

Swanscombe & Greenhithe Masterplan



EDAW - PBA's - Donaldsons - Tribal HCH

March 2005

table of contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1	INTRODUCTION
2	PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT
3	EXISTING SITUATION
4	CURRENT PERFORMANCE
5	OPPORTUNITIES
6	OBJECTIVES
7	MASTERPLAN CONCEPT AND VISION
8	THE MASTERPLAN
9	DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND PROJECTS
10	DELIVERY AND IMPLEMENTATION
11	CONCLUSIONS

executive summary

To be discussed at Cabinet on 10th March, for reporting and approval at Cabinet 31st March.

1. introduction



The High Street would benefit from improvements to the physical environment and a comprehensive access and parking strategy.

This document has been prepared by EDAW in association with Peter Brett Associates, Tribal HCH (formerly HACAS Chapman Hendy) and Donaldsons. It sets out a Draft Masterplan showing how Swanscombe and Greenhithe may be developed over time, building on the opportunities arising from the development of Kent Thameside as a strategic growth focus within the Thames Gateway.

The overarching aspiration is to regenerate the existing urban area and to provide for its effective integration with major planned developments in Kent Thameside. The primary aim is to guide and inform the physical aspects of development and to bring about a high quality and cohesive urban form well integrated with the wider area.

The Masterplan aims to:

- Provide a coherent planning and design context and framework for future regeneration and change;
- Promote sustainability objectives as set out in regional and national policy;
- Present a vision for Swanscombe and Greenhithe;
- Provide a flexible framework for the promotion of development opportunities and projects which will respond to changes over time;
- Promote investment and best practice in architecture, urban design, landscape and sustainability;
- Enhance the quality of the built form and public realm;
- Define the character, content and form of future development opportunities;
- Provide advice on delivery and implementation.

The Masterplan provides:

- A focus on the physical fabric of Swanscombe, the new developments and supporting infrastructure;
- A single planning framework to jointly address the current and future needs of the existing community and the requirements of development;
- An implementation and delivery programme, identifying projects, responsible bodies, funding opportunities and timescale.

The Masterplan has been prepared in accordance with current best practice in regeneration and design and fully reflects the Government's sustainable communities agenda. The proposals are being put forward after consultation with Dartford Borough Council, Swanscombe & Greenhithe Town Council and key stakeholders. There will be a requirement for on-going consultation

with key stakeholders and the community as proposals are further developed.

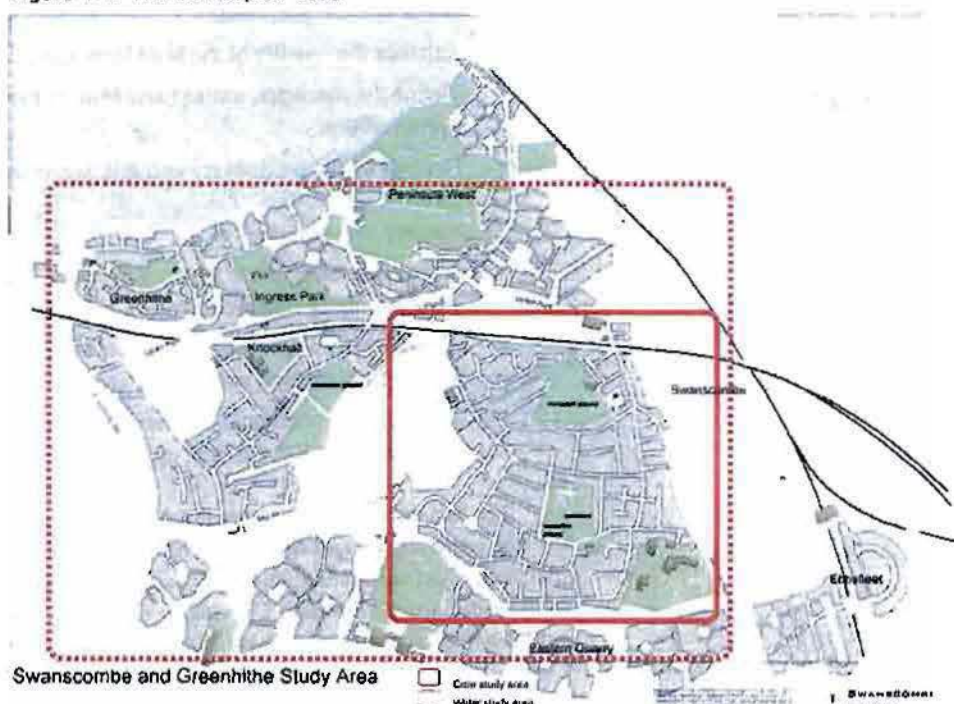
UNIQUE POTENTIAL

Swanscombe and Greenhithe is located at the centre of a nationally significant strategic growth area where planned housing, commercial and transport developments are being brought forward over a 20 year timescale. Kent Thameside forms the central growth focus of the Thames Gateway with long term potential for 30,000 new homes and 50,000 jobs. Nearly half of these homes will be around Swanscombe and Greenhithe. The principal objective in Kent Thameside is the development of sustainable communities which will involve the integration of new development with existing communities.

Historically, Swanscombe was a free-standing settlement- today it forms part of a dynamic urban growth area and its role must be redefined. The existing community is in the position to benefit from these surrounding developments. In order to maximise these benefits, there is a requirement for strategic thinking and the Masterplan will provide a framework for future change and development.

A key consideration has been the integration of Swanscombe and Greenhithe within the wider Kent Thameside area. The Masterplan therefore covers Swanscombe and Greenhithe and the interface with the major planned developments in the area, as illustrated by Figure 1.1 below. Whilst the focus of the Masterplan is the core area which comprises the built area of Swanscombe, consideration has also been given to the wider context including linkages to the River Thames, the green space network and integration with the proposed developments at Ebbsfleet, Eastern Quarry and Swanscombe Peninsula.

Figure 1.1: The Masterplan Area



Consultation with key stakeholders has been undertaken during the preparation of the Masterplan including two stakeholder workshops. At the second stakeholder workshop, three Masterplan scenarios were presented to participants representing low, medium and high levels of intervention. General support was expressed by stakeholders for a high level of intervention in order to maximise benefits for Swanscombe and Greenhithe. The Masterplan is therefore based on a strategy which proposes significant change within Swanscombe and Greenhithe in the context of major planned development in Kent Thameside.

The planning policy context highlights the Government's vision and objectives for creating sustainable communities. In assessing Swanscombe and Greenhithe's existing character, the area's history and strong community identity is evident, but there are various physical, social and economic barriers which need to be addressed in promoting a more positive and sustainable future.

The planned developments at Ebbsfleet, Eastern Quarry and Swanscombe Peninsula provide a range of opportunities, through direct physical integration, investment in new infrastructure and potential planning obligations to be secured under Section 106 agreements. All of the masterplans and associated legal agreements in respect of these new developments remain subject to agreement with Borough Council (with the exception of the Ebbsfleet Section 106 Agreement).

There are many organisations working towards the regeneration of Swanscombe and Greenhithe, and a large number of projects have been advanced in the last five years. There is a requirement for improved project coordination, building upon the progress brought about by Dartford Borough Council, Swanscombe & Greenhithe Town Council and initiatives such as the appointment of a Neighbourhood Renewal Officer.

The Masterplan sets out a vision which articulates Swanscombe and Greenhithe's role at the centre of Kent Thameside and illustrates how the urban quality can be improved in the future. It is based on a concept which involves activating the edges of the existing urban area in order to achieve its integration with Ebbsfleet, Eastern Quarry and Swanscombe Peninsula West, improved linkages between Swanscombe, Knockhall and Greenhithe and the development of a series of activity hubs. The core underlying objectives are to:

- Improve the public realm to achieve the same quality as new developments;
- Integrate Swanscombe and Greenhithe physically with its surroundings, including the river;
- Provide gateways into Swanscombe;
- Improve housing quality and increase the range of housing choice;
- Increase opportunities for and the range of retail, cultural, leisure and commercial facilities;
- Improve accessibility by foot, bicycle and public transport.

The masterplan report is divided into the following sections:

- **Planning Policy Context** – setting out the key policy objectives and designations for the area;
- **Existing Situation** – setting out an analysis of the existing urban structure and facilities;
- **Current Performance** – including an assessment of current performance against the ODPM's key requirements for sustainable communities;
- **Opportunities** – incorporating an analysis of the opportunities presented by current developments, funding sources and infrastructure proposals;
- **Objectives** – setting out the need for a vision for Swanscombe and Greenhithe and the objectives of the Masterplan;
- **Masterplan Concept and Vision**;
- **Masterplan Proposals**;
- **Key development projects** – including an assessment of development options;
- **Delivery and Implementation** – setting out advice on implementation and delivery of the Masterplan proposals.

2. planning policy context



Besides external links, connections within Swanscombe to key community facilities would benefit from environmental improvements.

Several key documents provide the national, regional and local planning framework for the masterplan including Regional Planning Guidance (RPG9), Kent and Medway Structure Plan and the Dartford adopted and emerging Local Plans. Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) provides non-statutory direction on more specific issues or opportunities.

NATIONAL CONTEXT

Communities Plan

In February 2003, the ODPM launched its Communities Plan to help shape and guide the development of sustainable communities. Development is directed to the Thames Gateway and other growth areas.

The Thames Gateway has potential to deliver 120,000 new homes and 200,000 new jobs subject to the appropriate infrastructure being in place. The focus will be on developing and expanding the existing communities, such as Dartford, and on creating major new communities on large areas of brownfield land including Kent Thameside.

Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (PPS1, February 2005)

PPS1 sets out the Government's objectives for planning for sustainable development. The Government is committed to developing strong, vibrant and sustainable communities and the diverse needs of all people in existing and future communities, promoting personal well-being, social cohesion and inclusion and creating equal opportunities for all citizens. PPS1 promotes the better integration of all strategies and programmes, partnership working, effective community involvement and the promotion of development that creates socially inclusive communities including suitable mixes of housing. It states that Development Plans should:

- Ensure that the impact of development on the social fabric of communities is considered and taken into account;
- Seek to reduce social inequalities;
- Address accessibility for all members of the community to jobs, health, housing, education, shops, leisure and community facilities;
- Take into account the needs of all the community;
- Deliver safe, healthy and attractive places to live;
- Support the promotion of health and well-being by making provision for physical activity.

PPS1 reiterates the Government's aims for sustainable development:

- Social cohesion and inclusion;
- Protection and enhancement of the environment including mitigation of the effects of delivering environmental quality through positive policies on issues such as design, conservation and the provision of public space;
- Prudent use of natural resources;
- Sustainable economic development including the provision of infrastructure and services and promotion of investment opportunities.

Planning authorities are required to ensure that sustainable development is treated as an integrated part of development plans and recognise the needs of the community to secure a better quality of life for the community as a whole. In delivering sustainable development, emphasis should be placed on the following:

- Promotion of regeneration to improve the well-being of communities, improve facilities, promote high quality and safe development and create new opportunities for people living in communities;
- Promotion of communities which are inclusive, healthy, safe and crime free whilst respecting the diverse needs of communities;
- Identification of sufficient land of suitable quality to meet needs for housing, employment, commercial development and for leisure and recreation;
- Reduction in need to travel and encouragement of accessible public transport provision;
- Promotion of more efficient use of land through high density mixed use development and use of previously developed land and buildings;
- Enhancement and protection of biodiversity, natural habitats, the historic environment and landscape and townscape character.

Plans should integrate various elements of sustainable development to achieve social, environmental and economic objectives and should:

- Set a clear vision and objectives for future development and strategies for implementation and delivery;
- Consider needs and problems of communities in the area;
- Seek to integrate activities relating to development and regeneration and to coordinate relevant strategies and programmes.

PPS1 highlights the importance of high quality and inclusive design to create well mixed and integrated developments with well planned public spaces which provide opportunities for physical activity and recreation. The importance of involving the community in developing the vision for its area is also emphasised.

Creating Sustainable Communities: Greening the Gateway, a greenspace strategy and implementation plan for the Thames Gateway, ODPM (January 2004/2005)

Greening the Gateway sets out the Government's vision for the Thames Gateway as a world class model of sustainable development with the living landscape at its heart. It has two key objectives:

- That a network of varied and well-managed greenspaces should be the setting for new and existing residential and commercial areas;
- That the landscape should be regarded as functional green infrastructure, recognising a wide range of potential benefits from healthy recreation to wildlife protection and enhancement to flood risk management.

The implementation plan clarifies how the work of the various delivery partners fits together and sets out a delivery framework for Greening the Gateway. It clarifies how Government, its Agencies and its funding will support the delivery of greenspace. A major theme of Greening the Gateway is the concept of function green infrastructure offering a range of benefits including:

- Recreation, relaxation, sport and healthy exercise;
- Education and social inclusion;
- Mitigating the impacts of climate change;
- Improvement in local water quality and use of sustainable drainage systems;
- Reducing impacts of local air pollution;
- Protection and enhancement of biodiversity;
- Income generation via the green economy;
- Sustainable food production such as allotments and community gardens;
- A bridge to the countryside;
- Network of cycle paths and footways;
- A sense of place and identity;
- Demonstrating the quality of the environment to residents, visitors and potential investors.

It is considered essential that this multi-functionality of greenspace is recognised in its planning, design, management and maintenance. Greening the Gateway also highlights the importance of management of the greenspace network if it is to be effective in enhancing the regeneration process.

REGIONAL CONTEXT

Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9)

RPG9, adopted in March 2001, provides the regional spatial framework for local plans and other programmes. It encourages economic success throughout the region, ensuring a higher quality of environment, management of natural resources, opportunity and equity for the region's population and a more sustainable pattern of development. The focus is on enabling urban renaissance, promoting regeneration and renewal, concentrating development in urban areas, promoting a prosperous and

multi-agency countryside and promoting wider choice in travel options, thereby reducing reliance on the public car.

The regeneration of the Thames Gateway is identified as a regional and national priority. Thames Gateway is to be a strong and diverse sub-region, offering a strong transport system and a quality environment for business and homes. Local communities should derive maximum benefit from development opportunities. Development will reflect the importance of the River Thames and its estuary for biodiversity and recreation as appropriate.

Thames Gateway Planning Framework (RPG9A, 1995)

The principles of the Gateway spatial framework were first established in RPG9A, based around the consolidation of the region's existing urban areas, maximising the potential offered by the area's brownfield land and exploiting the opportunity offered by CTRL and riverside locations.

Kent Thameside was one of two main centres of development identified in RPG9A, centred on the new CTRL station at Ebbsfleet, and the adjoining major brownfield sites at Eastern Quarry, Swanscombe Peninsula and Northfleet. It is identified as a growth area of regional significance given its locational advantages for business.

RPG9A established a planned framework for the Thames Gateway together with a set of principles to guide future development and environmental enhancement of the area, plus a broad strategy for economic and housing development, transport and the environment, and outlines a land use vision. The key principles may be summarised as follows:

- Making the most of the Thames Gateway opportunity;
- Creating a vibrant and sustainable pattern of communities;
- Relating transport opportunity and land use opportunity;
- Bringing life to the river and riverfront;
- A new environmental standard.

Regeneration of the Thames Gateway is seen as a long term market-led project. The backbone of open and green spaces will be enhanced to improve its environmental and ecological value and the quality and image of the area as a place to live.

Kent & Medway Structure Plan

The existing Structure Plan was adopted in 1996. In policy NK1 Kent Thameside was designated as a priority location for urban regeneration and new development, and prescribed that "major economic development and housing opportunities will be comprehensively planned ... in association with new transport infrastructure (including ... provision of new and improved public transport networks)".

The Kent and Medway Structure Plan Deposit (September 2003) is an emerging plan yet to be adopted. The Examination in Public was held in September 2004 and the Panel report is expected mid February. It will replace the 1996 Kent Structure Plan. It sets the direction, policy and proposals for Kent and Medway and covers the period 2001 – 2021. The current re-draft of policy NK1 states: "At, and between, the principal urban areas of Dartford and Gravesend/Northfleet major mixed use developments based on

previously developed or other damaged land will be comprehensively planned, including appropriate measures to integrate new development with existing communities, and phased in conjunction with the provision of new highway and public transport infrastructure, community services and facilities, and air quality management initiatives.”

LOCAL CONTEXT

The local planning framework for development is contained within the Borough's Local Plan. Dartford has an adopted Local Plan: The Borough of Dartford Local Plan (April 1995) and an emerging Local Plan: Dartford Borough Local Plan Review Second Deposit Draft (As Amended) (September 2002). Amendments were made to this latter plan in January and April 2004.

The Borough of Dartford Local Plan

This adopted plan covers the period from 1995 – 2001. As the emerging plan is yet to be adopted its policies and proposals still apply.

A number of key aims are identified for the Borough of Dartford:

- Maintain economic growth and widen the employment base through encouraging commercial, industrial, leisure and tourist-related facilities.
- Reverse the long-standing trend of declining population and ensure adequate supply of housing and appropriate range of sizes, types and tenures.
- New development is to be of a high quality and standard design to enhance the area.
- Make maximum use of redundant land (including derelict and despoiled).
- Provide adequate infrastructure to meet needs.
- Establish and protect Green Belt boundaries.
- Enhance the provision of recreational and community facilities.
- Protect and enhance historic buildings and areas and the built environment and to fully recognise the importance of the River Thames.
- Conserve the countryside and rural landscape.

Dartford Borough Local Plan Review Second Deposit Draft

The emerging plan covers the period from 2001 to 2011 and sets out policies and proposals for the development and use of land in the Borough. The Council is not proceeding to adoption and is working towards the preparation of a Local Development Framework.

The strategy for Dartford is defined by its role as a growth area within the Thames Gateway. Significant growth levels are to be accommodated to maximise sustainable objectives, serving the needs of existing and future residents and conserving the best of the natural and manmade environment.



Traffic calming facilities should preferably be designed in conjunction with environmental improvements

A number of strategic principles are identified to achieve a sustainable urban structure:

- Maximise the beneficial use of urban land and buildings and maintain and enhance overall quality.
- Incorporate a high standard of quality in new design in buildings and their settings which maximises energy efficiency and energy conservation.
- Maximise the opportunities for pedestrian, cycling and high quality public transport accessibility to and from new development, integrating with existing communities.
- Plan for residential density, patterns and layouts which maximise access to both existing and proposed routes.
- Reduce the need to travel by private car through a more compact form of development and appropriate car parking standards.
- Plan for a mix of land uses.
- Establish a Green Grid of inter-connected open space with landscape, recreational and ecological roles.
- Enhance the quality of the urban environment and social and community facilities.
- Use land and buildings more intensively around centres and along corridors with existing or potential good public transport.
- Main strong protection for the Metropolitan Green Belt.
- Conserve and protect areas of nature conservation interest.
- Safeguard and improve the amenity and quality of life of residents.
- Protect and enhance the Borough's special character and conservation areas.
- Provide sufficient affordable housing to meet needs.

It is envisaged that the future strategic role of the Borough will change considerably over the next 20 – 30 years with a considerable growth in population in terms of residents and jobs. There is significant potential to regenerate areas and create new communities with a mix of uses. New employment supported by new residential development will be focused at Crossways Business Park, Ebbsfleet and North Dartford.

The Plan seeks high standards of design and quality of development. Key objectives include:

- The desire to raise the overall standard of quality of design and development.
- Creation of new places of interest and character.
- Increasing mixed-use development.
- Increasing accessibility and permeability in the design of new development by means other than the car.
- Creating a Green Grid network of interlinking, high quality open space and landscape.
- Improving access for less mobile people.
- Enhancing and preserving the best of existing landscape and ensuring new habitat creation respects local landscape qualities.

- Maximising water and energy conservation and minimising pollution.
- Protecting areas of wildlife and ecological value.

The Green Grid is defined as “a number of multi-purpose, attractive open spaces, linked by a web of green corridors, footpaths and landscape to neighbourhoods within the urban area.” The key aim is to give ready access to open space and develop strong wildlife corridors. Development will not be permitted either in or within close proximity where it would have a detrimental impact on the Green Grid.

The Plan also seeks to expand the Green Network by requiring a network of public open space of an appropriate scale and quality on development sites including: Ebbsfleet, Eastern Quarry, Ingress Park and Swanscombe Peninsula West. Community woodland in the Urban Fringe is sought as a contribution towards the Green Grid network at Eastern Quarry and Ebbsfleet.

Proposals at neighbourhood centres for leisure and community facilities to serve the immediate locality will be permitted in Swanscombe's High Street and Craylands Lane/Milton Street.

Housing

The emerging plan identifies land for approximately 7,000 new dwellings (13,000 net extra people) between 2001 – 2011. The concept of developing 'urban villages' on major sites is promoted. Protection of the Green Belt and open countryside will be ensured. New residential development should achieve sustainable design, incorporate the urban village concept and be sympathetic to its environs in terms of scale, massing and design, respecting street form. Dartford's density policy will be applied across all sites. It should include suitable levels of open space and landscape and where appropriate contribute to the Green Grid.

Excluding the allocation east of Craylands Lane, 30% affordable housing will be sought from residential development. This affordable housing is defined as 10% for social rented accommodation and 20% for intermediate housing including shared ownership, sub-market rent and discounted sale. 25% of all housing on sites over 0.5ha or where 15 or more units are proposed is to be developed as 'Lifetime Homes'¹.

Economy

The Plan seeks to develop a strong economic base through sustainable growth and diversification of employment opportunities. Key objectives are to:

- Develop the local economy as a key employment centre in the Thames Gateway.
- Secure growth in a range of employment opportunities.
- Secure employment growth on major sites.
- Provide accommodation for small and medium sized firms.
- Secure high standards of design.

¹ *Lifetime homes have been defined by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation as those which support residents whatever their stage of life or level of physical ability.*



Most of the buildings along the edges of Swanscombe do not face the open space, hitherto ignoring its value.

Transport

The plan promotes an integrated transport strategy which minimises the need to travel, reduces car dependence and encourages the use of more sustainable modes of travel. Due to the large scale regeneration opportunities, the plan recognises the enormous transport challenge facing Dartford.

The proposed Fastrack public transport system runs along two east west corridors. One route will operate on the northern edge of the masterplan area, linking with Northfleet to the east, along Galley Hill and London Road and continuing west towards Dartford along both London Road and Crossways Boulevard. It also provides links into the large development sites bordering the river (including the Swanscombe Peninsula) and Eastern Quarry. The second east west route operates across the Eastern Quarry site, to the south of Swanscombe. The Plan safeguards these routes and recognises the importance of ensuring local connections to Fastrack.

Green Belt

South of the A2 and A296, land has been designated as Green Belt to protect its openness and to conserve and enhance the character and appearance of the countryside, restricting major growth to the north of the Borough.

Retailing

The Plan seeks to foster a sustainable pattern of retail provision that meets the needs of, and is accessible to, the whole community. A sequential approach is to be adopted for retail development. Dartford is to be consolidated and enhanced as the main mixed-use shopping centre. Swanscombe High Street is identified as a District Shopping Centre and Craylands Lane/Milton Street as a Local Shopping Centre.

Community Facilities

A full range of community services should be accessible to residents. Housing proposals at Swanscombe Peninsula West, Eastern Quarry and Ebbsfleet will need to include on-site provision for primary schools. Secondary School provision is envisaged at Eastern Quarry and may be required at Swanscombe Peninsula West.

Further future investment will be concentrated on the major development sites to meet the needs of residents of the new communities at new neighbourhood centres. There will be some improvement and expansion of existing facilities and neighbourhood centres.

Leisure, Recreation & Tourism

The plan seeks to meet the Leisure and recreational needs of the Borough's residents. Dartford is promoted as a sporting, cultural, tourist and entertainment destination. The Plan seeks to enhance the accessibility of the countryside in a manner which preserves its openness, landscape quality, tranquillity and wildlife resources. Increased public access along the River Thames is sought in line with the preservation of the amenity and wildlife resources of the river environment.

Built Environment

The plan seeks to maintain and enhance the quality, character and appearance of the built environment. Greenhithe has a Conservation Area. However the policy relating to Overhead Power Lines applies. Planning permission will not be granted for housing or education development in locations which lie within a distance of 50 metres on either side of an overhead power line.

Natural Resources

The Plan seeks to protect and enhance the special and distinctive features of the Borough's environment, to minimise any adverse impacts from development and to harness new development opportunities to promote environmental improvements.

A Tidal Flood Zone is identified in the northern part of the masterplan area, beyond London Road and including the majority of Swanscombe Peninsula. Residential development will only be permitted if a number of criteria are met and applications in the affected area must be accompanied by a flood risk assessment.

River Thames

The Plan seeks to maximise the opportunities for housing, transport, economic regeneration and environmental improvement along the waterfront. Recreation is promoted along the River Thames subject to nature conservation and sustainable development considerations.

Swanscombe Peninsula West is subject to a policy relating to riverside development. This policy seeks to ensure development contributes to its riverside location, is of high quality design and incorporates a public riverside footpath and cycleway. Public access to the riverside is promoted.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

A number of Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) documents have been prepared and adopted by Dartford Borough Council in respect of the major development opportunities. They provide more detailed but non-statutory guidance.

Ebbfleet Development & Environment Framework (June 1996)

Ebbfleet is to be developed as a major transport interchange and catalyst for new and improved transport systems. It will be a major new commercial centre of regional importance where substantial new employment opportunities will be created together with the provision of extensive and integrated community infrastructure meeting the needs of both existing and new communities.

Eastern Quarry Planning Brief (July 2002)

Eastern Quarry is identified as a 'key opportunity' in the region and for development as a unique and exciting new community with a strong sense of place. It should be connected to existing communities and help deliver the Fastrack and Green Grid initiatives.

Greenhithe Riverfront Urban Design Strategy (November 2003, adopted May 2004)

The Greenhithe Riverfront Urban Design Strategy provides urban design guidance for the Everards site and Pier Road Boatyard. This guidance is based on site and context analysis, review of planning policy and feedback from a public consultation exercise. The document is thorough in its analysis of the two sites, how they relate to Greenhithe Village and the High Street and in identifying the strategic importance of both sites for Greenhithe Village.

Swanscombe Peninsula West Planning Brief (February 2004)

Swanscombe Peninsula West should be developed as a high quality new community with a strong sense of place based on urban village principles. It should be fully integrated with neighbouring sites, especially Ingress Park and take full advantage of its riverside setting. It will retain and enhance the existing habitats and areas of nature conservation importance. It should also capitalise on its proximity to the planned Ebbsfleet business district and contribute to the implementation of Fastrack and the Green Grid initiative.

KEY POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

The planning strategy for the area seeks to accommodate significant growth levels to maximise sustainable development objectives, to serve the needs of existing and future residents and to conserve the best of the natural and built environment. The area will play an important role within the Thames Gateway. Key policy objectives of relevance to the preparation of the Masterplan may be summarised as follows:

- Development of sustainable communities in the Thames Gateway including the development, expansion and integration of existing communities;
- Promotion of regeneration and renewal and wider choice in travel options;
- High quality development with necessary community services including health, education, recreation and transport;
- The importance of building on the distinctive assets of the area and to foster a strong character and sense of place;
- Maintain economic growth and widen the employment base;
- Ensure adequate supply of housing and appropriate range of sizes, types and tenures;
- Provision of adequate infrastructure to meet needs;
- Creation of Green Grid network of interlinking, high quality open space and landscape;
- Increasing accessibility and permeability in the design of new development.

The strategic role of the Borough of Dartford will change significantly over the next 20-30 years with a considerable growth in population, the development of new employment opportunities and new infrastructure provision. This is the context within which the Masterplan options for Swanscombe and Greenhithe must be considered.

3. existing situation



An uninviting approach to the railway station with obstructed views deters people from using the facility.

This section describes and analyses Swanscombe's existing physical form and socio-economic profile. This analysis focuses on the core area of Swanscombe

PHYSICAL REVIEW

In the next two decades the character of the areas around Swanscombe and Greenhithe will change significantly due to the impact of large scale development projects. This will have impacts on and consequences for the physical environment of Swanscombe and Greenhithe. Analysis of the characteristics and features of the existing urban area contributes to an understanding of existing strengths and weaknesses and future opportunities and threats which must be addressed in the Masterplan. This will in the definition of required actions and interventions for Swanscombe in order to maximise potential benefits and minimise potential impacts from the surrounding development projects.

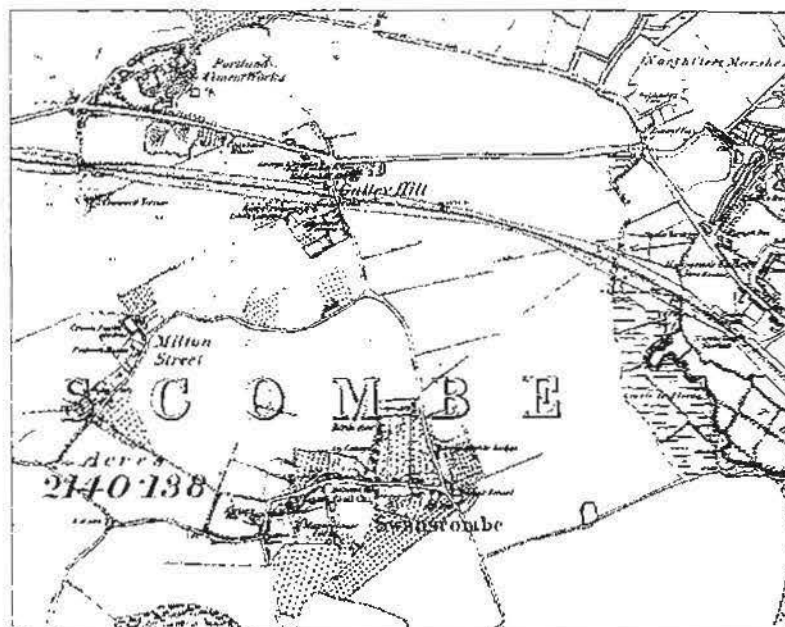
Built form

Swanscombe originated as a linear settlement along Swanscombe Street with St. Peter & Paul's Church and the infant school on either side of the village. 800m to the north a number of cottages and the George & Dragon pub, next to London Road, formed Galley Hill (see Figure 3.1 below for a historic map of Swanscombe and Appendix A for a full street map).

Today Galley Hill is the High Street, which explains the non-central location of the High Street. Quarries and physical and topographical constraints have restricted Swanscombe from expanding significantly, resulting in a compact urban form. To the north, the North Kent Railway Line forms a strong edge to the settlement. The southern edge of Swanscombe is defined by Eastern Quarry. To the east and west chalk quarrying have restricted further growth.

Around St. Peter & Paul's Church and cemetery a regular street pattern extends between Swanscombe Street, Stanhope Road, Milton Road, Milton Street and Alkerden Lane. These are the historic streets connecting Swanscombe with its surroundings. The town is characterised by an easily surveyed street pattern that is clearly defined with active building frontages. The High Street, to the north east, forms the connection between the railway station and Swanscombe core area. The recent development of Neptune Park has been built between Swanscombe's North West border, the recreation ground and the railway line.

Figure 3.1: Map of Swanscombe (1863)



Although there are many architectural styles represented in Swanscombe, overall there are no significant changes in character and identity between different areas. Predominantly 2 to 3 storey terraced housing and a number of post-war estate developments have provided single-use areas with little changes in density.

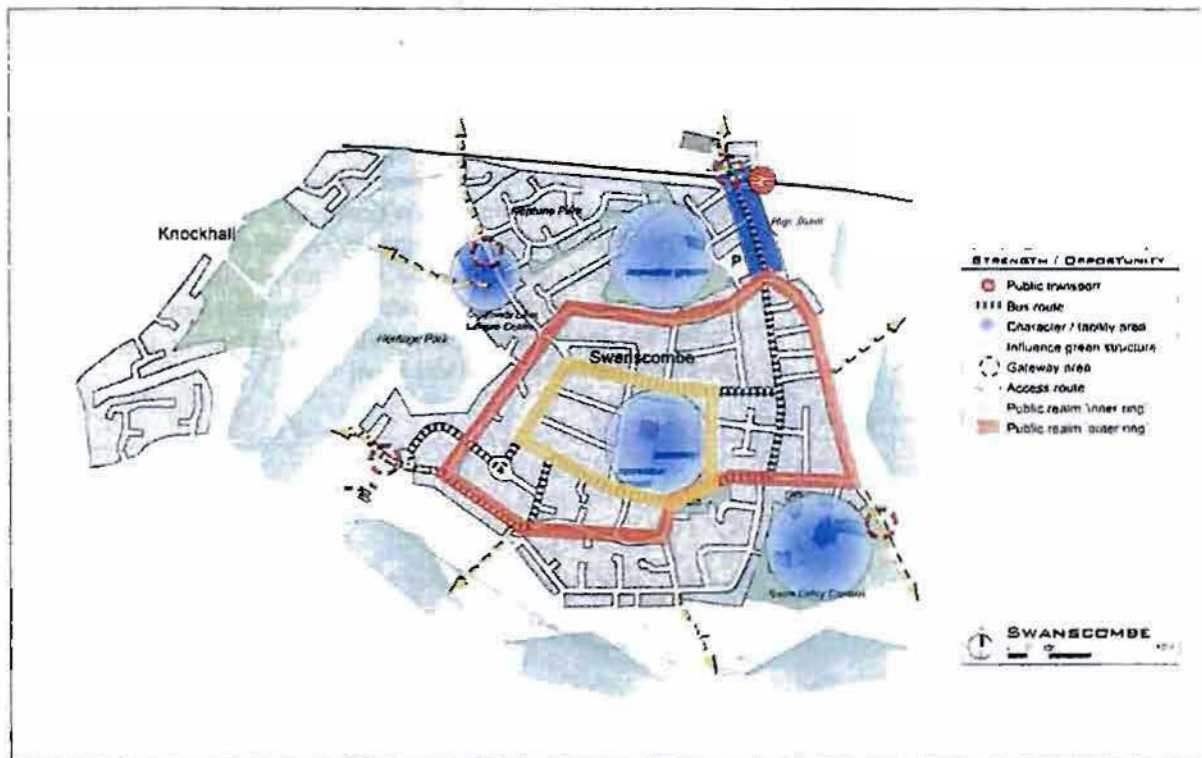
Neptune Park comprises contemporary town houses set in a traffic calmed environment. Unfortunately the built form and the spatial layout of this new development are not well integrated with the surrounding areas, such as Broomfield Road, Craylands Lane and the recreation ground.

The High Street runs between London Road and Milton Road, clearly marked on either end by distinctive local buildings The George & Dragon pub, the former church and the Methodist church. The High Street is a mixture of residential and commercial properties. Apart from a number of discrete 'corner shops' scattered through Swanscombe, the parade at Milton Road/Craylands Corner, and the smaller gathering of retail premises at Stanley Road, the High Street is the main commercial facility.

Besides being the main shopping facility the High Street is also the main traffic route into Swanscombe from London Road. This dual use causes conflicts between pedestrian movements, through-traffic and parking demands. The Grove surface car park offers additional parking facilities but is not sign posted and its pedestrian link to the High Street is very poor quality.

The figures below (Figures 3.2 and 3.3) illustrate the physical strengths and weaknesses of Swanscombe, as described in the following section.

Figure 3.2: Physical Strengths of Swanscombe



Public Realm

Consultation with Key Stakeholders has highlighted a general feeling of dissatisfaction with the general environment, particularly with reference to traffic congestion, dirt, dust, the unkempt state of small green spaces such as road verges and the poor conditions of footpaths, walkways and road drainage. There is significant concern that the environment will further deteriorate, particularly as a result of the additional construction traffic that is envisaged. Poor signage, a dilapidated street scene and a lack of definition and identity are key issues in Swanscombe. The poor state of a number of non-adopted roads has a particular negative impact on the overall quality of the streetscape.

Although the overall character of the streetscape lacks variety, on a local level differences and characteristics can be identified. The High Street, Swan Valley Community Campus, the cemetery, the recreation ground and the area around Broomfield Pavilion all have a distinct character.

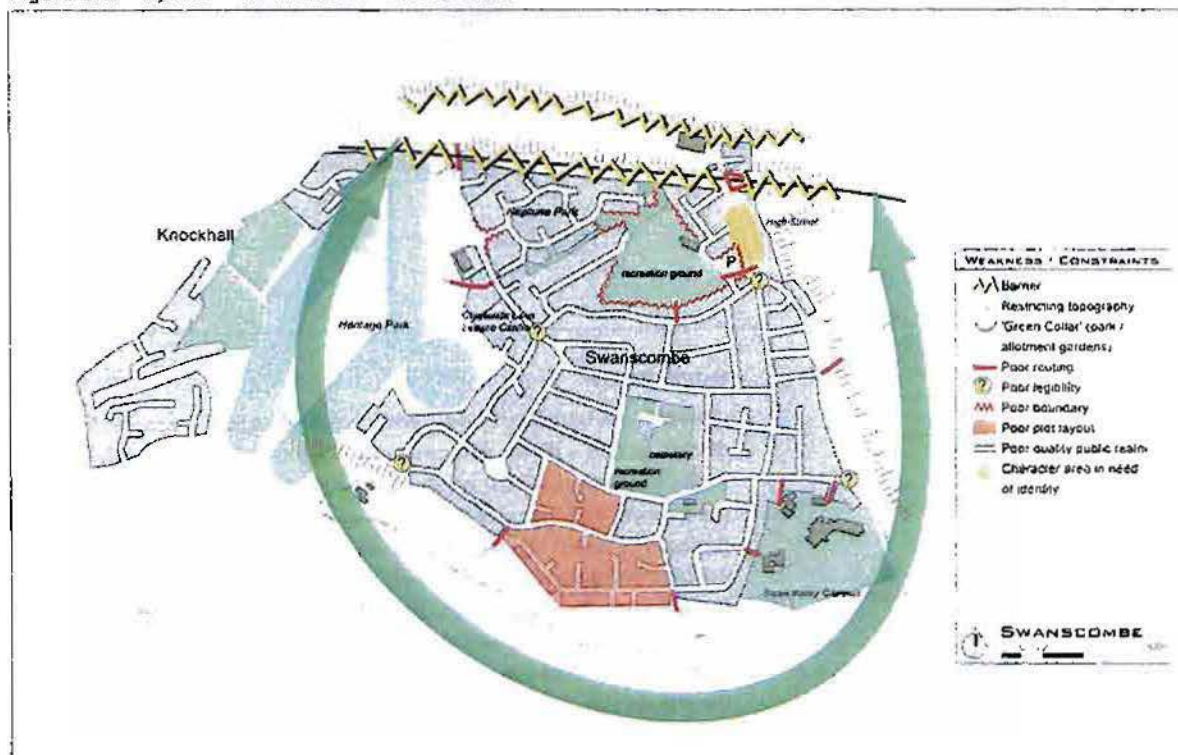
A number of streets are more 'spacious' and differ in character because the houses are set-back from the street. The presence of street trees at specific locations contributes to the identity of these streets. Therefore Swanscombe Street, Gunn Road, Trebble Road, Ames Road, Park Road and Eglinton Road form an 'inner ring' around the cemetery, while Swanscombe Street, Manor Road, Milton Street, Milton Road and Stanhope Road form an 'outer ring' around Swanscombe's core area.

Strengthening the local characteristics and introducing continuity in the design of these areas and street will help to improve legibility and to establish a sense of place.

Open Spaces

In principle the extensive open spaces around Swanscombe are enormous environmental assets, accommodating park land, allotment gardens, sports and leisure facilities. The landscape structure around Swanscombe lends the area a characteristic sense of openness but also emphasizes its isolated position. Future developments at Eastern Quarry, Ebbsfleet and Peninsula West reinforce this isolated position by retaining the green corridors between the existing and new urban areas. High quality physical and visual links should prevent these green corridors from becoming an obstructive green 'collar' and ensure permeability to allow Swanscombe residents to access neighbouring facilities and vice versa.

Figure 3.3: Physical Weaknesses of Swanscombe



Within Swanscombe, the main open spaces are The Grove/Broomfield Recreation Ground, the sport fields of Swan Valley Community Campus, the Heritage Park, and the playground, cemetery and recreation ground adjacent to St. Peter & Paul's Church. The Grove/Broomfield Recreation Ground is of strategic importance since it is located in between the station, High Street, the western part of Swanscombe and Neptune Park development. Unfortunately the recreation ground does not benefit from a good setting because all of the surrounding properties face the space with their rear facades, providing little natural surveillance. The new Town Council Offices on part of the recreation ground does not make the most of its relationship with the recreation ground, but this can be addressed in future projects.

Access and Movement

Swanscombe is served by four highway access routes:

- High Street – a north south route linking London Road with Swanscombe Railway Station and Stanhope Road/Southfleet Road;
- Southfleet Road – a north south route linking the Eastern Quarry site and the Swan Valley Community Campus with Stanhope Road and the High Street;
- Alkerden Lane – an east west route from the centre of Swanscombe via Milton Street or Manor Road to the B255 St Clements Way;
- Craylands Lane – a north south route which provides a constrained link under the low headroom railway bridge to London Road.

The major strategic highway connection is via London Road, accessed by the High Street or Craylands Lane, which provides access to the M25 and A2. Stanhope Road to the south gives direct access to the A2 at Pepperhill and Alkerden Lane provides access to the B255 St. Clements Way and the A2.

Most importantly in vehicle access terms is the combination of the transport infrastructure, the topography and height differences due to the quarries and green corridors, which results in a great deal of severance between existing areas and future developments.

Traffic management is observed to be poor at present, with many junctions requiring signalisation to ensure an efficient flow onto the main distributor network. Driving through Swanscombe can be confusing for visitors, due to the street pattern.

Vehicle parking is predominantly arranged as on-street parking facilities, with limited off street parking for residents. The demand for residential parking clearly exceeds the supply and therefore on street parking dominates the streetscape. While this works as a traffic calming measure it also obstructs bus services, influencing routes, frequency and reliability of the services. Parking on pavements also constrains pedestrians and cyclists.

Swanscombe railway station is on the northern edge of the community, accessible only by flights of stairs and is poorly maintained and unattractive, particularly to those with impaired mobility. Poor lighting and therefore perceived poor security may be influencing trip choices at night. Pedestrian access is poor between platforms (and the booking office) via the road bridge, which only has a footpath on the western side. The level of service is reasonable but would benefit from frequency enhancements. There is no evidence of significant levels of commuter parking near the station.

High frequency buses serve the London Road corridor and in future Fastrack will come close to Swanscombe, but not directly serve it. Existing bus services form part of a wider interurban network and therefore services often suffer from congestion elsewhere on the network, causing unreliability. The bus services access Swanscombe via the High Street and Alkerden Lane, serving most of the town. The existing bus services are a mix of local and longer distance services, at frequencies ranging from every 10 minutes to hourly. They are all operated by Arriva, with the exception of the X80 which is operated by Ensignbus:



Introducing a clear hierarchy in terms of traffic and public realm will improve the legibility of the town at key locations.

- 480/490 operates via A226 London Rd between Dartford and Gravesend every 10 minutes at peak times, 30 minutes off-peak, but does not penetrate the centre of Swanscombe.
- 306/308/309 operates on Alkerden Lane to the south and through the High St. Its role is to link Sevenoaks, Borough Green and Gravesend to Bluewater and it runs hourly.
- 455 and 456 links Swanscombe to Dartford via Craylands Lane and Horns Cross or Crossways on a half hourly basis and acts as the main local Swanscombe bus, serving Milton Road and the main residential areas. It does not run on Saturdays and the last return is at 1505.
- X80 is a longer distance service linking Strood to Bluewater and Lakeside, again on an hourly frequency, which commenced operation in mid 2004.

The review of local bus services has confirmed that these routes are meeting current levels of local demand and that there is spare capacity on most vehicles, for most of the day. However there may be destinations which are not served and in particular links between parts of Swanscombe could be enhanced, such as serving the Swan Valley Community Campus better. Innovative community based transport solutions such as demand responsive transport may be better placed to meet such unmet demand.

In theory the confined scale of Swanscombe means that all facilities are located within walking distance. However residents with restricted movement have difficulties accessing some areas of town, and the low quality and unkempt state of the public realm is discouraging to pedestrian movement and access. Access routes to facilities, such as the station, the schools and health centres are generally uninviting, poor quality, not sign posted, obscured and often unlit. A number of pedestrian routes cross The Grove/Broomfield recreation ground, providing a route towards the High Street and the station.

Links into the green areas around Swanscombe are mostly poorly maintained and overgrown, obstructing views of the open landscape structure. Improving these links and introducing new links through the green corridors will be key to the integration of Swanscombe and Eastern Quarry and Ebbsfleet.

Although a compact town Swanscombe is not particularly pedestrian friendly because of its narrow and poor quality pavements. Parking on pavements is a real difficulty in some residential areas. Cycling within the town is similarly affected and there are no off street cycle routes, although National Cycle Route 1 crosses the town. The opportunity to encourage cycling to nearby employment and retail locations is constrained by poor routes and a lack of cycle facilities.

Throughout a large part of Swanscombe, alleyways and lanes provide rear access to dwellings. At the moment they are in disrepair and encourage antisocial behaviour. If they were improved they could ease parking problems and be a useful amenity for residents.

Facility clusters

Although Swanscombe has no significant commercial centre it has a variety of community, sports and leisure facilities, mapped below on figure 3.4. These facilities are predominantly located in three clusters.

The two, historically, separate centres of Swanscombe (Swanscombe Street, Stanhope Road) and Galley Hill (High Street) are nowadays still clearly visible in Swanscombe. Besides commercial uses, the High Street cluster also provides the Post Office and The Grove car park and recreation ground, to be joined by the new Council Offices. The High Street cluster is also the main public transport hub, combining mainland rail services with local buses.

The second cluster at the Swan Valley Community Campus, the original centre of Swanscombe, is a combination of educational and health facilities. Plans for expanding the health uses at this location are currently being considered. The educational uses comprise of a nursery, primary and secondary school, a library, a centre for adult education and sports facilities.

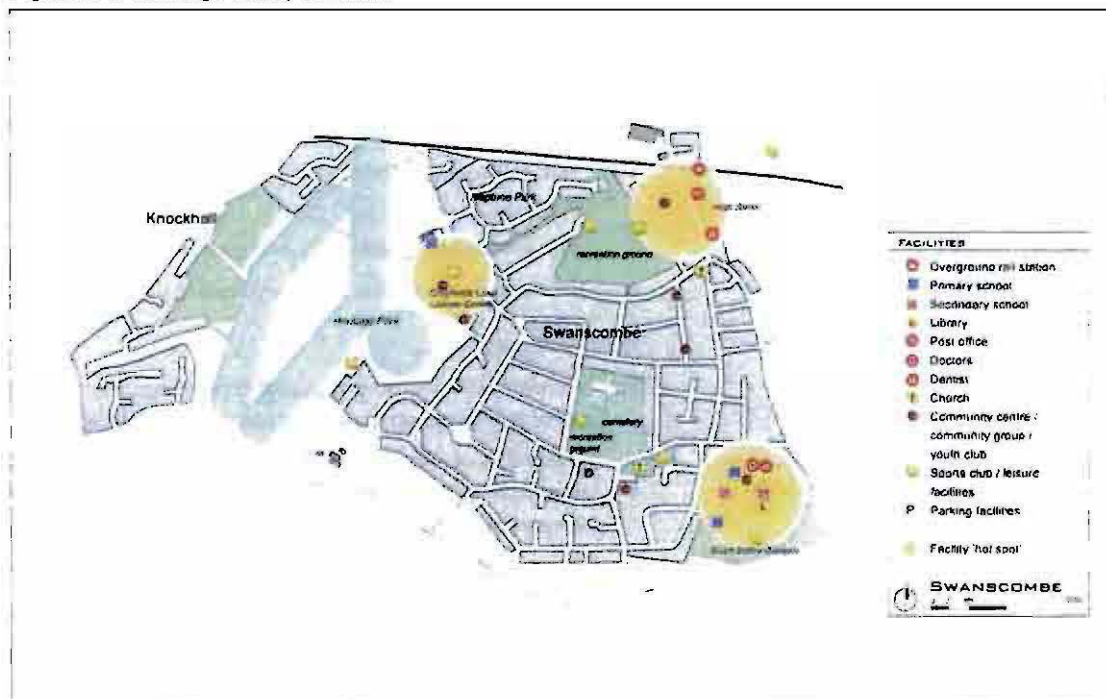
The leisure centre along Craylands Lane together with the primary school, community centre and the entrance to the Heritage Park form a third cluster.

Besides these three facility 'hot spots' a number of community and religious centres are dispersed throughout Swanscombe.

In Knockhall a number of sport facilities provide a transition between the Heritage Park and the residential areas. Besides the sports grounds Knockhall also has its own primary school, community centre, clinic and, although separated by the railway line, a library.

All facilities are orientated towards Swanscombe's and Knockhall's local population. The lack of cultural uses or an evening economy ensures Swanscombe is not a destination for visitors or passers-by.

Figure 3.4: Existing Facility Clusters





Improving pedestrian and cycle routes through the green structure is essential to a successful integration of the new development projects with Swanscombe.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

The key socio-economic characteristics are summarised below:

Demographics

- Swanscombe has a young population profile, with a relatively high proportion of under-sixteens and a relatively low number of pensioners.
- Swanscombe has a higher proportion of lone parent households.

Employment and social inclusion

- The number of Swanscombe residents in employment has fallen in Swanscombe in the last 10 years, contrary to trends in the UK, the South East and Dartford as a whole. Unemployment for Swanscombe males (4.3%) is higher than the local and regional average while still lying below the national average of 5.1%.
- The claimant count matches the national average, but it higher than the South East and Dartford averages.
- Swanscombe residents are more likely to work in lower paid sectors such as manufacturing, hotels and retail – very few have knowledge-based jobs.

Education and skill levels

- Over a third of the population have no qualifications, higher than all comparison areas.
- Only 22% of Swan Valley school pupils achieved 5 A*-C grades (based on former grading system), compared to the national average of 54%

Crime

- Swanscombe has historically had relatively low levels of crime compared to the national average. However recent figures have shown significant increases in incidence of car theft and criminal damage, above the national averages. Swanscombe is a focus area in the new Community Safety Strategy.

Health

- Teenage pregnancy rates are higher in Swanscombe than all comparison areas.
- More people are on disability living allowance than the national average.
- GP lists in Swanscombe are now closed to new patients.

HOUSING NEED

The full Affordable Housing appraisal can be found in Appendix D. Key findings of this appraisal may be summarised as follows:

- Nearly 60% of Swanscombe's population owns their own home, but the proportion of those renting from the council is higher than all comparison areas.
- Swanscombe has lower house prices than average but recently there has been stronger growth than national and regional levels.

- The Right to Buy (RTB) for existing tenants has proved popular in Swanscombe. Rising values however now mean that RTB is becoming increasingly unaffordable. Moreover the remaining Council stock in Swanscombe is now disproportionately made up of flats, which are increasingly used to house families with children in order to meet housing needs, leading to a higher turnover of residents.
- In 2001-02 there were 131 households in housing need (two thirds backlog, one third newly arising), approximately a fifth of the need in the borough. This is a substantial proportion, and given rising property values this problem is likely to have increased since 2001-02.
- A private sector house condition survey found 6.2% of the housing stock was unfit, with an average cost of £3,800 to make fit.

TRANSPORT

London Road is Swanscombe's major strategic highway connection, providing access to the A2 and M25. There is concern that development around Swanscombe should not result in worsening traffic pressure on the London Road corridor. The local traffic model is being re-evaluated and the results of that work will inform development choices and transport solutions to mitigate the impact.

The proposed 'Peninsula Way'; a north-south link between Swanscombe Peninsula West and Ebbsfleet may provide capacity which will in part take some of the pressure from London Road. Peninsula Way has been an aspiration for a number of years, the objectives and purpose being to:

- Provide local access for the Peninsula and surrounding area;
- Provide accessibility within the Kent Thameside area, including to Ebbsfleet and Bluewater;
- Facilitate Fastrack;
- Provide relief to London Road by providing additional permeability and route choices.

The alignment of Peninsula Way has not been fixed and will depend on the implementation of development on Swanscombe Peninsula. Depending on when and if a new road is implemented and where it links into the existing infrastructure will determine what effect the new road may have on London Road.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The range and quality of shops is low, partly in consequence of the proximity of other retail facilities in the area. The community enjoys a relatively large number of community venues and sports facilities. The new health centre has improved Swanscombe's health provision, but GP lists are now closed to new patients in Swanscombe and the focus remains on curative health care, with no provision of preventative measures.

SUMMARY

Issues arising from the audit of current conditions in Swanscombe may be summarised as follows:

- Low skilled population, low income employment
- Low educational attainment
- Concerns about anti-social behaviour
- Less owner occupied housing than average
- Concern about housing affordability
- Poor range and quality of shops
- Variety of architecture and housing styles
- Local character and distinctiveness
- Relative isolation, poor linkages with wider area
- Parking and congestion
- Poor quality public realm
- Lack of legibility and signage

4. current performance

Based on the analysis of Swanscombe and Greenhithe's current performance, as described in the Neighbourhood Renewal Action Plan and subsequent review, and taking into account the ODPM's key requirements for sustainable communities from the Communities Plan (2003), it is possible to assess Swanscombe and Greenhithe's current position and to identify the key themes which will need to be addressed in the implementation of the Masterplan.

Figure 4: Assessment of Swanscombe's Current Performance

ODPM's key requirements for sustainable communities	Swanscombe and Greenhithe's performance
A flourishing local economy to provide jobs and wealth	Swanscombe and Greenhithe provide few indigenous employment opportunities. Due to the spatial segregation of employment into places such as Crossways and Bluewater, local over reliance on relatively few sectors and large employers, and the cycle of low skills and low value employment, Swanscombe and Greenhithe's economy is not a source of community pride or wealth. Swanscombe and Greenhithe's retail offer is sparse and of low rental value.
Strong leadership to respond positively to change	There is commitment from Dartford Borough Council, plus other initiatives and organisations, but there is sometimes a mismatch of priorities, capacity and funding.
Effective engagement and participation by local people, groups and businesses, especially in the planning, design and long term stewardship of their community, and an active voluntary and community sector	The Town Council provides representation for the local people and an important route for engagement. The Neighbourhood Renewal Action Plan provided a new foundation for engagement and participation. Continued work must be invested in to ensure continued community engagement and involvement with partners and residents.
A safe and healthy local environment with well-designed public and green space	Much of the public realm and open spaces feel neglected, and do not encourage pedestrian activity, sport or other interaction.
Sufficient size, scale and density, and the right layout to support basic amenities in the neighbourhood and minimise use of resources	Swanscombe and Greenhithe is largely developed, but the provision and use of local amenities is undermined by a lack of legibility and natural surveillance, especially as footpaths and alleyways feel unsafe.
Good public transport and other transport infrastructure both within the community and linking it to urban, rural and regional centres	Swanscombe and Greenhithe's transport infrastructure and services are under-developed and under-serviced, in terms of road, rail, bus, pedestrian and cycle linkages. The quality of physical links to surrounding developments is of particular concern.
Buildings that can meet different needs over time, and that minimise the use of resources	Some of the built stock is poor quality, and most of the housing stock is relatively inflexible in terms of conversion or extension.
A well-integrated mix of decent homes of different types and tenures to support a range of household sizes, ages and incomes	Apart from the low quality of some housing stock, there is also a relatively limited range of housing types. Affordability has become a problem.
Good quality local public services, including education and training opportunities, health care and community facilities, especially for leisure	Swanscombe and Greenhithe benefits from a range of education, leisure and community facilities. Although there are some clusters of facilities, other premises are scattered across the town, so there is no focus and little sense of sustained activity. Local youth are underprovided for and use of the river is not maximized.

LIDPM's key requirements for sustainable communities	Swanscombe and Greenhithe's performance
A diverse, vibrant and creative local culture, encouraging pride in the community and cohesion within it	The local culture is proud and vibrant, but does not appear to be particularly diverse or creative. There are sections of Swanscombe and Greenhithe's population that are not catered for in terms of leisure and cultural interests.
A "sense of place"	Swanscombe and Greenhithe has a strong sense of place once you know the town, but there is a lack of information and directions for visitors.
The right links with the wider regional, national and international community	Swanscombe and Greenhithe has been a standalone community over a long period of time and it has not made the strong links to its surroundings.

Based on this assessment, the fundamental issues to be addressed in satisfying the requirements for sustainable communities relate to the following:

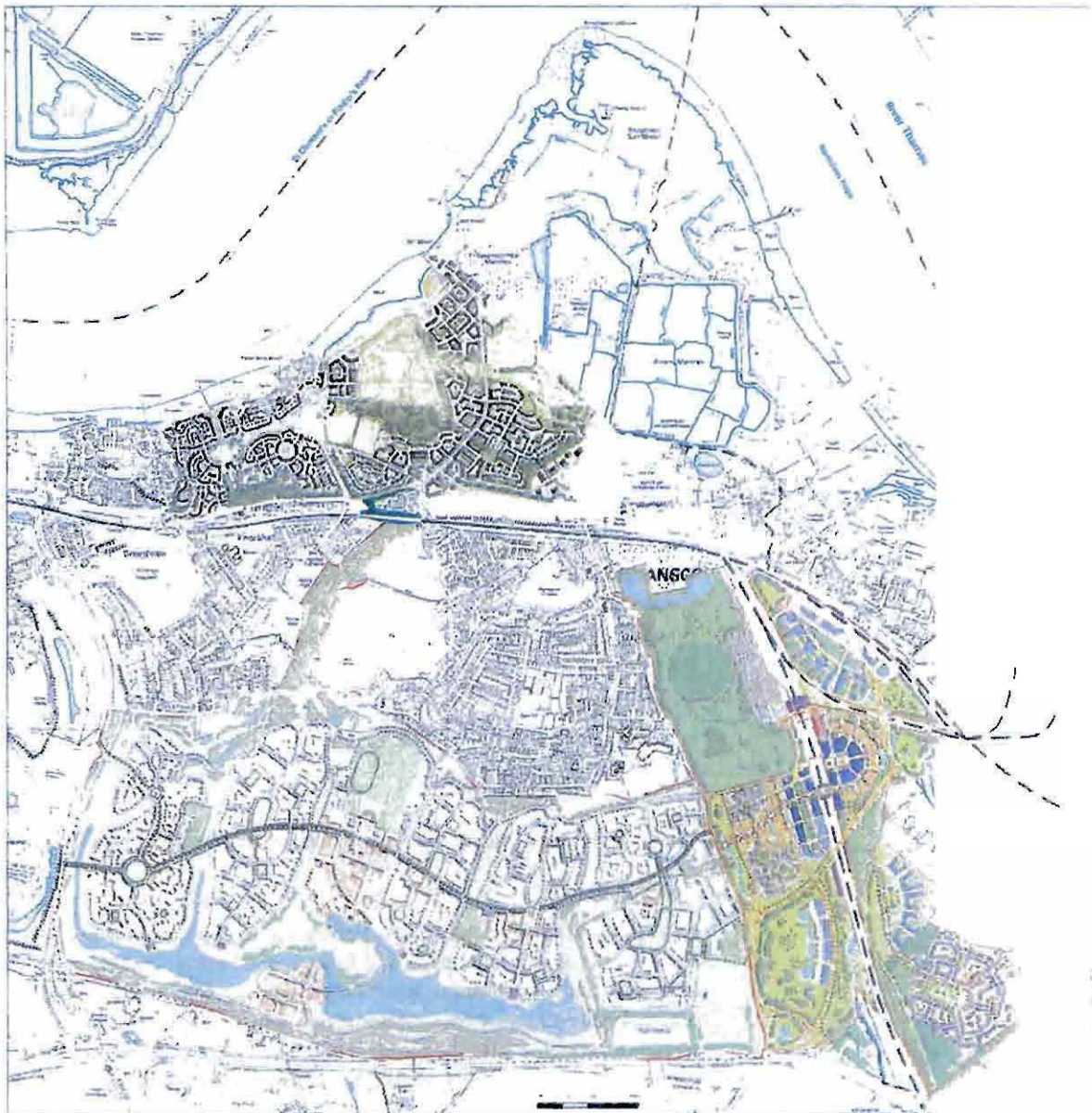
- Quality of public realm, transport infrastructure and services,
- Housing types and quality,
- Community activity hubs and the participation of the local communities in Swanscombe and Greenhithe's future.

These issues have been addressed in the preparation of the Masterplan.

5. opportunities

Swanscombe and Greenhithe are presented with a number of opportunities to benefit from current initiatives in Kent Thameside. The principal opportunities relate to the surrounding developments and the potential for integration, current/proposed projects and initiatives within the town and a range of funding sources arising from the surrounding developments or potentially available in Kent Thameside.

Figure 5.1: Map of current developer masterplans



FOCUS ON REGENERATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THAMES GATEWAY

The Government is committed to the regeneration and development of the Thames Gateway to accommodate growth requirements and to deliver sustainable communities. Over the Thames Gateway as a whole, £446million of directly targetted resources (2003-2006) will be complemented by transport investment of at least £600million, expected to lever in a further £2billion from public and private sector partners. A target of 120,000 new homes by 2016 has been identified with high quality, high density development in the priority areas (including Kent Thameside) where the majority of this growth will be focussed. 30,000 new homes and 50,000 jobs are targeted for Kent Thameside. The Government is committed to support packages of projects to take forward key development locations, that will contribute towards the creation of sustainable housing and employment growth. As well as delivering sites for new development, they address essential community, environment, education and employment issues needed to create places where people want to live and are able to work. Delivery at the local level is being taken forward by the Kent Thameside Delivery Board. Emphasis is being placed on creating better transport infrastructure links, education and skills projects and projects that develop local areas into key visitor attractions. Kent Thameside Delivery Board is working in partnership with Dartford Borough Council and Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council to develop a number of proposals:

- Community halls;
- General environmental improvements
- Junction improvements on London Road.

There is the opportunity to build on these projects in the development of the Masterplan.

SURROUNDING DEVELOPMENTS

A number of major developments are proposed which will have a fundamental affect on the character and strategic role of the area.

The area has already been affected by major commercial developments at Bluewater Regional Shopping Centre and Crossways. Significant residential developments are underway or complete at Ingress Park, Waterstone, Eagles Road and Steele Avenue. Over the next 20 years, major developments are proposed at:

- Ebbsfleet
- Eastern Quarry
- Swanscombe Peninsula

See figure 5.1 for a map of the current masterplans for these developments.

Ebbsfleet

Ebbsfleet is to be developed as a major transport interchange with a regular rapid service to central London and Europe, and catalyst for new and improved transport systems. It will be a major new commercial centre of regional importance where substantial new employment opportunities will be created together with the provision of an extensive and integrated community infrastructure meeting the needs of both existing and new

communities. The proposed Ebbsfleet Park is directly adjacent to Stanhope Road and the Swan Valley Community Campus.

Outline planning consent was granted in November 2002 for up to 789,550 sq m of gross floorspace comprising employment, residential, hotel and leisure uses supporting retail and community facilities, car parking, open space, roads and infrastructure. A maximum of 3200 residential units is permitted. The consent allows for a range of land use mix in the final development within ceilings for residential, commercial and ancillary uses. The planning consent was granted subject to further work and strategies relating to transport, open space and affordable housing. The Masterplan is very open ended and the consent requires the submission and approval of Quarter Masterplans, a transport strategy for the whole site and reserved matter applications for each phase of development.

Kent CC is working with Land Securities on education and community facilities. The Section 106 Agreement is relatively limited in scope. The main clause in the Section 106 relates to affordable housing and the dedication of open space on the western part of the site to be directly accessible from Swanscombe. The assumption is that affordable housing and community facilities will be provided on site and a key issue relates to access to facilities from the wider area. Key provisions of the Section 106 Agreement may be summarised as follows:

- Dedication of open land (to be identified in Quarter Masterplans)
- Environmental liaison and consultation
- Provision of space for heritage/interpretation facilities in community building
- Establishment of Architectural Consultative Group
- Three primary school sites and school playing fields, location to be identified in Quarter Masterplans
- Contribution of £1.5 million towards costs of enlarging one or more of existing secondary schools including Swan Valley Community Campus
- Day care facilities for the elderly
- 20% of units on Dartford land and 25% of units on Gravesham land to be affordable. Provision to be phased and may be in the form of affordable housing units or commuted payments or Affordable Housing equivalents. Location to be identified by approval of reserved matters. Tenure and sizes to be determined by Local Housing Needs Indicators on submission of reserved matters for approval. The local planning authority may require a Commuted sum in lieu of some or all of the Affordable Housing units.

The consent allows for a period of 8 years for the submission of details. Development is taking place in an east-west direction starting in Springhead, where a reserved matters application is to be submitted for 299 dwellings and 100,000 ft sq offices with development due to commence in 2006 (projected completion of 100 units per annum 2006-2009). Further work is required on proposals in Dartford but limited progress is being made at present and depends on the rail link and investment in infrastructure. There is currently no clear programme for Masterplan preparation and proposals remain fluid with the exception of Springhead. Linkages to Swanscombe are constrained by topography.

Fastrack is not specifically referred to in the agreement but the need for excellent public transport is acknowledged. Low parking standards are applied in view of the constrained capacity of the highway network to accommodate growth in car based trips as part of a strategy to maximize non-car based movements. The possible extension of Crossrail to Ebbsfleet has been raised. Dartford BC is supportive and Land Securities are undertaking design work around the potential new Crossrail station in Northfield Quarter. The Department for Transport is looking to the developer to pay for the station but this will be difficult to secure because the Section 106 is completed. The issue of Crossrail is unlikely to be resolved before late 2007.

Eastern Quarry

Dartford BC is currently dealing with the applications. Three applications have been submitted – one for the whole site, a separate application by Land Securities for their part of the site and an application for land shaping. An application for the Second Site land is expected soon. Blue Circle retains quarrying rights at the western end of Eastern Quarry up to 2008.

The application for the whole site relates to 7250 dwellings plus associated facilities. Dartford BC supports the application in principle and is in discussions with Land Securities regarding funding and infrastructure. The Masterplan is not fixed although location of the six main villages and market centre has been identified. Separate Masterplans will be prepared for each village. The market centre is proposed to the south of the Fastrack route adjacent to a new educational campus including a main secondary school. Swanscombe is separated from the new villages by a continuous band of green space and a local distributor road. Land Securities do not want to be tied down to a Masterplan at this stage and want flexibility. The development could begin in 2006 with completion of up to 1500 units by 2010.

Dartford BC had hoped to report application to members in June 2004 but this was deferred to enable further highways work to be undertaken at the request of the Highways Agency. The Highways Agency accepts the Kent Thameside Traffic Model as a starting point. The scope of further modelling work is now agreed with further assessment required of M25 junctions. Key issues are transport, social and community facilities and funding. Bean Junction is an important issue. The application is likely to be considered once the Highways Agency response is received. Land Securities want to deal with the consent through the use of Grampian² conditions rather than legal agreement.

Fastrack is tied into Eastern Quarry with possible linkages to Swanscombe. Swanscombe & Greenhithe Town Council want provision of a northern park. The park has the potential to constrain access, and it must be well designed to ensure effective linkages. There is a need for direct physical integration. Swanscombe residents will want access to Fastrack. Given the nature of Swanscombe as a tightly knit area of terraced houses and roads Fastrack cannot run through the town. It is proposed that services from Swanscombe and Greenhithe will link to Fastrack. The proportion of car ownership is relatively high in Swanscombe, so there is a need to understand where

² *Grampian conditions are defined such that if they are not met, the development cannot or will not be allowed to proceed.*

people from Swanscombe want to go and whether they need to link with Fastrack. The Section 106 agreement has not yet been drafted.

Swanscombe Peninsula West and East

A Planning Brief has been adopted by Dartford Borough Council, and an application submitted by Land Securities for the western part of the site for 1750 dwellings plus associated infrastructure. Consideration of the application is at an early stage.

The development elicits challenging technical issues. Land raising is required to create a development platform and there is a need to secure integration with Ingress Park. Crest and Land Securities will have to work together. At Ingress Park, there are obligations on Crest to provide a route from Ingress Park across Swanscombe Peninsula West to London Road prior to occupation of 600 units, which requires Land Securities agreement that could affect the development programme. A condition allows Crest up to a total of 950 units at Ingress Park.

Swanscombe Peninsula could play a key role in Swanscombe and Greenhithe gaining improved access to the riverside and help make sense of connections between Swanscombe, Greenhithe and Ingress Park. Connections to the Ebbsfleet business district and the Green Grid will be important features.

A key issue relates to the location of the local centre. Crest has planning consent for local centre proposals and subject to obligations to also provide a school site and local centre at the eastern end of the development. Land Securities proposal for Swanscombe Peninsula West shows the local centre on London Road. Crest obligations would need to be revisited if the location of local centre changes. The school has also shifted eastwards towards the Swanscombe Peninsula West site giving rise to a potential gain in residential capacity on the Ingress Park site.

The developers' intention is that the local centre will complement Swanscombe High St and serve as a book end between old and new development. However, it will be necessary to address the issue of getting people across London Rd to the new facilities. Applications and negotiations are at early stage.

No allowance was made in the application for delivery of Peninsula Way. This is seen as a longer term issue but as traffic conditions worsen, the requirement will come forward. It is a difficult link to provide and the main driver for provision will be development on Swanscombe Peninsula East. Once the route of Peninsula Way is decided and provided it is possible that Fastrack will be diverted along it from London Road.

The timescales of development require review. Swanscombe Peninsula West will require major infrastructure investment. Traffic performance is a major concern. Other forms of funding for Peninsula Way have not been considered, even though it may be required earlier. Highways Agency will be cautious about it as it directs traffic onto the A2. A Lower Thames Crossing would change the context but that cannot be factored in at this stage. There is a need to look at funding for infrastructure works in addition to Section 106.

OTHER SCHEMES

Waterstone Park

This residential scheme is under construction overlooking Bluewater (Stone Castle, London Road). There is full consent for Phase 1 of 200 units and outline consent for Phase 2 of 450 units. The first set of reserved matters for Phase 2 is now approved. Section 106 contributions for Phase 2 include London Road improvements, community facilities in the area to the value of £100,000, affordable housing, open space, and educational contributions.

St Clements Valley

This is an employment site of 50,000 sq m B1 with an application expected shortly. The site is allocated in the Local Plan Review and will secure Green Grid open space down to the Bluewater Roundabout. Built development will occupy no more than 25% site.

Little Swanscombe

A planning application has been submitted for 110 dwellings south of London Road, between Swanscombe and Peninsula West. It is a housing allocation in the Local Plan Review.

Greenhithe Waterfront

Appeal dismissed for 219 apartments, but other proposals likely to be forthcoming in 2005.

Korsnes

Outline permission granted for 370-450 homes on Galley Hill Road in Swanscombe. Details are currently under consideration.

There are also small applications being considered for 50 homes on Knockhall Road and 40 homes at Mount Nod.

Bluewater

There is the potential for future development in the shape of a lapsed consent for a hotel. There is some headroom in the Local Plan for expansion which recognises the need to retain Bluewater's regional function and to refresh its offer. This could require more floorspace as recognized in the Structure Plan Review.

DEVELOPER ASPIRATIONS

It is unusual for a single developer to be promoting all of the major development opportunities within a single area. Whilst Land Securities will work with developer partners, it intends to retain a controlling arm. This may have implications for the timescale of development, investment in infrastructure and the rate at which individual sites are brought forward for development.

At the first Stakeholder Workshop, representatives of Land Securities set out the scope of potential benefits which the development could bring to Swanscombe and Greenhithe:

- Range of new housing provision and tenure (private, social, shared ownership, rented) including possible investment in existing housing stock

- Investment in existing facilities to serve wider community e.g.: leisure
- New local shopping centre complementary to retail provision in Swanscombe and Greenhithe
- Investment in small projects for local groups
- Landscaping and upgrading of facilities including work with Groundwork to coordinate existing initiatives
- Local Employment Initiative including measures to raise skills levels and aspirations and apprenticeships
- Public transport improvements with link between Fastrack and local bus services
- Work with local schools

The developers are seeking to work with Dartford Borough Council and the Town Council but do not at present propose to fix development proposals or to directly address issues relating to the physical integration of Swanscombe and Greenhithe preferring to retain maximum flexibility. The Section 106 is not based on a detailed Masterplan.

DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL HOUSING STRATEGY

Dartford Borough Council's 2004-07 Housing Strategy has been finalised. It will be 'GOSE fit-for-purpose' once a business plan has been agreed.

The draft strategy document includes the following strategic objectives and timescales which are relevant to the Swanscombe Masterplan:

- Ensure that a sustainable mix of housing is provided on major development sites (2004-05)
- Seek to ensure that new housing developments contain an element of larger family housing where appropriate (2004-07)
- Intervene to ensure that high quality design standards are met on all new housing development sites and all new affordable homes meet the Housing Corporation's Scheme Development Standards (SDS). (Ongoing)
- To provide 30% affordable housing on all urban development sites of over 15 units or more, or over ½ hectare (2002-2011)
- To facilitate the provision of 2,500 affordable homes through planning gain policies (2002-2011)
- Deliver a minimum of 500 new affordable homes (2004-07)
- To ensure that a proportion of housing for Key Workers is provided on all development sites (2002-2011)
- Further assess demand with employers for Key Worker Housing (July 2005)
- Carry out a Housing Needs Survey (2006-07)
- Consider carrying out a Housing Markets Study (2006-07)
- Establish tenant sub-groups for each of the major estates to improve tenant participation
- Achieve 75% Decent Homes by April 2008 and 100% by April 2010

The analysis of the existing situation highlights the following priorities:

- The quality of the private sector housing stock must be improved,
- Provision of affordable housing will be predominantly within the new developments, not within Swanscombe and Greenhithe. This must feature a sufficient proportion of family housing, and affordability criteria must be realistic, cognisant of local income and savings levels,
- The limited provision of on-site affordable housing will probably rely largely upon properties above retail premises.

TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

Central to the debate about improving accessibility is the future role of the Swanscombe and Greenhithe railway stations. Key questions to be addressed are the future levels of service and in turn the potential demand that the stations may be expected to meet. Once these issues are addressed the case for investment in the physical infrastructure, as well as improved links to the stations, can be more fully evaluated.

Swanscombe station has a basic half-hourly service for most of the day, provided by the stopping service on the London (Charing Cross) to Gravesend route. These trains call at all stations between Gravesend and Hither Green, then selected stations to London Bridge and Charing Cross. In the morning and evening peak periods there is one additional service and there is a direct train to and from Cannon Street. Greenhithe station enjoys an additional service, providing four trains an hour.

Whatever the scale of development in and around Swanscombe and Greenhithe, there are three significant railway projects which will change the range of travel opportunities available to local people and affect the future use of Swanscombe and Greenhithe stations. These are:

- the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL) and the new station at Ebbsfleet
- the Crossrail project
- service improvements as part of the proposed new "Integrated Kent Franchise"

CTRL

CTRL will provide new fast domestic services from Ebbsfleet to St Pancras, probably calling on the way at Stratford where connections will be available to the Underground, Docklands Light Rail and the bus network. This may be attractive to people working in Stratford, St Pancras or Docklands, but of limited attraction to passengers who are travelling to the City and the West End. Services to Cannon Street or Charing Cross will continue to meet the needs of many passengers. Their decisions on the route to take will be based not just on train journey time, but total cost, overall travel time and convenience. The degree of attractiveness will also depend on the pricing policy (the SRA suggests that high speed services will operate with premium fares) and the ease of access to Ebbsfleet Station.

Ebbsfleet Station will effectively have two separate parts, an international station for people travelling to Paris and Brussels, and a domestic station for people travelling into London. There will be three entrance points to the station, with international services accessed via the western entrance.

Extensive car parking will be provided at Ebbsfleet station, but it remains to be seen how easy it will be to access the car park at busy times, and some parking spaces will be relatively distant from the station entrance. The cost of car parking is not yet known, but it is expected that premium pricing will be used to deter domestic passengers from “parking and riding”, in order to ensure that capacity is available for international passengers, who are likely to need long stay parking, and for whom the cost of parking represents a much smaller add-on to the cost of rail travel.

There will be alternative means of accessing Ebbsfleet station from Swanscombe and Greenhithe:

- walking,
- cycling,
- local bus,
- Fastrack bus,
- local rail.

Walking and cycling can be encouraged by ensuring that there is a reasonably direct route with appropriate facilities where people feel safe. The existing local buses may or may not be convenient for Ebbsfleet Station, as it would represent a diversion from their current route; but the new Fastrack system is designed to link into Ebbsfleet station. Passengers from Swanscombe and Greenhithe would need to walk to London Road to access Fastrack services and this may be a deterrent, particularly from the south of Swanscombe.

It is unlikely that local people will find local rail a useful link to the CTRL. This is mainly because the local rail service will not connect directly with services using Ebbsfleet. This highlights the importance of good pedestrian and cycle links from Swanscombe to Ebbsfleet.

Although the CTRL is progressing well and is scheduled to open in 2007, there could still be delays. Furthermore, there is as yet no certainty about when the domestic services would begin, but the SRA suggest that it is considered likely to be later than the international services, possibly by December 2009.

Crossrail

The Crossrail project has gone through many iterations over the years and there is still no certainty about how or when it will come to fruition. It was at one time intended to reach Ebbsfleet, though how passengers would connect with international or domestic trains was not clear. The current plan is for trains to terminate at Abbey Wood, well to the west of Swanscombe and indeed Dartford, and to connect with existing rail services. This plan has been challenged, not least by the promoters of the alternative “Superlink”, who do not propose to take the Crossrail line south of the Thames.

The Crossrail Bill has Abbey Wood as its terminus but if Crossrail were to be extended to Ebbsfleet in the future, calling at Swanscombe and Greenhithe on the way, the most intensive service proposed seems to be four trains an hour (each way). However it should be possible to have four trains an hour stopping at Swanscombe and Greenhithe, with or without Crossrail.

Existing rail and the Integrated Kent Franchise

There are four trains an hour, each way, passing through Swanscombe in most hours, but only two of these call at the station. Reviewing the current timetable, there appears to be no practical reason why more trains could not call. The issue has more to do with the inconvenience this might cause to passengers travelling longer distances, and the likelihood of losing some of that traffic if the service becomes perceived as a frequently stopping service.

The longer distance trains run between London and Gillingham via Strood and the Strood and Higham Tunnels. These are semi-fast in nature, calling at all stations between Gillingham and Gravesend, then principal stations only to London. However, the importance of the Bluewater shopping centre has required them to stop additionally at Greenhithe for the connecting bus service. This breaks up one of the longer gaps between station calls.

There may be an argument for having these trains call at all stations between Gravesend and Dartford, and providing as far as possible a fifteen minute headway. This could not be achieved at present without extensive timetable revisions east of Gravesend, or much faster acceleration and deceleration, implying new rolling stock.

In addition, the turnaround time at Gillingham is only 8 minutes. Even one additional call would add at least a minute to the journey time in each direction and reduce the turnaround time by two minutes.

The whole of the timetable will be reviewed as part of the proposed Integrated Kent Franchise. This will take account of the proposed introduction of high speed "Kent Domestic" services and the likelihood that many (although not all) existing passengers will prefer a very fast journey to St Pancras rather than travel on semi fast services to London Bridge and Charing Cross.

It was proposed in the "IKF" consultation document dated February 2004 that the existing frequency of services would be maintained at these intermediate stations, i.e. two trains an hour (each way) at Swanscombe, Northfleet and Stone Crossing but four trains an hour at Greenhithe. The only change proposed is that the two Gillingham trains would be re-routed to serve Lewisham rather than Greenwich; and in addition, there would be the new Sittingbourne – Ebbsfleet – St Pancras high speed services. However the Strategic Rail Authority's IKF Stakeholder Briefing Document (January 2005) suggests that from 2009 peak service levels will be worse than current levels, particularly for Greenhithe station.

There is therefore the opportunity to review the role of the Gillingham trains and "downgrade" them slightly, from their current semi-fast status to something more akin to a "Metro" role. However, there are many more considerations beyond the need for travel from Swanscombe, such as:

- Is there capacity on the trains?
- Will revenue be put at risk and will inspectors be able to check and issue tickets between stops?
- Will the extra stops reduce the reliability of the service?

It is unlikely that a more intensive service, of up to six trains an hour, each way, could be achieved without significant infrastructure work at Dartford and Gravesend. Platform occupation is an issue at both locations, and the capacity of the junction at Dartford is another constraint.

PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

There is a wide range of projects underway or proposed in Swanscombe and Greenhithe. The responsible bodies include:

- Kent County Council;
- Dartford Borough Council;
- Swanscombe & Greenhithe Town Council;
- Kent Thameside Delivery Board;
- Service providers such as the Primary Care Trust, the schools, South Eastern Trains, Arriva and the police;
- The community and voluntary sector including CVS, Under One Roof, the churches, Walk Tall, the Discovery Centre and Groundwork.

Each of these bodies hold their own objectives and priorities which are generally in accordance with the objectives of the Masterplan. The energy behind all of these projects and initiatives can be combined, and synergies will allow funding to be allocated in the future so more is achieved.

Section 10 outlines how each of the current or potential projects fits into the Masterplan, and shows how they may be developed in the future. Additionally Appendix B includes the list of physical projects and initiatives currently active or under consideration, arranged under the original Neighbourhood Renewal Action Plan themes.

Discussions with voluntary and community group leaders have highlighted that they are already seeking to work together and to pool resources. There is support for clustering and rationalising community facilities, as this would help them share capital and revenue funding and would advance the likelihood that purpose built facilities could be provided in the future. A vital first step is an audit of community, leisure and sports facilities across Swanscombe and Greenhithe, which is in the list of projects already identified.

6. objectives



Sections of Swanscombe 'inner' and 'outer' ring benefit from the presence of street trees. These typical features provide identity to a place and should be enhanced and used as a measure for further improvements.



Although physically connected there is still poor integration between the Neptune Park development and the rest of Swanscombe.



The Recreation Ground does not benefit from active building frontages.

THE NEED FOR A VISION

With a large number of agencies and projects in Swanscombe and Greenhithe, there is a need to clarify the lines of decision making and delivery a shared vision.

All the partners must come together to support this Masterplan and take it forward as appropriate.

The development of a vision is essential to the promotion of a sustainable community. Currently there is no single overarching shared vision for Swanscombe and Greenhithe. The vision from the Neighbourhood Renewal Action Plan contained a number of aspirations for Swanscombe and Greenhithe such as:

- Attractive, safe, comfortable, welcoming, confident and aspiring
- People want to live here
- Affordable housing and good access to better local facilities and employment

The vision presented by the Swanscombe & Greenhithe Town Council is for:

- A town where people feel at ease
- Sustainable transport
- Growing up without the fear of crime
- Quality and choice

TOWARDS A SHARED VISION FOR THE FUTURE

A number of objectives have emerged which have informed the development of a vision for the future. PPS1 highlights the importance of a clear vision and objectives for future development and identifies the following key objectives for developing sustainable communities:

- Improve well being through new and improved facilities, promotion of high quality and safe development and creation of new opportunities;
- promotion of an inclusive community which is healthy, safe and crime free whilst respecting the diverse needs of the community;
- improved access for all to jobs, health, education, shops, leisure, community facilities, open space, sport and recreation;
- reduction in need to travel and encouragement of accessible public transport provision;
- promotion of more efficient use of land through higher density mixed use development and use of previously developed land and buildings;
- enhancement and protection of environment, landscape and townscape character.

This leads to a specific set of objectives for Swanscombe and Greenhithe:

- The importance of educating and skilling the population has already been recognised, and this work must continue in earnest, linked to the opportunities arising from developments at Crossways and Ebbsfleet.
- Part of this education must be to help residents respond positively to change and to get involved in the planning and design process for their own built environment and that surrounding them.
- Pavements, roads, footpaths, cycle paths, lighting, signing, decorations, front gardens, building frontages, public buildings, housing, civic spaces and green areas must all be of the highest quality, leading to a feeling of not least safety, at best pride.
- Housing must be high quality, across the private and social sectors, with the right mix of types and tenures for the community.
- Residents must be able to safely and happily walk or cycle between Swanscombe and Greenhithe and into Ebbsfleet, Eastern Quarry and Swanscombe Peninsula at any time of the day and night, to benefit from the employment opportunities.
- Residents from Ebbsfleet, Eastern Quarry and Swanscombe Peninsula must be able to safely and happily walk or cycle into Swanscombe and Greenhithe to enjoy the community facilities, benefit from a sense of culture and gain a sense of place.
- Swanscombe and Greenhithe should look to its links to the river to secure further value from its unique position.
- The number of community facilities must be rationalised and provided in mixed-use centres that always feel busy and fun, retaining and improving the breadth of services.
- Swanscombe and Greenhithe must make the most of the opportunity to develop a more positive sense of place
- If it chooses, it stands to benefit from increasing regional and national importance, for example by making international links through Ebbsfleet.

The Masterplan seeks to establish a coherent framework for current and future projects within Swanscombe and Greenhithe. It also starts to establish a model of delivery and implementation, and to go beyond the existing list of projects to characterise a vision for the area.

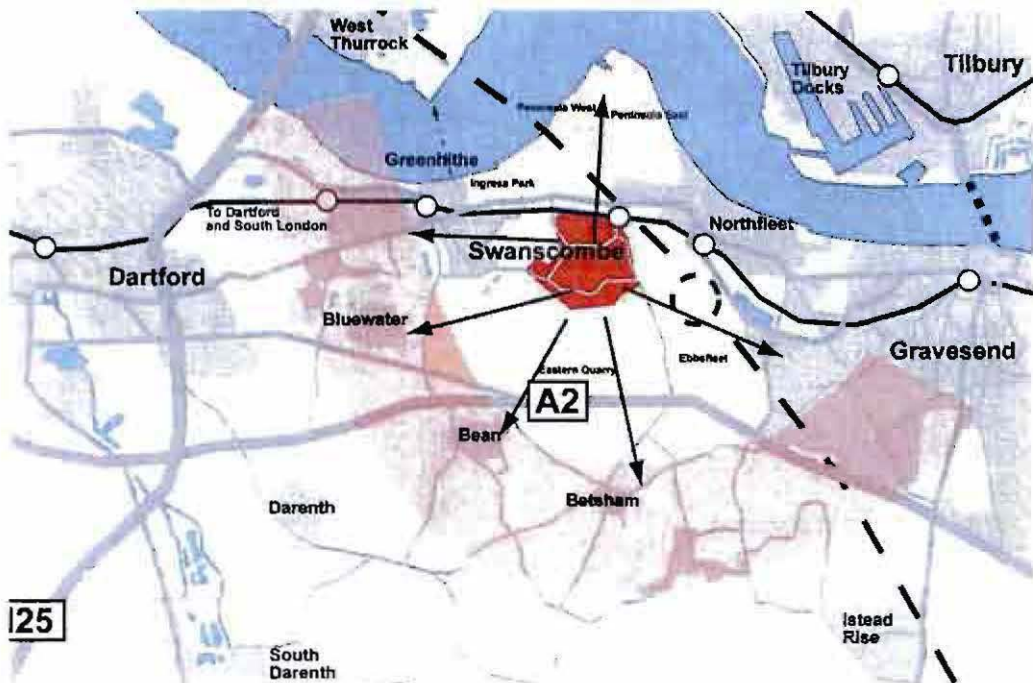
7. masterplan concept & vision

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

A key objective of the proposals for Kent Thameside is to transform the area into an attractive and dynamic place to live and work, both for existing communities and new residents and to define its position within the wider Thames Gateway. The challenge facing the Masterplan is to establish what role Swanscombe and Greenhithe should take within Kent Thameside in the future.

Improving transport facilities and other infrastructure allows for greater flexibility and mobility. People are able to access and benefit from jobs, commercial, health and other facilities outside their place of residence. Investments in new rail infrastructure, Fastrack, bus services and a potential new ferry crossing will further improve the internal as well as the external connectivity of the area. Within this context, the future of Swanscombe and Greenhithe should first be considered in conjunction with development within Kent Thameside. The opportunities at Blue Water, Crossways, Ebbsfleet, Eastern Quarry and Swanscombe Peninsula, plus the historic centres of Dartford and Gravesend, all offer possibilities for residents of Swanscombe and Greenhithe, as illustrated in Figure 7.1 below.

Figure 7.1: Swanscombe within Kent

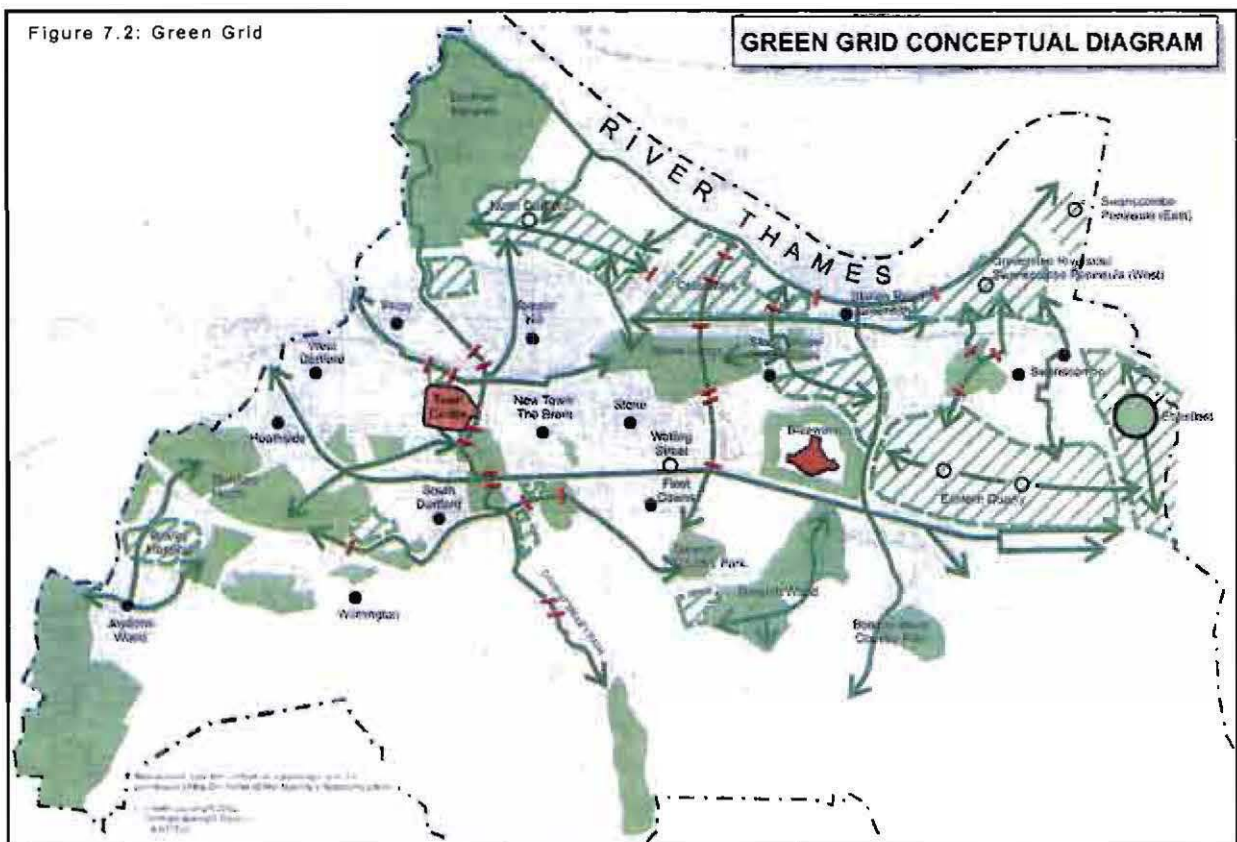


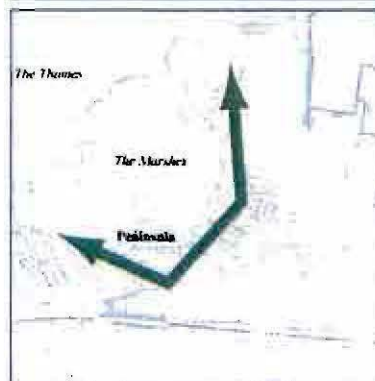
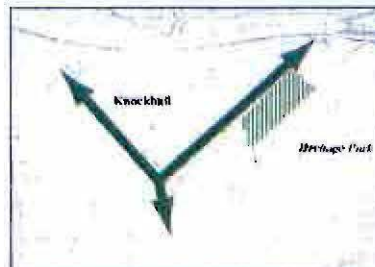
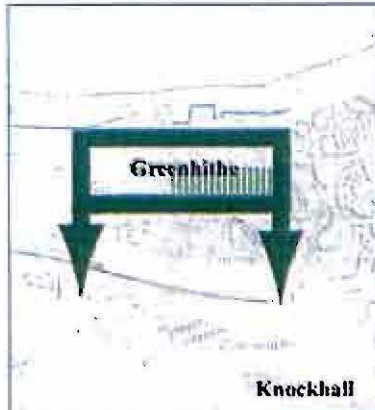
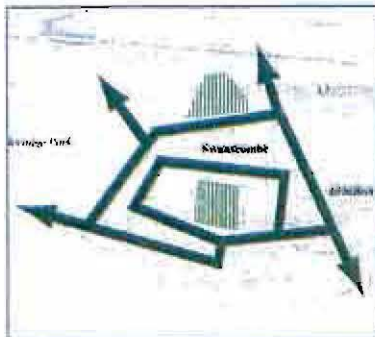
SPATIAL FRAMEWORK

On first impression, Swanscombe and Greenhithe are surrounded by open green spaces and the wider open perspective created by the River Thames. On closer investigation, however, most of these open spaces are neither accessible nor usable. Parts of the Thames riverfront comprise private domain. Years of quarrying have resulted in deep pits with dramatic height differences and cliff faces which are difficult and dangerous to access. Apart from the accessibility issues, these quarries are also private ownership. In reality, therefore, the open and green character is difficult to experience and forms more of a barrier segregating the area rather than part of the settlements.

The redevelopment of the quarries and industrial areas will change the function and perception of the open spaces significantly. The green spaces and riverfront are the most valuable and powerful environmental assets of the area and should be used to complement and maximise the quality of living, working and play in the area. For the north of Kent a Green Grid is being developed to combine existing and new green spaces. In the future the green spaces could form a continuous, spatial system that provides the much needed integrating structure within and between the existing and new individual urban entities in the area of Swanscombe and Greenhithe.

Figure 7.2: Green Grid





Urban Entities

Swanscombe, Greenhithe, Knockhall, Ingress Park, Swanscombe Peninsula West and Eastern Quarry are all independent settlements, having either developed over time or specifically designed as such. These urban entities are generally organised around an internal spatial structure. Although not deliberately designed or immediately obvious, this internal spatial structure plays an important role in the legibility, understanding and identity of the place. Improving this structure often means formalising routes and improving the environmental quality of specific streets and paths. The internal spatial structure can also be a guiding element in terms of the traffic structure, the hierarchy of routes and pedestrian and cycle paths.

Because the internal spatial structure is not always obvious, careful consideration has to be given to its identification and definition. Within this Masterplan Concept, the spatial structure of Swanscombe, Greenhithe, Knockhall, Ingress Park, Swanscombe Peninsula West and Eastern Quarry has been identified. This comprises a network of streets, route and paths and is crucial to the integration process.

Swanscombe

Swanscombe has a concentric urban structure with the cemetery in the centre. Historically Milton Road/Street, Stanhope Road, Swanscombe Street and Manor Road have provided Swanscombe's 'ring road'. These streets have their own character: they vary in width, role and landscape and some stretches feature street trees. Broomfield Recreation ground is offset to the north. The current High Street is one of the four historic exit routes from Swanscombe.

Greenhithe

Greenhithe's historic orientation along the river means the two main streets into the village, Station Road and The Avenue, run perpendicular to the Thames. They connect on either side with the High Street which runs parallel to the Thames. Eagles Road is a later addition to this structure.

Knockhall

Knockhall has a V-shaped structure comprising Mounts Road and Knockhall Road. The recreation and sports ground is adjacent to Knockhall Road.

Ingress Park

Within the new development of Ingress Park, the spatial structure is based upon Ingress Abbey and the park around this landmark building. Ingress Park Avenue and Lovers Lane make a U-shaped spinal road through the development providing a link with London Road. From this spinal road, a number of routes provide views and access to the river.

Swanscombe Peninsula West

Within Swanscombe Peninsula West, the Marshes and associated parks provide an important spatial element around which development is organised. Further development on the Swanscombe Peninsula will expand this parkland system. A U-shaped series of streets will connect the Peninsula West development with London Road (via Manor Road) and Ingress Park.



Eastern Quarry

The development of the Eastern Quarry is based on a spatial structure which comprises six villages separated by green wedges but interconnected by a spinal route. A series of smaller urban parks are located along this spinal route.

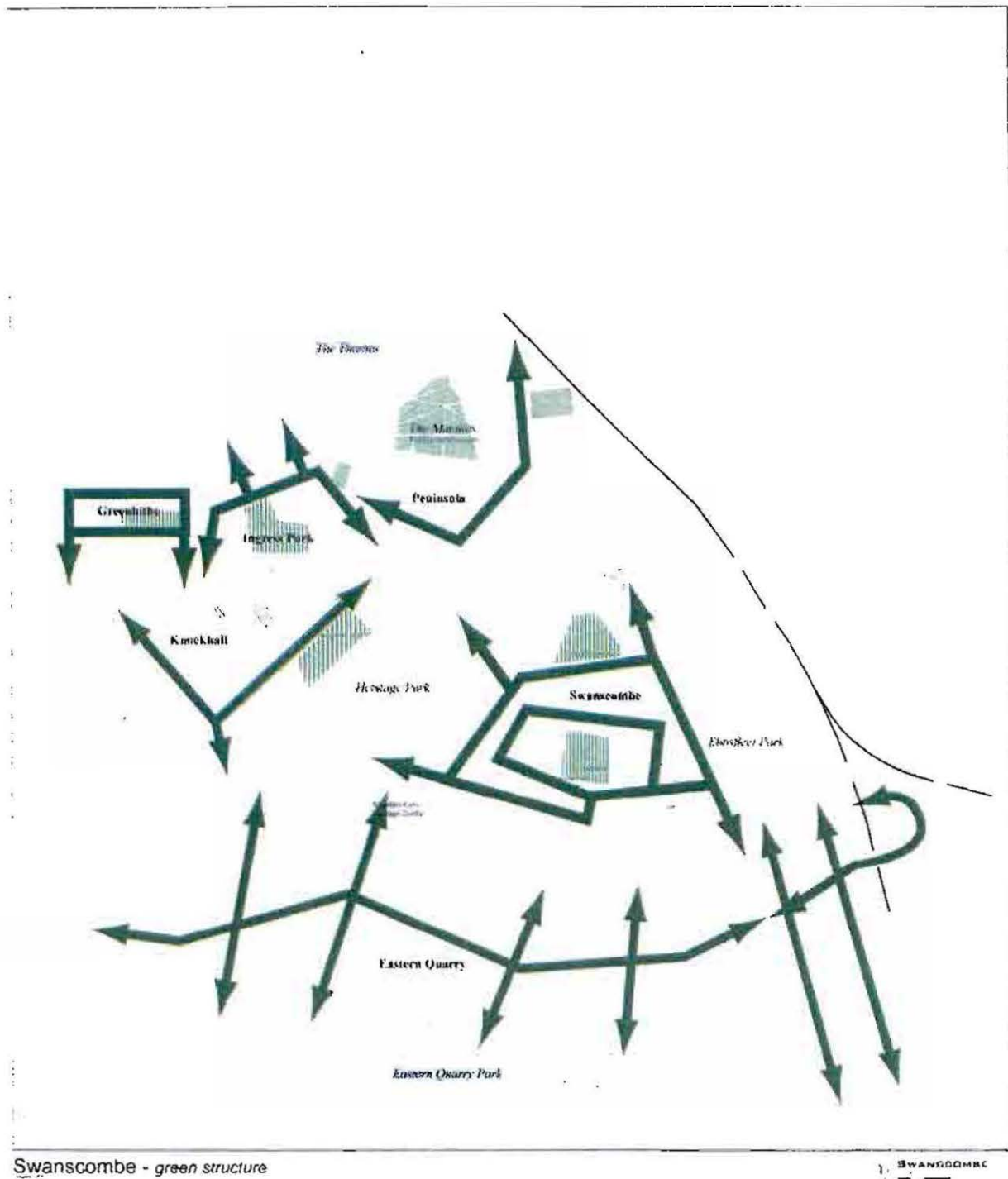
Ebbsfleet

Within Ebbsfleet the main route leads in a curving movement from Eastern Quarry to Ebbsfleet Station. Perpendicular to this route two streets run from the north to the south, hereby connecting Ebbsfleet Park with the green spaces to the south of Ebbsfleet.

Figure 7.3: Swanscombe and Greenhithe Green Structure



Figure 7.4: Swanscombe and Greenhithe Green Structure (1)

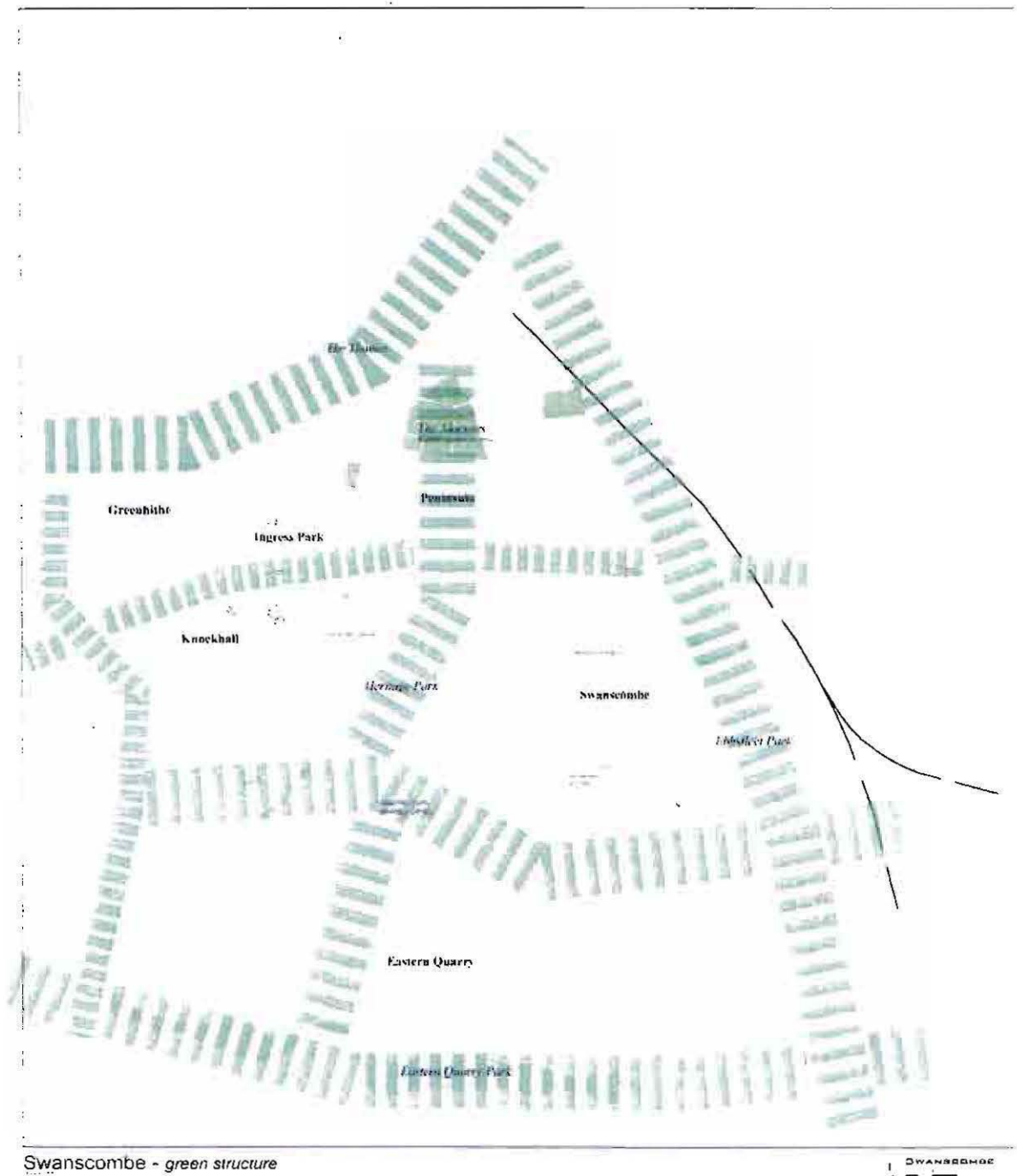


Swanscombe and Greenhithe

The establishment of a wider spatial network of parks and open spaces would connect Swanscombe, Greenhithe, Knockhall, Ingress Park, Swanscombe Peninsula and Eastern Quarry. This network would act on an intermediate level between the North Kent Green Grid on a regional scale and the internal spatial structures on a local scale.

This intermediate level is essential for the renaissance of the Swanscombe and Greenhithe area and provides a spatial framework that ensures the integration of the existing and new urban areas.

Figure 7.4: Swanscombe and Greenhithe Green Structure (2)



Swanscombe - green structure

The spatial framework comprises various elements, some of which already exist but need to be 'rediscovered' and others which relate to future developments. The elements have their own role, character and identity but together they form a continuous structure. It is essential that the spatial framework becomes embedded in the urban structure and becomes part of daily life. This means that urban areas need to face the open spaces rather than turning their back on them. This will be more straightforward to achieve in new developments than with infill development in existing areas.

The key elements in the spatial framework can be identified as the Thames Riverfront, London Road, Alkerden Lane, Eastern Quarry Park, St. Clements Way, Heritage Park (including the Marshes) and Ebbsfleet Park. The success and level of integration between the various developments depends on the level of continuity, accessibility and activity within these corridors. The nature of riverfront development at Ingress Park has a crucial role to play. Works on the Heritage Park, 'a walk into history', are being implemented. This will set the tone for further expansion of the park corridor and the level of quality and continuity.

Combining the spatial framework and the internal structures provides clear guidance for future green space and public realm studies and for more specific projects within Swanscombe.

Figure 7.5: Swanscombe and Greenhithe Green Structure (3)

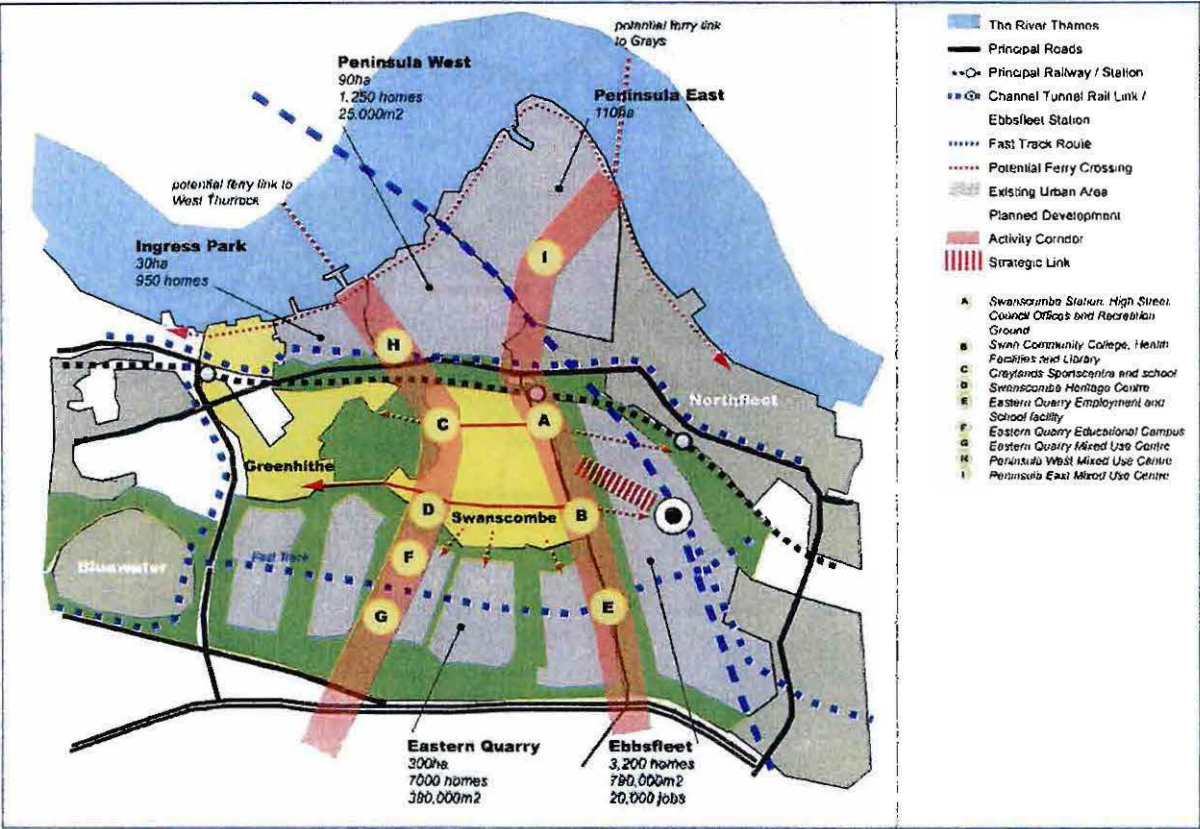


ACTIVITY CORRIDORS

New employment, commercial and leisure opportunities will be within close proximity of Swanscombe and Greenhithe. However, if the community is to maximize the benefits, then careful consideration should be given to how physical integration could be established. Figures 7.6 and 7.7 illustrate the activity corridor concept which provides the physical structuring element in the Masterplan for promoting greater physical integration between the existing communities, the riverside and new development.

Although predominantly residential in character, Swanscombe and Greenhithe has a variety of valuable community facilities. These facilities are clustered around the High Street, Swan Valley Community Campus, and Craylands Lane. Upgrading and expanding existing health, sports and education facilities and the new Town, Council offices near the High Street will further reinforce these clusters. This must be achieved with consideration of the provision of commercial leisure opportunities at Bluewater and Ebbsfleet.

Figure 7.6: Masterplan Concept

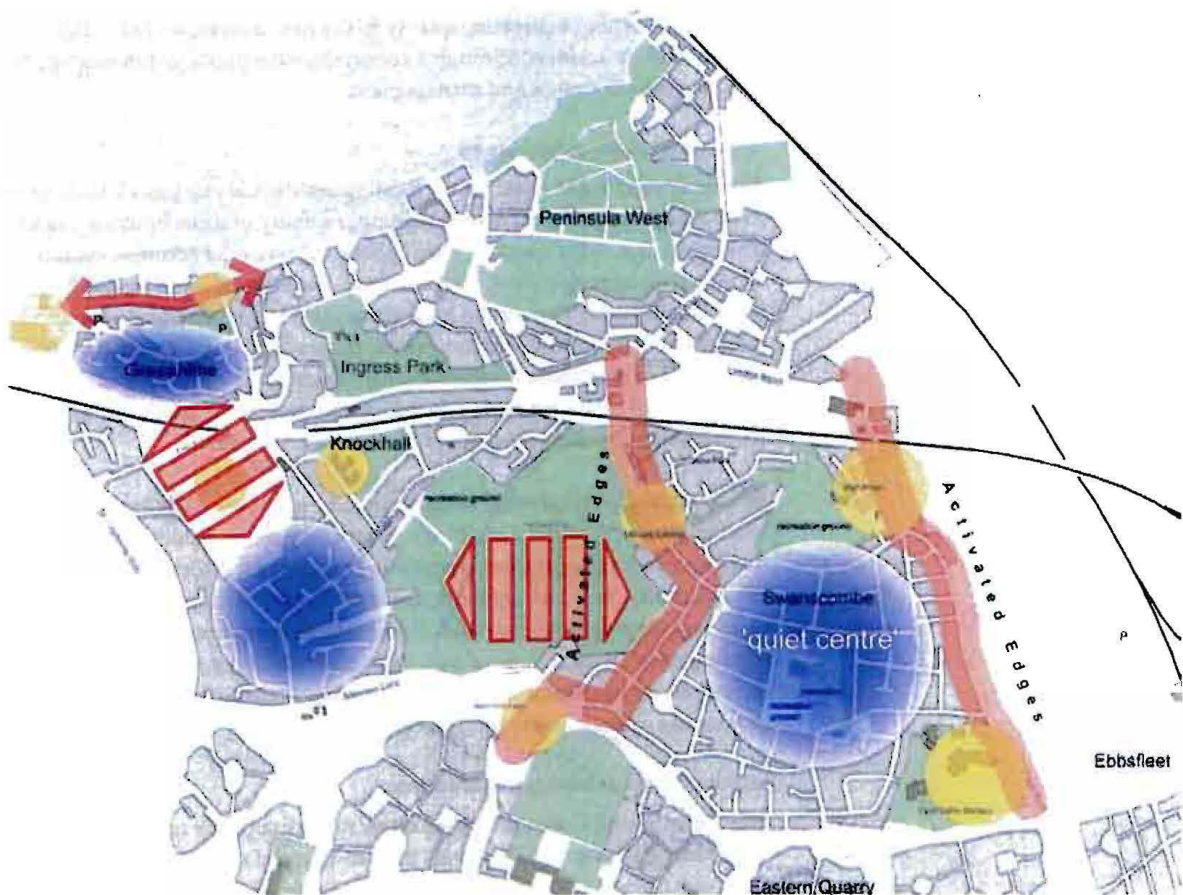


The corridor of activity through to Eastern Quarry at the western edge of Swanscombe (denoted by D in the diagram above) requires something to activate this link. Further expansion and improvements to the Heritage Park provide the opportunity for the development of Alkerden Farm as an associated attraction. Defining options and sources of revenue funding is vital before thinking for this activity corridor to progress.

The facility clusters are located on the corners of Swanscombe. Most activity is therefore focussed outward, towards the urban edges, leaving the heart of the town as a quiet living environment. This concept of a 'quiet heart and activated edges' is a valuable structural tool in the development of the masterplan. Acknowledging and strengthening this functional structure means intensification of development and activity and improvements to the High Street, Stanhope Road, Craylands Lane and Milton Street, and considering them as Activity Corridors which define the residential core.

To expand these Activity Corridors beyond Swanscombe and Greenhithe's borders to the new centres of activity, such as Swanscombe Peninsula West Mixed Use Centre and Eastern Quarry Commercial Centre and Educational Campus, will be of strategic importance to the successful integration of the area. The Activity Corridors will provide access and logical routing between various areas and centres, and will establish guiding principles for future mixed-use development projects, for Eastern Quarry and Swanscombe Peninsula West and East and beyond.

Figure 7.7: Activity Corridors and Residential Core



In addition to the two Activity Corridors, strategic links with Ebbsfleet are required to maximise the benefits from proposed new employment opportunities and transport infrastructure. The Fastrack service to the commercial centre and offices associated with the international station provides a direct public transport link for residents of the villages in Eastern

Quarry. A network of roads, crossing Southfleet Road, ensures further connections between Ebbsfleet and Eastern Quarry.

Swanscombe and Greenhithe, however, is physically separated from Ebbsfleet by a Park and the topography of the site is a further constraining factor. Nevertheless the establishment of a physical and visual link would bring Swanscombe and Greenhithe closer to Ebbsfleet, allow for easier access to new facilities and break down the isolation of the existing settlements. Such a link would also promote sustainable modes of transport for short distance trips. On a local scale, existing and new pedestrian and cycle routes should ensure further permeability of the Ebbsfleet and Heritage Parks.

KEY THEMES

The following key themes underpin the Masterplan Concept and Vision.

Creation of a sustainable village

The central concept is to reinforce Swanscombe and Greenhithe's position as component 'urban villages' or centres of activity within Kent Thameside. This is consistent with the Masterplan concepts for Ebbsfleet and Eastern Quarry. The objective must be to create within Swanscombe and Greenhithe an environment of equivalent quality to the new developments. High quality will be achieved through a comprehensive public realm strategy that focuses on both design and management.

Improving residential areas

The most significant aspect of the existing residential stock is a lack of variety in housing typology and density and poor quality of some housing stock. This gives rise to the need for much greater diversity of accommodation types in future residential provision: from one bedroom and studio flats, to large single family homes and housing to meet local needs (e.g. elderly persons housing). Allowing for greater diversity of building typologies will contribute to establishing higher quality housing. This includes improving the quality of existing housing. Funding and delivering improvements to private sector housing stock must be defined and agreed.

Intensification of residential areas, especially along the Activity Corridors, around transport nodes and along the urban riverside would introduce hierarchy and variety in use, density and public space, thereby strengthening the urban structure and legibility. It would also increase opportunities for retail and employment provision. Focussing development around the existing railway stations would increase the viability of existing rail services as well as the likelihood that increased transport demand will support greater use of sustainable transport modes.

Improving transport infrastructure

Swanscombe and Greenhithe's transport infrastructure is under-developed and existing provision is relatively poor in terms of road, rail, bus, pedestrian and cycle linkages. The masterplan must secure effective linkages to surrounding developments and facilities for public transport, pedestrians and cyclists. In addition, the masterplan must address issues of linkages to the highway network and traffic management.

Swanscombe Gateway

Currently the High Street lacks a sense of place and a distinct identity. Although it is the main entrance to Swanscombe by car and by public transport it has no strong visible relation with the station and London Road. Intensification of uses on the High Street, especially to the north of the railway line, and in the area embracing the junction with London Road would create a defined gateway into Swanscombe and introduce a real sense of arrival. Fostering the existing historic character with a combination of residential, office, small business and commercial uses and excellent transport facilities would create a small but strong mixed-use hub. In the High Street a balance has to be established between accommodating all modes of transport. Motorised traffic and parking facilities have to be an integrated part of the street, but organised in a rational and unobtrusive way.

Green Structure and links to the Riverfront

The green structure and links to the Riverfront are Swanscombe and Greenhithe's most important environmental assets. It is essential to protect and enhance the green space, especially areas identified as being ecologically rich, and to maximise the value of the riverfront location. The development of a strategy to improve accessibility to green spaces and the river, including increased provision for leisure use, is vital. Improved interaction between the edges of urban and green areas will encourage greater surveillance, appreciation and more activity in the park land areas.

8. the masterplan

The Masterplan concept and vision described in the previous section forms the basis for Swanscombe and Greenhithe's future regeneration and development. Over the next two decades both Swanscombe and Greenhithe will become important nodes within a larger network of interconnected urban settlements, with each settlement retaining its own distinct character and appeal. The strategic location, the excellent highway and rail connections (15 minutes to London from 2009) and the area's small scale, distinctive character and green feel will combine to make it an attractive and desirable place to live.

The Masterplan provides a framework for Swanscombe and Greenhithe to meet the challenges provided by the development of Kent Thameside and the associated investment in new infrastructure in the area. It sets out objectives and principles to achieve integration with the surrounding planned developments and to guide regeneration and details a number of specific projects that will act as a catalyst and help to shape the settlements in the future.

The Masterplan will provide an important tool in delivering change, a framework and a tool for engaging with a range of stakeholders, funding partners and the local community. It will provide the confidence that the area is going to change and assist in attracting new investment into the area to achieve these objectives.

The Masterplan is based on a clear strategy and incorporates:

- Proposals relating to the whole area (referred to in this document as generic proposals);
- Specific development opportunities and projects, described in detail in the next section.

The Masterplan focuses on the core area of Swanscombe but the framework also incorporates proposals for Greenhithe. In some cases, options are presented in respect of specific development projects for further consideration in relation to future funding opportunities. There will be a requirement for the preparation of more detailed design guidance in respect of these proposed development options.

MASTERPLAN PRINCIPLES

The Masterplan for the under study area is illustrated in Figure 8.1. A principal objective is to raise the quality of Swanscombe and Greenhithe to a level commensurate with the new development areas. The Masterplan is an opportunity for making places for people- it includes the way places work and matters such as community safety; how places look and the connections between people and places, movement and urban form.

The objective is to create a safe and attractive living environment that provides a sense of identity and place to which local communities can relate and in which they can have pride. The Masterplan promotes the creation of a high quality built environment for all and seeks to secure a high quality of townscape, urban form, building design and urban spaces through the use of architecture, urban design and landscape design. Based on the key characteristics of successful urban areas identified in the DETR (now superseded by the ODPM)/CABE publication 'By Design', the principles of which will guide future change and development in the area may be summarised as follows:

- **Character** – A place with its own identity
- **Public Realm** - A place with high quality, attractive and successful public spaces and streets
- **Linkages** - A place that is connected with its surroundings, easy to understand and where public and private spaces are clearly distinguished
- **Transport and Movement** - A place that is easy to get to and move through
- **Sustainability** – A viable, successful place which minimises resource consumption
- **Adaptability** - A place that can change easily in response to changing requirements
- **Diversity** - A place which offers variety and choice

The Masterplan proposals seek to respond to these key principles.

Detailed proposals related specifically to either Swanscombe or Greenhithe are set out later in this section.

Character

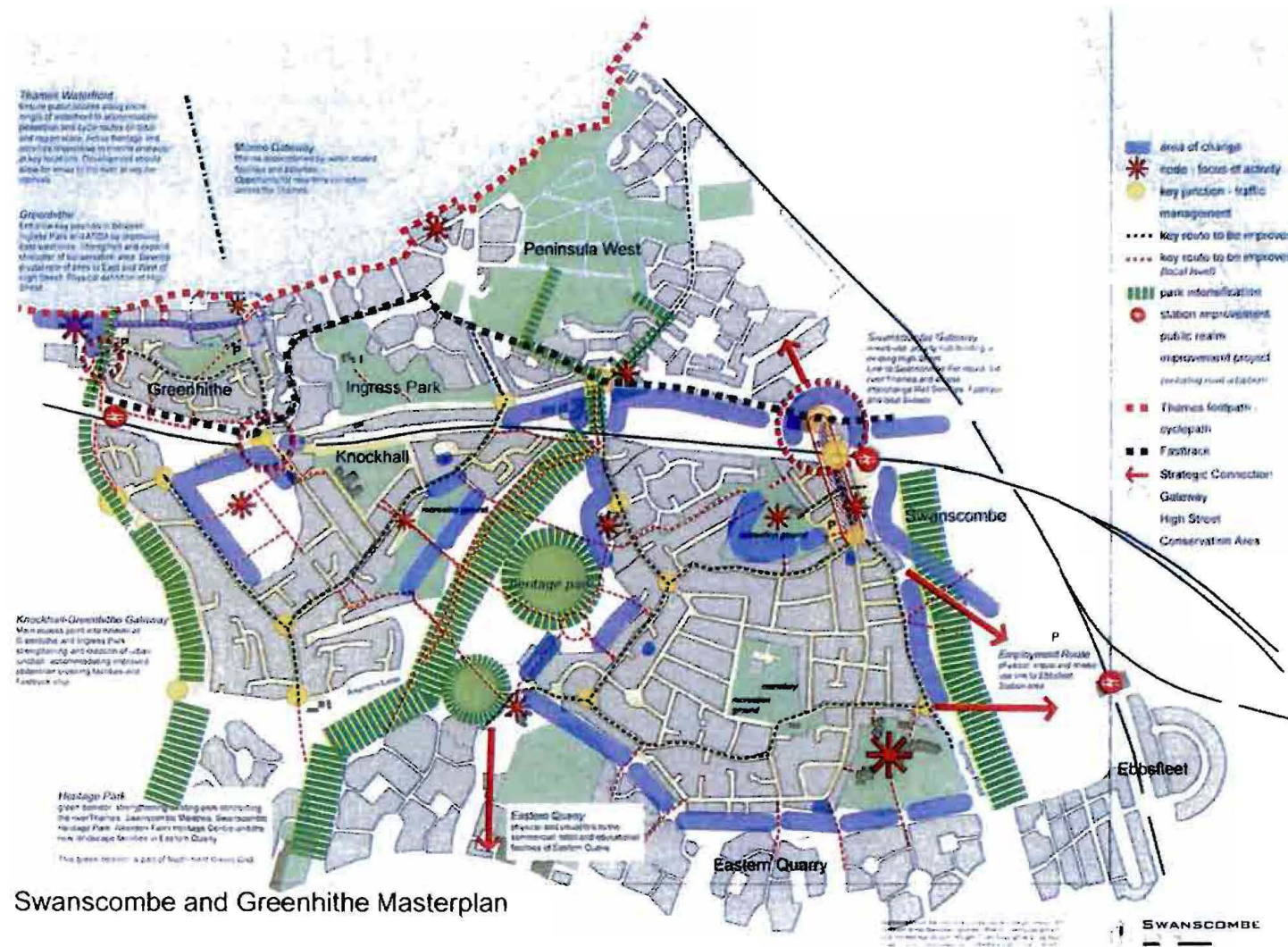
The 'character' of an area is determined by its form and layout; building types; architectural style and detailing; the age of buildings; the form, appearance and location of open spaces; the mix of uses and activities and how the area is used by people.

The following general principles will apply to new development and the design of public realm and environmental improvement schemes.

- The need to create distinctive places well related to the wider area
- The importance of raising aspirations through the promotion of high quality development which will change the image and perception of the area.

Swanscombe and Greenhithe offer a unique opportunity for integrating the existing communities with new developments through the creation of a distinctive relationship between the town and its surroundings. This will create an added dimension to the town, giving improved access to the underutilised resource of the surrounding parkland as well as creating new routes through and surveillance onto the parkland.

Figure 8.1: Swanscombe and Greenhithe Masterplan



Swanscombe and Greenhithe Masterplan

Within this wider urban area, Swanscombe and Greenhithe has the potential to fulfil the role of distinctive settlements within the Kent Thameside growth area

The layout and use of varying scales of streets, public open space and quality designed activity clusters, along with the variety of activities within the parkland have been used to give Swanscombe and Greenhithe a distinctive sense of place.

Key Principles

- Overall, a high quality of building and landscape design and use of local materials will be encouraged for developments across Swanscombe and Greenhithe.
- Developers will be required to apply best practice examples in sustainability and energy efficiency in submitting planning applications.
- The provision of the Town Council Offices onto the Recreation Ground will create the opportunity for higher density and community uses overlooking the open space and fronting onto The Grove.
- Designs for the Swanscombe Gateway and the development sites at the Leisure Centre and the Campus will be required to be of a high architectural quality, to create distinctive landmark buildings that will frame views to and from the town and the Parkland and give a sense of arrival or 'gateway' to Swanscombe.
- Part of the site currently occupied by the surface car park at The Grove is identified for a high quality, mixed use development complementing the uses in the Town Council Offices and the High Street.
- The proposed redevelopment of the corner of the High Street and Milton Road will define the access to the High Street and provide a connection between the Council Offices and the High Street in order to achieve a better integration of the facilities.
- The proposed redevelopment of the corner of Swanscombe Street and Stanhope Road will create a 'front door' for the facilities on the Swan Valley Community Campus. The proposed new vocational centre will provide a landmark building that could further define the access to the Campus, or wherever the vocational centre is sited.
- Improvements to Greenhithe's High Street will be in conjunction with the conservation area and will emphasize the character of the place.
- The proposed redevelopment of the boatyard site and Everards site will define the start and end of the High Street and provide a connection between Greenhithe and Ingress Park.
- Designs for the Greenhithe / Knockhall Gateway and the adjacent development site requires high architectural quality and needs to create a distinctive landmark building that will provide a sense of arrival or 'gateway' to Greenhithe and Knockhall and frame views to and from St. Mary Church.



Creating an interactive and animated public realm



Active frontages onto the public realm



Mix of soft and hard landscape treatments and connection to the Woodland

Public Realm

Within Swanscombe and Greenhithe there is a tremendous opportunity to improve the physical quality of the town through investment in the public realm. The public realm – the areas around and between buildings such as streets, squares and parks – needs significant improvement to encourage a sense of pride and ownership and place for the residents and visitors to enjoy the town. The objective should be to raise aspirations and the quality of the public realm. High quality public realm should be an integrated part of any new development projects.

The public realm aims to;

- **Reinforce image and identity** – celebrate the history of the area through a strategy of public realm improvements concentrated upon new lighting, street furniture and public art.
- **Focus public realm** – public realm interventions should be co-ordinated at key activity focal points, gateways and landmark areas to aid permeability and legibility.
- **Establish meeting areas** - seating and meeting areas should be established at significant points along major movement routes such as the activity corridors and the High Street, providing spaces for public animation and human interaction.
- **Prioritise pedestrians** - greater priority for pedestrians at road junctions to increase safety and ease of circulation movements, particularly focussing upon the activity hubs.
- **Enhance public safety** – public spaces should be well lit and where possible receive passive surveillance from surrounding buildings and uses, such as at the recreation ground and the parks.
- **Green the town** - through tree planting and environmental improvements, bring the tranquil atmosphere and setting of the Heritage Park, Ebbsfleet Park and Green Grid into the heart of the urban built form.
- **Reduce impact of car parking** - car parking will be sensitively designed to enhance rather than detract from the quality of the public realm, particularly in The Grove, the High Street and residential streets.

The principal categories of public realm relate to:

- High Street / The Grove
- Residential Streets
- Recreation Ground and open spaces
- Heritage Park
- Ebbsfleet Park

An enhanced public realm network will make the area a more pleasant and enjoyable experience for people living, working and visiting. Key activity nodes such as the railway stations, the High Street, the Campus and the recreational areas will be linked together by a network of high quality and attractive inter-connected spaces and streets. Through the delivery of some key public realm interventions, a legible sequence of spaces and streets will be created that will provide a clear movement pattern throughout the area for both residents and visitors.



Key Principles

- Continuity of the green structure as identified in Chapter 5 has to be achieved in both a visual as physical way.
- Ensuring public access along the entire length of the waterfront will access to the river and accommodate continuous pedestrian and cycle routes.
- The green corridor comprising of The Marshes, The Heritage Park and Eastern Quarry Park should be aimed at providing a well defined route to and from the river for pedestrians and cyclists as well as wildlife.
- Public access around the Wildlife and Nature Reserve in the Marshes is aimed at improved access to the river.
- Environmental improvements to St.Clements Way, London Road and Alkerden Road will provide connectivity between various open spaces and provide visual relief from the highway character of these parts of the green grid.
- Improvements to the settlement's internal spatial structure will integrate local open spaces in the wider framework.
- The comprehensive public realm strategy will ensure coherence and continuity in the design of the public realm.
- High quality materials, street furniture and lighting should be of good integrated design to reduce street 'clutter' and light pollution.
- Bespoke design should be introduced at key locations to enhance their identity.
- Signage and traffic management schemes should be coordinated with the public realm strategy to ensure a holistic and uniform approach to the design of the public realm.

The proposals are illustrated in Figure 6.1 and in more detail in Figure 6.2.

Linkages

Urban areas are defined by networks of streets and spaces.

The Masterplan seeks to create well defined street frontages and routes which will be enhanced through improved lighting, paving and planting.

New buildings will face onto the street, with buildings on key routes and at key junctions forming landmarks to aid orientation. The gateways to the key areas should be highlighted by significant buildings, spaces or features which are easy to identify.

Public spaces will have active frontages. The introduction of some retail, service and community uses will animate public spaces and improve surveillance and community safety.

The following general principles will apply to new development and the design of public realm and environmental improvement schemes in the Swanscombe area.

- The creation of legible and well defined routes and spaces
- Celebration of elements such as main routes or key spaces
- Continuity of building frontages





Landmark building with imaginative lighting



Homezone: shared surface for vehicles and pedestrians

Key Principles

- Creation of strong physical and visual links through the use of landmark buildings, spaces, structures and signage.
- Development should set up a clear hierarchy between public fronts (streets and squares) and private backs (gardens and courtyards).
- Development should be built to the back of pavements and must have their primary access and windows overlooking the public realm.
- Where residential development faces onto the street, a well defined private 'defensible space' should be provided to give a sense of privacy and security.
- The use of high quality and distinctive built form, public realm and public art in strategic locations will be used to convey a strong sense of arrival and a sense of place.
- Focal public open spaces should be emphasized and should be clearly defined and used for civic, leisure and recreational purposes.
- Entry points to the parkland areas should be used to create distinctive landscape settings and provide information, to both attract people into the park and to aid in orientation and way finding.
- The new Town Council building will be a prominent landmark structure within the town centre.
- There should be a range of landmark elements throughout the development at the local/pedestrian scale.

Traffic and movement

The objective is to create a network of streets that cater for all forms of movement which pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles can share comfortably and safely. More sustainable forms of movement such as walking and cycling and the use of public transport will be encouraged.

Re-establishing the balance between motorised traffic and soft modes of transport can help to change the perception of traffic and parking in Swanscombe.

The principal proposals are illustrated in Figure 8.1 and in more detail in Figure 8.3. The principal proposals relate to:

- Traffic management
- Public transport
- Treatment of station
- Parking
- Residential Streets
- High Street / The Grove
- Pedestrian and Cycle routes

Key Principles

- The traffic management strategy will guide vehicles through and around Swanscombe and Greenhithe using the most appropriate roads, defined by their role in the road network hierarchy, streetscape and character.
- The traffic management strategy will ensure greater pedestrian priority at key locations such as the High Street and the activity clusters and other community facilities.
- Junction improvements at key locations will provide greater priority to pedestrians and cyclists and ensure better legibility and connectivity.
- Provision of improved pedestrian and cyclist crossing facilities along London Road on recognised desire lines will improve the connectivity and integration of the areas on both sides of the road.
- A package of “soft” and “hard” measures should be developed which address walking and cycling, bus and car access to the stations, for both residents and visitors, again recognising existing and future desire lines.
- To facilitate reliable bus movement changes to the on-street parking will be necessary, although possibly unpopular, in order to avoid pinch points and subsequent delays to services.
- Formalising parking areas and provision of regular passing places along the bus routes, possibly by utilising some of the existing grass verge adjacent to the road will alleviate congestion on bus routes.
- Bus stops should be protected by parking restrictions so that buses can pull into the kerb, easing access for passengers to and from the bus. These areas of restriction will also act as passing places for the bus services.
- Vehicle speed should be managed by the use of traffic calming, both horizontal and vertical deflections can be provided in conjunction with enhancement of the streetscape, e.g. planters to form chicanes, raised pedestrian crossing points etc.
- All traffic calming will be designed so as not to inhibit the movement of buses, and will be designed to accommodate the needs of the bus operators.
- The provision of effective traffic calming will keep vehicle speeds low and reduce intimidation of cyclists by traffic.
- Strategic Cycle Network Route 1 should be defined more clearly and segregated where there is sufficient space.
- Cycle provisions will be introduced along the river to provide a cycle route reaching from Dartford to Gravesend.
- A number of strategic local cycle routes are identified and should be enhanced.
- Cyclists will share carriageway space with vehicles where space does not allow for the provision of dedicated cycle lanes.
- Pedestrian and cycle routes to and from Fastrack stops will ensure maximum connectivity between Fastrack and residential areas.



Mix of uses vertically and horizontally

Sustainability

The creation of a sustainable living and working environment is fundamental to the regeneration of Swanscombe and Greenhithe. It is proposed that sustainability considerations, such as energy and water efficiency, use of renewable energy, sustainable construction and drainage, building orientation, use of recycled materials, minimisation of waste and prolonging the lifespan of buildings should be incorporated into all new development in and around Swanscombe and Greenhithe.

The Masterplan seeks to encourage more sustainable lifestyles can be achieved through the promotion of more sustainable modes of transport such as public transport and walking and through mixed-use development which provides employment and retail opportunities within easy reach of housing areas.

Good urban design will promote social inclusion and the strengthening of existing communities. Good quality living and working environments and community and leisure facilities will help to retain and attract people to the area.

Adaptability

New development should be able to adapt to the changing requirements of the community over time. Also changes in use of existing buildings from housing to commercial, community and retail uses and vice versa should be encouraged where appropriate to respond to changing requirements over time.

The street pattern and layout of residential areas should also be capable of adaptation to accommodate different uses in the future.

Diversity

The interaction between people of different backgrounds and from different age groups and a range of facilities and activities can make urban life more vibrant and interesting. This will encourage people to remain within the area.

Variation in the appearance and design of development in different parts of the area will assist in promoting diversity and establishing a 'sense of place' and community spirit.

Diversity of an urban area is reflected in the mix of land uses. New development should seek to introduce a mix of uses to add vibrancy and variety to residential areas including a range of facilities to meet the needs of the local community.

Community Safety

New development will be in accordance with the guidance set out in 'By Design'. The guidance promotes a practical and co-ordinated approach to the problems of safety and security for people and properties and provides practical solutions for the design and layout of the physical environment which will help to reduce crime, fear of crime and antisocial behaviour.



Use of colour and built form to create diversity

People feel safer on active streets and in places with natural or other surveillance. Safety will also be improved by creating and sustaining a sense of place where it enables people to identify with their surroundings and this can be achieved through appropriate layout, high quality architecture and landscape design. A poor environment signals neglect and lack of control and can enhance a sense of vulnerability.

Creating an Inclusive Environment

Development will be required to meet the highest standards of accessibility and inclusion. Principles of inclusive design will require that developments:

- Can be used safely and easily by as many people as possible without undue effort, separation or special treatment
- Offer the freedom to choose and the ability to participate equally in the development's activities
- Value diversity and difference

Accessibility for disabled people will be a requirement of all development within Swanscombe and Greenhithe and the surrounding parkland in accordance with the principles of inclusive design. Disabled people will be fully involved in determining accessibility and in the preparation of detailed design schemes.

MASTERPLAN PROPOSALS

The following text expands on the already identified Masterplan proposals for Swanscombe and Greenhithe. The proposals relate to the principal categories of:

- Public Realm and Open Space (Figure 8.2);
- Transport and Movement (Figure 8.6);
- Development opportunities (Figure 8.10).

Public Realm and Open Space

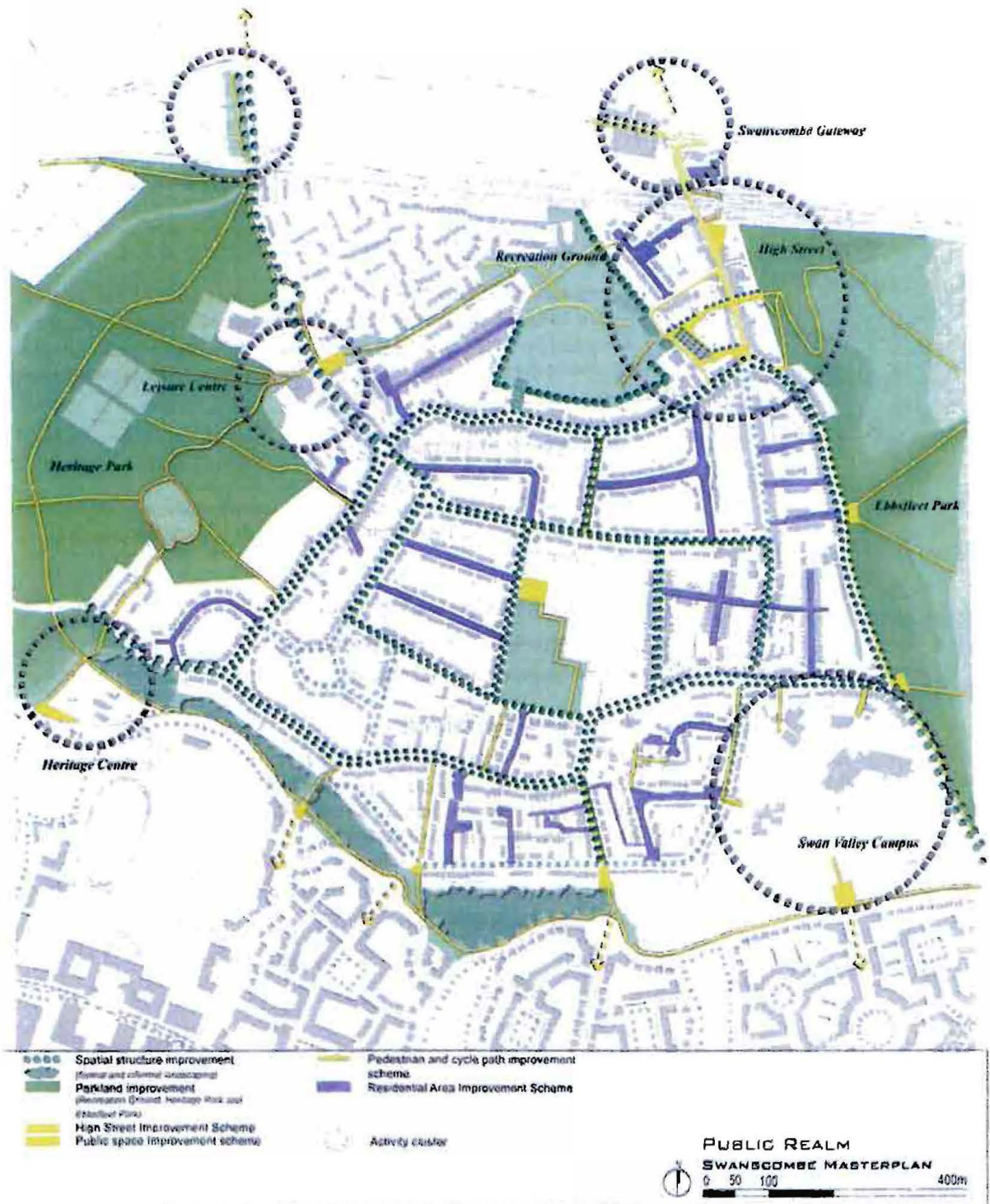
The condition of the public realm in many ways reflects the status of a place. The public realm in Swanscombe is generally in need of improvement and enhanced maintenance, but has the potential to lift the quality of the town and improve the identity of the place.

Proposals relating to the public realm and open spaces are identified as:

- Public Realm network
- High Street / The Grove / Swanscombe Gateway;
- Residential Streets;
- Open Spaces.

The proposals related to the public realm and open spaces are illustrated in Figure 8.2

Figure 8.2: Public Realm and Open Space



Public Realm Network

The public realm network spatial structure as defined in Section 5 will ensure a visual and physical connection between the various areas of Swanscombe and link Swanscombe to its surroundings. Within the spatial structure, an 'inner ring' (Swanscombe Street, Gunn Road, Trebble Road, Ames Road, Park Road and Eglinton Road) and 'outer ring' (Milton Road, Stanhope Road, Swanscombe Street, Manor Road, Milton Street and Milton Road) has been identified as one of the principal structuring elements. Emphasising both the 'inner ring' and 'outer ring' will provide better legibility and understanding of Swanscombe and establish a distinctive character and identity to these streets.



Existing



Figure 8.3 Proposed treatment of 'outer ring'

In addition to the 'inner ring' and 'outer ring' the 'approaches' to Swanscombe (Alkerden Lane, Craylands Lane, The High Street and Southfleet Road) need to be improved.

To ensure the quality and effectiveness of this spatial structure continuity and coherence in design are required. It is recommended that a Streetscape Design Manual should be developed to ensure the co-ordination of materials, street furniture, lighting and signage to be used throughout Swanscombe. The defined palette of materials and street furniture will ensure visual continuation of the spatial structure.



High Street | The Grove

The High Street is possibly the most important character area within Swanscombe. Its location next to the station and London Road means that the High Street provides many people's first impression of Swanscombe. This emphasizes the importance of high quality public realm:

Key proposals:

- The public realm should be designed according to the standards set out in the Masterplan and enhance the distinct character of the place.
- The use of high quality materials, street furniture and lighting will provide the desired quality envisaged for the High Street.
- The use of a coherent palette of materials and colours will contribute to the overall quality of the streetscape.
- The use of block pavement on the carriageway will emphasize the character of the High Street as a destination rather than of a through-route.
- A Shop Front Improvement Scheme is proposed to ensure quality and coherence along the High Street.
- Parking facilities will be designed as an integral part of the streetscape.

Improvements to the public realm must be considered in conjunction with the traffic arrangements and redevelopment proposals for the High Street. This project is identified as one of the key development opportunities with regards to the regeneration of Swanscombe and will be described and illustrated in more detail later in this section.

Residential Streets

Most of the public realm comprises residential streets. However few of these streets are designed in a way that reflects or enhances this residential use. Most streets are dominated by motorised traffic and parked cars. The lack of soft landscaping and in many cases poor quality surface materials and street furniture also contributes to a poor quality environment.

Key Proposals:

- The design of residential streets is aimed at reducing the visual and physical presence of motorised traffic.
- A clear indication of change in character will be given to residential areas through of distinctive entrance treatments.
- Where possible, materials other than tarmac will be used for the surface of the carriageway. The use of single-surface-treatment is proposed to visually emphasize the residential use.
- Reduction of road width, formalised parking bays, build-outs and planters is proposed to reduce speed and enhance security in residential streets.

The opportunity to improve the quality of the residential streets is illustrated in the artist's impressions of Sun Road and Albert Road.



Existing



Figure 8.4: Albert Road – proposed improvements



Existing



Figure 8.5: Sun Road – proposed improvements

Open Spaces

Swanscombe comprises a number of open spaces. These open spaces form an important element in daily life, whether they are used for informal recreation, as through-routes or sports.

The principal open spaces identified in Swanscombe are:

- Broomfield Recreation Ground;
- The Heritage Park;
- Ebbsfleet Park;

In general these open spaces lack quality and definition and are poorly integrated with the surrounding urban areas. Improving the quality of the open spaces will not only strengthen the visual attractiveness of the spaces themselves but also their value for the community. An improved sense of safety, greater use and accessibility and permeability will embed the open space in Swanscombe.

Proposed improvements to the open spaces include:

- Creation of new park entrances.
- Provision of high quality pedestrian and cycle paths through the open spaces.
- Enhancement of lighting facilities.
- Signage and integration panels to improve legibility.
- Edge treatment and creation of well defined boundaries.
- Landscape and planting schemes.
- Variety in character to enhance ecological value and biodiversity
- Improvements to management and maintenance regime.
- Provision of enhanced sports and educational facilities.

The Broomfield Recreation Ground, the Heritage Park and Ebbsfleet Park present key opportunities with regards to the regeneration of Swanscombe and are described and illustrated in more detail later in this section.

Transport and Movement

An important prerequisite for promoting integration and achieving the regeneration of Swanscombe is the provision of physical connections. Transport and movement facilities enable people to access services, community facilities and neighbouring places.

Traffic and Movement proposals relate to:

- Traffic Management
- The High Street / The Grove
- Swanscombe Station
- Residential Streets
- Public Transport
- Parking
- Pedestrian and Cycle Routes.

Traffic management

Traffic management within Swanscombe is a complex issue and will influence the operation and feel of the town. The overall objective is to regulate traffic flows on sensitive residential roads, whilst allowing residents to move freely within Swanscombe and into Knockhall and Greenhithe and the surrounding areas.

In the short term, junction improvements along London Road will be brought forward, along with the provision of Fastrack stops, which are being developed to ease local access problems. The Masterplan aims to reinforce

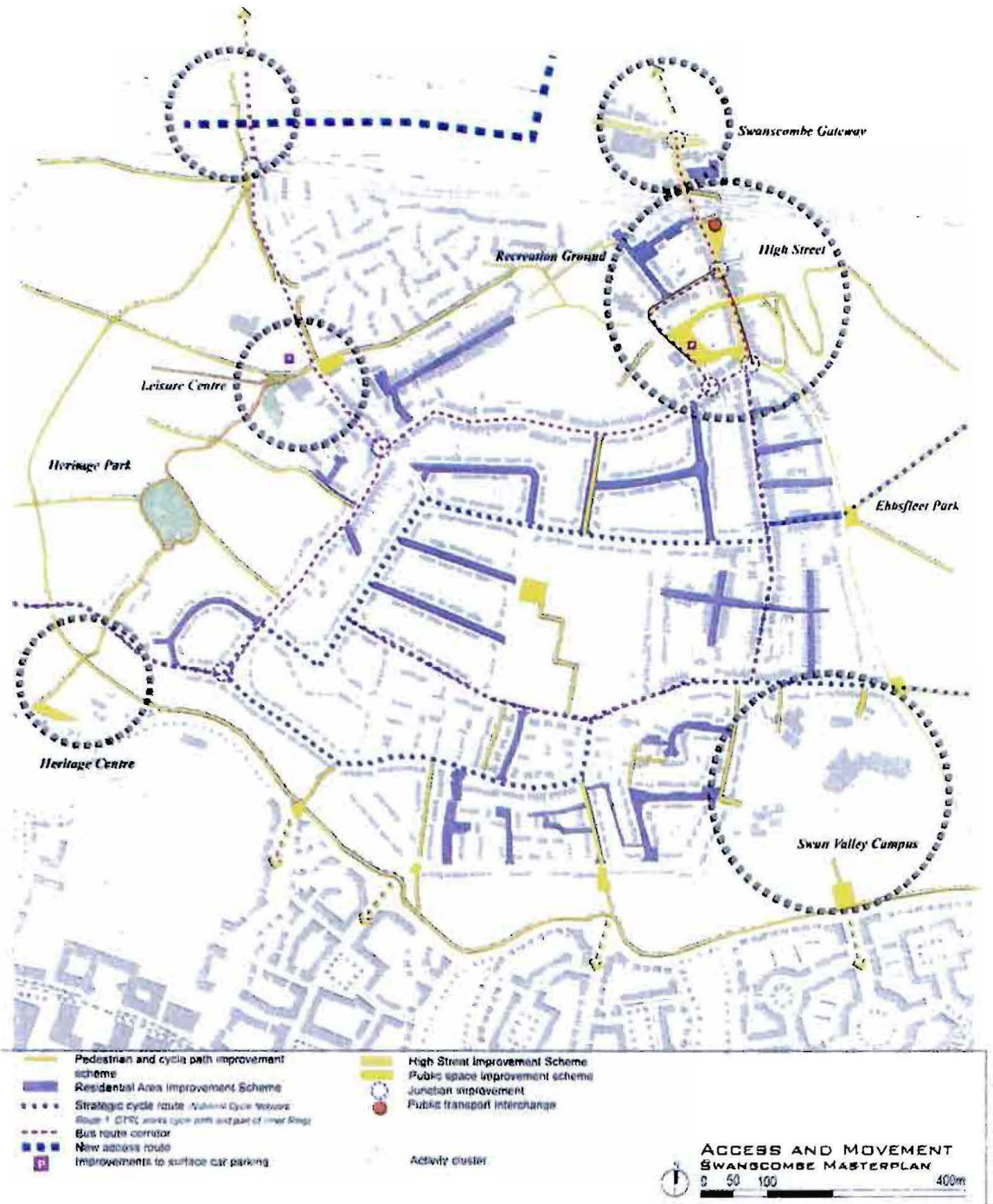
the identity of Swanscombe by providing a gateway at the entry to High Street.

There are a number of potentially conflicting requirements, relating to the management of traffic throughout Swanscombe, which have come to light through discussion with stakeholders, including:

- Maintaining on-street parking provision;
- Effective public transport operation;
- Reducing rat-running through Swanscombe;
- Integration with surrounding communities and new developments;
- Improved access within Swanscombe and beyond;
- Provision of high quality public realm and infrastructure.

The Masterplan seeks to balance these needs. However close working with key stakeholders will be crucial in delivering success.

Figure 8.6: Transport and Movement



The proposed activity corridors at the edges of Swanscombe, the 'inner and outer ring roads' and the 'residential areas' will enable these places to be defined by their streetscape which will be designed to reflect the uses within in these areas. It is anticipated that the outer ring and inner ring will act as movement routes containing quality public transport corridors and facilities for cyclists. It is possible that parking management or restraint may be required in these streets in order to facilitate reliable and efficient bus movement. As with all highways proposals in the Masterplan, the layout of these streets will be determined at the detailed design stage following consultation with key stakeholders.

A number of junctions have been identified as improvement projects. Within Swanscombe two junctions are identified as being of strategic importance.

Craylands Lane / Milton Road Junction

The existing roundabout junction works reasonably well for traffic but provision of crossing points on the desire lines between the local shops and residential areas will improve conditions for pedestrians.

Cycle parking should be provided in convenient locations, in order to promote local trips by bicycle to local shops.

Alterations to the roundabout will help to define the junction, further reduce vehicle movement and ease movement for pedestrians in this area. This should be achieved by narrowing the geometry of the junction and raising it to the same height as the surrounding pavement, with the use of contrasting materials to highlight the area.

The exit into Ames Road should be narrowed using planters and suitable materials to reinforce the change in hierarchy between the outer ring and the residential road.

Milton Street / Manor Road

The geometry of the existing roundabout should be altered to narrow the junction down in order to reduce vehicle speeds and decrease crossing distances for pedestrians.

The poor pedestrian facilities should be improved by providing dropped kerbs and tactile paving on pedestrian desire lines.

Protection of the bus stops with parking restrictions or bus cages will improve the operation of the bus stops and will allow buses to pull up to the stops, and ease access for passengers on and off the buses.

A gateway effect should be created to reinforce the identity of Swanscombe and entry into the 'outer ring'

High Street / The Grove

The High St and Stanhope Road, forming part of Swanscombe's outer ring, will provide an important local link to Eastern Quarry and Ebbsfleet for residents of Swanscombe, enabling integration with the surrounding development proposals. This route is not intended to be a general traffic link, and should only be for local traffic, as stated in the Eastern Quarry Planning Brief, Supplementary Planning Guidance, (July 2002).

There will be a requirement to explore how Stanhope Road and the High Street can be made less attractive to through traffic in consultation with key stakeholders and local residents. However adjusting signal timings to make the new high quality distributor routes within Eastern Quarry and Ebbsfleet more attractive to through traffic should have a positive effect. The local operation and treatment of Stanhope Road and the High Street, including the provision of pedestrian and cycle facilities, will also make these routes less attractive to through traffic. The delivery of the Peninsula Way scheme may also make the High Street less desirable to through traffic. These proposals will still allow local traffic to access Eastern Quarry, Ebbsfleet and the A2.

Several approaches have been identified for treatment of the High St. because the traffic situation of the High Street has to be considered in conjunction with public realm improvements and development opportunities of the High Street, these approaches will be further addressed and illustrated in more detail in the section regarding 'Development Opportunities and Projects'.

Residential Streets

It is important to reduce the dominant role of motorised traffic in residential streets and to enhance pedestrian priority. Traffic calming features within the residential area will assist in keeping vehicular speeds low, in the region of 10 -20mph and create a safer pedestrian and cycling environment. These residential areas are shown in detail within Figure 8.6.

The proposed measures include:

- Raised junctions / speed tables;
- Changes to road geometry and reduced radii on corners;
- Use of contrasting paving strips or textured materials to warn traffic of shared areas;
- Use of landscaping and materials to create a less car dominated environment;
- Shared surfaces or 'low' kerbs.

The traffic calmed features will also contribute to a safe and pleasant pedestrian and cycle environment for residents and visitors to the area.

These proposals will be developed in conjunction with the public realm improvements to the residential street to ensure a high quality streetscape.

Public Transport

Swanscombe is reasonably well served by public transport. Rail services, bus services and in future, Fastrack, provide public transport connections between Swanscombe and key destinations in the wider area, such as Dartford, Gravesend and Bluewater. Link services to Fastrack will form important new changes to public transport provision. Ebbsfleet Station will complement these connections with a high speed rail link providing a direct link to Stratford and St. Pancras.

from a frequency increase is the 455/456, which has a combined half hourly frequency. If this were to be increased to fifteen minute intervals it would be close to a “turn up and go” service, where passengers would not need to refer to a timetable before travelling.

However, central to this option is whether the investment in additional buses on the 455/456 corridor would attract sufficient additional patronage to ensure commercial viability. It is unlikely to be a service that the County Council will have as a priority for enhancement funding and therefore further modelling of potential passenger growth and viability would be required to justify an increased frequency of service.

This option has the benefit of being relatively straightforward to develop and deliver, with the opportunity to increase interchange opportunities between buses and rail within Swanscombe and to generally raise the profile of local buses.

Scenario 2: Develop New Network, Similar Service Levels

If funding for higher frequencies is not available, there may be opportunities to use existing resources more efficiently to serve Swanscombe. This would involve a network routing review and potentially the use of new routes to provide links to popular destinations.

This option is constrained in part by the layout of Swanscombe and the surrounding roads. For example if the 480/490 were diverted into Swanscombe via the High Street, Milton Road and Craylands Lane, this would provide a major service improvement. However this is probably not practical because of the highway constraints and the need to provide fast end to end journeys on the route. Taking the 480/490 service through to Bluewater via Swanscombe and Alkerden Lane would be another option, but this would miss out Greenhithe. The same concerns are preventing Fastrack from directly accessing Swanscombe.

Locally, the 455/466 services could be given a revised route within Swanscombe, although the perception is that the operator has refined the route to the best network already. There are few areas within Swanscombe that are further than 400 metres from a bus stop served by the 455/466 and therefore any change may increase walking distances for some users. It is therefore suggested that significant route changes within the town itself (apart from those arising from revised layouts in the High Street and at the station) are unlikely to attract significant passenger benefits compared to the disruption to existing users.

It may be possible to make better use of services 308/309, but this route has the added disadvantage of potential service unreliability, as it is a relatively long distance route which passes through a number of congested locations. Its route covers the same roads as the 455/466 but there are unlikely to be benefits in revising the local routing.

Overall there appears to be few benefits in revising routes within Swanscombe or to the destinations served. Indeed changes to service routings may lose patronage from existing customers and lead to a loss of service viability. It is therefore considered that more radical solutions should be considered if there is to be a step change in local bus use in Swanscombe.

Scenario 3: Develop New and Innovative Service Provision at Enhanced Level

Reviewing longer term options for public transport in Swanscombe leads to a “clean sheet” solution, considering all of the potential service opportunities that new vehicles, service investment and technology can achieve.

Utilising conventional buses, it may be appropriate to consider a routing and service level strategy which fits in with the emerging local bus service hierarchy:

- Fastrack – Interurban High Quality Network
- Urban Network – Other key bus links on main corridors, using conventional buses
- Local Bus – serving the community, with smaller vehicles operating through residential areas (for example, to provide a link service to Fastrack)
- Community Transport – Specialist services, providing travel for those who can not use conventional buses

Swanscombe can benefit from services at all levels of the hierarchy, but there should be an emphasis on getting the local bus links right. These do not have to be conventional buses, either single or double deck, but could be more frequent minibuses or demand responsive taxibus services.

There is a requirement to maintain existing conventional bus links, for peak hour employment trips and school transport movements where capacity may be an issue. Therefore changing existing services to higher frequency minibus operation may offer some benefits if service capacity throughout the day can be maintained.

However, Swanscombe could benefit from more innovative public transport solutions. There are increasing numbers of successful urban and suburban demand responsive or taxibus services, which offer flexibility in pickups and destinations, timing and availability. Such a service could be developed for Swanscombe town initially, with the potential opportunity to extend it with the benefit of developer’s contributions from the Swanscombe peninsula and other developments.

The technology which demand responsive transport (DRT) requires is now well established and the ease of booking has been much improved through the availability of bespoke software and dedicated call centres. While such services are unlikely to ever be commercially viable, because of the overheads of operating a pre booking system, there are real service efficiencies in that the vehicles only operate when required and response rates can be very good. Dynamic vehicle scheduling and new methods of trip booking (internet, SMS text, etc.) are also reducing costs of DRT schemes.

To take forward such a proposal will require a scoping study and wide consultation to identify potential demand. Once the scheme is developed opportunities for funding, from central government, local authority or developer funding streams would need to be considered. However initial assessment suggests that Swanscombe is the type of community where a DRT solution could be effective and therefore it is recommended that it is explored further in the implementation of the Masterplan.

Station and rail services

The station's main issues relate to location and the quality of facilities and environment. While the location cannot be changed (although the development of Swanscombe Peninsula will make the station more central to surrounding developments) there are opportunities to address many of the other perceived problems associated with Swanscombe Station.

These proposals relate to:

- Improving the visibility of the station
- Improving information and signage facilities
- Lighting and surveillance
- Physical appearance of platforms and shelters
- Improvements to access paths
- Access to and from station by foot, cycle, car and bus

The proposals for the station are described and illustrated in more detail in the next Section (see Development Opportunities and Projects).

Parking

To be able to properly address improvements across the generic proposals relating to the public realm, housing, traffic management and pedestrian and cycle activity, decisions about car parking have to be part of the solutions. Clarification of car parking arrangements is also implied in several of the projects described in the section relating to 'Development Opportunities and Projects'.

Parking within Swanscombe is a serious and sensitive issue and care will be needed to balance the needs of:

- Residents who wish to park close to their homes;
- Pedestrians and wheelchair users who require adequate footway width;
- Public transport and cyclists who require adequate carriageway width.

The concerns have been raised in Stakeholder discussions, as illustrated in the photographs:

- There is a high demand for parking throughout the whole of Swanscombe;
- Cars are parked with two wheels on footways even though there is enough sufficient carriageway space;
- The parking areas to the rear of properties are underused;
- On road parking is acting as a form of traffic calming, reducing speeding throughout Swanscombe;
- The Grove Road car park is poorly signed and is cut off from the High Street by stepped access and narrow poor quality pedestrian routes.

On street parking

The photos to the left illustrate some current examples of the problems related to on street parking. On street parking should be rationalised so that the parking capacity is maintained where possible and the traffic calming effect of the parked vehicles is still enforced. This could be achieved by using a combination of the following measures:



On-street parking



Access to Grove Road car park

- Provision of sheltered parking to provide traffic calming and improve the streetscape by the use of planting and attractive materials. This would keep vehicles off the footways;
- Widening of footways with vehicles permitted to park half on half off the kerb, overall providing more space for pedestrians;
- Introduction of echelon parking to maximise the number of spaces on street;
- Conversion of underused verges, for example on Stanhope Road, to remove parking from the pedestrian areas. This would create more road space for the implementation of cycle and public transport links.

On street parking must be considered in relation to the availability of parking at the rear of many properties in Swanscombe. It is important to understand why this is currently under-utilised. Fear of crime, narrow access points and lack of back garden gates could be amongst the problems. A further study is required to find out the optimal design and management routines to encourage use of rear parking. These should then be implemented in relevant areas, as on street parking is rationalised.



Parking controls

Consideration will need to be given to the management of all parking in the area to avoid Swanscombe becoming an overflow car park for passengers using Ebbsfleet Station, particularly in the light of the proposed public transport improvements and pedestrian linkages between Swanscombe and Ebbsfleet. This may necessitate a Controlled Parking Zone for the area which would need thorough consultation with residents and key stakeholders.

It is possible that parking restrictions may be required to enhance the performance of the bus route through Swanscombe. If this is the case, every effort must be made to accommodate the demand for parking.

Car parking requirements in respect of any new development must be considered. As changes to car parking are proposed in each area of Swanscombe and Greenhithe, full public consultation will be required.

Pedestrian and Cycle routes

On a local scale, it is essential to acknowledge the importance of pedestrian and cycle links to community facilities such as The Grove/Broomfield Recreation Ground, the High Street, Swan Valley Community Campus and through the Heritage Park to Knockhall. The state of these links can be intimidating and even deter people from using community resources. Improved linkages to Knockhall, Eastern Quarry and Ebbsfleet will provide more vitality to the areas along the route and a better interconnection. It is important to ease movement at a local scale as much as possible, therefore negating the need for cars for short distance travel.



Existing



Figure 8.8: Artist impression of improved pedestrian route

The Masterplan identifies strategic pedestrian and cycle routes however a more detailed walking strategy should be undertaken to identify pedestrian desire lines and local pedestrian routes. Improvements to pedestrian routes should focus on:

- Provision of even and unobstructed surfaces.
- Edge treatment, providing a clear and continuous definition between the private and public domain.
- A good level of lighting
- Landscaping to enhance and demonstrate the route
- Build form to address the paths providing natural surveillance.

The effects of these proposals are illustrated in Figure 8.8.

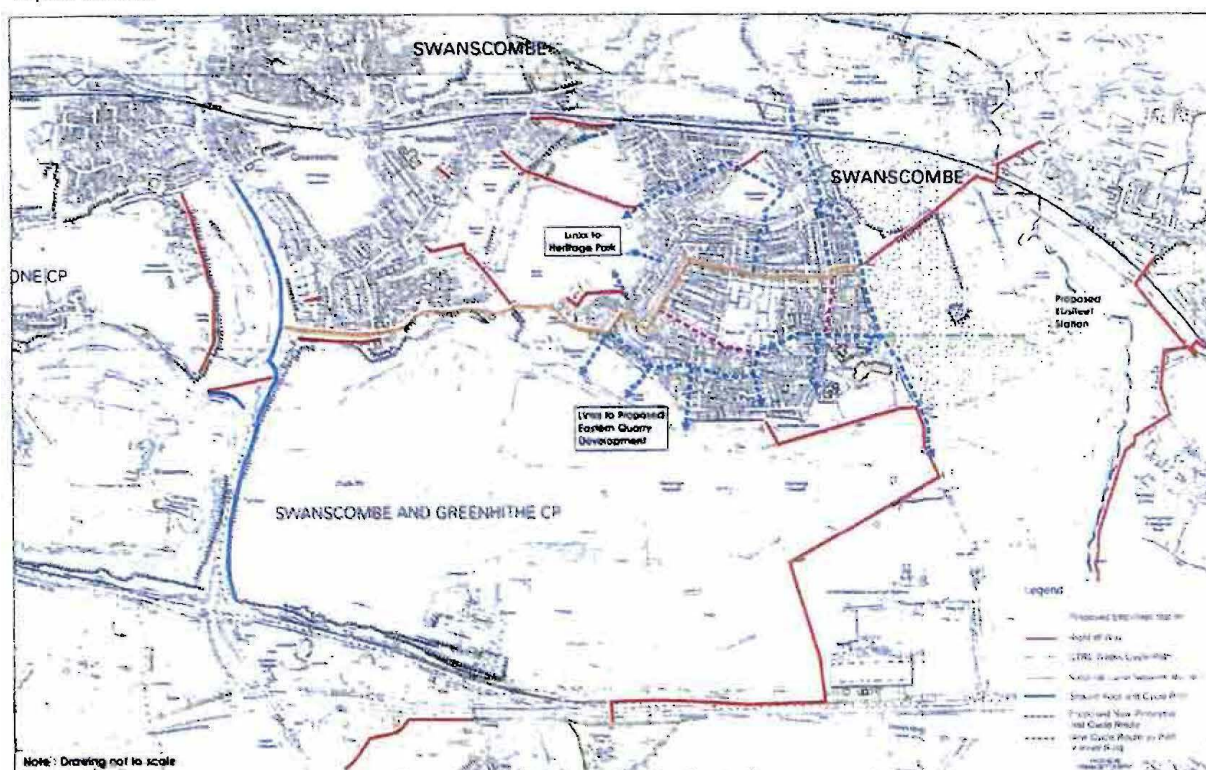
The National Cycle Network (NCN) Route 1 passes through Swanscombe, as illustrated in Figure 8.9. The route is on road utilising existing residential streets in the area: there are no specific cycle facilities such as cycle lanes associated with this route.

The existing provision for cyclists in the area is poor, with no dedicated measures and an extreme lack of direction signing, even on the National Cycle Route. However, there are a number of routes through open space that could be enhanced as leisure routes.

It is likely that the provision of facilities for cyclists will be for local movement and will have limited effect on longer distance journeys, given the topography of the surrounding areas. However, the development proposals for the surrounding area provide the opportunity of establishing new links to Swanscombe which should enhance integration with the surrounding area.



Figure 8.9: The National Cycle Network through Swanscombe, and proposed pedestrian and cycle route improvements



It is considered that new routes should be implemented, as illustrated in Figure 8.6 to provide access to key local destinations, including;

- Riverfront;
- Swanscombe Station;
- High Street;
- New Town Council Offices;
- Recreation Ground;
- Heritage Park;
- Swan Valley Community Campus;
- All the schools in the area;
- Ebbsfleet Park.

These local links should also act as feeder routes to the NCN in order to help encourage more strategic cycle journeys. Safe secure cycle parking using 'Sheffield' type stands should be provided at all of the key destinations listed above.

Cycling routes will be a combination of on road and off road routes. The off road routes will be used to provide access to and through the many areas of open space and can act as attractive leisure routes. On road routes will be provided which give cyclists specific advantages over motor vehicles, such as contra flow cycle lanes (as proposed in the High Street and illustrated in the section regarding 'Development Opportunities and Projects') and advanced cycle stop lines at traffic signals. These cycle routes should be marked by dedicated cycle lanes on normal roads, although it is envisaged that cyclists in general would mix with other road users in the residential areas.

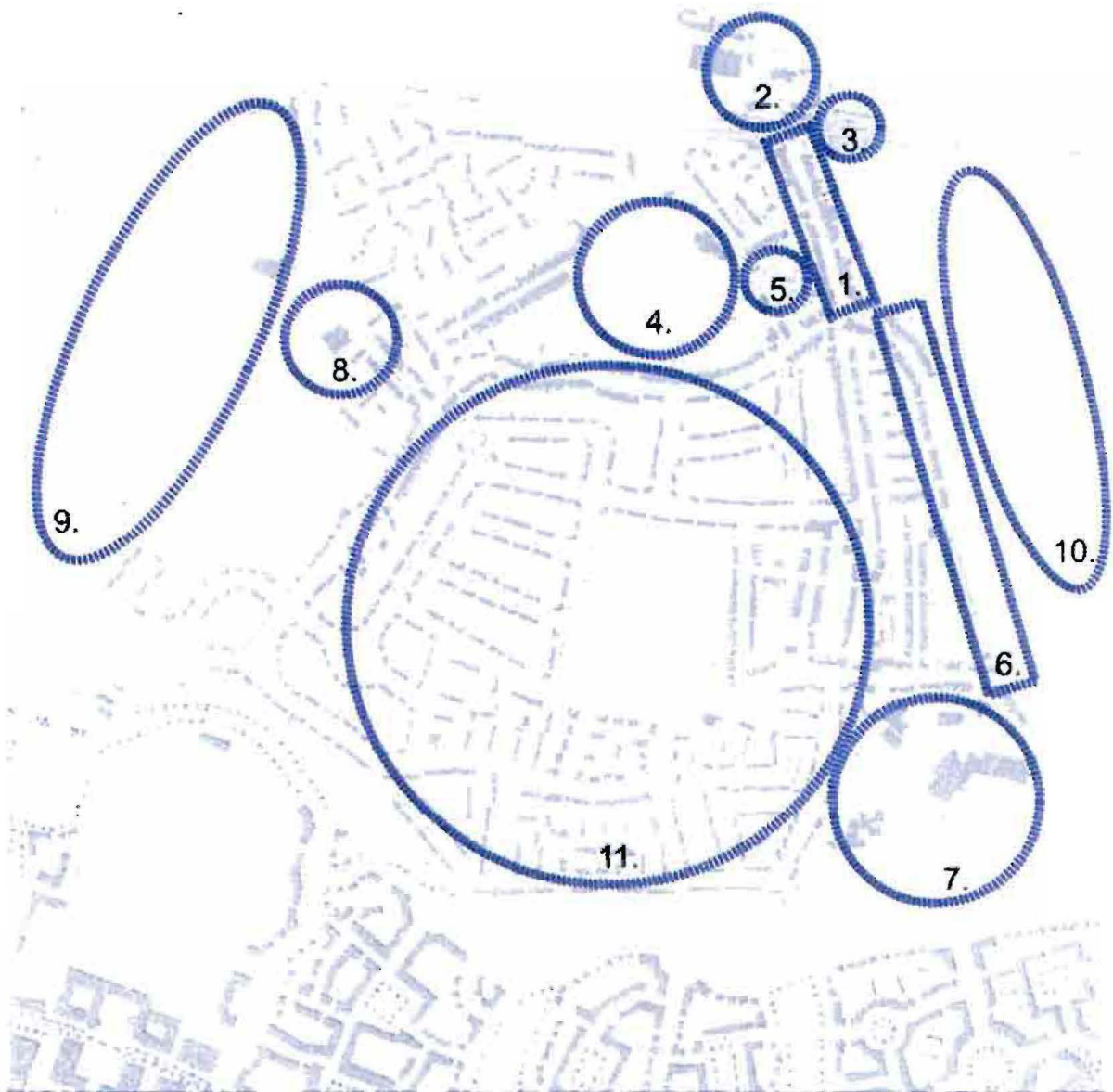
Development opportunities

A number of development opportunities have been identified in the Masterplan. These are illustrated in Figure 8.10 and comprise:

- Opportunities for redevelopment and reuse of previously developed land and buildings;
- Potential development sites;
- Development of activity clusters.

The development opportunities and projects are examined in further detail in Section 9.

Figure 8.10: Development Opportunities



- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. High Street | 6. Stanhope Road |
| 2. Swanscombe Gateway | 7. Campus |
| 3. Station | 8. Leisure Centre |
| 4. Recreation Ground | 9. Heritage Park |
| 5. The Grove | 10. Ebsfleet Park |
| | 11. Private Housing Stock |

FIGURE 8.5

SPECIFIC PROJECTS

SWANSCOMBE MASTERPLAN



9. development opportunities & projects

A number of development opportunities and projects have been identified. These projects will act as catalysts in the regeneration of Swanscombe and Greenhithe and will serve to strengthen the main activity clusters. The development opportunities and projects relate to:

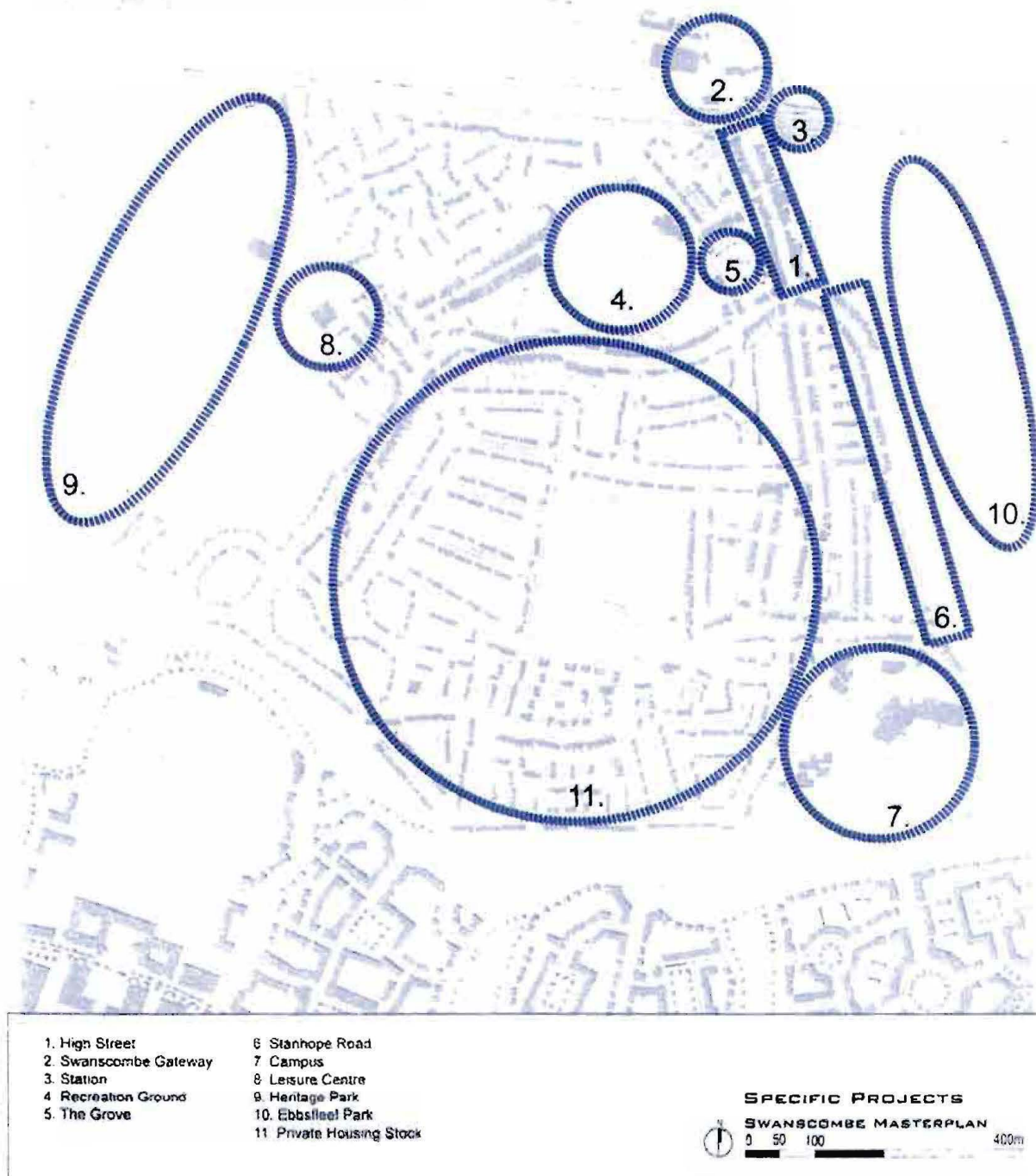
1. High Street
2. Swanscombe Gateway
3. Station
4. Broomfield Recreation Ground
5. The Grove
6. Stanhope Road
7. Swan Valley Community Campus
8. Craylands Lane Leisure Centre
9. The Heritage Park
10. Ebbsfleet Park
11. Private Housing Stock

These projects are illustrated in Figure 9.1.

In Greenhithe and Knockhall opportunities and projects are illustrated in Figure 9.22 and relate to:

1. High Street
2. Thames Riverfront
3. Greenhithe Station
4. Knockhall-Greenhithe Gateway
5. Disused works and Knockhall Pit
6. Mounts Road and Knockhall Road
7. Knockhall Sports and Recreation Ground

Figure 9.1 Swanscombe development projects



1 High Street

The High Street is possibly the single most significant area in Swanscombe. In considering the approach to be adopted to enhance its appearance and function, action will have to go beyond the currently identified Retail Strategy and public realm improvements.

The High Street is adjacent to other key development opportunities projects: the Gateway (2), Station (3), the recreation ground (4), The Grove (5), Stanhope Road (6) and Ebbsfleet Park (10). All of these projects are interrelated, but they are described separately for the purposes of this document.

The High Street currently comprises a mix of homes, small retail units, a small supermarket and some commercial properties including a post office sorting office. At peak times, traffic on the High Street is heavy, with obstructions caused by deliveries to shops, buses, school coaches and unmanaged parking. Stakeholders have expressed great concern about the impact of increased levels on the High Street due to the Ebbsfleet and Eastern quarry developments. Therefore the future of the High Street is closely related to improving traffic circulation.

The proposed approach to improve the High Street involves a combination of proposals relating to public realm, traffic and redevelopment. This is illustrated in Figure 9.2 and comprises:

- One-Way traffic system (illustrated in Figure 9.3) providing new traffic circulation in the High Street and The Grove.
- Reallocation of road space for the benefit of pedestrians and cyclists and to provide on-street parking.
- Redevelopment of existing residential properties on eastern side of High Street to provide station plaza, new footpaths, mixed-use development comprising new station facilities and a public space as a new focal point.
- Creation of station plaza to provide improved access to station, bus interchange directly related to the station and drop-off parking facilities serving station.
- Environmental improvements to the High Street, including surface treatment, landscaping, new street furniture and re-organisation of parking facilities.
- Creation of pedestrian and cycle route connecting Broomfield Recreation Ground, The Grove car park, the High Street and to Ebbsfleet Station through Ebbsfleet Park.
- Redevelopment of The Grove car park, including landscaping and rationalisation of parking facilities.
- New development to overlook and activate the new links in to the High Street and the car park.
- Redevelopment of corner of Milton Road and High Street to provide better integration of the High Street, Town Council Offices and The Grove car park.
- Creation of public space and public art providing entrance and focal point to the High Street.

- Remodelling and signalisation of junction Milton Road-High Street to provide greater pedestrian priority and ease of movement and well defined entrance to the High Street.
- At the southern end of the High Street, innovative design and attractive materials to form a southern 'gateway' to the High Street.

Figure 9.2: High Street

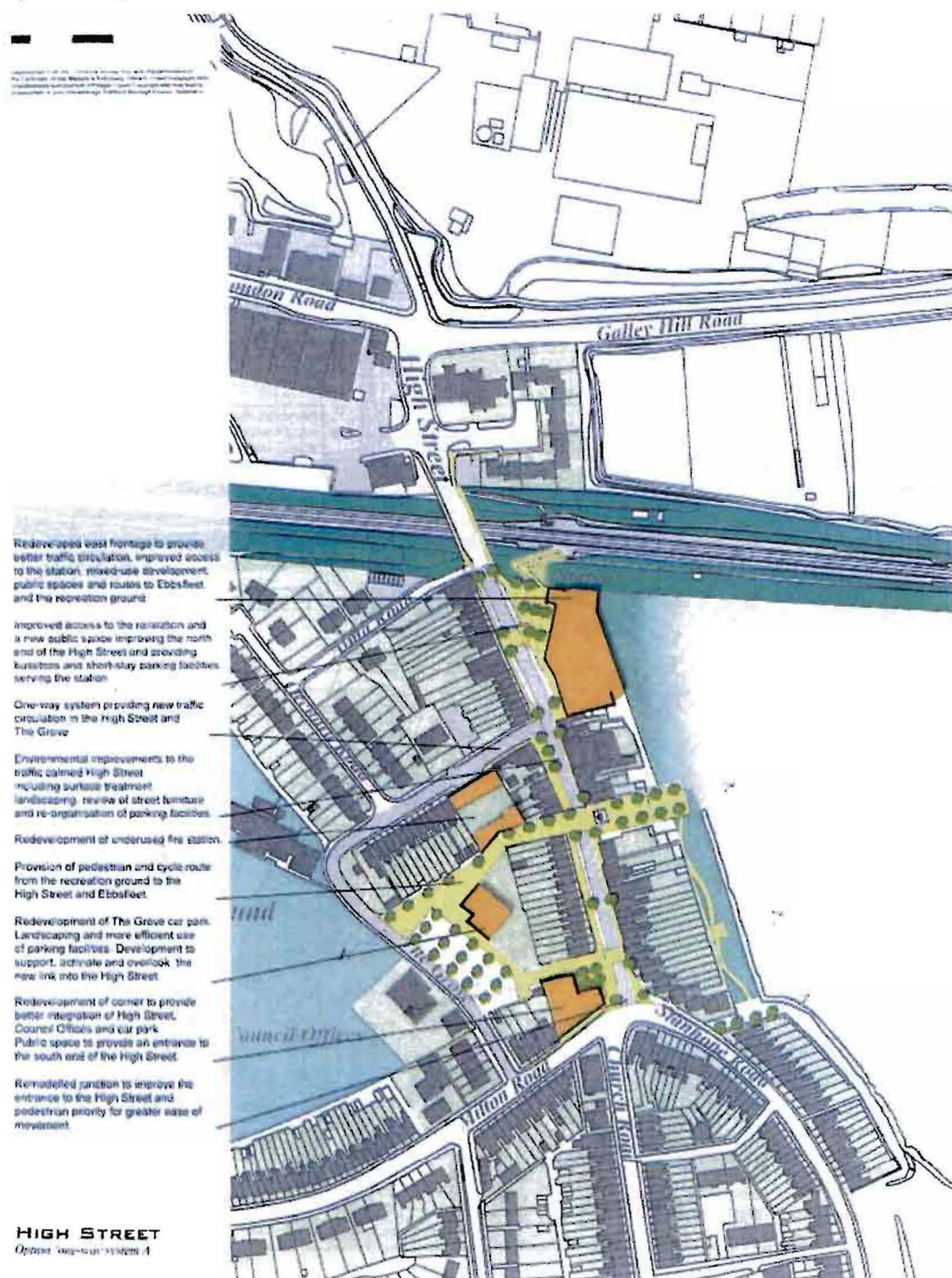
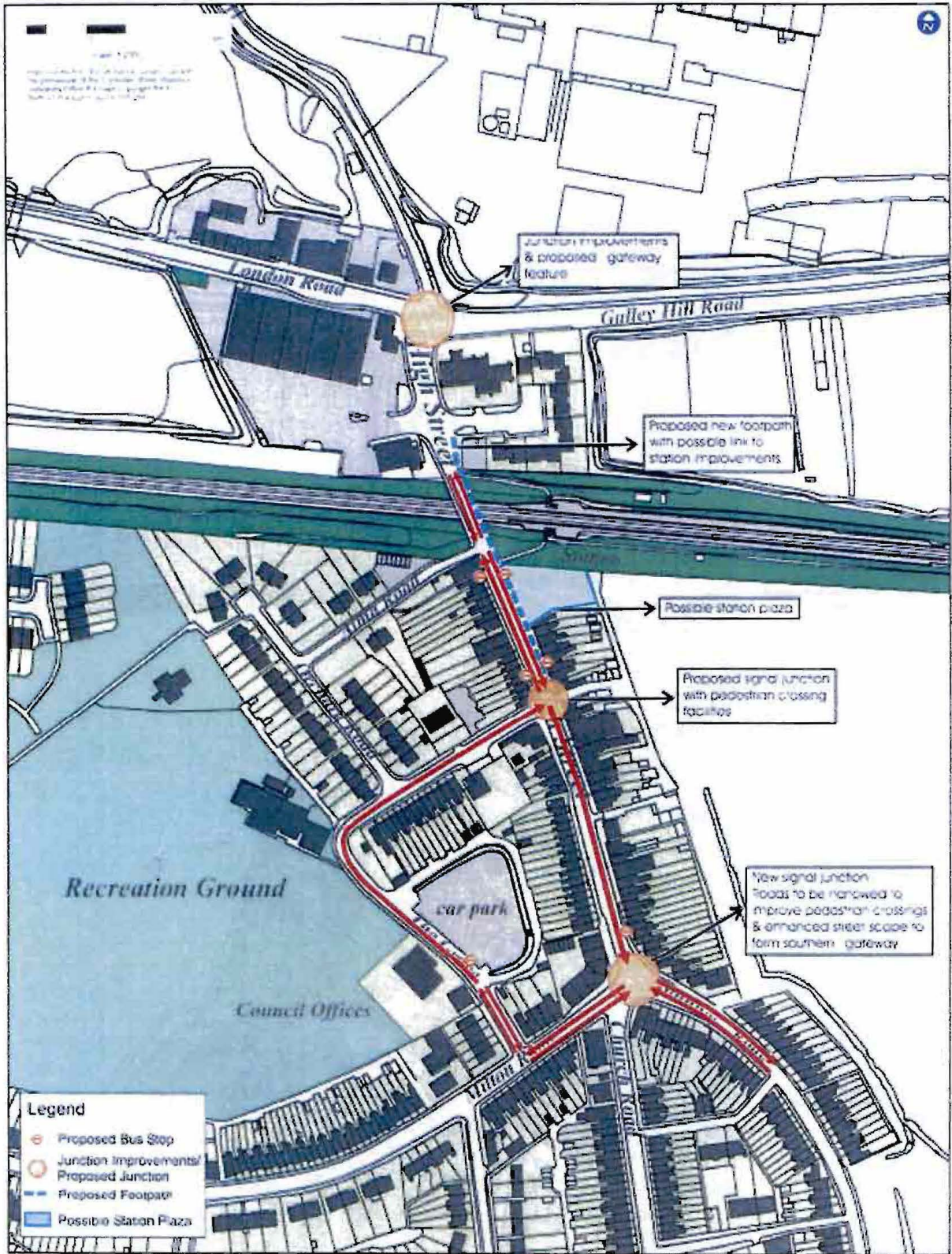


Figure 9.3: High Street – Proposed Traffic Circulation



The proposed new traffic circulation in the High Street and The Grove is illustrated in Figure 9.3. The introduction of a new one way system will involve:

- One way operation of the High Street between The Grove and Milton Road;
- The Grove – two way access to the car park and one-way northbound to its junction with the High Street.
- Signalised junctions at High Street/The Grove, The Grove/Milton Road and High Street/Milton Road to provide pedestrian crossing phases and advance cycle stop lines.

The new links to The Grove will promote integration of the High Street with Broomfield Recreation Ground, the Town Council Offices and The Grove. These new linkages between the various facilities will enhance and strengthen the physical and functional structure of this activity cluster. Residential, commercial, employment and community uses are more closely integrated in this centre and will benefit from this improved synergy. Increasing the traffic flows in The Grove is in line with the aspiration to reduce traffic in the High Street, stimulate the use of the car park and increase activity around The Grove, a process initiated by the location of the proposed Town Council Offices. This arrangement would have a number of positive benefits for the High Street:

- Maintaining traffic flow through the High Street keeps the potential for passing trade for the shops;
- Narrowing the road to one-way provides space for on street parking in the High Street;
- Under footways will create greater ease of movement and a more pleasant shopping environment;
- New pedestrian crossings will improve access and movement for pedestrians;
- Enhanced links between the High Street and an improved Grove Road car park will maximise usage of the High Street and create synergy between the High Street, recreation centre and the new Town Council Offices;
- Downgrading the High Street will revert the road back to its role as a local distributor road and make it less attractive as a route to Eastern Quarry and the A2.

Bus stops will be located just to the south of the station, near to the junction with The Grove and on the High Street near the junction of Milton Road. A stop will be provided on The Grove near to the new Town Council Offices.

The redevelopment on the eastern side of the High Street is envisaged in phases. Further phases, as illustrated in Figure 9.4 and 9.5 could take place depending on local opinion and market condition. A flexible approach would be to provide accommodation that could be adapted to retail, residential or commercial use at the ground floor.

Figure 9.4: High Street – Potential Phase 2

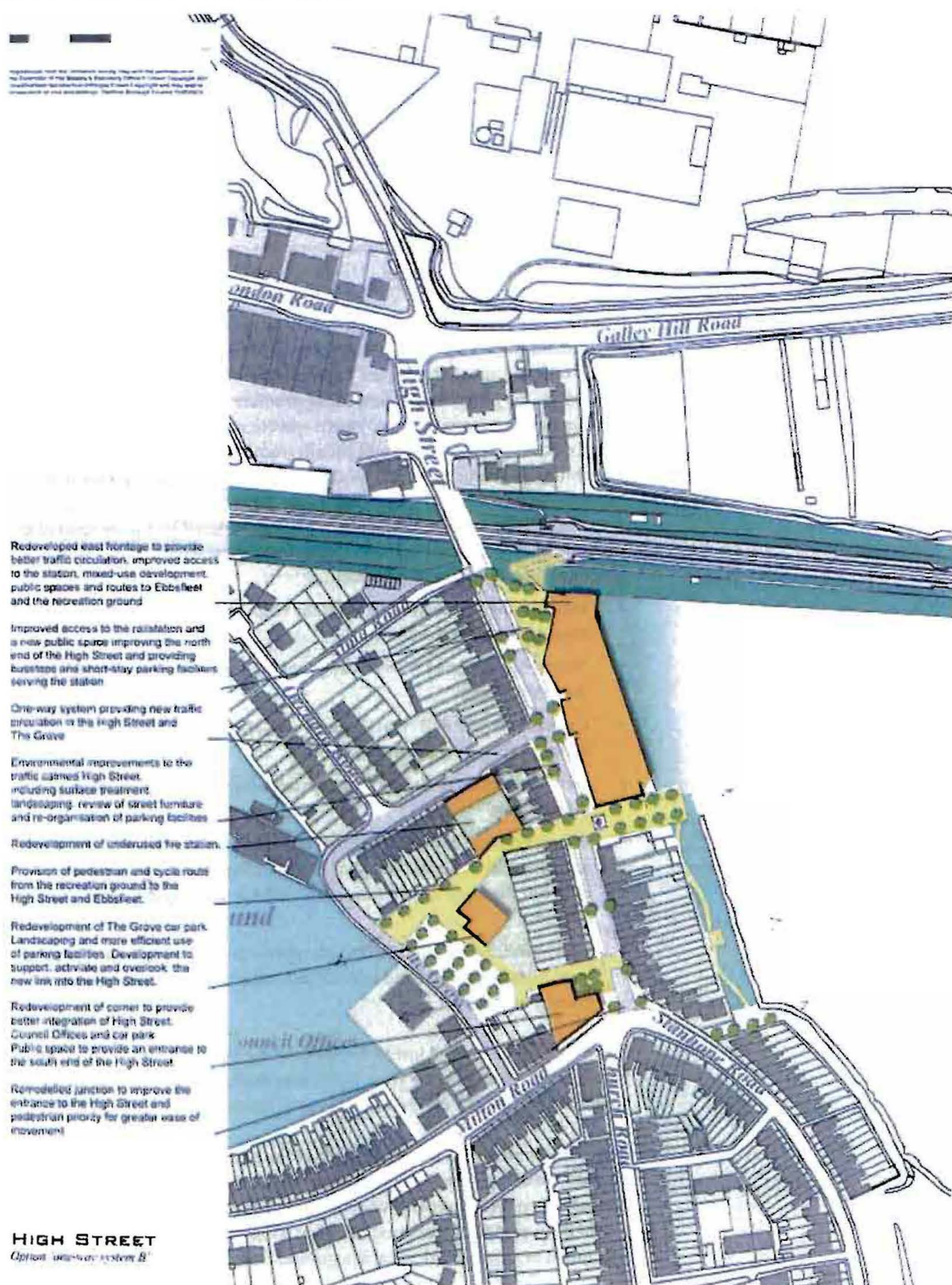
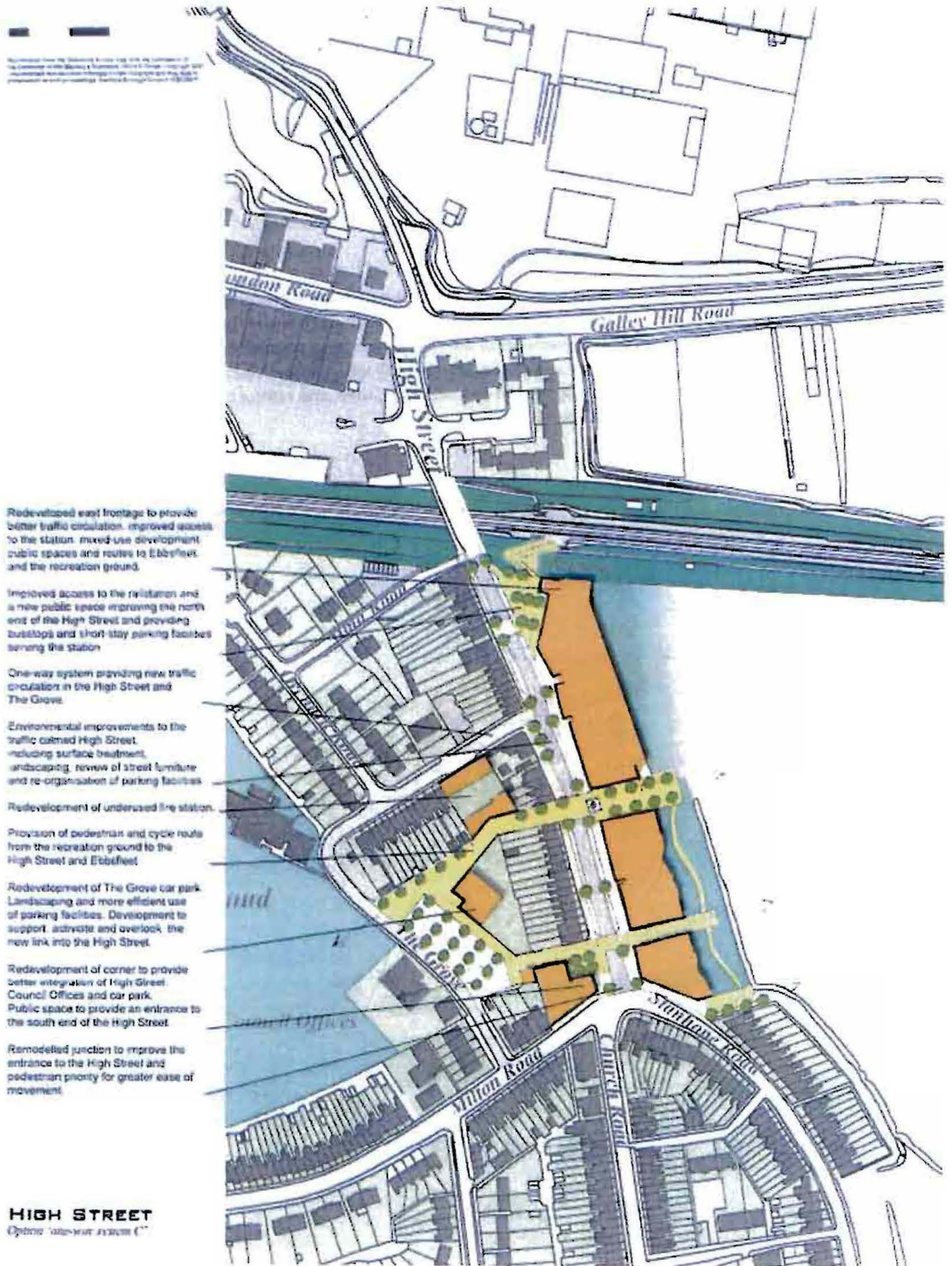


Figure 9.5: High Street – Potential Phase 3



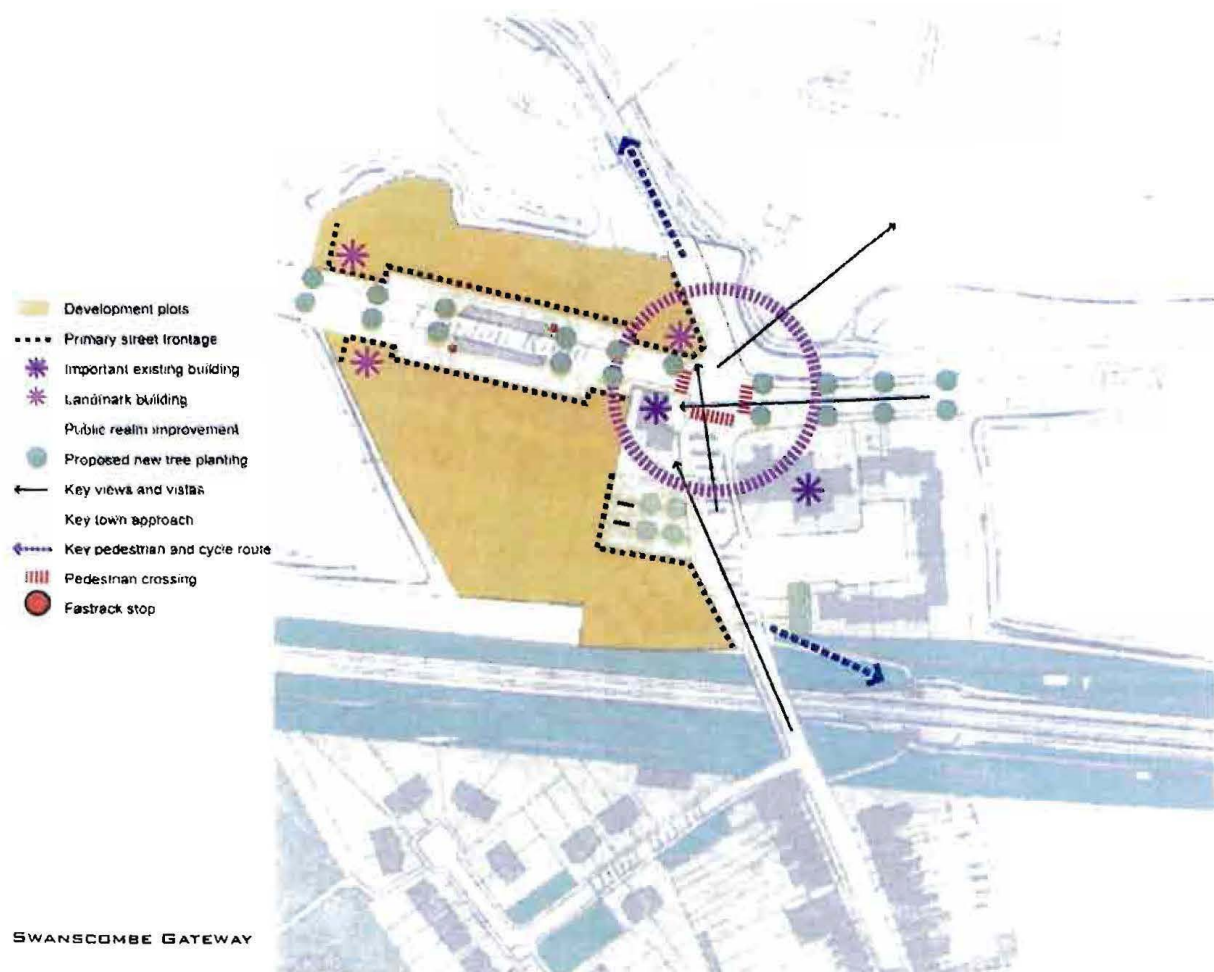
In the process of developing the preferred approach, other options have been considered to address the traffic situation in the High Street and their opportunities and constraints for the urban environment. These are illustrated in Appendix C.

2 Swanscombe Gateway

In conjunction with the proposed improvements at the London Road junction, and improvements to the station and High Street, a 'gateway' is proposed at the northern entrance to the High Street. The Swanscombe Gateway will give the town a 'face' to London Road reinforcing the identity of Swanscombe. The Gateway will also enhance the character of the High Street.

Short term changes for the Gateway relate to refurbishment of the George and the Dragon pub, a recognisable feature along London Road, and improvements to the existing business park. Relocation of the Royal Mail depot and the fire station will open up opportunities for redevelopment on the High Street and near the Grove, and reduce traffic at the retail heart of the High Street.

Figure 9.6: Swanscombe Gateway



The long term aspiration is to redevelop the business park and provide a mixed-use Gateway and extension of the High Street. This long term aspiration for the Swanscombe Gateway is illustrated in Figure 9.6 and includes:

- Creation of a mixed-use scheme providing a connection between Swanscombe and Swanscombe Peninsula West.
- Potential for high density of housing and commercial/industrial development in close proximity of the public transport facilities.
- A clear and well-defined gateway into Swanscombe and the High Street.
- A better setting for the Church and George and Dragon as key features on London Road.
- Improved pedestrian and cycle crossings at the junction to minimise the barrier created by London Road.
- A pedestrian and cycle route to the Peninsula, The Marshes and the Thames.
- Creation of a continuous frontage along London Road benefiting from this highly visible location and accentuating London Road with (landmark) buildings to provide human scale to the road corridor at this key location.
- Proposed tree planting along London Road.
- Integration of Fastrack stop and provision of high quality environment and route to the High Street and the station.
- Creation of new public space to improve setting of new development.
- Use of visual art involving local artists/community to define Gateway.

3 Swanscombe Station

The station is an important facility for the community of Swanscombe, providing direct train services to employment, educational, commercial, health and recreational facilities in Dartford, Gravesend, Kent Thameside and the wider area including London. The poor quality of the station environment is discouraging for travellers and provides a negative image of Swanscombe as a destination.

A number of cosmetic improvements are proposed in the short term.

- Better signage and improved visibility to the existing station building and platforms
- Better lighting, improved CCTV and removal overgrowth on paths and surrounding land (while developing softer landscape features) will make the station more visible and would improve of safety and security.
- Better cycle storage facilities will encourage local trips. Improving access to and from the northern side of the station (the “down” platform) via better pavements on the existing road bridge would be a major enhancement.
- Better links to bus stops and the creation of a mini interchange.
- Set down facilities for passengers could be improved, as there are currently no appropriate stopping places.
- Improvements to waiting facilities will encourage station use.
- Other measures, such as raising awareness of trip destinations and opportunities, and general information, have been used in other

locations to help rebrand underperforming rail facilities. Such marketing initiatives are relatively inexpensive but can have a strong impact on increasing passenger demand.

As part of a comprehensive plan for the High Street there is the potential for more substantial, longer term improvements to the station.

The station plaza (as proposed in the High Street project) would improve interchange opportunities at Swanscombe Station, providing space for bus stops, drop off points and short term parking. Retail opportunities could also form part of this. There would be the opportunity to greatly improve the pedestrian environment, providing a continuous footpath on the eastern side of the High Street, for example as a cantilever on the side of the existing bridge. A new bridge and plaza would also link in to any proposed station improvements.

It is recognised that there will be a requirement for further detailed feasibility studies to assess development potential and close working arrangements with the Station operators and Key Stakeholders.

The location of the station in a cutting means it is less accessible than a station at grade and this presents a barrier to passengers with impaired mobility. The potential new access from station plaza would improve accessibility significantly but the only complete solution would require the provision of lifts to both platforms. However, there is unlikely to be a business case for expenditure on lifts based on current passenger numbers and alternative options, such as providing better links by accessible buses to nearby stations which are fully accessible, may be a more appropriate solution.

4 Broomfield Recreation Ground

Broomfield Recreation Ground is of great importance to Swanscombe and its residents. It not only provides a valuable area of green space and a range of recreational facilities within the heart of Swanscombe, it is also provides an important link between the west of Swanscombe, Penstemon Drive, the High Street and the station.



Existing situation

The surrounding residential properties do not benefit from this setting since the majority are orientated with their backs towards the green space. Although the recreation ground accommodates a sports ground and playground, its size allows for further intensification and more active use.

The proposed approach to enhancing the recreation ground is to improve its accessibility to encourage greater use and provide a destination for residents and visitors.

Improving accessibility includes general proposals such as:

- Physical improvements to paths;
- Environmental improvements to entrances;
- Relocating the garages along Milton Road to allow for a wider entrance to the open space;
- Improvements to lighting and signage;
- Enhanced visibility of park from neighbouring areas.

In addition to these general improvements, the Masterplan proposes two approaches to enhancing Broomfield Recreation Ground:

- Landscape Plan;
- Town Park.

Landscape Plan

The 'Landscape plan' approach (indicative plan Figure 9.7 and artist impression Figure 9.8) will raise the profile of the recreation ground by improving the physical quality of the green space, enhancing its role as a focus point and improving the existing interface with its surroundings. Hard and soft landscaping are the main tools to physically and visually define the green space.

Key proposals in 'Landscape Plan' are:

- Creation of landscape structure to enhance visual appeal of recreation ground and achieve integration of the various parts of the recreation ground.
- The landscape design will feature elements such as variation in surface materials, height differences, a planting scheme or perhaps a water feature to improve the quality of the place.
- The provision of a 'screen' of trees around the perimeter of the grounds to formalise the edge.
- Creation of a focus point, such as a landscape feature, that will contribute to the identity of the place and provide a point of destination.
- Paths aligned to pedestrian desire lines to provide maximum and efficient permeability, connecting Broomfield Road and Manor Road to the new Town Council Offices and the High Street.
- Provision of a through-route providing a link between the Heritage Park, the Council Offices, the High Street and Ebbsfleet.
- Intensification of the recreation ground to increase the number of people using the ground to enhance the sense of safety.

Figure 9.7: Broomfield Recreation Ground – Landscape Plan

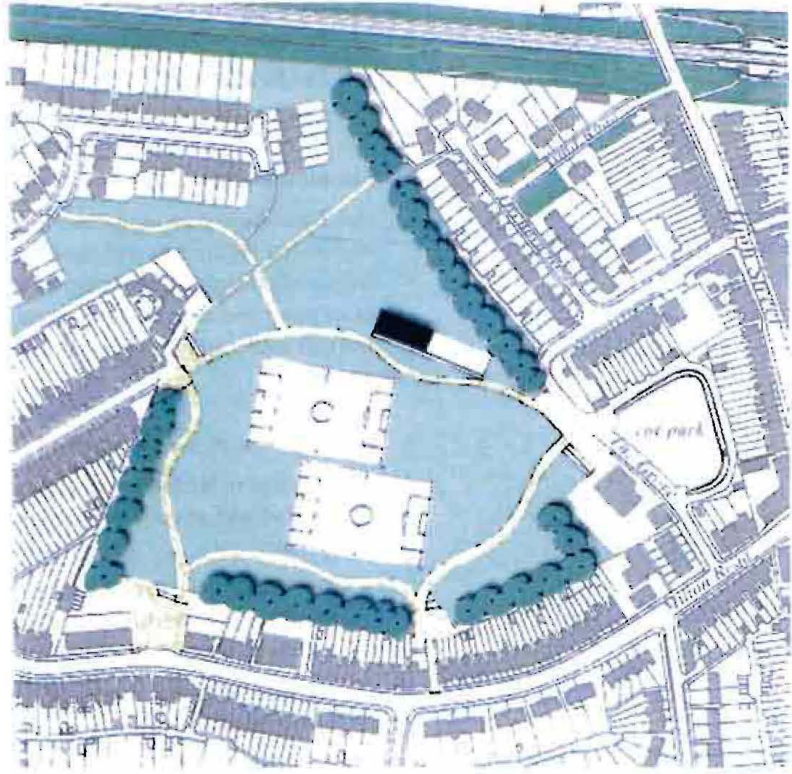


Figure 9.8: Broomfield Recreation Ground – proposed improvements



Town Park

The 'Town Park' approach combines environmental improvements with proposals to enhance the interface with the surrounding areas. New developments around the perimeter of the recreation ground will change the character of the recreation ground into a town park with residents overlooking the space. An indicative plan and artist impression of this approach are illustrated in Figure 9.9 and Figure 9.10.

- New development will be used to provide an active frontage to the recreation ground.
- Environmental and landscape improvements to the recreation ground (as described in 'Landscape Plan').
- The setting of adjoining properties will be enhanced by the green space while at the same time the park will benefit from a more intensive use, higher status and appreciation and enhanced sense of safety.
- Provision of a wide walkway with seating facilities around the perimeter of the park would form a well defined edge.
- Provision of high quality pedestrian and cycle routes.
- Provision of a through-route providing a link between the Heritage Park, the Town Council Offices, the High Street and Ebbsfleet.

Figure 9.9 Broomfield Recreation Ground – Town Park

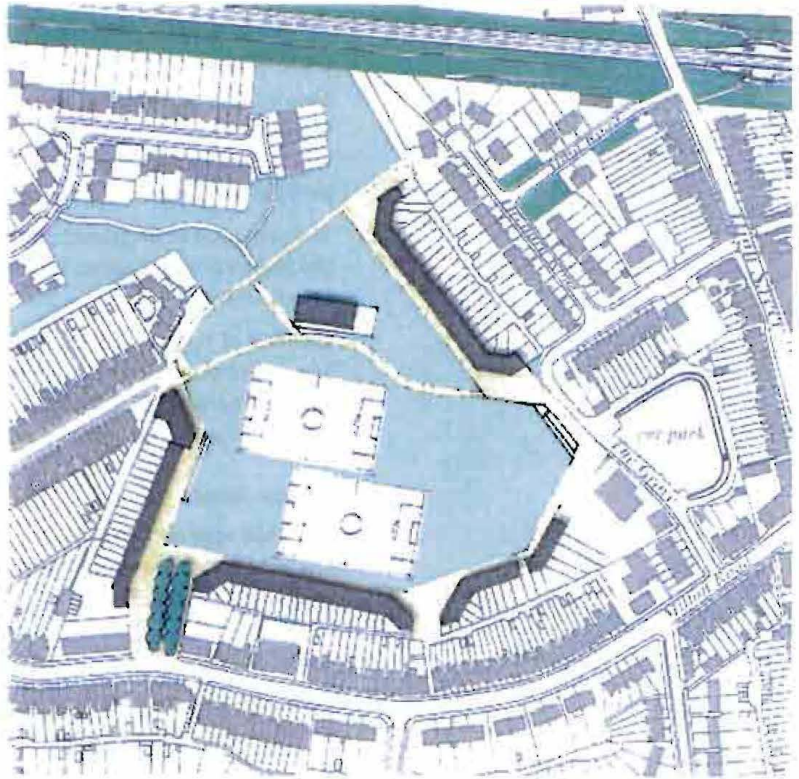


Figure 9.10: Broomfield Recreation Ground – Creation of Town Park



5 The Grove

Proposals for new Town and Council Offices, including Community Hall and crèche, are being progressed on The Grove. This scheme will bring new activity and investment to the recreation ground and the High Street, strengthening this facility cluster.

The proposed scheme for the Town Hall and Council Offices complements the proposed approach for the High Street (illustrated in Figure 9.2). Further proposals for The Grove include:

- Reconfiguration of the car park to ensure more efficient use of car parking space.
- New mixed-use building, accommodating community facilities and residential uses fitting along the rear of the properties on the High Street, will further increase the use and vibrancy of the activity cluster, and provide natural surveillance of the car park and paths.
- The provision of improved pedestrian access through to the High Street, linking with routes across Broomfield Recreation Ground and through to Ebbsfleet Park.
- Creation of high quality edge of Broomfield Recreation Ground along The Grove providing an inviting and high quality entrance to the green space, a meeting place for local residents and an important node in the strategic route to the High Street and Ebbsfleet.

6 Stanhope Road

The proposed approach to Stanhope Road is based on the definition of this street as a local route between the High Street, Swan Valley Community Campus, Ebbsfleet and Eastern Quarry.

Proposals include:

- Opening up of the park to allow for greater access to and through Ebbsfleet Park and to reveal the key views across the park.
- Entrances to the park at locations related to the urban fabric and linked with routes through the urban area.
- Seating facilities and information panels at park entrances.

- Provision of pedestrian and cycle routes to and through the park, integrated with pedestrian and cycle routes within Swanscombe.
- Off-road cycle facilities along the park edge providing both recreational and safe routes towards Swan Valley Community Campus and beyond.
- The edge treatment will include provision of a generous walkway as an interface between Stanhope Road and Ebbsfleet Park
- Physical definition of the edge of Swanscombe will give physical shape to the importance of the street.
- Narrowing of carriage way to discourage speeding and through-traffic from London Road to Eastern Quarry.
- Traffic calming features.
- Formalised parking arrangements, including sheltered bays and use of green verge for residents car parking.
- Tree planting as part of the 'outer ring' spatial structure approach.
- New development at key locations. It is not perceived as desirable to create a continuous built frontage along the park edge but landmark buildings at key locations would preserve views of the park and at the same time contribute to the importance of the park and legibility of Swanscombe. It is essential that these landmark buildings address the character of the location and make the most of their special setting.
- The potential for a public transport link from the station, across Ebbsfleet park, to Swanscombe Street should be explored.



The artist impression (Figure 9.11) illustrates the proposals for Stanhope Road.



Figure 9.11: Stanhope Road – proposed

7 Swan Valley Community Campus

While the campus fulfils a prominent role in Swanscombe its physical presence is concealed. Its location at the edge of Swanscombe, behind the buildings along Swanscombe Street and Keary Road, means that the educational, community and health care facilities suffer from poor visibility and accessibility.

The Masterplan identifies two possible approaches to improving the setting of the Campus.

- Improved Access (Figure 9.12 and Figure 9.13)
- Grand Entrance (Figure 9.14)

The preferred approach should be established in further feasibility studies and in consultation with key stakeholders to agree a way forward.

Improved Access

This approach will improve the integration of the campus with the surrounding community and enhance the sense of arrival and the role of the campus as a point of destination through environmental improvements to the access routes and increase visual attractiveness to the people that use the Campus.

Proposals in this approach include:

- Environmental improvements aimed at the quality of surfaces and materials.
- Re-organisation of parking facilities
- Improvements to street lights, signage and information panels.
- The setback of the facilities requires users to be 'drawn' from the street onto the campus. A series of bespoke lighting or art elements leading from Swanscombe Street onto the campus will help to guide people and contribute to the legibility of the area and the identity of the campus.
- The provision of a new vocational centre on the campus will be incorporated in this new access arrangement. The physical shape and design of the new building will provide a landmark building defining the access to the campus. If the vocational centre is provided off-campus, then physical links to the campus will be strong.

Figure 9.12: Swan Valley Community Campus – Improved Access

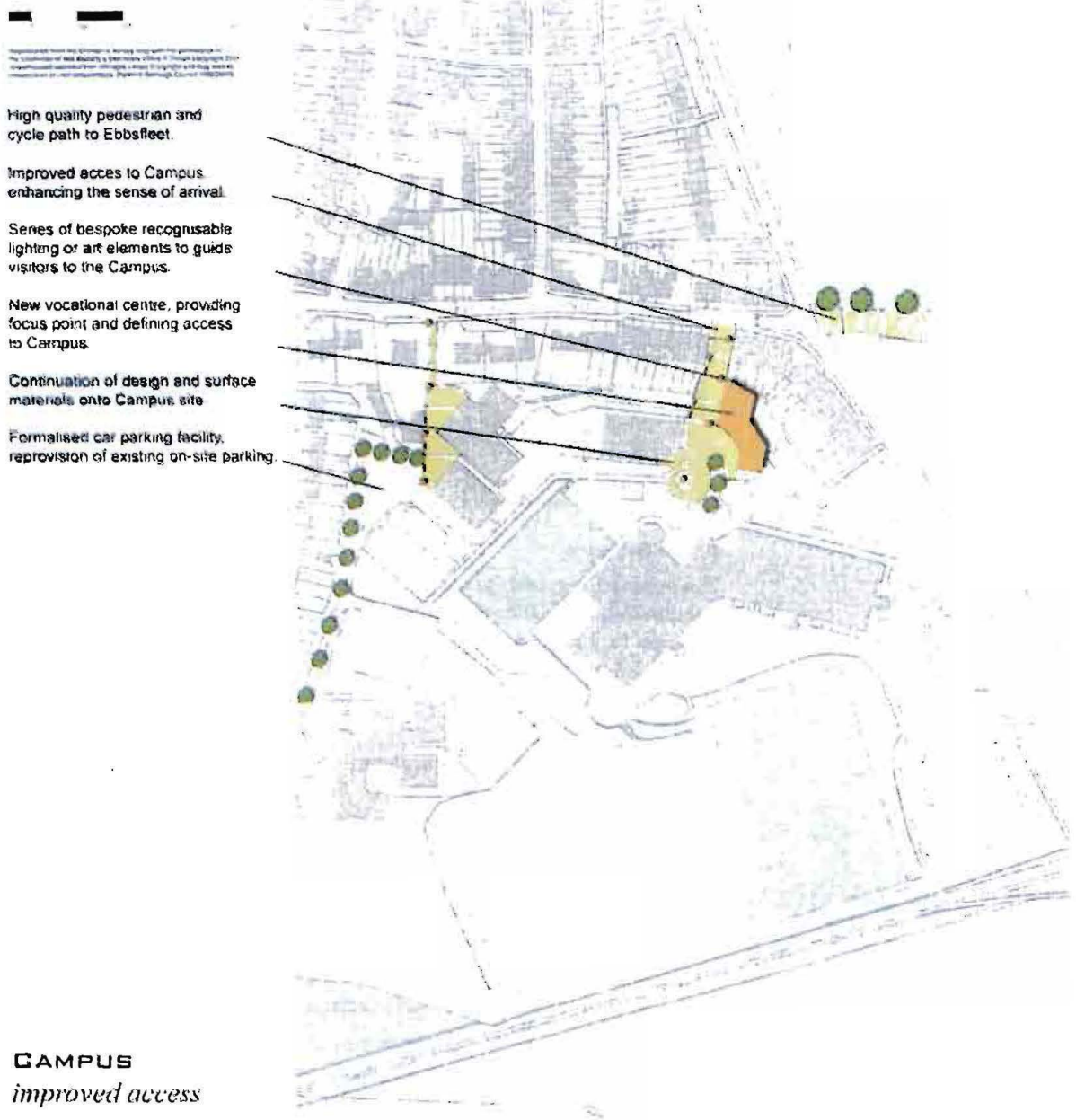


Figure 9.13: Swan Valley Community Campus – Improved Access



Grand Entrance

This approach responds to the aspiration of creating a 'grand entrance' to the Campus in close relation to the entrance to Swanscombe, the access to Ebbsfleet Park and the 'employment route' towards Ebbsfleet. Proposals related to this approach are illustrated in Figure 9.14.

The proposals include:

- The acquisition of properties along Swanscombe Street and Stanhope Road to provide a 'grand entrance'. Besides improving the visibility of the Campus from Stanhope Road this will raise the status of the Campus considerably.
- Creation of a gateway into Swanscombe and setting the scene for further development around the junction of Stanhope Road and Swanscombe Street, the place where Swanscombe originated.
- Definition of the entrance to Ebbsfleet Park and the pedestrian and cycle route to Ebbsfleet Station and the adjacent facilities.
- Environmental improvements to the public realm and creation of a new public space, which can be used for school or community activities.
- The provision of a new vocational centre on the campus will be incorporated in this new access arrangement. The physical shape and design of the new building will provide a landmark building defining the access to the campus. If the vocational centre is provided off-campus, then physical links to the campus will be strong.
- Incorporation of the childcare facilities along Swanscombe Street to provide an improved second entrance to Campus. This will include provision of car parking facilities for the Campus.

Figure 9.14: Swan Valley Community Campus – Grand Entrance

Representative from the Edinburg Planning Group with the permission of the Council of the City of Edinburg, Texas. The City of Edinburg Planning Group is a registered trademark of the City of Edinburg, Texas. The City of Edinburg Planning Group is a registered trademark of the City of Edinburg, Texas. The City of Edinburg Planning Group is a registered trademark of the City of Edinburg, Texas.

Mixed-use development defining a gateway into Swanscombe and the route to the facilities in Ebbsfleet

High quality pedestrian and cycle path to Ebbsfleet

Car parking facility, reprovision of existing on-site parking

New grand entrance to Campus, providing greater visibility and enhancing sense of arrival.

Series of bespoke recognisable lighting or art elements to guide visitors to the Campus.

New vocational centre, providing focus point and defining access to Campus.

Continuation of design and surface materials onto Campus site

CAMPUS
grand entrance



The new buildings currently shown within Eastern Quarry are separated from the campus' southern edge. This break seems rather false when the benefits of a direct link are considered. A direct access route into the campus could be provided as an extension of one of the main streets of Eastern Quarry, physically connecting the campus to the urban fabric of the new developments. Landmark buildings with community uses aligned with the campus philosophy will strengthen the area. Housing could be located further north in the Masterplan to surround the campus and allotments, making the area feel more vibrant and active. The Eastern Quarry application is at an outline stage and these ideas could be taken forward at the detailed application stage.

8 Leisure Centre

The leisure centre on Craylands Lane forms an important community hub on the west side of Swanscombe. Together with the facilities for the Elders Forum and St. John's Ambulance and the Heritage Park, the leisure centre is identified in the Masterplan as a cluster of activity and a community focus point to be intensified and further enhanced in the future.

Proposals include:

- Intensified use of available underutilised land.
- Improvements to the existing sports and community facilities.
- Expansion of existing facilities, taking into account provision for contemporary sports (climbing wall, skating facilities, etc.) focussing on the needs of youth and future residents.
- Provision of new indoor sports facilities to be reviewed in relation to facilities to be provided in Eastern Quarry, Ebbsfleet and Knockhall.
- Provision of new outdoor facilities to increase the levels of activity in the Heritage Park and provide a better relation with the football pitches in the centre of the park.

The Elders Forum and St. John's Ambulance are considered valuable community resources. The current buildings are inadequate and there is a requirement for improved facilities.

Behind the leisure centre, a new entrance feature to the Heritage Park has been designed by Groundwork. The provision of a high quality path linking this entrance feature with Craylands Lane and providing the main route to Knockhall is an integral part of improvements to the leisure centre and the activity hub. The significance of this path will become further distinguished when reviewed in conjunction with a new pedestrian and cycle path, utilising the green verge between Broomfield Road and Penstemon Drive, from Craylands Lane, Pacific Close to the recreation ground and the High Street.

The Masterplan proposes four possible approaches to enhancing Craylands Lane Leisure Centre.

- Integrated Centre (Figure 9.15)
- Purpose built facilities on same location (Figure 9.16)
- Purpose built facilities in different location (Figure 9.17)
- Complete redevelopment (Figure 9.18)

The preferred approach should be established following further feasibility studies and in consultation with key stakeholders to agree a way forward. This will address issues such as the spatial requirements of the Elders Forum and St. John's Ambulance, the level of investment provided by both the public and private sector and the demand for additional sports, leisure and community facilities.

Option 1: Integrated Centre

The first approach, illustrated in Figure 9.15, is for the integration of facilities within the leisure centre. This assumes the Elders Forum and St. John's Ambulance would make use of the space available when the Town Council facilities are relocated to the new Council Offices.

Depending on demand and funding the building of the leisure centre could be extended, relocating the ball court closer to the park. The current site of the Elders Forum and St. John's Ambulance would become available and together with the adjacent land could be used for a predominantly residential scheme. The scheme is focussed on repairing the urban structure and providing an active edge to the park.

Option 2: Purpose built facilities in same location

The second approach requires purpose built community facilities where the Elders Forum now sits, illustrated in Figure 9.16. It assumes there is no available space in the leisure centre, even with possible expansion. The facilities for the Elders Forum and St. John's Ambulance are provided in a new, purpose built building in the same location. Such a building will accommodate facilities for other community uses, such as the uses currently accommodated in the Wallace Gardens community hall. Behind the community building, family homes could be included in the scheme.

Figure 9.15: Craylands Lane Leisure Centre – Option 1



Figure 9.16: Craylands Lane Leisure Centre – Option 2

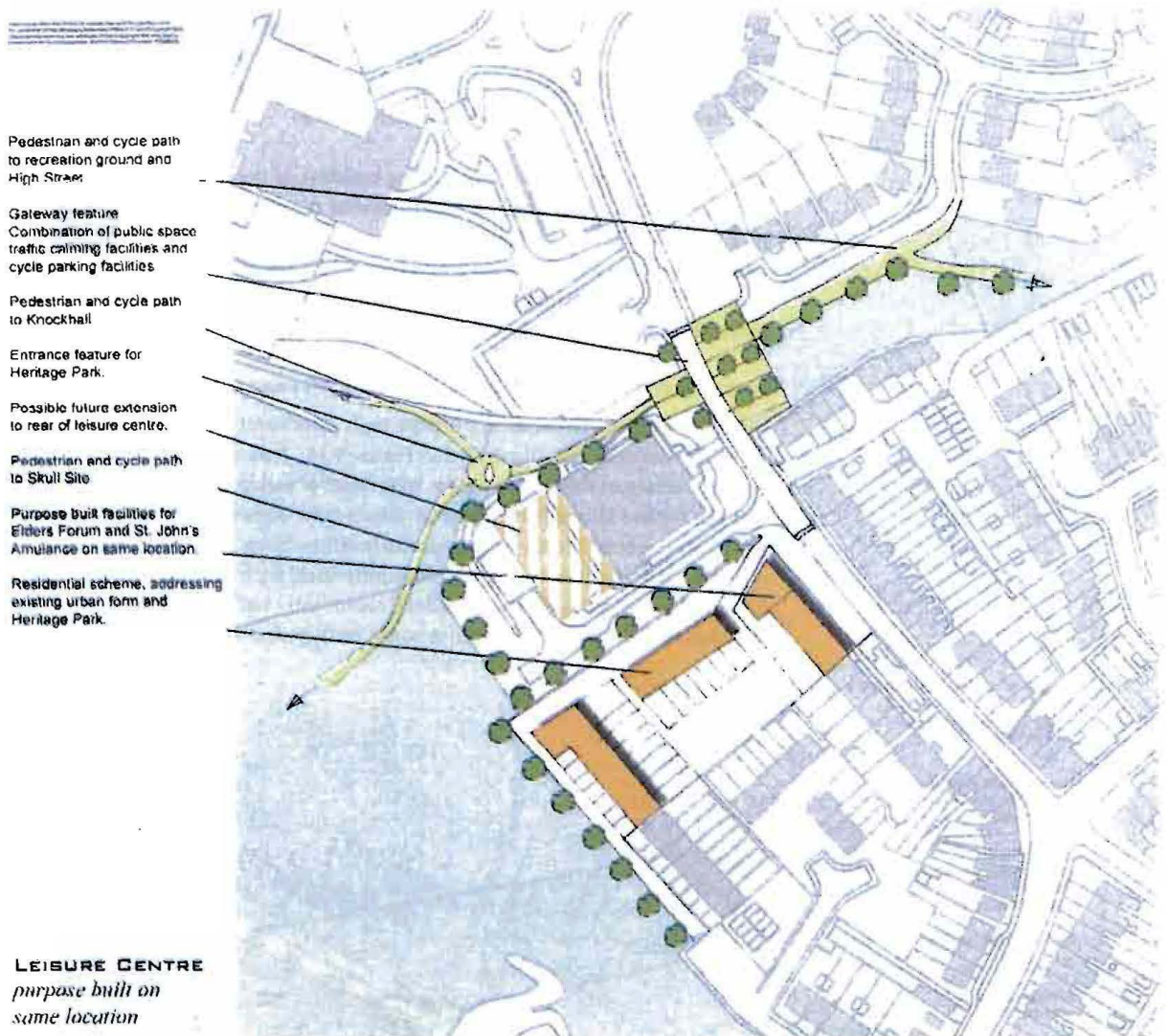
**Option 3: Purpose built facilities on different location**

Figure 9.17 illustrates the third approach. This approach sees purpose built facilities for Elders Forum and St. John's Ambulance in a different location. To enhance the significance of this activity hub there is a preference for this new location to be within the vicinity of the existing leisure centre, for example on the site of the current car park. Such a development will define a public space, as an entrance to the park and a gateway into Swanscombe from Craylands Lane.

Option 4: Complete Redevelopment

The fourth approach, see Figure 9.18, shows a complete redevelopment of the leisure centre including the current site of the Elders Forum and St. John's Ambulance and the adjacent land. A new layout for the area will include a new, larger leisure and sports centre, new outdoor sports facilities, new parking facilities, a new public space providing better access to the park and setting of the entrance feature and a new building accommodating the Elders Forum and St. John's Ambulance, other community facilities and residential uses.

Figure 9.17: Craylands Lane Leisure Centre – Option 3

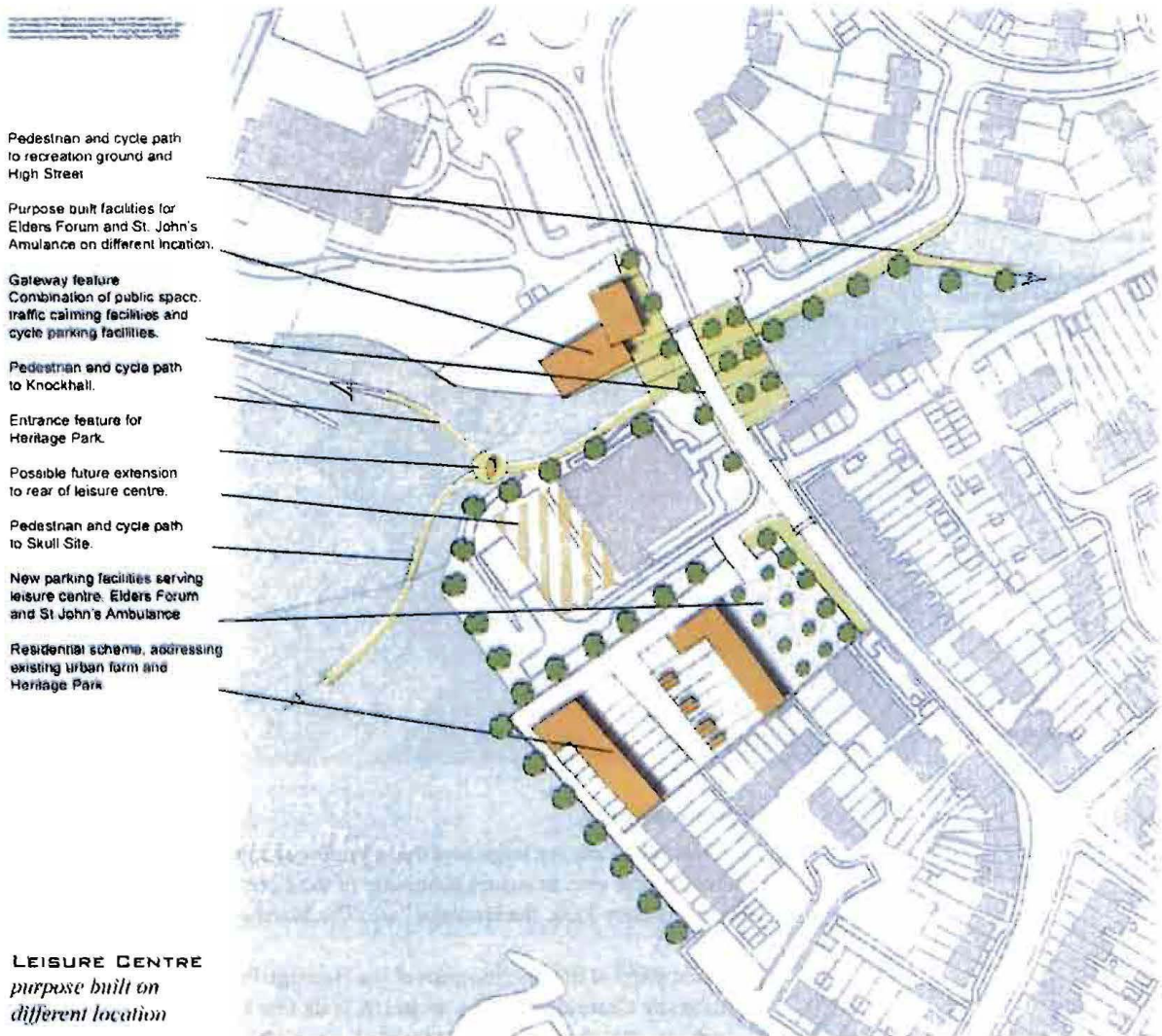
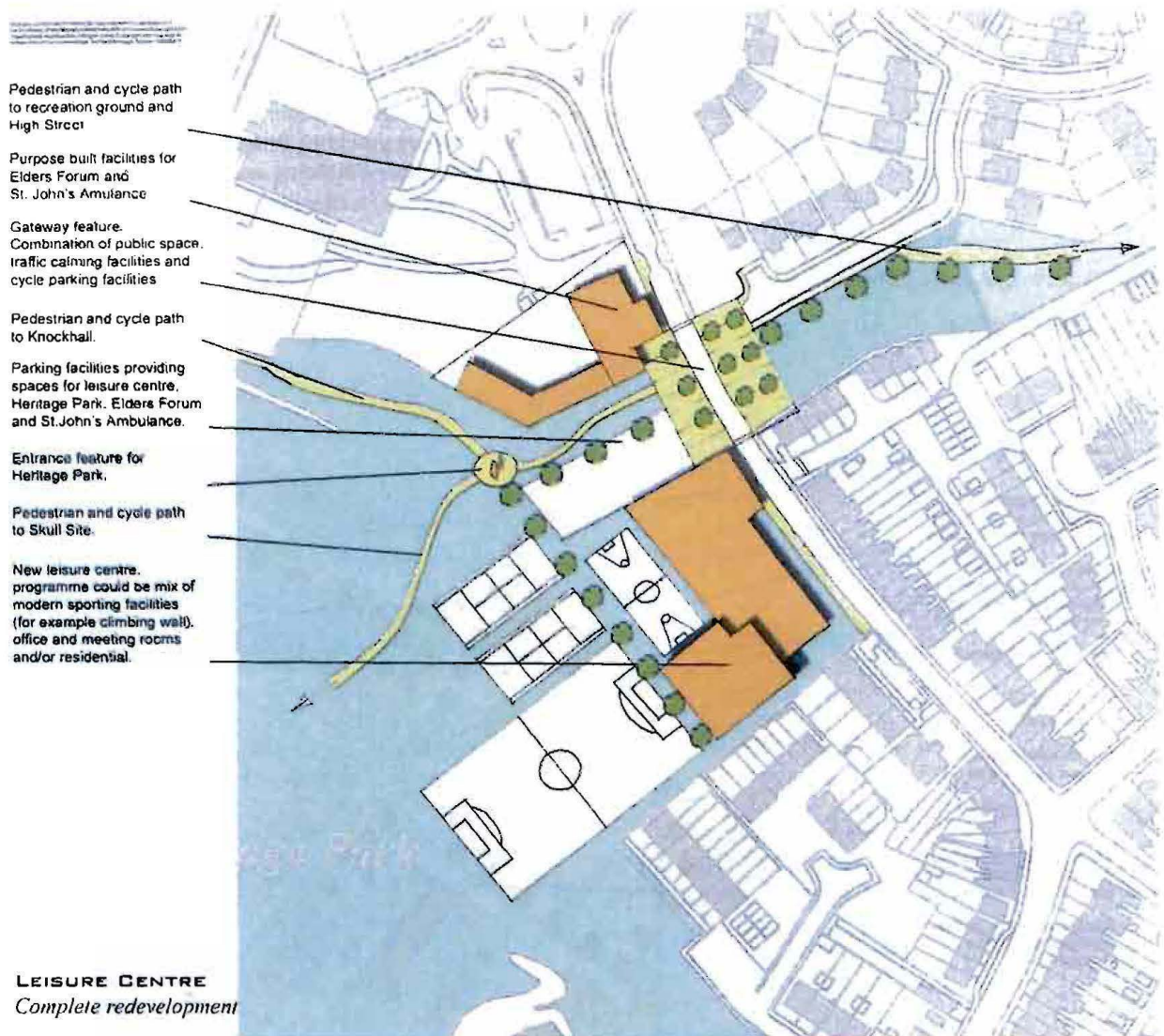


Figure 9.18: Craylands Lane Leisure Centre – Option 4



9 Heritage Park

The Heritage Park is a large area that combines a range of distinct projects. These projects seek to ensure continuity of the Green Corridor, comprising Eastern Quarry Park, the Heritage Park, The Marshes and the riverfront.

The first steps of the development of the Heritage Park are currently being initiated by Groundwork. The project 'A walk into history' supplies a route into the park to the skull site. At the skull site a feature is planned and along the route information panels will be provided. The beginning of the route, at the back of the leisure centre, has an entrance feature. It is essential to extend this entrance feature towards Craylands Lane and connect to the proposed pedestrian and cycle route to Broomfield Recreation Ground. All approaches for the Leisure Centre acknowledge the importance of this park entrance.

Continuous routes through the Heritage Park will be established to optimise permeability and interconnection Swanscombe, Knockhall and Eastern Quarry.

Further shaping of the Heritage Park, through intensification of its use and edges will further enhance its importance and quality. Possibilities for intensification of the edges through new development are limited but worthwhile exploring. In the future, redevelopment of Gilbert Close and the land to the back of Milton Street and Madd Close will provide this improved interface with the park.



Existing situation

Craylands Lane Bridge

The railway bridge on Craylands Lane forms a physical gateway into Swanscombe. This bridge is important with regards to the continuation of the green corridor, linking the Heritage Park with the Peninsula.

Proposals to ensure the continuation of the green link include:

- Creation of an entrance to the Heritage Park, illustrated in Figure 9.19.
- Edge treatment along Craylands Lane to improve visibility of the park.
- Provision of pedestrian and cycle routes from north to south past the viaduct.
- Improvements to pedestrian and cycle route to Knockhall.
- Introduction of signage (related to signage provided in other parts of the park to ensure continuity in design)
- Creation of a lighting feature under the bridge
- Traffic calming measures integrated with public realm improvements.
- Continuous surface and edge treatment on north and south side of bridge.
- Exploring the opportunity for widening the bridge section to allow for greater permeability and greater continuity of the green corridor. This is illustrated in Figure 9.20. This would provide greater quality within this section of the strategic pedestrian and cycle network and the integration of Little Swanscombe and Peninsula West. Structural issues will have to be addressed and the pedestrian environment under the bridge will require special attention.

Figure 9.19: Entrance to Heritage Park

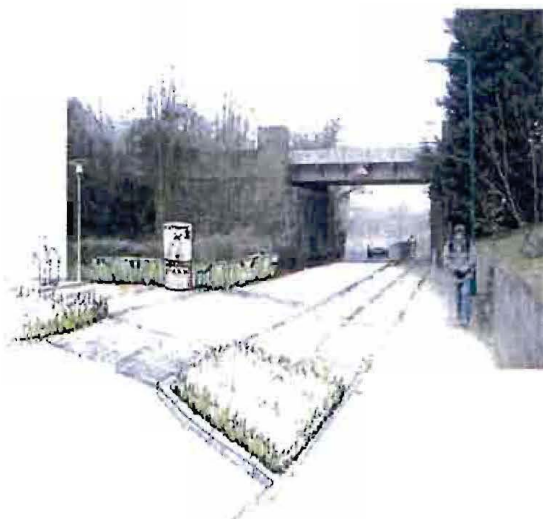


Figure 9.20: Green Corridor



New development

The masterplans for Little Swanscombe and Peninsula West are of vital importance with regards to securing the continuation of the green corridor in the spatial framework. The Masterplan for Little Swanscombe currently does not reflect its strategic location in the green corridor and the potential to minimize its isolated setting. It is considered necessary to review the provisions made for the green corridor and link with the Heritage Park within the Little Swanscombe Masterplan.

Within the Peninsula West Masterplan, the proposed configuration of London Road and Swanscombe Cross is crucial for the success of the green corridor. The coordinated definition and design of the green corridor on either side of London Road should ensure continuity of the corridor and spatial structure. Further green structure provision within the Peninsula West development should provide a clear connection with The Marshes and the river front.

As part of the Eastern Quarry development a major Urban Park will be developed. It would be sensible that this park is designed in conjunction with initiatives for Swanscombe Heritage Park. Permeability and a clear definition of the park edges are a key element of the success of these parks.

Heritage Centre

Opportunities for transforming Alkerden Farm into a Heritage Centre would be a valuable addition to the Heritage Park. The Heritage Centre could supply a local cultural attraction closely related to the skull site. The physical relation between the Heritage Centre and the skull site is a key issue. The Masterplan envisages high quality pedestrian and cycle routes connecting the Heritage Centre and the Skull site. Redevelopment of Gilbert Close is a long term aspiration to ensure this direct link and improve the edge of the Heritage Park.

10 Ebbsfleet Park

This project draws upon elements of the plans for the High Street (1), Stanhope Road (6) and the Swan Valley Community Campus (7). In summary, to promote the flow of people between Ebbsfleet and Swanscombe, maximum accessibility and permeability of the park has to be ensured. These objectives have been included in a number of design proposals.

Design proposals:

- Several pedestrian and cycle links must be provided directly to Ebbsfleet Station and other strategic entrance points in the Ebbsfleet development.
- From the High St and the top of Stanhope Road, this is complicated by topography and ground conditions. However we recommend that this approach is followed aggressively due to the importance of a link from Swanscombe Station and the High St through the park.
- Paths from the middle of Stanhope Road and at the campus will provide pedestrian and cycle routes through the park connected with the National Cycle Network Route 1 and other strategic routes in Swanscombe.
- Development on key locations on the park side of Stanhope Road will ensure these paths enjoy natural surveillance for most of the day.

- In order to encourage pedestrian and cycle activity, good lighting should be provided.
- Protective planting should be provided to encourage use of the routes in inclement weather.

In order to ensure that Swanscombe will benefit from Ebbsfleet, it is vital that the proposals are integrated in the design for Ebbsfleet Park and that the Ebbsfleet Masterplan incorporates these important links.

More detailed proposals relating to the edge treatment of Ebbsfleet Park are illustrated in the section regarding Stanhope Road.

11 Private Housing Stock

The quality of the private housing stock requires improvement, as identified in the Private Sector Housing Stock Survey. A detailed study is required to identify appropriate areas of Swanscombe that require special attention and treatments. The study must also set priorities for the location and types of improvements.

A successful example of the area approach has been the environmental improvements carried out on the Gunn Road estate. The lessons learned from this project should be applied to subsequent improvement projects. Prior to the full study, it is proposed that this approach is adopted for a programme of improvements to housing and the general environment of the estates enclosed by Manor Road, Betsham Road, Leonard Avenue and Durrant Way. Another opportunity is to remodel the corner premises along Durrant Way and Leonard Avenue to allow for new development, supporting linkages to Eastern Quarry in a more active way.

There are limited opportunities for intensification and introduction of new types of housing within Swanscombe. Where this is possible, the priority should be for high quality family housing, as this is the sector in which the recent Housing Needs Survey identified the greatest demand.

The need for an affordability study has already been identified. This is required to inform S106 negotiations, in terms of definition, numbers, types and tenures.

GREENHITHE AND KNOCKHALL

The Masterplan principles set out in section 8 will apply to all future interventions in Greenhithe and Knockhall.

Integrating Old and New

Greenhithe village is the first of the existing urban areas to be directly affected by new development. Ingress Park built to the East of Greenhithe Village is the first phase of the development of the Swanscombe Peninsula. Although Ingress Park itself is characterized by high quality architecture and urban design, ensuring a non-uniform character and the integration of key elements such as Ingress Abbey and the riverfront, the level of integration with the existing urban pattern of Greenhithe is poor. The lack of interconnected streets and the low quality of the park at the West end of the promenade have resulted in the development of two independent urban areas.

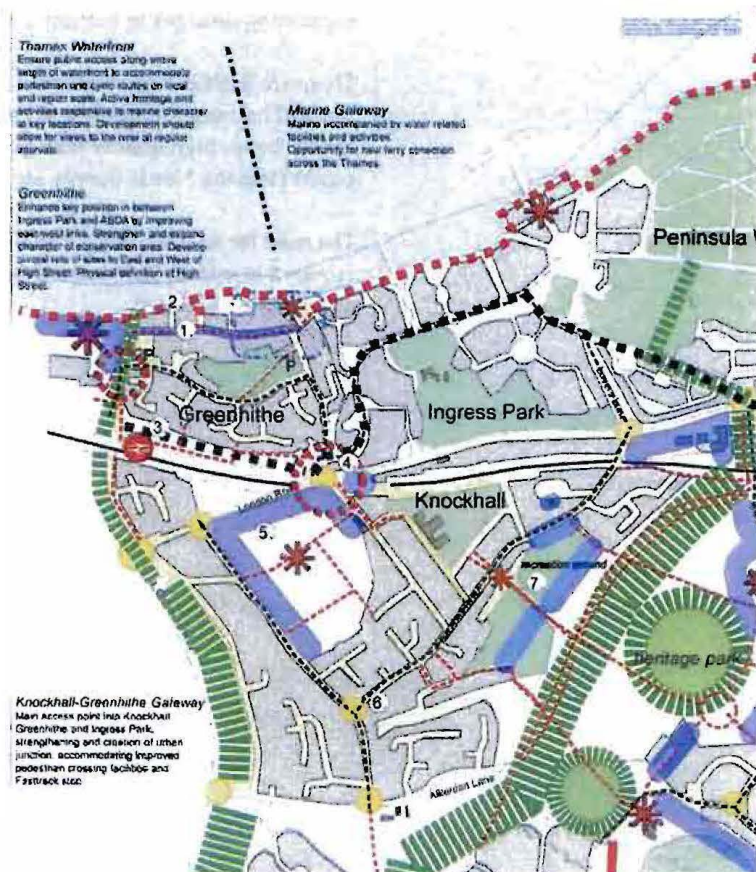
To the west of Greenhithe Village, along Crossways Boulevard and Station Road, a new superstore has been developed. This superstore is an important facility that draws people to Greenhithe but also generates significant activity and traffic to the West of the Village. The physical integration of the superstore with the existing urban fabric is relatively poor.

Below, a number of projects are described that will strengthen Greenhithe and Knockhall's urban form and success. See figure 9.21 for a map showing where the projects are.

Figure 21: Greenhithe Projects

- Interventions Greenhithe**
- 1 High Street
 - 2 Thames River Front
 - 3 Greenhithe Station
 - 4 Knockhall-Greenhithe Gateway
 - 5 Knockhall Pit
 - 6 Mounts Road and Knockhall Road
 - 7 Knockhall Sports and Recreation Grounds

- area of change
- node - focus of activity
- key junction - traffic management
- key route to be improved
- key route to be improved (local level)
- park intensification
- station improvement
- public realm improvement project (existing) (new intention)
- Thames footpath / cyclepath
- Fasttrack
- Strategic Connection
- Gateway
- High Street
- Conservation Area





1 High Street

Greenhithe Village occupies a key position between these two new developments with the High Street being the main connection. For Greenhithe Village to benefit from the advantages and facilities of the superstore and Ingress Park it is vital to enhance this east-west link and strengthen the physical and functional role of the High Street. Strengthening and expanding the character of the conservation area would help to create an attractive environment responsive to the historic image of large parts of the Village.

Both the Everards and boatyard site on either side of the High Street have a pivotal role for the future of Greenhithe Village. Developing these sites are crucial elements of strengthening the physical definition of the High Street, providing destination at the start and end of this route. They also provide public access to river, the most important natural asset, and the potential for improving Greenhithe's setting and offering opportunities for pedestrian and cycle routes towards Dartford and the Peninsula. The mixed-use character of these developments would improve Greenhithe's cultural and commercial role within the borough. In the Greenhithe Riverfront Urban Design Strategy, supplementary planning guidance is provided to ensure that the desired connectivity is achieved.

2 Thames River Front

For centuries the river frontage has been Greenhithe's *raison d'être* and most important environmental asset. It is unfortunate that currently most of the river promenade is private domain (Frobisher Way) and various sections of the river frontage are physically blocked and segregated. Pedestrian and cycle routes therefore have to be directed along the High Street which highlights the importance of enhancing the physical environment of the High Street. Both Bendigo Wharf and the inlet behind the boat club offer opportunities to become a more active part of the riverside experience.

Future opportunities for establishing a Marine Gateway in the area with water related facilities and activities and scope for new ferry connection linking both sides of the Thames should be explored. Such a maritime activity hub could either be used to regenerate existing urban areas or reinforce new development on the Peninsula.

The green space along Eagles Road is currently underused but could be a valuable community resource. The existing playground and car parking are currently in a poor and neglected state and improvements should address issues such as lighting and visibility to improve safety and minimize vandalism.

3 Greenhithe Station

At present Greenhithe Station is an important interchange accommodating buses serving residential areas and Bluewater. Implementation of Fastrack, parallel to the railway line, will bring an enormous improvement to the accessibility of Greenhithe and will further increase the importance of good interchange facilities between the different modes of transport.

Currently the interchange facilities and the physical environment are not optimised and the station is poorly linked with its surroundings. Work is underway to provide a platform-level bus interchange on the north side. The

implementation of the Fastrack route and stops, could help in improving the station environment further and introduce new links into Smugglers Walk and Maritime Close and further to Eagles Road. A quality pedestrian route to The Avenue would be beneficial. It is essential that Fastrack be approached as an integrated part of Greenhithe.

4 Knockhall-Greenhithe Gateway

The junction of London Road, The Avenue and Knockhall Chase provides a main access into Knockhall, Greenhithe and Ingress Park. The environment is dominated by the large volumes of through-traffic on London Road which conflict with the pedestrian movements between Greenhithe (The Avenue) and Knockhall (Knockhall Chase). A signalisation design for the junction is nearly complete.

This crossing is on the route from Greenhithe Village to the primary school along Eynsford Road in Knockhall and the pedestrian facilities should be reviewed.

To reduce the visual impact of the vehicular traffic, which is considered intimidating, it is important to change the character of this node and provide an urban frontage to the junction. The underused land on the corner of Knockhall Chase and future redevelopment of the garage site (in combination with the redevelopment of the gas works site) offer opportunities to provide landmark buildings on this junction which will not only change the physical appearance of the junction and provide a gateway into the area.

Knockhall Chase is a 20mph zone which is appropriate given its role as the main route to the Knockhall Community Primary school. Unfortunately apart from the traffic sign, nothing in the physical appearance of the street, reflects this status. Physical improvements to the street are proposed to address pedestrian priority, traffic calming and safety facilities, identify the entrance to the residential area and the route to the school.

5 Disused Works and Knockhall Pit

The disused works and former pit enclosed by London Road, Knockhall Chase and Mounts Road is very important for the future of Knockhall. The strategic location and size offers potential for development subject to site conditions. The location of the site on London Road enables Knockhall to create a frontage along this strategic corridor. This would not only reduce the perception of London Road as a barrier but also provide a highly visible setting suitable for new businesses development. New streets and links would repair the fractured urban pattern and improve connectivity within Knockhall.

The size of the site could accommodate a mixed-use scheme combining residential, employment and community uses and public space of high quality that could form a new focus point in Knockhall. Access would have to be carefully considered. Development of the site would also provide a valuable link between Eastern Quarry, Bluewater, the Thames, Greenhithe Centre and Ingress Park. It will be necessary for further feasibility work to establish the extent of developable land. The land is not available for development for at least twenty years, but in the interim could be partly or wholly opened to public access as a green space.

6 Mounts Road and Knockhall Road

Mounts Road and Knockhall Road are the main through-routes in Knockhall. The hierarchy in the road network should be reflected in the design of the streets and public spaces. A greater distinction between in through-routes and residential streets would enhance the character of Knockhall and improve legibility of the place. A comprehensive public realm strategy would help to strengthen coherence in the design and use of materials and street furniture. This would improve the general appearance and quality of Knockhall. Swanscombe, Knockhall and Greenhithe are distinctive settlements and their different characters could be reflected by separate design guides or palettes of materials.

7 Knockhall Sports and Recreation Grounds

The sports and recreation grounds along Knockhall Road form a transition between Knockhall and the Heritage Park. These open spaces and recreation grounds are valuable community assets and deserve to be made use of intensively. To encourage maximum use of these green spaces, they need to be a destination for specific activities and also firmly anchored in the urban structure and daily life. Improving routes through the Heritage Park and recreation grounds are proposed to activate these green spaces. The underused site of the Empire Bowls Club offers the opportunity to create a new entrance to the Heritage Park with a new pedestrian and cycle path running across the park to the skull site incorporating a new bridge across the gorge.

10. delivery & implementation



Improving pedestrian and cycle routes through the green structure is essential to a successful integration of the new development projects with Swanscombe.

The Masterplan provides the basis for the co-ordination of funding and the preparation of development briefs and detailed design of specific projects. It will also provide a platform for future discussions with developers in the preparation of detailed masterplans for the surrounding developments and inform the negotiations of associated Section 106 Agreements.

The Masterplan identifies a range of proposals and projects to support Swanscombe and Greenhithe's changing role from that of detached settlements to vital parts of a successful new urban area. A number of organisations are already involved in Swanscombe and Greenhithe's regeneration and a range of funding sources are being used. Delivery Partnerships will be required to seek funding from existing sources and fully exploit other sources of capital and revenue funding. The tables at the end of this chapter summarise current initiatives and funding sources, suggest changes to existing initiatives where appropriate and sets out new interventions and potential new funding sources.

A number of principles underpin the delivery of proposals set out in the Masterplan:

- The implementation of the Masterplan must be approached in a comprehensive way.
- Integration of proposals and projects with masterplans for surrounding major developments is crucial.
- The provision of new infrastructure is fundamental to achieving the Masterplan objectives and must be addressed comprehensively.
- Development and public realm proposals should seek to improve the existing environment and image of Swanscombe and Greenhithe and must be of the highest design quality;
- The importance of establishing the planning policy context for bringing forward proposals in the Masterplan;
- Development proposals must accord with the objectives for the Masterplan as a whole and must not compromise the delivery of subsequent elements of the plan.

Consideration is given to the following themes:

- Maximising funding opportunities;
- Sharing facilities;
- Promoting developer interest; and
- Maximising integration with and benefits of major developments in the area;
- Delivery mechanisms for key projects;
- The actions and activities required to deliver the key projects.

The chapter is concluded by a delivery mechanism table for each Masterplan project. This captures each current initiative that is already working towards this project. It then goes on to define a set of assignments to progress each project. Finally this information is summarised in a priority table, giving an indicative work programme.

MAXIMISING FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Although the masterplan provides a comprehensive vision, it has to be recognised that delivery will depend on funding availability.

A wide range of potential funding sources are available, and Swanscombe and Greenhithe has already been benefiting from them in many ways. A key objective must be to maximise major public and private sector funding to secure regeneration objectives.

ODPM

ODPM is responsible for communicating the overarching vision for the development of the Gateway and drawing together strategic agencies involved in delivering the sustainable communities agenda. Key issues include transport investment, improvement to the image and environment of the Gateway and delivery of social and community facilities to meet the demands of the growing population.

Swanscombe and Greenhithe is in the Thames Gateway growth area identified within the Communities Plan (ODPM, February 2003). This designation makes it the target of special funding from the ODPM. For all the growth areas, £446 million was announced in February 2003, with a further £100 million in November 2004, to deliver new schools, sports facilities, business opportunities, health services, arts provision, training centres, libraries, nature parks and sustainable transport links. Of the additional £100million, £37.5million was allocated to Kent. It was in that second tranche of funding that Dartford Borough Council's bid for £1 million for community facilities and environmental improvements was successful. The money is being spent on the following projects in Swanscombe:

- London Road Junction Improvements
- New Town Council Offices sewer connection
- Freehold purchase of Knockhall Village Hall
- Keary Road Allotment Fencing
- Water supply to Craylands Lane future sports pavilion
- Structural Surveys of Church Road Community Hall, Old Swanscombe Library and The Grove Community Centre
- Refurbishment design of The Grove Community Centre
- Gunn Road Estate refurbishment
- Swanscombe street signs, litterbins and entrance signs
- Knockhall Chase traffic junction design
- Teen shelter in Knockhall Park

Further announcements of funding can be expected in the future, particularly around May-June in time for the end of the first three years of funding in

March 2006. The Masterplan will assist in maintaining a list of appropriate projects for applications under future funding streams.

Additionally, the ODPM has announced the Community Infrastructure Fund. This is £200 million to be spent on large transport projects. This could be a source of funding for projects such as London Road improvements or Fastrack extensions.

Kent Thameside Delivery Board

Kent Thameside Delivery Board is a collaboration between:

- Kent County Council;
- Gravesham Borough Council;
- Dartford Borough Council;
- Local Strategic Partnership;
- English Partnerships;
- SEEDA;
- ODPM;
- GOSE;
- Housing Corporation;
- Land Securities;
- Countryside Properties;
- London & Continental Railways.

The Board's regeneration framework identifies integrating new and existing communities, tackling deprivation, improving quality of life and implementing the highest standards of urban design amongst their strategic objectives. The masterplan reflects these objectives. Priority projects include Thames Waterfront, creating attractive public and open spaces and developing new education and leisure opportunities.

Board members will be announcing funding and other resources to assist in the delivery of regeneration objectives and the sustainable communities agenda at the local level in the future. Opportunities highlighted in the Masterplan should be evaluated with the Delivery Board for possible funding. It is vital that the Delivery Board engages with the Masterplan. The projects contained within the Masterplan may be relatively small in terms of the size of other projects the Delivery Board is promoting, but a well-functioning Swanscombe and Greenhithe is essential to Kent Thameside as a whole and a coordinated approach to delivering the objectives of the Masterplan is required.

South East England Development Agency (SEEDA)

SEEDA is currently focussing on developments in Northfleet. Future projects will be based around the Swanscombe Peninsula East proposals. This provides potential for integration of proposals with Swanscombe and Greenhithe and opportunities for assistance and should be investigated with SEEDA.

English Partnerships (EP)

English Partnerships will focus on large-scale delivery of new development, particularly housing and issues of affordability. This means direct involvement in Swanscombe and Greenhithe will probably be relatively minor, though EP could become involved if the links between intervention in Swanscombe and Greenhithe and elsewhere are demonstrated.

Housing Corporation

The Housing Corporation will be an important partner in securing affordable housing in the new developments. £450m funding is being sought from the Housing Corporation and other government agencies to fund the provision of affordable housing. There will consequently be pressure to meet the wider needs of the region on the new development sites. Typically under PPG3, S106 obligations would be directly linked to local needs. However, the Housing Corporation will now expect to see sub-regional allocations policies and procedures in operation. The development of appropriate arrangements for new developments, which give some priority for local residents, will therefore be essential to ensure access for residents in Swanscombe and Greenhithe to affordable housing.

The Housing Corporation could also support Registered Social Landlords providing affordable housing within Swanscombe. Consideration should be given to potential schemes for purchasing, refurbishing and renting empty properties, such as properties above shops.

Aspirations for home ownership on the new development sites are unlikely to be met unless sufficient subsidy can be brought into the projects so that the RSL (or developer) partners are able to sell either shared ownership or shared equity schemes at about 50% market value for family homes.

Current alternatives would be conventional shared ownership, where the buyer acquires an initial tranche of the equity, say 30% or 50%, with the potential to "staircase" upwards in further tranches when they can afford to in the future. A rent of about 3% is payable on the value of the unsold equity share retained by the RSL.

The Housing Corporation also provides subsidies for the "Homebuy" scheme where the buyer again acquires an initial share of the equity, but pays no rent on the remainder, which is in effect an interest free loan. The RSL recovers its value on the unsold equity by placing a charge on the property and recovering the same proportion of the value on any future disposal.

URBAN

URBAN is distributing European funding amounting to £7.4 million over six years. URBAN's area includes the two current wards of Swanscombe and Greenhithe. There are regular deadlines for grant submissions until 2006, for activity until 2008. Matched funding is required and activities must be additional to existing undertakings. Several priorities for Swanscombe and Greenhithe, such as the improvement of private housing, are excluded, though improvements to public realm are included. URBAN's core interests are job creation, business start-up, SME assistance, creating and improving green space and creating and improving public buildings. For small

organisations interested in smaller grants there is a Community Chest with a simpler application process.

Public Sector

Both Dartford Borough Council and Kent County Council and a range of service providers such as the Primary Care Trust, have programmes of planned capital and revenue spending in Swanscombe and Greenhithe, on transport, education and a range of other services. Ensuring the masterplan and associated projects synergise with this planned spending will optimise community benefits. The Borough Council, County Council and Town Council must work with other service providers, to lobby for service improvements and help guide their implementation.

The Town Council is currently functioning at the level of a Parish Council. The influx of residential and business population, and therefore Council Tax and business rate revenue, must transform the local governance. This will create many opportunities for positive change.

Current funding

A number of projects have already been identified in Swanscombe and Greenhithe, which are at or near completion, underway or for which funding is being sought. The tables at the end of this chapter highlight the projects that are underway or have already been identified, relate them to the Masterplan proposals and suggests how they can be integrated with the Masterplan. It briefly analyses further funding potential.

Some of the identified projects will require review in relation to the Masterplan. These have been classified into two categories: requiring a location to be decided upon or relating to the implementation of the Masterplan. Implementation is discussed further at the end of this chapter.

SHARING COMMUNITY FACILITIES

A full audit of existing community, leisure and sporting facilities throughout Swanscombe and Greenhithe is a vital initial study. This should build on the Borough-wide Open Space and Playing Pitch Strategy, the Ebbsfleet Leisure Strategy and the Strategic Leisure Assessment undertaken by Sport England. The masterplan supports the improvement of community, leisure and sports facilities across Swanscombe and Greenhithe. A balance must be achieved between refurbishing community buildings of architectural or local significance and providing purpose-built modern facilities. Clustering facilities in multi-agency premises is also beneficial to users and service providers. Scattered small buildings across the town are not sustainable, in terms of usage levels or in capital or revenue budgets. The masterplan suggests the following locations for clusters of community activity:

- The Grove
- The High St, with a particular community focus at the southern end of the High Street at Church Road
- The Swan Valley Community Campus
- Craylands Lane Leisure Centre
- Knockhall Recreation Ground and Community Centre
- Greenhithe Community Hall and Riverside Facilities

There is significant opportunity within these areas for sharing and improvement facilities. Health, leisure and educational services for all generations can sit together, ensuring buildings are fully utilised throughout the day, week and year, fostering inclusion and community spirit. Integrated working will allow pooling of capital and revenue between charities and other organisations, and their funding bodies.

PROMOTING DEVELOPER INTEREST

Some of the projects described in the masterplan rely on attracting private developers, for housing, retail and commercial schemes, for example on the High St and near to Craylands Lane Leisure Centre. The success of these projects depends on the ability to attract developers but also the potential availability of other sources of cross-subsidisation.

Commercial

Swanscombe and Greenhithe has virtually no office market at present but when looking at the area as a whole, North Kent is increasingly viewed as an attractive location. Dartford, Maidstone, Sevenoaks and Gravesend are existing centres with significant commercial space. However, supply here is constrained and no major new commercial developments have been completed recently or are planned. Ebbsfleet will be an important new commercial centre, due to its proximity to CTRL and Crossrail services. In the future, Swanscombe could benefit from this proximity.

Minimum construction costs for commercial space start from £90/ft² and current rental value in Swanscombe are £15/ft². Commercial development is not viable in the current market, so uplifts would have to be considered if a decision was taken that new commercial space was required. Alternatively space could be constructed as residential, with flexibility for it to be converted in future years. There may be potential for specialist business space, particularly for small and start up businesses in Swanscombe, but this sort of market is difficult to construct.

Retail and leisure

Swanscombe has only local shopping provision and there is no existing market for new retail development. Current capital values will not sustain new investment in the High Street in the current market. The location of new retail development to serve the future population of the growth area will determine the sustainability of retailing in the centre of Swanscombe. Local shopping is likely to remain of modest to low value and in initial periods whilst the new communities are under construction, may have to be underwritten by the developers. With shopping significantly under represented in Swanscombe, the creation of a retail hub to serve the existing and proposed communities would have significant benefits. Retail development will need to be promoted as part of sustainable mixed use developments.

The major commercial leisure is located at Bluewater, and limits the commercial attractiveness of Swanscombe as leisure destination. This highlights the importance of improving linkages to these facilities and to concentrating development on leisure facilities to service the local community.

The non-food and comparison retail offer proposed at Swanscombe Peninsula West, Ebbsfleet, Eastern Quarry and North Dartford combined with the existing offer within Swanscombe and Greenhithe, such as the Asda, may impact on shopping patterns in Dartford as a whole. Further analysis should be pursued to help fully understand the future retail interaction changes that will occur.

Once information is available, serious discussion is needed concerning the possible rationalisation of the number of retail hubs, to ensure their long term viability and success. Decisions to consolidate Swanscombe High St, focus on London Road or having a centre deeper in to Swanscombe Peninsula or Ingress Park must be made. Market-led development will be very conservative and will wait to see which centre will be most successful, possibly leaving other centres to die. Decisions and resulting policies must be PPS6 compliant to enable S106 negotiations on locations and accessibility.

Residential

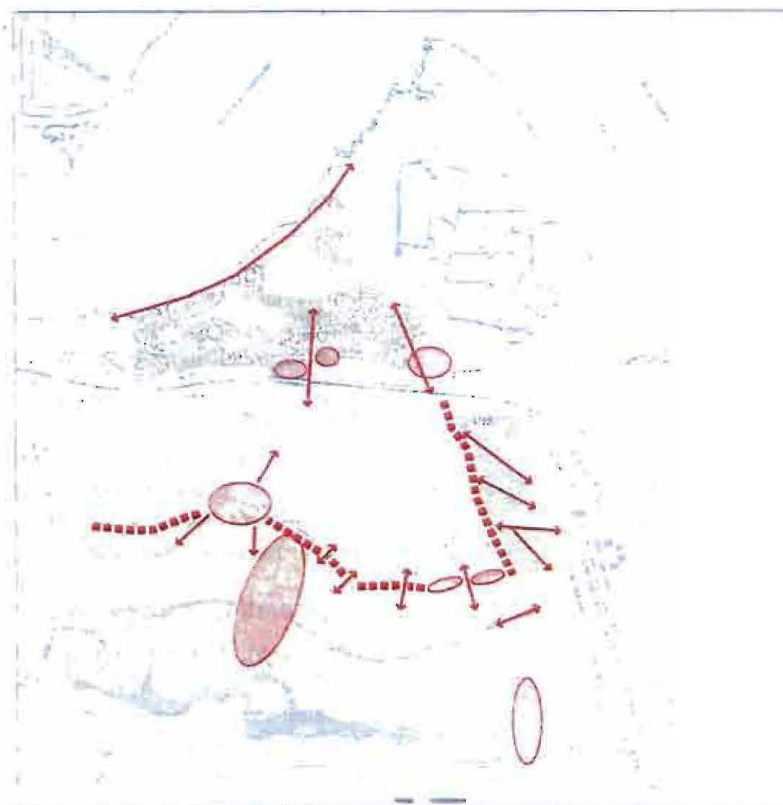
Residential development is the only strong market in Swanscombe and Greenhithe. Therefore the Masterplan projects focus partly on potential development areas as a mechanism for bringing in improved public realm and further S106 negotiations.

MAXIMISING INTEGRATION WITH NEW DEVELOPMENTS

Promoters of the new developments must be involved in the implementation of the masterplan. The spatial framework defined must be supported by the developers to ensure they integrate with the existing green and urban framework, and the aspirations for their evolution. Dartford Borough Council's Regeneration Strategy states that they expect that developers will be committed to the principle of design excellence and will work with the Council to ensure that the objectives of the Council and community are met when sites are developed.

The Masterplan also highlights the need to review the current masterplans for the major development areas and to establish a number of key parameters within which the Masterplans will be developed to ensure integration with the existing communities. The Masterplans have not yet been finalised and there is the opportunity to work with Land Securities to develop these proposals. Figure 10.1 identifies the areas where changes to the developer masterplans would aid integration with this Masterplan.

Figure 10.1: Potential Areas of Change for Developer Masterplans



Ebbsfleet

Ebbsfleet Park should be designed to incorporate high quality paths linking the High Street, Stanhope Road and the Campus to suitable entry points in Ebbsfleet. The masterplan should include the area directly behind the High Street to ensure that the connections are properly addressed. The feasibility of built development on the eastern side of Stanhope Road, especially in the vicinity of the Campus, should be investigated to further encourage use of the park and network of paths. This will not only address access between Swanscombe and Greenhithe and Ebbsfleet but will ensure the community benefits from an open space which has been inaccessible for many years.

Eastern Quarry

There are four key areas which need further investigation and may require change to the Masterplan concept.

The Provision and Location of Community and Sporting Facilities

It will be necessary to review what will be provided within Swanscombe and what will be provided on the northern side of Eastern Quarry.

The Physical Integration of Swanscombe and Eastern Quarry

Direct coalescence of the developments in the vicinity of the Campus, to boost the facilities on the campus and have more homes benefiting from being directly adjacent to it, should be investigated. With good pedestrian and cycle facilities this would encourage movement between the areas. This could also improve access to Ebbsfleet.

A further issue relates to the design of the proposed urban park and how this will relate to the Heritage Park.

A vital part of intensifying the utilisation of the parkland is to ensure a safe and secure environment. Increasing the number of people living along the parks overlooking them and taking responsibility and ownership should be an aim on both sides of the green space. Development should overlook, address and interact with the park, respecting existing relations between existing communities and the open spaces. A new fringe of development around Swanscombe would address this.

Peninsula West

Peninsula West is the least defined masterplan, but the following parameters should inform its future evolution.

- The establishment of a green corridor from the Heritage Park into Peninsula West to the river requires more consideration in terms of the treatment of road and rail barriers and local access. An innovative approach could include the provision of a green bridge. This is particularly important in the light of the current Little Swanscombe proposal objectives for which do not integrate well with the Masterplan.
- The location and content of the local centre must be sensitive to Swanscombe and Greenhithe's needs and be accessible to the local community.
- Excellent pedestrian and cycle links between Peninsula West, Swanscombe and Greenhithe, Ingress Park and the river are essential. Careful consideration must be given to gradients and attractiveness of Pilgrims Way as a route between Swanscombe and the River.

Section 106 Agreements

The potential availability of Section 106 funding provides a major opportunity to take forward the Masterplan which will benefit the local community.

The mechanisms of securing money from development is governed by Circular 1/97 and by the wording in section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended. Good practice was set out in the ODPM review of 106 contributions (November 2004).

The ODPM review identified 3 classifications of planning obligations:

- Class 1: contributions that aim to meet the directly consequential impacts of a development;
- Class 2: affordable housing, where those authorities who require it, would generally see it as being an integral part of the development; and
- Class 3: contributions which are community need rather than impact based.

The Council's policy for securing Section 106 should be governed by the principles of best practice. In assessing what should be secured from 106 agreements the Council should:

- determine the nature, extent and timing of the impacts being caused by the development;

- establish appropriate infrastructure standards in policy terms;
- identify those areas where there are already infrastructure shortfalls or spare capacity and measure their extent;
- measure impacts against standards in order to calculate appropriate mitigation; and
- cost the mitigation measures and determine the timing of their delivery.

Without carrying out this rigour it will not be feasible to appropriately determine the impacts that development may have nor what realistic and defensible targets should be sought.

Government policy does not seek to secure contributions which address underlying deficiencies; such contributions would in essence be a form of taxation. Indeed contributions should relate fairly in scale and kind to the development impact being addressed.

In considering funding contributions, the Council will need to ensure that there is an appropriate mechanism, based on policy objectives and measurement of existing deficiencies and surpluses, for assessing the contributions. It should also be recognised that for some significant schemes, such as Peninsula West, the high enabling costs for land raising and ecological treatment may substantially reduce the available funding for contributions.

It may also be that market cycles of which there are likely to be several in the lifetime of development, will require adjustment to allow for increases, decreases and interruption of development and the contributions that flow from them. There are also likely to be as yet unforeseen technological changes which could alter requirements and aspirations.

In that context it is recommended that a multi-disciplinary and multi-organisation officer team is convened which represents the following key areas of impact that will need to be assessed in relation to each development:

- Transport
- Affordable housing
- Health care
- Education
- Social services
- Training
- Public realm
- Open space/playing fields

It is recognised that mitigation of each impact will be core to many service directors. It should be recognised that the initial position should be that all impacts should be mitigated by the development: however it is unlikely that this will be feasible.

In practice for example to date only 10-12% of affordable housing has been secured from new development albeit the target is 30%. It is also recognised that for valid reasons it may be desirable to secure disproportionate contributions to a particular aspect: Ingress Park secured a contribution of in

excess of £6 million to the restoration of the Priory and landscaping for example.

It will be necessary to establish a contributions matrix to lever in private funding into a range of public realm, civic and infrastructure projects. This will require an objective mechanism whereby for major applications, there is an assessment and evaluation of the relative importance of the impacts so that contributions can be targeted appropriately. Once such method would be the creation of a Matrix of Impact Assessment (MIA). The matrix identifies the potential impacts from development.

For each major development the impacts are graded by the MIA officer team. The system allows for the assessment of the impacts of the scheme in question but allows for the wider issues as they stand at the date of determination to be taken into account. Each impact score is then totalled and the relative importance of each impact determines the proportion of funding that will be sought for each impact area. The contribution to central facilities in a way which secures potentially significant amounts from a single development for a clearly identified need would allow for critical mass to be achieved to secure delivery of objectively determined critical elements.

The Masterplan includes a number of development-related requirements such as:

- Public open space;
- Pedestrian and cycle routes;
- Affordable housing;
- Transport improvement, including new bus facilities and improvements to stations;
- Provision of or contributions to educational, social and community facilities within the local area.

If done as a tariff setting system in advance of applications, this will allow the Council to prioritise relevant issues within the wards or being set in response to specific applications could define contributions of a given proposal. Certain projects may achieve a higher needs score for infrastructure rather than education, or social rented housing may achieve a higher score on another site depending on the particular impacts of the proposal under consideration. This could allow for a flexible but robust approach to defining specific impacts of a scheme.

It will be vital to ensure that the appropriate delivery bodies are set up with public sector partnerships already in place to make most effective use of funding secured and that the bodies' relevant boards have already approved the projects that require funding. Commuted sums secured for maintenance will need to be ringfenced and managed.

For areas of expenditure for which it is inappropriate to secure 106 contributions the council tax banding will be an important mechanism for securing emergency services, refuse and other service cover provided by the local authority.

PROJECT DELIVERY

The Masterplan identifies a number of projects throughout Swanscombe and Greenhithe. The summaries in the following tables identify the relevant current initiatives, funding (current and potential), further work and timing.

Public realm and open space

For generic proposals as described in Section 8 throughout Swanscombe and Greenhithe.

Current and potential projects that contribute to the masterplan	Funding identified	How projects can integrate and adapt
Improvement of unadopted roads (Park Terrace, Albert Road and Hope Road)	DBC	Projects need to use masterplan principles
Lighting and security measures in Grove Road car park and Stanhope Road	PFI	Project is nearing completion
Gunn Road environmental projects	ODPM, DBC	Project complete. Learn lessons to apply to future projects.
General environmental improvements	DBC, ODPM	These projects need to link with each other. They can seek definition from the masterplan. They must sequentially address priorities according to funding availability and use design guidelines.
Brighter, Better Swanscombe		
Deep Clean 2		
Introducing and enhancing signage		
Seasonal streetscape improvements such as hanging baskets and Christmas lights		
Improvements to children's play areas		
Crime and Disorder Audit and Action Plan	Police	Integrate findings into public realm design and management, including Secured by Design requirements.
Finding a solution to illegal motorcycling	Discovery Centre, Police, Groundwork.	Integrate into public realm design and management
Further work	Timing	Funding potential
Design guidelines, for all aspects of public realm, including consideration of maintenance regime and differentiation of the inner and outer ring road. The guidelines would be informed by and inform the environmental maintenance review. All works undertaken in Swanscombe and Greenhithe must follow the guidelines. Special public realm considerations given to the High Street / The Grove and all open spaces within Swanscombe and Greenhithe.	Design guidelines are needed as soon as possible in 2005.	DBC ODPM URBAN Street maintenance activities have no class under S106. This should be funded through Council Tax and business rates. Streetscape improvements are Class 3 where an impact from new developments is defined. Contributions to CCTV links to form a district system could seek Class 3 support. Where additional policing will be required because of developments, Class 1 contributions could be sought.

Transport

For generic proposals as described in Section 8 throughout Swanscombe and Greenhithe.

Current and potential projects that contribute to the masterplan	Funding identified	How projects can integrate and adapt
Community Transport, School minibus and Elderly Transport.	DBC, SGTC, URBAN. (Class 1 S106 contributions are appropriate for links to Fastrack.)	Develop into demand-led service
Access to Employment Study	URBAN	Studies and schemes must be integrated and follow masterplan principles. Must be planning reserved matter for all new developments.
Parking strategy & traffic impact	KCC, DBC	
Traffic management scheme for Swanscombe	KCC, DBC	
Re-opening of Northfields and Pilgrims Way footpaths.	CTRL	Use design guide and integrate into defined routes
Introduction of a network of walking trails and walking groups	KCC	This needs to consider urban as well as leisure routes.
Further work	Timing	Funding potential
See tables on the High Street / The Grove and the station.		Private sector involvement in public transport. KCC and DBC for highways and parking projects. ODPM and SEEDA for other projects Class 1 S106 will cover projects for extra traffic from developments. Class 3 will cover projects like green travel plans.
On street and rear parking projects throughout Swanscombe, involving consultation, design and works. This would involve the calming measures, integrated with the public realm works.	Early public consultation in high profile areas, integrated with work on public realm design guidelines during 2005, continuing into other areas through 2006.	
Improvements for pedestrians and cyclists throughout Swanscombe and Greenhithe: consultation, design and works.	Consultation in 2006. Design and works 2007-8.	
Public transport innovation, particularly demand responsive transport. Feasibility study required, including identification of capital and revenue funding sources.	Feasibility study in 2007.	
Feasibility study of new ferry service. If viability is low or many years in the future, access points and locations must be protected.	Feasibility study possibly aligned with further waterfront studies. Long term project.	

1 High Street

For the specific projects as described in Section 9.

Current and potential projects that contribute to the masterplan	Funding identified	How projects can integrate and adapt
Retail strategy for the High Street, and improvements to public realm		Utilise the public realm improvements described in masterplan
Adaptation of the Methodist Church to wider use		
Refurbishment or redevelopment of the old library and community centre to wider use	KCC, DBC	
Further work	Timing	Funding potential
Feasibility study, design and works for the first phase of the preferred approach for the High Street. This would include public realm and transport developments. Public realm and transport improvements should proceed before redevelopment. They must proceed whether feasibility of the further work is proven or not.	Feasibility study as soon as possible in 2005. Public realm and transport improvements also as soon as possible in 2005. Redevelopment dependent on results of feasibility study and developer interest	Private sector retail, commercial and housing developers URBAN ODPM Class 1 S106 where direct impact from new development can be proved.

2 Swanscombe Gateway

For the specific projects as described in Section 9.

Current and potential projects that contribute to the masterplan	Funding identified	How projects can integrate and adapt
Traffic lights at London Road and High St junction	ODPM and KCC	Project designed and being implemented.
Further work	Timing	Funding potential
As details emerge about Fastrack stops, other improvements to London Road, SPW local centre and role of High Street, require feasibility studies, designs and works for the pub, the business park and the streetscape. Relocation of fire station and Royal Mail depot to the business park or elsewhere on London Road could improve feasibility	Junction improvements for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists, and pub improvement during 2005-6. Mixed use development from 2006 depending on feasibility results.	KCC ODPM Private sector commercial developers SEEDA Class 1 S106 where direct impact from new development can be proved. Fire Service and Royal Mail.

3 Swanscombe Station

For the specific projects as described in Section 9.

Current and potential projects that contribute to the masterplan	Funding identified	How projects can integrate and adapt
Cosmetic improvements to station and through ticketing	Network Rail	Network Rail's plans are only first stage of what is required
Further work	Timing	Funding potential
Improved access. Soft measures to increase demand. Pedestrian bridge. Station plaza Improved access. All require feasibility, design and works.	Soft measures rolled out 2005-6. Pedestrian bridge feasibility in 2006, with activity dependent on results. Station Plaza feasibility in line with High St feasibility (2005) but assume works will be later than High St improvements.	KCC Network Rail Arriva South Eastern Trains Strategic Rail Authority ODPM URBAN Private sector commercial developers

4 The Recreation Ground / Broomfield Park

For the specific projects as described in Section 9.

Current and potential projects that contribute to the masterplan	Funding identified	How projects can integrate and adapt
Development of Broomfield Park into a sports hub	Football Federation	Current project with Football Federation needs to be absorbed into plans
Further work	Timing	Funding potential
Design for landscape approach and works.	2005-6.	KCC and DBC ODPM Private sector leisure developer More sports facilities can be considered a Class 3 S106, based on the impact of new residents.

5 The Grove

For the specific projects as described in Section 9.

Current and potential projects that contribute to the masterplan	Funding identified	How projects can integrate and adapt
Grove Hall refurbishment into community & sports hub	ODPM (design)	Integration with public realm and transport guidelines
New Town Council offices, including community hall & crèche	DBC	
Further work	Timing	Funding potential
Feasibility, design and works for car park, building and access points.	Car park and access points considered as part of High St works and feasibility in 2005-6. Feasibility for building undertaken by end of 2006.	KCC and DBC ODPM Private sector developer See S106 comment above.

6 Stanhope Road

For the specific projects as described in Section 9.

Current and potential projects that contribute to the masterplan	Funding identified	How projects can integrate and adapt
See public realm table above for lighting and security measures project	PFI	Project is only first stage of what is required.
Further work	Timing	Funding potential
Feasibility, design and works for phases of improvement and development. First stage could pilot the public realm strategy and design guidelines. Final phases could see public transport link across park to Ebbsfleet and development on park edge, close to Community Campus: see Ebbsfleet Park table.	Public realm and transport improvements 2005-6. Further work dependent on Eastern Quarry and Ebbsfleet masterplans and implementation.	KCC and DBC ODPM Private sector developers Class 1 S106 where direct impact from new development can be proved.

7 Swan Valley Community Campus

For the specific projects as described in Section 9.

Current and potential projects that contribute to the masterplan	Funding identified	How projects can integrate and adapt
Maximising use of the campus		This depends on many issues, such as provision of a bus stop and flexibility on charging for facilities.
Vocational education centre, to be affiliated to Swan Valley Community Campus, though not necessarily on the campus site.	KCC ODPM	This must be adjacent to if not on the campus, or in another activity cluster.
Further work	Timing	Funding potential
Feasibility, design and works for improved access, art installations and public realm. Feasibility study for grand entrance.	Public realm and transport improvement in 2005-6. Improved access in 2006-7 depending on provision of vocational centre Feasibility for grand entrance considered from 2010.	KCC and DBC ODPM Private sector developer Class 1 S106 where direct impact from new development can be proved.

8 Crayland Lane Leisure Centre

For the specific projects as described in Section 9.

Current and potential projects that contribute to the masterplan	Funding identified	How projects can integrate and adapt
Front extension to Craylands Lane Leisure Centre	Gravesham Leisure	
Mini soccer project.	Football Federation	Project must be integrated into masterplan proposal.
Wallace Gardens Hall assessment		Uses currently in the hall should integrate into defined activity cluster.
Further work		Funding potential
Feasibility, design and works for integration and improvement of community and sports facilities	Feasibility study in 2005. Taken forward by private developer during 2006-7. Some dependency on provision of leisure in Eastern Quarry.	Sport England, KCC and DBC ODPM Private sector leisure and housing developers. More sports facilities can be considered a Class 3 S106, based on the impact of new residents.

9 Heritage Park

For the specific projects as described in Section 9.

Current and potential projects that contribute to the masterplan	Funding identified	How projects can integrate and adapt
Upgrading the Heritage Park	ODPM	Current Groundwork project needs to be enlarged when funding available, following principles in masterplan.
Signalisation of London Road and Craylands Lane		Need to follow principles of masterplan, especially in promoting green corridor.
Signalisation of London Road and Knockhall Road		
Further work	Timing	Funding potential
Feasibility, design and works for entrances and wider path network. Improvement to railway bridge. Developments to formalize edge of park.	Public realm and entrance improvement in 2005-6. Railway bridge and park edge developments are long term projects, possibly from 2010, depending on developer interest and developments at Eastern Quarry and SPW.	Sport England URBAN KCC and DBC ODPM Private sector housing developers

10 Ebbsfleet Park

For the specific projects as described in Section 9.

Current and potential projects that contribute to the masterplan	Funding identified	How projects can integrate and adapt
No projects currently under review		
Further work	Timing	Funding potential
Change of Ebbsfleet park design. New private sector development at park edge.	Change of park design and implementation as soon as possible, dependent on Land Securities timetable. Park edge developments are long term consideration.	Land Securities and other private sector developers.

11 Housing

For the specific projects as described in Section 9.

Current and potential projects that contribute to the masterplan	Identified funding	How projects can integrate and adapt
Investment in private sector stock		
Study on affordability	No class for S106 as it is required to underwrite the calculation of obligations.	Must inform S106 matrix, requests and negotiations
Further work	Timing	Funding potential
A detailed study of priority areas and priority treatments. Marketing grants from a range of organizations. Design and works as appropriate.	Study as soon as possible in 2005. Set up grants programme 2006-9, with associated activity.	It is possible to request this within S106 negotiations but there is no class for S106 as causal link is unclear. Therefore commuted sums could be provided, but if they were challenged defense would be weak. A delivery body, such as Community Trust, would have to be instituted. Alternatively under Section 1.11 of the Local Government Act, developer and authority could enter a unilateral undertaking, not linked to the development, but as a general agreement. Grants from the Energy Saving Trust and potential new funding schemes from ODPM/DTI/Defra.
Robust and deliverable affordable housing in Swanscombe and surrounding developments	Policy work already underway.	Class 2, as confirmed by housing need policy

Greenhithe and Knockhall

For the specific projects as described in Section 9.

Current and potential projects that contribute to the masterplan	Identified funding	How projects can integrate and adapt
Traffic management scheme for Greenhithe	DBC	All need to integrate with masterplan, and resulting public realm and transport guidelines. Eagles Road car park project must address security and playground too.
Eagles Road Car Park	KCC	
Greenhithe Community Hall	DBC, S106	
Knockhall Community Centre and sports ground	ODPM, DBC	
Signalisation of London Road, Knockhall Chase and The Avenue	ODPM, KCC	
Signalisation of London Road and Mounts Road	KCC	
Further work	Timing	Funding potential
Applying Greenhithe Riverfront Urban Design Strategy SPG	Timing for these projects is less understood, but applying the existing SPG, the Empire Bowls park entrance and Knockhall Chase are early wins. Further work on the riverfront, comprehensive links to the Heritage Park and further Greenhithe Station improvements are medium-long term projects, dependent on developer intervention and funding stream availability.	KCC and DBC
Study on riverfront gateway and implementation.		URBAN
Design and works for comprehensive link to Heritage Park		ODPM
Design and works for Empire Bowls Heritage Park entrance.		SEEDA
Greenhithe station improvements as part of Fastrack.		Private leisure developers
Design and works for Knockhall Chase 20mph zone.		

Management and delivery

This provides a summary of current management and implementation, which is developed further at the conclusion of this section.

Current and potential projects that contribute to the masterplan	Identified funding	How projects can integrate and adapt
Planning Aid Outreach		All of these need to be integrated with each other and with the overarching principles of the Masterplan. A cross-organisation Regeneration Steering Group could adopt the implementation of the masterplan.
Co-ordination of services		
Supporting Independence.		
Marketing, Publicity and Promotions		
S106 Negotiations and delivery		
Early Community Benefit from S106		
Town Services Contract		
Private sector leasing		
Community and leisure facilities audit	DBC, KCC, Groundwork, CVS	Vital to be completed before masterplan can be fully implemented. Class 3 S106 could cover provision, but not the actual review or audit.
Sports pitches and facilities review		
Further work	Timing	Funding potential
Implementation is investigated further in the final section of this chapter.	Partnership working must continue and strengthen immediately.	KCC and DBC URBAN Most of these projects have no class for S106. Agreements may secure contributions to officer time.

Projects which require site identification

This provides a summary of projects that are at an early stage of feasibility study, so a site has not been identified or agreed.

Current and potential projects that contribute to the masterplan	Identified funding	How projects can integrate and adapt
Healthy Living Centre Feasibility		Must integrate principles of Masterplan into decisions on location and design.
Young People's Activities		
Bowls Pavilion		
Further work	Timing	Funding potential
Design and build services or integrate within existing buildings as appropriate once feasibility studies complete	Not possible to define at this stage. It would be best for these to be integrated into the Masterplan proposals and projects and their timetables.	Sport England PCT KCC and DBC ODPM URBAN Private sector developers More facilities can be considered a Class 3 S106, based on the impact of new residents.

Action Plan

The Masterplan establishes a series of future opportunities. However, for these projects to be achieved, intervention will be required by the key stakeholders. Successful delivery of these projects is dependent on the early provision of public realm and community facility improvements to raise aspirations and the image of the town. This Draft Action Plan sets out the key stages in delivering the Masterplan vision.

Project	Early wins: 2005-2006	Next phases: 2006-2009	Long term: 2010+
Existing initiatives	Complete all the existing projects through a comprehensive approach		
Public realm	Guidelines High Street and Stanhope Road	All public realm in Swanscombe and Greenhithe to quality of new development	
Transport	High Street and The Grove Exemplar resident parking schemes	Demand responsive public transport. Pedestrian and cyclist improvements throughout	Ferry service
1 High Street	See above	Redevelopment of part of High Street east side. Redevelopment of block at corner of High St/Milton Road	Further redevelopment
2 Swanscombe Gateway	Junction improvements. Improvements for pedestrians and cyclists Face-lift / redevelopment for pub	Relocation of Fire Station and Royal Mail Depot Provision of mixed use development with industrial/commercial focus	Growth of Swanscombe Gateway along London Road
3 Swanscombe station	Soft measures to encourage travel	Pedestrian bridge Station Plaza and new platform access.	
4 The Grove	Public realm and transport improvements	Car park reconfiguration Access to High Street New building	
5 Broomfield Park / Recreation Ground	Landscape option		Town park option
6 Stanhope Road	Public realm and transport improvements	Dependent on Ebbsfleet Park design and implementation	
7 Swan Valley Community Campus	Public realm and transport Improved access		Grand access
8 Craylands Lane Leisure Centre	Redevelopment and provision of community uses and housing		Future role of leisure centre and growth
9 Heritage Park	Public realm and entrance improvement		Rail bridge
10 Ebbsfleet Park	Dependent on Ebbsfleet Park design and implementation		
11 Housing	Consultation Local estate office with handyman service Renovation grants/loans for landlords and owner-occupiers	'Living over the shop' scheme Infill developments, with appropriate densities, house types and affordability. Continued/extended grants/loans for landlords and owner-occupiers	
Greenhithe and Knockhall	Applying Greenhithe Riverfront Urban Design Strategy SPG Design and works for Empire Bowls Heritage Park entrance Design and works for Knockhall Chase 20mph zone	Study on riverfront gateway and implementation Design and works for comprehensive link to Heritage Park Greenhithe station improvements as part of Fastrack	Further implementation of riverfront leisure opportunities

IMPLEMENTATION

Implementing the Swanscombe and Greenhithe masterplan will be a complex process, drawing on a range of funding sources and interventions. It will be dependent on effective partnership working between a number of key organisations. This is a strength, because reliance on one major funding source or single organisation could jeopardise the entire process. However, it does require management and strong partnerships. The Town and Borough Councils have taken significant steps towards coordinated work and sharing knowledge and staff. The formation of the town council's sub-group dealing with physical proposals assists the consultation process.

Implementation of the masterplan will require the establishment of an organisational structure to coordinate implementation activity, involving key stakeholder.

It will be important to ensure the masterplan remains relevant. This masterplan has a maximum life covering the development timescale of the surrounding developments, of approximately 20 years. It should be updated regularly, for example every five years, as the surrounding developments are agreed and built, and as Swanscombe and Greenhithe's social and economic status evolves.

The minimum that must be achieved is that the County, Borough and Town Councils, plus other service providers need to:

- Ensure the masterplan is applied in a holistic and progressive manner through all planning, transport, social and economic roles;
- Proactively encourage developers to embrace the quality agenda;
- Promote co-ordinated public sector funding to deliver key public realm and infrastructure projects required early on;
- Prepare projects which can be taken on by private and public sector partners.

Implementation will not be possible without enthusiastic support from the local communities. This will involve communication and engagement, but also a process of training and skilling. This must integrate with the range of work on learning and skills underway throughout Swanscombe and Greenhithe. Awareness raising could build on the model of creating neighbourhood champions, who are trained and then supported in raising awareness amongst their neighbours at an informal level. Information could also be disseminated effectively through school children telling parents and grandparents about special themed lessons and visiting speakers.

It is recommended that the masterplan is adopted as a supplementary planning document to aid the delivery of its objectives in Swanscombe and Greenhithe and surrounding developments. This must be integrated with further studies and proposals for the waterfront and access to it.

Overall, a comprehensive approach will serve to stimulate developer and service provider confidence in Swanscombe and Greenhithe.

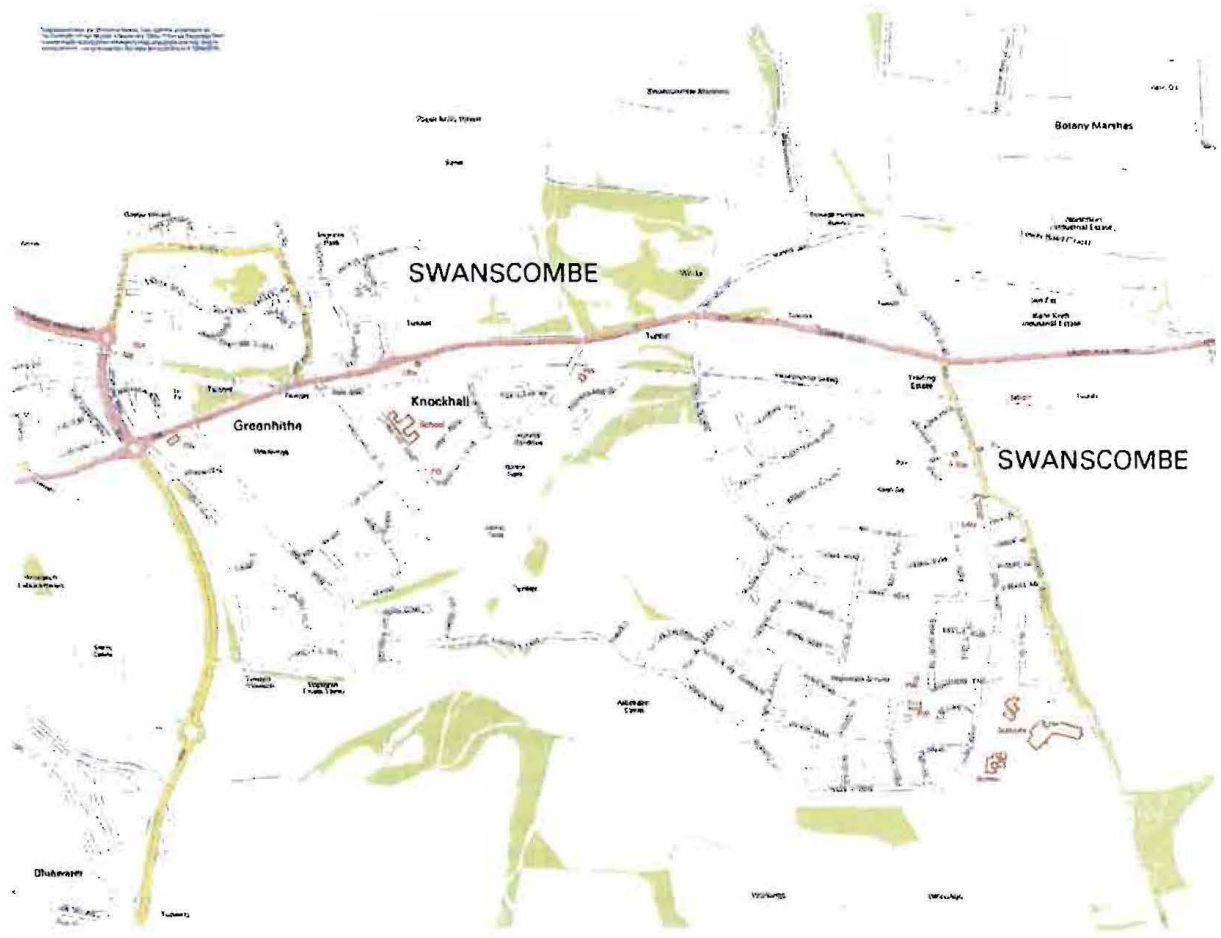
11. conclusions

Swanscombe and Greenhithe must grasp this opportunity to become an even better place to live, work and play. Swanscombe and Greenhithe has the opportunity for positive change, and there is a need to raise the aspirations of the whole community to benefit from it. This will be dependent on early intervention to improve the environment and image of the area.

Communication with the public and community participation is the most important part of implementing this masterplan. There is a need for greater engagement of the local community in the planning and development of the area. For example, we advise that physical models should be produced, both professionally and by residents, particularly school children. This process itself will help raise awareness and aspirations. The models can then be placed around the area, for example in community halls, pubs and shops. This can then facilitate more public participation, such as having debates and collaborative design workshops. This consultation and participation must also involve the range of charities and community organisations active in the area.

Only with everyone signed up, can the masterplan for Swanscombe and Greenhithe confidently move forward. Swanscombe and Greenhithe has many assets and offers a number of opportunities for sustainable change and development in the future. The masterplan provides a framework for the area to evolve into a successful and desirable place which will perform a key role in the development of Kent Thameside.

appendix a



appendix b

Other options considered for the high street opportunity areas.

OPTION A

Responding to the need to widen the carriageway and footpath where it is most narrow, one approach would be to acquire the front gardens of the dwellings directly south of the station. This is illustrated in Figure B1.1. However it is judged that this is not worthwhile, considering the lengthy CPO process compared to the scant benefit of the minimal widening it would achieve.

OPTION B

Consideration was also given to a higher level of intervention, involving the construction of a bypass to the east of the High Street and introduction of a one way system or complete pedestrianisation of the High Street, as illustrated in Figure B1.2. This would involve demolishing of the eastern side of the High Street. The provision of a by-pass was not considered to be justified:

- The High Street will not provide a through-route to Ebbsfleet or Eastern Quarry, and traffic levels will not demand this increased scale of carriageway provision.
- Ground conditions and topography would make the project extremely difficult and costly to implement.
- Complex junction arrangements would be required at London Road, and also with Stanhope Road, Church Road and Milton Road.
- Public transport provision would be more complex.
- The vibrancy of the High Street, would be diluted, decreasing the footfall and passing trade that the retail sector requires.
- The commercial offer of the High Street would be reduced.
- The sensitive character of the High Street and its streetscape be adversely affected.

Figure B1.1 Option A

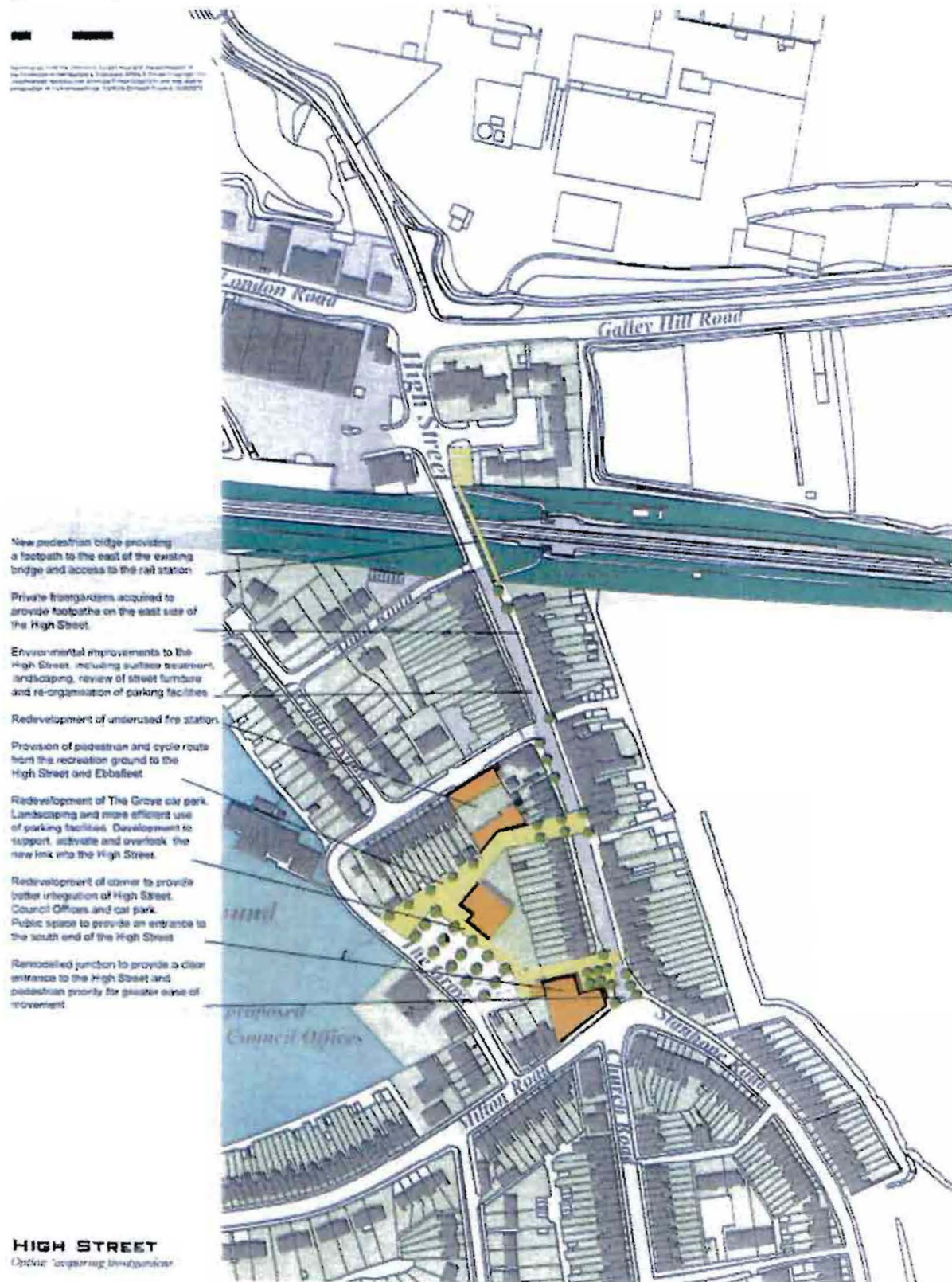
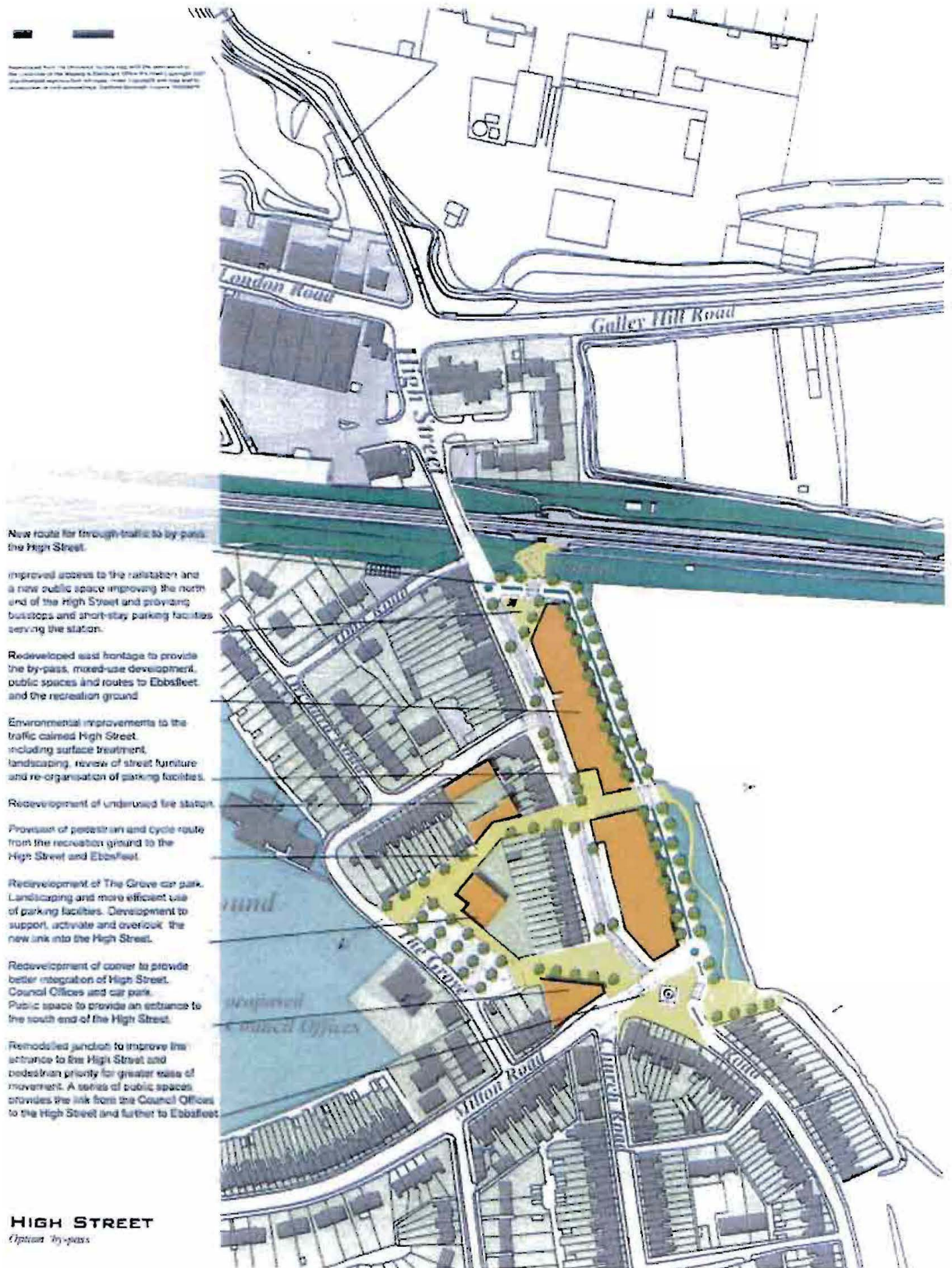


Figure B1.2 Option B



appendix c

Projects and initiatives with a physical impact (active or under consideration) in Swanscombe and Greenhithe

Accessibility and transport

Project	How	Responsibility for Implementation and/or Funding
Access to London Road / Relief of London Road	Traffic lights at junctions with: High Street / Galley Hill Craylands Lane Knockhall Road Knockhall Chase/The Avenue Mounts Road	KCC, DBC
Community Transport and School minibus and Elderly Transport.	Commercial Local Bus Service, subsidised service or other solution, possibly using two new minibuses	KCC, Swan Valley, Discovery Centre, Voluntary & Community sector.
Traffic management scheme for Greenhithe	One-way westbound along High Street.	DBC, SGTC
Swanscombe Transport Assessment Study	Transport needs assessment and quick win projects for Swanscombe in cooperation with local CDWs and residents	Urban TGK
Traffic management scheme for Swanscombe	Full impact of developments on traffic in Swanscombe to be explored	KCC, DBC, SGTC
Swanscombe Station improvement	Network Rail are understood to have some plans for 'cosmetic' improvements and through ticketing. Further clarification necessary. Crossrail improvements may assist, but not for another ten years.	KCC, Network Rail, Arriva, South Eastern Trains and the Strategic Rail Authority.
Swanscombe High Street	Development of a retail strategy, and improvements to the High Street as a public realm.	SGTC, KTSDB, KCC, Groundwork.
Footpaths	Re-opening of Northfields and Pilgrims Way footpaths.	SGTC, KCC.
Parking strategy & traffic impact	Review of existing road space with a view to more effective use and feeding back of traffic impact studies.	SGTC, KCC.

Community involvement

Project	How	Responsibility for Implementation and/or Funding
Riverside Heritage Centre	Community consultation for redevelopment of local building as community centre	Urban Community Chest
Planning Aid Outreach	Capacity building for local residents and community groups to participate in planning process	Urban TGK

Community Safety

Project	How	Responsibility for Implementation and/or Funding
Crime and Disorder Audit and Action Plan	Promoting Swanscombe for inclusion as a geographical target area in the next community safety plan.	DBC, Police.
Illegal Motorcycling	Supporting young people to provide their own solution, which will then go out for consultation and funding.	Discovery Centre, PCSO's, Groundwork.

Co-ordination and Marketing

Project	How	Responsibility for Implementation and/or Funding
Co-ordination of services	Establish Swanscombe Neighbourhood Regeneration Steering Group.	SGTC
Supporting Independence.	Exploring use of SIP to bring about service improvements. Develop a local PSA project.	SGTC
Marketing, Publicity and Promotions	Developing and delivering a marketing plan for Swanscombe, to create a feel good factor about regeneration.	SGTC, KTSDB.
S106 Negotiations and delivery.	Maximising community benefit from S106 agreements.	DBC, SGTC

Health and wellbeing

Project	How	Responsibility for Implementation and/or Funding
General activities of PCT	-Upgrading existing health estate (pump priming) -Changing models of health and social care – integrated health and social care centre -Comprehensive health impact assessments	PCT, KCC
Maximising use of school and other facilities	Expanding use of Swan Valley PFI facilities.	SGTC
Healthy Living Centre Feasibility	Feasibility study for a healthy living centre or network.	SGTC

Housing and the environment

Project	How	Responsibility for Implementation and/or Funding
Improvement of unadopted roads	Upgrading and adoption of Park Terrace, Albert Road, Hope Road.	DBC
Eagles Road Car Park	Improve landscaping and widen 'The Avenue'	KCC
Grove Road car park and Stanhope Road	Under PFI additional lighting and security is being added to the car park and modifications are to be made to Stanhope Road.	KCC
Housing Improvement	Investment in private sector stock using proceeds from S106 negotiations.	KCC, DBC
General environmental improvements	Improvements to public realm	KCC, DBC, SGTC
Gunn Road Estate Environmental Improvements	Physical improvement of Gunn Road Estate in cooperation with local residents	Groundwork, Gunn Rd Residents Steering Group, SGTC
Signage	Introducing and enhancing signage in Swanscombe.	Swan Valley Campus, KCC, SGTC
Streetscape Improvements	Project to enhance the streetscape seasonally – hanging baskets, Christmas lighting.	SGTC, Groundwork.
Early Community Benefit	Ensure existing communities get early benefits from S106 agreements.	DBC, SGTC.
Brighter, Better Swanscombe	A programme of aesthetic improvements to Swanscombe's housing stock and streetscape.	SGTC
Town Services Contract	Bringing together all services' standards contracts.	SGTC
Private sector leasing	Find out number of private sector leases with London boroughs (and other local authorities)	Housing
Deep Clean 2	Deep Clean 2 to happen with enhanced sustainability from within the Swanscombe community.	SGTC, Voluntary and Community sector.
Study on affordability of housing		SGTC

Leisure and culture

Project	How	Responsibility for Implementation and/or Funding
Community and leisure facilities	Audit of facilities, ensuring complementarity of proposals.	SGTC, Groundwork, CVS
Vocational Centre	Vocational education centre, to be provided as part of Swan Valley Campus, though not necessarily on the campus site.	KCC, Swan Valley Campus
Eastern Quarry facilities	Changing rooms for playing fields Swimming Pool Community Hall for each village Recreational use of water, e.g. angling Major Urban Park	KCC, DBC, SGTC
Sports pitches and facilities in Swanscombe	Comprehensive overview of currently available, unused and proposed pitches and facilities in Swanscombe. Purchase and implementation of Empire and Essander Sites.	KCC, DBC, SGTC
Swanscombe Heritage Park	Upgrading of the Heritage Park.	SGTC, Groundwork, English Nature.
Greenhithe Community Hall		SGTC
Grove Hall	Refurbishment of the Hall into a community and sports hub	SGTC, Groundwork, CVS
New Town Council offices	Provision of new Town Council Offices including Community Hall and crèche	DBC, SGTC
Knockhall Community Centre	Acquisition and development	SGTC, Groundwork, CVS
Wallace Gardens Hall Assessment.	Assessment of hall's future viability.	SGTC
Young People's Activities	Youth Centre provision, youth shelter.	SGTC, Discovery Centre, Groundwork, Cyber Place.
Development of Sport Activity	Mini Soccer at Craylands and the development of Broomfield Park as a sports hub.	SGTC, Football Federation.
Walking Trails	Introduction of a network of walking trails and walking groups.	SGTC
Bowls Pavilion	Implement a bowls pavilion.	SGTC
Children's play areas	Improvements to play areas.	SGTC
Methodist Church	Potential for multi-agency centre	Various NGOs
Old Library/Community Centre becoming a multi-agency centre and community café	Acquire from KCC and convert as meeting/interview/office provision for police community support officers, community and voluntary organisations.	KCC, DBC, SGTC and others

appendix d

SWANSCOMBE TRAIN STATION AUDIT

Station

Swanscombe

(Ratings: 1=Poor, 2=Poor/Average, 3=Average, 4=Average/Good, 5=Good)

1) The station and its surrounding environment**a) Surrounding Land-Use**

(Tick appropriate boxes)

Commentary**Residential**☒**Offices**☐**Industrial**☐**Retail / Leisure**☒**Public Open Space**☐

Mainly residential with some small retail in High St

b) Surrounding Development Opportunities

(Rate and specify land use and development opportunities)

Commentary**Vacant Buildings**☐**Construction Sites**☐**Brownfield Sites**☒**UDP Proposals**☒

Thames Gateway sites surround Swanscombe town. There are numerous development proposals for the area.

c) Surrounding Environmental Quality

(rating of perceptions)

Commentary**Noise/Traffic****Litter****Vandalism****Lighting****Overall Impression****d) Station visibility and appearance**

(ratings)

Comments**Station visibility**

(within the streetscape)

Station image

(consider what maintenance needs to be undertaken)

Can see where it is clearing shelters

2) ACCESSIBILITY: PEDESTRIAN ROUTES TO THE STATION

Route Description

Ref No.

(eg B1 for Barcelona 1 etc - one audit sheet for each station entrance)

Commentary / Identify Opportunities**a) Main crossing** 1/2(comment on principle road crossing by station entrance
toucans, tactile paving etc.)Zebra ok for E/B platform
v poor for W/B and ticket office**b) Other crossings** n/a

(Comment on other crossings which might be used to access the station including side roads)

c) Station visibility 1

(walls, fences, vegetation, etc. obstructing sight lines)

Narrow access Paths
Overgrown in summer**d) Footpath Conditions** 3

(consider condition of path surfacing)

OK

e) Severance 1

(Consider level of road traffic and suitability of crossings)

Poor as (a)

f) Lighting 2/3

(Are pedestrian routes well lit)

Lighting present - site visit during day therefore not observed working

g) Signing 1

(Are pedestrian routes properly signed)

Poor signing, don't know which entrance is for E/B or W/B

h) Safety/Security 1/2

(Consider blind corners, vegetation growth etc.)

Poor - blind corners fenced each side not overlooked

i) Mobility Impaired 1**Person Access**

(is ramped access available)

Steep steps - no ramped access

j) Overall Impressions 1

(consider key issues here)

Very poor access, secluded no footpath on east side of bridge

3) ACCESSIBILITY: CYCLE INTERCHANGE

		Commentary / Identify Opportunities
a) Convenience of Cycle Routes (Accessibility of formal routes to the station)	1	No cycle routes at station
b) Quality of cycle Access (are dedicated cycle routes well maintained)	1	Poor access - steps to platforms
c) Severance (Consider cycle crossings, impact of road traffic flows and parked vehicles)	1	No cycle crossings
d) Signing (Are local cycle routes well signed to and from the station)	1	No signing
e) Cycle Storage Outside the station (location, provision, security)	1	Home
f) Overall Impressions	1	V poor ; not conducive to encouraging cycling

4) ACCESSIBILITY: BUS INTERCHANGE

Commentary / Identify Opportunities

NB. Can any stops be moved?

- a) **Convenience of Stops** 1
(Consider location of stops for ease of access to station, estimate walk time)

Close to E/B but v poor to W/B

- b) **Appropriateness of Bus Routes** 2/3
(What destinations do local buses serve)

Reasonable service and destinations

- c) **Visibility of stops from the station entrance** 1
(Are these bus stops clearly visible from the station)

Poor, sited away from station and smal sign on exisitng L/C

- d) **Pedestrian access to bus stops** 1
(Consider the quality of walking routes betw. station and stop)

No footing on East side of bridge

- e) **Severance** 1
(Does traffic act as a barrier between the station and the bus stops)

No footing on East side of bridge

- f) **Crossing Facilities** 1/2
(consider their location relative to the bus stops)

V poor for W/B platform

- g) **MIP Access** 1
(Are bus stops accessible to mobility impaired users)

No specific facilities on such ?? kerbs

- h) **Signing at bus stop** 1
(Are bus stop locations well signed from the station)

None

- i) **Lighting at bus stop** 3
(are bus stops well lit)

Normal street lighting

j) Security at bus stop 3

(Does it feel safe to wait
at the local bus stops)

OK - away from town but overlooked by residential area

k) Shelter Provision 1

(Is a shelter and seat provided
Is timetable, route and local
map information available)

No info or shelter 1 seats

l) Seating Provision 1

(Is the level of seating
provided adequate, are
the seats comfortable)

See above

**m) Timetable/ Network
Information** 1

(Consider the quality of
travel information provided)

None provided

**n) Parking Restrictions
in vicinity of stop** 1

(Are parking restrictions
properly enforced)

DYL nearby but not cage etc

o) Bus stop markings 1

Consider whether
the road markings are
adequate and highly visible)

None

p) Overall Impressions 1

Very Poor

5) ACCESSIBILITY: CAR/TAXI INTERCHANGE

Car Passenger Drop-Off Points

Commentary

- a) **Convenience of Drop-Off Point** 1
(Location of this point relative to the main station entrance)

Nowhere - narrow road over bridge would make it difficult

- b) **Condition off Drop-Off Point** n/a
(Consider surface dressing and road markings)

None

- c) **Waiting Restrictions** 2
(What are these restrictions and are they appropriate)

Single yellow lines - no loading restriction

- d) **Level of Severance** n/a
(Does road traffic and parked cars hinder access to drop off point)

Taxi interchange

- e) **Is there a well located taxi rank (Y/N)** N
(Comment on its condition, road markings, illegal parking)

- f) **Are taxis available** N
(Yes if there is a minicab office or waiting taxis)

6) INTERCHANGE AND ACCESS TO OTHER MODES

- General comments** 1
(comment on motorcycle parking, access to trams, underground and river ferries)

Very poor - no direct access to other modes

7) PARKING PROVISION

The station car park

a) Make a record of:

i) Parking Charges

ii) Approx. number of spaces

None

b) Convenience ☐

(Consider proximity to station)

c) Condition ☐

(Consider surface dressing, layout etc.)

d) Lighting / Security ☐

(Is the car park and its access route well lit, is CCTV provided)

e) Signing ☐

(Is the car park well signed from the road)

f) MIP Access ☐

(Are disabled parking bays provided close to the station, is disabled access suitable)

Off Street Parking

g) General Comments ☐

(consider location of parking and waiting restrictions applied)

8) ACCESSIBILITY: RAIL-TO-RAIL INTERCHANGE**Commentary / Identify Opportunities**

a) Station Usage 2 (Level of trip Generation) (Consider the perceived level of station activity)	Reasonably well used by locals (observed off peak)
b) Connect Times 1 (desktop issue - are connecting services timed for convenient interchange)	No interchange possibilities
c) Platform Seating 2 (Is the provision of seating appropriate to the demand, comfortable and sheltered)	One bench within shelter. Shelter has no windows. Does have roof
d) Platform Waiting Rooms 1 (heating, security, seating, lighting, visibility, perception, cleanliness)	No waiting rooms
e) Cross Platform Interchange 1 (consider quality of interchange, footways, subways, steps, covered, graffiti)	Very poor have to go back up road - stairs on each access
f) In Station Lighting 2/3 (Is the lighting adequate to create a safe environment, e.g. platforms / access tunnels)	Lighting is provided Not observed at night
g) Safety/Security 2/3 (Is CCTV provided, are there any blind spots)	CCTV present Possible blind spot between access and platform camera on stairs

9) STATION FACILITIES**(Defined as the area inside and immediately outside the station)****Commentary / Identify Opportunities**

- a) Public Telephones**
 (Are public telephones
 provided in working order)

None

- b) Station Shops/
 Newsagents**
 (Consider whether these outlets
 enhance station environment)

None

- c) Cycle Provision**
 (Location, security,
 type of stand and usage)

None

- d) Toilet Provision**
 (are toilets provided Y/N)

None

- e) Waiting Rooms Y/N**
 (comments on waiting rooms
 by main entrance)

None

- f) Station Staff**
 (Is the station staffed, if so
 is the provision appropriate)

Station shut at 13:30 (time of survey)

- g) Help Points**
 (Are help points provided,
 if so are they well located)

None

- h) Station Environment**
 (Consider condition inside
 station building - is maintenance
 work required?)

N/A

10) PASSENGER INFORMATION

Timetables and announcements	Comments
a) Pocket Timetables <input type="text" value="1"/> (provision of information, accuracy etc.)	None
b) Display Timetables <input type="text" value="3"/> (viewing height, illumination location, clarity of information)	Time tables provided at entrance to station
c) Real Time Electronic <input type="text" value="3/4"/> (Is real time information provided and working, legibility)	One screen per platform
d) Monitor Information <input type="text" value="N/A"/> (are they working, legible, is information accurate)	None
e) Announcements <input type="text" value="3/4"/> (Are announcements audible and clear)	Good
f) Local area maps <input type="text" value="1"/> (what local information is provided, is it useful)	None
g) Public Transport Map <input type="text" value="1"/> (are bus stops and taxi ranks identified)	None

Passenger Signing

h) Are the following signs provided (Y/N):

Way out
Platform destination
For Toilets
For Local Buses
For Taxis
Station name on the platform
 (is the station name properly illuminated)

N
N
N
N
N
Y
?

i) **General comments on the provision and clarity of signs within the station**

OK not really vandalised

11) TICKETING ISSUES

Comments	
j) Ticket Machines 2 (Are they well located, and is provision sufficient)	<div>Permit to travel only</div>
k) Ticket Office 1/2 (consider staffing provision, opening hours etc.)	<div>Station closed and no staff present</div>

12) MOBILITY IMPAIRED PERSON ACCESS ISSUES

Consider the suitability of the station for MIP access
 (Consider height of handrails, ramps, gradients, platform heights, scope for level access)

Comments / Opportunities

Step access to each platform Very Poor

13) INNOVATIVE IDEAS

(Suggest measures which could improve the station environment - e.g. for cycle storage or internet access)

lease see separate report concerning role of Swanscombe S