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1 Introduction

1.1 The purpose of the document

1.1.1 The main purpose of producing this Issues and Options Report is to generate comments on how the development of the Cheeseman’s Green and Waterbrook area should progress over the plan period (up to 2021, but also with a view to the longer term). The report describes the character of the area and its planning context highlighting distinctive features, opportunities and constraints and presenting a series of options for consideration.

1.1.2 Some options represent clear choices. However other options are not mutually exclusive and there may be opportunity to combine elements from more than one option on any particular issue to establish the preferred option.

1.1.3 All comments should be received by the council no later than 5PM on Monday 3rd August 2009. The document can be viewed, and comments made, via the Council’s Limehouse Consultation Portal

1.1.4 The next stage will be to produce a draft submission Cheeseman's Green and Waterbrook Area Action Plan for Autumn 2010 before which there will be a number of consultation exercises with key stakeholders and the local community.

1.2 Policy Context

1.2.1 In 2003, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) produced the Sustainable Communities Plan which identified Ashford as a growth area with the potential to accommodate 31,000 new dwellings and 28,000 new jobs by 2031.

1.2.2 In February 2004, English Partnerships, on behalf of Ashford Borough Council and Ashford’s Future, appointed a consultant team led by Urban Initiatives to commence work on the Greater Ashford Development Framework (GADF). Following a range of studies, and consultation events over the course of 2004 and early 2005, the GADF outlined a master plan to direct the growth and regeneration of Ashford.

1.2.3 The Ashford Core Strategy, adopted in July 2008, is the first of a number of documents to be produced under the new Local Development Framework (LDF) which will see it replace the current system of local plans. The Core Strategy sets out the overall vision and objectives for the Borough up to 2021.

1.2.4 Core Strategy policy CS5 outlines the key requirements of the proposed urban extension at Cheeseman’s Green and Waterbrook. The area has been identified as a mixed use development area to accommodate about 4300 dwellings and create at least 1475 jobs by 2021, with potential for a further 2200 dwellings and 750 jobs by 2031. A strategic park is also confirmed for this area in Policy CS18a. Core Strategy policies also aim for high quality and sustainable designs, 30% affordable housing, a range of dwelling types and a flexible high technology bus-based transit system serving the area (known as SMARTLINK). On Figure 2 of the Core Strategy (see Map 1, page 2), the separate sites of Cheeseman’s Green and Waterbrook are reflected in diagrammatic form with different notations, however it is clear from policy CS5 that these two areas should be planned as a single expansion area. One of the challenges for this AAP is to establish the balance of different uses across the two sites in a way that will deliver the quantum of new development required to be provided here in the most sustainable way.
1.3 The role of the Area Action Plan

1.3.1 An Area Action Plan (AAP) is a planning framework for areas where there is to be significant change. It focuses on the actions required to ensure that the change is achieved in line with the broad approach set out in the Core Strategy. The Cheeseman’s Green and Waterbrook AAP will form part of the Ashford Local Development Framework. It will allocate a specific development area at least for the period to 2021, but will also take account of the extent of the final development. It will set out policies for residential, employment, open space and a wide range of community and infrastructure development within the area and set the timetable for the implementation of its proposals.

1.4 Sustainability Appraisal

1.4.1 A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Scoping Report was produced prior to the production of the Issues and Options report which assesses the social, economic and environmental impact of development. The SA Scoping Report is being consulted upon with Natural England, English Heritage and the Environment Agency. A copy of the SA Scoping Report can be found online through the Council’s Website www.ashford.gov.uk
2 Key environmental constraints to the site

2.1.1 The Cheeseman's Green / Waterbrook area is predominately greenfield land. There is a dispersed pattern of existing settlement, with isolated farms and small groups of dwellings. There are a number of listed buildings.

Existing landscape patterns and habitat features

2.1.2 Parts of the river floodplain are intensively farmed, but the pattern of floodplain fields and hedgerows on the fringes of these two development areas is relatively enclosed, with pastures divided by old, gappy hedgerows, small copses and hedgerow trees. To the north, the Willesborough Dykes have a more open character, with extensive damp pastures divided by open drainage ditches. Here the vegetation on the A2070 embankments sub-divides the landscape, reducing its perceived scale and forming a backdrop to local views. Buildings on the fringes of this open landscape are often prominent and the distinctive roofline of the Designer Outlet is a local landmark.

2.1.3 The major roads and junction of the A2042 and A2070 (T) in the centre of Willesborough Dykes are a dominant and negative influence. Collier's Hill (74m), a Greensand outlier, is a distinctive local landscape feature within a generally flat landscape. The panoramic views from the summit describe the overall topographic setting of Ashford. The extent of development in this direction will be an important issue in determining the impact of development and establishing a firm boundary to limit future expansion.

Hydrogeology

2.1.4 Areas around the East Stour River lie within an undefended floodplain (see Map 2). Government policy prevents the development of housing and most other forms of development in the functional floodplain. Government Guidance (PPS25) also emphasises the need to act on a precautionary basis and to take account of climate change. In the South East it is anticipated that winter peak flows in rivers may increase by 20% over the next 50 years. For this reason, the Environment Agency strongly advise that inappropriate development such as housing or business uses is not permitted within an area that includes the predicted effects of climate change (20% increase in peak flows).

2.1.5 The majority of the area is underlain by Weald Clay. The local topography shows that the Cheeseman's Green and Waterbrook area is likely to drain toward the River East Stour passing between the two development areas. According to the Environment Agency (EA), there will be some alluvial deposits on the banks of the river, and these may contain groundwater, particularly during times of heavy rainfall. These deposits will also flow toward the river channel. In terms of groundwater quality, there are no known issues with groundwater in the vicinity. The extreme north of the Waterbrook site incorporates the Hythe Formation which is classed as a principal aquifer.

Drainage

2.1.6 Based on the above, the Environment Agency would advise against the use of infiltration systems, such as soakaways, for drainage. The reason is that groundwater levels are unknown, and the Weald Clay is unlikely to provide adequate soakage rates. Drilling through the clay to reach the Tunbridge Wells Sand beneath may improve the drainage potential, but would also increase the risk of encountering groundwater. The sand is classed as a secondary aquifer, and it should be noted that the Environment Agency would generally object to any direct discharge to
groundwater. Alternative SUDS schemes may be appropriate, but the main drivers will be the proposed end use for the site, and the likelihood of contamination being encountered during development. Soakaways or other infiltration systems will function better on the areas underlain by the Hythe Formation, however, this geology is prone to instability caused by the 'washing-out' of sand layers by soakaway discharges, which can cause minor subsidence in some cases. As for the Tunbridge Wells Sand, there should be no direct discharges to groundwater within the Hythe Formation.

Biodiversity

2.1.7 The core most valuable ecological habitats are the wetlands of Willesborough Dykes, the floodplain habitats along the East Stour and Ruckinge Dyke and the ancient coppice woodland of Captain’s Wood. Links between these habitats along the river corridors and drainage ditches form a valuable ecological network, which extends right into the heart of Ashford. Part of the Willesborough Dykes is a Site of Wildlife Importance (SWI). It is a low-lying grazed wet grassland landscape, subdivided by drainage ditches. The area supports a range of unusual and rare wet grassland plants and is also important for wintering and breeding birds. Willesborough Dykes has also been designated as a County Wildlife Site.

2.1.8 Captain’s Wood is ancient coppiced hornbeam-oak-ash woodland and an important core habitat within the local ecological network. This woodland is exceptionally valuable because it harbours a diverse and extensive pool of species, which can migrate between woodland floodplain habitats. However, the ecological function of the wood can only be maintained if it is buffered by woodland edge habitat and linked (by hedgerows, copses and meadows) to the floodplain landscapes of the East Stour (to the east) and Ruckinge Dyke (to the west). Captain’s Wood is protected by a Tree Preservation Order.

Contamination

2.1.9 No known current or historic landfills are present within either development area. Areas in the northern part of the Waterbrook area are shown by the Environment Agency to be located within a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ) (1).
Key environmental constraints to the site

Map 2 - Cheeseman’s Green and Waterbrook key constraints

Noise

2.1.10 Parts of the site adjoining the proposed waste and minerals operation (see Map 4, Page 10) and immediately adjoining Waterbrook Avenue are likely to be unsuited to residential development due to noise or other potential impacts on residential amenity. One site (the Truck Stop) operates 24 hours per day and in its current location may limit the range of uses which could be located close by.

Archaeology

2.1.11 Ashford has long been a focus for transport connections and two principal Roman Roads met at a staggered junction to the south of the town (on the edge of Whitewater Dyke). The alignment of one of these Roman Roads is evident in parts of the Park Farm area where it survives as a camber. Other sites of archaeological and historic importance include evidence of Neolithic remains along the edge of the East Stour floodplain and evidence of post medieval field boundaries and water management systems within the Willesborough Dykes area.
Issue 1
To what extent should the existing buildings, including listed buildings, landscape features, floodplain, and wildlife habitats be protected when planning the initial layout and how restrictive are noise and archaeological remains for future residential development?

Option 1
Existing residential properties, listed buildings, hedgerows, trees, ancient woodland, watercourses, ponds, etc should be protected to form a framework for the site layout

Option 2
Some features are sacrificed in order not to compromise the principles of the layout

Option 3
Enhance Captain's Wood ancient woodland and make it accessible for future generations

Option 4
The floodplain should remain free of development but may be used as open space and for transport connections

Option 5
Avoid residential development on the areas of the site where the impact of noise would significantly affect residential amenity
Option 6

The floodplain and an area which allows for a 20% increase in peak flows should remain free of development but may be used as open space and for transport connections.

Option 7

Should the 24 hour truck stop operation remain in its current position or be relocated to a more appropriate location amongst other similar activities?
3 Planning history of the area

3.1 Local Plan Allocations

3.1.1 Cheeseman's Green and Waterbrook have long been identified in the Ashford Borough Local Plan (2000) as sites for substantial development.

3.1.2 Cheeseman's Green (Site 13) is proposed for a new residential and business community of 700 dwellings and up to 40 hectares of business park development. This will include a 20% affordable housing target (140 units) and provide funding towards transport improvements and a number of local community facilities for future local residents. The Local Plan identifies both a footprint for development within the Local Plan period and an area that could provide further substantial development in the future. This boundary for further development was indicative only. This policy remains as a 'saved' Local Plan policy but will be superseded when this AAP is adopted.

3.1.3 What became the Waterbrook Local Plan site was originally intended to accommodate customs clearance facilities for HGVs but following the advent of the Single European Market in the 1990s, the need for such a large customs facility was greatly reduced. This allowed the site to be considered for alternative uses and given its location, in relatively close proximity to the M20 motorway, the site was designated for primarily employment uses in 2000. Waterbrook (Site 14) was proposed primarily for warehousing and distribution uses (B8) with potential for light and general employment uses (B1 and B2) and a roadside facility with a petrol station, restaurant and budget hotel. This policy was not 'saved' and as such there is no extant Local Plan policy specifically for the Waterbrook site. Several outline applications have been submitted over recent years for a range of employment uses but none has received planning permission.

3.1.4 Detail on the Local Plan allocations can be found on the Council’s website www.ashford.gov.uk

3.1.5 The following section looks at the recent planning permissions granted for both Cheeseman’s Green and Waterbrook.

3.2 Planning history of Cheeseman’s Green

3.2.1 Prior to the adoption of the Core Strategy, an outline planning consent had been granted in January 2006 at Cheeseman’s Green for 1100 dwellings, 180 live/work units and 70,000 square metres of B1 business floorspace together with a range of community facilities, a food superstore, access roads and public open space based on the existing Borough Local Plan allocation (ref:02/00278/AS). Development at Cheeseman's Green is expected to commence in 2009, on part of the site, in accordance with a phasing plan recently agreed by the Borough Council.

3.2.2 The total number of dwellings built during Phases 1 to 6, will be 700 which is the maximum number that can be occupied prior to the completion and opening to traffic of M20 Junction 10A. The final phases consist of 400 dwellings in three residential neighbourhoods on the south side of Captain's Wood (Sevington Lake, Captain's Green and Woodbank).

3.2.3 This raises several issues for the AAP in respect of how this planning permission should be integrated with the delivery of the wider Cheeseman’s Green / Waterbrook urban expansion area, including the location of the main community facilities. These are considered in more detail later in this Report.
3.2.4 The Greater Ashford Development Framework (GADF) also considered the extent of the area for development at Cheeseman’s Green. It recommended that the piece of land at the north-western end of the Cheeseman’s Green site, which was allocated for employment uses in the Local Plan, and has planning permission for this purpose, should remain free from any development. This area became known as the ‘nib’ (see Map 3, shown in purple). It was also considered in the Core Strategy examination where the Inspector recommended that, although it could be developed, it should not be designated for a particular use at that time. The future use of the ‘nib’ is therefore a specific issue for the AAP to resolve.

Map 3 - The Masterplan for the 2006 Cheeseman’s Green Outline Planning Permission, showing the ‘Nib’ in purple

3.3 Planning history of Waterbrook

3.3.1 At Waterbrook, there is a planning permission on over 5 hectares on the north-eastern part of the site for a waste transfer station and minerals operations at the existing rail head (shown on Map 4). There are also some existing employment operations involving a truck stop which operates 24 hours a day and occupies approximately 5 hectares of the site and the Ashford Business Point which accommodates the local Chamber of Commerce and provides small office and conferencing facilities.
The future mix of uses at Waterbrook has been the subject of recent debate at a Planning inquiry into outline proposals for around 100,000 sq metres of B1-8 business development, a hotel and petrol filling station to the north of the Waterbrook area (shown on Map 4). The outcome of the Inquiry confirmed the policy approach established in the Core Strategy by dismissing the appeal and it is now clear that the site should come forward for a suitable mix of uses, including residential and employment development, and as established in the Core Strategy Policy CS15, a Park & Ride site.

The Planning Inquiry also considered detailed proposals for a more limited part of the site next to the Waste and Minerals site (see Map 4). These were for a Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA) testing facility, a depot for GSE and a speculative development of small industrial units. These proposals were allowed on appeal and form part of the wider template around which a mixed use development could be planned.

The role of this AAP was confirmed as being an appropriate vehicle by which to test various options and alternatives for the future development of the Waterbrook site and these can start to be explored in this Report.

These must also include that remaining part of the wider Waterbrook area identified diagrammatically in the Core Strategy, which lies to the south of Cheeseman's Green Lane. This area was identified in the Local Plan (Policy S13) as part of a new residential and business community built over a number of years to
be developed over the longer term. It represents a significantly different character from the rest of the Waterbrook area, being distinctly rural in nature. How this part of the site is treated, including how the existing sporadic development on it is integrated, is a major challenge for the AAP.
4 Broad Locations for Development

4.1.1 The Core Strategy identifies the broad area of Cheeseman's Green and Waterbrook to accommodate some 6,500 dwellings, 2,225 jobs and associated infrastructure and community facilities. Existing planning consents give an indication of the distribution of some of this development but there remains potential flexibility in how the whole site may best be arranged.

4.1.2 One of the key issues for the AAP is to consider how this mix of development should best be provided across the whole development area and specifically where and how that development should be located.

4.1.3 In considering the options for accommodating these quantum's of development, there are a number of factors that should be taken into account such as:-

- the ability to deliver the relevant amounts of development by 2021 (and beyond) at reasonable densities and rates of development,
- the juxtaposition of various uses, existing or proposed,
- the need to create a higher density corridor for SMARTLINK to pass through,
- the need to accommodate other uses that will support this amount of new development such as schools, community facilities, retail facilities and open spaces,
- the need to provide a 1000 space Park & Ride site within the urban extension area, and,
- the relationship of the development with the adjoining open countryside.

4.1.4 Whilst some of these factors also raise specific issues in their own right (dealt with elsewhere in this Report), together they go to the heart of the masterplanning challenge for this AAP. It is critical for the masterplanning to establish the key principle of the mix of uses that can realistically be delivered within this area, given these factors and the associated constraints discussed in this Report.

4.1.5 This raises several specific issues for this AAP. Firstly, there is a need to establish the role of any 'High Street' here. Unlike at Chilmington Green, there is the potential for more than one location due to the presence of two separated 'sites' within the single area and so there may be scope for a greater spread of 'High Street' facilities across more of the area and thus maybe more than one 'High Street'? However, this approach could serve to undermine the advantages of a more centralised location for the main facilities that will serve the area.

What are the most appropriate location for uses at Cheeseman’s Green & Waterbrook?

North of Captains Wood (including 'The Nib')

4.1.6 There is currently consent for 1100 dwellings, 180 live/work units, a superstore, and community facilities at Cheeseman’s Green, north of Cheeseman’s Green Lane. The permission also includes 70,000sqm of B1 business floorspace on ‘The Nib’. It was envisaged that this development, mostly north of Captain’s Wood, would comprise a mixed use community with a central High Street.
4.1.7 The Core Strategy Inspector’s Report concluded that the permission for employment land on the ‘Nib’ (shown on Map 3, page 9) is no longer required on quantitative, qualitative or competitive grounds. Nor is this land required for floodplain enhancement or to become part of the proposed Wetlands Park, and other uses would now be acceptable. Equivalent employment land closer to the M20 motorway has been provided in the Core Strategy. The Core Strategy leaves a decision on the future of the ‘Nib’ to this AAP.

4.1.8 The landowners have expressed their desire for the area to be re-designated for residential development as part of the AAP. As the land lies outside the floodplain and is recognised as not being necessary for purely employment purposes, residential development is a feasible option for this area. However, this may not be the only option. For example, there may also be opportunities to integrate other uses into a residential environment here, such as community facilities or local retail uses. Alternatively, as the Core Strategy policy for the Cheeseman’s Green / Waterbrook area requires the provision of 1475 jobs by 2021, and a further minimum of 750 jobs beyond that, this may be a suitable location for a small employment area that is integrated within or adjoining a residential zone.

4.1.9 If the area is to be re-designated for primarily residential development, what form and scale of development would be appropriate here? The location of the nib on the periphery of the AAP area, might suggest that a lower density of development might be most suitable. However, the ‘nib’ may lie relatively close to the route of SMARTLINK which could justify a higher density. This is an important issue in establishing the wider layout and structuring of the AAP area as there may be implications for the local catchments for community facilities, shops and other services and public transport connections.

4.1.10 The future use(s) of the ‘Nib’ is important in the overall masterplanning process for this area because it will begin to identify the most appropriate and sustainable location(s) for the ‘High Street(s)’ and the densities and boundaries to the whole development. The hierarchy of uses will also influence the way different types of transport links are provided. It will also contribute to the business case for SMARTLINK and identifying the key routes.

**Issue 2**

*What are the most appropriate uses for the 'Nib' and to what scale should those uses be planned?*

**Option 8**

Low density housing

**Option 9**

Higher density mixed use development including housing, a local centre and employment uses
**Option 10**

Mixed use development including higher density housing, the main High Street serving Cheeseman's Green/Waterbrook

**South of Captains Wood**

4.1.11 The area south of Captain's Wood will accommodate the majority of the development of Cheeseman's Green. The precise boundary to the south will be determined by:

- The need to accommodate development within a high quality design,
- The density and layout of development,
- The environmental constraints on the site

4.1.12 The extensive area will need to accommodate a mix of uses including a significant number of new homes. In order to represent a sustainable community, the housing development will need to be supported by employment provision and other community services. These could be in the form of a 'High Street' serving the whole Cheeseman's Green and Waterbrook area with, for example, a food superstore, other shops and local offices, secondary school, doctors surgery and other services (many of which were required to be provided as part of the existing planning permission at Cheeseman's Green). An alternative approach would be to provide a smaller 'High Street' south of Captain's Wood, north of Captain's Wood and at Waterbrook such that each area has a small local centre offering a limited sized food store together with local services such as a primary school or health care provision.

**Issue 3**

What are the most appropriate uses for the area south of Captain's Wood?

**Option 11**

A mixed use community with a range of housing types/densities and local employment opportunities centred on a High Street

**Option 12**

A mixed use community with a range of housing types/densities and local employment opportunities with one or more small centres
Waterbrook

4.1.13 As previously identified in the planning history of the area on pages 9-11, the Waterbrook area has a number of existing or permitted employment uses and a small scattering of residential properties. The future development of Waterbrook and planning permissions needs to consider how these uses will be integrated and what effect this will have on the range of uses which can be accommodated.

4.1.14 The Employment Land Review identifies the amount and type of employment potential at Waterbrook.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment Type</th>
<th>Employment Area (ha)</th>
<th>Floorspace (m²)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Office Space</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>75,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial Space</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>19,200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 - Identified amount of employment space and types at Waterbrook

4.1.15 However, the approach to Waterbrook in the Core Strategy recently supported on appeal highlights the need to consider a more intensive mix of employment, residential and community uses to help it integrate better with Cheeseman’s Green and the existing built up areas to the north. A more mixed use development at Waterbrook will also contribute to a high density corridor for SMARTLINK.

4.1.16 The mixed use focus of the site suggests that any employment development should be smaller scale, perhaps mainly B1 (Business) uses, but potentially also some small scale B2 (General Industrial) and B8 (Storage and Distribution).

4.1.17 The Ashford Core Strategy policy CS5 identifies the need for the Cheeseman’s Green/Waterbrook area to be master planned as one area rather than treated as two separate sites. This raises several fundamental issues that will need to be resolved through the AAP.

**Issue 4**

What are the most appropriate uses for Waterbrook and how should they be arranged?

**Option 13**

Provide employment land surrounding the Truckstop facility to help it integrate into a more mixed use development.
**Option 14**

Create a mixed use development of housing and business (B1) uses across most of the site, potentially also some small scale general industry (B2) and warehousing (B8) close to the minerals/waste transfer site with careful design and noise limitations to protect residential amenity.

**Option 15**

Waterbrook to provide a majority of employment land (B1, B2 and B8 uses) and a Park and Ride site with residential development on the periphery to help integrate with Cheeseman's Green and to facilitate SMARTLINK.

**Phasing of Waterbrook**

4.1.18 At Waterbrook the proposed mixed use area gives some flexibility over the precise location of the employment and other uses. However, early consideration needs to be given to locations of employment development that by its nature and/or location is compatible with the mixed use designation especially any that can take place before M20 Junction 10A is built.

4.1.19 It is also important to ensure that sufficient land is available for job targets to be met. As a guideline, it is considered that no less than 15ha of employment land should be provided. Waterbrook could also be a suitable area for relocating existing businesses affected by redevelopment in the town centre or other areas.

**Issue 5**

What areas of Waterbrook can be released early for employment uses?
5 Mix of uses

5.1 The location of community facilities

5.1.1 The scale of housing and employment development at Cheeseman's Green/Waterbrook will require significant provision of local community facilities and services such as a new secondary school, primary school, doctors' surgeries, a superstore, local shops, indoor leisure and community space and other local services.

5.1.2 The most sustainable way of providing such facilities is to cluster them close to each other within walking distance of the home (normally about 400m). This gives the best opportunity to be able to access services by sustainable transport, to link trips to different facilities and to create a social focus for an area.

5.1.3 As there is likely to be only one secondary school and one superstore, such facilities could anchor a new main 'High Street' around which could cluster smaller shops and services. The 'High Street' could serve the whole Cheeseman's Green/Waterbrook area. More local services such as a primary school and local shop could form the basis of more local neighbourhoods.

Issue 6
Where should community facilities be located?

Option 16
Provide a hierarchy of community hubs to serve the development including:

- a principal hub in the 'High Street' centre of Cheeseman's Green which is well served by public transport, containing for example, a primary school, a library, a secondary school (or in close proximity to), adult social services, a health centre, a superstore
- a number of secondary hubs based around, for example, a primary school, community hall and smaller shop facilities to serve the neighbourhoods

Option 17
Dispersing the community provision throughout the development
5.2 The form of the 'High Street'

5.2.1 One of the principal issues related to density and design will be the form and location of a 'High Street' through the urban expansion area. The GADF established the principle of a high density corridor through the Ashford Growth Area which would act as the anchor for the proposed SMARTLINK public transport network that will link the town centre with the two (and ultimately three) urban expansion areas shown on Growth Area diagram, on page 2. This principle has been cemented through the adoption of the Core Strategy.

5.2.2 Wherever the 'High Street' passes, there are opportunities to create a high quality public realm which is highly attractive to local residents to make this a vibrant centre of the new community. The 'High Street' will be the most accessible part of the development areas and the focus for a hierarchy of transport connections.

### Issue 7
The 'High Street' will be designed as a high quality public realm. What form should it take?

#### Option 18
Create a linear central ‘High Street’ of regular form with buildings of a greater height than the surrounding areas

#### Option 19
Create a central square or less regular space within the centre (e.g. a series of spaces such as at Tenterden) with buildings of a greater height than the surrounding areas
6 Residential Densities

6.1 Varying densities of housing and the 'High Street'

6.1.1 For the scale of development envisaged in the Cheeseman’s Green / Waterbrook area, establishing an appropriate range of residential densities across the area is a key part of the masterplanning process. The density of development plays an important part in successfully accommodating the development within landscape sensitivities, making the most efficient use of greenfield land and minimising distances between places. Historic towns and villages were often built to high densities, particularly at the centre, making for attractive townscapes and the efficient use of land.

6.1.2 This issue is obviously related to the overall scale of the development area that will be needed to accommodate the quantum of development in policy CS5 of the Core Strategy but will also be fundamental in establishing the character and design of the overall layout around which much of the more detailed planning of individual areas will take place.

6.1.3 However, using simple residential densities can be a crude device in masterplanning large areas and it is better to establish some key principles at this early stage that will then help to inform a more detailed debate around more specific residential densities in due course.

6.1.4 Some of these principles could include the following:-

- Variation of densities across the development,
- A mix of uses,
- Variation in design,
- Creation of a series of different spaces,
- A variety of different facilities within the development,
- Different storey heights to give a varied roofscape to the development

6.1.5 The AAP will need to establish to what extent these principles (or any others that might be identified) should influence the densities of development, especially residential development, across the urban extension area before a definitive boundary to the development area can be confirmed. This debate will also need to take account of Government planning policy on net residential densities and the implications of different densities on the land required to accommodate the development quantums required by policy CS5 of the Core Strategy. It will also need to take account of the impacts of transport.
Issue 8

What housing densities should be applicable for Cheeseman’s Green and Waterbrook area and how should these be determined?

Option 20

Achieve a range of housing densities across the Cheeseman's Green and Waterbrook area without falling below the national indicative minimum of 30 dwellings per hectare with high densities at the centre of the community and lower densities close to the countryside.

Option 21

Allow some development at lower than the national indicative minimum provided the average density at Cheeseman's Green and Waterbrook is at least 30 dwellings per hectare.

Option 22

Set residential densities within the urban extension area based on good design principles.

Option 23

Set a definitive boundary for the development area as a means of determining residential densities.

6.2 Housing Mix

6.2.1 Sustainable communities should achieve a mix of housing types, sizes and tenures. The Ashford Local Housing Needs Survey has shown a high demand for affordable housing and the Core Strategy policy looks for no less than 30% of all new housing on sites of 15 dwellings or more in the Ashford Growth Area to be provided as affordable housing (with 60% of these for rent and 40% provided as other forms of affordable provision).
6.2.2 The outline planning permission granted at Cheeseman’s Green was under the previous Local Plan policy where by only 20% of new housing had to be affordable housing. Any development based on this consent will not therefore meet the Council’s current standard for affordable housing.

6.2.3 This raises an issue for the AAP as the implementation of the planning permission would result in a shortfall of affordable housing provision across the urban expansion area unless a higher proportion than 30% was planned for in the remaining parts of the area.

6.2.4 The evidence of the wide range of types (semi-detached, detached, terraced, flat/maisonette, bedsit/studio/room only, bungalow, sheltered housing, residential care/nursing home, extra care housing) and size (1 to 5+ bedrooms) required to meet local needs is illustrated within the local housing needs study.

6.2.5 Lifetime Homes is an initiative which incorporates design features that together create a flexible blueprint for accessible and adaptable housing in any setting. Its purpose is to increase choice, independence and allow people to continue to live in their home even if their needs change through age, illness or disability.

6.2.6 A self build home is for people who want to plan, design and build their own homes. Accommodation needs for gypsies and travellers will also be assessed (in Ashford Borough as a whole).

Issue 9

What mix of housing should be provided for at Cheeseman’s Green/Waterbrook?

Option 24
The mix of housing includes 30% affordable housing for all new permissions

Option 25
The mix of housing includes over 30% affordable housing for all new permissions to compensate for the lower level of affordable housing required by the extant outline planning permission

Option 26
Encourage an element of self build housing within a dedicated area
6.3 The quality and safety of the public domain

6.3.1 Secured By Design is a police initiative to encourage the building industry to adopt crime prevention measures in the design of developments to assist in reducing the opportunity for crime, creating a safer and more secure environment.

6.3.2 It has been shown (1) that Secured By Design estates suffer from 50% less burglary and 25% less vehicle crime and criminal damage.

Option 27
Encourage Lifetime Homes throughout the development

Issue 10
How should the public realm such as the streets and open spaces be designed and managed?

Option 28
Create a high quality, well maintained and safe public realm which is based on quality materials and is well lit and overlooked with sufficient provision for long term maintenance

Option 29
Accept standard designs and materials for highways, footpaths/cycleways and open spaces without sufficient provision for long term maintenance and security.

1 Secured by Design Website (2008) http://www.securedbydesign.com
7 Transport

7.1 Connecting the new communities

7.1.1 An extensive part of the area around the East Stour River/Ruckinge Dyke and Bilham Dyke is located within the land assessed as having a 1 in 100 or greater annual probability of river flooding and is designated in the Core Strategy as a strategic park. This floodplain physically separates Cheeseman’s Green from Park Farm to the west (Ruckinge Dyke and Bilham Dyke) and Cheeseman’s Green from Waterbrook to the east (East Stour River). It would be possible to connect these areas with roads, footpaths and cycleways, and as essential infrastructure they would need to be designed with the 100 year flood level in mind.

7.1.2 A large dense ancient woodland of high biodiversity value, known as Captain’s Wood, extends across the Cheeseman’s Green area and acts as a natural buffer between the northern and southern parts of the site. Opening up the woodland for road connections would damage the ancient woodland, alter the character of this important green space and reduce the wildlife value.

7.1.3 The Waterbrook area is separated to the north east from the site proposed for primarily employment use at Sevington by the Channel Tunnel Rail Link and domestic railway.

7.1.4 Given the barriers of the floodplain, Captain’s Wood and the Channel Tunnel Rail Link, there are issues about how the different parts of the new development will be connected with each other and the wider network.

7.2 Linking the northern and southern parts of Cheeseman’s Green

**Issue 11**

How should connections be made linking the northern part of Cheeseman’s Green with the more extensive southern part of the site?

**Option 30**
A direct footpath and cycleway route through Captains Wood

**Option 31**
Roads which circuit around Captain’s Wood

**Option 32**
Roads, footpaths and cycleways which circuit around Captain’s Wood
7.3 Connecting east to west: Orchard Way

7.3.1 The principal access to the Cheeseman's Green/Waterbrook area is to be from the A2070 Southern Orbital Road (see chapter 7.4 on page 26). However, given the size and strategic nature of this area, a number of other new road links will need to be developed to connect the area to Park Farm, Sevington and the rural areas to the south.

7.3.2 Of particular importance is the potential creation of a new vehicular link road across the railway lines to the north-east of the site. This route would provide access through the adjacent Sevington site, which is identified in the Core Strategy for employment uses, to the proposed M20 Junction 10a. This route was seen in the Greater Ashford Development Framework (GADF) as being part of a longer outer orbital route linking M20 Junction 10a and the A28 (referred to as ‘Orchard Way’) connecting the major urban expansion areas that were proposed south of Ashford but which was not to be seen as a replacement for the A2070 trunk road. ‘Orchard Way’ is included in the Core Strategy as a strategic highway proposal required by 2021. The GADF is available to view on the council's website www.ashford.gov.uk

7.3.3 Key issues for this AAP are the alignment and status of this route and the role it should play in delivering the Cheeseman's Green / Waterbrook urban extension. This includes the consideration of where the route might cross the railway (and its deliverability) and the alignment it may take through the development area, for example whether it should be part of the main 'High Street'. The AAP will also need to consider the phasing of this route in respect of the delivery of development within the urban extension area - at what point should this link be in place?

7.3.4 Related to this issue is the connection to the west towards the Park Farm area and the A2070 Hamstreet Road. The existing planning permissions for Park Farm and Cheeseman's Green provide two vehicular connections between the two development areas but both of these are located towards the northern part of the urban extension area. Should there be additional vehicular connections between the two areas located further south, in particular any further connection to the recent junction created on the A2070 at Park Farm?

7.3.5 Finally, the AAP will need to address the issue of vehicular connections with the rural road system. There is a substantial network of rural lanes in and around the urban extension area and these may be significantly affected by the presence of such a large development nearby. Should the development be connected in any way to the rural road network which might provide greater accessibility for existing rural communities to the range of services and facilities that will be provided within the urban extension area, or should it be as self-contained as possible to limit the potential for rural roads being used as 'rat-runs' for traffic going to and from the development?

Issue 12

How should the more extensive southern part of the Cheeseman's Green area and its potential 'High Street' be linked to housing development at Park Farm and the Waterbrook area?
Option 33
Direct road links across the floodplain

Option 34
Direct footpath/cycleway links across the floodplain

Option 35
Direct road links AND footpath/cycleway links

Option 36
SMARTLINK (a new quality bus service) connecting the areas with a frequent service

Issue 13
How should development be connected to the existing road network?

Option 37
Fully integrated hierarchy of routes, well connected to local rural lanes and roads

Option 38
A relatively self-contained network, with only limited vehicular access to local rural lanes and roads

Issue 14
How should the area link across the Channel Tunnel Rail Link to the Sevington employment site to the north east and to the wider road network?
Option 39
A new direct road link with footpath/cycleways across the Channel Tunnel Rail Link

Option 40
SMARTLINK to use the direct road link to connect the areas by public transport

Option 41
Avoid a road link over the Channel Tunnel Rail Link and use the A2070 (with improvements for additional capacity) as the link from Sevington to Waterbrook/Cheeseman’s Green area

Option 42
Provide footpath/cycleway links across the Channel Tunnel Rail Link, even if there is no road link

7.4 A2070 Junction Improvements

7.4.1 The current junction where the A2070 meets Waterbrook Avenue is a four arm roundabout. Much consideration has been given to this junction as to whether it should remain a roundabout or whether to introduce a traffic signalised junction to deal with the increase in additional traffic that both Cheeseman's Green and Waterbrook will bring along with the introduction of the new M20 Junction 10A.

7.4.2 The preferred approach of the Borough Council and the developers of the Cheeseman's Green site involves a traffic signalised junction. This has been endorsed by the Highways Agency which also sees bus priority measures being considered in the scheme. The Highways Agency is currently looking at options for how to accommodate cyclists/pedestrians at this junction.

7.4.3 The traffic signalised junction is deemed the preferred approach given that greater control can be had on the flow of traffic, the junction is seen to be safer than a roundabout and can accommodate both the flow of pedestrians and cyclists more easily and introduce bus priority measures, which in turn can encourage greater use of more sustainable modes of travel.
7.5 The location of the SMARTLINK Route

7.5.1 The Ashford Core Strategy and the Ashford Area Transport Study both identify SMARTLINK as the ‘backbone’ of a comprehensive transport strategy to support and secure the growth of Ashford.

7.5.2 The SMARTLINK service will be a flexible, high technology, bus-based transit system to serve the two proposed major growth areas of Chilmington Green/Discovery Park and Cheeseman’s Green/Waterbrook via the town centre and the railway stations incorporating existing urban areas along the route. The masterplanning of the Cheeseman’s Green/Waterbrook area should be co-ordinated with decisions on the detailed route of SMARTLINK and the type and spacing of the bus stop facilities associated with it to ensure the highest patronage.

7.5.3 For the Cheeseman’s Green / Waterbrook area, SMARTLINK will play a key role in establishing the parts of the development area around which the major facilities and higher density residential areas should be located, and in terms of detailed design, the route of SMARTLINK can be reactive to the masterplanning process.

7.5.4 However, there are some important decisions on the SMARTLINK route which will help to determine the layout and design of certain areas as well as the potential scale and mix of development. Principally, this applies to the links to Orbital Park site to the north.

7.5.5 A report has recently been produced for Kent County Council which looks at two potential SMARTLINK routes to connect Orbital Park to the future development areas to the south of the A2070.

7.5.6 Firstly, the service could pass through an improved traffic signalised A2070 junction at grade and onto Waterbrook Avenue. This would be a relatively cheap option but would provide less advantage to the SMARTLINK service in terms of priority and speed, although the junction could still be designed to provide bus lanes and some priority at the traffic signals.
7.5.7 The alternative would be to provide a direct link under the A2070 between Waterbrook and Orbital Park. The SMARTLINK service would thus avoid the busy A2070 junction altogether giving some potentially significant time savings for journey times. Of course, this would be a significantly more costly option given the need to create a tunnel under the A2070.

**Issue 16**

What route should SMARTLINK take into Cheeseman’s Green/Waterbrook from Orbital Park?

**Option 45**

Across the A2070 at grade through an improved signalised junction

**Option 46**

Under the A2070, through a tunnel under the road.

7.5.8 In addition to this issue, there are also some choices to make in respect of the SMARTLINK route through the urban extension area. Given the spread of the development area, there is a possibility of introducing a 'loop' for SMARTLINK through the development which could start at either the A2070 or further into the site, perhaps at the southern end of Waterbrook Avenue. Alternatively, the route could terminate at a particular point within the urban extension area and return along the same route.

**Issue 17**

How should SMARTLINK serve the site?

**Option 47**

To run a loop through the urban extension area
Option 48

Terminate at a particular point and return along the same route
7.6 The location of the Park & Ride site

7.6.1 Core Strategy policy CS15 identifies the need for a Park & Ride facility to be planned at Waterbrook as part of the delivery of the Council’s parking strategy.

7.6.2 The Ashford Park and Ride Study outlines a site requirement of up to 1000 spaces for a Park & Ride facility here. The AAP was identified by the Core Strategy Inspector as the means of identifying a Park and Ride site. The Park and Ride bus service is likely to be provided by the SMARTLINK service to the town centre. Taking into consideration the work assessing the potential routes for the SMARTLINK bus service (see chapter 7.5 on page 27), the preferred location for Park and Ride is south of the A2070 and east of Waterbrook Avenue.

7.6.3 In deciding where the Park & Ride should be located, consideration is given to the following:

- accessibility of the site to both cars and the buses that serve it,
- its location in relation to strategic routes which carry significant amounts of traffic,
- where sufficient land is available, with the potential to expand if needed,
- relationship to other uses in surrounding parts of the urban extension

### Issue 18
Where should Park and Ride be located?

- **Option 49**
  Immediately south of the A2070, east of Waterbrook Avenue

- **Option 50**
  South of the A2070, east of Waterbrook Avenue

- **Option 51**
  Alternative location? Please specify .................................
7.7 Cycle & pedestrian routes

7.7.1 Although no national cycle routes or strategic long distance footpath links pass through the area, the area is crossed by a number of public footpaths and bridleways. The new urban extension should be served by sustainable transport links to reduce the impact of cars within the development and on the surrounding road network. Local pedestrian and cycle routes and bridleways need to be considered as an integral part of the initial masterplanning process. There may be provision for a cycle route alongside the SMARTLINK route, maximising accessibility for cyclists. Each SMARTLINK bus stop could have facilities for secure cycle parks.

7.7.2 In addition to providing local pedestrian, cycle and horse routes throughout the development, it is important to consider early in the plan making process how these local routes will connect with the more strategic cycling and pedestrian routes.

7.7.3 Ashford's Green and Blue Grid Strategy suggests a hierarchy of routes, which together provide an integrated network of Green Grid routes. These routes are integrated with those proposed as part of Ashford's overarching Cycle Strategy. Some follow the alignment of existing rights of way; others are proposed. Within the Cheeseman's Green/Waterbrook area, the Green and Blue Grid Strategy suggests strategic routes running along both sides of the CTRL (taking advantage of views from an elevated embankment) and following the alignment of the former Roman Road linking Cheeseman's Green to Park Farm. A network of circular routes (footpaths/cycleways/bridleways) is designed to thread between existing and future urban communities, connecting the Park Farm area to Cheeseman’s Green across the existing bridge at Church Hill. Both strategic and circular Green Grid routes link to rural recreational routes encircling Ashford on minor roads and rural lanes within the wider countryside.

Issue 19

What types of pedestrian, cycleway and bridleway access should be created within the Cheeseman's Green/ Waterbrook area?

Option 52

Create a network of pedestrian and cycleway links throughout the development and to the town centre; adjoining established neighbourhoods and the public footpath network by using the routes of existing public rights of way, including:

- A 'leisure' cycling/walking route along the length of the river corridor incorporating existing public rights of way (where possible) with a number of easy access points,
- Direct access to the countryside from new development that does not border the river corridor,
- A direct cycle route over the Channel Tunnel Rail Link to access Sevington employment area and up to the new M20 junction 10A (plans include a cycle bridge over the M20),
- Cycle connections from Cheeseman's Green/Waterbrook to Park Farm
- Cycle connections north west from the 'Nib' to link with the proposed Willesborough Dykes cycle path
Option 53
Create a network of safe and direct pedestrian and cycleway links throughout the development and to the town centre, adjoining established neighbourhoods and the public footpath network by diverting existing public rights of way through the new development.

Option 54
Create a hierarchy of strategic, circular and rural recreational routes using a combination of existing public rights of way, diverted public rights of way and newly created routes connecting existing and future urban neighbourhoods and providing direct routes to Ashford town centre, to adjacent open spaces and out to the wider countryside.

Option 55
Direct routes out of the development towards Ashford Town Centre to encourage 'commuter' cycling, including:
- Along the existing Waterbrook Avenue, across the A2070 via dedicated crossings, into Orbital Park,
- At the Waterbrook/A2070 junction, turning right onto a dedicated cycle route up to M20 junction 10 and beyond (allowing access to the William Harvey Hospital and National Cycle Route 18 at Willesborough)

Option 56
Making roads safer (i.e. traffic calming) by creating shared surface streets where the pedestrian and cyclist use road space but have priority over cars

Option 57
Create footpaths and cycleways adjoining roads

Option 58
Create segregated footpaths and cycleways located away from roads through the green open space network.
7.8 Traffic impact on the M20

7.8.1 The ability to implement this urban extension area to the full relies upon the creation of additional capacity at junction 10 of the M20. Currently, the capacity of the existing motorway junction is limited to the extent that only a minority of development here could be implemented prior to further improvements to junction capacity being in place.

7.8.2 The Highways Agency are promoting a new motorway junction 10a that lies a short distance east of the existing junction. This new junction has been designed to accommodate sufficient capacity to allow the full development of the Cheeseman’s Green/Waterbrook urban extension but it is not scheduled to be in place until late 2013.

7.8.3 The capacity of the motorway junction is clearly a significant issue to consider in the phasing of development in the urban extension area and these constraints will inevitably dictate the pace of early development at Cheeseman’s Green/ Waterbrook. However, given the current housing market and the slow down in construction, the amount of development which may come forward prior to the opening of Junction 10A may not be such an issue. Bearing in mind the rate of delivery of other housing/employment developments which are also reliant on Junction 10A, if other reliant sites do not come forward as envisaged, how much further development of Cheeseman's Green/Waterbrook can be released to compensate for this?

**Issue 20**

*Should traffic capacity prior to the opening of M20 Junction 10A restrict the amount of development at Cheeseman’s Green and Waterbrook?*

7.9 The phasing of Park and Ride and SMARTLINK

7.9.1 For environmental and road capacity reasons, a range of sustainable modes of transport should be available from early in the site’s development. The early implementation of SMARTLINK services will encourage local residents to use it from the outset and encourage a modal shift from cars to public transport. It is important that new residents have the choice of using a bus service from the outset and a fore-runner to SMARTLINK may be provided to ensure that a service is available.

7.9.2 There are several options in respect of the phasing of SMARTLINK services to the Cheeseman's Green / Waterbrook area. There could be set trigger points within the wider phasing of the development so that services follow development as it takes place, or, a fuller service could be planned for independent of the progress of specific parts of the development area. If the former, then it would be an important issue for the AAP to establish what those trigger points should be and how SMARTLINK services should be enhanced or made more frequent when those points are reached.

**Issue 21**

*When should SMARTLINK be phased in to support the development of Cheeseman’s Green / Waterbrook?*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option 59</th>
<th>Provide SMARTLINK bus services into the town centre at the early stages of development (say 500 dwellings)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Option 60</td>
<td>An extension to existing bus services into the town centre provided at the early stages of development (say 50 dwellings) to be followed by a SMARTLINK service as the majority of first neighbourhood is completed (say 1000 dwellings)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 61</td>
<td>To provide commuter services to the station from the outset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 62</td>
<td>Provide SMARTLINK services in line with the introduction of Park and Ride at Waterbrook, due in 2015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7.10 Residential car and cycle parking standards

7.10.1 Residential parking is of particular importance in the overall design of this new development area. In a development of up to 6,500 dwellings, over-provision of residential car parking may involve the use of more greenfield land resulting in the requirement for additional areas of land to be developed and extending the built footprint of development further into the countryside as well as discouraging use of public transport or other sustainable modes of transport. Conversely, under provision of residential car parking or providing it in the wrong form or layout can result in cluttered and unattractive urban environments dominated by parked cars which may, in the worst cases, adversely affect highway and pedestrian safety or block routes.

7.10.2 Determining the appropriate residential parking standards for a development should take into consideration the following issues:

- The density of development and highway layout,
- Maximising the use of sustainable transport,
- Dwelling size and mix,
- On-street parking controls (including neighbouring streets),
- Proximity of public car parks (for visitors)

7.10.3 The occupancy of new dwellings varies considerably, not least with the size of dwellings. The previous Kent County Council residential parking standards \(^1\) were based on numbers of bedrooms in each property as follows:

**Maximum Vehicle Parking Standards**

- 1 bedroom: 1 space per dwelling,
- 2 and 3 bedrooms: 2 spaces per dwelling,
- 4 or more bedrooms: 3 spaces per dwelling,
- Sheltered Accommodation: 1 space per resident warden + 1 space per 2 units

**Minimum Cycle Parking Standards**

- Individual residential dwellings: 1 space per bedroom,
- Flats and maisonettes: 1 space per unit,
- Sheltered accommodation: 1 space per 5 units

7.10.4 Recent Government planning guidance (now superseded) sought to set an average on-site parking requirement of 1.5 spaces per dwelling across developments.

7.10.5 However, the success of a residential parking standard may be as much about the spaces are provided and this forms a key element in establishing a successful and attractive urban design for any development. For example, issues to consider here include the extent to which garages are used as private parking spaces, as opposed to additional household storage areas; the use of shared parking courtyards as opposed to individual parking within a dwelling curtilage; and the use of on-street parking and the extent to which that should be controlled, either through 'yellow lines' or resident permit schemes.

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\(^1\) Kent and Medway Structure Plan SPG4: Vehicle Parking Standards (July 2006). The Structure Plan has now been superseded by the South East Plan (2009)
In terms of the location and design of residents' parking, the desire is usually for parking to be conveniently located near to the front of houses but parking spaces should be visually inconspicuous in a way that does not dominate the street scene, but at the same time overlooked for security reasons.

**Issue 22**

What should the residential car and cycle parking standards be within the Cheeseman's Green/Waterbrook area?

**Option 63**

Continue with the former Kent County Council car and cycle parking standards

**Option 64**

Alter the Kent County Council car and cycle parking standards to allow for lower levels of car parking provision in areas where services are readily accessible by walking, cycling or public transport

**Option 65**

Allow for more generous vehicle parking standards than the former Kent County Council standards
8 Green Space

8.1 The types and location of open space

8.1.1 Open space, sport and recreation facilities can make a major contribution to quality of life. It is important to ensure that Cheeseman's Green/Waterbrook has sufficient open space which is well located in relation to housing and other development and which makes the most of existing landscape features. There is also a need to ensure that they are of high quality, attractive to users and well managed and maintained. The Cheeseman’s Green/Waterbrook development areas abut extensive river floodplain landscapes which function as a ‘green wedge’, bringing the countryside right into the built up area. As part of a wider open space network there is an opportunity to reflect and enhance the characteristic ecological habitats, landscape patterns and features of the river floodplains and Willesborough Dykes, extending valuable ecological habitats and creating an attractive landscape setting for the new urban neighbourhoods.

8.1.2 The Core Strategy proposes a green corridor known as the Green 'Necklace' which would link the strategic park and other parts of the open space network through the town. The Core Strategy also proposes the clear definition of a fixed and controlled edge to Cheeseman's Green/Waterbrook through appropriate landscaping, sometimes, but not always, in the form of extensive woodland (countryside buffer zones). Whilst forming a strong visual edge, these areas would retain, and potentially enhance, connections to the countryside.

8.1.3 Cheeseman's Green Park has been identified as a strategic recreational open space. The strategic spaces will be linked by a green 'necklace' that will make use of the existing 'green corridors' through Ashford and proposed 'blue infrastructure' of floodplain and water management features in accordance with an overall 'Green and Blue Grid' Strategy (1). Cheeseman's Green Park will be an important recreational resource for the south-eastern part of the town, serving the new community at Cheeseman's Green/Waterbrook.

8.1.4 The size of and location for the new Cheeseman's Green Strategic Park will be determined by a detailed feasibility study. The Ashford PPG17 Assessment of existing open space provision indicates that this area is deficient in formal sports and recreation facilities and the majority of the Cheeseman's Green Park area, as identified in the Core Strategy, is within the East Stour River floodplain so further work will be required to develop a masterplan for the park.

8.1.5 The Green and Blue Grid Strategy states that, ‘Further work will be required to locate this park, which would be better integrated if it could be sited within the Willesborough Dykes/Cheeseman’s Green area, providing formal recreation and sports facilities to complement the surrounding natural floodplain landscapes’.

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Issue 23

How should open space be provided for the community?

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1 A copy of the Green and Blue Grid Strategy can be found at [www.ashford.gov.uk](http://www.ashford.gov.uk)
Option 66
Children's play areas close to home (400 metres walking distance)

Option 67
Urban parks and gardens, allotments and young people's facilities (e.g. Skate and BMX parks, all weather kick about areas) provided within each neighbourhood

Option 68
Strategic open space serving the whole community:
A) a 'Green Necklace' threading through the area and linking facilities (natural & semi-natural areas also containing children's play areas and sustainable transport links);
B) Cheeseman's Green Park and;
C) Countryside buffer zones

8.2 The phasing of open space provision

8.2.1 The phasing of open space provision is important in protecting and enhancing existing site features, providing an attractive and healthy environment for new residents and ensuring that development is well integrated into the surrounding countryside.

Issue 24
When should open space/strategic planting be implemented?

Option 69
Provide local open space such as children's play areas at the same time as the development it serves.
Option 70

Provide no neighbourhood open space facilities until neighbourhoods are nearing completion allowing new residents to have an input into the design and content of the areas.

Option 71

Provide some advanced strategic planting (e.g. Cheeseman's Green Park and the Green Necklace) to establish a green framework and early screening.

Option 72

Provide temporary/basic open space facilities at an early stage (say after the building of 250 dwellings).

8.3 The potential uses for Cheeseman's Green Park

8.3.1 When looking at the potential uses of Cheeseman's Green Park, consideration needs to be given to the uses of the other strategic parks planned for the growth area, including:

- **Conningbrook/Julie Rose Stadium area** - a regional watersports facility to complement the stadium with associated open space and leisure activities,
- **South Willesborough Dykes Wetland Park** - Identified in the Local Plan as a Site of Wildlife Importance (SWI). There is an opportunity to bring this area forward as a major local natural resource that is both sustainable, educational and recreational,
- **Discovery Park** - work is being undertaken as part of the Chilmington Green AAP. Initial ideas for Discovery Park are to provide multifunctional & innovative recreational opportunities that complement the other two parks. Initial concepts include planting a tree for each new home in Ashford; a park for all the family; community gardens; orchards and woodlands (potentially for energy production) and an events venue.

8.3.2 The uses to be found at Cheeseman's Green Park will need to complement the uses found at other strategic parks whilst providing for the needs of the local area.

Issue 25

What use(s) would you like to see at Cheeseman's Green Park?
| Option 73 | A natural, uninterrupted landscape |
| Option 74 | A park which combines extensive areas of natural landscape with a range of other more formal recreational areas and facilities, extending across parts of the floodplain and into the development areas |
| Option 75 | A large sports field with a number of sporting facilities, including sports pitches and tennis courts |
| Option 76 | A leisure or mountain bike facility, with links to the network of cycle routes that lead to the open countryside |
| Option 77 | A park with a tourist attraction, for example a conservation attraction |
| Option 78 | An entertainment space for concerts, fairgrounds, etc |
| Option 79 | To display public art throughout |
8.4 The urban/rural fringe

8.4.1 As new development is being introduced into a greenfield site which is visible from existing development and surrounding public footpaths, consideration needs to be given to the design of development which abuts the countryside. It should seek to establish a physical and natural limit to the peripheral growth and also provide a strong identity for this area whilst creating new habitats and areas for public enjoyment. The two development areas also have long frontages onto the floodplains of the East Stour and Ruckinge Dyke. This means that development has the potential advantage of views across open space, but also the challenge of creating an attractive and sensitive urban/rural ‘edge’ in a landscape setting.

Issue 26
What treatment should be given to new development where it abuts the countryside and the river floodplain?

Option 80
Screen development by a wide and continuous landscape belt

Option 81
Provide a less structured edge including block planting (with gaps), lower density, well designed housing or industrial business units with landscaping within the curtilage.

Option 82
Provide the opportunity for development to overlook the open countryside and wetland areas, rather than turn its back on the natural landscape or be artificially screened from view.
9 Community

9.1 The type of community buildings

9.1.1 A ‘Community Hub’ is a single building or group of buildings which could include educational provision, health facilities and community space. Grouped facilities allow the opportunity for shared spaces, collaborative working and potentially high quality buildings which may otherwise have proved unaffordable. It is also hoped that the concept would encourage better social inclusion by providing more effective service delivery and easier access for the local community.

Issue 27
What would be the best option to operate these community services?

Option 83
Providing a full range of facilities in separate buildings which may not be close to each other

Option 84
Focusing combined services in a ‘community hub’ building or a clustered group of buildings

9.2 The phasing of community facilities

Issue 28
When is the best time to incorporate community services into the development?

Option 85
Provide no community facilities until neighbourhoods are nearing completion so that the new community can have an input into the design and content of the buildings
Option 86

Provide temporary or basic level community infrastructure facilities at an early stage and build upon when the communities grow.
9.3 Community Management

**Issue 29**

How should community facilities be managed and funded to ensure their long term sustainability?

There are a number of models for managing community facilities in the longer term and the options are set out below.

**Option 87**

**Public Sector Led**

**Range of services provided:**

Educational facilities co-locating with (for example) a nursery, children’s centre, leisure facilities, public library, performing arts studio.

**Organisational structure:**

Typically the overall management of these sites would be the responsibility of the governing body and the head teacher. Opportunity for the employment of a ‘business manager’ equal to the head teacher with direct responsibility for the site and the service agreements with partners, supported by caretakers and/or maintenance staff.

**Sources of capital/revenue funding:**

Capital costs are to be met by the development

Statutory services are assured a degree of revenue funding.

**Income generation:**

Possibility for the integration of services such as a café to provide extra income or enable commercial elements to operate such as a pharmacy or dentist. Funds may be drawn through residential service charges to allow some services to be subsidised.

**Flexibility of model:**

The public sector led management model is suitable for developments large enough to support a primary school or secondary school. This model would also be suitable as part of a wider ‘hybrid’ model, with management responsibilities split between (for example) education and a development/charitable trust.
Option 88

Estate Management Led (with control passing to residents as majority stakeholders)

Range of services provided:

Estate Management will typically be responsible for landscaping, security, maintenance of public open spaces and management of service charges.

Organisational structure:

Typically Estate Management companies are privately owned and operated with members/shareholders (In the residential sector it is common for the residents to become members/shareholders upon purchasing a property)

Sources of capital/revenue funding:

Capital costs are to be met by the development

Revenue funding is raised from service charging placed on dwellings

Income generation:

Depending on whether the Estates Management were to take responsibility for more community facilities and services such as recycling points they could benefit potentially from some council grant-funding, for example, representing a proportion of council tax collections.

Flexibility of model:

The estate management model can only realistically be applied to development of 1000 dwellings or more in order that administration costs can be covered. This model can be part of a 'hybrid' model and has been successfully combined with Parish Council management in certain cases.
Option 89

Estates Management Led (with Charitable Trust)

Range of services provided:

Same as option 88. However, financially they are able to invest more in the community such as community halls and youth facilities through the Dowry fund (1).

Organisational Structure:

An estate management model run by a charitable trust will have members but not shareholders. The residents association will typically be members along with the commercial interest and the investors.

Sources of revenue funding:

Revenue funding is raised from service charges on dwellings and potentially commercial units. Charitable Trusts are also eligible to tap into external funding mechanisms.

Income generation:

Depending on whether the Estates Management were to take responsibility for more community facilities and services such as recycling points they could benefit from some council grant funding, for example, representing a proportion of council tax collections.

Flexibility of model:

The estate management model can only realistically be applied to development of 1000 dwellings or more in order that administration costs can be covered. This model can be part of a 'hybrid' model and has been successfully combined with Parish Council management in certain cases.

(1) a sum of money gifted by English Partnerships (now known as the Homes and Communities Agency) for the purposes of regeneration.
Option 90

Development Trusts or Community Interest Companies (CIC’s)

Range of services provided:

Development trusts are responsible for the running and maintenance of countless and very varied facilities, including statutory provision and mixed use.

Organisational structure:

A development trust is typically managed overall by an appointed (and salaried) Chief Executive or Director. Major decisions are made by a board of elected members, appointed members or a mixture of both.

Sources of capital/revenue funding:

There is no reason why a CIC could not collect and administer service charges on residential and commercial properties. Capital funding could be sought from central government to support the infrastructure needs of Ashford’s growth.

Income generation:

Same as option 89.

As with an estate management company, a CIC would have more freedom in terms of procurement than the public sector and if the founding company were large enough they may be able to negotiate very competitive rates for specific services (i.e. security and cleaning). This would result in lower costs.

Flexibility of model:

The CIC model would certainly be more suited to management of a number of places to make it financially viable. However, there is a strong need for a model that is responsive to local need and one which encourages local representation. This model requires a lot of in depth work to take forward, and co-ordination across the whole of the new developments in Ashford..
Option 91
Parish Council Led

Range of services provided:
Parish Councils are responsible for a number of facilities, typically consisting of village halls, open space/local sports fields, allotments, cemeteries, etc

Organisational Structure:
A parish Council is made up of elected and/or co-opted councillors who must be local residents. Parish Council meetings are open to the public. Parish Councils also have a responsibility to comment on planning applications within or affecting their area.

Sources of capital/revenue funding:
Through local authority council tax.

A parish council has the power to precept an additional element of Council Tax to fund its expenditure. Also, grants can be sought from various bodies.

Question 1
Are there any other community management options which you consider to be appropriate for Cheeseman’s Green/Waterbrook and for what types of facilities?
10 Sustainability

10.1 Meeting sustainable design standards

10.1.1 The Ashford Core Strategy Policy CS10 requires a Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4 to be achieved for residential dwellings in the urban extensions. Non-residential dwellings need to achieve an overall BREEAM level of excellent. The minimum carbon dioxide reduction is 30%. This section sets out a number of options which seek to achieve the energy, water and material credits to comply with CS10 sustainable design and construction standards.

Renewable Energy Options

10.1.2 The Government’s renewable energy policy is set out in the Energy White Paper. This aims to put the UK on a path to cut its carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions by some 60% by 2050, with real progress by 2020, and to maintain reliable and competitive energy supplies. The development of renewable energy, alongside improvements in energy efficiency and the development of combined heat and power, will make a vital contribution to these aims. The Government has already set a target to generate 10% of UK electricity from renewable energy sources by 2010. The White Paper sets out the government’s aspiration to double that figure to 20% by 2020.

10.1.3 In 2007, Ashford's Future commissioned a Sustainable Energy Feasibility Study (1) which looked at a number of renewable energy technologies, the potential CO₂ savings and costs within different scales of development from 10 dwellings to 18,000 dwellings along with a representative mix of non-residential development. The results of the modelling carried out in the course of this study allow stakeholders to identify the most cost effective technologies which are likely to be suitable for development in the Cheeseman's Green/Waterbrook area. Cluster 6 relates to a development size of 6,500 dwellings as an example and is referred to in the options set out.

10.1.4 Table 2 shows the potential CO₂ savings possible through the use of low carbon and renewable energy generation technologies. Of the technologies investigated PhotoVoltaics (PV) has the potential to provide the greatest level of CO₂ mitigation, although at a high cost. It is recognised however that various combinations of renewable technologies might provide more optimal solutions, in terms of cost and CO₂ mitigation potential. For example, to achieve the minimum carbon dioxide reduction of 30%, biomass boilers could be installed in all dwellings which would give a maximum 32% CO₂ reduction. Alternatively, PV Panels could be combined with biomass boilers to get a 93% CO₂ reduction. The environmental (visual and noise) impact of each type of technology will also be a factor in assessing their acceptability in addition to the compatibility of technologies as outlined in Table 1.

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1 A copy of the Ashford Sustainable Energy Feasibility Study can be found at [www.ashfordbestplaced.co.uk](http://www.ashfordbestplaced.co.uk)
### Large Scale Remote Generation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Embedded Generation</th>
<th>Wind</th>
<th>Biomass Boilers</th>
<th>Biomass CHP</th>
<th>Gas CHP</th>
<th>Heat Networks</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>PV</td>
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<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
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<tr>
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<td>x</td>
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<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Air Source Heat Pumps</td>
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Table 1 - Complimentary and conflicting technology combinations

~ = integration possible if heat source is on a large enough scale and can be configured to export heat to a heat network
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Photovoltaic Panels (PV)</th>
<th>Solar Hot Water Panels</th>
<th>Small Scale Roof Top Wind Turbines</th>
<th>Large Scale Wind Turbines</th>
<th>Ground Source Heat Pumps</th>
<th>Air Source Heat Pumps</th>
<th>Biomass Boilers</th>
<th>Gas CHP</th>
<th>Biomass CHP (average dependant on type of biomass CHP technologies)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maximum % reduction in CO₂ emissions</td>
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<td>11%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>29%</td>
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Table 2 - Potential CO2 savings associated extra capital costs of using various renewable energy technologies as identified by ARUP for a development of 6,500 dwellings as proposed at Cheeseman's Green/Waterbrook
Issue 30
What is technically and economically viable for Cheeseman’s Green/Waterbrook to achieve its minimum renewable energy standards onsite? (bearing in mind the Core Strategy Policy CS10 which requires offset contributions to be made for the balance of the development's carbon emissions which are not neutralised onsite)

Option 92
Photovoltaic Panels (PV)

*PV Panels convert energy from the sun into electricity using semi conductor cells assembled in panels. The maximum capacity of PV able to be installed is limited by the available space for their location.*

Option 93
Solar Hot Water Panels

*Convert the sun's energy into hot water which is best suited to provide domestic hot water rather than space heating. The maximum potential CO2 savings of solar hot water panels is therefore limited by both the hot water consumption of the development and the space available for the location of the panels.*

Option 94
Small Scale Roof Top Wind Turbines

*Several different models of wind turbines which are suitable for roof top mounting are available on the market. Two models were considered for this study, the Swift 1.5kW for installation on houses and the Proven 6kW for installation on or near non-residential buildings. These are well established horizontal axis turbines. Of a scale which is appropriate to the cluster sizes.*

*(Due to the complex nature of wind analysis and the restricted availability of wind speed data, the predictions of annual electricity generation are highly approximate)*
**Option 95**

**Large Scale Wind Turbines**

The possible locations for large wind turbines (100kW+) are limited by a number of factors including proximity to high buildings, available grid connection, shadow flicker and noise. The noise produced by large scale wind turbines requires them to be located as much as 500m from residential areas.

**Option 96**

**Ground Source Heat Pumps**

Ground Source Heat Pumps (GSHP) are low energy systems that use the near constant temperature of the soil and/or ground water together with a heat pump to provide space heating, cooling and domestic hot water.

**Option 97**

**Air Source Heat Pumps**

Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHP) can be located on the sides of buildings and so have fewer limitations regarding the capacity that can be installed. However the potential CO₂ savings possible with air source heat pumps are limited by two principal factors:

1. Air source heat pumps are used to provide space heating and cooling demand, but not hot water demand. Gas water heaters will still be required.
2. Air source heat pumps are less efficient than ground source heat pumps as they require regular defrosting in winter which uses electricity and so provide lower CO₂ emissions savings per kW installed.

**Option 98**

**Biomass Boilers**

Modern biomass boilers are highly efficient heating units with low or zero carbon emissions depending on the fuel used. Generally, biomass boilers come in two different types - wood chip boilers and wood pellet boilers. Biomass boilers come in a range of sizes and can be used to heat individual houses or offices or supply many buildings using a district heating network.
### Option 99

**Gas Combined Heat and Power (CHP)**

*Heat is distributed from CHP plants to consumers using piped hot water or steam. The heat is usually transmitted from the district heating circuit to the heating circuits of each individual building using heat exchangers. The cost of the district heating network is often the largest cost in a CHP scheme and its economic value is dependant on the density of buildings served.*

### Option 100

**Biomass Combined Heat and Power (CHP)**

### Option 101

**Alternative Renewable Energy Technologies (please specify)**

### 10.2 Meeting sustainable drainage standards

10.2.1 The move towards sustainable drainage recognises that conventional separately drained systems of greenfield sites may not be acceptable in the 21st century, as development generally increases the proportion of 'impermeable' surfaces through the roofs, roads and similar impermeable surfaces in any development. This results in a higher proportion of runoff being collected and conveyed to adjacent watercourses; this runoff also occurs more rapidly, resulting in 'peaky' runoff.

10.2.2 Policy CS20 in the Ashford Core Strategy requires all new development to include appropriate sustainable drainage systems (SUDS) for the disposal of surface water, in order to avoid any increase in flood risk or adverse impact on water quality.

10.2.3 For the Cheeseman's Green/Waterbrook area, the Environment Agency advise against the use of infiltration systems, such as soakaways, for drainage given that groundwater levels are unknown in the area and the Weald Clay is unlikely to provide adequate soakage levels. Alternative SUDS schemes may be appropriate.

10.2.4 The issue of scale is also relevant when considering SUDS options. Provision could be made separately for individual sites, however, site wide strategic approaches should also be considered. Strategic provision of SUDS would have land use implications.

### Issue 31

**What SUDS features would be most appropriate at Cheeseman’s Green/Waterbrook?**
Option 102

*Wet Ponds*

Wet ponds are basins that have a permanent pool of water. They provide temporary storage for additional storm runoff above the permanent water level. The temporary storage normally promotes pollutant removal provided the pond is of suitable size.

Option 103

*Extended Detention Basins*

Extended detention basins are designed to detain a certain volume of runoff as well as providing water quality treatment. Although they are normally dry, they may have small permanent pools at the inlet and outlet.

Option 104

*Constructed Wetlands*

Constructed wetlands are specifically designed to treat pollutants in runoff and comprise a basin with shallow water and aquatic vegetation that provides biofiltration.

Option 105

*Rainwater Harvesting Systems*

Includes simple water butts to more complex rainwater use systems. Rainwater from impermeable surfaces flows via down pipes to a storage tank and is filtered to restrict leaves and large solids from entering the tank.
Option 106

Green Roofs (eco roofs or vegetated roof covers)

Multilayered system that covers the roof of a building with vegetation over a drainage layer. This reduces the volume of run-off and attenuates peak flows from roofs. There are two main types of green roofs:

Intensive roofs – landscaped environments that are usually publicly accessible; and Extensive roofs – cover the entire roof area with low-growing, low maintenance plants, and are designed to be accessible for maintenance purposes only.

Option 107

Online/Offline storage

Storage of run-off in underground tanks or other structures such as oversized pipes. Tanks can take the form of oversized pipes, concrete tanks, corrugated steel pipes and plastic modular geocellular tank systems.
11 Utilities Provision

11.1.1 Core Strategy Policy CS21 specifies that major developments must be able to demonstrate that there are, or will be, adequate water supply and wastewater treatment facilities in place to serve either the whole development, or where development is being carried out in phases, the whole of the phase for which approval is being sought.

11.1.2 Given the scale of development at Cheeseman's Green and Waterbrook, consideration needs to be given to the existing capacity of Ashford’s Wastewater Treatment Works (WWTW) and what the implications are for the phasing of this development in providing any additional capacity.

11.1.3 In addition, there are issues around the capacity of energy supply, gas and telecommunications to accommodate further development prior to any additional capacity being provided.

Issue 32

How much of Cheeseman's Green and Waterbrook can be developed prior to providing any additional utility provision, including:

- Water Supply,
- Surface Water Drainage,
- Foul Water Drainage,
- Electricity Supply,
- Gas Supply,
- Telecommunications