



# State of Medway Report

## Policy Framework

November 2008



# State of Medway Report: Policy Framework for the LDF November 2008

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## State of Medway Reports

This is one of a series of factual reports that are being produced to inform the preparation of Medway's Local Development Framework or LDF. Each deals with a specific topic and draws together available information from a variety of sources.

The reports are intended to establish the current position and a baseline for further work. They also help in highlighting gaps in the information base. We would be pleased to hear from any interested party about any information sources that have not been referred to or gaps that should be addressed in future work.

At this preliminary stage no attempt has been made to identify issues arising from this research or options for addressing such issues. That will follow over the next few months but we would be happy to receive any initial suggestions now.

If you would like to comment on or respond to this report please use one of the methods set out in our 'Engagement Protocol', which is being widely publicised.

To monitor progress being made on the LDF please regularly check our website at [www.medway.gov.uk/ldf](http://www.medway.gov.uk/ldf).

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### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 In the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004, the Government introduced a new development planning system which requires local planning authorities to produce spatial development plans. These are to be more broadly based than their predecessors and are to be linked to other appropriate strategies, in particular, the local community strategy.
- 1.2 A Sustainable Community Strategy has to be prepared following consultation with local communities and key local partners through the Local Strategic Partners. The Sustainable Community Strategy sets out the strategic vision for an area and is linked into overarching regional strategies.
- 1.3 The Local Development Framework (LDF), is a collection of local development documents which delivers the spatial planning strategy and the Core Strategy is the key plan within the LDF. The core strategy has to be consistent with national policy and in general conformity with the regional strategy.

- 1.4 The Government intends that spatial planning objectives for local areas, as set out in the LDF, should be aligned, not only with national and regional plans but also with shared local priorities set out in sustainable community strategies.
- 1.5 The LDF and core strategy must be based upon sound evidence and should involve the community in its preparation from the outset. In order for the community to be properly engaged, it needs to have access to the evidence base in order to make informed judgements. Consequently, as much evidence as possible should be assembled “up front” rather than at a later stage in the plan making process.
- 1.6 As part of the evidence base, this report sets out the key policies and strategies at national, regional, sub-regional and local levels, which provide the framework within which the Medway Core Strategy will be prepared. It is not intended to be fully comprehensive, but to provide a gateway to wider evidence contained within these policy documents.
- 1.7 The report includes current policy documents as well as emerging documents which, when adopted, will have a bearing on the preparation of the core strategy. It sets the scene by briefly describing the component parts of the current local development plan and the documents that will replace it, before moving on to the policy context for the core strategy.

## **2. The Medway Local Development Framework**

- 2.1 The Local Development Framework (LDF) for Medway will replace the existing Medway Local Plan, which was adopted in May 2003. The development plan documents (DPDs) will cover the period to 2026. The LDF will include a vision for the future of Medway and objectives and targets which development must meet to secure that vision. Once adopted, planning applications and other decisions will be made in accordance with it.
- 2.2 The Local Development Framework will form part of the Development Plan for Medway. The Development Plan is made up of those plans which have been statutorily adopted and which apply to Medway. The Medway Development Plan currently comprises:
  - Medway Local Plan 2003
  - Kent and Medway Structure Plan 2006
  - Kent Minerals Local Plan: Brickearth 1986
  - Kent Minerals Local Plan: Construction Aggregates 1993
  - Kent Minerals Local Plan: Chalk & Clay 1997
  - Kent Minerals Local Plan: Oil & Gas 1997
  - Kent Waste Local Plan 1998
  - Regional Planning Guidance for the SE (RPG9) 2001

- Thames Gateway Planning Framework (RPG9a) 1995

2.3 These were all saved until September 2007 under the transitional provisions of the 2004 Act. The Kent and Medway Structure Plan, the Regional Planning Guidance and the Thames Gateway Planning Framework are all saved until the South East Plan is adopted, probably in 2009. In 2007, the Secretary of State issued directions to further save the Local Plan documents. As a unitary authority, Medway has to produce a Minerals and Waste Development Framework for its area and this is being incorporated within the Medway LDF rather than being produced as a stand-alone document.

2.4 The documents being prepared initially are:

- Core Strategy DPD
- Chattenden Area Action Plan DPD
- Site Allocations and Development Control Policies DPD.

### 3. National Policy

#### **Sustainable Communities: Building for the Future**

3.1 The Government's Sustainable Communities: Building for the Future (2003) sets out several key requirements for the creation of sustainable communities to be facilitated by the Local Development Framework process including:

- A flourishing local economy to provide jobs and wealth;
- A safe and healthy local environment with well designed public and green space;
- Sufficient size, scale and density, and the right layout to support basic amenities in the neighbourhood and minimisation of the use of resources, including land:
- Good public transport and other transport infrastructure both within the community and linking it to urban, rural and regional centres;
- Buildings, both individually and collectively, that can meet different needs over time, and that minimise the use of resources;
- A well integrated mix of decent homes of different types and tenures to support a range of household sizes, ages and incomes;
- Good quality local public services, including education and training opportunities, health care and community facilities, especially for leisure;
- A diverse, vibrant and creative local culture, encouraging pride in the community and cohesion within it; and
- A sense of "place" (Page 5).

3.2 The action plan in **Sustainable Communities in the South East** refers to the need to accelerate development of new communities in

the Thames Gateway and Medway is included within this. The document states that the Thames Gateway has unique features that give it a national as well as regional significance. It:

- Offers the opportunity to regenerate existing deprived communities through access to 300,000 new jobs that could be accommodated by 2031;
- Has one of the largest concentrations of brownfield sites in the country;
- Is in a strategic location on major transport links to the continent and is close to London (Page 7).

3.3 In **Securing the Future: Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy, 2005**, the Government sets out what climate change will mean for the United Kingdom in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Included in its forecasts is the continued rise in relative sea levels around most of the UK's shoreline. By the 2080's sea levels in the Thames Estuary may have risen by as much as 86 cm (Page 74).

### **Planning Policy Statements**

#### *PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development*

3.4 Paragraph 27 of PPS1 sets out the general approach for the delivery of sustainable development. In preparing development plans, planning authorities should seek to:

- Promote national, regional, sub-regional and local economies by providing, in support of the Regional Economic Strategy, a positive planning framework for sustainable economic growth to support efficient, competitive and innovative business, commercial and industrial sectors.
- Promote urban and rural regeneration to improve the well being of communities, improve facilities, promote high quality and safe development and create new opportunities for the people living in those communities. Policies should promote mixed use developments for locations that allow the creation of linkages between different uses and can thereby create more vibrant places.
- Promote communities which are inclusive, healthy, safe and crime free, whilst respecting the diverse needs of communities and the special needs of particular sectors of the community.
- Bring forward sufficient land of a suitable quality in appropriate locations to meet the expected needs for housing, for industrial development, for the exploitation of raw materials such as minerals, for retail and commercial development, and for leisure and recreation – taking into account issues such as accessibility and

sustainable transport needs, the provision of essential infrastructure, including for sustainable waste management, and the need to avoid flood risk and other natural hazards.

- Provide improved access for all to jobs, health, education, shops, leisure and community facilities, open space, sport and recreation, by ensuring that new development is located where everyone can access services or facilities on foot, bicycle or public transport rather than having to rely on access by car, while recognising that this may be more difficult in rural areas.
- Focus developments that attract a large number of people, especially retail, leisure and office development, in existing centres to promote their vitality and viability, social inclusion and more sustainable patterns of development.
- Reduce the need to travel and encourage accessible public transport provision to secure more sustainable patterns of transport development. Planning should actively manage patterns of urban growth to make the fullest use of public transport and focus development in existing centres and near to major public transport interchanges.
- Promote the more efficient use of land through higher density, mixed use development and the use of suitably located previously developed land and buildings. Planning should seek actively to bring vacant and underused previously developed land and buildings back into beneficial use to achieve the targets the Government has set for development on previously developed land.
- Enhance as well as protect biodiversity, natural habitats, the historic environment and landscape and townscape character.
- Address, on the basis of sound science, the causes and impacts of climate change, the management of pollution and natural hazards, the safeguarding of natural resources, and the minimisation of impacts from the management and use of resources.

#### *Supplement to PPS1: Planning and Climate Change*

3.5 Paragraph 9 of the Supplement to PPS1: Planning for Climate Change sets out a number of objectives for contributing to global sustainability. In order to deliver sustainable development, and in doing so fully respond to climate change, spatial strategies should:

- In providing for the homes, jobs, services and infrastructure needed by communities, and in renewing and shaping the places where they live and work, secure the highest viable resource and energy efficiency and reduction in emissions;



- Deliver patterns of urban growth and sustainable rural developments that help secure the fullest possible use of sustainable transport for moving freight, public transport, cycling and walking; and, which overall, reduce the need to travel, especially by car;
- Secure new development and shape places that minimise vulnerability, and provide resilience to climate change, which are consistent with social cohesion and inclusion;
- Conserve and enhance biodiversity, recognising that the distribution of habitats and species will be affected by climate change;
- Reflect the development needs and interests of communities and enable them to contribute effectively to tackling climate change; and
- Respond to the concerns of business and encourage competitiveness and technological innovation in mitigating and adapting to climate change.

### *PPS 3: Housing*

- 3.6 PPS3 explains that the Government's key housing policy goal is to ensure that everyone has the opportunity of living in a decent home, which they can afford, in a community where they want to live. To achieve this, the Government is seeking:
- To achieve a wide choice of high quality homes, both affordable and market housing, to address the requirements of the community
  - To widen opportunities for home ownership and ensure high quality housing for those who cannot afford market housing, in particular those who are vulnerable or in need
  - To improve affordability across the housing market, including by increasing the supply of housing
  - To create sustainable, inclusive, mixed communities in all areas, both urban and rural (Para. 9).
- 3.7 The Government is clear that planning, via development plans and planning decisions, have a key role in meeting central government's housing objectives by delivering the outcomes listed in paragraph 10 of PPS3:
- High quality housing that is well designed and built to a high standard

- A mix of housing, both market and affordable, particularly in terms of tenure and price, to support a wide variety of households in all areas, both urban and rural
- A sufficient quantity of housing taking into account need and demand and seeking to improve choice
- Housing developments in suitable locations, which offer a good range of community facilities and with good access to jobs, key services and infrastructure
- A flexible, responsive supply of land – managed in a way that makes efficient and effective use of land, including re-use of previously-developed land, where appropriate.

*PPS4 Planning for Sustainable Economic Development: Consultation Draft, December, 2007*

- 3.8 The current guidance, PPG4, Industrial and Commercial Development and Small Firms, was published in 1992 and is now out of date. It is due to be replaced and consequently the Government issued a consultation draft document in December, 2007, PPS4 Planning for Sustainable Development. The main elements of national economic development, taken from that document, are set out below.
- 3.9 Positive plan making for economic development: Planning authorities should encourage economic development, in line with the principles of sustainable development. In particular they should develop flexible policies that are able to respond to economic change and the need for co-ordination with infrastructure and housing provision.
- 3.10 Using evidence to plan positively: Planning authorities should use a wide evidence base to understand both existing business needs and likely changes in the market, to prepare policies to support sustainable economic development in their area.
- 3.11 Recognising the needs of business: Recognising that they will not be able to anticipate all changes in the economic climate, provision should be made for a supply of land, which will be able to cater for the differing needs of businesses and the expected employment needs of the whole community which is flexible enough to be responsive to a changing economy or new business requirements. The designation of sites for single or restricted use classes should be avoided wherever possible as should the carrying forward of existing allocations where this cannot be justified.
- 3.12 Efficient and effective use of land: Planning authorities should seek to make the most efficient and effective use of land and buildings,

especially vacant or derelict buildings (including historic buildings). They should also take into account changing working patterns, economic data including price signals and the need for policies that reflect local circumstances.

- 3.13 Securing a high quality and sustainable environment: Economic development, regardless of location, should be of high quality and inclusive design which improves the character and quality of an area and the way it functions. The design of new commercial development should address the challenges posed by climate change and the pressures on the natural and historic environment (See paragraphs 14-27).

*PPS 6: Planning for Town Centres*

- 3.14 The Government's key objectives for town centres are set out in paragraphs 1.3 to 1.5 of PPS 6: Planning for Town Centres. They are to:
- Promote their vitality and viability by planning for their promotion, growth and enhancement and by focusing development in them and encouraging a wide range of services in a good environment, accessible to all
  - Enhance consumer choice by making provision for a range of shopping, leisure and local services, which allow genuine choice to meet the needs of the entire community, and particularly socially-excluded groups
  - Support efficient, competitive and innovative retail, leisure, tourism and other sectors, with improving productivity; and
  - Improve accessibility, ensuring that existing or new development is, or will be, accessible and well-served by a choice of means of transport.
- 3.15 Other Government policy objectives are also relevant:
- To promote social inclusion, ensuring that communities have access to a range of main town centre uses, and that deficiencies in provision in areas with poor access to facilities are remedied
  - To encourage investment to regenerate deprived areas, creating additional employment opportunities and an improved physical environment
  - To promote economic growth

- To deliver more sustainable patterns of development through high-density, mixed-use development and promoting sustainable transport choices, including reducing the need to travel and providing alternatives to car use; and
- To promote high quality and inclusive design, improve the quality of the public realm and open spaces, protect and enhance the architectural and historic heritage of centres, provide a sense of place and a focus for the community and for civic activity and ensure that town centres provide an attractive, accessible and safe environment for businesses, shoppers and residents.

### *PPS7 Sustainable Development in Rural Areas*

3.16 PPS7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas sets out the Government's objectives for rural areas. These are:

- To raise the quality of life and the environment in rural areas through the promotion of:
  - Thriving, inclusive and sustainable rural communities, ensuring people have decent places to live by improving the quality and sustainability of local environments and neighbourhoods
  - Sustainable economic growth and diversification
  - Good quality, sustainable development that respects and, where possible, enhances local distinctiveness and the intrinsic qualities of the countryside; and
  - Continued protection of the open countryside for the benefit of all, with the highest level of protection for our most valued landscapes and environmental resources.
- To promote more sustainable patterns of development:
  - Focusing most development in, or next to, existing towns and villages
  - Preventing urban sprawl
  - Discouraging the development of 'greenfield' land
  - Promoting a range of uses to maximise the potential benefits of the countryside fringing urban areas; and
  - Providing appropriate leisure opportunities to enable urban and rural dwellers to enjoy the wider countryside.

- Promoting economic performance: By developing competitive, diverse and thriving rural enterprise that provides a range of jobs and underpins strong economies.
- Promoting sustainable, diverse and adaptable agriculture sectors where farming achieves high environmental standards, minimising impact on natural resources, and manages valued landscapes and biodiversity; contributes both directly and indirectly to rural economic diversity; is itself competitive and profitable; and provides high quality products that the public wants (Page 6).

### *PPS9 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation*

3.17 PPS9 sets out planning policies on the protection of biodiversity and geodiversity through the planning system. It seeks to:

- Promote sustainable development by ensuring that biological and geological diversity are conserved and enhanced as an integral part of social, environmental and economic development, so that policies and decisions about the development and use of land integrate biodiversity and geological diversity with other considerations
- Conserve, enhance and restore the diversity of England's wildlife and geology by sustaining and, where possible, improving the quality and extent of natural habitat and geological and geomorphological sites; the natural physical processes on which they depend; and the populations of naturally occurring species which they support
- Contribute to rural renewal and urban renaissance by enhancing biodiversity in open spaces and among developments so that they are used by wildlife and valued by people, recognising that healthy functional ecosystems can contribute to a better quality of life and to people's sense of well-being; and ensure that developments take account of the role and value of biodiversity in supporting economic diversification and contributing to a high quality environment (Page 2)

3.18 Paragraph 5 requires LDFs to:

- Indicate the location of designated sites of importance for biodiversity and geodiversity, making clear distinctions between the hierarchy of international, national, regional and locally designated sites; and
- Identify and support any areas or sites for the restoration or creation of new priority habitats which contribute to regional targets.

3.19 Paragraph 12 states that networks of natural habitats provide a valuable resource. They can link sites of biodiversity importance and provide routes or stepping stones for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of species in the wider environment. Local authorities should aim to maintain networks by avoiding or repairing the fragmentation and isolation of natural habitats through policies in plans. Such networks should be protected from development, and, where possible, strengthened by or integrated within it. This may be done as part of a wider strategy for the protection and extension of open space and access routes such as canals and rivers, including those within urban areas.

*PPS10: Planning for Sustainable Waste Management*

- 3.20 The overall objective of Government policy on waste is to protect human health and the environment by producing less waste and by using it as a resource wherever possible. Through more sustainable waste management, moving the management of waste up the ‘waste hierarchy’ of reduction, reuse, recycling and composting, using waste as a source of energy, and only disposing as a last resort the Government aims to break the link between economic growth and the environmental impact of waste. This means a step-change in the way waste is handled and significant new investment in waste management facilities (Para. 1).
- 3.21 Key planning objectives (Para. 3) include the need for planning authorities to:
- Help deliver sustainable development through driving waste management up the waste hierarchy, addressing waste as a resource and looking to disposal as the last option, but one which must be adequately catered for
  - Provide a framework in which communities take more responsibility for their own waste, and enable sufficient and timely provision of waste management facilities to meet the needs of their communities
  - Help secure the recovery or disposal of waste without endangering human health and without harming the environment, and enable waste to be disposed of in one of the nearest appropriate installations
  - Protect green belts but recognise the particular locational needs of some types of waste management facilities when defining detailed green belt boundaries and in determining planning applications.
- 3.22 In preparing development plan documents (Paras.16 to 18) the core strategy of a waste planning authority should set out policies and proposals for waste management in line with the Regional Spatial

Strategy (RSS) and ensure sufficient opportunities for the provision of waste management facilities in appropriate locations including for waste disposal.

- 3.23 Waste planning authorities should identify sites and areas suitable for new or enhanced waste management facilities for the waste management needs of their areas. Waste planning authorities should in particular:
- Allocate sites to support the pattern of waste management facilities set out in the RSS in accordance with the broad locations identified in the RSS; and
  - Allocate sites and areas suitable for new or enhanced waste management facilities to support the apportionment set out in the RSS.
- 3.24 In doing so, waste planning authorities should be able to demonstrate how capacity equivalent to at least ten years of the annual rates set out in the RSS could be provided and identify the type or types of waste management facility that would be appropriately located on the allocated site or in the allocated area, taking care to avoid stifling innovation in line with the waste hierarchy.

*PPG17 Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation*

- 3.25 PPG17 states that to ensure effective planning for open space, sport and recreation it is essential that the needs of local communities are known. As such, the guidance encourages local authorities to develop open space strategies and undertake robust assessments of the existing and future needs of their communities for open space, sports and recreational facilities (Para. 1).
- 3.26 PPG 17 confirms that open space, sport and recreation are fundamental to delivering broader Government objectives (Page 2). These include:
- Supporting an urban renaissance - local networks of high quality, well managed and maintained open spaces, sports and recreational facilities help create urban environments that are attractive, clean and safe. Green spaces are important as areas for nature conservation, biodiversity and as 'green lungs' which help improve air quality
  - Supporting a rural renewal - the countryside can provide opportunities for recreation and visitors can play an important role in the regeneration of the economies of rural areas

- Promoting social inclusion and community cohesion - well planned and maintained open spaces and recreational facilities can help improve people's sense of well being and serve as a focal point for community activities and social interaction
- Health and well being - open spaces, sport and recreational facilities have a vital role to play in promoting healthy living and preventing illness, and in the social development of children of all ages through play, sporting activities and interaction with others
- Promoting more sustainable development - by ensuring that open space, sports and recreational facilities (particularly in urban areas) are easily accessible by walking and cycling, and that more heavily used or intensive sports and recreational facilities are planned for locations well served by public transport.

#### *PPS 22: Renewable Energy*

- 3.27 PPS 22 (Page 6), states that the Government's energy policy, including its policy on renewable energy, is set out in the Energy White Paper, Our Energy Future – Creating a Low Carbon Economy, 2003. This aims to put the UK on a path to cut its carbon dioxide emissions by some 60% by 2050, with real progress by 2020 and to maintain reliable and competitive energy supplies. The development of renewable energy, alongside improvements in energy efficiency and the development of combined heat and power will make a vital contribution to these aims. The Government has already set a target to generate 10% of UK electricity from renewable energy sources by 2010. The White Paper set out the Government's aspiration to double that figure to 20% by 2020.
- 3.28 Planning which facilitates renewable energy developments can contribute to the Government's sustainable development strategy:
- By contributing to the nation's energy needs, ensuring all homes are adequately and affordably heated; and providing new sources of energy in remote areas
  - By reductions in emissions of greenhouse gases and thereby reducing the potential for the environment to be affected by climate change
  - By reducing the nation's reliance on ever diminishing supplies of fossil fuels; and
  - Through the creation of jobs directly related to renewable energy developments, but also in the development of new technologies. In rural areas, renewable energy projects have the potential to play an increasingly important role in the diversification of rural economies.



- 3.29 The Regional Spatial Strategy should include the target for renewable energy capacity in the region for achievement by 2010 and by 2020. Where appropriate, targets in regional spatial strategies may be disaggregated into sub-regional targets (Paragraphs. 2 to 5).
- 3.30 Local planning authorities may include policies in local development documents that require a percentage of the energy to be used in new residential, commercial or industrial developments to come from on-site renewable energy developments. Such policies:
- Should ensure that requirement to generate on-site renewable energy is only applied to developments where the installation of renewable energy generation equipment is viable given the type of development proposed, its location, and design;
  - Should not be framed in such a way as to place an undue burden on developers, for example, by specifying that all energy to be used in a development should come from on-site renewable generation (Para. 8).

*PPS 25: Development and Flood Risk*

- 3.31 The aims of planning policy on development and flood risk, set out in paragraphs 5 and 6 of PPS25 are to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk from flooding and to direct development away from areas at highest risk. Where new development is, exceptionally, necessary in such areas, the aim is to make it safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere and, where possible, reducing flood risk overall.
- 3.32 Consequently, regional planning bodies and local planning authorities should help to deliver sustainable development by:

Appraising Risk:

- Identifying land at risk and the degree of risk of flooding from river, sea and other sources in their areas
- Preparing Regional Flood Risk Appraisals or Strategic Flood Risk Assessments as appropriate
- Framing policies for the location of development which avoid flood risk to people and property where possible, and manage any residual risk, taking account of the impacts of climate change
- Only permitting development in areas of flood risk when there are no reasonably available sites in areas of lower flood risk and benefits of the development outweigh the risks from flooding.

Reducing Risk:

- Safeguarding land from development that is required for current and future flood management e.g. conveyance and storage of floodwater, and flood defences
- Reducing flood risk to and from new development through location, layout and design, incorporating sustainable drainage systems (SUDS)
- Using opportunities offered by new development to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding e.g. surface water management plans; making the most of the benefits of green infrastructure for flood storage, conveyance and SUDS; re-creating functional floodplain; and setting back defences.

*MPS1 Planning and Minerals*

3.33 The Government's objectives for minerals planning in the UK reflect the requirement to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Mineral exploitation has the potential for significant environmental impacts both direct and indirect. To mitigate these impacts government wishes the following principles to be applied to mineral planning to maintain supply to meet need while preventing irreversible environmental damage.

3.34 These principles are:

- To ensure, so far as practicable, the prudent, efficient and sustainable use of minerals and recycling of suitable materials, thereby minimizing the requirement for new primary extraction
- To conserve mineral resources through appropriate domestic provision and timing of supply
- To safeguard mineral resources as far as possible
- To prevent or minimise production of mineral waste
- To secure working practices which prevent or reduce as far as possible, impacts on the environment and human health arising from the extraction, processing, management or transportation of minerals
- To protect internationally and nationally designated areas of landscape value and nature conservation importance from minerals development, other than in the exceptional circumstances detailed in paragraph 14 of this statement

- To secure adequate and steady supplies of minerals needed by society and the economy within the limits set by the environment, assessed through sustainability appraisal, without irreversible damage
  - To maximise the benefits and minimise the impacts of minerals operations over their full life cycle
  - To promote the sustainable transport of minerals by rail, sea or inland waterways
  - To protect and seek to enhance the overall quality of the environment once extraction has ceased, through high standards of restoration, and to safeguard the long-term potential of land for a wide range of after-uses
  - To secure closer integration of minerals planning policy with national policy on sustainable construction and waste management and other applicable environmental protection legislation; and
  - To encourage the use of high quality materials for the purposes for which they are most suitable.
- 3.35 The MPS has several annexes that address the principle economic mineral groups. Only that annex addressing aggregates is relevant to Medway. Aggregates include land-won sand and gravel and crushed rock, marine-dredged sand and gravel and alternatives, including recycled materials supplied or used as aggregate.
- 3.36 Ancillary policy objectives for aggregates are:
- To encourage the use, where practicable, of alternative aggregates in preference to primary aggregate
  - To encourage the supply of marine-dredged sand and gravel to the extent that environmentally acceptable sources can be identified and exploited, within the principles of sustainable development
  - To make provision for the remainder of supply to be met from land-won sand and gravel and crushed rock.

## 4. Regional Policies

### *RPG9 Regional Planning Guidance for the South East*

- 4.1 The regional policies for Medway are contained within Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9) and the Thames Gateway Planning Framework (RPG9a). When looking across these

documents the strategy for the Thames Gateway, and Medway's role within this, is clearly set out. Regional policies for the Thames Gateway seek to:

- Give priority to development in the urban area on previously developed land
- Match the level of employment growth with the level of new housing growth
- Concentrate development near public transport and reduce the need to travel long distances
- Encompass a wide range of employment opportunities
- Aim to raise skills in the workforce and support the development of higher education
- Set high standards of design and create higher density development;
- Safeguard and enhance the countryside
- Develop higher value activity including knowledge industries and research and development; Achieve sustainable development on mixed-use sites
- Provide for the growth of smaller scale employment development and existing economic functions
- Identify sites for economic development
- Emphasise the role of town centres and inner urban areas for regeneration and employment growth.

See RPG9 Policies RE1, RE2, RE3, RE4, RE5, RE6, RE9, RE10, RE11, Q1, Q2, Q3, Q5, Q6, E1, T1, T4, T7 and Paragraphs 4.9 to 4.13 and 12.2 to 12.8 on the Thames Gateway.

- 4.2 In November 2004, RPG9 was amended by the addition of a new Chapter 14: Tourism and Related Sport and Recreation. This identified the Thames Gateway as a sub-regional priority for tourism in policy TSR7, which seeks to realise the potential for growth in business, sporting, environmental and attraction based tourism as part of the wider regeneration strategy for the Gateway.
- 4.3 Paragraph 14.49, states that the planned development activity along the North Kent coast forms a significant element of the regeneration plans for the Thames Gateway as a whole. The anticipated economic growth and planned transport improvements should provide the

opportunity to develop a valuable business tourism market, provided suitable quality accommodation and conference/exhibition facilities are made available. Similarly, the 2012 Olympics in east London could provide significant opportunities for high quality sports related and ancillary development activity in the area and attract significant visitor numbers.

- 4.4 The area also benefits from environmental assets, including internationally designated wildlife habitats, which could provide additional opportunities for tourism activity, if appropriately managed. A proposal for a regional park for Thames Gateway Kent, encompassing a series of country parks forming part of a wider branded 'Green Grid', also offers considerable potential and associated opportunities for rural diversification. Sustainable transport links will be essential to connect the various attractions in the area and encourage longer stays.

#### *RPG9a The Thames Gateway Planning Framework*

- 4.5 RPG9a, the Thames Gateway Planning Framework, identifies the potential for high quality housing and business developments and the opportunities for these at Chatham Maritime, Rochester Waterfront, Gillingham Business Park and the Frindsbury Peninsula. It recognises the need to foster and protect Medway's historic heritage and its tourist potential, as well as protecting the open countryside close to the Towns, including the North Kent Downs AONB and large tracts of marshland of international importance for wildlife in the Thames and Medway Estuaries.
- 4.6 RPG9a requires attention to be focussed on the urban areas for the majority of new development needs, mainly on the many waterfront sites. It also states that new development could also provide the focus for the housing regeneration necessary in the inner parts of Strood, Chatham and Gillingham. It states that there should be only limited outward expansion onto peripheral sites and firm protection for the Green Belt and the best and most versatile agricultural land. It requires planning policies to steer development away from areas of urban fringe, which provides locally valuable countryside and opportunities for recreation, identifying the countryside to the north and east of Gillingham as being particularly important in this context.
- 4.7 RPG9a goes on to emphasise the need to improve public transport, identifying the possibility of providing a park and ride network. On the Hoo Peninsula, with the exception of a limited number of sites, it considers that significant development is not appropriate because of the need to protect the large areas of environmental and agricultural importance. The exceptions are the large industrial sites at Kingsnorth and the Isle of Grain which make them suitable for accommodating those employment uses which may not be easily accommodated elsewhere.

- 4.8 RPG9a considers that the release of land from the defence estate at Chattenden could allow a more sustainable relationship between employment and homes on the Hoo Peninsula. It recognises the scope for expanding the existing settlement at Chattenden into a new village which would take into account the longer term development needs of the Medway Towns and the consequent need to make a comprehensive response to its full potential.
- 4.9 Annex 1 of RPG9a sets out the planning framework principles and within this paragraphs 3 and 4 refer to the need to raise aspirations for development, optimise opportunities and to change attitudes such that the area will not expect or accept more of the environmental and development standards of the past but to attain an economic uplift and environmental gains.

See RPG9a – Paragraphs 6.10.1 to 6.10.17 on the Medway Towns and Hoo Peninsula.

#### *The Emerging South East Plan*

- 4.10 The Draft South East Plan was submitted in March 2006 and following an Examination in Public in March, 2007, the Government published its response to the Panel's report in July 2008, together with a Consolidated Plan which incorporates all the proposed changes. The Consolidated Plan sets out a vision for the region through to 2026, which seeks to maintain a high quality of life and increase prosperity and opportunities for all, whilst nurturing and enhancing the region's environmental assets and increasing the efficiency with which resources are used (Para. 3.3). The policies in the Plan are divided into two sections. Section B includes core regional policies, which apply the strategy to the whole region, whilst section C contains strategies for 10 sub-regions, including Kent Thames Gateway, of which Medway is a major part.
- 4.11 A number of the overall strategic policies have particular relevance for Medway and are summarised below.
- 4.12 One of the spatial principles upon which the plan is based is to focus new development on a network of regional hubs. The Medway Towns are designated in paragraph 4.11 as one of those hubs and is identified as a regeneration opportunity with longer term potential to provide higher order functions and fulfil the role of a regional transport hub.
- 4.13 The plan requires the provision of an adequate quantity and high quality of employment land and a range of sites for a broad range of employment uses to meet the current and future requirements of local economies (Para. 6.16). It does not set out employment floorspace requirements.

- 4.14 Policy RE4 requires local authorities, business sectors and education and training providers to work jointly to ensure that skills provision meets business requirements and that the workforce is equipped to access job opportunities. Further and higher education establishments need to plan for increased places on courses and continuous development in the workplace and particularly expand provision in the growth areas.
- 4.15 Policy RE5 encourages smart growth, which is the increase in the region's prosperity while reducing the rate of increase in its ecological footprint. This will include the support and promotion of Information and Communications Technology, flexible working practices, improved productivity and competitiveness, home based businesses and accessible services and education.
- 4.16 The encouragement and delivery of smart growth in the Thames Gateway, set out in Section C, paragraph 19.11 will be through:
- Upgrading of skills of existing residents as well as attracting skilled migration
  - Improving economic activity rates
  - Encouraging business formation; reducing over-reliance on jobs outside the region.
- 4.17 With regard to housing the Plan aims to ensure that everyone has the opportunity of living in a decent home, in a community where they want to live (Para. 7.1). Consequently, local planning authorities are required to:
- Facilitate the delivery of the plan's housing requirements (Policy H3)
  - Substantially increase the amount of affordable housing (Policy H3)
  - Provide an appropriate range and mix of housing types to meet all needs, including those of groups with particular needs (Policy H4)
  - Raise the quality of new housing, reduce its environmental impact, facilitate future adaptation to meet changing needs and increase housing densities to reflect an overall regional target of 40 dwellings per hectare (Policy H5)
  - Make better use of the existing housing stock by reducing the number of vacant, unfit and unsatisfactory dwellings, encouraging the conversion of larger houses to flats and, where appropriate, encouraging the movement of smaller households from larger to smaller accommodation (Policy H6).

- 4.18 The region's strategic vision for 2026 is for a socially and economically strong, healthy and just South East, that respects the limits of the global environment (Para. 3.1). To achieve this the plan facilitates the development of health, education, cultural and leisure amenities (Para. 15.1).
- 4.19 The Plan recognises that a rich and varied cultural "landscape" is a contributor to "smart growth" and is essential to delivering a competitive, information led economy. It can help regeneration and urban renaissance and promote health and well being (Para.15.22). Cultural and community facilities, such as libraries, community and sports centres and village halls, can provide lifelong learning and skills development in an environment suitable for groups excluded from mainstream services, whilst bringing together existing and new communities in areas of growth (Para. 15.24).
- 4.20 Policy TC1 identifies a strategic network of town centres comprising three categories: centres for significant change; primary regional centres and secondary regional centres. Chatham is one of the 12 centres for significant change. Town centres in this category will be the focus for significant growth and major retail development and other large scale town centre uses should be located within them.
- 4.21 Policy CC2 promotes measures to mitigate and adapt to the forecast effects of climate change. Mitigation, through reducing greenhouse gas emissions, will primarily be addressed through greater resource efficiency including:
- Improving energy efficiency performance of new and existing buildings and influencing behaviour of occupants
  - Reducing the need to travel and ensuring good accessibility to public and other sustainable modes of transport
  - Promoting land use that acts as carbon sinks
  - Encouraging development and use of renewable energy
  - Reducing the amount of biodegradable waste landfilled.
- 4.22 Policy CC3 seeks to stabilise the South East's ecological footprint by 2016, and to reduce it by 2026. Implementation will require a sustained new programme of action incorporating:
- Increased efficiency of resource use in new development
  - Adaptation of existing development to reduce its use of energy, water and other resources
  - Changes in behaviour by organisations and by individuals



- 4.23 Policy NRM14 sets out indicative sub-regional targets for Kent and Medway for land-based renewable energy of 111 MW by 2010 and 154 MW by 2016. Local authorities are required to collaborate and engage with communities, the renewable energy industry and other stakeholders on a sub-regional basis to assist in the achievement of the targets through:
- Undertaking more detailed assessments of local potential
  - Encouraging small scale community based schemes
  - Encouraging development of local supply chains, especially for biomass
  - Raising awareness, ownership and understanding of renewable energy.
- 4.24 The strategy seeks to reduce the amount of waste produced and to re-use, recycle and recover as much waste as possible before final disposal (D6: Para. 10.4). As a consequence, Kent and Medway are required to provide for the management of the following quantities of waste between 2006 and 2025:
- 2.46 million tonnes (12.1%) of London’s exported waste (Policy W3); and
  - 4.929 million tonnes of municipal solid waste and 9.549 million tonnes of commercial and industrial waste per year (Policy W7).
- 4.25 The strategy aims to meet the supply of construction aggregates from a significant increase in supplies of secondary and recycled materials, a reduced contribution from primary land won resources and an increase in imports of marine-dredged imports (D6:Para10.72). Consequently, Medway is required to make provision for 0.2 million tonnes per annum, of recycled and secondary aggregates by 2016 (Policy M2). Kent and Medway are required to maintain a landbank of at least seven years, of planning permissions for 2.53 million tonnes per annum, of land won sand and gravel through the plan period (Policy M3).
- 4.26 SEERA has now published a consultation document on its Partial Review of RPG9 and the Draft South East Plan: Review of Sub-Regional Allocation of Land Won Aggregates, May 2008. This reduces the overall requirement for land won sand and gravel for the region in Policy M3, from 13.25 mtpa to 12.18 mtpa and apportions the requirements for Kent and Medway. There are three options as follows:

Demand Option:	Kent 1.90 mtpa	Medway 0.29 mtpa
Environmental Option	Kent 1.48 mtpa	Medway 0.16 mtpa
Demand and Resources Option	Kent 1.68 mtpa	Medway 0.19 mtpa

- 4.27 Chapter 19 deals with the Kent Thames Gateway sub-region. This was first recognised as a priority area for regeneration in the 1980's and RPG9 and RPGA have subsequently confirmed the area as a national and regional priority for regeneration and growth. From the outset the fundamental theme has been regeneration of large previously developed sites, improvement of poor urban environment and stimulus to the economy. The sub-region comprises the major urban areas of Dartford, Gravesham, Medway and Swale north of A2/M2 (Para. 19.1).
- 4.28 Therefore comprehensive regeneration of the area is clearly intended rather than just increasing dwelling supply, although this is an important component.
- 4.29 In Medway, the strategy is to concentrate new dwellings, employment and services within the urban area at the riverside sites and at Ministry of Defence land at Chattenden. Development is to be particularly concentrated near the transport hub of Chatham (paragraphs 19.6 and 19.7). Between 2006 and 2026 Medway is required to make provision for the completion of 16,300 dwellings (Policy H1, Table H1b), of which 15,700 will be within the Thames Gateway. (Policy KTG4), and 600 will be within that part of the "Rest of Kent" which lies within Medway. (Policy AOSR6).
- 4.30 Under Policy KTG1, priority is to be given to the use of previously developed land and the benefit of new services and employment will be made available to existing communities and carefully integrated with them. The Green Belt and the AONB will be protected from development and coalescence with adjoining settlements to the south, east and west of the Medway urban area and to the west of Sittingbourne is to be avoided.
- 4.31 Within the Thames Gateway, policy KTG4 applies an indicative target of 30% of all new dwellings for affordable housing. However, the target for individual districts will be determined locally, taking into account strategic housing market assessments, available funding and the circumstances of major development sites. Policy H3 states that, when setting targets, regard should be had to the overall regional target of 25% of all new housing being socially rented accommodation and 10% of other forms of affordable housing. However, indicative targets for sub-regions should take precedence over the regional target.
- 4.32 The economy will be dynamic and widely based; provision will be made for the expansion of the existing economic functions and for the introduction of new office, manufacturing and services on a large scale, with an emphasis on higher value activity including knowledge industries and research and development (Policy KTG2).
- 4.33 The role of Medway, as a main economic location, will be promoted.

Major sites identified in Medway will be developed to their full potential, building on the existing high technology aerospace and automotive sectors and attracting new high value activity, or accommodating the expansion of transport, energy, distribution and manufacturing (see KTG2 (iv)).

- 4.34 Kent Thames Gateway has a relatively high proportion of jobs in manufacturing and distribution and the presence of ports and power generation. These are essential functions for the region, London and the nation and policy KTG2 seeks to ensure that provision is made for their future capacity and viable operation as well as new types of jobs to diversify the economy.
- 4.35 Priority should be given to the completion of major existing employment sites and new employment locations should be provided in conjunction with new housing land. Chatham Maritime and land adjacent to Rochester Airfield are identified for technology and knowledge based development (Policy KT3).
- 4.36 Town centres and inner urban areas will be given greater emphasis as locations for regeneration and employment growth in services and cultural activity. Medway is identified as a major location for the expansion of higher and further education (Policy KTG3)
- 4.37 Chatham has a key role as a city of learning and culture (Policy KTG3) and will be further developed as a major town centre, providing a concentration of mixed retail, leisure and service uses. Medway will further develop the functions of a city centre within Thames Gateway, providing higher education, retail and other services (KTG3). Provision will be made for local and district facilities in conjunction with the development of major new neighbourhoods (Policy KTG5)

### **Other Regional Strategies**

#### *The Regional Economic Strategy, 2006 – 16*

- 4.38 The Regional Economic Strategy adopts three objectives:
1. Global Competitiveness – assisting more businesses to operate internationally and maximising the South East's share of foreign direct investment; increasing business expenditure on research and development and encouraging greater collaboration with the region's knowledge base; increasing the percentage of total South East business turnover attributable to new and improved products and services; and securing the infrastructure needed to secure continued prosperity.

2. Smart Growth – lifting underperformance through increasing the region’s stock of businesses; maximising the number of people ready for employment at all skill levels, and ensuring they are equipped to progress in the labour market; increasing the participation of South East businesses (especially small businesses and social enterprises) in tendering for public sector contracts; reducing road congestion and pollution levels by improving travel choice, promoting public transport, managing demand and facilitating modal shifts; ensuring sufficient and affordable housing and employment space of the right type and size to meet the needs of the region and create the climate for long-term investment through efficient use of land resources, including mixed-use developments; and improving the productivity of the workforce and increasing economic activity.
  3. Sustainable Prosperity – supporting quality of life through reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions attributable to the South East and increasing the contribution of renewable energy to overall energy supply in the region; reducing per capita water consumption and increasing the Gross Value Added per tonne of materials entering the waste stream; achieving measurable improvements in the quality, biodiversity and accessibility of green space, open space and green infrastructure; and enabling more people to benefit from sustainable prosperity across the region and reducing polarisation between communities.
- 4.39 The Strategy identifies actions to achieve the objectives, including eight transformational actions that have the potential to have particular impact across the breadth of the Strategy:
1. 100% Next Generation Broadband Coverage – to improve business efficiency and transform the way people work and learn.
  2. Science and Innovation Campuses – to establish new world class research facilities in the South East.
  3. Skills Escalator – to ensure that people at all skill levels are continually equipped to progress in the labour market.
  4. Regional Infrastructure Fund – to harness new sources of funding for infrastructure investment.
  5. Raising Economic Activity Rates – by addressing barriers to employment and increasing incentives to work.
  6. Global Leadership in Environmental Technologies – to exploit the business opportunities created by reducing carbon emissions and waste generation.
  7. Education-Led Regeneration – to harness the catalytic effect of new

Further and Higher Education facilities on releasing untapped potential.

8. Making the Most of 2012 – to ensure that the 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games leave a positive and lasting legacy for the South East.

#### *South East England Health Strategy*

4.40 The South East England Health Strategy has six aims:

1. Health Inequalities: Reduce health inequalities and raise the life expectancy of the most socially disadvantaged.
2. A Sustainable Region: Promote a vibrant, healthy and sustainable region to maximize the impact on people's health and address climate change.
3. Safer Communities: Reduce violence and create safer communities, promoting social cohesion and well being in relationships, families and communities.
4. Employment and Health: Improve workplace health and social inclusion in employment to create a more productive workforce and promote greater population well being.
5. Children and Young People: Promote the physical and mental health and well being of children and young people.
6. Later Life: Improve the healthy life expectancy of older people and reduce inequalities in health by adding years to life adding life to years and adding dignity to care.

#### *South East Regional Housing Strategy 2006 Onwards*

4.41 The South East Regional Housing Strategy (2008-11) now produced by the Regional Housing Board (RHB), ensures that there is a strong alignment of funding priorities with the South East Plan and Regional Economic Strategy. The housing strategy has specified the following as its key priorities over the next 3 years -

- Increase the amount of affordable housing built in the region
- Make sure new affordable homes come in a range of sizes, to suit families as well as couples and singles
- Continue funding for local authority housing stock to meet the decent home standard.
- Make sure that new affordable homes meet high standards of building and energy efficiency .

- 4.42 The RHB will also invest in refurbishing rundown private sector housing, affordable homes in rural areas and accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers.

*Regional Transport Strategy July 2004*

- 4.43 In those objectives that are of particular relevance to Medway, the Regional Transport Strategy seeks:
- To facilitate urban renaissance and foster social inclusion by rebalancing the structure and use of the transport system. In particular by bringing forward measures that encourage modal shift and significantly improve the attractiveness of local public transport services
  - To reduce the wider environmental, health and community impact associated with the transport system by bringing forward measures to positively manage the transport system in ways that reduce our dependence on the private car
  - To improve transport infrastructure in the Thames Gateway to maximize regeneration potential and encourage economic development
  - To develop road and rail links that improve inter-regional connectivity
  - To improve and develop more sustainable transport connections to the region's key ports, airports and international railway stations as a basis for the enhancement of its gateway function to Europe and the rest of the world.

## **5. Sub-Regional Strategies and Programmes**

*Kent & Medway Structure Plan 2006*

- 5.1 Although the Local Development Framework does not have to conform to the adopted Structure Plan (only to regional planning policy), the Kent & Medway Structure Plan 2006 represents the most recent articulation of strategic planning policy in Kent and Medway, and remains part of the development plan for Medway until superseded by the South East Plan. Although the Plan includes a wide range of policies to be applied throughout Kent and Medway, the following policies relate specifically to Medway.
- 5.2 The overarching policy for Medway is Policy ME1. This states:

“Proposals to regenerate Medway should focus upon the Medway Waterfront including central Chatham, Rochester Riverside and at Strood. Expansion beyond the Medway urban area to meet development requirements should be concentrated at a new, mixed-use community at Chattenden/Lodge Hill on previously developed land or such alternative land as may be identified in Local Development Documents in the event that the former defence land fails to come forward when necessary to provide for the planned employment or housing provision for Medway.

Development for the Higher and Further Education sectors including a full-scale university campus, will be supported. Provision will be made for the technology and knowledge sectors adjacent to Rochester Airfield, at Chatham Maritime and Chattenden/Lodge Hill.

Completion of improvements to the A228 together with rail access improvements to support growth of Thamesport and industrial and commercial development at Grain and Kingsnorth will be promoted.

Major new town centre investment at Chatham on a scale appropriate to one of the region’s principal urban centres will be supported, particularly in relation to new public transport capacity, employment provision, retail, cultural, tourism and leisure facilities.

As part of a comprehensive greenspaces strategy, provision will be made for a network of open land (‘Green Grid’) which will link major areas of open space with the Thames and Medway and with existing and new communities.”

- 5.3 Policy HP1 makes provision for the development of 11,500 dwellings in Medway between 2001 and 2016.
- 5.4 Policy HP1 sets a target for the development of housing on previously developed land for Kent and Medway at 70%. The guideline for Medway is 80%.
- 5.5 Policy SS3 designates Strategic Gaps to maintain the separation of the urban areas of the Medway Gap, Maidstone and Medway, the settlements on the east and west sides of the River Medway and the Medway Towns and Sittingbourne.
- 5.6 The roles of Chatham as a sub-regional town centre, Rochester, Strood, Gillingham and Rainham as urban service centres and Hoo St. Werburgh as a rural service centre are safeguarded and enhanced by policy EP14.
- 5.7 Policy EP2 indicates a total provision of 575,000 sq.m. of employment land (B1,B2 and B8 uses), from 2001-2021. This includes 505,000 sq.m. of existing commitments and at least 20ha of new land at the Chattenden/Lodge Hill site for a range of employment uses including

the knowledge and technology sector. Grain, Kingsnorth and land adjacent to Rochester Airfield are scheduled as strategically important employment locations in Policy EP4. Policy EP5 makes provision for a technology and knowledge based cluster adjacent to Rochester Airfield and at Chatham Maritime.

*Creating Sustainable Communities; Greening the Gateway, 2004*

- 5.8 This strategy for greenspace sets out a vision for the landscape of the Thames Gateway. It is a statement of intent within which more detailed strategies and action plans will fit. It is not a spatial strategy or a prescription for land use development on specific sites.
- 5.9 The strategy aims to provide a framework for integrating the whole range of urban and rural open spaces into the regeneration process. It applies to formal parks, the grounds of schools and hospitals, the landscape around housing, canal and rail corridors, woodlands, wetlands, inter-tidal areas, wilder landscapes and the wider countryside. Farmland, business parks, development sites and domestic gardens also make a vital contribution to the greenspace network.
- 5.10 The Government recognises the importance of greenspace to the quality of the environment, the image of the Gateway and to the quality of life, including opportunities for healthy exercise, sport and recreation. It encourages a holistic approach to the greenspace network in order to provide a cohesive green infrastructure, which will enhance new built development.
- 5.11 The Government is encouraging the emergence of a continuous linked network of various landscapes both within and between built up areas. The project is expected to take 25-30 years to come to fruition. The core principles of the strategy will inform the regional spatial strategies, local development frameworks and the practical action of the many agencies and organisations that shape the environmental quality of the area.
- 5.12 The core principles of the document consist of the following:
- 1 Planning in advance- including open space provision as an integral part of regeneration planning from the outset;
  - 2 Developing an environmental evidence base:
  - 3 Encouraging inclusiveness and integration- strengthening physical linkages in the landscape;
  - 4 Protecting local character and distinctiveness;



- 5 Protecting designated sites;
- 6 Habitat restoration and creation;
- 7 A dynamic landscape- responding to changing circumstances
- 8 Community involvement.

*Thames Gateway Interim Plan: Policy Framework, 2006*

- 5.13 The Thames Gateway Interim Plan has been prepared by the Department for Communities and Local Government with a view to adoption of a final plan in 2008. It builds upon Greening the Grid and extends the concept of Green Grids through the development of the concept of Thames Gateway Parklands. Parklands will be planned alongside or ahead of built development and will:
- Celebrate the character, identity and history of each community in the Gateway;
  - Improve the public realm;
  - Protect, enhance and create a mosaic of bio-diverse habitats;
  - Encourage active, healthy lifestyles;
  - Integrate management of flood risk, water supply and water quality;
  - Contribute to the Gateway's low carbon status and opportunities for local renewable energy generation;
  - Link communities through excellent foot and cycle paths and public transport;
  - Promote locally grown food that enhances soil fertility and biodiversity.
- 5.14 The Parklands Framework will build upon and add to projects which are already underway, and from existing programmes to provide investment in an integrated environmental infrastructure, both in rural and urban areas. The intention is to co-ordinate and enhance the work of existing bodies whilst enabling them to retain their responsibilities and powers. It will consider what sources of funding are available and what the priorities are for spending, as well as long-term management arrangements.

*The Cultural Framework and Toolkit for Thames Gateway North Kent. July 2006*

- 5.15 The Cultural Framework and Toolkit for Thames Gateway North Kent (TGNK) is an initiative to help integrate culture into the regeneration and growth of TGNK. It includes a vision and guiding principles that were agreed by all stakeholders to guide future cultural development across the area.

- 5.16 The Framework and Toolkit was created by a collaboration between the South East Cultural Agencies; the Department for Communities and Local Government; the Department for Culture, Media and Sport; Local Authorities; Local Regeneration Partnerships; SEEDA; the Regional Assembly; GOSE; National Lottery distributing bodies; and others.
- 5.17 The document identifies the following priorities for cultural development in TGNK from 2006 to 2016:
- Build capacity within the existing cultural sector in the areas of leadership, skills, audience development, and income generation and funding. This will enable it to provide a firm foundation for cultural development.
  - Improve, refurbish and expand existing cultural facilities and activities to meet the demands of a growing and diversifying population, contemporary quality standards, and contemporary models for service delivery.
  - Ensure full access to relevant facilities and activities at new street / new neighbourhood level. This is as much part of the infrastructure of sustainable communities as roads and schools. New facilities (libraries, multi-purpose community hubs etc.) will be needed and must be accessible to the entire community.
  - Ensure facilities and activities at local district / borough / sub-regional level meet modern expectations for attractive and vibrant cities and towns. Medway's central location within TGNK and its large local population make it an obvious candidate for sub-regional facilities, but equally important considerations include:
    - Site availability and infrastructure capacity
    - Location of existing facilities and activities
    - Leadership, management and funding capacity of development partners
    - Patterns of demand within catchment areas
    - Accessibility of major facilities and activities in London and other parts of Kent.
  - Maximise the potential of the London 2012 Games to catalyse sporting and other infrastructure projects, to bring together existing and incoming communities, to raise the profile and activities of the local cultural sector, to increase participation and volunteering, and to increase tourism and inward investment. In order to ensure sustainability, all cultural projects conceived to meet these priorities must be considered in terms of their entire life cycle and life-cycle costs (Para. 3.1.6).

## 6. Local policies

### *Medway Community Plan 2007-2010*

- 6.1 The Medway Community Plan is prepared by the Medway Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), which brings together all the main organisations representing the community of Medway including businesses, voluntary and community organisations and public bodies. The Local Strategic Partnership is made up of almost 200 partner organisations. The latest version of the partnership's report and plan, entitled Medway's Community Plan, is for 2007-2010.
- 6.2 A Local Area Agreement is a three year agreement that sets out the priorities for action for a local area agreed between central government, represented by the Government Office, and a local area, represented by the local authority and LSP and other key partners at local level. The LAA should therefore reflect the local community strategy and it will be refreshed annually, which will enable changes in national or local priorities to be reflected. The Government advises that these priorities are currently grouped round 4 themes:
- Children and Young People
  - Safer and Stronger Communities
  - Healthier Communities and Older People
  - Economic Development and Enterprise.
- 6.3 There are a number of thematic partnerships within the LSP and the key themes of the new community plan reflect their work and priorities:

#### **Sustainable Development and Regeneration in Medway**

Improve the quality of life for existing and new communities by ensuring that regeneration and development is matched to the natural resources and infrastructure available.

#### **Learning for Life in Medway**

Increase vocational training opportunities available for people of all ages

#### **An Economically Prosperous Medway**

Increase and improve local employment opportunities so more local people can work in Medway

#### **Medway a City of Culture and Tourism**

Realise Medway's cultural ambitions as the City for the Thames Gateway

#### **A Safer Medway**

Reduce anti social behaviour to increase people's feelings of safety.

**Healthy People in Medway**

Enable people to remain healthy and independent, especially older people and other vulnerable groups

**A Sustainable Environment for Medway**

Cherish and enhance Medway's urban and rural heritage and the important resources of open space, countryside and wildlife habitats

**Transport for Medway**

Deliver accessible and integrated transport options to support the regeneration of Medway

**A Community Involved in Medway**

Empower local people to have greater participation and influence in local affairs.

**Medway: A Place for Young People**

Ensure the safety and well being of children and young people so they can play a productive part in Medway's society.

*The Council's Principles and Priorities 2007-2010*

6.4 Medway Council has two guiding principles for service delivery and six strategic priorities to be achieved between 2007 and 2010, to deliver its plans for Medway's renaissance.

6.5 The guiding principles or core values are:

- Putting our customers at the centre of everything we do
- Giving value for money.

6.6 The six priority areas are:

- A clean and green environment
- Safer communities
- Children and young people having the best start in life
- Older and vulnerable people maintaining their independence
- People travelling easily and safely in Medway
- Everyone benefiting from the area's regeneration.

*Medway Local Transport Plan 2006-2011*

6.7 The overall strategy for transport in Medway as set out in the Local Transport Plan is as follows:

- Limiting the need for travel through the development of a more sustainable economy and spatial framework for the area – reduced

dependence on commuting, increased ability to support a full range of local services, marked reduction in average length of trips.

- Improved strategic connectivity – to provide the basis for improved economic performance and recognising the regional and national role of the Thames Gateway as a growth area and destination in its own right.
- A step change in public transport capacity for movements within the area – to facilitate choice, support urban regeneration and growth and minimise social exclusion.
- Intelligent management of the highway system – to maximise efficiency, minimise noise and pollution and ensure public transport reliability.
- Consolidating Medway’s role as a gateway for freight serving the wider South East – through selected port development and the promotion of rail freight.
- Setting new standards in terms of public transport integration – cutting edge information systems, high quality interchange facilities, through/integrated ticketing and signposting, consistent development of the bus network etc.,
- Development of cycling and pedestrian networks as valued resources for the whole community – coherent network development, removal of barriers, urban/rural integration through the public rights of way (PROW) network.
- Accessibility driven development – Medway at the forefront of intelligent and sustainable development meeting the needs of all.
- Integrated approach to local scheme development and area measures including safer routes to schools – creating “added value” through intelligent approaches to road safety, traffic management, structural maintenance, street lighting etc.,
- High quality design standards – recognising that transport networks make up a substantial part of Medway’s public realm and the contribution that can make to regeneration and community pride and confidence.

#### *Medway Waterfront Renaissance Strategy 2004*

- 6.8 The Medway Waterfront Renaissance Strategy was prepared in conjunction with Medway Renaissance and adopted by the Council in 2004. It sets out a development strategy for the waterfront for the next

20 years and forms the initial basis for delivery through the Thames Gateway Strategic Partnership.

6.9 The document establishes six themes:

Quality and design

Create a beautiful waterfront city, with inspiring architecture and public open spaces, and a sense of local distinctiveness  
Achieve high quality development which embraces innovative and sustainable design, construction and resource management techniques  
Promote Medway's unique maritime heritage and encourage the integration of new with old in a sensitive way

Sense of place

Develop and maintain a strong sense of identity, civic pride and belonging, by harnessing the best qualities in the built, natural and social environment  
Reconnect our urban spaces with the river - physically, visually and culturally  
Create a people friendly environment that is safe and secure and accessible for all

The river

Encourage a mix of industrial, recreational and leisure uses on the river, whilst protecting its important ecological and landscape character  
Make the most of opportunities to increase public access to the river, ensuring that new development enhances its attractiveness, views and overall appeal

Economy and learning

Enhance competitiveness and develop a mixed economy with opportunities for inward investment and learning  
Develop and foster cultural, knowledge and creative employment and activity  
Develop Chatham Centre as the strategic civic, office, community and retail centre of Medway and beyond

Housing and community

Provide a mix and balance of house types and sizes that will be attractive and affordable to a broad cross-section of the community  
Promote diversity and choice through mixed-use development that strengthens neighbourhoods with modern facilities and accessible local services

## Transport

Develop fast and efficient transport links between houses, jobs, services and key destinations

Widen transport choice and improve public transport

Encourage direct and safe walking and cycling routes that connect key waterfront attractions/ destination.

- 6.10 The Strategy states that over the next twenty years, Medway Waterfront will accommodate between 6,000 and 8,000 additional dwellings of mixed size and tenure
- 6.11 Each regeneration site will contribute its own special elements to create Medway Waterfront as an exciting riverside destination. Each site has different natural and built characteristics and different development opportunities, ensuring complementary, rather than competing, uses.
- 6.12 The sites will be connected through a chain of high quality public spaces, with a walkway and cycleway on both sides of the river and hubs of activity to attract people to the waterfront. We want to create new links along and across the river, with the potential for river transport in the future and the creation of a pedestrian and public transport bridge linking Chatham Centre and waterfront with Medway City Estate. The bridge will form an iconic gateway to Chatham Centre and Waterfront and play an important role in enabling physical and visual connections between developments on both banks of the river. It will also be the connecting element between greenspace corridors on the north and south banks of the river, creating a critical hub for Medway's green grid and public access to the waterfront.
- 6.13 Revitalising Chatham Centre and waterfront is the focal point of the Waterfront Renaissance Strategy. It will become the commercial, civic and cultural heart of both Medway Waterfront and Medway as a whole. Rochester Riverside will deliver the greatest proportion of new housing on Medway Waterfront, complemented by business and other uses. Together with Star Hill to Sun Pier and Medway City Estate, they will form the central core of Medway Waterfront.
- 6.14 An enhanced Strood town centre and greenspace at Temple Marsh will serve surrounding new waterfront communities and businesses.
- 6.15 The role of Gillingham town centre will be supported by the development of mixed uses and a range of water-based activities at Gillingham Waterfront.
- 6.16 The creation of a university and college quarter within a potential world heritage site will be the cornerstone of Medway's economic regeneration. We will be promoting the development of creative and cultural small businesses on the Waterfront to provide job opportunities for graduates and create a more attractive cultural environment to

attract students to the area. We will also be requiring the design of new schools to allow for easy community access both in and out of school hours.

- 6.17 We aim to generate over 10,000 additional jobs on Medway Waterfront by earmarking strategic employment sites and encouraging mixed uses as a basis for inward investment. Our emphasis will be on creating start-up and grow-on space for small and medium-sized businesses at key locations, and establishing a creative and cultural industries quarter within the Star Hill to Sun Pier area.
- 6.18 The ultimate number of homes will depend on the capacity of the transport infrastructure to support additional development.

*Medway Regeneration Framework, 2006-2016*

- 6.19 Whereas the Medway Waterfront Renaissance Strategy was confined to the waterfront areas of Medway, the Medway Regeneration Strategy widens this to provide the strategic context for the whole of Medway and a picture of Medway in 2016. It sets out the priority actions which flow from the Community Plan and which are necessary to achieve that picture (Page 3).
- 6.20 The vision for Medway in 2016 (Page 7) includes:
- A major retail centre for the region
  - A major university complex with 15,000 students
  - A regional cultural offer
  - Vibrant town centres with an active evening economy
  - Efficient and integrated transport with fast links to London and Europe
  - Lifelong learning opportunities
  - A housing market of choice
  - An employment market of choice and growing prosperity
  - A learning and skills offer at all levels, available to all and appropriate to Medway's growing economy.

- 6.21 Priority areas of focus:

- 6.22 In order for Medway to develop into a city of learning, culture, tourism and enterprise, vital components for regeneration success need to be supported and developed. Medway's ambitions around transformation and growth are clearly dependent on the necessary investments and activities that will either kick start, facilitate or support the scale of regeneration envisaged. In order of importance the areas are:

- Town Centres – Chatham will be Medway's civic and cultural heart and function as a sub regional shopping centre, with Rainham,



Gillingham, Rochester and Strood all playing identified roles as district centres. Significant change is required in Chatham while a programme of strategic development for the other centres is essential.

- Transport for Medway puts transport right at the heart of the regeneration plans. It is essential that we provide a sustainable public transport system that is accessible. Transport priorities have been identified for Medway, via the Local Transport Plan and regional priority setting.
- The Medway economy needs to be healthy and growing to provide the full range of opportunities to existing and new Medway residents. Priorities for investment have been identified in the Economic Development Statement.
- The continued development of the further and higher education offer, together with improvements to skills development, participation levels, vocational training and post 19 training are all vital to the success of Medway.
- Social regeneration is a focus for activity. The creation of cohesive and sustainable communities is a priority for Medway with an expected 12,500 – 16,000 homes to be built. It is clear that benefits from growth must be delivered to existing communities and that new developments must be effectively integrated. There will be an emphasis on bringing communities together.
- A major element in transforming Medway into a premier European city will be the provision of a range of cultural experiences and opportunities appropriate for a city of 300,000. Existing cultural assets and new cultural initiatives will help to establish the identity of the city and create a positive image.
- Environmental priorities include 'Greening the Kent and Medway Gateway' including delivery of key initiatives such as Green Grid Medway and Great Lines City Park, managing flood risk, leading in sustainable construction, reducing the impact on natural resources and utilising renewable energy together with enhancing existing environment and green spaces.
- Medway has a proud history of hosting major sporting and cultural events and is well placed to capitalise on the 2012 London Olympics and beyond. Medway will have the transport links and tourism offer to capture locally the potential benefits of the 2012 games.
- Infrastructure provision both within and beyond Medway is crucial to further growth and success.

- Improving the health of Medway residents is important together with the provision and delivery of the local health infrastructure (Pages 14 to 15).

*Medway Wildlife, Countryside and Open Space Strategy 2008-2016*

- 6.23 The Medway Wildlife, Countryside and Open Space Strategy aims to secure the following outcomes:

**Providing more high quality facilities**

Medway Council, its partners and stakeholders will ensure that all residents and visitors will have access to a range of parks, open spaces, play areas, allotments, countryside and sports sites that are more welcoming, safer, cleaner and greener.

**Improved monitoring and management**

Medway Council, its partners and stakeholders will ensure that all residents and visitors experience better monitoring and management of greenspace sites.

**Prioritised investments**

Medway Council and its partners and stakeholders will work together to increase investment and income generation. Work will be prioritised to achieve sustainable improvement and value for money.

**Improved protection and conservation**

Medway Council, its partners and stakeholders will work together to realise their duty to protect, manage and enhance the wildlife, countryside, biodiversity, and open space resource and to strengthen policy protection for rural Medway.

**More open spaces contributing directly to regeneration**

Medway Council and its partners and stakeholders will ensure that Medway's countryside and open spaces contribute to on-going regeneration.

**Greater celebration and engagement**

Medway Council, its partners and stakeholders will ensure that residents and visitors have opportunities to enjoy and appreciate Medway's countryside and open space resource and also to engage in discussion about future management.

*Medway Housing Strategy 2008-2011*

- 6.24 Medway's Housing Strategy has the following long term vision to:

- Maximize the supply of suitable and affordable housing and meet housing need

- Enable vulnerable people to live independent lives
- Improve the quality and energy efficiency of housing
- Develop sustainable communities and promote neighbourhood renewal
- Promote better and fairer access to housing services.

6.25 A set of sub-strategies have been prepared as part of the wider development of this strategy. Those strategic aims, included within the sub-strategies, of particular relevance to the core strategy are as follows:

- Ensuring access to decent, safe and warm homes in a sustainable community;
- Making the best use of housing;
- Promoting affordable warmth;
- Raising awareness of the benefits of home energy conservation to tackle the effects of cold homes and reduce the amount of people living in fuel poverty;
- Ensuring that properties are brought back into use to meet housing needs;
- Rejuvenating neighbourhoods to aid in the regeneration of Medway;
- Ensuring that all people have equal opportunity in accessing housing services and suffer no discrimination on the grounds of their disability, colour, race and nationality, ethnic or national origins;
- Maximising the supply of safe, suitable and affordable housing to meet the needs of young, disabled and older people in Medway;
- Keeping older people and people with disabilities living in their own home for as long as possible;
- Raising awareness of the impact poor housing has on the health of older people and the services available to them;
- Ensuring that the provision of affordable housing contributes to the regeneration of Medway. Developments should be attractive, safe and designed and built to a high quality;
- Developing a range of affordable housing options to meet the needs of the community so that people have a choice of housing in a place where they want to live;
- Ensuring that future housing developments within Medway create long lasting sustainable communities.

*Medway Council Municipal Waste Management Strategy 2005-20201*

6.26 The waste strategy sets out a framework for the management of Medway's municipal waste for the next 15 years. It provides an integrated waste management action plan, focusing on waste minimisation, recycling and composting. The strategy gives guidance

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<sup>1</sup> Available via the Council's website [http://www.medway.gov.uk/medway\\_waste-4.pdf](http://www.medway.gov.uk/medway_waste-4.pdf)

- for future waste management collection and disposal contracts, providing an alternative to using landfill sites to dispose of Medway's waste.
- 6.27 Medway produces more waste per household than the national average. A total of 141,237 tonnes were produced in 2004/05, of this 72.5 per cent was disposed of in landfill sites in 2004, with 27.5% recycled/composted in 2004/5. Landfill is becoming a less viable option for disposing of waste due to existing locations filling up, a lack of space for new sites, environmental objections to landfill and rapidly increasing costs.
- 6.28 New waste legislation, the Landfill Directive, means that an alternative to landfill is required, especially for disposal of biodegradable waste. 68 per cent of municipal waste is considered to be biodegradable. Medway has to reduce the amount of biodegradable waste sent to landfill sites from the current levels to a maximum of 24,000 tonnes in 2020. This poses a considerable problem as Medway is currently heavily reliant on landfill and could exceed allowances within the next 3-4 years.
- 6.29 Each year the amount of household waste collected is increasing by about 3%. On top of this, Medway will experience a large increase in households over the next 15 years due to the regeneration of the Thames Gateway and government targets. This will lead to even more waste being produced within Medway.
- 6.30 The strategy recognises that these issues pose a serious challenge for Medway Council and that action is required if the council is going to meet statutory recovery and recycling targets and reduce the amount of biodegradable municipal waste which is disposed of in landfill sites.
- 6.31 The strategy advises that waste minimisation and increased levels of recycling will help to control the amount of waste that will need to be disposed of. However, these initiatives alone will not be enough to meet the landfill directive targets and to ensure Medway reduces its dependence on landfill sites.
- 6.32 It proposes that an "in-vessel" composting facility will be needed locally to treat mixed garden and kitchen household waste for composting. A transfer station and bulking station will also be required to handle the increase in recycled waste.
- 6.33 The council is looking into alternative disposal treatments for the waste that cannot be recycled or composted. There are several new and emerging technologies that could be applicable for Medway's residual waste.

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*Medway Economic Development Statement, 2006*

- 6.34 The Medway Economic Development Statement provides a report on Medway's position, ambition and priorities to be addressed over a three year period up to 2009. It has been prepared as a result of a review of the 10 year Economic Development Strategy (1999-2010), which has now become outdated in many respects.
- 6.35 Paragraphs 3.1 to 3.16 of the Statement identify a number of key economic indicators for Medway as follows:
- The Medway economy has grown at a rate above the national average (22.8%) since 1998;
  - The population is forecast to rise from the current level of over 250,000 to around 300,000 by 2021;
  - Medway has a working population of 158,500, and an economically active population of 129,200;
  - More than 90,000 people are employed in Medway, but 50,000 people commute out to London and the South East daily. Only 20,000 commute in;
  - The main employment sectors are not high wealth creating sectors;
  - A person working in Medway earns nearly 10% less than the national average;
  - There are fewer large companies based in Medway than any of the comparable large urban areas in the South East;
  - There has been a 25% increase in Medway's business stock since 2000 and there are currently an estimated 13,000 businesses;
  - 19,000 jobs were created between 1994 and 2002;
  - Medway is an under-performing part of the South East economy and lags significantly behind the South East average in economic performance.
- 6.36 The statement considers that Medway is capable of sustaining a growth rate of twice the national average which would result in the creation of 40,000 new jobs by 2026 (Para.2.2). This growth of the economy and jobs will be across the sectors, and is dependent upon certain preconditions being met. These are set out in the following strategic priorities (Para. 2.3):

**Strategic Priority 1**

Chatham City Centre – to firmly establish Chatham as the city centre and heart of cultural, commercial and leisure activity. This will build upon present advantages in city-scale amenity provision to give Medway the central economic focus it currently lacks. Necessary investment to create Chatham city centre will enable Medway to compete more effectively in attracting inward investment in future.

**Strategic Priority 2**

The Universities at Medway – to connect the new university sector to the business and wider community, improve the quality of provision and increase the influence of the universities and the education sector over the Medway economy.

**Strategic Priority 3**

Transport connectivity – to ensure that necessary infrastructure improvements (particularly rail) are made to better connect Medway with London and the South East. Public transport investment within Medway is also essential to provide a viable alternative to car use, and improve access to employment opportunities.

**Strategic Priority 4**

Employment space – jobs cannot be created in Medway without the allocation of the necessary space, which is currently scarce in Medway. Appropriate and effective use of regeneration sites for employment uses is therefore imperative.

**Strategic Priority 5**

Sector development – work to enhance the key sectors of manufacturing/engineering, construction, health and cultural/tourism/creative industries will directly address employment, wage, skills, knowledge economy and growth targets. The key sectors for inward investment focus will be financial and business services from 2009 onwards.

6.37 Paragraphs 2.5 to 2.10 set out the Statement’s five Strategic aims:

**Image** – events, culture, marketing and profile are now accepted as vital to successful economic development. Measures to improve Medway’s image will therefore be central to plans for physical and economic regeneration, and for increased business activity. For example, London Olympics in 2012 are an unprecedented opportunity to plan for increased cultural activity and media exposure to ensure the establishment of Medway as a City of Culture.

**Regeneration** – the Thames Gateway is the major catalyst for change in Medway, and support from central Government is set to transform Medway so that the preconditions are right for economic regeneration to happen. Successful delivery of regeneration plans will trigger increased levels of inward investment and innovation in Medway, which will secure better quality employment, reflected in increased wage levels and growth for the Medway economy. The alignment of Neighbourhood Action Plans will provide an important connection between existing communities and access to opportunities arising from large-scale development plans.

**Skills** – there is a clear need to instill a learning culture among Medway people and Medway businesses alike. Measures are required to enable up-skilling and re-skilling of the Medway workforce, and

flexible delivery of adult training. Links to the young people's plan will be vital. It is therefore imperative that Medway makes full use of its new education infrastructure, and establishes firm links between businesses, community training facilities and schools to fulfill its ambition to become a City of Learning.

**Competitiveness** – Medway needs to increase the amount of business activity, and for existing business to become more competitive. Actions to support this aim will help the economy become more robust and less vulnerable to external economic conditions. The strategy will support entrepreneurship, encourage more efficient processes and advocate increased use of new technology to assist Medway businesses to become more competitive.

**Jobs** – Medway needs to narrow the gap between the number of working people, and the number of jobs in Medway. The quality of new employment is also of critical importance, and the action plan will outline measures to support the development of new high value-added employment. Provision of suitable space for employment generating activity will be a key facet of the strategy. Employment creation will become an overarching aim of the Medway Economic Development Statement, with measures outlined under the above aims contributing to this key deliverable.

#### *Medway Schools Organisation Plan, 2003*

- 6.38 The main purpose of the Schools Organisation Plan is to set out how Medway LEA plans to meet its statutory responsibility to secure enough education provision to promote higher standards of attainment. It includes a strategic vision, policies and principles for each category of education. Relevant extracts from paragraphs 2.1 to 2.10 are summarised below.

#### Nursery and early years

- 6.39 Medway will consider establishing further school nursery classes or foundation stage units where doing so supports the LEA's duty to secure good quality nursery education places for all local children.

#### Primary

- 6.40 Medway has an unusually high share of separate infant and junior schools. For reasons listed below, any new primary school in Medway would be for pupils from four to 11 years old:
- continuity of provision from Foundation Stage to the end of Key Stage 2
  - Avoidance of the need for children to transfer to another school at the age of seven

- Teachers would have the opportunity to gain wider developmental experience than in a single phase school
- More convenient for parents with more than one primary aged child to have them in one school for various reasons including school hours, development days, uniform and school roles.

#### Secondary

6.41 Medway LEAs vision is to provide parents with an appropriate secondary school place for children within their local area, as far as is practicable. It aims to achieve this through a planned stepped approach by:

- Establishing local collaborative groupings of schools that will work in partnership with each other
- Encouraging all secondary schools to achieve specialist status
- Creating a new academy
- Liaising with the Church of England Diocese to consider the option of creating a faith school
- Working closely with the Learning Skills Council on post-16 issues, now that it has statutory responsibilities for its provision

6.42 Medway LEA's long-term strategy is to work with secondary schools and the diocesan authorities towards 'Building Schools for the Future' in the area. 'Building Schools for the Future' is a major DfES initiative to rebuild all secondary schools in England. Medway LEA would need to review the locations and premises of all secondary schools and decide in partnership with stakeholders, how many schools are needed, of what size and type and in what locations.

#### Post-16 strategy

6.43 Medway has a commitment to closer partnership working between schools in Medway and Mid Kent College to provide 16-19 years with the best opportunities. Strategic Area Reviews of post-16 learning will ensure that all learners have high quality, accessible learning opportunities capable of meeting their ambitions and those of employers, and local opportunities.

#### Special educational needs

6.44 Medway aims to reduce its reliance on the placement of pupils with special education needs outside the authority and give a significant majority access to suitable provision close to their homes.

#### Schools for the future

6.45 In accordance with the DfES's Building Bulletin 95 'Schools for the Future', schools will be encouraged to open their buildings during the school day and where possible become a focal point for their



community and have a regenerative effect by also including such complementary services like health centres, libraries and sports centres.

#### Size of school

- 6.46 Medway considers that normally schools should be no larger than:
- An infant school 360 places or four forms of entry
  - A junior school 480 places or four forms of entry
  - A primary school 630 places or three forms-of-entry
  - A secondary school 1800 pupils or 10 forms-of-entry.

#### Local provision

- 6.47 School places will be provided within the local area where they are needed, wherever possible. This is consistent with the council's policies of reducing the numbers of car journeys at peak times and of promoting safer routes to schools.

#### *Opportunity in the Third Age: Improving Life for Older People in Medway; 2008 – 2011*

- 6.48 The Plan will focus on the steps needed to enhance and sustain the contribution made by older people in the community. The aim will be to assist older people to live independently and be active and healthy. By doing so this will enable older people to live safely and be fulfilled and with the necessary resources available to them, they can retain a high level of productive engagement with the community as a whole (Page 3).
- 6.49 Some of the identified key priorities for Medway set out on pages 5 and 6 are listed below.
- 6.50 Continue to provide lifelong learning opportunities so as to equip older people with the new skills required in the workplace.
- 6.51 The council will investigate the possibilities for the co-location of libraries with other services, such as community centres, so as to create "one-stop shops" which are of particular benefit to older people.
- 6.52 Greenspace Services will work with key stakeholders over the next three years to realise opportunities to promote an active healthy life for older people.
- 6.53 Develop Healthy Living Centres across Medway to ensure that older people can access all of their health primary care and social care services in one local centre.

- 6.54 Increase the number of extra care sheltered housing places in Medway so that even those people who cannot remain in their own homes will be able to access supported accommodation where they can retain their independence and “have their own front door”.
- 6.55 Recognise that people’s needs change through the various stages of life regardless of gender, ethnic origin, faith or ability.
- 6.56 Develop the Centres of Excellence at Woodlands and Shawswood so as to make available under one roof a whole range of services that contribute to health, well-being and continued participation in the life of the community.
- 6.57 There are many older people who are asset rich but cash poor. There is a need to develop a strategy for encouraging older people to downsize into more appropriate accommodation, thereby freeing up the equity in their homes to make their own lives more comfortable, and freeing up those homes for families who need them.
- 6.58 Improve the infrastructure for community based health and social care and contribute to the regeneration of Medway. The principle vehicle for achieving this will be the LIFT Company, which is a partnership between the NHS, Medway Council and a private sector partner, Ryhurst.

*Other Local Documents*

- 6.59 Other Local documents prepared by Medway Council which concentrate on delivery rather than overall strategy are the Medway Children and Young People’s Plan, 2006 – 2009, Medway Council’s Sports Development Strategy, 2005 – 2010, and Medway’s Community Safety Partnership Plan, 2008 – 2011. These have not been summarised in this report.