

**Ashford Local Development Framework  
Core Strategy (July 2008)**

**Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment  
Adoption Statement**

**Introduction**

Ashford Borough Council adopted the Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy (CS) Development Plan Document (DPD) on the 10<sup>th</sup> July 2008.

This statement has been prepared in accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (16) (3) and (4), which requires a statement to be produced on adoption of a plan or programme, to detail:

1. How environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan or programme;
2. How the Environmental Report has been taken into account;
3. How opinions expressed through public consultation have been taken into account;
4. The reasons for choosing the plan or programme as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with;
5. The measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan or programme.

Planning Policy Statement 12 (PPS12) widens these considerations from environmental, to broader sustainability issues, so that this statement provides information on the wider sustainability appraisal process.

This statement examines each of these points in turn.

## 1. How sustainability considerations have been integrated into the plan

### Policy Context

The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Sustainability Appraisal (SA) for the Core Strategy was prepared in the context of national and regional planning guidance and policies. The role of Ashford as a Growth Area sets the context for the preparation of a large part of the Core Strategy, the level of growth being endorsed at regional level through Regional Planning Guidance for Ashford (2004) and the draft South East Plan (2006), and the Kent and Medway Structure Plan (2006). The Core Strategy incorporates the changes set out within the Inspector's binding Report and is in general conformity with national and both the approved and emerging Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS).

Prior to the preparation of the Core Strategy, information on the baseline condition of the Borough was gathered as well as the identification of key environmental, social, and economic issues which could impact the sustainability of the Borough.

### Vision, Aims and Objectives

From this, the Council defined a Vision and a series of Guiding Principles for the future of the Borough, reflecting the national, regional and local planning context and taking into account the views of the local community. The Inspectors Report refined the Vision further to add local distinctiveness drawn from more specific policies and proposals that appeared elsewhere in the Core Strategy.

The Vision for Ashford has focused on the need for sustainable development within the Borough. It states... *"Ashford will meet the growth ambitions established in the government's Sustainable Communities Plan, and the more specific targets in the emerging South East Plan, in a balanced and sustainable manner having regard to capacity constraints. Its expansion will follow a compact growth model based on the existing urban area of Ashford town and a small number of sustainable urban extensions to it. Where practicable, impediments to growth, such as capacity limits at the motorway junctions, will be removed allowing the town to develop as an office, research and business node that will attract inward investment and stimulate the economic growth of the sub-region.*

*Job creation will keep pace with house building and there will be timely provision of all the social and physical infrastructure required to enable development to take place in a truly sustainable manner. Amongst other things there will be a step change in the use of public transport and other sustainable means of travel. This will be facilitated by the appropriate location of land uses relative to each other, often in mixed use areas, and the introduction of a bus-based rapid transit system coupled with restraints on parking where this would not prejudice economic growth.*

*Growth targets will not be met by development in the rural part of the Borough. In that area development will be restricted to that which is genuinely needed to ensure the economic and social well-being of rural residents and workers and build sustainable and balanced rural communities. Most development will take place in the larger and more sustainable rural settlements, especially Tenterden, Charing, Hamstreet and Wye. A high priority will be given to protecting and enhancing the natural and built environment of the rural areas, especially those parts that have a special designation and those that are closest to the existing and proposed built up area of Ashford".*

An emphasis of sustainable development and high quality design is central to the Councils' development strategy and in determining planning applications. The guiding principles set out in Policy CS1 focus on the key sustainability issues to be addressed through a set of objectives and are in line with Government guidance. The aims of sustainable development will be achieved by applying the following key planning objectives;

- A. Development that respects the environmental limits that protect the high quality built and natural environment of the Borough, minimises flood risk, provides for adequate water supply, and protects water and air quality standards;
- B. The conservation and enhancement of the historic environment and built heritage of the Borough;
- C. Protection for the countryside, landscape and villages from adverse impacts of growth and the promotion of strong rural communities;

- D. New places - buildings and the spaces around them - that are of high quality design, contain a mixture of uses and adaptable building types, respect the site context and create a positive and distinctive character and a strong sense of place and security;
- E. New buildings and places designed to meet challenging sustainable design and construction standards that work towards achieving zero carbon developments, including minimising the use of resources and waste, and to enhance biodiversity;
- F. The best use of previously developed land and buildings to help regenerate urban areas and the carefully phased release of greenfield land to make best use of a finite resource;
- G. The timely provision of community services and other local and strategic infrastructure to provide for the needs arising from development;
- H. A general balance between a growing population and the creation of jobs locally and, on large sites, a mix of residential, employment, community and other local services that together help create a well served community, capable of providing locally for many of its needs;
- I. A wider choice of easy to use forms of sustainable transport to serve developments that generate significant demand for movement.
- J. Provision of a commercial environment that is conducive to encouraging new and existing businesses;
- K. The creation of an integrated and connected network of green spaces to provide a framework for growth - helping serve the recreational needs of the community, enhancing biodiversity and providing green routes for pedestrians and cyclists.
- L. Healthy sustainable communities that put human health and well being at their heart – fostering access to amenities, healthier forms of transport, and mixed and cohesive communities designed for social interaction.
- M. Developments that are designed to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change.

### **Strategy Policies**

In pursuit of the adopted Vision and supporting guiding principles the evolution of the plan has taken into account the main recommendations emerging from the SEA/SA process and seeks to ensure that development in the Borough represents a sustainable solution for accommodating growth.

### **Monitoring**

Effective monitoring is an essential component in achieving sustainable development. The Core Strategy includes a set of indicators that will be used to monitor all of the policies contained within the CS to enable environmental, social and economic impacts to be assessed. The results of this monitoring will feed into the Annual Monitoring Report.

## **2. How the Sustainability Appraisal has been taken into account**

Sustainability Appraisals (SA) help local planning authorities fulfil their objective of contributing to the achievements of sustainable development in preparing plans through a structured assessment of objectives and core strategies against key sustainability issues for an area. The SA has contributed to the development of the Core Strategy by providing an independent, broad qualitative appraisal of the Core Strategy Issues and Options and Preferred Options as they were developed. The outcome of the SA process incorporates the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the emerging Ashford Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy.

The SEA/SA clearly demonstrates that sustainability considerations have been incorporated throughout the preparation of the development plan document. The appraisal has added transparency to the process as well as improving the sustainability of the emerging policies contained within the Core Strategy.

The SEA/SA provides a formal statement and audit trail of the assessment undertaken. It is important to note that the outcomes of the appraisal work are based on an extensive options development, consultation and assessment process undertaken as part of the Greater Ashford Development Framework. Therefore the SEA/SA process for the Core Strategy reflects the SEA/SA process which underpinned the evolution of the Greater Ashford Development Framework.

The SEA/SA process began with the preparation and consultation of a LDF Scoping Report. For the purposes of complying with the SEA Directive, Part 3 Section 13, the LDF Scoping Report together with the Handbook for Change detailing the Environmental Baseline, Draft Appraisal Objectives, Criteria and Indicators and initial strategic growth options was circulated to the statutory consultees for comment in March 2005. The Council consulted the four SEA statutory consultation bodies, which included at that time the Environment Agency, English Heritage, English Nature and the Countryside Agency. To obtain a comprehensive range of responses comments were also sought from the Government Office for the South East, Ashford Primary Care Trust, Mid Kent Social Services, Kent County Council, Learning Skills Council, Ashford Chamber of Commerce, and the Borough Council Economic Development Officers. Comments received on the LDF Scoping Report together with the SEA/SA recommendations, highlighting where the objectives might be strengthened in relation to sustainability principles are summaries in the Final SA Report (October 2006). The draft LDF objectives were subsequently amended to take on board these recommendations and the revised objectives are now set out as Policy CS1 of the Core Strategy.

To inform the Core Strategy Issues and Options Report three scenarios for the future growth of Ashford were considered at an intensive four day workshop with stakeholders during April 2004. The three scenarios (The Dispersed Model; The Decentralised Urban Village Model; and The Compact Centre Model) were discussed to consider the quantum and distribution of development and how this might be accommodated. Following the workshops the individual scenarios were assessed using a matrix against the SEA/SA criteria which were arranged under the broad headings of protecting the environment, social progress, and prudent use of natural resources, economic growth and transport. The full appraisal results including the matrix is contained in Appendix B and C of the Final SA Report (October 2006). The initial appraisal highlighted the Compact Centre Model to have the most positive effect on the sustainability criteria.

Following the selection of the Compact Centre Model the preferred scenario was taken forward through a series of growth options. Four options were chosen with a number of common themes, the options included an expanded Chilmington Green; an expanded Kingsnorth; an expanded Cheesemans Green and the Canal District. Through consultation a combination of an expanded Cheesemans Green and a reduced Canal District was considered to perform best against the sustainability criteria. In addition a series of mitigation proposals were suggested. The preferred option would be based on 'the reduction of the canal district, the enlargement of the Cheesemans Green development, the reinforcement of the role of the mixed use villages, and focussing public transport on two primary corridors'.

The policy issues contained within the Core Strategy Preferred Options Report were then appraised. The policy options were organised around Housing, Environment, Employment, Rural Economy, Shopping, Transport, Tourism and Community Facilities. These policy options were appraised against the sustainability objectives and targets and the extent to which they have addressed previous SEA/SA appraisal recommendations. The appraisal of core policy issues concluded that 'they generally corresponded with SEA/SA sustainability objectives and were broadly in line with current sustainability guidance and practice'.

Three options for the allocation of rural growth were appraised against SEA/SA objectives and concluded that the allocation to be restricted to Tenterden and the key villages presented positive impacts in relation to local services, facilities, public transport and employment provision. 'The continued focus of development in the largest settlements could encourage new businesses and support the existing rural employers. The areas where this option underperforms are in respect of impacts on the landscape, and potential for increased run off rates from development'. Mitigation measures and recommendations supported the rural options appraisal outcomes.

As a direct result of the SEA/SA recommendations the Core Strategy sets out a clear set of standards in relation to design and sustainability. These standards have taken into consideration the approach used by SEEDA sustainability checklist and RPG9. The SEA/SA concluded that the proposed standards are in line with SEA targets.

The Core Strategy Preferred Options Report was consulted on between 17<sup>th</sup> June and the 26<sup>th</sup> August 2005. In light of the representations received (over 1,500) further options were developed to address the main issues raised. These amendments were reviewed against the SEA/SA to ensure the policies continue to meet the sustainability objectives. Chapter 10 of the SEA/SA details the appraisal of the Emerging Core Strategy Policies as a result of the consultation responses of the Core Strategy Preferred Options Report. In concluding the SEA/SA considered 'that the Draft Core Strategy and preferred options have due regard for sustainability objectives, as set out in the SEA/SA appraisal framework. The evolution of the Plan has taken into account the main recommendations emerging from the SEA/SA process and, it is considered, represents a sustainable option for accommodating growth'.

Following the submission of the Core Strategy to the Secretary of State on the 16<sup>th</sup> November 2006 two subsequent sustainability assessments have been undertaken. As a result of emerging national guidance and implementation of the Code for Sustainable Homes to replace the existing EcoHomes, In April 2007 the Council proposed minor changes to Policy CS10 to reflect the new national guidance. A supplementary SA of the proposed policy wording changes was consulted on and concluded that the proposed changes do not have any environmental, economic or social implications that have not already been covered in the sustainability appraisal. The proposed policy changes provided an update and further clarity to the implementation of Policy CS10.

In response to the recommendations of the SEA/SA an Appropriate Assessment was undertaken in consultation with Natural England (NE) to test whether the Core Strategy, combined with other plans, was likely to have an adverse impact on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites in the Borough. Wye and Crundale Downs SAC, (as identified in the AA of the South East Plan), is the only Natura 2000 site within the Ashford Borough. As a result of the Appropriate Assessment it was determined that there was no change required to the SEA/SA and no negative effects on the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites by reason of the mitigation measures in the Core Strategy.

The majority of changes set out within the Inspectors binding report have been considered against the sustainability objectives during the SEA/SA of the Core Strategy. The outcomes of the SEA/SA process are set out within the SEA/SA Appraisal Scoping Report (March 2005) and the SEA/SA Sustainability Report (October 2006) both undertaken by the Halcrow Group Limited. There has therefore been no need to amend the Final SEA/SA Report. There are a few exceptions to this, were significant changes made by the Inspector following the examination have not been fully considered against the sustainability criteria and there are considered in Appendix 1.

### **3. How consultations entered into have been taken into account**

#### **Key Environmental Bodies**

The Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive requires that authorities referred to in Article 6(3) shall be consulted when deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information that must be included in the Environmental Report. In England the key bodies are the Environment Agency, English Heritage and Natural England (formerly English Nature and the Countryside Agency). The SEA/SA Appraisal Scoping Report and Handbook for Change detailing the environmental baseline; initial LDF Plan Objectives; overview of the appraisal framework and methodology; criteria and indicators and initial strategic growth options were circulated to the statutory consultees (above) in March 2005 for comment.

A number of other key organisations were also consulted, including:

- The Government Office for the South East
- Ashford Primary Care Trust
- Mid Kent Social Services
- Kent County Council
- Learning Skills Council
- Chamber of Commerce
- Economic Development Officers at Ashford Borough Council

#### **Public Participation**

The Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive requires early and effective opportunity within appropriate time frames to express their opinion on the draft plan or programme and the accompanying Environmental Report before the adoption of the plan or programme or its submission to the legislative procedure. At each stage in the LDF preparation, the Council undertook a programme of public participation on the Core Strategy and its SEA/SA and recommendations made as to how the sustainability of the plan might be improved prior to submission of the Core Strategy to the Secretary of State.

#### **Consultation under Regulation 25**

Before preparing the Core Strategy, extensive consultation was undertaken within the framework of the Greater Ashford Development Framework (GADF). The GADF is the first masterplan for the Borough to be prepared as part of the new planning system and is the principal supporting document for the Core Strategy. Consultation on the GADF forms the Issues and Options Stage pursuant to regulation 25(1) for the Core Strategy.

The Council carried out an initial Scoping Report back in October 2003 that established the key appraisal objectives, criteria, indicators and targets and considered the emerging scenarios which underpins the Strategic Growth Model development based on work undertaken in the Ashford's Capacity: A Handbook for Change. The initial Scoping Report for the Ashford Development Strategic Environmental Assessment (English Partnerships) (Halcrow Group Limited) (Environmental Report) was consulted on with key stakeholders including the statutory consultees.

During 2004 and 2005 the Council undertook a series of extensive consultation events working towards progressing the GADF. The first major consultation event was held at Eastwell Manor between the 26 – 29 April 2004, where selections of stakeholder groups were invited to participate in an intensive four-day workshop. The workshop focused on capacity building; on the quality agenda, building on the principals identified in the Ashford's Future Study [Halcrow 2002] Report; the scale of growth challenge for Ashford identified in the governments Sustainable Communities Plan; to clarify the issues of growth and to explore and develop a preferred growth scenario.

The second stage in the consultation process was the establishment of the Town Team a group of representatives who would liaise with their respective communities as the GADF evolves. Another main function for the Town Team was to formulate a Town Charter, which sets out the primary principals and aspirations for Ashford's development.

The third part was a wider public consultation event held on the 22 May 2005 at County Square Shopping Centre in Ashford's Town Centre. Representatives of consultants, Ashford Borough Council and Ashford's Future introduced the growth challenge to members of the public, in order to capture their ideas and opinions. At this event 1500 people engaged in consultation activities, of these approximately 500 people involved directly in playing a version of the Scenario 3 game [see GADF]; approximately 1000 additional people walked through the exhibition and 300 written responses were gained.

Alongside the consultation the Council produced two environmental reports that appraised the emerging Strategic Growth Scenarios (First environmental report) and an options appraisal of the Strategic Growth Models (Second Environmental Report). In March 2005 an updated Scoping Report was published and consulted on with the statutory consultees and key stakeholders. The final GADF report together with the accompanying Environmental Report was published in April 2005. The assessment concluded that the draft LDF objectives generally have regard to the broad sustainability objectives and are in line with Government guidance. Part 2 of the SEA/SA Report sets out the consultation responses and changes made to strengthen the objectives in relation to the principles of sustainability.

### **Consultation under Regulation 26**

The Preferred Options Core Strategy DPD together with the SEA/SA Options Appraisal Report allowed the public to consider the Councils preferred options in the context of the SEA/SA process over a ten-week period from Friday 17th June to Friday 26th August 2005. The SEA/SA Options Appraisal Report set out the strategic growth scenarios appraisal, the strategic growth model appraisal, the appraisal of preferred options together with a rural options appraisal and the implementation of key SEA/SA recommendations for design and sustainability, and an assessment of the core policy issues against the sustainability objectives and targets.

In line with the emerging Ashford Statement of Community Involvement we held eleven staffed public exhibitions during the consultation period around the Borough at the following parishes of: Mersham & Sevington, Kingsnorth, Tenterden, Wye, Charing, Shadoxhurst, Great Chart with Singleton, Kennington, South Ashford, Boughton Aluph, Willesborough and Ashford Town Centre County Square. A Core Strategy 'Preferred Options' Summary Leaflet was produced for members of the public to take away with them. Overall we received over 1600 representations on the Core Strategy 'Preferred Options' report. A summary of the main issues raised is published in the Regulation 28 Statement that accompanies the Core Strategy as a background document. The Council then appraised the significant changes arising from the consultation on the preferred options, which are presented in the final Sustainability Report (2006).

### **Submission**

Ashford's Core Strategy accompanied by the Final Sustainability Appraisal Report (October 2006) was submitted for examination on the 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2006. The examination hearing was undertaken between the 19<sup>th</sup> June and the 16<sup>th</sup> November 2007. The Council received over 1000 representations on the submitted Core Strategy from individuals and organisations either supporting or objecting to the soundness of the document which were considered by the Independent Inspector undertaking the examination.

During the examination a limited number of changes were proposed to the Core Strategy to reflect a change in national guidance and to reflect comments made in the SEA/SA appraisal. An Appropriate Assessment into the potential impacts of the Core Strategy proposals on the Wye and Crundale Downs Special Area of Conservation (SAC) was carried out, in consultation with Natural England. The Appropriate Assessment tested whether Ashford's Core Strategy was likely, in combination with other plans, to have an adverse impact on the integrity of any Nature 2000 site. The Wye and Crundale Downs SAC is the only Natura 2000 site in the Borough.

On the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007 the Government introduced the Code for Sustainable Homes to replace the EcoHomes Standards as set out in Policy CS10. To reflect this change the Council proposed minor amendments to Policy CS10 including providing further guidance. A Sustainability Appraisal was carried out on the proposed changes. All post-submission changes were consulted on with the statutory consultees and published on the Councils website for comment by stakeholders and the public.

#### **4. Reasons for choosing the document as adopted in light of other reasonable alternatives**

The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (12) (2) requires environmental reports to examine reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme. This statement is required to set out the reasons for choosing the plan or programme as adopted in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with.

PPS12 highlights the fact that regard should be had to the chain of conformity to avoid duplication of assessment. The current Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East is Regional Planning Guidance 9 (RPG9). In 2003, Ashford was identified as a Growth Area in the Government's Sustainable Communities Plan. Halcrow's Overarching Report investigated Ashford's capacity to accommodate growth and this was specifically referred to in paragraph 12.64 of RPG9 Chapter 12 as the study by which the outline spatial framework and infrastructure measures in RPG9 should be tested and refined against within the LDF. RPG9 (as amended in 2004) sets out specific targets for additional dwellings and jobs in the Ashford Growth Area to 2016 and confirms the status of Ashford as a growth area within the wider context of the South East region. RPG9 set a detailed vision for the expansion of the town with areas identified to the southeast and south for expansion to 2016, progressing in a southwest direction post 2016.

Once adopted the South East Plan will be a full revision of RPG9 and will cover the period to 2026. Following an Independent Examination the South East Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State at the end of March 2006 and is still awaiting the publication of proposed changes from the Secretary of State. The Core Strategy has been prepared and is in general conformity with both the approved RGP9 and the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) the South East Plan. The South East Plan has been subject to a SEA/SA including the assessment of different spatial options. RGP9 forms part of the government guidance employed in the SEA/SA of the Ashford Core Strategy with compliance required at all levels of the assessment programme.

The SEA/SA of the Core Strategy was a progression from the SEA/SA of the Greater Ashford Development Framework. The conclusion was that the preferred option selected was the most sustainable option, performing well against the sustainability criteria. The proposed Core Strategy policies to implement the preferred option are in accordance with sustainability principles, with the majority of policies being supportive of the sustainability criteria. Areas which need improvement in sustainability terms were highlighted in the SEA/SA but overall the Core Strategy has due regard for the sustainability objectives, as set out in the SEA/SA appraisal framework.

## 5. Monitoring

Annex 1(i) of the SEA Directive requires that significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan are monitored. The SEA/SA of the Core Strategy proposed a number of contextual and policy indicators additional to those already set out within the Annual Monitoring Report (AMRs) which forms the basis of the LDF monitoring framework. These indicators together with existing indicators will be reviewed regularly to ensure all key sustainability objectives are included in future AMRs. The result will feed into subsequent reviews of the Core Strategy and will ensure that any sustainability/environmental impacts arising as a result of implementing the Core Strategy are identified and mitigated.

The Inspectors Report requires additional indicators to monitor the performance of the Core Strategy. These indicators are listed below and will be included in future Annual Monitoring Reports.

Policy	Indicator	Target	Data Source
CS15	Modal split / use of bus network	(1) 35% of journeys to the town centre, and 20% of other journeys, capable of being made by SMARTLINK to do so (2) reduce proportion of journeys made by car from 65% in 2003 to 57% by 2021. (3) 100% compliance with approved Green Travel Plans	KCC Bus Operators  KCC ABC
CS15	Viability of SMARTLINK	Revenue to exceed operating costs	System operators
CS6	Number and distribution of facilities in the rural area, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village shops</li> <li>• Post offices</li> <li>• Schools</li> <li>• GP surgeries</li> </ul>	(1) Maintain number of villages scoring 20+ on the rural sustainability matrix. (2) Minimise number of facilities lost	ABC Parish Councils KCC (Schools)

## Appendix 1

Significant change to the Core Strategy following the Inspectors Report	Where will the policy be implemented?	Does the change constitute a change in strategy or policy from the submitted CS?	Has this issue been covered by the SEA/SA?	Are amendments to the SEA/SA required due to the significant change?
Third expansion area for 1,500 dwellings before 2021	Early review of CS	Yes	The third expansion area will be identified as part of the early review of the Core Strategy before 2014	No
Extension of SMARTLINK	Early Review of CS	No	Consideration will be given to the extension of SMARTLINK as part of the early review of the Core Strategy before 2014	No
Removal of Canal District		No	Removal of the reduced Canal District is not considered a significant change to the preferred option appraisal within the SEA/SA.	No
New employment area at Sevington, substituting Cheesemans Green permission	Cheesemans Green / Waterbrook AAP	Yes	Sevington was assessed as part of the Common Theme Appraisal of 'out of town employment areas'. The SEA/SA recommended integration between mono-functional employment areas and residential area to increase mixed-use developments.	No
Waterbrook sub-area provision for at least 15ha mixed-use of primarily employment use (if needed)	Cheesemans Green / Waterbrook AAP	No	Mixed-use is a common theme running through the options development. Employment areas (Waterbrook, Sevington and Sandyhurst) are considered throughout the appraisal within the SEA/SA recommending a greater level of mixed-use to meet the sustainability criteria.	No
Eliminating the reliance on windfall sites in the rural areas by increasing allocations in the main rural settlements	Tenterden DPD	Yes	Rural options were appraised against the strategic sustainability criteria. The appraisal concluded that Option 2 – Allocations to be restricted to Tenterden and the key villages had the most positive effect on the sustainability criteria.  The Inspectors change will result in increasing the overall allocation in the rural areas by a further 350 dwellings. This will not significantly affect the hierarchy of distribution of allocations, as they will still be restricted to Tenterden and the key villages.	No
Rural settlements – changes to 3 <sup>rd</sup> tier settlements	Tenterden DPD	Yes	The SEA/SA concludes that the Councils third tier rural settlement hierarchy support the appraisal outcomes, but that more justification is needed in the selection of the most sustainable settlements in the third tier.  The rural sustainability matrix is being updated as part of the Tenterden and Rural Sites DPD and this will be reflected in the SEA/SA for that DPD.	No

<b>Significant change to the Core Strategy following the Inspectors Report</b>	<b>Where will the policy be implemented?</b>	<b>Does the change constitute a change in strategy or policy from the submitted CS?</b>	<b>Has this issue been covered by the SEA/SA?</b>	<b>Are amendments to the SEA/SA required due to the significant change?</b>
New policy CS7 – The Economy and Employment Development	CS	Yes	New policy but no significant change against the contents already set out within the submitted CS.	No
Reducing the proportion of affordable housing required on qualifying sites in the growth area from 35% to 30%	Urban DPD / Affordable SPD	Yes	Affordable housing was considered as part of the Preferred Options appraisal.  The SEA/SA target provision was set at 30%, the SEA/SA welcomed provision above this level.	No
Omitting the lower threshold for affordable housing proposed in the rural areas	Tenterden DPD	Yes	The SEA/SA considered major sites within the threshold of affordable housing and so there is no significant change.	No
New policy CS18a – strategic recreational open spaces, new strategic recreational open spaces at Conningbrook, Discovery Park, South Willesborough Dykes and Cheeseman's Green	Green Spaces SPD	Yes	New policy but no significant change to the content set out in Policy CS18 of submitted CS	No
CS20 – SUDS on developments that drain into the River Stour, reduction in pre-development run-off rates.	SUDS SPD	No	SUDS are considered under the common themes in the SEA/SA for the CS. Also a separate SEA/SA had been undertaken for the Preferred Options for the SUDS SDP with changes to be reflected in the subsequent SEA/SA.	No
CS20 – elsewhere aim for a reduction in existing run-off rates.	SUDS SPD	No	As above	No