditions and flood risk and integrated with a new and improved public transport network;
- (f) Gravesend/Northfleet Riverside and North East Gravesend involving the reuse of previously used land and premises and, in the case of North East Gravesend, provision of the Denton Relief Road.

Policy NK2: Medway

Proposals to regenerate Medway should focus upon the Medway Waterfront including central Chatham, Rochester Riverside and at Strood.

Expansion beyond the Medway urban area to meet development requirements should be concentrated at a new, mixed-use community at Chattenden/Lodge Hill.

Development for the Higher and Further Education sectors including a full-scale university campus, will be supported. Provision will be made for the technology and knowledge sectors at Rochester Airfield, Chatham Maritime and Chattenden/Lodge Hill.

Completion of improvements to the A228 together with rail access improvements to support growth of Thamesport and industrial and commercial development at Grain and Kingsnorth will be promoted.

Major new town centre investment at Chatham on a scale appropriate to one of the region's principal urban centres will be supported, particularly in relation to new public transport capacity, employment provision, retail, cultural, tourism and leisure facilities.

Policy NK3: Swale

Within the Thames Gateway part of Swale measures to support economic regeneration and diversification at Sittingbourne and Sheerness/ Queenborough will be pursued. Provision of the A249 Second Swale Crossing and the Sittingbourne Northern Relief Road (linking the A249 with the A2 to the east) are prime requirements for this. Other strategic provisions include:

- (a) opportunities for mixed business, industrial and distribution and residential development already identified at Ridham/Kemsley;
- (b) expansion of the port of Sheerness in accordance with Policy TP22;
- (c) completion of the strategic expansion of Iwade for c.1200 dwellings (including the initial phase previously allocated through the Swale Local Plan). Provision for development should ensure no infringement upon areas of wildlife importance or on high quality agricultural land and maintain separation between Iwade and Sittingbourne;
- (d) mixed-use urban expansion at North East Sittingbourne (including land currently allocated through the Swale Borough Local Plan) in conjunction with the definition and phased provision of the Sittingbourne Northern Relief Road from its link with the A249. Provision for development should avoid infringement upon areas of wildlife importance and minimise the call upon high quality agricultural land;
- (e) mixed use regeneration involving development around Milton Creek, Sittingbourne for housing, business, retail and leisure development, community facilities and environmental enhancement and providing good links with the town centre. Development should be phased in conjunction with the Sittingbourne Northern Relief Road;

- (f) regeneration involving mixed use development at Queenborough and Rushenden on the Isle of Sheppey for housing, employment, community facilities in conjunction with environmental improvements and transport measures including the Rushenden Link Road to the A249;
- (g) expansion of the Sittingbourne Research Centre as an innovation hub and science based cluster subject to the provision of improved access arrangements.

At Faversham conservation of the historic environment remains the prime consideration.

Peripheral growth of Faversham for residential development is not envisaged. Improvement of local employment opportunities will be pursued but should incorporate a review of the scale and location of previous commitments which remain unimplemented with a view to rationalisation, consideration of alternative site provision and husbanding of land in established employment uses.

Within this framework full and effective use should be made of development capacity within the town providing for a balance of business, commercial and residential development with particular attention paid to meeting locally based needs for housing.

Policy EK1: Canterbury

At Canterbury the location of new development will be governed by the need to conserve the built environment and setting of the historic city.

Expansion of the Further and Higher Education sectors in Canterbury will be supported. Knowledge and technology uses linked to this sector will be encouraged, initially through the identification of a site not exceeding 10 hectares.

Proposals for major cultural facilities and high quality tourism accommodation in, or with good access to, the city centre will be encouraged.

New office accommodation contributing to diversification of the economy and urban regeneration will be promoted in the city and through provision for up to 20 hectares for business development at Canterbury at a location easily accessible to the city by way of public transport and cycling as well as by car.

The transport strategy for the City of Canterbury will be reviewed to:

- (a) bring forward further initiatives to provide for enhanced public transport and facilities for cycling and walking as alternatives to the use of the car;
- (b) promote junction improvements on the A2 to the west and south of Canterbury

At Herne Bay/Whitstable it is strategic policy to enhance and diversify the local economy. A site, or sites, providing up to 10 hectares at Herne Bay/ Whitstable for the relocation and expansion of local firms and inward investment, should be identified.

Policy EK2: Dover

Development in Dover should strengthen and diversify its economy and promote environmental enhancement. This will include support for pharmaceuticals research and development in the Sandwich Corridor at Richborough and implementation of strategic employment land at Dover (White Cliffs Business Park). Appropriate expansion and diversification of the port of Dover and mixed use redevelopment of the Dover Town Investment Zone will also be supported.

The economic prosperity of Deal and Sandwich as market towns will continue to be supported as will their role as service centres for the East Kent coast.

Proposals supporting the regeneration of the former East Kent Coalfield sites primarily involving the provision of new employment and recreational uses should be continued.

The mixed-use expansion of Aylesham, incorporating provision for up to 1,000 dwellings by 2016, is supported.

The housing provision for Dover District (Policy HP1) includes 300 dwellings for the post 2006 period to be accommodated at a location, or locations, that can support, and offer good accessibility to, business growth to the north of Sandwich.

Improvements to transport infrastructure and accessibility should include early implementation of the East Kent Access proposals in the A256 corridor, A2 improvements between Lydden and Dover, rail access to the port of Dover, and rail infrastructure and service improvements between Dover and Canterbury, Thanet, and Ashford.

Policy EK3: Thanet

Development in Thanet must address the long standing economic and social problems of the area by strengthening and diversifying the local economy and employment base.

Proposals for growth in Thanet should provide a better balance between housing and employment by enhancing the rate of inward investment in the economy. As a key catalyst for economic growth the expansion of Manston Airport for passengers and freight will be supported including the development of new terminal and freight handling facilities.

Developments which will contribute to the regeneration of the central and seafront areas of Ramsgate and Margate, including cultural and tourism-related proposals, will be supported. This includes initiatives for Ramsgate Waterfront and Margate Old Town.

A new town centre for Thanet at Westwood will involve mixed use retail, service and leisure uses and a new public transport interchange, and be developed predominantly on previously used land.

A Strategic Development Location of up to 1,000 dwellings for the post 2006 period, adjoining the urban area at Westwood, should be defined and phased through the Local Plan/Local Development Framework.

Improvements to infrastructure will be required to support economic growth and improve accessibility, including East Kent Access (within the A256 and A253 corridors), rail infrastructure and service improvements between Thanet and Canterbury, Dover, Ashford and London and an eventual direct rail link to Manston Airport.

Policy CC1: Ashford

Ashford is identified as a regional centre for growth. The location and phasing of development will be comprehensively planned. Expansion will be focused on high quality and sustainable developments in and around central Ashford and, where further greenfield development is required, in an arc to the south of the town.

Early measures to improve the public realm and quality of life in Ashford should include major investment in educational, cultural, retail, leisure, convention and community facilities.

Provision will be made for up to 40 hectares of additional land for business development to meet requirements beyond 2011.

Major investment in physical infrastructure, social and community facilities, public transport enhancement, other sustainable transport initiatives and environmental management will be

required to support the growth in residential and business development proposed and the existing community. This will include:

- Enhanced junction capacity on the M20 involving improvements to Junction 10 , a new Junction 10a and, in the longer term, improvements at Junction 9;
- Quality bus corridors, Park and Ride facilities and a new centrally located bus interchange possibly linked to the International Passenger Station;
- Measures to manage flood risk in the Stour Valley including surface water drainage improvements;
- Provision for sustainable management of water resources, including facilities for increasing water supply and the treatment of wastewater in conjunction with the maintenance of water quality standards;
- An enhanced network of water and public greenspaces;
- Positive management of the urban fringe around Ashford for recreation and the enhancement of biodiversity

An assessment will be undertaken to examine the potential role of new transport links between the A2070 and the A28 to the south west of the town.

Following masterplanning of Ashford's growth, Local Development Documents should identify the outer limit of Ashford's planned expansion and measures to:

- (a) protect the open countryside in the M20/A20 corridor towards Folkestone, taking account of the requirement for a new motorway junction on the M20 to the south east of Ashford (Junction 10a); and
- (b) maintain the separate identity of rural settlements around an enlarged Ashford urban area.

In the rest of Ashford Borough the principal planning policy will be to protect and enhance the character of the countryside and the rural setting of its towns and villages.

Policy CC2: Maidstone

Proposals for new office and residential uses should focus on the centre of Maidstone to provide close integration between employment, housing and public transport facilities.

Proposals to enhance and broaden the town centre's retail, leisure, tourism and cultural draw will be supported. Transport improvements to support these initiatives will include the A229 Upper Stone Street contraflow and All Saints Link.

No large-scale release of greenfield land for housing will be provided beyond land already allocated for built development in the Maidstone Local Plan.

Any re-appraisal of land provision for economic development at Maidstone should not:

- (i) involve net additional release of greenfield land above land allocated or permitted for such purposes at 2001;
- (ii) undermine the principal role of the Strategic Gap in separating north Maidstone, as defined by the M20, from the Medway Towns urban area and the north western edge of Maidstone from Aylesford/Ditton;

- (iii) prejudice the role of the North Downs Special Landscape Area in protecting the foreground of the North Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Policy CC3: Shepway

Proposals which assist in regenerating Folkestone, including improvement of its shopping, service and tourism functions will be supported. Provision for mixed-use regeneration of the harbour and seafront should incorporate a major residential element and consider opportunities for alternative uses of the port.

The strategic expansion of Hawkinge should be completed on the basis identified in the Shepway Local Plan with no further major development on the Downs. Provision for up to 20 hectares of additional land for business should be identified and be well-related to the Folkestone/Hythe urban area or New Romney.

Proposals to strengthen the rural economy of Romney Marsh should be concentrated at New Romney and/or Lydd. Elsewhere, protection of the environment and countryside will be foremost. Proposals to retain and strengthen the current uses at Lydd Airport and Folkestone Racecourse should be pursued.

Policy WK1: West Kent

In the West Kent Districts of Sevenoaks, Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge and Malling:

- (a) there will be no release of land from the Metropolitan Green Belt to meet strategic requirements and no major release of additional greenfield land beyond land committed at 2001 for residential or business development;
- (b) in seeking to make the best use of land within the principal urban areas for housing the local planning authorities should make provision to safeguard existing and/or new employment land for more intensive (office) employment uses at locations in, or close to, the town centres of the principal urban areas.

Policy WK2: Sevenoaks

Within Sevenoaks District the scale of new housing development reflects its location wholly within the inner Metropolitan Green Belt, the relatively small scale of the principal urban areas of Sevenoaks and Swanley and the character of their built environments.

Fort Halstead is identified as a prospective business cluster associated with its established role in research. Proposals to expand technology and knowledge activities will be supported subject to the provisions of policy FP4.

Policy WK3: Tonbridge and Malling

Within Tonbridge & Malling Borough, housing and employment growth will be concentrated at the following strategic development locations:

- Kings Hill for continued development of a new mixed-use urban community involving phased development of a campus style business park, major residential development and associated social and community facilities. A revised mix of land use to reduce B1 employment provision and increase the housing element will be pursued;
- Holborough Quarry, to the north of Snodland and west of the A228, principally for housing and associated social and community facilities;

- Leybourne Grange, to the south of the M20 and west of the A228, for housing development and associated social and community facilities;
- Peters Pit, on the East Bank of the Medway, principally for housing and associated social and community facilities and subject to the provision of transport infrastructure including a new crossing of the Medway.

Policy WK4: Tunbridge Wells

The prime consideration at the urban area of Tunbridge Wells in the quantity and location of development will be the conservation of the built and natural environment, the setting of the town and its location within the Green Belt.

Within this framework full and effective use of development capacity within the principal urban area of Tunbridge Wells/Southborough will be pursued. This should provide for a balance of business, commercial and residential development with particular attention paid to meeting locally based needs for housing.

CHAPTER 4: PROTECTING AND ENHANCING OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Policy E1: Protecting Kent's Countryside

Kent's countryside will be protected for its own sake and in the interests of the social, economic and environmental well being of Kent. Development in the countryside should seek to maintain or enhance it. Development which will adversely affect the countryside will not be permitted unless there is an overriding need for it which outweighs the requirement to protect the countryside. Development so permitted should include appropriate mitigation and/or compensation

Policy E2: Protecting Kent's Coast and Estuaries

Kent's undeveloped coast and estuaries will be conserved and enhanced. Development in such areas and in adjoining countryside will not be permitted if it materially detracts from the scenic, heritage, wildlife or scientific value of these areas. Development so permitted should include appropriate mitigation and/or compensation.

Policy E3: Protection and Enhancement of Landscape Character

Kent's landscape and wildlife habitats will be conserved and enhanced. Development will not be permitted if it would lead to the loss of features or habitats which are of landscape, historic, wildlife or geological importance, or are of an unspoilt quality free from urban intrusion unless there is a need for development which outweighs these considerations.

Where a need for development in the countryside is justified important features and characteristics will be retained. Proposals should reflect the need for conservation, reinforcement, restoration or creation of countryside character and provide for the appropriate management of important features and the wider landscape.

Policy E4: Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Heritage Coast

Protection will be given to the nationally important landscapes of:

- the Kent Downs and High Weald Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty; and
- Kent's Heritage Coast between Kingsdown and Dover and between Dover and Folkestone.

The primary objective in these areas will be to protect and enhance landscape character and natural beauty.

Major commercial, mineral or transport infrastructure developments will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that:

- i. there is a proven national interest;
- ii. there are no alternative sites available or the need cannot be met in any other way; and
- iii. appropriate provision can be made to minimise harm to the environment.

Other development which would be detrimental to the natural beauty, quality and character of the landscape and quiet enjoyment of the area will not be permitted. Development that is essential to meet local social or economic needs should be permitted provided that it is consistent with the purpose of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Heritage Coast.

Policy E5: Special Landscape Areas

Special Landscape Areas are defined as follows and indicated on the Key Diagram. Detailed boundaries of the SLAs will be reviewed and defined in local plans/development documents.

North Downs
Greensand Ridge
High Weald
Eastern Low Weald
Western Low Weald
Old Romney Shoreline
North Kent Marshes
Sandwich Bay/Pegwell Bay
Dungeness
Blean Woods

The primary objective in Special Landscape Areas will be the long term protection and enhancement of the quality of the landscape whilst having regard to the economic and social well being of their communities.

Policy E6: International and National Wildlife Designations

Development will not be permitted where it would directly, indirectly or cumulatively, materially harm the scientific or nature conservation interests of any of the following categories of sites:

- a European site;
- a proposed European site;
- a Ramsar site;
- a Site of Special Scientific Interest;
- a National Nature Reserve

Policy E7: County and Local Wildlife Designations

Development which would materially harm the scientific or nature conservation interests, either directly, indirectly or cumulatively, of:

- Local Nature Reserves
- County Wildlife Sites identified in Local Development Documents
- Regionally Important Geological/ Geomorphological Sites

will not be permitted unless there is a need which outweighs the local nature conservation or geological/ geomorphological interest and adverse impacts can be adequately compensated.

Policy E8: Protection and Enhancement of Biodiversity

Important wildlife habitats and species will be protected, maintained and enhanced, especially through long term management and habitat creation schemes, particularly where they have been identified as national and county priorities in the UK and Kent Biodiversity Action Plan(s), or where they are protected under wildlife legislation. This will be secured by:

- i. Ensuring that site evaluation is undertaken to establish the nature conservation value of proposed development sites;
- ii. Identifying, safeguarding and managing existing and potential land for nature conservation as part of development proposals, particularly where a connected series of sites can be achieved;
- iii. Local planning authorities identifying locations and proposals for habitat and species management, restoration and creation.

Development likely to have an adverse effect, directly, indirectly or cumulatively, on important habitats or species will not be permitted unless:

- there is an overriding need for the development that outweighs adverse impact on nature conservation ; and
- adverse impact on an important nature conservation resource can be adequately mitigated and/or compensated

Policy E9: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows

Provision should be made for the creation of new woodland, especially indigenous broad-leaved species at appropriate locations in Kent, including provision of new habitats as part of development proposals.

Tree cover and the hedgerow network should be maintained. Additionally they should be enhanced where this would improve the landscape, biodiversity, or link existing woodland habitats. Ancient and semi-natural woodland will be protected and, where possible, enhanced.

Policy E10: Potential for Community Forests and Woodlands

The potential for community forests or community woodland sites will be investigated in North Kent and at Ashford and other suitable locations and where appropriate, defined and safeguarded in Local Development Documents.

Policy E11: Planning and Management of the Urban Fringe

Local Planning Authorities will work together and with others to draw up and implement strategies for ensuring effective environmental management and high quality design for urban fringe areas, particularly in Dartford/Gravesham (Kent Thameside), at Ashford and where other large-scale new developments are proposed.

Local Development Documents will provide policies for such areas that ensure:

- The maintenance or enhancement of landscape and urban character;
- The creation of new habitats;
- The safeguarding of land for public access and the provision of recreational networks, including linkage with existing communities/built-up areas;
- Where appropriate, the enhancement of damaged , despoiled or degraded land.

Where directly related, contributions from developments to the implementation of such programmes may be required

Policy E12: River Corridors

The environment within river corridors, including the landscape, water environment and wildlife habitats, will be conserved and enhanced. Where consistent with this provision will be made for:

- increased opportunities for access and water recreation;
- increased public access for walking, cycling and horse riding and links to existing rights of way and cycleway networks.

Supply of water, treatment and disposal of waste water and flood risk management should be sustainable and deliver environmental benefits.

Policy E13: Environmental Enhancement of Primary Routes

Enhancement of landscape quality and character and wildlife habitats along primary road and rail routes, including important tourist routes, will be promoted.

Policy E14: Rural Lanes

Rural lanes which are of landscape, amenity, nature conservation, historic or archaeological importance will be protected from changes and management practices which would damage their character, and where possible will be enhanced.

CHAPTER 5: PROMOTING QUALITY OF LIFE IN TOWN AND COUNTRY

Policy QL1: Quality of Development and Design

- (i) All development should be well designed and be of high quality. Developments, individually or taken together, should have regard to the scale, layout pattern and character of their local surroundings. Development which would be detrimental to the built environment, amenity, functioning and character of settlements or the countryside will not be permitted. Existing built environment of high quality and character will be protected and enhanced. Innovative design will be encouraged where appropriate.
- (ii) Local authorities and others will:
 - (a) ensure that the distinctive character of towns and villages is conserved and improved;
 - (b) apply the principles of the Kent Design Guide when determining planning applications and preparing site-specific development guidance;
 - (c) require that a design statement accompanies significant proposals for development with accurate illustrations of the development in its surroundings;
 - (d) develop design policies for their area based on an analysis of the quality, character and significance of the surrounding built and natural environment. This will include:
 - (i) identification of areas where local design policies will apply to take account of their special character;
 - (ii) provision of design guidance within development briefs and master plans for major development sites and areas of change.
- (iii) The design of development should:
 - (a) consider the needs of all sections of the community;
 - (b) provide for a healthy, safe and secure environment;
 - (c) enhance the public realm;
 - (d) protect the amenity of residents;
 - (e) incorporate sustainable construction techniques including provision for recycling facilities, water conservation and energy efficiency.

Policy QL2: Priorities for the Public Realm

A concerted effort will be made to improve the appearance, design, safety and ambience of the public realm including streets, squares, walkways, green space and vistas in both town and country. This will be implemented by:

- (i) programmes of investment in new and refurbished public spaces;
- (ii) the improvement of townscapes including environmental enhancement;
- (iii) improved maintenance of streets, squares and other open spaces;
- (iv) adoption of measures that foster community safety and security;
- (v) encouragement, as appropriate, of retail, leisure, sport and recreation, cultural and civic activity to bring vitality to the central areas of our towns and cities.

Policy QL3: Movement and Accessibility in the Public Realm

Local authorities will establish priorities and programmes for:

- a) pedestrian priority and reduced traffic speeds within town centres, in existing residential areas and in major new development areas;
- b) the provision of safe pedestrian and cycle routes to schools;
- c) a network of high quality, direct and convenient pedestrian and cycle routes linking public open space, safe streets and parks in urban areas, residential areas with community facilities/services and the principal urban areas with the surrounding countryside.
- d) The provision of a safe and convenient network for pedestrians and cyclists in rural areas

Where directly related, contributions from developments to the implementation of such programmes may be required.

Policy QL4: Maintaining the separation and identity of settlements

The separation and identity of settlements will be maintained including:

- a) Safeguarding of the open and undeveloped character of the countryside around and between settlements, including the use of landscape buffers;
- b) The allocation of land at, but outside the built confines of, settlements for uses which maintain or enhance their setting;
- c) The protection of important features, views and sensitive skylines

Policy QL5: Quality and the Density of Development

Revised Policy QL5

In conjunction with the delivery of high quality design and to secure efficient use of land, residential development should:

- avoid densities * below 30 dwellings per hectare
- realise densities* of between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare
- achieve densities* above 50 dwellings per hectare in central urban areas and in locations with good public transport accessibility or in conjunction with public transport oriented development

Business and commercial development should also secure the efficient use of land.

More efficient use of land should also be achieved through redevelopment of low density uses, especially within the central parts of the major/principal urban areas

** Densities apply to the net area of land for residential use excluding major distributor roads, primary schools , open spaces serving a wider area , significant landscape buffer strips and other uses.*

Policy QL6: Mix of uses on sites

- a) New large scale developments will include a mix of residential and employment uses, unless an appropriate mix can be achieved through proximity to, and integration with, existing development. They will incorporate appropriate community and other services if not available within walking distance or if they cannot be provided in extended facilities nearby;
- b) Opportunities should be taken to introduce an appropriate mix of uses into existing developed areas and on major sites currently planned for single use where this would lead to a better balance in the mix of development;
- c) Consideration of proposals for other sites should assess their potential contribution to mixed use, either within the development site itself or by complementing surrounding uses.

Policy QL7: Conservation Areas

The primary planning policy towards conservation areas is to preserve or enhance their special character and appearance.

Development within conservation areas should preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area. Development which would harm the character of a conservation area will not be permitted.

District Planning authorities should:

- (i) include policies within local development documents that protect within conservation areas the plan form, buildings, architectural features, archaeological sites, trees, streets and spaces, and the relationships between these features, which contribute to their special character and setting;
- (ii) review the boundaries of existing conservation areas and, where appropriate, amend them and/or identify new conservation areas;
- (iii) carry out conservation area appraisals to identify important features or characteristics which need to be protected and develop strategies for the enhancement of conservation areas.

Policy QL8: Archaeological Sites

The archaeological and historic integrity of scheduled ancient monuments and other important archaeological sites, together with their settings, will be protected and, where possible, enhanced. Development which would adversely affect them will not normally be permitted.

Where important or potentially important archaeological remains may exist, developers will be required to arrange for archaeological assessment and/or field evaluation to be carried out in advance of the determination of planning applications.

Where the case for development affecting an archaeological site is accepted, the archaeological remains should be preserved in situ. Where preservation in situ is not possible or justified, appropriate provision for preservation by record will be required.

Policy QL9: Buildings of Architectural or Historic Importance

Listed Buildings will be preserved and their architectural and historic integrity and the character of their settings will be protected and enhanced. Development which will adversely affect them will not normally be permitted. Changes of use will be permitted where these will provide the best reasonable means of conserving the character, appearance, fabric, integrity and setting of listed buildings.

Policy QL10: Historic Landscape Features

Development will not be permitted which would have an adverse impact upon the historic and archaeological importance, landscape character and physical appearance of historic landscapes, parks and gardens.

Historic landscape features and the settings and views into, and out of, historic landscapes, parks and gardens will be protected and where possible enhanced.

Policy QL11: Heritage Assets - Enabling Development

Development for the purposes of protecting a heritage asset will be permitted only where this is the sole means of protecting and securing the long-term future of the asset. The scale of development shall not exceed that required to achieve this objective and be in a form that minimises dis-benefits.

Policy QL12: Existing community services and deficiency

Existing community services* and recreation facilities will be protected as long as there is a demonstrable need for them. Provision will be made for the development and improvement of local services in existing residential areas and in town and district centres, particularly where services are deficient. Flexibility in the use of buildings for mixed community uses, and the concentration of sports facilities at schools, will be encouraged.

** community services includes schools and other education provision, social services, adult education, libraries, youth and community services, police and emergency services health, culture, places of worship recreation and amenity space, sport, local shopping, public utilities, and transport.*

Policy QL13: Provision for new community services and infrastructure

- a) Provision will be made to accommodate additional requirements for local community services* within new residential, commercial and mixed use developments or through the provision or upgrading of facilities nearby in response to:
 - Needs associated with the new development
 - growth in demand from the community as a whole;
- b) Development will not be permitted until the basis for the funding of the community services it requires has been identified and agreed;
- c) Provision will be made in Local Development Documents for major new community facilities. Specifically land will be provided for:
 - expansion of Further and/or Higher education at Canterbury and Medway and Ashford;
 - primary and secondary schools in areas of major new dwelling provision;
 - a new general hospital at Tunbridge Wells.

New community services will be located where they are accessible by walking and cycling and by public transport from the area they serve. Whenever practical they will be located in town, district or local centres.

** community services includes schools and other education provision, social services, adult education, libraries, youth and community services, police and emergency services, health, culture, places of worship, recreation and amenity space, sport, local shopping, public utilities, and transport.*

Policy QL14: Cultural development and the arts

Proposals for cultural or arts facilities will be encouraged, particularly where located within, or close to town centres or public transport nodes. Development proposals in general should seek to promote public art, both directly and through the provision of development contributions.

Policy QL15: Provision for major sporting venues

The development of high quality venues for sport to serve Kent and wider regional or national requirements will be encouraged. Assessment of the potential for such facilities will give particular emphasis to Thames Gateway and Ashford. Any such provision should be accessible to the County as a whole by a choice of transport and preferably be at a major or principal urban area.

Policy QL16: Formal recreation/sport facilities

All major new formal recreation and sports facilities, including intensively used facilities in rural areas such as golf courses, should be accessible by a choice of transport and designed to avoid nuisance from traffic, noise and lighting.

Local Development Documents will make provision for sport, informal and formal recreation facilities taking account of the potential for dual use and/or joint provision. Where there is a continuing need, existing facilities will be protected and where these are deficient land will be identified for improvements.

The need for new facilities within major new residential and mixed-use developments will be assessed and appropriate provision made.

Where additional facilities are needed in rural areas priority should be given to clustered provision at rural service centres.

Policy QL17: Water recreation

Development that improves or extends water recreation in Kent will be permitted provided it causes no material harm to species, natural habitats or the wider environment.

Policy QL18: Green-space networks and rights of way

Local authorities will prepare open space strategies and reflect their land use requirements in Local Development Documents:

- a) In urban areas local authorities will establish and extend green-space networks as corridors for movement by foot and cycle, as havens for wildlife and natural habitats and for leisure, amenity and recreational use. Where practicable green linkages should be encouraged from within settlements to the open countryside;

- b) Existing open space and public rights of way will be protected and improved as part of these networks, which, where possible, should extend through major new development sites and connect directly with community facilities, employment areas and transport hubs;
- c) The rights of way network will be protected and enhanced and the provision, protection and improvement of routes and networks open to equestrians will be supported.

Policy QL19: Potential for Regional Parks

The potential for Regional Parks will be investigated in North Kent and within the Stour Valley catchment in East Kent. Where appropriate, they will be defined and safeguarded in Local Development Documents.

CHAPTER 6: FOSTERING PROSPERITY

Policy FP1: Employment Land Provision

- (a) Priority will be given to developing sites in Kent with planning consent or identified in local plans for financial and professional services, business, industrial and warehousing uses (Use Classes A2/B1-8) as at 2001.
- (b) In addition new land should be identified as follows:
 - In Medway at least 20 hectares for a wide range of employment uses including the knowledge and technology sectors as part of mixed use development at Chattenden/Lodge Hill;
 - At Canterbury City up to 10 hectares to provide specifically for knowledge and technology uses linked to the education sector in Canterbury and up to 20 hectares for office accommodation and business development at the city;
 - At Herne Bay-Whitstable up to 10 hectares to ensure a continuing supply of land for the relocation and expansion of local firms and to attract inward investment to the coastal towns;
 - In Shepway provision of up to 20 hectares to improve choice and support inward investment;
 - At Ashford further employment land up to 40 hectares will be provided to give support, for the longer term, to its role as a regional growth point based on balanced employment and housing growth;
- (c) Accordingly the total provision for net additional floorspace provision for financial and professional services, business, industrial and warehousing uses will be:

Local Authority Area	Net Commitment at 2001 (000's sq.m)	New Provision	Total 2001-21 (000's sq. m)
Ashford	592	140	732
Canterbury	161	140	301
Dartford	892		892
Dover	512**		512**
Gravesham	435		435
Maidstone	129		129

Sevenoaks	84		84
Shepway	162	70	232
Swale	938		900&
Thanet	304		304
Tonbridge & Malling	316		241#
Tunbridge Wells	74		74
KCC Area	4,599	350	4836
Medway	505	70	575
Kent	5,104	420	5411
North Kent	2,770	70	2,802&
East Kent Triangle	977**	140	1117**
West Kent	474		399#
Channel Corridor	883	210	1,093

- (d) At Sevenoaks, Swanley, Tonbridge, the Medway Gap Tunbridge Wells, Maidstone and Faversham the existing supply of land and premises for business use should be carefully managed. Best use will be made of existing employment sites and previously developed land to sustain the provision of business space.
- (e) Existing employment sites that are well located and otherwise well suited to employment use should be retained for this purpose. Existing commitments may be reviewed through Local Development Documents. Sites, which have not succeeded because of constraints or poor quality may be replaced by alternative, more marketable and better located allocations provided that this:
- does not prejudice the scale and implementation of strategic locations for business development supported and safeguarded by this Plan (Policy FP3);
 - does not conflict with other Structure Plan policies.

Measures, including investment by the public and private sectors to provide serviced sites and/or land reclamation, should be taken to bring forward sites that the market alone would not develop. Schemes will be encouraged to improve unattractive sites where this is a main reason for their lack of investment.

- (f) Local Development Documents should identify land for the appropriate location of businesses likely to cause environmental disturbance , particularly in residential or mixed use areas.
- (g) Employment uses other than those covered by Policy FP1 (but excluding retail and leisure) may be included on the major sites provided that this does not conflict with the policies of this Plan, notably in respect of the location of major generators of travel demand.

Notes to Policy FP1:

*** Includes land at Richborough-Sandwich previously occupied by a variety of uses and now available for redevelopment.*

Figures for Tonbridge and Malling allow for revised mix of land uses at Kings Hill and reduced B1 content pursuant to Policies HP1 and WK3. & Figures for Swale allow for some rationalisation of business floorspace at Faversham pursuant to Policy NK3

Net Commitments include local plan allocations at 2002 , planning permissions at 2001 , net completions 2001-2002 and vacant plots within existing employment sites.

New provision based on 3,500 sq. m per hectare.

Policy FP2: Location of New or Replacement Employment Land

Proposals for employment and business development other than (a) those already identified in adopted local plans or (b) at the specific locations identified in Policy FP4 (b) or identified pursuant to Policy FP6, should be located in, or adjacent to, principal urban areas where they are easily accessible by a choice of transport. Such proposals should be attractive to the market place.

Policy FP3: Locations of Strategic Importance for Business, Industrial or Distribution Uses

In contributing to the provisions of Policy FP1 the safeguarding and implementation of the following strategic employment locations will have priority:

- Ashford: Eureka Science Park
- Ashford: Orbital Park
- Ashford: Waterbrook(Sevington)
- Ashford: Cheeseman's Green
- Dartford: North Dartford (including Fresh Marshes)
- Dartford: Crossways Business Park
- Dartford: Eastern Quarry
- Dartford/Gravesham: Ebbsfleet Valley
- Dover: Land at Richborough
- Dover: White Cliffs Business Park
- Shepway: Shearway Business Park : Folkestone
- Shepway: Link Park: Lympne
- Swale: Neatscourt: Queenborough
- Swale: Lappel Bank : Sheerness
- Swale: Ridham Kemsley
- Swale: Eurolink: Sittingbourne
- Thanet: Eurokent
- Thanet: Manston Park
- Tonbridge and Malling: Kings Hill*
- Medway: Kingsnorth and Grain
- Medway: Rochester Airfield

**Subject to the provisions of Policy WK3*

Policy FP4: Land for technology and knowledge clusters

High quality proposals for intensification or expansion in the technology and knowledge sectors will be supported at the following locations unless there are exceptional and overriding environmental impacts which cannot be adequately mitigated:

- (a) a new site at Canterbury linked to the University (pursuant to Policy FP1);
- (b) expansion of technology and knowledge activities at:
 - Fort Halstead (Sevenoaks District);
 - Horticultural Research Institute (HRI): East Malling;
 - Kings Hill;
 - Pfizer and land in the Sandwich Corridor at Richborough;
 - Sittingbourne Research Centre;
 - Rochester Airfield ;
 - Chatham Maritime.
- (c) the expansion, at existing locations, of other key employers in the technology and knowledge sectors.

Policy FP5: Premises for small firms

Premises for small firms will be provided:

- (a) within larger industrial estates;
- (b) within new mixed-use developments;
- (c) as part of clusters of similar economic activity (pursuant to Policy FP4);
- (d) through the development of small infill sites; and

- (e) through the conversion or alteration of suitable existing buildings.
- (f) through the protection of existing employment land

Development at these locations should demonstrate good accessibility from the primary or secondary route network.

Policy FP6: Development of employment uses in rural areas

Provision for small scale business development (B1-B8) and service industries should be made within, or adjoining, the built up area of rural service centres (identified on the Key Diagram) or of larger villages that can provide a sustainable form of development. Development should be appropriate to the scale of the settlement and without detriment to its amenity, character or setting. In this context small scale live/work units may be acceptable.

No provision for business development will be made elsewhere in rural Kent except where:

- i. it involves the re-use, adaptation or redevelopment of an existing building, as covered by Policy SS7(ii) ; or
- ii. it is required for the expansion of an established business and/or for the processing, storage, distribution or promotion and research concerning produce from Kent agriculture, horticulture or forestry;
and
good access can be provided to the primary road network and bus or rail services;

The role of the Kent Agricultural Showground at Detling is recognised as important and requiring enhancement so as to promote more widely the land based economy of Kent and the region.

All development supported within the terms of this policy should have no unacceptably adverse impact on the local transport network, the environment or the Green Belt and will be subject to the restriction of subsequent expansion if in conflict with the policies of this Plan.

Policy FP7: Farm Diversification

Conversion, alteration or re-use of existing farm buildings to support agriculture, horticulture and forestry based on Kent, or other locally sourced produce, will be permitted where the traffic and environmental impacts are acceptable and it is demonstrated that the proposal is:

- (a) necessary for the efficiency or viability of an existing business or required for a new agriculture, horticulture or forestry business; or
- (b) a suitable small-scale non-agricultural use which secures the viability of a farm; or
- (c) a suitable land based activity

New small-scale buildings or replacement buildings for the above purposes may be permitted if no existing buildings exist which could be converted, provided that they are of a scale and design appropriate to their rural surroundings and there are no overriding environmental constraints.

All such proposals should be supported by a business case or farm plan which demonstrates effective management of the farm in the long-term.

Policy FP8: Protection of agricultural land

- a) In order to protect the long term productive potential of agriculture, development of agricultural land will only take place when there is an overriding need identified in the Development Plan which cannot be accommodated within the major/principal urban areas, rural service centres or on other previously developed land;

- b) Best and most versatile agricultural land (DEFRA Grades 1, 2 and 3a) will be protected from development unless:
- there is no alternative site on land of poorer agricultural quality; or
 - alternative sites have greater value for their landscape, biodiversity, amenity, heritage or natural resources; or
 - the land proposed for development is more accessible to infrastructure, the workforce or markets than the alternatives.

Policy FP9: Sustainable Tourism Development

Development of tourism facilities, such as accommodation and visitor attractions, will be supported if:

- (a) they are designed to a high standard which enhances their setting and the attraction of Kent as a tourist destination; and
- (b) there are clear economic advantages to Kent; and
- (c) there are no adverse environmental impacts or such impacts are capable of being adequately mitigated; and
- (d) they reduce dependence on the private car and access is possible by a choice of means of transport, particularly by public transport, cycling and walking; and
- (e) equal access is provided for all social, economic and cultural groups and to people with disabilities.

Policy FP10: Tourism development and regeneration

New tourist attractions and the upgrading of existing tourism facilities in the major/principal urban areas will be supported, particularly if located in, or near to, town or district centres, where they assist regeneration and cause no harm to the environment or to the amenity of nearby residential areas.

Priority will be given to such development:

- within the Kent part of the Thames Gateway;
- at the coastal resorts of the East Kent Triangle and Shepway;
- at Ashford.

Proposals for new buildings or for the refurbishment of buildings of historic interest, particularly in "clusters", for arts or cultural use will be supported where they cause no environmental harm. Environmentally related tourism initiatives will be encouraged.

Policy FP11: Tourist accommodation

- (a) Sites for the development of high quality tourist, business and conference hotels and for budget hotels will be identified, as first priority in, or adjacent to, town or district centres;
- (b) Proposals for hotel development elsewhere must demonstrate that they will have no significant adverse environmental or transport impact;
- (c) Proposals which would result in the loss, without replacement, of good quality accommodation at the coastal towns will not be permitted unless there is overriding economic advantage to the area from the development;
- (d) The conversion or extension of existing buildings to provide small hotels, bed and breakfast or self catering accommodation will be permitted provided this causes no harm to the local environment;
- (e) Historic inns and pubs should be retained in this use unless a change of use is demonstrated to be necessary to secure their future

- (f) the improvement of touring and static caravan and camping sites will be permitted if the development benefits the local environment.

Policy FP12: Major Tourism/Visitor Attractions

Proposals for major tourism/visitor attractions in Kent of national or regional significance will be encouraged. All such developments should be of an exceptionally high standard of design and landscaping.

The priority for the location of such development is within the urban areas of Thames Gateway, Ashford or the coastal towns of east Kent.

The location, and associated land take, of proposals outside the principal urban areas will require exceptional justification and should demonstrate that the development:

- is capable of bringing major benefits to Kent's economy; and
- will make an important contribution to diversifying and upgrading the tourism and visitor attractions in the county; and
- is well related to the passenger rail and primary road networks; and
- is located so as to minimise its impact on the environment including landscape, wildlife, the best and most versatile agricultural land and areas of archaeological and historic importance; and
- incorporates satisfactory provision for mitigation of adverse impacts on the locality.

Policy FP13: Development at the strategic network of town and district centres

The role of regional, sub regional, principal and district centres forming the strategic hierarchy of retail and service centres in Kent, as identified on the Key Diagram, will be safeguarded. Development proposals which enhance the quality, range and choice of shopping and/or expand or diversify service, business or leisure activities will be supported.

Development should achieve a high standard of design and enhance the visual quality, functioning and environment of a centre.

Local authorities will:

- (a) include policies in Local Development Documents to support the retail function of these centres including the allocation of suitable sites or areas for retail and/or mixed use development to meet identified needs;
- (b) identify measures to improve the environment and functioning of centres including pedestrian priority zones and networks and public transport access and interchange arrangements;
- (c) pursue measures including, where necessary, compulsory purchase to make town centre sites available for planned development.

Policy FP14: Sequential consideration of sites for retail and leisure development

New retail and leisure development should be located on sites within town and district centres, taking account of the scale of development proposed in relation to the size and function of the centre. If there are no suitable sites or buildings that are, or will become, available then sites on the edge of these centres may be considered.

In the absence of edge of centre sites development of large food or bulky goods stores may be considered, exceptionally, at out of centre locations but within the confines of a major/principal urban area.

Development (including extensions to existing retail development) on the edge of, or outside, town and district centres must demonstrate that:

- there is a need for the development; and
- more suitable sites do not exist within town or district centres, or on their edge; and
- Individually or cumulatively the development does not undermine the viability or vitality of existing town and district centres; and
- the development is accessible to a choice of public and private transport, and by walking and cycling; and
- the development will not prejudice readily available and accessible sites identified for housing, business and industrial development.

Policy FP15: Development for core comparison goods shopping

- a) Proposals for core comparison shopping should be accommodated at town or district centres in Kent.
- b) Development of comparison goods shopping in the sub-regional and principal town centres will be supported, particularly at:
 - i. Maidstone;
 - ii. Chatham;
 - iii. Ashford;
 - iv. Tunbridge Wells
 - v. Folkestone
 - vi. Dover
 - vii. Sittingbourne.
- a) The scale and character of development at Canterbury should not prejudice investment in, and strengthening of, the principal town centres in East Kent and development of Ashford as a sub regional centre.
- b) Any development at Bluewater should not prejudice investment in, and strengthening of, the sub regional centres of Chatham and Maidstone nor conflict with the role of principal town centres in North Kent as the prime focus for local retail, service, cultural and leisure facilities.
- c) Development of a new mixed use town centre for Thanet at Westwood, adjacent to and integrated with existing major retail provision, and incorporating up to 25,000 sq. m of gross retail floorspace will be supported.

Policy FP16: Development of bulky comparison goods retailing

- a) Where it is demonstrated that the need for bulky goods shopping cannot be met within or on the edge of town or district centres (as identified on the Key Diagram) first priority should be given to development located at or adjacent to existing major out of centre retail developments that are accessible by a choice of transport. Planning conditions restricting the character of retail sales to bulky goods will be applied.
- b) At existing out of centre retail locations guidance will be provided to define the limits of retail use, improve pedestrian circulation and secure better access by public transport.

Policy FP17: Development of large food stores

Proposals for large new food stores should be located within or on the edge of town or district centres in accordance with the sequential approach of Policy FP14.

Local Development Documents will:

- (i) identify and allocate sites for such development

(ii) identify where new or improved convenience shopping, which cannot be accommodated within town or district centres, is needed:

(a) to make good deficiencies in the quality or amount of existing provision; or

• ; or

(b) to meet new requirements associated with major new residential communities including the Strategic Development Locations identified by this Plan.

Policy FP18: District and Local Centres

An appropriate scale of retail and service provision at the urban and rural district centres (as identified on the Key Diagram), and at local, neighbourhood and village centres identified within Local Development Documents, will be supported where it will underpin the role, vitality and viability of such centres.

Local Development Documents will identify the locations of new local centres of a suitable scale that are needed to serve large scale residential or mixed use development.

CHAPTER 7: HOUSING PROVISION AND DISTRIBUTION

Policy HP1: Housing Provision and Distribution 2001-2021

Provision for housing for 2001-2021 will be made in accordance with the following quantities:

	Dwellings (net)					
	2001 - 2006	2006 - 2011	2011 - 2016	2001 - 2016	2016 - 2021	2001 - 2021
Ashford	3,500	5,000	5,500	14,000*	6,000	20,000*
Canterbury	2,100	2,100	2,000	6,200	1,500	7,700
Dartford	3,900	4,000	4,500	12,400	3,100	15,500
Dover	1,600	1,600	1,300	4,500	1,000	5,500
Gravesham	1,400	1,500	1,500	4,400	1,100	5,500
Maidstone	2,300	2,200	2,000	6,500	1,800	8,300
Sevenoaks	800	800	800	2,400	700	3,100
Shepway	1,800	1,500	1,400	4,700	1,200	5,900
Swale	2,500	2,500	2,500	7,500	2,000	9,500
Thanet	1,700	1,700	1,700	5,100	1,500	6,600
Tonbridge & Malling	2,200	2,100	2,100	6,400	1,900	8,300
Tunbridge Wells (KCC area)	1,500	1,400	1,100	4,000	1,100	5,100
Medway	25,300	26,400	26,400	78,100	22,900	101,000
Kent	3,500	3,900	4,100	11,500	3,600	15,100
	28,800	30,300	30,500	86,600	26,500	116,100

* including provision for 13,100 dwellings 2001-2016 and 18,500 dwellings 2001-2021 at the Ashford growth point

Notes to Policy HP1

The quantities in Policy HP1 include all forms of housing development providing self contained dwelling units for permanent accommodation and relate to net increases to the housing stock after 31st March 2001 i.e. net of demolitions or other losses from the housing stock. In order to secure the overall average annual rate of provision for the 2001/2016 period the quantities for the three phasing periods to 2016 are cumulative i.e. any surplus or shortfall from the

early periods of the Plan are carried forward to subsequent periods. Provision for 2016-2021 is subject to review in the light of monitoring and a further review of RPG9. For the purposes of implementing Policy HP1 housing provision will mean the expected net dwelling capacity of planning permissions and allocations in previously adopted or deposited development plans which were outstanding at 31st March 2001 (including dwellings then under construction) plus the planned net dwelling capacity on sites subsequently released or to be released for development through allocations in development plans and planning permissions. The assessment of the level of provision in relation to Policy HP1 will also allow for:

- (i) the expected contribution from sites below the site size threshold adopted for the identification of development plan allocations; and
- (ii) the expected contribution from other windfall sites involving previously developed land.

Policy HP2: Phased Provision of Housing Land

The local planning authorities will phase and manage the release of sites for housing development, taking account of the expected contribution of windfalls, to ensure that generally previously developed sites are brought forward before greenfield sites whilst meeting the housing requirements for the phasing periods set out in Policy HP1.

Policy HP3: Contribution of Previously Developed Land to Housing Provision: 2001-2016

	Housing Provision 2001-2016	Target for Previously Developed Land (%)
Ashford	14,000	30
Canterbury	6,200	70
Dartford	12,400	95*
Dover	4,500	65
Gravesham	4,400	75
Maidstone	6,500	65
Sevenoaks	2,400	90
Shepway	4,700	60
Swale	7,500	30
Thanet	5,100	80
Tonbridge & Malling	6,400	90
Tunbridge Wells	4,000	90
Medway	11,500	80
Kent	89,600	70

Note to policy HP3

** Policy target for Dartford includes former mineral workings and other damaged land that falls outside the definition of previously developed land within the terms of PPG3*

Policy HP4: Sequential Approach to Location of New Housing Provision

In identifying sites to be allocated for housing to meet the housing requirements in Policy HP1 a search sequence will be applied as follows:

- 1) The re-use of previously developed land and buildings:
 - a) within Kent's major/principal urban areas; followed by:
 - b) within Kent's rural service centres; followed by:

c) within a smaller rural settlement, as defined in Local Development Documents, with the potential for a sustainable form of development including ready access to good quality public transport;

followed by:

2) Where applicable, settlement extensions or new communities identified as strategic development locations by this Plan;

followed by:

3) An extension or extensions to:

(a) a major/principal urban area; followed by:

(b) a rural service centre; followed by:

(c) a smaller rural settlement, as defined in Local Development Documents, with the potential for a sustainable form of development including ready access to good quality public transport.

Where practical consideration of a settlement extension, under 3) above, should give priority to the use of previously developed land.

Policy HP5: Assessment of New Housing Land

In applying Policy HP4 and in the control of development, the suitability of both previously developed and greenfield sites for housing development should demonstrate:

- (a) good quality accessibility to jobs, shops and services by means other than the car including the potential for improving such accessibility; and
- (b) adequate capacity within existing transport, utility, social and community infrastructure to absorb further development or the ability for new or enhanced facilities to be provided; and
- (c) the role of development in sustaining local services and facilities;
- (d) the absence of material harm arising from physical and environmental constraints affecting the development of land.

Policy HP6: Housing Development in the Countryside

Housing development outside the confines of the major/principal urban areas will not be permitted unless it is:

- a) a site allocated for housing development in a Local Development Document; or otherwise consistent with Policy SS6; or
- b) minor development within the confines of a rural service centre or smaller rural settlement; or
- c) a single dwelling for farm, forestry or other workers where a rural location at, or in the immediate vicinity, of a place of work is essential; or
- d) the rebuilding, conversion or modest extension of a dwelling currently in residential use; or
- e) the conversion of a commercial, institutional, industrial or other rural building to meet an identified local need for housing which does not conflict with a need to retain local employment opportunities and is in a location that has good accessibility to a range of services in a nearby settlement.

Housing development must not be detrimental to the character of the countryside and, as appropriate, the character of rural settlement.

Policy HP7: Range and Mix of Housing Provision

The provision made for housing in Local Plans/Local Development Documents and through development proposals should secure a mix of dwelling sizes and types which will contribute towards meeting the identified needs of all sections of the community. As appropriate this should include:

- a) sheltered housing
- b) supported and lifetime housing
- c) student accommodation allied to the needs of the higher and further education sectors in Kent.

Policy HP8: Affordable Housing Provision

Provision of all affordable housing involving net additions to the housing stock will contribute to meeting the housing quantities in Policy HP1.

Local Development Documents should:

- a) establish the proportion of strategic housing provisions identified in Policy HP1 that should be met by affordable housing on the basis of District housing needs assessments;
- b) identify the respective contributions planned for shared equity, key worker and other forms of intermediate housing
- c) indicate the site size thresholds that will apply to provision of affordable housing and provide indicative targets for the level and composition of the contribution required from specific sites.

Policy HP9: Affordable Housing on Rural Exception Sites

Local Development Documents should indicate those rural settlements at which the provision of affordable housing would be acceptable on sites that have not been allocated for housing but where such development would be justified to meet a proven local need.

Policy HP10: Provision of Permanent and Transit Gypsy Accommodation

Where a need for permanent or transit gypsy accommodation is established, provision should be in accordance with the Structure Plan's policies for protection of the environment, countryside and the Green Belt.

Sites should be provided within the principal urban areas or rural settlements. In the absence of such sites, locations with good accessibility to the principal urban areas or rural service centres and with easy and safe access to primary and other main roads will be preferred.

Proposals should be located to avoid adverse impact on residential amenity, highway capacity and highway safety.

CHAPTER 8: QUALITY, CHOICE AND ACCESSIBILITY IN THE TRANSPORT NETWORK

Policy TP1: Assessment Criteria for Transport Proposals

All major proposals for enhancing the transport network in Kent and Medway will be assessed according to their social, transport, economic and environmental effects with specific regard to:

- The relationship to the overall strategy of this Plan;
- The contribution towards achieving a more sustainable pattern of development and regeneration;
- The likely impact on the environment including areas of special environmental quality;

- The likely effects on air quality and carbon dioxide emissions;
- Noise impacts;
- Reducing dependence on the private car
- The economic and operational benefits likely to be achieved relative to the cost of the proposal;
- The contribution to the movement of passengers and freight by rail;
- The need to concentrate traffic on the most suitable routes;
- The impact on road casualty reductions;
- The need to maintain or improve town centre accessibility by sustainable means;
- The need to accommodate improvements for bus services, pedestrians and cyclists; and
- The ability to enhance the environment for local communities.

Policy TP2: Transport and the Location of Development

Local Planning Authorities should ensure that development sites are well served by public transport, walking and cycling, or will be made so as a result of the development. Travel plans should be established for larger developments that generate significant demand for travel to promote the use of these means of transport

Developments likely to generate a large number of trips should be located where there is either a good choice of transport already available or where a good choice can be provided in a manner acceptable to the Local Transport Authority.

Policy TP3: Safeguarding of Programmed Strategic Transport Schemes

The programmed major transport schemes listed in Table TP3 will be promoted and land required for their construction safeguarded.

Table TP3 Programmed Strategic Transport Schemes

Rail (1)	Channel Tunnel Rail Link (under construction) Thameslink 2000 Strood Tunnel (under construction) East Kent Re-signalling Scheme
Motorway & Trunk Roads (2)	A2/A282 Dartford Improvement A2 Bean – Cobham A21 Lamberhurst Bypass (under construction) A21 Tonbridge Bypass – Pembury Bypass Improvement A249 Iwade to Queenborough including Second Swale Crossing (under construction) M20 Junction 10 Improvement M20 New Junction 10a M25 Junctions 1b-3 M25 Junctions 5-7
Local Transport Plan schemes (3)	A256 East Kent Access – Phase 1 (Sandwich – Ebbsfleet Lane) (under construction) Fastrack – Phase 1 (Dartford town centre – Darenth Park- Bluewater-Greenhithe – A226 – Gravesend town centre A228 Main Road – Ropers Lane A228 Leybourne & West Malling Corridor Improvement (including M20 Junction 4)

Notes :

(1) Schemes listed in Transport 2010

(2) Schemes are included in the Highways Agency's Targeted Programme of Improvement.
 (3) Schemes are included in the respective Local Transport Plans for Kent and Medway (2001/02 – 2005/6) and have been provisionally accepted by Government(subject to completion of statutory procedures).

Policy TP4: Support for strategic rail schemes:

Kent County Council and Medway Council will press Government and the Strategic Rail authority to implement the rail schemes listed in Table TP4 within the Plan period.

Table TP4: Strategic Rail Schemes

Schemes identified in Multi-Modal Studies
Increased rail capacity/capability around/through London
South Coast Corridor rail capacity improvements (including Ashford - Hastings)
Other Schemes
Domestic passenger services via the CTRL from/to Ashford and East and North Kent towns as far as Thanet and Dover
Thameslink 2000: Extension of services to Gravesend and Maidstone
Crossrail: Extension of services to Ebbsfleet and Medway
Ashford - Thanet journey time improvements on existing line
North Kent Line (Dartford - Gillingham) rail capacity improvements
Medway Valley Line - improved junctions at Strood and Paddock Wood
Rail Access to Manston Airport (1)
Dover Western Docks rail freight link (1)
Sheerness Docks rail freight capability improvements (1)
Thamesport London rail freight capability improvements (1)
Holborough – rail connection to Medway Cement works (1)

Notes :

(1) Scheme funded in whole or in part by development.

Policy TP5: Major Transport Corridors

Kent County Council and Medway Council will press Government, the Regional Assembly and, where appropriate , the Highways Agency to identify and implement integrated transport solutions to the existing and predicted congestion problems on the sections of the Motorway & Trunk Road network listed in Table TP5.

Table TP5: Existing or predicted problems on the motorway & trunk road network requiring integrated transport solutions

Schemes included in the Regional Transport Strategy (2004)	A2 Bean interchange A2 Lydden – Dover A21 Kippings Cross – Lamberhurst* A21 Lamberhurst – Flimwell
Schemes for further development (Department for Transport July 2003)	M25 Junction 5 Improvement: Sevenoaks

Roads Subject to Existing Congestion (1)	M20 Junctions 3-5 A282 Dartford Crossing
Roads Subject to Heavy Stress Levels in 2010 (1)	M20 Junction 7-8 M25 Junctions 3-5 M20 Wrotham Hill
Additional roads potentially under pressure in growth areas of Thames Gateway and Ashford	A2 (M25-M2) M20 Junction 9 and section between Junctions 9 and 10
Other Network Problems	M2/A2/A299 Brenley Corner Junction(M25-M2) A2 Canterbury Bypass Junctions M2 Junction 5 A20 Townwall Street: Dover

Notes:

(1) Stress levels identified or forecast by Highways Agency

* The Highways Agency is currently working on a scheme to bring forward into the Targeted Programme of Improvements (TPI)

Policy TP6: Further Thames Crossing

The strategic planning and transport authorities(Kent County Council and Medway Council) will seek to ensure that Government investigates fully, and quickly, the need for, and location of, a further multi modal crossing of the River Thames for passengers and freight, taking into account:

- the transport, economic and regeneration benefits to Kent;
- the balance of beneficial and adverse impacts on Kent communities and the well being of settlements including potential air quality and noise impacts;
- the protection of the nationally and internationally important natural environment to the east of Gravesend;
- the ability to integrate a crossing with the existing road and rail network in Kent and the impacts associated with any consequential links with these networks

In reaching a judgement as to whether there is a net benefit to Kent of a further crossing the strategic planning authorities will take into account the criteria of Policy TP1.

Policy TP7: Future Strategic Transport Schemes

The Local Planning Authorities will safeguard land for the major transport schemes listed in Table TP7, which may be promoted through the respective Local Transport Plans for Kent and Medway. These schemes will be subject to multi-modal scheme appraisal and will also be subject to Policy TP1.

Table TP7: Other Strategic transport schemes to be promoted through local transport plans

Schemes included in current Local Transport Plans (2000/1 - 2005/6)
A228 Colts Hill Strategic Link A228 Ropers Lane – Grain East Kent Access Phase 2 B2163 (A274) Leeds & Langley Bypass
Schemes in Sustainable Communities Plan: Growth Areas (Thames Gateway; Ashford to be funded partially or fully by development)
Kent Thameside: Fastrack Future Phases (including North Dartford, Stone, Eastern Quarry,

<p>Northfleet Riverside , Ebbsfleet, Swanscombe Peninsula, Thames Way) Transport for Medway (Integrated Network Development and provision of substantial new public transport capacity) Ashford: Orbital and radial bus priority schemes Ashford: A28 Chart Road Dualling and A28 - A2070 Link Sittingbourne Northern Relief Road Kent Thameside : Denton Relief Road :Gravesend Kent Thameside : London Road/St Clements Way Junction: Dartford Rushenden: Link to the A249 : Queenborough</p>
<p>Other schemes to be funded partially or fully by development</p>
<p>A260 Hawkinge Bypass (partially complete) A227 (A25) Borough Green and Platt Bypass A228 East Bank of the Medway/Snodland Bypass Dualling A228/A26 Kings Hill – Seven Mile Lane</p>
<p>Other Schemes</p>
<p>A229 Maidstone: Upper Stone Street Improvements and All Saints Link Road A26 Tonbridge: London Road - Hadlow Road Link Improved Links between Hempstead and Walderslade</p>

Policy TP8: Supporting Public Transport

Public transport will be promoted by providing through partnership:

- Better interchange facilities between public transport and other transport modes, including better car parking;
- Better integration between bus and rail services, including through ticketing;
- The provision of improved and integrated public transport information;
- Improved facilities for passengers, especially access for the mobility impaired;
- Continued financial support for non-commercial but socially necessary bus services;
- Procuring Government grant for urban and rural services
- Greater use of bus priority measures;
- Encouraging the improvement of the rail network and services using Government funding streams and developer contributions;
- The development of quality partnerships, such as those already in Maidstone & Thanet, and in other areas such as Canterbury.

Table TP8

<p>The following specific schemes to improve public transport services are planned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements to Dartford Station and refurbishment of Greenhithe Station including public transport interchange • Integration of Ebbsfleet mainline, Ebbsfleet North Kent line platforms, possible Crossrail station and Northfleet Station (1) • Redevelopment of Maidstone East station and interchange improvements , including pedestrian links to Maidstone Barracks Station(1) • Reconstruction of Strood station and interchange improvements (1) • Enhanced bus/rail interchange at Ramsgate, Gillingham, Tonbridge and Gravesend • A20 corridor: Medway Gap: bus priority measures (1) • Improved rail interchange facilities on the Tonbridge - Ashford line and on the Ashford – Hastings line • Replacement bus interchange in central Ashford • Access, parking and interchange improvements : West Malling station (1) • Manston Parkway Station • Rail service and infrastructure improvements on the Medway Valley Line
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- Enhanced integration with bus services and improved station facilities on the Sheerness branch line
- Enhanced pedestrian facilities for Chatham station
- Enhanced access arrangements to Rochester station (1)
- Improved facilities at Margate Station
- Integration and improvement at Dover Priory Station
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-
- Web CCTV to enhance security at stations
- New buses and increased service frequency for Thanet linking with QEQM Hospital
- New buses and increased service frequency between Canterbury, Whitstable and Herne Bay
- New buses and increased service frequency in Gravesend for services to Bluewater and Darenth Valley Hospital

Notes:

(1) Scheme to be funded wholly or partially by development

Policy TP9: Supporting Park and Ride

Bus and rail based Park & Ride facilities to serve both town centres and major traffic generators will be supported where they form part of an overall transport strategy for an area, including reduced parking in town centres, increased parking charges and bus priority measures linking the facilities to the town centre. Where appropriate contributions towards the provision of such facilities will be sought from developers.

Policy TP10: Facilities for Pedestrians and Cyclists

Facilities for pedestrians and cyclists will be provided and their use promoted. Local authorities should ensure that these are included in the design of all transport projects and other developments. Land should be safeguarded to provide safe and direct pedestrian and cycle routes where necessary.

Policy TP11: Development and Access to the Primary/Secondary Road Network

Development will not be permitted which involves either the construction of a new access onto the primary or secondary road network or the increased use of an existing access, where a significantly increased risk of crashes or traffic delays would result unless appropriate measures to mitigate the effect of development have been secured .

Policy TP12: Rail Freight and Handling Facilities

Development which will encourage the transfer of freight from road to rail, including the development of freight handling facilities, will be permitted unless there is overriding conflict with other planning and environmental considerations. If necessary, conditions will be imposed on planning permissions in order to maximise the amount of non-road borne freight movements.

Policy TP13: Safeguarding of Railway Land for Transport Purposes

Land used formerly for the railways will be safeguarded from development which would preclude its future use to meet an identified transport need.

Policy TP14: Development Traffic & Heavy Goods Vehicles

Development which generates significant increases in traffic, especially heavy goods vehicles, will not be permitted if it is not well related to the primary and secondary road network, or if it would result in a significant increased risk of crashes or traffic delays unless appropriate measures to mitigate the effect of the development have been secured .

Kent County Council and Medway Council will:

- identify and signpost lorry routes so as to direct heavy goods vehicles away from rural and residential areas;
- work with others to achieve distribution of goods by sustainable means in the urban areas in Kent.

Policy TP15: Local Transport Strategies

Local transport strategies for urban and rural areas will be promoted in accordance with the transport policies of this Plan and the Local Transport Plans for Kent and Medway. The prioritisation of investment in urban areas will have regard to the regional hubs and interchanges identified in the Regional Transport Strategy.

Policy TP16: Traffic and Minor Roads

Through traffic, particularly goods vehicles, will be discouraged from travelling on minor roads by the use of traffic management measures, regulatory measures, the control of development and freight quality partnerships.

Policy TP17: Management of Minor Roads

Minor roads will not be widened or realigned unless overriding safety considerations require it and no alternative method to resolve the safety problems is deemed practicable.

Policy TP18: Roadside Services

New facilities and services for road users and development of existing facilities will be permitted on the motorway, trunk road and primary route network unless there is an overriding conflict with other planning and environmental considerations.

Policy TP19: Vehicle Parking Standards

Development proposals should comply with the respective vehicle parking policies and standards adopted by Kent County Council and Medway Council.

Policy TP20: Gateway Function of the Ports

The role of the following ports as deep water and/ or gateways to Europe will be protected and enhanced:

- Dover
- Channel Tunnel
- Medway Ports, including Sheerness and Thamesport
- Ramsgate.

At the 'core' ports of Dover, Sheerness, Thamesport and Ramsgate, the priority will be to safeguard the port function.

Proposals for development which will enable the growth of trade at Kent and Medway ports and wharves will be supported provided that:

- any measures required by the development to improve local access by road and rail are brought forward as part of the proposals;
- the proposals maximise the potential for passenger and freight traffic to be accommodated by rail;
- the proposals achieve a high standard of design; and
- there are no overriding adverse economic, social and environmental impacts.

Deep water frontage in the Thames Estuary will be safeguarded for port or port related uses where good surface access by road, and preferably by rail, exists or can be readily provided. Elsewhere proposals which will assist the diversification of trade, port operations or land uses will normally be supported.

Policy TP21: Channel Tunnel Capacity and Second Fixed Link

Improvements to the capacity of the Channel Tunnel and to the loading gauge and capacity of the Channel Tunnel rail routes will be supported.

In the event of a second fixed cross-Channel link being proposed, the local planning authorities will consider the economic, transport, social and environmental impacts of such a proposal. A proposal that substantially increases congestion on the County's road network will not be supported.

Policy TP22: Kent and Medway Ports

- Expansion of the Port of Dover will be supported to enable growth of freight and passenger traffic. Any such development, outside of the existing harbour walls, will be subject to the reinstatement of the rail link to the Western Docks to enable a significant proportion of freight to reach the port by rail. Improvements to the loading gauge between Dover Docks and Folkestone will be supported
- At Thamesport further expansion of the port will be encouraged within existing port confines and through inland expansion at Grain subject to improvements to the capacity of the rail access to the port and improvements to the A228;
- At the Port of Sheerness expansion should involve intensification of port use within existing port confines or expansion onto nearby land designated for commercial use. Development that further expands the port will be subject to the availability of, and opportunity for, improved transhipment and rail access and the completion of the A249 Second Swale Crossing scheme;
- At the Port of Ramsgate proposals should assist the growth of port trade and not compromise its role as a major gateway port. However within the area of the Royal Harbour, diversification will be supported subject to the overriding need to protect the historic character of the area;
-
- At the Port of Folkestone, mixed use development which will assist in the regeneration of central Folkestone will be supported. This could include leisure and business uses as well as some retention of port and fishing activities; and
- On the Thames and Medway in North Kent, key deep water wharves will be retained and a programme of investment in modern facilities, rail access and good highway linkages will be pursued. A programme of rationalisation and restructuring of the wharves will be carried forward as part of the Thames Gateway initiative.

Policy TP23: Major distribution and transhipment centres

Proposals which encourage the transfer of freight from road to rail, road and air or between road and sea or river, which are designed and landscaped to a high standard, will be supported including at the following locations:

- on the Isle of Sheppey (Sheerness) subject to the completion of the A249 second Swale crossing scheme
- north of Sittingbourne (Ridham and Kemsley area);
- serving Thamesport on the Isle of Grain, subject to improvements to the A228 and to rail access;
- at Dover on allocated employment land to provide inland freight facilities for the port;
- at Dover through extension of the Dover Western Docks to provide a road-rail freight interchange, subject to economic and environmental considerations;
- at Manston Airport.

The provision of an inland road-rail facility to serve the Channel Tunnel, or a major new distribution and transshipment centre elsewhere in Kent, will be permitted only where:

- the site is easily accessible to the trunk road system and served by rail sidings and/or water;
- strong evidence is provided that the proposal is necessary and viable, and will reduce the overall volume of freight traffic carried by roads in Kent;
- there are no significant adverse effects on the local economy, countryside character or environment.

The long-term use of the rail facility as an integral part of the operation of the site should be secured.

Policy TP24: Manston Airport

The development of Manston Airport into a regional airport with a capacity of up to 6 million passengers per annum by 2021 will be supported. Proposals related to the development of the airport will be assessed for acceptability against the following criteria:

- development being directly related to the operation of the airport unless otherwise forming part of a proposal in a Local Development Document; and
- no significant detrimental impact on internationally, nationally or locally designated environmental areas; and
- no significant adverse impact on the amenity of local communities which cannot be satisfactorily mitigated; and
- appropriate measures being secured to mitigate the impact of development including noise control, air pollution, water pollution, landscape and habitat management; and
- the requirements for surface access being adequately accommodated within the capacity of the existing or committed local transport network; and
- measures being identified and secured to improve access by public transport modes including the provision of a direct rail link when the capacity of the airport reaches 4 million passengers per annum.

Policy TP25: Lydd Airport

The expansion of general aviation at Lydd Airport will be supported. Proposals related to the development of the airport will be assessed against the following criteria:

- the impact upon the surrounding environment, landscape and local settlements;
- the economic and employment advantages;
- access from the main centres of population and the availability of a choice of transport modes; and

- the existence of suitably located alternative flying facilities.

Policy TP26: Other Airports and Airfields

Proposals for the development of new facilities for commercial and recreational flying at existing airfields will be permitted only where they do not have an unacceptable adverse economic, social and environmental impact on the local and wider community.

CHAPTER 9: CLIMATE CHANGE AND MANAGING OUR NATURAL RESOURCES

Policy NR1: Energy Generation

Proposals for energy generation will be assessed by the local planning authorities in terms of:

- Their impact on landscape and nature conservation, health, built environment, air quality, atmosphere (including the level of emissions) and water resource interests; and
- The effectiveness of proposed mitigation measures; and
- The proximity of proposals to the energy source and their contribution to meeting the energy needs of local communities; and
- The prospective life of energy plants and, where appropriate, the site restoration measures proposed.

Policy NR2: Renewable Energy Production

Development necessary for the production of energy from renewable sources will be supported where there would be no overriding conflict with environmental interests. Prospective sites for renewable energy facilities and production, including consideration of provision integrated with new development, will be identified in Local Development Documents.

Offshore wind energy generation is supported in appropriate locations. Onshore wind energy, generation, despite its considerable potential, will be judged within the context of its overall impact on the landscape.

Policy NR3: Combined Heat and Power Generation

Proposals for combined heat and power generation and district heating systems will be supported particularly where they are based on the harnessing of renewable energy sources and can be integrated with new development. Local Development Documents should assess, and where viable, provide for such schemes in the planning of major development proposals.

NEW POLICY

Policy NRx : Development and the Prudent Use of Natural Resources

Proposals for development should demonstrate that their design and layout contributes to:

- (a) the conservation and prudent use of energy, water and other natural resources; and
- (b) a reduction in CO₂ emissions through re-use , or the more efficient use , of resources

Policy NR4: Pollution Impacts

The quality of Kent's environment will be conserved and enhanced. This will include the visual, ecological, geological, historic and water environments, air quality and levels of tranquillity and light intrusion.

Development should be planned and designed to avoid, or adequately mitigate, pollution impacts. Proposals likely to have adverse implications for pollution should be the subject of a pollution impact assessment.

In assessing proposals local authorities will take into account:

- a) Impact on prevailing background pollution levels; and
- b) The cumulative impacts of proposals on pollution levels; and
- c) The ability to mitigate adverse pollution impacts; and
- d) The extent and potential extremes of any impacts on air quality, water resources,

Development which would result in, or significantly contribute to, unacceptable levels of pollution, will not be permitted.

Policy NR5: Development Sensitive to Pollution

Development which would be sensitive to adverse levels of noise, air, light and other pollution, will not be supported where such conditions exist, or are in prospect, and where mitigation measures would not afford satisfactory protection.

Policy NR6: Air Quality Management Areas

The local authorities are required to:

- (a) review and assess air quality and, where necessary, declare Air Quality Management Areas;
- (b) work towards improving air quality in Air Quality Management Areas through preparation of an Air Quality Action Plan

The scale and character of development in, or adjoining such areas, should be controlled so as not to adversely affect this improvement.

Policy NR7: Water Quality

Development will not be permitted where it would give rise to an unacceptable impact on the quality or yield of Kent's watercourses, coastal waters and/or ground water resources.

Policy NR8: Water supply and wastewater treatment

The development of new or expansion of existing water supply or wastewater facilities will be supported where:

- there is a demonstrable need to serve existing development and/or development proposed in accordance with the development plan; and
- this represents the best environmental option; and
- land use and environmental impacts are minimised through appropriate mitigation.

Land required for expanded or new facilities for water resource management or wastewater treatment will be identified and safeguarded in Local Development Documents. This will include provision for the enlargement of Bewl reservoir and additional wastewater treatment facilities in the Ashford area.

Policy NR9: Development and Flood Risk

Development will be planned to avoid the risk of flooding and will not be permitted:

- i. if it would be subject to an unacceptable risk of flooding or where it would increase the risk of flooding elsewhere; ;
- ii. Where it would prejudice the capacity and integrity of flood plains or planned flood protection or coastal defence measures;
- iii. Where it will hinder the implementation of future flood protection or coastal defence measures;
- iv. if it would adversely affect the ability of the land to drain.

Where development is necessary in areas at risk of flooding it should be designed and controlled to mitigate the impact of flood risk.

Local Development Documents will include policies to:

- (a) ensure that a risk based sequential approach, reflecting degrees of flood risk, is adopted in guiding specified categories of development away from flood risk areas;
- (b) secure the provision and maintenance of appropriate drainage systems in new developments to mitigate flood risk;
- (c) ensure that proposals for development are accompanied by flood risk assessments appropriate to the scale and nature of the development and the risk.
- (d) Seek to create new wetland wildlife habitats where these complement flood risk reduction measures

Policy NR10: Flood Protection

The development of new or replacement flood protection or coastal defence measures that are in accordance with a Catchment Management Plan, Shoreline Management Plans or Coastal Defence Strategies will be supported. Where these are required to service a development their provision and maintenance should be funded as part of that development.

CHAPTER 10: MANAGING OUR WASTE AND MINERALS RESOURCES

Policy WM1: Integrated Waste Management

Provision will be made for the integrated management of waste reflecting Best Practicable Environmental Option (BPEO), the national waste hierarchy and national targets for waste management.

The Waste Local Development Frameworks for Kent and Medway will identify the range, scale and location of facilities to provide for rapid growth in capacity for recycling, composting and recovery from waste of all controlled streams.

Energy from waste proposals will be considered only as part of an integrated approach to increase waste recovery rates and should incorporate other waste management facilities including recycling, composting and materials recovery.

Policy WM2: Assessment criteria for waste proposals

Proposals for the treatment, storage, transfer, processing or disposal of waste will be required to show that they represent the best balance between the most efficient and most environmentally sustainable method of managing a specific type of waste. Proposals should demonstrate that they:

- Meet a demonstrable need that overrides material agricultural, landscape, conservation, traffic and other environmental or land use concerns; and

- Are the Best Practicable Environmental Option (BPEO) and thereby accord with the waste hierarchy, the proximity principle (taking into account the environmental impact of the mode of transport proposed) and the contribution made to self sufficiency.

Policy WM3: Securing waste reduction

Development proposals will be required to demonstrate they are able to make a contribution to reducing growth in the volume of waste generated in Kent and Medway.

Local Development Documents will include policies:

- 1) Requiring the submission of a waste minimisation and recycling plan alongside major development proposals and, where appropriate, provide for the use of conditions or agreements to secure waste minimisation;
- 2) Providing for the development of assembly, manufacturing or processing facilities to recycle and/or recover waste.

Policy WM4: Planning for waste management capacity

The Kent and Medway Waste Development Frameworks will make provision for, and maintain, integrated waste management capacity sufficient for 15 years ahead.

Through their Waste Development Frameworks, Kent and Medway Councils will each make provision for the management of the equivalent of the waste arising in their areas.

Policy WM5: Waste Disposal to Land

Where disposal of waste to land can be demonstrated to represent the Best Practicable Environmental Option in terms of Policy WM1:

- 1) For inert waste, priority will be given to using suitable mineral workings rather than other land disposal sites where this will facilitate the reinstatement of land to a beneficial after-use and/or secure improvement of the environment;
- 2) For non inert waste, subject to Policy WM2, Kent and Medway Councils will consider landraising as an option for waste disposal. Provision should be made for the re-instatement of land to a beneficial after-use.

Policy WM6: Provision of strategic waste management facilities

The Kent and Medway Waste Local Development Frameworks will seek to provide a pattern of waste management facilities over the plan period, to include:

- (i) A strategic recycling facility in North Kent to meet local and regional needs;
- (ii) Industrial scale composting facilities in North Kent and East Kent;
- (iii) A waste reprocessing plant in East Kent providing energy production both for the plant and wider use and incorporating provision for materials recycling;
- (iv) Further landfill capacity in North Kent to meet the need to dispose of residues to land; and Other facilities that may be required to meet integrated waste management targets.

They will also determine the need for, and pattern of, small scale waste processing and composting facilities.

Wherever practicable facilities should be located to enable the use of rail and/or water based transport.

Policy WM7: Construction related spoil

In order to minimise the environmental impact of construction projects which require significant quantities of construction aggregates or give rise to significant amounts of surplus spoil, a scheme for the transport and routing of such materials, together with proposals for the disposal or reuse of surplus spoil, will be designed into the project itself.

Policy M1: Sources of Minerals Supply

Subject to environment, transport and other material planning considerations, including appropriate after-use, proposals for the provision of minerals through recycling, the use of secondary materials, imports and the acceptable extraction of local sources of supply will be permitted.

Policy M2: Use of Secondary/ Recycled Materials

Kent County Council and Medway Council will seek to maximise the use of recycled and secondary materials through:

- The Councils' own material specifications in setting contracts;
- Encouraging other contractors to use, and specify the use of, recycled materials;
- Permitting recycling proposals at appropriate locations consistent with Waste Local Development Documents.

Policy M3: Assessment Criteria for Minerals Proposals

Proposals for minerals extraction and/or associated plant and buildings and minerals recycling facilities will be permitted only where they do not have an unacceptable adverse impact on agricultural, landscape, conservation, or environmental interests of acknowledged importance or on residential and business communities.

Permission will only be granted if any physical constraints on the land have been properly taken into account and if there are adequate access proposals, measures to minimise harm to the landscape and environment, to protect local communities, to landscape the site, remove plant or buildings after workings have ceased and to restore the land to an appropriate after use, normally as working progresses.

Wherever appropriate a period of aftercare will also be required.

Policy M4: Provision and Safeguarding of Marine Wharves and Rail Depots

Existing marine wharves and rail depots that receive and process minerals will be protected generally from development that would inhibit their continued operation or potential expansion. This will be achieved through the identification of buffer zones around such sites in Minerals Local Development Documents.

Wharves on the Thames and Medway will be subject of study and potential rationalisation in accordance with Policy TP22.

Proposals for new marine wharves and rail depots, to receive and process imports of minerals, will be permitted on appropriate sites. In assessing whether a site is appropriate, Kent County Council and Medway Council will consider all material planning interests including those relating to agriculture, landscape, conservation, environment, traffic and access.

Policy M5: Provision for Construction Aggregates

Kent County Council and Medway Council will review and maintain:

- 1) A supply of aggregates sufficient to contribute to national, regional and local needs, in accordance with their agreed share of regional aggregates supply.
- 2) A landbank of permitted reserves throughout the period of the Plan of:
 - sand and gravel sufficient for at least 7 years' production at agreed apportionment levels;
 - ragstone sufficient for at least 10 years' supply.

Policy M6: Limestone Extraction in East Kent

Subject to the requirements of Policies M1 and M3 Kent County Council will give favourable consideration to limestone mining in East Kent. When assessing the landbank for Kent's land won construction aggregate requirements, no account will be taken of this option until planning permission has been granted.

Policy M7: Silica Sand

Kent County Council will seek to maintain a landbank of permitted reserves of silica sand sufficient for at least 10 years supply for each production site, or at least 15 years at sites where significant capital investment is required.

Policy M8: Building Stone

Kent County Council and Medway Council will seek to ensure that an adequate supply of building stone is maintained.

Policy M9: Brickearth

Proposals for the extraction of brickearth will be permitted which will enable each stockbrick works to be maintained with at least 15 years reserves of brickearth. Proposals for brickearth extraction on the best and most versatile agricultural land must provide for the site to be progressively restored.

Policy M10: Chalk and Clay

Kent County Council and Medway Council will seek to maintain throughout the Plan period:

- (a) at least 25 years of permitted reserves of chalk and clay for cement production;
- (b) at least 15 years of permitted reserves of clay for brick and tile production;
- (c) at least 10 years of permitted reserves of chalk for agricultural uses
- (d) adequate permitted reserves of chalk and clay for engineering, pharmaceutical and whiting manufacture.

Policy M11: Oil, Gas and Coalbed Methane

Proposals for the exploration and appraisal of oil, natural gas and coalbed methane will be permitted. Permission for any production of on-shore oil, gas and coalbed methane which would require a gathering station, export terminal or distribution network will only be given if there are adequate proposals for:

- a) the screening, landscaping and design of production well sites, gathering stations and export terminals; and
- b) access and routing for vehicular traffic; and
- c) avoiding nuisance to any sensitive development in the vicinity; and

- d) transport of oil, gas and coalbed methane within the plan area (for which there will be a presumption in favour of rail transport and/or underground pipelines so far as this is practicable); and
- e) The testing or disposal of gas; and
- f) the clearance of plant, equipment and buildings and the restoration and aftercare of all areas affected by the production operations at the end of the permitted period.

The siting of gathering stations and export terminals in locations protected by the Structure Plan's countryside and coast policies, or in locations close to substantial built development, will be refused, unless it can be shown that there is no suitable alternative location.

Policy M12: Safeguarding of Mineral Reserves

Development proposals which would sterilise the future availability of strategic minerals identified in Minerals Local Development Documents will be refused. Where possible, known sources of secondary and recycled materials will be safeguarded from sterilisation.

Where development is proposed, extraction of the mineral resource prior to, or in conjunction with, development will be encouraged.

Wherever practicable proposals for development should provide for the use of secondary and recycled materials .

CHAPTER 11: IMPLEMENTING AND MONITORING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE KENT & MEDWAY STRUCTURE PLAN

Policy IMP 1: Meeting the costs of community and other infrastructure needs generated by new development

The local planning authorities will require appropriate contributions from developments to meet the costs of providing community, transport and other infrastructure necessary to provide for the needs arising from the development. Such contributions will be agreed before planning permission is granted and the facilities and/or services will be provided in accordance with an agreed phasing programme and, where appropriate, ongoing management and/or maintenance arrangements.