

# Understanding the practicalities of delivering sustainable communities

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# Understanding the practicalities of delivering sustainable communities

- Background - why Ashford? - constraints
- Setting up a delivery partnership (LDV)
- Producing a masterplan for sustainable growth
- A sustainable transport strategy to support the growth plan
- An emerging delivery plan - costs, funding sources - issues to address/lessons learnt



# Ashford - Background



- 4<sup>th</sup> best place to live in the UK - official!
- Location - it has everything
  - Excellent transport connections
  - 37 minutes from central London from 2009
  - In the heart of the garden of England
  - Great prospects for property investment

- .....but its ugly!



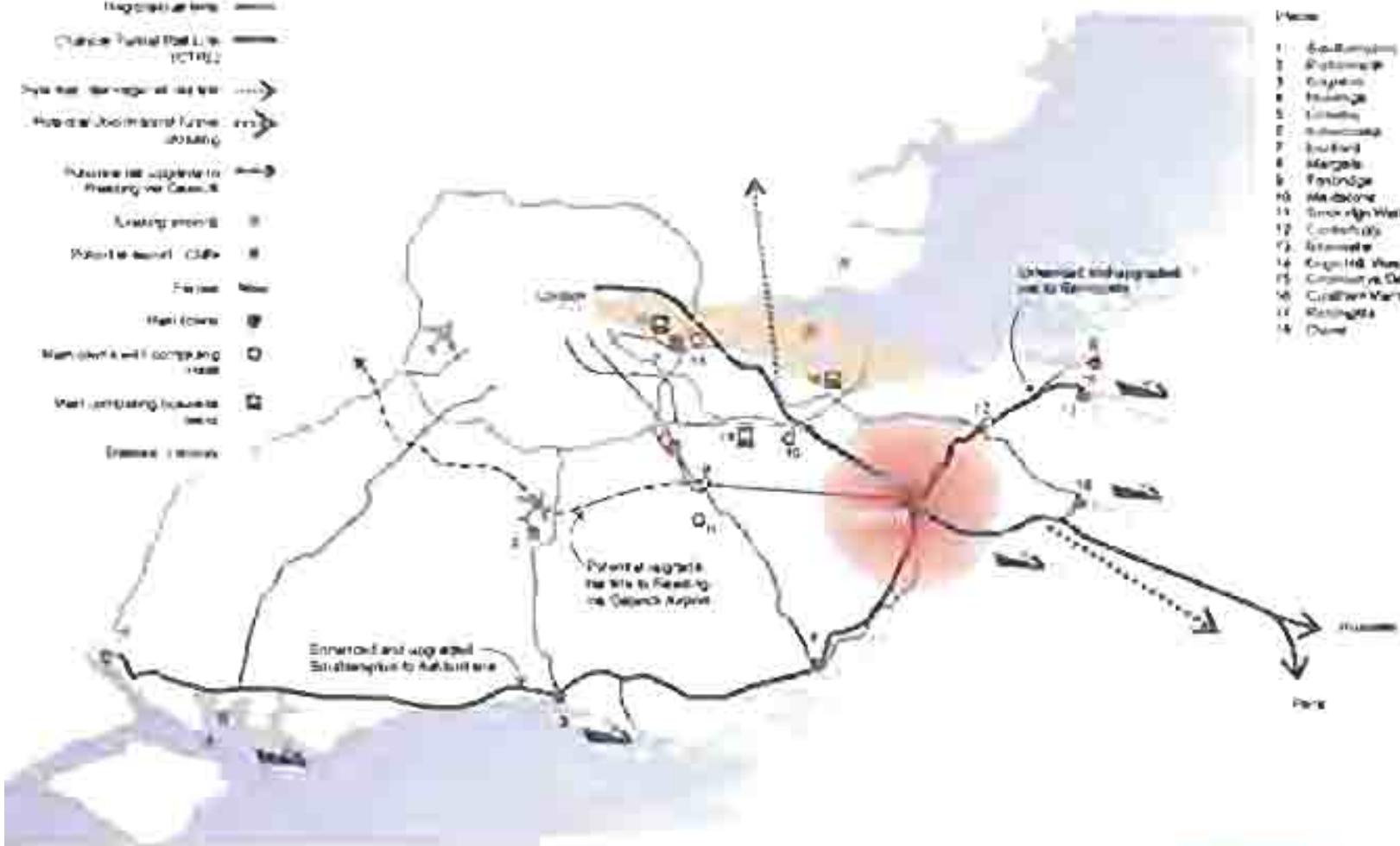
....but there are worse places!



# Regional Context

- Distance
- Main route
- Regional lines
- Chance Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL)
- Cycle route
- Hospital
- Future rail capacity in existing or closed
- Existing airport
- Potential airport (CIP)
- Future
- Main route
- Main route with competing road
- Main competing bus route
- Existing airport

- View
- 1 Southampton
  - 2 Exeter
  - 3 Exeter
  - 4 Exeter
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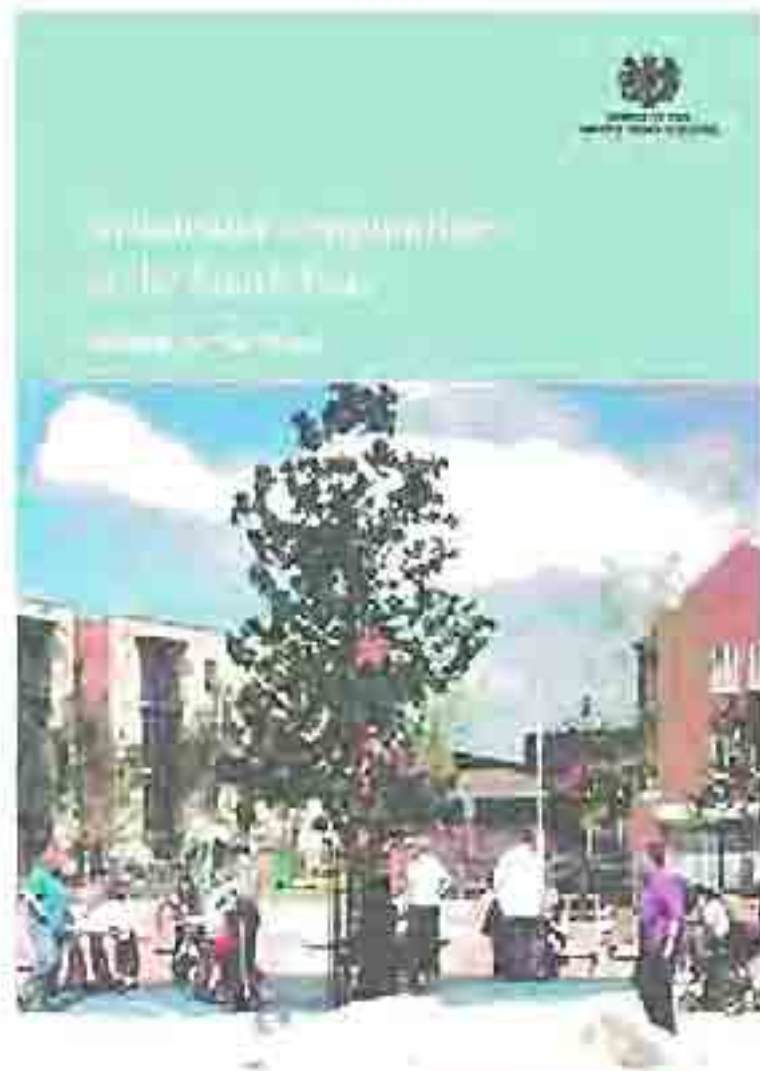
# Environmental Constraints



- AONB
- Flood plain
- Transport corridors
- Quality of town centre
- Fractured distribution of housing areas







# Headline Figures



## Scenario B: Mixed Urban Consolidation/Growth Strategy

### The numbers

	2001- 2006	2006- 2011	2011- 2016	2016- 2021	2021- 2026	2026- 2031
Housing Growth (cumulative)	3,200	7,925	13,050	18,540	24,750	30,780
<i>(annual average)</i>	640	945	1,025	1,098	1,242	1,206
Employment Growth	1,755	5,895	10,305	15,660	21,420	27,810
<i>(annual average)</i>	351	828	882	1,071	1,152	1,278

Current population of Ashford town is 54,000



# The Sustainable Communities Plan

## Benefits:

- Government funding
  - ODPM Growth area fund
  - Community Infrastructure Fund
- Partnership Board/Team
  - Dedicated to the growth agenda

## Enabling:

- A 30 year Masterplan
  - Implications for infrastructure
    - transport/water/energy
    - social/education/health etc
- Co-ordination of delivery
  - Not just a housing/jobs plan
    - community building
    - environmental improvements
    - sustainability





# Ashford's Future

## Interim Delivery Plan (2003 - 2006)

Submission by the  
Ashford's Future  
Delivery Board, a  
Partnership of:

Ashford Borough Council  
English Partnerships  
Environment Agency  
Government Office for the  
South East  
Housing Corporation  
Kent County Council  
Office of the Deputy  
Prime Minister  
South East England  
Development Agency  
South East England  
Regional Assembly

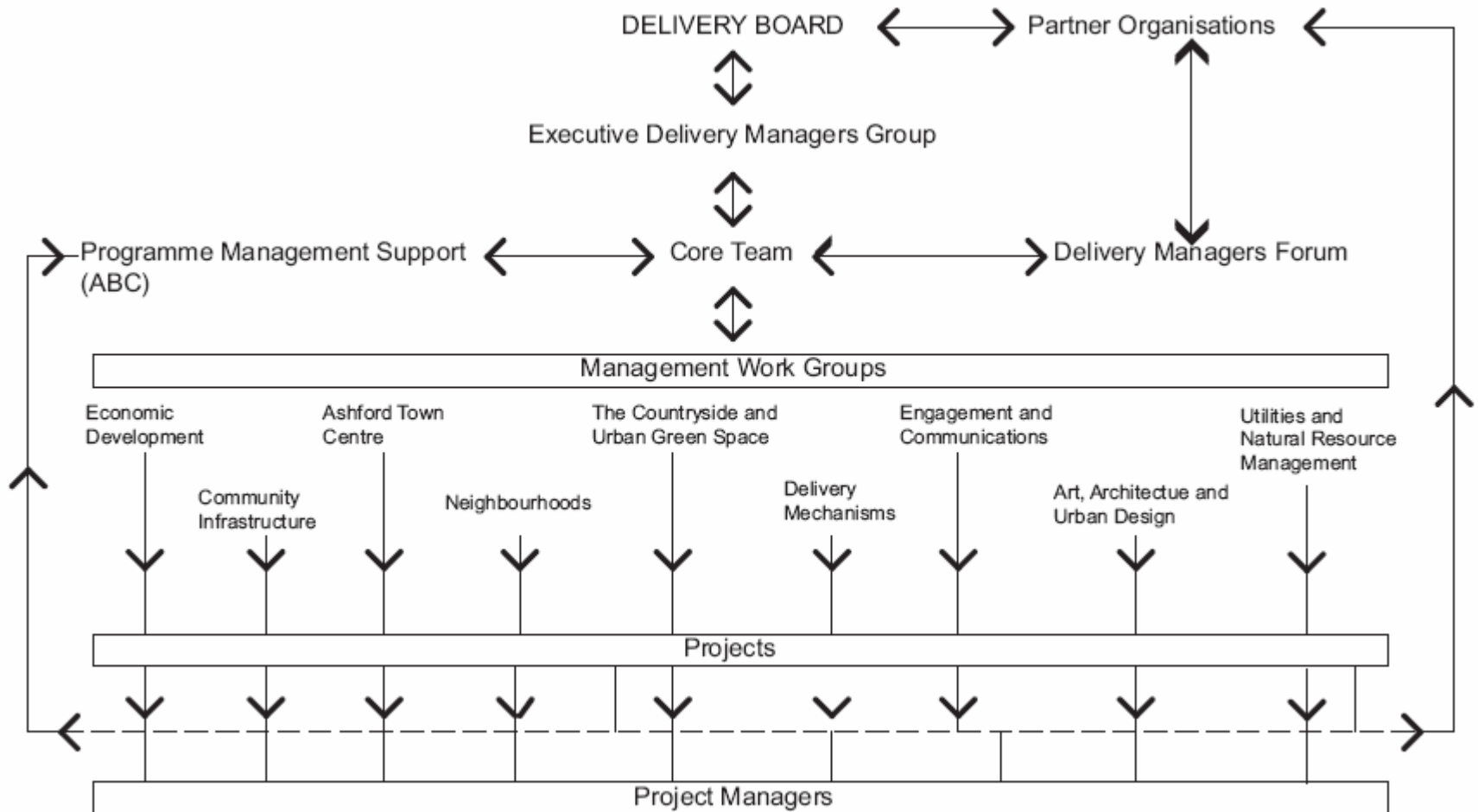


# Ashford's Future Delivery Board

- Ashford Borough Council
- SEEDA
- Government Office for the South East
- South East England Regional Assembly
- Private Sector Representative
- Kent County Council
- English Partnerships
- Housing Corporation
- Environment Agency
- ODPM
- Learning and Skills Council
- Highways Agency



# Ashford's Future Delivery Structure



# Ashford's Future Partnership Issues/lessons learnt

- Must agree corporate objectives - adequate resources
- Need for team players prepared to challenge or move away from own policies
- Need to get the partnership message through - 'organisation wide'



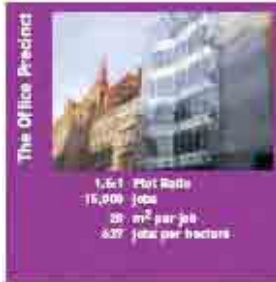
# The Ashford Masterplan

## Developing a Strategic Growth Model

### Growth tiles

Living Quarters

Employment Environment



Placing tiles on the grid map



Making Neighbourhoods



# Masterplan Growth Options

- Dispersed model
  - Suburban neighbourhoods/greatest land take
  - Unlikely to support major public transport
- Urban village model
  - Urban villages with district centres/medium land take
  - Less likely to support major public transport
- Compact model
  - High level mixed use development/build on town centre
  - Supports a linear major public transport scheme
  - Issues for the flood plain



# Stakeholder workshops



# GAME BOARD 3 COMPACT

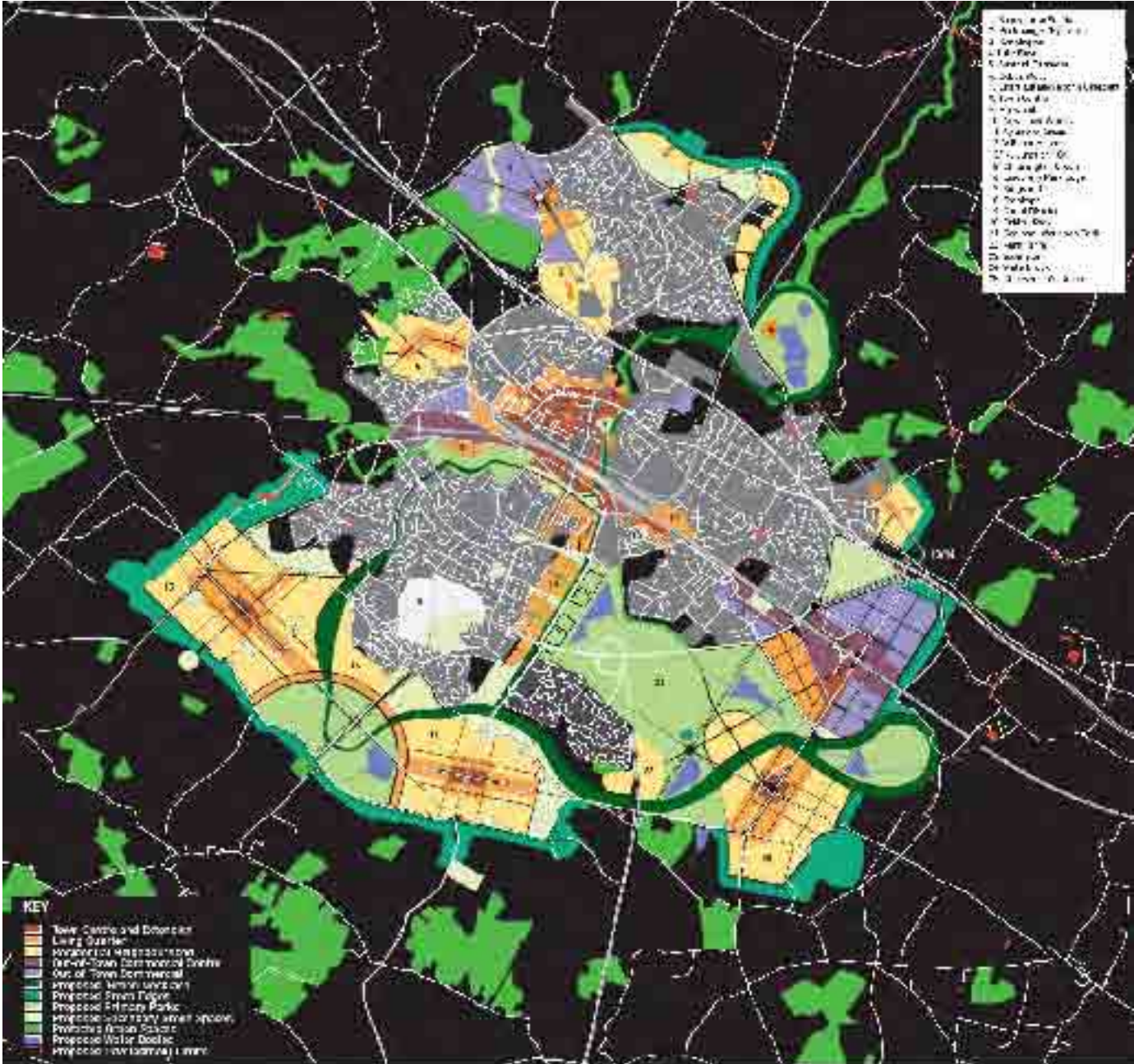


# Structuring neighbourhoods.



# Ashford's Future Masterplan

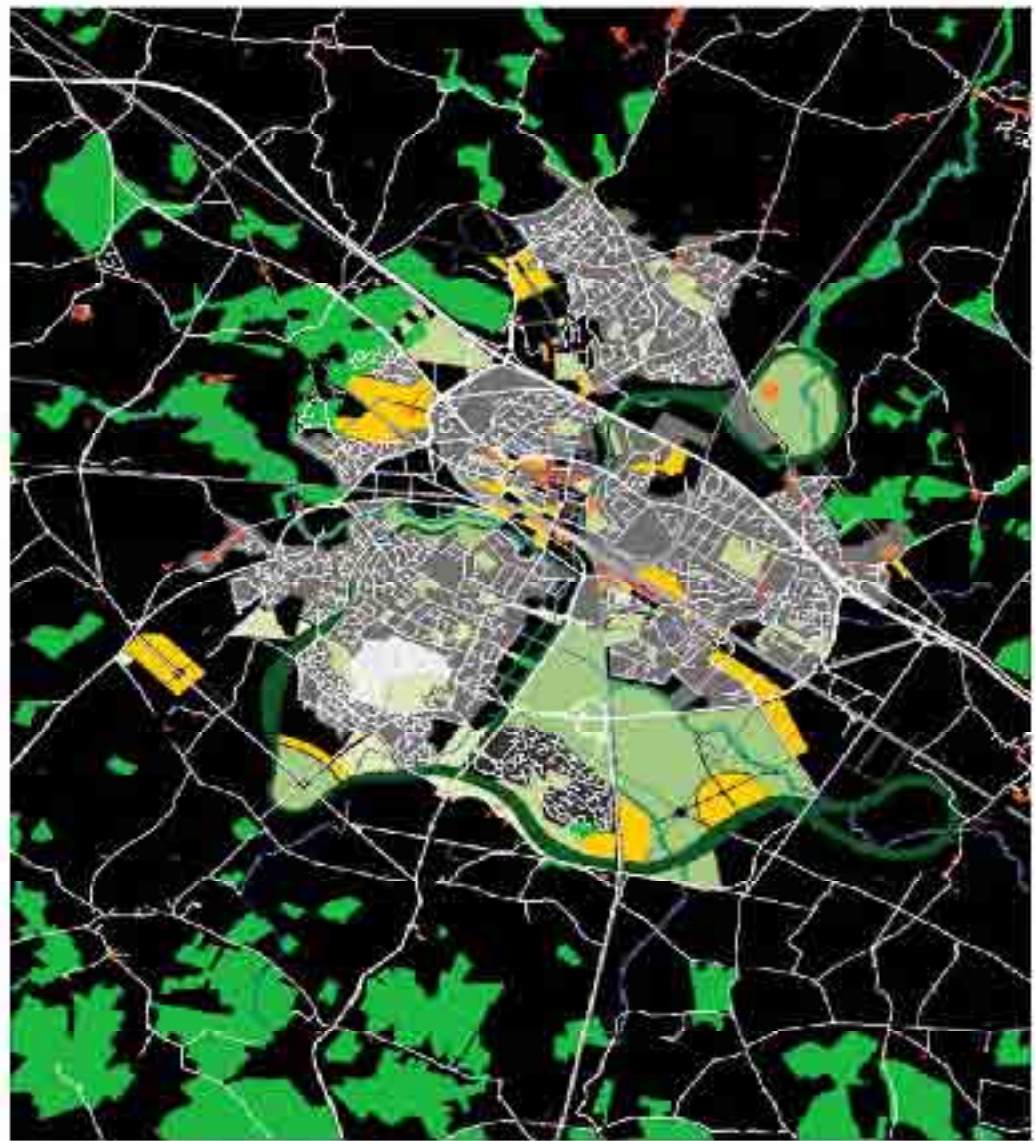
## Preferred Strategic Growth option 2031



# Ashford Masterplan/LDF

## Phase 1 2001-2011

- 9,070 dwellings and 7,000 jobs
- Allocated areas (e.g Singleton, Park Farm extension, Barracks) - 3,250 dwellings
- Town centre - 1,000 dwellings
- 'Mend before you extend' - focus on existing urban areas



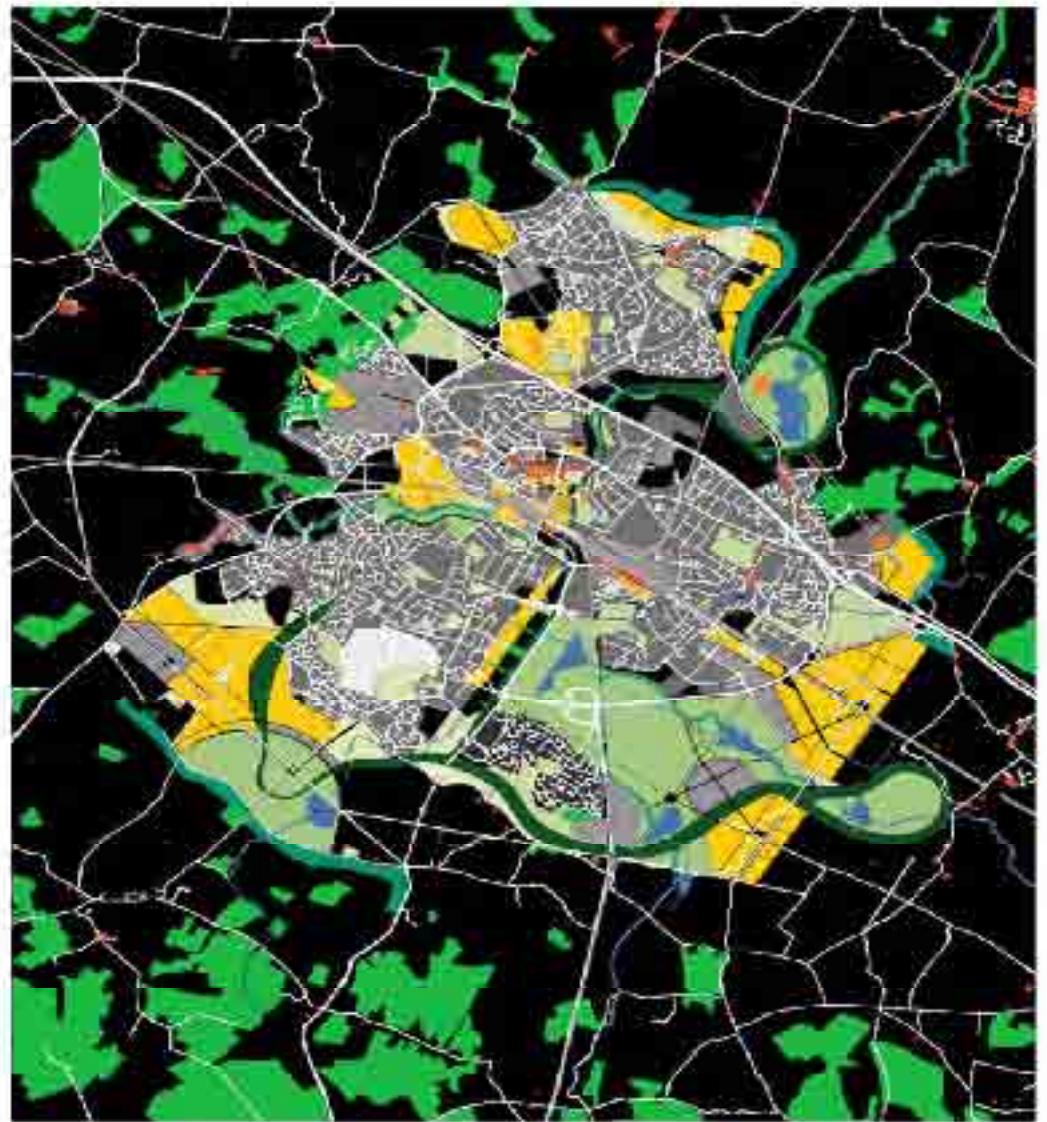
Ashford Local Development Framework: Core Strategy Options report

Phase 1 development 2001 - 2011



# Ashford Masterplan/LDF

Phase 2 2011-2021

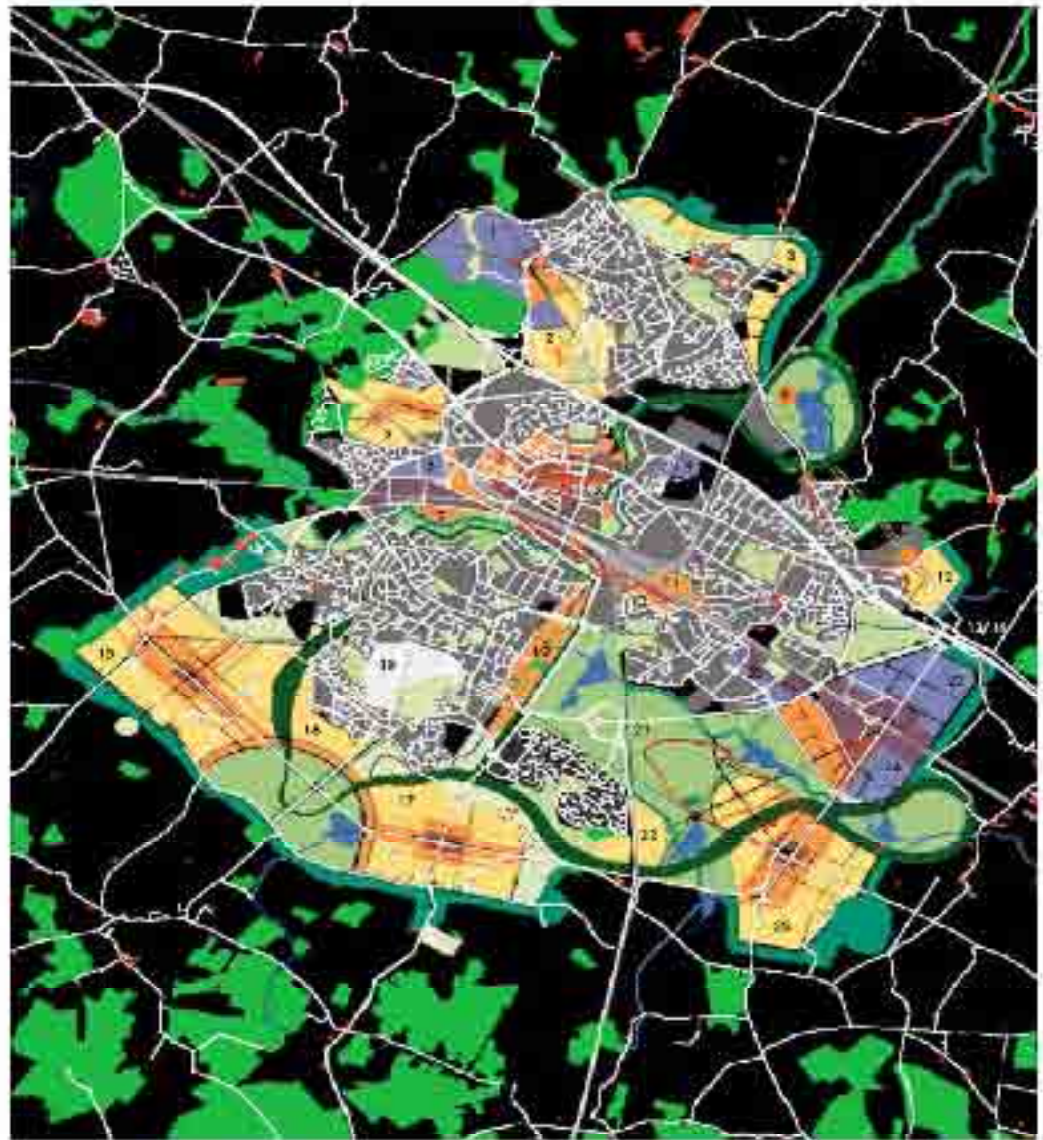


Ashford Local Development Framework: Core Strategy Options report

Phase II development 2011 - 2021



Ashford Masterplan  
Phase 3 2021-2031  
Beyond LDF



Greater Ashford Development framework 2001 - 2031



# Masterplanning

## - issues/lessons learnt

- Take account of existing commitments - current Local Plan
- Political issues - plan (and its phasing) needs to be flexible
- Need to consult widely and regularly update
  - Stakeholders
  - Landowners/developers
  - Public
- Fixing the plan - changes affect the timescales/process



# Developing a Sustainable Transport Strategy to support the Masterplan

Testing the Masterplan and informing it

- Strategic model to maximise the potential use of public transport, walking and cycling
- Highway needs model (Saturn), to test the highway network and motorway junctions
- Town Centre model (Vissim), to test options for the ring road and parking strategy
- Need for co-ordination team and interaction between masterplanners and transport planners



# Building a 'Sustainable Community'

## What does it mean for local transport?

- Compact development option – high level of intervention
  - Town Centre - high density + mixed use
    - Ring road reconfiguration – encourage walking
    - Control Car Parking – parking strategy
  - Urban villages – mixed use – 10 mins. walk to centre
    - Community facilities - reduce travel demand
    - Public transport, Park and ride, cycling
- Existing Ashford is surrounded by villages/rural area
  - Need to recognise that car use will still be important
- Need to reduce car trips to and from town rather than stop people owning cars



# Transport - Modal Share Targets

<b>Mode</b>	<b>2003 (base)</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2031</b>
Car	65	60	57	55
Public Transport	4	8	10	12
Cycle	3	4	5	5
Walk	28	28	28	28

\*source RPS Core Strategy Preferred Options Transport Assessment – August 05

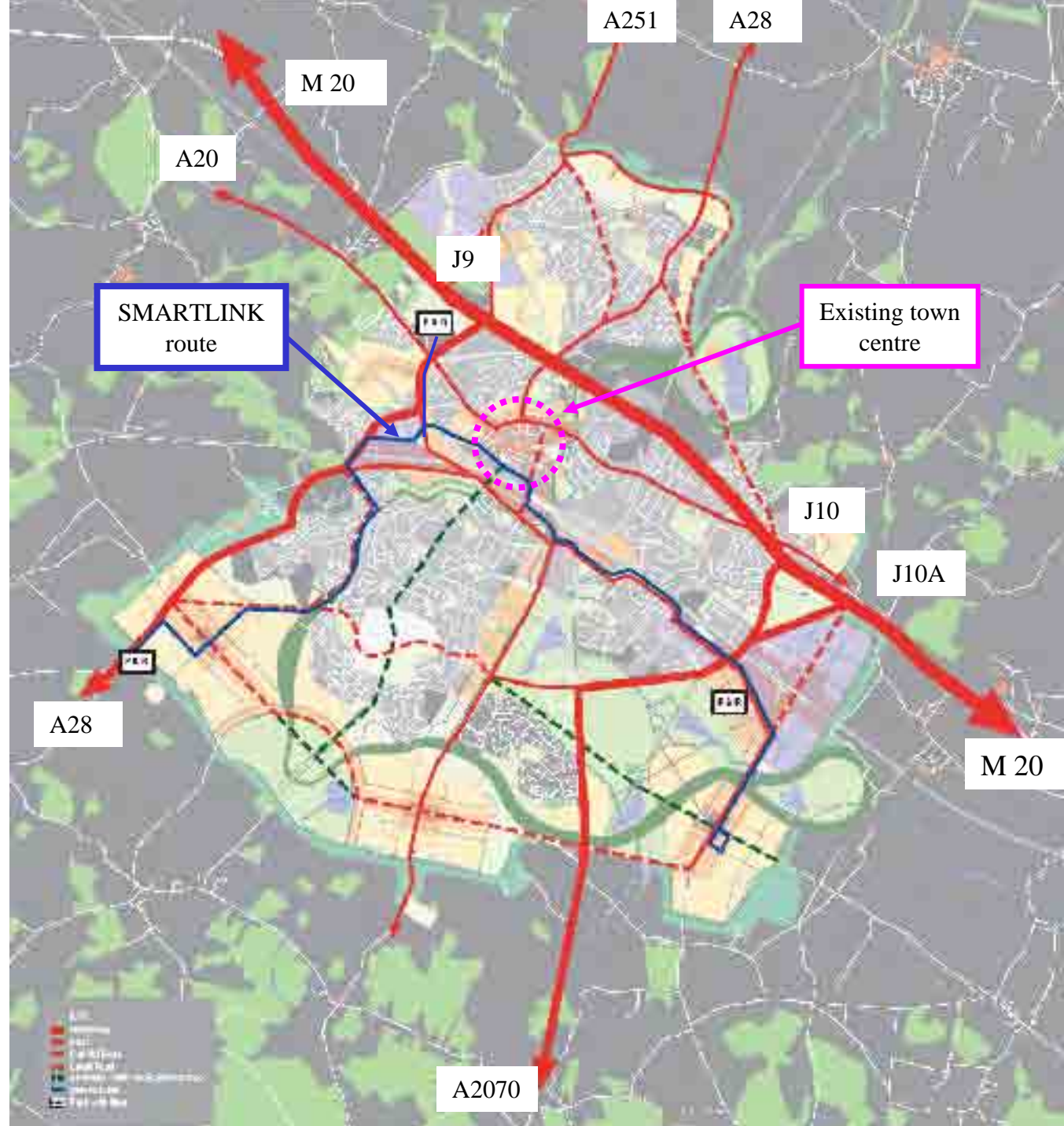


# Transport Infrastructure at 2031

## Strategic M20/Rail

Town wide  
SMARTLINK bus  
Park and Ride  
Cycling  
New highway  
corridors  
Improved traffic  
management

Town Centre  
Ring Road changed  
Walking  
Parking Restraint



# Ashford's Future Growth Effecting Transport 'Change'

- Achieve Modal Share targets
  - A real challenge to provide sustainable communities
  - Carrot and stick approach - but not 'anti-car'
- Provide genuine travel choices
  - Bus/train/cycle/walk - must offer genuine alternatives to the private car
  - ie the carrots must be 'juicy'
- Improve integration and accessibility
  - Improved interchanges between modes at P+ride/Stations/Town Centre bus termini
  - Town centre; station; education; retail parks; surrounding leisure facilities etc must be accessible to all
  - key components of a successful LTP



# Ashford Town Centre

- Significant expansion
- Brown field sites
- 3,000 new dwellings
- 12,000 new jobs
- 150,000 sq m of gross retail/leisure floor space
  
- 'Mend before extend'



# ASHFORD TOWN CENTRE

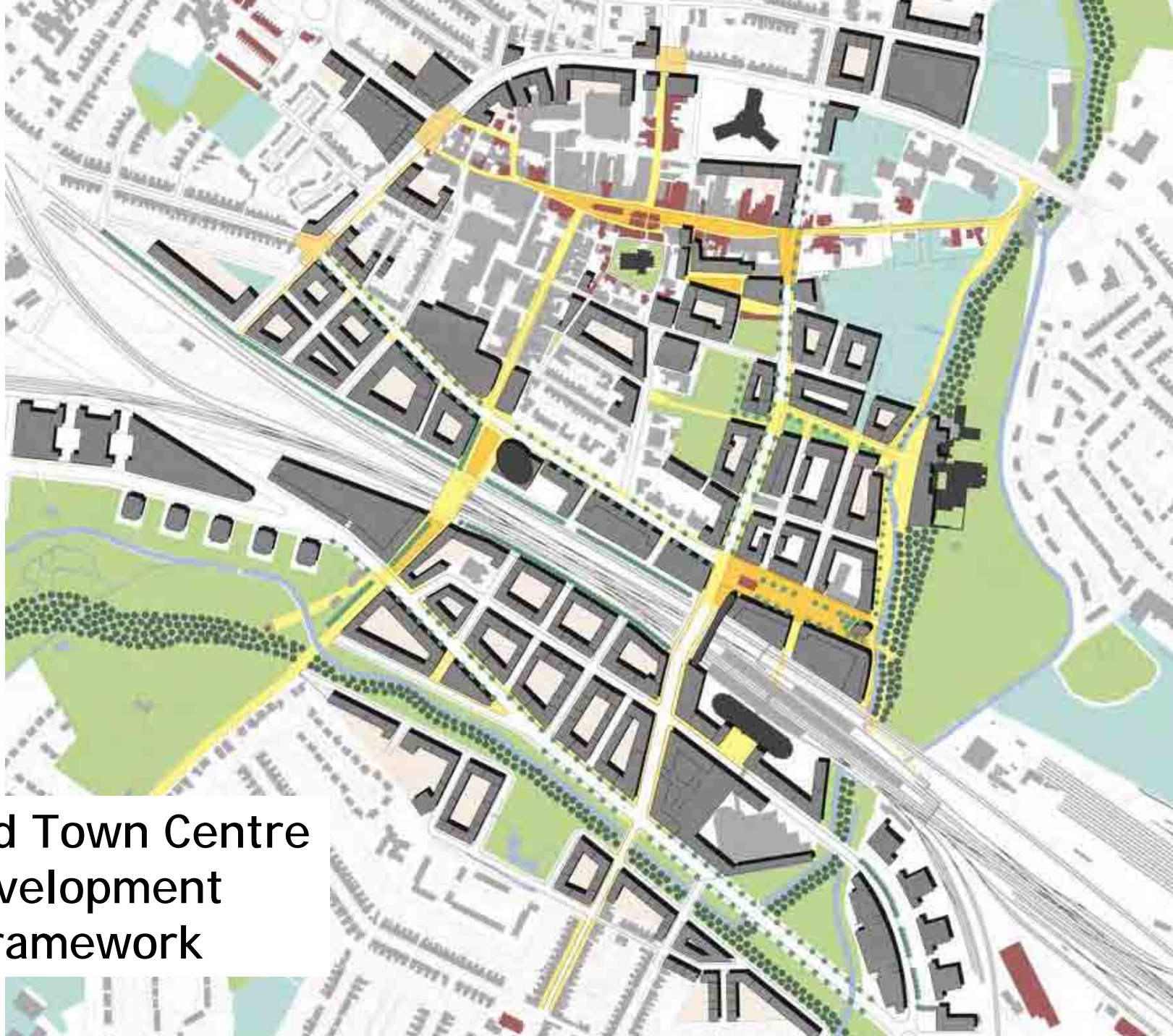
Victoria Road

International Passenger Station

Paris 1 hr 30 min  
Brussels 1 hr 30 min







Ashford Town Centre  
Development  
Framework

# Supporting Town Centre change 'mend before extend'

- Ring road reconfiguration
  - Reducing road capacity (c85% of current traffic)
  - High quality public realm - 'Living streets'
  - Bring momentum and improve local economic
- Victoria Way corridor
  - Key to extending town centre
  - Reduces traffic on Ring road
- Parking Strategy
  - Parking relocation plan - release key town centre sites for development
  - Park and ride
  - Parking controls and pricing





‘Shifting the balance from a ring road to a network of great streets and spaces, that connect the town centre with surrounding neighbourhoods.’

# Ring Road Reconfiguration



# Public Realm Strategy:

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- Integrating routes and spaces
- Create an attractive and safe pedestrian environment
- Highest quality materials, fittings and furniture
- Robust materials
- Interconnected
- Uncluttered
- Strengthens retail core



# Parking Strategy

- Significant parking restraint needed
  - To make reconfigured ring road work
  - To help support modal shift to public transport and park and ride
- Parking relocation plan
  - 3 strategic multi storey car parks in town
  - 3 strategic Park and ride sites
  - Releases sites for redevelopment
- Less than half PPG13 max. parking standards
  - 'Commuted' to Park and ride
  - Some flexibility in phasing needed to encourage early momentum
- Parking charge increases
- 'Market' tested to ensure acceptability



# Ashford's Future Delivery Plan Cost

- Overall Infrastructure cost - c£1.65b
- Primary Transport infrastructure - c£234m
  - Phase 1 to 2011 - £118m
  - Phase 2 to 2021 - £83m
  - Phase 3 to 2031 - £33m
- Delivery Plan - by end 2005
  - Will identify funding streams/phasing/strategic infrastructure tariff/s106/gap funding required



# Funding Infrastructure

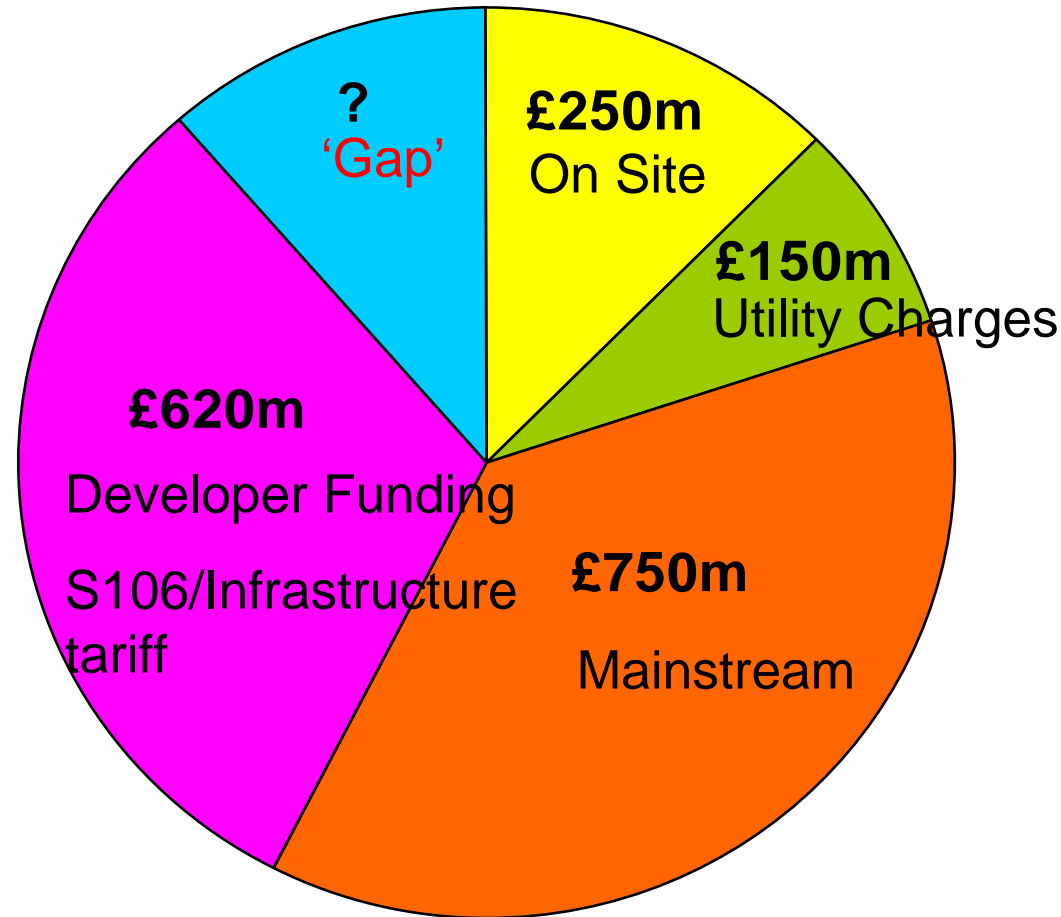
Ashford Cost Plan -  
Total bill - £1.5 - 2 bn

## Infrastructure Tariff

- Needs to be set at affordable level for developers
- Developers want certainty in timing of delivery of infrastructure provision

## 'Gap' funding

- Gap could increase depending on level of infrastructure tariff
- If not funded directly will have implications for speed of growth or quality/  
sustainability of development





## M20 J10

Capacity improvements

Interim scheme by 2006

New J10a by 2011

## SPG

Requires a lead developer to take funding risk

Protracted s106 negotiations

Has not delivered scheme on time

Need to find another way

# Messages from Ashford

- We are making good progress
  - Masterplan/LDF is progressing through the statutory processes
  - Government funding for infrastructure is helping to kick start the growth plan
- But ....Issues to resolve
  - Need for joined up government and LA objectives
  - Need LA and partner resources to help deliver
  - More flexibility with funding provision
  - Is the LDF procedure quicker than Local Plans?
  - Progress needed on Strategic Infrastructure Tariff
  - Resolution of gap funding/banker for infrastructure
- if we can resolve these issues we can deliver.....



..... The Vision for Ashford's Future  
- 'A great town in a great setting'



