

A stylized map of Strood town centre, showing a network of roads and building footprints in light green and white against a darker green background. The map is oriented vertically, with the town centre at the top and a river or waterway at the bottom.

STROOD

TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN

MEDWAY COUNCIL

December 2019

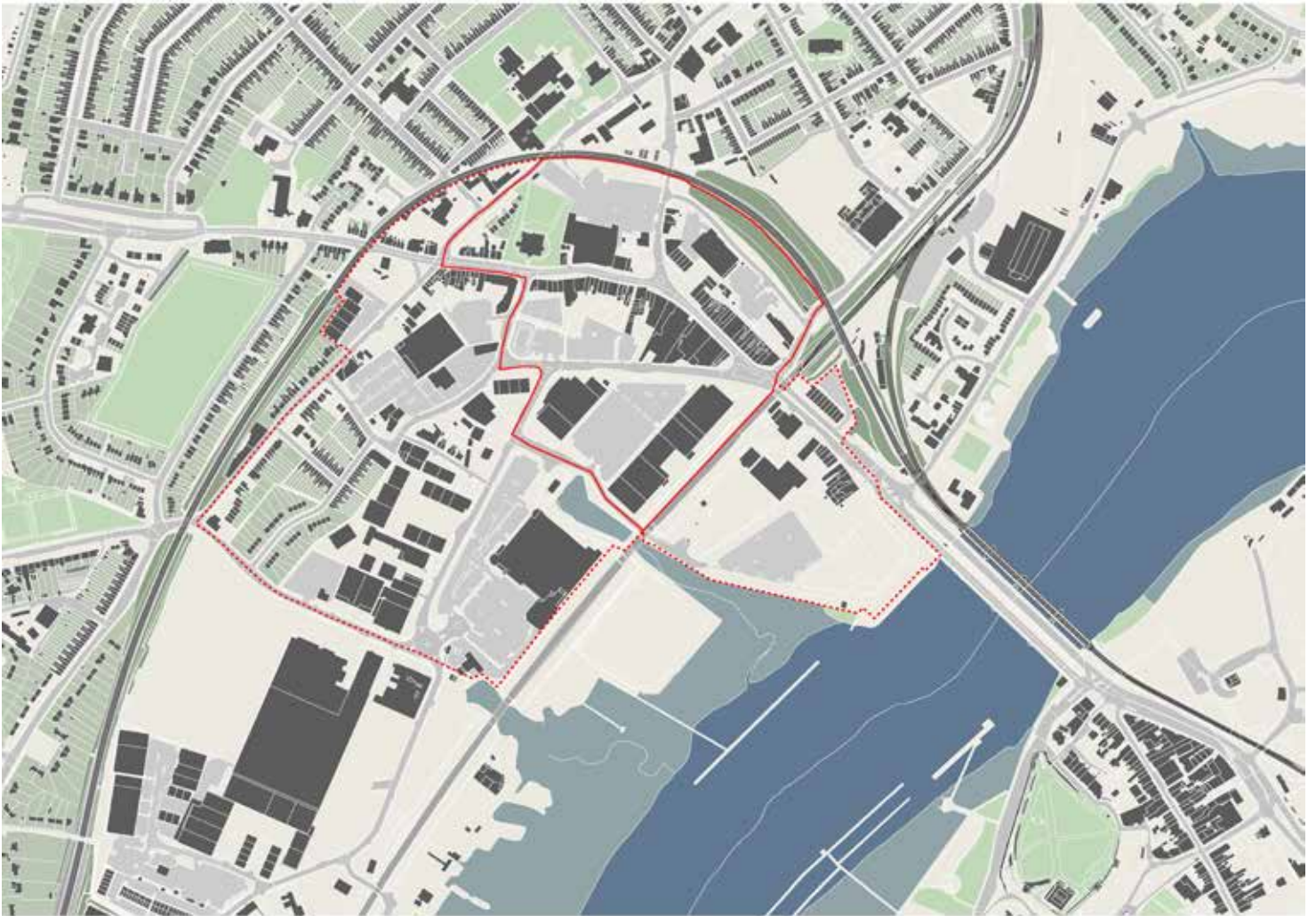
**Allies and Morrison
Urban Practitioners**



Jane's Creek and the view of Rochester Castle and Cathedral in the background

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Strood Town Centre boundary (solid red) and the wider context area (dashed red) for the Masterplan study

INTRODUCTION

1.1 ROLE OF THE MASTERPLAN

Allies and Morrison Urban Practitioners was commissioned to prepare a Town Centre Masterplan and Delivery Strategy for Strood on behalf of Medway Council. The consultant team for the project includes transport and movement experts, Alan Baxter, and property and economic development consultants, GVA.

This report sets out the vision and spatial masterplan for Strood, including:

- The policy and strategic context for Strood;
- Summary of analysis undertaken for the project;
- A vision and thematic objectives for the town centre;
- A Masterplan setting out spatial and design priorities; and
- A phasing and delivery strategy.

The study boundary for the masterplan incorporates the area within the Strood Town Centre boundary, and a slightly wider boundary for context. Where appropriate, the project team looked beyond these boundaries at strategic opportunities.

A detailed baseline study was prepared for the project. This background report is designed to tell the story of Strood and to reveal the potential that its unique history can have in placemaking today and charting a successful course for the future. In this sense, the document serves as a reference point beyond its role as an evidence base for the current project.

The Strood Town Centre Masterplan sets out a spatial framework to guide future development and investment in the town centre. The Masterplan will not be a statutory or supplementary policy document but rather will be considered as part of the Evidence Base for the emerging Local Plan for Medway Council.

The masterplan is structured by three levels of intervention:

- Short term, with projects that should be deliverable within the next five years (before 2025)
- Medium term, with projects that are more strategic but should be possible to deliver within the next five to ten years (2026-2030)
- Long term with more ambitious and strategic projects that are objectives to aim towards over the coming 20 years. (2031-2035)

The masterplan drawings reflect the proposals identified for the short and medium term. Longer term opportunities are identified only in the phasing plans for the project, as these are broad aspirations rather than specific proposals.

The masterplan takes proposals contained in the Strood Waterfront SPD as established context for the Strood Civic Centre site and the waterfront area close to Strood rail station and does not revisit these sites for the masterplanning exercise.

All the development numbers exclude the areas included in Strood Waterfront SPD and are distinctly separate.

1.2 PROJECT PROCESS

The project commenced in May 2018 and has consisted of three main phases of work: understanding the context and place, developing a vision for Strood and producing delivery guidance for the masterplan.

Following an inception meeting and site visit with the council, the project team undertook research and analysis, to develop a thorough understanding of Strood and its surrounding context. This included a policy review, an analysis of the socioeconomic make-up of the local population, a review of the property market, historic research and mapping of the town's urban design characteristics. In addition, a workshop was held to ask key stakeholders about what works well and what could be improved in Strood and to identify sites which could be important for improving Strood. The baseline study was presented to the council in an interim report in July 2018.

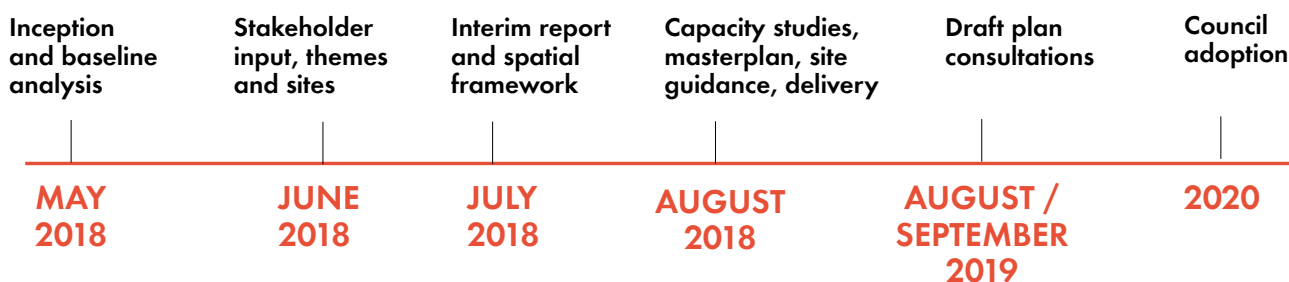
Through the baseline analysis, issues, opportunities, priorities and key sites began to emerge. In the next phase of work, these evolved into the vision and thematic objectives for Strood. The aims for Strood were considered alongside the plans for neighbouring towns, to ensure a joined up approach. A strategic spatial plan for the town was developed and tested through high level density and capacity studies. The spatial plan was then developed into the draft masterplan.

In the final phase of the project, comments were incorporated and the spatial vision was finalised. Place-making and site-specific guidance was provided, identifying key moves to achieve the vision for Strood. High-level advice was set out for delivery and phasing. This masterplan is the culmination of this work and has been designed to be able to be adopted as policy as part of the new Local Plan.

A public consultation was held between 16th August to 30th September 2019 on the masterplan. The document was available on the Council's website and local libraries during this time. Officers also held two public drop in sessions in Strood Community Hub and a stakeholder workshop with landowners, infrastructure providers and other Council services. The results of this consultation have been considered and relevant updates made to the document. The specific outcomes of the consultation will be published by the Council separately.

Stakeholder invitees

Environment Agency
 NHS Medway CCG
 Historic England
 KCC archaeology
 Thames Gateway Kent Partnership
 SE Coast Ambulance Service
 Southern Water
 Southern Water
 Moot Homes
 Orbit Homes
 MHS Homes
 Arriva
 Network Rail
 Highways England
 Southeastern
 Diocese of Rochester
 Age UK
 Salvation Army
 Parish of St Nicholas Church Strood
 Strood Community Project
 Strood Community Hub
 Medway Housing Corporation
 Peel Ports
 Savills
 Tesco
 Strood Retail Park
 Greenwich University
 University of Kent
 Medway Council - Affordable Housing
 Medway Council- Education Planning
 Medway Council- Integrated Transport
 LGF Town Centre Works
 Medway Council- Transport Operations
 Medway Council- Parking Manager
 Medway Council- Economic Development
 Medway Council- Urban Design
 Medway Council- Heritage
 Medway Council- Public Health
 Medway Council- Property
 Medway Council- Green spaces
 Medway Council- Libraries and Community Hubs
 Medway Council- Tourism & Heritage
 Medway Council- Markets Officer
 Medway Council- Youth Service
 Medway Council- Environmental Health
 Medway - Air Quality
 Rochester Bridge Trust





The stakeholder workshop, June 2018



The consultant team undertaking a site visit of Strood with the council, May 2018





CHAPTER 2 **CONTEXT**

2 CONTEXT

2.1 MEDWAY POLICY CONTEXT

Draft Local Plan and Medway 2035

Medway is experiencing significant growth and local policy recognises Strood's potential to help accommodate that growth, both in terms of housing and increasing the mix of employment. A clear vision and strategy are needed to identify space for homes and workspace, as well as to help Strood's growth to act as a driver for improvements in the town – better housing, higher quality jobs, new services and facilities, and new public spaces – while maintaining and enhancing its distinct character.

Looking ahead to the next 20 years, while still draft, the emerging Local Plan sets out the following priorities for Medway:

- To put Medway on the map, tackling the perception of Medway as uninspiring and post-industrial through placemaking
- To make better use of the untapped potential of the River Medway, for growth, recreation, placemaking and for transportation
- To retain and celebrate the identity and heritage of each town, while reaping the benefits of delivering services at a city scale
- To improve, increase and connect green spaces
- To promote higher-value and a more diverse mix of industry, in part through providing good quality employment space
- To retain university graduates
- To create spaces that encourage activity, active travel and social interaction.

In particular to Strood, draft local policy:

- indicates a density of 95 dwellings per hectare is appropriate within most of the town centre
- acknowledges the town's capacity to contribute to a better mix of employment space, building on the success of the Innovation Centre
- acknowledges the potential for more town centre homes and identifies demand for two-bedroom homes, starter homes and supported accommodation
- aims to increase footfall and spend opportunities, in part through better integrating the retail park with the High Street

National Planning Policy Framework, 2019

National policy supports the use of under-utilised land and buildings, urging us to consider how we can use space more efficiently to free up space for much-needed housing. This is certainly the case for Strood, where land-hungry industry, yards, car parking, rail infrastructure, and vacant upper floors are rife in the town centre. There is a need to think creatively about where uses can be combined and intensified. Of course this land use puzzle brings into question land ownership and the intentions of the landowner. The NPPF encourages local authorities to take an active role in facilitating land assembly (paragraph 119), which will be necessary in Strood where land is highly fragmented.

Strood Waterfront Development SPD, 2018

The Strood Waterfront Development SPD sets out a framework for the delivery of 1,600 homes on eight sites along the river's edge. The framework seeks to protect and maximise key views, establish a continual riverside path, provide new open space, deliver high quality new homes and overall to transform underused land into a thriving waterfront community. These developments will have huge implications for the town, and the vision for the town centre should be sure to align with and maximise the benefits from the waterfront developments.

Rochester Riverside

In addition, across the Medway from Strood, Rochester Riverside is designated a regeneration site in local policy. It is planned to accommodate 1,400 homes, a primary school and nursery, 10 acres of open space, a hotel, 2km of riverside pathway and commercial space. Construction has begun for the first three phases.

2.2 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Local Growth Fund

Medway Council successfully secured Local Growth Funding to improve traffic flow, movement and the public realm in Strood Town Centre. The first phase of work was completed in 2018/19 and other works are underway. The initiative is improving the town centre by providing new surfacing, new lighting, measures to reduce the speed of traffic, wider footpaths and cycle-friendly routes. The programme of work includes:

- Tolgate Lane and the town centre car park/market space
- High Street and Commercial Road: redesigned including more direct crossing points for pedestrians
- High Street and North Street
- Commercial Road and Station Road
- The pedestrian access to Strood Train Station on Station Road

The Strood Town Centre Masterplan should look to align with these improvements where possible, supporting the progress of the programme's jobs and housing outcomes, while also setting aspirations for a next stage of improvements in the longer term.

Proposed transport improvements

Strood is highly connected and serves as an interchange. Investigations are being carried out to improve connectivity between the Medway towns and to the Hoo Peninsula through rail and/or rapid bus transit. Improvements could reinforce Strood's role as an interchange and further improve its connectivity.

Letwin Housing Review, 2018

With large sites coming forward, as is the case with Strood Waterfront and Rochester Riverside, there is risk of development stalling when the market becomes saturated. The Letwin Housing Review recommends housing should be built of more varied types – different tenures, designs, typologies, settings, and sizes. This will allow new homes to better meet the needs and desires of the community, while ensuring supply appeals to a wider range of buyers.

The Grimsey Review 2, 2018

In addition to accommodating housing, the masterplan must also set out plans to revitalise the town centre. While traditionally, the role of a High Street was retail, current market dynamics and consumer patterns require us to look to different uses. As the Grimsey report states “there is already too much retail space in the UK and bricks and mortar retailing can no longer be the anchor for thriving high streets and town centres. They need to be repopulated and re-fashioned as community hubs, including housing, health and leisure, entertainment, education, arts, business/office space and some shops.” Strood's high street has already seen a shift from traditional retail towards services, such as banks, leisure, community and food and beverage. Careful consideration is needed towards an appropriate and viable mix of uses for Strood's town centre. Medway's Local Plan sets out priorities for the area which could influence this mix: to improve the health and wellbeing of residents, to accommodate higher value industries, to increase skill levels in the local population, to retain graduates, and to make better use of the river for recreation, leisure and commercial uses.

While footfall in town centres has decreased every year since 2013 in the UK, retail parks have increased (in number and footfall) every year in the same period (Grimsey Review, 2018). This is apparent in Strood where the struggling High Street is adjacent to a successful retail park. Strood should look to build on this success, better connecting the retail park to the rest of the town centre, working to retain shoppers, and in the long run, improving the contribution the large format shops make to the streetscape of the town.

2.3 KEY MESSAGES FROM ANALYSIS

A baseline analysis and stakeholder consultation has been undertaken to consider:

- Strood's urban design and character;
- movement and transport;
- socioeconomic make up;
- and commercial and property market.

Through this analysis, key factors have emerged which the town centre masterplan is informed by and responds to. These include:

Strood's historic identity

Studying Strood's history brings into focus characteristics which can be embraced and celebrated as the town looks ahead, to further the character and identity of Strood. Strood's history has long been intertwined with Rochester, being connected by Rochester Bridge. Strood was the productive and industrial engine, which supported Rochester as a religious and civic centre. Strood's town centre has also long been shaped by infrastructure, with rail bridges and viaducts visible on historical photos and marking the entrance to the town. The town's location on the River Medway has also been a thread to its identity and role over the course of history. Since the decline of industry in Strood, the town has turned away from the river, losing this part of its identity. Making more of the river, the railway viaduct, Rochester Bridge and taking on its historical productive role could help Strood to re-establish its distinct role and identity in the Medway.

Flood risk

Large parts of the town centre are at high risk of tidal river flooding and surface water flooding. National Planning Policy requires that the vulnerability of development should be taken into account which may mean that some areas at risk are unsuitable for certain development types. It could also mean that further action needs to be taken to reduce the risk of flooding before development can occur. Further investigation is needed to establish which sites would be viable for development, taking into account the risk of flooding and vulnerability of development.

Identifying space for growth

Whilst Strood does not have a large number of listed buildings, it does have a general historic townscape in the core High Street area. By evaluating the townscape value and adaptability of each building, buildings which might be expendable to provide new links or sites are identified (see plan on page 7). Looking at the wider town centre environs, the buildings to the south west are generally of low quality, suggesting these could be areas for change, both to accommodate growth and to improve the town's environment and character. Of course, townscape is only one factor in identifying opportunity sites. Considering uses, these sites contain significant industrial land, as well as a supermarket. Proposals must find a way to relocate or re-provide space for these uses, ensuring jobs are not lost.

Green space

There is a lack of green space in the town centre, with the St Nicholas Churchyard being the only public green space within the boundary. In addition, street trees, which play an important role in character and air quality, are sparse.

Parking

Much of the town centre's area is surface car parking, with two public car parks providing 175 spaces within the boundary, and Strood Station providing 105 spaces nearby. The remaining retail car parks provide 1,247 spaces. However, the retail car parks often have restrictions, preventing people from leaving their cars there while they visit other destinations in the town. This imbalance between public and private car parking spaces presents a challenge, as well as an opportunity to free up significant space in the town centre.



1790s View of Strood below and across to Rochester



1828 View towards Rochester



c1930 Strood's high street, with invicta Palace on the left



1905 Strood Pier
All images © Medway Council Archive



1905 High Street



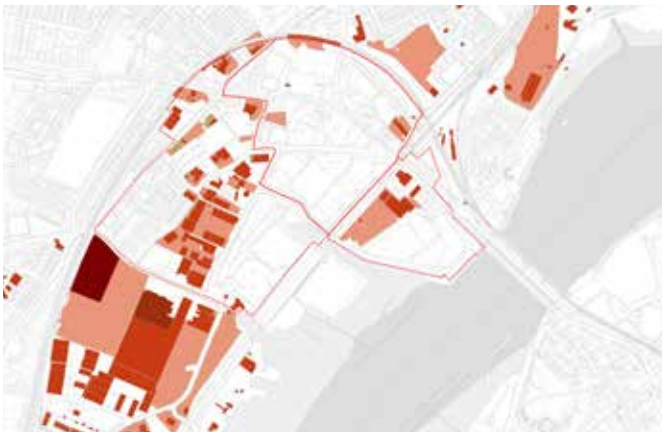
Strood's tramway



Active town centre uses

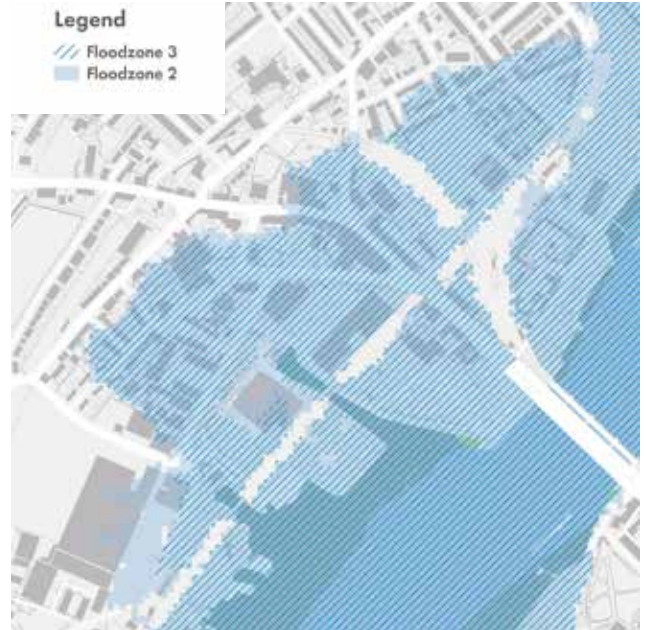


Box stores and car parking



Industrial land

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| ■ Retail | ■ Industrial |
| ■ Supermarket | ■ Storage |
| ■ Bigbox retail | ■ Industrial yard space |
| ■ F&B | ■ Car park |
| ■ Service industries | ■ Transport |
| ■ Leisure | ■ Residential |
| ■ Entertainment | ■ Empty / unknown |
| ■ Community | |
| ■ Religious | |
| ■ Education | |
| ■ Culture | |
| ■ Trade counter | |



Flood zones, indicative only



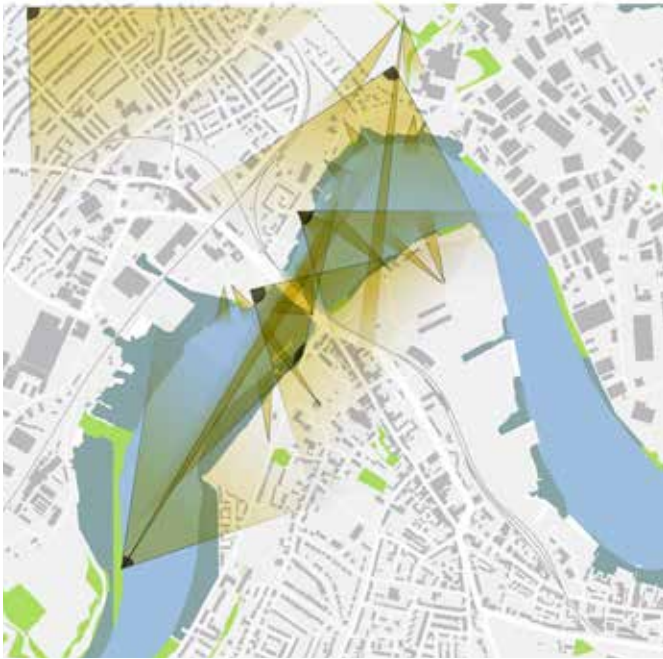
Flooding on Strood High Street, 1921 © Medway Council Archive



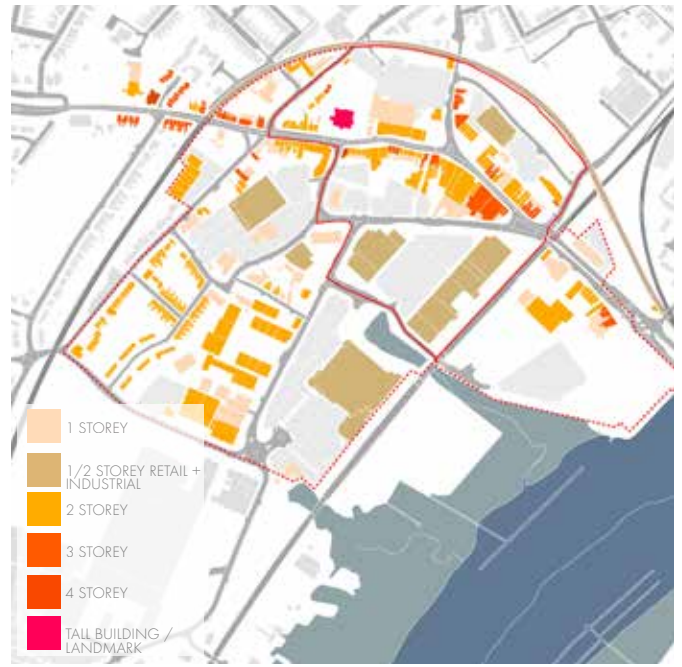
Kingswear Gardens



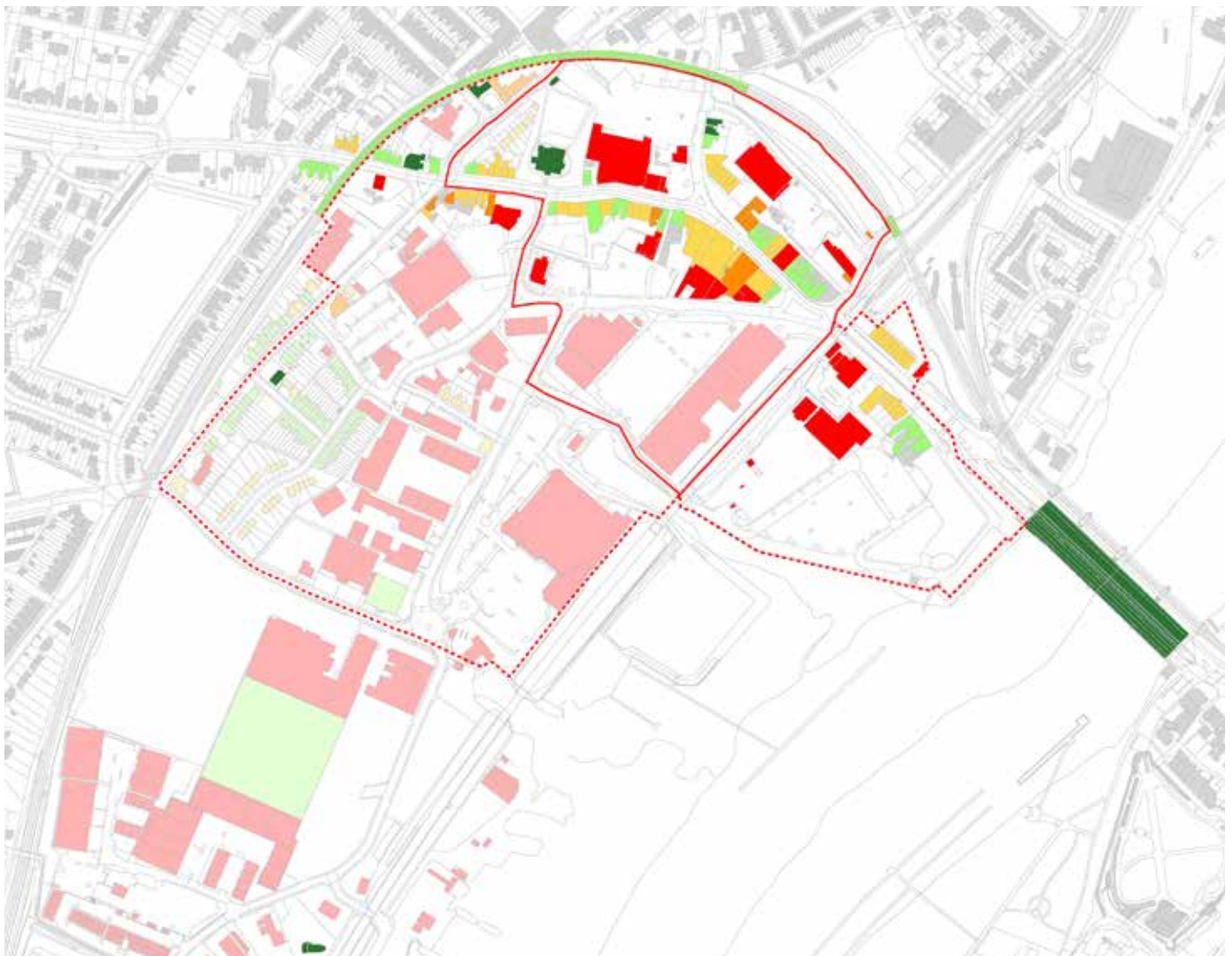
Innovation Studios



Strategic views, according to the Strood Waterfront SPD (2018)



Building heights



LISTED BUILDING / HIGH / MEDIUM / MEDIUM-LOW / LOW - Townscapes value
HIGH / AVERAGE / LOW - Building adaptability



view towards Rochester 1790s



view towards Rochester (from Church Green Road) 2018

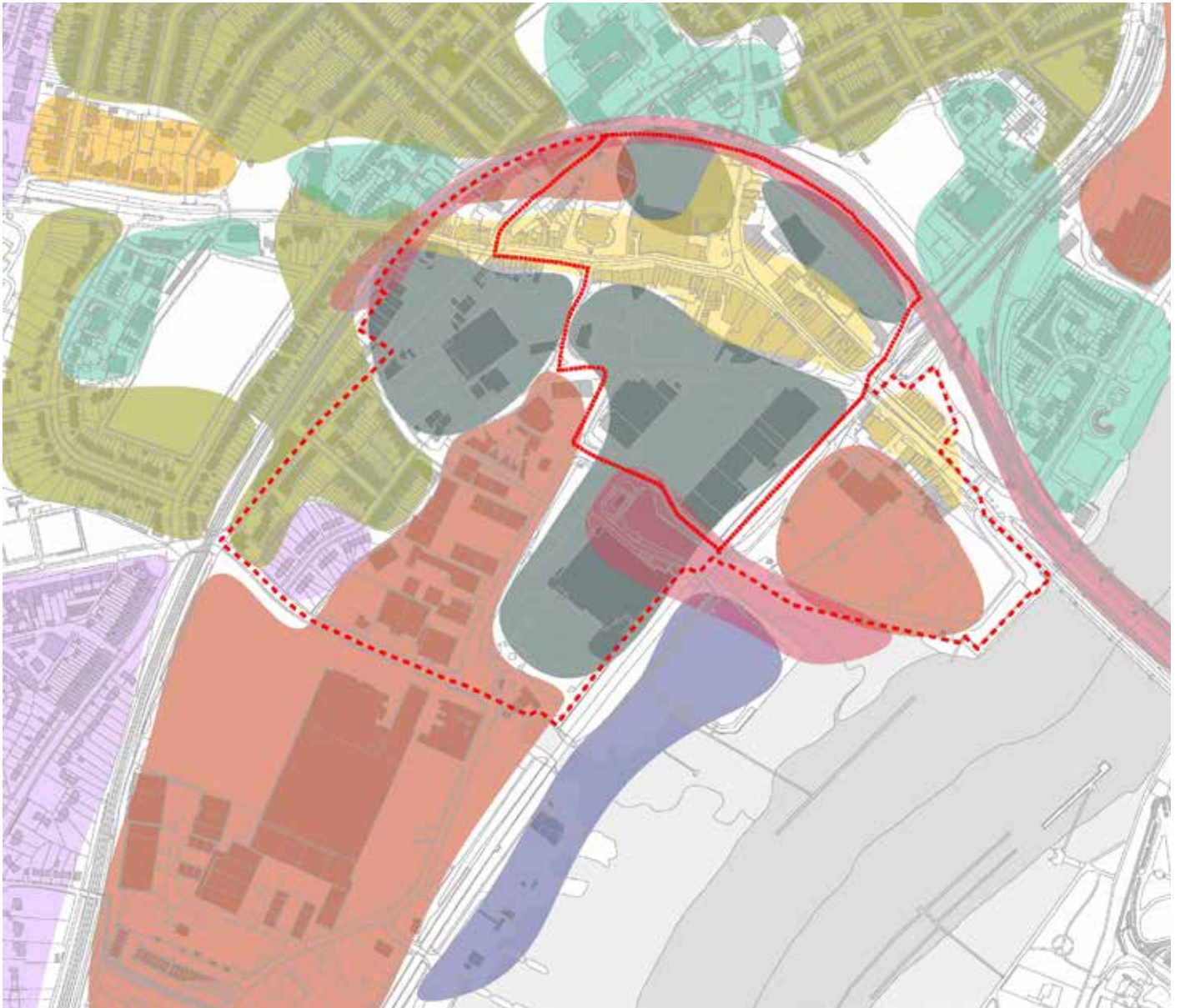


Rochester, Strood and Chatham, Medway, Kent 1838, JMW Turner
 An engraving of Strood and Rochester published in 1838 by depicts the two Medway towns within the picturesque setting of the landscape

Wider landscape network

Whilst Strood and Rochester's economic and cultural relationship has weakened over time, the visual links between them remain strong. Strood is situated within the foothills of the Kent Downs and the mouth of the River Medway. The reading of topography and landscape from Strood and views of the Medway towns from the river and surrounding landscape form part of the area's distinctive character. Broader natural assets such as the Hoo Peninsula and Kent Downs are easily accessible from the town centre. However, opportunities exist to increase accessibility and awareness of the following resources:

- Upnor
- Hoo Peninsula and Cliffe Pools
- Medway Marshes
- Kent Downs
- Shorne
- Ranscombe Farm Nature Reserve.



Character Areas

Broad existing character areas have been identified for the town centre and the surrounding environs. These will be reviewed as the draft masterplan is prepared, to identify where the character of particular areas may need to change, to improve legibility and accommodate new uses.

- Historic High Street
- Industrial Heritage
- Riverside
- 19th Century Terrace
- Historic villa
- Interwar / garden city style semi detached
- Big Box Retail
- Industrial
- Modern urban development



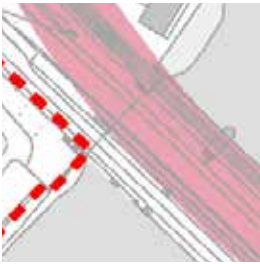
Historic High Street

The historic High Street is clearly identifiable, with buildings of varying age but contributing to a clear structure.



Inter-war / Garden City style

To the west and south west of the town centre, inter-war and garden estate style residential neighbourhoods are found.



Industrial Heritage

The historic viaduct that runs through the town centre brings a particular character with it. Whilst this can be a barrier to movement and helps create a 'walled city', with investment it can provide a characterful spine with interesting uses.



Big Box Retail

Big box retail dominates the areas immediately behind the high street. These do not contribute to the townscape, but are commercially successful. Scope exists to improve the typology of these whilst maintaining the successful uses.



Riverside

The Riverside is currently quite inaccessible and can be opened up with pedestrian routes, alongside investment to protect the Medway Marine Conservation Zone.



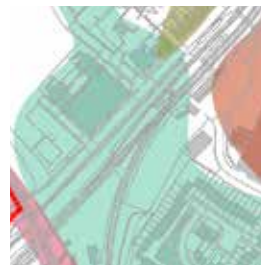
Industrial

A large industrial area exists to the south of the town centre, characterised by industrial units of varying size and quality, and yards to support these. The area reaches north to Commercial Road and some scope could exist to consolidate these uses.



19th Century Terrace

The town's 19th Century terraces and worker's cottages extend to the north and west of the town centre.



Modern Urban development

Pockets of modern, urban residential development located around the town centre. These generally have slightly higher densities but are not always integrated well with the surrounding areas.



Historic Villa

A small residential area to the west of the town centre has spacious residential villas, each with a different design and character.





CHAPTER 3
VISION AND OBJECTIVES

A VISION FOR STROOD

The future vision for Strood and has been informed by the town's past. The distinctive role for the town centre is borne out of its rich heritage, with a focus on embracing and re-casting earlier roles and attributes in a way that reflects and supports lifestyles in the 21st Century. Three key strands to the vision for the town centre have been identified:

1 Reconnecting with the river

Strood historically turned towards the River Medway with the waterway both supporting key industries and establishing a strong identity for the town. The river also provided a mutual focus that brought Strood and Rochester together as two parts of a whole, each with a complementary role. During the 20th Century, both towns turned their backs on the River Medway, but cleaner waterways and the leisure opportunities related to this now provide the impetus for Strood to turn back to both the river, and to Rochester beyond. Strood will once again become a riverfront town, with strong connections between the waterfront, the town centre and neighbourhoods.

2 Embracing and reinterpreting Strood's historic role as a productive engine

Strood once provided the productive engine to Rochester's religious seat and centre of trade - a place with scope to accommodate new spaces and activities. As manufacturing patterns changed during the 20th Century, this role decreased. However, patterns of industry and manufacturing are shifting once again, and Strood retains the qualities of a place that can adapt and absorb new typologies and activities. Strood's position on the High Speed 1 route, its proximity to London, and the relative affordability of space puts it in an ideal position to support new businesses in growing industries, whether these be creative or tech based.

3 An attractive place to live - balancing work and homes

Strood's historic focus on industry and its position on the strategic A2 road network mean that the living environment for residents has sometimes been a secondary consideration. However, with movement patterns and the nature of work spaces changing, a valuable opportunity exists to recast Strood as an attractive place to live as well as to work. This includes a range of homes that meet the needs of the whole community, a network of green and open spaces, and a positive relationship between homes and workspaces so that these do not undermine the character or functioning of one another.



RECONNECTING
WITH THE RIVER



EMBRACING
AND
REINTERPRETING
STROOD'S
HISTORIC
ROLE AS A
PRODUCTIVE
ENGINE



AN ATTRACTIVE
PLACE TO LIVE
- BALANCING
WORK AND
HOMES

THEMATIC OBJECTIVES

STROOD'S CHARACTER AND BUILDINGS

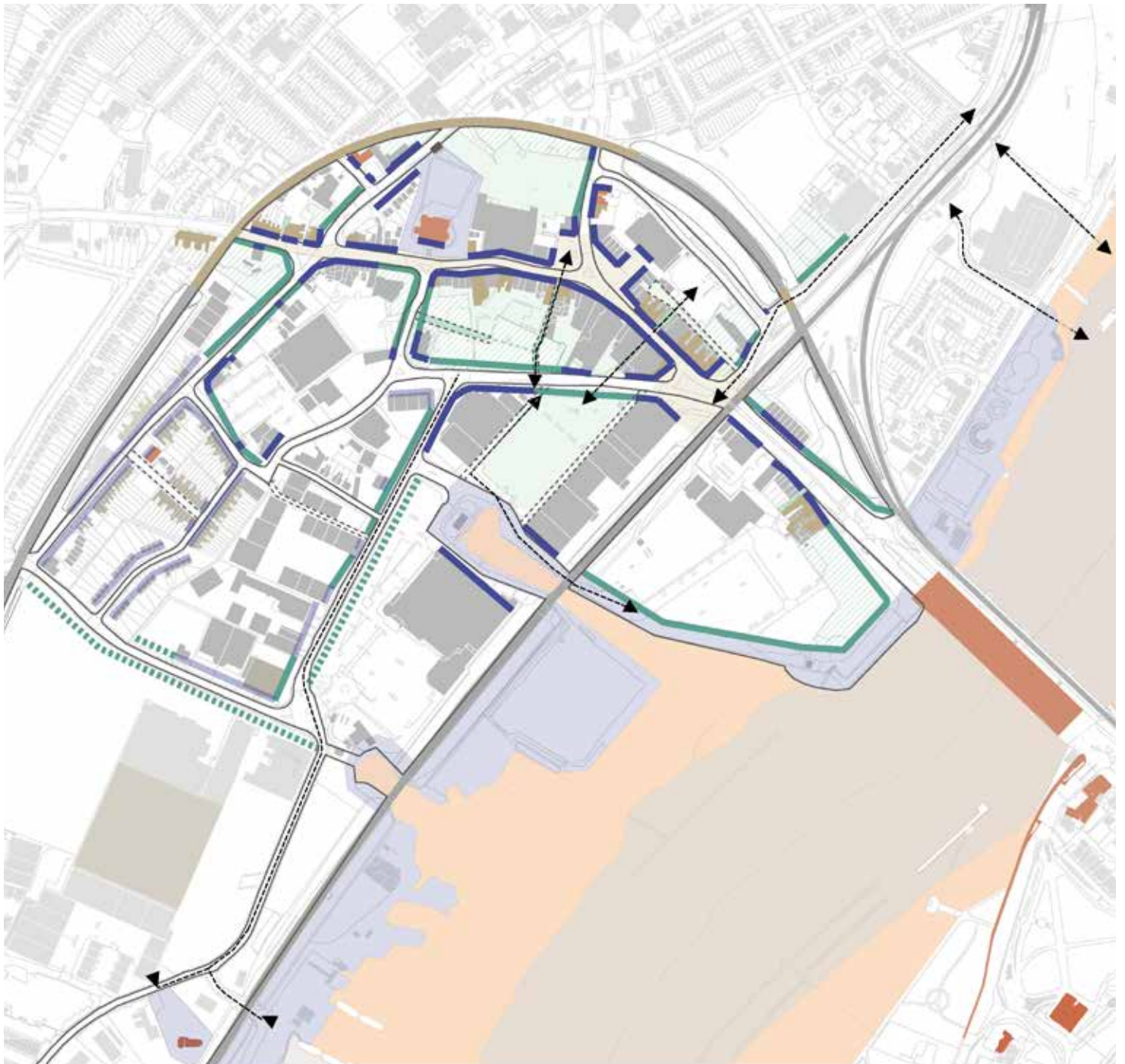
Strood's historical identity as a charming market town with productive docks has been eroded over time. The A2 severs Strood and defines it for many as a place to travel through rather than to. Large footprint industrial buildings and box stores have punched holes in the block structure and give little back to the environment of the streets. Development in Strood has the potential to re-establish its character, by facing on to the streets, restoring the street pattern and environment, and framing spaces with active frontages. Strood should look to its characterful, yet underused assets – St Nicholas Church, Temple Manor, the historic viaduct and the river. By improving their use and setting, Strood can help to instil a sense of place and remind people of its identity.

Key Objectives:

- Enhance the character and role of the historic viaduct arches which traverse the town centre
- Address legibility issues in the town centre by establishing buildings that front key streets
- Improve setting of St Nicholas Church – at front and rear
- Relocate space hungry industry to the south and redevelop sites as mixed-use homes and jobs
- Improve the setting of Temple Manor, and access to this by bike and on foot and by car, with parking
- Celebrate Strood's rail, industry and dock heritage through typologies and architecture
- Ensure Civic Centre site can help transform relationship with river and perceptions of the town – buildings should front the river and should provide quality and comfortable pedestrian links between the town centre and the riverfront
- Identify opportunities for townscape surgery through infill sites and replacement of poor quality buildings



- Town centre boundary
- Listed building
- High townscape value
- Natural asset
- High Street
- Urban blocks
- Secondary streets or lanes
- Existing key frontages for legibility (town centre)
- Proposed key frontages for legibility (town centre)
- Existing key frontages for legibility
- Proposed key frontages for legibility
- Key town centre infill sites important for legibility
- key car park or yard sites for improvement
- Improve character and access of natural resource or green space
- Improve connection



Strategic framework plan indicating principals relating to the legibility and character of the town centre



STROOD'S PUBLIC SPACES

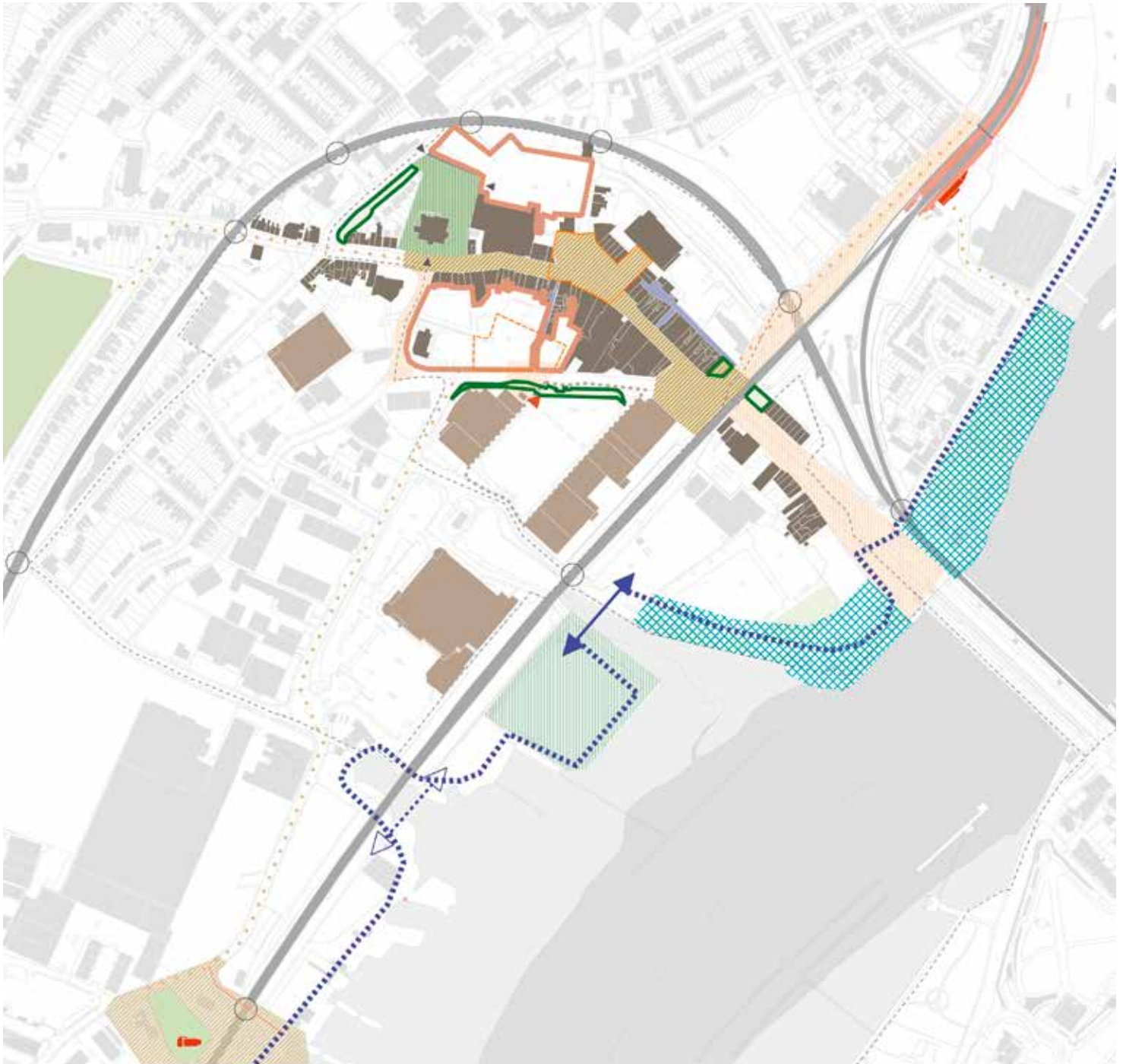
Creating and improving civic and green spaces is vital to establishing a 'heart' for Strood. A space of suitable size and character will be set out to accommodate the market; this can be unlocked through changes to traffic and parking. St Nicholas Church Gardens will be improved and opened up, as the town's main central green space. Existing squares and 'left over space' will be invigorated, through tree planting and public realm works, some of which is already underway. The addition of a swale could provide a new green spine linking the waterfront to the town centre, while also helping to prevent flooding. New and existing green spaces should create new routes along the River Medway, providing opportunity for leisure, for access to nature, and for cycling and walking.

Key Objectives:

- Establish a suitably sized and character public space for the market and public events - this could be by combining existing spaces
- Strengthen the role and function of existing public spaces
- Maintain St Nicholas Church gardens, as the main central green space
- Green the town centre, through open space and tree planting that can establish a connected network of green spaces
- Continue to enhance the laneways in character and quality, and add to these
- Make better use of 'left over space' within the town centre
- Open up access to the creeks and public spaces along the riverfront
- Improve the setting of the Grade I Listed Temple Manor, to the south of the town centre
- Align public realm improvements with the Local Growth Fund improvements as far as possible



- Town centre boundary
- Existing greenspace
- Primary town centre buildings
- Secondary town centre buildings
- Car park public realm improvements
- Greenspace improvements
- Improve green infill sites
- Proposed market square
- Existing market square
- Public realm improvements to waterfront
- Proposed crossing
- Suggested crossing
- Riverfront route
- Increase legibility and wayfinding
- Railway arch access points





STROOD'S MOVEMENT

Improving the environment for people to walk around the town centre is a key priority to make Strood a vibrant place. Regardless of how people travel to town, we all use pavements and public spaces at some point in our trip. At the moment, the unpleasant, car-dominated environment dissuades people from spending time in the town centre. The gyratory system is problematic and different options need to be considered to limit through traffic and enable a change in the character of the High Street. And reducing traffic, by providing alternative access to the southern industrial area via Knights Road, will decrease congestion and improve air quality. Consolidating surface car parking in to a multi-storey car parks will mean tarmac can be reclaimed and transformed for people: space for a market, green space, space to walk, space to meet up and space to stay a while.

A network of routes in the town centre is needed to make it appealing and comfortable for people to walk and cycle. Public spaces in the town centre should be joined up with direct and generous paths. The station should be better linked to the town centre, potentially through a new accessible station entrance on the north side and public realm improvements, and certainly by bringing key sites forward that will change the character of Station Road. Routes in the town should be improved and joined up allowing people to travel with ease: between the retail park and the High Street; to and along the River; across the bridge to Rochester; and beyond.

Pedestrian and cycle movement

Key Objectives:

- Establish a more comfortable pedestrian and cycling environment throughout the town centre
- Improve legibility between the train station and the High Street
- Create stronger links between the Retail Park and the High Street
- Maintain pedestrian links between Strood and Rochester
- Improve pedestrian links between the town centre and the riverfront
- Improve pedestrian links along the riverfront
- Improve cycling and walking links out to the wider countryside and along the Medway riverside

Proposals to help deliver this:

- Use infill sites in key locations between the train station and High Street to provide commercial space and front the street – improving legibility
- Remove poor quality buildings between the High Street and Commercial Road – ensure these front both streets and create a new pedestrian laneway between the two.
- Ensure pedestrian link between High Street and river is retained/enhanced through Civic Centre site
- Establish a quality wayfinding system around the town centre



- Pedestrian routes
- Areas of poor environment
- ↔ Formal pedestrian crossing
- - - - - Informal pedestrian crossing
- Bus stops
- ← Wider pedestrian connection

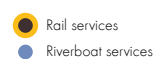
Public Transport

Key Objectives:

- Maximise the use of trains between the Medway towns, to better integrate them - services could operate as 'tube' style stops, with people hopping between town centres.
- Explore potential for river travel either through a river bus or taxi. This could make use of the piers in place Strood and Chatham.
- Explore opportunity for a public transport link to the universities at the Historic Dockyard through the Medway City Estate – a 10 minute route
- Explore potential for a bus rapid transit through the Medway towns and connecting to the Hoo Peninsula.

Proposals to help deliver this:

- Accessible station entrance on the north side.
- Reconfigure bus routes to run along the High Street, better connect to the station and incorporate rapid transit links to the Hoo Peninsula and other Medway Towns.
- Upgrade Strood Pier to accommodate river bus taxi services and improve interchange with the station.



Vehicular movement

Key Objectives:

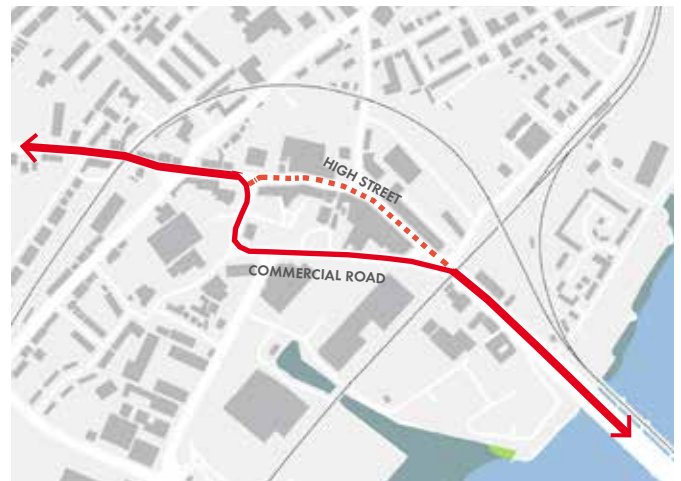
- Address the issue of traffic dominating the town centre by:
- Limiting the amount of through traffic going through the town centre
- Limiting the number of commercial vehicles circulating in the central core
- Change character of streets to remove gyratory traffic
- Support all shops in the town centre through flexible public car parking

Proposals to help deliver this:

- Explore opportunities to change the gyratory system. options could include two way movement on Commercial Road and limited access to the High Street. These and other options are to be subject to further feasibility testing and transport modeling that will accompany the Local Plan.
- Establish frontage to Commercial Road, so that it reads as an urban street
- The feasibility of a new route between Commercial Road and Gun Lane will also be explored.



The existing gyratory system



The gyratory removed - the A2 could become two way along Commercial Road and the High Street becomes a local access road.



Existing traffic congestion along Strood High Street, complex junctions and a large mass of surface car parking make for a poor pedestrian environment.



STROOD'S COMMERCIAL HEART

Strood's historic role as a productive engine will be embraced, reinterpreted and reasserted. Building on the success of Strood's innovation centre, workspaces will be created for small businesses. New buildings, as well as retrofitted high street vacancies and the refurbished arches will provide modern, affordable offices and studios. Some of this space could be designed as workspace for graduates, attracting students from Chatham Maritime to launch their careers in Strood. With more people working in the centre – populating public spaces, supporting shops, and using local services – the town will be reinvigorated. Strood's wealth of space should be seen as an opportunity to test things - to try new business models and typologies, to test a new business idea, and to innovate.

Jobs and Industry

Key Objectives:

- Exploit the fact there is space to 'test things' – industry, innovation, new models and typologies
- Provide small workspace for graduates from the universities at Chatham Maritime
- Provide general small workspace – modern but affordable – as has been very popular at the Innovation Centre by the riverfront
- Improve the relationship between industry and residential uses, by separating inappropriate industry uses from homes, and introducing new, compatible work spaces in their place

Proposals to help deliver this:

- Review scope of railway arches for workspace, leisure and retail – microbrewery as example
- Review possibilities for 1950s buildings on High Street to be adapted as affordable workspace – ground and upper floors
- Use small infill sites for new commercial affordable space

Retail

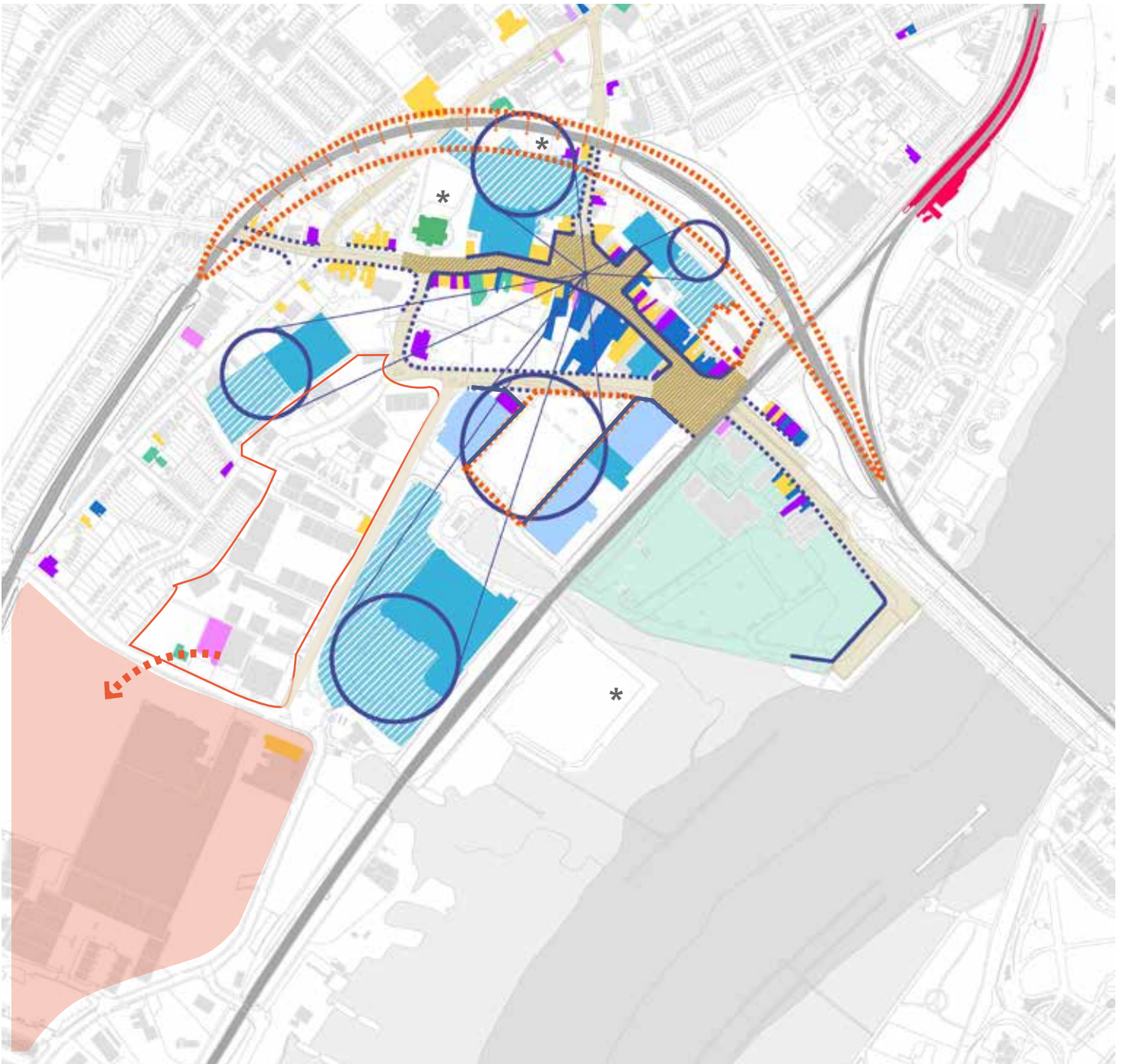
Key Objectives:

- Capture more linked trips from visits to the retail park and supermarkets
- Support the economically healthy retail park model, but improve typology in the long run
- Diversification of uses, incorporating further community uses, services, leisure and work space
- Accommodate the market in a sustainable, long-term location

Proposals to help deliver this:

- Improve pedestrian connections between the High Street and the retail park
- Short term at retail park – create mezzanines to expand uses
- Long-term at retail park – redevelop as mixed-use, so residents can support shops and services
- Explore opportunities in railway arches to deliver commercial and leisure space
- Provide more flexible public car parking that is not exclusively linked to retail park

- Town centre boundary
- Capture linked trips from retail park
- Review for commercial and leisure intensification
- key waterfront site
- Primary commercial street
- Secondary streets
- Retail use
- Big Box retail
- Supermarket
- Supermarket car park
- Community use
- Leisure use
- service use
- Food and beverage
- Active Frontage Type 1 : (predominantly Retail / F&B)
- ... Active Frontage Type 2: (predominantly Commercial / employment and residential front doors)
- * Activate space through pavilion / small cafe





TOWN CENTRE LIVING IN STROOD

Strood will provide high quality new homes of different sizes, types and styles to meet the varied needs of local people. This could include assisted living homes which give older people support to live independently for longer, student housing, and homes for young families. New homes should be built at a higher density, making the best use of the well-connected location, but also at a height that does not detract from the town's character or key views. A pier for houseboats should be considered, providing a different way for people to live in and visit the town.

Strood's new town centre neighbourhoods will be designed for town centre living, putting homes alongside shops, workspace and community uses. New ground floor spaces will be designed flexibly to accommodate the changing needs of the town: health and leisure, entertainment, education, arts, business space or shops. The town centre will continue to be the place that people come to do their grocery shopping, but it will attract people to stay a while longer: to pop to the market, to eat at a restaurant, to visit the waterfront or to stop in at the bank. Improved pedestrian connections between the High Street and the Retail Park will help both to thrive. And in the long run, the supermarkets could become further integrated into the town centre, incorporating homes and other uses onto their sites and adding mezzanines or new buildings to create 'streets'.

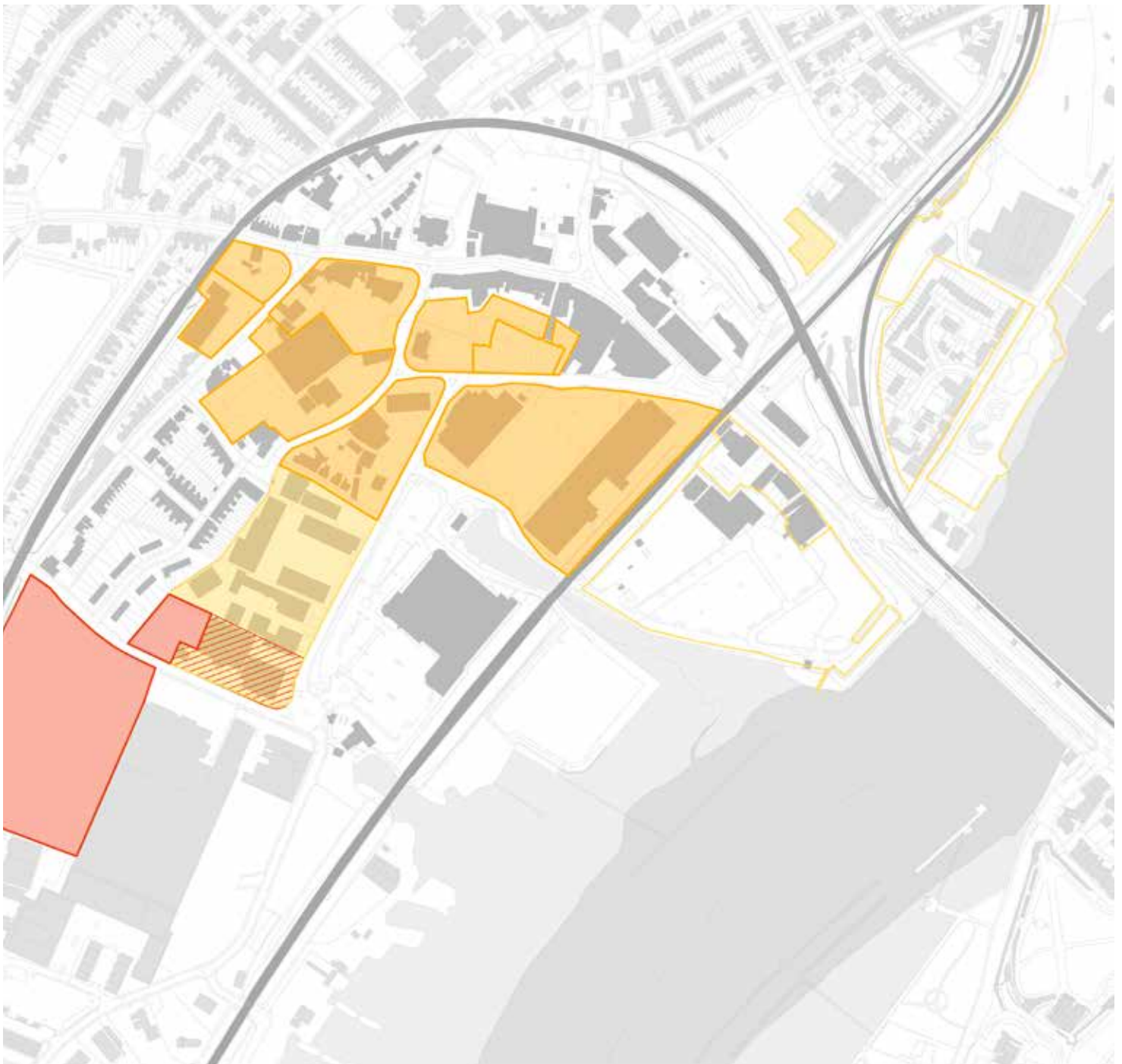
Housing

Key Objectives:

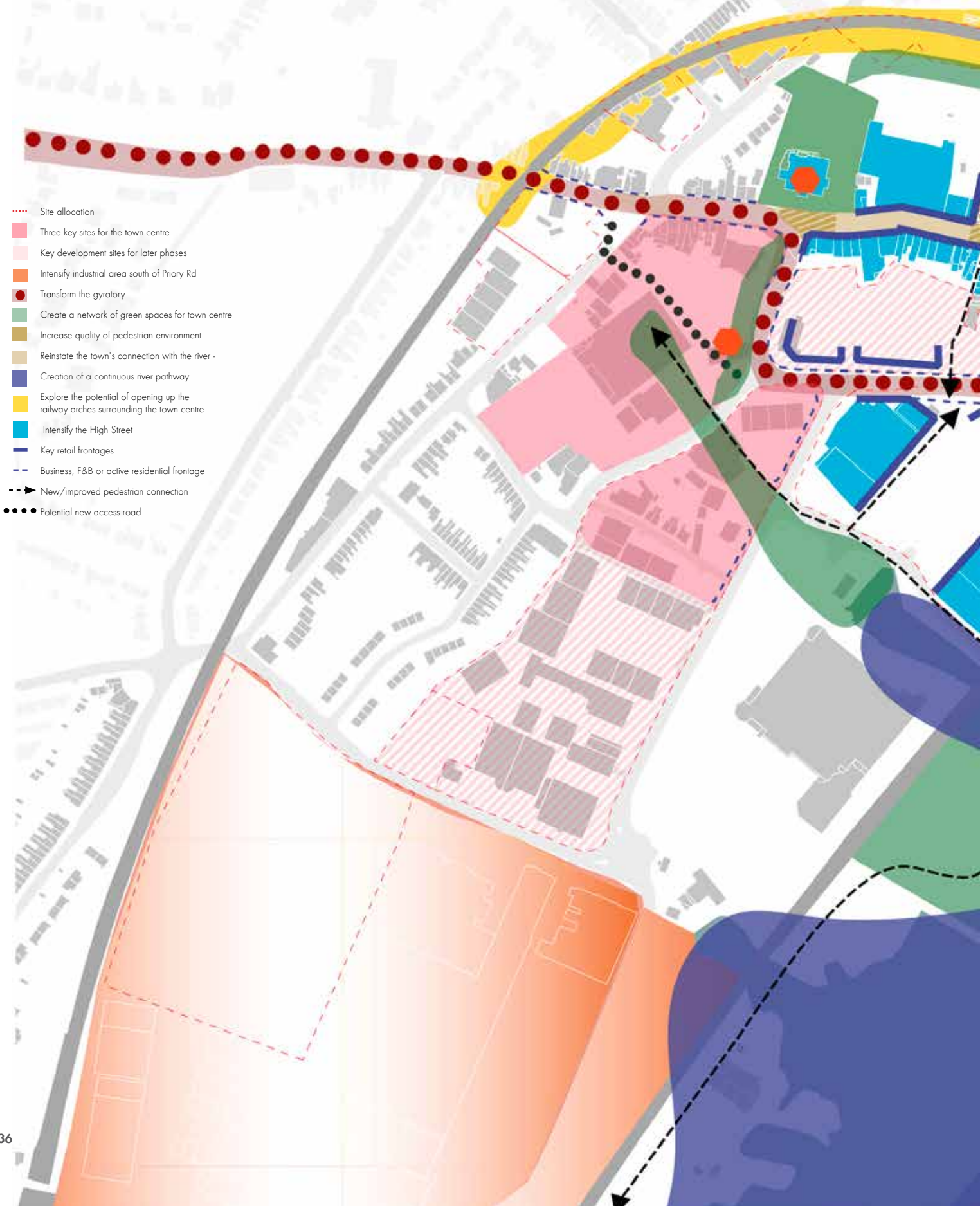
- Explore opportunities for providing student housing for Universities at Medway campus
- Provide homes for young families – 2 bedroom with some outdoor space
- Provide quality homes for older people – assisted living models
- Explore opportunities for houseboat living
- Provide higher density homes as part of mixed-use schemes



- Mixed use - residential with commercial / retail / F&B / leisure uses
- Predominantly residential
- Predominantly Industrial



SPATIAL FRAMEWORK



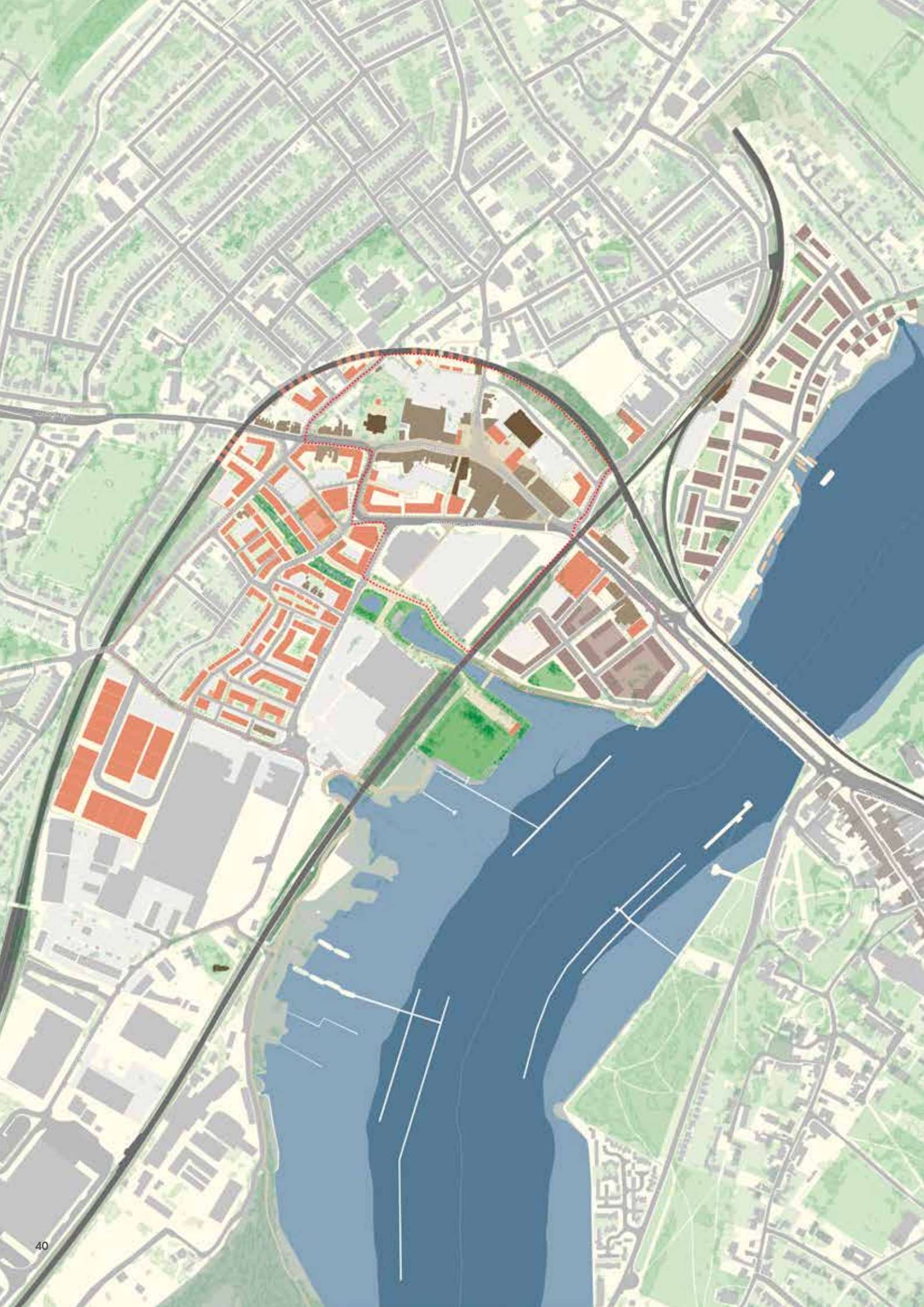
- Site allocation
- Three key sites for the town centre
- Key development sites for later phases
- Intensify industrial area south of Priory Rd
- Transform the gyratory
- Create a network of green spaces for town centre
- Increase quality of pedestrian environment
- Reinststate the town's connection with the river
- Creation of a continuous river pathway
- Explore the potential of opening up the railway arches surrounding the town centre
- Intensify the High Street
- Key retail frontages
- Business, F&B or active residential frontage
- ▶ New/improved pedestrian connection
- Potential new access road







CHAPTER 4
ILLUSTRATIVE MASTERPLAN



c.800 HOMES

c.22,000 SQM
COMMERCIAL SPACE

c.14,600 SQM
LIGHT INDUSTRY

c.1,400 SQM
FOOD STORE

c.3,800 SQM
COMMUNITY/HEALTH

c200 PUBLIC
PARKING SPACES

4.1 MASTERPLAN OVERVIEW

The overarching masterplan drawing sets out proposals identified for Strood Town Centre in the short term (0-5 years) and medium term (5-12 years). Longer term opportunities for the town centre are identified in the phasing plans but not included in the illustrative masterplan.

The masterplan represents one example of how sites in and around the town centre might come forward in a way that helps to meet the thematic objectives identified for Strood. It is not intended to be a prescriptive plan for how development would come forward.

The masterplan does, however, demonstrate the potential for land uses to be rationalised within the town centre; the general capacity in the town to accommodate new residential and commercial space; and the likely infrastructure and public realm investment that would be required to deliver these changes successfully.












The following section provides an overview of the illustrative masterplan, setting out:

- The movement framework and specific projects
- A public realm and green space framework
- Suggested ground floor and upper floor uses
- Suggested building heights
- Resulting density levels across the identified opportunity sites
- A framework for providing a range of building typologies and examples of these

Key

- EXISTING HIGH STREET BUILDINGS
- BUILDINGS OF TOWNSCAPE MERIT
- STROOD RIVERSIDE SPD
- PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Key

-  PRIMARY ROAD A2
-  SECONDARY VEHICULAR ROUTE
-  TERTIARY VEHICULAR ROUTE
-  GYRATORY IMPROVEMENTS
-  PRIMARILY SERVICE ACCESS
-  SHARED SURFACE / RESTRICTED TRAFFIC
-  RESIDENTIAL STREET
-  KEY PEDESTRIAN ROUTE
-  RIVERSIDE PATH
-  CAR PARK ENTRANCES
-  POSSIBLE CAR PARK ENTRANCES



4.2 ROUTES AND MOVEMENT

Reworking of gyratory and changes to vehicular movement hierarchy

The A2 runs through the heart of Strood Town Centre in a one-way gyratory arrangement, which has resulted in a car-dominated environment with a high volume of through-traffic and heavy vehicles on constrained historic streets through the centre. To address this one option is that the gyratory could be reconfigured by making Commercial Road and the High Street into two-way streets. A2 through-traffic could use Commercial Road between St Nicholas Church and Station Road.

The High Street could be downgraded to carry local traffic and buses, which would allow streetscape improvements to give greater priority to pedestrians and public transport, encouraging sustainable travel and improving safety and air quality issues in the centre. This would also enable parts of the High Street and North Street to be closed for special events like market days.

The transport network in Strood has been a long-standing and complex concern. The Local Growth Fund programme has invested in some public realm and highway improvements. Further evidence is to be provided by the Strategic Transport Assessment informing the Local Plan. In taking forward development plans for Strood the Council will explore the option of reworking the gyratory to achieve the ambitions set for an attractive and successful town.

REINSTATEMENT OF HISTORIC ROUTE, FOR PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS

LOCAL TRAFFIC & BUSES ONLY ON HIGH STREET AND SOUTHERN END OF NORTH STREET. ROADS CLOSED TO TRAFFIC ON MARKET DAY

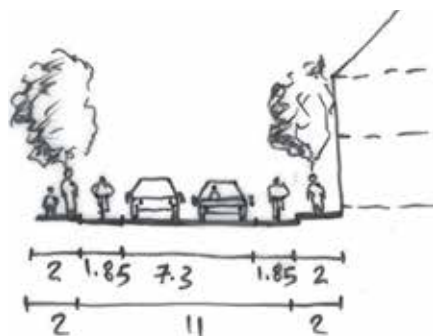
JUNCTION IMPROVEMENTS TO SUPPORT ROAD CHANGES

MULTI-STOREY CAR PARK

POTENTIAL GYRATORY IMPROVEMENTS

ESTABLISHMENT OF FINE GRAIN STREET NETWORK TO SUPPORT WORKSPACE AND HOMES

NEW CONNECTION TO M2 FROM KNIGHT ROAD



A sketch showing the proposed street section and lane widths (in metres) if the A2 were to be two way along Commercial Road.



Above, the existing High Street - Commercial Road intersection, with the island highlighted in orange. Below, a sketch of the possible layout of the intersection if the gyratory were to be removed. By removing the island space is freed up to extend pavements in front of the church, improving its setting. Top image © Google



Indicative car parking layout

CURRENT PUBLIC CAR PARKING:
 TEMPLE STREET: 74 SPACES
 COMMERCIAL ROAD: 101 SPACES
 TOTAL: 175 SPACES

PROPOSED PUBLIC CAR PARKING:
 MSP ADJACENT TO CIVIC CENTRE: APROX 200 SPACES

Key

- PRIVATE / RESIDENTIAL CAR PARK
- PUBLIC CAR PARK
- SUPERMARKET CAR PARK
- EXISTING SUPERMARKET CAR PARK
- ⋯ POTENTIAL SITE FOR MULTI-STOREY CAR PARK
- OTHER



Orford Road was dominated by vehicular traffic with a poor urban environment and narrow footways, frequently blocked by parked coaches, cars, and street clutter. The new development introduced public realm improvements, with the road narrowed to allow only for local buses with restrictions for vehicles and motorcycles from 10am to 10pm.

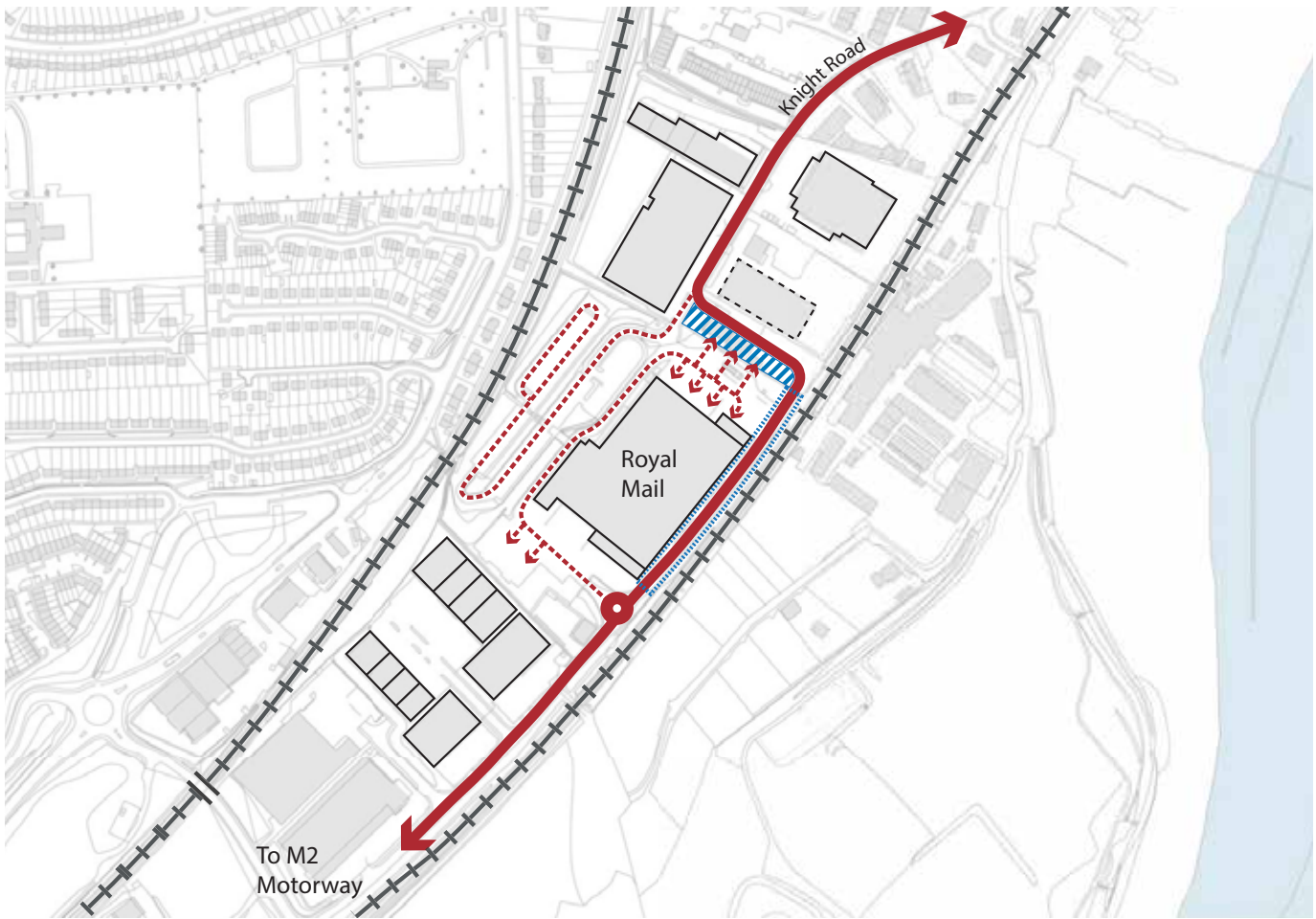
Consolidated public car parking in multi-storey




Much of Strood's public parking is provided in large surface car parks. There is the opportunity to consolidate this in shared multi-storey car parks for general town centre use. Such car parks should be constructed in one or two key locations to allow sites with large surface car parks to be freed up for redevelopment with a denser more urban grain. Furthermore, new multi-storey car parks could incorporate electric vehicle charging points, encouraging the use of low or zero emission vehicles.

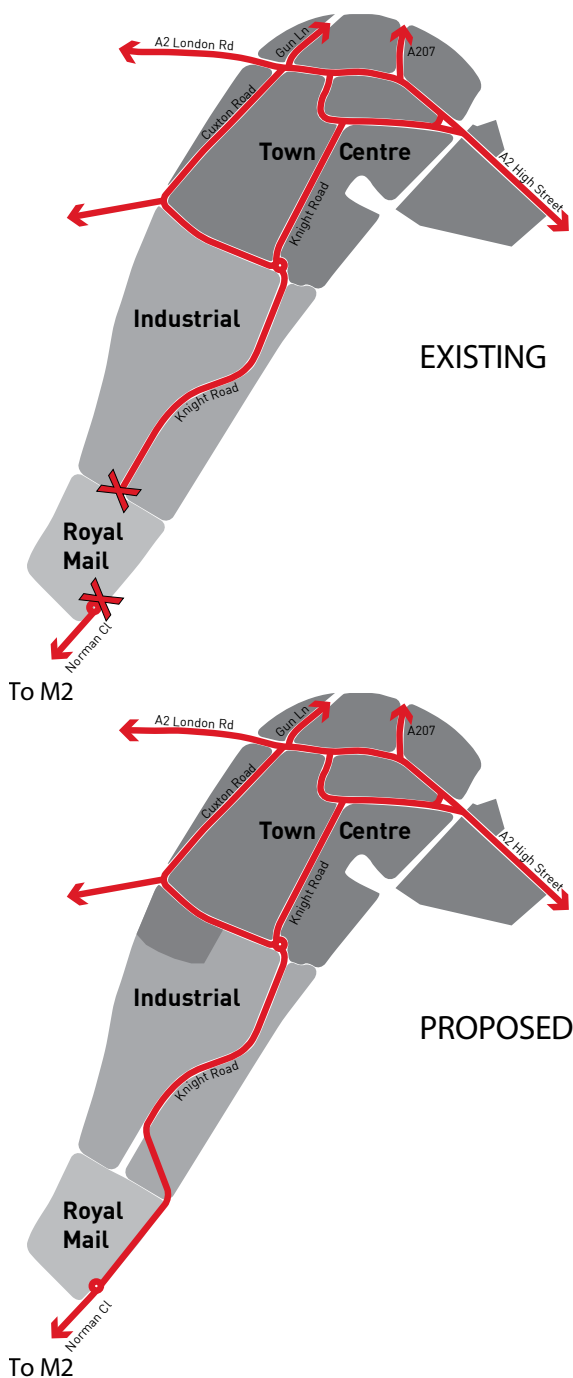
The exact location is yet to be finalised and will be informed through further studies (Medway Parking Study) and negotiation with landowners. The height for this has been determined to reprovide the parking spaces in the two public town centre surface car parks, while aligning to heights of the adjacent railway viaduct and proposed heights in the Strood Waterfront Masterplan SPD. In the longer run, if more capacity is needed, the Temple Fields site area is suggested as a location for a second multi-storey car park, which would be anticipated to come forward with the redevelopment of that site and could serve a food store as well as providing town centre parking.

On street and residential car parking

The proposed sites for redevelopment will also have implications for general parking capacity (outside of car parks). Locations for the reprovision of parking have been considered (shown in purple) to ensure the proposals are feasible, however parking provision would need to be determined on a site by site basis.



-  Depot land required
-  Potential additional land for Depot
-  Vehicular Access



Connection of Knights Road south to M2

Another opportunity to explore further is the potential to connect the existing industrial areas south of Strood town centre more directly to the M2 motorway, removing the need for heavy industrial traffic to use the A2 through the centre and avoiding constraints like the many railway arches that surround Strood. This could be achieved by extending Norman Close through the Royal Mail depot and connecting it to Knights Road. However this would likely require rearrangement of lorry access and parking arrangements at the depot and potentially restricting through traffic between Knights Road and Priory Road to avoid attracting general traffic between the A2 and M2.



Existing town centre grain



Proposed town centre grain - a series of smaller and more legible blocks making the town centre more permeable and more pedestrian friendly.

Pedestrian and cycle networks

Walking routes into and through the town centre generally follow the existing streets, but footways, particularly on the historic routes, are narrow in many places and constrained with extensive guard rail to separate pedestrians from heavy traffic. Recent improvements to the Market Square, key junctions and a new rail station building are starting to address some of these local issues, but the pedestrian environment generally across the town centre is in need of improvement with widened footways, new and enhanced crossings and better public spaces.

Formal cycle infrastructure within the town centre is limited. National Cycle Route 1 is the primary cycle route in the area. A signed route runs from NCN1 at the northern end of Rochester Bridge around the civic centre site and connects into the retail area to the south of the town centre, although this is largely on-road with some stretches on shared footways. This route should be enhanced and extended wherever development can facilitate, with additional cycle parking provided at key destinations like the station.

Improved pedestrian links between centre and waterfront, town centre and rail station

In addition to enhancing the environment along the High Street and Commercial Road, it is proposed the walking links from the town centre to the Station (along Station Road and Canal Road) are improved with new and improved crossings, wider pavements, enhanced lighting and wayfinding signage. Key development sites along these routes should also provide more active frontage to improve legibility and activity.

A waterfront path should be created by connecting key pieces of existing pathway with new foot/cycle bridges and links. Routes back into the town centre, particular along Jane's Creek and through the retail park, should be enhanced. Again with improved crossings, wider pavements, enhanced lighting, wayfinding signage and active frontage.

Public transport network – buses, trains, river taxis

Strood has excellent connectivity to the road and rail network of the South East. The A2 / M2 provides direct connections to London and Dover, and Strood Station on the North Kent Line and at the terminus of the Medway Valley Line provides High Speed connections via Gravesend and Ebbsfleet to London St Pancras and direct connections northwest to London Bridge, London Victoria and London Blackfriars, southeast to Faversham, Ramsgate and Dover, and south to Maidstone.

15 bus services run throughout Strood town centre, accessible from 8 bus stops. All services pass Rochester Bridge via High Street connecting Strood town centre to north (Grain, High Halstow, and Cliffe), west (Higham, Gravesend, Earl Estate, Park Fields and Bluewater), and southwest (Cuxton and Halling).

Key proposals are to enhance connections to and accessibility of Strood Station, which could include opening a new accessible station entrance on Station Road (with lifts on the north side connecting to an extended footbridge over the platforms). Routing bus services along the High Street (with general through-traffic on Commercial Road) to draw more activity into the centre. And rebuilding Strood Pier to accommodate new riverboat services linking the Medway Centres. Enhanced and direct walking links between the pier and the station would encourage interchange between rail and river services.

Key

- RIVERSIDE ROUTE
- TOWN CENTRE ROUTES
- PAVILIONS TO ACTIVATE PUBLIC REALM
- STATION - TOWN CENTRE ROUTE



- IMPROVED ARCHES SETTING TO SUPPORT BUSINESSES
- IMPROVED CHURCHYARD WITH SEATING AND KIOSK
- COMBINED SQUARE FOR WEEKLY MARKET AND SPECIAL EVENTS
- BETTER LINK FROM HIGH STREET TO STATION
- IMPROVED PUBLIC SPACE
- SWALE LINEAR PARK
- BETTER PEDESTRIAN ROUTE FROM HIGH STREET TO RIVER
- PUBLIC RIVERFRONT GREEN SPACES
- A NEW LARGE RIVERFRONT PUBLIC SPACE WITH NATURAL AND WILD PLANTING
- CONTINUOUS RIVER PATH, LINKING TO TEMPLE MANOR AND ON TO CUXTON
- IMPROVED SETTING TO TEMPLE MANOR

4.3 PUBLIC REALM AND GREEN SPACE

The illustrative masterplan establishes a network of green spaces that raise the profile of St Nicholas Church Gardens as the primary green space in the town and connect to the River Medway. A series of new riverfront spaces are proposed and a new river path to the south and north, taking in the Grade I Listed Temple Manor en route.

A swale linear park is proposed, aligning with Jane's Creek, to bring green space into the centre and to new residential neighbourhoods; and to provide flood mitigation measures to an area which is predominantly flood zone 3.

Pedestrian routes between the High Street and the rail station are improved, with wider pathways on the south side of Station Road. Better connections are also made between the car parks and the High Street and the riverfront and High Street.

A central public space and market place is proposed, bringing together the smaller, underused existing spaces.

The masterplan reflects the Strood Waterfront public realm proposals for the area between the train station and the River Medway and will continue to explore connections to the station over time.



Establishing a swale linear park

A swale linear park could extend into Strood town centre, aligning with Jane's Creek, bringing much needed natural green space into the centre and potentially providing valuable mitigation against flood risk.

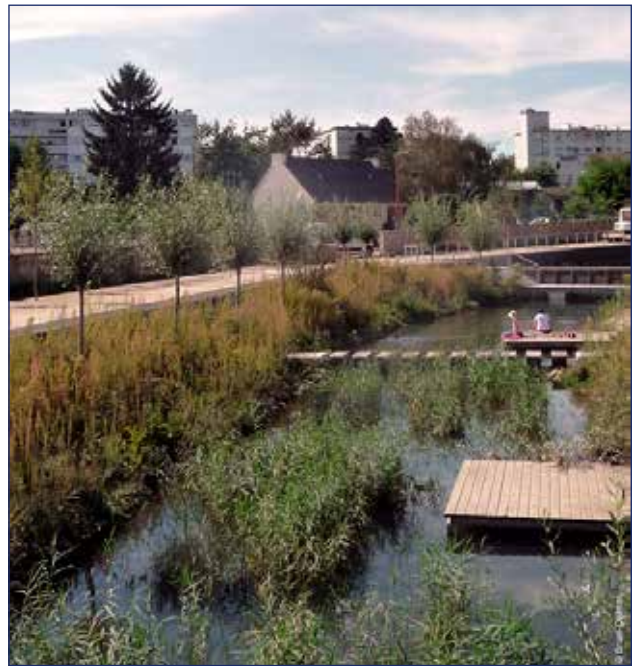
The linear park would be a visual reminder of Strood's riverside location and would provide an attractive setting for a new residential neighbourhood.

The illustrative masterplan includes a swale running parallel to a residential street, with homes on one side fronting the street, and homes on the other side fronting the linear park, taking advantage of the opportunity for creating a semi-private environment.

The approach has been used successfully elsewhere, including Barking Riverside on the north banks of the Thames and in Upton in Northampton. A similar approach is proposed for Lincolnshire Lakes, close to Scunthorpe, albeit in a more suburban location.



Proposed swale park at Lincolnshire Lakes



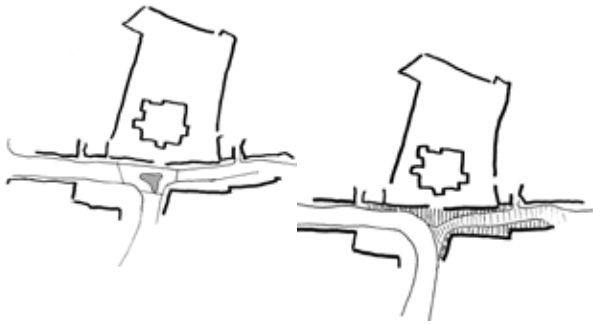
Gohards Brook in Nantes © Landezine



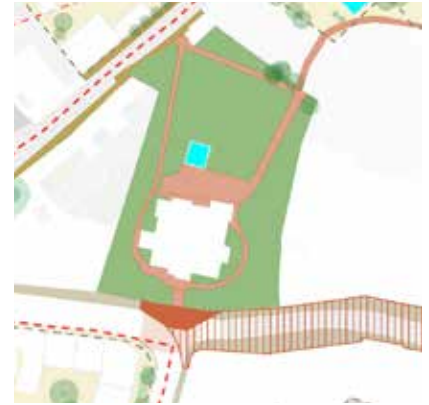
© Stilwell Partnership
Swale parks at Barking Riverside and in Northampton



© The Land Trust



The existing central pedestrian island could be shifted to the north side of the road, encouraging cars to continue on the A2 and providing more public space in front of St Nicholas Church.



Improving the setting of St Nicholas Church

St Nicholas Church is a significant townscape landmark in Strood town centre and the churchyard is the most sizeable green space within the centre.

The setting of the Church on the High Street is currently compromised by signage, clutter and the speed of the A2. The proposed reworking on the gyratory will enable the existing pedestrian crossing to be shifted to the north side of the road to give breathing space for the church and improve the public realm. This approach has been successfully delivered at Chingford Lane in Walthamstow.

The churchyard is already well used, with picnics and other events being held in the space. In line with the church's ambitions, this role could be expanded with the addition of a kiosk cafe and additional seating, as has been introduced at St John's Church in Hackney, London.



St Nicholas Church street and churchyard setting



Chingford Lane in Walthamstow, where a road entrance has been narrowed to slow traffic and create public space
Top image © Google



St John's Church in Hackney has introduced a kiosk and a market stall, transforming its grounds into an active public space.



Improving the High Street

At the moment Strood High Street is heavily trafficked, cluttered and of poor quality, making it unappealing to spend time there and limiting the commercial potential of the shops. A key step in reviving the town centre is a shift from being 'a place to go through', to becoming 'a place to go to'.

Initial improvements are already being made through the Local Growth Fund; and the masterplan aligns with these where possible, while also suggesting further improvements in the longer term.

The masterplan proposes that the gyratory system be removed, shifting A2 traffic to Commercial Road and designating the High Street for local traffic. This could be achieved through traffic calming measures which disincentivise drivers from using this route, for example: a lower speed limit, a weight limit, narrowing the entrances, planting and street furniture, different/shared surfacing and reallocating space from road to pavements or cycle lanes. In this way, while access is maintained, the environment will be improved for people on foot and drivers will be encouraged to follow the A2 along Commercial Road.



Chingford Lane in Walthamstow, where the road entrance has been narrowed, encouraging traffic to continue ahead or take the turning very slowly.
Top image © Google



Orford Road was dominated by vehicular traffic with a poor urban environment and narrow footways, frequently blocked by parked coaches, cars, and street clutter. The new development introduced public realm improvements creating an environment for people rather than cars.



Shopfront improvements and activating the public realm

Strood High Street contains many buildings of historic merit and architectural quality, however many of these are in a state of disrepair with original features lost or covered up through modern store additions and insensitive signage.

A shopfront improvement programme could help unify the character of the High Street and restore the original architectural features and storefronts. A coherent approach to shopfront design should be taken along the High Street, but with scope for individual elements to provide coherent frontage that is not homogenous. Wherever possible, existing shopfronts and features should be retained and restored to enhance and protect the character of the High Street.

Many shopfronts along the High Street have been left as blank inactive facades which contribute little to the public realm. Where possible facades should address the High Street and town square, providing windows into the unit, promoting interaction and natural surveillance along the street.



St James Street in Walthamstow - a heritage led regeneration scheme to preserve and enhance shopfronts and historic buildings along the street, along with public realm improvements.

Top image © Google



Blank shopfronts along Strood High Street



Improving pedestrian links

The illustrative masterplan includes improvements to existing routes and suggests new pedestrian links to make walking around the town centre a pleasant experience.

Improvements have already been made to the route through the Commercial Street car park and Tolgate Lane, with new surfacing, planting and street furniture. The illustrative masterplan suggests where an additional connection could be made between Commercial Road and the High Street, which could help enhance the success of the retail park and better knit it into the town centre. This route could be extended by raising the profile of the pathway through Ramos Cafe and Restaurant, to Newark Yard through signage and improving the environment of both.

In the other direction, the masterplan proposes the Tolgate Lane improvements be extended through the retail park, joining with the newly created swale and green spine and connecting to the River Medway.

Resurfacing, and improving street furniture, planting and lighting will also improve the path between the viaduct and the bridge, making it easier and more appealing for people to walk to and from the waterfront development and beyond.

The redevelopment of the Tesco area could unlock permeability to the south west of the town centre. In addition to new roads, a new pedestrian path would bisect the block providing a route from Commercial Street and the High Street to the heart of a new residential neighbourhood. This would reestablish a historic route for Strood.



Local Growth Fund improvements to Tolgate Lane



Maps from 1960 (left) and before show a historical route which in 1990 (right) has been removed, degrading the block structure and making this area of the town less permeable. © Google Earth



Creating a central town square

Strood High Street currently has two small public spaces, either side of the southern end of North Street. These are not well used as they are not enclosed by active frontage and do not have space to accommodate events or activities. The illustrative masterplan includes proposals to create a shared surface area that brings together these two spaces as one, larger space, that could accommodate the weekly market and events and activities such as hosting the town Christmas tree.

Replacement buildings or new, light pavilions are proposed, to provide active frontage and enclosure to the spaces. One day a week, this short section of the High Street could be closed to traffic (with all parking access retained from North Street) to host the market. The railings would be removed to create a cohesive, larger space and surfacing and materials would enable the space to be read as one. This would establish a space that could be used for a town Christmas tree or for other events.



The existing separate spaces on the High Street



Kingston town centre has an area of shared surface which could accommodate market stalls on certain days



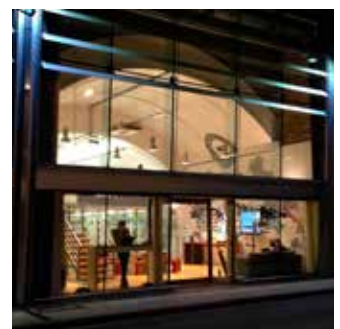
Intensifying the use of the arches and improving their setting

Strood's viaducts and rail arches are an integral part of the town's character and heritage. The arches are currently used by light industry businesses that contribute to Strood's economy. However, as the role of town centres shifts and new space is made for industry to the south, the arches could be more intensively used, with the 10.50 from Victoria micro-brewery serving as a strong precedent.

The Bankside and Bermondsey areas of south London are criss-crossed by viaducts serving the same rail routes as those in Rochester. In recent years, these have been refurbished and converted to both food and drink uses and to accommodate a growing number of contemporary work spaces. These spaces could take their lead from the success of the Innovation Centre on the riverfront, and the popular micro-brewery already in place.

This greater intensity of use will bring with it an improvement to the physical environment surrounding the arches and can contribute to the network of open spaces proposed for Strood town centre.

The masterplan also identifies areas where new links should be made through the viaducts, such as connecting Edward Street to St Nicholas Churchyard.



Workspace and leisure space in Bankside, London



10.50 from Victoria micro-brewery
© Dover Kent Archives



Malby Street Market: railway arches provide a characterful setting for the market, while also continuing to host light industrial uses.



Improving the link to Strood Station

Whilst Strood's viaducts create a distinctive character for the town centre, they do divide portions of the town centre and create convoluted pedestrian links. This is the case on Station Road where narrow pavements, the lack of visual connection and the lack of character, makes the route between the station and the town centre illegible.

The link along Station Road could be improved through reinstating the historic pavement on the south side of the street. A better station entrance is also proposed on Station Road, either through extension of the pedestrian bridge to provide a lift entrance on the north side; or through improvements to the underpass through lighting and public realm works and ticket machines on Station Road. This, coupled with new homes at the National Tyres site and new workspace at The Car Shop site and clear signage would improve the visual connections, the sense of place, and the pedestrian environment between the station and the town centre. These light industry businesses can be relocated further south within the town.



Station R. pattern marked was placed in position by women between 1910 and 1915



Historic photos show that Station Road previously had a comfortable pavement beyond the arches. This could be reinstated.

Top image © Medway Council Archive
Bottom image © Google



This scheme in Walthamstow has improved a connection beneath a rail arch and created a Sustainable Urban Drainage scheme at the same time. This has created better links, a nice environment and would help mitigate against flood. Left image © Google



Creating a new riverside path

The River Medway is an underused asset for Strood town centre, with untapped potential for Strood to improve movement and its recreation offer. The masterplan proposes that a new riverside path could be created along the river Medway. This intervention has the potential to encourage people to cycle and walk more, both as a means of transportation as well as for recreation and exercise. In addition, with the implementation of strong wayfinding and branding, a riverside path could also help to make Medway a destination, attracting residents and tourists to visit attractions as part of a journey, as has been successful in the case of the West Atlantic Way in Ireland.

As a first phase the masterplan proposes that a riverside path be created from Strood town centre to Temple Manor, via new green spaces at the Civic Centre Site and adjacent to Jane's Creek. This path would provide a new way to access and experience Temple Manor, while also connecting the Temple Marsh residential development to the town centre.



The Wild Atlantic Way route runs along Ireland's west coastline, spanning nine counties. High quality wayfinding and public realm interventions, alongside online branding of natural assets have helped make the project a success in attracting tourists to the area.



Improving the setting of Temple Manor

Built in the 13th century by the Knights Templar, Grade I listed Temple Manor is a significant heritage asset for Strood.

Historic photos reveal a serene rural setting, substantial gardens and a pond. Historic mapping shows significant degradation of the plot size of Temple Manor, leaving it now surrounded by an industrial estate. This has left little space from which to appreciate the building. In addition, there is little in terms of wayfinding or visual links on the approach to Temple Manor.

The masterplan includes proposals to improve the setting of Temple Manor, with a riverfront walk to reach the building and a new entrance, limited parking and a kiosk afforded by regaining the small industrial site to the north of the building. This would help re-establish Temple Manor's relationship with the River Medway and shift perceptions of this significant heritage asset.

This intervention would require heritage or growth funding and should be supported by a co-ordinated bid.



Temple Manor's historic setting



Aerial photograph of Temple Manor, 2017 © Google Earth



The current approach to Temple Manor



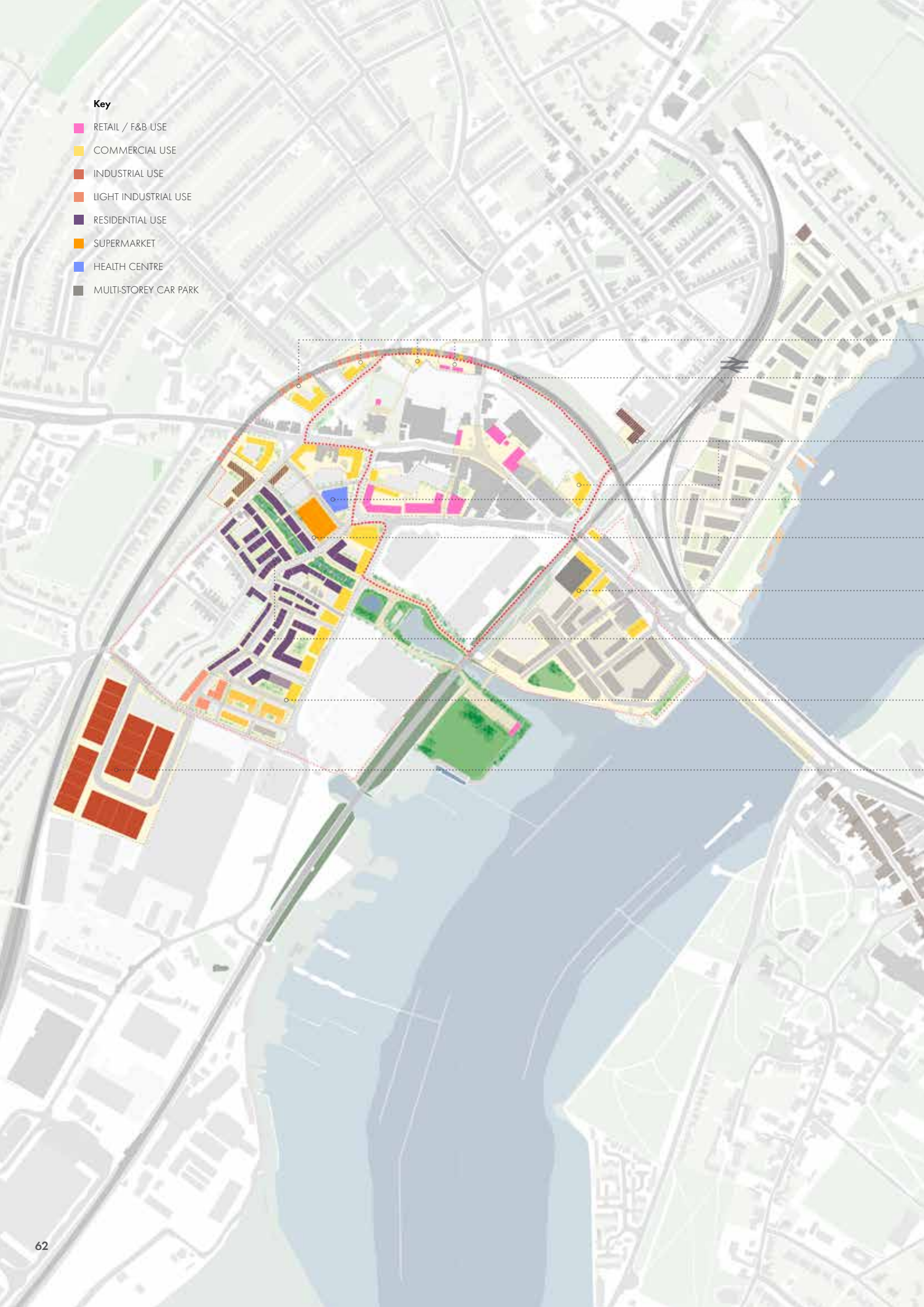
Temple Manor c1930/40 © Medway Council Archive



Temple Manor today © Clem Rutter

Key

- RETAIL / F&B USE
- COMMERCIAL USE
- INDUSTRIAL USE
- LIGHT INDUSTRIAL USE
- RESIDENTIAL USE
- SUPERMARKET
- HEALTH CENTRE
- MULTI-STOREY CAR PARK





MORE ACTIVE USE OF RAIL ARCHES



TOWN CENTRE BOUNDARY



WORKSPACE BETWEEN STATION AND TOWN CENTRE TO STRENGTHEN LINK



HEALTHY LIVING CENTRE



SMALLER FOOD STORE



WRAPPED MULTI-STOREY CAR PARK



NEW HOMES OVERLOOKING GREEN



BUSINESS/COMMERCIAL SPACE



RELOCATED INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS AND YARDS

4.4 GROUND FLOOR USES

The masterplan includes proposals to consolidate industrial uses to the south of the town centre by Priory Road and establish mixed commercial space - retail, F&B, work space and appropriate industry within the town centre itself.

Commercial frontage is proposed for Commercial Road, so that this feels part of the town centre rather than a 'back'. A commercial spine is also proposed along Knight Road. This will help to provide a continuity of commercial activity between the town centre and the Priory Road area. Furthermore, commercial uses are more appropriate than residential in areas of high flood risk.

A replacement medium sized food store with associated parking is proposed for the current Tesco site and a Healthy Living Centre with parking is proposed on the Temple Street car park site.

The rail viaduct arches are identified for active commercial uses, which could be a mix of industry, office space and F&B, providing a diversity of uses in the centre.

Food and drink uses are proposed for the riverfront at the Civic Centre site, and a mix of retail, office and food and drink uses are proposed for the section of the High Street between the viaduct and the river. The new multi-storey car park is also proposed for the area.

New residential neighbourhoods are identified at the Civic Centre site and in place of some of the relocated, larger footprint industrial uses. It will be important to maintain a similar level of industrial spaces overall, to support local businesses.



Industrial uses can be relocated in some cases, but a similar quantum should be retained



The Innovation Studios present a good model for flood-resistant future small business space

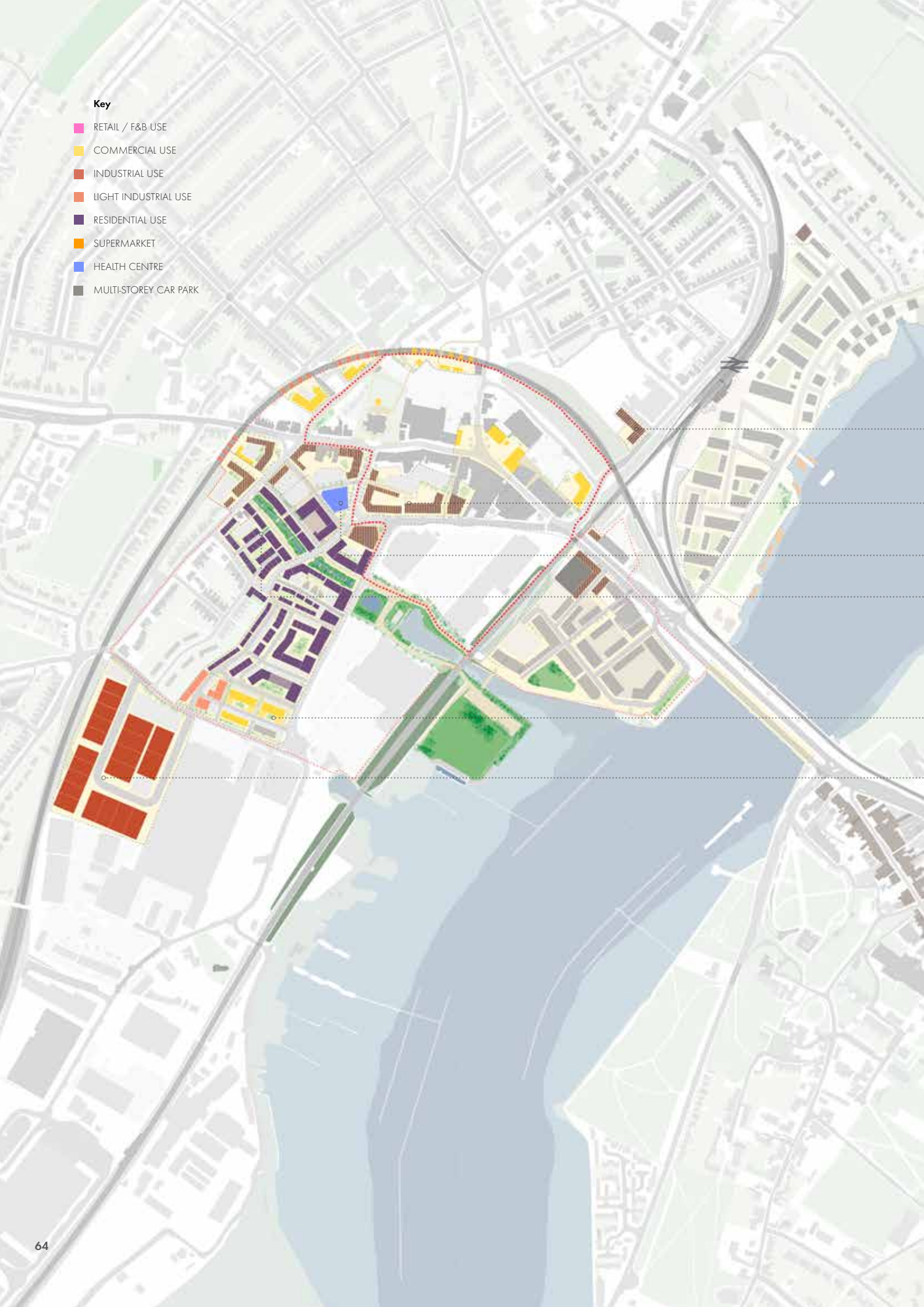


The public realm works at the Commercial Road car park and the Starbucks coffee shop are starting to provide 'frontage' and activity on the street - this should be continued and strengthened.



Key

- RETAIL / F&B USE
- COMMERCIAL USE
- INDUSTRIAL USE
- LIGHT INDUSTRIAL USE
- RESIDENTIAL USE
- SUPERMARKET
- HEALTH CENTRE
- MULTI-STOREY CAR PARK



4.5 UPPER FLOOR USES

WORKSPACE OR MIXED USE BUILDINGS BETWEEN THE TOWN CENTRE AND STATION

FLEXIBLE UPPER FLOOR USES IN THE CORE CENTRE (COMMERCIAL OR RESIDENTIAL SPACE)

UPPER FLOORS OF HEALTHY LIVING CENTRE

RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBOURHOODS BETWEEN CUXTON ROAD AND KNIGHT ROAD

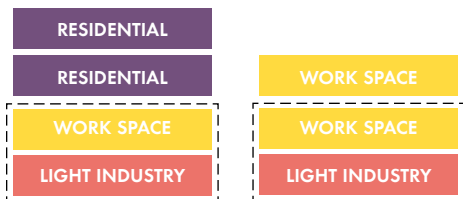
EMPLOYMENT OR LIGHT INDUSTRIAL SPACE FRONTING PRIORY ROAD

MULTI-STOREY INDUSTRIAL SPACE SOUTH OF PRIORY ROAD

The core of the town centre is identified as requiring flexibility in terms of its ground floor and first floor uses. Commercial uses are prioritised within the town centre, but these could be retail, food and beverage or office space. First floor uses could then be either office space or residential space, depending on demand and air quality.

Work space is identified for the upper floors in the area close to the viaducts and residential space is identified on the upper floors in the new neighbourhoods at the Civic Centre site and between Cuxton Road and Knight Road.

The industrial area to the south is identified as having potential for work space above light industry. This approach is intended to intensify work uses and accommodate the same amount of workspace whilst using a smaller footprint.



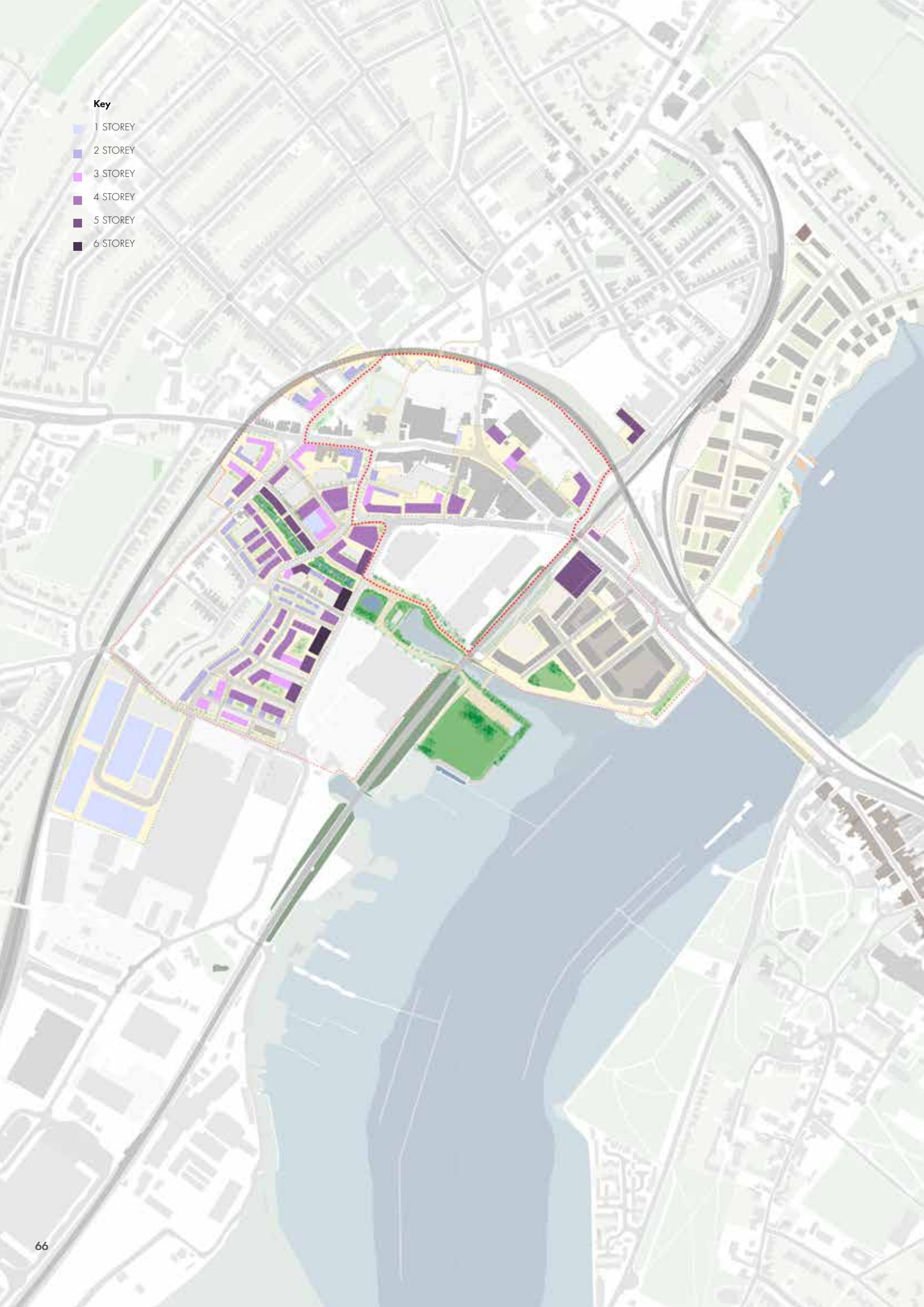
A flexible approach could be taken in the southern area of Knight Road, with a combination of light industry, work space and residential space



A flexible approach should be taken to ground and first floor uses in the town centre, to respond to shifts in the national retail environment. These could include retail, food and beverage, office space and residential in a number of combinations.

Key

- 1 STOREY
- 2 STOREY
- 3 STOREY
- 4 STOREY
- 5 STOREY
- 6 STOREY





Strood's topography and key views to Rochester Castle and Cathedral inform building heights in the town centre

4.6 HEIGHTS, SCALE, MASSING AND DENSITIES

The Medway's views and topography are distinctive, with particular sensitivity around views to and from Rochester Castle. The heights in the masterplan have taken these into account, proposing only 1 to 6 storey buildings.

The taller buildings proposed form a commercial spine along Knight Road, safely outside the strategic view corridors set out in local policy. The commercial use is also appropriate considering the high flood risk in this area.

A four storey and five storey building are also proposed on key sites along Station Road, helping to improve the legibility of this main entrance to the town.

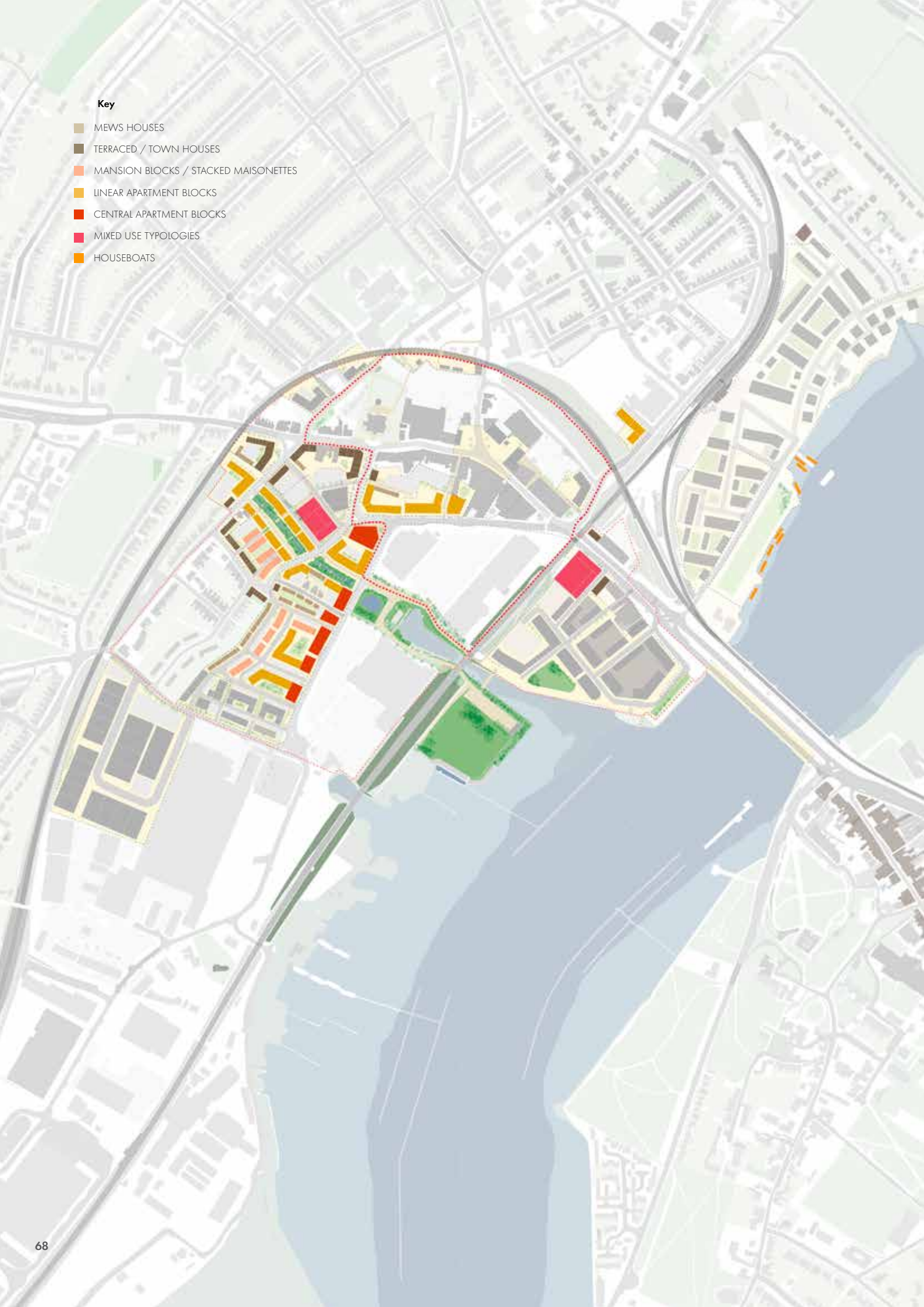
The heights and densities of the new residential neighbourhoods are responsive to the surrounding context, the town centre location and the proximity to public transport.



The density proposed by the illustrative masterplan is approximately 100 dwellings per hectare across the residential sites (shown above).

Key

- MEWS HOUSES
- TERRACED / TOWN HOUSES
- MANSSION BLOCKS / STACKED MAISONNETTES
- LINEAR APARTMENT BLOCKS
- CENTRAL APARTMENT BLOCKS
- MIXED USE TYPOLOGIES
- HOUSEBOATS



4.7 RESIDENTIAL TYPOLOGIES

A range of residential typologies is proposed for Strood town centre, in order to cater to the varying needs of the community in terms of age, family size, budget and accessibility requirements.

Typologies include mews housing, town houses, maisonettes, mixed use apartment blocks and houseboats. Providing attractive and appealing mixed-use typologies will be particularly important for helping Strood to retain its employment base whilst providing new homes for a growing community.

The suggested residential typologies are designed to respond to the landscape context of their location and the intensity and range of uses within the immediate proximity. The masterplan is not intended to be prescriptive and the residential types may come forward in a different form or location. However, the principle of providing a range of housing types is considered important in order to support a mixed and diverse community.

Examples of housing types are provided on the following pages.



from left:
 FCB Studios, Accordia Housing, Cambridge ©Sebastian Ballard / Wikimedia Commons
 Barking Riverside
 AHMM and MaccreanorLavington Architects, Anne Mews, Barking



MAE Architects, Hammond Court, Walthamstow
 Allison Brooks, Newhall Harlow
 Barking Riverside



from left:
 Allies and Morrison, Hale Wharf Phase 2
 Allies and Morrison, St Andrews
 Allies and Morrison, West Hendon



MEWS HOUSES

Intimate, low-rise style, with private front doors alternating with garage doors. Flexible options to cater to a variety of needs and lifestyles; usually potential to add a low-profile third storey as required in the future.

35-55 dph



TERRACE / TOWNHOUSES

Interchangeable between wheelchair accessible and typical three and four bed homes allows for variation in unit types along any given street; while at the same time maintaining the desired character of the building fabric.

50-80 dph



STACKED MAISONNETTES

Interchangeable between wheelchair accessible and typical floor plans, terraced apartments can cater to many needs. Lower-levels can form maisonettes with private entrances or shops; whilst upper level apartments can have private terraces and balconies.

50-125 dph



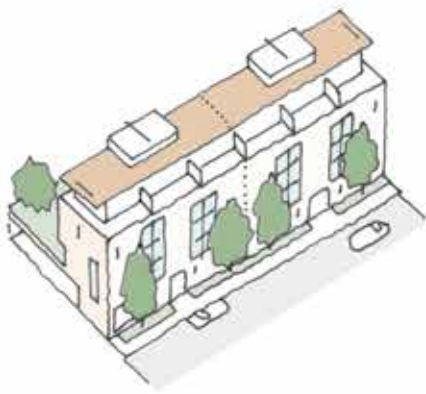
from left:
 Allies and Morrison,
 Allies and Morrison, Bow Quarter



from left:
 River Spreefield River Co-housing, Fatkohel Architekten, Berlin
 Allies and Morrison, Lock Keepers, Bow
 Panter Hudspith, Royal Road, Kennington



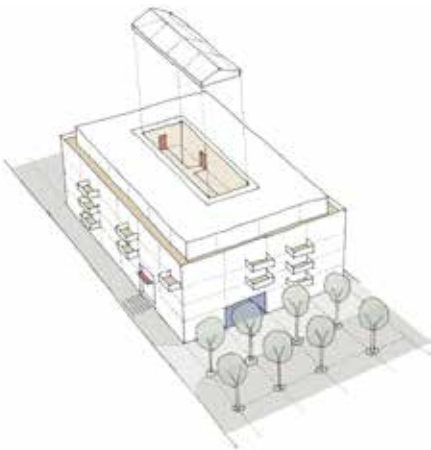
from left:
 Supermarket service access for mixed use block, Bermondsey Tesco, London
 Maccraenor Lavington, Canada Water, London
 Allies and Morrison, Camden Goods Yard, London



LINEAR APARTMENT BLOCK

Interchangeable between wheelchair accessible and typical floor plans, linear apartment blocks can cater to many needs. Apartments can be organised on one floor or stacked across two. Apartment blocks can flexibly accommodate work space at ground floor, with residential above.

100 - 150 dph



CENTRAL APARTMENT BLOCK

Central apartment blocks can accommodate a range of uses and are likely to be 3-6 storeys in height. Apartments can be organised on one floor or stacked across two. Apartment blocks may include more than one storey of commercial use from the ground floor and separate entrances would be required for commercial and residential elements.

200+ dph



MIXED USE BIG BOX RETAIL AND RESIDENTIAL

A large block containing supermarket or other large floorplate retail at the ground floor, with residential uses above. Separate entrances would be provided for the retail, for residential properties, and for servicing. Car parking could be pooled between the retail and the residential. As with apartment blocks, work space could also be accommodated within the overall block.

200+ dph





CHAPTER 5
DELIVERY GUIDANCE

- Local Plan site
- Strood Waterfront SPD site
- Infill sites identified in study
- Larger sites identified in masterplan study



POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SITES

DELIVERY GUIDANCE

5.1 DRIVERS OF CHANGE

Based on detailed analysis of the core Strood Town Centre Masterplan area and wider town context, a number of key drivers are identified, which are expected to steer the direction of regeneration and growth in Strood over the next 20 years;

- New residential development and different forms of town centre living
- Residential-led mixed use development
- Distinct, affordable small business offer
- Different types of future employment space
- Student audience
- New forms of retail and leisure space – new typologies
- Drawing on the town's strong heritage and natural assets
- Reconnecting with Rochester

New residential development and different forms of town centre living

New residential development focused within the town centre will be a key future driver for Strood Town Centre. This is because not only will it help to meet housing need within the Medway area, but it could help to deliver a more diverse town centre audience and support greater activity and spending in the town centre. The emerging Strood Waterfront development will also provide a new audience to consider and cater for in the town centre, which could lead to a more diverse, spend profile and set of audience needs supporting a greater mix of uses and activity within the town centre.

Going forward, this highlights the importance of improving pedestrian links between Commercial Road and the High Street as well as the path between the viaduct, to strengthen the connectivity between the waterfront development and town centre. This could help to see that the new catchment is sufficiently captured and does not gravitate to other nearby town centres, such as Rochester.

As part of this new residential development different forms of town centre living (including family housing, assisted living, student accommodation, and Build to Rent) in a range of different residential typologies (such as mews housing, linear apartment blocks and terraced/ town houses) could help to cater for the diverse demographic and socio-economic profile of current and future residents. This would support greater use of the town centre throughout the day and evening, with a more diverse set of audience needs driving the demand for a wider range of town centre uses to come forward.

Residential led mixed use development

From a viability perspective, residential-led development in the town centre could support value generation and act as a catalyst to bring forward mixed-use schemes, which would otherwise be undeliverable. Bringing forward residential-led mixed use development could help to support activation of ground floor uses within the town centre, specifically along Commercial Road and Knights Road. This could help to deliver a range of commercial, retail and leisure uses within Strood which are not part of the existing offer. In particular the delivery of new workspace and flexible small business space is a key potential benefit.

Distinct, affordable small business offer

Providing a distinct, affordable small business offer in Strood town centre is a key proposed driver of regeneration. The success of the Innovation Studios in Strood and the demand for SME space, demonstrates how the provision of distinct small business space which caters for existing demand alongside opportunities for innovation has helped to transform otherwise challenged sites in Strood; and assisted in retaining existing and supporting new businesses which would otherwise have to locate elsewhere. Therefore, focusing delivery of this type of commercial space could help to contribute to a 'productive role' for Strood which celebrates and builds from its productive past.



Different types of future employment space

It will however be important to explore different forms of employment space which are not car reliant and likely to further exacerbate the traffic and congestion problems faced by the town centre. This should be supported by any public transport improvement projects that are pursued by the Council, as well as the increased prioritisation of pedestrian movement through the town centre.

Future employment space in the town centre could take the form of new purpose built units on redeveloped sites as well as potentially repurposed units on the high street itself, this will cater to meet a range of different small business needs and affordability levels. There may also be an opportunity to explore the opportunity for providing interim spaces on development sites, particularly using modular construction and/or following the example set by spaces like the Innovation Studios, however permanent move on space must be provided to retain and continue to support the business activity occupying any interim spaces.



Student audience

Aligned to this, the proximity to Greenwich University, University of Kent, and Canterbury Christchurch University campuses at Chatham Maritime creates an interesting opportunity to capture the student audience in a different manner. Rather than through student accommodation, this can be through providing affordable and flexible start-up space that could help to attract and retain graduates within the Medway area. This could be a credible opportunity considering the existing rail network which provides fast connections between the Medway towns, and is not related solely to providing student housing, which may be better suited to a location in Chatham. Highlighting an earlier point, providing this type of space which is attractive to recent graduates could improve both day time and evening use in the town centre, and again support a greater range of town centre activities which enhance the vibrancy in the town centre.



Top: Innovation Studios Strood, modern employment space, Middle: University of Greenwich Medway Campus, © University of Greenwich, Bottom: University of Kent's Medway Campus © University of Kent

New forms of retail and leisure space

At present, the Retail Park and convenience offer are major drivers generating footfall within the town centre, and contributing to its attraction to visitors. However, the possible catchment of the student population, as well as growing and diversifying future population supported by a range of new town centre living opportunities could help to deliver new forms of retail and leisure spaces in the town centre, provided this does not seek to directly compete with the offer in Chatham.

The future retail and leisure offer should seek to attract local, independent businesses as well as chains. To an extent this is already happening in the town centre; a microbrewery is being run in a railway arch unit, which whilst small, is proving to be successful and providing a new form of destination within the town centre. Subject to operational requirements, activating the space under Strood's railway arches for small retail, leisure and other business spaces could prove a good opportunity in this regard, particularly for businesses requiring affordable space. These types of space may be incidental and develop over time as new audiences use the town centre, so the Council should adopt a supportive approach towards this as opportunities come forward.

Drawing on the town's strong heritage and natural assets

Strood's strong heritage and natural assets can act as another key driver of regeneration for the town centre. A significant amount of the built and environmental form in the town centre could be enhanced to improve the character of the area, making it more attractive to visitors. Temple Manor is an underused heritage asset, which could be brought back into use with improved wayfinding and pedestrian pathways from the core town centre. Similarly, the natural assets within Strood town centre are unique and delivering a swale linear park from Jane's Creek into Strood town centre could bring much needed green space as well as create a setting for a new residential neighbourhood in the future.

Reconnecting with Rochester

Strood has a long historic connection to Rochester. It is important that Strood's future offer compliments Rochester's and the development plans are cohesive to ensure that there is limited competition between the centres.

5.2 PHASING OPPORTUNITIES

A range of potential development sites have been examined within the masterplan study area¹ and a high level assessment made of their suitability and potential availability. The majority of sites considered are those identified in Medway Council's Local Plan and SLAA, however several sites have also been identified by the Masterplan team as having redevelopment potential and have been included in addition to those already designated. The caveat to the consideration of these sites is that there is no formal determination of their suitability, availability and achievability to inform the assessment of their development phasing, or an understanding of any level of intent to pursue redevelopment.

The high level qualitative assessment has informed a view on the likely sequence of delivery of these key opportunities. In terms of this assessment, each respective site has been assessed against six key deliverability factors. These are factors determined to be most influential for bringing forward development on the potential sites, reflecting complexity, cost and certainty of delivery.

- **Site Allocations** – Existing planning policy allocations for a site will set out the parameters for what is deemed to be suitable development. An existing use may be restrictive as it may not align with current market conditions or developers' interest, but could also support redevelopment aspirations if aligned with the vision for Strood.
- **Planning permissions** – Similar to site allocations, there may be existing, pending or approved planning permissions in place for a site, which could either hinder the availability of the site for redevelopment, or its redevelopment in alignment with the Masterplan vision.
- **Existing Use** – Details regarding the existing use of a site will flag a number of considerations which may add to the cost and/or complexity towards

¹ It should be noted that some sites have been included where we understand development is already planned to come forward. The intention of this is so that we may provide a more informed delivery phasing strategy.

bringing forward new development. This could highlight whether remediation or other costly surveys need to be undertaken to understand the site condition and ultimately bring it forward for development.

- **Land Ownership: Public/Private** – The ownership position is directly concerned with two interrelated factors; the control over the future of the site, and the resultant time it takes to bring a site forward for redevelopment. A site within private ownership will be more challenging to deliver if development aspirations do not align with the Councils'.
- **Land Ownership: Single/Multiple** – Determining the number of land interests which are present within a single site indicates the simplicity of bringing a site forward for development, and whether there could be a requirement for land assembly to bring multiple land owner interests into alignment or acquiring multiple land parcels within a desired site boundary (both of which can be lengthy and costly processes).
- **Major Site Constraints** – This relates to a range of other site-specific considerations relating to designations within Medway's policy allocations map, including; being/near to a listed building, or near/in a nature conservation area, open space or identified flood risk area. In isolation these considerations may not surmount to a significant impact towards the cost or complexity of delivering a site, but may contribute to shaping delivery decisions.

Environmental constraints and land contamination are likely to be significant for a number of sites in the town centre, however the assessment of these constraints and potential mitigation measures must be undertaken on a detailed site-by-site basis, and does not fall within the remit of a masterplan framework. An example of such an environmental constraint is the land contamination and subsequent remediation requirements anticipated for the extension and development of Jane's Creek, and development on Knight's Road and Temple Manor.

The outcome of the deliverability assessment provides a understanding of each site and its likely redevelopment, informing an initial ranking of sites in relation to their timescales for delivery. Where possible, further consideration of the likely phasing of the development of certain sites has been undertaken, which has included early stage stakeholder and landowner engagement, and feedback from the stakeholder workshop.

For clarification, the site opportunities have been categorised into three phases; Phase 1 (0-5 years), Phase 2 (6-10 years), and Phase 3 (11-15+ years). This provides an indication of when sites are likely to be delivered, but does not provide certainty in development completion. There are a range of uncertainties that influence both the ability to commence development and the development trajectory once construction commences, which make it impossible to predict exactly when sites will be delivered.

The table on the following page shows the outcome of this high level deliverability assessment, and what this means for the potential phasing of delivery on the site. This provides a high level indication of the phase in which the completion of site redevelopment is expected. However, for certain sites, particularly large scale redevelopment options which could bring forward a substantial number of units, the delivery of parts of the site could come forward in earlier phases to achieve a suitable pace of delivery in response to prevailing local market conditions.

The indication of potential phasing in the table is heavily caveated by the uncertainty associated with future development trajectories. Its basis on six factors described above reflecting site characteristics, context and land ownership, means the redevelopment intent for the sites has not been factored into the assessment. The exception to this is where a site has planning permission, or where engagement has been undertaken with the landowner following the identification of SLAA sites.

It is not possible to predict development completions for opportunity sites with any certainty, considering the range of factors influencing delivery, particularly the need to achieve a single land ownership position, the potential for remediation and site preparation prior to development commencement, the uncertainty of the planning application and determination process and the dependence on landowner aspiration to drive redevelopment opportunities forward. The further forward you look the more challenging it is to predict potential development.

Most crucially the challenged viability position in this local market context is a barrier to delivery. Private sector led redevelopment will not be pursued unless certain residential and commercial values can be achieved, and the ability to achieve this will also affect the speed at which a development can be built out. The size of a potential scheme also has a substantial impact on the speed at which it can be delivered. Rochester Riverside is suggested to be building out at a rate of 93 dwellings per hectare based on the target for delivering 1,400 homes over the next 15 years, and this gives a feel for the speed at which development can come forward. The delivery of these units also risks saturating (or flooding) the residential market which could dampen the demand for future development and therefore the speed at which this can be delivered.

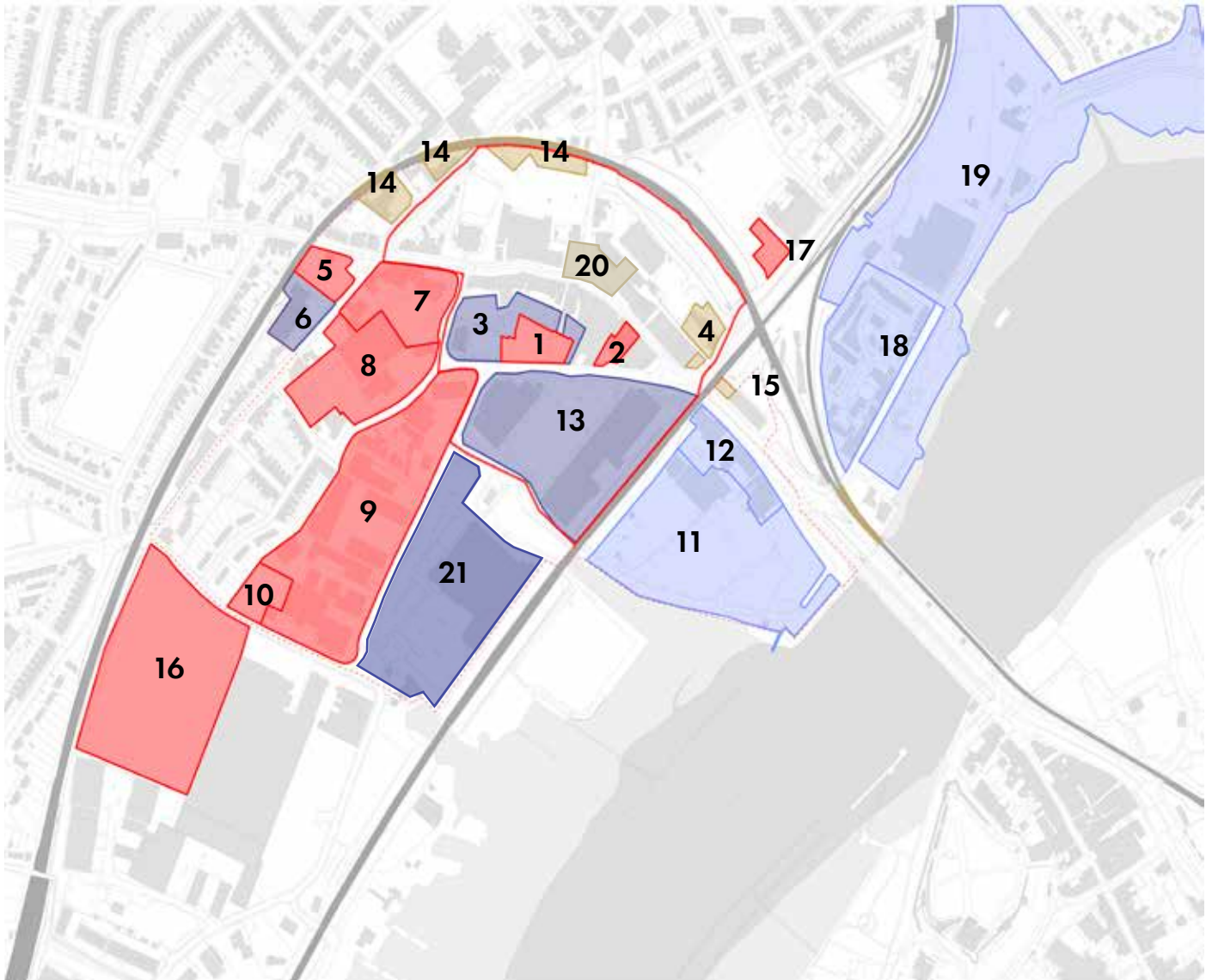
The uncertainty associated with the timescales of redevelopment means that the phasing assessment is more heavily skewed towards the later phases, with existing planning permission the only reliable way of indicating delivery within the first five years. Within the table text in bold denote sites which have been included for completeness of the delivery strategy, but which we understand to have development plans underway.

Proposed phasing by site (indicative only)

| DELIVERY PERIOD | SITE REF | DEVELOPMENT SITE ADDRESS |
|------------------------|-----------|--|
| PHASE 1 0-5 YEARS | 2 | 75-81 HIGH STREET |
| | 5 | A2 BP GARAGE |
| | 17 | TYRE CENTRE SITE |
| PHASE 2 5-10 YEARS | 4 | 2 STATION ROAD |
| | 6 | CUXTON ROAD AUTO CENTRE |
| | 7 | TEMPLE STREET PUBLIC CAR PARK, 151-175 HIGH STREET, 1A-1 CUXTON ROAD |
| | 8 | TESCO SITE, CUXTON ROAD ACCESS POINT AND COMMERCIAL ROAD WORKS SITE |
| | 10 | PRIORY ROAD |
| | 12 | 3-39 HIGH STREET |
| | 14 | RAILWAY ARCHES (3) AND ADJACENT LAND |
| | 15 | LAND ADJACENT TO 24 HIGH STREET |
| | 16 | FREIGHT CENTRE SOUTH OF PRIORY ROAD |
| PHASE 3 10-15 YEARS | 1 | COMMERCIAL ROAD PUBLIC CAR PARK |
| | 3 | MCDONALDS, CAR SALES GARAGE AND REAR OF HIGH STREET PROPERTIES |
| | 9* | LAND BOUND BY COMMERCIAL ROAD, KNIGHT ROAD, PRIORY ROAD AND SMITH STREET |
| | 11* | CIVIC CENTRE SITE |
| | 13 | RETAIL PARK |
| | 18 | KINGSWEAR GARDENS |
| | 19* | STROOD WATERFRONT |
| | 20 | TOWN SQUARE |
| 21 | MORRISONS | |

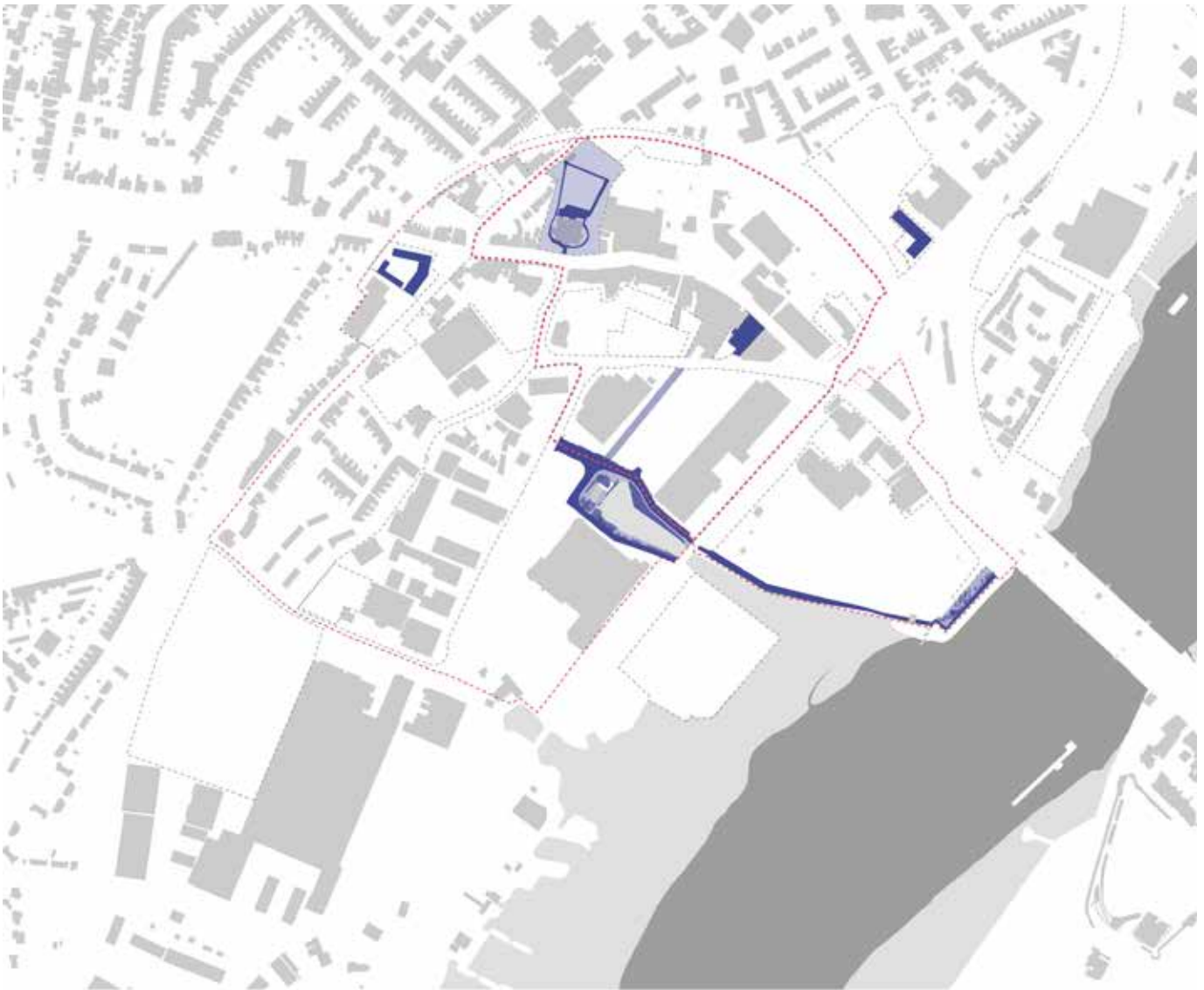
This table provides a high level indication of the phase in which the completion of site redevelopment is expected. However for certain sites (such as those with *), particularly large scale redevelopment options which could bring forward a substantial number of units, the delivery of parts of the site could come forward in earlier phases to achieve a suitable pace of delivery in response to prevailing local market conditions.

- Local Plan site
- Strood Waterfront SPD site
- Infill sites identified in study
- Larger sites identified in masterplan study



POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SITES

■ phase 1 ■ phase 2 ■ phase 3 ■ phase 4



A plan of phase one sites

Phase 1

0-5 years (2020 to 2025)

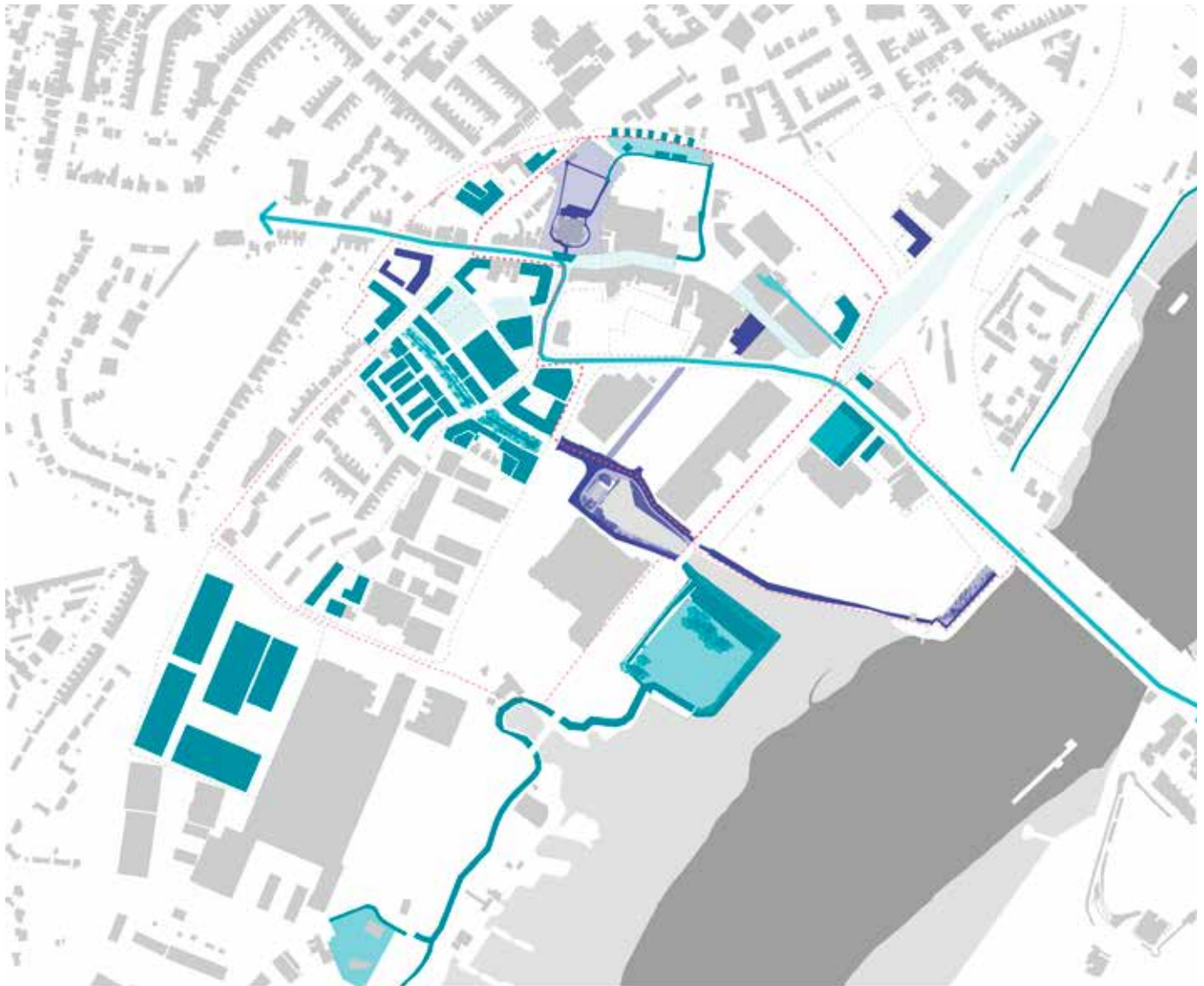
Sites in Phase 1 are sites which have proposals or emerging planning applications that are in line with the Masterplan vision, and smaller interventions which sit within single landownership, the most preferable of which is single, public sector ownership.

There is some certainty associated with the delivery of Site 2 – 75-81 High Street due to the planning consent secured for the site to deliver residential units, and whilst this does not guarantee the pace of delivery within the first phase it provides confidence that development completion in this first phase is potentially realistic.

The suggestion of Site 5 – A2 BP Garage for early redevelopment reflects it being put forward through the call for sites process for the Medway SLAA, followed up with engagement with the land owner representative for the site. Despite the current business operations on site which are likely to be displaced as a result of site redevelopment, the landowner is keen to move forward with an emerging scheme. Working with the landowner and bringing this site forward is key to help shape a gateway development in Strood town centre, however as the site is proximate to the plans for the new gyratory its delivery will have to be carefully timed to align with the potential infrastructure improvement plans.

Whilst the Tyre Centre Site (Site 18) does not have a planning consent and engagement with the landowner has not been undertaken to support this Masterplan process, it has been identified with the SLAA which means its suitability, availability and achievability has been assessed as part of this identification.

■ phase 1 ■ phase 2 ■ phase 3 ■ phase 4



A plan of phase one and two sites

Phase 2

6-10 years (2026 to 2030)

Sites in Phase 2 are those which have some prospect of coming forward for redevelopment, but with characteristics making them more costly or timely to deliver. For example, re-provision of an existing use or challenging land assembly implications. In Phase 2, it is envisaged that improvements to the gyratory, the riverside walkway to Temple Manor and Civic Centre redevelopment may potentially be underway/ completed. This could help to improve the conditions to bring forward sites which connect the Civic centre and waterfront to the town centre.

In terms of enhancing the commercial aspirations outlined in the Masterplan, a key site to emphasise is site 14 (Railway arches (3) and adjacent land). The site is part vacant and has a mix of public/ private ownerships. This and the fact there is no clear indication of the intent for redevelopment results in a medium term expectation for delivery. However, there could be an opportunity to deliver parcels of land within this site separately which could enhance deliverability. In terms of the opportunity, the use of this site could be intensified to deliver new commercial uses, to compliment the proximate Victoria microbrewery. There are many precedents of railway arches being brought back into use, and delivering a range of much needed space for new affordable workspace or leisure uses. Bringing forward this site could help to improve the place-making to the north of the town centre area, and become a new driver for this area as a destination.

The Council has received funding (discussed later) to support the delivery of a parcel within Site 7 (Temple Street public car park, 151-175 High Street, 1a-1 Cuxton Road). The funding will support a new Healthy Living Centre on Temple Street public car park, and significantly help to strengthen the commercial activity to the east of the town centre, prior to the improvements to the gyratory. Whilst this centre could be delivered early supported by the secured funding, the comprehensive site delivery is anticipated within Phase 2. This allows for development uncertainty and the potential requirement to deliver the site comprehensively.

■ phase 1 ■ phase 2 ■ phase 3 ■ phase 4



A plan of phase one, two, three and four sites

Phase 3

11-15 years (2031 to 2035)

Sites which fall into Phase 3 are those which have a significant number of barriers which will impede development delivery. This includes sites which have extremely fragmented ownerships, single use planning policy allocations which are not in alignment with the Masterplan vision, and relatively high costs or lengthy time considerations associated with re-provision or removal of existing uses. Sites in Phase 3 are more likely to be able to come forward once all the major improvements have been made to the town centre, and market conditions and values improve.

Larger scale redevelopment opportunities also fall within this category due to the constraints on delivery rates in response to the prevailing local market conditions, which makes it likely that development comes forward over longer timescales. This is particularly acute considering the influence of schemes coming forward in the wider area such as Rochester Riverside, and the rate at which the market can absorb new development.

Another key, long term consideration is Site 1 (Commercial road public car park). The site will require the re-provision of the car parking and weekly market. This process is likely to be costly and lengthy as the release of other sites will need to be considered for the re-provision of the car parking, and improvements to traffic movement will need to be completed to ensure that parts of North Street and High Street can be closed to accommodate the market.

■ phase 1 ■ phase 2 ■ phase 3 ■ phase 4



A plan of phase one, two, three and four sites

Phase 4

15+ years (2035 onwards)

Site 13 (the retail Park) specifically has a number of long leases which would likely entail a lengthy and/or costly vacant possession exercise. Moreover, it is currently relatively successful and a good anchor for Strood town centre, therefore it does not require immediate action. However in the long term, with changing occupier trends likely to result in tenants no longer requiring the significant quantum of floorspace associated with big box retail, there is an opportunity to consider a new space typology on the site to enhance the future commercial offer within Strood town centre. This site is one of the longest term opportunities explored in the Masterplan, with the least certainty surrounding its delivery.

Site 22 (Morrisons supermarket) is a similar long term aspiration. It currently operates well and is unlikely to change in the short to medium term, but in the longer term, the supermarket's national spatial strategy may change. In this situation, a supermarket could be reprovided with homes alongside this.

General commentary

Although this assessment of phasing is informative, and begins to consider which sites may be taken forward and when, it must be clear that this provides a snapshot of deliverability based on current conditions, and incorporates professional judgement into the ranking of how deliverable a site is based on the six key factors identified, as well as the consideration of other factors that influence the phasing of development, where available.

In practice there are many other factors that could influence when development on a site could come forward, and certain factors could act as either a catalyst or barrier to delivery to an extent that cannot be anticipated here. Significant Council intervention is not considered as part of this assessment of deliverability, but could potentially see accelerated development on certain sites.

This Masterplan phasing should be taken as a high level guide for when site opportunities could be expected to come forward. This is caveated by its basis largely on site characteristics/context and land ownership position, which means developing a detailed understanding of the redevelopment phasing of sites requires further testing and update as proposals move forward and engagement with land owners is progressed.

The most important consideration for delivery timescales is that sites are not considered in isolation, but that the assessment reflects the timing of proposed Masterplan projects such as the removal of the gyratory, the subsequent sequencing of delivery progress on surrounding sites, and the expected delivery timescales for sites based on the scale of development and prevailing local market dynamics. This delivery approach should support the phased transformation of the town centre into a vibrant, cohesive and attractive centre.

5.3 DELIVERY AND FUNDING APPROACHES

The Strood Town Centre Masterplan provides the spatial framework to guide investment and development in the town centre, which will form part of the Local Plan evidence base.

The Masterplan provides a guide for the development proposals and project opportunities for the town centre over the short and medium timescales (0 - 5 years and 6 – 10 years). Site opportunities over the long term timescale (11 – 15 years and 15+ years) are identified in the phasing section, but not consolidated directly into the masterplan proposals or project opportunities due to the uncertainty associated with their longer term nature.

The development opportunities presented as part of this spatial framework suggest the potential over the next 10 years to deliver approximately 800 homes and 22,000sqm commercial space (including light industrial, community and convenience retail floorspace). However, this is not set in stone, and there is flexibility in the development quantum across the site opportunities considered. As well as the potential to deliver new homes and commercial and community floorspace, a number of project opportunities are also identified, focused on routes and movement, public realm, green space and heritage.

Due to the framework nature of this Masterplan intended to guide development rather than dictate it, there is flexibility in delivery and funding approaches. Specific consideration for funding and delivering particular schemes or projects will need to be undertaken in due course once the relevant parameters are confirmed.

The Delivery and Funding guidance here highlights the key potential delivery challenges, and identifies delivery and funding approaches that could help to overcome these challenges.

Potential challenges to delivery

There are several overarching challenges for delivery which will affect potential sites and projects within Strood Town Centre;

- **Viability position:** The market dynamics in Strood show that values remain challenged, which directly hinders the viability position of development opportunities. This makes it more challenging to attract and incentivise private sector investment and development in the town centre. This could be tackled in part through the development mix that comes forward in the town centre, using higher value, more viable residential development to support the commercial elements which have a weaker value position. However, it will also result in more reliance being placed on securing funding to improve the viability position for individual schemes or projects.
- **Existing uses:** Many of the sites identified as opportunities in the Masterplan have existing uses that will be required to be re-provided. This will have implications for the approach to delivery, with careful consideration being required to ensure there are minimal disruptions for businesses, residents and visitors to the town centre. Particular uses that this relates include car parking (both private and council owned), and industrial activities and their potential relocation to the south or the wider town centre area away from the town centre core. Re-provision requirements will need to be assessed on a site-by-site basis.

- **Enabling works:** The nature and setting of a number of town centre sites, will require enabling works to bring forward development in the context of the existing site condition. This could include remediation, flood defence works and a range of other studies and interventions related to heritage, environmental constraints etc. This will affect not only the viability position for redevelopment, but also the pace at which land can be brought forward.
- **Site ownership fragmentation:** Many of the sites identified as opportunities within the town centre are fragmented by multiple, private land ownerships. This significantly increases the complexity of bringing forward development on these sites, and can require significant intervention to instigate costly and lengthy land assembly.

These challenges vary in severity, and will affect different site and project opportunities to different extents, if at all. The phasing of development opportunities is influenced by them, but there are also potential delivery and funding interventions that can go some way to overcoming them.

Potential delivery and funding interventions

In delivery terms there are several key steps the Council should work through to bring forward site redevelopment opportunities, reflecting varying levels of land ownership.

Where possible, to drive forward development in the town centre, the Council could seek to develop the sites in their own land ownership control. However, this delivery approach is limited by the Council's limited land ownership position, and is likely to require securing grant funding (discussed later).

The Civic Centre and Strood Waterfront sites are the most notable examples where the Council has control over delivery, both of which are guided by the Strood Waterfront Development Brief. The former civic site has undergone flood defence works in preparation for redevelopment, supported by £3.5mn SELEP Local Growth Funding secured by the Council.

Car parking sites are the other major Council assets that could provide direct delivery redevelopment opportunities, however this is dependent on the town centre's car parking strategy (reflecting parking capacity requirements and revenue generation), and is unlikely in the short term for the Commercial Road car park in particular due to its use to accommodate the market.

To increase land ownership control within the town centre, the Council could seek to partner with land owners adjacent to Council owned sites. This could maximise the development opportunity in certain parts of the town centre, where there is also private sector development appetite. However, this approach is also limited by the location of Council owned sites and the complexity of the land ownerships adjacent to these sites in many cases meaning they may only be medium or longer term options i.e. Site 7 incorporating Temple Street public car park and High Street / Cuxton Road corner (in Council ownership) and a garage and other buildings in third party ownership.

The Council could also decide to intervene more directly through some combination of site assembly and delivery, which may require the use of their compulsory purchase powers. This form of intervention can have significant complexity, and substantial time and cost implications, and can be particularly challenging where there are multiple fragmented land ownerships within particular site parcels. Opportunities requiring this level of ownership are likely to fall into the medium and long term phases due to the complexity they involve.

The Council should seek to play a pivotal role in supporting redevelopment schemes and realising the project opportunities identified in the spatial framework (movement, public realm and public space projects – see Sections 4.2 and 4.3), by securing funding and acting as a sponsor for funding bids. Funding bids should be well-evidenced and demonstrate the integrated benefits that could be achieved for the town centre beyond the individual project for which they are being sought. The project themes for which funding should be sought includes the following:

Strategic transport investment

- Removal of the gyratory system and changes to vehicular movement hierarchy (phase 1/2)
- Consolidated car parking in multi-storey (phase 1)
- Connection of Knights Road south to A2, shifting industry from the core town centre and unlocking other areas for residential / commercial development (phase 2/3)
- Improved pedestrian, cycle and public transport network (phases 1,2 & 3)

Public realm investment

- Establishing a swale linear park (phase 1/2)
- Creating a central town square (phase 2)
- Intensifying the use of the arches and improving their setting (phase 2)
- Improving links through and alongside the rail arches – particularly to the rail station (phase 2)
- Improving pedestrian links throughout the town centre (phases 1, 2 & 3)

Heritage setting investment

- Improving the setting of St Nicholas Church (phase 1)
- Improving the setting of Temple Manor (phase 2)

Environment and flood risk mitigation

- Possible new flood defence works and/or the creation of an extended creek/swale environment as a functional flood plain (phase 1)

Community infrastructure investment

- Funding for the new Healthy Living Centre in Strood has already been secured
- There may be future requirements for the principle of a primary school in the future

There are a number of funding regimes the Council has previously secured to support regeneration and placemaking either in Strood or other towns in the authority area, which the Masterplan projects could qualify for subject to these funding regimes still being available at the appropriate time. New funding opportunities may become available that cannot be predicted at this point, and/or existing funding sources may no longer be available in the future Masterplan phases. This should therefore be considered as a guide for considering different future funding opportunities, rather than specific advice about funding sources to pursue.

The Council secured £28.6mn from the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) Local Growth Fund in 2014 to support the delivery of five schemes across the area. One of these five projects was the Strood Town Centre Journey Time and Accessibility Enhancements, with a provisional allocation of £9mn. The project has been split into five key phases (1 - Commercial Road Car Park and Tolgate Lane, 2 - Gun Lane, 3 - Station Road Junction with Commercial Road, 4 - Commercial Road with Knight Road, 5 - High Street).

The SELEP secured £570mn Local Growth Funding to date from Central Government through three funding rounds, with £8.3mn remaining available in Local Growth Funding to the end of March 2021. Should the Local Growth Fund remain an available funding source over the Masterplan phasing periods (0 - 5, 5 - 12 and 12 - 17 year phases) this could support strategic transport investment and environment and flood risk mitigation projects, unlocking commercial development opportunities.

The SELEP Growing Places Fund is a £730mn Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government fund designed to support key infrastructure projects which unlock wider economic growth and residential development, operating as a recyclable loans scheme. Within Medway, both the Rochester Riverside and Chatham Waterfront projects have secured this funding to support their delivery, as part of the £48.705mn round 1 funding towards 13 capital infrastructure projects within the SELEP area. The SELEP has committed to re-investing £9.3mn Growing Places Funding in eight new projects to 2019/20. This reinvestment or further funding rounds could support strategic transport investment and environment and flood risk mitigation projects, unlocking commercial development opportunities, should it remain available over the Masterplan phasing periods.

The NHS Medway Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) received £6mn Capital Funding from the Department of Health and Social Care towards developing the Strood Healthy Living Centre on the Temple Street car park. However, this form of capital funding is provided for specific projects, and it is unlikely further funding could be accessed to go towards another qualifying community infrastructure investment project in Strood.

Medway Council secured £2mn Heritage Lottery Funding in 2015 (alongside Amherst Heritage Trust) to support Chatham's Command of the Heights project reconnecting to the area's military history. There are a number of heritage related grant programmes from the National Lottery, with quarterly decisions made on funding bids for grants up to £1mn. The current deadline for Heritage Grants or Heritage Enterprise applications in South East England is December 2018.

Potential funding options summary

| Project type / Development uses | Potential funding options | Phase funding is likely to be required |
|--|--|---|
| Strategic transport investment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SELEP Local Growth Fund • SELEP Growing Places Fund | Masterplan phases 1 and 2 To improve accessibility and unlock development opportunities |
| Public realm investment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developer Contributions | Masterplan phases 1, 2 and 3 (depending on specific projects) |
| Heritage setting investment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Lottery Heritage Fund • Developer Contributions | Masterplan phases 1 and 2 (depending on specific projects) |
| Environment and flood risk mitigation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SELEP Local Growth Fund • SELEP Growing Places Fund • Developer Contributions | Masterplan phase 1 To enable development to come forward |
| Community infrastructure investment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developer Contributions | Masterplan phases 1, 2 and 3 (depending on specific projects) |
| Residential development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Infrastructure Fund • Highways England Growth & Housing Fund | Masterplan phases 1, 2 and 3 (depending on specific projects) |
| Commercial development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SELEP Local Growth Fund • SELEP Growing Places Fund • Highways England Growth & Housing Fund | Masterplan phases 1, 2 and 3 (depending on specific projects) |

As well as the funding sources mentioned above that the Council has previously secured to support development in Strood, there are also a number of other current funding sources that typically support the types of projects within the framework Masterplan, which the Council could investigate. These include the following:

- **Future Funding Opportunities:** The Council will review emerging funding opportunities to help support the regeneration of Medway and will make bids where appropriate.
- **Highways England (HE) Growth and Housing Fund:** The HE Growth and Housing Fund is a £100mn ring fenced fund allocated through the Road Investment Strategy to provide capital investment to unlock the delivery of new jobs and homes, which must be used to supplement developer contributions and plug a funding gap. Funding must be allocated by 2021 and is available to support LEPS, local authorities and the private sector, generally with a maximum value of £5mn invested into any one scheme to cover up to 50% of costs. The timescales of this fund mean it could also only support first phase Masterplan projects, as it stands.
- **DEFRA Flooding & Coastal Erosion Risk Management Funding:** This Central Government Funding through DEFRA is spent in the most part directly by the Environment Agency, however some grants are given to local authorities, and there are several related funding sources that could be explored should further flood defence works be required on particular sites.

There is no certainty that the Council will be able to secure capital funding or other forms of funding to support any of the potential projects or to support the residential and commercial development schemes across the town centre. For many potential projects there will be reliance on Developer Contributions (in the form of CIL and Section 106) to subsidise these projects. However, considering the viability position in this market context and the implications this will have for viability of development schemes, the Council should avoid placing undue expectations of the level of funding this can provide, which must be assessed on a scheme by scheme basis.

The table (left) summarises the potential funding options for the different types of Masterplan projects discussed above, and the likely phase within which funding could be required. This is by no means exhaustive, but incorporates the funding options explored above as a snapshot in time.

5.4 NEXT STEPS

The Strood Town Centre Masterplan provides the spatial framework to guide investment and development in the town centre. This will form part of the Local Plan evidence base, without being taken through a formal adoption process.

In terms of delivery the proposals and project opportunities over the short and medium timescales (0 - 5 years and 6 – 10 years) could, subject to a range of factors beyond the control of the Council, provide the focus for the Masterplan and the scale of development that could be achieved, with longer term opportunities considered but not forming part of the potential development capacity identified.

This framework approach builds in flexibility for the nature of future development, which is particularly important for Strood considering its challenging viability context and the limited control the Council has over town centre sites, resulting in significant reliance on the private sector for investment and delivery.

The Council is already kick-starting regeneration in the wider town centre area at the Civic Centre site, guided by the Strood Waterfront SPD. Alongside this, a partnership approach towards development in the town centre between the Council and key landowners and developers may be appropriate, however this is limited by the private sector ownership position of much of the town centre.

Considering this level of control, the Council should focus on promoting the vision the Masterplan establishes for Strood:

- Reconnecting with the river
- Embracing and reinterpreting Strood's historic role as a productive engine
- An attractive place to live – balanced work and homes

The other immediate Council priority should be to seek out available funding from Central Government through the SELEP, and from other sources, to invest in infrastructure, economic development, public realm, heritage and environmental mitigation (i.e. flood risk) that will enable and support residential and commercial development across the town centre. This will demonstrate the Council's commitment and proactive role towards realising the vision for Strood and help to ensure consistency and high quality public space provision which connects individual site opportunities and helps town centre regeneration be joined up and comprehensive.

Initial landowner engagement is already underway by the Council in relation to the Call for Sites process, supported by GVA where required. This engagement process is on-going and will continue following publication of this Masterplan. This will enable the Council to understand landowners' development aspirations for their sites, supporting redevelopment in alignment with the Masterplan framework.

Further detailed work will also be required to evolve the project proposals identified in the Masterplan framework, particularly for complex projects like the removal of the gyratory which will have a substantial impact on movement and development opportunities within the town centre, and for sites where there are likely to be significant environmental or other development constraints, such as for the improvement of Jane's Creek and establishment of a swale linear park.



Appendix



5 SITES

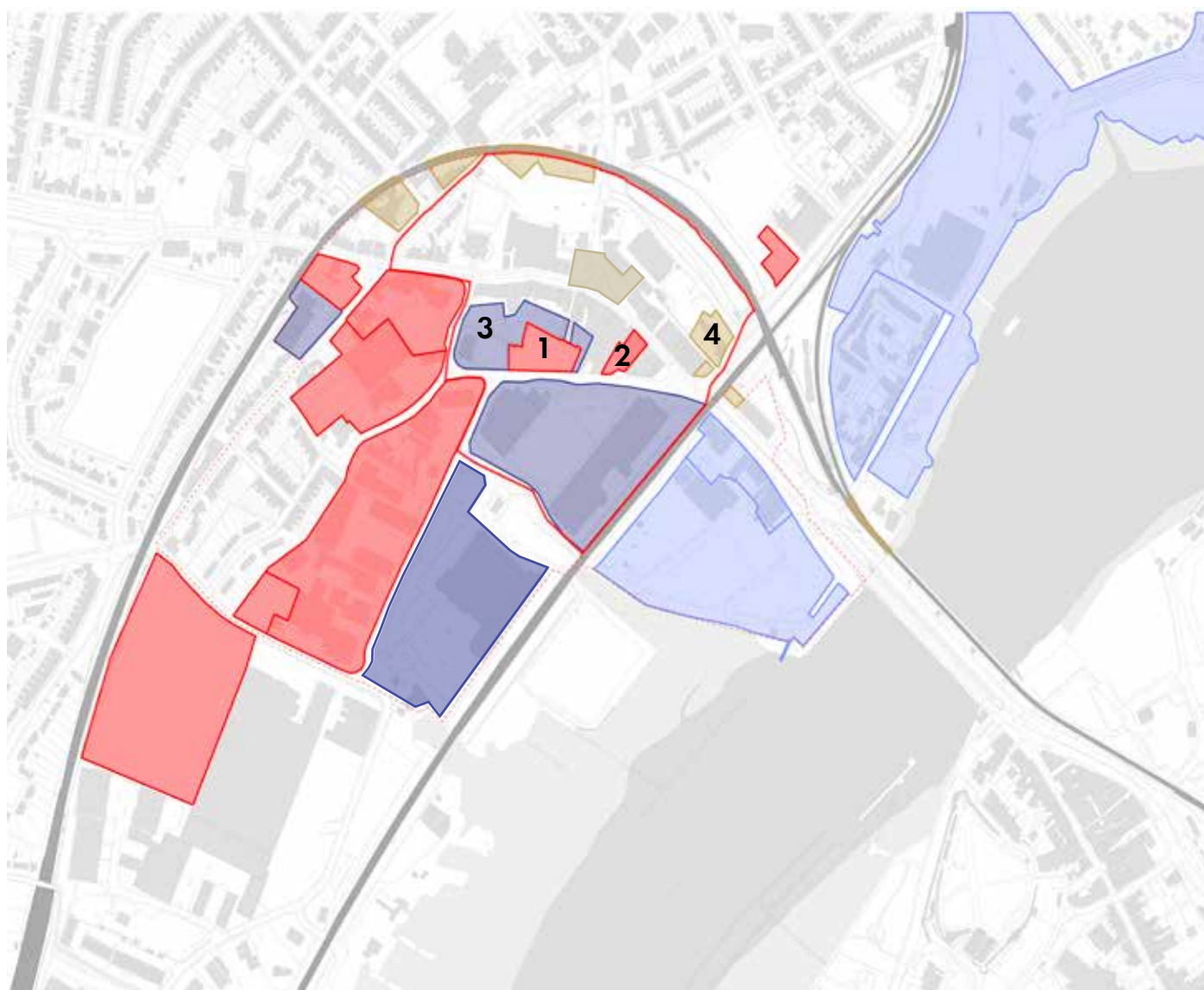
5.1 HIGH LEVEL ASSESSMENT

This section sets out the initial review of development sites within the town centre boundary, within the study area, and in the broader town centre environs.

The assessment is designed to give an overview of the sites available that can help to deliver the emerging vision and spatial strategies for the masterplan, and will be considered in more detail at the next stage of the project.

The review identifies each site and the approximate area available; it assesses each site's suitability for particular development types and the related planning considerations; and it highlights any high level viability issues associated with the site.

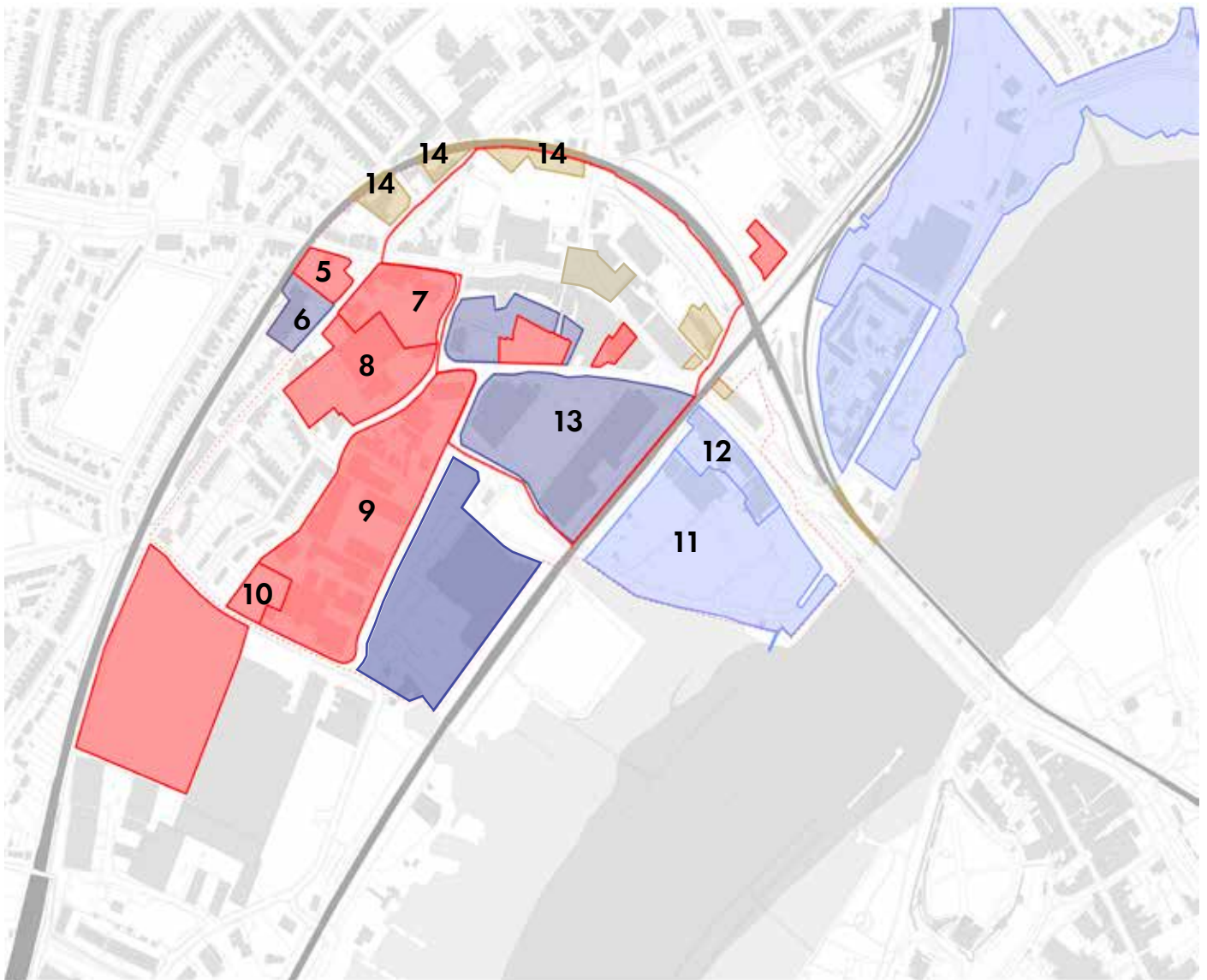
The assessment will be used as a reference tool for the next stage of the project, during which a draft masterplan will be developed.



POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SITES

- Local Plan site
- Strood Waterfront SPD site
- Infill sites identified in study
- Larger sites identified in masterplan study

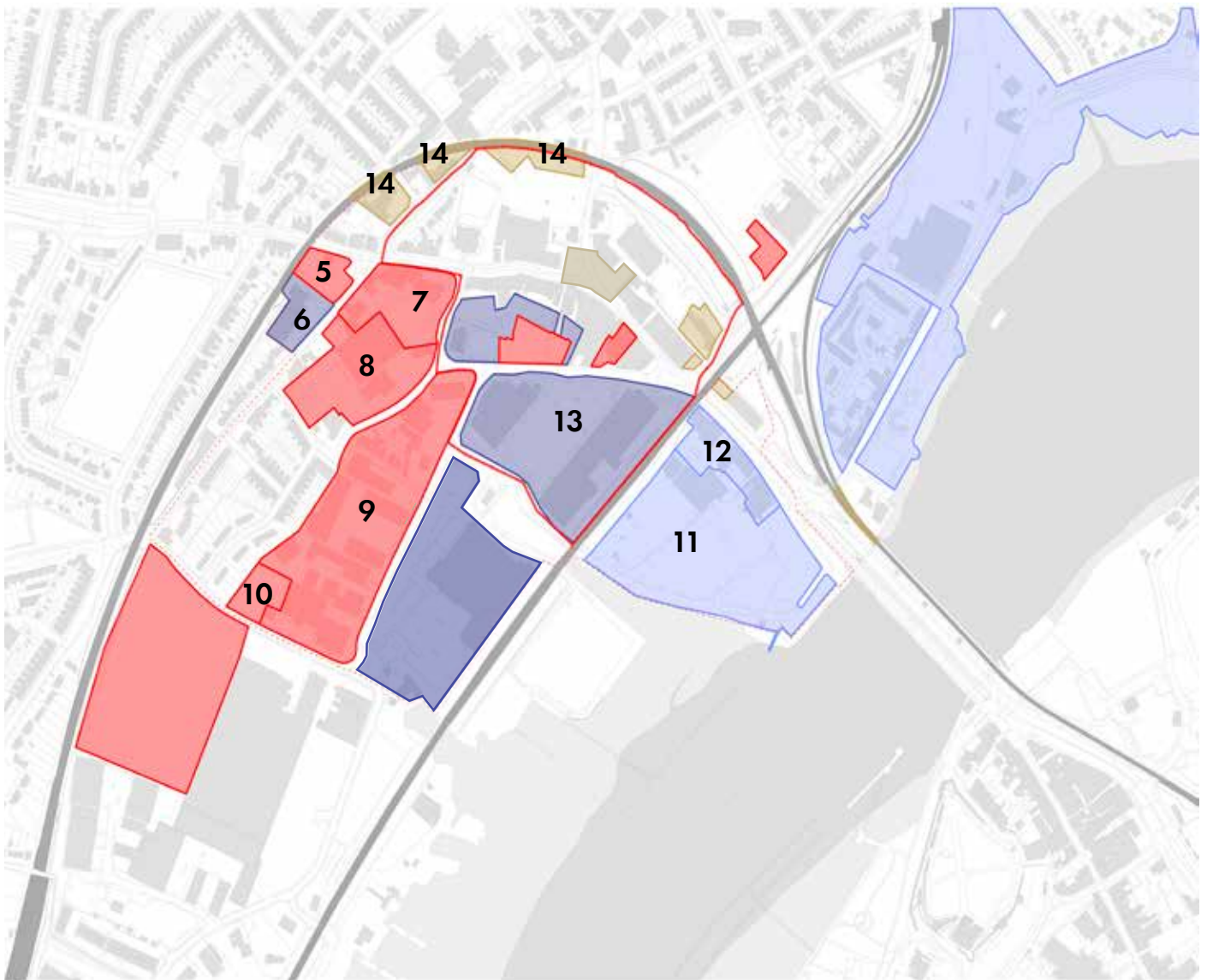
| SITE | AREA | AVAILABILITY | SUITABILITY | DELIVERABILITY | |
|---|--|--------------|---|---|---|
| WITHIN CORE TOWN CENTRE BOUNDARY | | | | | |
| 1 | Commercial Road public car park (1115) | 2,578 sqm | Council freehold. Not currently available due to use as car park and market space | This is a strategic location within the town centre and could accommodate commercial and mixed uses establishing frontage to Commercial Road. Public car parking would need to be reprovided and a new home found for the Market. | Highly dependent on the feasibility of moving the market and reprovion of parking. Both likely to add cost to development. Unlikely to come forward in the short term. |
| 2 | 75-81 High Street (1142) | 1,122 sqm | Available in Local Plan. In third party ownership | Highly suitable for mixed use commercial and residential space, establishing frontage to both High Street and Commercial Road. Possible new pedestrian link. | Planning application approved (MC/15/2097) for conversion to 9 resi units. Consent does not include commercial uses. |
| 3 | McDonalds, car sales garage and rear of High Street properties | 5,675 sqm | Third party land ownership. Sites not available in short term. | In the longer term, these sites are suitable to provide new commercial and residential mixed-use space and to establish frontage to Commercial Road. | Site redevelopment will involve complex land assembly as there are multiple ownerships. Gelmane Investment Ltd hold a number of the freehold interests of the land parcels within the Site. Any future development would need to take into account Gelmane's interests/aspirations for the Site. |
| 4 | 2 Station Road | 1,686 sqm | Part Council owned, part third party ownership | Highly suitable for small scale commercial/employment space, visible along Station Road and to mark entrance to town centre | Highways England are the land owners for the smaller parcels of land. They may be reluctant to release the land if they are considered operationally important. Large section of Site at 2 Station Road could be brought forward, however there are multiple private ownerships and leases which need to be addressed. Value of new commercial may not offer sufficient uplift. |



POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SITES

- Local Plan site
- Strood Waterfront SPD site
- Infill sites identified in study
- Larger sites identified in masterplan study

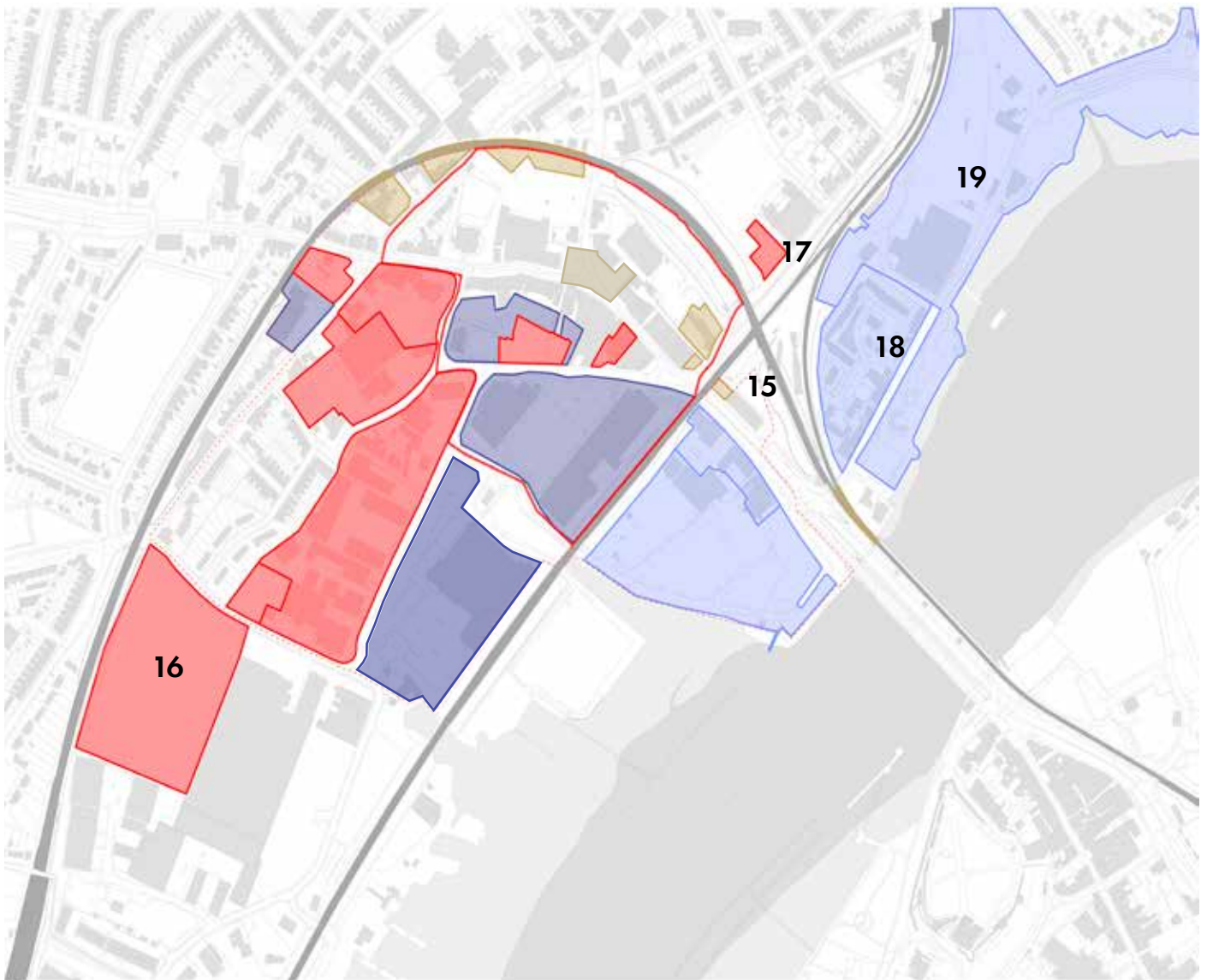
| SITE | AREA | AVAILABILITY | SUITABILITY | DELIVERABILITY |
|-------------------------------------|---|--------------|---|--|
| WITHIN MASTERPLAN STUDY AREA | | | | |
| 5 | A2 BP Garage (0603) | 2,495 sqm | Not available in Local Plan. Third party ownership. Landowner has plans for mixed-use scheme. | Suitable for mixed-use development. Access to rail arch spaces to be retained High remediation costs from garage will impact future viability of scheme. Long term consideration, for when values have improved. May be impact of new road alignment on development capacity/mix |
| 6 | Cuxton Road Auto Centre | 3,225 sqm | Identified in study. Availability to be ascertained. | Very suitable site for mixed-use or multi-use residential and commercial space in the longer term. In one ownership, and currently low value trade use. Could be short term proposition depending on land owner ambition. May be impact of new road alignment on development capacity/mix. |
| 7 | Temple Street public car park, 151-175 High Street, 1a-1 Cuxton Road (SO22) | 7,923 sqm | Car park and High St/Cuxton Road corner in Council freehold. Garage and other buildings in third party ownership. | In a good position to help address movement issues in the town and unpick the gyratory and/or provide mixed-use development. Would require more detailed studies on traffic levels and road layout. Would require land assembly or CPO for comprehensive scheme. Capacity and mix will be affected by proposed road scheme - with potential impact on development value. |
| 8 | Tesco site, Cuxton Road access point and Commercial Road works site (0843) | 12,280sqm | Third party ownership. Part vacant. Part of the site is known to have been marketed in the past. | Central, suitable site for mixed-use commercial and residential development. Opportunity to provide higher intensity commercial space than existing. Could be a quick win if Tesco are willing to relocate. Likely to be minor impact of proposed road alignment on development capacity/mix. May require wider approach to sites to ensure continuity of trading for Tesco (usually a pre-requisite for redevelopment). Extent of parking required may affect viability |
| 9 | Land bound by Commercial Road, Knight Road, Priory Road and Smith Street (SO25) | 32,408 sqm | Third party ownership. Not available in Local Plan. | Central location, suitable for higher density commercial and residential mixed-use space. Consideration to be given to relationship with adjacent residential and industrial uses. Employment uses will need to be reprovided. Likely longer term opportunity. Extremely fragmented land ownership would be challenging land assembly task. Spatial guidance and principles would help individual, private schemes to come forward successfully. Would help deliverability by creating certainty. Proactive business relocation strategy a pre-requisite to deliverability of new development. |



POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SITES

- Local Plan site
- Strood Waterfront SPD site
- Infill sites identified in study
- Larger sites identified in masterplan study

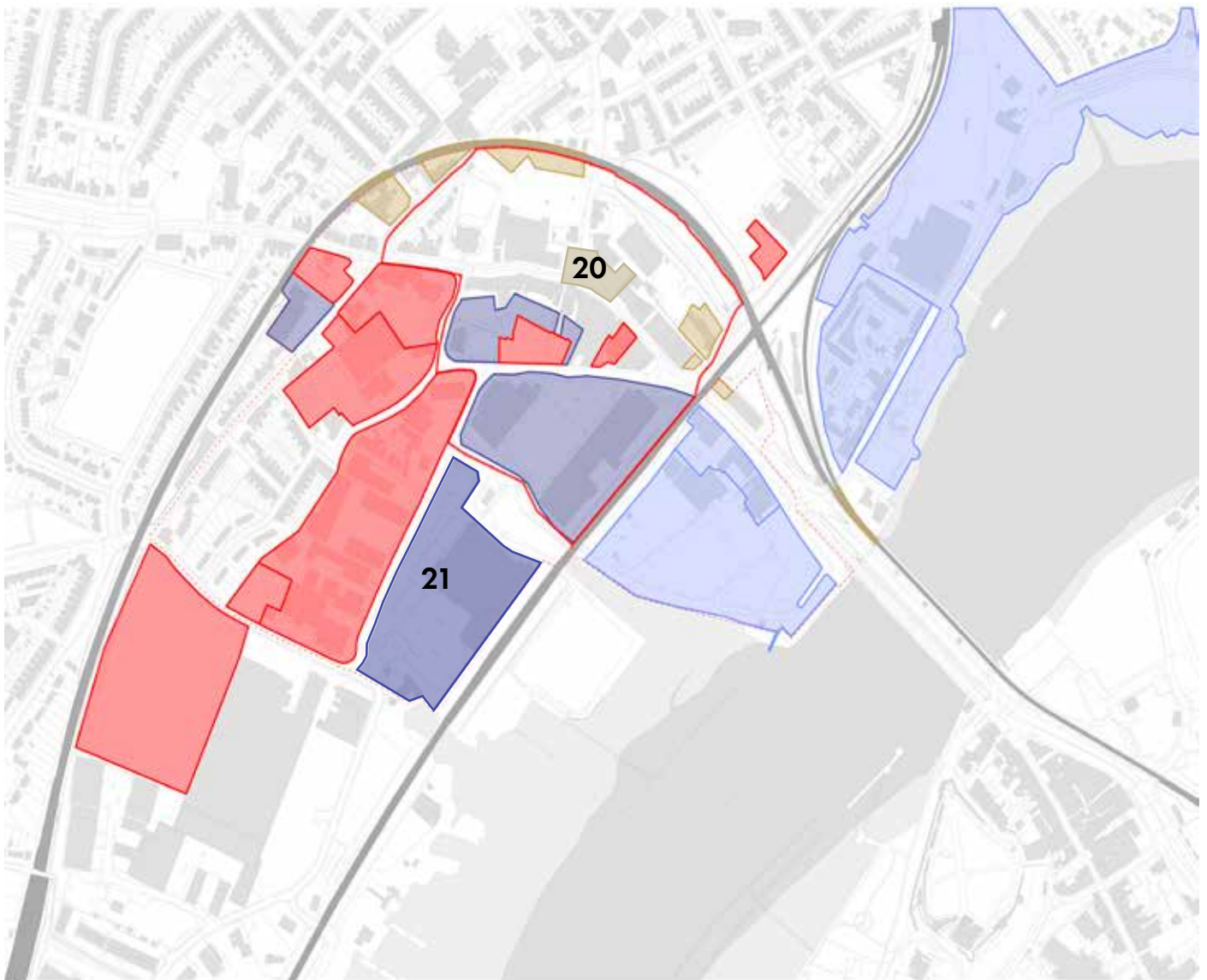
| SITE | AREA | AVAILABILITY | SUITABILITY | DELIVERABILITY | |
|---|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|---|---|
| WITHIN MASTERPLAN STUDY AREA CONTINUED | | | | | |
| 10 | Priory Road (1057) | 2,700 sqm | Available in the Local Plan. Third party ownership. | Suitable for employment space, fronting Priory Road. | Could be short term proposition, as in single ownership and near existing employment uses. |
| 11 | Civic Centre site (0137) | 31,350 sqm | Available in the Local Plan. | Spatial framework set out in the Strood Waterfront SPD for a mixed use scheme. Highly suitable for residential and leisure uses. Flood risk an issue, but works underway. | In council ownership, and site in process of being cleared. Dependent on Council strategic ambitions for Site. |
| 12 | 3-39 High Street | 1,686 sqm | Third party ownership. Not identified as available. | Suitable for mixed use development that provides work space, homes and shops and connects through to the river front. Could be instrumental in improving arrival to Strood. | Comprehensiveness challenged by fragmented ownership – easier to overcome as part of shared vision with site 11. Fragmented land ownership; would have to be considered as a long term proposition. |
| 13 | Retail Park | 28,067 sqm | Third Party ownership. Not available - no plans for change in medium term. | Suitable for internal mezzanine expansion or small pavilion building addition in medium term. Suitable for redevelopment in longer term. Large floorplate retail would need to be reprovided, with easy access parking but this could have residential above and provide better frontage. Possible decked parking. | Long leases recently signed for the retail park, and recently sold to new investor. Would be a long term proposition, highly dependent on structural changes in retail landscape across UK. |
| 14 | Railway arches and adjacent land | 2,237 sqm 1,416 sqm 2,993 sqm | Mostly third party ownership - Network Rail? Small part Council owned. Part available from initial review. | Suitable for small employment and commercial uses, improving frontage to public areas. | May be operational and safety restrictions. Further consultation with Network rail required in the first instance. |
| 15 | Land adjacent to 24 High Street | 268 sqm | Third party ownership. Not available | Suitable for commercial development, providing shops and/or workspace. | Small, individual site which would come forward privately. |



- Local Plan site
- Strood Waterfront SPD site
- Infill sites identified in study
- Larger sites identified in masterplan study

POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SITES

| | SITE | AREA | AVAILABILITY | SUITABILITY | DELIVERABILITY |
|----|--|-------------|---|--|---|
| | OUTSIDE THE MASTERPLAN STUDY AREA | | | | |
| 16 | Freight Centre south of Priory Road (0839) | 30,650 sqm | Available in the Local Plan. Third party ownership. | Highly suitable for the relocation of industrial uses from sites to the north, to enable employment uses with higher job density and residential to be developed on those sites. Consideration would need to be given to commercial vehicle access. | Large parcel of land within one ownership (Swains and sons). Could potentially come forward in the short term if industrial operations are no longer required to be on the land, and if redevelopment aligns with freeholder ambitions. |
| 17 | Tyre centre site (1039) | 1,371 sqm | Third party ownership. Not available. | Highly suitable location for employment space, close to rail station and improving legibility between station and town centre. Business would need to be reprovided, perhaps to the south of the town centre (site 16). | Small, individual site which would come forward privately. Value uplift may be difficult to achieve in short term. |
| 18 | Kingswear Gardens | 15,769 sqm | Third party ownership. Not available. | Suitable for residential and commercial space. However, existing residential is still relatively recent and flood risk impacts on design possibilities. | Cost of acquiring properties would impact 'viability' and deliverability. Question whether capacity can be sufficiently uplifted to justify intervention. |
| 19 | Strood Waterfront (0090 and 0109) | n/a | Third party ownership. Available in Local Plan. | Highly suitable for residential at the northern part of the site. Flood risk means southern part of the site would be landscaping. Included as reference only - outside of the study area and with Council plans underway. | Question whether plans already too far advanced after flood defence work - general viability issues likely to drive achievability. |



- Local Plan site
- Strood Waterfront SPD site
- Infill sites identified in study
- Larger sites identified in masterplan study

POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SITES

| | SITE | AREA | AVAILABILITY | SUITABILITY | DELIVERABILITY |
|----|--|-------------|--|--|--|
| | OUTSIDE THE MASTERPLAN STUDY AREA | | | | |
| 20 | High Street public squares | n/a | Part Council ownership, part Public Highway, Part third party ownership. Not available in Local Plan | Council land suitable for pavilion/slim building on north edge, to give frontage to square. Buildings next to Friary Precinct suitable for higher density replacement in longer term, with commercial at ground floor and residential above. | Council/Highways could bring forward pop-up schemes in short term. Built schemes would be medium/longer term as value uplift may be difficult to achieve in short term. |
| 21 | Morrisons site | n/a | Third party ownership. Not available in Local Plan. | Suitable for redevelopment in the longer term, with mixed uses including food store, commercial space and residential. | Site in single ownership but subject to flood zone 3 issues. Could come forward in longer term, as Morrison reviews its national strategy. |

5.2 MASTERPLAN SUMMARY SCHEDULE OF AREA

Key sites with the quantum of development as based on the illustrative masterplan. All areas are approximate and based on the current concept plan layouts as illustrated in this report. These will be subject to change through design development and coordination. Areas given are based on GEA (Gross External Area). Quantum has been measured for sites assessed in delivery matrix only and excludes sites with existing proposals / planning permissions in progress - i.e. civic centre site and 75-81 High Street . For the sake of this study commercial space includes retail and F&B uses.

| | Site 7 | Site 8 | Site 9 | Site 10 | Site 16 |
|---------------------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| TOTAL RESIDENTIAL | 2394 | 18620 | 37330 | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL UNITS* | 24 | 186 | 373 | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL COMMERCIAL / WORKSPACE ** | 1347 | 0 | 8246 | 2956 | 0 |
| TOTAL SUPERMARKET | 0 | 1387 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL COMMUNITY / HEALTH | 3831 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL INDUSTRIAL | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 14656 |
| TOTAL PARKING (PUBLIC ONLY) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL GEA: | 7572 | 20007 | 45576 | 2956 | 14656 |
| SITE AREA: | 7923 | 12280 | 32408 | 2700 | 30650 |
| APPROX DENSITY: | 30 | 152 | 115 | n/a | n/a |

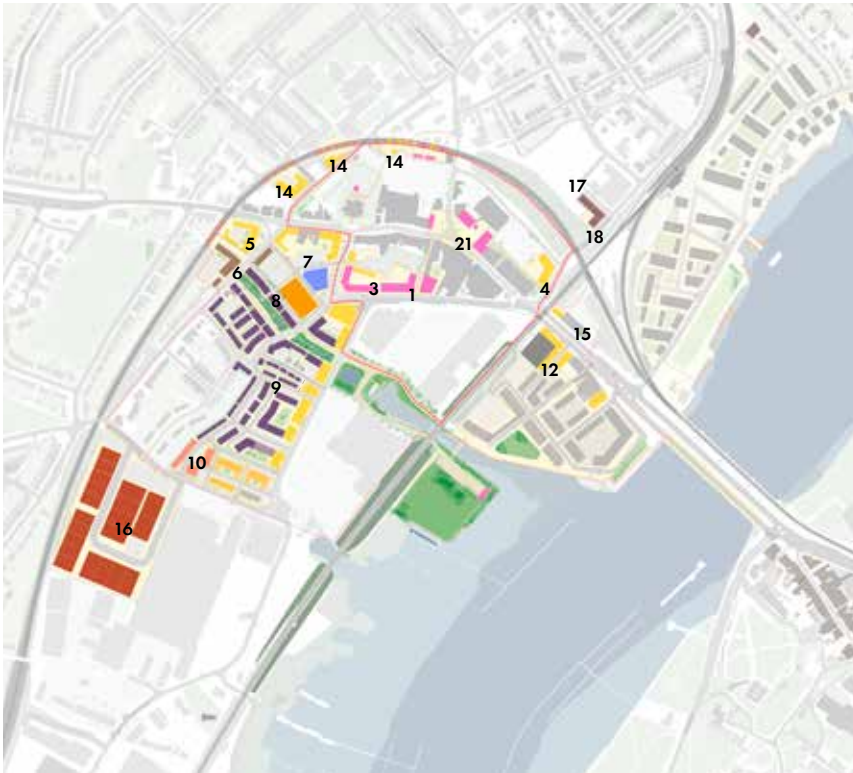
| Site 1 | Site 3 | Site 4 | Site 5*** | Site 6*** | Site 12 | Site 14*** |
|--------|--------|--------|-----------|-----------|---------|------------|
| 4725 | 4372 | 0 | 1607 | 3029 | 4526 | 0 |
| 47 | 44 | 0 | 16 | 30 | 45 | 0 |
| 197 | 0 | 2688 | 909 | 0 | 1288 | 2306 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7740 | 0 |
| 4922 | 4372 | 2688 | 2516 | 3029 | 13554 | 2306 |
| 2578 | 5675 | 1686 | 2495 | 3225 | 1686 | 6646 |
| 183 | 77 | n/a | 64 | 94 | 268 | n/a |

| Site 18 | Site 21 | Site 15 |
|---------|---------|---------|
| 1113 | 2730 | 581 |
| 11 | 27 | 6 |
| 2132 | 1046 | 83 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 3245 | 3776 | 664 |
| 1378 | n/a | 268 |
| 81 | n/a | 217 |

Key:

- Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Health / Community
- Supermarket
- Parking

Indicative only



Total Quantum (indicative only)

| | | |
|--|---------------|--------------|
| TOTAL RESIDENTIAL m2 | 81027 | |
| APPROX UNITS* | 810 | |
| TOTAL COMMERCIAL / WORKSPACE m2** | 23198 | 43072 |
| TOTAL SUPERMARKET m2 | 1387 | |
| TOTAL COMMUNITY / HEALTH m2 | 3831 | |
| TOTAL INDUSTRIAL m2 | 14656 | |
| TOTAL PARKING (PUBLIC ONLY) m2 | 7740 | |
| APPROX SPACES* | 260 | |
| TOTAL GEA | 131839 | |

Notes:
 GEA: Gross External Area m2
 * Units based on approximate calculation of 100m2 GEA per unit
 ** or other active uses
 *** site includes railway arches - area unknown
 **** based on MSP area

5.3 SITE AVAILABILITY IN STROOD TOWN CENTRE 2018

| MASTERPLAN SITE REF | SITE ADDRESS | AVAILABILITY | USE PROPOSED | TIMESCALE |
|---------------------|---|--|---|------------|
| WITHIN SITE 9 | COLLIS HOUSE, KNIGHT RD | YES | EMPLOYMENT/ RETAIL | 11 YEARS + |
| WITHIN SITE 9 | UNIT 6 DEACON TRADING CENTRE, KNIGHT RD | YES | EMPLOYMENT | NOW |
| WITHIN SITE 5 | SLAA SITE 603 | YES | COMMERCIAL GROUND RESIDENTIAL UPPER | 0-5 YEARS |
| WITHIN SITE 7 | 167C HIGH STREET, STROOD | YES | HOUSING | 11 YEARS + |
| WITHIN SITE 13 | 23 COMMERCIAL ROAD, STROOD | YES | EMPLOYMENT | 11 YEARS + |
| WITHIN SITE 9 | 7 ALMA PLACE, STROOD | YES | RETAIL | 6-10 YEARS |
| WITHIN SITE 9 | 5 ALMA PLACE, STROOD | YES | RESIDENTIAL | 0-5 YEAR |
| SITE 8 | TESCO SITE | TO BE CONFIRMED THROUGH DISCUSSION WITH TESCO PROPERTY DIVISION | | |

The delivery information and advice provided by GVA in this report does not constitute a valuation, and cannot be regarded or relied upon for the purposes of viability studies. It does provide a guide for feasibility and deliverability in line with the purpose for which the assessment is required. The advice is exempt from the current RICS Valuation Standards (the Red Book).

GVA has relied on the information provided to us by Medway Council. GVA's views are based on evidence obtained through desk-top analysis, the use of data sources used widely through the property industry, and market research conducted locally. GVA reserve the right to amend this advice should new information come to light.

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Allies and Morrison Urban Practitioners accepts no responsibility for comments made by members of the community which have been reflected in this report.

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