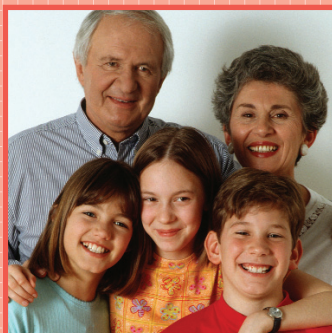


# *Dartford's Site Specific Allocations – Preferred Policy Approaches Document*



*July 2006*

*Part of Dartford's Local Development Framework*

**DARTFORD**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

## Site Specific Allocations – Preferred Policy Approaches Contents

	Page
Preface	1
Chapter 1- The Context for Selecting Sites	2
The Policy Context	2
The South East Plan	2
Government Planning Policy Guidance	2
The Corporate Plan, Community Strategy and other Relevant Policies and Strategies	2
Chapter 2: Housing Allocations	5
Housing Development	5
Housing Supply	6
Housing Allocations	7
Housing Trajectory and Delivery Issues	9
Gypsy Sites	9
Chapter 3: Employment Allocations	10
Employment Development	10
Employment Site Selection	10
Employment Supply	10
Employment Allocations	11
Chapter 4: Transport Schemes	12
Transport Capacity	12
Fastrack	12
Channel Tunnel Rail Link	13
Crossrail	13
Other Safeguarded Transport Schemes	13
Cycle Routes	15
Map 1 Crossrail	16a
Diagram 1 – Cycle Routes	16b
Chapter 5: Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt	17
Oakfield Lane Campus	17
Mabledon Hospital	18
Axton Chase School	19
Chapter 6: Community Sites for Sport, Recreation, Leisure and Cultural Uses	20
Sport, Leisure and Recreation	20
Princes Park	20

Central Park	20
The Acacia Hall Complex	21
Stone Lodge	21
Heritage Interpretation at Ebbsfleet / Eastern Quarry	22
Riverfront Recreation and Leisure	22
Proposed Local Nature Reserves	23
Ancient Woodlands Country Park	24
Map 2 – Managing the Marshes	24a

## **Preface**

1. Dartford Borough lies at the heart of the Thames Gateway, the area selected by the Government to absorb a substantial proportion of the South East's growth. Dartford itself has been earmarked for large scale regeneration with over 15,000 new homes planned for the urban area and a significant new employment centre based around the new Ebbsfleet International station.
2. Dartford's status as a strategic location for growth creates both opportunities and challenges for the area and for the community. On the one hand, development can bring jobs and prosperity, homes for local people who need them, new leisure, recreational and cultural facilities, and new uses for derelict areas, and in turn attract a new entrepreneurial creative community. On the other hand, more activity places more demands on infrastructure and facilities, and the scale and pace of growth can lead to changes which the existing community find difficult to adapt to.
3. The Council's overall planning approach places the needs of the existing community first and foremost. The Local Development Framework will provide a plan for growth, but one which protects and builds on Dartford's assets – its communities, its environment and its economy.
4. The Core Strategy is based on:
  - Setting a clear vision for the pattern of development – the town centre, Ebbsfleet Valley and the riverfront
  - Creating the foundations for strong economic growth so that residential development is more than matched by new job creation
  - Providing clear guidelines for community infrastructure to support development (leisure possibilities and where needed new education, health and other essential services) and ensuring this is provided early
  - Recycling derelict land while protecting and enhancing green space, and bringing green space to the heart of the communities
  - Enhancing the viability and vitality of Dartford town centre
  - Ensuring that new developments provide the right conditions for human interaction and community life to flourish
5. This document allocates land in order to achieve these aspirations and secure the Core Strategy's spatial vision.

## Chapter 1: The Context for Selecting Sites

### POLICY CONTEXT

#### The South East Plan

6. The South East Plan sets out the overall scale of growth to be achieved within the Borough for the 2006 to 2026 period as follows:

##### *Scale of growth*

- *15,700<sup>1</sup> dwellings in the period 2006 to 2026 (15,500 in the urban area and 200 outside the urban area).*
- *Minimum target figure of 959,000 square metres up to 2026.*

#### Government Planning Policy Guidance

7. Planning policy guidance, primarily in PPS1, PPG3 and PPG6 sets the national planning context for prioritising the allocation of sites. The following principles are of particular relevance:

- *Sites which are close to or within urban areas will be favoured over sites which are distant from existing facilities and likely to generate new infrastructure demands*
- *Previously-developed sites will be favoured over greenfield sites, unless they are intrinsically unsuitable for development*
- *Development which supports the viability of Town Centres and provides new use for derelict land will be prioritised*

#### The Corporate Plan, Community Strategy and other Relevant Policies and Strategies

8. The Core Strategy sets out priorities for the selection of sites and they are as follows:

##### **PPA8**

***Sites which are close to or within urban areas will be favoured over sites which are distant from existing facilities and likely to generate new infrastructure demands***

- Takes advantage of better accessibility to existing facilities.
- Concentrates growth within defined limits to create a critical mass of population to support better public transport and other community facilities.

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<sup>1</sup> There is an additional 2001 to 2006 shortfall figure of 1,946 units which also needs to be provided for.

**PPA9**

***Previously-developed sites will be favoured over greenfield sites, unless they are intrinsically unsuitable for development***

- Takes advantage of an existing resource by using previously developed land.
- Redeveloping derelict land in key locations such as within Dartford Town Centre or the Northern Gateway.

**PPA10**

***Development which supports the Town Centre and provides new use for derelict land will be prioritised***

Town Centre Viability

- A significantly improved and diverse<sup>2</sup> retail offer to enhance the town centre's daytime economy.
- A significant increase in the attractiveness of the town centre both to prospective business users and the public through the development of leisure and cultural facilities.
- Increasing the number of potential users of the Town Centre through residential development within and close to it.

Town Centre Vitality

- Increasing the evening economy through an increase in leisure and cultural uses.
- Residential development within the Town Centre which will increase the use of facilities and shops whilst extending the town's active hours.

**PPA11**

***Development which brings activity and destination uses to the riverfront will be promoted***

- Creates marine recreation facilities and related destinations and opportunities.
- Encourages the use of river frontages and walks by the general public.
- Opens up riverside areas to use by the general public.

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<sup>2</sup> This should encompass providing for both mainstream retailers, and independent operators capable of contributing to the creation of specialist character areas

**PPA12**

**Sites within the Ebbsfleet Valley that support the new high quality commercial centre around Ebbsfleet station.**

- The need to create a critical new centre of employment at Ebbsfleet which will act as a vital economic driver for Dartford and Kent Thameside as a whole.
9. These general principles underpin the Council's spatial strategy which foresees a pattern of development which focuses on **Dartford Town Centre**, the **Ebbsfleet Valley** and the **riverfront**. This supports the fundamental objectives of the LDF: town centre renaissance, the creation of a new employment based commercial centre located around the new passenger station at Ebbsfleet, and riverfront rejuvenation, and ensures its conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy. They are also linked to the Council's Corporate Plan 2006-07, the Dartford and Gravesham Community Plan and the Regional Spatial Strategy.

## Chapter 2: Housing Allocations

### Housing Development

10. Dartford has a key role to play in delivering a significant growth area comprising sustainable communities demonstrating exemplar, innovative design.
11. An analysis of available residential land supply shows that there is sufficient land to meet the South East Plan's target of 15,700 homes by 2026, and to make up the 2001 to 2006 shortfall of 1946 units.
12. It should be noted, however, that the capacity of Dartford's transport systems to absorb this level of housing growth is under review. The release of sites for development will be related to the implementation of measures to manage the impact of development in transport terms, acknowledging that the form and mix of development will be planned at the outset to minimise additional travel demands, particularly by private car. The details of this mechanism are currently under consideration and will be published with the LDF Submission Stage documents.
13. Given the Core Strategy's spatial vision and priorities, the site selection process for residential allocations was based on the search sequence set out in paragraph 30 of Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 (PPG3), and the specific criteria set out in paragraph 31 of PPG3:
  - The **sequential test and the availability of previously-developed sites** and empty or under-used buildings and their suitability for housing use
  - The **location and accessibility** of potential development sites to jobs, shops and services by modes other than the car, and the potential for improving such accessibility.
  - The **capacity of existing and potential infrastructure**, including public transport, water and sewerage, other utilities and social infrastructure (such as schools and hospitals) to absorb further development and the cost of adding further infrastructure.
  - The **ability to build communities** to support new physical and social infrastructure and to provide sufficient demand to sustain appropriate local services and facilities.
  - The **physical and environmental constraints on development of land**, including, for example, the level of contamination, stability and flood risk, taking into account that such risk may increase as a result of climate change.

## Housing Supply

14. Sufficient housing land has been identified to meet the South East Plan and Kent and Medway Structure Plan policy requirements. The South East Plan 2006 to 2026 requirement of 15,500 for the urban area and 200 for the rural area results in a combined total of 15,700. A shortfall in completions of 1,946 units against the Kent and Medway Structure Plan requirement between 2001 and 2006 must also be added to this figure, giving a grand total of 17,646 units to accommodate. Table 1 gives further details.

**Table 1 – Comparison with policy requirement**

**Urban**

Requirement	Units	
requirement (KTS part)		
SE Plan 2006~26	15500	
KMSP 2001~6	3900	
<b>TOTAL URBAN REQUIREMENT</b>	<b>19400</b>	
Supply		shortfall / surplus
completions (2001~6)	1954	-1946
identified land ~ commitments and allocations	17594	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19548</b>	<b>+148</b>

**Rural**

<b>Supply</b>	185	-15
SE Plan <b>Requirement</b> - rural	200	

15. The identified commitments and allocations are identified in Policy PPA100 below. The phasing is indicative only, and will not be applied prescriptively.

## Housing Allocations – Preferred Policy Approaches

### PPA100

The following sites, as shown on the Proposals Map, are allocated for residential development.

### Housing sites and phasing<sup>3</sup>

(sites over 4 units)

Ref no.		*density assumptions (units/ha)	2006 to 2026 units	Phasing 2006/11	2011/16	20016/21	2021/26
	<b>Urban</b>						
	<b>Commitments</b>						
1	Ebbsfleet		1600	370	1230		
2	The Bridge		1500	750	750		
3	Ingress Park (balance)		216	216			
4	Waterstone Park (balance)		450	450			
5	Korsnas		370	370			
6	Miskin Road		45	45			
7	Craylands Lane		110	110			
8	Greenwood, Darenth Rd		7	7			
9	33 Bean Rd		18	18			
10	34-40 Station Rd, Greenhithe		6	6			
11	36-40 Heath St		9	9			
12	33-35 Myrtle Road		9	9			
13	115, 116 Priory Road		5	5			
14	Orchard St/Kent Road		6	6			
15	West Hill House, West Hill		22	22			
16	Powder Mill Lane		77	77			
17	adj 182,184 London Rd Stone		5	5			
18	Adj 1 Mildred Cl		14	14			
19	63-69 High St		7	7			
20	Apex Car Park		7	7			
21	225 London Rd Stone		9	9			
22	22- 28 Spital St (2 sites)		20	20			
23	77-83 Hythe St		12	12			
24	52 Spital St		12	12			
25	East Hill ATC		30	30			
26	TA, Stone Place Rd		37	37			
27	125-129 Dartford Road		19	19			
28	Invicta Sports Ground, Burnham Road		14	14			
29	Coldart Centre, King Edward Avenue		25	25			
30	53 Little Queen Street		14	14			
31	389-397 Princes Road		9	9			
	<i>urban capacity study**</i>		1180	295	295	295	295
	<b>Total commitments</b>		<b>5864</b>				

<sup>3</sup> The table will need to be updated before submission stage to reflect the finalised commitments for a 2006 base date. Planning permissions issued after the base date are counted within the windfall allowance.

<b>Allocations</b>							
32	Lowfield Street		516	516			
<u>Dartford Northern Gateway</u>							
33	Northern Gateway West	100	330	330			
34	Northern Gateway East	50	135	135			
35	Millpond Road	100	165	165			
<u>Dartford Town Centre</u>							
36	Station Mound	100	32	32			
37	Overy Street	100	135	135			
38	Co-op	100	37	37			
39	Fairfield Pool	100	130	130			
40	Ingress Park / Swanscombe Peninsula Interface <sup>4</sup>	50	600	300	300		
41	Thames Europort / Johnson's Wharf	50	850		850		
42	Everards		160	160			
43	West Hill Hospital		239	239			
44	Fantaseas		175	175			
45	Eastern Quarry		7,250	650	2200	2200	2200
46	Stone House Hospital		130	130			
47	Dartford West Campus		136	136			
48	St. James' Lane Pit	allow for OS	500		500		
49	Darenth Road		60	60			
50	Tylers House, Dartford		40	40			
51	Watling Street		70	70			
52	Frontage on St Mary's Rd, Stone		40	40			
<b>Total allocations</b>			<b>11,730</b>				
<b>TOTAL URBAN SUPPLY</b>			<b>17,594</b>	<b>6479</b>	<b>6125</b>	<b>2495</b>	<b>2495</b>

<b>Rural</b>							
<b>Commitments</b>							
53	8,10 Main Rd Sutton at Hone		8	8			
54	r/o 49-59 Tile Kiln Lane		8	8			
55	Hook Place Farm		8	8			
56	Clockhouse Stables, Green St Green		11	11			
<b>Total commitments</b>			<b>35</b>				
<b>Allocations</b>							
57	Axton Chase		150	150			
<b>TOTAL RURAL SUPPLY</b>			<b>185</b>	<b>185</b>			

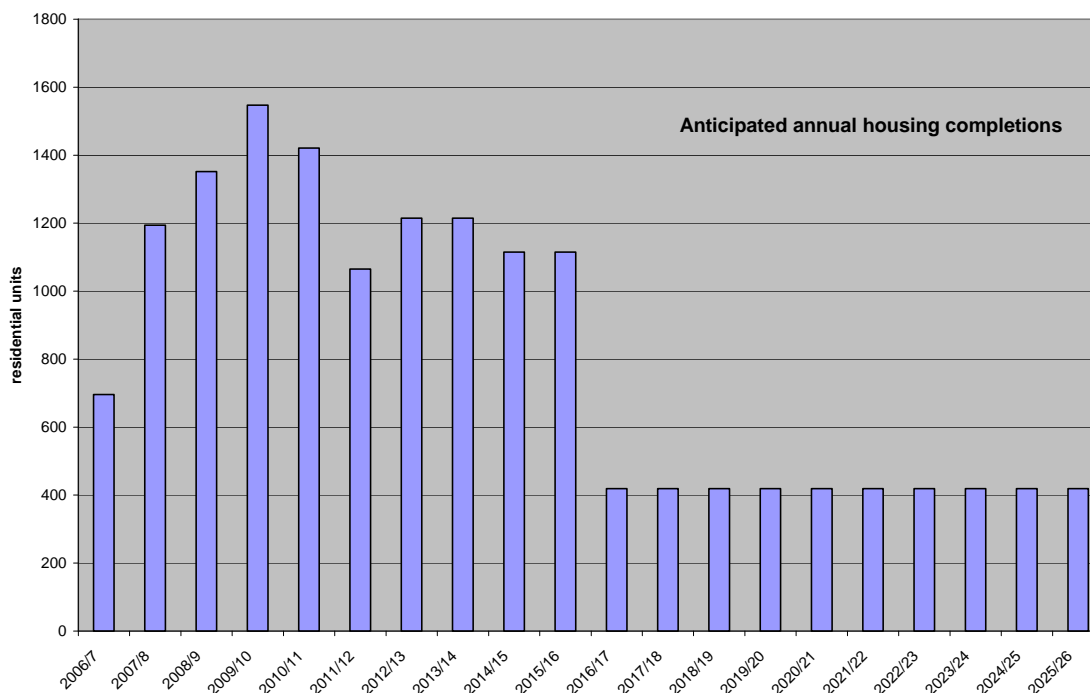
\* density as per proposal where not stated

\*\* an element of unidentified 'windfall' sites is anticipated – see Urban Capacity Study element

<sup>4</sup> Includes increased capacity within the last phase of the Ingress Park development and a "rounding-off" portion at the western end of Swanscombe Peninsula to include a mix of uses to create a community focus.

## Housing Trajectory and Delivery Issues

16. The above scenario results in the housing delivery trajectory shown in the Table below. Building rates can be uneven and the LDF's Annual Monitoring Report process will keep a close watching brief on delivery. An essential component of the new LDF system is the ability to incorporate flexibility within the plan-led process. This is particularly vital with regard to housing delivery.



## Gypsy Sites

17. The requirements for dealing with site specific allocations to satisfy gypsy and traveller needs is clearly set out in guidance (Circular 1/06). In process terms this means that local authorities must first identify need and then provide for that need. Dartford's need will be assessed in a "Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment" (GTAA), currently in the process of being undertaken. The results will be fed into regional work being undertaken on the subject.

### Gypsy Sites - Preferred Policy Approaches

#### PPA101

**The Council will undertake the required Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment to understand the potential need for sites within the Borough, and formulate policy accordingly.**

## **Chapter 3: Employment Allocations**

### **Employment Development**

18. Dartford has a key role to play in delivering a major new employment centre for Thames Gateway as a whole. Sub-regional guidance identified the potential to create significant opportunities for employment within the Borough to reduce Kent's current reliance on London for jobs. This has already begun with development at Crossways and will continue with a mix of employment at The Bridge and a prime focus around Ebbsfleet station.

### **Employment Site Selection**

19. In conformity with the Core Strategy, sites identified for major employment uses contribute to one or more of four main aspirations:
  - the creation of a significant new employment centre at Ebbsfleet;
  - supporting the development of mixed uses at North Dartford – this includes both continuing investment at Crossways, and new uses at The Bridge and Littlebrook;
  - supporting regeneration and revitalisation within or close to Dartford Town Centre; and
  - providing key employment uses within sustainable mixed use communities.

### **Employment Supply**

20. The South East Plan contains a minimum target of 959,000 square metres of employment floorspace by 2026. An analysis of available employment land supply shows that the Council can allocate 940,345 square metres for employment floorspace. The difference is due to a reduced amount of employment floorspace having been agreed at Eastern Quarry.

**Employment Allocations – Preferred Policy Approaches**

**PPA102**

The following sites, as shown on the Proposals Map, are allocated for employment development:

<b>Ref No.</b>	<b>Commitments</b>	<b>A2/B Uses Square Metres</b>
	Ebbsfleet	265,000
	The Bridge	185,000
	Ingress Park (balance)	3,667
	GSK industrial expansion site	46,500
	Crossways (balance)	74,198
	Other (under construction, completed but vacant, less pending losses)	40,489
	Littlebrook (post 2005)	72,089
	<b>Total Commitments</b>	<b>686,943</b>

<b>Allocations</b>		
<b>Town Centre Revitalisation Sites</b>		
Dartford Northern Gateway		
	Northern Gateway West	9,107
	Northern Gateway East	15,030
	Millpond Road	6,365
Dartford Town Centre		
	Station Mound	1,900
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>32,402</b>
<b>Sustainable Mixed Use Communities</b>		
	Eastern Quarry	120,000
	Eastern Quarry (Second Site)	10,000
	Swanscombe Peninsula West	25,000
	St Clements Valley	50,000
	Darenth Road	16,000
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>221,000</b>
	<b>Total Allocations</b>	<b>253,402</b>
	<b>Total Commitments and Allocations</b>	<b>940,345</b>

## Chapter 4: Transport Schemes

### Transport Capacity

21. The Council is currently engaged with its KTS partners (Gravesham Borough Council, the Kent Thameside Delivery Board, Kent Highway Authority and the Highways Agency) in a strategic review of the impact of planned development on the transport systems of Kent Thameside. It is expected that a package of specific transport measures and policy intentions will be identified, together with a phased implementation programme which will be linked to the release of sites for development. The objective of the linked transport and development programme will be to ensure that new development places as few additional demands on the network as is practicable, thus ensuring that development is sustainable in transport terms.
22. The SSA identifies specific transport projects for which land will be required. Additional allocations may become necessary as a result of the works described above.

### Fastrack

23. A key element in the Transport Strategy for Kent Thameside is the *Fastrack* public transport system. The *Fastrack* network includes dedicated “track” for use by local public transport services. This track will be made up of sections of segregated bus-only road, on-street bus lanes and, where these are not possible because of constraints on existing roads, priority measures at junctions.
24. The Fastrack system will be developed in phases. Phase One between Dartford and Gravesend town centres via Darenth Valley Hospital and Bluewater began operation in March 2006. The relative timing of other phases will depend on the order in which new development comes forward. The exact route of Fastrack through the major development sites will be determined as part of the design and layout of individual sites.

#### **Fastrack - Preferred Policy Approaches**

##### **PPA103**

**Land shown on the Proposals Map is safeguarded for the construction of the Fastrack public transport system. Other development will not be permitted on the land covered by this safeguarding if it would be likely to prejudice the implementation of this scheme.**

## Channel Tunnel Rail Link

25. In 1996, the Secretary of State issued the current safeguarding directions for the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL). Until the safeguarding directions are lifted, the line of the CTRL and areas of associated works, including access roads to the station and the new interchange on the A2 trunk road, are safeguarded.

### Channel Tunnel Rail Link - Preferred Policy Approaches

#### PPA104

**Land shown on the Proposals Map is safeguarded for the construction of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link and related works. Other development will not be permitted on the land covered by this safeguarding if it would be likely to prejudice the implementation of this scheme.**

## Crossrail

26. The Council supports the extension of Crossrail to Ebbsfleet. In February 2005, the Secretary of State for Transport issued safeguarding directions for the Crossrail route between Abbey Wood and Hoo Junction which covers land within Dartford Borough, as shown on Map 1. The line of the Crossrail route is safeguarded.

### Crossrail - Preferred Policy Approaches

#### PPA105

**Land shown on the Proposals Map is safeguarded for the Crossrail route. Other development will not be permitted on the land covered by this safeguarding if it would be likely to prejudice the implementation of this scheme.**

## Other Safeguarded Transport Schemes

27. Safeguarding transport schemes is done with the objective of managing travel demand in a more sustainable way. This Plan therefore makes provision for a limited amount of road building and junction improvements for the purposes of access to new development sites, efficient traffic management or to meet environmental or other objectives. The Council will expect such schemes to comply with best practice in terms of environmental mitigation.
28. The following identified transport schemes are proposed to be safeguarded:
- Safeguarding of road improvement off University Way to serve development at Dartford Fresh Marshes. The scheme is to be funded by the developer.
  - North Dartford Link: Land is safeguarded for a scheme to provide a transport link between North Dartford and Crossways across the A282 for Fastrack as an early part of the infrastructure required by the Bridge development.

- Greenhithe Triangle: the “Everards Link” to provide a dedicated Fastrack link from Greenhithe Station into the Ingress Park site.
  - Town Centre Southern Access Road: it is proposed to realign the south east quadrant of the town centre ring road, which currently separates the town centre from Central Park, with a new road running from the High Street opposite Holy Trinity Church southwards and then westwards between the ornamental gardens of Central Park and the playing fields to the south, rejoining Lowfield Street at the site of the Glentworth Club, and incorporating significant pedestrian priority at Market Street, upper Lowfield Street, and throughout its route across Central Park. This route will facilitate the redevelopment of the southern part of the town centre.
  - London Road / St Clements Way Junction Improvement: This Kent County Council scheme will facilitate development of sites that will impact on London Road and its junctions.
  - A2/A282 Dartford Improvement. This major Highways Agency scheme forms part of the Government’s Targeted Programme of Improvements and includes providing free flow slips at the A2/ A282/M25 interchange (junction 2 of the M25).
29. Three additional transport schemes are also likely to be required but no specific scheme can be identified at this point in time. Work is continuing in this regard and land will be safeguarded if required when the results are known:
- Bean Interchange Improvement – parties agree that without improvement, the junction will experience operational difficulties but a practical design solution has not yet been proven in technical terms.
  - Peninsula Way – the potential requirement for this infrastructure is safeguarded as part of the conditions of the Ebbsfleet planning permission. This is likely to be a long term requirement.
  - North Dartford Link: The provision of a general traffic link (together with provision for pedestrians and cyclists) between the Bridge development and Crossways across the A282 may be required to relieve transport demands at Junction 1A in the future.

#### **Other Safeguarded Transport Schemes - Preferred Policy Approaches**

##### **PPA106**

**a. Land shown on the Proposals Map is safeguarded for the construction of the following schemes. Other development will not be permitted on this land if it would be likely to prejudice the implementation of any of these schemes:**

- 1. A2/A282 Dartford Improvement;**
- 2. Access to Dartford Fresh Marshes;**
- 3. North Dartford Link;**

4. **Greenhithe Triangle comprising the “Everards Link”, Station Road to London Road;**
5. **A new road at Central Park; and**
6. **London Road / St Clements Way Junction improvement**

#### **Other Potential Schemes - Preferred Policy Approaches**

##### **PPA107**

**Where the Council is unable to safeguard a definite scheme, but considers a scheme may be required in future, a precautionary approach will be promoted whereby:**

- a. **The Council recognises the need for Bean Interchange to be improved - no development will be permitted that would prejudice delivery of this improvement.**
- b. **The Council recognises that in the long term, there may be a need for the road scheme known as “Peninsula Way” or a similar scheme to be constructed – development at Ebbsfleet protects this possibility and no development will be permitted that would prejudice delivery of this possible eventuality.**
- c. **The Council recognises that in the long term, there may be a need for a general traffic link to be created connecting The Bridge development with Crossways – no development will be permitted that would prejudice delivery of this possible eventuality.**

#### **Cycle Routes**

30. Provision of good quality cycle routes in the Borough is an important element in the Kent Thameside Urban Transport Strategy. Such routes should be direct, attractive and safe to encourage usage. The Millennium route of the National Cycle Network - promoted by Sustrans, the sustainable transport charity - crosses the Borough. Two alignments of the route are proposed; an inland route has already been established and a route alongside the Thames will be constructed as riparian development progresses.
31. Cycle routes can be designed with a range of different users and journey purposes in mind. For more functional uses, such as journeys to work or school, more direct routes are needed, closely related to desire lines from origins of demand. Routes to school need to take account of the needs of younger, less experienced cyclists. For leisure uses, routes can be less direct but should be more attractive in themselves taking in landmark locations and places of interest. Proposals for new cycle routes will need to ensure they are compatible with the Green Grid network. Cycle routes should be designed to the standards for cycleways set out in Kent Design; further guidance can be found in Kent County Council's “A Cycling Strategy for Kent”.

**Cycle Routes - Preferred Policy Approaches**

**PPA108**

**Planning permission will not be granted for development that would prejudice the implementation or operation of the cycle route network as shown at Diagram 1, including a new section of off-highway route: the Riverside Route element of the Millennium route of the National Cycle Network NCR1.**

## Chapter 5: Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt

32. Annex C to PPG2 recognises that Green Belts contain some major developed sites such as factories, power stations, water and sewage treatment works, military establishments, civil airfields, hospitals and research and education establishments. Where a major developed site is identified in a Local Plan, limited infilling or redevelopment, which meets the criteria in paragraph C3 or C4 of PPG2, is not “inappropriate development”. Only three such sites in the Borough are of such a scale and meet the criteria and are thus identified: Oakfield Lane campus, Mabledon Hospital site and Axton Chase School.

### Oakfield Lane Campus

33. The Council regards the Oakfield Lane campus as an important higher educational facility, and wishes to see it continue in this role. Locally accessible higher education is important in its own right but is central to the development of Kent Thameside as a ‘learning region’. As a major developed site in the green belt, infilling or redevelopment for educational purposes may take place within the existing campus in accordance with Annex C, PPG2. Such proposals should be based on the aggregate ground floor area of the existing buildings (the “footprint”). Development proposals should be accompanied by a masterplan prepared by the applicant. Proposals for limited infilling at major developed sites in continuing use should not lead to a major increase in the developed proportion of the site.
34. The campus contains many of the sports facilities that formed part of the original physical education college established by Swedish sports pioneer, Martina Bergman-Osterberg (‘Madame Osterberg’) in 1895. There is also an archive of her effects and other mementos. The preservation of these features must be taken into account in any proposals for reuse or redevelopment of the campus.

### Oakfield Lane Campus - Preferred Policy Approaches

#### PPA109

**Planning permission will be granted for further educational buildings, redevelopment and/or extensions of existing buildings, provided that the proposals:**

- a. do not reduce the openness of the Green Belt,**
- b. respect the historical integrity of the original buildings, grounds and other features,**
- c. will not lead to a major increase in the developed proportion of the site, and**
- d. do not include structures which exceed the height of those already on the site.**

## **Mabledon Hospital**

35. The site of the former Mabledon Hospital lies to the south of the A2 and is divorced from the main urban area. Although the buildings have been demolished the footprint of the site (9485 sq m) has been registered and it therefore qualifies as a Major Developed Site under Annex C of PPG2. The site forms part of English Partnerships' "Hospital Sites Programme". However, the manner in which the footprint may be developed should be informed by the locational sustainability criteria set out in PPG3. In these terms, the site does not perform well as a location for housing:
- it is not well located in relation to jobs, shops, and services by modes other than car
  - the site is not of a sufficient capacity to build a new community or to significantly improve the viability of Lane End
  - there are enough previously developed urban and strategic sites available elsewhere to meet housing needs
36. Notwithstanding Annex C of PPG2, the sustainability arguments therefore militate against any general residential use or other development that might generate significant volumes of traffic on this site. However, the site is suitable for a use which is appropriate to a semi-rural environment and does not generate significant sustained volumes of activity or traffic. The site could accommodate a modern bereavement services facility specifically designed to capitalise on its natural setting or a residential home, or a combination of similar uses.
37. Since becoming vacant, the nature conservation value of the site has increased and any redevelopment proposals will need to address this enhanced value as part of a design-led scheme.

### **Mabledon Hospital - Preferred Policy Approaches**

#### **PPA110**

#### **Proposals for development at Mabledon Hospital site must:**

- **not exceed the registered footprint**
- **not generate significant sustained volumes of activity and traffic**
- **not detract from the residential amenity of Lane End**
- **be appropriate to its semi-rural setting and must not damage the local landscape**
- **take account of nature conservation interest, including its relationship with the adjoining Darenth Wood Site of Special Scientific Interest, and make appropriate provision for its management**

- **provide green grid spaces and links, and community woodland**
- **be based on an agreed planning brief for the site**

**Proposals may include a modern bereavement services facility or residential care home (Use Class C2 Residential Institutions). Residential dwellings (Use Class C3) will not be acceptable.**

### **Axton Chase School**

38. The site of Axton Chase School lies to the south of the B260 in Longfield and is enclosed on two sides by the built-up area of the village. Planning permission has been granted by Kent County Council to relocate the School on an adjacent site. If this permission is implemented the original school site will be declared surplus. Should this be the case, and in the event of it not being re-occupied by another educational user, the requirements of Annex C of PPG2 will apply. In this case, a residential redevelopment scheme would be appropriate and this should include an element of keyworker housing.

### **Axton Chase School - Preferred Policy Approaches**

#### **PPA111**

**Should the Axton Chase School site become redundant, proposals for a predominantly residential development in accordance with guidance given in Annex C of PPG2 on a footprint basis of 9,130 square metres will be permitted. Proposals will be required to:**

- **provide a comprehensive scheme for the layout and phasing of the development of the whole site including the provision of open space; and**
- **incorporate a form of development and a density of 30 dwellings per hectare in keeping with its semi rural environment; and**
- **given the sensitive location of the site, normal domestic permitted development rights should be withdrawn through the development control process; and**
- **to provide a good mix of family housing incorporating 30% of affordable housing with a level of keyworker accommodation to be agreed with the Council.**

## Chapter 6: Community Sites for Sport, Recreation, Leisure and Cultural Uses

39. The Corporate Plan stresses the need for Dartford to be “a place of quality and choice”. In addition to providing for housing and employment growth, this also means providing for areas and sites where people can enjoy their leisure time by taking part in active sports, enjoy the natural environment or have the local area’s history and heritage referenced and interpreted for them. The Core Strategy emphasises the need to provide:

- A full range of opportunities to participate in cultural and leisure pursuits as well as sport and recreation, in attractive surroundings and with access to first class facilities

40. This chapter allocates sites to contribute to this strategic outcome.

### Sport, Leisure and Recreation

41. Significant sport and recreation developments are to be located at the following sites.

#### Princes Park

42. Princes Park will be developed into a community focus for sport. A new stadium is currently being built and the Princes Golf Club will be restored. There may be opportunities to expand provision to include other sports.

#### Princes Park - Preferred Policy Approaches

##### PPA112

**Princes Park is allocated as a community sports park providing a variety of formal sport and recreation facilities.**

#### Central Park

43. The Council has recently acquired the Acacia Club land which immediately adjoins Central Park, and other land formerly part of the Glentworth Club is to be made publicly accessible as part of the Lowfield Street development proposals. As a result, Central Park will be significantly expanded by bringing the green parts of the former private Club lands into the Park area. There is also the potential to include links to land to the south of Princes Road, around Brooklands Lake as well. Master-planning is underway to deliver an improved and expanded Central Park<sup>5</sup>.

#### Central Park - Preferred Policy Approaches

##### PPA113

**a. Central Park will be expanded to include other adjoining green spaces. Masterplanning will define future uses within the Park area.**

<sup>5</sup> After extensive consultation, this will include the provision of a skate park within the heart of Dartford's Central Park, close to the River Darent.

- b. The Dartford Town Centre Area Action Plan will provide detailed guidance for how Central Park can be positively linked to the Town Centre to support lasting regeneration.**

### **The Acacia Hall Complex**

44. Dartford Borough Council recently acquired the Acacia Club lands, much of which will form a natural extension to Central Park. At the northern end of the site is the Acacia Hall Complex which contains the listed building Acacia Hall and the more recently constructed banqueting and sports halls, outdoor recreation facilities and parking and circulation areas. It is the Council's intention to improve and enhance the recreational facilities within the Acacia Hall Complex<sup>6</sup>.

#### **The Acacia Hall Complex - Preferred Policy Approaches**

##### **PPA114**

- a. The built facilities within the Acacia Hall Complex will be improved and enhanced as a community leisure hub providing a variety of both formal and informal sport, recreation, cultural and leisure facilities.**
- b. The Dartford Town Centre Area Action Plan will provide detailed guidance for the site and how it can be positively linked to the Town Centre to achieve lasting regeneration.**

### **Stone Lodge**

45. Stone Lodge has been identified as a new urban park to cater for a variety of community sports and leisure needs. Support in principle is given for further phases of sports development. Ambitions include the provision of local community benefits as well as centres of sporting excellence and the first step in this latter aim has been the construction of the new Dartford Judo Centre of Olympic standard.

#### **Stone Lodge - Preferred Policy Approaches**

##### **PPA115**

**Land at Stone Lodge is allocated as a new urban park. This will provide both formal and informal facilities for a variety of sport, recreation and leisure interests. The facilities must cater for local community needs. Further specialised sporting facilities will be appropriate in principle subject to other land use planning considerations.**

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<sup>6</sup> Plans have been announced to relocate Fairfield Pool within the Acacia site. A feasibility study is also currently underway to assess the potential of the site as a suitable location for the specialist Bird College (dance and theatre performance).

### **Heritage Interpretation at Ebbsfleet / Eastern Quarry**

46. Construction of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link has resulted in significant archaeological finds. Further development within the Ebbsfleet Valley / Eastern quarry area is likely to produce additional finds.
47. The legal agreement relating to the Ebbsfleet proposals requires a dedicated space for the interpretation of local heritage artefacts. There have also been preliminary discussions about the possibility of delivering a related heritage centre at Alkerden Farm, as part of the Eastern Quarry proposals. Depending on viability and operational and management requirements, such a centre could provide for the interpretation of the wider heritage of the local area.
48. Further discussions will need to take place to determine the best option, and these discussions should be held in close consultation with both Dartford and Gravesham Councils, the Kent Thameside Delivery Board (who have produced a publication on the area's heritage) and Kent County Council's Heritage and Archaeology team.

#### **Heritage Interpretation Site - Preferred Policy Approaches**

##### **PPA116**

**Space is allocated within the overall Ebbsfleet / Eastern Quarry development for the interpretation of the local heritage and archaeological finds. The delivery and management of this space will be agreed with the Council in consultation with its partners and within the context of the overall heritage interpretation requirements of the local environment.**

### **Riverfront Recreation and Leisure**

49. The recent Kent Thameside Waterfronts and Waterways study highlighted the opportunity to maximise public access to the riverfronts in general and particularly where specific points of interest exist. It also highlighted the need to look at the entire Dartford and Gravesham riverside area with a view to developing a strategy to rationalise the pattern of uses which dominate the riverside. Within the context of that study, three sites are allocated for specific marine recreational uses as follows.

#### **Riverfront Sites - Preferred Policy Approaches**

##### **PPA117**

**Rejuvenation and redevelopment of sites along the River Thames will be delivered in the context of a wider strategy to rationalise the pattern of riverside uses along the entire Dartford/Gravesham riverside which the Council will develop in dialogue with partners. Any rationalisation strategy will need to consider the viability of existing operational uses and whether any are redundant or require relocation.**

##### **PPA118**

**With regard to sites along the River Thames:**

- a. Land is allocated at the eastern end of Ingress Park where Lovers Lane reaches the river for marine recreation, including moorings, a slipway, easy launch facilities or a full-scale marina.
- b. Land is allocated at the Thames Europort / Johnson's Wharf site for marine recreation, including moorings, a slipway, easy launch facilities or a full-scale marina.

Subject to other planning considerations, the inclusion of related uses may also be appropriate to enliven this area of the riverfront.

#### PPA119

The Northern Gateway Area Action Plan will contain the broad strategy for future development along the River Darent north of Dartford Town Centre. Land on either bank of the River Darent, from the half tide lock, through the industrial areas to the north of Dartford Town Centre is allocated for a mix of uses that will include an element of marine recreation and take advantage of the riverside setting. The Northern Gateway Area Action Plan will contain more specific guidance on the future of this site.

50. The Area Action Plans for Dartford Town Centre and the Northern Gateway will elaborate on the contributions specific development sites can make in terms of rejuvenating the frontages along the River Darent.

### Proposed Local Nature Reserves

#### Dartford Marshes and Ebbsfleet

51. The Kent Wildlife Trust identifies *Kent Wildlife Sites* which although not always of national importance are nevertheless of sufficient interest to merit recognition. The scientific and nature conservation value of *Kent Wildlife Sites* can be enhanced through their designation as local nature reserves. Two of these are proposed for Local Nature Reserve status: Dartford Marshes and Ebbsfleet.
52. While the designation does not enjoy the same statutory protection as a *Site of Special Scientific Interest*, it does give a strong foundation for the defence of the area against competing land uses and for the management of habitats. The introduction of management plans, the possible availability of grants and the provision of facilities for field study and interpretation can also help in this.
53. The Council has recently approved a *Managing the Marshes Strategy* for Dartford Marshes. This will form the basis for the establishment of the Local Nature Reserve.
54. The establishment of a reserve at Ebbsfleet – (partly in Gravesham Borough Council's area) by the private sector and other agencies is also being considered. The development proposals for Ebbsfleet require an ecology framework to be prepared to safeguard the future management of the area along the Ebbsfleet stream corridor. The proposed development at Ebbsfleet may offer the opportunity to move toward formal designation of the potential nature reserve and the Council will pursue this further.

### **Proposed Local Nature Reserves - Preferred Policy Approaches**

#### **PPA120**

Dartford Marshes, as shown on Map 1 is allocated for the establishment of a Local Nature Reserve.

#### **PPA121**

Development at Ebbsfleet must include an ecological framework that will provide for the long-term management of the Ebbsfleet stream corridor's ecological interest. Designation as a formal nature reserve is supported in principle.

### **Ancient Woodlands Country Park**

55. This refers to the land from Darenth Country Park to Beacon Wood Country Park, including Darenth Wood, Lords Wood and Ladies Wood. The entire site has a variety of significant habitats and protection for nature conservation purposes is paramount. The area also has significant potential as an educational resource, as well as use for informal recreation. The Council has prepared a "Proposals Plan" to guide future management and bidding opportunities.

### **Ancient Woodlands Country Park - Preferred Policy Approaches**

#### **PPA122**

The sites comprising the Ancient Woodlands Country Park are allocated for the provision of improved access and a meaningful network of paths and routes, providing for a variety of leisure interests, in accordance with the Council's "Proposals Plan" for the Park.