



Where growth should happen (and where it shouldn't)

To safeguard the wider community, the Local Plan proposes a renewed focus on regeneration at Dartford Town Centre and Ebbsfleet Garden City.

Most development will take place in these 'Priority Regeneration Centres' where much development has already been approved and will continue to be built out over the lifetime of the new Plan. There is no Green Belt release planned for new housing.

In other parts of the urban area, the focus will be on consolidating improvements to social infrastructure. Some limited development of brownfield sites in these areas may be allowed where they are well served by public transport and particularly where they support improvements to infrastructure and the local environment.

The Plan details proposals for three specific major 'strategic sites':

- Ebbsfleet Central - mixed uses
- Dartford Town Centre (Hythe Street/Kent Road) - mixed uses
- Littlebrook Power Station - employment

This land would be allocated for major new facilities, jobs or homes; and development and infrastructure to improve the local environment.

Please respond by midday on 21 February 2020 using the online form on the Local Plan Review link at www.dartford.gov.uk/policyconsultation



Schools, Health and other supporting Infrastructure

We know that residents are concerned to ensure that schools, GP surgeries and other community facilities are provided alongside new housing development. That is why it is a core principle of our current Local Plan.

A number of new primary and secondary schools have recently opened, including River Mill and Cherry Orchard Primary Schools and Stone Lodge Secondary School. Many school extensions have also been provided in the Borough.

We have worked closely with the organisations which provide these new facilities, including the NHS and Kent County Council, by helping to plan for future requirements, identifying sites and providing funding assistance through our development contributions.

We propose to keep a focus on providing new infrastructure in good time to meet the demands from new development. We are already planning a new primary school in Stone and further schools in Ebbsfleet Garden City. New GP surgeries are being planned in Dartford Town Centre (at Hythe Street/ Kent Road site), Stone/Greenhithe and at Ebbsfleet Garden City. In future there may be a need for new schools to serve Dartford Town Centre, north Dartford and the Greenhithe area.

The new Local Plan identifies sites for the schools and health facilities we will need to help provide certainty for their delivery. We will make best use of the developer contributions we receive to bring forward these facilities at the right time.

Please respond by midday on 21 February 2020 using the online form on the Local Plan Review link at www.dartford.gov.uk/policyconsultation



Transport

Fastrack provides high frequency bus services alongside traditional bus routes. We support improvements to both to ensure the services are not disrupted by local congestion. The extension of Fastrack is planned to expand its coverage, for instance by constructing a direct tunnel link between Bluewater's bus station and Ebbsfleet Garden City.

To produce an attractive new way of travelling, a local partnership is exploring the long-term, potential of an extension of Crossrail (the Elizabeth Line) from its current terminus at Abbey Wood. This has the potential to improve the frequency and capacity of train services and to support further regeneration.

We are keen to encourage more walking, cycling and environmentally responsible transport in the borough. Our proposal is to work closely with stakeholders and user groups to create safer networks.

We have to be realistic about local car use and how we manage our local road network. Improvements will therefore occur to main roads in the Borough. There are planned upgrades to the A2 junctions at Bean and Ebbsfleet but there are further opportunities for improvements to junctions on the M25/ A282 tunnel approach road.



We fought hard to secure the delivery of a new Lower Thames Crossing, east of the Borough, and this will provide additional capacity and an alternative to the highly congested Dartford Crossing/ M25.

We are preparing an assessment to model the impacts of new development on the highway and to guide proposals for further improvements to the road network, including local improvements.

Please respond by midday on 21 February 2020 using the online form on the Local Plan Review link at **www.dartford.gov.uk/policyconsultation**



Green Space

We already have a huge commitment to a Borough-wide network of parks, playspaces, sports grounds, allotments, nature conservation areas and other open places. We now propose to strengthen the role of green spaces in the local environment by:

- Identifying opportunities for tree planting, helping to address climate change
- Encouraging the implementation of the England coast path along the River Thames
- Identifying new open spaces within major development sites
- Encouraging environmental improvement projects, for example in the Darent Valley.

We will continue to protect and enhance all key ecological sites, features, habitats and species. We propose to update our policy to require new developments to result in a net improvement to biodiversity. There will be a particular focus on this in Biodiversity Opportunity Areas where there are good opportunities for enhancement of wildlife and plants.

We already require new development to provide public and private green space as part of the development. We propose to strengthen the policy to make sure that the open space provided is of a good quality and useable.

Please respond by midday on 21 February 2020 using the online form on the Local Plan Review link at www.dartford.gov.uk/policyconsultation



Housing

Dartford is building a sufficient amount of housing to provide for local needs. Our study looked at the type of homes that are needed for the future population.

To provide the right balance of homes that local people could afford, new developments should deliver 20% of homes as social or affordable rented homes and 15% as subsidised owner-occupied homes such as shared ownership. We are carrying out further work to test if this is achievable financially.

People are living longer and with more complex health and accommodation needs. We propose that all new homes will be built to accessible/ adaptable standards, with flexibility and space. We also wish to encourage the provision of wheelchair user homes within new developments.

Our study also specifically identified a need for 3 and 4 bedroom family homes and homes suitable for older people. We propose that some of these are provided in all larger developments.

The government demands that we build a minimum of 797 homes per year. To prevent inappropriate sprawl, we are focusing developments on major sites such as Ebbsfleet Garden City. To put this in context, 413 homes were built there last year which represents a huge part of our total target.

There is already much approved development, which may be built out faster than we expect.

Please respond by midday on 21 February 2020 using the online form on the Local Plan Review link at www.dartford.gov.uk/policyconsultation



Dartford Town Centre

Work to improve Dartford Town Centre is now well underway. The Lowfield Street development is progressing, along with a micro-brewery and major enhancements to Market Street, other restaurants, shops and homes are also coming forward.

The Local Plan proposes the continued transformation of the town, encouraging sensitive development, particularly where this can add to the range of activities and convert underused shops and spaces for other purposes. New residential development as part of a wider mix of uses will increase expenditure, supporting local facilities and services

New development will be expected to reflect the town's unique historic character. The scale of new buildings should be sensitive and complementary to adjoining existing buildings.

Plans will support new public spaces connected by green pedestrian routes, and linked with residential areas. This will create a high class environment which is attractive and safe for pedestrians, and which is easy to move around and enjoy. Regeneration is proposed at Hythe Street/ Kent Road (Former Co-op and Westgate car park site). The proposal is for:

- Leisure uses – cinema, food and drink, hotel
- Primary care health hub
- Homes
- Car parking

Opportunities for other brownfield redevelopment, which could enable the town centre to adapt to the nationally changing High Street context, will be explored for the Local Plan. For example, renewal of the Priory and/or Orchards Shopping Centre could bring a wider range of uses responding to local demands, providing better walking links and a higher quality environment.

Please respond by midday on 21 February 2020 using the online form on the Local Plan Review link at www.dartford.gov.uk/policyconsultation



Ebbsfleet Central

Ebbsfleet Central is the area of land around Ebbsfleet International Station. This has long been agreed for large scale development and can meet a significant amount of Dartford's housing targets, focusing on the good public transport connections.

As the Ebbsfleet Central area grows, land uses will be reconfigured to balance the needs of the new community, including car parking.

We considered three options for the future use of the site:

- Option A: High Density Business District plus other uses, including residential
- Option B: Mixed, lively Urban Heart comprising employment, health, leisure, education, residential, restaurants/ bars and retail, potential for a centre of excellence for medical and education purposes.
- Option C: Residential-led Development

Our preferred option is Option B. It would provide: a focal centre of activity at the heart of the Garden City to complement Dartford and Gravesend Town Centres and Bluewater, major new public open spaces/ parks, and a transport hub (interchange between at Ebbsfleet International and Northfleet railway stations), Fastrack, buses, and enhanced walking and cycling connections.



Options A and C have less of a range of uses. Under Option B, development would include:

- Over 3,000 dwellings, a sizeable chunk of our housing targets
- Approximately 30,000sq m of community uses
- Approximately 12,500sq m of retail space
- Approximately 100,000sq m of business space, mainly offices

Please respond by midday on 21 February 2020 using the online form on the Local Plan Review link at **www.dartford.gov.uk/policyconsultation**



Swanscombe Peninsula

The Peninsula is a largely open area of low-lying marsh land located between Swanscombe and the River Thames on the eastern boundary of the Borough.

Parts of the site are heavily contaminated by previous industry and there are current employment uses centred around Manor Way and Lower Road. It is within the Ebbsfleet Garden City area boundary.

We are aware of proposals for a internationally important entertainment resort but we have a responsibility in our Local Plan to consider alternative uses. The creation of a resort at Swanscombe Peninsula would have many advantages, particularly for jobs, skills and local leisure provision, but we must ensure that the local transport infrastructure is protected and that any proposal benefits the wider community.

Whilst we wait for these proposals we have given consideration to other alternatives and our preferred option is for an extensive ecological park combined with a sensitively integrated, lower density mixed use development to the south of the site near existing commercial uses. This would include outdoor/ leisure uses with retention of local jobs and some development on previously developed parts of the site.

A further alternative is to not specify potential uses but to include a criteria based policy to deal with any proposals that may come forward.

Please respond by midday on 21 February 2020 using the online form on the Local Plan Review link at www.dartford.gov.uk/policyconsultation