

**Medway Core Strategy****Examination**

**Harry Deakin OBE  
Brian Kingsley Smith**

**Note  
Model Policy  
The Presumption**

It is against the background of failure of the first Medway Core Strategy (Supplementary material attached) that our representations have been made particularly drawing attention to the fact that (excepting only the Civil Service Sports Ground at Watling Street Gillingham which is now a fitness centre and B&Q shopping centre) no employment sites have been identified in Medway for 30 years, that the only sites mentioned in the current Core Strategy have been rolled over from at least two previous plans and that that the independent advice to the Council since the previous finding of unsoundness on employment and the economy has not been fully implemented. We repeat our (copy attached) 11<sup>th</sup> May representations.

Simply finding this CS unsound will not help the Medway economy or Medway's citizens; on the contrary it will exacerbate the situation because the consequent Presumption may just result in piecemeal residential releases because (a) residential land is worth far more than employment land; and (b) provision of Employment Land requires proper planning to ensure that it is of the right type (e.g. suitable for SMEs and manufacturing), in the right place (accessible both to the transport network and for employees) and available (will be developed when required by a suitable agency).

Incorporation of the model clause (with or without variations which accurately reflect the government's intention) is not a minor change even if Medway Council so proposes; it would be a main modification "at the heart of NPPF - a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking". Mr. McCutcheon is correct that the model policy would be a significant change. It impacts on the whole Core Strategy, particularly the economic, employment, housing and out-commuting issues which so concern us. The issue cannot properly be addressed during the afternoon of the first day of the Examination when other matters are already scheduled. Any shortcoming in the Examination might lead to a legal challenge further delaying adoption of a sound Core Strategy.

All the policies in the present document need review. To take just one example (which turns on arithmetic rather than judgement) the housing strategy obviously conflicts with NPPF paragraph 47. The Trajectory on CS page 163 does not show the required 20% buffer and identification of the sites necessary to make up that shortfall necessitates consideration of alternatives and reasons for the ultimate selection. Of particular concern to us is CS17 which requires modification in the light of the Council's independent economic consultants' advice and section 1 of the NPPF.

Notwithstanding the pressure to secure a sustainable core strategy, examination of these issues requires more than being slotted into an already crowded afternoon; it probably requires adjournment of the Examination for some months whilst main modifications take their proper course.

23<sup>rd</sup> May 2012

## Robin Hill

11<sup>th</sup> May 2012

Dear Madam

You will recall that we have for decades been critical of Medway's planning policies. Recent communications resulting from the NPPF impel us to observe:

- 1 Recent PINS and DCLG advice can hardly be adequately considered in the afternoon of the first day of the Examination when the cabinet may not have considered what its officers should contribute. On the one hand, the model clause might be said to do no more than incorporate into the development plan what would otherwise be an overriding "other material consideration". If, however, it is thought to undermine any of the policies already in the Strategy or if any policies do not conform to the presumption then surely the Inspector, the Council and other interested parties need to consider why and to examine the consequences.
- 2 Question 1A on the Planning Advisory Service LPA checklist Self Assessment ("PAS Checklist") reads: "*Does the plan meet objectively assessed needs, with sufficient flexibility ..?*" On the crucial issue of the economy the "objectively assessed" material comprises the Medway Economic Strategy 2009-12 Final Report ("MESFR"). Paragraph 1.8 explains its objectivity and that "*it is evidence-led rather than being driven by any organisational or political agendas*". So far as we can see from the Council's website it has not been updated or revised.
- 3 Attention is drawn to the section headed "Strategic Priority 4 – Employment Space" beginning on page 3 and then to pages 38 to 42, particularly the overall conclusion on page 42. The Core Strategy does not meet these "objectively assessed needs"; instead it relies on inclusion within employment land availability the huge areas at Grain and Kingsnorth which have been discounted in every development plan since Kent County Council days for the reasons given in those documents (e.g. footnote 1 to fig.6a of the Medway Local Plan and at paragraphs 8.6 – 8.9 of the MESFR). These sites have been 'rolled over' for decades from several previous plans and are still mainly undeveloped. CS Table 6.2 shows a surplus of 635,189 sq.m mainly attributable to these two unsustainable sites. CS 6.24 reads "*employment generated there will more than offset notional supply deficits elsewhere in Medway*". Has the author attempted to reach either site by public transport from Walderslade, Lordswood, North Gillingham, Luton or other areas where job-seekers live? Paragraphs 6.24 and 6.26 are specious. CS17 is not a policy merely a repetition of the Council's long-held and unfulfilled aspirations such as offering "an alternative to out-commuting". The policy does not set out the alternatives considered, why they were rejected, and when, how and by whom the 'policy' will be delivered.

- 4 Regrettably the situation is now more serious than when we have previously advocated realistic employment provision. On a vast scale the council has persisted in redevelopment of allocated employment land for other purposes, has allocated potential employment sites such as Medway Gate for housing, has exercised its power to close a significant employment site at Cliffe and even worse, chronically failed to develop land which it (and others) own around Rochester Airport. Mr. Deakin was for many years chairman of the statutory Rochester Airport Consultative Committee and Mr. Kingsley Smith was a founding shareholder and director of the airport operating company. The company followed government airport policy and advice and submitted to the council professionally prepared Airport Master Plans at considerable expense demonstrating how large areas could be developed and redeveloped whilst retaining airport operations. These plans were revised over years but notwithstanding encouraging words from the Deputy Leader (who had been appointed to oversee the future of the airport) no progress was ever made. The company even sought to interest the council's development department in the rapidly expanding UAV technology market following encouragement from high tech interested businesses but all to no avail. Today the airport continues limited "hand to mouth" operations because it has no security of tenure.
- 5 The result is that it is now extremely difficult to identify sites for new employment allocations and it by no means follows that a site like Rochester Riverside (which is not going to be developed residentially) could be re-allocated for employment due to site conditions and insurance risks. Nevertheless Medway Council will not undertake the work identified at pages 40 – 42 of MEDS.
- 6 The attraction of Medway for low cost housing exacerbates commuting problems which have chronically afflicted the GVA statistics and which force existing residents to work elsewhere. Whilst the University provision initiatives have been welcome, there has been no real effort to provide sites for SMEs (particularly manufacturing jobs) disparagingly described by councillors as "sheds". A local manufacturer occupying one such building in Gillingham has recently received the Queen's Award to Industry and then been taken over for its technological expertise by a Scandinavian company. The CS illustrates a continuing determination to ignore sustainable B1 / B2 / B8 provision and to ignore the economic and social risks being run.
- 7 The CS is therefore unsound on numerous counts. Neither of the two elements of the evidence base is present. There is nothing to demonstrate a positive response to the questions on page 10 of PAS Checklist. No rejected alternatives to employment land policy are even mentioned. Above all the CS does not "follow the approach of the presumption in favour of sustainable development and guide how it should be applied" (Question 1A PAS Checklist).

Yours truly

Harry Deakin OBE  
Brian Kingsley Smith

To: Miss Laura Graham BSc MA MRTPI  
C/O The Programme Officer  
ldfprogrammeofficer@medway.gov.uk

**Medway Core Strategy  
Examination**

**Harry Deakin OBE  
Brian Kingsley Smith**

**Supplementary material**

We had wrongly assumed that the Inspector would be aware of the earlier Core Strategy and the circumstances in which it was withdrawn. It was only when we received the attached (S2-3) result of our FoI Request to PINS that we realised the position.

The Inspector will, of course, reach her own conclusions based on all the material available to her which will be significantly different to that considered by her predecessor. It is nevertheless interesting that her identification of matters and issues has similarities with the first inspector's "Matters to be considered" (attached S4 -5). On 9th March 2007 the Inspector distributed a time-table for sessions on 29 May - 1 June, 12-15 June, & 18 - 19 June with Examination ending 20 June. For each session, topics and participants were identified. However on 22 May the Inspector adjourned the Examination (letter attached S6) and issued an agenda (attached S7) for the first session to which we were specifically invited.

The first Examination duly opened on 29 May 2007. A further session was held on 11 July (notes attached S8 - 18). On 9 August the Council informally submitted extensive potential changes to which we responded. The Programme Officer's email of 17 August is also attached (S19).

At a final hearing on 6 September (Inspector's agenda attached S 20-22) the Inspector, after an adjournment, explained why he had concluded that the draft CS was unsound (including references to Conformity Tests which were failed). The Council asked how long it would take for his report to be available to which he replied "in next few weeks".

On 7 September Medway Council requested that the Core Strategy be withdrawn and on 2 October GOSE so directed thus precluding issue of the Inspector's Report.

On 19 November 2007 GOSE chaired a meeting attended by three Medway Officers, another GOSE representative and PINS to discuss the most appropriate way for Medway to proceed with the production of their LDF and it was agreed that Medway would submit a revised LDS (sic) by January 2008.

23<sup>rd</sup> May 2012

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# The Planning Inspectorate

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Mr Brian Kingsley-Smith

Your Ref:

Our Ref:

Date: 14 May 2012

Dear Mr Kingsley-Smith

## Freedom of Information Request – Medway Core Strategy

Thank you for your e-mail dated 19 April 2012 requesting information from the Planning Inspectorate in connection with the Medway Core Strategy that was withdrawn in 2007.

**1. The documents issued by that inspector before, and more particularly, during the course of that Examination (indicating issues upon which he required further information and inviting representations).**

We apply a 2 year retention period from the date the file is put away following the last action. In this instance, following the withdrawal of Medway Council's Core Strategy, the file was put away in 2007 and was destroyed approximately 2 years later. As such, we are unable to supply any documents, if there were any, that would have been issued by the Inspector.

**2. The notes made by that Inspector and any draft of the report which he would have issued had the Strategy not been withdrawn.**

The Inspector left the Planning Inspectorate over two years ago. We have no contact address for him now, so are unable to obtain any notes he may have made or of any draft report.

**3. All communications passing between the Inspectorate and Medway Council since withdrawal of the first Core Strategy.**

As I have said above, the file has been destroyed and the Inspector is no longer employed by the Planning Inspectorate. Therefore, we have no records of any communications that may have taken place between us and Medway Council

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following or in relation to the withdrawal of their earlier Core Strategy. The only correspondence we have had with the Council is in relation to their new Core Strategy following its publication and submission to the Secretary of State.

**4. All information, if any, relating to the previous Examination which has been made available to the second Inspector, Miss Laura Graham.**

I can confirm that the current file for Medway Council's Core Strategy contains no information in connection with the previous examination into the withdrawn Core Strategy.

**Request review and appeal procedures**

If you have any queries about this response then please contact me. If you are unhappy with the decision or handling of your request then you may ask for an internal review. Details of our review procedures and right of appeal to the Information Commissioner are set out in the attached leaflet.

Yours sincerely

*Stephen Davies*

Stephen Davies  
Plans team

# Medway Core Strategy (CS)

## Matters to be considered at the Examination in Public

The matters to be considered at the Examination will be structured around questions based on the tests for soundness set out at paragraph 4.24 in PPS12. Inclusion of a question below should not be taken to indicate it necessarily goes to the heart of a matter that could undermine the soundness of the Core Strategy.

### A. Procedural Matters

1. Has the CS been prepared in compliance with:-
  - i) The Local Development Scheme?
  - ii) The Statement of Community Involvement?and has it been subjected to a sustainability appraisal?

### B. Conformity

1. Does the CS, and in particular the site selection process set out in Policy CS 09, conform to national planning policy (PPG's and PPS's) and in particular the importance of considering the relative sustainability of sites?
2. Is the CS in general conformity with and reflect appropriately the adopted Structure Plan, the existing Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9), the Thames Gateway Planning Framework (RPG9a) and the emerging South East Plan (RSS), and is it flexible enough to be able to respond to minor changes in the final provisions of the latter?
3. Does the CS have proper regard to the Medway Community Plan and Medway Regeneration Framework insofar as those documents relate to spatial matters?

### C. Coherency/consistency

1. Is the CS consistent with and does it extend appropriately the overall strategy promoted in the existing extant Local Plan?
2. Are the policies, strategic allocations such as at Chattenden/Lodge Hill and the urban renaissance proposed by the regeneration of key sites along the River Medway justified, particularly in terms of their relative sustainability and deliverability?
3. Has it been demonstrated that the plan area's development needs can be met without the need to extend existing urban boundaries? Is that policy approach the most sustainable and otherwise most acceptable option? How does that Spatial Strategy Objective (page 43) relate to

the sequence of site selection (3a, 3b and 3c) promoted in Policy CS 09?

4. Does reliance on previously-developed land and land within existing urban boundaries to meet the area's housing needs carry with it the indirect impact of increasing land values within urban areas, thus making it less affordable for existing and new employment uses?
5. Does the Core Strategy make provision for employment growth at an appropriate scale and at locations within the Plan area commensurate with both the existing and proposed distribution of housing and associated population?
6. Is the policy approach advocated for areas subject to flooding clear (See Policy CS 27, Key Spatial Objective (Page 43), Key Issue (Page 35) and Policy CS 20)) and is it consistent with PPS25?
7. Is it appropriate to include the detailed provisions of Policy CS 03 in a Core Strategy and are those details justified?
8. Are the implementation and monitoring mechanisms associated with the policies in the CS clear, measurable and likely to be effective?
9. What spatial impact would Policies CS 06, CS 07 and CS 08 have?
10. Are the policies that promote transport (Policy CS 10), Health & Social Care (Policy CS 11), Education & Personal Development (Policy CS 12) and benefits of the London Olympics (Policy CS 14) distinctive to this area and clear in their land use/spatial impact?
11. What timescales are proposed for the production of the strategy promoted in Policy CS 22?
12. What are the planned programmes for the preparation of Area Action Plans and as appropriate a Masterplan for the development of the new settlement at Chattenden/Lodge Hill (Policy CS 29) and the renaissance of the Strood Centre and Waterfront area? Are the matters to be dealt with in those publications suitable for that level of policy document?
13. Is the reference in the final paragraph of Policy CS 18 to "Proposal for new or extended food --- shopping---" consistent with the final sentence of paragraph 8.135?



**LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK EXAMINATION  
MEDWAY COUNCIL**

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Date: 22 May 2007

Dear Sir or Madam

**LDF EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC – TUESDAY 29 MAY – THURSDAY 20 JUNE  
TO BE HELD AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GREENWICH, CHATHAM MARITIME**

The Inspector has asked me to contact you to advise that the Examination Programme has been postponed apart from matter (C5) Coherency/Consistency. This matter will open the examination on Tuesday 29 May at 9.30.

Please read the Inspector's comments as follows:

*"I have now read the full submissions on the questions I have posed from the Council and all representors programmed to appear at the Examination.*

*I have considerable concerns over the Plan's emphasis on housing despite the recognised need in Medway to produce a Core Strategy with a much wider agenda. That general concern is referred to by a number of representations that refer to what is perceived as the lack of attention in the Core Strategy to the economy of the Plan area and in particular to the need to widen the scope of the Strategy to include provision of land for employment.*

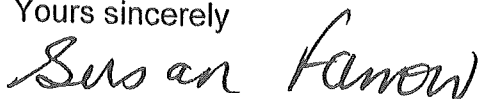
*My concern is such that I consider I then need to come to a view on whether or not this matter **on its own** is of sufficient impact to render the Core Strategy unsound, before I hear submissions on the other matters selected for consideration at the Examination.*

*I shall therefore hear submissions on Question C5 on Tuesday 29 May. The remainder of the Examination has been postponed for up to one month to allow me the time to consider that matter."*

I will be writing to you again once the Inspector informs me of the new Examination date.

Thank you for your co-operation and please accept my apologies for any inconvenience this may cause.

Yours sincerely



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Agenda for the Examination Session to be held on 29 May 2007

Question C5 "Does the Core Strategy make provision for employment growth at an appropriate scale and at locations within the Plan area commensurate with both the existing and proposed distribution of housing and associated population?"

AGENDA

1. Is it generally accepted by all parties that Medway's economy, and in particular the area's employment provision, is a high priority and that all things being equal should form a material part of the LDF?
2. What levels of employment provision are required to be made for the Medway area by the approved Structure Plan, the extant RPG and the emerging RPG and over what periods of time?
3. What constitutes the Core Strategy's economic evidence base?
4. What evidence is there of employment opportunities being provided on regeneration, mixed use or other sites to replace employment that may have been/is being lost on those sites or elsewhere and to meet on-going employment needs of the Plan area?
5. What policy or other provision is made in the Core Strategy for employment growth within the Plan area?
  - Within the Town Centres
  - On riverside regeneration sites
  - Chatham Maritime
  - On mixed use sites
  - Hoo Peninsula (Kingsnorth and Grain)
  - Universities
  - Rochester Airfield
  - Chattenden
  - Others
6. How is that provision related in terms of scale, distribution and type to the existing and proposed housing provisions of the Core Strategy and to meeting the area's employment needs in a sustainable way?

## Medway Core Strategy

This paper indicates a number of other matters within the Core Strategy over which I have concerns. These are presented informally at this stage and are not open for debate at the Hearing session on 11 July 2007. They should not be read as necessarily comprehensive and are presented on a 'without prejudice' basis.

### Transport

This subject is programmed to be considered when dealing with Policy CS10.

Policy CS10 relies heavily on the provisions of the Local Transport Plan, with paragraph 8.70 setting out the overall strategy as contained in that document. Apart from references to the 'Thames Gateway' and 'Medway' at the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> bullet points, these strategy statements, which could be described (provocatively) as 'motherhood and apple pie', are not distinctive to Medway and read as though they could equally apply to other locations merely by changing the references.

Paragraph 8.71 then makes it clear that the 15 year 'Transport for Medway' initiative is critical to the delivery of the strategy. This publication is currently at options stage so that critical document is still evolving!

Policy CS10 itself contains four main elements.

- The first indicates that land etc will be safeguarded to enable the strategy (as set out in the Local Transport Plan) to be realised, yet the bullet points that represent that overall strategy do not contain any tangible indication of where or the likely extent of safeguarding that would be needed.
- The second contains the vague statement that effectively reiterates the need for development to have sustainable locations in terms of maximising accessibility (and presumably minimising the need for movement).
- The third merely echoes what are contained in a number of the bullet points that represent the overall strategy in the Local Transport Plan. It represents a largely aspirational statement that does little to develop the strategy further.
- The fourth, requiring Accessibility and Transport assessments to be carried out for all major developments reads as guidance for the operation of development control – it leaves 'major' undefined, presumably to be determined by the Council on a case by case basis.

### Waste & Minerals

These subjects are to be considered at the end of the Hearing programme under Policies CS24 and CS25.

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Policy CS24 Waste.

As contained in the submitted document this is a standard development control policy that establishes the approach to be taken in dealing with proposals for waste disposal. It does not have any strategy content and is not distinctive to Medway. The suggested additional wording refers to a non quantified regional target (paragraph 8.189 of the supporting text sets out the EU Landfill Directive Targets for Kent and Medway but does not extract what constitutes Medway's part in that) and reference to "---an appropriate mix of integrated waste management facilities---" does little to establish a strategy.

Policy CS25 Minerals.

There is no attempt to quantify the "identified need for mineral supply from Medway" or to establish the standards that will apply to mineral extraction and waste recovery activities (not clear why waste recovery is included in a policy dealing with minerals). The supporting paragraphs contain an overview of the availability of minerals in Medway and the main factors that impact on its extraction. There is no discernable strategy in the policy or the section.

Chattenden

Chattenden has evolved over the years from a 'new village scale settlement' (Core Strategy paragraph 8.225) to a "strategic development location" for some 5,000 dwellings and 20 – 25 hectares of employment land (Core Strategy paragraph 8.226). The Structure Plan (Policy ME1) states that Chattenden/Lodge Hill "---should be on previously developed land---" but does not provide an appraisal of the extent of that land or its likely development potential.

This Core Strategy (paragraph 8.226 and Policy CS29) then takes what is stated as the Structure Plan figure of 5,000 dwellings (note - where in the S Plan is that figure provided and where is the reference to Chattenden as a 'strategic development location' established) and applies it without any reference to its being on previously developed land (pdl), referring only to there being a large amount of pdl at Chattenden as well as land in agricultural use and woodland (paragraph 8.230). Paragraph 8.227 of the Core Strategy also refers to some 180 hectares that is expected to be developed at Chattenden, without any indication of how that figure was arrived at, or on what bases it has been derived. The range of uses that need to be provided within the new settlement at Chattenden is listed for the first time in paragraph 8.233. The statement that these uses are to enable Chattenden to function as a sustainable settlement needs to be more fully explained and justified, as in some cases the threshold scale of the settlement will be determined by the uses (eg Secondary School).

Policy CS29 itself states that land surplus to MOD requirements is identified for the new settlement. This implies that it is the MOD's decision on what land is surplus that will determine the location and scale of the new settlement. The scale and extent of pdl is not therefore referred to in the Policy as a constraint, and on the face of it that factor will not be influential in determining the details of the pattern and scale of development in the Area Action Plan and masterplanning work. It could be argued that approach would not accord with Policies ME1 and HP2 of the Structure Plan, nor with the site selection sequence provided in Policy CS09.

# Medway Core Strategy

This paper is presented to provide a framework for discussion at the Hearing Session to be held on 11 July 2007. It will form the main agenda item for that session and will be followed by a second agenda item to enable discussion on what options are available to deal with the Core Strategy in the event that I continue to have serious concerns over its Economic/Employment provisions.

The Hearing session held on 29 May 2007 considered Question C5 – “Does the Core Strategy make provision for employment growth at an appropriate scale and at locations within the Plan area commensurate with both the existing and proposed distribution of housing and associated population?”

Since the earlier Hearing session I have considered the arguments presented in writing and verbally at that session. As was reflected in the above question and considered in more detail at that session under the agenda items (see below), I continue to be concerned that the Core Strategy is not comprehensive as it does not appear to present an employment/economic perspective. In this discussion paper I raise the most significant of my concerns, structured under the agenda items.

## Background

1. In approaching this matter I have had regard to the provisions of paragraphs 2.9 – 2.14 of PPS12. I note in particular that the Core Strategy “*---should set out the key elements of the planning framework for the area*” (paragraph 2.9), “*---should draw on any strategies of the local authority and other organisations that have implications for the development and use of land---*” (paragraph 2.10), “*---should set out broad locations for delivering the housing and other strategic development needs such as employment---*” (paragraph 2.10), but “*---should not identify individual sites*” (paragraph 2.12).
2. Paragraph 1.21 of the Core Strategy makes it clear that in order to concentrate resources on housing delivery, only the Core Strategy and Housing and Mixed Use DPDs have been produced. Paragraph 1.23 goes on to recognise that this approach “*---does not sit easily with local circumstances in Medway where there is a need to respond to a much wider change agenda*”. The Council's concern on this matter has been reinforced in paragraph 5.11 of Topic Paper 4 as follows:- “*The Council was concerned by the suggestion that it should only produce a housing site-specific DPD. The Council recognises the need to build sustainable communities and this includes balancing housing with other uses including employment-generating uses*”.
3. Against that background the decision was taken to produce Core Strategy and Housing and Mixed Use DPDs as a first phase in the production of the full LDF, to be followed by other publications produced in accordance with the Council's LDS, including one to deal with the economy and employment.

4. In addressing my question C5 that was considered at the Hearing session held on 29 May 2007, the Council's written response (Paragraph 1.1 of response Ref No CS/MC/WS-C5) referred further to the Council's preference "*---to take a comprehensive approach to the preparation of its Local Development Framework--- to ensure that economic activity and jobs growth related to and kept pace with housing growth*".

### Hearing Session 29 May 2007

#### Agenda Item 1

*"Is it generally accepted by all parties that Medway's economy, and in particular the area's employment provision, is a high priority and that all things being equal should form a material part of the LDF?"*

5. It was generally agreed at the Hearing session held on 29 May 2007 that Medway's economy, and in particular the area's employment provision, should be a high priority. The Council and MOD/Holdfast argued however that the Core Strategy should present a high level strategy that is heavy on principles and light on details in order to provide flexibility. It was also stated (Page 2 of the Council's paper on Item 1) that within the Core Strategy the overall economic/employment strategy was focussed on Policy CS15, but was also within the Spatial Vision and associated objectives and within Policies CS12 through to CS19 and Policies CS28 through to CS30.
6. I shall deal with each of these elements of the Core Strategy in turn with a view to ascertaining what overall economic/employment strategy they contain.

#### Spatial Vision

7. Two of the Plan's Key Spatial Objectives as set out in paragraph 7.9 are:
  - *"Promoting a strong, stable, and productive economy that aims to bring jobs and prosperity for all and which reduces the current reliance on out-commuting;*
  - *Fostering balanced and timely provision of housing, employment, infrastructure and community services to meet the social needs of the community and to help maintain and develop well functioning settlements."*
8. In furtherance of those objectives, one of the Plan's Spatial Strategy Objectives (Page 43) is:
  - *"Provision will be made to meet employment requirements, including the development of technology and knowledge based clusters at Rochester Airfield, Chatham Maritime and Chattenden/Lodge Hill and unlocking the strategic scale industrial and commercial land allocations at Grain and Kingsnorth".*

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9. The Overall Spatial Strategy section of the Plan (Page 49) starts with the statement:- "*An overall spatial strategy for Medway is already well articulated through a range of national, regional and local documents*".

**Comment**

10. The Spatial Vision chapter of the Core Strategy does not itself provide a clear statement of how Medway's economy is to be developed. It reproduces a statement from the Medway Community Plan (paragraph 7.1) and summarises a number of employment and other economic development initiatives that for the most part would appear to be existing commitments or at least long established proposals (paragraph 7.4, 7.5 and 7.6). An understanding of the Spatial Vision for the Plan area, including that part that relates to the economy and in particular the employment provision, would appear therefore to require a full understanding of a number of national, regional and local documents and is not set out in the Core Strategy itself. It does not therefore "draw on" those other documents, but relies upon them to provide the necessary economic element of Medway's overall spatial strategy.

**Policy CS15**

11. This is stated by the Council (Page 2 of the Council's written response to agenda Item 1) to be the focus for the overall economic/employment strategy. Among other matters, it states that provision will be made to expand existing economic functions and to introduce new office, manufacturing and service functions to address current under performance. It also refers to provision for specific economic development being made through appropriate development plan documents at Rochester Airfield, Chatham Maritime and at Chattenden/Lodge Hill.

**Comment**

12. Apart from three references in the policy to Medway and to the above specific sites there is nothing about this policy to make it distinctive to the Plan area. Nor does it or the supporting text (paragraphs 8.104 – 8.113) provide an overview of how much, when and where economic development is intended to take place or what form it will take. There is therefore no way one can assess from the Core Strategy the extent to which economic development will quantitatively be in balance with, geographically reflect, or otherwise relate to, proposed housing development. On the contrary, paragraph 8.112 refers to the constantly evolving nature of Medway's economy and emphasises the importance of regularly reviewing the identified key sectors (of economic development), the opportunities that exist for cluster development and relevant support mechanisms. On the face of it, this text would appear to be stating that the evolutionary nature of the economy of the area means that an economic strategy will need to emerge through monitoring and review rather than being set out clearly in policy. The Core Strategy does not therefore set out what are the strategic economic

development needs of the Plan area or identify the broad locations for delivering such needs (eg for employment).

**Policies CS12, CS13, CS14, CS16, CS17, CS18, CS19, CS28, CS29 and CS30.**

13. These policies refer to a wide ranging number of subject areas including education, leisure & tourism, the 2012 Olympics, business and employment support, town centres, retail development, employment and mixed use developments, Medway waterfront, Chattenden/Lodge Hill and Strood centre and waterfront, respectively. In general they are supportive of employment-generating proposals and to a greater or lesser extent all have implications for the economy of the area.

**Comment**

14. Taken individually or together these policies do not state clearly how, where, how much and what sort of new employment provision is to be made within the Plan area and over the Plan period. They do not therefore play a material role in defining an economic/employment strategy for the Plan area.

**Agenda Item 2**

*“What levels of employment provision are required to be made for the Medway area by the approved Structure Plan, the extant RPG and the emerging South East Plan and over what periods of time?”*

15. The paper produced by the Council in response to this item includes a table (Table C5 - MC1) that summarises the employment floorspace requirements for the Medway area as contained in the extant Structure Plan 2006 (period 2001 – 2021) and the emerging South East Plan 2006 (period 2006 – 2026). A pro rata calculation is then used to derive from those figures what would be the appropriate employment floorspace requirements for Medway during the LDF period of 2006 – 2021. Comparing the resultant figures with the current employment floorspace supply figure of 356,612 sq m as derived from the Annual Monitoring Report 2006 results in deficits of 82,138 sq m and 231,138 sq m for the Structure Plan and emerging South East Plan requirements, respectively.
16. The above Structure Plan deficit is intended largely to be met (as stated in Structure Plan Policy EP2) by the employment component of development at Chattenden/Lodge Hill. The above deficit in the emerging South East Plan requirements is intended to be met by development on sites listed on Table C5 – MC3 at pages 10 – 14 of the Council’s response tabled at the 29 May 2007 Hearing session and entitled “Policy provision for employment opportunities on regeneration, mixed use and other sites – a basic summary”.

**Comment**

(5/3)



17. Whilst these tables may provide a comprehensive list of sites available within the Plan area for employment development, they do not in all cases include details of the likely capacity of those sites in either floorspace or job creation terms. There is therefore no way of confirming that these sites can be expected to meet the deficit or the future requirement.
18. In addition to the above information, page 15 of the Council's response paper (addressing Agenda Item 4 below) refers to the area's job growth target of 40,000 jobs as established by the Medway Economic Development Strategy and associated Action Plan (I note here that paragraph 8.6 of Topic Paper 4 contains the same job growth figure and clarifies that it is for the period up to 2026 (ie 5 years longer than the period of the Core Strategy)). Even if reduced pro rata it is clear that this job growth target is substantially in excess of the current housing requirement of 12,524 dwellings in Medway between 2006 and 2021. Whilst the response paper states that the vast majority of these jobs are expected to be provided in the locations listed in the paper, as stated in paragraph 17 above, the relevant table of sites does not include details of the likely capacity of those sites and nor is their geographical distribution compared with the distribution of housing sites.
19. In any event, these employment figures and details of sites for employment development are not contained in the Core Strategy, which does not therefore provide guideline employment figures or similar but appears to rely instead on existing committed employment land (unquantified), land already allocated for employment development in the Local Plan (unquantified), together with some 70,000 sq m of employment floorspace at Chattenden/Lodge Hill. In addition, no attempt has been made in the Core Strategy to confirm that this approach to the provision of employment land/floorspace (an approach that would appear to be based on that of the Structure Plan) would remain broadly equable, logical and in balance with the level of housing growth requirement emerging with the SE Plan.

### Agenda Item 3

*"What constitutes the Core Strategy's economic evidence base?"*

20. The list set out in Table C5 – MC2 on pages 6 – 8 of the written response tabled at the Hearing session by the Council contains some 21 publications that the Council considers provide the necessary economic evidence base, together with further reports, technical studies and monitoring datasets that in some instances provide support for these documents.

### Comment

21. As discussed at the Hearing session, these publications provide a useful evidence base but are themselves largely aspirational in terms of how the economy of the Plan area should be developed during the Plan period. They do not provide information or policy on

which aspirations should be given priority and why, and also on how those aspirations are to be achieved. Those are matters that should be addressed in the Core Strategy but are not.

22. In addition, the 'features' listed below the above table, particularly the reference to an ongoing debate on "*---the extent to which a housing/jobs balance should be sought*" have not been addressed in the Core Strategy. It is also noted from these 'features' that the evidence base currently lacks a full economic capacity/employment land assessment. That apparent shortcoming is not addressed in the Core Strategy.

#### Agenda Item 4

*"What evidence is there of employment opportunities being provided on regeneration, mixed use or other sites to replace employment that may have been/is being lost on those sites or elsewhere and to meet on-going employment needs of the Plan area?"*

23. Table C5 – MC3 on pages 10 – 14 of the written response tabled at the Hearing session by the Council contains a list of sites within the Plan area for which the principle of employment development has been established by existing or proposed policy (eg existing Local and Structure Plans, existing or proposed Development Briefs, submitted Housing and Mixed Use DPD, proposed Action Area Plans, proposed Masterplans, and the proposed Employment Development DPD). As stated at the Hearing session, the Council considers some 30,000 jobs are likely to be produced by development on these sites. That statement was questioned at the Hearing by reference to Table EP1 in the Structure Plan that shows the overall take-up of employment land in Kent (1991 – 2001) was about 30%.

#### Comment

24. The site information provided on this table and the accompanying comments that include reference to the jobs growth target of 40,000 that is set by the Medway Economic Development Strategy and associated Action Plan (see paragraph 18 above) is noted. As stated in paragraph 19 above however, the Core Strategy itself does not contain these or other guideline employment figures and nor does it provide an analysis of the existing supply of employment land or an indication of what additional employment (if any) needs to be provided as part of this emerging LDF system of Plans. I consider it is reasonable to expect the Core Strategy to provide an element of certainty by including the scale of employment and related matters in the Core Strategy. It is not appropriate to leave such matters to be determined in a later DPD.
25. In addition, reference is made on page 15 of the written response tabled at the Hearing session by the Council to "*Should it prove that any additional employment locations are required that will be achieved through the Economic Development and other DPDs and AAPs that will make up the full LDF*". That statement would again

appear to indicate that the approach adopted for the provision of employment in the Core Strategy is as stated in paragraph 19 above to be to rely on existing committed and allocated employment land, together with some 70,000 sq m of employment floorspace at Chattenden/Lodge Hill, with any shortfall that arises dealt with by future LDF documents. That does not in my view constitute a clear, viable and logical employment strategy as part of an economic strategy.

### Agenda Item 5

*"What policy or other provision is made in the Core Strategy for employment growth within the Plan area?"*

- *Within the Town Centres*
- *On riverside regeneration sites*
- *Chatham Maritime*
- *On mixed use sites*
- *Hoo Peninsula (Kingsnorth and Grain)*
- *Universities*
- *Rochester Airfield*
- *Chattenden*
- *Others*

26. Table C5 – MC4 on pages 18 - 20 of the written response tabled at the Hearing session by the Council contains a list of sites within the Plan area that were presented in response to the above question. This table should be considered alongside Table C5 – MC3 that is dealt with under Agenda Item 4 above. Taken together, the Council argues that these tables demonstrate the Core Strategy makes extensive provision for employment growth within the Plan area and in all the locations listed in the above question.
27. Among other matters it was pointed out at the Hearing session that paragraph 2.15 of Section E4 of the emerging South East Plan states *"The amount of employment land provided in Kent Thames Gateway should be generous to enable the concentration of new housing in the area and the need to revitalise the local economy."* Reference was also made to paragraph 6.3 of Topic Paper 4 that states *"Given the large areas of previously developed land in Medway, no provision has been made for the release of substantial sites for economic development. Instead, employment provision will match that of new housing within the urban areas---"*.

### Comment

28. Similar to the situation referred to in paragraphs 19 and 24 above, the Core Strategy does not contain an assessment of the likely job creation capacity of the sites listed on these tables. In any event, the job numbers or other ways of assessing the levels of employment likely to be generated by development is only provided for a relatively small proportion of the sites listed in the tables. The situation presented in response to this question would therefore appear to reinforce the conclusion reached in paragraph 12 above,

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namely that an economic strategy will emerge through monitoring and review rather than being set out clearly in policy.

### Agenda Item 6

*"How is that provision related in terms of scale, distribution and type to the existing and proposed housing provisions of the Core Strategy and to meeting the area's employment needs in a sustainable way?"*

29. The written response tabled by the Council at the Hearing session in response to this question refers to most of the main proposed housing allocations being part of, or located very close to, the employment locations listed in Table C5 – MC3 (see Agenda Item 4 above). It is also stated that the employment-generating uses to be provided on the relevant sites would be required to at least match previous jobs levels, with job opportunities also expected to be provided on nearby sites. The Council's overall view on this matter is therefore that the Core Strategy provides a very comprehensive response to the employment/housing balance and its associated sustainable distribution and that the details of the employment areas will appropriately be dealt with in the Economic DPD.
30. A map of most of the Plan area was tabled at the Hearing session by Respondent No 362 (Mr Parkes – Holdfast Consortium) showing the main proposed housing areas and their likely capacities, together with the main employment areas as listed in the tables referred to in paragraphs 23 and 26 above (Tables C5 – MC3 and C5 – MC4). As there was no agreement on the likely job creation figures associated with the relevant sites, it was not possible to determine the extent to which this map demonstrated there was a balance between the number and distribution of existing and proposed housing and existing and proposed employment opportunities.

### Comment

31. The Core Strategy states that the achievement of a housing/employment balance is an objective (Policy CS15). It does not however contain an analysis of the relative scales and distribution of housing and employment sites to show whether and how a balance is to be achieved during the Plan period. It may be that the employment sites being promoted would relate in terms of their distribution and likely job creation to the housing sites, but the Core Strategy does not demonstrate that to be the case. Nor does it state what policy approach is being promoted for employment generation or demonstrate the principles of how that or any other economic policy should be put into effect.

### Conclusions

32. In the light of the above there would appear to be no alternative but to conclude that the Core Strategy lacks any recognisable strategy for the scale and location of employment development during the Plan period (up to 2021). Information presented and discussed at

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the Hearing session did go some way to allaying my fears on the lack of a balance between future growth in employment and housing development, but that information is not contained within the Core Strategy, which does not in any event establish an overall scale and strategy for the provision of land suitable for employment development. This lack of clear guidance on the overall policy, scale and location of employment development means there is no basis against which to monitor employment development through the time period of the Plan.

33. As referred to in paragraphs 12, 25 and 28 above the Council's approach on this important matter would seem to be either to rely on existing committed and allocated employment land, together with some 70,000 sq m of employment floorspace at Chattenden/Lodge Hill, with any shortfall that arises dealt with by future LDF documents; or that an economic strategy will emerge through monitoring and review rather than being set out clearly in the Core Strategy. Neither of those two approaches is in my view acceptable. Although details of the Economic/Employment strategy, such as the identification of individual sites, should await the publication of the Economic DPD, the Core strategy should at least set out the overall scale and broad locations for delivering the strategic development needs for employment (paragraph 1 above).

**Mr Ces Cunningham**  
**Inspector for the Medway LDF Examinations**

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**B. Kingsley Smith**

**From:** "ldfprogrammeofficer" <ldfprogrammeofficer@medway.gov.uk>  
**To:** "B. Kingsley Smith" <bks22@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** 17 August 2007 11:46  
**Subject:** RE: Modifications to C5 and other matters

Dear Mr Kingsley Smith

I have forwarded your email to the Inspector and he has commented as follows:

*Can you advise them that you have sent it to me, but as the matters they have raised go much further than what has so far been considered at the two Hearing sessions I am not able to respond to it. Much of what is raised relates to what the Council has recently published by way of "without prejudice" suggested changes etc - documents that have not been produced in line with what was agreed at the end of the Hearing session on 11 July. I suggest therefore that these comments are passed to the Council and that Messrs KS and Deakin are advised that has been done.*

I have passed this to the Council as the Inspector has advised me to.

Many thanks

Sue

Sue Farrow  
LDF Programme Officer  
Compass Centre  
Chatham Maritime  
Chatham  
Kent, ME4 4YH  
Tel: 01634 331145  
Fax: 01634 331480

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22/08/2007

**LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK EXAMINATION  
MEDWAY COUNCIL**

Date: 20 August 2007

Dear Sir or Madam

**PROCEDURAL MEETING - LDF CORE STRATEGY**

As you know, two one-day hearing sessions have been held on 29 May and 11 July 2007 to consider matter C5, Economy and Employment. This matter was brought forward by the Inspector to the beginning of the Hearings programme as a result of concerns he had on the Plan's economic provisions relating in particular to employment.

Following the first of those Hearings (29 May) and in the light of the matters presented and considered the Inspector produced a discussion paper for the subsequent Hearing (11 July) setting out his continued concerns. A further paper, which was not open for debate, was tabled at that second Hearing session setting out a number of matters within the Core Strategy on which the Inspector had further concerns. The Council agreed at the end of that Hearing to produce on a 'without prejudice basis' a number of minor changes that could be made to the Plan to improve its clarity.

The Council has subsequently decided to go much further than had been agreed at the Hearing on 11 July 2007 and to produce 'in Examination modifications' that it suggests address the Inspector's concerns. These modifications, together with an associated sustainability appraisal and the papers referred to in the above paragraph can be viewed on the Council's website:  
<http://www.medway.gov.uk/index/environment/9995.html/32182/53888/63834.htm>

The Inspector has now agreed to hold a one-day procedural Hearing session to consider the way forward. This meeting will not be used to discuss or consider technical representations on the content on the Core Strategy. It will be used to consider and hopefully agree the most effective way of moving the Examination of the Core Strategy forward. All parties who have been invited to participate in the Examination hearings are being invited to this meeting.

I will be sending an Agenda out to you as soon as I can.

**The Compass Centre, Chatham Maritime,  
Chatham, Kent, ME4 4YH  
Tel: 01634 331145 Fax: 01634 331480  
Susan Farrow, Programme Officer  
ldfprogrammeofficer@medway.gov.uk**

**RECEIVED**

22 AUG 2007

Kingsley Smith  
Solicitors LLP

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**LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK EXAMINATION  
MEDWAY COUNCIL**

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The Hearing will take place on Thursday 6 September 2007 and will start at 9.15 am at:

The University of Greenwich  
Jellicoe Lecture Theatre 106  
Central Avenue  
Chatham Maritime  
Kent, ME4 4TB

The Jellicoe Building is located directly behind the Gate House at the University Entrance. Please report to the Gate House prior to the start of the Hearing, you will be directed by a member of staff to the Hearing. Limited car parking is available on the campus and a member of staff at the Gate House will issue you with a pass. Alternative parking is available at the Compass Centre car park, which is a short walk away. (Please see attached location plan).

As I need to ensure the venue chosen is suitable, I would be grateful if you could let me know as soon as possible if you wish to attend.

Yours sincerely

**Susan Farrow  
Programme Officer**

**The Compass Centre, Chatham Maritime,  
Chatham, Kent, ME4 4YH  
Tel: 01634 331145 Fax: 01634 331480  
Susan Farrow, Programme Officer  
ldfprogrammeofficer@medway.gov.uk**

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# Examination of Medway Core Strategy

## Procedural Hearing Session – 6 September 2007

### Agenda

1. Review of progress to date, documents produced and views thereon – Inspector.

Matters dealt with at Hearings held on - 29 May 2007  
- 11 July 2007

*For documents, please see the Examination website:-*

*(<http://www.medway.gov.uk/index/environment/9995.html/32182/53888/63834.htm>) and*

*(<http://www.medway.gov.uk/index/environment/9995.html/32182/53888/59404.htm>)*

*and in particular the statements of case produced by each respondent and the Council for the 29 May Hearing; the Inspector's subsequent discussion paper for the 11 July Hearing that set out his concerns on the Core Strategy's Economic/Employment strategy (together with a further paper that has not been discussed dealing with concerns over the Plan's provisions for Transport, Chattenden and Minerals/Waste); recently published papers from the Council on proposed modifications to the Core Strategy.)*

2. Council's response. (Followed by GOSE and other parties as appropriate)
3. The way forward – Inspector, GOSE, Council and other parties as appropriate.

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