

URS



Swale Core Strategy Issues and Strategic
Spatial Options Consultation
Sustainability Appraisal

Final Report
December 2010

Prepared for



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1 Introduction

Background

- 1.1.1 Scott Wilson has been commissioned by Swale Borough Council to undertake an independent Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Core Strategy, which is a component of the Borough's emerging Local Development Framework (LDF).
- 1.1.2 The Core Strategy will set out the overarching planning framework for the Borough up to 2031. It will set out the long-term vision for the Borough and identify the broad locations, scale and type of development and supporting infrastructure (such as schools and road improvements) that will take place. It will include policies on issues such as new homes, jobs and the natural environment.
- 1.1.3 Scott Wilson has been involved in previous SA work with the Council, producing the original Scoping Report and the SA of The Sittingbourne Town Centre and Milton Creek Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

1.2 This Report

- 1.2.1 This report documents the findings of the SA of the Spatial Issues and Strategic Options consultation document produced by the Council. The purpose of undertaking this SA exercise is to identify the likely effects of the plan or programme in advance so that adverse effects can be minimised and beneficial effects can be enhanced.
- 1.2.2 Within this report Chapter 2: Methodology provides further details on why SA/SEA is required and how it is undertaken. Chapter 3 provides the background to the development of the Spatial Issues and Strategic Options and the development of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies. Chapters 5 – 19 provide a topic lead discussion of the SA findings and Chapter 20 the conclusions and recommendations.

1.3 How to Comment

- 1.3.1 If you would like to comment on the Sustainability Appraisal Report, or have comments on the Core Strategy itself, please contact:
- 1.3.2 By email: pyo@swale.gov.uk
- 1.3.3 By post:

Pick Your Own
Spatial Planning Policy – Swale Borough Council
Swale House
East Street
Sittingbourne
Kent
ME10 3HT

2 Background

Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

- 2.1.1 Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (PCPA) (2004), all Development Plan Documents (DPDs) produced by local authorities, as part of their LDF must undergo a process of Sustainability Appraisal (SA). The Core Strategy is a DPD and is one of the documents that sits within the LDF, and so is subject to SA.
- 2.1.2 SA involves the identification and evaluation of the DPD's impacts on economic, social and environmental objectives – i.e. its compatibility with the three dimensions of sustainable development. The SA process incorporates the requirements of a European law requiring certain plans and programmes to undergo a formal Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

- 2.1.3 SEA involves the systematic identification and evaluation of the environmental impacts of a strategic action (e.g. a plan or programme). In 2001, the EU legislated for SEA with the adoption of Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (the 'SEA Directive'). The Directive entered into force in the UK on 21 July 2004 and applies to a range of English plans and programmes including DPDs.
- 2.1.4 SA and SEA are therefore both statutory requirements. The Government's approach to this dual requirement is to incorporate the requirements of the SEA Directive into the SA process. The SA, which considers all three pillars of sustainability, therefore incorporates the requirements of the SEA Directive. The Government published guidance on undertaking SA of spatial plans ('the Guidance') in November 2005¹. This Guidance has now been replaced by the Plan Making Manual (PMM) published by the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) in 2009. The combined SA/SEA process is referred to in the Guidance and in this document as 'Sustainability Appraisal (SA)'.

2.2 Compliance with the SEA Directive

- 2.2.1 The table below sets out the required content of the Environmental Report as defined in the SEA Regulations and details how these have been met in this SA Report.

Requirement	Where Covered
An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programme and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes	Chapter 3 and Context Review in Chapters 5 to 19
The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme	Baseline and Likely Future Conditions in Chapters 5 to 19
The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected	Baseline in Chapters 5 to 19

¹ Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (2005) Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/142520.pdf>

Requirement	Where Covered
Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC	Context Review and Baseline in Chapters 5 to 19
The environmental protection objectives, established at International, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation	Environmental Protection Objectives in Chapters 5 to 19
The likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors	Policy Appraisal findings in Chapters 5 – 19, detailed summaries in Chapter 20 and Conclusions in Chapter 21
The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme	Proposed Recommendations in Chapter 21 and proposed monitoring in Chapters 5 - 19
An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information	Chapter 3: Discussion of Spatial Options
A description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with Article 10	Proposed Monitoring in Chapters 5-19
A non-technical summary of the information provided under the above headings	Separate document

2.3 Compliance with the SEA Directive

2.3.1 The table below sets out the required content of the Environmental Report as defined in the SEA Regulations and details how these have been met in this SA Report.

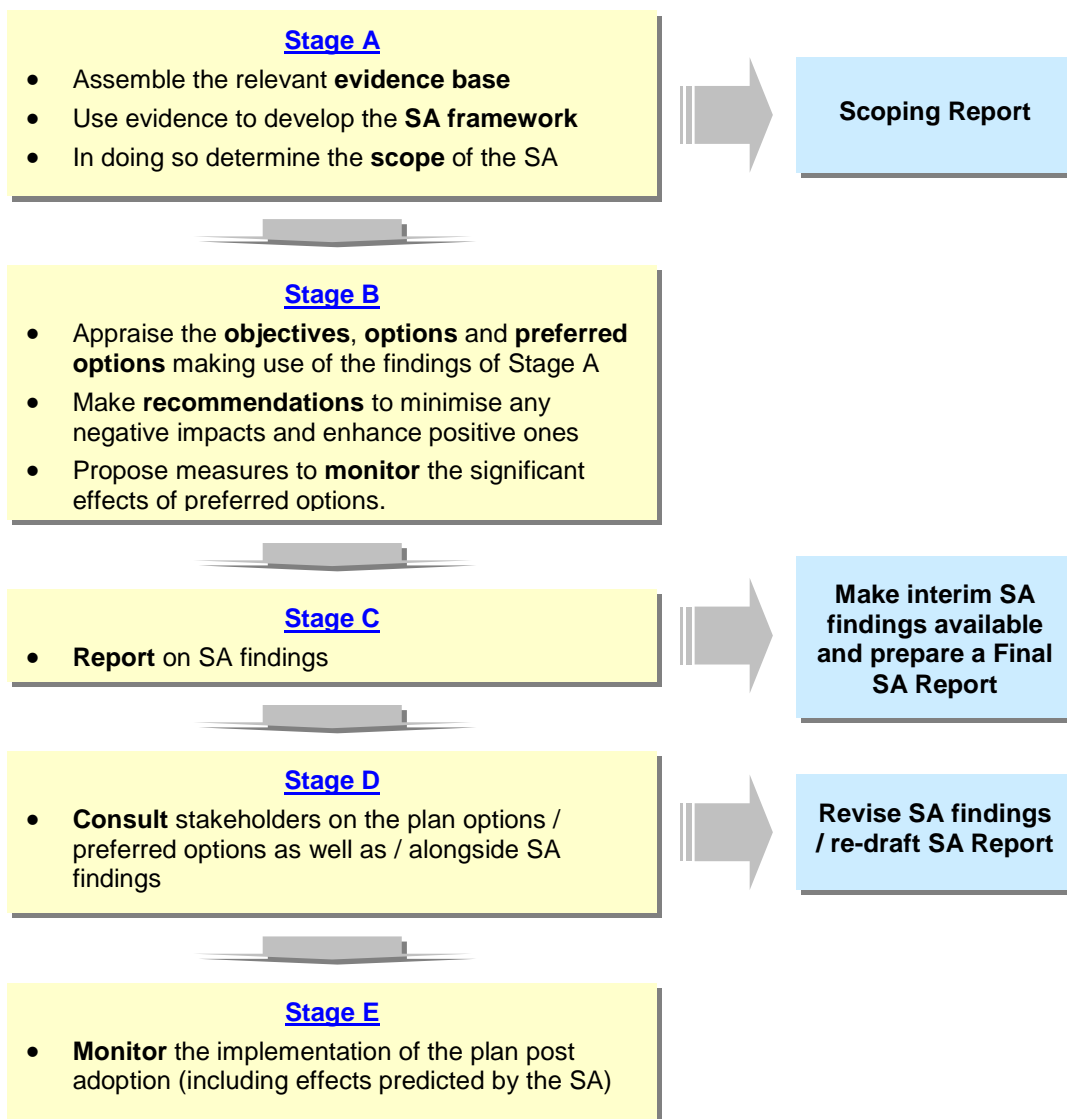
Requirement	Where Covered
An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programme and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes	Chapter 3 and Context Review in Chapters 5 to 19
The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme	Baseline and Likely Future Conditions in Chapters 5 to 19

Requirement	Where Covered
The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected	Baseline in Chapters 5 to 19
Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC	Context Review and Baseline in Chapters 5 to 19
The environmental protection objectives, established at International, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation	Environmental Protection Objectives in Chapters 5 to 19
The likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors	Policy Appraisal findings in Chapters 5 – 19, detailed summaries in Chapter 20 and Conclusions in Chapter 21
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The SA process

2.3.2 The Guidance advocates a five-stage approach to undertaking SA (see Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1: The five stage approach to SA



Stage A

2.3.3 The purpose of Stage A is to define the scope and level of detail of the assessment. This includes the identification and review of relevant international, national, regional and local plans and programmes that might influence the LDF, and from which sustainability objectives can be derived, and the collection of baseline data, along with trend data where appropriate, to inform the identification of key sustainability issues.

2.3.4 The output of Stage A is the production of a Scoping Report, which is subject to public consultation. The Scoping Report outlines the identified key sustainability issues for the Borough in light of the baseline data collated. It also sets the Sustainability Framework, which includes the Sustainability Objectives that were developed in the context of the identified issues and other relevant plans and programmes.

2.3.5 The Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report is available in full to download from the Council's website at: <http://www.swale.gov.uk/sustainability-appraisal-scoping-reports/>

2.3.6 The environmental protection objectives, context review and baseline sections of the Scoping Report are replicated in this document.

Baseline Data

2.3.7 Baseline data was collated and reviewed in order to establish the baseline conditions against which the implementation of the LDF documents can be assessed. The review sought to establish:

- The current situation and whether trends indicate that the situation is improving or getting worse;
- The current situation in relation to established thresholds or targets;
- Whether any particularly sensitive or important elements of the Borough are likely to be affected;
- The practicality of improving the current situation in light of the type of effects experienced e.g. temporary or permanent effects; reversible or irreversible effects; and
- Whether there have been any significant cumulative or synergistic effects over time and if there might be such effects in the future.

2.3.8 The baseline data and conditions are outlined and analysed in Chapters 6-20.

Data Gaps and Associated Problems

2.3.9 An important feature of the compilation of baseline data is the identification of any gaps in the data or any difficulties encountered when collating the information. This is especially important when identifying indicators by which to monitor whether the Sustainability Objectives are being achieved as any difficulties in collating data could render monitoring ineffectual.

2.3.10 An important issue when collating data is the geographical extent at which the data is collected. Although a great deal of data is collected at the Borough level there are some types of data where information is not collected at this scale. For example water quality is sampled for rivers and streams that may cross the boundaries of Boroughs and Districts. Certain data sets are only available at a national scale. Using national level data makes establishing the baseline and trends in the Swale area more problematic as it is possible that conditions in the Borough are not replicated at a national level, or are to a greater or lesser extent.

2.3.11 A further issue relating to data collation is the continuity of data over time and the reliance upon external agencies for such data. A great deal of data is collected by external agencies and therefore reliance is placed upon these agencies for such data. However, such agencies determine what data is collected and the timescales for data collection. This can be an issue if there are changes in the way data is collected or the level at which data is collected as this can have implications for the continuity of monitoring.

Consultation on the Scoping Report

2.3.12 The Scoping Report was subject to consultation. Responses were invited from a range of relevant bodies and stakeholders. The Final Revised Scoping Report issued in December 2008, incorporated any changes on the scope of the assessment that were considered to be

required following public consultation. A copy of this report can be viewed on the Swale Borough Council website on the Local Development Framework pages <http://www.swale.gov.uk/sustainability-appraisal-scoping-reports/>

- 2.3.13 This SA report can be read in conjunction with the Scoping Report which sets the context within which the appraisal has been undertaken; relevant portions of the Scoping Report baseline and context review have been reproduced herein.

The SA Objectives

- 2.3.14 The Scoping Report sets the Sustainability Framework, which includes the Sustainability Appraisal Objectives (SA Objectives) that were developed in the context of the identified issues and other relevant plans and programmes. Table 2.1 below outlines the SA Objectives and associated decision making criteria for the Swale LDF.

Table 2.1 Sustainability Appraisal Framework

SA Objective	Decision Making Criteria
1. To reinforce local distinctiveness, local environmental quality and amenity through the conservation and enhancement of the built and cultural heritage	Protect archaeological sites, historic buildings, conservation areas and other culturally important features?
2. To minimise the need for energy, increase energy efficiency and to increase the use of renewable energy	Does it limit the emissions of greenhouse gases? Ensure the Borough is prepared for the effects of climate change (in particular sea level rise and temperature changes)?
3. To encourage sustainable construction materials and methods	Increase the energy efficiency of the Borough's housing stock and all other buildings? Increase the proportion of energy generated from renewables? Does it identify opportunities for wildlife corridors, networks and stepping stones?
4. To reduce air pollution at identified and ensure air quality continues to improve across the Borough	Contribute to reductions in air quality monitoring pollutants at monitoring locations across the Borough?
5. To protect and enhance the valued landscape and townscape of Swale	Does it preserve and enhance the Borough and county wide landscape classifications? Does it preserve and enhance the nationally important landscape within the Kent Downs AONB? Does it contribute positively to the Borough's established high quality landscape? Does it provide for new open spaces, allotments? Does it contribute to the green grid network?
6. To protect and enhance soil quality and reduce contamination	Does it reduce contaminated sites and increase remediation of redundant industrial land? Does it reduce or improve the quality of agriculture land? Does it improve the quality of the Borough's land overall? Does it protect an identified brownfield site with conservation value or which provides a strategic link within the green grid network? Does it affect high grade agricultural land? Does it cause soil pollution/contamination?
7. To manage and reduce the risk of flooding	Does it improve the quality of water within the Borough? Does it reduce the demand for water (water efficiency measures)? Ensure that development does not increase the Borough's

SA Objective	Decision Making Criteria
8. To maintain and enhance water quality (ground and surface) and make efficient use of water	<p>vulnerability to flooding? Does it conserve adequate water supply to maintain healthy populations and rich biodiversity and ensure that water bodies are enhanced to increase biodiversity and ecosystems? Will it affect groundwater resources? Will it impact on surface water quality? Does it provide SUDs systems and other flood prevention systems to attract biodiversity, and to ensure that such systems are integrated into the wider green grid network?</p>
9. To conserve and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment	<p>Will it maintain and enhance relevant Habitats and species eg Mudflats or protected bird species? Will it protect and enhance habitat corridors and linking routes? Does it continue the protection of the internationally, nationally, European and regionally designated areas and appropriate propose appropriate enhancement? Does it conserve and enhance the BAP priority habitats within the Borough? Does it conserve and enhance the populations of protected and/BAP priority species within the Borough Does it allow for the creation of new areas of BAP priority habitats? Does it meet the principles of decision making on biodiversity in the good practice guide Does it create opportunities to link to and create the green grid network? Does it allow for the permeability of new development for biodiversity?</p>
10. To achieve the sustainable management of waste	<p>Reduce waste arisings? Increase the re-use of materials? Increase the rates of recycling and composting and/or recovery of energy from waste? Ensure disposal of waste material (where required) in accordance with the waste hierarchy?</p>
11. To meet the challenges of a growing and ageing population	<p>Assist with regeneration of deprived areas in the Borough? Improve access to key services? Improve access to recreation, amenity and community facilities?</p>
12. To reduce poverty and social exclusion	
13. To improve accessibility for all to key services and facilities	
14. To improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities in health	<p>Improve access to health services? Does it contribute to fuel poverty reductions? Improve access to recreation and open spaces? Are negative air quality and pollution impacts mitigated against?</p>
15. To reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and the fear of these	<p>Help reduce the fear of crime? Reduce crime rates especially in areas where crime is highest? Have designing out crime measures been incorporated into new development?</p>
16. To provide affordable and decent housing adaptable to future needs of the community	<p>Deliver the appropriate mix of housing to deliver the long term regeneration schemes for the Borough? Reduce the number of people homeless or in temporary accommodation?</p>

SA Objective	Decision Making Criteria
	Contribute to the provision of affordable, social and key-worker housing? Reduce the number of unfit housing and those falling below the decent homes standards? Deliver adaptable housing to meet the lifelong needs of the population? Reduce the experiences of fuel poverty? Deliver housing in sustainable locations with access to employment, community and public transport hubs?
17. To sustain economic growth and competitiveness	Does it contribute the development of eco-tourism industry? Does it provide for opportunities to attract new businesses to the Borough? Does it contribute to infrastructure improvements?
18. To ensure high and stable levels of employment in accessible locations	Are the numbers of knowledge based and higher paid jobs increased? Are new employment opportunities created to meet the needs of the residents? Are employment locations sustainable and accessible by public transport, walking and bicycle?
19. To raise the educational achievement levels across the Borough and help people to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in employment	Does it contribute to increased learning opportunities across the Borough?
20. To promote traffic reduction and encourage more sustainable alternative forms of transport	Does it provide improvements and new routes for cyclists and pedestrians? Does it reduce to need to travel by car? Will the development lead to adverse impacts on the Strategic Road Network, particularly junction 5 and 7 of the M2 which cannot be mitigated acceptably?

Stage B and C

- 2.3.15 This SA Report documents Stages B and C of the SA process. The Strategic Spatial Options and emerging Core Strategy and Development Management policies have been appraised and recommendations have been made to enhance beneficial effects and minimise adverse ones.

Stage D

- 2.3.16 Following consultation on the Issues and Strategic Options for the Core Strategy the Council will consider the responses received. The Council will then undertake further public consultation on development options that will inform development of the preferred option and preparation of the Core Strategy. Section 3 provides further details on the production process of the Core Strategy and other LDF documents.

Stage E

- 2.3.17 Stage E of the process (monitoring) will be undertaken by the Council following adoption of the Core Strategy. The appraisal findings sections of Chapters 5 – 19 report on the findings of the appraisal of the policies. This is followed by a section on Monitoring that outlines the indicators considered relevant to enable the Council to effectively identify whether each policy is contributing towards achieving sustainable development. A final list of monitoring indicators will be published in the SA Statement following adoption of the Core Strategy.

2.4 Appraisal of the Issues and Strategic Spatial Options

2.4.1 The general method adopted when undertaking the appraisal was to compare each policy approach with the equivalent statutory development plan policies currently in force in Swale Borough.

2.4.2 Where the policy approach proposed little or no change to the existing policy it was assumed that it would do little or nothing to affect the trends in relevant sustainability variables. In such cases no effects were recorded.

2.4.3 Where the policy option proposed a change of policy the effects of this were assessed in terms of the nature of its impacts (beneficial/adverse/neutral/uncertain) and of its relative magnitude and duration over time. These criteria were then used to judge whether the resulting effect would be minor or significant. These assessments are reproduced in Appendix 1.

2.4.4 The symbols used in the assessment are as follows:

Beneficial		Adverse		Uncertain	No effect
++	+	-	--	?	~
Significant positive effect on Objective	Positive effect on Objective	Negative effect on Objective	Significant negative effect on Objective	Uncertain effect on Objective due to unknown factors	No effect on Objective

2.5 Uncertainties and assumptions at this stage

2.5.1 A number of uncertainties exist at this stage in the Core Strategy preparation;

- The spatial options presented by Swale Borough Council are indicative of different patterns of development at this stage. As such at this stage, individual development sites are not known and therefore it has been assumed that development could proceed anywhere within the indicative area/ town or village, and indeed outside it (within the restrictions of the option text). The appraisal has sought to identify the potential constraints that may exist within the indicative area, although it is recognised that such effects are uncertain until more detailed site specific information is available;
- The policies presented are high-level and often provide a list of elements to be included in the resultant policies and as such accurately appraising the effects of the policies is open to additional uncertainty;
- The performance of the economy over the next few years will define the feasibility of much of this plan (it has been assumed that we are currently in a temporary situation which will recover to satisfy the predicted levels).
- The exact composition of the development options are uncertain (certain basic assumptions have been made regarding design principles, housing typologies and densities);

2.5.2 A number of assumptions have been made when undertaking the appraisals;

- As stated in the consultation document, it has been assumed that the development options outside of the specified urban areas will be on greenfield land.
- For water quality, it has been assumed that site level mitigation would be employed to avoid most adverse effects on water quality;

- For new housing development it has been assumed that the minimum mandatory building regulations, code for sustainable homes or BREEAM rating at time of construction phasing will be accorded to for sustainable design and construction and energy provision, unless the policy states otherwise.
- It has been assumed that the necessary social infrastructure will be in place to serve the development option in question but that additional requirements are subject to the individual elements of the option and emerging policy framework.

The Sustainability Appraisal Report

2.5.3 The SEA Regulations require the assessment of the likely significant environmental effects of the plan or programme on issues such as:

- Air
- Biodiversity including flora and fauna
- Climate
- Cultural heritage
- Human health
- Landscape
- Material assets
- Population
- Soil
- Water
- And the interrelationship between the above factors

2.5.4 The SA process extends the assessment process to include likely significant social and economic effects of the topics listed above to include social and economic factors such as the economy, employment and skills, transport and accessibility and crime and safety.

2.5.5 This SA Report includes a chapter on each of the above sustainability topics. Each chapter is structured in a series of themes, as follows:

- Introduction;
- Context Review;
- Environmental Protection Objectives (where applicable);
- Baseline;
- Likely Future Conditions;
- Environmental and Sustainability Issues;
- Relevant SA/SEA Objectives;
- Appraisal findings - likely significant effects and likely minor effects of the spatial options and policy approach;

- Proposed mitigation - recommended measures to minimise adverse effects or enhance beneficial effects; and
- Proposed monitoring - recommended ongoing monitoring of significant effects.

3 The Issues and Strategic Spatial Options Consultation

3.1 The Strategic Spatial Options

3.1.1 Swale Borough Council has developed four Strategic Spatial Options for the Core Strategy. These options are the first stage of the options generation which will inform the development of the Swale Core Strategy. These options present different ways at which development might be distributed across the Borough and by how much. The Council held an option generating workshop in May 2010 with key stakeholders to inform the development of the Core Strategy Vision and these Spatial Options.

3.1.2 The development of the options has been informed by a number of baseline studies. The Council have decided that whilst the South East plan will no longer be in place by the time the Core Strategy is progressed, as RSS's² will be removed by the Localism Bill (due December 2010) it is considered that use of the SE Plan housing figures together with the Council's evidence base and demographic forecasting, allows for a readily understood and evidential base upon which to derive 'growth scenarios'. Although this will be kept under review.

3.1.3 In arriving at the four Strategic Spatial Options, the council discounted a number of other options that were not considered to be 'reasonable'³ and therefore were not developed further.

3.1.4 The four spatial options that are being consulted upon are:

- Option 1 – Continuing previous policy provision for development concentrated on urban areas
- Option 2 - Continuing previous policy provision for development concentrated on urban areas and larger villages
- Option 3 – Step change in employment growth and continuing previous policy provision for development concentrated at urban areas; and
- Option 4 – Step change in employment and housing growth.

3.1.5 Details of the individual options can be found in the Consultation document. These options will be refined and a preferred approach for the Spatial Strategy determined after further public consultation in 2011.

3.1.6 The Council has developed Core Strategy Objectives. These are illustrated below.

Prosperity, Homes and Communities, Infrastructure and Services
1. Support sectors that can build on our strengths, diversify our economy, promote investment in skills, and develop our distinct opportunities in pursuit of greener and pioneering technologies.
2. Bring economic growth, regeneration and community development, especially to our most deprived communities.

² Announcement made on the 6th July by Eric Pickles, however decision overturned in high courts in November 2010.

³ Swale Borough Council. Pick your own – Issues and Strategic Spatial Options January 2011

3. Support our farming and food sectors so that they are at the forefront of increasing food security, reducing food miles and local food consumption.
4. Provide the right housing to support regeneration and stronger, greener communities.
5. Develop tourism and culture to support regeneration, employment growth, communities and environmental management.
6. Improve prosperity and environmental quality with efficient and sustainable transport networks.
7. Ensure timely delivery of the services and infrastructure to support strong communities.
Sustainability and Environment
8. Adapt to climate change with innovation, reduced use of resources, managed risk to our communities and opportunities for biodiversity to thrive.
9. Use our coastal assets to support a strong economy and a sustainably managed environment.
10. Support economic success and improve community wellbeing with a network of maintained, protected and improved natural assets in town and country.
11. Use our historic and natural assets to drive regeneration, tourism, and environmental quality.
12. Strive for high quality design to bring a better quality of life and self-confidence to our communities.
Sittingbourne
13. Re-establish Sittingbourne as the principal town with investment in retail, leisure, culture and community services and further education, within new and improved green spaces and streets.
Isle of Sheppey
14. Ensure change on Sheppey: supports Sheerness as its commercial and service

focus; strengthens and integrates its communities at Rushenden, Queenborough and Minster/Halfway; manages its coastal and heritage assets; modernises its leisure and tourism industries for visitors; and increase the sustainability of isolated communities.

Faversham

15. Sustain Faversham's role and character as an historic market town for residents and visitors with a range of businesses and services that increase diversity and interest.

Rural communities

16. Address identified needs in our rural communities so that they are sustained in ways that also respects their scale and character.

3.1.7 The Council have developed a vision for Swale. This was subject to two rounds of public consultation and external support was given by the Planning Advisory Service (PAS). The vision has been approved by both the Council and the Swale Partnership (The Local Strategic Partnership) and demonstrates that the Core Strategy Vision is directly taking forward the Sustainable Community Plan – Ambitions for Swale.

3.1.8 During the preparation of the 'Vision' it was also subject to SA. The finalised Vision for Swale is:

The Vision for Swale

It is 2031 and Swale is known by the fruits of its endeavours.

We have harnessed our assets – a strategic location, diverse communities and an outstanding natural environment – and are a sustainable, flourishing place in which to enjoy life and do business with:

- Sittingbourne transformed into an attractive, competitive and prosperous town, with a thriving centre that residents across the Borough are proud to use;
- Sheerness and Queenborough as beacons of coastal rejuvenation leading the way to success for all communities on the Isle of Sheppey;
- Faversham a thriving market town and heritage destination that has grown organically; and
- Successful rural communities across our downs, farmed plains and coast as places of innovation; nurturing enterprise, local produce and greater self-reliance.

3.1.9 The following is a summary of the SA findings:

3.1.10 The vision performs favourably against all the SA objectives. In particular the vision is seeking to reinforce and protect local distinctiveness, local environmental quality and amenity of the borough and in particular the four key identified areas (objective 1). The environmental and

heritage qualities of the borough and the focus on sustainable growth across the four areas positively benefits the achievement of objective 9 with regard to conservation and enhancement of the natural environment and biodiversity and objective 5 the landscape and townscape. The vision is beneficial to the achievement of economic growth and competitiveness and maintaining employment levels (objectives 17 and 18).

3.2 Core Strategy Policies and Development Management Policies

3.2.1 This consultation document also contains an outline for the proposed Core Strategy Policies and Development Management Policies. A list of these policies is contained below:

Table 3.1 Potential Core Strategy Policies

Policy number	Name
Policy CP1	Settlement Hierarchy
Policy CP2	Provision for jobs and homes 2006-2031
Policy CP3	Location of allocations
Policy CP4	Sustainability and environment cross-cutting policy
Policy CP5	Prosperity cross-cutting policy
Policy CP6	Homes and Communities
Policy CP7	Health and wellbeing cross-cutting policy
Policy CP8	Infrastructure and implementation cross cutting policy
Policy CP9	Green infrastructure cross cutting policy
Development Management Policies	
Policy DM1	Sustainable Design and Construction
Policy DM2	The Coast Policy
Policy DM3	Heritage Assets
Policy DM4	Natural Assets
Policy DM5	Natural Assets
Policy DM6	Enabling development for landscape and biodiversity enhancement
Policy DM7	Retail Development
Policy DM8	Rural Economy
Policy DM9	Tourism
Policy DM10	Affordable Housing
Policy DM11	Rural Exception Housing Policy
Policy DM12	Provision for Gypsy and Travellers
Policy DM13	Servicing new development
Policy DM14	Managing travel demands
Policy DM15	Proposed open space and recreation standards

3.2.2 At this stage, the consultation document outlines the scope for the content of these policies. It has been this scope of policy that has been appraised.

4 Assessment of DPD Objectives against SA Objectives

- 4.1.1 In order to ensure that the objectives for the Core Strategy DPD contribute to the promotion of sustainable development it is necessary to assess them against the sustainability objectives for the Borough. Although it is unlikely that every DPD objective will inherently contribute towards sustainable development an assessment will identify objectives that could be amended to increase their contribution to sustainable development. However, it should be noted that as a result of the potential incompatibility between some aspects of sustainable development e.g. protection of the environment has the potential to be incompatible with development, it might not be practicable to amend some DPD objectives. The assessment is presented and discussed in Figure 3.1.
- 4.1.2 In cases where the compatibility of objectives is dependent upon their implementation it will be necessary to ensure that relevant strategies and policies are worded to ensure that the level of incompatibility is reduced and that suitable mitigation or compensation measures can be implemented to avoid any adverse effects or at least reduce them to an acceptable level.
- 4.1.3 The assessment also indicates that a few objectives are generally incompatible e.g. meeting housing need is generally incompatible with conserving biodiversity as additional development has the potential to adversely effect biodiversity by destroying or fragmenting habitats directly through development on a site or increasing recreational pressure on a protected site. In order to overcome this identified incompatibility it will be necessary to ensure that any unavoidable adverse effects that are likely when implementing relevant policies are reduced to an acceptable level through mitigation and compensation measures. However, the development of relevant policies should aim to avoid adverse effects wherever possible.

Figure 3.1 SA and CS objectives compatibility table

✓	Generally compatible	×	Generally incompatible	~	No relationship	?	Compatibility depends upon implementation
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		Core Strategy Objectives															
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
SA Objectives	1	~	~	~	?	✓	~	~	~	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	2	✓	~	~	✓	~	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	~	~	~	~	~	~
	3	✓	~	~	✓	~	✓	~	✓	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~
	4	?	~	✓	?	~	✓	~	✓	~	✓	~	~	~	~	~	~
	5	~	?	✓	?	✓	✓	~	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	6	~	~	✓	~	~	✓	~	✓	✓	✓	✓	~	~	~	~	~
	7	~	~	~	?	~	✓	~	✓	✓	✓	~	~	~	~	~	~
	8	~	~	~	~	~	✓	~	✓	✓	✓	✓	~	~	~	~	~
	9	~	~	~	?	✓	✓	~	✓	✓	✓	✓	~	~	?	?	~
	10	~	~	~	✓	~	~	✓	✓	✓	~	~	~	~	~	~	~
	11	~	✓	~	✓	~	~	✓	~	~	~	~	✓	✓	~	~	~
	12	~	✓	~	~	~	~	✓	~	~	~	~	~	✓	~	~	✓
	13	~	✓	~	✓	~	~	✓	~	~	~	~	~	✓	✓	~	✓
	14	~	✓	~	~	~	~	✓	~	~	✓	~	✓	✓	✓	~	✓
	15	~	✓	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~
	16	~	✓	~	✓	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	✓
	17	✓	✓	✓	~	✓	✓	✓	~	✓	✓	✓	~	✓	✓	✓	~
	18	✓	✓	✓	~	✓	✓	✓	~	✓	✓	✓	~	✓	✓	✓	✓
	19	✓	✓	~	~	✓	~	✓	~	~	~	✓	~	~	✓	~	✓
	20	~	~	✓	~	~	✓	✓	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~

Commentary:

SA Objective 4 vs CS Objective 1 – need reassurance that the greener and pioneering technologies will contribute to reductions in air pollution.

SA Objective 5 vs CS Objective 2 – economic growth, regeneration and community development should be promoted at the consideration of the landscape and townscape of Swale, new development should respect the character of the existing build and natural environment. This relationship is uncertain until specific areas are identified.

SA Objective 1 vs CS Objective 4 – Compatibility is uncertain as it is dependent upon the design of the housing and construction methods which will ensure that local distinctiveness is maintained.

SA Objective 2 vs CS Objective 4 - dependent on location of housing and sustainable transport modes available as well as other contributing factors to air pollution.

SA Objective 5 vs CS Objective 4 – dependent on location of proposed housing and design.

SA Objective 7 vs CS Objective 4 – dependent on location of proposed housing and design.

SA Objective 9 vs CS Objective 14 – It is uncertain at this stage how the regeneration proposals for Sheppey will impact upon the natural environment.

SA Objective 9 vs CS Objective 15 – It is uncertain at this stage how the proposals for Faversham will effect the natural environment.

5 Cultural Heritage

Introduction

5.1.1 The UNESCO World Heritage Convention (1972) defines the scope of “cultural heritage” as follows:

- Monuments: architectural works, works of monumental sculpture and painting, elements or structures of an archaeological nature, inscriptions, cave dwellings and combinations of features, which are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science;
- Groups of buildings: groups of separate or connected buildings which, because of their architecture, their homogeneity or their place in the landscape, are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science;
- Sites: works of man or the combined works of nature and man, and areas including archaeological sites, which are of outstanding universal value from the historical, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological point of view.

5.1.2 Preserving the cultural and historic environment benefits communities in more than one way:

- It provides an essential educational resource for the understanding of the past and its legacy;
- It contributes to the national and local economy as it promotes tourism and provides jobs; and
- It provides people with a sense of belonging to a unique and special place – a sense of identity.

Environmental Protection Legislation

5.1.3 Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979):

- Provides for nationally important archaeological sites to be statutorily protected as “scheduled ancient monuments” (now Scheduled Monuments)

5.1.4 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990):

- Provides specific protection for buildings and areas of special architectural or historic interest.

Context Review

5.1.5 The key messages from the context review are given below:

Message	Source
A high level of protection should be given to the most valued townscapes.	Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development
The historic environment and its heritage assets should be conserved and enjoyed for the quality of life they bring to this and future generations. It should be recognised that heritage assets are a non-renewable resource and the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits of heritage conservation should	Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning and the Historic Environment

Message	Source
be considered. Intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary if heritage assets are to be maintained for the long term and the positive contribution of such heritage assets to local character and sense of place should be recognised and valued.	
South East has a rich and diverse historic environment, which is irreplaceable. The historic buildings and landscapes that characterise the region add much to the quality of life that underpins the region's economy. Recognition of the importance of the historic environment that contributes so much to regional and local character and distinctiveness.	South East Plan (2009)
Kent County Council will stabilise and, where possible, reverse the adverse effect of transport and its infrastructure on the natural and built environment and on local communities.	Kent Local Transport Plan
Ensure that Swale enjoys an excellent quality of life by protecting and enhancing the natural and built environment and ensuring that all regeneration in Swale is environmentally sustainable.	Sustainable Community Strategy 2009-2026

Baseline

- 5.1.6 The Borough has a wealth of historic areas, buildings and features reflecting its naval and maritime history, its roman and medieval legacy and its industrial archaeology.
- 5.1.7 There are at least 1,850 listed buildings, including one of the best surviving medieval farmsteads in the country and the earliest multi-storey iron framed building in the world in the Borough. This is four times the national average of listed buildings⁴. The Borough contains 11 buildings identified on English Heritages Buildings at Risk Register. The Council has compiled a list of local at risk buildings which include 11 grade II* and grade I buildings from the national listed building register. The Council has identified 41 buildings which require placing on the local buildings at risk register. Another indicator is the gradual decay of buildings or the cumulative effect that minor or poorly conceived and executed changes have on the Borough's heritage.
- 5.1.8 The Borough contains 21 Scheduled Ancient Monuments and 2,685 sites on the Sites and Monument Records. Swale contains 50 Conservation Areas, covering 2.4% of the Borough. A number of the Conservation Areas were designated over 20 years ago, the Council is therefore in the process of undertaking reviews of the designations. Currently there have been 20 conservation area designations reviews including Bredgar, Lower Halstow, Faversham and Upchurch. There are also 4 English Heritage Registered Parks and Gardens. The Kent Gardens Compendium, compiled by Kent County Council lists parks and gardens which offer more local and modern interest.
- 5.1.9 Within Conservation Areas, Article 4 directions (a direction removing some or all permitted development rights within the conservation area, issued by local planning authorities) can be applied. Currently in the Borough, Faversham Conservation Area has an article 4 direction applying to approximately 1800 properties. This restricts work that is undertaken within the Conservation Area to require planning consent before commencement, in order to preserve the character and heritage of the area.

⁴ Swale AMR 2006/07

Likely Future Conditions

- 5.1.10 The significant number of listed buildings and conservation areas in the Borough will require continued protection and enhancement to ensure their future preservation. A commitment to this is illustrated through the Article 4 direction in force across Faversham Conservation Area. The Council will actively pursue opportunities for creative uses of the Buildings at Risk, including where viable the sustainable re-use of the buildings.

Environmental and Sustainability Issues and Problems

- 5.1.11 The following issues have been identified:
- Across the Borough (and nationwide) there continues to be a considerable level of unauthorised work to listed buildings and buildings within conservation areas, at times detrimentally damaging these buildings for future generations.
 - Across the Borough there are a number of redundant and disused buildings of heritage value, including those on the local and national buildings at risk registers.
 - Across the Borough there are 20 Article 4 directions, providing additional protection to certain features of the conservation area otherwise not protected.
 - Pressure for new development and regeneration across the Borough requires a balance to be found between preservation of the historic environment and delivering new residential, commercial and industrial development to meet the future needs of Swale.

Proposed SA/ SEA Objectives

SA objective	To reinforce local distinctiveness, local environmental quality and amenity through the conservation and enhancement of built and cultural heritage
Decision making criteria	Protect archaeological sites, historic buildings, conservation areas and other culturally important features?

5.2 Appraisal Findings

Likely Significant Effects

- 5.2.1 No significant effects arising from the Strategic Spatial Options and Core Strategy policy proposals on SA Objective 1 were thought likely. A number of minor effects were identified and these are discussed below.

Likely Minor Beneficial Effects

- 5.2.2 Minor beneficial effects were identified for the following policies:

Spatial Options 1, 2, 3 and 4

- 5.2.3 These spatial options propose to regenerate Faversham Creekside contributing to reinforcing local distinctiveness and character through targeted urban regeneration. Faversham is a historic town, containing conservation areas and listed buildings which require careful design considerations for any new development being considered in particular the employment led focus.

- 5.2.4 Each spatial option focuses urban regeneration within and around Sittingbourne, Sheerness and Queenborough this regeneration is envisaged to be in keeping with the local character of these areas, respecting identified cultural merits of these towns.

Policy CP1 – Settlement Hierarchy

- 5.2.5 This policy approach will define settlement hierarchy for the Borough, identifying which development is suitable in which area. This approach should enable reinforcement or protection of local character through requiring protection of the built and cultural heritage of these areas.

Policy DM3 – Heritage Assets

- 5.2.6 This policy approach will deliver protection and enhancement for the Borough's heritage assets.

Policy DM9 – Tourism

- 5.2.7 Tourism across the Borough does value the historic environment and through increased visitor numbers indirect improvements may be able to be made to the historic environment to enhance and protect it.

Policy DM11 – Rural Exceptions Housing Policy

- 5.2.8 This policy approach will seek to restrict the development of market housing to existing built up area boundaries this approach should deliver protection and conservation of built and cultural heritage.

Policy DM12 – Provision for Gypsy and Travellers

- 5.2.9 This policy approach seeks to identify sites to meet the identified needs of the gypsy and traveller community. Through rigorously applying the site identification criteria and site criteria requirements it should be ensured that no detrimental impact on the built or natural environment occurs in particular the historic environment.

Recommendations

- 5.2.10 It should be ensured through the spatial options development that stringent protection is provided to the historic environment within the main towns within the Borough, in particular Faversham. The emerging CS and DM policies, in particular CP1 the settlement hierarchy and DM3 Heritage Assets should continue to recognise this, as identified in the current form.

5.3 Proposed Monitoring

- Identified listed buildings, locally listed/ important buildings and structures, SAMs, historic parks and gardens, conservation areas and changes to these
- Completion of Conservation Area reviews

6 Climate

Introduction

- 6.1.1 There is a general scientific consensus that Human activity has resulted in the accumulation of greenhouse gasses in the atmosphere and is causing climatic change.
- 6.1.2 The increase in global temperature is likely to continue unless greenhouse gas emissions are reduced. The impacts of climate change are expected to be warmer, wetter winters and hotter, drier summers. Sea levels are expected to rise and, together with an increase in rainfall, lead to more frequent flooding of rivers and the coastline. Extreme weather events such as storms or heat waves are likely to be more frequent.
- 6.1.3 These impacts are likely to have a number of indirect effects. Flooding may become more frequent and severe in some areas. These would include changes in the availability and quality of water resources, damage to native habitats and migration or extinction of native plants and animals. Infrastructure and buildings could be damaged more frequently by storms.

Environmental Protection Objectives

- 6.1.4 Renewed EU Sustainable Development Strategy (2006):
- Kyoto Protocol commitments of the EU-15 and most EU-25 to targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 2008 – 2012, whereby the EU-15 target is for an 8% reduction in emissions compared to 1990 levels. Aiming for a global surface average temperature not to rise by more than 2°C compared to the pre-industrial level.
 - By 2010 12% of energy consumption, on average, and 21% of electricity consumption, as a common but differentiated target, should be met by renewable sources, considering raising their share to 15% by 2015.
 - By 2010 5.75% of transport fuel should consist of biofuels⁵, as an indicative target, (Directive 2003/30/EC), considering raising their proportion to 8% by 2015.
 - Reaching an overall saving of 9% of final energy consumption over 9 years until 2017 as indicated by the Energy End-use Efficiency and Energy Services Directive.
- 6.1.5 Climate Change Act (2008):
- Legally binding targets:
- Greenhouse gas emission reductions through action in the UK and abroad of at least 80% by 2050, and reductions of at least 34% by 2020, against a 1990 baseline⁶; and
 - Projected emissions from international aviation and shipping must be taken into account for carbon budget decisions. At present it is not definite that aviation and shipping emissions will be covered by the Act, Defra state that the Government will include emissions from aviation and shipping in the Act or explain why not to Parliament by 31st December 2012⁷.

⁵ Increased use of bio-fuels will depend largely on future availability and the result of continued research into their environmental impact and long term viability.

⁶ http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/legislation/cc_act_08/cc_act_08.aspx [accessed 20.09.2010]

⁷ Defra, Climate Change Act 2008 (December 2008) <http://www.defra.gov.uk/Environment/climatechange/uk/legislation/provisions.htm>

Context Review

6.1.6 The key messages from the context review are given below:

Message	Source
The causes and potential impacts of Climate Change should be addressed through policies that reduce energy use, reduce emissions, promote the development of renewable energy resources, and take climate change impacts into account in the locations and design of development.	Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development
Spatial planning should help shape places with lower carbon emissions and resilient to the climate change now accepted as inevitable.	Planning for Climate Change, Supplement to PPS1
Local authorities are required to promote and encourage the development of renewable energy resources. Small-scale projects can provide a valuable contribution to the overall output of renewable energy. Climate change is expected to increase flood risk; policies should therefore avoid placing new development in unsustainable flood risk locations, as recognised in PPS25.	Planning Policy Statement 22: Renewable Energy
Promote sustainable development by ensuring that biological and geological diversity are conserved and enhanced as an integral part of social, environmental and economic development, so that policies and decisions about the development and use of land integrate biodiversity and geological diversity with other considerations.	Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation
The need to incorporate measures for climate change mitigation and adaptation in the Core Strategy and the need to place increased emphasis on natural resource management and efficiency is recognised. In order to be more sustainable, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve security and diversity of supply, we must improve energy efficiency and increase the amount of energy obtained from renewable sources.	South East Strategy for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy
The challenge is not only to reduce carbon emissions but also to develop a long-term strategy to adapt to the climate changes already underway.	Kent Environment Strategy (2003)
A sustainable approach to development is required to ensure that location, transport connections, mix of uses and community facilities, together with husbanding of land and energy resources all combine to produce social and economic benefits.	Kent Design Guide 2008
A study to identify constraints and opportunities for sustainable design and construction measures and technologies across the borough.	Swale Borough Council, Sustainable Design and Construction Developer Guidance (2010)

Baseline

- 6.1.7 Over the past century, average temperature has risen by 0.5°C and summer rainfall has decreased. Around the south east the coastline the sea level is rising, threatening important coastal habitats and increasing the risk of flooding through sea level rise, major precipitation events and surface water run-off.
- 6.1.8 Emissions of the 'basket' of six greenhouse gases in the UK fell by around 15.3 per cent between the base year and 2006. (The base year is 1990 for carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide, and 1995 for fluorinated compounds.) To meet its commitment to the Kyoto Protocol, the UK has agreed to reduce total greenhouse gas emissions by 12.5 per cent relative to the base year over the period 2008-20128.
- 6.1.9 A report⁹ commissioned by DEFRA estimates that 1,251,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide were emitted from the Borough in 2005 (as stated by DEFRA in April 2008 revision report). The basis of the emissions estimates is the local gas, electricity and road transport fuel consumption estimates issued by DEFRA. These sources account for around 80% of UK emissions; the remaining 20% are derived from the National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory estimates.

Table 2.1: Estimates of CO₂ emissions by end user, revised April 2008

Authority	Total (tonnes)	Population ('000's)	Per capita total CO ₂ (tonnes)	Domestic per capita in CO ₂ (tonnes)
South East	58,190	8,164	7.1	2.5
Swale	1,088	127	8.6	2.3

Source: DEFRA

- 6.1.10 The table above illustrates that Swale produces a higher level of CO₂ tonnes than the south east average. It is thought this is linked to the industrial activity in some areas of the Borough.
- 6.1.11 The Borough, and particularly Sheppey and the coastline are affected by sea level change. Historic maps show how the coast line has changed over many years. These illustrate areas of land in the west of the Borough north of the Barksore Marshes, e.g. Millford Hope Marsh and Greenborough Marsh, as part of the mainland. Whilst these were unsettled they were crossed by trackways and were probably used for summer grazing. Now they are either remnants of saltmarsh or lost to the mudflats and only visible at low tide. On the northern and eastern coasts of Sheppey the effects of coastal erosion are particularly apparent at Warden Point where the clay coastline is slipping into the sea.
- 6.1.12 The Council has signed up to the Nottingham Declaration, committing not only to reduce its own emissions of greenhouse gases, but to act as a catalyst to other organisations in the Borough to promote awareness of climate change and reduction of overall emissions.
- 6.1.13 The Thames Gateway is envisaged to be developed as an eco-region, setting and meeting high standards, not only for construction waste and low carbon, but also for water conservation and safeguarding against flood risk. The South East, Kent and the Borough are now pushing strongly for new development to incorporate sustainable design and construction methods, energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies.
- 6.1.14 The Council is a member of the Kent Energy Efficiency Partnership who have developed a fuel poverty strategy known as the Kent Health and Affordable Warmth Strategy¹⁰ with the specific

⁸ <http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/climatechange/uk/ukccp/pdf/ukccp06-all.pdf>

⁹ Local and Regional CO₂ Emissions Estimates 2005, DEFRA (2007), revision April 2008.

¹⁰ <http://www.southeastcoastpublichealth.org.uk/document.aspx?id=3145&siteID=1011>

aims including; raising awareness of fuel poverty; and working towards ensuring that the housing stock can deliver affordable warmth. This strategy is currently under review and a revised version will focus on the health aspects of the implications of energy and how to work to mitigate these.

- 6.1.15 The Kent, Sussex and Surrey Energy Saving Trust Advice Centre, managed by Creative Environment Network (CEN), offers domestic energy advice and discounted energy products to householders by leveraging funding from government utility companies and by negotiating bulk discounts. The overall improvement in energy efficiency achieved since 1996 is 15.33% and overall fuel efficiency for Swale achieved since 1996 is 30%. This has been achieved by a number of measures, including the provision of advice and information and referrals to the “Warm Front” and “Health Through Warmth” schemes.
- 6.1.16 Modelling has demonstrated the challenge that faces wildlife in adapting to climate change in the highly fragmented region of North West Europe. Coastal habitats are predicted to decline under sea-level rises¹¹.

Likely Future Conditions

- 6.1.17 Climate change impacts are inevitable across the Borough; global sea levels are changing. Around the UK they are increasing in height and temperature, associated with this is increased risk from flooding both coastal, river and surface water. Global temperatures are increasing; this is felt across the UK with impacts upon habitats and species through changing migration patterns and habitat loss. Swale, along with the rest of the UK will continue to experience the effects of climate change.
- 6.1.18 It seems probable that the transport sector will continue to increase its contribution to the UK total emissions of greenhouse gases. Road traffic levels continue to increase and there is increasing concern about the role of air travel in contributing to significant increased levels of emissions. Within Swale there is a high dependence on lorry movements on the Borough’s roads due to the location of depot’s within the Borough, Sheerness Docks and the close proximity the Ports of Dover and the Channel Tunnel.
- 6.1.19 UK Greenhouse gas emissions have been falling in recent years and the government is committed to continuing this reduction. This fall has mainly been due to the replacement of coal-fired power stations with gas fired power stations during the so called ‘dash for gas’ in the 1990s. It is possible that the downward trend has stalled and that the total UK emissions may be about to rise again.
- 6.1.20 New development will require where feasible the incorporation of sustainable construction and design methods, including sustainable sourcing of materials (local sourcing where possible) and the incorporation of energy efficiency measures and where feasible renewable technologies.
- 6.1.21 Climate change adaptation requires a new way of developing and managing the natural environment. The natural environment will require measures that allow wildlife and habitats to adapt to future climate change which will affect habitat fragmentation and could lead to species migration or decline. An ecological network which allows biodiversity to adapt to climate change and which incorporates a variety of measures (e.g. habitat creation, habitat enhancement, buffering habitat areas and protected sites and creating connections through corridors and stepping stones) should be designed and implemented in the future.

¹¹ Natural England, BRANCH, 2007, Final Report

6.1.22 The Green Grid Network is developing across Swale, in partnership with authorities across the wider south east. Opportunities for wildlife corridors, networks and stepping stones will be identified in order to extend buffer and link existing wildlife sites and habitats as a critical part of adaptation to climate change.

6.1.23 Sea level rise is a known effect of climate change which will pose a threat to the Borough in the future. The frequency of extreme weather events is likely to increase with future climate change; this could increase the risk of flooding across the Borough. The threat to saltmarsh and mudflats throughout Europe will increase during this century as identified through studies undertaken on behalf of Natural England¹⁰.

Environmental and Sustainability Issues and Problems

6.1.24 The following problems have been identified:

- Steps are required to address the emission of greenhouse gases from a number of sectors including transport, industry and the domestic user.
- Steps are required to identify and protect a green grid structure throughout the Borough allowing wildlife to migrate through the built and rural environment as climate changes.
- Climate change is a considerable threat to the Borough, in particular the coastal areas, the saltmarshes and protected habitats through sea level rise, temperature increases.
- The poor public transport system across the Borough creates a car dependency. Transport improvements, such as improved public transport links and locating new development in sustainable locations can contribute to reducing emission levels.
- New and existing buildings require retro-fitting and development using sustainable construction methods to ensure that the Boroughs buildings are adaptive to climate change.
- The sustainability agenda requires the delivery of alternative energy sources, such as renewable energy technologies.
- Established development within the Borough should be retrofitted where possible, utilising government grants and funding where possible.

Proposed SA/SEA objectives

SA objective	<p>To minimise the need for energy, increase energy efficiency and to increase the use of renewable energy</p> <p>To encourage sustainable construction materials and methods</p>
Decision making criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does it limit the emissions of greenhouse gases? • Ensure the Borough is prepared for the effects of climate change (in particular sea level rise and temperature changes)? • Increase the energy efficiency of the Borough's housing stock and all other buildings? • Increase the proportion of energy generated from renewables? • Does it identify opportunities for wildlife corridors, networks and stepping stones?

6.2 Appraisal Findings

Likely Significant Effects

Policy DM1 – Sustainable Design and Construction

- 6.2.1 This policy approach will deliver the framework for development to be built to be adaptable to changing lifestyles and climate through encouraging buildings for life standards and developments to achieve Code for Sustainable Homes (CSH) and BREEAM standards, over the long term this should achieve significant benefits. This policy approach also achieves significant long term benefits through the mechanism for delivery across the Borough of renewable, decentralised and low-carbon energy generation at a range of scales and for all forms of development. It will also deliver significant long term benefits with regard to the use of sustainable construction methods, energy efficiency and water efficiency measures once the technologies and developments have been established.

Recommendation

- 6.2.2 Consider how higher CSH and BREEAM targets are set if intending to be different from statutory requirements. Clarify if the Carbon Fund will only be linked to carbon emissions or other aspects of CSH and BREEAM. Provide further detail in the supporting text or a SPD.

Likely Minor Beneficial Effects

- 6.2.3 Minor beneficial effects were identified for the following policies:

Spatial Options 1, 2, 3 and 4

- 6.2.4 The scale of the developments brought forward under these options will dictate how energy efficient developments can be. Delivery of new residential and employment development has the potential to be designed and constructed to current building regulation standards in particular with regard to energy efficiency and carbon reductions and meets the required design codes and standards at the time of development e.g. CSH and BREEAM. Smaller developments will struggle to deliver the energy efficiency and carbon reductions that are possible in large scale regeneration projects such as CHP. Development within Faversham may find meeting the regulations harder due to the prevalent historic nature of the buildings within the town. Developing at urban extension sites gives the developer greater opportunities to incorporate the most up to date sustainable design principles.

Recommendation

- 6.2.5 Ensure that the preferred Spatial Options provides a mechanism to deliver the required or higher than CSH and BREEAM standards and meets the governments carbon reduction targets through energy efficiency measures and low carbon technologies.

Policy CP4 – Sustainability and Environment Cross-cutting policy

- 6.2.6 This policy approach is the mechanism for delivering sustainable development across the Borough.

Policy CP6 – Homes and Communities

- 6.2.7 This policy approach will deliver benefits with regard to climate change, energy efficiency and sustainable construction through requiring new development to adhere to required CSH or

BREEAM standards and follow sustainable design and construction guidance and the Borough's Energy Opportunities Plan.

6.3 Proposed Monitoring

- Renewable energy installations and low carbon technologies developed in the Borough
- Green house gas emissions
- Development constructed to achieve the required CSH or BREEAM standards (target to be confirmed (if above national govt. standards) later in the Core Strategy process)

7 Air

Introduction

7.1.1 Historically the main cause of poor air quality has been pollution from factories or coal burned for domestic heating. Smoke and sulphur dioxide from these sources resulted in serious public health problems in the major cities. By and large, thanks to regulation and technological changes, this source of pollution is no longer a problem in the UK, however poor air quality remains an issue.

7.1.2 Today traffic forms the principal source of pollution. Carbon monoxide (CO), oxides of nitrogen (NOX), volatile organic compounds (VOC) and small particles (PM10) are among the pollutants emitted from vehicle exhausts. These compounds can cause severe cardio-vascular and respiratory harm to people, especially in the long term, and also have adverse effects on the natural and built environment.

Environmental Protection Objectives

7.1.3 Directive 96/62/EC the 'Air Quality Framework Directive':

- To assess air quality and obtain relevant information
- To maintain ambient air quality where it is good and improve it in other cases

7.1.4 Directive 1999/30/EC the first 'Daughter Directive':

- To maintain levels of sulphur dioxide (SO₂), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), small particles and lead below limit values and to prepare attainment programmes where limit values are unlikely to be met under a 'business as usual' scenario

7.1.5 Directive 2000/69/EC the second 'Daughter Directive'

- To establish limit values for benzene and carbon monoxide (CO)

7.1.6 Directive 2002/3/EC the third 'Daughter Directive'

- To set long term objectives for equivalent to the World Health Organisation's new guideline values
- To formulate reduction plans in cases of non-compliance
- To set target values for ozone (O₂)

7.1.7 Directive 2004/107/EC the fourth 'Daughter Directive'

- To set target values for arsenic (As), cadmium (Cd), mercury (Hg), nickel (Ni) and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) in ambient air.

Context Review

7.1.8 The key messages from the review include:

Message	Source
Reduce the negative impacts of transport on air quality by promoting: congestion management; travel planning; increased use of public transport; cleaner transport fuels;	Planning Policy Statement 23: Planning and Pollution Control

Message	Source
and lower emission vehicles.	
The challenge is to minimise the impact of all forms of pollution and sustain past improvements in air and water quality.	Kent Environment Strategy

Baseline

- 7.1.9 Under the provisions of the Environment Act 1995, each Local Authority is obliged to review and assess the air quality within its area. The aim of this review and assessment process is to establish whether or not the Statutory Air Quality objectives for the seven named pollutants are likely to be exceeded.
- 7.1.10 The seven pollutants are as follows:
- Benzene
 - 1,3 – butadiene
 - Carbon monoxide (CO)
 - Lead
 - Nitrogen dioxide (NO₂)
 - Particles(PM₁₀)
 - Sulphur Dioxide (SO₂)
- 7.1.11 Swale Borough Council have considered all 7 pollutants and by a process of elimination identified pollutants for which there may be a risk of exceedence. Swale identified that PM₁₀ and NO₂ required further investigation at two locations in the Borough, Sheerness and Ospringe. Two continuous monitoring stations were commissioned at these locations.
- 7.1.12 The main source of air pollution in the Borough is road traffic emissions from major roads, notably the M2, A2, and A249. An Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) was declared in March 2009 along the A2 in Newington where exceedences of the annual mean objective for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) were predicted. Other pollution sources, including industrial, commercial and domestic sources, also make a contribution to background pollution concentrations¹².
- 7.1.13 The data collected by the monitoring stations is managed by ERG on behalf of The Kent and Medway Air Quality Partnership and data is available live on the website. In addition to the air quality monitoring stations, the Environmental Protection Team carries out passive monitoring using diffusion tubes for NO₂. These tubes are situated in a number of locations around the Borough. The data is used to give an indication of background levels and any areas that may need further investigation.
- 7.1.14 In Swale air quality is monitored at:
- Sheerness (urban background)
 - Swale Roadside
 - Swale Ospringe Roadside 2
- 7.1.15 Swale Borough Council has undertaken monitoring for NO₂, PM₁₀ and SO₂. The 2009 data for these pollutants have shown compliance with the Air Quality Standards Objectives with

¹² Swale Borough Council LAQM Annual Progress Report 2010

regard to PM10 and SO2. With respect to NO2 exceedences of the annual mean have been observed.

- 7.1.16 The 2009 diffusion tube results have shown that 15 sites have exceeded the annual mean NO2 objective of 40 µg/m³. Of these sites 5 have relevant exposure when projected to façade and are located outside of the existing AQMA; 3 in Sittingbourne and 2 in the A2 Ospringe area, near Faversham. The 2009 results for PM10 have shown the following exceedences of the daily mean objective 50 µg/m³. There has been one exceedence at the Swale Ospringe Roadside 2 location and 11 exceedences at the Swale Sheerness Background location. The Air Quality Standards Objective allowance for this objective is 35 exceedences per year. In this case the 2009 results show that PM10 concentrations met the objective.
- 7.1.17 Swale Borough Council has measured concentrations of NO2 above the annual mean objective at relevant locations outside of the AQMA, in Sittingbourne and the A2 Ospringe area. These locations were already identified in previous Local Air Quality Management reports. The Council is currently in the process of considering declaring further AQMAs in Sittingbourne, while a Detailed Assessment of the A2 Ospringe, near Faversham has been undertaken in 2010 and an AQMA has been designated at Newington¹³.
- 7.1.18 The following tables illustrate the air quality situation in the borough:

Table 2.2 Swale Ospringe Roadside 2

Air Quality Objectives at Swale Roadside 2 in 2009			
Pollutant	Objective	Result	Achieved
PM ₁₀	Annual mean > 40 µg m ⁻³ (Grav Equiv)	27	Yes
PM ₁₀	daily mean > 50 µg m ⁻³ (Grav Equiv) on more than 35 days	1	Yes
NO ₂	Annual Mean > 40 µg m ⁻³	29	Yes
NO ₂	Hourly Mean > 200 µg m ⁻³ for more than 18 times per year	0	Yes
Warning: PM ₁₀ achieved a capture rate less than 75% for the year (23%). Results may not be representative of the full year and should be used for guidance only.			

Table 2.3 Swale Sheerness

Air Quality Objectives at Swale Sheerness in 2009			
Pollutant	Objective	Result	Achieved
PM ₁₀	Annual mean > 40 µg m ⁻³ (Grav Equiv)	27	Yes
PM ₁₀	daily mean > 50 µg m ⁻³ (Grav Equiv) on more than 35 days	16	Yes
NO ₂	Annual Mean > 40 µg m ⁻³	22	Yes
NO ₂	Hourly Mean > 200 µg m ⁻³ for more than 18 times per year	0	Yes
SO ₂	15 Minute mean > 266 µg m ⁻³ for more than 35 15-minute periods	0	Yes

¹³ Swale Borough Council LAQM Annual Progress Report 2010

Air Quality Objectives at Swale Sheerness in 2009			
SO ₂	Hourly mean > 350 µgm ⁻³ for more than 24 hours	0	Yes
SO ₂	Daily Mean > 125 µgm ⁻³ for more than 3 days	0	Yes

Source: Kent Air

7.1.19 The tables above illustrate that Swale achieves the air quality targets for the pollutants monitored, performing positively.

Likely Future Conditions

7.1.20 Should manufacturing levels continue to decline in the Borough, this may offset rises in air pollution from other sources. Transport is a significant contributor to poor air quality, within Swale there are a number of strategic transport routes which contribute to the quality of air in the Borough. Improvements to the public transport networks emphasising reduced car use should ensure that air quality does not continue to be compromised by transport use in the Borough.

7.1.21 As stated in the introduction, emissions have a detrimental effect on the natural world from landscape to the species that inhabit them. Habitat such as chalk grassland which is nutrient poor is seriously affected by biodiversity. If development planned within Swale is to adversely effect the traffic on the M2 and other major roads across the Borough, the added emission are likely to affect the Queensdown Warren SAC (the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) which will be undertaken at later staged of the Core Strategy production will examine this point further).

Environmental and Sustainability Problems

7.1.22 The following issues have been identified:

- Traffic is likely to continue to be a major source of air pollution in the Borough. Significant 'micro hot spots' at Ospringe and St Pauls Street Sittingbourne have been identified (by Council officers), at these two locations emission targets are being exceeded. The negative effects of transport and development on air quality should be minimised.
- Increased traffic flows resulting from the new bridge linking Isle of Sheppey with the mainland and the future new northern relief road bring increased traffic flows and associated air pollution issues.
- Increased emissions are likely to have an adverse impact on the wildlife and habitats within the Borough.

Proposed SA/SEA Objectives

SA objective	To reduce air pollution and ensure air quality continues to improve across the Borough
Decision making criteria	Contribute to reductions in air quality monitoring pollutants at monitoring locations across the Borough?

7.2 Appraisal Findings

Likely Significant Effects

- 7.2.1 No significant effects arising from the Strategic Spatial Options and Core Strategy policy proposals on SA Objective 4 were thought likely. A number of minor effects were identified and these are discussed below.

Likely Minor Beneficial Effects

- 7.2.2 Minor beneficial effects were identified for the following policies:

Spatial Options 1 and 2

- 7.2.3 Completion of the Sittingbourne Northern Relief Road (SNRR) is expected to contribute towards reducing traffic congestion on the current road network. This may have a minor effect on local air quality, reducing the intensity of areas where pollution from vehicles was an issue. Once the SNRR is constructed and operational (over the long term) it is probable that air quality improvements will arise as congestion is reduced. However, there is uncertainty surrounding the level of impact of traffic on air pollution.

Spatial Option 3

- 7.2.4 This Spatial Options proposes completion of the SNRR and the first phase of the Sittingbourne Southern Relief Road (SSRR). As stated above, this may have a minor effect on air quality reducing the intensity of areas where pollution from vehicles was an issue. Associated with congestion is poor air quality, there is currently poor air quality at Ospringe (the monitoring station) and an AQMA has been declared at Newington, these are linked to the current A2. However, with improvements to the road network and an encouragement to use sustainable transport methods it is hoped air quality will improve within the town centre (Sittingbourne) and at the monitoring stations across the Borough. As the proposed road improvements are undertaken (over the long term) it is probable that air quality improvements will arise as congestion is reduced. However, there is uncertainty surrounding the level of impact of traffic on air pollution.

Spatial Option 4

- 7.2.5 This Spatial Options proposes completion of the SNRR and the SSRR. As stated above, the completion of these roads should reducing the intensity of areas where pollution from vehicles was an issue within the towns and villages of the Borough. However, as explained under negative effects the SSRR has the potential to lead to increases in traffic on some areas of the A2 around Teynham.

Policy CP4 – Sustainability and Environment cross-cutting policy

- 7.2.6 This policy approach is the mechanism for achieving sustainable development across the Borough, which has associated benefits with regard to air pollution.

Policy DM14 – Managing Travel Demand

- 7.2.7 This policy approach will contribute towards a more sustainable transport system for the Borough, contributing towards reductions in emission improving air quality across the Borough.

Minor Negative Effects

Spatial Option 2

- 7.2.8 This Spatial Option proposes a larger rural centre focus including around Newington and the wider A2 corridor, this development would contribute towards increased traffic movements around these enlarged communities in particular Ospringe, Teynham and Newington and the associated air quality issues.

Spatial Option 4

- 7.2.9 This Spatial Option proposes delivery of the full SSRR, the route of which will go through a considerable rural area and bring associated air quality effects to this area. There is also the associated impact of increased traffic and air pollution on the A2 in some areas including Teynham.

Recommendations

- 7.2.10 Through the consideration and development of the Spatial Options ensure that the final route in particular the SSRR results in least environmental damage. In order to mitigate air pollution associated with traffic, the Core Strategy should continue to encourage use of sustainable transport options where ever feasible for residents (CS4 and DM14) and in particular for the potentially increased rural villages (Spatial Option 2).

7.3 Proposed Monitoring

- New designations of Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA)
- Frequency of air pollution standards violations
- Per capita emissions of 'conventional' air pollutants (CO, VOC, NOX, PM10)
- Per capita fossil fuel consumption, and emissions of CO2 and other climate change emissions

8 Landscape

Introduction

8.1.1 Landscape character is defined as 'a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse' (Source: Landscape Character Network). Landscape gives a locality its sense of place, making it different from neighbouring localities.

8.1.2 Landscapes can be areas designated for their natural beauty or ambience but can also be 'ordinary' places that are not given statutory protection. Urban landscapes also have an important role to play in affecting the quality of people's lives, therefore enhancing 'townscapes' is also important.

Environmental Protection Objectives

8.1.3 European Landscape Convention (2000)

- Commits the UK to "recognise landscapes in law as an essential component of people's surroundings, an expression of the diversity of their shared cultural and natural heritage, and a foundation of their identity"

8.1.4 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act (1949):

- Provides for the creation of National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

8.1.5 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990):

- Provides specific protection for buildings and areas of special architectural or historic interest

8.1.6 Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000):

- Create a framework for public access to the countryside
- Provides greater protection to Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and new arrangements for the management of AONBs
- Provides for the possibility of Conservation Area Boards for AONBs
- Management Plans receive a statutory status

8.1.7 Section 85 requires public bodies to have regard to the purposes of designations of AONBs.

Context Review

8.1.8 The key messages from the context review are given below:

Message	Source
There are areas of landscape that are highly valued locally, which may not be nationally designated areas. Local landscape designations should only be maintained where it can be shown that criteria-based planning policies cannot provide the necessary protection.	PPS7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas
Protect and enhance, where possible, biodiversity	PPS9: Biodiversity and Geological

Message	Source
and geological resources in the areas where development plan policies and planning decisions are taking place.	Conservation
Provide the context for a network of accessible, high-quality and sustainable landscapes and waterways, which capitalise on existing natural, built, historic and cultural assets, to support their conservation, enhancement and on-going use, and boost the Gateway's rich biodiversity assets, strengthen character and identity, transforming perceptions and making it a great place to live, work and invest.	Thames Gateway Delivery Plan (2007)
Protect and enhance natural habitats, wildlife and landscape, minimising waste and pollution and promoting sustainable development solutions. Sustainable agriculture, horticulture and forestry as cornerstones of a diverse and prosperous land based economy.	Kent Environment Strategy
Create a cleaner and greener Swale, in which people choose to live and work. Ensure that growth is not only environmentally sustainable, but delivers positive improvements in the quality of life for local people.	Ambitions for Swale, Swale's Sustainable Community Strategy 2009 – 2026 (2009)
Invest in strategic green space, to maximise the ecological value of Swale's key landscape assets and realising their tourism and recreational Potential. Support the development of Swale's Green Grid, connecting urban communities with parks and open spaces and with the surrounding countryside.	Corporate Plan Refresh 2009-2012 'Shaping the Future of Swale'
Commitment to securing enhancements to the network of routes and paths available to the public, of which the PROW network is an important but not exhaustive part.	Kent Countryside Access Improvement Plan
Protection and enhancement of landscape and biodiversity resources and to protect and enhance biodiversity across the borough.	Landscape Character and Biodiversity SPD (consultation draft) 2010

Baseline

- 8.1.9 At the national level, the Countryside Agency (now Natural England) have mapped and described regional character areas across the country as part of their Countryside Character Programme. Three of the seven landscape character areas that fall wholly or partially within Kent, define the character of Swale Borough. The northern part of the Borough, generally including Sheppey and the marshland, falls within the Greater Thames Estuary. South of this the North Kent Plain forms the main agricultural and fruit belt across the Borough. Finally the dip slope of the North Downs is characterised by mostly arable land and pasture forms the southern part of the Borough.
- 8.1.10 There are a number of landscape designations that cover Swale Borough. Most of the landscape south of the M2 forms part of the nationally designated Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), as illustrated in Figure 5 of the Scoping Report.
- 8.1.11 Outside the AONB, the lower dip slope, together with some of the dry valleys, are recognised by Kent County Council as the North Downs Special Landscape Area (SLA), as illustrated in

Figure 2 of the Scoping Report. The majority of the marshlands in the north of the mainland and south Sheppey form part of the North Kent Marshes SLA, which continues from the Medway Marshes to the west of the Borough to the Seasalter Marshes to the east. In the east of the Borough is the Blean Woods SLA, the majority of which extends into neighbouring Canterbury District.

8.1.12 At the county level Kent County Council have further refined and subdivided these character areas. The following character areas fall wholly or partly within Swale Borough:

- North Sheppey
- Swale Marshes
- Fruit Belt
- Chatham Outskirts: Mid Kent Downs
- Bicknor: Mid Kent Downs
- Challock: Mid Kent Downs
- Faversham Fruit Belt
- Eastern Swale Marshes
- Eastern Fruit Belt
- The Blean

8.1.13 The Local Plan 2008 has designated four Areas of High Landscape Value; these were designated to ensure that development is steered toward the opportunities available in locations with lesser landscape impact. These areas were identified as worthy of protection because of their conformity, at the local level, with one or more of the following criteria:

- containing resources of local level importance
- having high scenic quality;
- being generally unspoilt;
- having a clear sense of place;
- having historical or wildlife interests;
- there being a consensus of professional and public opinion.

8.1.14 The Landscape Character Assessment for Swale 2005 has identified 42 Character Areas. The list of Landscape Character areas is contained in Appendix 3 and highlights the condition, sensitivity and management guidelines for each area. The Landscape Character Assessment shows that 7 character areas are in need of restoration and re-creation. Special Landscape Areas are designated by the County Council and defined within the Local Plan, with three such areas present in the Borough.

8.1.15 The Borough has a considerable and varied coastline – the longest in Kent at 111km. The mainland and southern coast of the Isle of Sheppey comprise low lying marshland, forming the Medway and Swale Estuary. The coastline is largely undeveloped, except within its creeks and in a section of the Swale between Ridham and Milton Creek and the north-west coast of the Isle of Sheppey.

- 8.1.16 The northern coast of the Isle of Sheppey is of a very different character. Beaches and eroding cliffs provide a stark contrast to the south of the Island, whilst gently undulating hills, punctuated with chalet and caravan parks are a prominent feature of the coast.
- 8.1.17 The Council own or manage 309 hectares of major urban and country parks. In addition, numerous small pieces of open space are located in housing and town centre areas contributing greatly to the urban green landscape. The major parks are located throughout the Borough and vary in character from the formal such as Faversham Recreation Ground to the informal at The Glen, Minster.
- 8.1.18 The Council own and manage a number of areas of woodland across the Borough. This includes Perry Woods in Faversham, which is a major area of semi natural woodland. The Council is also part of a partnership which manages Church Woods which is part of the Blean woodland complex (SLA).
- 8.1.19 Faversham contains two major parks and recreation grounds, covering 11.3 hectares. The facilities provided at these sites include play areas, sports pitches, gardens and other facilities. Sittingbourne is home to 8 major parks and recreation grounds, covering 62.1 hectares. All locations have provision of play areas and sports pitches apart from Johnson House Gardens. In Sheerness there are 13 Major Parks and recreation grounds covering 58.7 hectares. These contain a varying range of facilities.
- 8.1.20 Swale Borough Council has 13 allotment sites: 4 in Faversham, 5 in Sittingbourne, 2 in Sheerness and 2 in Queenborough. The majority of the sites are run by self management groups.
- 8.1.21 Portions of the Borough's landscape are dominated by the industries which operate on the land, such as the fruit growing belt, where there is a local dominance of poly tunnels.

Likely Future Conditions

- 8.1.22 The Borough's open spaces and areas of high landscape value will continue to be protected and enhanced especially from future development pressures. It is envisaged by the Council that the fruit growing industries will continue to grow in the future requiring management in order to ensure negative impacts from poly tunnels are avoided.

Sustainability Issues and Problems

- Swale contains a high quality distinctive landscape which requires protection, enhancement, extension, connectivity and permeability to maintain its locally distinctive habitats.
- The consequences of climate change are a problem facing some of the Borough's highest quality landscapes including the marshes. The impacts of habitat fragmentation and isolation will become increasingly apparent as climate changes and development expands.
- Tensions have been identified between the agricultural sector and the fruit growing industries due to the historic dominance of the fruit growing industry which is now facing decline. There has been a decline in the number of orchards and poly tunnels do have a negative impact on the quality and appearance of the landscape and also on land quality in these particular areas.
- Environmental quality is not distributed evenly across the Borough, access to natural green and open space is limited for many communities.

Proposed SA/SEA Objectives

SA objective	To protect and enhance the valued landscape and townscape of Swale
Decision making criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does it preserve and enhance the Borough and county wide landscape classifications? • Does it preserve and enhance the nationally important landscape within the Kent Downs AONB? • Does it contribute positively to the Borough's established high quality landscape? • Does it provide for new open spaces, allotments? • Does it contribute to the establishment of the green grid network?
Indicator (s)	<p>Changes in landscape character area conditions Creation of new public open space and allotments Improvements to existing open spaces and allotments Improvement/ decline in condition of the AONB</p>

8.2 Appraisal Findings

Likely Significant Effects

- 8.2.1 No significant positive effects arising from the Strategic Spatial Options and Core Strategy policy proposals on SA Objective 5 were thought likely although a number of significant negative effects were identified.

Spatial Option 3

- 8.2.2 This Spatial Option proposes housing delivery within the existing urban areas (Sittingbourne, Sheerness and Queenborough), urban extensions and additional housing requirements met through expansion or infill development in the key village locations of Iwade, Teynham or Minster/Halfway. Development at the village locations will have a greater negative effect on the rural landscape and valued natural environment of the Borough.
- 8.2.3 Although, this option, as all options requires the release of Greenfield land it requires the smallest amount for new housing development of the four proposed Spatial Options but it does include new homes in the Port of Sheerness. It therefore offers greatest potential to protect the countryside and high grade agricultural land across the Borough however the scale of development is still significant. The Greenfield land surrounding Sittingbourne is high grade agricultural land.
- 8.2.4 A considerable size of Greenfield land is allocated to deliver the additional employment development of 60ha. Expansion is proposed at the Kent Science Park up to 145,000 sq m, providing 4,800 direct jobs in total over the long term, this expansion and the other required employment growth development has associated negative impact on the AONB and surrounding countryside.
- 8.2.5 This option proposes the completion of the Sittingbourne Northern Relief Road (SNRR) to the A2 and the new junction to the M2 providing the 1st phase of the Sittingbourne Southern Relief Road (SSRR) with the intention to relieve traffic congestion across the Borough. The M2 junction improvements could impact upon the AONB and there are considerable environmental implications associated with the SSRR as the proposed route goes through areas of high quality landscape value, agricultural land and important countryside.

Spatial Option 4

- 8.2.6 This option delivers the greatest levels of housing and economic growth across the Borough and will therefore have the greatest negative effect on the Boroughs landscape and townscape. It will require the release of a considerable amount of Greenfield land – surrounding Sittingbourne, at the Kent Science Park and the identified village locations. This Greenfield land potentially includes areas of high agricultural quality and landscape value as well as valued countryside used for the enjoyment of all.
- 8.2.7 This option proposes the completion of the SNRR to the A2 and the SSRR (including the new junction to the M2) with the intention to relive traffic congestion across the Borough. The M2 junction improvements could impact upon the AONB and there are considerable environmental implications associated with the SSRR as the proposed route goes through areas of high quality landscape value, agricultural land and important countryside causing considerable environmental effects.

Recommendations

- 8.2.8 Ensure that for all options that all suitable brown field land is utilised before the release of Greenfield land in particular the identified higher quality land. Ensure that when finalised, the route of the SSRR utilises the lower grade land and designations wherever feasible.

Likely Minor Beneficial Effects

- 8.2.9 Minor beneficial effects were identified for the following policies:

Spatial Options 1, 2, 3 and 4

- 8.2.10 These Spatial Options proposes to regenerate Faversham Creekside which contributes to reinforcing local distinctiveness and character. Areas of Faversham and the surrounding area are designated as areas of high landscape value and special landscape areas, any new development should enhance these landscape designations.

Policy CP9 – Green Infrastructure cross-cutting policy

- 8.2.11 A green infrastructure network has the potential to deliver positive benefits with regard to the landscape of the Borough through enabling creation of green corridors and green chains and providing the mechanism for funding to be obtained to implement required improvements.

Policy DM2 – The Coast Policy

- 8.2.12 This policy approach will see the protection and management of the coastline, supporting restrictions on development along the coast line. The protection mechanisms will support the intrinsic landscape that exists within the Borough.

Policy DM3 – Heritage Assets

- 8.2.13 This policy approach will achieve benefits with regard to the protection of the Borough's heritage assets, the mechanisms proposed will also enable protection and enhancement of the landscape and townscape of the Borough through ensuring high quality designed development proposals.

Policy DM4/5 – Natural Assets

- 8.2.14 This policy approach seeks to ensure protection and enhancement of the Boroughs natural assets, delivering anticipated protection to the landscape and townscape of the Borough.

Policy DM6 – Enabling development for landscape and biodiversity enhancement

- 8.2.15 This policy approach will provide the mechanism to deliver enhancements to the Boroughs high quality landscape.

Policy DM11 – Rural Housing Policy

- 8.2.16 This policy approach will seek to restrict the development of market housing to existing built up area boundaries and within accordance with the settlement hierarchy, this approach will ensure protection of the landscape and townscape of the Borough.

Policy DM12 – Provision for Gypsies and Travellers

- 8.2.17 This policy approach seeks to identify sites to meet the identified needs of the gypsy and traveller community. Through rigorously applying the site identification criteria and site criteria requirements it should be ensured that no detrimental impact on the built or natural environment occurs in particular on the landscape.

Likely Minor Negative Effects

Spatial Option 1

- 8.2.18 This Spatial Option proposes a reduced Greenfield land take and focuses on use of previously developed land, however land will still be required for release to meet the identified housing and employment growth requirements.

Spatial Option 2

- 8.2.19 This Spatial Option proposes a larger rural centre focus, directing housing sites towards green fields and the identified larger village centres. This will have a negative effect on the rural landscape and valued natural environment of the Borough.

Recommendation

- 8.2.20 Ensure that as the spatial options are developed further that the impact of increased development (both housing and economic) on the natural environment is mitigated against through protection mechanisms.

Uncertain Effects

Policy CP3 – Location of Allocations

- 8.2.21 At this stage it is uncertain the sustainability implications of the locations for development. Swale has a valued landscape and a rich historic and natural environment; in particular Faversham and the swale estuary which requires protection are considered when determining locations for development.

Recommendation

- 8.2.22 Ensure that emerging policy recognises implications of SPA and SAC designation as well national and local biodiversity and nature conservation designations or cross reference is made to Biodiversity Core Strategy and Development Management policies.

Policy DM8 – Rural Economy

- 8.2.23 The rural economy will be supported through this policy mechanism but it will also be ensured that there is no detriment to the landscape character and countryside conservation, however the degree of this is uncertain at this stage.

8.3 Proposed Monitoring

- Changes in landscape character area conditions
- Creation of new public open space and allotments
- Improvements to existing open spaces and allotments
- Improvement/ decline in condition of the AONB

9 Soil

Introduction

9.1.1 Healthy soils are essential to sustainable development. Soils form part of most terrestrial habitats, provide a medium in which plants can grow and are, therefore, essential to biodiversity. Similarly, they play a key role in agriculture, with the fertility of the soil having a major bearing on the productivity of the land.

9.1.2 Soil can be considered a non-renewable resource because its formation is an extremely slow process.

Environmental Protection Objectives

9.1.3 The European Soil Thematic Strategy (2006) has the following objectives:

- Establish common principles for the protection and sustainable use of soils;
- Prevent threats to soils, and mitigate the affects of those threats;
- Preserve soil functions within the context of sustainable use; and
- Restore degraded and contaminated soils to approved levels of functionality.

9.1.4 Safeguarding our Soils, A Strategy for England has the vision: By 2030, all England's soils will be managed sustainably and degradation threats tackled successfully. This will improve the quality of England's soils and safeguard their ability to provide essential services for future generations. The vision will mean that:

- agricultural soils will be better managed and threats to them will be addressed;
- soils will play a greater role in the fight against climate change and in helping us to manage its impacts;
- soils in urban areas will be valued during development, and construction practices will ensure vital soil functions can be maintained; and
- pollution of our soils is prevented, and our historic legacy of contaminated land is being dealt with.

Context Review

9.1.5 The key messages from the context review are given below:

Message	Source
Development should be prioritised on previously developed land.	PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Communities
Many urban areas contain large amounts of land, once used for industrial purposes but now under-used or vacant. Optimum use should be made of potential sites and existing premises in inner cities and other urban areas.	PPS6: Town Centres
Promote a sustainable, diverse and adaptable agriculture sector where farming achieves high environmental standards that is competitive and profitable; and provides high	PPS7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas

Message	Source
quality products.	
Advocates the precautionary approach to development and land contamination.	PPS23: Planning and Pollution Control
Quantify diversity, quality and extent of soils to help develop strategies to eliminate threats to spoil and promote sustainable land management.	DEFRA Soil Protection Programme
Protect and enhance where possible, biodiversity and geological resources in the areas where development plan policies and planning decisions are taking place.	PPS9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation

Baseline

- 9.1.6 The diverse landscapes of the Borough can be largely attributed to its very rich and varied geology and soils.
- 9.1.7 The upper chalk of the North Downs dip slope dominates the southern area of the Borough. Over the majority of its area it is overlain by clay-with-flints on the higher ground and head deposits in the valley bottoms. The fine loamy and silty soils of the clay-with-flints support cereals, permanent grassland and deciduous woodland. In the valleys the thinner well-drained calcareous soils generally support grassland.
- 9.1.8 To the north of the chalk is a band of Thanet, Oldhaven and Blackheath beds overlain with a complex mix of brickearths and gravels. The main areas of settlement, including Sittingbourne and Faversham are located within this band, along with the Roman Road of Watling Street. The deep well drained, often stoneless, fine silty soils throughout this area have traditionally supported a variety of crops, most notably apples and other top fruit with some hops.
- 9.1.9 London clay forms the geology of the northern and far eastern parts of the Borough, including the Isle of Sheppey. The London clay gives rise to two contrasting landscapes. Where it is low lying it is overlain with alluvial deposits, which form an almost continuous belt of marshland along the north edge of the mainland and across southern Sheppey. London clay also forms the higher ground of northern Sheppey, capped with a small area of Bagshot beds around Minster and the distinctive clay ridge of the Blean in the east.
- 9.1.10 On the marshland ditches and pumps drain deep stoneless clayey soils. Traditionally these soils support grazing, although some areas have been sufficiently drained to support cereals. The mudflats and saltmarshes are categorised as unripened gley soils. Some of these soils are flooded at high tide and generally they are conserved as saltmarsh habitats with some summer grazing.
- 9.1.11 Both Brownfield and Greenfield locations will inevitably require development in the future across the borough, research has shown (by the Wildlife Trust) that in certain instances brownfield sites are more diverse than agricultural land, especially the case with reptile and invertebrate species.
- 9.1.12 Swale contains, proportionately, some of the most significant levels of the highest quality agricultural land in the UK. It is located within a central mainland belt running approximately east west (but not exclusively) around the A2 Watling Street. This reflects the wind blown deposits of brickearth that are especially conducive to growing a wide range of crops and made the area renowned for its fruit growing. That heritage has significantly declined with arable and livestock now the main products.

- 9.1.13 The agricultural land classification of Swale is illustrated in Figure 3 of the Scoping Report.
- 9.1.14 On Sheppey, agricultural land quality is relatively poor, except in isolated pockets on the higher ground. However, even here, agriculture is the mainstay of the nationally important North Kent Marshes Environmentally Sensitive Area.

Likely Future Conditions

- 9.1.15 The ongoing development programme in the Borough is likely to result in the continuing clean up of contaminated land. The Council is keen to promote the use of previously developed land and the associated remediation of this land where required. However, there will continue to be pressure for new development of low grade agricultural land and non protected open land across the Borough.
- 9.1.16 There is a dominance of high quality land around the main towns of the Borough (mainland) and associated development pressures are inevitable.
- 9.1.17 There are envisaged to be competing pressures for agriculture land due to climate change and greater proportions of land falling within flood risk areas due to sea level rises and surface water issues and the need to be more self sufficient in light of associated emission impacts from importing foods and the need to develop on non brown field land. This does illustrate a demand for increased protection of agricultural land, not currently supported by Government policy.

Environmental and Sustainability Issues and Problems

- 9.1.18 The key problems identified are as follows:
 - Pressure to develop on agricultural land and potential for competing uses of agricultural land due to climate change (greater agricultural production linked to self sufficiency verses need to develop in areas at low risk to flooding and on non previously developed sites once all reserves are utilised).
 - Areas of contaminated land exist across the Borough, as required will be remediated or protected as habitat sites where identified.
 - Brownfield land can be important for biodiversity and, in some instances, offer a higher level of biodiversity than agricultural land; therefore there may be competing pressure for new development and biodiversity protection.

SA/SEA Objectives and Indicators

SA objective	To protect and enhance soil quality and reduce contamination
Decision making criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does it reduce contaminated sites and increase remediation of redundant industrial land? • Does it reduce or improve the quality of agricultural land? • Does it improve the quality of the Boroughs land overall? • Does it protect an identified brownfield site with conservation value or which provides a strategic link within the green grid network? • Does it affect high grade agricultural land? • Does it cause soil pollution/contamination?

9.2 Appraisal Findings

Likely Significant Effects

9.2.1 No significant positive effects arising from the Strategic Spatial Options and Core Strategy policy proposals on SA Objective 6 were thought likely. A number of significant negative effects were identified and these are discussed below.

Spatial Options 1, 3 and 4

9.2.2 The Greenfield land surrounding Sittingbourne is high grade agricultural land, this land is identified for expansion of Sittingbourne to meet the options requirements.

Spatial Option 2

9.2.3 Land surrounding Newington is identified as Grade 1 and 2 agricultural land, this is high quality land and mitigation should be put in place if development is proposed for this land.

Recommendations

9.2.4 Ensure that for all options, all suitable previously developed land is utilised before the release of Greenfield land in particular the identified higher quality land.

Likely Minor Beneficial Effects

9.2.5 Minor beneficial effects were identified for the following policies:

Spatial Options 1, 2, 3 and 4

9.2.6 Proposing development within the main urban and developed areas (including the identified village locations) reduces the impact on Greenfield land, however it is still understood that Greenfield land will be required for release. Focusing on urban areas utilises previously developed land.

9.3 Proposed Monitoring

- Soil morphology
- Previously Developed Land
- Land use densities
- Agricultural Land quality
- Land remediation

10 Water

Introduction

- 10.1.1 Water is essential for all life, human as well as animal or plant, and it is important to treat water as the scarce resource it really is in order to minimise impact on the environment and human health. The efficient use of water, which takes into account its long-term availability and quality is an important factor in sustainable development.
- 10.1.2 Many activities have the potential to pollute water. Pollution may enter the water environment from a point source, for example effluent discharged from a pipe, or from a diffuse source, such as nitrates in rainwater runoff from agricultural land. Polluted water can be treated if it is contained; this, for instance, is what happens to sewage before it is released into the environment. Untreated pollutants can severely damage the natural environment and are a risk to human health.
- 10.1.3 Flooding is another important concern. In England and Wales, around five million people live in areas at risk of flooding. Many floods are localised, short-lived events that can happen suddenly, sometimes with little or no warning. They are usually caused by intense storms that produce more runoff than an area can store or a stream can carry within its normal channel. Urban areas, which have many hard surfaces that restrict infiltration, are at increased risk of flooding.
- 10.1.4 In high-risk areas defence mechanisms can be put in place to control floods but these are costly and frequently merely transfer the problem to another location. Therefore a key aim of land use planning is ensure that flood risk is taken into account at all stages in the planning process to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding, and to direct development away from areas at highest risk.

Environmental Protection Objectives

- 10.1.5 Protection of Water against Agricultural Nitrate Pollution (England and Wales) Regulations 1996, SI 888):
- Surface or underground waters that are or could be high in nitrate from agricultural sources must be designated as Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZ).
 - Within these zones farmers must observe an action programme of measures restricting the timing and application of fertilisers and manures and must keep accurate records¹⁴.
- 10.1.6 Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive 1991:
- The Directive aims to protect the environment from the adverse effects of waste water discharges;
 - All urban waste water must undergo secondary treatment or equivalent, in particular for:
 - All discharges from agglomerations of more than 15,000 population equivalent (i.e. with a 5-day BOD of 60g of oxygen per day);
 - All discharges to freshwater and estuaries from agglomerations between 2,000 and 10,000 population equivalent.

¹⁴ Environment Agency. EC Directive on controlling nitrates from agricultural sources. Available on [www.environment-agency.gov.uk]. Accessed 10.01.2007.

10.1.7 Environmental Permitting Regulations (EPR) 2010:

- Protects groundwater by preventing or limiting the inputs of polluting substances into groundwater. Substances controlled under these regulations fall into two categories:
 - **Hazardous** substances are the most toxic and must be prevented from entering groundwater. Substances in this list may be disposed of to the ground, under a permit, but must not reach groundwater. They include pesticides, sheep dip, solvents, hydrocarbons, mercury, cadmium and cyanide.
 - **Non-hazardous pollutants** are less dangerous, and can be discharged to groundwater under a permit, but must not cause pollution. Examples include sewage, trade effluent and most wastes. Non-hazardous pollutants include any substance capable of causing pollution.

10.1.8 Water Framework Directive 2000:

- Aims to improve water quality and promote the sustainable use of all UK water bodies, including coastal waters, estuaries and all inland water bodies;
- It requires all UK river basins to reach "good status" by 2015, through demanding environmental objectives, including chemical, biological and physical targets;
- WFD monitoring, known as classification, is risk-based and focuses where there is likely to be a problem. It reports on over 30 measures, grouped into ecological status (including biology and 'elements' such as phosphorus and pH) and chemical status ('priority substances'). It uses a principle of 'one out, all out' which means that the poorest individual result drives the overall¹⁵.
- The WFD covers estuaries, coastal waters, groundwater and lakes as well as rivers.
- Of importance to Swale when considering water resources for the Borough and the impacts of increasing abstraction for public water supply is the link between groundwater and the groundwater dependent surface water features, which make up the SPA.

Context Review

10.1.9 The key messages from the context review are given below:

Messages	Source
Identifies broad locations where significant housing coincides with high flood risk. The Thames Gateway is identified within this category. Residual risk is identified as an issue in the SE.	Regional Flood Risk Assessment for the South East (2007)
Identifies sustainable long-term management policies for the coastal areas of Swale. Policy recommendations are in line with those recommended by DEFRA: Hold the line – maintain or upgrade the level of protection provided by the defences, Advance the line – build new defences seaward of the existing defence line, Managed realignment – allow retreat of the shoreline, with management control or limit movement, and No active intervention – a decision not to invest in	Isle of Grain to South Foreland Shoreline Management Plan Public Consultation Medway Estuary and Swale Shoreline Management Plan North Kent and Swale Catchment Abstraction Management Plan (2007)

¹⁵ Environment Agency. Water Quality. Available on www.environment-agency.gov.uk

Messages	Source
providing or maintaining defences.	
The importance of high quality beaches and water environment is recognised. Ensure that beaches and bathing waters are free from human effluent, litter and oil and that quality standards are achieved (e.g. blue flag).	Kent Environment Strategy
The “resource availability status” indicates the relative balance between committed and available resources in a particular area. The status is classified as ‘no water available’, ‘over-licensed’ or over abstracted’. The strategy illustrates implications for new development in the Borough especially in terms of water efficiency.	The Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy
Promotes water efficiency measures through new development design.	Kent Design Guide (2008)
Promotes reduction in consumption of potable water in dwellings, through the use of water efficient fittings, appliances and water recycling systems. CSH Level 3 mandatory water consumption level is less than 105 litres per person per day.	Code for Sustainable Homes (2008)
Ensure that growth is not only environmentally sustainable, but delivers positive improvements in the quality of life for local people.	Ambitions for Swale, Swale’s Sustainable Community Strategy 2009 – 2026 (2009)

Baseline

- 10.1.10 The Water Companies relevant to Swale are Southern Water and South East Water. Southern Water provides wastewater treatment to all of Swale and supplies water to Sittingbourne, Sheppey and the west of the Borough. South East Water provides water to the east of the Borough.
- 10.1.11 The majority (68%) of Southern Water’s supplies comes from groundwater, predominantly from the Chalk aquifer which is widespread across the region. A further 28% comes from river abstractions, including the Medway and Stour in Kent. The remaining 4% of supplies come from the surface water impounding reservoirs, all of which are owned and operated by the company. The largest of these is Bewl Water. This is a pumped storage reservoir with water being abstracted from the River Medway, stored and subsequently released as required for re-abstraction further downstream. The reservoir is owned and operated by Southern Water, but South East Water has an entitlement to 25% of the yield.
- 10.1.12 Over 70% of the water South East Water delivers comes from just over 150 boreholes and wells, with the remainder from six river intakes and surface water reservoirs.¹⁶
- 10.1.13 A high proportion of the Borough falls within the Environment Agency’s tidal flood zones. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) for Swale has been completed (August 2009) which provides greater clarity of flood zones within the Borough for present day, for 2070 (for commercial development) and 2115 (for housing), taking into account the effects of climate change.
- 10.1.14 The SFRA assessed 9 potential development areas in detail. In terms of tidal flood risk Sittingbourne Town Centre, Iwade and Faversham Town Centre have significant proportions of their areas in Flood Zone 1 (low risk). Other areas (including Milton Creek, Faversham Creek,

¹⁶ Swale LDF Topic Paper 10 – Water, August 2009

- Sheerness and Queenborough and Rushenden) had extensive areas covered by the tidal flood zones. As the SFRA demonstrates, flood risk will increase with Climate Change.
- 10.1.15 Surface water, groundwater, and to a lesser extend fluvial flooding also present risks and are highlighted in the SFRA. The SFRA gives guidance on the application of sustainable drainage systems¹⁷.
- 10.1.16 Currently none of the river length in the Swale/North Kent catchment is achieving good ecological status/potential. Expected progress to 2015 is moderate. The overall status for the groundwater body across Swale is poor¹⁸.
- 10.1.17 Ground water levels within the Borough are changing. Industrial water abstraction has declined, mainly due to the Paper Mill in Swale closing. However due to the closure of the Mill, ground water levels have risen considerably in Sittingbourne and pose a risk of flooding at times of intense rainfall when capacity of the drainage system is at its maximum.
- 10.1.18 The Environment Agency's North Kent CAMS (2004) made an assessment of the water availability within a number of water resource management units, including surface and groundwater sources. The groundwater units in particular are exploited for the purposes of public water supply. The final status assigned to each unit is detailed in the table below.

Table 2.5: Water Abstraction Sites

Site	Status
Sheppey water balance – a rain fed unit	No water available
Iwade water balance – a rain fed unit	No water available
Teynham water balance – a spring fed unit	No water available
Seasalter water balance – a spring fed unit	No water available
Gillingham Chalk & LLT	Over abstracted
Sittingbourne Chalk & LLT	Over abstracted
Faversham Chalk	Over licensed
Selling Chalk	Over licensed
Faversham LLT	Water available
Selling LLT	Water available

Source: CAMS

- 10.1.19 Bathing waters are evaluated by the Environment Agency. Bathing water quality has improved significantly since 1990. Between 1998 and 2008 the number of bathing waters meeting the European guideline standards increased by a third. This is largely due to water companies investing to improve the quality of their sewage discharges. There has been a small decline in bathing water quality since 2006, due to diffuse pollution from agricultural and urban sources,

¹⁷ Swale LDF Topic Paper 10 – Water, August 2009

¹⁸ Swale LDF Topic Paper 10 – Water, August 2009

and storm sewage overflows operating more frequently. Further sewerage improvements are planned in the water companies' environment programmes.

- 10.1.20 In 2008 both monitoring stations in Swale, at Sheerness and Leysdown, were classed as having excellent bathing water quality¹⁹.

Likely Future Conditions

- 10.1.21 The risk of flooding will continue to be an issue across the Borough, even with the incorporation of mitigation measures associated with new developments such as sustainable drainage systems. Sea level rises are linked to climate change and will be a threat to the Borough in the future.
- 10.1.22 The availability of water in the south-east is a continuing issue which requires careful management. Water efficiency measures, including rainwater harvesting and greywater recycling and water efficient fixtures and fittings and metering are mandatory in new developments. South East Water's Future Plans 2010-2015 states that they plan to increase metering of household properties by increasing the penetration of metered household properties from 37% to 70% by 2015 and to 90% by 2020. The Southern Water Draft Business Plan for 2010-2015 states that they plan to install over 500,000 meters by 2015 to achieve full metering.

Sustainability Issues and Problems

- 10.1.23 The following issues have been identified:
- The Borough is vulnerable to tidal flooding and from surface water flooding which will be exacerbated by climate change.
 - Water abstraction and water availability will continue to be an issue, especially as development increases.
 - Increased water consumption will have an increased impact on the biodiversity that inhabits water bodies and water systems.
 - As available land for new development becomes scarce, land which falls within flood risk areas is likely to require considering. Through undertaking detailed flood risk assessments, mitigation measures can be incorporated to potentially allow non-vulnerable uses to be permitted.

Proposed SA/SEA objectives

SA objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To manage and reduce the risk of flooding • To maintain and enhance water quality (ground and surface) and make efficient use of water
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¹⁹ Swale LDF Topic Paper 10 – Water, August 2009

10.2 Appraisal Findings

Likely Significant Effects

Policy CP4 – Sustainability and Environment Cross cutting policy

- 10.2.1 This policy approach will deliver significant long term benefits with regard to water efficiency due to implementing sustainability measures into new developments.

Likely Minor Beneficial Effects

- 10.2.2 Minor beneficial effects were identified for the following policies:

Spatial Options 1, 2, 3 and 4

- 10.2.3 The delivery of new housing and employment opportunities will ensure that water is used efficiently through the implementation of the required CSH and BREEAM standards for water minimisation.

Policy CP6 – Homes and Communities

- 10.2.4 This policy approach will deliver benefits with regard to water quality and efficiency through the implementation of sustainable design and construction practices.

Policy CP4 - Sustainability and environment – crosscutting policy

- 10.2.5 This policy approach is the mechanism for achieving sustainable development across the Borough this includes incorporating water efficiency measures into new development and advocating sustainable construction practices.

Policy DM1 – Sustainable Design and Construction

- 10.2.6 This policy approach will deliver the framework for development to be built to be adaptable to changing lifestyles and climate through encouraging buildings for life standards and developments to achieve CSH and BREEAM standards, including water efficiency measures.

Uncertain Effects

Spatial Option 1

- 10.2.7 Exact development locations are unknown at this stage however; considerable areas around Sittingbourne, Faversham and the Isle of Sheppey are at risk of flooding. Appropriate mitigation measures will be required to be incorporated into all new development and demonstration that no alternative suitable lower risk site is available for development in accordance with PPS25. The development within the existing urban area has a low potential to affect water quality due to the urban nature of the existing environment. However, if currently undeveloped land is utilised within the urban area it should be ensured that no additional surface water run-off is created and appropriate attenuation measures are employed. This is dependent on the construction and operation of the eventual land uses. The development growth scenario for Sittingbourne will exceed the current capacity at the Sittingbourne (WwTW).

Spatial Option 2

- 10.2.8 The larger villages of Iwade, Iwade, Eastchurch and Leysdown are located on the Isle of Sheppey they are within or adjacent to areas of identified floodrisk (however flood defences are in place to protect much of the Isle of Sheppey from flooding). Considerable areas of Sittingbourne and Faversham are at risk of flooding, however again much of the land is protected by flood defences. The development of a number of urban fringe sites has the potential to effect water quality. It will depend on the construction and operation of the eventual land uses. The development growth scenario for Sittingbourne will exceed the current capacity at the WwTW but the capacity at Queenborough and Eastchurch WwTW under this option will be sufficient.

Spatial Options 3 and 4

- 10.2.9 The search for housing sites at the key village locations to deliver the circa 860 units under option 3 but 4850 under option 4 have the potential for sites to fall within flood risk areas. Areas of Sittingbourne, Iwade, Teynham and Minster/ Halfway are all areas of flood risk, however most areas do benefit from flood defences, reducing the risk. The development of a number of urban fringe sites has the potential to effect water quality. It will depend on the construction and operation of the eventual land uses. In the long term capacity will be exceeded at Queenborough under Spatial Option 3 and Eastchurch WwTWs for development proposed around Sheppey under Spatial Option 4.

Recommendations

- 10.2.10 In line with the supporting Water Cycle Strategy, to enable the larger growth options to be materialised, infrastructure investment is required at the identified WwTW (Queenborough for Spatial Option 3 and Eastchurch for Spatial Option 4), the policy mechanisms need to be in place to deliver this through the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies.

10.3 Proposed Monitoring

- Chemical and biological water quality?
- Water consumption per capita?
- Dwellings at risk of flooding and consents contrary to EA advice on flooding?
- Does it conserve adequate water supply to maintain healthy populations and rich biodiversity and ensure that water bodies are enhanced to increase biodiversity and ecosystems?
- Will it affect groundwater resources?
- Will it impact on surface water quality?
- Does it provide SuDs systems and other flood prevention systems to attract biodiversity, and to ensure that such systems are integrated into the wider green grid network?

11 Biodiversity

Introduction

11.1.1 Biodiversity is the variety of life on earth at all levels, from genes to worldwide populations of the same species; from communities of species sharing the same small area of habitat to worldwide ecosystems.

11.1.2 Biodiversity has many attributes:

- It is a vital, integral part of the planet's life support system;
- It is the basis for evolution and adaptation to a rapidly changing environment;
- It is a key component of a functioning environment for future generations;
- It is essential to maintain clean water, fertile soil and clean air, thereby providing the basis for existence and indirect economic benefits;
- It can be managed and used for economic benefit, for instance to produce crops, medicines, building materials, fuel and tools;
- It has economic and social values e.g. in leisure and recreation or tourism, and educational, aesthetic and spiritual value, and so enriches our quality of life;
- It determines the distinctive character or 'feel' to an area, be it a chalk downland, estuary or woodland; and
- People value the existence of biodiversity and want it conserved.

11.1.3 The main threats to both local and global biodiversity are associated with human activities causing habitat loss/damage, loss of biodiversity, loss of protected species, disturbance to and pollution of ecosystems, risk to unprotected habitats and the impact of climate change. Human activity on a local scale in back gardens can also be detrimental with an increase in paving and other non-grass/ tree options. Back gardens have now though been removed from the brownfield classification, providing stronger protection from development. Many species-populations are being reduced and fragmented below viable sizes. Conserving biodiversity is a global, long-term challenge and requires global, long-term solutions that start at the local level. The neglect of habitats can also have a detrimental impact on their ecological value.

Environmental Protection Objectives

11.1.4 Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, 1971:

- To conserve wetlands of international importance, especially as waterfowl habitats;

11.1.5 Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats, 1979:

- To protect endangered species and their habitats;

11.1.6 (Wild) Birds Directive 79/409/EEC, 1979:

- To protect of all naturally occurring wild bird species and their habitats, with particular protection of rare species;

11.1.7 Bonn Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of the Wild Animals, 1979:

- To protect threatened animals that migrate across national boundaries and/or the high seas;

11.1.8 Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, 1992:

- To protect important natural habitat (listed in Annex I, amended in Directive 97/62/EC) and species (listed in Annex II), using measures to maintain or restore their "favourable conservation status", principally by Special Areas of Conservation, but also (through land-use and development policies) by management of the landscape features of importance to wildlife outside SACs;
- To safeguard species leading strict protection (Annex IV). This Directive is transposed into UK law through the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations, 1994.

11.1.9 The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000):

- Part I is concerned with the protection of wildlife,
- Part II relates to the countryside and national parks (and the designation of protected areas),
- Part III covers public rights of way,
- Part IV deals with miscellaneous provisions of the Act

11.1.10 The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

- Creates a new statutory right of access on foot to certain types of open land, to modernise the public rights of way system, to strengthen nature conservation legislation, and to facilitate better management of AONBs. It contains provisions for local authorities to establish byelaws and give greater powers of enforcement to a variety of relevant bodies.

11.1.11 The Hedgerow Regulations 1997

- The regulations are intended to protect important countryside hedges from destruction or damage. It does not apply to hedgerows which are 'within or marking the boundary of the curtilage of a dwelling-house'.

Context Review

11.1.12 The following are the key messages from the context review:

Message	Source
Every authority must have regard to and conserve, enhance and maintain biodiversity in enhance Local Wildlife Sites and biodiversity outside designated areas. A list of particularly important habitats and species is published by the secretary of state, in consultation with Natural England.	NERC Act 2006
Biodiversity should be considered during the initial stages of plan making. Developments should recognise the role and value of biodiversity in supporting economic development and contributing to a high quality environment. Development should not take place where it would cause a loss or damage to ancient woodland, except where the development can be proven to have benefits that outweigh the loss of the woodland.	PPS9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation and Good Practice Guide
Conserve and enhance biological diversity in Kent and to contribute to the conservation of national and global biodiversity.	Kent Biodiversity Action Plan 1997

Message	Source
The Swale BAP has actions relating to land-use planning as well as specific habitat actions for priority habitats and actions directed at supporting and encouraging local communities to take action for wildlife.	Swale Biodiversity Action Plan 2008
There is a need to protect and enhance the number of species of plants and animals in Kent and the quality of their habitats, including those which are internationally and nationally important and those which are characteristic of Kent.	Kent Environment Strategy
Invest in strategic green space, to maximise the ecological value of Swale's key landscape assets and realising their tourism and recreational potential. Support the development of Swale's Green Grid, connecting urban communities with parks and open spaces and with the surrounding countryside	Corporate Plan Refresh 'Shaping the Future of Swale' 2009-2012
Ensure that growth is not only environmentally sustainable, but delivers positive improvements in the quality of life for local people.	Ambitions for Swale, Swale's Sustainable Community Strategy 2009 – 2026 (2009)

Baseline

- 11.1.13 Swale Borough is rich in biodiversity, with a range of semi-natural and man-made habitats, some of which are recognised as being of importance at county, national or international levels. 20% of the Borough (8,469 hectares) is designated for international or national value, a further 5% (2,000 hectares) is designated for their County (local) value, and these are the 32 designated Sites of Nature Conservation Importance.
- 11.1.14 Three of Natural England's Natural Areas - the Greater Thames Estuary, the North Kent Plain, and the North Downs span the Borough.
- 11.1.15 Most of the land of Swale Borough is within the Greater Thames Estuary Natural Area. Soft sediments, forming extensive saltmarshes and mudflats, dominate the intertidal zone. These are separated along most of its length by man-made sea defences from the low-lying land. These areas were formerly subject to more frequent flooding, but are now mainly arable land, with much grassland and still some substantial areas of grazing marsh and its network of ditches, dykes, creeks and fleets. The value of this landscape is recognised in the designation of undeveloped parts of the North Kent coast as an Environmentally Sensitive Area.
- 11.1.16 The Borough contains the following Special Areas of Conservation:
- Queendown Warren in the south west of the Borough – designated for the protection of habitats and (non-bird) species. It is also designated as a SSSI and is a fine example of unimproved calcareous grassland, particularly important for orchids.
 - The Blean Complex, one of the largest areas of woodland in England, is also designated as an SSSI. As a whole this area represents a mosaic of ancient semi-natural woodland with mixed coppice with oak standards, sweet chestnut coppice and conifer plantation. The diverse ground flora includes some species indicative of a long history of woodland cover. The area is also noted for birds with over 50 species of breeding bird having been recorded and for its invertebrate interest with nationally rare species of butterflies such as the heath fritillary.
- 11.1.17 Two SPAs are included partly within the Borough boundary. These are the Medway estuaries and marshes and The Swale. These two sites are also designated as Ramsar sites and SSSIs.

11.1.18 Swale contains a third of all the intertidal habitats in Kent and important estuary habitats including coastal grazing marsh, saltmarsh and mudflats.

11.1.19 Swale contains 6 SSSIs falling wholly or partly within the Borough:

- Medway and Estuary Marshes
- Purple Hill
- Queendown Warren
- Sheppey Cliffs and Foreshore
- The Swale
- Church woods, Blean

11.1.20 The quality of these SSSIs as recorded in August 2010 is illustrated in the table below:

Table 11.1 SSSI condition (Source: www.naturalengland.co.uk)

Name	% area meeting PSA target	% Area favourable condition	% area unfavourable recovering	% area unfavourable no change	% area unfavourable declining	% area destroyed/part destroyed
South East average	94.24	47.72	46.52	2.17	3.52	0.07
Purple Hill	100	64	36	0	0	0
Queendown Warren	100	100	0	0	0	0
Medway Estuary and Marshes	98.84	98.84	0	0.68	0	0.48
Sheppey Cliffs	100	100	0	0	0	0
The Swale	97.83	97.83	0	2.17	0	0
Church Woods, Blean	100	71.3	28.7	0	0	0

11.1.21 Table 11.1 illustrates that a high proportion of the SSSIs in the Borough are meeting or are close to achieving the PSA target. None of the SSSIs have been destroyed or part destroyed.

11.1.22 The Borough contains the Elmley and Swale National Nature Reserves.

11.1.23 Oare Marshes Nature Reserve is located on the south bank of The Swale at Harty Ferry. The well-sheltered marshes and mudflats of Oare marshes provide a superb habitat and attract many migrating birds. The reserve, managed by the Kent Wildlife Trust, consists of some 170 acres of grazing marsh, dissected by fresh and brackish water dykes and bounded by an earth seawall and some salt marsh.

11.1.24 The Blean woods are the largest in Kent covering more than 3,000 hectares - more than 11 square miles. The woodland is very old and almost half of it is so special for wildlife that it has been designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest. Ancient woodland is well known for its rich flora, which includes plants such as wood anemone, herb paris and early purple orchid, and is also important for woodland invertebrates. Blean Woods is an RSPB nature reserve. Woodland in Swale supports a number of species identified in the UK BAP as priorities for action, including dormouse, Bechstein's bat, tree pipit, lesser spotted woodpecker, hawfinch, great crested newt, lesser butterfly orchid and fly orchid. Other species of note include nightingale

- and common buzzard. An important complex of smaller woodland Local Wildlife Sites in Swale includes Endings Wood, Putt Wood, Oakenpole Wood, Divan Wood, and woodland on the Belmont Estate.
- 11.1.25 Sheppey Cliffs and Foreshore are designated as a Geological Site of Special Scientific Interest.
- 11.1.26 The Medway Estuary and Marshes form the largest area of intertidal habitats which have been identified as of value for nature conservation in Kent and are representative of the estuarine habitats found on the North Kent coast. A complex of mudflats and saltmarsh is present with in places grazing marsh behind the sea walls which is intersected by dykes and fleets. The area holds internationally important populations of wintering and passage birds and is also of importance for its breeding birds. Mudflats, intertidal saltmarsh and sea grass beds are important nursery habitats for sea fish. An outstanding assemblage of plant species also occurs on the site.
- 11.1.27 Figures 4 and 5 of the Scoping Report illustrate the nature conservation designations within the Borough.
- 11.1.28 Kent County is home to 28 UK BAP Priority habitats and 85 Priority Species. Much of the land in and around Swale's coast consists of UK BAP priority habitats²⁰, including:
- Intertidal mudflats in the Swale and the Medway Estuary, and to the north of Sheppey.
 - Saltmarsh in the Swale and the Medway Estuary.
 - Coastal grazing marsh, particularly along the Swale, but also in the Medway Estuary to the west of the Borough.
 - Seagrass beds on the mudflats in the Swale.
 - Saline lagoons, in the form of the defensive canals at Queenborough Lines and the boating lake at Barton's Point Country Park.
- 11.1.29 Mudflats, saltmarsh, grazing marsh and seagrass beds are treated as separate habitats in the UK BAP, and it is the case that certain species rely more on one sort of habitat than another, for example:
- Mudflats, intertidal saltmarsh and sea grass beds are important nursery habitats for sea fish.
 - Grazing marsh is an important habitat for water voles (a very rapidly declining species for which Sheppey remains a very important refuge) as well as for many insect species associated with wet ditches.
 - Saline lagoons support a number of species tolerant of brackish conditions, but unable to survive in fresh or fully saline water, including the tasselweeds (*Ruppia* spp.) and the lagooncockle.
- 11.1.30 Woodland in Swale supports a number of species identified in the UK BAP as priorities for action, including dormouse, Bechstein's bat, tree pipit (which occurs in recently coppiced woodland), lesser spotted woodpecker, hawfinch (now a very rare bird in Kent), great crested newt, lesser butterfly orchid and fly orchid. Other species of note include nightingale, a species for which Kent is particularly important, and common buzzard, a bird which has recently recolonised Kent after an absence of many decades.
- 11.1.31 A number of UK BAP priority species are associated particularly with farmland, including brown hare (which occurs in arable land on the downs as well as on coastal grazing marsh) and a

²⁰ Swale BAP 2008

- suite of birds including corn bunting, grey partridge, lapwing, skylark, tree sparrow, turtle dove, yellow wagtail and yellowhammer.
- 11.1.32 Built-up areas and gardens provide suitable habitats for a number of UK BAP priority species, including hedgehog, pipistrelle bat, song thrush, spotted flycatcher, common toad and stag beetle. Other species may have a strong association with buildings where structures often mimic their favoured natural habitats, for example bats, house martins and swifts, and even lichens (for which churchyards can be especially important). Brownfield sites can be particularly important for rare insects, including, in Swale, the very rare shrill carder bumblebee.
- 11.1.33 Swale BAP (2008) recognises orchards as being important for biodiversity, with the older traditional orchards being the most important sites for wildlife, supporting species such as the nationally rare noble chafer beetle. Swale has 274 old traditional orchards, covering an area of 458ha, the highest concentration in any Kent district.
- 11.1.34 Swale BAP (2008) also recognises wildflower grassland habitats as important for biodiversity. Traditionally managed, flower-rich grassland is a very rare habitat in Swale; as a result many wild species associated with grassland are under significant threat. Swale does have large areas of coastal grassland, important as coastal grazing marsh. Queendown Warren is an area of chalk grassland which is of international importance and recognised as a Special Area of Conservation under European law. Other areas of chalk grassland are across valley sides, a number of these are on roadside verges and designated as Roadside Nature Reserves. Other small areas of flower-rich grassland include the Highsted Quarries Local Wildlife Site and Doddington Churchyard. Wildflower grasslands in Swale can support populations orchids, including man orchid (a UK BAP priority species). Other important include birds such as skylark and yellowhammer (both UK BAP priority species), and butterflies, moths, and other insects.
- 11.1.35 As stated above there are many important county and locally designated areas known as local wildlife sites.

Likely Future Conditions

- 11.1.36 The European designated sites and the national designated sites in the Borough will continue to require significant protection to ensure their future survival. The Medway and Estuary marshes are experiencing significant unfavourable conditions which are declining in condition quality. This condition is likely to continue to decline with species decline or migration from areas declining in habitat quality.
- 11.1.37 The Swale BAP (2008) highlights the trends in the priority habitats it covers. In terms of orchards, lack of European Union support for horticulture has reduced incentive for maintaining traditional orchards. However, there is a growing interest in community orchards to save old orchards and plant new ones. Traditional woodland management has declined, but practices such as coppicing are expected to increase with emphasis on sustainable biofuel use, this is beneficial to biodiversity management. Remaining areas of wildflower grassland are now small and fragmented, this means that the species they support are more vulnerable to climate change impacts. Built-up areas and gardens are increasing in extent, although pressure for building on brownfield land may threaten some of these areas. Climate change, in particular temperature rise has implications for habitats and the continued survival of them.
- 11.1.38 Estuary habitats continue to be threatened. Sea-level rise, particularly at the rate expected under future climate change, is leading to 'coastal squeeze' whereby intertidal habitats are losing space between the increasingly high low-water mark and fixed coastal defences.

- 11.1.39 Remaining areas of wildflower grassland are now small and fragmented, so that the species they support exist in isolated populations which are vulnerable to climate change impacts. There is increased emphasis, therefore, on creating larger habitat blocks, and creating better links across the landscape. There is a role for the creation of wildflower grasslands as part of new built developments, where they can be incorporated as attractive elements of open spaces and verges, or even as living roofs.
- 11.1.40 The development of the green grid network within swale, linking with the green grid established across the south east and the Thames Gateway, extends and increases the permeability of 'green' spaces. This will enable the movement and creation of habitats and species across the Borough.
- 11.1.41 The local authority and the local wildlife trust will continue to establish systems to conserve and enhance local wildlife sites and the management of biodiversity outside of the designated areas.
- 11.1.42 New housing development has to take biodiversity into account through the Code for Sustainable Homes scheme, this will contribute to new development that will be permeable to wildlife with enhancements and design having the potential specifically adopted to accommodate biodiversity.
- 11.1.43 To note: An Appropriate Assessment will be undertaken of the Core Strategy and further LDF documents as required at a later stage in the DPD development process once policies, spatial option and development locations and refined and become more definite.

Environmental and Sustainability Problems

- 11.1.44 The following issues have been identified:
 - Biodiversity is threatened by climate change in particular temperature rises and sea level rise, inappropriate built development, pollution, changing land management practices and vandalism.
 - Rich biodiversity habitats within the Borough especially the coastal areas require greater protection to ensure no loss of habitat or species.
 - Swale has not traditionally been active in the area of requiring green space or habitats to be created as part of new developments.
 - The coastal components of The Swale and Medway Estuary and Marshes SPA and Ramsar site remain at risk from sea level rise and coastal squeeze from fixed defences.
 - Potential for disturbance to birds using designated sites for leisure use, including jet skiing, bait digging and marina developments.
 - Woodland sites within the Borough suffer the general problem affecting Kent's woodlands – the lack of large scale markets for woodland products.

Proposed SA/SEA Objectives

SA objective	To conserve and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment
Decision making criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it maintain and enhance relevant Habitats and species eg Mudflats or protected bird species? • Will it protect and enhance habitat corridors and linking routes? • Does it continue the protection of the internationally, nationally, European

	<p>and regionally designated areas and appropriate propose appropriate enhancement?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does it conserve and enhance the BAP priority habitats within the Borough? • Does it conserve and enhance the populations of protected and/pr BAP priority species within the Borough? • Does it allow for the creation of new areas of BAP priority habitats? • Does it meet the principles of decision making on biodiversity in the good practice guide? • Does it create opportunities to link to and create the green grid network? • Does it allow for the permeability of new development for biodiversity?
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11.2 Appraisal Findings

Likely Significant Effects

11.2.1 The following significant negative effects were identified from the Strategic Spatial Options and Core Strategy policy proposals on SA Objective 9. A number of minor positive and negative effects were identified and these are also discussed below.

Spatial Option 4

11.2.2 Planning for a higher housing growth to meet the higher employment growth scenario potentially has a significant negative impact on the natural environment of the Borough. Kent has a wealth of biodiversity and protected habitats. The high level of housing and employment planned for of the plan period (and beyond) brings with it considerable pressure from new residents and their associated habits which require considerable mitigation measures to be considered. In particular, the expansion of the Port of Sheerness has potential to negatively effect the European designation (SPA) within the vicinity of the port. Identification of locations for potential housing sites at Iwade and Minster / Halfway are within close proximity to the SPA and SSI.

Recommendation

11.2.3 In light of the emerging joint North Kent Study, ensure that future emerging planning policies contain mitigation measures from the study and HRA to guarantee protection of the SPA and SAC.

Likely Minor Beneficial Effects

11.2.4 Minor beneficial effects were identified for the following policies:

Spatial Option 1

11.2.5 The principle of locating housing development within urban areas and identified urban extensions ensures protection of the valued natural environment of Swale.

Policy CP1 – Settlement Hierarchy

11.2.6 This policy approach seeks to focus residential development within the built up area boundaries contributing to protection of the natural environment.

Policy CP4 – Sustainability and Environment cross-cutting policy

- 11.2.7 This policy approach seeks to ensure that the physical and natural environment of Swale is conserved and enhanced balancing the need for residential and economic development. This policy approach also seeks to ensure that opportunities for migration of habitats and species are actively promoted.

Policy CP9 – Green Infrastructure Cross cutting policy

- 11.2.8 The green infrastructure network will be protected and enhanced and ensured that it maintains and enhances biodiversity to ensure that development and implementation results in a net gain of Biodiversity Action Plan habitats.

Policy DM4/5 – Natural Assets

- 11.2.9 This policy approach seeks to ensure protection and enhancement of the natural environment.

Policy DM6 – Enabling development for landscape and biodiversity enhancement

- 11.2.10 This policy approach is seeking to achieve enhancements to identified Biodiversity Opportunity areas or landscapes in poor condition.

Policy DM8 Rural Economy

- 11.2.11 The rural economy will be supported but it will also be ensured that there is no detriment to countryside conservation and biodiversity.

Policy DM15 – Proposed Open Space and Recreation Standards

- 11.2.12 This policy approach seeks to preserve and enhance existing open spaces and address deficiencies in accessible open spaces. This approach benefits the natural environment.

Likely Minor Negative Effects

Spatial Option 2

- 11.2.13 This Spatial Option proposes a larger rural centre focus, directing housing sites towards green fields and the identified larger village centres. This will have a greater negative effect on the rural landscape and valued natural environment of the Borough.

Recommendation

- 11.2.14 Ensure that as the spatial options are developed further that the impact of increased development (both housing and economic) on the natural environment is mitigated against through protection mechanisms.

Spatial Option 3

- 11.2.15 Kent has a wealth of biodiversity and protected habitats. The expansion of the Port of Sheerness has potential to negatively effect the European designation (SPA) within the vicinity of the port. Identification of locations for potential housing sites at Iwade and Minster / Halfway are within close proximity to the SPA and SSI. The SSRR first phase will negatively impact

considerable areas of countryside and the expansion of the Kent Science Park is within close proximity to the AONB.

Recommendation

- 11.2.16 Ensure that as the spatial options are developed further, the impact of increased development (both housing and economic) on the SPA and SAC as well as the national designations (SSSI and AONB) and local designations is mitigated against through protection mechanisms specified in the forthcoming HRA.

Policy DM1 – Sustainable Design and Construction

- 11.2.17 This policy approach will support development that promotes sustainable living by enabling access to green spaces and wildlife corridors; there is the potential for damage to occur to these areas negatively affecting the biodiversity.

Uncertain Effects

Policy CP3 – Location of Allocations

- 11.2.18 At this stage it is uncertain the sustainability implications of the locations for development. Swale has a valued landscape and a rich historic and natural environment; in particular Faversham and the swale estuary which require protection are a consideration when determining locations for development.

Recommendation

- 11.2.19 Ensure that emerging policy recognises implications of SPA and SAC designation as well national and local biodiversity and nature conservation designations or cross reference is made to Biodiversity Core Strategy and Development Management policies.

11.3 Proposed Monitoring

- % of SSSI in favourable and unfavourable condition
- International, European, National, Regional and Local Designations
- Locally important species and habitats (BAP priority habitats) created
- Amount of new habitat sites created through Local Development Framework policies (to be identified at later date) and amount of new habitat created by new development.
- Numbers and diversity of species using the green grid

12 Waste

Introduction

12.1.1 The Environmental Protection Act 1990 identified waste as any substance that constitutes a scrap material, an effluent or other unwanted surplus. This definition was amended by the Waste Management Licensing Regulations 1994 to define waste as 'any substance or object which the producer or the person in possession of it, discards or intends or is required to discard'.

12.1.2 Controlled wastes are subject to regulation since the 1990 Act and include industrial, commercial or household wastes. Some of these wastes are defined as hazardous and are those that have irritant, toxic, harmful, carcinogenic or corrosive properties. These must be handled and treated in specific ways. Non-controlled wastes, from agriculture, mines and quarries, are subject to their own regulations.

12.1.3 Swale Borough Council has responsibility for waste collection, however waste planning and waste disposal is the responsibility of Kent County Council.

Environmental Protection Objectives

12.1.4 The EU Landfill Directive:

- By 2010 to reduce biodegradable municipal waste landfilled to 75% of that produced in 1995
- By 2013 to reduce biodegradable municipal waste landfilled to 50% of that produced in 1995
- By 2020 to reduce biodegradable municipal waste landfilled to 35% of that produced in 1995

12.1.5 The Waste Strategy 2007:

- Decouple waste growth (in all sectors) from economic growth and put more emphasis on waste prevention and re-use;
- Meet and exceed the Landfill Directive diversion targets for biodegradable municipal waste in 2010, 2013 and 2020;
- Increase diversion from landfill of non-municipal waste and secure better integration of treatment for municipal and non-municipal waste;
- Secure the investment in infrastructure needed to divert waste from landfill and for the management of hazardous waste; and
- Get the most environmental benefit from that investment, through increased recycling of resources and recovery of energy from residual waste using a mix of technologies.

12.1.6 Statutory targets from the Waste Strategy 2007:

- Reduce the amount of household waste not re-used, recycled or composted. This means reducing it from the 22.3 million tonnes in 2000 to 12.2 million tonnes in 2020 (with a target of 15.9 million tonnes by 2010). This is a reduction of 45%.

12.1.7 Specific targets for recovering (diverting from landfill) municipal waste have been set:

- To recover 53% of municipal waste by 2010
- To recover 67% of municipal waste by 2015

- To recover 75% of municipal waste by 2020
- 12.1.8 Specific targets for recycling and composting from the Waste Strategy 2007 are:

- To recycle or compost at least 40% of household waste by 2010
- To recycle or compost at least 45% of household waste by 2015
- To recycle or compost at least 50% of household waste by 2020

Context Review

- 12.1.9 The key messages from the review include:

Message	Source
Sets the vision for a region in which natural resources are used and managed efficiently so that by 2025: the amount of waste produced will be minimised; the overwhelming majority of materials will be re-used, recycled or have value recovered from them; and the environment will be protected and enhanced for future generations.	South East Regional Waste Management Strategy
Principal objectives in managing municipal waste management in Kent: deliver high quality services to the people of Kent, including an emphasis on waste reduction, recycling and diversion from landfill meet the statutory targets set for Kent, and exceed them in areas where this is a locally agreed priority support, where possible, other related policy aims of the Kent authorities (e.g. regeneration)	Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (2007)
Reduce waste and improve recycling, looking for new opportunities to minimise the amount of waste the Borough produces	Corporate Plan Refresh 2009 – 2012 'Shaping the Future of Swale'

Baseline

- 12.1.10 The amount of residual household waste collected per household in Kent has been falling over time, as illustrated in Figure 12.1 below. The target for this performance indicator is 704 Kg and it can be seen that this was achieved in 2008/09.

Figure 12.1: Residual Household Waste per Household for Kent²¹

Year	Residual Household Waste Collected per Household
2004/05	916 Kg
2005/06	899 Kg
2006/07	836 Kg
2007/08	780 Kg
2008/09	699 Kg

- 12.1.11 In line with the decrease in the amount of residual household waste per household for Kent, the proportion of waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting for Kent has increased over the same time period, as illustrated in Figure 12.2.

²¹ Audit Commission Performance Indicator N191 – <http://oneplace.audit-commission.gov.uk> [accessed 21.09.10]

Figure 12.2: Residual Household Waste sent for Reuse, Recycling and Composting for Kent²²

Year	Residual Household Waste sent for Reuse, Recycling and Composting
2004/05	25.7%
2005/06	28.09%
2006/07	32.43%
2007/08	35.82%
2008/09	38.65%

12.1.12 Figures published in the 2008/09 Kent Minerals and Waste Annual Monitoring Report illustrate the following municipal waste data for Kent County:

Municipal Solid Wastes	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 759,493 tonnes of this waste: • 343,491 sent to Landfill • 99,257 incinerated with EfW • 228,352 recycled • 88,392 composted

12.1.13 The following table illustrates the performance of Swale Borough against the government's Best Value Performance Indicators for Waste (2007/08)²³:

Household dry recycling (82a)	14,085.55 tonnes (26.07%)
Household green recycling (82b)	659.65 tonnes (1.22%)
Household recycling and composting (82a+b)	27.29%
Household waste collected per person (84a)	420kg

12.1.14 The latest DERFA waste statistical research has identified Swale as falling within the top ten authorities with the largest percentage decrease in household waste per head in the 2007/08 period. The Council has reduced the household waste collected per person by 9.24% to 420.40kg compared to 463kg in 2006/07²⁴.

12.1.15 The Borough contains 28 waste management sites, as recorded in the Minerals and Waste AMR 2005/06. Household waste recycling centres, including those that recycle green waste, are located at Church Marshes, Gas Road in Sittingbourne, Stoneyard in Sheerness and Salter's Lane in Faversham. Local recycling centres allowing for the collection of paper, glass, plastic, clothing, cardboard, books etc. Faversham contains 18 local centres, Sheppey has 19 local centres, and the Sittingbourne area contains 30 local centres. The Swale twin bin waste collection scheme was introduced in 2007, collecting glass bottles and jars, paper products, plastic bottles, cans, foil and aerosols. Parts of the Borough on the twin bin scheme regularly exceed 36% recycling rate. In November 2007, over a 4-week period, Swale recycling rate was 43.81% including kerbside collections and bring-sites.

Likely Future Conditions

12.1.16 The rate of recycling in the Borough is increasing, and is meeting the targets set at the national level. The amount (kg) of household waste produced in the Borough is the third greatest in

²² Audit Commission Performance Indicator N192 – <http://oneplace.audit-commission.gov.uk> [accessed 21.09.10]

²³ <http://www.defra.gov.uk/Environment/statistics/wastats/archive/mwbvpi200506-200708.xls>

²⁴ <http://www.defra.gov.uk/Environment/statistics/wastats/archive/mwbvpi200506-200708.xls>

Kent; this needs to continue to reduce in the future²⁵. However as identified in the latest DEFRA figures the Council is making very good progress and will continue to do so in the future. New developments will incorporate greater recycling and composting facilities through design standard requirements which will contribute to future improvements in sustainable waste management.

Environmental and Sustainability Problems

12.1.17 The following problems have been identified:

- Continued need for new developments to incorporate waste storage facilities.
- Continuation of meeting and exceeding recycling and waste management targets set at the County, regional and national level.

Proposed SA/SEA Objectives

SA objective	To achieve the sustainable management of waste
Decision making criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce waste arisings? • Increase the re-use of materials? • Increase the rates of recycling and composting and/or recovery of energy from waste? • Ensure disposal of waste material (where required) in accordance with the waste hierarchy?

12.2 Appraisal Findings

Likely Significant Effects

12.2.1 No significant effects arising from the Strategic Spatial Options and Core Strategy policy proposals on SA Objective 10 were thought likely. A number of minor effects were identified and these are discussed below.

Likely Minor Beneficial Effects

12.2.2 Minor beneficial effects were identified for the following policies:

Spatial Options 1, 2, 3 and 4

12.2.3 The new residential development has the potential to incorporate recycling storage facilities within the dwellings encouraging reductions in waste production. All new development will feed into the wider recycling and waste collection services. However, the proposed levels of new development, both housing and employment related, generate considerable levels of waste, which even through the identified recycling mechanisms still requires an amount of waste treatment by an identified technology, placing pressure on the County Council's waste disposal arrangements.

Policy CP6 Homes and Communities

12.2.4 This policy approach requires new homes to respond to climate change including environmental standards for construction as outlined in the Sustainable Design and

²⁵ www.kent.gov.uk

Construction SPD. Following this approach, it is envisaged that beneficial effects will be achieved with regard to waste minimisation.

Policy CP4 Sustainability and Environment cross-cutting policy

12.2.5 This policy approach intends to support the sustainable development of Swale, in relation to waste it is seeking to reduce the amount of biodegradable waste land filled.

Recommendation

12.2.6 Consider including further references to sustainable waste management as currently there is only mention of reduce the amount sent to landfill but not how this will be achieved.

Policy DM1 – Sustainable Design and Construction

12.2.7 This policy approach promotes sustainable living, encouraging all developments in the Borough (including conversions and extensions) to reduce waste. This policy approach is also looking to see all new development achieve CSH and BREEAM standards which include credits relating to waste minimisation and provision of recycling facilities.

Recommendation

12.2.8 Ensure that the policy requires waste minimisation and the use of recycled and sustainable sourced materials throughout the development process (concept, Material sourcing, construction and implementation).

12.3 Proposed Monitoring

- Waste arisings (all waste streams)
- Recycling and composting rates
- Recycling facilities

13 Population

Introduction

- 13.1.1 This chapter discusses the population of Swale, its composition and distribution, now and in the future and the likely significant social, economic and environmental effects of the Core Strategy policies on the population of Swale.

Context Review

- 13.1.2 Key messages from the context review include:

Message	Source
Regeneration outcomes intend to deliver a sustained increase in the quality of life for communities throughout the Gateway, through increased community cohesion, safe, vibrant, thriving town centres and open spaces that provide focal points for local communities, and improved equality and better social outcomes for the Gateway.	Thames Gateway Delivery Plan (2007)
Kent County Council will support independence and reduce social exclusion by improving transport links to key destinations and bringing services closer to communities.	Kent Local Transport Plan 2006-2011
Swale Forward's vision is "to achieve a transformation in Swale's economic, social and environmental profile, so that it is one of the best places in Britain in which to live, work, learn and invest".	Swale Forward, Business Plan 2008-2011

Baseline Information

- 13.1.3 The Borough's population was estimated to be 131,900 by the midyear 2009 (published June 2010). The population structure between males and females reflects the regional and national position. The population is identified as growing fast, with an increase of almost 17% between 1981 and 2006, this compares with a national increase of 7%²⁶. The following table illustrates the population estimates:

Table 13.1: Swale's population estimate

	Swale	South East	Great Britain
All people	130,300	8,308,700	60,975,400
Males	65,300 (49.5%)	4,134,900 (49%)	29,495,400 (49.2%)
Females	66,500 (50.5%)	4,300,800 (51%)	30,507,700 (50.8%)

Source: ONS Midyear Estimates (2009)

- 13.1.4 The population's ethnic structure of Swale is illustrated in the table below. These figures are from the 2001 census so are likely to have changed due to increased levels of migration into the Borough.

²⁶ Swale Consultation Draft Sustainable Community Strategy 2009-2026

Table 13.2: Population Age Structure (mid-year 2007) (%)

Age group	Swale	Kent	England
0-4	7,800 (6.0)	81,100	3,038,400
5-9	8,000 (6.1)	81,200	2,869,300
10-14	8,900 (6.8)	90,500	3,091,500
15-19	8,700 (6.7)	94,000	3,354,100
20-24	7,500 (5.7)	79,100	3,457,900
25-29	7,200 (5.5)	76,200	3,357,700
30-34	7,700 (5.9)	78,900	3,311,600
35-39	9,600 (7.4)	99,100	3,830,200
40-44	10,400 (8.0)	108,700	3,960,700
45-49	9,100 (7.0)	97,800	3,541,700
50-54	8,000 (6.1)	86,200	3,094,500
55-59	8,600 (6.6)	90,800	3,121,400
60-64	8,400 (6.4)	89,100	2,903,700
65-69	6,100 (4.7)	66,200	2,233,100
70-74	5,000 (3.8)	57,600	1,959,400
75-79	4,100 (3.1)	48,700	1,647,100
80-84	2,800 (2.1)	35,900	1,217,800
85-89	1,700 (1.3)	22,700	739,000
90+	700 (0.5)	11,000	363,000

Source: ONS Midyear Estimates (2007)

Table 13.3: Population Structure (Ethnicity) (%)

Ethnicity	Swale	South East	England
All People (Persons)	122,801	8,000,645	49,138,831
White	98.14	95.10	90.92
White; British	96.13	91.30	86.99
White; Irish	0.72	1.03	1.27
White; Other White	1.29	2.77	2.66
Mixed	0.68	1.07	1.31
Mixed; White and Black Caribbean	0.20	0.30	0.47
Mixed; White and Black African	0.09	0.12	0.16
Mixed; White and Asian	0.24	0.37	0.37
Mixed; Other Mixed	0.15	0.28	0.31
Asian or Asian British	0.58	2.33	4.58
Asian or Asian British; Indian	0.32	1.12	2.09
Asian or Asian British; Pakistani	0.07	0.73	1.44
Asian or Asian British; Bangladeshi	0.12	0.19	0.56
Asian or Asian British; Other Asian	0.07	0.29	0.48
Black or Black British	0.33	0.71	2.30
Black or Black British; Caribbean	0.13	0.34	1.14
Black or Black British; African	0.14	0.31	0.97
Black or Black British; Other Black	0.06	0.06	0.19
Chinese or Other Ethnic Group	0.27	0.78	0.89
Chinese or Other Ethnic Group; Chinese	0.18	0.41	0.45
Chinese or Other Ethnic Group; Other Ethnic Group	0.09	0.37	0.44

Source: ONS, 2001 census

- 13.1.5 There is a programme for the development and expansion of the network of community hubs across the Borough. These will include new physical facilities, the further development of links between the existing hubs and support for Swale's voluntary infrastructure.

Rural Communities

- 13.1.6 Swale's rural communities are diverse; many rural settlements in Swale are of significant size and act as local service centres. Others suffer from isolation and a lack of local services. Rural deprivation impacts inconsistently across the Borough. Particular areas of high deprivation are the rural areas of Eastern Sheppey, with the Leysdown and Warden area in the most deprived 20% of all wards in England.

Deprivation

- 13.1.7 Swale ranks 116 out of 354 Councils in terms of the average rank of score, this summarises the district taken as a whole, including both deprived and less deprived Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs). Figure 6 of the Scoping Report illustrates the average rank of deprivation across the Borough.
- 13.1.8 Within Kent, Swale is ranked as second most deprived district, as was the case in 2004, (after Thanet). Against each of the six local authority measures, Swale performs particularly poorly against the rank of concentration measure, ranking 87th nationally. This measure looks at the relative deprivation of the most deprived 10% of the population within each local authority area. Swales lower ranking against this measure indicates that communities in the Borough are polarised, with very deprived areas, sitting alongside areas of relative affluence.
- 13.1.9 Across the Borough, the number of SOAs (Super Output Areas) within the worst 20% has increased from 14 to 15 between 2004 and 2007. The concentration of deprivation remains in the same areas; 11 of the most 20% deprived are on Sheppey, 3 in Sittingbourne and 1 is in Faversham. Across the Borough only 17 out of the total 31 SOAs have improved their ranking from 2004, illustrating that overall the position across the Borough has worsened.
- 13.1.10 Across the Borough, deprivation associated with employment, income and education and skills remain the principal factors. Education and skills is the key issue affecting the largest area of the Borough, with 32 SOAs falling within the worst 20% nationally. The Isle of Sheppey experiences a particularly poor performance.
- 13.1.11 Sheerness East is the ward currently with the worst ranked SOA in the Borough.

Likely Future Conditions

- 13.1.12 The population of the Borough will continue to grow through natural population growth as well as the regeneration agenda for Swale as part of the wider Thames Gateway redevelopment progresses and future planned growth through the LDF which will result in inward migration. The population of Swale is ageing as well as growing in line with regional and national trends.
- 13.1.13 A network of community hubs is programmed to be set up across the Borough providing an increased range of voluntary and community sector facilities meeting the needs of the population.

Environmental and Sustainability Issues and Problems

- 13.1.14 The following issues have been identified:

- “Quality of life indicators such as health and crime suggest that Swale is a relatively pleasant place to live, though deprivation is an issue (mainly related to education and skills deprivation)”²⁷. However across the Borough pockets of deprivation do exist.
- An increasing aging population does put additional pressure on service and health provision.
- The population of the economically active is increasing in the Borough; this is positive and brings benefits with regard to the aspiration to improve the employment structure of the Borough.
- With regard to deprivation, education and skills is the key issue affecting the largest area of the Borough. However, deprivation is also strongly associated with employment and income as well.

SA/SEA Objectives

SA objective	To meet the challenges of a growing and ageing population To reduce poverty and social exclusion To improve accessibility for all to key services and facilities
Decision making criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist with regeneration of deprived areas in the Borough? • Improve access to key services? • Improve access to recreation, amenity and community facilities?

13.2 Appraisal Findings

Likely Significant Effects

- 13.2.1 No significant effects arising from the Strategic Spatial Options and Core Strategy policy proposals on SA Objectives 11, 12 and 13 were thought likely. A number of minor beneficial effects were identified and these are discussed below.

Likely Minor Beneficial Effects

- 13.2.2 Minor beneficial effects were identified for the following policies:

Spatial Options 1, 2, 3 and 4

- 13.2.3 Each Spatial Option is proposing a level of housing growth and employment growth to meet the needs of a growing population and a desire to create sustainable economic growth and deliver new employment opportunities for residents and attract inward migration to the Borough. Spatial Options 1 and 2 propose lower housing and employment growth in line with regional targets, but still meeting the needs of a growing population. Spatial Options 3 and 4 propose higher levels of growth to meet the needs of the growing population and plan for increased growth both in terms of housing and economic. Each Spatial Option does have the potential to contribute towards reductions in poverty and social exclusion and through the development locations proposed improvements in accessibility to key services and facilities.

²⁷ Regeneration Framework 2006 Swale Forward

Policy CP2 Provision of Jobs and Homes 2006-2031

- 13.2.4 Setting the amount of housing and employment floorspace in a policy is beneficial to the achievement of SA Objectives 11 and 12 with regard to providing for an aging population and contributing to reductions in poverty and social exclusion through the delivery of new housing and employment opportunities.

Policy CP4 Sustainability and Environment cross-cutting policy and Policy 4

- 13.2.5 This policy approach is seeking to achieve safe, secure and socially inclusive communities across the Borough and ensuring that the most deprived people also have an equal opportunity to benefit from and contribute to a better quality of life.

Policy CP6 – Homes and Communities

- 13.2.6 This policy approach is proposing to deliver homes designed to meet the needs of an aging population through requiring lifetime homes standards.

Policy CP7 – Health and well being cross-cutting policy

- 13.2.7 This policy approach is intending to tackle any health inequalities across the Borough, protect, enhance and deliver new and improved health care facilities where a need is identified and encourage healthy lifestyles. Through the delivery of this policy benefits will be achieved with regard to SA Objectives 11, 12 and 13.

13.3 Proposed Monitoring

- IMD 2007 rank of average score
- Population Profile (age structure, ethnicity etc.)

14 Health

Introduction

- 14.1.1 According to the World Health Organisation, health can be defined as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease²⁸. This chapter discusses how the Core Strategy policies are likely to influence public health in Swale.
- 14.1.2 Although the Council has responsibility for certain aspects of public health, for instance local air quality management, health matters are not directly influenced through land-use planning and the Local Development Framework. However, planning has its statutory origins in public health and amenity issues. It continues to influence the key determinants of public health, among them housing, air quality, employment and education.

Context Review

- 14.1.3 Key messages from the Context Review Include:

Message	Source
The planning system should ensure that, wherever practicable, noise-sensitive developments are separated from major sources of noise (such as road, rail and air transport and certain types of industrial development). Where this is not possible local planning authorities should consider whether it is practicable to control or reduce noise levels, or to mitigate the impact of noise, through the use of conditions or planning obligations.	PPG24: Planning and Noise
Protect open spaces and ensure accessible recreational, amenity and open green space is available to meet the recreational needs of the population.	PPG17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation
Better health and wellbeing are two of the major social and economic benefits we can secure through good management of the natural environment in both rural and urban settings. Specifically: children should experience and familiarise themselves with their local environment to benefit their mental and physical health and further their development. Adults should be offered increased contact with the natural environment resulting in reduced stress and more fulfilling lives. Healthy Ageing is enhanced by close and frequent contact with the natural environment leading to greater independence and dignity. Connections between people and the natural environment should go beyond the lives of individuals to create a lasting legacy of strong and healthy communities for future generations.	Natural England Position Statement: Health & Wellbeing (October 2008)
Achieve a Borough in which people live healthier lives and have access to high quality services	Ambitions for Swale, Swale's Sustainable Community Strategy

²⁸ World Health Organisation, 1948, Preamble to the Constitution of the World Health Organisation

Message	Source
that meet their needs: Reduce the gap in health outcomes by improving the performance of the worst performing wards to the levels of the rest of the Borough; Promote healthy lifestyles and reduce levels of smoking and obesity; Improve access to health facilities, especially in the Borough's most disadvantaged areas	2009 – 2026 (2009)
Sports, arts and recreational activities have the ability to address many of the current social concerns regarding poor physical and emotional health.	Taking Part, Swale Borough Council Cultural Strategy 2008-2011
Kent County Council will improve the health of Kent residents by reducing the impact of transport, encouraging increased physical activity and enhancing access to key health facilities.	Kent Local Transport Plan 2006-2011
The Countryside Access Improvement Plan sets out an agenda for encouraging healthy exercise.	Kent Countryside Access Improvement Plan
Eradicate fuel poverty by 2018 through programmes to improve energy efficiency, maintaining downward pressure on fuel bills, supporting industry initiatives against fuel poverty and tackling poverty and increasing incomes.	The UK Fuel Poverty strategy – 5 th Annual Progress Report 2007

Baseline Information

- 14.1.4 The average life expectancy of the Borough residents is 78.2 years. Swale has one of the lowest life expectancies in the South East, the Swale Health Profile (2007) states that life expectancy is increasing and is similar to the England average.
- 14.1.5 As explained in the previous section there are considerable areas of health inequality across the Borough. Swale Health Profile (2007) states that there are contrasts between the health of people in prosperous parts of Swale and those in the Isle of Sheppey.
- 14.1.6 The Swale Health Profile (2010)²⁹ provides the following summary:
- The health of people in Swale is generally worse than the England average. Estimates suggest that the level of binge drinking in adults is better than the England average, but the levels of obesity and healthy eating are worse.
 - Over the last 10 years, the death rate from all causes, and the rate of early death from cancer and from heart disease and stroke, have fallen and are similar to the England average.
 - There are inequalities in health within Swale. The life expectancy for women and men living in the most deprived areas is about 6 years lower than for those living in the least deprived areas.
 - The proportion of Reception year children classified as below the average for England. The level of tooth obese is similar to the average. GCSE achievement is decay in 5 year old children is also lower than average.

²⁹ www.healthprofiles.info

- The proportion of pregnant women who smoke and the teenage pregnancy rate are both higher than the England average.
 - The death rate from smoking is higher than average. Smoking accounts for over 230 deaths each year.
 - The Kent Local Area Agreement has prioritised adult participation in sport, tackling serious violent crime, older people's independence through rehabilitation, childhood obesity, and road injuries and deaths.
- 14.1.7 Fuel poverty in Swale is recorded as affecting 4,600 households³⁰ 2,200 of which are not eligible for government energy efficiency schemes such as "Warm Front", including:
- 7.7% of households without central heating;
 - 17.6% with a long term illness;
 - 3,980 people receiving disability living allowance; and
 - 1,945 people receiving attendance allowance
- 14.1.8 A fuel-poor household is defined as one that needs to spend more than 10% of its income on all fuel use to maintain a satisfactory heating regime. This is generally defined as 21oC in the living room and 18oC in other rooms.
- 14.1.9 Swale's local authority buildings, accessible to the public that are suitable for access by disabled people, are registered as 91.66%, achieving the Council's BVPI 156 target.
- 14.1.10 In 2006, 24,257 of Swale's population were admitted to hospital as in patients. The total claimants of incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance totalled 5,355 in 2006. The majority of claimants were claiming incapacity benefit, 4,770 compared to 585 for severe disablement allowance.
- 14.1.11 There are 6 community hospitals around east Kent, providing a wide range of services including outpatient consultations in all major specialities and other out of hour services.
- 14.1.12 As described in Section 4.5, Swale contains two strategic walking routes and national cycling route one which provide opportunities for recreation and walking. Promoting physical activity is fundamental to improving the health of the Borough.
- 14.1.13 The natural environment is fundamental to a healthy lifestyle, the creation of a green grid network across the Borough provides an accessible and linked up environment for all to enjoy. The green grid network will link to accessible amenity and recreational facilities as well as providing green routes through urban environment, into designated sites and to natural open space. Cycle routes are also included within the green grid.

Likely Future Conditions

- 14.1.14 Demands on the health care facilities in the Borough are likely to increase due to the regeneration programme set for the Borough. People are also living longer contributing to an aging population who will place additional pressure on health care facilities. Promoting physical activity is fundamental to improving the health of the Borough As identified, Swale has some of the worst health outcomes of anywhere in the South East which will continue as pressure is place on existing health care facilities.

³⁰ UK Fuel Poverty Strategy

14.1.15 Development of the green grid network and new open spaces and biodiversity habitats provides opportunity for enjoyment of the natural environment. The network provides an opportunity for a healthier lifestyle of existing and new residents. New development should in the future, be developed to comply with Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards (ANGSt).

Environmental and Sustainability Problems

- There is a need to provide more accessible local healthcare facilities.
- Demands for health care and associated services in the Borough are rising and are expected to continue to rise as the population increases and ages and new housing and employment opportunities increase.
- A focus on healthy lifestyles should be encouraged.
- 'Hot-spots' within the Borough have been identified as having poor air quality, air quality and air pollution this has been associated with negative health impacts.
- Fuel poverty within the Borough still requires reducing.
- The Borough's recreational, cultural facilities and activities and natural green and open spaces of good quality are currently limited and require development and improvement to support local quality of life. This is especially the case in urban Sittingbourne and Sheerness.

Proposed SA/SEA Objectives

SA objective	To improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities in health
Decision making criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve access to health services? • Does it contribute to fuel poverty reductions? • Improve access to recreation and open spaces? • Are negative air quality and pollution impacts mitigated against?

14.2 Appraisal Findings

Likely Significant Effects

14.2.1 No significant effects arising from the Strategic Spatial Options and Core Strategy policy proposals on SA Objective 14 were thought likely. A number of minor effects were identified and these are discussed below.

Likely Minor Beneficial Effects

14.2.2 Minor beneficial effects were identified for the following policies:

CP7 – Health and well-being cross-cutting policy

14.2.3 This policy approach is intending to tackle any health inequalities across the Borough, protect, enhance and deliver new and improved health care facilities where a need is identified and encourage healthy lifestyles.

Policy DM1 – Sustainable Design and Construction

- 14.2.4 This policy approach encourages the use of public transport and walking and cycling it also seeks to deliver accessible green spaces, promoting healthy lifestyles.

Policy DM15 Proposed Open Space and Recreation Standards

- 14.2.5 This policy will identify the amount of new open space that is required to meet identified deficiencies within local communities; this will deliver opportunities for outdoor recreation and associated health benefits.

Likely minor negative effects

Spatial Option 4

- 14.2.6 The higher proposed housing levels and economic development will generate additional pressure on health care infrastructure requiring planning contributions as mitigation. It is unsure as to the expected levels of contributions due to other sectors also requiring this funding.

Recommendation

- 14.2.7 Ensure that the policy approach to planning contributions in emerging Core Strategy policies delivers fair allocation of contributions.

14.3 Proposed Monitoring

- Quality of life – limiting long term illness
- Life expectancy
- Health deprivation
- Mortality rate
- Recipients of welfare benefits
- Provision of new open spaces within the Borough.

15 Crime and Safety

Introduction

- 15.1.1 Safe, healthy and vibrant neighbourhoods are fundamental to the economic, social and environmental well-being of the community. This chapter investigates the current and likely future situation in terms of crime and public safety in the Borough.

Context Review

- 15.1.2 Key messages from the Context review include:

Messages	Source
Local planning authorities should consider the scale of night-time leisure developments they wish to encourage in town centres and their likely impact, including the cumulative impact on the character and function of the centre, anti-social behaviour, crime and the amenities of nearby residents	Planning Policy Statement 6: Town Centres
The County "will strive to provide a safe and secure transport system for all users throughout the county".	Kent Local Transport Plan
Promote community safety through the Swale Community Safety Partnership, to reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and drug and alcohol misuse and to support young people Develop targeted responses to the needs of individual communities to combat localised concentrations of deprivation, and/ or to work with neighbourhoods to support processes of change and regeneration	Ambitions for Swale, Swale's Sustainable Community Strategy 2009 – 2026 (2009)
Priorities for 2010-11 include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce repeat victimisation of domestic abuse victims • Reduce incidents of rowdy nuisance behaviour, fly-tipping and noise • Address the offending behaviour of young people • Reduce crime, with particular emphasis on burglary • Reduce incidents of deliberate fires • Reduce the impact of alcohol misuse • Work to embed the responsibility of reducing re-offending across all agencies for all age groups. 	Swale Community Safety Partnership Community Safety Plan 2008-2011 2010-11 Refresh
Work with partners to reduce crime and fear of crime and to tackle priority crime areas by engaging with local communities on community safety issues	Corporate Plan Refresh 2009 – 2012 'Shaping the Future of Swale'

Baseline Information

15.1.3 Table 15.1 below illustrates the total crime figures for the Borough for the period April 2005 to March 2010.

Table 15.1 Swale Crime Figures

Financial Year	Total All Crime Incidents
Apr 05 – Mar 06	11931
Apr 06 – Mar 07	11800
Apr 07 – Mar 08	11615
Apr 08 – Mar 09	10623
Apr 09 – Mar 10	9565

Source: Swale Borough Council

15.1.4 Crime in Swale has generally decreased in the year between 2009 and 2010 with robberies showing the highest decline with a reduction of 28.6%. Burglaries have decreased by 14.9%, vehicle crime by 10.4% and anti-social behaviour incidents have shown a modest reduction of 1.7%³¹ when compared with the same three month period in 2009³². The only increase in crime rates relates to violent crimes, which have increased by a modest 4.5%.

Likely Future Conditions

15.1.5 Swale is experiencing rapid growth in population and associated construction and development that brings with it increasing opportunities for the criminal. However new development designed to standards that 'design out crime' should assist with tackling the crime issues facing the Borough.

Environmental and Sustainability Problems

15.1.6 The following issues have been identified:

- Swale is a relatively safe Borough, although some instances of crime have increased in recent years, community warded and neighbourhood pride zones will contribute to reducing instances of crime and the fear of crime.

³¹ Kent Police Local Crime Mapping www.kent.police.uk [accessed 21.09.10]

³² May, June, July

Proposed SA/SEA Objectives

SA objective	To reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and the fear of these
Decision making criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help reduce the fear of crime? • Reduce crime rates especially in areas where crime is highest? • Have designing out crime measures been incorporated into new development?

15.2 Appraisal Findings

Likely Significant Effects

- 15.2.1 No significant effects arising from the Strategic Spatial Options and Core Strategy policy proposals on SA Objective 15 were thought likely. A number of minor effects were identified and these are discussed below.

Likely Minor Beneficial Effects

- 15.2.2 Minor beneficial effects were identified for the following policies:

Policy CP4 Sustainability and Environment cross-cutting policy

- 15.2.3 This policy approach is seeking to achieve safe, secure and inclusive communities across the Borough through implementing the sustainable development priorities for Swale.

15.3 Proposed Monitoring

- Crime statistics (violence against a person, burglary, theft of and from a motor vehicle, instances of shop lifting).
- Fear of crime

16 Housing

Introduction

- 16.1.1 The housing market has not been responding sufficiently to housing demand. Many areas in southern England have suffered from high demand and low supply, while a lack of affordable housing has made it difficult for first time buyers to get on the property ladder.
- 16.1.2 Adequate planning is required to ensure that such market failings are addressed and that the mix of dwellings is sufficient to meet the current and future needs of local residents including families, single people, elderly people and multi-person households. The changing composition of the Borough's population is discussed in Chapter 13: Population.
- 16.1.3 Ensuring that housing and employment development is matched locally is essential to meet the government's sustainability objectives. The aim is to reduce the distance that people have to travel to work and thus the environmental impact associated with commuting. These issues are also explored in Chapter 19: Transport and Accessibility.

Context Review

- 16.1.4 Key messages from the context review include:

Message	Source
Promote high quality inclusive design in the layout of new developments and individual buildings in terms of function and impact, over the lifetime of the development. Design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area should not be accepted.	Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development
Ensure that everyone has the opportunity of living in a decent home, which they can afford, in a community where they want to live. Ensure that these should be high quality homes that are well designed, make the best use of land, are energy efficient, employ sustainable methods of construction and contribute to the wider goal of a more sustainable pattern of development.	Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing
Prevent homelessness through offering realistic options and choice. Provide good quality temporary accommodation, minimise the length of stay and reduce numbers. Work in partnership to maximise housing options and improve the quality of life for local people. Provide quality, accessible services to all customers.	Swale Homelessness Strategy 2008-2012
Increase housing supply, including affordable housing Improve housing condition and local neighbourhoods Support vulnerable people Tackle disadvantage and improve quality of life	Swale Housing Strategy 2010-2015
Ensure sufficient affordable housing to meet identified local needs Improve the environment of existing communities both in housing stock and the surrounding	Corporate Plan Refresh 2009 - 2012 Shaping the Future of Swale

Message	Source
<p>community, especially within the Borough's most deprived communities</p> <p>Increase integration between new and existing communities in areas of major new housing development</p> <p>Ensure standards of design and sustainability in all new developments</p> <p>Improve the quality of existing accommodation, particularly in the Borough's most deprived communities</p> <p>Ensure effective provision of services, whether public, commercial or voluntary as new developments come forward</p> <p>Reduce fuel poverty and increasing fuel efficiency, especially for those on low incomes</p>	
<p>The 'Vision for Kent' vision is for Kent to be a county where housing needs are met and decent, high quality homes help create attractive, safe and friendly communities.</p>	<p>Vision for Kent (2006-2026)</p>

Baseline Information

- 16.1.5 Swale is essentially rural with more than 20 villages and a total of 34 parish councils dispersed through a substantial rural area. Swale has three main towns, Sheerness, Sittingbourne and Faversham. The mid-year population estimate for Swale in 2007 is 129,700.
- 16.1.6 There are approximately 55,500 dwellings in Swale, including non-permanent dwellings, almost all of which are in the private sector following the transfer of the Council's housing stock in 1990. 21% of the housing stock was built before 1919. The stock condition survey of 2005 undertaken by the Council identifies:
- 6.2% of homes are unfit³³ compared with 7% nationally. This shows a significant improvement from the previous surveys when in 2002 8% were unfit and in 1991 when it was estimated to be 20%;
 - 19% of Swale's Housing Association stock failed to meet the Decent Homes Standard compared with a national average of 46%. (2004 Housing Stock condition survey)
- 16.1.7 In relation to private sector housing, the majority of properties are Semi Detached (41.3%) and Terraced (31.5%) with the remainder being a combination of detached, flats and maisonettes. (This compares with the 2002 report which assessed the private sector to be comprised of 34% terraces, 5% flats, 34% semi detached properties and 27% detached properties.)
- 16.1.8 Most properties are owned either with a mortgage or outright (48.9% & 34.3% respectively) with 16.6% of properties being privately rented. (This compares with the 2002 report which assessed private ownership to stand at 89% with 8% being assessed as being privately rented)³⁴.
- 16.1.9 The South East Plan housing completions target for Swale is 10,800 dwellings for the period 01/04/2006 to 31/03/2026, which equates to 540 dwellings per annum. The number of net completions in the period 2006-2008 is 1,602 dwellings. There were 709 completions in

³³ Swale Annual Monitoring Report 2009

³⁴ Swale Borough Council - Private Sector House Condition Survey 2010

- 2009/10, making a total since 2006 of 2,80535 completions (19.4% of the South East Plan requirement). In terms of affordable housing, the number of completions in 2009/10 was 181.
- 16.1.10 In 2008/09 completion levels were lower than the RSS annualised average. This is only the first time since 2006 and the second since 2001. The SHLAA has identified and/or delivered 11,191 dwellings over the period to 2026, which is a total of 391 units over and above the RSS target of 10,800 dwellings³⁶.
- 16.1.11 There are currently 4,432 households on the local authority register and 3,352 households on the waiting list. Those households on the waiting list predominately want smaller dwellings, with 43% wanting a 1 bed and 32% wanting a two bed dwelling³⁷.
- 16.1.12 All house prices are sourced from the latest Land Registry figures for 2008. In 2006/07, the average house price was £175,455, by 2007/08 this had risen to £182,910, an increase of 79% since 2001. The biggest rises were for entry-level stock. There was a gap of 21.7% between wages and the cost of housing incomes over a three year period to 2004. There is an annual affordable housing shortfall of 428 units per year, especially for flats and terraced houses.
- 16.1.13 There is a dramatic difference in house price across the Borough, with higher prices in Faversham than in Sheppey. Property prices in Sittingbourne rose by 14 per cent between January 2006 and January 2007. According to the latest Land Registry figures, the average price of a property in Sittingbourne stood at £180,087 last January. Property prices in Faversham, fell by 6.9 per cent between January 2006 and January 2007. According to the latest Land Registry figures, the average price of a property in Faversham stood at £188,921 last January. The average price of a detached home was £272,443 in January 2007, compared to £320,437 in the previous January, a difference of 15 per cent. Property prices in Sheerness, rose by 18.6 per cent between January 2006 and January 2007. According to the latest Land Registry figures, the average price of a property in Sheerness stood at £160,986 last January. The cheapest property purchased in Sheerness between January 2006 and January 2007 sold for £29,000 while the most expensive cost £432,000.³⁸
- 16.1.14 The delivery of new housing (and other development) is using up the reserves of previously developed land, this has implications for future growth within the Borough outside of the strategic regeneration projects. It is therefore recognised that Greenfield reserves particularly in the post 2016 period will be required. This is supported by the South East Plan Panel Report (paragraph 19.72).
- 16.1.15 The Borough falls within the Thames Gateway, this includes a target to deliver 160,000 homes by 2016 across the whole area and 4,734 within Sittingbourne and 1,000 new homes with Quennborough and Rushden regeneration area.
- 16.1.16 There are currently approximately 50 supported housing schemes in Swale, including sheltered units, flats, and hostels. This includes people living in their own homes and receiving a package of support. The Housing Need Survey found that 12,520 (24.1%) of households contained somebody with a disability, 36% of which indicated a need for care or support. The need for supported accommodation was identified in 457 households.
- 16.1.17 The Council insists that all registered social landlord developments meet Scheme Development Standards as set by the Housing Corporation and is in line with the Building Regulations, Part M. In addition, 75% of all new developments must comply with the Lifetime Homes criteria.

³⁵ KPOG Housing Information Audit 2009/10

³⁶ Swale Annual Monitoring Report 2009

³⁷ Swale Annual Monitoring Report 2009

³⁸ Swale Annual Monitoring Report 2009

16.1.18 The average Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) rating for a property in Swale is 58 compared to the national average of 49. Using this as a benchmark, the thermal performance of properties in Swale compares well against the national average³⁹.

16.1.19 The Boroughs Housing Strategy projects the household growth over the plan period, this is illustrated in the table below:

Table 16.1: Housing Growth Forecasts 2004-2029

	2004	2006	2011	2016	2021	2026	2029
Swale Household Projections	52,000	53,000	58,000	62,000	67,000	71,000	73,000
% Change		+1.02	+1.11	+1.07	+1.08	+1.06	+1.03

Source: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/housing/xls/707899.xls>

16.1.20 The RSS housing trajectory forecasts that households are set to increase by 17% between 2006-2026 with more than the total number of one person households expected to grow by 50% in this period.

16.1.21 Across Swale there are a number of empty homes which are currently not able to be brought into the housing stock. This is being actively pursued by the Council.

16.1.22 Owner occupied housing is by far the largest sector in Swale making up 79% of all homes; a further 6% is rented privately. Registered social landlords form 15% of the stock, the largest of which is Amicus Housing Group to whom the Council transferred its stock in 1990.

16.1.23 The number of affordable homes available in rural areas through Amicus Housing Group has continued to fall as a result of house sales. Housing Register statistics show that the following rural areas have the highest level of housing need: Borden, Bredgar, Hartlip, Eastchurch, Newington, Rodmersham and Bobbing. 75% of applications for rural areas on the Housing Register are for 1 and 2 bedroom accommodation.

16.1.24 The 'supporting people's locality plan' (Kent County Council) has identified a number of issues:

- Shortage of supported accommodation for people with learning difficulties, mental health problems and sensory disabilities;
- Lack of supported accommodation specifically for people who misuse substances, especially a 'wet' hostel;
- Shortage of enhanced care accommodation for the older population;
- Increased floating support services will be required for older people;
- Tenancy support services are needed for homeless applicants in temporary accommodation; and
- Accommodation and support services for 16 and 17 year olds leaving care and for those who are not.

16.1.25 Across the Borough there are pitches comprising 32 unauthorised and 75 authorised sites (both public and private) in 2006. The North Kent GTAA (2006) has a target to provide 88% of new pitches on private authorised sites by 2011 and to provide accommodation for 62 households in Swale by 2011.

³⁹ Swale Borough Council - Private Sector House Condition Survey 2010

Likely Future Conditions

- 16.1.26 In the long term, house prices are likely to rise. However, in the short term economic climate, it is difficult to predict the trajectory of house prices. In a 'best case' scenario of continued economic growth, house prices could see short term increases of 1.6% per annum. It is also possible, though, that the current decline in house prices could continue in a sharp and prolonged fall; under this scenario, prices would be predicted to decline by 30% between 2008 and 2011 before rising again to recover by 2026.
- 16.1.27 The East Kent SHMAA states that approximately half of Swale is within the Thames Gateway Growth Area. This will impact on housing growth within the Thames Gateway and adjacent areas. The Thames Gateway development has the potential to attract new residents into the area.
- 16.1.28 Provision of new housing across the Borough is forecast to increase in the future to meet the allocations of the RSS. The growth in households is forecast to increase overall by 18.7% over the 20 year period. However, delivery of housing targets in the Borough will need to reflect the changing economic situation (i.e. whether house prices continue to decline). But, if targets do need to be changed in order to optimise affordability and economic growth, these changes will need to be made at national and regional levels before they can be implemented at the Borough level.
- 16.1.29 A growing elderly population requires flexible the provision services that enable older people to remain independently in their own homes for longer period of time.

Environmental and Sustainability Issues and Problems

- 16.1.30 The following issues have been identified:
- The provision of affordable housing in the Borough is currently below the target set in the Local Plan, the Council needs to deliver further affordable homes to meet the needs of the population both in the urban and rural areas of the Borough.
 - The escalating cost of buying and renting homes in rural areas means that the adequate provision of affordable housing to meet local need is of particular importance. This provision includes options for renting, shared ownership and low cost home ownership, secured, where appropriate, in perpetuity for local people.
 - The Council needs to continue the improvement programme to ensure that the decent homes standard is achieved in existing and emerging housing stock.
 - Rural housing both the delivery and affordability is a big issue facing the Borough.
 - Provision of adaptable housing to meet the needs of the disabled and elderly population (lifetime homes).
 - The North Kent GTAA study identified an overarching requirement for 64 pitches to meet the needs of the community up to 2016. This includes provisions for the 9 overcrowded households and 30 concealed households with a preference for Swale. In addition there is a need to provide permanent pitches for 12 families living on sites with temporary permission due to expire.

Proposed SA/SEA Objectives

SA objective	To provide affordable and decent housing adaptable to future needs of the community
Decision making criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver the appropriate mix of housing to deliver the long term regeneration schemes for the Borough? • Reduce the number of people homeless or in temporary accommodation? • Contribute to the provision of affordable, social and key-worker housing? • Reduce the number of unfit housing and those falling below the decent homes standards? • Deliver adaptable housing to meet the lifelong needs of the population? • Reduce the experiences of fuel poverty? • Deliver housing is sustainable locations with access to employment, community and public transport hubs?

16.2 Appraisal Findings

Likely Significant Effects

16.2.1 The following significant effects arising from the Strategic Spatial Options and Core Strategy policy proposals on SA Objective 16 were identified.

Policy CP6 Homes and Communities

16.2.2 This policy approach will set the total number of homes to be built to 2031, it identifies that housing will be required to be delivered that is sustainable and of a high quality. This policy seeks to achieve 20% of market housing to be delivered to lifetime homes standards and meet the Building for Life criteria. The policy will also have regard to the thresholds for affordable housing. Over the medium to long term these policy requirements are appraised to deliver significant benefits.

Policy DM10 Affordable Housing

16.2.3 This policy will provide the framework for delivering affordable housing across the Borough over the plan period. Over the medium to long term, as greater numbers of units are delivered this policy is appraised to deliver significant benefits.

Policy DM11 Rural Housing Policy

16.2.4 This policy approach is appraised to deliver significant medium to long term benefits as it will require all housing proposals to be kept affordable and for locally eligible residents.

Likely Minor Beneficial Effects

16.2.5 Minor beneficial effects were identified for the following policies:

Spatial Option 2

- 16.2.6 This option also has a rural housing focus focusing a proportion of housing to the rural communities meeting the identified need in these areas.

Spatial Option 4

- 16.2.7 This Spatial Option plans for higher housing growth (18,500 with 9,500 'outstanding' for longer term housing growth beyond the plan period) to support high employment growth scenarios (22,900 net job capacity), strengthen Sittingbourne's role as a main town, and address transport constraints. This Spatial Option has the maximum potential to deliver the highest proportion of affordable housing in accordance with the Council's standards.

Policy CP1 Settlement Hierarchy

- 16.2.8 This policy approach defines the settlement hierarchy for the Borough and the development suitable within the boundaries.

Policy CP2 Provision of jobs and homes 2006-2031

- 16.2.9 This policy will set out the amount of housing requiring identification through the Core Strategy. Through providing the delivery mechanism for additional housing across the Borough contributes to delivering affordable and decent homes.

Likely Minor Negative Effects

Spatial Options 1, 2 and 3

- 16.2.10 These options plan for the identified housing growth of 13,500 units over the plan period. This will deliver considerable benefits across the Borough with regard to the proportion of affordable homes delivered. However, these options deliver lower levels of housing growth than identified being required if current migratory trends continue, questioning the deliverability of these spatial options.

Recommendation

- 16.2.11 Ensure that the final Spatial Option plans for delivery of the maximum feasible level of new housing development for the Borough as determined through baseline studies and current migratory trends.

16.3 Proposed Monitoring

- 16.3.1 The following indicators could be used to measure effects:

- Average house price
- Identified affordable housing need, completions and shortfall in delivery
- Applicants on the housing register
- Total number of households
- Household type
- %homes meeting/ not meeting the decent home standard

- Empty properties
- Developments meeting/ constructed to lifetime homes standards
- Housing completions
- Developments built to ecohomes/ CSH mandatory standards
- Provision of Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople pitches and sites.

17 Local Economy

Introduction

- 17.1.1 The performance of the economy has a fundamental bearing on the achievement of sustainable development. It has both beneficial and adverse impacts. On one hand there are negative aspects, such as generation of waste, or pollution from industry or traffic, while on the other hand the economy provides employment and generates wealth. A sustainable economy should be seen as a part of the wider social and natural environment and, as far as possible, not adversely effect these wider elements.

Context Review

- 17.1.2 Key messages from the context review include:

Message	Source
Build prosperous communities by improving the economic performance of cities, towns, regions, sub-regions and local areas, both urban and rural. Reduce the gap in economic growth rates between regions, promoting regeneration and tackling deprivation. Deliver more sustainable patterns of development, reduce the need to travel, especially by car and respond to climate change. Promote the vitality and viability of town and other centres as important places for communities. Raise the quality of life and the environment in rural areas by promoting thriving, inclusive and locally distinctive rural communities whilst continuing to protect the open countryside for the benefit of all.	PPS4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Development
Raise the quality of life and the environment in rural areas through the promotion of thriving, inclusive and sustainable rural communities; sustainable economic growth and diversification; and continued protection of the open countryside.	Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas
The Regional Economic Strategy sets three key objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global Competitiveness • Smart Growth • Sustainable Prosperity 	Regional Economic Strategy 2006 -2016
Increase the value of the Borough's economic base, through the provision and promotion of employment sites for higher value uses and by attracting new investment. Support the development of enterprise and entrepreneurship, including social enterprise, by ensuring access to business support and premises. Regenerate Swale's town centres as major centres for employment, learning, culture and services. Increase access to employment opportunities, especially in the most disadvantaged parts of the Borough and among the most disadvantaged communities.	Ambitions for Swale, Swale's Sustainable Community Strategy 2009 – 2026 (2009)
Opportunities should be sought to diversify the economic base of the region's coastal resorts, while consolidating and upgrading tourism facilities in	Regional Tourism Strategy

Message	Source
<p>ways which promote higher value activity, reduce seasonality and support urban regeneration. Priority should be given to improving the quality of all existing attractions to meet changing consumer demands and high environmental standards in terms of design and access. The Thames Gateway is identified as a tourism growth area for realising the potential for growth in business, sporting, environmental and attraction based tourism as part of the wider regeneration strategy for the Gateway, adding value to the existing tourism market.</p>	
<p>Economic strengths of the Borough: good transport accessibility to the M2 and M20 motorways and rail links to London; the growth potential of the Port of Sheerness and related distribution activities; a strong industrial base; employment growth above the regional average; good levels of new business formation; the Kent Science Park; generally low land/building costs; above average unemployment providing available labour supply; close to major housing and population growth planned in the Thames Gateway; and affordable housing costs combined with proximity to attractive countryside.</p>	<p>Swale Employment Land Review (2010)</p>

Baseline Information

- 17.1.3 Swale performs similarly to the national picture as a whole with regard to enterprise, with new business start-ups, business closures and total growth in business stock all at the national average. The GVA per head in 2001 was recorded to be £9,311 this had increased to £12,056 in 200740.
- 17.1.4 Swale's economic performance is constrained by poor infrastructure. To deliver the economic improvements desired by the council, the right infrastructure is fundamental to support the growth and change desired. Transport and commercial property are highlighted in the State of the Borough report as key infrastructure improvement areas, but wider infrastructure requirements include utilities and communications technology. However, the Port of Sheerness is the fourth largest in the Country, with plans for major expansion and the borough is on the strategic road network, but as detailed in the transport section (Chapter 19) upgrading and future investment is required to meet the economic needs of the borough and the greater south east.
- 17.1.5 The Council has commissioned consultants to undertake a Retail Study for the Borough (which is expected to be published in December 2010). Early indications are that approximately 50% of expenditure for comparison floorspace is retained within the Borough and that this market share will remain constant for the foreseeable future. There is however, leakage from the Borough to surrounding centres at Canterbury, Maidstone, Bluewater and Hempstead Valley, Gillingham. KCC undertook health checks for the town centres of Sittingbourne, Faversham and Sheerness in 2009. These show the position of the Borough's three main centres relative to other centres in Kent. Faversham is identified as having a low vacancy rate of 5%, which compares well to the national average of vacancy rates at 12.45%. The Kent Town Centre Health Check (03/04) for Sittingbourne, Sheerness and Faversham shows the position of these

⁴⁰ www.kent.gov.uk/research Economic Profile 2007 Swale

town centres relative to 16 other centres in Kent. Faversham is identified as having a low level of vacancies suggesting a relatively stable centre, although clearly not flourishing⁴¹.

- 17.1.6 The Borough currently has a poor image with investors⁴². Swale has historically had an economy dependent on the processing industry and manufacturing and the rural agricultural economy. The manufacturing industry, the cornerstone of the local economy has seen significant decline, with over 25% reduction in employment over the five year period to 2003. The knowledge based sector is recognised to be the drivers of national economic growth, through the Kent Science Park, the location for knowledge-based businesses and through developing a network of high quality business locations and developing enterprise and entrepreneurship future investment will be focused.
- 17.1.7 There are relatively few large firms in the Borough with only 3% of businesses having more than 50 employees and none with over 500, although this share is similar to Kent generally and nationally. Swale also has a high proportion (83%) of very small firms (0-9 employees).
- 17.1.8 As illustrated in the table below, in 2007 VAT registered business were recorded as follows (the most recent figures available):

Table 17.1: VAT Registration/deregistrations

	Swale (numbers)	Swale (%)	SE (%)	GB (%)
Registrations	405	10.3	10.0	10.2
Deregistrations	340	8.7	7.2	7.3
Stock (at end of year)	3,615	-	-	-

Source: Nomis

- 17.1.9 The Council supports the development of tourism as both a driver for employment growth and a shift in the perception of the Borough. Tourism activity is an area seen by the Borough as providing future economic growth. In particular the Borough is looking to take fuller advantage of the high quality natural environment through eco tourism. The tourism sector is well developed and continuing to develop particularly with regard to eco-tourism, heritage and maritime, it has safeguarded 5,000 jobs and creating 300 direct and 600 indirect new jobs. The Swale Employment Land Review (2010), states that tourism has below average representation in the Borough, but with above average growth. Development of the 'business' tourism industry (hotels and conference facilities) is under consideration as an area of expansion in the Borough, particularly Sittingbourne.
- 17.1.10 Tourism across the Borough can capitalise on the eco-tourism sector, Swale possess some high quality landscapes with large populations of migratory and breeding birds and a rich biodiversity. This environment is suitable for walking, birdwatching and nature conservation, key tourist attractions.
- 17.1.11 Faversham is seen as an opportunity area to be developed as a tourist destination, capitalising on its historic market town status and surrounding high quality countryside. Faversham also has a range of small-scale industrial and distribution activities, as well as offices and an allocated employment site with potential for B1-B8 development. Swale Employment Land Review states that Faversham may have potential for IT, media and design firms in a facility for higher end start-up firms.
- 17.1.12 The rural economy has historically been dominated by land-based sector and is still an important part of the Borough's economy. However it has long been in decline in employment terms and

⁴¹ Swale Annual Monitoring Report 2004/05

⁴² Swale Economic Development Strategy 2005-08

has been affected in recent years by the agricultural crisis. The agriculture sector has driven forward diversification which has been met with success, with the emergence of new opportunities following CAP reform and the continuing development of rural tourism⁴³. The Employment Land Review (2010) states that there is a significant demand and development interest in the rural area, spread across many small locations.

- 17.1.13 Tourism is a strong contributor to the Borough's economy. There was an 80% growth in tourism related employment between 1998 and 2003⁴⁴. The Isle of Sheppey with its quality beaches has made it a popular tourist destination. The Borough does contain a wealth of attractions for visitors to the area. This includes 14 identified historic house and heritage sites, 8 museums and galleries, including the Fleur dis Lis Heritage Centre in Faversham and the Sittingbourne Heritage Centre, and the Guildhall Museums. In 2006/07 72 visits per 1,000 population were made to museum's in the Borough. There is potential for the growth of rural tourism; this is targeted at environmentally sensitive, high value tourism.
- 17.1.14 Swale has been affected by the recession both in job numbers and employment completions. There has been large number of B8 completions, mostly due to one development (Morrisons depot in Kemsley). There has been a fall in B1 uses and IT, knowledge based jobs have fallen, contrary to Ambitions for Swale the Sustainable Communities Strategy and falling further below the South East average for these job sectors.
- 17.1.15 There has been a large drop in job numbers recently with losses of 1,600 in 2009 and over 4,000 in 2008 without replacement and without 'high end' wages. This is a trend which will need to be addressed in the LDF.
- 17.1.16 There has been a significant loss in 'town centre' uses. Whilst there has been a steady decline within the Borough previously, the drop this year is assumed to be a product of the national recession as this drop is mirrored in other authorities within Kent⁴⁵.

Likely Future Conditions

- 17.1.17 The economy of the Borough is linked to that of the UK economy as a whole. For this reason predictions are difficult to make. However, the Borough is in a strong position to see future improvements with its economy, linked to the proportion of employment generating development planned for the future in the Borough and the attractive location of the Borough to investors.
- 17.1.18 There is potential for the agricultural industry to diversify and more local people to produce own/ locally ground food to supply the local markets. There will be an increasing trend towards self-sufficiency amongst residents and support of local producers where available, as the cost of living is set to increase.
- 17.1.19 The tourism industry of the Borough is set to grow and bring economic benefits, utilising the attractive built and natural environment and landscapes of the Borough, especially within Faversham with the future regeneration plans around the creekside.
- 17.1.20 Future regeneration priorities will see the development of Kent Science Park as the location for knowledge-based businesses. Across the Borough a network of high quality business locations will be developed such as Neatscourt and improvements to the existing business parks and town centres. Employment led regeneration is being sought at Faversham and on other small scale sites in and around Faversham. There are also regeneration proposals for Sittingbourne town

⁴³ Regeneration Framework 2006-2016 (Swale forward)

⁴⁴ Consultation Draft Sustainable Community Strategy 2009-2026

⁴⁵ Swale Annual Monitoring Report 2009

centre including a new Learning Hub to improve skills. Milton Creek is Sittingbourne's historic dock, regeneration of this area is proposed for a new waterfront district to reconnect Sittingbourne to the Swale Estuary. Queenborough & Rushenden regeneration includes a Rushenden Link Road and new employment development supported by SEEDA funding. Sheerness is to be enhanced as a commercial and cultural centre for Sheppey with improved links between its docks, town centre and seafront.

17.1.21 Swale's skills profile is a particular problem, levels of skills and qualifications fall well below the national average and this poor performance has the potential to hold back the rest of the economy, especially given the need to attract higher level jobs⁴⁶ (skills and qualifications are discussed in Chapter 18 Employment).

Environmental and Sustainability Problems

- The Borough currently has a poor image with investors⁴⁷.
- Declining traditional industries of manufacturing and processing within the Borough, and a decline in the rural economy.
- An above average proportion of lower paid jobs with commuting to better paid jobs outside the Borough; a relatively low-skilled workforce.
- The delivery of employment land competes with land for residential development.
- The Borough needs to capitalise on development of the tourism sector, in particular eco-tourism respecting the high quality natural environment.
- Declining retail sectors and out migration of residents to surrounding shopping centres.
- Under-representation in the financial and business services and other knowledge based sectors, which typically which have greater potential for growth.
- The future economic performance is constrained by poor infrastructure, investment is required to rectify this issue and make the Borough an attractive place to invest.

Proposed SA/SEA Objectives

SA objective	To sustain economic growth and competitiveness
Decision making criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does it contribute the development of eco-tourism industry? • Does it provide for opportunities to attract new businesses to the Borough? • Does it contribute to infrastructure improvements?

17.2 Appraisal Findings

Likely Significant Effects

Spatial Options 3 and 4

17.2.1 Spatial Options 3 and 4 propose a higher rate of employment growth (595,000sqm) and facilitates a major expansion of the Kent Science Park as well as expansion at the Port of Sheerness. This proposed growth is intended to meet the specific needs of key employment sectors, such as knowledge and green economies all contributing to economic development and growth across the Borough.

⁴⁶ Regeneration Framework 2006-2016 (Swale forward)

⁴⁷ Swale Economic Development Strategy

Likely Minor Beneficial Effects

17.2.2 Minor beneficial effects were identified for the following policies:

Spatial Options 1 and 2

17.2.3 Spatial Options 1 and 2 propose to deliver a lower rate of employment over the plan period (415,000 sqm); although these levels are not high they will contribute to the Boroughs economic growth and competitiveness through attracting some new enterprises to the Borough. These options also propose expansion of the Kent Science Park providing further opportunities for new businesses to relocate to.

Policy CP1 Settlement Hierarchy

17.2.4 This policy approach identifies the hierarchy for development across the Borough; this includes defining where employment and industrial development can be located facilitating economic growth over the plan period.

Policy CP2 Provision of Jobs and Homes 2006 – 2031

17.2.5 This policy approach specifies the delivery requirements for employment land. Delivering land for employment opportunities contributes towards economic growth across the Borough.

Policy CP5 Prosperity cross-cutting policy

17.2.6 This policy approach intends to support the employment led strategy, aiming to produce a strong and sustainable economy addressing future economic challenges.

Policy CP8 Infrastructure and implementation cross-cutting policy

17.2.7 This policy intends to deliver sufficient infrastructure to facilitate the required development, this benefits economic development across the Borough.

Policy DM7 Retail Development

17.2.8 This policy approach through supporting the retail development needs of the Borough and protecting the existing town centres achieves beneficial results with regard to sustaining economic growth and competitiveness and employment across the Borough.

Policy DM8 Rural Economy

17.2.9 This policy approach will deliver a mechanism to try and enable the security of the rural economy this approach therefore supports the rural economy but it will also be ensured that there is no detriment to the landscape character, countryside conservation and biodiversity of the Borough.

Policy DM9 Tourism

17.2.10 Promoting and improving the tourism sector within the Borough will deliver positive benefits with regard to sustaining economic growth and competitiveness, in particular in the rural areas of the Borough.

17.3 Proposed Monitoring

17.3.1 The following indicators could be used to measure effects:

- Employment floorspace
- Companies/ businesses located in area
- Tourism facilities and opportunities

18 Employment and Skills

Introduction

- 18.1.1 This chapter deals specifically with employment rather than wider economic factors. Clearly any expansion or contraction of the economy is likely to have an effect on employment in the Borough and this is the overall context in which this chapter should be read.
- 18.1.2 Ensuring that housing and employment development is matched locally helps to reduce the distance that people have to travel to work and reduces the environmental impact associated with commuting.

Context Review

- 18.1.3 Key messages from the Context Review Include:

Message	Source
<p>Heavy reliance on out commuting for employment due to a shortfall in jobs relative to the resident workforce. Almost 60% of the out-commuting residents work in B class jobs and work in London or the adjoining Boroughs. In-commuting equates to 22% of all workplace jobs in Swale.</p> <p>There is an emerging cluster of Knowledge led businesses at the Kent Science Park, providing employment and training opportunities within the Borough, representing the single most important opportunity to promote significant structural change and generate more skilled, well-paid employment within the local economy. The leisure, cultural and tourism industries are recognised as important employment sources within the Borough, further investment is required to enhance and continue the growth and value provided by this sector in the future.</p>	Swale Employment Land Review (2010)
Kent will be a county where learning is stimulated and supported for everyone – for life, for enjoyment and for employment.	Vision for Kent (2006-2026)
Deliver a step change in Swale's learning and skills performance to ensure a high quality skills base sufficient and to enable people in Swale to realise their full potential.	Ambitions for Swale, Swale's Sustainable Community Strategy 2009 – 2026 (2009)

Baseline Information

- 18.1.4 In recent years the focus for employment growth has been in the Thames Gateway and Sittingbourne. Much of the investment has consolidated on existing strengths and diversified the economy within the dominant industrial sectors of logistics, transport and manufacturing. This focus has produced employment growth but has maintained a lower skills base.
- 18.1.5 The Borough as a whole faces growing competition from a number of other locations in Kent and the South East. The increasing urbanisation of North West Kent and the rapid growth of towns such as Canterbury has meant that Swale must respond to these commercial and

competitive pressures. But as a Borough, Swale faces particular problems because of its narrow economic base which is still shaped by traditional industry and, hence, lower skilled (and lower paid) jobs. Increasingly, these are under threat from international competition. There is also a lack of employment in 'knowledge driven' sectors which are considered crucial to national economic growth.

18.1.6 There has been a reduction in Finance, IT, other business activities for the third year in a row and surprisingly a reduction in Manufacturing (the previous trend has been an annual growth). Overall jobs sectors have had minimal growth or losses which are attributed to the economic downturn.⁴⁸

18.1.7 The levels of commuting for work outside the Borough are a particular issue, 44% of the Borough's resident working population travelled outside of the Borough for work. People are generally travelling to Canterbury, Medway Towns and Maidstone rather than commuting to London. The Swale Employment Land Review (2010) states that earnings in Swale are 15% lower than the South East average, this suggests that many Swale residents are commuting to higher paid jobs outside of the Borough and that there is a need for more, higher paid jobs locally.

18.1.8 The table below illustrates the working age (16-64) population (2009) of the Borough.

Table 18.1: Working age population (2009)

	Swale (numbers)	Swale (%)	South East (%)	GB (%)
All people - working age	83,900	63.6	64.1	65.0
Males - working age	41,900	64.2	65.0	66.0
Females - working age	41,900	63.0	63.2	64.0

Source: Nomis

18.1.9 Local resident earnings, as illustrated in the table below indicate that Swale performs lower than the SE average, but residents are earning more than the national average in terms of weekly pay. Residents earn less than the regional and national average in relation to hourly rates.

Table 18.2: Swale annual hours and weekly earning by residence (2009)

	Swale (£)	SE (£)	GB (£)
Gross weekly pay	492.2	536.6	491.0
Male	547.5	589.3	534.4
Female	419.0	454.0	426.6
Hourly pay	12.33	13.73	12.47
Male	12.78	14.66	13.16
Female	10.97	12.11	11.45

Source: Nomis

18.1.10 The residents of Swale are employed in a wide variety of sectors. The following table illustrates this:

⁴⁸ Swale Annual Monitoring Report 2009

Table 18.3: Employee jobs (2008)

	Swale (employee jobs)	Swale (%)	SE (%)	GB (%)
Total employee jobs	42,800	-	-	-
Full-time	29,800	69.5	69.0	68.8
Part-time	13,100	30.5	31.0	31.2
Employee jobs by industry				
Manufacturing	6,200	14.4	8.1	10.2
Construction	2,300	5.3	4.5	4.8
Services	32,500	75.9	85.7	83.5
Distribution, hotels & restaurants	9,900	23.1	24.6	23.4
Transport & communications	3,300	7.8	5.9	5.8
Finance, IT, other business activities	6,500	15.2	24.0	22.0
Public admin, education & health	11,100	25.8	25.6	27.0
Other services	1,700	4.0	5.6	5.3
Tourism-related	3,200	7.4	8.2	8.2

Source: Nomis

- 18.1.11 As indicated above, the greatest proportion of Swale's residents are employed in the service sector, reflecting the regional and national pattern. A significantly higher proportion of residents are employed in the manufacturing industry than those in the rest of the SE and nationally.
- 18.1.12 A significantly lower proportion of residents are employed in the finance, IT and other business sectors compared to the SE and the national average. This reflects the identified need in the Swale Economic Strategy to develop the skills base of the population to diversify the Boroughs employment structure. The Borough has low proportions of employment in the knowledge sectors; there has been an improvement over recent years. There is still a lot to be done to continue driving the improvement of the knowledge sector within Swale. Targeting investment that will generate higher skilled employment in more knowledge intensive sectors is a key priority of the Council.
- 18.1.13 The Swale Employment Land Review (2010) identifies that the largest private sector employers in Swale are in the industrial and transportation sectors and include Aesica (pharmaceuticals), St. Regis Paper, Medway Ports and Shepherd Neame (brewers). Pfizer, a major pharmaceutical firm, has recently relocated from the Borough. There are no major office based firms based in Swale although two call centre operations are based at Kent Science Park. Another important local employer is the cluster of three prisons on the Isle of Sheppey. The tourism sector is also a significant supporter of local jobs, with many caravan parks based on Sheppey and many bed and breakfast establishments and self-catering accommodation across the North Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 18.1.14 Kent Science Park is a cluster of knowledge led businesses. For Swale to achieve its ambition of a step change in the local economy it is recognised that an expansion of activity at the Science Park is required. The Swale Employment Land Review (2010) states that there are currently proposals to develop two new 'Tech Units', of 2,300m² and 930m² to provide

accommodation for new technology tenants and the expansion needs of existing businesses on site. Longer-term, the Science Park has aspirations for an extension to the existing site, providing up to 12,000 m2 of additional floorspace, to be developed over the next 4-5 years.

- 18.1.15 The Swale Employment Capacity Study (2010) concludes that there are around 120 individual development sites in Swale that could generate almost 1.2 million m2 floorspace, mainly for B class uses but with a significant element of retail and leisure uses. This amount of floorspace has the potential to accommodate just over 35,000 jobs (gross) in Swale up to 2026. Most of the estimated new jobs are anticipated to come from industrial uses (74%). However, 4,400 (19%) could be accommodated on potential office sites and expansion of the Kent Science Park and 1,300 (6%) could be provided by retail and leisure uses⁴⁹.
- 18.1.16 The distances of travel to work by Swale's residents reflects the regional picture, 9% work from home the majority of the time, 24% (20% SE) work within 2km of home, 14% (15%) work between 5-10km of home, 17% (14%) work between 10-20km of home and 20% (18% SE) work between 20-60plus from home.
- 18.1.17 Tourism is a key sector in Swale, there has been a 50% growth in tourism related employment between in the last eight years. Tourism is still a low percentage of all Swale jobs (6.9%) when compared to the South East region (7.9%) and nationally (8.3%).
- 18.1.18 Faversham is a key area where the Council wishes to significantly enhance the role as a market town and employment centre to provide a choice for people to live and work locally. Currently there is a high reliance on out commuting for employment to other areas within Swale and Canterbury.
- 18.1.19 There is some evidence that the Borough's skills profile is improving. Among the current workforce, the proportion qualified to at least NVQ2 increased by over 9 percent between 2001/2 and 2005/6, ahead of the Kent average.
- 18.1.20 School attainment has also improved significantly: between 2003 and 2007, the percentage of students achieving GCSE passes at grades A*-C in Swale schools increased by 27%, compared with a Kent average of 16% and a national average of 15%. However, the Borough's average attainment figures still lag behind those for Kent and England as a whole. With this continued improvement, and the prospects of investment in the new Minster Academy and in the wider reorganisation of education on the Isle of Sheppey, the outlook for long-term improvement in the Borough's skills profile appear stronger⁵⁰.
- 18.1.21 The following table illustrates the Borough's qualification achievements as recorded between January and December 2009. It can be seen that the attainment of NVQ4 and above (degree level and above) is significantly below the regions average and lower than the national average.

Table 18.4: Qualifications (Jan 2009-Dec 2009)

	Swale (number)	Swale (%)	SE (%)	GB (%)
NVQ4 and above	14,500	17.4	32.6	29.9
NVQ3 and above	32,100	38.5	52.6	49.3
NVQ2 and above	48,500	58.3	69.0	65.4
NVQ1 and above	64,600	77.6	83.0	78.9
Other qualifications	6,600	8.0	7.8	8.8
No qualifications	12,000	14.4	9.1	12.3

Source: Nomis

⁴⁹ Swale Employment Capacity Study 2010

⁵⁰ Swale Annual Monitoring Report 2009

18.1.22 The regeneration framework identifies that the poor performance in skills and qualifications has the potential to hold back the rest of the economy, especially given the need to attract higher value jobs.

Likely Future Conditions

18.1.23 As stated in previous sections, the future regeneration for the Borough and the wider Thames Gateway should create employment opportunities associated with economic investment into the Borough.

18.1.24 Development of the skills base of the population, through the learning hub will enable enhanced employment prospects. In particular within the knowledge intensive sectors, an objective of the Council. However, continued poor performance in skills and qualifications has the potential to hold back the rest of the economy, especially given the need to attract higher value jobs. There is a need to manage the transition from the current dependence on sectors requiring low skill base to the aspiration to move towards a high-value, knowledge based employment sector.

18.1.25 Employment within the Service sector is likely to continue to be greatest in the Borough, reflecting the regional and national trends.

Sustainability Issues and Problems

18.1.26 The following issues have been identified:

- High levels of out commuting to jobs particularly in the higher skilled sectors and the higher paid jobs especially using car as a main form of transport resulting in increased congestion.
- Declining local manufacturing industry, as identified by the Council;
- A significantly higher proportion of residents are employed in the manufacturing industry and the greatest proportion of Swale's residents are employed in the service sector. There is a significantly lower proportion of residents are employed in the finance, IT and other business sectors compared to the SE and the national average;
- The average pay is significantly lower than the SE but is just above the GB average. Female workers in the Borough are paid less than the GB hourly rate and earn less on a weekly basis than both the national and regional average.
- Swale has a large number of people lacking qualifications and a shortage of graduate labour employment opportunities. Investment in skills and learning is regarded as critical for long-term regeneration.
- The poor skills profile is a problem when the Borough is trying to branch out into the higher skilled knowledge based industries. The current low skill base of the population is reflected through the existing employment opportunities which have been historically offered.

Proposed SA/SEA Objectives

SA objective	To ensure high and stable levels of employment in accessible locations
Decision making criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the numbers of knowledge based and higher paid jobs increased? • Are new employment opportunities created to meet the needs of the residents? • Are employment locations sustainable and accessible by public transport, walking and bicycle?

SA objective	To raise the educational achievement levels across the Borough and help people to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in employment
Decision making criteria	Does it contribute to increased learning opportunities across the Borough?

18.2 Appraisal Findings

Likely Significant Effects

- 18.2.1 No significant effects arising from the Strategic Spatial Options and Core Strategy policy proposals on SA Objectives 18 and 19 were thought likely. A number of minor effects were identified and these are discussed below.

Likely Minor Beneficial Effects

- 18.2.2 Minor beneficial effects were identified for the following policies:

Spatial Options 1 and 2

- 18.2.3 Spatial Options 1 and 2 propose to deliver a lower rate of employment over the plan period (415,000 sqm); although these levels are not high they will contribute to the Boroughs economic growth and competitiveness through attracting some new enterprises to the Borough. These options also propose minor expansion of the Kent Science Park providing further opportunities for new businesses to relocate to.

Spatial Options 3 and 4

- 18.2.4 Spatial Options 3 and 4 propose a higher rate of employment growth (595,000sqm) and facilitates a major expansion of the Kent Science Park as well as expansion at the Port of Sheerness. This proposed growth is intended to meet the specific needs of key employment sectors, such as knowledge and green economies all contributing to economic development and growth across the Borough. These options identify employment opportunities for industry sectors within the key towns and employment locations across the Borough. The expansion of the Kent Science Park is for employment purposes and long term growth extending beyond the plan period delivering a considerable number of new employment opportunities.

Policy CP1 Settlement Hierarchy

- 18.2.5 This policy approach identifies the hierarchy for development across the Borough; this includes defining where employment and industrial development can be located. This contributes to delivery of employment opportunities and associated skills development.

Policy CP5 Prosperity cross-cutting policy

- 18.2.6 This policy approach intends to support the employment led strategy, aiming to produce a strong and sustainable economy addressing future economic challenges.

Policy CP7 Health and well being cross-cutting policy

- 18.2.7 This policy seeks to increase education and training opportunities and support employment opportunities.

Policy DM7 Retail Development

- 18.2.8 This policy approach through supporting the retail development needs of the Borough and protecting existing town centres is beneficial with regard to delivering and supporting employment opportunities.

Policy DM8 Rural Economy

- 18.2.9 This policy approach through a mechanism to try and enable the security of the rural economy will contribute to the delivery of employment opportunities for local people within these defined rural locations.

Uncertain Effects

Spatial Option 3 and 4

- 18.2.10 There is current uncertainty surrounding the actual labour supply required to deliver these options, in particular if people do not relocate to the borough but commute in from neighbouring local authorities. Associated with labour supply is the skills set of existing and new residents to meet the needs of the proposed future sector (and employers).

Recommendation

- 18.2.11 It has been assumed that associated with employment opportunities is the potential to improve the skills of local residents, however basic skills are required for residents to be considered for the new employment opportunities. There is currently uncertainty surrounding this. There is little mention of learning and skills currently within the proposed policies it should be encouraged that future provision for learning and skills for all sectors of the community is discussed in detailed Core Strategy policy where required.

18.3 Proposed Monitoring

- 18.3.1 The following indicators could be used to measure effects:

- Employment by Occupation
- Annual average wage
- Economic activity and Economic inactivity
- Employment/ unemployment rates
- Education qualifications achieved by residents

19 Transport and Accessibility

Introduction

- 19.1.1 Sustainable transport is key to the wider sustainable development agenda. An efficient transport network is a pre-requisite of a successful, modern economy. A safe and accessible transport network helps fulfil societal objectives, while an energy efficient and low-pollution transport network is essential to safeguard the environment and climate. Reconciling these, often conflicting, requirements is at the heart of the planning process.
- 19.1.2 Accessibility, both to services and employment, is a particularly difficult issue in a predominantly rural district such as Swale, where the dispersed population makes public transport less viable than in urban areas. In villages not well-served by public transport the car is often the only realistic means of access to the main town and city centres.

Context Review

- 19.1.3 Key messages from the context review include:

Message	Source
Development plans should contain clear, comprehensive and inclusive access policies – in terms of both location and external physical access. Policies should aim to break down barriers and exclusions in a manner that benefits the entire community.	Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development
Local transport priorities and investment should be closely linked to development planning. The LDF and Local transport plan should be complementary. Housing should be principally accommodated within urban areas, planning for increased intensity for both housing and other uses at locations which are highly accessible by public transport, walking and cycling. Create more direct, safe and secure walking routes, particularly in and around town centres and local neighbourhoods, and to schools and stations, to reduce the actual walking distances between land uses and to public transport.	Planning Policy Guidance note 13: Transport
Promote good management and investment in the transport system, improving the structure of the transport system in favour of more sustainable means of transport.	Regional Transport Plan
Deliver an efficient, integrated, sustainable and multi-modal transport network capable of supporting a growing population and increased economic opportunity. Deliver sustainable transport in new developments. Promote access to sustainable transport. Invest in major transport infrastructure. Maintain and improve the highways network. Improve road safety Develop alternative access to services.	Ambitions for Swale, Swale's Sustainable Community Strategy 2009 – 2026 (2009)
Provide good, safe accessibility to jobs and	Kent Transport Strategy

Message	Source
services for all sections of the community in Kent, and to improve the environment and health of the community by reducing congestion and pollution, widening the choice of transport available, and by developing public transport, walking and cycling.	
Increase the use of sustainable transport modes and to increase accessibility by all sectors of the community.	Swale Transport Strategy 2006-11

Baseline Information

- 19.1.4 The Borough is well related to the motorway and trunk network providing access to the M2 and A249, leading to the M20, M26 and M25, other channel ports and the Channel Tunnel.
- 19.1.5 The Borough's Transport Strategy highlights priorities for the A249 enhancements, Sittingbourne Northern Relief Road round the A2 at Babchild and Rushenden Link Road. These are key to the delivery of the Thames Gateway employment sites in the Borough. Recent years have seen major investment in the transport infrastructure, most prominent of which was the 2006 opening of the new Sheppey crossing which has greatly increased connectivity between the Isle of Sheppey and the rest of Kent.
- 19.1.6 Swale has seen major investment in transport infrastructure in recent years. In 2006 the new Sheppey Crossing opened, greatly increasing connectivity between the Isle of Sheppey and the rest of Kent, this fulfils a long-required transport need.
- 19.1.7 Sheerness is the UK's fourth largest freight port.
- 19.1.8 Sittingbourne has direct rail connections to London with a travelling time of just over an hour. Residents can also travel from Sheerness but have to change at Sittingbourne and Faversham residents can travel to London and further a field from Faversham train station.
- 19.1.9 There is a dependence on car use within the rural areas of the Borough resulting from the poor accessibility of the villages by public transport, in particular the low frequency of bus services. The dominance of the car creates a poor environment for walking including a lack of pedestrian priority measures, poor crossing facilities, pollution from vehicles and low quality streetscape.⁵¹
- 19.1.10 Car ownership in the Borough generally reflects the regional and national picture with regard to 2 car households which is 26%, compared to 29% in the southeast and 24% nationally. Swale has a considerably greater number of households owning 1 car, 74% in comparison with 42% in the south east and 43% nationally.
- 19.1.11 The main urban areas of the Borough are compact and relatively flat, an ideal environment for cyclists. However, currently there is very little supporting infrastructure for cyclists. Throughout Kent there are approximately 490 kilometres of cycle network, made up of national, regional, recreational and urban cycle routes.
- 19.1.12 The Saxon Shore Way is a long-distance footpath that follows the Kent coast from Gravesend to Rye in East Sussex, some 140 miles. The Saxon Shore Way traces the coast as it was in Roman times and follows the line of the Roman fortifications. The Swale Heritage Trail is a shorter footpath of some 11 miles from Murston, west of Sittingbourne, to Goodnestone. Also many local walking routes across the Borough.

⁵¹ Swale Transport Strategy 2006-11

- 19.1.13 The emerging green grid network provides a safe alternative route which cyclists and walkers can use, as well as residents for day to day journeys.

Likely Future Conditions

- 19.1.14 Continued reliance on the private car places increased pressure on the Borough's road network as capacity levels are reached. In particular capacity constraints are experienced at M2 J5, M2 J7 also future capacity assessment is required for the junctions on the A249 (T). The rail network of Swale has been improved through Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL) Domestic Services in the Borough, this will continue to lead to improved rail links and usage by the local population.
- 19.1.15 Recent road improvements such as the Sittingbourne Northern Relief road have resulted in increases in traffic levels, particularly the A2; when the full route of the northern relief road is completed, an increase of 30% in traffic is forecasted.⁵²
- 19.1.16 Car ownership in the UK as a whole is rising and it is likely to continue, this is likely to be the case in Swale. With improvements to public transport the high level of 1 car households may decline and the number of additional cars per household will also hopefully decline.
- 19.1.17 Future development within the Borough should promote and support the potential for increasing walking, cycling, car sharing and community transport provision.
- 19.1.18 Regeneration proposals for the Borough should contribute sustainable transport improvements, in both the urban and rural areas of the Borough.
- 19.1.19 The Transport Strategy also notes that the dispersed pattern of settlement in Swale means that comprehensive public transport solutions are more difficult to deliver in the Borough than in other more urbanised parts of the Thames Gateway. The private car will continue to be the primary mode of transport across much of Swale, and it will be important to strike a balance between essential investment in new highways infrastructure and in facilities that can enable people to access and transfer between a number of modes of transport. Achieving this balance is central to Swale's future transport development.
- 19.1.20 Throughout the Borough there should be a continued focus on developing and enhancing the public rights of way to provide green travel alternatives for rural communities and opportunities should be taken to enhance the links between towns and the wider countryside.

Environmental and Sustainability Problems

- 19.1.21 The following problems have been identified:
- Transport capacity constraints have been identified on many of the Borough's strategic roads (M2 J5, J6 and J7 and A249 (T)).
 - The regeneration agenda cannot be delivered without significant transport improvements, most notably improvements to Junction 5 of the M2 and the A2 link. Also the delivery of future phases of the Sittingbourne Northern Relief Road.
 - Connections between the rural communities, employment, services and amenities are very poor with regard to accessible public transport.
 - Poor accessibility of rural villages by public transport.
 - Low use of public transport to get to work compared to the country average.

⁵² SA Workshop February 2008

- Poor supporting infrastructure for cyclists in the Borough.
- Poor quality pedestrian environment in certain areas of the Borough.

Proposed SA/SEA Objectives

SA objective	To promote traffic reduction and encourage more sustainable alternative forms of transport
Decision making criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does it provide improvements and new routes for cyclists and pedestrians? • Does it reduce to need to travel by car? • Will the development lead to adverse impacts on the Strategic Road Network, particularly junction 5 and 7 of the M2 which cannot be mitigated acceptably?

19.2 Policy Appraisal Findings

Likely Significant Effects

- 19.2.1 No significant effects arising from the Strategic Spatial Options and Core Strategy policy proposals on SA Objective 20 were thought likely. A number of minor effects were identified and these are discussed below.

Likely Minor Beneficial Effects

- 19.2.2 Minor beneficial effects were identified for the following policies:

Spatial Option 1

- 19.2.3 Development within the urban areas encourages sustainable modes of transport. Where there is a good choice of facilities within walking distance of employment locations, services and existing dwellings this reduces the need to use a private vehicle for both new and existing residents. Sittingbourne and Faversham have good rail links ensuring that a high proportion of commuting can be undertaken by rail. Congestion is an issue within Sittingbourne and this option intends to complete the Northern Relief Road to the A2, however the transport impact upon the secondary road system are uncertain.

Spatial Option 2

- 19.2.4 Development within the urban areas encourages sustainable modes of transport. Where there is a good choice of facilities within walking distance of employment, services and existing dwellings this reduces the need to use a private vehicle for both new and existing residents. Sittingbourne and Faversham have good rail links ensuring that a high proportion of commuting can be undertaken by rail. Congestion is an issue within Sittingbourne and this Spatial Option intends to complete the Northern Relief Road to the A2. Congestion around Sittingbourne (and the other main towns) affects the attractiveness of these areas as places for people to visit to utilise the services available. Locating development within the identified rural villages brings questions regarding sustainable transport options and reducing the reliance on the private car. In particular the impact on the secondary road network through this focus on rural development is uncertain although congestion is envisaged. Within Sheppey there is currently little option for sustainable transport modes, this requires improvement if future development occurs.

Spatial Option 3

- 19.2.5 This Spatial Option proposes the completion of the SNRR to the A2 and the new junction to the M2 providing the 1st phase of the SSRR with the intention to relieve traffic congestion across the Borough. The M2 junction improvements could impact upon the AONB and there are considerable environmental implications associated with the SSRR as the proposed route goes through areas of high quality landscape value, agricultural land and important countryside. These road developments should improve accessibility to a regenerated Sittingbourne and the Kent Science Park in the future. These proposals for highway improvements contribute to traffic reduction but do not encourage the use of sustainable forms of transport. The overall level of level of regeneration proposed across the Borough will bring a considerable increase in traffic movements on the road network, it is uncertain at this stage the level of impact. There are deliverability issues surrounding the SSRR and the junction improvements proposed for the motorway.

Spatial Option 4

- 19.2.6 This Spatial Option proposes the completion of the SNRR but it also proposes the delivery of the SSRR, between the M2 and the A2. This has the potential to deliver considerable benefits for transport links across the Borough facilitating the economic growth but, again, at the detriment of the natural environment as the route will go through areas of high value countryside and the M2 junction improvements could impact upon the AONB. These proposals will alleviate existing traffic problems on the Borough's current roads in those areas but will not contribute towards encouraging more sustainable modes of transport. There are deliverability issues surrounding the SSRR and the junction improvements proposed for the motorway with regard to the principle of the work requiring being undertaken, funding and the transport implications of the Spatial Option.

Policy CP1 – Settlement Hierarchy

- 19.2.7 This policy approach seeks to deliver sustainable transport and road transport improvements within the main identified settlement areas of the Borough, also intending the improvement of accessibility to services.

Recommendation

- 19.2.8 Highlight Sheppey as an area that requires considerable sustainable transport investment.

Policy CP5 – Prosperity –cross cutting policy

- 19.2.9 This policy approach through supporting an employment led strategy requires the delivery of supporting transport network both sustainable options and improvements to the existing primary and secondary road network to enable a strong and sustainable economy for the Borough's future.

CP4 – Sustainability and environment cross-cutting policy

- 19.2.10 This policy approach seeks to reduce the need to travel and looks to ensure that good accessibility to public and other sustainable modes of transport are made available.

CP8 – Infrastructure and implementation cross cutting policy

- 19.2.11 Transport is an identified component of infrastructure through this policy mechanism. Projects identified for the Borough include the SNRR and the SSRR and improvements to J5 of the M2, as discussed under the Spatial Options. These projects should contribute towards improvements in congestion at the identified locations within the Borough. There are however, deliverability issues surrounding the SSRR and the junction improvements proposed for the motorway with regard to the principle of the work requiring being undertaken, funding and the transport implications of the proposal questioning the delivery. Further identified transport improvements across the Borough include the walking and cycling network, rail and bus provision. These will contribute towards encouraging the use of sustainable transport modes and hopefully associated traffic reduction.

DM8 – Rural Economy

- 19.2.12 This policy approach will not support diversification of the rural economy that would result in unsustainable increases and patterns in traffic, therefore promoting a reduction in traffic generation.

Recommendation

- 19.2.13 Consider including reference to the need to provide links with sustainable transport modes across the Borough for employees (buses to local train stations or car sharing) if possible. This could link with policy CP8 Infrastructure or DM14 Managing Travel Demand to highlight and tackle rural transport issues.

DM14 Managing Travel Demand

- 19.2.14 This policy approach will contribute towards a more sustainable transport system for the Borough, contributing towards reductions in emissions improving air quality across the Borough as well as improving the accessibility of key facilities by public transport modes.

19.3 Proposed Monitoring

- 19.3.1 The following indicators could be used to measure effects:
- Method of travel to work
 - Distance travelled to work and average commute time
 - Household Car Ownership
 - Per capita expenditures on roads, parking and traffic services
 - Public Rights of Way designated across the Borough
 - Implementation of road improvement schemes
 - Quality of transport facilities for disabled people
 - Proportion of children's travel to school and other local destinations by walking and cycling
 - Frequency of air pollution standards violations
 - Per capita emissions of 'conventional' air pollutants (co, VOC, NOx, PM10)

20 Appraisal of Issues and Strategic Spatial Options

20.1 Strategic Spatial Options

20.1.1 This section provides a full description of the findings from the appraisal of the Strategic Spatial Options.

20.2 Strategic Spatial Option 1

20.2.1 This spatial option proposes an urban regeneration focus to delivering housing requirements and a lower employment growth scenario. The principal of locating development within the existing urban areas within the Thames Gateway area and using some urban extension sites reduces the negative impact on the valued natural environment of Swale and its high quality countryside. This approach also reduces the impact on Greenfield land, although it is understood that some Greenfield land will still be required for new development (circa 3,280 homes) at urban extension sites. Focusing primarily in urban areas utilises the available previously developed land. However, areas of Greenfield land around Sittingbourne and Queenborough and/or Minster/Halfway have high grade agricultural value and landscape value.

20.2.2 This spatial option proposes the delivery of 13,500 homes, including affordable housing delivery. It is however uncertain if these levels of development will actually deliver the required housing to meet housing needs of local people, in particular affordable housing need.

20.2.3 Development within the urban areas encourages sustainable modes of transport. Where there is a good choice of facilities within walking distance of employment locations, services and existing dwellings this reduces the need to use a private vehicle for both new and existing residents. Sittingbourne and Faversham have good rail links ensuring that a high proportion of commuting can be undertaken by rail. Congestion is an issue within Sittingbourne and this spatial option intends to complete the Northern Relief Road to the A2, however the transport impact upon the secondary road system are uncertain. Associated with congestion is poor air quality, there is currently poor air quality at Ospringe (the monitoring station) and an AQMA has been declared at Newington, these are linked to the current A2. However, with improvements to the road network and an encouragement to use sustainable transport methods it is hoped air quality will improve within the town centre and at the monitoring stations across the Borough.

20.2.4 This Spatial Option intends to deliver a lower employment allocation, but still meeting the commitments indicated within the Employment Land Review (2009). Additional employment, including expansion of the Kent Science Park (6ha), but within its transport and environmental capacity, and regeneration of employment opportunities all positively contribute to ensuring high levels of employment in accessible locations and provide the mechanism for economic growth and improved competitiveness in the Borough. Although this is a lower employment allocation it still has a beneficial effect on increased economic growth and has the potential to increase Swale's position in the County as well as further afield, delivering considerable benefits to the economy. However, at this stage it is uncertain if this proposed economic growth level will provide the mechanism for all future economic needs e.g. for strategic distribution uses, general industry and knowledge based jobs.

20.2.5 There are uncertainties surrounding the level of skills within the Borough to be able to fill the proposed levels of required labour supply through the creation of these new jobs. It is hoped that levels of out commuting will decrease as employment opportunities are realised and people relocate back to the Borough. There is the potential with the new employment opportunities to improve the skills of local residents, however there is also a need to improve

- educational attainment within the Borough to enable people to have the required skills to be considered suitable for employment opportunities.
- 20.2.6 The scale of development brought forward under this Spatial Option will dictate how energy efficient new developments can be. Delivery of new residential and employment development will be designed and constructed to the current building regulations. It should also meet the minimum standards for Code for Sustainable Homes (CSH) and BREEAM. The smaller developments within the urban may struggle to deliver the energy efficiency and carbon reductions that are viable for larger developments, such as CHP. Development within Faversham may find meeting the regulations harder due to the prevalent historic nature of the buildings within the town. Developing at urban extension sites gives the developer greater opportunities to incorporate the most up to date sustainable design principles.
- 20.2.7 The development within the existing urban areas has a low potential to affect water quality due to the urban nature of the existing environment. However, if currently undeveloped land is utilised within the urban area it should be ensured that there is no additional surface water run-off and appropriate attenuation measures are employed. This is dependent on the construction and operation of the eventual land uses. Exact development locations are unknown at this stage; however, considerable areas around Sittingbourne, Faversham and the Isle of Sheppey are at risk of flooding. Appropriate mitigation measures will be required to be incorporated into all new development and demonstration that no alternative suitable lower risk site is available for development in accordance with PPS25. The development growth scenario for Sittingbourne will exceed the current capacity at the Sittingbourne (WwTW).
- 20.2.8 This Spatial Option proposes to deliver enhanced leisure facilities in Sittingbourne contributing to opportunities for improved health for residents. Future new development, in particular areas of urban extension or considerable new development together have the potential to incorporate secure by design and designing out crime initiatives. Improvements to the public realm through small scale regeneration and improvement projects in the towns and villages of the Borough can contribute to an enhance environment and a feeling of security.

20.3 Strategic Spatial Option 2

- 20.3.1 This Spatial Option is similar to Spatial Option 1 except that it proposes expansion or infill development of the larger village centres. This Spatial Option proposes housing delivery within the existing urban areas (Sittingbourne, Sheerness and Queenborough) and additional housing requirements meet through expansion or infill development in the larger village centres of Eastchurch, Leysdown, Iwade, Newington, Teynham and Boughton Street. This Spatial Option intends to deliver a lower employment allocation, but meeting the commitments indicated within the Employment Land Review (2009) still has a beneficial effect on increased economic growth and has the potential to increase Swale's position in the County as well as further afield. Additional employment related development including modest expansion of the Kent Science Park and some regeneration of employment opportunities within Faversham positively contributes to ensuring employment opportunities in accessible locations and provides the mechanism for economic growth and improved competitiveness in the Borough.
- 20.3.2 This Spatial Option proposes a larger rural centre focus, directing housing sites towards urban extensions and the identified larger village centres. This will have a greater negative effect on the rural landscape and valued natural environment of the Borough. Also the focus on Greenfield release directly impacts upon the high grade agricultural land that surrounds Sittingbourne and the high valued countryside surrounding other village locations. Land surrounding Newington is identified as Grade 1 and 2 agricultural land; this is high quality land and mitigation should be put in place if development is proposed for this land. This expansion

also poses considerable changes to village character, although the local character should be respected and reduces the separation of some villages contributing towards a coalescence of areas. Positively, no additional rural sites will be identified under this option outside of the larger village centres. The housing proposed however at rural locations is not likely to be supplied by the proposed employment opportunities and residents will have to travel further afield within the Borough (or outside) for employment opportunities.

20.3.3 Development within the urban areas encourages sustainable modes of transport. Where there is a good choice of facilities within walking distance of employment, services and existing dwellings this reduces the need to use a private vehicle for both new and existing residents. Sittingbourne and Faversham have good rail links ensuring that a high proportion of commuting can be undertaken by rail. Congestion is an issue within Sittingbourne and this Spatial Option intends to complete the Northern Relief Road to the A2. Congestion around Sittingbourne (and the other main towns) affects the attractiveness of these areas as places for people to visit to utilise the services available, with an associated negative effect on the local economy and retail sector. Associated with congestion is poor air quality, with improvements to the road network and encouragement to use sustainable transport methods it is hoped air quality will improve within the town centre and at the monitoring stations across the Borough. However, it is noted that there is currently an AQMA at Newington and poor quality at Ospringe which are on the A2 corridor. Locating development within the identified rural villages brings questions regarding sustainable transport options and reducing the reliance on the private car. In particular the impact on the secondary road network through this focus on rural development is uncertain although congestion is envisaged. Within Sheppey there is currently little option for sustainable transport modes, this requires improvement if future development occurs.

20.3.4 The scale of development brought forward under this Spatial Option will dictate how energy efficient new developments can be. Delivery of new residential and employment development will be designed and constructed to the current building regulations. It should also meet the minimum standards for Code for Sustainable Homes (CSH) and BREEAM. The smaller developments within the urban may struggle to deliver the energy efficiency and carbon reductions that are viable for larger developments, such as CHP. Development within Faversham may find meeting the regulations harder due to the prevalent historic nature of the buildings within the town. Developing at urban extension sites gives the developer greater opportunities to incorporate the most up to date sustainable design principles.

20.3.5 Considerable areas of Sittingbourne and Faversham are at risk of flooding, however much of the land is protected by flood defences. The larger villages of Eastchurch and Leysdown are located on the Isle of Sheppey, development in these locations is within close proximity to the SPA and SSSI. These villages are also located within or adjacent to areas of identified floodrisk (however flood defences are in place to protect much of the Isle of Sheppey from flooding). The development of a number of urban fringe sites has the potential to effect water quality. This will depend on the construction and operation of the eventual land uses. The development growth scenario for Sittingbourne will exceed the current capacity at the WwTW but the capacity at Queenborough and Eastchurch WwTW under this option will be sufficient.

20.4 Strategic Spatial Option 3

20.4.1 This Spatial Option proposes housing delivery within the existing urban areas (Sittingbourne, Sheerness and Queenborough), urban extensions and additional housing requirements met through expansion or infill development in the key village locations of Iwade, Teynham or Minster/Halfway. Development at the village locations will have a greater negative effect on the rural landscape and valued natural environment of the Borough. The local village locations

- identified for employment and residential development are required to ensure that they respect the existing local character and reduce the potential for a major change to the village character.
- 20.4.2 Swale has a wealth of biodiversity and protected habitats. The expansion of the Port of Sheerness has the potential to negatively effect the European designation (SPA) within the vicinity of the port. Identification of locations for potential housing sites at Iwade and Minster/Halfway are within close proximity to the SPA and SSSI. Although, this spatial option, as all spatial options requires the release of Greenfield land for housing development it requires the smallest amount of the four proposed Spatial Options as it places an increased emphasis on urban regeneration in Sittingbourne and by including new homes in the Port of Sheerness. It therefore offers greatest potential to protect the countryside and high grade agricultural land across the Borough. However, the Greenfield land surrounding Sittingbourne and Teynham is high grade agricultural land.
- 20.4.3 Considerable areas of Sittingbourne and Faversham are at risk of flooding, however much of the land is protected by flood defences. Also the village of Iwade is within or adjacent to areas of identified floodrisk (however flood defences are in place to protect much of the Isle of Sheppey from flooding). The proposed expansion of the port of Sheerness will fall outside of the current flood defences and the expansion proposals will require considerable flood risk protection and mitigation measures. The development of a number of urban fringe sites has the potential to effect water quality. This will be dependent on the construction and operation of the eventual land uses. The proposed levels of growth within Sittingbourne will exceed the capacity of the Sittingbourne WwTW, which will require consents to increase capacity. In the long term capacity will be exceeded at Queenborough and for development around Sheppey there is limited capacity at both the Queenborough and Eastchurch WwTW.
- 20.4.4 Meeting the needs of Faversham includes proposals to regenerate Faversham creekside which contributes to reinforcing local distinctiveness and character through targeted urban regeneration. Careful consideration should be paid to the designated conservation areas within Faversham.
- 20.4.5 This Spatial Option proposes high economic aspirations for Swale intending to put the Borough in a strong position in terms of attracting new employment opportunities and investment and raising the Boroughs profile across the County and the region and further afield. This Spatial Option has the potential to offer opportunities to diversify the economy, in particular into greener sectors. This Spatial Option has significant positive long term employment benefits due to the considerable amount of employment floorspace proposed and resulting new employment opportunities. This includes an indication that the port of Sheerness is allocated for expansion (although the employment implications of the reclamation of operational land are unknown at this stage) as well as development within the current dock boundaries, these improvements can deliver up to 697 new jobs. A considerable size of Greenfield land is allocated to deliver the additional employment development of 60ha and 22,900 new jobs; however, as stated previously this has considerable negative effects on the natural environment. Expansion is proposed at the Kent Science Park up to 145,000 sq m, providing 4,800 direct jobs in total over the long term, however as stated previously this expansion has associated negative environmental effects. Employment opportunities will be delivered at Faversham to improve quality of local supply.
- 20.4.6 There are uncertainties surrounding the level of skills within the Borough to be able to fill the proposed levels of required labour supply through the creation of these new jobs. It is hoped that levels of out commuting will decrease as employment opportunities are realised and people relocate back to the Borough. There is the potential with the new employment opportunities to improve the skills of local residents, however there is also a need to improve

- educational attainment within the Borough. Therefore planned growth of employment provision across the Borough positively benefits the economic growth and prosperity of the Borough. Although this is shrouded in question due to the current and future economic market across the whole UK.
- 20.4.7 There is however an identified conflict between the need for land for housing and the provision of employment land within Sittingbourne, as both require accessible town centre locations. There is also uncertainty surrounding the deliverability of both the economic growth and the housing delivery – the economic growth could encourage in-commuting rather than people relocating to the Borough and taking up the available housing.
- 20.4.8 This Spatial Option proposes the completion of the Sittingbourne Northern Relief Road (SNRR) to the A2 and the new junction to the M2 providing the 1st phase of the Sittingbourne Southern Relief Road (SSRR) with the intention to relieve traffic congestion across the Borough. Associated with congestion is poor air quality, there is currently poor air quality at Ospringe (the monitoring station) and an AQMA has been declared at Newington, these are linked to the current A2. However, with improvements to the road network and an encouragement to use sustainable transport methods it is hoped air quality will improve within the town centre and at the monitoring stations across the Borough. The M2 junction improvements could impact upon the AONB and there are considerable environmental implications associated with the SSRR as the proposed route goes through areas of high quality landscape value, agricultural land and important countryside. These road developments should improve accessibility to a regenerated Sittingbourne and the Kent Science Park in the future. These proposals for highway improvements contribute to traffic reduction but do not encourage the use of sustainable forms of transport. The overall level of level of regeneration proposed across the Borough will bring a considerable increase in traffic movements on the road network, it is uncertain at this stage the level of impact. There are deliverability issues surrounding the SSRR and the junction improvements proposed for the motorway.
- 20.4.9 The scale of development brought forward under this option will dictate how energy efficient new developments can be. Delivery of new residential and employment development will be designed and constructed to the current building regulations. It should also meet the minimum standards for Code for Sustainable Homes (CSH) and BREEAM. The smaller developments within the urban may struggle to deliver the energy efficiency and carbon reductions that are viable for larger developments, such as CHP. Development within Faversham may find meeting the regulations harder due to the prevalent historic nature of the buildings within the town. Developing at urban extension sites gives the developer greater opportunities to incorporate the most up to date sustainable design principles.

20.5 Strategic Spatial Option 4

- 20.5.1 This proposed Spatial Option plans for higher housing growth (18,500 with 9,500 'outstanding' for longer term housing growth beyond the plan period) to support high employment growth scenarios (22,900 net job capacity), strengthen Sittingbourne's role as a main town, and address transport constraints. It therefore delivers the greatest social and economic benefits over the plan period and beyond but at the detriment of the natural environment.
- 20.5.2 The delivery of higher housing and economic growth will require the release of a considerable amount of Greenfield land – surrounding Sittingbourne, at the Kent Science Park and the identified village locations. This Greenfield land potentially includes areas of high agricultural quality and landscape value as well as valued countryside used for the enjoyment of all.
- 20.5.3 This Spatial Option has the potential to deliver the greatest level of housing in Swale and has the capability to deliver the greatest level of affordable housing a considerable social benefit

- but as stated above at the detriment of the natural environment. This is because although where feasible previously developed land will be utilised within the urban areas and village and rural locations considerable areas of Greenfield land will be required. However it is understood that no sites of significant size will be identified at rural settlements, negatively affecting the meeting of housing need at these locations.
- 20.5.4 The housing development is phased over the plan period, with a higher proportion of new housing planned for the medium term and longer term; this positively impacts upon the delivery of affordable and decent housing in the long term. This Spatial Option proposes the delivery of major new green infrastructure; this can potentially enhance the natural environment of the Borough and encourage additional use of the open spaces throughout the Borough. No development sites are identified at rural settlements; this does not help meet identified housing need in these locations. However, the proposed high housing growth focusing on the main urban areas, urban extensions and the key village locations, delivering new housing to meet housing needs across the Borough.
- 20.5.5 With considerable levels of new housing proposed it is very likely that the character of the identified villages will change considerably, along with new residents moving to the villages. This development also has the potential to negatively impact upon the surrounding environmental quality and local character that individualises the village locations.
- 20.5.6 There is however an identified conflict between the need for land for housing and the provision of employment land within Sittingbourne, as both require accessible town centre locations. There is also uncertainty surrounding the deliverability of both the economic growth and the housing delivery – the economic growth could encourage in-commuting rather than people relocating to the Borough and taking up the available housing.
- 20.5.7 This Spatial Option proposes the delivery of major new green infrastructure; this can potentially enhance the natural environment of the Borough and encourage additional use of the open spaces by existing and new residents.
- 20.5.8 This Spatial Option proposes the greatest economic aspirations for Swale intending to put the Borough in a strong position in terms of attracting new employment opportunities and investment and raising the Boroughs profile across the County, the region and further afield. It therefore offers opportunities to diversify the economy, in particular into greener sectors. The delivery of new employment opportunities will be phased over time with the greatest proportions delivered in the medium time period however, cumulatively over the medium to long term (and beyond) the significance of employment opportunities positively increases.
- 20.5.9 Significant levels of employment growth are planned for under this option (22,900 net job capacity). The locations identified for growth and expansion should meet the needs of residents as locations are distributed across the Borough, in the main towns and urban areas as well as the Port of Sheerness and major expansion at Kent Science Park, as well as small enterprise centre at Leysdown. Associated with employment opportunities are the potential to improve the skills of local residents but this should be supported by increased educational attainment. Currently there is uncertainty surrounding the skill levels of existing residents and the labour supply needs. Associated with employment growth is in-migration of workers and new residents positively contributing to the economy of the Borough. Although this is shrouded in question due to the current and future economic market across the whole UK.
- 20.5.10 This Spatial Option proposes the completion of the Sittingbourne Northern Relief Road (SNRR) but it also proposes the delivery of the Sittingbourne Southern Relief Road (SSRR), between the M2 and the A2. This has the potential to deliver considerable benefits for transport links across the Borough facilitating the economic growth but, again, at the detriment of the natural

environment as the route will go through areas of high value countryside and the M2 junction improvements could impact upon the AONB. These proposals will alleviate existing traffic problems on the borough's current roads in those areas but will not contribute towards encouraging more sustainable modes of transport. There are deliverability issues surrounding the SSRR and the junction improvements proposed for the motorway with regard to the principle of the work requiring to be undertaken, funding and the transport implications of the option.

- 20.5.11 Areas of Sittingbourne, Iwade, Teynham and Minster/Halfway are all areas of or close to flood risk, however most areas do benefit from flood defences, reducing the risk. Swale has a wealth of biodiversity and protected habitats. The expansion of the Port of Sheerness has the potential to negatively effect the European designation (SPA) within the vicinity of the port, however this is uncertain at this stage. Identification of locations for potential housing sites at Iwade and Minster/Halfway are within close proximity to the SPA and SSSI. The proposed levels of growth within Sittingbourne will exceed the capacity of the Sittingbourne WwTW, which will require consents to increase capacity. In the long term capacity will be exceeded at Queenborough and Eastchurch WwTWs for development proposed around Sheppey.
- 20.5.12 The scale of development brought forward under this option will dictate how energy efficient new developments can be. Delivery of new residential and employment development will be designed and constructed to the current building regulations. It should also meet the minimum standards for Code for Sustainable Homes (CSH) and BREEAM. The smaller developments within the urban may struggle to deliver the energy efficiency and carbon reductions that are viable for larger developments, such as CHP. Development within Faversham may find meeting the regulations harder due to the prevalent historic nature of the buildings within the town. Developing at urban extension sites gives the developer greater opportunities to incorporate the most up to date sustainable design principles.

20.6 Proposed Core Strategy and Development Management Policies

- 20.6.1 The proposed approach to the 9 Core Strategy policies and 15 Development Management policies contained within the Issues and Strategic Spatial Options Report have been tested against the SA Objectives. As with the Strategic Spatial Options appraisal these have been appraised in the short (up to 2016), medium (up to 2021) and long term (up to 2030). Where appropriate, recommendations have been identified which are intended to help the development of the detailed policies for later stages in the Core Strategy production programme. Each topic section contains a detailed discussion of the draft policy approach and the full appraisals are contained within Appendix 1. A summary of the appraisal can be found below.

Policy CP1 - Settlement Hierarchy

- 20.6.2 This policy approach will deliver sustainability benefits with regard to the local economy, employment generation and sustainable transport options. It will ensure that through allowing appropriate development in the appropriate defined settlement location sustainable growth is achieved with the associated protection of the natural environment.

Policy CP2 - Provision for jobs and homes 2006-2031

- 20.6.3 This policy approach will deliver beneficial social effects providing affordable and decent housing and providing for an aging population. It also delivers economic benefits contributing towards sustained economic growth and employment opportunities. This approach contributes towards reductions in poverty and social exclusion through the deliver of new housing and employment opportunities.

Policy CP3 – Location of allocations

- 20.6.4 At this stage it is uncertain the sustainability implications of the locations for development. Swale has a valued landscape and a rich historic and natural environment.

Policy CP4 – Sustainability and Environment cross-cutting policy

- 20.6.5 This policy approach is the mechanism for achieving sustainable development across the Borough. It therefore contributes beneficially to the achievement of the SA Objectives 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10. The policy also seeks to achieve safe, secure and inclusive communities beneficial to the achievement of SA Objective 15.

Policy CP5 – Prosperity –cross cutting policy

- 20.6.6 This policy approach will deliver beneficial effects with regard to economy, employment and skills and sustainable transport.

Policy CP6 – Homes and Communities

- 20.6.7 This policy approach will deliver environmental benefits with regard to climate change, energy efficiency and sustainable construction. It will also contribute towards social benefits through proposing homes designed to meet the needs of an aging population (lifetime homes and decent homes standards).

Policy CP7 – Health and well being cross cutting policy

- 20.6.8 This policy approach would deliver beneficial social effects with regard to improving health and health inequalities and access to key services and facilities. The policy also seeks to increase education and training opportunities and support employment opportunities contributing positively to economic development.

Policy CP8 Infrastructure and implementation cross cutting policy

- 20.6.9 This policy approach provides the infrastructure framework to enable the proposed development across the Borough to be delivered. The delivery of development is dependent on this infrastructure delivery which if sufficient capacity is not found within existing or delivered from investment in new infrastructure then there may be adjustments to be made to the planned phasing. Therefore this policy approach will delivery benefits for the economy and housing objectives if sufficient infrastructure is available but if not, there is the potential to negatively effect the future economic growth of the Borough and the accessibility of housing (including affordable), to meet the identified need. This can also affect the delivery of associated social infrastructure.

Policy CP9 Green Infrastructure cross-cutting policy

- 20.6.10 This policy approach is beneficial with regard to delivering environmental benefits. It also provides opportunities for benefits for the health and well being of residents and visitors alike.

Development Management Policies

Policy DM1 Sustainable Design and Construction

- 20.6.11 This policy approach will deliver significant long term benefits with regard to the use of sustainable construction methods, renewable energy, energy efficiency and water efficiency measures once the technologies and developments have been established. The policy is also intending to ensure opportunities for wetland habitats and species through options for sustainable flood risk management, delivering positive environmental benefits.
- 20.6.12 This policy approach will also deliver positive social and environmental benefits with regard to the design and location of new development. Through encouraging designs that reduce the need to travel and promote the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and use of public transport as well as accessible green spaces this has positive benefits with regard to promoting healthy lifestyles, reducing traffic related impacts and climate change.

Policy DM2 The Coast Policy

- 20.6.13 This policy approach will see the protection and management of the coastline, supporting restrictions on development along the coast line. The protection mechanisms will support the biodiversity designations and the intrinsic landscape of the Borough.

Policy DM3 Heritage Assets

- 20.6.14 This policy approach will achieve benefits with regard to the protection of the Borough's heritage assets, the mechanisms proposed will also enable protection and enhancement of the landscape and townscape of the Borough through ensuring high quality designed development proposals.

Policies DM4/5 Natural Assets

- 20.6.15 These policies seek to ensure protection and enhancement of the Boroughs natural assets, delivering positive environmental benefits.

Policy DM6 Enabling development for landscape and biodiversity enhancement

- 20.6.16 This policy approach is a rural exception policy. Proposals will be permitted only where they will deliver benefits to the condition of the landscape and biodiversity. Therefore it should be ensured that the proposal does not cause harm to the natural environment before further enhancements are delivered. It therefore has the potential to provide benefits to biodiversity and the natural environment.

Policy DM7 Retail development

- 20.6.17 The retail policy approach through supporting the retail development needs of the Borough and protecting the existing town centres achieves beneficial results with regard to sustaining economic growth and competitiveness and employment opportunities across the Borough.

Policy DM8 Rural Economy

- 20.6.18 This policy approach will deliver a mechanism to try to enable the security of the rural economy. The rural economy will be supported but it will also be ensured that there is no detriment to the landscape character, countryside conservation and biodiversity benefiting environmental objectives.

Policy DM9 Tourism

- 20.6.19 Tourism across the Borough will deliver positive benefits with regard to sustaining economic growth and competitiveness, in particular in the rural areas of the Borough.

Policy DM10 Affordable Housing

- 20.6.20 This policy approach will require the delivery of affordable housing for new developments delivering positive social benefits to both the rural and town residents. The policy is looking to achieve all affordable homes to be delivered to lifetime homes standards delivering housing to be adaptable to an aging population. Over the long term, significant benefits are identified through the delivery of these lifetime homes standards and the provision of affordable housing.

Policy DM11 Rural Housing

- 20.6.21 This policy approach will seek to restrict the development of market housing to existing built up area boundaries and within accordance with the settlement hierarchy, this approach will ensure protection of the landscape and townscape and conservation of built and cultural heritage delivering beneficial effects on the environmental objectives. This policy will require all proposals to be kept affordable and be kept for local eligible residents, a positive benefit with regard to social objectives.

Policy DM12 Provision for Gypsy and Travellers

- 20.6.22 This policy approach seeks to identify sites to meet the identified needs of the gypsy and traveller community. Through rigorously applying the site identification criteria and site criteria requirements it should be ensured that no detrimental impact on the built or natural environment occurs in particular on the landscape and biodiversity designations. Also through applying the criteria it should be ensured that no detrimental impact is had on existing communities.

Policy DM13 Servicing new development

- 20.6.23 This policy will deliver the framework for infrastructure provision linked to new development. It is envisaged that this mechanism will positively contribute to ensuring the accessibility of key services and facilities and deliver positive social benefits.

DM14 Managing Travel Demand

- 20.6.24 This policy approach will contribute towards a more sustainable transport system for the Borough, contributing towards reductions in emissions improving air quality across the Borough as well as improving the accessibility of key facilities by public transport modes.

Policy DM15 Proposed Recreation and Open Space Standards

- 20.6.25 This policy approach through restricting the loss of open spaces across the Borough biodiversity and nature conservation within these areas is protected, a positive environmental effect and through enabling the provision of new open spaces associated health benefits should result.

21 Conclusions and Recommendations

21.1 Strategic Spatial Options

- 21.1.1 The delivery of the housing and economic growth options for each of the Spatial Options requires the release of a considerable amount of Greenfield land – around Sittingbourne, Queenborough, Sheerness, at the Kent Science Park and the identified village locations. This Greenfield land potentially includes areas of high agricultural quality and landscape value as well as valued countryside used for the enjoyment of all. Where feasible previously developed land will be utilised for both employment and housing development, although there is an identified conflict between these land uses, particularly around Sittingbourne.
- 21.1.2 Considerable areas of Sittingbourne and Faversham (Spatial Option 1, 2, 3 and 4) are at risk of flooding, however much of the land is protected by flood defences. The expansion of the Port of Sheerness (Spatial Options 3 and 4) has potential to negatively effect the European designation (SPA) within the vicinity of the port and the expansion area falls outside of current flood defences. Identification of locations for potential housing sites at Iwade and Minster / Halfway are also within close proximity to the SPA and SSI providing uncertain but potentially negative effects currently.
- 21.1.3 Spatial Options 1, 2 and 3 propose housing delivery within the existing or as extensions to urban areas (Sittingbourne, Sheerness and Queenborough). Only Spatial Option 2 has a specific rural housing focus, directing housing sites towards Greenfields and the identified larger village centres (Eastchurch, Leysdown, Iwade, Newington, Teynham and Boughton Street) (circa 3,205 homes on Greenfield). This will have a greater negative effect on the local character of the villages which will require mitigation and on the rural landscape and valued natural environment of the Borough. No additional rural sites will be indentified under this option outside of the larger village centres. Spatial Option 3 proposes that additional housing requirements are met through expansion or infill development in the key village locations of Iwade, Teynham or Minster/Halfway. Spatial Option 4 is planning for a higher housing growth to meet a higher employment growth scenario, this will have the greatest potential negative impact on the natural environment of the Borough as the greatest proportion of Greenfield land is required for use.
- 21.1.4 Each option will enable the delivery of affordable housing to meet the needs of the community, however, it is uncertain if the housing levels proposed in Spatial Options 1 and 2 will meet the future levels of housing need and it is predicted that they will fall short of the required affordable housing needs. Spatial Option 4 proposes the greatest delivery of housing within and beyond the plan period delivering the associated affordable housing, particularly in the medium to long term.
- 21.1.5 Spatial Options 3 and 4 propose the completion of the SNRR but they also propose the delivery of the SSRR, between the M2 and the A2. This has the potential to deliver considerable benefits for transport links across the Borough facilitating the economic growth but, again, at the detriment of the natural environment as the route will go through areas of high value countryside and the M2 junction improvements could impact upon the AONB. These proposals will alleviate existing traffic problems on the Borough's current roads in those areas but will not contribute towards encouraging more sustainable modes of transport. There are deliverability issues surrounding the SSRR and the junction improvements proposed for the motorway with regard to the principle of the work requiring to be undertaken, funding and the transport implications of the option. Due to the lower levels of growth proposed for Spatial Option 3 this places greater uncertainty on the deliverability of these major road improvements compared to Spatial Option 4.

- 21.1.6 The allocation of the S106 monies from the development proposals should be managed carefully to ensure that the road improvements do not receive all funding. Funding is also required for other infrastructure projects including green and social infrastructure (including community facilities and education facilities) to meet the needs of the local communities.
- 21.1.7 In contrast Spatial Options 1 and 2 only propose completion of the Sittingbourne Northern Relief Road, however the completion of this road project should contribute to improved congestion throughout Sittingbourne and the surrounding area and associated air quality improvements. It is uncertain at this stage the implications of all spatial options on the existing primary and secondary road network particularly from increased development in the identified villages and rural areas. Associated with congestion is poor air quality, there is currently poor air quality at Ospringle (the monitoring station) and an AQMA has been declared at Newington, these are linked to the current A2. However, with improvements to the road network and an encouragement to use sustainable transport methods it is hoped air quality will improve within the town centre and at the monitoring stations across the Borough.
- 21.1.8 Spatial Options 1 and 2 intend to deliver a lower employment allocation but meeting the commitments indicated within the Employment Land Review (2009). Additional employment, including moderate expansion of the Kent Science Park (6ha), but within its transport and environmental capacity and regeneration of employment opportunities all contribute to ensuring increased levels of employment in accessible locations and provide the mechanism for economic growth and improved competitiveness in the Borough. Although this is a lower employment allocation it still has a beneficial effect on increased economic growth and has the potential to increase Swale's position in the County as well as further afield, delivering considerable benefits to the economy. However, at this stage it is uncertain if this proposed economic growth level will provide the mechanism for all future economic needs e.g. for strategic distribution uses, general industry and knowledge based jobs.
- 21.1.9 Spatial Options 3 and 4 propose high economic aspirations for Swale intending to put the Borough in a strong position in terms of attracting new employment opportunities and investment and raising the Boroughs profile across the County and the region and further afield. Spatial Options 3 and 4 have the potential to offer opportunities to diversify the economy, in particular into greener sectors. This has significant long term employment benefits due to the considerable amount of employment floorspace proposed and resulting new employment opportunities. This includes an indication that the port of Sheerness is allocated for expansion (although the employment implications of the reclamation of operational land are unknown at this stage) as well as development within the current dock boundaries, these improvements can deliver up to 697 new jobs. Major expansion is proposed at Kent Science Park, as well as small enterprise centre at Leysdown.
- 21.1.10 Associated with employment opportunities are the potential to improve the skills of local residents but this should be supported by increased educational attainment. Currently there is uncertainty surrounding the skill levels of existing residents and the labour supply needs. Associated with employment growth is in-migration of workers and new residents positively contributing to the economy of the Borough.
- 21.1.11 The scale of development brought forward under all four Spatial Options will dictate how energy efficient new developments can be. Delivery of new residential and employment development will be designed and constructed to the current building regulations. It should also meet the minimum standards for Code for Sustainable Homes (CSH) and BREEAM. The smaller developments within the urban areas may struggle to deliver the energy efficiency and carbon reductions that are viable for larger developments, such as CHP. Development within Faversham (Spatial Option 1) may find meeting the regulations harder due to the prevalent

historic nature of the buildings within the town. Developing at urban extension sites (all spatial options) gives the developer greater opportunities to incorporate the most up to date sustainable design principles.

- 21.1.12 The development within the existing urban area (as proposed by all spatial options) has a low potential to affect water quality due to the urban nature of the existing environment. However, if currently undeveloped land is utilised within the urban area it should be ensured that there is no additional surface water run-off and appropriate attenuation measures are employed. The proposed levels of growth within Sittingbourne (under all options) will exceed the capacity of the Sittingbourne WwTW, which will require consents to increase capacity. In the long term capacity will be exceeded at Queenborough under spatial option 3 and Eastchurch WwTWs for development proposed around Sheppey under spatial option 4.
- 21.1.13 The delivery of associated community facilities, in particular enhanced leisure facilities in Sittingbourne (as identified in Spatial Option 1) have the potential to contribute towards opportunities for improved health for residents. Future new development, in particular areas of urban extension or considerable new development together has the potential to incorporate Secure by Design and Designing out Crime initiatives. Improvements to the public realm through small scale regeneration and improvement projects in the towns and villages of the Borough can contribute to an enhanced environment and a feeling of security.

21.2 Draft Core Strategy and Development Management Policies

- 21.2.1 The draft policy content for the Core Strategy and Development Management policies has been appraised against the SA framework. Broadly these policy approaches are contributing towards the delivery of sustainable development across the Borough. As the policies are developed through the on going Core Strategy and Development Management DPD preparation process, a more detailed SA can be undertaken and further recommendations provided to enhance their development.

21.3 Recommendations

- 21.3.1 At this stage in the Core Strategy and Development Management Policy development, the main areas that the SA has highlighted for consideration are:
- Nature Conservation and Biodiversity – when identifying locations for new development (housing and employment) high regard should be had to the significant nature conservation designations that are in place across the Borough, in particular the SPA, SAC and SSSI's.
 - Greenfield development and the valued natural environment – it is understood that under each option Greenfield land is likely to be required for release to meet the identified housing and employment allocation requirements. This land should be kept to a minimum to preserve the natural environment of Swale. Land released for development should contribute to the high quality landscape through high design principles, enforced through Development Management policies.
 - Local Character – development within the identified villages should have strong consideration to how local character can be preserved through design measures and possible community provision.
 - Flood risk – Although large areas of the Borough are at risk of flooding a high proportion of these are already protected by established flood defences, however, new development should be located to avoid flood risk and mitigation measures incorporated to ensure that any new development is designed to adapt to flood risk in accordance with PPS25.

- Adequate provision should be made through the policy framework to ensure that adequate capacity is available at the Borough's WwTW to enable the delivery of the proposed growth scenarios (both economic and housing).
- Green Infrastructure – currently only spatial option 4 proposes the delivery of green infrastructure, this should be included with the final spatial option approach.
- The delivery of critical infrastructure to support the proposed higher housing and economic growth scenarios is uncertain and through Core Policy 2 should be managed accordingly.
- Transport – encourage sustainable transport options in the urban expansion areas. Within the village and rural locations and in particular for the Isle of Sheppey develop opportunities for improved public transport and reduced private car use. This can be linked to the development of the rural economy (DM8).
- Considerable mitigation and care should be applied to developing the route for the SSRR to minimise the impact on the natural environment.
- Skills development – to enable residents to utilise the future job opportunities considerable emphasis should be placed on developing mechanisms for training opportunities and improved education attainment (which it is understood is outside of the planning systems control).
- The housing and employment opportunities should be a mechanism, in association with the energy opportunities plan, for the delivery of renewable energy, energy efficiency and low carbon technologies across the Borough.
- The final spatial option should try to balance and provide the mechanism to reduce the levels of out-commuting currently experienced from the Borough. This is associated with the future creation of employment opportunities and related economic growth.
- The delivery of new housing in particular affordable housing should move towards meeting some of the identified need of the Borough.

21.3.2 The following table illustrates the recommendations with regard to individual spatial options and proposed Core Strategy and Development Management Policies.

Table 21.1 Recommendations

Option / Policy	Recommendation	Council Response (to be completed post public consultation)
Spatial Options		
Spatial Options 1, 2, 3, and 4	Cultural Heritage - It should be ensured through the spatial options development that stringent protection is provided to the historic environment within the main towns within the Borough, in particular Faversham.	
Spatial Options 1, 2, 3, and 4	Ensure that the preferred Spatial Option provides a mechanism to deliver the	

	required or higher than CSH and BREEAM standards and meets the governments carbon reduction targets through energy efficiency measures and low carbon technologies.	
Spatial Options 1, 2, 3, and 4	Through the consideration and development of the Spatial Options ensure that the final route in particular for the SSRR results in least environmental damage and that the option promotes sustainable transport. In order to mitigate air pollution associated with traffic, the Core Strategy should continue to encourage use of sustainable transport options where ever feasible for residents (CS4 and DM14) and in particular for the potentially increased rural villages (Spatial Option 2).	
Spatial Options 3 and 4	Ensure that for all options that all suitable brown field land is utilised before the release of Greenfield land in particular the identified higher quality land. Ensure that when finalised, the route of the SSRR utilises the lower grade land and designations wherever feasible.	
Spatial Options 3 and 4	In line with the supporting Water Cycle Strategy, to enable the larger growth options to be materialised, infrastructure investment is required at the identified WwTW (Queenborough for Spatial Option 3 and Eastchurch for Spatial Option 4), the policy mechanisms	

	need to be in place to deliver this through the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies.	
Spatial Option 4	In light of the emerging joint North Kent Study, ensure that future emerging planning policies contain mitigation measures from the study and HRA to guarantee protection of the SPA and SAC.	
Core Strategy Policies		
CP1	<p>The emerging policy should continue to recognise the importance of the historic environment and the protection required, as identified in the current form.</p> <p>Transport - Highlight Sheppey as an area that requires considerable sustainable transport investment</p>	
CP2	No recommendations	
CP3	No recommendations	
CP4	In order to mitigate air pollution associated with traffic, the Core Strategy should continue to encourage the use of sustainable transport options where ever feasible for residents and in particular for the potentially increased rural villages (Spatial Option 2).	
CP4	Waste - Consider including further references to sustainable waste management as currently there is only mention of	

	reduce the amount sent to landfill but not how this will be achieved.	
CP5	No recommendations	
CP6	No recommendations	
CP7	No recommendations	
CP8	No recommendations	
CP9	No recommendations	
Development Management Policies		
DM1	Consider how higher CSH and BREEAM targets are set if intending to be different from statutory requirements. Clarify if the Carbon Fund will only be linked to carbon emissions or other aspects of CSH and BREEAM. Provide further detail in the supporting text or a SPD.	
DM1	Waste - Ensure that the policy requires waste minimisation and the use of recycled and sustainable sourced materials throughout the development process (concept, Material sourcing, construction and implementation).	
DM2	No recommendations	
DM3	The emerging policy should continue to recognise the importance of the historic environment and the protection required, as identified in the current form.	

DM4	Include further discussions and explanation of green infrastructure and link to Core Strategy Policy CP9.	
DM5	Include further discussions and explanation of green infrastructure and link to Core Strategy Policy CP9.	
DM6	No recommendations	
DM7	No recommendations	
DM8	<p>Consider referring to the development of local rural skills as well as creation of jobs.</p> <p>Transport - Consider including reference to the need to provide links with sustainable transport modes across the Borough for employees (buses to local train stations or car sharing) if possible. This could link with policy CP8 Infrastructure or DM14 Managing Travel Demand to highlight and tackle rural transport issues.</p>	
DM9	No recommendations	
DM10	No recommendations	
DM11	Consider cross reference to DM10 Affordable Housing with regard to delivering rural housing to meet lifetime homes standards.	
DM12	Consider linking this to other development as well as residential.	

	Provide links with Core Strategy CP9 and DM4/5 with regard to requiring green infrastructure provisions or include green infrastructure in this policy.	
DM13	No recommendations	
DM14	In order to mitigate air pollution associated with traffic, the Core Strategy should continue to encourage use of sustainable transport options where ever feasible for residents and in particular for the potentially increased rural villages (Spatial Option 2).	
DM15	Consider referencing links to the green infrastructure and creation of green corridors between open spaces. Consider highlighting the nature conservation value of the open space.	

22 Next Steps

- 22.1.1 The Council will consider the consultation responses received during the consultation period on the Issues and Strategic Spatial Options Report. These responses will inform the development of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies.
- 22.1.2 The future programme for the production of the Core Strategy and Development Management DPD is:
- 22.1.3 **Stage 2** - Preferred Options and Site Options Report – taking forward the consultation responses and technical evidence, the Council chooses and includes its preferred spatial option. This document will also include:
- The general location of those sites the Council considers may be able to contribute toward the overall preferred option and a general assessment of each,
 - Greater level of detail about development amounts and mix, and
 - More detail on the set of policies.
- 22.1.4 **Stage 3** - Consultation Draft Core Strategy – consultation upon the contents of a near completed Core Strategy.
- 22.1.5 **Stage 4** - Proposed Submission Draft Core Strategy – consultation on the completed Core Strategy prior to submission to the Secretary of State.

Appendix 1 – Appraisal Matrices

These matrices can be viewed as a separate document, accompanying the report

URS



Swale Core Strategy Issues and Strategic
Spatial Options Consultation
**Sustainability Appraisal – Appendix 1 –
Appraisal Matrices**

December 2010

Prepared for:





Strategic Spatial Options

Option 1			
SA Objective	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
1. To reinforce local distinctiveness, local environmental quality and amenity through the conservation and enhancement of the built and cultural heritage	~	+?	+?
2. To minimise the need for energy, increase energy efficiency and to increase the use of renewable energy	+	+	+
3. To encourage sustainable construction materials and methods	+	+	+
4. To reduce air pollution and ensure air quality continues to improve across the borough	~	+?	+?
5. To protect and enhance the valued landscape and townscape of Swale	+	+	+
6. To protect and enhance soil quality and reduce contamination	+	+	+
7. To manage and reduce the risk of flooding	?	?	?
8. To maintain and enhance water quality (ground and surface) and make efficient use of water	+	+	+
9. To conserve and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment	+	+	+
10. To achieve the sustainable management of waste	~	~	~
11. To meet the challenges of a growing and ageing population	+	+	+
12. To reduce poverty and social exclusion	+	+	+
13. To improve accessibility for all to key services and facilities	+	+	+
14. To improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities in health	+	+	+
15. To reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and the fear of these	~	~	~
16. To provide affordable and decent housing adaptable to future needs of the community	+	+/?	+/?
17. To sustain economic growth and competitiveness	+	+	+
18. To ensure high and stable levels of employment in accessible locations	+	+	+
19. To raise the educational achievement levels across the borough and help people to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in employment	+	+	+
20. To promote traffic reduction and encourage more sustainable alternative forms of transport	-/?	-/?	/?
Summary This Spatial Option proposes an urban regeneration focus to delivering housing requirements and a lower employment growth scenario. The principal of locating development within the existing urban areas within the Thames Gateway area and using some urban extension sites reduces the negative impact on the valued natural environment of Swale and its high quality			

countryside.

This approach also reduces the impact on Greenfield land, although it is understood that some Greenfield land will still be required for new development (circa 3,280 homes) at urban extension sites. Focusing primarily in urban areas utilises the available previously developed land. However, areas of Greenfield land around Sittingbourne and and/or Minster/Halfway have high grade agricultural value and landscape value. No smaller rural sites are identified negatively affecting the meeting of housing need at these locations.

This option proposes the delivery of 13,500 homes, including affordable housing delivery. It is however uncertain if these levels of development will actually deliver the required housing to meet housing needs of local people, in particular affordable housing need.

This option intends to deliver a lower employment allocation, but still meeting the commitments indicated within the Employment Land Review (2009). Additional employment, including expansion of the Kent Science Park (6ha), but within its transport and environmental capacity, and regeneration of employment opportunities all positively contribute to ensuring high levels of employment in accessible locations and provide the mechanism for economic growth and improved competitiveness in the Borough. Although this is a lower employment allocation it still has a beneficial effect on increased economic growth and has the potential to increase Swale's position in the County as well as further afield. However, at this stage it is uncertain if this proposed economic growth level will provide the mechanism for all future economic needs e.g. for strategic distribution uses, general industry and knowledge based jobs.

Exact development locations are unknown at this stage however; considerable areas around Sittingbourne, Faversham and the Isle of Sheppey are at risk of flooding and further development has the potential to affect water quality and surface water run-off. The development growth scenario for Sittingbourne will exceed the current capacity at the Waste Water Treatment Works (WwTW).

Development within the urban areas encourages sustainable modes of transport. Congestion is an issue within Sittingbourne and this option intends to complete the Northern Relief Road to the A2.

Option 2			
SA Objective	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
1. To reinforce local distinctiveness, local environmental quality and amenity through the conservation and enhancement of the built and cultural heritage	~	+?	+?
2. To minimise the need for energy, increase energy efficiency and to increase the use of renewable energy	+	+	+
3. To encourage sustainable construction materials and methods	+	+	+
4. To reduce air pollution and ensure air quality continues to improve across the borough	+?	+?	+?
5. To protect and enhance the valued landscape and townscape of Swale	+	+	+
6. To protect and enhance soil quality and reduce contamination	+	+	+
7. To manage and reduce the risk of flooding	?	?	?
8. To maintain and enhance water quality (ground and surface) and make efficient use of water	+	+	+
9. To conserve and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment	-	-	-
10. To achieve the sustainable management of waste	~	~	~
11. To meet the challenges of a growing and ageing population	+	+	+
12. To reduce poverty and social exclusion	~	~	~
13. To improve accessibility for all to key services and facilities	+	+	+
14. To improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities in health	+	+	+
15. To reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and the fear of these	~	~	~
16. To provide affordable and decent housing adaptable to future needs of the community	+	-	-
17. To sustain economic growth and competitiveness	+	+	+
18. To ensure high and stable levels of employment in accessible locations	+	+	+
19. To raise the educational achievement levels across the borough and help people to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in employment	+	+	+
20. To promote traffic reduction and encourage more sustainable alternative forms of transport	-	-	-
<p>Summary This Spatial Option proposes a larger rural centre focus, directing housing sites towards urban extensions and the identified larger village centres utilising previously developed land and reducing the impact on Greenfield land. However it is understood that some Greenfield land will be required for release, this will have a greater negative effect on the rural landscape and valued natural environment of the Borough. In particular a number of the villages are located within close proximity to the SPA and SSSI and within areas of identified flood risk. Land surrounding Newington and</p>			

Teynham is identified as Grade 1 and 2 agricultural land; this is high quality land and mitigation should be put in place if development is proposed for this land or close to it. No additional rural sites will be identified under this option outside of the larger village centres. This option intends to deliver a lower employment allocation, but meeting the commitments indicated within the Employment Land Review (2009). This still has a beneficial effect on increased economic growth and has the potential to increase Swale's position in the County as well as further afield. Additional employment related development including modest expansion of the Kent Science Park and some regeneration of employment opportunities within Faversham positively contributes to ensuring employment opportunities in accessible locations and provides the mechanism for economic growth and improved competitiveness in the Borough. Development within the urban areas encourages the use of sustainable modes of transport, however locating development within the identified rural villages brings questions regarding sustainable transport options and reducing the reliance on the private car. In particular the impact on the secondary road network through this focus on rural development is uncertain although congestion is envisaged. Within Sheppey there is currently little option for sustainable transport modes, this requires improvement if future development occurs. Exact development locations are unknown at this stage however; considerable areas around Sittingbourne, Faversham and the Isle of Sheppey are at risk of flooding and further development has the potential to affect water quality and surface water run-off. The development growth scenario for Sittingbourne will exceed the current capacity at the WwTW but the capacity at Queenborough and Eastchurch under this option will be sufficient.

Option 3			
SA Objective	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
1. To reinforce local distinctiveness, local environmental quality and amenity through the conservation and enhancement of the built and cultural heritage	+	+	+
2. To minimise the need for energy, increase energy efficiency and to increase the use of renewable energy	+	+	+
3. To encourage sustainable construction materials and methods	+	+	+
4. To reduce air pollution and ensure air quality continues to improve across the borough	+/?	+/?	+/?
5. To protect and enhance the valued landscape and townscape of Swale	--	--	--
6. To protect and enhance soil quality and reduce contamination	-	-	-
7. To manage and reduce the risk of flooding	?	?	?
8. To maintain and enhance water quality (ground and surface) and make efficient use of water	+	+	+
9. To conserve and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment	-/?	-/?	-/?
10. To achieve the sustainable management of waste	~	~	~
11. To meet the challenges of a growing and ageing population	+	+	+
12. To reduce poverty and social exclusion	~	~	~
13. To improve accessibility for all to key services and facilities	~	~	~
14. To improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities in health	~	~	~
15. To reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and the fear of these	~	~	~
16. To provide affordable and decent housing adaptable to future needs of the community	+	-	--
17. To sustain economic growth and competitiveness	+	+	+
18. To ensure high and stable levels of employment in accessible locations	+	+	++
19. To raise the educational achievement levels across the borough and help people to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in employment	+?	+?	+?
20. To promote traffic reduction and encourage more sustainable alternative forms of transport	-/?	-/?	-/?
Summary			
<p>This Spatial Option proposes housing delivery within the existing urban areas (Sittingbourne, Sheerness and Queenborough), urban extensions and additional housing requirements met through expansion or infill development in the key village locations of Iwade, Teynham or Minster/Halfway. No smaller rural sites are identified negatively affecting the meeting of housing need at these locations. It is however uncertain if the proposed levels of development will actually deliver the</p>			

required housing to meet housing needs of local people, in particular affordable housing need. The urban expansion and village locations will have a greater negative effect on the rural landscape and valued natural environment of the Borough. The expansion of the Port of Sheerness has the potential to negatively effect the European designation (SPA) within the vicinity of the port. Identification of locations for potential housing sites at Iwade and Minster/Halfway are within close proximity to the SPA and SSSI. Although, this option, as all options requires the release of Greenfield land it requires the smallest amount of new housing of the four proposed Spatial Options as it includes new homes in the Port of Sheerness as well as the identified key village locations. It therefore offers greatest potential to protect the countryside and high grade agricultural land across the Borough. However, the Greenfield land surrounding Sittingbourne and Teynham is high grade agricultural land.

Considerable areas of the Borough including Sittingbourne and Faversham are at risk of flooding, however much of the land is protected by flood defences. The proposed expansion of the port of Sheerness will fall outside of the current flood defences and the expansion proposals will require considerable flood risk protection and mitigation measures. The proposed levels of growth within Sittingbourne will exceed the capacity of the Sittingbourne WwTW, which will require consents to increase capacity. In the long term capacity will be exceeded at Queenborough and for development around Sheppey there is limited capacity at both the Queenborough and Eastchurch WwTW¹.

This option proposes high economic aspirations for Swale intending to put the Borough in a strong position in terms of attracting new employment opportunities and investment and raising the Boroughs profile across the County and the region and further afield. This option has the potential to offer opportunities to diversify the economy, in particular into greener sectors. This option has significant positive long term employment benefits due to the considerable amount of employment floorspace proposed and resulting new employment opportunities. This includes an indication that the port of Sheerness is allocated for expansion (although the employment implications of the reclamation of operational land are unknown at this stage) as well as development within the current dock boundaries, these improvements can deliver up to 697 new jobs. A considerable size of Greenfield land is allocated to deliver the additional employment development of 60ha and 22,900 new jobs; however, as stated previously this has considerable negative effects on the natural environment. In particular expansion at the Kent Science Park of up to 145,000 sq m, providing 4,800 direct jobs in total over the long term could have a negative effect on the near by AONB. Employment opportunities will be delivered at Faversham to improve quality of local supply.

This option proposes the completion of the Sittingbourne Northern Relief Road to the A2 and the new junction to the M2 providing the 1st phase of the Sittingbourne Southern Relief Road (SSRR). However, the M2 junction improvements could impact upon the AONB and there are considerable environmental implications associated with the SSRR as the proposed route goes through areas of high quality landscape value, agricultural land and important countryside. These road developments should improve accessibility to a regenerated Sittingbourne and the Kent Science Park in the future, these proposals for highway improvements contribute to traffic reduction but do not encourage the use of sustainable forms of transport.

¹ Water Infrastructure and Environmental Capacity Assessment for Swale Borough Council, Scott Wilson, November 2010

Option 4			
SA Objective	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
1. To reinforce local distinctiveness, local environmental quality and amenity through the conservation and enhancement of the built and cultural heritage	+	+	+
2. To minimise the need for energy, increase energy efficiency and to increase the use of renewable energy	+	+	+
3. To encourage sustainable construction materials and methods	+	+	+
4. To reduce air pollution and ensure air quality continues to improve across the borough	-/?	-/?	-/?
5. To protect and enhance the valued landscape and townscape of Swale	-/?	--	--
6. To protect and enhance soil quality and reduce contamination	-	--	--
7. To manage and reduce the risk of flooding	?	?	?
8. To maintain and enhance water quality (ground and surface) and make efficient use of water	+	+	+
9. To conserve and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment	--	--	--
10. To achieve the sustainable management of waste	~	~	~
11. To meet the challenges of a growing and ageing population	+	+	+
12. To reduce poverty and social exclusion	~	~	~
13. To improve accessibility for all to key services and facilities	~	~	~
14. To improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities in health	-	-	-
15. To reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and the fear of these	~	~	~
16. To provide affordable and decent housing adaptable to future needs of the community	+	++	++
17. To sustain economic growth and competitiveness	+	++	++
18. To ensure high and stable levels of employment in accessible locations	+	++	++
19. To raise the educational achievement levels across the borough and help people to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in employment	+/?	+/?	+/?
20. To promote traffic reduction and encourage more sustainable alternative forms of transport	-/?	-/?	-/?
Summary			
<p>This proposed Spatial Option delivers the greatest social and economic benefits over the plan period and beyond but at the detriment of the natural environment. The delivery of higher housing and economic growth will require the release of a considerable amount of Greenfield land – surrounding Sittingbourne, at the Kent Science Park and the identified village locations. This Greenfield land potentially includes areas of high agricultural quality and landscape value as well as valued</p>			

countryside used for the enjoyment of all. This option also proposes the delivery of the Sittingbourne Southern Relief Road, between the M2 and the A2 (as well as completion of the Sittingbourne Northern Relief Road) which will deliver considerable benefits for transport links across the Borough facilitating the economic growth but, again, at the detriment of the natural environment as the route will go through areas of high value countryside and the M2 junction improvements could impact upon the AONB. These proposals will alleviate existing traffic problems on the Borough's current roads in those areas but will not contribute towards encouraging more sustainable modes of transport.

This option has the potential to deliver the greatest level of housing, in Swale and has the capability to deliver the greatest level of affordable housing a considerable social benefit but as stated above at the detriment of the natural environment. This is because although where feasible previously developed land will be utilised within the urban areas and village and rural locations considerable areas of Greenfield land will be required. However it is understood that no sites of significant size will be identified at rural settlements other than the identified larger village locations, negatively affecting the meeting of housing need at these locations. This option proposes the delivery of major new green infrastructure; this can potentially enhance the natural environment of the Borough and encourage additional use of the open spaces by existing and new residents. The proposed levels of growth within Sittingbourne will exceed the capacity of the Sittingbourne WwTW, which will require consents to increase capacity. In the long term capacity will be exceeded at Queenborough and Eastchurch WwTWs for development proposed around Sheppey.

This option proposes the greatest economic aspirations for Swale intending to put the Borough in a strong position in terms of attracting new employment opportunities and investment and raising the Boroughs profile across the County and the region and further afield. This option has the potential to offer opportunities to diversify the economy, in particular into greener sectors. The delivery of new employment opportunities will be phased over time with the greatest proportions delivered in the medium time period however, cumulatively over the medium to long term (and beyond) the significance of employment opportunities positively increases. Associated with employment opportunities is the potential to improve the skills of local residents but this needs to be supported by increased educational attainment. Therefore, the planned growth of employment provision across the Borough positively benefits its economic growth and prosperity.

Core Strategy Policies

Policy CP1 – Settlement Hierarchy			
SA Objective	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
1. To reinforce local distinctiveness, local environmental quality and amenity through the conservation and enhancement of the built and cultural heritage	+	+	+
2. To minimise the need for energy, increase energy efficiency and to increase the use of renewable energy	~	~	~
3. To encourage sustainable construction materials and methods	~	~	~
4. To reduce air pollution and ensure air quality continues to improve across the borough	~	~	~
5. To protect and enhance the valued landscape and townscape of Swale	~	~	~
6. To protect and enhance soil quality and reduce contamination	~	~	~
7. To manage and reduce the risk of flooding	~	~	~
8. To maintain and enhance water quality (ground and surface) and make efficient use of water	~	~	~
9. To conserve and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment	+	+	+
10. To achieve the sustainable management of waste	~	~	~
11. To meet the challenges of a growing and ageing population	~	~	~
12. To reduce poverty and social exclusion	~	~	~
13. To improve accessibility for all to key services and facilities	+	+	+
14. To improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities in health	~	~	~
15. To reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and the fear of these	~	~	~
16. To provide affordable and decent housing adaptable to future needs of the community	+	+	+
17. To sustain economic growth and competitiveness	+	+	+
18. To ensure high and stable levels of employment in accessible locations	+	+	+
19. To raise the educational achievement levels across the borough and help people to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in employment	+	+	+
20. To promote traffic reduction and encourage more sustainable alternative forms of transport	+	+	+
<p>This policy approach will define the settlement hierarchy for the Borough, identifying which development is suitable in which area. This approach seeks to deliver sustainable transport and transport improvements within the main settlement areas of the borough, also improving accessibility of services. Allocating the areas for services and facilities of appropriate scale for the centre encourages appropriate investment and sustains economic growth and employment opportunities. Residential development will be allowed within built up boundaries preserving the landscape and natural environment.</p>			

Policy CP2 – Provision of jobs and homes 2006-2031			
SA Objective	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
1. To reinforce local distinctiveness, local environmental quality and amenity through the conservation and enhancement of the built and cultural heritage	~	~	~
2. To minimise the need for energy, increase energy efficiency and to increase the use of renewable energy	~	~	~
3. To encourage sustainable construction materials and methods	~	~	~
4. To reduce air pollution and ensure air quality continues to improve across the borough	~	~	~
5. To protect and enhance the valued landscape and townscape of Swale	~	~	~
6. To protect and enhance soil quality and reduce contamination	~	~	~
7. To manage and reduce the risk of flooding	~	~	~
8. To maintain and enhance water quality (ground and surface) and make efficient use of water	~	~	~
9. To conserve and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment	~	~	~
10. To achieve the sustainable management of waste	~	~	~
11. To meet the challenges of a growing and ageing population	+	+	+
12. To reduce poverty and social exclusion	+	+	+
13. To improve accessibility for all to key services and facilities	~	~	~
14. To improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities in health	~	~	~
15. To reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and the fear of these	~	~	~
16. To provide affordable and decent housing adaptable to future needs of the community	+	+	+
17. To sustain economic growth and competitiveness	+	+	+
18. To ensure high and stable levels of employment in accessible locations	+	+	+
19. To raise the educational achievement levels across the borough and help people to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in employment	~	~	~
20. To promote traffic reduction and encourage more sustainable alternative forms of transport	~	~	~
Setting the amount of housing and employment floorspace in a policy is beneficial to the achievement of SA Objectives 11 and 12 with regard to providing for an aging population and contributing to reductions in poverty and social exclusion through the deliver of new housing and employment opportunities. It is beneficial for SA objectives 17 and 18 contributing towards sustained economic growth and employment opportunities. The policy is beneficial with regard to providing affordable and decent housing.			

Policy CP3 – Location of allocations			
SA Objective	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
1. To reinforce local distinctiveness, local environmental quality and amenity through the conservation and enhancement of the built and cultural heritage	?	?	?
2. To minimise the need for energy, increase energy efficiency and to increase the use of renewable energy	~	~	~
3. To encourage sustainable construction materials and methods	~	~	~
4. To reduce air pollution and ensure air quality continues to improve across the borough	~	~	~
5. To protect and enhance the valued landscape and townscape of Swale	?	?	?
6. To protect and enhance soil quality and reduce contamination	~	~	~
7. To manage and reduce the risk of flooding	?	?	?
8. To maintain and enhance water quality (ground and surface) and make efficient use of water	~	~	~
9. To conserve and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment	?	?	?
10. To achieve the sustainable management of waste	~	~	~
11. To meet the challenges of a growing and ageing population	~	~	~
12. To reduce poverty and social exclusion	~	~	~
13. To improve accessibility for all to key services and facilities	~	~	~
14. To improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities in health	~	~	~
15. To reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and the fear of these	~	~	~
16. To provide affordable and decent housing adaptable to future needs of the community	~	~	~
17. To sustain economic growth and competitiveness	~	~	~
18. To ensure high and stable levels of employment in accessible locations	~	~	~
19. To raise the educational achievement levels across the borough and help people to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in employment	~	~	~
20. To promote traffic reduction and encourage more sustainable alternative forms of transport	?	?	?
At this stage it is uncertain the sustainability implications of the locations for development. Swale has a valued landscape and a rich historic and natural environment; in particular Faversham and the swale estuary which requires protection are consideration when determining locations for development.			

Policy CP4 –Sustainability and environment cross-cutting policy			
SA Objective	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
1. To reinforce local distinctiveness, local environmental quality and amenity through the conservation and enhancement of the built and cultural heritage	~	~	~
2. To minimise the need for energy, increase energy efficiency and to increase the use of renewable energy	+	+	++
3. To encourage sustainable construction materials and methods	+	+	++
4. To reduce air pollution and ensure air quality continues to improve across the borough	+	+	+
5. To protect and enhance the valued landscape and townscape of Swale	+	+	+
6. To protect and enhance soil quality and reduce contamination	~	~	~
7. To manage and reduce the risk of flooding	+	+	+
8. To maintain and enhance water quality (ground and surface) and make efficient use of water	+	+	++
9. To conserve and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment	+	+	+
10. To achieve the sustainable management of waste	+	+	+
11. To meet the challenges of a growing and ageing population	~	~	~
12. To reduce poverty and social exclusion	~	~	~
13. To improve accessibility for all to key services and facilities	~	~	~
14. To improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities in health	~	~	~
15. To reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and the fear of these	+	+	+
16. To provide affordable and decent housing adaptable to future needs of the community	~	~	~
17. To sustain economic growth and competitiveness	~	~	~
18. To ensure high and stable levels of employment in accessible locations	~	~	~
19. To raise the educational achievement levels across the borough and help people to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in employment	~	~	~
20. To promote traffic reduction and encourage more sustainable alternative forms of transport	+	+	+
<p>This policy approach is the mechanism for achieving sustainable development across the borough. This policy approach will deliver significant long term benefits with regard to the use of sustainable construction methods, renewable energy and energy efficiency and water efficiency measures once the technologies and developments have been established. The policy is also intending to ensure opportunities for wetland habitats and species through options for sustainable flood risk management. The policy also seeks to achieve safe, secure and inclusive communities beneficial to the achievement of SA Objective 15.</p> <p>Recommendation</p>			

Include further reference to sustainable waste management as currently only mention reduce amount of biodegradable waste land filled.

Policy CP5 - Prosperity cross-cutting policy			
SA Objective	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
1. To reinforce local distinctiveness, local environmental quality and amenity through the conservation and enhancement of the built and cultural heritage	~	~	~
2. To minimise the need for energy, increase energy efficiency and to increase the use of renewable energy	~	~	~
3. To encourage sustainable construction materials and methods	~	~	~
4. To reduce air pollution and ensure air quality continues to improve across the borough	~	~	~
5. To protect and enhance the valued landscape and townscape of Swale	~	~	~
6. To protect and enhance soil quality and reduce contamination	~	~	~
7. To manage and reduce the risk of flooding	~	~	~
8. To maintain and enhance water quality (ground and surface) and make efficient use of water	~	~	~
9. To conserve and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment	~	~	~
10. To achieve the sustainable management of waste	~	~	~
11. To meet the challenges of a growing and ageing population	~	~	~
12. To reduce poverty and social exclusion	+	+	+
13. To improve accessibility for all to key services and facilities	~	~	~
14. To improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities in health	~	~	~
15. To reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and the fear of these	~	~	~
16. To provide affordable and decent housing adaptable to future needs of the community	~	~	~
17. To sustain economic growth and competitiveness	+	+	+
18. To ensure high and stable levels of employment in accessible locations	+	+	+
19. To raise the educational achievement levels across the borough and help people to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in employment	+	+	+
20. To promote traffic reduction and encourage more sustainable alternative forms of transport	+	+	+
This policy approach will deliver beneficial effects with regard to economy, employment and skills and sustainable transport as well as contributing to reductions in poverty and social exclusion.			

Policy CP6 – Homes and Communities			
SA Objective	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
1. To reinforce local distinctiveness, local environmental quality and amenity through the conservation and enhancement of the built and cultural heritage	~	~	~
2. To minimise the need for energy, increase energy efficiency and to increase the use of renewable energy	+	+	+
3. To encourage sustainable construction materials and methods	+	+	+
4. To reduce air pollution and ensure air quality continues to improve across the borough	~	~	~
5. To protect and enhance the valued landscape and townscape of Swale	~	~	~
6. To protect and enhance soil quality and reduce contamination	~	~	~
7. To manage and reduce the risk of flooding	~	~	~
8. To maintain and enhance water quality (ground and surface) and make efficient use of water	+	+	+
9. To conserve and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment	~	~	~
10. To achieve the sustainable management of waste	+	+	+
11. To meet the challenges of a growing and ageing population	+	+	+
12. To reduce poverty and social exclusion	+	+	+
13. To improve accessibility for all to key services and facilities	~	~	~
14. To improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities in health	~	~	~
15. To reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and the fear of these	~	~	~
16. To provide affordable and decent housing adaptable to future needs of the community	+	++	++
17. To sustain economic growth and competitiveness	~	~	~
18. To ensure high and stable levels of employment in accessible locations	~	~	~
19. To raise the educational achievement levels across the borough and help people to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in employment	~	~	~
20. To promote traffic reduction and encourage more sustainable alternative forms of transport	~	~	~
This policy approach will deliver benefits with regard to climate change, energy efficiency and sustainable construction. It is proposing homes designed to meet the needs of an aging population (lifetime homes and decent homes standards).			

Policy CP7 –Health and well being cross cutting policy			
SA Objective	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
1. To reinforce local distinctiveness, local environmental quality and amenity through the conservation and enhancement of the built and cultural heritage	~	~	~
2. To minimise the need for energy, increase energy efficiency and to increase the use of renewable energy	~	~	~
3. To encourage sustainable construction materials and methods	~	~	~
4. To reduce air pollution and ensure air quality continues to improve across the borough	~	~	~
5. To protect and enhance the valued landscape and townscape of Swale	~	~	~
6. To protect and enhance soil quality and reduce contamination	~	~	~
7. To manage and reduce the risk of flooding	~	~	~
8. To maintain and enhance water quality (ground and surface) and make efficient use of water	~	~	~
9. To conserve and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment	~	~	~
10. To achieve the sustainable management of waste	~	~	~
11. To meet the challenges of a growing and ageing population	+	+	+
12. To reduce poverty and social exclusion	~	~	~
13. To improve accessibility for all to key services and facilities	+	+	+
14. To improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities in health	+	+	+
15. To reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and the fear of these	~	~	~
16. To provide affordable and decent housing adaptable to future needs of the community	~	~	~
17. To sustain economic growth and competitiveness	~	~	~
18. To ensure high and stable levels of employment in accessible locations	+	+	+
19. To raise the educational achievement levels across the borough and help people to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in employment	+	+	+
20. To promote traffic reduction and encourage more sustainable alternative forms of transport	~	~	~
This policy approach would deliver beneficial effects with regard to improving health and health inequalities and access to key services and facilities. The policy also seeks to increase education and training opportunities and support employment opportunities contributing positively to achievement of SA Objectives 18 and 19.			

Policy CP8 Infrastructure and implementation cross-cutting policy			
SA Objective	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
1. To reinforce local distinctiveness, local environmental quality and amenity through the conservation and enhancement of the built and cultural heritage	~	~	~
2. To minimise the need for energy, increase energy efficiency and to increase the use of renewable energy	~	~	~
3. To encourage sustainable construction materials and methods	~	~	~
4. To reduce air pollution and ensure air quality continues to improve across the borough	~	~	~
5. To protect and enhance the valued landscape and townscape of Swale	~	~	~
6. To protect and enhance soil quality and reduce contamination	~	~	~
7. To manage and reduce the risk of flooding	~	~	~
8. To maintain and enhance water quality (ground and surface) and make efficient use of water	~	~	~
9. To conserve and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment	~	~	~
10. To achieve the sustainable management of waste	~	~	~
11. To meet the challenges of a growing and ageing population	~	~	~
12. To reduce poverty and social exclusion	~	~	~
13. To improve accessibility for all to key services and facilities	~	~	~
14. To improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities in health	~	~	~
15. To reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and the fear of these	~	~	~
16. To provide affordable and decent housing adaptable to future needs of the community	~	~	~
17. To sustain economic growth and competitiveness	+	+	+
18. To ensure high and stable levels of employment in accessible locations	~	~	~
19. To raise the educational achievement levels across the borough and help people to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in employment	~	~	~
20. To promote traffic reduction and encourage more sustainable alternative forms of transport	+/?	+/?	+/?
<p>This policy approach provides the infrastructure framework to enable the proposed development across the Borough to be delivered. The delivery of development is dependent on this infrastructure delivery which if sufficient capacity is not found within existing or delivered from investment in new infrastructure then there may be adjustments to be made to the planned phasing. Therefore this policy approach will delivery benefits for the economy and housing objectives if sufficient infrastructure is available but if not, there is the potential to negatively effect the future economic growth of the Borough and the accessibility of housing (including affordable), to meet the identified need. This can also affect the delivery of associated social infrastructure.</p>			

Policy CP9 Green Infrastructure cross-cutting policy			
SA Objective	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
1. To reinforce local distinctiveness, local environmental quality and amenity through the conservation and enhancement of the built and cultural heritage	~	~	~
2. To minimise the need for energy, increase energy efficiency and to increase the use of renewable energy	~	~	~
3. To encourage sustainable construction materials and methods	~	~	~
4. To reduce air pollution and ensure air quality continues to improve across the borough	~	~	~
5. To protect and enhance the valued landscape and townscape of Swale	+	+	+
6. To protect and enhance soil quality and reduce contamination	+	+	+
7. To manage and reduce the risk of flooding	~	~	~
8. To maintain and enhance water quality (ground and surface) and make efficient use of water	~	~	~
9. To conserve and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment	+	+	+
10. To achieve the sustainable management of waste	~	~	~
11. To meet the challenges of a growing and ageing population	~	~	~
12. To reduce poverty and social exclusion	~	~	~
13. To improve accessibility for all to key services and facilities	~	~	~
14. To improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities in health	+	+	+
15. To reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and the fear of these	~	~	~
16. To provide affordable and decent housing adaptable to future needs of the community	~	~	~
17. To sustain economic growth and competitiveness	~	~	~
18. To ensure high and stable levels of employment in accessible locations	~	~	~
19. To raise the educational achievement levels across the borough and help people to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in employment	~	~	~
20. To promote traffic reduction and encourage more sustainable alternative forms of transport	~	~	~
A Green infrastructure policy approach is beneficial with regard to the boroughs natural environment and biodiversity. It also delivers positive benefits with regard to the landscape of the Borough.			

Development Management policies

Policy DM1 – Sustainable Design and Construction			
SA Objective	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
1. To reinforce local distinctiveness, local environmental quality and amenity through the conservation and enhancement of the built and cultural heritage	~	~	~
2. To minimise the need for energy, increase energy efficiency and to increase the use of renewable energy	+	+	++
3. To encourage sustainable construction materials and methods	+	+	++
4. To reduce air pollution and ensure air quality continues to improve across the borough	+	+	+
5. To protect and enhance the valued landscape and townscape of Swale	~	~	~
6. To protect and enhance soil quality and reduce contamination	~	~	~
7. To manage and reduce the risk of flooding	+	+	+
8. To maintain and enhance water quality (ground and surface) and make efficient use of water	+	+	++
9. To conserve and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment	+	+	+
10. To achieve the sustainable management of waste	+	+	+
11. To meet the challenges of a growing and ageing population	~	~	~
12. To reduce poverty and social exclusion	~	~	~
13. To improve accessibility for all to key services and facilities	+	+	+
14. To improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities in health	+	+	+
15. To reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and the fear of these	~	~	~
16. To provide affordable and decent housing adaptable to future needs of the community	~	~	~
17. To sustain economic growth and competitiveness	~	~	~
18. To ensure high and stable levels of employment in accessible locations	~	~	~
19. To raise the educational achievement levels across the borough and help people to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in employment	~	~	~
20. To promote traffic reduction and encourage more sustainable alternative forms of transport	~	~	~
<p>This policy approach will deliver the framework for development to be built to be adaptable to changing lifestyles and climate through encouraging buildings for life standards and developments to achieve CSH and BREEAM standards, over the long term this should achieve significant benefits. The policy also requires developments to incorporate sustainable design measures including water efficiency measures.</p> <p>This policy approach will deliver across the borough renewable, decentralised and low-carbon energy</p>			

generation at a range of scales and for all forms of development. This policy approach therefore achieves significant long term benefits with regard to SA Objectives 2 and 3.

Recommendations

Consider how CSH and BREEAM targets are set if intending to be different from statutory requirements. Clarify if the Carbon Fund will only be linked to carbon emissions or other aspects of CSH and BREEAM. Provide further detail in the supporting text or a SPD.

Policy DM2 – The Coast Policy			
SA Objective	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
1. To reinforce local distinctiveness, local environmental quality and amenity through the conservation and enhancement of the built and cultural heritage	~	~	~
2. To minimise the need for energy, increase energy efficiency and to increase the use of renewable energy	~	~	~
3. To encourage sustainable construction materials and methods	~	~	~
4. To reduce air pollution and ensure air quality continues to improve across the borough	~	~	~
5. To protect and enhance the valued landscape and townscape of Swale	+	+	+
6. To protect and enhance soil quality and reduce contamination	~	~	~
7. To manage and reduce the risk of flooding	+	+	+
8. To maintain and enhance water quality (ground and surface) and make efficient use of water	~	~	~
9. To conserve and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment	+	+	+
10. To achieve the sustainable management of waste	~	~	~
11. To meet the challenges of a growing and ageing population	~	~	~
12. To reduce poverty and social exclusion	~	~	~
13. To improve accessibility for all to key services and facilities	~	~	~
14. To improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities in health	+	+	+
15. To reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and the fear of these	~	~	~
16. To provide affordable and decent housing adaptable to future needs of the community	~	~	~
17. To sustain economic growth and competitiveness	~	~	~
18. To ensure high and stable levels of employment in accessible locations	~	~	~
19. To raise the educational achievement levels across the borough and help people to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in employment	~	~	~
20. To promote traffic reduction and encourage more sustainable alternative forms of transport	~	~	~
This policy approach will see the protection and management of the coastline, supporting restrictions on development along the coast line. The protection mechanisms will support the biodiversity designations and the intrinsic landscape that exists achieving positive benefits for SA Objectives 5 and 9.			

Policy DM3 – Heritage Assets			
SA Objective	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
1. To reinforce local distinctiveness, local environmental quality and amenity through the conservation and enhancement of the built and cultural heritage	+	+	+
2. To minimise the need for energy, increase energy efficiency and to increase the use of renewable energy	~	~	~
3. To encourage sustainable construction materials and methods	~	~	~
4. To reduce air pollution and ensure air quality continues to improve across the borough	~	~	~
5. To protect and enhance the valued landscape and townscape of Swale	+	+	+
6. To protect and enhance soil quality and reduce contamination	~	~	~
7. To manage and reduce the risk of flooding	~	~	~
8. To maintain and enhance water quality (ground and surface) and make efficient use of water	~	~	~
9. To conserve and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment	~	~	~
10. To achieve the sustainable management of waste	~	~	~
11. To meet the challenges of a growing and ageing population	~	~	~
12. To reduce poverty and social exclusion	~	~	~
13. To improve accessibility for all to key services and facilities	~	~	~
14. To improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities in health	~	~	~
15. To reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and the fear of these	~	~	~
16. To provide affordable and decent housing adaptable to future needs of the community	~	~	~
17. To sustain economic growth and competitiveness	~	~	~
18. To ensure high and stable levels of employment in accessible locations	~	~	~
19. To raise the educational achievement levels across the borough and help people to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in employment	~	~	~
20. To promote traffic reduction and encourage more sustainable alternative forms of transport	~	~	~
This policy approach will achieve benefits with regard to the protection of the Borough's heritage assets, the mechanisms proposed will also enable protection and enhancement of the landscape and townscape of the Borough through ensuring high quality designed development proposals.			

Policy DM4 – Natural Assets			
SA Objective	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
1. To reinforce local distinctiveness, local environmental quality and amenity through the conservation and enhancement of the built and cultural heritage	~	~	~
2. To minimise the need for energy, increase energy efficiency and to increase the use of renewable energy	~	~	~
3. To encourage sustainable construction materials and methods	~	~	~
4. To reduce air pollution and ensure air quality continues to improve across the borough	~	~	~
5. To protect and enhance the valued landscape and townscape of Swale	+	+	+
6. To protect and enhance soil quality and reduce contamination	~	~	~
7. To manage and reduce the risk of flooding	~	~	~
8. To maintain and enhance water quality (ground and surface) and make efficient use of water	~	~	~
9. To conserve and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment	+	+	+
10. To achieve the sustainable management of waste	~	~	~
11. To meet the challenges of a growing and ageing population	~	~	~
12. To reduce poverty and social exclusion	~	~	~
13. To improve accessibility for all to key services and facilities	~	~	~
14. To improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities in health	~	~	~
15. To reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and the fear of these	~	~	~
16. To provide affordable and decent housing adaptable to future needs of the community	~	~	~
17. To sustain economic growth and competitiveness	~	~	~
18. To ensure high and stable levels of employment in accessible locations	~	~	~
19. To raise the educational achievement levels across the borough and help people to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in employment	~	~	~
20. To promote traffic reduction and encourage more sustainable alternative forms of transport	~	~	~
<p>This policy approach seeks to ensure protection and enhancement of the Boroughs natural assets. This delivers benefits with regard to SA objectives 5 and 9.</p> <p>Recommendations</p> <p>Include further discussions and explanation of green infrastructure and link to Core Strategy Policy CP9.</p>			

Policy DM5 – Landscape Character and Biodiversity			
SA Objective	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
1. To reinforce local distinctiveness, local environmental quality and amenity through the conservation and enhancement of the built and cultural heritage	~	~	~
2. To minimise the need for energy, increase energy efficiency and to increase the use of renewable energy	~	~	~
3. To encourage sustainable construction materials and methods	~	~	~
4. To reduce air pollution and ensure air quality continues to improve across the borough	~	~	~
5. To protect and enhance the valued landscape and townscape of Swale	+	+	+
6. To protect and enhance soil quality and reduce contamination	~	~	~
7. To manage and reduce the risk of flooding	~	~	~
8. To maintain and enhance water quality (ground and surface) and make efficient use of water	~	~	~
9. To conserve and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment	+	+	+
10. To achieve the sustainable management of waste	~	~	~
11. To meet the challenges of a growing and ageing population	~	~	~
12. To reduce poverty and social exclusion	~	~	~
13. To improve accessibility for all to key services and facilities	~	~	~
14. To improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities in health	~	~	~
15. To reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and the fear of these	~	~	~
16. To provide affordable and decent housing adaptable to future needs of the community	~	~	~
17. To sustain economic growth and competitiveness	~	~	~
18. To ensure high and stable levels of employment in accessible locations	~	~	~
19. To raise the educational achievement levels across the borough and help people to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in employment	~	~	~
20. To promote traffic reduction and encourage more sustainable alternative forms of transport	~	~	~
<p>This policy approach seeks to ensure protection and enhancement of the Boroughs high quality landscape character and biodiversity. This delivers benefits with regard to SA objectives 5 and 9.</p> <p>Recommendations Include further discussions and explanation of green infrastructure and link to Core Strategy Policy CP9.</p>			

Policy DM6 – Enabling development for landscape and biodiversity enhancement			
SA Objective	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
1. To reinforce local distinctiveness, local environmental quality and amenity through the conservation and enhancement of the built and cultural heritage	~	~	~
2. To minimise the need for energy, increase energy efficiency and to increase the use of renewable energy	~	~	~
3. To encourage sustainable construction materials and methods	~	~	~
4. To reduce air pollution and ensure air quality continues to improve across the borough	~	~	~
5. To protect and enhance the valued landscape and townscape of Swale	+	+	+
6. To protect and enhance soil quality and reduce contamination	~	~	~
7. To manage and reduce the risk of flooding	~	~	~
8. To maintain and enhance water quality (ground and surface) and make efficient use of water	~	~	~
9. To conserve and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment	+	+	+
10. To achieve the sustainable management of waste	~	~	~
11. To meet the challenges of a growing and ageing population	~	~	~
12. To reduce poverty and social exclusion	~	~	~
13. To improve accessibility for all to key services and facilities	~	~	~
14. To improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities in health	~	~	~
15. To reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and the fear of these	~	~	~
16. To provide affordable and decent housing adaptable to future needs of the community	~	~	~
17. To sustain economic growth and competitiveness	~	~	~
18. To ensure high and stable levels of employment in accessible locations	~	~	~
19. To raise the educational achievement levels across the borough and help people to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in employment	~	~	~
20. To promote traffic reduction and encourage more sustainable alternative forms of transport	~	~	~
This policy approach is a rural exception policy. Proposals will be permitted only where they will deliver benefits to the condition of the landscape and biodiversity. Therefore it should be ensured that the proposal does not cause harm to the natural environment before further enhancements are delivered. It therefore has the potential to provide benefits to biodiversity and the natural environment.			

Policy DM7 Retail Development			
SA Objective	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
1. To reinforce local distinctiveness, local environmental quality and amenity through the conservation and enhancement of the built and cultural heritage	~	~	~
2. To minimise the need for energy, increase energy efficiency and to increase the use of renewable energy	~	~	~
3. To encourage sustainable construction materials and methods	~	~	~
4. To reduce air pollution and ensure air quality continues to improve across the borough	~	~	~
5. To protect and enhance the valued landscape and townscape of Swale	~	~	~
6. To protect and enhance soil quality and reduce contamination	~	~	~
7. To manage and reduce the risk of flooding	~	~	~
8. To maintain and enhance water quality (ground and surface) and make efficient use of water	~	~	~
9. To conserve and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment	~	~	~
10. To achieve the sustainable management of waste	~	~	~
11. To meet the challenges of a growing and ageing population	~	~	~
12. To reduce poverty and social exclusion	~	~	~
13. To improve accessibility for all to key services and facilities	~	~	~
14. To improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities in health	~	~	~
15. To reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and the fear of these	~	~	~
16. To provide affordable and decent housing adaptable to future needs of the community	~	~	~
17. To sustain economic growth and competitiveness	+	+	+
18. To ensure high and stable levels of employment in accessible locations	+	+	+
19. To raise the educational achievement levels across the borough and help people to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in employment	~	~	~
20. To promote traffic reduction and encourage more sustainable alternative forms of transport	~	~	~
The retail policy approach through supporting the retail development needs of the borough and protecting the existing town centres achieves beneficial results with regard to sustaining economic growth and competitiveness and employment across the borough.			

Policy DM8 – Rural Economy			
SA Objective	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
1. To reinforce local distinctiveness, local environmental quality and amenity through the conservation and enhancement of the built and cultural heritage	~	~	~
2. To minimise the need for energy, increase energy efficiency and to increase the use of renewable energy	~	~	~
3. To encourage sustainable construction materials and methods	~	~	~
4. To reduce air pollution and ensure air quality continues to improve across the borough	~	~	~
5. To protect and enhance the valued landscape and townscape of Swale	+	+	+
6. To protect and enhance soil quality and reduce contamination	~	~	~
7. To manage and reduce the risk of flooding	~	~	~
8. To maintain and enhance water quality (ground and surface) and make efficient use of water	~	~	~
9. To conserve and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment	+	+	+
10. To achieve the sustainable management of waste	~	~	~
11. To meet the challenges of a growing and ageing population	~	~	~
12. To reduce poverty and social exclusion	~	~	~
13. To improve accessibility for all to key services and facilities	~	~	~
14. To improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities in health	~	~	~
15. To reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and the fear of these	~	~	~
16. To provide affordable and decent housing adaptable to future needs of the community	~	~	~
17. To sustain economic growth and competitiveness	+	+	+
18. To ensure high and stable levels of employment in accessible locations	+	+	+
19. To raise the educational achievement levels across the borough and help people to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in employment	~	~	~
20. To promote traffic reduction and encourage more sustainable alternative forms of transport	+	+	+
<p>This policy approach will deliver a mechanism to try and enable the security of the rural economy this will be beneficial for SA Objectives 17 and 18. The rural economy will be supported but it will also be ensured that there is no detriment to the landscape character, countryside conservation and biodiversity benefiting SA objectives 5 and 9.</p> <p>Recommendations Consider referring to the development of local rural skills as well as creation of jobs.</p>			

Policy DM9 – Tourism			
SA Objective	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
1. To reinforce local distinctiveness, local environmental quality and amenity through the conservation and enhancement of the built and cultural heritage	+	+	+
2. To minimise the need for energy, increase energy efficiency and to increase the use of renewable energy	~	~	~
3. To encourage sustainable construction materials and methods	~	~	~
4. To reduce air pollution and ensure air quality continues to improve across the borough	~	~	~
5. To protect and enhance the valued landscape and townscape of Swale	~	~	~
6. To protect and enhance soil quality and reduce contamination	~	~	~
7. To manage and reduce the risk of flooding	~	~	~
8. To maintain and enhance water quality (ground and surface) and make efficient use of water	~	~	~
9. To conserve and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment	~	~	~
10. To achieve the sustainable management of waste	~	~	~
11. To meet the challenges of a growing and ageing population	~	~	~
12. To reduce poverty and social exclusion	~	~	~
13. To improve accessibility for all to key services and facilities	~	~	~
14. To improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities in health	~	~	~
15. To reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and the fear of these	~	~	~
16. To provide affordable and decent housing adaptable to future needs of the community	~	~	~
17. To sustain economic growth and competitiveness	+	+	+
18. To ensure high and stable levels of employment in accessible locations	+	+	+
19. To raise the educational achievement levels across the borough and help people to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in employment	~	~	~
20. To promote traffic reduction and encourage more sustainable alternative forms of transport	~	~	~
Tourism across the borough will deliver positive benefits with regard to sustaining economic growth and competitiveness, in particular in the rural areas of the borough.			

Policy DM10 - Affordable Housing			
SA Objective	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
1. To reinforce local distinctiveness, local environmental quality and amenity through the conservation and enhancement of the built and cultural heritage	~	~	~
2. To minimise the need for energy, increase energy efficiency and to increase the use of renewable energy	~	~	~
3. To encourage sustainable construction materials and methods	~	~	~
4. To reduce air pollution and ensure air quality continues to improve across the borough	~	~	~
5. To protect and enhance the valued landscape and townscape of Swale	~	~	~
6. To protect and enhance soil quality and reduce contamination	~	~	~
7. To manage and reduce the risk of flooding	~	~	~
8. To maintain and enhance water quality (ground and surface) and make efficient use of water	~	~	~
9. To conserve and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment	~	~	~
10. To achieve the sustainable management of waste	~	~	~
11. To meet the challenges of a growing and ageing population	+	+	++
12. To reduce poverty and social exclusion	~	~	~
13. To improve accessibility for all to key services and facilities	~	~	~
14. To improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities in health	~	~	~
15. To reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and the fear of these	~	~	~
16. To provide affordable and decent housing adaptable to future needs of the community	+	++	++
17. To sustain economic growth and competitiveness	~	~	~
18. To ensure high and stable levels of employment in accessible locations	~	~	~
19. To raise the educational achievement levels across the borough and help people to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in employment	~	~	~
20. To promote traffic reduction and encourage more sustainable alternative forms of transport	~	~	~
<p>This policy approach will require the delivery of affordable housing for developments of 15 units or more. Separate thresholds have been identified for the rural areas and the main towns of Sittingbourne and Faversham to ensure that the housing needs of both the rural communities and the residents of the towns are catered for. The policy is looking to achieve all affordable homes to be delivered to lifetime homes standards delivering housing to be adaptable to an aging population, benefiting the achievement of SA Objectives 11, 14 and 16. Over the long term significant benefits are identified through the delivery of lifetime homes standards and the provision of affordable</p>			

housing.

Policy DM11 Rural Housing Policy			
SA Objective	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
1. To reinforce local distinctiveness, local environmental quality and amenity through the conservation and enhancement of the built and cultural heritage	+	+	+
2. To minimise the need for energy, increase energy efficiency and to increase the use of renewable energy	~	~	~
3. To encourage sustainable construction materials and methods	~	~	~
4. To reduce air pollution and ensure air quality continues to improve across the borough	~	~	~
5. To protect and enhance the valued landscape and townscape of Swale	+	+	+
6. To protect and enhance soil quality and reduce contamination	~	~	~
7. To manage and reduce the risk of flooding	~	~	~
8. To maintain and enhance water quality (ground and surface) and make efficient use of water	~	~	~
9. To conserve and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment	~	~	~
10. To achieve the sustainable management of waste	~	~	~
11. To meet the challenges of a growing and ageing population	~	~	~
12. To reduce poverty and social exclusion	~	~	~
13. To improve accessibility for all to key services and facilities	~	~	~
14. To improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities in health	~	~	~
15. To reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and the fear of these	~	~	~
16. To provide affordable and decent housing adaptable to future needs of the community	+	++	++
17. To sustain economic growth and competitiveness	~	~	~
18. To ensure high and stable levels of employment in accessible locations	~	~	~
19. To raise the educational achievement levels across the borough and help people to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in employment	~	~	~
20. To promote traffic reduction and encourage more sustainable alternative forms of transport	~	~	~
<p>This policy approach will require the delivery of affordable housing for new developments delivering positive social benefits to both the rural and town residents. The policy is looking to achieve all affordable homes to be delivered to lifetime homes standards delivering housing to be adaptable to an aging population. Over the long term, significant benefits are identified through the delivery of these lifetime homes standards and the provision of affordable housing.</p>			

This policy will require all proposals to be kept affordable and be kept for local eligible residents, a positive benefit with regard to SA objective 16.

Recommendation

Consider cross reference to DM10 Affordable Housing with regard to delivering rural housing to meet lifetime homes standards.

Policy DM12 – Provision for Gypsies and Travellers			
SA Objective	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
1. To reinforce local distinctiveness, local environmental quality and amenity through the conservation and enhancement of the built and cultural heritage	+	+	+
2. To minimise the need for energy, increase energy efficiency and to increase the use of renewable energy	~	~	~
3. To encourage sustainable construction materials and methods	~	~	~
4. To reduce air pollution and ensure air quality continues to improve across the borough	~	~	~
5. To protect and enhance the valued landscape and townscape of Swale	+	+	+
6. To protect and enhance soil quality and reduce contamination	~	~	~
7. To manage and reduce the risk of flooding	~	~	~
8. To maintain and enhance water quality (ground and surface) and make efficient use of water	~	~	~
9. To conserve and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment	~	~	~
10. To achieve the sustainable management of waste	~	~	~
11. To meet the challenges of a growing and ageing population	~	~	~
12. To reduce poverty and social exclusion	+	+	+
13. To improve accessibility for all to key services and facilities	~	~	~
14. To improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities in health	~	~	~
15. To reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and the fear of these	~	~	~
16. To provide affordable and decent housing adaptable to future needs of the community	~	~	~
17. To sustain economic growth and competitiveness	~	~	~
18. To ensure high and stable levels of employment in accessible locations	~	~	~
19. To raise the educational achievement levels across the borough and help people to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in employment	~	~	~
20. To promote traffic reduction and encourage more sustainable alternative forms of transport	~	~	~
<p>This policy approach seeks to identify sites to meet the identified needs of the gypsy and traveller community. Through rigorously applying the site identification criteria and site criteria requirements it should be ensured that no detrimental impact on the built or natural environment occurs in particular on the landscape and biodiversity designations. Also through applying the criteria it should be ensured that no detrimental impact is had on existing communities.</p>			

Policy DM13 – Servicing New Development			
SA Objective	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
1. To reinforce local distinctiveness, local environmental quality and amenity through the conservation and enhancement of the built and cultural heritage	~	~	~
2. To minimise the need for energy, increase energy efficiency and to increase the use of renewable energy	~	~	~
3. To encourage sustainable construction materials and methods	~	~	~
4. To reduce air pollution and ensure air quality continues to improve across the borough	~	~	~
5. To protect and enhance the valued landscape and townscape of Swale	~	~	~
6. To protect and enhance soil quality and reduce contamination	~	~	~
7. To manage and reduce the risk of flooding	~	~	~
8. To maintain and enhance water quality (ground and surface) and make efficient use of water	~	~	~
9. To conserve and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment	~	~	~
10. To achieve the sustainable management of waste	~	~	~
11. To meet the challenges of a growing and ageing population	~	~	~
12. To reduce poverty and social exclusion	~	~	~
13. To improve accessibility for all to key services and facilities	+	+	+
14. To improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities in health	~	~	~
15. To reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and the fear of these	~	~	~
16. To provide affordable and decent housing adaptable to future needs of the community	~	~	~
17. To sustain economic growth and competitiveness	~	~	~
18. To ensure high and stable levels of employment in accessible locations	~	~	~
19. To raise the educational achievement levels across the borough and help people to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in employment	~	~	~
20. To promote traffic reduction and encourage more sustainable alternative forms of transport	~	~	~
<p>This policy will deliver the framework for infrastructure provision linked to new development. It is envisaged that this mechanism will positively contribute to ensuring the accessibility of key services and facilities (SA Objective 13).</p> <p>Recommendations Consider linking this to other development as well as residential. Provide links with Core Strategy CP9 and DM4/5 with regard to requiring green infrastructure provisions or include green infrastructure in this policy.</p>			

Policy DM14 – Managing travel demand			
SA Objective	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
1. To reinforce local distinctiveness, local environmental quality and amenity through the conservation and enhancement of the built and cultural heritage	~	~	~
2. To minimise the need for energy, increase energy efficiency and to increase the use of renewable energy	~	~	~
3. To encourage sustainable construction materials and methods	~	~	~
4. To reduce air pollution and ensure air quality continues to improve across the borough	+	+	+
5. To protect and enhance the valued landscape and townscape of Swale	~	~	~
6. To protect and enhance soil quality and reduce contamination	~	~	~
7. To manage and reduce the risk of flooding	~	~	~
8. To maintain and enhance water quality (ground and surface) and make efficient use of water	~	~	~
9. To conserve and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment	~	~	~
10. To achieve the sustainable management of waste	~	~	~
11. To meet the challenges of a growing and ageing population	~	~	~
12. To reduce poverty and social exclusion	~	~	~
13. To improve accessibility for all to key services and facilities	+	+	+
14. To improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities in health	~	~	~
15. To reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and the fear of these	~	~	~
16. To provide affordable and decent housing adaptable to future needs of the community	~	~	~
17. To sustain economic growth and competitiveness	~	~	~
18. To ensure high and stable levels of employment in accessible locations	~	~	~
19. To raise the educational achievement levels across the borough and help people to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in employment	~	~	~
20. To promote traffic reduction and encourage more sustainable alternative forms of transport	+	+	+
This policy approach will contribute towards a more sustainable transport system for the Borough, contributing towards reductions in emissions improving air quality across the borough as well as improving the accessibility of key facilities by public transport modes. Therefore positively benefiting SA objectives 4, 13 and 20.			

Policy DM15 – Proposed Open Space and recreation Standards			
SA Objective	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
1. To reinforce local distinctiveness, local environmental quality and amenity through the conservation and enhancement of the built and cultural heritage	~	~	~
2. To minimise the need for energy, increase energy efficiency and to increase the use of renewable energy	~	~	~
3. To encourage sustainable construction materials and methods	~	~	~
4. To reduce air pollution and ensure air quality continues to improve across the borough	~	~	~
5. To protect and enhance the valued landscape and townscape of Swale	~	~	~
6. To protect and enhance soil quality and reduce contamination	~	~	~
7. To manage and reduce the risk of flooding	~	~	~
8. To maintain and enhance water quality (ground and surface) and make efficient use of water	~	~	~
9. To conserve and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment	+	+	+
10. To achieve the sustainable management of waste	~	~	~
11. To meet the challenges of a growing and ageing population	~	~	~
12. To reduce poverty and social exclusion	~	~	~
13. To improve accessibility for all to key services and facilities	~	~	~
14. To improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities in health	+	+	+
15. To reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and the fear of these	~	~	~
16. To provide affordable and decent housing adaptable to future needs of the community	~	~	~
17. To sustain economic growth and competitiveness	~	~	~
18. To ensure high and stable levels of employment in accessible locations	~	~	~
19. To raise the educational achievement levels across the borough and help people to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in employment	~	~	~
20. To promote traffic reduction and encourage more sustainable alternative forms of transport	~	~	~
<p>This policy approach is seeking to restrict the loss of open space unless strong justification is identified subject to defined criteria. This policy will identify the amount of new open space that is required to meet identified deficiencies within local communities this will contribute towards provision of new open spaces and an associated opportunity for outdoor recreation and associated health benefits. Through restricting the loss of open spaces across the borough biodiversity and nature conservation within these areas is protected, a positive effect for SA Objective 9.</p>			

Recommendations

Consider referencing links to the green infrastructure and creation of green corridors between open spaces. Consider highlighting the nature conservation value of the open space.

The Vision

The vision has been assessed in terms of the nature of its effects (beneficial/adverse/neutral/uncertain) and of its relative magnitude and duration over time. These criteria were then used to judge whether the resulting effect would be minor or significant.

	SA Objective	
1	To reinforce local distinctiveness, local environmental quality and amenity through the conservation and enhancement of the built and cultural heritage	++
2	To minimise the need for energy, increase energy efficiency and to increase the use of renewable energy	~
3	To encourage sustainable construction materials and methods	~
4	To reduce air pollution and ensure air quality continues to improve across the borough	~
5	To protect and enhance the valued landscape and townscape of Swale	+
6	To protect and enhance soil quality and reduce contamination	~
7	To manage and reduce the risk of flooding	~
8	To maintain and enhance water quality (ground and surface) and make efficient use of water	~
9	To conserve and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment	+
10	To achieve the sustainable management of waste	~
11	To meet the challenges of a growing and aging population	~
12	To reduce poverty and social exclusion	~
13	To improve accessibility for all to key services and facilities	+
14	To improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities in health	~
15	To reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and the fear of these	~
16	To provide affordable and decent housing adaptable to future needs of the community	~
17	To sustain economic growth and competitiveness	+
18	To ensure high and stable levels of employment in accessible	+

	locations	
19	To raise the educational achievement levels across the borough and help people to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in employment	~
20	To promote traffic reduction and encourage more sustainable alternative forms of transport	~
<p>Comments:</p> <p>The vision performs favourably against all the SA objectives. In particular the vision is seeking to reinforce and protect local distinctiveness, local environmental quality and amenity of the borough and in particular the four key identified areas (objective 1).</p> <p>The environmental and heritage qualities of the borough and the focus on sustainable growth across the four areas positively benefits the achievement of objective 9 with regard to conservation and enhancement of the natural environment and biodiversity and objective 5 the landscape and townscape.</p> <p>The vision is beneficial to the achievement of economic growth and competitiveness and maintaining employment levels (objectives 17 and 18).</p>		

