
Strood Waterfront

Development Brief

2018



View from former Civic Centre site across to Rochester



Contents

Executive Summary

- 1.0** Introduction
- 2.0** The Vision and Opportunity
- 3.0** Strood Waterfront Today
- 4.0** Planning and Design Principles

Appendix 1: Policy References

Appendix 2: Illustrative Masterplan

Appendix 3: Flood Defence Planning Application

Appendix 4: Transport Statement

Executive Summary

The council, its partners and other stakeholders have come together to agree a vision for a new waterfront community with a range of homes to meet the needs of Medway's population – all set within new and improved public spaces that take advantage of these sites' superb setting.



Strood Waterfront consists of a number of high value opportunity sites, which together can deliver significant positive change to Strood District Centre and the Authority as a whole. The Waterfront sites offer an exceptional opportunity that demands an exemplar of sustainable, waterfront development. Medway Council is both the local planning authority and the landowner for the majority of the Waterfront sites and now wishes to work with development partners to regenerate these sites and transform Strood's waterfront.

The Waterfront has the potential to become a stunning new face for Strood, transforming perceptions of the area and contributing to wider regeneration initiatives for the Town Centre and across the Medway conurbation.

Strood has a vibrant High Street and locational advantages including high-speed rail services into London and ease of access to Kent's countryside including the Hoo Peninsula.

Moreover, the potential of Strood's location on the sweep of the River Medway with potential south-facing views across to Rochester's cathedral and castle has yet to be realised. Despite the Town Centre's proximity to Rochester, Strood currently sees little direct benefit from Rochester's tourism and evening economy.

This Development Brief shows how Strood's Waterfront can be transformed with up to 1,600 new homes, including affordable houses and apartments, along with new businesses and public spaces. The Waterfront sites can be better connected to each other, to the Town Centre, Strood station, Medway City Estate and Frindsbury. The Development Brief is a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which sets out the council's intentions and guide planning and investment decisions for the Waterfront's regeneration.

The Waterfront sites benefit from a series of important assets:

- Proximity to the newly improved Strood rail station with both convenient local train services across Medway and High-Speed services into London St Pancras International;
- Highly sustainable location within easy access of Town Centre facilities;
- South facing aspect looking across the River Medway to the impressive historic sites of Rochester Castle and Cathedral;
- Close to Rochester's historic centre, which is a major tourist attraction.

The council has also undertaken land assembly to consolidate ownership and is investing in flood defences to prepare land for development. The council has a positive attitude to quality development that enhances Medway and attracts appropriate investment.

The Waterfront development will have a positive impact on the vitality and sustainability of Strood's District Centre, helping to diversify Strood's retail and leisure offer and attracting new markets by providing greater choice. Development will improve the public realm and make the river more accessible for all Strood's residents, it will attract investment and raise property values. The

potential for stronger connection both north and south could reinforce the sites' assets, linking to the North Kent Marshes, Upnor, Temple Marsh and the Medway Valley.

In recognition of the Waterfront's unique assets, Medway Council has existing and emerging policy and guidance to facilitate the aspirations for high quality development of this exceptionally well positioned waterfront site with outstanding views. Medway Council's Development Plan policy is set out in the current 2003 Local Plan and the emerging Medway Local Plan.

Within this policy background, this SPD sets out a clear and positive policy context with principles to guide development proposals.

An Illustrative Masterplan has been prepared as part of this Development Brief to test development parameters, the deliverability of development and the likely impacts. In doing so, a bespoke hypothetical scheme has been tested with the consideration of transport issues (IBI Group March 2017). This process has informed the guidance captured in this document.

In preparing this Development Brief, the council has consulted residents, businesses and other stakeholders.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Medway Council's Local Plan Policy

This Strood Waterfront Development Brief has been prepared as an update and expansion on the council's adopted 2006 Strood Riverside Development Brief SPD. The 2018 Development Brief seeks to achieve the Strood Waterfront vision by reinforcing the planning framework and providing more detailed guidance to inform any future planning application for these sites.

The council's development plan consists of the 2003 Local Plan and various supplementary planning documents. The Local Plan provides the policy basis for the various supplementary planning documents including the 2006 Strood Waterfront Development Brief and the 2009 Strood Town Centre Masterplan, both of which have relevance to this development brief. More specifically, Medway Local Plan 2003 policies S1, S2, S3, H1, and H3 relate.

Strood Riverside was identified in the adopted Medway Local Plan (May 2003) as a potential development opportunity designated between two allocated housing sites (Canal Road and Commissioners Road) with the capacity for a total of approximately 200 dwellings. Following the Local Plan adoption it was felt that the Local Plan significantly underestimated the true development potential and strategic importance of the area. This resulted in the preparation of the Strood Riverside Development Brief 2006. In 2009 the Civic Centre and the Strood Riverside Development Brief areas were considered as part of the 2009 Strood Town Centre Masterplan.

National and local planning policy objectives have changed since the adoption of these SPD's and therefore planning policy for the sites requires a further update to take forward development and ensure compliance with these changes. This document (Strood Waterfront Development Brief 2018) will provide an update to replace the Strood Riverside Development Brief and inclusion of the former Civic Centre site. Inclusion of the former Civic Centre site provides a wider development context and the opportunity to enhance connections from the riverfront to the defined Town Centre to the north.

The council is currently preparing its new Local Plan, which will include site allocations and development management policies when finalised. Once adopted, the new Local Plan will supersede the 2003 Local Plan. It is therefore pertinent that linkage to the emerging Local Plan is also clear, which may include a designation on a proposals map and accompanying development management policies. Guidance contained in this

document is therefore subject to change following the adoption of the new Local Plan.

1.1.1 Emerging Local Plan Key Issues

Medway benefits from a stunning landscape setting, rich heritage, high-speed train links, universities, a strategic location in the Thames Gateway, and a diverse offer of services and businesses. However there are areas which need addressing. Medway's economy and skills levels are weaker than competing areas. There are marked inequalities in health, with life expectancy shorter for our residents. Medway is often unfairly associated with negative perceptions. The town centres are not always seen as attractive destinations and vibrant hubs for community activities. Changes in the economy and how people respond to retailing has changed significantly, which requires a different response to the traditional. The scale of growth Medway is experiencing is challenging and will place increasing pressure on infrastructure, services and facilities, and open spaces.

A key task for the Local Plan is to manage growth to achieve a more successful, attractive Medway with healthier communities that share in the benefits of development. Development should be seen to deliver benefits – better housing for local people, higher quality jobs, new services and facilities such as schools and parks. Growth can boost the economy, improve our town centres, turn derelict and underused land into attractive modern places to live, work and visit, and achieve the city scale facilities that Medway warrants.

Growth does not mean losing the character of the area. Medway's history, countryside and the river provide the context for future development. The natural and built environment defines Medway, and will be at the core of the Local Plan. The development strategy must show how we can provide land for housing, jobs, infrastructure and services, whilst protecting important environmental and heritage assets, retaining and

strengthening the green infrastructure links for people and wildlife.

There has been much change since the 2003 Local Plan, which has relevance for Strood, i.e. introduction of HS1, demolition of the Civic Centre, changes in retail patterns, changes in the economic climate, and increased housing need. The Local Plan will support the regeneration of Strood to capitalise on its stunning location overlooking Rochester Castle and Cathedral, its accessibility to high speed rail and motorway links and the availability of redevelopment sites. Redevelopment of the sites presents an opportunity to address many economic and social issues whilst making the most of the waterfront, through environmental enhancements and strengthened green infrastructure links and public realm.

1.1.2 Background to Regeneration

Strood Riverside was first identified as a strategic development project in 1995 and a set of development guidelines were approved by the then Rochester upon Medway Council in 1996 to guide future proposals. At this time, public funding was invested in the adjacent housing development off Canal Road using social housing grant, a scheme that has since been delivered (Kingswear Gardens Estate).

The council also began to acquire land and made a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) on the grounds of regeneration. The former scrap yards and car breakers on the riverside were acquired, a new river wall constructed and the Watermill Gardens open space laid out. The open space was intended to serve not just the first phase of housing, but also the site to the north when it was developed.

A Development Brief was adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in September 2006 to reinforce masterplan proposals for the site, and to elaborate upon key planning policy guidance including the Local Plan and the Medway Waterfront Renaissance Strategy.

The 2006 Development Brief has acted as a starting point for this Development Brief, and the analysis required to update the Development Brief. We have retained previous analysis where appropriate, however new analysis has been undertaken for the sites and where more recent data is available, baseline information has been updated.

1.2 Strategic Context and Planning Guidance

1.2.1 Corporate Guidance

The 2003 Local Plan and the emerging Local Plan fit into the context of a series of strategies, documents and plans that map out ambitions for Medway to achieve its potential as a successful vibrant modern city, that celebrates its heritage and close links to the river and countryside.

Council Plan

The Council Plan 2016-2021 sets out three key priorities for the area:

- A place to be proud of
- Maximising regeneration and economic growth
- Supporting Medway's people to realise their potential

The Council Plan promotes Medway as a great place to work, live, learn and visit, supported by strategies for culture, tourism and regeneration. The council priorities provide a strong basis for the Local Plan in planning positively for Medway's needs, boosting the economy, improving access, delivering new homes, improving residents' health and wellbeing, and caring for the environment.

Medway 2035, Regeneration Strategy

Medway has a long standing commitment to regeneration, and a number of strategies, development briefs and masterplans have informed the transformation of the waterfront and urban areas over recent decades. As the regeneration programme continues, strategies and plans need to be refreshed. A new Regeneration Strategy Medway 2035, set to be operational by 2019, is drafted and out for publication alongside the emerging Local Plan. This shares the emerging evidence base and strategic objectives, and will promote and support the realisation of the ambitions set for Medway's successful growth by 2035.

1.2.2 Planning Policy

Whilst not a comprehensive list of relevant policies, the following highlights those policies in the 2003 Local Plan that will have the most influence on the use and form of development at Strood Waterfront. The emerging Local Plan policies will also need to be taken into account as it gains weight through the stages of preparation and at adoption, at which point it will replace the 2003 Local Plan.

MEDWAY LOCAL PLAN 2003

- Policy S1 (Development Strategy)
- Policy S2 (Strategic Principles)
- Policy S3 (River Medway)
- Policy H1 (New Residential Development)
- Policy H3 (Detail on the council's Affordable Housing Requirements)
- Policy H10 (Provision of a Range and Mix of House Types and Sizes)
- Policy BNE1 (General principles for built development) Policy BNE2 (Amenity Protection)
- Policy BNE3 (Noise Standards)
- Policy BNE4 (Energy Efficiency)
- Policy BNE6 (Landscape Design)
- Policy BNE8 (Security and Personal Safety)
- Policy BNE22 (Environmental Enhancement)
- Policy BNE23 (Contaminated Land)
- Policy BNE24 (Air Quality)
- Policy L3 (Existing Open Spaces)
- Policy L4 (Provision of Open Space in New Residential Developments)
- Policy L11 (Riverside Path and Cycleway)
- Policy T3 (Provision of Safe and Convenient Footpaths)
- Policy CF2 (Provision of New Community Facilities)
- Policy CF13 (Flood Risk)

FUTURE MEDWAY - EMERGING MEDWAY LOCAL PLAN

Medway Council is preparing a refreshed Local Plan, which has been through two stages of consultation, 'Issues & Options' and 'Development Options' (Regulation 18), which took place in Jan/Feb 2016 and Jan/Feb 2017 respectively. The council has consulted on the latest version of the Local Plan in Spring 2018, with the aim to reach adoption by 2020.

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS

A BUILDING HEIGHT POLICY FOR MEDWAY (2006)

In 2006, the council adopted a Building Height Policy for Medway as a Supplementary Planning Document. Part 1 is a general guide policy on higher buildings laying down a range of detailed criteria on design quality. Part 2 is a policy on locations, identifying where higher buildings might/might not be appropriate. Part 2 also illustrates key strategic views that need to be protected.

The key elements of the guidance that relate to Strood Waterfront are that new higher buildings should be at appropriate locations, of first-class design quality and enhance the qualities of their location and setting. Higher buildings are advocated as a means of achieving

an intensity of development that encourages a mix of uses and facilities. The policy also requires that buildings that stand out as landmarks have active uses at ground floor level.

MEDWAY COUNCIL INTERIM RESIDENTIAL PARKING STANDARDS (2010)

In 2010, the council adopted an interim document for Residential Parking Standards. This document stipulates the minimum number of car and cycle parking spaces required per dwelling, dependent on size. The guidance recognises that reductions to the standard can be considered for developments within an urban area, provided that good links to sustainable transport are available and day to day facilities are within an easy walking distance.

NATIONAL HOUSING STANDARDS

Medway Council has adopted National Housing Standards for internal residential space standards.

The document provides developers, landowners and their advisors with guidance on the main principles and minimum layout and space standards that are expected in the design of new housing and in the conversion of existing properties. The Standards apply to proposals that include new dwellings of any tenure.

1.2.3 Wider Guidance

MEDWAY LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 2011-2026 (2011)

This SPD is the current transport plan for Medway and aims to address wider social, economic, and environmental challenges for the area.

KENT AND MEDWAY GROWTH AND INFRASTRUCTURE FRAMEWORK (2015)

The Kent and Medway Growth and Infrastructure Framework provides a collaborative approach to growth and infrastructure planning for the region and has been developed with Medway Council and Kent's twelve district authorities.

MEDWAY WATERFRONT RENAISSANCE STRATEGY 2004

This place-based strategy provides a 20-year framework for the regeneration of 14 key sites along the River Medway corridor. The Waterfront sites fall within the Strood Riverside and Strood Centre quarters, which, have the objective of "building waterfront communities around a distinctive centre". The ambitions have been continued into the Medway 2035 regeneration strategy.

OTHER RELEVANT GUIDANCE

- Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2012 - 17
- Medway Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment 2011
- Medway Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 2006 (updated 2011)
- Medway Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2015
- Medway Surface Water Management Plan 2016
- Medway SuDS Masterplanning Document 2013
- Medway Air Quality Planning Guidance 2016
- Dementia Friendly Communities the Built Environment Guidance 2006

1.3 The Status and Purpose of this Document

The 2018 Strood Waterfront Development Brief SPD is adopted by the council as an SPD. This SPD will provide a vision and guidance for the determination of any future planning application for the site; this updated SPD will therefore be used by Medway Council for development management purposes and will also be a key document when the council markets the development site opportunity.

There are four specific objectives in preparing a Development Brief for Strood Waterfront:

- Delivery of the vision and ambitions for the regeneration of Strood as part of a wider urban development strategy.

- Amplify and update the 2003 Local Plan policy applicable to the site. There have been a number of significant changes in national and strategic planning guidance since the site was originally allocated for development and current expectations for the redevelopment of Strood Waterfront exceed those envisaged within the Local Plan.
- Facilitate and shape the redevelopment of Strood Waterfront to ensure its long-term physical, economic, social and environmental regeneration.
- Establish a coherent set of land use and design parameters to guide the future regeneration of the site. These guidelines seek to provide a deliverable strategy that will encourage private sector investment.

The development principles outlined in the council's 'Vision' for Strood Waterfront have formed the basis of an Illustrative Masterplan to test and confirm the council's aspirations for these sites can be translated into deliverable development. The Illustrative Masterplan is described in Appendix 2.

This Development Brief has been developed in consultation with key stakeholders and therefore represents a robust and endorsed vision for Strood Waterfront. It provides the parameters as to the scale and mix of future development and the standards for future design quality.

1.4 Format of the Development Brief

For convenience, the SPD for Strood Waterfront consists of separate volumes:

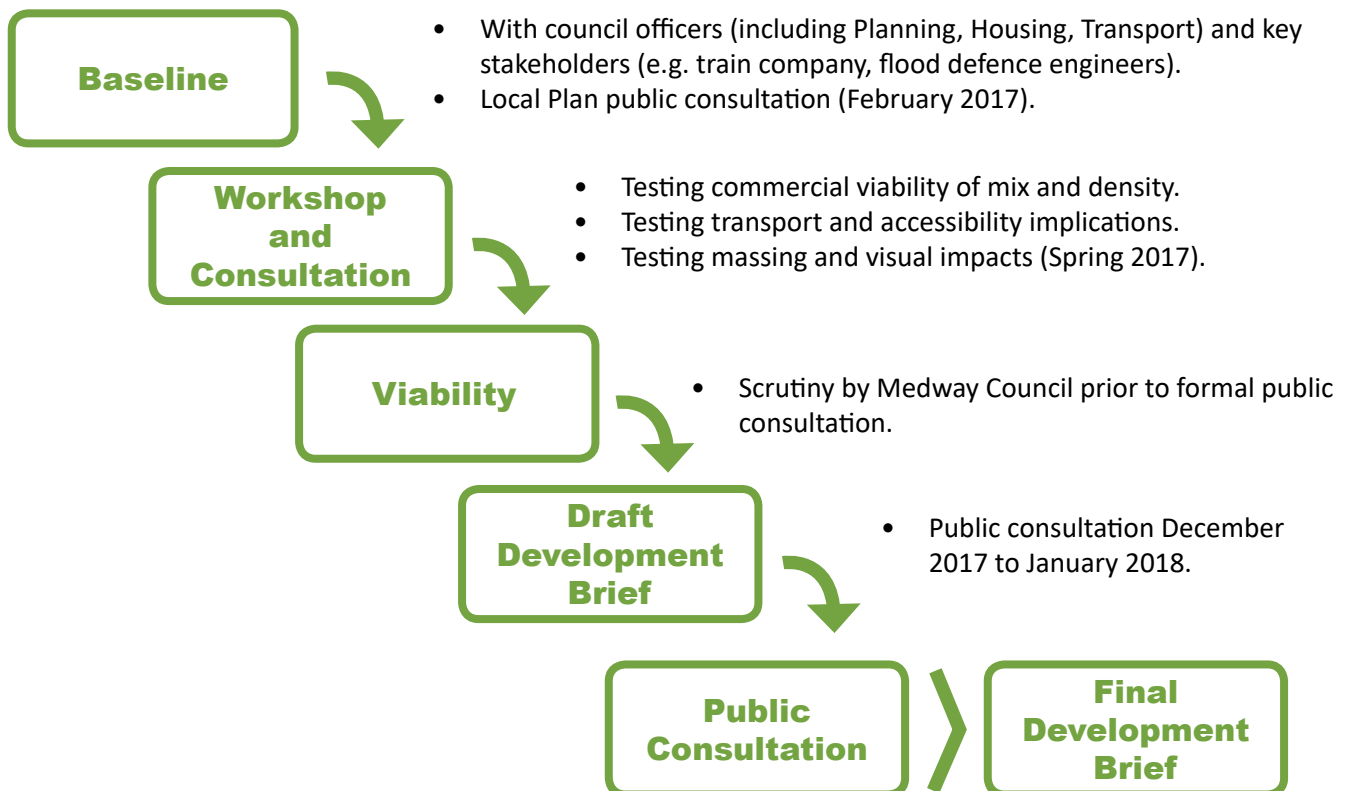
1. The Supplementary Planning Document (this document);
2. Appendices consisting of technical reports informing the preparation of the SPD:
 - Policy References
 - Illustrative Masterplan
 - Flood Defence Planning Application
 - Transport Statement

These documents are available on the council's website. Hard copies are also available from Medway Council upon request.

This document seeks to establish a clear and positive policy context in which the redevelopment objectives for the area can be seen as achievable and desirable.

1.5 Process for Preparing this Document

This Development Brief has been prepared through a rigorous process of drafting and testing as outlined in the diagram below:



Review of consultation comments and amendment to draft SPD as necessary prior to adoption by Medway Council, Summer 2018.

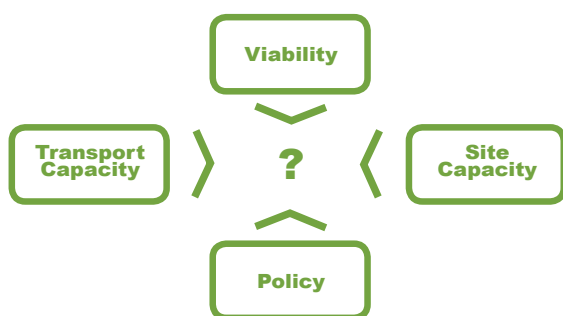
Option Testing

To confirm the deliverability of Strood Waterfront, the emerging, non-detailed options for development quantum and mix have been tested against:

- Council policy
- Accessibility and impacts on transport systems including highways
- Commercial viability

An Illustrative Masterplan was developed to test project site capacity including:

- Mix of uses and housing types including houses and apartments;
- Impacts of height and massing on key views;
- Provision of open spaces; and
- Car parking provision.



The conclusions from this testing have determined that a viable development meeting the council's policies and aspirations for the sites is deliverable.

1.6 Issues Raised as Part of Medway Local Plan Public Consultation

In association with consultation on the emerging Local Plan in February 2017, Medway Council consulted with residents, businesses and other stakeholders to identify local issues to inform the emerging planning and design principles for Strood Waterfront. Respondents emphasised the following issues:

- Improve access to Strood station and sense of arrival.
- Existing road capacity and impact of new homes.
- Improvements to the road network in front of Morrisons.
- Integration of existing Canal Road bus route.
- Majority of Strood residents said the best view is of the white cliff and All Saints Church, Frindsbury Hill.
- Maintaining existing residents' view, especially Wingrove Road.
- Boundary treatment to Cranmere Court and Wingrove Road.

- Residents are supportive of river walk/cycle route connecting to Frindsbury Hill.
- Residents are supportive of development of the former Civic Centre site, recognising that it is currently underutilised.
- Residents from wider Strood also supported Strood Waterfront.
- Residents are in support of regenerating Kingswear Gardens, third-party land on Canal Road and Strood Pier.

In addition, local stakeholders that have been consulted regarding flood risk mitigation measures include:

- Southeastern Rail
- Rochester Bridge Trust
- Environment Agency



Figure 1: Strood Station Approach



Figure 2: All Saints Church viewed from Commissioner's Road

Local people will be provided further opportunities to comment as more detailed proposals are brought forward through planning applications.

Any planning application for the Waterfront sites must be prepared with public consultation consistent with Medway's Statement of Community Involvement.

2.0 The Vision and Opportunity

The vision for Strood Waterfront is for the creation of a residential-led development with appropriate supporting commercial uses including leisure and food/drink opportunities to enliven street frontages and public spaces.

Strood Waterfront represents a significant brownfield redevelopment opportunity, the delivery of which has the potential to assist the wider regeneration of the town. Fundamental to this being achieved is addressing the flood risk issues in this area.

Once protected, these sites will be transformed into an area of prime, high quality residential land with potential for premium housing, offering fantastic views and access to the River Medway, Rochester Castle and Rochester Cathedral. Workspace at Watermill Wharf is the first step at creating this high quality environment. The council is investing in flood defence improvements for the former Civic Centre and Riverside sites.

The council has prepared flood risk mitigation measures for the first two phases, the details of which form a planning application in 2017, Reference: MC/17/1172 & MC/17/1173 (appended as Appendix 3). It is the council's intention that agreed measures are implemented to prepare the sites for development.

Development at Strood Waterfront is a vital and complementary component to other regeneration projects elsewhere within Medway. Through early delivery, it is envisaged that the sites will set benchmarks for good quality urban design and architecture.

New development will provide housing and other benefits for local people. The Waterfront development will have a positive impact on the vitality and sustainability of Strood's town centre, helping to diversify Strood's retail and leisure offer and attracting new markets by providing greater choice.

New and improved linkages will better integrate development with the Town Centre and help consolidate the High Street shopping south of Station Road. Development will contribute to attracting investment and uplifting property values.

Our vision is based on not just transforming the Waterfront sites but also the relationship of Strood and its Town Centre to the wider Medway conurbation, better linking Strood's High Street, the River and the residential areas east and west of the Town Centre including the Frindsbury Conservation Area. Waterfront development will improve the public realm and make the river more accessible for all Strood's residents and open views to the River and to landmarks including the Castle, Cathedral and All Saints Church on its iconic hilltop setting.

The inclusion of the former Civic Centre site within the Strood Waterfront development area provides a further development context. The former Civic Centre site has the opportunity to enhance connections from the riverfront to the defined Town Centre to the north. The former Civic Centre site provides the opportunity to create lively daytime uses including cafes.

Moat Homes and Orbit Homes aspire to bring forward the redevelopment of the Kingswear Gardens estate.

The Vision for Strood Waterfront is a part of redefining Strood within the wider city of Medway - its role and character, so as to play a stronger role as one of Medway's best residential locations, benefitting from excellent local shopping, transport and facilities, and a first class setting by the river.

2.1 The Opportunity

The Sites and their Status, Location, Area and Access

1. Former Civic Centre – Site Area: 3 Ha. This brownfield site is situated west of the A2 High Street and is currently used as a surface car park. Medway Council has identified the site as a residential-led, mixed-use regeneration site to meet the high demand for housing. The site contains the following uses, which will be retained:

- Pumping station
- CCTV facility
- Ambulance Service crew accommodation building

2. Land in third-party ownership including properties on Canal Road, the High Street and land adjacent to Strood railway station is also included within this Development Brief to ensure that Strood Waterfront contributes to the wider regeneration of Strood town centre. The station has undergone improvements to facilities, including a new station building. The station site and other third-party land also offer opportunities for public realm improvements and, in conjunction with Medway Council, further development opportunities. Medway Council encourages appropriate regeneration opportunities along the High Street including creating additional routes through to the former Civic Centre site. Medway Council will hold further consultation with stakeholders as proposals are brought forward.



Map 1: Waterfront Sites



Figure 3: Kingswear Gardens Estate



Figure 4: Watermill Gardens with Frindsbury visible in distance



Figure 5: Riverside Tavern and Strood Riverside



Figure 6: Former Civic Centre Site

3. Watermill Wharf – Site Area: 0.2 Ha. Watermill Wharf is owned by Medway Council and has been developed to deliver 15 office and 18 storage units aimed at local small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and start-up businesses. The development is a satellite of the Innovation Centre Medway near Junction 3 of the M2.
4. Kingswear Gardens – Site Area: 1.5 Ha. Kingswear Gardens is situated adjacent to Strood Riverside and Strood railway station and is currently owned by Moat Homes and Orbit Homes, who are working with Medway to regenerate the site. The site is currently in use as the Kingswear Gardens Estate.
5. Watermill Gardens – Site Area: 0.9 Ha. Public open space including sport and play facilities. The council owns the freehold of part of the site and a long lease on the areas outside of the council's ownership.
6. Strood Riverside – Site Area: 5.9 Ha. Partially industrial in use. The site is owned by the council following a series of compulsory purchases. The Riverside site wraps around the Riverside Tavern public house.
7. The Riverside Tavern is in private ownership and not included in this Development Brief. This Development Brief assumes that the Tavern will continue as a public house.
8. An additional area of land in the council's ownership / long leasehold lies south of Jane's Creek. This land is currently considered to be unsuitable for development due to access constraints and flood risk. However, open space uses may be appropriate if more direct pedestrian access can be provided across Jane's Creek.

2.2 Delivering Change

Workspace at Watermill Wharf is complete and represents the start of the wider regeneration programme envisaged for Strood Waterfront. Southeastern Trains with Network Rail have undertaken the modernisation of facilities at Strood station including a new ticket hall.

Medway Council will work with neighbouring landowners including Moat, Orbit, Network Rail / Southeastern and the Rochester Bridge Trust to deliver regeneration in a phased programme of development.

Moat Homes' and Orbit Homes' ambition is to bring forward redevelopment of Kingswear Gardens, therefore this land has been included within the masterplan.

Third-party land along the southern side of the High Street adjacent to the former Civic Centre site offers potential for regeneration improvements in the longer term including additional or improved connections between the former Civic Centre site and the High Street.

To optimise development sites and deliver comprehensive regeneration, the council wishes to see development of land on Canal Road, which is currently in third-party ownership.

2.3 Related Proposals

The following projects are ongoing (June 2018) at time of adoption:

- Commissioner's Road – planning permission for new homes and access from Commissioner's Road.
- Strood Waterfront Flood Defence Works – Planning application for construction of flood defences including realignment of Canal Road and Station Approach.

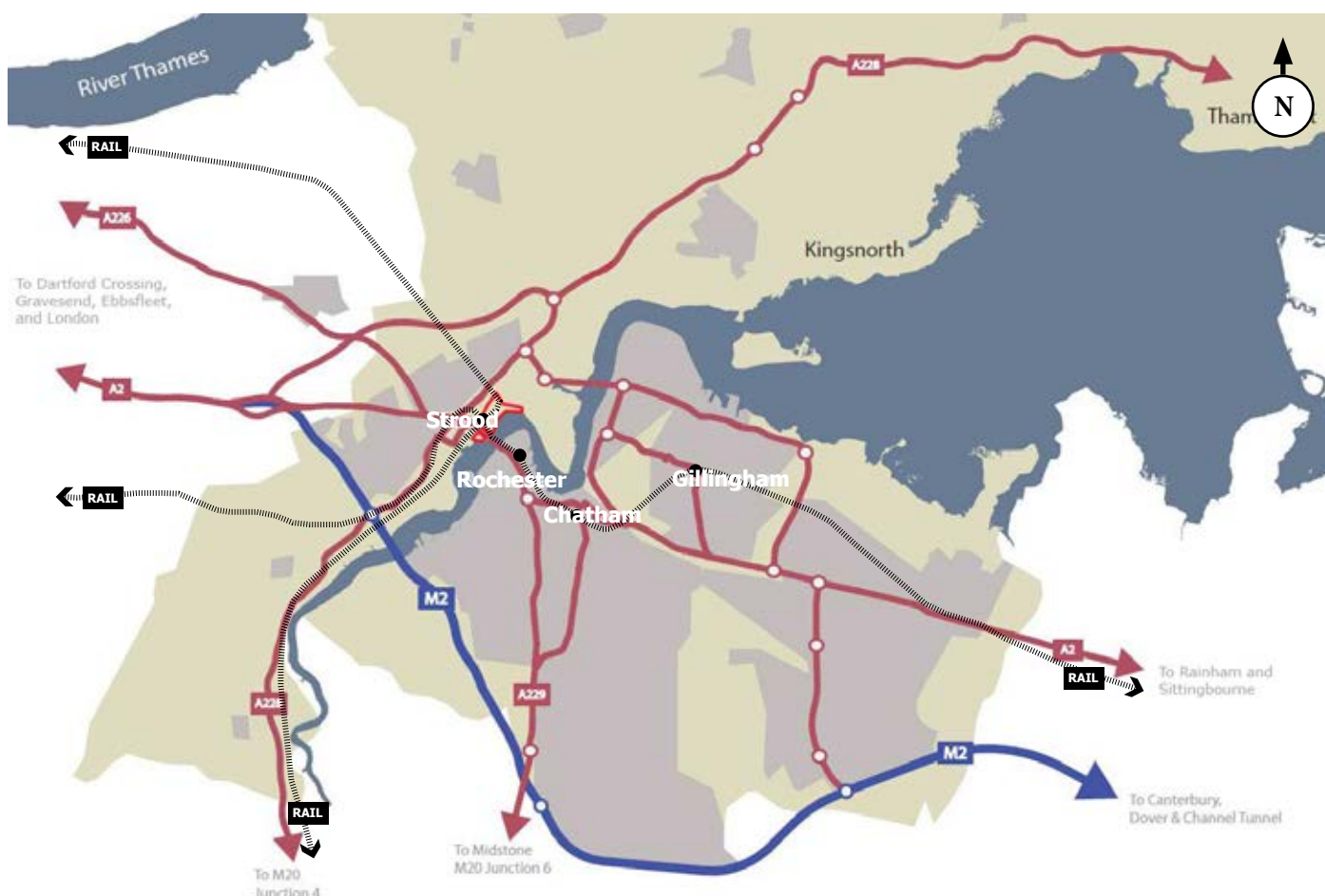
The council is undertaking the flood defence works to enable future mixed use residential led development on the former Civic Centre and Strood Riverside sites. This presents the opportunity for a future strategic flood defence scheme.

Together, these sites represent a connected sweep of Strood Waterfront, totalling over 11 Ha of development potential and can provide better links both along the riverside and to Strood; its town centre and its railway station.

3.0 Strood Waterfront Today

3.1 Strategic Importance

- Strood Waterfront is located within the Thames Gateway, an area identified by the Government as an important growth area in which the focus is upon the speed of delivery of development projects whilst ensuring sustainable and well-integrated communities. The sites provide a unique opportunity to promote local ownership for future site development, with a prime location on the waterfront, alongside an established residential area, in close proximity to a well connected rail station, bus links and Strood and Rochester town centres.
- The Government has invested significant capital resources in Strood to bring forward development and to increase the supply of housing. Investment includes a £9m Local Growth Fund (LGF) scheme in the Strood town centre, Homes England funding for the Riverside site and will include £3.5m LGF for the former Civic Centre site for flood protection works.
- The Riverside site is adjacent to a mainline railway station with frequent (every 30 minutes off-peak London service) and high-speed services to London (32 minutes) and East Kent (72 minutes) and the only rail link from Medway to the south, serving Maidstone and Tonbridge and Malling. This is a key asset and plays a significant role in shaping the development proposals. Strood is also the first point of arrival into Medway. These sites therefore have the potential to create a community and environment that appropriately recognises and emphasises this key location and its advantages.



Map 2: Strategic Location Plan

- The sites have excellent road links via the M2 to North Kent including Ebbsfleet International and the Bluewater Shopping Centre, London and the M25/Dartford river crossing, and via the M20 to Ashford and Folkestone, and the Channel crossings. In April 2017 the Secretary of State for Transport announced the preferred route for a new Lower Thames Crossing under the Thames, east of Gravesend and Tilbury, which will seek to improve access to Essex and relieve congestion at the Dartford crossing.
- The sites are directly adjacent to the River Medway and located within a 5-10 minute walking distance of Strood town centre and 10-15 minute walking distance from Rochester High Street.
- It is close to areas with significant history and character and has panoramic views across the river to historic Rochester, including outstanding outlooks over the castle and cathedral, and down the river towards Chatham.
- Strood Waterfront's visibility and position in relation to Rochester and Historic Chatham Dockyard makes its development influential as part of the wider economy, character and future of the Medway area.
- There is therefore the opportunity to deliver a highly sustainable development, and establish a modern quality character to Strood.

3.2 *Land Form and Topography*

Strood Waterfront is located on the north bank of the River Medway and lies within the historic floodplain between ridges of higher ground to the north and east, and the historic settlement of Rochester to the south. The Waterfront sites are effectively flat and require improvements to flood defences to facilitate development. Former chalk quarries around Frindsbury have left a backdrop of dramatic chalk cliffs. The Waterfront sites lie at a bend in the River Medway and the confluence with Jane's Creek, a smaller tributary.

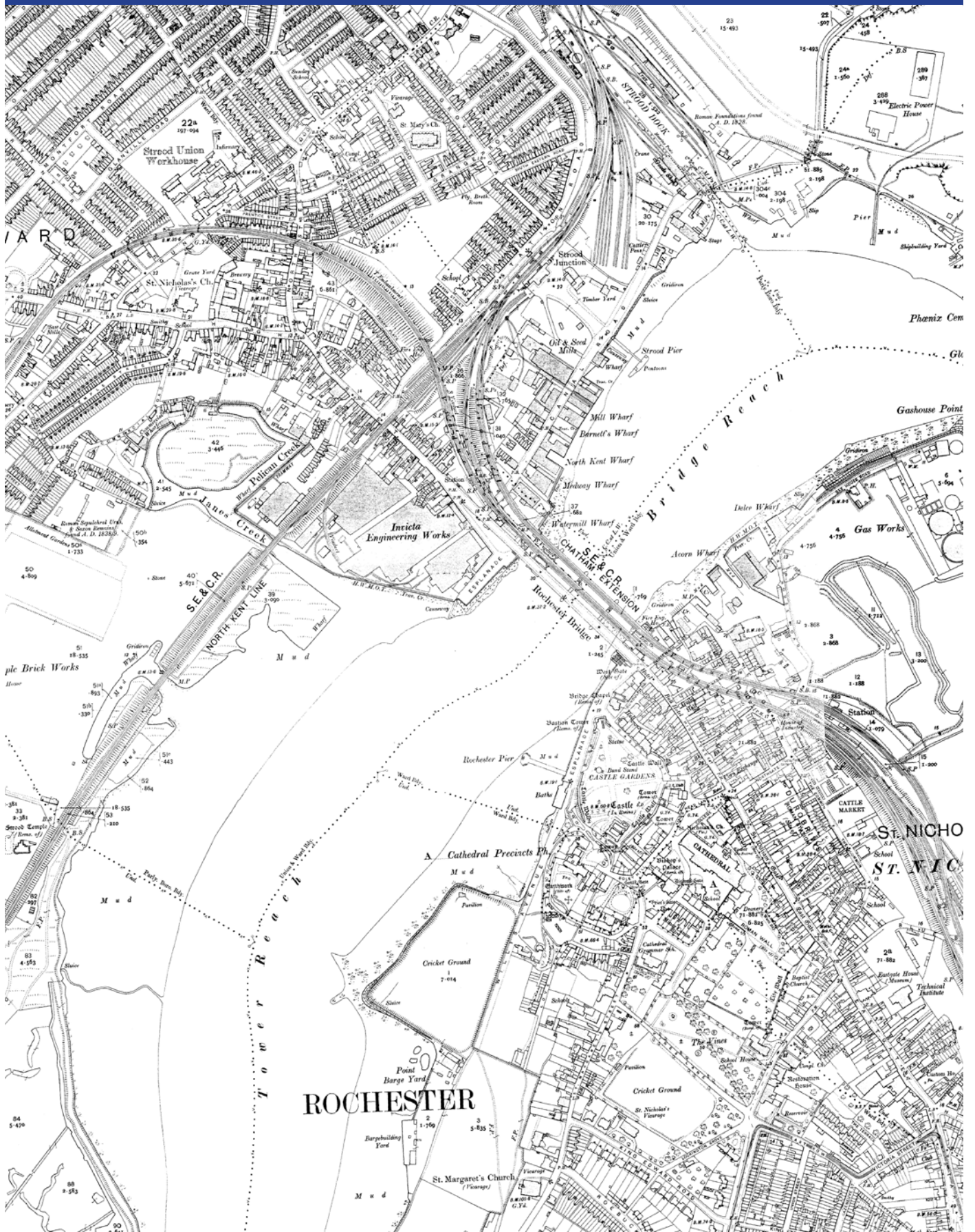
3.3 *History*

The history of Strood Waterfront is best understood in the context of the history of the wider conurbation. Rochester has an ancient history associated both with the Romans and the nineteenth century writer, Charles Dickens, as well as a number of notable medieval and historic buildings. Nearby Chatham Dockyard dates back to the sixteenth century and since its closure in 1984 has been the focus of considerable regeneration work.

Strood's Waterfront has a long history of industrial usage associated with the docks and wharfage afforded by the Thames and Medway Canal and the River Medway and has also included mills, cement works, agricultural livestock markets and meat processing.

Since the arrival of the railway, the Riverside site was predominantly used for sidings and materials storage.

Map 3: 1909 Map of Strood



4.0 Planning and Design Principles

4.1 Overarching Urban Quality

In the background of Medway's current Local Plan 2003 and the emerging Local Plan, the following will provide further guidance on how the council wishes to pursue the delivery of Strood Waterfront. The 2003 Local Plan and national policy and guidance will provide the policy link until the emerging Local Plan is adopted. The guidance below is therefore subject to change in light of the adoption of the emerging Local Plan and its ambitions for high quality urban regeneration in central and waterfront locations in Strood. This is in line with the updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which promotes higher density developments in accessible locations.

Key to the design approach is wider context and the strategic ambitions for Strood and the authority as a whole. Development proposals scoped out in isolation of the wider vision have the potential to undermine and conflict with the strategic vision for the authority, making the delivery of vital infrastructure infeasible and thereby impacting on the quality of space and the development, e.g. walkway along the riverside will require contributions from developers to deliver this key piece of infrastructure, which could be a missed

opportunity if each proposal were considered in an uncoordinated way. Proposals and ambitions for Strood District Centre and the opportunity areas identified through the Local Plan must also be taken into account. It is therefore vital that proposals for development of this area are consistent and complementary to the strategic vision captured in the Local Plan and through regeneration initiatives in the Regeneration Strategy 2035 as well as within this guidance document.

A more considered approach is also required in the creation of a high quality environment and public realm. A user-friendly and attractive public realm is essential in creating a desirable, cohesive place to live and address health issues prevalent in the authority. Providing public access to the waterfront forms part of this vision, which will also address other deficiencies.

Development at Strood Waterfront must be designed to realise the vision for these sites as a new, sustainable and healthy waterfront community and a place that contributes to the image and vitality of Strood.



To realise this vision, development will need to:

- Be sustainable with regard to social cohesion (creating a sense of belonging, trust, and community), economic regeneration, use and reuse of resources (e.g. land, water) and construction materials, protection and promotion of biodiversity, and minimising energy usage and carbon emissions.
- Support the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors through well designed homes that enjoy good light and air, have access to green spaces and the ability to grow food and generally support healthy lifestyles including play and exercise and active travel. Particular care should be given to appropriate design to meet the needs of those with dementia. This will include design and location of signage and the inclusion of wayfinding and legibility cues in architectural and landscape design. Design of homes and community areas should support all generations to live independently.
- Create a visually coherent, dramatic and memorable waterfront prospect when viewed from Rochester and that engages with the river yet respects the scale and aspect of Rochester's historic landmarks and the wider topography of river and surrounding hills.
- Be accessible and well-connected, especially for journeys by sustainable travel modes that promote healthy activity and social interaction.
- Provide enhanced public access to the river through provision of waterside pedestrian and cycle routes, thereby providing a unique opportunity for residents and visitors to partake in leisure and recreational activities.
- Provide a welcoming, attractive and safe public realm that encourages activity for all ages and is well overlooked by surrounding development so as to deter crime and anti-social behaviour. Taking into account the wellbeing of older and less mobile residents small sociable pockets of public spaces should be woven into the fabric of residential areas at a very local level.
- Integrate the new community with Strood's existing community and High Street, and wider centre.

- Establish and protect visual connections at a range of scales from the local, and across the Medway (e.g. between All Saints Church and Rochester Cathedral).
- Provide variety and interest, with a mix of appropriate uses, building types, landscape and architectural design. Distinctive character areas should be created that respond to each site's varying context along the River Medway.
- Former Civic Centre, Riverside and Kingswear Gardens sites should create a series of distinctive character areas, each with its own sense of place and identity. The residential areas, the setting around the railway station and the riverside walkway should each be clearly legible and contribute to the overall sense of place.

The proposal should set the standard for future development within the area and beyond. The design principles that are to be respected in redeveloping the site are set out below.

4.2 Sustainability

Sustainability is a key consideration, which cuts across various themes including transport options, ecology, biodiversity and renewable energy. The location of the site along the waterfront and by the Marine Conservation Zone has implications for how the development proposals are designed and potential adverse impacts on the Medway Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ), ecology and biodiversity. The construction of any future development must ensure, where possible, direct and indirect impacts to the MCZ are avoided. National guidance also supports sustainable modes of transport. Traffic congestion in and around Strood is common at peak times and the increase in residential numbers as a result of proposals is likely to have an impact requiring mitigation and/or alternative and sustainable modes of transport.

The scheme design, inclusive of limited non-residential uses, should enhance public transport options and promote sustainable and active travel modes i.e. new and improved facilities for walking, cycling and public transport including public and private bicycle parking and real-time information on bus services.

Design should protect, preserve and enhance ecological values including the river. Opportunities

to 'green' buildings and integrated planting design (e.g. green walls and climbing plants) can promote biodiversity, increase contact with nature, and create a more attractive and varied environment. Planting should be used to contribute to solar shading and filtration of air pollutants.

Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SuDS) should be provided including sufficient storm water attenuation to accommodate tide locking of existing drainage outfalls. Design should aim to reduce surface water flood risk to the site and the surrounding area. SuDS infrastructure is to be integrated with both hard and soft landscaped areas. Proposals should be prepared in liaison with Medway Council (as LLFA and Highway Authority) and Southern Water.

The layout and design of buildings should maximise energy efficiency and sustainability. To ensure all homes get some direct sunlight, north-facing single-aspect homes should be avoided and to prevent overheating, solar shading should be provided for south-facing single-aspect homes. Construction materials must be acquired from sustainable sources, with a preference for those produced using recycled materials and those that can be easily recycled. The development should also minimise embodied energy and carbon emissions.

Social cohesion can be facilitated through the creation of informal, formal, and/or programmed opportunities for interaction e.g. seating along garden spaces, community facilities, gardening allotments respectively.

The council prefers the inclusion of the Carbon Neutral energy strategy including, if possible, on-site renewable energy generation; facilities for car club parking and electric vehicle charge points; and superfast fibre-optic broadband infrastructure serving all homes and businesses.

4.3 Health and Wellbeing

Health and wellbeing is a central theme of importance for Medway and particular relevance in this guidance. Medway Council is committed to reducing health inequalities, increasing life expectancy and improving the quality of life of those who live and work here. Familiarity by way of landmarks and key features 'anchors' are particularly important for people with dementia, as it provides continuity and an ongoing relationship with the setting residents have grown

up in. People's lifestyles and environment affect their health and wellbeing, and quality of life is essential to physical and mental health and wellbeing and relates to every facet of life. Proposals will need to demonstrate how they contribute to the health; wellbeing of those that live in, work and visit Strood Waterfront. This could include access to green spaces and contact with nature, mitigation of air and noise pollution, homes and public spaces that benefit from good standards of daylight and sunlight, promotion of active travel, accessibility for all users including provision for those with mental health and physical disabilities and/or chronic conditions (e.g. dementia, post traumatic stress disorder, diabetes). Design should follow the recommendations of 'Active Design' (2016) published by Sport England and supported by Public Health England.

Planning applications for Waterfront sites should be supported by Health Impact Assessments.

4.4 Heritage

The survival of the historic built environment above-ground within the proposed development area is limited due to the intensive mid-late twentieth century development of the site for commercial and light industrial usage. However significant below-ground archaeology are likely to exist across both Development Brief sites.

There are no statutory constraints relating to the preservation or protection of any historic buildings or structures within the site, nor does the site lie within a Conservation Area.

However there are a number of significant heritage assets located nearby, which provide the context for the site including Rochester Castle, Rochester Cathedral, St Margaret's Church, the Historic Rochester Conservation Area to the south, and the Frindsbury and Manor Farm Conservation Area, including All Saints Church, to the north-east. These assets are all visible from the Development Brief sites therefore due consideration would therefore need to be given to the setting of and views from/towards these assets, which could act as a constraint on what development (scale, mass, height, appearance) might be appropriate.

There are also a number of existing built heritage assets that are of local significance, which should be positively integrated into the masterplan or preserved in some other way. These are described below:

- Rochester Bridge is a Grade II Listed structure. There has been a river crossing in this location since Roman times. The current bridge dates back to the 1850s with subsequent alterations and additions. The bridge is owned by the Rochester Bridge Trust, a registered charity created by an Act of Parliament.
- The outer lock gates of the Thames and Medway Canal. These are in poor condition and are fenced off from the public. A section of shoreline separates the gates from the present walkway/ cycle route to the north.
- Strood Pier. The pier was originally intended for the unloading of cargo and is now used for the mooring of fishing vessels and other light craft. It is owned by Peel Ports.
- The Riverside Tavern; a two-storeyed Victorian public house with typical features.
- At least nineteen 'Dragon's Teeth'; constructed as part of a Second World War anti-invasion defensive line. These are concrete anti-vehicle obstacles located in-situ on the riverside walkway north of Strood Pier and ex-situ east of the approach road to the station.
- A former Soviet cold war-era submarine is currently anchored offshore.

Whilst there are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments on the site, due to the nature of historic settlement in the area, the site is likely to contain a wide range of heritage assets of archaeological and geo-archaeological interest buried at depth, deeply buried and complex sedimentary sequences and peats, and also near surface remains. Such remains are likely to date to a variety of periods and will include remains and/or important deposits from the early Prehistoric period onwards, including:

- Complex sedimentary sequences, including well-preserved organic remains.
- Evidence for prehistoric exploitation along the margins of the River Medway, potentially including evidence for salt production.

- Evidence for Romano-British activity, potentially including burials.
- Evidence for the Roman river crossing over the Medway, including causeway, bridge and associated structures and activity.
- Medieval occupation and the line of the medieval bridge over the Medway.
- Post-medieval occupation and industry.
- Flood defences of all periods may survive along the current river frontage and these may be impacted upon by new flood prevention measures.

Further archaeology screening undertaken through the Local Plan evidence gathering could provide a further steer on areas of archaeological importance. The emerging Local Plan, supported by a [Heritage Asset Review](#) and draft policies, will be shortly followed up with a Heritage Strategy and refined policies. Refer to these resources to inform the treatment and approach to the various historic assets within and in close proximity to the study area.

Further evaluation and assessment are necessary to determine the significance of any archaeological potential prior to the submission of any planning application. A full programme for this assessment should be agreed with Kent County Council, in consultation with Medway Council and undertaken prior to agreeing the development layout. Where it is found that important archaeological and historical remains exist, it is considered that the impacts could be minimised through:

- Archaeological monitoring of any further geo-technical work taking place on the site to establish the extent of archaeological remains.
- Careful foundation design.
- Careful siting of development. The proposed development layout should take the most important areas of archaeology into account and perhaps incorporate them into areas of lower potential impact such as green spaces.
- Careful flood risk design. Flood defences should be kept to a minimum width and depth to limit the impact on archaeological deposits in the alluvial and peat layers whilst also minimising the need for extensive archaeological mitigation strategies.

- Impact on possible remaining Roman and medieval waterfront activities and flood defences may occur during construction of flood prevention measures.
- Mitigation strategies for any development which will impact on the buried archaeological resource.

Following evaluation, there may be a need for a more detailed investigation of any important archaeological remains prior to development. The information gathered from any subsequent excavation works will be beneficial to the understanding of the development of the wider area, especially as little recent archaeological investigation has taken place in the vicinity of the development site. However, all intrusive investigation or development will have an adverse effect on any archaeological deposits in the development area. The NPPF recommends that the best mitigation strategy is always to preserve archaeology in situ.

Any new development should take account of the former canal and the site's industrial past; opportunities to integrate, interpret and explain the site's historic character into any new development should be sought.

4.5 Views and Vistas

Views and vistas are particularly important for the sites given the location along the waterfront and the close proximity to key significant heritage assets, sitting directly across from Rochester Castle and Cathedral. Medway Council's adopted Building Heights Policy (2006) identifies the importance of the landscape 'bowl' that Strood Waterfront sits within, the lower topography can accommodate taller buildings without

breaking the natural ridge line. This guidance will be under review in Spring 2018.

Strood Waterfront represents an exceptional opportunity to enhance the waterfront prospect and benefit from the accessibility afforded by excellent public transport infrastructure. For these reasons, the Waterfront sites are considered an exception to the blanket height restriction set out in the Building Heights Policy, subject to the following considerations:

Views in and out of the sites vary considerably within the wider context. Development should be managed to ensure that it responds positively to its setting, and the historic environment. The sites' visual boundaries should be considered at two scales.

1. Longer views out from the sites

The sites sit within a natural bowl thus affording excellent views to Rochester Bridge and up and down the River . The views of Rochester Castle and Cathedral are of particular importance in this context, being the landmark historic buildings of heritage and cultural value. These are key attractors in the area and need to be carefully addressed without detracting from their importance.

Views are enclosed locally at a low level by the surrounding railway line, Medway Bridge, the future development of Rochester Riverside, the Frindsbury Ridge, and the white chalk cliffs of the former quarry to the north east.

The sites benefit from an open river frontage, sitting on a raised terrace at a higher level than existing water levels in the River Medway. Views out are primarily of:



Figure 7: View of Rochester Castle and Cathedral from Strood Waterfront



Figure 8: Rochester Bridge



Map 5: Consideration of Parameters

- The river, including potential views across the Riverside site from Strood railway station, the entrance of which currently has no visual connection to the river.
 - Significant views of Rochester Castle and Cathedral.
 - Rochester Bridge.
 - Views from within the Waterfront sites looking north-east to All Saints Church and north-west to the spire of New Testament Church of God.
 - Views from All Saints Church and Church Green, Frindsbury looking across the Riverside site to Rochester Castle and Cathedral.
 - Views of St Margaret's Church, Churchfields, The Esplanade and Fort Clarence to the south. Views to Kent Downs to the south-west.
 - The site's location on a bend in the River Medway provides dramatic views up and downstream including longer views to Chatham, Fort Pitt Hill/ Jacksons Field, Fort Amherst and the high ground of The Great Lines Heritage Park.
 - Long views into the site from Chatham and the Rochester Marina and the adjacent river bank and river activity.
- 2. Longer views into the site from sensitive viewpoints**
- Views from the historic built environment of Rochester, including the Castle and Cathedral.
 - From Rochester Bridge.
 - From the Rochester Riverside regeneration area including Rochester station and multi-storey car park.

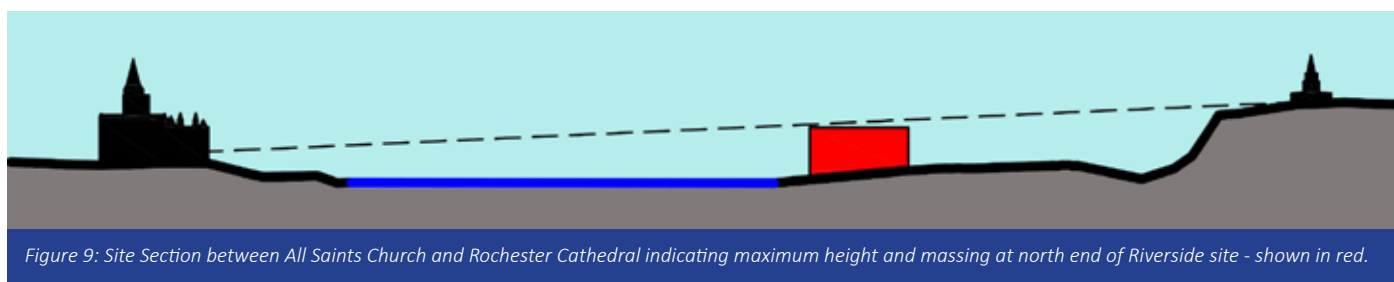


Figure 9: Site Section between All Saints Church and Rochester Cathedral indicating maximum height and massing at north end of Riverside site - shown in red.

- From Frindsbury Ridge which overlooks the whole site.
- From Broomhill Park looking south.
- From The Great Lines Heritage Park and Chatham Naval Memorial.
- From St Margaret's Church and Churchfields.
- Potentially from the M2 Medway Viaduct.
- Potentially from Jackson's Field / A229 City Way.
- Potentially from higher ground to the north of the A289 Hasted Road.
- Potentially from Sun Pier, Chatham.

In the longer term, the aspect of Strood Riverside will also be influenced by its visual relationship with development envisaged for Rochester Riverside, located directly opposite the site. In addressing these opportunities and constraints, a comprehensive visual impact assessment is required to accompany all development proposals coming forward for Strood Waterfront.

4.6 Urban Form and Scale

4.6.1 Scale, Height and Massing

Strood Waterfront represents a unique location within Medway where development proposals must balance visual impacts on valued assets including Rochester Castle and Cathedral with the opportunity for highly sustainable and transformatory development to create a new waterfront.

Medway Council's Building Height Policy defines buildings over five storeys as tall. The guidance generally supports the heights for Strood Waterfront as one of the areas with particular emphasis on heights being appropriate closer to the District Centre, subject

to careful consideration of strategic views and context. The scale of development should be reflective of the site's accessible location, whilst also responding to the openness of the River Medway and respecting important views and vistas. In particular the following constrain maximum heights:

- Development should not break the ridge line of land north of Strood in long views from Rochester Castle gardens, Rochester station car park, St Margaret's Church, Rochester or Sun Pier, Chatham.
- New development should not interrupt mutual sight lines between Rochester Cathedral and All Saints Church, Frindsbury.
- Building massing should be proportionate to the scale of spaces that they address – whether intimate mews lanes or the sweep of the Medway.

The site sections and massing studies prepared as part of the Illustrative Masterplan show that development of up to eleven storeys could sit within the 'bowl' of surrounding hills without intruding into the natural ridge line in key views. However, other factors such as massing and scale need to be appropriately considered, given the significant heritage context.

4.6.2 Landmark Buildings and Spaces

Any proposals should include visual reference points to reinforce the structure of development, add character and enhance the overall identity of the site. Opportunities have been identified for local land marking in the following locations:

- The south side of the former Civic Centre site, overlooking the Medway;
- Along the riverside near Strood station and Strood Pier; and

- At the eastern part of the Riverside site at the confluence of views south-west from the public footpath to Frindsbury, views east from Rochester Marina, and views north from Chatham.

Local landmarks can be achieved by creating distinctive and memorable buildings and the landmark term does not always imply additional building height.

4.6.3 Urban Form

Development should seek to create coherent urban blocks where public and private spaces are clearly defined, public routes and spaces are overseen, and rear gardens are secure.

Entrances to residential development including ground floor apartments and communal entrances should be visible and entered from the public realm. Houses and ground floor apartments should be provided with landscaped front areas to provide privacy to ground floor rooms without negating passive surveillance of public spaces from those dwellings.

To activate the public realm, support viability and aid legibility, ground floor non-residential uses should be located to face onto public spaces or routes benefitting from higher footfall.

4.6.4 Relationship to Existing Development

New development is to respect existing adjacent homes. New development should create secure blocks with clearly defined public fronts and private backs including backing onto existing rear gardens. Back to back distances to existing properties should be proportionate to building heights and not less than 20m. In general, the height of new development should scale down in proximity to existing two and three storey properties including:

- Cranmere Court
- Wingrove Road
- Riverside Tavern

4.7 Environment

A range of environmental issues are relevant including green infrastructure, landscape, ecology, flood risk, Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ), biodiversity, air quality. Medway Local Plan 2003 Policy S3 (River Medway) supports certain proposals which are

consistent with nature conservation, landscape, and hydrological policies and have no adverse impact upon coastal archaeology. Medway Local Plan 2003, Policy BNE 22 (Environmental Enhancement) supports development leading to the protection and improvement of the appearance and environment. The government's 25 Year Environment Plan (2018) also supports connecting people with the environment to improve health and wellbeing and increasing resource efficiency.

In 2017, environmental assessments were carried out in support of flood defence works proposals. The assessment identified environmental issues, which need to be addressed as part of any planning application:

- Suitable habitat for reptile species in north-eastern presence of the Strood Riverside site, and two buildings with potential to support roosting bats.
- Medway Estuary Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) and inter-tidal mudflat habitat adjacent to site. Any in-river construction or operation would need a marine licence from the Marine Management Organisation.
- Social impacts to residents during construction that could affect local people and properties, public access and amenity space, and river users.

4.7.1 Water Quality

In consultation with the Environment Agency, the council will expect that development accords with the objectives of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) to ensure that there is no deterioration in water quality. Strood Riverside is located in a Source Protection Zone (level 2), which indicates a potential risk from development to sensitive ground-waters and to surface waters. Accordance with the WFD provides a legal framework against which to protect surface and ground-waters using a common management approach and following common objectives, principles and measures. The core objectives are to ensure that any development on the site prevents deterioration to the aquatic ecosystem and to restore polluted surface waters and ground-waters to 'good' status in terms of ecological and chemical parameters.

4.7.2 Flood Risk

Fluvial

The Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning shows that the Waterfront sites are (currently) classified as Flood Zone 3, areas of a high probability of flooding. Specifically, this is land which has a 1 in 200 or greater annual probability of river flooding. Medway Council prepared flood defence proposals for the former Civic Centre and Riverside sites, which were consented in mid-2017. These proposals include new sheet-piled river walls, raised land levels and associated realignments of highways and utilities infrastructure. Canal Road and the Station Approach Road will be realigned to optimise the requirement for temporary roadways and optimise developable site areas to the south of Canal Road and the Station Approach Road. Details of proposals MC/17/1172 and MC/17/1173 are included in Appendix 3. The flood risk will therefore change following implementation of flood risk mitigation measures, to reduce the risk to a lower classification, thereby making it more appropriate for residential development.

Surface Water

The Waterfront sites are located within and adjacent to areas which are at high risk of surface water flooding. This flood risk will not be mitigated by the currently proposed flood defence measures. Instead appropriately designed sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) informed by relevant policy and national and local guidance will be encouraged/sought compliant with WFD in terms of surface water discharge and Marine licence where necessary.

All development proposals will need to agree and respond to fluvial and surface water flood risk issues via liaison with the lead local flood authority.

Flood risk mitigation measures should be prepared in accordance with the following Local Plan 2003 policies:

- Policy CF 13: Tidal Flood Risk Areas
- Policy CF12: Water Supply
- Medway Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 2006 (updated 2011 and under review at present)
- Medway Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2015
- Medway Surface Water Management Plan 2016

- Medway SuDS Water. People. Places. A guide for master planning sustainable drainage into developments (2013)

4.7.3 Ground Conditions, Groundwater and Water Supply

Medway is located in an area of water stress as identified by the Environment Agency with water supply managed by Southern Water and Southeast Water. Water efficiency measures will be welcomed in the design of schemes.

Past land uses at Strood Waterfront have included a range of industrial activities, some of which have caused contamination. Site investigations have been undertaken in support of the flood defence measures and localised contamination has been identified, i.e. hotspots including hydrocarbons and some asbestos containing material within shallow Made Ground deposits on the Riverside site. These issues will be managed as part of the flood defence works.

Watermill Gardens is to be upgraded including new planting, lighting and play equipment. The necessary ground investigation works to upgrade Watermill Gardens will need to be taken into account. Works will need to be carefully undertaken to avoid groundwater contamination and be supported by the relevant evidence. The scope of investigations should be agreed with the Local Planning Authority and the Environment Agency before any site investigation works commence.

Any area outside of the flood defence works, being developed, would need to be investigated and dealt with accordingly to avoid groundwater pollution. Local Plan 2003 Policy BNE 23 (Contaminated Land) requires detailed site examination where direct or indirect impacts occur. Risk assessments will need to be carried out by any developer, in line with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and the Environment Agency's technical guidance with regard to groundwater conditions and potential contamination issues.

4.7.4 Biodiversity

The inter-tidal area is an important habitat under the Kent Biodiversity Action Plan and any encroachment on this will need special justification or mitigation. Developers should consult with the Environment Agency on this matter.

The mudflats located adjacent to the site are priority habitats within the Kent Biodiversity Action Plan. Careful consideration should be given to the effect of any development on the mudflats and any changes to the retaining wall, forming the boundary of the site, should not alter the natural accumulation of mud and silt within the area. In accordance with Environment Agency guidelines, there should be no net loss in the existing inter-tidal habitat including both mudflats and saltmarshes.

While the habitats identified within the site itself are considered to be common and of low conservation value, it will be necessary prior to site clearance for specialist surveys to be undertaken and for necessary works to be implemented to protect existing bats, reptiles, invertebrates, and nesting birds that may be present on the site.

Further details on the biodiversity of the site are provided in the Phase 1 Habitat Survey prepared as part of the flood defence planning application for the Strood Riverside and former Civic Centre sites.

4.7.5 Air Quality

Strood Riverside lies within the Central Medway Air Quality Management Area (AQMA), which has been declared for exceedances of the nitrogen dioxide annual mean air quality objective. Air quality will therefore be a material consideration for the development, and the impacts upon the AQMA and future occupiers of the development will require careful consideration.

In response to the NPPF, Medway has developed and introduced new Air Quality Planning Guidance (2016) which provides guidance on the assessment and mitigation of air quality impacts associated with developments. The main focus of the guidance is road traffic emissions, but other sources of air pollution, such as industrial emissions, combined heat and power (CHP) plant and biomass burning may also require consideration.

The guidance has been developed to:

- Introduce a method for assessing the air quality impacts of a development which includes the quantification of impacts, calculation of damage costs and the identification of mitigation measures to be implemented to negate the impact of development on air quality.

- Tackle cumulative impacts.
- Provide clarity and consistency of the process for developers, the local planning authority (LPA) and local communities.

A fully detailed assessment and costed air quality mitigation scheme will be required to support a planning application for the Strood Waterfront Development. This could include the implementation of standard mitigation measures for certain types of development, including electric vehicle charging points, low NO_x gas fired boilers, and construction dust mitigation. The assessment shall consider impacts on future occupiers and the Central Medway AQMA, associated with all relevant sources, including transport, other combustion sources and emissions associated with construction of the development itself.

The air quality assessment shall also include an air quality emissions mitigation assessment, which will determine the scale of mitigation to be provided to offset the associated increase in emissions created by the development, using the approach provided in the Medway Air Quality Planning Guidance (2016).

The examples provided in the guidance are non-exhaustive, and the council welcomes innovative mitigation measures to reduce emissions, reduce travel need and result in a modal shift to more sustainable means of travel.

4.7.6 Noise

It is considered that the principal noise source to the northern and eastern parts of the site is generated by industrial activities, the majority of which will cease as part of the redevelopment of the area. Road traffic noise and trains also contribute to noise levels. The adjacent railway and busy surrounding roads dominate noise levels in the southern and western parts of the site, although industrial noise from the adjacent industrial estate also influences background noise levels.

The development itself is likely to generate noise, for example noise created during construction activities, noise from additional traffic movements on the local road network during operation of the development, and any commercial noise sources introduced as part of the development. These additional noise impacts will need to be considered. A noise impact assessment will be required to support any planning application,

consistent with national policy and guidance e.g. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Planning Practice Guidance (NPG), and Noise Policy Statement for England (NPSE).

4.8 Land Use and Development Form

4.8.1 Context

The former Civic Centre site previously accommodated administrative services for the council. The Civic Centre services have now been relocated, the buildings demolished, and the site cleared. A CCTV control centre, a pumping station, and an Ambulance Service crew facility remain on site and are proposed for retention.

Strood town centre is defined as a District Centre in the 2003 Medway Local Plan. Although it provides everyday basic needs, the general amenity quality of the town centre environment is currently poor. Medway Council has commissioned a Retail and Commercial Leisure Needs Assessment for the authority, which includes a health check and guidance for Strood District Centre. The retail offer is limited and could benefit from the diversification of uses. The town is dominated by a traffic system which has evolved to deal with issues around the river crossing rather than encouraging the centre to become a place to enjoy. Further south of the town centre is a retail park consisting of large warehouse outlets, some of which have been sub-divided. Adjacent to this, to the South West, is a large Morrisons. Toward the east and north of the centre are three other supermarkets, which add value and give the centre credit as a supermarket destination. The council is preparing a masterplan and delivery strategy for the wider central area of Strood to support the preparation of the Local Plan, and to promote further regeneration.

There is a clear relationship between the activities in the Town Centre and those at Strood Waterfront, especially with regard to the potential connectivity and accessibility offered around the railway station. Strood railway station lies adjacent to the northern boundary of the Riverside site. Network Rail and Southeastern, the station operating company, implemented an upgrade of station facilities including a new station building and an associated retail concession in 2017.

Station Road, immediately to the north of the Riverside site and the railway, consists mainly of Victorian terrace

blocks of smaller two-storey houses. More recent development includes apartment buildings of up to five storeys. Further north, this pattern of Victorian terraces merges into a looser arrangement of semi-detached, detached and smaller terraced houses dating from the 1920's and 1930's.

Kingswear Gardens, which lies to the south west of the Riverside site and Strood station, is a residential development currently comprising 77 homes. Adjacent to this development, along Canal Road are several older, disused two-storey properties which formerly accommodated a mix of commercial and residential uses. Collectively there is a poor visual quality to the built environment at this end of Canal Road.

In close proximity to the northern boundary of the site lies Cranmere Court, a more recent residential cul-de-sac development of predominantly two-storey detached dwellings.

Adjoining the site to the east is the 'Medway City Estate'. Fronting onto the water, the estate provides a significant concentration of employment and industrial uses. Opportunities to enhance sustainable modes of travel for those working in the industrial estate towards Strood station are to be encouraged.

Rochester Town Centre, which has developed niche retailing around arts and tourist-related uses, is within a 5 minute walk of the southern edge of the Waterfront and a 10 minute walk of the centre of the Waterfront. Rochester Town Centre has a vibrant evening economy including pubs, bars and restaurants.

4.8.2 Land Uses

Land uses should reflect the Waterfront's unique assets and location including the Medway setting, dramatic views and proximity to public transport and a District Centre. Land uses should contribute to delivering the waterfront vision through the transformation of these sites into an attractive, vibrant and highly sustainable waterfront community.

The following land uses were considered appropriate for each site for testing parameters through the illustrative masterplan. However it is accepted that proposals in future will need to respond to the market and demonstrate viability and it would be more helpful for proposals to respond to guiding principles rather than prescriptive uses. However, there are some key quantified uses that are essential:

- A variety of new homes including apartments and houses, to suit a variety of tenures and household sizes.
- A minimum of 3 Ha on site provision of open spaces including upgraded Watermill Gardens, along with circa 10 Ha provision for sport, play and other activities e.g. allotment gardening, which may be provided off-site. Upgraded Watermill Gardens could include seating, café, public toilets and play equipment. Strengthened green infrastructure links and public realm will provide appropriate riverside access for the public and connect new development to the town and wider area.
- Station-related retail and/or A3 food/beverage excluding takeaway food.
- Local shops to complement existing retail along the High Street, south of Station Road.
- Appropriate supporting commercial, commercial leisure and retail uses on the former Civic Centre site.
- Provision for new community facilities like a care home to meet local needs will also be supported.

There is growing evidence of the benefits in co-delivery of elderly care and early-years care; further consideration could be given to this style of delivery of care facilities.

- Retained council and third party uses (CCTV control centre, a pumping station and an Ambulance Service crew facility on the former Civic Centre site only).

Land uses are subject to sequential testing in respect of flood risk in accordance with the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) 2006. Currently the sites exist within an area considered to be at a high risk of flooding but the planned flood mitigation measures will reduce the risk and therefore in (flood risk) policy terms, the land uses listed above would be acceptable.

The council will expect consistency of proposals with the principles of this SPD but will exercise flexibility where the developer's proposals are responding to changing circumstances beyond their control including but not limited to national policy, the economic climate and varying market conditions. However, deviations from this SPD and the recommended land uses will need robust justification on viability, planning or other grounds.

Site	Site Area	Residential	Other Complementary uses	Public Open Space
Former Civic Centre	3 Ha	✓	Includes retention of existing CCTV and Ambulance Service crew facilities. Uses that drive community access to the waterfront, support or increase vitality and make the best use of the waterfront including the remarkable views. For the purpose of the illustrative masterplan these include commercial, commercial leisure and retail uses (as continuation of existing ground floor retail parade along west side of High Street).	✓
Kingswear Gardens	1.5 Ha	✓	✗	✓
Watermill Wharf	0.2 Ha	✗	Employment	
Watermill Gardens	0.9 Ha	✗	Enhanced space which could include seating, café, public toilets, play equipment.	✓
Strood Riverside		✓	Station-related retail.	✓

4.8.3 Housing Mix and Tenure

Medway Council's Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2015 provides information on housing mix needs. Medway Local Plan 2003 Policy H10 states that on sites larger than 1 Ha in size, the provision of a range and mix of housing types and sizes will be sought. The policy continues by stating that this "will include smaller units of accommodation suited to the needs of one and two person households, the elderly or persons with disabilities and housing that can be adapted for such use in the future".

The supporting text to Policy H10 sets out the council's stance with regard to the provision of smaller dwellings noting that: "The provision of smaller dwellings, including flats, can help to meet the continuing demand from small households that will form a significant proportion of housing demand during the plan period. It will also provide cheaper accommodation and, because it will often be provided at higher densities within the urban areas, will help to reduce the demand for the development of greenfield sites".

The Waterfront sites offer potential for extra care accommodation as part of mix of housing to accommodate a broader mix of household needs. Proposals will need to have regard to the housing mix recommendations in the SHMA, offering a greater market mix.

4.8.4 Affordable Housing

Medway Council's Local Plan 2003 Policy H3 affordable housing requirements state that for development "within the urban area, developments which include 25 or more dwellings or where the site area is 1 hectare or more." Medway normally expects that 25% of new homes will be provided as affordable housing, of which provision should include 60% affordable to rent and 40% shared ownership, subject to viability, assessed on a site-by-site basis. Refer to Medway Guide to Developer Contributions and Obligations, and policies in the emerging Local Plan.

4.8.5 Open Space

Medway Council has prepared the Medway Wildlife Countryside and Open Space Strategy (2008-16), which provides guidance on open space requirements for the Waterside sites. Further guidance on existing open spaces and future requirements are set out in the following:

- Planning and Design for Outdoor Sport and Play.
- Medway Open Space PPG17 Study 2012, which is being updated.
- Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play: Beyond the Six Acre Standard 2015.

Strood is currently underprovided with open spaces. Strood Waterfront includes the following existing public open spaces: Watermill Gardens provides play and recreational uses and a smaller, landscaped space lies next to Rochester Bridge at the Esplanade. The existing Watermill Gardens are designated as an open space, the loss of which is protected by Local Plan Policy L3.

New residential development will also be expected to provide new areas of open space in accordance with Policy L4 (Provision of Open Space in New Residential Developments), where there is a proven deficiency. Strood Waterfront does fall within an area of open space deficiency and thus will need to comply in respect of any development proposal.

A mix of on-site and off-site provision will be sought. On-site provision should include provision, access, and views of a range of spaces including children's play spaces, informal amenity spaces and a riverside walkway. In the context of Strood Waterfront, the existing open space facilities at Watermill Gardens were provided with the expectation that additional housing would be provided on the site and further enhancements to this space will cater for a larger population. For this reason, it is considered appropriate to include this existing open space facility (in its enhanced form) within any open space calculation.

Financial contributions for off-site sport provision would be acceptable, given the size and location of the waterfront sites.

Moreover, the river represents a substantial open space, which although provides limited leisure activity, does open up long views and provides both a contrast to Medway's urban areas and a wildlife habitat. Future plans for the area should encourage the possibility of river uses, subject to environmental considerations, complementary to the existing boat club without having an adverse impact on their operation.

Strood Pier is in the ownership of Peel Ports and has been inactive in recent years. Medway Council

encourages the future use of the pier for leisure activities. Reinstating and the future use of Strood Pier would require a considerable impact assessment taking into account the sensitivities of the MCZ and to demonstrate that this is a sustainable and viable marine designation. The Environment Agency and Natural England would need to be satisfied that appropriate measures are in place to address their concerns. Any in river construction or operation would need a marine licence from Marine Management Organisation. The Local Plan's policies for leisure seek to fulfil the following objectives:

- To protect existing open spaces, buildings and facilities which serve a leisure purpose;
- To provide land for open space for formal and informal recreation to meet identified needs;
- To improve the quality and accessibility of existing leisure facilities and open spaces; and
- To ensure that within new developments, provision is made for accessible, quality open space and play provision.

Strood Waterfront is to provide a range of attractive, publicly accessible open spaces, including an enhanced riverside walkway, linked by a high quality public realm, in line with the emerging Medway Green Infrastructure Strategy. Watermill Gardens is to be upgraded including new planting, lighting, play equipment, and the inclusion of water features and public art within public spaces is encouraged. A minimum of 3 Ha of new and improved public spaces are to be provided including:

- An arrival space linking Strood station to the river.
- A focal space within the former Civic Centre site with views across the Medway to Rochester Castle.
- Waterfront spaces including improvements to the covenanted land, south of the former Civic Centre site.
- A waterside space alongside Jane's Creek with buildings set-back a minimum of 10m from the river wall.
- Local and incidental pocket parks and play areas.
- Communal gardening or allotment area within the Riverside site.

- Street trees are to be included to new routes and along the realigned Canal Road. Other incidental planting and seating areas are to be included throughout.
- Site planting and design should also, where practicable, contribute towards a wider green open space network which should incorporate elements of habitat creation including, for example, native tree planting.

To encourage a sustainable development in the town centre location where there is a deficiency of greenspace, it would be preferable for the land adjacent to Jane's Creek to be made accessible by a pedestrian and cycle bridge, utilising this area for greenspace and improving public use. However, the council will consider alternative solutions, including offsite provision, subject to consultation at an early stage with regard to its quality and function.

Strood Waterfront is to be a safe, secure and welcoming environment for all. Public spaces play a role in this, i.e. buildings facing onto public areas can provide passive surveillance to deter crime and anti-social behaviour. Blank elevations are to be avoided. Public spaces are to be activated by inclusion of active frontages including entrances facing directly onto the street rather than onto parking areas, to encourage social interaction.

Design of public and communal open spaces also support and promote healthy lifestyles for all ages thus improving the physical and mental wellbeing of their residents, workers and visitors and encouraging social integration thereby reducing social isolation:

- Open spaces should be designed to encourage activity and tackle social isolation by providing a meeting place and supporting social interaction.
- Outdoor gyms in communal areas.
- Multipurpose garden space/s to encourage social integration, and promote healthy lifestyles. These should include sensory gardens, gardening areas for residents, communal food growing areas.
- Sheltered and extra care housing should include informal spaces such as a sensory garden, along with food growing spaces for residents' activity.
- Dementia-friendly design.

4.9 Infrastructure

4.9.1 Community Infrastructure

Medway Local Plan 2003 Policy CF2 encourages the provision of new community facilities. In light of this guidance, there will be a requirement at Strood Waterfront to provide new or upgraded accommodation for the community, which could include healthcare. The increase in housing is likely to increase the demand on health services, ranging from the need for more staff, both clinical and non-clinical through to the need for expanded premises to provide services, from S106 contributions. Consideration should be given to locating vibrant environments - such as nursery schools and community hubs, close to housing for older people. Facilities must be of an appropriate scale, have minimal impact on neighbouring amenity, and be accessible by a variety of means of transport. Where the development of sites have an impact on community infrastructure and heritage assets, development proposals may be required to contribute financially towards the maintenance and enhancement of Medway's heritage assets. Community infrastructure requirements are considered in Medway Council's Medway Infrastructure Position Statement (January 2017), and will be further detailed in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan supporting the new Medway Local Plan. The council has set out its requirements for developer contributions to infrastructure and services in the [Medway Guide to Developer Contributions and Obligations](#).

Some existing primary schools in the locality have the capacity to expand to accommodate the additional children that will reside at Strood Waterfront, subject to Section 106 contributions. Similarly, additional secondary school places will be required to meet demand from the development and S106 contributions will aid the expansion of local schools.

4.9.2 Utilities

A 24" medium pressure steel gas main traverses the site. Appropriate access to the easement will need to be maintained and this may have to be achieved by relocating the gas main.

In addition there is a large diameter surface water pumping mains crossing the site. An easement of 4 metres width on either side of the mains is required.

This is a water stress area, therefore any development proposal should support a water efficient design, consistent with Southern Water's approach, which is encouraged to be in line with government's optional technical standard on greater water efficiency of 110 litres per person per day

(Paragraph: 014 Reference ID: 56-014-20150327 Planning Practice Guidance).

The developer will need to consult with the relevant utility bodies in formulating their proposals (including Southern Water and Southern Gas Networks) to ensure that there is adequate service to support proposed development, the routing of all utilities pipes is addressed, and to provide the appropriate protection or diversion of apparatus.

4.10 Movement

4.10.1 Accessibility

Strategic Connections

The site's strategic location is an important asset with excellent transport links. It is well placed for access to the M2, the M20, Ebbsfleet International, Ashford International, and the M25 London Orbital.

The new Lower Thames Crossing under the Thames, east of Gravesend and Tilbury will improve access to Essex and relieve congestion at the Dartford crossing. Strood railway station serves High-Speed services to London St Pancras International and the Medway Valley line to the south, and North Kent connectin to wider network, including east Kent. Strood station is near the junction of these lines plus the North Kent Coast Mainline from Chatham to Victoria, which is served from nearby Rochester station.

At the local level, Strood town centre sits at the hub of three major roads:

- The A228 giving access to Grain to the north and the M2 motorway, and West Malling and Kings Hill to the south;
- The A2 giving access to London and the M25 to the west and Rochester to the east; and
- The A226 to Gravesend.

The River Medway provides part of an important leisure and commercial waterway stretching from Tonbridge to the south to the Thames Estuary to the north.

Local Connectivity

Road

The main highway access into the site is via the Canal Road junction with the A2. The junction is fairly complex, allowing access to the A2 from Canal Road and from the former Civic Centre, all within a restricted amount of carriageway space

necessitating a complex arrangement of central reservation vehicle crossings, as well as provision for U-turns to be undertaken by east bound traffic.

Access to the north onto Commissioner's Road is currently via a priority junction to the east of the HGV width restriction gate adjacent to the Wingrove Drive junction. The width restriction was put in place in order to prevent heavy vehicle movements to Medway City Estate from taking place via Commissioner's Road. Access to Canal Road from Commissioner's Road is restricted to buses, taxis and bicycles only.

Rail

At present Strood railway station is located within the site with the main access to the ticket hall from Canal Road. In general, signage to Strood station is poor.

The railway lines isolate the site, both visually and physically, from surrounding areas of residential development and there is no immediate vehicular access to the station from Station Road on the west side of the rail line. Pedestrian and cyclist access from Station Road can be gained via the narrow subway to the north side of the railway station. The subway is lit but there are no CCTV cameras in the subway, only on the east side approach. There is a fairly steep ramp from the subway leading to the station ticket hall. Customer car parking is provided adjacent to the ticket hall building for a total of approximately 100 cars. A taxi rank is also located outside the station.

Bus

Bus services run along Station Road and Canal Road to serve the railway station. These services support commuters, including workers from Medway City Estate and further afield. There are also frequent local and Kent-wide services that can be taken from the high street. The area is therefore supported by public transport.

Walking and Cycling

The sites have a network of walking and cycling routes which link to recreational opportunities and encourage active travel. Improvement of these routes will encourage healthy lifestyles by connecting to good quality green and blue spaces. Medway Council has initiated a recreational Medway cycle route passing through the Waterfront area, offering excellent opportunity to explore links both north and south.

The Saxon Shore Way footpath/Sustrans National Cycle Route 1 between Inverness in Scotland to Dover, runs north-south adjacent to much of the site's riverside

frontage linking Wingrove Drive and the Canal Road junction with the A2 High Street. The route provides a strategic leisure cycle route designed for use by a wide range of groups, including families. Much of the route through the site is currently on the carriageway. From the Canal Road junction with the A2 High Street, National Cycle Route 1 heads east bound along the Rochester Bridge towards Rochester. From Wingrove Drive to the north the cycle route heads uphill to Parsonage Lane and Upnor Road.

Connectivity between the Civic site and Strood Waterfront sites

The former Civic Centre site is accessed from the east via the esplanade, which also serves business units in the undercroft of Rochester Bridge and provides maintenance access to the existing pumping station. The former Civic Centre site is also accessible from Knight Road although vehicular access is constrained by the spans of the existing rail bridge.

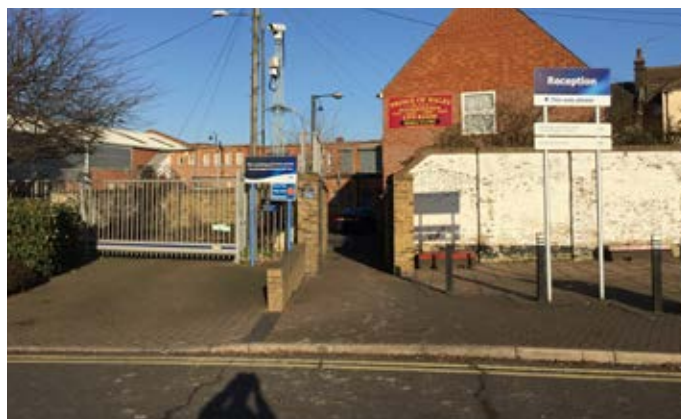


Figure 13: Pedestrian Link from Civic Centre site to High Street

Pedestrian access is also available from the former Civic Centre site to the High Street. However pedestrian links from the former Civic Centre to Canal Road across the High Street / Rochester Bridge are complicated by the carriageway layout and traffic signal phasing.

4.10.2 Supporting Evidence / Assessments

Strategic Transport Assessment

The council has commissioned a Strategic Transport Assessment (STA) to support the emerging Local Plan. This will provide the evidence base for strategic infrastructure needs and mitigation requirements for each site allocation, including the Strood Waterfront site. Strood town centre is often congested, especially at peak times, and therefore measures will need to be identified to mitigate the impacts of development.



Figure 10: Commissioner's Road junction with Canal Road



Figure 11: Canal Road



Figure 12: Pedestrian underpass to Strood Station from Station Road

The Transport and Movement Appraisal (see Appendix 4) comprises early scoping work to find options to address these issues. The Waterfront should form a part of the council's transport strategy that supports lower use of cars and greater use of public transport and active travel modes (walking and cycling).

The appended Transport and Movement Appraisal addresses transport capacity issues with a view to informing the overall design process and identifying potential impact mitigations.

The key insights gained during the appraisal include:

- Accesses for the scoped development potential at Strood Waterfront currently have light traffic and are under capacity;
- The surrounding road network is congested during peak hours;
- The proposed development will need to rely heavily on sustainable modes of transport and address these opportunities positively in the design approach. Current policies and best practice encourage and support this;
- Medway residents living in close proximity to a train station have lower levels of car ownership and tend to make fewer trips by car or van;
- In combination with progressive parking standards, lower parking provision rates are justified. Emerging trends and technologies can be used to further lower parking provision;
- Strood town centre is often congested, especially at peak times, and therefore measures will need to be identified to mitigate the impacts of development. The STA will provide the evidence base for strategic infrastructure needs and mitigation requirements for each site allocation, including the Strood Waterfront sites.

Transport Statement

A Transport Statement has been prepared to assess the potential impacts of development at Strood Waterfront and suggest appropriate mitigation measures. The Transport Statement is included in Appendix 4. To minimise the impact of the development, a number of mitigation measures have been put forward for consideration. These suggested measures include council wide foundational initiatives; initiatives to be

implemented around the site area; and site specific strategies.

There is no single measure that will be able to solve the existing transport issues or those generated as a result of proposals for the site as scoped out in the illustrative masterplan. The solution is dependent on numerous individual measures and improvements across the Medway, the area, and the sites.

Guidance

Current policies and best practice encourage and support reliance on sustainable modes of transport. The transport assessment concluded that numerous individual measures and improvements across the Medway urban area would provide a suitable solution. The combination of committed infrastructure improvements, justified lower parking standards (see below), and modal shift to sustainable modes of transports could potentially allow the road network to accommodate additional traffic as a result of the proposed development. This could contribute to the development of the modern waterfront University City of Medway.

Opportunities for interaction with strategic walking and cycling routes and to promote alternative modes of transport would support the sustainable travel objective. The following were identified through the transport assessment subject to environmental considerations and impact on the MCZ:

- Greater use of the waterfront for leisure purposes. Creating synergy with the Saxon Shore Way and National Cycle Route 1 and promoting the site as a place to stop and spend time.
- Potential for cycle and walking leisure journeys to better link to Strood town centre.
- Encourage access from the former Civic Centre site to Temple Marsh. Pedestrian access along the riverfront between the former Civic Centre site and Watermill Gardens would also be encouraged.
- Improvements to the attractiveness and security of the route to Medway City Estate.
- Use of Strood Pier for ferry services or river leisure, subject to environmental considerations, evidence supporting no significant adverse impact on the MCZ and appropriate mitigation measures where required.

- Promoting a safer access route to Strood railway station, including access by bus, and ensuring that the station conforms to disability standards.

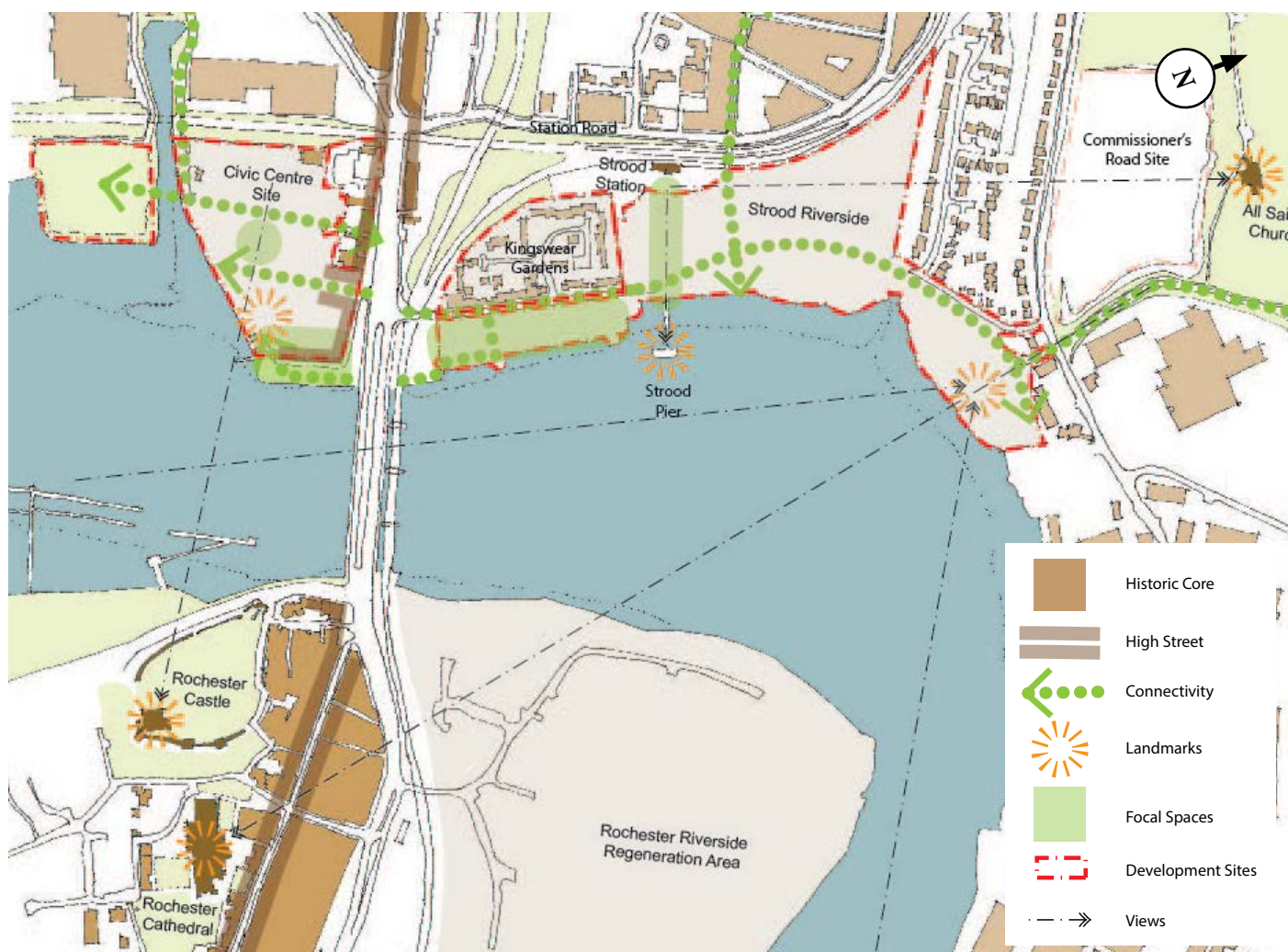
Strood Waterfront is to be a pedestrian-priority environment that promotes active mobility (walking and cycling) both within and across the Waterfront sites. Medway Local Plan 2003 Policy T3 seeks to encourage the development of safe and convenient footpaths to link houses, schools, town centres, work places, recreation areas and public transport routes. Access for maintenance vehicles is also an essential and will be required to the full extent of new flood defence walls. Potential to provide pedestrian connectivity across Jane's Creek and if possible, on to Temple Marsh should be included.

Access to the riverfront is essential for residents as it supports leisure, health objectives and general enjoyment of their surroundings. In accordance with Medway Local Plan 2003 Policy L11 (Riverside Path and

Cycleway), development on sites fronting the river will not be permitted unless the proposals include a riverside walkway and cycleway. The walkway or cycleway should provide continuity for users by connecting to, or facilitating future connections to, walkways on adjoining sites. The riverside footpath at Strood Waterfront should be designed and routed to minimise the impact on ecology, nature conservation and landscape, and take into account the integrity and operational requirements of flood defences.

A network of pathways and cycle routes connecting to amenities and new and existing open spaces throughout the development, and to provide easy, attractive active travel options is suggested. This requires adherence to the following principles:

- A riverside walkway is essential and will provide access to the waterfront for leisure and recreational purpose; to enhance the quality of the environment and making it more attractive and enjoyable.



Map 6: Strood Waterfront Design Principles


- Active travel is to take priority through new and improved walking and cycling routes including routes to rail and bus services and Strood town centre; linking the former Civic Centre, Watermill Gardens and Riverside sites, and connecting with existing walking routes where possible e.g. to the Frindsbury Conservation Area. Maintenance and pedestrian access should be provided alongside Jane's Creek where buildings should be set back a minimum of 10m from the river wall.
- Improved pedestrian crossing of Canal Road from Kingswear Gardens to Watermill Gardens and from Strood station to Strood Pier.
- Existing walking routes between Canal Road and Strood railway station and Station Road should be upgraded with hard and soft landscape and lighting to provide easier interchange between bus and rail.
- Walking routes from the site of the former Civic Centre to High Street and Knight Road should be upgraded with hard and soft landscape and lighting. New routes to the High Street should be opened up if possible.
- Existing vehicular access to the Rochester Bridge undercroft and former Civic Centre pumping station must be maintained.
- All streets should be stimulating, attractive and safe environments for all users and therefore are to be designed to provide interest, animation and passive surveillance with front doors and active frontages addressing public spaces.
- Canal Road should become an attractive, tree-lined main street for the area with numerous views to and across the river. Through-routing of motor vehicles will be constrained and design speed should reflect the road's function for local access. To accommodate through bus routes, vehicle speeds will be managed by carriageway width and surfacing in preference to speed ramps. Canal Road will provide a through connection for cyclists, linking to the wider Medway cycle route.
- Development should be serviced by a network of interconnected streets providing a choice of routes. Routes are to be legible with clear lines of sight to entry and exit points. Cul-de-sacs will only be acceptable where their termination is visible from their entrance junction.
- Routes should provide vistas to local landmarks and landscape features including:
 - Rochester Castle
 - Rochester Cathedral
 - All Saints Church, Frindsbury
 - Strood Pier and the Medway
 - Jane's Creek
- Trees should provide shade, shelter and interrupt the visual dominance of parked cars. Public seating with arms should be provided on all routes at intervals of not more than 60m so that the elderly and people with disabilities can rest.

4.10.3 Car Parking and Servicing

Appendix 6 of Medway Council's Local Plan applies an average residents' car parking standard of 1.5 spaces per dwelling, irrespective of tenure or size. However, a lower ratio can be justified in an urban area with good links to sustainable transport and where day-to-day facilities are within easy walking distance. A scoping exercise, in the form of a Transport Statement, has been carried out and attached as Appendix 4.

Planning applications will need to make the case for lower car parking provision based on the sites' uniquely sustainable locations including excellent accessibility to public transport and local amenities. The site benefits from a high degree of accessibility, rail, road network, bus and cycle links. The rail links offer a high speed service into London and Ebbsfleet international. Well connected bus and cycle links offer residents various modes of travel choice. Being in close proximity to Strood and Rochester District Centres provides a retail, service and leisure offer within walking distance along safe accessible walkways. The infrastructure is in place and facilities are in close proximity to support a modal shift. This would achieve health, safety and environmental benefits, i.e. a reduction in carbon emissions, noise and air pollution and a more pedestrian friendly environment that would increase footfall in the centres. There are therefore multiple benefits for Strood and the wider authority area.

Car parking may be provided as a mix of on plot, on-site (undercroft) and include some on-street parking spaces. On-street charging points should be provided for electric cars and e-bikes. Reserved parking spaces should be included for car clubs.



Secure bicycle storage and washing facilities should be provided for all homes including apartment buildings.

4.11 *Additional Areas for Development*

Opportunities for creating synergy and maximising the regeneration benefits of development at Strood Waterfront should be explored, including the potential for environmental improvements or redevelopment at High Street (south of Station Road), Station Road car park and the wider Strood area.

4.12 *Phasing*

Flood defence works and therefore the ensuing development work is envisaged to be comprised of at least three construction phases starting with the former Civic Centre site, then Riverside and culminating with Kingswear Gardens, if Kingswear Gardens were to come forward for redevelopment. The council would support interim uses to encourage community involvement within the site, both before and during the construction of the housing developments, where appropriate.

