

**Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead  
Local Development Framework**



**Maidenhead Town Centre  
Area Action Plan  
Adopted September 2011**



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### *The Maidenhead Town Centre Area Action Plan*

#### Introduction

Maidenhead is a major town within the Thames Valley. Its attractive setting and unparalleled accessibility, with convenient links to London, Heathrow and the rest of the country, have long made it a focus for commercial and residential development.

Commercially attractive, Maidenhead has long been exposed to continuous and often rapid change. Many were introduced piecemeal in response to immediate needs. Consequently, while the town centre's history and character are still evident from its street pattern and the presence of some older buildings, the area feels disjointed and stimulants to the senses are scarce. In addition, a decline in the town centres quality, vibrancy and role in recent years has further affected its appeal. Maidenheadians themselves say they long to regain a sense of pride in their town; and the town centre has enormous potential as an attractive and vibrant centre, serving a relatively prosperous catchment area.

Over recent years there has been a marked decline in its quality, vibrancy and role but Maidenhead town itself has enormous potential as an attractive and vibrant centre, serving a relatively prosperous catchment area. A regeneration programme is long overdue.

*"Maidenhead will become the distinctive heart of the community, a place that celebrates its green Thames Valley setting, which is welcoming, attractive and accessible to all, and provides a strong economic focus for the wider community"*<sup>(1)</sup>

This shared vision has led to the development of an Area Action Plan (AAP) for the whole town centre focusing on regeneration and setting out how the true potential of Maidenhead town centre can be unlocked. The plan will shape and guide the rejuvenation of the town centre.

The AAP will help bring about:

- A vibrant, visually attractive town centre that will excite and surprise;
- A memorable place with striking architecture, spaces and waterways;
- A much larger shopping area with a host of new shops;
- A strong local economic focus;
- A centre for community art and culture;
- Improved accessibility, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists;
- A town centre that residents can relate to and be proud of.

The plan is the product of wide ranging research plus many observations and ideas that have come forward from residents and stakeholders who have an interest in the future of the town centre.

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1 *'A Vision for Maidenhead Town Centre', the vision and action plan commissioned by the Partnership for the Rejuvenation of Maidenhead (PRoM).*

## Executive Summary



### The approach

Reviving the character is the aim. Creating a sense of place, a destination - for shoppers, residents, businesses or visitors. This involves exploring opportunities for new building, new streets and spaces, for improved shopping facilities and attracting new businesses, for creating new homes and providing social and cultural attractions as well as further improving the towns accessibility. The approach encapsulates the four key themes:

- Place making
- Economy
- People
- Movement

The approach also identifies six sites for specific development - the Opportunity Areas:

- Broadway Triangle
- West Street Area
- York Road Area
- Railway Station
- High Street East / York Stream
- Stafferton Way

At the end of each of the four key themes (listed below) is a summary of the relevant policies. In addition, the AAP has information about the policies for each of the Opportunity Areas, plus details of policies that will help with delivery and implementation of developments. For the full details of the policies to be used in decision making please refer to the main AAP.

## Place Making

Distinctly Maidenhead: The best places should be memorable, with a look and atmosphere which people will not only find attractive but appreciate and recognise as distinctive to the town. There will be exciting new buildings, in a variety of styles, including some taller ones in carefully selected places. Between the buildings, new streets and spaces will be created, or existing ones improved. Well designed streets and spaces will be crucial to the appeal and success of the town as well as providing opportunities to meet and talk, linger or walk, gather for markets and events or provide access to green space. This step change towards a high quality environment is needed across the town centre. In addition, the identification of 'gateways' will provide locations for developments of outstanding, landmark quality. The waterway through the centre will become prominent features where a variety of activities can take place. The Opportunity Areas will be key to creating a sense of place.



### MTC 1 Streets & Spaces

Development will be expected to bring about improvement of streets and spaces in a variety of ways including street furniture, new public spaces and reduced pedestrian, cycle and traffic conflicts.

### MTC 2 Greening

Proposals will be expected to contribute to the overall greening of the town centre through, for example, strengthening links to existing open spaces, planting trees and landscaping, and providing new green space.

### MTC 3 Waterways

The waterways will be improved and better integrated with the town centre.

### MTC 4 Design

Proposals must be of high quality in terms of urban design and architecture with a specific focus on creating a mixed use town centre environment that is welcoming, safe, durable and stimulating. The town centre should also be highly accessible and easy to move around. The buildings, and layout of streets and spaces should have a clear image and be easy to understand, and the use of landmarks will enable people to find their way around with ease. The town centre should also be able to adapt in light of any changes to future needs.

### MTC 5 Gateways

As well as being design to a very high standard (Policy MTC4), the entrances - gateways - into the town centre will be expected to be examples of outstanding and distinctive architecture supported by high quality public realm, in particular landscaping, lighting and public art.

### MTC 6 Tall Buildings

In areas identified as being appropriate for tall buildings there will be specific development requirements such as being particularly distinctive and of exceptionally high quality design there must not be unacceptable negative micro-climatic effects and the buildings must be suited to the area and local context.



## Executive Summary

### Economy

Additional space for business growth, greatly enhanced shopping eating and drinking opportunities and new tourist facilities are vital to a vibrant and successful town centre economy.

The shopping centre will be enhanced to provide greater choice and a wider variety, serving the needs of residents and encouraging more people into the town centre. The prime shopping areas which include the High Street and the Nicholsons Shopping Centre will remain, and a major new extension to the shopping centre will be added to the south on the Broadway Opportunity Area. The main focus for markets and events will be the High Street but there will also be opportunities for events across the town centre and in the newly-created public spaces.

The area within the Town Centre Commercial Boundary will become the focus for new offices, primarily within the Opportunity Areas. Offices will help bring about future rejuvenation and bring more people into the centre.

Visitor accommodation will be encouraged to strengthen and diversify the range on offer. There will be opportunities for new quality hotels in the centre and new food and drink establishments will be encouraged, mainly within the shopping areas, providing a lively leisure-based economy that complements other town centre activity.

#### MTC 7 Retail and Shopping Frontages

The primary shopping area will be protected and enhanced. The highest priority for major new retail-led development in the town centre will be the Broadway Opportunity Area which will be comprehensively developed to link into, complement and become part of the primary shopping area.

The retail character of the primary shopping area will be maintained and enhanced, and proposals involving the loss of shops (Class A1) will only be allowed in specific circumstances. While it is important to retain the retail character of the secondary shopping streets and areas, there will be opportunities there for greater diversity of retail and non-retail uses.

#### MTC 8 Food & Drink

Within the Opportunity Areas and shopping areas, food and drink establishments will be supported where they will not lead to an unacceptable concentration of this kind of business, harm the town centre's retail function, and/or have an adverse impact on the amenity or character of the area. Proposals which result in the loss of existing public houses and restaurants will generally be resisted.

#### MTC 9 Markets & Events

Events and markets will be focused on the High Street and in town centre spaces, where these are considered appropriate for such activities. Developers will be encouraged to support and enable the operation of events and markets.

#### MTC 10 Offices

New office developments will be focused within the Opportunity Areas. They will only be allowed outside of these if they do not compromise the Opportunity Areas themselves. A net reduction in office space will only be acceptable in certain circumstances.

#### MTC 11 Visitor Accommodation

Inside the town centre commercial boundary, proposals for additional hotels and other accommodation for visitors will be supported where they will improve the quality or diversify the existing range of accommodation on offer.

## People

The town centre will become home to a new and diverse group of residents in an innovative and attractive urban setting. They will have easy, walkable access to shops, business and transport. There will be a mix of new housing, primarily focused on the Opportunity Areas, bringing life, activity, vitality and vibrancy into the centre by day and night.

Improvements to the town centre will see streets and spaces capable of hosting a wide variety of activities and events. Aspirations for more and better cultural facilities, coupled to Maidenhead's excellent accessibility suggest that new and improved social, cultural, community and leisure offerings should be encouraged to create a heart to the town centre and contribute to its status as a destination.

### MTC 12 Housing

The Opportunity Areas will be expected to make a significant contribution to housing, but housing development will also be supported throughout the town centre. All proposals will be expected to contribute to a sustainable mix and choice of housing with any net reduction in the number of homes or loss of residential land will be generally resisted.

### MTC 13 Community, Culture and Leisure

Proposals for improved community, cultural and leisure facilities will be supported within the town centre. Any developments that result in the loss of such amenities will generally be resisted.

## Movement

Maidenhead town centre will build on its excellent accessibility to be a welcoming place for residents and visitors alike. Arrival points and movement into and around the centre will be improved, enhancing people's experience and perceptions of the town centre.

A public transport interchange will be created in the Opportunity Area at the Railway Station which itself will see significant investment with the arrival of Crossrail. New and improved pedestrian links will make the town more 'people friendly' and make the railway station and Kidwells Park integral parts of the town centre by making them much more accessible.

New development must enhance pedestrian movement, support arrival by bicycle and provide sufficient parking. The town will continue to be accessible by car. Where new development gives rise to the need to improve the existing road network these will be phased accordingly and prioritised where necessary.



### MTC 14 Accessibility

Accessibility to the town centre will be optimised for all methods of travel, with a specific focus on creating a safe and comfortable environment for pedestrians and cyclists and on improving access by public transport.

### MTC 15 Transport Infrastructure

This policy identifies the infrastructure that will be needed to support the growth and improvement of the town centre.



## Executive Summary

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## INTRODUCTION

### What Is The Maidenhead Town Centre AAP?

**1.1** Currently, Maidenhead town centre does not match the needs and expectations of residents. The Maidenhead Town Centre Area Action Plan (AAP) is a plan that will be used as the basis for rejuvenating the town centre. It sets out the vision for how the area will change over the period leading up to 2026 and a strategy for achieving this.

**1.2** The AAP is a major step towards achieving the rejuvenation of Maidenhead town centre. It covers the wider town centre area including not only the shopping area but also the surrounding leisure facilities, offices and main roads, helping to ensure the town centre is considered comprehensively and not in a piecemeal way.

**1.3** Our rejuvenation plan will affect your experience of Maidenhead town centre. It will mean:

- New shops, homes, businesses and leisure opportunities
- An attractive waterside
- The introduction of more trees and greenery
- Landmark buildings and attractive open spaces
- Pedestrian and cyclist friendly streets



**Picture 1 Indicative illustration of Maidenhead town centre from the south west**

**1.4** The preparation of the AAP involved considerable research and consultation. The main stages were as follows:

1. A Vision for Maidenhead Town Centre - see Supporting Documents For The AAP;
2. Stakeholder Workshop - in June 2009 a workshop was held with a wide range of organisations with an interest in Maidenhead town centre;
3. Maidenhead On Track for the Future - this newsletter distributed in September 2009 provided an opportunity for residents to feedback their views on several matters that were discussed at the stakeholder workshop;

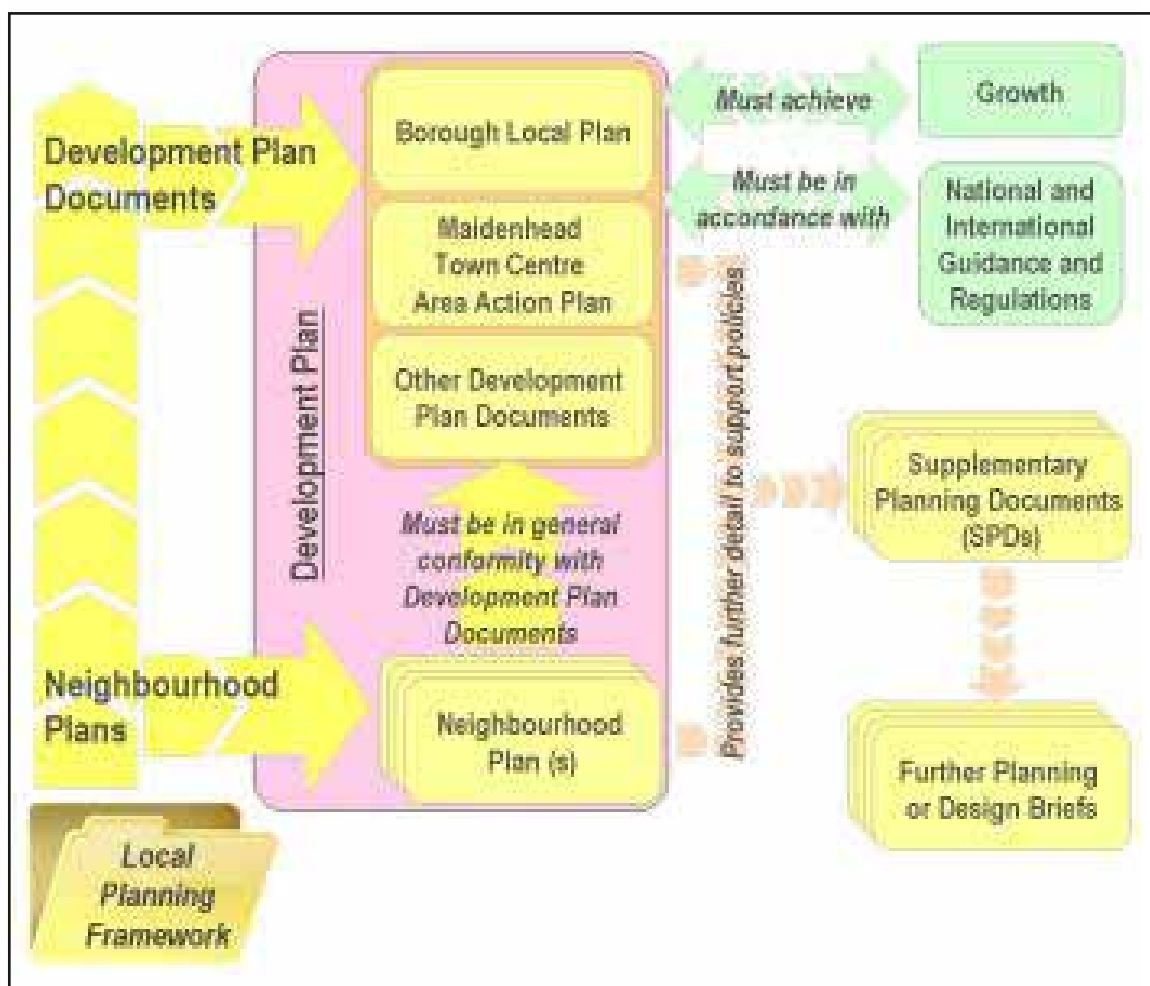


4. Maidenhead Town Centre Area Action Plan Preferred Options Document - consultation on the preferred approach ran from 14<sup>th</sup> January to 12<sup>th</sup> February 2010 and included a public workshop and exhibition;
5. Maidenhead Town Centre Area Action Plan Submission Document - consultation on the draft submission document ran from 14<sup>th</sup> October to 25<sup>th</sup> November 2010;
6. Examination in Public - the appointed Inspector considered all written representations on the draft AAP and held additional hearing sessions from 29<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011;
7. Receipt of the Inspector's report - the Inspector found the AAP to be sound and recommended that it should be adopted with two small areas of change. The report was received by the council on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2011;
8. Adoption - the AAP was adopted by the council on the 27<sup>th</sup> September 2011.

## Other Important Documents You Need To Know About

**1.5** The Maidenhead Town Centre AAP will be one of several principal planning documents, known as Development Plan Documents (DPDs), in the council's Local Development Framework (LDF). This is the folder of documents which are the main consideration in deciding planning applications.

**1.6** The AAP is the first DPD to be prepared. This reflects the importance placed on the rejuvenation of the town centre and the considerable developer interest, and had the agreement of the Government Office for the South East. Whilst the council has sought to build in a degree of flexibility, the advanced preparation of the AAP may require its partial review following the completion of other parts of the LDF, particularly the Borough Local Plan which will need to consider development issues across the Royal Borough. Figure 1 'Relationships in the Planning Framework' shows the relationship between the AAP, other parts of the LDF and neighbourhood plans.



**Figure 1 Relationships in the Planning Framework**

**1.7** In addition, the council produces documents which provide complementary policy guidance. These include development briefs for sites and specific matters. Those of particular relevance to development within Maidenhead town centre include:

- Maidenhead Town Centre Conservation Area Statement
- Broadway / King Street / Queen Street Planning Brief
- Maidenhead Waterways Framework
- Sustainable Design and Construction SPD
- Planning Obligations and Developer Contributions SPD

**1.8** Over time the various parts of the LDF will replace the council's current planning document, the adopted Local Plan. Upon the adoption of the AAP, several policies within the Local Plan will be superseded. A list of these is provided in Appendix B 'Policy Relationships & Schedule Of Policies That Have Been Superseded'.

**1.9** It is a requirement that the AAP is consistent with national policy. You can find out more information on national policy on the website of the [Department for Communities and Local Government](#).

## Supporting Documents For The AAP

**1.10** A number of reports and studies have been used as background to the AAP. These include the following:

### A Vision For Maidenhead Town Centre

**1.11** In December 2007, the council launched the Partnership for the Rejuvenation of Maidenhead (PRoM) bringing together political parties and community and business organisations, with support from council officers. Under independent chairmanship, the group had a clear focus to provide an agreed way forward so that Maidenhead is restored to the vibrant place people want it to be.

**1.12** PRoM appointed consultants DTZ and BDP to help produce a vision and action plan to provide a basis for future strategies and a framework within which the town centre could prosper and develop. The work built upon previous exercises undertaken by the council including the results of community consultation. The plan, *A Vision for Maidenhead Town Centre* was endorsed by PRoM and adopted by the council as the strategy for further work on the town centre.



**Picture 2 A Vision for Maidenhead Town Centre**

**1.13** Further detail is provided under 'Vision & Objectives'. The full document is available to download from the council's website.

### Sustainable Community Partnership Strategy

**1.14** A Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) aims to set out the overall strategic direction and long-term vision for the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of a local area. The government expects local planning policies to be aligned not only with national policy but also the shared priorities set out in the SCS.

**1.15** The Community Partnership aims to ensure the Royal Borough continues to be a place where everyone can thrive in a safe and healthy environment and are working on the seven challenges of:

1. Improving community safety
2. Strengthening local communities
3. Reducing health inequalities
4. Safeguarding the vulnerable
5. Raising education and skills attainment
6. Promoting sustainable economic growth
7. Tackling climate change

**1.16** The rejuvenation of Maidenhead town centre and creating opportunities to promote the centre as a welcoming, attractive and accessible location is identified as a priority action.

## Sustainability Appraisal

**1.17** The council tests emerging local planning policies to ensure they are fully understood and reflect sustainability principles. The AAP was accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal Report, which highlighted the significant economic, social or environmental effects. This was central to informing the AAP's preparation.

## Research Studies

**1.18** In preparing the AAP, the council has gathered evidence on a variety of issues including future retail and employment needs, urban design and transport. Reference to these is made when justifying policies and proposals. The reports are available to download from the [Evidence Base](#) section of council's website.

## Finding Your Way Around The AAP

- Section 2 'Our Vision For Maidenhead Town Centre': Explains the overall vision and objectives for the town centre.
- Section 3 'Town Centre Places': Sets out the policies which will influence what the town centre will look like, including the design of buildings, waterways and green spaces.
- Section 4 'Town Centre Economy': Sets out the policies on how the town centre will contribute to a healthy economy, including shops, leisure and offices.
- Section 5 'Town Centre People': Sets out the policies on providing more homes within the town centre and supporting facilities.
- Section 6 'Town Centre Movement': Sets out the policies on getting to and around the town centre, including infrastructure projects needed to support rejuvenation.
- Section 7 'Town Centre Opportunity Areas': Sets out our approach to specific areas where significant change will occur.
- Section 8 'Delivery & Implementation': Provides more detail on how the AAP will be implemented through our delivery plan and monitoring.

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## Our Vision For Maidenhead Town Centre

2



## OUR VISION FOR MAIDENHEAD TOWN CENTRE

### Challenges & Opportunities

**2.1** Maidenhead is a major town within the Thames Valley. The town's evolution is strongly linked to the importance of the stage and private coach route between London and the West. In many ways this historic link continues. Its attractive environmental setting, excellent accessibility and links to London, Heathrow and the motorway network have established Maidenhead as a focus for commercial and residential development.

**2.2** National planning policy generally directs those uses which attract many people, such as offices, retail and cultural facilities to town centres. Maidenhead, as a major town centre, continues to support healthy housing and office markets. However it is recognised that some past developments have had a negative impact on the town centre, for example some architecture which has not aged well. While recent years has seen new office, leisure, residential and retail developments, there has been an overall decline in the quality, vitality and role of the town centre. The shopping area has suffered due to increasing competition from surrounding towns, particularly for comparison goods, and the centre experiences a high degree of expenditure leakage as residents decide to shop elsewhere.

**2.3** The town centre has a number of opportunities on which to build. The following is based on what people have told us, as well as our research.

- The central area is compact. Enhancing the area around the High Street, Queen Street and King Street will provide a legible and accessible centre.
- There is good vehicular access to the town centre.
- Improvements to the railway station as part of the arrival of Crossrail provide an opportunity to enhance accessibility by train.
- There are some excellent open spaces just outside the central area. Connecting these areas into the town centre will help introduce greenery into the town centre and enable people to use the town centre in a different way.
- Waterways run through the east of the town centre. Enhancing and integrating these into the wider area will help green the town centre and create a unique feature.
- The street pattern and a number of historic buildings link to Maidenhead's past and add character to the town centre.
- There are a number of important and well used leisure and cultural facilities.
- A number of key areas and individual sites are underused at present, presenting an opportunity to create value and stimulate change.

### Vision & Objectives

**2.4** The Partnership for the Rejuvenation of Maidenhead (PRoM), a cross party group with a majority of lay members representing local interests, was formed in 2008 under independent chairmanship to bring a wide audience to finding agreed solutions for the regeneration of the town centre. The agreed vision for Maidenhead town centre is set out below.

#### Vision

*"Maidenhead will become the distinctive heart of the community, a place that celebrates its green Thames Valley setting, which is welcoming, attractive and accessible to all, and provides a strong economic focus for the wider community."*

**2.5** The proposals and policies in the AAP have been informed not only by this vision, but also by a set of key objectives. As well as underpinning planning policy, these objectives should inform development proposals themselves and the wider management of the town centre. The subsequent chapters of the AAP that contain the objectives and policies are arranged into the four key themes of:

1. Places
2. Economy
3. People
4. Movement

## Objectives

### Places

- Improve the quality of and provision of public space.
- Introduce greenery into the town centre to reflect its Thames Valley setting.
- Enhance and introduce the use of water.
- Promote high quality built form.

### Economy

- Quicken the pace of urban development and promote economic growth.
- Promote mixed use development.

### People

- Foster greater civic pride.
- Improve the identity and image of the town centre.

### Movement

- Optimise town centre accessibility.
- Reduce pedestrian and vehicular conflicts, and promote a people-friendly town.

**2.6** Turning this vision into reality requires a range of solutions and proposals which includes not only planning policies to deliver physical change but also the continued involvement of various partner organisations and other council services. Substantial investment through major building projects will be required to deliver many improvements.

## Spatial Strategy

**2.7** The spatial strategy sets out the approach taken by the AAP in broad terms. The spatial strategy is implemented through detailed policies found in the subsequent sections. Where these relate to specific boundaries these will be shown on the Proposals Maps (see Appendix C 'Schedule Of Changes To The Proposals Map').

### Overall Approach

**2.8** The broad strategy is to enable Maidenhead town centre to grow so that it can meet local rejuvenation aspirations and fulfil its role as a major town within its catchment area. The AAP boundary has been drawn to include not only the shopping area but also the surrounding leisure facilities, offices and main roads. This will help to ensure the town centre is considered and planned for as whole and not as separate parts. In order to bring about rejuvenation it is important to ensure the right uses and sites are promoted so that they complement and strengthen existing town centre uses and work together to achieve the wider vision and objectives for the town centre.

### Main Land Uses

**2.9** The strategy is to provide a mix of uses across the town centre, albeit that the emphasis will change in different areas.

**2.10** Maidenhead's main shopping area is centred on the High Street and the Nicholson's Centre. Existing shopping areas will continue to be protected and enhanced. Development within these areas could help meet some of the need for additional shopping floor space, helping keep the shopping area as compact as possible. However, there

will not be sufficient capacity within the main shopping area to meet the entire identified need. This will mean that the main shopping area needs to be extended in a way which retains a compact form and fully integrates into the existing shopping areas rather than involve piecemeal peripheral development. It is also important that such an extension complements, rather than competes with the High Street and Nicholson's Centre.

**2.11** The best location for an extension to the main shopping area is to the south of the Nicholson's centre providing good linkages with the existing primary shopping area. This has sufficient redevelopment potential to meet the majority of the anticipated future need and to draw the shopping area closer to the railway station, while integrating with the existing area and retaining its compact form.

**2.12** Offices will be concentrated in specific areas across the town centre (known as Opportunity Areas), where they have the greatest potential to help rejuvenation. Offices will also be allowed alongside other town centre uses within the commercial core. As a major generator of traffic, there is a need to ensure office developments are easily accessible.

**2.13** Maidenhead town centre offers a range of community, culture and leisure facilities including a multi screen cinema, ten pin bowling and laser quest, bowling club, leisure centre and various restaurants and bars / public houses. The town centre is also the home of Maidenhead United Football Club and a number of civil facilities including council offices, the police and fire stations.

**2.14** The town centre will continue to be an appropriate location for those facilities which serve the wider area. There are however a number of opportunities which could be of particular benefit in widening the type of activities on offer to ensure that the town centre attracts people of all ages and interests, improving the town's appeal as a destination. These include facilities capable of hosting concerts, conferences and exhibitions. Improving linkages to the parks and play spaces which surround the town centre would widen the possible range of activities and attraction of the area.

**2.15** While the town centre benefits from a number of food and drink establishments, the evening economy generally caters only for younger people and does not attract a more diverse cross section of the community, particularly those of the older age groups or families. To ensure the vibrancy of the centre in the evenings, it is important that the area is not dominated by those who only come to the centre to drink, therefore a wide range of evening uses should be encouraged, including leisure, entertainment, arts and culture, and education. Pubs and clubs should be kept to the commercial core of the centre rather than primarily residential areas.

**2.16** Housing is promoted throughout the town centre. As a highly sustainable location, no area is considered unsuitable in principle for housing development. Notwithstanding this, all housing developments will need to be sensitive to potential environmental problems that can occur in town centres, such as noise and nuisance. In addition, in locating new housing development, attention will need to be paid to avoiding areas at flood risk. In the more commercial areas, housing provision will normally be part of a mix of uses and involve the upper floors, however there is also some opportunity to provide townhouses. The growth of housing is likely to generate a need for new or improved community facilities within the town centre and across the wider area. In the rare event of a conflict between uses, priority will be given to those uses which have to be in the town centre, e.g. major shopping and leisure development.

### Design Framework

**2.17** The best places are memorable, with a look and atmosphere which people find attractive, but which also appreciate and recognise the distinctiveness of the place. The strategy envisages a town centre where the valued buildings and spaces are protected and where unattractive areas see positive change. New developments should respect and enhance the overall town centre, providing an accessible and attractive environment with excellent connections to the wider town centre.

**2.18** The existing historic core along the High Street will be retained and enhanced. However, other parts of the town centre would benefit from exciting, innovative architecture and urban design. A particular emphasis will be on creating high quality entrance points into the town centre through the use of distinctive architecture and/or high quality public realm and the improvement of the waterways.

**2.19** While building heights generally vary between three and six storeys in the town centre at present, it is recognised that tall buildings when designed well can improve a town's identity and image and help achieve wider aims such as capitalising on existing services and helping to protect the Green Belt. Tall buildings are not acceptable everywhere and will be permitted in carefully selected areas where they would best contribute to rejuvenation and improving the image of the town centre.

**2.20** All development should contribute to the creation of a high quality public realm with the provision of public spaces. It should provide continuity and enclosure with a high degree of active frontages and other measures to ensure a safe and secure environment.

### **Transport Improvements**

**2.21** A successful town centre must be accessible by all means of transport and provide a comfortable and safe environment for pedestrians and cyclists. Pedestrian links to the town centre from surrounding residential areas will be improved, overcoming the barrier represented by the relief road. Within the main shopping streets, priority will be given to pedestrians. Unnecessary vehicle movements in these areas will be prohibited during core shopping hours. Alternative routes will be provided for through trips, including the completion of the Stafferton Way Link Road.

**2.22** Links to and through the town centre for cyclists will be improved, with secure cycle parking provided in priority locations, close to key destinations.

**2.23** Access to the town centre for buses, taxis and community transport services will be retained with interchange points strategically located so as to minimise the walk for passengers, particularly those with restricted mobility. Facilities at bus stops and taxi ranks will be enhanced to improve passenger comfort, personal security, ease of boarding and alighting, and access to information for all users.

**2.24** In order to encourage travel by rail, links between the station and the town centre will be improved. The advent of Crossrail and redevelopment of the site around the train station presents an opportunity to improve interchange facilities and enable better integration between trains, buses and taxis, while improving access to the station for pedestrians and cyclists.

**2.25** The rejuvenated town centre will have adequate levels of car parking spread across various sites. This will be supported by clear directional signage and information on the length of stay / charging regimes, and real-time data on capacity. Centrally located car parking will cater predominantly for short-stay shopping trips, while long-stay commuter parking will be allocated to sites further out from the centre. In all cases, priority spaces should be reserved for blue badge holders, with ready access to shopmobility services within the most central facility. Consideration will also be given to the provision of charging points to cater for and encourage use of electric vehicles, and the sharing of spaces 'out of hours'.

**2.26** Businesses located within the town centre will be covered by travel plans that will effectively manage travel demand, encouraging alternatives to the private car for commuting and business trips. Arrangements will be made to ensure adequate access for deliveries and other service vehicles, and for customer loading areas where appropriate.

### **Key Diagram**

**2.27** Figure 2 'Key Diagram' shows the main elements of the strategy, and gives an overall idea of how Maidenhead town centre will change.



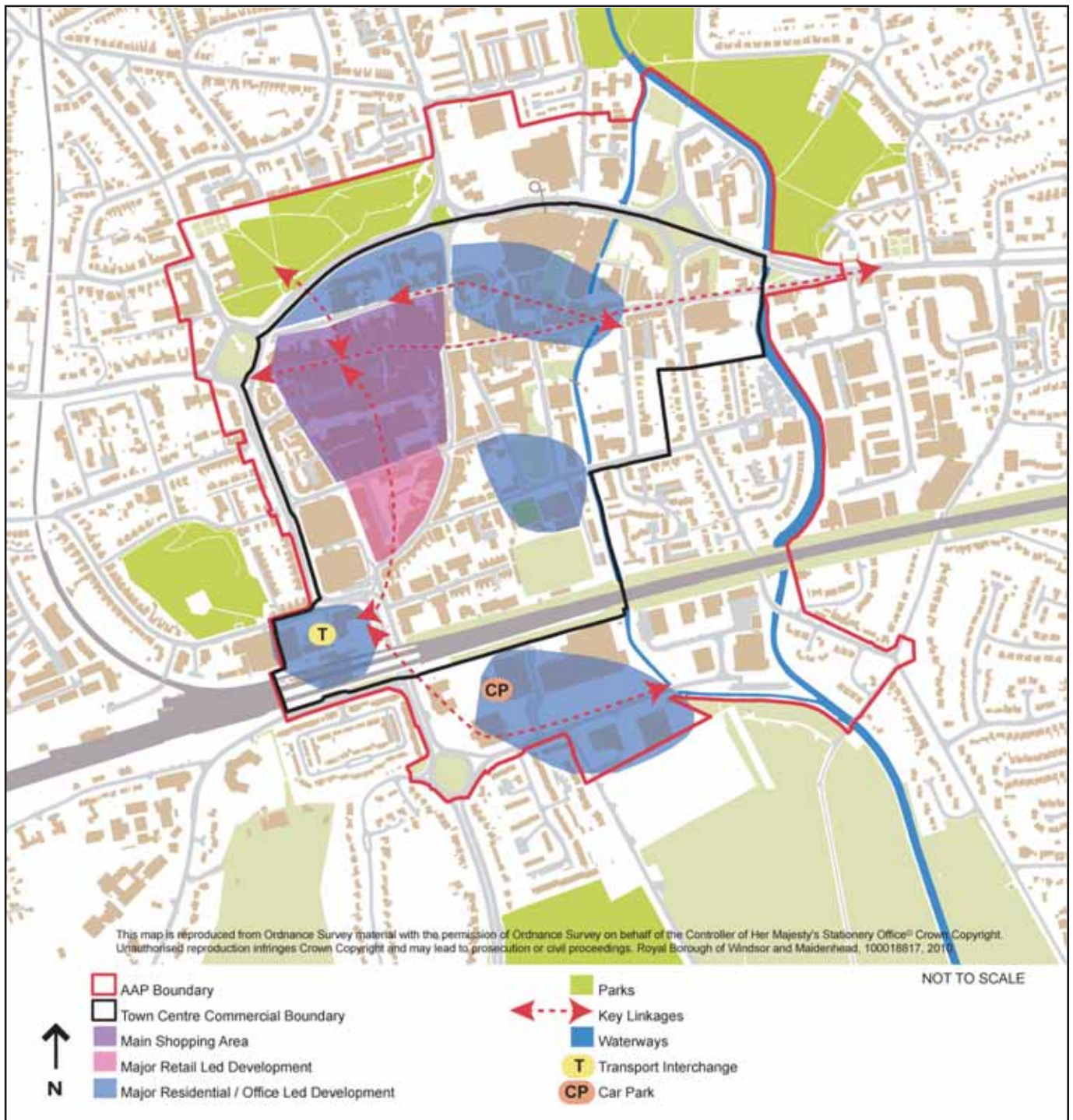


Figure 2 Key Diagram





**Picture 3 Indicative illustration of Maidenhead town centre incorporating changes promoted by the AAP**

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## TOWN CENTRE PLACES

### PLACES OBJECTIVE 1

*"Improve the quality and provision of public space"* by introducing new town centre spaces through the redevelopment of Opportunity Areas (see Section 7), improving the quality of existing public spaces with a specific focus on the train station, High Street, King Street, and Queen Street; and ensuring that existing and new public spaces are safe both throughout the day and evening.

### PLACES OBJECTIVE 2

*"Introduce greenery into the town centre to reflect its Thames Valley setting"* by enhancing existing green spaces, introducing new green space through the redevelopment of Opportunity Areas, and improving accessibility and links between the town centre's green spaces, particularly Kidwells Park.

### PLACES OBJECTIVE 3

*"Enhance and introduce the use of water"* by strengthening the town centre's links to the River Thames, enhancing the quality and setting of the town centre's waterways, and increasing their accessibility through the redevelopment of Opportunity Areas and adjacent town centre sites.

### PLACES OBJECTIVE 4

*"Promote higher quality built form"* by ensuring new development achieves high standards of design and sustainability, promoting landmark buildings at key strategic and gateway locations, protecting buildings of heritage value, and enhancing existing buildings in areas that positively contribute to the character and identity of the town centre such as High Street and Queen Street.

## Streets & Spaces

**3.1** Streets and spaces - the public realm - are defining aspects of any town centre. Maidenhead's public realm is at present mixed and disjointed. We want to improve the streets and spaces so that they are a unifying theme that positively supports and enhances the town's image and future growth.

### Policy MTC 1

#### Streets & Spaces

The town centre's streets and spaces will be improved with specific focus on creating a high quality, pedestrian friendly and safe town centre environment. Throughout the town centre, development proposals will be expected to provide for the improvement of streets and spaces through a variety of measures, including:

- a. New street furniture, lighting, signage, public art and hard landscaping.
- b. Planting of trees and use of other soft landscaping.
- c. Protecting and enhancing existing open spaces.
- d. New public spaces in Opportunity Areas or where other opportunities arise.
- e. Crime prevention measures, such as those within Secure by Design.
- f. Reducing pedestrian, cycle and vehicular conflicts.

Development that does not achieve this will be resisted.

You may also want to review:

- Public Realm Strategy
- Sustainable Design and Construction SPD



**Picture 4 An example of public realm improvements**

**3.2** The creation of attractive streets and spaces is part of any successful town centre. It can boost a town's image and help change public perception, promote activity and increased use, and also encourage investment and provide the context for development. Quality public realm also plays a key part in helping people find their way to and around an area and helps people feel safe.

**3.3** At present, the public realm within Maidenhead town centre is mixed, with a variety in the type and quality of materials resulting in a somewhat disjointed, patchwork feel. Our strategy is to create a distinctive town centre which helps give the area a sense of place and identity.

**3.4** The council has prepared a Public Realm Strategy to co-ordinate future changes and ensure the town centre's streets and spaces are a unifying theme. A palette of quality materials and consistent approaches to lighting, signage and street furniture should be used across the town centre.

**3.5** Development proposals will be expected to provide for the improvement of streets and spaces through the town centre by incorporating measures into redevelopment schemes and/or making contributions to wider town centre improvements, including public art. Further guidance for gateway locations and the Opportunity Areas is provided by Policy MTC5 and Policies OA1 to OA6 respectively.

## Greening

**3.6** Maidenhead prides itself on its green setting close to the River Thames and surrounding countryside. The rejuvenation of the town centre will provide the opportunity to 'green' it and give it closer connections to its wider setting. Green space will form part of a wider network of open spaces which will help provide an attractive environment, and opportunities for recreation and biodiversity for residents and visitors alike.

### Policy MTC 2

#### Greening

Throughout the town centre, development proposals will be expected to contribute to overall greening through a variety of measures including:

- Protecting and enhancing the existing network of open spaces and connections.
- Strengthening links between open spaces, particularly through the creation of green / landscaped connections.
- The planting of trees and use of other soft landscaping in gateway and other prominent locations.
- The integration and enhancement of the waterways into the town centre.
- Providing new public spaces where appropriate, particularly in Opportunity Areas.
- Use of trees and other landscaping, and/or creating green and brown roofs and walls.



You may also want to review:

- Open Space Study
- Public Realm Strategy
- Maidenhead Waterways Framework

**3.7** Green spaces can take many forms – they can be large green spaces, parks, smaller ‘pocket’ parks and gardens, streams and recreational and sports pitches. They can also be both public and private space, and form an important part of a wider open space network. Within a town centre, green spaces provide an opportunity for leisure, relaxation and a means to escape from the busy town environment. They also add an element of nature that helps to balance and soften the appearance of buildings, help regulate air quality and provide a home for wildlife.

**3.8** The AAP area includes the large space of Kidwells Park, a green corridor along the waterways and a number of smaller pocket parks and private spaces. Beyond the boundary are other green spaces including Grenfell Park, Town Moor and Braywick Park. Within the commercial centre there is relatively little green space. Access to the surrounding parks is also restricted having been cut off by major roads. The council’s Open Space Study confirms that there is a shortfall of open space in the Maidenhead area when balanced against local standards.



**Picture 5 Public space can provide for leisure and relaxation**

**3.9** Consultation has highlighted the lack of different types of green and open spaces with feedback from young people showing support for more green spaces and better use of the area alongside the town’s waterways. Due to the town centre’s already built up nature it is difficult to create any new major green space. Our strategy is therefore to seek alternative ways to “green” the town centre, including:

- **Improving access to existing open spaces** – Overcoming the obstacle of major roads will help people to access the large open spaces on the edge of the town centre.
- **Routes and corridors** - Greening key routes and corridors will help reintegrate existing open spaces into the town centre, allowing people to rediscover these areas. In addition, the waterways provide a unique feature for the town centre.
- **Use of planting** - Trees and other planting will form an important element of public realm improvements across the town centre. In gateway locations, larger trees are particularly encouraged.



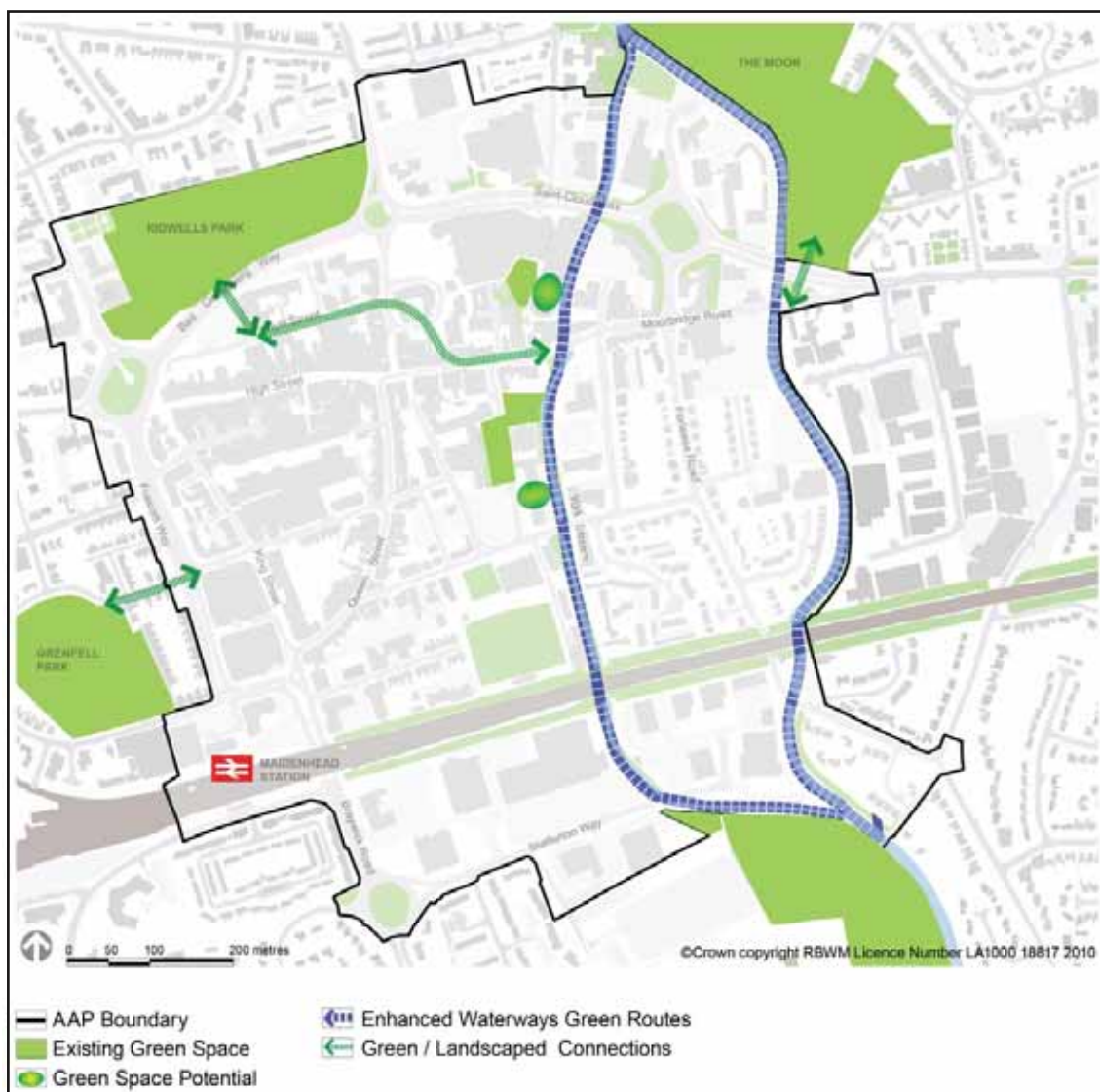


**Picture 6 Trees can soften the appearance of buildings and spaces**

larger sites should incorporate new green spaces as part of their overall design. Further guidance for the Opportunity Areas is provided in Policies OA1 to OA6.

**3.10** Development proposals will be expected to strengthen links between open spaces through their design, layout and planting. The use of green and brown roofs and planted walls is encouraged to further soften the appearance of buildings and for their benefits for wildlife, flood risk and air quality. Where necessary, proposals for planting, particularly of trees, should be supported by an assessment of constraints, both above and below ground, and a management plan for those areas which will not be transferred to the council. Where suitable, planting schemes should use locally native and wildlife friendly species to maximise biodiversity benefits.

**3.11** It is envisaged that significant contributions to improved greening will be provided as a result of redevelopment of the Opportunity Areas. The form of contribution will vary from area to area with some expected to include higher levels of planting, while



**Figure 3 Green Network**

## Waterways

**3.12** Maidenhead's historical growth and success as a town is in many ways attributed to its close ties to the River Thames. While the river may no longer be as important for trade and travel, it is still one of the town's most important landscape and recreational assets. We want to use the opportunities presented by the River Thames and in particular its side channels, to enhance the quality of the town centre area itself.

### Policy MTC 3

#### Waterways

The improvement and integration of the waterways to create a high quality, safe, green corridor through the town centre will be encouraged.

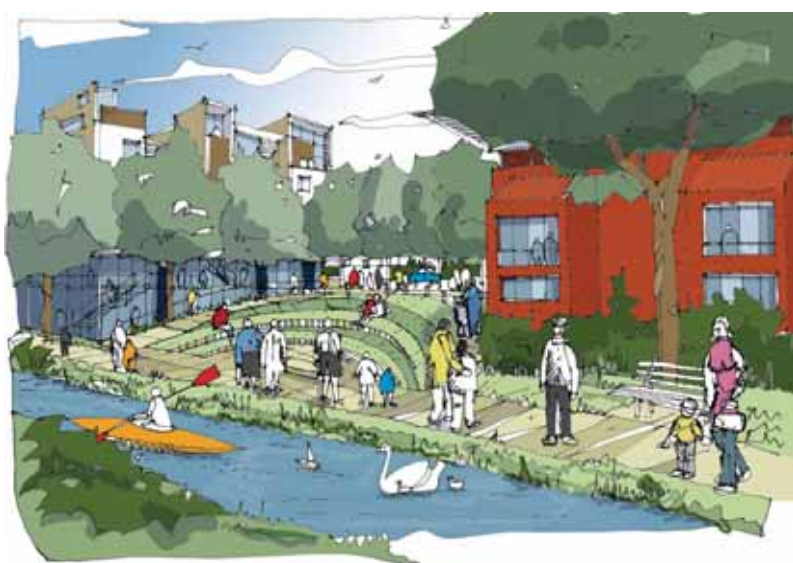
Developments adjacent to the waterway will be expected to:

- a. Embrace their waterside setting through design and landscaping.
- b. Conserve or enhance biodiversity.
- c. Allow for continuous pedestrian and cycle access along the waterside.
- d. Improve access to the waterside.

Development which prejudices the improvement and integration of the waterways, including the potential implementation of the Maidenhead Waterway Project, will be resisted.

You may also want to review:

- Maidenhead Waterways Framework
- Public Realm Strategy



**Picture 7 Introducing water and greenery**

incorporating landscape and biodiversity improvements, through presenting an active frontage to the waterway and making the area feel more open and safe rather than enclosed. Detailed planning guidance for the waterway corridor is set out in the *Maidenhead Waterways Framework*.

**3.13** Although the River Thames flows to the east of the town, a number of side channels branch off before rejoining the main channel. One branch, the York Stream still flows through the town centre, whilst the normally dry Moor Cut passes further east over Town Moor.

**3.14** The evolution of the town centre has disregarded the waterways with adjacent buildings presenting their back elevations or closing it off with high fencing. Our strategy is to improve and reintegrate the waterways into the townscape to enhance the environment and provide a feature around which recreation and leisure activities can be encouraged.

**3.15** Redevelopment of existing buildings alongside the waterway is encouraged to enable a step change in the quality of buildings and spaces. The design of developments will be expected to embrace their waterside setting by

**3.16** In addition to improving and integrating the waterways, the Maidenhead Waterways Restoration Group (MWRG) is preparing a proposal to transform the nature of the waterways.<sup>(2)</sup> Known as the Maidenhead Waterway Project, the proposal is to create an accessible green corridor with raised and stabilised water levels. The project will be implemented in stages and is aimed at benefiting the maximum number of potential user groups. It is the MWRG's long-term aspiration that the waterways be navigable by narrow boats.

**3.17** Consultations have shown strong local support for the aspirations of the Maidenhead Waterway Project. While the technical design has yet to be finalised with no permissions or consents being in place, the proposal is well advanced including locations where supporting infrastructure will be needed. In these locations, any redevelopment will be expected to safeguard the necessary land to enable provision. The feasibility and impacts arising from the detailed technical design, including potential impacts on flood risk and ecology, will need to be considered through the planning application process.

## Quality Design

**3.18** Maidenhead has a wide variety of buildings. While some areas are valued, others are unsightly. The rejuvenation of the town centre provides the opportunity to retain the best parts while improving other aspects. Our aim is to create a distinctive town centre which balances protection of the historic core with modern, well designed development. Not only will this improve peoples' quality of life, but it will also attract business and visitors to the benefit of the town centre and the area's economy.

### Policy MTC 4

#### Quality Design

Proposals will be required to be of high quality, contributing to an overall improvement in terms of urban design and architecture. A specific focus should be the creation of a mixed use town centre environment that is welcoming, safe and secure, durable and stimulating and which is also highly accessible and easy to move around. Buildings, streets and spaces should have a clear image and be easy to understand.

The town centre should also be able to adapt in light of any change in future needs.

Development proposals will be expected to:

- a. Be appropriate in terms of site coverage, urban grain, layout, access, scale, proportion, mass and bulk, height, roofscape and landscape.
- b. Use an appropriate choice of materials and colour.
- c. Be visually attractive from all angles.
- d. Enhance streets and spaces through quality design and architecture.
- e. Provide a high quality environment for future users.
- f. Be suitable in terms of crime prevention and community safety and security.
- g. Incorporate fibre optic technology up to and within the premises.
- h. Clearly distinguish between public and private space.
- i. Where appropriate, provide their primary access directly from the street and have active ground floor uses.
- j. Be accessible, usable, legible and permeable to all, embodying the principles of inclusive design.
- k. Contribute to the creation of a mixed use town centre environment.
- l. Be resilient to air pollution.
- m. Be sustainable in their design, construction and operation.
- n. Not increase flood risk and be seen to reduce flood risk where possible.
- o. Respect the environment, heritage and the function of existing landmarks, and
- p. Satisfactorily address traffic, movement, servicing and parking impacts.

<sup>2</sup> Further information is available on the MWRG's website [www.maidenheadwaterways.org](http://www.maidenheadwaterways.org)



You may also want to review:

- Maidenhead Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal
- Maidenhead Waterways Framework
- Sustainable Design and Construction SPD
- Public Realm Strategy
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and corresponding addendum relating to Maidenhead town centre

**3.19** Good design is about 'place making'. Ensuring the highest standards of architectural design is vital to making places and spaces visually attractive. Buildings and spaces should be well connected, providing an environment in which people feel comfortable and is easy to move around. Maidenhead town centre currently has a mixed built environment. While the central area is based around a historic core, the surrounding area is fragmented and has a wide range of building types and sizes many of which are considered to be bland and uninteresting architecture. Aside from appearance, many older buildings are not constructed in ways which meet the needs of modern business practices.

**3.20** Our strategy is to achieve a step change in design quality. All proposals across the town centre will be required to be of high quality, contributing to an overall improvement in terms of urban design and architecture. In addition to improving streets and spaces and introducing greenery (see Policy MTC 1 'Streets & Spaces', Policy MTC 2 'Greening' and Policy MTC 3 'Waterways'), enhancement will be sought through the design of individual buildings so that the town centre become a place that is attractive, safe, easy to get round and a pleasure to be in. Developments should also lead to a place where people feel safe and secure. Getting the design right, for example reducing the opportunity for crime and antisocial behaviour through natural surveillance and suitable CCTV arrangements will avoid the need to correct buildings and spaces and reduce ongoing maintenance costs. Further advice on crime prevention and reduction measures can be found in the document 'The Compendium of Crime Prevention and Reduction in the Planning System'.<sup>(3)</sup>

**3.21** The achievement of high quality design requires developments to be design-led, evolving from an evaluation of the town centre and immediate area. While in certain areas the protection of the historic core and the enhancement of the waterways (see Policy MTC3) should define the design approach, other areas are suitable for innovative, distinctive and contemporary approaches to design. In all instances, design should include the incorporation of modern technologies such as fibre optic technology up to and within the buildings, so as to ensure the availability of fast broadband access to both housing and business premises.

**3.22** Landmarks are features which act as locational references, helping people to find their way around an area and contributing to local distinctiveness. A number of new, sparingly distributed landmark buildings are proposed. Such buildings should stand out from their background and be of iconic or signature design quality but not necessarily imposing in height. New landmarks are proposed to complement those which already exist across the town centre. Most of the existing landmarks are valued older buildings. However, in the case of Sainsbury, the landmark status results from its contemporary design, while Berkshire House is considered a landmark for its prominent height when viewed both from within and outside the town centre, rather than its architecture. Landmark features are listed below:

- The Bear Hotel, High Street
- Town Hall, St Ives Road



**Picture 8 The Bear Hotel acts as a landmark within the town centre**

3 For further information please see [www.thamesvalley.police.uk/compendium](http://www.thamesvalley.police.uk/compendium)

- Maidenhead Library St Ives Road
- 110-114, High Street (The Post Office)
- 45-51, The High Street (Coffee Republic, West Cornwall Pasty Company, Shoe Zone)
- Berkshire House
- Cresset Towers 69-73, High Street
- The Methodist Church, High Street
- 41, Queen Street (Atkinson Keene)
- The clock tower located next to the railway station
- The United Reform Church, West Street
- Sainsbury

**3.23** Development proposals are expected to be appropriate to their location within the town centre and as such development heights and scales will generally be highest in the central area and decrease outwards towards suburban areas. Notwithstanding this, development will be expected to preserve and enhance Maidenhead's historic environment, including the conservation area and listed buildings. Taller buildings are also permitted as an exception in specific locations (see Policy MTC 6 'Tall Buildings').

**3.24** It is essential that development take account of environmental impacts. Land to the east of the town centre is subject to fluvial flooding. Development in these areas will need to respond to the risk of flooding in their design and layout, with an aim of reducing flood risk. The council has prepared a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment to help understanding the nature of flood risk and how development can be made safe in flood risk areas. An addendum specific to the town centre has also been produced to advise on the type and location of development, and ways to reduce flood risk.

**3.25** Most of the town centre is covered by an Air Quality Management Area. It is important that new development is resilient to air pollution and, to this end, an air quality assessment will be required for all major applications. This should show the ambient air quality in relation to national objectives and, where these are exceeded, outline proposed mitigation measures.

**3.26** Ensuring that development is designed and constructed to be sustainable is a key part of the council's wider corporate and planning strategy. Reducing energy consumption through design and efficiency measures, and the incorporation of renewable and/or low-carbon technologies, has significant implications for site layout, form and the aesthetics of development. Early consideration of these issues, including future proofing for emerging technologies, will reduce costs and ensure the design incorporates approaches most suited to the town centre and the individual site. Detailed planning guidance is set out in the *Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document*.

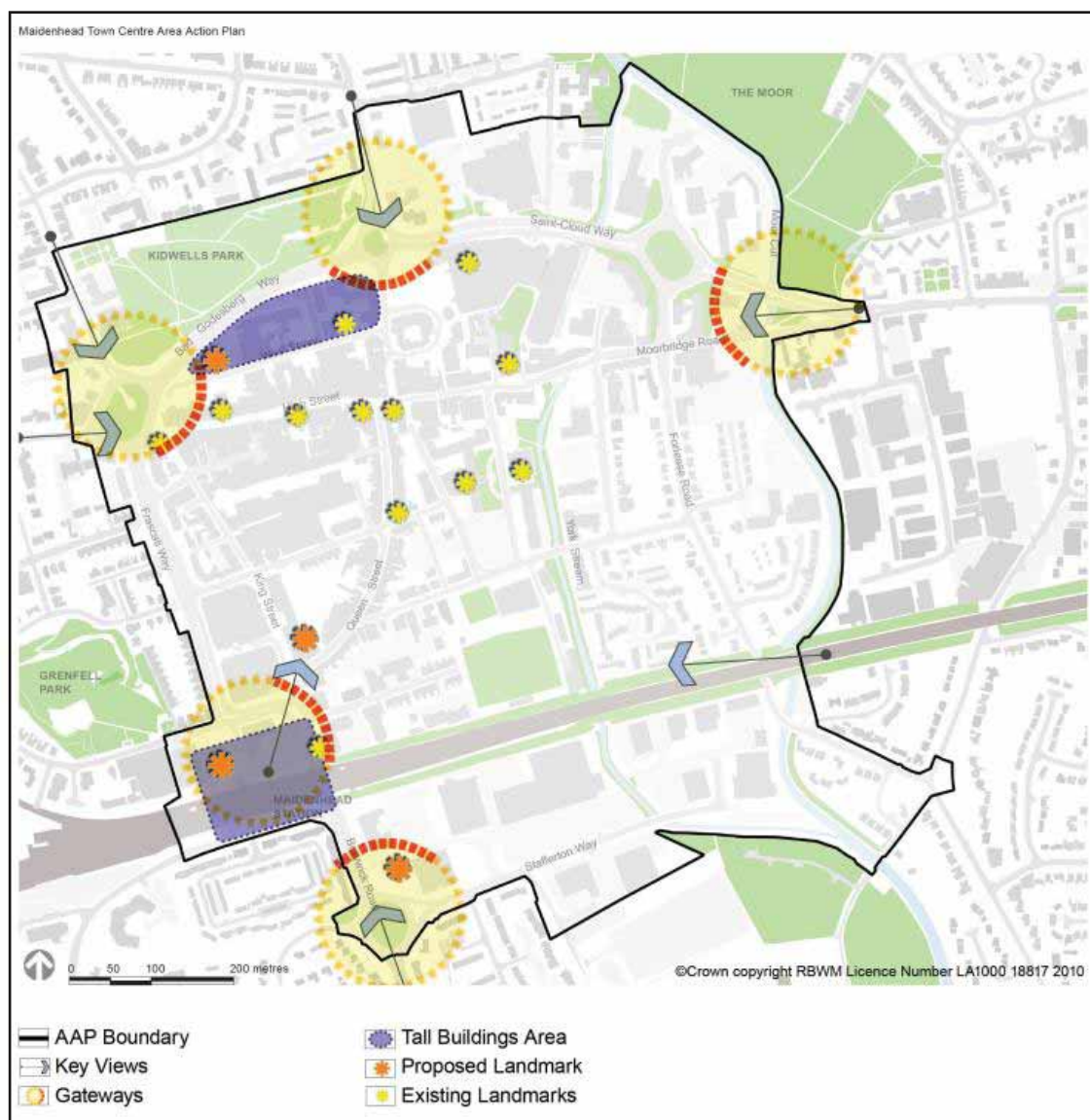
## Evaluating Design Quality

**3.27** All proposals will need to demonstrate through design and access statements that they are of high quality. Whilst a significant emphasis shall be placed on achieving the highest standards of architectural appearance, consideration should also be given to other design aspects of development ensuring that it:

- functions properly in terms of access and linkages;
- is designed and laid out to integrate with the surrounding area and facilitate ease of movement for a diverse population;
- has a clear image and is easy to understand;
- contributes towards providing a safe and secure environment;
- employs sustainable design and construction techniques.

**3.28** A Design Review Panel has been set up by the council to advise on proposals for larger and more sensitive sites or where specialist advice is required. In some cases, in particular where tall buildings are proposed, it may also be appropriate to seek the views of the South East Region Design Panel and / or CABE. The advice of these bodies should be sought at the pre-application stage.

**3.29** The principles set out allow some flexibility in the way the new town centre could be laid out. Whilst some sites could be developed independently of one another, it is preferable for landowners to work together to achieve a better solution which would unlock opportunities to make more substantial changes across the town centre. Where there is a compelling case for comprehensive redevelopment, the council will do all in its powers to ensure sites come forward for together or that proposals evidence how they will not adversely limit development opportunities on adjacent sites.



**Figure 4 Design Framework: Gateways, Landmarks & Building Height**

## Gateways

**3.30** Whether arriving by car, bicycle, on foot or by train, the main entrance points into the town centre lack any distinctive quality, sense of arrival or help to direct people to their chosen destination. Making the most of the opportunities available to improve the gateways will help the town centre's identity and image and enable people to find their way around. This will be vital for giving a good first impression on entering the town centre.



## Policy MTC 5

### Gateways

Within the gateways there will be an emphasis on creating high quality entrances that will enhance the town centre's image and identity.

In addition to principles set out in Policy MTC4, proposals within these gateway locations will be expected to demonstrate outstanding and distinctive architecture, supported by a high quality public realm (in particular landscaping, lighting and public art).

Development proposals that detract from the role, function and appearance of gateways will be resisted.

**3.31** Gateways are the main entrance points into a town centre and as such often shape a visitors first impression. Gateways are often marked by buildings but landscaping or other features such as public art can also define these important entrances in to the town centre.

**3.32** Maidenhead town centre is considered to have five main gateways, namely:

- Railway Station.
- Junction of Marlow Road / Castle Hill / Bad Godesberg Way / Frascati Way.
- Junction of Cookham Road / Bad Godesberg Way / Saint-Cloud Way / Market Street.
- Junction of Bridge Road / Saint Cloud Way / Forlease Road.
- Junction of Braywick Road / Stafferton Way.

**3.33** Whilst the gateways, which are shown on Figure 4 'Design Framework: Gateways, Landmarks & Building Height', vary in character, they all mark key arrival points. At present, the opportunity afforded by the prominent locations is not utilised and in fact some give a negative impression of Maidenhead.

**3.34** Within gateway locations there should be a particular emphasis on achieving a high quality environment. This should include buildings of outstanding architectural quality, the use of larger trees and other planting, hard landscaping, public art, signage and lighting of important features or buildings. Specific guidance for each gateway location is provided below.

### Railway Station

**3.35** The railway station will see significant investment as part of the arrival of Crossrail and the proposal to create a transport interchange. There is scope to create a landmark building of particular outstanding architectural quality and large scale public art to give a sense of arrival and to help those trying to find their way to the interchange. Due to the number of commuters using this area, the space will need to be attractive, welcoming, durable and direct people to key destinations. Legibility and circulation through and to the site will be of particular importance.

### Junctions along Bad Godesberg Way

**3.36** Bad Godesberg Way carries significant levels of traffic around the town centre. At present, the area is characterised by a mix of poor quality buildings, many of which present their backs to the road. There is scope to redevelop this area and provide landmark buildings, including possible taller buildings, and improved landscaping. This gateway offers the opportunity for large scale public art.

### Junction of Bridge Road / Saint-Cloud Way / Forlease Road

**3.37** Saint-Cloud Way carries significant traffic around the town centre. At present, the area is characterised by mature landscaping and a number of buildings. It is not envisaged that new building will occur within this gateway, but that improvements will relate to the public realm and public art.

### Junction of Braywick Road / Stafferton Way

**3.38** In the past, the railway bridge would have formed the southern gateway. However, following the replacement of Brunel's arches with a more utilitarian bridge, the area is not considered a positive image for the town centre. The gateway is now focused around the roundabout and nearby office buildings. The potential for redevelopment of the existing offices provides the opportunity to create a landmark building that signifies the entrance to the town centre. In addition, trees will be important to continue the avenue effect from Braywick Road. This gateway offers the opportunity for large scale public art.

## Tall Buildings

**3.39** By virtue of their size and prominence, tall buildings can affect the image and identify of a place. While there are mixed views towards tall buildings, in the right places they can make a positive contribution towards rejuvenation.

### Policy MTC 6

#### Tall Buildings

Tall Buildings Areas are focused around the railway station and south of Bad Godesberg Way as illustrated in the proposals map. Across these areas taller buildings will need to vary in height to achieve a dynamic skyline and to avoid a monotonous mass of buildings at the maximum height.

In addition to the principles set out in Policy MTC4, proposals for tall buildings will be expected to:

- a. Demonstrate that they are particularly distinctive and of exceptional high quality design that is visually attractive from all angles and distances.
- b. Enhance the skyline, create legibility and make a positive contribution to wider views with particular attention also paid to roof design and variation of building heights.
- c. Be suited to their context in terms of height, scale, massing, form, facing materials, topography and their relationship to neighbouring development.
- d. Avoid unacceptable negative micro-climate effects in terms of wind, sun, reflection and overshadowing.
- e. Have a lighting strategy for the building and wider site.
- f. Have a maintenance strategy for the interior and exterior of the building.

Outside Tall Building Areas proposals for the replacement of an existing tall building by another tall building will be assessed against the criteria set out above. New tall buildings on sites outside the Tall Buildings Areas, which do not currently accommodate a tall building, will be resisted.

**3.40** The prevailing building heights across the town centre is from three to six storeys (10-20 m). For the purposes of this AAP, tall buildings are those which are noticeably higher than 20 m. Buildings should not be developed above the existing maximum building height of approximately twelve storeys (40 m) to ensure they respect the size and compact nature of Maidenhead and respect visibility from the surrounding countryside to the existing level.

**3.41** The vision for the central area is to build on its status as an important major town within the Thames Valley; it will become a dynamic and exciting 21<sup>st</sup> Century Town Centre. Tall buildings have an important part to play in achieving this. They will act as a catalyst for rejuvenation, create a new image through a distinctive skyline, form landmarks and signalise key arrival points. Practically, they will also help to achieve the level of development that is required for the town centre to rejuvenate.

**3.42** An urban design analysis has been undertaken to identify the most locationally appropriate areas for such development and to establish the approach towards the existing tall buildings. The government, the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) and English Heritage, support such a plan-led approach which provides certainty to the development industry, reduces speculative applications, helps to protect the historic environment and seeks to remove past mistakes by replacing poor buildings.

**3.43** The two areas of the railway station and south of Bad Godesberg Way have been identified where new tall buildings are appropriate (see Figure 4 'Design Framework: Gateways, Landmarks & Building Height'). Within these areas a variation in building heights will be required to achieve a dynamic skyline thereby avoiding a monotonous mass of buildings at the maximum height. When formulating plans for tall buildings and in the assessment of these through planning applications, regard shall be paid to Policy MTC6 along with the general strategy towards design as set out in 'Quality Design'. In addition, it will be expected that applicants will address the general design requirements of Policy MTC5 'Gateways'.

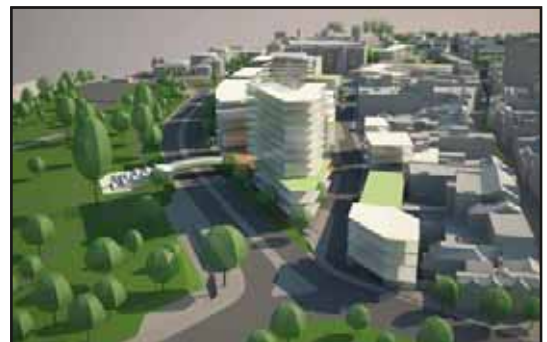
**3.44** New tall buildings will be the exception and will be used sparingly to achieve specific purposes and for this reason they will be resisted outside the Tall Buildings Areas unless they are an appropriate replacement for an existing tall building. Outside of these Areas (with the exception of existing tall buildings) building height should reflect the location in terms of the size and importance of different streets and public spaces and protect against impacts on sensitive areas such as the historic environment and low rise housing. This will be achieved by respecting existing heights.

### **Railway Station**

**3.45** The railway station is an important gateway to the town centre. A tall building could act as a landmark for the town centre and enable wider changes to the area to enable the creation of a transport interchange.

### **South of Bad Godesberg Way**

**3.46** Bad Godesberg Way carries significant traffic around the town centre. Its junctions are considered to be gateways to the town centre, however, at present they are characterised by a mixture of poor quality building. Tall buildings here would help with legibility and to create a sense of place on arriving into the town centre from the north, east and west. It is also acknowledged here that a more intensive form of development is required from a viability point of view in order to rejuvenate this area and create better links to Kidwells Park. Being close to the Maidenhead Conservation Area, it will be necessary to pay particular attention to the exact location and impact of any buildings.



**Picture 9 Indicative illustration of a tall building south of Bad Godesberg Way with accompanying link to Kidwells Park**

### **Existing Tall Buildings**

**3.47** There are three existing tall buildings which fall within the definition adopted: Berkshire House, Costain House and Nicholsons House. It is accepted that these buildings are unattractive, of poor quality and detract from the town's image due to their prominence on the skyline whether in localised or distance views. The redevelopment of these buildings is encouraged.

### **Evaluating Proposals For Tall Building**

**3.48** Proposals for tall buildings will need to demonstrate, through the submission of fully justified and worked up proposals, that they are of exceptional high quality design and vanguards of sustainability and construction techniques. The council will expect applicants to follow guidance on tall buildings issued by CABI and English Heritage. These expect proposals to be supported by:

- An urban design study which includes an assessment of any concurrent proposals for other tall buildings or where others are likely to follow.
- A verifiable 360 degree view analysis, including a model, which allows for an accurate and realistic representation of the proposal from all significant views including near, middle and distant, public realm and streets around the base of the building.

**3.49** Where permission is granted, the council will secure the detailed design, materials and finishes, maintenance of the building, and treatment of the public realm through the use of planning conditions and/or planning obligations to ensure against inferior details and materials being substituted at a later date.

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## TOWN CENTRE ECONOMY

### ECONOMY OBJECTIVE 1

*"Quicken the pace of urban development and promote economic growth"* by providing additional retail that supports and enhances the town centre's existing retail offer; promoting office development that reinforces Maidenhead's role as an attractive business centre; encouraging high quality tourism and hotel facilities; and creating an evening economy through improved restaurant, café and night time uses along High Street, Queen Street and King Street, as well as in the Opportunity Areas.

### ECONOMY OBJECTIVE 2

*"Promote mixed use development"* by ensuring Opportunity Areas are developed as comprehensive mixed use schemes; and by promoting town centre land uses that effectively complement and integrate to create a vibrant, stimulating and sustainable town centre environment.

## Retail

**4.1** Shops draw people into the town centre and are central to stimulating the local economy and defining Maidenhead's image. Securing the town centre as a desirable place to shop and spend time is fundamental to its rejuvenation and the improvement of the town's image and character. Maidenhead has been losing trade to other centres and out of centre locations. To maintain and enhance overall vitality and viability, and to perform its role as a major centre within its catchment area, there is a need for major new retail led development in the town centre.

### Policy MTC 7

#### Retail

Maidenhead town centre will be the principal location for retail development. The town centre's retail role will be maintained and enhanced through the protection of retail activity within the Primary Shopping Area and the delivery of a major comprehensive retail led development in the Area for Major Retail Led Development (also see Policy OA1: Broadway Opportunity Area). New development should broaden the range of shopping opportunities and improve Maidenhead's image as a sustainable and high quality shopping destination.

Development will be required to:

1. Protect and enhance retail activity within the designated Primary Shopping Area.
2. Focus new retail development within the Primary Shopping Area and the Area for Major Retail Led Development.
3. Ensure effective integration between the Primary Shopping Area, the Area for Major Retail Led Development, and frontages elsewhere.

#### Frontages

Within primary frontages, as illustrated on the proposals map, the retail character will be maintained and enhanced. Proposals therein for change of use or redevelopment from shops (Class A1) to other uses will only be permitted where they would:

1. be appropriate to the character and function of the area; and
2. not result in adverse impacts on existing uses within the frontage; and
3. not result in the loss of a prominent shop unit within the primary frontages



Within secondary frontages, as illustrated on the proposals map, opportunities for a greater diversity of retail and non-retail uses, including promoting a street café culture, will be supported where they do not adversely impact on the existing character, function and vitality of the street or surrounding environment.

Outside the primary and secondary frontages, new retail development will only be permitted where it would not compromise the vitality, viability and attractiveness of the town centre.

You may also want to review:

- Retail Capacity Study



**Picture 10 An example of a retail led development**

and disposable income, will improve quality and choice.

### Retail Capacity & Allocations

**4.4** The Retail Capacity Study suggests that, if a reasonable amount of expenditure is clawed back, around 15,900 m<sup>2</sup> of new Class A1 retail floorspace<sup>(4)</sup> (net sales area) could be provided in Maidenhead by 2016 without harming neighbouring retail centres. This would suggest that the town centre could support a new scheme in the order of up to 25,000 m<sup>2</sup> gross retail floorspace around 2016.

**4.5** The area to the south of the High Street and the Nicholsons Centre (the Primary Shopping Area) is designated for comprehensive major retail led development to provide the bulk of this new floorspace early in the plan period (see Policy OA1: Broadway Opportunity Area). Increased retail trade in this central area would support and enhance the main shopping area and facilitate better links both to the existing shopping core, and to the railway station. In order to maximise benefits for retail trade and the wider town centre, any scheme should include a mix of types and sizes of retail unit, so as to complement and extend the existing range of retail opportunities. In particular, the opportunity should be taken to include a range of larger units than are available at present, together with an anchor variety or department store.

**4.2** Maidenhead plays an important role in a network of town centres in the Thames Valley. However, despite the presence of several national retailers, the town centre has experienced a gradual decline over recent years. Survey information suggests that many residents are dissatisfied with the range and quality of shops and, as a result, shop elsewhere. The council's Retail Capacity Study found that most people do not shop for items like clothing, footwear and electrical goods in Maidenhead. Less than 10% of the expenditure available for these kinds of goods in the catchment area was spent in the town centre.

**4.3** There is strong public support for making improvements to Maidenhead town centre. Our strategy is to keep more spending locally to protect and enhance the town centre retail trade primarily to meet residents' needs within the catchment area. Clawing back some of the expenditure which is currently spent elsewhere, and taking advantage of increased population

4 14,400 m<sup>2</sup> of comparison goods and 1,500 m<sup>2</sup> of convenience goods.

**4.6** Smaller-scale retail development elsewhere within defined frontages, particularly primary frontages, is desirable to support existing businesses and allow them to grow. Redevelopment guidelines for some of the other Opportunity Areas also include some small scale and ancillary retail floorspace. This provides some flexibility within the plan, but does not detract from the main priority to deliver a major retail led mixed use scheme within the Broadway Opportunity Area as an extension to the primary shopping area.

**4.7** In the period after 2016, there may be additional retail capacity in the town. Current studies indicate that an additional 14,000 m<sup>2</sup> of town centre retail capacity<sup>(5)</sup> (net sales area) may exist in the period 2016-26 when taking account of the completion of the Broadway Opportunity Area and predicted changes in population and expenditure. This figure is not exact as future estimates will depend upon various factors such as future population and expenditure growth, the level of clawback of expenditure achieved by the Broadway scheme, as well as other developments in the surrounding catchment. For these reasons retail trends and capacity figures will be monitored and the level of retail capacity reassessed after the scheme's completion. Any further necessary land allocations will be made at that time.



**Picture 11 An example of a retail led development**

### Shopping Designations

**4.8** The retail function of a town centre is defined by its Class A1 shops. Other uses play a valuable role in creating a balanced town centre but their distribution needs to be controlled, to avoid an adverse effect on visitor numbers and spending. Hence the policy approach to different use classes varies across the town centre.

**4.9** The Primary Shopping Area contains the town centre's main shopping streets and includes most of the major retail multiples and variety stores, and is the focus for retailing activity.

**4.10** Across the town centre, frontages are defined as primary and secondary. Primary frontages are those which include a high proportion of shops (Class A1). These are centred on the Nicholson's Centre and adjoining parts of the High Street. Secondary frontages are those where there is greater opportunity for diversity of uses and mainly comprise the remainder of the High Street into Bridge Street, and extend to the south along King Street and Queen Street.

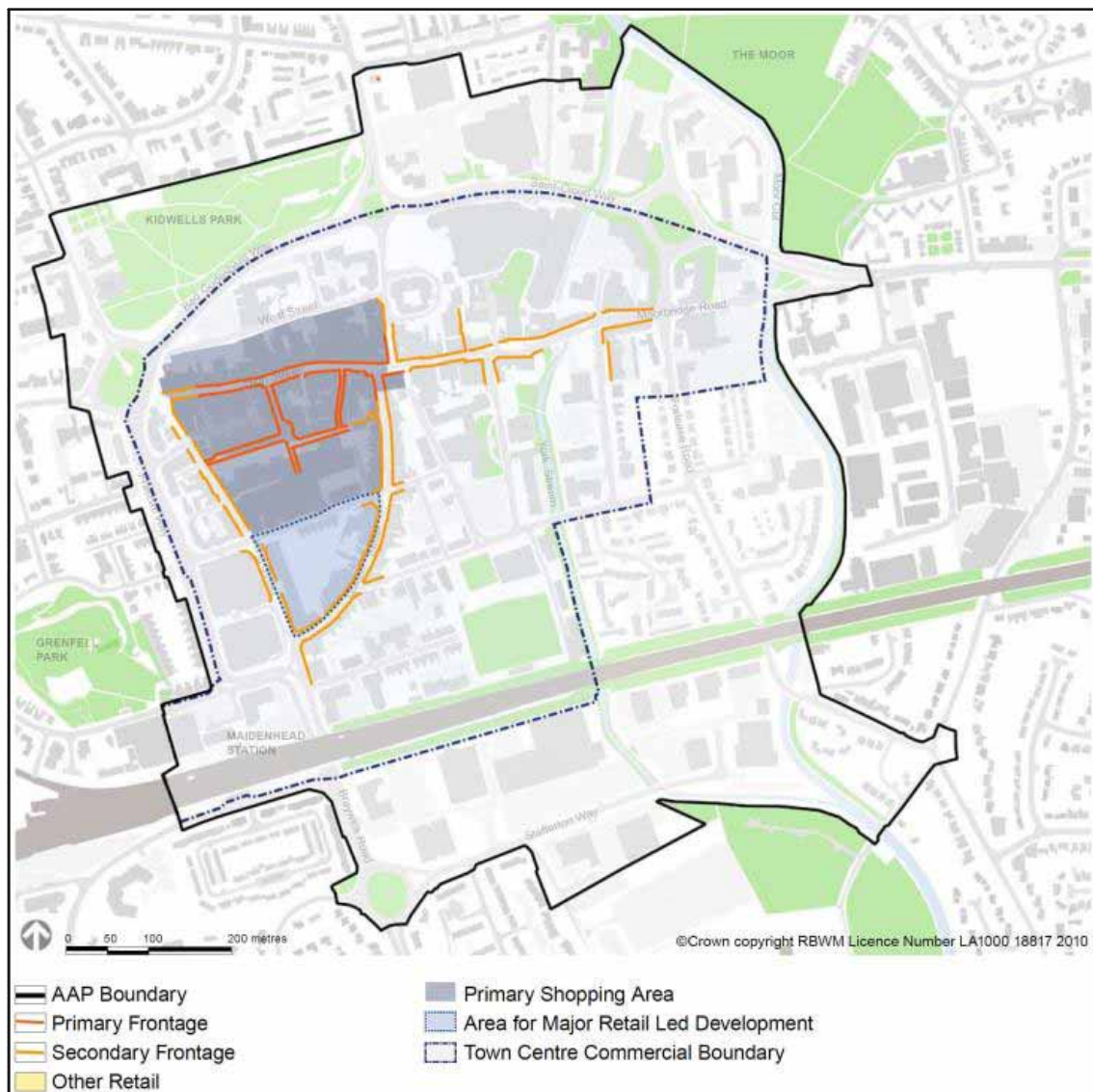
**4.11** It is important that the vitality of the Primary Shopping Area and Primary Frontages is retained. This does not preclude non-shop uses (non-Class A1). Indeed an appropriate amount of supporting uses, for example food and drink outlets, is necessary to complement the shops and function of the area. However, it is important that such uses do not dominate the area. In general, the loss of shops will be resisted unless the loss would be appropriate to the retail character of the area.

**4.12** Secondary frontages are those that play a less central shopping role within the town centre. Here there is opportunity for a greater diversity of retail (Class A1) and non-retail (non-Class A1) uses, and the promotion of a street café culture. Secondary frontages should contain a good mix of different uses, and an appropriate mixture will be supported where this would not adversely impact on the existing character, function, and vitality of the street or surrounding environment. The AAP is not prescriptive about the proportion of retail and non-retail uses that would be appropriate in any given area as the role played by secondary frontages varies across the town centre. In general, however, it would be inappropriate for more than 50% of the units in any given section of the town centre to be in non-Class A1 use. More guidance on this point will be contained within a forthcoming Supplementary Planning Document.

<sup>5</sup> 12,350 m<sup>2</sup> of comparison goods and 1,650 m<sup>2</sup> of convenience goods.

**4.13** When proposals are submitted involving the loss of shops within the primary or secondary frontages, they should be accompanied by evidence of a marketing exercise. This should detail the price and terms on which the business was offered, advertising undertaken and interest received, along with any other relevant factors. When considering applications for change of use or redevelopment from shops (Class A1) to other uses, marketing evidence will be assessed within the context of the following criteria to assess whether the proposal is appropriate:

- Impact on retail character and function of the frontage.
- Impact on the vitality of other uses within the frontage.
- The prominence of the unit to be lost.



**Figure 5 Retail Designations**

#### Other Retail Areas

**4.14** Some retail development exists outside of defined frontages. The main elements are a Waitrose superstore at Moorbridge Road, a Sainsbury superstore at Providence Place and Maidenhead Retail Park at Stafferton Way. While the superstores are reasonably well connected to the town's central shopping provision, the retail park is out of centre and has little functional connection or integration with the town centre.



**4.15** Of equal importance to proposals aimed at improving the town centre's retail trade, is the need to protect the retail function of existing frontages. Existing retail developments outside of the defined frontages play a useful role in the town's retail provision and provide facilities that complement existing provision. In particular, Maidenhead Retail Park provides a facility for bulky goods retailing that is otherwise lacking in the town. Either subdivision of units or expansion of the range of goods sold there would change the character of the retail park by attracting a different type of occupier and customer, expanding its turnover and putting it in direct competition with the town centre. Proposals for subdivision or expansion of the range of goods sold will therefore be resisted.

**4.16** The council's Retail Capacity Study states that any new floorspace should be located in accordance with the sequential approach. It should also be noted that all types of goods can be sold from a town centre location. Hence, outside the primary and secondary frontages, the council will resist further retail development, subdivision of units or widening the range of goods able to be sold.

## Food & Drink

**4.17** Food and drink establishments are attractions in their own right but they also encourage people to stay longer and bring activity into the area outside shopping hours.

### Policy MTC 8

#### Food & Drink

Proposals for food and drink establishments will be supported in Opportunity Areas and retail frontages where they will not lead to an unacceptable concentration, harm the town centre's retail function, or have an adverse impact on the amenity or character of the area.

Proposals for the retention of the town's existing restaurants and pubs will be supported. Development proposals that would result in the loss of existing restaurants and pubs will only be acceptable where the loss:

1. Would not result in a reduction in the choice and range of restaurants and pubs available; or
2. Would be outweighed by the achievement of other Area Action Plan objectives through the proposed development.



**Picture 12 Food & drink establishments help bring vibrancy to a town centre**

**4.18** Restaurants, cafés, public houses and bars are essential to the town centre's vibrancy. A range of facilities where people can eat and drink attract people into the centre, contributing to the town centre's economy, and to stay longer. Activity is also extended into the evening which can create a safer feel to the centre.

**4.19** Food and drink uses are split into restaurants and cafés (Class A3), drinking establishments (Class A4) and hot food takeaways (Class A5). It is important to ensure that the number and mix of establishments complements other town centre uses and appeals to a wide cross section of people. Too many venues, or the wrong mix, can lead to problems with noise and disturbance and create a negative image. Conversely, too few can result in a stale environment and a town centre that feels empty, unsafe and unwelcoming.

**4.20** Currently there is a good selection of daytime food and drink venues to cater for those working or shopping in the town centre. The evening economy is more limited and is mainly based around large drinking venues. In general, existing venues appeal mostly to younger people and relatively few attract older age groups or families. Drinking venues are an important element in a vibrant evening economy. A range from smaller traditional pubs and restaurants through

to larger bars should be encouraged, and large venues should not dominate. The current dominance of large drinking venues does not lead to a healthy town centre and other evening uses should also be encouraged to provide more of a balance.

**4.21** Food and drink uses can have either a positive or a negative impact on residential amenity. The right sort of venue (e.g. a local pub or restaurant) can enhance an area by providing a place for a community to meet and socialise, whereas the wrong sort of use can disrupt an area through inappropriate noise, disturbance, smells and so on. Takeaways raise particular issues in this respect and any new takeaway venues will need to be carefully controlled.

**4.22** Many of these matters are addressed under the licensing regime, and government guidance discourages the planning system from trying to control matters that are dealt with under other legislation. However, it is important to ensure that the AAP encourages a prosperous and vibrant evening economy while protecting residential amenity and minimising crime and disorder, so as to ensure the success of the rejuvenated town centre.

**4.23** Opportunity Areas and retail frontages are considered the types of location best suited to food and drink uses. These locations are the easiest within which to control amenity issues, and concentrating new venues there could also result in a series of vibrant focal points within the town centre. Policy MTC8 therefore supports proposals for food and drink uses in Opportunity Areas and retail frontages, subject to them being appropriate for their location and considerations in Policy MTC7: Retail. When considering applications for food and drink uses, consideration will be given to the following criteria to assess whether the proposal is appropriate:

- Choice, variety and range of restaurants or pubs available in the area.
- Character of the area.
- Suitability of the building and site for restaurant or pub use.
- Economic viability of the restaurant or pub use.
- Need for the restaurant or pub use.
- Benefits from reusing the site for alternative uses.
- Achievement of other AAP objectives.

**4.24** Existing restaurant and pub uses play a valuable role in the town centre economy but their sites can be vulnerable to loss to higher value activities. To protect the leisure function and mix of uses of the town centre, a cautious approach is taken to the loss of restaurants and pubs. When proposals involving the loss of an existing restaurant or public house are submitted, they should be accompanied by evidence including a marketing exercise. This should detail the price and terms on which the business was offered, advertising undertaken and interest received, along with any other relevant factors.

**4.25** When considering applications involving the loss of an existing restaurant or public house,<sup>(6)</sup> marketing evidence will be assessed within the context of the following criteria to assess whether the proposal is appropriate:

- Choice, variety and range of restaurants or pubs available in the area.
- Character of the area.
- Suitability of the building and site for restaurant or pub use.
- Economic viability of the restaurant or pub use.
- Need for the restaurant or pub use.
- Benefits from reusing the site for alternative uses.
- Achievement of other AAP objectives.

## Markets & Events

**4.26** Markets and community events can add distinctiveness and diversity to a town's overall shopping experience. They attract people, helping to make a town centre lively, and can significantly enhance a town centre's overall image and identity.

<sup>6</sup> This policy protects the fabric that is necessary to allow a restaurant or pub to operate. Hence the policy applies to buildings currently in restaurant or pub use, and also those currently vacant but which were last used as a restaurant or pub.

## Policy MTC 9

### Markets & Events

Events and markets will be facilitated and focused on the High Street and in town centre spaces where those spaces are considered appropriate for these activities.

Development that would prejudice the operation of events and markets in the town centre will be resisted. Development that incorporates suitable spaces and appropriate infrastructure (electricity points, lighting etc.) will be looked on favourably.

You may also want to review:

- Public Realm Strategy



**Picture 13 Markets bring variety and activity to the High Street**

**4.27** Markets are part of the overall retail economy. In addition to providing a more varied shopping experience in Maidenhead, they also have the benefit of supporting local producers. A variety of events such as film shows and carnivals also take place throughout the year at various locations within the town centre.

**4.28** Public consultation has revealed significant support for the provision of market space but there is a variety of opinion over the best location for it. Regular markets are currently held in King Street and Grove Road. Each of these locations has certain advantages. However, neither provides a totally appropriate environment nor do they maximise the opportunity to integrate the markets fully into the functioning of the town.

**4.29** Overall it is considered that focusing markets and other events on the High Street would best support the retail economy and help ensure the High Street's continued vitality and viability alongside the areas of proposed new retail development in Broadway Opportunity Area. Events that are more suited to other areas will be expected to consider how they can contribute to supporting the wider town centre.

**4.30** It is accepted that the High Street will need to be upgraded and facilities improved to take full advantage of the potential of holding markets and events. The council will seek to upgrade the public realm throughout the town centre but especially in the High Street area, and such upgrades will enhance the facilities available for markets and events. In this context, the council will resist any proposals that would prejudice the operation of markets and events in the High Street. Other new public spaces within the town will also be designed with the needs of events in mind, so as to offer complementary facilities.

**4.31** When considering proposals for markets or events in the town centre, consideration will be given to the following criteria to assess whether the proposed location is appropriate:

- Size of site.
- Proximity to shops.
- Facilities available.
- Access arrangements.
- Scale of pedestrian flows.



**Picture 14 An event held in Kidwells Park**



## Offices

**4.32** Offices are an important town centre use as they provide local employment opportunities, attract people who spend time and money in the centre, and can positively enhance daytime activity. They generate wealth and help establish town centres as vibrant and successful hearts of their communities.

### Policy MTC 10

#### Offices

Proposals for new office development will be focused within Opportunity Areas. Proposals for office development elsewhere within the Town Centre Commercial Boundary will be acceptable.

Development proposals resulting in a net reduction of office space will only be acceptable where this loss:

1. Would not unduly reduce the quality and/or quantity of office floorspace; or
2. Would be outweighed by the achievement of other Area Action Plan objectives through the proposed development.

You may also want to review:

- Employment Land Review

**4.33** The Royal Borough is part of the prosperous Thames Valley and, notwithstanding the recent recession, is one of the key drivers of economic activity in the area. Maidenhead plays a key role in the economic success of the Royal Borough and the town centre is a natural focus for this economic activity.



**Picture 15 An example office development**

**4.34** The service sector and knowledge-based firms are strongly represented in the town centre and in the wider economy, and the local workforce is highly educated. As a result, this area has historically been an attractive location for offices and demand for office floorspace has been high. Research shows that this strong demand is likely to continue. National policy<sup>(7)</sup> identifies offices as a key town centre use and they form part of a balanced mix of uses in a prosperous town centre. As a major town, Maidenhead is suitable and attractive for this use and it is important that the town centre caters for the needs of both small and large businesses, which together contribute to the town centre economy. The AAP promotes sustainable economic development that reinforces the town centre's role in both the local and wider economy. Offices can increase the value of a development and thereby improve its viability. This allows for provision of other, more socially desirable but potentially less economically viable uses as part of a mixed use scheme.

**4.35** While future employment growth in the area may be largely office-based, significant numbers of local people will continue to be employed in other sectors. Where these other sources of employment are appropriate to a town centre location (such as shops and hotels) they are provided for in other policies of this plan. Types of employment that are less appropriate for a town centre location (such as manufacturing and warehousing) generally are not provided for within the AAP with the exception of limited provision within the Stafferton Way

Opportunity Area. Where additional need exists, they will be accommodated in locations elsewhere in the Royal Borough and this will be delivered through other LDF documents.

**4.36** Public consultation has revealed support for offices in sustainable locations and that several parts of the town centre are potentially suitable for office development. Policy MTC10 concentrates new office development in the Opportunity Areas as those are the areas that are considered to offer the greatest potential for rejuvenation of the centre. This means that major development will be facilitated and encouraged within the Opportunity Areas.

**4.37** Development in other parts of the town centre may be desirable, for example to support existing businesses and allow them to grow. Where appropriate, the policy allows this and enables a range of sites to come forward for development, without the whole plan strategy being reliant on a few large sites. Through Policy MTC10 a flexible supply of floorspace will be delivered, capable of responding to local employment needs and market requirements.

**4.38** Public consultation revealed some concern over the amount of new offices proposed in the town centre. A balanced approach to office provision involves making the best use of existing office space while pursuing opportunities to upgrade, improve and expand the stock on offer. While office vacancy rates in Maidenhead are currently abnormally high, this is a factor of the recent recession and research does not suggest any long-term decline in the requirement for offices. On the contrary, research indicates a significant need for new office floorspace over the LDF period. Most of the identified future supply is in Maidenhead town centre, and the vast majority of potential office sites identified in research are located in the Opportunity Areas.

**4.39** Where floorspace is vacant, this tends to be either new space that has been completed but not yet let, or older space that is unattractive to the market. In the case of the latter, the best solution to maximise beneficial use of the land may be to redevelop that floorspace to provide better quality, more attractive offices. The policy facilitates such redevelopment.

**4.40** In some circumstances a site currently in office use may be better used for alternative purposes. To protect the economic function of the town centre a cautious approach is taken to the net loss of office floorspace, but Policy MTC10 allows for such changes of use where they would help to achieve other AAP objectives, or where the loss of floorspace would be minimal in terms of either quantity or quality.

**4.41** When proposals involving the net loss of office floorspace are submitted, they should be accompanied by evidence of a marketing exercise. This should detail the price and terms on which the floorspace was offered, advertising undertaken and interest received, along with any other relevant factors such as the quality and vacancy level of the floorspace and the appropriateness of the site for office use. When considering planning applications involving a net loss of office floorspace, this marketing evidence will be assessed within the context of:

- The possible benefits from relocating the office use.
- The possible benefits from reusing the site for alternative uses.
- The achievement of other AAP objectives.



**Picture 16 An example office development with outdoor space**

## Visitor Accommodation

**4.42** Hotels can play an important role in promoting a sustainable visitor economy and supporting local business needs. They encourage longer visits, generate expenditure within the town centre, support the evening economy and increase linkages to other tourism opportunities.

## Policy MTC 11

### Visitor Accommodation

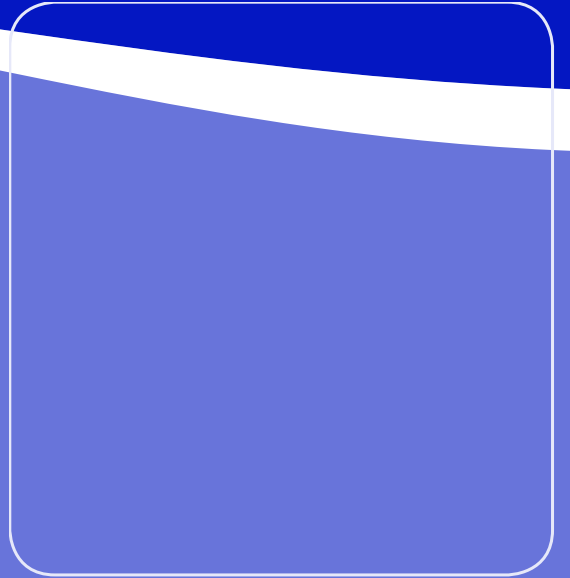
Proposals for additional visitor accommodation within the Town Centre Commercial Boundary will be supported where they would improve the quality or diversify the range of accommodation on offer.

**4.43** The Royal Borough is a tourism hotspot for both national and international visitors. Approximately 7 million people visit the Royal Borough each year, spending some £444 million per annum and indicating a strong visitor market. While tourism is a major driver of the local economy, employing in the region of 11,000 people, Maidenhead town centre has no hotels serving either the business or leisure markets. The current development for a Travelodge in King Street will provide a welcome addition to the town centre. Planning for additional hotel development will support the economic function of the town centre and provide an opportunity to create a focal or meeting point.

**4.44** The location of hotels is highly important to their success. Modern hotels typically need to be located in places that are visible and highly accessible. Given that a hotel needs to be accessible by a variety of transport modes, there are no clear sustainability arguments for promoting one particular town centre location over another. Maidenhead town centre is sufficiently compact to allow for hotels in a number of possible locations. In addition, business and leisure hotels will have different locational requirements. Given this context, it would be inappropriate in this plan to be prescriptive about their location. Policy MTC11 therefore adopts a flexible approach to enable it to respond to market demands and expectations.

**4.45** When considering development proposals for visitor accommodation, the baseline position will be an assessment of the existing provision. Proposals should be accompanied by evidence that they would either improve the overall quality of accommodation available in the town centre (i.e. raise standards as against existing accommodation) or provide a type of accommodation not currently available (e.g. a different type of hotel or one with facilities that are not currently on offer in the town centre).

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**Town Centre People**

**5**

## TOWN CENTRE PEOPLE

### PEOPLE OBJECTIVE 1

*"Foster greater civic pride"* through the creation of the town centre as a sustainable urban living environment characterised by a range of new high quality dwellings; the provision of community, cultural and leisure facilities that support a vibrant, active and healthy community; and the provision of high quality attractive and usable spaces that enable the local staging of public events such as local markets and festivals.

### PEOPLE OBJECTIVE 2

*"Improve the identity and image of the town centre"* by making it more of a shopping and leisure destination; ensuring that new development is attractive and achieves high quality building design, providing public realm improvements that promote lively, animated and safe streets and spaces; and enhancing the town centre's arts and cultural offer.

## Housing

**5.1** Town centre living offers a unique opportunity for residents to access services, employment and leisure facilities on their door steps. While few people currently live within Maidenhead town centre there is an opportunity to provide more homes which will bring more life to the area and help to support shops, services and leisure facilities.

### Policy MTC 12

#### Housing

New housing development will be supported throughout the town centre, with Opportunity Areas expected to make a significant contribution to housing. All proposals will be expected to contribute to a sustainable mix and choice of housing; higher density housing will be appropriate in suitable locations.

Development proposals resulting in a net reduction in housing accommodation or loss of residential land will only be acceptable where:

1. Retention would be undesirable due to environmental, physical or servicing constraints; or
2. This would be outweighed by the achievement of other Area Action Plan objectives through the proposed development; or
3. Alternative housing is provided within the Area Action Plan Area.

You may also want to review:

- Berkshire Housing Market Assessment
- Housing Need Survey
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

**5.2** Town centres are becoming increasingly more important as a place to live. This is to be welcomed as it adds vitality and some feeling of ownership of the streets and spaces. Whilst new homes will be built across the Royal Borough, Maidenhead town centre has the potential to accommodate around 800 new homes within the Opportunity Areas. Past consultation shows strong support for continuing the existing approach of intensification of urban areas to help protect the Green Belt and to reflect their general sustainability. Maidenhead town centre is seen in particular as a location where high density housing development can be supported.



**5.3** New homes will continue to occur over the plan period. While flats are likely to make up the majority of new housing across the town centre, there is opportunity to provide townhouses in some areas. It is unlikely that town centre living will be popular with a large number of families and other groups, however, developments should provide a mix of dwelling size and avoid being dominated by one-bedroom units. In terms of affordable housing, the council currently seeks to achieve a 30% proportion of the total units provided on developments involving a net increase of 15 or more dwellings through Local Plan Policy H3. The AAP does not expect town centre developments to be treated differently than any other part of the Royal Borough.



**Picture 17 An example of a townhouse development**

**5.4** The council will resist the loss of existing homes across the Royal Borough unless justified by community requirements as this would affect the council's ability to deliver the housing requirement and lead to increased pressure to release land within the Green Belt. The loss of housing within Maidenhead town centre is no exception and any loss will only be deemed acceptable where retention would be undesirable or where on balance the achievement of other objectives should take priority.

**5.5** Increasing the number of homes in the town centre raises the issue of conflict with other uses, particularly in the evening. Measures to mitigate potential noise and disturbance should be built into the design of both the new homes and the potential source of the disturbance.

**5.6** Town centre residents will need to be supported by adequate community facilities including education, health facilities and meeting places. Whilst Maidenhead town centre benefits from a range of facilities, particular attention will be paid to whether additional housing development needs to contribute to the provision of new or improved facilities including training and education. The council will work with partners to identify these needs for community infrastructure.

## Community, Culture & Leisure

**5.7** The centre of Maidenhead has good quality community, cultural and leisure facilities. These include the cinema, ten-pin bowling, bowls club, football ground, leisure centre and parks, meeting halls, the heritage centre and places of worship. Our aim is to place these activities at the centre of rejuvenation plans to benefit both existing and future residents.

### Policy MTC 13

#### Community, Culture & Leisure

Proposals for new or improved community, cultural and leisure facilities within the town centre which meet the needs or aspirations of residents and visitors will be supported.

Proposals that result in the loss of land or buildings in community, cultural and leisure use will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that either:

- a. There is no longer a need for the building or land to be retained in community, cultural or leisure use; or
- b. Acceptable alternative provision is made.

You may also want to review:

- Indoor Sports Facilities Study
- Local Cultural Strategy
- Maidenhead Town Centre Facilities Report



**Picture 18 An example of art with a public square**

and District Arts Council.<sup>(8)</sup> In recognition, our strategy aims to place community, cultural and leisure activities at the centre of the rejuvenation plans.

**5.11** Wider improvements to the town centre will see streets and spaces capable of hosting a wide range of activities and events (see Policy MTC 1 'Streets & Spaces', Policy MTC 2 'Greening', Policy MTC 9 'Markets & Events'); improved waterways providing a feature around which leisure activities and art can occur (see Policy MTC 3 'Waterways'), and places where people can eat and drink (see Policy MTC 8 'Food & Drink'). To complement these actions, proposals for new and improved community, cultural and leisure uses are supported in principle across the town centre.

**5.12** Consultation has also shown demand for improved cultural facilities covering a wide range of activities. The council's facilities study further suggests that existing facilities do not meet local needs or aspirations. The identified needs and aspirations are of a varied nature. In order to provide for the majority of activities, the council supports the provision of dedicated multi-use facilities.

**5.13** The York Road Opportunity Area is designated for major development (see Policy OA 3 'York Road Opportunity Area'). The presence of community and cultural uses, for example the Maidenhead Heritage Centre, Maidenhead Library and the waterway, provides an opportunity to complement and enhance the existing range of activities including the provision of multi-use facilities. Smaller scale facilities will also be permitted elsewhere across the town centre, particularly in larger developments which are strongly encouraged to incorporate space for public art and displays.

**5.14** In view of the importance of community, cultural and leisure uses, the loss of existing facilities will be resisted. Where redevelopment involves existing community, cultural or leisure uses alternative provision will be required within the development site. The aim will be to ensure that the replacement buildings provide flexible space that meets not only the needs of the organisation that has been relocated but also lends itself to a range of other events, for example exhibitions, other arts and cultural events, and small scale indoor health related activities.

**5.15** Proposals which would lead to the loss of facilities will only exceptionally be permitted and only where the applicant can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the council that there is no longer a need for the land or building in any form of community, cultural or leisure use. Proposals should include information on financial viability having regard to appropriate marketing, the demand for the use of the site or premises, its usability and the identification of potential future occupiers.

**5.8** Community, cultural and leisure facilities are important to help create a thriving and vibrant town centre. Cultural and leisure activities attract not only local residents but also people from further a field, including people who may not otherwise choose to visit a town centre.

**5.9** As population increases within Maidenhead, including the planned delivery of some 800 additional homes within the town centre, there will be a need to ensure that facilities are provided to meet the community, cultural and leisure needs of residents. The council will work in partnership with relevant community service providers to ensure health, education and other community needs arising from development are met.

**5.10** There is strong public support for the promotion of cultural and leisure opportunities within the town centre, in particular the activity of local groups such as those associated with the Maidenhead



**Picture 19 An example of a space which can be used for cultural events**

8 See [www.maidenhead-arts.org.uk](http://www.maidenhead-arts.org.uk)



## TOWN CENTRE MOVEMENT

### MOVEMENT OBJECTIVE 1

*"Optimise town centre accessibility"* by enhancing the quality and functionality of key gateways; ensuring that all transport infrastructure is well designed, safe and accessible; and promoting better integration of public transport facilities with a particular focus on utilising the train station as an integrated transport hub with strong connections to the town centre.

### MOVEMENT OBJECTIVE 2

*"Reduce pedestrian and vehicular conflicts, and promote a people friendly town"* by establishing a clear and legible hierarchy of movement and access across the town centre; prioritising pedestrian and cyclist accessibility; eliminating unnecessary vehicular movements; strengthening existing links to and within the town centre and creating new links where necessary.

## Accessibility

**6.1** Accessibility is key to a successful town centre. Whilst Maidenhead's town centre is generally easy to get to, there are several aspects / barriers which restrict ease of access. The rejuvenation provides the opportunity to overcome these barriers to make the town centre more accessible particularly by walking, cycling and public transport.

### Policy MTC 14

#### Accessibility

Accessibility to the town centre will be optimised for all modes of travel, with a specific focus on creating a safe and comfortable environment for pedestrians and cyclists and improving access by public transport.

Development should where appropriate:

- Provide improved pedestrian and cyclist connections to and through the town centre;
- Enhance accessibility by bus;
- Facilitate better integration between transport modes, particularly train, bus and taxi;
- Optimise traffic flows and circulation, including the use of signage, to minimise congestion.
- Provide adequate parking facilities, including disabled parking spaces, motorcycle parking and cycle parking, and provision of electric vehicle charging points.

You may also want to review:

- Local Transport Plan (LTP)
- Accessibility by Design
- Parking Strategy

**6.2** An accessible and welcoming town centre can encourage people to visit and use local facilities and promote healthier lifestyles through encouraging walking and cycling. While the town centre is generally easy to get to and move around, there will be a substantial increase in the number of people living, working, shopping and visiting the area over the lifetime of the AAP. There are also several acknowledged barriers to accessibility. To accommodate

growth and minimise impacts on the road network, it will be essential to upgrade pedestrian and cycle routes which radiate out from the town centre and manage traffic and car parking. Figure 6: 'Linkages' provides an indication of the potential links within and across the town centre.

## Connections

**6.3** One of the most significant barriers to movement is the A4/A308. While allowing cars to move around the centre, it severs the town centre from adjoining residential areas and key locations such as the railway station and Kidwells Park, and makes cycling unappealing and potentially hazardous. Consultation has also highlighted a number of other issues within the centre including the disjointed arrangements for trains, buses and taxis, a lack of driver information on car parking, and aspects of its layout and signage.

**6.4** All developments will be expected to improve accessibility into and through the town centre by design, the provision of parking and cycling facilities and provision of/or contributing towards key infrastructure projects. The comprehensive redevelopment of the Opportunity Areas provides a unique opportunity to overcome some of the barriers to movement through the design and layout of new buildings and spaces.

## Transport Interchange

**6.5** The railway station is a major gateway into the town centre with around 3.5 million people passing through it each year. With the planned upgrade to the Great Western Main Line and the arrival of Crossrail, the railway station will see significant investment as its importance increases.

**6.6** The Railway Station Opportunity Area has been designated to deliver upgraded facilities including the provision of a transport interchange for rail, bus and taxis, upgrades to the railway station itself and improved access between the station and the wider town centre for pedestrians and cyclists.

## Car Parking

**6.7** Whilst Maidenhead town centre is generally accessible by walking, cycling, bus and train, many people arrive, and will continue to arrive, at the town centre by car. There are currently around 3,300 publicly accessible car parking spaces in the town centre. The majority of spaces are made up of the Hines Meadow (Sainsbury), Nicholsons Centre and Stafferton Way car parks; however, a number of smaller car parks are spread across the centre.

**6.8** Centrally located car parks will cater predominantly for short stay shopping trips, while longer stay parking is directed towards the periphery of the town centre. The advertising of car parks by appropriate signage will ensure town centre users are aware of them, where spaces are available and help avoid unnecessary traffic movements.

**6.9** Currently, the main car parks have spare weekday capacity for approximately 1,000 vehicles. There is, therefore, some existing potential to accommodate the planned increase in people working, shopping and visiting the town centre.

**6.10** Improved parking for rail users and town centre employees will be achieved through a new or extended multi-storey car park within the Stafferton Way Opportunity Area. Increased long stay parking at this strategic location allows the management of long-stay places to be transferred from current central shopper car parks to this location, whilst still providing easy access to the town centre. Other opportunities will be explored with Network rail for increasing rail related parking.

**6.11** The re-provision of car parking as part of a comprehensive retail-led development within the Broadway Opportunity Area provides scope for increasing centrally located short stay car parking, replacing some of the smaller surface car parks elsewhere.



**Picture 20 Indicative illustration of a transport interchange at the railway station**



**6.12** Parking standards for individual developments are set out in the council's *Parking Strategy* planning brief. This, and any subsequent update, will be used to negotiate the number of parking spaces which are provided. Where possible parking should be provided securely underground or at basement level. As part of the overall provision, a proportion of spaces should be suitable for those with disabilities. Similarly, some spaces will be expected to include charging points to cater for and encourage the use of electric vehicles and car clubs. Other parking areas provided or replaced within the opportunity areas will be maximised by provision of shared use of these facilities outside of working hours.

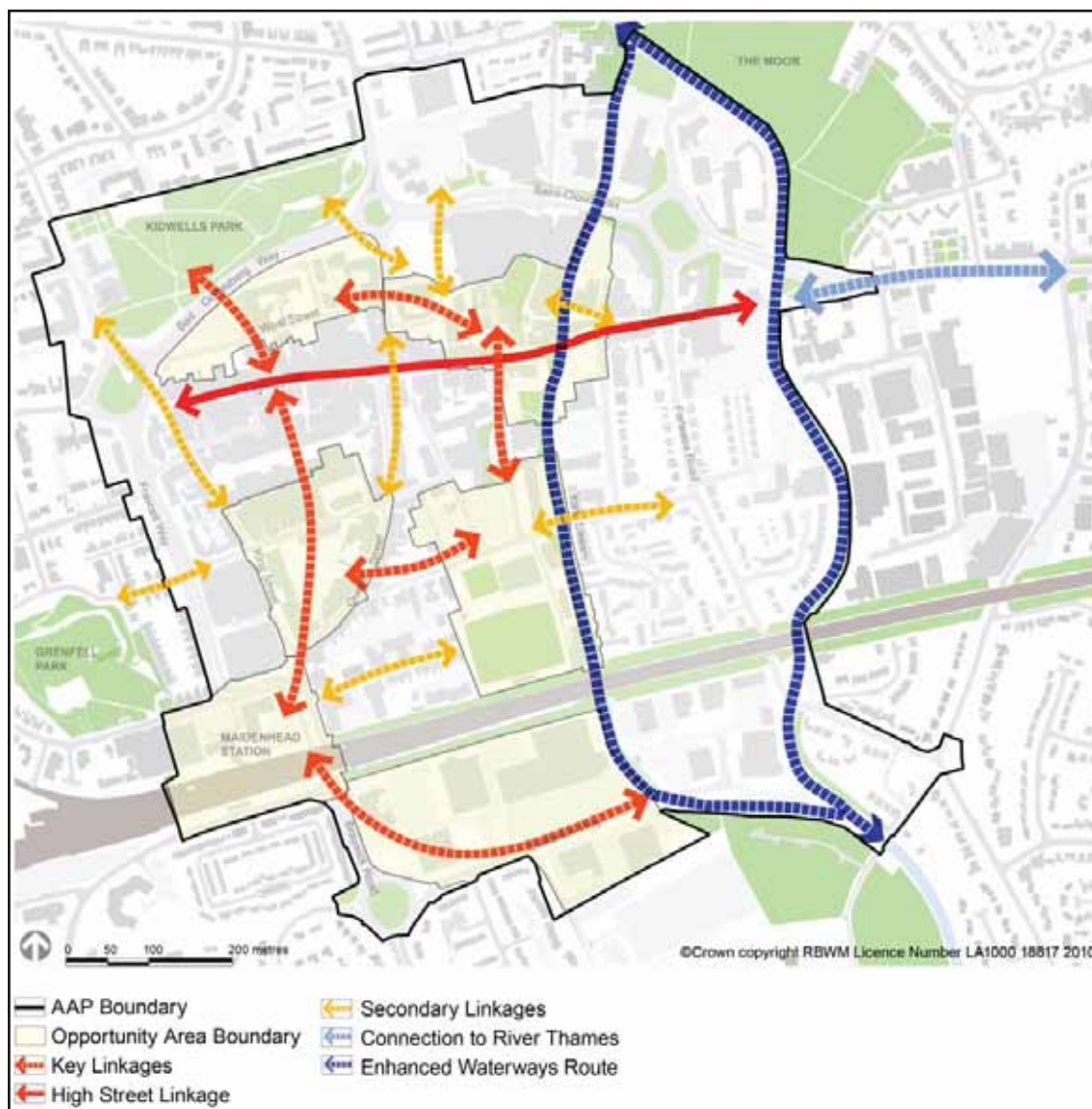


Figure 6 Linkages

## Transport Infrastructure

**6.13** The AAP will plan for the town centre so that the network is best positioned to cater for any growth in traffic in the area.

## Policy MTC 15

### Transport Infrastructure

The following infrastructure is required to support the growth and improvement of the town centre (see Figure 7 'Transport Improvement Areas'):

- a. Areas 1 and 2 - Creation of a train/bus/taxi/cycle interchange adjacent to the railway station; improved crossing facilities; and, junction improvements to Broadway/Frascati Way (A308).
- b. Area 3 - Improvements to the roundabout.
- c. Area 4 - Improvements to the roundabout; and, North-South link improvements.
- d. Area 5 - Alterations to the A4 including junction improvements.
- e. Area 6 - East-West link improvements (the Stafferton Way link); and, improvements along Oldfield Road and Forlease Road.

Development should take account of the needs of cyclists in the design of highway improvement schemes and provide secure and convenient cycle parking facilities at all key destinations within the town centre.

Land required to safeguard future provision of identified projects will be safeguarded from development.

**6.14** To assess the impact of growth on the road network, a traffic model for the town centre and wider strategic model for the borough has been developed. The models have been used to undertake capacity analysis of the existing road network, assess the impacts of delivering growth and prepare a strategy to accommodate the planned increase in movements. The testing demonstrates that traffic implications can be accommodated on the local road network provided investment is made in transport infrastructure and suitable measures are put in place to manage travel associated with new development.<sup>(9)</sup> However, the strategic model demonstrates that many of the junctions on the Strategic Road Network (SRN) will see demand levels exceeding capacity. The modelling work illustrates increased trips on the SRN that are attributed to AAP development.

**6.15** Policy MTC15 sets out the key infrastructure projects needed to support town centre growth (also see Figure 7 'Transport Improvement Areas'). A staged approach to bringing the infrastructure improvements forward will be required.

**6.16** The traffic situation will be monitored but individual developments will be expected to carry out Transport Assessments (TAs) to demonstrate that any impact on the highway, including strategic junctions listed below, can be mitigated. Proposed developments will be expected to use the traffic model to assess their impacts and, if necessary, undertake detailed junction assessments. Assessments will also be required to ensure new development does not contribute to poor air quality issues,<sup>(10)</sup> including any transport-related mitigation measures that prove necessary.

#### Strategic Junctions

- M4 J7
- M4 J8
- A404(M) J9a
- A404(M) J9b
- A308(M) / A308

**6.17** Any road and junction improvements will be provided as off-site works as part of the development of the Opportunity Areas and/or through making financial contributions towards such infrastructure. With these measures in place, the testing through the model shows for example that southbound queues on Forlease Road and the A4 are better managed, southbound queues on the Cookham Road are shortened, northbound flows remain unchanged and there will not be any excessive queueing on Broadway / Frascati Way junction compared to the 'do nothing' scenario. The proposed infrastructure improvements are one solution to accommodating the level of growth in the town centre and the council will consider alternatives that are tested using the traffic model and put forward in TAs.

<sup>9</sup> See Maidenhead Town Centre AAP: Traffic Infrastructure report.

<sup>10</sup> This is discussed in more detail in the Quality Design section of this document.

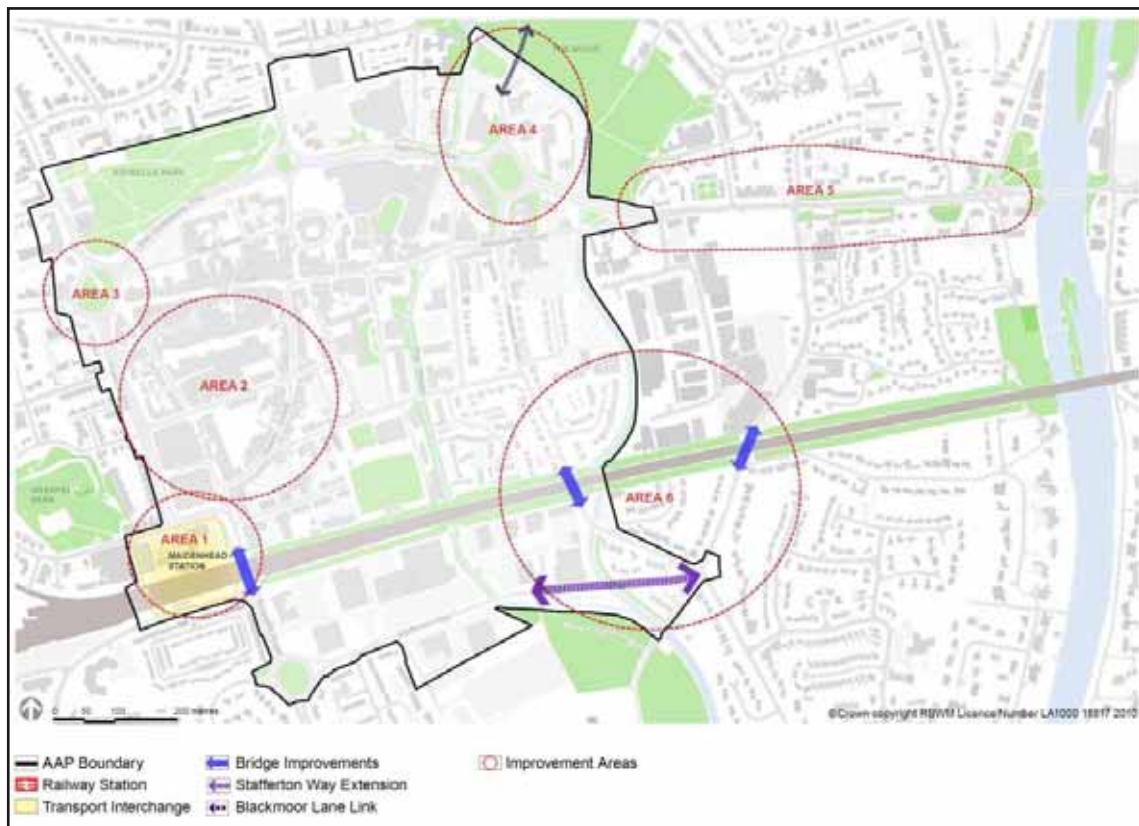
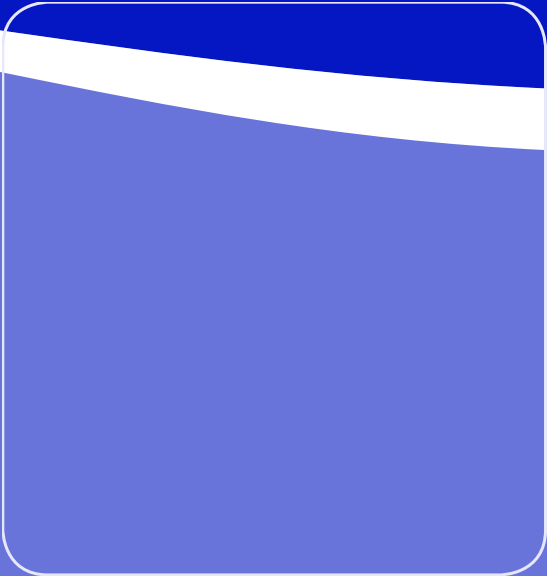


Figure 7 Transport Improvement Areas



## Town Centre Opportunity Areas

7

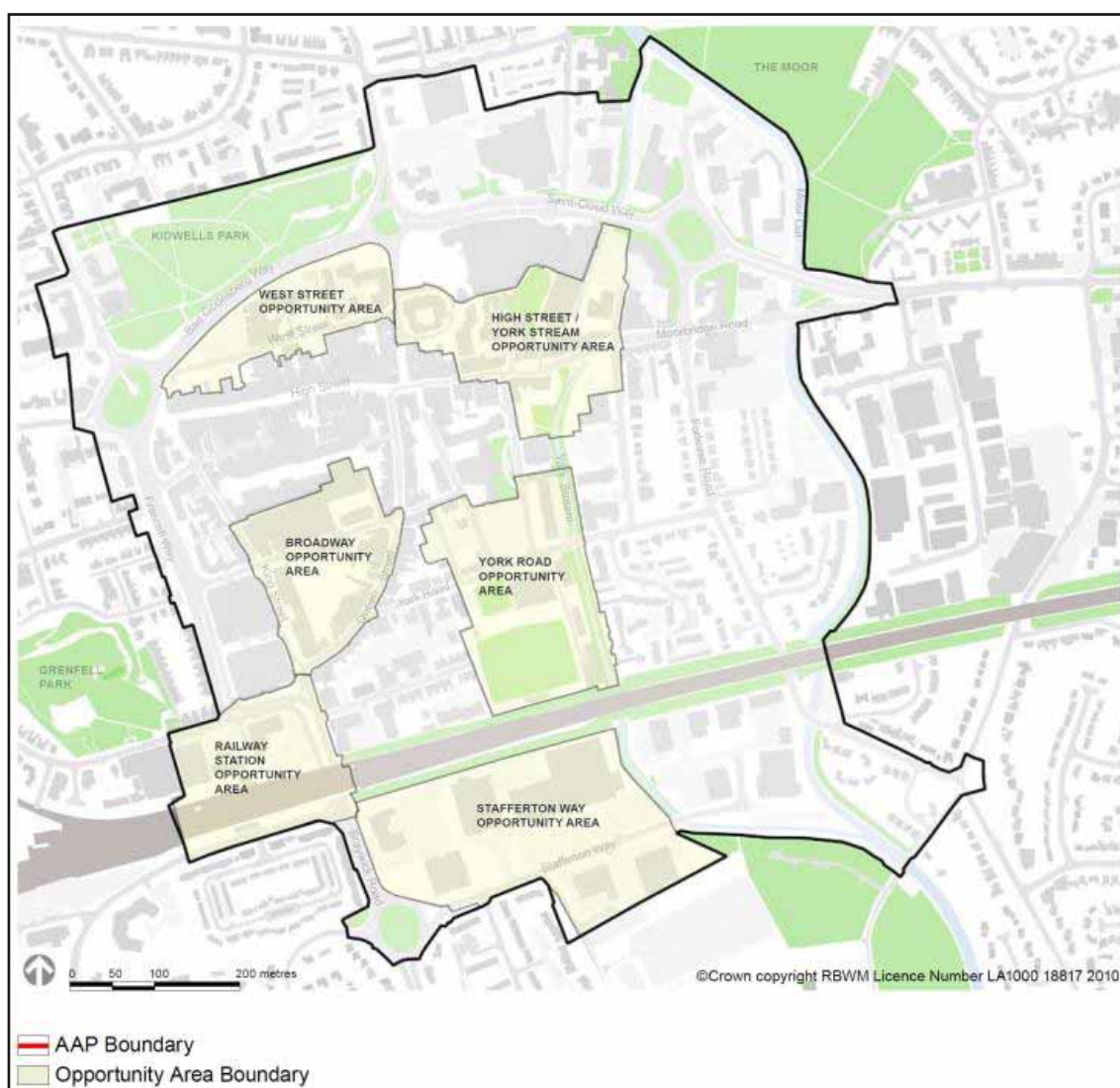


## OPPORTUNITY AREAS

**7.1** Six specific Opportunity Areas have been identified where comprehensive redevelopment and other improvements over the lifetime of the AAP will play a key role in the town centre's rejuvenation and revitalisation (See Figure 8 'Opportunity Areas').

**7.2** Requirements for each of the Opportunity Areas are set out in the following policies. The estimated capacities are based on planning permissions, feasibility studies and urban design analysis. Capacities are approximate. Where appropriate, more detailed planning briefs will be prepared to help guide development proposals.

**7.3** An appropriate mix of land uses is sought across each Opportunity Area. It is essential that each area integrates with the immediate and wider town centre's existing character and function, and positively enhances its identity through the creation of a sustainable, stimulating and vibrant town centre environment. The type of land use and layout has also been influenced by the need to respond to and reduce the risk of flooding. The Addendum to the Level 1 SFRA for Maidenhead Town Centre AAP provides flood risk guidance in relation to all the Opportunity Areas. Whilst the council has assessed flood risk across the town centre in the preparation of the AAP, it should be noted that Environment Agency data on flood risk (including surface water) is regularly updated. When preparing development proposals, the latest data should always be used.



**Figure 8 Opportunity Areas**



## Broadway Opportunity Area

**7.4** The allocation of this area for a comprehensive retail led, mixed use scheme will help to secure the town centre as a desirable place to shop, and fulfil its role as a major retail centre. The new shopping area will comprise a mix of types and size of units that will be integrated into the existing retail core of the Nicholsons Shopping Centre, King Street and Queen Street. Alongside the retail units will be a mix of complementary leisure uses particularly cafés and restaurants, and new homes and offices which will provide a vibrant and lively area within the 'heart' of the town centre. Forming part of the southern gateway and being adjacent to the railway station, high quality buildings along with improvements to the streets and spaces will help define a key entrance into the town centre and draw residents, visitors and shoppers to certain locations.

**7.5** The redevelopment of this area will help:

- Secure the town centre's long term vitality and viability;
- Significantly improve accessibility and links within the town centre, particularly between the railway station and existing retail core;
- Enhance the town centre's retail offer;
- Enhance the town centre's public realm including the creation of public space;
- Create a stimulating and vibrant shopping environment and retail circuit; and
- Enhance the town centre's image and identity and raise its profile as a destination for shopping, leisure and recreation.

### Policy OA 1

#### Broadway Opportunity Area

The Broadway Opportunity Area is allocated as an area for future major retail led mixed use development. It is the highest priority area for major new retail development in the town centre to achieve the revitalisation of the centre. A comprehensive retail led mixed use regeneration scheme should be brought forward for this area early in the plan period. Proposals for this area should comprise in the order of:

1. 25,000 m<sup>2</sup> of retail floorspace (gross);
2. 190 residential dwellings (gross);
3. 6,000 m<sup>2</sup> of office floorspace (gross);
4. Complementary leisure provision, particularly café and restaurant uses;
5. Replacement multi-storey car park;<sup>(11)</sup> and

Development and design principles of particular relevance and importance to the redevelopment of this area include:

- a. Strengthening and enhancement of the town centre's overall retail offer.
- b. A mix of uses that complement the existing primary shopping area.
- c. Innovative and distinctive architecture reflective of its gateway location.
- d. Effective integration with existing shopping areas through strong and direct pedestrian connections to the Nicholson's Centre, King Street and Queen Street.
- e. Enhanced linkages between the railway station and the existing retail network.
- f. High quality, appealing retail environment with active frontages at ground level, both internally and externally, to King Street, Queen Street and Broadway.
- g. Incorporation of new central high quality public spaces.
- h. Promotion of access by walking and cycling and reduction in the dominance of vehicles.
- i. Vehicular access and servicing off Broadway and Queen Street.

<sup>11</sup> The existing Broadway Car Park provides 734 spaces and is the principal short stay car park serving the town centre. Full replacement will be required as part of a considered approach to parking across any development proposal.

- j. Pedestrianisation of Broadway, provided an appropriate solution for access and servicing is achieved.
- k. Not increase flood risk and use sustainable drainage systems to reduce surface water flood risk where possible.

Proposals which would result in the piecemeal redevelopment of this area and/or prejudice the future delivery of a comprehensive retail led mixed use scheme will not be supported.

The policy requirements and design principles are illustrated in Picture 21 'Indicative illustrations of the Broadway Opportunity Area'.

**7.6** The area is at present in a number of private ownerships, with the council also being a major landowner by virtue of its ownership of the multi-storey car park to the rear of the Nicholson Centre. Redevelopment of the Broadway Opportunity Area is integral to the successful implementation of the AAP's spatial strategy and realisation of the overarching vision for the town centre. The council is currently in discussions with a major international developer and funder concerning delivery of a comprehensive retail led mixed use scheme in the Broadway Opportunity Area.

**7.7** In order to deliver the required comprehensive approach set out in this policy and reasoned justification, if necessary and, where there is a compelling case in the public interest, the council will consider the use of its compulsory purchase powers.

### Uses

**7.8** The focus for any development of the Broadway Opportunity Area should be the provision of additional high quality comparison retail floorspace. This will enable Maidenhead to strengthen its position in the face of other competing centres and out of centre locations, claw back lost retail expenditure and become more sustainable by better meeting the needs of those in its catchment area.

**7.9** Any scheme should provide a range of retail unit sizes in order to meet the needs of modern retailers for both smaller and larger stores. It will be vital that the quantum and quality of retailing proposed allows Maidenhead town centre to claw back expenditure leaking elsewhere, in order that it can fulfil its role in the retail hierarchy. The inclusion of restaurants and cafés will be encouraged where they complement existing uses and the primary retail function of the area, and support an improved vitality in this part of the town centre.

**7.10** Housing should be provided as part of any scheme. Town centres are recognised as being highly sustainable locations for residential development and the Broadway Opportunity Area will enable the provision of new high quality town centre apartments in an area within close proximity to the railway station, primary shopping core, and other town centre services and facilities.

**7.11** Other appropriate uses include offices as well as community / leisure. Proposals should result in a net increase in office space within the area. Where proposals result in a loss of office space this can only be justified if a significant contribution is made towards achieving other plan objectives and where the loss of this space would not prejudice Maidenhead's status as a key centre for employment within the Royal Borough.

### Built Form

**7.12** Redevelopment proposals for this Opportunity Area should comprise a number of buildings that face key routes, such as Queen Street and King Street, and support the creation of new retail streets and a central public space. All new buildings should be designed so that their key frontages and entrances face onto the street.

**7.13** The southern tip of the Opportunity Area forms part of a major gateway into the town centre and therefore provides an opportunity to create a highly visible face to the new development. The town centre lacks 'landmark' buildings at present and the opportunity should therefore be taken to provide a landmark building of innovative and distinctive architecture fronting the King Street / Queen Street junction, to signal arrival at the town centre. The scale and appearance of any new development within the Opportunity Area should be of a high quality and respect the local distinctiveness of the town centre and that of nearby older buildings, particularly those within the designated conservation area.

**7.14** Redevelopment proposals for this area will also enable the creation of a much needed urban, outdoor, public space within the town centre. The most appropriate location for this is in the centre of the Opportunity Area fronting the Broadway and with strong direct connections to the Nicholson Centre, King Street and Queen Street. This new pedestrian space should act as the focal point of activity for the Broadway Opportunity Area, it should be engaging, distinct in character, and provide opportunities for seating, public art, entertainment and activity.

**7.15** The council's investigations of flood risk indicate that the site can be developed safely.<sup>(12)</sup> However, given the site size, and its location in relation to groundwater mapping, development proposals will need to be accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment. This should include consideration of flooding from surface water and groundwater and the incorporation of appropriate design responses including sustainable drainage measures.

### **Access & Transport**

**7.16** Pedestrian and cyclist movement and accessibility into and through the town centre is currently confusing due to an array of separated routes. Additionally, access to the town centre from the railway station is compromised by the A308 which acts as a physical and psychological barrier to people arriving from the south or via train. This is largely due to the conflicts that arise between vehicles and pedestrians needing to cross the A308.

**7.17** Redevelopment of the Broadway Opportunity Area should support improved accessibility and links within the town centre, particularly to and between the railway station and the existing retail core. The layout of any proposals should therefore seek to improve pedestrian and cyclist legibility and permeability through the provision of new high quality, convenient, safe and well lit pedestrian connections and cycle routes. Strong, clear and direct linkages should be provided to successfully integrate the area with other key parts of the town centre, particularly the Nicholson's Centre, High Street, King Street, Queen Street, and the railway station.

**7.18** To improve the site's relationship with the railway station, future development proposals will be expected to contribute to improvements aimed at simplifying the crossing for pedestrians and cyclists, improving safety by minimising vehicular - pedestrian / cyclist conflicts, and increasing the attractiveness of the area to reflect its status as a gateway to the town centre.

**7.19** The High Street is currently pedestrianised, as is the part of King Street south of Broadway. To maximise integration of the Broadway Opportunity Area and to assist in creating a new focal point for the centre, access to and within the area should be focused primarily towards pedestrians. Pedestrianisation of the Broadway (in whole or part) will, therefore, be supported where an appropriate and acceptable transport, servicing and access solution is identified. This could involve creating a shared pedestrian space along Broadway with vehicular access limited to service vehicles and buses.

**7.20** As part of a comprehensive and sustainable transport solution, any proposals will be required to replace existing car park facilities with a new car park of greater capacity to service the development and wider town centre. Any identified deficiency in car parking will need to be offset by planning contributions to enable the delivery of necessary strategic transport infrastructure.

**7.21** Vehicular access to and from the Opportunity Area is to be provided via the Broadway – Frascati Way junction. To facilitate two way access, junction and road improvements will be required along the Broadway and at its junction with Frascati Way. In addition a number of other improvements to the local road network will be as outlined in Appendix D 'Infrastructure Projects'. The use of conditions and planning obligations may be required to secure appropriate funding to deliver necessary infrastructure.

12 See the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and related addendum for Maidenhead town centre.



Picture 21 Indicative illustrations of the Broadway Opportunity Area

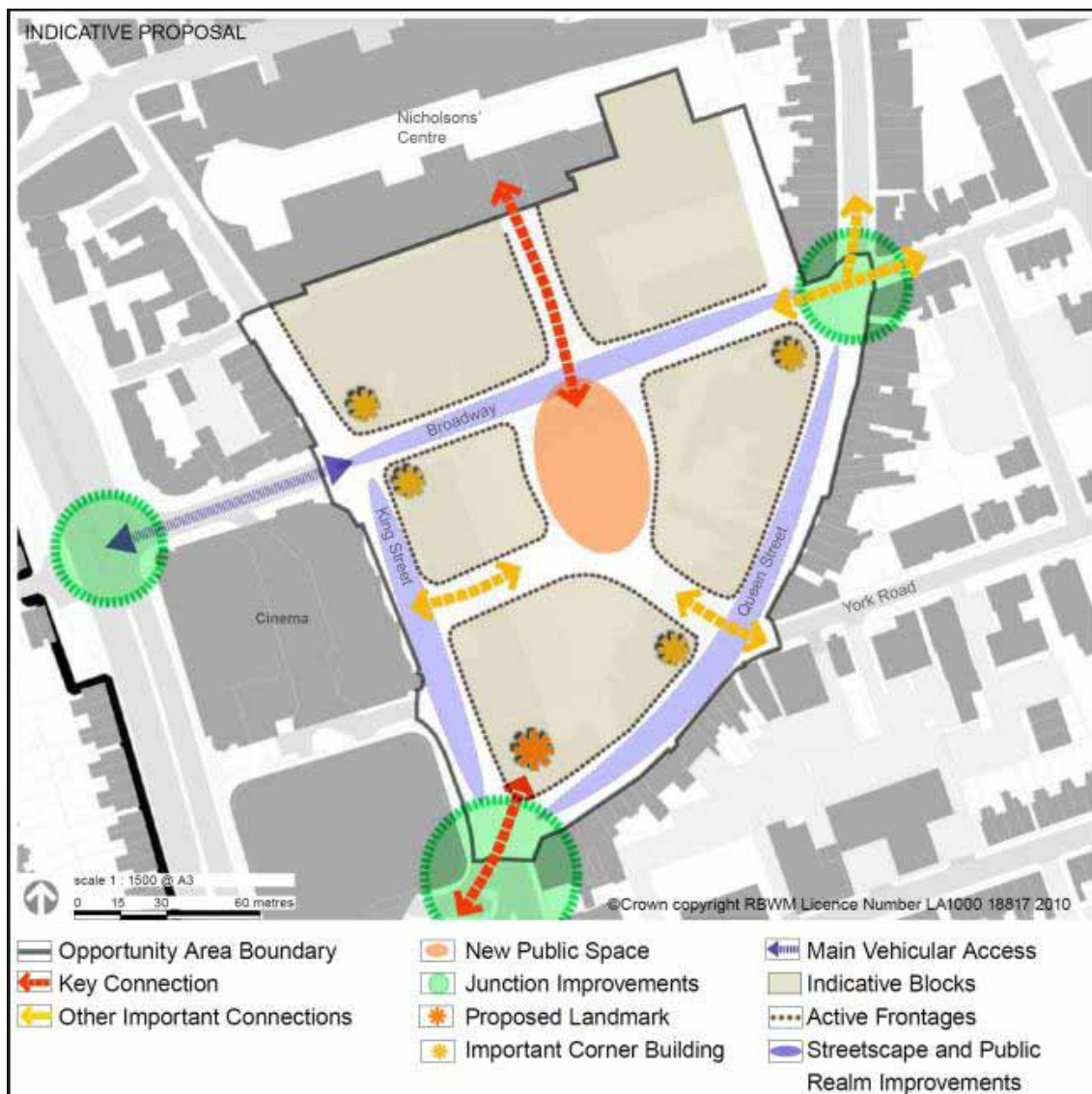


Figure 9 Broadway Opportunity Area Indicative Plan



## West Street Opportunity Area

**7.22** Redevelopment of the West Street Opportunity Area for a mixed use development will play a key role in shaping Maidenhead's identity and improving the overall appearance of the town centre, given its position to the south of the A4 relief road and proximity to a number of main routes that lead into the town. In helping to define a sense of place and feeling of arrival there will be high quality buildings along its A4 frontage along with outstanding architecture, planting, public art and lighting in the gateways to replace views of dated buildings and rear service areas. With improved links into the town centre, in particular the High Street, this will attract visitors and residents alike as well as allow easy access to Kidwells Park.

**7.23** The redevelopment of this area will:

- Improve the town centre's appearance and frontage along Bad Godesberg Way (A4 relief road).
- Significantly improve the town centre's office and residential profile.
- Create new high quality gateways into the town centre.
- Enhance the town centre's land use efficiency and sustainability.
- Significantly improve the town centre's accessibility and permeability.
- Improve the town centre's green setting through better integration of Kidwells Park with the town centre.
- Create a more lively and attractive environment along West Street.

### Policy OA 2

#### West Street Opportunity Area

The West Street Opportunity Area is allocated for a residential and office led mixed-use regeneration scheme. Proposals for this area should comprise in the order of:

1. 21,000 m<sup>2</sup> of office floorspace (gross);
2. 310 residential dwellings (gross);
3. Complementary leisure provision, hotel, food and drink uses.

Development and design principles of particular relevance and importance to the redevelopment of this area include:

- a. Effective integration with the existing retail network through the creation of a new pedestrian access way linking to the High Street.
- b. Creation of a new pedestrian and cycle link to Kidwells Park.
- c. High quality architecture with active frontages to West Street and Bad Godesberg Way.
- d. Buildings to provide enhanced skyline and positive contribution to wider views with particular attention to neighbouring development including heritage assets, roof design and variation of building heights.
- e. Public realm improvements including those to existing pedestrian underpasses.
- f. Development of taller buildings up to 12 storeys (40 m), with a landmark building at the western end of the site.
- g. Retention of the listed United Reformed Church, and enhancing its setting.
- h. Consolidation of existing telecommunications infrastructure unless alternative arrangements are in place.
- i. Retention of community facilities (the public house, Friends' meeting house and United Reformed Church's community hall) unless acceptable provision is to be made elsewhere.
- j. Vehicular access from West Street or Kidwells Park Drive.
- k. Replacement of existing public car parking.
- l. Not increase flood risk and use sustainable drainage systems to reduce surface water flood risk where possible.



Comprehensive redevelopment of this area is preferred, however a phased approach may be appropriate in keeping with a comprehensive framework, with land either side of Kidwells Park Drive being delivered independently. Any proposals within the Opportunity Area that do not conform with this policy or which would prejudice the future delivery of the Opportunity Area will be resisted.

The policy requirements and design principles are illustrated in Figure 10 'West Street Opportunity Area Indicative Plan'.

## Uses

**7.24** Proposals for redeveloping the West Street Opportunity Area should incorporate housing and office accommodation as the primary land uses. This could be supported by other complementary and ancillary uses such as leisure, food, beverage and small scale ancillary retail where these uses do not conflict with, or prejudice the delivery of the intended primary land uses or the major new retail development in the town centre on the Broadway Opportunity Area.

**7.25** The site's proximity to Kidwells Park and the primary shopping area make it a highly sustainable and appropriate location for future housing development. Development proposals will therefore be expected to contribute to the creation of a vibrant urban living environment through the provision of new high quality development which meets a range of housing needs.

**7.26** The West Street Opportunity Area is also a long established town centre office location and it is important that these uses are maintained and enhanced. New development proposals in this location will be expected to contribute to meeting forecast office floorspace demand and should be of a sufficiently high quality that will raise the profile and attraction of the town centre's office market. Development proposals that result in a loss of office floorspace within this Opportunity Area will therefore not be supported.

**7.27** Given the area's high visibility and proximity along the A4, a hotel use may also be appropriate within this area.

## Built Form

**7.28** The West Street Opportunity Area is a prominent site within the town centre with an extensive frontage to Bad Godesberg Way and the town centre's northern gateways. Development proposals for this Opportunity Area have the potential to positively enhance the town centre's appearance and identity and should therefore be of a high architectural quality, comprise buildings of varying form and height, and should contribute to the creation of an attractive and visually stimulating frontage to the A4 relief road.

**7.29** Improving West Street is also a key priority for this area and development proposals should therefore be designed so they present high quality attractive building frontages to West Street which support the creation of a safe, lively, comfortable and pedestrian friendly environment.

**7.30** Taller buildings are considered appropriate as they will help improve the town centre's legibility and contribute to creating a sense of arrival from the north, east and west. New development will be required to contribute to the creation of an dynamic and enhanced skyline characterised by high quality building design with variation in building heights throughout the area.

**7.31** The western end of the area also forms part of a major gateway into the town centre and provides an opportunity to create a landmark building in this location which acts as a key reference point and visual icon for the town centre. Given the site's prominence, proposals for a landmark building will be expected to adopt an innovative and distinctive architectural approach to building design.

**7.32** While proposals for taller buildings within this area are appropriate in principle, when preparing development proposals applicants should give detailed consideration to the design, bulk, massing and scale of new development to ensure it complements and enhances the setting of the United Reformed Church, and does not result in unacceptable visual, amenity or environmental impacts on the nearby Maidenhead Town Centre Conservation Area. Proposals which result in unacceptable impacts on these areas will not be supported.

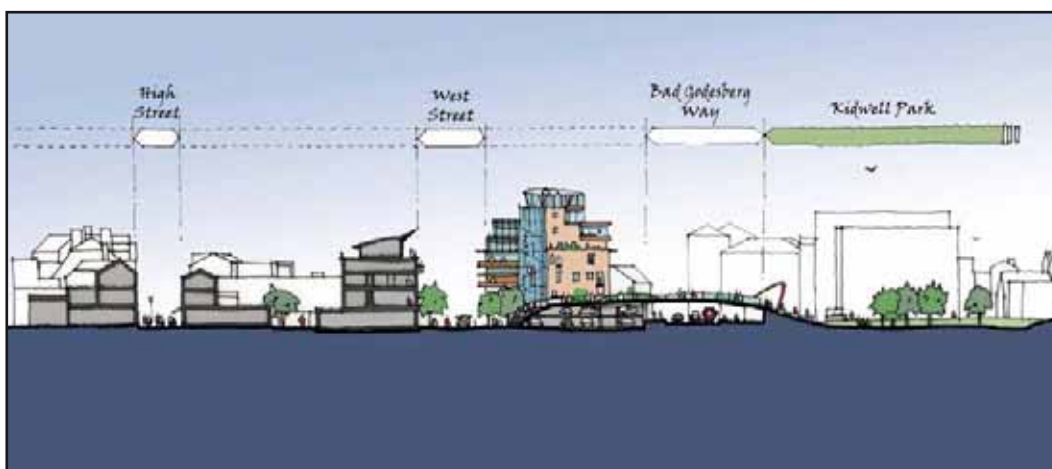
**7.33** The council's investigations of flood risk indicate that the site can be developed safely.<sup>(13)</sup> However, given the site size, and its location in relation to groundwater mapping, development proposals will need to be accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment. This should include consideration of flooding from surface water and groundwater and the incorporation of appropriate design responses including sustainable drainage measures.

### Access & Transport

**7.34** West Street Opportunity Area lies in a strategic location between the town centre core, the A4 and Kidwells Park. However, it is presently poorly connected with the rest of the town centre with pedestrians forced to use narrow alleyways and long detours to navigate through and around the site.

**7.35** Redevelopment of this area will provide an opportunity to greatly improve the town centre's permeability and enhance its green setting, both of which are key priorities for the AAP. New development proposals are expected to support the creation of a strong direct pedestrian connection between the High Street, West Street and Kidwells Park, which should be achieved through:

- Connection of the town centre with Kidwells Park via a new high quality pedestrian and cyclist link such as that depicted in Picture 22 'Indicative cross section from the High Street to Kidwells Park'. This is a major priority for the town centre and forms a key part of the AAP's Spatial Strategy.
- Creation of a new pedestrian walkway linking West Street to the High Street. This should occur within the broad area for investigation as shown in Figure 10 'West Street Opportunity Area Indicative Plan', and will be subject to an acceptable design solution being achieved which provides the necessary high quality link whilst minimising impacts on the Maidenhead Town Centre Conservation Area.



**Picture 22 Indicative cross section from the High Street to Kidwells Park**

**7.36** Vehicular access to and from the Opportunity Area is to be achieved via West Street and Kidwells Park Drive. To facilitate site access and ensure sufficient capacity on the local road network, improvements may be required at key junctions and roads as identified in Appendix D 'Infrastructure Projects'. The use of planning obligations may be required to secure appropriate funding to deliver necessary strategic transport infrastructure improvements.

**7.37** To ensure a sustainable transport solution is achieved for the West Street Opportunity Area, any future development proposals will be required to provide on site car parking in accordance with the council's parking standards for town centre developments. Where proposals involve the redevelopment of existing parking facilities, new parking should be provided to serve the town centre.

<sup>13</sup> See the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and related addendum for Maidenhead town centre.



Picture 23 Indicative illustration of the West Street Opportunity Area

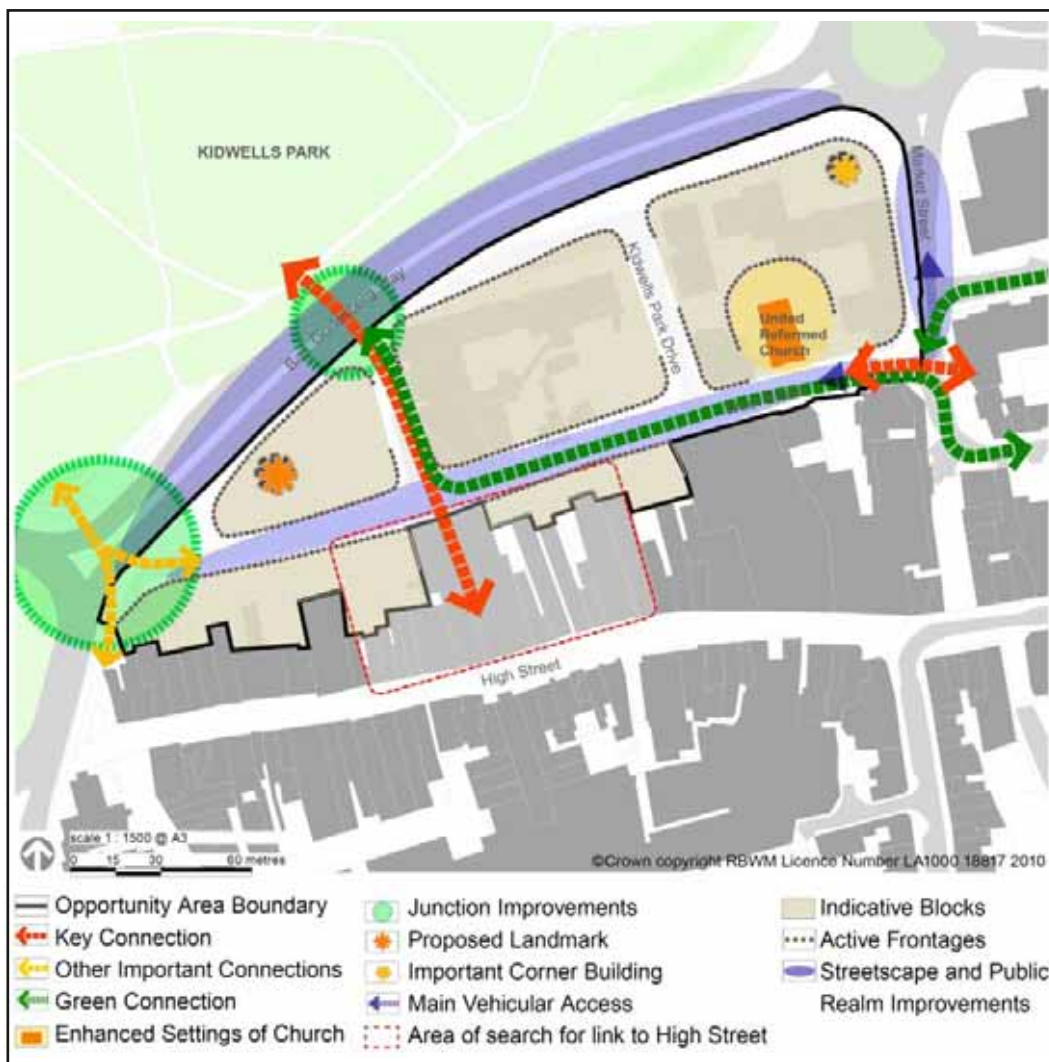


Figure 10 West Street Opportunity Area Indicative Plan

## York Road Opportunity Area

**7.38** A vibrant, memorable area will be created through a public square capable of hosting events and through giving more prominence to the existing waterway and a new pocket park adjacent to it. Surrounding these uses will be a mix of new homes, offices and community facilities complementing the existing civic functions.

**7.39** The redevelopment of this area will:

- Create a major new urban mixed use quarter in the town centre;
- Enhance the town centre's image and identity as a high quality urban centre;
- Optimise the use of brownfield land;
- Improve the town centre's land use efficiency and sustainability;
- Enhance York Stream and access to it to maximise its contribution to the town centre; and
- Enhance the town centre's public realm including the creation of a new public space capable of supporting events.

### Policy OA 3

#### York Road Opportunity Area

The York Road Opportunity Area is allocated for a residential and office led mixed use development. Proposals for the redevelopment of this Opportunity Area should comprise in the order of:

##### Land North of York Road

- 12,000 m<sup>2</sup> of office floorspace (gross);
- 100 residential dwellings (gross);
- Public square capable of hosting events;
- Green space (e.g. pocket park) fronting York Stream;
- Café and restaurant uses at ground floor.

##### Land South of York Road

- 60 residential dwellings (gross);
- Up to 2,000 m<sup>2</sup> of office floorspace (gross);
- Community facilities;
- A multi-use community, cultural and leisure facility.

Redevelopment of this Opportunity Area may be achieved through a single or phased approach, with land either side of York Road coming forward at separate times. Any proposals for the area will however need to be planned in a comprehensive manner and ensure effective integration between land north and south of York Road.

Development and design principles of particular relevance to the redevelopment of this Opportunity Area include:

- a. Effective integration with surrounding streets through improved and new access, particularly to the main retail area and the railway station.
- b. Embracing its waterside setting, conserving or enhancing the biodiversity of the waterways and improved access allowing for pedestrian and cycle access alongside.
- c. Respect the setting of the Town Hall and listed library building.
- d. Retention of community facilities unless they are no longer needed or acceptable alternative provision is to be made elsewhere.
- e. Variety in the type, size and tenure of dwellings.
- f. Creation of new public spaces, including those suitable for hosting events.



- g. Replacement of existing car parking.
- h. Not increase flood risk and seek to reduce this by steering residential development to areas of lowest flood risk within the site and by utilising sustainable drainage systems within the site design and layout to reduce the risk of surface water flooding.

The policy requirements and design principles are illustrated further in Figure 11 'York Road Opportunity Area Indicative Plan'.

## Uses

**7.40** Redevelopment of this area is expected to be residential led with office as the other primary land use. Development proposals should seek to optimise the use of this brownfield site, complement the character and function of the surrounding area, and enhance the town centre's role as a high quality mixed use living, business and leisure environment.

**7.41** Community, conference and leisure uses are also appropriate for this area, as well as restaurants and cafés where this would complement existing and proposed uses and support improved vitality. The aspiration for improved cultural, entertainment and leisure facilities supported through consultation would be appropriate for this area, complementing existing facilities. Proposals that would impact adversely on the primary shopping area and retail led proposals for the Broadway Opportunity Area will not be supported. Additionally, where proposals result in the loss of existing community facilities on site, these will need to be re-provided elsewhere unless it can be demonstrated that there is no longer a need for that facility.

**7.42** The York Road Opportunity Area is a large town centre site with close ties to the railway station and residential uses to the east, making it a highly appropriate and sustainable location for future housing and office development. The area's location on the eastern side of the town centre core lends itself to a different type of housing, including family housing, than that of the more centrally located Opportunity Areas. Development proposals for this area will therefore be expected to provide a mix of housing types and sizes to meet the community's diverse housing needs.

**7.43** The area also forms part of the town centre's civic quarter which includes the council's existing offices as well as the Town Hall and listed library building. The AAP seeks to maintain the civic function of this area and, therefore, where existing buildings are replaced, development proposals will be expected to re-provide accommodation for the council. Other office development will be supported where this is in accordance with the development levels set out in policy OA3, and does not prejudice the delivery of future housing.

**7.44** The area also includes Maidenhead Football and Desborough Bowls Clubs. Whilst the football club wishes to remain in the town centre, the bowls club have indicated a willingness to relocate. Any redevelopment proposals will be expected to include suitable open and amenity space recognising the open urban character of the site.

## Built Form

**7.45** The York Road Opportunity Area could be redeveloped in a single or phased manner but on the basis of a comprehensive approach for the purposes of creating a vibrant mixed use urban living and civic quarter. Development proposals for this area should comprise a number of buildings that present high quality active frontages to key routes including York Road, St Ives Road and Park Street, and together support the creation of an attractive and stimulating town centre environment.

**7.46** Building designs should respect the predominantly low to medium rise character of the area and should not result in unacceptable adverse impacts on existing development, particularly the Town Hall and listed library building.

**7.47** The majority of the site falls within an area with a low probability of flooding, however the eastern boundary is at medium probability of flooding. The council's investigations of flood risk, which include a sequential test, indicate that the site can be developed safely.<sup>(14)</sup> Development proposals will need to be accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) demonstrating that the layout and design has sought to steer development towards areas at lowest risk of flooding. In particular residential development should be avoided in areas at high probability of flooding and

14 See the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and related addendum for Maidenhead town centre.



should be steered towards areas within the site at low risk of flooding. The FRA should also include consideration of flooding from surface water and groundwater, and the incorporation of appropriate design responses including finished floor levels, community routes of site access and egress, and the need to set back development from the York Stream. The use of sustainable drainage solutions is particularly important in relation to both fluvial and surface water flooding.

**7.48** Enhancing and reintroducing the waterways and providing increased accessibility to them is a key objective for the town centre. Development proposals will therefore be expected to embrace their waterside setting and contribute to the protection and enhancement of York Stream. Building designs should include high quality facades fronting onto York Stream, with balconies, windows and private amenity space overlooking the waterway to support the creation of a safe, lively, and comfortable pedestrian friendly environment. Development proposals will also be expected to improve accessibility and usability of the waterways, including the creation of a new pocket park adjacent to York Stream.

**7.49** Redevelopment of the York Road Opportunity Area is also required to create a new town centre public square capable of hosting events. Redevelopment proposals for land north of York Road will therefore be required to provide a new public space as part of any scheme, which could be located adjacent to the Town Hall like that depicted in Figure 11 'York Road Opportunity Area Indicative Plan'. This, together with other spaces provided, could form part of a network of public space within the opportunity area, linking both natural and formal areas. Development should be flexible in order to maximise the value of open space within phased development proposals.

### Access & Transport

**7.50** By virtue of its central location, and the one-way restrictions within the local road network, the York Road Opportunity Area is less accessible by private vehicle than the other opportunity areas. The council's evidence base indicates that office uses on a large scale in this area would result in adverse effects on the local road network. With major office development planned for other more appropriate and accessible parts of the town centre, the extent of office use will be limited to ensure against adverse effects.

**7.51** To ensure a sustainable transport solution is achieved for the York Road Opportunity Area, future development proposals will be required to provide on site car parking in accordance with the council's parking standards for town centre developments. Where proposals are unable to comply with the council's parking standards, development proposals will be expected to offset these deficiencies through planning contributions towards necessary strategic transport infrastructure.

**7.52** Redevelopment of the York Road Opportunity Area will also require improvements to the local road network including upgrading the A4 relief road – Forlease Road junction as well as other improvements outlined in Appendix D 'Infrastructure Projects'. The use of planning obligations may be required to secure appropriate funding to deliver these necessary improvements.



**Picture 24 Indicative illustration of the York Road Opportunity Area**

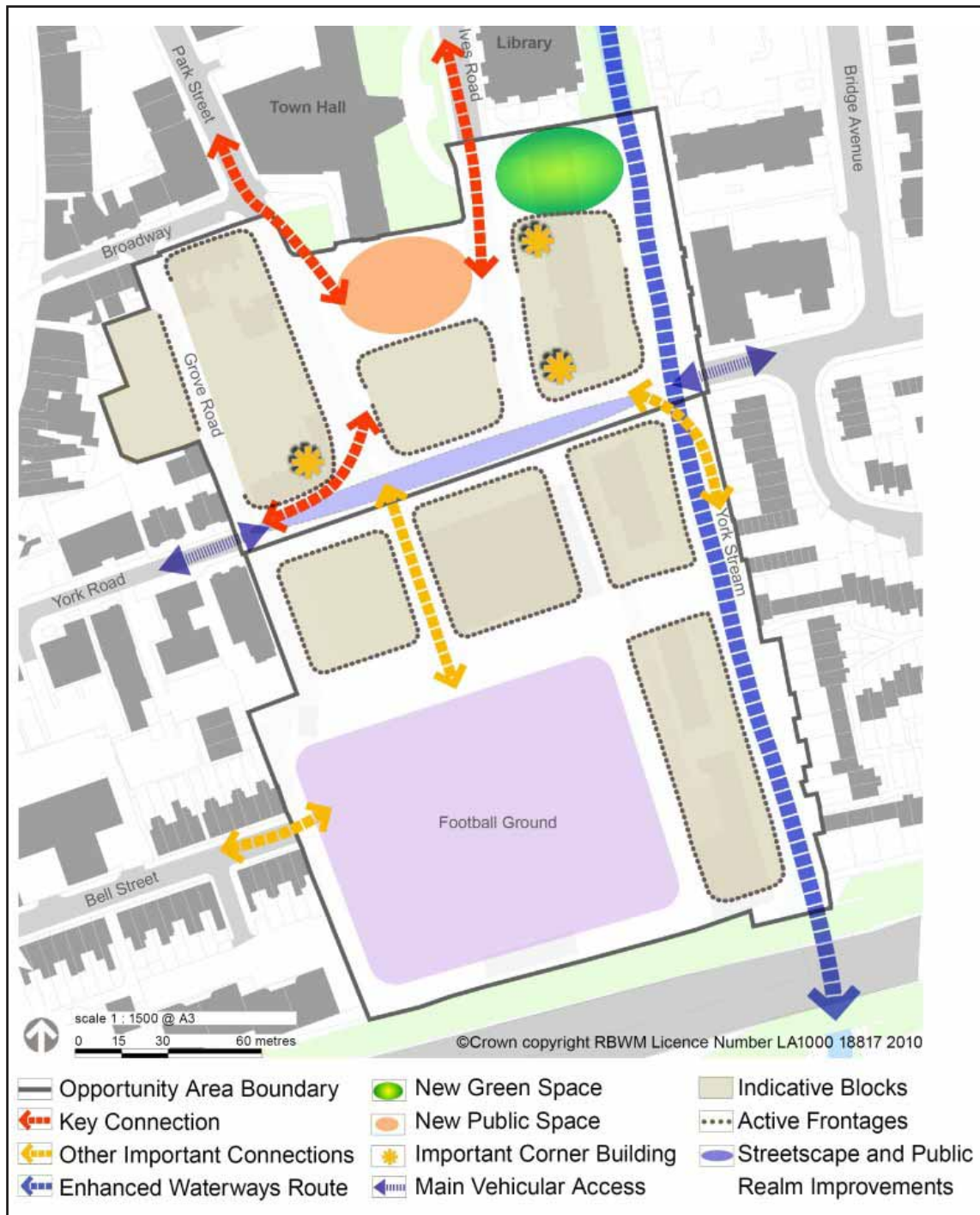


Figure 11 York Road Opportunity Area Indicative Plan

## Railway Station Opportunity Area

**7.53** Maidenhead Railway Station is a major gateway into the town centre with around 3.5 million people passing through it each year. With the planned upgrades to the Great Western Main Line and the electrification of the line to London to facilitate Crossrail, the importance of the railway station will increase. Recognising this opportunity, the station and surrounding area is allocated to allow improvements to sustainable travel through the provision of a transport interchange for rail, bus and taxi connections, upgrades to the existing station building and an enhanced station forecourt with improved pedestrian/cycle access. As an arrival point and destination, it is important to achieve high quality buildings and public realm together with a landmark building to act as a beacon of regeneration. Further, a new high quality link will be provided between the station and the town centre core to enhance accessibility.

**7.54** With the town centre expected to grow in the future, redevelopment of the Railway Station Opportunity Area provides a real opportunity to:

- Raise the profile, accessibility and attractiveness of public transport as a viable alternative to access the town centre;
- Improve the town centre's appearance through the creation of a high quality environment at the southern gateway into the town centre;
- Simplify the current traffic arrangements around the Grenfell Road – King Street intersection; and
- Enhance the town centre's accessibility through the creation of a new high quality link between the station and the town centre core.

### Policy OA 4

#### Railway Station Opportunity Area

The Railway Station Opportunity Area is allocated for office led mixed use development. Proposals for this area should comprise in the order of:

1. 15,750 m<sup>2</sup> of office floorspace (gross);
2. 50 residential dwellings (gross);
3. Train/bus/taxi interchange with drop-off and cycle parking facilities;
4. Enhanced railway station and concourse;
5. Small scale station-related retail, cafés and kiosk uses.

The Railway Station is scheduled for significant investment as part of the Crossrail programme. Development within the Opportunity Area will need to be prepared in consultation with the relevant rail authorities and be designed taking into consideration future plans for the railway station.

Development and design principles of particular relevance to the redevelopment of this Opportunity Area include:

- a. Creation of a train/bus/taxi interchange.
- b. Enhanced linkages between the interchange and core retail area, particularly improving the junction of King Street and Grenfell Road.
- c. Innovative and distinctive architecture reflective of its gateway location and varying levels across the site.
- d. High quality public realm.
- e. Replacement of existing car parking including the multi storey car park and surface car parking, and improved access to existing and future parking facilities.
- f. Enhance the setting of the clock tower.
- g. Not increase flood risk and use sustainable drainage systems to reduce surface water flood risk within the site where possible.

The policy requirements and design principles are illustrated further in Figure 12 'Railway Station Opportunity Area Indicative Plan'.

## Uses

**7.55** Proposals for redeveloping the Railway Station Opportunity Area should focus on providing a new public transport interchange together with office and housing accommodation as the primary land uses. In line with national planning guidance, a key priority of the AAP is to improve the town centre's sustainability. Central to this is the creation of a new transport interchange alongside the planned main line and Crossrail upgrades. Proposals for the redevelopment of this Opportunity Area will therefore be expected to include a transport interchange of sufficient capacity to cater for local bus and taxi services. The interchange is recognised as being of major importance to the town centre and the council will work with developers to facilitate its delivery.

**7.56** The Opportunity Area forms part of a cluster of existing office buildings focused around the train station. Given the site's accessible location and status as a major town centre gateway, it is important that these uses are maintained and enhanced. Office led mixed use proposals will therefore be encouraged where they complement the area's existing function and enhance the profile and attraction of the town centre's office market. Development proposals that result in a net loss of office floorspace within this Opportunity Area will not be supported.

**7.57** The site's proximity to the railway station, primary shopping area and Grenfell Park also make the Railway Station Opportunity Area a highly sustainable location for future housing development. Proposals will be encouraged where they incorporate an element of housing as part of an office led mixed use scheme. Where housing is proposed, applicants should have regard to the potential amenity impacts arising from the adjacent rail uses and should ensure a suitable response through the detailed design of development.

**7.58** Small scale food, beverage and station-related retail uses are also appropriate for this area, where this would complement existing and proposed uses and support improved traveller facilities and vitality. Proposals that would impact adversely on the primary shopping area and retail led proposals for the Broadway Opportunity Area will not be supported.

## Built Form

**7.59** The Railway Station Opportunity Area is a prominent town centre site forming part of the southern gateway whilst also having an extensive frontage to the A308. Development proposals for this area have the potential to enhance the town centre's appearance and identity, and should therefore positively contribute to the creation of an attractive and visually stimulating town centre environment reflective of its gateway location.

**7.60** With the planned arrival of Crossrail, the railway station and surrounding area will receive a significant uplift including a new station building and pedestrian concourse. Creating a high quality public realm is a key priority for this area. In this regard, future development proposals should, where possible, present an active frontage at ground level and be sited and designed to provide an effective interface with the planned station improvements. Access and circulation within the station area should take full advantage of the level changes across the site as well as possible alternative pedestrian access from the south.

**7.61** Taller buildings are considered appropriate for this area as they will optimise the use of brownfield land, help improve the town centre's legibility and contribute to creating a sense of arrival when entering the town centre from the south. An opportunity also exists to create a tall landmark building in this location which will act as a key reference point and visual icon for the town centre. Proposals for a landmark building will be expected to adopt an innovative and distinctive architectural approach to building design, and should recognise and respond to their surroundings, particularly Grenfell Park.

**7.62** Improving the relationship and pedestrian accessibility between the train station and the town centre is a key priority for the AAP. Central to achieving this is the creation of a more pedestrian friendly environment at the junction between the A308 and King Street. In conjunction with the Broadway Opportunity Area, development proposals for this area will therefore be expected to provide and/or contribute to public realm, junction and streetscape improvements.

**7.63** The council's investigations of flood risk indicate that the site can be developed safely.<sup>(15)</sup> However, given the site size, and its location in relation to groundwater mapping, development proposals will need to be accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment. This should include consideration of flooding from surface water and groundwater and the incorporation of appropriate design responses including sustainable drainage measures.

<sup>15</sup> See the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and related addendum for Maidenhead town centre.



## Access & Transport

**7.64** In accordance with national planning policy, a key priority for the AAP is to promote the use of more sustainable transport modes. Central to this is the future refurbishment and expansion of Maidenhead railway station and the development of a new bus and taxi interchange. To support the town centre's future sustainable growth, redevelopment proposals for this area will be expected to prioritise the improvement and delivery of new public transport facilities alongside the provision of office and housing development.

**7.65** Improving pedestrian accessibility between the station and town centre core is also a key priority. At present, access to the town centre from the railway station is compromised by the A308, which acts as a physical and psychological barrier to people arriving from the south or via the station. This is largely due to the conflicts that arise between vehicles and pedestrians needing to cross the A308.

**7.66** To improve the station's relationship with the town centre, future development proposals will be expected to contribute towards junction improvement works aimed at simplifying pedestrian access, improving safety by minimising pedestrian – vehicular conflicts, and increasing the quality and attractiveness of the area to reflect its status as a gateway to the town centre. Other improvements will also be required for this area, for example to enable future bus movements in and out of the site. Development proposals will also be expected to contribute to these improvements.

**7.67** The area is currently occupied by a number of parking facilities. Development proposals that result in the loss of existing parking facilities will be required to provide replacement car parks. Where development proposals are unable to comply with the council's parking standards and/or fail to provide the necessary replacement parking facilities, they will be required to offset these deficiencies through contributions towards necessary strategic transport infrastructure.



**Picture 25 Indicative illustration of the Railway Station Opportunity Area**



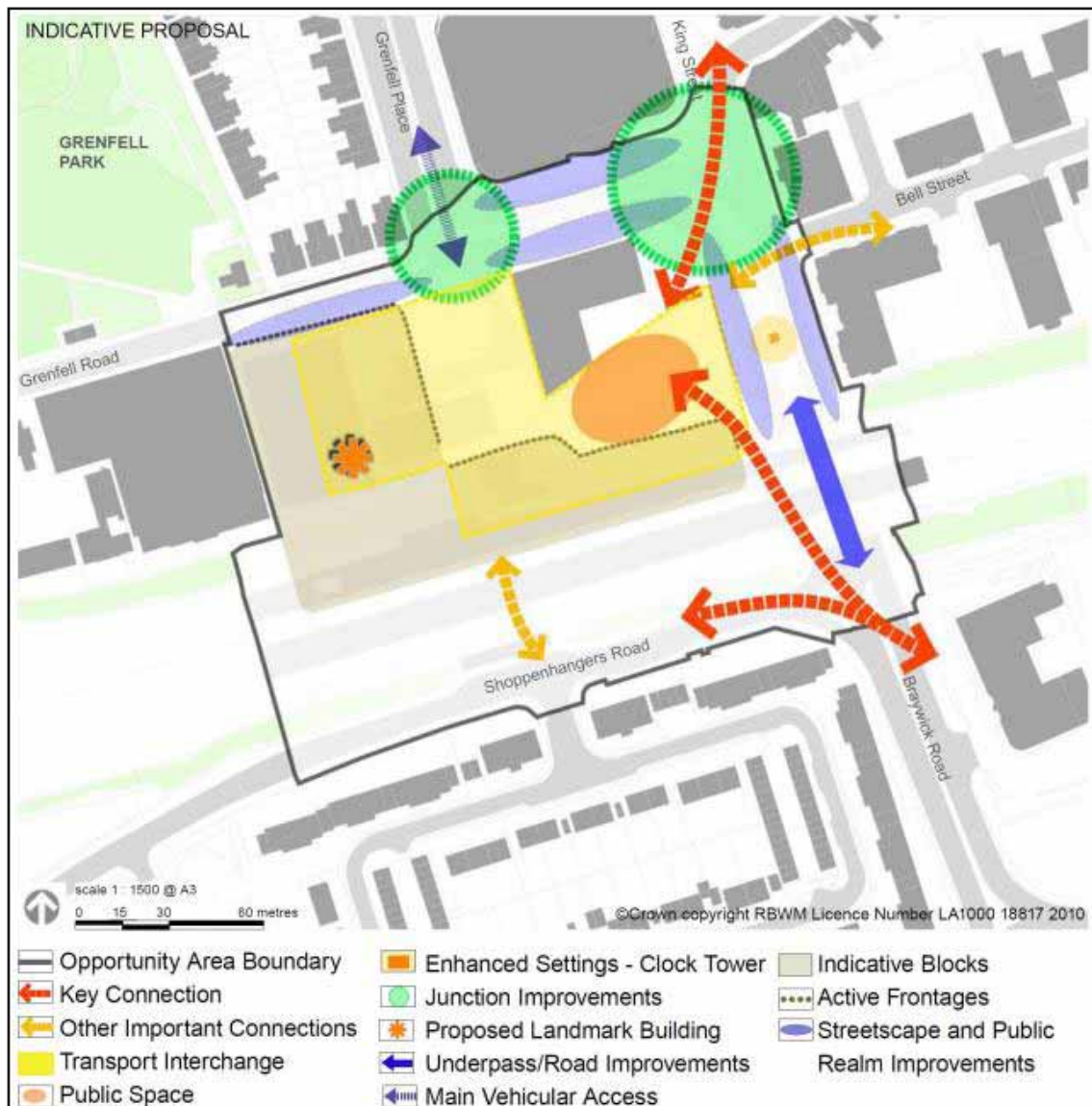


Figure 12 Railway Station Opportunity Area Indicative Plan

## High Street East / York Stream Opportunity Area

**7.68** The redevelopment of this area provides the opportunity to improve its appearance and the way it functions. It is planned to improve east to west links and provide better connections to the High Street and waterway. Along these routes will be high quality buildings and greater prominence will be given to the setting of St Mary's Church and the existing waterway as these are key focal points.

**7.69** The redevelopment of this area will:

- Improve pedestrian links through the site and to surrounding areas;
- Create a new high quality pedestrian space in the town centre for leisure uses;
- Enhance the quality of York Stream and maximise its contribution to the town centre; and
- Enhance the town centre's land use efficiency and sustainability.

### Policy OA 5

#### High Street East / York Stream Opportunity Area

The High Street East / York Stream Opportunity Area is allocated for residential and office led mixed use development. Proposals for the area should comprise in the order of:

- 100 residential dwellings (gross);
- 6,500 m<sup>2</sup> office floorspace (gross);
- Food and drink uses at ground level.

Development and design principles of particular relevance to the redevelopment of this Opportunity Area include:

- a. Effective integration with surrounding streets particularly the retail core, West Street and High Street/St Ives Road.
- b. Embracing its waterside setting, protecting the integrity, quality and biodiversity of York Stream and improving access to the waterside and allowing for pedestrian and cycle access alongside.
- c. Respect and enhance the setting of St Mary's Church.
- d. Variety in the type of dwellings.
- e. Creating new public spaces, particularly adjacent to York Stream.
- f. Not increase flood risk and seek to reduce this by steering residential development to areas of lowest flood risk within the site and by utilising sustainable drainage systems within the site design and layout to reduce the risk of surface water flooding.

The policy requirements and design principles are illustrated further in Figure 13 'High Street East / York Stream Opportunity Area Indicative Plan'.

### Uses

**7.70** Proposals for redeveloping the High Street East / York Stream Opportunity Area should incorporate housing and office accommodation as the primary land uses, together with an element of food and beverage uses provided they do not conflict with, or prejudice the delivery of, the intended primary land uses.

**7.71** The area's proximity to the town centre core, park and leisure facilities to the north, and civic quarter to the south make it a highly sustainable and attractive location for future residential development. Further residential development within this part of the town centre will complement existing uses and contribute to the vibrancy of the area.

**7.72** Office development is also prominent in this part of the town centre, with a number of office buildings located near Market Street and Providence Place. Many of these buildings are dated and will be available for redevelopment during the lifetime of the plan. With new office development planned for the West Street Opportunity Area, replacement

of existing buildings and provision of new floorspace within this Opportunity Area will complement other proposed development, preserve the ongoing role and function of the area and help create a new high quality residential and employment environment adjacent to the town centre core.

**7.73** Small scale retail and service uses may also be appropriate at ground level along designated secondary retail frontages, as active frontages will contribute to the creation of a vibrant and stimulating town centre environment. Proposals that would impact adversely on the primary shopping area or retail led proposals for the Broadway Opportunity Area will not be supported.

**7.74** An element of food and drink uses will also be supported where they would complement existing and proposed uses and support the creation of a vital and vibrant town centre environment. This is particularly the case around York Stream where there is a key aspiration to enhance and reintroduce the waterways as a key feature of the town centre.

### Built Form

**7.75** The High Street East / York Stream Opportunity Area should be redeveloped to create a new vibrant mixed use urban living and employment area. New proposals for this area should will be required to optimise the use of brownfield land to revitalise this hidden part of the town centre.

**7.76** Enhancing the waterways is a key objective for the town centre. Development proposals will therefore be expected to embrace their waterside setting and contribute to the protection and enhancement of York Stream. Central to this is the creation of a new public space which will provide a destination where people can visit, relax and enjoy the town centre. With this in mind, building designs should enhance the setting of York Stream including active ground floor frontages which support the creation of a vibrant and stimulating town centre.

**7.77** The area is not appropriate for tall buildings. Part of the Opportunity Area also falls within the town centre conservation area. When preparing development proposals, applicants should therefore give detailed consideration to the design, bulk, height, scale and massing of buildings to ensure they complement the setting of the conservation area and the listed library building. Proposals that are out of character with the area and/or result in unacceptable impacts on existing development will not be supported.

**7.78** Around half of the site falls within an area with a low probability of flooding, however the eastern side is at medium probability of flooding with small pockets at high probability. The council's investigations of flood risk, which include a sequential test, indicate that with careful design, the site can be developed safely.<sup>(16)</sup> Development proposals will need to be accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) demonstrating that the layout and design has sought to steer development towards areas at lowest risk of flooding. In particular residential development should be avoided in areas at high probability of flooding and should be steered towards area within the site at low risk of flooding. The FRA should also include consideration of flooding from surface water and groundwater, and the incorporation of appropriate design responses including finished flood levels, community routes of site access and egress, and the need to set back development from the York Stream. The use of sustainable drainage solutions is particularly important in relation to both fluvial and surface water flooding.

### Access & Transport

**7.79** At present this area is largely hidden from view and is poorly connected with the rest of the town centre. With the exception of the High Street, much of the area has limited permeability or clear access to other key town centre locations.

**7.80** To improve the prominence and accessibility of this area, development proposals will be expected to contribute to the provision of new and/or improved pedestrian access routes through the site, particularly between St Ives Road and Providence Place and from the High Street to the centre of the site surrounding York Stream. This will also include the provision of new high quality signage.

<sup>16</sup> See the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and related addendum for Maidenhead town centre.

**7.81** Proposals for the redevelopment of this Opportunity Area will be required to gain vehicular access off High Street and Market Street. To ensure a sustainable transport solution is achieved, future development proposals will be required to provide on-site car parking in accordance with the council's parking standards for town centre developments. Where proposals are unable to comply with parking standards, applicants will be expected to offset these deficiencies through planning contributions towards necessary strategic transport infrastructure.

**7.82** Partial demolition and redevelopment of Sainsbury's multi storey car park will also be required to enable the future enhancement of York Stream as a key feature of this Opportunity Area. Recognising the importance of York Stream to achieving the town centre's overall vision, the council will work with developers to bring forward this important site.



**Picture 26 Indicative illustration of the High Street East / York Stream Opportunity Area**



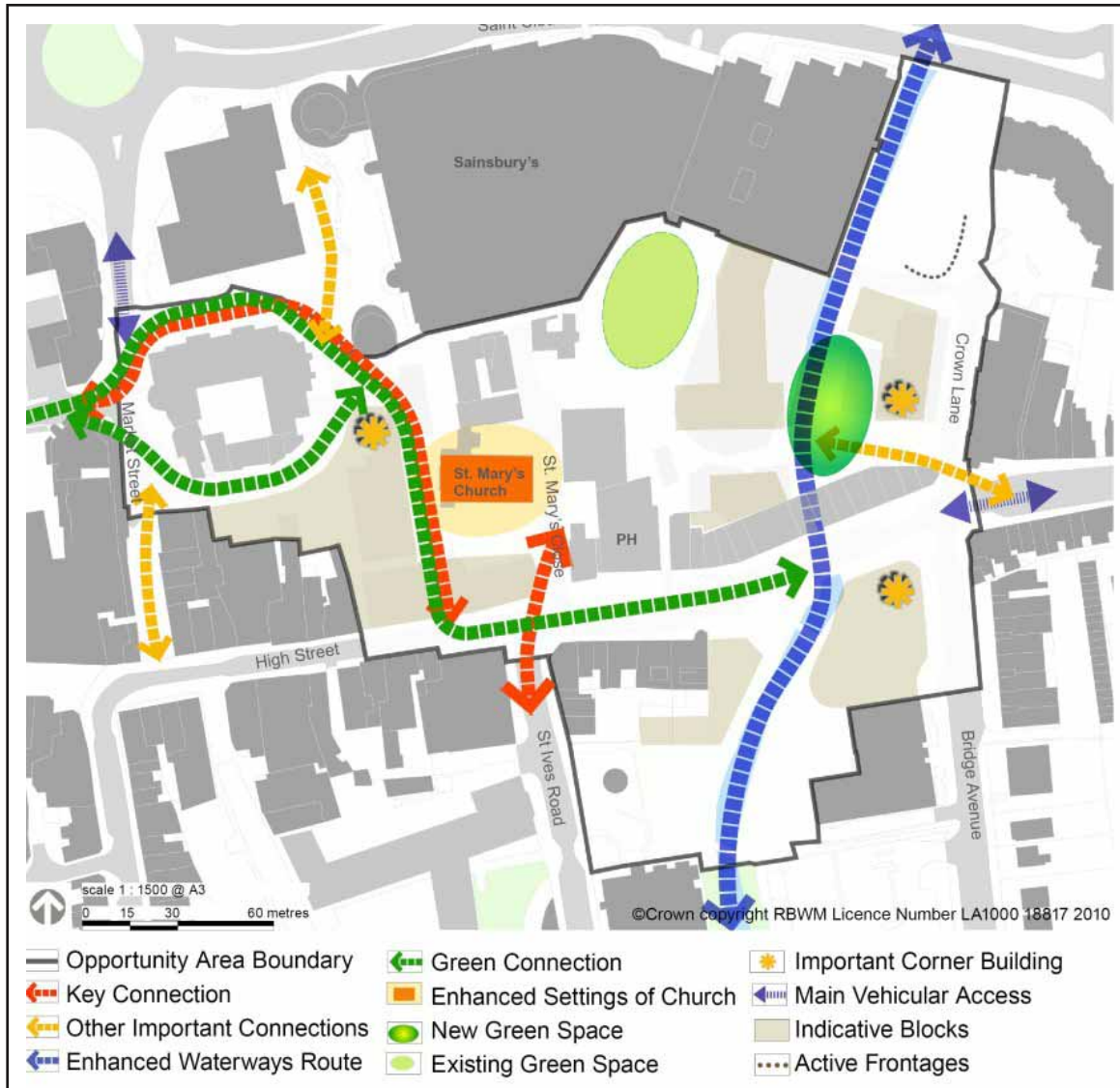


Figure 13 High Street East / York Stream Opportunity Area Indicative Plan



## Stafferton Way Opportunity Area

**7.83** This Opportunity Area forms part of a southern gateway into the town centre. On completion of the planned link road between Stafferton Way and Forlease Road/Oldfield Road, it will be on an important route around the town centre. To create the right image and identity within this area, there will be high quality buildings and improvements to streets and spaces including making a feature of the waterway, and particular attention given to creating a striking gateway. With the area's proximity to the railway station and town centre core, additional parking spaces will be provided along with improved pedestrian and cycle links.

**7.84** The redevelopment of this area will:

- Better integrate this area with the town centre and railway station;
- Provide a mix of office and commercial floorspace;
- Create a high quality gateway environment at the intersection of Stafferton Way and Braywick Road;
- Improve car parking facilities within the town centre;
- Maximise the re-use of existing brownfield land;
- Create a better quality streetscape and environment along Stafferton Way.

### Policy OA 6

#### Stafferton Way Opportunity Area

The Stafferton Way Opportunity Area is allocated for employment development. Proposals for this area should comprise in the order of:

##### Land North of Stafferton Way

- 9,000 to 15,000 m<sup>2</sup> of office floorspace (gross).
- New multi storey car park.

##### Land South of Stafferton Way

- 4,000 m<sup>2</sup> of non-office employment floorspace (gross).<sup>(17)</sup>

Development within the Opportunity Area may be brought forward through a single or phased approach, with sites potentially coming forward at separate times.

Development and design principles of particular relevance to the redevelopment of this Opportunity Area include:

- a. Enhanced linkages with the town centre through improved pedestrian access along Braywick Road, Stafferton Way and York Stream.
- b. Improved parking provision in the form of a new multi storey car park adjacent to the existing car park, and with strong links to the railway station and town centre core.
- c. High quality architecture reflective of its gateway location, with attractive building frontages to Stafferton Way and Braywick Road.
- d. Retention of the retail park in its current format.
- e. Enhance the setting and biodiversity of the York Stream.
- f. Not increase flood risk and seek to reduce this risk by steering development to areas of lowest flood risk within the site and by utilising sustainable drainage systems within the site design and layout.

The policy requirements and design principles are illustrated further in Figure 14 'Stafferton Way Opportunity Area Indicative Plan'.

17 Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order, Class B1(b), B1(c), B2, B8 and car showroom use.

## Uses

**7.85** Land north of Stafferton Way is presently occupied by office development and is in close proximity to the railway station and other office uses to the north. This part of the Opportunity Area has a history of development interest for office uses and such uses are considered more compatible with the adjacent railway line (i.e. less sensitive to potential noise and amenity impacts) whilst also providing a suitably compatible use with existing residential development to the west and south. Office led development will be encouraged on land north of Stafferton Way (excluding the retail park) where this complements the area's existing function and does not prejudice the delivery of other AAP principles and objectives.

**7.86** With Crossrail planned for completion in 2017, and substantial development planned in the town centre to 2026, a new and / or expanded multi storey car park is required to service additional demand for public car parking in the town centre and to support the increased patronage of the railway station. A new multi storey car park should therefore be provided through the redevelopment of land north of Stafferton Way.

**7.87** The existing Stafferton Way retail park is recognised as an important and successful retail facility serving Maidenhead. The emphasis is, therefore, on protecting and retaining the existing retail park while not expanding its floorspace or the range of goods offered.

**7.88** Land south of Stafferton Way has historically been used as light industrial, a car showroom and associated workshop facilities. These activities ceased in recent years and the sites have remained vacant. Since then, this part of the Opportunity Area has been the subject of development speculation with proposals being put forward for offices, retail, warehousing and community/conference facilities. In view of the site's edge of centre / out of centre location,<sup>(18)</sup> nearby adjacent uses, and its good access to the strategic road network, a more flexible approach to the site's future use for employment purposes is considered appropriate. Proposals for retail use on the site will not be supported.

## Built Form & Environment

**7.89** The Stafferton Way Opportunity Area is in a prominent location forming part of a southern gateway into the town centre. Development proposals for this area should therefore seek to positively contribute to the creation of a high quality environment which reinforces the area's gateway location and helps create a sense of arrival when entering the town centre from the south.

**7.90** Optimising the use of brownfield land is central to the creation a more sustainable and efficient town centre. The Stafferton Way Opportunity Area is not considered an appropriate location for tall buildings (i.e. higher than about 20 m). It is, however, recognised that a sufficient development quantum needs to be achieved in order to encourage the site's future redevelopment. Buildings of up to about 20 m in height will therefore be appropriate, provided they are designed to a high architectural quality, do not result in unacceptable impacts on nearby residential uses, and present attractive and visually stimulating frontages to Stafferton Way and the A308.

**7.91** A new multi storey car park should be sited on the current surface car park adjacent to the railway line and existing car parking facilities. In view of the site's proximity on the edge of a town centre gateway, the design and siting of this facility should respond to its local context and include facade treatments which help effectively screen the car park so it does not impact on the creation of a high quality environment or detract from the town centre's overall appearance.

**7.92** The Opportunity Area also has a frontage to York Stream. Enhancing and reintroducing the waterways and improving their accessibility is a key objective for the town centre. Development proposals on land adjacent to York Stream will therefore be required to embrace their waterside setting through the protection and enhancement of York Stream, and provision of new accessways where appropriate.

**7.93** The southern and eastern part of the site falls within an area with a medium probability of flooding. The council's investigations of flood risk, which include a sequential test, indicate that the site can be developed safely<sup>(19)</sup> Development proposals will need to be accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment demonstrating that the layout and design has sought to steer development towards areas at lowest risk of flooding. It should also include consideration

18 Following definitions in national planning guidance (PPS4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth), the site is considered to be edge of centre for office purposes but out of centre for retailing.

19 See the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and related addendum for Maidenhead town centre.

of flooding from surface water and groundwater, and the incorporation of appropriate design responses including finished floor levels, community routes of site access and egress and the need to set back development from the York Stream. The use of sustainable drainage solutions is particularly important in relation to both fluvial and surface water flooding.

## **Access & Transport**

**7.94** The Stafferton Way Opportunity Area is currently poorly connected with the town centre, with the railway line acting as both a physical and visual barrier. Additionally, with the arrival of Crossrail and the planned delivery of a new multi storey car park, there is a clear need to better integrate this area with the town centre and railway station, with the main focus being to improve the quality and safety of pedestrian links. New development will therefore be required to contribute to the improvement and/or provision of new pedestrian links connecting the Stafferton Way Opportunity Area with the railway station and town centre, with a particular focus on Braywick Road, Shoppenhangers Road and York Stream. New development will also be expected to contribute to the completion of the Stafferton Way Link road.

**7.95** In accordance with national planning policy, a key priority for the AAP is to promote the use of more sustainable modes of transport. With Crossrail's planned arrival in 2017, patronage of the railway station is expected to increase, while the proposed station upgrades will result in a loss of parking. To ensure the station's continued success it is important that the AAP promotes good access to the transport hub at the station, including the provision of suitable car parking facilities for commuters. Alongside this, the town centre's planned future growth will also result in increased demand for public car parking facilities.

**7.96** A new and / or expanded multi storey car park will therefore help address the loss of any existing car parks, respond to additional need generated by the town centre's growth and transport needs, and will help serve the needs of new development on land north of Stafferton Way. By virtue of the Opportunity Area's location, its existing use as a parking facility and its good access to the strategic road network, a multi storey car park is considered appropriate in this location and will be required as part of the area's future redevelopment. The council recognises this facility as being of strategic significance to the town centre and will therefore work with developers to secure its future delivery.

**7.97** Development proposals for land south of Stafferton Way will be expected to provide their own on-site parking facilities in accordance with the council's parking standards.

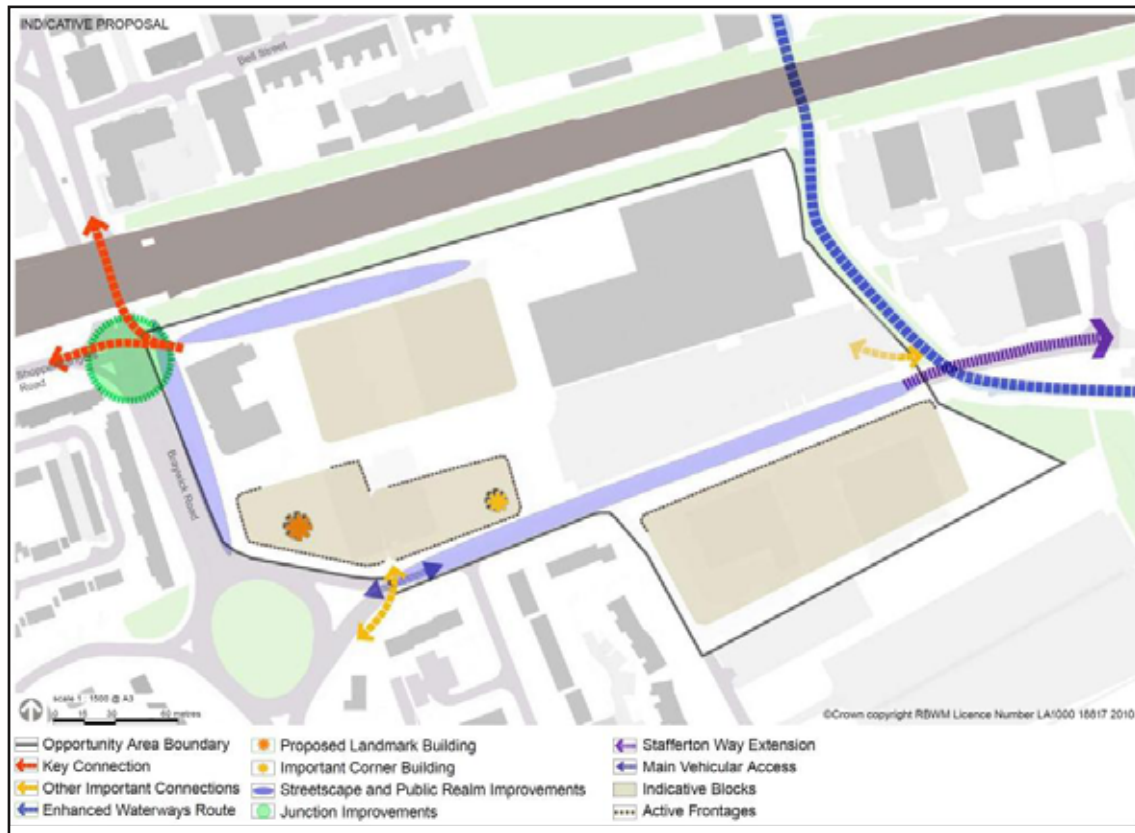


Figure 14 Stafferton Way Opportunity Area Indicative Plan





## DELIVERY & IMPLEMENTATION

**8.1** The AAP provides a comprehensive and integrated framework for change and growth of Maidenhead town centre. The council is committed to the delivery of all aspects of the AAP and recognises that in order to secure delivery it will be necessary to:

- Create the conditions required to stimulate investor confidence;
- Work with and encourage developers and landowners to bring forward their land and buildings for development/redevelopment;
- Engage other public sector stakeholders and the voluntary sector responsible for the delivery of different aspects of the AAP's preferred options;
- Promote, encourage and ensure the delivery of design excellence and innovation;
- Secure necessary highway improvements, accommodate new public transport infrastructure, enhance the public realm and improve pedestrian linkages and ensure adequate community facilities;
- Ensure the delivery of a built form and public realm of the highest design quality;
- Put in place measures to secure the long term management and maintenance of the public realm; and
- Put in place appropriate measures to ensure ongoing monitoring, consultation and involvement of the resident and business community.

**8.2** AAPs are required to have a strong focus on implementation and delivery. This section outlines the approach to managing the delivery of the AAP, including the way in which important infrastructure will be provided.

## Partnership Working

**8.3** The process of bringing about the rejuvenation of Maidenhead town centre will be challenging and complex. A number of key development sites are in different freehold ownerships, leaseholds and subject to other third party interests, and while there is considerable potential to intensify and regenerate these areas, significant public intervention is needed to realise opportunities and ensure supporting infrastructure is in place.

**8.4** To deliver the vision for the town centre and implement the AAP, the council will work in partnership with public, private and voluntary sector organisations to promote and facilitate the delivery of development proposals and infrastructure. Key partners will include:

- Residents and resident organisations;
- Community and voluntary organisations;
- Landowners and developers;
- Businesses and business organisations;
- Environment Agency;
- Homes and Communities Agency;
- Rail and bus operators;
- Housing Associations;
- Primary Care Trust;
- Emergency services; and
- Other members of the Community Partnership.

**8.5** While the council is a landowner within the town centre, the majority of development will involve land in private ownership. In preparing the AAP, discussions have been held with key landowners including Network Rail, Crossrail, ING, Telereal (BT), PRUPIM, Shanley Homes and AXA (on behalf of CIS). Feasibility work supporting the AAP has been informed by the aspirations of these landowners and at the same time has sought to identify opportunities and options which may help unlock development. The council will continue these discussions as both landowner and planning authority to ensure the delivery of the AAP.

**8.6** Engagement with the local community has been integral to advancing the AAP. The creation of PRoM to provide a wide range of business, community and political input has been central to the delivery of the AAP. This has been supported by numerous workshops and consultation initiatives to gain public feedback and inform the emerging proposals. Community involvement will continue to ensure local people remain involved in the rejuvenation of the

town centre. PRoM will continue to play a role in the implementation phase of the AAP. With a continued range of council and business interests, a slightly remodelled membership can provide a stimulus to regeneration through promotion and marketing to include provision of advice and expertise on areas such as procurement, design and economic development.

## Council Land Ownership

**8.7** The council through its offices, functions and workforce has a significant presence in the town centre. It has freehold ownership of a number of key sites including land within the Broadway, York Road and the West Street Opportunity Areas. As part of the process of stimulating investor interest and encouraging growth and rejuvenation, the council will seek to manage its land ownership to bring forward development which meets the vision and objectives for the town centre and showcases best practice.

## Compulsory Purchase

**8.8** Whilst some sites could be developed independently of one another, in some areas it is preferable for landowners, occupiers and developers to work together to unlock the potential and achieve a better solution. The council will work with landowners and developers to assist the process of rejuvenating the town centre and the delivery of the AAP. Where there is a need for site assembly, and this is not forthcoming through private treaty and negotiation, the council will consider using its compulsory purchase powers where there is a compelling case in the public interest. In such circumstances, it will be necessary for the promoter of the comprehensive development to demonstrate their ability to deliver the scheme.

### Policy IMP 1

#### Compulsory Purchase Powers

The council will use its powers of compulsory acquisition, where applicable and where there is a compelling case in the public interest, to bring forward the rejuvenation of Maidenhead town centre.

## Public Sector Funding

**8.9** The council is responsible for maintaining many of the roads, pavements and street furniture throughout the town centre. There is an ongoing programme of capital investments which includes not only repair but also ongoing enhancements. The town centre could benefit from a range of special funding programmes, primarily from public sector funding sources. The council will continue to explore and pursue public funding opportunities and, where available, will co-ordinate and prioritise secured funding in line with development phasing and use such funding to help deliver the environmental / infrastructure improvements and community / social facilities identified by the AAP.

## Infrastructure Plan

**8.10** Over the next 15 years, Maidenhead town centre is expected to undergo substantial regeneration and growth, with around 800 new homes to be delivered alongside substantial new retail (in the order of 25,000 m<sup>2</sup> gross) and office space (in the order of 72,250 m<sup>2</sup> gross). As new development comes forward existing infrastructure will need to be improved and new infrastructure provided to accommodate the planned growth and account for increased levels of activity.

**8.11** The phasing of development is critical to coordinating infrastructure delivery. It can also be used to ensure that development occurs in a logical order and in a way which delivers the most benefits to the town centre at an early stage.

**8.12** A summary of the main infrastructure projects required to support the level of growth supported by the AAP is set out below. Further details can be found in Appendix D 'Infrastructure Projects' including funding mechanisms and timings. A phasing schedule is set out in Appendix E 'Opportunity Area Phasing & Implementation'.

### Transport Interchange

**8.13** Provision of a new bus and taxi interchange adjacent to Maidenhead's railway station is a key priority for the AAP and is central to creating a more sustainable, vibrant and accessible town centre. The transport interchange will be provided as part of the Railway Station Opportunity Area, with delivery not expected to occur until the later phase in the plan period (2021 – 26).

### Community & Cultural Facilities

**8.14** The AAP aims to transform the town centre into a sustainable urban living environment supported by community, cultural and leisure facilities that foster a vibrant, active and healthy community. With the planned delivery of some 800 new dwellings, the AAP seeks to maximise the town centre's community and cultural offer through the provision of a new multipurpose facility which supports a variety of uses including small concerts, stage performances, community events, functions, conferences, gatherings and meetings. This facility will be delivered in the town centre, preferably as part of the York Road Opportunity Area.

### Public Realm

**8.15** The AAP seeks to improve the quality and provision of the town centre's public space, central to which will be the creation of an attractive public realm which supports a vibrant and stimulating town centre. To achieve this it is vital that the AAP adopts a comprehensive approach to regenerating the town centre to ensure areas not proposed for intervention are enhanced alongside identified development sites. Improvements to the town centre's public realm will be delivered throughout the plan period as development comes forward and funding is available.

### Kidwells Park Link

**8.16** The AAP seeks to optimise town centre accessibility, reduce pedestrian and vehicular conflicts, and improve links between the town centre's green spaces, particularly Kidwells Park. Creation of a new high quality pedestrian and cyclist link connecting the town centre with Kidwells Park is therefore a key priority of the AAP as it will help overcome the barrier created by the relief road, significantly improve the town centre's accessibility and green setting, and contribute to the realisation of the wider AAP vision and objectives. The new link will be provided as part of redeveloping the West Street Opportunity Area and is therefore not expected to be delivered until the later phase of the plan period.

### Waterways

**8.17** A key objective of the AAP is to enhance and introduce the use of water by strengthening links to the River Thames and enhancing the quality and setting of the town centre's waterways. The future protection, enhancement and rejuvenation of York Stream and Moor Cut is therefore a key priority for the town centre and is central to realising the AAP vision. Improvements to the waterways will be phased over the plan period as funding becomes available and key adjacent development sites are brought forward.

### Multi Storey Car Park

**8.18** Whilst a key goal of the overall AAP is to facilitate a shift in modal patterns, the council recognises that delivery of the AAP proposals will lead to an increased need for parking facilities in the town centre. With a substantial amount of development planned over the plan period, it will be necessary to provide new strategic car parking facilities to support the town centre's future sustainable growth. A multi-storey car park serving the town centre and the new Crossrail facilities is to be provided as part of the Stafferton Way Opportunity Area. Subject to securing the necessary funding, this piece of infrastructure could be delivered in the early to middle phase of the plan period.

### Highways Upgrades

**8.19** Whilst a key goal of the overall AAP seeks to facilitate a shift in modal patterns, the council recognises that delivery of the AAP proposals will place additional requirements on the town centre's road network. To ensure the road network is capable of supporting this additional load, several upgrades will be required over the course of the plan period. These include improvements to the A4 relief road, completion of the Stafferton Way link road and other junction works. Upgrades will be phased over the plan period to ensure sufficient network capacity to support the delivery of the AAP proposals.

## Planning Obligations

**8.20** In order to provide new and improved infrastructure to support the planned growth, it will be necessary for the council to coordinate funding and delivery from individual developments. Infrastructure will be secured via planning obligations<sup>(20)</sup> or by conditions attached to a planning permission, including Grampian conditions where appropriate. With regard to the AAP, individual planning obligations will fall into two categories:

- Those requirements that are essential to the development of individual sites, such as the provision of affordable housing, open space, access, car and cycle parking on site, public realm and sustainability targets; and
- Financial and other contributions to area-wide facilities and benefits considered integral to achieving the town centre's overarching Vision and Objectives, such as improvements to the transport network, strategic public realm, environmental and gateway improvements.

**8.21** The council's Planning Obligations and Developer Contributions SPD provides detailed policy on securing appropriate contributions towards certain infrastructure, services and facilities. The charges set out in the SPD are a simple mechanism that provide developers with the certainty they require regarding development costs. They also allow the council, as the organisation responsible for coordinating infrastructure delivery, to pool contributions and use them to provide the necessary strategic and local infrastructure at an appropriate stage in the development process. Whilst the SPD was adopted in December 2005, the associated formulae and projects are reviewed annually to ensure their accuracy. The SPD makes reference to the forthcoming Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), and will be subject to a more thorough review when the council adopts its own CIL. This is currently anticipated to be in 2014. From that point the relevant CIL regulations will apply to developer contributions within the town centre.

**8.22** Consistent with national planning policies, all charges imposed on new proposals within the town centre will be reasonable and proportionate to the scale of development. In preparing the AAP, the council has assessed the likely viability of the proposals under a range of scenarios in order to evaluate the potential for development to fund infrastructure costs over the plan period.

### Policy IMP 2

#### Infrastructure & Planning Obligations

Planning obligations will be used to ensure the delivery of key on-site and area-wide infrastructure required to service and mitigate the impact of development proposals. All new development within the AAP boundary will be required to contribute towards necessary infrastructure improvements.

In securing contributions, the council will be mindful of its Planning Obligations and Developer Contributions SPD. Improvements to the road network will be given priority in the negotiation of planning obligations.

You may also want to review:

- Planning Obligations and Developer Contributions SPD

## Monitoring Progress

**8.23** Once adopted it is important to ensure that each policy is meeting its objective and that targets are being achieved. A detailed monitoring framework forms part of the AAP and is provided in Appendix F 'Monitoring Framework'.

**8.24** Performance will be published each year through the Annual Monitoring Report process. Should monitoring show a policy is ineffective, consideration will be given to the underlying reasons. Where necessary, this could lead to a review of the AAP.

20 Circular 05/05: Planning Obligations and the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010.

## Risk

**8.25** It is considered that the main risks to realising the AAP vision and objectives are:

- Deliverability and viability;
- Provision of transport infrastructure; and
- Phasing of development and infrastructure.

### Deliverability & Viability

**8.26** This AAP has been prepared and submitted against the backdrop of some of the most difficult economic conditions on record. The slow down in the property market and reductions in public expenditure limit the availability of funding to support the town centre's growth, particularly in the initial years of the plan.

**8.27** Whilst it is beyond the planning system to correct the wider global economic problems, the AAP can and must help create the local conditions for renewed economic development. The AAP has been prepared in consultation with landowners and other stakeholders. In particular, individual development proposals have been assessed by indicative viability and sensitivity testing to ensure that there is a realistic prospect of proposals being deliverable during the life of the plan.

**8.28** The marrying up of planning and community objectives, design considerations, operational and infrastructure requirements and costs, together with the likely commercial attraction and viability of development proposals reduces the overall risk of delivery. Whilst individual schemes will all have their own differences and sensitivities in regard to costs and values prevailing at the time they come forward, all Opportunity Areas are considered to have a realistic prospect of being delivered over the plan period.

### Provision Of Transport Infrastructure

**8.29** The AAP proposes a number of major improvements to transport infrastructure. The key risk is securing funding to deliver the necessary improvements.

**8.30** The risk has been reduced by the development of a VISSIM multi-modal traffic model for the town centre and a VISUM model for the wider borough network, which have been validated by the Highways Agency. The models have been used to undertake the capacity analysis of the existing road network, assess the impacts of delivering growth and to prepare a strategy to improve the road network.

**8.31** These models demonstrate that the growth envisaged by the AAP can be accommodated satisfactorily, provided appropriate investment is made. The models have also informed a rational and fair approach to identifying, negotiating and securing planning obligations to help deliver future improvements.

**8.32** The transport strategy involves a number of major and costly upgrades, such as the Stafferton Way link road. It is therefore important that there is some flexibility over funding. The council is confident that the levels of planning obligations will be affordable in a phased manner over the life of the plan. Should this not be forthcoming, obligations that contribute towards highway improvements will be prioritised in accordance with Policy IMP 2 'Infrastructure & Planning Obligations'.

**8.33** In the event that insufficient funding is not available, the delivery of the Opportunity Areas will be slowed until funding becomes available.

### Phasing Of Development & Infrastructure

**8.34** Many of the town centre development sites are in private ownership or have complex leasehold arrangements. The success of the AAP requires the council and other public sector bodies to adopt a positive approach to the town centre's rejuvenation, and a willingness from the private sector to commit to significant levels of investment.

**8.35** The indicative phasing of development has taken account of a number of factors including any land assembly issues and pre-application discussion with landowners. However, implementation can be impacted by factors outside the control of developers and the council, for example the condition of the property market, the speed of the economic



recovery and construction costs. Phasing may also be impacted by delivery of schemes in surrounding areas. It will therefore be important to regularly meet with neighbouring authorities and monitor development activity within those areas, to identify potential developments which may affect the delivery of key sites.

**8.36** If one or more Opportunity Areas do not come forward for development at the intended time, the phasing schedule is likely to be slowed. If this is the case, new development proposals will be focused on smaller developments which do not compromise the wider delivery of the Opportunity Areas at a later date.

**8.37** The rate and phasing of future development in the town centre will also have an impact on the phasing of infrastructure. Through monitoring development and regular updating of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, the delivery of infrastructure can be adjusted if required. This would apply particularly to transport improvements, for example the need to upgrade the Frascati Way – Broadway junction to enable implementation of the Broadway Opportunity Area. With regard to other service infrastructure, the council will seek to engage with utility providers and share information to help ensure that necessary infrastructure improvements are delivered at the right time.

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