



LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

CORE STRATEGY SUBMISSION DOCUMENT

EMPLOYMENT BACKGROUND DOCUMENT

Employment Background Document

1. Introduction

This document provides a summary of background information on Ashford's economy together with relevant national and regional policies, and demonstrates how this has informed the approach to dealing with employment issues in the submission Core Strategy.

2. Local Characteristics

Population

2.1 The mid-2005 population estimate for Ashford Borough is 110,000, of which 69,100 are aged between 16 and 65 and are therefore of employment age. 23,200 are aged 15 or below¹.

Employment Structure

Economic Activity

2.2 Kent County Council data shows that in 2004, there were 29,000 economically active males and 24,100 females, giving a total of 53,100 economically active people within the Borough².

2.3 According to 2001 Census data, the largest proportion (11.8%) of males were in skilled trade occupations, followed by 11.1% in managerial and senior official occupations, and 6.8% each in associate professional and technical occupations and process, plant and machine operatives. Amongst females, the largest proportion (10.1%) were in administrative and secretarial occupations, followed by 6.0% each in associate professional and technical occupations and sales and customer service occupations.

2.4 Median weekly full time earnings in 2005 were £504.40 for males and £349.40 for females³. This compares with £451.70 (males) and £357.60 (females) in Kent as a whole, and £476.00 (males) and £372.70 (females) in England and Wales. Ashford has the highest earnings levels in Kent after Dover and Dartford⁴.

Employment Structure

2.5 According to the 2004 Annual Business Inquiry, the largest employment sector in Ashford is Distribution, Hotels and Restaurants (29.4% of industries, compared with 24.9 in 1995). This is followed by Public Administration, Education and Health (24.9%, up from 23.7% in 1995); Banking, Finance and Insurance (15.0%, up from 14.9% in 1995); and Manufacturing (11.7%, down from 13.1% in 1995). The Primary Industries and Transport and Communications sectors had also shrunk between 1995 and 2004, whilst Construction grew from 2.8% to 6.5%.

¹ Office for National Statistics

² KCC Analysis and Information Team

³ Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE)

⁴ KCC, *Earnings in Kent*, June 2006

Travel to Work Areas

2.6 Data from the 2001 Census⁵ shows that of 46,060 people working in Ashford Borough, 33,753 (73%) live in Ashford, 4,209 (9%) travel from Shepway, 1,483 (3%) from Canterbury, 1,201 (3%) from Maidstone, 1,044 (2%) from Dover and 2,589 (6%) from the rest of Kent and Medway. Outside the county, the largest contribution to the workforce is from East Sussex (668, 1%).

2.7 Of 48,872 Ashford residents in employment, 9,998 (20%) work within 2km of their home; 9,288 (19%) work between 2km and 5km away; and 4,731 (10%) between 5 and 10km. A significant proportion (5,541, 11%) worked from home.

Deprivation

2.8 Ashford Borough is the 233rd most deprived borough out of 354 nationally. In the South East it ranks 26th out of 67, whilst in Kent it ranks 8th of 12. The level of deprivation is therefore higher than in many other south east boroughs, although it fares much better nationally and compared to other Kent boroughs, where it is the 5th least deprived⁶.

Unemployment

2.9 Unemployment has been generally falling in Ashford for several years. In 2005, unemployment was at 1.4%, up marginally from 1.3% in 2004, but down substantially from a high of 7.7% in 1993⁷.

Business

2.10 In 2004, 70.7% (3,493) of Ashford firms were very small operations (1-4 employees), followed by 14.6% with 5-10 people. 48 companies (1%) employed 100 or more people.

2.11 The number of VAT registrations in Ashford has been growing over recent years, with 460 in 2004 compared with 370 in 1997. However, de-registrations are also at their highest level in recent years with 420 in 2004, from a low of 325 in 1997⁸.

2.12 Brake Brothers is the largest private employer by turnover⁹ in Ashford, followed by Quest International, Stena Line, Cearns & Brown, European Brands Group, Coty UK, Esselte UK, M & J Seafoods, Stockflag and the Human Resource Group.

⁵ Kent County Council, *Travel to Work Patterns in Kent County*

⁶ Kent County Council, *Deprivation in Kent*, June 2006, based on ODPM Indices of Deprivation 2004

⁷ NOMIS/KCC Analysis and Information Team

⁸ Annual Business Inquiry

⁹ Kent Messenger/FACE Magazine

3. Market Assessment Summary

3.1 This section provides a summary of the current position for the Ashford Urban Area, drawing upon recent market assessments undertaken by Roger Tym and Partners and Cluttons.

Ashford

Economic growth potential

3.2 Market conditions have not created the planned-for growth in employment-related development in Ashford over recent years. A combination of factors has led to this, not least because the Kent property market is finite and highly competitive, with many locations in East Kent outside Ashford benefiting from regeneration financial assistance. Within this context Tym and Partners state that the town also 'suffers from a lack of concerted policy and marketing drive with factors such as the high levels of developer contributions particularly acting as a barrier to new inward investment'. Forecasts of maximum possible levels of economic growth were developed by Roger Tym & Partners, but achieving these would be dependent on the constraints being overcome by stronger, targeted policy and fiscal intervention including a revised sub-regional economic strategy. "The market" and extent of economic growth will be fundamental to securing sustainable growth.

The past and present

3.3 Ashford has experienced slow employment growth during the 1990s, although manufacturing has grown relatively fast in Ashford. Below, we comment briefly on the strengths and weaknesses of Ashford in relation to four broad economic sectors.

Manufacturing

3.4 Ashford has been a highly competitive manufacturing location for manufacturing, especially for the Wood & Wood Products, Paper, Printing and Publishing, Rubber & Plastics sectors. This is due to a generous supply well-accessed sites; good links to the motorway network; a good stock of indigenous manufacturing; relative proximity to London; and the fact that Ashford's industrial rents are among the lowest in the South East.

3.5 Manufacturers also cite links to Europe, including Eurostar, as advantages of Ashford, although they seem to have much less weight than the factors mentioned above. The perceived advantages of access to Europe seem to relate to passenger travel rather than the transport of goods.

Distribution

3.6 Ashford's proximity to Europe does not appear to confer any particular advantage for distribution activities. This is largely because the optimal location for a distribution depot is usually the centre of gravity of the market area which it serves. For a national operation, this centre of gravity will be in the Midlands; for a regional depot, it would be on or near the M25. Nevertheless, there is demand for distribution sites in Ashford; however, most of this is local, regional or national in scope, with few major depots serving international markets.

Office-based services

3.7 Ashford is not a major centre for this sector, although there is a reasonable representation. Whilst most businesses serve a regional or sub-regional customer base, some operate in national and international markets. Consultation has not revealed any strong distinctive advantages of the town in relation to this sector.

3.8 Office demand has been improving in recent years. The out-of-town Eurogate scheme, completed over 10 years ago, remained largely vacant until recently but is now fully occupied, as is the recently refurbished International House. Rents have also risen.

Consumer services

3.9 Within this sector, retail and leisure / tourism offer the most scope for substantial expansion in Ashford. Ashford town centre is often perceived as a relatively low-status, low-quality retail centre within Kent, which caters to everyday needs. There is leakage to Canterbury, Maidstone and Bluewater, especially for higher order purchases. The Designer Outlet Centre has increased Ashford's retail catchment, attracting an estimated annual 1.8 million additional shoppers to Ashford, of which some 17% may also produce linked trips to the town centre.

3.10 There is limited tourism and leisure offer in the town centre. Recent investment has been at Eureka Business Park, comprising a hotel and leisure centre including a multi-screen cinema. Mixed use development is proposed at Victoria Road including a hotel and leisure development.

Inward investment

3.11 Ashford's industrial and commercial market is predominantly local and sub-regional, with most space taken by local companies. Major recent investments from outside Ashford have included Connolly Leather and Maruwa, a Japanese electrical equipment manufacturer. In total, Invest in Kent reports 14 inward investment successes in Ashford since April 1997, out of a total of 131 for Kent.

Constraints

3.12 The nature of the sub-regional economy places restrictions on Ashford's potential to attract demand from industrial and commercial businesses. Against a low level of sub-regional demand, the county provides a large amount of competing supply. Many large scale development opportunities exist at Kings Hill, Chatham Maritime, Crossways and many other sites. In policy terms, Ashford competes with priority areas such as the Thames Gateway and East Kent, which are targeted by major investment and commercial incentives. In contrast, the fastest-growing Districts in the South East are typically located in sub-regions characterised by buoyant demand and restricted competing supply. It is very unlikely that these conditions can be replicated in Ashford.

CTRL high-speed domestic rail services

3.13 Many of Ashford's larger employers have indicated that accessibility to London was a factor in their decision to locate in Ashford. This will improve significantly when fast CTRL domestic services to London are introduced in 2009. Fast domestic trains will also serve other local towns, improving Ashford's accessibility to the wider sub-region.

M20 Junction 10

3.14 This junction is critical to motorway access to Ashford, and provides local access between the north and south of the town. Construction work has begun to improve the junction and further improvements are planned through the provision of a new junction 10a.

Land and property

3.15 Ashford, like much of Kent, has suffered a long property recession followed by sluggish recovery. However, recent years have seen a market upswing locally and in the wider sub-region. In particular, industrial rents in Ashford have been rising. Agents report a shortage of modern, good quality property. Start-up premises and small workshops are also in short supply.

3.16 The office position is less clear cut. Rental growth throughout Kent has been smaller than that for industrial property, especially in town centre offices. Office rents in Ashford are only just starting to rise significantly, although there are indications that potential demand may exceed supply. Agents report that if more modern good-quality space were available, it could easily be let. Demand is highly elastic and occupier businesses that do not find what they want in Ashford simply go elsewhere, since Ashford has few unique advantages and much competing supply.

3.17 Ashford has generally not been considered a prime location for institutional investment. Bespoke development accounts for the major recent schemes on Ashford's business parks. The East Kent and Ashford property markets are relatively immature, characterised by the lack of an investment market for most sectors except retail, and poor market information and knowledge, although these views may be changing.

3.18 Another constraint is that Ashford's major commercial development opportunities are concentrated at just three sites, which until recently had just two landowners: Eurotunnel Developments (Orbital, Waterbrook) and Trinity College Cambridge (Eureka). This may have led to unrealistic land prices.

The future

3.19 The main potential opportunities for faster economic growth in Ashford include continuing growth of manufacturing, aiming to accelerate the pace and attract inward investment; a marked upgrade of Ashford's role as an office centre; significantly improved town centre retail provision; hotel development aimed at the international market, with associated conference facilities; and a major tourist attraction, which would draw cross-Channel visitors.

Tenterden and the Rural Area

3.20 Tenterden, the rural service centres, other villages and the countryside have different market requirements and constraints. An up to date market assessment of these areas will be part of the evidence base for the Tenterden and Rural Sites DPD.

4. Employment Land Study

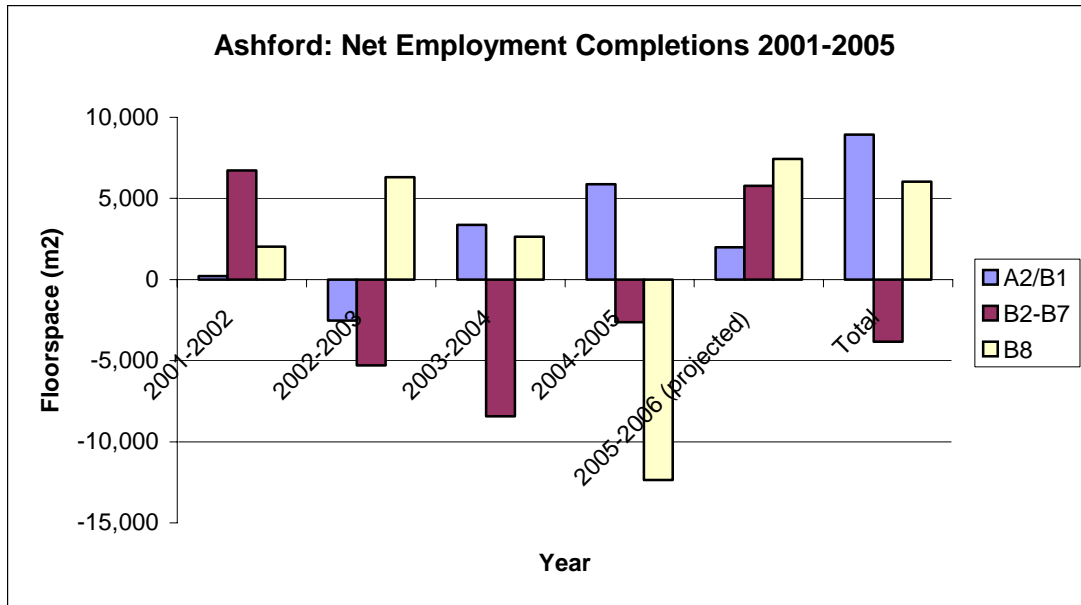
4.1 The latest KCC Employment Land Supply Monitoring Statistics show that Ashford Borough has a total A2/B1-8 employment supply of 665,080 m², representing 90% of the old Kent Structure Plan guidelines for 1991-2011 of 740,000 m². There is a good A2/B1 land supply of 464,740 m² (106% of the KSP guidelines), but an under-provision of land for B2-B8 uses of 200,340 m² (67% of guidelines).

The detailed statistics break down as follows:

Land Supply		Area (ha)	A2/B1 m ²	B2 m ²	B8 m ²	B2-8 m ²	A2/B1-8 m ²
Local Plan Allocations	Net Allocated	96.21	187,556	62,900	57,100	120,000	307,556
Planning Permissions	Net completed 1991-2005	60.00	77,843	14,622	10,224	24,846	102,689
	Net committed	78.31	195,841	21,091	30,803	51,894	247,735
Existing Sites	Vacant without planning permission	2.11	3,500	1,800	1,800	3,600	7,100
Total Land Supply		236.63	464,740	100,413	99,927	200,340	665,080
<i>Kent Structure Plan 1991-2011</i>	<i>Guidelines</i>		<i>440,000</i>			<i>300,000</i>	<i>740,000</i>
	<i>% of Guidelines</i>		<i>106</i>			<i>67</i>	<i>90</i>

4.2 An examination of recent trends shows that there has been a net loss in B2-B7 floorspace during the period 2001-2006. However, there has been a net gain in A2/ B1 and B8 floorspace during the same period.

	Ashford Net Completions: Floorspace (m2)					
	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006 (projected)	Total
A2/B1	221	-2,530	3,368	5,883	1,990	8,932
B2-B7	6,729	-5,291	-8,420	-2,623	5,774	-3,831
B8	2,024	6,304	2,638	-12,360	7,437	6,043
Total	8,974	-1,517	-2,414	-9,100	15,201	11,144



Job Creation

4.3 KCC's Annual Business Inquiry statistics (based on a sample) show that a total of 400 net additional jobs were created in Ashford between 2001 and 2004. As we do not currently have more up to date statistics to cover 2005 and 2006, we have calculated the potential contribution from A2/B1-8 sources using assumptions^{10,11} based on English Partnerships' Employment Densities study¹². This process involved calculating job creation figures on the basis of typical ratios of employees to floorspace.

4.4 The table below shows the number of jobs created as a result of employment completions in 2004/05 and 2005/06 as a result of new developments:

	Ashford Net Completions: Jobs		
	2004-2005	2005-2006 (projected)	Total
A2/B1	230.7	78.0	308.7
B2-B7	-77.1	169.8	92.7
B8	-247.2	148.7	-98.5
Total	-93.6	396.5	302.9

4.5 The table shows a net increase of 303 jobs between 2004 and 2006. However, it should be noted that this analysis only includes jobs from new developments in use classes A2 and B1-B8. As a result, it does not take into account other significant sources of employment such as education and health, retail or the leisure and tourism industry. Furthermore, it does not take account of other

¹⁰ These job totals do not take into account the increase in jobs in other sectors such as education and health, leisure, hotels or retail.

¹¹ The following assumptions have been used: B2 – 1 job per 34 m² (General Industrial Buildings as defined in English Partnerships study); B8 – 1 job per 50 m² (General Warehousing as defined in EP study); A2/B1 – 1 job per 25.5 m² (Looking at actual developments in 2005/06, a 50:50 split has been assumed between office/A2 (19 m² per job) and light industrial uses (32 m² per job))

¹² Arup Economics and Planning (2001), *Employment Densities: A Full Guide – Final Report for English Partnerships and the Regional Development Agencies*

factors such as the intensified use of existing premises. By making an assumption on job creation from other business sectors¹³ we have calculated that an additional 100 jobs were created in 2005 and 2006. In total, therefore, the number of jobs created between 2001 and 2006 is 803.

4.6 In reality, this is likely to be a very conservative estimate of jobs created to date. Whilst calculating job creation in this way is a useful guide, it is likely to significantly underestimate the actual growth in job creation. Whilst the KCC data shows net job creation figures between 2001 and 2004 of 400, similar floorspace to employment density analysis showed a significantly lower figure. This is likely to occur for the reasons suggested in the above paragraph.

4.7 Nevertheless, using this conservative estimate, the residual target for job creation to 2021 is 16,700 new jobs. The Core Strategy policies will help to deliver these jobs for the reasons set out in Section 5.

¹³ based on recent increases in those sectors as shown on the Annual Business Inquiry

5. Core Strategy Policy Approach

Scale of Employment Development

5.1 The Halcrow report concluded that Ashford should pursue a strategy of creating 28,000 additional jobs by 2031. The rationale for this is set out in detail in the Halcrow Overarching Report (2002), is included in the Greater Ashford Development Framework and has been previously considered in detail at the RPG9 Examination in Public.

Regional and Sub Regional Context

5.2 Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9) forms the Interim Regional Spatial Strategy until the South East Plan is adopted. RPG9 was published in 2001 although certain sections, including the chapter guiding growth in Ashford, was published in 2004.

5.3 RPG9 Chapter 12 Policy 1 sets out the requirements for job delivery in the Ashford Growth Area between 2001 and 2016:

	2001-2011	2011-2016
Jobs	5,900	4,400

5.4 Policy 2 stated that new development in the growth area will be delivered through urban intensification and the development of sustainable urban extensions integrated with new and enhance public transport facilities. RPG9 recognised that, at the time of publication, there was sufficient planned employment supply to meet forecast demand to 2016 and so no further allocations would be required during this time. However, it did recognise that substantial additional office and service floorspace would be required close to the town centre and international railway station.

5.5 It also recognised that strong and sustained job growth would be essential to accompany housing development, so that the town does not become over-dependent on out-commuting to London and the Thames Gateway area. Economic analysis in the Ashford Study and other subsequent analysis confirmed that substantial job growth of 10,000 new jobs by 2016 is needed in Ashford to match the housing growth. However, to achieve this figure would require a substantially enhanced economic development programme led by funding for education and skills, business start-up, growing existing businesses and attracting inward investment.

5.6 Policy 3 required Ashford's growth to deliver an enhanced quality of life. In relation to employment development, this stated that a range of suitable business space should be created to help promote economic growth.

Draft South East Plan

5.7 Section E3 of the draft South East Plan is concerned with the East Kent and Ashford sub-region, which also relates to the districts of Canterbury, Thanet, Dover and Shepway. It states that opportunities for increased international linkages and the economic strengths of the sub-region should be exploited. The Ashford Growth Area is identified as a fundamental element of this strategy, and its growth should also

bring benefits to the other parts of the sub-region and vice versa. A target for growth of 50,000 jobs is given for the sub-region as a whole between 2006 and 2026. Policy EKA3 states that Ashford should develop:

“...as an office, research and business node, providing market growth for the sub-region as a whole, and opportunity for large investments that need an expanding workforce.”

5.8 The draft plan identifies existing strategic employment sites as providing a major opportunity for inward investment to the Ashford Growth Area. Employment land should be provided generously where growth is to be concentrated within the sub-region. It states that if existing sites fail to provide readily available land for a variety of business types, provision for alternative use should be made and new land allocated. Policy EKA6 sets out the criteria for provision of new employment land. This states that employment land should be provided on a scale to match housing growth. A range of readily available sites and premises should be provided to meet the needs of a variety of business types. In particular, the draft Plan recognises that there is a need to attract and retain high ‘added value’ professional, technical and service jobs. In particular, high quality proposals for intensifying or expanding the technology and knowledge sectors are supported at suitable locations in Ashford.

5.9 The draft plan also recognises that some major sites in the sub-region have been slow to develop, and much business investment has been in activities not located on major business sites. As a result, consideration needs to be given to providing widely for new employment locations, including town centres. Policy EKA7 requires LDFs to confirm the broad scale of business and give priority to the completion of major employment sites in Ashford, in accordance with the GADF report. It states that new employment locations should be provided in Ashford to balance employment and housing growth. The draft South East Plan also repeats verbatim Policies 1 to 3 from RPG9 Chapter 12.

Kent and Medway Structure Plan

5.10 Policy EP2 requires further employment land to be provided in Ashford to give support for the longer term to its role as a regional growth point based on balanced housing and employment growth. It requires Ashford to provide 592,000 m² of employment floorspace between 2001 and 2021 and recognises that existing employment sites which have not succeeded because of constraints or poor quality may be replaced with other allocations.

5.11 Policy EP4 recognises Eureka Science Park and the South Eastern Sector (including or replacing land at Orbital Park, Waterbrook and Cheeseman’s Green) as strategic employment locations.

How will Core Strategy policies deliver the necessary job creation growth

5.12 To meet the Greater Ashford Development Framework target proposed in the Draft South East Plan (Policy EKA7), Policy CS2, which sets out the Borough-wide strategy for Ashford, states that 16,700 jobs will be provided for within the Ashford Growth Area between 2006-21.

5.13 The Core Strategy aims to provide a commercial environment that is conducive to encouraging new and existing businesses. A general balance between a growing population and the creation of jobs locally is also sought.

5.14 As the number of jobs generated is more important than the amount of class B1 to B8 floorspace, the Core Strategy sets targets for providing jobs rather than specific floorspace requirements.

5.15 Major infrastructure improvements signalled in the Core Strategy will help stimulate demand for employment space including the CTRL fast service to London (commencing in 2009) and improvements to motorway junction 10. In addition, new employment development is excluded from contributions to the proposed Strategic Tariff (Core Strategy policy CS8) in order not to impose barriers to new inward investment.

5.16 In relation to the traditional 'B' Class employment uses of offices, manufacturing and distribution, the Core Strategy builds on strategic policy guidance, the existing skill base and market demand and makes provision for suitable locations to allow for the development of a range of modern, good quality premises in appropriate locations. Paragraph 2.14 of the Core Strategy refers to the provision of wide range of employment facilities in Ashford in order to provide choice and to ensure that the town remains attractive to a variety of economic sectors and all sizes of business. In Tenterden and a number of larger villages, small scale employment development is considered to be appropriate.

5.17 In order to increase the choice of sites available and to meet identified market needs for B1 – B8 uses, a wide range of locations are included in the Core Strategy. These locations will include existing Local Plan employment commitments, together with new allocations. Table 1 in the Appendix illustrates existing Local Plan allocations along with an updated position for each site. This indicates that planning permission has been granted (and development completed) on a number of sites since the Local Plan was adopted. In addition the commentary also illustrates that there are changing ambitions expressed in the reasoned justification of the Core Strategy for a number of sites. In particular, this includes proposals which would make more intensive use of a number of existing employment sites than originally envisaged. Conversely, a number of sites allocated for employment use are now judged to be more suited to a mixed use development.

5.18 The Core Strategy makes it clear that the focus for significant job creation will be Ashford town centre, as supported by Policy CS3. Around 8,000 new jobs can be created there by 2021, especially in the office sector fulfilling the policies of RPG9 and the draft South East Plan and a growing market demand. Specific site allocations for new employment land in Ashford town centre will be made through the forthcoming Ashford Town Centre Area Action Plan DPD. Whilst it is likely that many of the sites allocated in the adopted Local Plan will continue to be allocated for employment uses, the Town Centre AAP will set out a vision based on a better, more intensified use of valuable town centre land. Delivering significant employment growth will be a key priority for the town centre, particularly in the office sector. Other "non-traditional" employment sectors such as retail, leisure and tourism will also make a contribution to the growth in jobs.

5.19 Policy CS4 seeks the creation of a further 6,625 new jobs elsewhere within the Ashford urban area, through the intensification of existing employment areas and the creation of new or expanded mixed use areas including Leacon Road, Eureka/Sandyhurst and Sevington. The Ashford Urban Sites and Infrastructure DPD will review existing employment sites and allocate employment sites within the existing urban area outside the town centre. In particular, existing employment locations such as Cobbs Wood may take on a more mixed-use role, whilst the existing Eureka/Sandyhurst area could be expanded and intensified with a stronger

employment purpose. Many existing employment areas may need significant investment to maintain and improve stock and the quality of the urban environment; this will be an important part of the 'Mend Before Extend' approach. In addition, new areas may need to be identified for strategic employment and mixed use locations. The existing urban area will make a significant contribution to job creation and it will be essential to ensure that a wide variety of employment sites and premises are made available to suit the needs of all types and sizes of potential occupiers.

5.20 Policy CS5 sets out that 600 additional jobs should be created at Chilmington Green with the remaining 1,475 at Cheeseman's Green/Waterbrook by 2021. These sustainable urban extensions to Ashford will provide mixed-use developments and strategic employment allocations. These will be identified in the relevant DPDs for those areas. The Waterbrook/Sevington area will make a particular contribution to employment generation due its location close to M20 Junction 10 and the proposed Junction 10a. Land at Cheeseman's Green and Waterbrook has historically been identified for employment purposes in the adopted Local Plan. As part of a sustainable urban extension, the type and nature of the proposed employment areas may evolve from that set out in the adopted Local Plan; in particular, Waterbrook is likely to take on a mixed-use role with a wider range of employment uses than was previously envisaged.

5.21 Although not contributing to the employment target for the Ashford Growth Area, some employment will also be necessary and desirable in Tenterden and the rural area as identified in Policy CS6. In particular, it will be important to identify and retain locally important existing employment sites to maintain the health of the rural economy and ensure that settlements are sustainable. Allocations and detailed policies on the rural economy will be set out in the Tenterden and Rural Sites DPD.

5.22 The Core Strategy recognises that whilst providing a good range and quantity of class B1 to B8 sites remains a key part of employment generation, delivering jobs does not just mean delivering land for 'B' class uses. Other economic sectors such as retail, banking and finance, leisure, tourism, construction, transport, health and education make a significant and increasing contribution to job creation within premises which do not fall within use classes B1 to B8. Indeed, recent statistics show that the health, social, education, hotel and catering and wholesale and retail industry sectors account for nearly 44% of civilian employee jobs in the UK.¹⁴

5.23 Proposals in the Core Strategy will stimulate all of these sectors. Policies relating to retail, leisure, culture (CS16 and 18), tourism (CS17), transport (CS15) and community needs (CS18) will all have the effect of increasing the provision of jobs within the Borough.

5.24 Providing for the required growth in employment in this way will ensure that a wide range of sizes, types and locations can be made available for employment growth, maximising the prospects for job delivery.

5.25 In summary the Core Strategy provides a flexible framework able to accommodate a strategic job requirement, meet market demand and provide guidance to subsequent DPDs. Job generation will be monitored annually alongside the development of housing and other key infrastructure and any adjustments in provision can be made through subsequent reviews of the Core Strategy.

¹⁴ UK Labour Force Survey, June 2006

Appendix

The adopted Local Plan identifies a number of sites for employment development, in many cases as part of a mixed use scheme. Table 1 below shows the remaining floorspace available at these sites as of October 2005¹⁵ together with a commentary which updates the position on each site.

Policy	Site	Total Area (ha)	New Dev Area (ha)	B1 (m ²)	B2 (m ²)	B8 (m ²)	Total (m ²)
AS.S1	S of Elwick Road & County Square	2.56	2.56	18,000	0	0	18,000
AS.S2	Technical College, Elwick Road	0.50	0.25	800	0	0	800
AS.S3	Dover Place & Tannery Lane	4.00	1.70	13,000	0	0	13,000
AS.S6	Corner of East St & Ring Road	0.22	0.22	900	0	0	900
AS.S7	Park Street	0.56	0.20	800	0	0	800
AS.S8	Mace Lane	0.30	0.00	0	0	0	0
AS.S9	Land at Victoria Road	4.50	0.00	6,017	-1,500	1,300	5,817
AS.S10	Victoria Rd (W), Victoria Crescent	4.00	-3.53	0	-4,100	0	-4,100
AS.S12	Former Powergen Site	2.08	1.46	2,000	1,000	800	3,800
AS.S13	Cheeseman's Green/Conscience Farm	40.00	40.00	63,000	35,000	22,000	120,000
AS.S14	Waterbrook	74.80	37.40	32,000	24,000	24,000	80,000
AS.S15	Orbital Park	36.53	0.00	0	0	0	0
AS.S22	Fmr Rowcroft & Templar Barracks	57.00	10.00	16,000	9,000	10,000	35,000
AS.S26	Land North of M20 at Bockhanger	15.00	4.00	12,000	0	0	0
AS.S27	Eureka Science & Business Park	47.00	1.27	4,818	0	0	4,818
AS.S35	Newtown Works Site	8.80	0.00	0	0	0	0
AS.S36	Klondyke Works	1.10	0.80	3,000	0	0	3,000
AS.S37	Henwood	5.00	3.20	16,006	0	0	16,006
AS.S40	Land N & S of Norman Road	2.56	0.50	1,665	0	0	1,665
AS.S42	South Stour Ave & Eastmead Ave	3.53	-3.53	-3,000	-600	-1,000	-4,600

Table 1 - Ashford Borough Local Plan 2000 – B1 to B8 Allocations (Ashford Growth Area)

Floorspace Estimates exclusive of B1-B8 consents on the site

Commentary

AS.S1 – South of Elwick Road and County Square

Part of this site is under construction to create a 22,000 m² extension to the County Square shopping centre. This is a key town centre development which will provide a significant increase in the amount of retail floorspace available in the town centre. It will also provide a major improvement in the townscape and frontage to Elwick Road, enhancing the attractiveness of this area to shoppers and significantly increasing pedestrian activity here. The remainder of site S1 forms the Elwick Road corridor between the Ring Road and the railway which is envisaged as an area of significant new development in a range of commercial uses alongside some new housing.

¹⁵ KCC Employment Land Monitoring Survey 2004/05, December 2005. Data correct as of 17th October 2005.

AS.S2 – Technical College, Elwick Road

This site is currently vacant and represents a major redevelopment opportunity in a prime location.

AS.S3 – Dover Place and Tannery Lane

This site, currently characterised by light industrial and employment uses and low quality, low density building stock, is shown in the Town Centre AAP Preferred Options Report as a proposed “Commercial Quarter”. It is considered a key gateway site for tourist, shopper and business visitors to the town and potential investors. The TCAAP Preferred Options Report suggests that up to 40,000 m² of office floorspace could be accommodated in this area by 2021 in addition to some retail and residential uses.

AS.S6 – Corner of East Street and Ring Road

This site was allocated in the adopted Local Plan for office and/or residential development. Planning permission has been granted for residential development on this site.

AS.S7 – Park Street

This allocation covered the rear areas of several properties that front the lower High Street and proposed mixed use development with retail at ground floor level with offices or residential above. No comprehensive redevelopment scheme has yet come forward here.

AS.S8 – Mace Lane

This site was been developed with new retail units.

AS.S9 – Land at Victoria Road

This site is proposed in the adopted Local Plan for a mix of uses. It forms part of the “Southern Expansion Quarter” as set out in the Town Centre AAP Preferred Options Report, which states it could accommodate 1,200 new residential units, 25,000 m² of office floorspace and 12,000 m² of retail and leisure floorspace. Land has been assembled by the Council on behalf of English Partnerships and SEEDA and the major proposal for a new Further and Higher Education Learning Campus is expected shortly on this site.

AS.S10 – Victoria Road (West), Victoria Crescent

This mixed use area was allocated in the adopted Local Plan for predominantly residential development. Part of the site has since been redeveloped for housing and so represents a loss of employment land but significant redevelopment of this area, which would form part of the proposed ‘Southern Expansion Quarter’ is anticipated.

AS.S12 – Former Powergen Site

The former power station site was allocated in the adopted Local Plan for employment uses. An application has been received for around 1,000 dwellings and retail and employment floorspace.

AS.S13 – Cheeseman’s Green / Conscience Farm

Outline planning permission has been granted for a business park but the Core Strategy proposes its relocation to the Sevington area. The Core Strategy proposes additional job creation in this area as part of the proposed urban extension.

AS.S14 – Waterbrook

This site was identified in the adopted Local Plan for predominantly warehousing and distribution uses, with some general and light employment and other uses. The Council has resolved to grant outline planning permission for around 100,000 sq.m. of employment floorspace. The Core Strategy proposes that this area should change to mixed-use development incorporating a higher density of employment development, which is likely to comprise predominantly B1 uses.

AS.S15 – Orbital Park

This large area is allocated for light industrial, general industrial and warehousing uses in the adopted Local Plan. Development of this area is continuing, although significant areas remain undeveloped at present.

AS.S22 – Former Rowcroft and Templar Barracks

This site was proposed in the adopted Local Plan for a mix of residential and commercial development. A resolution has been passed to grant planning permission for a development comprising residential development and employment floorspace.

AS.S26 – Land North of M20 at Bockhanger

This site was allocated in the adopted Local Plan for B1 employment uses to complement or extend the Science and Business Park. Planning permission has been granted on part of the site for a leisure/hotel development.

AS.S27 – Eureka Science and Business Park

The adopted Local Plan allocated this site for B1 employment uses. Outline planning permission has been granted for a business park. Significant additional employment floorspace can therefore be expected here.

AS.S35 – Newtown Works

This was proposed in the adopted Local Plan for a mix of B1 and B2 uses. The Council is currently considering an application for a residential-led mixed use scheme which includes some retail and employment uses.

AS.S36 – Klondyke Works

The adopted Local Plan recognised that these railway buildings were capable for re-use by conversion for tourist, leisure or light industrial purposes. No proposals have been forthcoming to date.

AS.S37 – Henwood

The adopted Local Plan proposed this land for residential and employment development. Land still remains available as part of this allocation for additional employment uses.

AS.S40 – Land north and south of Norman Road

The adopted Local Plan proposed this site for retail warehouse development and, should an appropriate part of the site become available for redevelopment, employment development. The land on the northern side of Norman Road has been developed for a large B&Q retail warehouse, whilst the land on the southern side of the road is currently under construction for a collection of retail warehouse units.

AS.S42 – South Stour Avenue and Eastmead Avenue

The adopted Local Plan permitted the redevelopment of vacant sites and existing business premises in this area for residential development, hence its proposed inclusion as a loss in the table above. However, no proposals have yet come forward to comprehensively redevelop the area.