

SECTION E



The Sub-regional Policy Framework

Aerial view of Oxford



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I Introduction

- 1.1** In line with section 5(3) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, draft policies have been drawn up for the nine sub-regional areas shown on Map CCI. These policies are required to address specific strategic cross boundary issues within the South East and adjoining regions that cannot be dealt with by individual or joint local development documents or by the policies in Section D. In addition, distinct policies have been drawn up for the Isle of Wight (shown as a Special Policy Area on Map CCI), to deal with the island's distinct social and economic issues.
- 1.2** To inform the draft policies and spatial options in each sub-region the Regional Assembly commissioned the preparation of strategies from the strategic planning authorities in each sub-region. Other district councils and representatives from the social, environmental and economic sectors were also involved in strategy preparation. Sections EI to E10 draw on the strategy reports submitted to the Assembly, together with the advice from the Isle of Wight Council on proposed policies for the island. These reports contain technical and background information that informed the strategy preparation and are available in full on the Assembly's website.
- 1.3** In general, the sub-regional reports reflect a general caution about future levels of growth, the need to link housing growth with a reasonable projection of economic growth, an acute concern about the inadequacies of physical and community infrastructure and the need to ensure that further growth is linked to specific

assurances and programmes for infrastructure provision. The draft strategy reports also highlight the need for continuing technical work to inform the strategies to be included in the final version of the South East Plan.

- 1.4** For each sub-region a summary is given of the key issues facing the area, followed by a discussion of options tested by the sub-regional strategy groups for the broad levels, type and distribution of housing and, in some sub-regions, for employment generating development as well. An indication is given of the options on which the Assembly is seeking comment, together with the options preferred or recommended by the sub-regional groups. In most cases the preferred options for the level of housing growth are at or close to the housing provisions drawn from RPG9. They do not allow for meeting the backlog of housing need, a regional assessment of which is included in section D3, nor for any shortfall in meeting RPG9 housing rates prior to 2006.
- 1.5** The draft policies deal only with key strategic issues facing each sub-region. They do not deal with all topics, only those requiring specific attention at the sub-regional level. They must be read in conjunction with the general policies in section D to understand the full policy context for any sub-region. A standard approach has been adopted towards policies dealing with the scale, distribution and type of housing and the provision of infrastructure. Initial proposals for the delivery and implementation of policies are also set out for each area, together with a commentary from the Assembly on the draft strategy prepared by the sub-regional strategy group.



Aerial view of South Hampshire

South Hampshire Sub-region

I South Hampshire

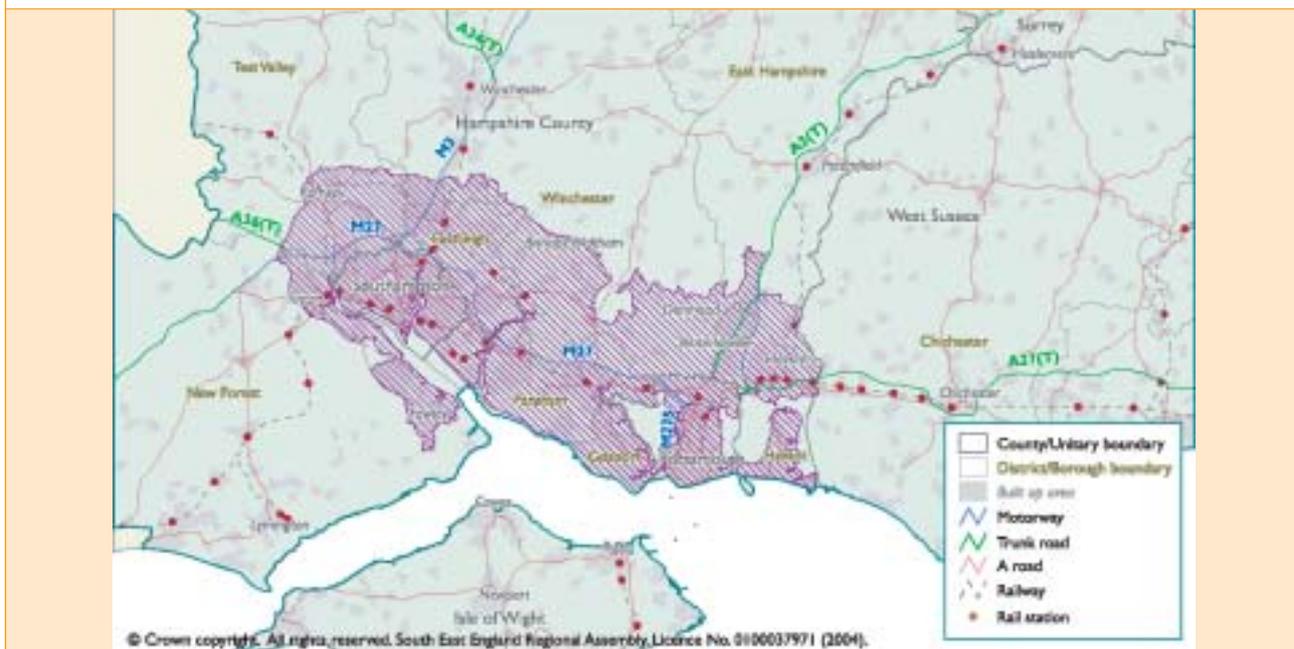
- I.1** South Hampshire is home to almost one million people and is the largest urban area in the South East. It covers the whole districts of Southampton, Eastleigh, Fareham, Gosport, Portsmouth and Havant, and parts of New Forest, Test Valley, Winchester and East Hampshire districts (see map E1).
- I.2** South Hampshire is 'punching below its weight' in the region and currently does not have a sufficiently high profile to attract the economic and infrastructure investment it needs. The area's economic performance is below the regional average and there are significant pockets of deprivation. The sub-regional strategy for South Hampshire is based on improving its economic performance. Currently the economy is performing more strongly than in recent years (3% annual growth in GVA)

and there is strong business investment within the two main cities in the retail and leisure sectors.

- I.3** South Hampshire has considerable advantages: a high quality environment, vibrant economy, world class higher education institutions and excellent transport links, by air, road, rail and sea. If these strengths are harnessed in tandem with visionary policies and investment in infrastructure, South Hampshire will have a bright future.
- I.4** This will involve growth of new businesses to replace declining ones, development of the skills and productivity of the workforce and promotion of the importance of the cities of Portsmouth and Southampton as centres of employment, leisure, shopping, culture and educational excellence. It will also mean development of new business premises and homes.

MAP E I

South Hampshire Sub-region



2 Levels of Development and Spatial Options

2.1 The geography of South Hampshire is a key influence on spatial options for new development. The area has a coastline bisected by river systems, both of which are of national and international importance for conservation. The rivers fragment the coastal margins into a series of islands or peninsulas which in turn constrain communications and have contributed to the major transport corridor through the area (M27) performing more as a local distributor route than an intra-regional one. Along the western margins is the New Forest National Park whilst to the north-east is a similar proposal for the South Downs. The coastal margin is also heavily urbanised and retaining the separateness and individual identity of settlements is highly valued.

2.2 New development must be carefully targeted to locations where it would benefit the sub-region through, for example, associated transport improvements, or helping to reduce social deprivation. In spatial terms the strategy is to focus on the potential of Portsmouth and Southampton. Both cities have achieved substantial renaissance and regeneration successes in recent years and there is an outstanding portfolio of major projects in the pipeline. The dual city-focus strategy will be complemented by regeneration and development within the other urban areas, embracing mixed use development and very high densities in appropriate locations. It should recognise that South Hampshire functions as an increasingly complex polycentric sub-region.

2.3 Development in greenfield locations will relate well to the two cities and to strategic public transport corridors and interchanges and be of sufficient size to justify and contribute to investment in

necessary transport and other infrastructure.

2.4 **Option A** – This option locates new development within and very close to the two cities in order to reduce the need to travel. It builds on existing public transport infrastructure and could justify more investment in these services. However, some areas adjacent to the two cities currently have poor access to city centres and the main road network and new development may simply add to existing problems as it may be difficult and costly to resolve them. In some locations additional development will put a strain on other existing services (eg drainage). Undeveloped gaps between existing settlements could be eroded. Option A could deliver levels of housing growth of around 6% higher than current planned rates. This would be insufficient to deliver economic regeneration and growth.

2.5 **Option B** – In addition to development within the cities and other urban areas, this option would locate a substantial amount of new development in 'Strategic Development Areas' which might typically accommodate between 5,000 and 10,000 dwellings. Up to four of these would be located north of and in close proximity to the two cities and, although they would have a degree of self containment, there would still be a need for enhanced or new transport links with neighbouring towns and existing or planned major employment areas. Although the emphasis would be on public transport initiatives there would also be a need for some new roads. A key challenge under this option will be the integration of the new developments into the rest of South Hampshire, especially in relation to the two cities. As wholly new communities there will be substantial infrastructure costs. However, their size also offers potential to offset some of these costs if part of the increase in land values associated with development can be captured. Option B would provide sufficient housing to deliver the economic strategy, with housing growth at around 20% higher than current planned rates.



2.6 Option C – In addition to development within the cities and other urban areas, this option would concentrate new development within existing or new transport corridors. Examples of potential corridor improvements include: Romsey to Southampton; Fareham to Eastleigh; Fareham to Gosport and Portsmouth; and Waterlooville to Portsmouth. Transport corridors would link the new development into the existing network but also offer potential to address existing problems. Key links would be between the new development and adjacent city and town centres, transport hubs and existing or planned major employment locations. The focus of the links would be public transport although some additional road building is also likely to feature. Option C would provide sufficient housing to deliver the economic strategy, with housing growth at around 20% higher than current planned rates.

2.7 Option D – This option combines Option B and C. It has the potential to deliver levels of housing growth of up to 40%

higher than those currently planned. There is therefore scope to be selective, by reducing the number of strategic development areas for example. The main advantage of this option is that it provides a significant critical mass in key locations to help justify the investment in the development of new transport corridors. However, there is no economic case for such a level of housing growth as this is unlikely to be achievable without compromising other objectives of the sub-regional strategy.

2.8 An additional ‘scattered’ development option was initially considered but was not developed further as it was inconsistent with the guiding principles.

Preferred Option

2.9 The sub-region’s preferred level of housing development is between 79,000 and 82,000 additional homes between 2006 and 2026 based on economic growth of between 3 and 3.5% per annum. There is no preferred spatial option.

Preferred Levels of Development

	Lower Estimate	Upper Estimate
Economic growth rate	3% pa	3.5% pa
Land for employment	approx. 400 hectares	approx. 500 hectares
Total new housing	RPG plus 15% 79,000	RPG plus 20% 82,000
Accommodated through existing commitments and urban capacity	47,000 – 56,000	47,000 – 56,000
Additional housing required on greenfield sites	23,000 – 32,000	26,000 – 35,000

3 Sub-regional Policies

Core Strategy

- 3.1** The strategy for South Hampshire is to improve its economic performance to at least match the regional average, with a target increase in Gross Value Added (GVA) of between 3 and 3.5% per annum. This will involve an increase in jobs as well as productivity, requiring land for business development and house building. To enable this to happen, there will need to be increased investment in transport and other infrastructure. The strategy is one of 'conditional managed growth', with the pace of growth and development determined by, and conditional on, the rate of infrastructure investment.

POLICY SH1: OVERALL STRATEGY

Development in South Hampshire will be led by economic growth and urban regeneration. Portsmouth and Southampton will be dual focuses for investment and development as employment, retail, entertainment, higher education and cultural centres for the sub-region. The other towns will play a complementary role serving their more local areas. Investment and improvements in transport will reflect this, as will the location of sites for development. High density development will be encouraged in the city and town centres, around public transport hubs and at sustainable waterfront locations.

The preferred spatial option is to be determined during development of the sub-regional strategy.

The scale and pace of land release for development will be related to the rate of economic growth taking place across the sub-region and to the provision of new infrastructure.

Strategic Development Areas

- 3.2** The focus and priority will be on urban regeneration, however brownfield sites alone cannot accommodate all the necessary development. Some greenfield development needs to be planned for to provide sites for the new businesses on which future economic prosperity depends and to provide enough homes for the sub-region's population.

POLICY SH2: STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT AREAS

Strategic Development Areas will be allocated north of and in close proximity to the two cities in the following broad locations:

- to be determined during development of sub-regional strategy.

In each Strategic Development Area (SDA) provision will be made for co-ordinated and integrated employment, transport and housing development, together with supporting health, community, social, shopping, education, recreation and leisure facilities and other identified requirements. Particular attention should be paid to securing quality public transport links with neighbouring city and town centres, transport hubs and existing or planned major employment locations.

The precise form and location of SDAs will be established in Local Development Documents. Their impact will be assessed in relation to their effect on surrounding districts and their sustainability.

Planning authorities, in partnership with developers, should develop a master plan for the area at an early stage in the development process. This should identify on and off-site infrastructure requirements and set out an implementation programme, including phasing. An Area Action Plan will be required for each SDA.

Implementation

- 3.3** Effective co-ordination of physical development and infrastructure provision to implement the strategy for South Hampshire will require a dedicated implementation agency. The agency will be required to provide for democratic leadership from the authorities that make up the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire.

POLICY SH3: IMPLEMENTATION AGENCY

An implementation agency will be created for South Hampshire with the responsibility and necessary powers to implement this strategy.

- 3.4** The rate of development of land (for employment and housing) will be phased to match the rate of infrastructure provision and economic growth. Major releases of greenfield land, particularly for employment purposes, also need to be phased to avoid undermining urban regeneration schemes. Some flexibility will be required to enable additional land to be brought forward or the release of land to be deferred, depending on economic growth and infrastructure provision. However, this will need to be balanced with the need to provide certainty to potential investors and developers during the planning and design stages of major strategic developments. The proposed implementation agency will have a role in monitoring the implementation of strategic land allocations within the sub-regional strategy area.
- 3.5** It will be appropriate to review the strategy periodically, while maintaining the overall direction of development set out in Policy SH1. Such a review will include assessing the progress towards the economic growth and other targets, enabling decisions to be made to revise the target if necessary or instigate new initiatives to help achieve it. The review

will also be the appropriate time to roll the strategy forward.

POLICY SH4: PLAN, MONITOR AND MANAGE

The rate of land release in the Strategic Development Areas will be phased and managed in the light of a range of indicators and monitoring information. This is likely to include economic growth rates, employment development, housing completions, housing affordability, the provision of transport and other infrastructure and the degree to which regeneration objectives are being met. Land allocations and phasing in policies SH5 and SH11 may be reviewed during the Plan period in the light of this monitoring information.

Economy and Employment

- 3.6** For the last two decades, South Hampshire's economic growth rate has been consistently below that achieved by the South East region. There have been marked differences within South Hampshire with the two cities failing to match even national growth rates, while the outermost parts of the strategy area have grown at rates above the regional average.
- 3.7** The South Hampshire economy is well-balanced. It has a strong specialism in advanced manufacturing but it lags behind the South East region in the development of the high value-added Advanced Business Services. Rates of new business creation and self-employment are below South East and national averages.
- 3.8** The aim to increase the sub-region's economic growth rate to between 3 and 3.5% per annum (Gross Value Added) will require around 400-500 hectares gross of land for employment development. About 60% of this land will be required for office space (B1) which will include

provision for a range of knowledge-based industries and business services. Most of the rest will be to provide new warehouse space (B8) for the predicted growth in distribution, transport and communications. The figures exclude sites for leisure and retail development which are forecast to grow significantly, as these uses will not require the type of space covered by the above policy. However, market demand in these areas will continue, particularly in the cities, with possible implications for the availability of potential office space in central locations.

3.9 In addition, there will be a requirement for sites for the development of advanced manufacturing in which South Hampshire has a particular strength. Conversely, a decline is forecast in traditional manufacturing which will release land for re-development. It is forecast that the land released from traditional manufacturing will be broadly equivalent to the amount required for new advanced manufacturing, although the location of the existing sites may not meet the needs of new and expanding firms. Local Development Documents may therefore need to allocate land additional to the figures in Policy SH6. The allocation of suitable land for employment in locations which are attractive to firms is crucial to achieving economic growth: local planning authorities should audit their current employment allocations to ensure that they satisfy the criteria of quality, availability and attractiveness to investors.

3.10 The existing stock of employment land and premises has been haemorrhaging due to the pressure to allow housing and other development on land in use or allocated for industry/offices. Between 1997 and 2002, almost half of all land developed for employment was to

replace existing employment land which transferred to other uses. In Portsmouth and Southampton the loss of employment space exceeded the new space built. There are often sound reasons for the loss of existing employment space: it may be ill-suited to current market needs or it may be necessary and appropriate to provide for a suitable mixed-use development on brownfield sites in order to achieve regeneration objectives. Nevertheless, this trend will tend to result in longer journeys to work and increased traffic congestion. Policies need to ensure that sites confirmed, through the above review process, as being suitable for employment development are protected for that use.

3.11 The selection of new sites for employment development will need to be made in conjunction with the location of housing development to enable people to live near their place of work thus reducing traffic congestion and environmental damage. For the same reasons, maintaining a mix of uses within existing built-up areas is equally important, pointing to the re-use of redundant industrial/business land for new employment uses unless this would create unacceptable traffic or environmental problems.

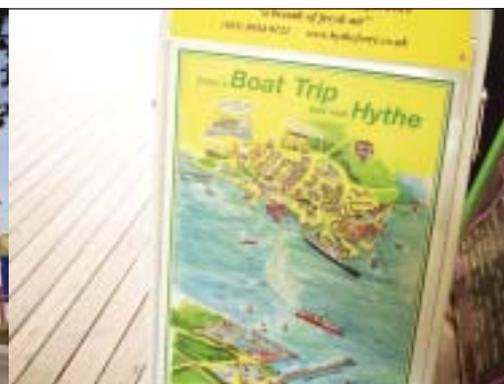
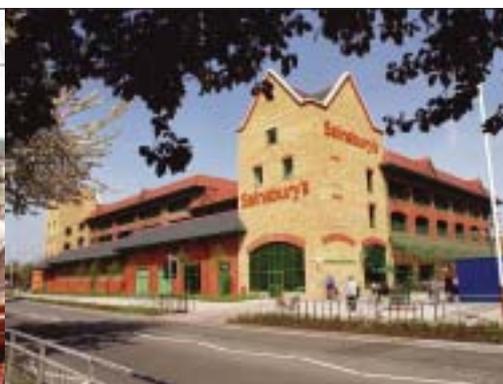
POLICY SH5: SCALE, LOCATION AND TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT

Between 400 and 500 hectares (gross) of land will be provided for employment development (user classes B1, B2 and B8) during 2006-2021¹.

Further detail to be determined during development of sub-regional strategy.

FOOTNOTES

¹ Provisions for the period 2021 to 2026 will be included in the review of the South East Plan.



POLICY SH6: TOWN AND CITY CENTRES

A policy will be developed to indicate the strategy for the future development of Southampton, Portsmouth and other large town centres in the sub-region. This will emphasise their regional and sub-regional functions as retail, leisure, cultural and business centres and define the strategy for the long-term development of these functions. It will also address the need to develop the individual identities of these major centres and to enhance the quality of life within them, through the implementation of comprehensive city and town centre strategies.

- 3.12** Large office developments are well suited to city and town centres and other locations which have good public transport accessibility. Their presence within the heart of the urban area can also help create vitality and underpin regeneration. Because office developments are relatively 'footloose' a sub-regional policy is required to ensure that all Local Development Documents treat them in the same way. At the same time, the capacity for very large corporate office buildings within existing town and city centres is limited. In order to compete effectively for potential investment by major corporations and international firms seeking a presence in the sub-region, a small number of greenfield sites may be designated within the sub-regional strategy to address these exceptional requirements.

POLICY SH7: OFFICE DEVELOPMENT

Local Development Documents will determine the scale and location of major office development in relation to the following hierarchy:

- i** in and on the edge of Portsmouth and Southampton city centres
- ii** in and on the edge of town centres
- iii** other locations, which have or will have good access to public transport.

- 3.13** In addition, the sub-regional strategy will designate appropriate broad locations to accommodate large office developments of regional or sub-regional significance which do not conform to these criteria. Further detail is to be determined during the development of sub-regional strategy.
- 3.14** The current skills base in South Hampshire is below the regional average and this is seen as a major impediment to the achievement of higher growth rates. Alongside ensuring that attractive sites and premises are available, the sub-regional strategy is also looking to regional and local agencies to raise the skills levels of the local labour force. Higher skilled workers tend to receive higher financial rewards and a successful strategy should help ameliorate some aspects of deprivation present within the two cities and other urban areas.

POLICY SH8: SKILLS

Regional and local agencies will work together to develop programmes in South Hampshire which will assist the local workforce to gain the necessary qualifications and skills needed by existing and future employers, in particular to substantially increase the number of people with NVQ level 4 and above.

The deficit in skills that is evident across much of the sub-region must be addressed directly through significant investment over the Plan period. To reinforce the key actions proposed in the Regional Economic Strategy to deliver ‘skills for prosperity’, local authorities and their partners will:

- **support the establishment of appropriate sector specific learning centres**
- **plan for the development of appropriate business clusters, with integrated planning of learning and development programmes**
- **enhance the regional role of the universities and their active role in skills development, transfer of knowledge and graduate employment schemes within the sub-region**
- **encourage workplace learning centres, part funded by employers**
- **link programmes of skills development to major new employment developments within the sub-region.**

Transport

- 3.15** Congestion is a major issue on several sections of the strategic transport network, particularly the M3, M27, A27, A3(M), A32 and A326. The traffic situation in the two city centres also suffers peak time congestion in a number of key corridors. By 2026, the natural and committed growth will exacerbate congestion, especially on the M3 and M27. Some links are predicted to have 70% over-capacity (all day average). There are

constraints on rail capacity in both Southampton and Portsmouth and on the Fareham – Eastleigh east-west rail link. Without investment the position is expected to get worse over the next 20 years irrespective of any additional development.

POLICY SH9: SUB-REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY

The planning authorities will ensure that the transport infrastructure needs, to support development in South Hampshire, are identified during the refinement of the strategy for the sub-region. As part of this work the issues of phasing of development in relationship to the provision of infrastructure will be addressed. Detailed proposals for the timely implementation of the transport infrastructure required to support further growth will be developed during the refinement of the strategy for South Hampshire.

- 3.16** The local transport authorities for South Hampshire – Southampton City Council, Portsmouth City Council and Hampshire County Council – recognise that co-operative working between themselves and with transport service providers is the best way to address the issues facing the area. They therefore collaborate on producing Local Transport Plans and have established the Solent Transport partnership. Building on this foundation, a Transport Executive is needed for South Hampshire, particularly to maximise delivery in respect of public transport and integration between transport authorities and providers.

POLICY SH10: TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT AND INTEGRATION

A co-ordinating body will be created for South Hampshire with the responsibility and necessary powers to manage and integrate public and private transport.

Housing

3.17 There is a requirement for new housing in South Hampshire to cater for demographic changes (eg more single person households and longer life expectancy). There is also a need to provide sufficient new homes for workers helping the local economy to grow. The strategy is to provide between 79,000 and 82,000 dwellings during the 20 years to 2026. The type of properties required in each district area should be informed by housing market assessments. The number of affordable dwellings required shall be informed by the results of housing needs assessments.

POLICY SH1 1: SCALE, LOCATION AND TYPE OF HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

The final version of the sub-regional strategy for South Hampshire will include a policy (or policies) setting out the overall level of housing provision, the distribution at district level, phasing and the type of housing that will be provided.

In the meantime the preferred overall level of housing provision is between 79,000 and 82,000 additional homes over the 20 years 2006 to 2026. There is no preferred spatial option at this stage, but the Regional Assembly would welcome comments on the spatial principles referred to in section 2.

3.18 It is a central priority for South Hampshire to ensure the affordable housing needs of the sub-region are met in the medium to long-term, with adequate affordable and key worker housing provision essential to support the economic development strategy as well as to deliver good quality public services. 28,500 additional affordable homes are required to address a backlog of existing unmet need and to provide for newly arising needs over the period covered by the sub-regional strategy.

POLICY SH1 2: AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Regional and local agencies will work together to provide a minimum of 28,500 new affordable homes in South Hampshire over the period 2006 to 2021. The South Hampshire housing authorities will work together to undertake a sub-regional housing market and needs assessment to establish the amount, types, sizes and tenure of affordable housing required in South Hampshire and how such provision should be funded.

4 Implementation and Delivery

IMPLEMENTATION AND DELIVERY

Policy	Delivery Mechanisms	Lead Roles	Support Roles
Policy SH1 – Overall Strategy		See specific policies below	
Policy SH2 – Strategic Development Areas	Local Development Documents Area Action Plans	City, borough and district councils Proposed Implementation Agency	County Council Developers
Policy SH3 – Implementation Agency		City, borough and district councils County Council	SEEDA Regional Assembly Government, Developers Infrastructure providers

IMPLEMENTATION AND DELIVERY – CONTINUED

Policy	Delivery Mechanisms	Lead Roles	Support Roles
Policy SH4 – Plan, Monitor and Manage	Local Development Documents	City, borough and district councils County Council Proposed Implementation Agency	Regional Assembly
Policy SH5 – Scale, Location and Type of Employment Development	Local Development Documents	City, borough and district councils	County Council SEEDA Economic Partnership Regional Assembly
Policy SH6 – Town and City Centres	To be developed	To be developed	To be developed
Policy SH7 – Office Development	Local Development Documents	City, borough and district councils	County Council SEEDA Economic Partnerships
Policy SH8 – Skills	Education and training provision	City, borough and district councils Learning and Skills Council	County Council FE Colleges and Universities Economic Partnerships
Policy SH9 – Sub-Regional Transport Strategy	Local Development Documents Local Transport Plans Direct provision	Local transport authorities Transport operators Highways Agency Proposed Transport Executive	Regional Assembly Central Government
Policy SH10 – Transport Management and Integration	Local Development Documents Local Transport Plans Direct provision	Local transport authorities Transport operators Highways Agency Proposed Transport Executive	Regional Assembly Central Government
Policy SH11 – Scale, Location and Type of Housing Development	Local Development Documents Local Housing Strategies Regional Housing Strategy	City, borough and district councils	County Council Regional Housing Board Regional Assembly
Policy SH12 – Affordable Housing	Local Development Documents Local Housing Strategies Regional Housing Strategy	City, borough and district councils	County Council Regional Housing Board Regional Assembly

5 Commentary

The majority of the South Hampshire Strategy Group partners have taken a consistently positive approach to development and scope that it could offer for regeneration and social and economic improvements. The key issue has been the need to achieve managed growth which is economic and infrastructure-led, based on the regeneration of the two cities and existing urban areas, and supportive of community and development needs.

The economic forecasts suggest that a level of housing provision of RPG 9 plus 40% could not be supported in economic terms. It is therefore considered that this option should not be included

in the draft Plan. However, current levels of housing growth are unlikely to deliver the vision and aspirations that South Hampshire has established for the sub-region. Options of between 15 and 20% above RPG 9 rates led by economic growth and investment in infrastructure would be broadly consistent with the regional spatial options discussed in Section C.

New policies and investment will be required to ensure that barriers to economic growth are overcome and avoided.

In terms of spatial distribution the focus should be on the two cities and urban areas and development based on existing or new transport corridors and at strategic development areas.

Sussex Coast Sub-region

I The Sussex Coast

- I.1** This sub-regional strategy covers the length of the Sussex Coast from Chichester to Rye (see map E2). At its centre is the city of Brighton & Hove, the largest urban area with a population of a quarter of a million. The two county towns of Chichester and Lewes along with Eastbourne, Hastings, Worthing, Bexhill, Bognor, Littlehampton and Shoreham form the other major urban areas.
- I.2** The sub-region faces a number of challenges in its future development. It contains a large number of environmental designations ranging from possible future National Parks through AONBs to Heritage Coast, and is susceptible to fluvial flooding and coastal management issues. The built environment has areas of heritage and cultural importance, however a large percentage of the housing stock is very old, with physical decay apparent in some towns.

- I.3** The sub-region's economy however contains a number of contrasts. Parts of the area's economy is poor, dominated by service sector, low-value, low paid employment. A number of towns contain significant pockets of deprivation and unemployment, alongside low skills and levels of educational attainment. These areas in particular suffer from high levels of out-commuting of the working population, so as to gain access to employment, and as a consequence hinders the sub-region's problems with transport infrastructure. However there are areas of the sub-region, primarily around Brighton and Hove, and to a lesser extent in other areas such as Hastings, which have shown or are showing a turn around in economic fortune. Brighton and Hove in particular has shown significant progress in its economic and social prospects, and likewise the area's demographics and skills base is far broader than the sub-region as a whole. This

MAP E2

Sussex Coast Sub-region



success will need to be captured and used as a catalyst for the renaissance of the sub-region.

- 1.4** The variety of pressures and conditions in the sub-region, combined with limited space for further development, exert significant upwards pressure on private housing affordability, and combine in a need to achieve a step change in the performance of the economy of large areas of the sub-region, in terms of employment, skills, and economic renaissance along with the need for careful spatial planning in a physically restricted sub-region.

2 Spatial Options and Levels of Development

- 2.1** The development of spatial options in the sub-region has concentrated on the scope for and the implications of accommodating future housing provision at a number of different levels. The spatial options for the sub-region are highly constrained by the factors outlined in paragraph 1.2 which profoundly restricts the number of different spatial patterns of development available at the strategic level. Three options have been evaluated against the objective of securing a step change in the economic performance of the sub-region along with a single distribution option.

- 2.2** **Option A** – Accommodating a rate of housing development approximately 20% below the current level (48,000 or 2,400 per annum 2006-2026) could be achieved without the need to allocate significantly more land for housing than is implied in current planning documents. These would need to be delivered as well as continuing unplanned housing from windfall sites within the urban areas at similar rates as the recent past. Achieving this level of urban intensification would require creative policy responses and decisions at the local level. However this

option implies a considerable slowing down of delivery after 2011/2016 which is unlikely to provide continuity of housing or labour supply in the medium term and thus is likely to exacerbate the problem of availability of affordable housing and fetter chances for economic recovery.

- 2.3** **Option B** – Accommodating a rate of housing development at a level around 20% higher than current rates (72,000 or 3,600 per annum 2006-2026) implies the same degree of urban intensification as Option A. It would additionally require substantial new greenfield land release that is likely to involve major incursion into significant environmental constraints, high quality agricultural land and/or land at flood risk. Whilst it may provide a greater opportunity to provide more affordable housing, it would also require high levels of job growth that, realistically, are unlikely to be achievable in the sub-region and could lead to unintended consequences such as higher levels of out-commuting. Although development values would be higher, this option would also require higher levels of associated infrastructure that are unlikely to be able to be funded from the development alone. It is also unlikely that such infrastructure could be delivered quickly enough or be provided in an environmentally acceptable way.

- 2.4** **Option C** – Accommodating a rate of housing development around the current rate (60,000 or 3,000 per annum 2006-2026), alongside the more vigorous drive for economic development and regeneration. This would require the same level of urban intensification within the towns as the other options, alongside new housing land allocations for around 11,000 dwellings over and above those being brought forward in existing plans. This is unlikely to be achieved without some incursion into environmental constraints. This option appears to offer the most sustainable combination of contributing to the needs of housing provision whilst enabling a step change in economic performance.



- 2.5 Spatial Distribution** – Irrespective of the levels of development chosen, most of the new provision should be focused on the existing coastal towns; however, where additional development is needed it is expected that new land allocations for housing and associated economic development, service provision and infrastructure would be made as sustainable extensions to settlement in the following areas: Bexhill, Eastbourne/ Hailsham, Brighton and Hove and Chichester to Angmering.

3 Sub-regional Policies

Core Strategy

- 3.1** The core strategy for the sub-region focuses on the need for a greater and more co-ordinated effort to deliver the substantial regeneration and growth of the sub-region. If successful this would contribute significantly to reducing poverty, deprivation and social exclusion, giving local people a better opportunity to take part more fully in the economic and social life of the sub-region. It should also ease the acute difficulties many local households face in gaining access to decent, affordable, private housing by helping to close the house price:local earnings ‘affordability gap’. There will always be those for whom such problems cannot be resolved by economic growth alone and who will require direct intervention and assistance.

POLICY SCT I: CORE SUB-REGIONAL STRATEGY

Local authorities and other agencies should, as a priority, pro-actively pursue and promote the sustainable economic growth and regeneration of the Sussex Coast that will:

- i** reduce intra-regional disparities and help bring the performance of the sub-regional economy up to the South East average
- ii** respond to the different needs, opportunities and characteristics of each town, or group of towns and all sections of their communities
- iii** build upon and help deliver major improvements to the strategic transport infrastructure and services both to reduce its peripherality and to improve accessibility within the sub-region
- iv** achieve a better balance between the provision of housing and the capability of both the local environment and economy to absorb this in a sustainable way whilst responding as far as possible to the needs of local people (including key workers) for decent homes at a price/cost that they can afford
- v** protect the sub-region’s high environmental quality (in both town and country) and promote excellence in the design of new development in recognition of their importance to economic success.

Enabling Economic Regeneration

- 3.2** Building upon the regional Policy CC8 Spatial Emphasis, weight in investment decisions should be focused on the central

and eastern parts of the sub-region. This will ensure that priority support is focused on areas with the greatest economic and social needs and will also facilitate the implementation of the comprehensive, multi-agency frameworks required to stimulate an economic renaissance. However this should not exclude other areas of the sub-region with pockets of quite severe deprivation from receiving the attention and investment that they need. Equally as important, realising substantial improvements in strategic transport communications and infrastructure is a priority for the sub-region. Improving east-west transport links and services will improve complementary connections with other key sub-regions and also improve access within the sub-region, assisting with widening access to employment opportunities throughout the Sussex Coast and to improving the balance of labour supply and demand. Improving north-south strategic transport links is equally important to reduce the area's peripherality from the rest of the region.

POLICY SCT2: ENABLING ECONOMIC REGENERATION

To help realise a step change in the sub-region's economic performance, national, regional and other relevant agencies and authorities should give increased priority to investment decisions and other direct support for the sub-region. Key measures should include:

- i directing national and regional assistance and expenditure to promote the social and economic regeneration of areas in greatest need by:**
 - a continuing the support being given to Hastings/Bexhill and Shoreham in general whilst**
 - b increasing the priority given to other parts of the Sussex Coast (from Shoreham to Rye, including Brighton and Hove and Hastings)**
 - c targeting other pockets of social and economic deprivation throughout the sub-region**

- ii delivering improvements to east-west transport links by road and rail to improve accessibility, facilitate strategic development opportunities and enable the better functioning of overlapping local labour and housing markets**
- iii maintaining and/or improving key north-south communication links that will also help to knit the coastal towns better into the rest of the South East and increase its attractions as a business location.**

Management of Existing Employment Sites and Premises

3.3 The sub-region needs to ensure that more, and a better mix of, quality sites and premises are available to address economic renaissance, including high quality starter space for innovative and growth orientated businesses. However, the majority of the existing stock of industrial and office accommodation is over 30 years old and not well suited to the needs of new industries and more dynamic growth sectors of the economy. There are also several key strategic employment sites and business park allocations that have remained undeveloped over a number of years, particularly in East Sussex. Nearly 290 hectares of land within the Sussex Coast is earmarked for industrial and commercial (BI-B8) development but only around 50 hectares of this total is readily available – the vast majority of which is located in the West Sussex coastal districts.

3.4 There are serious problems of viability in some areas where low rental yields (allied to high development costs in some cases) make the development of prospective employment sites unprofitable. Poor accessibility and other constraints are also significant barriers in some areas to delivery of industrial and commercial development. It is vital that the sub-region finds creative ways to utilise the opportunity that these sites present, especially with the limited scope for alternatives. In certain cases realising the



maximum potential benefit to the local economy may require the judicious introduction of other uses as part of a mixed-use scheme to help fund the provision of otherwise unviable employment space. The focus of such alternative uses should be on housing development wherever possible as this will also help to achieve other aims of the strategy and its extent can be finely tuned to minimise loss of employment potential.

- 3.5** Some existing sites may no longer be suitable for business purposes. If such redundant sites are 'lost' to other uses planning authorities should also pursue the possibility of securing development contributions towards bringing forward employment provision on other sites. The successful regeneration of the Sussex Coast will largely depend on ensuring that an appropriate range of good quality sites and premises in accessible locations is available to respond quickly to the needs of local businesses and realise opportunities for securing much needed investment.

POLICY SCT3: MANAGEMENT OF EXISTING EMPLOYMENT SITES AND PREMISES

To deliver sufficient appropriate sites and premises for business and other uses that will help to facilitate the regeneration of the local economy, local authorities should, in addition to Policy RE4:

- i** protect existing and allocated employment sites from other uses unless they are demonstrated to be incapable of meeting the needs of businesses

- ii** develop and co-ordinate with other agencies delivery mechanisms to unlock and implement sites with economic development potential, including port and airport sites at Newhaven and Shoreham, existing allocated business parks and other important sites that have persistently remained undeveloped
- iii** be prepared to permit mixed use schemes on existing or allocated employment sites in circumstances where this would deliver necessary employment space at the right time on sites which would be unviable for an employment only scheme
- iv** seek to improve and upgrade existing industrial estates and business areas to bring them up to modern standards required by business.

Employment Priority in New Land Allocations

- 3.6** One of the key challenges in this sub-region is to reconcile the competing demands for the limited opportunities that remain. Given the main objective to achieve an economic renaissance, priority in allocating land for development should be given to economic development over housing in terms of location, in particular as employment requirements tend to be more specific. Unless enough land that can readily be developed for business use is made available with good access to strategic communications networks, the overarching policy of economic renaissance is unlikely to be delivered.
- 3.7** In determining employment land allocations, local planning authorities will need to acknowledge and provide for a full range of

economic development requirements to ensure that an appropriate mix of business sites and premises is readily available. It is important that adequate space and facilities are provided to retain existing firms in the area and to give them and new employers the flexibility they need to prosper and grow. The need for economic regeneration is so great, and suitable site opportunities so limited, that some limited encroachment into environmental constraints may be justified to meet the specific economic needs of particular towns. Policy SCT4 is intended to be flexible enough to allow such a policy response, in selected cases, where it can be clearly demonstrated that no sustainable alternative exists that would deliver the identified regeneration needs.

POLICY SCT4: EMPLOYMENT PRIORITY IN LAND ALLOCATIONS

In conjunction with the priorities set out in Policy CC7, C2, RE1 and RE4, in allocating land for development, Local Development Documents should:

- i give priority to delivering employment development in strategically accessible locations to ensure an appropriate mix of readily available sites and premises whilst also providing sufficient space to:**
 - a retain existing firms and enable their expansion or relocation (within the sub-region)**
 - b create attractive opportunities for inward investment and new uses**
 - c at least match anticipated increases in the resident workforce**
- ii as an exception to general policy, allow for some infringement of environmental constraints in specific instances where there is a clearly justifiable case for delivering economic regeneration to meet identified needs, and where no more sustainable alternatives exist and the harmful impacts of development can be satisfactorily mitigated.**

Education and Skills

- 3.8** The skills, knowledge and aspirations of residents are central to the sub-region's economic success yet adult qualifications in the sub-region are below the regional average at all levels, leaving a substantial proportion of the population with no, or very low, levels of qualification. The Area Investment Frameworks across the sub-region and other local research has identified the need for better education and training to improve workforce skills at all levels if the economy is to prosper and regional disparities in performance are to be narrowed. Current identified priorities include: providing basic literacy and numeracy; raising the level of attainment among those with the lowest levels of qualification to a standard that will equip them to access the job market and progress; and raising higher-level skills that are required by innovative and dynamic sectors of the economy that can contribute to economic growth. There is a clear need to achieve a better match between the skills and training requirements of businesses with pathways to learning and provision that can be effectively accessed by those who need it, in terms of specific and transferable skills.

POLICY SCT5: EDUCATION AND SKILLS

In conjunction with Policy RE3, local authorities should work jointly with the Learning and Skills Council, local education providers, universities, colleges and the business community to deliver co-ordinated programmes to ensure that the local workforce is trained appropriately and flexibly, to enable residents to access and benefit from existing and new job opportunities, recognising the special needs and characteristics of the sub-region.

Co-ordinated Leadership and Promotion of the Sub-region

3.9 A crucial component of the sub-region's future economic success will be to overcome perceptions of the area amongst the business community as one of poor economic performance, low productivity and geographical peripherality. The sub-region needs to raise its profile as a location that is 'open for business'. Integrated multi-agency plans and frameworks are an essential component of, and pre-requisite to, achieving a step change in economic performance. Therefore each major area of the sub-region should prepare a simple, overarching plan or vision for their area which will provide leadership plus an agreed common purpose and direction so that regeneration efforts are combined to maximum effect irrespective of administrative boundaries. This process of partnership working is as important as the framework itself, as evidenced by the successful process and approach to regeneration being taken in Hastings-Bexhill through the '5-Point Plan'.

3.10 This approach should also include the consideration of promotional activities in the sub-region to act as a more powerful force, stressing the common advantages of the sub-region and working in a more co-ordinated and co-operative way to maximise impact rather than each area acting in competition.

Key measures will include:

- i** targeted marketing and promotion of the Sussex Coast to inward investors
- ii** advice to local businesses, including site opportunities and the availability of premises
- iii** encouraging development of key local business clusters
- iv** identifying potential growth sectors to nurture and promote more actively, including high technology, media and arts, universities and spin out businesses from them, leisure activities and tourism.

POLICY SCT6: CO-ORDINATION, LEADERSHIP AND PROMOTION OF THE SUB-REGION

Local authorities, regional agencies, government representatives and other key stakeholders should agree a long-term vision and together develop joint, multi-agency plans and frameworks as a focus for delivering economic and social regeneration for the following areas:

- i** Hastings – Bexhill area to develop and extend the work already undertaken in the '5 Point Plan' into the longer term
- ii** Eastbourne – Hailsham area to optimise the area's potential to provide employment space and associated housing in sustainable and strategically accessible locations along the A22 corridor
- iii** Coastal West Sussex from Selsey to Worthing to develop, over a longer term, the co-ordinated approach fostered by the Area Investment Framework and other specific initiatives
- iv** Shoreham – Brighton & Hove – Newhaven to continue to strengthen the economy of Brighton & Hove as a major centre and transport hub and to capitalise on strategic port and airport site opportunities at Newhaven and Shoreham.

Such multi-agency plans should focus on the provision of an appropriate balance of additional employment space, affordable housing and the necessary infrastructure, facilities and services required to support development, investigation of business clusters, skills development and promotion of the sub-region as a location 'open for business'.

Broad Amount and Distribution of Housing Development

3.11 Section 2 of this strategy has suggested a number of options for levels of development and a broad strategy for the spatial location of additional development. This broad distribution is strongly influenced by the extent of constraints and development already in the planning

system. A strategic level review of potential for housing delivery has concluded that:

- i The central part of the sub-region from Worthing to Seaford is highly constrained and virtually no further scope for greenfield development exists that would not encroach into the Sussex Downs AONB.
- ii In the eastern part of the sub-region from Eastbourne to Rye, the only strategic scope for additional greenfield development is at Bexhill and at Eastbourne/Hailsham. Here some compromise of constraints may be required to achieve an appropriate pattern of development.
- iii In the west of the sub-region, development is already proposed at Chichester and west of the River Arun. Subject to more detailed study, there may be further scope in the area from Chichester to Angmering, however there could be conflict with some constraints.
- iv In all areas significant improvements to infrastructure would be required to deliver additional housing.

- 3.12** New allocations will need to be made as sustainable additions to existing settlements in accordance with regional level policy and include appropriate amounts of land for employment and other uses.

POLICY SCT7: BROAD AMOUNT AND DISTRIBUTION OF FUTURE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

The final version of the sub-regional strategy for the Sussex Coast will include a policy (or policies) setting out the overall level of housing provision, the distribution at district level, phasing and the type of housing that will be provided. There will also need to be further work undertaken to place a sub-regional perspective on the issue of affordable housing. In the meantime, the principal authorities' preferred overall level of housing provision (Option C) is around 60,000 additional homes over the 20 years 2006 to 2026.

The Regional Assembly is also seeking views on option B tested by the sub-regional group which would give a total provision between 2006 and 2026 of 72,000 dwellings.

The sub-regional group's preferred spatial distribution is based around a focus on the existing coastal towns. Where additional development is needed it is expected that new land allocations would be made as sustainable extensions to settlements in the following areas: Bexhill, Eastbourne/Hailsham, Brighton & Hove, and Chichester to Angmering.

Infrastructure

- 3.13** It is important that the infrastructure required to support development proposals is identified sufficiently early in the planning process so that its provision can be phased in relation to the development it will serve and that it is delivered at the same time as that development. There are known strategic infrastructure constraints and issues in the sub-region, for instance the lead time required for developing new reservoir capacity to provide adequate water supply to the eastern part of the sub-region may challenge the sustainable pace of development in that sector. Furthermore, there are issues related to the discharge of treated waste-water and run off into watercourses feeding wetland SSSIs that require further exploration. The Highways Agency has indicated that there are constraints on the capacity of the trunk road network that would limit development potential but the scale of such limits has yet to be determined. The key items of strategic infrastructure that at this stage in the process are considered to be needed to deliver the strategy will need further investigation during the refinement of the strategy for the sub-region.

POLICY SCT8: INFRASTRUCTURE

The planning authorities will ensure that the infrastructure needed to support development in the sub-region is identified during the refinement of the strategy for the sub-region. As part of this work the issues of phasing of development in relationship to the provision of infrastructure will be addressed. Detailed proposals for the timely implementation of the infrastructure required to support further growth will be developed during the refinement of the strategy for the sub-region.

4 Implementation and Delivery

4.1 The success of the sub-regional strategy in delivering an economic renaissance for the Sussex Coast will ultimately depend upon the commitment of key national, regional and local agencies to its implementation. The strategic policies and proposals presented here need to be translated into more detailed policies and action plans through local development frameworks, local transport plans, community strategies, local economic strategies, area-based master plans and, crucially, investment programmes. The table below provides an indication of the range of mechanisms that will need to be brought to bear in delivering this over-arching sub-regional strategy, alongside identifying which agencies need to take primary responsibility for delivering (or securing the delivery of) particular aspects of policy and those that will have supporting roles.

IMPLEMENTATION AND DELIVERY

Policy	Delivery Mechanisms	Lead Roles	Support Roles
SCT1 – Core strategy		See specific policies below	
SCT2 – Enabling Economic Regeneration	Selective assistance, funding and investment priority Local Development Documents Planning Decisions	Central Govt. Highways Agency Strategic Rail Authority SEEDA Local authorities	Highway authorities Econ. partnerships Local strategic partnerships
SCT3 – Management of Existing Employment Sites and Premises	Local Development Documents	City, borough and district councils	County councils Econ. partnerships
SCT4 – Priority in New Land Allocations	Local Development Documents	City, borough and district councils	County Councils SEEDA Econ. Partnerships
SCT5 – Education and Skills	Education and training provision	Sussex Learning and Skills Council Local authorities	Universities FE Colleges Education authorities Econ. partnerships
SCT6 – Co-ordination, Leadership and Promotion	Local Development Frameworks AIFs Local Strategic Partnership Documents	City, borough and district councils Econ Partnerships Education & Skills Sector County Councils Local Strategic Partnerships	SEEDA Regional Assembly

IMPLEMENTATION AND DELIVERY – CONTINUED

Policy	Delivery Mechanisms	Lead Roles	Support Roles
SCT7 – Broad Amount and Distribution of Future Housing Development	Local Development Documents	City, borough and district councils	County councils SEEDA Econ. partnerships Sussex Enterprise Regional Assembly Regional Housing Board
SCT8 – Infrastructure	Local Development Documents Planning decisions Direct provision Development contributions	City, borough and district councils Infrastructure providers Developers	Central Government Regional Assembly SEEDA

5 Monitoring Performance

5.1 It will be important to monitor the implementation of the strategy and changes in the real world that it is trying to affect. An annual monitoring report will therefore be produced by the principal authorities to both highlight key actions being taken to deliver the strategy and to evaluate any associated impacts. Key measures will include:

- the extent of job creation relative to population, household and workforce growth and the implications of this for levels and patterns of commuting (ie the changing people/homes/jobs ‘balance’)
- comparative economic indicators (such as gross valued added, average wages, unemployment levels etc.) that will help assess whether the strategy is having any success in reducing regional disparities and closing the substantial economic performance gap
- the delivery of key infrastructure and the extent to which this may be facilitating the implementation of key employment sites and other strategic allocations for economic and/or housing development
- actual levels of development and outstanding commitments to the development of land for both employment and housing, together with a review of the extent to which employment sites are readily available
- the affordability of private housing relative to local earnings/income, the provision of social housing and other potential indicators of housing need/stress.

6 Commentary

6.1 In addition to the option for the level of future housing provision related to RPG9 preferred by the sub-regional group (Option C), it is considered that as part of the consultation views should also be sought on Option B, which is around RPG9+20%. This would reflect more closely the regional spatial options considered in section C of this consultation document related to the continuation of existing policies.

6.2 The higher level of growth would continue to challenge the sub-region, but allows a period of economic renaissance to be planned for and developed, alongside addressing issues of affordability and infrastructure provision, in an attempt to reverse past economic trends in the sub-region as a whole, and enable the recent successes of parts of the sub-region to be consolidated and extended, particularly at Brighton and Hastings.

6.3 In view of the decision to consult on a regional level of housing growth below the current planned rate of RPG9 taken by the Regional Assembly after the completion of the draft sub-regional strategies, the sub-regional strategy steering group may wish to test and seek views on a rate of housing development in the sub-region below RPG9.

6.4 Further work is needed in relation to affordable housing, the provision of infrastructure and the development of the spatial options.

East Kent and Ashford Sub-region

I East Kent and Ashford

- 1.1** East Kent and Ashford comprises the districts of Thanet, Dover, Folkestone, and parts of Swale and Ashford. The area encompasses the Growth Area of Ashford, identified in the ODPM's Sustainable Communities Plan, the coastal arc of nine coastal towns from Whitstable to Hythe which have experienced the cumulative impact of the decline of traditional industries, and the former Kent coalfield. The sub-region plays a nationally significant role as a key gateway to mainland Europe, but is relatively remote from London and the remainder of the region. The introduction of new high-speed domestic rail services will be a key factor in supporting the growth of Ashford and stimulating the regeneration of the coastal towns.

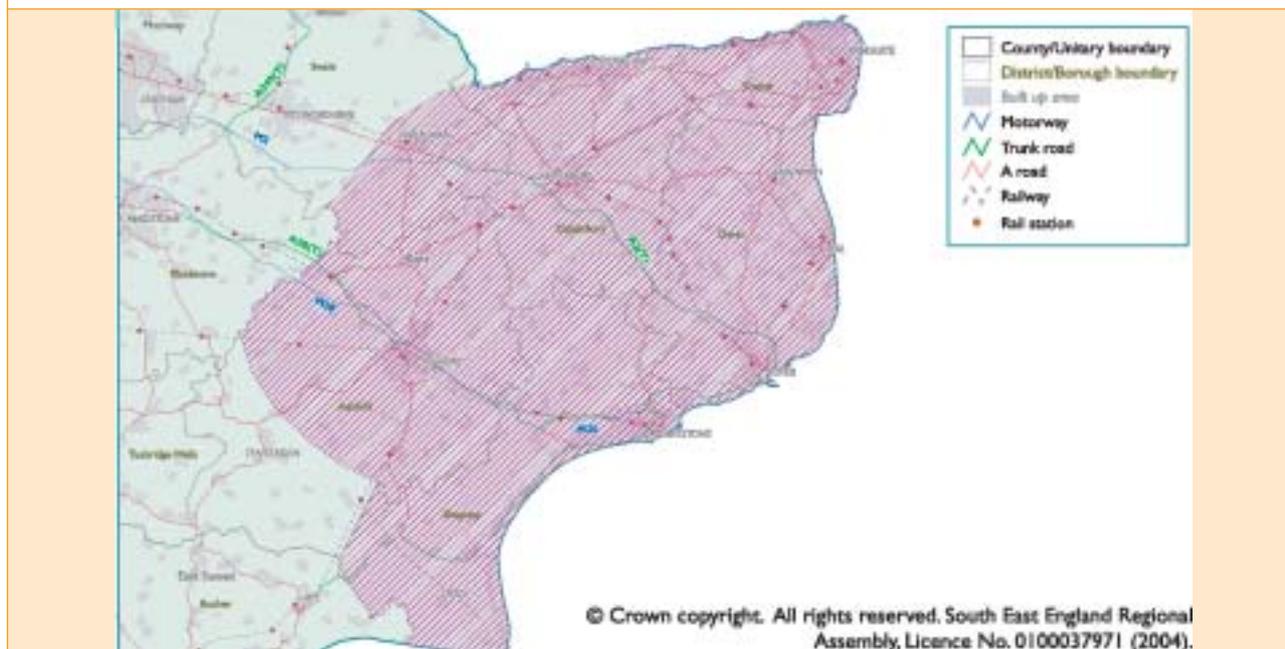
- 1.2** Key issues in developing a strategy for this sub-region have been the need to develop a mutually beneficial relationship between Ashford and the coastal towns, within a balanced strategy for the sub-region as a whole, and to determine an appropriate scale of development in a sub-region which includes some of the least economically buoyant areas of the region. This must be balanced against the need to manage and enhance an outstanding coastal landscape.

2 Spatial Options and Levels of Development

- 2.1** The Secretary of State has approved a spatial strategy for the Ashford Growth Area as an alteration to RPG9. This specifies the level of growth to 2016 and

MAP E3

East Kent and Ashford Sub-region



has been taken as a given for this sub-region. The policies relating to Ashford that have been published are set out in full in an Annex to this strategy. If there were to be delay in delivering new housing at Ashford this should not place pressure on other areas. Neither should housing provision at Ashford run ahead of the local economy for a prolonged period. Nor should employment growth take place at the expense of the regeneration areas.

- 2.2** Within the context provided by strategy set out for the Ashford Growth Area, two levels of development for the sub-region have been tested (both of which allow for the dwellings already identified for the Ashford Growth Area):
- Option 1 is based on the dwelling provision in the Kent and Medway Structure Plan extended through to 2026
 - Option 2 is based on a total approximately 25% higher than Option 1.

Growth Option 1

- 2.3** This option would require provision to be made for a total of 56,600 dwellings in the period 2001-2026. New dwellings would be concentrated in the Ashford Growth Area. The choice is between significant development in Shepway and Canterbury or to concentrate development at Dover and Thanet. Both would require greenfield land unless MOD land or major urban sites in Dover are released.

2001-06	10,600
2006-11	11,800
2011-16	11,800
2016-21	10,800
2021-26	11,600
Total	56,600

There would be concentrations of new employment of regional significance at Ashford, Thanet, Dover and Sandwich/Richborough that would be sufficient to support the level of housing provision.

Growth Option 2

- 2.4** This option would require provision to be made for a total of 71,900 dwellings in the period 2001-2026. New dwellings would be concentrated in the Ashford Growth Area. The choices for meeting Option 2 are either a major increase in Dover and Thanet or more distributed growth, including at Folkestone, Hythe and Canterbury.
- 2.5** If the environmental, transport and other constraints at Folkestone, Hythe and Canterbury are not to be breached by major development, a much larger quantity and share of long term development would have to be located at Thanet and Dover. The implications for transport and other infrastructure, for countryside constraints and for the ability of the local economy to support growth would need to be resolved before Option 2 could proceed. These areas are striving to achieve regeneration of under-performing local economies which would be unable to support major additional growth, and result in housing led growth at Dover and Thanet. The phasing of new housing development would be as follows:

2001-06	12,000
2006-11	14,800
2011-16	15,500
2016-21	15,100
2021-26	14,500
Total	71,900

- 2.6** The distribution of regionally significant employment sites would be similar to that in Option 1 although further evaluation would be required in order to determine whether a higher level of provision would be required in order to support the level of housing.

- 2.7** The Members Steering Group felt Option 2 to be unrealistic and hence Option 1 is the group's preferred scale of growth.



3 Sub-regional Policies

The Core Strategy

- 3.1** The ‘qualities that can foster success’ in East Kent and Ashford include the environment, heritage and quality of life. They will be protected and enhanced. The opportunities for increased international linkages and the economic strengths of the sub-regions should be exploited, provided they do not cause unacceptable harm to the environment.
- 3.2** The Ashford Growth Area is a fundamental element of the strategy. However, the Growth Area should not cause public or private investment to be diverted from the coastal areas that are in need of regeneration. Most of the towns in East Kent are small or medium sized. None offers a wide choice of employment types or great scale, but each has its own strength and specialism. The concept for the future is one of a sub-region with many centres, each with mutually reinforcing roles. The growth of Ashford should bring benefits for the coast and vice versa. The scale of development and investment in the coastal areas will be determined by the circumstances and opportunities in each area. The economic potential of Canterbury City should be realised for the benefit of the sub-region as a whole, through development of an appropriate scale and character.

POLICY EKAI: CORE STRATEGY

In order to achieve a greater emphasis on new employment and development in the east of the region relative to the west, the varied economic functions of the sub-region will be fostered and provision made for growth of new economic activity.

The unique heritage and environment will be protected and promoted for its own sake, and to foster the economic success of the sub-region.

A Growth Area for housing and employment will be developed at Ashford.

Throughout the sub-region economic success will be required to support the housing quantities proposed, but particularly at Deal, Dover, Faversham, Folkestone and Hythe, Herne Bay and Whitstable and Thanet.

The sub-region should build on the distinct economic roles of each area:

- **Ashford, with high-speed rail links to European capitals, should develop as an office and business node, providing market growth for the sub-region as a whole, and opportunity for large investments that need an expanding workforce.**
- **The coastal towns are of major strategic importance for international gateways, research and manufacturing. These functions should be developed and the economy of each town diversified and enlarged.**

- **Canterbury has a higher education cluster and international historic importance. It should develop links between university research and business and continue as a commercial and cultural centre.**

The relationship between these areas should be strengthened to allow each area and its functions to more readily benefit the whole of the sub-region.

POLICY EKA2: LOCATION, SCALE AND TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT

The final version of the sub-regional strategy will include a policy (or policies) setting out the overall level of housing provision, the distribution at district level, phasing and the type of housing (including affordable housing) that will be provided.

In the meantime, the sub-regional strategy members group preferred overall level of housing provision is for some 56,600 additional homes between 2001 and 2026 (46,000 dwellings 2006 to 2026 – Option 1 as discussed in Section 2 of this strategy). New dwellings would be concentrated in the Ashford Growth Area together with other significant developments in Shepway and Canterbury or at Dover and Thanet.

The Regional Assembly is also seeking views on Option 2 which would require provision of up to 71,900 dwellings 2001 to 2026 (59,900 dwellings 2006 to 2026).

Urban Renaissance of the Coastal Towns

- 3.3** Urban renaissance is ultimately about the quality of life for all who live in the coastal towns. This means that deprivation and ‘exclusion’ must be tackled. Improved education, skills and housing are essential to the renaissance, which will build on the particular potential of each area.

- 3.4** All the coastal areas require greater economic diversity and better access to London and beyond. Thanet is a major urban area that requires a much larger economic base. Dover, Folkestone and Hythe are major urban areas that require stronger business and community services. CTRL domestic services, and investment in the infrastructure through and beyond Kent, are vital to achieving this.

- 3.5** The smaller historic towns at the coast of Deal, Faversham, Herne Bay and Whitstable have strong urban character. They are attractive locations that need more local employment, but they will not achieve this unless public transport links and local services are maintained and improved.

POLICY EKA3: URBAN RENAISSANCE OF THE COASTAL TOWNS

New economic impetus will be encouraged throughout the coastal towns including the following:

- **The economy of Thanet will be developed and diversified through greater independence for services, a regional role for Kent International Airport (Manston), expansion of Port Ramsgate as Kent’s second cross Channel port and continued inward investment in manufacturing and transport, notably aviation and marine engineering.**
- **Kent International Airport will be a catalyst for economic development in Thanet and the sub-region and its growth as a regional airport with up to six million passengers per annum (mppa) is supported.**
- **The Port of Dover and Eurotunnel provide alternative transport links to the Continent and have potential to generate freight handling and tourism in the sub-region and Kent.**
- **At Sandwich, Pfizer provides large-scale pharmaceutical manufacturing and research and will be encouraged to continue its expansion.**



- **The regeneration of former collieries has attracted manufacturing and food processing and their transformation will be completed.**
- **The smaller towns of Deal, Faversham and Herne Bay and Whitstable should develop stronger local service functions and mixed employment uses of a suitable scale and character.**
- **Decommissioning of nuclear power plant at Dungeness will require new measures to increase local employment, and the potential of Lydd airport is supported for smaller scale operation (2 mmpa).**

The Gateway Role of the Sub-region

- 3.6** The Kent ports and transport routes are of vital international importance and a choice of modes and adequate capacity must be maintained on the cross Channel routes. The flow of international traffic through Kent should be tapped for its tourist potential and to 'add value' to freight.
- 3.7** The key issue for Dover is the need to ensure that landside infrastructure supports further growth in port activity. The reintroduction of a rail link and rail-freight operation in the Western Docks, together with securing access to CTRL domestic services, are aspirations that need to be pursued. There will also be a need for inland facilities within East Kent to provide more port-related value-added services.
- 3.8** Major growth is envisaged at Manston Airport, with potentially significant economic benefits for the sub-region. Environmental impacts will need to be

addressed including noise and air quality. Large land reserves are available within and adjacent to the airport for ancillary uses and related activity. Considerable investment will be required in surface access if the envisaged level of growth is to be realised.

POLICY EKA4: THE GATEWAY ROLE

A choice of modes and adequate capacity will be maintained on the cross Channel routes:

- **Expansion of the Port of Dover will be supported to enable growth of freight and passenger traffic. Any such development outside the existing harbour will be subject to the reinstatement of the rail link to the Western Docks to enable a significant proportion of freight to reach the port by rail.**
- **Improvements to the capacity of the existing Channel Tunnel and to the loading gauge and capacity of the Channel Tunnel rail routes will be supported.**

In the event of a second fixed cross Channel link being proposed it will be considered on the basis of the economic, transport, social and environmental impacts. Such a proposal should be designed to increase the share of traffic carried by rail.

Integrated coastal management

- 3.9** The coastal zone is exceptional for the variety of both its landscape and the potential pressures from industrial, transport and leisure activity. It has strong landscape and environmental elements which taken together need co-ordinated management and promotion. The strategy proposes a pilot project that will seek to facilitate the required co-ordination and commitment between local authorities and other organisations.

POLICY EKA5: INTEGRATED COASTAL MANAGEMENT

The development, management and use of the coastal zone will be co-ordinated through a joint policy framework. This will include protection of the most valuable habitats and environments, protection of aquifers, management of public access and tourism potential and guidelines for development. This will be within the context of flood protection and coastal defence measures contained in Catchment Management Plans, Shoreline Management Plans and Coastal Defence Strategies.

Locational criteria for sub-regionally significant development

- 3.10** Locations served by CTRL domestic services will have increased attraction for commercial and residential development, but particularly at Ashford. The sub-region also has a number of very important economic assets that have implications beyond their immediate sites for linkages with other businesses and institutions and for labour and service catchments. These are the economic engine of the sub-region and must be recognised in planning for the future pattern of development.

POLICY EKA6: LOCATIONAL CRITERIA FOR SUB-REGIONALLY SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT

The criteria for the location of major development are:

- **to exploit the potential for housing and business at locations served by the CTRL domestic services, especially Ashford**
- **to support the major economic assets of the Port of Dover, Kent International Airport, the pharmaceutical industry at Sandwich/Richborough and the Universities at Canterbury.**

Strategic infrastructure

- 3.11** Investment in transport to improve access to the sub-region and enable the development of major sites is given a high priority. This includes a full CTRL domestic service and new public transport and highway networks at Ashford to support the Growth Area. Dualling the A2 from Lydden to Dover will allow management of international traffic, reducing congestion within the town, and support allocated sites to the north of the town. Improvements to the A20 at Townwall St. will reduce congestion and encourage the development of town centre and waterside sites within Dover. Improvement of the A2 junctions at Canterbury will assist the economic contribution of the city to be realised and reduce pressure on this World Heritage site.
- 3.12** Particular importance is attached to the improvement of skills and qualifications to underpin the competitiveness of the economy. Specific projects of sub-regional significance are the future expansion of higher education at Canterbury, the Thanet campus, a new arts campus at Folkestone, the Ashford Learning Campus and the expansion of Further Education Colleges planned by the Learning and Skills Council. New academies will replace less successful secondary schools in Thanet and Folkestone.

- 3.13** The ability to transfer water across Kent means that water supply must be looked at in a wider context than East Kent and Ashford alone. The water companies and the Environment Agency accept that the capacity of the Bewl reservoir must be increased and that new water supplies will be needed, such as the suggested reservoir at Broad Oak near Canterbury. It is urgent that any uncertainty about water supply and treatment solutions is resolved, that a common understanding of the population implications of development is reached and that commitment is made for the necessary investment.
- 3.14** The general district hospitals at Ashford, Canterbury and Thanet will not be able to provide all specialised services and will individually serve a wider catchment for some services. Consequently, in terms of access to health services there will be reducing importance in concentrating new development in the areas with large hospitals.
- 3.15** The local housing authorities and other providers of affordable housing have a strong wish to increase the supply of both Social Registered Landlord housing to meet existing need and other forms of tenure such as shared equity to assist key workers and first time buyers. In areas where a large increase in total residential development is proposed, notably at the Ashford Growth Area, the supply of affordable housing could exceed local need during the Plan period. Consequently the local housing authorities recognise that the percentage of new housing that should be affordable will vary over time and by area, in the light of changes in the housing market and need. A proportion at or close to 30% would be appropriate in this sub-region for a period of at least five years.

POLICY EKA7: INFRASTRUCTURE

The planning authorities will ensure that the infrastructure needed to support development in the sub-region is identified during the refinement of the strategy for the sub-region. As part of this work the issues of phasing of development in relationship to the provision of infrastructure will be addressed. Detailed proposals for the timely implementation of the infrastructure required to support further growth will be developed during the refinement of the strategy for the sub-region.

4 Implementation and Delivery

- 4.1** Delivery mechanisms will need to be strengthened and developed to overcome weak market demand and limited capacity in infrastructure and services. This applies particularly to Option 2 which would require new projects for employment, housing, utilities and transport.
- 4.2** A sub-regional and regional perspective is needed to plan for matters such as cross Channel transport and inland infrastructure. The complementary economic roles of the centres in the sub-region also call for co-operation between the Local Strategic Partnerships and a co-ordinated approach to planning.
- 4.3** The concept behind the East Kent Spatial Development Company has potential as a means of overcoming East Kent's relative inaccessibility, low utilities thresholds and the perception of low return by developers. The principle could be applied in other contexts.

IMPLEMENTATION AND DELIVERY

Policy	Delivery Mechanisms	Lead Roles	Support Roles
EKA1 – Core strategy	Development of strategy Local Development Documents Planning decisions	Central Govt. Regional Assembly SEEDA Local authorities	Highway authorities Econ. partnerships LSPs
EKA2 – Location, Scale & Type of Development	Local Development Documents	City, borough and district councils	County councils Econ. partnerships
EKA3 – Urban Renaissance of the Coastal Towns	Local Development Documents AIFs	City, borough and district councils LSPs	County councils Econ. partnerships
EKA4 – The Gateway Role	Local Development Documents Local Transport Plans AIFs	Local authorities Transport Infrastructure Providers	Regional Assembly SEEDA Central Govt.
EKA5 – Integrated Coastal Management	Pilot Project	Local authorities Environment Agency English Nature	Voluntary Sector Tourism South East
EKA6 – Location of sub-regionally significant development	Local Development Documents	City, borough and district councils Education and Health Authorities	SEEDA Regional Assembly
EKA7 – Infrastructure	Local Transport Plans Local Development Documents Planning decisions Development contributions	City, borough and district councils Infrastructure providers	Central Government Regional Assembly SEEDA

5 Monitoring

5.1 It will be important to monitor the implementation of the strategy and an annual monitoring report will be produced by the county council in the sub-region to highlight the key actions being taken to deliver the strategy and whether specific policies need to be reviewed.

6 Commentary

6.1 The strategy's emphasis on the need to develop 'a creative synergy between development in the Growth Area and the coastal regeneration areas' reflects the brief and the approved Policy Statements for the Ashford Growth Area.

6.2 The option preferred for development (Option 1) does no more than roll forward the Structure Plan, although the scale of growth was quite strongly criticised at the recent Kent Structure Plan Examination in Public. Option 1 is broadly consistent with the regional spatial options described in section C of this draft Plan. However, it is considered that views should also be sought on a higher level of development (up to the level tested by the sub-regional strategy group as Option 2) to positively support economic growth and regeneration in the sub-region.

Annex – Policies

Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9), Chapter 12 – Ashford Growth Area

POLICY 1: SCALE OF GROWTH

The Ashford Growth Area should seek to deliver the following levels of housing provision and jobs over the period 2001-2016:

	2001-2011	2011-2026
Housing – of which up to 30% should be affordable	7,900	5,200
Jobs	5,900	4,400

To achieve the longer-term potential growth in the area which, subject to testing through the RPG process, is envisaged in the Communities Plan, active pre-planning is necessary, to achieve capacity increases in strategic infrastructure, particularly in respect of water supply, waste water treatment, health and education facilities and sustainable transport.

POLICY 2: SPATIAL FRAMEWORK

New development in the growth area will be delivered through urban intensification and the development of new sustainable urban extensions integrated with the provision of new and enhanced bus-based public transport and interchanges. Broad areas of search for new development are identified in Map 2.1.

At present there is sufficient planned employment land supply to meet forecast demand to 2016. Both quantitative and qualitative aspects of supply and demand for employment land should be kept under review in the Local Development Framework process, in order to encourage job growth to move forward in tandem with housing development.

To support sustainable growth, the provision of infrastructure should take place in parallel with development. Key transport improvements that are likely to be required by 2016 (subject to further detailed appraisal and statutory procedures) are:

- Improvements of Junction 10 of M20 and additional Junction 10a
- Frequent domestic services on the new CTRL, with links to East Kent
- Improvements to the Ashford-Hastings railway line
- A south Ashford rail station
- Co-ordinated bus route planning with new and existing development
- A new central bus interchange
- Park and ride facilities
- Facilities and measures to support cycling and walking and after 2016
- A south Ashford orbital road linking the A28 to the A2070.

Further work is required to examine the linkages between infrastructure provision and development and these linkages need to be investigated to inform the identification of priorities and the timing and sequencing of growth.

POLICY 3: SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

The growth envisaged at Ashford should deliver an enhanced quality of life following the principles of sustainable development. This will necessitate the phased and co-ordinated provision of quality community, economic, environmental and social infrastructure. This shall include the following:

- **Affordable housing** – significant increase in provision, mix and choice
- **Urban renaissance** – major improvements to the town centre and the public realm, linked to substantial additional provision of well-managed public open spaces
- **Employment** – creation of a range of suitable business space to help promote economic growth
- **Water-related** – the provision of reinforcements to water supply in parallel with demand management measures, and water treatment capacity
- **Drainage** – the strategic planning of surface water drainage management to minimise flood risk
- **Social** – the timely provision of additional local educational, health and community facilities
- **Resource efficiency** – more efficient use of resources, particularly energy, waste and water
- **Design quality** – a step change in sustainable design, construction and innovation, including use of the SEEDA Sustainability Checklist
- **Urban fringe** – positive management of the area around Ashford for recreation and biodiversity.

POLICY 4: EFFECTIVE DELIVERY

Delivery partners should make a firm commitment to the Delivery Board, the local delivery vehicle, whose structure should be kept under review as growth progresses. The dedicated Delivery Team should be maintained, reporting to the Board.

Delivery partners should investigate private and public sources of funding and work together to find a mechanism to forward fund strategic infrastructure.

Kent Thames Gateway Sub-region

I Kent Thames Gateway

I.1 The Thames Gateway was first recognised as a major planning concept in the 1980s and has maintained its profile since. Recently it was identified as a major growth area through the Government's Sustainable Communities Plan. The Greater London Authority and East and South East England Regional Assemblies have produced an Interregional Planning Statement on future growth and regeneration in the Thames Gateway to 2016. This strategy develops a post 2016 perspective that reconciles the scale of growth with the principles of regeneration and sustainable communities at the heart of the Thames Gateway concept.

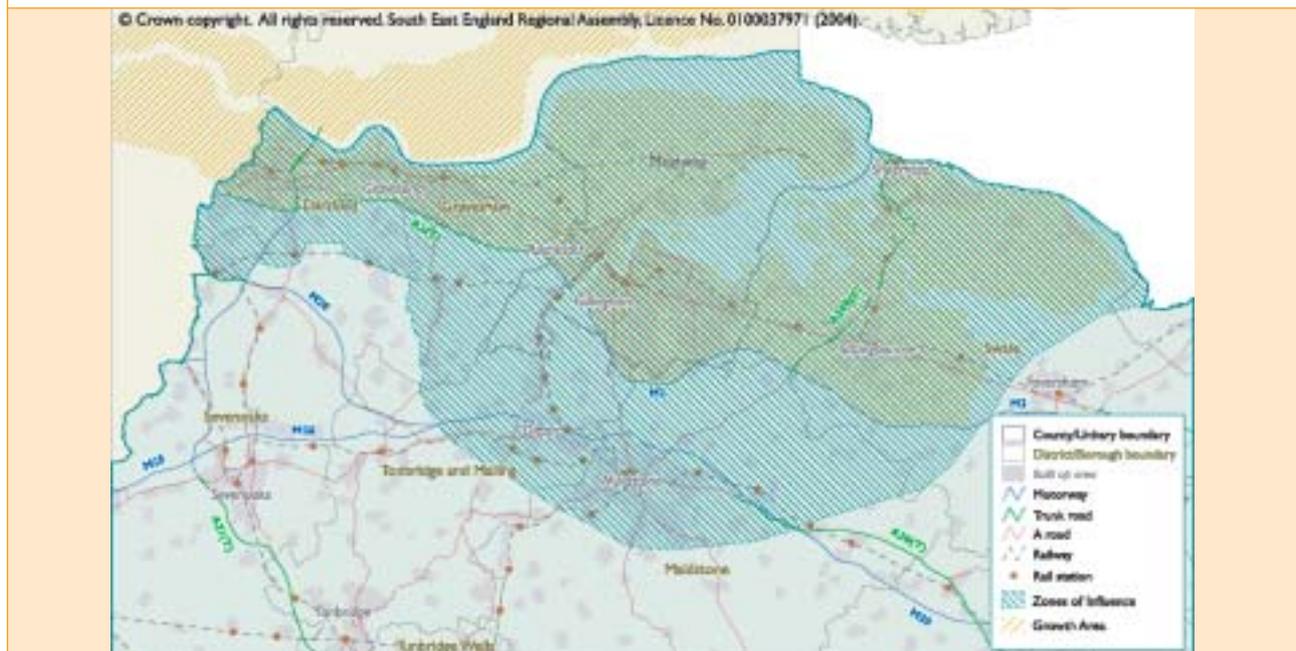
I.2 The Kent Thames Gateway sub-region covers the North Kent part of the growth area and its zone of influence covering the Medway Valley and Maidstone (see map E4). It includes all or part of the following administrative areas: Gravesham, Tonbridge and Malling, Maidstone, Dartford and Swale Borough Councils, Sevenoaks District Council and Medway Council.

I.3 The key issues particularly pertinent to Kent Thames Gateway are¹:

- a flourishing local economy
- effective engagement and participation of local people
- a safe and healthy environment with well designed public and green space
- sufficient size and scale and density to support basic amenities

MAP E4

Kent Thames Gateway Sub-region



FOOTNOTES

¹ Taken from the Sustainable Communities Plan (p.4) definition of a 'sustainable community'

- good public and other transport, both locally and linking to other centres
- a well integrated mix of decent homes
- good quality services including education, training and health
- a 'sense of place'
- the right links with the wider regional, national and international community.

1.4 In the period to 2011 the completion of the CTRL and Ebbsfleet station, cessation of chalk extraction and cement manufacture, improvements to A2, and the first phases of the Fastrack bus network, should allow development to accelerate in Thameside with a peak in the supply of housing on regeneration sites from 2011 to 2021, provided water supply, drainage and other infrastructure are also in place.

1.5 The question raised by the Sustainable Communities Plan is whether the pace of development can be accelerated up to and beyond 2016, and whether this could be achieved using mainly previously developed land. If not, what strategy should be adopted towards development on greenfield land in Medway and Swale, and in the Green Belt at Thameside.

2 Spatial Options and Levels of Development

2.1 The Sustainable Communities Plan progress report on Thames Gateway and the Growth Areas indicated Government commitment for at least 120,000 dwellings by 2016 in the Thames Gateway as a whole, of which about 40,000 would be in addition to development plan targets. To take this forward, the Inter-regional Planning Statement suggests there is site capacity for 40,000 jobs (Statement paragraph 2.4) and 43,000 dwellings in Kent Thames Gateway by 2016. This depends on all necessary infrastructure being in place, plus vigorous promotion and implementation (Statement paragraph

4.3). The dwelling numbers are distributed as follows (Statement paragraph 4.7):

Thameside	20,000
Medway	15,000
Sittingbourne/Sheerness	8,000

2.2 Three options have been tested against the objectives of meeting the economic and social needs of the area to 2026. These are based on the assessment of the maximum capacity of identified sites for new dwellings and jobs summarised in the Inter-regional Planning Statement and the forecasts produced for the Kent and Medway Structure Plan.

2.3 **Option 1** – Accommodating a rate of growth which is a continuation of the current rate in the Interregional Planning Statement (71,700 dwellings and 66,700 jobs 2001-2026). This is based on the capacity of residential sites assessed for the Interregional Planning Statement of 43,000 dwellings by 2016, rolled forward to 2026. A total identified land supply of almost 57,000 dwellings has been identified assuming:

- windfall sites come forward, over 10,000 dwellings planned on greenfield sites
- development options identified for the Interregional Planning Statement are all taken forward.

New land would need to be identified on greenfield sites for nearly 15,000 dwellings.

2.4 **Option 2** – This would mean accommodating a rate of growth post 2016 which is 20% above the growth rate in the Interregional Planning Statement (77,400 dwellings and 72,000 jobs 2001-2026). This is the same basis as Option 1, but with an additional 20% added for the post 2016 period. New land would need to be identified on greenfield sites for just over 20,000 dwellings.

2.5 **Option 3** – To provide an indication of the demographic and workforce implications of options 1 and 2, the forecasts produced for the Kent and Medway Structure Plan have been used to produce Option 3 as a



bench mark. This is based on the capacity of the urban areas as informed by the Interregional Planning Statement and technical work underpinning the Kent and Medway Structure Plan. It seeks to strike a balance between the need to accelerate past rates of development and expected market performance. The employment rate is based on different assumptions about the take up of major employment sites (58,200 dwellings and 54,000-77,000 jobs 2001-2026). New greenfield land for about 1,200 dwellings would be required.

2.6 Spatial Distribution – The Steering Group considered an examination of the feasibility of development at both Medway and Sittingbourne and/or limited further development at Thameside, were least damaging to the Green Belt and congestion. Under Option 3 strategic concentrations of new development would be focused at Thameside, within the Medway urban area and at Sittingbourne. For both Options 1 and 2 the main locations for additional development would be Medway (10,000 to 12,000 dwellings) and Sittingbourne (5,000 to 6,000 dwellings). With Option 2, land for perhaps 2,000 dwellings could be considered at Thameside.

2.7 The Members Steering Group felt Options 1 and 2 to be unrealistic and would change the policy of regeneration in Kent Thames Gateway to one of major greenfield development. It therefore recommended Option 3 as the preferred scale of growth in the sub-region.

3 Sub-regional Policies, Delivery, Implementation and Monitoring

Core Strategy

- 3.1** The core strategy is to maintain the emphasis on regeneration through maximising the use of urban and previously developed sites as a first priority. Large scale development on new green land will be avoided, unless clear long-term advantages become apparent in favour of a planned urban extension or new communities. Development in the Green Belt is ruled out, unless small additions to the urban areas are demonstrated by Local Development Frameworks to have merit. Regeneration should be undertaken in a manner that benefits the existing communities and integrates new development with them. The strategy recognises the wider regional role of the sub-region for employment, housing and transport, but gives priority to securing economic development and to reducing reliance on long distance commuting. The core strategy is for sustainable regeneration and growth by:
- Providing development that is necessary to meet the demographic, social and employment needs of the existing communities of Kent Thames Gateway and its role as a Growth Area
 - Transforming the scale and character of the economy, raising its growth rate above that of the region as a whole and strengthening international competitiveness

- Accommodating major new communities, and the community infrastructure required by the sub-region
- Focusing development at the urban areas and protecting and enhancing the heritage and natural environment
- Creating a high quality environment in the Growth Area as a whole in order to foster the success of the area
- Resolving hitherto intractable problems of access and congestion, and the capacity of public transport.

POLICY KTGI: CORE STRATEGY

Local and central government, and all parties concerned with service provision and infrastructure, will co-ordinate their policies and programmes to:

- i** as first priority, make full use of previously developed land for new development, and when this is no longer possible use new land in a manner which improves the form, functioning and environment of existing settlements
- ii** ensure that the benefits of new services and employment are available to existing communities, and that new development is carefully integrated with them
- iii** raise the standards of education and skills in the workforce, and achieve economic development and inward investment at an accelerated pace
- iv** greatly increase the supply of new housing, and affordable housing in particular
- v** set high standards for the design and sustainability of new communities, and for improvement of the existing urban areas, reflecting the riverside and historic character of the area
- vi** create higher density development in the main urban areas, linked by public transport to one another and to London

vii make progress in the transfer of freight from road to rail, by improving the links between international gateways and the regions, including freight routes around London.

Economic Growth and Employment

3.2 Development of major projects has been encouraged by completion of the M25 and further infrastructure developments will provide an additional stimulus to office and residential development. However, the economy is too small to support the workforce living in the sub-region, and a high proportion must travel to London and other centres for employment. The development of new offices has taken place much more gradually than in other parts of the region, and the regeneration of waterside sites in Medway has succeeded only with public sector support. The economy of the Kent Thames Gateway differs from most other sub-regions in the South East in the relatively high proportions 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 provision should continue to be made for their future capacity and viable operation.

POLICY KTG2: ECONOMIC GROWTH AND EMPLOYMENT

Land and opportunities for employment uses will be provided at each urban area on a scale sufficient to provide greater choice for the workforce as a whole, an alternative to long distance commuting, and local jobs to match the growth in housing and labour supply.

The development of the economy in Kent Thames Gateway will be dynamic and widely based, to provide employment for the community as whole. Provision will be made for the expansion of the existing economic functions of the area and for the

introduction of new office, manufacturing and service functions on a large scale, with an emphasis on higher value activity to address current under performance. The roles of the main economic locations will be promoted and developed as follows:

- Ebbsfleet will be developed as a major office centre of more than 20,000 jobs linked directly to central London and other European capitals, drawing its workforce from Thameside and beyond
- Major sites in Thameside with access to M25 will continue to develop a mix of employment uses, including offices, regional distribution and manufacturing
- Medway will further develop the functions of a city centre within Thames Gateway, providing higher education, retail and other services
- 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
- In Sittingbourne the employment and occupation structure will be diversified though expansion of the service and science sectors. In Sheppey, provision has been made for the expansion of the distribution, transport and manufacturing sectors
- Provision will be made for the continued presence and expansion of viable riverside employment uses, especially those using the river for transport.

Kent Thames Gateway – Zone of Influence

- 3.3** A ‘zone of influence’ consisting of Swanley, in Sevenoaks District, the rural areas of Dartford and Gravesham south of the A2, and the urban areas of Maidstone and the Medway Gap, could be affected by growth in Kent Thames Gateway. The characteristics and links to the gateway of the settlements in the zone of influence

are discussed in the background report on Kent Thames Gateway. The main issue that arises is the pressure on transport links between Maidstone & Medway Gap and the Growth Area. Any failure of the Growth Area to achieve its housing growth targets will not be provided for in the zone of influence. However, the need for an effective development strategy for Maidstone is underlined by the changes planned in the neighbouring Growth Areas.

POLICY KTG3: KENT THAMES GATEWAY – ZONE OF INFLUENCE

Development provisions for Swanley, Medway Gap and Maidstone will be determined by the Local Development Frameworks and will not be linked to growth in Kent Thames Gateway. Local Development Frameworks should give priority to:

- Making significant improvements to both the rail and road links between Maidstone & Medway Gap and Kent Thames Gateway
- Maintaining the Green Belt south of Kent Thames Gateway, notably in the rural areas of Dartford, Gravesham, Sevenoaks and Tonbridge and Malling
- Developing a wider economic development strategy for Maidstone
- Developing the hub of Maidstone as a major town centre at which retail, leisure and service uses will be concentrated.

Infrastructure

- 3.4** The efficient functioning of the Kent Thames Gateway depends on reliable east-west road and public transport routes, and the growth already planned depends entirely on their timely improvement. Efficient north-south movement by public transport and by road will be of increasing importance even with the existing level of planned growth.

Regional and international traffic will be affected by congestion on the transport networks serving development in the Growth Area, and there are therefore regional and national reasons to address transport capacity.

3.5 RPG9 proposed a study to consider improved transport links in the Thames Gateway, including an increase in cross-river capacity east of Dartford (the Lower Thames Crossing), and the impact of CTRL. A decision on a Lower Thames Crossing could only be taken following detailed study, which is in hand, and consideration must involve neighbouring areas on both sides of the Thames. The key items of major transport investment that, at this stage in the process, are considered to be needed to deliver the strategy will need further investigation during the refinement of the strategy for the sub-region.

3.6 It is important that the infrastructure required to support development proposals is identified sufficiently early in the planning process so its provision can be phased in relation to the development. The Steering Group identified the following as of particular significance for the sub-region:

- The creation of a skilled and qualified workforce able to support a newly developed economic base and to exploit new opportunities in technology and the knowledge economy.
- The current necessity to transfer water across Kent and from neighbouring areas means that new water supplies will be needed to accommodate already planned growth. It is likely that water supply and treatment can respond to increased growth but there will be a need for accelerated and increased investment.
- The scales of growth envisaged may mean that the capacity for acute health services has to be increased. The implications of full teaching status for existing acute hospitals would need careful appraisal.

3.7 A large increase in residential development is proposed, and the supply of affordable housing could exceed strictly local need during the Plan period. Consequently the local housing authorities recognise that the percentage of all new housing that should be affordable will vary over time and by area, in the light of changes in the housing market and need. A proportion at or close to 30% would be appropriate in this sub-region for a period of at least five years.

POLICY KTG4: INFRASTRUCTURE

The planning authorities will ensure that the infrastructure needs to support development in the sub-region are identified during the refinement of the strategy for the sub-region. As part of this work the issues of phasing of development in relationship to the provision of transport infrastructure will be addressed. Detailed proposals for the timely implementation of the infrastructure required to support further growth will be developed during the refinement of the strategy for the sub-region.

Flood Risk

3.8 Many of the major development sites in Kent Thames Gateway are in whole or in part within the coastal and fluvial flood zones defined by the Environment Agency. The Environment Agency is developing a long term plan for flood risk management throughout the Thames Estuary. *Thames Strategy 2100* will take six years to complete and renewal and possible enhancement of flood defences in the Thames Gateway will be implemented between 2015 and 2035. The 'Green Grid' and green space outside the urban areas, may provide opportunities for flood storage as part of the *Thames Strategy 2100* solutions.



POLICY KTG5: FLOOD RISK

In order to accommodate the growth levels proposed in this strategy it will be necessary to implement co-ordinated measures for flood protection and surface water drainage in the Thames, Medway and Swale. Strategic Flood Risk Assessments will be undertaken for each urban area and its major development sites, and reviewed in the light of the Environment Agency's long term plans for flood risk management.

Development will be planned to avoid the risk of flooding and will not be permitted if it would:

- be subject to an unacceptable risk of flooding or increase the risk elsewhere
- prejudice the capacity or integrity of flood plains or flood protection measures.

Local Development Documents will include policies to:

- adopt a risk based approach to guiding categories of development away from flood risk areas
- ensure that development proposals are accompanied by flood risk assessments.

Locational criteria for sub-regionally significant development

- 3.9** All major development should be accessible by a choice of transport from a wide catchment, and employment and housing should be of a scale and location that minimises the necessity for long distance commuting. The relative importance of existing employment centres will change with the development of new sites, but access to town centres will remain

important. Locations served by domestic services on the Channel Tunnel Rail Link should have increased attraction for commercial and residential development, but particularly at Ebbsfleet where major development is planned to take advantage of a frequent and fast service from an accessible station with a connection to international services. However, the frequency of the services and the stations to be served are undecided, and depend on the outcome of the *Kent Integrated Franchise*.

POLICY KTG6: LOCATIONAL CRITERIA FOR SUB-REGIONALLY SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT

The criteria for the location of major development are:

- to achieve a broad balance between housing and jobs at each urban area
- to exploit the potential for housing and business at locations served by the CTRL domestic services, especially Ebbsfleet and Chatham
- to locate housing and employment at the urban areas and where they are accessible by a choice of transport
- to locate community services (for example higher education and health) at locations accessible to their catchment by a choice of transport
- to take account of access to health and education services in the location of residential development
- to develop previously developed land before greenfield sites, except when there are clear planning advantages from the development of an urban extension or new community needed to maintain housing supply.

The Role of the Retail Centres

3.10 The role of retail centres is particularly important in this sub-region, which includes the shopping centre at Bluewater which serves a regional catchment. National planning guidance presumes against the expansion of regional centres unless provided for in regional plans. However, due to the large-scale regeneration and residential development around Bluewater, some development at the centre will be appropriate. Bluewater should remain competitive as a higher order retail centre for comparison goods and for this purpose limited additional retail floorspace should be accepted. It will not be acceptable for Bluewater to evolve as a multi-purpose centre for convenience and everyday shopping and services, which is the role of the existing town centres. At Ebbsfleet, ancillary retail and service space will be provided to support its role as a transport hub, identified in the Regional Transport Strategy.

POLICY KTG7: THE ROLE OF THE RETAIL CENTRES

A network of retail and service centres will be developed in which:

- **Limited additional floorspace at Bluewater should be permitted, if it maintains the specialist regional role of the centre for comparison goods shopping**
- **Dartford, Gravesend, Sittingbourne and, on a larger scale, the hubs of Chatham and Maidstone, will be further developed as the major town centres at which new mixed retail, leisure and service uses will be concentrated**
- **A new centre of appropriate scale will be provided at the Ebbsfleet transport hub**
- **Local Development Frameworks will make provision for local and district facilities in conjunction with the development of major new neighbourhoods.**

Green Initiatives

3.11 Greening the Gateway (January 2004) calls for a network of green spaces to link urban and rural areas. A major environmental initiative for the estuary and countryside in Kent Thames Gateway could overcome the current lack of an overall strategy. The concept is for well-designed and integrated green space that improves environmental quality and provides opportunities for recreation and sport. It would include rehabilitation of landscapes and habitats, and enhance the setting of the urban areas, increasing their attraction to inward investment and visitors. It would be an integrated environmental framework that protects the best, upgrades the worst and positively manages the connecting landscapes. In addition it will be important to ensure that the highest standards of design and use of new technological solutions are employed to make real the objective of sustainable development.

POLICY KTG8: GREEN INITIATIVES

The development, management and use of the countryside within the Growth Area will be co-ordinated through a joint strategic framework to be drawn up and implemented by the responsible parties. This will make provision for recreation, public access, and tourism potential. It will include protection and creation of the most valuable habitats, environments and aquifers. It should have regard to and influence flood protection and coastal defence measures contained in Catchment Management Plans, Shoreline Management Plans and Coastal Defence Strategies.

The policy framework should complement the areas for growth, and define the important points of separation between settlements and the urban edges to be actively managed. It would identify the connections between the urban 'green grid' and the rural area.

Built development will be of the highest standards of design, and adopt best practice in the use of sustainable techniques. This will be achieved through design and sustainability standards adopted for the sub-region as a whole and actively championed by regional and national agencies, as well as local planning authorities.

a continuation of the current rate in the Interregional Planning Statement (71,700 dwellings 2001 to 2026, 58,100 between 2006 and 2026) and accommodating a rate of growth which is 20% above the growth rate in the Interregional Planning Statement post 2016 (77,400 dwellings 2001 to 2026, 63,800 between 2006 and 2026).

Broad Amount and Distribution of Housing Development

- 3.12** Section 2 of this strategy has suggested a number of options for levels of development, and a broad strategy for the spatial location of additional development.

POLICY KTG9: BROAD AMOUNT AND DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

The final version of the sub-regional strategy for Kent Thames Gateway will include a policy (or policies) setting out the overall level of housing provision, the distribution at district level, phasing and the type of housing that will be provided. There will also need to be further work undertaken to place a sub-regional perspective on the issue of affordable housing.

In the meantime, the principal authorities' preferred overall level of housing provision (as discussed in section 2 of this strategy) is around 58,000 additional homes 2001 to 2026 (47,200 between 2016 and 2026). The preferred spatial distribution is for strategic concentrations of new dwellings at Thameside, notably at the strategic sites of Eastern Quarry, North Dartford, Ebbsfleet and the Thames riverside, within the Medway urban area at riverside sites, and to the north at Chattenden and within Swale District at Sittingbourne/Sheppey.

The Regional Assembly is also seeking views on higher levels of housing development of

4 Implementation and Delivery

- 4.1** If the strategy is to be achieved, the mechanisms needed to deliver the strategy and its proposals will need to be strengthened and developed to overcome weak market demand in some locations and the lack of capacity in infrastructure and services. This would apply particularly to Options 2 and 3, both of which would require new projects for employment, housing, utilities and transport. A new commitment and focus on regeneration should take place, for which government funding and support will be necessary. The delivery partners should maintain a firm commitment to the existing, recently established, delivery mechanisms.
- 4.2** A sub-regional and regional perspective is needed to plan for matters such as transport, water supply and integrated countryside and coastal management. Delivery partners should investigate private and public sources of funding, and work together and with Government to find mechanisms to forward fund infrastructure. An implementation mechanism is required whereby public funds can be used to guarantee future income from development so that private developers are able to make contributions to infrastructure with confidence. A solution to these matters is needed if the strategy is to be implemented.

POLICY KTGI0: IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISMS

The quantities in the strategy will be monitored and are subject to periodic review of the achievement of a balance between housing and employment, and the provision of infrastructure and services to support development. The strategy will be reviewed if serious imbalance or shortfall occurs.

A long term commitment will be given to the recently established delivery units within Thames Gateway, operating under the guidance of the Thames Gateway Delivery Unit. In turn these units will engage local authorities, government agencies such as CABE and English Partnerships in co-ordinating delivery and pioneering best practice in sustainable development and management of the development process.

4.3 The strategic policies and proposals presented here need to be translated into more detailed policies and action plans through local development frameworks, local transport plans, community strategies, local economic strategies, area-based masterplans and, crucially, investment programmes. The table below provides an indication of the range of mechanisms that will need to be brought to bear in delivering this over-arching sub-regional strategy, alongside identifying which agencies need to take primary responsibility for delivering (or securing the delivery of) particular aspects of policy and those that will have supporting roles.

IMPLEMENTATION AND DELIVERY

Policy	Delivery Mechanisms	Lead Roles	Support Roles
KTGI – Core strategy		See specific policies below	
KTG2 – Economic Growth and Employment	Local Development Documents Planning decisions	Local authorities	Local strategic partnerships SEEDA Regional Assembly Kent and Medway Economic Board Private sector Universities
KTG3 – Kent Thames Gateway – Zone of Influence	Local Development Documents Planning decisions	Local authorities Highway authorities	Local strategic partnerships
KTG4 – Infrastructure	AIF Phasing of provision with new development Local Development Documents Local Transport Plan Planning decisions Developer contributions and sectoral funding mechanisms Education and training providers	Local authorities Infrastructure Providers Housing Associations Strategic Health Authority Kent and Medway Learning and Skills Council	Highways Agency Strategic Rail Authority Network Rail Bus companies Central Government Water companies and OFWAT Environment Agency Local strategic partnerships SEEDA Regional Assembly Universities, Further Education Colleges and Schools



IMPLEMENTATION AND DELIVERY – CONTINUED

Policy	Delivery Mechanisms	Lead Roles	Support Roles
KTG5 – Flood Risk	Local Development Documents Planning decisions	Local authorities	Environment Agency
KTG6 – Locational criteria for sub-regionally significant development	Local Development Documents Planning decisions	Local authorities	
KTG7 – The role of the retail centres	Local Development Documents Planning decisions	Local authorities	Town Centre Management Partnerships Private sector
KTG8 – Green Initiatives	Local Development Documents Strategic framework	Local authorities	Central Government Regional Assembly CABE English Partnerships Kent Architecture Centre
KTG9 – Quantities of Housing and Economic Development	Local Development Documents	Local authorities	SEEDA Kent and Medway Economic Board
KTG10 – Implementation mechanisms	AIF	Local authorities Thames Gateway Kent Partnership	Regional Assembly Thames Gateway Delivery Unit

5 Commentary

5.1 The key issues in this sub-region are:

- Whether the pace of development can be accelerate up to and beyond 2016, and whether this could be achieved using mainly previously developed land
- That regeneration should be undertaken in a manner that benefits the existing communities and integrates new development with them
- That there are high infrastructure costs to support major growth and lower market demand than in some other sub-regions.

5.2 Views are now sought on all three options tested by the sub-regional strategy group.

Options 1 and 2 would require provision for 2,900 and 3,190 dwellings per annum respectively. At the regional level the scale of growth in the Inter-regional Planning Statement is used as the basis for the options.

- ### 5.3
- Further evaluation would be needed to identify the preferred location for additional housing provision within Medway, Swale at Sittingbourne and/or within Thameside. Further investigation is also needed on the additional infrastructure and services that will be required to support the higher dwelling provision, notably water supply and treatment and transport.