



## **SAHARA GROUP UK – AIRPORT - UK**

### **Thames Estuary Developments**

This division of Sahara Group UK seeks to invest the Group's capital in development opportunities, often through joint ventures with other investment companies and developers.

Working closely with – our residential business – Explore Investments aims to provide innovative residential, commercial, Airport, oil Refinery Railway fast trains links, retail and leisure solutions for new developments. Major projects are already has been Interdisciplinary Team Project – University of Brighton Thames Estuary Developments.

**Please visit our website under Sahara Group Projects**

### **Explore Living**

Explore Living is the residential arm of Sahara Group UK. We pride ourselves on bringing enhanced value and greater customer choice to each and every residential marketplace.

Explore Living is challenging industry norms in the same way that Sahara Group UK has been challenging the construction sector. Using our expertise of house and apartment building, we are providing customers with a new buying experience, with innovative construction approaches and the facility to select from a range of colours, fittings, units and layouts via a unique online system. We are aiming to remove the anxiety from the house-buying process and allow our customers to track the build progress of their house through our online capabilities.

You can find out more about Explore Living, including updates on our latest residential developments, via our website at Sahara Group Constructions

### **Our Capabilities**

Sahara Group UK'S ambition is to be a Total Solutions Provider to the built and infrastructure environment. We work with clients, as part of their team, from project conception through to delivery and on-going operations. This integrated method of delivery along with Sahara Group UK's extensive capabilities across all elements of a projects lifecycle, allow us to deliver world-class projects on time, on budget and to exacting standards.

With our focus on innovation we continually strive to develop the solutions which meet and exceed our client's needs. Through our self-delivery capabilities, the Sahara Group are able to deliver a broad offering that drives out waste, mitigates risk and allows us to integrate project resources quickly and effectively, thereby increasing productivity.



## **Project Introduction**

Ebbsfleet and the immediately surrounding area (hinterland) offer a rare and unique opportunity in the U.K. for a private developer. The Thames Gateway (see below) has been identified by the U.K. Government as the Prime Area in the U.K. for major development, in previous years there had been attempts by previous Governments to develop Northern England but historically the South East of England has been the powerhouse for the whole U.K. for wealth creation and people have always flocked to the area looking for better paid jobs. When the Labour Government came to power in 1997 they therefore decided that the most efficient route to take would be for further development in the South East and specifically the Thames Gateway.

### ***What is the Thames Gateway***

The Mayor of London and the Government have recognised that the Thames Gateway is an area of national and regional importance. It provides the city and the south east with a unique opportunity to develop land for a mix of industry, housing, open spaces and local facilities.

The Thames Gateway is at the heart of the Mayor's plans to regenerate east London, which has suffered from years of under-investment. In the Mayor's Draft London Plan the focus is to support significant growth in housing and employment. The Thames Gateway is an area of land stretching 40 miles (60 km) eastwards from East London [including Stratford, the Olympic Village and Canary Wharf] on both sides of the River Thames and the Thames Estuary [as far as Southend-on-Sea and the Isle of Sheppey] please see the map on the following page.

Parts of Thames Gateway have suffered from years of under-investment as some industries have declined much of the area reflects its industrial past. The lack of river crossings has made the physical barrier effect of the River Thames quite a problem for development in some areas. 'Zones of change' have been identified to target the investment and development needed to regenerate the area, Ebbsfleet is seen as one of the main economic drivers of the whole Thames Gateway. The Thames Gateway is the largest single regeneration initiative in North West Europe and the largest area of brownfield land in the South of England.

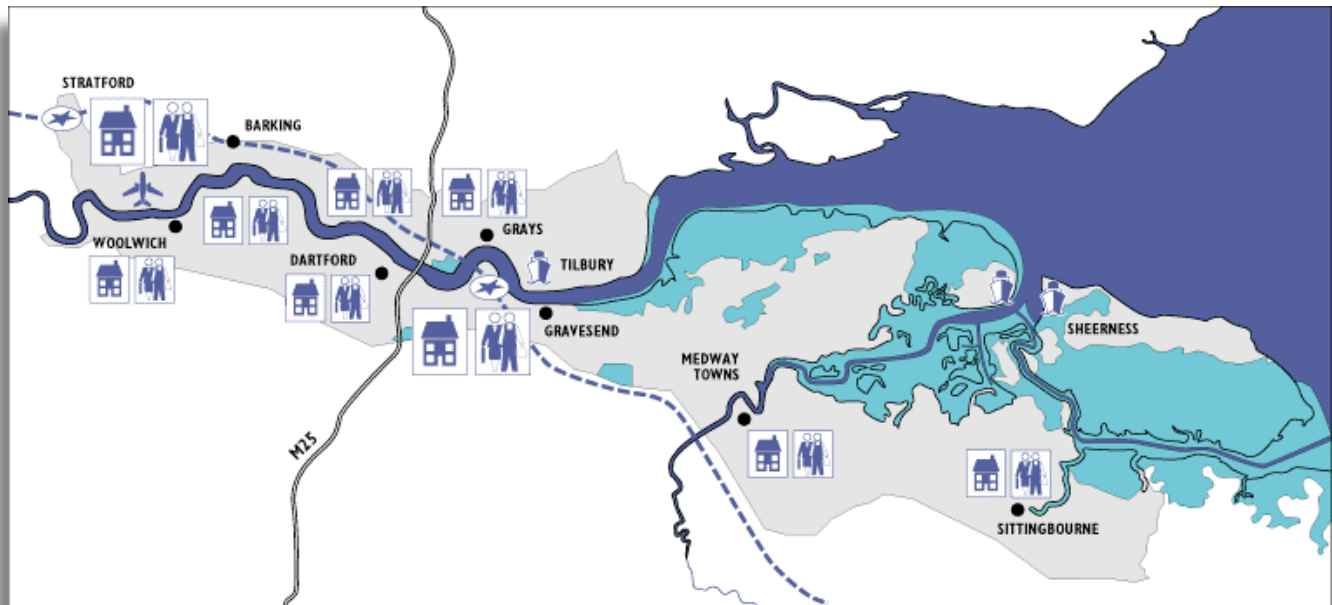


The Thames Gateway region, seen from a satellite

By regenerating town centres and building new towns from scratch, complete with new business space, shops, schools, parks and transport links, the idea is that thousands of new jobs will be created and the massive demand for housing in London and the south east will be relieved.

### Gateway in numbers

- The area is currently home to around 1.6 million people
- 160,000 homes are to be built
- 180,000 jobs are to be created
- £446m was earmarked in 2003 by the ODPM [now The Department for Communities and Local Government] to deliver regeneration initiatives across the Thames Gateway including £142.7m for North Kent.



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|---|--|---|---|---|--|
|  | Opportunities for new homes                    |  | Principal port<br>(Berths and wharves on the Thames are not identified) |  | Priority areas for nature conservation |
|  | Opportunities for new jobs                     |  | Principal airport   |  | Thames Gateway area                    |
|  | Potential Station for Channel Tunnel Rail Link |  | Channel Tunnel Rail Link  |  | M25 motorway route                     |





## ***Economics of the Thames Gateway and Ebbsfleet***

The South East of England has for centuries been the economic powerhouse of U.K. economy. This has been even more marked since the end of the manufacturing in the North of England that started during the industrial revolution. The U.K. economy as a whole has grown more rapidly than those of its European neighbours over the past 20 years, it is a stable country both economically and politically.

The U.K.'s housing market has continued to grow at a rapid pace over the past 12 years and although prices are high there still remains a chronic shortage of new homes, the Government has been keen for developers to build more housing, this policy has not changed with Gordon Brown becoming Prime Minister and he has in fact, increased the Government targets for new housing in the U.K. to 3,000,000 new homes. There are changes currently being made by Government concerning planning regulation in order to speed up the development process.

The Thames gateway has already seen significant investment by the UK Government and no area more so than Ebbsfleet. In this area the Government has invested in the new Cross Channel Rail Link International train station and an increase in the main A2 motorway running past the area as well as locally as in such things as the Fast Track Rail link. To understand the potential of the area, it is only necessary to look 2 miles west where the largest and most successful indoor shopping centre has been built (Bluewater). This is despite the fact the Lakeside shopping centre (nearly as large) is only 7 miles away. Also a few miles further West on the North side of the river the new Olympic park is being built to host the 2012 Olympic Games (please see Local map on the following page).







## ***Ebbsfleet International Train Station***

Central to the whole Kent Thameside region, Ebbsfleet will provide both International and domestic high speed rail services on the new Channel Tunnel Rail Link.



Work on the new six platform station was completed in September 2006. In 2007, the station opens for international Eurostar services that will take as little as 2hr 5min to reach Paris, 1h 41min to Brussels and just 1h 10min to Lille.





In 2009, Ebbsfleet will open for domestic passenger services provided by high-speed commuter trains. Ebbsfleet International station is near Dartford, close to Junction 2 of the M25 and the M20, M2 and A2 routes, and Bluewater shopping centre. The station will offer park-and-ride facilities for up to 9,000 vehicles. From Ebbsfleet, the new railway passes under the Thames in two 3km (2 mile) single-track tunnels (Thames Tunnel) and emerges in West Thurrock just to the east of the Queen Elizabeth II bridge.

At Ebbsfleet International, a new connecting line links the high-speed lines with the existing North Kent Line. This will enable domestic services serving Gravesend and the Medway towns to access the high-speed route.

The station is also central to many of the region's Thames Gateway developments, such as Ebbsfleet Valley, Waterstone Park, Northfleet Embankment and Swanscombe Peninsula.

### **International**

- Channel Tunnel to St Pancras International: 109km (68 miles)
- St Pancras to Ebbsfleet: 17 minutes
- St Pancras to Brussels: 1 hour 51 minutes
- St Pancras to Paris: 2 hours 15 minutes

### **Domestic**

- St Pancras to Folkestone: 57 minutes (est.)
- St Pancras to Canterbury West: 63 minutes (est.)
- St Pancras to Ashford: 40 minutes (est.)

### **SPEED**

300km/h (186mph): Maximum standard operating speed

334.7km/h (208mph): UK record set by Eurostar on CTRL, 30 July 2003

### ***Who is involved in the development project?***

From the very beginning we have worked closely with the Local Government for the area and we have established an effective and cooperative relationship. When we proceed with the development if there are any local land owners who do not cooperate and are unwilling to sell their land they will assist us by issuing a compulsory purchase order to make the landowner sell the land at a fair market





price. The local authority is also keen to help us build to a greater density that has currently been envisaged for the area.

Sir Terry Farrell is developing the masterplan for the area and will be involved in the ongoing design and development of the project. Sir Terry brings with him a worldwide reputation for his previous work as well as excellent links to the most important people within the Government, his reputation and connections will help speed up the planning approval process. Sir Terry is regarded by the Government as the main architect for the Thames Gateway.

King Sturge, the U.K.'s No.1 independent property consultant is leading on the land purchase for this development and they have been developing the correct strategy and estimating prices since March 2007.

DCLG (Department for Communities and Local Government), this is the department within Central Government responsible for the development of the Thames Gateway. Since the inception of this project we have worked with Senior figures within the DCLG to ensure that the correct development was planned and that it would receive full support.

Central Government, currently no official discussions have taken place with Central Government but they are aware of the planned development and based on their current guidelines the Development would be very welcomed.

### ***What is the potential for a development at Ebbsfleet?***

Why people would choose to live and work in this area as opposed to any other:

- Massive investment in transport for the Ebbsfleet area by the UK Government
- The rapid transport to London, this makes the area suitable for people working in London who wish to live in a more pleasant and rural environment. Also the rapid transport will mean it is possible for London based companies to move some or all of their operations to Ebbsfleet with no real loss to business.
- Rapid transport to Europe – this will make the area attractive for European companies looking to set up an office in the U.K.
- The economic power of the Southeast of England.
- Chronic shortage of housing in the UK and especially in the South East



- The commercial sector of the London U.K. property market is very strong, rents in London have reached their highest levels ever and areas such as Canary Wharf are now fully occupied with only transitional vacancies.
- Wealth of the area as shown by the success of the Bluewater shopping centre.
- Ebbsfleet is only 3 minutes drive from the greenbelt, this offers a far higher standard of living for those who seek this.
- Chance for people who travel into London everyday for their work to live locally to their place of employment.
- Cheaper rents than those of London.

### ***What kind of Development?***

The main chance of achieving best returns on investment will come from a high quality build. Because of the size of the development land bought at the start will benefit from the overall increase in land values brought about by the build standard on other adjacent plots, the success of one area will increase the returns on the next area. In order to achieve the best possible returns it is essential to pull in people who are willing to pay a higher price for better quality, this will ensure that any potential commercial customer will be more willing to come to the area as there will be people with greater personal wealth and / or of a good employable standard. With respect to the commercial development, it is essential that the build is to a high standard, as one of the objectives is to have London based companies move to the area, they will expect top quality build to properly represent their international company.