



# **Medway Core Strategy Plan Public Examination 2012**

## **Matter 6: Infrastructure**

**HEARING SESSION ON  
14<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2012 (PM)**

**STATEMENT BY  
MEDWAY COUNCIL**





## **Matter 6: Infrastructure**

### **Matter 6a:**

**Are the key infrastructure requirements, including transport and water-related (mains and sewerage) capacity, identified in the plan, and is there a reasonable prospect that necessary infrastructure will be provided?**

1. The plan clearly sets out the infrastructure requirements needed to deliver the Core Strategy vision and objectives for Medway. Infrastructure is a consistent theme throughout the plan and forms a central element of the implementation section. Based on a strong track record of infrastructure investment in Medway, the council is confident that the necessary infrastructure will be provided.
2. The Core Strategy takes account of the requirements to ensure the timely and effective provision of infrastructure to support the development of Medway's economy, to meet the needs of its growing communities and protect and enhance its environmental assets. The plan recognises the intrinsic link between promoting development for housing and employment and supporting infrastructure. It explicitly acknowledges the range of facilities and services that will be fundamental to achieving the sustainable development objectives set for Medway by 2028.
3. The Core Strategy vision integrates infrastructure provision with ambitions for employment and housing growth, community wellbeing and a healthy environment. Infrastructure requirements are set out in a number of policies, including CS1: Regenerating Medway; CS3: Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change; CS4: Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy; CS5: Development and Flood Risk; CS8: Open Space, Green Grid and Public Realm; CS9: Health and Social Infrastructure; CS21: Conventional Energy Generation; CS23: Waste Management; CS24: Transport and Movement; CS32: Medway Valley; CS33: Lodge Hill; and CS35: Developer Contributions.
4. The plan was produced based on assessments of the area's infrastructure needs, including its quality and capacity to support growth in Medway. In planning for the requirements of infrastructure delivery in the Core Strategy, the council has engaged extensively with a wide range of stakeholders throughout the plan preparation process. The strong links established through the Medway Local Strategic Partnership have been used. Details are set out in the Regulation 30 (d) Statement submitted with the Core Strategy (MC10). This included liaising with key stakeholders responsible for providing transport, water supply, provision for wastewater and its treatment, energy, utilities, waste, social care, education, flood risk and coastal change management, communication networks, social and community facilities, health, police and emergency services, green infrastructure, and also involved liaison with major landowners. Reference is made to

a number of these strategic plans in the evidence base supporting the Core Strategy.

5. The council as a unitary authority has been able to coordinate its various services to integrate into the planning process. A corporate working group has been established for ongoing engagement and involvement in the plan making process. This includes services such as housing, economic development, education, public health, greenspaces, transport, and environmental health. The group was an effective means of gathering information to support infrastructure planning and policy development.
6. Information was gathered on planned infrastructure schemes and requirements, indicative phasing, broad costs, funding sources, lead agencies and any contingencies. This information was used to produce the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule in Table 11-2, to outline work directly associated to development sites and the overall delivery of the Core Strategy. The schedule is based on partners' and service providers' strategic plans or information provided by them, current S106 agreements and planning conditions. The council will continue to monitor and update this information, and use as a performance measure for the Core Strategy through the Annual Monitoring Report.
7. The Core Strategy is considered robust in how it deals with infrastructure provision. The forthcoming Land Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD will provide more detailed information on infrastructure requirements. The council considers that it, rather than the Core Strategy, is the more appropriate vehicle for addressing many of the more technical and detailed infrastructure matters referred to in a number of the representations.

#### *Transport*

8. Medway Council as a unitary authority is a transport planning authority, and there has been close integration in the production of the LDF alongside the Local Transport Plan 3 (EB64). There has also been liaison with Kent County Council on transport matters of wider significance. The LTP aligns with the Core Strategy's spatial strategy and objectives set for Medway. The Core Strategy's Chapter 8: Transport and Movement and Appendix E: Transport Objectives, Schemes and Actions in LTP3 set out details of the transport requirements to support the sustainable development planned for Medway.
9. The major urban development sites located in the waterfront regeneration areas are closely aligned to the existing transport infrastructure network, that has benefited from substantial improvements, particularly for public transport, walking and cycling options. The strategic allocation of land at Lodge Hill, Chattenden, has been assessed on the ability to provide an effective transport

infrastructure, on highways, public transport, and for walking and cycling.

10. It is recognised that development in Medway may have implications for infrastructure provision beyond the administrative boundary. A specific instance is Junction 3 on the M2, which is situated in Tonbridge & Malling.
11. The Council is working closely with Kent County Council in looking at mitigating possible impacts on this strategic junction. The Two Authorities will continue to liaise with the Highways Agency on this matter (see LD02).
12. The Highways Agency has expressed possible concern over development resulting in additional traffic using Junction 2 of the M2. This will be monitored, but there are no apparent problems at present and the junction is considered to have substantial spare capacity.

#### *Water*

13. The council is aware that the South East region is subject to pressures on water resources. The council dedicated a separate 'State of Medway' baseline report to the issue of water supply (EB131). The Sustainability Appraisal carried out on the Core Strategy assessed the potential impact of emerging and draft plan policies on water resources. The council has liaised closely with the appropriate statutory undertakers and utility companies in the plan making process, to ensure that adequate provision for water supply and management has been met in the Core Strategy.

#### *Nationally significant infrastructure*

14. A specific characteristic of Medway is its importance as a location for nationally significant infrastructure. Much of this is sited on the Hoo Peninsula. It includes substantial energy infrastructure, with power stations at Grain and Kingsnorth, energy importation and Thamesport container port. The national significance of these facilities and the need to safeguard them is recognised in the Core Strategy. The council has planned positively for this infrastructure - the planning strategy is to seek to realise additional benefits through appropriate developments. Policy CS21: Conventional Energy Generation supports proposals for additional power generation and energy storage capacity on the Hoo Peninsula, and Policy CS24: Transport and Movement safeguards existing port and wharf capacity.

#### *Delivery*

15. The plan clearly links provision of infrastructure to sustainable development in Medway, and there are requirements to deliver essential infrastructure as a condition of development.

16. The council recognises the current pressures in the economy and reductions in public sector funding may challenge the ability to invest in infrastructure at this time. However the timescale of the plan up to 2028 allows scope for investment in more buoyant conditions. Medway has a strong track record of securing funding in infrastructure improvements, and this supports a confident view to achieving the requirements of the Core Strategy. Delivery has been considered in the background paper (LD03) submitted with the draft plan.
17. The high delivery rates of housing achieved in Medway in recent years, and the continued confidence from developers recorded in the latest Strategic Land Availability Assessment (reference EB84) in being able to deliver sites in coming years, supports the view that infrastructure requirements can be met.
18. Medway has significantly benefitted from existing investments in infrastructure over the last decade as part of the Thames Gateway regeneration area. This has included major improvements in transport infrastructure, such as HS1, Chatham Waterfront bus station, rail station upgrades and highway works in central Chatham and Rochester. Funding has also been directed to health and community facilities and green infrastructure, and preparing sites for development, such as Rochester Riverside.
19. This investment programme has supported and progressed the regeneration ambitions for Medway, which form the core of the spatial vision for the area. This provides a strong infrastructure base in many aspects for Medway, and has improved the quality and capacity of infrastructure, thus facilitating development. The key development locations in the plan are based in areas that have benefitted from investments.
20. Much of the sustainable development objectives for the plan are based on realising the potential of the infrastructure provision, such as improved transport links, and development of the University and Learning Quarter.
21. Substantial work in planning for the strategic allocation site at Lodge Hill, Chattenden, has focused on identifying the infrastructure requirements, and securing means of delivery. The council has liaised closely with the Defence Infrastructure Organisation's land sale delivery partner, Land Securities, to ensure an effective and viable approach. Further consideration is given to this matter in the paper prepared for the Examination Hearing on Matter 5.
22. The Thames Gateway Background Paper (LD08) details how Medway attracted £210 million investment in infrastructure between 2004-11. With reductions in public sector funding, and pressures on the private sector, the council is aware of the need to continue to work proactively

and in collaboration to secure further investment in infrastructure. Medway will seek to continue its notable successes in attracting investment to the area. It is recognised that new opportunities and mechanisms will emerge and Medway will seek to realise these.

23. The council as a member of the South East Local Enterprise Partnership has sought opportunities to secure further investment in transport. The council works collaboratively across north Kent, as part of the Thames Gateway, on strategic planning matters, including infrastructure needs.

**Matter 6b:**

**Does the CS comply with national policy in relation to development in areas at risk of flooding?**

24. The Core Strategy was prepared in line with national policy guidance on development and flood risk as set out in Planning Policy Statement 25: Development and Flood Risk (2010), and the supporting PPS25 Practice Guide. Early stages of the plan making process followed the guidance set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 25: Development and Flood Risk (2001). Following the issuing of PPS25, the council commissioned additional work on flood risk assessment to ensure compliance with the updated policy.
25. The council has now considered the Core Strategy document for compliance with the policy on flood risk set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and the Technical Guidance to the National Planning Policy Framework, both issued in March 2012. It is the council's opinion that the Submission draft Core Strategy meets the requirements in the updated national policy.
26. The council has followed the guidance in carrying out a strategic flood risk assessment for the area, and in Policy CS5: Development and Flood Risk applying the requirements of the sequential test and risk management and mitigation measures. The requirements for specific sites have also been included in the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule in Table 11-2.
27. As a local authority with a dominant estuary and river geography, Medway has a heightened awareness of flood risk issues and has established strong links in working with key statutory bodies, such as the Environment Agency, on flooding matters. The council has worked closely with the Environment Agency throughout the development of the Core Strategy, and has used the data provided through flood risk mapping, and policy set out in Shoreline Management Plans (EB38 and EB54) to inform the planning strategy for Medway.
28. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (EB132) was produced for Medway in 2006 to support planning and regeneration strategies. The assessment was updated in 2010 to align with guidance in PPS 25,

and to take account of updated hydraulic modelling information. Specific assessment has been made of waterfront regeneration sites that are the focus of much of the urban development of Medway, in line with the objectives of the Thames Gateway programme. The Medway Flood Defence Strategy: High Level Appraisal of Potential Solutions to Manage Flood Risk in the Urban Medway was published in 2011 (EB55) to provide greater certainty in delivering development on the key regeneration sites. This work has informed the policy development and infrastructure requirements set out in the plan.

29. It is acknowledged that some areas of the proposed development sites fall within zones of medium or high risk of flooding, and the need for flood risk management measures are recognised. As part of the plan making process, these sites have been assessed on a comprehensive range of sustainability criteria, and measures have been put in place to manage flood risk. Substantial investment has been made in improving flood management infrastructure at Rochester Riverside, and measures have been identified for other key regeneration sites.
30. Flooding is one of the measures of the Sustainability Appraisal framework, which was used for assessing the impact of the Core Strategy at key stages in its preparation. This appraisal was carried out by independent consultants and considered the likely impact of the different options for development locations may have on flood risk. The spatial strategy and the plan policies have been identified as not having a negative impact on flood risk. The plan was seen to take a positive approach in terms of managing flood risk. The waterfront regeneration sites are considered to make a positive contribution to sustainable development, through their use of previously developed land, and excellent access to transport links, services and facilities. The monitoring framework for the plan includes measures on flood risk, so that the impact and effectiveness of the Core Strategy can be measured.
31. The council has also considered wider flood management issues, outside of development sites. Policies provide suitable mitigation to adapt to the effects of climate change, including flooding. This is specifically recognised in planning for the Hoo Peninsula, with acknowledgement that there may be need/opportunities for flood storage in areas. The Core Strategy through its policies on managing flood risk, green infrastructure planning and protection and enhancement of natural assets promotes opportunities for wetland creation, accommodating water within the landscape and developments.



**Matter 6c:**

**Does the CS provide clear guidance on the circumstances in which developer contributions will be required, and has the impact on viability been quantified?**

32. The plan clearly states the requirements on developers to contribute to the provision of infrastructure where the need arises directly from development. This is recognised as a means of ensuring that the environment is safeguarded and that necessary infrastructure and facilities are provided to serve new development and offset any consequential planning loss to the area.
33. Policy CS35 provides specific guidance on developer contributions. The policy is linked to Medway Council's Guide to Developer Contributions (EB32), which has Supplementary Planning Document status. This SPD sets out the detailed criteria to be applied to developments through planning obligations and what contributions will be required. Further guidance on the infrastructure requirements for specific sites is set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule in Table 11-2. Criteria for the provision of affordable housing are set out in Policy CS14. The standards have been set based on an assessment of needs across Medway.
34. The council recognises in the Core Strategy that contributions to infrastructure requirements can affect the viability of individual developments. The plan acknowledges the need for reasonable flexibility in the delivery of the Core Strategy. This takes account of economic conditions and the scope for public subsidy to support infrastructure on complex regeneration sites. It promotes the council's commitment to its existing well established systems of viability assessment and negotiation with developers.
35. The council has commenced work on preparing a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to enable it to become a CIL charging authority before April 2014. The council has established a corporate project group to progress this work, and the timetable aims for adoption of the CIL charging schedule by late 2013. Through the process of developing a CIL, the council will continue to work in updating and refining information on infrastructure planning. The preparation of an Infrastructure Delivery Plan will be an essential aspect of this work. This will build on the infrastructure planning work underpinning the Core Strategy. The council will follow the statutory requirements in the preparation of a CIL charging schedule, through conducting a viability assessment, and setting the charging rate in consultation with local communities and developers. The robust process of producing the CIL will ensure that there is clear guidance on requirements for developer contributions, and that the impact on viability has been assessed. The CIL process will provide another mechanism to specify and secure infrastructure delivery.