Kent and Medway Structure Plan
mapping out the future

Working Paper 5

Kent Ports

September 2003

Medway COUNCIL

Kent County Council

KENT AND MEDWAY STRUCTURE PLAN

Working Paper 5
Kent Ports

Contents

KENT AND MEDWAY STRUCTURE PLAN

KENT PORTS

1. INTRODUCTION

For the purposes of this paper these are defined as the ports of Dover, Thamesport, Sheerness, Thames Europort, Ramsgate, Folkestone and Chatham. Individual wharves on the Thames and Medway estuaries and small ports such as Whitstable are not covered.

2. NATIONAL POLICY

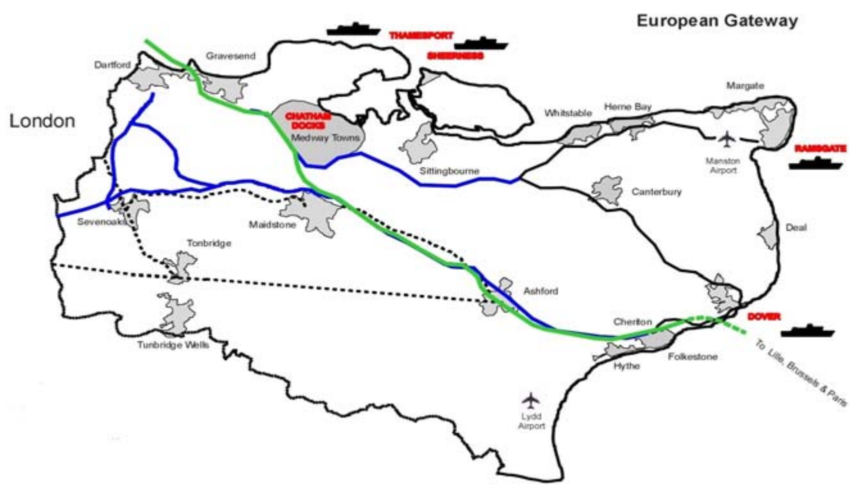
2.1 The Government's ports policy paper, *Modern Ports* (November 2000) sets out the Government's commitment to create successful, safe and sustainable ports which are fully integrated into the transport system.

2.2 Among the implications of the policy are:

- an emphasis on improving the efficiency of existing port and distribution facilities;
- the potential role of ports as distribution centres using rail as well as road connections;
- a strategy to promote the use of major freight interchanges;
- support for sustainable projects to improve port capacity where a clear need is demonstrated;
- imperative reasons for development must be demonstrated at sensitive sites; and
- an integrated approach to inland transport with an objective of improving access by rail and inland waterways

3. REGIONAL POLICY

3.1 Existing regional policy for ports is set out in RPG9 and in SEERA's draft Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) 2003. The RTS ports policies aim to maintain and encourage the Kent Gateway ports of Dover, Channel Tunnel, Ramsgate and the Medway ports through infrastructure proposals. The development of short sea shipping connections is also advocated in the draft RTS.



4. TRAFFIC TRENDS: Cross-Channel Passengers

Ferry/Shuttle

4.1 Table 1 shows passenger flows through the Kent Ports/Eurotunnel (excluding Eurostar) compared to the total passing through all the South/South Eastern ports and with the South/South Eastern/Eastern ports:

4.2 After 1993, the last full year before the Channel Tunnel opened, the total number of passengers using Kent ports rose to a peak in 1998; 55% above the 1993 level. The abolition of duty and tax-free allowances in July 1999 and subsequent fare increases has meant that passenger traffic has since fallen (21% between 1998 and 2002). Recent figures suggested that passenger flows are growing slightly again.

4.3 Kent's market share over the period 1993-2000 also peaked at 86-87% of the total for the South and South-East ports, and 79-80% of the total South, South-East and East Coast ports. Since then, market share has reduced, largely due to the abolition of duty free.

Table 1: Passenger Flows: Kent Ports & Channel Tunnel and South /South East and South/ South East with East Ports 1993-2002 (million passengers per annum-mppa)

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Total Kent (million)	**21.1**	**24.0**	**25.7**	**29.3**	**32.5**	**32.6**	**29.9**	**27.3**	**25.8**	**25.6**
Total South & SE *	27.9	30.0	31.7	35.7	37.7	37.9	34.2	31.7	32.7	32.1
Kent Proportion (%)	**76**	**80**	**81**	**82**	**86**	**86**	**87**	**86**	**79**	**80**
Total South, South East, East Coast **	31.4	33.4	35.1	38.8	40.8	40.8	37.2	34.7	34.9	35.4
Kent Proportion (%)	**67**	**72**	**73**	**76**	**80**	**80**	**80**	**79**	**74**	**72**

Sources: Focus on Ports – DETR/DfT and KCC (Kent Ports Liaison Group (KPLG))

* South/South East: Medway - Plymouth
** East Coast: Tyne – Harwich

4.4. Table 2 shows the distribution of cross-Channel passengers amongst the Kent ports and the Channel Tunnel since 1993, the first full year before the Tunnel was opened.

Table 2: Distribution of Cross-Channel Passengers: Kent ports (mppa)

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Dover	18.5	19.1	17.9	18.8	21.2	19.3	18.3	16.2	16.0	16.4
Tunnel Shuttle	-	0.3	4.9	8.9	9.2	13.1	11.8	10.5	9.7	9.0
Ramsgate	1.9	3.5	2.8	2.7	1.8	-	-	-	-	-
Folkestone	0.8	0.9	0.7	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.6	0.4	-	-
Sheerness	0.7	0.2	0.08	0.08	-	-	-		-	-

Sources: Focus on Ports – DETR; DTLR/DfT and KCC (KPLG) Data

4.5 Since Eurotunnel's passenger shuttles started in December 1994, the Channel Tunnel has captured some 35% of the total Tunnel and Dover traffic in 2002, although since 1998 Eurotunnel has transported almost 50% of the cars. In 2002, around five million cars and 220,000 coaches were carried across the Channel via the Tunnel and Dover.

4.6 Due to the intense competition between Eurotunnel and the ports, there are now no passenger car ferries from Sheerness, Ramsgate and Folkestone.

Eurostar

4.7 Eurostar trains carried 6.6 million passengers in 2002, although these are more in competition with air services than with the ferries/shuttle.

5. TRAFFIC TRENDS: Cross-Channel Freight

5.1 Table 3 shows the trends of ro-ro freight crossing the Channel between 1990 and 1999, comparing volumes through Kent compared to total volume in the UK.

Table 3: Ferry/Shuttle Ro-ro Traffic: Kent ports compared to total UK (million tonnes per annum)

Year	1990	1993	1999	2000	2001	2002
Kent Ports/Tunnel	1.152	1.316	2.545	2.873	3.075	3.210m
TOTAL Ports including Tunnel	3.837	4.327	6.553	6.902	7.194	
Kent Proportion (%)	30	30	39	42	43	

Source: Focus on Ports – DETR. Maritime Statistics 2001-DTLR

Notes:

Includes road goods vehicles and unaccompanied trailers
Kent proportion for 2000, road goods vehicles only = 65%

5.2 These figures indicate the significant increase in the number (167%) and the proportion of HGVs attracted to Kent since the Channel Tunnel opened in 1994.

5.3 Dover (1.85m) and the Channel Tunnel (1.23m) carry significantly more ro-ro freight than other ports in the country - Felixstowe (0.445m) and London (0.345m) are the next biggest (2000 figures).

5.4 The distribution of ro-ro traffic amongst the Kent ports and Eurotunnel since 1993 is shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Distribution of ro-ro traffic: Kent ports (million tonnes per annum)

Year	1993	1995	1997	1999	2000	2001	2002
Dover	1.10	1.06	1.60	1.67	1.62	1.77	1.85
Channel Tunnel	-	0.37	0.27	0.84	1.13	1.20	1.23
Ramsgate	0.22	0.24	0.12	0.06	0.08	0.13	0.13
Folkestone	-	-	0.02	0.04	0.04	0.01	-

Source: KCC (KPLG) Data

Note:
Thames Europort in Dartford is included as part of the Port of London. In 1999, Thames Europort carried 173,000 freight units.

5.5 Since freight shuttles started in June 1994, the Channel Tunnel has captured 40%of the total Dover/Tunnel market (2001). In November 1996 a fire which closed the freight service until July 1997 significantly affected flows in 1996/97.

Railfreight

5.6 Railfreight through the Tunnel started in June 1994 and grew to a peak of over 3.1m tonnes in 1998. Since then growth has been stagnant in 1999 and 2000 (around 2.9m tonnes), but in November 2001, problems with illegal immigrants attempting to board trains disrupted the services so that the flow fell to some 2.4m tonnes for 2001 and 1.5m tonnes in 2002. These volumes are most disappointing, given that forecasts before the Tunnel opened were for 6m tonnes initially and for growth in future years. The reason for the shortfall prior to the illegal immigration problem was service quality and reliability on both sides of the Channel and the highly competitive rates, coupled with security and flexibility offered by the road haulage sector. Flows of railfreight have partially recovered since but it will take some time before levels approach the pre 2001 figures.

5.7 In terms of market share, railfreight has declined steadily since 1997 as its growth has levelled off, whilst freight carried on the Shuttle and through the Kent ports has increased significantly. Comparing the tonnage carried by rail with that on the Shuttle/Kent ferries (assuming 12 tonnes per HGV unit), market share has declined from 11.7% in 1996 to 6.2% in 2001 and 3.7% in 2002.

6. TRAFFIC TRENDS: Medway Ports

6.1 It is difficult to get trend data for the individual Medway ports, although total tonnage set out in Table 5 for all the Medway ports shows very little change since 1990:

Table 5: Tonnage through Medway Ports 1990 – 2002 (million tonnes per annum)

Year	1990	1995	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Million tonnes	13.6	14.2	15.5	14.0	15.3	14.8	14.8

Source: Focus on Ports – DETR; Maritime Statistics 2001 - DTLR

6.2 In 1999 the Medway ports handled (by commodity):

4.4 million tonnes of container traffic (320,000 units)

2.2 million tonnes of minerals
2.2 million tonnes of coal/coke
1.6 million tonnes of aggregates
1.5 million tonnes of forest products
1.1 million tonnes of petroleum/gas
382,000 trade cars

6.3 The main ports within the Medway grouping are:

Sheerness - the main products carried through Sheerness are forest products, fresh produce and trade cars. In 2002, Sheerness handled some 540,000 tonnes of forest products, 818,000 tonnes of fruit and 460,000 trade cars.

Thamesport - started in 1990 and has achieved steady growth to 320,000 container units in 1999, with a market share of 7%, compared to 138,000 units in 1993 (4%). The current owners of Thamesport do not release information on throughput.

6.4 Both Sheerness and Thamesport are rail connected but, while rail traffic to and from Sheerness is currently negligible, rail modal share at Thamesport is around the 15% level.

7. ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION OF THE PORTS

7.1 The 1987 Kent Impact Study forecast that there would be net losses of employment in the cross Channel industry as a result of competition between ferries and the Channel Tunnel, and other factors such as simplified administration of international freight. These losses could be balanced by longer-term gains in a wide range of economic activity stimulated by the improved accessibility offered by the Tunnel and the completed motorway network.

7.2 In the event, traffic through Dover remains much higher than forecast partly because of stronger competition for trade from the rationalised ferry services, but also because the volume of traffic using the combined Kent routes is larger than forecast, for both passengers and freight vehicles.

7.3 Table 6 shows that there were losses in direct ferry industry employment from the peak in 1991 to 1998 of over 3,000 jobs, and these were partly balanced by the gain in Eurotunnel jobs. However, with the continuing growth of freight traffic and the introduction of new ferries, direct employment has increased at Dover. The combined Eurotunnel and ferry employment is now similar to the level of employment provided by the ports alone in 1994 when the Tunnel began operations:

Table 6: Change in Cross Channel Direct Employment

	1987	1991	1993	1998	2000/02
Ports	8,400	8,300	7,075	5,250	6,709 [1]
Tunnel	-	-	-	1,890	1,429 [2]
Total	8,400	8,300	7,075	7,140	8,138

Source: Transport Operators

1: Dover only: 2000: Arup
2: December 2002: Eurotunnel

7.4 Productivity in the industry has increased markedly. Compared to 1987, nearly twice the cross Channel passenger volume and three times the freight volume are handled in Kent, with a reduced work force.

7.5 There is also a much wider economic benefit to Kent from cross Channel transport than the jobs provided by the ferry and port operators, and those working directly in the industry. A number of employment sectors are linked to the port industry as a whole. Employment in these activities that are dependent on the ports, as opposed to domestic trade, is difficult to measure without in-depth survey; for example a haulier will derive some custom from international traffic and the remainder from serving the UK, particularly the south east and London market. In addition to the jobs in Table 6 above provided directly at Dover, Arup have estimated the total employment in Kent attributable to ferry traffic through Dover as up to 24,000 jobs if the following are included:

3,000 jobs in supplier businesses
3,600 jobs in local services supported by expenditure
6,000 – 10,000 jobs created by visitor's spending

7.6 Official data suggests that in 2001 sea and coastal transport, cargo handling and other water transport activity provided nearly 1,400 jobs.[1] Previous Kent CC estimates relating to the early/mid 1990's of the wider employment contribution of the three main deep sea ports of Thamesport, Sheerness and Chatham, including supplier businesses, linkages and multiplier, suggested between 3,000 and 4,000 jobs in Kent.

7.7 Airports in Kent employ small numbers at present. Official data suggest aviation as whole employed only 121 in Kent in 1998 but there have been recent increases at Manston.

7.8 The contribution to Kent jobs from international transport can therefore be summarised as follows:

- There are now about 9,000 people employed directly in port and air transport in Kent

- Those employed in supplier businesses, 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. For the industry as a whole, they are dispersed widely throughout the County but with concentrations at the ports.

- Distribution (other than retail) and warehousing is dispersed in Kent, but is locally more important at accessible points such as Ashford, Maidstone and Sevenoaks rather than at the ports. However, without the influence of the ports, employment in this sector would probably be below the national average. There was growth of nearly 2,000 jobs 1995-2001 or 4.7%, the same rate as nationally.

- Growth in hotel and catering employment of 15,200 1995-2001 (51%) was well above the national rate of increase and was in part due to the construction of new hotels on the main transport network. in Kent. Growth was particularly rapid at Ashford and Dartford, rather than the port towns. Although international travel helped the exceptional growth in this sector in Kent, it was underpinned by buoyant domestic conditions in this period.

7.9 In 1998 about £550 million was spent by cross-Channel car and coach travellers through Kent, but £420m of this was gained by France and Belgium, and the Calais area in

[1] Annual Business Inquiry 2001

particular. The County lost about £55m spending by Kent residents to France, and the net benefit of cross Channel spending flows in Kent was therefore not great.

7.10 A subsequent survey funded by Interreg suggests higher values based on all spending including petrol (£746m spent in total of which only £600m was spent in France).

7.11 As yet there is no strong evidence that the relative advantage given to the southern parts of Kent by the completion of the M20 and the Channel Tunnel has diverted development from other parts of the County or elsewhere.

7.12 Increased productivity trends suggest that there may not be major gains in direct employment in the ports sector, even if a ferry solution to long term growth were adopted.

7.13 Relative to traffic volumes a successful airport may deliver more employment. As a working assumption, based on a number of studies, Thanet District Council assumes growth of about 3,500 jobs for a small airport of about 1m passenger volume and strong freight traffic.

7.14 Kent could gain employment in haulage, distribution and tourism from increased international traffic, but success is uncertain. Kent has not benefited as much as might have been expected in these sectors to date.

8. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 Appendix 1 to this paper explores the planning constraints and opportunities for expansion in relation to the main ports of Kent and Medway. Each port has been assessed against the following criteria:

- i.) Urban Area i.e. the location of the port in relation to an urban area and the opportunity for further expansion
- ii.) Landscape i.e. the presence of strategically safeguarded landscapes such as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty/Heritage Coast, Special Landscape Areas
- iii.) Biodiversity i.e. the presence of environmentally sensitive areas of national or international significance such as Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Ramsar sites, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- iv.) Agriculture i.e. the proximity to land in agricultural use
- v.) Cultural Heritage i.e. features of historic interest
- vi.) Exposure to Flood Risk
- vii.) Accessibility by Road
- viii.) Accessibility by Rail
- ix.) Existing Development Plan provisions

8.2 The overriding conclusion from this assessment is that the future expansion of Kent and Medway ports is predominantly confined to what can be achieved within their existing boundaries. Most are constrained by their proximity to existing built development within urban areas and in a number of cases the presence of high level environmental and landscape designations. The one exception to this is Thamesport which is not embedded within a principal urban area and occupies a relatively remote location on the Isle of Grain. It has plenty of opportunity for further development being bounded to the north by the former BP Oil Refinery. However, further development at Thamesport could be affected by the presence of SPA, Ramsar and SSSI designations around the site.

8.3 Several of the ports enjoy good road access. Dover, Thames Europort, Ramsgate and Chatham have all benefited from road improvement schemes. In contrast both Sheerness and Thamesport are currently characterised by poor road links, respectively the absence of the Second Swale Crossing and A249 improvements on Sheppey and the need for improvements to the A228/B2001 on the Hoo Peninsula /Isle of Grain. In terms of rail access Thamesport, Sheerness, Chatham and Folkestone each have a direct rail link. Dover (Western Docks) used to have a rail connection but it is now severed. In promoting development at these ports it would be desirable to link this to greater use of existing rail facilities. This may require rail improvements and, in the case of Dover, reconnection to the network.

8.4 Existing local plans provide support for port related development and additionally at Dover (Western Docks), Ramsgate and Folkestone the opportunity for diversification to other uses. In the Minerals Local Plan (Construction Aggregates) Thamesport, Sheerness and Dover are identified as suitable locations for the import/export of aggregates.

8.5 A summary position outlining the development potential of each port assessed is provided below:

Dover

8.6 The Eastern Docks appears limited to development within the existing docks area. The Western Docks have greater scope for new development. Reinstatement of the rail link into the Western Docks would be desirable. There might also be scope for some land reclamation to the west, subject to environmental considerations.

Thamesport

8.7 Significant opportunity for further development but could be affected by proximity of high level environmental (nature conservation) designations. There is a need for improved road links to site and increased capacity for the rail link.

Sheerness

8.8 Good opportunities for further development through intensification of use of land on the Lappel Bank area which is already committed in planning terms for port related development. Further opportunities may be available on nearby land committed for commercial use although undeveloped land immediately adjacent to but outside the port confines is subject to nature conservation constraints. There is a need for improved road and rail access to the Isle of Sheppey to support growth of the port. The Second Swale Crossing and A249 Improvements are firmly programmed (Highways Agency Targeted Programme of Improvements)

Thames Europort

8.9 The port has potential for development although this is limited to within the confines of the existing site which is adjoined by the Crossways Business Park. Should the port function cease or relocate an option would be for the port area to be given over to wider business and distribution use alongside the Crossways development.

Ramsgate

8.10 The existing capacity of the port is substantially underused. There is scope for development through intensification within the existing boundaries of the port, but no scope for lateral expansion as the port is embedded within the Ramgate urban area. The port has much improved road access following completion of the Harbour Access Road. Ramsgate's role as a major gateway port should be safeguarded and proposals for diversification of use should take account of this.

Folkestone

8.11 The existing port is small and substantially underused. There is potential for redevelopment although no scope for further expansion beyond the existing site boundaries.

Chatham

8.12 The existing port has scope for new development within its existing site although there is no further potential for outward expansion. The port enjoys good road and rail access. Growth of the port should be linked to greater use of the rail facility.

9. STRATEGIC CONTEXT - KEY ISSUES

A: The degree to which international traffic is concentrated in Kent and modal choice

9.1. A fundamental question for the Structure Plan is whether the consequences of success of the port of Dover and the Channel Tunnel, both in terms of expansion of facilities and the capacity of the inland transport links, can be accommodated in Kent. There are two broad policy options:

a) To encourage the growth of traffic through the Kent Ports and Channel Tunnel

9.2 Existing policy (Kent Structure Plan 1996) is strongly supportive of increases in port traffic and the expansion of ports. The policies for individual ports state that developments to allow growth of trade will *"normally be permitted"*. This stance derives in part from the *Kent Impact Study* and the *1996 Kent Ports Strategy* and seeks to maximise employment in the ports sector, notably in East Kent.

9.3 A continuation of the current policy stance in the Kent and Medway Structure Plan would have the following elements:

- The need for improved capacity for road and rail infrastructure to enable road and rail traffic to pass freely through the UK and Kent to the Tunnel/ports
- The need for improved capacity for road and rail infrastructure to cater also for future forecast road and rail traffic to pass through the UK and Kent to the Tunnel/ports;
- While rail transport may have a smaller overall environmental impact than road, major rail infrastructure improvements take a long time to conceive and implement and financing them can be more problematic than roads. As it will not be possible to meet increased demand through use of rail in the short term it may be necessary to increase road capacity in the short and medium term.
- Maximise the use of all existing port capacity in Kent and encourage increased traffic.
- Support for the expansion of port operational areas, such as the Western Docks at Dover.

b) To reduce the impact of international traffic on Kent's environment and transport system

9.4 The rapid growth in international traffic through Kent, and the increase in Kent's share of the regional market, have increased peak period congestion on the trunk and primary roads, and generally added to traffic levels and environmental impact throughout the County. This suggests consideration be given to a shift in policy to constrain the growth of international traffic, particularly road freight. Key elements of such an approach might be:

- In line with European Union and national Government policies, to recognise that long distance road freight travel is less sustainable than longer sea journeys. The use of water transport should be therefore maximised.
- A corollary of this is that by limiting road investment the role of Dover/Channel Tunnel, Thamesport and Sheerness should be as ports primarily serving their nearest market in South East region, while ports in other regions serve the remainder of the UK.
- In parallel more of existing freight traffic would be encouraged to shift from road onto rail.
- Increases in the capacity of the Kent ports and the Channel Tunnel would need to be justified in terms of regional demand and against environmental criteria.

Achieving a balanced position?

9.5 There are clearly problems with seeking to influence the route and mode taken by international traffic, and the matter is not for the Structure Plan and Local Transport Plan alone:

- Market forces dictate the mode of freight transport and the route. Decisions will be based on the total cost and reliability of the trip from origin to destination including the time taken. Clearly there is a time advantage to route lorries through Dover/Channel Tunnel, and the much more frequent ferry service on these routes ensures greater flexibility compared to routes via other ports on the South and East Coasts

- The improvements to the capacity of the transport network that would help the Channel Tunnel and the Kent ports to maintain their competitive edge are generally not within the control of Kent and Medway Council. For the major ports, these prospective improvements include :

  (a) Dover
  - rail access, rail loading gauge;
  - A20 Town Wall Street, A2 Lydden – Dover (trunk road schemes

  (b) Channel Tunnel
  - rail loading gauge

  (c) Sheerness
  - Second Swale Crossing;
  - rail terminal, rail loading gauge

  (d) Thamesport*
  - improvements to A228
  - improved rail access

  (e) Dover/Channel Tunnel
  - Operation Stack - provision of an 'overspill' lorry park or other means of avoiding severe congestion in East Kent when parts of the M20 are closed.

  Note:

  *Improvement to the A228, giving access to Thamesport, is an exception in that it would be for Medway Council to promote through its Local Transport Plan.

- Additionally, all ports are pressing for improvements on the A2, M20, M25 (Highways Agency trunk roads) and rail capacity around London, particularly for freight.

- Although improved rail capacity for freight and passengers (including increased loading gauge) would appear to be a common element in both policy options, the ability of rail to accommodate the projected growth in traffic is limited without major new investment. At present, the Strategic Rail Authority does not have the resources to deliver such projects in the short/medium term. Additionally, the *Central Railway* proposals for a new freight route illustrates that rail investment, like roads, can give rise to environmental impact and opposition and even it were to be built, road haulage to the ports would continue to be the predominant transport mode.

9.6 At the same time, it is clear that strategic policy towards international transport through Kent cannot be open-ended. The volume of traffic has an impact on congestion and maintenance on the KCC/Medway maintained road network, even though the majority of traffic travels through Kent on motorways and trunk roads, which are a national responsibility (Highways Agency). There is an impact on the environment of the County from all traffic.

B: Long term capacity for Cross Channel traffic: the Tunnel and Ports

9.7 There is a strong case for maintaining two cross-Channel modes, the Tunnel and ports, in the long term in order to:

- provide choice for passengers and freight
- provide competition to keep tariffs down
- reduce the likelihood of disruption due to strikes, weather, breakdowns etc.
- spread employment opportunities
- spread pressure on transport networks, albeit to a limited extent

9.8 Following an undertaking given to the French and British governments, Eurotunnel submitted a feasibility study for a second fixed link at the end of 1999. The study identified two alternative schemes:
- a single bore two-level road tunnel for light vehicles; and
- a single bore rail tunnel carrying two divided tracks.

9.9 Both options would increase capacity for rail freight - the vehicle option would remove passenger shuttles from the existing tunnels - increasing capacity for rail freight by 13 times existing levels.

9.10 It is most unlikely that proposals will be brought forward by Eurotunnel before 2010. Passenger shuttle traffic has declined since abolition of duty free allowances, Eurostar has spare capacity and there are unused rail freight paths. However, freight shuttle traffic is growing and the Tunnel has achieved a gradual increase in its share of both the passenger and freight markets.

9.11 The long timescale needed to promote, design and construct a new fixed link does mean that proposals may well come forward in the life-time of the Structure Plan, which must therefore set out the strategic planning authorities' policy. There will be a need to consider the economic, transport environmental and social impacts of such a proposal. Improvements to Channel Tunnel capacity should be accompanied by improvements to the loading guage and capacity of Channel Tunnel rail routes and not result in a substantial increase in congestion on the County's road network.

A Strategy for the Structure Plan Review

9.12 In the light of the above, the strategy for the Kent and Medway Structure Plan could have the following elements:

- Qualified support for expansion of international traffic, which must first be supported by improvements in the transport network and support for effective investment on the existing rail network in Kent and beyond to shift traffic from roads;

- Support for measures to unlock bottlenecks in the road and rail network which cause congestion to the existing port and Tunnel capacity;
- In particular, because delivery of rail improvements are likely to have a longer lead time investment in road infrastructure is required to meet immediate needs;
- With completion of the CTRL, Kent will have three major international arteries and considerable pressure on the county from international transport. Therefore in the long term, international traffic through Kent must be accommodated within the capacity of this infrastructure;
- Safeguarding of the port function of the core ports (Dover, Sheerness, Thamesport and including Ramsgate)
- Continued long term support for two cross Channel modes (Tunnel and ports) in the interests of choice, competition, safety and flexibility;
- A policy towards a second fixed cross Channel link that supports a substantial switch from road to rail, does not jeopardise the choice of cross channel modes, and meets environmental criteria;
- Recognition of the importance of the major deep sea ports in Kent and continued support for the provision of a sufficient standard of road and rail access to serve existing port capacity;
- For individual ports, modification of the existing presumption in favour of permitting development in favour of policies which require the assessment of major expansion, against criteria including employment and environmental impacts;
- Safeguarding of key deep water wharfage in the Thames and Medway where good road and rail access is available or can be provided.
- Modification of policies for individual ports and the smaller wharves that place greater emphasis on their redevelopment for other uses if cross Channel services are no longer viable or transport access is inadequate.

Appendix 1: Kent Ports*: Assessment of Planning Constraints and Opportunities*

	Dover	Thamesport	Sheerness	Thames Europort
Relationship with Urban Areas	Landward expansion outside confines of existing Western and Eastern Docks areas constrained by existing built development and physical terrain of Dover. Scope for intensification /redevelopment within Western Docks.	Remote location on the Isle of Grain away from principal urban areas and other settlements. Port is bounded to the north by the former BP oil refinery and to the east by the Grain Power Station.	Landward expansion outside confines of existing port area constrained by existing built development of Sheerness.	Landward expansion outside confines of existing port area constrained by Crossways Business Park development.
Landscape	Eastern Docks bounded by AONB and Heritage Coast designations	North Kent Marshes SLA to west and east of port.	North Kent Marshes SLA south east of Queenborough.	No designations.
Biodiversity	Eastern Docks bounded by SSSI. Also small narrow strip of SSSI to west of Western Docks.	SPA/Ramsar/SSSI surrounding site (extends across Medway).	SPA/Ramsar designation adjoins south west end of Lappel Bank area of port and extends across Medway estuary. SSSI at south end of Lappel Bank.	No designations.
Agricultural Land	None.	None.	None.	None.
Cultural Heritage	Scheduled ancient monuments within Western Docks.	None.	Scheduled Ancient Monuments.	None.
Flood Risk	No risk.	Within Environment Agency indicative tidal flood risk area.	Within Environment Agency indicative tidal flood risk area	Within Environment Agency indicative tidal flood risk area.
Accessibility by Road	A2/A20 trunk roads. Capacity gap on A2 approaches to Dover (Lydden- Dover single carriageway). Also A20 approaches within Dover (A20 Townwall Street)	A228/B2001. A228 Improvements (Main Road – Ropers Lane; Ropers Lane – Grain included in Medway Local Transport Plan.	Second Swale crossing and A249 improvements on Sheppey in Highways Agency Targeted Programme. Completion envisaged 2006	A208. Proximity to the M25 and Dartford River Crossing.
Accessibility by Rail	Rail link into Western Docks disused. No link to Eastern Docks.	Railhead into port but Thamesport/ London rail freight capability improvements required.	Railhead into port but rail freight capability improvements required.	No direct rail link. Railway line and station nearby.
Development Plan Policy	Potential for mixed use development at Western Docks including cruise terminal. Also identified in Minerals Local Plan as site for import/export of aggregates. Commitment to port related development at Old Park (Whitfield) beyond port confines.	Extensive areas of land identified for employment development including expansion of port. Identified in Minerals Local Plan as site for import/export of aggregates.	Lappel Bank area allocated for port use/development. . Scope for intensification within area committed for port related use. Identified in Minerals Local Plan as site for import/export of aggregates.	Support for freight and passenger related development.
Summary	The Eastern Docks appears limited to development within the existing docks area. The Western Docks have greater scope for new development. Reinstatement of the rail link into the Western Docks would be desirable. There might also be scope for some land reclamation to the west subject to environmental considerations.	Significant opportunity for further development but could be affected by environmental designations. Need for improved road links to site and increased capacity of the rail link.	Good opportunities for further development through intensification on the Lappel Bank area already committed to port related use. Further opportunities may be available via nearby land committed for commercial use. Undeveloped land adjacent to but outside the port subject to nature conservation constraints. Need for improved road and rail access to the Isle of Sheppey to support growth of the port.	The port has potential for development although this is limited to the confines of the existing site. Should the port function cease or relocate an option would be for the port area to be given over to wider business or distribution use alongside the Crossways development.

	Ramsgate	Folkestone	Chatham
Relationship with Urban Area	Landward expansion outside confines of existing port area constrained by existing built development of Ramsgate.	Landward expansion outside confines of existing port area constrained by existing built development and regeneration proposals for Folkestone seafront.	Landward expansion outside confines of existing port area constrained by existing and proposed development at Gillingham & Chatham Maritime.
Landscape	No designations.	No designations.	No designations.
Biodiversity	SSSI adjoins port to west and close to SPA/Ramsar/LNR.	No designations.	Bounded by SSSI covering adjoining section of Medway.
Agricultural land	None.	None.	None.
Cultural Heritage	Port adjoins Victorian Royal Harbour.	Conservation area along north side of harbour.	None.
Flood Risk	No risk.	No risk.	Within Environment Agency indicative tidal flood risk area
Accessibility by Road	A253. Recent investment in harbour access road.	A260.	Improved access to strategic road network following recent completion of A278 Medway Towns Northern Relief Road.
Accessibility by Rail	None.	Rail link and harbour station.	Railhead into port.
Development Plan Policy	Support for development within existing port area including diversification to other uses.	Support for development within existing port area including diversification to other uses.	Support for port related development and expansion of commercial port.
Summary	The existing port is substantially underused. There is scope for new development through intensification within the existing boundaries of the port although no scope for lateral expansion beyond the existing site boundaries. The port has much improved road access.	The existing port is small and substantially underused. There is potential for redevelopment although no scope for further expansion beyond the existing site boundaries.	The existing port has further scope for new development within its existing site although there is no further potential for outward expansion. The port enjoys good road and rail access. Growth of the port should be linked to greater use of the rail facility.

Abbreviations:
AONB – Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
SSSI – Site of Special Scientific Interest
SPA – Special Protection Area
SLA – Special Landscape Area

APPENDIX 2

KENT STRUCTURE PLAN 1996: ADOPTED PORTS POLICIES

P1 General

Provision should be made for the early construction of good transport links to the Channel Tunnel and improvement of rail and road access to the Kent ports. Development proposals which will assist the diversification of trade, operations and land use at the Kent ports, will normally be permitted provided there is no overriding conflict with environmental policies.

P2 Second Channel Tunnel

In the event of proposals for a second fixed cross-Channel link or other major works associated with the Tunnel, the local planning authorities will consider the economic, transport and environment impacts of such proposals and will not normally permit such development if it would be detrimental to the open countryside between Ashford and Folkestone.

P5 Dover

Provision will be made for development which will enable growth of trade through the port of Dover. Further reclamation within Dover Harbour will be permitted subject to satisfactory design standards. An inland site for port operational uses, where these cannot be provided for within the harbour, will be acceptable at a location well related to the primary road network, provided that the proposal is consistent with the plan's environmental policies. Suitable alternative uses within Dover Harbour, including commercial and tourist development will be encouraged.

P8 Sheerness/Thamesport

In order to realise the economic potential of the deep water berths at Sheerness and Thamesport, development proposals for the expansion of these ports for cross-Channel and deep sea traffic will be encouraged and will normally be permitted. Provision will be made for improvements to rail access between the ports and the freight routes within Kent, and for improvements to the A249, including a second Swale Crossing, and the A228.

P9 Thames Europort

Development proposals which will assist the growth of trade through the Thames Europort will normally be permitted subject to other planning considerations including the impact on the setting and functioning of the adjoining business park development. Proposals for the provision of a rail access to the port will be supported.

P6 Ramsgate

Development proposals which will assist the expansion of port trade or diversification of Ramsgate's port will be encouraged and assessed in the light of employment benefits, access and environmental considerations.

P7 Folkestone

At the port of Folkestone, development proposals which will normally support the maintenance of cross-Channel services will normally be permitted, subject to other planning considerations. Provision for complementary leisure and business uses in the port area will also be appropriate. If a cross-Channel link cannot be maintained, consideration will be given to comprehensive development of the port area, including leisure and business uses, subject to improved highway access and environmental considerations. The needs of the fishing industry will also be considered.

P10 Small Ports/Wharves

Development proposals for the establishment or expansion of small ports and wharves will normally be permitted subject to adequate provision for access, including linkage to the rail network where practicable, and to other planning considerations, providing there is no overriding conflict with the Plan's environmental policies.