

REGENERATION COMMUNITY AND CULTURE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

18 AUGUST 2010

BEST STREET/HIGH STREET MASTERPLAN CHATHAM

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Summary

At its meeting on the 30 March 2010 Cabinet gave approval to a six week programme of public consultation on preliminary proposals for a masterplan for the Best St/High St area of Chatham. The consultation has now been completed and the results are the subject of this report. **Copies of the draft masterplan are enclosed with the agenda.**

1. Budget and Policy Framework

- 1.1 The costs of preparing the masterplan and the consultation have been met from the Medway Renaissance budget. The masterplan will be a supplementary planning document prepared in conformity with the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 1.2 The report does not directly relate to any Local Area Agreement (LAA) target. The eventual implementation of the masterplan could however contribute to a number of such targets relating to economic development and regeneration.

2. Background

- 2.1 A crucial element of the Council's regeneration plans is the development of Chatham as a regional scale centre. The South East Plan supported this but that plan has now been revoked. Policy TC1 identified Chatham as one of 12 centres for significant change in the region and the focus for significant growth with provision made for major retail development and other town centre uses of a large scale.

- 2.2 Although this policy no longer applies it is important that the case for Chatham continues to be actively promoted both regionally and nationally. It is also important that this strategic approach is already reflected in a number of Council plans and strategies, including saved local plan policies, the Medway Renaissance Strategy 2004 and the Sustainable Community Strategy. It is therefore established Council policy and has broad community support.
- 2.3 A successful town centre needs a combination of features to thrive and be successful. The most important is a good retail offer as this acts as the catalyst for other forms of investment, for example leisure, entertainment and employment uses.
- 2.4 A strong retail offer is therefore considered crucial in establishing the overall image and confidence of a town. Chatham's ranking as a retail centre has declined in recent years. Maidstone, Canterbury and Tunbridge Wells have had new retail developments in the last few years while Chatham has not.
- 2.5 As a result Chatham's retail ranking has slipped below competing towns even though these have smaller populations than Medway. Consequently Chatham's relative position is below where it should be. Without new substantial investment in the shopping offer it is considered the position can only worsen which could seriously undermine the Council's wider regeneration efforts.
- 2.6 A Medway wide Retail Capacity Study was completed in 2009 and has proved to be robust in its findings. It recommends that Chatham:
- should be developed as a major regional centre
 - in Medway terms it should be the focus for major retail developments, large scale leisure and other uses that attract large numbers of people
 - the retail strategy should focus on the re-occupation of vacant floorspace and the delivery of new development to provide at least 30,000 square metres of additional floorspace.
- 2.7 The additional floorspace should not preclude development in Medway's other centres but these should be geared to serving local catchment areas, while Chatham should serve the whole of Medway. The figure of 30,000 square metres is proposed, as it would have the critical mass to change perceptions of the town centre amongst retailers, investors and the local community.
- 2.8 Having regard to this study Urban Practitioners were commissioned to produce a masterplan for the Best Street/High Street area of Chatham and they were asked to concentrate initially on the retail offer as all other considerations should naturally flow from this.

3. Options

- 3.1 The draft masterplan has already been out to public consultation but the Council could still decide not to proceed with it. However, as explained below, it has generally been positively received and it is considered to provide a practical way forward in attracting private investment to Chatham.

4. Advice and analysis

- 4.1 The consultants were asked to have full regard to the proposed Pentagon extension of 15,000 square metres. This is half the identified critical mass that the centre needs to realise its potential. They have also had regard to the importance of retaining Debenhams and ensuring that sufficient provision is made for car parking.
- 4.2 A detailed analysis of the centre was undertaken and the draft masterplan proposal emerged. The key proposals were:
- Incorporation of the Pentagon extension as previously proposed
 - Selective redevelopment of poorer quality buildings along the High Street. This has the benefit of better connecting an enlarged Pentagon with the High Street as well as strengthening the High Street itself
 - The possible redevelopment of the Trafalgar Centre and areas around it plus improving the setting of Debenhams.
 - Opening up a large area to the rear of this part of the High Street, up to and running along Best Street. In this area the proposal is for a substantial car park together with larger floorplate stores such as furniture showrooms etc and potentially a large foodstore.
- 4.3 The draft masterplan was underpinned by a number of specific principles. In summary these include:

Retail Provision

- A new retail heart for the town centre between Best Street and Richard Street with a major food retailer incorporated into new frontage on Richard Street, with upper level parking accessed from Best Street, split over two storeys, to support this.
- New retail development along the northwest section of Best Street, accessed from Richard Street, with upper level parking accessed from Best Street.
- The potential to expand Primark to the rear of the block with frontage to Richard Street as well as the High Street.
- Selective redevelopment of some High Street properties at sensitive, punctuated points to allow for the creation of a new retail quarter connecting the Pentagon extension to a rejuvenated High Street.
- New retail development on the site of the current indoor market, with potential for provision of small units for high quality small retailers to create an attractive boutique retail environment.
- Coordination with the proposed Pentagon Extension, providing two levels of retail plus upper floor car parking.

Cultural/Leisure/Community Provision

- Potential expansion of the Central Theatre, with the addition of cafe and backstage facilities and adjoining cultural enterprise and associated offers.
- Accommodation of the proposed Primary Care Trust building, located in a central location with access from Richard Street and Best Street.
- Creation of a new community/civic cluster around Meeting House, with retail frontage onto the High Street.
- Possible hotel development as a landmark feature at the eastern end of New Road - creating a key gateway into the town centre and benefiting from proximity to the High Street/Best Street and upgraded pedestrian crossings.
- Support for the evening economy with greater activity around the pumping station and access to the eastern end of the High Street.

Employment space provision

- A workspace cluster at the eastern end of the High Street, fronting onto the new junction.
- New workspace development between Best Street and New Road, creating an active and attractive frontage to Best St, whilst simultaneously allowing for rationalisation of movement between these two streets.
- New work space provided onto the Brook, which would also provide frontage onto this important route
- Potential for workspace to be included in the landmark feature building at the eastern end of New Road.

Street scene improvements

- Remodelling of the Iceland building and neighbouring sites to create a new north-south route from the Brook to the High Street, allowing completion of the Brook frontage and ground level parking in the courtyard.
- Remodelling of Debenhams to wrap the block and create an active frontage to Richard Street.
- Creation of a new square around the pumping station to the north of the High Street, with restaurants and cafés fronting this.
- Creation of a new square around the Clover Street church.
- Creation of a strong north-south pedestrian route linking the Brook and Best Street, through these two new squares.
- Creation of a clearly defined public space at the High Street/Railway Street junction
- A legible and attractive route for pedestrians at the Railway Street/Best Street junction.
- Potential creation of a new square around a refurbished St John's Church.
- Paving, lighting, planting and street furniture improvements throughout and to Best Street, the High Street and Richard Street in particular.

- 4.4 The proposals build successfully on the Chatham Town Centre and Waterfront Development Framework – Supplementary Planning Guidance 2004. Implementing the whole masterplan is likely to take at least ten years but it has the potential to be broken down into a number of phases some of which are capable of being brought forward in the short term.
- 4.5 The regeneration of Chatham as a major retail centre is a considerable challenge. It is considered however there is enormous potential and the draft masterplan reflects this.
- 4.6 A Diversity Impact Assessment is currently being compiled and the results will be reported to Cabinet on 7 September 2010.

5. Risk Management

- 5.1 There are considered to be limited risks associated with this project at this stage. The main risks are considered to be associated with a failure to progress the work as indicated below.

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk
Failure to progress	Would lead to a planning policy vacuum in this part of Chatham with associated implications in terms of uncertainty in development decisions and a failure to attract investment	Strong support from the Council and the local community will provide investor confidence and act as a catalyst for future capital funding

6. Consultation

- 6.1 The consultation exercise complied with the Local Development Framework Statement of Community Involvement. The consultation involved:
- Article in Medway Matters publicising the consultation
 - Consultation leaflets distributed to town centre businesses and local residents
 - Letters sent to landowners
 - Posters advertising the consultation in local shops and businesses
 - Information on the Council's web site
 - All member briefing on 22 June
 - Advert in the Medway Messenger and a legal press notice
 - Exhibition in the Central Theatre

- Staffed drop by sessions held in the Central Theatre on:
 - Saturday 12 June 10am-2pm
 - Monday 14 June 10am-2pm
 - Saturday 26 June 10am-2pm
 - Thursday 1 July 10am-2pm
 - Friday 9 July 10am-2pm
 - Wednesday 14 July 10am-2pm
 - Letters and the masterplan document sent to key stakeholders including statutory consultees
 - Masterplan documents placed in Council offices and libraries
 - A dedicated website www.beststreethighstreet.com which attracted 613 hits with 425 accessing the document
 - Presentation given to the World Heritage Site Steering Group and subsequent display at the World Heritage Partnership meeting on the 28 June
 - Presentations to Medway Youth Parliament and Medway Access Group
 - Briefings to major retailers
 - Briefing to Brompton Pact and Mid Kent College.
- 6.2 The consultation/summary leaflet specifically asked for comments on key issues. **A copy of the form is enclosed with the agenda for members of the committee.**
- 6.3 Comments received related to both strategic and detailed issues. Furthermore, many respondents commented on a number of issues within their responses. Details of the replies received and proposed responses are set out in **Appendix 1**.
- 6.4 In response to the question whether the masterplan proposals would significantly improve Chatham as a place to shop and visit, 75% said yes and 25% said no. As well as commenting on the masterplan proposals, in response to questions about current shopping habits and reasons why they don't shop in Chatham, a number of respondents raised issues beyond the scope of the masterplan and planning in general (e.g. council or police service performance).
- 6.5 Officers also worked closely with Rainham Mark year 10 students who each year, as part of an enterprise week, undertake a research project. This year the students looked at Urban Regeneration in Chatham and they carried out their own surveys in Chatham town centre. Approximately 150 people of all age ranges were surveyed.
- 6.6 The findings of the students were:
- The main purpose of people going to Chatham is to shop. However people also believe that the quality of shops in Chatham is not to a good enough standard, therefore believe that better, high-end shops are needed, e.g. Marks & Spencer
 - The conclusion that safety is not as big a problem in Chatham as it is perceived to be
 - Chatham needs to be modernised as the findings say that it is very unattractive and out dated.

- 6.7 Given the findings of this research and the generally positive response to the wider consultation it is considered that the draft masterplan, with appropriate minor changes (see Appendix), should be adopted and actively promoted to the development and investment community.

7. Financial and legal implications

- 7.1 The masterplan will be a supplementary planning document prepared in conformity with 'saved' Medway Local Plan policies S5, R1 and R2 and in accordance with the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. As an adopted supplementary planning document the masterplan will carry considerable weight in the determination of future planning applications.
- 7.2 In order to be adopted as a supplementary planning document the preparation of and consultation on the development brief must be in accordance with the Town & Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004.

8. Recommendations

- 8.1 That the Committee consider the report and forward any observations it may wish to make to the Cabinet on the Best Street/High Street draft masterplan, having regard to the consultation responses received.

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Background papers

- Medway Local Plan 2003
- Local Development Framework Statement of Community Involvement.

APPENDIX 1 – BEST STREET / HIGH STREET CONSULTATION REPLIES AND PROPOSED RESPONSES

STATUTORY CONSULTEES	COMMENTS	RESPONSE
<p>English Heritage</p>	<p>Support the vision for the regeneration of Chatham town centre. Analysis of the issues is correct and the draft masterplan sits well alongside existing adopted masterplans. There are few designated assets within the study area, one scheduled ancient monument and two listed buildings. There are more designated assets around the study area and the changes within the study area raises potential issues for their setting.</p> <p>Advice of PPS5 most relevant. Objectives relate to conservation of the significance of the historic asset and also the positive contribution these can make to local character and sense of place. Figure 4.6 analyses the quality of the existing High Street and English Heritage would be pleased to comment on any reports about the quality of High Street properties. There is potential for older buildings to be obscured behind existing elevations.</p> <p>Do not suggest that former dense development of the 19 century is a model for the future of the town centre but it could provide an inspiration for new development. Support the need for enhanced access north to south across the High Street. Active frontages are essential to compliment the aspirations for the transformation of the Brook. Urge new development opportunities do not repeat past errors – the Debenhams opportunity is an example of this.</p> <p>Kent County Council Historic Towns Survey report for Chatham provides guidance on the archaeological potential of the study area. Area is classed as zone 3, which equates to low archaeological potential. Masterplan</p>	<p>Comments noted. Heritage assets listed in Fig 4.4 but reference to PPS5 should be added to Section 1</p>

	<p>represents an opportunity to explore the historic development of the town centre over a 200 year period. Suggest a research strategy is prepared.</p> <p>In terms of relationship to the proposed World Heritage Site, topography has created a real opportunity for the town centre. It is visible from the north side of the valley and the Great Lines. The town centre is part of the buffer zone to the proposed World Heritage Site. Buffer zones are not intended to be places where no significant change can take place but rather to encourage change not to harm the values of a World Heritage Site and where possible enhance these. High St/Best St has the potential to achieve this, in particular for views into the town from the escarpment of the Great Lines.</p> <p>The Great Lines Heritage Park now includes enhanced access from Fort Amherst to the memorial so these views will become more relevant. A feature of existing views is the roofs of monolithic blocks, urge new development provide an acceptable roof form to reflect their high visibility.</p>	
Environment Agency	<p>The flood map shows that the section of the Masterplan flanking Brook Street falls within Flood Zone 3. Sites 1a 1b 1c 2 3 4a 4b 4c and 12 fall within Flood Zone 3.</p> <p>It is essential that in allocating these sites you fully consider and demonstrate that these sites satisfy the Sequential Test and are designed in line with the guidance contained within PPS25 and in consultation with us. Site 2 (Halfords) includes a proposal for 30 homes within Flood Zone 3. Residential use falls within the More Vulnerable</p>	Comments noted. Add reference to flooding and Strategic Urban Flood Defence Strategy to Section 1

	<p>category in Table D2 of PPS25 and would therefore be subject to the Sequential and the Exception Test.</p> <p>Each application for developments within these areas should be accompanied by a site specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA).</p> <p>The Medway Urban Flood Defence Strategy may identity options for reducing the risk of flooding within the Masterplan area. The findings of this report will be a useful tool to inform planning decisions within the area.</p> <p><u>Delivering on the Thames Gateway Core Vision: Low Carbon agenda</u></p> <p>Recognise that the Green Infrastructure and access agenda has been well reflected in the draft masterplan, however wider environmental issues set out in the Thames Gateway Core Vision are not addressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • waste and recycling • green building including sustainable construction and retrofitting • energy efficiency • water efficiency • low carbon energy production • as well as research, development and manufacturing <p>Recommend developing a Low Carbon theme within the masterplan setting out how the masterplan area can support the Thames Gateway becoming a focus for low carbon industry and a place for low carbon communities.</p>	<p>Comments noted but Masterplan needs to be read alongside other guidance on these matters</p>
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	<p>Regarding any existing land contamination there may be constraints on certain elements of the proposals, but not insurmountable in most cases given most is re-use of existing premises with some re-development of certain plots if all goes ahead. Appropriate site investigations will be required at some stage and any contamination dealt with suitably, given setting and proposed uses issues. As so much of Chatham centre has been changed since the war and its use is mainly street scene, land contamination could be the occasional hotspots rather than widespread areas, i.e. maybe the odd car park, car workshop, plumbers or public space areas that need addressing.</p>	
Natural England	<p>Natural England welcomes the measures and aspirations in the masterplan to provide green infrastructure, including green roofs and provide and promote links to green infrastructure outside the masterplan area.</p> <p>Connectivity to local green infrastructure and green pocket parks</p> <p>Although there are limited opportunities for green infrastructure provision of any significant scale within the masterplan area (other than living roofs), Natural England welcomes the emphasis on promoting connectivity to existing green infrastructure resources in the local area. Natural England would also encourage the provision of new green infrastructure within the masterplan area, including green pocket parks as envisaged by the draft masterplan.</p>	Comments noted

	<p>Living roofs</p> <p>Natural England especially welcome and would encourage the use of green (or brown) living roofing as part of the development brought forward through the masterplanning and delivery processes.</p> <p>As well as providing tangible improvements to the living environment, living roofs can also provide important sustainability benefits by assisting climate change mitigation and adaption through, for instance, urban cooling and sustainable drainage.</p> <p>Living roofs can also provide a vital urban biodiversity resource and there is increasing evidence of these benefits and increasing technical knowledge on how to design them into new and existing development. Natural England would encourage living roofs that build in biodiversity enhancements as a core component of the design (including an emphasis on a diverse range of native locally occurring species rather than a low biodiversity value monoculture led planting scheme).</p>	
Highways Agency	<p>The Highways Agency's interest relates to the motorway and all-purpose trunk road network that we manage on behalf of the Secretary of State. In spatial planning and development control terms, we have a duty to safeguard the operation of that network. In this respect, our interest relates to the M2 and to the A2 trunk road to the west of M2 junction 1.</p> <p>Have been liaising with the authority for some time now on transport modelling work that will inform both the evidence base for your authority's Core Strategy and for the Local</p>	Comments noted but Masterplan needs to be read alongside other guidance on these matters

	<p>Transport Plan. This evidence base will take the form of a revised transport strategy for Medway.</p> <p>Although the draft master plan considers transport issues in the context of accessibility to the area under consideration, suggest that it also needs to establish a linkage with the authority's overall transport strategy and the expectations that would be placed on potential developers and occupiers of the redeveloped area. For example would expect that significant developments would be supported by a transport assessment and that travel plans would be put in place regarding their use.</p> <p>In particular note that the consolidation of the parking within and around the area will result in a net increase in the number of parking spaces available. Strongly urge that this is linked to the authority's overall parking strategy by for example indicating whether these additional spaces will be managed to discourage long-stay parking</p>	
Kent Wildlife Trust	<p>Have no objections to the above Masterplan. Attached are some recommendations as to how biodiversity enhancements and multifunctional Green Infrastructure could be built into the design of the new Town Centre.</p> <p>Kent Wildlife Trust has no comments regarding the plans within the Chatham 21 Chatham High Street /Best Street Area Master Plan however would recommend that the following points be considered when designing the new Town Centre.</p> <p>Regenerating the new Town Centre provides an opportunity to design in a multifunctional green infrastructure to provide a pleasant environment for its</p>	<p>Comments noted and many of these matters reflected in other guidance. Potential for increased biodiversity recognised but opportunities influenced by the hard urban context</p>

	<p>users and permeability for biodiversity. Features that will enhance biodiversity within what is at present a highly urbanised environment include:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green or brown roofs or green walls and balconies on retail units to provide stepping stones for biodiversity throughout the Town Centre. • Bird and bat boxes on all new builds including residential and retrofitted to old buildings to provide roosting habitat for these species. • Broad roadside verges of Biodiversity Action Plan Habitats, rough grassland, wildflower habitat and hedgerows linking into existing habitats such as the river, to provide routes through the built environment for species present. • Enhancement of any new or existing open spaces through boundary enhancement within the amenity areas and marginal and bank side habitat creation along the river. • Hedgerow planting around gardens and other grounds. • Insect attracting species incorporated within the planting scheme. This could be indigenous be could also include high nectar producing non indigenous species. <p>If such enhancements were created Chatham's appeal and biodiversity value is likely to increase.</p>	
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The Theatres Trust	<p>The Theatres Trust is The National Advisory Public Body for Theatres. The Town & Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995, Article 10, Para (v) requires the Trust to be consulted on planning applications which include '<i>development involving any land on which there is a theatre.</i>' It was established by The Theatres Trust Act 1976 '<i>to promote the better protection of theatres</i>'. This applies to all buildings that were either built as theatres or are used for theatre presentations, in current use, in other uses, or disused.</p> <p>We have no particular comments to make on the Masterplan but are pleased to see that the Central Theatre may be expanded with additional facilities and look forward to receiving any planning application concerning this building.</p> <p>Theatre and performing arts are required elements of a sustainable community, providing social, cultural, environmental and economic benefits. Theatres make a major contribution to the vitality of town centres and their evening economy, and are significant elements of any town or city's cultural infrastructure. The Theatres Trust is concerned that the arts and cultural development should play their full part in the community. Culture and the arts bring wider benefits and a stronger sense of community than mere economic analysis suggests. They are also about morale, well-being and pride in the area in which people live</p>	Comments noted.
South East England Partnership Board	The South East England Partnership Board has no substantive comments to make relating to this document and therefore does not wish to make any representations	Comment noted.

LOCAL ORGANISATIONS AND GROUPS	COMMENTS	
Chatham World Heritage Steering Group	<p>The Chatham World Heritage steering group adopted a Development Protocol in June 2009 to guide how and when it comments on planning applications and planning policy formulation. The following comments fall within the scope of the adopted protocol and related to the identified Outstanding Universal Value of the site:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The masterplan area is included within the proposed World Heritage site buffer zone primarily for its presence in views to and from the escarpment area of the Great Lines Heritage Park. The masterplan's attention to roofscapes and relationship with the Great Lines Heritage Park is therefore welcome. The following comments are outside of the scope of the adopted protocol but reflect synergies between the objectives of the masterplan and the policies of the Chatham Dockyard and its Defences Management Plan (part of the World Heritage Site bid document): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ improving movement around the town and waterfront; ◆ enhancing the public realm, and ◆ invigorating the evening economy 2. The group welcomes the intention to revitalise Chatham town centre and in particular the objectives of: 3. The group encourages the strengthening of the 	<p>Comments noted.</p>

	<p>relationship between the town centre and the Great Lines Heritage Park/proposed World Heritage Site, recognising that this would be of mutual benefit. The group proposes this could be appropriately reflected by the inclusion of the Chatham World Heritage logo in the final masterplan.</p> <p>On behalf of the steering group I would like to signal our support for the masterplan and than the council and its partners for giving direction to this important area.</p>	
<p>Area CPDA/CRO - Partnerships & Crime Reduction Kent Police-Medway</p>	<p>The Masterplan appears very comprehensive and includes many beneficial attributes and aspirations, which if fully realised could result in significant enhancements and benefits to the ongoing regeneration of the Medway towns.</p> <p>Observations at this stage include :- Additional Documents that should be factored in to the document to assist guide development or for reference are suggested to include :- Safer Places the Planning System & Crime prevention (ODPM2004) Safer Places- A Counter Terrorism Supplement (CLG2009) NACTSO (National Counter Terrorism Security Office)- Crowded places & guidance.</p> <p>Crime and anti-social behaviour are more likely to occur if the following seven attributes of Sustainable Communities are not Incorporated:- Access & Movement- Places with well defined & well used routes with spaces & entrances that provide for convenient movement without compromising security. Structure-Places that are structured so that different uses do not cause conflict.</p>	<p>Comments noted but Masterplan needs to be read alongside other guidance on these matters</p>

	<p>Surveillance-Places where all publicly accessible space is overlooked</p> <p>Ownership- Places that promote a sense of ownership, respect, territorial responsibility & community</p> <p>Physical protection- Places that include necessary well designed security features</p> <p>Activity- Places where the level of human activity is appropriate to the location & creates a reduced risk of crime & sense of safety at all times.</p> <p>Management & maintenance- Places that are designed with management & maintenance in mind, to discourage crime in the present & future.</p> <p>These are suggested to be incorporated in design guidance, to enhance the key themes for the design already detailed in the document.</p> <p>Improvement of Parking provision may be very beneficial however I can see little mentioned in respect of parking provision for residents of the possible 250 new units & clear, secure provision of parking (ideally close & in view) should be included for these. Similarly those utilising live/work or workspace units may also need appropriate allocated parking.</p> <p>Built form & build lines should be clear & legible and not provide non-overlooked aspects, deep recesses, or areas for concealment.</p> <p>If rear servicing is to be included then adequate security mechanisms need to be incorporated to ensure these are safe, secure and visible & equally they should not detract from the Street scene or overall scheme visual design</p>	
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<p>D. Lynch Chairman, Medway Access Group</p>	<p>Having viewed the master plan make the following main comments:</p> <p>To encourage disabled and elderly people to use Chatham disabled parking has to be plentiful and close to shops and amenities.</p> <p>As well as toilets being available in stores etc. it is essential to have several accessible public toilets as it may not always be possible to access shops - especially during evening and night.</p> <p>Other detailed comments will come to light as and when plans are submitted</p> <p>Because this development will be in place for many years to come developers need to work well beyond the existing Part M and BS 8300 and to bear in mind that disabled people are becoming more independent and numbers of disabled and elderly people are increasing.</p>	<p>Comments noted.</p>
<p>Medway Community Estates (liftco)</p>	<p>Refer to the consultation document inviting comments by 19th July. Have recently acquired on behalf of NHS Medway, the old warehouse building off Clover Street adjacent to Debenhams and the over ground car park.</p> <p>The redevelopment of this site for a new Primary and Community Care Building was supported in principle by Development Control (letter dated 8th April 2009 refers).</p> <p>Note that the identified site within the Master Plan does not represent the actual position of the site acquired by NHS Medway and this should be corrected.</p>	<p>Comments noted. Clarify location of proposed health development on all plans and emphasise importance of working with LIFTCo at appropriate stages in Section 7</p>

	<p>Also note that the Draft Implementation Strategy Sec 7.0, indicates extensive redevelopment of the immediate surroundings and adjacent areas as Phase 2. Would request that any implementation plan for this area, be conducted in harmony with the development intentions of NHS Medway to avoid unnecessary development or operational service disruption.</p>	
NHS Medway	<p>NHS Medway has purchased a site in Clover Street (nos. 9-11) for the potential development of a community healthy living centre and welcomes the creation of an accessible, attractive area around our site, particularly the improved transport links. Note however that the identified site within the Master Plan does not represent the actual position of the site acquired by NHS Medway and this should be corrected</p> <p>Clover Street is one part of a range of proposed developments to develop new high quality infrastructure for the delivery of health services in Medway. At this point proposals are in the early development stage and include the necessity to ensure a financially viable development. As well as creating the community healthy living centre, we are aware of and welcome the potential to include other uses on this site attracting third party income. Following discussions with your colleagues in the Planning Department believe that this site offers excellent opportunities for retail and are also in discussion with Medway Council about other potential uses e.g. extra care housing. These early thoughts on development are compatible with the proposals in the Masterplan.</p>	As above

	<p>There are no indicative timescales within the Masterplan for the phase 2 development of Clover Street East. Similarly, we have no indicative timescales for our proposals, so there is the need for ongoing discussions around the compatibility of development timescales. Links are already established to ensure that this happens.</p> <p>To summarise, your proposed development will significantly improve Chatham town centre, including making the area more accessible, and NHS Medway fully supports the Chatham High Street/Best Street Masterplan</p>	
LOCAL LANDOWNERS AND RESIDENTS	COMMENTS	
<p>Beak Kemmenoe Chartered Accountants 1-3 Manor Road Chatham Kent ME4 6AE</p>	<p>At present there is rear access to 1-3 Manor Road between the Sir John Hawkins car parks, which enables us to access our car park for approx 20 staff and our clients/visitors. Looking at the plans, the Sir John Hawkins car parks no longer exists and there appears to be what looks like a building in its place. Our concern is that the building will then block the access to our car park. Have been located in these premises for some 38 or more years and we lease both the properties - No 1 Manor Road from Pierson Trust whom we correspond with a Colonel Yerburch and No 3 Manor Road is leased from a Mr Scott.</p> <p>Appreciate the plans are not set in stone and are to improve the area, it would be most inconvenient if staff and visitors if they were unable to access the Beak Kemmenoe car park. I have been informed that we also used to be able to gain access from Manor Road, but since the Kent Reliance and Theatre Royal changes we are no longer able to access the car park via this route.</p>	<p>Comments noted. Existing access rights will have to be reflected in detailed proposals as they come forward</p>

<p>Savills (L&P) Ltd Wytham Court 11 West Way Oxford OX2 0QL</p>	<p>Write on behalf of Nuffield College who are the freehold owners of 235, 237 and 239 High Street Chatham. Note from the planning documentation sent to our client regarding the draft masterplan for Chatham 21, that there are plans to demolish our clients premises. Are disappointed to see that compulsory purchase and demolition are planned and will expect the council to take full consultation with all the affected land owners before any plans are finalised.</p>	<p>Full consultation with all landowners will be critical in taking the concepts in the masterplan forward. Where at all possible a collaborative approach will be followed and compulsory purchase would only be considered when it could be demonstrated that there was no practicable alternative</p>
<p>Habendum limited</p>	<p>This company is the freeholder of the tk maxx store (formerly marks and spencer) on the High Street. Currently the store can be serviced either from the high street or our rear service area, which can be accessed by road from Best Street. Will this change in any way if the proposed plans be implemented? In particular would we continue to enjoy vehicular access from Best Street? How would the proposed new service area with turntable between our unit and Best Street impact our unit?</p>	<p>Detailed proposals will need to take full account of existing access rights and servicing arrangements. The importance of this property is fully recognised and an ongoing dialogue will be sought to ensure mutually beneficial solutions are identified</p>
<p>41 Herbert Road Chatham Kent</p>	<p>6. I do shop in Chatham, generally at the weekend. 2I do not work in Chatham. I use the Banks, Theatres and restaurants. I also use the library. 3.More/better shops, more restaurants. Most definitely a better environment with improved public spaces and pedestrian access. More green areas, a water feature and some play area for the children. 6. Support all the features in question 4, just not too many bars. 5.Yes. Stated above. 6. Marks & Spencer, more mens clothes shops, art/crafts shops, HMV, Jewish deli would be nice to top it off.</p>	<p>Comments noted.</p>

Mrs P Sharp donpat.sharp@blueyonder.co.uk	The link given in Medway Matters did not work. From the plan given in Medway Matters it is not clear where any car parks are going to be situated. Will there be the same number of car parking spaces as at present? There also seems to be a lot of greenery and trees where at the moment there are buildings such as the rear of Tesco store so are the current properties being demolished or is this the artist bending the truth.	Broken link reported but website has functioned well. Details of the car parking strategy are set out in the full document
Diana Keating keatd002@medway.org.uk	The new shopping centre will not be a success if charges are made for parking, especially when you can park at Bluewater or Hempstead Valley for free.	Comment noted but it is also the case that all town/city centre retail schemes impose parking charges
Dalia Halpern-Matthews	You comment on a probable CPO of NCP/Trafalgar Centre. You also put with Trafalgar Centre 270-272 High Street. The Trafalgar Centre is 268-270 High Street. 272 High Street is the Nucleus Art Centre. Is it therefore your intention to place a CPO on the NAC? This is an English document, not an American one – so “metres” is not spelt “meters”. Why is the Nucleus Art Centre (NAC) not mentioned within the strengths of Chatham?	Comments noted and corrected references to be added to final document. The importance of the Arts Centre will also be stressed
O J H Hulf oliverhulf@aol.com	I have waded through your various reports and plans and have concluded until your staff have learned to communicate with us, your customers, in clear and concise terms and not in “council speak” there will remain a gulf. Regrettably we will have to live with the consequences without adding anything useful.	It is regretted that the respondent did not find the document readable but we have had a very positive response from others
Dave Creek creeky@hotmail.co.uk	What about the traffic flow with traffic coming across Rochester Bridge, along Commercial and High Street heading east? Is it just supposed to find a new route?	The proposals in the masterplan do not affect the wider highway system or journey options from the Rochester direction
Angela Whitmore crap@whitmorefamily.co.uk	Medway is where I was born and grew up but I moved away eight years ago partly because I didn't find it an attractive place to live. I'm really pleased to see what is	Comments noted

	<p>happening there – the work on the green spaces is great and it's lovely to see the town centre has finally been given a decent facelift! Medway has a huge amount to offer – it's only since moving away that I've appreciated how rich it is in history. I believe this work is exactly what Medway needs and maybe one day it will even have the reputation it deserves. Best wishes to all involved and I look forward to seeing the effects in future visits.</p>	
<p>Jeff Barker jbarker193@btinternet.com</p>	<p>The draft plan looks good .. alas, Chatham centre locals do nothing to encourage out of town visitors once the shoppers have dispersed. How many Medway residents would enjoy a night out in a revamped Lewisham, Deptford, Catford, etc. it is vital to have a safe and secure environment. I would suggest the provision of two highly visible static police rapid response centres incorporating overt cctv monitoring at each end of the proposed development. In addition to this I would suggest as much solar lighting as possible; this will then give "after dark" visitors to the new centre added reassurance and will create a trouble free vibrant evening destination for all. One more comment would be to introduce an annual professional cycling event around the "natural" circuit, which will be created.</p>	<p>Comments noted. A key objective of the masterplan is to improve the vitality of the centre and feeling of safety and comparable developments elsewhere have demonstrated that this can be achieved</p>
<p>Patricia Daniels patricia.daniels@medway.gov.uk</p>	<p>Did no-one notice that it continually refers to Station Road? I assume it means Railway Street.</p>	<p>Comment noted and appropriate corrections will be made to the final text</p>
<p>John Ward john@acornusers.org</p>	<p>It is a great pity that one cannot download the whole document as (say) a PDF as an alternative. All that seems to be possible is to email one page at a time to oneself.</p>	<p>A complete PDF version is available from the website</p>
<p>BERNARD THOMPSON bthompson000@btinternet.com</p>	<p>Dear Sir. Why does Medway Council waste our Council Tax on these stupid public surveys, when they totally ignore public opinion?</p>	<p>While the respondent's views are noted Council Tax has not been used to fund the masterplanning work and the further</p>

	<p>For example;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The demolition of the Thomas Aveling historic building in Strood. <u>Totally against public opinion.</u> 2. The demolition of the flyover over Chatham High Street. <u>Totally against public opinion.</u> 3. The cutting down of the trees in Globe Lane to allow the building of a new bus station. <u>Totally against public opinion.</u> 4. I have yet to meet anyone in the Medway Towns who has a good word to say about the ridiculous 2 way road system around Chatham, with it's endless traffic lights and hold ups. <p>So come on Medway Council, stop wasting <i>your</i> time, and <i>our</i> money with these ridiculous surveys, and just get on with what you do best. Ruin our once lovely towns.</p>	comments do not relate to the masterplan
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RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE

89 replies received.

Question 1. Do you currently shop in Chatham? Yes 82%, No 18%

If yes, how often?

Daily	21%
Weekly	41%
Monthly	19%
Less often	19%

If you do not shop in Chatham, please give up to three reasons why you do not.

It is unattractive, the quality of the shops is poor and I feel unsafe.
Have to pay for parking, range of shops is not what I am looking for, the town centre seems dirty and unwelcoming.
The shops I prefer aren't there. Unpleasant High Street to walk around. Bluewater is so easy to get to.
Shops are down-market object to paying for parking.
Do not reside/work within the area.
Traffic problems.
Poor parking, poor choice of quality shops, no good lunchtime eating/ restaurants.
Poor environment.
Would shop more often if buses were more available.
Poor quality shops. Scruffy run down surroundings. Expensive parking and lack of public transport (from Rochester Esplanade).
Unable to access many car parks in my Land Rover Discovery due to height restrictions.
Congestion and poor traffic flow. Too many pound shops and charity shops. Not enough large good retailers.
I work in Chatham, but main shopping done at Maidstone as no M & S, no British Home Stores and no DVD/ CD shops in Chatham.
Road network abysmal. Car parking expensive and inaccessible. Felt unsafe last time I visited in November.
Too many undesirable characters make the experience too depressing. No shops other than Debenhams and cheap shops.
Bluewater is my local centre and not so many thieves, shop-lifters, etc.
Too much traffic, Medway Council should only allow buses in Chatham.
Difficulty in driving through Chatham. Not enough good quality shops, ie M&S.
Despite the fact that I live within a minutes walk of Chatham High Street I don't shop there because of the: 1: Uncontrolled antisocial behaviour, 2: Its so dirty and badly maintained, 3: There's no pride in Chatham, it is so run down I'd rather shop anywhere else at present, I never feel safe there.
Although I live closer to Chatham, I tend to shop more frequently in Maidstone (or Bluewater) due to the quality of shops. The only decent shops in Chatham at present are Boots and Debenhams. The extended Primark just increases the visibility of cheap, low quality shops. When I walk round the Pentagon Centre or in the High Street I am stunned by the level of bad language that can be heard and this means my visits are brief just to buy essential items and leave.
Apart from Debenhams and Primark there are no quality retail shops.

It's not local for me, not appealing enough and dangerous (seen in views of others).
I might come more often if there were a Marks and Spencer or Waitrose. I normally go to a coffee shop and browse around.
Retail offer (lack of). Chavs - loads of them.
It is a dump. The shops are rubbish and the people in the area are usually scum.
Cost of parking. Lack of interesting shops General run-down atmosphere of the town.
Other than Debenhams I do not want to buy anything that the other shops offer.
Weekly shopping is only for 'odds and ends'. My main shopping is purchased elsewhere.
Lack of variety/standard of shops.
Don't like the shops there Scummy people - don't feel safe. Not my closest shopping centre - closer one has better shops
I don't shop
Shop selection is poor

Question 2. Do you work in Chatham? Yes 26%, No 74%

Do you use any of the other facilities in Chatham listed below?

Banks and building societies	56%
Theatres	48%
Pubs and restaurants	30%

Leisure, please specify:

8 people identifying bowling in Pentagon centre.
7 people identifying Chatham library.
Black Lion, Chatham Town F.C, Gillingham water front etc.
Central & Brook Theatres, pubs.
Central Hall.
Attend various events – including FUSE.
Very occasionally- one Indian restaurant.
Universities, walking.

No, everything gets ruined by antisocial behaviour.
River activities.
Street events, eg carol services.
As an active member of local amateur theatre groups, I use the Brook Theatre frequently for rehearsal space. Unfortunately, the cost of hiring the Central Theatre to actually perform shows (as was previously done by most amateur groups in the area) is now prohibitive meaning that many groups have relocated to Maidstone and the amateur productions appear to sell better in that area.
I might go to Sainsbury's for a change.
Coffee shops.
Pubs are to be avoided and there are no bars worth visiting. The excuse for a theatre is inadequate and not worth visiting.

Other, please specify:

Walk along the river bank. Enjoy the gardens around the riverbank and would like to see a more leisure orientated environment in this area.
Railway station - weekly trips to London.
Shopping.
Only ever go to Chatham for work purposes.
New arts centre.
Co-op bank.
Bank when absolutely necessary.
Churches.
Doctors, Dentist, Hairdresser.
Musical events in church halls and cathedral.
Church.
Nothing nice there anymore.
Pubs and restaurants on riverfront.
Post office.
Bus station.

Blueberry Park sandwich bar.
There used to be a cinema in a fine historical building and we could have had a proper theatre in a listed building but these have been lost.
Opticians.
NAC for coffees, some of the Indian restaurants.
Shops.

Question 3. Which of the following improvements would encourage you to visit and shop in Chatham more often.

The % indicates the support to each option from the total number of responses (89 people in this case).

More and better shops	76%
Improved car parking	37%
Better public transport	43%
More restaurants, pubs	25%
Better environment with improved public spaces and pedestrian areas	56%

Other, please specify:

In Chatham Town Centre, instead of more 'restaurants and pubs' I would like to see improved quality and service in these establishments. The general standard is poor in appearance, range, service, product offering.
Pay on exit parking - so I don't have to keep an eye on the time.
Better road access, can't anyone see the traffic problems through Strood, Rochester and Chatham...why aren't traffic problems/jams on the list above?
Reduce cost of parking.
Not so many closed shops, another big department store like there used to be - M & S.
More Leisure facilities for children, play parks, Riverside walkway uninterrupted, better cycle path.

Relief road from Medway Street to Dock Road not on the plans.
Cleaner paths, litter patrols. Buildings at Luton Arches End, filthy windows and environment- why are food outlets allowed?
Arts - visitor centre as in Rochester with Art gallery.
Remove the underclass/benefit culture.
No more cars in Chatham - only buses.
More litter bins and cleaner pavements. Empty shops/flats above.
Licensed Restaurants.
Less known criminals.
More public toilets. Get rid of all the chavs in Chatham.
Make it greener and cleaner. Enforce zero tolerance for antisocial behaviour.
Access and a well-planned road system. Co-ordinated transport system - road/rail.
Views of river, walks along river frontages, with facilities for leisure and sitting. Cafes and toilets (well kept)
Better leisure.
More stuff so Chatham can be a day out.
Public transport is fairly good - could be improved evenings/weekends. More dropping off points for buses, currently a long walk from rail station/bus station.
A proper theatre and cinema.
More theatres and a cinema or several.
Better and more reliable evening and Sunday bus service - evening opening coffee shops.
Evening bus service, community centre.
Better night-life.
Cleaner.
More free toilets.
Bus stop seating.
Cafes.
More Rock stuff.

Question 4. The masterplan has a number of key features listed below.

The % indicates the support to each option from the total number of responses (89 people in this case).

At least 30,000 sq m of new shops and a new food superstore on Best Street.	53%
The High Street is retained as the main shopping route with new pedestrian routes and shops connecting the Pentagon Centre.	65%
The creation of new public spaces.	64%
Shops, bars, cafes and restaurants provided along new pedestrian routes and onto new public spaces, to make the centre feel safer and livelier.	71%
Major new shopping and other developments between the High Street and the Brook and the High Street and Best Street.	55%
Replacement multi storey or underground car parking located along Best Street and the Brook to create two clear arrival points for cars and easy access to the shops.	48%
Enhanced views of the War Memorial.	42%
Major new shopping and other developments between the High Street and the Brook and the High Street and Best Street.	55%
Improvements to the eastern end of the High Street through the careful redevelopment of poorer quality buildings to provide replacement shops and other uses.	66%
Provision for other town centre activities, including community uses, work spaces and some residential accommodation to improve the overall vitality of the centre.	57%

Question 5. Do you think that, overall the masterplan proposals will significantly improve Chatham as a place to shop and visit will encourage you to visit Chatham more?

Yes	75%
No	25%

What other proposals do you think should be included:

The key to success is keeping vehicles away from the shopping areas but with plenty of low/nil cost parking to challenge the Bluewater/Sava Centre/Fremlin Walk attractions. Chatham was a modern town centre in the 60's but has not had any significant investment since that time. If Rochester is the heritage centre of Medway, then Chatham can become the modern shopping centre for

Medway but we need to get rid of old buildings and piecemeal development. Just an idea, but why cannot we put a raft over Chatham railway station with offices and parking and the new bus terminus there. That would be a giant leap forward for mankind!

Comments on Q4 - Would like to have early sight of the masterplan to review the visual impact of the statements made in Q4 before finally supporting proposal. A public space development should be considered at the point known as RATS BAY, which could be a sculpted terrace combining a water feature (fountains) produced by our local World renowned water feature manufacturer based in the Dockyard. This terrace would combine several key purposes: 1- flood defence, 2- entertainment area, 3- iconic focal point for Chatham. Comment on Q5 - generally the bald statements will improve the current offer but ultimately will depend on the type and quality of stores attracted. Parking facilities should be incorporated into existing sites, where possible. i.e. no more high level car parks. The preference would be underground car parking.

High quality theatre/music venue, with good restaurant, bars, theatre shop etc as in other large cities - in addition to the Central and Brook Theatres, which also have their place. Food hall selling local produce/farmers market or similar.

More entertainment venues with first class artists and shows, a real theatre not a cobbled together Methodist Hall.

Move the job centre - it attracts people with no money to hang around in the public areas all day.

You can improve Chatham in many ways but please start with improving the traffic flow or it will all be changed again in 10 years..... at the cost of what little green space will be left....

Improve traffic access.

Specialist shops.

Better street cleanliness. No burger/ hot dog vendor using mobile carts.

Better policing in the High Street, as we don't see that many down here. Also enforcement on people not drinking alcohol in the High Street. As there are still people doing just that.

Chatham High Street and the surrounding areas are very old and look out of place in a modern era. This includes the eyesore that is Pentagon and Mountbatten House. The removal of these two buildings would vastly improve the area. They are both relics of a time gone by.

Traffic flow around the new proposal crucial- people will not visit Chatham if it is impossible to get to the centre quickly. The present two-way system does not work.

Medway Council do not listen to people, include 'relief road' from Medway Street to Dock road on the side of the New Bus Station from the side of Staples. The road would go from Medway Street to Dock Road and help traders on the bottom road.

General clean up.
At the moment we only have park and ride from the Maidstone side of the town, should be from other direction as well.
Better access to shops by public transport. Waiting for a bus near the river is like being in a wind tunnel and freezing cold in the inclement weather (a reason I do not like shop at Dockside).
I am not convinced that the existing population of Medway will support this planned retail development- an influx of more affluent people seems to be needed, and probably a change in mind-set.
Green/ garden type installations- could be raised up on built up garden structures in wood park or store.
Making it a safer environment.
Ensure that a better traffic flow system is in place- at the moment the two-way system is chaotic. Always very long queue to be able to move around or through Chatham.
A covered walkway to the new bus station and the bus stops in waterfront way. Bus shelters in waterfront way now.
M & S, BHS, HMV, H & M.
The town can never improve while traffic and parking remains a nightmare and especially until the benefit culture is tackled, reducing drunks, drug addicts, single mothers and ethnic community.
Stop all of the cars.
Can't tell - the information is too vague.
Encourage the involvement of local groups, eg Age Concern that have been pushed out of the towns and other social groups to include smaller sports halls even though we have Medway Park.
Not with Bluewater on doorstep.
Better road system.
No, we need more public toilets. No more pigeons. No more spitting. No more drinking. No more fighting.
Possibly, but antisocial behaviour needs to be given 24hour zero tolerance approach. Reduction in use of constant police sirens during normal sleeping hours.
More use of the river frontage. Local traffic access (cycles and pedestrians) from Strood to Gillingham. River buses serving the dockyard and St Marys Island.
Specialist shops, eg Greengrocers, incl stalls outside. Fewer dress shops. Council to step in and remove derelict buildings, eg Theatre, Old Navy Club. Or preserve eg St Johns Church.

The plans will only work if the type of people using the town centre also changes...at present the "typical" people I encounter on a trip to Chatham to shop are very young mothers or groups of youths. As mentioned above, the use of bad language is currently a big turn off and this can only be improved if different people are attracted to the town!
Public events.
More upmarket shops, add more toilets (should be free).
Reduce pub 'ghettos' on Railway Street.
Less charity shops.
Improvement in security, pollution management and shop quality.
More leisure for younger people and more music shops.
More up market shops.
Retain green spaces with trees near Waterfront. Remove traffic lights on Waterfront bus lane. Put raised table with pedestrian crossing.
More bus stops to shorten walk to High Street (I have slight mobility challenges and use a stick).
Complete demolition of the Pentagon Centre including the office block.
More leisure and culture venues (especially as we now have so many students in the area).
Public toilets outside of Pentagon centre. More variety of shops.
Proper community centre - for socialising and finding information for all ages and conditions - including elderly and infirm.
A purpose built community centre to include all ages but have an area for elderly information, day care and social meeting rooms, multi cultural.
It needs to be kept clean and needs to be a safe area.
Bus 133 service improved.
More security needed to protect visitors from many drunk/drugged aggressive people and against all the vandalism etc
Chatham is in such a mess caused by various things - poor roads, poor car parking (expensive) and limited shops that it would be difficult no matter what improvement to make it better.
Free car parks - more car parks
Safer area to be around without gangs.
Better safety control
More CD shops, more rock clothing stores like Rocket in Rochester.

Question 6. Getting new retailers into Chatham will depend on how many shoppers they think they can attract. You can help us to help them by listing any new shops that would attract you, or existing stores if they were improved:

The 99p shop is very cramped, and you cant really get a pushchair around. And maybe a HMV music store, more children clothes shops, tackle shops (which me and plenty of my family and friends would use).
Marks & Spencer, Waitrose, John Lewis, Virgin.
Marks and Spencer Beales House of Fraser Gap Zara.
M&S, Bhs, good quality shoe shops, department store like Allders used to be - Debenhams isn't quite the same.
Debenhams has been a good replacement for Allders. We need to move all the eateries to a central food court where litter can be controlled. There are too many £1 shops in the main high street. Look at the retailers in Maidstone's Fremlin Walk and provide the same!
John Lewis, Waitrose, House of Fraser.
Hawkins Bazaar, Starbucks.
Marks and Spencer C&H Fabrics Outdoors clothing & equipment eg Cotswolds or Blacks, Lakeland, Hobbycraft. Better clothing eg Monsoon, Wallis, Fat Face, Kew, Jigsaw, Laura Ashley Better gift shops eg Past Times, Hotel Chocolate, Oil & Vinegar Encourage independent shops, small boutiques, bakers, specialist shops etc with lower rents and other incentives.
Waterstones,
Next, M&S, John Lewis, Animal, Starbucks, Laura Ashley, Paperchase, Mothercare, Fat Face, Wallis, Accessorise, Monsoon
How about thinking of the owner occupiers of historic retain units that have been working for years in this area, are they all to move to this utopia development, i think you couldn't fill the retail units you already had in the Pentagon or the dockside, so what makes you thing getting Harrods or any lesser outlet brand will improve a traffic nightmare.
Marks & Spencer. Independent retailers.
M & S, Zara, H & M, Gap, Next, Wallis, House of Fraser.
A store like HMV, The Range, a store that sells bigger cloths to men at a reasonable cost. A craft shop.
We have lost so many typical high street retailers over the last ten years. Bring back: Next, topshop/ man, M & S and refurbish stores such as Sainsbury's and Boots.
Waitrose, M&S and other high quality shops.
M & S.

There are lots of empty shops, which are not use in Chatham area. Look at Bluewater/ Lakeside and new shopping centre in Canterbury. Fill empty shops first then new shops.
A variety of small independent stores.
M & S food store. General shop in the High Street- not food outlet Clothes shop catering for older clientele Chemist near Tesco end
Shop that specialise in electrical goods including white goods.
M & S, TJ Hughes, Matalan, ASDA.
Fashion stores - Zara, Mango, All Saints, Warehouse, River Island High end department store- house of Fraser, John Lewis, popular restaurants- Pizza Express, Bella Halia,
Delicatessen and vegetarian restaurant e.g. such as Cranks in London. Craft centre type gallery selling affordable pottery, jewellery and picture. Dress shops e.g. ZARA, Phase 8, Zig Zag, Next etc. pizza express.
M & S, Lakeland, Clarks shoes.
M & S. Department store e.g. John Lewis; store selling white goods and other electrical items.
Nothing will make me shop in Chatham if the type of person found there does not improve - too many good-for-nothings.
Mothercare, Boots, Co-op, Currys.
Furniture. M&S food, newsagents, an open-air market.
The return of Marks and Spencer would be an asset. This store is sorely missed on all levels, especially fast food and sandwiches. This would also attract other retailers back in. Lunch time music venues, shows (short), High Street entertainment.
Get rid of pound shops - they attract chavs.
We need Marks and Spencers, British Home Stores.
Pull the whole thing down and start again. Medway Council should visit Maidstone to see how it is done in Maidstone.
Marks and Spencer, Next.
A big Marks and Spencer with coffee shop. HMV or similar music stall. A young, trendy cafe/bar serving non-alcoholic drinks such as milkshakes, smoothies, sarsaparilla, dandelion and burdock with and outdoor seating would provide a vibrant social meeting place and bring less antisocial locals.
We use local shops. More butchers, greengrocers, fishmongers are needed. A large market area would draw many people. Create an olde town within the new quality (not expensive) will be the key.
Next Marks & Spencer Other good quality men and women clothes stores Mothercare (all shops which were previously in the town and are now only available in Maidstone or Blue Water)

Return of Marks and Spencers, esp. food dept. Occasional street markets, eg Farmers' Market, French food
Marks & Spencer IKEA River Island Waitrose
Zara, River Island, Topman
M&S - even if Simply Food only.
Topman, River Island, bigger Burton, HMV
JJB improved, JD Sports, John Lewis, M&S back for others, HMV.
Topman, River Island.
River Island, Topman
M&S, John Lewis, HMV
M & S, Waitrose. More small speciality shops. Outlet for NGOs/charities.
Next, Monsoon, House of Fraser, La Tasca, Paperchase, Fat Face, Urban Outfitters, Gap, Faith, Aldo, Office, Schuh, O'Neill, Animal, Mexican Restaurant, Costa Coffee, Starbucks, Zizzi, Hummingbird Bakery.
They won't come here because most of the residents don't have much money. People who live outside Chatham prefer to go to Bluewater or Maidstone as it is a nicer place to go to and they do not have the 'scum element' that will blight Chatham for years to come.
Proper clothing stores - not boutiques.
Matalan. 'Large' men's clothes shops.
Craft shops, proper restaurants, not cafes.
A good music shop - for all types of music. A good book shop. More comprehensive sewing and craft centre.
Good quality shoe shop. Music shop for all tastes. Good value food outlet. Haberdasherie/Craft shop. Keep Post Office services.
Marks and Spencers - food and clothing. Zara Improve Boots (existing) Lakeland, Next .Better quality shoe shops
Next, Topshop, River Island, Marks & Spencer.
Visit the Fremlins Centre and Bluewater.
New Look, Dorothy Perkins.
TJ Hughes.
Pub for over 40s only.
BHS, Marks and Spencer, HMV, Clarks.
Cheaper shops.

M&S, Gap, H&M, Wallis, Laura Ashley, Monsoon, Accessorize, Starbucks, Cafe Nero.
Waitrose, Marks and Spencer, Lakeland, John Lewis, BHS, Monsoon.
Return of M&S, even if only food outlet.
TJ Hughes, Lidl.
Marks and Spencer, Next, decent shoe shop. Lakeland, HMV, Paperchase, Gap, C&H Fabrics.
Miss Selfridge, H&M, River Island, John Lewis/House of Fraser, Marks and Spencer, HMV.
River Island, Sports Direct
Next, Marks and Spencer, HMV, Gap and Baby Gap, H&M Children, Zara, Office Shoes, Russell & Bromley kids or any other good children's shoe shop!!
H&M, Matalan, Next, Marks and Spencer, Asda.
River Island, Hollister, Next.
H&M, Next, Matland, Holster, River Island, Pilot
Sound and image to be bigger, a Loudclothing.com store, HMV, Paramore store, My Chemical Romance store, Rocket in Rochester should come to Chatham.
Marks and Spencer
River Island, H&M, Hollister, Marks and Spencer, Currys
New Look, Shakeaway
River Island, HMV, H&M

Question 7. Other comments

I would say that another improvement should be more policing of the shopping areas, and maybe better quality security cameras and a good clean up.
I believe that Chatham could be improved if it were the centre of a rapid transit Monorail system (as seen in Sydney, Walt Disney World etc. NOT a light railway). A Monorail transport system will provide several key points, including: * An iconic project will provide high status, * proof of commitment to future planning for 30 - 50 years hence * A major engineering project with employment opportunities for local people * the ability to service current urban and rural communities and at the same time provide suitable (non road) transport to future areas of development. * a new mixed use river crossing between central Chatham and Medway City Estate would provide the route for both Monorail and mixed use transport. (proposed route is available on request) * An investment opportunity

for local people and others could be provided in the shape of an investment bond. Current workforce of approximately 160,000 could be invited to invest amounts over £500 (at interest rate to be agreed). If achieved this would raise £85million a good start. Just a thought.

Chatham will only become the town of choice for major shopping again once the ingress to the town from Maidstone, Gillingham, Rochester and Chatham Hill is properly sorted. The current transport study still splits the town into several corridors and does not lend itself for easy pedestrian movements. Another Medway Tunnel maybe the solution!!

Improve the traffic flow - Chatham is a nightmare to drive around especially with the amount of roadworks & traffic lights. There is a problem with traffic around the train station area & the Alexandra pub (opposite Wickes)

Too many pound shops, cheap down market outlets, estate agents and building society branches encouraging down market shoppers. Fast food outlets also lead to litter and intimidating gathering of claimants from the Job Centre in the Brook

Chatham has beautiful buildings (look up). Clean them up and make a feature of them

Traffic needs to flow along the old Rochester / Chatham High Street and round the river to Fort Amherst and beyond.... not right round Chatham town centre.... how long will a car journey from Staples to the Command House now take, day or night.....? watch the flow of traffic now.....its not going to go away is it? You are going to mess this up again... its not just me that is watching all this going wrong WHY?

Make more use of the waterfront & Sun Pier

1. Retaining the Victorian shop frontages add to the character of the High Street, so no demolition of the East End. 2. No new food superstore as there is Sainsbury's in the Pentagon. Encourage further ethnic foodstores. 3. Emphasis of the China Town culture at the East End.

We do not need so many amusement arcades, poundstores or fast food restaurant in our High Street. We need places you can buy CDs/DVDs as at the moment there is only Sainsbury's which doesn't hold much, or the new CEX place which only does second hand stuff.

How long as Mountbatten House been vacant? How much longer do I have to look out of my balcony and see that dammed eyesore which is of no use to anyone! Likewise what is with the roof top parking and the bloody great roadway that crosses the broads, surely this could be improved. I think Medway Council needs to go to look at Canterbury High Street and take a few examples. This is a great opportunity to get it right for once, lets not waste it again.

Start with relief road from Medway Street to Dock Road. If you do not have this extra road Chatham will be gridlock. And this will stop major bus services on cross network services and effect business. And what about floods, which will take place afterward and Chatham is near to the river Medway which will rise. Where are you going to place on layover Medway as no new roads to Chatham for Fastrack

services like in Gravesend Ebbsfleet and Temple Hill/ Dartford. Medway got to have a park and ride working seven days a week with new buses and P & R logo etc.

Vital components are: 1. Traffic flow improved. 2. Parking clear and cheap. 3. Excellent bus access to the centre. 4. Attractive public areas with seating. 5. High quality shopping. 6. High quality eating place. 7. Clear signage. 8. Attractive public walkways. 9. Links with the past (attractions obviously linked- historic dockyard, Fort Amherst, Riverside...etc...)

The properties towards Luton Arches are in a dirty dilapidated state and should be checked by environmental health department. It is beyond understanding that these premises are allowed to be used as food outlets. Disgraceful

Since the closure of the coop in Chatham High Street. There is only one shop (Debenhams) that is anything like a quality department store, an extra one would be of benefit. I would like to see more shops of good quality (not pound shops and charity shops) i.e. clothes shops shoe shops etc...

The bus stops are too far apart and the busses are not frequent enough from Walderslade Woods area/ Alexander Hospital area. Plus they are so old and smell of fuel that I feel unwell when travelling into Chatham. When you are older and carrying heavy shopping it is too far to walk to the busses. It is impossible to lift a heavy shopping trolley onto the antiquated busses, if I and others like myself are to shop in Chatham; this must be rectified.

More tree planting to soften the landscape. Do something about sub-standard housing (Luton area) attracting undesirable residents. More employment needed. More thought given to which shops are allowed- there are too many cheap, unattractive retailers. Why not some smaller starter units for new businesses, or showcasing items from the local university of Creative Arts? How will you prevent the public spaces becoming hangouts for drinkers and trouble makers?

Concern: remaining existing multi-storey car parks in Brook street area are a disruption to flow of traffic and pollution from demolition. Some sort of a face lift to the Pentagon Centre which is very claustrophobic.

Better and easy car park facilities less high restrictions

Many people that I know go to great lengths in order to avoid Chatham

1. Enclosed bus station would have attracted more shoppers. 2. Large numbers are pensioners or mums with young children who are not going to be able to carry purchases the extra distance, especially as shops to be concentrated in the middle of the High Street.

- More free clean toilets, - More visible police, security guards, - Pavement repairs as soon as possible, - Easier access for disabled people

I feel that free parking would be a way forward as I can shop at a number of stores/centres for free. Charging for parking until 10pm does not make me want to visit theatres and restaurants in the area.

Medway Council should let the planners of Maidstone take over as Maidstone has improved so much whilst Medway fund one disaster

after another wasting our hard earned money and the only achievement to date is to stop traffic and make Chatham a no-go area for normal people.

Stop building in Chatham and messing around with the buses.

Where is the new bus stop going to be - absolutely no information given on plan - very bad plan.

Although this is a long-term plan it is important to create a sense of urgency and start producing visible results before despondency sets in. The accent and focus is on Chatham but don't forget that 5 towns make a city and close involvement is required. Open-air shows at the riverside.

Chatham can't be improved because of the awful interbred people in it.

Put policeman back on streets More toilet facilities (including disabled facilities) Cheaper car parking Less yobs walking about.

Why has Medway Council allowed the car to become King. Why has the Council let Chatham become run down full of cheap shops, 99p, Poundland, etc.

Having lived here for a number of years now, my fiancée and I have experienced some truly unpleasant things. We have had our car vandalised more times than I can remember, been threatened, mugged and disturbed at all hours of the day and night. I feel ashamed not to be proud of where I live even though we are honest and good people. The locality of our home has impacted on our mental well being greatly with depression and anxiety issues. We have had needles, underwear in and around our home and garden and had things stolen. I truly believe that the antisocial behaviour should be given a 24 hours zero tolerance approach before other improvements could be introduced.

Widen Chatham Hill (lose buildings on the South side). Widen Dock Road from Brompton Road to the Brook or relief tunnel on East side of Dock Road to Globe Lane (Lose the Forces' recruitment offices. Improve station area traffic movement (lose the garage and the pub on the island).

(a) Cleanliness/street sweeping with quiet machines or brushes. (b) Cleanliness/spraying water esp. in summer to keep down smells. (c) Provision of more and better quality toilets, not only in Pentagon. (d) Refurbishment of Pentagon shopping areas, with more seats. (e) In open pedestrian areas, eg Clover Street, proper landscaping with regular attention and shopping bins. (f) Keep old mature trees wherever possible and plant more trees for the future.

Easy access and parking are a must. The roadworks, which are currently in place (and I can only assume more are planned!) make travelling from St Mary's Island to Chatham a complete nightmare! As a regular user of the Brook Theatre, I am put-off by the charge to use the car park when arriving around 7-8pm and the car park at the top of the hill is a "no-go" for women at night.

Just a general clean up, it feels really dark, dismal and dirty. Look more inviting.

Cleaner paths

Make sure the litter is checked and not a problem
Make it modern and clean. New crossing looks out of place.
Mountbatten House was focal point. Then Eye. How many more!! More eating places more litter. Too much traffic now more vehicles would make it worse.
I felt really disappointed that the Royal Theatre was compromised. I strongly feel that this should be reinstated as a major facility for theatre /community/cafe restaurant. I hope the stage demolition was because the workers made a mistake.
You will have problems providing underground car parking on the Brook and I am surprised you suggest this. You can't make Chatham a better place as you won't do what is required unless it involves messing around with the road system. Why do we have to pay for a bus station in the wrong place where private companies will benefit from it?
Return to free parking in the evenings and Sundays!
Cut back on charity shops, improve Central Theatre frontage.
I would like to see a better, more reliable evening bus service - not just one bus an hour for some places - maybe coffee shops open during the evening. A creche service for shopping mums. Policeman patrolling not just CCTV - CCTV cant break up a fight. Street entertainment. Sociable outdoor area - with equipment for all ages. What about rent-a-bike and bike swap facilities? Underground parking.
Please consider disabled access and parking at street level. Please keep in mind access and flat surfaces for less able and elderly. Creche facilities for shoppers. Evening bus service to out-of-town areas.
Retain the theatres in the Central Theatre and Brook. Do not introduce larger theatre that detracts from them, they are great places. Discourage people from eating takeaways in the High Street and leaving litter everywhere. Enforce litter laws.
More Bars/Clubs/Pubs
'Grn fl masterplan' and 'upper fl masterplan' - why the silly names? Maps: too much detail and TOO small. Bearing in mind the history of the Pentagon, etc should not any future development of Chatham town centre be 'organic', ie gradual, not sweeping 'new' and subsequently ill-advised grandiose plans.
Go back to the old one-way traffic system. Improve the Pentagon bus station, which is all near shops and under cover. Do not build new bus station away from shops and out in the open, no more new shops - use closed ones.
Build and display a model of 'the plan' of the proposed changes.
At the moment in Chatham there are a number of shops for the younger generation, there are none for the older generation, this needs redressing. But the above proposals could also bring in people who need to steal to fuel their drug and alcohol problem. Extra police, we don't see any at the moment.

Stop drinking, parking, hanging around in gangs on street corners.
Clearer signage and wayfinding. Dedicated town centre rangers. Bric-a-brac, antiques flea market, permanent farmers market. Positive marketing
Decent theatre with restaurant and meeting place - proper big venue.
Get rid of smaller 'no-brand' shops that look run down.
It is a good idea, which will create employment opportunities.
A place for rock and Metallers - visit makingmedwayrock.weebly.com or email makingmedwayrock@hotmail.co.uk
Better lighting at the night time. Improving road surfaces and paths. More bins and pedestrian crossings
More bins
Cleaner streets
More 'open' feeling. General cleanliness needs to improve. It is not a friendly safe environment, I dont know what to suggest to improve this

Ch21

Chatham 21

CHATHAM HIGH STREET / BEST STREET AREA MASTERPLAN
STAGE 3 DRAFT REPORT - DRAFT MASTERPLAN | MAY 2010

URBAN PRACTITIONERS | STOCK WOOLSTENCROFT | NATHANIEL LICHFIELD & PARTNERS | COLIN BUCHANAN | BIOREGIONAL







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0.0 INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT

Medway Council and its regeneration delivery unit, Medway Renaissance, have commissioned a multi-disciplinary team led by Urban Practitioners to produce a detailed masterplan for the High Street/Best Street area of Chatham town centre. This is designed to help Chatham to achieve the vision for the town identified in the Chatham Centre and Waterfront Development Brief (2008). This states that Chatham can be “a recognisable destination; a city with a lively, active and liveable reputation”. It is also designed to help the town achieve the vision set out in the Chatham Centre and Waterfront Development Framework (2004).

The retail led masterplan for the High Street/Best Street area will stimulate and guide development in this central area of the town, allowing for a significant expansion of retail and a restructuring of the town centre, to help Chatham fulfill its role as the commercial heart of the Medway towns. To achieve this successfully, the masterplan is to provide an ambitious yet deliverable framework for development that can help Chatham to become a regional centre for the Medway Towns.

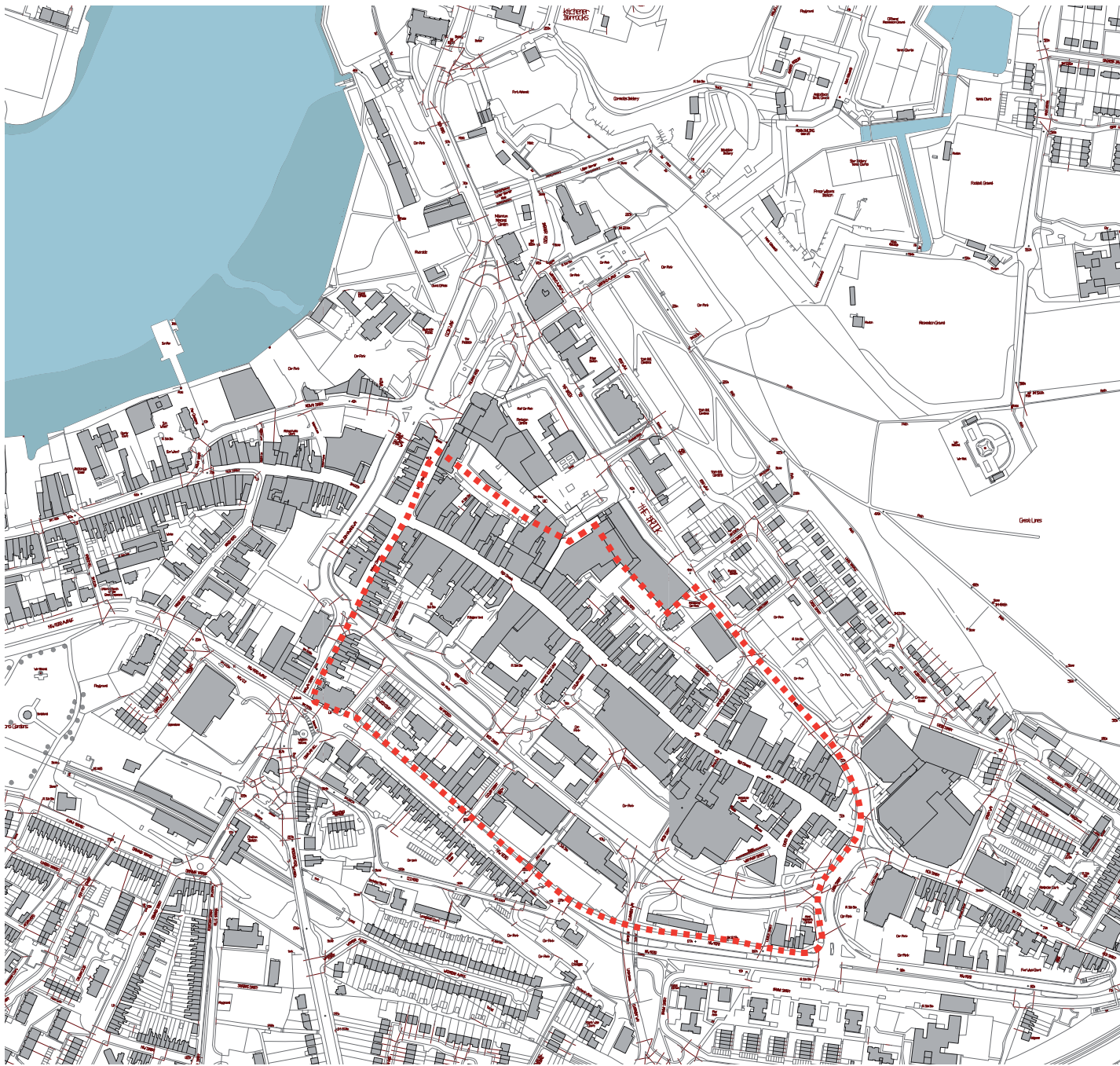


Fig 0.1: Plan of the study area

■ ■ ■ ■ Boundary of the High Street/Best Street Masterplan

STUDY AREA

The study area for the masterplan focuses on the key section of the High Street between The Brook and Waterfront Way (formerly John Hawkins Way); and on Best Street. The study area boundary is shown in Figure 0.1.

ADJACENT STUDIES

A number of adjacent studies are currently underway or have recently been completed within the town centre and it is important that the masterplan takes these plans into consideration so that plans for these critical areas within Chatham do not conflict with one another.

These studies include:

- Pentagon Centre Brief (adopted 2006)
- Waterfront Masterplan (adopted 2008)
- Station Gateway Masterplan (adopted 2008)
- Brook Masterplan (adopted 2008)
- Chatham Centre and Waterfront Development Framework SPG (adopted 2004)
- Gun Wharf Masterplan (under preparation by BDP)

1.0 LOCAL CONTEXT

PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

National policy

The Medway region is at the heart of the Thames Gateway regeneration area and is expected to accommodate significant residential growth over the next 20 years. The regeneration of the Thames Gateway is integral to the Sustainable Communities agenda. 15,700 new homes are planned to be provided in part of the Medway unitary area (South East Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), 2009). The whole area is highlighted as Growth Area, reflecting its role in the Thames Gateway growth corridor and a higher density development is directed towards urban areas, locating housing, employment and community services in areas accessible by public transport.

The South East Plan (2009) states the development of dynamic and successful town centres is central to the achievement of sustainable development in the South East. Chatham’s town centre is recognised as an area of concentrated economic activity and transport services and is designated as a primary retail centre, as the Plan states the area will be a focus for those town centre uses set out in PPS6.

Policy TCI identifies Chatham’s centre as one of twelve “Centres for Significant Change”. These town centres will be the focus for significant growth, and provision should be made for major retail developments and other town centre uses of a large scale. Policy KTG5 states Chatham will be further developed as a major town centre at which new mixed retail, leisure and service uses will be concentrated. Additionally, Policy KTG3 advocates high quality proposals for intensifying or expanding the technology and knowledge sectors at Chatham Maritime.

North Kent Economic Development Strategy (2009)

The strategy, published by the Thames Gateway Kent Partnership, states there is distinct a lack of business or retail units of suitable quality in Chatham Town Centre that has lead to the decline of the area.

The strategy maintains however, despite these issues, retail is a key element for regeneration plans in the area, as retail floor space will be doubled. In terms of office space, the strategy suggests Chatham is the favoured location in relation to the other Medway towns.

Local Plan (2003) and Core Strategy (2009)

The Medway Local Plan was adopted in 2003 and the whole plan was saved under the transitional arrangements for the LDF process (in 2007). The LDF Core Strategy was progressed and submitted for examination but withdrawn in September 2007.

The revised Core Strategy Issues and Options Report was published for public consultation in July 2009. The report considers the key issues and challenges facing Medway, outlining choices for where development should be allocated. The saved 2003 policies still remain valid until new LDF policies are adopted.

Both Local and Core Strategies aspire to develop Chatham into a city centre for both Medway and the wider Thames Gateway area. As the main centre in Medway, the strategy states Chatham should compete with other large regional and sub-regional centres such as Maidstone, Bromley and Canterbury. In order to achieve this, Chatham should be the focus for major retail developments, large-scale leisure and other uses that attract large numbers of people.

Chatham lags behind other sub-regional centres in terms of the amount and type of national multiples represented. If Chatham is to be enhanced in order to compete more effectively, then a critical mass of at least 30,000sq m

gross of additional comparison retail floor-space will need to be provided, as identified in the Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners’ Retail Study (2009). Policies R1 and R2 of the Local Plan state retail development which would undermine the potential vitality and viability of Chatham town centre will not be permitted. Additionally, Policy R12 of the Local Plan promotes mixed use development within Chatham.

The Core Strategy suggests new housing development should be concentrated near the transport hub of Chatham. The South East Plan (2009) advocates Medway Borough must provide 16,300 new homes between 2006 and 2026, and in order to help meet this target the Local Council has proposed to build 2,000 new dwellings in the Chatham Centre and Waterfront area.

TOWN CENTRE INITIATIVES

Medway Waterfront Renaissance Strategy (2004)

The Medway Waterfront Renaissance Strategy (2004) sets out development guidance up until 2024. The strategy seeks to transform Chatham into Medway Waterfront’s strategic commercial, cultural and civic heart. The aspirations and opportunities identified in the Strategy include:

- Greatly improve shopping and leisure facilities in Chatham
- Introduction of a range of new housing to increase community activity in the area
- Create a new focus for civic activity in the heart of the Centre
- promote creative and cultural activity and business development, including inward investment, particularly at the Waterfront and in the Lower High Street
- Strengthen the relationship and physical links between the High Street area and the waterfront

The key capacity figures identified in the strategy for the core Medway area are 3,350-3,900 new dwellings and 3,820-4,500 new jobs on a total site area 64 hectares.

The Medway Regeneration Framework 2006 - 2016

The Medway Regeneration Framework seeks to provide the long-term vision to transform Medway into a city of learning, culture, tourism and enterprise by 2016. It seeks to guide collaborative development between the areas of Chatham Centre and Waterfront, Rochester Riverside, and the town centres of Strood, Rochester, Gillingham and Rainham.

Chatham Centre and Waterfront Development Framework: Supplementary Planning Guidance (2004)

Like the Local Plan and emerging LDF, the adopted development framework aspires to transform Chatham’s town centre into the thriving and vibrant centre of Medway. The document identifies the reduction of naval trade, and the subsequent closure of the Chatham dockyard, as the primary reason behind the area’s poor economic performance. The framework suggests new development should be focused on the town centre and waterfront in order to provide social and economic regeneration to Chatham. The development framework suggests bold transformation, as opposed to modest change, which is required to change Chatham into the economic and cultural heart of the wider Medway area.

The framework sets out projects and investments which will transform Chatham’s centre, which includes the following schemes:

- Expansion and refurbishment of the Pentagon Centre to increase floor-space by approximately 15,000 square meters.
- A new food store approximately 8,000 square meters
- Over 8,000 square meters of small scale employment space and ground floor leisure uses
- A world class waterfront comprising a new performing arts facility, a visual arts facility, a new park and hotel

- A new central library and learning resource
- Major environmental improvements including a new riverside promenade, improved access to the waterfront and improvements along the high street
- A number of accessibility improvements to the centre

Chatham Centre and Waterfront Development Brief: Supplementary Planning Document (2008)

Adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document in August 2008, the framework document builds upon objectives identified with the Medway Waterfront Renaissance Strategy (2004) and aspires to transform Chatham into a city centre for Medway.

A major step in creating this modern, exciting waterfront city is to develop key regeneration areas along the River Medway with Chatham at its heart. Chatham Centre and Waterfront will be the centre of strategic commercial, cultural and civic activity for well over a quarter of a million people in Medway. A number of key objectives are identified, including:

- New development should be of an appropriate scale and use in prominent locations, to frame the space and create an urban energy throughout the centre;
- Sensitively designed taller buildings could add to and reinforce Chatham’s already impressive cultural and historical identity. The designs should be of high quality, should minimise overshadowing of key public spaces and any negative effects on biodiversity;
- A sense of expectation and arrival is to be established by the formation of clearly identifiable gateways and routes including from the railway station, along the High Street, along the waterfront, up to Town Hall Gardens, to Great Lines and cross-routes through the town centre from one side of the valley to the other;
- Currently bland or uninviting areas will be animated and upgraded in keeping with the public realm strategy;

1.0 LOCAL CONTEXT

- New safety conscious, welcoming and direct pedestrian links should be established, particularly between the High Street and the waterfront and north-south routes across the centre from New Road to the Great Lines City Park;
 - The quality, natural surveillance and use of existing pedestrian routes should be enhanced where possible;
 - Perimeter block development is to be promoted, fronting streets and access routes and, where appropriate, enclosing semi-private spaces;
 - Visual connections should be created from within and to the centre and waterfront, linking with the River Medway and the Great Lines City Park.
- The refurbishment of the existing centre through new opportunities created through relocating the bus station
 - The major extension of the centre into the area around Solomon's Road and the demolition of the existing Brook car park
 - The extension of the centre fronting the Paddock, by reclaiming highway land to provide a new development frontage

The outlines of other masterplans within Chatham are illustrated in fig 1.1, below.

Pentagon Centre Development Brief

The main objective of the Pentagon Development Brief is to set parameters for extending and refurbishing the Pentagon Centre to include a mix of uses. In addition the brief aspires to enable the Council to secure a viable and high quality scheme that is closely integrated with the Chatham Centre and Waterfront Development Framework, and adopted local and regional planning policy.

Given the prominence of the refurbishment and extension of the Pentagon Centre to Chatham town centre, the brief identifies a number of components that should be considered within the overall design process. These elements will help inform the character and identity of the building and ensure it is well integrated into its surroundings. The brief identifies there are three main opportunities for the extension and refurbishment of the Pentagon Centre:



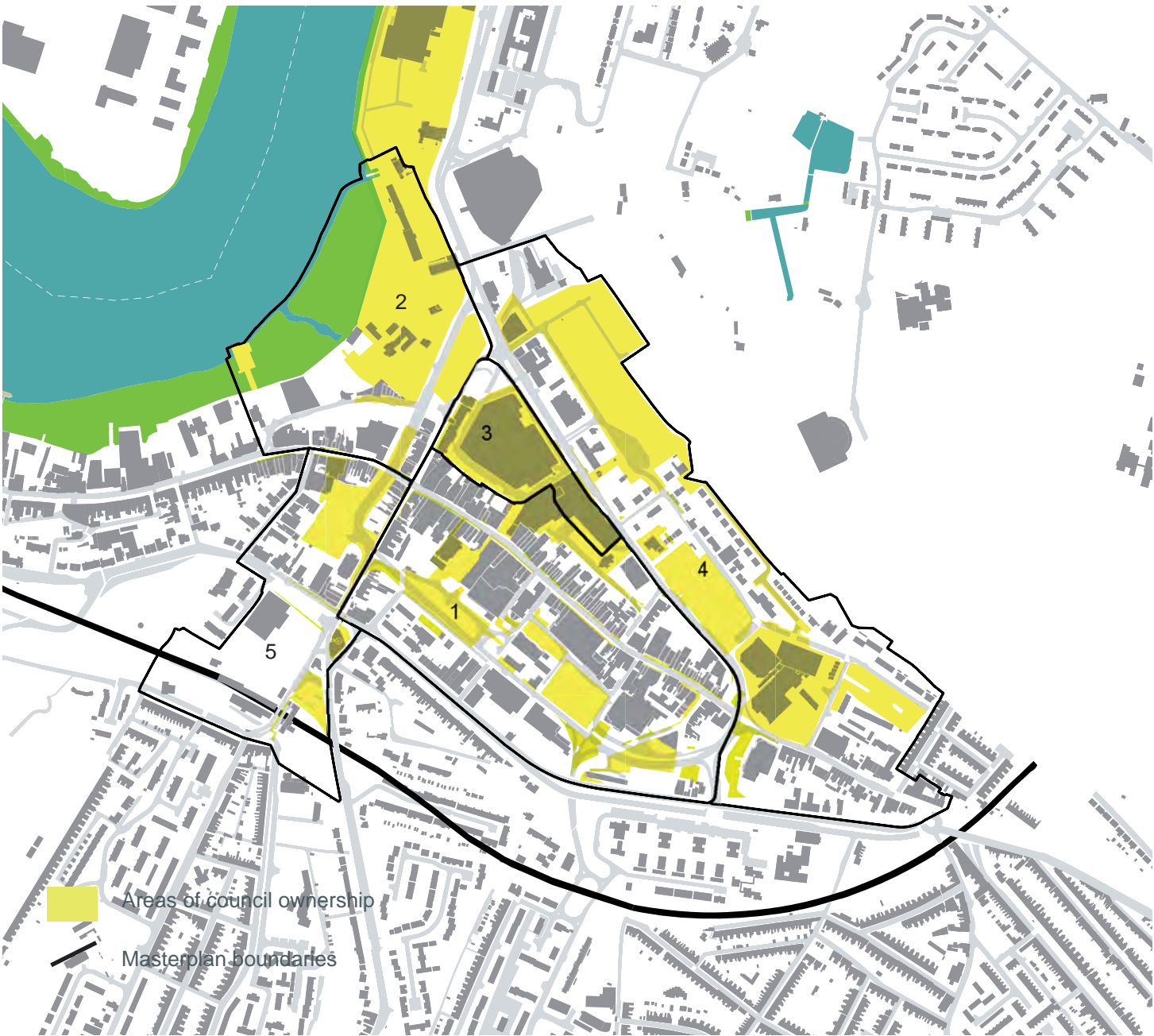
Fig 1.1: Additional Chatham masterplans

Transport and movement

Currently significant changes are underway for Chatham town centre’s movement network and the bus station in the town.

Land ownership

Figure 1.2 indicates the identified development areas within the town centre, and Medway Council land ownership, to provide context in terms of land parcels and deliverability of a masterplan for the town centre.



- 1 - High Street/Best Street Masterplan
- 2 - Waterfront Area Masterplan
- 3 - Pentagon Centre Development Brief
- 4 - The Brook Masterplan
- 5 - Station Gateway Masterplan

Fig 1.2: Council land ownership

2.0 CHATHAM’S ROLE AS A REGIONAL CENTRE

CHATHAM’S RETAIL PROFILE

As part of the evidence base for the 2009 LDF Core Strategy Issues and Options Report, NLP prepared a retail needs assessment for Medway Council, the Medway Retail Study dated March 2009. This study included a quantitative and qualitative assessment of the need for new retail facilities in Medway up to 2026 and an analysis of Chatham town centre’s strengths and weakness as a shopping destination. The key findings and recommendations in relation to retail facilities in Chatham town centre are summarised below.

- Despite having the main concentration of retail facilities in Medway, multiple retailer representation in Chatham town centre is ranked significantly lower than its main competing centres in the sub-region e.g. Bluewater, Maidstone, Canterbury and Tunbridge Wells.
- Chatham has a reasonable number of multiple and independent outlets but the depth and quality of the retail offer are generally poor. The retail sector is focused on the value/discount end of the market.
- Property indicators (retail rents and yields) are less buoyant in Chatham when compared with the main competing centres and retail property capital values are significantly lower.
- The proportion of vacant units in Chatham town centre is higher than the national average (17.4% compared with 11%).
- Chatham town centre’s market share of the comparison goods expenditure generated by residents within Medway urban area is only 21%. The market share in the outer catchment area is only 3%. Overall Chatham town centre attracts only 9% of comparison expenditure within the catchment area, which equates to just 65,000 customers.

- Chatham’s market share amongst the most affluent households (economic groups A, B and C1) in the catchment area is only 7%, compared with 11% for the least affluent households (economic groups C2, D and E). Chatham is attracting a disproportionately low number of affluent customers from the catchment area.
- Comparison shopping facilities in Medway are too dispersed (city centre, five district centres and out-of-centre retail warehouse parks) and the area needs a better focal point for this type of shopping.
- Comparison expenditure leakage from Medway urban area is currently 27% (£185 million in 2008). If improvements to comparison retail provision are not secured this leakage is expected to increase in the future. Significant development is needed just to maintain market share, if not reduce expenditure leakage.
- As a minimum, based on just maintaining market share and low population growth projections, Medway will require about 37,000 sq m gross of additional retail (Class A1 to A5) floorspace by 2016, over and above commitments in 2008. A further 40,000 sq m gross could be required between 2016 and 2021.
- Chatham town centre should be enhanced as a major regional centre, in order to serve both Medway urban area and the surrounding catchment area. The town centre needs to embrace a wide range of activities and should be the main focus for comparison shopping, leisure, entertainment and cultural activities in Medway.
- New comparison retail floorspace should be concentrated in Chatham town centre in order to provide an appropriate critical mass, around 30,000 sq m gross. The priority sites for new development are the Waterfront regeneration area, expansion of the Pentagon Centre, the Best Street regeneration area and The Brook.

Chatham’s catchment area

Chatham town centre has about 15,500 people living within 1 kilometre. The centre also draws customers from Medway urban area and its rural hinterland. Medway’s population was just over 260,000 in 2008, with a total comparison goods spending potential of £0.7 billion. Based on the Medway Council’s most cautious projections, this population will increase to 272,000 by 2016. Spending potential in real terms will increase to £1 billion by 2016.

Medway’s wider catchment area extends approximately 20 minutes drive time from Chatham town centre. Population within this drive area is 423,000, which is expected to increase to 444,000 by 2016. The comparison goods spending potential of this 20 minute drive time catchment area is £1.2 billion in 2008, increasing to over £1.6 billion in 2016.

Figure 2.1 illustrates Chatham’s catchment and its role in the Medway area.

Chatham can act as a commercial centre for the wider Medway area. The built-up area and the key local settlements are highlighted on the plan below.

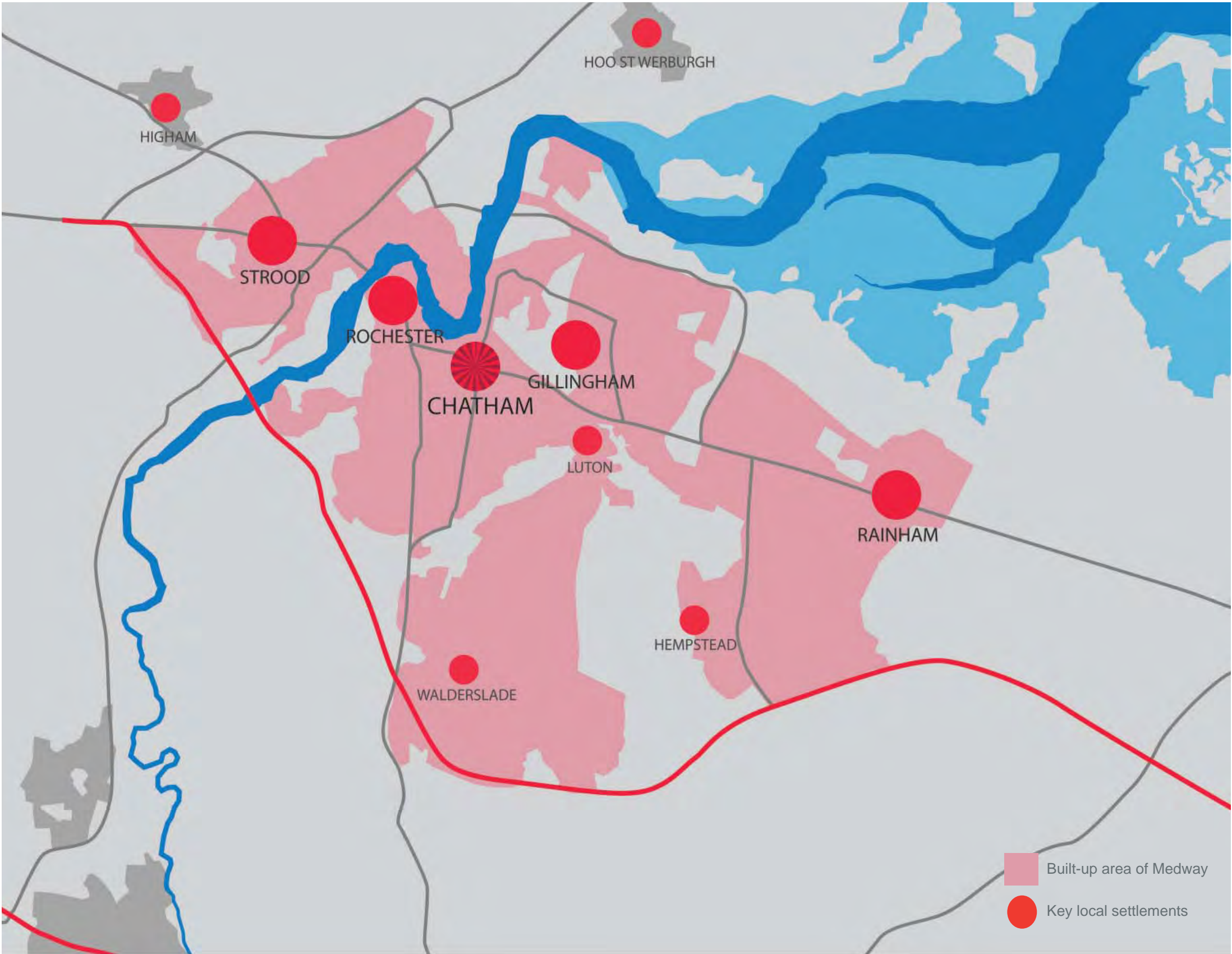


Fig 2.1: Chatham's role in the Medway area

2.0 CHATHAM’S ROLE AS A REGIONAL CENTRE

Chatham town centre’s current retail offer

The Medway Retail Study indicates that Chatham town centre has 406 retail premises, of which 337 were occupied in 2007 (Source: Goad). The vacancy rate is relatively high, 17.4% compared with the national average of 11%. There were 203 occupied Class A1 retail outlets, of which 99 were multiples operators and 104 were independent traders. For a centre of its size, Chatham town centre has a high proportion of independent traders.

In terms of comparison goods outlets there are only 142 shops (only 35% of all units), which in proportional terms is below the Goad average for town centres across the country (45%). One would expect a shopping centre of Chatham’s size and catchment potential to have a much higher proportion of comparison shops, around 50% to 60% of all units. The choice, range and quality of comparison goods shopping in Chatham are poor. The key anchor/ major comparison stores in Chatham are:

Debenhams	10,122 sq m gross
Wilkinson	3,726 sq m gross
Boots	1,847 sq m gross
Argos	1,843 sq m gross
Primark	3,200 sq m gross*
TK Maxx	1,254 sq m gross
WH Smith	790 sq m gross
Superdrug	758 sq m gross
Bon March	568 sq m gross
JJB Sports	552 Sq m gross

* approx. including extension into former Woolworth unit
Source: Experian Goad

There is a shortfall of anchor tenants and major space users (MSU's). The provision of discount/value comparison retailing is particularly strong in Chatham e.g. Primark, 99p Shop, Peacock, Shoefayre and charity shops. Food and grocery shopping is reasonably well represented with Tesco, Sainsbury and Iceland as the main stores.

The majority of Class A1 retail outlets within Chatham town centre are small units (less than 200 sq m gross), as shown in the graph below. In order to attract higher quality retailers to Chatham a range of modern units will need to be provided, i.e. small unit shops (100 to 200 sq m gross), medium sized units (200 to 500 sq m gross) and larger MSU’s and anchor stores.

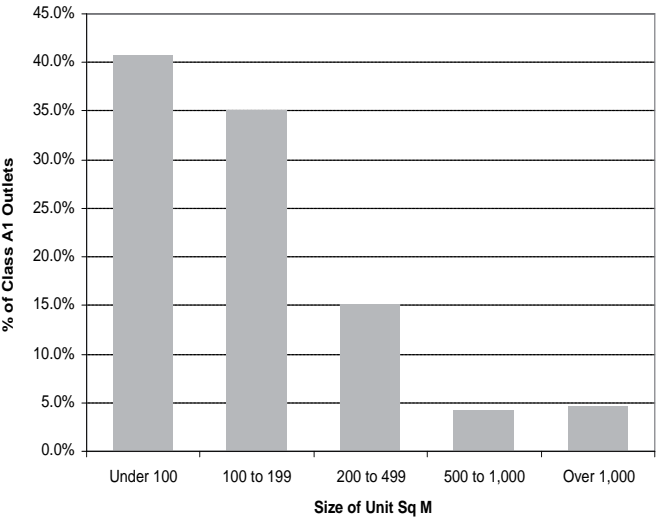


Table 2.2: Percentage and size of A1 outlets in Chatham

Comparative retail analysis

Benchmark centres have been identified and compared against Chatham town centre. The benchmark centres include Chatham's main competing centres in the north Kent sub-region plus other towns that have a similar population but better retail centres. The benchmark centres are:

- Brighton
- Peterborough
- Canterbury
- Plymouth
- Derby
- Southampton
- Maidstone
- Swindon
- Milton Keynes
- Wolverhampton

The key driver for the success of higher order shopping centres is comparison shopping facilities, and in particular fashion shopping and major anchor stores. Management Horizon’s UK Shopping Index provides an index of retail centres on the basis of a weighted score for multiple retailers represented in centres across the country. The weighted score comprises anchor stores, specialty stores, service operators and supermarkets. The weighted score reflects the tenant mix of centres and the quality/attraction of retailers. For example, key attraction retailers such as John Lewis and Debenhams department stores and other anchors such as Marks & Spencer carry a much higher weighting than smaller high street multiples and independents. On this basis, each centre is attributed a score, and all centres are ranked by this score. Chatham town centre’s weighted score (150 points) and national rank (188th) are compared with the main competing centres in the sub-region in table 2.3.

Centre	Rank	MHE Index Score
Bluewater Shopping Centre	25	321
Maidstone	41	277
Tunbridge Wells	69	240
Canterbury	82	244
Dartford	163	161
Gravesend	173	155
Chatham	188	150
Tonbridge	285	107
Sittingbourne	355	91
Hempstead Valley Shopping Centre	393	84
Sevenoaks	405	82
Gillingham	477	72
Strood	694	51
Sheerness	797	45
Faversham	959	37
Rainham	959	37
Dockside Shopping Centre	1,175	31
Rochester	1,789	19

Source: Management Horizons Europe 2008.

Table 2.3: Retail rankings in Kent

Nationally, Chatham town centre is ranked 188th, compared with 159th in 2003. Although not directly comparable with Management Horizon’s data, historic information suggests Chatham town centre has steadily fallen down the national rankings. Hillier Parker’s Shopping Centres of Great Britain suggests Chatham’s rank fell from 64th in 1984 to 98th in 1995 (excluding four new regional centres developed during that period).

Notwithstanding the decline in national rank, Management Horizon’s shopping index suggests Chatham town centre is still the primary comparison shopping destination within Medway urban area, out-scoring Hempstead Valley, Gillingham, Strood, Rainham and Rochester. However, Chatham’s retail offer is significantly below that found in other competing centres, in particular Bluewater, Maidstone, Tunbridge Well and Canterbury. Chatham has a similar offer when compared with Dartford and Gravesend, despite having a much larger population.

It is unlikely Chatham town centre will ever compete on an equal footing with Bluewater Shopping Centre. Bluewater is a true regional centre that serves Kent, South East London and beyond, and its focus is primarily on upper and upper-middle market fashion retailing. The future aspiration for Chatham town centre must be to compete more effectively with the other main centres in north Kent, in particular Maidstone, Gravesend and to a lesser extent Canterbury.

The 2008 Medway Retail Study indicates that 37% of comparison expenditure leakage from Medway urban area (£68 million in 2008) was attracted to Maidstone, just below the amount of leakage to Bluewater (38% and £70 million). Gravesend also attracted £10.5 million.

Table 2.4 on the next page sets out the benchmark centres listed by their Management Horizon’s rank/score. The prime retail Zone A rental figures achieved in each centre are also compared and provide an indicator of retail vitality and occupier demand.

2.0 CHATHAM’S ROLE AS A REGIONAL CENTRE

Centre	2008 MHE Rank	2008 MHE Index Score	Local Authority Area ONS Population 2009	Prime Zone A Retail Rents in 2008 PSF
Brighton	9	458	254,500	£190
Plymouth	17	374	253,900	£180
Southampton	19	350	235,100	£320
Milton Keynes	30	304	234,400	£275
Maidstone	41	277	145,700	£150
Peterborough	43	270	167,300	£210
Wolverhampton	52	256	235,100	£130
Swindon	55	253	192,300	£170
Derby	58	249	241,300	£180
Canterbury	82	244	153,200	£230
Chatham	188	150	262,600	£105

Source: Management Horizons Europe, ONS population and Colliers CBRE.

Table 2.4: Benchmark retail centres for Chatham

All the benchmark centres have lower population than Chatham (Medway LA), but have a much higher MHE score and higher Zone A rental levels. This suggests Chatham town centre is not currently punching its weight in terms of retail offer and property values.

There is a significant spread in rental values across the benchmark centres, with a range of Zone A levels from £130 to £320 per sq ft. Chatham is significantly below this range. An improved retail offer and modern development with an appropriate critical mass could assist Chatham in reaching rents of at least £150 per sq ft Zone A (i.e. the level of Maidstone) which would assist the potential viability of any major new retail developments. Small scale in-fill development is unlikely to generate the required uplift in rental levels to make development commercially attractive.

In terms of overall match, Chatham is closest to Derby, Swindon and Wolverhampton. All three of these centres have major retail led development proposals currently planned or recently completed, e.g. the opening of Westfield’s scheme will have elevated Derby in the hierarchy, and will have increased the centre’s MHE.

Brighton, Plymouth, Southampton and Milton Keynes have a similar population when compared with Medway, but have town centres with a MHE more than double that of Chatham. These centres are highly aspirational, with rankings in the top 30 in the UK, and therefore a step change in Chatham’s retail offer would need to be delivered if the town centre is to reach equivalent retail status. More realistically, Chatham town centre could aspire to a place within the top 50, which would require an MHE score of around 260 points, a 73% increase from its current score.

In order for Chatham town centre to compete on a more equal footing with its nearest competitor Maidstone, its Management Horizon’s score would need to increase by at least 100 points, which would be in line with some of the smaller benchmark centres, such as Derby and Swindon.

Management Horizon’s weighting scoring system is summarised as follows:

anchor department/variety stores = 10 to 15 points;
 other major space uses = 3 to 8 points; and
 smaller space user = 1 to 2 points.

By way of example, a 100 point increase in Chatham’s weighted score could be achieved via a new department store, five major space users (MSU) and about 40 unit shops, which would require a development of at least 20,000 sq m GLA.

In addition to the overall MHE weighted score and rank, Management Horizon’s quantifies what proportion of the weighted score relates to market sectors i.e.:

- upmarket (luxury/ upper and upper middle markets);
- middle-market; and
- down-market (value and lower middle markets).

Chatham is compared with the benchmark centres and Bluewater in figure 2.5. This graph demonstrates that all centres have a mix of retailing across all sectors. Most centres have as relatively low proportion of upmarket facilities and a much higher proportion of middle market facilities. Chatham has the lowest proportion of upmarket facilities (2%), and conversely the highest proportion of downmarket facilities (33%).

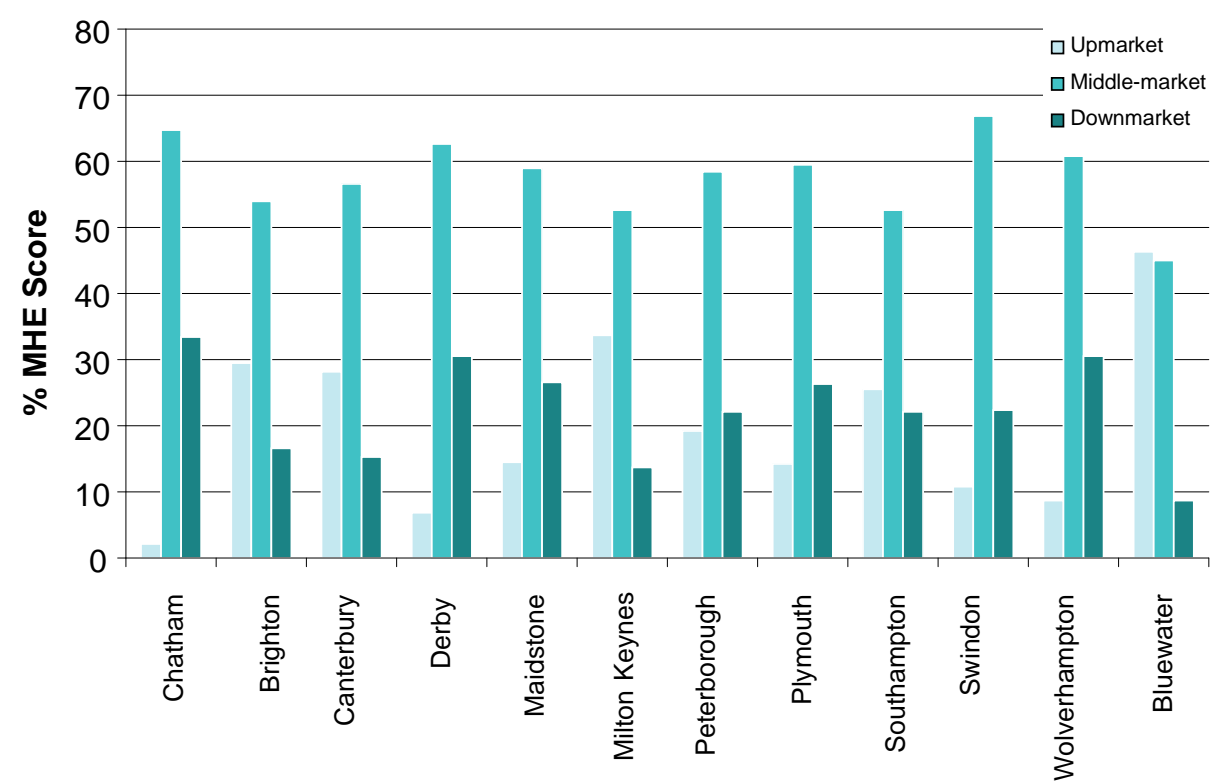


Fig 2.5: Benchmark Centres – MHE’s Shopping Index Market Sector Comparative Analysis 2008

2.0 CHATHAM’S ROLE AS A REGIONAL CENTRE

If Chatham is to achieve a step change in its retail offer then the range and choice of both upmarket and middle-market shopping facilities will need to be increased significantly. However, it is unlikely Chatham can realistically increase the proportion of upmarket facilities to the levels comparable with some of the higher order centres, such as Brighton (29%), Milton Keynes (33%), Canterbury (28%) and Southampton (25%). Nevertheless an increase from 2% to between 10% and 15% could be a target, similar to levels in Swindon (11%), Plymouth (14%) and Maidstone (11%).

MHE categories fashion shopping into market sectors from value through to luxury shopping. The proportion of Chatham’s score within each fashion category is shown in figure 2.6 and is compared with Swindon, Plymouth and Maidstone.

Chatham has no luxury/upper market fashion shopping facilities, but this sector is also relatively insignificant in the other three benchmark centres, about 1% in both Swindon and Maidstone. However in comparison with the other centres, Chatham under-performs in term of upper-middle market fashion shopping. Chatham should seek to increase this sector from only 2% to at least 10%. Chatham has a reasonable proportion of middle market fashion retailing (44%), but has higher proportions of lower-middle (21%), value (13%) and unclassified (21%) fashion retailers than the other centres.

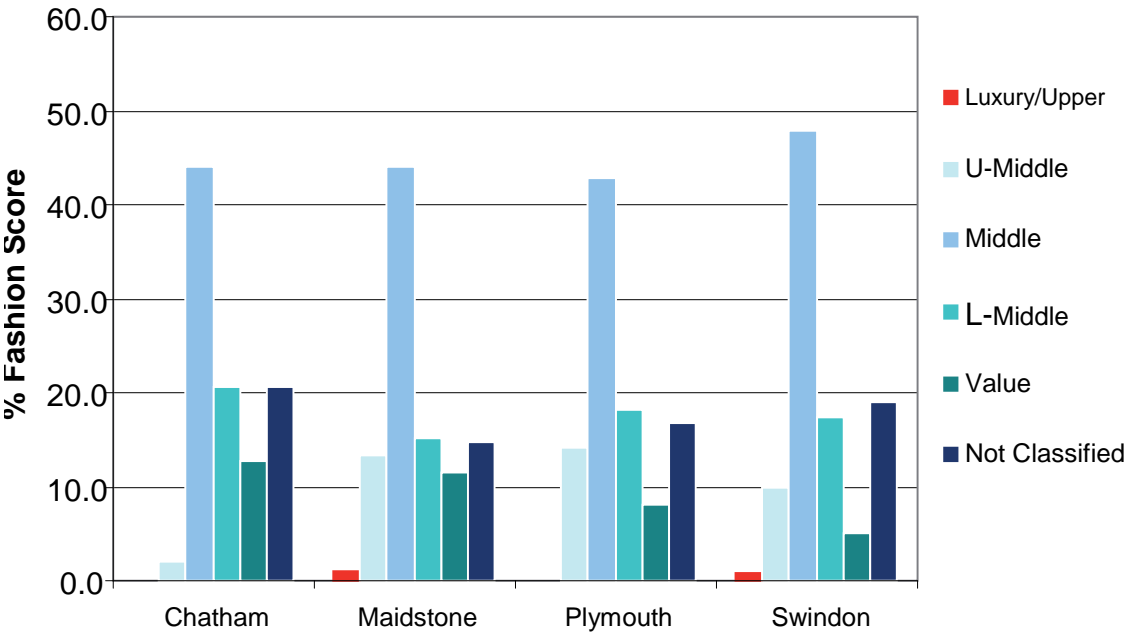


Fig 2.6: Fashion retailers in Chatham and comparitors

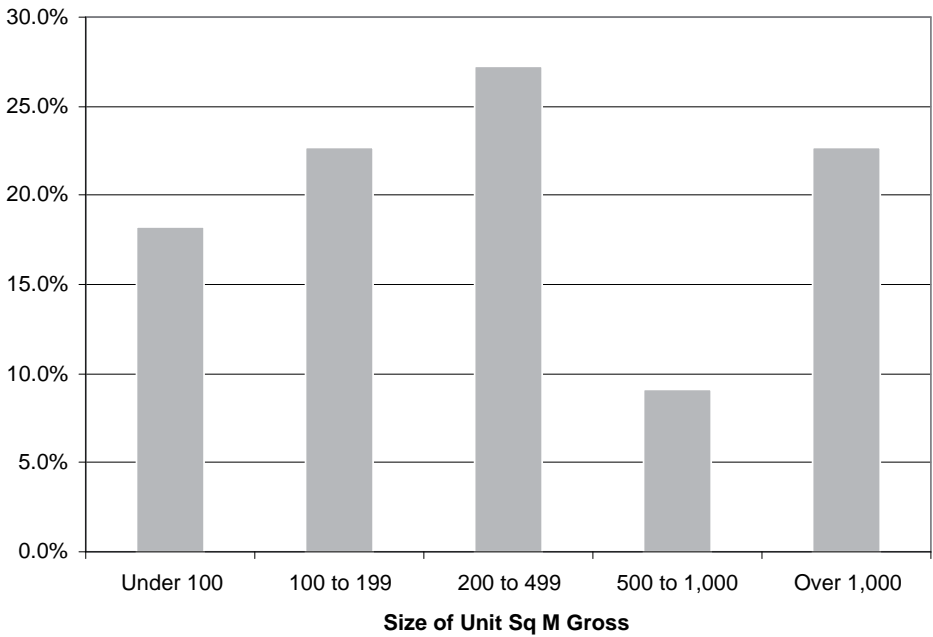


Fig 2.7: Space requirements for potential new retailers

Potential New Retailers

Nationally the demand for retail premises has reduced due to the effects of the recession and the short term prospects for attracting new occupiers in most town centres is poor. In the longer term the demand for retail accommodation is expected to improve when the economy recovers.

Some retail operators release their current space requirements and this information is published by Estate Gazette Interactive (EGi). This database provides details of the number and type of national multiple retailers seeking representation in different centres across the UK. At present there are only 8 space requirements listed for Chatham, as follows:

Best Buy	- 2,787 to 5,574 sq m gross
Costcutter	- 111 to 325 sq m gross
HomeSense	- 1,394 to 4,645 sq m gross
Poundworld	- 279 to 929 sq m gross
River Island	- 650 to 1,394 sq m gross
Store Twenty One	- 372 to 557 sq m gross
Virgin Media	- 60 to 111 sq m gross
Waitrose	- 929 to 3,252 sq m gross.

Other retailers with current space requirements in the South East region are shown in figure 2.8. An analysis of the size of units required by these operators is shown in figure 2.7 (based on the mid-point of the size of unit required).

These current space requirements suggest a broad mix of unit sizes will be required to attract new retailers to Chatham. It should be noted that the requirements listed above are a snapshot and it is necessary to take a longer term view of the potential operators who could be attracted to Chatham.

Operator	Retail Activity	Location	Required Unit Size (sq m)
As Nature Intended	Pharmacy Health & Beauty	In town	279 - 465
Bay	Clothing	In Town/ Shopping Centre	111 - 186
Bhs	Department Store & Variety	In town/ Shopping Centre	1394 - 6039
Borders	Books Video & Music	In town/ Out of town/ Shopping Centre	1858 - 2323
Cargo Home Shop	Household Goods	In town	279 - 465
Carluccio's	Restaurant Bars & Cafes	In town	Not specified
Clas Ohison	Department store & Variety Store, Hardware & DIY	Shopping Centre	1394 - 1858
Coast	Clothing	In town	130
Crocs	Clothing	In town/ Shopping Centre	46 - 93
Debenhams	Department Store	Edge of town/ In town/ Shopping Centre	5574 - 13935
Gant	Clothing	In town	214 - 232
HMV	Books Video & Music	In town/ Shopping Centre	186 - 1858
Holland and Barrett	Pharmacy Health & Beauty	In town/ Shopping Centre	74 - 139
HomeForm Group	Household Goods	In town	163 - 232
House of Fraser	Department Store	In town	12077
Instore	Department Store & Variety Store	Edge of town/ In town/ Out of town	557 - 929
Jane Norman	Clothing	In town/ Shopping Centre	139 - 325
Jessops	Services - Retailing	In town/ Shopping Centre	93 - 139
Jones Bootmaker	Clothing	In town/ Shopping Centre	102 - 149
Julian Graves	Food	In town/ Shopping Centre	46 - 111
Lakeland	Department Store & Variety Store, Household Goods	In town	465 - 557
Lush	Pharmacy Health & Beauty	In town/ Shopping Centre	46 - 139
Mango	Clothing	In town/ Shopping Centre	300 - 372
Marks & Spencer	Department Store & Variety Store	Edge of town/ In town/ Out of town/ Shopping Centre	3716 - 18580
Moda In Pelle	Clothing	In town/ Shopping Centre	28 - 130
Monsoon	Accessories & Jewellery, Clothing	In town/ Shopping Centre	93 - 372
Moss Bros	Clothing	Factory Outlet/ In town	167
New Look	Clothing	In town/ Out of centre/ Shopping Centre	929 - 3716
Next	Clothing, Household Goods	Edge of town/ In town/ Out of town/ Shopping Centre	929 - 1394
OKA	Household Goods	Edge of town/ In town	232 - 372
Ollie & Nic	Accessories & Jewellery	In town	60 - 65
Orange	Electrical & Computer Goods	Edge of town/ Factory Outlet/ In town/ Out of town/ Shopping Centre	84 - 139
Paddy Power	Services - Retailing	In town	Not specified
Papa John's	Restaurant Bars & Cafes	Edge of town/ In town	Not specified
Phase Eight	Clothing	In town	65 - 186
Quiz	Clothing	In town/ Shopping Centre	139 - 232
Reiss	Clothing	In town	167 - 279
Republic	Clothing	In town/ Shopping Centre	279 - 1115
Robert Dyas	Hardware & DIY, Household Goods	In town	186 - 372
Store Twenty One	Clothing	Edge of town/ In town	279 - 557
Suits You	Clothing	In town/ Shopping Centre	204 - 232
T-Mobile	Electrical & Computer Goods	In town/ Shopping Centre	74 - 93
Thorntons	Food, Gift & Speciality	In town/ Shopping Centre	37 - 56
Tiffinbites	Restaurant Bars & Cafes	In town/ Shopping Centre	Not specified
TK Maxx	Clothing	Edge of town/ In town/ Out of town/ Shopping Centre	1394 - 4645
Top Shop	Accessories & Jewellery, Clothing	In town/ Shopping Centre	150 - 3716
USC	Clothing	In town/ Shopping Centre	465 - 929
White Stuff	Clothing	In town	139 - 186

Fig 2.8: Retailers with current space requirement in the South East region

2.0 CHATHAM’S ROLE AS A REGIONAL CENTRE

Based on an analysis of retail representation in the most comparable benchmark centres the target operators could realistically be attracted to Chatham if the right scale and quality of development was implemented are listed below.

Anchor Stores	Major Space Users	
Bhs House of Fraser Marks & Spencer TJ Hughes Waitrose	French Connection Gap H&M HMV Matalan Miss Selfridge * previously in Chatham	Mothercare* Next* River Island Topshop Wallis Zara
Other Unit Shops		
3 Store All Saints Barratts Beaverbrooks Blue Arrow Build-A-Bear Workshop Birthdays Blue Banana Build a Bear Card factory Cargo HomeShop Clarks Coast Cult Diamonds and Pearls Evolution F. Hinds Faith Fat Face Fraser Hart	Games Workshop Goldsmiths Herbs & Acupuncture Hotel Chocolat Inspire Jane Norman Jessops Jones Bootmaker Julian Graves La Senza Lacoste Levi’s Lush Madhouse Millets Millie’s Cookies Monsoon Moss Bros Oasis	Past Times Pulp Pumpkin Patch Republic Robert Dyas Ryman Schuh Soap & Co Sole Trader Sony Centre Storm Suits You Sunglass Hut Tie Rack Virgin Media Warehouse

Fig 2.9: Target retail operators for Chatham

Conclusion and Recommendations

The aspirational targets for Chatham town centre are as follows:

- Chatham town centre must compete more effectively with Maidstone, Gravesend and Canterbury.
- Chatham town centre should aspire to a place within the top 50 of shopping centres across the county.
- Chatham town centre should have a much higher proportion of comparison shops, at least 50% rather than the current proportion of 35%.
- In order to attract higher quality retailers to Chatham a range of modern units will need to be provided, i.e. small unit shops (100 to 200 sq m gross), medium sized units (200 to 500 sq m gross) and larger MSU’s and anchor stores.
- New development must provide the necessary critical mass in order to attract customers, operators and increase property values to assist the viability of development. The vicious circle of lack of customer, operator demand for space and low property values needs to be broken.
- If Chatham is to achieve a step change in its retail offer then the range and choice of both upmarket and middle-market shopping facilities will need to be increased significantly. An increase from 2% to at least 10% should be the target.
- New development will need to be marketed to mainstream national multiples not currently represented in Chatham, particularly in the middle market sectors.

CHATHAM'S EVENING ECONOMY

Chatham in a regional context

Chatham sits at the centre of the large metropolitan area covering the Medway towns, with a potential catchment area of 260,000 people for its evening economy. However, there are a number of competing centres within the region which are popular for evening uses and it will be important for Chatham to provide a strong offer which can set it apart from these centres if it is to compete successfully.

Maidstone, to the south, has a restaurant offer, a strong pub offer, a semi-central area dedicated to leisure uses and a well developed nightclub scene. These have helped to create an evening economy circuit within the town, and although this can sometimes cause anti-social behaviour problems, it does attract a large number of people and bring activity to the centre during the evening.

Rochester, immediately to the west of Chatham, has a strong restaurant offer with diverse cuisines represented in small, atmospheric premises. It also has a number of pubs and bars which host live music. Chatham has potential to provide a complementary offer to Rochester, to strengthen the appeal of both locations, and this option will be explored.

Finally, Gillingham to the east, also provides a nightclub offer, though this is not considered to attract an audience from a regional catchment and is instead considered to have more of a local appeal.

Chatham's strengths and weaknesses

Chatham currently has a small cluster of restaurants and take-away premises at the eastern end of the High Street, a grouping of pubs along Station Road and a few dispersed theatres; the most high profile of these being the Central Theatre on the High Street.

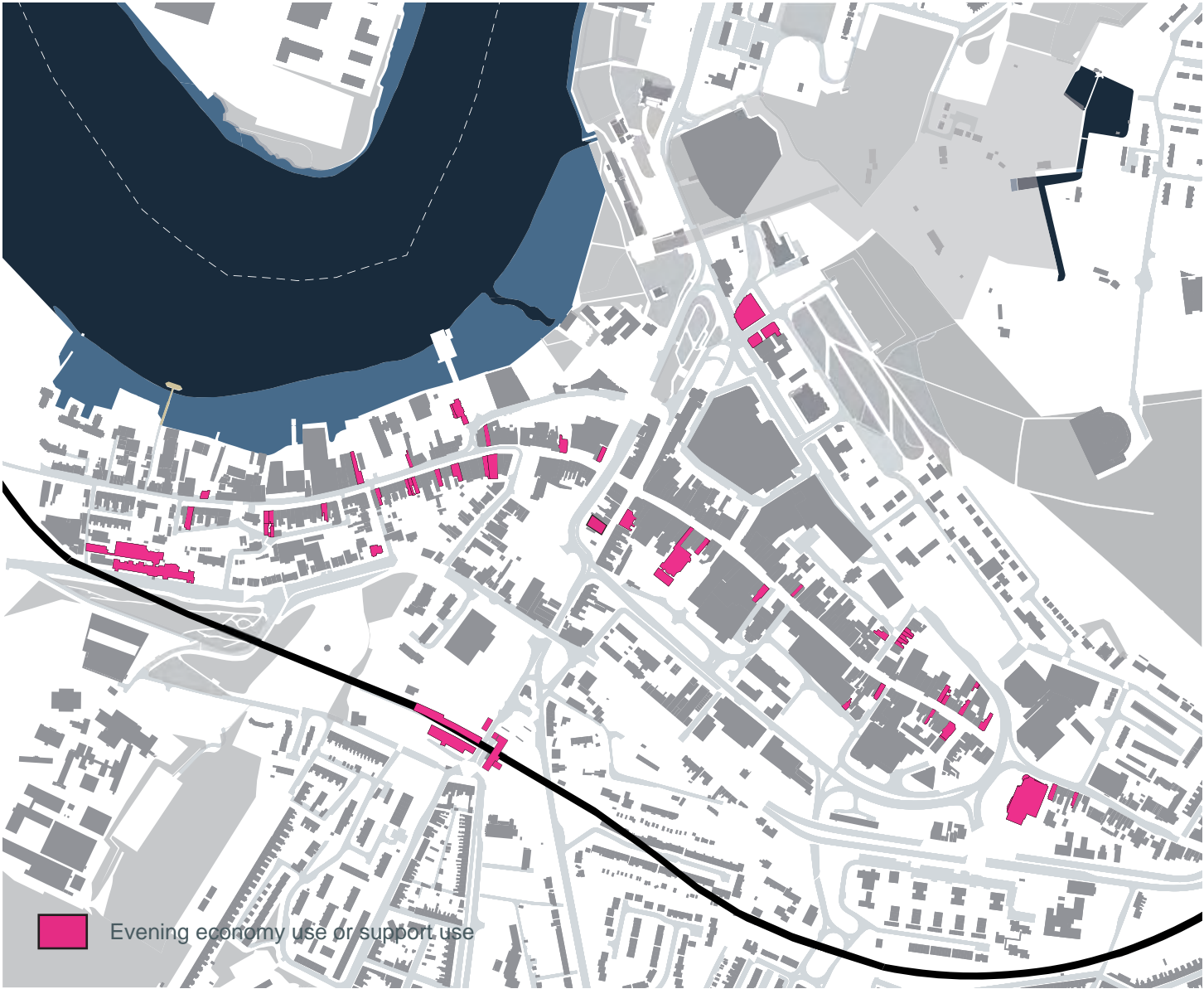


Fig 2.10: Chatham's evening economy uses

The evening economy within the town centre is fairly disparate, without a clear circuit linking these, and with a quality of public realm which does not provide an appealing environment in which to walk between the offers in the town.

However, Chatham does have an attractive historic environment in some sections of the town centre which could certainly support a stronger evening economy. It also has cultural gems, in its local bars which have hosted high profile and cult acts such as the early Libertines and Billy

Childish. This coupled with the live music acts which have their roots in Rochester, such as Morcheeba and James Taylor Quartet, could provide the basis of a strong cultural offer in the town.

In addressing Chatham's wider identity issues, it is important to highlight these and other creative assets and attributes the town has, including the well regarded University of the Creative Arts, where Tracey Emin, Zara Rhodes, Billy Childish and Karen Millen studied, amongst others.

2.0 CHATHAM’S ROLE AS A REGIONAL CENTRE

Potential for improving Chatham’s evening economy

Figure 2.11 indicates Chatham’s existing evening economy ‘nodes’, with the restaurants shown along the High Street towards Rochester, the pubs along Station Road and the cluster of small restaurants and take-aways at the eastern end of the High Street. The key cultural buildings, the theatres and art centre, are also highlighted.

The large node at the waterfront represents the Council’s ambitions to establish an area of cultural and leisure uses at this attractive spot within the town centre, which is a highly suitable location and presents the potential to effectively complement the offer in Rochester.

Considering the location of these fixed areas of evening economy activity, we have assessed the streets on which people would be most likely to be circulating during the evening, if they were to be making their way between restaurant, theatre, and bar and created a heat spectrum to indicate which streets and routes are likely to be the most well used within Chatham. The nodes and heat spectrum highlight the importance of the Station Road/Military Road area and the key apex with the High Street. It also highlights the isolated nature of the evening economy activity at the eastern end of the High Street.

In order to help address the disparate nature of the evening economy at present, and to help create an effective circuit for these activities, key locations have been identified for additional evening economy uses. These are based at, or close to, the United Reform Church on Clover Street and by the pumping station, just to the north of the High Street. These locations are close to attractive, historic building assets within the town centre and at proposed open spaces within the masterplan options, to help ensure an attractive environment for the evening economy and encourage people to spend their leisure time in the town centre. They also both sit comfortably at a key point of the proposed retail circuit within the masterplan options, which could work equally effectively as an evening economy circuit, helping to bring the current activity areas together and create a more integrated evening economy offer in Chatham.



Fig 2.11: Improving Chatham’s evening economy offer

3.0 CHATHAM'S ACCESSIBILITY

Chatham is highly accessible by train, and has the potential for growth in travel by rail by shoppers and leisure visitors. The study area is the retail heart of Chatham, and could be for the whole of the Medway Towns. Therefore access to and from the railway station from Chatham and the High Street area is very important. Unfortunately existing pedestrian access is poor, with only one route along Railway Street available, due to the significant barrier created by Best Street.

Other key pedestrian routes are shown in figure 3.2 from Chatham Centre & Waterfront Development Framework (EDAW 2004). These routes should be improved to connect the High Street area to the rest of Chatham.

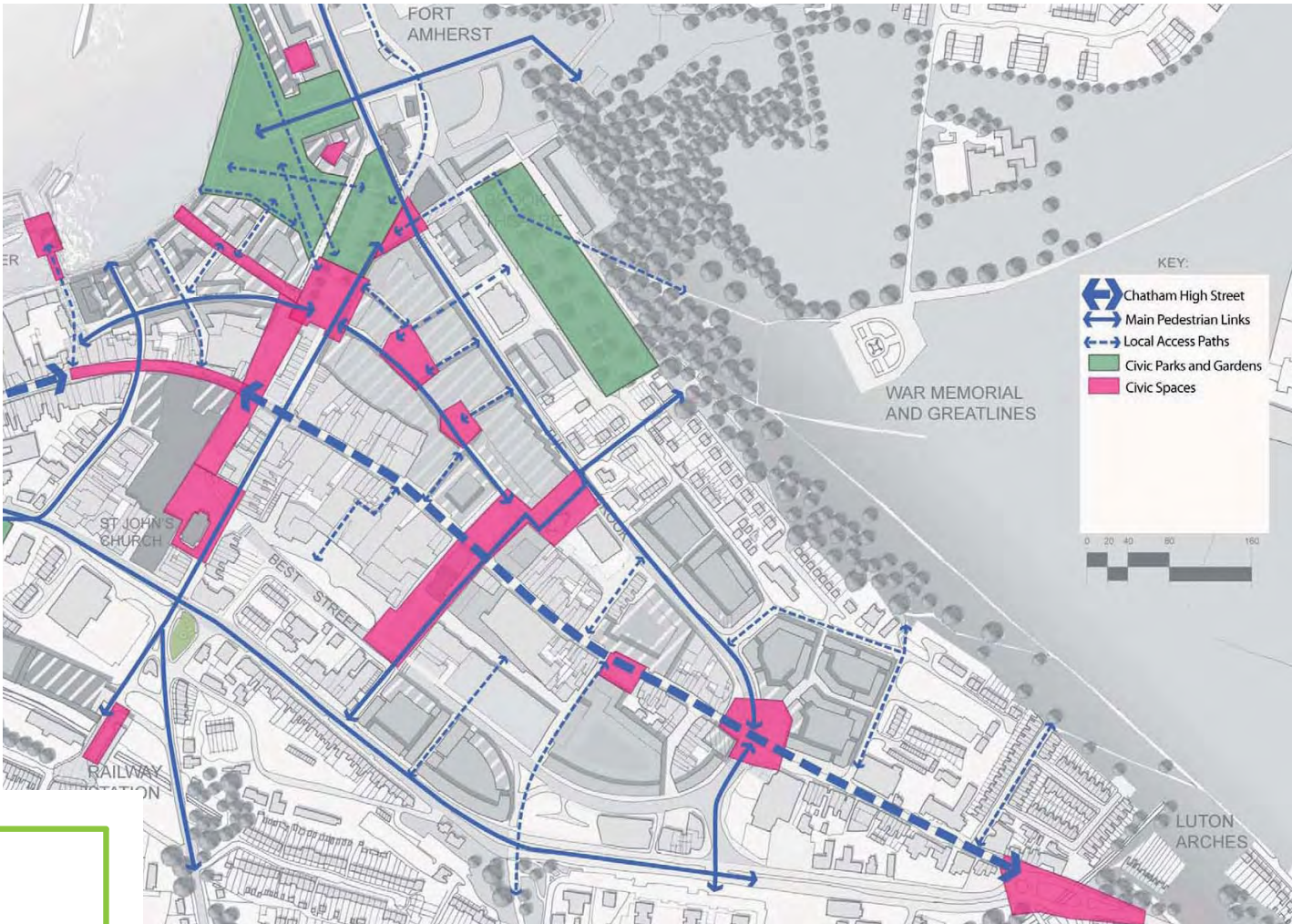


Fig 3.2: Pedestrian accessibility in Chatham, identified in 2008 Development Framework (EDAW)

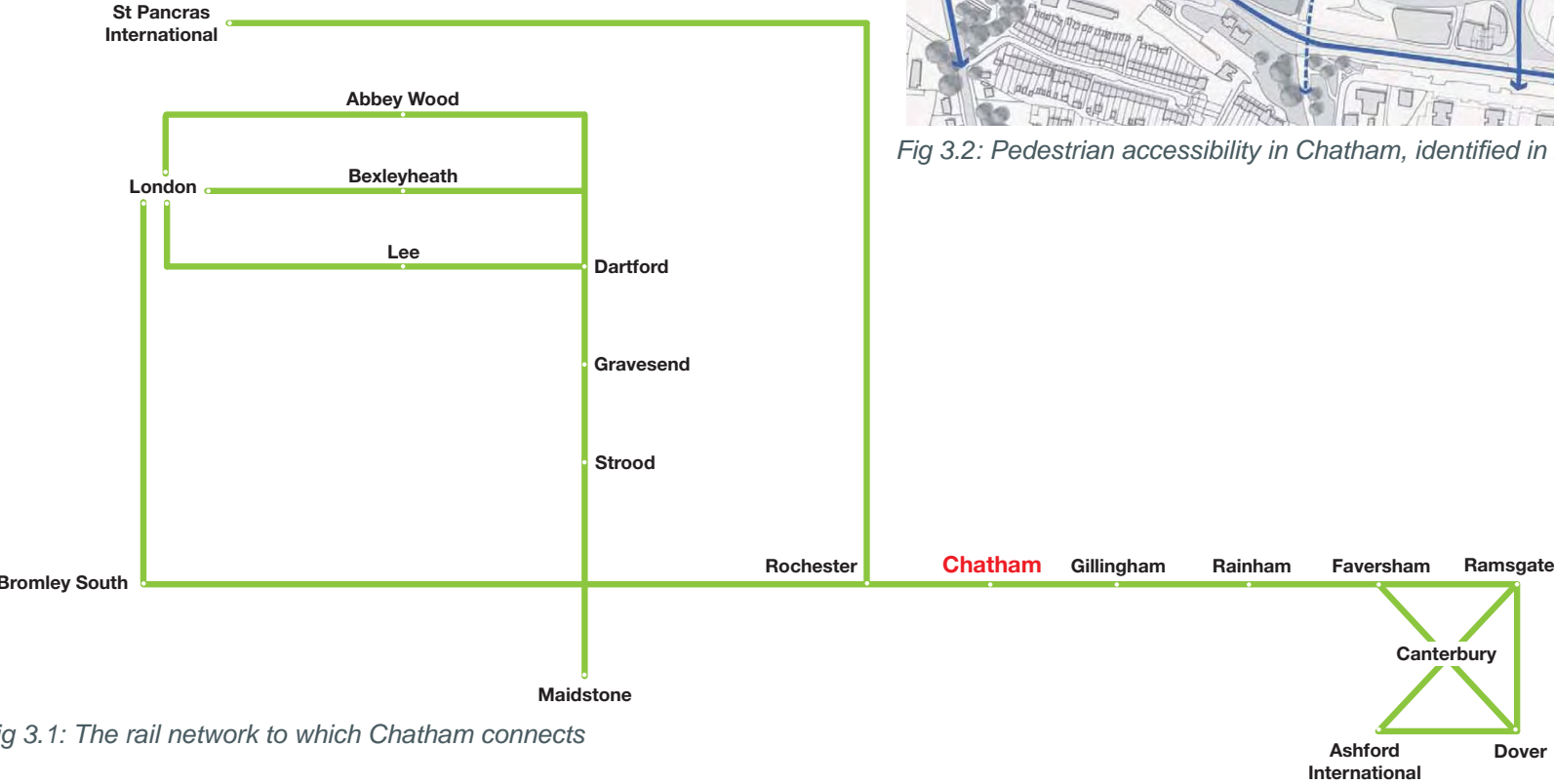
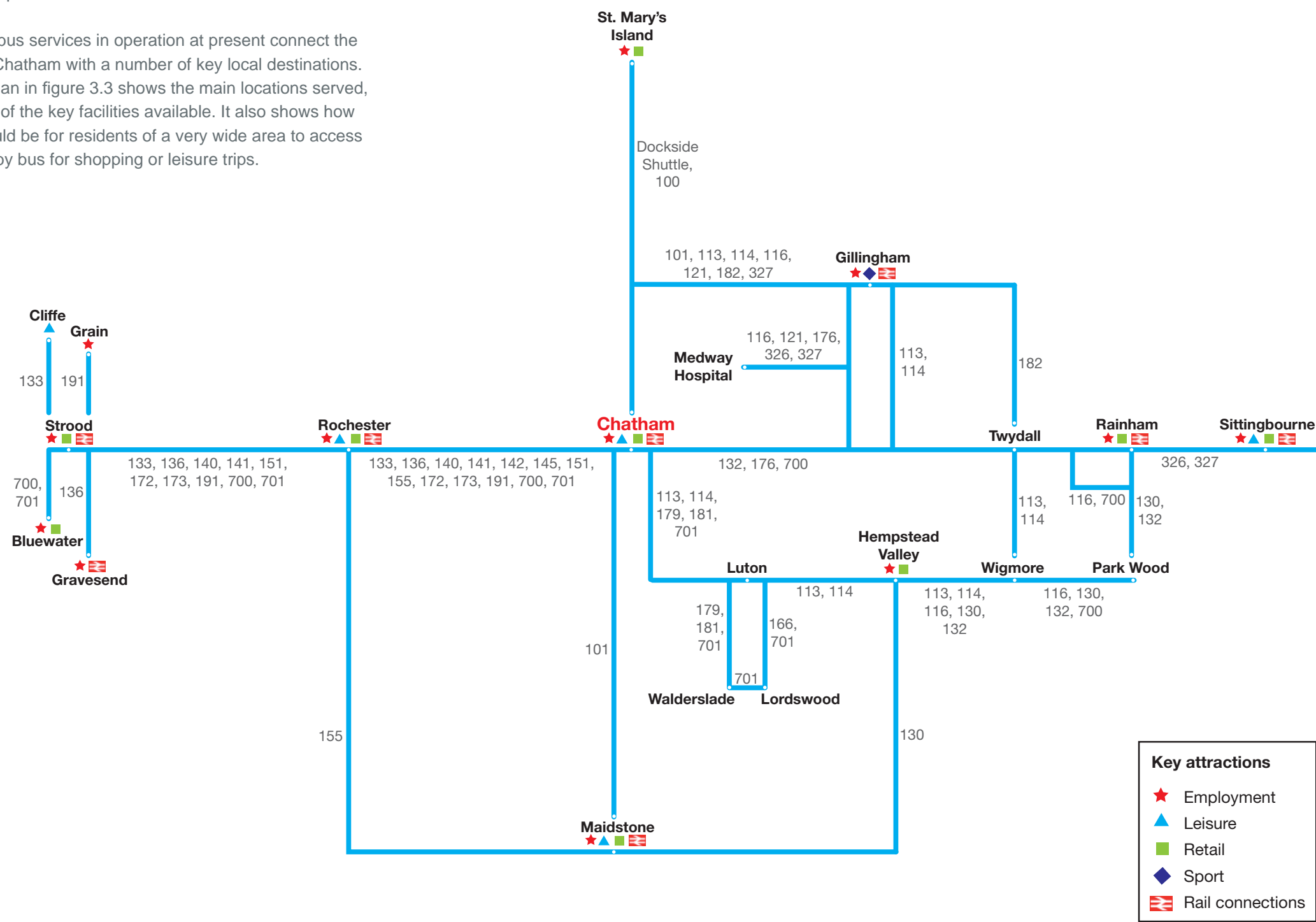


Fig 3.1: The rail network to which Chatham connects

Bus access is also very important to the regeneration of Chatham. This much underused transport mode should see a significant increase in popularity in the coming years. This is due to the construction of the Dynamic Bus Facility to replace the existing bus station in the Pentagon, and highway improvements.

However, bus services in operation at present connect the centre of Chatham with a number of key local destinations. The bus plan in figure 3.3 shows the main locations served, and some of the key facilities available. It also shows how easy it could be for residents of a very wide area to access Chatham by bus for shopping or leisure trips.

Fig 3.3: Bus accessibility to and from Chatham, with retail and leisure offer at nearby towns highlighted



3.0 CHATHAM'S ACCESSIBILITY

Any additional measures to help reduce bus delays and journey times will be highly beneficial. Access by bus to the High Street area, providing convenient bus stops with quality waiting facilities will be essential to regeneration. The low car ownership in residential areas to the centre of Chatham means such facilities, along with the improvements explained already, are highly likely to increase bus use.

Another travel mode that few people currently use is cycling. There are a number of cycle routes in the local area, including 2 national routes. Connections to these routes are fragmented, and there is a lack of safe and convenient cycle parking in the High Street area. The existing cycle routes are shown, and the gaps in the routes are clearly apparent in figure 3.4.

A retail centre with a strong focus on cycling, with high quality convenient cycle parking and good connections to the existing cycle routes, will be important to creating a sustainable Masterplan.

It is essential that Chatham becomes a sustainable centre for the future, and the measures discussed will help in this aim. However, access to convenient car parking will necessary to enable regeneration and ensure that new retail and leisure visitors consider Chatham an attractive destination. Existing car parking is shown on the plan, along with parking charges. As shown, parking is cheap and plentiful at present, but dissipated and not necessarily convenient. Proposals in the Medway LTP and the Chatham Centre & Waterfront Development Framework include for consolidated car parks near the train station and the Waterfront. A significant parking provision will also be necessary in the High Street area, and the volume desirable and achievable should be a fundamental part of this Masterplan.

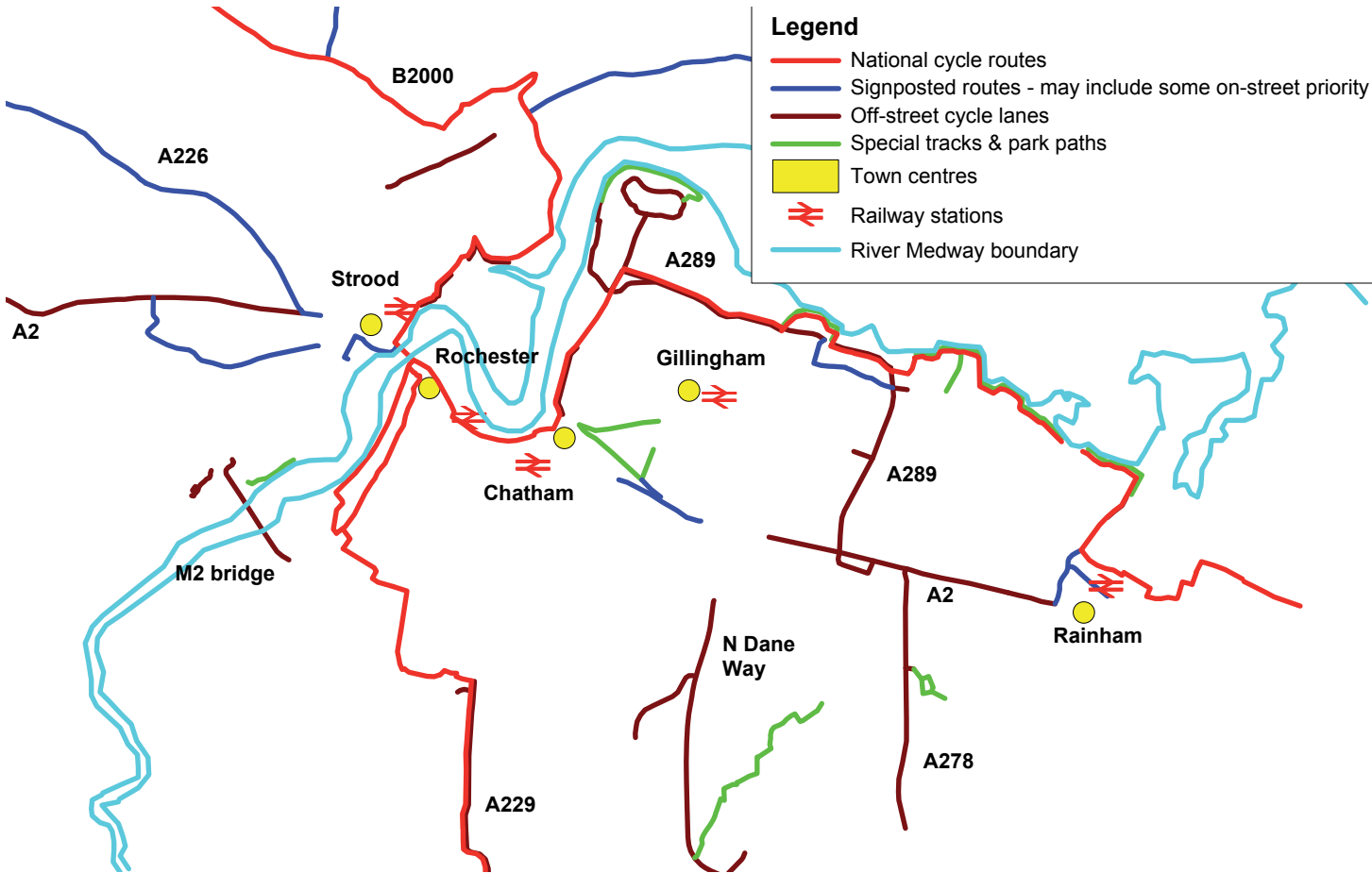


Fig 3.4: Cycle routes in the Medway area, highlighting that many routes do not connect

4.0 CREATING AN ATTRACTIVE TOWN CENTRE

The project team has reviewed the 2008 Chatham Centre and Waterfront Masterplan to identify the key messages regarding creating an attractive town centre for Chatham, and has focused upon the immediate High Street and Best Street area for new urban design analysis. This has helped to avoid the duplication of work undertaken for the earlier study and to provide targeted analysis and proposals for the core study area for this project.

In undertaking the urban design analysis, the project team has used the framework of the By Design document, produced by the then DETR and CABE. This document, published to promote higher standards in urban design, sets out key themes in the consideration of good urban design for towns and cities. These are:

- 1 Character** – a place with its own identity
- 2 Continuity and enclosure** – a place where the public and private spaces are clearly distinguished
- 3 Legibility** – a place that has a clear image and is easy to understand
- 4 Ease of movement** – a place that is easy to get to and move through
- 5 Adaptability** – a place that can change easily
- 6 Diversity** – a place with variety and choice
- 7 Security** – a place where the users feel and are as safe as possible

We have followed these themes in considering the characteristics of the natural and built environment in Chatham.

CHARACTER

Chatham has an extremely unusual topography, being situated on a sharp bend in the River Medway, and between two hills which rise up either side of the town, the Great Lines green space to the north and New Road area residential neighbourhoods to the south. These characteristics form a wedge shape, within which the town sits, providing a wide, flat waterfront at the north west and a linear high street, with the town tapering towards the south east.

This natural environment provides Chatham with a unique identity but also presents challenges in ensuring strong design and strategic planning for the town. Much of the waterfront area is within a significant flood risk zone, which significantly impacts on the options for ground floor uses in this area. This in turn presents challenges in accommodating the cultural and leisure uses that are needed in the town and in creating active ground floor uses which can bring activity and life to the waterfront area.

In the High Street/Best Street area, the topographical challenges are more closely related to the significant level changes between the High Street, Best Street and New Road, and the impact this might have on the accommodation of new uses, parking capacity and the creation of active ground floor uses. It will be important for the masterplan to look for the opportunities provided by the level changes and work with this as far as possible.

The steep level changes will also influence suitable building heights for the area and again, it will be important to work with the topography here, rather than specifically placing taller or small scale buildings on higher ground.

The town's existing skyline is dominated by Mountbatten House, which sits between the town centre and the waterfront. Aside from this building and Anchorage House to the west, the building heights in the town centre are predominantly low. Within the masterplan area, the Pentagon car park (6 storeys), the office building on Rome Terrace (9 storeys) and the telephone exchange building on Best Street (7 storeys).



Looking northward to the High Street, along Meeting House Lane, with the multi-storey car park and the hills in the distance.



Fig 4.1: Landmark buildings in Chatham, in terms of architecture, height or scale

4.0 CREATING AN ATTRACTIVE TOWN CENTRE

Fig 4.2: Sections taken along Chatham High Street indicating the significant level changes between the High Street, New Road and The Lines.



Topography

The sections in figure 4.2 highlight the unique topography of Chatham town centre and the level changes in the High Street/Best Street area. It also highlights the impact of Mountbatten House of the skyline of the town.

Heritage and conservation

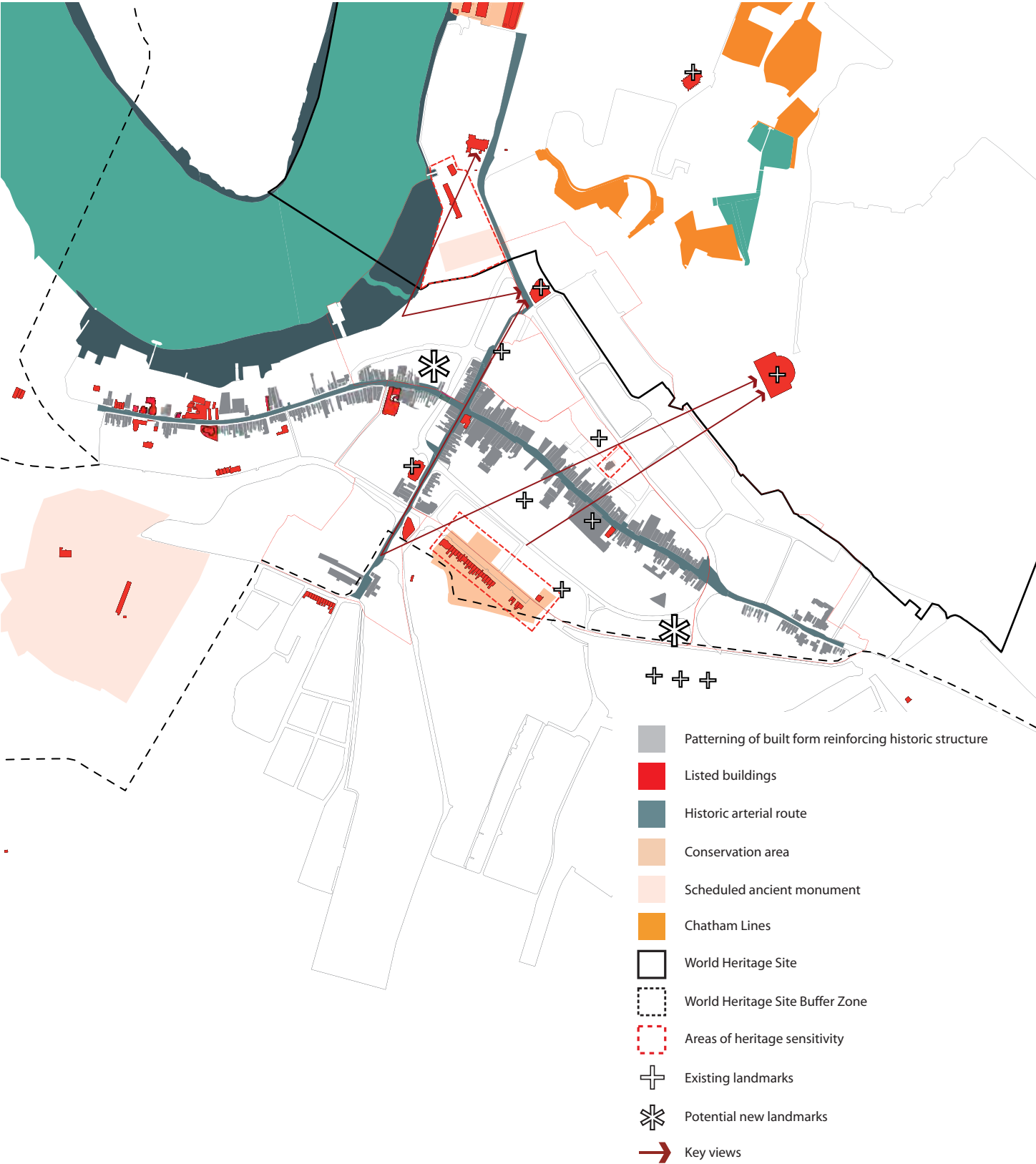
Figure 4.4 sets out the key heritage and character attributes of Chatham, including listed buildings, the ancient scheduled monument, conservation area and the World Heritage Site buffer zone. Also included are existing landmarks and potential new landmarks within the town centre. These have been identified as the key block between the High Street and the waterfront and just to the south of Best Street, marking the eastern entrance to the town. Areas which are not designated as conservation areas or have listed buildings but are considered to have historic assets are also identified.

Important view corridors have been identified from both the New Road/Best Street area and the rail station area to the War Memorial on the hill to the north of the town centre.



Fig 4.3: Plan to accompany fig 4.2 sections

Fig 4.4: Heritage and character attributes



4.0 CREATING AN ATTRACTIVE TOWN CENTRE

Character areas

The linear nature of Chatham town centre and the resulting length of the High Street mean that character areas can be identified along this central artery. Different uses and retail types have developed over time in response to building footprint sizes, their location, building frontage and access.

- Small, independent retailers and take-aways can be found at the eastern end of the High Street;
- Large retailers are found in the central section, with large, primary retailers on the southern side of the street, including Primark and Debenhams;
- Smaller retail units are found to the west of this, including banks, buildings societies and jewellery stores. Military Road and the lower part of Station Road share a similar character to this section of the High Street and can be included within this.
- There is a break in the retail and frontage to the High Street at what was the Sir John Hawkins flyover and is now Waterfront Way. This presents a strong opportunity for developing a quality public realm with a sense of openness in the town centre.
- The small, historic buildings are then re-established to the west of Waterfront Way with independent stores and offices. This marks the point at which Chatham and Rochester join.

In addition to the sections of the High Street, Chatham has other character areas, which include:

- The loop which encircles the town centre currently has a uniform character. Best Street to the south and The Brook to the north both form a route from which the town centre is not visible and drivers are drawn around and beyond the town. It will be beneficial to explore means of dismantling this character area, so that the sections of the road circling the town become part of the areas immediately surrounding them, rather than operating as a monotonous and detached experience which is divorced from the town centre.

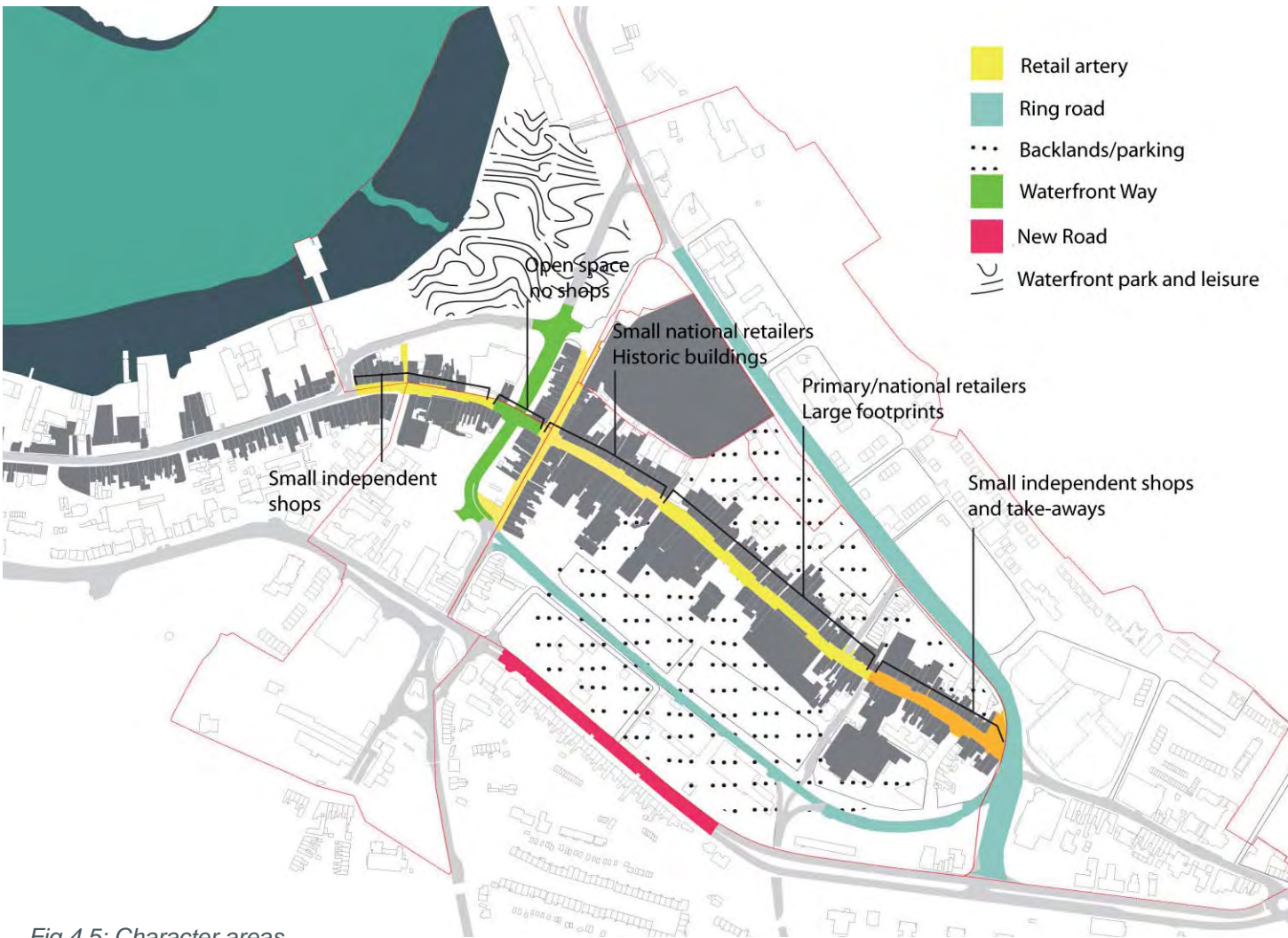


Fig 4.5: Character areas

- Either side of this route, though particularly on the inner side of the road, is a large area with service or multi-storey car parking and the 'backlands' servicing area to the High Street. This character area also presents an opportunity to transform the physical environment within Chatham town centre and ensure that the centre is visible to visitors as they arrive.
- The section of New Road, which runs to the south of Best Street, provides some of the strongest historic environment within Chatham, which should be preserved and enhanced. The existing BT exchange and Post Office building do not fit well with the character

of this area and it will be important to provide suitable uses and frontage on the north side of the road, in the longer term, to strengthen this historic area.

New Road



Best Street



The Brook



The High Street



Station Road



Backlands between the High Street and Best Street

4.0 CREATING AN ATTRACTIVE TOWN CENTRE

CONTINUITY AND ENCLOSURE

Townscape quality

The project team has undertaken a high level review of the quality of the townscape along the central High Street. This helps in assessing the quality of the environment in the heart of the town and strengthening the role and the vitality of the main retail street and also in identifying opportunities to provide new links from the High Street, to create a more integrated retail centre with a clear and attractive pedestrian circuit.

A traffic light system has been used in the analysis, with red indicating buildings which are considered to have a negative impact on the appearance of the High Street, yellow indicating buildings with a neutral impact and green indicating high quality buildings with a positive impact on the High Street. As can be seen in figure 4.6, the western end of the High street, incorporating the northern section of Station Road and Military Road, has a concentration of quality, historic buildings which contribute positively to the character of the town centre.

Further east, on the north side of the High Street, the townscape is not of such quality and a number of points have been identified where buildings could be replaced to strengthen frontage to the High Street, create links from the High Street and ‘complete the block’ with The Brook, helping to address the issue of backlands here.

On the southern side of the High Street the Debenhams building has been identified as having a negative impact on the street, in townscape terms, and it is worth considering whether this could be either reprovided, with a new anchor building for the department store, or at least with improvements to this in terms of the front facade and in providing ‘wrap-around’ development on the side and rear to improve the impact of the building.



Fig 4.6: Townscape quality of buildings on Chatham High Street

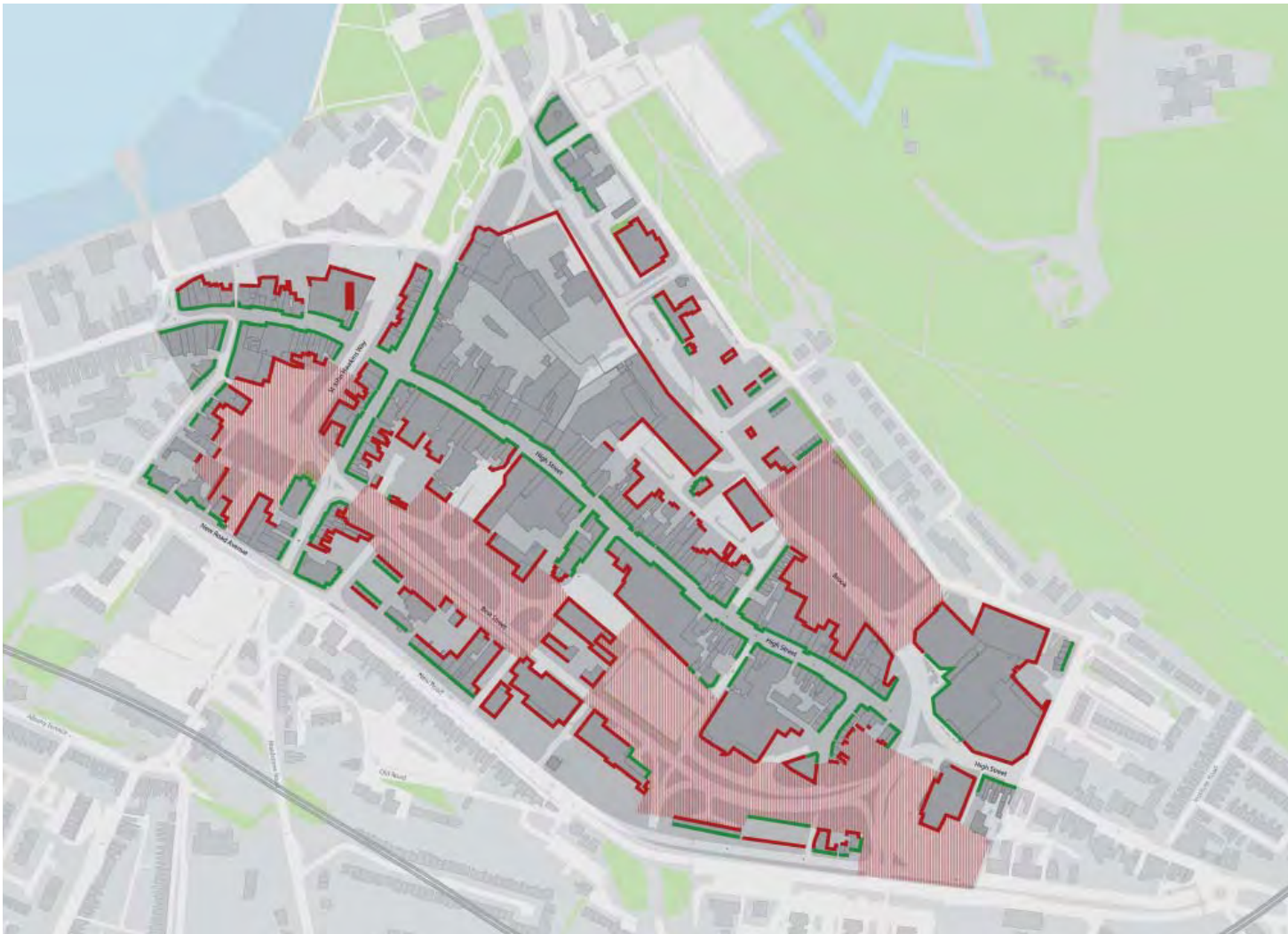
Fig 4.7: Active frontage and backs in Chathan town centre




Active frontage

In assessing the active frontage within the town centre, it is quickly apparent from figure 4.7 that whilst the High Street itself benefits from continual frontage of some sort or another (shown in green), the areas beyond this suffer from a fairly uniform lack of frontage (shown in red).

This high level of ‘backs’ beyond the High Street creates large areas which are poorly defined, being surround by backs on some or all sides, and these have been shaded.

The plan indicates that the area to the south of the High Street is particularly poorly defined, and therefore by providing new shops and buildings here, it will not only help to accommodate new retail capacity identified in the NLP Retail Study, but will also help to ‘mend’ the town centre, establishing a clearer network of enclosed routes and spaces which help to create an attractive physical environment and an urban character.



-  Poor frontage or backs to buildings
-  Positive frontage to buildings
-  Backland areas which have no active frontage

4.0 CREATING AN ATTRACTIVE TOWN CENTRE

QUALITY OF PUBLIC REALM

Green space and public spaces

As indicated in figure 4.8, Chatham benefits from a large amount of open space to the north of the town, with the Great Lines and Fort Amherst, but has very little green space in the town itself.

Similarly, Chatham also currently lacks hard landscaped public spaces with seating where people might eat their lunch during summer months or read a newspaper.

Providing green pocket parks and/or small hard landscaped spaces close to the High Street would greatly improve the physical environment within the town centre, and strengthen its appeal to local residents and visitors alike.



Fig 4.8: Green space surrounding Chatham town centre, but not within it

EASE OF MOVEMENT

Pedestrian links to the High Street

In understanding the movement patterns within the town centre, the project team has reviewed the routes into the retail heart for visitors, whether they arrive by car from the wider Medway region, by public transport to the rail or bus station or on foot from surrounding neighbourhoods or the university campuses nearby. We have used the location of the planned dynamic bus station in this analysis.

Figure 4.9 indicates that the current location of car parks in the town centre allow visitors to reach the High Street at one of a number of pedestrian passageways leading from the main street, if they take the shortest route. This scattering of arrival points helps to support the economic health of the shops along the High Street by ensuring that all sections have reasonable levels of footfall. The current predominance of surface level car parks in the centre should be addressed in order to improve the physical environment and provide more retail in the centre but it will also be important for consolidated parking to be located where it can ensure that all areas of the High Street benefit from the footfall. This might mean ensuring there is parking towards the eastern end of the High Street given the large number of parking spaces at the Pentagon Centre.

The plan also indicates the fractured routes into the centre from the south with a number of dead ends for pedestrians and a number of awkward routes. There is currently no clear and accessible route from the south.

Looking at the convergence of routes and arrival points in the centre indicates the importance of the eastern end of the High Street as an arrival point to the town centre, and of the junction of the High Street, Station Road and Military Road, as the apex of the town, both historically and today. These two points have consequently been identified as key areas for public realm improvements.

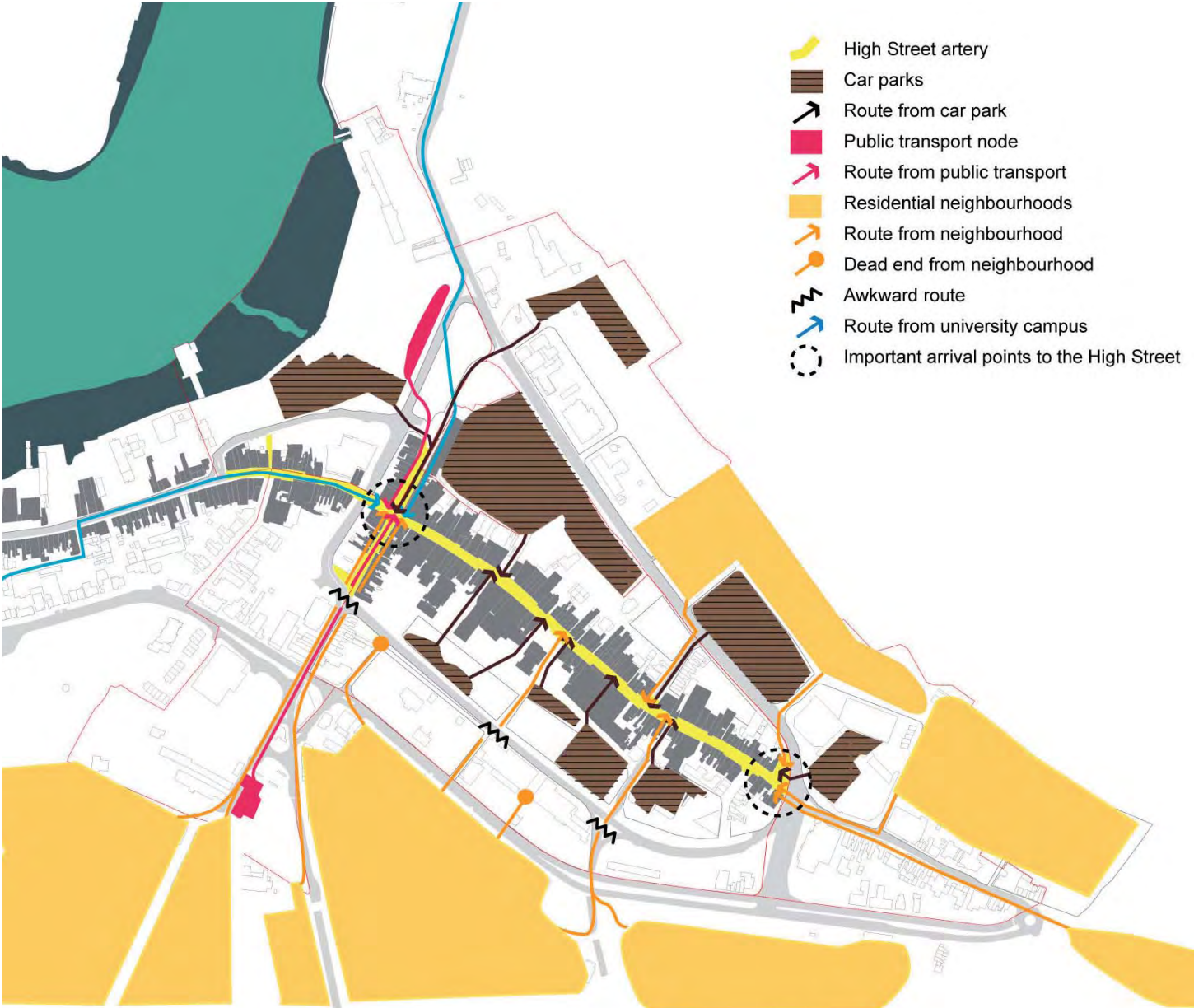


Fig 4.9: Pedestrian routes to the High Street from arrival points in the town

4.0 CREATING AN ATTRACTIVE TOWN CENTRE

Links between the town centre and the waterfront

To fully understand the movement patterns within the town centre, and the important relationship between the town centre and the waterfront, it is important to analyse the links between these two key areas. The waterfront is the location for ambitious plans to create a leisure and cultural hub within the town, taking advantage of the waterside setting, the parklands and the attractive historic buildings in the area.

Key activity points in the town centre have been identified which might act as origination points for trips to the waterfront. These are the rail station, Debenhams and the Pentagon Centre. The routes that pedestrians are likely to take between these and the waterfront have been reviewed and critical points which would be passed on more than one route to the waterfront have been highlighted. This shows the importance of the space at the junction of the High Street, Station Road and Military Road; the point at the south west corner of the Paddock which marks the arrival to the waterfront; the junction of the High Street and the new Waterfront Way; and the area immediately around St John's Church.

In terms of legibility, the block on the north west corner of the High Street/Waterfront Way junction becomes highly important as a landmark and guide in reaching the waterfront, both from the east and from the south. It is therefore proposed that this corner should be the location of a landmark building with active frontage, drawing people towards before leading them onto the waterfront.

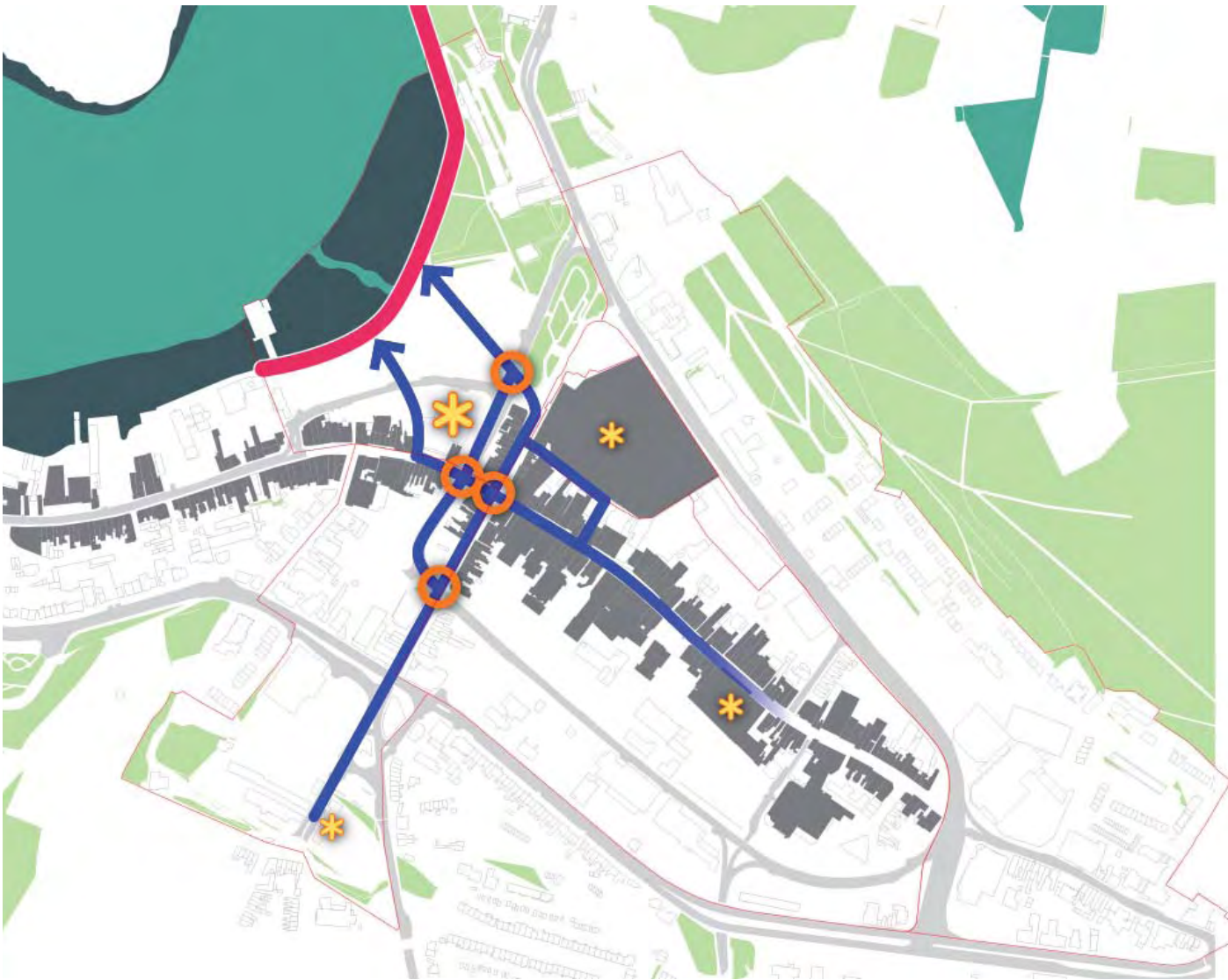






Fig 4.10: Key routes to the waterfront

-  Pedestrian routes to waterfront
-  Key junctions along routes
-  Landmarks - origination points and orientation aids
-  The waterfront

LEGIBILITY

Landmarks and viewing corridors

In figure 4.11, the listed buildings, key visual landmarks and resulting viewing corridors have been identified in order to give an overview of legibility within the town. The plan indicates that whilst there are a number of listed buildings within the town, only one or two of these fall within the High Street/Best Street study area, at the junction with Military Road and just to the east of Debenhams. It will be important to ensure that these buildings have an appropriate and attractive setting when considering the details of the masterplan.

The visual landmarks in the town have been identified as the tall or large buildings which help people to orientate themselves within the town centre. These are not, therefore, necessarily attractive landmarks. The Pentagon Centre and its adjacent car park are included in this group, along with the BT exchange building, the office block on Rome Terrace and Debenhams.

Beyond the study area boundary, the most important landmark is the War Memorial and it is important to consider views to this. These have been highlighted on the plan, along with views from this to Fort Amherst, from key locations within the town such as the rail station and the pier.



Fig 4.11: Listed buildings and key views in Chatham town centre

- Listed buildings
- Landmark buildings
- Viewing corridors

4.0 CREATING AN ATTRACTIVE TOWN CENTRE

Potential routes and spaces

Clear opportunities exist to provide public spaces which are supported by and strengthen pedestrian links in the centre.

Figure 4.12 sets out a strategic proposition for providing green and public space in the town centre, drawing on the analysis from the previous three plans. North-south links are strengthened at key points along the High Street where these can support new retail and leisure uses and can take advantage of townscape assets within the existing built environment.

The route between the rail station and the waterfront is strengthened, with a new public space surrounding St John's Church and a removal of the level change which currently acts as a barrier for pedestrians. The space at the 'apex' of the town is also improved.

A clear pedestrian route can also be established linking New Road and The Brook, through the High Street and a new retail area. This route would have a string of small public/green spaces which capitalise on the proximity of historic structures such as the United Reform Church and the Pumping Station, and could plug into a wider pedestrian network.

The small public space at the eastern end of the High Street is also identified for improvements, so that it can become a space where people are happy to sit and can complement the small restaurants and independent shops in this area.



Fig 4.12: Pedestrian routes and public spaces concept plan

ADAPTABILITY

Building footprint sizes

Building footprint sizes along Chatham High Street are varied, which is considered an asset in terms of adaptability and flexibility in the long term for the town centre. The majority of the large building footprints are on the southern side of the High Street, with the two Primark buildings (one formerly Woolworths) and Debenhams, amongst others. The multi-storey car park has also been included. Individual units within the Pentagon Centre are not shown but it is known from the NLP study that a mix of unit sizes are also available in the centre.

Medium sized units are scattered fairly evenly along the High Street, although there are slightly more on the north side. Smaller units are also scattered along the north side of the High Street but concentrations of smaller units also exist at the eastern end of the High Street and along Station Road and Military Road.

The NLP study noted that whilst it is important for anchor units to be accommodated, including potentially a food store, demand has also been identified for small to medium units in the town.



Fig 4.13: Building footprints on Chatham High Street

4.0 CREATING AN ATTRACTIVE TOWN CENTRE

DIVERSITY

Land-uses and spatial framework

Figure 4.14 sets out the land uses within the town centre, highlighting existing retail uses, work spaces, leisure/cultural uses and vacant sites. The existing and proposed anchor sites are also indicated, along with key areas of change which should be integrated effectively with their surrounds and opportunities for improving connections from the surrounding neighbourhoods and drawing green space into the centre.

Although the High Street is rightly dominated by retail uses, work space and leisure space are also scattered through the centre which helps to support Chatham as a more sustainable centre. Work spaces can be found particularly along Military Road and Station Road, and there is also a small cluster around the Debenhams store. Leisure uses are scattered more evenly with a small concentration at the eastern end of the High Street and an even spread along the Rochester section of the High Street.

New anchors are proposed to the south of the High Street, and potentially at the key block between the High Street and the waterfront.

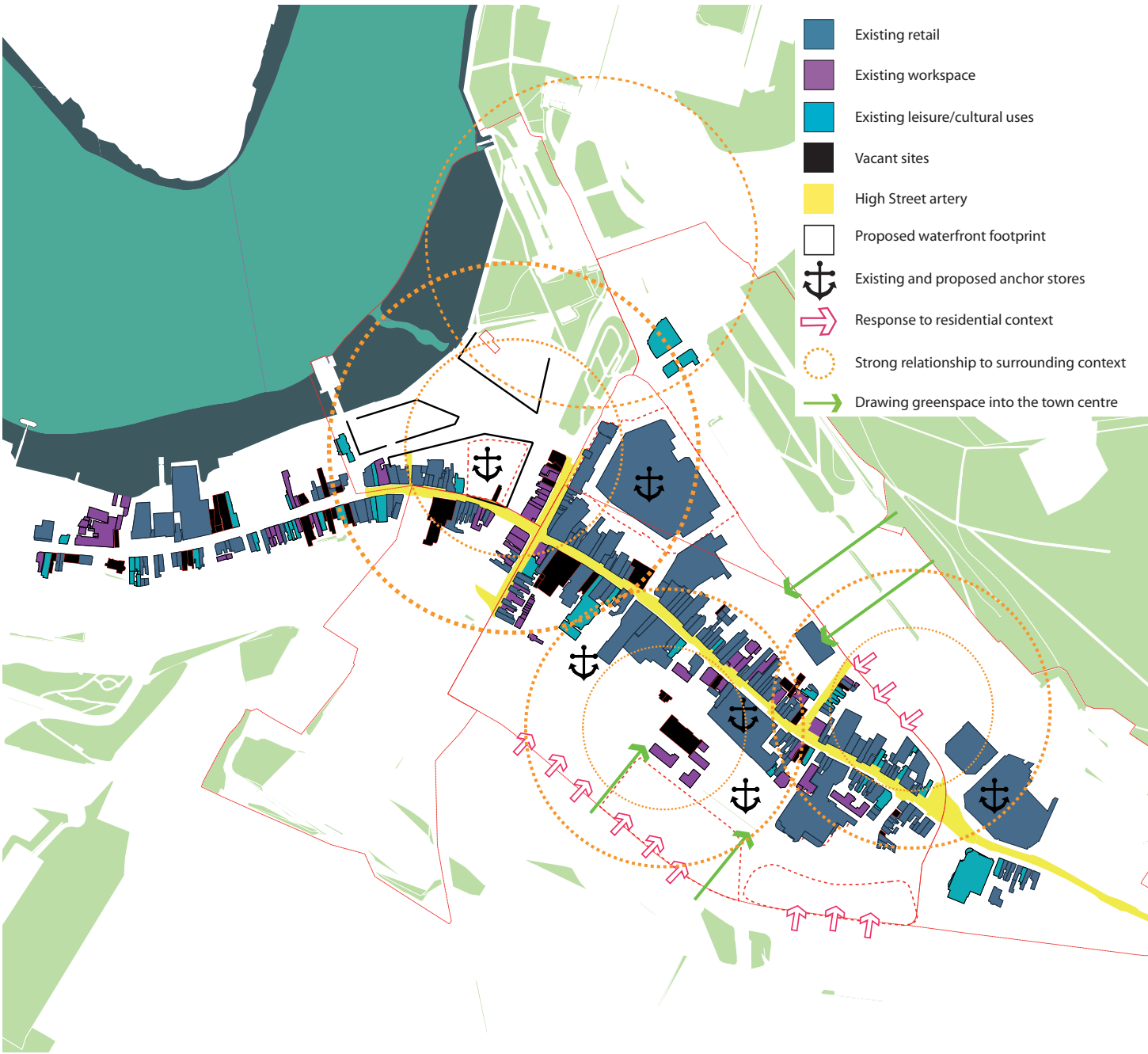


Fig 4.14: Spatial framework analysis plan

Retail types

Taking account of the current retail patterns in town and the recommendations made in the 2008 masterplan for the town centre and waterfront, suitable areas for retail in the town centre in the future have been identified.

The retail core for the centre, containing primary and national retailers selling comparison goods, should be centred around the High Street and the area immediately to the north and south of this, incorporating the Pentagon Centre and stretching to the critical block identified at the junction of the High Street and Waterfront Way.

The area between Best Street and New Road has been identified for some retail and residential uses, providing a sensitive transition between the town centre and the local centre feel of New Road.

Edge of town retail with large footprints is identified for The Brook area, taking advantage of its accessibility on the major road network.

Independent and specialist retail is identified for the eastern end of the High Street, the Station Road area and the waterfront area. Leisure supporting retail uses are also proposed for the waterfront area. This includes gift shops and specialist shops.

The existing and proposed anchors for the town centre are again shown in figure 4.15.

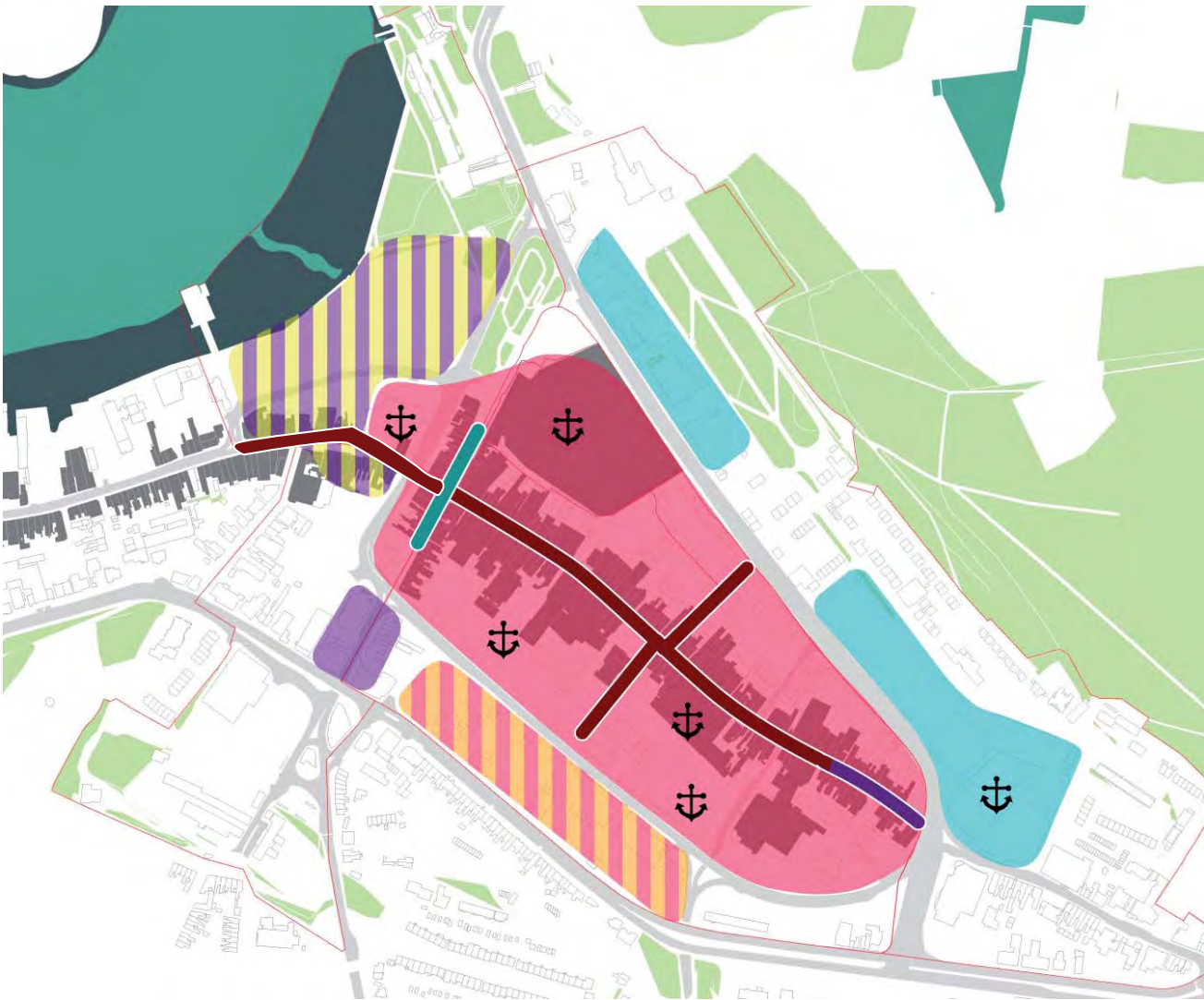


Fig 4.15: Proposed retail character areas in Chatham centre




5.0 REFINED OBJECTIVES AND APPROACH

OVERARCHING FRAMEWORK


An overarching framework shown in figure 5.1 has been developed to inform the options for the High Street/Best Street masterplan. This sets out the key aspirations for the town centre and provides a broad guide which the options then address in greater detail.

- The High Street is retained as the central route of the town centre, but permeability is improved, with the creation of a retail circuit effectively connecting the Pentagon Centre with new development to the north and south of the High Street. This helps to address the backland areas beyond the High Street.
- A series of public spaces are created in order to address the current lack of such spaces in the centre and to support the movement network.
- Active frontage is to be provided along new routes and onto new public spaces in order to provide a sense of continuity and enclosure within the town centre.
- New development is proposed for the areas between the High Street and The Brook and between the High Street and Best Street, helping to address the areas of poorly defined space in the centre.
- Replacement car parking is located predominantly to the south of the High Street, ensuring access points along the High Street from car parks, which can help to support the economic vitality of the full length of the High Street.
- Pedestrian links from surrounding neighbourhoods are strengthened, particularly from the south, and north-south links within the town centre are strengthened.
- Views of the War Memorial are preserved and enhanced.
- Retail anchors are enhanced at the Pentagon Centre and Debenhams, and a new anchor is provided to the south east of Debenhams.
- Service access is provided at two key locations on the north side of Best Street to provide access to new retail development in this area.
- New development is established between Best Street and New Road, providing more appropriate uses and a better quality environment for the important conservation area at New Road.
- The eastern end of the High Street is revitalised, with infill development providing new shops and improvements to the public realm
- Public transport links are improved by the new dynamic bus station, through grouped bus stops and a taxi rank at the eastern end of the High Street and improvements at the rail station.
- A mixed-use approach with work space and residential units provided above retail in the centre town.
- New community uses, including the Healthy Living Centre planned for the town centre and potential community uses at the United Reform Church.
- Provision of a hotel in the town centre.

 High Street as major artery


 Public space


 Listed building


 Conservation area


 Proposed development area

 Proposed service area


 Proposed service route

 Key view corridor/cone

 Marker building

 Retail anchor

 Key frontage

 Integration of residential context

 World Heritage Site visitors centre

 Public transport hub



Fig 5.1: Framework plan

5.0 REFINED OBJECTIVES AND APPROACH

CHATHAM IN THE EVENING

Figure 5.2 sets out the overarching plan for the evening economy in Chatham.

The High Street is highlighted as the main route for the town centre with this role continuing in the evening.

The key cultural buildings which will bring life to the town centre in the evening are identified as the new cultural centre at the waterfront, the two theatres, the pubs along Station Road and the two churches, which have scope for community activities. The arts centre is also highlighted.

A new concentration of night time uses are identified around a new square by the water tower taking advantage of the restaurants and take-aways which already exist in this area.

Taxi ranks are identified at the eastern end of the High Street by a new public square, by the station, at the waterfront and by the Pentagon Centre.

- Proposed development
- Night time uses
- Proposed residential overlook
- Key public realm improvements
- Proposed taxi rank
- Proposed lit routes



Fig 5.2: Secure by design plan for Chatham



6.0 DRAFT MASTERPLAN

The detailed options appraisal for the High Street/Best Street masterplan clearly identified the masterplan option as being most effective at meeting the objectives identified for the masterplan. This option has therefore been taken forward and further developed as the preferred option for consultation purposes.

GROUND FLOOR

The key features of the ground floor level of the masterplan are set out in figure 6.1, to the right.

RETAIL PROVISION

- A new retail area for the town centre between Best Street and Richard Street with a major food retailer incorporated into new frontage on Richard Street, with upper level parking accessed from Best Street split over two storeys to support this.
- New retail development along the north west section of Best Street, accessed from Richard Street, with upper level parking accessed from Best Street.
- New development in the High Street at sensitive points to allow for the creation of a new retail area connecting the Pentagon extension to a rejuvenated High Street.
- New retail development on the site of the current indoor market, with potential for provision of small units for high quality small retailers to create an attractive boutique retail environment.
- Coordination with the proposed Pentagon Extension, providing two levels of retail plus upper floor car parking.

CULTURAL/LEISURE/COMMUNITY PROVISION

- Possible expansion of the Central Theatre, with the addition of cafe facilities, enterprise and associated offer.
- Accommodation of the proposed Primary Care Trust building, located in a central location with access from Richard Street and Best Street.
- Creation of a new community/civic cluster around Meeting House, with retail frontage onto the High Street.
- Proposed hotel development as a landmark feature at the eastern end of New Road - creating a key gateway into the town centre and benefiting from proximity to the High Street/Best Street and upgraded pedestrian crossings.
- Support for the evening economy with greater activity around the pump house square and timed access to the eastern end of the High Street.

WORK SPACE PROVISION

- A work space cluster at the eastern end of the High Street, fronting onto the new junction.
- New work space between Best Street and New Road, creating an active and attractive frontage to Best St, whilst simultaneously allowing for rationalisation of movement between these two streets.
- New work space provided onto the Brook, which also provides frontage onto this important route
- Potential for work space to be included in the landmark feature building at the eastern end of New Road.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENTS

- Possible remodelling of the Iceland building and neighbouring sites to create a new north-south route from the Brook to the High Street, allowing completion of the Brook frontage and ground level parking in the courtyard.
- Potential remodelling of Debenhams to wrap the block and create active frontage to Richard Street.
- Creation of a new square around the pump house to the north of the High Street with restaurants and cafés fronting this.
- Creation of a new square around the Clover Street church.
- Creation of a strong north-south pedestrian route linking the Brook and Best Street, through these two new squares.
- Creation of a clearly defined public space at the High Street/Railway Street junction
- A legible and attractive route for pedestrians at the Railway Street/Best Street junction.
- Potential creation of a new square around a refurbished St John’s Church.
- Paving, lighting, planting and street furniture improvements throughout and to Best Street, the High Street and Richard Street in particular.

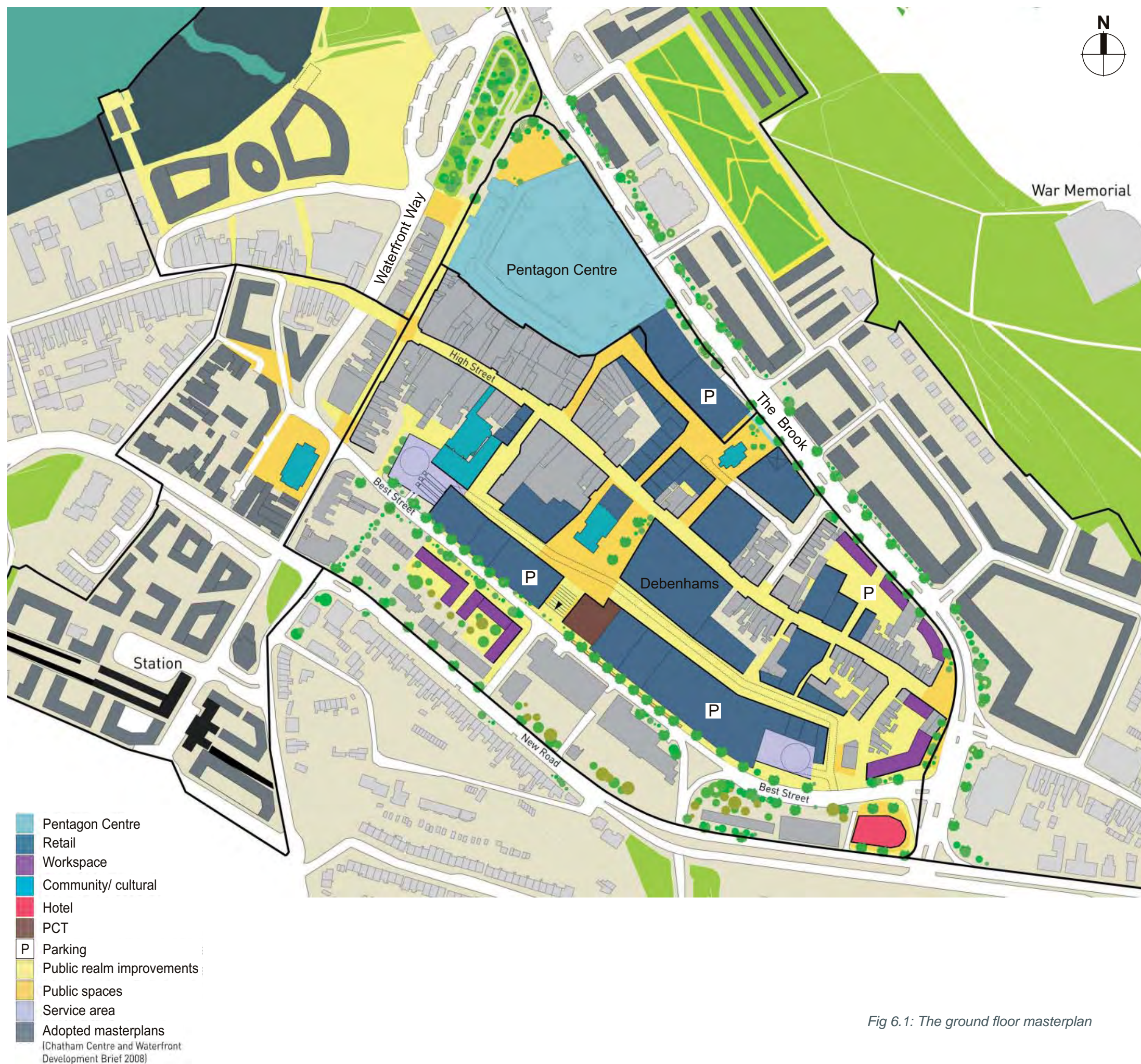


Fig 6.1: The ground floor masterplan

6.0 DRAFT MASTERPLAN

UPPER FLOORS

The preferred option has been developed with inbuilt flexibility, to maximise the potential for the masterplan to respond to the property market and other changing conditions. However, a number of upper floor uses have been suggested in order to help support a mixed-use, sustainable town centre.

The upper floor areas are considered suitable spaces for new homes and work spaces, to help ensure that the town centre retains activity throughout the day and evening. The upper floors are also suitable locations for replacement and new parking facilities (covered in further detail on the following pages).

Lastly, the upper floors of the masterplan provide valuable opportunities for creating roof gardens and green roofs - both improving the physical environment within the town centre and contributing to a sustainable future for the town.

HOUSING PROVISION

- Residential accommodation provided above retail development on Richard Street, with intelligent use of level changes to provide street access onto Best Street.
- Residential development over new retail at the north west end of Best Street.
- Residential units above new work space between Best Street and New Road, fronting onto Best Street.
- Residential units above retail space fronting onto on the Brook and coordinating with the separate masterplan for this area.

WORK SPACE PROVISION

- A work space cluster at the eastern end of the High Street, fronting onto the new junction.
- Upper floor work space provided opposite the PCT building, on the key junction of Richard Street and Clover Street.
- New office space provided above retail units between the High Street and new square based around the pump house.
- New work space provided onto the Brook, which provides frontage onto this important route.
- Potential for work space to be included in the landmark feature building at the eastern end of New Road.

PARKING PROVISION

- Re-provision of two floors of upper level parking at the Pentagon extension
- Re-provision of multi-level car park above new retail development between Best Street and Richard Street, to replace the NCP car park
- Provision of new multi-level parking above new retail development at the western end of Best Street.

THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

- Creation of roof gardens and green roofs throughout the town centre - particularly at the sites of upper level residential development along Best Street, Richard Street and the Brook.

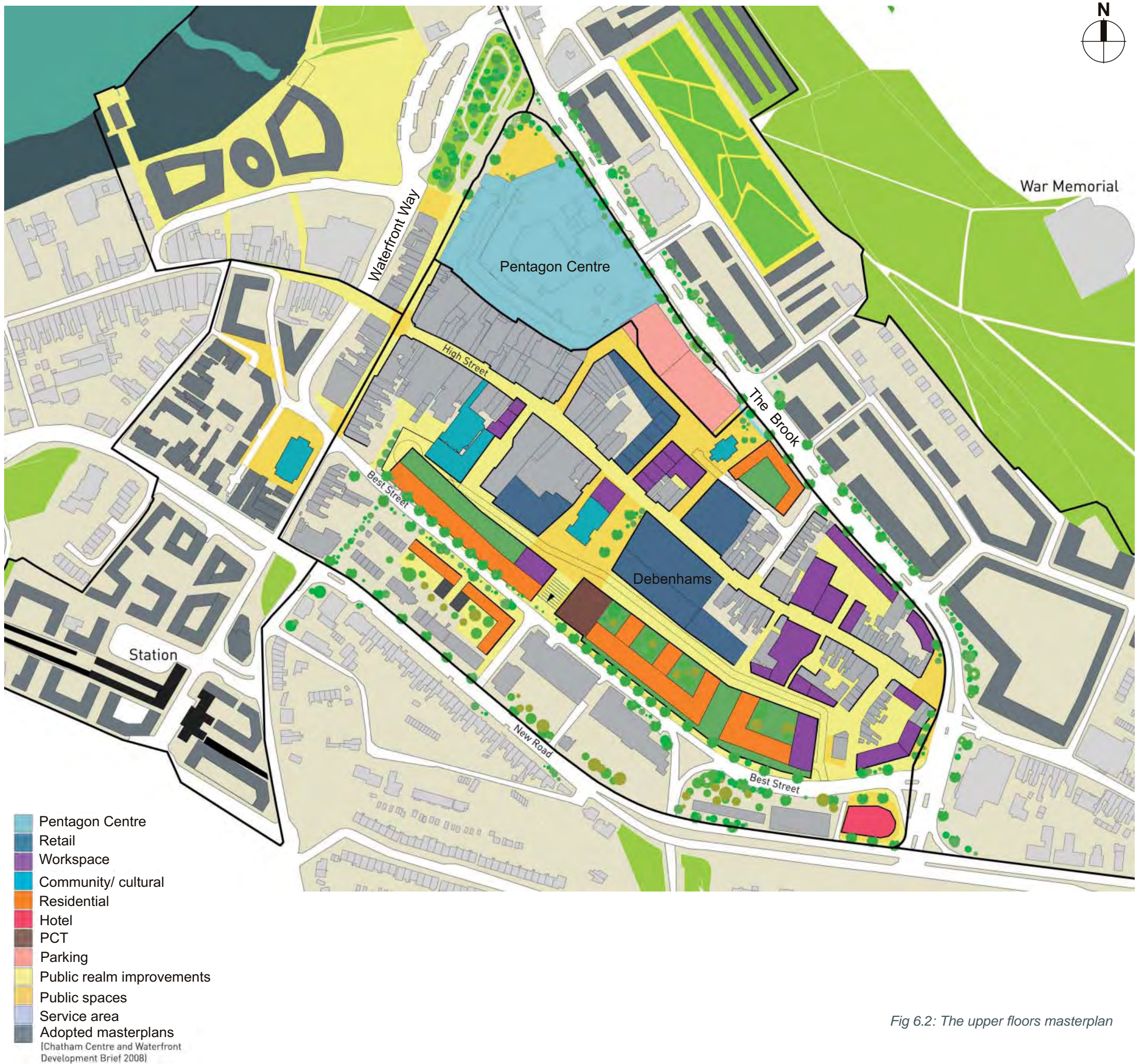


Fig 6.2: The upper floors masterplan

6.0 DRAFT MASTERPLAN

A CLEAR MOVEMENT NETWORK

A number of proposals are made within the preferred option, which both coordinate with the transport and movement proposals currently being brought forward by Medway Council and identify options for improving movement within the High Street/Best Street area.

The following is proposed and illustrated in figures 6.3 and 6.4:

PRIVATE VEHICLES

- Improved links between New Road and Best Street
- Rationalisation of Best Street and the parallel section of Clover Street, in order to simplify the road network and create space to establish active frontage on to Best Street here
- Evening access to the eastern section of the High Street and Batchelor Street, to animate the area and support the evening economy here.

PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT

- Strengthened north-south connections between Best Street, the High Street and the Brook.
- Clear connection between Pentagon extension and the High Street
- Better links to the waterfront from the town centre
- Alternative route through the new St John's square, to and from the rail station
- clear retail circuits in the town centre, connecting new and replaced anchors

PUBLIC TRANSPORT/TAXIS

- Bus only access for the immediate future along Waterfront Way in line with current Medway Council proposals
- Introduction of bus stops on Best Street to provide pedestrian access to the High Street and the new retail area on Richard Street from the south
- Proposed taxi ranks at the entrance to the Pentagon, at the eastern end of the High Street, by the train station and in the waterfront area.

SERVICING AND ACCESS

- Two new service access points from Best Street onto Richard Street, with turning circles in each case. Servicing access to Richard Street would be time limited.
- Service Access from The Brook to Solomons Road with a turning circle accommodated here
- Front servicing access to retail units at the eastern end of the High Street
- Front servicing access to retail units fronting The Brook

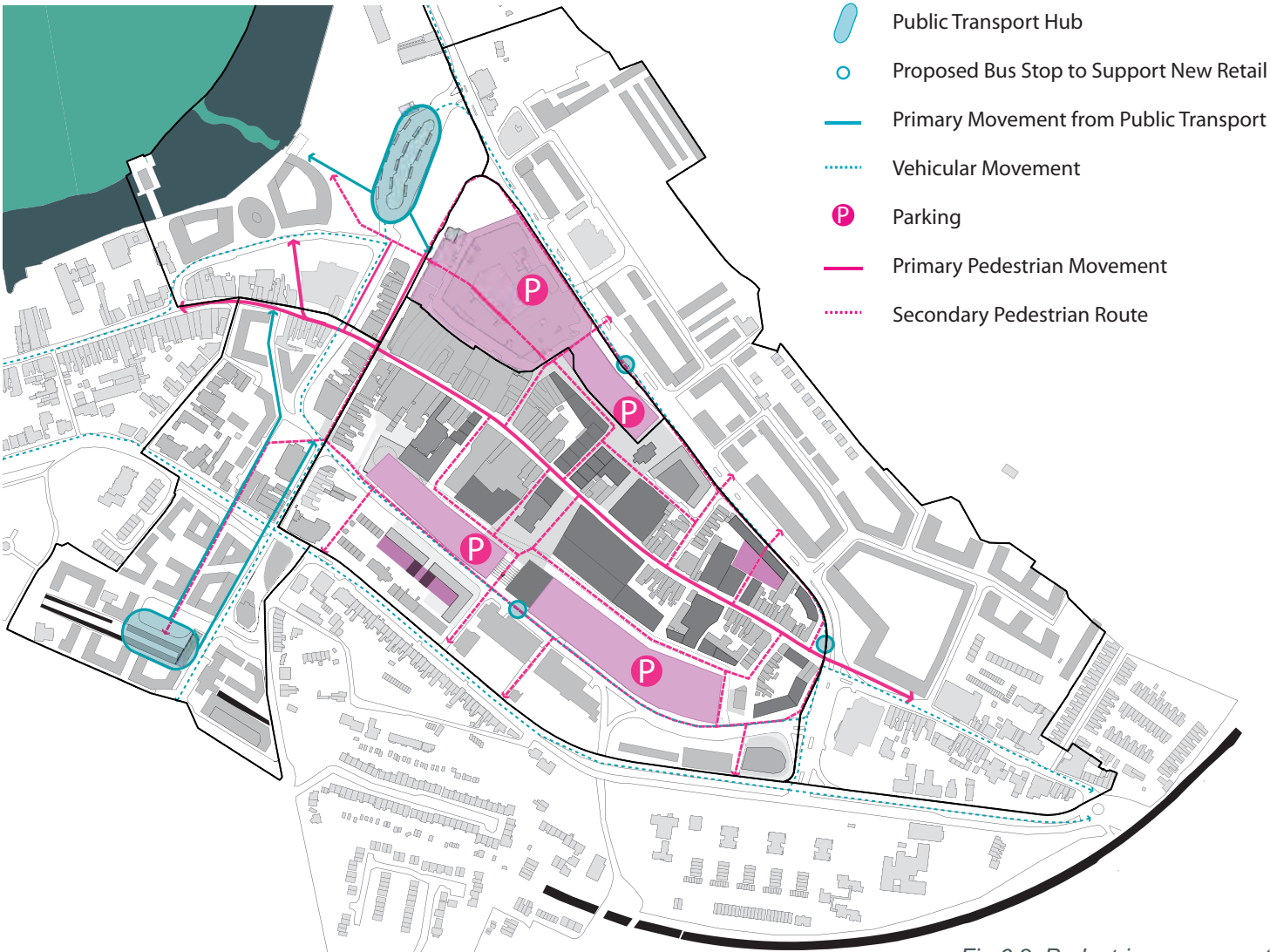


Fig 6.3: Pedestrian movement

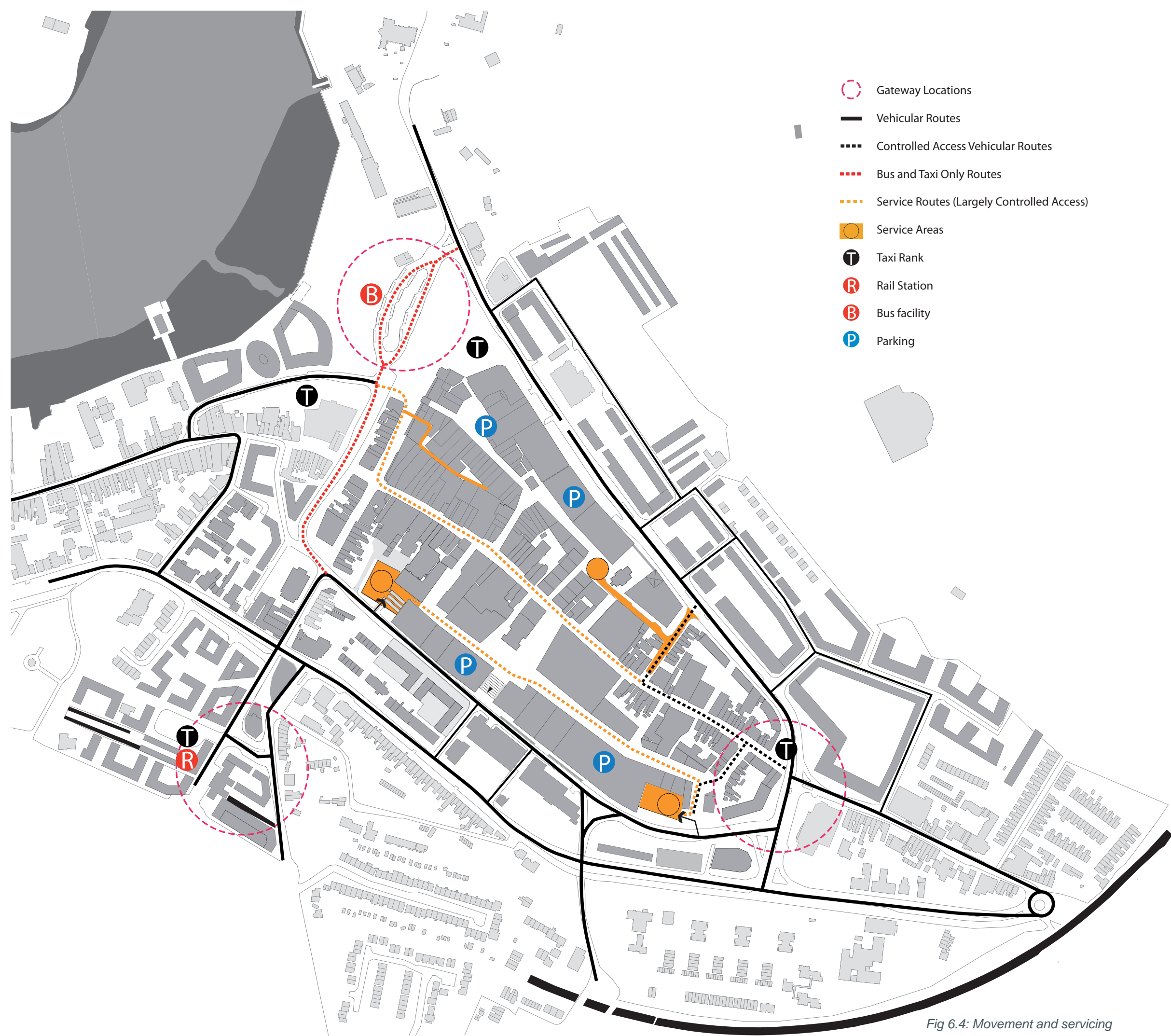


Fig 6.4: Movement and servicing

6.0 DRAFT MASTERPLAN

QUALITY PARKING PROVISION

The parking strategy for the preferred option has been informed by a number of principles designed to help create an attractive and usable environment which will attract customers from across the Medway area and perhaps beyond. These are set out below and illustrated in figure 6.5:

High quality parking spaces

Parking design has improved significantly over the last few years, with the development of multi-storey parking provision which does not have a negative impact on the surrounding environment and which provides users with a safe, attractive and high usable resource. Developments such as the Westfield Centre at White City in London have followed methods used in Continental Europe which direct drivers to free spaces and provide a comfortable environment.

Parking provision in Chatham is currently of a poor quality, but the central masterplan provides an opportunity to address this and provide high quality parking provision which attracts customers through its ease of use.

Encouragement of modal shift

By encouraging Chatham to be the commercial centre of the Medway City area, it is envisaged that public transport will become a more feasible alternative to the private car in the future. The recent expansion of student numbers in the town are likely to support the role of public transport in the area. This will help to relieve congestion and create a more attractive environment in addition to providing environmental benefits in the shorter term.

A quality retail offer

Popular shopping destinations are not driven by the level of parking available but by the retail offer at the location. Examples of this are the success of Oxford Street as the country's premier shopping destination and the fact that people do not visit Bluewater simply for the parking spaces but for the shops on offer.

A key focus for the masterplan is to create an attractive environment with a strong offer of shops and services which attract people to the town.

PARKING CAPACITY

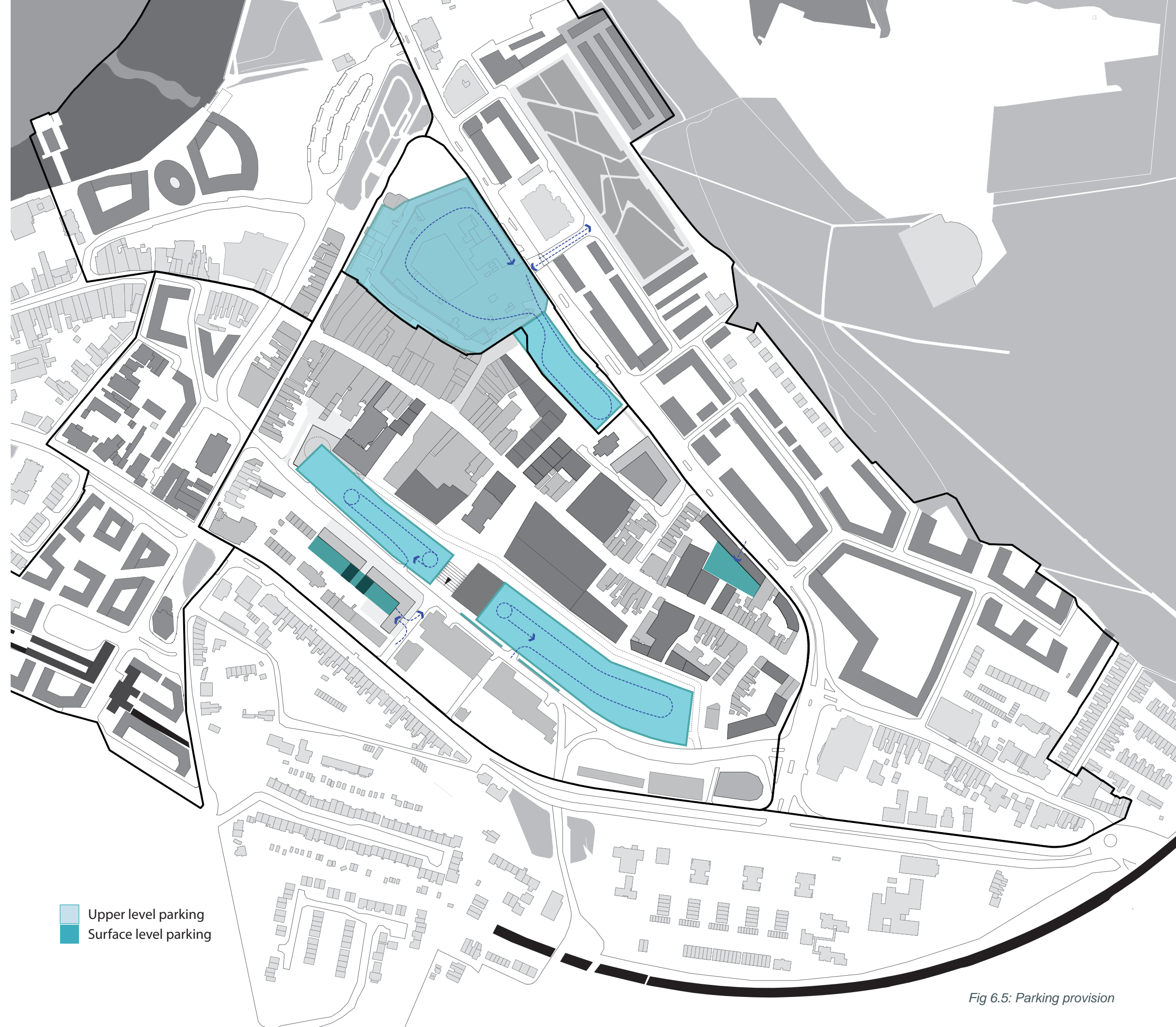
An overall parking capacity of 1,242 spaces has been identified with the draft masterplan in the preferred option. When taken in conjunction with the 500 parking spaces proposed as part of the Pentagon extension, this relates to an overall gain in parking spaces in the town centre.

A plan setting out the parking locations is provided to the right, including proposed access points and internal circulation patterns to multi-storey car parks at Best Street and for the Pentagon Centre.

The breakdown of parking spaces according to sites is set out below:

Site	Spaces
Pentagon extension	260
Best Street (western end)	304
Best Street (eastern end)	568
The Brook (surface parking)	35
Best Street (surface parking)	35
Best Street (on street parking)	23
TOTAL	1,225

This represents a gain in parking spaces for the town centre, of approximately 200 spaces, along with the qualitative improvements and short term parking provision that will make each space provide more value during the day.



Upper level parking
 Surface level parking

Fig 6.5: Parking provision

6.0 DRAFT MASTERPLAN

RETAIL CAPACITY

The levels of retail capacity developed for the draft masterplan have been informed by the detailed retail capacity study by Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners (2009), which identified a role for Chatham as the commercial centre of the Medway towns. It established that Chatham’s retail ranking, and therefore overall image, had slipped significantly in recent years but identified a strong retail demand for the short and medium term future which could help transform this situation. The study identified capacity for:

- 7,298 sqm of new large foodstore (convenience) space and 4,379 sqm of small foodstore space by 2016
- 24,000-55,000 sqm of comparison goods space, up until 2016
- A further 24,000-28,000 sqm between 2016 and 2021

The report was undertaken in the aftermath of the economic downturn and it is important to note that these figures already take account of shifts in the retail and property markets associated with the downturn. Taking this information into account the total retail capacities identified for the town centre are:

Site	Sqm
Pentagon extension	13,890
Halfords	1,940
High Street central	1,990
Iceland/The Brook	1,680
The theatre	444
Primark extension	3,128
Best Street (west)	3,942
Meeting House	437
Best Street (east)	16,394
Debenhams	16,680
Indoor market	1,380
Richard Street	390
Total	62,295
Amount of replaced retail	20,874
TOTAL NEW RETAIL	41,421

It is important to emphasise a number of key considerations relating to these retail capacity figures:

- These figures represent the maximum floorspace figures the final masterplan could achieve, based on the maximum number of storeys and plot density that would be appropriate for the town centre.
- The capacity figures cover both comparison and convenience retail and so are designed to address both the total of 24,000-55,000sqm of comparison space and 11,577sqm of total convenience space capacities identified in the NLP report.
- The phasing for the masterplan will take place at the next stage of the project but it is not envisaged that this retail space would all come forward by 2016. A proportion of the retail capacity identified therefore relates to the 24,000-28,000sqm identified for the time period between 2016 and 2021.

HOUSING CAPACITY

New residential development within the draft masterplan is designed to bring activity to the town centre throughout the day and evening and to encourage sustainable living patterns in the local area. Such new accommodation could serve the growing student population very effectively and support the evening economy in the town. The residential units are, however, designed to be a mix of tenure and size in order to ensure a balanced community. The capacity for new homes in the draft masterplan has been identified as:

Site	Homes
Halfords	30
Best Street (west)	72
Best Street (east)	124
Paddock (west)	9
Paddock (east)	15
TOTAL	250

WORK SPACE CAPACITY

The draft masterplan has been developed in order to ensure a balanced and strong economy and providing employment opportunities for Chatham will be critical in helping to establish the town as the commercial centre for the Medway City area.

The number of jobs which the masterplan can support has been identified through the retail and hotel development, through office space and through enterprise space. These calculations do not yet take account of the number of jobs which will be replacement jobs in the town centre, but there is likely to be a healthy increase in the number of jobs. The capacities have been identified as:

Site	Jobs
Pentagon extension	347
Halfords	49
High Street Central	149
Iceland	126
The Brook	82
The theatre extension	48
Primark extension	78
Best Street (west)	140
Meeting House	33
Best Street (east)	471
Debenhams	417
Indoor market	69
Richard Street	20
Paddock west	85
High Street south east	107
Paddock west	32
Paddock east	86
Eastern Marker	119
TOTAL	2,372
Replacement jobs	1,091
TOTAL NEW JOBS	1,281



- a The Pentagon
- 1 The Pentagon extension
- 2 Halfords
- 3 High Street central
- 4 Iceland/The Brook
- 5 The Theatre Extension
- 6 Primark extension
- 7 Best Street (west)
- 8 Meeting House
- 9 Best Street (east)
- 10 Debenhams
- 11 Indoor market
- 12 High Street south east
- 13 Paddock (west)
- 14 Paddock (east)
- 15 Eastern marker

Fig 6.6: Key sites in the masterplan

6.0 DRAFT MASTERPLAN

SECTION OF THE DRAFT MASTERPLAN

Chatham’s topography provides one of the town’s most distinctive features and whilst this helps to give Chatham a clear identity this also presents challenges when planning for new development in the town centre.

The section in figure 6.7 illustrates the level changes at work between New Road and Cross Street in the town centre with close to a three-storey level difference found between New Road and Best Street and a three-storey level difference between Best Street and Richard Street.

These level changes have a significant impact on the depth of building it is possible to achieve between these streets and consequently inform the uses for each site. However, it has been possible to work intelligently with the levels in order to accommodate parking in the masterplan and to ensure that both retail and residential uses can each address the street. The proposed location of a food store anchor, for example, Between Best Street and Richard Street (eastern end) has been designed to work with these level changes.

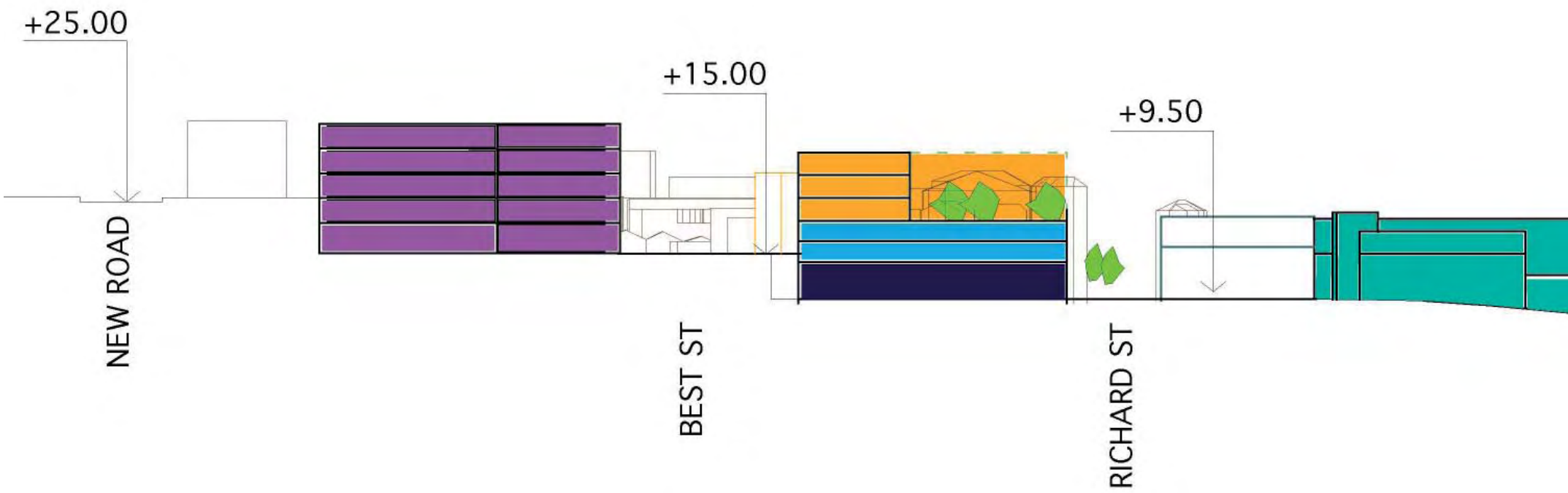
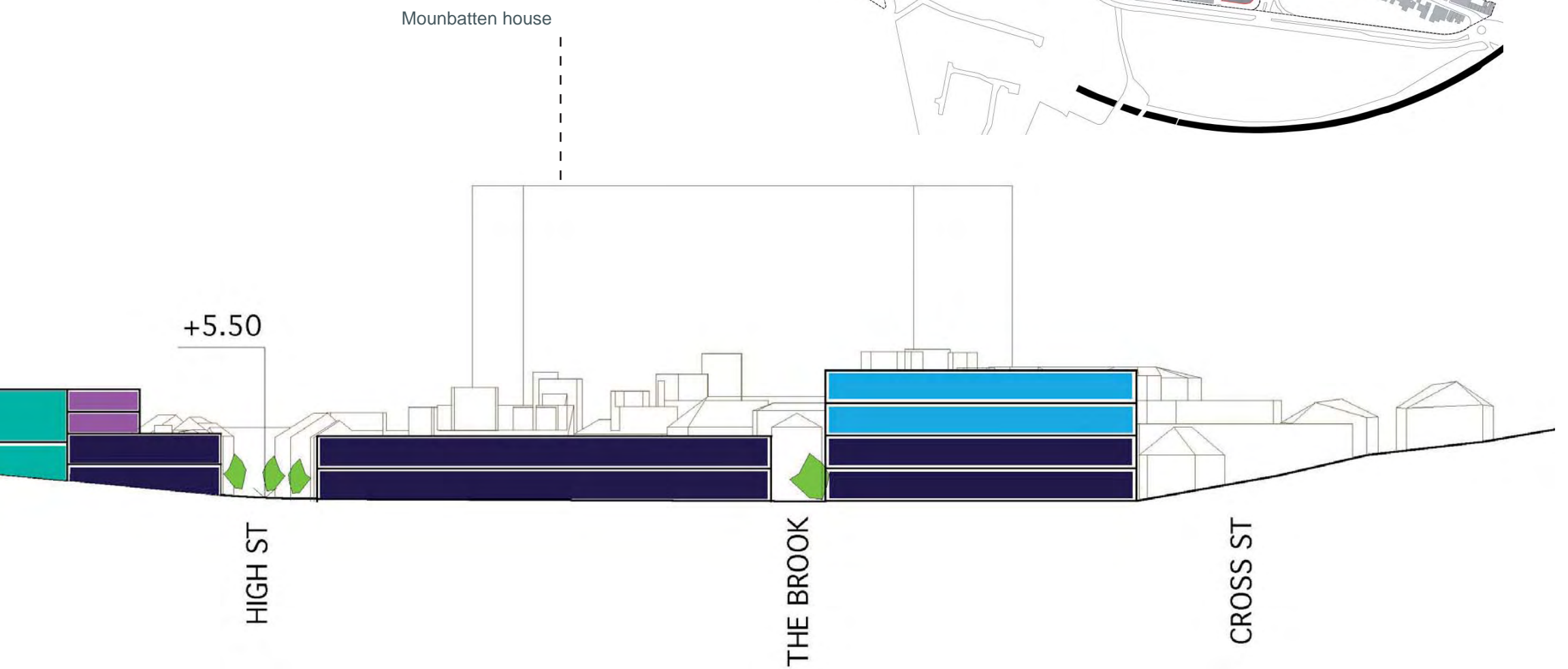


Fig 6.7: Section of the proposed draft masterplan, indicating building levels and uses

- Retail
- Workspace
- Residential
- Cultural
- Parking

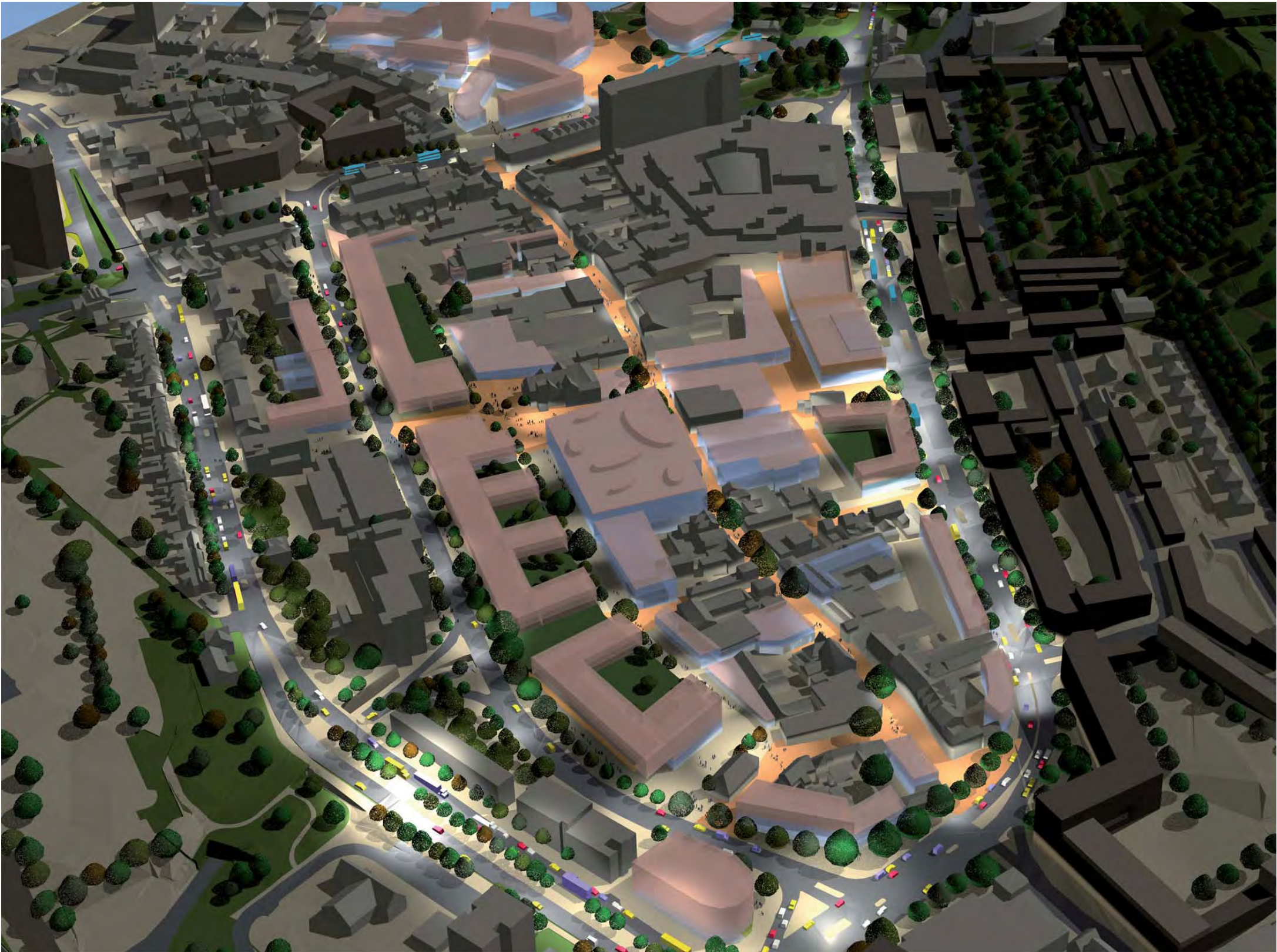


6.0 DRAFT MASTERPLAN

Fig 6.8: Masterplan view from the north west



Fig 6.9: Masterplan view from the south east



6.0 DRAFT MASTERPLAN

Fig 6.10: Masterplan view from the south west



Fig 6.11: Aerial view of the masterplan



7.0 DRAFT IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

The Chatham High Street/Best Street Masterplan represents a vision and physical framework which could be realised in a number of ways. The Masterplan identifies a range of opportunities to deliver significant improvements in Chatham town centre and this Implementation Plan sets out broad principles to show how this vision and framework could be delivered.

A comprehensive programme of proposals is suggested to transform the town centre and provide the step change which is overdue for Chatham. Delivering the Masterplan vision will require co-ordinated action and commitment from both the public and private sectors.

The Masterplan will provide the basis for partnership working in bringing forward opportunities and for the coordination of public and private sector investment. In this sense the Masterplan provides a key tool in promoting and facilitating development and regeneration of the town centre.

The proposed opportunities have the potential to come forward over varying timescales and this is addressed in the phasing section of the implementation plan.

Medway Council will have a strategic role as local planning authority in delivering the Masterplan but on specific opportunities it will also have a key role as landowner. This gives the Council the ability to have a direct influence over the development process, uses, and delivery over and above their normal planning authority role and means that the Council is in a position to help drive the changes forward.

The two main identified development opportunities, the Pentagon Centre and Best Street areas, do not all fall within the Council's land ownership and the Council is open to using statutory power to help bring these sites forward if this is needed.

The important parcels of land for the masterplan have been identified as:

- The Pentagon Centre (units 20 to 26) and the multi-storey car park;
- The Halfords store, Solomons Road;
- High Street shops premises (numbers 211 to 223);
- High Street shop premises (numbers 235 to 251);
- Debenhams Department Store;
- Victory House office building on Rome Terrace;
- Various uses bounded by Richard St, James St, Best St and Clover St.;
- The NCP car park on Rhode Street; and
- The Trafalgar Centre (270-272 High Street).

Development opportunities may also involve the assembly of other smaller parcels of land but these may not be critical to the implementation of the overall objectives of the masterplan.

The implementation of the Masterplan provides a significant opportunity for Chatham town centre to re-position itself as a high quality retail, leisure and employment destination for the Medway Towns - a role which has repeatedly been identified for the town in past vision, retail and spatial studies. In order to achieve this investment the town centre and the Council plans to actively market the opportunities.

The masterplan proposals will need to be packaged into a number of self-contained projects that can be delivered separately. The appropriate phasing of projects will be established before the first phase of projects is taken to the market. The Council will work with investors/developers to establish a clear indication of how each project fits into the overall vision for the town centre.

The planning policy context for the Masterplan seeks to provide certainty. The masterplan itself then promotes development and can give investors/developers confidence there is planning support and commitment to deliver the identified opportunities.

There are a number of delivery mechanisms and funding available and the preferred route will be different for each project. Development projects could be delivered as private sector developments, joint ventures between the public and private sector or a public sector led scheme. The key projects are likely to be joint ventures and this approach has the greatest potential for success. The investment required will be predominantly private sector but some funding support from the public sector is likely, for example the provision of land or technical input. The implementation of public realm and infrastructure improvements identified in the masterplan will provide an attractive canvas for investors and developers and attract more people to the town centre. In addition to funding support, the Council will have a key role to play in land assembly, ensuring suitable relocation of uses and more detailed feasibility appraisals for each project.

PHASING OF DEVELOPMENT

The key projects set out in the Masterplan will be brought forward over differing timescales depending on the nature of the project, delivery mechanism, the need to minimise disruption and land assembly issues. The masterplan proposals can be divided into two broad zones, that is north of the High Street (including the Pentagon Centre) and south of the High Street (Best Street).

The area to the south of the High Street is expected to deliver the largest quantum of new retail floorspace (over 40,000 sq m gross). In order to deliver the necessary step change in Chatham’s retail offer, the masterplan must deliver a critical mass of new floorspace within the early phases of development. The first phases of development are likely to occur south of the High Street which will act as a catalyst for longer term investment in other areas. The proposed phasing of development is summarised in the table to the right.

The table sets out the preferred phasing plan to ensure efficient re-provision of uses in the town centre so that parking and key retailers can be maintained continuously. However, this phasing could be adapted, should the Pentagon extension outlined in the existing Development Brief come forward in the short term. If this was to happen, a suitable phasing schedule would then be:

Phase 1: Pentagon extension and north west area of Best Street

Phase 2: south east area of Best Street and Halfords/High Street area

This flexibility has been built in to the High Street/Best Street masterplan so that Chatham can effectively respond to opportunities as they arise and bring about the step change in the shortest possible time frame.

The areas which have been identified for the four phases are distinct areas which could come forward separately. As it is possible for these areas to come forward independently, it might also be possible for a different phasing strategy to respond to this. As with the phasing strategy set out here, the decant issues and reprovision of key retailers and parking spaces would be a key issue.

The phasing table and plan of the areas of phasing are set out on the following page.

7.0 DRAFT IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

Fig 7.1: Possible phasing of the masterplan

Phase 1 Best Street North West End	<p>Description - development of the area to the rear of the Theatre and Primark store, to provide about 8,000 sq m of retail space, upper level car parking, residential and workspace uses.</p> <p>Constraints - requires the acquisition of Victory House and is likely to require the relocation of existing office uses. Loss of around 70 car parking spaces during construction.</p>
Phase 2 Best Street South East End	<p>Description - redevelopment of Debenhams store to provide a new flagship store and the Best Street car park, NCP car park and indoor market area, to provide about 36,000 sq m retail space, upper level car parking and mixed uses.</p> <p>Constraints - requires cooperation of Debenhams and acquisition of the NCP car park, the indoor market and a number of other uses. There is potential to relocate some displaced uses to Phase 1. Loss of around 430 car parking spaces during construction, which should be partially offset by a net increase in car parking provision provided in Phase 1.</p>
Phase 3 Pentagon Centre Extension	<p>Description - redevelopment of Pentagon Centre multi-storey car park and High Street shop premises to extend the shopping centre and improve links to the High Street. Replacement upper floor car parking will be provided. In total about 14,000 sq m of retail floorspace will be provided.</p> <p>Constraints - requires cooperation of Pentagon Centre and acquisition of High Street shop premises. Potential to relocate displaced uses to Phase 2. Loss of around 289 car parking spaces, partially offset by new provision in Phases 1 and 2. Demolition of Halfords store for Phase 4 could also provide temporary surface car parking during construction.</p>
Phase 4 Halfords and High Street North	<p>Description - redevelopment of Halfords and High Street shop premises, Iceland store and premises on the Brook to provide about 6,000 sq m of retail floorspace and mixed uses.</p> <p>Constraints - requires acquisition of the Halfords store and High Street shop premises, but potential to relocate displaced uses to Phase 2 and 3.</p>

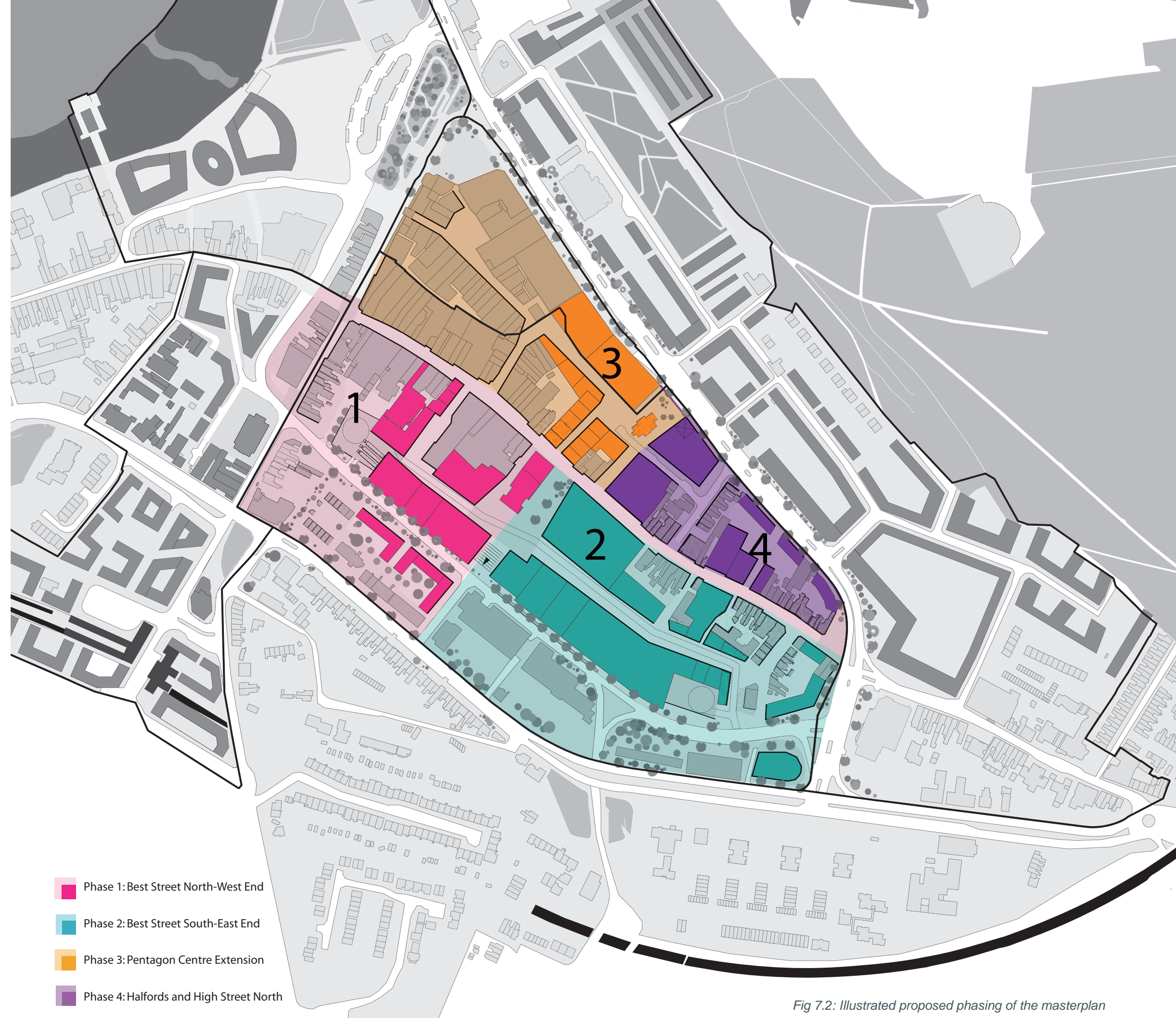


Fig 7.2: Illustrated proposed phasing of the masterplan

