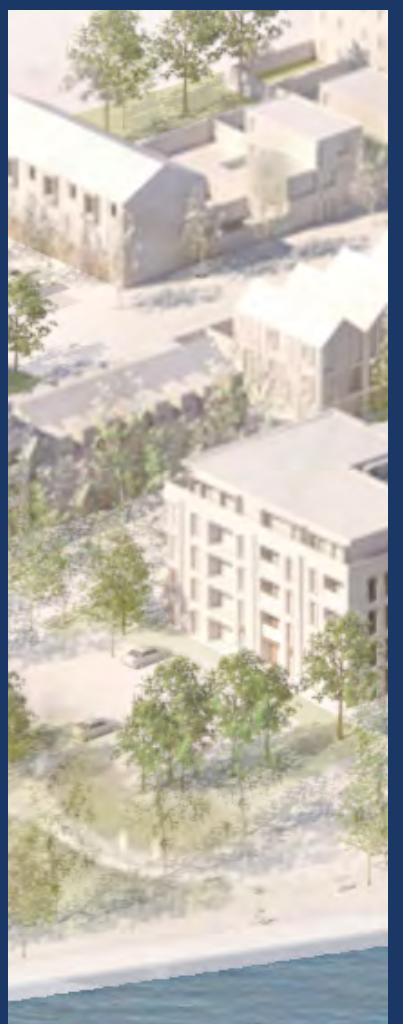


# Technical Appendices

Supporting Technical Studies for Maidstone Town  
Centre Sites Planning Guidelines | January 2020

OPPORTUNITY SITES

MAIDSTONE TOWN CENTRE



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Produced on behalf of Maidstone Borough Council by Savills Urban Design Studio

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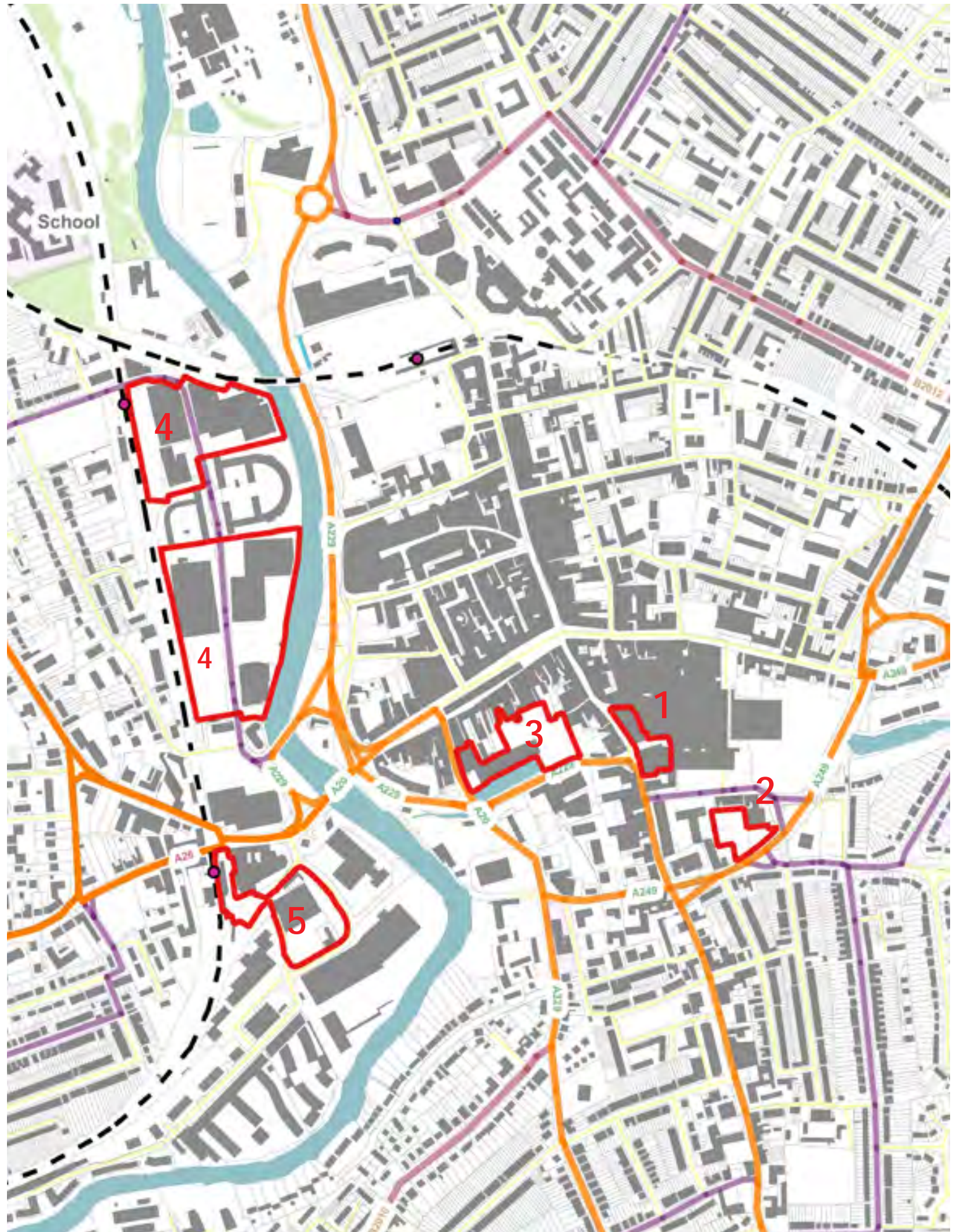
Appendix 5D: Connectivity with Public Transport



*Opportunity Sites*

**Key**

- 1** Granada House + Gala Bingo
- 2** Mote Road
- 3** Len House
- 4** Maidstone Riverside
- 5** Maidstone West





# Purpose and Context

## Role of the Appendices and Planning Guidelines

This Appendix document summarises the technical evidence prepared to support the five Town Centre Sites Planning Guidelines. These have been prepared by lead consultant Savills for Maidstone Borough Council. The purpose of the Planning Guidelines is to encourage, promote and facilitate the redevelopment of key opportunity sites within the town centre.

These opportunity sites consist of:

- Site 1. Gala Bingo and Granada House
- Site 2. Mote Road
- Site 3. Len House
- Site 4. Maidstone Riverside
- Site 5. Maidstone West

This document is broken down into the technical analysis for each of the five sites. This includes summary analysis of the existing context, and presentation of potential opportunities and constraints

The analysis and separate Planning Guideline documents for each site are a culmination of an extensive design and feasibility study undertaken by Savills for five 'Maidstone Town Centre Opportunity Sites' during the period April- August 2018.







# Site 1: Gala Bingo & Granada House

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## Appendix 1A: Planning Context



# National Policy Considerations

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was most recently updated in February 2019. This, together with relevant Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) now represents the most up-to-date national planning policy and guidance.

The NPPF Revision and the PPG place importance on the need to deliver sustainable development. This includes the delivery of necessary development to ensure that local planning authorities can sustainably meet the development needs of their area.

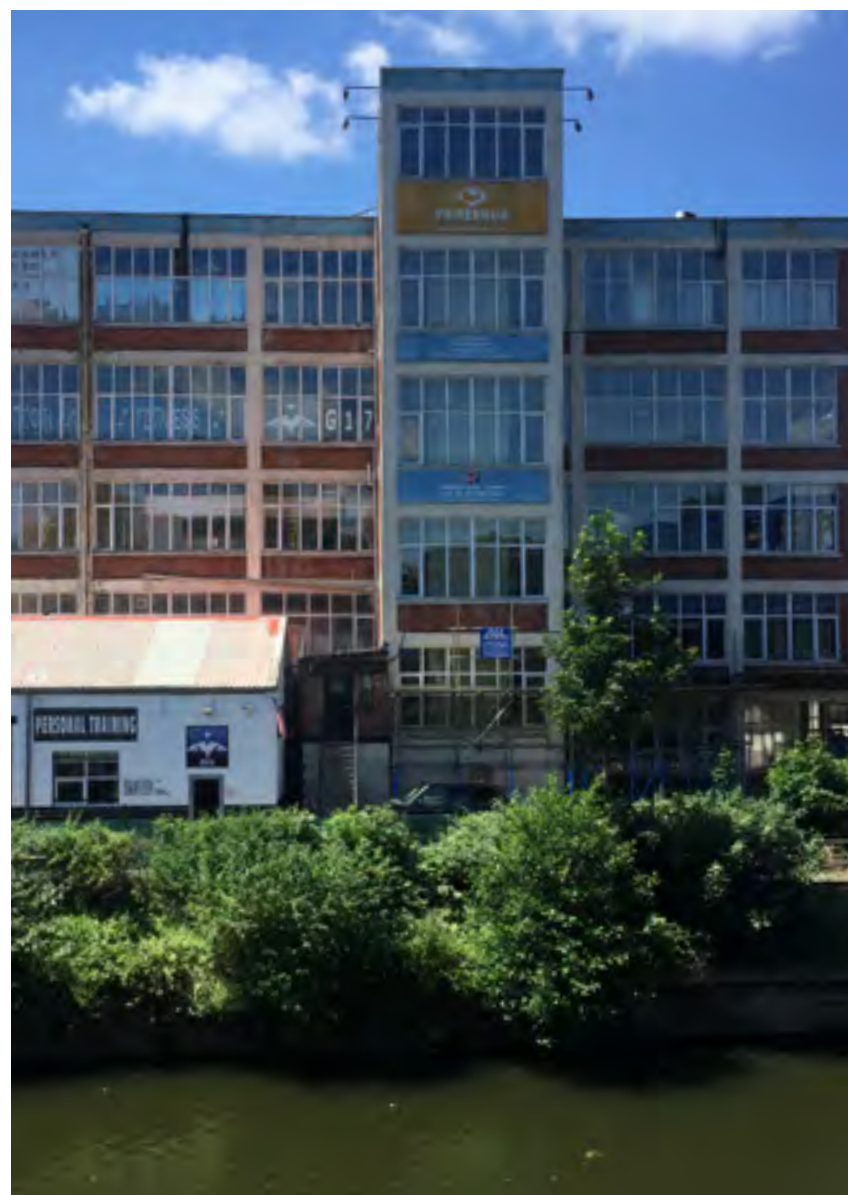
Key objectives within the NPPF Revision include:

- Significantly boosting the supply of homes including affordable homes and maintaining a five year supply of deliverable housing sites.
- Building a strong, competitive economy, placing significant weight on the need to support economic growth and productivity, and taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.
- Ensuring the vitality of town centres, and supporting the role that town centres play at the heart of local community by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation.

The site is within flood zone 3 and therefore has the highest risk of fluvial flooding. The NPPF Revision is clear that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (paragraph 155). Different types of development have different vulnerabilities, and therefore are regarded as being

appropriate or inappropriate. Developments and land uses that are regarded as being “more vulnerable” are not appropriate in flood zone 3. The PPG is clear that such development should be directed towards areas of lower flood risk.

Depending on the type of development being proposed, it may be necessary for the sequential and exceptions tests to be passed. A flood risk assessment will certainly be required if a development is progressed (see the PPG and NPPF Revision footnote 50). This will need to be considered early on, as it will have the potential to affect the scheme, type of development and also quantum.



# Local Policy Considerations

## Maidstone Borough Local Plan (2017)

Maidstone Borough Council adopted the Maidstone Borough Local Plan 2011 – 2031 ('MBLP') in October 2017. The MBLP comprises both the strategic aims and policies for the borough, and specific site allocations.

The borough assets, together with its good access to London and the channel ports for Europe, make Maidstone an attractive location for people to come to work and live. This creates a high pressure for development, so the MBLP focuses strongly on sustainability. Maintaining sustainable communities for the borough's urban and rural residents and businesses is at the heart of the MBLP's objectives.

The MBLP seeks to strike an appropriate balance between the national call for homes and the local need for housing (including affordable housing) and employment for a growing population. Development in the borough has been planned with supporting infrastructure to make proposals acceptable and to maintain residents' quality of life.

Relevant policies within the MBLP include:

- Policy SP4 – Maidstone Town Centre
- Policy SP18- Historic environment
- Policy SP20 – Affordable housing
- Policy H2– Broad locations for housing growth
- Policy DM1 – Principles of good design

- Policy DM4- Development affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets
- Policy DM16 – Town centre uses
- Policy DM19 – Open space and recreation
- Policy DM23/Appendix B – Parking Standards
- Policy DM28 – Secondary shopping frontages
- Policy DM29 – Leisure & community uses in the town centre

The MBLP advises that attention should also be paid to providing sufficient green spaces, not only for people to enjoy, but also to the value we should place upon our natural environment for its own intrinsic worth.

**Policy SS1** includes a housing target of 17,660 dwellings over the 20 year Plan period. This equates to a target of 883 dwellings per annum. In addition, the spatial strategy for the borough identifies a need for:

- 39,830m<sup>2</sup> floorspace for office use
- 20,290m<sup>2</sup> floorspace for industrial use
- 49,911m<sup>2</sup> floorspace for warehousing use
- 29,800m<sup>2</sup> floorspace for retail use



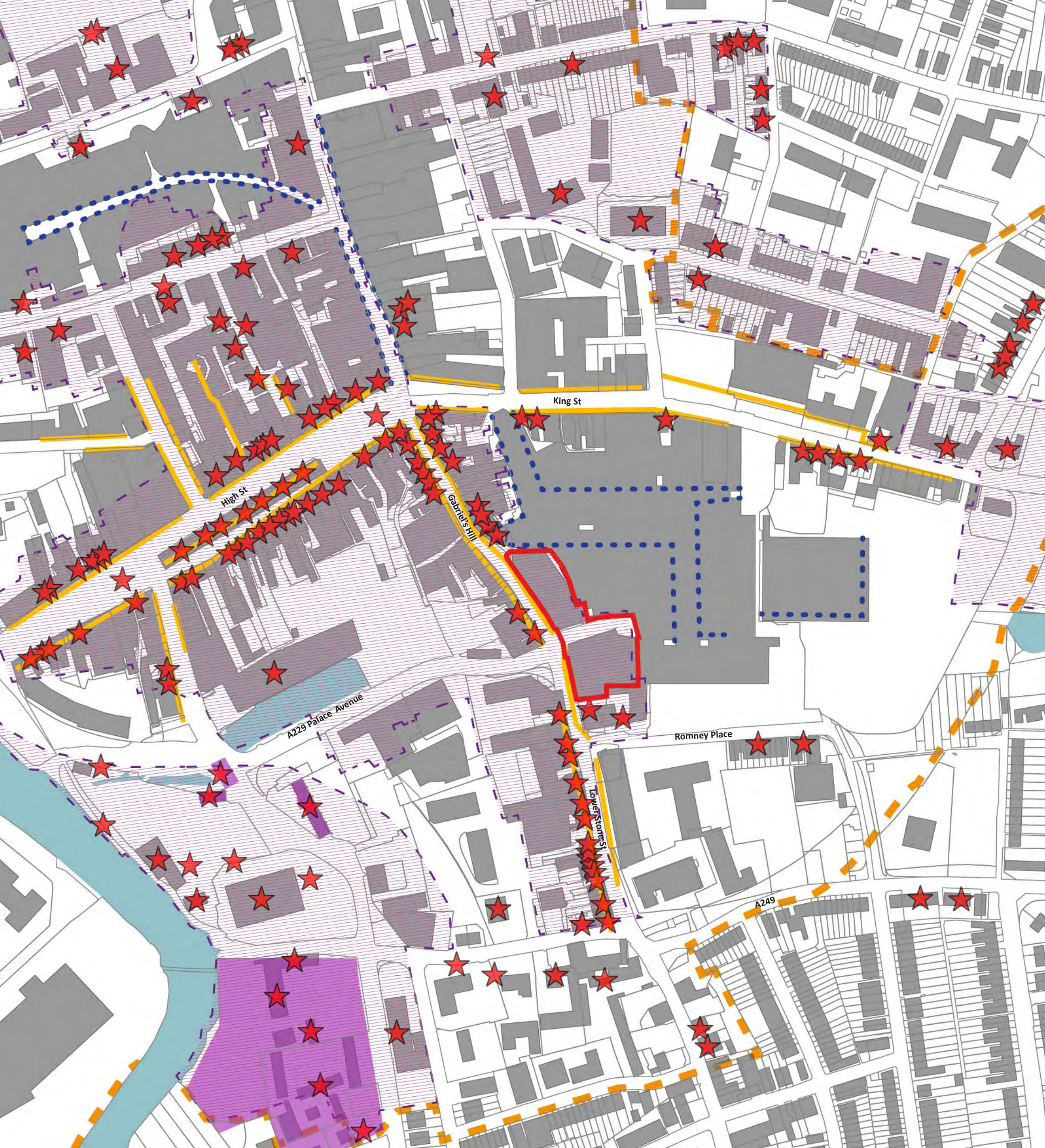











Fig. 1.1 Designations and Features

scale 1:2500 @ A3

Key

- |  |   |
|--|---|
|  Conservation Area                          |  MBLP Policy DM27 Primary shopping frontage |
|  Scheduled Monuments                        |  Built Form                                 |
|  Listed Buildings                           |  Water Bodies                               |
|  MBLP Policy DM28 Primary shopping frontage |  MBLP Town Centre Boundary                  |
|  |  Site Boundary                              |



**Policy SP4 Maidstone Town Centre** seeks to retain and enhance a variety of well integrated attractions including shopping, service sector-based businesses, leisure and cultural facilities that the town centre offers and also to retain the best quality office stock, whilst allowing for the redevelopment of lower quality offices. Policy SP4 of the MBLP supports a comprehensive retail redevelopment centred on The Mall, immediately to the north of the site.

The MBLP, paragraph 4.65, also supports the town centre as a suitable place for residential use: *“Whilst commercial uses are the priority for the town centre, residential development can have a supporting role, in particular as part of mixed use schemes. Additional*

*residential development in the town centre will help to promote town centre vitality, especially during the evening.”* Policy SP 4(vii.) promotes *“Select opportunities for residential redevelopment”*.

The MBLP seeks to focus retail uses within the primary and secondary shopping frontages policy areas of the town, especially protecting and consolidating retail use in the primary shopping frontage areas. **Policy DM28 ‘Secondary Shopping Frontages’** promotes the continued vibrancy of these streets, with their predominance of small units and independent shops.

The frontages along Gabriel’s Hill and Lower Stone Street are designated as secondary retail frontages

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### Policy SP4: Town centre vision

By 2031 a regenerated and sustainable Maidstone town centre will be a first class traditional town centre at the heart of the 21st Century County Town that has maintained its place as one of the premier town centres in Kent by creating a distinctive, safe and high quality place that has:

- Retained its best environmental features, including the riverside and the enhanced public realm;
- Provided a variety of well-integrated attractions for all ages including new shopping, service sector based businesses, leisure, tourism, and cultural facilities;
- Improved access for all.

Key components in realising this vision are:

- Enhancing the diversity of the retail offer, supporting a continued balance between independent and multiple retailers;
- Creating a highly sustainable location resilient to future climate change;
- Establishing the town centre as an attractive hub for business building on the town centre’s assets and environment;
- Creating a stronger mix and balance of uses within the centre to support long term viability including where appropriate residential development; and
- Tackling congestion and air quality issues through improvements in provision for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists, including public transport.



where retail, office and food and drink uses are appropriate and which establish or retain an active frontage to the street.

**Policy DM19 Open Space and Recreation** covers the provision on new housing sites. It requires a standard of 0.7ha amenity green space, 0.25ha space for children and young people and 1.6ha publicly accessible outdoor sports space per 1000 residents. The policy also requires 0.2ha allotments and community gardens and 6.5ha of natural/semi-natural areas of open space per 1000 residents. Given the compact nature of the site and the high density context, it is recognised that it will not be feasible to provide the required amount of open space on the site. Paragraph 6.89 of the MBLP allows for a financial contribution to be made to improve existing sites and enhance the capacity of existing provision if suitable opportunities for new open space cannot be identified within the specified accessibility standards due to site constraints.

Parking standards are set out in **Policy DM23/Appendix B** of the MBLP. Maidstone has approved vehicle parking standards published by Kent Highway Services as an interim measure for Development Management decisions, and the county gives advice on development proposals that generate a need for parking provision.

There is a significant need for affordable housing within the borough and a clear justification for the council to seek affordable dwellings through new development schemes. In order to respond to the identified need

for affordable housing of different tenures through the period of the plan, the MBLP has a target rate of 30% affordable housing for new developments within the Maidstone Urban Area (**Policy SP20 Affordable Housing**), with indicative targets of 70% affordable rented housing, social rented housing or a mixture of the two and 30% intermediate affordable housing (shared ownership and/or intermediate rent). The inclusion of this quantum of affordable housing on the site may not be achievable due to economic viability, however, and in such cases the policy recommends developers to enter into negotiations with the council's Housing department, in consultation with registered providers at the earliest stage of the application process. Given the costs of demolishing or refurbishing Granada House and Gala Bingo, viability of any development is likely to be a challenge, and early discussions relating to affordable housing provision are therefore highly recommended.

It will also be necessary to consider the impact of proposals on heritage assets. Whilst neither site contains a listed building, there are a number of listed buildings in the immediate area, notably those fronting the western side of Lower Stone Street. The site also lies within the Conservation Area. Any scheme will therefore need to be designed having regard to the setting of these heritage assets and the sites' situation within the Maidstone Centre Conservation Area. A more detailed review of the policy implications relating to these heritage assets is provided in Appendix 1C Heritage Review.

## Neighbourhood Plans

There are no made Neighbourhood Plans impacting upon the site.

## Relevant Planning History

Since 1996 there have been a number of planning applications and applications for certificates of lawfulness for the gradual conversion of offices above the retail units to flats.

The Gala Bingo building (formerly ABC cinema) has been the subject of a number of planning applications since the 1980s including the creation of a bingo area (1979) alterations to form a fourth cinema screen (1979) alterations to form a fourth cinema screen (1981) new discotheque/restaurant (1983) and change of use of part of the former cinema to retail and/or food and drink (2001).







# Site 1: Gala Bingo & Granada House

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## Appendix 1B: Site Analysis



## 1B:01 Land Use

Gabriel's Hill is a relatively busy pedestrianised street that has benefited from recent public realm improvements, and a number of small, independent shops, whilst Lower Stone Street is a busy one-way street, with traffic running in a north to south direction. Uses on Lower Stone Street include retail, office and restaurants at ground floor with mixed uses above. To the immediate west, Palace Avenue also forms part of the busy one-way system, with vehicle users having a clear view of Gala Bingo. To the immediate east, The Mall shopping centre abuts the rear of Granada House, whilst the associated multi-storey car park is situated to the east of Gala Bingo.

To the east of the site, The Mall is occupied by a variety of retail units on the ground, first and second floors with parking above. Part of this upper level is also occupied by Maidstone Borough Council offices. Whilst visits to the Council offices, shops and car parking during helps create daytime vibrancy, there is limited restaurant/leisure uses that stimulate the evening economy. In 2014, its owners, Capital and Regional, proposed a potential redevelopment scheme for The Mall and its surrounds including new retail, leisure and residential uses. However, to date, this has not been taken forward.

**16** Granada House comprises a three storey art deco building fronting on to Gabriel Hill. It has 12 retail units on the ground floor and 20 apartments above (1 x 1 bed and 19 x 2 bed). These flats are all let on short-hold tenancies and managed by an agent.

Gala Bingo is owned and managed by Buzz Bingo. The majority of the ground floor is in use as a bingo hall, however the remainder of the building retains the screens, seating, projection rooms, offices and ticket/confectionery sales areas associated with its previous cinema use. This includes a foyer area on the ground floor fronting Lower Stone Street (now boarded up), a small cinema screen/seating on the first floor and a large cinema screen subdivided into two seating areas/screens on the first/second floor. Projection rooms occupy the fourth floor.



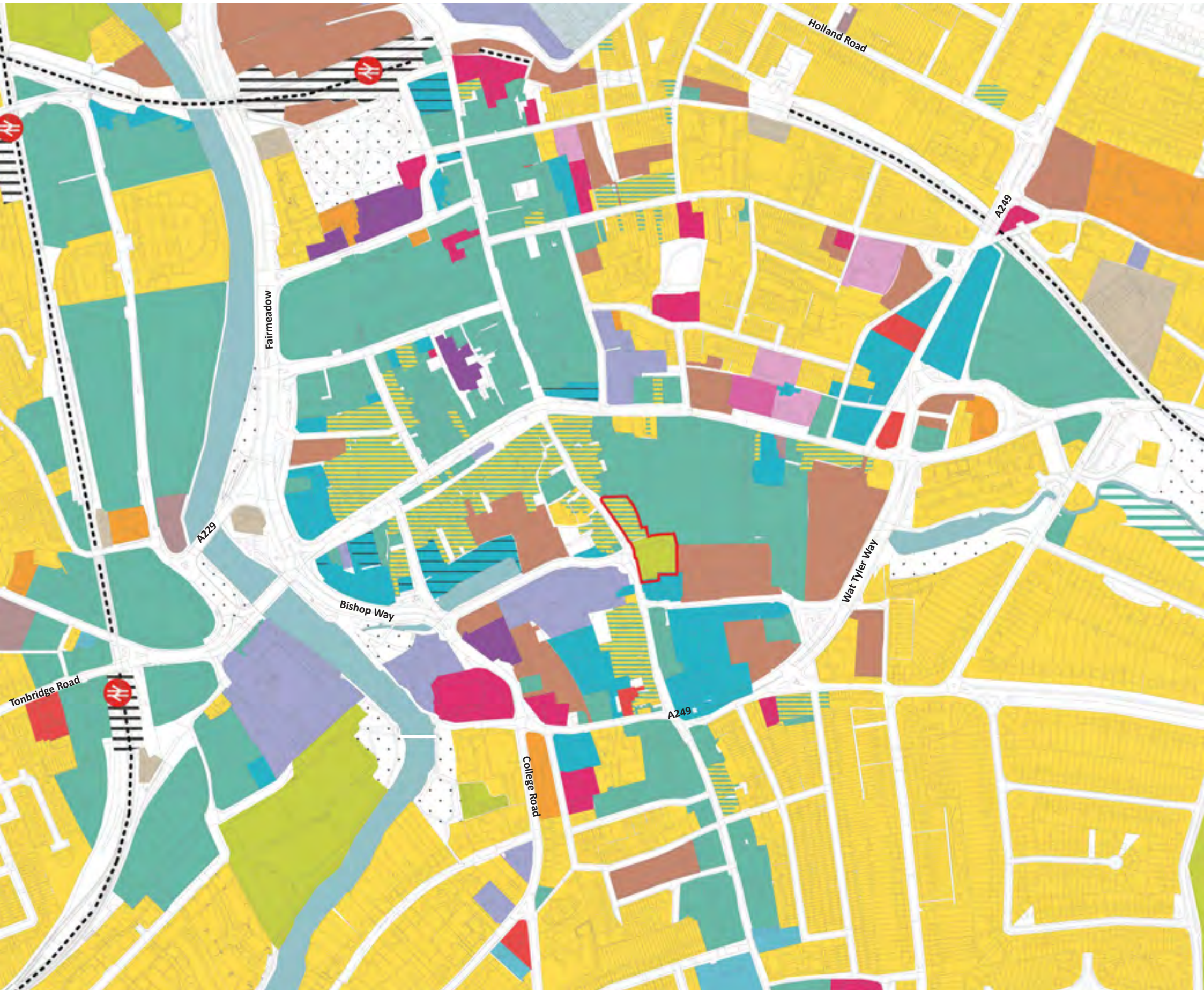


Figure 1.2 Land Use & Local Facilities

- |   |                     |                               |
|---|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| Residential   | Civic               | Allotments                    |
| Retail  | Cultural            | Place of Worship              |
| Mixed-use (Ground Floor Retail + Residential or Employment above) | Leisure             | Car Parking                   |
| Employment  | Hotel               | Industry and Electricity      |
| Mixed-use (Retail and/or Employment)                              | Prison              | Hospital and Doctor's Surgery |
| Education   | Park and Open Space | Train Station                 |
|   | Community Centre    | Site                          |



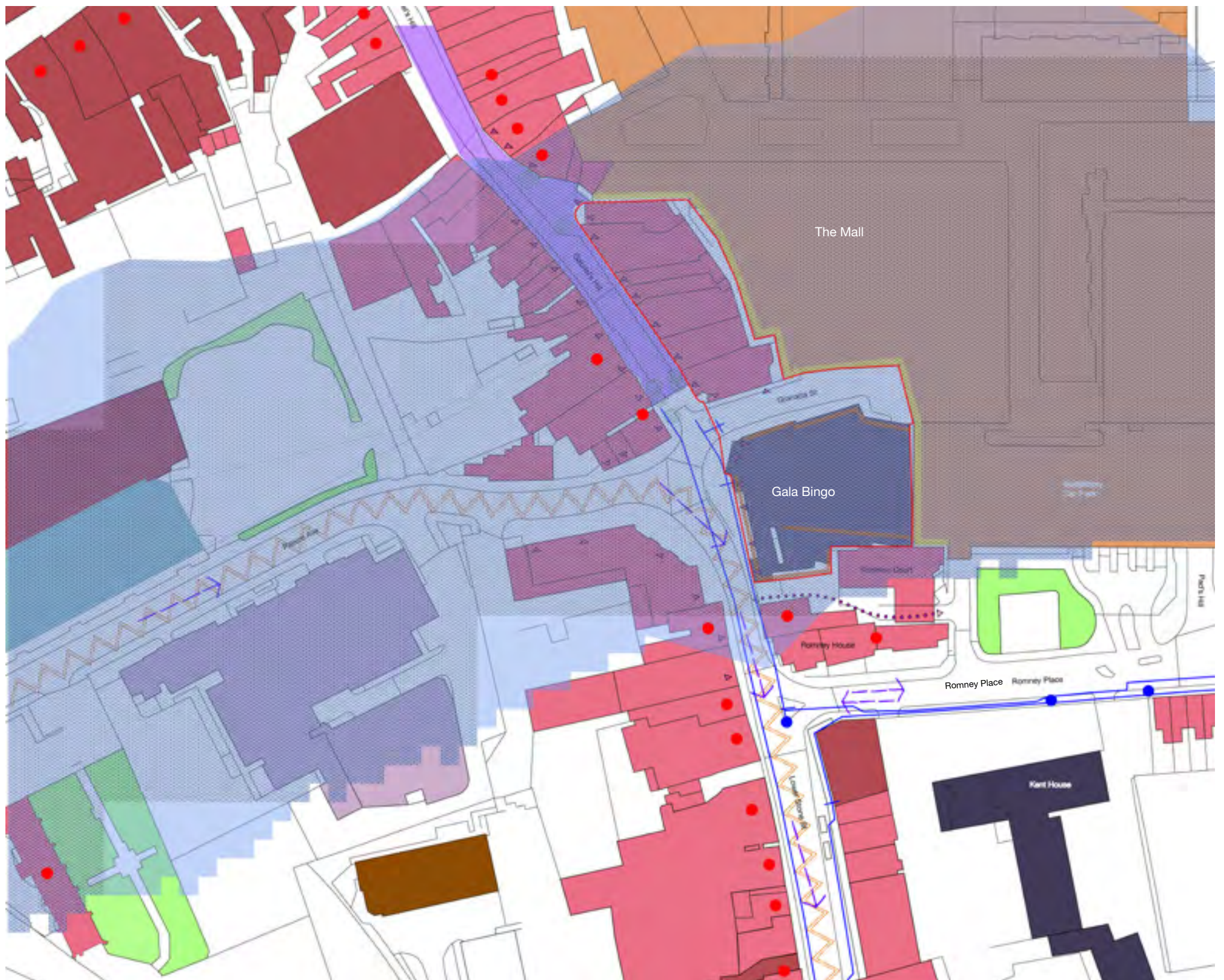
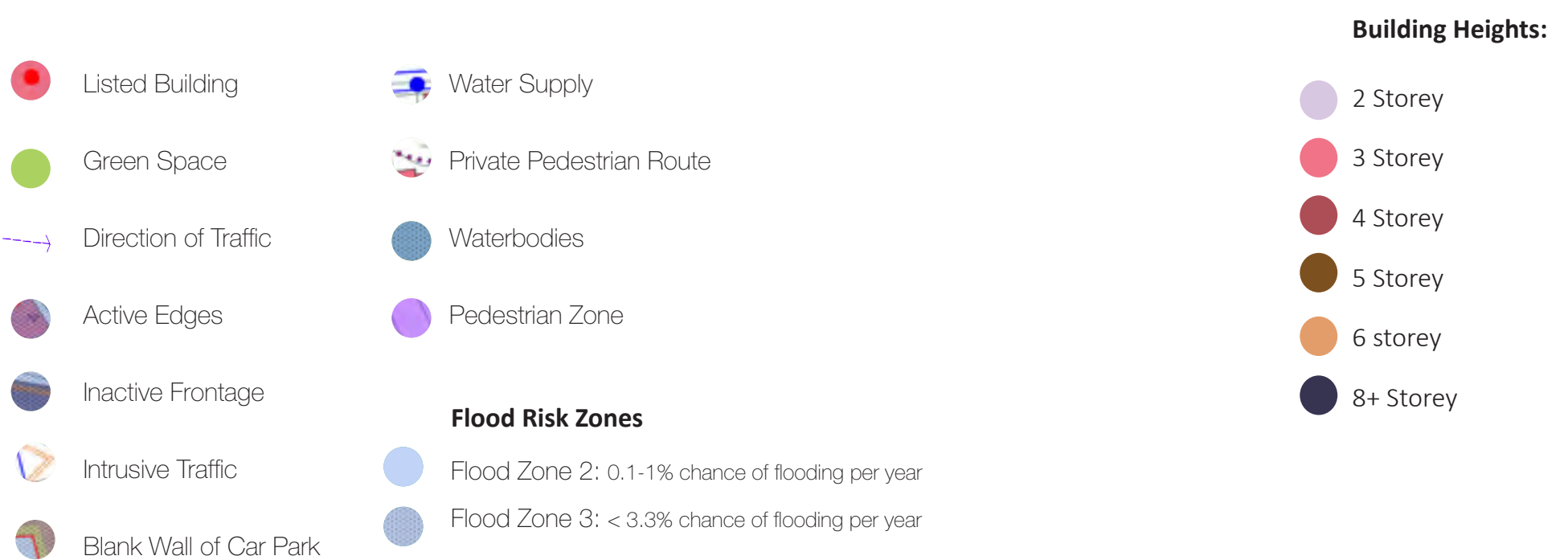


Figure 1.3 Contextual Analysis





## 1B:02 Built Form

The site comprises two separate buildings, Granada House and Gala Bingo, separated from each other by Granada Street.

Granada House is owned by Maidstone Borough Council and comprises a three storey art deco building fronting on to Gabriel Hill. It has 12 retail units on the ground floor and 20 apartments above (1 x 1 bed and 19 x 2 bed). These flats are all let on short-hold tenancies and managed by an agent. Access to the apartments is via a shared entrance hall off Granada Street, as well as a rear external staircase off Gabriel's Hill, adjacent to The Mall. This access is via a private gate and narrow alley giving it a dark and inhospitable character with poor surveillance.

The apartment element of the building occupies a narrower footprint than the retail units below, providing a roof terrace overlooked by shared external access balconies. Views from this rear elevation are dominated by a blank brick wall forming the western elevation of The Mall, which rises to the equivalent of approximately five storeys.

Gala Bingo is an imposing building set over four storeys. This is higher than adjacent buildings on Gabriel's Hill and Lower Stone Street, which are generally three storeys high (see Figure 1.3). There are a number of taller buildings within the town centre, including:

- The Mall- 5 storeys
- The Mall Multi-storey car park – 8 storeys
- Coleman House, King Street – 11 storeys
- Kent House, Romney Place – 9 storeys
- Medvale House, Mote Road – 8 storeys
- Midhurst Court, Mote Road- 13 storeys
- Miller House, Lower Stone Street- 13 storeys
- MBC + The Mall-10 storeys
- Sunningdale Court, Square Hill – 14 storeys

## 1B:03 Heritage and Architecture

The site does not contain any Scheduled Monuments or Listed Buildings, however it has a strong historic context, lying within the Maidstone Centre Conservation Area and containing two buildings of historic interest. A more detailed heritage analysis has been undertaken by Savills Heritage and is included at Appendix 1C.

Historic mapping from 1876-1895 (Figure 1.4) shows that the River Len ran through the centre of the Granada House site. In the 1876-1895 mapping, the river is also present to the east of the site, running parallel to a street known as Water Lane, reflecting the dominance of the river in the area. A brewery occupied the area to the east of the site, and Granada Street generally follows the historic route of 'Lower Brewery', which provided access to this riverside brewery. By 1896-98, the river appears to have been culverted beneath Water Lane, east of the site, but is still above ground within the Granada House area and it is not until the 1936 mapping that the river appears to have been culverted, allowing for the construction of Granada House.

As late as the 1908 historic mapping, Gabriel's Hill and Lower Stone Street formed a continuous main north-south route through the town past the site, with no east-west route in the position of Palace Avenue.

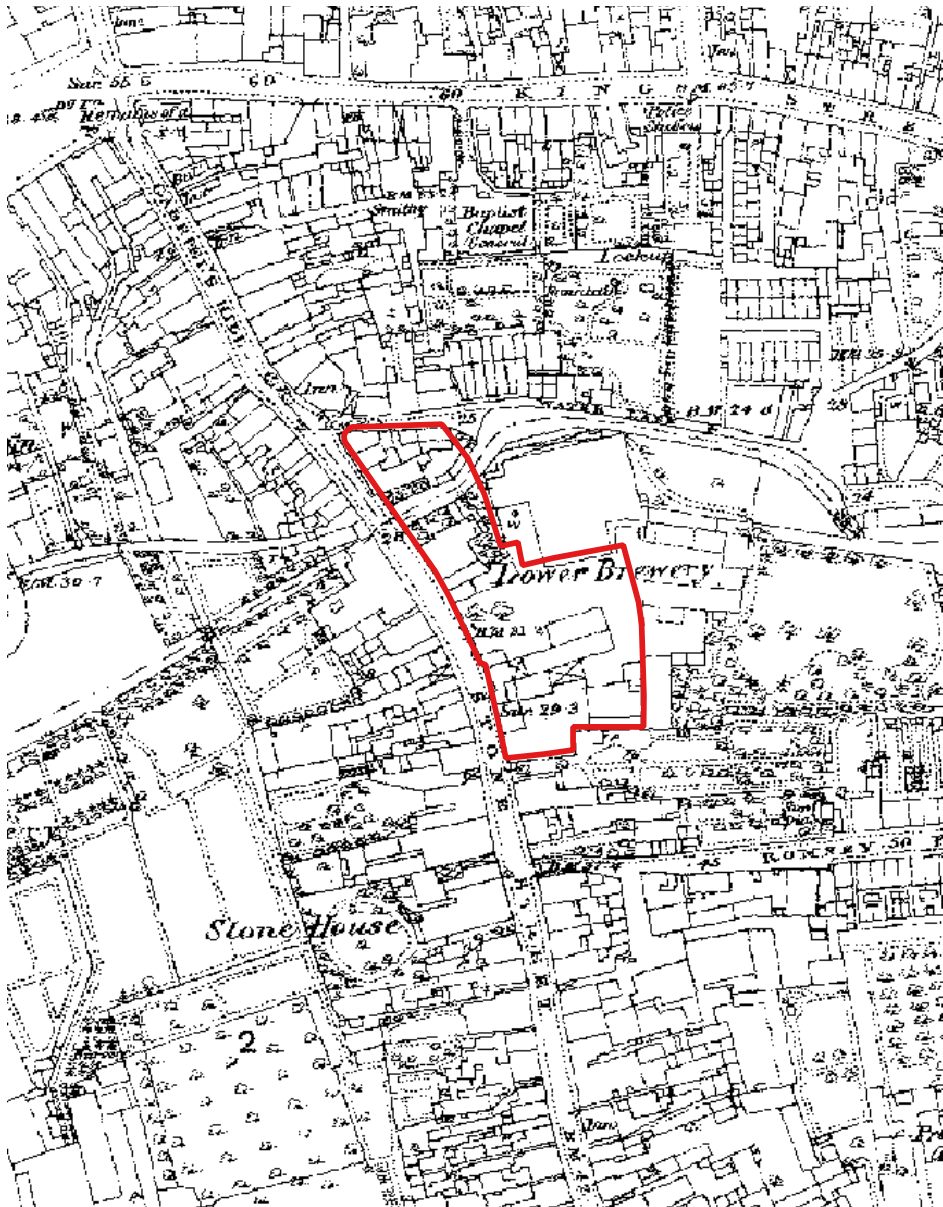
### Gala Bingo

Gala Bingo is classified as an 'essential' building in the Maidstone Centre Conservation Area Appraisal. The Appraisal describes its main architectural focus being the: *"main entrance front built on the splay on the corner of Lower Stone Street and Granada Street, which has a giant order of four prostyle Corinthian columns at first floor level and an eaves cornice with Egyptian detailing. This frontage partially closes views from Gabriel's Hill and Palace Avenue and is extremely important in townscape terms. The frontage to Lower Stone Street has tall round-headed windows to the first floor in metal-framed neo-Georgian design which served the original restaurant."*

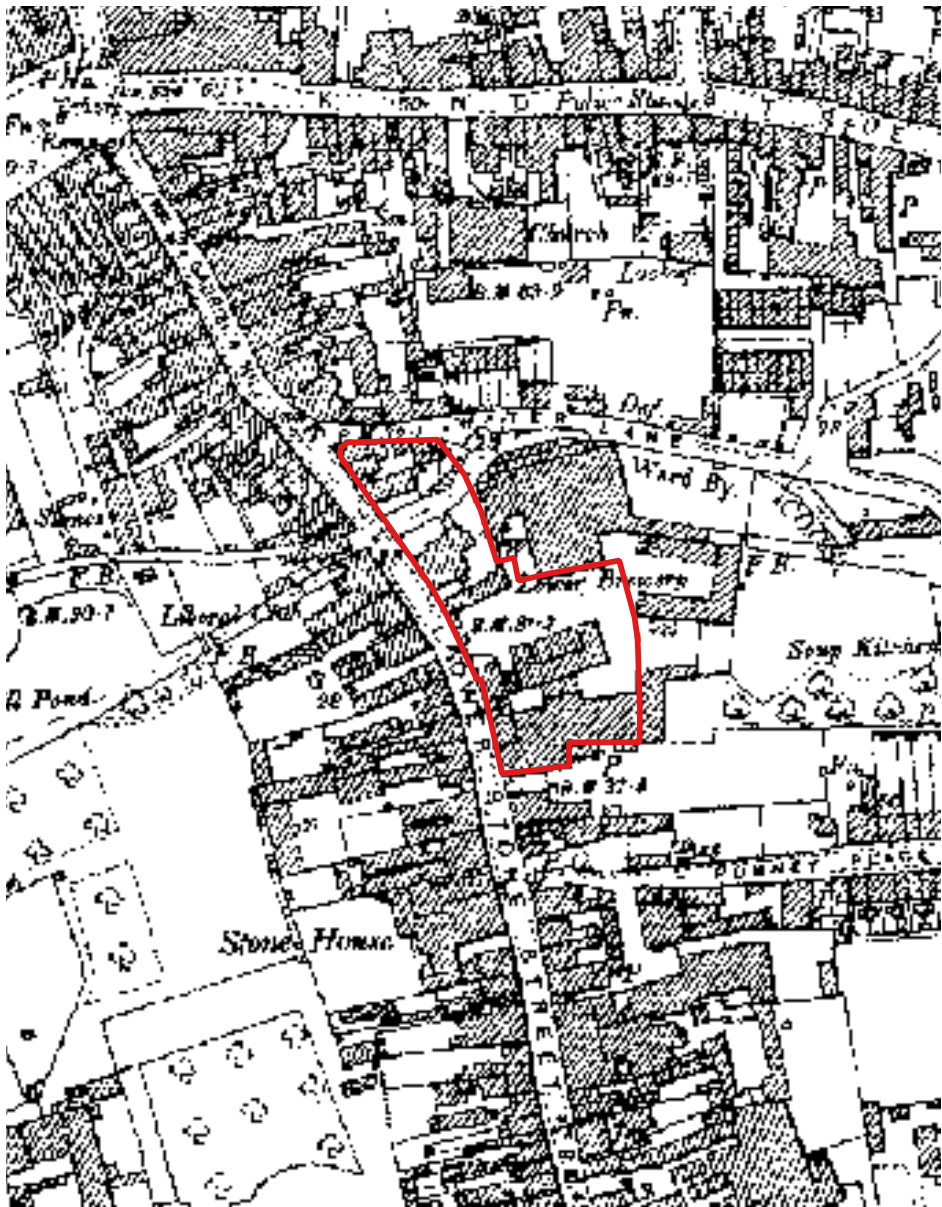
Further details relating to the history and features of the Gala Bingo are provided in Appendix 1C.



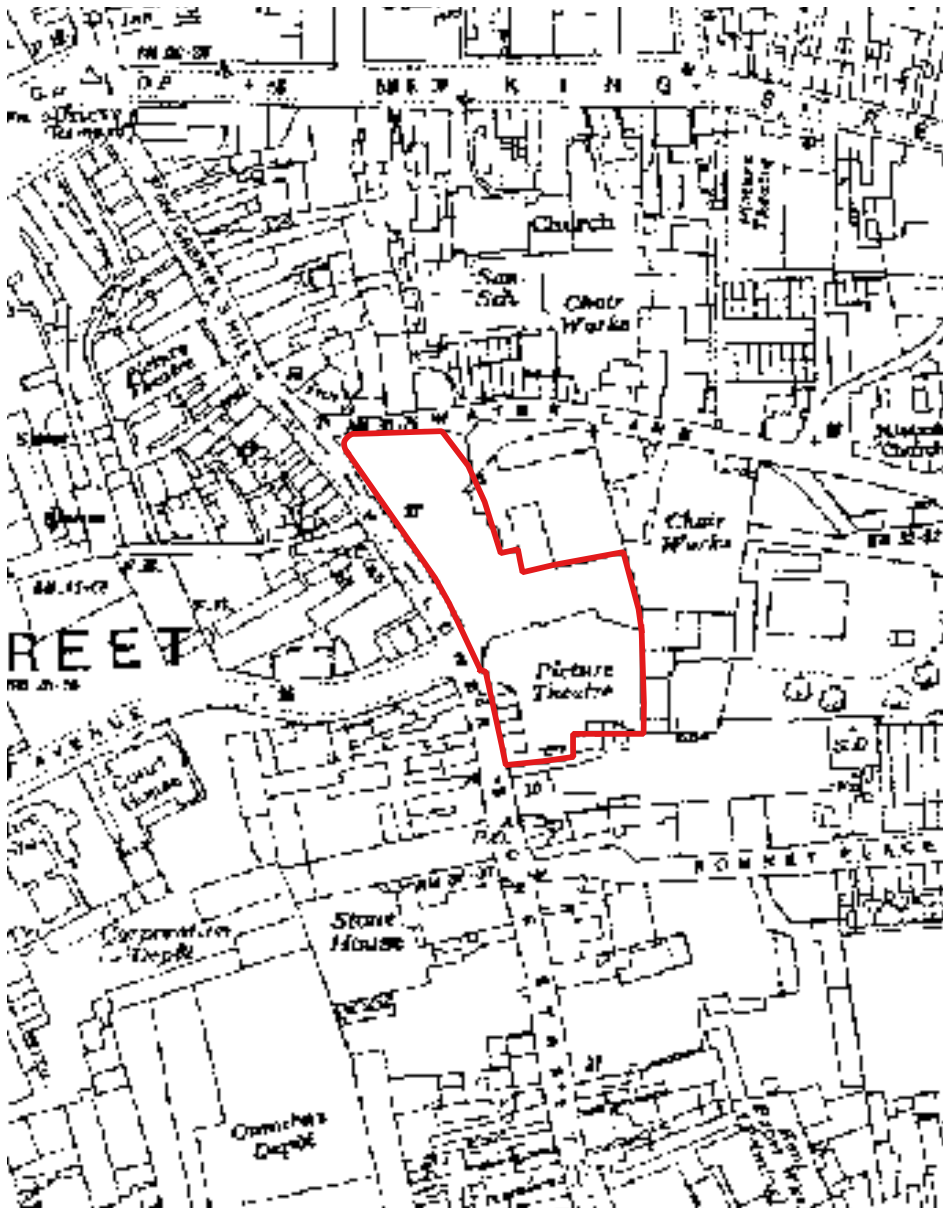
Figure 1.4: Historic Mapping



Historic Map: 1876-1895



Historic Map: 1896-1898



Historic Map: 1936-1946



Granada House, Gabriel's Hill





GAZI  
INTERNET  
GROCERY

VEGETARIAN

HER - GROCERY

BINGO

Gala

ENTRANCE

ENTRANCE

PLAYDOWN

ENTRANCE

ENTRANCE

ENTRANCE



## Granada House

Granada House was built in 1937 and comprises a building of three storeys in brown and red brick with cement banding. The rounded street corners at each end are typical of the 1930s Art Deco architectural style, as are the metal crittal windows. The Maidstone Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal lists the building as making a 'neutral contribution' to the character Conservation Area. As such, the principle of demolition would be acceptable if the replacement building was able to make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area through design, scale, mass and use of materials. Further details relating to the history and features of the Gala Bingo are provided in Appendix 1C.

# 1B:04 Landform, Hydrology, Noise and Air Quality

The site occupies a flat, floodplain area, lying at approximately 10m Above Ordnance Datum (see Figure 1.6).

The River Medway presents a relatively high flood risk to developments along its banks and the entire site lies within the Environment Agency’s Flood Zone 3. This is a ‘high’ risk area, with a 3.3% chance of flooding in any one year. The Granada house part of the site lies directly over the culverted River Len, a tributary of the River Medway, and the Gala Bingo building is known

to have experienced significant flood damage in 1968. Given the likely flood risks, it would not be appropriate to have residential uses at the ground floor level.

Given its town centre location and the proximity of Palace Avenue and known concerns relating to air quality in the immediate area, noise and air quality assessments will be required as part of any planning application, together with the delivery of appropriate mitigation measures.

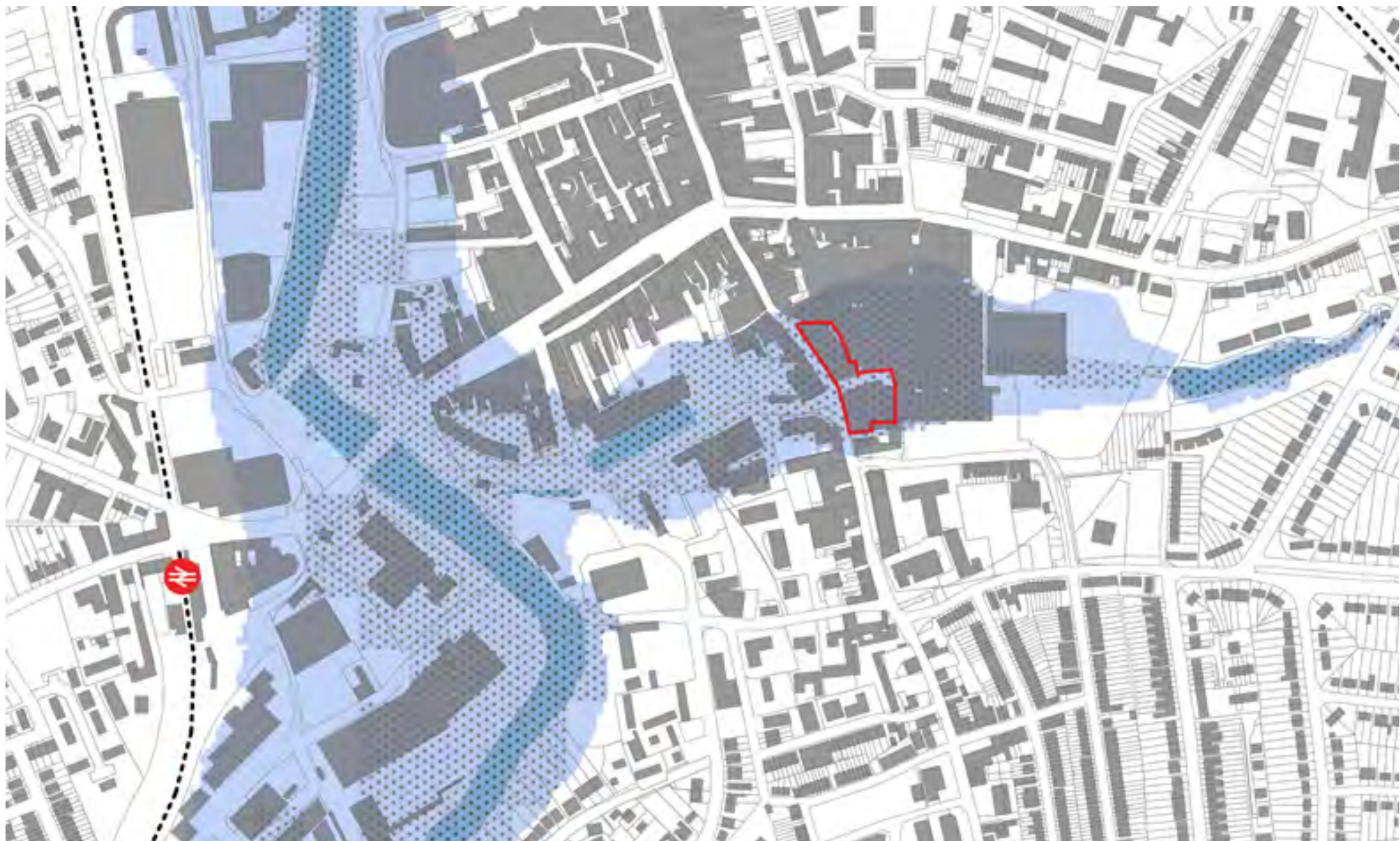




Figure 1.5:Hydrology

**Flood Risk Zones**

-  Flood Zone 3: < 3.3% chance of flooding per year
-  Flood Zone 2: 0.1-1% chance of flooding per year






- |   |              |   |               |
|---|--------------|---|---------------|
|  | Built Form   |  | Train Station |
|  | Contour 5m   |  | Water Bodies  |
|  | Railway      |  | Study Area    |
|  | Primary Road |   |               |

Figure.1.6: Landform





Fig.1.7 Movement and Access

- |                |                      |   |
|----------------|----------------------|---|
| ■ Railway Line | — Pedestrian Street  | Bus Station                             |
| — A Roads      | Public Rights of Way | 400m radius (5 min. walk) from Station  |
| — B Roads      | Train Station        | 800m radius (10 min. walk) from Station |
| — Minor Roads  | Bus Routes           | Site Boundary                           |
| Local Street   | Station carpark      |   |



## 1B:05 Movement

This site is situated to the north of Maidstone's one-way system on the corner of the A229 Lower Stone Street / Gabriel's Hill / Granada Street. The A229 Lower Stone Street is a dual-carriageway, one-way road which runs in a north-south alignment between Rochester in the north, and Hawkhurst in the south. Within the vicinity of the site, Lower Stone Street acts as an arterial route, with a 30mph speed limit.

Lower Stone Street is a busy one-way street forming part of the through-route around the town centre.

Gabriel's Hill is a narrow, one-way street which forms a part of the main retail core in Maidstone, with commercial frontages lining both sides of the street. It is restricted for car access at all times but allows servicing and disabled access between the hours of 5:30pm – 10:30am. It is one way from the Granada House end. The street has been undergoing a series of public realm enhancements, extending the redevelopment works completed for the High Street in 2012/13 as far as the junction of Gabriel's Hill with Palace Avenue. Designs within the paving here include a time trail reflecting the history of the town.

Granada Street is a dead-end road used by visitors to Gala Bingo. Whilst there are gates to the road from The Mall at its eastern end, there is no regular access required and owners of The Mall agree that, subject to legal checks, access to The Mall need not be retained.

In terms of the pedestrian environment, Lower Stone Street has varied pavement widths, and, outside of the Gala Bingo building, are particularly narrow. The footway surfaces do, however, benefit from dropped kerb crossovers across accesses and junctions, most of which have tactile paving and the appropriate colouring.

Immediately opposite the existing Gala Bingo building, a signalised pedestrian crossing is present, allowing for safer crossing of the highway.

There are no designated cycling routes within the site's immediate vicinity.

Maidstone has good transport links, with direct connections to London and the channel tunnel via the M20 and M2 motorway, and rail connections to London, the coast and Medway towns through three central railway stations in the town. There are approximately six trains per hour departing from Maidstone East Station, including direct connections to London Victoria and Ashford International, with interchanges to a number of destinations available. Expected improvement to links direct to the City of London via Thameslink in 2019 will further improve the site's connectivity and attraction as a commuter location, whilst improvements to Maidstone East and West (HS1) stations could further unlock potential.

The site lies on the southern edge of the heart of Maidstone town centre and is approximately 9 minutes' walk distance from Maidstone East Station and ten minutes from Maidstone West Station. The closest bus stops are on Lower Stone Street (50m away) and Maidstone Bus Station (80m away). Further details on connectivity with Maidstone's railway stations and bus stations are provided at Appendix 1D.

The closest taxi ranks are on High Street and King Street, both within a 200m walk to the north.

The site is immediately adjacent to the The Mall public multi-storey car park.



# 1B:06 Landscape and Visual Context

The site has a hard, urban character, with no vegetation. Current enhancements to the public realm of Gabriel’s Hill are significantly improving the visual and physical quality of the street, including high quality paving and street furniture.

With regards to its visual context, Gala Bingo terminates a vista along Palace Avenue, a one-way street which forms part of the busy route running around the town centre. Its monolithic massing and art deco architecture mean that it is a memorable landmark, reinforced by its place in the recent cultural history of the local community. As Granada House fronts on to Gabriel’s Hill, it is less visible to passing traffic, however its adjacent location to one of the entrances to The Mall mean that it forms a relatively memorable element in the streetscape of Gabriel’s Hill. By virtue of their listing by English Heritage/Historic England, the visual setting of a number of properties on the western side of Gabriel’s Hill are of greater importance than that of Granada House, in planning terms.

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Granada House & Granada Street, from multi-storey car park



Granada House from Gabriel’s Hill



Granada Street, between Granada House & Gala Bingo





*Gala Bingo and Palace Avenue, from roof of Len House*



*Lower Stone Street, looking north towards the site*







# Site 1: Gala Bingo & Granada House

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## Appendix 1C: Heritage Review



# Heritage Review: Gala Bingo and Granada House

The current Gala Bingo building was formerly known as the Granada Theatre and is located on the corner of Lower Stone Street and Granada Street, within the Maidstone Town Centre Conservation Area.

The importance of this theatre lies in that it was the template for what came to be known as the 'standard Granada', and was the first of the 12 so-called 'standard' Granada Theatres to be built as a circuit for the Granada Theatres chain outside of London, after the splendours of Walthamstow Granada in 1930 (Grade II\* Listed) and Tooting Granada in 1931 (Grade I Listed) in London.

The interior at Maidstone was designed by noted Russian theatre set designer Theodore Komisarjevsky in the Italian Renaissance style, which he had previously used at the Phoenix Theatre in London in 1930 (designed also by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott and Cecil Masey, on behalf of Sidney Bernstein, Grade II Listed). There were three decorative grilles on each side of the proscenium at Maidstone, which had a narrow frieze across its top, depicting charioteers, and which were inspired by the classical friezes used by Komisarjevsky at The Phoenix. Other features incorporated into the Maidstone Granada, and which replicated those at the Phoenix, also included the large main chandelier in the auditorium and the undulating balcony in the circle, which was a trademark design of Cecil Aubrey Masey, the architect appointed by Sidney Bernstein to design

his Granada Theatres. It is possible that much of this original fabric remains in situ, although hidden behind later partitions and suspended ceilings, as the building evolved from a theatre to a cinema and then, finally, a Bingo Hall. Bernstein had worked with Masey at the Phoenix Theatre along with Sir Giles Gilbert Scott; Masey was himself an accomplished architect, having designed the New Wimbledon Theatre in 1919 (Grade II listed) and also the Granada theatres at Walthamstow (Grade II\*) and Tooting (Grade I). He also went on to design the Granada Cinema at Woolwich (1937) (Grade II\*) and that at Clapham Junction (1937) (Grade II\*).

The Granada Theatres were vast leisure facilities situated throughout Great Britain and played host to, not only films, but also live shows and pantomime in particular, and were developed during the 1930s by media and leisure mogul, Sidney Bernstein, who later went on to establish Granada Television in 1954, as well as a whole leisure empire. Bernstein was an entrepreneur and recognised the burgeoning interest in cinema during the 1920s and 1930s, and, after seeing the grand 'picture palaces' in America, he decided to introduce the concept to the UK. By 1939 Bernstein, in conjunction with his brother Cecil, owned 39 theatres and, by 1949, the number had increased to 56. By the mid-1950s, the total number of theatres eventually rose to over 60 and formed what was to be the first of



a number of leisure-orientated ventures that the two brothers would oversee. The Bernsteins' company, Granada Limited, did not limit its portfolio of companies to theatre-owning and managing, but went on to diversify and develop interests in real estate, motorway services, publishing, retail shops, bowling alleys, Bingo Social Clubs (formed in 1960 by conversion of many of the theatres as a result of the decline in cinema going) and a television rental business.

The Granada Theatre Maidstone opened on 10 January 1934 with Tom Walls in "Cuckoo in the Nest" and John Barrymore in "Reunion in Vienna". Organist Alex Taylor opened the Christie 3Manual/8Ranks organ, which had a French style console. There was a stage, but no fly tower for scenery. There was also a popular cafe-restaurant, and a car park, and the cinema itself could seat 1,600. As Allen Eyles states in his book, The Granada Theatres, it was proclaimed as a monument to British materials, bought with British Capital and handled by British workmen, and that the only foreign items needed were fifteen tons of marble from Rome and Verona and five cork bases for the electric motors from Jerez in Spain.

The Granada Theatre was closed on 15th September 1968 due to flooding, and it re-opened the following week, using the 650 seat circle area only. The building was closed in April 1971 for conversion by



*Bingo Hall, ground floor*



*Refreshments kiosk, first floor*



*Screen 3, First floor*

the architectural firm George Coles & Partners into a Granada Bingo Club in the former stalls area, and a twin screen cinema in the former circle and cafe, using a new side entrance. Granada 1 & 2 opened on 26th December 1971 with 560 and 90 seats. The cinema was then tripled by twinning the former balcony in December 1974, with seating now provided for 258, 259 and 90. The Christie organ was removed and shipped to Australia, where it now resides at the Kelvin Grove High School, Brisbane.

Taken over by the Cannon Group in January 1989, the cinema was re-named Cannon; it became the MGM in May 1993 and Virgin from July 1995. In May 1996, it was taken over by ABC and was closed on 15 April 1999. The bingo club still remains open in the former stalls area, and the building is now owned by Gala Bingo.

Several plans have been proposed for the former cinema spaces since closing, which include a youth club, shops and a theatre company, and a Wetherspoon's pub but these never materialised and the upstairs cinemas remain empty and unused.

Within the Maidstone Centre Conservation Area Appraisal (2009) the portico of the old Granada cinema (Gala Bingo) is mentioned as one of the few "landmark" buildings in the Conservation Area (CAA, 2009, p.29) and which partially closes views from Gabriel's Hill and Palace Avenue. The building is described as performing an important townscape function, with its grand elevated portico being a focal point in views along

Lower Stone Street from the north and along Palace Avenue (ibid. p.69), and its value to the character of the Conservation Area is described as 'essential'.

Granada House was built in 1937 and comprises a building of three storeys in brown and red brick with cement banding. The rounded street corners at each end are typical of the 1930s Art Deco architectural style, as are the metal crittal windows. The building comprises various retail outlets in the ground floor with a variety of modern shopfronts and residential flats above. The Maidstone Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal lists the building as making a 'neutral contribution' to the character Conservation Area. As such, the principle of demolition would be acceptable if the replacement building was able to make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area through design, scale, mass and use of materials.

### **Planning Policy Context**

As neither Gala Bingo nor Granada House are listed buildings, they are deemed to be heritage assets of local/regional significance. That said, with research having revealed the historic significance of the original Granada Theatre, now Gala Bingo, its potential would merit consideration (in planning terms) as if it were a Grade II Listed Building, should it be desirable to restore the building to its former glory as a leisure attraction, with theatre and café area, as per its original form. Advice on its suitability for potential listing and conversion/restoration could be sought from the Historic England Designation Team.





Granada Street



Interface of Bingo Hall and The Mall multi-storey car park, Granada Street



Lower Stone Street

Historic England is a statutory consultee regarding any demolition works within a Conservation Area, and it is advised that the LPA or any applicant for a scheme affecting these buildings consult with Historic England at the earliest opportunity.

In Planning Policy terms, the revised NPPF (February 2019) Chapter 16 (Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment) states at para 192 that *“In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of: a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and, c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.”*

It also states that *“Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposal.”* Moreover, at para 191 the revised NPPF states that *“Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect of, or damage to, a heritage asset,*





Roof terrace at first floor level of Granada House. The side wall of The Mall dominates this space



Granada House and entrance to The Mall: an opportunity for enhancements



Granada House: important frontage at junction of Gabriel's Hill and Granada Street



*the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision.”*

Para 193 of the revised NPPF states: *“When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.”*

Para 194 of the revised NPPF states: *“Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.”* It further goes on to state that substantial harm to or loss of grade II listed buildings should be exceptional.

Para 196 states: *“Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.”*

Para 197 states: *“The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm*

*or loss and the significance of the heritage asset”.*

However, as noted at footnote 62 of the revised NPPF, the policies set out in chapter 16 relate, as applicable, to the heritage-related consent regimes for which local planning authorities are responsible under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as well as to plan-making and decision-making. In particular, Section 66 states that *“In considering whether to grant planning permission [or permission in principle] for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State, shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic<sup>37</sup> interest which it possesses.”* Similarly, Section 72 states that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area, although the revised NPPF 2018 does state at para 200 that *“Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably”* and also goes on to state at Para 201 that *“Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance*

*of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 195 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 196, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.”*

Finally, para 202 of the NPPF 2018 states: *“Local planning authorities should assess whether the benefits of a proposal for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the disbenefits of departing from those policies.”*

A new addition to the revised NPPF at para 198 states: *“Local planning authorities should not permit the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred”*, thus making viability assessments a key part in balancing the decision making process. In terms of finding an ‘optimum viable use’ for heritage assets this will not always be the most profitable solution, but the one which delivers a viable outcome with the least harm to the asset, and secures a sustainable future.

In local planning policy terms, the Maidstone Borough Local Plan (adopted 25 October 2017) sets out the framework for development in the Borough until 2031. Relevant policies include SP4 Maidstone

Town Centre; SP18 Historic environment; and H2 (1) Maidstone Town Centre broad location for housing growth. Policy DM1 Principles of Good Design is also relevant, stating that *“In order to achieve high quality design, it is expected that proposals will positively respond to and, where appropriate, enhance the character of their surroundings. It is important that development contributes to its context...Key aspects of built development will be the scale, height, materials, detailing, mass, bulk and site coverage...These features should relate well, and respond positively, to the context in which they are seen...New development should integrate well into the built, natural and historic environment...”* Para 6.5 of policy DM1 also notes that *“In assessing the appropriateness of design, the council will have regard to adopted Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans, Character Area Assessments and the Kent Design Guide, which provide specific information about local character and distinctiveness and give guidance on design principles.”* Policy DM4 details the approach to development affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets, which defers to national legislation (P (LBCA) A 1990 and NPPF 2018).

The Gala Bingo site, whilst not designated, must nonetheless be considered as a heritage asset of some significance. It retains not only its impressive façade but also preserves some important architectural features within its interior, despite being largely disguised as a result of its later subdivision and use as



a bingo hall and multi-screen cinema. Such features include the large main auditorium, now split in two, but with original features remaining, such as the curved art deco balustrades, cornicing, original skirtings, ceiling details and original floor plan which relate to its past as a Granada Theatre. The office rooms upstairs remain untouched, and other original features can be expected to be preserved behind the suspended ceilings and partitions of the original stalls, now used as the bingo hall. The building is declining, especially those elements of the former cinema which are currently sealed off and closed to the public. The building has a strong historical and associative value for its links to the development of the Granada Theatre Circuit and important individuals, such as the architect Cecil Masey and interior designer, actor and director Theodore Komisarjevsky. It operated not only as a sumptuous 'picture palace' but also had a restaurant on the first floor and café, as well as a car park. As a theatre it showed not only films but also live performances, in particular pantomime, and the first pre-WWII pantomime ever staged was "Dick Whittington" at Maidstone.

As the Gala Bingo building is not designated, the potential effects of any redevelopment will need to be appraised in accordance with paragraph 97 of the NPPF. This states that a 'balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset'. Key elements of the building which contribute to its significance include its external portico, architectural features and plan

form associated with its Granada Theatre era. As an alternative to full redevelopment, consideration may therefore also be given to either demolition and façade retention only or 'saving' the building and reinstating its leisure use. For interest and comparison, a former Granada cinema (Grade II\* listed) in Walthamstow is being purchased and redeveloped by Waltham Forest Council:

<https://walthamforest.gov.uk/content/waltham-forest-council-purchase-historic-former-granada-cinema-and-work-soho-theatre-bring>

Equally, any new development within the setting of the Gala Bingo building would also have to respect the setting and integrity of this building and those which characterise the Town Centre Conservation Area. The Granada Building could be demolished and rebuilt as long as the new development respects the non-designated Gala Bingo site and Conservation Area with sympathetic and appropriate design, scale, mass and use of materials.

Few buildings within the Conservation Area as a whole exceed three storeys in height, and the CAA states that *"it is unlikely that in any location development above four storeys will be considered acceptable"* (CAA, 2009. p.103).





# Site 1: Gala Bingo & Granada House

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## Appendix 1D:Connectivity with Public Transport

## Distances & Journey Times to Bus Stops & the Bus Station\*

Bus Stop	Location	Distance	Mode		
			Walk	Cycle	Number of Services Within a 20-Minute Walk
	Gala Bingo / Granada House / The Mall				
Mill Street	Mill Street	300m	4-Minutes	2-Minutes	71
Chequers Bus Station	Romney Place	150m	2-Minutes	1-Minute	
	Mote Road				
Lower Stone Street	Lower Stone Street	240m	3-Minutes	1-Minute	70
Chequers Bus Station	Romney Place	400m	5-Minutes	2-Minutes	
	Peugeot Building (Len House)				
Mill Street	Mill Street	17m	1-Minute	1-Minute	71
Chequers Bus Station	Romney Place	450m	5-Minutes	2-Minute	
	Maidstone Riverside				
Rocky Hill	A20 London Road	400m	5-Minutes	2-Minutes	71
Chequers Bus Station	Romney Place	1km	13-Minutes	4-Minutes	
	Maidstone West Station				
Broadway	A20 Broadway	270m	3-Minutes	1-Minute	71
Chequers Bus Station	Romney Place	1km	11-Minutes	3-Minutes	

\*(Markides Associates, June 2018)



## Distances &amp; Journey Times to Maidstone Rail Stations\*

Rail Station	Distance	Mode		
		Walk	Cycle	Public Transport
Gala Bingo / Granada House / The Mall				
Maidstone Barracks	1.2km	15-Minutes	6-Minutes	13-Minutes via Maidstone West
Maidstone East	750m	9-Minutes	4-Minutes	9-Minutes via Kings Hill Connect X1 / Sapphire 101 / 130 / 150
Maidstone West	800m	10-Minutes	3-Minutes	8-Minutes via 503 Maidstone P&R / Greenway 71 / Greenway 72 / 3 / 7
Mote Road				
Maidstone Barracks	1.5km	18-Minutes	7-Minutes	16-Minutes via Maidstone West or 15-Minutes via Greenway 71 / Greenway 72 / 58
Maidstone East	1km	12-Minutes	6-Minutes	10-Minutes via Sapphire 101 / 155
Maidstone West	1km	13-Minutes	4-Minutes	7-Minutes via Greenway 71 / Greenway 72 / 3 / 7
Peugeot Building (Len House)				
Maidstone Barracks	1.2km	14-Minutes	5-Minutes	10-Minutes via Maidstone West or 12-Minutes via Greenway 71 / Greenway 72 / 79A / 79C
Maidstone East	800m	10-Minutes	4-Minutes	10-Minutes via Kings Hill Connect X1 / Sapphire 101 / 79 / 155
Maidstone West	550m	7-Minutes	3-Minutes	5-Minutes via 503 Maidstone P&R / Greenway 71 / Greenway 72 / 1 / 3 / 6 / 6X / 7 / 8 / 79A / 79C
Maidstone Riverside				
Maidstone Barracks	500m	7-Minutes	2-Minutes	n/a
Maidstone East	950m	12-Minutes	5-Minutes	12-Minutes via Sapphire 101 / 79 / 150 / 155
Maidstone West	550m	7-Minutes	4-Minutes	n/a
Maidstone West Station				
Maidstone Barracks	1.1km	14-Minutes	6-Minutes	14-Minutes via Greenway 71 / Greenway 72 / 58 / 60 / 78 / 79A / 79C
Maidstone East	1.2km	16-Minutes	8-Minutes	12-Minutes via Kings Hill Connect X1 / Sapphire 101 / 79 / 150 / 155
Maidstone West	270m	3-Minutes	1-Minute	n/a





# **Site 2: Mote Road**

## **Appendix 2A: Planning Context**

# National Policy Considerations

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was most recently updated in February 2019. This, together with relevant Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) now represents the most up-to-date national planning policy and guidance.

The NPPF Revision and the PPG place importance on the need to deliver sustainable development. This includes the delivery of necessary development to ensure that local planning authorities can sustainably meet the development needs of their area.

Key objectives within the NPPF Revision include:

- Significantly boosting the supply of homes including affordable homes and maintaining a five year supply of deliverable housing sites.
- Building a strong, competitive economy, placing significant weight on the need to support economic growth and productivity, and taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.
- Ensuring the vitality of town centres, and supporting the role that town centres play at the heart of local community by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation.



*Site viewed from Mote Road*



# Local Policy Considerations

## Maidstone Borough Local Plan (2017)

Maidstone Borough Council adopted the Maidstone Borough Local Plan 2011 – 2031 ('MBLP') in October 2017. The MBLP comprises both the strategic aims and policies for the borough and specific site allocations.

The borough assets, together with its good access to London and the channel ports for Europe, make Maidstone an attractive location for people in which to come to work and live. This creates a high pressure for development, so the MBLP focuses strongly on sustainability. Maintaining sustainable communities for the borough’s urban and rural residents and businesses is at the heart of the MBLP’s objectives.

The MBLP seeks to strike an appropriate balance between the national call for homes and the local need for housing (including affordable housing) and employment for a growing population. Development in the borough has been planned with supporting infrastructure to make proposals acceptable and to maintain residents’ quality of life.

Relevant policies, as set out below include:

- Policy SP4 – Maidstone Town Centre
- Policy SP18- Historic environment
- Policy SP20 – Affordable housing
- Policy H2– Broad locations for housing growth
- Policy DM1 – Principles of good design

- Policy DM4- Development affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets
- Policy DM16 – Town centre uses
- Policy DM19 – Open space and recreation
- Policy DM23/Appendix B – Parking Standards
- Policy DM28 – Secondary shopping frontages
- Policy DM29 – Leisure & community uses in the town centre

The MBLP advises that attention should also be paid to providing sufficient green spaces, not only for people to enjoy, but also to the value we should place upon our natural environment for its own intrinsic worth.

**Policy SS1** includes a housing target of 17,660 dwellings over the 20 year Plan period. This equates to a target of 883 dwellings per annum. In addition, the spatial strategy for the borough identifies a need for:

- 39,830m<sup>2</sup> floorspace for office use
- 20,290m<sup>2</sup> floorspace for industrial use
- 49,911m<sup>2</sup> floorspace for warehousing use
- 29,800m<sup>2</sup> floorspace for retail use















Figure 2.1: Designations and Features

scale 1:2500 @ A3

**Key**

-  Conservation Area
-  Scheduled Monuments
-  Listed Buildings
-  Maidstone Borough Local Plan Policy DM27 Primary Shopping Frontage
-  Local Plan Policy DM28 Secondary shopping frontage
-  Maidstone Borough Local Plan Policy RMXI (6) Retail and Mixed Use Site Allocation
-  Built Form
-  Water Bodies
-  Town Centre Boundary
-  Site Boundary



**Policy SP4 Maidstone Town Centre** seeks to retain and enhance a variety of well integrated attractions including shopping, service sector-based businesses, leisure and cultural facilities that the town centre offers and also to retain the best quality office stock, whilst allowing for the redevelopment of lower quality offices. Policy SP4 of the MBLP supports a comprehensive retail redevelopment centred on The Mall, immediately to the north of the site.

The MBLP, paragraph 4.65, also supports the town centre as a suitable place for residential use: *“Whilst commercial uses are the priority for the town centre, residential development can have a supporting role, in particular as part of mixed use schemes. Additional*

*residential development in the town centre will help to promote town centre vitality, especially during the evening.”* Policy SP 4(vii.) promotes *“Select opportunities for residential redevelopment.”*

The MBLP seeks to focus on retail uses within the primary and secondary shopping frontages policy areas of the town, especially protecting and consolidating retail use in the primary shopping frontage areas. **Policy DM28 ‘Secondary Shopping Frontages’** promotes the continued vibrancy of these streets, with their predominance of small units and independent shops, but also allows for a wider range of services, including those that contribute to the night time economy.

## Policy SP4: Town centre vision

By 2031 a regenerated and sustainable Maidstone town centre will be a first class traditional town centre at the heart of the 21st Century County Town that has maintained its place as one of the premier town centres in Kent by creating a distinctive, safe and high quality place that has:

- Retained its best environmental features, including the riverside and the enhanced public realm;
- Provided a variety of well-integrated attractions for all ages including new shopping, service sector based businesses, leisure, tourism, and cultural facilities;
- Improved access for all.

Key components in realising this vision are:

- Enhancing the diversity of the retail offer, supporting a continued balance between independent and multiple retailers;
- Creating a highly sustainable location resilient to future climate change;
- Establishing the town centre as an attractive hub for business building on the town centre’s assets and environment;
- Creating a stronger mix and balance of uses within the centre to support long term viability including where appropriate residential development; and
- Tackling congestion and air quality issues through improvements in provision for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists, including public transport.

## Policy RMX1 (6) Mote Road, Maidstone

Mote Road, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for residential-led mixed use development to include a minimum of 2,000m<sup>2</sup> of office floorspace (B1a). Leisure uses (D2) would also be appropriate as part of the mix of uses on this site. Planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met:

### Design and layout

1. Where possible development should be sited to create frontage blocks to Mote Road/Wat Tyler Way and to Romney Place.
2. The development preserves the setting of the listed properties in Romney Place.

### Uses

3. The development should deliver a minimum of 2,000m<sup>2</sup> of office floorspace. Any scheme which includes a lesser amount of office floorspace should be accompanied by a viability assessment that considers alternative delivery and management approaches and their impact on viability. It should clearly set out the sales and build cost assumptions used, and demonstrate that the amount of office floorspace is the maximum which could be provided as part of a viable development.

### Noise

4. The submission of a noise assessment and the delivery of appropriate noise attenuation measures as part of the development.

### Air quality

5. The submission of an air quality assessment and appropriate air quality mitigation measures to be agreed with the council will be implemented as part of the development.

### Land contamination

6. The submission of a land contamination report and appropriate mitigation measures to be implemented prior to development commencing.



Close to the site, the frontages along Lower Stone Street and Romney Place are designated as secondary retail frontages where retail, office and food and drink uses are appropriate and which establish or retain an active frontage to the street, with the potential for other uses, such as residential, on upper floors.

**Policy DM19 Open Space and Recreation** covers the provision on new housing sites. It requires a standard of 0.7ha amenity green space, 0.25ha space for children and young people and 1.6ha publicly accessible outdoor sports space per 1000 residents. The policy also requires 0.2ha allotments and community gardens and 6.5ha of natural/semi-natural areas of open space per 1000 residents. Given the compact nature of the site and the high density context, it is recognised that it will not be feasible to provide the required amount of open space on the site. Paragraph 6.89 of the MBLP allows for a financial contribution to be made to improve existing sites and enhance the capacity of existing provision if suitable opportunities for new open space cannot be identified within the specified accessibility standards due to site constraints.

Parking standards are set out in **Policy DM23/Appendix B** of the MBLP. Maidstone has approved vehicle parking standards published by Kent Highway Services as an interim measure for Development Management decisions, and the County Council gives advice on development proposals that generate a need for parking provision.

The MBLP has a target rate of 30% affordable housing for new developments within the Maidstone Urban Area (Policy DM20), with indicative targets of 70% affordable rented housing, social rented housing or a mixture of the two and 30% intermediate affordable housing (shared ownership and/or intermediate rent). The inclusion of this quantum of affordable housing on the site may not be achievable due to economic viability and, in such cases, the policy recommends developers to enter into negotiations with the Council's Housing department, in consultation with registered providers at the earliest stage of the application process. Given its central, sustainable location, the site or part of it may be suited to management by a Registered Provider.

## Neighbourhood Plans

There are no made Neighbourhood Plans impacting upon the site.

## Relevant Planning History

In 2005, consent was granted for the erection of a nine storey office development with associated multi-level parking facility on the site. This was not implemented.





# **Site 2: Mote Road**

## **Appendix 2B: Site Analysis**

## 2B:01 Land Uses

The site is owned and managed by London and Cambridge Ltd. It is currently in use as a privately managed surface-level car park. To the south, it is partially concealed by billboards along Moat Road/Wat Tyler Way. Its western boundary consists of a rendered retaining wall, separating the site from adjacent parking associated with Kent House to the north-west and Medvale House to the south-west. Kent House is being converted to 123 residential flats through Prior Notification (15/53837) and Medvale House is in the process of being vacated by HMRC (passport office).

Further to the west, Miller House (on the corner of Mote Road and Lower Stone Street), has also recently been converted from offices to 99 apartments through Prior Notification (15/501881). Beyond these buildings, Lower Stone Street comprises a mixed-use street, with a concentration of food and drink establishments and retail units on the ground floor. Further west, Knight rider Street provides a connection to the River Medway and Lockmeadow Entertainment Centre beyond.

To the immediate north, on Romney Place, a terrace of historic town houses are used for commercial purposes, with their rear gardens now converted to a parking area

which is accessed via the Mote Road site. Further north, on the other side of Romney Place, the Chequers multi-storey car park and bus station and The Mall shopping centre beyond present a monolithic block between the site and historic town centre beyond. To the north-east, on the other side of Padsole Lane there is a Sainsbury's supermarket and associated parking,

To the east, further commercial properties abut the site, on Padsole Lane. These consist of a car rental garage and a Victorian house, converted to an office. To the east and south, land uses are predominantly residential. On the eastern side of Wat Tyler Way a tall building, Midhurst Court, is a residential apartment block, whilst to the south there are a number of streets with low rise Victorian terraces. Further east, on Square Hill Road and Mote Avenue, houses are low rise and lower density, whilst to the north-east, in the vicinity of Ashford Road and River Bank Close, there is a concentration of medium-rise apartments.

Further to the south-east, approximately 650m from the site, Mote Park is popular 450 acre area of public parkland.





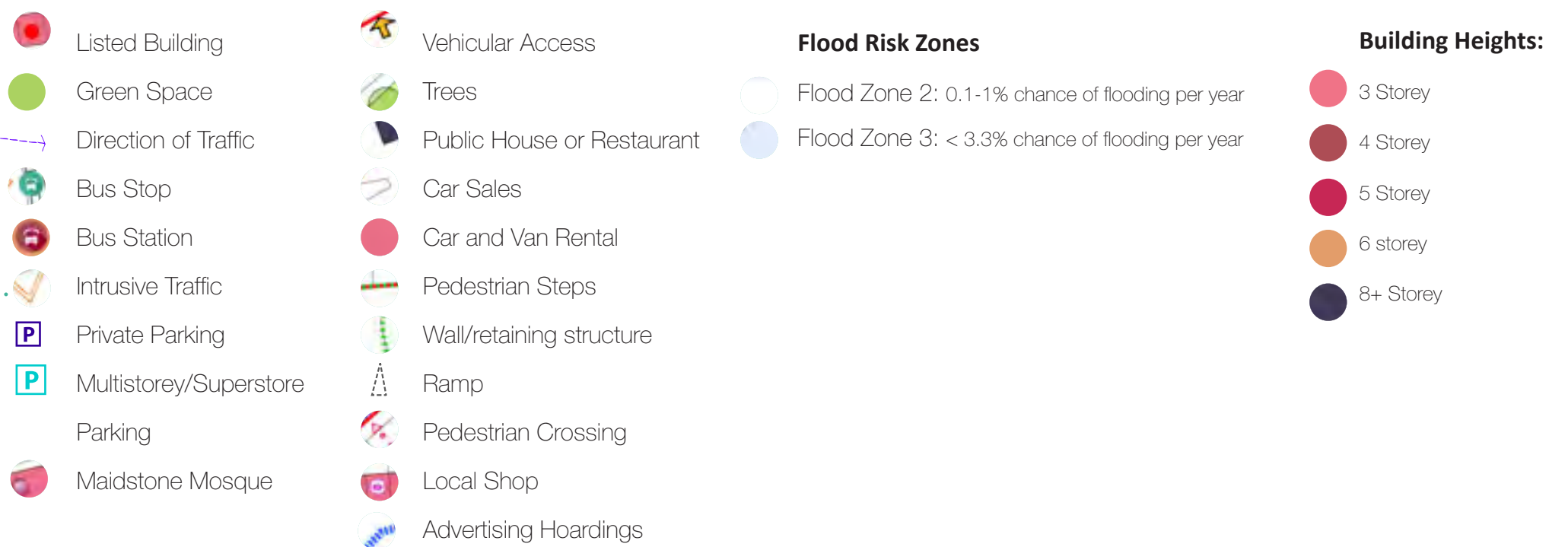
Figure.2.2 Land Use

- |   |                     |                               |
|---|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| Residential                                     | Civic               | Allotments                    |
| Retail  | Cultural            | Place of Worship              |
| Mixed-use (Ground Floor Retail and Residential) | Leisure             | Car Parking                   |
| Employment                                      | Hotel               | Industry and Electricity      |
| Mixed-use (Retail and/or Employment)            | Prison              | Hospital and Doctor's Surgery |
| Education                                       | Park and Open Space | Train Station                 |
|   | Community Centre    | Site                          |





Figure.2.3 Contextual Analysis including Building Heights





## 2B:02 Built Form

There are no buildings on the site. The surrounding area primarily consists of tall blocks, including a concentration of Maidstone's tallest buildings (see Figure 2.3):

- The Mall- 5 storeys
- Chequers Multi-storey car park – 8 storeys
- Coleman House, King Street – 11 storeys
- Kent House, Romney Place – 9 storeys
- Medvale House, Mote Road – 8 storeys
- Midhurst Court, Mote Road- 13 storeys
- Miller House, Lower Stone Street- 13 storeys
- MBC + The Mall-10 storeys

To the north and east of the site, buildings on Padsole Lane and Romney Place are two to three storeys high respectively, whilst the housing area to the south consists predominantly of two storey terraces.



*Looking south-east across site*



*Looking north towards Kent House*



*Entrance to site off Mote Road*

## 2B:03 Heritage and Architecture

The site lies outside of the Maidstone Town Centre Conservation Area, but to the north, it is bordered by a Grade II Listed row of Victorian townhouses, Nos. 1-14 Romney Place. These are listed for their group value with their rear yards backing onto the Site. To the southeast of the Site on the other side of the A249, there are a further two Grade II listed buildings: the Hunters Almshouses and Nos. 64-70 Mote Road.

The 14 terraced houses fronting Romney Place are listed under two entries, but consecutively form a group. These former houses are now largely used as offices or for business use. Nos. 1-10 comprise an early to mid-19th century row comprising three storeys and basement, built of stock brick. Each have one sash each and most retain their glazing bars and simple round-headed doorcases. Nos. 11-14 comprise a small group of Tudor Gothic houses, three storeys, stuccoed and tiled roofs. The terrace comprises a centre and two projecting wings with gables having scalloped bargeboards finials and pendants, although No.14 has lost theirs. Each house has two windows and obtusely pointed doorways with fanlights of the same shape and distinctive dripstones over the sash windows. The primary elevation of Nos 1-10, 12 and 13 are to the north facing onto Romney Place. No. 14 faces east. To the rear of Nos. 11-14 there is an industrial style Thrifty

Car and Van Rental warehouse, which has severely degraded the setting of these properties to their south elevation. Nos.1-10 have rear yards (no gardens) and their southern elevations overlook the current surface car park. To the north, this listed row overlooks the Chequers Bus Station and multi-storey car park.

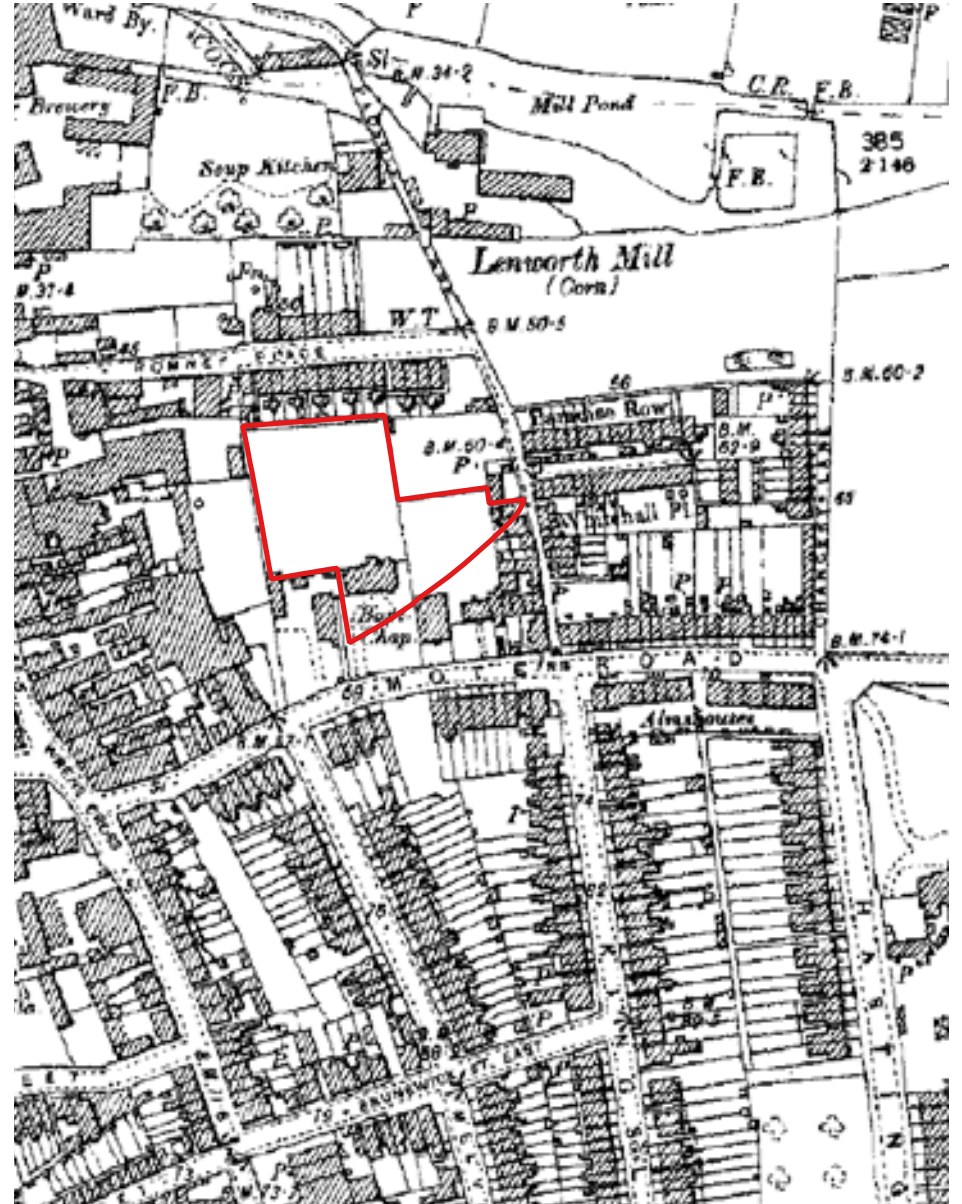
Whilst aesthetically pleasing, the setting of these assets has been heavily degraded and detracts from their significance. A more detailed heritage analysis has been undertaken by Savills Heritage and is included at Appendix 2C.

Historic mapping from 1876-1895 (Figure 2.4) shows the existing townhouses to the north, with either parkland or orchards on the site itself together with the Providence Baptist Chapel. Mote Road followed an east-west alignment which has since experienced some demolitions along its northern boundary to make way for the construction of Wat Tyler Way. To the north of the site, Romney Place included further town houses and, beyond this, parkland, whilst to the south, the existing neighbourhood of terraced housing was already established. To the north-east there appear to be fields associated with the edge of the town and a corn mill on the (now culverted) River Len. This overall character is still apparent in the 1908 and 1936-1946 mapping.

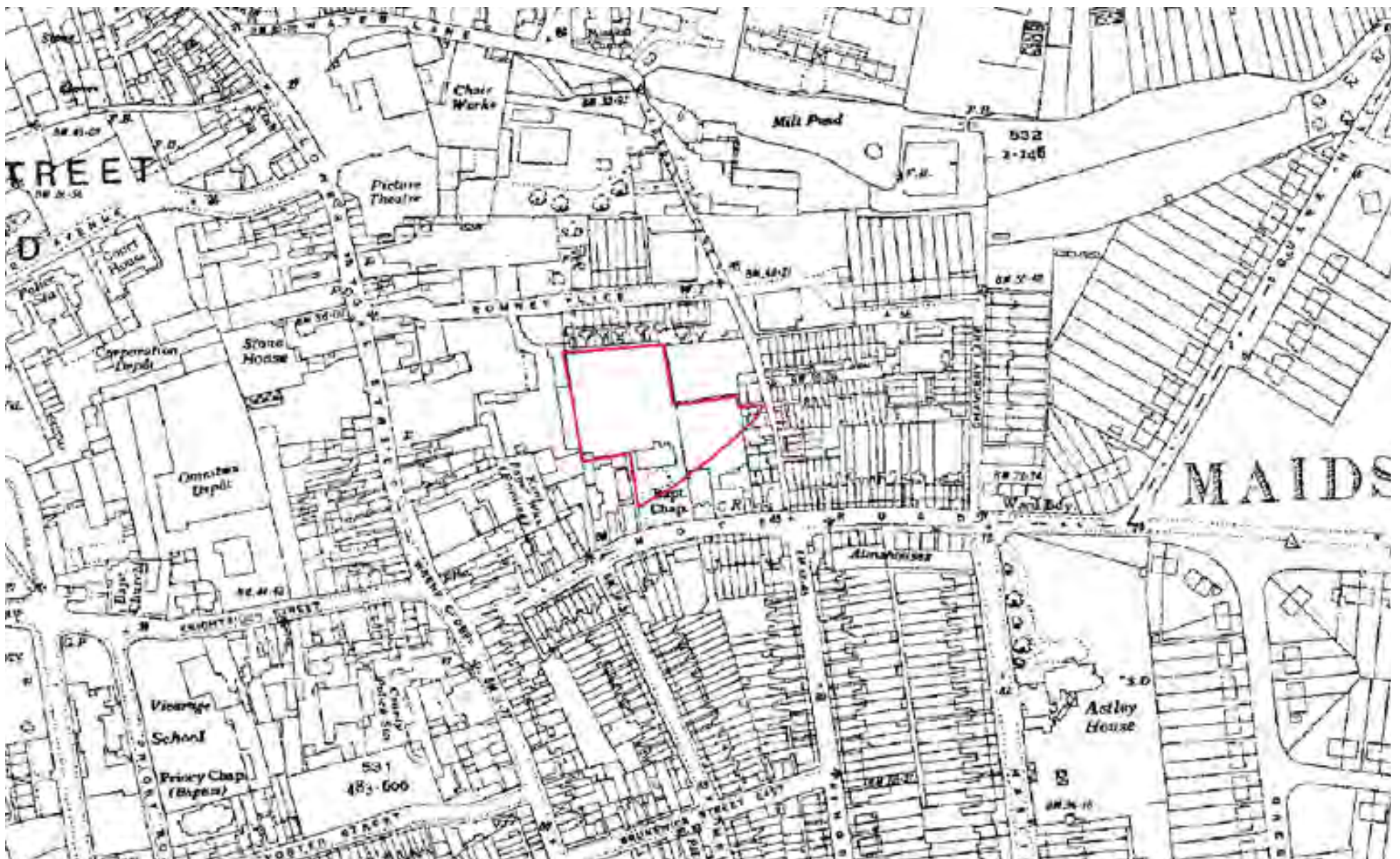




*Historic Map: 1876-1895*



*Historic Map: 1896-1898*



*Historic Map: 1936-1946*

*Fig.2.4 Historic Mapping*





*Tall buildings on Mote Road (north side)*



*Mixed Victorian buildings on Mote Road (south side)*



*Listed buildings on Romney Place*



*Listed buildings on Romney Place*



*Terraced Victorian streets to south of site*



*The Mall multi-storey car park to north of site, Romney Place*





To the immediate west and east of the site, the architectural character of the townscape is dominated by 1960s/1970s development, with the tall concrete office blocks of Kent House (1970s), Medvale House (1970s) and Miller House (1972) to the west and residential block, Midhurst Court (1965) to the east.



To the immediate north of the site, a row of listed town houses on Romney Place have intervisibility with the site and new development should respect their setting. The illustrative scenario for development on the site is not considered to materially affect this setting of these listed buildings. Romney Place is already degraded by existing highways infrastructure and existing tall buildings the significance of the listed buildings will not be affected.



Local town centre uses and assets



# 2B:04 Landform, Hydrology, Noise and Air Quality

The site occupies a relatively flat site, rising from approximately 15m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) in its northern area to 17.5m AOD to the south-east, along its boundary with Wat Tyler Way (see Figure 2.6). This level change incorporates some retaining walls, including one along its western boundary and one within the site, running in a north-south direction to the east of its access road. The site does not lie within an Environment Agency Flood Risk Area.

Given its town centre location and the proximity of Mote Road/Wat Tyler Way, noise and air quality assessments will be required as part of any planning application, together with the delivery of appropriate mitigation measures. A land contamination report and appropriate mitigation measures will also need to be implemented prior to development commencing, in accordance with Policy RMX1 (6).

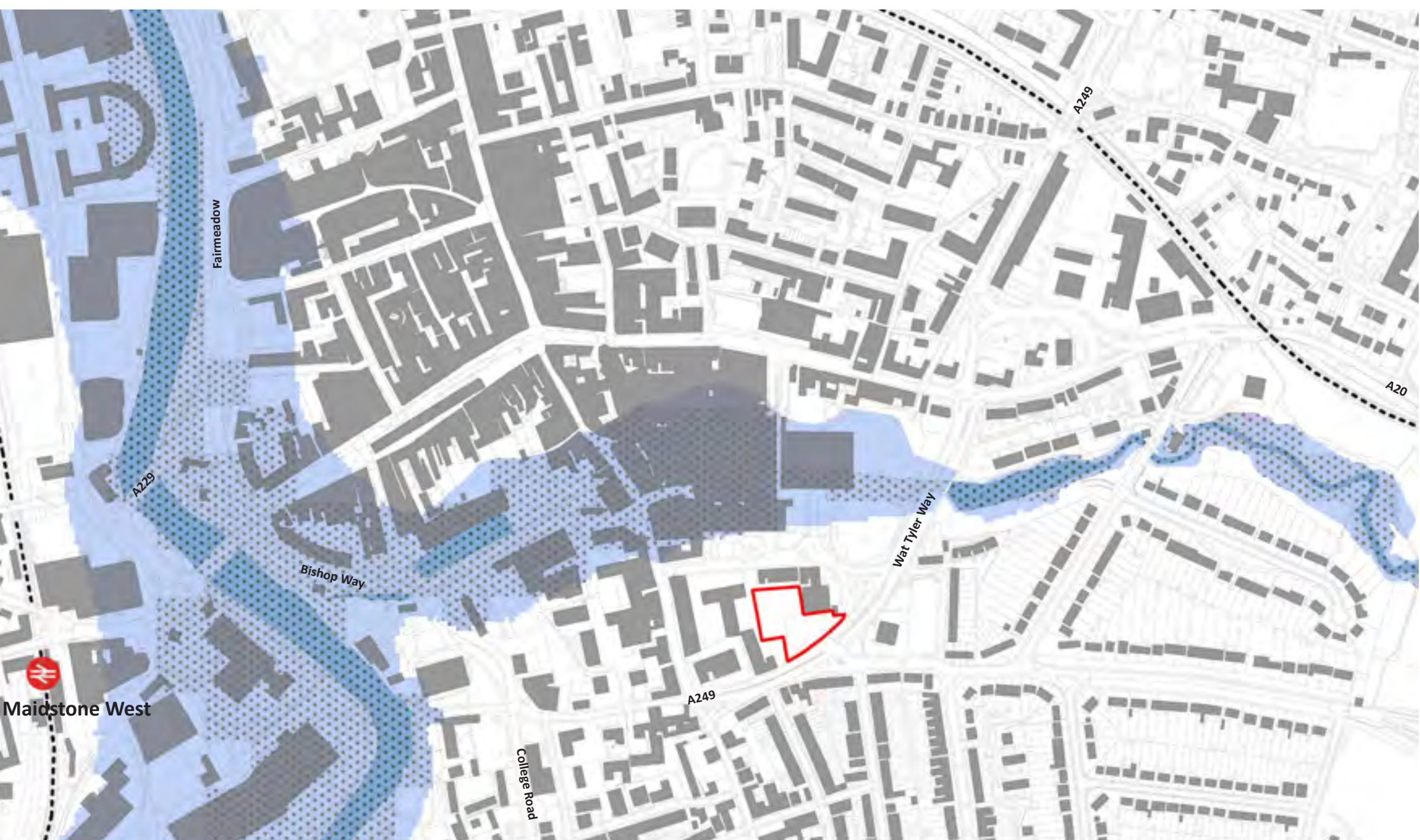


Figure.2.5:Hydrology

- FLOOD RISK ZONES:

  - Flood Zone 3: < 3.3% chance of flooding per year
  - Flood Zone 2: 0.1-1% chance of flooding per year
  - Built Form
  - Railway
- Train Station
  - Water Bodies
  - Site





- |   |   |
|---|---|
|  Built Form   |  Train Station |
|  Contour 5m   |  Water Bodies  |
|  Railway      |  Study Area    |
|  Primary Road |   |

Figure 2.6 Landform



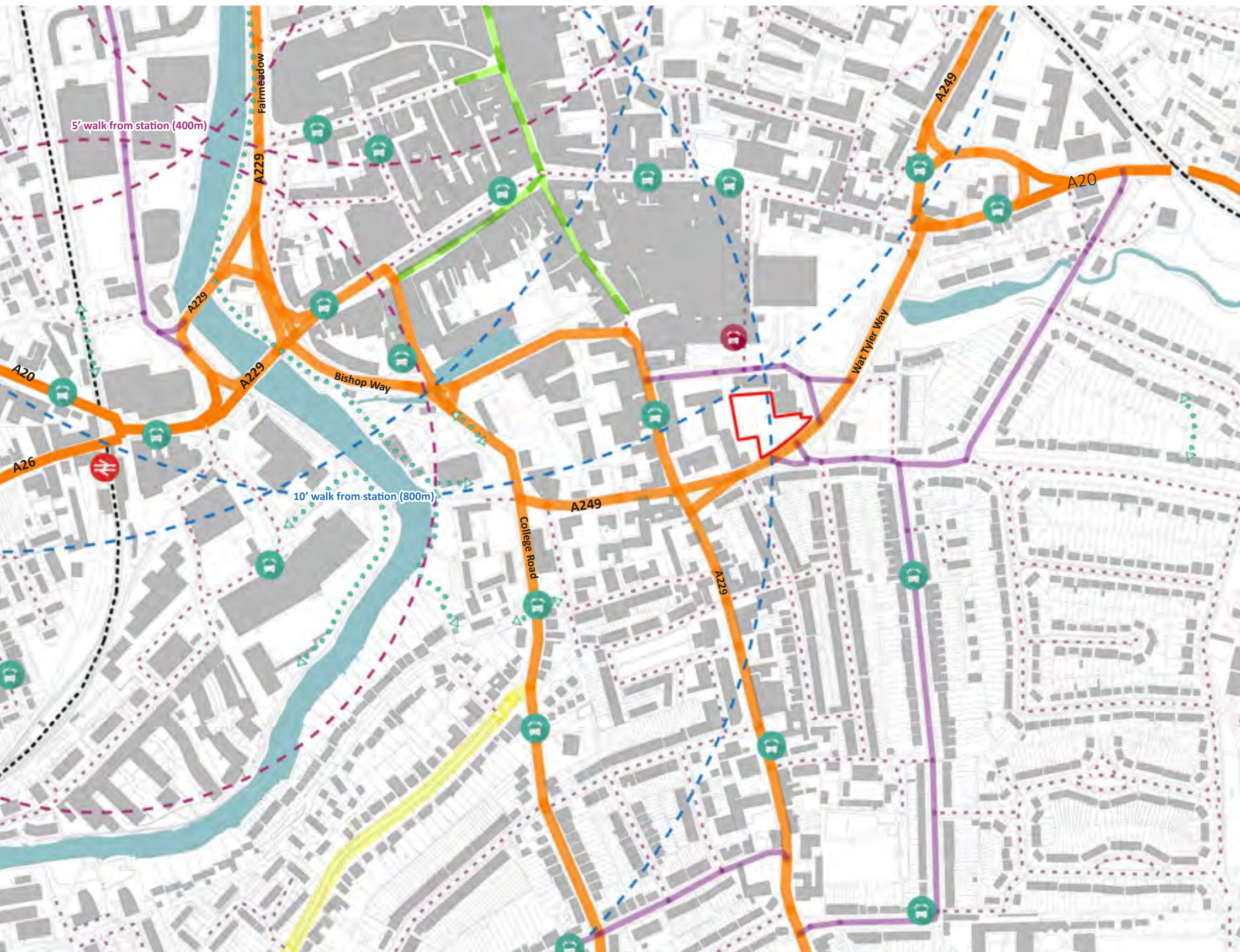


Figure 2.7 Movement and Access

- |                  |                        |   |
|------------------|------------------------|---|
| ■ Railway Line   | — Pedestrian Street    | ○ 400m radius (5 min. walk) from Station  |
| — A Roads        | — Public Rights of Way | ○ 800m radius (10 min. walk) from Station |
| — B Roads        | ⚡ Train Station        | ○ Site Boundary                           |
| — Minor Roads    | 🚌 Bus Routes           |   |
| ... Local Street | 🚏 Bus Station          |   |



## 2B:05 Movement

The Mote Road opportunity site is situated to the south of Maidstone and is surrounded by busy highways to the north (Romney Place), east (A249) and south (A249). Romney Place is a two-way road which connects the A229 with the A249, while also providing car parking access to the 'The Mall Maidstone' shopping centre. The A249 is a dual-carriageway with barriers separating the opposing lanes.

The site lies on the southern edge of the heart of Maidstone town centre and is sited less than 0.8km walking distance from Maidstone West Railway Station. The closest bus stops are on Lower Stone Street, less than 100m to the west of the site. Stop F serves eight bus services, whilst Stop G serves a further six services.

Maidstone has good transport links, with direct connections to London and the channel tunnel via the M20 and M2 motorway, and rail connections to London, the coast and Medway towns through three central railway stations in the town. There are approximately six trains per hour departing from Maidstone East Station, including direct connections to London Victoria and Ashford International, with interchanges to a number of destinations available. Expected improvement to links direct to the City of London via Thameslink in 2019, will further improve the site's connectivity and attraction as a commuter location, whilst improvements to Maidstone East and West (HS1) stations could further unlock potential. Maidstone East Railway Station is approximately 12 minutes' walk distance from the site.

The closest bus stops are at Maidstone Bus Station and on Lower Stone Street, approximately 60m and 80m from the site respectively. Further details on connectivity with Maidstone's railway stations and bus stops are provided at Appendix 2D.

Whilst the Mote Road opportunity site may be surrounded by highways, the pedestrian environment benefits from a number of staggered and signalised pedestrian crossings on both Romney Place and the A249. All crossings are supported by dropped kerbs and tactile paving, with a number of evenly spaced street lights ensuring that the area is well lit at night.

There are no designated cycling routes within the site's immediate vicinity.

The closest taxi ranks are on High Street and King Street, both within a 300m walk to the north.

There is currently a private pedestrian route into the site from the north-west corner, via a short set of steps. The only vehicular access into the site is from the A249/ Mote Road/Wat Tyler Way. Further transport advice will be required in relation to the suitability of this access point in relation to the quantum of development and parking spaces to be provided on the site. Any new access will need to be carefully designed to allow appropriate visibility splays.

# 2B:06 Landscape and Visual Context

The site has a hard, urban character, with no vegetation, covered entirely by an asphalt car park. A set of pedestrian steps provides access to the north-western corner of the site. The wider area similarly has a hard urban character, with the four lane A249 having no green central reservation, and buildings having little or no front gardens space. The extensive areas of parking, roads and tall buildings all dominate the views. To the east of the site, some mature trees on Wat Tyler Way close to the Midhurst Court tower block provide a leafier character to this area

With regards to its visual context, the site is clearly visible from the A249 Mote Road/Wat Tyler Way as it passes by the site's southern boundary. Further to the west, the existing tall buildings of Kent House, Miller House and Medvale House screen the site. To the south, the site is currently well screened by buildings on the southern side of Mote Road, however any new taller buildings on the site would become visible from the terraces of housing to the south such as Melville Road, Brunswick

Street and Kingsley Road. Similarly, taller buildings would be glimpsed from Romney Place and Wat Tyler Way to the north and north-east of the site and Mote Road to the east. There would also be private views into the site from the residential properties to the west of the site (Kent House, Miller House and potentially Medvale House), and the location and massing of new buildings together with the design of their internal layout should ensure that the privacy of these residents is not significantly affected.

By virtue of their listing by English Heritage/Historic England, particular attention should be paid to the visual setting of the listed buildings to the immediate north of the site. Whilst these are used as offices rather than their original residential use, workers will still have views from the southern elevation windows.





Looking towards site from eastern end of Romney Place



Looking towards site from Mote Road, looking north-east



Looking towards site from Mote Road, looking north





# **Site 2: Mote Road**

## **Appendix 2C: Heritage Review**

# Heritage Review

The Mote Road site is located between Romney Place and the A249 Wat Tyler Way, and to the east of Lower Stone Street. The site lies outside of the Maidstone Town Centre Conservation Area, but to the north, it is bordered by a Grade II Listed row of Victorian townhouses, Nos. 1-14, which are listed for their group value, with their rear yards backing onto the site. To the southeast of the site, on the other side of the A249, there are a further two Grade II listed buildings: the Hunters Almshouses and Nos. 64-70 Mote Road.

70

The site currently comprises a flat surface car park. On its west side, between it and Lower Stone Street, there are tall buildings including the nine storey Kent House and eight storey Medvale House (both used as offices), as well as Miller Heights, a former 11 storey office block converted from commercial to residential to form 99 apartments. There is another tall building at the corner of Mote Road with Wat Tyler Way to the southeast of the Site which also dominates the street scene.

The 14 terraced houses fronting Romney Place and backing onto the northern boundary of the site are listed under two entries, but consecutively form a group. These former houses are now largely used as offices or for business use. Nos. 1-10 comprise an early to mid-19th century row comprising three storeys and basement, built of stock brick. Each have one sash each and most retain their glazing bars and simple round-headed doorcases. Nos. 11-14 comprise a small

group of Tudor Gothic houses, three storeys, stuccoed and tiled roofs. The terrace comprises a centre and two projecting wings with gables having scalloped bargeboards finials and pendants, although No.14 has lost theirs. Each house has two windows and obtusely pointed doorways with fanlights of the same shape and distinctive dripstones over the sash windows. The primary elevation of Nos 1-10, 12 and 13 are to the north facing onto Romney Place. No. 14 faces east. To the rear of Nos. 11-14 there is an industrial style Thrifty Car and Van Rental warehouse which has severely degraded the setting of these properties to their south elevation. Nos.1-10 have rear yards (no gardens) and their southern elevations overlook the current surface car park. To the north, this listed row overlooks the Chequers Bus Station and multi-storey car park. Whilst aesthetically pleasing, the setting of these assets has been heavily degraded and detracts from their significance.

## Planning Policy Context

In Planning Policy terms, the newly revised NPPF (February 2019) Chapter 16 (Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment) states at para 192 that “*In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of: a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable*



*communities including their economic vitality; and , c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.”*

It also states that: *“Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposal.”* Moreover, at para 191 the revised NPPF states that *“Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect of, or damage to, a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision.”*

Para 193 of the revised NPPF states: *“When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.”*



*Listed buildings, Romney Place, with site beyond*





Listed building, Romney Place, with site behind



Listed buildings on Romney Road, adjacent to Kent House



Victorian properties on southern side of Mote Road

Para 194 of the revised NPPF states: “Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.” It further goes on to state that substantial harm to or loss of grade II listed buildings should be exceptional.

Para 196 states that: “Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.”

Para 197 states that: “The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset”.

However, as noted at footnote 62 of the revised NPPF, the policies set out in chapter 16 relate, as applicable, to the heritage-related consent regimes for which local planning authorities are responsible under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as well as to plan-making and decision-making. In particular, Section 66 states that: “In considering



*whether to grant planning permission [or permission in principle] for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.”*

Finally, para 202 of the NPPF 2018 states that: *“Local planning authorities should assess whether the benefits of a proposal for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the disbenefits of departing from those policies.”*

A new addition to the revised NPPF at para 198 states that: *“Local planning authorities should not permit the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred”*, thus making viability assessments a key part in balancing the decision making process. In terms of finding an ‘optimum viable use’ for heritage assets, this will not always be the most profitable solution, but the one which delivers a viable outcome with the least harm to the asset, and secures a sustainable future.

In local planning policy terms, MBLP sets out the framework for development in the borough until

2031. Relevant policies include SP4 Maidstone town centre; SP18 Historic environment; and H2 (1) Maidstone town centre broad location for housing growth. Policy DM1 Principles of good design is also relevant, stating: *“In order to achieve high quality design, it is expected that proposals will positively respond to and, where appropriate, enhance the character of their surroundings. It is important that development contributes to its context...Key aspects of built development will be the scale, height, materials, detailing, mass, bulk and site coverage...These features should relate well, and respond positively, to the context in which they are seen....New development should integrate well into the built, natural and historic environment...”* Para 6.5 of policy DM1 also notes: *“In assessing the appropriateness of design, the council will have regard to adopted Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans, Character Area Assessments and the Kent Design Guide, which provide specific information about local character and distinctiveness and give guidance on design principles.”* Policy DM4 details the approach to Development affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets, which defers to national legislation (P (LBCA) A 1990 and NPPF 2018).





## **Site 2: Mote Road**

### **Appendix 2D: Connectivity with Public Transport**

## Distances & Journey Times to Bus Stops & the Bus Station\*

Bus Stop	Location	Distance	Mode		
			Walk	Cycle	Number of Services Within a 20-Minute Walk
	Gala Bingo / Granada House / The Mall				
Mill Street	Mill Street	300m	4-Minutes	2-Minutes	71
Chequers Bus Station	Romney Place	150m	2-Minutes	1-Minute	
	Mote Road				
Lower Stone Street	Lower Stone Street	240m	3-Minutes	1-Minute	70
Chequers Bus Station	Romney Place	400m	5-Minutes	2-Minutes	
	Peugeot Building (Len House)				
Mill Street	Mill Street	17m	1-Minute	1-Minute	71
Chequers Bus Station	Romney Place	450m	5-Minutes	2-Minute	
	Maidstone Riverside				
Rocky Hill	A20 London Road	400m	5-Minutes	2-Minutes	71
Chequers Bus Station	Romney Place	1km	13-Minutes	4-Minutes	
	Maidstone West Station				
Broadway	A20 Broadway	270m	3-Minutes	1-Minute	71
Chequers Bus Station	Romney Place	1km	11-Minutes	3-Minutes	

\*(Markides Associates, June 2018)



Distances & Journey Times to Maidstone Rail Stations\*

Rail Station	Distance	Mode		
		Walk	Cycle	Public Transport
Gala Bingo / Granada House / The Mall				
Maidstone Barracks	1.2km	15-Minutes	6-Minutes	13-Minutes via Maidstone West
Maidstone East	750m	9-Minutes	4-Minutes	9-Minutes via Kings Hill Connect X1 / Sapphire 101 / 130 / 150
Maidstone West	800m	10-Minutes	3-Minutes	8-Minutes via 503 Maidstone P&R / Greenway 71 / Greenway 72 / 3 / 7
Mote Road				
Maidstone Barracks	1.5km	18-Minutes	7-Minutes	16-Minutes via Maidstone West or 15-Minutes via Greenway 71 / Greenway 72 / 58
Maidstone East	1km	12-Minutes	6-Minutes	10-Minutes via Sapphire 101 / 155
Maidstone West	1km	13-Minutes	4-Minutes	7-Minutes via Greenway 71 / Greenway 72 / 3 / 7
Peugeot Building (Len House)				
Maidstone Barracks	1.2km	14-Minutes	5-Minutes	10-Minutes via Maidstone West or 12-Minutes via Greenway 71 / Greenway 72 / 79A / 79C
Maidstone East	800m	10-Minutes	4-Minutes	10-Minutes via Kings Hill Connect X1 / Sapphire 101 / 79 / 155
Maidstone West	550m	7-Minutes	3-Minutes	5-Minutes via 503 Maidstone P&R / Greenway 71 / Greenway 72 / 1 / 3 / 6 / 6X / 7 / 8 / 79A / 79C
Maidstone Riverside				
Maidstone Barracks	500m	7-Minutes	2-Minutes	n/a
Maidstone East	950m	12-Minutes	5-Minutes	12-Minutes via Sapphire 101 / 79 / 150 / 155
Maidstone West	550m	7-Minutes	4-Minutes	n/a
Maidstone West Station				
Maidstone Barracks	1.1km	14-Minutes	6-Minutes	14-Minutes via Greenway 71 / Greenway 72 / 58 / 60 / 78 / 79A / 79C
Maidstone East	1.2km	16-Minutes	8-Minutes	12-Minutes via Kings Hill Connect X1 / Sapphire 101 / 79 / 150 / 155
Maidstone West	270m	3-Minutes	1-Minute	n/a





# **Site 3: Len House**

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## **Appendix 3A: Planning Context**

# National Policy Considerations

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was most recently updated in February 2019. This, together with relevant Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) now represents the most up-to-date national planning policy and guidance.

The NPPF Revision and the PPG place importance on the need to deliver sustainable development. This includes the delivery of necessary development to ensure that local planning authorities can sustainably meet the development needs of their area.

Key objectives within the NPPF Revision include:

- Significantly boosting the supply of homes including affordable homes and maintaining a five year supply of deliverable housing sites.
- Building a strong, competitive economy, placing significant weight on the need to support economic growth and productivity, and taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.
- Ensuring the vitality of town centres, and supporting the role that town centres play at the heart of local community by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation.



*Palace Road frontage showing regeneration of island within River Len*



# Local Policy Considerations

## Maidstone Borough Local Plan (2017)

Maidstone Borough Council adopted the Maidstone Borough Local Plan 2011 – 2031 ('MBLP') in October 2017. The MBLP comprises both the strategic aims and policies for the borough, and specific site allocations. Relevant policies are set out below and include:

- Policy SP4 – Maidstone Town Centre (including town centre boundary; The Mall redevelopment opportunity)
- Policy SP18- Historic environment
- Policy SP20 – Affordable housing
- Policy H2(1) – Detailed policies for broad locations for housing growth: Maidstone Town Centre
- Policy DM1 – Principles of good design
- Policy DM4- Development affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets
- Policy DM16 – Town centre uses
- Policy DM19 – Publicly accessible open space and recreation
- Policy DM23/Appendix B – Parking standards
- Policy DM28 – Secondary shopping frontages
- Policy DM29 – Leisure & community uses in the town centre

The MBLP seeks to strike an appropriate balance between the national call for homes and the local need for housing (including affordable housing) and

employment for a growing population. Development in the borough has been planned with supporting infrastructure to make proposals acceptable and to maintain residents' quality of life.

The MBLP advised that attention should also be paid to providing sufficient green spaces, not only for people to enjoy but also to the value we should place upon our natural environment for its own intrinsic worth.

The borough assets, together with its good access to London and the channel ports for Europe, make Maidstone an attractive location for people in which to come to work and live. This creates a high pressure for development, so the MBLP focuses strongly on sustainability. Maintaining sustainable communities for the borough's urban and rural residents and businesses is at the heart of the MBLP's objectives.

Policy SS1 of the MBLP includes a housing target of 17,660 dwellings over the 20 year Plan period. This equates to a target of 883 dwellings per annum. In addition, the spatial strategy for the borough identifies a need for:

- 39,830m<sup>2</sup> floorspace for office use
- 20,290m<sup>2</sup> floorspace for industrial use
- 49,911m<sup>2</sup> floorspace for warehousing use
- 29,800m<sup>2</sup> floorspace for retail use

The sites are all within the Maidstone Town Centre. Policy SP4 sets out a vision for the town centre, as shown in the adjacent box. It seeks to retain and enhance a variety of well integrated attractions including shopping, service sector-based businesses, leisure and cultural facilities that the town centre offers and also to retain the best quality office stock, whilst allowing for the redevelopment of lower quality offices. The MBLP seeks to focus retail uses within the primary and secondary shopping frontages policy areas of the town. To the north and west of the site, Mill Street is covered by the secondary shopping frontages policy, however the site itself is excluded from this.

The site offers an excellent opportunity for high density urban living in close proximity to the retail, business and leisure opportunities provided by the town centre. The MBLP, paragraph 4.65, states: “Whilst commercial uses are the priority for the town centre, residential development can have a supporting role, in particular as part of mixed use schemes. Additional residential development in the town centre will help to promote town centre vitality, especially during the evening.” Policy SP 4(vii.) promotes: “Select opportunities for residential redevelopment”.

The MBLP seeks to focus retail uses within the primary and secondary shopping frontages policy areas of the town. These are primarily to the north of the high street, within Fremlin Walk and Week Street and within The Mall to the east. The closest shopping frontages to the site are the ‘Secondary Shopping Frontages’ along Bank Street and High Street to the north and Gabriel’s

Hill to the east. In these areas, the MBLP promotes the continued vibrancy of these streets, with their predominance of small units and independent shops.

Maidstone has approved vehicle parking standards published by Kent Highway Services as an interim measure for development management decisions, and the County gives advice on development proposals that generate a need for parking provision. Parking standards are set out in Policy DM23/Appendix B of the MBLP.

Open space provision on new housing sites is covered by MBLP Policy DM19, requiring a standard of 0.7 ha amenity green space, 0.25ha space for children and young people and 1.6ha publicly accessible outdoor sports space per 1000 residents. The policy also requires 0.2ha allotments and community gardens and 6.5 ha of natural/semi-natural areas of open space per 1000 residents. Given the compact nature of the site and the high density context, it is recognised that it will not be feasible to provide the required amount of open space on the site. Paragraph 6.89 of the MBLP allows for a financial contribution to be made to improve existing sites and enhance the capacity of existing provision if suitable opportunities for new open space cannot be identified within the specified accessibility standards due to site constraints.

There is a significant need for affordable housing within the borough and a clear justification for the Council to seek affordable dwellings through new development schemes. In order to respond to the identified need for affordable housing of different tenures through the



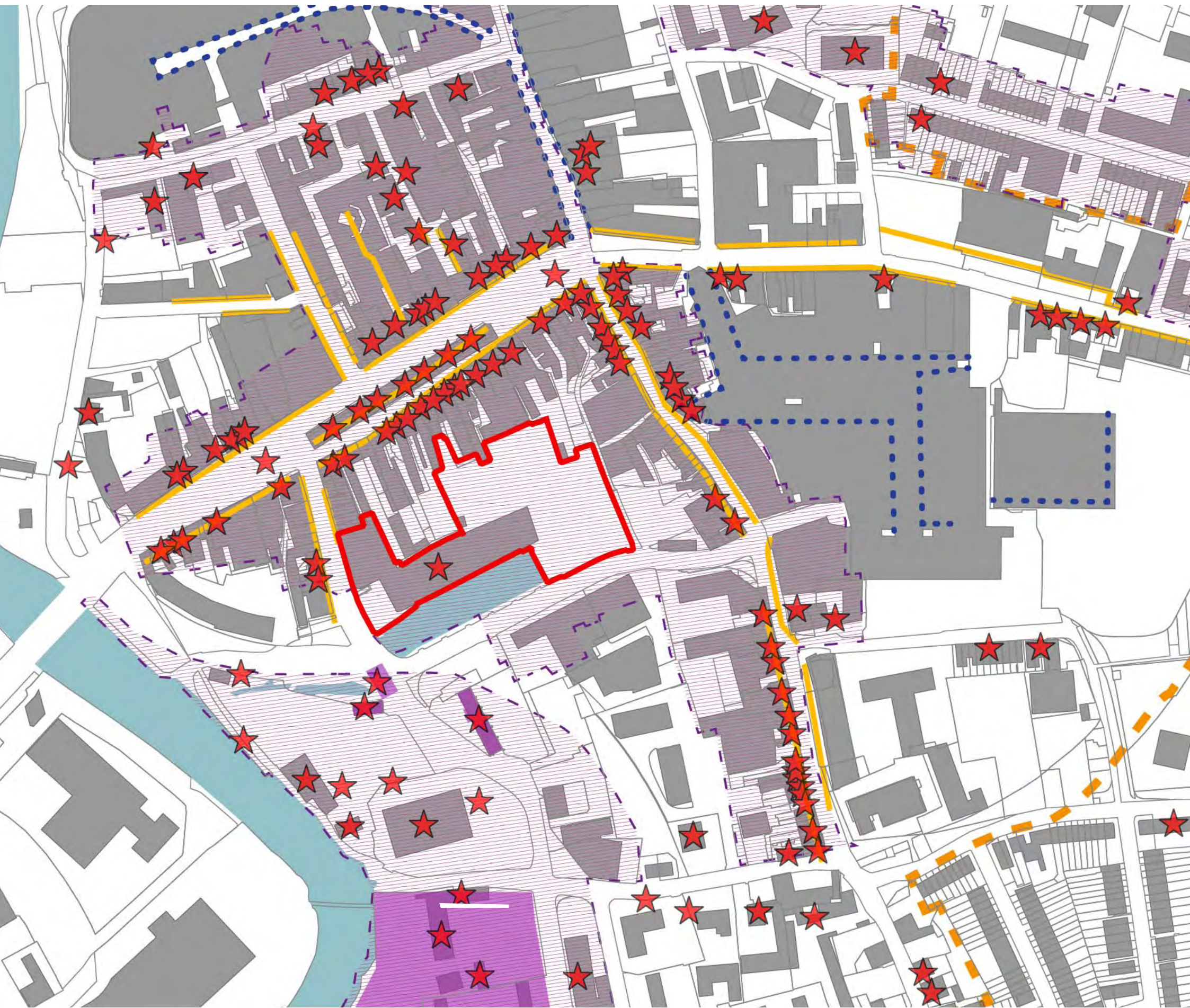











Figure 3.1: Designations and Features

scale 1:2500 @ A3

- |   |   |
|---|---|
|  Conservation Area   |  Maidstone Borough Local Plan Policy DM27 Primary shopping frontage   |
|  Scheduled Monuments |  Maidstone Borough Local Plan Policy DM28 Secondary shopping frontage |
|  Listed Buildings    |  Maidstone Borough Local Plan Town Centre Boundary                    |
|  Built Form          |  Site Boundary  |
|  Water Bodies        |   |



period of the plan, the MBLP has a target rate of 30% affordable housing for new developments within the Maidstone Urban Area (Policy DM20), with indicative targets of 70% affordable rented housing, social rented housing or a mixture of the two and 30% intermediate affordable housing (shared ownership and/or intermediate rent). The inclusion of this quantum of affordable housing on the site may not be achievable due to economic viability however and, in such cases, the policy recommends developers to enter into negotiations with the Council's Housing department, in consultation with registered providers at the earliest

stage of the application process. Given the costs of refurbishing/converting the listed building on the site, viability of any development is likely to be an issue, and early discussions relating to affordable housing provision are therefore highly recommended.

The site contains an historical car showroom building which is Grade II Listed (listing ID: 1393579). Therefore this provides an immediate restriction to development opportunity. The building also lies within the Maidstone Town Centre Conservation Area and within the setting of several listed buildings: Nos.16-20 and No.22 Mill Street (both Grade II-listed) to the west; Grade II Nos.

## Policy SP4: Town centre vision

By 2031 a regenerated and sustainable Maidstone town centre will be a first class traditional town centre at the heart of the 21st Century County Town that has maintained its place as one of the premier town centres in Kent by creating a distinctive, safe and high quality place that has:

- Retained its best environmental features, including the riverside and the enhanced public realm;
- Provided a variety of well-integrated attractions for all ages including new shopping, service sector based businesses, leisure, tourism, and cultural facilities;
- Improved access for all.

Key components in realising this vision are:

- Enhancing the diversity of the retail offer, supporting a continued balance between independent and multiple retailers;
- Creating a highly sustainable location resilient to future climate change;
- Establishing the town centre as an attractive hub for business building on the town centre's assets and environment;
- Creating a stronger mix and balance of uses within the centre to support long term viability including where appropriate residential development; and
- Tackling congestion and air quality issues through improvements in provision for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists, including public transport.



69, 70, 74-75, 76-77, 79-81, 82, 83-84, 86, 87-88, 89 Bank Street (all Grade II) and Nos. 78 and 85 Bank Street (both Grade II\*) to the north; and Nos.16-18 and No.20 Gabriel's Hill (both Grade II), No.2 Lower Stone Street (Grade II) and Nos.2-6 Palace Avenue (Grade II) to the east. To the south-west of the site are the Tithe Barn (Grade I), the Len Bridge (Grade II), the Gate House (Grade II), the Archbishop's Palace (Grade I) and All Saints Church (Grade I); which all make up part of the All Saints Conservation Area, which also forms part of the building's setting. Len House also forms part of the Conservation Area's setting. Further information on policy relating to heritage assets within the NPPF and Local Plan are given in a Heritage Review at Appendix 3C.

The site is within flood Zone 3 which has the highest risk of fluvial flooding. The NPPF Revision is clear that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (paragraph 155). Different types of development have different vulnerabilities, and therefore are regarded as being appropriate or inappropriate. Developments and land uses that are regarded as being "more vulnerable" are not appropriate in flood zone 3. The PPG is clear that such development should be directed towards areas of lower flood risk.

Depending on the type of development being proposed, it may be necessary for the sequential and exceptions

tests to be passed. A flood risk assessment will certainly be required if a development is progressed (see the PPG and NPPF Revision footnote 50). This will need to be considered early on as it will have the potential to affect the scheme, type of development and also quantum.

### **Neighbourhood Plans**

There are no made Neighbourhood Plans impacting upon the site.

### **Relevant Planning History**

The site has been subject to various planning applications for minor alterations and additions over the years. These included a change of use application to use the part of the building as a snooker/billiards licensed club (1983) and planning and conservation area consent applications to demolish a used car showroom and formation of replacement used car sales offices within the existing building (1993). Various applications for changes to signage have generally been approved however an application of two signs on the tower in 1974 was refused.





# Site 3: Len House

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## Appendix 3B: Site Analysis

## 3B:01 Land Use

The site is owned and managed by Peugeot and is currently in use as a dealership for new and used cars, together with vehicular maintenance workshops and parking. The building is in need of some maintenance work.

The Mill Street part of the building comprises a new car showroom at ground floor, with a disused snooker club above. To the rear, there is a glass-roofed parking/workshop area that was historically part of the showrooms. This is accessed from Mill Street.

The eastern part of the building, fronting the River Len, is over two floors, but a mezzanine level at the west end (Mill Street) results in two rows of upper windows on the west elevation. This western end of the building includes office space, however most of the building comprises open plan workshops. An internal vehicular ramp accessed from the Mill Street frontage provides access to the first floor.

To the east of the building, on the Palace Avenue frontage, the dealership operates their used cars sales area, with vehicular access provided from Palace Avenue. To the north of the used car area, there is a large secure parking area for storing cars. This area shares boundaries with a number of properties on Bank Street.

To the west of the site, Mill Street is part of Maidstone's historic core. It includes ground floor retail units and cafes with mixed uses above. West of this is the Bishops Way dual carriageway. This forms part of the main vehicular route around the town centre, creating a relatively hostile pedestrian/cycle environment and acting as a physical barrier between the town centre

and River Medway beyond.

To the north of the site, Bank Street and High Street form the southern part of the more vibrant town centre shopping area, which includes Royal Star Arcade and Fremlin Walk shopping centre. Like Mill Street, these are dominated by historic buildings with shops, cafes/restaurants and drinking establishments on the ground floor and mixed uses above.

Immediately to the north of the site, the boundaries of properties on Bank Street generally include rear yards and storage areas, with little opportunity for overlooking. However, two - three properties at the western end of this boundary do have windows on their southern elevation and appear to be in residential use. A night-club on Bank Street which also backs on to the site presents a predominantly blank brick façade to this northern site boundary. In the northern corner of this rear yard, there is a small beer garden attached to the Brenchley pub (also on Bank Street) which overlooks the site.

Between the rear of Len House's Mill Street frontage and the car storage area south of Bank Street, there is an area that lies outside of Peugeot's ownership but abuts the northern façade of the site's eastern block. These parcels are surrounded by coniferous trees to the south and west, which provide visual separation from the parking area of the site. The western part of this land parcel includes a narrow strip of garden/disused space which immediately abuts the eastern wall of the Len House rear workshop area. Due to lack of visibility it is not possible to ascertain the uses within this area, but according to aerial photography they appear to be yards



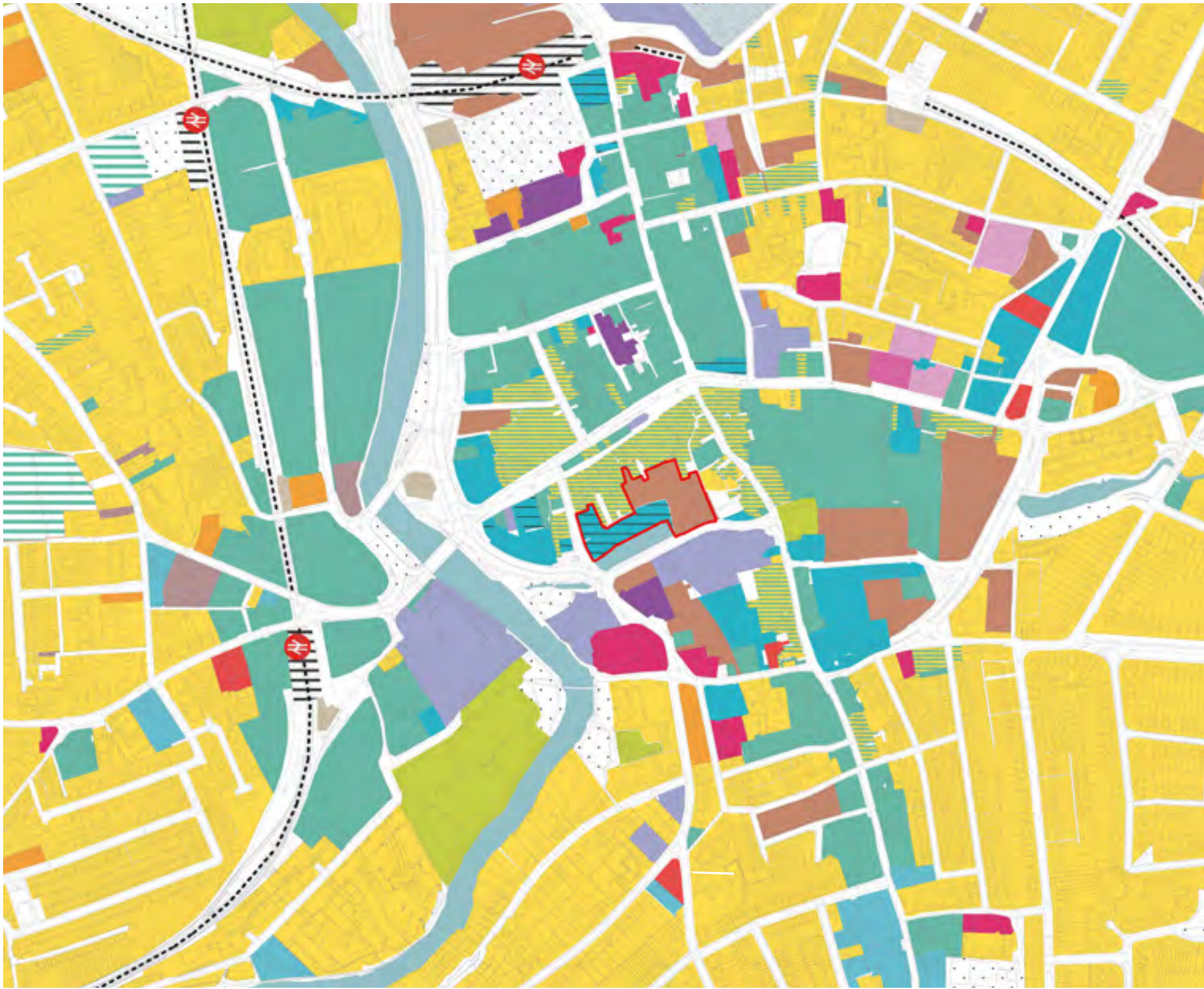


Figure 3.2 Land Use

- |   |                     |                               |
|---|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| Residential                                     | Civic               | Allotments                    |
| Retail  | Cultural            | Place of Worship              |
| Mixed-use (Ground Floor Retail and Residential) | Leisure             | Car Parking                   |
| Employment                                      | Hotel               | Industry and Electricity      |
| Mixed-use (Retail and/or Employment)            | Prison              | Hospital and Doctor's Surgery |
| Education                                       | Park and Open Space | Train Station                 |
|   | Community Centre    | Site                          |



associated with the retail/business uses on Bank Street.

To the east of the site, the buildings on Gabriel's Hill are in ground floor use as shops with mixed uses above. Gabriel's Hill also includes a night club as well as an entrance to The Mall, a large covered shopping centre and associated multi-storey car park.

To the immediate south, the River Len runs immediately adjacent to the southern wall of the eastern block of the building. This flows to join the River Medway to the west. Within the eastern part of the site (the used car sales area), the river is culverted, although it remains uncovered to the east of the access road to the east of the site. It is then culverted again beneath buildings in Gabriel's Hill and to the east.

South of the river, Palace Avenue runs parallel to the site's southern boundary. Immediately opposite the site, on the southern side of Palace Avenue, there is a public pay and display car park, Maidstone Police station and Magistrates Court. South of these are relatively extensive areas of private and public surface level parking.

To the south-west of the site, beyond the Palace Avenue/Bishops Way/Mill Street junction there is the historic Archbishops Palace area, including the All Saints Church of England church, fronting the River Medway.



*Mill Street frontage. from Palace Avenue.*



*Palace Avenue, looking east.*



*Pedestrian link to Bank St*



*Pedestrian link at Bank St*





Northern elevation, from northern site boundary.



Mill Street, looking north



Mill Street frontage of showroom



Yard to north of building, from roof.



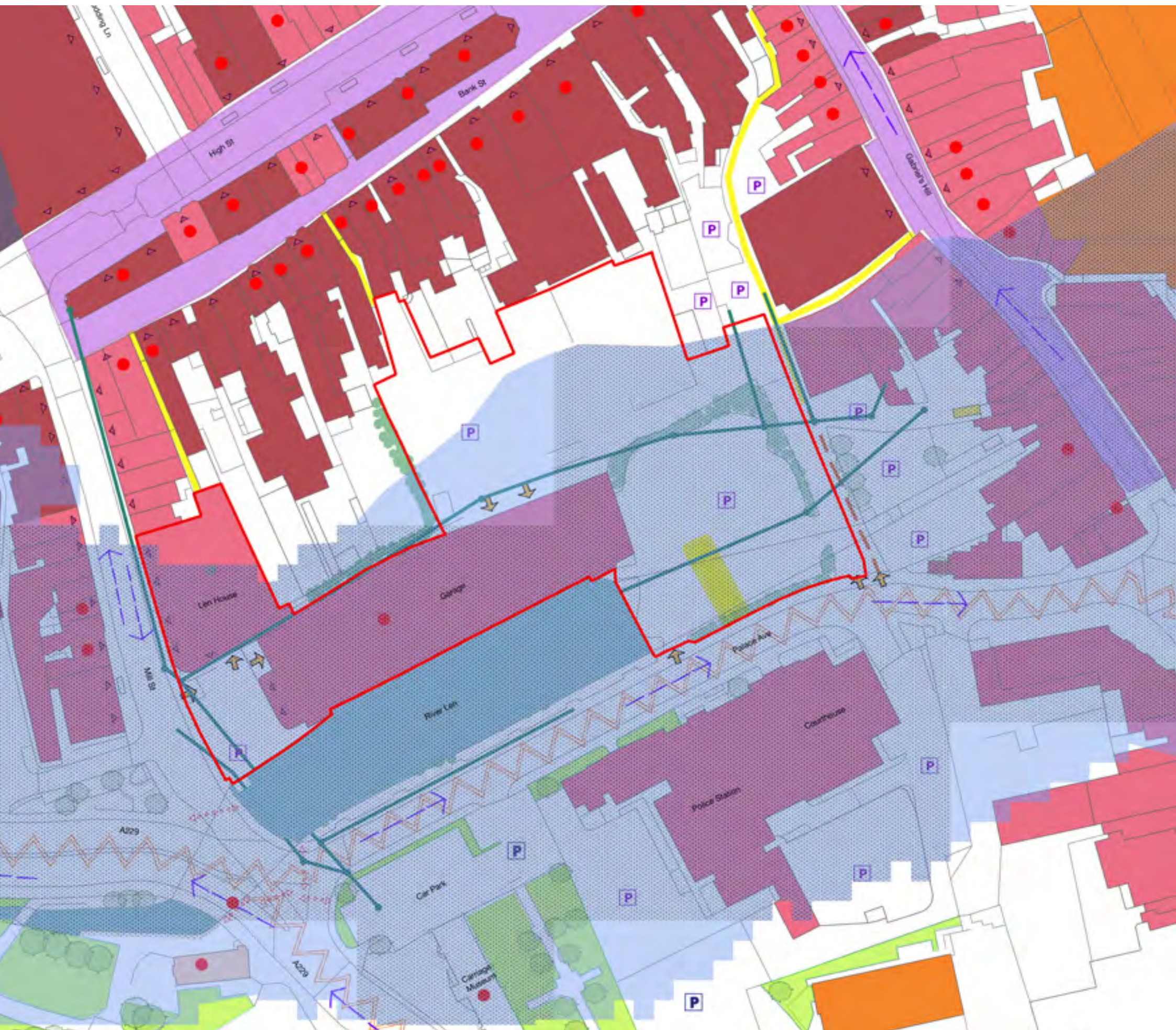
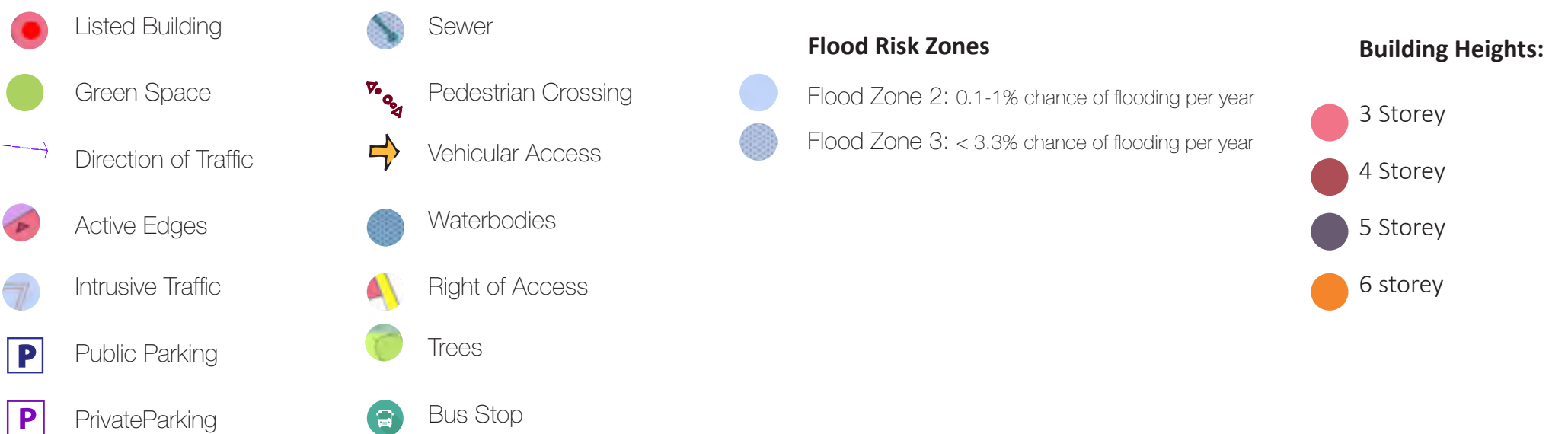


Figure 3.3 Contextual Analysis including Building Heights





## 3B:02 Built Form

The buildings on the site are two storeys in height. The ground floors are relatively high ceilinged, however the flat roof means that the overall height of the buildings are still lower than the equivalent of the adjacent three storey properties on Mill Street.

Given the historic function of the building to accommodate vehicular circulation, both blocks are very deep, with the Mill Street showroom/rear workshop approximately 28m deep and wing along Bishops Avenue approximately 27m deep.

Within the wider area, buildings are generally three to four storeys in height, consisting of dense historic terraces. Roofs are generally pitched, although there are some flat roofed properties. The parking area within the site and on the Palace Avenue frontage provides a relatively large open area, in what is otherwise a densely built up area. In particular, this means that the Palace Avenue frontage lacks visual enclosure.



*Mill Street, looking north*



*Mill Street eastern frontage*



*Maidstone Police Station & Magistrates Court & Family Court, Palace Avenue*





*High Street, looking east.*



*Jubilee Square, High Street.*



*Mill Street/ Bishops Way junction.*



*Museum of Carriages, The Tithe Barn. Listed building on Palace Avenue/ Mill Street.*



*Bank Street. Properties on right back on to site.*



## 3B:03 Heritage and Architecture

The site lies within the heart of the historic core of Maidstone. Historic mapping (Figure 3.4) shows that in Victorian times the site was occupied by a tannery and corn mill, as well as numerous small buildings associated with properties on Bank Street. The current location of the River Len to the immediate south of Len House was historically constructed as a mill pond with a further river channel appearing to run adjacent to the northern part of the existing Len House building and through the western part of Len House/within its front courtyard. South of the Mill Pond was a corn mill and a plant growing nursery. It is not until the 1936 map that Palace Avenue is present, with associated Police Station and Court House to the south.

Len House, also known as the Rootes building, is Grade II listed and also sits within the Maidstone Centre Conservation Area. It opened in 1938, when the showroom was considered the largest and most up to date in Kent.

The building was first listed in October 2009 for the following principal reasons:

- The building is of architectural interest as an example of a Modernist motorcar showroom and workshops which retains a significant proportion of its original fabric.
- The building is of architectural interest due to its grand scale, town-centre location and picturesque setting adjacent to the Len mill pond, which distinguishes it from other

buildings associated with the motorcar industry during this phase of early motoring.

- The building is a prominent manifestation of a hugely successful British car manufacturer, built in a period when the expansion of car ownership was having a revolutionary impact on the physical and social fabric of the nation

Internally, the workshops are largely open plan with the vehicular ramp between ground and first floor being a principal feature. The concrete and steel structure of the building is undisguised; at ground floor, concrete cross beams rest on large columns, supporting the first floor above. At first floor, the workshops are open to the roof. A number of original staircases remain throughout the building, mainly characterised by curved steel-strip balusters with wood or metal hand rails, as well as a curved mezzanine viewing gallery (now enclosed) in the south-east corner of the showroom. Historically, the open parking area on its Mill Street frontage was used as a petrol filling station.

Within the Maidstone Centre Conservation Area Appraisal (2009), the Rootes building is described as being redeveloped in the 1930s as: "*large and impressive state-of-the-art showrooms and workshops which remain such an important feature of the Conservation Area today*" (p.22) and is further noted as constituting "*an iconic building now of great townscape importance*"(p.82). It is therefore a sensitive site and any development here needs to respect the dominance of the listed building and the integrity of its setting

externally, as well as best preserving those internal features which are highlighted in the listing description as being significant, such as the internal ramp.

Few buildings within the Conservation Area as a whole exceed three storeys in height and the Rootes building is named as one of the landmark buildings within the town and Conservation Area, described as 'sitting attractively alongside the Mill Pond at the southern entrance to the Conservation Area...' (CAA, 2009, p.29). Most development within the Conservation Area is still of

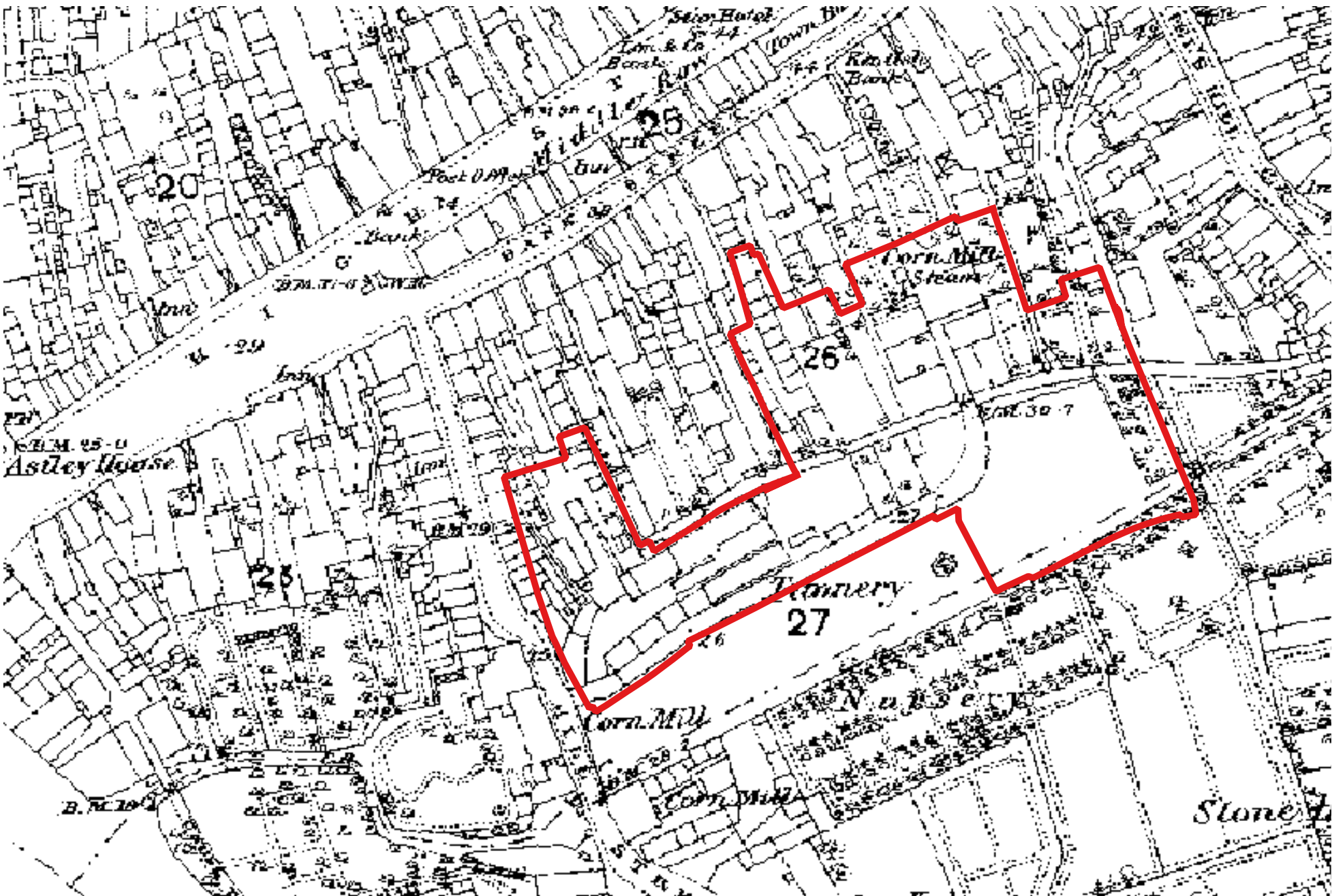
2-4 storey height with only a few modern exceptions to this, which are generally appraised as making a negative contribution to the Conservation Area, and further the CAA states that '*it is unlikely that in any location development above four storeys will be considered acceptable*' (ibid. p.103).

A more detailed heritage analysis has been undertaken by Savills Heritage and is included at Appendix 3C.



*Ramp from ground to first floor.*





Historic Map: 1876-1895



Historic Map: 1896-1898



Historic Map: 1936-1946

Figure 3.4 Historic Mapping



## 3B:04 Landform and Hydrology

The site occupies a sloping site, rising from approximately 7.5m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) in its south-western area to approximately 11m AOD in its northern corner (see Figure 3.6). This level change is reflected in the presence of some low retaining walls within the parking area in the northern part of the site.

The majority of the listed building and used cars sales area and the south-west part of the northern parking area lies within the Environment Agency Flood Zone 3, meaning it is at high risk of flooding (3.3% chance of flooding in any one year). The south-west corner of the northern parking area lies within Flood Zone 2, meaning it has a flood risk of between 0.01% and 1% in any year. The northern part of the site does not lie within a Flood Risk Zone. Any planning application would need to be accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment and appropriate mitigation measures.

The historic changes to the River Len and Mill Pond mean that there are some culverted water-courses within and adjacent to the site, including the part of the used car sales area immediately adjacent to the River Len. It is unlikely that it would be viable/structurally practical to build on this. If costs permitted, it would significantly enhance the public realm of Palace Avenue and this part of the site if this part of the River Len could be opened up again to create an additional length of waterfront.

Given its town centre location and the proximity of Palace Avenue a noise, air quality and land contamination assessments may be required as part of any planning application together with the delivery of appropriate mitigation measures.

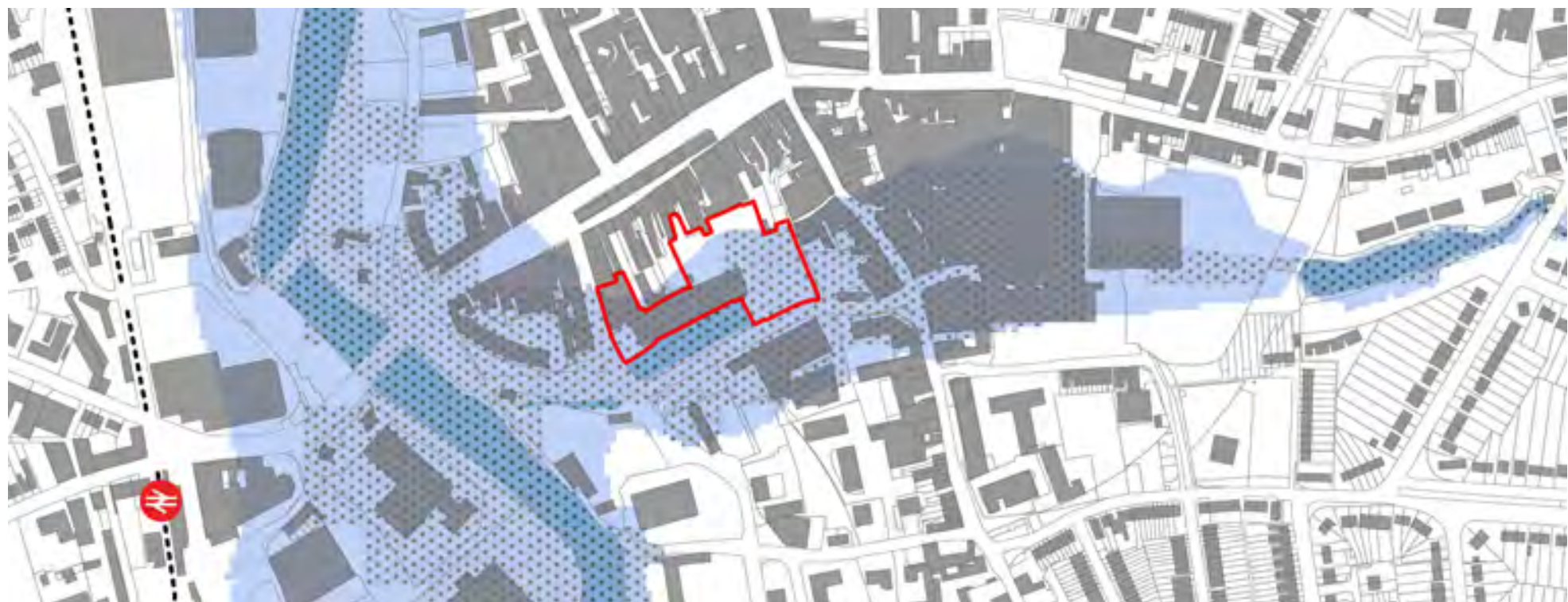


Figure 3.5:Hydrology

- FLOOD RISK ZONES:
- Flood Zone 3: < 3.3% chance of flooding per year
  - Flood Zone 2: 0.1-1% chance of flooding per year
  - Built Form
  - Maidstone West Railway Station
  - Site






- |  |              |   |               |
|--|--------------|---|---------------|
|  | Built Form   |  | Train Station |
|  | Contour 5m   |  | Water Bodies  |
|  | Railway      |  | Study Area    |
|  | Primary Road |   |               |

Figure 3.6 Landform



## 3B:05 Easements and Conveyances

There are a number of covenants relating to rights of light and the heights of any new buildings on parts of the site. It is recommended that legal advice should be gained prior to detailed design.

A number of foul water sewers pass through the site:

- across the Mill Street forecourt
- from Mill Street to the rear of properties on Gabriel's Hill, through the Mill Pond and on through the used car sales area (culverted river/Mill Pond)
- in a north-east direction to the north of Len house between Mill Street and Gabriel's Hill. This runs through the southern part of the Mill Street block of Len House
- a short stretch of sewer also links this sewer to the electricity sub-station beyond the north-east of the site

A surface water drain runs through the site to the north of the main eastern block of Len House, between Mill Street and Gabriel's Hill. This comes through the western part of this eastern block, in the vicinity of its vehicular access.

These drains and sewers on the eastern side of the site may be a particular constraint to construction here and it is recommended that suitable technical advice be sought prior to detailed design. These may require diversions or build over agreements.

Vehicular access to the site off Palace Avenue runs over part of the river culvert. Depending on the proposed use, this may result in weight restrictions to vehicles accessing the site or require reinforcement of the culvert. Further surveys will be required.



*Right of access to Bank Street (currently fenced off)*



*Palace Avenue frontage: culverted River Len in this area will limit development options in this part of the site*



## 3B:06 Movement



*Maidstone West Station*



*Arriva bus services*

The western part of the site fronts onto Mill Street, a two-way commercial street situated to the south of Maidstone town centre, connecting the High Street to the north with the A229 and Palace Avenue to the south. Whilst vehicles can travel in both a northbound and southbound direction along Mill Street, the northbound lane is restricted for use by bus and cycles only, leaving the southbound lane the only available lane for all traffic. In effect, the majority of all road users would consider Mill Street to be one-way.

Mill Street is subject to 30mph speed restrictions for the majority of its length; however, to the north of the street, near to the junction with the High Street, the speed restriction is lowered to 20mph.

**101**

To the south and south-west, Palace Avenue and Bishops Way respectively form part of the main circular route around the town centre. These busy one way streets act as a barrier to pedestrians, although signalised pedestrian crossings are provided at their junction with Mill Street. This large junction creates an extensive area of highway infrastructure that dominates the setting of both Len House and the listed Gatehouse to the Archbishop's Palace to the south west.

The site lies on the southern edge of the heart of Maidstone town centre and is sited less than 0.4km walking distance from Maidstone West Station as the crow flies. The closest bus stops are on Mill Street immediately outside Len House. These serve eight bus routes.





Figure 3.7 Movement and Access

- |                  |                                  |   |
|------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| ■ Railway Line   | — Pedestrian Street              | 🚌 Bus Station                             |
| — A Roads        | — Public Rights of Way           | ⬤ 400m radius (5 min. walk) from Station  |
| — B Roads        | 🚶 Train Station                  | ⬤ 800m radius (10 min. walk) from Station |
| — Minor Roads    | 🚌 Bus Routes                     | ⬤ Site Boundary                           |
| ... Local Street | 🚗 Maidstone East Station Carpark |   |



In terms of the pedestrian environment, Mill Street benefits from footways extending in both directions from the site entrance, with street lighting. To the north and south of the street, signalised pedestrian crossings allow for a safer crossing of the highway. These crossings benefit from appropriately coloured tactile paving and are provided at grade.

The north of Mill Street is an 'unsigned cycle route' on the 'Explore Maidstone' map (produced by Explore Kent, a Kent County Council led partnership initiative). This is described as being: "a route that is useful for cyclists to link up their cycle journeys." It is therefore not a designated route but deemed suitable for cycling.

Maidstone has good transport links, with direct connections to London and the channel tunnel via the M20 and M2 motorway, and rail connections to London, the coast and Medway towns through three central railway stations in the town. There are approximately six trains per hour departing from Maidstone East Railway Station, including direct connections to London Victoria and Ashford International, with interchanges to a number of destinations available. Expected improvement to links direct to the City of London via Thameslink in 2019, will further improve the site's connectivity and attraction as a commuter location, whilst improvements to Maidstone East and West (HS1) stations could further unlock potential. The site

is an approximate 10 minute walk from Maidstone East Station. Further details on connectivity with Maidstone's railway stations and bus stations are provided at Appendix 3D.

The closest taxi ranks are on High Street and King Street, 140m to the north.

There are two vehicular access points to the site, one off Mill Street and one off Palace Avenue. A further access route from Palace Avenue is possible, via an existing drive to the east of the site that is also within Peugeot's ownership. This also allows the potential for connecting with existing pedestrian routes to Gabriel's Hill to the west. There are also two pedestrian rights of access between the site and Bank Street. The western one connects to the glass covered workshop to the rear of the Mill Street block whilst the other connects to the northernmost part of the rear (northern) parking area, on its western side. Both are currently gated off to prevent public access.

Further details on connectivity with Maidstone's railway stations and bus stations are provided at Appendix 3D.

## 3B:07 Landscape and Visual Context

The site has a hard, urban character, with the only vegetation being some overgrown scrub on the eastern side of the River Len, overgrown ornamental shrub beds to the north and east of the used car sales area and low shrub planting along the Palace Avenue frontage of the used car area. There is also a self-seeded tree and small amount of scrub along the northern boundary. There is a row of coniferous trees along the western boundary of the northern parking area and also immediately adjacent to part of the northern side of the eastern building. Clarification is required as to the management responsibility/ownership of these trees. The parking areas are covered entirely by asphalt or concrete. The northern car parking area is enclosed by tall palisade security fence.

To the south of the site, there are some areas of self-seeded scrub along the River Len, both on an island within the mill pond as well as along its Palace way frontage.

The immediate wider area similarly has a hard urban character, with the expanse of road infrastructure on the A229 Palace Avenue/Bishops Way to the south and south-west and the predominance of terraced shops on Mill Street and the wider town centre to the north. To the south-west, the Carriage Museum and Bishops Palace have associated gardens which soften this area and provide recreational amenity space.

With regards to its visual context, the site is clearly visible from the A229 to the south and, given its size and art deco style is a memorable landmark from this immediate area. The River Len also provides an attractive setting to the building and unusual town centre waterfront walk. The site is generally not visible from the north or east other than from buildings with windows immediately backing on to the site. There is also an oblique view of the western part of the building from the top end of Mill Street.

If developed with taller buildings, there is the potential for views to be gained from the wider area, especially Bank Street and High Street. Given that this area lies within the Maidstone Centre Conservation Area and includes a lot of listed buildings it will be important to ensure that their settings are respected. It would not be appropriate for example, for new buildings to break the skyline of Bank Street when viewed from the north.

Particular attention should be paid to the visual setting of Len House itself and any new development within its setting would also have to respect the setting and integrity of the listed building, and would need to be subservient to it. As described in both the Maidstone Centre Conservation Area Appraisal and Maidstone Town Centre Study, this would best be achieved by restricting the heights of new buildings to four storeys.





Mill Street, looking north



Junction of Palace Avenue, Bishop's Way and Mill Street



Mill Street, looking south



Palace Avenue, looking west



Len House, looking west from the roof of The Mall car park







## **Site 3: Len House**

### **Appendix 3C: Heritage Review**

# Heritage Review

Len House, also known as the Rootes building, is Grade II listed and also sits within the Maidstone Centre Conservation Area. The building was first listed in October 2009 for the following principal reasons:

- The building is of architectural interest as an example of a Modernist motorcar showroom and workshops which retains a significant proportion of its original fabric
- The building is of architectural interest due to its grand scale, town-centre location and picturesque setting adjacent to the Len mill pond, which distinguishes it from other buildings associated with the motorcar industry during this phase of early motoring
- The building is a prominent manifestation of a hugely successful British car manufacturer, built in a period when the expansion of car ownership was having a the revolutionary impact on the physical and social fabric of the nation

This iconic Art-Deco building is built over two storeys with a flat roof and parapet to the front (facing Mill Road) and a saw-tooth roof with corrugated covering to the rear. The east block is over two floors but a mezzanine level at the west end results in two rows of upper windows on the west elevation. Internally, the workshops are largely open plan with the vehicular ramp between ground and first floor being a principal

feature. The concrete and steel structure of the building is undisguised; at ground floor concrete cross beams rest on large columns, supporting the first floor above, at first floor the workshops are open to the roof. A number of original staircases remain throughout the building, mainly characterised by curved steel-strip balusters with wood or metal hand rails, as well as a curved mezzanine viewing gallery (now enclosed) in the south-east corner of the showroom.

At the time of its opening in April 1938, the showroom was considered the largest and most up to date in Kent; at night 700ft of neon tubing outlined the frontage and spelled out the name 'ROOTES' on the tower above the main entrance. The size of the Rootes showroom floor, uninterrupted by supporting columns, combined with an elegant, streamlined exterior glowing with neon light, would have made an impressive sight. The Rootes complex was referred to as a '*palace of modern motoring*'.

Within the Maidstone Centre Conservation Area Appraisal (2009) the Rootes building is described as being redeveloped in the 1930s as 'large and impressive state-of-the-art showrooms and workshops which remain such an important feature of the Conservation Area today' (p.22) and is further noted as constituting '*an iconic building now of great townscape importance*' (p.82). It is therefore a sensitive site and



any development at the site needs to respect the dominance of the listed building and the integrity of its setting externally, as well as best preserving also those internal features which are highlighted in the listing description as being significant, such as the internal ramp.

Few buildings within the Conservation Area as a whole exceed three storeys in height and the Rootes building is named as one of the landmark buildings within the town and Conservation Area, described as ‘*sitting attractively alongside the Mill Pond at the southern entrance to the Conservation Area...*’ (CAA, 2009, p.29). Most development within the Conservation Area is still of two to four storey height with only a few modern exceptions to this, which are generally appraised as making a negative contribution to the Conservation Area, and further the CAA states that ‘*it is unlikely that in any location development above four storeys will be considered acceptable*’ (ibid. p.103).

### **Planning Policy Context**

In Planning Policy terms, the newly revised NPPF (February 2019) Chapter 16 (Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment) states at para 192 that “*In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of: a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with*

*their conservation; b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and , c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*”

Para 193 of the revised NPPF states that “*When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.*”

Para 194 of the revised NPPF states: “*Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.*” It further goes on to state that substantial harm to or loss of grade II listed buildings should be exceptional.

Para 196 states that: “*Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.*” However, as noted at footnote 62 of the

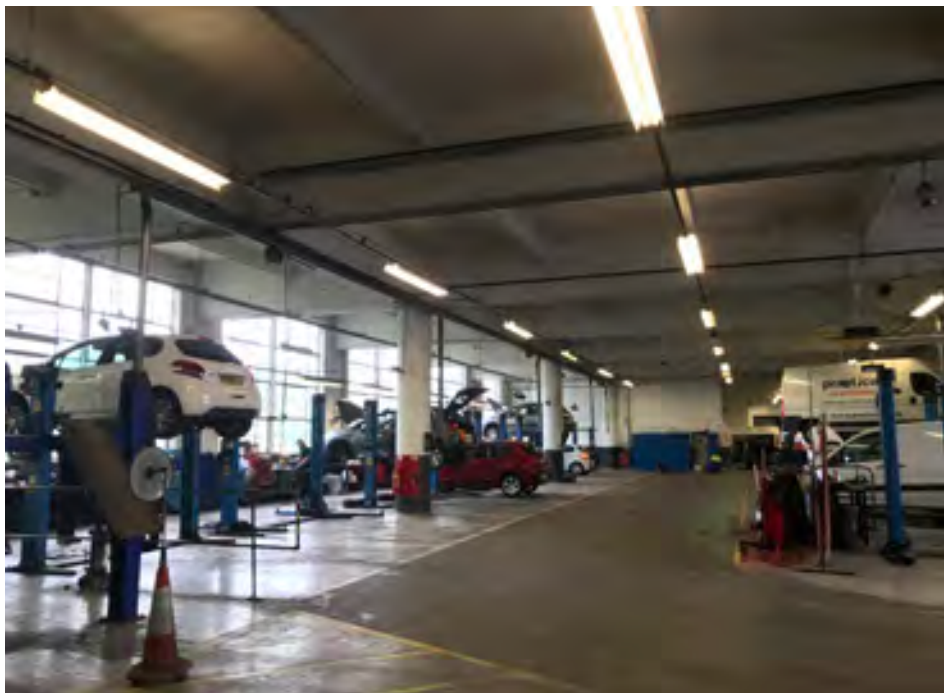




Rear ground floor showroom, Mill Street



Former snooker club, first floor Mill Street



Workshop, Palace Avenue frontage



North elevation



Palace Avenue/Mill Street: potential for riverside space



West elevation (used cars sales)



revised NPPF, the policies set out in chapter 16 relate, as applicable, to the heritage-related consent regimes for which local planning authorities are responsible under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as well as to plan-making and decision-making. In particular, Section 66 states *“In considering whether to grant planning permission [or permission in principle] for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.”*

Similarly, Section 72 states that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area, although the revised NPPF 2018 does state at para 200 that: *“Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably”,* and also goes on to state at Para 201 *“Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the*

*Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 195 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 196, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.”*

Finally, para 202 of the NPPF 2018 states that *“Local planning authorities should assess whether the benefits of a proposal for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the disbenefits of departing from those policies.”*

A new addition to the NPPF at para 198 states that *“Local planning authorities should not permit the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred”,* thus making viability assessments a key part in balancing the decision making process. In terms of finding an ‘optimum viable use’ for heritage assets this will not always be the most profitable solution, but the one which delivers a viable outcome with the least harm to the asset, and secures a sustainable future.

In local planning policy terms, the MBLP sets out the framework for development in the borough until 2031. Relevant policies include SP4 Maidstone

Town Centre; SP18 Historic Environment; and H2 (1) Maidstone Town Centre broad location for housing growth. Policy DM1 Principles of good design is also relevant, stating: *“In order to achieve high quality design, it is expected that proposals will positively respond to and, where appropriate, enhance the character of their surroundings. It is important that development contributes to its context...Key aspects of built development will be the scale, height, materials, detailing, mass, bulk and site coverage...These features should relate well, and respond positively, to the context in which they are seen....New development should integrate well into the built, natural and historic environment..”* Para 6.5 of policy DM1 also notes that *“In assessing the appropriateness of design, the council will have regard to adopted Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans, Character Area Assessments and the Kent Design Guide, which provide specific information about local character and distinctiveness and give guidance on design principles.”* Policy DM4 details the approach to Development affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets, which defers to national legislation (P(LBCA) A 1990 and NPPF 2018).

In terms of redevelopment at the Len House Site, it is clear that there needs to be a balance struck between conserving the key elements of the Rootes building which contribute to its significance and setting, and also finding an Optimum Viable Use (OVU) for the Len House complex. The key elements which contribute

to its significance are those which originally led to the Rootes building being described as the ‘palace of modern motoring’: the clear 1930s Art Deco architectural expression of the exterior of the building, particularly on its western and southern elevations fronting onto Mill Street and overlooking Len Pond, which were once illuminated with 700ft of neon tubing outlining the frontage; the plan form of the building, including the size and open heights of the original showroom floor, uninterrupted by supporting columns (which are still intact) and combined with the elegant streamlined exterior; the tower above the main entrance (once illuminated with ‘Rootes’ in neon lights), and the survival of a significant proportion of its original fabric, particularly within the interior. The internal ramp is described in the listing description as a ‘principal feature’ and therefore there would have to be clear and convincing justification to permit its loss where there are alternative schemes which would allow its retention. The interior of the building, despite the insertion of some modern partitioning (reversible), retains its original supporting columns, staircases, with curved steel-strip balusters with wood or metal handrails, curved mezzanine viewing gallery and even the tannoy system and speakers used to relay messages to the workshop floor. Its concrete and steel structure is undisguised; floors are of reinforced concrete with Terrazzo, rubber and grano finishing; and steel casement windows are retained throughout. Any redevelopment works should seek to conserve and enhance the



exterior and interior features where possible and find an optimum viable use which causes the least harm to the heritage asset.

Any new development within the setting of the Rootes building would also have to respect the setting and integrity of the listed building, and would need to be subservient to the Listed building. The building also lies within the Maidstone Town Centre Conservation Area and within the setting of several listed buildings: Nos.16-20 and No.22 Mill Street (both Grade II-listed) to the west; Grade II Nos. 69, 70, 74-75, 76-77, 79-81, 82, 83-84, 86, 87-88, 89 Bank Street (all Grade II) and Nos. 78 and 85 Bank Street (both Grade II\*) to the north; and Nos.16-18 and No.20 Gabriel's Hill (both Grade II), No.2 Lower Stone Street (Grade II) and Nos.2-6 Palace Avenue (Grade II) to the east. To the south-west of the site are the Tithe Barn (Grade I), the Len Bridge (Grade II), the Gate House (Grade II), the Archbishop's Palace (Grade I) and All Saints Church (Grade I); which all make up part of the All Saints Conservation Area, which also forms part of the building's setting.







## **Site 3: Len House**

### **Appendix 3D: Connectivity with Public Transport**

## Distances & Journey Times to Bus Stops & the Bus Station\*

Bus Stop	Location	Distance	Mode		
			Walk	Cycle	Number of Services Within a 20-Minute Walk
	Gala Bingo / Granada House / The Mall				
Mill Street	Mill Street	300m	4-Minutes	2-Minutes	71
Chequers Bus Station	Romney Place	150m	2-Minutes	1-Minute	
	Mote Road				
Lower Stone Street	Lower Stone Street	240m	3-Minutes	1-Minute	70
Chequers Bus Station	Romney Place	400m	5-Minutes	2-Minutes	
	Peugeot Building (Len House)				
Mill Street	Mill Street	17m	1-Minute	1-Minute	71
Chequers Bus Station	Romney Place	450m	5-Minutes	2-Minute	
	Maidstone Riverside				
Rocky Hill	A20 London Road	400m	5-Minutes	2-Minutes	71
Chequers Bus Station	Romney Place	1km	13-Minutes	4-Minutes	
	Maidstone West Station				
Broadway	A20 Broadway	270m	3-Minutes	1-Minute	71
Chequers Bus Station	Romney Place	1km	11-Minutes	3-Minutes	

\*(Markides Associates, June 2018)



## Distances &amp; Journey Times to Maidstone Rail Stations\*

Rail Station	Distance	Mode		
		Walk	Cycle	Public Transport
Gala Bingo / Granada House / The Mall				
Maidstone Barracks	1.2km	15-Minutes	6-Minutes	13-Minutes via Maidstone West
Maidstone East	750m	9-Minutes	4-Minutes	9-Minutes via Kings Hill Connect X1 / Sapphire 101 / 130 / 150
Maidstone West	800m	10-Minutes	3-Minutes	8-Minutes via 503 Maidstone P&R / Greenway 71 / Greenway 72 / 3 / 7
Mote Road				
Maidstone Barracks	1.5km	18-Minutes	7-Minutes	16-Minutes via Maidstone West or 15-Minutes via Greenway 71 / Greenway 72 / 58
Maidstone East	1km	12-Minutes	6-Minutes	10-Minutes via Sapphire 101 / 155
Maidstone West	1km	13-Minutes	4-Minutes	7-Minutes via Greenway 71 / Greenway 72 / 3 / 7
Peugeot Building (Len House)				
Maidstone Barracks	1.2km	14-Minutes	5-Minutes	10-Minutes via Maidstone West or 12-Minutes via Greenway 71 / Greenway 72 / 79A / 79C
Maidstone East	800m	10-Minutes	4-Minutes	10-Minutes via Kings Hill Connect X1 / Sapphire 101 / 79 / 155
Maidstone West	550m	7-Minutes	3-Minutes	5-Minutes via 503 Maidstone P&R / Greenway 71 / Greenway 72 / 1 / 3 / 6 / 6X / 7 / 8 / 79A / 79C
Maidstone Riverside				
Maidstone Barracks	500m	7-Minutes	2-Minutes	n/a
Maidstone East	950m	12-Minutes	5-Minutes	12-Minutes via Sapphire 101 / 79 / 150 / 155
Maidstone West	550m	7-Minutes	4-Minutes	n/a
Maidstone West Station				
Maidstone Barracks	1.1km	14-Minutes	6-Minutes	14-Minutes via Greenway 71 / Greenway 72 / 58 / 60 / 78 / 79A / 79C
Maidstone East	1.2km	16-Minutes	8-Minutes	12-Minutes via Kings Hill Connect X1 / Sapphire 101 / 79 / 150 / 155
Maidstone West	270m	3-Minutes	1-Minute	n/a





# Site 4: Maidstone Riverside

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## Appendix 4A: Planning Context

# National Policy Considerations

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was most recently updated in February 2019. This, together with relevant Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) now represents the most up-to-date national planning policy and guidance.

The NPPF Revision and the PPG place importance on the need to deliver sustainable development. This includes the delivery of necessary development to ensure that local planning authorities can sustainably meet the development needs of their area.

Key objectives within the NPPF Revision include:

- Significantly boosting the supply of homes including affordable homes and maintaining a five year supply of deliverable housing sites.
- Building a strong, competitive economy, placing significant weight on the need to support economic growth and productivity, and taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.
- Ensuring the vitality of town centres, and supporting the role that town centres play at the heart of local community by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation.



*View towards southern end of site with Travelodge Hotel and Bridges Gyratory in foreground.*



# Local Policy Considerations

## Maidstone Borough Local Plan (2017)

Maidstone Borough Council adopted the Maidstone Borough Local Plan 2011 – 2031 ('MBLP') in October 2017. The MBLP comprises both the strategic aims and policies for the borough and specific site allocations.

The borough assets, together with its good access to London and the channel ports for Europe, make Maidstone an attractive location for people in which to come to work and live. This creates a high pressure for development, so the MBLP focuses strongly on sustainability. Maintaining sustainable communities for the borough's urban and rural residents and businesses is at the heart of the MBLP's objectives.

The MBLP seeks to strike an appropriate balance between the national call for homes and the local need for housing (including affordable housing), and employment for a growing population. Development in the borough has been planned with supporting infrastructure to make proposals acceptable and to maintain residents' quality of life.

Relevant policies, as set out below include:

- Policy SP4 – Maidstone Town Centre (including town centre boundary; The Mall redevelopment opportunity)
- Policy SP18- Historic environment
- Policy SP20 – Affordable housing
- Policy H2(1) – Detailed Policies for broad locations for housing growth: Maidstone Town Centre

- Policy DM1 – Principles of good design
- Policy DM4- Development affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets
- Policy DM16 – Town centre uses
- Policy DM19 – Publicly accessible open space and recreation
- Policy DM23/Appendix B – Parking Standards
- Policy DM28 – Secondary shopping frontages
- Policy DM29 – Leisure & community uses in the town centre
- Policy RMX1 (5): Powerhub Building and Baltic Wharf

**Policy SS1** of the MBLP includes a housing target of 17,660 dwellings over the 20 year Plan period. This equates to a target of 883 dwellings per annum. In addition, the spatial strategy for the borough identifies a need for:

- 39,830m<sup>2</sup> floorspace for office use
- 20,290m<sup>2</sup> floorspace for industrial use
- 49,911m<sup>2</sup> floorspace for warehousing use
- 29,800m<sup>2</sup> floorspace for retail use

All of the Opportunity Sites are all within the Maidstone Town Centre. **Policy SP4** sets out a vision for the town centre. It seeks to retain and enhance a variety of well integrated attractions including shopping, service sector-based businesses, leisure and cultural

facilities that the town centre offers and also to retain the best quality office stock, whilst allowing for the redevelopment of lower quality offices. The MBLP seeks to focus retail uses within the primary and secondary shopping frontages policy areas of the town, to the east of the River Medway. Policy RMX1 (5): Powerhub Building and Baltic Wharf, does however allow for retail use here, provided the requisite retail planning tests are met, as part of a mixed use development.

The site offers an excellent opportunity for high density urban living in close proximity to the retail, business and leisure opportunities provided by the town centre. The MBLP, paragraph 4.65, states that: “Whilst commercial uses are the priority for the town centre, residential development can have a supporting role, in particular

as part of mixed use schemes. Additional residential development in the town centre will help to promote town centre vitality, especially during the evening.” Policy SP4 (vii.) promotes: “Select opportunities for residential redevelopment”. Policy H1 proposes 940 houses within the town centre, 190 of which could be on lands to the west of the River Medway.

**Policy RMX1 (5): Powerhub Building and Baltic Wharf** also allows for residential use here, as part of a mixed use development. Policy RMX1 (5) is a site-specific retail and mixed use policy for the Powerhub site. The sites allocated under policies RMX1 (1) to RMX (6) will deliver a mix of retail, employment and housing development to meet the borough’s needs. The sites provide for approximately 263 dwellings (accounted for in the total

## Policy SP4: Town centre vision

By 2031 a regenerated and sustainable Maidstone town centre will be a first class traditional town centre at the heart of the 21st Century County Town that has maintained its place as one of the premier town centres in Kent by creating a distinctive, safe and high quality place that has:

- Retained its best environmental features, including the riverside and the enhanced public realm;
- Provided a variety of well-integrated attractions for all ages including new shopping, service sector based businesses, leisure, tourism, and cultural facilities;
- Improved access for all.

Key components in realising this vision are:

- Enhancing the diversity of the retail offer, supporting a continued balance between independent and multiple retailers;
- Creating a highly sustainable location resilient to future climate change;
- Establishing the town centre as an attractive hub for business building on the town centre’s assets and environment;
- Creating a stronger mix and balance of uses within the centre to support long term viability including where appropriate residential development; and
- Tackling congestion and air quality issues through improvements in provision for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists, including public transport.



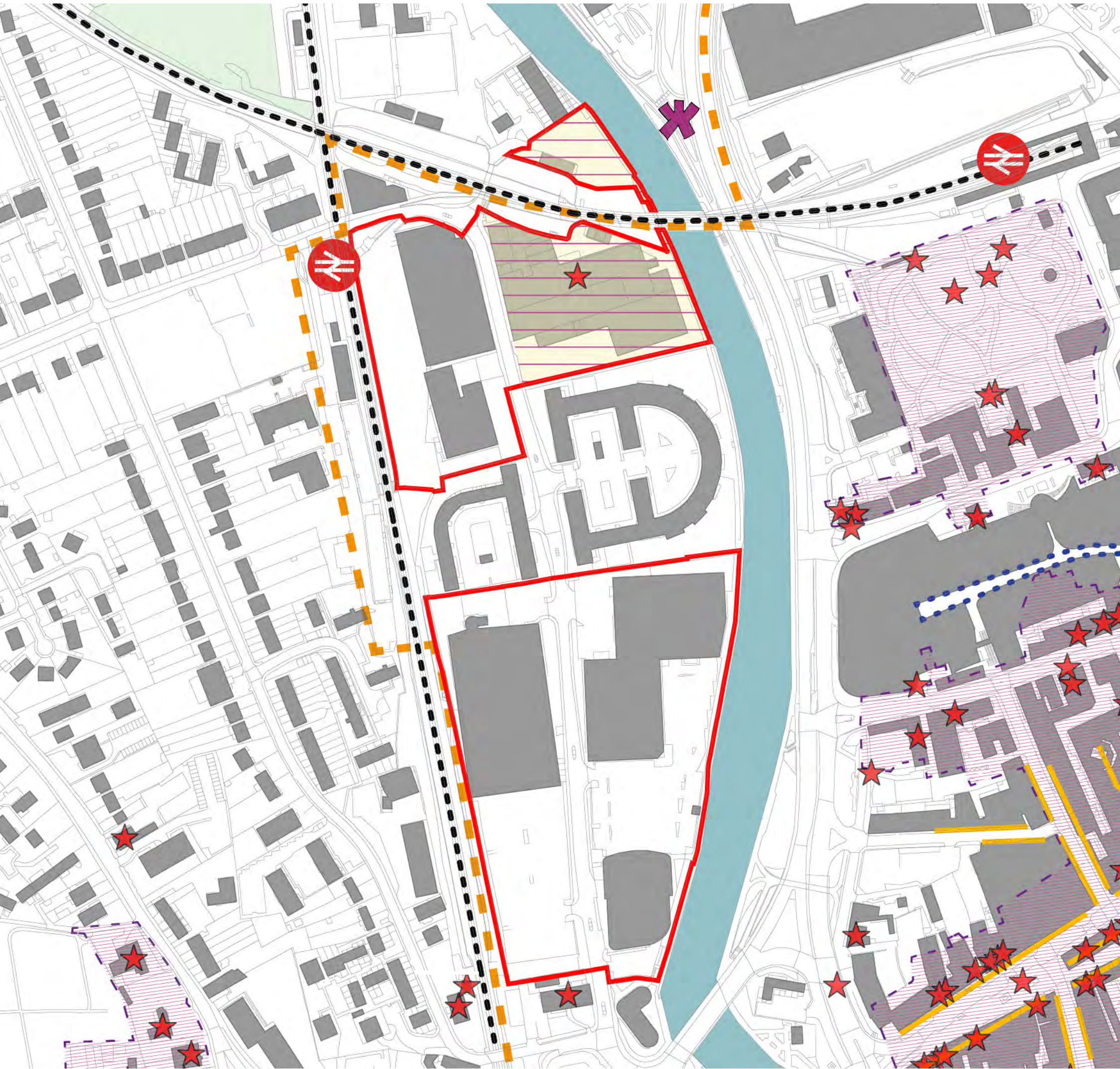











Figure 4.1: Designations and Features

scale 1:2500 @ A3

- |   |  |
|---|--|
|  Conservation Area                           |  Maidstone Borough Local Plan Policy DM27 Primary shopping frontage   |
|  Scheduled Monuments                         |  Maidstone Borough Local Plan Policy DM28 Secondary shopping frontage |
|  Listed Buildings                            |  Maidstone Borough Local Plan Town Centre Boundary                    |
|  Built Form                                  |  Site Boundary  |
|  Maidstone Borough Local Plan Policy RMX1(5) |  |



housing land supply under policy H1), 25,700m<sup>2</sup> retail floorspace and 106,000m<sup>2</sup> employment floorspace. Development will be permitted provided the criteria for each site set out in the detailed site allocation policies are met.

RMX1(5) states that the Baltic Wharf site is suitable for a mix of uses comprising houses, offices (B1a and/or A2), leisure uses (D2), cafés and restaurants (A3) and retail (A1), provided the requisite retail planning tests are met. The policy requires a comprehensive approach which avoids piecemeal development which would undermine the successful restoration of the listed building. Any development proposal for the northern car park alone in isolation from the Baltic Wharf site would fail to comply with this policy requirement. The planning brief provides focused guidance for the main Baltic Wharf site but this does not over-ride the requirement for proposals to fully accord with the allocation policy in the MBLP. The full text for this allocation is included opposite.

Maidstone has approved vehicle parking standards published by Kent Highway Services as an interim measure for development management decisions, and the County gives advice on development proposals that generate a need for parking provision. Parking standards are set out in **Policy DM23**/Appendix B of the MBLP.

The MBLP advised that attention should also be paid to providing sufficient green spaces, not only for people

to enjoy but also to the value we should place upon our natural environment for its own intrinsic worth. Open space provision on new housing sites is covered by MBLP Policy DM19, requiring a standard of 0.7ha amenity green space, 0.25ha space for children and young people and 1.6ha publicly accessible outdoor sports space per 1000 residents. The policy also requires 0.2ha allotments and community gardens and 6.5ha of natural/semi-natural areas of open space per 1000 residents. Given the compact nature of the site and the high density context, it is recognised that it will not be feasible to provide the required amount of open space on the site. Paragraph 6.89 of the MBLP allows for a financial contribution to be made to improve existing sites and enhance the capacity of existing provision if suitable opportunities for new open space cannot be identified within the specified accessibility standards due to site constraints.

There is a significant need for affordable housing within the borough and a clear justification for the Council to seek affordable dwellings through new development schemes. In order to respond to the identified need for affordable housing of different tenures through the period of the plan, the MBLP has a target rate of 30% affordable housing for new developments within the Maidstone Urban Area (**Policy DM20**), with indicative targets of 70% affordable rented housing, social rented housing or a mixture of the two and 30% intermediate affordable housing (shared ownership and/or intermediate rent). The inclusion of this quantum of



## Policy RMX1 (5): Powerhub Building and Baltic Wharf, St Peter's Street, Maidstone

The Baltic Wharf site, as shown on the policies map, is suitable for a mix of uses comprising housing, offices (B1a and/or A2), leisure uses (D2), cafés and restaurants (A3) and retail (A1). Planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met:

### Design and layout

1. The proposal conserves and, where possible, enhances the heritage significance of the listed Powerhub building and its setting and secures the building's restoration.
2. The proposal achieves the comprehensive development of the whole site and avoids piecemeal development which would undermine the achievement of the restoration of the listed building.
3. The proposal is designed to enhance the site's contribution to the townscape as seen from public vantage points, in particular from the banks of the River Medway.

### Uses

4. For retail (A1) floorspace additional to the 2,596m<sup>2</sup> which is lawful, submission of a sequential sites assessment and a retail impact assessment which demonstrate that the National Planning Policy Framework's sequential and impact tests are met.

### Access

5. The provision of a level riverside footpath for use by the public extending from the site's southern boundary with Scotney Gardens to connect at its boundary with Waterside Gate to the north.
6. Submission of an employees' Travel Plan to be implemented in conjunction with the development.

### Flooding

7. Submission of a Flood Risk Assessment for the development undertaken to a methodology agreed with the Environment Agency and the delivery of resultant flood mitigation measures.
8. Submission of a surface water drainage strategy for the development based on sustainable drainage principles.

### Noise

9. Submission of a noise assessment and the delivery of resultant noise attenuation measures.

### Air quality

10. The submission of an air quality assessment and emission reductions plan and the delivery of resultant mitigation measures.

### Land contamination

11. The submission of a land contamination assessment and the delivery of resultant mitigation measures.

### Highways and transportation

12. Development will contribute, as proven necessary through a Transport Assessment, to requisite improvements to the highway network, to include the following:
  - i. Improvements at the junction of Buckland Hill with London Road; and
  - ii. Improvements to the capacity of the eastbound carriageway of the Bridges Gyratory in the event that the current improvement scheme does not provide sufficient capacity to meet the needs of the development.
13. For proposals which include additional retail floorspace, measures to secure improved pedestrian, cycle and public transport links to ensure that the site is accessible and well connected to the primary shopping area.







affordable housing on the site may not be achievable due to economic viability however and, in such cases, the policy recommends developers to enter into negotiations with the council's Housing department, in consultation with registered providers at the earliest stage of the application process. Given the costs of refurbishing/converting the listed building on the site, viability of any development is likely to be an issue, and early discussions relating to affordable housing provision are therefore highly recommended.

Due regard will need to be given to the risk of flooding throughout the site, and development should be directed towards those areas which are the lowest risk (flood zone 1). A flood risk assessment will certainly be required if a development is progressed (see the PPG and NPPF Revision footnote 50).

The Powerhub building (Baltic Wharf) is Grade II listed (reference 1408072) and the Church of St Peter to the immediate south of the site is Grade II\* listed (reference 173469). Policy RMX1 (5) is clear that any development coming forward should conserve and where possible enhance the heritage significance of the listed (Powehub) building on this allocated site. This will need to be considered early on in the design process.

### Neighbourhood Plans

There are no made Neighbourhood Plans impacting upon the site.

### Relevant Planning History

The site has been the subject of a number of planning applications over the past 40 years. A hybrid application (13/0297) for a supermarket and associated uses on the Baltic Wharf site was granted consent on appeal in 2014. This was not implemented and has now expired.

Opposite the Baltic Wharf site, a change of use application for a builders merchants (Jewsons site) was consented in 1994. To the south of Jewsons a change of use application was made in 1990 for a vehicle rental facility, followed by the installation of an underground 6000 gallon petrol tank in 1991. To the south of the rental facility, a retrospective application was submitted in 2016 for the change of use of a previous plumbing merchant at 5 St Peter's Street to car wash and tyre replacement centre.

Land within the southern part of the site was increasingly subject to applications for retail-led schemes during the late 1980s onwards. Consent for retail warehouses at St. Peter's Wharf was given in 1987 and for retail warehouses at the former British Gas Depot on the western side of the street in 2000.





# Site 4: Maidstone Riverside

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## Appendix 4B: Site Analysis

## B4:01 Land Uses

The site is in multiple ownership with buildings occupied by retail, leisure and business users. The northern part of the site includes Raglan House, the listed Powerhub Building and its associated extensions on the eastern side of St. Peter's Street and Jewsons builders merchants, and a car hire company and car wash facility to the west. Beyond the western boundary, immediately to the west of Jewsons, are the platforms for Maidstone Barracks Railway Station.

The southern part of the site is occupied by larger, more recent 'box' retail units and associated large parking areas. These are currently occupied by Wickes on the eastern side of St. Peter's Street and the St Peter's Wharf Retail Park on the east, which currently includes Asda Home, TKMaxx, Hobbycraft and The Range retail outlets.

Between the two parts of the site, there are two large courtyards of apartment blocks, one each side of St. Peter's Street.

To the north of the site, a railway bridge crosses the River Medway. This has embankments immediately to the north of the Powerhub site. A pedestrian route runs to the south of the railway line here. To the north of the railway, there is a parking area accessed off Waterside Gate within the same ownership as the Powerhub and beyond this a small cul-de-sac of terraced housing and apartments. Waterside Gate also includes a health and leisure club with pool, gym and tennis courts.

To the north-west of the site, the Buckland Hill area is a leafy residential neighbourhood with relatively large properties and apartment blocks, many dating from Victorian times.

To the west of the site, the railway forms a physical barrier. At the northern end of the site, Maidstone Barracks railway station has platforms but no station building or parking. Other uses to the west of the railway line include allotments and the residential streets of St. Anne Court and Buckland Road, with further residential streets to the west.

To the east of the site is the River Medway, with the historic and retail core of Maidstone beyond.

To the south, there is the historic Church of St. Peter's, now converted to a children's nursery, and a Travelodge Hotel. South of these, St. Peter's Street joins the Bridges Gyratory, a large roundabout that includes two road bridges over the Medway. This is overlooked by two large buildings that lie in close proximity to the river, the Broadway Shopping Centre and Crown Combined Law Centre.



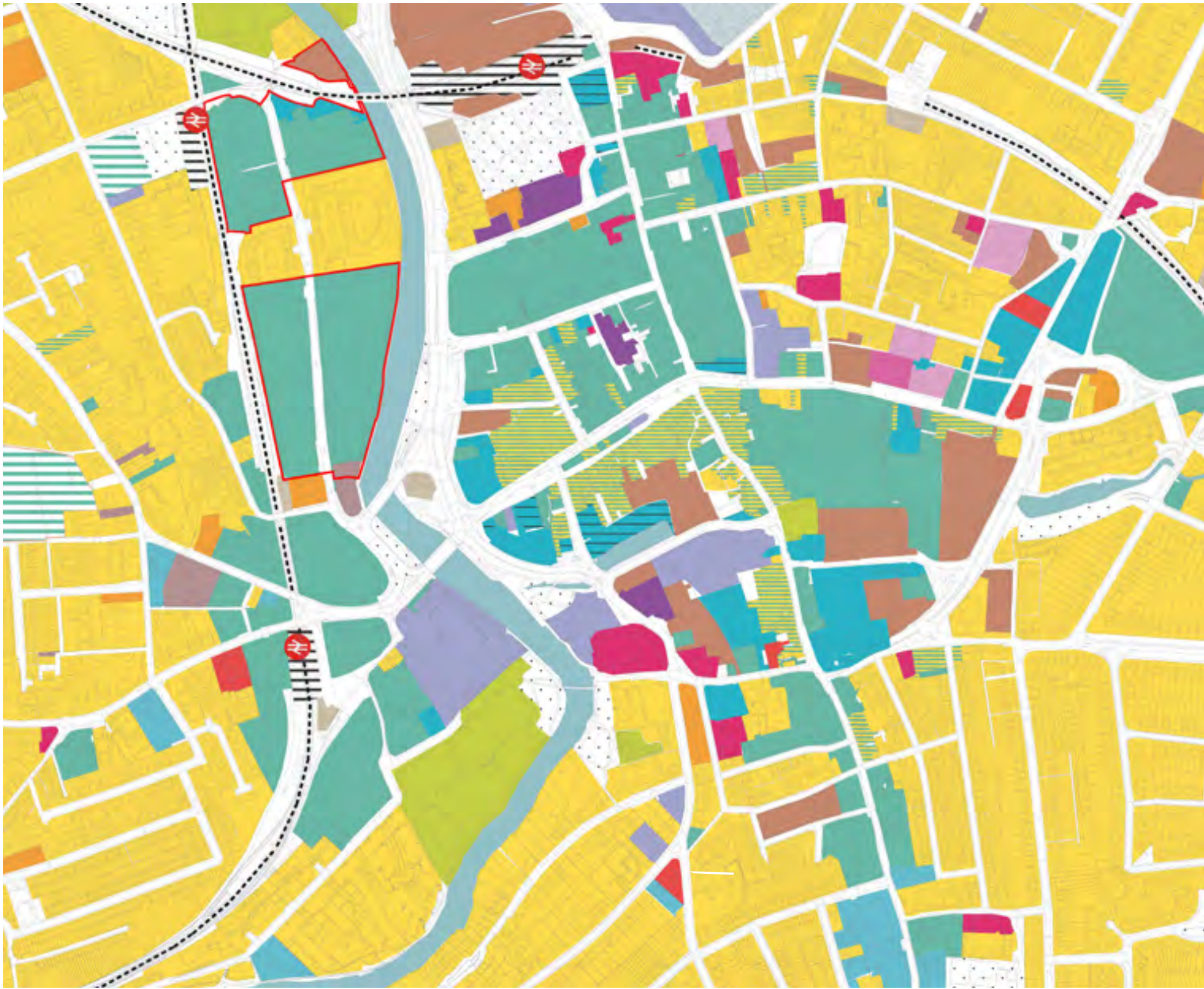


Figure.4.2 Land Use

- |   |                     |                               |
|---|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| Residential                                     | Cultural            | Place of Worship              |
| Retail  | Leisure             | Car Parking                   |
| Mixed-use (Ground Floor Retail and Residential) | Hotel               | Industry and Electricity      |
| Employment                                      | Prison              | Hospital and Doctor's Surgery |
| Mixed-use (Retail and/or Employment)            | Park and Open Space | Train Station                 |
| Education                                       | Community Centre    | Site                          |
| Civic   | Allotments          |                               |



Land Uses



Asda Home, St. Peter's Street, looking north.



Scotney Gardens apartments, south of Baltic Wharf



St. Peter's Wharf Retail Park looking west.



Fremlin Walk shopping centre, to east of River Medway



Powerhub, mixed commercial/vacant premises, viewed from railway bridge over River Medway





*Apartments on eastern side of River Medway*



*Jewsons builders merchants on western side of St. Peter’s Street*



*Mature vegetation on western side of site (southern end) provides visual separation from adjacent railway line.*



*Broadway Shopping Centre to south of site*







# B4:02 Built Form

The buildings on the site are predominantly the equivalent of two storeys in height, with some of the retail ‘box’ units including a mezzanine floor. Roofs are generally flat. The Powerhub is the exception to this, being five storeys in height.

Between each part of the site, the Scotney Gardens apartments are four-five stories high, forming a continuous convex crescent overlooking the river connected to further terraces fronting St. Peter’s Street.

To the west of the railway line, there are a number of four and five storey apartment buildings. West of this, building heights are more mixed, with two storey traditional houses interspersed with taller apartment blocks (including 5-7 storey blocks on London Road for example). To the immediate south of the site, buildings are deeper in plan and taller, including the six storey Travelodge building, three storey Broadway Shopping Centre and five storey Law Centre.



Powerhub/Baltic Wharf area: two to five storeys



Asda Home: two storeys

- Listed Building
- Green Space
- Building with river frontage
- Key views
- Privately managed car-parking
- Sewer
- Water supply

- Vehicular access points
- Riverside pedestrian route
- Trees
- Intrusive traffic

## Flood Risk Zones

- Flood Zone 2: 0.1-1% chance of flooding per year
- Flood Zone 3: < 3.3% chance of flooding per year

## Building Heights:

- 2 Storey
- 3 Storey
- 4 Storey
- 5 Storey

Figure 4.3 Contextual Analysis including Building Heights





POWERHUB

BUSINESS CENTRE MAIDSTONE



## B4:03 Heritage and Architecture

### Site History

The site lies to the west of the historic core of Maidstone. Historic mapping (Figure 4.4) shows that in mid to late Victorian times the northern part of the site and area to the west of the railway line still appeared as open fields. The southern part of the site was also predominantly open, albeit more formally managed, possibly as parkland, nurseries or orchards. At the south-western corner of the site, a small part of the site (in the vicinity of Asda Living) was occupied by gas works. A 'towing path' stretched along the river bank immediately adjacent to the western boundary of the site. This was the main route next to the river, as the eastern bank was already developed at this stage.

By the time of the 1896-8 mapping, both the Barracks Station and the railway station, now known as Maidstone East, had been constructed and St. Peter's Street included a far greater concentration of industrial buildings. The powerhub area is named on the map and included a timber yard whilst the north-western side of St. Peter's Street included a Malthouse. The south-eastern side of the site included an enlarged gas works. The south-western side of the street appears to be undeveloped.

These uses continued to expand during the early 20th century, with further malthouses and wharfs appearing along St. Peter's Street and the expansion of the gas works to the western side of the street shown on the 1908 map.

### Powerhub

The Powerhub, also known as the Former Tilling-Stevens Factory was built in 1917 and is Grade II listed. It is the earliest surviving 'Kahn Daylight System' factory in England. Such buildings were based on a regular grid of column, beam and slab, in which the concrete frame was fully exposed, and the external walls were glass-filled. The factory is thus constructed of a regular reinforced concrete grid, expressed throughout the exterior of the building. The front elevation, also of concrete, is dressed to present a classically-styled composition to the street. The building was first listed in February 2012 for the following principal reasons:

- Historic interest: the building is the earliest surviving by the practice of Wallis, Gilbert and Partners, the foremost factory architects of the inter-war period; it is also one of the few surviving examples of their early Daylight factories not to have undergone significant alteration;
- Technical interest: the building is one of few surviving examples of a group of English factories built using the Kahn Daylight System, an adaptable, efficient and influential system of factory building, developed in America for the construction of automotive factories;
- Architectural interest: the front elevation of this imposing building employs the compositional devices and decorative motifs which became synonymous with the work of Wallis, Gilbert and Partners; the powerful rationality of its other elevations expresses the modern approach to industrial architecture that its design, construction and layout embodies.

The heritage review (see Appendix 4C) concludes that there needs to be a balance struck between conserving the key elements of the listed Powerhub building which contribute to its significance and setting, and the public benefits which the scheme may bring. Equally, any new development within the setting of the Powerhub building would also have to respect the setting and integrity of the listed building, and would need to be subservient to the listed building. New development should also respect the non-designated heritage assets at the site with sympathetic and appropriate design, scale and mass.

The Powerhub building was designed to be built in stages, with south and west sides shown as ‘future extension’ when plans were originally drawn up for the building: however, it appears that a decision was taken

to only build the north and east sides. Therefore, the plan form is important as contributing to the significance of the building, as is its original fenestration and ‘Kahn Daylight System’, which has since been compromised by the modern internal subdivisions and replacement of the original critical windows with uPVC replacements.

Proposals should seek to restore the Listed Building and enhance the Site’s contribution to the Maidstone townscape as seen from public vantage points, in particular from the banks of the River Medway. Any demolition of parts of the original plan-form building would be contrary to local and national planning policy, particularly that of MBLP policy RMX1 (5), which will only grant permission where any proposal conserves and, where possible, enhances the heritage significance of the listed Powerhub building and its setting and secures

*Historic Map: 1876-1895*



*Historic Map: 1896-1898*



*Historic Map: 1936-1946*



*Figure 4.4 Historic Mapping*



the building's restoration. Any proposed demolition will therefore require appropriate viability and heritage assessments. It is noted in the listing description that the various sheds which adjoin the factory building to the south are not of special interest and therefore a valid argument can be made for these to be demolished and the area redeveloped. Consideration can also be given to the incorporation of a new penthouse storey on the listed building, again subject to a heritage and viability assessment.

### Raglan House

Raglan House was built in 1912 as drawing and management offices for WA Stevens Ltd, which became Tilling-Stevens in 1915, and is typical example of an Edwardian office building of a more restrained Baroque styling. Although not considered to be suitable for

listing, the building does possess some architectural merit, although has undergone a number of alterations, most notably the replacement of its roof, which negatively affects its architectural character. That said, whilst not a candidate for designation in its own right, its association with the Former Tilling-Stevens Factory (Grade II Listed, aka the Powerhub) means that the building is curtilage listed and of local significance. The building should therefore be retained where possible, as it contributes to the setting and significance of the listed Powerhub building, but is itself less sensitive to change and could be open to a number of uses.

### Rest of Site

Elsewhere on the site, buildings generally date from the early 21st century or late 20th century, consisting of large retail 'sheds'. The use of brick panels and plinths, shaped roofs and glazed panels and light coloured cladding means buildings such as Wickes and TKMaxx/The Range/Hobbycraft are of a higher quality than similar units elsewhere, but their lack of active street frontages and surveillance is very detrimental to the St. Peter's Street frontage.

The relatively recent construction of these buildings means that leases are relatively long, and they will not be providing short term opportunities for redevelopment.

### Surrounding Area

The Grade II\* former Church of St Peter is located adjacent to the southern edge of Site 4. Any development needs to respect the setting of this 13th century asset.

A more detailed heritage analysis has been undertaken by Savills Heritage and is included at Appendix 4C.



*Listed former Church of St. Peter*

# B4:04 Landform, Hydrology, Utilities, Noise & Air Quality

The site occupies a relatively flat floodplain site, rising from approximately 5.0m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) along its eastern boundary, to 10m AOD close to its western boundary (see Figure 4.6). This level change is reflected in the presence of some low retaining walls within the parking area in the northern part of the site. To the west of the railway line to the west of the site, the land rises relatively steeply, forming part of a valley side occupied by residential properties.

The site is situated on the western bank of the River Medway. This provides attractive views from the site, but is currently underutilised in terms of leisure and recreation. Few people use the riverside footpaths and there appears to be an opportunity to encourage more boats to moor here, including the potential for leisure use such as restaurants.

A small part of the Powerhub site lies within Environment Agency Flood Zone 3, meaning it is at high risk of flooding (3.3% chance of flooding in any one year. Much of the remainder of the northern part of the site and eastern half of the southern part of the site lie within Flood Zone 2, meaning it has a flood risk of between 0.01% and 1% in any year.

Any planning application would need to be accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment and appropriate mitigation measures.

As reflected in Policy RMX1(5), given the site's central location and industrial history, noise, air quality and land contamination assessments will be required as part of any planning application together with the delivery of appropriate mitigation measures. A number of foul water sewers pass through the site which may restrict

development or require the diversion of the sewer. These are predominantly located within the carriageway of St. Peter's Street, however, a length of sewer runs through the Baltic Wharf/Power Site. Suitable technical advice should be sought prior to detailed design in the vicinity of these utilities.

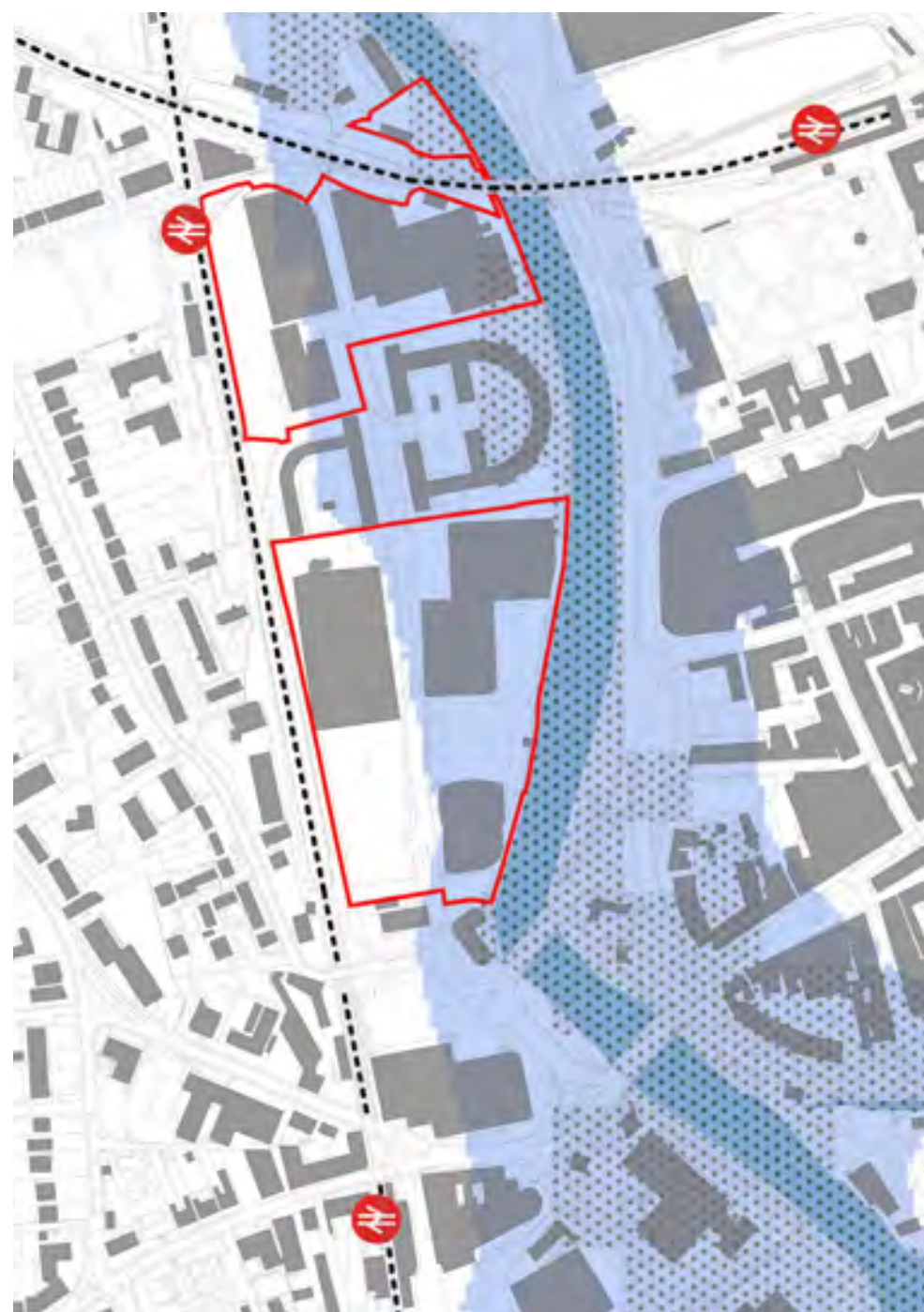


Figure 4.5: Hydrology








## FLOOD RISK ZONES:

- Flood Zone 3: < 3.3% chance of flooding per year
- Flood Zone 2: 0.1-1% chance of flooding per year
- Built Form
- Maidstone West Railway Station
- Site boundary





Figure.4.6: Landform

- |  |   |
|--|---|
|  Built Form   |  Train Station |
|  Contour 5m   |  Water Bodies  |
|  Railway      |  Site boundary |
|  Primary Road |   |



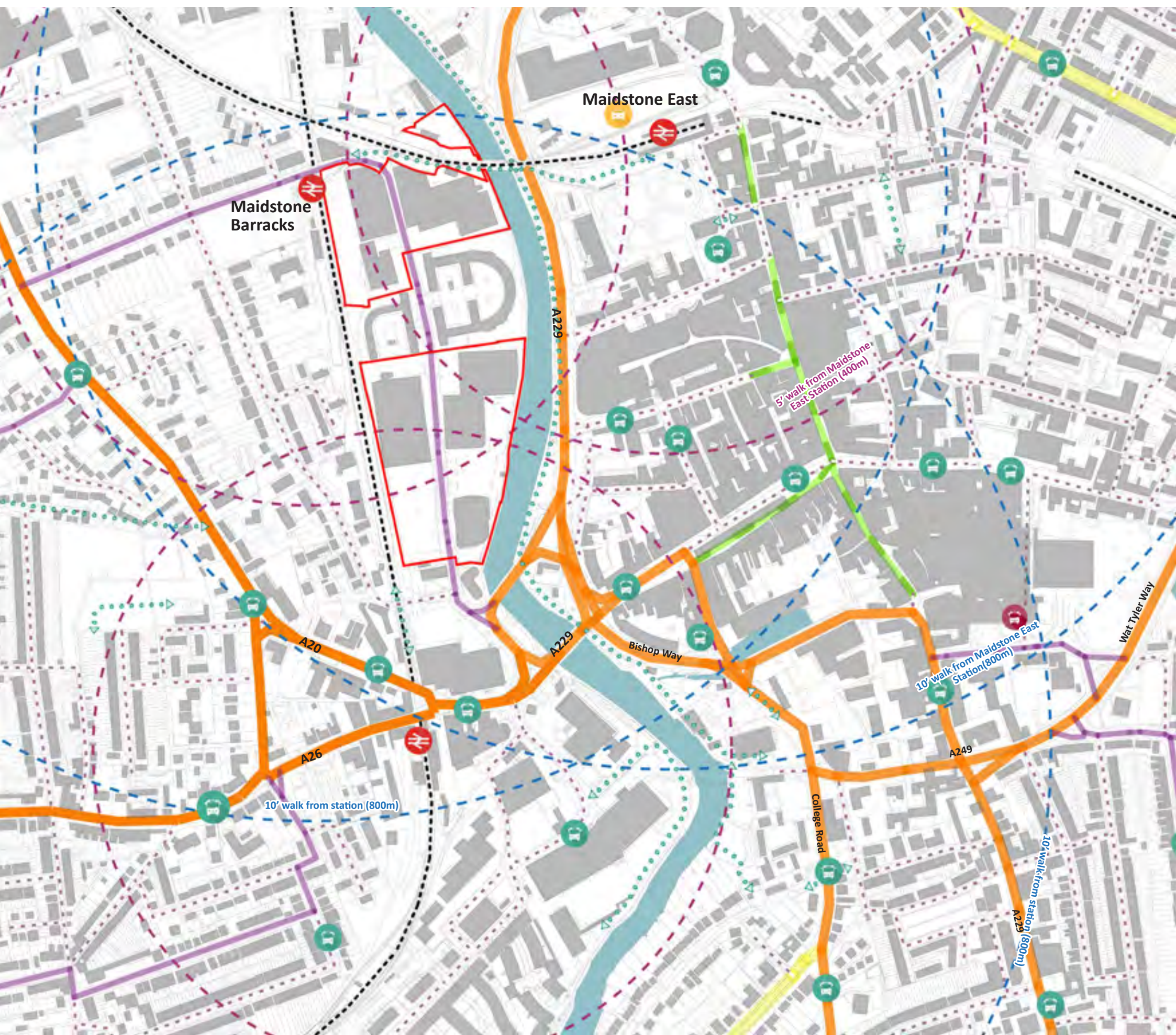


Figure 4.7: Movement and Access

- |                  |                                  |   |
|------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| ■ Railway Line   | — Pedestrian Street              | ● Bus Station                             |
| — A Roads        | — Public Rights of Way           | ○ 400m radius (5 min. walk) from Station  |
| — B Roads        | ● Train Station                  | ○ 800m radius (10 min. walk) from Station |
| — Minor Roads    | ● Bus Routes                     | ○ Site Boundary                           |
| ... Local Street | ● Maidstone East Station Carpark |   |



## B4:05 Movement

Both of the main parts of the site front onto St. Peter's Street which runs through the site in a north-south direction. At its northern end it turns westwards, becoming Buckland Hill. At its southern end it joins the busy gyratory that connects with the town centre, via two bridges over the River Medway. St. Peter's Street benefits from 30mph speed restrictions and right-turn only lanes at site accesses.

It is understood that impacts on the highways network within the area is currently worst during peak shopping hours. New developments would introduce alternative vehicle use patterns and further transport assessments/modelling will be required to inform future developments. Particular consideration will need to be paid to impacts on the junction of Buckland Hill with London Road and the eastbound carriageway of the Bridges Gyratory.

As the crow flies, the site is situated less than 0.2km from Fremlin Walk/town centre shops, however due to the River Medway, pedestrians/cyclists must take the river bridges at the northern (railway) and southern (St. Peter's Bridge/ gyratory) ends of the site. This increases the walk distances to Fremlin Walk from the northern end of the site and to High St/Kings Street from the southern end of the to 0.6km. This is still less than a 10 minute walk.

There is no bus route along St. Peter's Street. The closest stop to the southern end of the site is on Rocky Hill/ London Road, which serves 36 bus routes. The closest stops to the northern end of the site are on the

London Road at Somerfield Hospital (serving 19 bus routes) and at Maidstone East Station (serving 11 bus routes).

Maidstone has good transport links, with direct connections to London and the channel tunnel via the M20 and M2 motorways, and rail connections to London, the coast and Medway towns through three central railway stations in the town. There are approximately six trains per hour departing from Maidstone East Station, including direct connections to London Victoria and Ashford International, with interchanges to a number of destinations available.

Maidstone Barracks Railway Station is situated adjacent to the northern end of the site and could provide the opportunity for an enhanced station facility. This station is located on the Medway Valley Line, between the stations of Aylesford and Maidstone West. It provides direct services to Strood, Paddock Wood and Tonbridge. Services to London Charring Cross require a change of trains at Tonbridge.

Expected improvement to links direct to the City of London via Thameslink in 2019, will further improve the site's connectivity and attraction as a commuter location, whilst improvements to Maidstone East and West (HS1) stations could further unlock potential. The northern part of the site is a few minutes' walk from both Maidstone East and Maidstone Barracks Stations. Further details on connectivity with Maidstone's railway stations and bus stations are provided at Appendix 4D.

The closest taxi ranks are at Maidstone East Station to the north and Lockmeadow Leisure Complex to the south (both less than 0.5km from the site).

With regards to the pedestrian environment, St Peter's Street does not benefit from any signalised pedestrian crossings; however, there are a number of formalised crossing points which benefit from tactile paving, dropped kerbs and safety islands.

There are pedestrian footpaths along both banks of the River Medway. The one on the western side is situated immediately adjacent to the site's western boundary, continues as far north as the southern boundary of the Baltic Wharf site, adjacent to Scotney Gardens.

Two pedestrian routes connect St Peter's Street to the river to the north and south of Scotney Gardens, with a further connection, via steps, through the St. Peter's Wharf Retail Park (close to the entrance off Asda Living).

To the south of St Peter's Street, there is a local, surfaced, off-road cycle route which crosses the River Medway and connects with a local on-road route at the junction of the A229 and St Faith's Street.





## B4:06 Landscape and Visual Context

The site generally has a hard, urban character, vegetation restricted to trees/scrub along the railway line and trees and ornamental shrubs within the car-parks of the retail outlets. The latter include tree planting along both their St. Peter's Street and River Medway frontages.

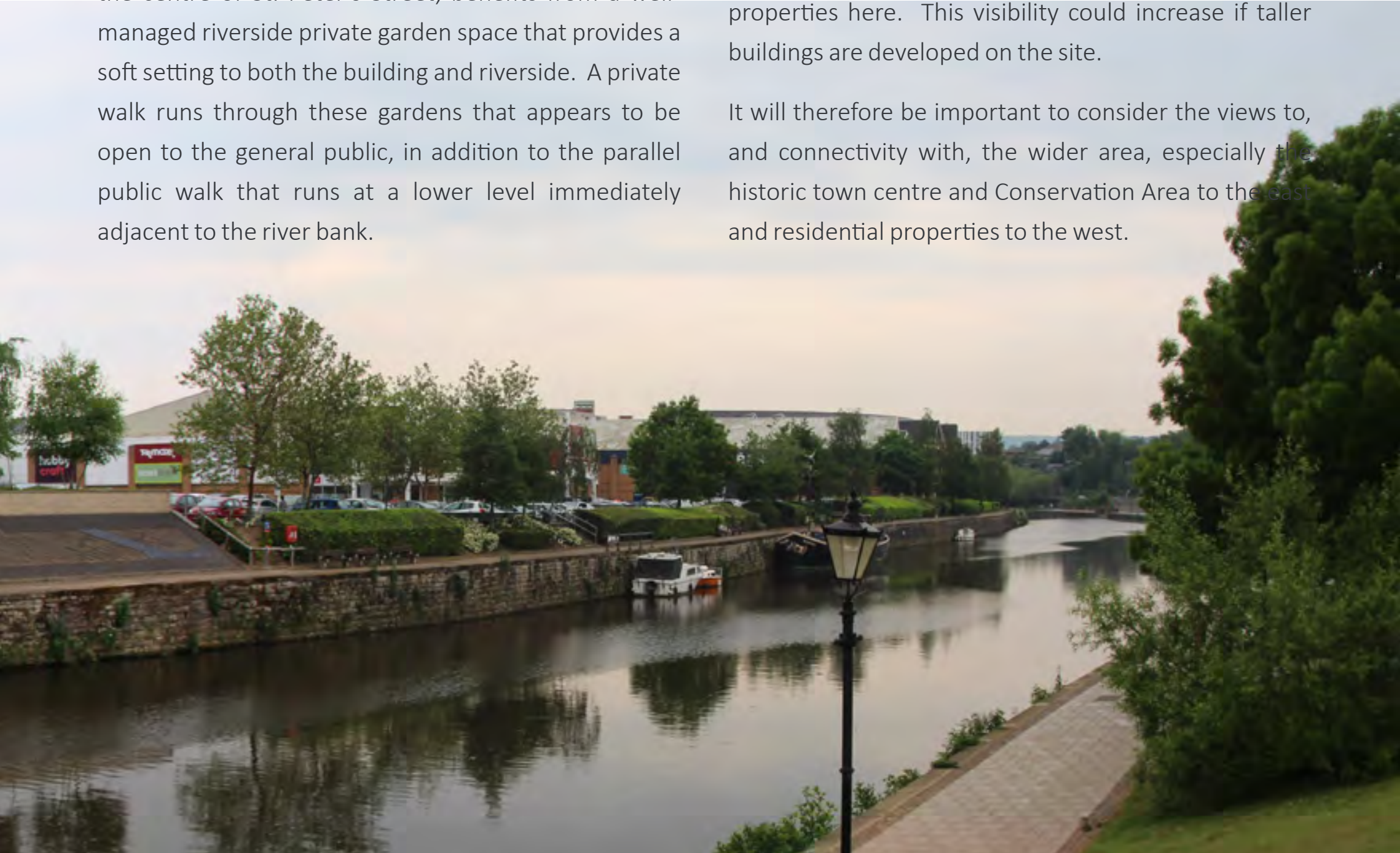
The coarse urban grain with its large areas of car parking and fractured street frontages means that the overall scenic quality of the St. Peter's Street is of low quality. Surveillance is poor due to the lack of street frontages, and this especially contributes to a fear of crime after dark.

Scotney Gardens, a large apartment complex within the centre of St. Peter's Street, benefits from a well-managed riverside private garden space that provides a soft setting to both the building and riverside. A private walk runs through these gardens that appears to be open to the general public, in addition to the parallel public walk that runs at a lower level immediately adjacent to the river bank.

With regards to its visual context, the site is most visible from the banks of the River Medway to the west, including the pedestrian footpaths each side of the river and the A229 Fairmeadow that runs along the river's eastern bank. Given the broad grain of the urban fabric here, there are also views from a number of streets and properties on the eastern side of the river, including Waterside, Earl Street, Medway Street, Bishops Way, McKenzie Court (Fairmeadow) and Maidstone East Station/Week Street. Due to the height of the Powerhub building, this can also be seen from the wider area, including the northern end of Fairmeadow.

Due to the rising nature of the land to the west, there will also be glimpses of the site from private residential properties here. This visibility could increase if taller buildings are developed on the site.

It will therefore be important to consider the views to, and connectivity with, the wider area, especially the historic town centre and Conservation Area to the east and residential properties to the west.







# **Site 4: Maidstone Riverside**

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## **Appendix 4C: Heritage Review**

# Heritage Review

This review focusses on the listed Powerhub building and Raglan House, which has an expired Certificate of Immunity).

## Powerhub Building

The Powerhub building, also known as the Former Tilling-Stevens Factory, is Grade II listed and was first listed in February 2012 for the following principal reasons:

- Historic interest: the building is the earliest surviving by the practice of Wallis, Gilbert and Partners, the foremost factory architects of the inter-war period; it is also one of few surviving examples of their early Daylight factories not to have undergone significant alteration;
- Technical interest: the building is one of few surviving examples of a group of English factories built using the Kahn Daylight System, an adaptable, efficient and influential system of factory building, developed in America for the construction of automotive factories;
- Architectural interest: the front elevation of this imposing building employs the compositional devices and decorative motifs which became synonymous with the work of Wallis, Gilbert and Partners; the powerful rationality of its other elevations expresses the modern approach to industrial architecture that its design, construction and layout embodies.

In 1916, Thomas Wallis (1872-1953) founded the architectural practice of Wallis, Gilbert and Partner (becoming Wallis, Gilbert and Partners the following year). In the early years of the practice he worked in close collaboration with Trussed Concrete Steel Limited

(Truscon). Truscon's proprietary system of concrete reinforcement had been developed by the Kahn family, who had set up Truscon to exploit the system in America; an English branch of the company formed in 1907. In America the Kahn system had been applied to the creation of a particular model of factory design which was based on a regular grid of column, beam and slab, in which the concrete frame was fully exposed, and the external walls were glass-filled, it was called the 'Kahn Daylight System' of factory design.

Together, Wallis, Gilbert and Partners and Truscon designed and constructed of a number of Daylight factories in England, of which the Tilling-Stevens factory is the earliest surviving. Wallis Gilbert and Partners went on to great success as an architectural practice, designing many factories and commercial buildings in the interwar period. One of their best known works is the Grade II\* listed former Hoover Factory (1932-35) in Ealing.

Tilling-Stevens Ltd was formed in 1915 after WA Stevens, inventor of the petrol-electric motor, met Richard Tilling of Thomas Tilling Ltd, London's oldest omnibus operator (established 1847). The men recognised the potential for petrol-electric transmission in motorised buses, and the companies went into partnership together, manufacturing their own vehicles. New premises were added to Stevens' Maidstone works (known as the Victoria Works) in 1912, including the adjacent Raglan House and, following the formation of Tilling-Stevens Limited, the works were enlarged again with



the construction of the Wallis, Gilbert and Partners factory in 1917 to accommodate production for war requirements.

The factory is constructed of a regular reinforced concrete grid, expressed throughout the exterior of the building; the front elevation, also of concrete, is dressed to present a classically-styled composition to the street.

The original design for the factory was a five-storey hollow rectangle, with a central, glazed, single-storey space within the well, which would contain part of the assembly shop. It was designed to be built in stages, with the south and west sides of the rectangle shown on the plans as 'future extension'. It is thought likely that the decision only to build the north and east sides of the rectangle was taken at an early stage, as the attic storey is centred over the existing front elevation. The factory was designed so as to accommodate all the various manufacturing processes in a downward flow through the building, each level being linked by electric lifts. Power was supplied to work stations by shafted over-head motors suspended from the beams.

The exterior of the building is generally little altered, the most notable exception being the replacement of the windows. The largest windows to the front were originally 54-light windows, they are now 12-light windows, those to the sides and rear were mostly 45-light windows, these are now 8-light windows. On the front elevation a doorway has been inserted into the left-hand of the three central bays to give access into a site office from St Peter's Street.

The interior is utilitarian; at each storey concrete pillars support beams and joists which support the floor above. The pillars get progressively smaller in cross-section at each storey up. Circular holes are cast into the joists, through which a conduit carrying electrical cable ran. In some places slots are cast into beams and joists to carry the motors which were suspended overhead, providing power to the factory machinery. The factory floors, which would have been completely open, are now divided into units with concrete block walls built between pillars, but these insertions are presumed to be reversible (NB inspection of the interior of the building was not permitted as part of this assessment).

In the early 1950s Tilling-Stevens was taken over by the Rootes Group and, as such, there is a historical association with Len House (the Rootes building), also Grade II listed.

### **Raglan House**

Raglan House was granted a Certificate of Immunity issued under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 for the period 21 March 2012 to 20 March 2017, meaning that the building would not be listed for a period of five years from date of issue, but this has now expired.

Raglan House was built in 1912 as drawing and management offices for WA Stevens Ltd, which became Tilling-Stevens in 1915, and is a typical example of an Edwardian office building of a more restrained Baroque styling. Although not considered to be suitable for

listing, the building does possess some architectural merit, although has undergone a number of alterations, most notably the replacement of its roof, which negatively affects its architectural character. That said, whilst not a candidate for designation in its own right, its association with the Former Tilling-Stevens Factory (Grade II Listed, aka the Powerhub) means that the building is curtilage listed and of local significance as part of Maidstone's diverse industrial heritage and links with the motor industry.

Raglan House was constructed as part of the expansion of the Victoria Works belonging to WA Stevens Ltd, with the new Tillings-Stevens Factory (the Powerhub) built immediately alongside Raglan House in 1917 when Tilling-Stevens Ltd was established after WA Stevens went into partnership with Richard Tilling, of Thomas Tilling Ltd. The building is a two storey, eleven-bay red brick building with painted stone dressings. The central entrance bay projects slightly and above the door there is a broken segmental pediment with a dated cartouche and swagged garlands on the tympanum. The building originally had a parapet with two parallel hipped roofs set behind and four chimney stacks. In the late 20th century the original roof was replaced with a large mansard roof with central dormer and roof lights, and the chimney stacks removed.

### **Planning Policy Context**

In Planning Policy terms, the latest version of the NPPF (February 2019) Chapter 16 (Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment) states at para 192 that: *"In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of: a) the desirability of*

*sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and; c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness."*

It also states that: *"Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal."* Moreover, at para 191 the revised NPPF states: *"Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect of, or damage to, a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision."*

Para 193 of the NPPF states that: *"When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance."*

Para 194 of the NPPF states: *"Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from*



*its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.” It further goes on to state that substantial harm to or loss of grade II listed buildings should be exceptional.*

Para 196 states that: *“Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.”*

Para 197 states that: *“The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset”.*

However, as noted at footnote 62 of the NPPF, the policies set out in chapter 16 relate, as applicable, to the heritage-related consent regimes for which local planning authorities are responsible under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as well as to plan-making and decision-making. In particular, Section 66 states: *“In considering whether to grant planning permission [or permission in principle] for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State, shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest*

*which it possesses.”*

Finally, para 202 of the NPPF states that: *“Local planning authorities should assess whether the benefits of a proposal for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the disbenefits of departing from those policies.”*

A new addition to the NPPF in 2018 (para 198) states: *“Local planning authorities should not permit the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred”*, thus making viability assessments a key part in balancing the decision making process. In terms of finding an ‘optimum viable use’ for heritage assets this will not always be the most profitable solution, but the one which delivers a viable outcome with the least harm to the asset, and secures a sustainable future.

In local planning policy terms, the MBLP sets out the framework for development in the borough until 2031. Relevant policies include SP4 Maidstone town centre; SP18 Historic environment; and H2 (1) Maidstone town centre broad location for housing growth. Policy DM1 Principles of good design is also relevant, stating that: *“In order to achieve high quality design, it is expected that proposals will positively respond to and, where appropriate, enhance the character of their surroundings. It is important that development contributes to its context...Key aspects of built development will be the scale, height, materials,*

*detailing, mass, bulk and site coverage...These features should relate well, and respond positively, to the context in which they are seen....New development should integrate well into the built, natural and historic environment..".* Para 6.5 of policy DM1 also notes that: "In assessing the appropriateness of design, the council will have regard to adopted Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans, Character Area Assessments and the Kent Design Guide, which provide specific information about local character and distinctiveness and give guidance on design principles." Policy DM4 details the approach to Development affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets, which defers to national legislation (Planning (LBCA) Act 1990 and NPPF 2018).

**152** Within the MBLP there is a site-specific retail and mixed use policy for the Powerhub site. Policy RMX1 (5) Powerhub Building and Baltic Wharf, St Peters Street, Maidstone.

In terms of the reuse and redevelopment at the Powerhub Site, it is clear that there needs to be a balance struck between conserving the key elements of the listed Powerhub building which contribute to its significance and setting, and also finding an Optimum Viable Use (OVU) for the complex as a whole. The OVU will cause the least harm to the heritage asset whilst securing a sustainable future and therefore it is important that a variety of options are considered and assessed, in consultation with Historic England.

The former Tillings-Stevens factory has a number of key elements which contribute to its significance. The building has a high evidential value: this is evidenced

by the site having been identified as one of the earliest surviving English factory buildings constructed using the Kahn daylight system, and therefore the building has important evidential value in documenting and displaying how such buildings were designed and constructed. The Kahn Daylight system marked a change in the philosophy of factory design during the early 20th century: the concrete frame permitted large open floor spaces and window openings, allowing cross-ventilation and increased daylight. It is the composition of the Powerhub building rather than the original fabric used which is a key element of its significance, as well as the relative intactness of the building: most of the modern partitions/insertions are assumed to be removable and the loss of original windows reversible. As such, it is its plan form which is a key element of its significance. The building also has a high historical significance for its association with Wallis, Gilbert and Partners, and that it is one of the earliest surviving works by this prominent architectural practice at the start of their professional lifetime. Of particular significance is the exterior architectural detailing, including Classical inspiration, decorative motifs and the use of corner towers. The Neoclassical motifs in concrete, alongside the building's multi-storey form and concrete frame construction became synonymous with Wallis, Gilbert and Partners in their later work, and so the building represents an early evolutionary phase in their particular architectural style.

As the principal elevation, the west has the highest significance for its architectural detailing and intended 'front', but the north, east and south elevations are also of significance and cumulatively contribute to the overall significance of the listed building and its plan form. The



loss of any one of these elevations would not seek to conserve or enhance the significance of the asset, and would be contrary to local and national planning policy. However, there are modern elements appended to these elevations which are of no significance and could be removed without damaging the significance of the building: these include the single-storey, metal sheet structure on a brick plinth attached to the north elevation; the lift shaft on the south elevation; and the two-storey flat roofed brick structure with external stair appended to the southern side of the original stair tower on the east elevation.

Any new development within the setting of the Powerhub building would also have to respect the setting and integrity of the listed building, and would need to be subservient to the Listed building. New development should also respect the non-designated heritage assets at the Site with sympathetic and appropriate design, scale and mass.

Any proposed demolition of elements of the listed Powerhub building are likely to be resisted although it is noted in the listing description that the various sheds which adjoin the factory building to the south are not of special interest and therefore a valid argument can be made for these to be demolished and the area redeveloped.

The Powerhub building was designed to be built in stages, with south and west sides shown as 'future extension' when plans were originally drawn up for the building: however, it appears that a decision was taken to only build the north and east sides.

Therefore, the plan form is important as contributing to the significance of the building, as is its original fenestration and 'Kahn Daylight System', which has since been compromised by the modern internal subdivisions and replacement of the original critical windows with uPVC replacements.

Proposals should seek to restore the Listed Building and enhance the Site's contribution to the Maidstone townscape as seen from public vantage points, in particular from the banks of the River Medway. Any demolition of parts of the original plan-form building would be most likely to cause substantial harm, and therefore be contrary to local and national planning policy, particularly that of MBLP Policy RMX 1 (5), which will only grant permission where any proposal conserves and, where possible, enhances the heritage significance of the listed Powerhub building and its setting and secures the building's restoration.

Raglan House is considered to be curtilage listed, and therefore should be retained where possible, as it contributes to the setting and significance of the listed Powerhub building, but is itself less sensitive to change and could be open to a number of uses.

The Grade II\* former Church of St Peter is located at the southern edge of Site 4. Any development needs to respect the setting of this 13th century asset. It is also important to consider the views to, and connectivity with, the historic town centre and Conservation Area on the other side of the River Medway.





## **Site 4: Maidstone Riverside**

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### **Appendix 4D: Connectivity with Public Transport**

## Distances & Journey Times to Bus Stops & the Bus Station\*

Bus Stop	Location	Distance	Mode		
			Walk	Cycle	Number of Services Within a 20-Minute Walk
	Gala Bingo / Granada House / The Mall				
Mill Street	Mill Street	300m	4-Minutes	2-Minutes	71
Chequers Bus Station	Romney Place	150m	2-Minutes	1-Minute	
	Mote Road				
Lower Stone Street	Lower Stone Street	240m	3-Minutes	1-Minute	70
Chequers Bus Station	Romney Place	400m	5-Minutes	2-Minutes	
	Peugeot Building (Len House)				
Mill Street	Mill Street	17m	1-Minute	1-Minute	71
Chequers Bus Station	Romney Place	450m	5-Minutes	2-Minute	
	Maidstone Riverside				
Rocky Hill	A20 London Road	400m	5-Minutes	2-Minutes	71
Chequers Bus Station	Romney Place	1km	13-Minutes	4-Minutes	
	Maidstone West Station				
Broadway	A20 Broadway	270m	3-Minutes	1-Minute	71
Chequers Bus Station	Romney Place	1km	11-Minutes	3-Minutes	

\*(Markides Associates, June 2018)



## Distances &amp; Journey Times to Maidstone Rail Stations\*

Rail Station	Distance	Mode		
		Walk	Cycle	Public Transport
Gala Bingo / Granada House / The Mall				
Maidstone Barracks	1.2km	15-Minutes	6-Minutes	13-Minutes via Maidstone West
Maidstone East	750m	9-Minutes	4-Minutes	9-Minutes via Kings Hill Connect X1 / Sapphire 101 / 130 / 150
Maidstone West	800m	10-Minutes	3-Minutes	8-Minutes via 503 Maidstone P&R / Greenway 71 / Greenway 72 / 3 / 7
Mote Road				
Maidstone Barracks	1.5km	18-Minutes	7-Minutes	16-Minutes via Maidstone West or 15-Minutes via Greenway 71 / Greenway 72 / 58
Maidstone East	1km	12-Minutes	6-Minutes	10-Minutes via Sapphire 101 / 155
Maidstone West	1km	13-Minutes	4-Minutes	7-Minutes via Greenway 71 / Greenway 72 / 3 / 7
Peugeot Building (Len House)				
Maidstone Barracks	1.2km	14-Minutes	5-Minutes	10-Minutes via Maidstone West or 12-Minutes via Greenway 71 / Greenway 72 / 79A / 79C
Maidstone East	800m	10-Minutes	4-Minutes	10-Minutes via Kings Hill Connect X1 / Sapphire 101 / 79 / 155
Maidstone West	550m	7-Minutes	3-Minutes	5-Minutes via 503 Maidstone P&R / Greenway 71 / Greenway 72 / 1 / 3 / 6 / 6X / 7 / 8 / 79A / 79C
Maidstone Riverside				
Maidstone Barracks	500m	7-Minutes	2-Minutes	n/a
Maidstone East	950m	12-Minutes	5-Minutes	12-Minutes via Sapphire 101 / 79 / 150 / 155
Maidstone West	550m	7-Minutes	4-Minutes	n/a
Maidstone West Station				
Maidstone Barracks	1.1km	14-Minutes	6-Minutes	14-Minutes via Greenway 71 / Greenway 72 / 58 / 60 / 78 / 79A / 79C
Maidstone East	1.2km	16-Minutes	8-Minutes	12-Minutes via Kings Hill Connect X1 / Sapphire 101 / 79 / 150 / 155
Maidstone West	270m	3-Minutes	1-Minute	n/a





# **Site 5: Maidstone West**

## **Appendix 5A: Planning Context**

# National Policy Considerations

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was most recently updated in February 2019. This, together with relevant Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) now represents the most up-to-date national planning policy and guidance.

The NPPF Revision and the PPG place importance on the need to deliver sustainable development. This includes the delivery of necessary development to ensure that local planning authorities can sustainably meet the development needs of their area.

Key objectives within the NPPF Revision include:

- Significantly boosting the supply of homes including affordable homes and maintaining a five year supply of deliverable housing sites.
- Building a strong, competitive economy, placing significant weight on the need to support economic growth and productivity, and taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.
- Ensuring the vitality of town centres, and supporting the role that town centres play at the heart of local community by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation.



*Eastern edge of site, at Barker Road/Hart Street junction*



# Local Policy Considerations

## Maidstone Borough Local Plan (2017)

Maidstone Borough Council adopted the Maidstone Borough Local Plan 2011 – 2031 ('MBLP') in October 2017. The MBLP comprises both the strategic aims and policies for the Borough and specific site allocations.

The borough assets, together with its good access to London and the channel ports for Europe, make Maidstone an attractive location for people in which to come to work and live. This creates a high pressure for development, so the MBLP focuses strongly on sustainability. Maintaining sustainable communities for the borough’s urban and rural residents and businesses is at the heart of the MBLP’s objectives.

The MBLP seeks to strike an appropriate balance between the national call for homes and the local need for housing (including affordable housing) and employment for a growing population. Development in the borough has been planned with supporting infrastructure to make proposals acceptable and to maintain residents’ quality of life.

Relevant policies, as set out below include:

- Policy SP4 – Maidstone Town Centre
- Policy SP18- Historic environment
- Policy SP20 – Affordable housing
- Policy H2– Broad locations for housing growth
- Policy DM1 – Principles of good design
- Policy DM4- Development affecting designated

and non-designated heritage assets

- Policy DM16 – Town centre uses
- Policy DM19 – Publicly accessible open space and recreation
- Policy DM23/Appendix B – Parking Standards
- Policy DM29 – Leisure & community uses in the town centre

**Policy SS1** includes a housing target of 17,660 dwellings over the 20 year Plan period. This equates to a target of 883 dwellings per annum. In addition, the spatial strategy for the borough identifies a need for:

- 39,830m<sup>2</sup> floorspace for office use
- 20,290m<sup>2</sup> floorspace for industrial use
- 49,911m<sup>2</sup> floorspace for warehousing use
- 29,800m<sup>2</sup> floorspace for retail use

All of the Opportunity Sites are all within the Maidstone Town Centre. **Policy SP4** seeks to retain and enhance a variety of well integrated attractions including shopping, service sector-based businesses, leisure and cultural facilities that the town centre offers and also to retain the best quality office stock, whilst allowing for the redevelopment of lower quality offices. The MBLP seeks to focus retail uses within the primary and secondary shopping frontages policy areas of the town, to the east of the River Medway.



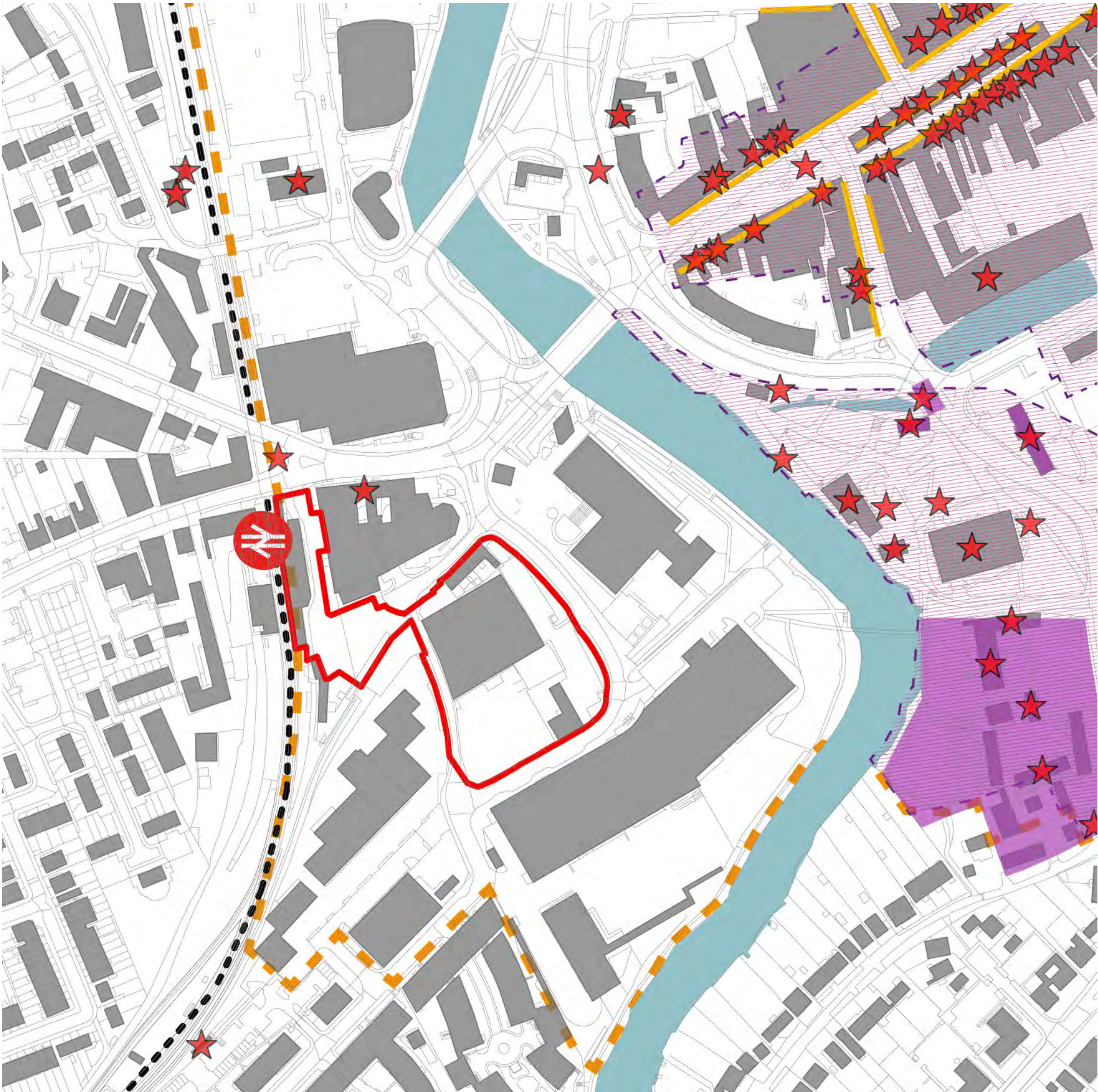


Figure 5.1: Designations and Features

scale 1:2500 @ A3

- Conservation Area
- Scheduled Monuments
- Listed Buildings
- Railway
- Train Station
- Built Form
- Water Bodies
- Maidstone Borough Local Plan Policy DM28 Primary shopping frontage
- Maidstone Borough Local Plan Town Centre Boundary
- Site Boundary



The site offers an excellent opportunity for high density urban living in close proximity to the retail, business and leisure opportunities provided by the town centre. The MBLP, paragraph 4.65, states that: *“Whilst commercial uses are the priority for the town centre, residential development can have a supporting role, in particular as part of mixed use schemes. Additional residential development in the town centre will help to promote town centre vitality, especially during the evening.”* Policy SP 4(vii) promotes: “Select opportunities for residential redevelopment”. Policy **H1** proposes 940 houses within the town centre, 190 of which could be on lands to the west of the River Medway.

The MBLP advises that attention should also be paid to

providing sufficient green spaces, not only for people to enjoy, but also to the value we should place upon our natural environment for its own intrinsic worth. **Policy DM19 Open Space and Recreation** covers the provision of open space on new housing sites. It requires a standard of 0.7ha amenity green space, 0.25ha space for children and young people and 1.6ha publicly accessible outdoor sports space per 1000 residents. The policy also requires 0.2ha allotments and community gardens and 6.5ha of natural/semi-natural areas of open space per 1000 residents. Given the compact nature of the sites and the high density context, it is recognised that it will not be feasible to provide the required amount of open space on the

## Policy SP4: Town centre vision

By 2031 a regenerated and sustainable Maidstone town centre will be a first class traditional town centre at the heart of the 21st Century County Town that has maintained its place as one of the premier town centres in Kent by creating a distinctive, safe and high quality place that has:

- Retained its best environmental features, including the riverside and the enhanced public realm;
- Provided a variety of well-integrated attractions for all ages including new shopping, service sector based businesses, leisure, tourism, and cultural facilities;
- Improved access for all.

Key components in realising this vision are:

- Enhancing the diversity of the retail offer, supporting a continued balance between independent and multiple retailers;
- Creating a highly sustainable location resilient to future climate change;
- Establishing the town centre as an attractive hub for business building on the town centre’s assets and environment;
- Creating a stronger mix and balance of uses within the centre to support long term viability including where appropriate residential development; and
- Tackling congestion and air quality issues through improvements in provision for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists, including public transport.

site. Paragraph 6.89 of the MBLP allows for a financial contribution to be made to improve existing sites and enhance the capacity of existing provision if suitable opportunities for new open space cannot be identified within the specified accessibility standards due to site constraints.

Parking standards are set out in **Policy DM23/Appendix B** of the MBLP. Maidstone has approved vehicle parking standards published by Kent Highway Services as an interim measure for Development Management decisions, and the County gives advice on development proposals that generate a need for parking provision.

The MBLP has a target rate of 30% affordable housing for new developments within the Maidstone Urban Area (**Policy DM20**), with indicative targets of 70% affordable rented housing, social rented housing or a mixture of the two and 30% intermediate affordable housing (shared ownership and/or intermediate rent). The inclusion of this quantum of affordable housing on the site may not be achievable due to economic viability and, in such cases, the policy recommends developers to enter into negotiations with the Council's Housing department, in consultation with registered providers at the earliest stage of the application process. Given its central, sustainable location, the site or part of it may be suited to management by a Registered Provider.

Parts of the site is within Flood Zone 3 which has the highest risk of fluvial flooding. The NPPF Revision is clear that inappropriate development in areas at risk of

flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (paragraph 155). Different types of development have different vulnerabilities, and therefore are regarded as being appropriate or inappropriate. Developments and land uses that are regarded as being "more vulnerable" are not appropriate in Flood Zone 3. The PPG is clear that such development should be directed towards areas of lower flood risk.

Depending on the type of development being proposed, it may be necessary for the sequential and exceptions tests to be passed. A flood risk assessment will certainly be required if a development is progressed (see the PPG and NPPF Revision footnote 50). This will need to be considered early on as it will have the potential to affect the scheme, type of development and also quantum.

There are two listed heritage assets to the north of the site; the war memorial (Grade II Listed; listing ID: 1401312) and 21 The Broadway (Grade II Listed; listing ID: 1336160) and new development may have the potential to affect the settings of these assets. To the north of the Broadway Shopping Centre there is also the Grade II\* listed former Church of St. Peter. Whilst the site is not located within a Conservation Area any tall buildings here will need to be carefully considered to take account of the views across from the historic town, including the All Saints Conservation Area and the Town Centre Conservation Area, when viewed across the River Medway from the east.



The site is located within a Minerals Safeguarding Area, however due to the existing built form on the site, this is unlikely to be an issue.

### **Neighbourhood Plans**

There are no made Neighbourhood Plans impacting upon the site.

### **Relevant Planning History**

In 1983 consent was also granted for the partial redevelopment of the Bonded Warehouse and Bottling Plant to a DIY retail warehouse and 122 space car park on the part of the site now occupied by B&Q. To the south of B&Q, a prior notification application was submitted for the change of use of Barker Chambers from offices to 11 No. 1 bed flats and 6 No. 2 bed flats in 2016.







# Site 5: Maidstone West

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## Appendix 5B: Site Analysis

## 5B:01 Land Uses

Land uses are summarised on Figure 5.2.

The site is in multiple ownership, with buildings occupied by a variety of users. It is currently occupied by:

- a number of takeaway outlets (along Hart Street)
- parking and the station building associated with the Maidstone West Railway Station
- a B&Q retail 'shed' with associated customer parking, loading bay and garden centre area
- Barker Chambers apartments and associated parking (opposite Lockmeadow Entertainment Complex)
- a public car park (Barker Road)

To the north of Hart Street, Broadway is a busy road with The Broadway Shopping Centre along its northern elevation and a mixture of residential and commercial uses to the south, including the front of the McDonald's drive-thru and a convenience store beneath an apartment block. At the western end, the street opens up into a small public open space which includes the War Memorial. This is fronted by a bicycle shop.

Further north, St. Peter's Street is currently occupied by a series of large retail 'sheds' and associated parking at St. Peter's Wharf, a Travelodge Hotel and the listed Church of St Peter (now a children's nursery).

To the west, the railway line separates the site from a predominantly residential area along the main routes of Buckland Road, the A20 London Road and A26 Tonbridge Road.



*Maidstone Crown and County Courts, Barker Road*



*Lockmeadow leisure complex, Barker Road*



*McDonald's drive-thru restaurant off Hart Street*





Figure 5.2 Land Use

- |   |                     |                               |
|---|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| Residential                                     | Civic               | Allotments                    |
| Retail  | Cultural            | Place of Worship              |
| Mixed-use (Ground Floor Retail and Residential) | Leisure             | Car Parking                   |
| Employment                                      | Hotel               | Industry and Electricity      |
| Mixed-use (Retail and/or Employment)            | Prison              | Hospital and Doctor's Surgery |
| Education                                       | Park and Open Space | Train Station                 |
|   | Community Centre    | Site                          |

To the south of the site, the western side of the Riverside includes the Lockmeadow Entertainment Complex, Lockmeadow Market and associated car parking and open space, Hart Street Commercial Centre (with medium sized retail sheds and associated parking) and beyond this a number of relatively large apartment blocks along Hart Street. To the south-west, there is further housing, predominantly consisting of two storey Victorian terraces and semi-detached properties.

To the east, the Crown Combined Court Centre occupies a large waterfront site, and north of this the Bridges Gyratory dominates the waterfront adjacent to the Broadway Shopping Centre. A public open space fronts the River Medway, forming part of a riverside walk that

continues the north, however it is relatively difficult for pedestrians to get to (via subways) and dominated by the noise and views of passing traffic on the adjacent bridges. To the east of the river is the historic core of Maidstone, with its shopping areas such as Fremlin Walk.





East of site: Law Courts & Thai restaurant front onto River Medway



Existing apartment block (Barker Chambers) within southern part of site on Barker Road, opposite Lockmeadow



Hart Street, west of Lockmeadow: residential and business uses



B&Q car-park + Barker Chambers, adjacent to Lockmeadow



Hart Street/Barker Road junction, looking north towards McDonalds Drive-thru and Broadway Heights apartments



Broadway Shopping Centre with Matalan and Lidl with smaller units below



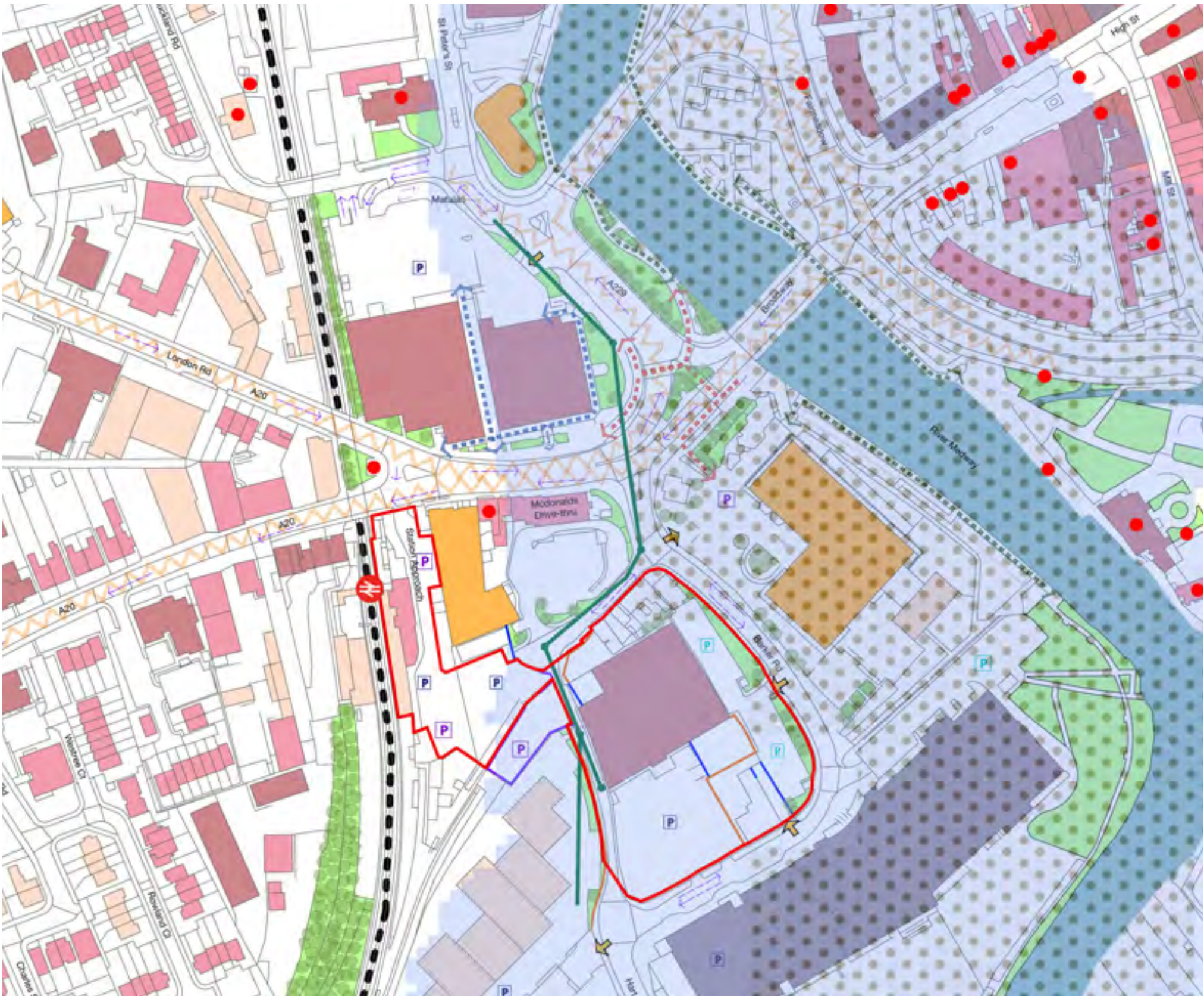
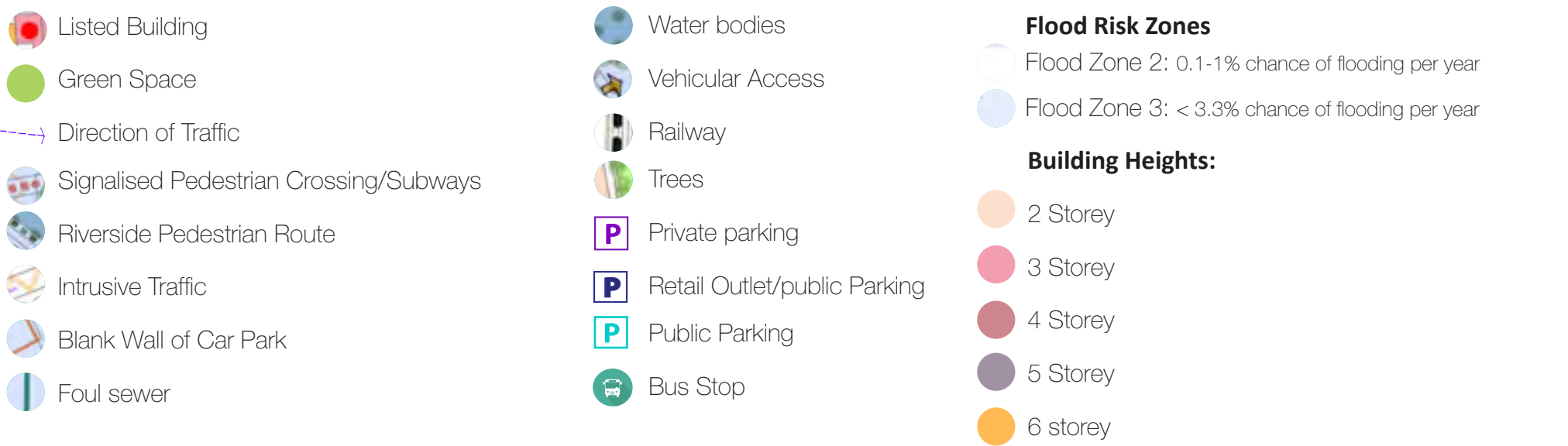


Figure 5.3: Contextual Analysis including Building Heights





## 5B:02 Built Form

Building heights and massing vary across the site (see Figure 5.3). Maidstone West Railway Station is an unassuming building, predominantly one storey in height, rising to two storeys at its western end as the adjacent parking area drops down a slight hill. This is associated by a few ad hoc one and two storey buildings along the western edge of its car park and a small one storey vacant lodge style building on its Broadway frontage (most recently a sandwich bar).

On the northern part of Hart Street, a terrace of 2.5 storey retail units with pitched roofs and mixed uses above front on to the street. South of these, the B&Q building is the equivalent of two storeys in height, occupying a 'box' type building. South of this, the office block opposite Lockmeadow is two storeys in height with its main frontage on to Barker Road.

In the wider area to the north and east, the urban grain is coarse, with large plan buildings reflecting the late twentieth century redevelopment of the area and its central location. The law courts rise to 4-5 storeys in height whilst Lock Meadow is the equivalent of three storeys. Due to flood risks, both buildings have their entrances built at an elevated level, effectively increasing their height further. On the northern side of Broadway, the Broadway shopping Centre steps up the hill, occupying a large plot. This building varies from two to three storeys and includes multi-storey car parking at ground-floor, first floor and roof levels; two large superstores and a series of smaller ground-floor retail units.

To the west and south, the retail units at Hart Street Commercial Centre and residential apartments on Hart Street also have relatively large floor plans and whilst the height of units at the Commercial Centre are generally the equivalent of 1.5 storeys in height, the apartments rise to three and four storeys.

To the immediate east of Maidstone West Railway Station, Broadway Heights apartment block is a local landmark, rising to 6 storeys whilst to the west of this along Tonbridge Road, there are some three and four storey apartment and office blocks. Further to the west, housing is generally two storeys in height.



*Broadway Heights, at entrance to Maidstone West Station extends to six storeys in height*

## 5B:03 Heritage and Architecture

The site lies to the west of the historic core of Maidstone. Historic mapping (Figure 5.4) shows that in mid to late Victorian times the northern part of the site was already occupied by a series of small properties (probably housing and retail) with gardens behind. The railway had already been constructed, as had Maidstone West Station. West of this, there were extensive plant nurseries, meaning that the sites were effectively on the western edge of the town. To the west, there was only one bridge crossing and the area currently dominated by the Bridges Gyratory was occupied by a series of wharfs and a brewery. The area now occupied by the law courts was a Timber Yard. Whilst the terrace of buildings on Hart Street was present, much of the B&Q site was still open gardens and the alignment of Barker Street did not start to emerge until the 1896-98 mapping. By the time of the 1936-46 mapping, the main changes to the site uses were the use of the B&Q site for a distillery and fruit canning factory.

There are no listed buildings on the site and it does not lie within a Conservation Area. The Victorian Maidstone West Railway Station, although not listed, is considered to be a non-designated heritage asset and retains a number of original features, but is dwarfed by the adjacent Broadway Heights apartment block.

To the north, the setting of the Grade II\* listed building, the former St Peters Church has been degraded with the construction of a tall Travelodge building on St Peter's Street and the retail park beyond to the north, as well as

the Broadway Shopping Centre to the south.

On the opposite side of the railway line and to the west of St Peters Church are two further Grade II listed buildings, No.8 Buckland Road and the building between 6 and 8 Buckland Road. At the western end of the Broadway, the Grade II listed War Memorial, a bronze statue of St George and the slain dragon on a tall cenotaph-like limestone plinth and base occupies a prominent position. Nearby, 21 The Broadway was originally built as a pair of houses in about 1830. The building faces directly onto the main road and is sandwiched incongruously between a modern McDonald's on its eastern side and the Broadway Heights apartment block to the west (built on the site of the former Railway Hotel). Development on the site therefore provides the opportunity to enhance the settings of these assets.

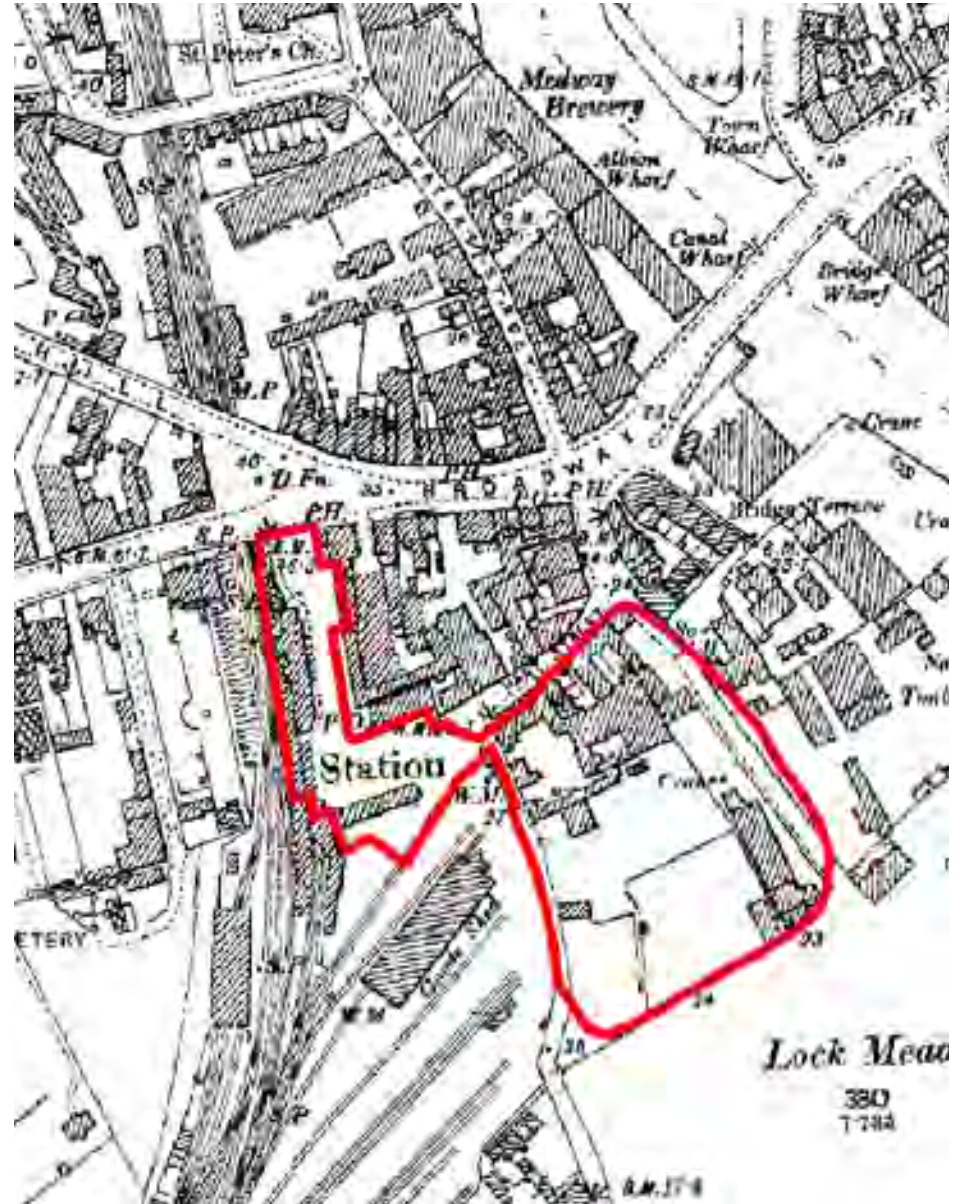
The closest Conservation Areas to the site are the All Saints and Maidstone Town Centre Conservation Areas to the east of the River Medway and Rocky Hill Conservation Area, 0.2km to the west. Development, especially tall buildings, should respect the visual settings of these areas.

A more detailed heritage analysis has been undertaken by Savills Heritage and is included at Appendix 5C.

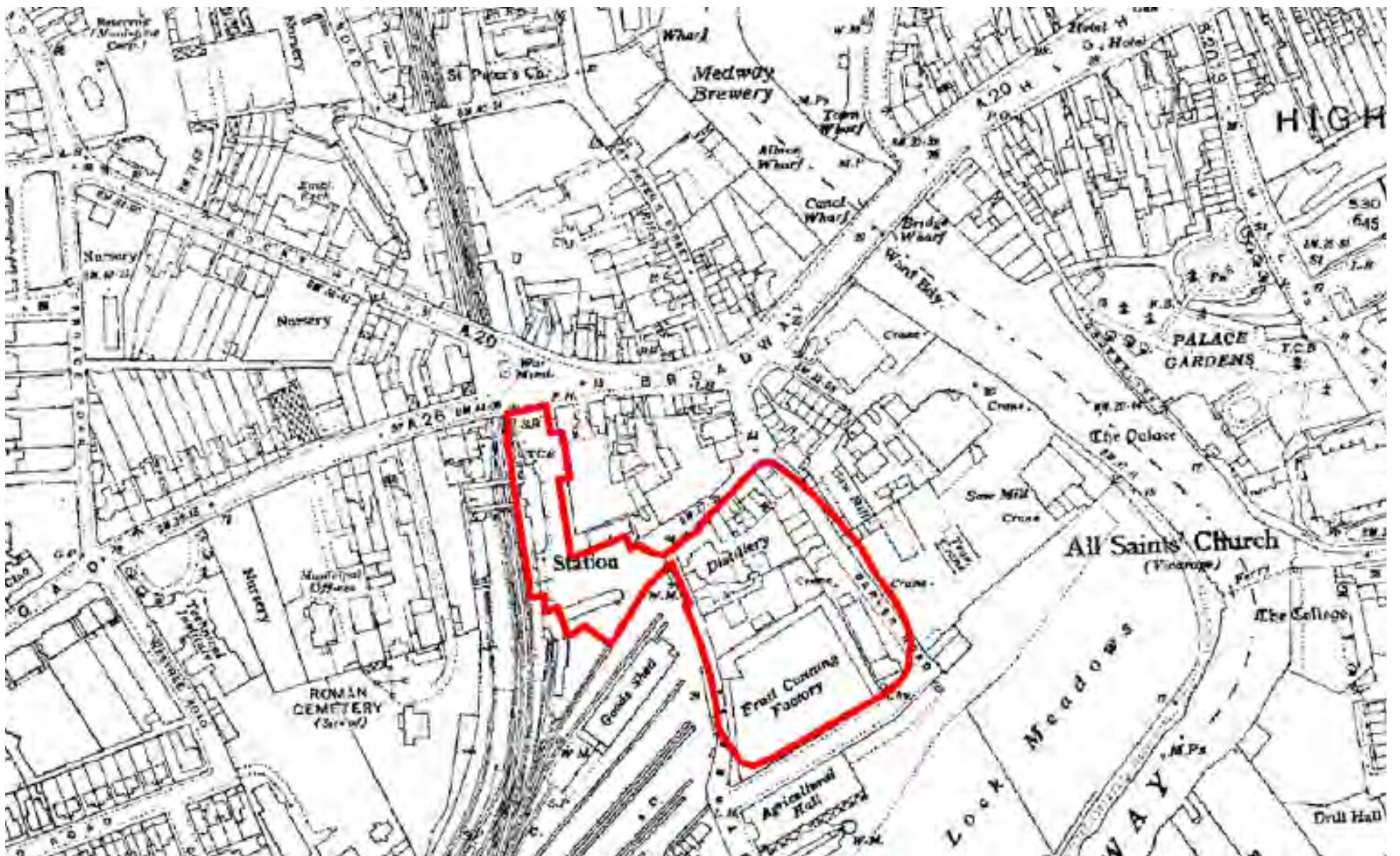




*Historic Map: 1876-1895*



Historic Map: 1896-1898



Historic Map: 1936-1946

Figure 5.4 Historic Mapping



# 5B:04 Landform, Hydrology, Noise and Air Quality

The site occupies a relatively low-lying floodplain site. The northern site slopes gently up to the west, rising from approximately 7m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) along its eastern boundary, to 12m AOD close to its western boundary (see Figure 5.5). This level change is reflected in the presence of an additional floor level at the eastern side of the site.

To the west of the railway line to the west of the site, the land rises relatively steeply, forming part of a valley-side occupied by residential properties.

The site is situated on the western bank of the River Medway however physical connectivity with the river is poor. The busy Broadway and Bridges Gyratory mean that pedestrians and cyclists use underpasses to get to the riverside footpath.

The majority of the site lies within Flood Zone 2, other than the railway station car park which are in Flood

Zone 1 (low risk) and the Barker Road car park and the western and southern parts of the Barker Road/Hart Street block which are in Flood Zone 3 (3.3% risk of flooding in any one year.)

Any planning application would need to be accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment and appropriate mitigation measures.

Given the site's central location and industrial history, noise, air quality and land contamination assessments will be required as part of any planning application together with the delivery of appropriate mitigation measures.






- |  |   |
|--|---|
|  Built Form   |  Train Station |
|  Contour 5m   |  Water Bodies  |
|  Railway      |  Study Area    |
|  Primary Road |   |

Figure 5.5: Landform



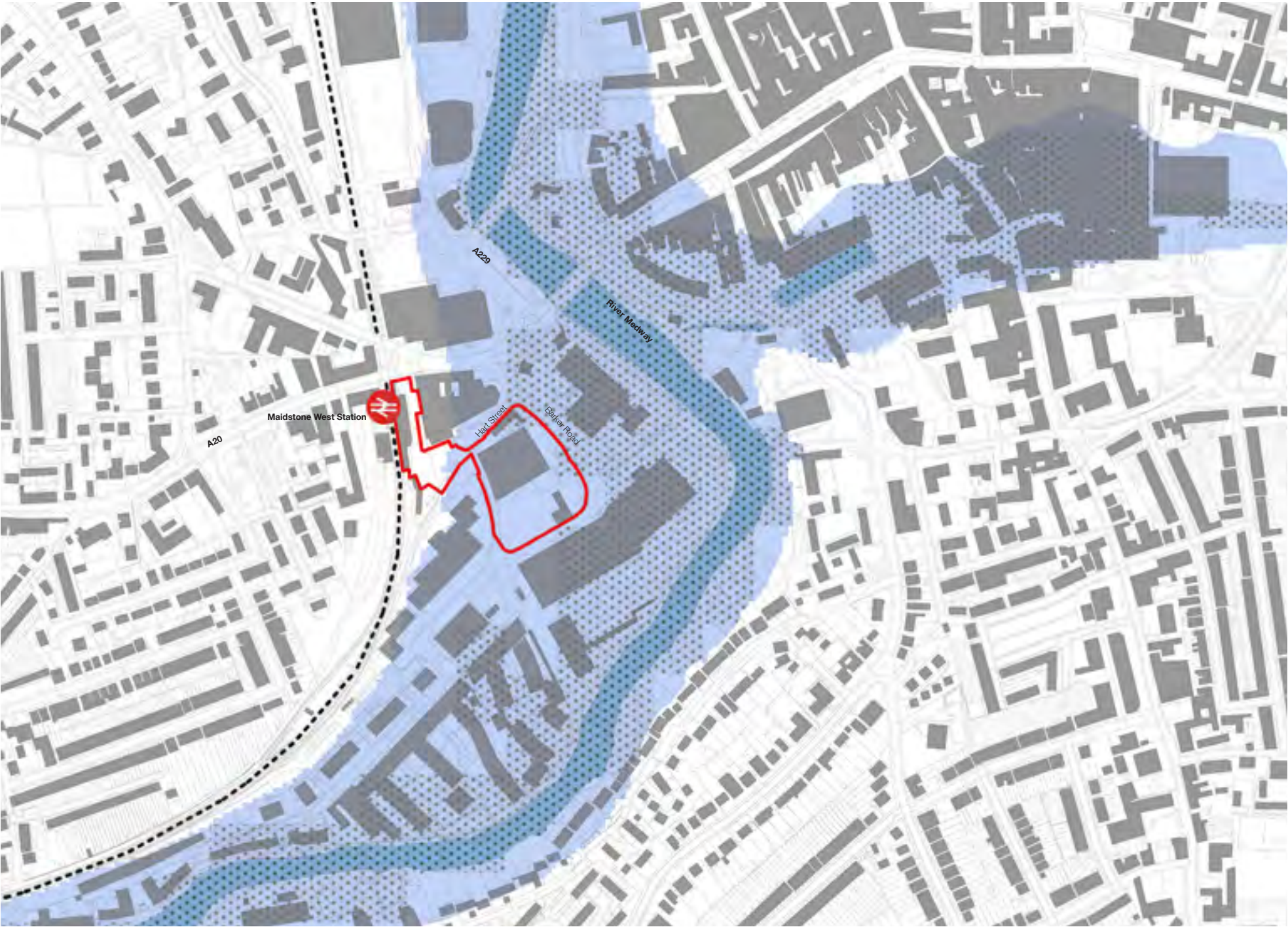


Figure 5.6:Hydrology

- FLOOD RISK ZONES:
- Flood Zone 3: < 3.3% chance of flooding per year

Flood Zone 2: 0.1-1% chance of flooding per year

Built Form

Railway

Train Station

Water Bodies

Site



## 5B:05 Utilities

A foul water sewer runs through the centre of the Barker Street public car park and an electricity sub-station is also located on the western edge of this car park. Development within these areas will either need to avoid these utilities, incorporating the required easements, or consider the relocation of these utilities. Elsewhere in the area utilities are located within the public highways and should not be a constraint to development.



Figure 5.7 Movement and Access

- Railway Line
- Primary Road
- A Roads
- B Roads
- Minor Roads
- Local Street
- Pedestrian Street
- Public Rights of Way
- Train Station
- Bus Routes
- Station Carpark
- Bus Station
- 400m radius (5 min. walk from Station)
- 800m radius (10 min. walk from Station)
- Site boundary



## 5B:06 Movement

To the south of the station, a number of minor two-way, single-carriageway roads intersect the site, including Barker Road and Hart Street. As the railway line is located to the west and the River Medway is located to the east, these roads do not lead to other destinations. Where Hart Street passes the western part of the southern site it only accommodates one lane of traffic and has very narrow pavements.

Access on to Broadway from Barkers Road is a left-turn only, meaning that users wishing to turn right have to travel around one-way circuit via Broadway, Tonbridge Road, Terrace Road and back down the other side of Broadway. At peak times, there can be queues to exit the Barker Road junction and access the Broadway Shopping Centre and St. Peter's Street shopping area.

The Station car parking/drop off access is provided from The Broadway to the north. Whilst there are gates onto Hart St from the Station Car Park, this access is only open for pedestrians. Currently the Station forecourt area presents a relatively low quality public realm to its frontage. There is the potential for this area to be reprofiled to provide better pick up

and drop off arrangements for all users. With regards to the pedestrian environment, the Maidstone West opportunity site benefits from wide footways and street lighting, however pedestrian barriers along both sides of the Broadway significantly restrict pedestrian movement, giving priority to traffic. Similarly pedestrian movement around the Bridges Gyratory system is hostile, with little option but to use underpasses in places.

There are pedestrian footpaths along both banks of the River Medway to the east of the site. Further access to the river is provided via a footpath to the south of the Crown Combined Law Centre and also via an open space to the east of Lockmeadow Entertainment Complex.



*Station car-park, looking west.*

To the south of the site, a surfaced, off-road cycle route follows the path of the River Medway and forms a part of the Medway Towpath cycling route. Given the busy nature of the Bridges Gyratory, cycle and pedestrian connectivity with the town centre is relatively poor.

Within the southern part of the site, the Barker Road public car park (operated by Maidstone Borough Council) has 75 spaces available. The WSP parking study shows that the peak occupancy across a Weekday and a Saturday here is generally quite low, not only in this particular car park but in what would be the alternative car parks in the same area. The WSP study divides the town centre into Zones and the entire zone in which the Barker Road car park is situated experiences no particular parking stress, suggesting all the car parks in that area are underutilized. The study also shows the Park and Ride is heavily underutilized in improving congestion in the town centre and should play an increasingly important role in the shaping of the town centre. This suggests that it would be reasonable to lose the parking spaces here if required for a wider strategic design for the site.

Maidstone has good transport links, with direct connections to London and the Channel Tunnel via the M20 and M2 motorways, and rail connections to London, the coast and Medway towns through three central railway stations in the town. There are approximately six trains per hour departing from Maidstone East

Railway Station, including direct connections to London Victoria and Ashford International, with interchanges to a number of destinations available. Expected improvement to links direct to the City of London via Thameslink in 2019, will further improve the site's connectivity and attraction as a commuter location, whilst improvements to Maidstone East and West (HS1) stations could further unlock potential.

Maidstone West is on the Medway Valley Line with direct services to Strood and Paddock Wood. The Station lies within the Opportunity Site making it a very sustainable location for further development. Maidstone East, with its direct routes to London, is an approximate 16 minute walk away. Further detail on connectivity with Maidstone's Railway Stations and bus stops are provided in Appendix 5D.

The closest bus stops to the site are on Broadway, immediately adjacent to Maidstone West Station. These serve 32 routes.

The closest taxi ranks are at Lockmeadow Leisure Complex immediately to the south of the site.





Maidstone West Station





## 5B:07 Landscape and Visual Context

The site generally has a hard, urban character with no public amenity space. The main trees are grouped along Barker Road, adjacent to the public car park on the eastern side of the southern site. These mature trees contribute greatly to the character of the street and setting of Lockmeadow and the Crown Combined Law Centre and, subject to Arboricultural surveys, should be retained.

With regards to its visual context, the site is somewhat screened from the town centre and River Medway by the Crown Combined Court Centre. Views here are from the immediate surroundings, including the Court Centre, Lockmeadow, Hart Street, Barker Road, Broadway and the railway line. If tall buildings were developed on the site these may be visible from the wider area however.

*Existing trees on Barker Road, at public car park*





Hart Street, looking north towards Maidstone West Station.



From northern end of Broadway, looking east.



From Barker Road, looking south towards Lock Meadow.





# **Site 5: Maidstone West**

## **Appendix 5C: Heritage Review**

# Heritage Review

This site provides a 'Gateway' opportunity linking historic Maidstone to the later part of the town to the west.

## Heritage Assets

The site is not located within a Conservation Area but any tall buildings here will need to be carefully considered to take account of the views across from the historic town, including the All Saints Conservation Area and the Town Centre Conservation Area, when viewed across the River Medway from the east. The southern part of Site 5 benefits however from being somewhat screened from the All Saints Conservation Area by the extant Crown Combined Court Centre which lies between Barker Road and the River Medway.

Close to the site's northern boundary, on The Broadway is a Grade II listed building, 21 The Broadway, which was originally built as a pair of houses in about 1830. The building is three storeys, of red brick with ripped slate roof and eaves cornice, with round-headed sash windows and doors with fanlight. It faces directly onto the main road and is sandwiched incongruously between a modern McDonald's on its eastern side and an apartment block to the west (built on the site of the former Railway Hotel), which is located adjacent to, and overlooking, Maidstone West Railway Station.

Also on the Broadway, the Grade II listed War Memorial

occupies a prominent position at the fork of the two main roads leading out of Maidstone to the west and is a bronze statue of St George and the slain dragon on a tall cenotaph-like limestone plinth and base. It was designed by Sir George Frampton, a renowned sculptor, whose best known work is probably the statue of Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens.

Beyond Broadway, on St Peter's Street, is a Grade II\* listed building, the former St Peter's Church. The building originated in the 13th century as the chapel for a hospital for pilgrims travelling to Canterbury, but became redundant after the Reformation. The building has a very good 13th century chancel with fine contemporary sedilia and piscine and, where it survives, the 13th century work is of very high quality as befits an archiepiscopal foundation.

The building was restored and enlarged in 1836-9 by John Whichcord, Snr, with further restoration in 1905 and the addition of a north vestry. The building was converted to secular use in the early 2000s and now operates as a childrens' nursery. The setting of this building has been degraded with the construction of a tall Travelodge building adjacent to the east on St Peter's Street and the soulless retail park beyond to the north, and to the south with the modern red-brick Broadway Shopping Centre.



On the opposite side of the railway line and to the west of St Peter's Church are two further Grade II listed buildings, No.8 Buckland Road and the building between 6 and 8 Buckland Road. The Building between 6 and 8 Buckland Road is a single storey construction of ragstone ashlar, dating to the 19th century and would appear to possibly be a former school building, perhaps associated with St Peter's Church from which is it subdivided by the railway. No.8 Buckland Road, listed as of 18th century date, is tucked back from the road and lies immediately adjacent to the railway line. No.6 Buckland Road (Red House) stood opposite the Old Brewery building but was delisted in 2013 because it had been demolished (it is now a small area of car park) but had previously formed a group listing with the remaining two. No.6 was also listed as being of 18th century date.

The 1868 OS 1:500 Town Plan for Maidstone shows the largely domestic nature of Site 5, which had a mixture of large houses with formal gardens.

The Maidstone West Railway Station, although not listed, is considered to be a non-designated heritage asset and retains a number of original features, but is dwarfed by the adjacent apartment block.







## Planning Policy Context

In Planning Policy terms, the NPPF (February 2019) Chapter 16 (Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment) states at para 192 that: *“In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of: a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and , c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.”*

It also states: *“Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposal.”* Moreover, at para 191 the revised NPPF states that: *“Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect of, or damage to, a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision.”*

Para 193 of the revised NPPF states that: *“When*



*considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance."*

Para 194 of the revised NPPF states: "Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification." It further goes on to state that substantial harm to or loss of grade II listed buildings should be exceptional.

Para 196 states that: "Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use."

Para 197 states: "The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset". However, as noted at footnote 62 of the revised NPPF, the policies set out in chapter 16 relate, as applicable,

to the heritage-related consent regimes for which local planning authorities are responsible under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as well as to plan-making and decision-making. In particular, Section 66 states that: "In considering whether to grant planning permission [or permission in principle] for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State, shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses." Similarly, Section 72 states that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area, although the revised NPPF 2018 does state at para 200 that: "Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably" and also goes on to state at Para 201 that: "Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 195 or less than

*substantial harm under paragraph 196, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.”*

Finally, para 202 of the NPPF states that *“Local planning authorities should assess whether the benefits of a proposal for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the disbenefits of departing from those policies.”*

In a new addition to the NPPF in 2018, para 198 states: *“Local planning authorities should not permit the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred”,* thus making viability assessments a key part in balancing the decision making process. In terms of finding an ‘optimum viable use’ for heritage assets this will not always be the most profitable solution, but the one which delivers a viable outcome with the least harm to the asset, and secures a sustainable future.

In local planning policy terms, the Maidstone Borough Local Plan (adopted 25th October 2017) sets out the framework for development in the borough until 2031. Relevant policies include SP4 Maidstone Town Centre; SP18 Historic environment; and H2 (1) Maidstone Town Centre broad location for housing

growth. Policy DM1 Principles of good design is also relevant, stating that: *“In order to achieve high quality design, it is expected that proposals will positively respond to and, where appropriate, enhance the character of their surroundings. It is important that development contributes to its context...Key aspects of built development will be the scale, height, materials, detailing, mass, bulk and site coverage...These features should relate well, and respond positively, to the context in which they are seen....New development should integrate well into the built, natural and historic environment..”.*

Para 6.5 of policy DM1 also notes that: *“In assessing the appropriateness of design, the council will have regard to adopted Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans, Character Area Assessments and the Kent Design Guide, which provide specific information about local character and distinctiveness and give guidance on design principles.”* Policy DM4 details the approach to Development affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets, which defers to national legislation (Planning (LBCA) Act 1990 and NPPF 2018).

### **Development Guidance**

The proposals for mixed use development at the Site accord well with the proposed largely residential development suggested for Site 4 Maidstone Riverside to the north. The proposals should consider the setting of the listed building in the wider area, including 21 Broadway and St. Peter's Church. The development



of Site 5 may presents an opportunity to provide an improved townscape for the historic town located on the east side of the River.



Mixed use buildings, Hart Street



Shop front, Hart Street



St. Peter's Church, St Peter's Street (Grade II\* listed)





# **Site 5: Maidstone West**

## **Appendix 5D: Connectivity with Public Transport**

## Distances & Journey Times to Bus Stops & the Bus Station\*

Bus Stop	Location	Distance	Mode		
			Walk	Cycle	Number of Services Within a 20-Minute Walk
	Gala Bingo / Granada House / The Mall				
Mill Street	Mill Street	300m	4-Minutes	2-Minutes	71
Chequers Bus Station	Romney Place	150m	2-Minutes	1-Minute	
	Mote Road				
Lower Stone Street	Lower Stone Street	240m	3-Minutes	1-Minute	70
Chequers Bus Station	Romney Place	400m	5-Minutes	2-Minutes	
	Peugeot Building (Len House)				
Mill Street	Mill Street	17m	1-Minute	1-Minute	71
Chequers Bus Station	Romney Place	450m	5-Minutes	2-Minute	
	Maidstone Riverside				
Rocky Hill	A20 London Road	400m	5-Minutes	2-Minutes	71
Chequers Bus Station	Romney Place	1km	13-Minutes	4-Minutes	
	Maidstone West Station				
Broadway	A20 Broadway	270m	3-Minutes	1-Minute	71
Chequers Bus Station	Romney Place	1km	11-Minutes	3-Minutes	

\*(Markides Associates, June 2018)



## Distances &amp; Journey Times to Maidstone Rail Stations\*

Rail Station	Distance	Mode		
		Walk	Cycle	Public Transport
Gala Bingo / Granada House / The Mall				
Maidstone Barracks	1.2km	15-Minutes	6-Minutes	13-Minutes via Maidstone West
Maidstone East	750m	9-Minutes	4-Minutes	9-Minutes via Kings Hill Connect X1 / Sapphire 101 / 130 / 150
Maidstone West	800m	10-Minutes	3-Minutes	8-Minutes via 503 Maidstone P&R / Greenway 71 / Greenway 72 / 3 / 7
Mote Road				
Maidstone Barracks	1.5km	18-Minutes	7-Minutes	16-Minutes via Maidstone West or 15-Minutes via Greenway 71 / Greenway 72 / 58
Maidstone East	1km	12-Minutes	6-Minutes	10-Minutes via Sapphire 101 / 155
Maidstone West	1km	13-Minutes	4-Minutes	7-Minutes via Greenway 71 / Greenway 72 / 3 / 7
Peugeot Building (Len House)				
Maidstone Barracks	1.2km	14-Minutes	5-Minutes	10-Minutes via Maidstone West or 12-Minutes via Greenway 71 / Greenway 72 / 79A / 79C
Maidstone East	800m	10-Minutes	4-Minutes	10-Minutes via Kings Hill Connect X1 / Sapphire 101 / 79 / 155
Maidstone West	550m	7-Minutes	3-Minutes	5-Minutes via 503 Maidstone P&R / Greenway 71 / Greenway 72 / 1 / 3 / 6 / 6X / 7 / 8 / 79A / 79C
Maidstone Riverside				
Maidstone Barracks	500m	7-Minutes	2-Minutes	n/a
Maidstone East	950m	12-Minutes	5-Minutes	12-Minutes via Sapphire 101 / 79 / 150 / 155
Maidstone West	550m	7-Minutes	4-Minutes	n/a
Maidstone West Station				
Maidstone Barracks	1.1km	14-Minutes	6-Minutes	14-Minutes via Greenway 71 / Greenway 72 / 58 / 60 / 78 / 79A / 79C
Maidstone East	1.2km	16-Minutes	8-Minutes	12-Minutes via Kings Hill Connect X1 / Sapphire 101 / 79 / 150 / 155
Maidstone West	270m	3-Minutes	1-Minute	n/a

