

15. Major Development Sites

15. Major Development Sites

Local Plan Aim

To facilitate a scale, mix and balance of uses, relevant to Dartford's Thames Gateway role and context, which is appropriate to the size and location of the major development sites, and which achieves sustainability objectives.

General Objectives for Each Major Development Site

1. To secure a flagship development, both of buildings and of public realm, of a substance and quality which will reinforce the rising expectations for Thames Gateway.
2. To establish a mutually reinforcing mix of uses which sustain and add value to each other.
3. To achieve a development layout that promotes strong linkages within the site and with adjoining locations, by means other than the car.
4. To achieve a mix, form and intensity of development which reduces the need to travel by car, encourages maximum patronage of public transport and makes provision for the Fastrack public transport system.
5. To encourage innovative approaches to sustainable development through building technology, layout and design, energy efficiency and environmental quality.
6. To retain, enhance and manage any recognised nature conservation and landscape qualities of the site.
7. To create an inter-linking network, both within the site and with adjoining locations, of high quality landscape and structural and local public open spaces and wildlife corridors as part of a Green Grid for Kent Thameside.
8. To increase public access to and public enjoyment of the site and encourage leisure and recreation uses of an appropriate scale without prejudicing any nature conservation interests.
9. To ensure that the necessary social, community, transport and environmental infrastructure and services are provided, directly related to phases of development.
10. To establish a strong inter-relationship with adjoining communities.
11. To reduce car dependence through parking solutions which allow proportionately reduced provision at each phase and provide measures to remove parking provision, where appropriate, over time.

15.1 Introduction

15.1.1 The strategic aims of the Local Plan, set out in the Strategy chapter, apply across the whole of the Borough. However, the majority of new development within Kent Thameside during the Plan period is likely to occur on six major sites - North Dartford, Ebbsfleet, Ingress Park, Eastern Quarry, Stone Castle and Swanscombe Peninsula West. An additional site, Swanscombe Peninsula East, has the potential to contribute to the regeneration of Kent Thameside after 2011. The size of these sites, the scale and mix of development they potentially can accommodate, the infrastructure needed to support these new communities and the timescale over which development will take place mean that it is appropriate for policies dealing with these sites to be set out in a separate chapter.

15.2 General Approach for the Major Development Sites

15.2.1 The scale of the six major development sites set out in this chapter demands a comprehensive approach which considers the mix and form of development in a holistic way. Between them, the six sites comprise 750 ha, and have the capacity to provide up to 14,000 dwellings, 700,000 sq m of employment floorspace plus other uses, including retail and supporting community facilities, over the next 20 years or so.

15.2.2 The key guiding principles will be:

- development planned according to sustainability principles, including a mix of uses, a high quality of design which encourages non-car travel (by cycle, by foot, by public transport) and higher densities around public transport stops;
- development planned in relation to their context - because of the scale of development on these sites, these sites cannot be viewed as self-contained entities;
- the phasing of development with the provision of transport infrastructure and services; and
- appropriate provision of supporting infrastructure.

15.2.2a The timing and mix of uses on each site will develop over time during the lifetime of the Plan. However, the broad programme is envisaged as follows:

Phase 1 (to 2006)

- Residential development continues at Ingress Park
- Completion of the first and, subject to planning permission, second phases of residential development at Stone Castle with possible phase 3 under construction
- Subject to planning permission, employment development begins to come forward on the St Clement's Valley part of the Stone Castle site
- subject to planning permission, the first phase of a mix of residential and commercial development at North Dartford

Phase 2 (to 2011) (all subject to planning permission)

- the final phases of residential and commercial development at Stone Castle
- first phase of residential development at Swanscombe Peninsula West
- first phase of a mix of residential and commercial development around the new station at Ebbsfleet
- first phase of a mix of residential and commercial development at Eastern Quarry
- remaining phases of residential and commercial development at North Dartford

Beyond the Plan Period (to 2016)

- completion of predominantly residential development at Swanscombe Peninsula West
- continuing commercial development and completion of residential development at Ebbsfleet
- continuing residential and commercial development at Eastern Quarry
- first phase of predominantly residential development at Swanscombe Peninsula East

In addition to the major development sites, considerable development is anticipated at the other sites allocated in the Plan for development.

15.2.3 Each of the major development sites may generate demand for new local shopping facilities. These facilities should be of a scale and range that relate solely to the needs of the local residents and employees, and be located such that they underpin and support the Plan's sustainable development strategy. They should also grow in line with, and not in advance of, the expansion of the new communities.

15.2.4 On all the major development sites, development proposals should conform with a planning brief, either prepared or agreed by the local planning authority, and be accompanied by a masterplan prepared by the applicant.

15.3 Ebbsfleet

Specific Objectives

1. To secure a city-scale form of development, incorporating a vibrant mix of activities, centred around the proposed Ebbsfleet Station, which will achieve major employment generation and inward investment.
2. To maximise the operational efficiency of Ebbsfleet Station by securing a development form which encourages opportunities for walking, cycling and public transport.

- 15.3.1 Ebbsfleet lies within Dartford and Gravesham Boroughs between the communities of Swanscombe and Northfleet. It has a total site area of 150 ha, of which approximately 100 ha falls within Dartford Borough. A large proportion of the site is damaged land, arising from extensive chalk quarrying and subsequent land-fill.
- 15.3.2 RPG9a states that Ebbsfleet Station can make a major contribution to the regeneration of the Dartford/Gravesend area by helping to attract commerce and underpinning a quality housing market. The Station will provide a unique opportunity for a new focus of growth, supporting a new commercial centre which will offer employment opportunities for those who currently have to commute into London from north and east Kent. The Kent Structure Plan identifies Ebbsfleet for the development of a new business centre.
- 15.3.3 Ebbsfleet provides a unique opportunity to provide a development of the highest standard. The site has a key Gateway position and is likely to become a hub of future growth and regeneration within Kent Thameside.
- 15.3.4 The Ebbsfleet Development and Environment Framework was formally adopted by Dartford and Gravesham Borough Councils and Kent County Council as supplementary planning guidance in June 1996. The Framework contains a number of principles covering issues relating to built form, transport and the environment, and helps to guide the nature and quantity of development that would be suitable to create a business centre in a mixed use setting. The Indicative Framework Plan sets out the suggested nature and extent of land uses and identifies transport corridors and green spaces. The Framework will remain an important material consideration in determining future planning applications within Ebbsfleet. Copies of the Framework are available from the Borough Council.
- 15.3.5 The key principles guiding future development at Ebbsfleet are:
- the delivery of a sustainable development which reduces the need to travel by private car and encourages travel by more energy efficient means;
 - high quality urban design which reflects Ebbsfleet's strategic significance as an internationally accessible commercial location;
 - high density development centred around the Ebbsfleet Station;
 - sufficient business development to provide for "critical mass" to meet sub-regional objectives for employment generation and inward investment;
 - a significant contribution to Structure Plan housing requirements;
 - extensive managed public open space, the protection of nature and wildlife conservation interests and scheduled ancient monuments;
 - retail and leisure provision of a scale to meet the needs arising from the development; and
 - the provision of social and community facilities in line with phases of development.
- 15.3.6 Dartford and Gravesham Borough Councils have resolved that, subject to appropriate agreements being reached, they will grant outline planning permission for nearly 790,000 sq m of floorspace comprising employment, residential, hotel and leisure uses together with supporting retail and community facilities. The building footprint will cover some 67 hectares which will be complemented by 76 hectares of public open space.
- 15.3.7 Fundamental to development at Ebbsfleet is a significant discouragement in car use. Outline planning approval has been granted in principle on the basis that by the time the development is complete, no more than 37% of work journeys to and from the development, excluding the station, will be by car.
- 15.3.8 Within Dartford Borough, the outline permission in principle allows for development in the form of two quarters - Station Quarter North and South - and specifies the maximum floorspace allowed for employment, residential, retailing and leisure uses for each quarter.

Any future applications for the site should not exceed the total floorspace permitted within these combined quarters set out below:

- 265,000 sq m gross of employment uses falling within use class B1;
- 205,000 sq m (2,115 dwellings) of residential use (use class C3);
- 115,000 sq m gross of core space, including hotels, of which not more than 27,750 sq m gross of leisure and/or entertainment uses falling within use class D2; and
- 16,750 sq m of gross floorspace falling within use class A1.

15.3.9 The scale and mix of retail provision at Ebbsfleet should reflect the demands of the future working population, the travelling population and the residential community resulting from the development, and should grow in line with and not in advance of the expansion of those communities.

15.3.10 A minimum provision of 76 ha of public open space will be sought for a development providing the scale of floorspace set out above (see the Leisure, Recreation and Tourism chapter).

MDS1 Ebbsfleet

Land is allocated at Ebbsfleet for a new business centre comprising a mix of predominantly employment floorspace, supported by residential, leisure, retail and cultural uses. Development proposals will only be permitted where the following criteria are met:

1. a mix, distribution and density of development which discourages the need to travel by private car and encourages travel by more efficient means;
2. a mix of uses which comprises predominantly commercial development, together with residential and ancillary uses concentrated around a new local centre;
3. a high quality of urban design;
4. a high degree of public access throughout the site;
5. the creation of a hierarchy of extensive green spaces and water spaces, forming part of the Green Grid network and fully accessible to the public, occupying no less than 50% of the area of Ebbsfleet;
- 5a the retention and enhancement of watercourses and habitats;
6. the safeguarding of Baker's Hole SSSI, Ebbsfleet SNCI and the four scheduled ancient monuments within Ebbsfleet;
7. a close integration with the Channel Tunnel Rail Link and Station with the highest density development centred around the Station;
8. the provision of necessary community infrastructure;
9. the provision of retail proposals that primarily meet the needs of local residents and employees and do not adversely affect the vitality and viability of Dartford town centre or existing or proposed district and local centres;
10. close integration with existing communities through the provision of road, pedestrian, cycle and public transport links, including a dedicated corridor for Fastrack; and
11. the concentration of development at nodal points and along public transport corridors.

Proposals should be phased to ensure that facilities grow in line with and not in advance of the needs the new community.

15.4 Ingress Park

Specific Objectives

1. To secure a predominantly residential-based mixed use development, based upon urban village principles.
2. To ensure that any development reflects the visual quality of the site, takes full advantage of the setting beside the River Thames and results in the restoration of Ingress Abbey.

- 15.4.1 Ingress Park is a predominantly residential development on a 29 ha site fronting the River Thames, east of Greenhithe. The site was formerly occupied by the derelict Empire Paper Mill and the Ingress Park Estate, consisting of a former Merchant Naval College and several derelict Grade II listed structures, including the 19th century Ingress Abbey, the Coach House and a former Gate House.
- 15.4.3 The Council prepared and subsequently adopted a planning brief for the site in November 1998, following public consultation. The Ingress Park and Empire Mill Planning Brief provides guidance on the scale, uses, densities and form of development. It forms supplementary planning guidance and is available from the Borough Council.
- 15.4.4 In April 1999, outline planning permission was granted for a mixed-use development comprising some 190,000 sq m of floorspace, together with 56,000 sq m of public open space. This comprises between 750 and 950 dwellings and up to 3,900 sq m of retail, business and community uses.
- 15.4.4a Since 1999, there has been extensive restoration of the Abbey, the Coach House and Orangery to enable it to be reused as commercial offices. Its position within the site overlooking the Thames provides the opportunity for it to be a focus for the new development. High quality, high density residential development has been designed to create a quality public realm, including continuous and active frontages. Over the lifetime of the development, all properties will be designed to be within 400 metres of a stop on the Fastrack public transport network with links to Greenhithe railway station, Crossways Business Park and Bluewater. It is anticipated that community facilities will be focused within a local centre, including shops, a pub, a doctor's surgery and a primary school. This should be designed to serve both Ingress Park and the neighbouring development on Swanscombe Peninsula West.
- 15.4.5 All future development on this site should be designed to encompass the principles of a mixed-use urban village (see para 2.2.3). The planning brief for the site will be a material consideration in determining future planning applications. In addition, future development must be integrated within its local context - most notably, the river to the north, the Greenhithe Conservation Area to the west and Swanscombe Peninsula to the east.
- 15.4.6 It should also make provision for the Fastrack network by providing a route for buses which penetrates to the heart of the site and is fully integrated with adjoining developments and activities in visual and functional terms. The route should be designed in such a way as to allow bus priority throughout, and to avoid any impedance due to congestion or conflict with other uses. A fully dedicated bus way will achieve this aim, but it may be possible to provide a mix of segregated sections and bus priority measures to achieve the same aim.
- 15.4.6a The eastern part of the site is often subject to very strong winds off the River. The design and elevation of rooflines will need to be well articulated in order to reduce possible wind damage, whilst landscaping should be incorporated to form windbreaks.

MDS2 Ingress Park

Land is allocated at Ingress Park for a mixed-use development comprising predominantly residential use with supporting community uses. Development proposals will only be permitted if the following criteria are met:

- 1. a mix of uses which comprises predominantly residential uses, concentrated around a new local centre;**
- 2. a development form which integrates with the existing village of Greenhithe and the proposed development at Swanscombe Peninsula West and takes full advantage of the site's riverside location;**

3. the provision of necessary community facilities, including a community primary school, to support the development at Ingress Park and to provide for the future integration with development at Swanscombe Peninsula West;
4. the preservation and enhancement of Ingress Abbey and the other Grade II listed structures within a parkland setting;
5. substantial public open space and the creation of a public right of way along the entire river frontage within the site, integrated with the Green Grid network;
6. the provision of cycle and footway networks throughout the site and links to Greenhithe Station and to the river;
7. the provision of retail proposals that meet the needs of local residents and employees and do not adversely affect the vitality and viability of Dartford town centre or existing or proposed district and local centres;
8. the provision of a bus route network which serves the development and allows bus priority throughout; and
9. compliance with Environment Agency criteria about flood risk including, where necessary, a requirement to raise land to 6.5 metres AOD.

15.5 Stone Castle

Specific Objectives

1. To secure
 - a new residential community, based upon a walkable neighbourhood which retains and enhances the Grade II listed Stone Castle within a predominantly landscaped setting;
 - a high quality business community within a linear parkland; and
 - a form of development that incorporates Green Grid links across the site and with adjoining locations and respects the important role of St Clement's Valley within the Green Grid network.
2. To achieve a mutually reinforcing mix of employment, residential and public open space which sustain and add value to each other.

15.5.1 Stone Castle covers a total area of approximately 46 ha, lying immediately north of Bluewater between Bean Road, Greenhithe to the east and Hedge Place Road, Horns Cross to the west. The site fronts the key traffic routes of London Road (A226) and St Clement's Way. It currently comprises three distinct parts:

- Stone Pits 9 and 9a, former quarries partially restored with waste fill, between Hedge Place Road and Sandy Lane, covering approximately 14 ha;
- Land between London Road, Sandy Lane and Stone Castle, also covering an area of 14 ha, comprising
 - Stone Pit 10 (a former landfill site, now being restored to form new public open space);
 - phase 1 of a residential development fronting London Road which, when complete, will total 250 dwellings;
 - phase 2 of a residential scheme comprising land currently used for agricultural purposes, the Grade II listed Stone Castle and Blue Circle's technical laboratories.
- St Clement's Valley, comprising land between Stone Castle, Bean Road, London Road and the Bluewater approach road (currently used in part for agriculture), together with land between St Clement's Way and Bean Road, in total covering an area of approximately 18 ha.

However the London Road/Sandy Lane/Stone Castle and the St Clement's Valley parts of the site are being designed as an integrated, mixed-use development.

Stone Pits 9 and 9a

- 15.5.2 Stone Pits 9 and 9a are not expected to come forward for development before at least 2011, owing to the difficult ground conditions and the likely presence of landfill gas. Geo-technical surveys have raised doubts over the feasibility of making good the tipped areas ready for residential development in the near future. Moreover, the two pits have been filled largely with domestic waste and, as a result, may be unstable. Therefore, further technical work will need to be carried out to prove that the land is physically capable of accommodating any development. Any proposals for potential development will also need to demonstrate beyond all reasonable doubt that possible contamination and landfill gas generated from these tipped areas would not pose a hazard (see Natural Resources chapter).
- 15.5.3 The lack of landscaping and the poor boundary treatment of this part of Stone Castle along London Road has a deleterious impact upon views along the London Road, a strategically important corridor within Kent Thameside. Therefore, any development proposals on other parts of Stone Castle that come forward within the Plan period will be expected to include a range of mitigation measures to improve the appearance of Stone Pits 9 and 9a.

Land between Sandy Lane and St Clement's Valley

- 15.5.4 The land between Sandy Lane and St Clement's Valley provides an excellent opportunity for a predominantly residential form of development, based on the concept of public transport orientated development and designed as a "walkable neighbourhood" (see Development and Design chapter). It is estimated that up to 625 dwellings could be satisfactorily accommodated in this part of the site.
- 15.5.4a In October 2000, planning permission was granted for 201 dwellings on 3.9 ha of land fronting London Road. This represents the first phase of residential development and is currently under construction, and known as "Waterstone Park". Phase 2 of the residential component of the site comprises an area of previously developed land (the former Blue Circle Technical Centre), an area of damaged land to be laid out as public open space, an area of greenfield land and Stone Castle itself.
- 15.5.5 For local public transport to be viable and provide the opportunity for people to consider alternative forms of transport other than the car, future residential development proposals will be expected to achieve more efficient use of land than in the past. Policy DD1 identifies Stone Castle as a location where public transport orientated development will be required (see Development and Design chapter), bearing in mind existing public transport provision along London Road, together with significantly improved provision as a result of Fastrack. As on all the major development sites, a proportion of affordable housing and "Lifetime" housing will be sought, in accordance with the relevant policies in the Housing chapter. This housing should be provided very close to public transport stops.
- 15.5.6 The height and mass of development will need to be sensitive to the context of the site. Building heights will be determined by the scale of the street, the local character and the proximity of public transport nodes. Long distance views to the Queen Elizabeth II Bridge and the River Thames will need to be preserved. Housing design should capitalise on these views, possibly by incorporating roof-terracing. The development layout should relate to land immediately to the east, adjacent to St Clement's Way. The setting of the Grade II listed Stone Castle will need to be protected and enhanced. Early phases of development must also allow for any future development on that part of the site currently occupied by the Technical Centre to be fully integrated.

- 15.5.7 Residential development at Stone Castle will be expected to be based upon a traditional urban form within a continuous and well-defined high quality public realm. The development should be designed to develop a strong sense of place with streets and squares. There should be a high level of permeability within the site to ensure access by foot and by cycle is maximised and given priority over the car. Development should be designed to ensure safety, for example by placing housing close to footpaths, play space and the London Road. Development proposals will be required to be designed to give optimum energy efficiency through layout and orientation, in accordance with policy NR23.
- 15.5.8 Residential development on the southern part of the site will be constrained by the existing overhead power line (see policy BE17) and the need to ensure that development must not compromise the setting of the Grade II listed Stone Castle, in accordance with policy BE8. Any proposals for sensitive alterations or extensions to Stone Castle will only be permitted where they comply with policy BE5.
- 15.5.9 An interconnected and varied framework of green links and public open spaces should be provided within the development, primarily on Stone Pit 10, west of Sandy Lane, which will form part of the Kent Thameside Green Grid network. These could include local play spaces, public urban squares, areas of nature conservation, water features, parks and strategic areas of landscaping. The landscaping treatment of the streetscape along London Road and the edges of the development site will be particularly important. Existing trees and hedgerows which represent important landscape features should be retained wherever possible. In particular, it is important that any development, including access, has no material adverse impact upon the existing woodland.
- 15.5.10 Community facilities, including play space, public open space, off-site school provision, local retail facilities or good links to existing off-site retail facilities, and affordable housing will be sought in accordance with the Local Plan policies on community infrastructure (see Community Facilities chapter).

St Clement's Valley

- 15.5.11 St Clement's Valley offers the opportunity to provide employment development and to create a significant new component of the Green Grid within Kent Thameside. Over time, it is envisaged that the Valley will form an important part of a continuous green link from Bluewater to the River Thames at Greenhithe. The wooded area between St Clement's Way and Bean Road could be enhanced with paths created to allow public access, including picnic areas. West of St Clement's Way a linear park could be created with a variety of areas, including parklands and small meadows. The provision and future maintenance of the open space will be secured by a planning obligation or by a Grampian-style planning condition. The scale of the site will allow for a range of different landscapes, both formal and informal, to be incorporated. However, the predominant impression of this space should be rural and natural in character.
- 15.5.12 Within this setting, high quality built development west of St Clement's Way could be accommodated. The northern end of the site is within convenient walking distance of Greenhithe Railway Station, adjacent to the London Road public transport corridor and will also be within easy walking distance of a stop on the Fastrack public transport network. Moreover, the topography, landscape and presence of existing development give this part of the site a more urban character than the remainder of the site. Commercial development could therefore be satisfactorily accommodated here. Further south, existing landscape features, such as the lake and open field, dominate and this part of the valley should remain free of development.
- 15.5.13 The development should predominantly be for B1 uses, accommodated in well designed buildings within the landscape setting. The development will add to the variety and quality of employment opportunities in Kent Thameside as well as funding the creation

and ongoing maintenance of the Green Grid. Development will need to allow for a minimum of 75% of the total site area to be given over to very high quality public open space incorporating the landscape features referred to above, fully accessible to the public. Land occupied by car parking and access roads will count towards the proportion of the built area. The open vistas south of London Road towards Bluewater should be retained and enhanced. Opportunities exist west of St Clement's Way to locate landmark buildings of architectural interest.

15.5.13a Access to serve the new development is likely to be achieved from St Clement's Way. Additional road infrastructure will be required to accommodate this development and will need to be funded by the developer.

15.5.14 Connectivity to the surrounding area and within the Valley will be an important design consideration. There will be a requirement for strong pedestrian and cycle links through the park, as well as strong east-west connections linking St Clement's Valley with future new development to the west.

15.5.15 Development proposals will be required to be designed to give optimum energy efficiency through layout and orientation, in accordance with the policy NR23.

15.5.16 Development proposals should demonstrate that they seek to minimise the need to travel by car in favour of other forms of transport. Work is taking place to identify future public transport services within the Greenhithe area and assess the best use of the limited traffic capacity at the Station Road roundabout. A transport assessment will be required to show how the need for public transport arising from the development will be met. Traffic calming measures should be designed as an integral part of the scheme and must not preclude bus penetration within the site.

MDS3 Stone Castle

Development proposals at Stone Castle will only be permitted if the following criteria are met:

- 1. a flagship mixed use, public transport orientated development, incorporating predominantly residential, employment and public open space;**
- 2. a new predominantly residential community, of around 625 dwellings in size on land between Sandy Lane and St Clement's Valley, based upon a walkable neighbourhood, with necessary community facilities and/or the funding of improvements of, and linkages to, existing off-site facilities;**
- 3. a comparatively high overall density of residential development with the highest densities close to public transport stops;**
- 4. the enhancement of the Grade II listed Stone Castle and its setting;**
- 5. the creation of a high quality new linear park forming part of the Green Grid network and fully accessible to the public occupying no less than 75% of the area of St Clement's Valley;**
- 6. a high quality business community, comprising predominantly B1 uses with some leisure use, occupying no more than 25% of the area of St Clement's Valley, and securing the provision of the publicly accessible open space and Green Grid on the remaining 75% which is required by criterion 5;**
- 7. the provision of a framework of Green Grid links and public open space throughout the site which retain those existing trees and hedgerows which form important landscape features;**
- 8. retention of important vistas from the site to the Queen Elizabeth II Bridge and the River Thames through layout and design which incorporate long-distance views from houses, and south from London Road to Bluewater;**
- 9. a high degree of permeability and accessibility both to and within the site by foot, cycle and public transport; and**
- 10. high quality landscape treatment to enhance the views of Stone Pits 9 and 9a.**

15.6 North Dartford

Specific Objectives

1. To create opportunities for high quality growth industries with an advanced technology base in accordance with strategic planning policies.
2. To create a development layout that maximises the strategic opportunities of this site whilst mitigating the negative effects of potentially poor neighbours and existing utility infrastructure.

15.6.1 North Dartford is a 104 hectare site adjacent to Junction 1a of the M25 Motorway and the Queen Elizabeth II Bridge. The site comprises the former Joyce Green Hospital (42 hectares) and Littlebrook Lakes (59 hectares), together with a small area of approximately 3 hectares between Littlebrook Manor Way and University Way. It lies on the northern edge of Dartford, approximately 2 km north of Dartford town centre. There is direct access to University Way (A206) which provides a link eastwards to Junction 1a (of the A282 (M25)) and westwards to Crayford, Erith and Bexley.

15.6.2 RPG9a states that proposals for North Dartford could become the focus of a high quality science and business park, closely allied with a new campus to be built for Greenwich University. It highlights the need for the development plan to help secure an environment of an appropriate quality by steering poor neighbour uses to more appropriate locations.

15.6.3 The Kent Structure Plan identifies the site at North Dartford as a strategic area for new development intended for mixed use comprehensive development, involving high quality business and science parks, a university campus, housing, leisure and recreation uses. The Kent Minerals Local Plan (Construction Aggregates) identifies land at North Dartford as an “area of search” where minerals exist and may have the potential for commercial working. Whilst acknowledging the presence of flint gravels, any proposals for extraction will need to be considered against the context of the acknowledged strategic importance of the development potential of the area. In particular, the Council believe mineral extraction should not be permitted if it would prevent commencement on this site, compromise the achievement of a quality environment at any stage of the development or limit the ability to achieve the comprehensive development of the site in its entirety.

15.6.4 Outline planning permission was granted in September 1993 for a higher education campus at the adjoining site immediately to the west. The University of Greenwich has now abandoned plans for a new university campus in this location, and the permission has lapsed. Subsequently, outline planning permission was granted in May 1994 for 116,450 sq m of B1, B2, B8, hotel and ancillary retail and leisure development on the Littlebrook Lakes site, and for 111,000 sq m of B1, ancillary retail uses and 100 dwellings at Joyce Green Hospital in February 1995.

15.6.5 Since 1995, the Government has revised a number of planning policy guidance notes, including PPG1 (General Policy and Principles). PPG1 states that mixed-use development can help create vitality and diversity and reduce the need to travel. Large, single use developments are now actively discouraged. In October 1998, the Government published “Planning for Sustainable Development: Towards Better Practice”, a practical guide which seeks to demonstrate ways to plan new housing and other essential new development which better meets the Government’s objectives for sustainable development. Furthermore, in order to meet the modern sustainability policy agenda by using land as effectively as possible and in order to provide homes close to jobs, many of the major development sites in the Borough, such as North Dartford, will be required to accommodate a significant mix of uses including a substantial element of housing.

15.6.6 For these reasons, the Council considers that, while the key planning aim remains the attraction of technology-based employment growth, a significant element of new housing

could be accommodated at North Dartford, without compromising this aim. This will help to achieve a better mix and balance of uses, so creating a more sustainable pattern of development and help to meet the Borough's housing requirement.

15.6.7 As a result, the Council has prepared and subsequently adopted a planning brief for the site. The North Dartford Planning Brief forms supplementary planning guidance and will be a material consideration in the determination of any development proposals on the site. The brief is available from the Borough Council.

15.6.9 The North Dartford site is of prime importance to Thames Gateway. Its development will reflect what has already been achieved, reinforcing the rising expectations for Kent Thameside, brought about by Crossways and Bluewater. It is critical that this flagship development acts as a pathfinder for other projects in Kent Thameside. Its strategic location - adjacent to Junction 1a of the A282 (M25) London Orbital Motorway, on the urban fringes of London, and within an area defined by Government as a growth area of regional significance - and its size - more than 100 hectares in total - demand a development of the highest quality which helps to establish a positive investment image for Kent Thameside, and one which genuinely embodies sustainable principles.

15.6.9a New development must take full account of the operational requirements, particularly access, of existing neighbouring land uses, including the Littlebrook Power Station and the Thames Water Treatment Works at Long Reach to the north of the site, to mitigate negative effects. This may be achieved through the design and layout to reduce views from habitable rooms and introduce new landform and landscaping to screen poor neighbour uses.

15.6.10 It is important that a sufficient critical mass of development is achieved in order to create a community of substance and create a sense of place. A settlement of around 1500 dwellings would support a two-form entry primary school (as well as the funding of additional places at existing off-site schools), and so create the opportunities for the establishment of a broadly self-contained community. It is estimated that the site has the potential to accommodate up to 150,000 sq m of employment floorspace without resulting in significant congestion, particularly at Junction 1a of the M25.

15.6.11 The site, therefore, has the potential to create a mixed-use development generating several thousand new jobs and a new community of around 3,500 people in line with the Government's sustainability objectives.

15.6.11a Both PPG3 and RPG9 require new residential development to be accommodated on previously-developed land first before considering greenfield locations. The former Joyce Green Hospital site is previously-developed land, whilst the Littlebrook Lakes part of the site is greenfield. In order to achieve a balanced mix of uses across the whole site, a proportion of the total residential development will be expected to be accommodated on the Littlebrook Lakes end of the site. However, residential development will be expected to be the predominant use on the Joyce Green Hospital site. A maximum of 33% of the total number of residential dwellings for North Dartford will be permitted on the Littlebrook Lakes part of the site.

15.6.12 In essence, this site provides a unique opportunity for technology-based sunrise industries to locate in Dartford and for establishing a model for sustainable communities, based on principles of low car dependency, access to local facilities, and high quality public transport.

MDS4 North Dartford

Development proposals at North Dartford will only be permitted where the following criteria are met:

1. A land use mix which comprises:
 - a Science Park (B1 use class), offering business space to high quality growth industries with an advanced technology base in a high quality landscaped setting;
 - a Business Park (mainly B1 use class with some B2) overlooking Littlebrook Lakes, comparable in quality to the Science Park;
 - a Logistics Park (mainly B8 use class) at the eastern end of the site, taking advantage of the proximity of the M25;
 - a residential community of around 1500 dwellings, with the necessary community infrastructure and facilities on site, closely integrated with the other development elements and offering similar standards of urban quality and landscape;
 - a range of leisure uses including a hotel and other commercial leisure uses to serve the residential community;
2. the retention of existing landscape features and the creation of new public open spaces and links which will form part of the Green Grid network;
- 2a the retention and enhancement of watercourses and habitats;
3. the provision of strong transport linkages both within the site and to adjoining sites, particularly Temple Hill, Crossways Business Park and Dartford Town Centre;
4. the provision of pedestrian and cycle network links to other adjoining sites;
5. high quality public transport links, including the provision of the North Dartford link and a segregated Fastrack corridor within the site;
- 5a. the provision of highway improvements to ensure that the traffic generated by the development, and existing or permitted development of adjoining sites, does not exceed the capacity of the local highway network;
6. the provision of a new bridge over University Way to provide a direct access to the site by public transport, cycling and walking from Temple Hill;
7. a local centre which should form the focus of the development; and
8. the provision of retail proposals that meet the needs of local residents and employees and do not adversely affect the vitality and viability of Dartford town centre or existing or proposed district and local centres.

15.7 Eastern Quarry

Specific Objectives

1. To secure a high quality compact mixed use development in the form of an urban village.
2. To secure a scale of residential development of a sufficient critical mass to complement the major employment and retail developments at Ebbsfleet and Bluewater.
3. To ensure development is fully integrated with the existing communities of Swanscombe and Knockhall.

15.7.1 Eastern Quarry is the largest development site within Kent Thameside, totalling nearly 300 hectares. The bulk of the site - 260 ha - currently comprises one of the largest operational chalk quarries in Kent, part of which has been restored and landscaped. The remaining 40 ha is currently occupied by the Northfleet West Sub Station, part of which is covered by the CTRL safeguarding.

15.7.2 RPG9a states that the site is of sufficient scale to accommodate a high quality, compact, mixed use development in the form of an urban village. The Thames Gateway Planning Framework also states that an emphasis on providing new homes would complement the major employment generating and retail developments at Ebbsfleet and Bluewater. The Kent Structure Plan identifies the site for comprehensive mixed-use development with an emphasis on housing.

15.7.3 Planning permission has now been granted for a replacement cement works and quarry at Holborough in the Medway Valley, enabling the relocation of cement production from Kent

Thameside. Given the size of the site it is possible that site preparation and early development could commence before chalk extraction ceases, and it is anticipated that up to 1,350 residential units could come forward within the Plan period. In time, it is anticipated that the total site has the capacity to accommodate up to 7,250 residential units, together with a significant element - up to 380,000 sq m - of employment floorspace, retail and supporting community facilities. A mix of uses on this very large site is important to maximise the opportunities for people to live close to their place of work and so reduce the need to travel. However, in order for the objective for the site set out in RPG9a to be met in respect of an emphasis of residential development, and the need to achieve the Structure Plan housing target, the Council wishes to see no less than two thirds of the total developed floorspace at Eastern Quarry for housing.

- 15.7.4 Eastern Quarry, by virtue of its scale and openness, provides a unique opportunity to create a dramatic setting for development. In order to make the site suitable for development, it will be necessary to reshape the existing areas of overburden and remodel most of the chalk faces. Where possible, development should relate positively to local slopes, ridges, lakes and water courses. It is estimated that up to 12 million cubic metres of material will need to be transferred across the site to achieve the new landform. A substantial part of the site is expected to be remodelled for public open space, water and landscaping. Current information suggests that 33% of the site area (approximately 120ha) could be open space which would still provide sufficient land to accommodate the scale of development proposed.
- 15.7.5 Development at Eastern Quarry will need to integrate well with the existing communities at Swanscombe and Knockhall, as well as the adjoining new developments at Bluewater and Ebbsfleet. Direct links with Swanscombe and Knockhall should be provided for pedestrians and cyclists by extending the Green Grid, and by providing new bus routes with priority over other traffic. Transport infrastructure should not sever the northern part of Eastern Quarry from existing built development to the north.
- 15.7.6 The task of transforming Eastern Quarry into a vibrant, mixed use, high density development will be a complex exercise.
- 15.7.7 Proposals will need to identify at least one suitable, continuous corridor across the site for a fully segregated, direct route for Fastrack which links the local centres. Although Fastrack should form the main public transport “spine”, complementary local services will also need to be accommodated. The impact of development capacity of the A2 interchanges at Bean and at Southfleet Road will need to be assessed as part of a Transport Assessment.
- 15.7.8 Proposals will need to allow for east west routes integrated with the built form between Bean Road and Ebbsfleet, as part of the requirement of the Ebbsfleet planning permission, including a segregated public transport route which penetrates the proposed new local centres. In addition, the development will need to be served by a number of secondary routes through the site. New roads should be integrated with the form of land use rather than producing “isolated” safeguarded transport routes that could be prejudicial to the quality and quantity of development. These roads should support the pattern of development and movement within Kent Thameside rather than serving any wider strategic role. Traffic routes should be designed to ensure public transport has priority over the car.
- 15.7.9 The scale of the development opportunity in Eastern Quarry, its relationship with Bluewater and Ebbsfleet and its position on the Fastrack network makes it an ideal location to introduce imaginative parking solutions. For example, development proposals might include areas of residential development which are car-free or rely upon initiatives such as car pooling schemes.

15.7.9a The estimates of capacity and timing of development at Eastern Quarry reflect the Secretary of State's Holborough decision enabling the relocation of cement production from Kent Thameside.

MDS5 Eastern Quarry

Development proposals at Eastern Quarry will only be permitted if the following criteria are met:

- 1. a mixed use, public transport orientated development in the form of a compact urban village, consisting predominantly of residential use, together with the necessary community infrastructure and some commercial uses;**
- 2. the creation of a landform which will provide a suitable environment for a new compact urban village;**
- 3. a minimum of two thirds of the total gross developed floorspace at Eastern Quarry for residential use;**
- 4. substantial areas of public open space, water features and landscaping comprising a minimum of 33% of the site area, which will form part of the Green Grid network;**
- 5. the provision of pedestrian and cycle network links to adjoining sites;**
- 6. one or more segregated public transport routes provided between Bean Road and Bluewater to the west and Ebbsfleet to the east, as part of the Fastrack network;**
- 7. a concentration of the highest densities of built development in locations best served by public transport;**
- 8. integration of new development with the adjoining uses at Bluewater and Ebbsfleet and the communities of Swanscombe and Knockhall;**
- 9. the provision of east west routes integrated with the built form;**
- 10. the provision of retail proposals that meet the needs of local residents and employees and do not adversely affect the vitality and viability of Dartford town centre or existing or proposed district and local centres; and**
- 11. preservation and enhancement of any areas of ecological and archaeological significance.**

15.8 Swanscombe Peninsula

15.8.1 Swanscombe Peninsula covers an area of 205 ha between Greenhithe and Northfleet, of which 173 ha fall within Dartford Borough. It comprises three distinct parts:

- Swanscombe Peninsula West is the land between Ingress Park and the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL) alignment and north of the North Kent Railway Line. It includes Black Duck Marsh and the former Swanscombe Cement Works and covers approximately 90 ha;
- Swanscombe Peninsula East is the land east of the CTRL alignment, measuring 83 ha, and includes Swanscombe Point, Swanscombe Marshes and part of Botany Marshes;
- a further 32 ha of the Swanscombe Peninsula, which includes most of Botany Marshes, and falls within Gravesham Borough.

15.8.2 The CTRL route dissects the site and will enter the tunnel under the Thames on Swanscombe Marshes. Planning permission has been granted at Swanscombe Peninsula for slurry lagoons to accommodate fill from the CTRL Thames Tunnel and at the former Croxton and Gary site at London Road, Swanscombe. CTRL safeguarding is covered in the Transport chapter.

15.8.3 RPG9a identifies the Peninsula as a riverside opportunity for an urban village. It recognises that commanding views along the Thames offer a valuable opportunity to secure quality development. The Kent Structure Plan identifies the site as having potential for major mixed-use development, predominantly housing.

Swanscombe Peninsula West

Specific Objectives

1. To secure a predominantly residential mixed-use development, based upon urban village principles.
2. To ensure development is fully integrated with neighbouring sites, especially Ingress Park and takes fully advantage of its riverside setting.
3. To retain and enhance the existing habitats and areas of nature conservation importance.

15.8.4 Parts of the 90 ha site have been used for waste tipping in the past, primarily whiting waste and works waste. In addition, a former gas works, sewage treatment works and cement works occupied part of the site in the past. Currently, parts of the eastern edge of the site, close to the CTRL alignment, is subject to flue dust tipping. The area known as Black Duck Marsh covers some 25 ha. This part of Swanscombe Peninsula West, formerly Blue Circle's local sports ground, is of low agricultural quality and is currently set aside agricultural land. The majority of the land is owned by Blue Circle Properties; the remainder of the site is occupied by a small number of users. Approximately 25 ha of the site is covered by CTRL safeguarding, parts of which will be temporary construction sites.

15.8.5 The industrial history of Swanscombe Peninsula has left a complex site with difficult ground conditions, which will experience further impact from the construction of the CTRL. Nevertheless, the site provides the opportunity for a new mixed use community with its own identity and character, developed over a number of years. Any development will need to integrate with the adjoining Ingress Park site to the west and allow for future links to the eastern part of the Peninsula.

15.8.6 It is unlikely that land within CTRL safeguarded area will be available for development during the plan period to 2011. Although CTRL construction is planned to end in 2007, this could extend to 2010, taking into account the constructor's option to defer the start date of CTRL construction. In addition, the safeguarded land will require landraising once CTRL has been completed.

15.8.7 The Environment Agency require the land to be raised to 6.5 metres AOD prior to development taking place, in order to reduce the risk of flooding. The bulk of the land lying below the required level lies in Swanscombe Peninsula West. Approximately 1.25 million cubic metres of fill material will be required to raise the land to 6.5 metres AOD of which half can be acquired within the site. Above and beyond this, it will be necessary to use additional fill material to create a landform which will serve as a suitable platform and backdrop for development.

15.8.8 It is anticipated that movement of material around and into the site, infill and consolidation of material will not begin before 2002 and will continue for up to five years. The landraising of the site and the consolidation of the land, therefore, needs to be commenced within the short term in order to create an acceptable development platform that will enable construction on the site to begin within the Plan period. However, the timing of the development will also depend upon the impact of CTRL construction and land raising activities upon adjacent land. In order to reduce disturbance arising from the construction of the CTRL and traffic movements, including noise and dust, no built development shall take place within 100 metres of the boundary of the CTRL safeguarded area until the CTRL has been completed.

15.8.8a Planning applications for landraising fall to Kent County Council to determine in the light of policy W5 of the Kent Waste Local Plan. The Borough Council will support in principle any application for landraising, ground modelling and stabilisation on the site which make:

1. maximum re-use of existing, on-site waste material as engineering fill, subject to the fill material being suitably treated;
2. use of Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL) tunnel spoil, where possible, as engineering fill, subject to the fill material being suitably treated;
3. use of the River Thames, where possible, for the importation of fill from off-site; and
4. a final landform which would serve as a platform for development and provide opportunities for open space and landscape.

15.8.9 The Environment Agency have reported the presence of water voles at Swanscombe Peninsula, protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. As a designated protected species, the presence of water voles will be a material consideration when determining any planning application.

15.8.9a Development of the area will need to take into account the conservation value of the site, including the retention and, where appropriate, the enhancement of watercourses and wildlife habitats. Any development proposals will also need to retain important landscape features such as woodland areas.

15.8.10 Of the 65 ha of the site suitable for development, it is estimated up to 30 ha may become available for initial development before 2011. A minimum of 25% of the net developable area should be identified for strategic public open space, to be incorporated within the Green Grid network, in addition to local open spaces within the built up areas. This proportion of public open space to site area is less than for other major development sites such as Eastern Quarry, Ebbsfleet and the St Clement's Valley part of Stone Castle. However, this will be compensated by significant public open space on the adjoining site at Swanscombe Peninsula East. Difficult ground conditions on Swanscombe Peninsula East are likely to limit the scope for built development and so increase the opportunities for strategic open space provided there. It therefore would be appropriate to balance competing land uses on these two development sites to take account of the ground conditions. The existing established woodland, predominantly on the western part of the site, between Black Duck Marsh and London Road, should be retained and incorporated within a formal park, in order to provide a backcloth for development close to the riverside.

15.8.10a Swanscombe Peninsula is often subject to very strong winds off the River. The design and elevation of rooflines will need to be well articulated in order to reduce possible wind damage, whilst landscaping should be incorporated to form windbreaks.

15.8.11 It is estimated that the site potentially has capacity for up to 1,700 dwellings of which approximately 450 could be built up to 2011. In addition, there is capacity for some commercial development, in the south eastern part of the site. This commercial development will need to relate to the proposed business centre around the Ebbsfleet station.

MDS7 Swanscombe Peninsula West

Development proposals at Swanscombe Peninsula West will be permitted subject to the following criteria:

1. a mixed use development consisting predominantly of residential use, together with the necessary community infrastructure and some business uses;
2. a development form which integrates with the development at Ingress Park;
3. a minimum of 25% of the net developable area identified for strategic public open space, to be incorporated within the Green Grid network, in addition to local open spaces within the built up areas;
4. the retention and enhancement of water courses, wildlife habitats and landscaping;
5. the creation of a public right of way along the entire river frontage within the site, which will form part of the Green Grid network, and a public slipway;

6. no built development within 100 metres of the boundary of the CTRL safeguarded area until the CTRL has been completed;
7. the provision of the necessary community infrastructure, including a community primary school, to support the development, fully integrated with the proposed development at Ingress Park;
8. approval by the Environment Agency and English Nature of any works that would affect riparian habitats;
9. the provision of cycle and footway networks throughout the site including links to Swanscombe, Greenhithe Station and the river;
10. the provision of retail proposals that meet the needs of local residents and employees and do not adversely affect the vitality and viability of Dartford town centre or existing or proposed district and local centres; and
11. the provision of a bus route network which serves the development and allows bus priority throughout.

Swanscombe Peninsula East

Specific Objective

To safeguard the potential, in the long term, for a mixed-use, predominantly residential development.

- 15.8.12 This part of Swanscombe Peninsula includes the majority of the Broadness Salt Marshes and the western part of Botany Marshes. There are relatively few current uses on the site - a sewage works and pumping station on Botany Marshes, a radar station and a small number of houseboats with mooring rights at the creek on Broadness Salt Marshes. Botany Marshes and land adjoining the marshes to the west are covered by a tipping licence for flue dust. The site is traversed by a 275kV overhead power line. A substantial part of Broadness Salt Marshes has been deposited with cement kiln dust in the past.
- 15.8.13 This area has the potential to contribute up to and beyond the Local Plan period to the regeneration of Kent Thameside. However, the whole site is covered by CTRL safeguarding and it is unlikely that any development will occur before 2011. The safeguarded land will require landraising once CTRL has been completed. Difficult ground conditions on Swanscombe Peninsula East are likely to limit the scope for built development and so increase the opportunities for strategic open space to be provided there. The overall provision of public open space at Swanscombe Peninsula will need to reflect the ground conditions across the whole site. Therefore, whilst a minimum of 25% of the net developable site area of Swanscombe Peninsula West will be sought for public open space, a substantial part of Swanscombe Peninsula East will be expected to be given over to strategic open space, of at least 50% of the developable site area. A public right of way along the entire riverside frontage of the site will also be sought.
- 15.8.14 There is a navigation radar station at Broadness Point at the northern part of the Peninsula. In addition, the relatively unobstructed views across the Point assist shipmasters in navigating this part of the Thames, close to the entrance to Tilbury Docks. Swanscombe Peninsula is subject to very strong winds. Particular attention needs to be paid to the design and elevation of rooflines to avoid wind damage, and the potential for the use of landscaping to form windbreaks. These considerations will need to be taken into account in preparing any development proposals.

MDS8 Swanscombe Peninsula East

Land is allocated at Swanscombe Peninsula East beyond 2011 for mixed use development incorporating, subject to site investigations, predominantly residential use. A minimum of 50% of the net developable site area will be public open space to meet needs arising from

both this site and the adjoining development site at Swanscombe Peninsula West. Landraising will be necessary, prior to any built development taking place, to raise the level of the land to meet the requirements of the Environment Agency.

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