

STRATEGIC OPTIONS

Part 1 Evaluation of Strategic Options

This section provides an evaluation of **key strategic options** carried out by the Council in preparing the Area Action Plan. It looks at a number of **strategic issues** that are important for shaping Dartford Town Centre in the future and deals with the types of land uses and activities that are suitable and how they will be spatially distributed.

Spatial issues focus on how to:

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| 1 | improve the retail offer within the town centre? |
| 2 and 5 | support the shopping function and provide a balance of uses in the Northern Gateway? |
| 3 | create a more attractive evening economy? |
| 4 | improve access to the town centre? |
| 6 and 7 | ensure conflicting land uses do not lead to nuisance and pollution? |

Note that due to similarities and to avoid repetition, some of the issues have been combined (where the same question is applied to different parts of the town centre). Issues 2 and 5 have been considered together in the same table, as have issues 6 and 7.

Also note that some issues (improving the environment and Dartford's assets) have not been assessed as they are integral to the regeneration of the town centre and are required regardless of the scale and type of development taking place.

The **key strategic options** considered in the preparation of the Plan are identified below, together with an assessment and the conclusions leading to the Council's Preferred Approach. These Preferred Strategic Options have been developed into the more detailed Preferred Approaches which are contained in the Area Action Plan.

In carrying out the assessment the following evidence and background material was taken into account:

- findings from the evidence base:
 - Donaldsons: Dartford Retail and Leisure Study 2006,
 - Position Statement 8Cii for the South East Plan Examination in Public 2006,
 - Kent Thameside Hotel Futures 2007.
- results of Enfusion's Sustainability Appraisal.
- responses received during consultation:
 - Donaldsons: Public Consultation: Dartford Town Centre and Northern Gateway Area Action Plans Production Stage Issues and Options, September 2005,
 - Dartford Youth Council, May 2007,
 - Town Centre Focus Day, June 2007,
 - Town Centre Residents Drop-in Session, June 2007.
- policies in strategic plans:
 - Kent Thameside Community Strategy Update 2007-2008,
 - Kent and Medway Structure Plan: Mapping out the Future 2006,
 - A Clear Vision for the South East: The South East Plan Core Document, Draft Plan for Submission 2006.

| Issue 1: Improving the Retail Offer within the Town Centre | | |
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| Option 1a Regenerate the town centre by increasing the net additional retail floorspace. | Option 1b Regenerate the town centre by retaining level of existing retail floorspace. | Option 1c Regenerate the town centre by allowing change of use of some retail units and consolidating within a smaller area. |
| Evidence Base | <p>Dartford Retail and Leisure Study forecasts a need for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • up to 4,350 sq m additional convenience goods floorspace by 2016, in addition to a new food superstore. • up to 15,550 sq m of additional comparison goods floorspace by 2016. • a wider range of higher quality retailers and increased market share of expenditure. <p>These findings support Option 1a.</p> | |
| Sustainability Appraisal (SA) | <p>The SA identifies Option 1a as the preferred option for sustainability. It highlights that the town centre should provide a variety of types and scale of new retail floorspace.</p> | |
| Consultation Responses | <p>Consultation supports Option 1a as it raises the need to attract a wider customer base by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing high quality retailers and a wider retail range, • ensuring a mix of multiples, small retailers and local independents, • encouraging more investment, lower rents and less vacancies, • redeveloping core retail sites, e.g. Lowfield Street, • branding Dartford as a Market town, developing the role of the markets and relocating the Thursday market to bring trade into the High Street. | |
| Strategic Plans | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Community Strategy aims to increase footfall and rents whilst reducing retail yields and vacancy rates. • The Structure Plan identifies Dartford as a Principle Town Centre and supports enhanced quality, range and choice of shopping (EP14). It also supports new retail development of a scale appropriate to the size and function of the town centre and promotes the sequential approach when locating retail development (EP15). • The Draft South East Plan seeks to promote good quality development to regenerate town centres (TC1). It identifies Dartford as a Secondary Regional Centre and a focus for major retail developments (TC2). <p>Guidance supports Option 1a.</p> | |
| Overall Assessment | <p>Given that this assessment points towards the need for a major improvement in retailing, Options 1b and 1c are <u>not</u> supported. In particular, these options will <u>not</u>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • generate sufficient retail floorspace to meet the forecast demand, • create an improved retail offer by relying on existing vacancies or consolidating shops into a smaller area, • encourage and accommodate large multiple retailers. <p>The Preferred Strategic Option is 1a as it is likely to enable an increase in the range and quality of shops. Option 1a is developed through Preferred Approaches: 1 New Shopping Floorspace, 2 Size of Units, 3 Primary Shopping Frontage, 4 Food Stores, 5 Retail Warehousing and 11 The Markets.</p> | |

| Issue 2: Uses to Support the Shopping Function | | | |
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| Issue 5: Balance of Uses in the Northern Gateway | | | |
| Option 2a and 5a Provide a balance of uses – employment, residential, leisure, culture, recreation. | Option 2b and 5b Provide predominantly leisure floorspace. | Option 2c and 5c Provide predominantly residential units. | Option 2d and 5d Provide predominantly work floorspace. |
| Evidence Base | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dartford Retail and Leisure Study identifies that an increased residential population will generate demand for leisure in the future. • There is a limited supply of modern offices in the town centre at Home Gardens, Instone Road/Lowfield Street and Spital Street. There is limited demand as evidenced by few planning applications in the town centre. Crossways has developed a significant office sector. This coupled with permission for significant office development at Ebbsfleet will continue to restrict the viability of town centre office development. • There is a need for residential uses to meet the draft South East Plan requirement. The Position Statement acknowledges that households in Dartford are set to grow by 41% (during 2006-2026) and that housing allocations represent the maximum realistic levels of provision for Dartford. Town centre dwellings have been included within the housing allocations, and are crucial to meeting the overall requirement. • Hotel Futures identifies a need for new hotels in the town centre, with the Northern Gateway being well suited to a budget hotel. <p>These findings support Options 2a and 5a.</p> | | |
| Sustainability Appraisal (SA) | The SA identifies Options 2a and 5a as the preferred options for sustainability. It highlights that the mix of land uses will help to create sustainable communities and that the Northern Gateway should include employment uses as part of a mixed use scheme. | | |
| Consultation Responses | <p>Consultation supports Options 2a and 5a as it raises the need for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a broader evening economy (see Issue 3 below), • a mix of leisure, hotel, housing, community, sports and open space, • redevelopment to provide more attractive facilities, • better links between Northern Gateway and the rest of the town centre. | | |
| Strategic Plans | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Community Strategy aims to provide opportunities for local employment and meet housing targets. • The Structure Plan promotes mixed uses including retail, service, leisure, office, community, cultural and residential (QL5, SS5, EP14). • The Draft South East Plan promotes Dartford as a major town centre where further development should be concentrated (KTG8) with a mix of leisure, culture, services, retail, employment, residential, commercial (TC1) and other uses that attract large numbers of people (TC2, TC3). <p>Guidance supports Option 2a.</p> | | |
| Overall Assessment | <p>Given that this assessment points towards the need for a variety of uses in the town centre and the Northern Gateway, Options 2b, 2c, 2d, 5b, 5c and 5d are <u>not</u> supported. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there is no demand for large, single use office or leisure schemes, • single use schemes will not contribute towards town centre vitality. <p>The Preferred Strategic Options are 2a and 5a as they support a variety of uses. Options 2a and 5a are developed through Preferred Approaches: 3 Primary Shopping Frontage, 6 Land Uses to Complement Shopping, 7 Housing, 8 Leisure, 9 Hotels and 14 Orchard Theatre.</p> | | |

| Issue 3: Creating a More Attractive Evening Economy | |
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| Option 3a Pursue a more balanced economy by encouraging a greater variety of evening time activities, more family friendly activities/venues and more residential development. | Option 3b Maintain the existing mix of night time activities and continue to allow the development of pubs, bars and clubs. |
| Evidence Base | Dartford Retail and Leisure Study identifies that there is no real current demand for additional commercial leisure facilities but with an increased future residential population, demand for leisure will also increase. This finding supports Option 3a . |
| Sustainability Appraisal (SA) | The SA identifies Option 3a as the preferred option for sustainability. It highlights that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a balanced day and evening economy will generate more active and vibrant streetscapes, • an increased residential presence will help to engender community safety and a shared feeling of ownership. |
| Consultation Responses | Consultation supports Option 3a as it raises the need for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improved security, lighting, policing, CCTV, active frontages and more people on the streets, • a choice of family entertainment activities - cinema, snooker clubs, bowling alley and ice rink, • better quality restaurants and a café culture, • an improved public realm especially at the Orchard Theatre and a new Town Square, • a safe and managed evening and night time economy which controls noise, vandalism and antisocial behaviour. |
| Strategic Plans | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Community Strategy aims to provide opportunities for local employment and to provide local facilities. • The Structure Plan supports proposals which expand or diversify service, business or leisure activities (EP14), • The Draft South East Plan promotes attractive and vibrant town centres which are the focal point of a mix of uses including leisure uses (TC1). It also seeks to promote uses that attract large numbers of people including cultural, tourism, social, community venues and leisure uses (TC2 and TC3). Guidance supports Option 3a . |
| Overall Assessment | Given that this assessment points towards the need for a vibrant evening economy which attracts different users into the town centre, Option 3b is <u>not supported</u> . In particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • more pubs and clubs encourage youths into the town centre at night, which reduces the desire for other members of the community to visit the town centre after dark. • a variety of evening activities and a more balanced evening economy will not develop. <p>The Preferred Strategic Option is 3a as it will provide a mixed, vibrant evening economy with a variety of leisure activities that will attract a wider audience. Option 3a is developed through Preferred Approaches: 6 Land Uses to Complement Shopping, 8 Leisure, 9 Hotels and 14 Orchard Theatre.</p> |

| Issue 4: Access to the Town Centre | |
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| Option 4a Dispersed distribution of car parking and bus services | Option 4b Improving accessibility and traffic movement around the town centre, with bus services located in easily accessible locations and car parking easily accessible from the ring road. |
| Evidence Base | <p>A number of weaknesses impacting on transport and accessibility issues have been identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • traffic bottlenecks, • poor cycle infrastructure and access, • few bus services entering the heart of the town centre, • under-utilisation of some car parking and capacity issues at others, • severance effect of the railway embankment and ring road. <p>Consultation is currently taking place on a Strategic Transport Tariff, and the Council has implemented an interim policy.</p> <p>The findings support Option 4b.</p> |
| Sustainability Appraisal (SA) | <p>The SA identifies Option 4b as the preferred option for sustainability. It highlights that improving the quantity of, and access to, public transport infrastructure will reduce energy consumption, improve air quality and support integrated communities.</p> |
| Consultation Responses | <p>Consultation supports Option 4b as it raises the need for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • safe and attractive pedestrian and cycle routes, • low cost public transport, bus stops that maximise footfall, good public transport interchanges and integration of the railway into the town, • sustainable developments that do not cause highway capacity issues, • an improved road system and reduced traffic and congestion, • a more accessible town for the disabled, elderly and carers of children, • improved car parking including residents parking, secure multi-storey car parks, long stay car parking and a pedestrian only High Street at night. |
| Strategic Plans | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Community Strategy aims to increase usage of public transport, reduce dependence on the car, provide local facilities and improve pedestrian and cycle access. • The Structure Plan promotes development that is well served by public transport, walking and cycling and developments that generate a large number of trips should be located where there is a good choice of transport (TP3). It also encourages better interchange facilities and bus priority measures and facilities for pedestrians and cyclists (TP9, TP11). • The Draft South East Plan favours non car modes as a means of access to services and facilities, an improved integrated network of public transport services and encourages development sites that are located and designed to reduce average journey lengths (T1). <p>Guidance supports Option 4b.</p> |
| Overall Assessment | <p>Given that this assessment points towards the need for an integrated approach to transport issues in the town centre, with improved accessibility, more public transport, efficient car parking and better traffic flows, Option 4a is <u>not</u> supported. In particular it will encourage a dispersed pattern of car parking and bus services.</p> <p>The Preferred Strategic Option is 4b as it provides an integrated approach for land use and transport. Option 4b is developed through Preferred Approaches: 12 Central Park, 13 River Darent, 14 Orchard Theatre, 15 Walking, 21 Local Traffic Improvements, 22 Strategic Transport</p> |

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| | Infrastructure, 23 Air Quality, 24 Buses, 25 Dartford Station, 26 Public Car Parking and 27 Cycling. |
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| Issue 6: Juxtaposition of Uses in the Town Centre | | |
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| Issue 7: Juxtaposition of Uses in the Northern Gateway | | |
| Option 6a and 7a Development separated into different uses | Option 6b and 7b All uses intermingled | Option 6c and 7c Intermingling of uses but segregation where uses conflict |
| Evidence Base | <p>There is no specific local based evidence regarding conflicting land uses. However, PPG24 Planning and Noise recognises that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the planning system has the task of guiding development to the most appropriate locations, wherever practicable, noise-sensitive developments should be separated from major sources of noise, new development involving noisy activities, should, if possible, be sited away from noise sensitive land uses, evening and night activities such as discos, night clubs, public houses, fast food restaurants pose difficulties and that noise generated within the premises, from customers in the vicinity and from traffic and car parking should not be under-estimated. <p>The findings support Option 6c and 7c.</p> | |
| Sustainability Appraisal (SA) | <p>The SA identifies Options 6c and 7c as the preferred options for sustainability. It highlights that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> intermingling of land uses helps to create integrated communities, conflicting land uses should be segregated in order to reduce impacts on residential safety and amenity, precincts of late night bars should be avoided. | |
| Consultation Responses | <p>Consultation supports Options 6c and 7c as it raises the need for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> themed quarters and zones for different uses, control of evening and night noise and anti-social behaviour. | |
| Strategic Plans | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Community Strategy aims to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour in Dartford. The Structure Plan promotes mixed use in town centres but also alternative locations for non-conforming uses which cause environmental disruption to residents (SS5). <p>Guidance supports Options 6c and 7c.</p> | |
| Overall Assessment | <p>Given that this assessment points towards the need for intermingling, but with some segregation of conflicting uses, Options 6a, 6b, 7a and 7b are <u>not</u> supported. In particular these options will not safeguard residents' quality of life from noise nuisance.</p> <p>The Preferred Strategic Options are 6c and 7c as they protect residents from potentially disturbing land uses. Options 6c and 7c are developed through Preferred Approaches: 6 Land Uses to Complement Shopping and 7 Housing.</p> | |

The assessment above shows that the following strategic options are preferred and identifies how they have been developed by linking them to the relevant five key themes in Part 2 of the Area Action Plan.

| Strategic Options | Relevant Key Themes |
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| 1a Regenerate the town centre by increasing the net additional retail floorspace | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening the Shopping Offer • Making More of Dartford's Assets |
| 2a Provide a balance of additional uses including residential units, leisure, culture and recreation and work floorspace | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening the Shopping Offer • Uses to Complement Shopping • Making More of Dartford's Assets |
| 3a Pursue a more balanced economy by encouraging a greater variety of evening time activities, including more family friendly activities/venues and more residential development in the town centre | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses to Complement Shopping • Making More of Dartford's Assets |
| 4b Improving accessibility and traffic movement around the town centre, with bus services located in easily accessible locations and car parking easily accessible from the ring road | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making More of Dartford's Assets • An Environment to Enjoy • Getting to the Town Centre |
| 5a Provide a balance of additional uses including residential units, leisure, culture and recreation and work floorspace | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening the Shopping Offer • Uses to Complement Shopping • Making More of Dartford's Assets |
| 6c Intermingling of uses in the town centre but segregation where uses conflict | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses to Complement Shopping |
| 7c Intermingling of uses in the Northern Gateway but segregation where uses conflict | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses to Complement Shopping |

Part B Site Compatibility Matrix

The key themes in Part 2 of the Area Action Plan show that regeneration is crucial and that various parts of the town centre have a different role to play. Part 3 of the Area Action Plan identifies three quarters within the town centre, each with a different character. Within these quarters, a number of **opportunity sites** which have considerable potential for redevelopment have been identified.

This section assesses options for different uses for town centre opportunity sites and compares them against the Preferred Strategic Options (as detailed above). The land use that performs the best in this assessment is identified in the yellow cell at the bottom of each table and has influenced the preparation of the relevant **Preferred Approaches** in Part 3 of the Area Action Plan.

Note that some of the opportunity sites have been grouped together as their site characteristics are similar in nature and they are located in close proximity to each other. The Northern Gateway West, Millpond and Northern Gateway East sites have been considered as a whole, as have the Market Street and Old Council Offices/Iceland Block. Also note that the redevelopment of sites is a critical element in regenerating the town centre. As such, the “do nothing” scenario is not seen as a plausible option and has not been tested.

| Station Approach: Alternative Uses Considered | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| Option 1 Mixed Use Development | Option 2 Retail Only | Option 3 Office Only | Option 4 Leisure Only | Option 5 Residential Only |
| <p><u>Shopping Offer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will complement rather than compete with the primary shopping area <p><u>Complementary Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will create activity throughout the day and evening <p><u>Environment to Enjoy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide better facilities with a renovated station and new plaza <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will locate homes close to the railway station, encouraging people to travel by public transport • provide car parking in an efficient manner • improve walking routes to the town centre and the River Darent, encouraging linked trips to the rest of the town | <p><u>Shopping Offer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will provide additional floorspace, helping to improve the retail offer • will maximise upon passing-by commuter trade • may compete with the primary shopping area. • will <u>not</u> make use of more sequentially preferable sites <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will <u>not</u> ensure linked trips to the rest of the town due to the elevated topography | <p><u>Shopping Offer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will complement rather than compete with the primary shopping area <p><u>Complementary Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will broaden the town centre economy • will <u>not</u> be viable as there is limited demand for office uses, due to floorspace availability at Crossways <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will encourage travel to work by public transport | <p><u>Shopping Offer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will complement rather than compete with the primary shopping area <p><u>Complementary Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will broaden the town centre economy • will create a family evening economy • will <u>not</u> make use of more sequentially preferable sites (cinema or bowling alleys in the town centre and sports at Acacia Hall) <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will provide leisure facilities in an accessible location • will encourage visitors to travel by public transport • will <u>not</u> ensure linked trips to the rest of the town due to the elevated topography | <p><u>Shopping Offer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will increase the customer base <p><u>Complementary Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will help to provide a mix of family housing and apartments • will help to enliven the streets during day and night <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will encourage travel to work by public transport • will encourage walking and cycling through the town centre |
| Meets Preferred Strategic Options 1a, 2a, 3a, 6a See Preferred Approach 29 | Meets Preferred Strategic Options 1a | Meets Preferred Strategic Options 2a | Meets Preferred Strategic Options 2a, 3a | Meets Preferred Strategic Options 2a, 6c |

Northern Gateway West, Millpond and Northern Gateway East: Alternative Uses Considered

| Option 1 Mixed Use Development | Option 2 Retail Only | Option 3 Office Only | Option 4 Leisure Only | Option 5 Residential Only |
|---|--|--|---|---|
| <p><u>Shopping Offer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will complement rather than compete with the primary shopping area • will provide retail warehousing • will provide convenience retail to cater for residents without competing with the town centre <p><u>Complementary Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will provide new homes, sports, leisure, hotel, restaurants and evening uses which will activate the area day and night • will provide a community hub with a range of education, health and social facilities <p><u>Environment to Enjoy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will maximise the Millpond and the River Darent, creating a central focus and a public plaza • will bring a better | <p><u>Shopping Offer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will provide additional floorspace, helping to improve the retail offer • will provide a destination use, helping to enliven this underused area • may compete with the primary shopping area. • will <u>not</u> make use of more sequentially preferable sites <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will <u>not</u> ensure linked trips to the rest of the town | <p><u>Shopping Offer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will complement rather than compete with the primary shopping area <p><u>Complementary Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will broaden the town centre economy • will <u>not</u> be viable as there is limited demand for office uses, due to floorspace availability at Crossways <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will encourage travel to work by public transport • will <u>not</u> ensure linked trips to the rest of the town | <p><u>Shopping Offer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will complement rather than compete with the primary shopping area <p><u>Complementary Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will broaden the town centre economy • will create a secondary leisure quarter and a family orientated evening economy • will <u>not</u> make use of more sequentially preferable sites, (cinema or bowling alleys in the town centre and sports at Acacia Hall) <p><u>Dartford's Assets</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will <u>not</u> protect the Priory Wall against unlawful uses nor allow adequate maintenance <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will provide accessible leisure facilities, encouraging visitors to travel by public transport • may not ensure linked | <p><u>Shopping Offer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will increase the customer base <p><u>Complementary Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will help to provide a mix of family housing and apartments • will help to enliven the streets during day and night <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will encourage travel to work by public transport • may improve walking routes to the town centre and the River Darent, encouraging linked trips to the rest of the town |

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| <p>image to this part of the town</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will retain/provide a flood storage facility <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will create a sustainable community and office/employment uses close to the station, encouraging people to travel to work by non car modes • will encourage linked trips via walking along the River Darent • will provide long stay car/coach parking to serve the railway station/Orchard Theatre • will provide better linkages with the rail station | | | trips to the rest of the town centre | |
| <p>Meets Preferred Strategic Options 1a, 3a, 4b, 5a, 7c. See Preferred Approaches 31, 32 and 33</p> | Meets Preferred Strategic Options 1a | Meets Preferred Strategic Options 5a | Meets Preferred Strategic Options 5a, 3a | Meets Preferred Strategic Options 5a, 7c |

Overy Street: Alternative Uses Considered

| Option 1 Mixed Use Development | Option 2 Retail Only | Option 3 Office Only | Option 4 Leisure Only | Option 5 Residential Only |
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| <p><u>Shopping Offer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will compete with the primary shopping area <p><u>Complementary Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will compete with the primary shopping area and the Northern Gateway • will <u>not</u> make use of more sequentially preferable sites <p><u>Environment to Enjoy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will maximise the setting of the River Darent • will not have sufficient space to segregate conflicting uses <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will encourage people to travel by public transport • will improve walking and cycling along the River Darent, with linked trips to the rest of the town | <p><u>Shopping Offer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will provide additional floorspace, helping to improve the retail offer • will compete with the primary shopping area • will provide large units suitable for retail warehouses. • will <u>not</u> make use of more sequentially preferable sites <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will <u>not</u> ensure linked trips to the primary shopping area due to it's edge of centre location | <p><u>Shopping Offer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will complement rather than compete with the primary shopping area <p><u>Complementary Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will broaden the town centre economy • will <u>not</u> be viable as there is limited demand for office uses, due to floorspace availability at Crossways <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will encourage travel to work by public transport | <p><u>Shopping Offer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will complement rather than compete with the primary shopping area <p><u>Complementary Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will broaden the town centre economy • will create a secondary leisure quarter and a family orientated evening economy • will <u>not</u> make use of more sequentially preferable sites (cinema or bowling alleys in the town centre and sports at Acacia Hall) <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will provide leisure facilities in an accessible location • will encourage visitors to travel by public transport • will <u>not</u> ensure linked trips to the town due its fringe location | <p><u>Shopping Offer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will increase the customer base <p><u>Complementary Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will help to provide a mix of family housing and apartments • will help to enliven the streets during day and night • could create a more active destination e.g. a riverside pub <p><u>Environment to Enjoy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will maximise the setting of the River Darent, • will provide good standards of residential amenity <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will encourage travel to work by public transport • will encourage walking and cycling along the River Darent |
| Meets Preferred Strategic Options 4b | Meets Preferred Strategic Options 1a | Meets Preferred Strategic Options 2a | Meets Preferred Strategic Options 2a, 3a | Meets Preferred Strategic Options 3a, 6c See Preferred |

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| Orchards Shopping Centre: Alternative Uses Considered | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| Option 1 Mixed Use Development | Option 2 Retail Only | Option 3 Office Only | Option 4 Leisure Only | Option 5 Residential Only |
| <p><u>Shopping Offer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will provide additional floorspace and large units, improving the retail offer and encouraging multiples <p><u>Complementary Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will broaden the town centre economy • will create activity day and evening and will build on the Orchards Theatre <p><u>Environment to Enjoy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will complement the environmental improvements outside the Orchard Theatre <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will encourage people to travel by public transport • will provide upper floor car parking with access from the ring road • will create new walking routes to River Darent | <p><u>Shopping Offer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will provide additional floorspace and large units, improving the retail offer and encouraging multiples <p><u>Complementary Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will <u>not</u> introduce other uses that will activate the area both day and evening • will <u>not</u> build on the nearby cultural facility at the Orchards Theatre <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will provide car parking on upper floors, with easy access from the ring road | <p><u>Shopping Offer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will complement rather than compete with the primary shopping area <p><u>Complementary Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will broaden the town centre economy • will <u>not</u> help to retain retail use in the primary shopping area; • will <u>not</u> be viable as there is limited demand for office uses, due to floorspace availability at Crossways • will <u>not</u> make use of more sequentially preferable sites nearer to the rail station <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will encourage travel to work by public transport, being located relatively close to the rail station | <p><u>Shopping Offer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will complement rather than compete with the primary shopping area <p><u>Complementary Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will broaden the town centre economy • will create a family orientated evening economy • will <u>not</u> help to retain retail use in the primary shopping area; <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will provide leisure facilities in an accessible location • will encourage visitors to travel by public transport | <p><u>Shopping Offer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will increase the customer base <p><u>Complementary Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will help to provide a mix of family housing and apartments • will help to enliven the streets during day and night • will <u>not</u> help to retain retail use in the primary shopping area <p><u>Environment to Enjoy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will <u>not</u> protect against existing night economy which causes noise and disturbance <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will encourage travel to work by public transport |
| Meets Preferred Strategic Options 1a, 2a, 3a See Preferred Approach | Meets Preferred Strategic Options 1a | Meets Preferred Strategic Options 2a | Meets Preferred Strategic Options 2a, 3a | Meets Preferred Strategic Options 3a |

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| 35 | | | | |
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| Former Co-op Store: Alternative Uses Considered | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|---|
| Option 1 Mixed Use Development | Option 2 Retail Only | Option 3 Office Only | Option 4 Leisure Only | Option 5 Residential Only |
| <p><u>Shopping Offer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will help to retain an active ground floor frontage • will provide additional floorspace and a large unit, improving the retail offer and encouraging a multiple <p><u>Complementary Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will broaden the town centre economy, with ground floor offices • will provide homes and create activity day and evening <p><u>Environment to Enjoy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will protect/ enhance the street scene <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may encourage people to travel by public transport • will provide bus stops and walking route from Westgate car park. | <p><u>Shopping Offer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will provide additional floorspace and a large unit, improving the retail offer and encouraging a multiple <p><u>Complementary Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will <u>not</u> introduce other uses that will activate the area both day and evening • will <u>not</u> build on the nearby cultural facility at the Orchards Theatre <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may enable improved access to Westgate car park | <p><u>Complementary Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will broaden the town centre economy • will <u>not</u> help to retain retail use in the primary shopping area; • will <u>not</u> be viable as there is limited demand for office uses, due to floorspace availability at Crossways • will <u>not</u> make use of more sequentially preferable sites nearer to the rail station <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may encourage travel to work by public transport | <p><u>Shopping Offer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will complement rather than compete with the primary shopping area <p><u>Complementary Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will broaden the town centre economy • will create a family orientated evening economy • will <u>not</u> help to retain retail use in the primary shopping area; <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may encourage visitors to travel by public transport | <p><u>Shopping Offer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will increase the customer base <p><u>Complementary Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will help to provide a mix of family housing and apartments • will help to enliven the streets during day and night • will <u>not</u> help to retain retail use in the primary shopping area • will <u>not</u> make use of more sequentially preferable sites <p><u>Environment to Enjoy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will <u>not</u> protect against existing night economy which causes noise and disturbance <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may encourage travel to work by public transport |
| Meets Preferred Strategic Options 1a, 2a, 3a, 4b See Preferred Approach 36 | Meets Preferred Strategic Options 1a | Meets Preferred Strategic Options 2a | Meets Preferred Strategic Options 2a, 3a | Meets Preferred Strategic Options 3a |

Lowfield Street/Fairfield Pool Leisure Complex: Alternative Uses Considered

| Option 1 Mixed Use Development | Option 2 Retail Only | Option 3 Office Only | Option 4 Leisure Only | Option 5 Residential Only |
|---|---|--|---|--|
| <p><u>Shopping Offer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will provide additional floorspace and large units, encouraging an anchor store • will help to improve the position in the retail hierarchy, with further retail investment <p><u>Complementary Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will provide homes and community facilities, creating an active hub day and night <p><u>Environment to Enjoy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will provide active frontages, integrated with a town square • will provide better pedestrian environment • will enhance and activate Central Park both day and evening <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will provide car parking and traffic schemes | <p><u>Shopping Offer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will provide additional floorspace and large units, encouraging an anchor store • may compete with the primary shopping area • will <u>not</u> make use of more sequentially preferable sites in the primary shopping area <p><u>Complementary Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will <u>not</u> introduce other uses that will activate the area both day and evening <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will <u>not</u> enable linked trips between retail at the southern end of Lowfield Street with the primary shopping area. | <p><u>Complementary Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will broaden the town centre economy • will <u>not</u> help to retain retail use in the primary shopping area; • will <u>not</u> be viable as there is limited demand for office uses, due to floorspace availability at Crossways • will <u>not</u> make use of more sequentially preferable sites nearer to the rail station <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will <u>not</u> encourage travel to work by public transport | <p><u>Shopping Offer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will complement rather than compete with the primary shopping area <p><u>Complementary Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will broaden the town centre economy • will <u>not</u> enable the integration of leisure with the town centre • will <u>not</u> help to retain retail use in the primary shopping area • will <u>not</u> make use of more sequentially preferable sites (cinema or bowling alleys in the town centre and sports at Acacia Hall) <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may <u>not</u> encourage visitors to travel by public transport. | <p><u>Shopping Offer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will increase the customer base <p><u>Complementary Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will help to provide a mix of family housing and apartments • will help to enliven the streets during day and night • will <u>not</u> help to retain retail use in the primary shopping area <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will <u>not</u> encourage travel to work by public transport |
| <p>Meets Preferred Strategic Options 1a, 2a, 3a, 4b, 6c</p> <p>See Preferred Approach</p> | <p>Meets Preferred Strategic Options 1a</p> | <p>Meets Preferred Strategic Options 2a</p> | <p>Meets Preferred Strategic Options 2a, 3a</p> | <p>Meets Preferred Strategic Options 3a</p> |

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| Market Street and Old Council Offices/Iceland Block: Alternative Uses Considered | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|---|
| Option 1 Mixed Use Development | Option 2 Retail Only | Option 3 Office Only | Option 4 Leisure Only | Option 5 Residential Only |
| <p><u>Shopping Offer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will retain retail frontage, improving the retail offer • will provide flexible outdoor market space • will complement the primary shopping area <p><u>Complementary Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will create new dining, with activity day and evening <p><u>Environment to Enjoy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will create a new town square and environmental improvements • will enhance vistas of Central Park and Holy Trinity Church <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will create a pedestrian route into Central Park | <p><u>Shopping Offer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will provide additional floorspace and a large unit, improving the retail offer and encouraging a multiple • will provide space for an outdoor market <p><u>Complementary Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will <u>not</u> introduce other uses that will activate the area both day and evening • will <u>not</u> build on the nearby cultural facility at the Orchards Theatre <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will encourage linked trips to the rest of the primary shopping area | <p><u>Complementary Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will broaden the town centre economy • will utilise upper storey floorspace • will <u>not</u> help to retain retail use in the primary shopping area; • will <u>not</u> be viable as there is limited demand for office uses, due to floorspace availability at Crossways • will <u>not</u> make use of more sequentially preferable sites nearer to the rail station <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may encourage travel to work by public transport | <p><u>Shopping Offer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will complement rather than compete with the primary shopping area <p><u>Complementary Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will broaden the town centre economy • will create a family orientated evening economy • will <u>not</u> help to retain retail use in the primary shopping area; <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may encourage visitors to travel by public transport | <p><u>Shopping Offer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will increase the customer base <p><u>Complementary Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will help to provide a mix of housing and apartments • will help to enliven the streets day and night • will create residential units on upper floors • will <u>not</u> help to retain retail use in the primary shopping area • will <u>not</u> make use of more sequentially preferable sites <p><u>Environment to Enjoy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will <u>not</u> protect against existing night economy <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may encourage travel to work by public transport |
| <p>Meets Preferred Strategic Options 1a, 2a, 3a, 4b, 6c</p> <p>See Preferred Approach 38 and 42</p> | <p>Meets Preferred Strategic Options 1a</p> | <p>Meets Preferred Strategic Options 2a</p> | <p>Meets Preferred Strategic Options 2a, 3a</p> | <p>Meets Preferred Strategic Options 3a</p> |

| Acacia Hall Complex: Alternative Uses Considered | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|--|
| Option 1 Mixed Use Development | Option 2 Retail Only | Option 3 Office Only | Option 4 Leisure Only | Option 5 Residential Only |
| <p><u>Shopping Offer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will compete with the primary shopping area <p><u>Complementary Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will compete with the primary shopping area and the Northern Gateway • will <u>not</u> make use of more sequentially preferable sites <p><u>Environment to Enjoy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will not have sufficient space to segregate conflicting uses <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may <u>not</u> encourage people to travel by public transport • may improve walking and cycling along the River Darent, with linked trips to the rest of the town | <p><u>Shopping Offer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will provide additional floorspace and large units, encouraging multiples and improving the retail offer • will compete with the primary shopping area • will <u>not</u> make use of more sequentially preferable sites in the primary shopping area <p><u>Complementary Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will <u>not</u> introduce other uses that will activate the area both day and evening • will <u>not</u> build on the sports assets that already exist will <u>not</u> provide a hub of recreational facilities <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will <u>not</u> enable linked trips with the primary shopping area | <p><u>Complementary Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will broaden the town centre economy • will <u>not</u> build on the sports assets that already exist on the site • will <u>not</u> provide a hub of recreational facilities • will <u>not</u> be viable as there is limited demand for office uses, due to floorspace availability at Crossways • will <u>not</u> make use of more sequentially preferable sites nearer to the rail station <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may <u>not</u> encourage travel to work by public transport | <p><u>Shopping Offer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will complement rather than compete with the primary shopping area <p><u>Complementary Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will broaden the town centre economy • will build on the sports assets that already exist • will provide a hub of recreational facilities • will bring new business into the town centre, using conference facilities • will <u>not</u> enable the integration with the rest of the town • will <u>not</u> make use of more sequentially preferable sites <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may <u>not</u> encourage visitors to travel by public transport | <p><u>Shopping Offer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will increase the customer base <p><u>Complementary Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will help to provide a mix of family housing and apartments • will help to enliven the both day and night • will <u>not</u> build on the sports assets that already exist • will <u>not</u> provide a hub of recreational facilities • will <u>not</u> make use of more sequentially preferable sites on the edge of the town <p><u>Environment to Enjoy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will protect against disturbance from the existing night economy <p><u>Town Centre Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may <u>not</u> encourage travel to work by public transport |
| Meets Preferred Strategic Options 4b | Meets Preferred Strategic Options 1a | Meets Preferred Strategic Options 2a | Meets Preferred Strategic Options 2a, 3a, 6c See Preferred Approach 41 | Meets Preferred Strategic Options 3a, 6c |

The assessment shows that the preferred use for the majority of sites is mixed use development.

| Opportunity site | Preferred type of development |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| Station Approach | Mixed use |
| Northern Gateway West | Mixed use |
| Millpond | Mixed use |
| Northern Gateway East | Mixed use |
| Overy Street | Predominantly Residential |
| Orchards Shopping Centre | Mixed use |
| Former Co-op Store | Mixed use |
| Lowfield Street/Fairfield Pool Leisure Complex | Mixed use |
| Market Street | Mixed use |
| Old Council Offices/Iceland Block | Mixed use |
| Acacia Hall Complex | Leisure/Sports |

Overall, the proposed site uses will result in a number of benefits for the town centre.

Benefits of developing opportunity sites include:

- creating a balanced mix of uses to support the primary shopping function, to broaden the economy and to bring vitality to the town centre,
- allowing the most suitable uses to be located in a sequential manner,
- allowing retail uses to be retained in the core shopping area and additional retail floorspace to improve the retail offer,
- allowing some office use to be introduced but only enough to meet demand,
- broadening the leisure base, helping to create a family orientated evening economy that will be attractive to a wider variety of people,
- providing new homes which will enliven the town centre and increase the customer base,
- creating improved accessibility, car parking and traffic movement, integrated as part of new development schemes,
- ensuring some sensitive uses are located in areas where they will not suffer from detrimental noise, nuisance and pollution.