

# **Dartford Development Policies Plan**

*Identified Employment Areas  
Final (June 2016)*

**DARTFORD**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

**Submission June 2016**

## Contents

<b>1. Introduction .....</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>2. Local Economy Review .....</b>	<b>2</b>
Local Economic Profile.....	2
Employment Land.....	4
<b>3. Policy Context .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>4. Sites Assessment .....</b>	<b>11</b>
Individual Site Assessment .....	11
<b>5. Conclusions .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Appendix I: Core Strategy Policies CS7 &amp; CS8 .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Appendix II: Site Screening and Selection Process .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Appendix III: Individual Site Assessment Forms.....</b>	<b>22</b>

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 One of the core principles of sustainable development contained within the National Planning Policy Framework is achieving a sustainable economy. Paragraph 17 states that planning should:

*“proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs. Every effort should be made objectively to identify and then meet the housing, business and other development needs of an area, and respond positively to wider opportunities for growth. Plans should take account of market signals, such as land prices and housing affordability, and set out a clear strategy for allocating sufficient land which is suitable for development in their area, taking account of the needs of the residential and business communities”*

- 1.2 The Council’s Core Strategy aligns with these principles and outlines an ambitious vision for Dartford as a place of quality and choice. Part of this vision is a prosperous local economy with sustained job growth. The Borough’s pattern of future development is based on a balanced and sustainable pattern of land use and transport where growth of new homes is in tandem with growth of the local economy.
- 1.3 The Ebbsfleet Valley and other strategic development opportunities provide a unique opportunity to realise this vision by attracting businesses from among the strong growth sectors in the economy, along with an associated skills uplift in order to provide a reliable and appropriately skilled labour force. This will improve the quantity, range and quality of employment opportunities in the Borough, providing further incentive for working closer to home leading to greater self-sufficiency and reducing reliance on commuting to London.
- 1.4 Dartford’s location in relation to Greater London and its excellent transport infrastructure give it strong competitive advantages. The Borough’s position in relation to the strategic road network has already brought substantial investment through developments at Crossways Business Park, The Bridge and Bluewater Shopping Centre. Ebbsfleet International station also provides a high speed rail-link to London, Kent and continental Europe, giving an opportunity for businesses to take advantage of Dartford’s location to the benefit of the local economy.
- 1.5 Whilst the Core Strategy outlines the amount and type of business growth required over the plan period (i.e. to 2026) in order to achieve its overall vision, through policies CS7 and CS8, a further policy is needed to manage change at existing employment sites. The new Development Plan Policy DP20 will allow for appropriate redevelopment opportunities to take place whilst maintaining a supply of different size and type of sites to continue to meet the commercial needs of a variety of businesses. This policy will therefore help to deliver the Core Strategy’s identified

growth through appropriate development management in planned locations, whilst safeguarding existing employment locations from inappropriate development that would undermine their continued commercial function. This approach aligns with the principles of national planning policy (specifically Chapter 1 of the NPPF) by supporting existing business sectors in the Borough and the development needs of business at the identified sites, thereby helping support sustainable economic growth.

- 1.6 This document outlines the Council's approach to the formulation of Policy DP20 and identifying sites to be protected under it. Chapter 2 gives information on Dartford's local economy as the basis for the need for new policy. Chapter 3 outlines the national and local policy context and how Policy DP20 fits into this policy framework as well as information on the type of sites that might be considered for protection under the policy. Chapter 4 sets out the parameters of the site selection and assessment processes and summarises the individual site assessments for those sites that were identified for protection. Chapter 5 provides an overall summary and conclusions in relation to Policy DP20 and its operation in the context of Dartford's wider economic strategy.

## 2. Local Economy Review

### *Local Economic Profile*

- 2.1 Of Dartford's 102,200 residents in 2014, 65,800 were of working age (16-64), and of these, around 79% were considered economically active<sup>1</sup>. The JSA claimant figures for 2015 in Dartford equate to around 1.1% of the working age population, which is below the national average<sup>2</sup>.
- 2.2 Despite the challenging macroeconomic circumstances during the current period of economic recovery, Dartford has experienced significant job growth in recent years. Between 2006 and 2013 the Borough experienced 16.32% growth in the number of employees in the area<sup>3</sup>. This is significantly higher than the Kent and national averages. Commuting data from the 2011 Census indicates that Dartford is a net importer of labour, with 5,384 more people commuting into the Borough than leaving for work<sup>4</sup>. This is the highest level in Kent.
- 2.3 Dartford had a total of 67,000 jobs in 2014<sup>5</sup> (including employees, self-employed, government supported trainees and HM Forces) and 58,300 employee jobs in 2014<sup>6</sup>. The Borough has a very high job density compared to other parts of North Kent at 1.01 jobs per head of working age population in 2014<sup>7</sup>.
- 2.4 The number of enterprises in the Borough has grown by 21% from 2010, with 3,585 enterprises in 2015<sup>8</sup>. Dartford also has a higher percentage of Medium and Large Enterprises than the Kent, South East and national averages<sup>9</sup>.
- 2.5 The majority of jobs in the Borough are based in the Services sector (over 80%), although Construction, Transport Storage and Wholesale and Retail make significant contributions above the level of the South East and national averages. Other significant employment sectors in the Borough are Public Administration, Education and Health, and Financial and Other Business Services.
- 2.6 Despite some large recent completions of facilities for logistics purposes, many of the storage and distribution uses in the Borough are not 'high value' employment uses. They do not necessarily require accommodation of the highest specification or may not be able to afford property prices associated with newly developed premises in

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<sup>1</sup> ONS Annual Population Survey and Population Estimates

<sup>2</sup> OND Jobseeker's Allowance with rates and proportions

<sup>3</sup> ONS Annual Business Inquiry (ABI) and Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES)

<sup>4</sup> ONS Census 2011

<sup>5</sup> ONS Jobs Density

<sup>6</sup> ONS Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES)

<sup>7</sup> ONS Jobs Density

<sup>8</sup> ONS Inter Departmental Business Register

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

Dartford. It is therefore important to retain a range of business premises in the Borough to suit the varying needs of each sector.

- 2.7 Around 45% of the jobs in Dartford in 2015 lie within the Standard Occupation Classification (SOC)<sup>10</sup> 1-3 Group, which includes Managers Directors and Senior Officials; Professional Occupations, and Associate Professional and Technical Occupations<sup>11</sup>. This is slightly above the national average (44.4%), but lower than the South East average (49.2%). In contrast, the 25% of Dartford's jobs lie within the SOC 4-5 Group, which includes Administrative & Secretarial, and Skilled Trades, which is above both the national and South East averages (21.4% and 20.9% respectively). Also above average is the percentage of jobs in the SOC 8-9 Group, which includes Process Plant & Machine Operatives, and Elementary Occupations, which in Dartford represents 18.3% of total jobs compared with 14.1% in the South East and 17.2% nationally.
- 2.8 Over 62% of the population of Dartford have qualifications equivalent to NVQ Level 3 or above, compared to the national average (57.4%)<sup>12</sup>. Similarly, the percentage of Dartford's population with qualifications equivalent to NVQ Level 1 or above and NVQ Level 2 or above is higher than the national average.
- 2.9 In terms of productivity, in 2013 Dartford had the highest GVA (Gross Value Added) per head of population of any of the Kent districts and was above the overall level for the South East<sup>13</sup>. GVA is a measure of Output, i.e. the value of the goods and services produced in the economy. GVA per head is where GVA is expressed as a value for each member of the resident population.
- 2.10 The median earnings in Dartford in terms of gross weekly pay are £577.20 for resident full-time workers in 2015<sup>14</sup>. This is marginally above the Kent and South East averages.
- 2.11 The Core Strategy established the following issues in relation to the local economy:
- High reliance on commuting to London
  - Provision of suitable jobs closer to home for rural population
  - Jobs needed to support population growth
  - Need to compensate for losses in declining job sectors
  - Development of local skill base to match needs of growth sectors
- 2.12 The more recent statistics above indicate that, whilst in general the local economy in Dartford has been improving, many of the issues identified in the Core Strategy are still prevalent. Although a net importer of labour, the continued high levels of out-

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<sup>10</sup> The Standard Occupation Classification (SOC) is a standard classification of occupational information for the UK. Jobs are classified in terms of their skill level and skill content.

<sup>11</sup> ONS Annual Population Survey

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Strategic Business Development & Intelligence, Research & Evaluation, Kent County Council

<sup>14</sup> ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings

## Identified Employment Areas

commuting to London coupled with Dartford’s high job density indicate that local jobs and the local skill base are not yet in direct correlation, despite the sustained job growth in the Borough.

- 2.13 Policy DP20 in the Development Policies Plan can help to deliver the Core Strategy objective of economic transformation through allowing for redevelopment in the three priority areas where there are significant overriding economic and job benefits, whilst continuing to encourage economic development at identified employment sites. This will ensure that growth in the key sectors outlined in Core Strategy Policy CS8, and Core Strategy growth areas, are delivered, whilst maintaining suitable sites for lower value (sometimes ‘bad neighbour’) uses, which remain important to the local economy given the associated nature and scale of jobs. This can meet priority Borough requirements and also support the economic functioning more widely, including Greater London.

### *Employment Land*

- 2.14 Overall, Dartford’s commercial land is very valuable compared to many places in Kent, reflecting its proximity to London and excellent strategic transport connections. Nevertheless, the Borough’s employment land can experience high levels of churn in terms of occupancy and redevelopment of sites.
- 2.15 As of January 2016 there were 335 empty properties on the Local Rating List for Dartford; however, the Council’s latest Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) for reporting year 2014-15 indicated a net gain in employment floorspace of 20,795 sq m. This was primarily through additional B8 storage and distribution facilities. However, these figures must be caveated by the gross figures for losses and gains of employment floorspace, as indicated in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: 2014-15 Change in Employment Floorspace**

<b>Type</b>	<b>Gain</b>	<b>Loss</b>	<b>Net</b>
Office (B1a and A2)	324 sqm	2,893 sqm	-2,569 sqm
Industrial (inc. B2)	9,832 sqm	8,110 sqm	1,722 sqm
Storage & Distribution (B8)	24,845 sqm	3,203 sqm	21,642 sqm
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>35,001 sqm</b>	<b>14,206 sqm</b>	<b>20,795 sqm</b>

- 2.16 The main contributor to the net gain in employment floorspace was the construction of a B8 warehouse at Littlebrook. Otherwise, there was significant churn in employment floorspace in the B1 and B2 industrial classes, with losses to changes of use and demolitions, and gains through new development at The Bridge.
- 2.17 The high levels of churn of employment land highlight the necessity of identifying and protecting employment sites through the Council’s Local Plan in order to support existing business sectors and to meet anticipated or changing commercial needs over the plan period.

- 2.18 Cumulatively, there has been a net gain in employment floorspace of 134,934 sq m in the Borough between 2006 and 2015. Using national job density assumptions and considering the types of employment developments in the Borough, it can be estimated that this level of growth has delivered somewhere in the region of 2700-4500 jobs over this period.
- 2.19 Whilst the development of employment floorspace and associated job growth has been positive, there remains a need to retain existing affordable stock, able to cater for the range of employers located in the Borough. Statistics on the changes in commercial floorspace from 2000-2012<sup>15</sup> indicate that, whilst there has been a general decline in industrial floorspace, this still makes up the vast majority of commercial floorspace in the Borough, despite the growth in the office sector during this period. There have been fluctuations in the levels of industrial floorspace in the Borough, especially influenced by the recent recession, reaching a peak of 557,000 sq m in 2010 and declining to 476,000 sq m by 2012. As the economy recovers, it is likely that further growth in employment development will occur, in line with the trend data outlined above.
- 2.20 As the majority of recent growth has been in industrial (B2 and B8) development, as evidenced in recent AMRs, it is pertinent that a supportive policy be enacted to protect sites for these types of use, whilst continuing to encourage redevelopment in the priority areas that will transform the local economy, in line with the aims of the Core Strategy.

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<sup>15</sup> Business Floorspace (Experimental Statistics), Valuation Office Agency

### 3. Policy Context

- 3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental at paragraph 7. The economic role is described as:

*“contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure”.*

- 3.2 A positive and proactive strategy for sustainable economic growth is expected within Local Plans, outlined at paragraph 21, with a range of requirements including to:

*“set criteria, or identify strategic sites, for local and inward investment to match the strategy and to meet anticipated needs over the plan period, [and] identify priority areas for economic regeneration, infrastructure provision and environmental enhancement...”*

- 3.3 In terms of locations, planning policy often traditionally identified industrial areas as they were the basis of the local economy and also provided for ‘bad neighbour’ uses. It is now recognised though, where not necessary due to specific health or safety risks, that separation of land uses can lead to unattractive places or other problems e.g. traffic generation. A local industrial profile that matches the skills base in the area is however required to ensure available opportunities are relevant.

- 3.4 If travel distances can be reduced between homes and work, particularly decreasing reliance on car travel, then this can have significant benefits in reducing congestion and helping the local environment. Sustainable development now requires close attention is paid to the provision of new jobs alongside new homes.

- 3.5 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) outlines a process for assessing employment land availability; however, this largely hinges on a housing assessment-based process, which is not appropriate at this stage of Dartford’s plan production. The PPG also outlines the following considerations when assessing site suitability, which has been used to help confirm criteria for assessment of existing sites in the Borough:

- physical limitations or problems such as access, infrastructure, ground conditions, flood risk, hazardous risks, pollution or contamination;
- potential impacts including the effect upon landscapes including landscape features, nature and heritage conservation;
- appropriateness and likely market attractiveness for the type of development proposed;
- contribution to regeneration priority areas;

- environmental/amenity impacts experienced by would be occupiers and neighbouring areas.

3.6 Dartford's Core Strategy sets out a very positive approach to job growth through two policies: CS7 and CS8. These can be found in full at Appendix I. Described as "a critical component of development in the Borough", paragraph 3.4 explains that Dartford's approach to job growth follows from the "strong competitive advantages arising from its location on the edge of London and the excellent transport infrastructure".

**Policy CS 7: Employment Land and Jobs:**

- sets out ambitious employment floorspace targets
- states (clause 1c) there will be "Protection of existing employment areas for B1, B2, B8 and A2, except where the site is identified in policies CS3 and CS6 [at Northern Gateway and Thames Riverside] for non-employment uses"
- outlines the anticipated distribution of jobs and development within broad areas of the Borough (dominated by the three priority areas of change that make up policy CS1, in particular with 90% of jobs in the Ebbsfleet – Stone and Thames Riverside areas)

**Policy CS 8: Economic Change**

- states the Council will focus on key growth sectors including office uses, logistics/distribution, advanced manufacturing, construction and other activities

3.7 The Core Strategy noted net job growth (averaging 1,430p.a.) and high job density (1 job per economically active resident as at 2007) in the Borough, despite the significance of commuting and the local impacts of the structural shift away from heavy industry and quarrying activities. For example, distribution uses were particularly increasing in the Borough, and the office-based Crossways development has so far created over 6,500 jobs (paragraph 3.11).

3.8 This rate of employment creation was expected to accelerate under objectives set for the wider sub region (Kent Thames Gateway). The Core Strategy supports sustainable development by promoting greater self-sufficiency in local jobs and less reliance on commuting to London as the sole source of local economic growth (paragraph 3.7).

3.9 The Core Strategy requires a choice and range of employment locations at paragraph 3.8: "A good distribution of employment sites across the Borough will provide choice for companies wishing to locate in the area, enable residents to access jobs close to home, as well as enabling a greater dispersion of trips around the Borough".

3.10 Paragraph 3.13 outlines some significant business clusters in the context of the growth sectors in CS8: "...with potential for office uses at Ebbsfleet and Crossways; logistics and transport at Littlebrook, environmental technologies at The Bridge,

Swanscombe Peninsula and Northern Gateway; and built environment/ construction at Crossways and The Bridge”. In this context, and as recognised in the principles set out at the end of this chapter, the Borough should also have direct regard to evidence of the economic synergies that arise and can be maintained from co-location of businesses.

- 3.11 National planning policy sees identifying specific sites for particular uses as an appropriate way that economic goals may be realised. Specifically in relation to Local Plans, the NPPF (paragraph 157) states that they should achieve a range of objectives including to:

*“allocate sites to promote development and flexible use of land, bringing forward new land where necessary... [and] identify areas where it may be necessary to limit freedom to change the uses of buildings, and support such restrictions with a clear explanation”.*

However although national policy emphasises economic development, it warns (NPPF para 22):

*“Planning policies should avoid the long term protection of sites allocated for employment use where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purpose. Land allocations should be regularly reviewed. Where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for the allocated employment use, applications for alternative uses of land or buildings should be treated on their merits having regard to market signals and the relative need for different land uses to support sustainable local communities”.*

- 3.12 Recent changes to the Permitted Development Regime<sup>16</sup> now allow certain changes of use to occur without being considered under Local Plan policy. Converting offices to residential use is now subject to a narrow range of impact considerations under the ‘Prior Approval’ regime, which does not include any consideration of overall availability of commercial property, or whether or not the site itself is currently occupied for commercial use. Other employment uses are now also allowed to be converted, subject to similar tests, although there are potential exceptions to this for “important” storage/industrial/distribution services. Accordingly Dartford Borough Council confirms through local policy its view that all identified locations on the Policies Map are important in this respect.

- 3.13 A local development management policy is needed to strike a balance between land uses and needs as set out in the Core Strategy, and to manage pressure to redevelop land to meet current housing market demands. The NPPF forms the starting point for policy, and this is taken forward by Local Plan policy that is relevant to the local economic context. The Core Strategy sets out this approach, in applying it in the

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<sup>16</sup> Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended)

current context via the Development Policies Plan / Policies Map, regard has been had to available evidence of present local economic indicators, as outlined in the previous chapter.

- 3.14 Development Plan Policy DP20 is concerned with existing employment locations to be identified on the Policies Map and B-class (industrial, office and storage/distribution) uses. This is consistent with the Core Strategy approach (particularly policy CS7:1c), although the Core Strategy did not explicitly list or map out the specific existing sites.
- 3.15 Sites should have appropriate flexibility to diversify in response to demand for economic land uses, whilst accounting for the legitimate need to manage pressures from speculative development that would undermine current uses and the overall function of the site. This should occur in line with the policy that is formulated with regard to a spatial strategy that aligns infrastructure, land and labour. Policy DP20 gives further detail on the types of uses that will be permitted in identified employment areas and related local environmental and character concerns that should be addressed in any proposal, alongside other criteria.
- 3.16 This approach is consistent with national planning policy (NPPF Paragraph 21), in supporting the existing business sectors present in the Borough through a positive policy that allows for sufficient flexibility to accommodate the changing needs of business over the Plan period. The Policy continues to encourage sustainable economic growth through its flexibility on sites within the Core Strategy's priority areas, allowing for redevelopment where there are significant economic and job benefits.
- 3.17 Policy DP20 also expands on the approach of the Core Strategy to provide flexibility in response to specific circumstances taking into account evolving patterns of operation of employment uses, preference for interrelated supporting uses located close to employment bases and the potential for overriding benefits to be achieved through re-development for other uses within the key identified development areas in Dartford.
- 3.18 Given the policy and economic context outlined so far, the principal reasons in Dartford for identifying locations in order to manage employment land uses, and the implications of doing so, can be expressed as follows:
  - a. To identify established concentrations of economic activity, where these are of a scale or form likely to prove resilient and viable in future. This supports productivity through existing clusters of business activity that benefit from co-location/ agglomeration, and create synergy. Planning should recognise the economic benefits of how innovation can occur; this can be through opportunities for beneficial information exchange in sectors, or through the co-location of a varied but complementary mix of activities.

## Identified Employment Areas

- i. **Single occupant sites or very small areas** will not benefit from this heterogeneity/dynamism, and are less likely to prove resilient to wider economic changes, particularly if their future is determined through one business owner. They are therefore unlikely to be appropriate sites for longer term protection.
    - ii. Town centres are relevant but dealt with separately in planning. Therefore, areas where town centre uses such as **offices and retail** predominate are not applicable.
  - b. To ensure locations that are demonstrably prospering and performing viably, and with a clear strategic role due to their special quality or location, are not undermined by the introduction of non-compliant uses. The sites should be considered and their quality confirmed by specific assessment, and they will then benefit from management through the policy. On this basis, it is not intended to allocate **existing unviable or possible future new freestanding employment locations** via the Policies Map where sufficient existing business activities are not present to confirm potential need.
  - c. To retain a sufficient choice of accommodation available to certain types or lower value employment sectors. These could be lost under market failure where their external worth is not fully monetised in the market for land employment uses. This can result in their long-term worth to Dartford, or the wider London/South East economy, not being reflected in current market conditions. This approach recognises opportunity costs over time if planned development in London, Dartford and elsewhere is not accommodated and supported by necessary uses, undermining strategies such as those to optimise resources through matching local skills with accessible opportunities in appropriate sectors. This entails that the wider benefits to Dartford and beyond of well-occupied industrial/ storage uses (for example), which may have **particular land and transport implications** should be recognised where consistent with the above.
- 3.19 Some of the implications of these important principles to ensure compliance with economic strategy and planning policy, in terms of which sites are appropriate to consider for designation, can be found within Appendix II's Site screening and selection results.
- 3.20 In summary, there have been a range of local and national policy considerations that have shaped the development of Policy DP20 and the subsequent selection of sites to be included as the identified employment areas enjoying protection under the policy. Policy DP20 incorporates the aims of both national planning policy and the Dartford Core Strategy to provide a suitable level of protection for existing employment sites in the Borough that remain appropriate locations for a range of employment uses. At the same time the policy is sufficiently flexible and positive to allow for some level of diversification at these sites, or for complete redevelopment within the Core Strategy's priority areas, where certain criteria are met.

3.21 National and local policy considerations, specifically the Core Strategy’s supporting evidence coupled with the National Planning Policy Guidance (PPG), have also influenced the process of site selection and the criteria against which sites have been assessed. This assessment is outlined in further detail in the next section.

## 4. Sites Assessment

4.1 Identified employment areas covered by Policy DP20, as delineated on the submission Policies Map designation, have been derived through a process of screening potential locations against the purpose of identification (principles outlined in chapter 3), and then through a specific site assessment process to ensure they are of sufficient value to prove viable for economic purposes into the future. The detailed process of screening sites, evidence sources and consultation inputs are outlined in Appendix II.

### *Individual Site Assessment*

4.2 Once sites passed the initial screening process, each was reassessed and scored individually against a matrix. This provided a further sense check of the suitability of sites for protection under the policy. The scoring matrix consisted of several criteria against which sites were measured on a score of one to five. Physical criteria encompassed the site’s location, access and condition; commercial criteria included commercial attractiveness and potential for redevelopment as an employment site; and sustainability criteria incorporated the potential for conflict with neighbouring uses, the proximity of the site to a labour source and supporting services, and the potential of the site to remain in employment use/ change to residential use.

4.3 These criteria were based on similar measures used in other Economic Land Reviews and also reflect the objectives of the Council’s Core Strategy; for example, a site’s location close to the strategic transport network has positive implications in terms of its impact on other local highways, whereas a small site with parking and access issues may be less commercially attractive and have fewer redevelopment opportunities for employment uses. The individual site assessments for qualifying sites can be found at Appendix II. The table below summarises the site’s location, the types of uses found there and the overall scores for each site following the assessment. Scoring confirms the individual merits of each location identified under policy DP20.

**Table 2: Identified Site Assessment Summary**

Site Name	Source	Location	Type of Uses	Overall Score
Crossways Business Park	Core Strategy	Urban Fringe – Business Park	High End HQs/ Storage & Distribution	40 (100%)
The Bridge	Core Strategy	Urban Fringe – Business Park	High End Storage & Distribution	39 (97.5%)

Identified Employment Areas

Questor	Core Strategy	Urban Fringe – Business Park	High End Mixed Employment Use	36 (90%)
Burnham Road	Core Strategy	Urban – Industrial Estate	Warehousing & Distribution	35 (87.5%)
Orbital One	Core Strategy	Urban – Industrial Estate	Warehousing & Distribution/ Office	34 (85%)
Riverside Industrial Estate	Core Strategy	Urban – Industrial Estate	Industrial	33 (82.5%)
West Hill	Core Strategy	Urban – Mixed Employment	Office & Sui Generis	31 (77.5%)
Manor Way	Core Strategy	Urban Fringe – Industrial Estate	Industrial & Warehousing	31 (77.5%)
Princes Road & Watling Street	Core Strategy	Urban – Industrial Estate	Industrial & Warehousing	31 (77.5%)
Rochester Way	Core Strategy	Urban Fringe – Industrial Estate	Industrial & Distribution	30 (75%)
Northfleet Industrial Estate	Core Strategy	Urban Fringe – Industrial Estate	Industrial & Warehousing	29 (72.5%)
Victoria Road & The Base	Core Strategy	Urban – Mixed Employment	Mixed Office, Industrial & Warehousing	29 (72.5%)
Darenth Hill	Core Strategy	Rural	Warehousing & Distribution	29 (72.5%)
Malthouse Farm	Officer Research	Rural	Mixed Office & Warehousing	29 (72.5%)
Westwood Farm	Core Strategy	Rural	Industrial	28 (70%)
New Town	Core Strategy	Urban – Industrial	Business & Industrial	27 (67.5%)
Galley Hill Road	Officer Research	Urban – Industrial	Warehousing & Distribution	27 (67.5%)
Dewlands	Core Strategy	Urban – Industrial	Business & Industrial	25 (62.5%)
London Road	Core Strategy	Urban – Industrial	Business & Industrial	23 (57.5%)
St Margaret's Farm	Core Strategy	Rural	Industrial & Warehousing	22 (55%)
Pinden End	Core Strategy	Rural	Industrial & Warehousing	21 (52.5%)

4.4 Each of the proposed employment site allocations scored at least 50% in terms of an overall score. Generally speaking, the best performing sites were the high quality purpose-designed business parks and industrial estates located on the urban fringe. These high value sites are well located in terms of the strategic road network and do

## Identified Employment Areas

not tend to conflict with neighbouring uses due to their location, whilst maintaining commercial attractiveness and redevelopment potential for employment purposes. The purpose-designed business parks at Crossways, Questor and The Bridge already provide over half of the Borough's employment floorspace.

- 4.5 Mid-scoring industrial estates such as Rochester Way and Northfleet performed well in terms of their proximity to the strategic road network and lack of conflict with neighbouring uses, but were not considered as high quality or as commercially attractive as other locations. However, these sites remain important and worthy of protection as locations able to accommodate traditional 'bad neighbour' uses away from residential locations.
- 4.6 Industrial estates located in the urban area had lower scores due to their proximity to neighbouring residential uses and/or access and parking issues. They are often of lower quality than the floorspace available at purpose-built business parks. However, they maintain a high level of occupancy and thereby commercial attractiveness, and are usually within easy access to a labour source and other supporting services. These estates often provide an affordable alternative to smaller businesses when compared to the higher value purpose-designed estates.
- 4.7 Rural sites scored lower on sustainability criteria, especially where there was not good access to the strategic road network. These sites are more attractive to niche businesses and often support SMEs and other smaller local businesses such as small-scale manufacturing. They often consist of small clusters of complementary businesses benefitting from co-location and remain worthy of protection, as evidenced by their high level of occupancy.
- 4.8 Individual site assessments acted as further evidence to confirm the sifting process, i.e. that the selected sites remain appropriate and suitable locations for a range of employment uses and are likely to continue to be utilised on a long-term basis. It is important under this policy that choice is available to cater for different types of employment use. This reflects the diverse nature of the employment offer in the Borough outside of purely office or retail related employment, and that certain locations remain preferable for so-called 'bad neighbour' uses.

## 5. Conclusions

- 5.1 Information in this report, particularly chapter 2, supports the economic case for identification of office, industrial and distribution areas in the Borough to maintain a choice of premises for business; and to retain Dartford's role as a major economic 'destination' in the sub-region, hosting more jobs for people from outside the Borough than those that leave to work elsewhere.
- 5.2 Provision of employment is an integral part of sustainable development as set out in the Core Strategy, limiting the need to travel for work, given the level of planned residential growth. This is also reflected in national planning policy, which places significant weight on the need to support sustainable economic growth, support existing business sectors and proactively plan to meet the needs of business.
- 5.3 As a result of the site assessments and consultation responses, there are now 21 employment sites allocated for continued protection under Policy DP20, with a median site size of 3.9ha. The sites in question range from high quality business parks such as Crossways and The Bridge through to popular but lower value estates such as Rochester Way and Manor Way Business Park, as well as smaller urban industrial estates and several rural sites with small-scale bespoke or niche employers. The majority of the sites cover a small land area, especially in the south of the Borough where they are constrained by the Green Belt.
- 5.4 In general, most of the Borough's employment sites contain warehousing and distribution (B8 Use Class) premises, reflecting Dartford's location in relation to the strategic transport network and proximity to Greater London. Industrial (Use Class B2) activities continue to make an important contribution in terms of current premises; and office (Use Classes B1a and A2) uses around found across the Borough and are essential element in Dartford's job opportunities.
- 5.5 The Council believes that Policy DP20 and its associated site allocations represent a sound basis for ensuring that the quantity, quality and range of employment sites in the Borough continue to meet the commercial needs of businesses and support sustainable economic growth. At the same time, the proposed allocations avoid the long-term protection of sites where there is no reasonable certainty of continued/new employment use, or a dependency on a single business, or locations/premises of limited overall merit, as evidenced by both the site sifting process and the evolution of this policy following consultation and individual site assessment. This approach is in accordance with national planning policy.
- 5.6 Policy DP20 is positively worded to intimate the development opportunities available at these sites and the types of uses that will be permitted. The policy contains sufficient flexibility to ensure that the needs of businesses continue to be met, as demonstrated by Clause 4, which allows for the development of ancillary supporting facilities and services where it can be demonstrated that these remain essential to the

## Identified Employment Areas

continued function of an employment area. Added flexibility and clear context is provided for applications in the three priority areas of change, identified in the Council's Core Strategy, at Clause 3. Redevelopment in these areas will be permitted provided that there are significant overriding local economic and job benefits and the relocation or loss of existing employment uses is clearly justified.

- 5.7 Policy DP20 will help to deliver the Core Strategy's objectives in terms of business growth and employment opportunities, and the Development Policies Plan as a whole highlights that decision-making will take place within this context. This is in accordance with the aims of national planning policy to ensure that planning supports sustainable economic growth, and supports existing business sectors and their needs. The combination of Policy DP20 with the existing Core Strategy policies will help deliver a proactive, flexible and clear economic strategy for the Borough.

## Appendix I: Core Strategy Policies CS7 & CS8

### Policy CS 7: Employment Land and Jobs

1. In the period 2006-2026, identified sites and potential new service jobs provide sufficient capacity to achieve a net growth of up to approximately 26,500 jobs through:
  - a) The development of 750,000 sq m gross of employment floorspace (B1, B2, B8, A2 and sui generis). The Council will work with landowners, partners and Locate in Kent to bring the sites forward for development and to identify users for the sites.
  - b) Take-up of vacancies of existing employment estates
  - c) Protection of existing employment areas for B1, B2, B8 and A290, except where the site is identified in policies CS3 and CS6 for non-employment uses.
  - d) Facilitating job growth in services needed to support the growth in population, through identification of sites and granting of planning permission for retail, leisure and community facilities and working in partnership with service providers, including Kent County Council and the Health Authority to ensure that the provision comes forward.
  
2. The indicative distribution will be as follows :

	Floorspace Sq m gross	Employment Type B1, B2, B8	No. of Jobs
Dartford Town Centre	41,300	B1, B2, B8	1,500
Ebbsfleet to Stone <i>(of which Ebbsfleet)</i>	221,400 <i>(176,000)</i>	B1 <i>(B1)</i>	9,700 <i>(8,100)</i>
Thames Waterfront	456,000	B1, B2, B8	11,800
Other Sites North of A2	27,200	B1, B2, B8	700
South of A2	2,500	B1, B8	Less than 100

3. In order to encourage the early delivery of jobs, the Council will:
  - a) Continue to work with developers of mixed use sites at Ebbsfleet, Eastern Quarry and The Bridge to encourage the phasing of jobs in line with, or in advance of, the delivery of homes.
  - b) Work with partners to bring forward employment at an early phase in the development of the Northern Gateway.
  - c) Work with developers and partners to bring forward employment and retail / leisure developments in the town centre.

**Policy CS 8: Economic Change**

1. The Council will seek a transformation of the economy by focusing on key growth sectors, in particular:
  - a) Office uses including financial and business services; government, and ICT related activity
  - b) High technology, specialist manufacturing and engineering (advanced manufacturing)
  - c) Logistics, transport and distribution
  - d) Environmental technologies
  - e) Creative industries, hospitality and leisure
  - f) Built environment and construction
2. The Council will work with developers, partners and Locate in Kent to deliver proposals for these uses on appropriate sites and identify end users.
3. In the case of Ebbsfleet, the Council will work with partners to encourage the relocation of government offices from Central London.
4. The development of a knowledge-based economy will be promoted by the Council through:
  - a) The implementation of the Science Park at the Bridge
  - b) Exploring the potential of an environmental technology park on the Swanscombe Peninsula.
  - c) Continuing to focus on research and development in the sustainable technologies field.

## Appendix II: Site Screening and Selection Process

The Dartford Economy and Employment Technical Paper (2010) in support of the Core Strategy identified and assessed 19 employment areas for the purposes of Policy CS7; however, these were not explicitly mapped on the Local Plan Policies Map. These sites were the basis for the initial development of Development Plan Policy DP20.

Initial site allocation proposals were taken forward on the basis that the sites identified in the Core Strategy supporting evidence remained fit-for-purpose, employment locations following an initial desktop investigation by Council Officers in accordance with the principles outlined in Chapter 3. The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) advice on site identification was also taken into account in the initial sifting process. This included an assessment of site size and location; current uses; character of the surrounding area, and potential physical and environmental constraints.

The sites were publicised through the serving of notices and letters to all identified properties, generating a relatively good response level from owners and occupiers. The sites were also publicised alongside the draft Policy DM20, at the Draft Plan & Options Consultation stage.

The consultation responses received were a mix of support for / agreement with protection versus those saying that the policy should be more flexible regarding changes of use or redevelopment at identified sites. There were a variety of comments on individual sites both for and against inclusion. This mix may reflect conflicting market indications or the different priorities of freeholders versus leaseholders. Some comments sought greater or lesser focus on the impacts of industrial development, and minor amendments have been made to take this on board, for example mentioning the enclosure of industrial processes.

As a result of the comments at the Draft Plan & Options Consultation and further site investigation, some of the previously identified sites were removed. These were three small sites in Newtown of lesser significance compared to other urban area options, in a variety of ways:

- One of the sites was derelict and little commercial interest had been shown in its redevelopment for employment purposes.
- Another of the sites was removed primarily due to its physical and access constraints, being of irregular size and shape, and surrounded by residential properties. This meant that the need for its long-term protection was questionable as it would not likely attract commercial interest if the current occupier vacated the site.
- For the third site in the area, most uses were inapplicable (more businesses in other sui generis function) and there was insufficient B Class or other industrial activity. This failed to meet the purposes of identification and was therefore screened out.

Furthermore an additional rural site was identified following the Draft Plan & Options Consultation. This was the site known as Darenth Hill, which had not been included at the

## Identified Employment Areas

Draft Plan and Options stage, despite having been initially identified in the Dartford Economy and Employment Technical Paper (2010) in support of the Core Strategy. The site should not be screened out. It remains a suitable location for employment uses, and worthy of continuing protection under policy, as it continues to provide a thriving centre for warehousing and distribution uses.

A further site was removed from the allocation following a detailed site assessment. This was the site known as Dartford Road in the west of the Borough. It was felt that this site no longer contained sufficient employment uses to be designated as an employment site, and was screened out. Reflecting its less accessible/prominent location relative to elsewhere in the town, it compared unfavourably with other options in that part of the Borough. Many of the remaining uses at the site were of more of a retail nature in planning terms. Consequently, this site was incorporated into Dartford West District Centre to be protected under the Council's Local Plan retail policies.

The boundaries of some of the identified sites were also altered following consultation to take account of current circumstances:

- An additional plot was added to the western boundary of Crossways Business Park to take account of an extant planning permission for employment uses.
- The under-used gasholder plot and some surrounding uses on the Victoria Road & The Base site was removed from the allocation due to its location adjacent to the River Darent, the redundancy of the existing gasholder, and the uncertainties surrounding how and when the site would come forward for redevelopment.
- Finally, the boundary of the site at Westwood Farm was altered to remove a redundant listed barn building and land within its curtilage at the edge of the site. This would allow for a wider range of other uses to be considered in its redevelopment. The boundary to the north of the site was also extended to encompass further existing employment floorspace within the designation.

Several representations suggested other changes to the boundaries of some sites; however, these were not considered necessary or appropriate:

- Changes to the Burnham Road site. The representor wished for land north of Sandpit Road to be removed from the allocation; however, this land remained in use and was occupied by several different businesses. Therefore the site boundary remains the same.
- Removal of the Princes Road/Watling Street site. The representor argued that this site was unsuitable for long-term protection due to existing issues with parts of the site; however, following investigation the site remains almost entirely occupied, with a range of industrial and storage uses. Consequently, the allocation of the site was taken forward.

There were also consultation responses that suggested other additional sites. These sites were investigated by Officers, but were not found to meet the purposes of designation in the initial screening process. The sites were either very small, comprising individual units or clusters under one operator, or, in one case, there was insufficient employment activity

## Identified Employment Areas

currently taking place on the site, although there was planned provision in future. Nevertheless, all of the sites were visited and scored to record information before screening out, although as the quality against all respects listed is not relevant this information has not been published here. Consequently, these sites were not taken forward to be identified under the policy.

The following table summarises the screening of each of the individual sites for which representations were received as part of the consultation process.

Site location	Reasons not taken forward	Stage identified	Screened Out
<b>Newtown</b>	Site derelict, no commercial interest in redevelopment for employment purposes.	Core Strategy supporting evidence	Reg. 18 consultation
<b>Newtown</b>	Small, irregular site with restricted access, surrounded by residential properties, unlikely to be suitable for long-term employment use.	Core Strategy supporting evidence	Reg. 18 consultation
<b>Newtown</b>	Insufficient B Class and related activity on site.	Core Strategy supporting evidence	Reg. 18 consultation
<b>Dartford Road</b>	Insufficient employment activity on site, incorporated into retail centre.	Core Strategy supporting evidence	Reg. 18 consultation
<b>Bean Triangle, including Forestrall Site</b>	Site does not benefit from complementary mix of B1(a), B2 & B8 uses. Does not perform a strategic role and premises are of poor quality.	Reg. 19 consultation	Pre-submission
<b>Storefast, North End Farm, Park Corner Road, Betsham</b>	Isolated single-occupier site. Does not play a strategic role in line with identified principles.	Reg. 19 consultation	Pre-submission
<b>Tata Steel, Station Road, Sutton-at-Hone</b>	Single-occupier site. Does not play a strategic role, limited scope for diversification.	Reg. 19 consultation	Pre-submission
<b>Hawley Mill, Hawley Road</b>	Site in office use only, no complementary B-class industrial/storage uses on site.	Reg. 19 consultation	Pre-submission
<b>Hawley Manor, Hawley Road</b>	Site in office use only, no complementary B-class industrial/storage uses on site.	Reg. 19 consultation	Pre-submission
<b>Littlebrook</b>	Insufficient range of current employment activity on-site	Reg. 19 consultation	Pre-submission

Identified Employment Areas

	whilst awaiting redevelopment of wider site following decommissioning of power station.		
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## Appendix III: Individual Site Assessment Forms

- VISIT DETAILS:

Address / name	Crossways Business Park
Date & Time	07.01.2016 PM

- ASSESSMENT ON SITE:

Criterion		Score (1= very low, 5= very high)					Comment
PHYSICAL	a. Strategic road network (+ public transport) availability	1	2	3	4	5	J1a A206/A282 v. close to site. Good access to public transport – Stone Crossing + Fasttrack
	b. Site access and parking	1	2	3	4	5	Excellent access & parking
	c. Quality and condition of premises	1	2	3	4	5	All units are new and in good condition
COMMERCIAL	d. Image and commercial attractiveness	1	2	3	4	5	High level of occupancy
	e. Ease of re-development of site for employment	1	2	3	4	5	Some available plots. Purpose-designed bus. park
SUSTAINABILITY	f. Lack of conflicts with neighbouring uses/ designations	1	2	3	4	5	No neighbouring resi uses
	g. Potential for site to remain employment with little potential for change to residential	1	2	3	4	5	Incompatible location with major residential uses on sustainability grounds
	h. Proximity to labour and supporting services/ business	1	2	3	4	5	Slightly away from TC but excellent transport links & supporting services, e.g. hotels

**TOTAL SCORE: 40**

Identified Employment Areas

• VISIT DETAILS:

Address / name	<b>The Bridge</b>
Date & Time	07.01.2016 PM

• ASSESSMENT ON SITE:

Criterion		Score (1= very low, 5= very high)					Comment
PHYSICAL	a. Strategic road network (+ public transport) availability	1	2	3	4	5	A206/A282 J1A good access. Good access to Fasttrack
	b. Site access and parking	1	2	3	4	5	V. good – purpose-designed business park
	c. Quality and condition of premises	1	2	3	4	5	New build employment premises. High quality
COMMERCIAL	d. Image and commercial attractiveness	1	2	3	4	5	Proximity to road network & high quality env.
	e. Ease of re-development of site for employment	1	2	3	4	5	Some large plots available
SUSTAINABILITY	f. Lack of conflicts with neighbouring uses/ designations	1	2	3	4	5	Some mixed use and resi to West
	g. Potential for site to remain employment with little potential for change to residential	1	2	3	4	5	Purpose designed bus. park
	h. Proximity to labour and supporting services/ business	1	2	3	4	5	Close to some resi & good transport links

**TOTAL SCORE: 39**

Identified Employment Areas

• VISIT DETAILS:

Address / name	Questor
Date & Time	07.01.2016 AM

• ASSESSMENT ON SITE:

Criterion		Score (1= very low, 5= very high)					Comment
PHYSICAL	a. Strategic road network (+ public transport) availability	1	2	3	4	5	Good access to A2/M25 via J1B
	b. Site access and parking	1	2	3	4	5	Good access & parking
	c. Quality and condition of premises	1	2	3	4	5	High quality
COMMERCIAL	d. Image and commercial attractiveness	1	2	3	4	5	Occupied & in good condition
	e. Ease of re-development of site for employment	1	2	3	4	5	Multi-users, but large site
SUSTAINABILITY	f. Lack of conflicts with neighbouring uses/ designations	1	2	3	4	5	Some limited neighbouring residential.
	g. Potential for site to remain employment with little potential for change to residential	1	2	3	4	5	Strategically well located Business Park, unlikely to change, units occupied
	h. Proximity to labour and supporting services/ business	1	2	3	4	5	Close to some resi, but fringe site. Good access to strat road network

**TOTAL SCORE: 36**

Identified Employment Areas

• VISIT DETAILS:

Address / name	<b>Burnham Road</b>
Date & Time	07.01.2016 AM

• ASSESSMENT ON SITE:

Criterion		Score (1= very low, 5= very high)					Comment
PHYSICAL	a. Strategic road network (+ public transport) availability	1	2	3	4	5	<i>Excellent access to Bob Dunn Way &amp; J1A</i>
	b. Site access and parking	1	2	3	4	5	<i>Good &amp; dedicated lanes</i>
	c. Quality and condition of premises	1	2	3	4	5	<i>Fairly modern</i>
COMMERCIAL	d. Image and commercial attractiveness	1	2	3	4	5	<i>Location, quality &amp; condition good. Range of units.</i>
	e. Ease of re-development of site for employment	1	2	3	4	5	<i>Multiple occupiers, site assembly difficult</i>
SUSTAINABILITY	f. Lack of conflicts with neighbouring uses/ designations	1	2	3	4	5	<i>No new development adjacent</i>
	g. Potential for site to remain employment with little potential for change to residential	1	2	3	4	5	<i>Small elements may be attractive to other users.</i>
	h. Proximity to labour and supporting services/ business	1	2	3	4	5	<i>Fairly close to TC. Good access to adjacent Crossways site</i>

**TOTAL SCORE: 35**

Identified Employment Areas

• VISIT DETAILS:

Address / name	<b>Orbital One</b>
Date & Time	07.01.2016 AM

• ASSESSMENT ON SITE:

Criterion		Score (1= very low, 5= very high)					Comment
PHYSICAL	a. Strategic road network (+ public transport) availability	1	2	3	4	5	<i>V. close to J1B</i>
	b. Site access and parking	1	2	3	4	5	<i>Good access, on-site parking available</i>
	c. Quality and condition of premises	1	2	3	4	5	<i>All appear occupied &amp; in good condition</i>
COMMERCIAL	d. Image and commercial attractiveness	1	2	3	4	5	<i>All occupied</i>
	e. Ease of re-development of site for employment	1	2	3	4	5	<i>Multi-users</i>
SUSTAINABILITY	f. Lack of conflicts with neighbouring uses/ designations	1	2	3	4	5	<i>No neighbouring uses other than Green Belt/open space</i>
	g. Potential for site to remain employment with little potential for change to residential	1	2	3	4	5	<i>Good access to strat road network, away from other resi uses</i>
	h. Proximity to labour and supporting services/ business	1	2	3	4	5	<i>Fringe site, but close to road network</i>

**TOTAL SCORE: 34**

Identified Employment Areas

• VISIT DETAILS:

Address / name	Riverside Industrial Estate
Date & Time	07.01.2016 PM

• ASSESSMENT ON SITE:

Criterion		Score (1= very low, 5= very high)					Comment
PHYSICAL	a. Strategic road network (+ public transport) availability	1	2	3	4	5	Fairly close public transport, poor access to road network
	b. Site access and parking	1	2	3	4	5	Parking issues – narrow road
	c. Quality and condition of premises	1	2	3	4	5	Good condition – some fairly new
COMMERCIAL	d. Image and commercial attractiveness	1	2	3	4	5	All occupied
	e. Ease of re-development of site for employment	1	2	3	4	5	Multi Users
SUSTAINABILITY	f. Lack of conflicts with neighbouring uses/ designations	1	2	3	4	5	New resi adjacent, but also adjacent employment uses
	g. Potential for site to remain employment with little potential for change to residential	1	2	3	4	5	Identified in Northern Gateway SPD – no prospect of change
	h. Proximity to labour and supporting services/ business	1	2	3	4	5	Close to TC, but further to other businesses

**TOTAL SCORE: 33**

Identified Employment Areas

• VISIT DETAILS:

Address / name	West Hill
Date & Time	16.11.2015 AM

• ASSESSMENT ON SITE:

Criterion		Score (1= very low, 5= very high)					Comment
PHYSICAL	a. Strategic road network (+ public transport) availability	1	2	3	4	5	Close to Dartford TC & bus routes. Good access to A2
	b. Site access and parking	1	2	3	4	5	Limited on-site parking other than Twistleton Ct
	c. Quality and condition of premises	1	2	3	4	5	Older renovated & new build
COMMERCIAL	d. Image and commercial attractiveness	1	2	3	4	5	Well used – smaller spaces, well maintained
	e. Ease of re-development of site for employment	1	2	3	4	5	Likely only two separate ownerships
SUSTAINABILITY	f. Lack of conflicts with neighbouring uses/ designations	1	2	3	4	5	Adjacent resi areas but topography assists with separate use
	g. Potential for site to remain employment with little potential for change to residential	1	2	3	4	5	Premises could be popular to convert to residential
	h. Proximity to labour and supporting services/ business	1	2	3	4	5	V. close to Dartford TC

**TOTAL SCORE: 31**

Identified Employment Areas

• VISIT DETAILS:

Address / name	Manor Way (Swanscombe)
Date & Time	17.12.2015 PM

• ASSESSMENT ON SITE:

Criterion		Score (1= very low, 5= very high)					Comment
PHYSICAL	a. Strategic road network (+ public transport) availability	1	2	3	4	5	Isolated from strat road network; close to Swanscombe station & Ebbsfleet
	b. Site access and parking	1	2	3	4	5	Good access via Manor Way, parking available
	c. Quality and condition of premises	1	2	3	4	5	Some outworn, but all occupied
COMMERCIAL	d. Image and commercial attractiveness	1	2	3	4	5	"Bad neighbour" uses, but could still be attractive commercially
	e. Ease of re-development of site for employment	1	2	3	4	5	Multi-users, but topography issues limit expansion
SUSTAINABILITY	f. Lack of conflicts with neighbouring uses/ designations	1	2	3	4	5	No neighbouring uses
	g. Potential for site to remain employment with little potential for change to residential	1	2	3	4	5	No resi potential presently
	h. Proximity to labour and supporting services/ business	1	2	3	4	5	Close to Swanscombe

**TOTAL SCORE: 31**

Identified Employment Areas

• VISIT DETAILS:

Address / name	Princes Road & Watling Street
Date & Time	23.11.2015 AM

• ASSESSMENT ON SITE:

Criterion		Score (1= very low, 5= very high)					Comment
PHYSICAL	a. Strategic road network (+ public transport) availability	1	2	3	4	5	Good access to J1B
	b. Site access and parking	1	2	3	4	5	Most sites have good parking & access, some more constrained
	c. Quality and condition of premises	1	2	3	4	5	Majority v. good some less well maintained
COMMERCIAL	d. Image and commercial attractiveness	1	2	3	4	5	Mostly large units & good access. May be issues on less well maintained parts
	e. Ease of re-development of site for employment	1	2	3	4	5	Multiple owners/operators but some large parcels
SUSTAINABILITY	f. Lack of conflicts with neighbouring uses/ designations	1	2	3	4	5	Limited although resi uses adjacent
	g. Potential for site to remain employment with little potential for change to residential	1	2	3	4	5	Prominent location on busy roads, plus excellent access to M25 & Fasttrack, some large land parcels
	h. Proximity to labour and supporting services/ business	1	2	3	4	5	Good access to M25 & other businesses at Crossways

**TOTAL SCORE: 30**

Identified Employment Areas

• VISIT DETAILS:

Address / name	<b>Rochester Way</b>
Date & Time	07.01.2016 AM

• ASSESSMENT ON SITE:

Criterion		Score (1= very low, 5= very high)					Comment
PHYSICAL	a. Strategic road network (+ public transport) availability	1	2	3	4	5	<i>Good access to A2 via A2018; reasonably close to Crayford Station</i>
	b. Site access and parking	1	2	3	4	5	<i>Good access, but on-street parking issues</i>
	c. Quality and condition of premises	1	2	3	4	5	<i>Limited buildings, some pre-fab structures</i>
COMMERCIAL	d. Image and commercial attractiveness	1	2	3	4	5	<i>Units occupied</i>
	e. Ease of re-development of site for employment	1	2	3	4	5	<i>Multiple users</i>
SUSTAINABILITY	f. Lack of conflicts with neighbouring uses/ designations	1	2	3	4	5	<i>No neighbouring uses</i>
	g. Potential for site to remain employment with little potential for change to residential	1	2	3	4	5	<i>Fringe location</i>
	h. Proximity to labour and supporting services/ business	1	2	3	4	5	<i>Fringe location – no supporting services to speak of</i>

**TOTAL SCORE: 30**

Identified Employment Areas

• VISIT DETAILS:

Address / name	Northfleet Industrial Estate
Date & Time	17.12.2015 PM

• ASSESSMENT ON SITE:

Criterion		Score (1= very low, 5= very high)					Comment
PHYSICAL	a. Strategic road network (+ public transport) availability	1	2	3	4	5	Isolated from strat road network; cloe to Swanscombe, Northfleet & Ebbsfleet stations
	b. Site access and parking	1	2	3	4	5	Narrow roads, lots of on-street parking
	c. Quality and condition of premises	1	2	3	4	5	Some older buildings but site appears occupied
COMMERCIAL	d. Image and commercial attractiveness	1	2	3	4	5	Occupied, but some units appear outworn
	e. Ease of re-development of site for employment	1	2	3	4	5	Access issues, but multiple users & 1 vacant plot
SUSTAINABILITY	f. Lack of conflicts with neighbouring uses/ designations	1	2	3	4	5	Constrained by HS1 line to West
	g. Potential for site to remain employment with little potential for change to residential	1	2	3	4	5	Resi to South but currently a highly industrial character
	h. Proximity to labour and supporting services/ business	1	2	3	4	5	Reasonably close to Northfleet

**TOTAL SCORE: 29**

Identified Employment Areas

• VISIT DETAILS:

Address / name	<b>Victoria Road &amp; The Base</b>
Date & Time	07.01.2016 PM

• ASSESSMENT ON SITE:

Criterion		Score (1= very low, 5= very high)					Comment
PHYSICAL	a. Strategic road network (+ public transport) availability	1	2	3	4	5	Close to Dartford Station & access to north & south town centre
	b. Site access and parking	1	2	3	4	5	Mixed – Base v. good, Victoria Rd a little constrained
	c. Quality and condition of premises	1	2	3	4	5	Base – excellent; Victoria Rd - reasonable
COMMERCIAL	d. Image and commercial attractiveness	1	2	3	4	5	Good location & tenants
	e. Ease of re-development of site for employment	1	2	3	4	5	One owner but multiple users
SUSTAINABILITY	f. Lack of conflicts with neighbouring uses/ designations	1	2	3	4	5	No resi uses adjacent
	g. Potential for site to remain employment with little potential for change to residential	1	2	3	4	5	Located in strategic site in the town.
	h. Proximity to labour and supporting services/ business	1	2	3	4	5	Fairly good – close to TC but further to other employment

**TOTAL SCORE: 29**

Identified Employment Areas

• VISIT DETAILS:

Address / name	<b>Darenth Hill</b>
Date & Time	23.11.2015 AM

• ASSESSMENT ON SITE:

Criterion		Score (1= very low, 5= very high)					Comment
PHYSICAL	a. Strategic road network (+ public transport) availability	1	2	3	4	5	Fairly good access to J1B; no public transport
	b. Site access and parking	1	2	3	4	5	Good – set for HGVs
	c. Quality and condition of premises	1	2	3	4	5	V. good
COMMERCIAL	d. Image and commercial attractiveness	1	2	3	4	5	Good yard space & warehousing
	e. Ease of re-development of site for employment	1	2	3	4	5	One owner but Green Belt site
SUSTAINABILITY	f. Lack of conflicts with neighbouring uses/ designations	1	2	3	4	5	Limited – some resi
	g. Potential for site to remain employment with little potential for change to residential	1	2	3	4	5	Occupied and in good condition
	h. Proximity to labour and supporting services/ business	1	2	3	4	5	Fruit distribution – brought in/out

**TOTAL SCORE: 29**

Identified Employment Areas

• VISIT DETAILS:

Address / name	<b>Malt House Farm</b>
Date & Time	23.11.2015 AM

• ASSESSMENT ON SITE:

Criterion		Score (1= very low, 5= very high)					Comment
PHYSICAL	a. Strategic road network (+ public transport) availability	1	2	3	4	5	<i>Broad with public transport. Straightforward link to J1B</i>
	b. Site access and parking	1	2	3	4	5	<i>Good accessible transport with land cut parking areas</i>
	c. Quality and condition of premises	1	2	3	4	5	<i>Good – mix of original brick, restored barns &amp; new warehousing</i>
COMMERCIAL	d. Image and commercial attractiveness	1	2	3	4	5	<i>Malt House Farm side fairly attractive, small premises; other warehousing and large yard</i>
	e. Ease of re-development of site for employment	1	2	3	4	5	<i>Land ownership &amp; Green Belt issues</i>
SUSTAINABILITY	f. Lack of conflicts with neighbouring uses/ designations	1	2	3	4	5	<i>Adjacent to some resi and commercial uses</i>
	g. Potential for site to remain employment with little potential for change to residential	1	2	3	4	5	<i>Green Belt – but existing premises could be capable of COU interest</i>
	h. Proximity to labour and supporting services/ business	1	2	3	4	5	<i>Customers, users &amp; employees require travel to site</i>

**TOTAL SCORE: 29**

Identified Employment Areas

• VISIT DETAILS:

Address / name	<b>Westwood Farm</b>
Date & Time	16.11.2015 AM

• ASSESSMENT ON SITE:

Criterion		Score (1= very low, 5= very high)					Comment
PHYSICAL	a. Strategic road network (+ public transport) availability	1	2	3	4	5	<i>Narrow lane – local distributor road – 10 mins to A2; no public transport</i>
	b. Site access and parking	1	2	3	4	5	<i>Access fairly good with parking</i>
	c. Quality and condition of premises	1	2	3	4	5	<i>Mainly good with no of maintained listed buildings</i>
COMMERCIAL	d. Image and commercial attractiveness	1	2	3	4	5	<i>Rural setting – commercial demand</i>
	e. Ease of re-development of site for employment	1	2	3	4	5	<i>Listed Buildings &amp; Green Belt issues</i>
SUSTAINABILITY	f. Lack of conflicts with neighbouring uses/ designations	1	2	3	4	5	<i>Some resi uses adjacent</i>
	g. Potential for site to remain employment with little potential for change to residential	1	2	3	4	5	<i>Occupied and well maintained site</i>
	h. Proximity to labour and supporting services/ business	1	2	3	4	5	<i>Distance not far but rural roads</i>

**TOTAL SCORE: 28**

Identified Employment Areas

• VISIT DETAILS:

Address / name	Newtown
Date & Time	16.11.2015 AM

• ASSESSMENT ON SITE:

Criterion		Score (1= very low, 5= very high)					Comment
PHYSICAL	a. Strategic road network (+ public transport) availability	1	2	3	4	5	Public transport route – most access local distributor roads
	b. Site access and parking	1	2	3	4	5	Car parking but unavailable due to use for service vehicles
	c. Quality and condition of premises	1	2	3	4	5	Some new, some refurb, others poorer quality
COMMERCIAL	d. Image and commercial attractiveness	1	2	3	4	5	For existing use types only
	e. Ease of re-development of site for employment	1	2	3	4	5	Multi operators
SUSTAINABILITY	f. Lack of conflicts with neighbouring uses/ designations	1	2	3	4	5	Adjacent to resi areas, but long term presence
	g. Potential for site to remain employment with little potential for change to residential	1	2	3	4	5	Demand for resi use due to location
	h. Proximity to labour and supporting services/ business	1	2	3	4	5	Multiple deliveries observed close to suppliers

**TOTAL SCORE: 27**

Identified Employment Areas

• VISIT DETAILS:

Address / name	<b>Galley Hill Road (Swanscombe)</b>
Date & Time	17.12.2015 PM

• ASSESSMENT ON SITE:

Criterion		Score (1= very low, 5= very high)					Comment
PHYSICAL	a. Strategic road network (+ public transport) availability	1	2	3	4	5	Close to Swanscombe Station & bus route; isolated from strat road network
	b. Site access and parking	1	2	3	4	5	Car parking available; access reasonable
	c. Quality and condition of premises	1	2	3	4	5	Units appear in reasonably good condition
COMMERCIAL	d. Image and commercial attractiveness	1	2	3	4	5	Units occupied; appear in good condition
	e. Ease of re-development of site for employment	1	2	3	4	5	Two different users
SUSTAINABILITY	f. Lack of conflicts with neighbouring uses/ designations	1	2	3	4	5	Close to resi uses & PH adjacent
	g. Potential for site to remain employment with little potential for change to residential	1	2	3	4	5	Close to resi uses
	h. Proximity to labour and supporting services/ business	1	2	3	4	5	Close to Swanscombe, not close to strat road network

**TOTAL SCORE: 27**

Identified Employment Areas

• VISIT DETAILS:

Address / name	Dewlands (London Road, Dartford)
Date & Time	16.11.2015 AM

• ASSESSMENT ON SITE:

Criterion		Score (1= very low, 5= very high)					Comment
PHYSICAL	a. Strategic road network (+ public transport) availability	1	2	3	4	5	Close to J1B; on bus route
	b. Site access and parking	1	2	3	4	5	Narrow access from main road; limited parking
	c. Quality and condition of premises	1	2	3	4	5	Occupied, but dated
COMMERCIAL	d. Image and commercial attractiveness	1	2	3	4	5	Occupied, likely to be of limited attractiveness for others
	e. Ease of re-development of site for employment	1	2	3	4	5	Multi-users, difficult to intensify
SUSTAINABILITY	f. Lack of conflicts with neighbouring uses/ designations	1	2	3	4	5	Close to resi uses
	g. Potential for site to remain employment with little potential for change to residential	1	2	3	4	5	Occupied units, but close to resi uses
	h. Proximity to labour and supporting services/ business	1	2	3	4	5	Close to resi community

**TOTAL SCORE: 25**

Identified Employment Areas

• VISIT DETAILS:

Address / name	London Road (Swanscombe)
Date & Time	17.12.2015 PM

• ASSESSMENT ON SITE:

Criterion		Score (1= very low, 5= very high)					Comment
PHYSICAL	a. Strategic road network (+ public transport) availability	1	2	3	4	5	Close to Swanscombe Station & bus route; isolated from strat road network
	b. Site access and parking	1	2	3	4	5	Difficult/tight access; parking appears limited
	c. Quality and condition of premises	1	2	3	4	5	Occupied & in reasonable condition
COMMERCIAL	d. Image and commercial attractiveness	1	2	3	4	5	Parking/access issues mean limited commercial attractiveness
	e. Ease of re-development of site for employment	1	2	3	4	5	Constrained by access issues & adjacent resi uses
SUSTAINABILITY	f. Lack of conflicts with neighbouring uses/ designations	1	2	3	4	5	Adjacent resi to East
	g. Potential for site to remain employment with little potential for change to residential	1	2	3	4	5	1 resi unit immediately adjacent, close to others, but occupied
	h. Proximity to labour and supporting services/ business	1	2	3	4	5	Close to resi in Swanscombe & public transport; limited parking

**TOTAL SCORE: 23**

Identified Employment Areas

• VISIT DETAILS:

Address / name	St Margaret's Farm
Date & Time	23.11.2015 AM

• ASSESSMENT ON SITE:

Criterion		Score (1= very low, 5= very high)					Comment
PHYSICAL	a. Strategic road network (+ public transport) availability	1	2	3	4	5	Highly inaccessible, no public transport links
	b. Site access and parking	1	2	3	4	5	Narrow roads leading to site; some on-site parking, but limited
	c. Quality and condition of premises	1	2	3	4	5	Reasonable condition & quality
COMMERCIAL	d. Image and commercial attractiveness	1	2	3	4	5	Occupied, but other users would be limited
	e. Ease of re-development of site for employment	1	2	3	4	5	Green Belt – limited opportunities to redevelop
SUSTAINABILITY	f. Lack of conflicts with neighbouring uses/ designations	1	2	3	4	5	Some neighbouring resi
	g. Potential for site to remain employment with little potential for change to residential	1	2	3	4	5	Sustainability issues – Green Belt site
	h. Proximity to labour and supporting services/ business	1	2	3	4	5	Not close to any settlements or public transport

**TOTAL SCORE: 22**

Identified Employment Areas

• VISIT DETAILS:

Address / name	Pinden End
Date & Time	23.11.2015 PM

• ASSESSMENT ON SITE:

Criterion		Score (1= very low, 5= very high)					Comment
PHYSICAL	a. Strategic road network (+ public transport) availability	1	2	3	4	5	Isolated, on narrow rural road. Nearest station is Longfield; nearest bus stop 0.5 miles
	b. Site access and parking	1	2	3	4	5	Narrow road, but some parking available
	c. Quality and condition of premises	1	2	3	4	5	Units in good condition
COMMERCIAL	d. Image and commercial attractiveness	1	2	3	4	5	Isolated, but attractive, suitable for small/home business
	e. Ease of re-development of site for employment	1	2	3	4	5	Multi-owners; Green Belt
SUSTAINABILITY	f. Lack of conflicts with neighbouring uses/ designations	1	2	3	4	5	Neighbouring resi, difficult to intensify; Green Belt
	g. Potential for site to remain employment with little potential for change to residential	1	2	3	4	5	Limited infrastructure & sustainability issues
	h. Proximity to labour and supporting services/ business	1	2	3	4	5	Isolated, limited transport links

**TOTAL SCORE: 21**