

Medway Local Plan

Adopted 14th May 2003

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INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Planning System

1.1.1 The basis of the town and country planning system in Britain was established in 1947, and in essence the pattern and intent of the system is the same today as when it was first established. Development is regulated and controlled in the public interest, with those wishing to undertake all but minor development required to first seek permission. This permission is sought from local authorities charged with the responsibility of managing planning legislation.

1.1.2 To ensure that decisions about the granting of planning permission are seen to be fair, open and reasonable, local authorities are required to prepare publicly available plans containing policies and proposals to guide the shape and nature of development in their areas. These plans are collectively given the name “the Development Plan”. The Development Plan is usually composed of four different types of plans: structure plans; local plans; minerals plans and waste plans.

1.1.3 The structure plan provides a framework for more detailed policies and proposals at a local level. These local policies are set out in local plans. In particular local plans identify specific sites for different forms of development and indicate how local issues are to be addressed over the life of the plan. Proposals for development relating to minerals and waste disposal are determined in the context of specialist minerals local plans and waste local plans.

1.1.4 Local plans have assumed a greater importance since the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, which makes the preparation of local plans a statutory requirement. It also makes it clear that where plans are up to date, proposals for development will generally be permitted only if they accord with the Development Plan. Therefore local plans, as the most detailed layer in the plan-making system, have a crucial role in directing and controlling development. This “planned” system means that there is an increased need to keep plans up to date.

1.1.5 In the past, Local Planning Authorities were able to prepare local plans which covered only a part of their areas but they are now required to prepare plans for the whole of their areas.

1.1.6 Medway Council came into existence as a Unitary Authority in April 1998. It is charged with the responsibility of preparing all types of plan for its administrative area and has extensive planning powers. It has resolved to:

- prepare a single local plan for the whole of its area.
- prepare a structure plan, to replace the current one, jointly with Kent County Council, covering the whole of Medway and Kent in order to retain the same geographic basis as the current plan.

- prepare waste and minerals local plans to replace the current ones produced by, and inherited from, Kent County Council.

1.2 Local Plans in Medway

1.2.1 The first local plan to cover Medway was the Medway Towns Local Plan, which was formally adopted in 1992. The geographical area of that plan covered the whole of two districts and a part of two others. The four district authorities concerned took the view that there would be significant benefits from having one comprehensive local plan for the whole of the Medway area. Accordingly, the plan was prepared jointly by Gillingham Borough Council, the City Council of Rochester Upon Medway, Maidstone Borough Council and Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council. This allowed those small parts of Tonbridge & Malling and Maidstone Boroughs north of the M2 motorway to be included in the Plan.

1.2.2 The changed statutory framework now means that the Medway Local Plan cannot cover those parts of the boroughs of Maidstone and Tonbridge & Malling. Instead they are covered by new district-wide plans prepared by those two authorities : the adopted 1998 Tonbridge and Malling Local Plan and the 2000 adopted Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan. This plan covers the whole of the administrative area of the Medway Council.

1.3 The Need for a Review

1.3.1 In addition to the legislative changes there are a variety of other reasons for this comprehensive review of the adopted 1992 local plan:

- A new direction for town planning coming from a national level, with the intent of bringing about an urban renaissance through an emphasis on regeneration of derelict and previously used land (brownfield sites) before developing fresh land in the countryside or on the edge of urban areas (greenfield sites).
- Updated national Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs), including the introduction of the principles of sustainable development, particularly concerning transport policy and the use of natural resources, and the “sequential test” for the location of major people and traffic attracting developments.
- Revised Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9) was published in March 2001. This rolls forward regional guidance to 2016 and provides a new framework for the preparation of structure and local plans.
- The Thames Gateway Planning Framework (RPG9a) was published in 1995 as a supplement to Regional Planning Guidance and provides a new stimulus for development and environmental improvement in the Gateway area.

- The Kent Structure Plan 1990 which guided the original Plan has now been replaced by a new Structure Plan which was adopted in December 1996. The new Structure Plan provides an up-to-date context for this Review. It covers the period 1991-2011.

1.3.2 There are many local issues which are not covered in the 1992 plan and which need to be addressed. These include a new protective regime for much of the Medway Estuary and Marshes; regeneration-based Action Areas in Strood and Rochester upon Medway; Phase I of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link; an increased emphasis on the role and importance of high quality urban design and landscape; the development of Chatham as Medway's own "city" centre as a focus for urban life, and many others.

1.3.3 There are a large number of policies in this local plan. The council recognises that a balance needs to be struck between undue prescription and a lack of certainty in decision making. However, there is a need to ensure that there are enough policies to establish a clear and consistent basis for decision-making that provides certainty to the development and investment sector and the local community.

1.4 Local Government Reorganisation

1.4.1 A consultation version of this plan was published under the title "*First Review of the Medway Towns Local Plan*", by Rochester Upon Medway City Council and Gillingham Borough Council prior to the creation of the Medway Council as a Unitary Authority in April 1998. The new council took over that plan as though it had prepared it itself, renamed it the Medway Local Plan, and made some significant changes.

1.5 The Local Plan Area

1.5.1 This local plan covers an area of approximately 250 square kilometres. It takes in the whole of the built-up area of Medway except parts of Lordswood and Walderslade in the administrative areas of Maidstone and Tonbridge & Malling Boroughs. The main built up area lies between the River Medway and the Wainscott by-pass in the north and the M2 motorway in the south. The historically separate towns of Chatham, Strood, Rochester, Gillingham and Rainham have now coalesced into a single conurbation with a population of approximately 250,000, making it one of the largest in the South East of England.

1.5.2 There are also several rural settlements on the Hoo peninsula and on the west bank of the Medway Valley. The area's attractive countryside ranges from the North Downs through the Medway Valley to the marshes around the river estuary. The westernmost part of the local plan area lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt, thus keeping the built up areas of outer London and Kent Thames-

side separate from the urban area of Medway. There are good communication links with London and the Continent via the M25, M2 and M20 and the north Kent rail line.

- 1.5.3 The area has a wide range of historic and natural assets including Rochester Castle, Cathedral and city centre, Chatham Historic Dockyard, Fort Amherst and a variety of urban and rural Conservation Areas. It is also the largest industrial centre in Kent. Since the closure of the Royal Naval Dockyard, the area has broadened its employment base, particularly with the development of high quality business parks at Chatham Maritime and Gillingham. The University of Greenwich has established a new campus at Chatham Maritime. The proposed nomination of the Dockyard and surrounding area for World Heritage Site designation during the next 10 years is a recognition of its historic importance.
- 1.5.4 Chatham town centre is an important sub-regional shopping centre and the council intends to develop it further as a vibrant focus for the whole of the community. The opening of the Medway Towns Northern Relief Road in 1999 has helped to reduce the congestion and pollution experienced in some parts of the urban area, and it has also greatly improved accessibility to a number of major employment areas.

1.6 The Plan Period

- 1.6.1 Government guidance indicates that policies and proposals in a local plan should normally cover a period of ten years. It would be the council's preference to extend the local plan to 2011. However, clarity about the future of the extensive Defence Estate at Chattenden is needed to inform a proper consideration of the development options for the post-2006 period. Continued uncertainty about if, and when, the Defence Estate will be made available for redevelopment (which is identified as being of strategic development importance in the "*Thames Gateway Planning Framework*") means that it would be prejudicial to proper planning to extend the plan period to 2011. Consequently, the council has reluctantly decided that this local plan can only cover the period 1996-2006.
- 1.6.2 However, this need not be problematic as policies in the structure plan allow development requirements to be dis-aggregated to the year 2006 and housing quantities in the structure plan for the 2006-2011 period are subject to review.

1.7 Timetable and Procedure

- 1.7.1 There were a number of distinct steps which were followed before the local plan was adopted. Some fall within the discretion of the Authority preparing the plan but most are set out in regulations approved by Parliament.
- 1.7.2 The various stages followed, up to the adoption of this local plan, are set out below.

Public consultation on deposit version	Summer 1999
Consideration of objections and Representations	1999 to 2000
Local Plan Inquiry opened	Autumn 2000
Receipt of inspectors report	Early 2002
Publication of proposed modifications	Autumn 2002
Plan adopted	14 th May 2003

1.8 Format of the Plan

1.8.1 The local plan consists of:

- a) *The written statement:*** This sets out the policies and proposals for the control and regulation of development, both general and site specific, and the reasons for them.

The strategy chapter sets out the over-arching themes of the local plan and also includes a number of policies that are concerned with particular large-scale strategic proposals. The remaining seven chapters address specific land use topics: the built and natural environment; economic development; housing; town centres and retailing; transportation; leisure and community facilities.

Each chapter sets out the current situation and the issues to be addressed before summarising Central Government guidance, regional planning policy and structure plan policies. The objectives underlining the policies in the chapter are then stated, followed by the policies and proposals that are distinguished by emboldened text. The text that precedes each policy gives the “*reasoned justification*” for that policy.

At the end of each chapter is a short summary of the environmental appraisal of the policies and proposals in the chapter (a full assessment is separately published). The final section in each chapter is a list of the key monitoring measures that the council proposes to use in identifying the performance of the plan in meeting its objectives. The monitoring measures are not designed to provide a comprehensive list of criteria set against each policy and proposal, rather they identify the key measures of success.

- b) *The proposals map:*** This identifies the areas to which particular policies apply and the location of specific proposals. Some policies are general in nature, applying across the whole plan area, and consequently are not shown on the proposals map. The map for this plan consists of :

- Four 1:12,500 scale plans which cover the whole of the plan area with the exception of the town centres which are covered by;
- A sheet of five 1:2,500 scale inset plans showing in greater detail the proposals for the central areas of Chatham, Strood, Rochester, Gillingham and Rainham.

1.8.2 In addition, the written statement contains a number of appendices providing supporting information.

1.8.3 Several policies may apply to a particular site or area. Some policies are site specific, whilst others are general and apply across the plan area. Accordingly, **all** of the relevant policies in the plan should be considered together in assessing how the plan would affect a parcel of land or proposals for development.

STRATEGY

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to outline a strategy that will provide a framework and context for the policies and proposals set out in the local plan. It also addresses some strategic locations and issues that are of a scale and significance to warrant consideration as strategic policies and these are set out in the second half of this chapter:

- 2.1.1 The strategy is developed from consideration of four main factors, which are:
- Changes in policy at the national level.
 - Regional and sub-regional planning policy.
 - The adopted Kent Structure Plan 1996.
 - An analysis of local problems, issues and opportunities which need to be addressed over the period of the Plan.

2.2 Policy Context

National Policy Changes

- 2.2.1 Since the Medway Towns Local Plan was adopted in 1992, there have been significant changes of emphasis in policy at the national level, reflecting in part international and global concerns. They include:
- Sustainability, in terms of patterns of development, reductions in use of energy, waste disposal and transport.
 - Quality of life and improved environmental standards.
 - Conservation of natural and built environmental assets.
 - Regeneration of inner urban areas and town centres.
 - Equality of opportunity for employment, travel, use of resources and access to facilities.

Regional Planning Policy

- 2.2.2 Medway is at the heart of the major regional economic regeneration priority area of Thames Gateway which was established in Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9) in 1994. This proposes to initiate a change in the previous strategy of promoting economic growth to the west of London. The RPG recognises that Thames Gateway has the potential to accommodate significant levels of new housing and employment development over the longer term, alongside improvements in environmental quality. It states that the area will benefit particularly from planned transport infrastructure (such as the Channel Tunnel Rail Link) and that its locational advantages between London and the Channel Tunnel, create the potential to attract higher levels of investment. RGP9 is currently in the process of being revised.
- 2.2.3 RPG9a “*The Thames Gateway Planning Framework*” was published in 1995 as a supplement to the Regional Guidance. RPG9a identifies the main development opportunities as being at Chatham Maritime, Rochester waterfront, Gillingham Business Park, Medway City Estate (Frindsbury peninsula) and the Hoo peninsula. It emphasises that once the Medway Towns Northern Relief Road is completed (and with the possible exception of a peripheral road linking the southern suburbs) the emphasis in transportation terms should switch from road building to improving public transport. Other strands of the guidance are the need to protect Medway’s fine historic heritage, improving urban design quality and protecting locally valuable countryside, especially to the north and east of Gillingham. The local plan must carry this framework through to a detailed local level, and enable Medway to fulfil its potential in the economic and development ambitions for the Thames Gateway as a whole.
- 2.2.4 RPG3b/9b “*Strategic Planning Guidance for the River Thames*” also provides useful guidance. Until the Government approves a new tidal defences planning strategy for the Thames, development schemes along this stretch of the river should allow sufficient space on the riverside margin for the possible strengthening of flood defences. The RPG goes on to advise that all Local Planning Authorities in Thames Gateway should prepare policies to secure high quality design on the riverside; prepare design guidance; consider the need for, and implications of, accommodating growth in port and river traffic; identify and protect sites for such purposes; and protect areas of nature conservation importance, including the internationally important marshes of the lower Thames.

Kent Structure Plan 1996

- 2.2.5 The Third Review of the Kent Structure Plan was adopted in December 1996. It seeks to apply national and regional planning policy to the particular circumstances of Kent, through a specific Thames Gateway Policy (S5) and a policy for Medway (NK2). There are a large number of other policies within the plan that have relevance, and it should be noted that the structure plan and the Medway Local Plan jointly provide the statutory Development Plan for Medway. The two plans should be read in conjunction with one another. A new structure

plan is currently being progressed jointly by Kent County Council and Medway Council.

Medway Council's Strategic Plan

2.2.6 Medway Council has prepared a Corporate Plan to 2004, following extensive public consultation. This is based on the council's six core values that guide the way that it will act and the policies that it will develop. These core values, and the objectives that flow from them, are:

- Giving value for money.
- Promoting economic, physical and social regeneration.
- Fostering citizenship.
- Improving the environment.
- Working for equal opportunity and access.
- Realising everyone's potential.

2.2.7 Those core values relating to the promotion of economic, physical and social regeneration and also improving the environment are particularly pertinent to land use planning and this local plan. Particular objectives in pursuit of these values include:

- Developing Chatham into the thriving day and evening city centre of Medway, whilst promoting the continuing role of other Medway town centres.
- Developing partnerships to build a range of thriving residential and business communities through the regeneration of key strategic sites (such as Chatham Maritime, Rochester Riverside, Kingsnorth, Grain and Strood Waterfront).
- Ensuring, in partnership with other providers, that a broad range of new homes are built to meet local needs and support the competitiveness of the local economy.
- Reducing congestion and pollution by decreasing the need to use private transport and increasing the use of public transport.
- Securing greater use of the River Medway for transport, leisure and tourism.
- Developing an integrated approach to the conversion, development and use of land to secure improvements to the built and natural environment.

2.2.8 Bearing in mind these core values and objectives, a number of key issues need to be addressed over the next few years through the local plan. These include:

- Tangible improvements to areas which suffer from moderate to severe deprivation e.g. poor housing, high unemployment and lack of facilities.
- Reducing traffic congestion within the urban area and improving public transport systems which need to be improved.
- The traditional town centres have suffered from greatly increased competition and are not the focus for community life that they should be. Medway also lacks a clearly defined “city” centre in which major facilities can be focused. Past trends need to be reversed.
- There is a need for further economic diversification to provide employment, and enable the local economy to more effectively manage the natural peaks and troughs of the economic cycle and to replace jobs lost through structural change.
- There is also a continuing need to protect and, where possible, improve the area’s natural assets, for example, areas of nature conservation value, semi-natural areas and urban open spaces.
- The environment in much of the urban area needs to be enhanced through improved design and, in some cases, sensitive renewal or comprehensive rehabilitation.
- Deficiencies in local facilities, e.g. health, education, arts and entertainment, sport and recreation, access to the countryside etc. need to be tackled.
- Ways need to be found to protect attractive countryside for its own sake and maintain a viable rural economy.

2.3 Strategy

Strategic Objectives

2.3.1. Taking these national, regional, structure plan and local issues into account, a number of strategic objectives are defined to guide the strategy for Medway. These are:

- (i) New development should follow sustainable development principles through its relationship to transport infrastructure, the location and mix of uses and the use of natural resources.
- (ii) The emphasis should be on creating an urban renaissance, through the redevelopment of brownfield sites within the urban area in preference to continued outward suburban expansion. The development of greenfield sites should be restricted to those well related to the structure of the urban area

and avoiding visual intrusion into the surrounding countryside, particularly the valuable urban fringe.

- (iii) The environmental quality and image of the area should be upgraded through the highest urban design and landscape standards being pursued in new development and regeneration.
- (iv) The economic base of the area should be enhanced by the promotion of selective new commercial developments of high environmental quality.
- (v) The widening of transport choices and accessibility, and a reduction in the reliance on the private car by improvements to facilities for cycling, walking and public transport.
- (vi) Chatham should be developed as Medway's 'city' centre, creating a major sub-regional centre able to compete effectively with its neighbours, offering a range of facilities for the whole community.
- (vii) Investing in the River Medway as an opportunity for transport, leisure, nature and tourism.
- (viii) Firm protection for the Green Belt, the best and most versatile agricultural land, sites of international, national and other strategic importance for nature conservation and landscape.
- (ix) Identifying the built heritage of Medway as an important historical and cultural resource, especially the defence heritage including Chatham Historic Dockyard, the Napoleonic defences and related buildings and areas.
- (x) Deficiencies in the provision of local community, recreation, health and education facilities should be remedied.

2.4 Policies and Reasoned Justification

Development Strategy

2.4.1 These objectives lead to the following strategic development principles that collectively constitute the strategy for guiding development and change in Medway over the plan period:

- (i) the main focus of new development will be within the urban area, particularly through regeneration of the Medway riverside;
- (ii) derelict, damaged and previously developed land will be the first choice for new development, in preference to the release of fresh land;
- (iii) new development can provide for urban renewal and housing regeneration in the inner urban parts of Strood, Chatham and Gillingham, but the green

hillsides and backdrops of the urban area are vital ingredients in defining the form and character of Medway and must be protected;

- (iv) the permanent protection of the open heartland of urban Medway at Capstone and Darland, and north and east of Gillingham means that the basic structure of the urban area is now settled, and there are few opportunities for outward expansion through new development;
- (v) The main economic development opportunities are at Chatham Maritime, Rochester Riverside, Gillingham Business Park, Medway City Estate and Rochester Airport. Grain and Kingsnorth have special significance as large-scale sites suitable for land intensive uses;
- (vi) the function and vitality of the town centres, and especially Chatham as Medway's 'city' centre, as a focus for community life, must be fostered;
- (vii) the increasing economic importance of Thamesport and Chatham Docks is recognised, which needs to be reinforced by appropriate transport improvements;
- (viii) the role of the historic built environment is recognised and will be protected. The major defence heritage systems will be sensitively developed, managed and interpreted as environmental flagship projects for the Thames Gateway, consistent with their potential World Heritage Site status.

2.4.2 Beyond the Plan's end-date of 2006, the Chattenden area will be critical to meeting development requirements. The precise form of development will be considered in the First Review of the Plan

2.4.3 The first two strategic policies encompass the principles set out above. In turn, they are then reflected in the detailed policies in the Plan.

POLICY S1: DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The development strategy for the plan area is to prioritise re- investment in the urban fabric. This will include the redevelopment and recycling of under-used and derelict land within the urban area, with a focus on the Medway riverside areas and Chatham, Gillingham, Strood, Rochester and Rainham town centres.

Land use and transport will be closely integrated, and priority will be given to a range of new and improved transport facilities, including facilities for walking, cycling and public transport.

Strategic economic development provision will be made both within the urban area and at Kingsnorth and Grain.

In recognition of their particular quality and character, long-term protection will be afforded to:

- (i) areas of international, national or other strategic importance for nature conservation and landscape; and*
- (ii) the historic built environment, including the Historic Dockyard, associated sites and fortifications.*

Outward peripheral expansion onto fresh land, particularly to the north and east of Gillingham, will be severely restricted. The open heartland of Medway at Capstone and Darland will be given long-term protection from significant development.

POLICY S2: STRATEGIC PRINCIPLES

The implementation of the development strategy set out in policy S1 will focus on:

- (i) maintaining and improving environmental quality and design standards;*
- (ii) a sustainable approach to the location and mix of new development, to provide local communities with a range of local facilities, (including transport measures to serve development and sensitivity in the use of energy and natural resources);*
- (iii) the adoption of a sequential approach to the location of major people and traffic attracting forms of development, including retailing, leisure, educational and health facilities.*

River Medway

- 2.4.4 The River Medway gives both the area and the council its name. Its existence was the reason why the area was first settled. Over several centuries the river has been the focus of community and economic life, although increasing industrialisation in Victorian times led to public access to much of the urban riverside being either removed or restricted. Much of the historic development of the towns occurred along the river and, today, much of the remaining historic fabric such as the World Naval Base is related to the use of the river. The Medway is now both a working river and a major leisure and recreation facility. There remain significant numbers of wharves, and the deep-water berths at Thamesport, on the Isle of Grain, have led to the rapid development of one of Britain's biggest container ports. There are also significant numbers of marinas and private berths on the river, particularly south of Rochester Bridge.
- 2.4.5 Further downstream towards the Thames Estuary, the river has a major role in nature conservation, as undeveloped coast and wetland of international importance offering a habitat to birdlife. This is reflected in the designation of most of the lower river as a Special Protection Area under the European Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds and as a Ramsar site under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance. Significant parts of both banks are also designated as part of the North Kent Marshes Special Landscape Area. Development along the banks of the upper parts of the river may have an impact upon sediment processes and other aspects of the tidal flow of the lower river and intertidal habitats. This may, in turn, have impacts upon the Ramsar and SPA sites. Consequently, development on the riparian edge needs to be carefully considered. The importance of coastal archaeology should also be borne in mind. There is a need for further survey work to access coastal archaeology. In addition to planning permission, various other consents may also be required before development on, over or adjacent to the River Medway may proceed. The Environment Agency will, under their own powers, seek to ensure that there is no net environmental loss resulting from any scheme which requires any Agency authorisations/consents.
- 2.4.6 The Medway thus performs several important functions in the local economy and ecology of the area, as well as making a very considerable contribution to the cultural and social life of the Towns.
- 2.4.7 The council recognises the variety and significance of the roles that the Medway performs, and proposes to develop an Action Plan to guide future development proposals along its length. The Action Plan will be prepared in conjunction with other statutory bodies and partners. It will also reflect the work already being undertaken on the Medway Estuary and Swale Management Plan, to which the council is committed.
- 2.4.8 Within the urban area new water-based transport services will be welcomed. Water-buses are a practicable possibility on the Medway, with a number of piers available from which to run such a service. Tourism related activities, utilising

the river, will be supported provided that there is no conflict with the nature conservation interest.

- 2.4.9 The council is already seeking to open up public access to the riverbanks within the urban area, in the first instance by the construction of a riverside walk and cycleway through the Rochester Riverside and Chatham Maritime areas. Further portions of riverside walks and cycleways will be sought in the urban area where they will not be in conflict with existing uses and are compatible with the Plan's other aims.

POLICY S3: RIVER MEDWAY

Proposals which are consistent with nature conservation, landscape and hydrological policies and which have no adverse impact upon coastal archaeology will be permitted that develop the River Medway for:

- (i) public access along the riverbank through the construction of riverside walks and cycle-ways;*
- (ii) use as a transportation corridor, both for freight and passengers;*
- (iii) appropriate commercial, tourism and leisure development along the river's edge of a high quality design;*
- (iv) recreational and tourism purposes.*

The inter-tidal habitats of the Medway are an important natural resource. Where any proposed development would affect the inter-tidal habitats, an assessment of its impact will be required. Where development is proposed that will result in any loss of inter-tidal habitats, proposals must include compensatory inter-tidal habitats sufficient to mitigate any loss.

Landscape and urban design framework

- 2.4.10 The council is preparing a landscape and urban design framework as a key step in the process of improving the physical environment and the quality of life for people in Medway. It will provide a clear, practical and robust design framework for physical change that will be particularly valuable to the private sector because it will give certainty about the standards of design which will be expected when planning applications are submitted.
- 2.4.11 Medway contains a wealth of historic buildings of a high quality. Many of these are associated with the development of the river. The Historic Dockyard contains the largest concentration of Scheduled Ancient Monuments in Kent. It is the most complete Georgian and Victorian former Royal Dockyard in Britain, and is of European and indeed, world, significance. The Napoleonic defences associated with Fort Amherst, the Lines and Upnor Castle also represent a unique local asset which have considerable potential as tourist attractions.
- 2.4.12 Rochester city centre is also an area with a high concentration of attractive, historic buildings, especially the Cathedral, the Castle and the High Street. Numerous visitors come from all over the world every year to see these attractions, particularly at festival times. There are a number of other Conservation Areas, including one at Star Hill/Sun Pier, which is the subject of a Townscape Heritage Initiative. Sensitive refurbishment and re-use of the built fabric is the aim here, and this is likely to include some new housing.
- 2.4.13 The council is keen to promote its built heritage as tourist attractions (to help diversify the local economy) but it is also concerned to ensure that this fabric is maintained, preserved and shown to best effect. The council is already working closely with the Historic Dockyard Trust to create a sensitive mixed-use development and tourist attraction in the Dockyard (see policy S9 below).
- 2.4.14 The council will work closely with the Historic Dockyard Trust, the Fort Amherst and Lines Trust and English Heritage to prepare a strategy for a possible World Heritage Site designation that would encompass the Historic Dockyard, Fort Amherst, Brompton and the Lines. The designation lies with an international committee of the United Nations, rather than with the council or the U.K. Government. In planning policy terms, this designation will not add any additional protection to the area, but it will require a higher standard of design to be demonstrated in any development proposals which come forward within the designated area or outside it, where they would affect its setting.
- 2.4.15 Many of the remaining historic structures are very fine examples of their type, but, as with many other conurbations, the area has undergone rapid change in recent decades, much of which has simply followed standard design patterns and exhibits little local character. There have been few modern buildings or developments of outstanding design. This has created a physical environment that falls short of public aspirations. It has also resulted in a loss of quality and distinct local identity. Ways need to be found to encourage more distinguished design. This does not mean simply emulating the past – good modern design has its place and is to be encouraged.

- 2.4.16 The Government's commitment to this changing agenda for better design standards is evident with the appointment of the Urban Task Force in 1998, which is charged *inter alia*, with improving urban quality as part of an urban renaissance. The 1998 revision of "Kent Design" illustrates this commitment at a strategic level.
- 2.4.17 The scale of development proposed in the Development Plan, both during and beyond the lifetime of this plan, will inevitably result in significant impact upon the landscape and built environment. The framework will provide a creative means of achieving good quality urban design and regeneration.
- 2.4.18 The guidance in the framework will ensure that development responds appropriately to its context, defining it broadly in visual, social, functional and environmental terms, but in a manner that responds to the specific problems and opportunities of different sections of the community. The forward looking framework will seek to improve the perception of "place" and bridge the gap in the planning system between all-embracing local plan policies and specific detailed guidelines for individual sites.

POLICY S4: LANDSCAPE AND URBAN DESIGN

A high quality of built environment will be sought from new development, with landscape mitigation where appropriate. Development should respond appropriately to its context, reflecting a distinct local character.

Medway's 'City' Centre

- 2.4.19 For a largely urban area with a population of 250,000 people, by far the largest urban area in Kent and one of the largest in the south east of England, Medway has a relatively poor retail hierarchy. Part of the reason for this is the five town centres within the urban area: Chatham, Gillingham, Rochester, Rainham and Strood. Chatham is the largest of these, with a significant number of national multiples in the core comparison retail sector. As a sub-regional centre it has a large range of comparison retailers and over 120,770 sq. m (1.3 million sq. ft) gross of retail/service trade floor space. But it ranks only fourth in the retail hierarchy in Kent - after Maidstone, Tunbridge Wells and Canterbury. It has lost ground over the last twenty years, particularly to Maidstone.
- 2.4.20 In recent years it has also faced local competition from the out-of-town Hempstead Valley shopping centre (which has a large Marks and Spencer store) on the southern periphery of the urban area, close to Junction 4 on the M2. It also competes with the regional shopping mall at Lakeside, near Thurrock in Essex and a second regional shopping mall – Bluewater – just outside Dartford.

- 2.4.21 But a town centre is more than just a retailing centre. In Medway, Chatham functions as one of the main destinations for a range of uses. It also provides facilities for the evening economy. These include the Central Theatre, the Medway Arts Centre, a cinema and a ten-pin bowling alley. Despite this, there are relatively few pubs and restaurants in the central area, by comparison with what should be expected of a centre serving a population of this size. As a result there is little reason for people to stay in central Chatham after the shops have closed, and the synergy that exists between retailers and food and drink outlets in other centres simply does not exist strongly enough here.
- 2.4.22 The central library is poorly located in relation to the centre and is housed in inferior quality buildings that the council is committed to replacing as a high priority. There are no major health or educational facilities within the town centre, and office-based employment plays a relatively minor role in the overall employment composition of the centre. Consequently, there is relatively little lunch time trade to underpin the retailing function.
- 2.4.23 Overall, it would be fair to characterise Chatham as performing below its potential. Nonetheless, there is also significant potential which needs to be unlocked.
- 2.4.24 Medway needs a focus with which the whole community can identify: a traditional town or city centre with a substantial “offer” that appeals to all sectors of the population and offers a recognisable local identity.
- 2.4.25 The council recognises this most strongly and has resolved to achieve this by promoting the concept of a strong ‘city’ centre for Medway. It aims to achieve this by actively developing the centre of Chatham as a multi-use focus for the whole community. Medway’s ‘city’ centre in Chatham, will become the main focus for the local community, not only in retailing terms, but also in terms of jobs, leisure, culture and entertainment. The Council has now published the “Chatham City Vision”, a comprehensive view of Chatham’s future, which will form a framework for new development in the ‘city’ centre.
- 2.4.26 Chatham’s centre is a natural choice for the focus because of its sub-regional shopping centre role, which is recognised within the structure plan, and its capacity to accommodate change. There are significant strengths that can be called upon, and valued facilities are already in place to act as building blocks for the future.
- 2.4.27 Chatham “city” centre, however, faces threats to this ambition. With potentially serious competition from Bluewater there is a need to put in place, new central shopping floor space of a high quality, complemented by a wide ranging package of measures to reinforce the “city” centre’s attractiveness. The council considers it is also essential that the centre regains its share of lost trade generated from within its own boundaries. The people of Medway need better shopping facilities than they currently enjoy. In pursuit of those facilities they are shopping elsewhere.

- 2.4.28 Providing improved facilities of a high quality in Chatham will enable the centre to better compete for trade currently leaking to other centres outside the area. Accordingly the council will support proposals that provide qualitatively and quantitatively improved retailing provision. A site – in Richard Street – has been identified to accommodate convenience and comparison shopping. The council will work in partnership with the private sector to achieve its new vision for Chatham. It will use its statutory powers and negotiate with third party interests to support appropriate schemes.
- 2.4.29 The centre has already been improved with a major environmental enhancement scheme for the pedestrianised area centred upon the High Street, the refurbishment of The Brook multi-storey car park and the provision of closed circuit television security cameras in other car parks. Innovative approaches to the traffic circulatory system in and around the town centre may result in opportunities to redefine public spaces and development opportunities, in conjunction with measures to promote improved access by public transport, foot and cycle. Pedestrian access to and from Chatham railway station and its associated bus interchange also deserves to be enhanced to raise the profile of the station. A further area suitable for environmental enhancement is the riverside adjacent to the library.
- 2.4.30 The proposed redevelopment of the library should release land for open space and for a mixed-use development that could include residential, retail, commercial and leisure uses. This would enhance the riverside area and integrate it more closely with the town centre. It is anticipated that the redevelopment of Chatham's riverside will provide a new focus for evening entertainment, well related to existing Class A3 uses in the western end of Chatham High Street. The council will actively promote a mixed-use approach in order to encourage diversity in the new "city" centre. The existing buildings of quality in the area should be retained and act as reference for its regeneration. Good examples include 103-119 High Street, which have seen recent investment.
- 2.4.31 The council will continue to encourage the provision of residential accommodation in the town centre through "living over the shop" and other initiatives. The change of use of properties to provide residential accommodation, particularly the upper floors of commercial premises, will be facilitated by a flexible approach towards car parking provision. The plan also allocates sites for residential use around the edge of the town centre.
- 2.4.32 When opportunities for office-style development at Chatham Maritime and Gillingham Business Park are exhausted (which is likely to be towards the end of this Plan period), the council will seek to encourage office proposals to the edge of Chatham town centre. This will be in line with current government guidance on the location of this form of development (contained in PPGs 6 and 13) and is in line with the proposed regional parking standards currently associated with the review of the regional planning guidance for the south-east (RPG9). The first review of this plan will be the appropriate time to consider the definition of edge

of centre office sites, but the council will consider seriously any proposals for major edge-of-centre office developments that are put to it in the interim.

POLICY S5: MEDWAY'S "CITY" CENTRE

Chatham town centre will be developed as the major, multi-use 'city' centre for Medway. Sites to cater for new retail development are allocated within the town centre, and any major comparison retail proposals should be located here. Qualitative improvements to convenience goods provision, which are well related to the core area, will be permitted.

A range of other uses appropriate to a town centre location will also be permitted, provided that they contribute to the centre's vitality and viability and are consistent with the requirements of the retail policies of this plan.

The council will permit initiatives to enhance the attraction of the town centre. These may include environmental improvements, improved access for public transport, cyclists and pedestrians and access to the riverside.

Land at the riverside, as defined on the proposals map, will be released for riverside open space and for mixed-use development. This could include Class C3 residential uses; Class A1 and A3 shop, restaurant and pub uses; Class B1 business; and Class D1 and D2 leisure uses.

Planning Obligations

2.4.33

In taking the development strategy forward, it is essential that new development does not place unacceptable burdens on existing facilities or the local environment. In reaching individual decisions to allocate land or determine planning applications, the council has to take account of all material considerations including the wider costs of, and impact caused by, the proposed development and the provision of infrastructure necessary to support it. The

Government has made it clear that the community at large should not suffer as a result of development proposals, and that it is reasonable to expect developers to contribute towards the cost of providing community infrastructure where the need for those facilities arises from their development. Used properly, planning obligations (legal agreements between the council and/or others and the developer to provide community infrastructure) are the means of delivering facilities that remedy genuine planning problems and enhance the quality of development. Planning obligations cannot, however, be used solely to address existing deficiencies in provision. It may be acceptable to seek an obligation where it would overcome an existing deficiency if the development proposed would materially exacerbate the deficiency.

2.4.34 Circular 1/97 “Planning Obligations” is the last up-to-date statement of government policy on the issue, and it contains limits on the powers that Local Planning Authorities have in seeking such obligations. The circular contains five tests that planning obligations must meet, these are that they should:

- (i) be necessary;
- (ii) be relevant to planning;
- (iii) be directly related to the development;
- (iv) be fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development; and
- (v) be reasonable in all other respects.

2.4.35 The council has set out in this plan what it will seek in terms of contributions to the provision of physical infrastructure, community facilities and/or environmental mitigation or compensation on a site specific basis. It would be contrary to the guidance in Circular 1/97 to be prescriptive about what will be sought, as each proposal must be judged on its individual merits and in relation to the five tests above. Nonetheless, the council has set out in its aspirations, to provide certainty to landowners and developers. Where development proposals come forward on sites not specifically identified within the plan, the council will seek planning obligations to meet the infrastructure needs or environmental mitigation/compensation needs arising from the development, under the terms of the policy set out below. It will aim to identify at an early stage the requirements of such “windfall” sites, and early consultation with the planning department is advised when considering development proposals, to clarify what those requirements will be.

2.4.36 Contributions, relevant to the circumstances, may be sought for physical facilities (land and buildings, such as open space, school places, affordable housing, highways, etc.), financial contributions to such facilities (where on-site provision cannot reasonably be made) or environmental mitigation or compensation (where mitigation is impossible or inadequate on its own) to replace lost ecological features (such as habitats).

2.4.37 The Kent Association of Local Authorities has produced a Good Practice Guide on the topic of development contributions. This is regularly updated (it was last revised in July 2001) and it provides much helpful advice and examples of good

practice from across the country. Developers and landowners may find it a useful aid when formulating their proposals and it will be used as a guide by the council in considering planning applications.

POLICY S6: PLANNING OBLIGATIONS

The council will set conditions on planning permissions or seek to enter into a legal agreement with developers to provide for new physical infrastructure, social, recreational and community facilities (including education facilities) and environmental mitigation or compensation measures where mitigation is impossible or inadequate on its own, where the need for these arises directly from the development concerned.

Provision will be sought in proportion to the size and nature of the individual development, and will take account of the existing pattern of provision and capacity in the locality.

Provision will be made on the site where this can be reasonably achieved. When this is not the case, contributions will be sought for the provision of facilities and ecological features elsewhere, provided their location can adequately serve the development site or are appropriately related to it.

2.5 Strategic Developments

- 2.5.1 Certain key development opportunities will be critical to the implementation of the strategy. This is due to their scale and location and ability to influence attitudes towards regeneration generally. Accordingly, the sections below describe these key opportunities and set out over-arching policies for each site. With the exceptions of Rochester Airfield, Rochester Riverside and Strood Waterfront the detailed policy requirements are then set out in the relevant topic chapters.

Rochester Riverside

- 2.5.2 The area of Medway riverside lying between Rochester Bridge and Doust Way, largely north of the railway line comprises a wide range of uses, many of which

historically relied on access to the river for their existence. For a few, this is still the case, but for the most part the wharves of Rochester as a port have been in decline for many years.

2.5.3 The character of the area is largely industrial. Apart from a group of modern small industrial units, the sites are large, with many having been devoted to freight operations. Rochester's original town gas works was located here, and gas holders still dominate the area close to Rochester Bridge. The nearby former railway goods depot, with its sidings, is now derelict. Although this area is invisible to those travelling along the A2 everyday, to those travelling by train it presents a very poor image of the heart of the urban area.

2.5.4 Strategic policy changes and the guidance in the Thames Gateway Planning Framework which were published in the early/mid 1990s indicated that there needed to be a switch away from continual suburban expansion towards the re-use of brownfield sites within urban areas. The riverside was one obvious area that would benefit from such an approach.

2.5.5 In 1993, following a consultant's report, Rochester City Council established policy objectives for the riverside area. Comprehensive redevelopment for a variety of uses including employment, residential, open space, and a riverside walk, was felt to be the best way forward. The City Council decided to seek the relocation of existing businesses from this central area and to investigate contamination issues.

2.5.6 The City Council made progress in acquiring land by negotiation to enable redevelopment to occur before the Medway Council came into existence. However, it became clear that the council needed to adopt an even more positive role in land assembly through use of its Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) powers. A CPO was successfully gained by Medway Council over a further 32 hectares in 1998, placing the bulk of the central area in the council's ownership. Outside the CPO area, it is anticipated that market forces will determine if, when and how buildings and sites are redeveloped.

2.5.7 The aim is to enable regeneration which will:

- Achieve a new vision and sense of place.
- Bring land and buildings into effective use.
- Provide community benefits.
- Build confidence and increase economic investment.
- Improve commercial prospects for businesses by relocating them to more convenient sites.
- Achieve the decontamination of land and provision of sites for redevelopment within an overall framework.

- Encourage public access to the riverside.

- 2.5.8 The plan designates the CPO area at Rochester Riverside as an Action Area for redevelopment. Action Areas are defined in PPG 12 “*Development Plans*” as “an area selected for... comprehensive treatment by development, redevelopment or improvement”. An Action Area lasts for a fixed period of ten years, and the period for this area will be ten years from the date of deposit (1999). This will bring about a major change in the nature of the land uses in this area, leading to a renaissance of the urban framework and a more appropriate townscape to carry this important area through into the 21st Century.
- 2.5.9 The council also recognises that there are a number of existing employment uses in the area, and the role that they play in providing jobs and investment. The council will work to assist the relocation of these uses, on a site by site basis, to more suitable sites within Medway. The council has identified sites across its area for employment development, and monitoring suggests that there is also a substantial stock of vacant industrial floor space that might prove suitable for relocation.
- 2.5.10 The council does not wish to be unduly prescriptive about precisely where on the site new land uses should be located and this will be an issue to be determined in conjunction with the council’s development partners. However, it accepts that the local plan should provide certainty for the community landowners elsewhere, potential investors and service providers. An Area Development Framework was prepared for the Action Area in 1997 to support the C.P.O., which showed a number of possible development scenarios. A mixed use approach has been supported and the council will work with its chosen development partners to produce a development brief which will expand upon policy S7. The brief will be subject to public consultation.
- 2.5.11 It is proposed that the area will contribute approximately 1500-1800 dwellings to meeting Medway’s housing requirements, many of which will be ‘affordable’. It is likely that only 300 dwellings will have been achieved by 2006 (the end-date of this plan), with the remainder coming forward later. The housing proposals together with other specific uses such as open space, new leisure facilities, a hotel, commercial development (including workshops and small-scale retail development to serve local people’s day to day needs) and a new primary school are also covered by specific policies in this plan.
- 2.5.12 The Action Area includes areas of inter-tidal habitat where no river wall exists at the moment. Subject to an assessment of the impact upon sediment movements, flood alleviation and nature conservation, the council will be prepared to consider *de minimus* encroachment over part of the mudflats, if this is essential and justified, in order to enable development to safely and successfully proceed. Mitigation or compensation for any loss of mudflats, in line with the provision of policies S3 and BNE37, will be sought.

POLICY S7: ROCHESTER RIVERSIDE ACTION AREA

The area of the Medway riverside north of Corporation Street, Rochester between Rochester Bridge and Doust Way, as defined on the proposals map, is designated as an Action Area.

The comprehensive regeneration of this area, over the next ten years, will be sought in accordance with a development brief approved by the council. Features which the Action Area is expected to provide include:

- *The development of approximately 1500-1800 dwellings including affordable housing, of which 300 to be completed by 2006.*
- *The provision of areas of open space and a riverside walk.*
- *A new river wall and reclamation in locations between the Shiplink site and Doust Way.*
- *The reservation of a site for a new primary school and the construction of other community facilities.*
- *The creation of new leisure facilities and a hotel,*
- *Appropriate small-scale employment uses in use Classes B1 and B2.*

All new development will be expected to comply with the following principles:

- (i) comprehensive mixed-use redevelopment to maximise the potential for securing the regeneration of the whole action area and its vicinity;*
- (ii) a high standard of urban design and landscape, establishing it as a new quarter of the urban area;*

(iii) high quality mixed developments, appropriate to the location of this area close to both the riverside and historic Rochester;

(iv) the provision of good pedestrian and cycle links within the site and to historic Rochester and to the public transport network, including Rochester Railway Station.

An ecological and hydrological appraisal of the impact of any development proposals will be required, particularly in relation to the construction of a new river wall on the mudflats and inter-tidal areas.

Chatham Maritime

- 2.5.13 Chatham Maritime is the name given to the major part of the former Royal Naval Base situated on the elbow of the bend in the River Medway marking the transition from the main river to its estuary. To the east is the area around Basin 3 that is now operated as a commercial port under the name of Chatham Port. To the south, the remaining area of the former base is now managed by the Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust as a living, working museum. The planning strategy has been firmly to regard the uses at Chatham Maritime and the Historic Dockyard as complementary and this principle is reaffirmed in this plan. Chatham Maritime was, for ten years from 1986, one of several Enterprise Zones designated within Medway.
- 2.5.14 The development of Chatham Maritime is rightly regarded as a flagship project for the Thames Gateway. After more than ten years of effort many successes have been achieved and a wholly new, high quality environment is being created.
- 2.5.15 A number of major new office developments have occurred, including a purpose built headquarters building for the Colonial Mutual Insurance Group and a telephone banking centre for Natwest. The former Pembroke Barracks buildings have now been occupied by part of the University of Greenwich and the Natural Resources Institute and there is some scope for expansion of these facilities. The development of the St Mary's Island residential community is now well under way, and ultimately is likely to house approximately 5,000 people.
- 2.5.16 The pace of development achieved to date has been heavily influenced by:
- Delays in the construction of the Medway Towns Northern Relief Road (including the Medway Tunnel) although this is now complete.

- The need for extensive land clearance, including the removal of large quantities of contaminated material from St Mary's Island and other infrastructure work.
- The deep economic recession which affected the development industry between 1989 and 1995.

However, the stage has now been reached where the pace of development can be expected to accelerate and key decisions on the form that this will take will determine the overall shape, quality and success of the project.

2.5.17 To assist in this process, the council has re-evaluated the progress made to date and considered the overall objectives that should now guide the development process. The site can be considered in two parts. Outline planning permission has been given for a scheme (or master plan) on St Mary's Island for 1700 dwellings, which incorporates:

- A neighbourhood centre intended to provide modest retail and medical facilities, a primary school and a range of community facilities.
- A central landscape feature and open space linking individual residential areas and the neighbourhood centre.
- A riverside path suitable for use by cyclists and pedestrians.

2.5.18 It is important that this master plan is regularly reviewed to reflect the latest design ideas and to put detail on the broad principles already agreed. In particular, the council are concerned that bold, imaginative approaches are taken to the design and layout of the housing areas. It is important to avoid an unduly suburban character and to capitalise on the site's natural assets, in particular the river and the basins. RPG9a calls for a townscape of quality to be provided and this objective is fully supported. At the same time it will also be important to incorporate non-residential elements and uses into the development to add variety and relief and encourage visitors onto the Island. Proposals for a public house and/or restaurant, for example, will be welcomed and small-scale leisure facilities may also be appropriate.

2.5.19 The remainder of the Chatham Maritime site, that is all land to the south of St Mary's Island, is proposed as a Mixed Use Zone. The dominant form of development to date has been commercial offices and while more will be provided, the opportunity now exists to diversify further to create a more lively atmosphere and ensure activity outside normal working hours. There are major proposals for a factory retail outlet centre, hotel, marina, business, public house and other leisure and class A3 uses on the site to the south of Basin 1. This will involve the retention and refurbishment of three large listed structures which were formally part of the Royal Naval base. These facilities will attract considerable numbers of visitors to Medway, to the advantage of the adjoining Historic Dockyard. A multi-modal access package will be sought, with rapid

public transport connections to Chatham and Gillingham town centres for visitors to the factory outlet centre (A Master Plan for Chatham Maritime will be adopted by the council as supplementary planning guidance to guide future development.)

2.5.20 By defining this part of the site as a Mixed Use Zone, the council are providing an opportunity to achieve this diversification whilst avoiding an inflexible or unduly prescriptive approach. However, in formulating proposals developers will be expected to have regard to the following:

- The need to, as far as possible, integrate the site into the adjoining Historic Dockyard. This will involve the introduction of uses that are complementary to the Historic Dockyard south of Basin 1; a co-ordinated approach to features such as cycle and pedestrian links; traffic management and sharing of visitor car parking.
- To further improve the vitality of the area south of Basin 1 careful consideration should be given to some small-scale residential development. This will add visual interest, improve security and ensure activity outside working hours. Policy H1 allows for a total of approximately 250 dwellings split between here and raised densities on St Mary's Island.
- There is a clear need to make the site as a whole more attractive to modes of transport other than the private car. This will require early consideration of external links from the site for cyclists and pedestrians. The council will also encourage proposals to substitute at least a proportion of the notional car parking requirement generated by major developments with public transport based alternatives; for example, Park and Ride and/or a shuttle bus service to Chatham and Gillingham town centres. The use of the River should also be considered in this context.
- Every opportunity should be taken to build on the special character introduced onto the site by Greenwich University. Currently high quality teaching and support space has been provided, along with purpose built halls of residence. However, many different ancillary facilities, albeit on a small scale, would widen the site's appeal and add to the services currently available to students and office workers. Expansion into some of the buildings within the Historic Dockyard might be an option.

2.5.21 Any development will need to take into account the important wildlife areas adjoining St Mary's Island, which are designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

POLICY S8: CHATHAM MARITIME

In the Chatham Maritime Mixed Use Zone and on St Mary's Island, as defined on the proposals map, a high

quality and innovative development will be sought which will set a standard for the Thames Gateway and create a townscape of note.

The development will:

- ***Include a factory outlet centre (retail), Class B1 offices, a hotel, land and water-based leisure uses and housing. Tourist facilities and Class A3 uses of a scale commensurate with their location will also be appropriate.***
- ***Create a new transportation framework for the sites, including improved public transport, cycling and pedestrian links to Chatham and Gillingham town centres with a key objective of reducing the need to travel by the private car.***
- ***Promote high quality and innovative design approaches to create a high quality and vibrant environment.***
- ***Promote development which is complementary to the Chatham Historic Dockyard in order to maximise visitor appeal and integrate the site with the wider environment.***

Chatham Historic Dockyard

2.5.22 The 37 hectares of Chatham Historic Dockyard contain the largest concentration of Scheduled Ancient Monuments in Kent. It is the most complete Georgian and Victorian former Royal Dockyard in Britain, and is of European and indeed world significance.

2.5.23 This has long been accepted by the Government, which established the Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust in 1984 when the Royal Navy Dockyard closed. The sustained support of English Heritage has enabled a substantial programme of repairs and refurbishments to the large number of historic buildings and artefacts since the Trust's formation.

- 2.5.24 The Historic Dockyard is physically central to the regeneration of urban Medway. The basic strategy proposed by the Trust, for a mixed use site, has been supported by the council and this will continue to be the case. The Historic Dockyard is now the location for a substantial number of jobs and small businesses, new homes created both through new development and refurbishment of historic residential property and it is a successful and thriving tourist destination in its own right.
- 2.5.25 In a formal planning sense, the Historic Dockyard is subject to a wide range of controls as a result of the large number of Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Listed Buildings. New development proposals require planning permission, and these applications are assessed against the range of policies that the local plan contains.
- 2.5.26 However, a broader framework is required to help underpin the shared ambitions of the Trust and the various agencies. The Historic Dockyard is a Conservation Area, and given the size, scale and significance of the site, a detailed management plan, or framework to establish clearly the conservation and development principles for it, is being prepared. This will be developed by the council in conjunction with the Historic Dockyard Trust, in the first instance, to reflect the Trust's own objectives, together with the national interests represented through English Heritage and the Department of Culture, Media and Sport. This will also provide a further opportunity to ensure that the integration of development proposals between the Historic Dockyard and Chatham Maritime is achieved, and that complementary uses are provided to the benefit of both major developments.
- 2.5.27 A development framework to guide development will also be prepared, again jointly by the Council and Dockyard Trust. The brief will aim to:
- Establish firm conservation principles for the site as a whole and for the use and re-use of existing buildings and artefacts.
 - Establish detailed guidance for individual development sites within the Historic Dockyard.
 - Ensure the proper planning of the interface between the Historic Dockyard and the Chatham Maritime area to the north.
 - Provide for pedestrian, cycle, vehicular and public transport access to be co-ordinated with proposals for Chatham Maritime and improve linkages with Chatham town centre.

POLICY S9: CHATHAM HISTORIC DOCKYARD

At the Historic Dockyard, Chatham, as defined on the proposals map, development that respects the historic

character of the site will be permitted. The standard of urban design must be of the highest order.

Strood Waterfront

- 2.5.28 The area of Medway riverside bounded to the west by the A228 and lying between Rochester Bridge and the M2 bridge, south of Strood town centre is an area that is largely industrial in character.
- 2.5.29 The northern part, closest to the town centre, is characterised by generally low quality industrial access roads, limited access to the riverside, poor pedestrian facilities and a poor quality built environment. The junction of Cuxton Road, Priory Road and Darnley Road at Darnley Arch on the A228 represents a significant point of vehicular and pedestrian conflict, and together with the Knight Road and Priory Road junction, is often heavily congested at peak times. The latter represents a poor quality access to the employment area of Temple Industrial Estate, particularly given that the sizeable Tesco distribution depot is one of several major local employers in this area. This northern part suffers from a jaded and “downbeat” appearance that is at odds with the very fine listed Temple Manor, which is surrounded by industrial units.
- 2.5.30 The southern end, however, contains more modern industrial units, and a major out-of-town leisure park. This affords an altogether different, “crisper” and more “upbeat” environment.
- 2.5.31 The area between the Medway Valley railway line and the river comprises a timber yard, a number of small-scale industrial units, the Temple Marsh area of public open space and derelict land. Vehicular access into this area is limited due to the low height and narrow width of the railway bridges and the often poor geometry of the approach roads.
- 2.5.32 Many of the industrial buildings in this whole area are now nearing the end of their useful life, having become outmoded in a fast changing business climate. Others are no longer considered to be appropriate given their close proximity to the major district shopping centre in Strood town centre. A number of local employers have already indicated a willingness to relocate.
- 2.5.33 Strategic policy changes and the guidance in the Thames Gateway Planning Framework which was published in the early/mid 1990s indicate that there needs to be a switch away from continual suburban expansion towards the re-use of brownfield sites within urban areas. Strood Waterfront is one obvious area that would benefit from such an approach.
- 2.5.34 The plan designates 73 hectares (180 acres) of Strood Waterfront as an Action Area for redevelopment or improvement. Action Areas are defined in PPG 12 “*Development Plans*” as “an area selected for... comprehensive treatment by development, redevelopment or improvement”. An Action Area lasts for a fixed

period of ten years, and the period for this Area will be ten years from the date of deposit (1999). This will bring about a major change in the nature of the land uses in this area, leading to a renaissance of the urban framework and a more appropriate townscape to carry this area through into the 21st Century.

- 2.5.35 The council do not wish to be unduly prescriptive about precisely where the new land uses should be located. However, it recognises that the local plan should provide certainty for land-owners and investors. To this end, a development brief will be approved by the council for the Action Area.
- 2.5.36 The council recognises that there are a number of important existing employment uses in the area, and the important role that they play in providing jobs and investment. Accordingly the council will work closely with local businesses in implementing the Action Area. It is anticipated that a substantial employment area will still remain, probably in the south of the Action Area, focused around the modern units that already exist.
- 2.5.37 For those businesses which choose to relocate, the council will work to assist their relocation, on a site by site basis, either on improved sites within the Action Area (such as to the east of the Medway Valley Line) or elsewhere within Medway. The allocated employment area at Kingsnorth may be an appropriate alternative location.
- 2.5.38 Resolving access and circulatory issues around Commercial Road and Knight Road will be important for development in part of the Action Area. In the southern part, a new railway station on the Medway Valley line will be sought, either in connection with the existing leisure park or a possible regional scale multi-purpose sports arena/stadium. It is likely that the Action Area as a whole will be able to contribute towards the housing provision both in this plan period (to 2006) and beyond. Many of these homes are likely to be “affordable”. This residential community will be within easy walking distance of the facilities of Strood town centre, which will help to support its vitality and viability, and to the major public transport routes that run close by it. These homes will also have ready access to the existing – but underused – public open space area at Temple Marsh. The plan assumes that approximately 100 dwellings will come forward from this area by 2006, although more will ultimately be yielded beyond that date.
- 2.5.39 The council will attempt to use regeneration to achieve a realignment of the A228 to avoid Darnley Arch and create a satisfactory highway infrastructure to the south of Strood town centre. There is potential for a new road linking Priory Road in the north with Roman Way in the south, allowing industrial and residential traffic to be separated. Any new railway station will need to meet both Network Rail and Connex’s technical, operational and commercial requirement.
- 2.5.40 The Action Area includes a stretch of the River Medway where no river wall exists at present. The council, consistent with policy BNE36, will not contemplate any loss of inter-tidal habitat within the SNCI around Temple Marsh. Subject to an assessment of the impact upon sediment movements, flood alleviation and

nature conservation, the council will be prepared to consider de *minus* encroachment over part of the inter-tidal area in the north of the Action Area if this is essential and justified in order to allow the provision of a continuous riverside walk and infrastructure to enable development to safely and successfully proceed. Mitigation or compensation for any loss of mudflats in line with the provisions of policies S3 and BNE37, will be sought.

POLICY S10: STROOD WATERFRONT ACTION AREA

The area of the Medway riverside south of Strood town centre, as defined on the proposals map, is designated as an Action Area. The regeneration of this area will be sought, over the next ten years, in accordance with a development brief approved by the council. Features which the Action Area is expected to provide include:

- *The development of approximately 100 dwellings by 2006, including affordable housing.*
- *The provision of a riverside walk with a soft river edge where appropriate to the circumstances.*
- *A possible alternative route for the A228, avoiding Darnley Arch.*
- *Improved vehicular circulation south of Strood town centre.*
- *A new station on the Medway Valley railway line.*
- *The creation of an appropriate setting for the listed Temple Manor.*
- *The construction of appropriate community facilities and improved access to the Temple Marsh public open space.*
- *Appropriate employment uses falling within use Classes B1, B2 and B8.*

- *Other uses appropriate to the location.*

Subject to the resolution of multi-modal access, parking, design and landscaping considerations, the area around Temple Marsh may be an appropriate location for a multi-purpose sports arena/stadium of a regional scale.

All new development will be expected to comply with the following principles:

- (i) comprehensive redevelopment to maximise the potential for securing the regeneration of the whole Action Area and its vicinity;*
- (ii) a high standard of urban design and landscaping, establishing it as a new quarter of the urban area;*
- (iii) high quality mixed developments, appropriate to the location of this area close to both the riverside and opposite historic Rochester;*
- (iv) the provision of good public transport, pedestrian and cycle links within the site and to Strood town centre and to the wider public transport network, including Strood railway station.*

An ecological and hydrological appraisal will be required of the impact of any development proposals, particularly the construction of a new river wall, on the mudflats and inter-tidal areas.

Rochester Airfield

2.5.41 Rochester Airfield is an extensive site occupying a strategic location adjacent to the A229 Maidstone Road, close to Junction 3 on the M2 motorway. Following the widening of the M2 it will become a major gateway site, on one of the main entrances to the urban area. It has a total site area of some 56.5 hectares, adjacent to which there is a major high technology research & development (R & D) and manufacturing facility operated by BAE Systems (previously Marconi

Avionics Ltd.) The airfield itself comprises two grass runways, with associated hangar and support facilities, and it is currently operated by Rochester Airport Plc. It caters for leisure and business flights by light aircraft. Part of the airfield extends into the Borough of Tonbridge and Malling.

- 2.5.42 There is a need to diversify the local economy if Medway is to progress towards a better choice of job opportunities, which are better paid, and which offer the people of Medway improved scope for career development. The Medway Economic Development strategy defines a mission to bring about a step change in the performance of the local economy to match that of successful regions elsewhere in the UK. To offer Medway people better opportunities to achieve a better quality of life and higher levels of prosperity, the strategy proposes the development of the competitiveness of the local economy by making it a recognised centre of excellence for high value manufacturing and knowledge intensive services.
- 2.5.43 Medway Council aims to provide a favourable environment for business activities and to develop partnerships to build a range of business communities through the regeneration of strategic sites, and generally to provide a favourable environment for skills development and business activities. The potential for development of high technology manufacturing could be best realised through the development of a science and technology park and the development of one or more technology based business incubators.
- 2.5.44 Rochester Airfield is one of Medway's key assets in this regard, given that it provides a first class location near to the M2 motorway and away from congested areas of the urban area. It is therefore identified as the location for the proposed science and technology park, given that it would offer plenty of scope for future expansion, enabling inward investors to be attracted, as well as having potential for the development of premises for start up and smaller businesses.
- 2.5.45 There are considered to be good prospects for successfully attracting a grouping of one or more major technology based occupiers alongside BAE Systems through concerted inward investment promotion, and for achieving a successful science and technology park development. Once this is achieved, there would be considerable scope for encouraging collaboration between these companies, the higher education institutions, and business support providers, to provide larger numbers of qualifications and jobs to local residents, to foster collaboration with local suppliers, and to develop spin-out activities and other small business opportunities, all centred around the development of an emerging local innovation and knowledge based culture.
- 2.5.46 Medway Council will demonstrate its commitment to the success of the science and technology park through careful marketing and promotion over the length of the project, with a product led strategy and positive, pro-active intervention. It will maintain a direct involvement with the development to achieve these objectives.
- 2.5.47 In order to facilitate the development of the science and technology park the Council will, after the expiration of the current lease in January 2004, close one

of the airport runways. Rochester Airport, operating from a smaller site is intended to remain open and operational, at least for the period of this Local Plan.

2.5.48 The development of the site will need to be guided by a development brief that sets out a clear framework. The brief will:

- Define the basis for a prestigious business, science and technology development, and establish key design and layout principles reflecting the site's importance and location.
- Promote an innovative package of transport measures for the site, including dedicated bus, cycling and pedestrian facilities, plus improvements to the City Way/Horsted Way gyratory. The primary objective will be to limit non-essential car traffic.
- Be preceded by further technical work to assess the optimum site layout for the detailed location of employment and aviation activities, along with access and safety considerations, along the lines of Atkins Options C/C1, (ref: Assessment of Land Use Options: Final Report by W.S. Atkins, February 2001, paras 3.12 and 26.6).
- Establish the detailed location for the employment and aviation activities within the site.
- Put in place measures to integrate the development with the surrounding area while, at the same time, exploiting its unique location and scope for a development of the highest quality.

2.5.49 Due to the scale of the opportunity that exists at the airfield, the development timetable will extend beyond the 2006 end date of the plan.

POLICY S11: ROCHESTER AIRFIELD

Rochester Airfield, as defined on the proposals map, is allocated for a high quality business, science and technology development comprising Class B1, B2 and B8 uses.

A development brief, approved by the council, will guide development.

Kingsnorth

- 2.5.50 The designated industrial site at Kingsnorth is 219 hectares and has a long planning history, deriving from the identification of the site for a proposed oil refinery in the 1960's, as well as the development of the major coal-fired power station. The oil refinery proposals did not proceed, but the legacy is the designation of a large area for general industrial development purposes and, more particularly, for a variety of industrial uses which cannot easily be accommodated within the urban area. However, the site is also surrounded by areas of nature conservation importance, including a Special Protection Area, and it is an important objective that substantial new development at Kingsnorth should be of a standard which respects this context.
- 2.5.51 A gas-fired power station is now under construction. The area has also been identified in the Kent Waste Local Plan 1998 as a suitable site for a waste to energy plant adjacent to the existing power station. It is the council's intention to review the inherited waste local plan policy framework at an early date.
- 2.5.52 Kingsnorth, together with Grain, is one of the few large strategic economic development sites in the Thames Gateway. It represents the next generation of such sites, to continue the regeneration development pattern, once Crossways at Dartford and Chatham Maritime are complete. Preparatory work needs to be started now to ensure that Kingsnorth is in a position to realise its full potential. Development interest is already rising, following the completion of the Medway Towns Northern Relief Road.
- 2.5.53 Whilst the site has considerable general potential for new industrial development (through inward investment), the council also sees Kingsnorth as the ideal site for the relocation or expansion of existing, local companies from within the urban area that need larger sites. Kingsnorth offers the advantage of larger plots and cheaper land than is available within the urban area. The council will also seek to relocate businesses to Kingsnorth from their inappropriate existing sites in areas allocated for redevelopment to other uses in the heart of the urban area, including Rochester Riverside and Strood Waterfront. Here there is sufficient land for the expansion of such uses and they can operate with little impact upon adjacent uses.
- 2.5.54** The site is capable of accommodating uses in Classes B1, B2 and B8. However, in the light of the advice of PPG13, only those uses falling within Class B1(c) will be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that the development makes provision for increased accessibility by means other than the private car. Such provision may take the form of contributions to public transport, the use of parking regimes and company transport plans. In appropriate cases, the provision will be sought by means of a planning obligation. Development in Class B1 which makes inadequate provision for increased accessibility will be restricted by the imposition of conditions or by planning obligation, to Class B1 (c).
- 2.5.55 The A228, which provides the principal vehicular access to the site, is inadequate to support the volume and nature of the traffic that is likely to be

generated by the scale of the development proposed. The council has successfully sought commuted sums from a variety of developments on the Hoo peninsula in order to carry out the necessary works on the A228, which are now principally related to off-line improvements to the west of Hoo St Werburgh. A financial contribution of some £6.7 million has already been made towards the cost of off-site highway improvements in respect of the consented Damhead Creek power station site and 32.4 hectares net (62 hectares gross) of the proposed employment land at the Kingsnorth Business Estate. In the light of this, further contributions will only be sought if additional traffic generating development is permitted. Government approval was given for the funding of the improvements in December 2001 and a programme which has a construction start date of Spring 2003 and a completion date of Autumn 2004 has now been initiated.

- 2.5.56 Kingsnorth has 66 hectares of land available for development. This excludes the power stations and their operational land, the existing industrial estate and land for environmental mitigation. It has been assumed that only a small portion of the site, 10%, will come forward for light industrial uses and the remainder will accommodate general industry (50%) and warehousing (40%.) By converting these areas using conversion ratios in the Structure Plan, the following floorspace is expected to be developed.

A2-B1: 26,182sqm, B2: 95007sqm, B8: 93166sqm

- 2.5.57 A development brief will be prepared by Medway Council which will need to address, inter alia, improvements to access by road, contamination and remediation, safeguarding land for rail sidings, a green transport plan to encourage public transport and discourage travel by car, landscaping, contouring and land raising, design and layout, phasing, ecological protection and mitigation and Section 106 obligations.

- 2.5.58 In addition, the council will seek a financial contribution towards an environmentally sensitive upgrading of the freight line from Hoo Junction to Grain, as this has the potential to serve the Kingsnorth site. The council will encourage development here to make maximum use of river and rail, rather than lorry, for freight movements.

POLICY S12: KINGSNORTH

At Kingsnorth, as defined on the proposals map, Class B2 General Industrial Development and Class B8 Storage and Distribution Uses will be permitted. Class B1 uses will be permitted but will be restricted to Class B1 (c) except where the development makes provision for increased accessibility by means other than the private car. Provision will be made within the site for the

relocation of businesses from urban regeneration sites, including special industrial uses and others not in a use class, subject to access and environmental considerations. Medway Council will prepare a development brief in association with the landowners. All development will be subject to the protection of nature conservation interests.

Development which does not require access to the railway or to the river, but which would prejudice use of, or access to, the wharves or the rail sidings will not be permitted.

Contributions will be sought to the improvement of off-site highways or the rail link to Kingsnorth where such improvements are needed from a practical point of view to enable the development to go ahead or are necessary from a planning point of view and are so directly related to the proposed development and to the use of land after its completion, that the development ought not to be permitted without it.

Isle of Grain

2.5.59 The former BP oil refinery on the Isle of Grain is a unique asset in Thames Gateway, being a very substantial area of about 630 hectares, which includes the fastest growing container port in the south east, at Thamesport. After Felixstowe and Southampton it is the most important such port in the country. The original oil storage tanks have been removed, and though there may be areas of contaminated land to deal with, this is a huge area of land in a strategic location that warrants active attention. The site lies adjacent to a Special Protection Area of international importance for nature conservation. As such, development at Thamesport and the Isle of Grain must not result in any detrimental impact upon that area.

2.5.60 Grain has been regarded as a substantial employment opportunity since the closure of the oil refinery in the late 1970s and it is a strategic site for inward investment. It is now the largest strategic economic development site in the Thames Gateway, and is of regional importance. The attention paid to its preparation for development needs to reflect that role. It represents the next generation of such sites, to continue the regenerative development pattern, once Crossways at Dartford and Chatham Maritime are complete. Preparatory work

needs to be started now to ensure that Grain is in a position to realise its full potential. The direct involvement of SEEDA and/or English Partnerships would be appropriate to bring forward a site of such significance.

2.5.61 The acquisition of the site by British Gas, as a strategic option for the production of substitute natural gas, has not resulted in much land coming forward for general industrial development. Notwithstanding this, the site can sustain a variety of uses if British Gas do not pursue this option. The council will encourage British Gas to establish a marketing strategy for the maximum use of the site at the earliest opportunity. Nonetheless, in recognition of the current uncertainty regarding when the land will come forward, the council does not count the site towards meeting the employment land requirement figure given in the adopted Kent Structure Plan.

2.5.62 The site is capable of accommodating port activities and large land users associated with these, in addition to uses within Use Class B1, B2 and B8. The site however, is unsuitable for B1 office and high technology uses, as it does not meet the locational tests for such uses as set out in PPG13 "Transport". Consequently, development within use class B1 will be permitted subject to the imposition of conditions, or planning obligations being entered into, to restrict occupants to Class B1(c) light industrial uses only.

2.5.63 The Isle of Grain represents one of the most important long term regeneration opportunities in the Thames Gateway and its redevelopment can therefore be regarded as being of regional and national importance. A development brief will be prepared by the Council in conjunction with the site owners to set out the preparatory work necessary to bring the site on stream and the parameters within which development will then take place. The issues to be considered include the following:-

- A programme of remediation will be needed to deal with contamination. This will prevent lateral movement of contaminants and protect the ecology both within the site and in the adjoining Ramsar site.
- Further improvements will be required to the A228 between Fenn Corner and the site.
- The capacity of the rail link between the Isle of Grain and Hoo Junction will need to be increased and capacity constraints beyond Higham will need to be investigated.
- Funding mechanisms will need to be explored, including the establishment of a public/private partnership, the possibility of grant aid and the use of Section 106 obligations.
- The potential to expand both the deep-water container trade and other coastal shipping trade will require investigation.

- The relative remoteness of the site necessitates the preparation of a green transport plan which seeks to expand the use of public transport and the transfer of journeys from the car to walking and cycling.
- Other issues to be addressed include design and landscaping, phasing, local amenity and the relationship of the site to the village of Grain.

2.5.64 Development of this site needs to recognise the importance of both the railhead and the access to deep-water berths. There is considerable potential for the international transshipment of goods through Thamesport and the Channel Tunnel if rail access is improved. With the completion of the Medway Towns Northern Relief Road and works on improving the A228, the site is no longer as remote from the urban area as it once was.

2.5.65 The A228, which provides the principal vehicular access to the site, is inadequate to support the volume and nature of the traffic that is likely to be generated by the scale of the development proposed. The council has successfully sought commuted sums from a variety of developments on the Hoo peninsula in order to carry out the necessary works on the A228, which are now principally related to off-line improvements to the west of Hoo St Werburgh. The council will seek a financial contribution towards the necessary additional highway works.

2.5.66 In addition the council will seek a financial contribution towards an environmentally sensitive upgrading of the freight line from Hoo Junction to Grain, as this serves the Thamesport and Grain sites. The council will encourage development here to make maximum use of river and rail, rather than lorry, for freight movement.

POLICY S13: ISLE OF GRAIN

At Grain, as defined on the proposals map, port activities and related development, in addition to uses falling within Class B1 (Business), Class B2 (General Industry) and Class B8 (Storage and Distribution) will be permitted, subject to the protection of nature conservation interests.

Development within Use Class B1, however, will be subject to the imposition of conditions, or planning obligations being entered into, to restrict occupants to Class B1 (c) light industrial uses only.

Development which does not require access to the river, but which would prejudice use of, or access to, the deep water wharves will not be permitted. A development brief, approved by the council, will guide development.

Contributions will be sought to the improvement of off-site highways or the rail link to the Isle of Grain where such improvements are needed from a practical point of view to enable the development to go ahead or are necessary from a planning point of view and are so directly related to the proposed development and to the use of land after its completion, that the development ought not to be permitted without it.

Chattenden

- 2.5.70 Although the Chatham Naval Dockyard closed in 1984 there is still a strong military presence in Medway, represented by the Royal School of Military Engineering based at Brompton. There are a number of training facilities scattered through the area including Upnor and Chattenden. Kitchener Barracks on Dock Road, Chatham is also occupied by the military.
- 2.5.71 Recent cutbacks in military expenditure have seen a reduction in the Royal Engineers' operations in Medway. Chattenden Barracks, north of the village of Chattenden, became vacant in 1995 and there is a possibility that the site could be declared surplus by the Ministry of Defence (MoD). The large Lodge Hill and Islingham Farm training areas are still used by the Royal Engineers, together with smaller operations at Lower and Upper Upnor. The MoD is still, therefore, both a major landowner and a major stakeholder in the area.
- 2.5.72 The publication of the Thames Gateway Planning Framework (RPG9a) in 1995 highlighted the development potential of the Defence Estate at Chattenden. If this land were to be released it could allow a more sustainable relationship to be fashioned between employment and homes on the Hoo Peninsula. It inferred that the existing barracks could be the basis for a campus-style development, but that there could also be scope for expanding the community into a new village, depending on the extent of land released. At this stage no land, including the barracks, has been declared surplus and no proposals can therefore be included in this plan.
- 2.5.73 Chattenden Barracks comprises a range of buildings including residential accommodation, workshops, recreational and medical facilities, teaching facilities, hard standings, open space and woodland. This 20 hectare (50 acre) site has potential for a number of institutional uses including higher education (which would be almost identical to its former military use), and a high quality but

small scale industrial park. There may also be scope within the site for some new housing development or for conversion of military housing to general housing use, but no firm allocation is included to this effect due to the uncertainties about the release of the site.

- 2.5.74 The location of the training areas owned by the MoD is not ideal if the complex is to be expanded into a new settlement. Land to the west falls within the visually prominent and important Hogmarsh Valley Area of Local Landscape Importance, while the land to the north and north east would not facilitate a natural extension or “rounding off” of the existing built-up area. Development to the east of the Barracks would be on agricultural land outside the MoD’s ownership and would raise fears about possible coalescence with the settlement of Hoo St. Werburgh. The council has specifically rejected development proposals to the west of Hoo, in favour of an allocation to the east to avoid potentially prejudicing long-term development options associated with the defence estate.
- 2.5.75 However, the council recognises the severe constraints on development in other areas surrounding the urban area of Medway. Land to the west is included in the Metropolitan Green Belt while that to the south-west and south is part of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Capstone, Lidsing and Darland area is protected as an area of local landscape importance in recognition of the important role that this has in separating Lordswood from Hempstead and the benefits that accrue because the countryside penetrates almost to the heart of the conurbation. Undeveloped land in the urban fringe to the east of Rainham and along the riverside north of Twydall and Rainham is vitally important, as the Thames Gateway Planning Framework recognises.
- 2.5.76 In these circumstances the potential of the relatively unconstrained Defence Estate at Chattenden cannot be disregarded. The council believes that the long-term (i.e. post-2006) development needs of Medway could be met in this area, subject to further detailed studies and the land being made available by the MoD. The council will continue to work to retain the Royal Engineers in Medway although the future of Chattenden needs to be considered within the context of RPG9a.
- 2.5.77 A comprehensive, rather than piecemeal, response to the potential at Chattenden will be needed, once a decision is made on its future, as RPG9a recognises. This should be based on a thorough consideration of the contribution that it might make to the longer-term development needs of the Medway area. RPG9a states that any incremental erosion of this major opportunity should be avoided, and suggested that options should preferably be considered through a review of the development plan. The Kent Structure Plan now reflects the Planning Framework in stating that the site has the capacity to add to the strategic development requirements of Medway in the medium to longer term.
- 2.5.78 The barracks and the training areas have significant potential and are strategically important to the future of the local plan area. The council’s interim position is that it would wish to consider the role and development potential of

any defence lands released at Chattenden in the first review of the Medway local plan.

POLICY S14: MINISTRY OF DEFENCE ESTATE, CHATTENDEN

The council will not permit the piecemeal redevelopment of the Chattenden Barracks and military training areas during the lifetime of this plan.

The site has long term development potential for business, educational and/or residential uses and this will be considered in the next review of the Medway local plan.

2.6 Environmental Appraisal

2.6.1 In accordance with the guidance contained at paragraphs 4.16 to 4.22 of PPG12 “Development Plans” the policies in this chapter have been subject to environmental appraisal.

2.6.2 The majority of the strategic policies are very sustainable, concerned with bringing about an urban renaissance, through encouraging the re-use of brownfield sites and supporting the vitality and viability of existing town centres. The policies encourage the use of sustainable forms of transport and address positively the need to reduce travel. They promote mixed-use development and the strengthening of the local economy. The policies are cogent in their pursuit of a high quality of urban design that protects local character. They also support the conservation of important elements of both the built and natural environment.

2.7 Monitoring Measures

2.7.1 The performance of the plan in meeting its aims with regard to the overall plan strategy will be judged against the following criteria:

- (i) the proportions of greenfield and brownfield land used for development;
- (ii) the number of major developments built in conformity with the sequential locational test for major traffic attracting developments;
- (iii) the changes in the vitality and viability measures for Medway’s ‘city’ centre;
- (iv) the progress in the development of the strategic schemes at: Rochester Riverside Action Area, Chatham Maritime, Chatham Historic Dockyard, Strood Waterfront Action Area, Rochester Airfield, Kingsnorth, Grain and Thamesport.

THE BUILT AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 People attach considerable importance to the quality of their surroundings and the prosperity of an area can be influenced to a considerable degree by its image. The image of Medway is important not only to existing residents, but it is also a significant factor in attracting business and tourism and so boosting the local economy and employment prospects. Visitors and residents alike should be able to enjoy a pleasant environment in which to work, shop and spend their leisure time.
- 3.1.2 One of the main tasks for the local plan is to reconcile the need for new development with the conservation and enhancement of the built and natural environment. Where new development does occur, high standards of site planning and landscape design will be required to ensure that it makes a positive contribution to the environment and image of Medway.
- 3.1.3 It is important that opportunities are taken for improving the environment and protecting the setting of heritage features. Medway Council as Local Planning Authority already encourages the maintenance and repair of listed and other historic buildings and the council will continue to promote this work. Every effort will be made to ensure that the public perception of the area is favourable by promoting its heritage and removing eyesores which detract from the area's attractions. It is particularly important to improve the general appearance of high profile areas along the main road and rail routes into Medway, especially the riverside and town centre areas.
- 3.1.4 The local plan recognises the role of the countryside and the natural environment in urban and rural areas. The countryside and natural environment are significant resources which make a profound contribution towards the quality of life of the local population. The countryside hosts farming, forestry and other working activities, but at the same time it accommodates walking, cycling, horse-riding and other recreational pursuits. The landscape provides visual amenity for visitors and residents alike. The countryside and the natural environment are also a haven for a great diversity of wildlife, flora and fauna which, if destroyed, is often irreplaceable.
- 3.1.5 Elements of the countryside and its influences extend into, and have been retained within, the built up area of Medway. They perform significant functions which should be recognised. They are, for example, significant for naturalising and softening the urban environment. They often have plant and wildlife interest which is appreciated by the urban community. Green spaces within the urban area also have important recreational and landscape value.

- 3.1.6 The countryside and natural environment of Medway has changed considerably over the last few decades, including significant and permanent loss to built development and urbanising influences. The extent of recent urban encroachment is exemplified by the large-scale housing development at Parkwood, Hempstead, Walderslade, Lordswood and Princes Park. These developments have resulted in great loss of woodland, agricultural land and open countryside.
- 3.1.7 The historic losses emphasise the need to conserve and manage those resources which remain. It is Government policy that the countryside should be safeguarded for its own sake and that non-renewable and natural resources should be afforded protection. In doing so, the principle of sustainability also requires an awareness of the consequences of actions now for future generations.
- 3.1.8 Protection of the environment does not simply mean that all development is prevented. Development when sensitively sited, designed and landscaped can enhance the environment. Development should therefore seek to respect environmental objectives and assets, including the need to improve current conditions. Policies in the local plan are therefore intended to control development, so that when it does occur, a positive benefit can be achieved.

3.2 Policy Context

Central Government Guidance

- 3.2.1 The Government recognises that the appearance of development and its relationship to its surroundings are material considerations in planning decisions and sets out its guidance in Annex A of Planning Policy Guidance PPG1 “*General Policy and Principles*”. The PPG states that good design should be the aim of all involved in the development process and should be encouraged everywhere. However, it recognises that aesthetic judgements are to some extent subjective. The PPG advises that particular weight should be given to the impact of development on existing buildings and on the character of areas recognised for their landscape or townscape, such as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Conservation Areas.
- 3.2.2 Annex A of PPG1 specifies that development plans should set out design policies against which development proposals are to be considered. These should avoid unnecessary prescription or detail, and should concentrate on guiding the overall scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout and access of development. The PPG suggests that Local Planning Authorities may produce supplementary planning guidance to cover detailed issues and elucidate and exemplify such policies, including local design guides and site specific development briefs.
- 3.2.3 Particular attention is drawn in PPG6 “*Town Centres and Retail Developments*” to the promotion of greater consideration of urban design to improve the

environment of town centres. A comprehensive approach should be taken to development, street furniture, paving, signage, access for the disabled and car parking. Local Planning Authorities are required to consider drawing up policies and supplementary planning guidance for shopfront design.

- 3.2.4 In 1994, the Department of the Environment published a discussion document entitled *“Quality in Town and Country”*, designed to stimulate a holistic approach to improving quality in the built environment, particularly in terms of the design of new development and the environment as a whole. The document recognised the important role of urban design in achieving these objectives.
- 3.2.5 A number of PPGs relate to the need to protect amenity. PPG12 *“Development Plans”* allows for the inclusion of detailed development control policies to seek to minimise pollution or visual intrusion. PPG1 and PPG24 *“Planning and Noise”* stipulate that noise is a material planning consideration. PPG23 *“Planning and Pollution Control”* requires local plans to take into account the impact on amenity of noise, dust, vibration, light or heat and to separate housing and other development sensitive to pollution from polluting uses where they cannot reasonably co-exist.
- 3.2.6 Advice on conservation is given in PPG15 *“Planning and the Historic Environment”*. A fundamental aspect of Government policy is that there should be effective protection for all aspects of the historic environment. The physical remains of the past are to be valued and protected for their own sake. The Government acknowledges that the historic environment is irreplaceable but also that, given its widespread nature, it cannot be preserved unchanged. Local Planning Authorities are required to identify what is special in the historic environment, to define its capacity for change and, when proposals for new development come forward, to assess their impact and give the historic environment full weight. Conservation can play a key part in promoting economic prosperity by ensuring that an area offers attractive living and working conditions which will encourage inward investment. PPG15 requires Development Plans to reconcile the need for development with the interests of conservation, including archaeology, and charges local plans with including policies for the protection, enhancement and preservation of sites of archaeological interest and their setting.
- 3.2.7 National planning guidance for the countryside and rural economy is contained in PPG7 *“The Countryside: Environmental Quality and Economic and Social Development”*. This PPG states that sustainable development entails accommodating necessary change in rural areas while maintaining and, where possible, enhancing the quality of the environment for residents and visitors alike. A healthy rural economy facilitates investment to protect and improve the countryside. The PPG states that rural areas can accommodate many forms of development without detriment, if the location and design of the development is handled with sensitivity. Indeed, new development should respect, and where possible enhance, the environment in its location, scale and design. The PPG considers that planning policies should give greater priority to restraint in areas that have been statutorily designated for their landscape, wildlife or historic

qualities. It also points out that the countryside should be safeguarded for its own sake and that non-renewable and natural resources should be afforded protection.

3.2.8 PPG2 "*Green Belts*" confirms that Green Belts should be protected as far as can be seen ahead, and that within them there should be a presumption against inappropriate development. Nature conservation is specifically covered in PPG9 "*Nature Conservation*" where the importance of both designated and undesignated areas for nature conservation is emphasised and particular advice is given for SSSIs and sites with additional national and international designations. PPG20 "*Coastal Planning*" states that the coast, particularly undeveloped parts, will seldom be the most appropriate location for development. It expects only development which requires a coastal location to be permitted there.

3.2.9 The 1996 Government White Paper "*Rural England: A Nation Committed to a Living Countryside*" examines the role and future of the English countryside up to the Millennium, and it explores the practicalities of sustainability in rural areas. The White Paper says that the countryside should be regarded as a national asset, and that sustainable development means managing the countryside in ways that meet current needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs. The Government more recently published a rural white paper in November, 2000, entitled "Our Countryside – The Future – a fair deal for England."

3.2.10 In 1994, the Government published the document "*Sustainable Development: The UK Strategy*" following the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. In this strategy document, the environment is seen as a vital asset to be passed on to future generations in the best possible condition. As part of its review of this strategy the Government published in 1998, the consultation paper, "*Opportunities for Change*". This consultation paper recognises that sustainability involves thinking holistically, looking at overall quality of life, considering direct, indirect and long term effects, with particular care being taken when development results in irreversible change. "A better quality of life, a strategy for sustainable development in the UK", was published in May 1999.

Regional Policy

3.2.11 RPG9 "*Regional Planning Guidance for the South East*" sets out a number of principles to govern development in the region. One of these requires the fullest possible use to be made of opportunities for redevelopment and recycling of urban land with the aim of securing regeneration and an improvement in the urban environment. Planning is required to protect and enhance sensitive urban areas and open spaces, ensure a mix of urban uses, and achieve a high quality of building design, to enable the region's towns to remain attractive places in which to live and work. At the same time, this regional guidance specifies that development should respect the region's valuable environmental features and avoid the wasteful use of land and other natural resources.

- 3.2.12 The regional strategy sets out a vision based on achieving a more sustainable pattern of development and travel, encompassing a renaissance within urban areas whilst seeking to secure a prosperous and multi-purpose countryside for all. Within the strategy, the region's environment is considered to be one of its key assets, with a high quality environment thought to be essential to the region's future prosperity. A significant improvement to the physical environment is sought including promoting good design and building on local distinctiveness. It indicates that priority should be given to protecting designated areas of national or strategic environmental quality, to ensure no net loss or damage from development, with protection of the wider countryside being secured through the concentration of development within the region's larger urban areas.

The Thames Gateway Planning Framework

- 3.2.13 The principles of RPG9 are carried forward into *"The Thames Gateway Planning Framework"* (RPG9a). This Planning Framework is more focused on the locality and the environmental issues of Medway. One of its objectives is to safeguard and enhance natural and man made environmental assets and, where necessary, improve the quality of the local environment and encourage the highest quality in the design, layout and appearance of new developments. It also recognises that there is scope for environmental improvement and economic regeneration to complement each other.

Kent Structure Plan 1996

- 3.2.14 The Kent Structure Plan takes environmental considerations to be a key factor in planning change and setting its priorities. Strategic policy S2 of the structure plan states that:

"The quality of Kent's environment, including the visual, aural, ecological, geological, historic, atmospheric and water environments, will be conserved and enhanced, and measures will be taken to minimise, and where appropriate, mitigate, any adverse impacts arising from developments and land use change".

- 3.2.15 A series of environment policies in the structure plan amplify the policy S2 requirement for adequate protection, mitigation of damage caused to, and enhancement of the environment.
- 3.2.16 Policy ENV1 states that the countryside will be protected for its own sake. Development is not to be permitted there, unless the need for the development overrides the requirement to protect the countryside.
- 3.2.17 Policy ENV2 states that development will not be permitted where it would involve a loss of features or habitats which are of landscape, historic, geological or wildlife importance, or are of an unspoilt quality free from urban intrusion, unless there is a need for that development which overrides these considerations. Furthermore, policy ED6 states that the long-term productive potential of agricultural land will be protected, unless there is an overriding need identified in the development plan. In particular, development which will cause the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land will not be permitted.

- 3.2.18 According to policy ENV15, the character, quality and functioning of the built environment in Kent is to be conserved and enhanced, with the expectation that development should be well designed and respect its setting. Further policies focus on the preservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, archaeological sites and Listed Buildings.

Local Strategies

- 3.2.19 Medway Council is in the process of formulating many strategy, implementation and action documents. For example, the council is seeking to develop a comprehensive landscape and urban design framework which is likely to be adopted as supplementary planning guidance (See policy S4).
- 3.2.20 Other management strategies and policy documents have assisted in the formulation of local plan policy including the Kent Countryside Strategy, the Kent Biodiversity Action Plan, Local Agenda 21, Gillingham Riverside Landscape Strategy and the draft management plans for the Thames and Medway Estuaries. These strategies can be seen as mechanisms to help implement the local plan.

3.3 Objectives

- 3.3.1 The objectives underlining the policies in this chapter are:
- (i) to promote environmental sustainability;
 - (ii) to protect and enhance the character, diversity and distinctiveness of the countryside, built and natural environments, with particular emphasis on identifiable assets such as:
 - (a) the Metropolitan Green Belt and strategically and locally important gaps between settlements;
 - (b) areas of strategic and local landscape importance;
 - (c) nature conservation and geological sites of international, county or local importance;
 - (d) areas of the best and most versatile agricultural land; and
 - (e) conservation areas, ancient monuments and listed buildings;
 - (iii) to sustain and diversify the rural economy and to make allowance for necessary change in the countryside and natural environment;
 - (iv) to ensure that development takes into account its environmental consequences, being suitably located and well designed, respecting

environmental assets and taking the opportunity to enhance current environmental conditions;

- (v) to improve the built environment by seeking a high standard of design in new development or alterations to existing buildings;
- (vi) to reconcile the need for new development with the conservation and enhancement of heritage features of the built environment, both rural and urban;
- (vii) to enhance the environment by seeking to remove eyesores and restore and improve the appearance of areas of poor townscape, particularly in high profile areas such as the riverside and along strategic routes;
- (viii) to promote imaginative site planning and landscape design to achieve quality open space on development sites.

3.4 Policies and Reasoned Justification

The Built Environment

3.4.1 Medway Council recognises the importance of maintaining and improving the amenity value, sustainability and appearance of the area in order to create an attractive and healthy environment in which to live and work, and to attract new investment. It is intended that all development, including extensions and alterations, will make a positive contribution to the character of the area by being designed to a high standard and respecting neighbouring property. Development should adhere to the principles of energy efficiency, take account of the need for security of property and personal safety and be readily accessible to all, including those with special needs. The council will encourage the use of sustainable construction methods including both the re-use and efficient use of materials used in construction; appropriate rehabilitation and refurbishment of buildings; and the effective use and recycling of water through design.

3.4.2 Careful consideration of site planning is integral to achieving a development that respects existing site features, landscape character and adjacent land. The siting of buildings should achieve an integration of both built and landscape elements in order to maximise the potential of the site.

Design

3.4.3 All new housing construction, extensions, rebuilding or conversions should provide a satisfactory standard of accommodation and make a positive contribution to the public realm, particularly in terms of design and materials used. Medway Council will prepare development briefs to provide design guidance for certain sites, including the following sites (not in order of priority):

- (a) Grain;

- (b) Kingsnorth;
- (c) Hoo St Werburgh;
- (d) sites adjacent to the Wainscott By-Pass;
- (e) Strood Waterfront;
- (f) Rochester Airfield;
- (g) Rochester Riverside;
- (h) rear of the former Seeboard building, High Street, Rochester;
- (i) Bourne and Hillier site, High Street, Rochester;
- (j) All Saints Hospital, Magpie Hall Road, Chatham;
- (k) Chatham Historic Dockyard;
- (l) land at Arden Street and High Street, Gillingham;
- (m) Grange Farm, Gillingham.

3.4.4 Extensions and residential infill development should not appear as afterthoughts nor dominate the original and adjacent buildings. They should not result in the over development of plots nor unduly reduce available garden or amenity areas. It is, therefore, necessary to control their design in terms of height, depth, mass, scale and materials to respect the appearance of the street scene and the character of the area.

3.4.5 The way in which potential investors, developers and business people perceive Medway is extremely important in promoting its economic development. One way of helping to improve the area's overall image as a business location is to ensure that the scale and design of new commercial and industrial development respects the integrity of existing buildings and is sensitively designed to enhance the quality of the environment.

3.4.6 Village design statements are prepared by local communities and offer a framework for participation, engaging local people in debate about new development in their area. The council will encourage their preparation and consider their adoption as supplementary planning guidance. Such design statements would augment the work to be undertaken within the landscape and urban design framework (see policy S4).

3.4.7 Although residential and economic development has been referred to above, the design principles set out in this section apply equally to all types of development.

3.4.8 It is increasingly recognised that the provision of art in public places and integrated within new buildings can improve the quality of the built environment and increase the attractiveness of a development both environmentally and financially. The integration of works of art into new development can have wider benefits, as they can contribute to the positive image of the area, making it more

attractive for new businesses to locate, and thus help in the promotion of economic regeneration.

- 3.4.9 The “Percent for Art” concept outlined by the Arts Council, encourages developers to set aside a proportion of their project’s capital budget (usually 1%) to commission work by artists and crafts people, usually as part of the development. Examples of such work might include the design and production of metalwork, stonework, brick detailing and patterning, signage, stained glass, tiling and paving, or could even involve the inclusion of textiles, murals, photographs or sculpture within the development. Funds might also be used to employ an artist as an integral member of the project design team. It should be noted that the most successful public art projects tend to be those that include the early involvement of artists and crafts people within the design process.

POLICY BNE1: GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR BUILT DEVELOPMENT

The design of development (including extensions, alterations and conversions) should be appropriate in relation to the character, appearance and functioning of the built and natural environment by:

- (i) being satisfactory in terms of use, scale, mass, proportion, details, materials, layout and siting; and*
- (ii) respecting the scale, appearance and location of buildings, spaces and the visual amenity of the surrounding area; and*
- (iii) where appropriate, providing well structured, practical and attractive areas of open space.*

Protection of Amenity

- 3.4.10 The need for development has to be balanced against the need to protect public health and the environment. The protection of quality of life in residential areas is particularly important. People should continue to enjoy adequate levels of amenity such as privacy, a quiet environment, daylight and sunlight. The need to protect particularly sensitive land uses such as hospitals and schools from pollution and noise is also important.
- 3.4.11 The council will, therefore, resist development which would result in damage to the amenity of those people occupying property close to new development.

Overlooking from public rights of way, play areas and neighbouring properties should be taken into account. The layout and orientation of buildings should take advantage of sunlight and should not block daylight to habitable rooms of neighbouring dwellings nor dominate and enclose adjacent property. The council will also seek to protect the occupants of proposed development who might suffer from the impact of existing activities by requiring amelioration measures through the use of planning conditions.

- 3.4.12 The council will have regard to the advice in the “*Kent Design*” guide (2000) and has adopted it as supplementary planning guidance. The guide contains advice, for example, on site layout and privacy, and sunlight and daylight concerns. It specifically refers to the Building Research Establishment Report “*Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight: A Guide to Good Practice*” as containing tests to check the level of daylight within dwellings and adjoining buildings.

POLICY BNE2: AMENITY PROTECTION

All development should secure the amenities of its future occupants, and protect those amenities enjoyed by nearby and adjacent properties. The design of development, should have regard to:

- (i) privacy, daylight, and sunlight; and***
- (ii) noise, vibration, light, heat, smell and airborne emissions consisting of fumes, smoke, soot, ash, dust and grit; and***
- (iii) activity levels and traffic generation.***

Noise

- 3.4.13 Noise can significantly affect the quality of life. Noise may come from a variety of sources, including road, rail and air traffic, industrial processes and recreational activities. Certain forms of development, for example residential development, can be particularly sensitive to noise.

- 3.4.14 PPG24 provides guidance on determining applications for residential development to ensure that noise levels are acceptable. Noise Exposure Categories (NECs) are identified for different types of noise source: road, rail and air traffic and mixed sources (which includes industrial noise). The council has considered these recommended NEC categories, and the associated noise thresholds of PPG24, and applied them to the plan area.

- 3.4.15 However, the council will, in some cases, vary noise levels by 3dB(A) in accordance with paragraph 9 of PPG24. The council will pursue lower thresholds, where appropriate, in order to seek improved environmental conditions. To aid developers in meeting these noise thresholds, the council will provide guidance on how to minimise noise through the production of supplementary planning guidance, including an explanation of what is required for the acoustic assessment of a development.
- 3.4.16 The NEC categories that the council uses are aimed at protecting residents within dwellings. However, the sound level within a residential building is not the only consideration. Most residents will expect their gardens and adjacent amenity areas to offer a reasonable degree of peaceful enjoyment. The advice in PPG24 is that general daytime, outdoor noise levels of less than 55 $L_{Aeq,T}$ dB, are desirable to prevent significant community annoyance.
- 3.4.17 Other noise sensitive developments include schools, hospitals and offices. It is acknowledged, however, that buildings for such uses often contain areas that are not noise sensitive. For example, storage areas in those types of building would not require protection. Sensitive buildings can be protected by attention to site layout and building design. Areas of landscape, nature conservation and historic importance and areas where livestock are kept are also locations where the potential impact of noise will be a consideration in the determination of planning applications.
- 3.4.18 Where new noisy industrial or similar development is proposed, it is necessary to ensure that it does not cause an unacceptable degree of disturbance to the amenity of existing uses in the locality. Proposals for such development near existing residential, or other noise sensitive receptors, will need to be assessed in accordance with the advice in PPG24. Where appropriate, however, the technical demonstration of impact will need to be couched in terms set out in British Standard BS4142: 1997.
- 3.4.19 Some developments may find it difficult to fully comply with the provisions of the council's noise standards, and it is acknowledged that some flexibility may be necessary if regeneration and other objectives are to be realised. However, it should be possible, in most instances, to design developments to mitigate and minimise the impact of noise, and this will be sought of all development proposals.

POLICY BNE3: NOISE STANDARDS

In considering the impact of noise from transport related sources on new residential development, the noise exposure categories (NECs) set out below will be applied as follows:

- (i) where noise levels are within category A, noise need not be considered as a determining factor;
- (ii) where noise levels fall within category B, the applicant should demonstrate that adequate mitigation measures are included in the proposal to reduce noise to a satisfactory level or, where appropriate, conditions will be imposed to ensure such mitigation measures;
- (iii) where noise levels fall within category C, the development will not be permitted unless either (a) the site is allocated for residential development or (b) there are no alternative quieter sites available. In both cases, a substantial level of protection against noise must be provided;
- (iv) where noise levels are within category D, planning permission will be refused.

Noise levels⁽¹⁾ corresponding to the noise exposure categories for new dwellings $L_{Aeq,T}$ dB

Noise Source	Noise Exposure Category (NEC)			
	A	B	C	D
Road Traffic				
0700-2300	<55	55-63	63-72	>72
2300-0700 ⁽²⁾	<45	45-57	57-66	>66
Rail Traffic				
0700-2300	<55	55-66	66-74	>74
2300-0700 ⁽²⁾	<45	45-59	59-66	>66
Air Traffic				
0700-2300	<57	57-66	66-72	>72
2300-0700 ⁽³⁾	<48	48-57	57-66	>66

Mixed Sources⁽⁴⁾

<i>0700-2300</i>	<i><55</i>	<i>55-63</i>	<i>63-72</i>	<i>>72</i>
<i>2300-0700⁽²⁾</i>	<i><45</i>	<i>45-57</i>	<i>57-66</i>	<i>>66</i>

These thresholds may be increased or decreased by up to 3dB(A) where it can be justified.

- (1) Noise levels: the free field noise level(s) (LA_{eqqT}) used when deciding the NEC of a site should be representative of typical conditions.*
- (2) Night-time noise levels (2300-0700 hours): sites where the free field individual noise events regularly exceed 80dB L_{Amax} (S time weighting) several times in any hour, should be treated as being in NEC C regardless of the $L_{\text{Aeq,8r}}$ (except where the $L_{\text{Aeq,8H}}$ already puts the site in NEC D).*
- (3) Aircraft noise: daytime values accord with the contour values adopted by the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions which relate to levels measured 1.2m above open ground. For the same amount of noise energy, contour values can be up to 2dB(A) higher than those of other sources because of ground reflection effects.*
- (4) Mixed sources: this refers to any combination of road, rail and industrial noise sources. The 'mixed source' values are based on the lowest numerical values of the single source limits in the table. The 'mixed source' NECs should only be used where no individual noise source is dominant.*

Residential development should be designed to minimise noise levels within gardens and/or amenity areas provided by that development, with the aim of having these areas experience a general daytime (07.00 to 23.00 hours) noise level of at most 55 $L_{\text{Aeq,T}}$ dB.

Noise sensitive development (including offices, hospitals, schools and, in respect of noise emanating from non-transport related sources, housing) should be designed to minimise the impact of existing noise sources and the applicant will be required to demonstrate that the proposed development will not be exposed to unacceptable levels of noise relative to the proposed use.

Noise-generating development should be located and designed so as not to have a significant adverse noise impact on any nearby noise sensitive uses (including offices, hospitals, schools and, in respect of noise emanating from non-transport related sources, housing).

Energy Efficiency

- 3.4.20 Non-renewable fossil fuels such as gas, oil and coal are burnt to yield energy directly, or are used in power stations to produce electricity. A reduction in the demand for energy from these sources will help in reducing harmful atmospheric emissions. These emissions include greenhouse gases and gases which contribute to “acid rain” and “smog”.
- 3.4.21 Energy efficiency in the design of buildings will include measures for reducing energy demand for heating, lighting and ventilation. For example, buildings should have: high levels of thermal insulation of the fabric and glazing; compact plan forms with minimisation of external surface areas; incorporation of draught lobbies; internal room layout and fenestration arrangements that benefit from the heat and light of solar energy; and utilisation of natural ventilation where possible.
- 3.4.22 Site layouts should avoid overshadowing, orientate facades within 30 degrees of south and utilise appropriately sited shelterbelts and hedgerows to act as windbreaks. Site layouts, densities and land use mixes influence the viability of combined heat and power/district heating schemes.
- 3.4.23 The use of solar panels also provides a direct means of utilising the sun’s energy. Whilst their wider use will generally be appropriate, particularly in new buildings, their visual impact will need to be taken into account. They will be unacceptable on Listed Buildings and will be required to be unobtrusively sited in cases where, in principle, they are considered to be acceptable on buildings in conservation areas.
- 3.4.24 Development can also indirectly reduce energy demand by minimising the use of materials with high embodied energy and requirements for mains water and waste water treatment. For example, water conservation measures, rainwater

recovery systems and “reed-bed” or other technologies for wastewater treatment are increasingly being incorporated into domestic and commercial schemes and in principle, such measures will be supported by the council. Embodied energy of materials refers to the energy expended in the manufacture, transportation and construction of materials. For example, locally sourced softwood timber window frames have a lower embodied energy than UPVC window frames.

POLICY BNE4: ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Energy efficiency measures will be sought within development proposals, providing there is no detrimental impact on amenity. In particular, proposals should have regard to:

- (i) appropriate siting, form, orientation and layout of the buildings and the appropriate size and location of windows to maximise passive solar heating, natural lighting and natural ventilation; and*
- (ii) the appropriate use and siting of soft landscaping to act as shading or shelterbelts; and*
- (iii) energy efficient technology including solar panels, combined heat and power/district heating schemes and district wind power schemes; and*
- (iv) high standards of insulation and other heat retaining features; and*
- (v) the use of building materials of the lowest possible embodied energy,*

except where there is an overriding need to avoid damage to the architectural or historic interest of Listed Buildings and buildings in Conservation Areas.

Lighting

3.4.25 Outdoor lighting is required for particular purposes, such as highway safety, external working during the hours of darkness and security purposes.

Floodlighting of important buildings can also add to the quality of an area. However, some lighting can cause nuisance due to glare. In the countryside in particular, sky glow can detract from the sky's natural state and cause disturbance to wildlife. Excessive lighting is also wasteful of energy. The council will, therefore, discourage the use of lighting considered to be unnecessary, (e.g. beyond that required for personal safety) and will seek to find more acceptable solutions. Light nuisance can be minimised by careful siting, angling or cowlings to ensure that light falls only where it is needed, controlling intensity and limiting the hours of illumination.

- 3.4.26 Full details of any external lighting scheme should be submitted as part of the planning application to enable the council to ensure that it is the minimum required for safety and working purposes and that its design minimises potential glare and spillage.

POLICY BNE5: LIGHTING

External lighting schemes should demonstrate that they are the minimum necessary for security, safety or working purposes. Development should seek to minimise the loss of amenity from light glare and spillage, particularly that affecting residential areas, areas of nature conservation interest and the landscape qualities of countryside areas.

Landscape Design

- 3.4.27 The provision and design of external landscaping is now integral to any major new development and must be given careful thought. It is important that landscape schemes take account of the need for access by people with disabilities and take into account personal safety and crime prevention issues.
- 3.4.28 By requiring provision of quality and detailed landscape schemes on development sites, the council is seeking to:
- (i) increase the amount of green space within the built-up area;
 - (ii) create or enhance positive elements of the character of the locality;
 - (iii) provide more, publicly accessible, open space for informal recreation, including within new, large scale employment developments; (see policies L4, L5 and L6);
 - (iv) link natural habitats, pedestrian routes and open spaces;
 - (v) reduce the visual prominence of parked cars and the scale of large areas of car parking;

- (vi) contribute to the improvement of air quality and microclimate in the urban area;
- (vii) help facilitate regeneration.

POLICY BNE6: LANDSCAPE DESIGN

Major developments should include a structural landscaping scheme to enhance the character of the locality. Detailed landscaping schemes should be submitted before development commences and should have regard to the following factors:

- (i) provide a structured, robust, attractive, long term, easily maintainable environment including quality open spaces, vistas and views; and*
- (ii) include planting of a size, scale and form appropriate to the location and landform, taking account of underground and overground services; and*
- (iii) include details of the design, materials and quality detailing of hard works elements such as gates, fences, walls, paving, signage and street furniture; and*
- (iv) retain important existing landscape features, including trees and hedgerows, and be well related to open space features in the locality; and*
- (v) support wildlife by the creation or enhancement of semi-natural habitats and the use of indigenous plant material where appropriate; and*
- (vi) include an existing site survey, maintenance and management regimes and a timetable for implementation.*

Access for All

3.4.29 The design of access to buildings and of circulation areas should meet the needs of those with limited mobility. Unnecessary difficulties and inconvenience can be experienced by people with disabilities, the elderly and others (for example those with prams or pushchairs), when confronted with pedestrian crossings, narrow entrance doorways, limited circulation space, external stairs, unsympathetic paving materials, kerbs and items of street furniture. The needs of these groups should be taken into account in the design of: new buildings; alterations to buildings; circulation spaces and routes from car parking; and public transport accessibility points (such as stations and bus stops). Whilst the internal layout of buildings which is governed by the Building Regulations is not normally material to the determination of planning applications, the council encourages developers to give equal consideration to providing access for all in the design of internal circulation spaces. Policy BNE7 is intended to complement, not duplicate the Building Regulations in this regard.

3.4.30 Matters that should be taken into account include:

- (i) the provision of steps and ramps, allowing adequate width of paths and doorways to facilitate access for users of wheelchairs, prams, pushchairs and others with mobility difficulties;
- (ii) the use of non-slip and tactile surfaces;
- (iii) adequate lighting and clear signage;
- (iv) the provision of dropped kerbs and the adequate provision, location and size of parking for vehicles of disabled drivers or those with young children;
- (v) the design and positioning of street furniture which avoids obstruction or danger and allows adequate circulation.

POLICY BNE7: ACCESS FOR ALL

Development should be designed so that access to buildings and external circulation areas meets the needs of people with disabilities, the elderly and people with young children.

Exceptions will be made in proposals affecting Listed Buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments and some buildings in Conservation Areas, if there is an overriding need to avoid damage to their architectural or historic interest.

Security and Personal Safety

- 3.4.31 The design of the built environment can assist in discouraging anti-social behaviour, prevent crime and thereby reduce the fear of crime or harassment. Circular 5/94 "*Planning Out Crime*" requires local plans to establish principles for the design, layout and landscaping of new development which will make crime more difficult to commit, increase the risk of detection and provide people with a safer, more secure environment. Those principles are summarised below, and the council will seek their incorporation into development proposals:
- (i) encourage passive surveillance and self-policing, for example by introducing residential development into commercial areas in town centres and designing residential development such that residential access roads, paths, parking areas, amenity areas and bus stops are within sight of the main living areas of residential properties;
 - (ii) avoid creating unduly large, single-use developments which are sparsely populated at certain times, particularly in the evenings and at night;
 - (iii) avoid the isolation of pedestrians or the creation of dark or hidden areas (e.g. alleyways) in the design, landscaping and boundary treatment of footpaths, cycleways and roads;
 - (iv) provide adequate lighting and incorporate security measures in the design of buildings;
 - (v) reduce the risk of "ram-raiding" by the appropriate siting and design of street furniture and shop fronts;
 - (vi) encourage a mixed range of uses in town centres to create a lively and attractive environment throughout the day and evening, including the provision of sporting, leisure and recreational facilities, particularly for young people.
- 3.4.32 The council will consult the Police Architectural Liaison Officer on major development schemes, and will take into account the advice on design given in the *Police Architectural Liaison Manual of Guidance*.
- 3.4.33 One particular means of providing more security for property and contributing to an improved sense of safety for individuals can be achieved by the installation of security cameras and CCTV (closed circuit television). Schemes which have been implemented include surveillance of car parks and major public areas such as town centres.

POLICY BNE8: SECURITY AND PERSONAL SAFETY

The design and layout of development should seek to maximise personal safety and the security of property.

Commercial Frontages

- 3.4.34 The appearance of shopfronts and the frontages of other buildings in town, district or local centres help to create an identity for a centre and can be influential in attracting trade. For example, unpainted and decaying shopfronts create a negative impression whilst large garish fascias and solid shutters or grilles provide an unattractive environment. The council aims to ensure the sensitive design of shopfronts and frontages to preserve the appearance and character of commercial areas. In addition, the council will publish supplementary planning guidance on shopfronts.

POLICY BNE9: DESIGN OF COMMERCIAL FRONTAGES

Proposals which would result in the loss of shop fronts of traditional design or materials, and which contribute to the character and appearance of an area, will not be permitted. Proposals for new commercial or retail frontages should:

- (i) respect the building's character, scale and appearance; and*
- (ii) incorporate fascias and any additional features which are in proportion to the elevations of the existing building and which avoid obscuring any existing architectural details; and*
- (iii) retain individual frontages when two or more building frontages are incorporated into a single unit; and*
- (iv) complement the positive character of the surrounding area; and*

- (v) ensure that any security grilles or shutters demonstrated to be necessary, are designed to be an integral feature of the frontage and maintain a shop window display.***

Advertisements

3.4.35 Advertisements in limited numbers can, if they are carefully designed and situated, form an attractive feature of a commercial centre. However, when they are poorly designed, unsuitably located, unduly large or too numerous, they can create visual clutter and become detrimental to the street scene. Sensitively designed and located illuminated displays can lend a sense of vitality to streets containing entertainment uses after dark, but there is a danger that they can detract from amenity or become a traffic hazard if they distract drivers. The regime of outdoor advertisement control enables Local Planning Authorities to control advertisements in the interests of amenity and public safety, including the ability to designate Areas of Special Advert Control, of which there are currently two in Medway. Some types of advertisements are exempted from detailed control and others often qualify for 'deemed consent'. In residential areas, proposals for advertisements will be permitted only in the most exceptional circumstances. The council will act to remove unacceptable advertisements, signs and hoardings that otherwise enjoy 'deemed planning consent'.

POLICY BNE10: ADVERTISEMENTS

Proposals for the display of advertisements and fascia signs will be permitted unless:

- (i) their scale, size, design, materials or illumination would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the land or buildings on which they are to be displayed or of the surrounding area; or***
- (ii) they result in visual clutter or are excessive in size or number; or***
- (iii) their siting on a building extends above ground floor fascia level and fails to respect architectural features or the original divisions of the property; or***

(iv) the sign constitutes a road safety hazard which would be likely to distract, confuse or obstruct the vision of road users.

3.4.36 It is necessary to exercise tighter controls over advertisements in particularly sensitive locations such as Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings or their settings. Relevant policies are BNE15 and BNE19 below.

Hoardings

3.4.37 Large poster displays or hoardings can have a detrimental impact on the street scene as they often appear out of scale with the properties on which they are displayed. However, they may be acceptable in commercial areas or along major transport routes if, for example, they would screen unattractive sites.

POLICY BNE11: HOARDINGS

Advertisement hoardings will only be permitted where they provide a screen to a site which is detrimental to the character of the area and where an improvement to the appearance of that site cannot be satisfactorily achieved by other means.

The hoarding will be expected to complement the street scene through its design and, where appropriate, the provision of incidental landscaping and street furniture.

Conservation Areas

3.4.38 A Conservation Area is an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. It will have a particular context or setting which may also have a special character or appearance worthy of preservation. Conservation Areas vary in size, ranging from whole town centres, to much smaller groups of buildings. They will often be centred on Listed Buildings, but other features of merit, such as open spaces, trees, historic street patterns, or items of historic or archaeological interest may also contribute to the special character of an area.

3.4.39 The urban fabric of Medway is rich in history and contains much that is worthy of conservation.

- 3.4.40 Rochester was established in Roman times to guard the Medway crossing and its Castle and Cathedral are predominantly Norman. Much of the core of Georgian and Victorian Rochester also survives, including the Corn Exchange, Hawkins Almshouses and the award winning Dickens Centre (housed in the 16th century Eastgate House). The Historic Dockyard (the former Royal Naval Dockyard) dates back to Tudor times, although much of that now remaining is Georgian. The Brompton Lines and Forts Amherst, Clarence and Pitt were all built during the early 19th Century. The military tradition continued with the establishment of the Royal School of Military Engineering and the Royal Engineers Institute, also during the 19th Century. A wealth of other buildings or features worthy of conservation also survive throughout the area.

Preservation and Enhancement of Conservation Areas

- 3.4.40 Medway contains 25 Conservation Areas which range in size from Rochester city centre and Brompton Lines to Cliffe village and Railway Street, Gillingham. These are shown on the proposals map and are listed below:

- (a) Rochester City Centre
- (b) Victoria Street, Rochester
- (c) Church Fields, Rochester
- (d) Upper Upnor
- (e) Cliffe
- (f) New Road, Chatham
- (g) Star Hill, Rochester
- (h) Watts Ave/Roebuck Road
- (i) St. Mary Hoo
- (j) Upper Bush
- (k) Halling
- (l) Star Hill to Sun Pier
- (m) New Road, Rochester
- (n) Frindsbury and Manor Farm
- (o) Brompton Lines
- (p) Rainham
- (q) Lower Twydall
- (r) Gillingham Park

- (s) Moor Street
- (t) Meresborough
- (u) Pembroke (Chatham Maritime)
- (v) Lower Rainham
- (w) Railway Street, Gillingham
- (x) Gillingham Green
- (y) Chatham Historic Dockyard

3.4.41 Local Planning Authorities have a duty to review their areas from time to time, to consider whether further designation or deletion is warranted and whether existing Conservation Area boundaries should be amended.

3.4.42 Medway Council will carry out a comprehensive review of all existing and proposed Conservation Areas before 2006. In particular, a comprehensive and co-ordinated review will take place of the Conservation Areas around the World Naval Base, Brompton and Fort Amherst. The council will pay special attention to the preservation and enhancement of the special character of all its Conservation Areas, and will carry out an appraisal of each area and prepare proposals to secure that objective. The policies aimed at achieving that end will also apply to proposed Conservation Areas.

POLICY BNE12: CONSERVATION AREAS

Special attention will be paid to the preservation and enhancement of the character and appearance of Conservation Areas, as defined on the proposals map.

Demolition in Conservation Areas

3.4.43 Conservation Area designation gives Local Planning Authorities control over the demolition of most buildings and some structures, such as walls, which are located within their curtilage. In considering proposals for demolition, the part played in the architectural or historic interest of a Conservation Area by the building concerned will be assessed, including the wider effects of demolition on the building's surroundings. Consent will not be given for the demolition of buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a Conservation Area. Buildings which detract from the character only because they have become neglected will be safeguarded and every effort will be made by the council to secure their restoration and repair by the owners.

3.4.44 Where it is proposed to demolish non-Listed Buildings in a Conservation Area, the council will not grant consent unless there are detailed plans for

redevelopment which demonstrate that the proposals would fit into the area in an acceptable manner. In order to ensure that unsightly vacant plots are not created, demolition will not be permitted to take place until a contract has been entered into for an approved redevelopment of the site.

POLICY BNE13: DEMOLITION IN CONSERVATION AREAS

Proposals to demolish a building which makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a Conservation Area will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that:

- (i) the building is wholly beyond repair: or***
- (ii) it is incapable of use; or***
- (iii) its design is inappropriate; or***
- (iv) the character and appearance of the Conservation Area would be enhanced by its removal and replacement.***

Consent will be conditional upon no demolition occurring until a contract has been entered into for approved redevelopment of the site.

Development in Conservation Areas

3.4.45 Planning decisions in Conservation Areas must pay special attention to the objective of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area.

3.4.46 The enhancement of an area can be defined as the reinforcement of the qualities which provide its special interest. It may be achieved through the sympathetic development of opportunity sites, the redevelopment of buildings which detract from the character of an area or by appropriate extensions and alterations. The council will seek to ensure that development does not take place which is detrimental to the character or appearance of a Conservation Area. Conservation Areas may contain some buildings which have no architectural or historic interest and are harmful to the overall character of the area. Their replacement with buildings of a similarly inappropriate design will not be acceptable.

3.4.47 The principal concerns about development in Conservation Areas will be the appropriateness of a building's mass and scale as well as its relationship with its context. The proposal should be in harmony with, or complementary to its neighbours in respect of the adjoining architectural styles. The use of materials generally sympathetic to those which have been historically used in the area is also important. The building should fit into the 'grain' of an area by respecting surviving historic street patterns, plot widths and depths. Enhancement may be achieved by the retention of existing features, materials and details (where they have survived) or by their reinstatement, where appropriate. In order to secure the retention of features on unlisted buildings which could otherwise be lost as a result of permitted development, the council will consider the use of Article 4 Directions to give control over such development.

3.4.48 The setting of a Conservation Area will be affected by development adjacent to its boundary or in the vicinity which would impinge on important views of the area. In order to assess the effect of development on a Conservation Area, detailed plans and drawings of the proposals, including elevations which show the development in its setting, will normally be required. Outline planning applications do not usually contain sufficient detailed information to enable the council to assess their impact. Consequently, full applications will be sought.

POLICY BNE14: DEVELOPMENT IN CONSERVATION AREAS

Development within Conservation Areas, or affecting their setting, should achieve a high quality of design which will preserve or enhance the area's historic or architectural character or appearance. The following criteria will be applied:

- (i) materials, features and details of buildings or structures which contribute to the character or appearance of the area should be retained or reinstated; and*
- (ii) traditional street patterns, building lines, open spaces and urban spaces, paving and roadway materials, boundary treatments and street furniture should be retained or reinstated; and*
- (iii) the scale, height, mass, roofscape, materials, detailing, fenestration, plot width and depth, and visual appearance of new development should be*

sympathetic with existing buildings and their settings; and

(iv) trees, hedgerows and open spaces should be retained and protected; and

(v) hard and soft landscape elements and traditional materials which enhance the area should be utilised.

Proposals should be submitted as full applications when they are within, or would affect, a Conservation Area.

Advertisements within Conservation Areas

3.4.49 In Conservation Areas it is particularly important for advertising signs (such as those on shops and other commercial premises) to be sympathetic in form, scale and materials to their context. Internally illuminated box signs, the use of plastic and freestanding poster advertisements (hoardings) will be inappropriate.

POLICY BNE15: ADVERTISEMENTS WITHIN CONSERVATION AREAS

Within Conservation Areas advertisements will not be permitted if their design, materials, size, colour or siting detract from the special character of the Conservation Area.

Demolition of Listed Buildings

3.4.50 The starting point for the exercise of Listed Building control is a recognition of the great importance of protecting these buildings of special architectural or historic interest from unnecessary demolition and from inappropriate alteration. Once lost, historic buildings cannot be replaced and the destruction of such buildings is seldom necessary for reasons of good planning. The council will not give consent for the demolition of any Listed Building without convincing evidence that either real efforts have been made to find viable uses for the building or that redevelopment would produce substantial planning benefits for the community which would decisively outweigh the loss of the building. Subjective claims about the architectural merits of proposed replacement buildings will not be a justification for the demolition of a Listed Building.

POLICY BNE16: DEMOLITION OF LISTED BUILDINGS

The demolition of Listed Buildings will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that there are exceptional and overriding reasons for demolition, and that all possible methods of preserving the building have been investigated.

Development involving Listed Buildings

- 3.4.51 The elements which make up the special interest of a Listed Building will usually extend beyond the external façades. Internal features (for example, decorated plaster ceilings and staircases, timber framing, fireplaces, joinery, wall panelling and wall paintings) can contribute to its architectural or historic interest, and consent is required for all internal alterations. In addition, the spaces and layout of the building and the archaeological (or technological) interest of the surviving structure and surfaces are equally important.
- 3.4.52 Certain Listed Buildings can accommodate sensitive alterations and extensions without damaging their character. Cumulative changes reflecting the history of different uses of the building are often part of its special interest. However, the special interest of buildings may be sensitive to even the slightest alteration. In order to properly assess the impact of proposed development on all elements of a Listed Building, the council will require all applications for alterations, extensions or changes of use affecting a Listed Building to be full applications, and to be accompanied by an application for Listed Building consent where one is required. Proposals for changes of use must include information relating to any associated alterations to the Listed Building.

POLICY BNE17: ALTERATIONS TO LISTED BUILDINGS

Alterations, extensions, conversions or changes of use affecting a Listed Building will not be permitted if they are:

- (i) detrimental to the architectural or historic character of the building; or*
- (ii) unsympathetic in design, scale, appearance and use; or*
- (iii) do not retain original features and materials.*

Setting of Listed Buildings

- 3.4.53 The setting of a Listed Building is often an essential part of its character. Historic buildings can lose much of their interest and townscape value if their surroundings include inappropriate development. The setting of a Listed Building will often owe its character to the harmony produced by a particular grouping of buildings and to the quality of spaces created around them. Such areas require careful attention to the details of the proposals. Consequently, full applications will normally be required which will enable a proper assessment of their impact. Proposals which would adversely affect the setting of a Listed Building will not be permitted.

POLICY BNE18: SETTING OF LISTED BUILDINGS

Development which would adversely affect the setting of a listed building will not be permitted.

Advertisements on Listed Buildings

- 3.4.54 Particular attention needs to be given to advertisements on Listed Buildings to ensure that their fabric, character and appearance are not damaged.

POLICY BNE19: ADVERTISEMENTS ON LISTED BUILDINGS

Advertisements will not be permitted if they would adversely affect the character, appearance or setting of Listed Buildings due to:

- (i) inappropriate siting; or*
- (ii) the use of internally illuminated signs; or*
- (iii) inappropriate materials; or*
- (iv) the painting over, obscuring or alteration of architectural details or traditional materials.*

Archaeology

- 3.4.55 The lower reaches of the Thames and Medway estuaries have played a strategic role in the development of Kent from prehistoric times onwards and sites of all periods from the Palaeolithic to the modern are represented. The local plan needs to address this legacy which is represented by Scheduled Ancient Monuments and other important archaeological sites.

Nationally Important Archaeological Sites

- 3.4.56 The planning system must protect nationally important archaeological remains, some of which enjoy special protection as Scheduled Ancient Monuments. National policy, as set out in PPG16, makes a presumption in favour of the physical preservation, in situ, of nationally important remains and their settings. In view of their intrinsic worth as historic sites and buildings, it is essential that the monuments themselves are protected and that unsympathetic or damaging development is not allowed in their immediate vicinity. In addition to planning controls, separate Scheduled Ancient Monument consent from the First Secretary of State is required before specified works are carried out which would affect an Ancient Monument. The sites which were scheduled in May 1999 are set out in Appendix 1 and their general locations are identified on the proposals map. The policy will also apply to monuments which are subsequently scheduled.

POLICY BNE20 SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENTS

Scheduled Ancient Monuments are defined on the proposals map. Development affecting Scheduled Ancient Monuments or other nationally important sites will not be permitted if it would:

(i) damage or destroy such sites; or

(ii) be detrimental to their setting.

Other Important Archaeological Sites

- 3.4.57 On the basis of information from the Kent Archaeological Sites and Monuments Record, Areas of Archaeological Potential have been identified. These cover broad areas of land which might contain archaeological remains, although there is no indication of their relative importance. It is not the intention of Medway Council to prevent development in such areas, but to provide an opportunity for their importance to be assessed at the earliest possible stage and for development to be designed to minimise destruction as a first preference. Where

this approach is not warranted, arrangements for excavation and recording of details should be made, and any important artefacts removed for curating, usually in a museum.

- 3.4.58 Development within Areas of Archaeological Potential which involves disturbance of below ground deposits could damage or destroy archaeological remains. For this reason, planning applications for development within these sites and others where archaeological remains are believed to be present will be the subject of consultation with the archaeological officer in order to assess the potential archaeological importance of the site. The council will seek to protect important archaeological remains in situ, and to avoid or minimise damage to these deposits. However, where damage is unavoidable, appropriate archaeological investigation will be required in advance of development. In some cases this may take the form of initial evaluation work followed by more formal excavation.
- 3.4.59 The importance of coastal archaeology should also be borne in mind. There is a need for further survey work to assess coastal archaeology.

POLICY BNE21 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

Development affecting potentially important archaeological sites will not be permitted, unless:

- (i) the developer, after consultation with the archaeological officer, has arranged for an archaeological field evaluation to be carried out by an approved archaeological body before any decision on the planning application is made; and***
- (ii) it would not lead to the damage or destruction of important archaeological remains. There will be a preference for the preservation of important archaeological remains in situ.***
- (iii) where development would be damaging to archaeological remains, sufficient time and resources are made available for an appropriate archaeological investigation undertaken by an approved archaeological body. Such investigations should be in advance of development and in accordance with a specification and programme of work approved by the council. Resources should***

also be made available for the publication of the results of the investigation.

Environmental Enhancement

- 3.4.60 A positive image will help Medway to attract tourism and business to the area, to the benefit of the local economy. It is, consequently, important that environmental enhancement schemes should be implemented in high profile areas, such as the main road and rail routes into Medway, the town centres and the riverside areas.
- 3.4.61 There is scope for environmental improvements to address the problem of neglected land and to enhance the appearance of strategic highway and rail routes. The rail approaches to Medway could be greatly improved by attention to derelict and vacant areas, the maintenance and planting of embankments and a comprehensive programme of improvements to stations, particularly Chatham, Strood and Gillingham. Connex and Network Rail are now implementing an upgrading of the five main stations in Medway, whilst Medway Council (with development partners) will be regenerating Rochester Riverside beside the Strood to Chatham railway.
- 3.4.62 Some of the existing employment areas, particularly the older ones, have poor standards of building design, layout and general environment. The council will encourage the improvement of these areas to enhance both the image of the companies and the wider environment of Medway. Prominent areas such as Strood Waterfront would benefit from environmental enhancement and other improvements.
- 3.4.63 Groundwork Medway Swale is closely involved in all aspects of environmental enhancement in the plan area. The council will support the close involvement of local communities in enhancement projects, as it encourages a sense of common ownership and ensures that the needs of the community are taken into account.
- 3.4.64 The River Medway has exerted a strong influence on local character. However, much of its potential visual attraction within the urban area is limited where the riverside has been in industrial or trading uses and access to the public is consequently restricted. As the commercial significance of the river has declined, new opportunities have arisen to facilitate public access to the riverside to increase the amount of open space and improve its setting.

POLICY BNE22 ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENT

Development leading to the protection and improvement of the appearance and environment of existing and proposed areas of development, transport corridors,

open spaces and areas adjacent to the River Medway will be permitted.

Pollution

- 3.4.65 Pollution can be conceived as the infliction of harm to living organisms or interference with ecological systems. The council will consult the Environment Agency (or other relevant pollution control authorities) on potentially polluting development in order to avoid conflicting requirements being imposed on a developer and to prevent undesirable duplication of pollution controls.

Contaminated Land

- 3.4.66 The re-use of derelict land can contribute towards the revitalisation of urban areas and reduce the need to use fresh land outside built-up areas. However, such land might be contaminated and require treatment. New development may need to incorporate measures for adequate protection from contamination. The best way of minimising any associated risks is to ensure that sites which may be contaminated are identified at an early stage. A risk assessment, and any necessary investigations, will then need to be carried out by the developer, and the results evaluated. Mitigation measures will need to be agreed before there is a decision on the particular form of development to be proposed.

POLICY BNE23: CONTAMINATED LAND

Development on land known or likely to be contaminated or affected by adjacent or related contamination must be accompanied by the findings of a detailed site examination to identify contaminants and the risks that these might present to human health and the wider environment. Appropriate measures to reduce, or eliminate, risk to building structures, services and occupiers of the site and of adjoining sites must be agreed. Such remedial measures must be satisfactorily implemented before the development is occupied.

Notifiable Installations

- 3.4.67 Certain sites and pipelines are designated as Notifiable Installations by virtue of the quantities of hazardous substance present. The siting of such installations will be subject to planning controls, for example under the Planning (Hazardous Substance) Regulations 1992 and the Planning (Control of Major Accident

Hazards) Regulations 1999, aimed at keeping these separated from housing and other land uses with which such installation might be incompatible from the safety viewpoint. In accordance with Circular 11/92 the council will consult the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), as appropriate, about the siting of any proposed Notifiable Installations.

- 3.4.68 The area already contains a number of installations handling notifiable substances, including pipelines. These are listed in Appendix 4. Whilst they are subject to stringent controls under existing health and safety legislation, it is considered prudent to control the kinds of development permitted in the vicinity of these installations. For this reason the council has been advised by the HSE of consultation distances for each of these installations. In determining whether or not to grant planning permission for a proposed development within these consultation distances the council will consult the HSE about risks to the proposed development from the Notifiable Installation in accordance with Circular 11/92.

Air Quality

- 3.4.69 Policy BNE2 relates to the localised amenity considerations of airborne emissions. However, some larger scale development proposals may result in harmful airborne emissions which are subject to separate pollution control regimes. In these circumstances the council will consult the pollution control authorities to ascertain whether pollution control criteria can be met.
- 3.4.70 In the case of air pollution, two areas of control exist outside the planning regime. The first is Integrated Pollution Control (IPC) which is regulated by the Environment Agency and concerns industrial processes with the greatest pollution potential. The second is Local Authority Air Pollution Control (LAAPC) which applies to other prescribed processes not covered by IPC. The Environmental Health section of the Development and Environment directorate of Medway Council will therefore be consulted in relation to development proposals subject to LAAPC.

POLICY BNE24: AIR QUALITY

Development likely to result in airborne emissions should provide a full and detailed assessment of the likely impact of these emissions. Development will not be permitted when it is considered that unacceptable effects will be imposed on the health, amenity or natural environment of the surrounding area, taking into account the cumulative effects of other proposed or existing sources of air pollution in the vicinity.

Development in the Countryside

- 3.4.71 As a valuable resource, the countryside needs to be protected for its own sake. The loss of countryside to encroaching urbanising development must, therefore, be resisted. Nevertheless, the countryside supports a range of activities and some necessary change is to be expected as activities develop or decline. In particular, national agricultural policy has altered, land is being taken temporarily out of agricultural production and diversification of rural enterprises may be required to help sustain the economy in rural areas.
- 3.4.72 The agricultural industry is the major user and manager of land in the countryside, but the amount of agricultural land in permanent production has decreased owing to the Common Agricultural Policy. Financial support for agricultural production is falling and farmers increasingly need to diversify their operations. At the same time, some new types of employment can locate in villages. The pleasant rural environment is an attraction, and new enterprises can bring employment and boost the rural economy. Diversification adds to the rural economy's vitality but it needs to be undertaken sensitively to avoid destroying the rural character that attracted it there in the first place. It should be borne in mind that as land use in the countryside diversifies, this need not be at the expense of wildlife. Change can, and should, positively contribute to biodiversity if appropriately planned.
- 3.4.73 A balance needs to be struck between the requirement to protect the countryside (by maintaining and enhancing its environment), and the need to support rural activities and communities. To strike this balance, only certain forms of development will be allowed in the countryside. The categories of allowable development strongly reflect policy RS5 of the structure plan.
- 3.4.74 Outdoor and informal recreational activity in the countryside is one activity for which provision is made. Any built development connected with such a use will need to be ancillary and small in scale, unobtrusively located and not damage rural amenity. Major new sports arenas or stadia would need an exceptional justification to be located in the countryside. Primarily indoor leisure or recreation facilities are not appropriate and, therefore, should be located within, or on the edge of, town centres under the terms of policy L2.
- 3.4.75 Diversification of the rural economy by the introduction of employment or other uses into existing rural buildings is another permissible exception to the usual policy of restraint in the countryside. This is, however, subject to detailed conditions being fulfilled, as set out in policy BNE27 below.
- 3.4.76 There are few significant institutional complexes in rural Medway. The main example is at Chattenden Barracks, although there are other military facilities nearby (for example at Upnor and on the edge of Wainscott). More detail on the approach taken to Chattenden is given in the preamble to policy S14.

- 3.4.77 Existing dwellings in the countryside may be adapted and, if necessary, rebuilt to meet residential needs. However, any proposals must respect their countryside setting, and, in particular, will need to be of an appropriate scale and appearance. Normally any rebuilding or modest extension (or annex) to a dwelling permitted under criterion (vi) of policy BNE25 below would not be expected to result in more than a 25% increase over the original dwelling's floorspace. It is, however, recognised that this is a nominal figure and proposals will be determined on a case-by-case basis. The exact proportion of any net increase in dwelling size that could be allowed is dependent upon the scale, character and location of the dwelling involved. An extension's design, size and position on the existing dwelling and its impact on the character of the surrounding countryside will also be influencing factors.
- 3.4.78 On the rare occasions when an institutional or public use needs to be located in the countryside, a supporting statement from the body involved should accompany any planning application, explaining why the use cannot be situated in an urban area, including an analysis of alternative sites considered, and justifying why the proposed site has been chosen.
- 3.4.79 In the rural area, development comprising jobs, shopping, leisure and services should mainly be focussed in or near to local service centres to help ensure that it is served by public transport and provides some potential for access by walking and cycling. The Local Plan identifies Hoo St. Werburgh as the preferred location for a significant increase in housing due to the presence of a wide range of services and any necessary additional services will also need to be focussed upon this settlement. Development proposed elsewhere in the rural area will need to meet the sustainability access requirements set out in section (i) of policy BNE26.
- 3.4.80 Small scale development will not warrant rejection on highway or access grounds if it gives rise to only modest additional daily vehicle movements and the impact on minor roads would not be significant.

POLICY BNE25: DEVELOPMENT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

Development in the countryside will only be permitted if:

- (i) it maintains, and wherever possible enhances, the character, amenity and functioning of the countryside, including the river environment of the Medway and Thames, it offers a realistic chance of access by a range of transport modes; and is either;***

- (ii) on a site allocated for that use; or***

- (iii) development essentially demanding a countryside location (such as agriculture, forestry, outdoor or informal recreation); or*
- (iv) a re-use or adaptation of an existing building that is, and would continue to be, in keeping with its surroundings in accordance with Policy BNE27; or*
- (v) a re-use or redevelopment of the existing built-up area of a redundant institutional complex or other developed land in lawful use; or*
- (vi) a rebuilding of, or modest extension or annex to, a dwelling; or*
- (vii) a public or institutional use for which the countryside location is justified and which does not result in volumes of traffic that would damage rural amenity.*

The countryside is defined as that land outside the urban and rural settlement boundaries defined on the proposals map.

Diversification of the Rural Economy

- 3.4.81 To support and diversify the rural economy, allowance is made in policy BNE26 for business development through the reuse of existing buildings. Structure plan policy RS4 allows “new build” business development within or on the edge of villages, but the scale, location and design of such development needs careful consideration in order to safeguard their settings. There are already many employment sites within the rural areas, including Grain, Kingsnorth, Hoo, and Halling and there are proposals in this plan for further employment opportunities at some of these locations. Also, with the possible exception of Grain, no part of the countryside is remote from urban areas where the majority of employment opportunities are concentrated. Development away from villages, except in established employment areas, would constitute sporadic development. Development in or on the edge of a village on the other hand would be within walking distance for local people and could, therefore, reduce reliance on the private car for journeys to work.
- 3.4.82 Business development at villages will be permitted provided that it is of a scale appropriate to the size of the village. Development of a larger scale will only be

permitted in exceptional circumstances where justification is given, either because the scheme answers local employment needs or because the development has some clearly identifiable requirement to be situated in a rural settlement. The definition of small scale in these circumstances will depend on the local situation and the impact of development on a particular settlement. A small scale business will be one that can be absorbed and integrated into a settlement in visual, functional and employment terms. The council will, in its assessment of proposals, take into account the physical scale and visual appearance of the development in its proposed setting, any highways implications, community and employment effects and conservation issues.

- 3.4.83 The likely catchment area of business developments can be closely related to their scale. In general terms the larger number of staff employed on site, the greater the need to ensure that the development is accessible by public transport, walking and cycling. This may mean locating larger employment uses in or near to a local service centre.

POLICY BNE26: BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL SETTLEMENTS

Business development proposed for sites within or on the edge of villages and other rural settlements, as defined on the proposals map, will only be permitted when the development is either:

- (i) small in scale, appropriate to the size of the settlement, and without detriment to the amenity, character or setting of the village; or***

- (ii) if not small scale, then justified by an overriding objective to meet local employment needs, essentially requiring a rural settlement location, having minimal detrimental impact on the character and amenity of the settlement, not resulting in volumes of traffic that would significantly damage rural amenity and accessible by public transport, walking and cycling.***

- 3.4.84 The adaptation of existing buildings in the countryside provides opportunities for the introduction of commercial, tourism, recreational and other activities to assist in diversifying the economy. Allowance is made for this type of development to occur under criterion (iv) of policy BNE25.

3.4.85 The introduction of a new activity can often alter the nature of the building and its surroundings. In particular, residential conversions will often involve extensive alterations to the fabric of the building, which is more likely to be detrimental to its character than is required for other changes of use. The associated domestication of the curtilage may also harm the setting of the building. Moreover, conversions to tourism, recreational or other commercial uses would benefit the rural economy more than residential use.

3.4.86 It is important to ensure that normal policies protecting the countryside are not undermined. Consequently, support for the reuse and/or adaptation of buildings, including more modern buildings, will be limited to those which are both of permanent construction and do not need major rebuilding (due to their being in a poor physical condition). When some structural alteration is involved, planning conditions may be used to improve the external appearance of that building and its setting. Normally any extension would not be expected to result in more than a 25% increase over the original building's floorspace. However, this is a nominal figure and proposals will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Many buildings situated in the countryside add to local character because they are of traditional design and use local materials. These features should not be destroyed in any change of use, adaptation or extension. Furthermore, when a change of use of agricultural buildings to non-agricultural purposes is proposed, this is likely to be subject to conditions withdrawing permitted development rights for new farm buildings (in respect of the particular agricultural unit involved) so that a proliferation of farm buildings in a locality can be avoided.

POLICY BNE27: RE-USE OF BUILDINGS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

Development involving the re-use or adaptation of an existing building in the countryside will be permitted provided that:

- (i) the building is of a permanent, substantial construction and will not need major or complete reconstruction; and*
- (ii) the form, bulk and design of the building will be in keeping with its rural surroundings; and*
- (iii) the building's character, any special features of architectural and historic value or its setting are not damaged; and*

- (iv) the nature, scale and intensity of the proposed use is not detrimental to residential and/or rural amenity, or the character of the area; and***
- (v) the development does not lead to a dispersal of activity on a scale likely to prejudice town or village vitality; and***
- (vi) when the re-use is to be residential, then either:***
 - (a) it is demonstrated that every reasonable attempt has been made, without success, to secure a suitable business re-use for that property; or***
 - (b) the residential element is a subordinate part of the scheme for business re-use.***

Farm diversification

- 3.4.87 Reform of the Common Agricultural Policy is bringing farmers closer to the market-place, through farm-based enterprises supplying niche markets such as regional and speciality foods, the larger scale group collaborations such as central fruit and vegetable packing operations and grain stores. These ventures can add value to local produce. Farmers increasingly look to diversify beyond the agricultural industry in order to supplement their incomes. Much farm-based work is now concerned with activities such as woodland management, farm shops, equestrian businesses, sporting facilities, nature trails, craft workshops and holiday accommodation. This provides potential benefits for the local economy and environment. It may be preferable for such development to re-use existing farm buildings, although appropriate new buildings may also be acceptable. The siting of new agricultural buildings should take account of the operational needs of farming.
- 3.4.88 The purpose of farm diversification is to supplement farm income in order to maintain the viability of the agricultural holding as a whole. The non-agricultural activity should remain a part of the farm enterprise so that it acts as a continuous revenue source to sustain the farm in the long term. The relationship of the proposed new activity to the farm's future economic viability and operation will, therefore, need to be demonstrated. The proposed diversification should not be detrimental to rural character or amenities, including the levels of traffic and activity generated.
- 3.4.89 Proposals for diversification should clearly indicate that they will not harm rural character nor be detrimental to local amenity, be of an acceptable scale, and be

accessible to a choice of modes of transport. Proposals will be measured against the provisions of policies BNE25, 26 and 27. Medway Council will seek “farm strategy statements” to accompany applications for farm diversification. These farm strategy statements should describe the farm holding (usually with an accompanying map), set out the existing farm’s activities, and demonstrate how the proposed new activity would integrate with and sustain the agricultural holding in the long term. These statements need not be lengthy or complex documents, but they should provide an informative context in which the planning application can be considered. Planning obligations may be sought in order to ensure that the diversifying activity is kept as a subsidiary part of the farming operation.

POLICY BNE28: FARM DIVERSIFICATION

Development related to farm diversification will be permitted when the development:

- (i) will not harm rural character or amenity; and***
- (ii) helps to maintain agriculture as the main land use on the farm holding; and***
- (iii) the design and scale of development is appropriate to its rural surroundings; and***
- (iv) is sustainable in terms of traffic generation and accessibility to a choice of modes of transport.***

A farm strategy statement will be sought which demonstrates that agriculture will remain the principal land use.

- 3.4.90 Farm shops are one possible form of farm diversification. It is possible for a farm shop to operate without the need for planning permission, provided only a small proportion of the goods sold are not produced on the farm itself. In situations where a farm shop is ancillary to a main farm operation, it can perform a vital function for a rural area, by providing fresh produce, new jobs and services, and helping to diversify the rural economy. However, when a farm shop is no longer ancillary to the farm operation, it requires planning permission. The nature of the activity could result in extra traffic, create harm to amenity, and constitute a significant retail activity in the countryside. This would contradict the principles of sustainability, being located away from centres of population and depending

upon car borne customers. The farm shop may also have an adverse effect upon the viability of nearby village shops, which policy R10 seeks to protect.

POLICY BNE29: FARM SHOPS

Farm shops will be permitted if they:

- (i) help maintain agriculture as the main land use on a farm holding; and**
- (ii) are sympathetic to the rural environment in their scale, design and use of materials, such that they do not detract from the visual amenity of the locality; and**
- (iii) do not undermine the viability of a nearby village shop, and do not result in traffic effects that damage rural amenity or highway safety.**

Metropolitan Green Belt

3.4.91 The Metropolitan Green Belt has its origins in regional planning policy and is designed to resist urban sprawl into the rural area around London. PPG2 gives five purposes for including land in the Green Belt, namely:

- (i) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- (ii) to prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another;
- (iii) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- (iv) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- (v) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

3.4.92 In Kent, the Metropolitan Green Belt has helped to preserve the open countryside between the edge of Greater London and the urban areas of Medway, Maidstone, Tunbridge Wells, Sevenoaks and Tonbridge. At a more local level, it has helped maintain the open area between Medway and Gravesend.

3.4.93 Policy MGB1 of the Kent structure plan defines the general extent of the Green Belt in Kent. It indicates that the Green Belt should extend about 15 miles from built-up Greater London, that is, to the east of Gravesend, to the west of

Rochester and to the west of West Malling. This general extent is well established, remaining unaltered since the 1990 Kent structure plan. National planning guidance has also made it clear that only in exceptional circumstances should a change be made to the general extent of Green Belts. The detailed boundaries of Green Belts are established in local plans.

3.4.94 The council considers that there are currently no exceptional circumstances to justify an alteration to the Metropolitan Green Belt boundary shown in the Medway Towns local plan 1992, and it has therefore been carried forward into this plan.

3.4.95 Within the Metropolitan Green Belt there is a general presumption against what is termed “inappropriate development” in PPG2. There is, therefore, a tighter regime regulating development to augment policy BNE25. It should be remembered, however, that the use of land in Green Belt areas also has a positive role to play in: providing opportunities for public access and recreation; retaining attractive landscapes or improving landscapes near to people’s homes; improving damaged and derelict land near settlements; securing nature conservation interests; and retaining land in agriculture, forestry and related uses. Many of these roles will be secured by the application of other policies in the plan.

POLICY BNE30: METROPOLITAN GREEN BELT

Within the Metropolitan Green Belt, as defined on the proposals map, there is a general presumption against inappropriate development. Development will not be permitted unless the following objectives are fulfilled:

- (i) it is designed and sited so that the open character of the area is maintained; and*
- (ii) it accords with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt.*
- (iii) new buildings will only be permitted for the following purposes:*
 - (a) agriculture or forestry; or*
 - (b) essential small scale facilities for outdoor sport or recreation, for cemeteries or other land uses that fulfil the above objectives; or*

(c) a limited extension, alteration or replacement of an existing building; or

(d) limited infilling within the village boundary of Upper Halling.

(iv) the reuse of buildings will only be permitted if:

(a) the development fulfils the above objectives, taking into account any proposed extension to the buildings and any associated uses of land surrounding the buildings; and

(b) the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction, and are capable of conversion without major or complete reconstruction; and

(c) the form, mass and general design of the buildings are in keeping with their surroundings.

Strategic Gap

3.4.96 Policy MK5 of the structure plan seeks to maintain the separation of Medway from Maidstone and the Medway Gap urban area (including the settlements on the east and west sides of the River Medway). The policy explains that development within the gap should be prevented where that development would significantly expand existing settlements. A “strategic gap” needs to be designated in local plans.

3.4.97 The policy is intended to apply both to the expansion of existing settlements and free standing developments which would erode the open character of the countryside and undermine its function of maintaining the separation of the existing settlements.

3.4.98 The boundaries of the strategic gap have been defined on the proposals map. It extends eastwards from the Metropolitan Green Belt to maintain the separation of Halling, North Halling, Cuxton and Strood from each other on the west bank of the River Medway. East of the river, the strategic gap covers the area immediately south of the Medway urban boundary, encompassing the Nashenden Valley and land immediately south of the M2 motorway in the Brooms Wood area.

POLICY BNE31: STRATEGIC GAP

Within the strategic gap, as defined on the proposals map, development will only be permitted when it does not:

- (i) result in a significant expansion of the built confines of existing settlements; or*
- (ii) significantly degrade the open character or separating function of the strategic gap.*

Landscape

3.4.99 The physical landform of Medway is very varied. The River Medway cuts through the North Downs and flows through the urban area into the expansive waterscape of the Medway estuary. To the north of the River Medway is the low ridge of the Hoo Peninsula, surrounded by flat marshland and the Medway and Thames estuaries. On the southern shore of the Medway estuary is the Gillingham Riverside area. This is a flat area of farmland which is particularly important as it provides a rural setting to both the estuary and the northern edges of Twydall and Rainham. To the south of the urban area are the rolling hills of the North Downs, a renowned landscape feature. There are several “green lungs” that penetrate into the heart of the urban area and other green hillsides and backdrops that perform a significant function, providing an open break in an otherwise heavily built-up, urban area.

3.4.100 A hierarchy of particularly attractive and important landscape areas can be identified. These areas merit specific policies to protect their landscape qualities. That part of the nationally important Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty within Medway covers the land immediately to the south of the urban area. There are landscapes of importance to Kent, namely the Special Landscape Areas identified by the Kent structure plan. There are also locally important landscape areas which are significant for local amenity and environmental quality in and around Medway. Many are important to the setting of the conurbation.

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

3.4.101 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) are designated by the Countryside Commission under the National Parks and Access to Countryside Act 1949 and are formally recognised as areas of national landscape importance. Part of the Kent Downs AONB extends into Medway, immediately to the south of the urban area. With the assistance of Medway Council, a management plan is currently being prepared to further the interests of the Kent Downs AONB as a whole.

3.4.102 Conservation of the natural beauty of the countryside, and of its wildlife and cultural heritage, should be given great weight in planning policies and development control decisions in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Due regard should be had to the economic and social well-being of local communities. Special considerations apply to major development proposals, which are more national than local in character. Major development should not take place in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty save in those exceptional circumstances. Because of the serious impact that major developments may have on these areas, applications for all such developments must be subject to the most rigorous examination. Major developments should be demonstrated to be in the public interest before being allowed to proceed. Consideration of such applications should therefore normally include an assessment of:

- (i) The need for the development, in terms of national considerations, and the impact of permitting it or refusing it upon the local economy;
- (ii) the cost of and scope for developing elsewhere outside the area or meeting the need for it in some other way;
- (iii) any detrimental effect on the environment and the landscape, and the extent to which that should be moderated;
- (iv) any construction or restoration should be carried out to high environmental standards.

POLICY BNE32: AREAS OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY

Development within the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, as defined on the proposals map, will only be permitted when it conserves the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area.

Major development will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances and will be considered against the following criteria:-

- (i) The national need;***
- (ii) Impact on the local economy,***

- (iii) The cost and availability of alternative sites or other means of meeting the need,*
- (iv) Any detrimental impact on the environment or landscape,*
- (v) The environmental standard of the proposed construction or restoration.*

Special Landscape Areas

3.4.103 Attractive landscapes of countywide significance are classified as Special Landscape Areas (SLAs) under policy ENV4 of the Kent structure plan. In Medway there are two SLAs, the North Downs and the North Kent Marshes, with the former being contiguous with the Kent Downs AONB. The council will aim to protect the natural beauty of these areas. Development which undermines this aim will only be considered if significant social or economic benefits would result. These social or economic benefits would be expected to have a countywide significance.

POLICY BNE33: SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREAS

Development within the North Downs and the North Kent Marshes special landscape areas, as defined on the proposals map, will only be permitted if:

- (i) it conserves and enhances the natural beauty of the area's landscape; or*
- (ii) the economic or social benefits are so important that they outweigh the county priority to conserve the natural beauty of the area's landscape.*

Areas of Local Landscape Importance

3.4.104 There are several areas of landscape that enhance local amenity and environmental quality, providing an attractive setting to the urban area and surrounding villages. These locally significant landscapes are shown on the proposals map as Areas of Local Landscape Importance (ALLIs). Some of these areas form part of the green hillsides and backdrops of the urban area, which are recognised in the Thames Gateway Planning Framework as a particularly important environmental resource.

3.4.105 These ALLIs are significant not only for their landscape importance, but also for other important functions:

- (i) As green lungs and buffers, helping to maintain the individual identity of urban neighbourhoods and rural communities;
- (ii) As green corridors (or links) for the community to reach the wider countryside;
- (iii) As edge or “fringe” land, needing protection from the pressures of urban sprawl; and
- (iv) As habitats for wildlife and corridors, along which wildlife from the wider countryside can reach the urban environment.

3.4.106 There is therefore a need to protect the landscape character and functions of each of the designated ALLIs.

3.4.107 Justification for designating each ALLI is set out below. This provides guidance on the landscape features and functions that the council will aim to protect. The council is in the process of producing a comprehensive landscape and urban design framework (see policy S4) which will give further details on the landscape features and character of the ALLIs:

(i) **HOGMARSH VALLAY**

Location and character

Undulating, open farm land and distinctive wooded hilltops extending north from Frindsbury and Medway City Estate to Chattenden.

Function

Forms a green buffer separating, and providing an attractive green backdrop for the built-up areas of Medway City Estate, Frindsbury, Wainscott, Lower and Upper Upnor and Chattenden.

Provides an attractive setting for a major gateway within the borough – the Medway Towns Northern Relief Road, contributing towards a positive image of Medway.

Connects all ALLIs at Chattenden Ridge, Deangate Ridge and Cockham Farm Ridge.

Provides an attractive setting for Manor Farm and Upnor conservation areas.

(ii) **CHATTENDEN RIDGE**

Location and character

Prominent wooded ridge extending NE from Chattenden and Cliffe Woods towards High Halstow.

Function

An important landscape feature forming the backbone of the Hoo Peninsula. Attractive setting to the rural settlements (Cliffe Woods and High Halstow) and countryside of the Hoo Peninsula.

Forms an attractive screen to the RSME training areas.

(iii) **DEANGATE RIDGE**

Location and character

High Ridge with a diverse landscape of woodland, agriculture, orchards and golf course, adjacent to the A228 near Hoo St Werburgh.

Function

Separates and screens RSME training areas from Hoo St Werburgh.

Fulfils a significant recreational and visual amenity role.

Creates an attractive setting for the A228.
Important to the setting of any possible future development of the RSME site.

(iv) **COCKHAM FARM RIDGE**

Location and character

Prominent wooded ridge extending east from Lower Upnor to Hoo St Werburgh along the north shore of the River Medway, and rolling agricultural landscape sloping gently towards Hoo St Werburgh.

Function

Forms a green, elevated backdrop to Chattenden, Hoo St Werburgh, Hoo Marina and River Medway when viewed from Chatham Maritime.

Separates and strengthens the individual identities of Upnor, Chattenden, Hoo St Werburgh and Hoo Marina.

Forms the northern shoreline and an attractive green backdrop to the river and the urban area.

Only stretch of wooded shoreline to River Medway within borough.

(v) **DILLYWOOD LANE**

Location and character

A gently undulating, visually diverse area of orchards and mixed farmland. Extends from the NW edge of Strood and Wainscott to the borough boundary.

Function

Creates an attractive, rural setting to the Medway Towns Northern Relief Road, contributing to the positive image of the borough.

Connects to the South East of Higham Upshire ALLI in Gravesham.

Constitutes an established rural landscape in close proximity to a large urban area.

Helps to maintain separate identity of Higham.

(vi) **HALLING COMMON**

Landscape and character

Area of flat marshland abutting Halling village, highly visible from the slopes of the Medway valley.

Function

Important to the rural landscape setting of Halling (and Wouldham on the other side of the River Medway in Tonbridge and Malling borough).

Connects to the similar landscape of Wouldham Marshes ALLI in Tonbridge and Malling borough.

Defines edge of Halling preventing urban sprawl, and encroachment towards riverbank.

Contributes to attractive views from the railway and river.

(vii) **CUXTON BRICKFIELDS**

Location and character

Visually prominent area rising from marshes along River Medway up to the Kent Downs AONB. Includes former Cuxton Chalk Pits 1 and 2 now landscaped.

Adjacent land affected by M2/CTRL works will take time to recover, so protection of this landscape is important.

Function

Maintains the separation between Strood and Cuxton, helping to retain individual identity.

Contributes towards the setting of Cuxton Village.

Extremely prominent from A228, M2, CTRL, Medway valley railway and the river – when approaching or passing through the borough. Forms a gateway to the urban area to be preserved and enhanced. For

ms a green backdrop to Medway Valley Park from across the river in Borstal and Rochester.

Creates a visual link and balance with the Kent Downs AONB on the other side of the river.

(viii) **NASHENDEN VALLEY**

Location and character

Prominent, steeply sloping chalk scarp rising from M2 towards Borstal.

Function

An important local landscape feature visible from M2 and CTRL.

Provides attractive, rural setting to the M2.

Forms a visual connection with southern side of valley, within Kent Downs AONB.

Provides open setting to Fort Borstal Scheduled Ancient Monument.

Forms a green backdrop to the urban area.

(ix) **TADDINGTON WOOD and BEECHEN BANK**

Location and character

Attractive, well wooded valley areas extending into Walderslade and Lordswood.

Function

Provide valuable green breaks in the surrounding urban development.

Conceal and provide a setting for urban development at Walderslade and Lordswood.

Beechen Bank connects to an ALLI in Maidstone borough.

(x) **HORSTED VALLEY**

Location and character

Finger of open space extending from A229 close to Rochester Airport, to Luton, including Coney and Daisy Banks.

Function

Provides a valuable open space close to a large urban area.

Defines urban areas, maintaining identities of separate communities.

Proves a green backdrop to SE side of valley which is generally built-up (Wayfield Estate).

Provides open setting to Fort Horsted and Luton Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

(xi) **CAPSTONE, DARLAND and ELM COURT**

Location and character

A substantial tract of undeveloped land extending from the North Downs as a green wedge into the heart of the urban area.

Function

Particularly attractive and important landscape feature defining urban areas, and preventing coalescence of Lordswood/ Princes Park and Hempstead.

Contributes significantly to informal open space needs of the communities which adjoin it.

Provides a rural landscape in close proximity to the urban area, bringing the countryside into the town.

Provides a wider landscape setting for Capstone Farm Country Park.

Contributes to the setting of the Kent Downs AONB to the south and the M2 motorway.

(xii) **MEIRSCOURT/MERESBOROUGH**

Location and character

Area of traditional Kentish farm landscape with country lanes on the eastern periphery of the borough.

Function

It is important as a buffer zone, helping to counteract outward pressure of urban sprawl and maintaining the separation of settlements. It is a continuation of adjacent areas in Swale Borough which are subject to a

settlement separation policy in the Swale Borough Local Plan. ALLI designation is consistent with Kent Structure Plan policy NK2, restricting the outward expansion of the urban area onto fresh land east of Gillingham, and with para. 6.15 of RPG9a, which specifically mentions the countryside north and east of Gillingham as being particularly important in the context of urban fringe land providing valuable countryside and recreation opportunities.

(xiii) **GILLINGHAM RIVERSIDE**

Location and character

Rural landscape of orchards and arable fields with country lanes. Situated to the north of Rainham and Twydall, adjacent to the River Medway. Medway Towns Northern Relief Road forms the western boundary.

Function

Forms an important green buffer separating the built-up areas of Twydall and Rainham from areas of international importance for nature conservation and recreation along the Medway estuary.

Enhances the setting of the Medway Towns Northern Ring Road on the western boundary, and allows attractive views from the river and railway.

Provides residents within an extensive urban area with access to an attractive, rural landscape.

Provides an attractive setting to the Lower Rainham and Lower Twydall conservation areas.

Contains a number of orchards, mature hedgerows and farm groups complementing and contributing to the Riverside Country Park.

Forms a green backdrop when viewed from the Medway Estuary.

(xiv) **GREAT AND LOWER LINES**

Location and character

Prominent open areas of historical interest, associated with fortifications between Gillingham, Chatham and Brompton.

Function

Provide valuable open space in contrast to heavily built-up areas around them, with fine views over Strood, Rochester and Chatham.

Contributes to the setting of Brompton conservation area.

Defines the western edge of Gillingham, maintaining the separate identities of Gillingham and Brompton.

Great Lines forms an attractive green backdrop to Chatham town centre.

(xv) **CLIFFE POOLS AND PITS**

Location and character

Distinctive, complex landscape of man-made lagoons and chalk pits west of Cliffe. The area is gradually reverting to a more natural appearance with well vegetated margins, spits and islands.

Function

Connects the extensive North Kent Marshes Special Landscape Area with the North Kent Marshes ALLI in Gravesham.

Industrial activities remain but the role of the ALLI is to inhibit further destruction of the landscape, protect the natural recovery that has occurred, and encouraged further positive efforts to restore the landscape.

Complements the proposals for a Conservation Park within the area.

(xvi) **BROOMS WOOD**

Location and character

Belt of remnant ancient woodland lying immediately south of Parkwood and Rainham, next to the M2.

Function

Provides a buffer and attractive screen to the M2 from adjacent residential areas.

Forms an attractive setting to the motorway as it passes through the borough, and reduces its impact on the countryside.
Forms an important visual link with blocks of woodland on the other side of the M2 (within the Kent Downs AONB).

POLICY BNE34: AREAS OF LOCAL LANDSCAPE IMPORTANCE

Within the Areas of Local Landscape Importance defined on the Proposals Map, development will only be permitted if:

- (i) it does not materially harm the landscape character and function of the area; or***
- (ii) the economic and social benefits are so important that they outweigh the local priority to conserve the area's landscape.***

Development within an Area of Local Landscape importance should be sited, designed and landscaped to minimise harm to the area's landscape character and function.

Nature Conservation

- 3.4.108 Medway contains an outstanding wildlife resource that has an important role to play in maintaining biodiversity. Biodiversity is the range in variation of living species and their habitats, and this extends from the local level up to the global scale. It is Government policy that biodiversity be conserved for its own sake as detailed in the "UK Biodiversity Action Plan". Indeed, the *Kent Biodiversity Action Plan* has been drawn up to reflect these ideals and the *Kent Wildlife Habitat Survey* reveals that 10,960 hectares (53.4%) of Medway is semi-natural habitat.
- 3.4.109 Medway Council takes very seriously its responsibility to conserve wildlife resources. A wildlife and countryside strategy is being prepared which will be used as a basis for the management of the natural environment, supplementing the local plan, and including measures to actively manage sites to improve their wildlife interest. Furthermore, in certain instances, positive management of areas can be achieved through the use of planning obligations in association with development proposals.

Critical Nature Conservation Sites

- 3.4.110 The nature conservation sites protected under policy BNE36 represent some of the most valuable wildlife habitat in the country, with much of it being of acknowledged or potential international importance. The nature conservation sites safeguarded by policy BNE37 are of at least local significance for the Medway area, and most are of strategic importance for Kent. The protection of these sites, with the habitat and the wildlife they include, is held to be critical. This is because the habitat of these sites, and the associated wildlife, are highly valued and will usually prove to be irreplaceable if lost to development. PPG12 indicates that where an environmental impact may be irreversible or very difficult to undo, this should be treated with particular care in the preparation of development plans, because future generations may value the lost environmental resource more than the development that replaced it.
- 3.4.111 It is clearly desirable that development should avoid causing environmental damage to these recognised nature conservation sites, and it is the intention to provide strong planning policy safeguards. In particular, those nature conservation sites of strategic, national or international importance should be afforded long term protection, meaning that planning policy should work to protect them beyond the local plan period. When a development is exceptionally justified (so that it is to be permitted despite it having a detrimental impact on the protected interests), then environmental compensatory measures are required. These compensatory measures will need to be of a scale and quality to reflect the high and critical value of those nature conservation resources that would be lost.
- 3.4.112 Overall, the general wildlife habitats and features of the area are considered to comprise a “constant natural asset” that should be maintained in order to safeguard biodiversity. Again, it is desirable to avoid or minimise losses of these types of wildlife resources, but if losses are unavoidable, compensatory measures should seek to maintain the overall stock of affected species or habitats.
- 3.4.113 Compensatory measures should make good the loss of an environmental feature by replacing it with a feature of at least equivalent value. Ideally, like should be replaced with like. For example, destruction of a pond should be compensated for by providing another pond of at least the same size in a locality near to the original. It would normally be expected that compensatory measures would be undertaken within, or immediately adjoining, the development proposal. However, where this is not practicable, or not desirable, mitigation measures should be implemented on alternative land in the vicinity (that is either in the control of the applicant, or by agreement with another party). The compensatory measures should aim to recreate the function of the ecological feature being lost and will involve an agreement to a defined management regime.

Sites of International Nature Conservation Importance

- 3.4.114 Internationally important nature conservation sites are:

- (i) the Medway Estuary and Marshes, which are a classified Special Protection Area (SPA) and a listed Ramsar site; and
- (ii) the marsh land and mud flats on the north shore of the Hoo Peninsula, which are part of the Thames Estuary and Marshes SPA and Ramsar site.

3.4.115 The First Secretary of State is obliged to classify SPAs under the European Union Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds and to list Ramsar sites under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance. The designation process can take several years and PPG9 advises that a precautionary approach should be applied in the interim, whereby potential SPAs are treated as if they are designated when development proposals that would affect them are under consideration. Policy BNE36 applies such a precautionary approach to potential SPAs and, with policy BNE37, extends this precautionary approach to other sites of substantial nature conservation interest put forward during the lifetime of the plan.

3.4.116 The environmental effects of any proposed development in, or close to, a SPA or Ramsar site will be subject to the most rigorous examination. Environmental impact statements will be required to accompany planning applications that could affect internationally important nature conservation sites. The Secretary of State will normally call-in for his own determination applications which are likely to significantly affect such sites.

3.4.117 A further type of site of international nature conservation importance is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) designated under the Habitats Directive. Currently there are no designated or candidate SACs in the area, but policy BNE36 will ensure that any subsequently selected sites enjoy protection.

Sites of National Nature Conservation Importance

3.4.118 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) are notified by English Nature. Biological SSSIs form a national series of sites for wildlife conservation. Some SSSIs are also designated as National Nature Reserves, whilst others are identified as key sites of national importance in the nature conservation review and the geological conservation review published by English Nature.

3.4.119 There are eight SSSIs in Medway:

- (i) Medway Estuary and Marshes;
- (ii) South Thames Estuary and Marshes;
- (iii) Northward Hill;
- (iv) Dalham Farm;
- (v) Tower Hill to Cockham Wood;
- (vi) Chattenden Wood;

- (vii) Cobham Wood;
- (viii) Halling to Trottiscliffe Escarpment.

3.4.120 The SSSIs mentioned at (i), (ii), (vii) and (viii) extend beyond Medway. Northward Hill is also a National Nature Reserve. The national importance of SSSIs means that development proposals in, or likely to affect them, will be subject to Environmental Assessment.

Sites of Local Nature Conservation Interest

3.4.121 While SPAs, Ramsar sites and SSSIs represent internationally and nationally important wildlife sites, there are many other sites that need protection if the diversity of habitats and species in Kent is to be maintained. Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCIs) have been identified by the Kent Wildlife Trust as being of county-wide importance. In addition, local authorities may designate Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) under Section 21 of the National Parks and Access to Countryside Act 1949. LNRs recognise a site's local significance in contributing to nature conservation and to opportunities for the public to see, learn about and enjoy wildlife.

3.4.122 Both SNCIs and LNRs are listed below. The Kent Wildlife Trust has advised Medway Council that all these SNCIs are of countywide/strategic importance. In some instances SNCIs and LNRs cover the same site. Those sites marked * are owned by Medway Council.

Sites of Nature Conservation Interest:

- (i) Grain Pit
- (ii) South Hill and Houlder Quarry;
- (iii) River Medway and Marshes, Wouldham;
- (iv) Cuxton Wood (Mill Wood)*;
- (v) Cuxton Pit;
- (vi) River Medway between Cuxton and Temple Marsh (*part);
- (vii) Bridge Woods, Burham;
- (viii) Luton Banks*;
- (ix) Hook Wood, Walderslade*;
- (x) Great Lines*;
- (xi) Darland Banks*;
- (xii) Ambley and East Hoath Woods (*part);
- (xiii) Grove Wood;

- (xiv) South Wood*;
- (xv) Berengrave Pit*;
- (xvi) Yaugher Woods
- (xvii) Princes Avenue

Local Nature Reserves:

- (i) Baty's Marsh*;
- (ii) Yantlet Creek*;
- (iii) South Wood*;
- (iv) Berengrave Chalk Pit*;
- (v) Rainham Dock (east)*;
- (vi) Darland/Ambley Wood*;
- (vii) Darland Banks*;
- (viii) Darland Banks* (proposed extension);
- (xiv) Cuxton Wood (Mill Wood)* (proposed);
- (x) Ridgeway Banks* (proposed);
- (xi) Dargets Wood (Beechen Bank)* (proposed);
- (xii) Sindal's Shaw* (proposed);
- (xiii) Hook Wood* (proposed);
- (xiv) East Hoath Wood (proposed);
- (xv) Motney Marshes* (proposed);
- (xvi) Motney Reedbeds* (proposed);
- (xvii) Nor Marsh* (proposed);
- (xviii) Foxburrow Wood* (proposed);
- (xix) Levan Strice* (proposed);
- (xx) Chestnut Wood* (proposed).

Any new area subsequently proposed or confirmed for these site designations will be subject to Policy BNE37 pending detailed consideration of the site through public consultation when the local plan undergoes review.

POLICY BNE35: INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL NATURE CONSERVATION SITES

International and National Nature Conservation Sites, as defined on the proposals map, will be given long term protection:

- (i) classified and potential Special Protection Areas (SPAS);*
- (ii) listed and proposed Ramsar sites;*
- (iii) National Nature Reserves;*
- (iv) Sites of Special Scientific Interest.*

Any new areas subsequently proposed or confirmed for these designations will also be subject to this policy provision, as would any subsequent proposed or designated Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

Development that would materially harm, directly or indirectly, the scientific or wildlife interest of these sites will not be permitted unless the development is connected with, or necessary to, the management of the site's wildlife interest.

Development for which there is an overriding need will exceptionally be permitted if no reasonable alternative site is (or is likely to be) available. The overriding need will be judged against the national and/or international ecological importance of the affected nature conservation designation.

When a Special Protection Area or Special Area of Conservation is affected this need must comprise imperative reasons of overriding public interest. If the affected Special Protection Area or Special Area of Conservation hosts a priority habitat or species, then the

need must relate to human health, public safety or beneficial consequences of primary importance to the environment, or to other imperative reasons of public interest established by the European Commission. In such exceptional circumstances, the detrimental impact upon the scientific or wildlife interest should be minimised and appropriate compensatory measures will be required.

POLICY BNE36: STRATEGIC AND LOCAL NATURE CONSERVATION SITES

Strategic and Local Nature Conservation Sites, as defined on the proposals map, will be given long term protection:

- (i) Sites of Nature Conservation Interest;*
- (ii) Designated and proposed Local Nature Reserves.*

Development that would materially harm, directly or indirectly, the scientific or wildlife interest of these sites will not be permitted unless the development is connected with, or necessary to, the management of the site's wildlife interest.

Development for which there is an overriding need will exceptionally be permitted if no reasonable alternative site is (or is likely to be) available. The overriding need will be judged against the strategic and/or local importance of the affected nature conservation designation. In such exceptional circumstances, the detrimental impact upon the scientific or wildlife interest should be minimised and appropriate compensatory measures will be required.

Nature Conservation outside Designated Sites

- 3.4.123 The wildlife heritage of Medway extends beyond the various designated nature conservation sites mentioned above. These undesignated habitats can

sometimes contain statutorily protected or rare wildlife species. Undesignated wildlife habitats can also be important to human enjoyment and people's sense of well-being. They often bring natural qualities into man-made, urban and otherwise harsh environments.

3.4.124 Protection of undesignated habitats is important to maintain the constant natural capital of the area. Undesignated habitats are significant for maintaining biodiversity (that is, they can represent green corridors or stepping stones for migration, dispersal and exchange of genetic material). Examples of features of the landscape which are of major importance for wild flora and fauna are:

- (i) hedgerows, streams and ditches between fields;
- (ii) uncultivated field margins, linear tree belts, shelter belts and plantations;
- (iii) ancient woodlands and semi-natural woodlands;
- (iv) the Estuary and River Medway, including associated inter-tidal areas and banks;
- (v) ponds and lakes;
- (vi) buildings inhabited by protected species

3.4.125 The Kent Wildlife Habitat Survey is a valuable source of information on types of habitats, many of which are undesignated. Three types of undesignated habitat are particularly important: the remaining areas of ancient semi-natural woodland; the inter-tidal habitats of the River Medway and Medway's last remaining areas of calcareous (chalk) grassland. The nature of these habitats are such that they are virtually irreplaceable. In addition, on a national level, these three habitats have become important because of their increasing rarity.

3.4.126 In accordance with policy BNE6, Medway Council will seek the enhancement and incorporation of new wildlife resources and habitat management within new developments.

POLICY BNE37: WILDLIFE HABITATS

Development that would cause a loss, directly or indirectly, of important wildlife habitats or features not protected by policies BNE35 and BNE36 will not be permitted, unless:

- (i) there is an overriding need for the development that outweighs the importance of these wildlife resources; and***

- (ii) no reasonable alternative site is (or is likely to be) available if ancient woodland, inter-tidal habitats and calcareous (chalk) grassland would be lost; and*
- (iii) the development is designed to minimise the loss involved; and*
- (iv) appropriate compensatory measures are provided.*

Wildlife Corridors and Stepping Stones

- 3.4.127 When development occurs, there may well be an opportunity to enhance the network of wildlife habitats, so that green corridors and stepping stones for species migration, dispersal and genetic exchange are improved, helping to maintain and improve biodiversity. This may be possible even within the urban area, by creating habitat links/stepping stones from the wider countryside and from those protected green spaces within the urban area (e.g. Areas of Local Landscape Importance). Such green corridors/stepping stones could accompany or be a part of routeways for new cycleways and footways created in the interests of sustainable transport.
- 3.4.128 The council will seek to further these wildlife interests (augmenting the provisions of policy BNE6) although it is recognised that not all new development will be able to provide habitats if the provision would be impracticable or add nothing to biodiversity. The council will prepare supplementary planning guidance to identify where such wildlife corridors and stepping stones exist and to demonstrate where (and how) enhancement can be made.

POLICY BNE38: WILDLIFE CORRIDORS AND STEPPING STONES

Development should, wherever practical, make provision for wild life habitats, as part of a network of wildlife corridors or stepping stones.

Protection of Species

- 3.4.129 Certain plant and animal species are protected under statutes and Government regulations(e.g. *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, Protection of Badgers Act 1992 and the Habitats Regulations 1994*). The presence of such protected species is a material consideration in the assessment of development proposals. Protected species are not restricted to designated nature conservation sites. Their occurrence can be unpredictable as their population and breeding, roosting

or feeding locations often change. Thus, the characteristics of protected species mean that it is also necessary to take account of their protection in undesignated sites. It will therefore be important to carry out survey work where appropriate to establish the presence of protected species, including the effect of seasonal factors on their presence. Advice on protected species is available through local offices of English Nature.

- 3.4.130 Protection in situ of protected species will be the primary aim, with impacts mitigated through design and/or mitigation. Translocation of species to another site, where practicable, will only be considered as a last resort.

POLICY BNE39: PROTECTED SPECIES

Development will not be permitted if statutorily protected species and/or their habitat will be harmed.

Conditions will be attached, and/or obligations sought, to ensure that protected species and/or their habitats are safeguarded and maintained.

Conservation Parks

- 3.4.131 *The Thames Gateway Planning Framework (RPG9a)* stresses that the estuarine marshes of the Thames downstream of Gravesend and those of the Medway are a key environmental asset, and points to the potential of “conservation parks”. Such conservation parks could improve public access to, and knowledge of, the nature conservation resources of the marshes, fostering conservation and enhancement jointly with recreation and “green tourism”. People could be attracted to these areas because of their wildlife interest, but appropriate management would need to ensure that the number of visitors did not cause damage. Ideally, visitors should be encouraged to travel to the area by means other than the private car.
- 3.4.132 The opportunity for such a conservation park has been identified on land to the west and north-west of Cliffe. Investigations and negotiations have begun with landowners and interested groups to establish the conservation park, and there is the need to protect the area from development that would preclude or damage the potential of the park. This designation will be underpinned by policy BNE34 which designates the area as an Area of Local Landscape Importance (see paragraph 3.4.107, item (xv)). The conservation park will need to achieve a proper balance between nature conservation, recreation, historic and tourism interests. It has the potential to be a “flagship”, quality scheme within Thames Gateway.

POLICY BNE40: CLIFFE CONSERVATION PARK

Development that would prejudice the implementation of the proposed conservation park near Cliffe, as defined on the proposals map, will not be permitted.

Trees and Woodlands

- 3.4.133 Individual trees, groups of trees and woodlands are features of the natural environment that can make a valuable contribution to the visual character of urban and rural landscapes. They also serve ecological functions: they are important for biodiversity and recirculate soil nutrients. Trees have a role in reducing air pollution by the removal of carbon dioxide and by filtering airborne particulates, such as dust. The provision of shade and shelter is a further benefit.
- 3.4.134 There is a recognised need to retain both individual and small groups of trees that contribute to the character of the urban townscape. Similarly, it is necessary to protect copses and woodland areas; many of these are included in the Areas of Local Landscape Importance protected by policy BNE34. Areas of ancient woodland in particular will have significant nature conservation interest and are protected by either policies BNE35 and BNE36, if they are recognised nature conservation sites, or by policy BNE37 elsewhere.
- 3.4.135 Medway has in the past, suffered substantial losses of trees and woodlands in order to accommodate development. The council intends to prevent any significant further loss and will seek to increase tree cover wherever possible. This will be achieved by the protection of existing trees and woodlands, by requiring additional tree planting in connection with development proposals and by supporting initiatives for community forests or woodlands.

Tree Preservation Orders

- 3.4.136 The council has powers to protect individual trees, groups of trees or woodlands and to control works to those trees, including felling. Many trees and woodlands are already protected by such Tree Preservation Orders.
- 3.4.137 Trees above a specified size that are situated within Conservation Areas also have a degree of protection, in that the council must be given 6 weeks notice of any intended works. This enables the council to serve Tree Preservation Orders if it considers it expedient to do so.

POLICY BNE41: TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS

Tree Preservation Orders will be used to protect trees, groups of trees and woodlands of important public amenity value. In considering applications for works to protected trees, regard will be had to:

- (i) the future health and appearance of the trees and woodlands;*
- (ii) where appropriate, requiring replacement planting of felled trees, the planting of an increased number of trees and, ensuring that the planting is incorporated in, and/or adjacent to, the site where the trees are to be felled; and*
- (iii) resisting applications for clear felling of woodland and requiring recoppicing or other woodland management to be carried out in accordance with good arboricultural practice.*

Hedgerows

- 3.4.138 Under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997, it is against the law to remove certain countryside hedgerows without permission. A person who wishes to remove, either entirely or in part, one or several hedgerows that meet the criteria set out in the Regulations, must first notify the council. Hedgerow removal does not simply mean the deliberate grubbing out of hedgerows, but also includes other acts that result in the destruction of hedgerows. The regulations do not apply to garden hedges, that is hedgerows within or marking a boundary of the curtilage of a dwelling house.
- 3.4.139 Removal of hedgerows is permitted under the Regulations if it is required to implement development for which planning permission has been granted, or is deemed to have been granted, except for most instances of “permitted development rights” under the Town & Country Planning General Permitted Development Order 1995.
- 3.4.140 The Regulations presume in favour of protecting and retaining important hedgerows, stating that the council should issue a Hedgerow Retention Notice unless it is satisfied that there are particular circumstances to justify the hedgerow’s removal. Criteria for determining whether a hedgerow is important are laid out in the Regulations.

POLICY BNE42: HEDGEROW RETENTION

Important hedgerows will be retained and protected.

Trees on Development Sites

- 3.4.141 The retention of trees and other natural features, such as hedgerows, as part of development proposals is also covered by the landscape design policy BNE6. Development proposals on sites containing trees will often need to be subject to negotiation to ensure that tree loss is minimised, that trees of particularly important amenity value are retained and that additional tree planting is achievable. This may need to include consideration of the siting and design of buildings, hardstandings, drainage runs, roads and footways. This is in order to avoid damage to the trees and the likelihood of subsequent requests for the removal of trees intended for long term retention, on the basis that buildings may be too close to them.
- 3.4.142 Accurate tree surveys will in most instances need to be submitted by applicants. The council will require any tree loss to be compensated by, for example, the planting of additional trees of appropriate species and of semi-mature size (in cases where a mature tree is lost). If necessary, compensatory planting may take the form of commuted payments to facilitate tree planting or community woodland schemes elsewhere in Medway. All works will be required to conform to the relevant British Standards.

POLICY BNE43: TREES ON DEVELOPMENT SITES

Development should seek to retain trees, woodlands, hedgerows and other landscape features that provide a valuable contribution to local character.

Community Forests and Woodlands

- 3.4.143 Community forests and woodlands offer valuable opportunities for improving the environment around towns, by upgrading the landscape and providing for recreation and wildlife. They also enable local communities to have “ownership” by taking responsibility for their maintenance. Their value to communities will be greatest when they adjoin the conurbation, particularly when associated with significant new development, and where they help to restore areas of damaged land. Policy ENV8 of the Kent structure plan states that the designation of community forests and woodlands will be investigated through local plans and, particularly pursued in Thames Gateway. A number of potential community woodland sites have been identified within the local plan:
- (i) Grain Foreshore, Grain;

- (ii) Avery Way, Allhallows;
- (iii) Cuxton Wood (Mill Wood), Cuxton;
- (iv) Six Acre Wood, Cuxton;
- (v) May's Wood, Cuxton;
- (vi) Ridgeway Bank, Chatham;
- (vii) Bishops Hoath Wood, Chatham;
- (viii) Chestnut Wood, Chatham;
- (ix) Dargets Wood, Chatham;
- (x) Sindal's Shaw, Chatham;
- (xi) Hall Wood, Chatham;
- (xii) Ballens Rough, Chatham;
- (xiii) Hook Wood, Chatham;
- (xiv) Bloors Lane Community Woodland, Rainham;
- (xv) Centenary Wood, Hoo St. Werburgh

POLICY BNE44: COMMUNITY WOODLANDS

Development that would prejudice the implementation of the proposed community woodlands, as defined on the proposals map, will not be permitted.

The Coast

- 3.4.144 The coast is an important national resource. A range of economic and social activities are dependent upon having a coastal location, yet the coast often has landscape, wildlife and other attributes that merit protection from development. The coastline is dynamic, changing through erosion, deposition and flooding.
- 3.4.145 Within Medway the coast has an estuarine character of tidal waters regularly inundating large expanses of mud flats and salt marsh, with surrounding, flat, grazing marshland. Some areas of the coastline have been developed. For example, there are the commercial developments at Grain and Kingsnorth, and the urban area has a lengthy, developed river frontage.
- 3.4.146 The undeveloped coast should not be used to accommodate new development that could be as well as or better situated inland or in existing developed areas. Structure plan policy ENV10 endorses this approach, seeking to protect the scenic, heritage and scientific value of the undeveloped coast.

- 3.4.147 The council feels that new port development and associated infrastructure is inappropriate and unnecessary on the undeveloped coast. Where new development requires a coastal location, the developed coast will provide the best option.
- 3.4.148 Flood defences are likely to be under increasing pressure from sea level rise, due to climate change and the geological sinking of the south east of England. The Environment Agency is considering the need to confirm the extent of flood risk areas in conjunction with a review of the Thames and Medway tidal defences. In the interim, a precautionary approach is justified, restricting development along the undeveloped coast. It is considered that new development along the undeveloped coast should not be permitted if it would need expensive engineering works to protect the development from the effects of flooding or erosion by the sea. Public access to this coast should be a basic principle, unless it can be demonstrated that it would be impracticable or damaging to nature conservation interests. In areas of possible conflict between public access to the coast and the nature conservation interest, management measures (such as zoning and ranger services) may be appropriate, to enable some limited access to the coastline.
- 3.4.149 The coastal zone extends seaward and landward of the coastline. The landward extent of the coastal zone is influenced by:
- (i) the landward extent of direct maritime influences and coast-related activities (e.g. ports, marinas and built development that restricts coastal influences);
 - (ii) the limits of tidal erosion, deposition and potential flooding;
 - (iii) the extent of low lying land and inter-tidal areas;
 - (iv) visibility from the coast;
 - (v) the extent of coastal ecological and landscape interests;
- 3.4.150 Control for planning purposes is limited to land above the mean low water mark (MLWM). Various other regulatory schemes control what occurs below the MLWM. Estuary Management Plans (EMPs) are in preparation for the Thames and Medway/Swale. These EMPs are non-statutory and can transcend the MLWM regulatory boundary. They are being prepared jointly by a range of organisations interested in, and having influence upon, the coastal environment. The intention is to establish a framework for co-operation and management, to address issues and conflicts affecting the estuaries. Other relevant initiatives that will be developed for this area include a Flood Defence Strategy and a Coastal Habitat Management Plan (ChaMP).

POLICY BNE45: UNDEVELOPED COAST

Development will be permitted in and alongside the undeveloped coast, as defined on the proposals map, only if:

- (i) a coastal location is essential and no suitable alternative site exists along the developed coast; and*
- (ii) the scenic, heritage or scientific value of the undeveloped coast is maintained and, where consistent with this and where practicable, public access to the coast is improved; and*
- (iii) the development is not likely to be at risk from flooding or coastal erosion to the extent that it would require defence works for its safety and protection.*

POLICY BNE46: DEVELOPED COAST

Development will be permitted in and alongside the developed coast, as defined on the proposals map, when:

- (i) the appearance and environment of the coast is improved; and*
- (ii) coastal erosion will not threaten any new building proposed as part of the development; and*
- (iii) public access to the coast is improved, where practicable and whenever appropriate; and*
- (iii) the need for the coastal location is justified when the development is outside existing settlement boundaries and Economic Development Areas.*

Rural Lanes

- 3.4.151 The structure plan highlights the rich heritage of ancient rural lanes in Kent, some of which date back to Medieval, Saxon and even pre-historic times. Structure plan policy ENV13 both protects, and seeks enhancement of, the character of these lanes. The structure plan suggests that such lanes be identified in local plans. Studies in Medway have identified those rural lanes with the highest physical landscape, amenity, nature conservation and historic value. The council will seek to protect these highest quality lanes and also afford the more general protection of structure plan policy ENV13 to all rural lanes in the area (reflecting recommendations made in the Rural Lane Studies that have been undertaken).

POLICY BNE47: RURAL LANES

Development served by, and/or affecting, the important rural lanes defined on the proposals map will only be permitted where there is no adverse effect upon the value of the lane in terms of its landscape, amenity, nature conservation, historic or archaeological importance.

Where alterations to the carriageway definition or boundaries of rural lanes is necessary, the use of natural, locally distinctive materials such as grass banks, stone setts and hedging will be required. The use of urbanising features such as raised concrete kerbstones, fencing and walls should be avoided unless these are absolutely essential for structural or safety reasons.

Agriculture

- 3.4.152 When preparing development plans and in the consideration of planning applications, account should be taken of the quality of agricultural land that would be lost through development proposals. PPG7 advises that little weight should normally be given to the loss of moderate or poor agricultural land (that is land falling within the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) land classification grades 3b, 4 and 5). Considerable weight should be given to protecting the best and most versatile agricultural land (that is land within MAFF grades 1, 2 and 3a). Indeed, within the principles of sustainable development, the best and most versatile agricultural land needs protection as a national resource for future generations. Only exceptionally should the best and most versatile agricultural land be developed.

- 3.4.153 According to structure plan policy ED6, the long term productive potential of agricultural land will be protected, unless there is an overriding need identified in the development plan, and, in particular, development which will cause a loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land should not be permitted.
- 3.4.154 It is an underlying local plan objective to minimise the loss of productive agricultural land to other uses. Much of the agricultural land in Medway is of sufficient quality to be classified by MAFF as the best and most versatile agricultural land. Firm policy protection of this land is justified. An agricultural land classification survey will be required to determine the site specific quality of any agricultural land proposed for development.

POLICY BNE48: AGRICULTURAL LAND

Development that would cause a loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land (MAFF grades 1, 2 and 3a) will not be permitted. Exceptionally, development will be permitted when:

- (i) there exists an overriding need for the development that is of more significance than the considerable weight to be afforded to protecting the best and most versatile agricultural land; and***
- (ii) there exists a lack of suitable development opportunities on previously developed sites and land within the boundaries of existing developed areas; or***
- (iii) either sufficient land in lower grades is unavailable, or available lower grade land has statutory landscape, wildlife, historic or archaeological designation which outweigh agricultural considerations; and***
- (iv) where grade 1, 2 or 3a land needs to be developed and there is a choice between sites in different grades the development is proposed on land of the lowest grade.***

Agricultural Development and Dwellings

- 3.4.155 The use of land for agriculture or forestry does not need planning permission. The erection of some agricultural buildings is subject to planning control whilst others are subject to a prior notification regime (whereby the council have to be notified of the siting and design of such buildings and can ask for details to be submitted for approval). Amenity considerations are the only factors which can be taken into account.
- 3.4.156 One of the few situations where residential development in the countryside is appropriate is when the accommodation is needed to allow farm workers to live at, or in the immediate vicinity of, their place of work due to the essential need for a continuous human presence. When there is uncertainty over whether agricultural dwellings in the countryside are genuinely needed for farming operations (including certainty that this need is capable of being sustained over a reasonable period of time), the council will have regard to the advice in Annex I of PPG7 and apply a financial viability test to judge the likely present and future financial viability of the agricultural enterprise.

POLICY BNE49: AGRICULTURAL DWELLINGS

Agricultural workers' dwellings in the countryside will only be permitted when:

- (i) there is a genuine need for the dwelling generated by the operation of the agricultural holding which it is to serve; and***
- (ii) the dwelling is of an appropriate scale and located on, or adjacent to, the agricultural holding it is to serve; and***
- (iii) there are no other buildings available for, or capable of conversion to, residential use within the vicinity.***

Occupancy conditions will be applied to agricultural workers' dwellings to ensure that the dwelling is retained for use by persons solely, or last, employed in agriculture in the locality and their resident dependants.

- 3.4.157 Changes in farming practices can result in permitted agricultural workers' dwellings no longer being required for workers on local farms, removing the need for the occupancy conditions. However, the council will need to be satisfied that this is clearly the case before removing occupancy conditions.

POLICY BNE50: AGRICULTURAL OCCUPANCY

Occupancy conditions for agricultural workers' dwellings in the countryside will only be removed when it is proved that the dwelling is no longer needed, now and for the foreseeable future, for someone solely, mainly or last working in agriculture on the holding and in the dwelling's general locality.

Where such conditions are removed, permission will not be granted for new agricultural or forestry workers' dwellings on the holding or on any new holding created by its sub-division.

Horses and Stables

- 3.4.158 Stables for horses normally require planning permission, as does using land for the keeping of horses for non-agricultural purposes and for equestrian activities. High standards of landscaping, design, construction and maintenance of buildings and maintenance of land are necessary to ensure that such activities do not have an adverse effect on the countryside. Traffic and activity levels will also be important considerations.

POLICY BNE51: EQUESTRIAN DEVELOPMENTS

Equestrian developments will only be permitted when:

- (i) the development maintains and, wherever possible, enhances the character of the locality; and*
- (ii) any buildings blend with their surroundings and are designed, constructed and landscaped using high standards; and*
- (iii) residential amenity is not harmed, in respect of smells, excessive noise or lighting; and*

- (iv) any jumps or other equipment involved are well designed and removed when not in regular use; and*

- (v) local amenity and road safety are not adversely affected by traffic generated by the development; and*

- (vi) any detrimental effects on local flora and fauna, including hedges and trees have been assessed and appropriate mitigation measures are carried out.*

3.5 Environmental Appraisal

3.5.1 This chapter contains far-reaching policies in pursuit of sustainable development. Design which respects and improves the quality of the built environment is encouraged. The policies serve to safeguard historical sites, buildings and landscape and to protect local character. They seek the protection of open countryside, encourage biodiversity, limit pollution and aim to clean polluted areas. Renewable energy schemes are encouraged, as is the recycling of resources, for example, the reuse of buildings and brownfield sites.

3.6 Monitoring Measures

3.6.1 The performance of the plan in meeting its aims with regard to the environment will be judged against the following criteria:

- (i) the number of developments permitted that do not conform to the council's noise standards;
- (ii) the number of developments using energy efficiency measures;
- (iii) the number of major developments that incorporate structural landscaping schemes;
- (iv) the number of developments adversely affecting the historic features and special character of Listed Buildings, Ancient Monuments and Conservation Areas;
- (v) the number of permissions given for existing rural buildings to be re-used;
- (vi) the amount of development that degrades the open character or settlement separation functions of the Metropolitan Green Belt, and the Strategic Gap;

- (vii) the amount of development that degrades the natural beauty of the North Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and of the North Downs and North Kent Marshes Special Landscape Areas;
- (viii) the amount of development that has a prejudicial effect upon the open character or landscape function of the Areas of Local Landscape Importance;
- (ix) the amount of wildlife habitat lost to development and new wildlife habitat resulting from development proposals; and
- (x) the amount of best and most versatile agricultural land lost to development.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 This chapter deals with employment and tourism, which are major components of Medway's economy. The aim of the council is to make Medway a leading European city region whose performance matches or exceeds that of similar regions elsewhere. It also aims to improve Medway's image and raise awareness of the area as a tourist destination.
- 4.1.2 For the purposes of this chapter, employment covers the use of land and premises for industrial and commercial business but excludes retail, leisure, health and community uses, which are covered elsewhere in the plan. Employment uses are defined in the Town & Country Planning Use Classes Order 1987 (as amended) : Class A2 uses are financial & professional services; Class B1 uses are business uses including non-A2 offices, research and development and light industry; Class B2 uses are general industry; Class B8 covers storage and distribution uses.
- 4.1.3 The local plan can, through the allocation of land for different uses, promote, encourage and protect industrial and commercial development and tourism, whilst ensuring that all development proposals accord with the principles of environmental sustainability. It is important that sites are of suitable environmental and locational quality to provide Medway with a marketable land supply, which will prove attractive to business and increase the level of tourism. In this respect the key objective of the plan will be to make provision for a range of sites to meet the needs of different types of business and tourism, to encourage diversification in the local economy.
- 4.1.4 Medway is well placed to benefit from any increase in economic activity in the region, with a wide range of quality developments and good communication links with both UK and European markets. North Kent remains an ideal location between London and mainland Europe for international companies planning to take advantage of the Single European Market. Medway has good accessibility to the Channel Tunnel and Kent ports and can provide a clean and spacious environment suitable for modern business. In commercial terms, there is a solid base of existing companies with a skilled and flexible workforce supported by good training facilities. The inclusion of the area within the Thames Gateway recognises the important role it can play in the economic development of the South-East region.
- 4.1.5 Medway has been successful in promoting a variety of tourist attractions in recent years and these are now well established destinations in South East England. Rochester city centre remains the focus of tourist activity, containing many fine Listed Buildings and attractions such as the castle, the cathedral, the Dickens Centre and the Guildhall Museum. The Historic Dockyard is also a major tourist destination and is being managed as a "living museum". Other noteworthy

attractions include the Royal Engineers Museum at Brompton, Upnor Castle and Fort Amherst, the finest Napoleonic fortress in the country.

4.2 Policy Context

Central Government Guidance

4.2.1 Government policy for planning and economic development is set out in Planning Policy Guidance Notes 4, 12 and 13, which emphasise that local planning authorities must have regard to the importance of encouraging industrial and commercial development in the interests of the national as well as the local economy. In this respect Development Plans should be seen to encourage employment and take into account the future needs of local business including land supply and the opportunities for economic growth. Policies that include economic priorities should provide for choice, flexibility and competition. The Government has stated that it wishes to see economic growth and a high quality environment pursued together. Development Plans must contain clear land use policies for different types of industrial and commercial development and positive policies to provide for the needs of small businesses. They should aim to ensure that there is sufficient land available to meet differing needs which is both capable of development and well served by infrastructure.

4.2.2. Government guidance on tourism is principally set out in PPG21 "*Tourism*", which seeks to enable the tourism industry to flourish whilst ensuring that those qualities in the environment that are a major attraction for visitors are conserved. Central to this policy is the achievement of sustainable development that serves the interest of both economic growth and conservation of the environment. The Government recognises that the planning system has an important role to play in facilitating tourist development, including the improvement of existing tourist attractions in a manner that maintains the qualities of our natural and built heritage. There is also the opportunity to utilise tourism as an element of urban regeneration schemes. In summary, the Government recognises that planning has a positive role to play in assisting tourism development but in doing so regard must be had to other related policies and the impact of proposals.

Regional Policy

4.2.3 The "*Regional Planning Guidance for the South East*" (RPG9) emphasises the vital role of the South East in the development of the UK economy. The Government is keen to develop the scope for co-ordinated land use and transport in order to meet environmental objectives. In developing employment policies, local planning authorities should have regard to the following key principles:

- (i) All development should be planned in a way that works towards securing the objectives of sustainable development.
- (ii) The immediate priority is to provide for economic recovery focusing on existing planning permissions and land use allocations and available or

planned infrastructure. Planning policy should not seek to constrain economic activity at the regional level.

- (iii) The fullest possible use should be made of opportunities for redevelopment and recycling of urban land to improve the urban environment and avoid the need to take greenfield sites.
- (iv) Development should respect the region's valuable environmental features.
- (v) Planning and transport policies should be co-ordinated to maintain and improve communications, reduce congestion in areas of development pressure, provide a better relationship between homes, the workplace and other activities, encourage energy efficient modes of transport and facilitate environmental improvement.

4.2.4 The Government has identified the eastern area of the region as containing the main locations with potential for development. The area is seen as having long term capacity to accept significant levels of housing and employment development alongside improvements in environmental quality. It is seeking to redress the economic imbalance that has arisen over the past 20 years as a result of faster economic growth in the western half of the region. It recognises that the Thames Gateway has not realised its full potential for development and regeneration and has suffered higher unemployment than the regional average.

4.2.5 The guidance points to several factors, which are likely to change the balance of economic growth over the next 20 years. These include current and future investment in transport infrastructure (including links to Europe) and environmental constraints which are restricting growth in the more congested areas of the region. The Thames Gateway has been identified as a priority area by the Government because of the opportunities it presents between London (as Europe's largest city) and the expanding market place in mainland Europe. Planning authorities should recognise the importance of this by a positive approach to industry, whilst giving due consideration to the quality of environment and balancing the needs of visitors against that of the host community.

Thames Gateway Planning Framework

4.2.6 The "*Thames Gateway Planning Framework*" (RPG 9a) provides a common vision and purpose for the sub-region. In broad terms it seeks to optimise the allocation of uses to the main development opportunities having regard to capacity and transport infrastructure. It confirms the availability of sites within Medway and its role as a main development location. The framework acknowledges the recent growth that has occurred in the financial services sector but identifies a continuing need to strengthen the area's attractiveness to enterprise and improve its competitiveness. It sees the scope for substantial office development as being limited and instead advocates provision for the distribution/logistics sector, environmental technology, strategic port uses, and conference and exhibition facilities.

4.2.7 The main development opportunities identified are at Chatham Maritime, Rochester Riverside, Gillingham Business Park and the Frindsbury Peninsula.

Support for the regeneration and improvement of the existing urban area is implied by the framework, together with protection for its environmental setting. The size and remoteness of the large industrial sites on the Isle of Grain and at Kingsnorth makes them suitable for accommodating those employment uses which may not be easily accommodated elsewhere, including land extensive uses with low employment rates and those uses difficult to accommodate within urban areas. The framework stipulates that a clear context should be provided by the Development Plan to encourage accommodation for these uses without incurring damage to the natural environment. Also on the Isle of Grain, the framework identifies the increasing importance of Thamesport as a deep water port and the need to improve transport links to reflect this potential.

- 4.2.8 The framework recognises that tourism currently under-performs in the area, but is an industry with significant prospects for economic growth. The history of the Thames Gateway and its heritage provide scope to develop heritage experiences to rival those of established national tourist destinations. In this respect the framework acknowledges the work that has already been done at Rochester and at the former Naval Dockyard at Chatham. Notwithstanding this, it identifies the opportunity to consider the relationship between individual tourist attractions and create linkages where these are missing. Local authorities are also encouraged to consider the effects of adjoining land uses on visitor attractions and to provide for a range of hotel accommodation specifically for the visitor market. In the advice relating to Medway, the framework identifies the importance of an effective link between Rochester Riverside and the historic core of the town and between the former Naval Dockyard and Chatham Maritime.

Kent Structure Plan 1996

- 4.2.9 The main theme of the structure plan is economic growth coupled with care for the environment. The strategic economic development policies of the plan are to stimulate economic activity through the growth of existing business and the attraction of new firms, and to capitalise on the physical proximity to Europe. North Kent is seen as a priority area, particularly in the context of the Thames Gateway initiative, and the plan promotes the upgrading of the environment and enhancement of the area's image. The strategic policy for Medway is to promote development through reinvestment in the urban fabric, including the redevelopment and recycling of underused and derelict land, with a focus on riverside sites.
- 4.2.10 A key objective of the structure plan is to ensure that there are sufficient opportunities for employment uses in order to meet the requirements of the existing and future workforce (including the unemployed). The employment needs of an area are expressed in terms of the additional floorspace required for employment uses. The floorspace figure is derived from the conversion of the labour supply projections to a corresponding scale of industrial and commercial development. Regard is also had to the economic strategy for the county, strategic development opportunities and environmental constraints, as well as land supply and past completion rates.

- 4.2.11 Structure plan policy ED1 indicates that the provision of floorspace for business (A2/B1) and industrial and storage/distribution (B2 and B8) development should be made in accordance with the following guidelines:

	Use Classes	1991-2001	2001-2011	Total
Medway	A2/B1	220,000 sq.m	130,000 sq m	350,000 sq m
	B2/B8	200,000 sq.m	170,000 sq m	370,000 sq m

- 4.2.12 However, since the structure plan covers the period 1991-2011 and the local plan covers the period 1991-2006, Medway Council has found it necessary to disaggregate the floorspace figures in policy ED1 to reflect the period of the local plan. The effect of this is to give a local plan requirement for 2001-2006 of 65,000 sq.m. of A2/B1 uses and 85,000 sq.m. of B2/B8 uses. The total provision for 1991-2006 is therefore 285,000 sq.m. for A2/B1 and 285,000 sq.m. for B2/B8.
- 4.2.13 The structure plan acknowledges that part of the total land supply is represented by several large sites outside the urban area and that development of these sites is likely to be partial or with low employment uses and not likely to occur before 2001. Furthermore, 192 ha of land at the Isle of Grain is likely to be developed for uses which will not count towards meeting the structure plan guidelines.
- 4.2.14 Structure plan policy ED2 stresses that the allocation of land for economic development should have regard to the availability and quality of commitments. It also states that where circumstances warrant, specific reservations for bad neighbour uses can be made. Policy ED3 identifies the Isle of Grain as a suitable location for major distribution and transshipment proposals, to take advantage of access to rail and port facilities subject to improvements being made to the A228. Policy P8 allows for the expansion of Thamesport for deep sea and cross-channel traffic. Policy ED4 stresses the need to provide sites and premises to meet the needs of small firms through the conversion of suitable buildings in both urban and certain rural locations, on larger industrial estates and on suitable infill sites.
- 4.2.15 Structure plan tourism policies support new development, including the expansion and upgrading of existing establishments. In particular policy ED13 indicates that in North Kent the provision of major tourism facilities of national or regional significance may be permitted in the countryside where such a location can be justified. In adopting this approach, the structure plan recognises the need to achieve a balance between economic development objectives and local environment and amenity considerations. It recognises that the benefits for visitors and residents derived from the provision of tourism and leisure facilities can easily be outweighed by development pressures or excessive numbers of visitors in sensitive areas. Proposals must therefore be consistent with the structure plan's environment, transportation and green belt policies.

Medway Economic Development Strategy

- 4.2.16 In 1999, Medway Council adopted an economic development strategy for the period up to 2010. By then the strategy aims to take Medway well on the way to becoming a leading European City region whose performance matches or exceeds that of similar regions elsewhere in the UK and European Union.
- 4.2.17 Medway's strategy is not just about economic development. The target of creating an additional 11,000 new jobs, and achieving the longer-term vision of transforming Medway into a leading European City region will have wider social and economic benefits and will help to improve the quality of life for all Medway's residents.
- 4.2.18 To take the strategy forward, four main action plans have been defined.

A. DEVELOPING THE COMPETITIVENESS OF MEDWAY BUSINESSES

- (i) Identifying key sectors and clusters in Medway whose competitiveness and growth prospects will largely determine the outlook for the local economy as a whole:
- Financial and business services – including information technology
 - High technology manufacturing – engineering, electronics, pharmaceuticals and other manufacturing
 - Transport and distribution/ value added logistics
 - Other key sectors- retail, education, construction, tourism and related sectors.
- (ii) Consider establishing sector groups and working with local firms to identify the factors that are critical to growth and competitiveness and developing sector specific actions to address them.
- (iii) Developing emerging sectors in the Medway economy and ensuring that local firms innovate and take advantage of new technology through the development of a Medway business incubator and a technology park.
- (iv) Ensuring that Medway offers a comprehensive and integrated range of first-class business support services including appropriate finance, through a partners for growth scheme.
- (v) Developing a Medway business competitiveness initiative enabling firms to identify their strengths and weaknesses and to obtain access to good practice examples.
- (vi) Ensuring that economic growth is not at the expense of the environment.

B. PROMOTING MEDWAY'S INWARD INVESTMENT POTENTIAL

- (i) Defining a clear message concerning what Medway has to offer to inward investors.

- (ii) Defining targets that are consistent with Medway's competitive strengths and where there are mobile projects:
 - Financial and business services, insurance and value-added logistics;
 - Engineering, electronics, pharmaceuticals and other high-tech manufacturing activities.
- (iii) In the targeted sectors, placing emphasis on attracting research and development-intensive functions (manufacturing) and technology-based, high value-added projects such as shared service centres and call centres (services).
- (iv) Further investment in Medway's physical infrastructure to ensure that the area offers first-class sites and premises to prospective inward investors.
- (v) In addition to attracting new inward investment, ensuring that companies already located in Medway remain and grow in the area.

C. HELPING MEDWAY PEOPLE DEVELOP THEIR SKILLS AND JOB PROSPECTS

- (i) Raising primary and secondary educational attainment levels and improving awareness amongst young people of careers and job opportunities in Medway firms.
- (ii) Raising education and vocational training levels in Medway's workforce, together with capacity building.
- (iii) Combating social exclusion and ensuring that local people are in a position to take advantage of employment opportunities.
- (iv) Encouraging Medway firms to invest in the development of workforce and management skills.
- (v) Establishing Medway as a learning city by developing a culture of lifelong learning and ensuring that there is appropriate local provision at all levels, from pre-school to higher education.

D. PROMOTING MEDWAY AS AN ATTRACTIVE PLACE TO LIVE, WORK AND VISIT.

- (i) The need to improve Medway's image and raise awareness of the area as a place to live, work and visit.
- (ii) Developing the town centres and Chatham as Medway's city centre.
- (iii) An emphasis on developing the Medway tourism and leisure product that results in greater number of overnight stays and higher spending by visitors in the local economy.

- (iv) Linked to this, the need to develop a more comprehensive range of visitor facilities – by diversifying from heritage into a wider range of retail, leisure and entertainment attractions.
- (v) Developing a major Medway conference and events venue, supported by investment to improve hotel accommodation, particularly in the central area of Medway such as the riverside, and to upgrade local transport links between different areas/ attractions in Medway.
- (vi) Ensuring that the tourism strategy is part of a wider strategy aimed at fostering civic pride and a strong local identity and sense of place. In short, promoting Medway as a place to visit depends on it being a thriving community and exciting place to be.
- (vii) Actions to improve Medway as a place to live, work and visit – mainly covered by the Medway Council strategic plan (health, housing, the environment etc.)

4.3 Recent Employment Trends and Issues

- 4.3.1 During the period 1981-91 the national trend was for employment in manufacturing to decline and for service sector jobs to increase. This was the case in the South East, although in north Kent the decline in manufacturing was more severe and the area's share of service sector growth was less than the average. The onset of a recession in 1990 created difficult trading conditions in all business sectors, particularly for small and medium sized companies. Whereas the south east economy had previously been considered buoyant and in need of restraint, this was no longer the case. The south east lost 5% of its employment in the period 1989-91 compared with 3% in the UK as a whole. Fortunately, the high levels of unemployment experienced in Medway during the mid-1980s (16%) have not reoccurred and unemployment at February 1999 was 4.1%, lower than the UK average (of 4.5%). A detailed breakdown of unemployment rates and other employment issues are available in the "*Medway Economic Development Strategy*" 1999.
- 4.3.2 The demand for manufacturing and office premises is showing firm signs of improvement. The success of Gillingham Business Park, Medway City Estate and Chatham Maritime demonstrates the importance of providing good quality development sites in locations that are generally highly accessible. The construction of the Medway Towns Northern Relief Road has further heightened the perception of the area as a development location. The area's inclusion within Thames Gateway, increasing links with Europe resulting from the Channel Tunnel and a reduction in trade barriers are becoming more important considerations. Given increased accessibility to Medway, the issue in economic development is not one of location but of the continuing need to improve both the environment and the image of the area and to overcome development constraints on sites in order to continue regeneration.

4.3.3 The council is aware of the importance of maintaining a supply of good quality sites in accessible locations, with an attractive environment. This has been particularly important in attracting high technology, research and development companies to Medway. The supply of such sites has diminished with their successful development over the last decade. This, coupled with the loss of land previously utilised for employment purposes to other uses, and the low quality of some remaining sites has made it necessary to consider further designations. These have been made to ensure that the supply of quality sites remains at a level that can meet the needs of the existing local economy and continues to encourage new companies to consider Medway as a prime location for business. The allocation of these additional sites is not considered to be strategically significant but will bring much greater flexibility to the plan.

4.3.4 Figure 6a summarises the employment land availability situation as at March 2000, taking account of the allocations set out later in this chapter.

Fig. 6a Employment Land Availability

Proposed Local Plan Allocations and Existing Sites

	Site Area (Ha)	Capacity m ² (using Kent Structure Plan 1996 conversion figures)				Total
		B1	B2	B8	B2-B8	
Gillingham Business Park	1.75	5554	0	1235	1235	6789
Ex-health Authority Land (Gillingham Business Park)	2.88	11425	0	0	0	11425
Civil Service Sports Council Land (Gillingham Business Park)	4.32	0	0	0	0	0
Gads Hill/ Danes Hill, Gillingham	0.29	0	835	0	835	835
Former Depot, Otterham Quay Lane	1.29	5117	0	0	0	5117
Chatham Maritime	12.8	50778	0	0	0	50778
Kingsnorth	66	26182	95007	93166	188173	214355
Isle of Grain* ¹	192	0	0	0	0	0
Findsbury Peninsula	9.6	3808	11055	16939	27994	31802
Formby Road, Halling	9.5	0	13675	16763	30438	30438
Fort Bridgewood	2.1	1666	1814	3705	5519	7185
Medway Valley Park/ Morgans Timber Works* ²	11.05	8767	12725	15598	28323	37090
Rochester Airfield	25	49588	14395	26468	40863	90451
Total	338.8	162885	149506	173874	323380	486265
Losses	28.69	4862	27306	41341	68647	73329
Total Net	113.57	158203	122200	132533	254733	412936

*¹ The 192 ha of land at the Isle of Grain is likely to be developed for uses which will not count towards meeting the structure plan guidelines.

*2 Medway Valley Park/Morgans Timber Works is now incorporated into the Strood Waterfront Action Area, see policy S10.

4.3.5 Figure 6b measures the total estimated floorspace of completions and commitments on existing and proposed employment sites against the requirements of the Kent Structure Plan. This shows that the net provision of Class A2/B1 floorspace gives a small deficit of 10,542 sq.m., whilst B2/B8 provision represents a surplus of 19,271 sq.m. The total floorspace represents a small surplus of 8999 sq.m.

6b. Employment floorspace supply and Structure Plan requirements

	A2-B1 Sq.m.	B2-B8 Sq.m.	Total Sq.m.
Kent Structure Plan guidelines 1991-2006	285000	285000	570000
Completed floorspace 1991-2000	93088	11777	105135
Floorspace with planning permission as at 31/3/2000	23167	37761	60928
Local Plan allocations	158203	254733	412936
Total supply	274458	304271	578999

4.4 Objectives

4.4.1 The strategic aim of the local plan is to stimulate and strengthen the expansion of economic activity in Medway to support the continued regeneration of the area's economic base, improve employment opportunities for its population and reduce the need for outward commuting. Considerable progress has already been made in reducing unemployment and diversifying the local economy. However, securing further investment and employment through the maintenance and growth of existing industry and commerce, together with the attraction of further new businesses, will build upon the achievements so far and help to secure a more stable and prosperous future for the area.

4.4.2 In pursuit of this strategic aim the council will seek to fulfil the following objectives:

- (i) to ensure that there is an adequate supply of good quality employment sites which will meet the needs of the area and be capable of accommodating a wide range of industrial and commercial uses;
- (ii) to develop a sustainable economy that is diverse and self supporting by encouraging the development of sites for a range of uses that will provide a variety of job opportunities and reduce the need for outward commuting;

- (iii) to pursue economic growth and a high quality environment in parallel, by encouraging high standards of design and landscaping;
- (iv) to encourage the re-use or conversion of existing business premises where appropriate and the redevelopment of derelict and underused land to assist regeneration;
- (v) to ensure employment uses are well related to physical infrastructure, housing and community facilities.
- (vi) to promote Medway as one of the major tourist centres in the South East ;
- (vii) to achieve better links between existing tourist attractions within the area;
- (viii) to support green tourism initiatives related to the area's natural assets;
- (ix) to encourage the development of new tourist accommodation;
- (x) to support the improvement and development of existing and new tourist facilities;
- (xi) to maintain a high quality of design in tourist facilities.

4.5 Policies and Reasoned Justification

Existing Employment Areas

4.5.1 Priority will generally be given to the retention of existing employment uses, provided that local amenity is not jeopardised. The council will encourage the improvement of such areas to enhance both the image and efficiency of companies and the environment. The latter is particularly important to the way potential business investors perceive Medway. Their accessibility by modes of transport other than car is also important and will be encouraged. Therefore, proposals for new development and extensions which are likely to generate further employment will be permitted in the areas listed below, subject to the particular characteristics of each site. A number of existing employment areas have been developed for a variety of office, industrial and warehousing uses. Accordingly, Business Uses (Class B1) and where appropriate, general industrial uses (Class B2) and storage and distribution uses (Class B8) will be permitted on the following sites for the reasons set out:

- (i) *Beechings Way Industrial Estate*: This comprises largely older industrial and office premises. A number of buildings have been sub-divided into industrial workshops and further engineering and manufacturing uses are present. The estate is not operating at full capacity and there is considerable potential for redevelopment. An adopted development brief seeks to strengthen the role of the site for a range of employment purposes and to maximise the development potential resulting from the construction of the adjacent Medway Towns Northern Relief Road. Future development is likely to include a range of different sized units suitable for B1, B2 and B8 uses, with particular emphasis on the opportunities to meet

the needs of small businesses. Part of the site may be developed for non-employment uses (a mixed use zone) to encourage re-investment at an early date.

- (ii) *Chatham Port* : The port deals with the handling and distribution of materials, together with some ship repairing. The continuing development of the port is covered in detail in policy ED9.
- (iii) *Courteney Road* : Developed as a linear employment area along the A278, immediately to the east of Gillingham Business Park, the site enjoys good access to the M2. There are key engineering and manufacturing companies in this area, dealing with automotive parts and packaging. Other premises are used for distribution, wholesaling and offices. The area is fully developed, although scope may exist for selective redevelopment for Class B1, B2 and B8 purposes. Some environmental improvements are also desirable.
- (iv) *Firmstart Estate* : The estate comprises a complex of small managed Class B1 units at Twydall. It provides training facilities and workshop premises with administrative support, if required, and is aimed at small businesses, particularly those starting up.
- (v) *Gads Hill/Danes Hill* : Adjacent to the Medway Estuary, along the route of the Medway Towns Northern Relief Road, the site is dominated by older premises currently used for engineering purposes. The Medway Towns Northern Relief Road has greatly improved access to this area and enhanced its development potential. There is potential to develop an area for small Class B1 units adjacent to a proposed residential site. On the remainder of the site Class B1, B2 and B8 development will be permitted.
- (vi) *Gillingham Business Park* : This is a major development, which is recognised as being amongst the finest of its kind in the South East. It contains high quality modern buildings providing accommodation for offices, research and development facilities, manufacturing, storage and distribution. A separate retail park is situated in the north-eastern corner of the business park. The site is considered suitable for B1 development and this is most likely to take the form of campus style offices.
- (vii) *Pier Road* : This industrial area includes a development of small Class B1 units, a large chemical works and several other inappropriately located uses around Gillingham Pier. The Medway Towns Northern Relief Road has greatly improved access to the area. There is potential at Gillingham Pier to construct further small Class B1 units and to consolidate provision for small firms. Any development should have particular regard to the opportunities for environmental improvement and the potential for leisure-related activities.
- (viii) *Railway Street Industrial Park*: This small development of medium sized light industrial units is predominantly in Class B1 use, located close to

Gillingham town centre and the railway station. The estate offers modern premises for an important sector of the industrial market. There may be some potential for further Class B1 development, coupled with environmental improvements and the reconfiguration of the adjoining car and lorry park.

- (ix) *Formby Road* : This site at Halling is currently occupied by part of the Rugby Cement works. Approximately 10 hectares is used for coal storage and could be made available for development for Class B1, B2 and B8 uses. The site has been identified in the Kent Waste Local Plan as a potential site for waste processing (including a waste to energy plant) but this designation is likely to be reviewed in the forthcoming Medway Waste Local Plan.
- (x) *Fort Bridgewood*: This is a small site adjacent to the Rochester Airport Estate with land remaining to be developed for Class B1, B2 or B8 uses.
- (xi) *Frindsbury Peninsula*: The peninsula, which includes the Medway City Estate, accommodates companies ranging from large owner/occupiers to small start-up businesses carrying out a wide variety of uses including storage and distribution, engineering, manufacturing, high technology, office and specialist retailing. Access has been radically improved with the completion of the Medway Towns Northern Relief Road. Land is available for development, which is considered suitable for Class B1, B2 or B8 uses.
- (xii) *Hopewell Drive*: This small employment area near Luton contains a number of light industrial businesses. It is approached through a residential area and, in order to safeguard the amenity of the area, only Class B1 uses will be permitted. A site was developed as a business village of small units in 1996.
- (xiii) *Isle of Grain/Thamesport* : The employment area is centred upon the former BP oil refinery. It is the location of the oil-fired Grain Power Station and the gas-fired AES Medway Power Station. BP has retained an area for oil storage, 80 hectares of land is occupied by Thamesport, a deep water terminal and container port, and an adjoining site is used by Foster Yeoman for the importation of aggregates. The area as a whole is served by a railhead and by the A228. However, substantial improvements are required to both the rail head and the A228 to enable the site to be developed to its full potential. The site is capable of accommodating port activities and large land users associated with these, in addition to uses within Use Class B1, B2 and B8. The site, however, is unsuitable for B1 office and high technology uses, as it does not meet the locational tests for such uses as set out in PPG13 "Transport". Consequently, development within use class B1 will be permitted subject to the imposition of conditions, or planning obligations being entered into, to restrict occupants to Class B1 (c) light industrial uses only. It is becoming increasingly accessible with the completion of the Medway Towns Northern Relief

Road and the planned dualling of the A228 between Main Road and Ropers Lane, Hoo.

- (xiv) *Kingsnorth*: The designated existing site includes the Kingsnorth Power Station, and Kingsnorth Industrial Estate, which contains a mixture of general industries. Further development on adjacent land will be permitted for Class B1, B2 and B8 uses under Policy S12. However, in the light of the advice of PPG13 relating to accessibility of office uses, only those falling within subgroup B1 (c) will be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that the development makes provision for increased accessibility by means other than the private car. Specialist industrial uses will also be permitted subject to acceptable environmental standards being achieved. A higher standard of design and landscaping will be required to improve the overall image of the area.
- (xv) *Lordswood Industrial Estate* : This estate is a light industrial area lying adjacent to a residential suburb of Chatham. It is largely complete.
- (xvi) *Laker Road Industrial Estate* : This area is located on the northern and western periphery of Rochester Airport and contains a variety of employment uses, mainly in the B2 and B8 categories. It has capacity on two remaining sites for further development.
- (xvii) *Second Avenue* : An old established light industrial estate, near the Luton local shopping centre. It has a few small sites available where, due to the proximity to residential properties, development will be restricted to Class B1 uses.
- (xviii) *Vicarage Lane, Hoo* : This area contains a variety of Class B1, B2, B8 and other employment uses, some of which are incompatible with the adjoining residential area of Hoo Marina Park. In order to improve conditions for nearby residents the intensification of un-neighbourly uses will be limited, and development will be restricted to Class B1 business uses.
- (xix) *Rochester Airport*: This extensive site lies close to the M2 in the south of the conurbation and is the location for a large research & development, assembly and manufacturing facility operated by BAE Systems. The site has the potential to become an employment centre of the highest quality and, as such, is covered by policy S11.

4.5.2 The local plan seeks to ensure that sufficient land is identified to enable a variety of employment opportunities to come forward. It also aims to limit the release of fresh land for development outside the urban area. The council will seek to retain appropriate existing sites for employment use. More specifically, given the scale and nature of provision made here and elsewhere in the plan, the council sees no case for retailing and leisure development to be allowed on land identified for business, industrial or warehousing uses.

POLICY ED1: EXISTING EMPLOYMENT AREAS

In the following Employment Areas, as defined on the proposals map, development will be permitted only for :

(A) Business (Class B1) development at:

(i) Firmstart Estate, Twydall

(ii) Second Avenue, Luton

(iii) Vicarage Lane, Hoo.

(B) Business (Class B1), general industry (Class B2) and storage and distribution (Class B8) at :

(i) Courteney Road, Gillingham

(ii) Gads Hill/Danes Hill, Gillingham

(iii) Gillingham Business Park

(iv) Pier Road, Gillingham

(v) Railway Street Industrial Park, Gillingham

(vi) Formby Road, Halling

(vii) Fort Bridgewood, Chatham

(viii) Frindsbury Peninsula

(ix) Kingsnorth

(x) Laker Road Industrial Estate

(xi) Rochester Airfield

(xii) Lordswood Industrial Estate

(xiii) Beechings Way (excluding the Mixed Use Areas)

(xiv) Isle of Grain/Thamesport

(xv) Hopewell Drive, Luton

(C) General Industry (Class B2) and storage and distribution (Class B8) at :

(i) Chatham Port.

(D) Business (Class B1) and general industry (Class B2) at:

(i) Former Depot, Otterham Quay Lane.

Proposals for development on the above sites resulting in the loss of existing industrial, business or storage and distribution development to other uses will not be permitted.

Employment in Action Areas and Mixed Use Areas.

4.5.3 Certain key areas have been designated strategically as Action Areas. This is due to their scale, location and their influence upon regeneration generally. These areas are primarily existing employment areas, where the council intends to promote large scale improvement which could include a variety of uses. Within the Rochester Riverside and Strood Waterfront Action Areas, the degree of employment to be retained and developed within each area will vary significantly.

4.5.4 In the Rochester Riverside area, most of the existing employment sites will be replaced, with the exception of the Castle View Business Park. At Strood Waterfront the area to be retained will be determined in conjunction with local companies through the preparation of the Action Area Plan, but is likely to be substantial. In advance of the Action Area Plan being prepared the council will grant planning permission for employment uses providing it can be demonstrated that the comprehensive development of the area would not be compromised.

POLICY ED2: EMPLOYMENT IN ACTION AREAS AND MIXED USE AREAS

Development will be permitted for :

- (i) Business (Class B1a) within the Chatham Maritime Mixed Use Area.*
- (ii) Business (Class B1) and General Industry (Class B2) in the Rochester Riverside Action Area;*
- (iii) Business use (B1), general industry (Class B2) and storage and distribution uses (Class B8) within the Strood Waterfront Action Area.*

The location and extent of development will be determined in the development briefs to be approved by the council for each Action Area.

Development in advance of the preparation of the briefs will be permitted providing the comprehensive development of each area would not be compromised.

Other Employment Sites

4.5.5 Although a large amount of industrial and commercial floorspace within Medway is concentrated on the identified Employment Areas, there are also many firms that lie outside them. Such firms may often be in residential areas or countryside. In many cases these firms do not cause any amenity problems to their neighbours. However, there are also sites which by reason of their age, impact on local amenity, physical constraints, or poor infrastructure are less suited to modern employment uses. In these cases, provided a suitable alternative site can be found for the relocation of existing firms, it would be appropriate to consider redevelopment for other uses to facilitate an improvement in local amenity and the environment of the area. Within the urban area the preferred form of redevelopment is likely to be housing. A number of such sites have been identified and allocated for other uses elsewhere in the local plan.

4.5.6 On acceptable sites a general policy will allow for the alteration or extension or redevelopment of such premises. Proposals for redevelopment will be limited to

light industrial or office uses, except where it can be demonstrated that the site is suitable for other types of employment use that can be accommodated without detriment to residential amenity.

- 4.5.7 A number of employment sites are situated in the countryside. These include Otterham Quay, Cliffe Chalk Pits, Cliffe Oil Storage Depot, Fenn Corner and Elm Court off Capstone Road. They are all characterised by having large areas of storage, parking or undeveloped land, and many have a detrimental impact on the visual environment and on local roads. Additional development could result in further detriment to the visual amenity of the rural area and an undesirable increase in traffic on rural roads. Where development is proposed, the council will seek practical improvements to visual amenity and/or traffic conditions where appropriate and will consider the preparation of development briefs to guide this process.

POLICY ED3: OTHER EMPLOYMENT SITES

On existing employment sites not identified in policies ED1 and ED2, proposals for the alteration, extension or replacement of existing premises will be permitted where they are not detrimental to local amenity. Redevelopment will be restricted to business (Class B1) uses except where it can be demonstrated that other types of employment use can be accommodated without detriment to residential amenity.

Within the rural area, extensions to, or alterations to, premises on existing employment sites will not be permitted where :

- (i) There would be an addition of 10% or more to the built footprint; and/or*
- (ii) Visual amenity is not improved; and/or*
- (iii) Traffic volumes would increase on nearby roads.*

Elm Court

- 4.5.8 The Elm Court estate is situated on high ground in the Capstone Area of Local Landscape Importance. It is surrounded by an attractive tract of countryside,

which maintains the separation between the built-up areas of Lordswood and Hempstead. The estate incorporates a number of small-scale industrial and commercial uses, together with a large garden centre and another retail unit. The buildings are an unattractive intrusion, which detracts from the character of the area.

- 4.5.9 The council considers the site inappropriate for employment uses and further intensification of the uses on the site will be resisted. Planning permissions have been granted in the past only in exceptional circumstances, against the background of the defined area of landscape value. The council will seek to protect and retain the Capstone Area of Local Landscape Importance. Therefore, only minimal development with high standards of landscaping, which would enhance the appearance and character of the area as a whole, will be allowed within the built-up area of Elm Court.

POLICY ED4: ELM COURT

Proposals for the intensification of existing uses within the Elm Court estate, as defined on the proposals map, will not be permitted. Minor alterations or extensions to existing buildings, or the replacement of an existing building within the confines of the estate will be permitted provided:

- (i) the form, mass and general design of the development is in keeping with the surrounding countryside; and***
- (ii) there is a high standard of landscaping; and***
- (iii) a Master Plan for the site is submitted illustrating how the development relates to the estate as a whole.***

New Employment Areas

- 4.5.10 It is important to maintain a range of employment sites to cater for the expansion of existing companies and to provide attractive opportunities for new business investors. Consequently, land is allocated for new employment areas capable of accommodating business, general industry and warehousing uses. In making these allocations it is recognised that certain uses will demand a particular type of site and location.

- 4.5.11 There is a need to cater for further business development including office services, high technology, research and development that cannot be satisfactorily accommodated in town centres. The latter may include an element of light industry, but typically these uses will require premises with a high office content and often demand sites that are attractive in terms of design, layout and landscaping. Accordingly, sites for Class B1 development on land to the south-west of Gillingham Business Park and the former depot at Otterham Quay Lane are allocated.
- 4.5.12 The area has attracted new manufacturing and engineering uses falling into the light industry or general industry categories. In some instances these uses may also be suited to a business park location, but they are more likely to require a modern industrial estate, e.g. Medway City Estate on the Frindsbury Peninsula. There is likely to be further demand for warehousing and distribution development. Where such uses serve local retail centres they should be appropriately located on sites within the urban area such as the Medway City Estate.
- 4.5.13 Of the undeveloped area at Kingsnorth, a significant area has been safeguarded for landscaping and nature conservation protection. This leaves approximately 66 hectares available for development. Development at Kingsnorth (which is dealt with in policy S12) will be subject to improvements to the local highway and rail networks, and should not be detrimental to the environmental importance of the Medway Estuary Marshes. This site is capable of accommodating uses in Classes B1, B2 & B8. However, in the light of the advice of PPG13, only those uses falling within Class B1 (c) will be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that the development makes provision for increased accessibility by means other than private car. Such provision may take the form of contributions to public transport, the use of parking regimes and company transport plans. In appropriate cases, the provision will be sought by means of a planning obligation. Development in Class B1 which makes inadequate provision for increased accessibility will be restricted, by the imposition of conditions or by planning obligation, to Class B1 (c).
- 4.5.14 Other uses which serve a regional market or which require a large land area and generate low levels of employment are better suited to sites further away from the urban area. In this respect the Isle of Grain has been identified as a future location for these uses subject to improvements in highway and rail infrastructure. The presence of the Thamesport deep water terminal also makes the Isle of Grain suitable for port related industries. Approximately 192 hectares of land is available for employment development. Policy S13 details the requirements that Grain/Thamesport will generate.
- 4.5.15 Grain is capable of accommodating port activities and large land-users associated with these. In conformity with policy P8 of the Kent Structure Plan, it is an objective to expand the capacity of the deep water terminal. The site is also suitable for uses in classes B1, B2 and B8. However, the Isle of Grain is unsuitable for B1 office or high technology uses, as it does not meet the locational tests for such uses set out in PPG13 "*Transport*". Consequently,

development within Use Class B1 will be permitted subject to the imposition of conditions or planning obligations being entered into, to restrict occupants to Class B1 (c) light industrial uses only. Major development at the Isle of Grain will be subject to the improvement of the A228 and the Grain to Hoo Junction rail line for which contributions from developers will be sought.

POLICY ED5: PROPOSED EMPLOYMENT AREAS

The following sites, as defined on the proposals map, are allocated for development for the use classes specified :

(A) Business (Class B1) development at :

(i) Gillingham Business Park (land to south of Bailey Drive);

(B) Business (Class B1), general industry (Class B2) and storage and distribution (Class B8) development at :

(i) Kingsnorth, subject to policy S12.

(ii) Isle of Grain/Thamesport, subject to policy S13

(iii) Rochester Airfield (25 hectares)

Small Firms

4.5.16

Small units have played an important role in assisting the development of new and existing companies over the last decade. There continues to be a strong demand for small units whether managed by the council in partnership with the local Enterprise Agency, such as the Pier Road Estate and Firmstart, or as part of private sector developments like Neptune Business Park on the Medway City Estate. The council will, therefore, support the provision of further small units on new and existing employment areas. At the same time it is recognised that small units can amalgamate without requiring planning permission. The council will endeavour to retain small unit complexes that have been purpose-built for start-up firms. Where planning permission is required for the redevelopment of such sites, permission will be refused if the proposals would lead to the loss of the small units and their replacement by larger units. The refurbishment of small units will be acceptable.

POLICY ED6: SMALL BUSINESS COMPLEXES

Redevelopment leading to the loss of small business unit complexes in existing and proposed Employment Areas, as defined on the proposals map, will not be permitted.

Special Industrial Uses

- 4.5.17 The general industry class (Class B2) now includes the so-called “noxious” industrial uses, which were formerly part of the Special Industrial Use Classes (B3-B7). These uses had to be registered under the Alkali etc Works Regulation Act 1906, and can generally be described as chemical operations that may produce emissions in to the environment or are otherwise considered offensive. The 1906 Act has now been superseded by the Environmental Protection Act, 1990 and such uses now have to be authorised. Appendix 5, lists the main categories of use set out in Regulations made under the Act, for which authorisation is required. Such uses are frequently subject to safeguarding measures and it is preferable for development to be located away from residential areas. The scope for accommodating further such development within the urban area is limited.
- 4.5.18 Part of the sites at Kingsnorth and Grain, which are relatively remote from residences, could be used for this purpose, but not to such an extent that it undermines the strategic role of the sites as set out in policies S12 and S13. Consequently, the council will only consider such uses against a stringent environmental standard as required in policies BNE2, BNE3, BNE23 and BNE24 and the constraints imposed by the Notifiable Installation described in appendix 4. Development at both sites will also depend on improvements to the local highway and rail networks being secured as stated in policies S12 and S13, and the council being satisfied that there would be no adverse impact on the environment or on residential amenity. In view of the special locational requirements, such uses will not be granted planning permission elsewhere in the local plan area.

POLICY ED7: SPECIAL INDUSTRIAL USES

The development of special industrial uses will only be permitted at Kingsnorth and Grain, as defined on the proposals map, subject to the provisions of policies BNE2, BNE3, BNE23 and BNE 24 and securing the transport infrastructure improvements specified in policies S12 and S13.

Industrial Uses not in a Use Class

- 4.5.19 There are other industrial uses which do not readily fit within any class of the Use Classes Order and which are described as “*sui generis*” uses. For example, this would include uses such as scrap yards, car body repairers, haulage and plant depots. These uses are also sometimes described as being non-conforming uses. It is often difficult for such uses to find suitable sites largely because they can cause noise disturbance, nuisance and annoyance to residential neighbourhoods or a wider area. However, the council recognises that these uses can contribute to the diversity of employment and provide important services to the local community. Provision should, therefore, be made for the location or relocation of such uses where they are inappropriately sited.
- 4.5.20 The council has identified two sites that could fulfil such a role, although the precise nature and scale of any proposed development will need to be individually assessed. The sites comprise the land already identified at Kingsnorth and Grain as new employment areas. In respect of these sites any acceptable proposals will need to have regard to the amenity of nearby residential properties including visual impact, as stated in policy BNE2, the scientific interest of the adjoining areas of national and international nature conservation importance and the character of the surrounding rural area.

POLICY ED8: INDUSTRIAL USES NOT IN A USE CLASS

The development of industrial uses not in a use class will be permitted at Kingsnorth and the Isle of Grain, as defined on the proposals map, subject to the provisions of policy BNE2 and there being no adverse environmental impact, especially in terms of residential amenity, nature conservation interests or the character of the surrounding rural area.

Chatham Port

- 4.5.21 The Mersey Docks and Harbour Company owns the commercial port which covers an area of approximately 58.7 hectares of the former Chatham Naval Dockyard and includes Basin No.3, which has access to the River Medway. Vehicular access to the site is directly off the Medway Towns Northern Relief Road. Since its establishment in 1984 the port has significantly increased the volume of traffic that it handles, although expansion was limited by the restricted nature of the access arrangements to the site prior to the recent completion of the Relief Road. The port is best known for the handling of timber and paper related products, but also offers ship repairing facilities.
- 4.5.22 The owners have expressed their interest in expanding the port operation and further developing facilities. The spare capacity that currently exists could be

used to accommodate cargo-handling capacity that is lost as a result of changes further upstream. The council will support the continued operation and future expansion of the port operation at Chatham. In doing so, it is recognised that additional berth facilities will be required. These additional facilities will provide capacity for relocated wharf operations displaced elsewhere along the river. The council will encourage the increased movement of freight by rail from the port, utilising the port's branch line (see also the transportation chapter).

POLICY ED9: CHATHAM PORT

Port related development and an expansion of the commercial port at Chatham, as defined on the proposals map, will be permitted subject to the provisions of policy T7 and the enhancement of the setting of the Medway Towns Northern Relief Road.

Working From Home

4.5.23

A variety of business activities can be undertaken from home without the need to apply for planning permission provided that the activities remain ancillary to, and do not involve material alterations to, the residential character of the property. The close juxtaposition of work and home can reduce car use and is therefore environmentally sustainable, particularly with the growth in tele-working. However, an intensification of what initially was considered an acceptable use can, over time, make it unacceptable due to its impact on neighbouring residential properties or for highways reasons. Generally, businesses operating from home should not be seen as long-term propositions if the intention is to expand. The council, whilst not wishing to limit the opportunities for private enterprise and acknowledging the benefits to sustainable development of working from home, will act to protect residential amenity.

POLICY ED10: WORKING FROM HOME

The establishment of businesses operating from the applicant's residence will be permitted provided that it can be demonstrated that there would not be any :

- (i) detrimental effect on residential amenity by way of dust, noise, smell or other emissions; and*

(ii) additional traffic flows and vehicle parking which would be harmful to residential amenity or road safety; and

(iii) erosion of the residential character of the area.

Existing Tourist Attractions and Facilities

4.5.24 A significant proportion of tourist visits to Medway are to the historic centre of Rochester or to see some of the other attractions around the urban area including the Historic Dockyard, Fort Amherst and the Royal Engineers Museum. In order to ensure that interest in the area is not lost, it is essential that existing attractions are retained and protected from inappropriate development in the vicinity. The successful promotion of such attractions is also dependent on the provision of appropriate infrastructure and complementary facilities such as coach and car parking, sign posting, visitor centres, public conveniences and public seating.

POLICY ED11: EXISTING TOURIST FACILITIES

Development that would be detrimental to, or result in the loss of, existing tourist attractions and facilities will not be permitted.

New Tourist Attractions and Facilities

4.5.25 The council recognises the valuable contribution that new tourist attractions and facilities can make to the local economy and will, therefore, support such development in appropriate locations. The potential for a particular area or site to accommodate such development will depend on the proposed use, the capacity of the site to absorb it and its impact on the surrounding area. Care must be taken to ensure that proposals do not undermine the local environment or harm the quality of life of residents. At the same time, the provision of carefully managed attractions and facilities can help to support conservation interests by providing new uses for historic buildings.

4.5.26 The same philosophy can be applied to proposals outside of the urban area. For example, the North Kent Marshes Study has identified the opportunity to promote a better understanding of the Medway Marshes and its nature conservation interest through tourism. There is substantial scope to capitalise on the wildlife aspect of the area to complement the attractions within the urban area.

- 4.5.27 In developing proposals, consideration should be given to the opportunities that exist for linkages with other attractions and facilities, for example, between Chatham Maritime and the Historic Dockyard.

POLICY ED12: NEW TOURIST FACILITIES

The development of new tourist attractions and facilities will be permitted, particularly at the following sites defined on the proposals map :

- (i) Rochester Riverside Action Area (see policy S7);*
- (ii) Chatham Maritime (South of Basin 1. Mixed Use Zone - see policy S8);*
- (iii) Chatham Historic Dockyard (see policy S9);*
- (iv) Bloors Wharf, Gillingham.*

Hotels

- 4.5.28 In order to assist the continued development of tourism in Medway, it is important to provide a full range of serviced accommodation to meet the needs of visitors, whether visiting for business or leisure purposes. Existing hotel provision is relatively limited in type, size and quality. The council is keen to reverse this position and to attract major hotel operators in order to promote the image of Medway as a business and tourist centre. Two sites for small hotels already have planning permission at Will Adams Way in Gillingham and at Beechings Way as part of a small mixed-use proposal.
- 4.5.29 There is considerable scope for additional hotel bedspaces, catering for both short stay visitors and business users. There is also scope for exhibition and conference facilities in the area. Hotels can make a positive contribution to urban regeneration and - in support of sustainable development and the sequential test - should be located in, or on the edge of, town centres. There is an opportunity for a hotel to be located in Chatham as the “city” centre for Medway. The council also considers that a further hotel would be appropriate on the Rochester Riverside, as part of the master plan for the area. Finally, hotel facilities will be appropriate at Chatham Maritime (south of Basin 1) if developed in conjunction with a major visitor attraction.

POLICY ED13: HOTELS

The development of hotels and associated facilities will be permitted in the following locations:

- (i) within, or on the edge of, Chatham town centre;*
- (ii) within the Rochester Riverside Action Area;*
- (iii) on Land South of Basin 1, Chatham Maritime, in conjunction with a major visitor attraction.*

Proposals for additional hotel facilities in other locations will be permitted provided;

- (iv) they are well related to Strood, Rochester, Gillingham or Rainham town centres; or*
- (v) they would positively contribute to the regeneration and renewal of a larger site or area within the defined urban boundary.*

Bed and Breakfast Accommodation and Guest Houses

- 4.5.30 Small scale accommodation such as bed and breakfast establishments and guest houses make an important contribution to the range of tourist accommodation and the number of available bed spaces. The local plan seeks to encourage the provision of such accommodation as part of the process of promoting the growth of tourism, subject to proposals having no adverse affect on local amenity. Planning permission will not always be required for such accommodation, where it is provided on a small scale within a dwelling house. However, for all proposals where permission is required, the council will have regard to the size and location of the property in assessing the impact of the proposal on amenity. Particular regard will be given to whether the property is located in an area where increased traffic activity would be detrimental to local amenity and whether the property has adequate off-street parking or there are on-street parking spaces available.

POLICY ED14: BED AND BREAKFAST ACCOMMODATION AND GUEST HOUSES

Bed and breakfast or guest house accommodation will be permitted providing there are no adverse affects on amenity, especially with regard to traffic and parking provision.

Self Catering and Caravan and Camping Sites

- 4.5.31 The council is aware of the importance of other types of accommodation, namely self-catering and touring caravan and camping sites. Self-catering facilities include chalets, permanent caravans or buildings converted specifically for this purpose such as farm buildings. Self-catering holidays have become increasingly popular in recent years. The opportunities for increasing the provision of self-catering accommodation are, however, fairly limited. There is an established chalet and caravan park at Allhallows-on-Sea, situated on the Hoo Peninsula overlooking the Thames Estuary. Sites for touring caravans and camping are also very limited, with only one recognised site at Woolmans Wood close to Rochester Airport. However, this site has a relatively poor environment due to motorway and aircraft noise. In 1996, a youth hostel opened in converted farm buildings close to Capstone Country Park. This has given a significant boost to the provision of low cost accommodation, especially for young people visiting the area.
- 4.5.32 There is a need for additional facilities to take advantage of Medway's strategic location between London and Europe. Such facilities need to be sensitively developed to avoid conflict with their surroundings. In considering proposals, regard will be given to their compatibility with existing uses in the area and the scope for integration with the surrounding landscape.

POLICY ED15: SELF-CATERING ACCOMMODATION

With the exception of Woolmans Wood caravan park, proposals which would result in the loss of existing self-catering tourist accommodation or touring caravan and camping sites will not be permitted, unless there is a proposal to relocate within the locality.

Proposals for new facilities will be permitted provided it can be demonstrated that :

- (i) the scale of development would not adversely affect local amenity, nature conservation interests or be an intrusive element in the surrounding landscape; and***
- (ii) the local highway network is capable of supporting the scale of development proposed; and***
- (iii) the facilities associated with the development are of a design and scale in keeping with the locality.***

Walking and Cycling

- 4.5.33 The varied landscapes of Medway (from the North Downs to the Medway Marshes) make it an attractive place for walkers and cyclists including those passing through the area on holiday. Interest in the latter has been further stimulated by the new youth hostel at Capstone Farm.
- 4.5.34 There are three important long distance footpaths in the form of the North Downs Way, the Pilgrims Way and the Saxon Shore Way. The council will seek to improve the signage of these footpaths and encourage the provision of better links within the wider footpath network. The council has produced circular walk guides for the Hoo Peninsula, Cuxton and Halling.
- 4.5.35 For cyclists travelling through the area, its attractiveness is often marred by the dangers that they face from traffic on key routes such as the A2, and the lack of dedicated cycle routes. The council will seek the provision of safer and more appropriate cycle routes throughout the area, and will raise awareness of these routes through tourist initiatives. These include support for the work being done by Sustrans to develop the Inverness to Dover national cycle route which passes through the area. The issues relating to walking and cycling are discussed in more detail in the transportation chapter.
- 4.5.36 The current and potential cycle and walking routes, and in particular the areas of high landscape quality through which they pass, represent a potentially significant tourism resource which could appeal to a wide range of visitors. Small-scale facilities, including overnight accommodation and refreshment stops, would add significantly to their attraction. However, proposals must be sensitive to their location and should embody high design standards.

POLICY ED16: TOURIST FACILITIES FOR WALKERS AND CYCLISTS

Small-scale tourist facilities to meet the needs of walkers and cyclists, including refreshment stops and overnight accommodation, will be permitted. These should be complementary to the surrounding area and well related to long distance footpaths or cycleways.

4.6 Environmental Appraisal

- 4.6.1 In accordance with the guidance contained at paragraphs 4.16 to 4.22 of PPG12 “*Development Plans*” the policies in this chapter have been subject to environmental appraisal.
- 4.6.2 The policies protect existing businesses and assist the development of further employment opportunities. They encourage the reuse of brownfield sites and restrict inappropriate out of centre development, whilst encouraging mixed land uses. Overall the policies serve to reduce the need to travel and protect open space and the countryside.
- 4.6.3 Industrial uses inappropriate to the urban area are directed to Kingsnorth. This is sustainable in that it concentrates these industries to one area, rather than being dispersed throughout Medway. The advantages of utilising Kingsnorth in this manner are considered to outweigh the negative aspects of its relative isolation.
- 4.6.4 With regards to tourism, the policies encourage the use of sustainable forms of transport, and facilitate access to such forms of transport. Existing tourist facilities are protected while new tourist facilities, which serve to boost the local economy, are promoted only when they are accessible to sustainable forms of transport and serve to enhance the area.

4.7 Monitoring Measures

- 4.7.1 The performance of the Plan in meeting its aims with regard to economic development will be judged against the following criteria :
- (i) The take-up of allocations and commitments against the structure plan requirement;
 - (ii) The quality of employment sites available in the area and the range and amount of industrial and commercial uses that are being developed;
 - (iii) The volume of employment land and floorspace lost to other uses;
 - (iv) The level of unemployment;

- (v) The location of new tourist attractions and their relationship with existing attractions;
- (vi) The numbers of new tourist bed spaces in hotels, holiday sites and guest houses.

HOUSING

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 Housing provision is probably the most contentious issue which the local plan has to address. On the one hand there is the requirement to meet the future housing needs of the local population and ensure that the area makes a proper contribution to the level expected across Kent and the South East region. On the other hand, there is widespread concern over the use of “fresh” land for building, the loss of open spaces and so called “town cramming”.
- 5.1.2 When providing for new housing the council has to have full regard to national, regional and structure plan guidance. In particular this establishes the overall scale of provision for which the local plan must make sites available. However, in arriving at the pattern of development, the council has also had regard to many other factors including local demographic trends, the performance of the local housing market and the likely contribution from other housing providers in addition to private companies building for sale. Finally, every effort has been made, as far as possible, to match actual provision with identified needs. For example, a new emphasis is given to the provision of smaller units of accommodation for non-family use.
- 5.1.3 Where significant new developments are being proposed, the council is determined to do all that it can to minimise their environmental impact, ensure that the need for community and other facilities is met and that higher and innovative standards of design are employed.

5.2 Policy Context

Central Government Guidance

- 5.2.1 Government policy, which is the subject of PPG3 “*Housing*”, and also referred to in PPG1 “*General Policy and Principles*”, requires the planning system to provide an adequate and continuous supply of land for housing which will provide choice and a range of housing types to meet an increasingly varied range of requirements. These include single persons, small households, the elderly, those with special needs and those seeking affordable housing.
- 5.2.2 At the same time it requires that established environmental policies are maintained, including the continued protection of the Green Belt and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty; the conservation of natural habitats, the protection of the countryside and the best and most versatile agricultural land and the conservation and enhancement of the urban environment and built heritage.
- 5.2.3 In order to meet the requirement for new housing and at the same time maintain conservation policies, full and effective use should be made of land within

existing urban areas, including the use of neglected, unused or derelict land and the conversion, improvement and redevelopment of existing buildings. At the same time, “town cramming” should be avoided and the green spaces which all towns need for recreation and amenity must be protected.

- 5.2.4 Further advice on housing is contained in PPG13 “*Transport*”. This states that when located in urban areas, housing development can be more readily accessible to a choice of means of travel to other facilities such as local shops, schools, work places and places of entertainment. Housing development should, therefore, be located within existing larger urban areas and concentrated in higher density development near public transport centres or alongside corridors well served by public transport. In order to further reduce the need to travel to work, employment and residential uses should, where feasible, be juxtaposed. The scope for housing within mixed use developments is referred to in PPG6 “*Town Centres and Retailing*”.
- 5.2.5 Where these needs cannot be met in central locations, alternative locations for housing should be capable of being well served by rail or other forms of public transport. Sporadic housing development should not take place in the countryside and significant expansion of housing in villages should be avoided where this is likely to result in commuting by car to urban areas and travel needs are unlikely to be well served by public transport.
- 5.2.6 Government policy on affordable housing is contained in PPG3 and Circular 6/98. Where there is a lack of affordable housing to meet local needs, authorities may set an overall target for its provision throughout the plan area and set targets for specific sites. Authorities may negotiate with developers to include an element of affordable housing, both on allocated housing sites and on windfall sites. A uniform quota should not be imposed on all developments.
- 5.2.7 In rural areas, small sites in, or adjoining, villages may be released for affordable housing to meet local needs, but such sites must not be allocated for housing in the local plan and market housing should not normally be permitted. These sites are known as “rural exception sites”.

Regional Policy

- 5.2.8 Housing policy for the South East was set out in 1994 in RPG9. This pointed out that the number of households in the Region had grown faster than the rate of population growth since 1971 and was projected to grow from 7 million in 1991 to 8 million in 2011. The faster rate of growth was attributed to greater longevity and more people living on their own. Development plans are therefore required to ensure that additional housing is affordable and meets the needs of the growing number of small households.
- 5.2.9 The Region was required to plan to meet its own generated demand for housing and not add to a continued small out-flow of households to other regions. The Secretary of State had decided that a rate of provision of 57,000 dwellings per year should be made for the region over the 20 years from 1991 to 2011. The

Guidance set out the geographical distribution for the first 15 years of this period and required a total of 5,800 dwellings per annum to be provided in Kent from 1991 to 2006. In making this provision, it had taken into account the expected shift in the longer term of new development pressures and employment opportunities from the west to the east of the region and areas of development potential such as the East Thames Corridor (now the Thames Gateway). This figure provides the basis for the provision of housing land in the adopted Kent Structure Plan, 1996.

5.2.10 House prices in London and the South East have been, and remain on average, higher than in other regions. Policies on affordable housing are therefore particularly relevant in the region. Assessing the need for affordable housing is best done at the local level in local plans.

5.2.11 In a section on the East Thames Corridor, the Guidance recognised that with environmental improvement, there was considerable potential to realise the natural advantages of the many riverside locations and to improve amenity through high quality housing and attractive waterside developments, whilst taking into account the risks posed by flooding and of contamination from past industrial uses.

5.2.12 The regional strategy for the South East was reviewed in March 2001.

Thames Gateway Planning Framework

5.2.13 “*The Thames Gateway Planning Framework*” (RPG9a) recognises the role that can be played by existing residential areas in helping to meet housing needs through conversions, refurbishment programmes and small scale housing schemes. Local authorities, where necessary, are urged to encourage an improvement in the quality and amenities of both the housing stock and the local environment.

5.2.14 The framework requires priority to be given to developments which involve the recycling and reuse of vacant and under-used urban sites, before consideration is given to the release of greenfield land. The aim is to create a sustainable relationship between homes, workplaces and other facilities. Proposals which minimise the need to travel, especially by private car, are also to be encouraged.

5.2.15 However, it is acknowledged that the main scope for new housing provision is on the major opportunity sites where the full range of housing needs, from affordable housing to the executive market, should be catered for.

5.2.16 The importance of the quality of the residential environment in influencing the perception of the Thames Gateway as a place to live is recognised. Whilst the provision of open space and housing densities which are sensitive to their environment should be encouraged, higher densities should be permitted where they can take advantage of public transport and where access to employment and other facilities can be achieved by walking or cycling.

5.2.17 The framework recognises that Medway is now well placed to make the most of its significant opportunities for high quality housing and business developments. It requires attention to be focused on the urban area for the majority of new development needs, mainly on the many waterfront sites. New development can also provide the focus for the housing regeneration necessary in the inner parts of Strood, Chatham and Gillingham.

5.2.18 On the Hoo Peninsula, the release of land from the Defence Estate at Chattenden is identified as an area of potential, in addition to a campus style development, for an expansion of the community into a new village. It considers it important for there to be a comprehensive response to the full potential at Chattenden and to avoid an incremental erosion of the opportunity and states that consideration of this area should be undertaken through a review of the development plan. The strategy chapter (in policy S14) expands on the issues.

Kent Structure Plan 1996

5.2.19 A principal function of the structure plan is to determine the future scale and distribution of housing provision in Kent. It provides a framework extending over a period from 1991 to 2011. Provision for the periods 1991 to 2001 and 2001 to 2006 are firm, whilst those for the post-2006 period are subject to future review. Kent has an important role to play in pursuing the aims of regional guidance for the eastern part of the region and in responding to the opportunities identified in the Thames Gateway Planning Framework.

5.2.20 In assessing future housing requirements for each District, Kent County Council initially prepared household projections based upon a continuation of recent demographic trends. The main factors taken into account were the Registrar General's population estimates, projected birth and death rates, projected rates of net migration (the surplus or shortfall of persons moving into Kent over those moving out), projected changes in household size, an allowance for vacancies and second homes and provision for a reduction in shared households. By taking into account the effect of specific policies for different parts of the county, which are aimed at altering these trends, the projections were then adjusted to produce policy-based housing provisions for each District.

5.2.21 Whilst the county gained overall from net migration over the 1981-1991 period, the distribution of this was highly variable, with net losses in much of North Kent, and overall gains concentrated in East Kent. Thus the 1991 based trend housing projections for the three periods for Medway are relatively low :

Trend based additional dwelling requirements - Medway

Period	1991-2001	2001-2006	2006-2011	1991-2011
Dwellings	6,000	2,700	2,300	11,000

Source: KCC Technical Working Paper 1/94 (Housing)

5.2.22 However, in establishing the provision to be made for housing development in Medway, the structure plan takes into account factors other than the trend based projections. It recognises that there is a need to match housing provision with the healthy supply of land identified for new economic development. The trend based projections are low due to high rates of out-migration over recent years. The Plan seeks to stem this flow. The policy, therefore, is to boost housing provision well above trend requirements, whilst respecting the physical and environmental capacity of the area.

5.2.23 Policy H1 of the structure plan therefore makes the following housing provision for Medway:

Period	1991-2001	2001-2006	2006-2011	1991-2011
Dwellings	9,000	4,000	3,000	16,000

5.2.24 The structure plan recognises that there are severe limitations on further fresh land release in addition to the development opportunities already identified in the area. The policy emphasis now focuses on recycling land within the urban area in support of regeneration objectives. The provision for 1991-2001 seeks to recognise the scale of existing land supply opportunities for the short to medium term and provides for the accommodation of locally generated household growth and a reduction in out-migration. For the longer term, 2001-2011, the reduced rate of provision recognises growing constraints on land supply. However, for the reasons given in the Introduction, the period of this local plan is limited to 2006.

5.3 Housing Needs and Supply

5.3.1 Many different factors influence the need for, and supply of, housing and it is necessary for the local plan to have regard to all of them. A detailed analysis has been made to develop the strategy and policies for housing which follow and some of the more significant aspects of the analysis are discussed below.

Demographic Factors

5.3.2 The starting point for assessing housing needs is demographic, that is, what key changes are likely to occur in the local population. The most important of these are population growth and changes in the size of households. Figure 5a shows the actual and projected change in the population of the plan area based on past and current trends.

Figure 5a Population Growth 1971 - 2006 (Trend Projection)

Year	1971	1981	1991	1996	2001	2006
Population	228,600	240,300	243,300	245,400	247,500	248,400
% Change		6.4%			1.2%	

Source: KCC Technical Working Paper 1/94

5.3.3 However, based on the scale of development envisaged in the Kent Structure Plan (see paras 5.2.20 - 5.2.23 above) a higher rate of growth is envisaged as shown in Figure 5b.

Figure 5b Population Growth 1991 - 2006 (Kent Structure Plan)

Year	1991	1996	2001	2006
Population	243,300	249,500	255,200	258,200
% Change			6.0%	

Source: KCC Technical Working Paper 1/94

5.3.4 Clearly this projected change in the total population is significant, but of even greater significance is the anticipated increase in the number of households. Figure 5c shows the anticipated continuing decline in the average size of households while Figure 5d sets out the changes in the total number of households in the plan area based on both the trend projection and the position adopted in the structure plan.

Figure 5c Actual and Projected Decrease in Household Size 1971 - 2006

Year	1971	1981	1991	1996	2001	2006
Average Household Size	2.96	2.83	2.61	2.55	2.48	2.42

Source: KCC Technical Working Paper 1/94

Figure 5d Actual and Projected Number of Households 1971-2006

Year	1971	1981	1991	1996	2001	2006
Households (Trend)	74,800	84,400	92,700	95,900	99,100	101,900
% Change		24%			6.3%	
Households (Structure Plan)	74,800	84,400	92,700	97,500	102,200	105,900
% Change		24%			8.6%	

Source: KCC Technical Working Paper 1/94

- 5.3.5 It is readily apparent that in both the trend and structure plan based projections, the number of households is increasing at a greater rate than the total population. This is a feature which is being experienced nationally as well as locally, and it is caused by many factors. People are living longer, leading to an increase in smaller households at the top end of the age range; people are having fewer children, resulting in fewer large households than was traditionally the case; young people are tending to leave home earlier, and so are establishing new households in their own right; and the increased incidence of divorce and separation has also had a marked effect on the average size of households.
- 5.3.6 In summary it can be seen that, whilst on the trend based projection, the total population of the plan area is forecast to increase by only 5,100, the number of households will increase by 9,200. In the structure plan policy based forecast the figures are 14,900 and 13,200 respectively.
- 5.3.7 However, whilst the number of households is one of the prime factors in determining how many dwellings will be required, various other adjustments also need to be made to arrive at the housing requirement. For example, a proportion of the new households identified will not in fact require traditional housing accommodation but instead will be “housed” in various institutional or supported environments. These include, for example, old people receiving full time care in specialist accommodation, people occupying hostels and students in halls of residence.
- 5.3.8 Small proportions also fall into the categories of “shared” and “hidden” households. The former includes people sharing accommodation such as a house and the latter includes persons who would have been expected to set up as a separate household but have not in fact done so, perhaps for financial reasons.

5.3.9 These and other factors explain the disparity between the forecast increase in households and the stated housing requirements in the Kent Structure Plan as set out below.

Figure 5e Comparison of Household Growth and Dwelling Requirements (Kent Structure Plan)

Period	1991-2001	2001-2006	Total
Increase in Households	9,500	3,700	13,200
Housing Requirement	9,000	4,000	13,000

Housing Stock

5.3.10 The housing stock in 1991 was 95,499 units of which 5,142 were vacant. This latter figure equates to a vacancy rate of 5.38% compared to 5% for Kent as a whole. By 1996 the stock had increased to around 98,950 units. The stock is highly varied, ranging from small flats in town centre locations to large period properties. There is a high proportion of older terraced properties in the inner urban core. Further out are large suburban neighbourhoods built since the 1950s.

5.3.11 By comparison to the national average, a high proportion of the stock is owner occupied. In the former Rochester area, Medway Housing Society acquired the City Council housing stock in 1990. In the Gillingham area, housing association property is rapidly increasing as a major source of publicly funded accommodation, whilst council housing continues to slowly reduce in number. Some increase is occurring in the privately rented sector. This sector will become more important with the decline in household size and uncertainties over future growth in the value of owner occupied properties.

5.3.12 Another important trend concerns the conversion of generally older family houses to self-contained flats and 'houses in multiple occupation'. Again this can be seen as a response to the demand for smaller households and a means of funding the refurbishment of older properties. The trend does, of course, mean that the existing stock can be adapted to contribute to meeting future needs and the growth in the number of households. It is also to be encouraged as a means of urban regeneration.

5.3.13 The vacancy rate also deserves comment. As indicated above, it stood at 5.38% in 1991. A proportion of the stock will always be vacant due to people moving, new properties being added to the stock while awaiting their first occupants and other factors. However, the rate in the plan area is higher than in many other areas due to the number of long term empty properties, particularly in and around the established town centres. If these properties could be brought back into use, this would reduce the need for new built properties, result in significant

environmental improvements and add to the vitality of the town centres. A target rate of 3.5% at the end of the Plan period would be challenging, but attainable if relevant initiatives are put in place.

The Housing Market

5.3.14 Figure 5f shows the actual build rate achieved over the 1988-1998 period and compares this with the rate expected in the structure plan.

Figure 5f Housebuilding 1988-1998 Compared To the Predicted Structure Plan Rate

Year	88/89	89/90	90/91	91/92	92/93	93/94	94/95	95/96	96/97	97/98	Total	Av.
Structure Plan Requirement	1160	1160	1160	900	900	900	900	900	900	900	9780	978 pa
Actual Build Rate	1454	1467	391	825	769	669	546	644	598	713	8076	807 pa

Notes: (1) Structure plan requirement 1988/91 relates to the Second Review, 1990, and for 1991/98 the Third Review, 1996.

(2) Figures for 1986/91 include parts of Maidstone and Tonbridge & Malling north of the M2 which were included in the Medway Towns Policy Area at that time.

5.3.15 It will be seen that in only two of the ten years did the build rate match or exceed the policy requirement, and that in recent years it has been consistently below. This clearly shows the effect of the recession in the market and the amount of ground which now has to be made up if the structure plan requirement is to be met over the remainder of the plan period.

5.4 Objectives

5.4.1 Arising from the analysis summarised above and the regular monitoring work carried out by the council, the objectives for the housing strategy are:

- (i) to make sufficient provision for housing to meet the requirements set out in the structure plan;
- (ii) to maximise the use of brownfield sites within the urban area in order to promote regeneration and to limit, as far as possible, the release of fresh land for housing development to minimise environmental damage;
- (iii) to retain and improve the existing housing stock and encourage its most efficient use;
- (iv) to match, as closely as possible, the needs of households with the types of dwellings provided, by encouraging a greater range and choice in the supply of accommodation including different tenures and "affordable dwellings";

- (v) to safeguard the amenity and character of existing residential neighbourhoods;
 - (vi) as far as possible, to maximise accessibility to local services, facilities and employment opportunities in order to achieve a balanced approach to regeneration and reduce the need to travel;
 - (vii) to encourage higher standards of design in new housing to add interest and variety to local areas and, through the provision of life-time homes, to more effectively meet the needs of occupiers, particularly those with special needs.
- 5.4.2 In selecting sites for development these objectives have been fully taken into account and an appraisal of each site made.
- 5.4.3 The selection of sites for inclusion in the Medway Local Plan for residential development is in conformity with Policies H3 and NK2 of the Kent Structure Plan by maximising the use of previously developed land within the urban area. Only then has “fresh” land been considered, firstly within the urban area and then on the edge of the urban area and the villages. This process is in line with the sequential approach to site selection advocated in paragraph 30 of PPG3.
- 5.4.4 The first category of urban sites were “brownfield” sites consisting of land or buildings which had previously been developed. Redevelopment is well underway at St Mary’s Island and other riverside sites are identified for comprehensive regeneration in accordance with RPG9a. Chatham Maritime, Rochester Riverside and Strood Riverside are all at different stages of development and in due course, Strood Waterfront, to the south of the town centre will come forward as the last major riverside regeneration project.
- 5.4.5 Other brownfield sites allocated for housing include: industrial or commercial land or buildings which no longer meet modern day requirements and non-conforming uses in residential areas; small vacant infill sites; redundant institutions; car parks; and sites where redevelopment would enhance a conservation area.
- 5.4.6 The next category of urban allocations were greenfield sites not previously developed. These comprised: vacant sites where planning permission has lapsed but the principle of residential development has been established; land previously reserved for road schemes or served by new roads; sites allocated for residential development in the Medway Towns Local Plan, 1992, and subsequently carried forward; former military land; and redundant allotments.
- 5.4.7 Every allocated housing site is within a reasonable walking distance of bus or rail routes which provide good accessibility to services, facilities and employment. Medway retains a wide selection of local shopping centres, parades and corner shops which are accessible to most of the allocated sites and all cater for their daily shopping and other services.
- 5.4.8 Despite giving priority to the allocation of housing sites within the urban area, it is also necessary to identify greenfield sites outside the urban boundary in order to meet the housing requirements in Policy H1 of the Kent Structure Plan.

- 5.4.9 The site-selection process specifically takes account of the key planning policy constraints that affect land in and around the Medway towns. These include Green Belt, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Strategic Gaps, Special Landscape Areas and Areas of Local Landscape and Nature Conservation Importance. In addition, the process takes account of important strategic development principles set out in RPG9a. These include: the need to limit outward expansion and development on fresh land; protection for features of local landscape importance such as green hillsides and backdrops; and to steer development away from areas of the urban fringe which provide locally valuable countryside and recreation opportunities, particularly in the area to the north and east of Gillingham.
- 5.4.10 Having regard to these features, only four substantial greenfield sites are identified as urban extensions, two at Wainscott, one at Grange Farm and one at Hoo St. Werburgh. The latter is the largest village in Medway and is free of the countryside conservation policies which apply elsewhere. It has a wide range of social and community facilities, a good frequency of bus services to the urban area and beyond, and is relatively well located to serve the employment areas at Kingsnorth and the Isle of Grain.
- 5.4.11 Overall, for the period of the Local Plan up to 2006, 80% of land and dwellings identified in outstanding planning permissions and allocations for housing will utilise previously developed sites.

5.5 Policies and Reasoned Justification

Housing Land Allocations

- 5.5.1 As indicated above, the Kent Structure Plan requires provision to be made for 13,000 new dwellings over the plan period. The local plan achieves this as follows:

Figure 5g Housing Land Supply 1991-2006

A	Kent Structure Plan requirement 1991-2006	13,000
B	Dwelling completed (all sites) 1.5.91 – 31.3.00	6,181
C	Large sites (5 or more units) with planning permission as at 31.3.00 (see schedule at Appendix 2)	2,585
D	Allowance for completion on small sites (less than 5 units) 2000-2006	528
E	'Windfall' allowance 2000-2006	513

F	Sub Total (B+C+D+E)	9,807
G	Shortfall (A-F)	3,193
H	Proposed allocations	3,191
I	Total Supply (F+H)	12,923
J	'Deficit' against structure plan requirement	-2

5.5.2 Policy H1 sets out proposals for new housing development, over and above those which already have the benefit of planning permission. Each proposed site has a unique reference number and an indicative capacity that is neither a target nor a maximum figure, but merely reflects the council's initial assessment of the site.

5.5.3 Development guidelines and principles are set out for the larger sites. These summarise the requirements for the site to which intending developers will be expected to have full regard. In certain cases it is also intended to prepare more detailed development briefs before planning applications are considered. Development proposals will need to satisfy all other relevant policies in this plan. Attention is particularly drawn to policy S6 on planning obligations. The development of most of the sites in policy H1 will impose additional pressure on local primary schools and contributions will be sought for the provision of either school extensions or new schools.

POLICY H1: NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Residential development will be permitted on the following sites, as defined on the Proposals Map, subject to the requirements set out below.

All sites which meet the appropriate size thresholds will be subject to Local Plan policies requiring the provision of open space, affordable housing and a mix of dwelling types. New residential development on these sites should be in accordance with policy BNE3, which sets out the council's noise standards.

ME004	West of Vixen Close, Lordswood.	15units
ME045	Land adj. 1 Wiltshire Close, Chatham.	6units
ME113	Chatham Maritime (South of Basin 1) and St. Marys Island. To be provided in conjunction with	250 units

mixed use development. Master plan to be prepared and adopted to guide development. See policy S8. The dwellings will be provided by increasing the density of development on St. Mary's Island and identifying new sites at Chatham Maritime.

ME154	130A Beacon Road, Chatham.	10 units
ME193	Corner of Foord Street and Delce Road, Rochester.	19 units
ME250	Medway Brick and Stone Works and Wharf, Lower Upnor. <i>Vehicular access to be taken only from Upnor Road; Site of Nature Conservation Interest in Upchat Lane to be retained; possible site contamination to be investigated and treated; local shop to be provided (see policy R8); traffic impact assessment required.</i> <i>The following measures will be required to safeguard the interest of the S.S.S.I.: Access to the S.S.S.I. will be required for research and habitat management purposes, but general access restricted to avoid damage to the site; evidence to be provided that drainage, regrading and similar measures to the quarry face will not be required; there will be no shading of the quarry faces; provision to be made for management of the nature conservation interest.</i>	110 units
ME254	Strood Riverside, Canal Road. <i>An investigation of possible contamination is required and any necessary treatment carried out; noise impact assessment required and any necessary mitigation measures implemented; an archaeological assessment will be required; vehicular access to be provided from Commissioners Road and Canal Road but no linking them (except for possible bus link); flood mitigation measures are to be investigated and if necessary implemented; river wall to be repaired. Traffic impact assessment required.</i>	104 units
ME270	Land rear of 21 - 27 Pilgrims Way, Cuxton.	9 units
ME293	Rochester Riverside. <i>Included in an Action Area (see policy S7); to be the subject of a development brief; traffic impact assessment required. The overall housing provision will be higher than 300 dwellings but the remaining units will come forward</i>	300 units

beyond the end of the plan period.

ME323	Land between 190 - 200 Beacon Road, Chatham.	8 units
ME342	Mercury Close adj. to 62 - 72 Shorts Way, Borstal.	5 units
ME371	All Saints Hospital, Magpie Hall Road, Chatham. To be the subject of a development brief and a traffic and road safety impact assessment; site to be investigated for any possible contamination and any necessary treatment implemented; two points of vehicular access required to Magpie Hall Road; a community facility And open space to be provided and a contribution to primary school provision will be sought.	262 units
ME374	Former paint factory, Bush Road, Cuxton. Investigation of contamination required and any necessary measures to be implemented; pedestrian facilities to be provided in Bush Road.	70 units
ME375	Commissioners Road, Strood. Site to be investigated for possible contamination and any necessary treatment implemented; vehicular access to be taken from access road to the west; public access to riverbank to be provided and river wall to be provided; flood mitigation measures to be investigated and if necessary implemented; traffic impact assessment required.	100 units
ME376	B.T. depot, Fort Clarence, Borstal Road Rochester. Vehicular access requires improvement, possibly in the form of a mini roundabout on St Margaret's Street; improved pedestrian links required to St Margarets Street and Maidstone Road; Ancient Monument Consent required, and setting of Fort Clarence to be safeguarded; site to be investigated for possible contamination and any necessary treatment implemented; possible underground works to be investigated as part of site survey. The repair of the Gun Tower must be carried out as an integral part of the development.	33 units
ME383	Cross Street, Chatham.	26 units
ME385	32 New Road/ Five Bells Lane, Rochester Access to be taken from Five Bells Lane.	10 units
ME386	328 - 338 and 342 - 344 High Street,	15 units

Rochester. Site capacity is 30 units of which 15 to be provided by 2006 and 15 to come forward after the end of the plan period.

- ME387** *Barrier House, Barrier Road, Chatham. 68 units*
Conversion of building to be investigated and setting of Fort Amherst to be protected. Development will be limited to the footprint and height of the existing building. The site to be subject to an appropriate degree of archaeological survey and recording during the course of development.
- ME389** *Rear of Elm Avenue, Chattenden. 105 units*
Vehicular access to be taken from Main Road.
- ME390** *East of Bell's Lane, Hoo St. Werburgh. 340 units*
Subject to: the retention and strengthening of existing screen planning; the retention of existing pond and trees; the completion and opening of a new roundabout at the junction of Bells Lane and Ratcliffe Highway, forming part of the A228 improvement scheme, prior to the first occupation of the dwellings; a traffic impact assessment being submitted; up to three points of vehicular access being provided, together with improvements to and/or traffic calming in Bells Lane; existing footpaths/public rights of way being retained; contributions towards improvements to services and facilities required as a direct result of developing the site including extension of Hoo St. Werburgh primary school; and the preparation of an ecological study. A development brief to be approved by the council will guide development. (The overall capacity of the site is 558 units, 340 to be provided up to 2006 and the remaining 218 to come forward beyond the end of the plan period).
- ME391** *Former junior school site, Avery Way, 36 units*
Allhallows. Subject to retention of playing field for public use. Access to be provided from Avery Way, and remaining trees to be retained and protected.
- ME403** *Southern Water site, Capstone Road, 60 units*
Chatham. Mature trees to be retained; disused wells within the site should be backfilled before construction begins; contaminated site investigation required and any necessary mitigation measures implemented.
- ME404** *Seeboard site, R/O High Street, Rochester. 53 units*
Access to be taken from The Terrace; retail

frontage to the High Street to be retained.

ME406	<i>New Stairs, Dock Road, Chatham. Access to be taken from New Stairs; development to respect the historic character of the World Naval Base.</i>	<i>41 units</i>
ME407	<i>Gray's Garage, High Street, Chatham. Site to be investigated for possible contamination and any necessary treatment implemented.</i>	<i>28 units</i>
ME409	<i>Hilda Road, Chatham (former laundry). Site to be investigated for possible contamination and any necessary treatment implemented.</i>	<i>5 units</i>
ME410	<i>Cooks Wharf, off High Street, Rochester. Site to be investigated for possible contamination and any necessary treatment implemented.</i>	<i>18 units</i>
ME413	<i>Strood Waterfront, Strood. Included in an Action Area (see policy S10) mixed use regeneration scheme; housing units likely to be on former industrial land; site to be investigated for possible contamination and any necessary treatment implemented; traffic impact assessment required.</i>	<i>100 units</i>
MC001	<i>Lodge Hill, Chattenden. Relatively isolated site; provision of shop, pub or other community facility to be sought.</i>	<i>47 units (net)</i>
MC005	<i>352 - 356 Luton Road, Luton.</i>	<i>22 units</i>
MC006	<i>18 - 24 Orchard Street, Gillingham.</i>	<i>7 units</i>
MC007	<i>36 - 52 High Street, Rainham.</i>	<i>21 units</i>
GL125	<i>St Peters Church, Trafalgar Street, Gillingham. Unusual site configuration requires sensitive design approach, featuring flats.</i>	<i>13 units</i>
GL132	<i>Duncan Road, Gillingham. Access from Duncan Road only; redevelopment should include frontage development to complement character of the street.</i>	<i>20 units</i>
GL134	<i>Former Seeboard depot, Windsor Road, Gillingham.</i>	<i>55 units</i>
GL135	<i>Borough Road, Gillingham. Access to be taken from Borough Road only; requires relocation/re-siting of</i>	<i>25 units</i>

existing commercial business.

GL143	Station Road, Rainham. Remainder of a larger site identified in the 1992 local plan.	7 units
GL147	Mill Road/Arden Street, Gillingham. 3 or 4 storey infill development required that fronts Mill Road, where the existing building line should be strengthened.	21 units
GL150	Amherst Hill, Brompton. Mature trees to be retained; scale and character appropriate to its Conservation Area location required. Development will be subject to an agreement to secure a contribution towards a comprehensive restoration of the Scheduled Ancient Monument, and the provision, improvement and maintenance of public open space in the vicinity of the site. A detailed design brief to be drawn up to guide the development, with a view to minimising the visual impact on Fort Amherst and the local area. The brief should address dwelling size and height; appearance; orientation; the definition of detailed development boundaries by reference to the landform and existing trees; vehicular and pedestrian access; layout; the provision and disposition of open space; and landscaping (including the retention of trees where appropriate.)	34 units
GL152	East of Gillingham Golf Course, Gillingham. Possible access via existing garage court; two storey medium density housing, design should take account of proximity to the Medway Towns Northern Relief Road.	8 units
GL159	89 Ingram Road, Gillingham. Development brief approved to guide development.	5 units
GL174	Former Rainham Southern Relief Road land, Rainham. Development brief approved to guide development; must retain existing community orchard and as many trees as possible on the remainder of site; area at rear of the parish church to be accessed from Hurst Place, with the remainder from Orchard Street; pedestrian links to Rainham town centre to be provided; cycleway to be provided through site; development off Orchard Street to be of higher density, reflecting its town centre location and its proximity to existing off-street car parks.	26 units
GL176	Lower Lines, Gillingham.	55 units

Dependent upon dedication of land for open space and safeguarding of setting of adjoining Scheduled Ancient Monument; mature trees to be retained; scale and character appropriate to its Conservation Area location required. Development will be subject to an agreement to secure a contribution towards a comprehensive restoration of the Scheduled Ancient Monument, and the provision, improvement and maintenance of public open space in the vicinity of the site.

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|--------------|---|------------------|
| GL178 | Grange Farm, Gillingham.
<i>Development brief to be prepared; site to be developed in sectors well related to the existing highway network; maintain setting of Grench Manor; 1.1 hectare primary school site to be reserved adjacent to Hazelmere Drive and the playing fields to the south; travel appraisal report required; no new access to be taken from Medway Towns Northern Relief Road.</i> | 250 units |
| GL180 | Howlands Nursery, Christmas Street, Gillingham.
<i>Access via Christmas Street; land to the north to be provided for public open space maximum two storeys set back into site to maintain distant views of St Mary Magdalene Church; site to be investigated for possible contamination and any necessary treatment implemented.</i> | 45 units |
| GL181 | Medway House, 277 Gillingham Road.
<i>As much as possible of original structure to be retained.</i> | 12 units |
| GL182 | 53 - 57 James Street, Gillingham
<i>A frontage flatted development will facilitate removal or relocation of an inappropriately located use.</i> | 7 units |
| GL188 | Little York Farm, Lower Twydall Lane, Twydall.
<i>Must respect character of the Lower Twydall Conservation Area and that of Lower Twydall Lane.</i> | 16 units |
| GL189 | Coach repair depot, Pump Lane, Lower Rainham.
<i>Notional capacity only; need to respect rural character of area and that of Pump Lane will determine real capacity of the site; site to be investigated for possible contamination and any necessary treatment implemented.</i> | 9 units |

The following two sites will be the subject of a development brief that will also incorporate the proposed open space south

of Hoo Road. Development will be conditional upon the specific identified requirements and also contributions being made towards:

- (i) the provision of educational and community facilities, a general practitioners' surgery, off-site traffic management measures and any highway improvements required to access the sites; and*
- (ii) a noise impact assessment and the implementation of any required mitigation measures; and*
- (iii) the provision of a landscaping strip along the boundary with the Medway Towns Northern Relief Road.*

ME392 **East of Higham Road, Wainscott. 184 units**
Main vehicular access to be from Hoo Road; a second access serving a maximum of 50 dwellings may be taken from Higham Road. Traffic impact assessment required.

ME393 **East of Wainscott Road, Wainscott. 96 units**
Vehicular access to be taken from Hoo Road; pedestrian and cycle route connections to be provided into Wainscott Road; an additional emergency vehicle access to be provided; an area of 0.4 hectares to be reserved for a doctor's surgery; local shops to be provided to meet neighbourhood needs; traffic impact assessment required.

Retention of Existing Stock and Safeguarding of Committed Housing Sites

- 5.5.4 The council wishes to ensure that existing housing is retained in residential use as far as possible. Redevelopment or change of use of existing dwellings for non-residential uses on a large scale would increase the pressure for the release of fresh land for housing (both in the countryside and on open land within the urban area). The council, however, recognises that, in exceptional circumstances, some changes to provide specifically needed facilities, such as a community centre, may be of benefit to a local community. It is also an important objective to ensure that residential areas continue to be pleasant places in which to live. Subject to there being no material change in the circumstances relating to a particular site, there will be no objection in principle to a renewal of permission for residential use should an existing unimplemented planning permission expire. The development for other purposes of housing sites with planning permission will not be permitted.

POLICY H2: RETENTION OF HOUSING

Development which would result in a net loss of existing residential accommodation (or the loss of sites with unimplemented planning permission for residential development) will not be permitted unless:

- (i) it can be demonstrated that the existing building or site is unsuitable for continued residential use; or***
- (ii) the proposal would provide facilities of significant benefit to the immediate local community.***

Affordable Housing

5.5.5 The council has identified that there are significant numbers of people who need homes but cannot afford to buy on the housing market. There is a need to provide these people with opportunities to obtain homes through affordable housing. This is defined as both low cost market housing and housing which is made available at a subsidised cost to people with insufficient income to gain access to full home ownership or to occupy houses generally available on the local housing market suitable for their needs. It includes social housing, consisting of rented or shared ownership dwellings provided at a subsidised cost by registered social landlords (e.g. housing associations) or local authorities. Low cost home ownership involving purchase at a discounted price is also included, provided that the long-term retention of the dwellings as affordable housing can be guaranteed. This latter form of affordable housing will only be acceptable to the council where other forms of affordable housing tenure cannot be achieved. In order to reflect local need, the preferred form of affordable housing will be rented tenure.

5.5.6 Occupancy can be controlled in the case of affordable housing managed by a registered social landlord without additional controls being applied by the council as Local Planning Authority. In the other cases, planning conditions or obligations can be used to control occupancy in the long term.

5.5.7 Housing needs surveys were carried out for the former District Council areas of Rochester and Gillingham in 1997 and 1998 respectively. They took into account housing conditions, concealed households, overcrowding and the special needs of disabled people. They also explored the types of tenure and the means by which householders expected to meet their needs, either by upgrading their existing accommodation or by moving home. Household incomes were measured against the cost of housing in Medway and a total of 3,836 households emerged who were seeking to move but could not afford to buy or rent at current market prices at the time of the survey.

- 5.5.8 To this figure was added those on the housing waiting list and those registered as homeless, which, when set against likely provision for the survey years, left a current unsatisfied housing need for 7,136 dwellings.
- 5.5.9 These findings were taken into account to produce an estimate of net housing needs likely to arise between 1998 and 2006, which amounted to a total of 10,695 dwellings. The majority of these needs are for rented accommodation. This substantially exceeds the total number of dwellings expected to come forward on allocated sites (c. 3,000) to provide for all housing requirements in Medway up to 2006.
- 5.5.10 The council has, therefore, set an objective of providing 1,000 affordable new dwellings by 2004. It will seek to achieve this objective, in part, by negotiating with developers for the inclusion of an element of affordable housing on sites where evidence of affordable housing need has been established.
- 5.5.11 In assessing sites that come forward, the size, suitability and economics of the provision of affordable housing will be taken into account, including the proximity of local services and facilities and access to public transport. It follows, therefore, that urban sites will provide the majority of affordable housing opportunities. Wherever possible, sites should incorporate a mix of affordable housing types, such as family housing, homes for smaller households and also "lifetime" homes (that are designed to be adapted easily for those with special needs). The proportion of affordable housing on each site will be dependent upon the particular site characteristics and will be subject to negotiation.
- 5.5.12 Circular 6/98 sets a size threshold where local authorities can negotiate for the provision of affordable housing. These size thresholds are set out in Policy H3 and negotiations will take place in relation to all applications for housing development over each threshold. A number of sites have been identified in areas of housing need on which the council has set a minimum target of 25% for the provision of affordable housing. In some cases a different figure reflects negotiations which have already taken place. These sites will provide 429 affordable houses. This figure could increase if housing associations were to acquire any of these sites in order to fully develop them themselves.

POLICY H3: AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Where a need has been identified, affordable housing will be sought as a proportion of residential developments of a substantial scale.

A substantial scale is defined as follows:

- (i) in settlements in rural areas with a population of 3,000 or fewer, developments which include 15 or more dwellings or where the site area is 0.5 hectare or more;*
- (ii) within the urban area, developments which include 25 or more dwellings or where the site area is 1 hectare or more.*

Agreements to permanently retain the affordable housing in this tenure will be sought.

Matters to be taken into account when affordable housing is negotiated, will be:

- (a) the suitability of the site for affordable housing development;*
- (b) the economics of provision;*
- (c) the proximity of local services and facilities and access to public transport;*
- (d) the realisation of other planning objectives as priorities on a site;*
- (e) the need to achieve a successful housing development taking into account the appropriate mix of affordable housing types and the proportion of affordable housing and its subsequent management.*

The following targets are adopted for specific large sites as a basis for negotiation:

<i>All Saints Hospital</i>	<i>30</i>
<i>Strood Riverside North (Canal Road and Commissioners Road)</i>	<i>51</i>
<i>Rochester Riverside</i>	<i>75 (by 2006)</i>

<i>Lower Lines</i>	14
<i>Grange Farm</i>	62
<i>Borough Road</i>	6
<i>Christmas Street</i>	11
<i>Strood Waterfront Action Area</i>	25 (by 2006)
<i>East of Higham Road, Wainscott</i>	46
<i>East of Wainscott Road, Wainscott</i>	24
<i>East of Bells Lane, Hoo St. Werburgh</i>	85 (by 2006)

- 5.5.13 In addition to the provision of affordable housing as part of a larger development, the council will also work in conjunction with registered social landlords to bring forward smaller sites for development. The local plan makes an allowance of over 1,100 dwellings coming forward on unidentified sites during the plan period. It is anticipated that a number of those will be acquired and developed by the housing associations.
- 5.5.14 Other sites could also make a contribution towards affordable housing but without the involvement of public subsidy. The council and the registered social landlords could act as enablers for such arrangements, which would bring forward cross-subsidised low cost market housing which, through ‘staircasing’, would not provide any protected long-term affordable housing but would help to provide for a mix of housing types and prices. Wainscott and Hoo are two areas in particular where the scale of development would warrant the provision of a full mix of housing.
- 5.5.15 The council will seek to make further provision for affordable housing through a continuation of its existing housing policies. These include an empty homes strategy (consisting of a living over the shop initiative, bringing vacant properties back into use and the conversion of buildings in other uses to residential use) whereby up to 100 affordable dwellings per year could come forward. Support will also continue to be given to those seeking to obtain private rented accommodation. Where existing dwellings are in very poor condition and refurbishment proves to be uneconomic, some redevelopment will be considered as part of wider neighbourhood improvement schemes.
- 5.5.16 Where an affordable housing need can be established in the rural area, Government policy allows an exception to be considered to the normal policies of restraint outside existing villages if there is no other way whereby this need could be met. In some parts of the rural area, large sites have been allocated for residential development in policy H1. Where those sites are suitable for the inclusion of an element of affordable housing to meet local needs this will be sought. Accordingly, “exceptions” to the allocations and policies in this plan are not considered necessary.

Housing in Urban Areas and Town Centres

- 5.5.17 A key element of national housing policy is to minimise the loss of greenfield sites for residential use by making the best use of development opportunities within the urban areas. In addition to the development of sites specifically allocated in the local plan, this can be achieved in a number of ways: the development of vacant or derelict land, the conversion of buildings formerly in a non-residential use and of good townscape quality, the redevelopment of existing residential or non-residential properties, the development of small infill sites and the sub-division of large residential properties.
- 5.5.18 The potential exists for residential development in, or close to, the town centres in several forms: individual housing schemes; as part of a mix of uses in a commercially orientated development; and by the utilisation of underused floor space above existing commercial premises. People living in town centres can contribute to town centre vitality and economic health through their support of local businesses. They can also benefit from accessibility to a range of services, accessibility to public transport facilities and to employment opportunities. Town centre housing can contribute to the range of housing choice, by providing for small households, those with low levels of personal mobility and those seeking low cost accommodation.
- 5.5.19 Whilst seeking to maximise residential development opportunities within the urban area, the council will seek to ensure that the amenity of local neighbourhoods is respected and will seek to avoid “town cramming”. This development of urban areas will be achieved by resisting the loss of open space and by taking into account the density of surrounding development when deciding upon the appropriate density for individual sites. Whilst it will resist the introduction of residential uses in those identified industrial areas where the policy is to retain employment opportunities some derelict or inappropriately located sites are likely to prove suitable for residential use.
- 5.5.20 The improvement of the existing housing stock can result in a worthwhile contribution to local housing provision, and can reduce the quantity of vacant premises and the demand for fresh land. Empty Homes Officers are employed by the council to assist in achieving this aim. The council will seek improvements to substandard housing by encouraging owners to take up home improvements and other grants and by using their powers where necessary under the Public Health, Planning and Housing Acts, to secure repairs and improvements, including bringing empty properties back into use.

POLICY H4: HOUSING IN URBAN AREAS

Within the urban area, as defined on the proposals map, residential development will be permitted consisting of:

- (i) the use of vacant or derelict land or the change of use or redevelopment of existing buildings no longer required for non-residential use; or*
- (ii) the redevelopment of existing residential areas and infilling in such areas (providing that a clear improvement in the local environment will result); or*
- (iii) mixed commercial and residential uses in proximity to town centres; or*
- (iv) the use of upper floors above commercial premises.*

High Density Housing

- 5.5.21 Paragraph 58 of PPG3 requires Local Planning Authorities to:
- Avoid developments which make inefficient use of land (those of less than 30 dwellings per hectare net);
 - Encourage housing development which makes more efficient use of land (between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare net); and
 - Seek greater intensity of development at places with good public transport accessibility such as city, town, district and local centres or around major nodes along good public transport corridors.
- 5.5.22 New housing development will generally be expected to be in keeping with the character of the surrounding neighbourhood. Housing in town centres can be built at a much higher density than in suburban areas. This can help diminish the need to release greenfield sites, and reduce the need to travel to jobs, shops or other facilities. High-density residential development at, or near, public transport access points similarly has the benefit of making the most efficient use of land and providing a choice of means of transport for residents. Public transport access points include bus stops, railway stations or locations where a concentration of public transport routes converge. Sites close to public transport access points are defined as those within a 5 minute walking distance. Planning permission will not be given for development in town centres or close to public transport access points that are at densities more usually found in suburban areas. High-density development must meet a high standard of both design and quality if it is to make a positive contribution to the appearance of the area.

POLICY H5: HIGH DENSITY HOUSING

Housing proposals at low densities will not be permitted in, or close to:

- (i) town centres; or*
- (ii) near existing or proposed public transport access points; or*
- (iii) along routes capable of being well served by public transport and which are close to local facilities.*

Conversion of Large Houses into Flats

5.5.23 The requirement for small dwellings, particularly for the young and the elderly, will continue to give rise to considerable pressure to convert houses which are considered too large for the average household, into self-contained flats or houses for multiple occupation. Although the need for smaller dwellings is acknowledged, care must be taken to ensure that this provision is not made at the expense of the usual planning considerations, such as the amenity of other residents and highway criteria (including parking). The intention is to protect the character and amenity of residential areas where single household occupation is the norm, whilst encouraging conversion to flats and maisonettes in areas where such development is already established.

5.5.24 The council considers that dwellings of less than 120 square metres gross floor area in predominantly residential areas should be retained for families and single households, as conversion to smaller units is unlikely to be satisfactory. Conversions will need to take account of the layout of accommodation in order to ensure that, wherever possible, noise sensitive rooms are not adjacent to noisy rooms.

POLICY H6: FLAT CONVERSIONS

The change of use or redevelopment of larger dwelling houses for self contained flats will be permitted except where:

- (i) the surrounding area is predominantly in single household occupation; or*

- (ii) the house is of a size suitable for use for single household occupation; or*
- (iii) the proposals are likely to unacceptably increase on-street car parking; or*
- (iv) the proposals could adversely affect the amenity of the area or adjoining occupiers.*

Conversion of Large Houses into Multiple Occupation

- 5.5.25 A house in multiple occupation (H.M.O.) differs from one converted to self-contained flats. The latter are accessed separately and contain all the facilities (bathroom, kitchen etc.) necessary for separate habitation. An H.M.O. is composed of private areas i.e. bedrooms, used only by certain occupants, plus shared facilities i.e. bathrooms, W.C.s and kitchens. H.M.O.s can provide inexpensive housing for single person households. Demographically this need will increase. However, H.M.O. properties can cause annoyance to adjoining occupiers if there are increased traffic movements and/or poor standards of conversion and sound insulation. Six people may live in a dwelling house as a single household but above this threshold, planning permission is required for houses in multiple occupation.
- 5.5.26 It is the aim to enable such accommodation to come forward on condition that it provides a high standard of conversion whilst minimising possible detrimental effects. This will be achieved by restricting H.M.O.s to suitable properties in areas capable of supporting them (including the extra traffic and parking they may generate).
- 5.5.27 In order to avoid adverse effects on nearby residences, H.M.O.s will normally be expected to be detached properties. Semi-detached or terraced properties will only be acceptable for H.M.O.s if adjoining properties already have planning permission, or are lawfully used, for non-residential uses or multiple occupation.
- 5.5.28 The most suitable locations for H.M.O.s are likely to be within, or on the fringes of town centres or on main roads, where retail and commercial uses predominate at ground floor level but some houses still remain, together with flats above commercial property. These locations are unlikely to be well suited to family occupation. There may be other mixed areas where properties could be suitable for conversion. However, in all cases the other criteria in the policy will need to be taken into account.

POLICY H7: MULTIPLE OCCUPATION

Dwellings intended for multiple occupation will be permitted subject to the following criteria:

- (i) the property is in an area with a predominantly mixed-use or commercial character; and*
- (ii) the property is located where increased traffic and activity would not be detrimental to local amenity; and*
- (iii) either the property is detached and the proposal would not adversely effect the amenity of the occupiers of nearby properties; or*
- (iv) where the property is not detached, relevant nearby or adjoining properties are in multiple occupation or a non-residential use; and*
- (v) for changes of use, the property is too large to reasonably expect its occupation by a single household.*

Institutional Uses

5.5.29 There is continual pressure for both new build and changes of use of existing buildings to create Class C2 residential institutions (such as rest homes for the elderly, homes for the mentally ill, nursing homes and residential schools, colleges or training centres). “Care in the community” is increasingly being provided in small, self contained households, often with supervision on an afternoon, evening or weekend basis. A dwelling can house up to six people living together as a single household without planning permission for a change of use being required. “Care in the community” will often fall into that category.

5.5.30 Larger residential institutions, which generally involve full time personal care for the residents by staff, raise more difficult planning issues. Some institutional uses can result in a loss of privacy, overlooking, noise and disturbance, particularly where it is proposed to convert or extend terraced or semi-detached houses. The council will seek to accommodate such uses whilst safeguarding the amenity of nearby residents. Where occupants retain their independence and personal mobility, a location well related to shops, public transport and other

facilities would help to serve their needs. A reasonable (5 minute) walking distance to such facilities would be an appropriate standard to apply. Parking and amenity space for residents of the institution are also pertinent issues.

POLICY H8: RESIDENTIAL INSTITUTIONS

Residential institutions and hostels will be permitted subject to the following criteria:

- (i) the proposal would not adversely effect nearby residential amenity; and***
- (ii) in appropriate cases, where the occupants have a degree of mobility and independence, the property is within reasonable walking distance of shops, public transport and other facilities; and***
- (iii) adequate amenity space is provided for residents; and***
- (iv) parking is adequate for staff, visitors and service vehicles, taking into account the accessibility of public transport; and***
- (v) for changes of use, the property is too large to reasonably expect its occupation by a single household.***

Backland Development

- 5.5.31 In parts of Medway it is possible to find landlocked, vacant or neglected sites to the rear of existing residential properties. In some cases it may be acceptable to develop such “backland” for housing subject to a number of criteria. There will be a need to provide a proper means of access, suitable provision for parking and sufficient space between the existing and proposed buildings to preserve the amenity of the area and avoid overlooking. Sensitive design and landscaping will also be required, including the retention of any valuable existing natural features (such as trees). “Tandem” development, consisting of one house immediately behind another, sharing the same access, generally causes disturbance and loss of privacy to the house at the front and, therefore, proposals for such development will not be permitted.

POLICY H9: BACKLAND AND TANDEM DEVELOPMENT

Backland development will be permitted only when it does not constitute piecemeal development that would threaten the comprehensive development of a wider area. Tandem development will not be permitted. Backland development will be permitted when:

- (i) there is no loss of privacy from overlooking adjoining houses and/or their back gardens; and*
- (ii) there is acceptable vehicular access; and*
- (iii) there is no significant increase in noise or disturbance to adjacent residents from traffic using the access; and*
- (iv) existing natural features, such as trees, which contribute to the amenity of the area are retained or conserved; and*
- (v) there is adequate private amenity space for the existing and proposed dwellings; and*
- (vi) the character and amenity of the area as a whole is maintained.*

Range of Housing

5.5.32 It is important to ensure that there is an appropriate mix of both house types and sizes to meet the needs of different types of households. This will encourage the development of mixed communities. This can be achieved by the allocation of a variety of size of housing sites, but also by ensuring that a mix of housing types are provided on all sites greater than one hectare. However, where higher density development is sought in response to policy H5, it is acknowledged that although a variety of house sizes can be provided, the variety of house types is likely to be restricted.

5.5.33 The provision of smaller dwellings, including flats, can help to meet the continuing demand from small households that will form a significant proportion of housing demand during the plan period. It will also provide cheaper accommodation and, because it will often be provided at higher densities within

the urban areas, help to reduce the demand for the development of greenfield sites.

POLICY H10: HOUSING MIX

On sites larger than one hectare, where residential development is acceptable in principal, the provision of a range and mix of house types and sizes will be sought. This will include smaller units of accommodation suited to the needs of one and two person households, the elderly or persons with disabilities and housing that can be adapted for such use in the future.

Residential Development in Rural Settlements

5.5.34 Those rural settlements that are of a size, form and structure to be considered villages can often acceptably accommodate minor development or redevelopment within their boundaries. For such larger rural settlements, village boundaries have been defined on the proposals map. These are intended to contain development within the existing built confines, to prevent sporadic development and the loss of valuable countryside. The boundaries have, therefore, generally been tightly drawn to exclude schools, playing fields, actively used allotments, working farms and larger gardens. In the few cases where areas of public or private open space have been included within the boundary, development will not be permitted in accordance with policy L3.

POLICY H11: RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL SETTLEMENTS

Unless the site is allocated for housing development in the local plan, or an exceptional justification can be made, housing development in the rural area will be restricted to minor development within the confines of the following villages and settlements, as defined on the proposals map:

- (i) Allhallows*
- (ii) Lodge Hill Lane, Chattenden*
- (iii) Cliffe*
- (iv) Cliffe Woods*
- (v) Cooling*

- (vi) Cuxton*
- (vii) Grain*
- (viii) Halling*
- (ix) High Halstow*
- (x) Hoo St. Werburgh*
- (xi) Lower Stoke*
- (xii) Lower Upnor*
- (xiii) North Halling*
- (xiv) Upper Halling*
- (xv) Upper Stoke*
- (xvi) Upper Upnor*
- (xvii) Chattenden*
- (xviii) Lower Rainham.*

5.3.35 Sites have been identified for new residential development (in addition to the minor development referred to in policy H11) at Lower Upnor, Hoo, Chattenden, Cuxton and Allhallows, and are included in policy H1.

Mobile Home Parks

5.5.36 Hoo Marina Park has been a mobile home park since the late 1960s and contains some 250 chalets. It is also a permanently licensed residential park. As such the Park is now a permanent home for all the residents of the chalets. The Kingsmead Mobile Home Park, situated to the south of Avery Way, Allhallows, is a permanent mobile home park with the benefit of a full planning permission. The site has provided low cost housing since 1961 and is quite different in character from the permanent housing at Allhallows itself.

5.5.37 Park homes help to provide affordable housing for a small, but significant, number of households. The council, therefore, wishes to retain mobile homes in the parks in order to maintain a continuing supply of affordable housing, although development for the benefit of the residents will normally be supported. The redevelopment of the chalets with conventional housing will not be permitted.

POLICY H12: MOBILE HOME PARKS

Within Hoo Marina Park and the Kingsmead Mobile Home Park, as defined on the proposals map, development which would lead to the permanent loss of the mobile homes, or a reduction in the area available for their use,

will not be permitted unless it is development ancillary to the use of the parks.

Gypsy Caravan Sites and Travelling Showpeople's Quarters

5.5.38 Gypsies are defined in the Caravan Sites Act 1968 as:

"... persons of nomadic habit of life, whatever their race or origin, but (this) does not include members of an organised group of travelling showmen and persons engaged in travelling circuses, travelling together as such".

5.5.39 As with other groups within the community, gypsies have housing needs which the local plan needs to consider and for which provision needs to be made. These needs are usually different from other groups and frequently require three different types of sites:

- Sites for settled occupation.
- Temporary stopping places.
- Transit sites.

5.5.40 Specific advice relating to planning control and gypsy caravan sites is contained within the Department of Environment Circular 1/94 which deals with the need for a plan-led system in relation to gypsy site provision. The circular states that proposals for sites should continue to be determined solely in relation to land use factors. While gypsy sites might be acceptable in some rural locations, the granting of permission must be consistent with agricultural, archaeological, countryside, environmental and Green Belt policies. It further states that, as a rule, it will not be appropriate to make site provision in open areas where development is severely restricted such as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Sites of Special Scientific Interest and other protected areas.

5.5.41 Policy H8 of the adopted Kent Structure Plan requires that provision for gypsy sites should be made where there is an identified need in accordance with criteria established in Circular 1/94.

5.5.42 There is one gypsy site within Medway, located at Cuxton. Should there be a proven need, proposals for further sites will be assessed against a number of criteria, relating to locational, landscaping/mitigation and highways issues, together with the need for infrastructure provision.

POLICY H13: GYPSY CARAVAN SITES AND TRAVELLING SHOWPEOPLE'S QUARTERS

Gypsy caravan sites and travelling showpeople's quarters will be permitted when:

- (i) the site is close to essential local services, including shops, public transport, schools, medical and social services; and*
- (ii) the site can be physically contained and adequately screened from surrounding land; and*
- (iii) there is compliance with agricultural, landscape, nature conservation and countryside policies; and*
- (iv) there is no adverse impact on nearby residential amenity or agricultural interests; and*
- (v) access arrangements are of a standard approved by the Highway Authority; and*
- (vi) there is adequate provision of power, water and sewerage.*

5.5.43 There is currently a showman's quarters at Station Road, Strood. Circular 22/91 advises that local planning authorities should bear the needs of showmen in mind in the preparation of local plans. If it can be demonstrated that such a need exists, advice on appropriate locations will be given in accordance with the general policies and the criteria within policy H13.

5.6 Environmental Appraisal

5.6.1 In accordance with the guidance contained at paras. 4.16 to 4.22 of PPG12 "Development Plans" the policies in this chapter have been subject to environmental appraisal.

5.6.2 The non-site specific housing policies are on the whole sustainable. They encourage the reuse of brownfield sites and existing buildings, which are on the

whole within the urban areas and, therefore, maintain open countryside. The policies encourage accessible housing at affordable values and serve to reduce vacancy rates. A mix of uses is promoted which is sustainable because it reduces the need to travel and assist local economies.

- 5.6.3 The majority of the sites within the site-specific housing policies safeguard agricultural land and maintain open countryside. Although some result in loss of open space and greenfield sites, a total of 58% of the allocated housing is on brownfield sites. This is in line with the Government's 60% target. When existing permissions are taken into account, this figure rises to 80%. Many of the sites are urban and central which serves to reduce the need to travel, increase the convenience of walking and cycling and boost the local economy through encouraging a mix of uses.

5.7 Monitoring Measures

- 5.7.1 Housing supply will be regularly monitored on an annual basis and measured against Kent Structure Plan housing requirements. The development of affordable housing will be monitored in conjunction with the housing division and the housing land supply study will be periodically updated. Key criteria in the successful achievement of the plan's housing strategy will be:

- (i) the maintenance of a continuous five year housing land supply;
- (ii) the proportion of housing achieved on brownfield sites;
- (iii) the implementation of the allocated sites;
- (iv) the construction of 1,000 new affordable homes;
- (v) the provision of a mix of housing types, sizes and ownerships.

TOWN CENTRES AND RETAILING

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 Shopping is an essential element in the social and economic life of communities. It is also a major employer of people and one of the most dynamic sectors of the economy. Medway has a uniquely complex pattern of retail and service facilities. There are five major town centres and a wide variety of established local shopping facilities ranging from traditional district shopping centres on radial roads to the purpose built district centre at Hempstead Valley. There are also numerous small parades and individual shops, primarily serving local shopping requirements within the urban area and in villages. Many of the shopping centres are well served by public transport and some are well placed in relation to large residential areas.
- 6.1.2 The retailing sector has undergone dramatic change since the 1960s, as competitors battled for supremacy in an increasingly competitive industry dominated by powerful retail chains. For many, expansion in out-of-town centres was the preferred growth strategy, often because of the relative ease of developing greenfield, as opposed to brownfield, sites. More recently the emergence of the National Lottery (which has altered spending patterns) and the new wave of shopping formats, (including 'club shopping', factory outlets, superstores, and Sunday trading) have had a significant impact on the spending patterns and shopping behaviour of consumers. But, perhaps, the greatest influence on shopping development over the past 20 years has been the advent of out-of-town retailing. It was the out-of-town movement, which brought government intervention in the form of planning policy guidance on retailing (PPG6, 1993 and 1996).
- 6.1.3 The past decade has seen the status of the town centres in Medway challenged. The trends most in evidence that have affected the area are (a) the apparent direct competition between the five major shopping centres, which meant that there was no single shopping centre focus for retailing; (b) out-of-centre food superstores and retail warehouse parks and the dispersal of leisure and other major activities from the heart of the traditional shopping centres; and (c) the loss of trade to out-of-town and regional shopping developments (such as Lakeside, and more recently, Bluewater).
- 6.1.4 It is competition, and the fear of competition, that, more than any other factor, has contributed to the current lack of confidence in retail investment in local town centres.
- 6.1.5 Throughout the local plan, the term 'retail development' is used to refer to developments within class A1 (shops) of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987. This chapter also deals with A2 uses (financial and professional services) and A3 uses (food and drink premises). Retail uses not

within a use class (called '*sui generis*' uses) which include car sales, taxi or vehicle hire, petrol filling stations, amusement centres and laundrettes are also considered in this chapter.

6.2 The Current Position

6.2.1 The hierarchy of centres is listed and described below. The main characteristics of each centre are set out, together with an outline of how they are expected to develop over the plan period.

Hierarchy of Centres

Main Retail / City Centre

Chatham

District Centres

Strood
Gillingham
Rainham
Hempstead Valley Shopping centre
Rochester

Local Centres, Village and Neighbourhood Centres

These 74 centres are listed in policy R10

Retail Parks

Gillingham Business Park
Horsted Retail Park
Strood Retail Park

Free standing stores

Courtney Road, Gillingham
Maidstone Road, Chatham

Chatham

6.2.2 The council has resolved to create a single, strong "city" centre for Medway, by actively promoting the centre of Chatham as the "city" centre and main sub-regional shopping centre. Medway's "city" centre, will become the focus for the community, not only in retailing terms, but also in terms of jobs, leisure and entertainment. To achieve this the council will support proposals that attract quality retailers and promote a mixed-use approach in order to encourage diversity in the centre.

- 6.2.3 Chatham town centre is a natural choice because of its sub-regional shopping centre role, which is recognised within the structure plan. It has a large range of national comparison retailers and approximately 102,153 sq. m (1.3 million sq. ft) gross retail and service trade floorspace, in 369 units. It competes primarily with Maidstone, Bromley, Canterbury, Tunbridge Wells, Lakeside and Bluewater. In addition to its role as the major retailing centre in Medway, it also functions as one of the main destinations for a range of uses which provide evening entertainment. These include the Central Theatre, the Medway Arts Centre, the ABC cinema, and the bowling centre.
- 6.2.4 Chatham has seen recent improvements with a major environmental enhancement scheme for the pedestrianised area centred upon the High Street, the refurbishment of The Brook multi-storey car park and the bus station and the provision of closed circuit television security cameras in the car parks. Further areas suitable for environmental enhancement include the Ring Road and the Riverside.
- 6.2.5 The council wishes to work in partnership with the private sector to achieve its new vision for Chatham. It will be prepared to use its statutory powers and negotiate with third party interests to support appropriate schemes. As a first step the council and English Partnerships commissioned a study to develop a strategy for the improvement of the “city” centre. The study, which assesses the vitality and viability of the centre, was carried out by consultants to inform the local plan on appropriate policies for the shopping centre, and where the focus for regeneration issues should be within it. Further studies are planned to articulate a clear vision and master plan for the centre.
- 6.2.6 Chatham meets the PPG6 definition of a “town centre” which provides a broad range of facilities and services. It also fulfils a function as a focus for both the community and public transport. The growth potential for durable goods floorspace (including bulky goods) is, however, limited in Medway over the plan period and priority will, therefore, be given to directing it to Chatham. The scope for new convenience floorspace is also limited but there is enormous scope to improve the quality of existing floorspace either through refurbishment or replacement.

District Centres

- 6.2.7 The next group of shopping centres all function as ‘District Shopping Centres’, which PPG 6 defines as groups of shops, separate from the town or city centre, usually containing at least one supermarket or superstore, and non retail services. The five centres are important in terms of the number of retail and service outlets, total gross floorspace and their locations. They provide a range of convenience and durable good shops, some with a speciality appeal. Independent retailers predominate in these centres.

Strood

- 6.2.8 The centre of Strood operates as a District Centre. It is compact and vibrant with two medium sized convenience stores and three sizeable multiple stores. In all it

accommodates approximately 35,987 sq.m. (387,400 sq.ft.) gross of retail and service space in 119 units. The District Centre is adjacent to a retail warehouse park with a number of large retail warehouses and a large surface car park. Major through roads (the A2 and the A228) divide the central area of Strood and the quality of the environment is poor in comparison with other similar centres. It needs to improve its quality and attraction as a District Centre, possibly with a new food store. Environmental improvements following the completion of the Medway Towns Northern Relief Road will improve facilities for pedestrians and open up opportunities for urban design initiatives (see the transportation chapter). The nearby railway station already provides connections to most of the other main district centres in Medway.

Rochester

- 6.2.9 Rochester City centre performs a specialist role. There is currently 35,699 sq.m. (384,300 sq.ft.) gross retail and service trade area in 160 units in the centre. It has responded to the changing retail environment by diversifying into specialist shops such as arts, antiques and tourist-related uses. The uses are suited to the historic buildings in the High Street (and its connections with the author Charles Dickens), and Rochester Castle and Cathedral. The relatively high proportion of A3 uses and the provision of night clubs within, and close to the centre, combined with an attractive historic environment means that Rochester's evening economy is the most vibrant in Medway. The nearby railway station provides connections to most of the other main district centres. The council would encourage a limited range of retail opportunities in Rochester meeting primarily local needs, which are sensitive to the conservation character of the area.

Gillingham

- 6.2.10 Gillingham town centre functions as a District Centre. It is centred on a linear High Street and comprises over 200 retail units, totalling approximately 38,690 sq. m. (416,500 sq ft) gross retail/service floorspace. There is a broad range of units, with slightly more than half the floorspace being comparison shopping. The area is well served by public transport with four principal bus routes and a railway linking Gillingham to Chatham, Rochester and London and the Kent coast. There is potential for new investment in convenience floorspace provided the site selected properly relates to the rest of the centre and so underpins the existing retail offer.

Rainham

- 6.2.11 Rainham District Centre is the easternmost of the five main traditional shopping centres and provides a range of town centre services. It comprises over 130 retail/service units, totalling approximately 24,300 sq. m. (261,600 sq ft) gross floor space. It has a compact retail area serving local needs and providing a number of community and cultural facilities. Several pubs and restaurants on the High Street provide a relatively vibrant evening economy. The focus of shopping in the town centre is located at the junction of the High Street (A2) with Station Road. Rainham has a pedestrian precinct, built in the 1980s, adjoining a large

public car park. The nearby railway station provides connections to most of the other main district centres in Medway. A requirement for additional convenience floorspace has been identified and this could be accommodated by re-configuring and updating the “Precinct” area.

Hempstead Valley Shopping Centre

- 6.2.12 Hempstead Valley shopping centre is a purpose-built indoor mall style of district shopping centre. The centre has attracted major multiples and was extended in the early 1990’s. The council is however, concerned that any increase in comparison floorspace is likely to have an adverse impact on the strategy for Medway’s “city” centre and the more traditional District Centres. As such only minor changes will be permitted during the period of the plan.

Local, Village and Neighbourhood Centres

- 6.2.13 These are small groups of shops usually comprising a newsagent, a general grocery store, a sub-post office and occasionally a pharmacy, a hairdresser and other small shops of a local nature.

- 6.2.14 By this definition, there are no less than seventy-four Local Shopping Centres in Medway including villages and neighbourhood centres. These centres cater mainly for day to day convenience needs and lower order durable goods, whilst some centres sell higher order durable goods from specialist outlets. The level of vacant units tends to vary according to their individual floorspace and unit size. These centres are listed in policy R10.

- 6.2.15 Given the importance of shops to the local economy of villages and the greater emphasis now placed upon their protection by PPG6, all village retail outlets will be afforded a high degree of protection and further facilities will be encouraged.

Retail Parks and Food Stores

- 6.2.16 Retail parks are defined in PPG6 as groups of three or more retail warehouses. There are three such sites in Medway, located at Horsted Retail Park (near Rochester Airport), Gillingham Business Park and adjacent to Strood District Centre.

- 6.2.17 Strood Retail Park is adjacent to a defined District shopping centre and of rather poor quality by modern standards. The site is occupied by B&Q, Matalan, Carpet Right Depot and the former Charlie Browns. The dual use of the surface car park by customers to the town centre and the retail warehouse units shows the relative ease of linked trips between the site and the town centre.

- 6.2.18 Horsted Retail Park is a purpose built retail warehouse park on the Maidstone Road (the main radial route into Chatham from the south). The site is occupied by PC World, Currys, Homebase, Toys ‘r’ Us and Pets Mart. It is some considerable distance from any district centre, but within reasonable walking distance of an Asda Superstore.

- 6.2.19 Gillingham Business Park is a major business park on the A2, accommodating a range of B1, B2 and B8 uses. The Retail Park is on the north-east corner of the site, adjoining the A2 and A278 and is occupied by a number of retail warehouses include Harveys, B&Q, Magnet, MFI and Allied Carpets. It is some distance from any designated district, local or neighbourhood centre, but close to a Tesco superstore.
- 6.2.20 There are two free-standing food superstores in Medway; Tesco at Courtney Road, Rainham close to Gillingham Business Park and Asda on Maidstone Road, Chatham. A Safeway store at Princes Park functions as a local centre and a Co-op foodstore at Walderslade anchors that local centre.

Factory Outlets

- 6.2.21 Factory outlet centres are groups of shops that sell comparison goods at discounted prices, including seconds and end of line goods. A Factory Outlet shopping centre, leisure and business uses in Chatham Maritime are currently under construction. The development is part of the overall regeneration objective for the former Royal Naval Dockyard. The development, which extends to about 16.75 hectares, includes 12,628 sq.m net comparison retail floorspace and an extensive leisure facility of approximately 18,580 sq.m.

Town Centre Management

- 6.2.22 The council has long-standing Town Centre Management schemes in Chatham and Gillingham, and is extending the benefits of Town Centre Management, in conjunction with the private sector to Strood, Rochester and Rainham. Forums already exist, or are being, established in each of these centres.

6.3 Policy Context

Central Government Guidance

- 6.3.1 PPG 6 and PPG 13 are the main focus for national guidance on retailing.
- 6.3.2 The government advocates a plan-led approach, including a clearer definition of the hierarchy of centres. A sequential test should be applied to development proposals, preference should be given to town centre sites or buildings suitable for conversion, followed by edge-of-centre sites, district and local centres, and only then out-of-centre sites. Any out-of-centre sites must be accessible by a choice of transport modes, including public transport.
- 6.3.3 The guidance does not impose an embargo on out-of-centre development. It advises that when out-of-centre retailing is considered necessary, proposals should be assessed against the harm it could do to the development plan strategy. Local Authorities should also consider the impact on the vitality and viability of town centres and the effect on travel patterns and car use. The sequential test should be extended to include employment uses such as commercial and public offices, hospitals, higher education, entertainment, leisure and community uses.

6.3.4 Retailing will continue to underpin town centres. However, the guidance stresses that vitality and viability depends not just on retailing but on a wide range of factors including an attractive environment, good accessibility, other amenities and continued investment. Local Authorities should involve private investors and infrastructure providers in the preparation of town centre strategies. Good town centre management will bring together the relevant public agencies, residents, retailers, leisure operators, developers and investors and will ensure the proper co-ordination and development of services in the town centre.

6.3.5 Diversification of uses should be encouraged in town centres. Different, but complementary uses, during the day and evening, can reinforce each other, making town centres more attractive to local residents, shoppers and visitors. Suitable areas and sites should be identified for mixed-use development. A mixture of small businesses, houses or offices and the occupation of flats above shops can increase activity and stimulate shopping and other services and in turn add to vitality. Where vacant premises seem unlikely to be reused for that purpose, conversion to other service, leisure or residential uses should be encouraged. The effective use of car parking and encouragement of high quality urban design are important objectives for town centres. Mixed use development which includes commercial and residential uses, is supported in policies R12 and H4.

6.3.6 Changes of use, whether in town, district or local centres should be assessed not only on their positive contribution to diversification, but also on the cumulative effects on loss of retail outlets, traffic, parking and local residential amenity.

6.3.7 New retail development should be accessible by a choice of means of transport. This will usually mean locating it in, or next to, town centres, or in other locations which are well served by public transport. For new out-of-centre development, local authorities should seek to establish whether public transport would be sufficiently frequent, reliable and convenient. It should also assess whether services are direct or adjacent to the proposals and the characteristics of the catchment area. In terms of overall levels of car travel, PPG13 seeks to reduce the reliance on the car and facilitate multi-purpose trips. PPG6 commends local planning authorities to consider locating major generators of travel demand in locations, which are, or can be, well served by public transport.

Regional Planning Guidance

6.3.8 RPG9 sets out government policy for the South East region. This recognises that town and district centres perform an important social and economic function, and should be the focus of activity for retailing. Wherever possible, retail development should be located within existing town and district centres. Where this is not possible, sites within the urban area may be acceptable, provided they would not adversely affect the vitality and viability of nearby town and district centres. The site should also be accessible by a choice of means of transport, including public transport.

- 6.3.9 Town centres should be the focus for retail development, to enable one trip to serve several purposes, to ensure that such shopping is more accessible to those without cars and to contribute to the economic strength of existing towns.
- 6.3.10 The “*Thames Gateway Planning Framework*” (RPG9a), emphasises that the town centres can contribute to the regeneration of the sub-region. It recognises that the quality and attractiveness of some centres could be enhanced by upgrading existing facilities, making use of derelict or underused land, improving the environment and securing their effective management and promotion.

Kent Structure Plan 1996

- 6.3.11 The Kent Structure Plan expands upon the policy of developing successful town centres by encouraging a diverse mix of uses. Local plans should create a strong market place and a high quality environment, both physical and cultural, to attract visitors and residents, and make provision for safe and convenient movement into and around shopping centres.
- 6.3.12 The structure plan requires retail development to be provided in accordance with the essential requirements and future trade potential of the different sectors of retailing. In order to maintain their vitality and viability it gives priority to town and district centres for the location of retailing, and in relation to Medway, states that the potential for comparison retail development should be focused upon Chatham, building upon recent traffic management and pedestrianisation improvements. Following the sequential approach, town centre and edge-of-centre sites should be identified first, and only if both are unavailable might locations elsewhere in the urban area be acceptable. In the latter case, developments should be planned to enable them to become new local centres in their own right. It also recognises the need for shops to be accessible by a choice of transport modes and the need to protect village shops that are important to the rural economy.

6.4 Objectives

- 6.4.1 The aims and objectives of the council’s policies for retailing in Medway are:
- (i) to enable Medway’s “city” centre (as a shopping centre of sub-regional importance) to sustain and increase its role for durable goods shopping, and other activities that will complement the character and functions of the centre including its role as a major employment, leisure and entertainment centre;
 - (ii) to improve the quality of the retail “offer” in Medway, by generating a climate of confidence for retail investment;
 - (iii) to concentrate retail and related facilities in existing centres so that they are accessible to all, including those without the use of private vehicles so that combined shopping trips are easy;

- (iv) to maintain a range of local shops and services to meet daily (as well as specialist) needs so that a range of facilities is available locally to reduce the need to travel;
- (v) to improve the vitality and viability of existing shopping centres by creating a positive policy framework for new development, diversification, investment, redevelopment, refurbishment and environmental improvement;
- (vi) to accommodate new forms of retailing or mixed uses where these do not undermine the vitality and viability of town, district and local centres.
- (vii) to sustain a buoyant retail economy with high retail employment.

Retail Capacity

Comparison Floorspace

- 6.4.2 The council has undertaken a review of past retail policies and proposals. Account has also been taken of changed circumstances, developments implemented and particularly new retail requirements expected to occur during the plan period. This work has been informed by a study undertaken by Hillier Parker which concluded that there is limited capacity for additional comparison floorspace in Medway over the plan period. The reason for this is mainly attributed to the opening of Bluewater shopping centre. However, there is considered to be scope for further investment beyond 2006.

Convenience Floorspace

- 6.4.3 The study concluded that an allocation for a further food store in Strood was justified and that in quantitative terms, there was also scope for additional floorspace in the eastern part of the area. It concluded that there is a qualitative case for improved provision in Chatham. The council is concerned that any provision of new floorspace to meet the forecast potential must underpin the functions of the established centres; especially Chatham, Gillingham and Rainham.

6.5 Policies and Reasoned Justification

Chatham: Comparison Retailing

- 6.5.1 The council recognises that Bluewater will have an adverse affect on the prospects for new comparison floorspace during the plan period. However, it is firmly of the view that a positive response to the situation is required and every effort made to consolidate Chatham's role as the principal location for comparison shopping within Medway.

- 6.5.2 In this context, three factors provide a basis for investment in the short term:

- (i) There is considerable scope to improve the quality of existing floorspace through store refitting and the modest reconfiguration of properties to meet retailer's current requirements. Confidence amongst individual retailers can be improved if groups of shops are up-graded at

the same time. A greater level of co-ordination to achieve this can be encouraged through the Town Centre Management Initiative, which is already in place.

(ii) It is known that, over an extended period, expenditure on comparison goods generated from within the Medway area has been leaking to other centres further afield. If the quality of the retail offer in Chatham can be improved, there is a clear opportunity to win back a proportion of this “lost” expenditure, enabling it to regain its proper status in the hierarchy and to provide facilities of a quality appropriate to a major urban area.

(iii) Finally, analysis indicates that over the plan period, some expenditure growth on what are sometimes described as “bulky goods” will occur. In recent years such growth has been met by the development of free-standing retail stores or parks but in the future this will have to change if the guidance in PPG6 is followed. Commercial commentators are already speculating that “large showrooms” in town centres will supersede stores on retail parks and this is a sector in which Chatham could be in the vanguard of change.

6.5.3 Given these factors and the wider role for Chatham envisaged in policy S5, the local plan therefore gives specific priority to the centre as the preferred location for new or replacement comparison retailing, including so called “bulky goods”. To facilitate this, policy R1 gives a general presumption in favour of such floorspace within the core area of the centre as defined on the proposals map and allocates a specific site at Richard Street.

6.5.4 The site at Richard Street is well related to the primary retail area, being to the rear of the Alders department store. It fronts onto the principal shopping street and can be readily accessed from the ring road. It is within easy walking distance of both the railway and bus stations. An imaginative approach to the development of the site would be likely to feature a range of uses in addition to conventional shop units trading in comparison goods. These might include a moderately sized foodstore (see below) and non-retail uses which could contribute to the vitality and viability of the scheme (and the centre) as a whole.

6.5.5 The council also considers that other opportunities exist within the core area but does not wish to be prescriptive about them at this stage, pending further work to advance the “City” Centre Vision for Chatham. However they might include improvements and extensions to the Pentagon Centre. Further development opportunities may also occur beyond the edge of the core area (i.e. within a radius of 200-300 metres). These will be expected to relate to and reinforce the role of the core area.

6.5.6 To further encourage investment the council will consider partnership arrangements with intending developers and the use of its statutory powers to bring forward appropriate developments.

POLICY R1: CHATHAM – COMPARISON RETAILING

Chatham town centre is identified as a regional scale comparison goods centre. Proposals for retail development which would undermine the strategy for, or the vitality and viability of, Chatham town centre will not be permitted. Major Class A1 comparison proposals (those of over 2,500 sq. metres gross floor space) will not be permitted outside the defined core area of Chatham, as defined on the proposals map.

Proposals for Class A1, A2 and A3 uses or any other uses appropriate in a shopping street will be permitted in the core area subject to:

- (i) the proposed use(s) contributing to the vitality and viability of the area; and*
- (ii) the singular and/or cumulative impact of such uses not being detrimental to the shopping function of the area and the range of facilities provided.*

Land at Richard Street, as defined on the proposals map, is allocated for use Class A1 retail development (principally for comparison goods), together with ancillary Class A2 and A3 uses. Proposals should make adequate provision for pedestrian access from the High Street and public car parking.

Exceptionally, schemes on the edge of the core area (defined as within 200-300 metres of the boundary) will be permitted subject to:

- (iii) it being demonstrated that the development proposed cannot be accommodated within the core area; and*

- (iv) the use, the site location and layout being related directly to the core area to complement the vitality and viability of the centre as a whole.*

Chatham: Convenience Retailing

- 6.5.7 The 1999 Hillier Parker retail study identified only limited scope for additional convenience floorspace in Chatham town centre although it did indicate that there was an opportunity to re-direct some expenditure growth from areas to the east. In addition, it highlighted the poor quality of the existing convenience space in Chatham and encouraged its replacement or refurbishment. These stores are poorly laid out by modern standards and the council will work with new or existing retailers to bring about an improvement in the convenience offer.
- 6.5.8 The absence of large flat sites makes it difficult to accommodate a large replacement foodstore. However, a small to medium sized store could complement any comparison goods scheme which comes forward on the Richard Street site (policy R1). Any larger-scale proposals will need to be situated outside the core area, in locations which do not prejudice the development of the city centre concept, but at the same time relate to the rest of the centre. Thus, sites in the Riverside/Medway Street area would not be appropriate but other opportunities are considered to exist around the Ring Road.

POLICY R2: CHATHAM – CONVENIENCE RETAILING

Within the Chatham Core Area, as defined on the proposals map, qualitative improvements to existing Class A1 convenience floorspace will be permitted through refurbishment or redevelopment.

Development of additional Class A1 convenience floorspace will be permitted within the Core Area as first choice, or (if suitable sites are not available) on the edge of the Core Area, subject to:

- (i) the proposal supporting the vitality and viability of the Core Area; and*
- (ii) there being no highway objections; and*

(iii) provision being made for access by pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users, and there being adequate car parking provision consistent with policies T13 and T15.

6.5.9 An existing Tesco superstore, former market hall and multi-storey car-park at The Brook/High Street, Upbury Way, Slicketts Hill and Cross Street occupies a strategic position within the city centre, but its contribution to the overall vitality of the city centre is limited by outdated design and a poor site layout. Both the CB Hillier Parker study and the Chatham Vision work emphasise its potential strategic role in regenerating the city centre, and its refurbishment or redevelopment is, therefore, encouraged in policy R3 below. Redeveloped or refurbished retail floor space, together with other uses appropriate to its position adjacent to the existing retail core would be appropriate.

POLICY R3: CHATHAM – THE BROOK AND HIGH STREET

Refurbishment or replacement of the former indoor market, existing superstore and associated multi-storey car park at The Brook/High Street, Chatham, as identified on the proposals map, will be encouraged for retail and/or other uses appropriate to a town centre location subject to:

- (i) the development form and site layout being directly related to the core area to contribute to the vitality and viability of the centre as a whole; and***
- (ii) provision being made for access by pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users, and there being adequate car parking provision consistent with policies T13 and T15.***

Strood

6.5.10 Analysis undertaken by, and on behalf of, the council indicates that there is no forecast requirement for additional comparison goods floorspace in Strood over the period of this plan. However, significant growth in convenience spending is forecast, providing the opportunity to develop a new foodstore to compliment those already located in, and adjacent to, the existing centre. It is important

however, that any such store is well related to the existing centre, encouraging multi-purpose trips and contributing to the vitality and viability of the centre as a whole.

- 6.5.11 As indicated in paragraph 6.5.4, the Strood Retail Park is well located in relation to the Core Area but warrants refurbishment. Recently the ownership of this development was combined with that of the Fisher Controls site to the south and this enlarged site is considered to provide the best opportunity to site a new convenience store.
- 6.5.12 This would be best achieved by securing a comprehensive approach to the combined sites. The convenience store should be sited at the northern end, fronting onto Commercial Road, to obtain maximum pedestrian access to the retail core of Strood with any displaced retail warehouse units being relocated to the southern end of the site. Such an arrangement would best contribute to the vitality and viability of the rest of the centre and provide the most robust solution in landscape and urban design terms. It is accepted however, that this approach would require the voluntary relocation of the existing retail warehouses and accordingly the council will seek to assist in this process by ensuring that their reasonable needs are met within the overall development. Contributions to the Strood Town Centre Environmental Scheme will be sought, to provide the appropriate highway capacity.
- 6.5.13 No specific requirement has been identified elsewhere within the centre of Strood, e.g. Friary Precinct, which has been earmarked for modest retail development in the past. However, it is appropriate to make a policy provision in favour of retail investment of an appropriate scale and nature within Strood's Core Area.

POLICY R4: RETAILING IN STROOD

The core Area of Strood town centre is defined on the proposals map. Within the Core Area, use Classes A1, A2 and A3 and other uses appropriate to a District Centre will be permitted provided they support the vitality and viability of the centre as a whole.

Land to the south of Commercial Road, as defined on the proposals map, is allocated for:

- (i) the replacement of the existing retail warehouse park with a Class A1 convenience store of up to 6,000 sq. metres; and*

(ii) replacement Class A1 retail warehouse floorspace on the land to the south of the existing retail park.

The development will be permitted subject to:

(iii) contributions to the Strood Town Centre Environment Scheme and implementation of an improved access to the site; and

(iv) high quality pedestrian links across Commercial Road into the Core Area of the centre; and

(v) a quality of architectural design which makes a positive contribution to the town centre.

Gillingham

- 6.5.14 Gillingham town centre has a well established, and continuing, role as a District Centre meeting the needs of a well-defined and densely populated catchment area. However, its tightly built up fabric acts as a constraint in development terms. Only a very limited increase in comparison spending is forecast over the plan period, but sufficient headroom has been identified to justify a further moderately sized convenience store.
- 6.5.15 The council in partnership with the private sector and a housing association is promoting a mixed-use regeneration project in the Arden Street area at the western end of the town centre and, nearby, an opportunity exists to promote a mixed scheme anchored by a foodstore in the area defined by High Street/Skinner Street/Jeffery Street and James Street. This would involve building on an existing car park, but significant benefits could be achieved if a scheme linked through to the High Street and Skinner Street, where design improvements would contribute substantially to the image of the centre as a whole.
- 6.5.16 This scheme may be difficult to realise due to the number of ownerships involved but the council would be prepared to consider the use of its compulsory purchase powers, if necessary, to secure land assembly to enable the scheme to proceed. It is critical that any new convenience store developed in, or on the edge of, the Core Area relates properly to the rest of the centre and does not function in isolation from it.
- 6.5.17 Elsewhere within the town centre smaller scale opportunities exist to upgrade existing shop units and the council will encourage this.

POLICY R5: RETAILING IN GILLINGHAM

The Core Area of Gillingham town centre is defined on the proposals map. Within the Core Area Use Classes A1, A2, and A3 and other uses appropriate to a District Centre will be permitted, provided they support the vitality and viability of the centre as a whole.

Land at High Street/Skinner Street/Jeffery Street/James Street is allocated for a retail development to include a new foodstore (up to 2000 square metres gross floorspace) as the principal floorspace element subject to:

- (i) improvements to public transport provision to the town centre in lieu of on-site parking; and*
- (ii) high quality pedestrian links to High Street and Skinner Street; and*
- (iii) a high quality of design complementing the established character of the area.*

Rainham

6.5.18 Rainham town centre has an extensive and prosperous catchment area, which overlaps with that of Hempstead Valley shopping centre to the south west and the freestanding superstore at Courteney Road. During the plan period forecast increases in convenience spending will provide an opportunity to improve its standing in the retail hierarchy. The Orchard Precinct acts as the central focus for retail activity in the centre, but it is now looking dated and its layout could be improved.

6.5.19 The council considers that, with the need to accommodate a further foodstore, this should be directed to the Orchard precinct which can be readily upgraded, reconfigured and/or extended on its existing site. To this end policy R6 makes specific provision for a foodstore of up to 2,000 sq. metres within this location. It also defines the Core Area of the centre within which further new investment will be encouraged.

POLICY R6: RETAILING IN RAINHAM

The Core Area of Rainham town centre is defined on the proposals map. Within the Core Area use Classes A1, A2 and A3 and other uses appropriate to a District Centre will be permitted, provided they support the vitality and viability of the centre as a whole.

The Orchard Precinct is allocated for refurbishment, and reconfiguration and /or extension to include a new foodstore of up to 2000 square metres gross floorspace, subject to:

- (i) retention of the existing number of on-site parking spaces; and*
- (ii) appropriate servicing and access arrangements; and*
- (iii) the provision of high quality pedestrian links from the precinct to the High Street and Station Road; and*
- (iv) a high quality of design complementing the established character of the town centre.*

Hempstead Valley Shopping Centre

6.5.20 Although a district centre in retailing terms the relative shortage of non retail facilities means that Hempstead Valley functions in a different way to Strood, Gillingham and Rainham. Some increase in forecast expenditure within the catchment area is expected over the plan period but it is intended that this be directed to Chatham, Gillingham and Rainham which are under greater economic pressure and fulfil a wider range of functions.

6.5.21 Nevertheless there is scope for continuing improvements to the existing centre buildings to maintain its competitiveness and there is a need to bring the former car showroom building back into productive use. The centre is a hub for a number of local bus services and it also provides Medway's connection to the national express coach network but the facilities supporting these functions need to be enhanced. Accordingly the council is happy to allow for the minor upgrading of the centre and its associated non-retail facilities.

POLICY R7: HEMPSTEAD VALLEY SHOPPING CENTRE

Within the Hempstead Valley Shopping Centre, as defined on the proposals map, development will be limited to minor extensions not resulting in a net increase in retail floorspace, and improvements to existing facilities.

Rochester

- 6.5.22 It is intended that the role of Rochester city centre as a largely specialist and tourist related centre should continue to be supported. There will be small- scale opportunities to upgrade existing facilities and perhaps expand them, in a modest way, during the plan period as the local tourism market develops. In addition there is a need to encourage small-scale convenience outlets catering for the day to day needs of the local residential population. Mainstream retail facilities on a larger scale are not, however, appropriate given the geographical proximity to both Strood and Chatham town centres.

POLICY R8: ROCHESTER CITY CENTRE

The Core Area of Rochester city centre is defined on the proposals map. Within the Core Area, use Classes A1, A2 and A3 uses and other uses appropriate to the form of the centre, will be permitted provided they support the vitality and viability of the centre as a whole. Such uses should be compatible with the specialist and tourism related character of the centre or cater specifically for the day to day needs of the local residential population.

A very high quality of design and layout will be required reflecting the unique historic character of the centre.

Retail Provision and New Residential Development

- 6.5.23 it is important that provision is made for retail and service facilities in Local Centres to serve new residential areas. St Mary's Island is one such area and local provision here will be important as it is not within easy reach of other

centres. Rochester Riverside, Wainscott and, to a lesser extent, Lower Upnor also have proposed housing developments of a size warranting a local retail facility. The proposed residential area east of Hoo is close to Hoo village centre and further work is required to determine what additional facilities may be justified. This assessment will be undertaken as part of the preparation of the development brief proposed for the site. The precise nature of the facilities to be provided at Rochester Riverside, Wainscott and Lower Upnor will also be determined through the development briefs being prepared for these sites.

POLICY R9: RETAIL PROVISION IN NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS

Local shopping facilities within Use Classes A1, A2 and A3 at a small scale, appropriate to meet the daily needs of residents, workers and visitors, will be provided in association with major residential development at the following sites as defined on the proposals map:

- (i) St Mary's Island*
- (ii) Lower Upnor*
- (iii) Rochester Riverside*
- (iv) East Of Wainscott Road*
- (v) Adjacent to Hoo village centre (subject to detailed evaluation through a development brief).*

Local Centres, Villages And Neighbourhood Centres

- 6.5.24 Local Centres (such as Twydall, Parkwood and Walderslade), village shops and pubs and Neighbourhood Centres (local groups and parades of shops) are important in providing locally available retailing and other services to communities. They are also important in promoting sustainable living patterns, by being within easy walking or cycling distance of people's homes thereby reducing reliance on the car.
- 6.5.25 The council will protect their position in the retail hierarchy by resisting changes of use from A1 uses (especially food). Where opportunities to strengthen Local Centres by the development of additional retail or service uses occur, these will generally be supported.

**POLICY R10: LOCAL CENTRES, VILLAGE SHOPS AND
NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES**

In Local Centres, villages and Neighbourhood Centres as defined on the proposals map and listed below, development involving the loss of existing shopping facilities, including retail, service and food and drink uses (Classes A1, A2 and A3) will not be permitted unless an improvement to local amenity or the provision of community facilities occurs that outweighs the loss.

Local Shopping Centres Numbers

<i>Lordswood</i>	<i>1-18 Kestrel Road</i>
<i>Parkwood</i>	<i>1-45 Parkwood Green</i>
<i>Twydall</i>	<i>1-64 Twydall Green</i>
<i>Walderslade</i>	<i>263-385 odds; Walderslade Road 7-11 (odds) & 8-12 (evens) Walderslade Shopping Centre, Units 1-6 Sherwood House, Walderslade Village Centre</i>
<i>Ordnance Street</i>	<i>2-16 (evens)</i>
<i>Luton Road</i>	<i>2-74 (evens)</i>
<i>Pattens Lane</i>	<i>106-112 (evens) & 27-35 (odds)</i>
<i>Wayfield Road</i>	<i>161-183 (odds)</i>
<i>Luton High Street</i>	<i>25-49 (odds) & 50-54 (evens)</i>

<i>Shirley Avenue</i>	<i>1a-5 (odds) & 20-25 (incl)</i>
<i>Silverweed Road / Yarrow Road</i>	<i>42-86 (evens) & 27-31 (odds)</i>
<i>Admirals Walk</i>	<i>1-12 (evens)</i>
<i>The Links</i>	<i>11-16 (incl)</i>
<i>Holland Road</i>	<i>60-68 (evens)</i>
<i>Rainham Road / Watling Street</i>	<i>168-182 (evens) & 101-109 (odds)</i>
<i>Delce Road</i>	<i>82-128a (evens)</i>
<i>The Fairway</i>	<i>64-72 (evens) & 1-2 Leake House</i>
<i>Marley Way, Central Parade</i>	<i>1-12 (incl)</i>
<i>Maidstone Road, Rochester</i>	<i>69-83 (odds) & 118-130 (evens)</i>
<i>Leander Road / Orion Road</i>	<i>80-82 (evens) & 53-57b (odds)</i>
<i>Bligh Way</i>	<i>165-181 (odds)</i>
<i>Bryant Road / Weston Road</i>	<i>61-97 (odds) & 34,36,64/49</i>
<i>Darnley Road / Cedar Road</i>	<i>9a-29 (odds) & 14/1-5 (odds)</i>
<i>Wells Road</i>	<i>1-7 (odds) & 25-35 (odds)</i>

<i>Frindsbury Road</i>	<i>88-110 (evens) & 105-109 (odds)</i>
<i>Brompton High Street</i>	<i>3-25 (odds) & 8-26 (evens)</i>
<i>Fairview Avenue</i>	<i>151-169 (odds)</i>
<i>Hempstead Road</i>	<i>140-148 (evens)</i>
<i>Hoath Lane</i>	<i>30-48 (evens)/Wigmore Rd. No 2</i>
<i>Maidstone Road, Rainham</i>	<i>371-377 (odds)</i>
<i>Sturdee Avenue</i>	<i>42-58 (evens) & 59-65 (odds)</i>
<i>Watling Street</i>	<i>46-94 (evens) & 123-147 (odds)</i>
<i>Norreys Road</i>	<i>1-4 (incl)</i>
<i>Livingstone Circus</i>	<i>1-8 & 13-17 Livingstone Buildings, Barnsole Road 1-6, Gillingham Road 198-206 (evens) & 239-277 (odds), Franklin Road 142 & Balmoral Road 217 & 219</i>
<i>Princes Park</i>	<i>Safeway Store, 1 and 2 The Mall</i>
<i>Hoo, St Werburgh</i>	<i>All shops in village</i>
<u><i>Village Centres</i></u>	
<i>Allhallows</i>	<i>All shops In village</i>

Chattenden	All shops In village
Cliffe	All shops In village
Cliffe Woods	All shops In village
Cuxton	All shops In village
Grain	All shops In village
Halling	All shops In village
High Halstow	All shops In village
Lower Stoke	All shops In village
Wainscott	All shops In village

Neighbourhood Centres

London Road, Rainham	12-40 (evens)
Delce Road	48-56 (evens)
New Road, Chatham	139-151 (odds)
Maidstone Road, Rochester	57-59 (odds), 208-214 (evens), 97-109 (odds)
Cuxton Road	Units 1-9 (odds), Unit 2-4 (evens)
High Street, Strood	5-39 (odds) & 4-24 (evens)
London Road, Strood	2-24 (evens)
Canterbury Street	132-136 (evens) 148-206 (evens) 227-255 (odds) 302-304 (evens) 312-320 (evens)

	428-432 (evens) 499-563 (odds)
<i>James Street</i>	119-123 (odds)
<i>High Street, Rainham</i>	173-179 (odds)
<i>London Road / Maidstone Road</i>	1-7 (odds) / 2 (evens) Maidstone Road
<i>Station Road, Rainham</i>	88-94 (evens) & 183-191 (odds)
<i>Ashley Road</i>	1-9 (odds)
<i>Barnsole Road</i>	151-157 (odds)
<i>Boundary Road</i>	109-113 (odds)
<i>Carnation Road</i>	41-47 (odds)
<i>Dale Street</i>	289-291 (odds)
<i>Gillingham Road</i>	36-46 (evens)
<i>Grove Road</i>	54 (evens) & 59 (odds)
<i>John Street</i>	78-86 (evens)
<i>Laburnum Road</i>	67-71 (odds)
<i>Lonsdale Drive</i>	286-288 (evens)
<i>Luton Road</i>	268-274 (evens) 136-183 (evens) 110-114 (evens) 84-92 (evens)
<i>Rochester Court, Medway City Estate</i>	Unit 2-6 (evens) & 3-1 (odds)

<i>Palmerston Road</i>	<i>88-106 (evens)</i>
<i>Peverel Green</i>	<i>45-49 (odds)</i>
<i>Richmond Road</i>	<i>136-142 (evens)</i>
<i>Scotteswood Avenue</i>	<i>1-7 (odds)</i>
<i>Trafalgar Street</i>	<i>131-135 (odds)</i>

Town Centre Uses and Mixed Use Schemes

- 6.5.26 The council wishes to sustain an appropriate and accessible range of non-retail uses in major centres (Chatham, Strood, Gillingham and Rainham and, on a smaller scale, Rochester). Such uses include some forms of business employment (generally offices), leisure and entertainment, health, cultural and educational facilities. These often have large catchment areas and need to be accessible to a large number of people. If sited in town centres they contribute greatly to the vitality and viability of these centres and offer scope for multi-purpose trips.
- 6.5.27 In accordance with the advice given in PPG's 6 and 13, a sequential test for such uses is proposed. Where a proposed facility is intended to meet more than local needs it should be located in Chatham as the preferred location.

POLICY R11: TOWN CENTRE USES AND THE SEQUENTIAL APPROACH

Business employment (Class B1(a)), leisure and entertainment uses, cultural and educational facilities will be expected to be located in the main centres of Chatham, Strood, Gillingham and Rainham or in the event of no suitable sites being available, on the edges of these centres. Proposals elsewhere for these uses, unless otherwise allocated in the local plan, will only be permitted if:

- (i) it is clearly demonstrated that no suitable centre or edge of centre site exists; and*

(ii) the site is easily accessible by a choice of transport modes, including public transport; and

(iii) the uses proposed would not undermine the vitality and viability of the main centres listed.

6.5.28 Government guidance is clear, and recent national research confirms, that mixed use schemes within, or on the edge of, town centres contribute greatly to their vitality and viability while at the same time promoting sustainability. Such schemes may comprise of a range of uses including residential, offices, service uses, food and drink, entertainment and health facilities as well as retail.

6.5.29 Within the main centres of Chatham, Strood, Gillingham, Rainham and, to a lesser extent, Rochester there is considerable scope for the development of well conceived schemes which combine high quality design with compatibility with adjoining uses. More specifically the continuing work on developing the “City” centre vision for Chatham has identified the Riverside/Medway Street area (see policy S5) as being ideally suited for a mixed approach to development. Other opportunities exist both within the core area (on a smaller scale) and outside the Ring Road. Such an approach may be suitable within the Friary Precinct site in Strood, while in Gillingham the council is already promoting the mixed use concept in the Arden Street area. In Rainham an adopted development brief advocates a mixed use approach on the former Co-Op department store site opposite the parish church. Other opportunities exist in each of the centres.

6.5.30 Policy R12 promotes such schemes whilst avoiding inflexibility by listing specific sites.

POLICY R12: MIXED USE SCHEMES

Within, or on the edge of, the defined Core Areas of Chatham, Strood, Gillingham, Rainham (and at a lesser scale Rochester) mixed use developments of an appropriate scale and incorporating high design standards and which contribute to the vitality and viability of these centres will be permitted.

Retail Uses and the Sequential Approach

6.5.31 The preceding policies in this chapter make generous provision for new retail development within, and on the edges of, the main town centres of Chatham, Strood, Gillingham and Rainham. This provision is of a scale to comfortably absorb forecast growth in retail expenditure over the plan period and it fully

accords with PPG6, which makes it clear that town centres are the preferred location for retail investment.

- 6.5.32 Policy R13 covers circumstances where, exceptionally, a case is made that a proposed development cannot be accommodated within, or on the edge of, any of the main centres. In such circumstances the tests set out in the policy will be rigorously applied.

POLICY R13: RETAIL USES AND THE SEQUENTIAL APPROACH

Retail development outside the main retail centres will only be permitted when it is demonstrated that sites suitable for the proposed retail development are not available in accordance with the following sequence:

- (i) within the Core Areas of Chatham, Strood, Gillingham and Rainham; then*
- (ii) on the edge (i.e. within 200-300 metres) of the core Areas of Chatham, Strood, Gillingham and Rainham; then*
- (iii) within or adjacent to one of the Local Centres, Village and Neighbourhood Centres as listed in policy R10.*

Development will be assessed in accordance with the following criteria:

- (iv) the extent to which the proposal would undermine the strategy and objectives of the local plan to sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of existing centres; and*
- (v) whether the scale and type of retailing by itself, or cumulatively with other proposals, would have a detrimental impact on the vitality and viability of the Core Areas, Local Centres, Villages or Neighbourhood Centres; and*

(vi) whether the location enables access by a choice of transport, including public transport;

(vii) the overall impact on travel, the likely changes in travel patterns and reduction in the reliance on the car.

“Ancillary” Retail Development

6.5.33 A variety of retail uses exist outside retail centres and these can take many forms. They include shops in hospitals and trade or sales counters in wholesale warehouses and factories. In recent years there has also been a considerable expansion in the number and size of retail outlets associated with petrol filling stations.

6.5.34 Where the original function of the retail unit is clearly “ancillary” to the main use of the site or premises there is seldom a difficulty. However, in some cases the temptation to appeal to a wider market can result in the unit losing its original purpose, potentially to the detriment of other retail establishments or local amenity. Where planning permission is needed, appropriate conditions will be imposed on any consent to ensure that the use remains ancillary to the main use of the business or site. In the case of petrol filling stations, the shop can be an effective substitute for the traditional corner shop but it is appropriate to restrict its scale so that the retail use remains ancillary to the sale of fuel.

POLICY R14: ANCILLARY RETAIL DEVELOPMENT

Retail sales which are intended to be ancillary to the main use (such as sales from factories, trade warehouses, hospitals and petrol filling stations) will be permitted subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions to ensure that the retail use remains ancillary.

Amusement Arcades Etc...

6.5.35 Certain facilities such as amusement arcades, virtual reality centres and sauna/massage establishments also justify a degree of control. If inappropriately sited they can have a detrimental effect on neighbouring activities, particularly on residential development. Generally, such uses should be located within, or on the edge of, town centres and sited away from sensitive uses, which might suffer loss of amenity.

POLICY R15: AMUSEMENT ARCADES, ETC

Amusement arcades, virtual reality centres and establishments such as sauna/massage parlours will only be permitted within, or on the edge of, a retail centre and subject to:

- (i) there being no detrimental impact on the retail character and function of the centre; and*
- (ii) there being no adverse affect on the character of a Conservation Area or other place of special architectural or historic character; and*
- (iii) there being no detrimental effect on the amenity enjoyed by neighbouring uses.*

Where the proposal relates to ground floor premises, a shopfront of appropriate design will be required.

Restrictions On Goods For Sale

6.5.36 It is now common practice to impose planning conditions relating to the range of goods sold from food superstores and retail warehouses. As PPG6 points out *“retail proposals can change their composition over time. Such changes could create a development that the planning authority would have refused, on the grounds of impact on the vitality and viability of an existing town centre. It may be sensible to consider these and planning conditions to ensure that these developments do not subsequently change their character unacceptably.”*

6.5.37 In the case of some large stand-alone stores, ancillary trading and services can have a serious impact on local centres and retail warehouses are promoted on the basis that they deal with bulky goods which cannot be properly offered in town centre environments.

POLICY R16: RESTRICTIONS ON GOODS FOR SALE

Durable goods sold from any foodstores or retail warehouses outside an existing retail centre will be limited by condition to exclude any of the following items if their sale would adversely affect the vitality and

viability of a nearby retail centre: clothing, footwear, books, jewellery, toys, sports goods, recording material, computer software and services such as opticians and travel agencies. The floorspace area will also be specified from which durable goods can be sold if the development would adversely affect the viability and vitality of a nearby retail centre as a whole without such a condition.

Retail warehouses will be limited by condition so that they shall not sell food for consumption off the premises (other than confectionery).

A2 and A3 Uses and Change of Use

- 6.5.38 Class A2 (Financial and Professional Services) and Class A3 uses (Food and Drink) are important components of town centres and add to their vitality and viability. However, in some cases an undue concentration of such uses within the main retail frontages can have a negative effect, reducing footfall and visual interest and disrupting the benefits which shops gain from being close to one another. Purely takeaway food outlets can also bring a negative image to an area if they are unduly concentrated and cater primarily for the late evening, as opposed to daytime and early evening trade.
- 6.5.39 Control on such uses needs to be applied sensitively as there is often a fine line between what might be beneficial or not to the town centre. Nevertheless the council is of the view that proper control should be exercised in appropriate cases. Policy R17 provides a basis for this which allows the circumstances in each case to be fully considered.

POLICY R17: A2 AND A3 USES AND CHANGE OF USE

Changes of use within, and on the edge of, the Core Areas of Chatham, Strood, Gillingham, Rainham and Rochester from Class A1 (retail) to A2 (Financial and Professional Services) or A3 (Food and Drink uses) at ground floor level will be permitted except where the addition of such a use within any particular part of the centre would cumulatively have a detrimental effect on the character and retail function of the centre or visual amenity.

6.5.40 Control is also required outside the main centres, in particular to protect residential amenity. Policy R18 sets out five criteria against which proposals for take away hot food shops, restaurants, cafes, bars and public houses can be properly considered.

POLICY R18: TAKE AWAY HOT FOOD SHOPS, RESTAURANTS, CAFES, BARS AND PUBLIC HOUSES

Take-Away hot food shops, restaurants, cafés, bars and public houses will be permitted, outside the defined retail core areas, provided that the following criteria are met:

- (i) there is no significant detrimental impact on neighbouring land uses or to residential amenity; and*
- (ii) the presence of any similar uses in the locality, and the combined effect that any such concentration would have, would be acceptable in terms of environmental impact and highway safety; and*
- (iii) the proposed hours of opening are acceptable in relation to the amenities of the area; and*
- (iv) suitable refuse storage, disposal and collection facilities are provided; and*
- (v) the proposal pays particular attention to meeting the provision of policies BNE2, BNE3, T1, T13 and T22 in respect of the mitigation of noise and general disturbance, for the proper extraction and treatment of fumes and smells, and arrangements for parking, servicing and access for people with disabilities.*

Vehicle Sales and Showrooms

6.5.41 Purpose designed vehicle showrooms can create visual interest and variety. However, their space requirements and need for high quality access means that they are difficult to accommodate in town centre locations. Largely open vehicle

sales areas often have a poor image through the use of low quality temporary buildings, poor boundary treatments and excessive signing and promotional material. Difficulties can also occur if there is an undue concentration of showroom uses within employment areas. They attract large numbers of private vehicles onto roads otherwise frequented by heavy goods vehicles and parking can overflow onto roads, creating a hazard.

- 6.5.42 The council wishes to encourage high quality showrooms and associated uses in appropriate locations, and also to encourage operators to invest in their sites in the interest of local amenity. The preferred locations are on major routes outside main centres where mixed commercial uses predominate and, in the case of employment areas, close to the main access points and on the main road frontage. Where practicable, buildings should be purpose designed with good architectural detailing being used to provide visual interest. Careful consideration should always be given to the treatment of boundaries and on-site lighting. Signage should also be carefully considered to avoid undue clutter and complement the buildings on the site. Changes of use to Class A1 retail on sites outside established retail centres will be prevented by the application of conditions.

POLICY R19: VEHICLE SALES AND SHOWROOMS

Vehicle showrooms and open sales areas should feature visually interesting buildings, high quality boundary treatment and surfacing and be accompanied by full details of any outdoor lighting and signage. Sites should be well related to the primary and secondary road network and be of sufficient size to avoid other than incidental on-road parking resulting from the use.

Change of use from vehicle sales to Class A1(shops) on sites outside established retail centres will be prevented by the application of planning conditions where such a change of use would prejudice the vitality and viability of a nearby retail centre.

6.6 Environmental Appraisal

- 6.6.1 In accordance with the guidance contained at paras. 4.16 to 4.22 of PPG12 "Development Plans" the policies in this chapter have been subject to environmental appraisal.

6.6.2 The retailing policies are on the whole sustainable. The main themes of the chapter are the support and maintenance of the retail hierarchy; the regeneration and revitalisation of existing major centres and the protection of local centres. The chapter is also strong on the reduction in the need to travel, the discouragement of out-of-centre retail development, the encouragement in the use of brownfield sites, and the promotion of equal opportunity of use.

6.6.3 The policies do not have any direct impact on global sustainability or natural resources, but indirectly they are likely to have a positive effect.

6.7 Monitoring Measures

6.7.1 The performance of the plan in meeting its aims with regard to retailing will be judged against the following criteria:

- (i) Changes in the level of durable and convenience goods floorspace, in particular within Chatham, and any changes in the retail hierarchy of centres;
- (ii) The number of mixed use development schemes permitted within the main centres during the plan period;
- (iii) The implementation of the major allocated retail schemes in Chatham, Strood, Gillingham and Rainham;
- (iv) Changes in the vitality and viability of existing shopping centres and their general environmental condition;
- (v) The level of retail employment.

LEISURE

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 Leisure is a term used to describe free time and the enjoyment of free time. Leisure uses involve a broad range of inter-related sport, recreation and cultural activities. Sports activities can be described as games or competitive activities played indoors and outdoors and involving physical exertion, for example, athletics, football and cricket. Recreational activities are harder to define and encompass a wider range of pursuits. They are pursuits which result in the refreshing or entertaining of oneself and are pleasurable activities, for example, having access to the countryside in the form of a country park, cycling along a riverside walkway, non-competitive swimming, walking etc. Cultural activities can be defined as arts and entertainment activities, for example, theatres, cinemas and museums. Therefore leisure activities can range from those carried out at indoor or outdoor facilities, involve passive and active pursuits and be within public or private ownership.

7.1.2 The provision of accessible sport and leisure facilities is an essential ingredient in improving the quality of life and achieving a sustainable living pattern for the residents of Medway. Leisure pursuits help to develop a person's physical and mental health and self-esteem. They also play an important role in enhancing social interaction, fostering a sense of community, assisting in the protection of green spaces and semi natural habitats and creating a high quality urban environment that meets the leisure demands of its residents. All these aspects add to the social, economic and environmental fabric of Medway not only by providing new opportunities and experiences for the local community but also providing a source of income generation and employment opportunities.

7.2 The Current Position

Sports Facilities

7.2.1 Within Medway there are various public and private sports facilities. The area contains one regional and one district sports centre, namely the Black Lion Sports Centre in Gillingham and the Strood Sports Centre respectively. They provide a wide range of facilities including indoor swimming pools and an all weather sports pitch at Strood Sports Centre. There is also an international trampoline centre situated next to the Black Lion Sports Centre. There are a number of local sports centres including the Stirling Centre in Rochester, the Lordswood Leisure Centre and the Priestfield Sports Centre. These include large and small sports halls, squash courts, fitness rooms and health suites as well as outdoor provision for tennis, netball and 5-a-side football. Indoor swimming pools are also located at Hoo St Werburgh and Rainham. Other key facilities include an ice rink at Gillingham Business Park, a private all-weather sports pitch in Gillingham, a badminton "Centre of Performance" in Gillingham, an internationally recognised indoor bowls club at Prince Arthur Road in Gillingham and two other indoor bowl venues at Deangate and Chatham. Other facilities

include ten pin bowling at the Pentagon Centre, Chatham; a six lane floodlit athletics track at Deangate; an artificial ski slope in the grounds of Capstone Country Park and Medway Valley Park, a major leisure facility which would benefit from greater accessibility to various forms of transport. There are also a number of marinas located along the Medway Estuary.

7.2.2 The Sports Council's standard for the provision of indoor sports facilities is one district sports centre per 40,000 - 90,000 population plus one for each additional 50,000 population. Although the existing level of provision is below the standard recommended by the Sports Council, it should be recognised that the standard is based on a numerical assessment and does not take into account locational requirements, accessibility and other factors. It would be unrealistic and beyond available resources to bring existing provision up to these standards.

7.2.3 Nevertheless, Medway Council will seek to enhance and expand existing facilities and it will support the development of new leisure facilities where appropriate. The refurbishment and extension of facilities at Strood Sports Centre has already been completed (in 1995) and the council is now working with the Hundred of Hoo School to develop facilities to meet the needs of communities on the Hoo Peninsula and with Medway Community College (in the Luton, Holcombe area), in the provision of community sports hall facilities. Furthermore it is aware of the need to replace the indoor bowling facilities at Chatham Riverside and to identify sites for the Medway Rowing Club, an indoor tennis centre and an indoor cricket club. The opportunity to bid for lottery funding to support such proposals could increase the ability to improve or develop new facilities. Medway Council, as Local Planning Authority, will support such bids where it can be demonstrated that the development would be appropriate in land use planning terms.

Open Space

7.2.4 Open space with recreational value such as play areas and playing fields, together with informal open space, such as amenity land, are all of great value in the contribution they make towards meeting the leisure needs of residents. Within the urban area there are a number of important open spaces that act as green lungs, breaking up the built environment and providing accessible areas of open space, such as Capstone Country Park, Gillingham Riverside and the Coney Banks. Many of these open spaces provide for a variety of recreational pursuits, from playing field games to observing wildlife habitats.

7.2.5 Open space contributes towards making Medway an attractive place to live and work by improving the quality of the urban environment. Protecting existing open space, especially within the urban area, is important due to the shortage of formal areas of open space when measured against the National Playing Field Association minimum standard (of 2.4 hectares per 1000 population). At a population level of 240,000 (1991 Census) a requirement of 576 hectares of formal open space should be provided and there is a substantial deficit in both playing field and play area provision.

Cultural Facilities

- 7.2.6 Medway, in spite of its size, has only a limited number of arts and entertainment venues. The principal reason for this is the proximity of London and the significant influence that the capital plays in arts provision. However, there is a growing demand for the provision of cultural facilities such as museums, cinemas, and formal and informal venues for the performance of music, theatre and dance. The council is actively developing the Centre of Chatham as Medway's "City" centre and it will become the main focus for cultural facilities within Medway.
- 7.2.7 The principal entertainment venue in Medway is the Central Theatre in Chatham, and over the years substantial improvements have been made to this facility. Other entertainment venues include The Brook Theatre in Chatham; the Medway Little Theatre, Rochester; the cinema in Chatham and the Casino Cabaret Rooms in Rochester. On an occasional basis the St George's Centre and Black Lion Sports Centre in Gillingham double as further venues for theatre and musical productions. There are a number of museums within Medway including the Royal Engineers Museum in Gillingham and The Guildhall Museum in Rochester. Art galleries are situated at the Visitors Information Centre, Rochester; Lordswood Leisure Centre and at a number of libraries (including Gillingham, Lordswood, Strood and Walderslade). A multiplex cinema forms part of the major out-of-centre entertainment complex at Medway Valley Park to the south of Strood. In addition, Medway can boast other entertainment facilities including bingo halls, night clubs and an extensive range of pubs and restaurants. The council also supports a programme of public events which include arts, entertainment and sport.

7.3 Policy Context

Central Government Guidance

- 7.3.1 Government guidance in recent years has promoted the principle of sustainable development and this is most clearly acknowledged in PPG1 and PPG13. The need for facilities to be located within urban areas and accessible by a variety of modes of transport is an essential element of national planning policy. It is therefore important that future leisure provision accords with these principles.
- 7.3.2 PPG 17 "Planning for Open Space Sport and Recreation" recognises the growing awareness of the importance of all kinds of sports and leisure facilities in urban areas and acknowledges the particular concern felt by many communities that open spaces with recreational value should be protected from development. The guidance states that all playing fields whether school playing fields or those owned by other public, private or voluntary organisations are of special significance both for their recreational and amenity value and, in towns and cities, for their contribution to green spaces in an urban environment.
- 7.3.3 The overriding theme of central government policy is that local authorities should be actively promoting the development of sport and recreation in the widest

sense and encouraging the provision of a wide range of opportunities for recreation so that people can choose activities which suit them best. Such opportunities should be available to everyone including the elderly and those with disabilities for whom access to facilities is especially important. A particular emphasis is placed on protecting all playing fields, both public and private.

Regional Guidance

- 7.3.4 RPG9 “*Regional Guidance for the South East*” recognises the important role leisure plays in improving the quality of life of the South East’s inhabitants. Leisure is also an important component within urban areas as it contributes towards the attractiveness of a location as a place in which to live and work. The “*Thames Gateway Planning Framework*” (RPG9a) acknowledges the contribution that leisure can make towards achieving successful regeneration. Local authorities are encouraged to put in place planning policies which support the provision of a wide range of leisure facilities and allow the market to respond to the demand for recreation. Development plans should include land use policies to provide open space to serve new homes, safeguard existing open space and improve the use of those open spaces which are less well frequented. The Framework also recognises the regional significance of the Medway Estuary for water based recreation, whilst acknowledging that there is only limited scope for greater use without affecting important nature conservation interests.

Kent Structure Plan 1996

- 7.3.5 The Kent Structure Plan indicates that the main focus for leisure activity is towns and town centres. It highlights the importance of leisure to the vitality and viability of centres. The plan acknowledges the contribution that open space makes to the environmental quality of urban areas and its amenity value. The plan aims to extend recreational opportunities, and this includes support for the provision of major new sports arenas or stadia. Where facilities are located in the countryside, any built development must be small in scale and ancillary to an outdoor recreation use. In built-up areas development will need to be balanced against the objective of maintaining and improving urban environmental quality and to avoid town cramming.

Medway Council Leisure Strategies

- 7.3.6 It should be noted that leisure objectives cannot be achieved solely through the planning process. The local plan sets out the land use implications of leisure proposals. Medway Council, through the Education and Leisure Directorate, has its own strategies for the provision and management of recreation, sport, art and entertainment facilities. These strategies take their lead from other bodies such as the Sports Council and the Arts Council which have produced national and regional guidance. The Medway Council Strategic Plan for 1999-2004 has identified a special role for Chatham in the provision of arts and entertainment facilities.

7.4 Objectives

7.4.1 The leisure policies of this plan aim to meet the aspirations of the widest possible range of users, including young people, the elderly and the disabled and recognise that different groups have different requirements. Furthermore, the policies reflect the importance of formal recreation provision, such as sports centres and playing fields, alongside informal recreation provision such as country parks and the cultural aspects of leisure, for instance museums. To achieve improved access and greater participation in sport and recreation, this plan supports the fullest use of existing facilities including those in schools, higher education establishments and private companies and clubs. The efficient use of existing facilities can reduce the need to identify further land. The strategic aim is to provide for as wide a range of interests as possible in a way which meets the objectives of sustainable development.

7.4.2 In pursuit of this strategic aim the council as Local Planning Authority will seek to fulfil the following objectives:

- (i) to protect existing open spaces¹, buildings and facilities which serve a leisure purpose;
- (ii) to provide land for open space for formal and informal recreation to meet identified needs;
- (iii) to improve the quality and accessibility of existing leisure facilities and open spaces;
- (iv) to ensure that within new developments provision is made for accessible, quality open space and play provision;
- (v) to encourage the multiple use of leisure facilities in the public, private and voluntary sectors including, where appropriate, the dual use of educational facilities;
- (vi) to maintain, improve and promote the greater use of the public rights of way network;
- (vii) to encourage the provision of arts, cultural and entertainment facilities to meet needs within the local plan area, reflecting the council's intention to promote a "City" Centre in Chatham.

7.5 Policies and Reasoned Justification

7.5.1 There are often pressures to redevelop existing leisure facilities, such as sports and cultural facilities, for alternative uses and this can apply to facilities in both public and private ownership. The council aims to provide protection for these sites to ensure that there is a range of sports and cultural venues throughout Medway, whilst recognising that there may be exceptional circumstances when it would be beneficial to re-develop existing facilities.

- 7.5.2 Where replacement leisure facilities are proposed these should be accessible by a range of transport modes and be sited within existing urban areas. A means of achieving this is by locating development in highly accessible locations and by maintaining or improving choice for people to walk, cycle or catch public transport.

POLICY L1 : EXISTING LEISURE FACILITIES

In order to maintain existing levels of provision, development which would result in the loss of leisure facilities will not be permitted unless it can be shown:

- (i) that similar or better replacement is made elsewhere within the same catchment area, which is well located in relation to the primary or secondary road network and is readily accessible by public transport, pedestrians and cyclists; or***
- (ii) that there is no longer a need for the facility and it is unsuitable for conversion to an alternative leisure use; or***
- (iii) that the site is allocated for other development in the local plan.***

New Facilities

- 7.5.3 Leisure facilities within town centres, such as arts, entertainment, cultural and some sports facilities, have an important role to play in enhancing the attraction of town centres. They can contribute to their evening economies and widen the scope of facilities offered to the public from a shopping centre to a focus for the community. There are already a number of existing leisure uses located within and on the edge of Medway's town centres which enhance them, for example, located within Chatham is a ten pin bowling facility at the Pentagon Centre, two theatres and a cinema. It is intended to redevelop Chatham Library, with the new facility providing a range of services and enhancing the leisure offer in Chatham. This will form part of the development of Chatham as the "City" centre of Medway.

- 7.5.4 In recent years, there has been greater recognition of the role that leisure uses play in making our town centres more attractive. PPG6 supports a sequential test approach towards some leisure uses, encouraging leisure to locate within town centre and edge of centre locations and, only when this is not possible,

outside the town centre at sites which are highly accessible by public transport. The types of leisure uses appropriate to a town centre include those falling within Use Class D1 (such as an art gallery, museum, and exhibition hall) and Use Class D2 (such as a cinema, concert hall, bingo, casino or dance hall). Leisure uses appropriate to an edge of centre location include some sports facilities, such as district sports centres (Use Class D2). Other uses which are not included within Use Class D1 and D2 but fall within policy L2 include theatres and other similar leisure uses. Whilst the sequential test approach will be applied to all major leisure proposals, smaller scale facilities of an appropriate nature will be permitted within local or neighbourhood centres.

- 7.5.5 If facilities cannot be located within town centres (or are not appropriate to a town centre location), such as local sports facilities or playing fields, suitable out-of-centre locations will be acceptable, subject to their impact on residential areas, the environment and the local highway network. In the case of major proposals, particular consideration will be given to whether there is an identified need at the national, county or local level for such a facility.
- 7.5.6 Within Medway there are three mixed-use opportunity sites that include provision for leisure facilities : Rochester Riverside Action Area (see policy S7); Chatham Maritime (see policy S8) and Strood Waterfront Action Area (see policy S10). All will involve the treatment of contaminated land and the provision of improved infrastructure; Rochester and Chatham are also major comprehensive regeneration schemes involving the reuse of historic buildings.
- 7.5.7 The development of Chatham as a “City” centre will involve focussing major leisure uses into Chatham and specifically the Chatham riverside. This will provide a link between the retail core redevelopment along Rochester Riverside and the Historic Dockyard and Fort Amherst.

POLICY L2: NEW LEISURE FACILITIES

Within or on the edge of town centres, leisure uses falling within use Classes D1 and D2 and other theatre, arts and cultural leisure uses will be permitted. Proposals for leisure development outside town centre and edge of centre locations will only be permitted when it can be demonstrated that the proposal:

- (i) is inappropriate within a town centre or edge of centre location; or is on a site identified in Policies S7, S8 and S10 as being suitable for leisure uses in accordance with a Master Plan or development brief; and***

- (ii) would not adversely affect the strategy for, or the vitality and viability of Chatham town centre or other, nearby, town centres; and***
- (iii) has followed the sequential test in that there are no alternative, suitable and available locations in, or on the edge of, Chatham town centre, the other town centres or on other edge of centre locations; and***
- (iv) would have no significant detrimental impact on neighbouring land uses or residential amenity; and***
- (v) is highly accessible by public transport, affords good opportunities for access by pedestrians and cyclists and is sited near the primary or secondary road network.***

Major Stadium

7.5.8 Priestfield Stadium, the home of Gillingham Football Club, is Kent's only professional Football League ground. It is located within a densely built up residential area of inner Gillingham and has been improved to comply with the Taylor Report (with further improvements planned, including the construction of two new stands).

7.5.9 The Kent Structure Plan has identified a need for a major stadium of a regional or sub-regional standard, as there is currently no facility reaching this standard within Kent. This facility would serve the County need and provide the opportunity for multiple use, including a football ground and associated non-football leisure facilities. Gillingham Football Club has expressed an interest in relocating and developing a new stadium in the longer term. Therefore, opportunities may exist to combine a new football stadium with other stadium-based uses. If a suitable site for a stadium comes forward during the period of the local plan the proposal will be considered against the criteria set out in policy L2. Temple Marsh, within the Strood Waterfront Action Area, may be a suitable location (see policy S10).

Open Space

7.5.10 Within urban areas the retention of public and private open space of recreational and amenity value is particularly important as this is where demand is concentrated. Open space includes youth and adult sports facilities, casual play space, play areas and informal amenity open space, such as semi-natural

habitats. Amenity open space and semi natural habitats in urban areas provide opportunities for informal recreation and adventure play and contribute much to people's health and well being. Medway Council attaches great importance to the retention of recreational and amenity open space in urban areas and recognises that once built on, open space is likely to be lost to the community forever. There is also demand for the creation of new open space, such as allotments, in Walderslade, Lordswood, Hempstead and Parkwood.

7.5.11 Open space is equally important within rural settlements. Although villages may benefit from ready accessibility to the countryside they still require open space to meet specific needs, particularly where agricultural practices have led to the intensive use of surrounding land. The countryside also provides important opportunities for public access to semi-natural habitats through the network of public rights of way and larger areas for informal recreation such as the Darland Banks, Capstone Valley and Gillingham Riverside. The importance of open space is further recognised in various local strategies covering nature conservation, landscape and open space and further research into open space needs within Medway is planned.

7.5.12 Provision of land for outdoor sports facilities, such as children's play areas and playing fields, is currently below the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) standard of 2.4 hectares per 1000 population. There is a shortage of play areas in every Ward and this is shown in Appendix 3. There is also a deficit in playing field provision although many of these areas have gained greater protection recently under the Town and Country Planning (Playing Fields) (England) Direction 1998 and the Department for Education and Employment Circular 3/99. Under the direction all playing fields either owned by the council or which have been in educational use for the past five years are protected from development. At current population levels, Medway requires a minimum of 576 hectares of outdoor sports facilities to meet the NPFA standard and there is a significant deficit in both outdoor sports facilities and play areas. The constraints imposed by the heavily urbanised nature of much of Medway make it unrealistic to expect new provision to be achieved on a scale that could significantly reduce the deficit in facilities. However, protection should be given to those areas where facilities can be realistically provided during the plan period.

7.5.13 Only those areas of open space (including outdoor play facilities and amenity open space) exceeding 0.25 hectares are identified on the proposals map, but all open space is protected from development, whatever its size and whether the land is in public or private use. Only in exceptional circumstances will development be permitted on areas of protected open space. Sites with potential for contributing towards informal open space and local amenity are those which, for example, could be enhanced by the implementation of a landscaping scheme or other measures.

7.5.14 The term 'small' in sub-section (i) of policy L3 relates to a development that would only affect land not able to be used for outdoor play space, or lead to the loss of a sports or recreation facility (including safety margins). Within sub-section (ii) alternative open space provision will be considered suitable if it is of

a similar quality and size, location, accessibility and management arrangements to that lost.

POLICY L3: PROTECTION OF OPEN SPACE

Development which would involve the loss of existing formal open space, informal open space, allotments or amenity land will not be permitted unless:

- (i) sports and recreation facilities can best be implemented, or retained and enhanced through redevelopment of a small part of the site; or*
- (ii) alternative open space provision can be made within the same catchment area and is acceptable in terms of amenity value; or*
- (iii) in the case of outdoor sports and children's play space provision, there is an excess of such provision in the area (measured against the n.p.f.a. standard of 2.4 hectares per 1,000 population) and such open space neither contributes to, nor has the potential to contribute to, informal leisure, open space or local environmental amenity provision; or*
- (iv) in the case of educational establishments, the development is required for educational purposes and adequate areas for outdoor sports can be retained or provided elsewhere within the vicinity; or*
- (v) the site is allocated for other development in the local plan.*

New Open Space

7.5.15

It is important to consider the need for new development to make provision for open space. New residential developments may reasonably be expected to provide open space as a part of the essential community facilities required to

meet the needs that they generate. The type of provision will depend on the scale of development, the size and type of dwellings proposed and the particular character of the site. However, there is also a need to provide land for passive leisure and social use to encourage healthy life-styles and provide for general well being. This is particularly important for sheltered housing schemes and special needs housing for elderly people.

7.5.16 Provision of formal open space should be in accordance with the NPFA standard of 2.4 hectares per 1000 population. The NPFA standard is a minimum standard for outdoor play space and recommends 1.7 hectares for outdoor sports facilities and 0.7 hectares for children's play space. Outdoor sports facilities can be defined as formal areas, such as pitches, courts, greens and athletics tracks. The open space should be planned as an integral part of the development and be of an adequate size and design. It should have regard to its local context, enhance the environment and develop robust landscapes that can easily be maintained. Developers should have particular regard to these requirements if they intend to offer open space for adoption by the Local Authority. The value of combining different forms of open space should also be considered, for instance, combining casual play space and equipped areas. Developers will not be expected to provide private outdoor sports facilities as part of any development.

7.5.17 Of great importance is the ease of access to play areas: if access is problematic then open space will remain under-used. It is considered more important to take account of the walking time taken to reach play areas (allowing for severance of walking routes by main roads, railway lines etc...) than solely the distances involved.

Table 1: Play Provision

Facility	Walking Time (min)	Walking Distance	Straight Line Distance	Minimum Size		Nearest House Property Boundary	Characteristics
				Activity Zone	Total (inc buffer)		
LEAP (Local Equipped Area or Play)	5	400m	240m	400m ²	3,600m ² (0.36ha)	20m from activity zone	About 5 types of equipment. Small games area
NEAP (Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play)	15	1000m	600m	1000m ²	8,500m ² (0.85ha)	30m from activity zone	About 8 types of equipment Kickabout and cycle play opportunities.

Source:NPFA 1992

7.5.18 In calculating the formal open space requirement, the population of a site should be calculated by considering the type of dwellings proposed and the estimated number of inhabitants. The following population per dwelling ratio will be used

for calculating the contribution of new development towards open space; details of this approach are given in Appendix 3.

Occupancy of Dwellings Ratio

1 Bedroom dwelling	1.33 persons
2 Bedroom dwelling	2.44 persons
3+ Bedroom dwelling	3.59 persons

- 7.5.19 For small developments with a population of less than 50 (or larger developments where there are particular site constraints such as extreme topography or an existing open space adjoining), the provision of open space in accordance with the NPFA standard may not be practical. The residents of these developments will, however, increase the demand on play areas, playing fields and informal open spaces elsewhere. Therefore, a commuted payment from developers will be sought for the provision elsewhere of open space which cannot be provided on site or for the upgrading of existing sub-standard facilities. In all cases, the improvements sought will be directly related to the development and developers will be expected to enter into an agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Contributions will reflect the scale of the proposal, the need for open space arising from the development and the cost of providing the necessary facilities. Where appropriate this will be done in association with Parish Councils where they have responsibility for recreation.
- 7.5.20 In areas of adequate provision of formal open space and play facilities an informal open space element will be sought in lieu of the formal open space element. What constitutes “adequate provision” will be measured against provision within the relevant Ward, facilities adjoining the site and adjoining Wards, if the development abuts a Ward boundary. In the case of sheltered housing and special needs housing for elderly people, provision of informal open space will be required on site instead of the formal open space.
- 7.5.21 At the outline planning application stage if the open space requirement cannot be calculated the provision of open space will be reserved through a legal agreement so that it can be resolved at the detailed planning application stage.

POLICY L4: PROVISION OF OPEN SPACE IN NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS

Where there is a proven deficiency, residential development proposals shall make open space provision, within an agreed timescale, in accordance with the following:

- (i) residential development likely to be occupied by 100 people or more shall include well located local open space for formal recreation on-site at a*

standard equivalent to 1.7 hectares per 1,000 population and open space for children's play and casual recreation on-site at a standard equivalent to 0.7 hectares per 1,000 population. Provision of some or all of the formal open space off-site or the improvement or extension of an existing off-site facility will be permitted where the council is satisfied that this would be a better alternative;

(ii) residential developments likely to be occupied by between 50 and 100 people should include well located local open space for children's play and casual recreation on-site at a standard equivalent to 0.7 hectares per 1,000 population;

(iii) in small residential developments likely to be occupied by less than 50 people, contributions will be sought towards the provision of children's play and casual recreation which is fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development proposal. Such contributions will only be sought where provision can be made in a location close to, and easily accessible from, the development and would be of direct benefit to the occupiers.

Play provision should incorporate facilities based on the hierarchy set out in Table 1.

Where the existing formal open space provision in the vicinity exceeds the N.P.F.A. minimum requirement for outdoor play space, an informal open space element will be sought on-site in lieu, applying the same standard.

In the case of sheltered housing and special needs housing for the elderly, formal open space and children's play/casual space will not be required. Informal open space provision will be sought on-site in lieu of the formal open space requirement.

Open Space in Employment Areas

7.5.22 Large scale employment development can be remote from existing areas of open space which could be used by employees. Provision close to employment areas would not only benefit employees but also enable the creation of semi natural habitats and improve the appearance and value of the development, as for example, at Gillingham Business Park. Open space could be provided where built development would not be permitted, such as in Areas of Local Landscape Importance. It may also be possible to develop links with existing areas of public open space and public rights of way. The detailed specification of the landscaping to be sought is set out in policy BNE6.

POLICY L5 : OPEN SPACE IN EMPLOYMENT AREAS

Areas of landscaped amenity open space will be sought from major employment developments, either within, or adjacent to, the development.

Open Space Allocations

7.5.23 Within Medway there are a number of areas which are significant, not only from a wildlife and nature conservation perspective, but also for the visual relief they bring to densely built-up areas. They are also areas that, if made available to the public, could provide important recreational opportunities for residents and visitors alike. The council will seek to make these areas available to the general public for informal recreation purposes. The areas listed in policy L6 are protected by policy L3 as existing areas of open space.

Policy L6 : OPEN SPACE ALLOCATIONS

The following sites, as defined on the proposals map, will be safeguarded for the provision of informal public open space:

- (i) Lower Lines, Gillingham;*
- (ii) Inner Lines, Brompton;*
- (iii) Hillyfields, Gillingham;*
- (iv) land between former junior school, Avery Way and Kingsmead Park, Allhallows;*
- (v) Cherry Tree Orchard, Rainham ;*
- (vi) land South of Pier Road, Gillingham.*

New Playing Fields

- 7.5.24 In addition to open space provision for new housing schemes, some additional provision of playing fields is required in the urban area. This is considered necessary both in terms of meeting the NPFA guidelines for playing field provision and to benefit areas which are poorly served by existing provision.

Policy L7: NEW PLAYING FIELDS

The following sites, as defined on the proposals map, are identified for the provision of new playing fields :

- (i) Castlemaine Avenue;***
- (ii) Chapel Lane, Hempstead;***
- (iii) Hoo Road, Wainscott.***

Development which would prejudice these proposals will not be permitted.

- 7.5.25 A key opportunity for improving provision of sports and recreation facilities is the dual-use of existing and proposed facilities in the public and private sectors, for instance at places of employment and educational establishments. This optimises the use of existing resources and avoids the need to release further land adjacent to the urban area.

- 7.5.26 If school playing fields are available, as a matter of practice, for community use they can count towards meeting the N.P.F.A. standard. In some instances dual use already occurs, for example at the Upbury Manor School in Gillingham and the recently completed netball and tennis centre at Rainham School for Girls. Elsewhere there is potential for facilities to be made more widely available for public use, subject to the agreement of individual schools. The council recognises the potential value of such facilities as a community asset and is promoting dual-use of facilities such as the community sports hall at Medway Community College, Luton. It will seek to encourage and promote dual-use wherever possible.

Policy L8 : DUAL USE OF RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Dual-use of private and educational sports facilities will be sought, particularly in areas where a deficiency of open space or demand for sports facilities exists.

Country Parks

7.5.27 Medway is surrounded by attractive open countryside and has an important network of informal open spaces, including two country parks at Gillingham Riverside and at Capstone Valley. The existing country parks have proved very popular, attracting in the region of 200,000 visits to Riverside and 250,000 visits to Capstone each year. They provide facilities for a range of informal recreational activities based around the nature conservation value of the sites. There is also a regular programme of events and educational facilities to allow nature study by schools. Further improvements in facilities are planned, subject to adequate resources being made available, including the restoration of the Black House at Lower Rainham and the clearance of a scrap processing site at Bloors Wharf. Both sites lie within the designated Gillingham Riverside Country Park. The council intends to designate further country parks at Grain, Cuxton and Horsted as well as expanding the existing parks.

7.5.28 Grain Foreshore is in an area with a shortage of open space provision and facilities for young people. The site is already in public ownership and is of high nature conservation, landscape and historic value. Archaeological remains have been found within the site and these are considered to be of national importance. Horsted Farm is also in public ownership and forms an extensive area of semi-natural habitat of high landscape and nature conservation value close to large housing estates. It has been suggested that Ranscombe Farm is suitable for a country park designation as the area is of high landscape and nature conservation value. It is close to an area which has suffered significant environmental damage as a consequence of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link and widening of the M2. The creation of a country park at Ranscombe will complement initiatives to manage the countryside affected by these major infrastructure schemes. It is also close to Strood, which has a serious lack of open space. Both Horsted and Ranscombe will relieve the pressure on Capstone, where the number of visitors exceeds capacity, and they will also reduce the length of car journeys to travel to country park facilities. The Council is currently considering a proposal to extend the Horsted Country Park designation onto the Coney Banks and adjoining land.

Policy L9 : COUNTRY PARKS

The council will designate country parks at the following locations, as defined on the proposals map :

- (i) Grain Foreshore;***
- (ii) Ranscombe Farm, Cuxton;***
- (iii) Horsted Farm, Chatham.***

and maintain the existing country parks at:

- (iv) *Gillingham Riverside;*
- (v) *Capstone Valley.*

Public Rights of Way

7.5.29 Public rights of way comprise footpaths, bridleways and byways. They form part of a network of links providing access to the countryside, riverside and within the urban area. Other links include cycle lanes, walkways, public open spaces, rural lanes and linear corridors, forming a green grid network. Public rights of way are protected by legislation from development or other activity that would restrict their use. Furthermore, there are several long distance paths which pass through, or are within easy reach of Medway including the North Downs Way, the Pilgrims Way and the Saxon Shore Way. Public rights of way are an important recreational resource and an amenity valued by residents and visitors alike. In considering development proposals, the council will seek to keep the network open to public use, improve standards of maintenance and way-marking, protect the character of individual routes, facilitate access for the disabled and, in accordance with policy S6 extend the network in order to fill gaps in provision.

Policy L10 : PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

Development which would prejudice the amenity, or result in the diversion or closure, of existing public rights of way will not be permitted, unless an acceptable alternative route with comparable or improved amenity can be provided.

Riverside Walk and Cycleway

7.5.30 The River Medway has importance in wildlife, visual amenity and heritage terms and it is considered important to safeguard and improve public access to the riverside. There are some attractive areas where the public can sit and view the river and a walkway also exists on parts of the riverside at Rochester, Chatham, Strood and at Medway Valley Park. However, there is a need for further connecting sections to form a continuous riverside walk and cycleway. The redevelopment of sites within the urban area will bring forward opportunities for new sections of riverside walk to be constructed, such as the new pedestrian route around St Mary's Island at Chatham Maritime. In some locations it may be desirable for the walk to deviate slightly from the riverbank, but in all cases it will integrate with and enhance the surrounding area including existing development, jetties and connecting pathways.

7.5.31 It is recognised that cycling is an increasingly popular leisure activity providing an inexpensive recreational pursuit that can be enjoyed by people of all ages and

incomes. The Inverness to Dover Millennium Cycle Track will be a continuous cycle track that will pass through Medway. The development of cycleways and the formation of a strategic cycle network are considered in more detail in the Transportation chapter. However, it should be noted that bridleways and byways can be used by cyclists and they can provide suitable safe routes for leisure cycling. Therefore it is intended to promote the dual use of new public routes for walking and cycling, including the riverside walk.

- 7.5.32 There are a number of possible environmental impacts that this cycle route may have. Consequently, developers should have regard to the policies of the Built and Natural Environment chapter. In particular, the riverside footpath and cycle facility should be designed and routed to minimise the impact on ecology, nature conservation and landscape and take into account the integrity and operational requirements of flood defences.

Policy L11 : RIVERSIDE PATH AND CYCLEWAY

A riverside path for use by pedestrians and cyclists will be developed between the following locations:

- (i) on the south side of the River Medway, linking Gillingham Riverside Country Park to the Historic Dockyard, Rochester Riverside, the Esplanade and Baty's Marsh, Borstal;***

- (ii) on the north side of the River Medway, linking Hoo, Upnor and Temple Marsh to Halling.***

Development on sites fronting the river will not be permitted unless the proposals include a riverside walkway and cycleway, or it can be demonstrated that the operational needs of the development would prevent this. The walkway or cycleway should provide continuity for users by connecting to, or facilitating future connections to, walkways on adjoining sites. The riverside footpath and cycle facility should be designed and routed to minimise the impact on ecology, nature conservation and landscape and take into account the integrity and operational requirements of flood defences.

Golf Courses

- 7.5.33 There are two 18 hole golf courses at Gillingham and Deangate and a private golf course at Allhallows, in addition to a range of smaller golfing facilities elsewhere. No new courses have recently been built although facilities have been improved at the Strand in Gillingham, and at Deangate Ridge, Hoo.
- 7.5.34 Proposals for golf courses and associated leisure facilities will be permitted provided they do not conflict with other policies and subject to the layout of courses and design of buildings being acceptable.

Policy L12 : GOLF COURSES

Proposals for golf courses and associated facilities will be permitted subject to the following criteria :

- (i) it is compatible with the scale and character of the local landscape and does not adversely affect the countryside and natural environment; and***
- (ii) it does not result in the irreversible loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land; and***
- (iii) it is well located in relation to the highway and public transport network; and***
- (iv) it does not prejudice the amenity of local residents or other users of the countryside, and protects or satisfactorily provides for existing public rights of way; and***
- (v) it does not include functionally unrelated ancillary development.***

Water Based Leisure

- 7.5.35 The River Medway and its Estuary provide an attractive and increasingly popular setting for water based recreation. Indeed, in recent years the Medway Estuary has become an important regional centre for water sports and in particular sailing. Both the existing recreational use of the Medway and future opportunities for increased activity must be balanced against its commercial use and the importance of the area for nature conservation. Within areas designated

as International and National Nature Conservation sites or Strategic and Local Nature Conservation sites, water based recreation will be subject to detailed conditions being satisfied as set out in policies BNE35 and BNE36. In this respect, the area can be split into two. Firstly, the open waters nearer the mouth of the Estuary which lend themselves to a range of water sport activities and secondly, the sheltered waters around the Marshes where many types of water sports could potentially damage and conflict with important nature conservation interests.

7.5.36 An Estuary Management Plan is currently being produced for the Medway Estuary and River Swale. The purpose of the plan is to ensure the sustainable use of the Estuary through integrated management of the natural, economic, recreational, educational and tourism resources. It is intended that the Management Plan will provide a framework that addresses estuary-wide issues and identifies the means for reconciling conflicts. The Estuary Management Plan, when completed, will be adopted as supplementary planning guidance for informing decisions relating to the need for, and location of water based leisure facilities.

7.5.37 The provision of further water based leisure facilities will be considered in the light of this Management Plan. Applicants will need to demonstrate that proposals will not be detrimental to natural habitats through increased noise and disturbance or result in conflict with other water based activities. There is a current approval for a marina development at Chatham Maritime in Basins 1 and 2 which allows for certain mitigation measures and so limits secondary disturbance in the sensitive parts of the Estuary.

7.5.38 An area of land adjoining the Strand Leisure Park, currently owned by British Gas, is likely to be declared surplus to their requirements. The opportunities for development of the land are limited due to the presence of retained gas installations on adjacent land. However, notwithstanding this, there is an opportunity to use the land for a low-key purpose, such as boat storage. This would be of benefit to the Strand Leisure Park as it could enable improvements in access and management to be made to Commodore Hard, a well used public slipway. Other water based leisure facilities likely to come forward in the local plan period include a water sports activity centre at Chatham Maritime, improvements to Upnor Pier and a public slipway at Canal Road, Strood which will form part of the major regeneration works being undertaken along the Strood Riverside.

Policy L13 : WATER BASED LEISURE

The development of water based leisure facilities along the River Medway will be permitted, subject to the following criteria :

- (i) there is no adverse effect on nature conservation interests; and***

(ii) there is adequate land based access for pedestrians, cyclists and road traffic; and

(iii) it does not prejudice the amenity of local residents, adjoining uses or other users of the River Medway.

7.6 Environmental Appraisal

7.6.1 In accordance with the guidance contained at paras. 4.16 to 4.22 of PPG12 “Development Plans” the policies in this chapter have been subject to environmental appraisal.

7.6.2 The policies protect and maintain open space, whilst also improving access to it, such that facilities are locally available. They also protect existing facilities and establish a firm basis for the provision of new community facilities. Such new facilities are required to be accessible to various forms of transport, affording opportunities for access by means other than the private car. This is in line with sustainable principles.

7.6.3 The policies in the leisure chapter do not have a direct impact on global resources and natural sustainability. However the sustainable nature of the policies will indirectly have a positive effect.

7.7 Monitoring Measures

7.7.1 The policies contained in this chapter will be assessed against the following indicators:

- (i) an increase in the provision of open space protected by policies L3 and L6, taking into account open space lost to development and additional open space provided in new development;
- (ii) the number of recreation proposals which have been implemented within, or on the edge of, town and district centres;
- (iii) the number and extent of recreation sites lost or partially lost due to development;
- (iv) the length of public rights of way which have been closed;
- (v) the length of Medway riverside walk constructed.

¹ Open Space: Includes natural heathland, downland, woodlands, parkland and areas that are not publicly accessible but contribute to environmental amenity; playing fields, landscape settings, children’s

play areas; local parks providing for court games, sitting out areas or nature conservation; small local parks and open spaces such as gardens; linear open spaces and other routes which provide opportunities for informal recreation.

TRANSPORTATION

8.1 Introduction

- 8.1.1 Transport is fundamental to both national and local life: it provides the vital links between homes and workplaces, shops, educational and leisure facilities. The private motor car has become the principal motorised form of transport for most of the population, nationally and locally. However, there are still significant numbers of people who do not have access to a car and this raises issues of disadvantage and social equity where facilities are provided that are only easily accessible by those with cars.
- 8.1.2 It has become increasingly clear over the last twenty-five years that continued provision for the growth in use of motor vehicles, and the car in particular, is not a practical possibility. Traffic levels have grown dramatically since 1945 and are projected to continue to grow. With increasing congestion, safety, pollution and parking problems, it is becoming manifest that the present unsatisfactory situation on the roads is not going to improve (if anything, it will further deteriorate) without intervention to regulate the situation.
- 8.1.3 There is a new emphasis on creating and encouraging sustainable forms of development, which comes from international concern at increasing levels of pollution and the impact of this on global climate change as well as other, more local, micro-level concerns. The series of Earth Summits held in the 1990s agreed to promote change in the way that industrialised economies address these concerns. In the U.K. this has been carried forward through the publication in 1994 of "*Sustainable Development: the U.K. Strategy*", which has been followed by revised government guidance to Local Planning Authorities, such as that contained within PPG1 and PPG13. The aim now is to create new patterns of development that reduce the need to travel and the length of journeys. It is intended to transfer freight, where practicable, from road to rail or water and to reduce reliance on the private motor car where realistic alternatives, such as cycling, walking and public transport, are available. The government recognises that this is a long-term project and that the public will take time to reconsider their journey patterns, but this is vital if the economic and physical well-being of the U.K. is not to suffer.
- 8.1.4 There is, equally, a recognition that in some circumstances, improved transport infrastructure is essential to other important policy aims, such as economic regeneration. This is the case in Medway, where, in order to address physical and economic problems, and to remedy social inequality, new roads have been constructed to open up areas for redevelopment purposes. These new roads also have the benefit of affording relief to residential areas and town centres which are congested with through traffic, and of releasing road space for forms of transport, such as buses and cycles, which could help reduce atmospheric pollution. This new transport infrastructure is vital for the movement of freight between ports, industrial and commercial premises and retail outlets.

- 8.1.5 However, managing the existing highway network to achieve the best, balanced use of it is also important. The environment of Medway, and thereby its attractiveness to inward investment, will be improved by addressing problems of deteriorating air quality, increased congestion and road safety. There is a need to reduce the dependence on the private car, promote public transport and provide better facilities for cyclists and pedestrians. There is also a need to reduce the impact of vehicles, particularly HGVs, on unsuitable roads. To address social equity issues, it is also important to ensure that those without private transport are not disadvantaged because of their lack of accessibility to facilities and places of work.
- 8.1.6 The development strategy of the plan aims to achieve the physical and economic regeneration of Medway by re-cycling previously used brown land, whilst protecting open areas and environmental quality within the urban area. The strategy also seeks to achieve a better relationship between land uses to reduce the length and number of journeys and to enable multi-purpose trips to take place.

8.2 The Current Position

- 8.2.1 Medway is well located in relation to the strategic road and rail network of Kent. It has good road and rail links with central London, deep water (and other) port facilities and is within easy reach of Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted Airports via the motorway network. The completion of the M20, and its widening north of Maidstone, have improved access to both the Channel Tunnel and the ports, with the M2/A2 providing an alternative route. The Channel Tunnel and Ashford International Station have improved freight and passenger access to continental Europe by rail.
- 8.2.2 The main responsibility for highways in the local plan area lies with Medway Council although the Department for Transport is responsible for the M2 motorway.
- 8.2.3 As part of its role as Local Highway Authority, the council is responsible for the preparation of a Local Transport Plan for the area. The Local Transport Plan sets out the Authority's transport policies and programme, including its capital programme aspirations including local transport schemes and initiatives, highway and bridge maintenance and local safety and environmental schemes.
- 8.2.4 The council is responsible for the provision and management of public off-street car parks and has acquired Special Parking Area status enabling it to enforce on-street parking regulations and charging regimes with effect from the year 2000.
- 8.2.5 Rail infrastructure, including track, signalling and stations, is the responsibility of Network Rail while the operation of passenger train services in Medway is undertaken by Connex South Eastern. Freight services are operated by a number of companies owned by Wisconsin Railways.

Public Transport

- 8.2.6 Public transport will have an increasing role to play in the overall transport strategy to reduce dependence on the car in the interests of improving the environment of Medway. This will mean encouraging less reliance on car use where other alternatives are available, and reshaping car parking provision to encourage this change in travel behaviour.
- 8.2.7 Medway is well provided with passenger rail services offering a number of destinations. Rochester, Gillingham, Chatham and Rainham are situated on the line from London Victoria/Cannon Street to Thanet and Dover. Gillingham is also the terminus of the service from London Charing Cross/Cannon Street via Dartford and Gravesend that serves Strood, Rochester and Chatham. Strood is also the northern terminus of the Medway Valley Line, along which services run, via Cuxton and Halling, to Maidstone, with some services extended to Paddock Wood and Gatwick Airport.
- 8.2.8 In recent years new rolling stock ("Networkers") has replaced forty year old trains on the Gillingham-Charing Cross service, but higher levels of investment are required in both signalling and rolling stock to bring the network up to the standard of other lines in the South East. Networkers are being introduced on the Victoria service at present. More modern trains were also introduced onto the Medway Valley Line in 1998.
- 8.2.9 The first phase of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL) is currently being built parallel to the M2. This will link central London to the Tunnel portal by a purpose-built high-speed line. No stations are planned within Medway, but the proposed station at Ebbsfleet (between Northfleet and the A2) will be very accessible from Medway, when it is completed in Phase II of the project. Significantly, Phase II of the CTRL project involves a new junction with the North Kent line at Northfleet, which will enable faster services to be offered - via the CTRL - to St. Pancras from Medway's railway stations.
- 8.2.10 In the past, there were a number of rail-served sidings in Medway but several have now closed. There remain significant sidings at Grain, Thamesport and at Cliffe, served by the freight only branch from Hoo junction. This line uses Victorian technology, and has capacity restrictions that inhibit long term expansion. A branch from Gillingham to the commercial port at Chatham was rebuilt as part of the Northern Relief Road, and this could carry freight from the Docks.
- 8.2.11 At the time of the 1991 Census, 27% of households in Medway did not have the use of a car. For those without access to a car, including school children and elderly people, buses are an important means of travel. There is an extensive urban network linking the various town centres to one another and to the suburbs. There are also services out to the rural area on the Hoo peninsula, and inter-urban routes to major nearby towns. The council supports many of the socially necessary services in the area which are not economic for bus operators to provide commercially, but resources to fund these services are strictly limited.

- 8.2.12 The improvement of the quality and convenience of bus services will help to provide a realistic alternative to the car and contribute to successfully sustaining the prosperity of town centres. Many services focus on the purpose built Pentagon Bus Station, situated in the centre of Chatham, which is directly linked to the conurbation's only major town centre indoor shopping mall. This provides one of the few purpose-built bus stations in Medway, although there are on-street facilities in Gillingham, Strood and Rainham centres. There are relatively poor bus facilities at Rochester, whilst those at Hempstead Valley are in need of improvement. There is good rail to bus interchange available at Chatham railway station, but the level of facilities is poor and the layout cramped, creating passenger/vehicular conflicts.
- 8.2.13 Over the last decade, the use of bus services has declined for a variety of reasons. The pattern of development permitted in the conurbation since the 1950s has made the private car a more convenient mode as centres of employment, shopping and leisure have become separated from residential areas, and ever more dispersed throughout the conurbation. In turn, the reliability and speed of bus services have suffered from the congestion brought about by increased car use and the lack of bus priority measures. The council is seeking to address these issues in the preparation of this plan and the Local Transport Plan and by entering into Quality Bus Partnerships with the major local bus operators.
- 8.2.14 Commuter coaches provide an alternative means of commuting to London for many people. In comparison to the train, they can offer almost a door-to-door service at lower cost and are more convenient for those living in the southern suburbs of Medway. One problem however is the on-street parking by commuters making part of their journey by car, which occurs close to some of the coach pick-up points.
- 8.2.15 Hempstead Valley Shopping Centre is an important location in the National Coach Network and the council will take steps to ensure the provision of information and ticketing (at the centre and elsewhere within the Towns) to facilitate this role. It will also ensure that there are direct bus services linking the Centre with other parts of Medway.
- 8.2.16 Coaches are also important to tourism in the area. Many visitors to Rochester and the Historic Dockyard arrive by coach, particularly school groups. Coach parking and ancillary facilities have recently been improved in connection with the new Visitors' Centre in the High Street, Rochester.

River and Sea

- 8.2.17 The River Medway is a working river that is a valuable asset to the area. Although its commercial use has declined in recent decades, as manufacturing industries which made use of the river (e.g. cement) have closed, many wharves are still active on the Frindsbury Peninsula, at Cliffe (on the Thames) and at the cement works at Halling. The growth in commercial river traffic in recent years

has been at Chatham Dock and the major new container port at Thamesport. Coal and oil are still imported for the power stations at Kingsnorth and Grain.

- 8.2.18 Chatham Port caters for a wide variety of cargoes and handling facilities, including roll-on roll-off, and promotes transshipment using the port as a distribution hub for sea-going vessels. Further expansion of facilities is required by the operators, allowing wharfage at Rochester Riverside to be released.
- 8.2.19 Thamesport has also developed very rapidly over a very short period and continues to increase its volume of business, both import and transshipment. It is rapidly becoming one of Britain's major container ports and is one of the few that has the physical capacity to expand its deep water facilities. However, significant further development on the Isle of Grain is currently restricted by poor road and rail access.
- 8.2.20 The river is also an important leisure facility and a number of marinas and moorings exist along much of its length within the urban area.

Air

- 8.2.21 Medway has good motorway links to the major South East airports at Gatwick, Heathrow and Stansted, although rail links are poor. Rochester Airfield, which is owned by the council, is situated approximately four miles south of Rochester town centre, between the M2 and the A229. It has two grass runways of approximately 850 metres in length and is operated by Rochester Airport plc. It is used primarily for general aviation, particularly for recreational flying and for pilot training. Its open days and special events are popular with the general public, it is in a good location for supplying aviation fuel and its climate and topography are suited for aviation activities. The current lease expires in 2004 and the local plan is proposing that it should continue to operate after that date using only a single runway.

Cycling

- 8.2.22 As the need to reduce reliance on the use of the car has become apparent, the importance of encouraging cycling as an alternative means of transport, especially for short trips, has grown. Although local topography is not everywhere conducive to cycling, there is much that has and can be done to encourage cycling for short journeys. Cycle lanes, shared use surfaces and advisory routes have been provided in a number of locations and further works are planned as part of a review of the Strategic Cycle Network. Cycleways are also being provided in conjunction with major development schemes, such as at Chatham Maritime.
- 8.2.23 Sustrans, the charity which designs and builds traffic free routes for cyclists, walkers and people with disabilities, is working to develop the National Cycle Network. One of the routes is the Inverness to Dover route. Route 101, between London and Dover, passes through Medway and will form part of the council's Strategic Cycle Network. A further part of the National Cycle Network is the route from Chatham to Maidstone.

Roads

- 8.2.24 The M2 motorway skirts the southern boundary of the conurbation and allows east-west traffic to bypass Medway. It also performs an important function for the conurbation itself by providing an alternative route to the A2 and relieving inadequate roads within the urban area from east-west movements.
- 8.2.25 The Medway Towns Northern Relief Road was completed in 1999 and provides a northern by-pass to the urban area, connecting the M2/A2 (Junction 1) in the west, to the A2 and onwards to the M2 at Junction 4 in the east. The new road provides improved access to Chatham, Gillingham and Strood, whilst also opening up redevelopment areas to the north, including Chatham Maritime. The new road has relieved the considerable congestion that occurred through the urban area, in particular on Rochester Bridge, and has enabled proposals for a network of public transport priority routes to be developed.
- 8.2.26 However, the urban area still experiences congestion during the peak hours, particularly due to the “school run” and the high level of single occupancy cars, with 77% of vehicles in the peak hours only carrying the driver. Congestion occurs on the A2 spine road through the centres of Strood, Rochester, Chatham and Rainham. Measures are being developed to favour public transport rather than the private car on these congested routes. Congestion also occurs during the peak hours at junctions 3 and 4 of the M2 motorway.
- 8.2.27 From the Medway Towns Northern Relief Road, the A228 carries large volumes of commercial traffic north towards Thamesport, Grain and other locations on the Hoo peninsula, north-east of Chattenden. The road suffers from poor vertical and horizontal alignment in a number of locations and has a poor accident record. Measures are being developed to remedy this situation.

Parking

- 8.2.28 The growth in car ownership and use has consequences for on-street and off-street parking space. Close to the town centres, competition for spaces from residents, shoppers or commuters has led to the introduction of residents’ parking schemes. A major scheme has also been introduced around Medway Maritime Hospital.
- 8.2.29 In the town centres, especially Chatham, the principal centre, the provision of short stay parking for customers is vital if they are to compete with out-of-centre retail facilities, including Bluewater. Historic Rochester has its own particular car and coach parking problems because of the conflicting needs of residents, traders and visitors. In 1996 the former City Council introduced a permit scheme for residents living in Rochester High Street who do not have off-street parking, in order to address some of the problems they experience.
- 8.2.30 Uncontrolled lorry and coach parking can cause problems to residents and businesses alike and the council continues to monitor the situation closely to minimise disturbance to amenity and safety.

8.3 Policy Context

Central Government Guidance

- 8.3.1 PPG12: Development Plans, states that the transport strategy set out in local transport plans and decisions on priorities for transport investment will have implications for development plans. Similarly, planning decisions on land use (both individual applications and in development plans) will impact on the strategy in the local transport plan. It is therefore vital that the strategy which supports decisions taken in developing and implementing a local transport plan takes full account of, and complements, the land use strategy in the relevant development plan. Equally, the development plan strategy should underpin the land use issues arising from the implementation of a local transport plan. The Medway Local Plan conforms fully with this advice.
- 8.3.2 In March 2001, the Government issued PPG13 “Transport”, which provides advice to local authorities on how they should integrate transport and land use planning. It emphasises the need for the planning system to encourage patterns of development and influence the location, scale, density, design and mix of land uses in order to reduce the need to travel, reduce the length of journeys and make it safer and easier for people to access jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services by public transport, walking and cycling. This will help to reduce congestion and pollution, improve access, promote sustainable distribution and improve the quality of life.
- 8.3.3 The Road Traffic Reduction Act 1995 places upon Local Highway Authorities the duty to publish a report on traffic flows on their roads, with targets for future traffic restraint. It indicates that in the future the supply of road space cannot be increased to meet all forecast demands, but that the demand for car travel must be managed and reduced. The council is to introduce measures to reduce the dependence on the private car, widening the choice of travel options and so establish road traffic reduction targets which are sensible and achievable. However, the LTP recognises that at the start of the plan period it is difficult to set meaningful road traffic reduction targets because of the emphasis on economic regeneration in Medway (as part of Thames Gateway) and the inevitable dispersal of traffic that is likely to occur with the roadworks associated with widening of the M2 around the south of the urban area.
- 8.3.4 The Highways Agency is the Department for Transport agency charged with responsibility for managing the trunk road network. Direct access to trunk roads should be rigorously controlled, with no direct access to motorways permitted other than for service areas, maintenance compounds and at junctions. There should be a strong presumption against the creation of new accesses to high standard all purpose trunk roads and to trunk roads with a clear strategic importance. On the less important trunk roads and the majority of trunk roads in urban areas, this policy may be relaxed if road safety is not compromised.

- 8.3.5 The Highways Agency will ensure that development proposals take account of their impact on the trunk road network, considering traffic conditions 15 years from either the time of the assessment or the first year of the plan period (whichever is the later). The general aim of the Highways Agency is to seek a solution which leaves the trunk road network no worse off than had the development not proceeded. In other words, where the developer agrees to fund an improvement to the highway which, taken together with the impact of the development, would leave expected conditions on the trunk road much the same as those anticipated without the development.

Regional Policy

- 8.3.6 “*Regional Planning Guidance for the South East*” (RPG9) 1994, contained a number of objectives in relation to transport which were:

- To provide for safe and efficient movement and to facilitate accessibility in order to serve the existing and future pattern of development in the region;
- To reconcile the demand for travel with environmental concerns;
- To reduce the growth in reliance on the motor vehicle;
- To increase the opportunity to choose modes of travel with less environmental impact, particularly walking, cycling, public transport, and rail and water for freight;
- To take account of the interaction between transport and land use; and
- To take into account fully the high and rising economic and environmental costs of transport in the South East.

Because of the high cost of transport infrastructure it is important to make the most efficient and effective use of the existing highway network.

- 8.3.7 RPG9 was reviewed in 2001 and for the first time, some parking standards have been set at a regional level. The proposals represent a reduction in the levels of acceptable vehicle parking related to development that are set out in the Kent Standards previously used by the council. They also represent a shift from minimum to maximum levels of parking requirements.

Thames Gateway Planning Framework

- 8.3.8 Subsequent to the issuing of RPG9, the Government issued an addendum relating to the potential to redirect development pressures in the South East away from the pressured western side of London to the redevelopment opportunities available in the Thames Gateway. The potential arose partly a result of the transport infrastructure improvements which were planned, principally the Channel Tunnel Rail Link and the widening of the M2.

- 8.3.9 One of the five principles in the “*Thames Gateway Planning Framework*” (RPG9a) is the need to create a clear pattern of sustainable development based on a reduced need to travel and reliance on the motor car. The strategy identified that some improvements to the road network were needed, as:

“additions to capacity may be the best means of supporting development in certain locations and addressing congestion, especially where it affects the economic health and quality of life in the community”.

- 8.3.10 More detailed guidance for Medway in the Planning Framework stresses the need to consider the wider effects of increased traffic on the natural and built heritage. In the longer term, the emphasis should shift to improving public transport including Park and Ride, and examining the potential for Light Rail Transit.

Kent Structure Plan 1996

- 8.3.11 The adopted Kent Structure Plan 1996 encompasses all of the principles of sustainable development and sustainable transport as set out in RPG9, PPG13 and RPG9a. Policy S7 is the strategic policy for transport, which emphasises the need to provide for travel by a variety of means, especially in town centres. It also recognises that movement to/from and through Kent and between major centres of traffic generation will be assisted by improvements to the capacity and quality of the rail network and primary and secondary roads. The policy for Thames Gateway (S5) stresses the importance of improvements to transport, including public transport, to the regeneration of the area.
- 8.3.12 The Channel Tunnel Rail Link is covered by policy P4 and this also encompasses Ebbsfleet Station and the junction with the North Kent Line. The policy recognises the regeneration benefits that will flow from the Ebbsfleet Station in relation to Thames Gateway. Policy P8 encourages development proposals for the expansion of the deep water berths at Thamesport, together with improvements to the A228. Policy P10 provides encouragement to the establishment or expansion of small ports and wharves subject to adequate access provision.
- 8.3.13 The Transport chapter of the structure plan contains a number of policies that help to frame the context for the transport policies of this plan. Policy T1 places emphasis on the need to provide facilities to assist pedestrians, cyclists and the use of buses and trains as an alternative to reliance on the private car. The highway programme for the primary and secondary road network is set out in policy T2, although this has subsequently been substantially reduced in a 1997 review. Improvements to the secondary network, such as village by-passes, will be assessed under the provisions of policy T7. The transfer of freight from road to rail is promoted through policy T9, whilst traffic management is provided for within policies T12 and T16. Vehicle parking is dealt with in policies T13, T14 and T17, although these policies need to be read within the context of the revised regional parking guidance referred to above.

8.4. Objectives

8.4.1 The following objectives form the basis of the integrated transportation strategy which follows, and which will be pursued by the council in its role as Highway Authority and Planning Authority throughout the period to 2006:

- (i) develop strategies which encourage more sustainable transport choices for journeys, in particular home to school and home to work, by the encouragement of new, and the protection and improvement of existing, public transport provision and the provision of increased opportunities for cyclists and pedestrians;
- (ii) traffic management measures to optimise management of the road network, reduce unnecessary use of the private car, increase road safety, and improve opportunities for public transport, cycling and/or walking;
- (iii) a co-ordinated vehicle parking strategy for the urban area which encourages a reduction in the unnecessary use of the private car;
- (iv) action to assist easy, safe and dignified access by people with disabilities;
- (v) promoting new development that reduces the need to travel and offers transport choices (particularly to move freight by rail or river), is well related to the planned future transport network, does not impair highway safety and is phased to the provision of any transport works or facilities necessary to enable the development to proceed;
- (vi) limited new highway construction, where there are demonstrable benefits to cycling, walking and/or public transport and where there are proven and clear economic development, highway safety and/or environmental benefits which accrue;
- (vii) to achieve all of the above while, at the same time, protecting the economic competitiveness of the area.

8.5 Policies and Reasoned Justification

Impact of Development

8.5.1 The council is committed to the principle of sustainable development (in order to avoid congestion, reduce energy use and pollution and tackle social exclusion). In this context, it is important that as many trips as practicable should be made by public transport or other alternatives, and that new developments are designed to offer realistic alternatives to travel by the private car. Public transport is likely to provide a genuine alternative to the car when a site is within 400m of a bus stop with a minimum 20 minute service frequency during peak hours, or is within 1 km of a passenger rail station. It is particularly important that development that will attract a significant proportion of heavy goods vehicles, or

traffic movements at unsociable hours, is well related to the primary route network and avoids residential areas.

POLICY T1: IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT

In assessing the highways impact of development, proposals will be permitted provided that:

- (i) the highway network has adequate capacity to cater for the traffic which will be generated by the development, taking into account alternative modes to the private car; and*
- (ii) the development will not significantly add to the risk of road traffic accidents; and*
- (iii) the development will not generate significant H.G.V. movements on residential roads; and*
- (iv) the development will not result in traffic movements at unsociable hours in residential roads that would be likely to cause loss of residential amenity.*

Access to the Highway Network

8.5.2 It is important for road safety that all development has adequate access to the highway. On primary, district and local distributor roads the number of new accesses should be kept to a minimum. In all cases, adequate visibility splays must be provided in the interest of road safety. The council will provide standards for all new accesses in its role as Highway Authority.

POLICY T2: ACCESS TO THE HIGHWAY

Proposals which involve the formation of a new access, or an intensification in the use of an existing access, will only be permitted where:

- (i) the access is not detrimental to the safety of vehicle occupants, cyclists and pedestrians; or*

(ii) can, alternatively, be improved to a standard acceptable to the council as Highway Authority.

Provision for Pedestrians

- 8.5.3 A large proportion of the journeys that people make is already made on foot. Indeed, all journeys start on foot, whatever mode is used for the remainder of the journey. It is also noteworthy that a high proportion of all journeys made by all means of travel is very short. There is particular potential to encourage greater use of walking as the mode for the whole length of these shortest trips. Better conditions for pedestrians, linked to locational policies which promote the provision of facilities and activities (such as district and local centres) close to people's homes, could lead to a significant change in travel choices, as PPG13 recognises.
- 8.5.4 But, there is also the potential to influence attitudes towards walking as the first part of longer journeys, and to use this as a springboard to encourage the consideration of even greater modal choice. For instance, attractive and safe routes to public transport access points can aid considerably in the take-up and use of public transport.
- 8.5.5 The impact of proposed developments on pedestrian movements should be carefully analysed by developers, and will be examined by the council in its assessments of proposals. New or enhanced pedestrian routes should closely follow pedestrians' preferred routes (or "desire lines") whilst allowing them to cross busy roads easily and safely. Pedestrian routes should not be segregated by a significant distance from the carriageway or from other activity as isolated routes are not attractive to pedestrians and can engender fears about personal safety. The council will produce supplementary planning guidance on this issue in a "*Planning Out Crime*" booklet.
- 8.5.6 The council is also implementing a programme of "Safer Routes to Schools" projects in conjunction with both primary and secondary schools. The aim of this initiative is to break the car dependency culture which has developed over the last twenty years and engender amongst children an attitude that the car is not always the best or most attractive means of travel. Parents and others taking children to and from school add considerably to both congestion and pollution. The initiative aims to reassure parents that there are other, safe, ways of their children making these journeys, including cycling and walking. Children cycling and walking to school has an important role to play in reducing car dependency in adult life, and it encourages social interaction beyond the school gate.
- 8.5.7 The council will seek to ensure, where practicable, that development adjacent to the Medway riverfront provides a riverside walk suitable for pedestrians, cyclists and people with disabilities.

8.5.8 As part of its walking strategy, the council will:-

- (i) identify the network of routes and locations (including the links between key uses such as schools, town centres and transport interchanges) where the needs and safety of pedestrians will be given priority, and the measures that will be taken to support this objective;
- (ii) pay particular attention to the design, location and access arrangement of new development to help promote walking as a prime means of access;
- (iii) promote high density, mixed use development in and around town centres and near to major transport interchanges;
- (iv) promote and protect local day to day shops and services which are within easy walking distance of housing;
- (v) create more direct, safe and secure walking routes, particularly in and around town centres and local neighbourhoods, and to schools and stations, to reduce the actual walking distance between land uses, and to public transport; and
- (vi) ensure that the personal security concerns of pedestrians are addressed.

POLICY T3: PROVISION FOR PEDESTRIANS

Medway Council will develop a network of safe and convenient footpaths, to link houses, schools, town centres, work places, recreation areas and public transport routes.

Development proposals shall provide attractive and safe pedestrian access. In all cases, they should maintain or improve pedestrian routes related to the site.

New pedestrian routes should closely follow pedestrians' preferred routes, should be designed to provide an attractive and safe pedestrian environment, and ensure they are accessible by people with disabilities wherever possible.

Provision for Cyclists

8.5.9 The level of cycling in the U.K. is significantly lower than in a number of neighbouring countries, which have taken steps to make cycle use attractive as a

day to day means of travel. Cycling is a viable alternative to the use of the car for many short journeys and has the advantage of being a pollution free form of transport as well as providing health benefits. PPG13 advises that local plans should include policies that encourage the implementation of specific measures to encourage people to use bicycles. The Local Plan seeks to encourage and make provision for cycling, not only as a means of transport but also as a recreational pursuit and as a means of access to the countryside.

- 8.5.10 The council has already started work on creating an effective cycle network across the urban area, and it intends to continue to improve provision for cyclists to make cycling both safer and more attractive. A primary network affording routes that parallel the principal arterial roads in the towns and that link the suburbs to Chatham town centre, the principal district and local centres and other major trip attractors (such as leisure facilities, schools, colleges, health facilities, major employment areas, etc..) will be implemented during the Plan period. There will be continuing consultation with interested parties in the development of the Cycling Strategy and as each phase of the Strategic Cycle Network is brought forward.
- 8.5.11 Particular consideration needs to be given to facilities to enable cyclists to cross roads carrying a heavy traffic flow (especially at junctions) and to put in place measures to restrict on-street parking and reduce vehicle speeds where segregation of motor vehicles and cyclists is impossible. The council will seek to ensure that proper planning and construction of cycle and pedestrian routes will continue across adjacent administrative boundaries. As with pedestrian routes, care needs to be taken to ensure that all cycle routes are not isolated from other activity on personal safety grounds. The use of shared pedestrian/cycle routes raises particular safety issues, which need to be carefully considered. The council will only consider the use of such shared space as a last resort, when all other solutions have been explored and dismissed. Unsegregated shared use will be avoided, particularly in well-used urban situations. This is in line with the latest government guidance.
- 8.5.12 The council's developing programme of "Safer Routes to School" projects has an important role to play in reducing the car dependency culture amongst children and young people, encouraging cycling and reducing peak hour congestion.
- 8.5.13 Consideration of the provision of cycle routes and cycle priority measures will be required in new development. The council may seek contributions towards the development of the Strategic Cycle Network where appropriate, or it may seek to encourage developers to initiate local networks that integrate with the primary cycle network. There are a number of possible environmental impacts that new cycle routes may have. In proposing new cycle facilities, developers should have regard to the policies of the Built and Natural Environment chapter. In particular, any new riverside cycle facility should be designed and routed to minimise the impact on ecology, nature conservation and landscape and take into account the integrity and operational requirements of flood defences.

- 8.5.14 The council will also encourage, through its own actions and through negotiations connected with development proposals, the provision of secure cycle parking at public transport interchanges, including railway stations and Park and Ride facilities, to increase the opportunities to use cycles in combination with public transport and car sharing. Provision of secure cycle parking facilities will also be sought at all major new trip attracting developments; Chatham town centre, District Centres and Local Centres (as defined in the Retailing chapter); and at publicly available facilities. Shower, changing and secure clothing storage facilities are also an important consideration for cyclists, and would be particularly welcomed at major trip attracting developments.

POLICY T4: CYCLE FACILITIES

The council is implementing a network of strategic cycle routes, and the development of this and local routes will be actioned through the Highways Programme and the development process.

Major trip attracting development proposals should make provision for cycle facilities related to the site. This may include, where appropriate, the Strategic Cycle Network, cycle priority measures and new or enhanced cycle routes that relate to cyclists' preferred routes.

Secure cycle parking and associated facilities will be sought in accordance with the council's adopted cycle parking standards. Provision at public transport interchanges, buildings open to the general public (especially public institutions, leisure, educational and health facilities) and in Chatham town centre, District Centres and Local Centres will be particularly sought.

Public Transport Infrastructure

- 8.5.15 The bus is ideally suited to perform the role of providing local transport and, for the future, the increasing role of the bus will be crucial. However, due to congestion there is a need to aid bus access and service reliability as well as to reduce bus journey times by bus priority measures. These can be achieved by a number of means, such as dedicated bus lanes, bus activated traffic signals or bus gates, etc. These measures can be enhanced by improved passenger access and waiting facilities (such as bus boarders to discourage illegal parking and enhance access for people with disabilities, and increased numbers of

shelters) and real-time travel information systems at stops and in the principal retail centres. Through public/private sector Quality Bus Partnerships, co-operative working to integrate infrastructure with the bus operators' incoming generation of low floor easy access buses can be achieved.

- 8.5.16 Policy T5 identifies the routes that it considers to be key in the process of bus service enhancement. Particular priority will be afforded to Park and Ride corridors, as experience elsewhere suggests that it is easier to coax car drivers onto buses for part of, rather than all of, their journey. It may, in the future, be appropriate to offer such facilities to suitably liveried hackney carriages as they are also a potentially important part of the public transport network. There is also a need in the Local Transport Plan, to address the upgrading of longer distance bus links as a way of reducing car use.

POLICY T5: BUS PREFERENCE MEASURES

Within the bus corridors identified on the Proposals Map, preference measures to aid bus access, particularly on Park and Ride routes, will be developed. Such measures may include:

- (i) dedicated bus lanes, including contra-flow lanes where appropriate;***
- (ii) priority to buses at junctions;***
- (iii) priority within traffic management schemes;***
- (iv) enhanced waiting and access facilities and information systems for passengers, including people with disabilities.***

- 8.5.17 Substantial new development schemes have the opportunity to make a contribution towards offering sustainable transport choices in line with PPG13. Major schemes will inevitably be traffic attractors or generators. Attractors should be designed to allow users to make realistic transport choices by offering high quality facilities for public transport. These might include public transport accessibility points (e.g. bus stops and railway stations) with safe and attractive waiting areas/shelters (and routes to them), seating, information systems on the time and availability of public transport services and facilities for people with disabilities to gain access to public transport.

- 8.5.18 Substantial new housing sites will be major traffic generators. As such they should make provision for access and priority by bus (or rail or light rail in appropriate circumstances), taking into account road layout, widths, geometry, design and the need for stopping and turning areas of sufficient length and width to accommodate modern full-size buses. The council will wish to see new housing areas offer full access to buses, and easier and more direct access and egress to/from nearby major roads for buses than is offered to the private car.

POLICY T6: PROVISION FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Where of sufficient scale, new developments will be expected to make provision for access by public transport (for example, bus, rail or light rail). The provision of facilities, such as safe and attractive passenger waiting areas, seating, information systems, signed safe and attractive pedestrian access routes and facilities for people with disabilities, related to the scale of the development will be sought by negotiation.

Rail Services and Infrastructure

- 8.5.19 Grants are available under the Transport Act for the provision of rail sidings and rolling stock if there would be environmental benefits through the reduction of heavy goods vehicle movements on unsuitable roads. The council will support any operator who wishes to apply for these grants subject to the proposals being consistent with the local plan.
- 8.5.20 The council only have a limited role in the provision of rail services, although they are active in lobbying for improvements and can provide financial support to infrastructure schemes and passenger services in appropriate cases. This plan aims to facilitate use of the rail network for passenger journeys and freight movement. Both the council and Network Rail are seeking to develop the potential of the line between Rainham and Strood to provide a very convenient intra-urban service between the five town centres. Measures to improve existing stations, including access and parking to support greater use of rail services, will generally be permitted. Indeed, Connex is proposing a number of station improvements which are designed to increase rail patronage, including implementation of the Genesis Project. This involves the large scale upgrading of all the main line stations in Medway, and includes:
- Rebuilding Strood station
 - Refurbishment of other stations
 - Closed circuit television installation to improve security
 - Improvements to car parks and access.

- 8.5.21 The freight line from Hoo to Grain gives access to the deep water berths at Thamesport and enables a proportion of the goods passing through the port to be moved by rail. The council will support environmentally sensitive measures to increase the use of this line, including a passing loop at Sharnal Street and improvements to bridges at Gravesend (outside the council's area) which currently restrict the loading gauge. The branch from Gillingham to Chatham Port has recently been improved to allow the transfer of freight from ship to rail, but could also be incorporated into a light rail system in the future, forming a loop from Gillingham Station via Chatham Maritime to Chatham town centre. Policy ED9 relates to Chatham Port. Proposals which threaten the continued rail use of the Grain and Dockyard branches will not be permitted.
- 8.5.22 Some employment areas already have sidings that enable freight to be moved by rail. The council will not permit the loss of these facilities through development, other than in exceptional circumstances. It will seek to ensure that, where practicable, major freight traffic generating development proposals provide access to the rail network for freight movements.

POLICY T7: THE RAIL NETWORK

Proposals for new and enhanced passenger rail stations and rail-related facilities at stations and developments with rail access, will be permitted subject to environmental, access and landscaping considerations.

Development that would sever or prejudice any existing rail route or would result in the loss of freight sidings will be permitted only in exceptional circumstances. Proposals for new rail sidings to serve existing or proposed employment development will be permitted provided there is no unacceptable increase in road traffic to/from the site and it is acceptable in environmental terms. Use of the rail network for the carriage of freight will be sought from major freight traffic generating development wherever practicable.

Medway Metro

- 8.5.23 A study led by Kent County Council into improving services on the Medway Valley railway line between Strood and Maidstone West has indicated that a growth in patronage can be achieved by developing a fast inter-urban link between Medway and Maidstone. This would revitalise and make better use of a line that is currently under used. Although Connex have invested in second-

hand sliding door trains for the line, the infrastructure (particularly bridges and signalling) requires heavy investment to bring it up to the latest standards. Existing stations need upgrading, and there are new developments adjacent to the line, such as Medway Valley Leisure Park, which urgently need to be served by train. Significant new housing is proposed on the East Bank of the River Medway (in Tonbridge and Malling Borough), and this could also be served by a new station at Holborough.

- 8.5.24 Light rail along the route would offer shorter and faster trains. Coupled with new sections of track to serve Rochester and Chatham town centres there is the opportunity to make a greater penetration into the urban area. This is the proposal called Medway Metro. The County Council have resolved not to progress the scheme any further at this time, but it may be a longer-term project beyond 2006.

Light Rapid Transport

- 8.5.25 The council is investigating the prospects for a light rapid transport system through the heart of Medway. This may take the form of a tram or guided bus system linking Chatham Maritime, the Historic Dockyard, Chatham centre, Rochester Riverside, central Rochester and Strood Waterfront. The scheme, if it proceeds, will be linked to economic regeneration, leisure and tourism development. It will also incorporate prioritised high speed links to the south eastern suburbs of Medway. The scheme is at a very early stage of gestation, and no detailed alignments are yet available. This is a post-2006 scheme.

The Channel Tunnel Rail Link

- 8.5.26 Royal Assent was granted for the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL) in December 1996 and construction on Phase I from the Tunnel mouth to Ebbsfleet commenced in autumn 1998, with completion likely in 2004. The route of the CTRL has been safeguarded under Directions by the Secretary of State. The current Directions were issued in February 1996 and require the council to consult Union Railways Ltd (URL) on all applications for planning permission within the safeguarded area. Applications which the council might be minded to approve against URL advice will be referred to the Secretary of State for a decision.

POLICY T8: ROUTE OF THE CHANNEL TUNNEL RAIL LINK

The area safeguarded for the Channel Tunnel Rail Link under the Directions issued by the Secretary of State in February 1996 is shown on the proposals map. Development which would prejudice the implementation of the rail link will not be permitted.

River Buses

- 8.5.27 As recognised in policy S3 of the Strategy chapter, the River Medway is a major asset to the area. Much of the commercial river traffic on the upper reaches has disappeared as the manufacturing industries which made use of it have declined. Commercial traffic is now largely directed to Chatham Dock and Thamesport (with similar facilities on the Frindsbury Peninsula and at Halling). This has made the river potentially more accessible to leisure users and to passenger river bus services. The council supports, in principle, the provision of river bus services, but it has no plans to operate or commercially support any such services itself. Consequently, proposals for river bus services will need to fulfil the technical, operational and financial requirements of a commercial operator.
- 8.5.28 There are currently five public piers on the Medway within the urban area: the Esplanade (Rochester); Strood Pier, Sun Pier (Chatham); Thunderbolt Pier (Historic Dockyard) and Gillingham Pier. These probably provide insufficient access points for a commercially viable river bus service. It had been suggested to the council that new piers are likely to be necessary and that suitable sites might include: Medway Valley Leisure Park; Laser Quay, Medway City Estate; Riverside, Medway City Estate; Whitewall Creek (for the park and ride site); Chatham Maritime (to serve the factory outlet centre); and St. Mary's Island (to serve the new housing). There may also be the potential to utilise the existing RSME pier at Lower Upnor if this site is released from the Defence Estate.
- 8.5.29 The council will permit, subject to environmental safeguards, proposals for enhancing existing piers and constructing new piers. The piers may serve as focuses for new leisure facilities in their own right.
- 8.5.30 Any new piers on the River Medway will require the approval of the Environment Agency and the Medway Ports Authority as the Conservators of the River. In certain locations, piers may impact adversely on nature conservation, ecological, hydrological or landscape protection interests and other uses of the river (including recreational fishing). The council will examine all proposals carefully for this reason. Close liaison with the appropriate regulatory authorities at an early stage in the evolution of any proposals for new piers will be encouraged.

POLICY T9: RIVER BUSES AND PIERS

Proposals for improvements to existing piers and for the development of new piers on the Medway to provide river bus services will be permitted that are consistent with nature conservation, ecological, hydrological and landscape policies and other river uses.

Wharves

- 8.5.31 There are a number of wharves along the River Medway which are still in operation or are available for use. These enable freight to be transported into and out of Medway by river and thus help to reduce the number of freight journeys made by road. Chatham Port is dealt with in policy ED9 in the Economic Development chapter. Where other wharves are well related to the primary route network or the end-user of the goods being transported by river, the council will refuse permission for development which would remove either the wharves themselves or access to them: an approach in line with the guidance in PPG13. However, it will not afford this protection to those wharves which are poorly served by good quality roads, such as those between Rochester Bridge and Chatham town centre, (to which vehicles can only gain access by travelling through town centres); or on Gillingham Riverside (where access can only be gained via the Lower Rainham Road, which is inadequate to cater for heavy traffic flows).
- 8.5.32 The council will not permit proposals ancillary to existing wharves on the Hoo Peninsula that would lead to significant increases in traffic on the A228 until improvements to the A228 have been secured. The wharves themselves must be retained. The jetties at Cliffe provide a useful function, but the council does not wish to see an expansion of business at these wharves which would result in a substantial increase in heavy vehicles using the country lanes which currently provide access to the site.

POLICY T10: WHARVES

Development proposals which would result in the loss of either the wharves or access to the wharves, at the following locations, as defined on the proposals map, will not be permitted:

- (i) Halling;***
- (ii) Frindsbury Peninsula;***
- (iii) Kingsnorth;***
- (iv) Cliffe;***
- (v) Grain.***

Proposals ancillary to the wharves at sites (iii), (iv) and (v) which would lead to significant increases in traffic on

the A228 will not be permitted until the off-line improvements to the west of Hoo St Werburgh have been secured.

Development Funded Transport Improvements

- 8.5.33 Where the traffic from proposals would overload the transport network or create safety problems, the council will apply conditions to prevent development proceeding until the necessary infrastructure has been improved. The council will also be prepared to enter into legal agreements with developers for the improvement of the transport network, on the basis of guidance in Circular 1/97 “*Planning Obligations*” and policy S6. This may involve bringing forward a scheme already in the transport programme or it may involve contributions towards the provision of facilities for cycling, walking or public transport, in line with the guidance in PPG13.

POLICY T11: DEVELOPMENT FUNDED TRANSPORT IMPROVEMENTS

Legal agreements with developers will be sought to secure

- (i) off-site improvements to transport infrastructure (which may include rail freight, public transport, pedestrian and cycling infrastructure) and/or public transport services, the need for which arises from the proposed development; and***

- (ii) improved accessibility by all modes of transport***

Traffic Management

- 8.5.34 In view of the general pressures on the highway network it is important that available space is used to maximum capacity on suitable routes and traffic flows are limited on others. Traffic management measures have three main purposes:

- (a) to improve safety through such means as separation of vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists, and weight or width restrictions;
- (b) to help improve the environment by discouraging through traffic from residential areas or excluding unsuitable heavy traffic; and
- (c) to improve the road network’s capacity using measures such as one way systems and linking traffic lights along a stretch of road.

In residential districts, area-wide approaches to traffic management will be pursued rather than addressing problems on certain roads in isolation.

- 8.5.35 Traffic management is the use of physical and legal measures to control traffic movement to improve safety and convenience for vulnerable road users such as pedestrians, cyclists and disabled people in particular, by reducing the speed of traffic and discouraging non-essential traffic. Opportunities also arise to improve the street environment and introduce planting. Conditions in Medway will be monitored and where problems are identified, traffic management schemes will be developed and implemented.

POLICY T12: TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

In localities or on routes where traffic volumes or perceived dangers significantly interfere with movement by pedestrians or cyclists, and /or damage the wider environment, the Council will consider the need for traffic management/calming measures in consultation with local residents and businesses, the emergency services, public transport operators and others requiring essential vehicular access.

Road layouts within new developments will need to be designed with appropriate traffic management measures to help limit vehicle speeds and improve safety for all road users. Care will be needed in the design of traffic management measures so that they are appropriate to their surroundings, particularly in Conservation Areas.

Vehicle Parking

- 8.5.36 The growth of car ownership and increased mobility leads not only to congestion on the highway network but also competition for limited parking space. Until recent changes in Government policy, most new development was expected to make full provision on site for vehicle parking. It is now recognised that the availability of parking space is often a key determinant in people's decision to use the car. Consequently, to deter unnecessary car use the provision of parking spaces associated with new development should be reduced, particularly where convenient public transport is available. Chatham town centre, other major district and local centres and locations close to main bus routes and rail

stations fall into this category. Equally, existing major out of centre development must be encouraged to develop new public transport nodes in order that they too play their part in traffic reduction and unfair competitive advantages are not gained.

- 8.5.37 New development must provide some parking on site to avoid on-street parking which might unacceptably reduce road capacity and increase the risk of road traffic accidents. However, there is a balance to be struck between setting the car parking provision so high that it positively encourages car use (contrary to PPG13), and setting it so low that it unacceptably impinges upon highway safety, economic competitiveness and amenity issues.
- 8.5.38 The Council has now adopted a set of vehicle parking standards in accordance with advice in PPG13, which set maximum levels of parking for broad classes of development. These are shown in Appendix 6.
- 8.5.39 The Government's Regional Office for the South East (GOSE) has commissioned research on how the intentions of PPG13 have been implemented in relation to parking standards. As a result of this work, in November 1998 it published for consultation purposes draft off-street parking standards for the whole of the South East region outside London. Revised standards, following that consultation, have yet to be published.
- 8.5.40 These proposed standards would, in theory, even out inequalities in parking standards across the region, thereby creating a "level playing field", and removing the ability of developers to play off one Local Authority against another in terms of their interpretation of parking standards. The GOSE document proposes parking standards that are very substantially below the standards included in Appendix 6.
- 8.5.41 Because of the very considerable state of flux at the present time regarding possible new parking standards, there is uncertainty about whether the standards included in the local plan will continue to apply throughout the local plan period. Any revised standards subsequently adopted by the Council during the plan period will supersede those in Appendix 6.
- 8.5.42 Whatever standards are ultimately applied, there will be flexibility over on-site parking requirements in two specific cases. The first of these is Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas, where special considerations apply in order that they should continue to have a viable future. The second case would be conversions or changes of use which achieve the residential use of the upper storeys above premises within designated retail centres (see Retailing chapter).

POLICY T13: VEHICLE PARKING STANDARDS

Development proposals will be expected to make vehicle parking provision in accordance with the adopted standard. The current standard is shown in Appendix 6.

Provision for people with disabilities will be required to be made on site, consistent with the provisions of policy T22.

These standards will be varied, if necessary, in order to ensure the continued use, or successful restoration and/or reuse, of a Listed Building or development in a Conservation Area. The standards will also be varied in order to achieve a residential use in the upper storeys of premises within the designated retail centres.

Travel Plans

- 8.5.43 The Government wants to help raise awareness of the impacts of travel decisions and promote the widespread use of travel plans amongst businesses, schools, hospitals and other organisations.
- 8.5.44 A travel plan is a general term for a package of measures tailored to the needs of individual sites which is aimed at promoting greener, cleaner travel choices and reducing reliance on the car. It enables organisations to reduce the impact of travel and transport on the environment through the increased use of public transport, walking and cycling, a reduction in traffic speeds, improved road safety and personal security and more environmentally friendly freight movements.
- 8.5.45 A travel plan can address different types of travel associated with an organisation's activities including:
- commuter journeys
 - business travel undertaken by staff during the working day
 - visitors travelling to and from the workplace for meetings, courses etc
 - deliveries and/or contractors calling at the workplace
 - fleet vehicles operating as part of the organisation's activities.

- 8.5.46 A Travel Plan co-ordinator is employed by the Council and can provide advice to existing companies and potential applicants for new built developments. A range of guidance is available and this will be updated in line with best practice over the period of the local plan.

POLICY T14: TRAVEL PLANS

Travel Plans will be required for all developments which require a transport assessment or as otherwise required by the Council's vehicle parking standards, including the following:

- (i) all substantial developments comprising employment, retail, leisure and/or service floorspace;*
- (ii) smaller developments in category (i) which would generate additional traffic movements in or near to air quality management areas or other areas specifically targeted for a reduction in road traffic;*
- (iii) new or expanded educational facilities;*
- (iv) where a local traffic problem would otherwise lead to a refusal of planning permission.*

Parking Strategy

- 8.5.47 The council has evolved a sustainable and integrated Parking Strategy for urban Medway. Specific emphasis is placed on the five major retail centres (Chatham, Gillingham, Strood, Rochester and Rainham) and the environmentally sensitive area around Star Hill/Sun Pier. Consequently, these are covered by Transport Policy Areas within which parking policies apply.
- 8.5.48 This recognises that Chatham town centre is the principal centre for both shoppers and for many commuters/workers, whilst the other major district and local centres are also significant draws in their own right. In recognition of the importance that the council puts on the future vitality and viability of these centres, particular priority in parking provision will be given to short-stay parking for customers. In line with the guidance in PPG6, that town centre parking provision should be made communally in publicly available car parks, the council will seek to reduce the amount of non-residential private car parking through permissive redevelopment policies. In residential streets, the council will normally

give priority to on-street parking for local residents over non-residents, through the introduction of residents' preference parking zones. In other locations, the council will place emphasis on attaining the guidance outlined in PPG13, that is that parking requirements should generally be kept to the operational minimum (See policy T13 above).

8.5.49 The strategy for Chatham town centre is to ensure both the maximum number of short stay car parking spaces available for shoppers and other visitors and the maximum use of those spaces, close to the core of Chatham town centre. A key part of the strategy will involve changing some long-stay publicly available spaces for town centre workers over to short-stay spaces for the use of customers. This will reduce town centre congestion and improve both accessibility and the environment for shoppers and other town centre visitors, thereby maintaining and enhancing the vitality and viability of Chatham town centre.

8.5.50 To achieve this end will mean offering alternatives for those commuters who currently use long stay car parks in the town. Those limited number of town centre workers who need access to their cars during the course of the working day will continue to be provided for with a limited number of publicly available spaces in car parks on the edge of the town centre. Workers who do not need to use their car at all for their commuting journey will be encouraged to use alternative modes. Park and Ride, along many of the major radial routes, will provide for those commuters to the town centre who are reluctant to give up car use completely, but do not need access to their cars during the course of the working day. Park and Ride means that commuters can park in secure out-of-centre car parks and then travel speedily, easily and cheaply into the town centre by public transport. This strategy has worked very successfully across Britain, including Maidstone, Tunbridge Wells and Canterbury in Kent. The first bus Park and Ride facility in Medway was provided at Horsted, close to Rochester Airport in 1996.

8.5.51 In Gillingham, Strood, Rochester and Rainham, the council is seeking to improve the security and accessibility of short stay publicly available customer car parking close to the core of the shopping centres. The Star Hill/Sun Pier area is an immensely important one in townscape terms that retains a number of interesting and viable retail uses mixed with a number of other commercial and residential uses. It is the location of a major Conservation Area Partnership Scheme, reflecting its historic and townscape sensitivity. This is an area that is, and will be, undergoing significant change during the lifetime of this plan, and new parking provision needs to be carefully planned to minimise adverse visual impact.

8.5.52 Historically, a considerable quantity of parking related to the town centres has taken place in the surrounding residential streets and areas. This undermines the overall parking strategy, encouraging car commuters to continue to use their car, as there is a free parking space at the end of their journey. This can cause amenity, safety, pollution and access problems, especially to local residents and businesses. Residents' preference parking schemes aim to address these

issues by introducing a limitation of a maximum two hours free stay in a designated street (or area), but after this time they may only remain with the benefit of a permit. Such permits are issued to local residents of those streets (or areas) for their use, and the use of their visitors.

8.5.53 The council will implement its parking strategy, at least in part, by the use of a pricing regime in its own public car parks. This is structured to deter long-stay users from occupying short-stay spaces. Long-stay visitors are not intended to be accommodated in these car parks since they occupy spaces that could otherwise be consecutively occupied by several town centre customers throughout the course of the day. The council has powers to operate a decriminalised parking regime (enabling the effective enforcement of on-street parking regulations) which enable it to police the Parking Strategy significantly more effectively and efficiently than previously. The strategy will be implemented in a phased fashion, parallel with the introduction of other complementary transport measures including park and ride and bus preference.

8.5.54 Within the Transport Policy Areas, the council will seek contributions to assist transport provision to the areas, rather than site specific parking provision. This will be based on a target percentage of trips to the proposed development being made by public transport, walking and cycling. This will then be linked, through a financial conversion, to a commuted sum for non-car provision.

POLICY T15: PARKING STRATEGY

In the Chatham town centre Transport Policy Area, as defined on the proposals map, long stay car parking for those using the town centre and who need access to their car during the course of the working day will be provided around the edge of the town centre in publicly available spaces. Long stay parking for those who do not need such access will be provided at suburban Park and Ride sites. Provision for short-stay car parking will be made in publicly available spaces close to the shopping streets within Chatham town centre.

In the Gillingham, Strood, Rochester and Rainham Transport Policy Areas, as defined on the proposals map, the council will provide short stay publicly available car parking close to the core of the shopping centres. In the Star Hill/Sun Pier Transport Policy Area as defined on the proposals map, short stay publicly available car parking

will be provided in less sensitive locations that do not adversely impact upon the character of the area.

Commuted sums will be sought, where appropriate, to secure improved accessibility to sites by all transport modes generated by development. These payments will be used to assist the provision of appropriate transport choices. Such choices may include Park and Ride projects or assistance to the provision of bus, rail, cycling, taxi or pedestrian infrastructure.

Proposals which would lead to the removal of private off-street car parking spaces in Chatham town centre will be permitted where to do so would not conflict with other policies of this plan.

New Town Centre Parking

- 8.5.55 In order to maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of Rainham for shoppers, some additional short-stay publicly available car parking facilities are proposed. An extension to the existing car park at the rear of The Cricketers pub, funded by commuted payments, is proposed.

POLICY T16: RAINHAM TOWN CENTRE PARKING

New public parking facilities will be provided at the rear of the Cricketers Public House, Rainham, as defined on the proposals map.

Park and Ride

- 8.5.56 Park and Ride enables drivers to park on the outskirts of the urban area in purpose built car parks which are served by frequent public transport services to Chatham town centre. This will reduce the length of car journeys, reduce congestion in the town centre and avoid having to provide more car parking on valuable land which can be put to other uses. Parking spaces in the town centre will then be available for short-stay use by those people with an essential need to access the town centre by car. Most Park and Ride sites across the country are associated with bus services, but there are examples of rail-based Park and Ride. The Park and Ride strategy for Medway has, thus far, concentrated on bus Park and Ride.

- 8.5.57 The first of these sites is at Horsted, close to BAE Systems and Rochester Airport, with parking for 200 cars. This site is currently used only on Saturdays due to the need for significant off-site junction improvements to cope with flows during the peak hours of the working week. These works need to be carried out in order for the site to achieve its full potential, and for Park and Ride to make a proper contribution to meeting the parking needs of Chatham town centre. If the proposed redevelopment of Rochester Airport proceeds, it is likely that the Park and Ride site will be relocated and enlarged. Complementary bus priority measures will be introduced, together with other minor junction improvements between the site and Chatham town centre.
- 8.5.58 In 1993 a study was undertaken to assess the potential for Park and Ride in Medway. This identified several potential sites or broad locations to be used for bus Park and Ride. Following on from this, the council is now intent on developing a network of new Park and Ride sites. The first of these sites is at Whitewall Creek on the north-eastern edge of the Medway City Estate (a major employment site) close to the western entrance to the Medway Tunnel. This is on the route of the Medway Towns Northern Relief Road and would intercept traffic travelling to Chatham from Frindsbury, Wainscott, Grain and the Hoo peninsula via the MTNRR. There is the potential for cross-commuter journeys between the town centre and the Medway City Estate and there is the additional potential to serve the Historic Dockyard and Chatham Maritime en route. The site could potentially also serve Gillingham and Strood town centres if it was considered that such services could be viable. The council will seek to develop further sites during the lifetime of the plan.
- 8.5.59 Within the allocated area, one possible site for the park and ride facility is at the top end of Whitewall Creek. Some commercial development will also be considered. The creation of landscaping areas as part of the overall scheme will be required. The creek forms an important part of the inter-tidal habitats of the Medway Estuary, and is recognised by the council as a potential area for the creation of additional inter-tidal habitats. The need for development here will, therefore, be balanced against the requirement to protect the environment. New development should be consistent with the adjacent ALLI on the north side of the creek. Development of the allocated site should follow an investigation of the environmental conditions on-site and the impact of the scheme. Proposals for the site should be in accordance with an overall development and mitigation/compensation strategy approved by the council. Mitigation or compensation for any loss of mudflats, in line with the provisions of policies S3 and BNE37, will be sought.
- 8.5.60 The proposed T17 allocation at Whitewall Creek is on land adjoining an established employment area. The allocation reserves land for a major park and ride facility together with structural landscaping and appropriate environmental mitigation. On any land within the T17 allocation that is not required for the park and ride facility, commercial and industrial development will be permitted which takes advantage of that facility. This may include facilities that would provide

services benefiting the adjacent Medway City Estate, and take advantage of the site's status as a major public transport node and prominent location.

- 8.5.61 The council will seek to develop further park and ride sites during the lifetime of the plan. There is also potential for rail Park and Ride within the plan area, especially if through services from the Medway Valley line could be extended through to Chatham, in association with a possible new station to serve the Medway Valley Leisure Park south of Strood. This is considered to be something of a longer term possibility at present, but the council would welcome the initiative of developers, Network Rail and Connex (or other rail operators) in bringing this idea to fruition.
- 8.5.62 In order to alleviate the problem of on-street parking associated with commuter coach services and car sharing, the council has constructed a commuter car park at Junction 4 of the M2 with access from Maidstone Road. There is also the potential to provide another Park and Ride site (probably for car sharing journeys to London) within the proposals to widen the M2 at Junction 3, although this site lies in Tonbridge and Malling Borough.
- 8.5.63 The council will continue to investigate other opportunities for Park and Ride on other radial routes into Chatham town centre. Suitable sites are likely to be visually prominent and will require careful consideration of their environmental impact. Lighting will be essential to security and personal safety as, without these, the facility will not be attractive to use.

POLICY T17: PARK AND RIDE

Whitewall Creek, at Anthony's Way, on the Medway City Estate, as defined on the proposals map, is allocated for a new bus Park and Ride site and, on any surplus land, commercial and industrial development which takes advantage of that facility.

Additional Park and Ride facilities will be permitted provided that:

- (i) where it is for bus Park and Ride, the site is well related to the primary or secondary route network, and related bus priority measures can be implemented to improve bus journey times;***
- (ii) it will not adversely affect residential amenity or environmental protection;***

- (iii) there is satisfactory access, lay-out, design, screening and high quality landscaping.*

New Transport Infrastructure

8.5.64 The council is the Highway Authority for its administrative area, giving it the power to devise and implement both major and minor schemes. It is also the development control authority for schemes implemented by private developers and a statutory consultee for schemes which are promoted by the Highways Agency. Transport infrastructure can have a very significant effect on the locality and in order to protect the environment and the amenities enjoyed by residents, shoppers and businesses, the council will expect very high standards of design and mitigation. The council will base its assessment of such schemes on the new approach to appraisal of transport projects set out in the Government's White Paper "A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone" (July 1998).

POLICY T18: NEW TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

Proposals for major transport infrastructure will be assessed against the following considerations:

- (i) the provision of facilities for integrated transport, including cycling, pedestrian movement and public transport;*
- (ii) the contribution of the scheme to improved safety;*
- (iii) the economic impact of the infrastructure investment, through the estimated benefits of reduced journey times for commercial, business and other traffic;*
- (iv) the environmental and social impact of the scheme including extent of protection for the built and natural environment, estimates of noise and vibration and proposed mitigation, severance and landscaping proposals; and*
- (v) the demonstrable need for the infrastructure and its contribution to the regeneration of Medway's economy and physical environment balanced*

against the need not to encourage private car journeys.

Road Building Schemes

- 8.5.65 This section deals with new roads which are programmed for construction or whose routes need safeguarding during the plan period. It should be noted that there has been a significant shift in attitude towards road building in accordance with advice contained in PPG13. With the switch towards encouraging the use of alternatives to the private car, several schemes at both national and local levels have been abandoned.

Abandoned Road Schemes

- 8.5.66 The County Council, as the then Highway Authority, undertook a review of its road programme in 1995 and 1997, and formally abandoned a number of schemes:

A228 Frindsbury Road, Strood

- 8.5.67 This widening scheme is no longer considered necessary due to the Medway Towns Northern Relief Road.

A231 Gillingham Town Centre Relief Road: Arden Street to Mill Road

- 8.5.68 This road is no longer considered necessary due to the Medway Towns Northern Relief Road.

Rainham Southern Relief Road

- 8.5.69 Measures will instead be introduced through Rainham town centre to encourage non-local through traffic to use the M2 by the introduction of vehicle restraint, together with the improvement of cycle and pedestrian facilities.

Strood Ring Road

- 8.5.70 Congestion is severe in central Strood where the A228 and A2 cross by means of a gyratory system using the main shopping streets. A ring road was approved a number of years ago but this was abandoned by the County Council as the Highway Authority at the time in 1997. Details of the council's proposed replacement scheme are given below.

Medway Towns Southern Peripheral Road

- 8.5.71 A high standard distributor road network has been an important design element of the Walderslade, Lordswood and Hempstead development areas since their inception. Between Lordswood/Walderslade in the west and Hempstead in the east, largely paralleling the M2 widening, is the previously proposed route of the Medway Towns Southern Peripheral Road (MTSPR). This largely passes through the administrative area of Maidstone Borough (who are the Local Planning Authority). The scheme was abandoned by Kent County Council as Highway Authority in 1997, although, they, the Medway Council and Maidstone

Borough Council agree that the scale of traffic on the inadequate local roads and rural lanes in this area is harmful to residential and countryside amenity.

- 8.5.72 Any works proposed to address these issues will need to be of a scale and nature such that they do not encourage additional trips by the private car, but manage existing movements in a more sensitive, safe and sustainable manner. Particular aims will be to alleviate the problems caused by the demand for, and the circuitous nature of access to, the M2 (particularly at Junction 4), and to improve access by public transport and means other than the private car for the Lordswood/Walderslade area to Hempstead Valley Shopping Centre. Any scheme will be promoted by the Medway Council through Kent County Council as the Highway Authority for the bulk of the route. Detailed design work is currently being completed prior to public consultation on a revised scheme.

New Roads

- 8.5.73 There remains a need for certain new road schemes to address particular local problems and maintain economic vitality and viability. The achievement of this limited programme depends in part on Government funding through the Local Transport Plan process. Contributions from proposed developments in accordance with policy T18 above, will help to bring schemes forward in the programme.
- 8.5.74 The Highways Agency, on behalf of the Department of Transport intends to widen the M2 between Junctions 1 and 4. Between Junctions 1 and 3 a new four lane carriageway for London-bound traffic will be constructed on the south-western side of the existing motorway with the existing carriageway being used for coast-bound traffic. This will mean the construction of a new bridge and viaduct across the River Medway to carry the new carriageway. Between Junctions 3 and 4 the motorway will be widened to three lanes in each direction.
- 8.5.75 Approval for the motorway widening scheme is included in the Channel Tunnel Rail Link Act and so the scheme is not open to objection through this local plan process. Considerable mitigation works are proposed, and the council will seek to protect the interests of the local communities and commercial interests through consultation arrangements put in place by the Highways Agency.
- 8.5.76 A new flyover is to be built to carry the A229 over the Bridgewood Roundabout as part of the M2 widening scheme. This should ease traffic congestion at this important junction. Only the northern approaches to this flyover are in the local plan area, the remainder being in Tonbridge and Malling Borough.
- 8.5.77 The A228 from M2 Junction 2 towards Grain carries large volumes of commercial traffic to Thamesport, Grain and other locations on the Hoo Peninsula. There is considerable potential for further development on the peninsula and Grain, but the road suffers from poor vertical and horizontal alignment in a number of locations and has a poor accident record. There are three improvement schemes for the A228 in the highway priority identification pool in structure plan policy T2, namely:

- Christmas Lane to Grain (on-line improvement).
- Main Road to Ropers Lane Dualling (scheme approved).
- M2 to Holborough Dualling (no scheme prepared).

8.5.78 The potential of Thamesport, Grain and Kingsnorth cannot be fully realised until the A228 is improved and the council will not permit further development which would significantly increase traffic on the A228. Several improvements have already been implemented, and the dualling between Main Road and Ropers Lane is being partially funded through development at Kingsnorth. A possible off-line improvement to Fenn Corner is also being investigated. The major outstanding part of the improvement is the Main Road to Ropers Lane improvement (sometimes referred to as the Hoo by-pass). The alignment shown on the proposals map, and referred to in policy T19, was adopted by Kent County Council before Medway Council became the Highway Authority. It is considered that this alignment may not be the best achievable, particularly at the junction between the A228 and Main Road. Consequently, Medway Council has drawn up a revised scheme, which includes a new section of link road to the north of properties in Main Road.

8.5.79 Transport Supplementary Grant funding has now been secured enabling the A228 improvement scheme to proceed. This development however, will be advanced as part of an integrated approach, including the upgrading of the Hoo Junction to Grain railway line.

8.5.80 The traffic reduction benefits which arise from the opening of the MTNRR create the opportunity to improve the environment in the important district shopping centre of Strood. The town centre is currently bisected by the A2, leading to poor environmental quality and severe pedestrian/vehicle conflicts. At present 22,000 vehicles per day travel through Strood town centre, including a significant proportion of HGVs. At many times of the day the traffic is almost stationary. The proposal for a Strood ring road has now been abandoned, and a smaller scale scheme is now proposed to allow for pedestrian, cycle and public transport priority measures, coupled with traffic restraint. When implemented the scheme should reduce severance in the main shopping streets, improve road safety for pedestrians and improve air quality. Overall the proposal should enhance the attractiveness of Strood as a shopping centre, improving its vitality and viability. Financial contributions to this scheme will be sought from any potential new retail proposals (See policy R3) in, and on the edge of, Strood town centre.

POLICY T19: ROAD SCHEMES

The routes of the following road schemes, as defined on the proposals map, will be safeguarded against prejudicial development:

Department of Transport scheme:

- (i) M2 widening Junctions 1-4***

Medway Council schemes:

- (i) A228 Main road to Ropers Lane dualling;***
- (ii) Strood Town Centre Environmental Improvements***

Development Related Road Schemes

A228 to East Bank of Medway River Crossing

- 8.5.81 Structure Plan policy MK3 refers to the need for a new Medway Crossing to facilitate access to the strategic housing allocations on the East Bank of the Medway (within Tonbridge and Malling Borough). Whilst an alignment for the Medway Valley Crossing has been identified in the Tonbridge and Malling Borough Local Plan it has been recognised that there are potential constraints to its implementation. As such, an alternative safeguarded area has been identified within the administrative boundaries of Medway and is identified on the proposals map.
- 8.5.82 The safeguarded area identified on the proposals map is considered to be the most appropriate area within Medway where the proposed Medway Valley Crossing could be accommodated in a satisfactory manner to allow access to the development proposals on the East Bank of the Medway. The safeguarded area is shown on the proposals map principally in order: to advise third parties of the access proposal; so that the full environmental consequences of the new development can be assessed; and to provide a context for considering any other development proposals in the vicinity.
- 8.5.83 It must be emphasised that neither Medway Council nor the other planning and highway authorities accept any financial liability in respect of the identification or implementation of this scheme. It is expected that the full cost of implementation and any blight or purchase notice liability, which might arise, will be under-written by the landowners or developers of the site dependent upon this road for access.
- 8.5.84 Given the juxtaposition of the borough boundaries, a comprehensive approach will be adopted to the assessment of the cumulative affects of the proposed development on both the east and west bank of the Medway. If unacceptable adverse impacts are identified as a result of traffic impact assessment or environmental impact assessment, appropriate remedial measures will be required which should be implemented in accordance with a phased programme agreed with the relevant planning and highway authorities. In particular Medway

Council will have close regard to the traffic implications of the proposed development on Borstal and Rochester.

POLICY T20: DEVELOPMENT RELATED ROAD SCHEMES

The route of the following road scheme, as defined on the Proposals Map, is identified as being necessary to satisfactorily access specific development proposals, and will be safeguarded against prejudicial developments:

A228 to East Bank of the River Medway

Any alternative put forward to these proposals must be at least the equivalent of the identified proposals in terms of capacity, and no worse in terms of environmental impact.

Motorway Service Areas

- 8.5.85 It is important that there are adequate facilities (including fuel, toilets, refreshment facilities, limited shopping facilities and parking) at convenient intervals for drivers on motorways and trunk roads. The A2/M2 is the only road of this status in the area and there are already facilities to the west on the A2, and at Farthing Corner just to the east of Junction 4 of the M2. There are unlikely to be any further sites where a service area could physically be accommodated on both sides of the M2 motorway in the local plan area because of built development or steep slopes on the north eastern side. Land to the south west of the motorway is within the Kent Downs A.O.N.B. and the North Downs Special Landscape Area whilst to the north west of the urban area the land is within the Metropolitan Green Belt. Service areas would not be appropriate in such areas.

POLICY T21: MOTORWAY SERVICE AREAS

Further Motorway Service Areas adjacent to the M2 will not be permitted.

Provision for People with Disabilities

- 8.5.86 People with disabilities face many challenges in undertaking tasks that most of the community take for granted. Consequently, their access needs, which may

vary enormously depending on the nature and degree of the disability, require specific and careful consideration. Both public perceptions and legislation are changing towards a more rigorous approach to making proper provision for people with disabilities to overcome the sheer lack of thought that much new development offers. New responsibilities have already been conferred on service providers in this regard by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, and subsequent provisions which are now in force.

- 8.5.87 The council proposes to make a number of significant commitments to people with disabilities in terms of the way that it assesses development proposals. Publicly available facilities will need to demonstrate that the needs of people with disabilities have been fully taken into account, including the provision of reserved on-site car parking close to the main pedestrian access to the development. Particular care needs to be taken where development is proposed in Listed Buildings or Scheduled Ancient Monuments. Further elements of this commitment to cater for, and consider the needs of, people with disabilities are contained within policies T3, T5, T6, and T13.

POLICY T22: PROVISION FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Development including facilities to be used by the public, and new housing development, will need to demonstrate that the needs of people with disabilities have been fully taken into account.

All new development designed to be open to the public shall provide adequately signed and appropriate access for people with disabilities subject to the requirements of the legislation and conditions affecting Listed Buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

Except in the Transport Policy Areas, as defined on the proposals map, (where such provision will be made communally by the council) the car parking provision generated by the needs of the development under policy T13 shall not be commuted in respect of the provision for people with disabilities. The provision shall be:

- (i) made on the site, with the parking spaces closer than any other spaces to the main pedestrian access to the development; and***

- (ii) of the size and layout defined in the council's vehicle parking standards; and*
- (iii) clearly marked for the use only of people with disabilities.*

8.5.88 The local plan is proposing to develop a science and business park at Rochester Airfield which would result in the closure of one of the main runways. However, with the appropriate investment in the remaining runway and other aviation related facilities within the airport, the level of activity could increase. Policy T23 therefore sets out the criteria against which any future proposals for aviation related development will be measured. Such criteria would also apply to any proposals for new general aviation facilities within the plan area.

POLICY T23: AVIATION RELATED DEVELOPMENT

Development proposals at or affecting Rochester Airport and any proposed new aerodromes, will be considered against the following criteria:

- (i) compatibility with existing or potential aviation operations;*
- (ii) the scale and nature of the proposed development, taking account of the existing amount of activity on the site;*
- (iii) the economic and employment benefits of the development;*
- (iv) the proposals for a science and technology park at Rochester Airport in policies S11 and ED5;*
- (v) the impact upon residential and other noise sensitive properties;*
- (vi) traffic generation;*
- (vii) other environmental and social impacts; and*

(viii) accessibility from the urban area of Medway.

8.6 Environmental Appraisal

- 8.6.1 In accordance with the guidance contained at paragraphs. 4.16 to 4.22 of PPG12 “Development Plans” the policies in this chapter have been subject to environmental appraisal.
- 8.6.2 The chapter is, on the whole, very sustainable. It is concerned with promoting alternative, more sustainable, modes of transport and the facilities necessary to improve movement. It encourages improved access for all sectors of the community to public transport, and pursues improved facilities for cyclists and pedestrians. It addresses social equity issues by ensuring access to facilities for people with disabilities. The policies will, indirectly, have beneficial effects on the local economy (by aiding accessibility through improvements to a range of transport infrastructure) by making the area a more attractive location for inward investment.
- 8.6.3 The development of new highways schemes is considered by the U.K. government to be unsustainable in terms of the impact on the environment, resulting in the loss of countryside, and amenity, whilst at the same time acting to encourage both the length and the number of journeys. This would be contrary to the aims set out in PPG13. It should be noted, however, that new roads can serve to open up new development opportunities and support economic regeneration, especially if coupled with measures to reduce traffic speeds and aid pedestrians, cyclists and public transport. The plan proposes only a limited additional extra highway programme.

8.7 Monitoring Measures

- 8.7.1 The performance of the plan in meeting its aims with regard to transportation will be judged against the following criteria:
- (i) Improved journey times for buses;
 - (ii) The increase in the number of bus and train passengers and the increase in accessibility of bus and train services and the decrease in journeys by car;
 - (iii) The length of cycleways opened, and the increase in cycling as a means of transport;
 - (iv) The reduction in the overall amount of on-site parking achieved in new development compared with the adopted maximum parking standards;
 - (v) The scale of reduction of private non-residential parking spaces within the town centres;
 - (vi) The opening and successful operation of new Park and Ride sites.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

9.1 Introduction

- 9.1.1 Community services include healthcare, social services, education, libraries, fire protection, police and community halls. In terms of community service provision, it is desirable that the widest possible range of facilities are locally available and readily accessible to create balanced communities and reduce the need to travel. It is thus important to ensure the provision of necessary facilities within new development schemes, and to safeguard existing facilities, which are providing a valuable local service.
- 9.1.2 This chapter also deals with the provision of utilities, which are necessary to support development. Utilities include gas, electricity, water supply, land drainage, sewerage, wastewater treatment and telecommunications. It is important to make efficient use of utilities in order to minimise the need for additional investment. New development must be capable of being readily served by the necessary utilities.

9.2 Current Position

- 9.2.1 Healthcare services for the local plan area are currently provided by a number of authorities. The Medway NHS Trust based in Medway, is the provider of acute services (such as surgical and medical services) whereas community mental health and elderly services are provided by Thames Gateway Healthcare NHS Trust based in Sittingbourne. The West Kent Health Authority, based at Aylesford near Maidstone, is the purchasing agency for healthcare services and is responsible for assessing the healthcare needs of local people. It is also responsible for administering contracts with independent professional service providers such as general practitioners, dentists, pharmacists and opticians.
- 9.2.2 The Medway NHS Trust provides its services from the Medway Maritime Hospital in Gillingham, and St Bartholomew's Hospital in Rochester, but the latter will shortly transfer to the Thames Gateway NHS Trust.
- 9.2.3 This Trust provides its community mental health and elderly services in the Medway area from leased parts of Medway Hospital. It also runs a nursing home, health centres, clinics and a hospice across the Medway towns and some services are provided within GPs' surgeries.
- 9.2.4 Since April 1998, provision of social services has been the responsibility of Medway Council. The basis of social services provision is contained in the council's community care plan and children's services plan for 2002-2005. It aims to shape services and infrastructure in communities that enable people to live as independently as possible. Examples include enhancing accessibility to local amenities and public facilities, provision of accommodation through

adaptation or new build, encouraging local work opportunities for all sectors of society and taking action on the needs of deprived communities. This approach is also supported by the community development initiatives of the council. Social services are currently delivered through four local offices providing a range of services for older people, people with disabilities or mental health problems and children and their families.

9.2.5 Social Services is committed to continuing a reallocation of resources from residential to community care. Social services provision will often overlap with healthcare and housing needs, and consequently there is close liaison between these services.

9.2.6 Services may be commissioned from both Social Services itself and from other outside provider organisations. Whilst Social Services is responsible for registering all residential care homes, those which provide nursing care must also be registered with the West Kent Health Authority.

9.2.7 There are currently 89 primary, 20 secondary and 3 special state schools in the Medway area. The Schools Standards and Framework Act came into effect in September 1999 and Medway schools are now organised as follows:

83 community schools	(72 primary, 11 secondary)
8 voluntary controlled	(7 primary, 1secondary)
11 voluntary aided	(10 primary, 1secondary)
7 foundation	(7secondary)

9.2.8 Further education facilities are provided at the Mid Kent College of Further Education at City Way and Horsted and at the Kent Institute of Art and Design, New Road, Rochester. In Chatham Historic Dockyard the former clock tower building is now the Bridge Warden's College, a postgraduate and professional development education centre run by the University of Kent.

9.2.9 The University of Greenwich has relocated its Department of Earth and Environmental Science and School of Engineering to Chatham Maritime. It has incorporated the Natural Resources Institute, which was a government research organisation. The campus also includes a variety of student support facilities, including purpose-built accommodation.

9.2.10 Although not responsible for further education, the council sees considerable advantage in developing a highly skilled and trained workforce locally. It is one of the council's core aims to develop further education within Medway.

9.2.11 In April 1998, the provision of library and information services became the responsibility of Medway Council. The basis of this provision is contained in the Library Plan, which is submitted to the Department of Culture, Media and Sport for approval and assessment. The main objectives are to enable as many people

as possible to have access through libraries to recreational, cultural, educational and life-long learning opportunities. The library service is provided from 17 static service points and one mobile library. Static service points vary in size from the smallest in Grain and Hempstead to the largest in the town centres at Chatham, Gillingham and Strood.

- 9.2.12 There is currently an under-provision of cemeteries with four active cemeteries located in Chatham, Gillingham, Rochester and Strood. There are no crematoria in Medway itself, but the council operates the Medway crematorium at Bluebell Hill in Tonbridge and Malling Borough, close to junction 3 of the M2 motorway.
- 9.2.13 The police divisional headquarters for Medway is situated at Rochester police station. Sub-divisional police stations are located at Chatham and Rainham, covering the Chatham and Gillingham areas respectively.
- 9.2.14 The divisional fire headquarters for Rochester, Gillingham, Swale, Dartford and Gravesham is situated at Watling Street, Chatham. This is also the only full-time staffed station on the east side of the River Medway, the equivalent on the west side being at Gravesend Road in Strood. There are also unstaffed fire stations at New Cut, Chatham; Green Street; Gillingham; Rainham; Halling; Cliffe; Hoo and Grain.
- 9.2.15 British Gas Transco has responsibility for gas transmission. Three pressure reducing stations at Rochester Riverside, Gillingham Holder Station and the Grain Refinery convert main grid pressure gas to a medium pressure network, which extends into the main residential areas. A medium pressure pipeline also extends out into the Hoo Peninsula running south of High Halstow and close to Lower Stoke. Gas for domestic and most commercial purposes is taken from the low pressure network. The gas system has been extended to many rural communities although not all areas are covered.
- 9.2.16 At Grain, British Gas has an existing liquefied natural gas (LNG) storage facility and also has plans to build a LNG importation terminal. This terminal is designed to supplement domestic supplies to meet an anticipated surge in demand, including that arising from the new network of gas fired power stations.
- 9.2.17 The National Grid Company Plc is responsible for the transmission of electricity and SEEBOARD Plc has responsibility for the local distribution of electricity. Powergen plc operates two electricity-generating power stations at Kingsnorth and Grain, supplying electricity into the national grid. A combined cycle gas turbine power generation station has been operating at Grain for 2 years and another is under construction at Kingsnorth. The council has resolved to grant planning permission for an additional gas fired power station at Grain, but this requires a licence from the DTI before construction can proceed.
- 9.2.18 Water supply for Medway is the responsibility of Southern Water plc, except for the Halling area, which is supplied by Mid-Kent Water plc. Both companies anticipate that the majority of locations for development within the local plan area

can be readily supplied from existing water mains. The Environment Agency has a responsibility for managing water resources. Extraction of water from chalk aquifers is restricted as part of its North Kent Water Resource Management Scheme.

9.2.19 Land drainage is the responsibility of the Environment Agency and the Lower Medway Internal Drainage Board. There are large areas within Medway which are low lying and may be susceptible to a 1000 year surge tide.

9.2.20 Sewage and wastewater treatment facilities are provided throughout Medway by Southern Water plc. It is making progress with the upgrading of the waste water and sewage sludge treatment works at Motney Hill, Rainham to comply with the European Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive. Considerable highway and amenity issues are involved, particularly during the construction period, and the site adjoins the Medway Marshes which have international importance for wildlife conservation.

9.3 Policy Context

Central Government Guidance

9.3.1 Central government advice relating to planning for facilities is set out in planning policy guidance notes (PPGs). PPG 1 “*General Policy and Principles*”, PPG 3 “*Housing*” and PPG 12 “*Development Plans*” emphasise the need for the planning system to ensure that major new developments are provided with infrastructure including community facilities. The pattern of development proposed in local plans should take account of infrastructure limitations or alternatively, should provide those responsible for infrastructure with a measure of certainty, to enable them to plan for future needs. Local plans should include policies setting out the local authorities’ requirements for planning obligations under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act. These requirements should accord with Circular 1/97 “*Planning Obligations*” and the policies should indicate the facilities or utilities to be provided and whether a contribution towards their provision is required.

9.3.2 PPG 22 “*Renewable Energy*” reiterates government policy to stimulate the exploitation and development of renewable energy sources that have prospects of being both economically attractive and environmentally acceptable. In the UK, this includes wind power, hydropower, bio-fuels, waste incineration and active solar power. It is the government’s view that the renewable sources will provide diversity and security of energy supply. The environmental benefits associated with renewable energy derive from reduced air pollutants from the burning of fossil fuels, that is, less carbon dioxide which contributes to ‘global warming’ and fewer acidic deposits from sulphur dioxide and nitrous oxides. PPG 22 also states that commercial energy generated from the incineration of waste may alleviate some of the problems associated with the disposal and treatment of waste.

- 9.3.3 Telecommunications relates to all forms of communication by electrical or optical wire and cables and radio signals. Their associated development includes radio masts or towers, antennae, radio equipment housing, telephone boxes, cabinets and junction boxes, poles and overhead wires. PPG 8 “*Telecommunications*” emphasises that the telecommunications industry and technology is demand led: it is government policy to encourage the growth of the industry and a choice of service providers to the benefit of local communities and the national economy. The PPG also advises Local Planning Authorities to protect established telecommunications networks from built development that may cause interference.

Regional Guidance

- 9.3.4 “*Regional Planning Guidance For The South East*” (RPG9) emphasises the vital role of South East England in the development of the UK economy as a whole. It provides a framework for the future development of the South East. This guidance embodies a number of objectives that should be pursued concurrently and requires an appropriate balance to be struck. Planning policies should be directed towards enhancing economic performance; sustainable development and environmental improvement; opportunity and choice.
- 9.3.5 The “*Thames Gateway Planning Framework*” (RPG9a) amplifies the policies of RPG9. One of the main principles is the importance of achieving the right mix of development on the major opportunity sites, in order to create sustainable and vibrant communities, where the relationship between homes and places of work, commerce, relaxation and leisure are more sustainable.

Kent Structure Plan 1996

- 9.3.6 Policy S9 of the Kent Structure Plan states:
- “in preparing local plans and considering development proposals, local authorities will have regard to the need for community facilities and services, including education, health and cultural facilities, local shopping facilities, transport infrastructure and public utilities. Provision will be made for the development of further and higher education, including academic and student accommodation. Planning authorities will not normally permit development unless the infrastructure which is directly required to service the development can be made available at the appropriate time.”*
- 9.3.7 This highlights the importance of synchronising development and related community facilities or infrastructure with public and private sector capital investment programmes so that development does not overload infrastructure capacity. It also prevents the waste of scarce resources on infrastructure not warranted by the development strategy.

Good Practice On Planning Obligations

- 9.3.8 The Kent Association of Local Authorities (KALA) has produced a Good Practice Guide on Developer Contributions. This emphasises the importance of

developers building high quality, balanced communities with locally available facilities. The key to this is developers being encouraged to make contributions to community facilities, as set out in Circular 1/97. The Good Practice Guide has been adopted by the council for development control purposes and sets the context for the type and appropriateness of contributions from various developments, detailing the range of facilities relevant to developer contributions.

9.4 Objectives

9.4.1 The following objectives are identified in relation to community service provision in Medway:

- (i) to ensure that a wide range of community services and facilities are available, convenient and readily accessible to the population of Medway; and
- (ii) to build local communities with local facilities of a high quality by ensuring the provision of community services where new development takes place.

9.4.2 The objectives relating to utilities are :

- (i) to ensure that the most efficient use of existing utilities is made and;
- (ii) to ensure that suitable and adequate utilities are in place to meet local demands including the provision of adequate infrastructure where new development takes place.

9.5 Policies and Reasoned Justification

Existing Community Facilities

9.5.1 There is a need to protect existing community facilities, such as community halls, unless it can be demonstrated that exceptional circumstances exist where it would be beneficial to redevelop sites. Proposals that would result in the loss, without replacement, of community facilities should clearly demonstrate that those facilities are no longer needed. Where redevelopment, involving replacement is proposed, the replacement facilities should be of a similar scale and kind, be easily accessible, particularly by public transport, and reduce the need to travel. The accessibility of the proposed replacement will be assessed in terms of pedestrian and cyclist accessibility and the proximity of the proposal to the main road network and public transport routes.

POLICY CF1: COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Development which would result in the loss of existing community facilities will only be permitted where it can

be demonstrated that exceptional circumstances exist such that it would be beneficial to redevelop sites.

Replacement facilities of a similar scale and kind will be sought. They should be easily accessible by the local population by a variety of means of transport, including public transport, cycling and walking.

New Development and Physical Infrastructure

- 9.5.2 New development should be readily served by necessary physical infrastructure. A key tenet is that developments should bear their own costs and not be a charge on the public purse. Adequate infrastructure planning is required in order to avoid the need for retrospective works. Medway Council will seek to secure the provision of necessary infrastructure by the negotiation of planning obligations, where appropriate, in accordance with the principles of Circular 1/97. This is covered by policy S6 in the Strategy Chapter.

New Development and Community Facilities

- 9.5.3 The co-operation of developers in the financing and provision of new capital infrastructure works will be sought for services which are made necessary by new development e.g. education, health or recreation facilities in accordance with policy S6. Policy H1 specifically identifies the need for relevant facilities on allocated housing sites, in order that the costs of provision can be taken into account at an early stage by landowners and developers. The need for facilities generated by other windfall sites, will be assessed at the submission of planning applications subject to the principles of Circular 1/97, the KALA guide and policy S6.
- 9.5.4 New community facilities may also be required within existing developed areas. The type of facility may be anything from a community hall or place of worship to changing rooms at a playing field. Provision of these facilities must be of an appropriate scale, have minimal impact on neighbouring amenity and be accessible by a variety of means of transport.

POLICY CF2: NEW COMMUNITY FACILITIES

New community facilities will be permitted subject to:

- (i) the size and scale of development being appropriate to the site; and***

(ii) the development having no detrimental impact on the countryside, residential amenity, landscape or ecology; and

(iii) accessibility to the local population by a variety of means of transport, including public transport, cycling and walking.

Healthcare Services

9.5.5 The Medway NHS Trust has now centralised acute hospital services at the Medway Maritime Hospital site in Gillingham, which has resulted in the closure of the entire site at All Saints Hospital. These changes may result in some loss of accessibility to acute healthcare services for a proportion of residents in Medway. However, the centralisation in services coincided with the completion of the Medway Towns Northern Relief Road which offers enhanced accessibility to the Gillingham site, both by private vehicles and bus services. Facilities for enhanced pedestrian and cycle access, a resident's parking scheme and localised traffic management all form parts of the redevelopment. Some staff residential units will be displaced from the hospital site and will be replaced in the locality.

9.5.6 The objective of the Thames Gateway Healthcare NHS Trust is to provide a strategic network of Community Hospitals throughout its district. Saint Bartholomew's is to become a Community Hospital. A site was identified at Wainscott for a community hospital in the 1992 local plan. However, the Trust has now stated that this site is no longer required and it has therefore been deleted. In the longer term the Trust has identified the need for a community hospital in Gillingham, but due to financial constraints, no firm proposals are likely to come forward during the period of this plan.

Local Healthcare Facilities

9.5.7 The West Kent Health Authority bases its service provision on the principle of accessibility to a choice of healthcare facilities. It suggests that patients in urban areas should need to travel no more than three miles, and those in rural areas no more than eight miles. There should also be an acceptable distribution of facilities that are accessible by wheelchair. The council has supported these objectives insofar as doctors' surgeries have been provided within major residential schemes and a number of new build surgeries and conversions have been granted planning permission.

9.5.8 However, in Gillingham in particular, there remains an identified need for an upgrading of facilities to meet modern standards. The council endorses the principle of GP surgeries and associated healthcare facilities at three locations to meet this requirement. Two sites, at Castlemaine and at the Sunlight Centre in Gillingham, will also include other community and leisure facilities.

- 9.5.9 A surgery to serve the new Wainscott housing areas is needed and funding will be required to achieve this. The council proposes to seek contributions from the allocated housing developments in that area to this end. A further facility will be provided as part of the neighbourhood centre at St. Mary's Island, Chatham Maritime.

POLICY CF3: SITES FOR LOCAL HEALTHCARE FACILITIES

General practice surgeries and associated health care facilities will be permitted at the following locations, as defined on the proposals map :

- (i) Castlemaine Community Site, Gillingham (in conjunction with other community and leisure facilities);***
- (ii) Builders Yard, Ingram Road, Gillingham;***
- (iii) Sunlight Centre, Richmond Road, Gillingham (in conjunction with community and other facilities);***
- (iv) Wainscott ;***
- (v) St Mary's Island, Chatham Maritime (in conjunction with neighbourhood centre).***

- 9.5.10 The conversion of properties to doctors surgeries and the expansion of existing surgeries to provide a wider range of healthcare services raises important issues. The council supports the objective of local provision of high quality primary healthcare facilities, as this will reduce the need to travel by car and be more convenient for the public (thus a recognised deficiency in provision will be a material consideration in the assessment of such proposals). However, there is a need to balance the need for such proposals with the impact that they have on local amenity (largely due to increased traffic flows and parking). Where proposals are otherwise acceptable on amenity grounds, the requirement to meet the council's adopted Vehicle Parking Standards will be judged on the individual merits of each case, having regard to the proposal's catchment area, convenience of public transport and local (i.e. Ward) car ownership levels.

POLICY CF4: PRIMARY HEALTHCARE FACILITIES

New or improved primary healthcare facilities will be permitted in areas where there is a deficiency in the quality of existing provision, subject to there being no undue loss of amenity to neighbouring residents.

Adequate on-site parking will be required in accordance with policies T13 and T15, unless it can be demonstrated that circumstances exist to justify a reduction in this standard.

Social Services: Nursing and Special Care

- 9.5.11 The council has granted planning permission for a number of new and expanded residential care homes and nursing homes in recent years. Analysis of demographic changes indicates continuing significant growth in the over-75 and over-85 age groups, with a corresponding likelihood that demand for residential care homes and nursing homes will increase. Community Care Plans indicate service shortfalls for these facilities.
- 9.5.12 The council's Social Services Directorate considers that local needs should be met by local facilities. These should cater for people in the locality with which they are familiar. Thus, premises should be small scale and located and designed to respect the amenities of future residents. Non nursing care or special care residential homes will be considered against policy H8 of the Housing chapter.

POLICY CF5: NURSING AND SPECIAL CARE

Accommodation providing nursing or special care to meet needs arising in local neighbourhoods will be permitted, subject to there being no undue loss of amenity to neighbouring residents. Proposals should be of a size, design and location that will provide a satisfactory environment for future residents.

Social Services: Childcare Facilities

- 9.5.13 There is a range of available childcare facilities including creches, day nurseries, playgroups and childminding carried out within residential properties. They

provide a useful community service, particularly for working and/or single parents. Nationally it is becoming recognised that children who have good quality pre-school experience, make more significant progress in formal education. Local research indicates that in certain parts of Medway, in particular central Chatham, there is an under-provision of affordable pre-school facilities, such as play schools, especially for children with special needs.

- 9.5.14 Generally, childcare facilities can be provided in non-residential institutions (such as church halls and public halls) without planning permission. Childminding may be carried out in residential properties provided that the vehicular traffic, noise, activity and disturbance do not materially alter the character of the property. Where planning permission is required for childminding, the applications will be considered against the policy relating to businesses in residential areas (policy ED10).

Education: Schools

- 9.5.15 Many Medway schools are currently operating at, or near, capacity. The additional housing proposed in the plan will add to that pressure and it may be necessary to either provide new primary schools or expand existing ones. Several sites are reserved to meet the anticipated demand for new primary school facilities:

- (i) The existing schools in North Rochester are close to, or at, capacity. New housing development, principally on the Riverside, will create further demand for places. To cater for this, sites have been identified for new primary schools at the Esplanade and within the Rochester Riverside Action Area (policy S7). Housing development on the Riverside will be expected to contribute towards the new facilities in accordance with policy S7.
- (ii) If a need can be demonstrated for a new primary school to the south of Rochester, development will exceptionally be considered on a playing field site to the south of the Esplanade/ Shorts Way. However, it will be necessary to show, by reference to a comparative exercise that the site is the most suitable for a school, taking into account all relevant factors including the loss of the existing recreational facility. In the meantime, the site will be protected by policy L3.
- (iii) Existing schools in the Frindsbury/Wainscott area have limited capacity. There is substantial new housing development proposed for this locality. Two initiatives are proposed to ensure satisfactory primary school provision is made in this part of the conurbation. A site on the existing Temple School site is allocated for a new one-form entry primary school, which is close to the new housing area. Additionally, it may be necessary to enlarge Wainscott Primary School to two-form entry. This will mean the loss of part of the playing field, which will be replaced by additional land to the south, which is allocated for this purpose.

- (iv) Substantial housing development is proposed at Bells Lane Hoo. As a consequence it may be necessary to extend Hoo St. Werburgh Primary School to accommodate the possible demand for places.
- (v) The development of the All Saints Hospital site (policy H1, ME 371) will put pressure on schools in the Luton area, some of which are nearing capacity and cannot be easily extended. The council as Education Authority is currently investigating the potential of the Medway Community College site to accommodate a new primary school.
- (vi) A site at Grange Farm, Gillingham will be reserved to assist with meeting the demand from the housing built on site GL178.
- (vii) A further site for a primary school at Hillyfields, Gillingham, is intended to meet primary education needs in the longer term in the North Gillingham area. It is on land already in the council's ownership.
- (viii) Finally, a site is allocated for a two-form entry primary school within the proposed Neighbourhood Centre at St Mary's Island, Chatham Maritime (see policies S8 and R8). This will meet the needs of this new residential community.

9.5.16 The Council supports the proposed allocations for schools in the 2000 Maidstone Borough-Wide local plan at Walderslade which, because of the catchment areas, will assist in meeting existing demand for school places in the Walderslade area.

9.5.17 Secondary school roles will be near capacity for the next two years, serving the existing population. Some capacity will then become available but in order to meet the additional demand for secondary school places generated by the housing proposals in the local plan, a number of schools may need to be expanded. The identification of those schools will be the subject of further investigation. No new secondary schools are proposed in the local plan.

9.5.18 In accordance with policy S2 the council will assess the effect of new residential development on educational provision. Where justified by the scale of the proposal, contributions will be sought towards new or improved facilities. The council may choose to seek provision of shared or dual-purpose facilities (such as sports halls or libraries) when negotiating educational provision, to enable use by the general public as well as by pupils. It is acknowledged that many School Managers prefer sole use sites for security and insurance purposes, and their views on the potential for dual-use will be sought at an early stage.

POLICY CF6: PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Land at the following locations, as defined on the proposals map, is allocated for new primary school

provision. Development that would prejudice the implementation of these proposals will not be permitted:

- (i) Rochester Riverside Action Area;***
- (ii) Grange Farm, Gillingham;***
- (iii) Hillyfields, Gillingham;***
- (iv) St. Mary's Island, Chatham Maritime.***

Land will be safeguarded within the existing grounds of the following sites for the development of primary schools:

- (i) Temple School;***
- (ii) Medway Community College.***
- (iii) Gillingham Community College/Woodlands Primary School***

In order to provide for additional facilities a number of schools may be expanded, including:

- (iv) Wainscott Primary School;***
- (v) Hoo St. Werburgh Primary School.***

Further, Higher and Adult Education

9.5.19 The council supports the expansion of Further Education facilities locally in recognition of the advantages of a skilled and well educated workforce and the unique business opportunities that will arise from the close association of core research and academic activities. The council will strongly encourage the expansion of Further Education as one of its key corporate aims. The existing Greenwich University campus at Chatham Maritime offers opportunities for expansion, whilst the nearby Historic Dockyard may also offer opportunities. Further education is a major people attractor, producing substantial levels of traffic. It is important therefore, for it to be accessible and to accord with the sequential tests of PPGs 6 and 13. Therefore major Further or Higher Educational centres should be provided in readily accessible locations such as the town centres and preferably related to Chatham as Medway's "city" centre.

9.5.20 The council's own Adult Education Service provides a wide range of services to the community, helping those with learning difficulties, those returning to work and many other client groups. Services are provided from a network of centres across Medway, including dedicated sites and others affiliated to local schools.

The council's Library Service has, as one of its core objectives, the creation of a framework for life-long learning. This comprises support to formal schooling, further education and higher education, together with provision for access by individuals to knowledge for self-development, scholarship or increased skills.

POLICY CF7: FURTHER, HIGHER AND ADULT EDUCATION

Further, Higher and Adult Education facilities will be permitted on appropriate sites in Chatham town centre or other town centres which are accessible by a variety of means, including public transport, cycling and walking.

Expansion of the existing campuses at Chatham Maritime and Chatham Historic Dockyard will be permitted.

Cemeteries

- 9.5.21 There is a need for further provision of land for cemetery use in the Gillingham area. A site has therefore been reserved, adjacent to the existing cemetery at Woodlands Road, Gillingham.

POLICY CF8: CEMETERY EXTENSION

Land at Cornwallis Avenue, Gillingham, as defined on the proposals map, is allocated for an extension to the existing cemetery.

Libraries

- 9.5.22 Most people in the Medway area now have reasonable access to a library service and these are generally well used. The central library in Chatham is poorly located in relation to the centre, and is housed in inferior quality buildings that the council is committed to replacing as a high priority. The proposed redevelopment of the library should release land for open space and for a mixed use development which could include residential, retail, commercial and leisure uses. A replacement site for the library facility is currently being sought. Further decisions in relation to other libraries, e.g. Rochester, may be necessary when the site, size and timescale have been determined for a replacement central library and resource centre in Chatham.

- 9.5.23 The substantial housing development proposed within the plan may require consideration of expansion of existing library facilities, to meet community needs, perhaps co-located with other new community facilities.

Electricity

- 9.5.24 The Kent Waste local plan identifies two sites with potential for waste to energy plants in Halling and at Kingsnorth. An application for the latter site was submitted to Kent County Council in late 1996, but was subsequently withdrawn.
- 9.5.25 The council would be concerned about proposals for further energy plants in the local plan area for a number of reasons. There are already four power stations with a fifth in prospect. This represents a significant concentration. There are also concerns about the possible effect on the image of the area caused by such uses and the effects of cumulative air pollution. This accords with the Thames Gateway Planning Framework (RPG9a) which advocates the need to enhance the environmental image of the area. Power stations often require large areas of land but generate very low levels of employment.
- 9.5.26 If Medway is to play its full, proper role in Thames Gateway, it needs to reserve its employment land stock for employment intensive uses. For these reasons, the council considers it inappropriate to permit further energy plants except in very exceptional circumstances where it can be demonstrated that a clear and specific local need exists.

POLICY CF9: POWER STATIONS

Further power stations will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that a clear and specific local need exists.

- 9.5.27 The visual impact of electricity pylons and overhead lines can be significant, both when individual lines cross areas of landscape value and when a profusion of lines create a visually unattractive clutter. Wherever possible the routing of overhead lines should avoid residential areas for general amenity reasons. The council will take into account the potential loss of amenity of prospective occupiers when considering proposals for new residential developments in the vicinity of existing high voltage overhead power lines. The council recognises that often the potential loss of amenity from new overhead lines to existing residents can be avoided by careful line routing. In view of substantial economic, technical and practical difficulties between the under-grounding of low and high (132kV and above) voltage power lines the council will only seek the under-grounding of high voltage power lines in exceptional circumstances.

POLICY CF10: OVERHEAD SUPPLY LINES

The council will seek the subterranean provision of low voltage electricity power lines and the removal of redundant overhead equipment throughout Medway.

Only in exceptional circumstances will the council seek the undergrounding of high voltage (132kV and above) overhead lines. Usually careful line routing will be used to protect the character of AONBs. Special Landscape Areas, Nature Reserves, Ramsar Sites, valued local landscapes and the amenity of occupiers of existing and designated residential areas.

Renewable Energy

- 9.5.28 The council supports the principle of renewable energy schemes. A stimulus for commercial exploitation of renewable energy schemes is the subsidy provided by the Non Fossil Fuels Obligation. The Department of Trade and Industry and Seaboard plc carried out a joint study into the potential of renewable energy in the South East, which was published in 1996. It contains no site specific proposals that require consideration in this local plan.
- 9.5.29 One of the main sustainable advantages of using renewable energy is its contribution to limiting emissions of greenhouse gases. Some renewable energy sources (eg wind, solar) produce no CO₂ or gaseous emissions. Another benefit of renewable energy is the combustion of methane gas from landfill waste to create energy.
- 9.5.30 There are often considerable environmental constraints on renewable energy schemes that will need to be taken into account. There may be a detrimental visual amenity impact from apparatus and grid connections in areas of landscape importance. Many types of renewable energy schemes may mean significant problems of traffic generation that would need to be adequately addressed. There may be a detrimental impact on amenity in terms of nature conservation, particularly in the RAMSAR sites.
- 9.5.31 Locational constraints can arise since, in many cases, the resource can only be harnessed where it occurs. For example, there is scope to generate heat and electricity from the bacterial digestion of sewage sludge at Motney Hill wastewater treatment works, which could make the site self sufficient in energy.

POLICY CF11: RENEWABLE ENERGY

Renewable energy schemes for the generation and consumption of electricity will be permitted when the location, scale and design of the apparatus and associated infrastructure are not detrimental to nature conservation or landscape concerns and present no significant loss of residential or countryside amenity.

Water Supply

- 9.5.32 The council will consult the water supply companies and the Environment Agency to ensure the availability of water resources for new development which is not allocated in this plan. New development should not negate efforts to secure the conservation of water resources by, for example, the creation of large impermeable areas or the rationalisation of drainage systems which can reduce the effective replenishment of water resources. Damage to water resources may occur due to physical disturbance of aquifers and groundwater flows through quarrying, road construction, new mineral workings, infill of old mineral workings etc or through contamination by waste disposal on land, industrial processes, and disturbance of existing contaminated land.
- 9.5.33 Development proposals must ensure that adequate measures are undertaken to protect surface and groundwater resources. The council will consult the Environment Agency on development that has drainage implications within the Aquifer Protection Zone 1 Areas. Proposals should take into account the policy statements in the Environment Agency's 'Policy and Practice for the Protection of Groundwater'.

POLICY CF12: WATER SUPPLY

Development will not be permitted where:

- (i) it would have a detrimental effect on the quality or yield of water supply; or*
- (ii) it would prevent or reduce replenishment of groundwater aquifers; or,*
- (iii) it would have an adverse impact on the flora, fauna (including fisheries interests) and amenity of water courses and other habitats whose nature*

conservation value is dependent on maintaining water levels;

(iv) it would represent an unacceptable risk to the quality of groundwater resource, unless appropriate measures are taken to adequately protect those resources.

Land Drainage

- 9.5.34 There are large areas within Medway which are low lying and may be susceptible to a 1000 year surge tide. In the long term, defensive barriers and walls may need to be raised to cope with rising sea levels. Low-lying areas may be at risk of tidal flooding should the sea defences, where they exist, be breached or overtopped. Developers need to take this into account by not locating habitable rooms at ground floor level. In some cases, the risk of tidal flooding may rule out development or require the raising of ground levels or other special measures to overcome the problem, ideally limiting the depth of flooding to no more than 1.2 metres (approximately 4 feet).
- 9.5.35 Broadly speaking, the Council is assured that the current land drainage network is capable of meeting the scale of additional demand from future development. Sustainable urban drainage systems will be encouraged where these are appropriate to the development being proposed, in line with the Kent Design Guide and CIRIA report 555. Areas susceptible to floodrisk include Halling and Cuxton Marshes, the Hogmarsh Valley, Rochester and Strood riverside and the Riverside area of Gillingham.
- 9.5.36 The Environment Agency generally advises that development, including the intensification of development, should be resisted in identified flood plains or areas at unacceptable risk from flooding. Where it is decided that nonetheless, such development should be permitted, the council will take account of advice from the Environment Agency. Such advice will encompass whether to attach conditions to secure flood protection and/or mitigation measures (including the setting of particular slab levels for buildings and measures to restore floodplain or provide adequate water storage as part of the development). Within the built-up area of Medway, flood defences already exist but may in certain cases have to be strengthened.
- 9.5.37 New development or redevelopment can increase the rate and volume of surface water runoff, potentially exceeding the capacity of watercourses. Development that could increase the risk of flooding must include appropriate surface water runoff attenuation or mitigation measures. This is in accordance with policy NR5 of the adopted Kent Structure Plan. All residential allocations proposed in this plan have been assessed as acceptable in flood risk terms, but appropriate mitigation measures will be required in certain instances. The Environment Agency will be consulted in all such cases.

POLICY CF13: TIDAL FLOOD RISK AREAS

Development will not be permitted within a tidal flood risk area if:-

- (i) it harms the integrity of the flood defences; or***
- (ii) it fails to provide for a means of escape for people in the event of a flood; or***
- (iii) it introduces residential living and sleeping accommodation below the estimated flood level; or***
- (iv) it introduces mobile homes or caravans; or***
- (v) it introduces new holiday accommodation between October and May.***

Sewerage and Wastewater Treatment

- 9.5.38 Development that would overload the sewerage system may require off site sewers to be requisitioned. All sewerage systems should be connected to the main drainage system and constructed to adoptable standards. Southern Water Plc anticipates that development at the urban riverside can be provided for in sewers already existing or proposed, but elsewhere connections to sewers may be needed. The council will expect developers to negotiate with Southern Water Plc to resolve any sewerage and waste water issues.

Telecommunications

- 9.5.39 Many aspects of telecommunication development are exempt from planning controls. Those developments that do require planning permission, or are subject to prior notification regulations, will need to avoid environmental impact. The operators' technical requirements will need to be balanced against the considerations that the council, as Local Planning Authority, would usually apply. Telecommunications operators are, therefore, strongly encouraged to liaise with the council at an early stage to ensure that proposals can be accommodated and that constraints are identified.
- 9.5.40 Telecommunications development can be very intrusive and can impinge on open landscape. Consequently it is important that location and siting is carefully controlled. Aerials should be attached to existing buildings or structures where possible. In order to avoid an unnecessary proliferation of telecommunications

towers, the sharing of apparatus or the attachment of antennae to existing structures will be encouraged, where this would minimise harm to visual amenity. The removal of obsolete telecommunications equipment will be sought and the siting of antennae on buildings or structures should minimise their visual impact.

9.5.41 Large physical structures can cause disruption and interference to telecommunication networks. The council will need to be satisfied that the potential for interference has been taken into account in the siting and design of such developments. Where the potential for interference is expected, co-ordination with the Radio-communications Agency will be required and their advice taken into account.

9.5.42 In assessing designs for new high masts, the council will seek a mast capable of allowing the sharing of space with other operators at critical sites (where there are aesthetic or environmental implications). Operators will be expected to show sound technical, legal or environmental reasons of an exceptional nature why this cannot be done if they wish to erect high masts for their sole use.

POLICY CF14: TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Telecommunications development will be permitted subject to:

- (i) the applicant for a new mast showing evidence that sharing existing masts and sites, buildings and structures have been explored and found to be unsuitable due to legal, technical or environmental reasons; and***
- (ii) the site being the best available in environmental terms within technical and legal constraints and mitigation measures have been taken to minimise visual intrusion/environmental impact and amenity considerations; and***
- (iii) new high masts being of a design that allows the sharing of aerial space with other operators at critical sites.***

9.6 Environmental Appraisal

- 9.6.1 In accordance with the guidance contained at paragraphs. 4.16 to 4.22 of PPG 12 “Development Plans” the policies in this chapter have been subject to environmental appraisal. The policies broadly support sustainable principles. They encourage the provision of, and access to, community facilities, for instance by insisting that new school facilities must be sustainable in location and accessible from public transport routes. These policies also protect against detrimental impact upon landscape and the loss of visual amenity.
- 9.6.2 Overall, the policies have little impact in terms of global sustainability and natural resources, but where utilities or services development may have a detrimental impact, habitats and species are protected and safeguarded against contamination.

9.7 Monitoring Measures

- 9.7.1 The performance of the local plan in meeting its aims with regard to the provision of community facilities will be judged against the following criteria:
- (i) The number and extent of services and utilities provided in/by new development schemes;
 - (ii) The implementation of the GP Surgery proposals at Gillingham, Wainscott and St Mary’s Island;
 - (iii) The number and extent of new school developments undertaken by the service providers on sites allocated or safeguarded for the purpose;
 - (iv) The development of additional Further Education facilities;
 - (v) The length of electricity supply lines placed underground;
 - (vi) The number of, and visual intrusion of, telecommunications masts permitted.

APPENDIX 1

SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENTS AT APRIL 1999

Monument Parish No	Title Grid	Ref:
Gillingham 194	Fort Darnet	TQ 806 708
Gillingham 201	Brompton Lines (See also Rochester upon Medway)	TQ 760 683
Gillingham 228	Chatham Dockyard, bell mast (in temporary storage, due to be relocated to St Mary's Island)	
Gillingham 233	Chatham Dockyard, the Dock Pumping Station (See also Chatham)	TQ 762 703
Chatham 206	Chatham Dockyard, Main Gate	TQ 761 691
Chatham 207	Chatham Dockyard, bell mast West of Main Gate	TQ 761 691
Chatham 208	Chatham Dockyard, Police Offices	TQ 761 691
Chatham 209	Chatham Dockyard, the Ropery	TQ 761 691
Chatham 210	Chatham Dockyard, engine or boiler house	TQ 760 693
Chatham 211	Chatham Dockyard, Ropery Offices	TQ 760 693
Chatham 212	Chatham Dockyard, Sail Loft	TQ 760 692
Chatham 213	Chatham Dockyard, Captain of Dockyard's house	TQ 760 692
Chatham 214	Chatham Dockyard, Officers' Terrace and gardens to east	TQ 760 692
Chatham 215	Chatham Dockyard, stables adjacent to terrace	TQ 760 692
Chatham 216	Chatham Dockyard, Medway House	TQ 758 690
Chatham 217	Chatham Dockyard, Assistant Queen's Harbour Master's Office	TQ 757 691
Chatham 218	Chatham Dockyard, Queen's Stairs	TQ 757 691
Chatham 219	Chatham Dockyard, the Main Offices	TQ 759 691
Chatham 220	Chatham Dockyard, Naval Store Department	TQ 759 692
Chatham 221	Chatham Dockyard, Chain Cable Shed	TQ 757 687

Chatham 222	Chatham Dockyard, No.3 Boat Store	TQ 757 694
Chatham 223	Chatham Dockyard, No.61 Boat Store, Nos.4 & 5 Slips	TQ 759 695
Chatham 224	Chatham Dockyard, covered slip to N of No.5 Slip	TQ 760 695
Chatham 225	Chatham Dockyard, the Mast Pond	TQ 760 695
Chatham 226	Chatham Dockyard, the Brunel Sawmills	TQ 761 693
Chatham 227	Chatham Dockyard, the Expense Accounts Dept, Wages Division	TQ 762 694
Chatham 229	Chatham Dockyard, the Lower Boat Store	TQ 762 696
Chatham 230	Chatham Dockyard, the Iron Store	TQ 761 693
Chatham 231	Chatham Dockyard, the Wheelwrights Shop	TQ 760 694
Chatham 232	Chatham Dockyard, former working Mast House and Mould Loft	TQ 760 694
Chatham 233	Chatham Dockyard, the Dock Pumping Station (see also Gillingham)	TQ 762 703
Chatham 234	Chatham Dockyard, the Joiners' Stores	TQ 760 692
Chatham 235	Chatham Dockyard, MCD Joiners' Shop	TQ 760 692
Chatham 236	Chatham Dockyard, the Cashiers' Office	TQ 759 690
Chatham 237	Chatham Dockyard, Officer's Reading room and Admiral's Conference room	TQ 759 660
Chatham 238	Chatham Dockyard, two stables SE of Sail Loft	TQ 759 689
Chatham 239	Chatham Dockyard, two "Vanbrugh" type houses	TQ 760 690 TQ 760 691
Chatham 240	Chatham Dockyard, the Dockyard Wall	TQ 7589 6890 TQ 7596 6898 TQ 7596 6897 TQ 7585 6879
Chatham 241	Chatham Dockyard, the Painters Shop and Adjacent Store	TQ 758 687
Chatham 242	Chatham Dockyard, Rigging House No 1 and Storehouse No 2	TQ 758 689
Chatham 243	Chatham Dockyard, Storehouse No 3	TQ 757 688
Chatham 244	Chatham Dockyard, Tarred Yarn Store	TQ 758 688
Chatham 248	Hatchelling House, Chatham Dockyard	TQ 762 691
Chatham 252	Fort Luton	TQ 763 660

Chatham 253	Fort Horsted	TQ 751 650
Chatham 283	Chatham Dockyard, South Pumping Station	TQ 758 692
Chatham 300	Chatham Dockyard, No 1 Smithery	TQ 760 695
Chatham 321	Brook Low Level Pumping Station	TQ 759 678
Chatham 385	Site of 17 th Century Dockyard	TQ 758 691
Chatham 386	Former Guardhouse	TQ 757 686
Chatham 387	Chatham Dockyard, Dockyard Church	TQ 758 689
Chatham 388	Chatham Dockyard, Customs House	TQ 758 690
Chatham 389	Chatham Dockyard, garden wall of Medway House	TQ 758 690
Chatham 390	Chatham Dockyard, Dry Docks Nos. 2,3 & 4	TQ 761 694
Chatham 391	Chatham Dockyard, site of South Mast Pond	TQ 762 695
Cliffe 269	Cliffe Fort	TQ 707 767
Cooling 80	Cooling Castle	TQ 755 760
Cuxton 199	Palaeolithic site	TQ 711 665
Frindsbury 171	Upnor Castle Extra	TQ 758 705
Halling 328	Site of Archbishops Palace, East of St John's Church	TQ 705 639
Hoo 193	Hoo Fort St Werburgh	TQ 797 703
Hoo 195	Cockham Wood Fort St Werburgh	TQ 776 713
Isle of Grain 297	Artillery Tower (known as Grain Tower)	TQ 898 761
Rochester upon Medway 3	Rochester Castle	TQ 741 686
Rochester upon Medway 32	Bridge Chapel	TQ 740 689
Rochester upon Medway 90	Temple Manor	TQ 733 684
Rochester upon Medway 154	Rochester City Wall	TQ 740 682 TQ 743 683 TQ 744 686 TQ 745 683
Rochester upon Medway 201	Brompton Lines (See also Gillingham)	TQ 760 683
Rochester upon Medway 202	Fort Clarence	TQ 739 677
Rochester upon Medway 254	Fort Borstal	TQ 733 665
Rochester upon Medway 294	Remains of Rochester Priory Cloister	TQ 742 684

Rochester upon Medway 332 Open areas within Roman, Saxon
and Medieval town

TQ 7424 6857
TQ 7419 6846
TQ 7432 6852
TQ 7436 6837
TQ 7439 6835
TQ 7430 6832

APPENDIX 2

HOUSING SITES WITH OUTSTANDING PLANNING PERMISSION AT 31ST MARCH 2000

Site Ref	Site Address	Dwellings Outstanding
GL 012B	Area O, Lambsfrith Grove South, Hempstead	14
GL 033	Land off Birling Avenue, Gillingham	32
GL 073	Land at St Mary's Island, Chatham Maritime	1236
GL 082	Brompton School site, Brompton	42
GL 138	Melody Close, Grain Road, Wigmore	5
GL 139	R/o Sunnymead Avenue, Gillingham	59
GL 146	92-100 Trafalgar Street, Gillingham	14
GL 174A	Former Rainham Southern Relief Road Land	9
GL 175	Waterside Lane, Gillingham	86
GL 177	Land r/o 94 Bloors Lane, Rainham	13
GL 185	Hothfield Motors, Hothfield Road, Rainham	7
GL 186	Eastcourt Methodist Church, Goudhurst Road, Gillingham	16
GL 187	Land r/o Holy Trinity Church Hall, Twydall Lane, Gillingham	7
GL 190	40 Napier Road, Gillingham	12
MC 003	108-118 & 108a-118a High Street ,Rochester	8
MC 008	277 High Street, Rochester	14
MC 009	Old George Public House, Main Road, Chattenden	10
MC 010	St John's Field, Pattens Lane, Chatham	20
MC 012	382-386 High Street, Rochester	6
MC 013	2 Union Street, Chatham	6
ME 186	Phase 2 ,Historic Dockyard, Dock Road, Chatham	56
ME 189	153-185 Princes Avenue, Chatham	34
ME 219	Former Shorts factory, The Esplanade, Rochester	6
ME 219	Former Shorts factory, The Esplanade, Rochester	64
ME 222	90 Walderslade Road, Chatham	7
ME 237	St Paul's Church, 137a New Road, Chatham	44
ME 253	Former Lucas site, The Esplanade, Rochester	106
ME 254	Strood Riverside North, Strood	91
ME 257B	Land off Christmas Lane, High Halstow	46
ME 258	Quickkrill's Farm, Cliffe	15
ME 259A	East of Stonehorse Lane, Wainscott	70
ME 259B	East of Lower Rochester Road, Wainscott	100
ME 259C	North of Hollywood Lane, Wainscott	23
ME 259E	West of Hollywood Lane, Wainscott	44

ME 262	31-37 Tennyson Avenue, Cliffe Woods	6
ME 286	Whitehouse Farm, Grain	6
ME 294	343-345 High Street, Rochester	6
ME 302	Adj Elaine Court Elaine Avenue, Strood	6
ME 328	Land at Longhill Avenue, Gillingham	59
ME 337A	The Dance House, Tobruk Way, Chatham	11
ME 358	Land r/o Victoria Cross Public House, Fanconi Road Lordswood	8
ME 362	Land at Ernest Road, Chatham	7
ME 394	103-107 Glencoe Road, Chatham	3
ME 397	Courtsole Farm, Pond Hill, Cliffe	5
ME 399	Land r/o 40-46 Robin Hood Lane, Walderslade	36
ME 401	The "Victorian" Public House, Victoria Street, Rochester	15
ME 402	Lock-up garage site off Burma Way & Tobruk Way, Chatham	7
ME 405	Former Spembly Car Park, New Cut, Chatham	16
ME 411	12 Star Hill, Rochester	5
ME 412	Former Spembly works, New Road Avenue, Chatham	27
ME 414	114 Borstal Road, Rochester	12
ME 415	226-232 Chatham Hill Chatham	8
ME 420	2 - 8 Wyles Avenue, Gillingham	8
ME 421	Foundry Wharf, r/o 327 - 335 High Street, Rochester	12

TOTAL

2585

APPENDIX 3

OPEN SPACE

The provision of open space within new residential development should be equitable and effective at keeping pace with development and should apply to all new residential development of one dwelling or more. All residential development (except for some exceptions set out in policy L4) should satisfy their open space needs at a standard of 2.4 hectares per 1000 population. A single house generates a per capita need for formal/children's open space in the same way as larger development. The first priority is that as much open space as possible of the required open space is provided on site. In cases where any or all of the required open space is not to be provided on site then contributions to the improvement of open space provision will be required based on the number of persons and the actual cost of laying out those facilities. The Council will ensure that commuted sums for children's play areas are used within 1000m of the funding development.

Population thresholds have been introduced to Policy L4 to determine the open space requirements for a development. These have been included to provide a sensible basis for calculating the open space requirement on a site by site basis.

The National Planning Field Association (NPFA) standard for formal open space provision is based on population (2.4 hectares per 1000 population). In the past, the average household size was used, approximately 2.6 persons per household within the Medway Towns. A problem with using one occupancy rate for all types of housing is that it fails to distinguish between the sizes of dwellings so that the requirement for a 20 dwelling scheme of 1 bedroom flats would equal that of a 20 dwelling scheme of 5 bedroom houses. It is therefore appropriate to use a standard based on the number of people likely to occupy each dwelling based on the actual size of proposed dwellings rather than a flat rate based solely on the number of proposed dwellings. Based upon a survey of new dwellings in Medway carried out in 1998 by Colliers Erdman Lewis, an average household size will be applied in accordance with the number of bedrooms in each dwelling in a development.

1 bedroom dwelling	= 1.33 persons
2 bedroom dwelling	= 2.44 persons
3+ bedroom dwelling	= 3.59 persons

In the case of planning applications where the number and type of dwellings is unknown (for instance outline planning applications) the requirement for the provision of open space would have to be reserved through a legal agreement so it can be resolved when a detailed application is made.

PLAY AREAS AND NUMBER OF PIECES OF EQUIPMENT

The play areas listed below are those within the ownership of Medway Council. Within the Medway Towns area there are additional play areas often owned by Parish Councils, however, there is no data relating to the number of pieces of equipment within these play areas.

	PLAY AREAS	NO. OF PIECES OF EQUIPMENT
1	Brompton	5
2	Mill Road	9
3	James Street	3
4	Otway Street	Closed for refurbishment
5	Hamilton Road	5
6	Hillyfields	8
7	The Strand	11
8	Fort Apache	8
9	Grange Road	4
10	Balmoral Gardens	6
11	Hazelmere Drive	4
12	Braithwaite Court	1
13	Coplins, Kick about	4
14	Keswick Court	2
15	Gillingham Park	8
16	Rookery Fields	10
17	Teynham Green	6
18	Sanctuary Road	8
19	Goudhurst Road	4
20	Beechings Way	8
21	Vinall Park	13
22	Woodchurch	5
23	Cozenton Park	7
24	Holding Street	3
25	Rainham Rec.	4
26	Bankyfields	4
27	Winchester Way	3
28	Cherry Trees	5
29	108 Maidstone Road	7
30	Platters Park	7
31	Ryetop	6
32	Hempstead (Juniors)	10
33	Hempstead (Infants)	9
34	Edwards Close	5
35	Wigmore Park	4

36	Parkwood Green (8-14 years)	5
37	Parkwood Green (under 8 years)	7
38	Kingsfrith	5
39	Bayswater Drive	5
40	Whitegate Wood	5
41	Darland View	7
42	Craigie Walk	6
43	Riverside Country Park	9
44	The Old Orchard	3
45	Moor Park Close	2
46	Lyll Way	4
47	Town Hall Gardens	2
48	Carpeaux Close	2
49	Crestway	4
50	Luton Rec	5
51	Capstone Park (Upper)	13
52	Capstone Park (Lower)	3
53	Lordswood Sports Centre	4
54	Ballens Road	6
55	Moonstone Drive	2
56	Iona Close	5
57	Whimbrel Walk	5
58	Princes Park	4
59	Hook Meadow	5
60	Snodhurst Bottom	4
61	Maidstone Road Sports Ground	7
62	Chalk Pit Hill	6
63	Vale Drive	5
64	Friston Way	5
65	Hills Terrace	3
66	Perry Street	4
67	Victoria Gardens	3
68	Jacksons Rec	11
69	Copperfield Open Space	6
70	Priestfields Rec	6
71	Borstal Rec	3
72	Esplanade	9
73	Low Meadow	5
74	Cuxton Road	4
75	Rushdean Road	6
76	Lilac Road	6
77	Knights Place Rec	8
78	Darnley Road	4

79	Church Green	6
80	Cliffe Road	5
81	Hancock Close	3
82	Broomhill Park	13
83	Cliffe Woods	4

PLAY AREAS IN MEDWAY – AUDIT, DECEMBER 1998

Ward No.	Play Area No.	Ward Name	Sq M of Equipd. P.A.	Pop	N.P.F.A. Req'ments @ .250 per 1000	Shortfall (Ha)
CHATHAM CENTRAL						
	1	67 Victoria Gardens	1220			
	1	62 Chalkpit Hill	500			
	1	65 Hills Terrace	209			
	1	61 Maidstone Road	850			
	1	66 Perry Street	625			
	Total		0.34 ha	13285	3.32	2.99
CUXTON & HALLING						
	2	73 Low Meadow	1690			
	2	96 Bush Road	500			
	2	98 Browndens Road	500			
	2	97 Vicarage Road	500			
	Total		0.32 ha	5161	1.29	0.97
GILLINGHAM NORTH						
	3	9 Grange Road	323			
	3	8 Fort Apache	357			
	3	7 The Strand	4015			
	3	6 Hillyfields	3615			
	3	5 Hamilton Road	2605			
	3	4 Otway Street	367			
	3	3 James Street	218			
	3	2 Mill Road	10,099			
	3	14 Keswick Court	302			
	3	13 Coplins Kick About	2805			
	3	12 Braithwaite Court	253			
	3	11 Hazlemere Drive	206			
	Total		2.52 ha	13608	3.40	0.88
GILLINGHAM SOUTH						
	4	16 Rookery Fields	1552			
	4	10 Balmoral Gardens	437			
	Total		0.20 ha	14085	3.52	3.32
HEMPSTEAD & WIGMORE						
	5	40 Whitegate Wood	428			
	5	38 Kings Frith	1712			
	5	32 Hempstead (Juniors)	1102			
	5	Lamplighters Close	150			
	Total		0.34 ha	8650	2.16	1.82
LORDSWOOD & CAPSTONE						
	6	57 Whimbrel Walk	450			
	6	56 Iona Close	2275			
	6	54 Ballens Road	720			
	6	53 Lordswood Leisure	512			

6	52	Centre Capstone Park (Lower)	335			
6	51	Capstone Park (Upper)	250			
Total			0.45 ha	10078	2.52	2.07
LUTON & WAYFIELD						
7	50	Luton Rec	389			
7		Luton Millenium	133			
7	49	Crestway	615			
7		Barnfield	625			
Total			0.22 ha	12660	3.17	2.95
PENINSULA						
8	89	Mallard/ Heron Way	500			
8	87	St. Davids Road	800			
8	88	Allhallows Road	500			
8	85	Cooling Road	500			
8	86	High Halstow Rec	500			
8	92	Fourwents Rec	500			
8	93	Pottery Road Rec	800			
8	90	High Street, Grain	500			
8	91	The Street, Upper Stoke	500			
Total			0.51 ha	12473	3.12	2.61
PRINCES PARK						
9	58	Princes Park	405			
Total			0.04 ha	10256	2.56	2.52
RAINHAM CENTRAL						
10	28	Cherry Trees	782			
10	30	Platters Park	650			
10	34	Edwards Close	1398			
10	31	Ryetop	1154			
10	29	108 Maidstone Road	850			
Total			0.48 ha	12778	3.19	2.71
RAINHAM NORTH						
11	25	Rainham Rec	2230			
11	44	The Old Orchard	186			
11	43	Riverside Country Park	4004			
11	24	Holding Street	631			
11	23	Cozenton Park	952			
11	26	Bankyfields	85			
Total			0.81 ha	8752	2.12	1.31
RAINHAM SOUTH						
12	39	Bayswater Drive	1631			
12	46	Lyll Way	253			
12	36	Parkwood Junior	1822			
12	37	Parkwood Infant	931			
12	42	Craigie Walk	1093			
12	45	Moor Park Close	366			
12	27	Winchester Way	460			

<u>Total</u>			0.66 ha	15319	3.83	3.17
RIVER						
13	68	Jackson's Rec	1050			
13	47	Town Hall Gardens	254			
13	1	Brompton	3281			
<u>Total</u>			0.46 ha	4559	1.4	0.94
ROCHESTER EAST						
14	69	Copperfield Open Space	625			
<u>Total</u>			0.06 ha	8102	2.03	1.97
ROCHESTER SOUTH & HORSTED						
15	64	Friston Way	744			
15	63	Vale Drive	835			
<u>Total</u>			0.16 ha	13055	3.26	3.10
ROCHESTER WEST						
16	72	Esplanade	675			
16	70	Priestfield Rec	800			
16	71	Borstal Rec	625			
<u>Total</u>			0.21 ha	8102	2.03	1.82
STROOD NORTH						
17	82	Broomhill Park	676			
17	81	Hancock Green	225			
17	80	Cliffe Road	3712			
17	79	Church Green	563			
17		Canal Road	730			
<u>Total</u>			0.59 ha	12671	3.17	2.58
STROOD RURAL						
18	95	Holly Road Rec	500			
18	94	Elm Avenue/ Hoo Common	500			
18	84	Church Street, Cliffe	800			
18	83	Cliffe Woods	567			
<u>Total</u>			0.24 ha	11857	2.96	2.72
STROOD SOUTH						
19	78	Darnley Road	1635			
19	77	Knights Place Rec	615			
19	76	Lilac Road	900			
19	75	Rushdean Road	1260			
19	74	Cuxton Road	645			
<u>Total</u>			0.50 ha	14118	3.53	3.03
TWYDALL						
20	20	Beechings Way	1829			
20	19	Goudhurst Road	3021			
20	18	Sanctuary Road	255			
20	17	Teynham Green	5302			
20	21	Vinall Park	2204			
20	22	Woodchurch Crescent	1274			

<u>Total</u>			1.39 ha	13039	3.26	1.87
WALDERSLADE						
21	55	Moonstone Drive	237			
21	59	Hoo Meadow	500			
<u>Total</u>			0.07 ha	9069	2.27	2.20
WATLING						
22	15	Gillingham Park	1466			
22	41	Darland View	788			
<u>Total</u>			0.23 ha	9546	2.39	2.16
Overall Total			10.80 ha	241223	60.5 ha	49.71 ha

Appendix 4,

Notifiable Sites

HSE

Reference	Occupier	CD (m)
HL/03/914	Swalegas Ltd, Rochester	100
HL/03/881	Cliffe Storage Ltd, Rochester	250
HD/03/147	B.P. Oil, Isle of Grain	250
HL/03/617	Transco., Isle of Grain	1000
HL/031576	Transco, Rochester	30
HL/03/3215	ALTA Gas Plc, Chatham	100
HL/03/112	Akzo Chemicals Ltd, Gillingham	500
HL/03/875	Transco, Gillingham	300

Pipelines

HSE

Reference	Operator	Pipeline Name	CD(m)
HC/13/920-1	Transco	Shorne/ Gillingham	17
HC/10/157-1	Transco	Shorne AGI/Isle of Grain	196
HC/13/903-1	Transco	Isle of Grain/Deangate Wood	6
HC/13/903-2	Transco	Deangate Wood/Hooley	6
HC/13/905-2	Transco	Gillingham/Murston	17
HC/13/905-1	Transco	Deangate Wood/Gillingham	17
HC/173/10	Energy Power Gp	W of Lower Stoke/Damhead Creek power station	212

APPENDIX 5

SCHEDULES 1, 4, 5 and 6 OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (PRESCRIBED PROCESSES AND SUBSTANCES) REGULATIONS 1991.

SCHEDULE 1

CHAPTER 1 Fuel Production Processes, Combustion Processes (including power generation) and Associated Processes.

Section

- 1.1 Gasification and associated processes
- 1.2 Carbonisation and associated processes
- 1.3 Combustion processes
- 1.4 Petroleum processes

CHAPTER 2 Metal Production and Processing

- 2.1 Iron and steel
- 2.2 Non-ferrous metals
- 2.3 Smelting process

CHAPTER 3 Mineral Industries

- 3.1 Cement and lime manufacture and associated processes
- 3.2 Processes involving asbestos
- 3.3 Other mineral fibres
- 3.4 Other mineral processes
- 3.5 Glass manufacture and production
- 3.6 Ceramic production

CHAPTER 4 The Chemical Industry

- 4.1 Petrochemical processes
- 4.2 The manufacture and use of organic chemicals
- 4.3 Acid process
- 4.4 Processes involving halogens
- 4.5 Inorganic chemical processes
- 4.6 Chemical Fertiliser production
- 4.7 Pesticide production
- 4.8 Pharmaceutical production
- 4.9 The storage of chemicals in bulk

CHAPTER 5 Waste Disposal and Recycling

- 5.1 Incineration
- 5.2 Recovery processes
- 5.3 The production of fuel from waste

CHAPTER 6 Other Industries

- 6.1 Paper and pulp manufacturing processes
- 6.2 Di-isocyanate processes
- 6.3 Tar and bitumen processes
- 6.4 Processes involving uranium
- 6.5 Coating processes and printing
- 6.6 The manufacture of dyestuffs, printing ink and coating materials
- 6.7 Timber processes
- 6.8 Processes involving rubber
- 6.9 The treatment or processing of animal or vegetable matter

Schedule 4

Release into the air: Prescribed Substances

Schedule 5

Release into water: Prescribed Substances

Schedule 6

Release into land: Prescribed Substances

NB. Specific uses are listed in the regulations under every individual section listed above and have been amended by subsequent regulations. Reference should be made to all relevant regulations to identify specific uses which require authorisation.

APPENDIX 6

MEDWAY COUNCIL PARKING STANDARDS (MAY 2001)

Medway's Local Transport Plan 2000-2005 sets the objective to restrain demand for car travel by changes to vehicle parking standards and promotes cycling, walking and public transport as alternative modes. Maximum parking limits for the private car in new development are set for all land-use classes together with minimum cycle parking standard where appropriate.

This approach is fully supported by national, regional and local policies, including the Government's White Paper on the future of transport "A New Deal for Transport", PPG3, PPG13, RPG9 and the Medway Local Plan which contains the following policies that are applicable to parking standards:

- T4: Cycle facilities
- T11: Development funded transport improvement
- T13: Vehicle parking standards
- T15: Parking strategy
- T17: Park and ride
- T22: Provision for people with disabilities

The following parking standards will be subject to review during the life of the Local Plan.

Parking standards for people with a disability

Parking for people with a disability must be additional to maximum private car parking provision. Development proposals should provide adequate parking for disabled motorists, in terms of numbers and design (see Traffic Advice Leaflet 5/95, Parking for Disabled People). A guide to the number of parking spaces for disabled motorists is given in the table below (based on TA 5/95), further details are available in "Reducing Mobility Handicaps" (IHT, London, 1991)

Minimum number of parking spaces for motorists with a disability		
Land use category	Car park size	
	Up to 200 spaces	Over 200 spaces
Business premises – employees and visitors	Individual space for each registered disabled employee plus two spaces or 5% of the max. private car standard whichever is the greater for visitors	Six bays plus 2% of the max. private car standard
Shopping and recreation	Three spaces or 6% of the max. private car standard whichever is greater	Four spaces or 4% of the max. private car standard whichever is greater
Hotels with specially designed rooms	One space for each specially designed room	

Parking standards for new development

The following table details Medway Council's adopted parking standards for new development, including private vehicles, commercial vehicles and cycles. An indication is also given of the threshold for transport assessment.

The parking standards for private cars for land use classes A1, B1, C3, D1 and D2 were adopted in May 2001 as interim parking standards and take account of the guidance in PPG13, PPG3 and RPG9. It is hoped that Kent County Council and the District Councils in Kent will be able to work in partnership with Medway Council to agree common standards across Kent. The remaining vehicle parking standards for private cars and commercial

vehicles are based on Kent County Council adopted standards. Cycle parking standards are taken from the Medway Council's *Strategy to encourage walking and cycling and to assist people with restricted mobility*, which is a supporting document to the council's Local Transport Plan.

Land use category:	Parking standards			
A1, A2, A3	Private car parking spaces	Commercial vehicle parking spaces	Cycle parking spaces	Threshold for transport assessment
Standard type	Maximum permitted	Minimum requirement	Minimum requirement	
A1 retail				
Food retail, including cold food take-away	One per 18m ² GFA	One per 500m ² GFA	One per 250m ² GFA for staff/ customers (Refer to note 6)	1000m ²
Non food retail warehouses	One per 20m ² GFA	One per 500m ² GFA	(Refer to note 8)	
Garden centres	One per 10m ² of area open to public	(Refer to note 1)		(Refer to note 3)
A2 Financial and professional services				
Accountants, betting office, Bank or Building Society, Solicitors, etc.	One per 18m ² GFA plus staff parking (Refer to note 12)	Nil	One per 400m ² GFA for staff (Refer to note 6)	(Refer to note 3)
A3 Food and drink				
Public houses and licensed bars	One per 4m ² GFA, plus one per 8m ² GFA for off-licence	(Refer to note 1)	One per 250m ² GFA for staff and customers	(Refer to note 3)
Restaurants, cafes and banqueting halls	One per 6m ² GFA, plus staff parking (Refer to note 12)		(Refer to note 6)	
Transport cafes	(Refer to note 8)	One per 5m ² GFA	(Refer to note 8)	
Hot food take-aways	Six per unit (Refer to note 4)	Nil		

Land use category:	Parking standards			Threshold for transport assessment
	Private car parking spaces	Commercial vehicle parking spaces	Cycle parking spaces	
B1, B2, B3-B7, B8	Maximum permitted	Minimum requirement	Minimum requirement	
B1 Business				
Offices, research and development of products and processes, industrial processes	One per 30m ² GFA.	(Refer to note 1)	One per 400m ² GFA for staff (Refer to note 6)	2500m ²
B2 General industrial				
Up to 99 m2	Two spaces	(Refer to note 1)	One per 500m ² (Refer to note 6)	(Refer to note 3)
From 100 m2 to 199 m2	Three spaces			
From 200m2	One per 50 m ² GFA (Refer to note 10)			
B3 – B7 (Refer to note 3)				
B8 Storage and distribution				
Storage and distribution	One per 110m ² GFA (Refer to note 10)	One per 1500m ³ GBV	One per 500m ² (Refer to note 6)	(Refer to note 3)
Wholesale trade distribution	One per 35m ² GFA (Refer to note 10)	One per 500m ² GFA		

Land use category:	Parking standards			Threshold for transport assessment
	Private car parking spaces	Commercial vehicle parking spaces	Cycle parking spaces	
C1, C2, C3	Maximum permitted	Minimum requirement	Minimum requirement	
C1 Hotels and hostels				
Residential hostels	One per two occupants + staff parking (Refer to note 12)	Nil	(Refer to note 8)	(Refer to note 3)
Hotels	One per bedroom			

C2 Residential institutions					
Nursing homes with attendant care	One per six residents (for visitors) + staff parking (Refer to note 12)	One space (Refer to note 5)	(Refer to note 8)	(Refer to note 3)	
Hospitals	Two per three beds + four for each consulting room				
Residential schools, colleges or training centres	Visitor/student parking (Refer to note 11) + staff parking (Refer to note 12)	(Refer to note 1)			
C3 Dwelling houses					
Urban areas	Average of 1.5 per dwelling across site (Refer to note 2)	Nil	One per five dwellings (Refer to note 7)	(Refer to note 3)	
Rural areas: One bedroom	One and one third per unit (Refer to note 2)		Nil		
Rural areas: Two or three bedrooms	Two per unit (Refer to note 2)				
Rural areas: Four or more bedrooms	Three per unit (Refer to note 2)				
Sheltered housing	One per unit (Refer to note 2)				(Refer to note 8)

Land use category:	Parking standards			
D1, D2	Private car parking spaces	Commercial vehicle parking spaces	Cycle parking spaces	Threshold for transport assessment
Standard type	Maximum permitted	Minimum requirement	Minimum requirement	
D1 Non-residential institutions				
Places of worship	One per five seats	Nil	(Refer to note 8)	(Refer to note 3)
Schools (non-residential) – Primary and secondary and	Staff parking (Refer to note 12) + 10% casual parking + drop off area (Refer to note 9)			
Schools (non-residential) – Sixth form college	Staff parking (Refer to note 12) + 10% casual parking + one per seven students + drop off area (Refer to note 9)	(Refer to note 1)		
Further and higher education	One per 15 full time students + 1 space per 2 staff			2500m ²
Libraries	One per 60m ² GFA	Nil		(Refer to note 3)
Clinics	Four per consulting/treatment room + staff parking (Refer to note 12)			
Creches/playschools or nurseries – includes day nursery and day centre	One per two staff + one per four children for parents			
Art galleries, museums	(Refer to note 3)		(Refer to note 14)	
D2 Assembly and leisure				
Cinemas, ballrooms, bingo, church halls, community centres	One per five seats	Nil	(Refer to note 8)	1000m ²
Sports facilities	(Refer to note 3)			
Night clubs, social halls	Max. one per 20m ²	Nil		

Land use category:	Parking standards			
Unclassified	Private car parking spaces	Commercial vehicle parking spaces	Cycle parking spaces	Threshold for transport assessment
Standard type	Maximum permitted	Minimum requirement	Minimum requirement	
Vehicle sales	One per 50m ² GFA	(Refer to note 1)	Nil	(Refer to note 3)
Petrol filling stations	One per 20m ² GFA		(Refer to note 8)	
Car servicing and repairs	Four per service bay	Nil	Nil	
Open commercial uses	Staff parking (12)	(Refer to note 3)		
Boating facilities, marina	One per berth			
Touring caravan sites	1.1per unit + staff parking (Refer to note 12)			
Amusement arcades	Staff parking (Refer to note 12)		(Refer to note 8)	
Car hire	one car per four cars in service + staff parking (Refer to note 12)	Nil		
Theatre	One per five seats		Nil	

Notes

1. Provision for deliveries off the public highway required
2. Single garage with GFA less than 13.2m² not included. Double garage with GFA less than 26.4m² but greater than 13.2m² treated as single garage. Multiple longitudinal parking per plot will be assessed as a maximum provision of two spaces irrespective of combined length of driveway and garage. Communal spaces should not be located more than 20m from the dwellings they serve.
3. Assessment on an individual basis
4. Drive-in or drive through facilities must provide sufficient on-site waiting space for vehicles to stand clear of the highway.
5. Separate provision must be made for ambulances and delivery vehicles
6. Cycle parking for GFA below threshold to be determined on individual merits
7. Applicable only to high density developments sharing facilities
8. To be determined on individual merits
9. Space should be provided for the setting down and picking up of children away from the highway
10. Plus car space provision for site offices up to maximum B1 (office) standard
11. One space for every two students of driving age, one space per ten resident pupils below driving age for visitors
12. Maximum one space per member of staff

Glossary

GFA	Gross Floor Area
GBV	Gross Building Volume

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ANCIENT SEMI NATURAL WOODLAND

All stands of ancient woodland which do not obviously originate from planting.

BIODIVERSITY

This means “the variety of life”. It is the range in variation of living species and their habitats. It encompasses the whole range of animals, plants and micro-organisms on earth, along with the ecosystems in which they live.

BROWNFIELD SITES (DERELICT LAND, RECYCLED LAND)

Previously developed land that is, or was, occupied by a permanent (non-agricultural) structure and associated fixed surface infrastructure. The definition covers the curtilage of the development. It may occur in both built up and rural settings.

BUS BOARDERS

A form of bus stop used if a bus experiences difficulty in manoeuvring to the kerb side due to parked or loading vehicles. Boarders are located between otherwise continuous parked cars and jut out. They enable buses to align with the kerb and create passenger waiting areas without conflicting with general pedestrian flows.

BUS GATES

These are located at the point(s) of access to bus-only roads or links. They could be traffic signals actuated by the buses, physical barriers surmountable only by buses, or signs such as “No Entry except Buses”.

COMMUTED PAYMENTS

Agreed monies paid by a developer to the Local Authority for the provision and/or future maintenance of specific facilities or infrastructure.

COMPARISON GOODS

High value, non food products, such as clothing, furniture, electrical goods, for which the consumer generally expects to invest time and effort into visiting a range of shops before making a choice.

CONSERVATION AREAS

An area designated by the Local Planning Authority under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as of special architectural or historic interest and the character or appearance of which is desirable to preserve or enhance.

CONSERVATION AREA PARTNERSHIP SCHEME (CAP)

Partnership agreement between the Local Authority and English Heritage to improve environments through a combination of redevelopment, restoration and enhancement.

CONSTANT NATURAL ASSET

Environmental resources (e.g. the general wildlife habitat and species level of the local plan area) that, whilst not necessarily individually unique or irreplaceable, it is necessary to maintain the total amount of, at or above a given level, usually the present level, or even an enhanced level. It is a concept that has been developed in order to help apply the principles of sustainability (see English Nature (1994) Sustainability in Practice).

CONVENIENCE GOODS

Food, newspapers, alcoholic drinks, tobacco and household items and magazines.

DECIBEL (db)

A measure of the level of sound. It is often adjusted to become db (A), which is a sound measurement that better represents people's assessment of loudness. A change in noise of 3 db (A) is the minimum perceptible under normal conditions, and a change of 10 db (A) corresponds roughly to halving or doubling the loudness of a sound.

DECRIMINALISED PARKING REGIME

The Road Traffic Act 1991 provides for the decriminalisation of most on-street parking offences. The Local Authority may apply to the Secretary of State. Following this, responsibility for enforcement of parking becomes that of the Local Highway Authority, rather than the police.

DEVELOPMENT BRIEF OR SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

These are prepared in support of policies and proposals within the Local Plan. They inform developers and other interested parties of the constraints and opportunities presented by the site and the type of development expected or encouraged by local planning policies.

DISTRICT CENTRE

Shops, separate from the town centre, usually containing at least one food supermarket or superstore, and non-retail services such as banks, building societies and restaurants.

DURABLE GOODS

Goods that have a long useful life, such as furniture.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPENSATION/MITIGATION

Mechanisms whereby the loss of environmental resources can be mitigated. The exception would be that the compensatory measure should replace the lost environmental feature with a feature of at least equivalent value.

GREENFIELD SITES (FRESH LAND)

A site which has not previously accommodated urban development or other activities. Normally open countryside.

GROSS FLOORSPACE

Total area of a site including building structure.

HIGH TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRIES

Industries within the fields of electronic precision, engineering, pharmaceuticals, and biochemistry. The term can also refer to manufacturers who use high technology systems to produce ordinary goods.

HIGHWAY PROGRAMME

An annual programme issued by the Department for Transport listing the highway schemes which have received a funding commitment and the timetable for building the scheme.

$L_{Aeq,T}$

This is equivalent continuous sound level – the sound level of a notionally steady sound having the same energy as a fluctuating sound over a specified measurement period (T).

LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT (LRT)

A fixed-track public transport system which uses vehicles lighter than normal railways; in particular they can negotiate steeper gradients and smaller curve radii.

LISTED BUILDING

A national list of buildings of architectural or historic interest prepared by the Department of National Heritage. Subject to special planning control, buildings are graded in accordance with their importance (Grade I, Grade II*, and Grade II).

LOADING GAUGE

This is a term that is most commonly used in relation to freight movement and relates to the maximum dimensions of a rail vehicle that can be accommodated on a given stretch of railway.

LOCAL AGENDA 21 (AGENDA FOR THE 21ST CENTURY)

This is an international agreement established at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit. It identified the important role of local government in working with local communities to plan for substantial development, often known as Local Agenda 21.

LOCAL CENTRE

Small grouping usually comprising a newsagent, a general grocery store, a sub-post office and occasionally a pharmacy, a hairdresser and other small shops of a local nature.

HIGHWAY AUTHORITY

The Department for Transport is the Highway Authority responsible for the motorway and trunk road network; and Medway Council is responsible for all other roads.

NATIONAL NATURE RESERVES

Areas defined by English Nature and considered to be of such national importance as to require preservation. Designated under section 19 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 or section 35 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

ODPM

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. The central government department responsible for, inter alia, the town and country planning system. Provides the statutory framework within which Local Planning Authorities work. Issues Directions, Circulars, guidance and has the power to intervene in the local planning process.

PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS (PD)

Small scale developments which do not require planning permission from the LPA.

PPGs (PLANNING POLICY GUIDANCE NOTES)

Guidance notes on various topics relating to land use planning policy matters, issued by ODPM. There are currently over 20 PPGs in existence.

PRECAUTIONARY PRINCIPLE

Where there are significant risks of damage to the environment, precautionary action to limit the use of potentially dangerous materials or the spread of potentially dangerous pollutants is taken if the balance of likely costs and benefits justifies it.

PRIMARY ROAD NETWORK

Those inter-urban routes which provide access to within five miles of the larger urban centres. These roads include motorways, trunk roads and primary "A" roads.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT ACCESS POINTS (PTAPs)

Bus stops, public transport interchanges and railway stations etc.

QUALITY BUS PARTNERSHIP

Partnerships between the Local Authority and bus operators to deliver better bus services. In these partnerships the local authority provides traffic management which assists bus services, whilst bus operators offer better quality, improved marketing, better integration and more reliable services.

RAMSAR SITE

Sites designated under the RAMSAR Convention on the Conservation of Wetlands of International Importance Especially Waterfowl Habitat, ratified by the British Government in 1976. English Nature have the responsibility of identifying Ramsar sites.

REAL TIME TRAVEL INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Allows continuous monitoring of buses by satellite tracking systems, and the communication of up to date information to bus passengers on when their bus is due.

RPG (REGIONAL PLANNING GUIDANCE)

Guidance about the overall scale and broad location of development on a regional level over the longer term. There is RPG for all English regions. The current guidance for the south east of England (RPG9) is being reviewed.

RETAIL HIERARCHY

This ranks retail centres in order of importance.

RETAIL PARK

Groups of retail warehouses formed into "Centres" generally with shared car parking.

RETAIL WAREHOUSES

Large single-level stores specialising in the sale of household goods (such as carpets, furniture and electrical goods) and bulky DIY items, catering mainly for car-borne customers and often in out-of-town locations.

RURAL EXCEPTION SITES

Small sites within, or adjoining, existing villages which are released solely to provide affordable housing for local needs.

SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENT (SAM)

Buildings or other structures scheduled under the Ancient Monuments Acts, as being of significant archaeological importance. Consent is required from the First Secretary of State for works affecting a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

SECONDARY ROAD NETWORK

The preferred routes linking urban centres with populations of 25,000 or more to the Motorway and Primary Route Networks and providing access to within five miles of smaller urban centres with a population over 10,000. These routes include "A" roads not considered primary routes.

SEMI-NATURAL AREAS

An area of native flora and/or fauna species that is apparently natural but has been significantly modified by human activities.

SITES OF NATURE CONSERVATION INTEREST (SNCI)

Identified by the Kent Wildlife Trust (KWT) and considered to be of countywide importance.

SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST (SSSI)

Nationally important areas for the conservation of wildlife habitats, geological features and landforms. SSSIs are areas of land that have been notified by English Nature as being of special interest under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 or the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.

SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION (SAC)

Areas designated under Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna. They contribute to the conservation of biodiversity.

SPECIAL PARKING STATUS

See Decriminalised Parking Regime.

SPECIAL PROTECTION AREA (SPA)

Areas designated under European Community Directive 79/409 on the Conservation of Wild Birds, to conserve the habitat of rare or vulnerable birds and all regularly occurring migratory birds.

SUPERSTORES

Single level, self-service stores selling mainly food or food and non-food goods, usually more than 2,500 square metres trading floorspace, with supporting car parking at surface level.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Commonly defined as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987).

TOWN CENTRE

City, town and traditional suburban centres, which provide a range of facilities and services and which fulfil a function as a focus for both the community and for public transport. It excludes small parades of shops of purely local significance.

TOWN CRAMMING

The development of all open sites within a built-up area, a practice which is identified by Government and the Council as being unacceptable.

TRANSPORT SUPPLEMENTARY GRANT FUND (TSG)

A form of funding obtained from central Government for major road and traffic projects (costing more than two million pounds). It is a grant of 50% towards a scheme and therefore needs to be supplemented from local taxation and other sources.

USE CLASSES ORDER

Statutory instrument which defines broad categories of use of land and buildings.

- A1 - Shops, for the sale, display or provision of goods and services (except hot food) to visiting members of the public. Includes shops, hairdressers, funeral directors, post offices, dress or DIY hire shops, ticket and travel agencies and pet shops. It does not include launderettes and dry cleaners, snack bars, restaurants and hot food takeaways or motor vehicle sales.
- A2 - Financial or Professional Services (other than health or medical services)- includes betting shops, building society offices and banks.
- A3 - Food or drink – includes restaurants and takeaways.
- B1 - Business – includes offices, research and development premises and light industry (industry which can be carried out in a residential area without adverse environmental effects from noise, vibration, smell, fumes, smoke, soot, ash dust or grit).
- B2 - General Industry – Any industrial use not covered by B1.
- B8 - Storage and Distribution-Wholesale warehouses (but not retail warehousing), distribution centres, repositories.

Employment sui-generis – Any works under the Alkali, etc. Works Regulation Act, 1906.

- C1 - Hotels – Hotels, Boarding and guest houses.
- C2 - Residential Institutions – Residential schools, colleges, hospitals and convalescent/nursing homes.
- C3 - Dwelling Houses – Dwellings, small businesses at home, communal housing of the elderly and handicapped.

Residential 'sui generis' – Hotels

- D1 - Non-Residential Institutions – this includes places of worship, church halls, clinics, health centres, crèches, day nurseries, consulting rooms, museums, public halls, libraries, art galleries, exhibition halls, non-residential education and training centres.
- D2 - Assembly and Leisure – includes cinemas, music and concert halls, dance, sports halls, swimming baths, skating rinks, gymnasium and other indoor and outdoor sports and leisure uses, such as, bingo halls, casinos.

Leisure 'sui generis' – Theatres.

WINDFALL SITES

Potential sites for development which are unanticipated by the Local Plan process.

WORLD HERITAGE SITE

Cultural and natural sites of outstanding world-wide value designated by the World Heritage Committee.