



# **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.

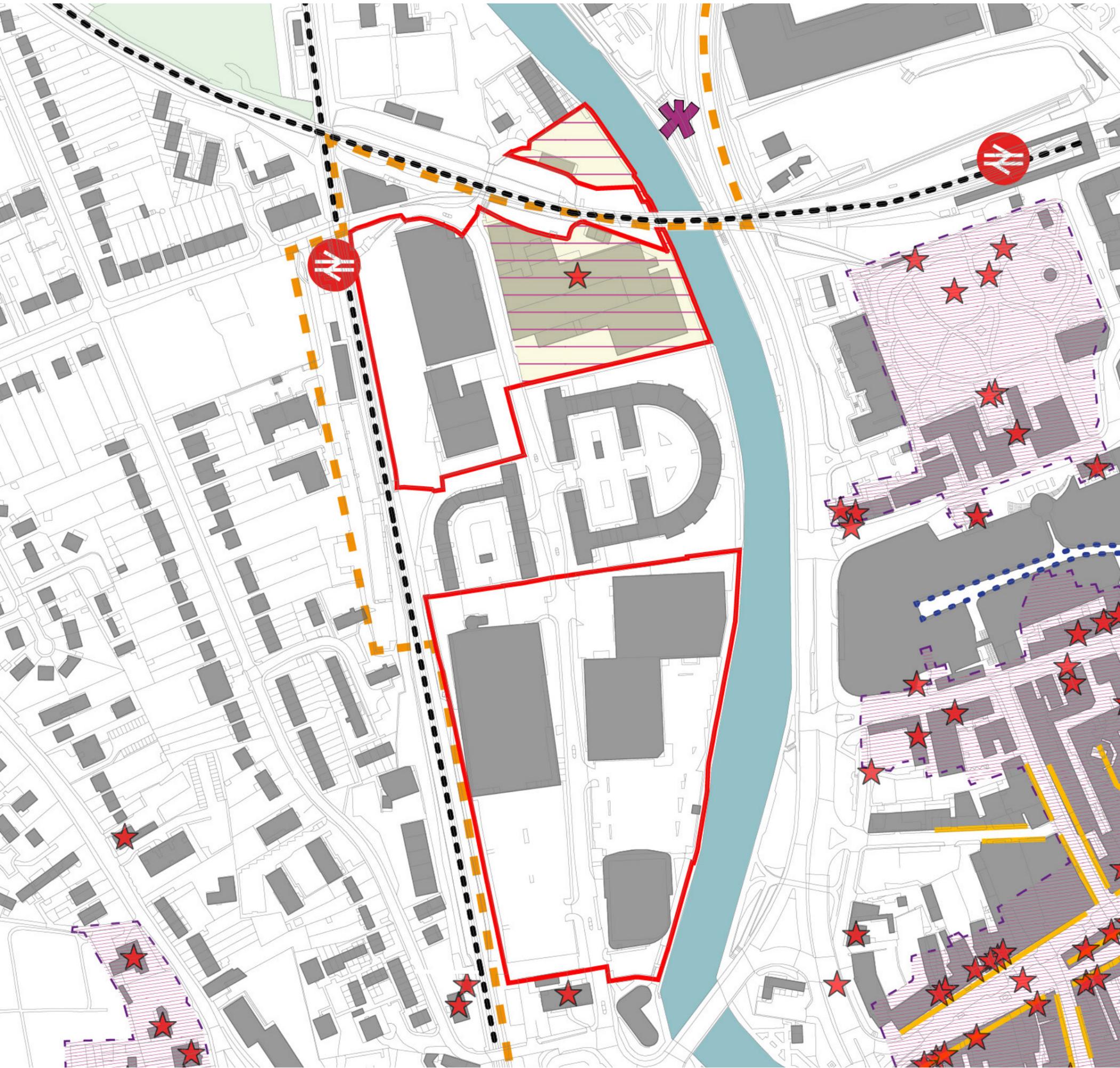


Figure 4.1: Designations and Features

scale 1:2500 @ A3

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

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.



travelodge

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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*



P

Maidstone Barracks Station

Raglan House

Jewson

Powerhub

High Level Bridge

River Medway

McKenzie Ct

Buckland Rise

Buckland Gardens

Hubert Walker Drive

European LCP

St Peter's St

Scotney Gardens

Waterside

St Anne Ct

The Range

Fairmeadow

Wickes

TK Maxx

Hobbycraft

P

St Peter's St

P

P

River Medway

Asda Living

Fairmeadow

P

Hotel

## 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

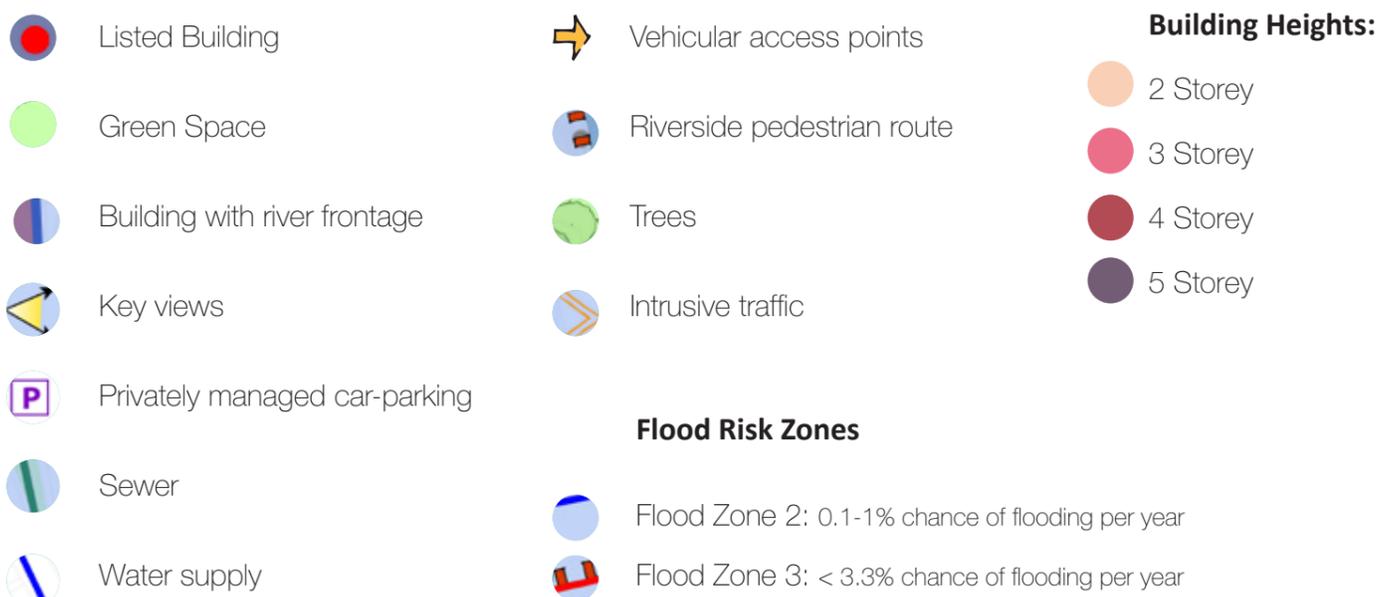


Figure 4.3 Contextual Analysis including Building Heights



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



*Listed former Church of St. Peter*

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.

## 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.

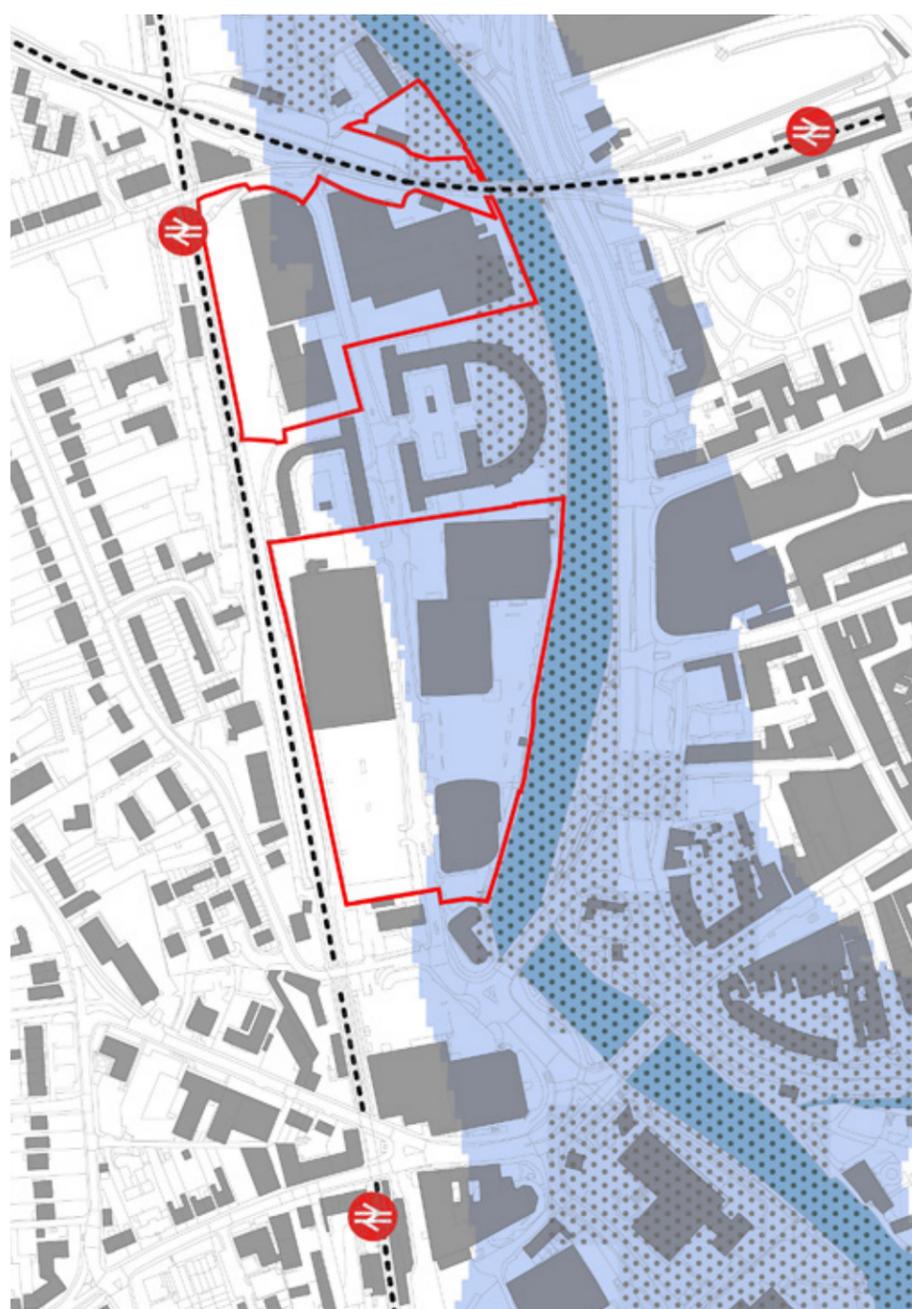


Figure 4.5: Hydrology

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

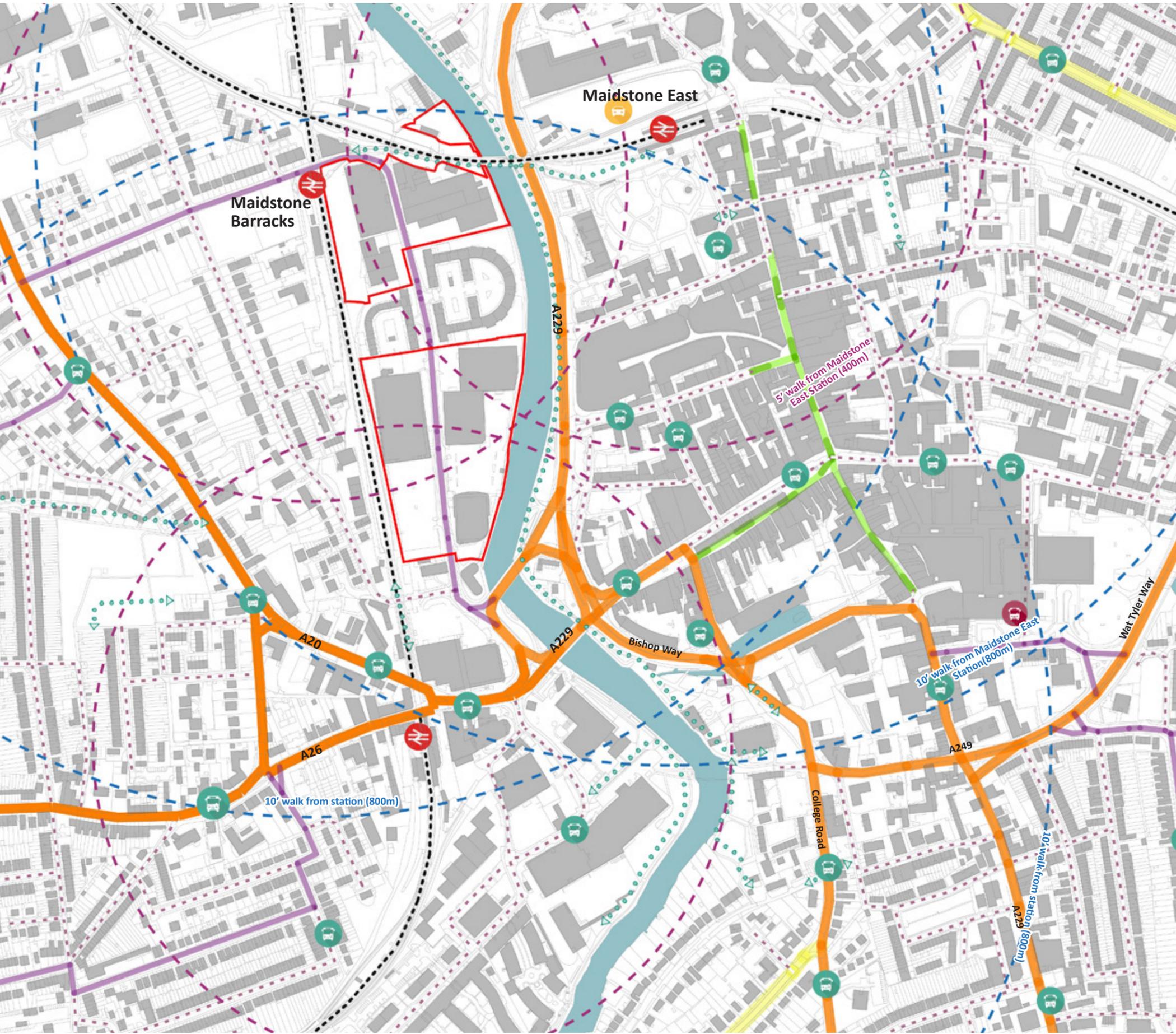


Figure 4.7: Movement and Access

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

## 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
<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