Chapter 8: **Quality, Choice and Accessibility in the Transport Network**

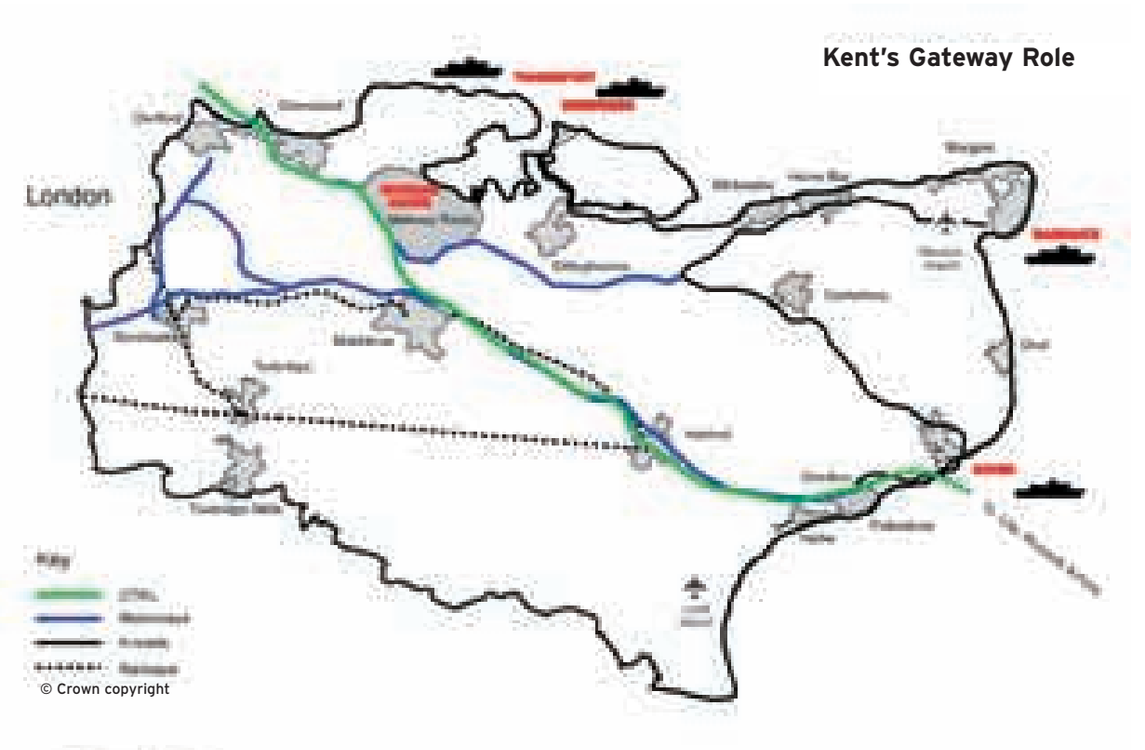
8.1 Transport has an important influence on the quality of life and the economic prosperity of Kent and Medway. Transport is essential to allow people access to work, education, shopping, social and leisure opportunities and to enable goods to be moved efficiently. However, transport, particularly road traffic, can have adverse effects, including health impacts, physical injury, noise and air pollution. Additionally the character of many of Kent's towns and rural lanes is being harmed by congestion and heavy traffic.

8.2 Kent and Medway Councils, as the local Transport Authorities for the county, are responsible for maintaining some 9,140 km of carriageways (8,340 kms within the KCC area ; 800 kms within Medway and 2,800 associated structures (2,700 KCC area; 106 within Medway). Maintaining this asset, currently valued at broadly £6 billion is an important element of the transport strategy within this Plan. Making best use of the network is also a vital component in tackling the challenges arising from the near doubling of traffic that has occurred in Kent since 1980.

8.3 Peoples' travel behaviour has changed over time and will continue to do so. People are travelling greater distances to meet their daily needs, mainly because of the convenience of car travel. Continuing to rely to such a large extent on car travel is unsustainable. It will lead to worsening congestion, damage to the environment and will ignore the problems faced by those without access to a car. If people are to be persuaded to change their travel behaviour and rely less on their cars, then they need to be offered more convenient and efficient public transport or other alternatives tailored to their needs.

8.4 There are a number of distinctive factors which influence travel patterns in Kent. These include the high volume of international traffic passing through the county, the large numbers of commuters who travel to London by road and rail and the fact that Kent is made up of many medium sized towns and rural villages with no dominant urban area. These characteristics make for a significant amount of movement between and within the principal urban areas and the countryside. While parts of Kent and Medway are generally well served by the rail, motorway and trunk road networks, other parts are more remote.

Kent's Gateway Role



Key Transport issues for Kent include:

- Kent's proximity to London and its role as the UK's main gateway to Europe
- Kent's dispersed pattern of settlements
- managing the economic and social problems associated with congestion and the need to improve journey reliability
- taking account of the environmental, social and health impacts of heavy traffic
- managing and maintaining the existing transport network
- improving public information to ensure more informed travel choices
- ensuring that more remote areas have access to public transport;
- limited facilities for cyclists and walkers
- reducing dependence on the car especially for journeys to, and within, urban areas
- supporting the Plan's development and regeneration strategy and responding to the opportunities and impacts associated with new development

8.5 **SEERA's Regional Transport Strategy (2003)**

- promotes investment in forms of transport other than the car.
- identifies a number of regional hubs where there is the potential to achieve better access by non-car transport modes by building on existing transport networks. Hubs will include high quality interchanges, improved public transport and better facilities for pedestrians and cyclists.
- in Kent and Medway, Ebbsfleet, Rochester, Maidstone and Ashford have been identified as hubs.
- Canterbury and Tonbridge are also identified as important transport interchanges

Kent and Medway's Strategy for Transport seeks to:

- facilitate national, regional and local inter-urban movements whilst minimising harm to the environment
- promote a pattern and form of development that reduces the need to travel
- promote accessibility for all sectors of the community
- address local and global environmental concerns
- support strong local economic performance
- address the broad transport needs of individual areas and the interrelationship between them
- ensure that new housing, employment and other development is served by a choice of means of transport including public transport, walking and cycling routes
- maintain and make efficient use of the existing transport network
- provide travel choice and alternatives to the private car, including public transport, walking and cycling
- inform the public as to the choices of transport services available in and about Kent
- promote travel plans for large developments
- introduce and support measures to influence and manage demand for travel
- reduce the impact of travel on communities and the wider environment
- reduce the rate at which congestion is worsening and improve journey reliability
- improve air quality, safety and personal security and reduce social exclusion related to transport issues
- secure improvements to the transport network
- concentrate longer distance traffic movements on the most suitable routes indicated in the road hierarchies attached to this Plan.

Major Transport Improvements

8.6 A shift towards more sustainable transport patterns will occur only if overall accessibility by sustainable transport modes is improved, particularly within urban areas. This means making significant improvements to public transport, walking and cycling facilities. This will require investment over and above that associated with the incremental changes brought forward as part of new development and will require effective partnership working between the public and private sectors. Meeting future transport requirements will need a targeted programme of major improvements to Kent's transport infrastructure and to the county's public

transport services. There will still need to be some road building to ensure the county can accommodate through traffic and movements between urban areas. The priority for transport improvements will be based on the overall strategy of this Plan and will reflect the assessment criteria in Policy TP1. These criteria will be used to inform future reviews of the Local Transport Plans for Kent and Medway and responses to schemes promoted by the Department of Transport or the Strategic Rail Authority.

8.7 The scale, distribution and location of the development identified in this Plan will generate demand for transport. These demands will be met in part through the programmed strategic transport schemes (Policies TP3 and TP4) but also through the schemes (Policy TP7) to be promoted through future Local Transport Plans. For example, the success and character of the extensive redevelopment of previously used sites proposed in Kent Thameside will depend upon a sustainable transport system being in place to serve the area – this is the phased provision of 'Fastrack'. At Ashford sustainable growth will not be possible without a mix of transport solutions to tackle existing problems, such as Junction 10 of the M20, and to influence the character of future travel demand such as through the orbital and radial bus priority schemes identified in Policy TP7.

Policy TP1: Assessment Criteria for Transport Proposals

All major proposals for enhancing the transport network in Kent and Medway will be assessed according to the balance between social, transport, economic and environmental effects with specific regard to:

- **The relationship to the overall strategy of this Plan;**
- **The contribution towards achieving a more sustainable pattern of development and regeneration;**
- **The likely impact on the environment including areas of special environmental quality;**
- **The likely effects on air quality;**
- **Reducing Carbon Dioxide emissions**
- **Reducing dependence on the private car**
- **The economic and operational benefits likely to be achieved relative to the cost of the proposal;**
- **The contribution to the movement of passengers and freight by rail;**
- **The need to concentrate traffic on the most suitable routes;**
- **The impact on road casualty reductions;**
- **The need to maintain or improve town centre accessibility by sustainable means;**
- **The need to accommodate improvements for bus services, pedestrians and cyclists; and**
- **The ability to enhance the environment for local communities.**

Transport and the Location of Development

8.8 The location of development is a major factor in influencing the demand for transport and how that demand will be met. This Plan highlights the need for land use and transport planning to be well integrated. There is an emphasis on locating development where it will reduce dependency on the car and increase the use of public transport.

8.9 In preparing Local Plans/Local Development Documents and determining planning applications, local authorities will need to consider the location of the proposed development, how it would fit in with the existing transport network, how easy it would be for people to reach services and what arrangements are being made for transport. Larger scale developments may provide scope for major changes in the transport network and could support major new public transport infrastructure. Smaller developments can still make a contribution to sustainable transport, for example, by providing walking and footpath links. Developments that are only accessible by car should be avoided.

Policy TP2: Transport and the Location of Development

Local Planning Authorities should ensure that development sites are well served by public transport, walking and cycling, or will be made so as a result of the development. Travel plans

should be established for larger developments that generate significant demand for travel to promote the use of these means of transport

Developments likely to generate a large number of trips should be located where there is either a good choice of transport already available or where a good choice can be provided in a manner acceptable to the Local Transport Authority.

Major Local Transport Plan Schemes

8.10 The schemes listed in Policy TP3/Table TP3 cover the rail, motorway and trunk road networks and local highway network schemes in the 2001-2006 Kent and Medway Local Transport Plans or in government programmes. These schemes will improve the operation of Kent's strategic transport network and will support economic development. The Local Authorities will use their influence to secure the early completion of these schemes.

Policy TP3: Safeguarding of Programmed Strategic Transport Schemes

The programmed major transport schemes listed in Table TP3 will be promoted and land required for their construction safeguarded.

Table TP3: Programmed Strategic Transport Schemes

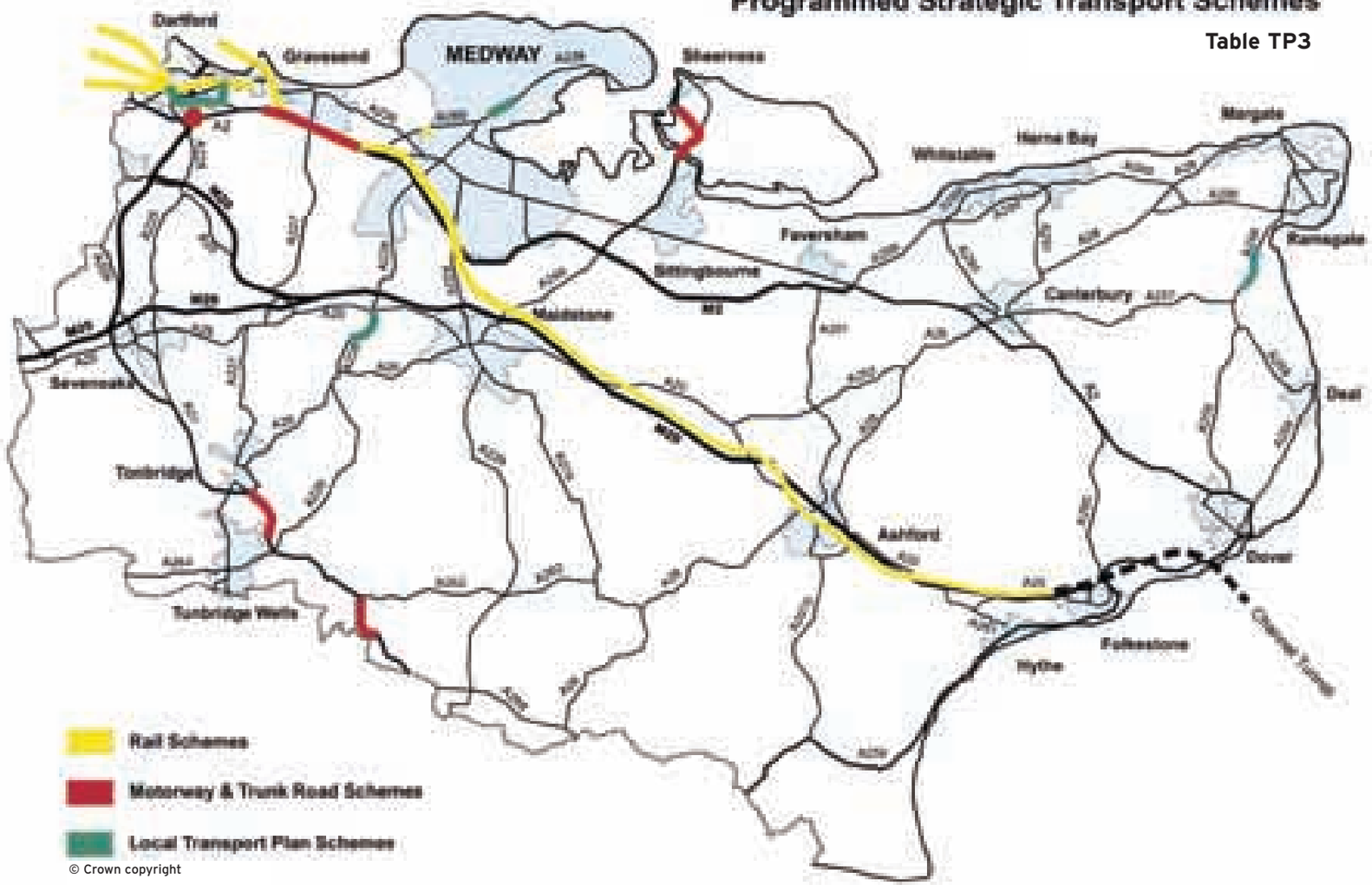
Rail [1]	**Channel Tunnel Rail Link (under construction)** **Crossrail** **Thameslink 2000** **Strood Tunnel** **North Kent Re-signalling Scheme**
Motorway & Trunk Roads [2]	**A2/A282 Dartford Interchange Improvement** **A2 Bean - Cobham** **A21 Lamberhurst Bypass** **A21 Tonbridge Bypass - Pembury Bypass Improvement** **A249 Iwade to Queenborough including Second Swale Crossing**
Local Transport Plan Schemes [3]	**A256 East Kent Access - Phase 1 (Sandwich - Ebbsfleet Lane)** **Fastrack - Phase 1 (Dartford town centre - Darenth Park- Bluewater-Greenhithe - A226 - Gravesend town centre** **A228 Main Road - Ropers Lane** **A228 Leybourne & West Malling Corridor Improvement**

NOTES :

1. Schemes listed in Transport 2010
2. Schemes are included in the Highways Agency's Targeted Programme of Improvement.
3. Schemes are included in the respective Local Transport Plans for Kent and Medway (2001/02 - 2005/6) and have been provisionally accepted by Government.

Programmed Strategic Transport Schemes

Table TP3



Rail Investment

8.11 The biggest change to the rail network in Kent and Medway will be the completion of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL) identified in Table TP2. While this will increase the network's capacity the full benefits of the CTRL will only be seen when decisions are made on what use can be made of the CTRL by domestic passenger services and freight trains. Better rail services also depend on the availability of modern rolling stock and power supply, signalling and track improvements on the existing network.

8.12 Major development of the rail network, more than currently programmed, is needed to encourage rail travel and reduce pressure on the road network. It will also avoid the costs, financial and environmental, of more extensive expansion of the road network. A number of schemes are identified in table TP3. Some are outside the administrative boundaries of Kent and Medway but are crucial to making the best use of the rail network in Kent. One of the major problems facing traffic from Kent and the rest of Europe trying to reach the rest of the UK is the way London tends to "block" rail traffic. This particularly affects long distance rail freight. Rail services are primarily focussed upon commuting into London, often at the expense of orbital services that would avoid the need to travel into the capital and back out again.

Policy TP4: **Support for Strategic Rail Schemes**

Kent County Council and Medway Council will press Government and the Strategic Rail Authority to implement the rail schemes listed in Table TP4 within the Plan period.

Table TP4 : Strategic Rail Schemes

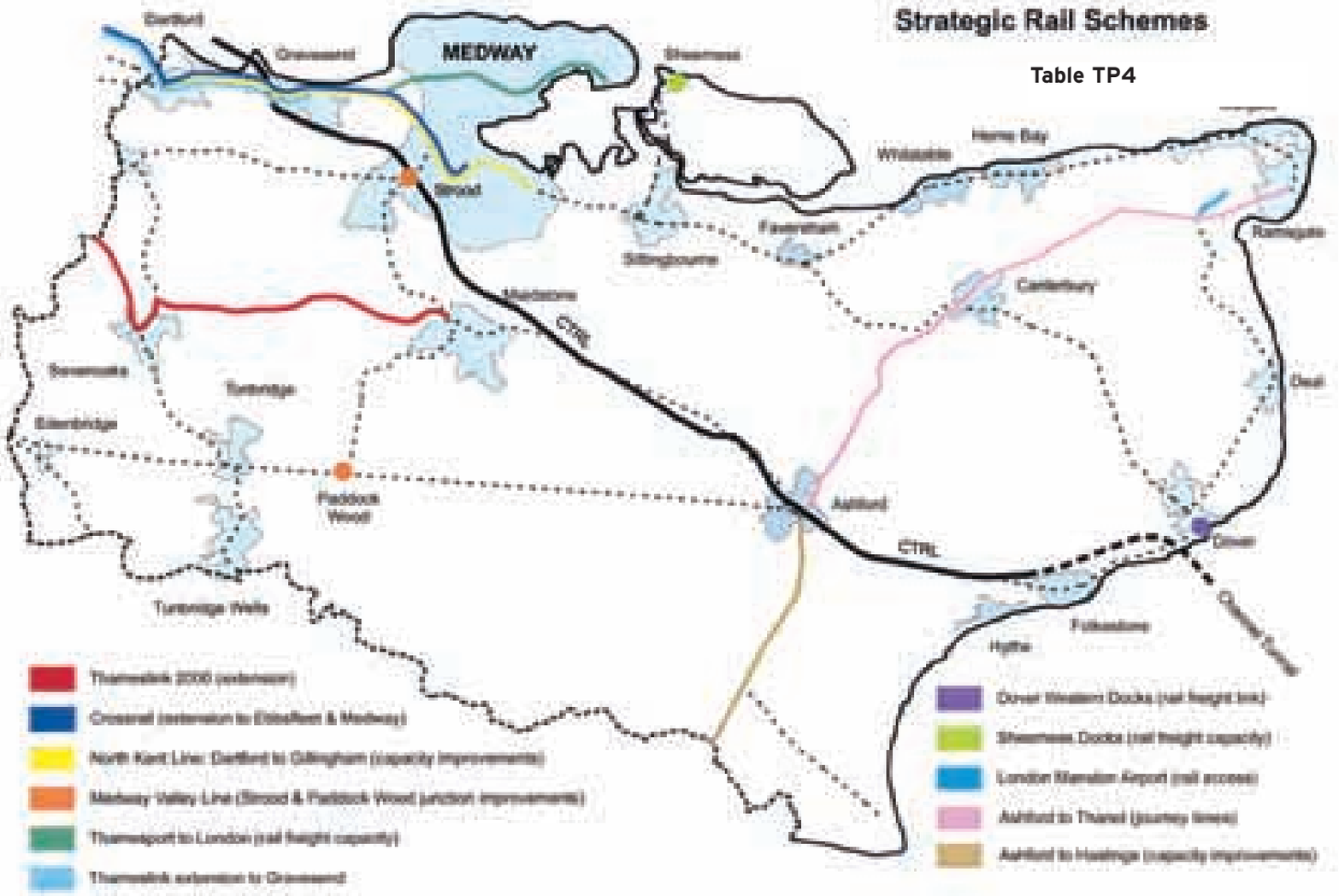
Schemes identified in Multi-Modal Studies
Increased rail capacity/capability around/through London
South Coast Corridor rail capacity improvements (including Ashford- Hastings)
Scheme Included in the Mayor of London's Transport Strategy
Woolwich Rail Crossing (Docklands Light Railway Connection)
Other Schemes
Domestic passenger services via the CTRL from/to Ashford and East and North Kent towns
Thameslink 2000: Extension to Gravesend and Maidstone
Crossrail: Extension to Ebbsfleet and Medway
Ashford – Thanet journey time improvements on existing line
North Kent Line (Dartford – Gillingham) rail capacity improvements
Medway Valley Line – improved junctions at Strood and Paddock Wood
Rail Access to Manston Airport [1]
Dover Western Docks rail freight link [1]
Sheerness Docks rail freight capability improvements [1]
Thamesport – London rail freight capability improvements [1]

NOTES :

1. Scheme funded in whole or in part by development.

Strategic Rail Schemes

Table TP4



Investment in Major Transport Corridors

8.13 There is a need to tackle existing and potential points of congestion on the major transport corridors formed by the motorway and trunk road network, which are not the subject of current proposals within the Highways Agency's Targeted Programme of Improvements nor other potential transport solutions. Multi modal studies will play a key part in how best to deal with particular parts of the network and there will be a need to consider improvement to public transport, traffic management and local accessibility. Factors to consider in determining the extent of the required improvement include the actual increase in congestion over time and the future funding made available to rail schemes which will reduce the pressure on roads. Table TP5 identifies locations at which positive action for improvements is now required.

Policy TP5: Major Transport Corridors:

Kent County Council and Medway Council will press Government and the Highways Agency to identify and implement multi-modal solutions to the existing and predicted congestion problems on the sections of the Motorway & Trunk Road network listed in Table TP5.

Table TP5: Existing or Predicted Problems on the Motorway & Trunk Road Network Requiring Multi-Modal Solutions

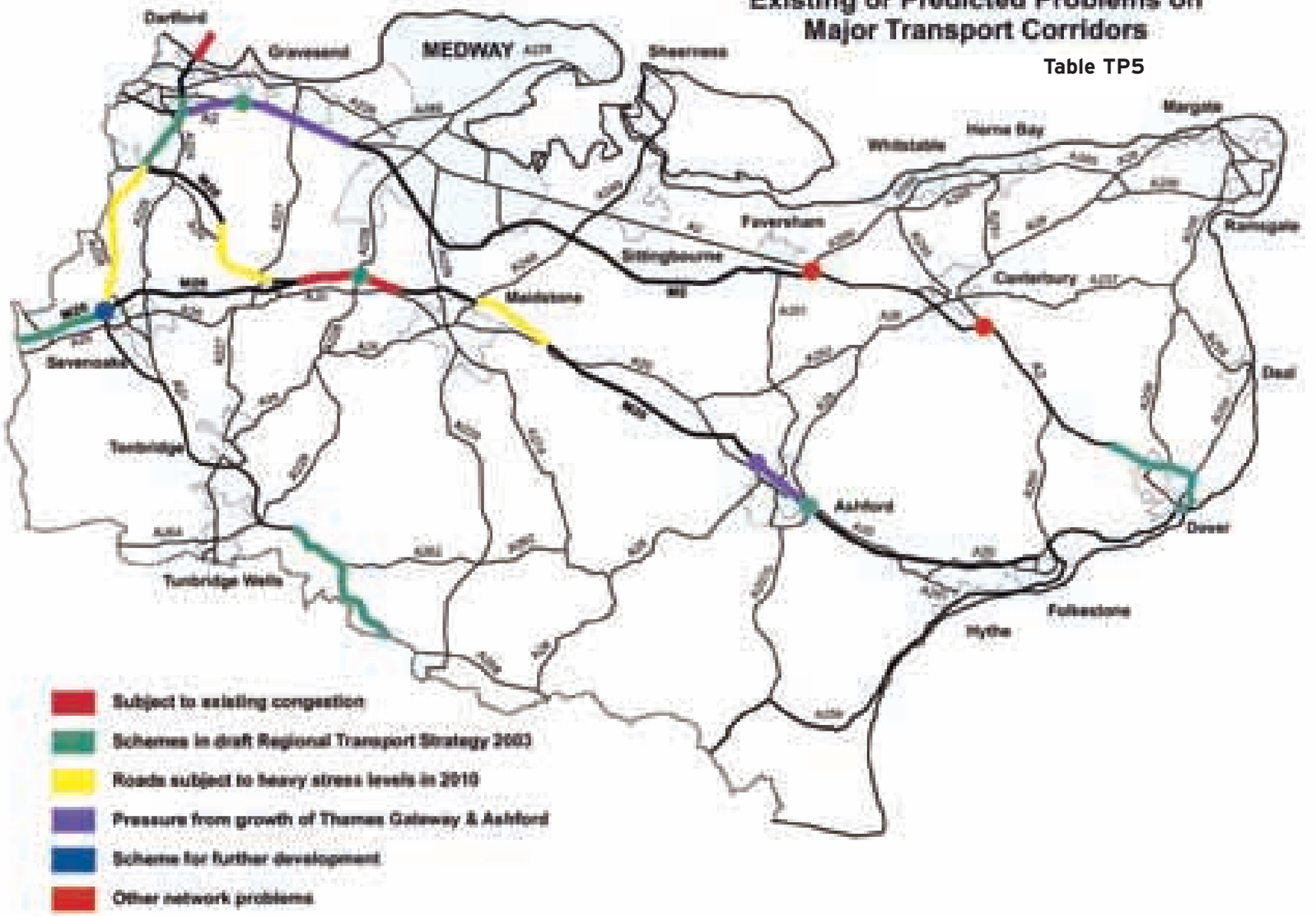
Schemes included in the draft Regional Transport Strategy (2003)	M20 Junction 10 Improvement M20 Junction 4 Improvement M25 Junction 1b-3 M25 Junction 5-7 A2 Bean interchange A2 Lydden - Dover A20 Townwall Street: Dover A21 Kippings Cross-Lamberhurst A21 Lamberhurst-Flimwell
Schemes for further development (Department for Transport July 2003)	M25 Junctions 5 Improvement: Sevenoaks
Roads Subject to Existing Congestion[1]	M20 Junction 3-5 A282 Dartford Crossing
Roads Subject to Heavy Stress Levels in 2010[1]	M20 Junctions 7 - 8 M25 Junctions 3-5 M20 Wrotham Hill
Additional roads potentially under pressure in growth areas of Thames Gateway and Ashford	A2 (M25 - M2) M20 Junction 9 and section between Junctions 9 and 10
Other Network Problems	M2/A2/A299 Brenley Corner Junction A2 Canterbury Bypass Junction

NOTES :

1. Stress levels identified or forecast by Highways Agency.

Existing or Predicted Problems on Major Transport Corridors

Table TP5



Further Thames Crossing

8.14 The concept of a new road and/or rail crossing of the River Thames east of Dartford has been under consideration since a Highways Agency study in 1994. Such a proposition is a national and inter-regional issue. The recent Orbit and London-Ipswich multi-modal studies recommend further investigative work is undertaken as does the draft Regional Transport Strategy which identifies strategic corridors within the South East to assist in regional and inter-regional movement, reduce the concentration of movement on the London area and to assist regeneration in sub regional priority areas. One of these corridors links mainland Europe (via Dover and the Channel Tunnel) to the east of London and into Essex.

8.15 Provision of a further crossing would have major economic, environmental and transport implications for Kent and if a proposal were to be identified Kent and Medway Councils would need to fully appraise it in accordance with Policy TP1 of this Plan. Prior to this Kent and Medway Councils wish to ensure that the need for, and location of, any further crossing of the Thames is investigated as a matter of urgency taking full account of the key considerations identified in Policy TP6.

Policy TP6: Further Thames Crossing

The strategic planning and transport authorities will seek to ensure that Government investigates fully, and quickly, the need for, and location of, a further multi modal crossing of the River Thames taking into account:

- **the transport, economic and regeneration benefits to Kent;**
- **the balance of beneficial and adverse impacts on Kent communities and the well being of settlements including potential air quality and noise impacts;**
- **the protection of the nationally and internationally important natural environment to the east of Gravesend;**
- **the ability to integrate a crossing with the existing road and rail network in Kent and the impacts associated with any consequential links with these networks**

In reaching a judgement as to whether there is a net benefit to Kent of a further crossing the strategic planning authorities will take into account the criteria of Policy TP1.

Local Authority Major Transport Schemes

8.16 A number of major transport schemes not currently in Local Transport Plans, will need to be carried out in order to improve traffic movement between towns, benefit the local environment or allow planned development sites to be brought forward. It is unlikely that enough money will be available for all these schemes. Whether individual schemes go forward will depend on detailed feasibility studies, justification and environmental impacts and potential financial contributions from developments. Schemes listed in Table TP7 will need to be prioritised in accordance with the criteria set out in Policy TP1.

Policy TP7: Future Strategic Transport Schemes

The Local Planning Authorities will safeguard land for the major transport schemes listed in Table TP7, which may be promoted through the respective Local Transport Plans for Kent and Medway. These schemes will be subject to multi-modal scheme appraisal and will also be subject to Policy TP1.

Table TP7: Other Strategic Transport Schemes to be Promoted Through Local Transport Plans

Schemes included in current Local Transport Plans (2000/01 –2005/6)
A228 Colts Hill Strategic Link
A228 Ropers Lane – Grain
East Kent Access Phase 2
B2163 (A274) Leeds & Langley Bypass
Schemes in Sustainable Communities Plan: Growth Areas (Thames Gateway; Ashford (to be funded partially or fully by development)
Kent Thameside: Fastrack Future Phases (including North Dartford, Stone, Eastern Quarry, Swanscombe Peninsula, Thames Way)
Transport for Medway (Integrated Network Development and provision of substantial new public transport capacity)
Ashford: Orbital and radial bus priority schemes
Ashford:A28 Chart Road Dualling and A28 – A2070 Link
Sittingbourne Northern Relief Road
Rushenden: Link to the A249 : Queenborough
Other schemes to be funded partially or fully by development
A260 Hawkinge Bypass (partially complete)
A227 (A25) Borough Green and Platt Bypass
A228 East Bank of the Medway/Snodland Bypass Dualling
A228/A26 Kings Hill - Seven Mile Lane
Other Schemes
A229 Maidstone : Upper Stone Street Improvements and All Saints Link Road
A26: Tonbridge : London Road – Hadlow Road Link
Improved Links between Hempstead and Walderslade

Widening Choice

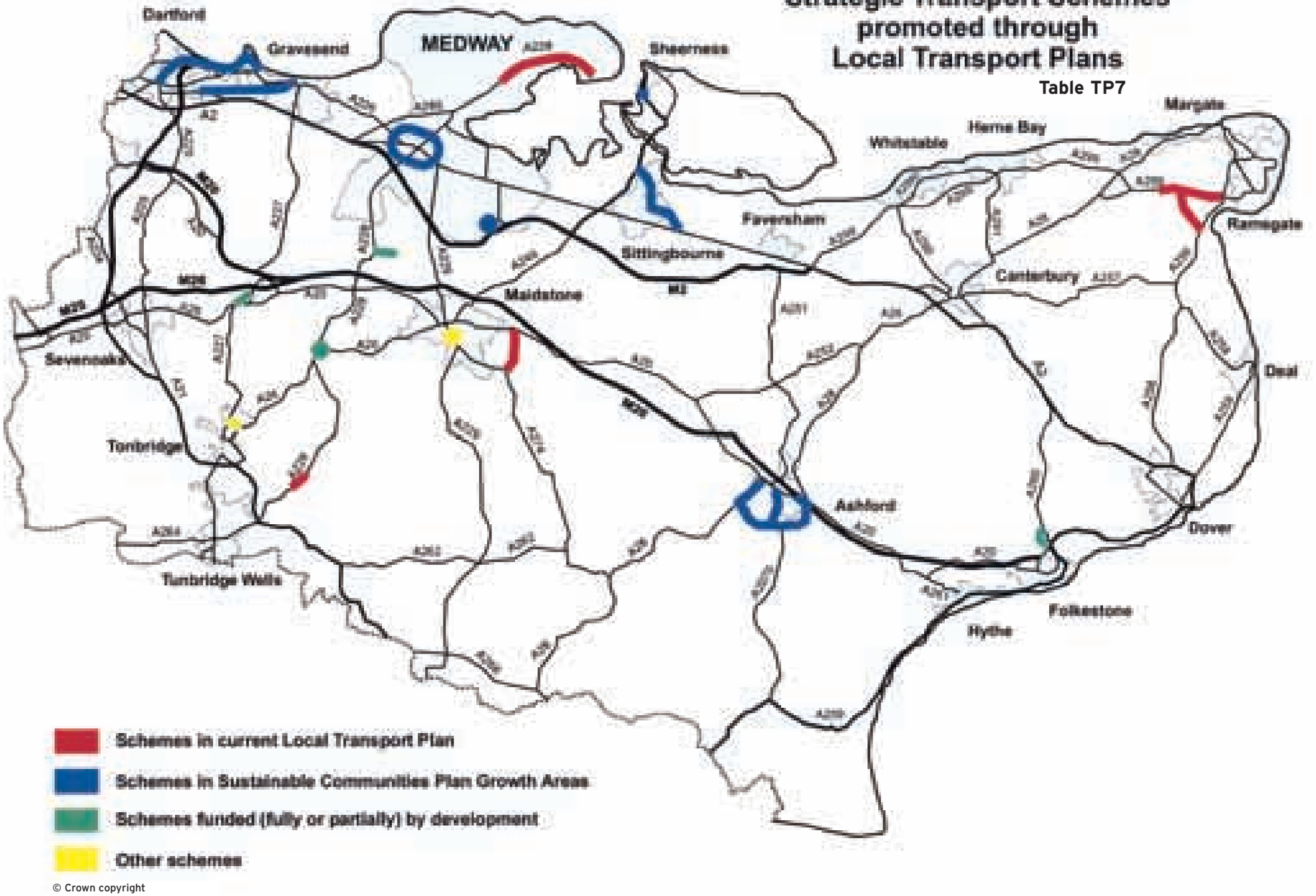
8.17 Providing solely for the private car is no longer a sustainable long-term strategy, particularly in urban areas. The use of buses, rail, cycling and walking, needs to be encouraged both to protect the environment and to offer greater accessibility for those who do not have access to a car or who choose not to use one. Encouraging the use of alternative modes of travel through management of the transport network, the provision of infrastructure, travel plans and partnership working with transport providers is important.

Public Transport

8.18 People without access to a car depend on public transport to reach services that are not available locally. In urban areas where journeys may be relatively short, good quality public transport provides a more efficient and sustainable alternative to the private car for many trips. In rural areas, however, public transport may be less viable due to a more dispersed population.

Strategic Transport Schemes promoted through Local Transport Plans

Table TP7



8.19 Buses can make travel by public transport accessible to a wider range of people and provide the principal means of public transport across Kent and Medway. Many bus services are operated commercially without the need for public subsidy but others need to be supported particularly in rural areas, at evenings, on Sundays or when new routes are launched. Ensuring bus routes can serve larger developments will be crucial if their usage is to be supported. Smaller scale developments will also need good accessibility to the public transport network.

8.20 There are more than 100 rail stations in Kent and Medway. Many of them are well used, but some particularly in rural areas are not. Some rail routes are relatively slow while others are congested. Better use could be made of the rail network by improving services, rolling stock, stations, access, car parks and other facilities. Improved signalling and maintenance would also provide a more reliable and safer service. Physical and cost limitations mean that it is not possible to provide rail access to all parts of the County, but Kent and Medway Councils will continue to work together with the rail industry to make improvements wherever possible.

8.21 Public transport networks will need to be improved in response to new patterns of development and to changes in travel behaviour. New bus interchanges or services should be considered where a development is likely to generate sufficient demand. New railway stations and services should be considered where they would provide greater opportunities for the use of public transport or improve links with other forms of transport. Providing improved services may go hand in hand with the closure of existing stations where there is no longer a justified need, or where keeping them open would slow down journey times.

Policy TP8: **Supporting Public Transport**

Public transport will be promoted by providing through partnership:

- **Better interchange facilities between public transport and other transport modes, including better car parking;**
- **Better integration between bus and rail services, including through ticketing;**
- **The provision of improved and integrated public transport information;**
- **Improved facilities for passengers, especially access for the mobility impaired;**
- **Continued financial support for non-commercial but socially necessary bus services;**
- **Procuring Government grant for urban and rural services**
- **Greater use of bus priority measures;**
- **Encouraging the improvement of the rail network and services using Government funding streams and developer contributions;**
- **The development of quality partnerships, such as those already in Maidstone & Thanet, and in other areas such as Canterbury.**

Table TP8

The following specific schemes to improve public transport services are planned:

- Improvements to Dartford Station and refurbishment of Greenhithe Station including public transport interchange
- Redevelopment of Maidstone East station and interchange improvements[1]
- Reconstruction of Strood station and interchange improvements [1]
- Enhanced bus/rail interchange at Ramsgate, Gillingham, Tonbridge Gravesend and Minster stations
- A20 corridor: Medway Gap: bus priority measures
- Improved rail interchange facilities on the Tonbridge – Ashford line and on the Ashford – Hastings line
- Replacement bus interchange in central Ashford
- Access, parking and interchange improvements : West Malling station[1]
- Manston Parkway Station
- Rail service and infrastructure improvements on the Medway Valley Line
- Enhanced daytime rail service between Minster, Sandwich, Deal and Dover
- Enhanced rail services on the Sheerness branch line
- Enhanced pedestrian facilities for Maidstone and Chatham station
- Enhanced access arrangements to Rochester station [1]
- Disabled access improvements at Tunbridge Wells station
- Continuing bids to the Government for funding bus services
- Web CCTV to enhance security at rural stations

NOTES:

1. Scheme to be funded wholly or partially by development

Park & Ride

8.22 Park & Ride facilities help to reduce congestion in town centres and in other locations. Facilities can be appropriately located on the edge of towns, either adjacent to a rail station or on the primary and secondary road network. It is important that Park & Ride facilities are sited so that they intercept existing or potential car journeys rather than generating additional car trips. Park & Ride should be provided as part of an overall transport strategy for an area. This is particularly important when serving town centres, where the relationship between parking fees and fares will strongly influence the use of Park & Ride. Bus priority measures need to be provided to ensure that the benefits of bus travel for passengers are maximised. Park & Ride facilities can fulfil a number of different functions as, for example:

- a collection/delivery point for goods bought in town centres
- an interchange for school transport
- an interchange for rural bus services
- a service for town centre workers

8.23 Rail based Park & Ride facilities, in the form of 'parkway' stations, may also be considered in connection with longer rail journeys. Enough parking will need to be provided around the stations to avoid any inappropriate parking in nearby roads. Although these schemes may cause an increase in local car journeys there are potential benefits in terms of:

- reducing long distance car journeys;
- reducing congestion on routes to major town centre stations;
- improving the interchange between bus and rail services.

Policy TP9: **Supporting Park and Ride**

Bus and rail based Park & Ride facilities to serve both town centres and major traffic generators will be provided. Contributions towards the provision of such facilities will be sought from developers.

Walking & Cycling

8.24 On average 25% of journeys in Great Britain are less than a mile long. Walking and cycling are healthy activities that are becoming increasingly popular not just as leisure activities but also for day to day journeys. They can help reduce dependency on the car, particularly for short journeys but also for longer ones when integrated with public transport.

8.25 Life can be made safer and more convenient for pedestrians and cyclists by keeping them away from other road users, by introducing traffic calming and by improved crossing facilities. Facilities for pedestrians and cyclists will be maintained and improved through the Local Transport Plans and the development of local transport strategies. The use of such facilities will be promoted through travel plans.

8.26 Proposals for new development can help to encourage people to walk and cycle by being

designed around good facilities for both means of transport. The aim should be to provide permeable, convenient and safe environments that will encourage walking and cycling facilities to be used. New developments should also complement or enhance existing pedestrian and cycle route networks in the area.

Policy TP10: Facilities for Pedestrians and Cyclists

Facilities for pedestrians and cyclists will be provided and their use promoted. Local authorities should ensure that these are included in the design of all transport projects and other developments. Land should be safeguarded to provide safe and direct pedestrian and cycle routes where necessary.

Development and Access to Primary and Secondary Routes

8.27 Where development, which is expected to generate significant car and goods vehicle movements, is justified it should have good links to the major transport networks to avoid long distance movements on inappropriate routes. It is also important, for safety reasons, that new development avoids a proliferation of new access points onto primary and secondary routes.

Policy TP11: Development and Access to the Primary/Secondary Road Network

Development will not be permitted which involves either the construction of a new access onto the primary or secondary road network or the increased use of an existing access, where a significantly increased risk of crashes or traffic delays would result.

8.28 In deciding the most appropriate location for a development it is important to have a clear understanding of the likely demand for travel that it will generate, existing traffic flows, and the choice of transport proposed to meet the additional demand. The local authorities will expect a Transport Assessment to be carried out for any proposed development large enough to have implications for local transport strategies. A Travel Plan will also be required. The level of detail will depend on the scale of the development but in general the transport assessment will need to show:

- the demand for transport movements associated with the development;
- any investment required for sustainable forms of transport to meet the predicted travel demand;
- the amount of parking to be provided;
- any highway improvements needed before the development can proceed.

Distribution

Rail freight

8.29 As much goods traffic as possible should be transferred to rail because it is more environmentally sustainable and energy efficient than road transport. This is especially relevant to the use of the Channel Tunnel for rail freight. It is unlikely that Kent's road network could be improved sufficiently to handle the growth in transport movements expected during the Plan period, which makes rail vitally important in the movement of goods.

8.30 Transfer of freight from road to rail will be encouraged, through schemes that provide additional rail freight capacity, improve road/rail interchanges and directly serve major development sites, unless there are overriding planning or environmental constraints. Better rail freight access to ports in Kent and Medway would benefit road freight. This is dealt with more fully under Policies TP20-22. The priorities for major investment in rail infrastructure in Kent and Medway are identified under Policies TP3/TP4.

8.31 The rail freight network in Kent and Medway has a number of routes which currently attract little or no freight movements. Increased use of these routes will be encouraged. Completion of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link, will remove Eurostar trains and some domestic services from the existing rail network, making more slots available for freight.

Policy TP12: **Rail Freight and Handling Facilities**

Development which will encourage the transfer of freight from road to rail, including the development of freight handling facilities, will be permitted unless there is overriding conflict with other planning and environmental considerations. If necessary, conditions will be imposed on planning permissions in order to maximise the amount of non-road borne freight movements.

8.32 Land adjacent to railway stations, former goods yards, railheads and marshalling yards may come under pressure to be used in other ways once it is no longer required for railway use. Such sites, though, may have an important role in broader transport terms, for example:

- to enable better integration between rail and other modes of transport such as by providing bus stops/shelters, car parking, taxi ranks, or cycle parking;
- for development that could benefit from direct access to the rail network;
- to improve adjacent rail stations;
- to provide new passing loops;
- for new stations.

8.33 It is therefore important to retain this land for future transport use rather than losing it to other forms of development even if there are no immediate proposals for its use. Any proposals for temporary uses would need to demonstrate that the potential for future transport use is not jeopardised.

Policy TP13: **Safeguarding of Railway Land for Transport Purposes**

Land used formerly for the railways will be safeguarded from development which would preclude its future use to meet an identified transport need.

Road Freight

8.34 While rail has the potential to take some international freight away from the County's roads, road haulage will continue to be predominant as it tends to be a more flexible and economic method of freight movement. An efficient road freight industry is essential for the UK's economy and competitiveness, to meet day to day needs and to service the workplace. The Freight Transport Association (FTA) has developed its 'Delivering the Goods' initiative to promote environmentally sensitive, economic and efficient deliveries of goods in towns and cities. Kent County Council and Medway Council support the work of the FTA and seek to reduce the impact of lorries in sensitive urban and rural areas. This includes attempting to prevent " rat running".

Policy TP14: **Development Traffic & Heavy Goods Vehicles**

Development which generates significant increases in traffic, especially heavy goods vehicles will not be permitted if it is not well related to the primary and secondary road network, or if it would result in an increased risk of crashes or significant traffic delays.

Kent County Council and Medway Council will:

- **identify and signpost lorry routes so as to direct heavy goods vehicles away from rural and residential areas;**
- **work with others to achieve distribution of goods by sustainable means in the urban areas in Kent.**

8.35 Local transport strategies aim to provide a co-ordinated approach to transport planning. They should deliver a balanced and efficient transport system that offers a wider choice of transport and meets future needs while avoiding unacceptable damage to the environment. District authorities in partnership with the highway authority, transport providers and local businesses, should develop these strategies in consultation with the local community.

8.36 The aims of the local transport strategies will be to:

- address the transport needs of both rural and urban areas;

- ensure that major developments are served by a choice of transport;
- minimise the need to travel and encourage alternatives to the private car;
- require transport assessments and travel plans to be submitted for major workplace, education, health care , leisure and other community developments;
- improve bus facilities and services by introducing, for example bus priority measures, interchanges and quality bus partnerships;
- encourage improvement in the capacity, use and quality of the rail network including the provision of new stations;
- provide Park and Ride facilities;
- provide for pedestrians, cyclists, those with impaired mobility, powered two wheelers and taxis;
- manage parking controls effectively;
- manage traffic speed by measures which include traffic calming, 'home' and 20mph zones and the Quiet Lanes concept;
- improve the local highway network;
- make efficient use of the local highway network through traffic management, signing, width and weight restrictions and the use of high occupancy lanes;
- establish freight quality partnerships to improve the efficiency and sustainability of goods deliveries;
- introduce measures to tackle congestion;
- reverse deterioration of air quality caused by road traffic, especially in declared Air Quality Action Plan areas;
- consult on elements within the strategy and market and promote the schemes introduced.

Policy TP15: **Local Transport Strategies**

Local transport strategies for urban and rural areas will be promoted in accordance with the transport policies of this Plan and the Local Transport Plans for Kent and Medway. The prioritisation of investment in urban areas will have regard to the regional hubs and interchanges identified in the Regional Transport Strategy.

Minor Roads

8.37 The existing and planned networks of Motorways & Trunk Roads, Primary Routes and Secondary Routes are shown in maps TP1 to TP3 The majority of through traffic will be guided onto these routes. Traffic movement should be kept to a minimum outside the main transport corridors and traffic management measures will be used to guide traffic onto the most appropriate routes. Improving and maintaining the main transport corridors to a high standard should reduce the need for traffic to use minor roads except for access and leisure purposes.

Policy TP16: **Traffic and Minor Roads**

Through traffic, particularly goods vehicles, will be discouraged from travelling on minor roads by the use of traffic management measures, regulatory measures, the control of development and freight quality partnerships.

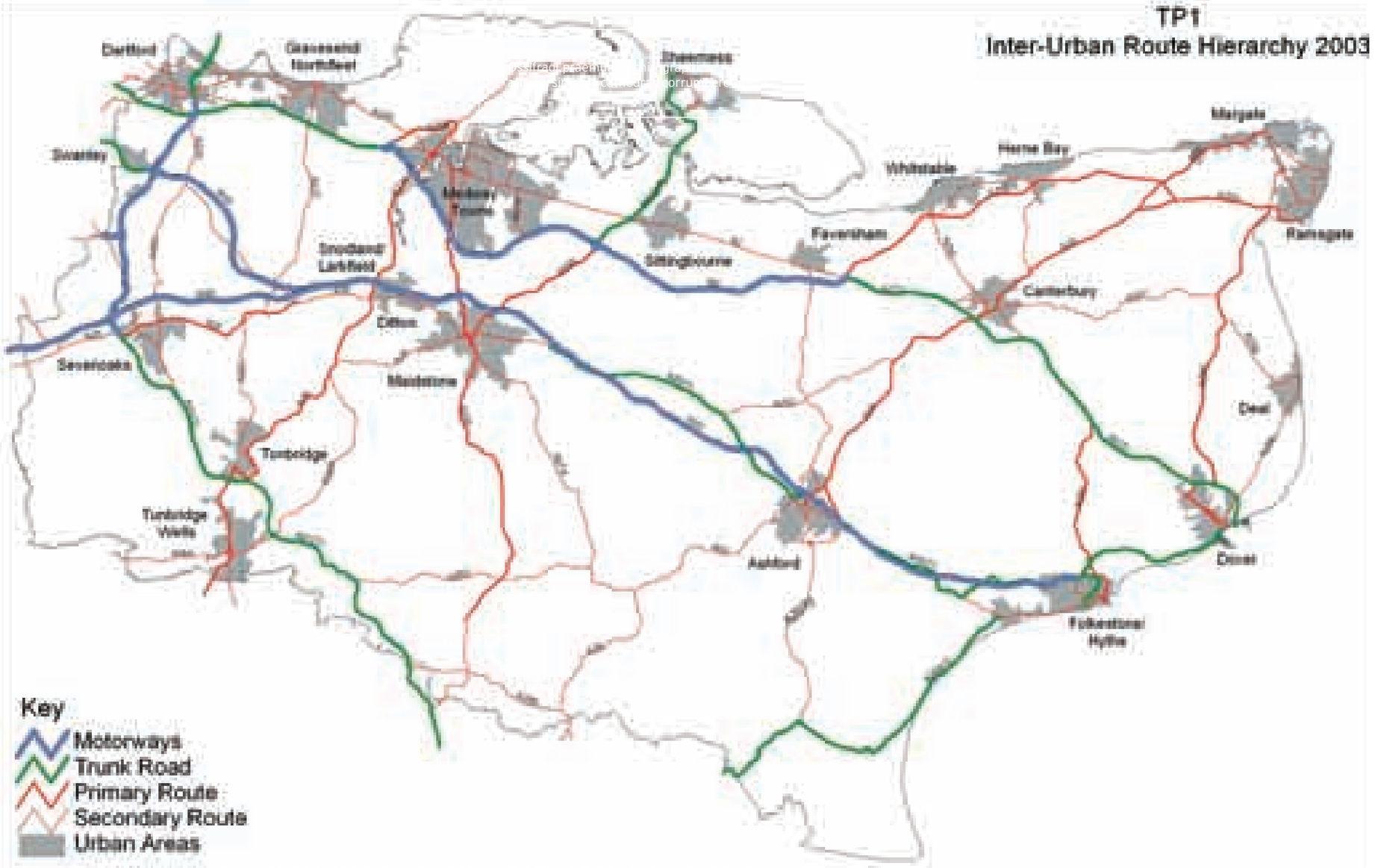
8.38 It is important to ensure that the use of minor roads through, and between, settlements is safe and compatible with the local environment. Improving minor roads by widening and straightening them would encourage non-essential traffic to use them and result in faster vehicle speeds and worsening road safety, particularly for cyclists and pedestrians. Such improvements can also harm the landscape and conservation interests. Traffic management measures on the other hand can improve the quality of the environment, if they are designed sympathetically.

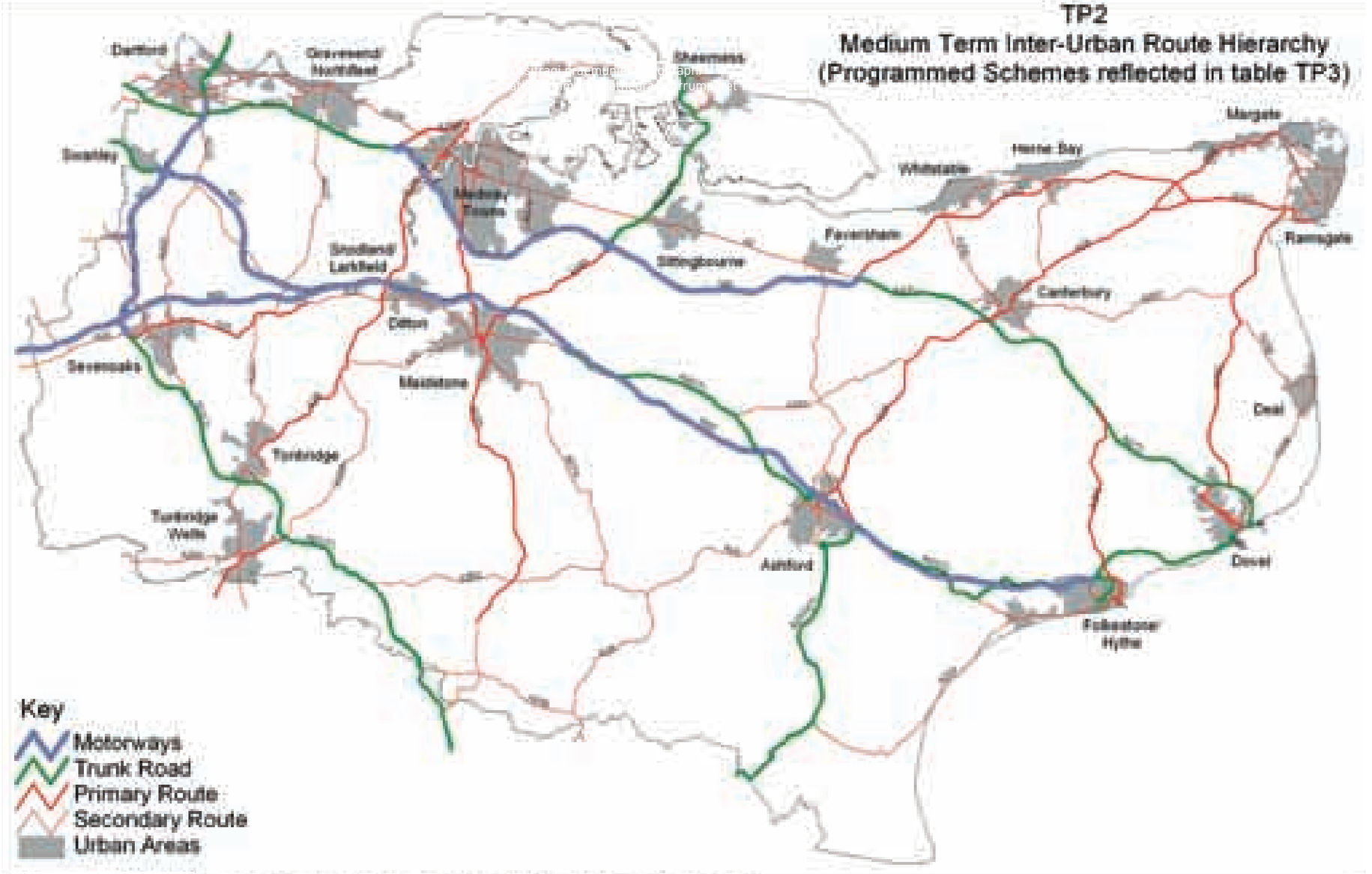
Policy TP17: **Management of Minor Roads**

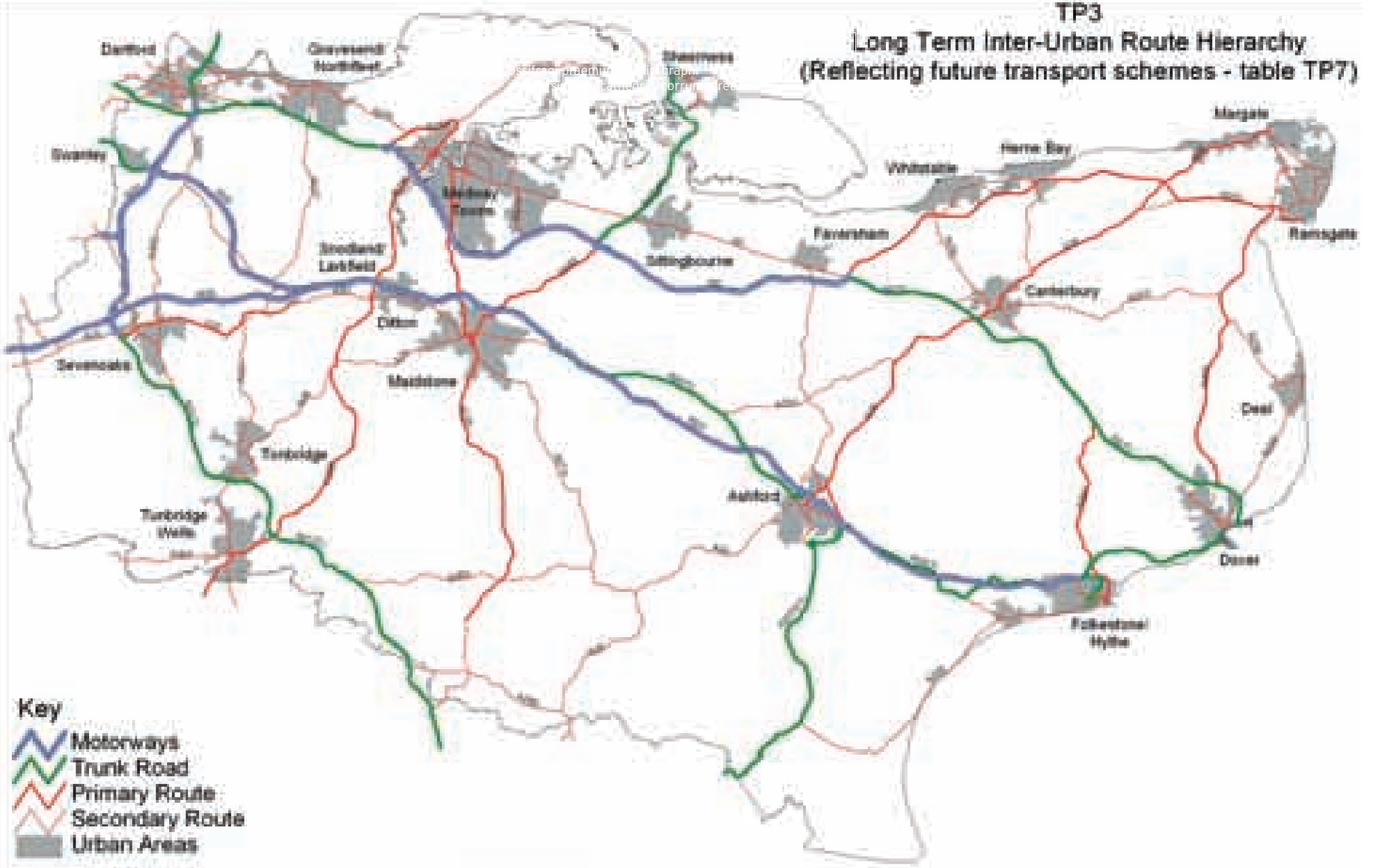
Minor roads will not be widened or realigned unless overriding safety considerations require it and no alternative method to resolve the safety problems is deemed practicable.

Roadside Services

8.39 Suitable facilities should be provided to allow lorry and car drivers and their passengers to rest and take refreshments. Such facilities enable drivers to break their journey and reduce the risk of accidents. They are best located along the motorways, trunk roads and primary route network, which cater for







longer distance traffic. They help to deter through traffic from diverting onto local routes in search of facilities. Because of their potential impact on the environment, facilities should be limited to a scale, which is necessary to meet the needs of drivers and passengers - more extensive commercial ventures in the open countryside should be avoided. Justification for such schemes will depend on a number of factors including whether or not there are existing facilities along the route and whether or not there is scope to upgrade existing facilities rather than develop greenfield sites.

Policy TP18: **Roadside Services**

Facilities and services for road users will be permitted on the motorway, trunk road and primary route network only where a demonstrable need can be established and there is no overriding conflict with other planning and environmental considerations.

Parking

8.40 The strategy within this Plan is to reduce the need for people to travel by car which should, in turn, reduce the need for on-site parking. The availability, or otherwise, of parking at either end of a journey has a significant influence on the choice of transport used. Managing the supply of parking can encourage people to choose alternative means of transport, but those alternatives must be available. Reducing the amount of parking available without providing people with an alternative can result in inappropriate parking in nearby roads and may adversely affect local businesses.

8.41 Both Kent County Council and Medway Council have adopted maximum standards for parking which cover different categories of land use. These constitute Supplementary Planning Guidance to Policy TP19. The guidance will be regularly reviewed to take account of any changes in circumstances. Local standards for individual town centres which consider both transport implications and town centre viability may be agreed with the district authority. In some cases it may be appropriate for car parking to be provided away from the site as part of publicly provided parking space or in conjunction with a Park & Ride scheme (see Policy TP9).

Policy TP19: **Vehicle Parking Standards**

Development proposals must comply with the respective vehicle parking policies and standards adopted by Kent County Council and Medway Council.

Kent's Ports

8.42 The Channel ports and Channel Tunnel perform a vital gateway function to allow the movement of goods and people in and out of the country. As well as these main facilities, the small wharves and ports around the Kent coast also provide employment and support a range of valuable functions from the import and export of raw materials through to commercial fishing and marine leisure. The continuing prosperity of Kent's ports is important nationally and regionally but also to individual towns and to the county as a whole.

Employment in Kent's ports

- About 9000 direct jobs in port and air transport ;
- 3000-4000 jobs in three main deep sea ports of Thamesport, Sheerness and Chatham
- Those employed in supplier business or supported by the expenditure of the industry's workforce and travellers using the ports are more numerous:
  - Dover alone could support more than 12,000 such jobs
  - Indirect employment is more widely dispersed in the county but with concentrations at the ports

8.43 Some ports have the opportunity to expand but others are constrained by being close to a built-up area or, in some cases areas of environmental or landscape importance. Good quality access to the primary road and rail networks is critical to the future success of Kent's ports and to their development. However, port traffic places substantial pressure on the county's transport system. The rapid growth in international traffic, has increased the amount of congestion on Kent's trunk and primary roads and has had impacts on the environment

throughout the county. If activity at the ports is to be promoted it must be done in a way that does not harm the economic, social and environmental fabric of the county.

8.44 The Structure Plan strategy toward the ports includes the following elements:

- Qualified support for the expansion of international traffic, where it is supported by improvements in the road and rail network (within and beyond Kent) which are able to reduce congestion and encourage more traffic movements by rail;
- Support for the development of short sea shipping services as an alternative to land transport and greater use of the Thames and the Medway for moving freight and materials;
- International traffic through Kent being accommodated within the major international arteries (A2/M2, A20/M20, the CTRL and existing rail routes);
- Support for the parallel cross-channel options provided by the Channel Tunnel and the ports in order to allow choice, competition, safety, flexibility, job opportunities and a spreading of the pressure on the transport network;
- Recognition of how important Kent and Medway's major deep sea ports are and support for the right standard of road and rail access to serve them;
- Support for proposals for port expansion to be assessed against criteria that includes economic, social and environmental impacts and the need to encourage freight traffic to move from road onto rail;
- Redevelopment for other uses at ports and smaller wharves where port operations are no longer viable or where transport access is inadequate, carried out in partnership with the port owners and local planning authorities;
- Support for proposals to produce energy from renewable sources such as wind power as long as these do not harm the environment or conflict with port functions (see Policy NR2);
- If the need for a second fixed Cross Channel link is demonstrated, any proposal should encourage a substantial switch of traffic from road to rail and not jeopardise the choice of cross Channel modes, meet environmental criteria and minimise the impact on the county's roads.

The Major Ports

8.45 The major ports are:

- **Dover** – The UK's principal ferry port with substantial freight, car, coach and cruise activities could expand within the confines of the existing port, with the greatest potential lying within the Western Docks. The rail link into the Western Docks needs to be reinstated and there is a need to improve access to the Eastern Docks by upgrading of the A2 Lydden-Dover to dual carriageway standard and improved traffic management on the A20 Townwall Street.

- **Channel Tunnel** – Now carries significant volumes of cars and freight on its shuttles. Eurostar and international rail freight services also use the Tunnel, although the amount of rail freight carried is disappointing. The Tunnel still has considerable potential to encourage a transfer of freight from road to rail and this would be helped by increased capacity around London and better service quality.
- **Thamesport** –The fourth largest container port in the country with the opportunity for further landward expansion and port development subject to the protection of nature conservation interests. Further development at the port depends on improved road links via the A228 and increased rail link capacity.
- **Sheerness** – The largest UK port for break bulk fresh produce, Sheerness has substantial opportunities to intensify port related activity within existing boundaries and, if required, to expand onto nearby industrial areas. There are important nature conservation areas adjacent to the port. The Second Swale Crossing will significantly improve road access to Sheppey but improved rail access is needed to increase the amount of freight carried in this way.
- **Ramsgate** – The existing port is substantially underused with only freight services to Ostend, but Ramsgate now enjoys much better road access and traffic flows to and from the port increased to around 125,000 lorries during 2002. There is scope for the port to reintroduce ferry services and to create facilities that take into account the expanding role of Manston Airport.
- **Thames Europort** – Roll-on/roll-off services currently sail from the port at Dartford to Zeebrugge, Vlissingen and Dunkerque. The port has potential for development although this is limited to the confines of the existing site. The port may ultimately relocate and allow the existing site to become part of the Crossways Business Park.
- **Chatham** – The port has scope for new development within its existing site.
- **Folkestone** – The existing port is small and there are currently no cross-Channel passenger or freight services operating from it. There are, though, proposals to regenerate the port area, to include mixed-use development that will diversify the range of land uses.

8.46 Under the terms of its franchise Eurotunnel submitted a feasibility study for a second fixed link at the end of 1999. It is unlikely that proposals will be brought forward before 2010 as there is still spare capacity in the existing link but the long time scale needed to design and construct a new fixed link, may mean proposals being brought forward within the timescale of this Structure Plan.

Policy TP20: **Gateway Function of the Ports**

The role of the following ports as deep water and/ or gateways to Europe will be protected and enhanced:

- **Dover**
- **Channel Tunnel**
- **Medway Ports, including Sheerness and Thamesport**
- **Ramsgate.**

At the 'core' ports of Dover, Sheerness, Thamesport and Ramsgate, the priority will be to safeguard the port function.

Proposals for development which will enable the growth of trade at Kent and Medway ports and wharves will be supported provided that:

- **any measures required by the development to improve local access by road and rail are brought forward as part of the proposals;**
- **the proposals maximise the potential for passenger and freight traffic to be accommodated by rail;**
- **the proposals achieve a high standard of design; and**
- **there are no overriding adverse economic, social and environmental impacts.**

Deep water frontage in the Thames Estuary will be safeguarded for port or port related uses where good surface access by road, and preferably by rail, exists or can be readily provided. Elsewhere proposals which will assist the diversification of trade, port operations or land uses will normally be supported.

Policy TP21: **Channel Tunnel Capacity and Second Fixed Link**

Improvements to the capacity of the Channel Tunnel and to the loading gauge and capacity of the Channel Tunnel rail routes will be supported.

In the event of a second fixed cross-Channel link being proposed, the local planning authorities will consider the economic, transport, social and environmental impacts of such a proposal. A proposal that substantially increases congestion on the County's road network will not be supported.

Policy TP22: **Kent and Medway Ports**

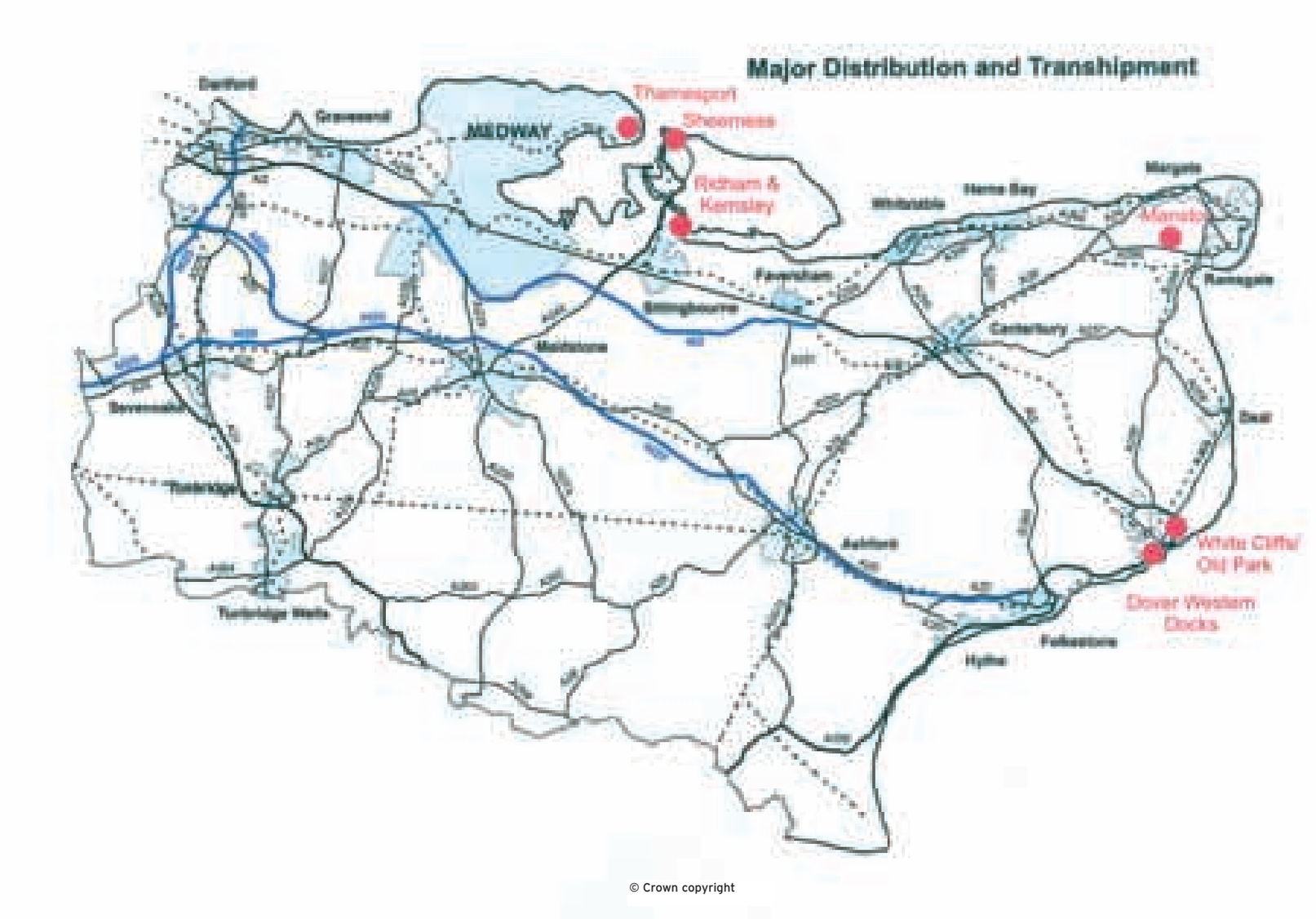
- **Provision will be made for development which will enable growth of freight and passenger traffic through the port of Dover. Any such development, outside of the existing harbour walls, will be subject to the reinstatement of the rail link to the Western Docks to enable a significant proportion of freight to reach the port by rail;**
- **At Thamesport further expansion of the port will be encouraged within existing port confines and through inland expansion at Grain subject to improvements to the capacity of the rail access to the port and improvements to the A228;**
- **At the Port of Sheerness expansion should involve intensification of port use within existing port confines or expansion onto nearby land designated for commercial use. Development that further expands the port will be subject to the availability of, and opportunity for, improved transhipment and rail access and the completion of the A249 Second Swale Crossing scheme;**
- **At the Port of Ramsgate proposals should assist the growth of port trade and not compromise its role as a major gateway port. However within the area of the Royal Harbour, diversification will be supported subject to the overriding need to protect the historic character of the area;**
- **At Thames Europort redevelopment of the port for other land uses will be supported;**
- **At the Port of Folkestone, mixed use development which will assist in the regeneration of central Folkestone will be supported. This could include leisure and business uses as well as some retention of port and fishing activities; and**
- **On the Thames and Medway in North Kent, key deep water wharves will be retained and a programme of investment in modern facilities, rail access and good highway linkages will be pursued. A programme of rationalisation and restructuring of the wharves will be carried forward as part of the Thames Gateway initiative.**

Major distribution and transhipment centres

8.47 Kent is a favoured location for distribution companies handling international goods and serving the major London market. Handling of such freight efficiently is important to the economy as whole. The Ports White Paper and Regional Planning Guidance for the South East together provide criteria for the development of major freight distribution and transhipment uses. This includes making best use of existing infrastructure, encouraging the movement of freight by rail and developing inter-modal interchange facilities.

8.48 The 1996 Kent Structure Plan supported the development of major distribution and transhipment facilities at five locations. Each of these sites meets the criteria set out in national and regional policy, but only Dover has proceeded. Support is maintained for these locations as follows:

- **Sheerness (Isle of Sheppey) and north of Sittingbourne**, on land with rail connections, where distribution uses linked to the wharves and ports could be developed;
- **Grain (Thamesport)**, where there is ample land with rail connection for distribution uses linked to the container port;
- **Dover**, on inland sites where development is proceeding to serve the port;
- **Manston**, where land adjacent to the airport could be used for storage and transhipment serving air and sea transport.



8.49 There is concern that an inland road-rail interchange serving cross-Channel traffic such as the site previously proposed at Ashford (Sevington) could encourage freight to travel by road by reducing the viability of rail freight. This reflects the fact that rail freight is currently at a severe disadvantage because train loads have to be assembled in North London (Willesden). The location of such interchanges outside urban areas may also conflict with strategic policies to protect the countryside and this will need to be weighed against the need for the development. There will need to be firm evidence that the rail facilities at such sites will be used.

Policy TP23: **Major distribution and transhipment centres**

Proposals which encourage the transfer of freight from road to rail, or between road and air or sea, which are designed and landscaped to a high standard, will be supported at the following locations:

- **on the Isle of Sheppey (Sheerness) and north of Sittingbourne (Ridham and Kemsley area) subject to the completion of the A249 second Swale crossing scheme;**
- **serving Thamesport on the Isle of Grain, subject to improvements to the A228 and to rail access;**
- **at Dover on allocated employment land to provide inland freight facilities for the port;**
- **at Dover through extension of the Dover Western Docks to provide a road-rail freight interchange, subject to economic and environmental considerations;**
- **at Manston Airport.**

The provision of an inland road-rail facility to serve the Channel Tunnel, or a major new distribution and transhipment centre elsewhere in Kent, will be permitted only where:

- **the site is easily accessible to the trunk road system and served by rail sidings and/or water;**
- **strong evidence is provided that the proposal is necessary and viable, and will reduce the overall volume of freight traffic carried by roads in Kent;**
- **there are no significant adverse effects on the local economy, countryside character or environment.**

The long-term use of the rail facility as an integral part of the operation of the site should be secured.

Kent's Airports and Airfields

8.50 The past 50 years has seen a dramatic increase in the amount of air travel for business and leisure. Good air links are important to businesses, providing access to new markets and attracting investment. Many of the UK's major airports are reaching their capacity and a forthcoming Government White Paper on airports policy will set out how growth is to be accommodated over the next 30 years including the scale and pattern of additional airport capacity needed in the South East. This Plan assumes that the Government does not select a major airport at Cliffe in North Kent as its choice for future expansion of airport capacity.

8.51 While there are social and economic benefits associated with expanding air services and while regional airports can promote regeneration, environmental and community interests must be safeguarded.

London (Manston)

8.52 Manston Airport in Thanet has the potential to develop into a regional airport and become one of the largest single generators of economic activity within the county. It could handle between four and six million passengers per annum (mppa) by 2021 (comparable to the amount of passengers using Luton Airport in 2000) and up to 400,000 tonnes of freight per annum by 2015, subject to the development of terminal facilities, warehousing and apron space. In the longer term, there may be potential for passenger numbers to grow to 10 mppa. The future growth of Manston depends upon its ability to attract passengers from the major London airports and to capture new markets. Its expansion will have a significant impact on East Kent's economy, labour market, transport needs and urban development. It is important to ensure that the airport's growth does not have an unacceptable impact on the environment or on the quality of life of residents. Detailed proposals for expansion should therefore address:

- Surface access. Strategic road access to/from the west is good, but the local road network will need


© London (Manston) Airport

to be improved to address potential congestion. The growth of the airport should be underpinned by the development of a choice of travel modes for both passengers and employees. An essential part of the process will be the phased improvement of public transport links to the airport. The airport will need a direct rail link once it reaches a critical mass in order to minimise congestion on the wider road network.

- Noise impact - Noise is likely to be a very important issue for communities living near flight paths. The control of noise and the introduction of mitigation measures will be essential to ensure there is no significant impact on local amenity.
- Air quality - Expansion of Manston Airport will have an effect on local and regional air quality because of the increase in both air and road traffic. Air quality will need to be monitored and mitigation measures will need to be put in place to protect the local environment.

Lydd

8.53 The airport at Lydd plays an important part in serving local business needs and providing opportunities for recreational flying. The future development of Lydd Airport should focus on enhancing its existing facilities (including terminal and runway improvements). This will improve the airport's ability to cater for general aviation and passenger traffic and capture scheduled and charter business. Development proposals will be assessed for their impact on the surrounding environment and local communities, how appropriate proposed mitigation measures are and the choice of transport options providing access to the airport.

Headcorn

8.54 The potential for further development at Headcorn is constrained by its location within a sensitive environment. However, Headcorn has an important role to play in meeting business and general aviation needs particularly for recreational flying and related activities and there is potential to consolidate and improve existing facilities.

Rochester

8.55 The general aviation and business role of Rochester is to be safeguarded. There is an opportunity to improve existing facilities at the airport. Proposals for development will be assessed against their impact upon the surrounding environment, landscape and local communities.

Policy TP24: **Manston Airport**

The development of Manston Airport into a regional airport with a capacity of up to 6 million passengers per annum by 2021 will be supported. Proposals related to the development of the airport will be assessed for acceptability against the following criteria:

- **development being directly related to the operation of the airport unless otherwise forming part of a proposal in a Local Development Document; and**
- **no significant detrimental impact on internationally, nationally or locally designated environmental areas; and**
- **no significant adverse impact on the amenity of local communities which cannot be satisfactorily mitigated; and**
- **appropriate measures being secured to mitigate the impact of development including noise control, air pollution, water pollution, landscape and habitat management; and**
- **the requirements for surface access being adequately accommodated within the capacity of the existing or committed local transport network; and**
- **measures being identified and secured to improve access by public transport modes including the provision of a direct rail link when the capacity of the airport reaches 4 million passengers per annum.**

Policy TP25: **Lydd Airport**

The expansion of general aviation at Lydd Airport will be supported. Proposals related to the development of the airport will be assessed against the following criteria:

- **the impact upon the surrounding environment, landscape and local settlements;**
- **the economic and employment advantages;**
- **access from the main centres of population and the availability of a choice of transport modes; and**
- **the existence of suitably located alternative flying facilities.**

Policy TP26: **Other Airports and Airfields**

Proposals for the development of new facilities for commercial and recreational flying at existing airfields will be permitted only where they do not have an unacceptable adverse economic, social and environmental impact on the local and wider community.