

## Newnham Park

**1.1** Newnham Park is a 28.6 hectare site located to the north of the urban area adjacent to junction 7 of the M20 motorway. Newnham Court Shopping Village dominates the western part of the allocated site, and the Kent Institute of Medicine and Surgery (KIMS) hospital is under construction on the northern perimeter of the site together with a new access road. Expanded hospital facilities and associated development to form a medical campus will create a specialist knowledge cluster that will attract a skilled workforce to support the council's vision for economic prosperity.

**1.2** Newnham Court Shopping Village has been developed (and continues to develop) in a piecemeal fashion over time and, consequently, the visual impact of this site is poor. The inclusion of the Shopping Village with the medical campus as part of the allocation will deliver a comprehensively planned development that will provide quality buildings in a parkland setting.

**1.3** A rectangular field of approximately 3 hectares to the south east of the development site, is identified for new woodland planting, to be developed as a parkland nature reserve, and transferred into the ownership of a Trust to ensure its long term maintenance. This field offers the opportunity to provide for net gains in biodiversity and ecological connectivity between the large expanses of ancient woodland.

**1.4** Newnham Park is located in the countryside and lies within the setting of the nationally designated Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), where particular attention needs to be paid to protecting and conserving the distinctive character of the landscape. Existing landscape features within the site boundaries should be retained where possible, and the site is subject to tree preservation orders. There are constraints to development particularly along boundaries adjacent to the Local Wildlife Site/ancient woodland where a landscape buffer of between 15m and 30m will be required, together with a minimum 15m landscape buffer to be planted each side of the stream running through the site. Most of the site is of limited ecological value, the areas of interest primarily focused at the edges of the site and along the stream.

**1.5** The medical campus will deliver up to 150,000m<sup>2</sup> of specialist medical facilities and associated uses, of which 25,000m<sup>2</sup> will provide for related offices and research and development. Appropriate uses on the site will include hospital or healthcare facilities, specialist rehabilitation services, medical related research and development, central laboratory facilities, and medical training. Medical facilities to the west of the existing stream will be delivered in advance of those being provided on land to the east of the stream.

**1.6** The regeneration and revitalisation of Maidstone's town centre is a priority and the town centre will continue to be the primary retail and office location in the borough. Development will predominantly comprise replacement premises for the existing garden centre and for the shops already established on site (equating to some 14,300sqm) and a limited amount of additional floorspace at Newnham Court Shopping Village (up to 700sqm) within the vicinity of the existing retail footprint, as shown on the policies map. Restrictions on the type of goods sold and the class A and D2 uses operating should ensure that the Village is

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complementary rather than in conflict with the vitality and viability of the town centre and should ensure that the character and appearance of area is consistent with its sensitive location. The town centre functions successfully due to the mix of uses in close proximity to each other. Consequently, new additional non-retail floorspace (i.e. that which does not fall within use class A1) at Newnham Park, such as cafés, restaurants and public houses, together with banks and estate agents, are unlikely to be acceptable. Similarly, leisure uses such as cinemas and bowling alleys, and other uses that are likely to conflict with the town centre, will not be permitted. Conversely, subject to restrictions on the type of goods sold, retail premises that have a unique and recognised "out of town" format, such as 'homeware' offers, are likely to be acceptable on the allocated site because conflict with town centre uses would be unlikely. The height and bulk of the retail units will need to be controlled in this sensitive landscape location and for this reason conventional retail warehouse style buildings will not be acceptable. In order to assess the impact of proposals on the town centre, a retail impact assessment will be required.

**1.7** Critical to the successful development of Newnham Park is the provision of appropriate transport infrastructure. Vehicular access to the site will be taken from the New Cut roundabout, with bus and emergency access from the A249 Sittingbourne Road. A bus interchange will be provided as part of the retail development, together with a car park management plan. A Travel Plan will be required to accompany a planning application. Permeability is an important aspect of the site's development, and enhanced pedestrian and cycle links to the residential areas of Grove Green, Vinters Park and Penenden Heath, and to Eclipse Business Park, will be provided.

<b>Site name, address</b>	<b>Newnham Park, Bearsted Road, Maidstone</b>		
Ward	Boxley	Parish	Boxley
Current use	Medical, retail and open countryside		
<b>Newnham Park development criteria</b>			
Newnham Park is allocated for a medical campus, a replacement retail centre and a nature reserve, as identified on the policies map. Planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met:			
<b>On site</b>			
Design and layout			
1. Phased provision of a maximum of 150,000m <sup>2</sup> of specialist medical facilities set within an enhanced landscape structure of which 25,000sqm will provide for associated offices and research and development;			

Site name, address	Newnham Park, Bearsted Road, Maidstone
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Provision of a replacement garden centre and replacement retail premises of up to 14,300 sqm gross retail floorspace and additional provision of retail floorspace not exceeding 700 sqm gross retail floorspace which is not to be used for the sale of clothing, footwear, accessories, jewellery and watches. All replacement and additional retail floorspace shall be confined to the vicinity of the existing footprint of the current retail area as shown on the policies map. New additional non-A1 floorspace will not be appropriate. The retail development should include the provision of a bus interchange and a car park management plan;</li> <li>3. Creation of a parkland nature reserve of approximately 3 hectares on land to the south east of the site, as shown on the policies map, and through a legal agreement transferred to a Trust;</li> <li>4. Construction of buildings of high quality design in a sustainable form that reflect the site's prime location as a gateway to Maidstone;</li> <li>5. Mitigation of the impact of development on the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and its setting through:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. The provision of new structural and internal landscaping to be phased in advance of development;</li> <li>ii. The retention and enhancement of existing planting;</li> <li>iii. The use of the topography in site layout plans to exclude development on the higher, more visually prominent parts of the site;</li> <li>iv. The control of building heights across the whole site in response to the site's topography with no building to exceed 4 storeys in height;</li> <li>v. The use of low level lighting; and</li> <li>vi. The use of green roofs where practical.</li> </ol> </li> <li>6. Medical facilities on land to the west of the existing stream will be delivered in advance of medical facilities on land to the east of the stream;</li> <li>7. The additional retail floorspace must be of an out of town format that is complementary to town centre uses and, by means of a sequential sites assessment, demonstrably require an out of town location. Large scale retail warehousing style buildings will not be acceptable in this sensitive landscape location;</li> <li>8. Submission of a retail impact assessment which clearly demonstrates that the retail development has no significant adverse impact on the town centre;</li> <li>9. Provision of a landscape buffer of between 15m and 30m in width along the northern and eastern boundaries of the site in order to protect Ancient Woodland, with tracts of planting extending into the body of the development;</li> </ol>

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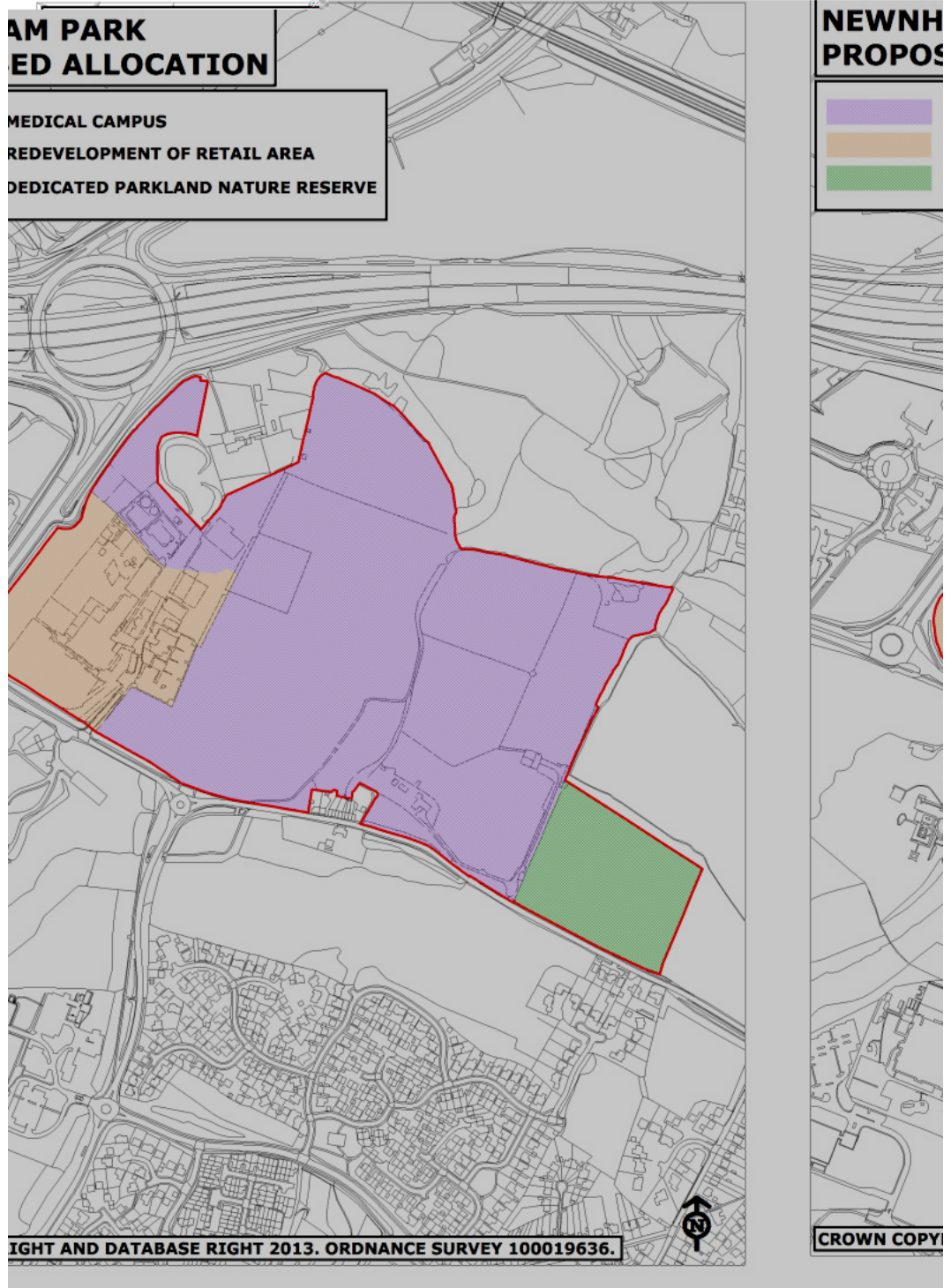
Site name, address	Newnham Park, Bearsted Road, Maidstone
	<p>10. Provision of a landscaped buffer of a minimum 15m in width on both sides of the existing stream running north-south through the site (minimum 30m width in total), in order to enhance the amenity and biodiversity of this water body; and</p> <p>11. Submission of a full landscape assessment to be approved by the council.</p> <p>Archaeology</p> <p>12. Provision of a watching archaeological brief in order to protect any heritage assets found on site.</p> <p>Access</p> <p>13. Vehicular access to the site from the New Cut roundabout, with bus and emergency access from the A249 Sittingbourne Road;</p> <p>14. Enhanced pedestrian and cycle links to the residential areas of Grove Green, Vinters Park and Penenden Heath, and to Eclipse Business Park; and</p> <p>15. Submission of a Travel Plan, to be approved by the Borough Council.</p> <p>Ecology</p> <p>16. Submission of an ecology survey and detailed mitigation measures.</p> <p>A development brief, to be approved by the council, will detail the way in which medical facilities, retail redevelopment and the nature reserve, together with integral landscaping and supporting infrastructure, are delivered in an integrated and coordinated manner.</p> <p><b>Off site</b></p> <p>Highways</p> <p>17. Submission of a full Transport Assessment to identify off-site highway improvements to serve the development, to be secured in a phased manner by the provision of infrastructure or through contributions by means of a signed legal agreement prior to the commencement of development;</p> <p>18. Capacity improvements to the Bearsted roundabout at the junction of Bearsted Road with the A249 Sittingbourne Road, together with the provision of pedestrian crossing facilities;</p> <p>19. Capacity improvements to the New Cut roundabout at the junction of Bearsted Road and New Cut Road, together with the provision of pedestrian crossing facilities;</p> <p>20. The upgrading of Bearsted Road to a dual carriageway between Bearsted roundabout and New Cut roundabout, land take being confined to the north of Bearsted Road;</p>

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<b>Site name, address</b>	<b>Newnham Park, Bearsted Road, Maidstone</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>21. Safety and capacity improvements to the M20 motorway junction 7 roundabout;</li><li>22. Improved public transport to operate between the site and the town centre, via New Cut Road and Ashford Road;</li><li>23. Bus priority measures on New Cut Road, where feasible, and traffic signal priority measures at the junction of New Cut Road and the A20 Ashford Road; and</li><li>24. Improved bus links to the site from the residential areas of Grove Green and Penenden Heath.</li></ul>	

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## Maidstone East and Maidstone Sorting Office

**1.8** Maidstone East is a long standing development site located close to the heart of Maidstone town centre. Combined with the adjacent Royal Mail Sorting Office site, which has more recently become available, there is the opportunity to achieve a substantial retail-led redevelopment here which will help to regenerate this part of the town centre. The site is in a key gateway location, prominent in views from the station, from the Medway valley to the west and, to a lesser degree, from Fairmeadow. The prompt delivery of a successful retail-led mixed use scheme here will do much to upgrade the quality and attractiveness of this northern entrance to the town centre.

**1.9** This edge of centre site is considered suitable for a combination of comparison and convenience retailing. The site already benefits from direct links via Week Street to the main shopping areas of the town centre and an important element in any scheme will be upgrading of the quality and attractiveness of this pedestrian route to help maximise the prospect of linked trips. Providing an element of comparison shopping in units fronting onto Sessions Square will particularly help to attract shoppers from the rest of the town centre to the development and vice versa.

**1.10** Housing is seen as an important supporting use on this site. Residential development could be delivered in separate blocks either to the west of the site or possibly south of the railway line fronting Brenchley Gardens, or on upper floors above the retail development.

**1.11** The overall station environment will also be uplifted, improving overall accessibility to and within the station, increasing the prominence of the station building itself and facilitating easier transfer between buses, trains and taxis. Network Rail has specific requirements for the site relating to the provision of commuter car parking and track maintenance.

**1.12** Sessions House is a prominent listed building which faces and over-looks the site. Development heights will be controlled to limit the impact on views of the building from the west and would not normally exceed 5 storeys. There is also the opportunity through the development to achieve a better frontage to the western side of Sessions House Square.

**1.13** A development proposal could also encompass Cantium House as part of a comprehensive scheme if this site becomes available.

Site name, address	Maidstone East and Maidstone sorting office, Sandling Road, Maidstone		
Ward	North	Parish	N/A
Current use	Railway station, parking, Royal Mail sorting office		
<p><b>Maidstone East and Maidstone sorting office development criteria</b></p> <p>Planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met:</p>			

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## **On site**

### **Design and layout**

1. The provision of up to 10,000sqm of comparison and convenience shopping floorspace and some 210 dwellings.
2. The provision of a more prominent station entrance fronting onto Sessions House Square/Week Street
3. Development is designed to respond to the listed Sessions House and its setting. Development should provide an 'active' frontage comprising individual retail units facing the west side of Sessions House Square and provide direct pedestrian entrance into the development via this frontage
4. Development is designed to achieve a visual and physical connection between Sessions Square and Brenchley Gardens.
5. The overall height and bulk of development is controlled to limit the overall incursion in views of Sessions House from the west.
6. Assessment of the archaeological potential of the site is undertaken and the measures needed to address the assessment's findings secured.
7. The provision of commuter car parking to serve Maidstone East railway station.
8. Maintenance access for Network Rail to the western end of the railway tracks is secured.

### **Access**

8. The scheme enables the improved, safe and convenient interchange between buses, trains and taxis, including through the provision of improved pick up/drop off facilities
9. Full disabled access to the station and platforms is secured.
10. Highway access is taken from Sandling Road. An additional, in-bound only access to the Sorting Office part of the site could be taken from Fairmeadow.

### **Flooding and water quality**

11. The submission of a detailed surface water drainage strategy for the development based around sustainable drainage principles .

### **Noise**

12. The submission of a transportation noise assessment and the delivery of resultant noise attenuation measures in particular for residential development sited close to the railway line and/or Fairmeadow.

### **Air Quality**

13. The submission of an air quality assessment and emissions reduction plan.



<p><b>Land contamination</b></p> <p>14. The submission of a land contamination assessment and the delivery of resultant mitigation measures.</p> <p><b>Off site</b></p> <p><b>Public realm</b></p> <p>15. Contributions to a comprehensive public realm enhancement scheme for the stretch of Week Street linking the site to the junction with Fremlin Walk, and from the site to Brenchley Gardens, to significantly upgrade the quality and attractiveness for pedestrians.</p> <p>16. Complementary, linked public realm improvements to Sessions House Square to provide an enhanced public open space.</p>
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Table 1.1

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