



# **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.



*Broadway Shopping Centre, viewed from The Broadway*

# 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.

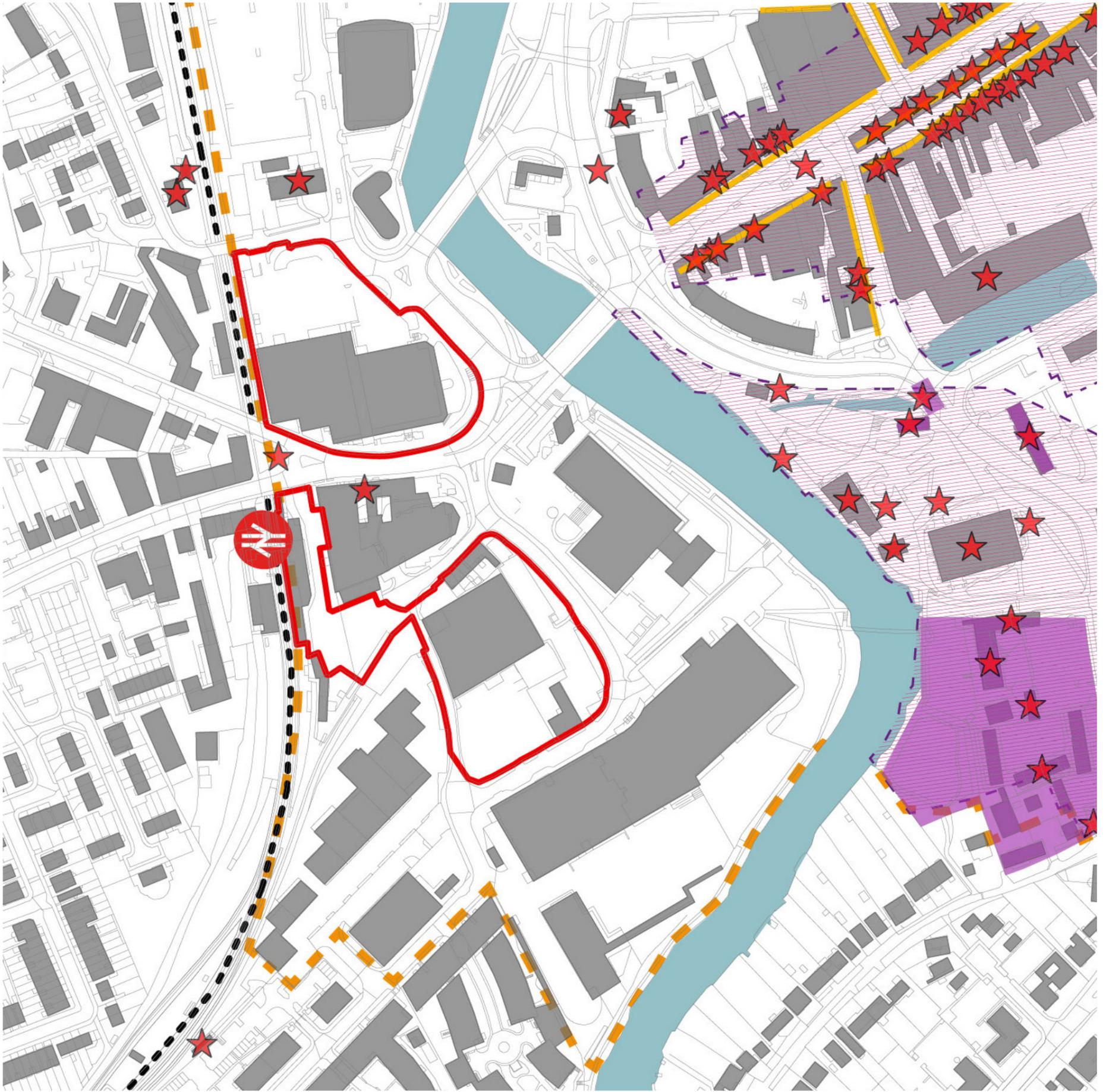


Figure 5.1: Designations and Features

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 sites offer 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 sites are 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 between the two sites; the war memorial (Grade II Listed; listing ID: 1401312) and 21 The Broadway (Grade II Listed; listing ID: 1336160). To the north of the Broadway Shopping Centre there is also the Grade II\* listed former Church of St. Peter and No.8 Buckland Road and the building between 6 and 8 Buckland Road. Due regard will need to be given to the setting of these and other heritage assets if a scheme is progressed. 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.

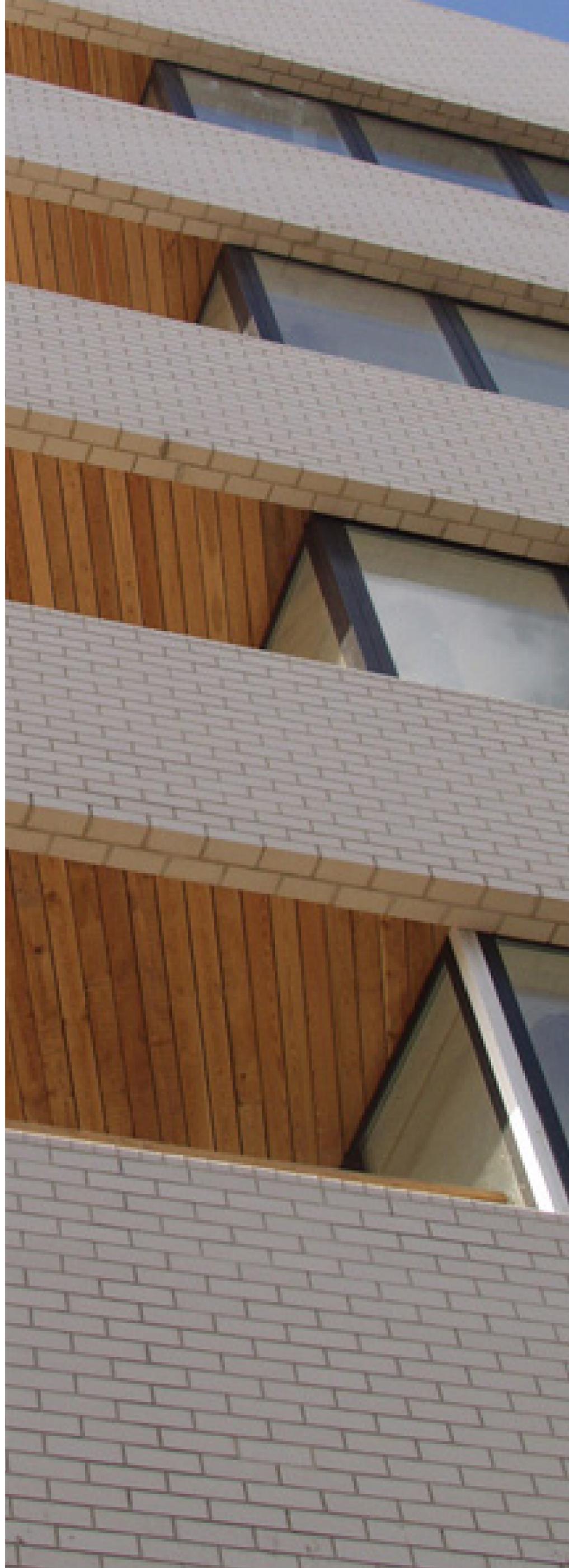
The site is located within a Minerals Safeguarding Area, however due to the existing built form on the site, this is unlikely to be an issue.

### **Neighbourhood Plans**

There are no made Neighbourhood Plans impacting upon the site.

### **Relevant Planning History**

The Broadway Shopping Centre was granted consent on the site of the former Medway Brewery and adjacent land in 1983. In this year 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. 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 sites are in multiple ownership, with buildings occupied by a variety of users.

The northern site comprises the Broadway Shopping Centre. The upper level is occupied by two large units separated by an atrium, Lidl and Matalan. Beneath these, fronting on to Broadway, are a number of smaller units with individual entrances, currently occupied by a gym, tanning shop and kitchen showroom. The ground floor and part of the first floor are occupied by customer parking and loading bays.

The southern site 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 the site, 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 sites 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                          |

Between the two sites, 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.

To the south of the site, the western side of the Riverside includes the Lockmeadow Entertainment Complex 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 Gyrotory 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

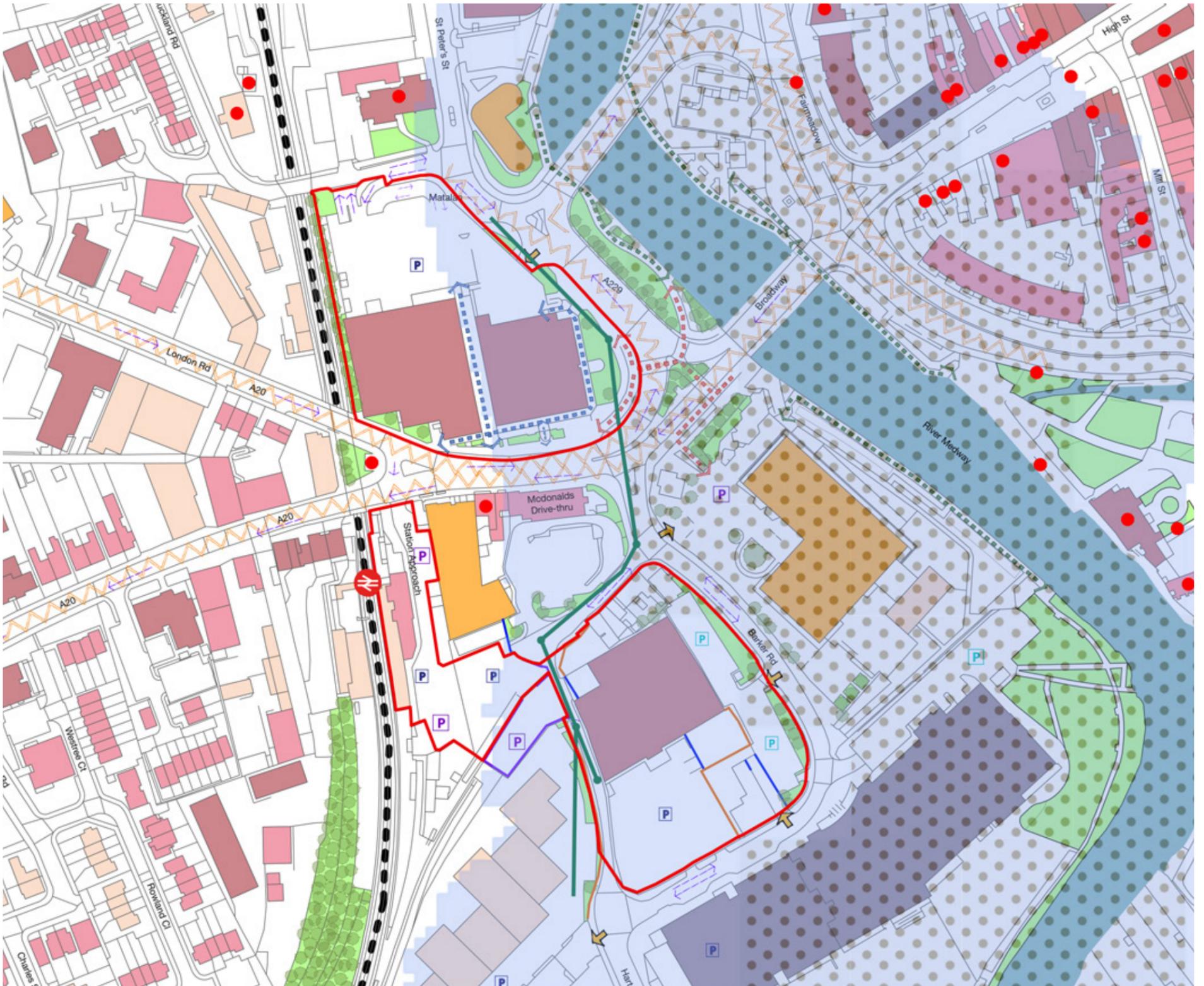


Figure 5.3: Contextual Analysis including Building Heights

- |  |                              |  |
|--|------------------------------|--|
| Listed Building                        | Water bodies                 | <b>Flood Risk Zones</b>                          |
| Green Space                            | Vehicular Access             | Flood Zone 2: 0.1-1% chance of flooding per year |
| Direction of Traffic                   | Railway                      | Flood Zone 3: < 3.3% chance of flooding per year |
| Signalised Pedestrian Crossing/Subways | Trees                        | <b>Building Heights:</b>                         |
| Riverside Pedestrian Route             | Private parking              | 2 Storey   |
| Intrusive Traffic                      | Retail Outlet/public Parking | 3 Storey   |
| Blank Wall of Car Park                 | Public Parking               | 4 Storey   |
| Foul sewer                             | Bus Stop                     | 5 Storey   |
|  |                              | 6 storey   |

## 5B:02 Built Form

Building heights and massing vary across the site (see Figure 5.3). The Broadway Shopping Centre is a monolithic building occupying the whole of the northern site. This varies from two to three storeys across its height and also includes rooftop parking.

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, 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. 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.

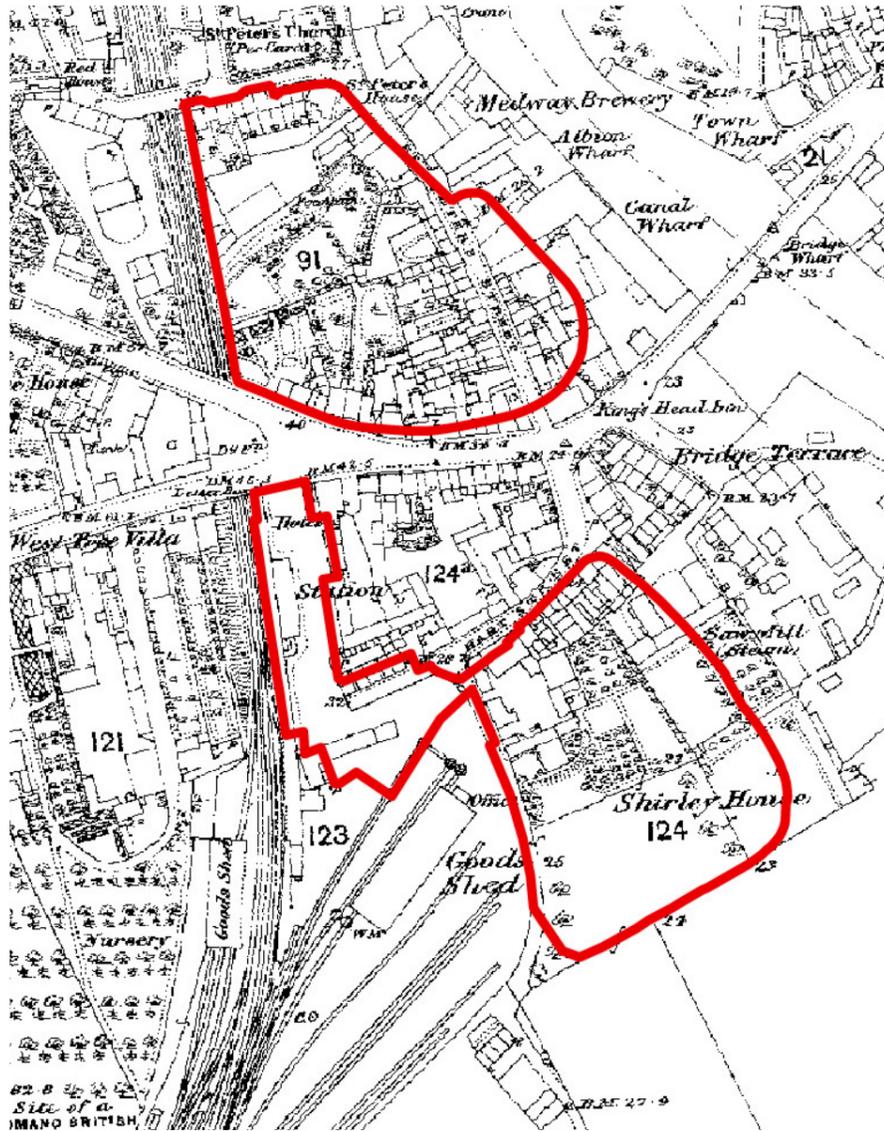
To the north of the northern site, the setting of the Grade II\* listed building, the former St Peters Church has been degraded with the construction of a tall Travelodge building on St Peter's Street and the retail park beyond

to the north, as well as the Broadway Shopping Centre to the south.

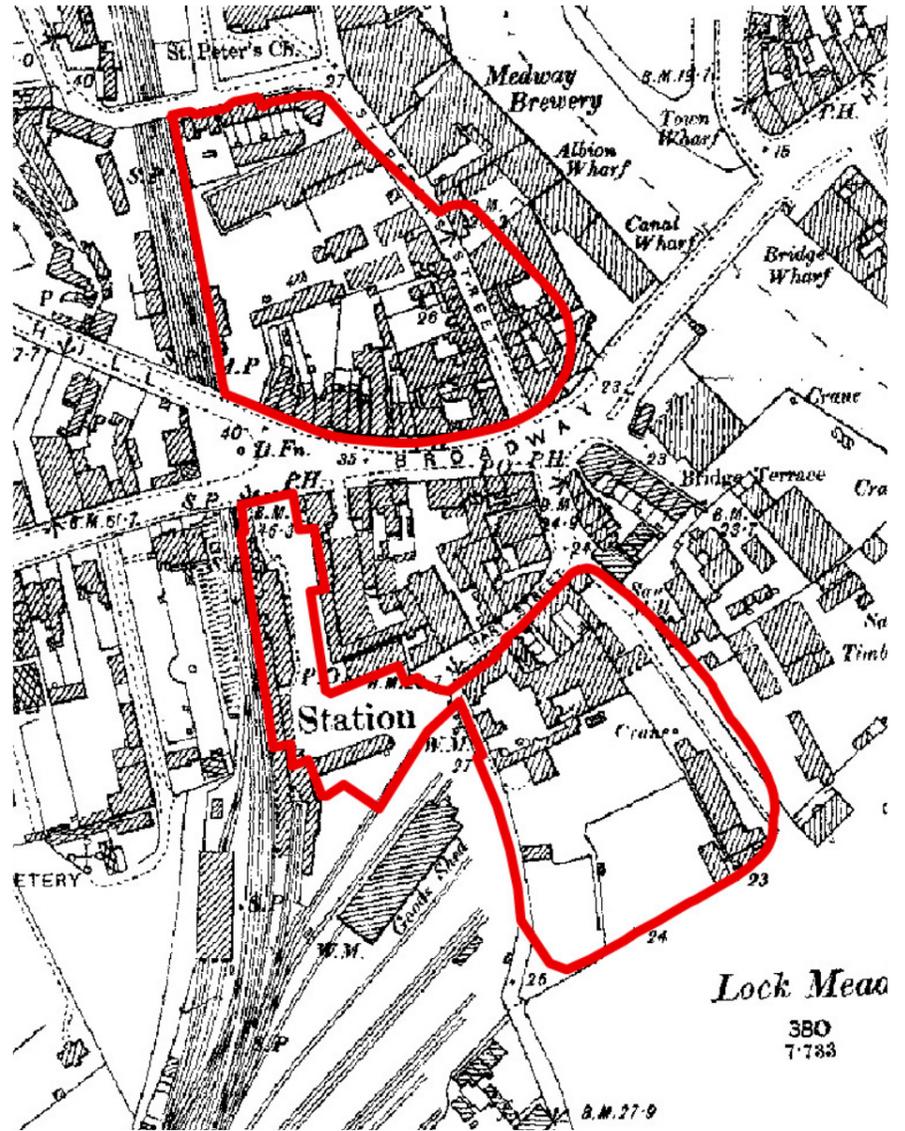
On the opposite side of the railway line and to the west of St Peters Church are two further Grade II listed buildings, No.8 Buckland Road and the building between 6 and 8 Buckland Road. At the western end of the Broadway, the Grade II listed War Memorial, a bronze statue of St George and the slain dragon 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.

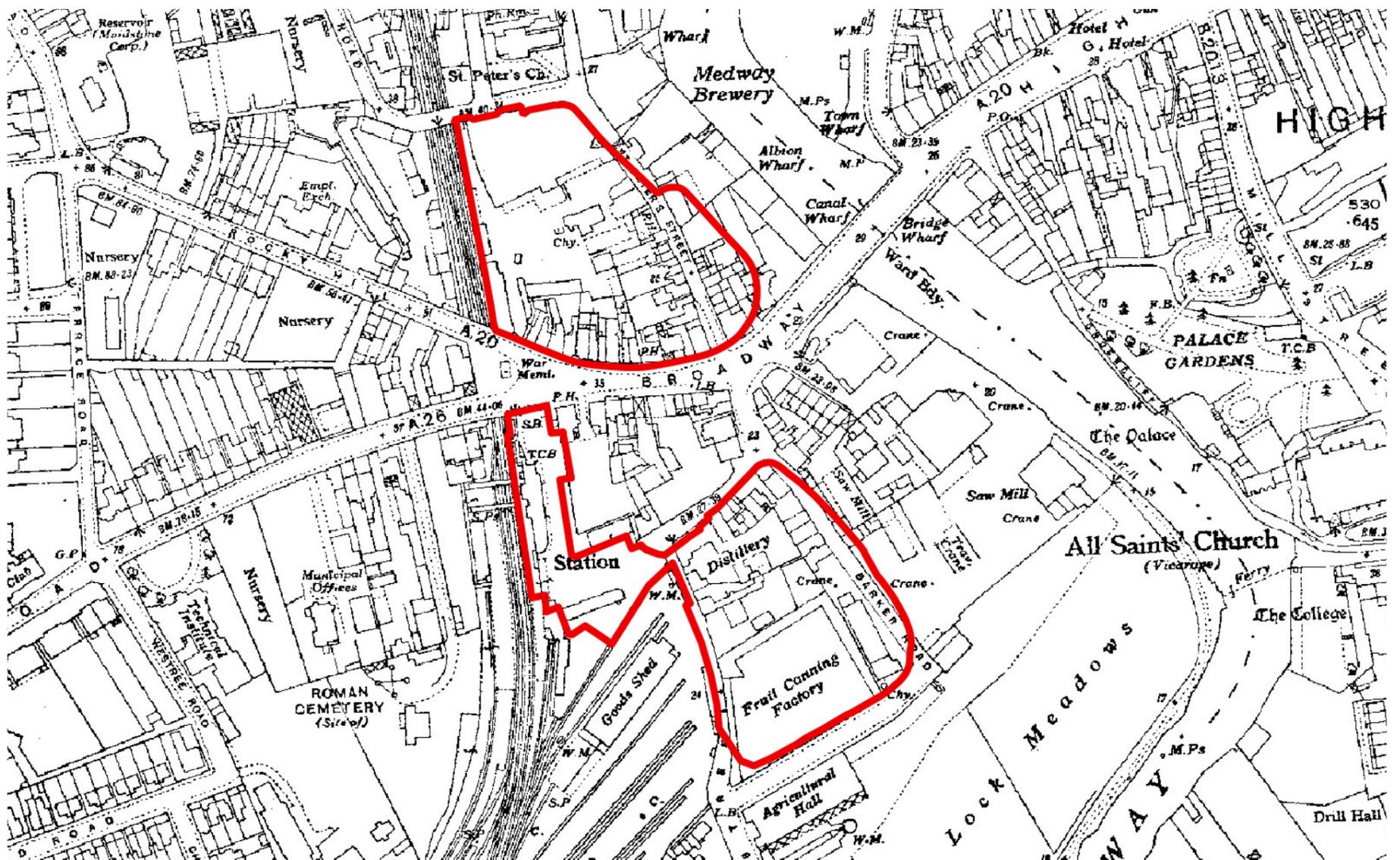
A more detailed heritage analysis has been undertaken by Savills Heritage and is included at Appendix 5C.



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 6m 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.

The southern part of the site rises from approximately 7m on its western side to 12m in its north-west corner.

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.

**176** 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 western half of the northern site lies within Environment Agency Flood Zone 2 (see Figure 5.6), meaning it has a flood risk of between 0.01% and 1% in any year. The majority of the southern site also 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.



Figure 5.5: Landform

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

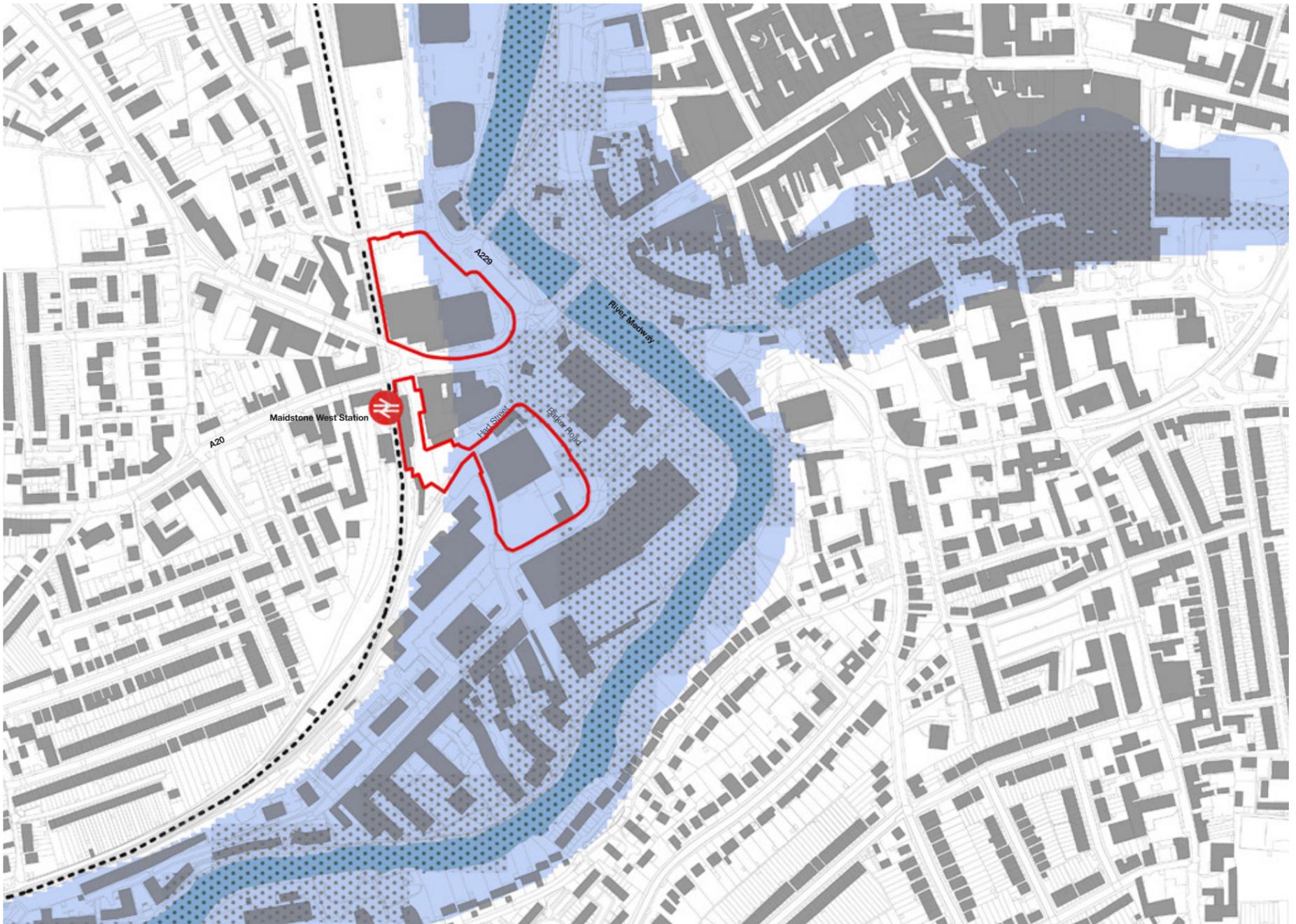


Figure 5.6:Hydrology

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.



*The Broadway physically separates the two parts of the site, making pedestrian movement difficult*



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

The northern site is accessed from Buckland Road to the north (shoppers and loading) and the A229 Bridges Gyratory to the east (loading only). The Broadway (A20) runs to the south of this site, but there is no vehicular access to the site from this busy street. A railway line along the western boundary disconnects it from the road network in this direction.

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 then 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 southern end of 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 (both less than 0.5km from 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 northern site occupies a prominent position on the western riverbank, allowing views from the bridges over the River Medway, footpaths adjacent to the river and the western side of the town centre opposite at Fairmeadow and Bishops Way. It is also visible from its immediate surrounding streets, namely Broadway, Buckland Road, St. Peter's Street, Tonbridge Road and Barker Road.

The southern part of the southern 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.

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



*Hart Street, looking north towards Maidstone West Station.*



*From northern end of Broadway, looking south.*



*From Bridges Gyratory, looking west towards Broadway Shopping Centre*



# **Site 5: Maidstone West**

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

# Heritage Review

The site is split into two portions, separated by The Broadway/A23 London Road and incorporates part of the Maidstone West station site. The northern part of Site 5 is located immediately adjacent to the main road network which crosses the Medway linking the western half of Maidstone to the main town centre on the east side of the river and therefore this site provides a 'Gateway' opportunity linking historic Maidstone to the later part of the town to the west.

## Heritage Assets

**188** Neither of the sites are 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.

To the north of the northern part of Site 5 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 car park and Lidl in the northern half of Site 5.

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. 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 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, and more dense housing fronting onto St Peter's Street.

Between both halves of Site 5 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.

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.





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. Site 5 also presents an opportunity to provide an improved townscape for the historic town located on the east side of the River, and especially to improve the current setting of the Grade II\* listed St Peter's Church which lies immediately opposite the Site to the north, and whose setting is currently negatively affected by the modern car park wall. There are also opportunities to improve the setting of the Grade II listed War Memorial and general townscape.



*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
<b>Gala Bingo / Granada House / The Mall</b>					
Mill Street	Mill Street	300m	4-Minutes	2-Minutes	71
Chequers Bus Station	Romney Place	150m	2-Minutes	1-Minute	
<b>Mote Road</b>					
Lower Stone Street	Lower Stone Street	240m	3-Minutes	1-Minute	70
Chequers Bus Station	Romney Place	400m	5-Minutes	2-Minutes	
<b>Peugeot Building (Len House)</b>					
Mill Street	Mill Street	17m	1-Minute	1-Minute	71
Chequers Bus Station	Romney Place	450m	5-Minutes	2-Minute	
<b>Maidstone Riverside</b>					
Rocky Hill	A20 London Road	400m	5-Minutes	2-Minutes	71
Chequers Bus Station	Romney Place	1km	13-Minutes	4-Minutes	
<b>Maidstone West Station</b>					
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
<b>Gala Bingo / Granada House / The Mall</b>				
<b>Maidstone Barracks</b>	1.2km	15-Minutes	6-Minutes	13-Minutes via Maidstone West
<b>Maidstone East</b>	750m	9-Minutes	4-Minutes	9-Minutes via Kings Hill Connect X1 / Sapphire 101 / 130 / 150
<b>Maidstone West</b>	800m	10-Minutes	3-Minutes	8-Minutes via 503 Maidstone P&R / Greenway 71 / Greenway 72 / 3 / 7
<b>Mote Road</b>				
<b>Maidstone Barracks</b>	1.5km	18-Minutes	7-Minutes	16-Minutes via Maidstone West or 15-Minutes via Greenway 71 / Greenway 72 / 58
<b>Maidstone East</b>	1km	12-Minutes	6-Minutes	10-Minutes via Sapphire 101 / 155
<b>Maidstone West</b>	1km	13-Minutes	4-Minutes	7-Minutes via Greenway 71 / Greenway 72 / 3 / 7
<b>Peugeot Building (Len House)</b>				
<b>Maidstone Barracks</b>	1.2km	14-Minutes	5-Minutes	10-Minutes via Maidstone West or 12-Minutes via Greenway 71 / Greenway 72 / 79A / 79C
<b>Maidstone East</b>	800m	10-Minutes	4-Minutes	10-Minutes via Kings Hill Connect X1 / Sapphire 101 / 79 / 155
<b>Maidstone West</b>	550m	7-Minutes	3-Minutes	5-Minutes via 503 Maidstone P&R / Greenway 71 / Greenway 72 / 1 / 3 / 6 / 6X / 7 / 8 / 79A / 79C
<b>Maidstone Riverside</b>				
<b>Maidstone Barracks</b>	500m	7-Minutes	2-Minutes	n/a
<b>Maidstone East</b>	950m	12-Minutes	5-Minutes	12-Minutes via Sapphire 101 / 79 / 150 / 155
<b>Maidstone West</b>	550m	7-Minutes	4-Minutes	n/a
<b>Maidstone West Station</b>				
<b>Maidstone Barracks</b>	1.1km	14-Minutes	6-Minutes	14-Minutes via Greenway 71 / Greenway 72 / 58 / 60 / 78 / 79A / 79C
<b>Maidstone East</b>	1.2km	16-Minutes	8-Minutes	12-Minutes via Kings Hill Connect X1 / Sapphire 101 / 79 / 150 / 155
<b>Maidstone West</b>	270m	3-Minutes	1-Minute	n/a

