

Thanet Parkway Railway Station
Alternative Options Analysis Report

July 2014



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1. Introduction

This option selection report aims to identify a suitable option to improve rail connectivity to development sites in East Kent. Kent County Council's aspiration is to encourage inward investment to East Kent and widen the job market for local people by improving the perception of East Kent as a suitable place to invest and work in. This can be achieved by improving rail connectivity to Discovery Park Enterprise Zone, the Manston Airport site and other development sites in East Kent and by taking advantage of planned rail improvement schemes and High Speed 1 (HS1).

1.1 Manston Airport

Note: When this analysis was undertaken the Manston Airport was still operational and thus is referred to as Manston Airport. The Thanet Parkway Railway Project consultation material refers the Airport as the Manston Airport Site as currently (January 2015) the future of the site is unclear. Whether the site continues to operate as an airport or is utilised for mixed use development the site is earmarked for growth in Thanet District Council's Draft Thanet Local Plan to 2031 Preferred Options Document and thus the need to support the site via rail remains relevant.

The increased utilisation of Manston has been identified as an opportunity for economic growth in East Kent and a way of providing additional aviation capacity in the UK. The airport is close to a number of high population settlements including Thanet, Canterbury, Ashford, Medway and Maidstone, with the Airport having a catchment area of over 1.5 million people¹. A Masterplan document (2009)² has been produced for Manston Airport which lays out the ambitions for the growth of the airport.

The Masterplan document forecasts that by 2033 the airport will have served around 4.7 million passengers and catered for 400,000 tonnes of freight. Further growth of the airport is expected beyond 2033, but has not yet been forecasted for. The airport has seen development with the introduction of a twice-daily scheduled flights from Manston Airport to Schipol Airport in Amsterdam, operated by KLM Royal Dutch Airline. Schipol airport is a major European hub airport and by flying to Schipol Airport connections can be made to 317 destinations worldwide.

Improved rail connectivity has been identified as key to enabling the forecast levels of growth at Manston Airport to occur, with other airports such as Southend having benefited substantially from enhanced rail connectivity. The Masterplan refers to improvements in surface transport access as a way of improving access between Manston Airport and main settlements areas. The delivery of improved rail connectivity to Manston Airport will help support the sustainable growth of Manston Airport, by providing an alternative to the use of the car to access the airport.

1.2 Development Sites

The project is also aimed to help establish new commercial development sites and support investment at existing sites. Improving rail connectivity to these sites will help to encourage inward investment, as the attractiveness and accessibility of these sites will improve substantially. The key

¹ KCC (2011). Public Transport Accessibility to Small and Medium Sized Regional Airports.

²Infratil Airports (2009) Manston, Kent International Airport Master Plan.

<http://www.manstonairport.com/userfiles/files/planning/KIA%20Master%20Plan%20LR.pdf>

sites which will be supported by improved rail accessibility this project include Discovery Park Enterprise Zone, Manston and Eurokent Business Parks and residential areas around Westwood.

1.2.1 Discovery Park Enterprise Zone

Discovery Park Enterprise Zone is the former site of Pfizer's European research and development headquarters. The site was purchase in August 2012 by Discovery Park Ltd and provides 3 million square feet of workspace, including laboratories, offices and warehouses. Forty six companies are currently located at the site, with the potential for businesses to benefit from discounted business rates by locating at the site. The site is also set to benefit from a new investment project in coastal defences. The £25 million project is to provide a 1 in 200 year flood protection for the Discovery Park Enterprise Zone site and for the town of Sandwich.

The site has recently been successful in attracting new businesses to the site, with Discovery Park owners in 2012 announcing ambitions to create 3,000 at the Enterprise Zone by 2017. Accessibility to this site is predominantly by private car although walking and cycling from Sandwich is encouraged. Access to jobs by non-car users and sustainable development of the site, requires investment in sustainable transport to the site to take advantage of the HS1 and planned rail improvements between London and Ramsgate.

1.2.2. Manston Business Park

Manston Business Park is identified with Thanet District Council's Core Strategy Preferred Options Consultation as a "prime location for economic growth. The document suggests that the 43 acre site should be allocation for B1, B2 and B8 business use. In order to support job creation at this site it is recognised that improvements in public transport are required, mentioned in the Core Strategy Preferred Option document.

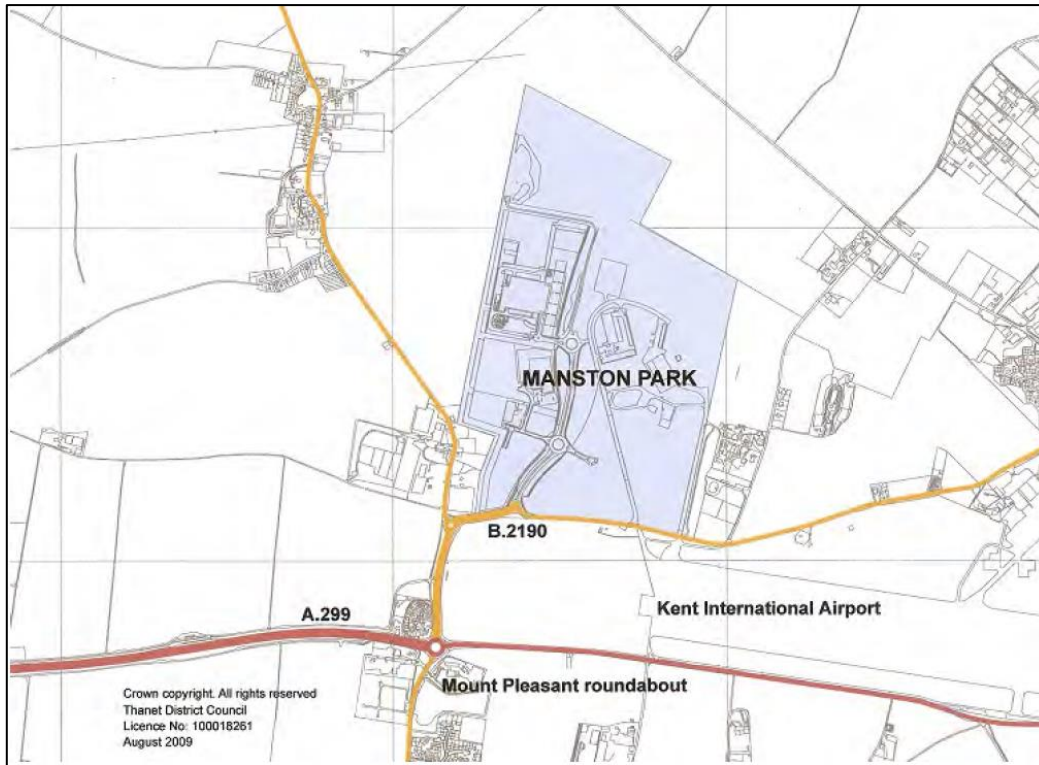


Figure 1: Location of Manston Business Park (Source: Thanet District Council)

1.2.3. EuroKent

EuoKent has been allocated a mixed use area in Thanet District Council’s Draft Local plan to 2031, linking and integrating the development into the wider Westwood community. Land is provided for up to 350 residential properties and 15.5 hectares of land for flexible business use. In order for this site to be a sustainable location for development, sustainable transport to this site needs to be improved.

1.3 Deprivation in Dover and Thanet

Thanet is a particularly deprived area of Kent, with 15,200 households thought to be living in poverty in 2010³. The unemployment rate in Thanet is 5.7% (June 2013) compared to a Kent average of 2.8% (June 2013)⁴. There are also areas of Dover with high levels of unemployment, such as Tower Hamlets with an unemployment rate of 8.2%⁵. The high level of unemployment in parts of East Kent means that commercial development and economic growth is required to support the economies of these Districts. It is also important to recognise that car ownership in Thanet and Dover is low in comparison to other parts of Kent and therefore sustainable access to development sites is essential.

³ Kent County Council (2012). Households in Poverty. <https://shareweb.kent.gov.uk/Documents/facts-and-figures/Deprivation/dep1-11-households-in-poverty.pdf>

⁴ Kent County Council (2013) Unemployment in Kent <https://shareweb.kent.gov.uk/Documents/facts-and-figures/Unemployment/district-unemployment-bulletin.pdf>

⁵ Kent County Council (2013) Ward Unemployment in Kent <https://shareweb.kent.gov.uk/Documents/facts-and-figures/Unemployment/ward-unemployment-bulletin.pdf>

1.4 Optimising Journey Time Improvement Scheme

KCC and Network Rail are working together on a number of schemes to reduce journey time between Ashford International and Ramsgate by about 10 minutes by 2018/19. Capitalising on the existing HS1 and planned rail enhancements will result in a greater perception of the region as a viable place to attract inward investment.

2. Existing Passenger Transport Accessibility

This section summarises the existing transport accessibility to Manston Airport and the development sites.

2.1 Public Transport Access to Manston Airport

Stagecoach operates an hourly bus service between the Manston Airport site, Manston Business Park, Ramsgate, Broadstairs, Palm Bay and Birchington on service number 38 and 38A. With three bus stops between the Manston Airport site and Ramsgate Railway Station, along with some custom bus stops being served, the timetabled journey time between the Manston Airport site and Ramsgate Railway Station is between 9 and 10 minutes. The airport site is also served by the number 11 bus service which provides a Monday to Saturday connection to Broadstairs, Westwood, Minster, Preston, Ickham and Canterbury at a frequency of 5 buses per day, but does not provide a direct connection to any railway stations.

Ramsgate Railway Station is the closest railway station to the Manston Airport site, at a distance of approximately 4km from the entrance to the Manston Airport site, which is well connected with a number of rail services operating between Ramsgate and London. In the off peak, Ramsgate Station is served by a single train per hour from Margate to St Pancras International via High Speed 1 (HS1), while in the peak this increases to 2 trains per hours (tph) with a journey time of 76 minutes.

Ramsgate is also served by 2 tph stopping trains from Ramsgate to Charing Cross via Tonbridge with a journey time from Ramsgate approximately 130 minutes, 2 tph to Charing Cross via Dover with a journey time of nearly 150 minutes and 2 tph to London Victoria via the North Kent Line with a journey time of around 120 minutes.

Despite Ramsgate Railway Station being well served by rail services, the poor connectivity between station and the airport site and other development sites increases the overall journey time of reaching there by public transport. Appendix 1 shows the limited area of Kent from which the population can currently reach the Manston Airport site by public transport in under an hour. As a result of poor public transport connectivity a majority of passengers travel to the airport site by private car. In 2011 the modal share of passengers reaching Manston Airport was identified as 90% private car and 10% taxi¹.

2.2 Public Transport Access to Development Sites

Current public access arrangements to each of the development sites is discussed below.

2.2.1 Discovery Park Enterprise Zone (EZ)

The Discovery Park Enterprise Zone is served by the 87/88/88A Stagecoach operated bus service at an hourly frequency. This bus provides a connection from the Discovery park EZ site to Dover, Whitfield and Sandwich Town Centre. The bus service does not provide a connection to Sandwich Railway Station itself (as the closest railway station to Discovery Park) but the station is an estimated 9 minute walk from Sandwich Town Centre bus stop.

Sandwich Railway Station provides rail connections to Ramsgate and London stations. Mainline services operate from Sandwich to London Charing Cross on an hourly basis, increasing to 2tph

during the peak, with a journey time of over 130 minutes. Kent County Council initially funded the extension of High Speed train services to Deal and Sandwich, which is now running commercially, with 3 High Speed Trains operating from Sandwich station in the morning and 2 High Speed trains departing from St Pancras for Sandwich in the evening. The journey time for High Speed 1 services to London St Pancras compared to Mainline is 90 minutes.

2.2.2. Manston Business Park

The Manston Business Park is currently poorly connected by public transport, with only one morning (journey time of 24 minutes) and one evening weekday (journey time 10 minutes) route 38 bus service operating from Ramsgate rail station to Manston Business Park. 3.2.3 Eurokent Business Park

There is no direct bus connection between the Eurokent site and Ramsgate Railway Station (as the closest railway station to the EuroKent Business Park site).

2.3 Road Access to Manston Airport and Development Sites.

Thanet benefits from a developed strategic road network with connections to West Kent, London and the wider South East area via the A299 dual carriageway which joins the M2 motorway. Local accessibility has recently been improved with the completion of New Haine Road in 2008 and Phase 2 of the East Kent Access Road in 2012. The delivery of the East Kent Access Road has been a key infrastructure improvement to supporting the development Discovery Park Enterprise Zone, whereas the New Haine Road has unlocked the Eurokent development.

3. Description of Options

KCC has engaged with Stakeholders and internal experts to consider the options for improving rail accessibility to the Manston Airport site, Discovery Park and other development sites in Thanet.

3.1 Options Rejected Prior to Workshop

Two options were rejected prior to the option workshop.

3.1.1 Do-nothing

The increased demand for rail travel in East Kent and the limitations of existing stations in East Kent, mean that to do nothing is not an option. The problems of parking in residential areas in Ramsgate for access to rail services from Ramsgate Railway Station will continue to increase. The Thanet Parkway Railway Station Business Case suggests that under a do-nothing scenario there would be demand for 289 car parking spaces, whilst Ramsgate Railway Station currently only provides 44 car parking spaces. This would result in increased conflict between residential parking and parking for access to Ramsgate Railway Station.

The increase in vehicle trips for journeys from Ramsgate railway station will also lead to increased traffic problems within this residential area, adding to noise and air pollution. The High Street St Lawrence is the main route used to access the railway station from East Kent Access Road and sites such as Discovery Park. This road already designated as an Air Quality Management Area with NOx emissions above the health-based annual mean standard of 40 µg/m³⁶.

3.1.2 Option for a direct rail connection and railway station at Manston Airport

The idea for a new railway station to be built close to Manston Airport Terminal building was put forward in the Manston Airport Masterplan document. The delivery of a railway station at Manston Airport would require a new railway line to be constructed off the existing railway line. The poor feasibility of this work and the potential cost of the scheme led this option being ruled out. The positioning of a new railway station close to Manston Airport terminal would also reduce the benefits in terms of supporting Discovery Park Enterprise Zone.

Manston Airport runway also presents a physical barrier to having a direct rail line to Manston Airport Terminal building. The railway line would either need to delivery around the runway or tunnelled under the runway at an unaffordable cost.

⁶ Thanet District Council (2013). Air Quality Action Plan 2013.

<https://thanet.gov.uk/publications/environmental-health/air-quality-action-plan-2013/2-thanet-air-quality/>

3.2 Options considered in workshop

The following options were considered in the workshop.

Option 1

Deliver a new railway station

- New railway station to be built along the existing railway line between Minster and Ramsgate
- 2 minute journey time from Ramsgate Railway Station
- Shuttle bus service from Thanet Parkway Railway Station to the Manston Airport site and Discovery Park Enterprise Zone.

Option 2

Increase car parking provision at Ramsgate Railway Station

- Increase the number of car parking spaces from the existing 44 spaces to at least 300 spaces
- Marketing of the railway station as a station to serve the Manston Airport site and commercial development sites
- Provide a shuttle bus service from Ramsgate Railway Station to the Manston Airport site and Discovery Park Enterprise Zone.

Option 3

Increase car parking provision at Minster Railway Station

- Increase the number of car parking spaces from the existing 20 spaces to at least 300 spaces
- Marketing of the railway station as a station to serve the Manston Airport site and commercial development sites
- Provide a shuttle bus service from Minster Railway Station to the Manston Airport site and Discovery Park Enterprise Zone.

Option 4

Provide shuttle bus service from Birchington-on-Sea Railway Station

- Marketing of railway station as a station to serve the Manston Airport site and commercial development sites, such as Manston Business Park
- Provision of a shuttle bus service between Birchington-on-Sea Railway Station to the Manston Airport site and Discovery Park Enterprise Zone.

Option 5

Provide direct coach service between London and the Manston Airport/ Discovery Park sites

- Provision of a coach service between a key London Interchange such as Victoria Railway and sites at the Manston Airport and Discovery Park.

Option 6

Provide shuttle bus from Ramsgate Railway Station

- Marketing of the railway station as a station to serve the Manston Airport and commercial development sites
- Provide a shuttle bus service from Ramsgate Railway Station to the Manston Airport site and Discovery Park Enterprise Zone.

4. Option Evaluation

In this section an evaluation of each of the options considered in the workshop.

4.1 Assessment criteria

Each option was assessed against a set of defined criteria so they could be compared with one another. Criteria was chosen that would identify which of the options would best achieve the Council's aspiration, i.e., providing sustainable surface access by rail to the Manston Airport site, Discovery Park and other major development sites in East Kent. The criteria are shown below:

Options assessment criteria

Code	Description
Distance (RS-M)	Estimated distance between the railway station and the Manston Airport site for shuttle bus service
Distance (RS-DP)	Estimated distance between the railway station and Discovery Park Enterprise Zone for shuttle bus service
Road Suitability	Suitability of road infrastructure for shuttle bus service to operate between railway station and Manston Airport/ Development sites
Frequency of Rail	Frequency of current rail service operating along station route (in London direction) and stopping at station where existing railway station exists
Journey Time	Estimated journey time to London
Connectivity	Connectivity to other main (high population) settlements (High/ Medium/Low)
Cost	Cost of option (High/ Medium/ Low)
Impact on investment	Likely impact of enhancing the image of Thanet and Dover Districts as an attractive investment location (High/Medium/Low)
Impact on growth	Impact on economic growth (High/Medium/Low)
Pros	Summary of Pros
Cons	Summary of Cons

4.2 Evaluation of Options

Option 1: Deliver a new railway station	
Distance (RS-M)	2.3 miles (3.7 km)
Distance (RS-DP)	3.2 miles (5.2km)
Road Suitability	High. A new access junction would connect the Thanet Parkway Railway Station with the A299/ A256 Ramsgate Road Sevenscore roundabout. The shuttle bus would then utilise the recently completed East Kent Access Road to reach the Manston Airport site and Discovery Park Enterprise Zone.
Frequency of Rail	6 trains per hour
Journey Time	About an hour
Connectivity	High. Thanet Parkway Railway Station will be well connected to most of the key urban settlements in Kent including Ashford, Canterbury, Dover, Maidstone and the Thames Gateway (via Ebbsfleet Railway Station) as a future growth location.
Cost	High
Impact on investment	High. This option will have a positive impact in enhancing the attractiveness of East Kent for investment. Good opportunity to market the Parkway station as a station to serve the Manston Airport site and Discovery Park EZ.
Impact on growth	High <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project will help to unlock development sites which are currently only accessible by private car. • By providing additional station capacity in Thanet this will support the delivery of new houses development proposed in the draft Thanet Local Plan. • The project will help to deliver the growth anticipated at the Manston Airport site. • This option offers the shortest shuttle bus distance between the railway station and the Discovery Park Enterprise Zone. As a result this option is likely to have a greater impact in supporting the economic growth of Discovery Park EZ (as the largest commercial development site identified), compared to the other options proposed.
Pros	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High frequency train service to London and major population areas in Kent. Journey times to London will be under an hour (using HS1 services) once Journey Time Improvements scheme has been implemented. • A railway station at this location offers the shortest distance for a shuttle bus to operate. • Good marketing tool for Manston Airport, Discovery Park and other development sites, to attract inward investment in East Kent.
Cons	Higher initial cost, but if the service is successful it is expected that Southeastern (or the new franchise holder) would take responsibility for operating the station and service provision to the station in the long term.

Option 2: Increase car parking provision at Ramsgate Railway Station	
Distance (RS-M)	2.5 miles (4.0km)
Distance (RS-DP)	5.5 miles (8.9km)
Road Suitability	Medium. Shuttle bus would be required to travel along residential streets in Ramsgate, for the initial part of the journey to the Manston Airport site and Discovery Park Enterprise Zone. The road infrastructure beyond the residential area is suitable for the operation of a shuttle bus service, with the shuttle bus utilising East Kent Access Road to Discovery Park site and B2050 for the Manston Airport site.
Frequency of Rail	8 trains per hour
Journey Time	Between 74 minutes and 132 minutes depending on train (Journey time improvements will have an impact in reducing journey time).
Connectivity	High. Ramsgate Railway Station is well connected to most of the key urban settlements in Kent including Ashford, Canterbury, Dover, Maidstone and the Thames Gateway (via Ebbsfleet Railway Station) as a future growth location.
Cost	Medium.
Impact on investment	Medium. By fully refurbishing the existing accessibility to the station, through providing additional car parking spaces, this option has the potential to enhance the attractiveness on the Manston Airport site to some extent, but to a limited extent for Discovery Parkway EZ.
Impact on growth	High to Medium. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project will help to unlock development sites which are currently only accessible by private car. By providing additional station car park capacity will not support the delivery of new houses identified in in the draft Than Local Plan. • Due to the distance between Discover Park and Ramsgate station, this option many not have the same impact in supporting economic growth at Discovery Park, but the option will act to encourage economic growth in Ramsgate Town Centre itself.
Pros	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower cost than the construction of a new railway station. • High frequency train service to London and major population areas in Kent, with a journey time to London of an hour, using HS1 services, once Journey Time Improvements scheme has been implemented. • Option would be operational in shorter timescale than a new railway station.
Cons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of land for additional car parking space provision may affect feasibility of option delivery. • Wouldn't have the same impact as a new railway station.

Option 3: Increase car parking provision at Minster Railway Station	
Distance (RS-M)	3.1 miles (5.0km)
Distance (RS-DP)	5.6 miles (9.0km)
Road Suitability	Medium - Low. The shuttle bus service may struggle to operate around the parked cars which are currently permitted to park along the residential streets close to Minster Railway Station. Two-way traffic is unable to pass alongside parked cars. The B2190 to the Manston Airport site and the A299 & A256 to Discovery Park are suitable routes for the operation of a shuttle bus service.
Frequency of Rail	1 train per hour
Journey Time	126 minutes (Journey time improvements will have an impact in decreasing journey time)
Connectivity	Medium. Minster Railway Station is well connected to the high population areas of Canterbury and Ashford. Indirect rail connections provide access to a majority of railway stations in Kent.
Cost	Medium/High The renovation cost of improvements to Minster station is likely to be high in comparison to Ramsgate Railway Station, as existing car parking facilities at Minster Railway Station are limited.
Impact on investment	Low. By fully refurbishing the existing railway station and enhancing the accessibility to and car parking at the station, this option has limited potential to enhance the attractiveness of the Manston Airport site and Discovery Park due to narrow width of the roads in Minster.
Impact on growth	Low. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited level of support to deliver new housing development identified in the draft Thanet Local Plan. Whilst the scheme may have some impact in improving accessibility to commercial development sites, the geographical distance between Minster and Discovery Park EZ may limit the impact of the option in supporting this particular development site (as the largest of those identified).
Pros	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lower cost than the construction of a new railway station. Option would be operational in a shorter timescale than a new railway station.
Cons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Substantial work would be required to expand car parking facilities at Minster Railway Station. Potential negative impact on village community of Minster as a result of increased traffic flow and the operation of the shuttle bus service through the village. Car parking along residential streets may be an obstacle to the operation of the shuttle bus service and additional vehicle traffic in and out of the village. Currently limited trains services from Minster Railway Station.

Option 4: Provide shuttle bus service from Birchington-on-Sea Railway Station	
Distance (RS-M)	3.6 miles (5.8km)
Distance (RS-DP)	8.0 miles (12.9km)
Road Suitability	Medium- Low. The shuttle bus service would operate along B roads for the journey from Birchington-on-Sea to the Manston Airport site. For Discovery Park the shuttle bus could utilise East Kent Access Road between Minster and the Discovery Park site. Whilst the existing road infrastructure has the capacity to operate a shuttle bus service, the geographical distance makes this a less attractive route for a shuttle bus to operate.
Frequency of Rail	2 trains per hour
Journey Time	Between 101 minutes and 103 minutes
Connectivity	Low. Birchington Railway Station is connected via the North Kent line to coastal towns such as Margate, Ramsgate, Whitstable, Herne Bay and Faversham. From Faversham the train continues in the London direction to serve high population areas in the Medway Towns, Gravesend and Dartford. Poorer connectivity exists between high population areas such as Maidstone, Ashford and Canterbury to Birchington-On-Sea Railway Station.
Cost	Low
Impact on investment	Low. Due to the geographical distance between Birchington- Railway Station and the Manston Airport site and Discovery Park EZ, and the poorer rail connectivity from Birchington-On-Sea to urban areas in Kent and London, this option is unlikely to be successful in enhancing the image of the Manston Airport site and Discovery Park EZ.
Impact on growth	Low. Due to the geographical distance between Birchington-On-Sea and the Manston Airport site and Discovery Park, the operation of a shuttle bus service is not likely to have any significant impact in unlocking development and supporting economic growth in East Kent.
Pros	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower cost than the construction of a new railway station • Short timescale for delivery.
Cons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer distance between Birchington-Railway Station and the Manston Airport site and Discovery Park. This option is a particularly unattractive option for access to Discovery Park EZ. • Rail connectivity from Birchington-On-Sea is limited in comparison to other options, as there is no direct access to the major population areas of Ashford, Canterbury or Maidstone from this station and a long journey time to London.

Option 5: Provide direct coach service between London and the Manston Airport/ Discovery Park sites	
Distance (RS-M)	75.4 miles (121.3km) Assuming coaches depart from London Victoria Coach Station
Distance (RS-DP)	78.7 miles (126.7km) Assuming coaches depart from London Victoria Coach Station
Road Suitability	Low. Severe congestion can often be experienced along the Strategic Road Network between London and Thanet, and within inner city London. Delays and journey time uncertainty would affect the operation of a coach service long this route. There is a substantial geographical distance between key transport interchanges in London, such as London Victoria Coach Station, the Manston Airport site and Discovery Park EZ.
Frequency of Rail	N/A
Journey Time	N/A
Connectivity	Low. The coach service would only provide direct access to London and therefore would not act to serve the population in the wider Kent area.
Cost	Medium/Low
Impact on investment	Limited. Due to the long journey time between London and Thanet/ Dover District it unlikely that this option would enhance the attractiveness of Thanet and Dover Districts for any investment. Coach is often seen an unattractive option compared to journeys by rail or private car.
Impact on growth	Low. Due to the journey time between London transport hubs and Manston Airport/ Discovery Park sites, it is unlikely that this option would be an attractive option for accessing the Manston Airport site or for journeys to Discovery Park. It is therefore expected that this option would have limited impact in supporting economic growth in East Kent.
Pros	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower cost than the construction of a new railway station • Short timescale for delivery.
Cons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long geographical distance and journey time between London and East Kent. • A coach service from London may not be targeting the correct market for the Manston Airport site, as the London market is already served by other major airports such as Gatwick and Heathrow. • This option does not support the planned development identified in the draft Local Plan.

Option 6: Provide shuttle bus from Ramsgate Railway Station	
Distance (RS-M)	2.5 miles (4.0km)
Distance (RS-DP)	5.5 miles (8.9km)
Road Suitability	Medium. Shuttle bus would be required to travel along residential streets in Ramsgate, for the initial part of the journey to the Manston Airport site and Discovery Park Enterprise Zone. The road infrastructure beyond the residential area is suitable for the operation of a shuttle bus service, with the shuttle bus utilising East Kent Access Road to Discovery Park site and B2050 for the Manston Airport site.
Frequency of Rail	8 trains per hour
Journey Time	Between 74 minutes and 132 minutes depending on train (Journey time improvements will have an impact in reducing journey time).
Connectivity	High. Ramsgate Railway Station is well connected to most of the key urban settlements in Kent including Ashford, Canterbury, Dover, Maidstone and the Thames Gateway (via Ebbsfleet Railway Station) as a future growth location.
Cost	Low
Impact on investment	Low. Whilst the station has the potential to be marketed as a railway station to serve the Manston Airport site and Discovery Park. The provision of a shuttle bus service alone may not be enough to attract people into using this option to access the Manston Airport site and Discovery Park.
Impact on growth	Low. By improving public transport access between Ramsgate, Manston Airport and other development sites, the option will improve access to jobs. Due to the distance between Ramsgate station and Discovery Park, this option will not have the same impact in supporting the economic growth of Discovery Park as of option 1 (a new Parkway Railway Station). It is therefore thought that this scheme will have minimal impact in supporting economic growth.
Pros	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower cost than the construction of a new railway station. • High frequency train service to London and major population areas in Kent, with a reduced journey time to London using HS1 services, once Journey Time Improvements scheme has been implemented. • Short timescale for delivery.
Cons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Without refurbishment work at Ramsgate Railway Station to provide coach parking, this may not be an attractive option. • Would not be a substantial marketing tool to attract investment in East Kent.

4.3 Options shortlisted for further consideration

Options 1 and 2 have been shortlisted for further investigation. These options have been identified as offering the most potential benefit in terms of improving accessibility to the Manston Airport site, Discovery Park and other development sites in East Kent and enhancing the attractiveness of East Kent for investment.

The following officers have been consulted during the option consideration process:

Name	Organisation	Attended Discussion Meeting	Attended workshop	Telephone/ Email Correspondence
Strategy Delivery Manager	Kent County Council			
Principal Transport Planner - Strategy	Kent County Council			
Principal Transport Planner- Rail	Kent County Council			
Principal Transport Planner- Delivery	Kent County Council			
Director of Community Services	Thanet District Council			
Planning Manager	Thanet District Council			

5. Further Investigation of Option 2 (Improved Ramsgate Car Park)

Ramsgate Railway Station is currently a well-used railway station, with 1,062,606 passenger trips through the railway station in 2012/13. Passenger numbers at Ramsgate railway station have increased by 38% between 2004/05 and 2011/12 but the ability for this railway station to cope with future growth is limited due to car parking issues.

Parking provision at Ramsgate Railway Station is insufficient to cope with current and future demand. There are currently only 44 car parking spaces at Ramsgate Railway Station. Since the station is located within a residential area, currently users of the station park on residential streets. The future increased demand will put pressure on this and may lead to conflict between the needs of residents and station users. Increased traffic in these residential streets is also likely to impact on air quality and safety.

The future demand assessment show that there could potentially be a need to provide at least 289 car park spaces at Ramsgate station to meet the demand in 2021. Land availability for the provision of sufficient car parking is a constraint on this option. The following options have been investigated to see whether there is sufficient land to build a car park:

- Replace the existing station car park with a multi-storey car park
- Build a multi-storey car park at Network Rail Maintenance Depot
- Build a car park at Warre Recreation Ground
- Acquire industrial land on Princes Road to construct a car park.

5.1 Replace the existing station car park with a multi-storey car park

The first option explores whether the existing station car park can be converted in to a multi-storey car park (figure 2).



Figure 2: Ramsgate railway station car park (Source: KCC)

This option would be convenient for passengers from the station accessibility viewpoint, but can be affected by congestion at peak periods. This option would require more traffic to be routed through the residential area, increasing congestion, noise and pollution. The well-being and privacy of the local residents will be greatly affected both during and post construction. This option will severely affect the local safety situation for walking (especially for disabled and elderly people) and cycling (especially young people) in the area.

5.2 Build a multi-storey car park at Network Rail Maintenance Depot

The second option which has been investigated is for additional car parking facilities to be provided at a site owned by Network Rail within their rail maintenance facility (figure 2). The identified area is currently being used by Network Work staff at the Maintenance Depot and HGV's accessing the Depot to deliver goods. The access to the Depot is secured and is not open to the public.



Figure 3: Network Rail maintenance depot (Source KCC)

The early discussion with Network Rail indicates that the provision of a multi-storey car park at this site is feasible from the engineering point of view. However, the secure access and car parking for Network Rail staff and HGV movement should be maintained when a new car park is built at the site, which would increase the car park construction cost substantially.

If a multi-storey car park is provided at this site then the privacy and well-being of adjacent residents would be affected. Furthermore, the highway network and roundabouts in the area need to be improved to cater the additional trips due to station car parking.

To access the entrance station and passenger platforms from the proposed car park site two options have been identified.

One option would be to deliver improvements to the pedestrian footpath, along Newington Road and Warre Recreation Ground. This route would take 7-10 minute walk. This pedestrian footpath through the Warre Recreation Ground, parallel to the railway line, is unlikely to be favourable with passengers due to the walking time, indirectness of route and potential safety issues (figure 3).

Alternatively a pedestrian footbridge could be built to create a more direct route between the identified car park site and the station entrance and platforms. The cost of this option has not been

estimated as part of this report, but is unlikely to be feasible, as there are a number of Network Rail buildings such as an inspection shed and cleaning shed situated between the proposed car park site and passenger service platforms.



Figure 4: Route of 7- 10 minute walk between the Ramsgate Railway Station and Ramsgate Maintenance Depot (Source: Google Maps)

5.3 Build a car park at Warre Recreation Ground

There is sufficient area available to build a car park at Warre Recreation Ground (figures 5 and 6), but some work needs to be undertaken to provide access to the site. In addition, the highway network requires improvements to deal with generated trips due to a car park.



Figure 5: Warre Recreation Ground (Source: KCC)

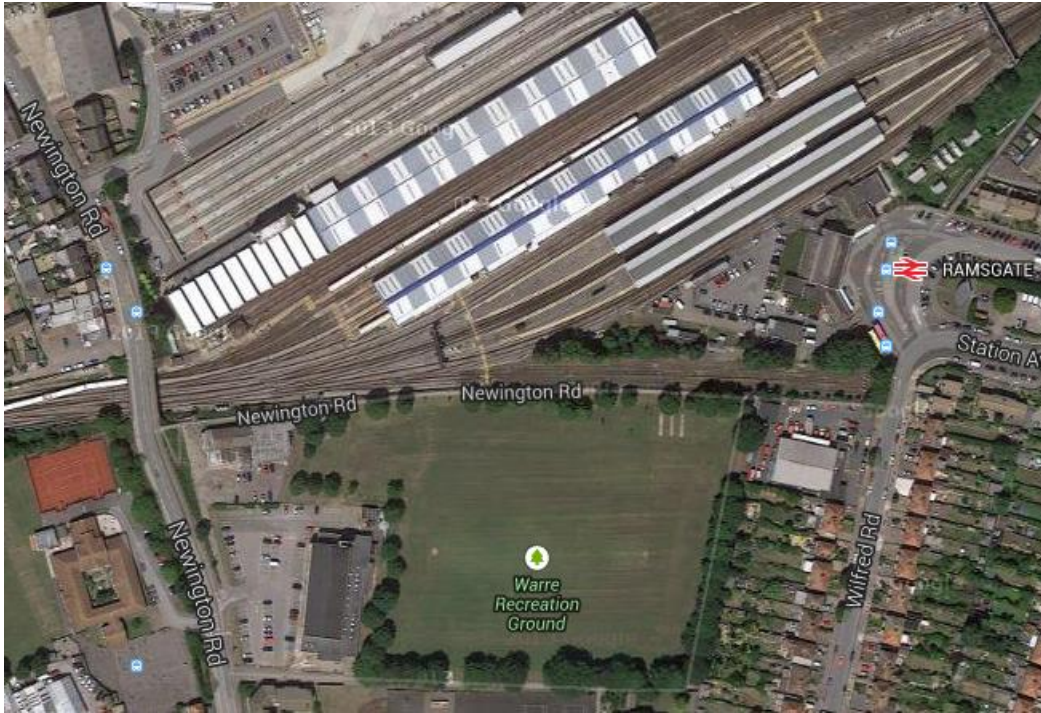


Figure 6: Warre Recreation Ground in relation to Ramsgate Railway Station (Source: Google Maps)

The main challenge in relation to this option is likely to be the lack of public support for this option due to irreversible loss of green space and recreation area in the urban environment. The cost of building a car park for 289 vehicles, landscaping, land costs, maintenance and operating costs, and highway network improvements cost for all above options has not been estimated.

5.4 Acquire industrial land on Princes Road to construct a car park

The option of acquiring some of the existing industrial land off Princess Road which was suggested by Thanet District Members was considered. The area totals 3.638 acres. There are eight freehold titles on the land held in six ownerships.

The only vacant site is 0.46 acres in size. The provision of 289 parking spaces at street level might require between 1.98-2.97 acres depending on design, access and planning requirements and is thus not feasible. A multi-storey car park could be an option, but this requires land up to 0.74 acres.

The seven other sites are all in use, five of which are operational businesses and two are warehouses and storage.

No suitable location has been identified to provide a 289 space car park for providing a short to medium term solution to cater for population growth, let alone accounting for a uniform housing growth and potential increased car ownership.

5.5 Summary of findings

The option to provide additional parking at Ramsgate Station would require significant investment in new car park facilities at the station to meet growing demand. The results indicate that a car park of 289 spaces would be required to provide a short-medium term solution until 2021, assuming some restriction is put on on-street parking which is currently freely available.

No clear option for the provision of land to develop adequate car parking capacity to improve car parking capacity at Ramsgate station is identified, due to the railway station being situated within a residential area.

It is anticipated that the demand for Ramsgate station parking and the impact of residential development will put added pressure on the highway network, air quality and safety.

This option for improvements to Ramsgate station will not provide a sustainable long term solution to facilitate passenger demand. Options to increase the level of car parking would only provide a short term solution and no suitable site has been identified for additional car park facilities.

6. Further Investigation of Option 1 (a new Parkway Railway Station)

Further investigation has been carried out as to the feasibility of building a new parkway station in Thanet. Two options are identified for building a parkway station: a proposal put forward by developers of the Manston Green development site and a KCC proposed site option.

6.1 Manston Green Development Proposal

The promoters of the Manston Green development (800 houses, community facilities, school and associated road infrastructure) discussed with KCC to understand the feasibility of delivering a parkway station on an adjacent site to their development proposal.

The location of the Manston Green site would mean a parkway station would be located only 1 minute from Ramsgate station (the KCC proposed location would have a 2 minute headway from Ramsgate). This means it is likely there would be implications for service performance, and therefore the timetable, particularly for the peak hour trains departing Ramsgate towards Ashford. Based on the criterion used for earlier option assessment, this parkway location would be further from the Discovery Park Enterprise Zone and Manston Business Park than the KCC proposed site reducing the attractiveness of this option in connecting to development sites.

6.2 Kent County Council's Proposed Site

KCC's proposed location for Thanet Parkway is to the south of the Manston Airport site and to the west of the village of Cliffsend. The proposed Parkway station will be situated on the Ashford International to Ramsgate rail line, with direct access to the East Kent Access (EKA) road (figures 7 and 8). The EKA road, completed in May 2012, improves the link into Thanet by replacing substandard single carriageway sections on the A256 and the A299. The EKA road provides the opportunity for direct access to the station without an adverse impact on the local road network.

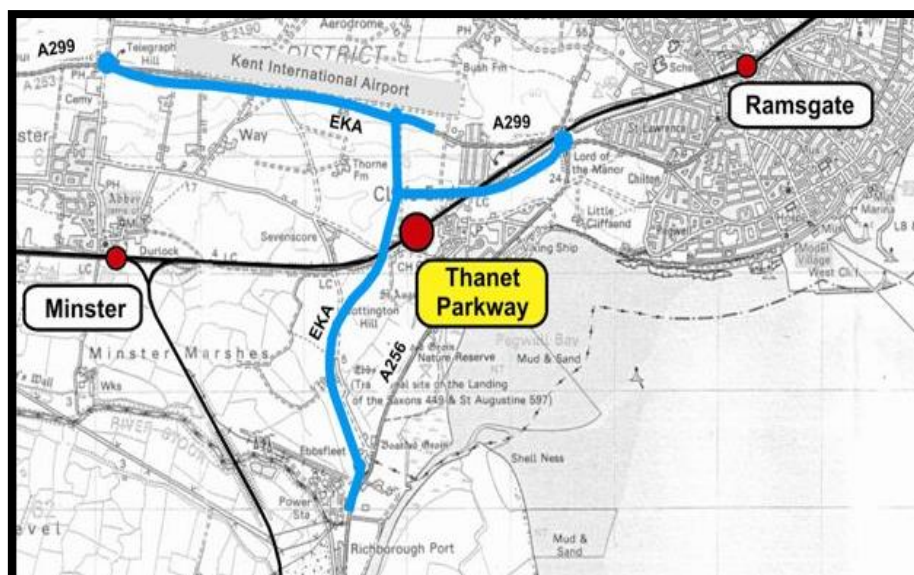


Figure 7: Preferred Location for Thanet Parkway Railway Station (Source KCC)



Figure 8: Ariel View of Preferred Location for Parkway Station (Source: Google Maps)

The analysis of option 1 (section 4.2) indicates that this location would be the most suitable for a new parkway station based on access to key development sites. This option is seen to have a high impact on investment and growth and will capitalise on Journey Time Improvements to connect the station to London with journey times of under an hour.

6.3 Determination of option

The technical work carried out to assess the optimum location for a station on this stretch of railway, and informal discussions with Network Rail suggest the proposed Manston Green site has more uncertainties associated with it and could potentially therefore be more problematic to deliver than a parkway station at the KCC proposed site.



Figure 9: Location of Manston Green proposed station facility relative to Kent County Councils preferred location for Thanet Parkway Railway Station (Source: Google Maps)

A planning application for the Manston Green Development was submitted to Thanet District Council in late 2013. The planning application no longer contains plans for a parkway station at the site.

The KCC proposed location is deemed to be the most appropriate site for the delivery on a new “Thanet Parkway” railway station.

7. Conclusion

This report aimed to identify a suitable option to improve rail accessibility to the Manston Airport site, Discovery Park and development sites in East Kent. Eight options were identified:

- Do nothing
- Provision of a direct rail connection and railway station at the Manston Airport site

These two options were dropped at the discussion phase, as they were deemed to be unviable. The following six options were discussed at a workshop:

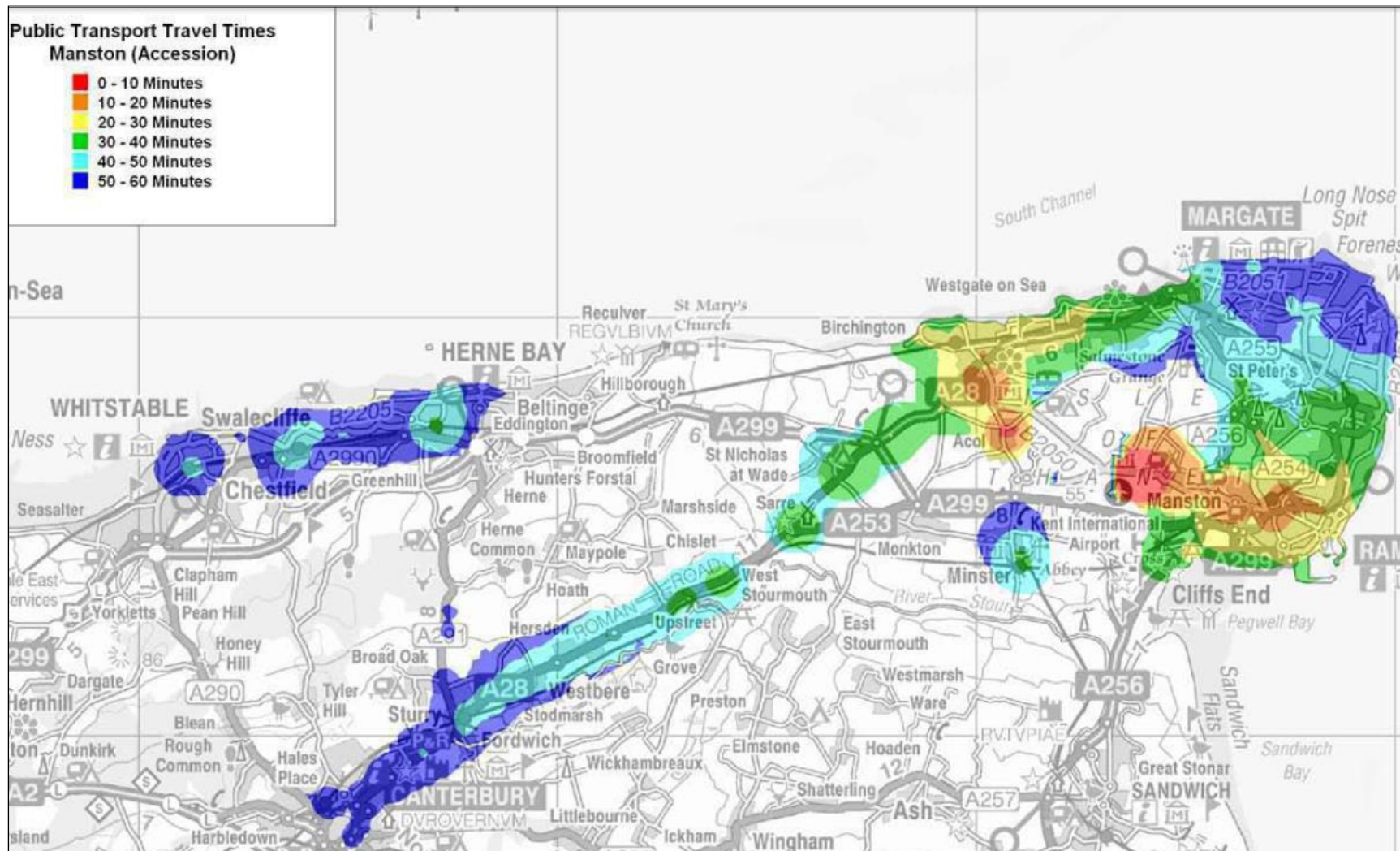
1. New 'Thanet Parkway' Railway Station
2. Increase car parking provision at existing Ramsgate Railway Station
3. Increase car parking provision at existing Minster Railway Station
4. Shuttle bus from the existing Birchington-On-Sea Railway Station
5. Direct coach service between London and Manston Airport/ Discovery park
6. Shuttle bus from existing Ramsgate Railway Station

Of these six options, options 1 and 2 were shortlisted but Option 2 was discounted later due to the unavailability of land to provide additional car park at Ramsgate station. Therefore Option 1 (a new parkway railway station) was selected to achieve KCC's aspiration for East Kent. This option could be developed at a suitable location with adequate road infrastructure that would provide good access to the Manston Airport site, Discovery Park Enterprise Zone and other development sites in East Kent.

This option is seen to have a positive impact in enhancing the attractiveness of East Kent for investment and a high impact on growth in East Kent by unlocking development sites previously accessible by private car and providing future station capacity to support the development of housing and commercial growth in the area.

Further information on the Thanet Parkway option and a full justification about this option can be found in the Thanet Parkway Business Case available at www.kent.gov.uk/thanetparkway

Appendix 1: Journey Time to the Manston Airport site by Public Transport



Source: KCC (2011) Public Transport Accessibility to Small and Medium Sized Regional Airports. (Mott Macdonald Report)