

# ROCHESTER RIVERSIDE



## DEVELOPMENT BRIEF



JULY 2004

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# executive summary

Rochester Riverside is a flagship regeneration site, one of the largest and most challenging brownfield opportunities in the Thames Gateway and is also one of several major regeneration schemes in the heart of Medway. The site is highlighted as a significant opportunity in the Thames Gateway Planning Framework (1995) and designated as an Action Area for redevelopment in the Medway Local Plan (2003). It is the intention that a new and vibrant urban quarter is created that responds to the unique environmental and historic context, of its location and offers long term benefits for residents and visitors of Rochester.

This document is a development brief for Rochester Riverside and has been produced to establish the principles and requirements for the future redevelopment of the site. It explains the previous uses and history of the site, existing policy context and physical constraints, which has been used to develop guidelines to lead the delivery of proposals for the site.

The principal aims of the brief are to:

- promote a new and exciting sustainable urban quarter;
- stimulate regeneration of the waterfront through a vibrant mixed use development integrating with the existing character and environmental context of Rochester;
- ensure long term benefits for Rochester's existing and future residents and visitors;
- deliver a 'prosperity plan' for Rochester and the surrounding Medway area;
- realise inspirational and high quality urban design, architecture and public realm;
- recognise the site's role in securing and enhancing the area's ecological potential;
- create a sense of local distinctiveness and enhance Rochester's tourist appeal; and
- provide clear guidance on delivery mechanisms for the development of the site.

A number of key design principles for Rochester Riverside are set out in the development brief. These are divided into key themes, as follows:

- **Land use components** – Rochester Riverside will provide a complementary mix of uses within a high quality environment for residential living.
- **Character areas** – a number of character areas are proposed within Rochester Riverside. Each of these will have their own distinct identity whilst contributing to the overall quality and sense of place.
- **Urban form and density** – Rochester Riverside will employ high standards of urban design. The scale and density of development will respect the historic character of central Rochester whilst responding to the openness offered by the River Medway.
- **Views and vistas** – the scheme will respond to the important views and vistas towards and across the site.
- **Open space and landscape** – Rochester Riverside will offer a range of attractive publicly accessible open spaces linked by a high quality public realm.
- **Access and movement** – Rochester Riverside will be an environment that is 'people-friendly' and not dominated by the car, encouraging the use of alternative transport modes.
- **Sustainability** – layouts and design of buildings to maximise energy efficiency and sustainability. A mix of uses, public transport options, preservation and enhancement of ecological values will be integral to the design.
- **Safety and security** – Rochester Riverside is to be a safe, secure and a welcoming environment for all.

The design principles will form the basis for the preparation of a comprehensive masterplan for the site. The scheme for Rochester Riverside will need to address a number of specific site issues. These include: the provision of a two form entry primary school, upgrading existing flood defences, decontamination of the site, the replacement and retention of a number of facilities (adequate reprovision of coach and car parking and the provision of a market site), publicly accessible open space and a continuous river walk/cycleway.

It is intended that the development brief will be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance by Medway Council after the completion of a period of public consultation and be used for development control purposes.



The development brief will help to ensure that Rochester Riverside creates a physical environment that is admired by visitors and loved by those who call it home.

# 1. introduction

Rochester Riverside is a flagship site and one of the largest and most challenging opportunities in the Thames Gateway.



Waterfront regeneration



High quality architecture, urban design and public realm

Medway Waterfront represents an unparalleled regeneration opportunity to create a beautiful ‘waterfront city’: Rochester Riverside forms an important early phase of the renaissance of Medway Waterfront. It is a flagship regeneration site, one of the largest and most challenging brownfield opportunities in the Thames Gateway and is also one of several major regeneration schemes in the heart of the Medway area. As such, its development is critical to the wider regeneration of the Thames Gateway.

Rochester Riverside has the opportunity to become a vibrant and active mixed use quarter, containing a range of complementary uses. These include a range of housing types and tenures, a hotel and conference centre, retail and leisure facilities, community uses, a new primary school, business and incubator space for existing and incoming employees and a whole range of other destination based and activity generating uses.

## 1.1 PURPOSE

This development brief relates to the Rochester Riverside site and sets out a series of overarching planning and design principles within which future development will take place.

The primary aim of this brief is to guide and inform the physical aspects of the development to bring about a high quality cohesive scheme that will be a carefully considered whole rather than just a collection of buildings.

The brief does not aim to impose rigid guidelines or formulae that must be adhered to but establishes a set of strategic parameters to guide future development proposals.

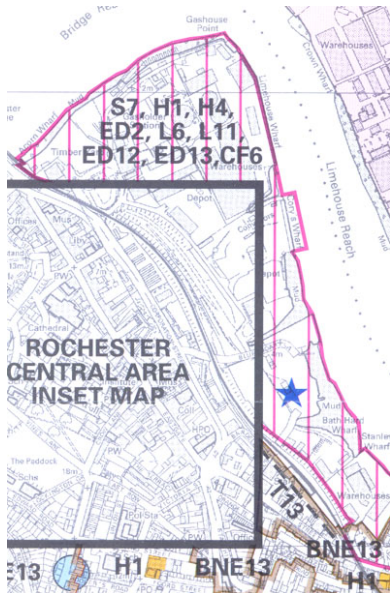
The principal aims of the brief are to:

- promote a new and exciting sustainable urban quarter;
- stimulate regeneration of the waterfront through a vibrant mixed use development integrating with the existing character and environmental context of Rochester;
- ensure long term benefits for Rochester’s existing and future residents and visitors;
- deliver a ‘prosperity plan’ for Rochester and the surrounding Medway area;
- realise inspirational and high quality urban design, architecture and public realm;
- recognise the site’s role in securing and enhancing the area’s ecological potential;
- create a sense of local distinctiveness and enhance Rochester’s tourist appeal; and
- provide clear guidance on delivery mechanisms for the development of the site.



It is intended that this development brief will be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) by Medway Council after the completion of public consultation. The brief will provide planning and design guidance to promote development interest and be used for development control purposes.

Policy S7 of the adopted Medway Local Plan states the following in respect of the Rochester Riverside site:



Rochester Riverside Medway Local Plan proposals map designation

#### POLICY S7: ROCHESTER RIVERSIDE ACTION AREA

The area of the Medway riverside north of Corporation Street, Rochester between Rochester Bridge and Dust Way, as defined on the proposals map, is designated as an Action Area.

The comprehensive regeneration of this area, over the next ten years, will be sought in accordance with a development brief approved by the council. Features which the Action Area is expected to provide include:

- The development of approximately 1500-1800 dwellings including affordable housing, of which 300 to be completed by 2006.
- The provision of areas of open space and a riverside walk.
- A new river wall and reclamation in locations between the Shiplink (Limehouse Wharf) and Dust Way.
- The reservation of a site for a new primary school and the construction of other community facilities.
- The creation of new leisure facilities and a hotel.
- Appropriate small-scale employment uses in use Classes B1 and B2.

All new development will be expected to comply with the following principles:

- i) comprehensive mixed-use redevelopment to maximise the potential for securing the regeneration of the whole area and its vicinity;
- ii) a high standard of urban design and landscape, establishing it as a new quarter of the urban area;
- iii) high quality mixed developments, appropriate to the location of this area close to both the riverside and historic Rochester; and
- iv) the provision of good pedestrian and cycle links within the site and to historic Rochester and to the public transport network, including Rochester Railway Station.

An ecological and hydrological appraisal of the impact of any development proposals will be required, particularly in relation to the construction of a new river wall on the mudflats and inter-tidal areas.

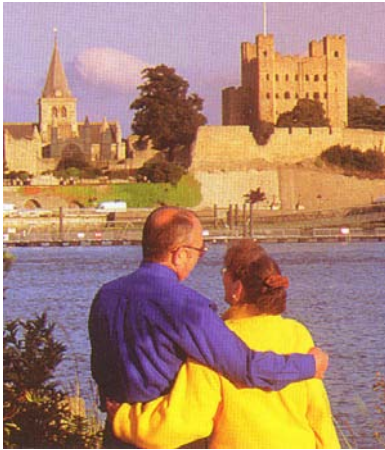
As future Supplementary Planning Guidance this development brief will provide key principles and guidelines that will be adhered to and fully integrated into the design of a comprehensive and detailed masterplan.

In particular, a future masterplan for the site is to incorporate the following elements:

- a mix of residential dwellings of which a proportion should be affordable (the provision of affordable housing should be in accordance with current adopted local planning policy);
- parking in accordance with adopted standards in the Medway Local Plan. This should also include adequate parking either on site or close to the development for non-residential uses;
- a 4 star hotel with conference facilities;
- 2 form entry primary school;
- a small scale food store that services the convenience needs of residents created by the new development;
- an appropriate level of non-residential commercial use including the Castlevew Business Estate where units 7-28 are to remain;
- public art;
- community facilities;
- continuous river walk/cycleway;
- publicly accessible open space (including the river walk/cycleway and high quality public realm creating a destination in its own right) to meet the needs of residents, workers and visitors;
- natural open space (this should include a mix of inter-tidal habitat and terrestrial habitat in the form of trees, scrub and naturally managed grassland for the benefit of wildlife and people);
- a river wall 6.1m above ordinance datum at Newlyn and designed in accordance with Environmental Agency standards and PPG25;
- new entrance to Rochester Station from the development;
- measures to integrate the development with Rochester High Street (e.g. overcoming the severance caused by Corporation Street and the railway);
- new piers/landing stages; and
- the replacement or retention of the following facilities:
  - an 18 space coach park with driver/visitor facilities;
  - 370 public parking spaces within or adjacent to the development\*; and
  - a market site.

\* Existing car parks: Blue Boar Lane (145 spaces); Market Site and Corporation Street (217 spaces); The Common (25 spaces); Eason's Yard (83 spaces).

## 1.2 WHAT IS TO BE ACHIEVED?



Rochester Riverside will become a high quality urban development that acknowledges historic Rochester.

A strong “vision” exists for Rochester Riverside. This vision is to create a new and exciting urban quarter that responds to the unique environmental and historic context of its location and offers long term benefits for the future of Rochester and its residents.

Rochester Riverside has been described by Lord Rogers as “what urban renaissance is all about”. It has the potential to become a high density, high quality, mixed use ‘flagship’ development – **an exemplar of urban renaissance and renewal**.

Rochester Riverside will be **an exceptional and exciting sustainable development** that serves as a valuable asset at all levels – to historic Rochester, to Medway as a whole, to regeneration in the Thames Gateway and as an example of regeneration nationally. Indeed, Rochester Riverside should be seen as improving the current ‘offer’ and providing a **prosperity plan for Rochester** itself and the surrounding Medway area. Rochester Riverside will be an excellent example of how development can benefit both wildlife and people.

The ‘vision’ for Rochester Riverside is to establish a new urban quarter as a **vital component** of the Council’s waterfront regeneration strategy. Development, therefore, is to be complementary to those regeneration opportunities and projects elsewhere in Medway. Indeed, the success of Rochester Riverside will be marked by its ability to establish a **vibrant community** with a range of uses and activities, in a way which does not compromise the vitality and viability of surrounding areas and centres.

Rochester Riverside will become a **special place** – with a built form that integrates with the historic character, scale, feel and rhythm of Rochester itself. From within the development one should feel as though they are in Rochester. This is to be achieved by establishing attractive connections from the site to Rochester and Chatham High Streets, creating an urban grain and feel, and responding to the historic context of the site through architecture, public art and streetscape.

The design of Rochester Riverside will explore the opportunities offered by the waterfront location – the feel, behaviour, setting and unique environment that it offers. As one enjoys and discovers Rochester Riverside reference, both physical and theoretical, should always be made to the waterfront – through the pattern of attractive streets and spaces, the creation of views and vistas and the location of different uses.

Together, the historical and waterfront references create a **unique place of story and discovery** that will welcome, surprise and delight, residents and visitors.

It is essential that qualities which will define the environment and character of Rochester Riverside are created from the outset and then evolve and mature over time. Careful phasing and employing the highest quality of design will ensure that Rochester Riverside becomes a delightful and stimulating place for all.



Rochester Riverside – ‘a place that embodies the strengths of historic Rochester and, combined with the unique waterfront setting, creates a physical environment that is admired by visitors and loved by those who call it home.’

### 1.3 STRUCTURE

The structure of the development brief is as follows:

Section 2	Describes the site context and history.
Section 3	Identifies the site and describes the existing site characteristics in terms of existing uses, surrounding development and physical characteristics.
Section 4	Summarises the planning policy context for Rochester Riverside from the national level down to the local.
Section 5	Identifies the physical, environmental and design constraints of the site.
Section 6	Defines the overarching design and movement principles for the future development of Rochester Riverside.
Section 7	Outlines the phasing and implementation measures required for the Rochester Riverside development.
Section 8	Sets out a range of next steps that need to be taken to ensure the Rochester Riverside vision is realised and achieved.
Section 9	Glossary of definitions of key words and terms used in the development brief.

### 1.4 CONSULTATION

Following a period of consultation, the Rochester Riverside Development Brief was adopted as supplementary planning guidance by Medway Council on 29<sup>th</sup> June, 2004. A separate report is available from the regeneration team at Medway Council that summarises all the comments received during the consultation and the Council’s response to them.

## 2. site context

### 2.1 STRATEGIC ROLE

The south east has been identified as the gateway to the rest of the UK due to its transport infrastructure, including six international airports, five international rail stations, six major ports and an extensive road, motorway and rail network. The Channel Tunnel has also enabled the region to become more open and accessible to Continental Europe. These key factors will help foster the further economic success and regeneration of the south east region.

The Thames Gateway area, which runs from East London through North Kent and South Essex and includes the Medway Towns, is identified within Regional Planning Guidance (RPG9a) as being of national priority and has unique potential due to its strategic location and strong assets.

The Medway area covers approximately 250 sq. km and takes in the whole built up area of Medway and consists of the five Medway Towns of; Rochester, Chatham, Gillingham, Rainham and Strood along the north Kent coast. The Medway Towns are:

*'home to more than 250,000 people and 4,000 companies, this makes them one of the biggest communities in the South East outside of London and an important focus for commerce in the area'*  
(para 6.10.1, RPG9A).

The Medway area also consists of a large amount of attractive countryside, ranging from the North Downs through the Medway Valley to the marshes around the river estuary. The westernmost part of the Medway area lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt.

As part of the Thames Gateway area, Rochester Riverside is part of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's focus on increasing the speed of delivery of development projects, while ensuring sustainable and well integrated communities.

The attraction of the Medway Towns is mainly drawn from Chatham Historic Dockyard, the most complete Georgian Dockyard in the world and the unique historic urban environment within the centre of Rochester, which are both of national importance. In relation to Rochester Riverside RPG9a notes :

*'Rochester Castle, the Cathedral precinct and the High Street combine to provide an historic townscape of national importance'*  
(para 6.10.4, RPG9A)

The predominance of these historic areas has led to the tourist activity in Medway being centred around Rochester High Street and Chatham Waterfront. This historic legacy is an important feature within Medway and is a valuable strength of Rochester and Chatham in terms of attracting new investment to the area.

Rochester Riverside is located within the Medway Towns and is identified as a 'main opportunity site' within the Thames Gateway Area. The site has the potential to play an important role in creating an effective link between the historic city core and the riverside.



Medway Waterfront – Rochester Riverside, Chatham and Chatham Maritime

Rochester is well located in terms of both road and rail connections to London, Canterbury and Dover. In particular the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL), which is currently being completed, will improve high speed train links between London and European Cities. Rochester, Chatham and Gillingham stations will connect with the CTRL services at Ebbsfleet International Passenger Station via the North Kent Line, and journey times to central London will be significantly improved. These improved rail connections will not only reduce travel times between Medway and London but are likely to increase development potential around the station areas, particularly in terms of commercial and residential development.



Rochester High Street

#### *Character influences of Rochester Riverside site...*

There are a number of important elements that influence the emerging character of Rochester Riverside. These include:

- **The River Medway** – to a large extent bounds the northern edge of the Medway towns and has a character of a working river, although less so than during its industrial past. The working aspects of the River Medway are particularly noticeable at Strood Riverside and the Medway City Estate.
- **Rochester High Street** – is the current focus for pedestrian and visitor activity and from where visitors to Rochester city centre are most likely to come from into Rochester Riverside. Therefore, pedestrian access and views into the Riverside Area should be strongly concentrated along these lines of movement.
- **Rochester Station** – the location of the station adjacent to the site and its future improved rail connections between Rochester, Ebbsfleet, Central London and Medway Towns will exert an important influence on the perceptions of the property market towards development in and around Rochester Riverside.
- **Star Hill to Sun Pier Conservation Area** – is partly located within the southern area of Rochester Riverside and provides an important influence on the character and built form of the riverside and new development.



River Medway – View looking towards Rochester Riverside site from Strood

## 2.2 SURROUNDING USES AND SERVICES

**Retail** – within Medway, Chatham town centre is classified as a regional centre. A current masterplanning exercise in Chatham town centre is examining the expansion of the existing shopping centre in response to the quality of the current retail offer.

Rochester is classed as an Urban District Centre and is not therefore the target for additional major retailing. Rochester city centre has developed as a niche market for mainly independent retailers in areas such as antiques, arts and tourist related uses. There is a high proportion of pubs, bars and restaurants near the centre resulting in a vibrant evening economy.

**Leisure** – Medway offers an extensive variety of facilities, however, the overall amount of provision is lacking. The existing provision includes: a regional sports centre in Gillingham, a district sports centre in Strood, the Ice Bowl and Gillingham Business Park, an Alpine Ski Centre in Capstone Country Park. The most recent addition to the leisure offer in Rochester is the development of the Medway Valley Leisure Park offering a mix of A3

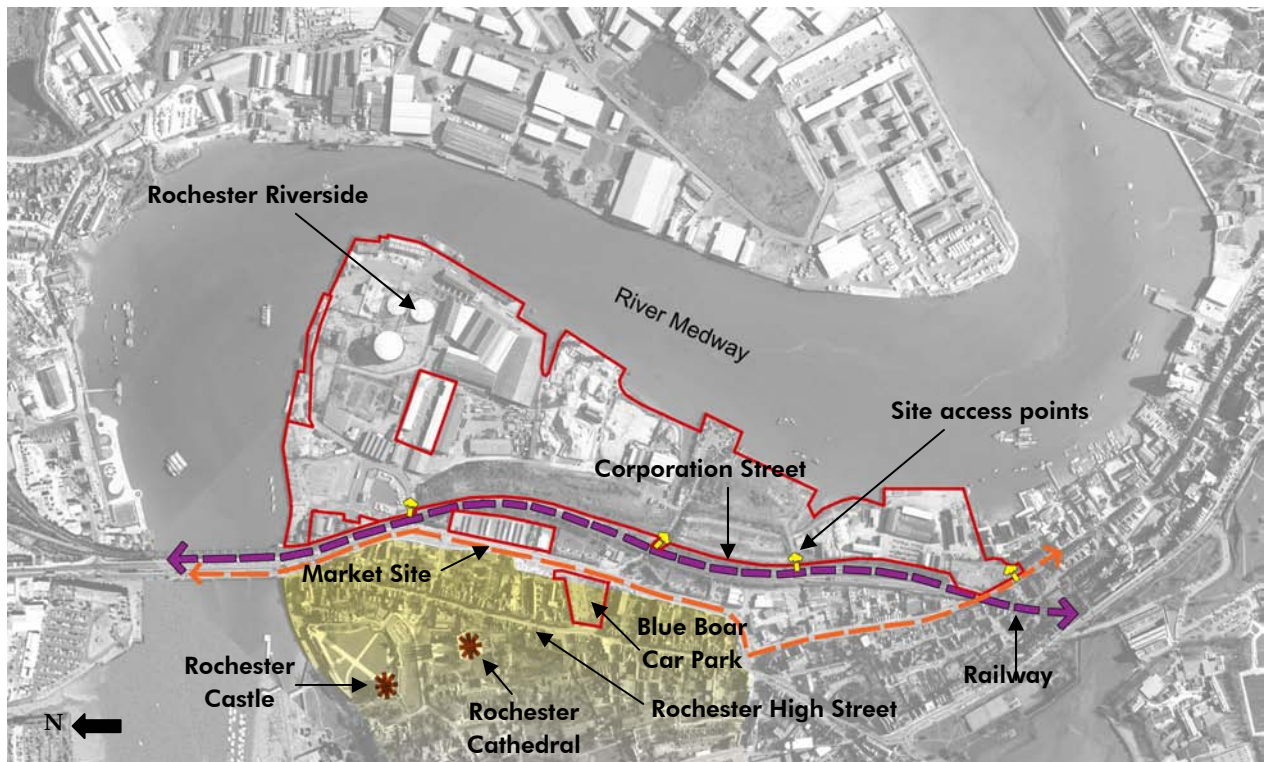
uses, health and fitness facilities, a night-club and an eight screen cinema. The present hotel offer in Rochester is poor, with existing hotels being low grade.

**Public transport** – Public transport in Medway is not well used. Public perception is that the bus network is poor and fundamental improvements in the service are required in order to increase its use. Most of the buses serve the town areas with between two and eight buses an hour (week days) while rural areas have a much less frequent service.

A significant proportion of people working in Medway travel by train out of the area. There are a number of stations in Medway. The rail service currently offers a 40 minute journey between Rochester and London Victoria. In the long term, the completion of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link is expected to provide a 30 minute journey time to London St. Pancras. In the short term the priority is to improve the quality of the rail service.



# 3. site description



Site location plan

## 3.1 SITE LOCATION

Rochester Riverside is a brownfield site adjacent to the River Medway and the historic city of Rochester. The site comprises some 32 hectares of mixed use and derelict land with a river frontage of approximately 1.2 kilometres.

The main area of the site is bounded to the north and east by the River Medway, to the west by the operational railway tracks (London Victoria to Canterbury) and to the south by residential development. Access into the site is currently achieved at two points off Corporation Street at Gas House Road and Blue Boar Lane, and at two points off the High Street at Furrell's Road and Doust Way

In addition to the main site area there are two small areas located to the west of the main site boundary that are to be considered as part of this development brief (these are referred to as Market Site and Blue Boar Car Park).

### 3.2 SITE CHARACTERISTICS

Rochester Riverside is a complex site. The Existing Site Plan shows the existing site divided into a number of zones to aid description. The existing character and attributes of each of these zones is as follows:



Existing site zone plan



Industrial character & poor landscape quality affects the site



Gas holders dominate the landscape in Zone One

**Zone One** – This zone is dominated by three gas holders, within the Transco site, and large warehouses which are highly visible due to their prominent location on the peninsula of the site.

There is limited vehicular circulation within this zone with the access road terminating at Limehouse Wharf.

This part of the site is subject to some contamination due to previous activities.

**Zone Two** – Aggregate import and ready mixed concrete operation facilities are the main occupiers within this zone and utilise access of the river for commercial purposes. Consequently, the physical environment is of poor visual and landscape quality.

The mudflats, tidal creeks and riverbank protection within Zone Two have developed as interesting ecological areas.



Derelict & exposed riverbank

**Zone Three** – Zone Three is predominantly unused and subject to high levels of fly tipping which gives an impression of dereliction. This zone is relatively exposed and has little built development on it.

The river edge occupies an important part of this zone and will need to be investigated as part of the detailed development of a masterplan for the site.

**Zone Four** – The environmental quality is low within the majority of the southern area as it is used predominantly for wharfage warehouses and builders yards.

Vehicular access and circulation into the site is restricted due to the large-scale uses and limited vehicular access through Bath Hard.

A car park and KIAD student accommodation is provided off Doust Way. This reduces the scale of the built form to be more in keeping with the residential dwellings within the Star Hill to Sun Pier Conservation area (the conservation area is partly located within Rochester Riverside) see Section 4.3.

The site is subject to some contamination due to previous activities.

**Other sites** – future proposals for Rochester Riverside are to include two sites to the west of the main site. These are known as Market Site and Blue Boar Lane Car Park (see existing site plan). These sites are discussed in Section 3.3.

#### *Key site characteristics and issues...*

**Industrial Character** – the character of the area is largely industrial. Rochester Riverside has accommodated a wide variety of large and small scale industrial, commercial and maritime activities since the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, but most of these have declined or ceased operations. Today, some industrial and commercial activities remain, together with substantial areas of derelict and under-used land.

**Gasholders** – Rochester’s original town gas works was located here. The gasholders still dominate the site.

**Physically Separated** – the site is physically separated from Rochester by the main railway line from London Victoria and London Bridge to the North Kent coast and by the A2 road. There is limited public access to the site with few opportunities to gain access to the riverfront. Where footpaths exist they are unwelcoming and dominated by adjoining roads. Vehicular access to and from the site is restricted due to the low height and narrow width of the railway bridges.

**Railway Station** – the station is poorly integrated with the existing city centre in terms of its location and current layout.

**Visibility** – the railway embankment provides a significant visual and physical barrier which divorces the site from the heart of the existing city. Views into the site tend to be localised and oblique.





Castle View Business Park



View to Acorn Shipyard

### 3.3 CURRENT USES

The Rochester Riverside site contains a number of current occupiers and landowners, across a range of leasehold and tenancy terms.

**Zone One** – A variety of industrial, commercial and water related uses, in a mixture of small and large premises, are operating within this zone. The Transco site, including the three gas holders, dominate the central area with warehouses on Limehouse Wharf bounding the east and south-east edges of the Transco site. To the north is the operational Acorn Shipyard and to the south, Castle View Business Park, which contains a mix of independent operators including printers, manufacturing and sales activities.

The coach park is located off Gas House Way and is utilised by tour operators bringing visitors to Rochester particularly around festival time.

The remainder of the site includes a transport depot, warehousing and print works.

**Zone Two** – The principal uses within this zone are RMC Aggregates, waste management facilities, along Cory's Wharf. The railway sidings and the redundant Blue Boar Wharf occupy the remainder of this zone.

**Zone Three** – The former railway sidings and Furrells Wharf form the majority of this central zone. This zone is predominantly unused with minimal built structures on site. Previous uses include business and industry.

**Zone Four** – This zone is characterised by a mix of smaller uses including builders' merchants and independent occupiers, compared to the majority of the site. The southern area includes Easons Car Park and student housing for KIAD on the former Doust Shipyard. There are a number of warehouses at the back of Stanley Wharf.

**Other Sites** – the Existing Site Plan also highlights two areas to the west of the main site that form an integral part of the Rochester Riverside scheme area. As identified on the plan these sites currently contain the following uses:

- **Market Site** – council car park used weekly as the site for a market. The market is to be relocated from this site as part of the development proposals for Rochester Riverside.
- **Blue Boar Lane Car Park** – located adjacent to the High Street, this site is currently used as a surface car park with approximately 145 spaces.

### 3.4 PROJECT BACKGROUND

The background to the present opportunity for the mixed use regeneration of Rochester Riverside began in 1993 when Rochester City Council established a set of policy objectives for the area. These aimed towards achieving comprehensive redevelopment for a variety of uses including employment, residential, open space and a riverside walk. In 1997 Rochester City Council served a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) on the site and this was confirmed in October 1998 when Medway Council came into existence. In 2001 the council exercised these powers to secure the assembly of the bulk of the site. This was completed in 2003 and SEEDA, the Council's partners, are now negotiating to acquire the gas land.

Outline planning permission was granted for mixed use development containing 450 houses in 1998, however this lapsed in 2001. The permission contained insufficient detail to give a developer confidence that a new application would be permitted. Today, with site assembly almost complete a new outline planning permission based on a detailed scheme is to be sought.

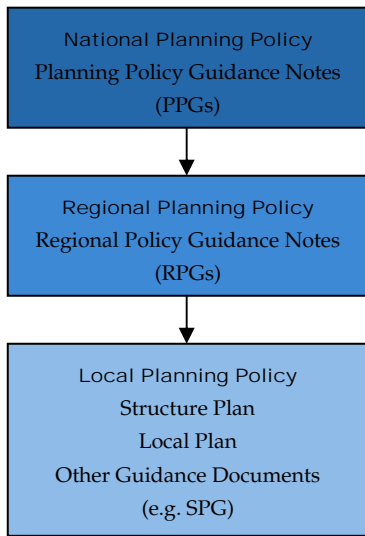
This development brief sets out the principles and guidelines that a new scheme should address to ensure that a high quality development occurs.

#### *Rochester Riverside today...*

- Rochester Riverside contains approximately 32 hectares (74 acres) of land, which is predominantly in the ownership of Medway Council following a programme of Compulsory Purchase (CPO) and land acquisition adopted by the Council since 1993. Site assembly is now almost complete. SEEDA are carrying out negotiations, to obtain outstanding parcels of land.
- Rochester Riverside forms a crucial element of the Thames Gateway Strategy, having been identified as a major regeneration opportunity and will help the Government achieve its aims for deliverable sustainable communities.
- The development of Rochester Riverside will form a major component in bringing about the strategic regeneration of Medway in line with the objectives of the Thames Gateway Strategy and the broader objectives of both national and regional Government guidance.



# 4. planning policy context



Hierarchy of planning policy and guidance.

A hierarchy of planning policy and guidance documents govern the way in which land is developed and used. At the strategic level, policy is applied at the national and regional scale. At the local level, policy is applied from the borough to neighbourhood scale. Relevant guidance at the national, regional and local level is summarised in this section.

It is important to note that at the time of producing this Development Brief Planning Policy Guidance Notes are in the process of being replaced by a series of planning policy Statements (PPS). All development carrying forward as part of the future plans for Rochester Riverside will need to accord with Planning Policy Statements as and when they become formally adopted.

## 4.1 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

Since the publication of *Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: Housing* in March 2000 and the *Urban White Paper Our Towns and Cities: The Future – Delivering an Urban Renaissance* published in November 2000, national policy has strengthened the focus on maximising the use of urban land and encouraging mixed-use developments.

National policy on urban design has also been reviewed in recent years, with the publication of *By Design* in 2000. This document stresses the importance of good urban design and urbanism, the need for high quality in building design, streets, public places and materials.

Of particular relevance to Rochester Riverside is the Government’s approach to the planning system which is outlined in *Planning Policy Guidance Note 1: General Policy and Principles (1997)*. PPG1 is underpinned by three interrelated themes of sustainable development, mixed-use and good design. Specific aspects of these themes are:

- Sustainable development seeks to deliver the objective of achieving economic development to secure higher living standards, while protecting and enhancing the environment. In particular, a sustainable framework should seek to use already developed areas in the most efficient way while making them more attractive places in which to live and work and to shape new development patterns in a way which minimises the need to travel;
- Mixed-use development can help create vitality and diversity and reduce the need to travel. The planning system seeks to deliver high quality mixed use developments such as urban villages with a mixture of uses, high standards of urban design, access to public open space and green spaces and ready access to public transport; and
- Emphasis is placed on good design. The effects of new buildings and their curtilages have a significant effect on the character and quality of

an area and related issues of civic pride, a sense of place and an area's attractiveness for business and investment. As such design is recognised as a matter of proper public interest.

The development of Rochester Riverside will be required to achieve these national policy objectives.

#### 4.2 REGIONAL PLANNING POLICY

Regional Guidance relating to the application site is set out in the Regional Planning Guidance Notes; RPG9 and RPG9a. In March 2001, the Government Offices for the South East, East of England and London published the revised *Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9)*. It sets out regional and central government's approach to development in the South East of England.

Within this strategic framework provided by RPG9, more detailed regional guidance is provided for Rochester Riverside in the *Thames Gateway Planning Framework (RPG9a)* (1995). The Framework identifies the site as one of four 'main opportunity sites' in the Medway Towns for delivery of the Thames Gateway Strategy.

##### Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9)

RPG9 provides a clear vision for the South East of England; that being one of:

*"encouraging economic success throughout the Region, ensuring a higher quality of environment with management of natural resources, opportunity and equity for the Region's population, and a more sustainable pattern of development"*

(para 3.1).

It reiterates that adopting the principles of sustainable development is particularly important across the South East to retain the economic success of the region and to protect environmental and cultural assets given the external pressures on the resources in the region. Development should be concentrated in urban areas to help foster the urban renaissance. Increased densities, a greater diversity in housing provision and the adoption of the sequential approach to development are supported through RPG9 (para 3.8-3.11).

Regional guidance promotes a key set of development principles for the South East. Those of relevance to the site are that:

- urban areas should become the main focus for development through making them more attractive, accessible and better able to attract investment;
- greenfield development should normally take place only after other alternatives have been considered, and should have regard to the full social, environmental and transport costs of location;
- the pattern of development should be less dispersed with more sustainable patterns of activity, allowing home, work, leisure, green spaces, cultural facilities and community spaces to be in closer proximity;
- economic opportunities should be increased .... [including] positive investment strategies for the Thames Gateway;

- the development of housing should be more sustainable, providing a better mix of sizes, types and tenures;
- development should be located and designed to enable more sustainable use of the Region's natural resources;
- there should be continued protection and enhancement of the Region's biodiversity;
- access to jobs should be less dependent on longer distance movement; and
- transport investment should support the spatial strategy, maintaining the existing network, enhancing access as part of more concentrated forms of development, overcoming bottlenecks and supporting higher capacity and less polluting modes of transport (para 3.5).

These key development principles are to shape the development and future role of Rochester Riverside.

#### RPG9a The Thames Gateway Planning Framework (1995)

The Thames Gateway Planning Framework (1995) provides sub-regional guidance for the Thames Gateway region, which runs from East London through North Kent and South Essex, including Rochester and the other Medway Towns.

RPG9a states that the Thames Gateway is an area of opportunity where housing and economic development provide great potential for growth within the region, in conjunction with environmental improvements. Previously, the area was characterised by industrial dereliction and environmental decay. RPG9a states that the designation of the 'Thames Gateway' will help foster economic, social and environmental regeneration by setting the strategic framework (para 1.4).

RPG9a states that development within the region must be sustainable and development should be of the highest quality and integrated with existing transport networks. RPG9a highlights a number of objectives for the Thames Gateway:

- to improve economic performance;
- to maximise the opportunities for new economic activity and jobs, created by improving transport connections to continental Europe;
- to work with the market; building on existing economic and community strengths, enforcing the economic base, and at the same time attracting new economic investment; strengthening existing communities as well as attracting new residents;
- to encourage a sustainable pattern of development, optimising the use of existing and proposed infrastructure and making the fullest possible use of the many vacant, derelict and under-used sites;
- to safeguard and enhance natural and man-made assets and, where necessary, raise the quality of the local environment; and
- to encourage the highest quality in the design, layout and appearance of new developments (para 1.8).

RPG9a places emphasis on the creation of partnerships to deliver key projects. Of particular relevance to Rochester Riverside, RPG9a identifies the following opportunities and constraints:

- the potential for flagship projects on large sites;
- the scope for development to be located on previously used sites;
- the many fine waterfront locations which can provide attractive settings for development;
- the recognition of actual and potential contaminated land;
- high unemployment; and
- a lack of ambition and self-reinforcing cycle of environmental degradation (para 2.5).

Particularly important for the development proposals, RPG9a states that main development principles are:

- the importance of getting the right mix of development onto the major opportunity sites, in order to create vibrant communities, where the relationship between homes and places of work, commerce, relaxation and leisure are more sustainable; creating a vibrant and sustainable pattern of communities;
- the economic and environmental potential of the river and river-front and the need to avoid loss of the waterfront to developments which do not significantly benefit from a riverside location; bringing life to the river and river-front; and
- the scope for environmental improvement and economic regeneration to complement each other (para 4.3).

RPG9a specifically recognises Rochester waterfront as a significant opportunity

*“...for high quality housing and business developments.”*

(paras 6.10.2 and 6.10.3)

It also recognises the importance of the Medway Towns’ historic heritage. In particular,

*“Rochester Castle, the Cathedral precinct and the High Street combine to provide an historic townscape of national importance.”*

(para 6.10.4)

This historic environment is to be fostered and protected and future regeneration opportunities are to be brought forward without conflicting with the natural and built heritage. Indeed,

*“There is scope to improve the relationship between the historic heritage of the Medway Towns and the potential for development. One example, the importance of an effective link between Rochester Waterfront and the historic core of the town.”*

(para 6.10.6)

#### South East Regional Transport Strategy (Draft Jan 2003)

A Regional Transport Strategy is currently being prepared for the South East. It will represent a replacement of the transport section in RPG9 (2001). All development proposals for Rochester Riverside will need to be in accordance with this emerging document.

“The Strategy aims to create a high quality transport system to act as a catalyst for continued economic growth and improved quality of life for all.”

The following strategy objectives are of relevance.

- to improve transport infrastructure within the Thames Gateway to maximise regeneration potential and encourage economic development;
- to improve strategic rail and road links;
- to improve and develop more sustainable transport connections;
- to facilitate urban renaissance; and
- to reduce the wider environmental, health and community impact associated with the transport system by bringing forward measures to positively manage the transport system in urban areas that reduces our dependence on the private car.

#### 4.3 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

At the local level a number of policy and guidance documents are relevant to the development of Rochester Riverside. Of particular relevance are the Kent Structure Plan (1996), the Medway Local Plan (2003) and the Kent Waste Local Plan (1998).

##### Kent Structure Plan (1996)

The adopted Kent Structure Plan (1996) covers the period 1996 – 2011. This will be replaced by the Kent and Medway Structure Plan, which was placed on deposit in 2003 but has not yet been adopted.

A key objective of the Structure Plan is to support and improve the standard of the environment and quality of life, whilst improving the level of economic prosperity and obtaining a high quality in the standard of new development. A further objective is to preserve and enhance the environment through adopting a strategy of sustainable development (para 3.1 – 3.6).

Within this context, a number of strategic objectives have been developed for Kent as a series of policies and are summarised thus:

- **Policy S1:** that local planning authorities will seek to achieve a sustainable pattern and form of development;
- **Policy S2:** that the quality of Kent’s environment will be conserved and enhanced, and measures will be taken to minimise, and where appropriate, mitigate, any adverse impacts arising from development and land use change;
- **Policy S3:** to stimulate economic activity and employment in Kent by the growth of existing industry and commerce and the attraction of new firms;



- **Policy S5:** in the Thames Gateway, it will be important to upgrade the quality of the environment, and to enhance the economic base of the area by the promotion of major new commercial development of high environmental quality, by the improvement of transport (including public transport) and other infrastructure, and by increasing the range of housing, leisure and community facilities;
- **Policy S6:** housing provision should enhance the quality, range and choice of housing and be concentrated in urban areas;
- **Policy S7:** the development of transport infrastructure and integration of transport strategy with land uses;
- **Policy S8:** the enhancement of the vitality and viability of town centres, particularly through the enhancement of shopping, service, business and leisure and through providing residential accommodation; and
- **Policy S9:** to provide community facilities where needed, including education, health and cultural facilities, local shopping facilities, transport infrastructure and public utilities.

The Structure Plan supports the principles of regional guidance, recognising the need to encourage development of the Thames Gateway as it is identified as the main opportunity for growth. A number of objectives relating specifically to the Thames Gateway are developed:

- comprehensive development should be of high quality, improving the general environmental appearance and for the benefit of the local economy;
- the potential of securing regeneration on damaged and previously-developed land;
- development proposals should take account of the important built heritage and archaeological resources in Thames Gateway; and
- the role of major development locations in the development strategy should be of a more sustainable pattern and form though land use mix, form and density in relation to neighbouring urban areas (para 3.70 – 3.79).

The Structure Plan continues by providing specific guidance in relation to the Medway Towns. A principal objective is to develop and recycle areas of under-used and damaged land within the urban framework of the towns (para 3.92).

Policy NK2 states;

*“Policy NK2: At the Medway Towns it is a strategic policy to promote development through reinvestment in the urban fabric including redevelopment and recycling of under-used and derelict land within the urban framework, with a focus on the riverside areas, in the interests of upgrading the environmental quality and image of the area and to restrict outward peripheral expansion on fresh land, in particular to the East of Gillingham. The provision of the Medway Towns Northern Relief Road and improvements to the A228 are key pieces of infrastructure needed to support regeneration of the town centres and riverside sites and will be promoted. Long term protection will be afforded to areas of national, international or other strategic importance for nature conservation.”*

### Kent and Medway Structure Plan (September 2003)

As mentioned above, the adopted Kent Structure Plan (1996) covers the period 1996 – 2011. This will be replaced by the Kent and Medway Structure Plan (Mapping Out the Future, September 2003), which roles forward the Structure Plan to 2021. The following references are to the September 2003 document.

The overall spatial strategy for Kent and Medway is followed by Area Based Policies which set out priorities for different parts of the County. Policy NK2: Medway, states *“Proposals to regenerate Medway should focus upon the Medway Waterfront including central Chatham, Rochester Riverside and at Strood.”* Paragraph 3.11 states that *“Urban renaissance will be accelerated particularly through the regeneration of the Medway Waterfront and through the renewal of poor quality housing. Medway Waterfront is a series of large-scale inter-linked brownfield development sites along the River Medway. It includes Chatham Centre and Waterfront and the adjacent Rochester Riverside and Chatham Maritime.”*

Structure Plan policy NR9 deals with management of development and flood risk and states that

*“Development will be planned to avoid the risk of flooding and will not be permitted:*

- *If it would be subject to an unacceptable risk of flooding or where it would increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.....*
- *If it would adversely affect the ability of the land to drain”*

Paragraph 9.46 which supports this policy deals with mitigation by design and identifies raising ground levels as a suitable detailed design measures to minimise risk in areas where it is essential that development takes place.

The Structure Plan is the appropriate document for planning policy guidance on minerals and waste disposal issues. Policy WM6 seeks to ensure an appropriate provision of strategic waste management facilities across the County to meet local and regional needs. The Policy states that *“wherever practicable facilities should be located to enable the use of rail and/or water based transport”*.

One of the key issues identified for mineral resources is the need to *“maintain sufficient capacity for the importation of minerals”* since geological and environmental constraints mean that approximately two thirds of primary aggregates are supplied by rail and wharf facilities (2001 figures). Policy M4 deals with the provision and safeguarding of marine wharves and rail depots. This states that *“existing marine wharfs and rail depots which receive and process minerals will be protected generally from development that would inhibit their continued operation or potential expansion”*. However, Medway already has three facilities for import of aggregates, two of which have the benefit of a rail link. Rochester Riverside is not identified in the Structure Plan as one of the major ports in the County.

The transportation section of the Structure Plan contains policies relating to Kent and Medway Ports. Policy TP22 states that *“On the Thames and Medway in North Kent, key deep water wharves will be retained and a programme of investment in modern facilities, rail access and good highway linkages will be*

*pursued. A programme of rationalisation of the wharves will be carried forward as part of the Thames Gateway initiative". The Structure Plan strategy toward the ports includes "...redevelopment for other uses at ports and smaller wharves where port operations are no longer viable or where transport access is inadequate, carried out in partnership with the port owners and local planning authorities."*

#### Medway Local Plan (2003)

The Medway Local Plan sets out the strategy, objectives and detailed policy for guiding development in Medway. The overarching development strategy for the plan area is to prioritise re-investment in the urban fabric. This is to include the redevelopment and recycling of under-used and derelict land within the urban area, with a focus on the Medway riverside areas and Chatham, Gillingham, Strood, Rochester and Rainham town centres (Policy S1).

The implementation of this development strategy is to be guided and focused on a number of principles:

- maintaining and improving environmental quality and design standards;
- a sustainable approach to the location and mix of new development, to provide local communities, (including transport measures to serve development and sensitivity in the use of energy and natural resources); and
- the adoption of a sequential approach to the location of major people and traffic attracting forms of development, including retailing, leisure, educational and health facilities.

Specific strategic policies for Rochester Riverside detail the Council's objectives and principles. The site is recognised as largely industrial, derelict and with large gas-holders dominating the northern part of the site. It is seen as an obvious urban brownfield site that needs regenerating and promoting for the sustainable re-use of urban previously-developed land.

A series of objectives have emerged for the development of Rochester Riverside:

- Achieve a new vision and sense of place;
- Bring land and buildings into effective use
- Provide community benefits
- Build confidence and increase economic investment
- Improve commercial prospects for businesses by relocating them to more convenient sites
- Achieve the decontamination of land and provision of sites for redevelopment within an overall framework
- Encourage public access to the riverside.

The development strategy and above objectives formed the basis of the designation of Rochester Riverside as an Action Area for redevelopment. Action Areas are defined in *Planning Policy Guidance Note 12: Development Plans* (2000) as "an area selected for ... comprehensive treatment by development, redevelopment or improvement".

Policy S7 states that the comprehensive regeneration of Rochester Riverside, over the next 10 years, will be sought in accordance with a development brief adopted by the council.

Policy S7 also sets out the features which the Rochester Riverside Action Area is expected to provide:

- The development of approximately 1500-1800 dwellings including affordable housing, of which 300 are to be completed by 2006;
- The provision of areas of open space and a riverside walk;
- A new river wall and reclamation in locations between the Shiplink (Limehouse Wharf) site and Doust Way;
- The reservation of a site for a new primary school and the construction of other community facilities;
- The creation of new leisure facilities and a hotel; and
- Appropriate small-scale employment uses in Use Classes B1 and B2

Future proposals for development at Rochester Riverside should reflect and be in accordance with the principles for development set out in Policy S7. These are:

- Comprehensive mixed-use redevelopment to maximise the potential for securing the regeneration of the whole action area and its vicinity;
- A high standard of urban design and landscape, establishing it as a new quarter of the urban area;
- High quality mixed developments, appropriate to the location of this area close to both the riverside and historic Rochester;
- The provision of good pedestrian and cycle links within the site and to historic Rochester and to the public transport network, including Rochester Railway Station;
- An ecological and hydrological appraisal of the impact of any development proposals will be required, particularly in relation to the construction of a new river wall on the mudflats and inter-tidal areas.

Policy S7 sets the overall strategic framework for Rochester Riverside. In addition, there are a number of detailed policies relevant to the site. These are as follows:

- [Policy ED2: Employment in Action Areas and Mixed Use Areas](#); development will be permitted for business (B1) and general industry (B2) in the Rochester Riverside Action Area. The location and extent of development will be determined in the development briefs to be approved by the Council for each Action Area.
- [Policy ED13: Hotels](#); the development of hotels and associated facilities will be permitted within the Rochester Riverside Action Area.
- [Policy L11: Riverside Path and Cycleway](#); a riverside path for use by pedestrians and cyclists will be developed on the south side of the River Medway, linking Gillingham Riverside Country Park to the Historic Dockyard, Rochester Riverside, the Esplanade and Baty's Marsh, Borstal. Development on sites fronting the river will not be permitted unless the proposals include a riverside walkway and cycleway, or it can be demonstrated that the operational needs of the development would prevent this.

- **Policy R9: Retail provision in new residential developments;** local shopping facilities within Use Classes A1, A2 and A3 at a small scale, appropriate to meet the daily needs of residents, workers and visitors, will be provided in association with the development of Rochester Riverside.
- **Policy CF6: Primary Schools;** land at Rochester Riverside Action Area is allocated for a new primary school. Development that would prejudice the implementation of these proposals will not be permitted.
- **Policy T10: Wharves;** local planning policy seeks to protect the operation of the following wharves:
  - Halling
  - Frindsbury Peninsula
  - Kingsnorth
  - Cliffe
  - Grain

The Council will not protect wharves which are poorly served by good quality roads, such as those between Rochester Bridge and Chatham Town Centre. Local Plan policy specifically supports the expansion of Chatham Docks, stating that additional facilities will provide capacity re relocated wharf operations displaced elsewhere along the river. This relates directly to Rochester Riverside at para 8.2.18 of the Medway Local Plan which states that the expansion of Chatham Docks would allow wharfage at Rochester Riverside to be released.

The wharves contained within the Rochester Riverside site are not protected for continued river-based activity.

#### Kent Waste Local Plan (1998)

The Kent Waste Management Plan, adopted in 1998, contains further site-specific and policy detail on the waste policies in the adopted Structure Plan. The objectives of the plan are to improve environmental standards, ensure capacity within the system for current and future waste management requirements and to move Kent towards more sustainable approaches towards waste disposal. The Plan contains three policies which are relevant to the Rochester Riverside site. Policy

Policy W7 identifies Blue Boar Wharf as one of 17 sites in the County which are considered suitable in principle for proposals to prepare Category A Waste (inert) for re-use. Proposals at other sites will be considered against a set of specified criteria.

Policy W8 supports the reuse of spoil from within construction projects within the project itself. This is particularly relevant to works which would involve preparation for development, site landscaping and land restoration.

Policy W8A deals with the disposal of dredgings from rivers, creeks, ports and mooring facilities. The Plan states (paragraph 5.2.14) that Medway Ports Ltd. currently disposes of about 53,000 m<sup>3</sup> of maintenance dredgings each year. Disposal sites include Rushenden Marshes at Queenborough, Hoo Island and Barksore Marshes, which is within the Medway Marshes SSSI and SPA. Policy 8A therefore sets an order of priority for disposal of necessary



dredged material. The policy focuses on the need to minimise dredging, to retain dredgings within the inter-tidal system, the use of dredging as a soil medium, landfill cover or building aggregate, and disposal in dedicated landfill sites, in that order of priority.

Policy W9 identifies Blue Boar Wharf as one of 21 sites in Kent considered suitable in principle for proposals for waste separation and transfer, including household waste (categories B&C). Proposals at other sites will be considered against a set of specified criteria.

The adopted Waste Local Plan is now several years out of date and Medway Council will be preparing a new Waste Development Framework in the near future.

#### *Recognising the need for regeneration ...*

The Medway Local Plan recognises the need for regeneration of key sites within the Medway Towns, including the application site. Good design and the securing of high environmental quality is desired whilst retaining and enhancing the vitality and vibrancy of the towns, through development of the natural assets of the area. Particularly, the River Medway is seen as providing potential for improvement for the area. These principles are to underpin the future development of Rochester Riverside.

A hierarchy of planning policy documents identify Rochester Riverside as a key regeneration opportunity for mixed use development.

#### Other Policy Guidance

A number of other statutory and non-statutory policy guidance documents are of relevance to the future development of Rochester Riverside:

##### *Draft Medway Waterfront Renaissance Strategy (April 2004)*

The Medway Waterfront Renaissance Strategy is currently in draft form and will shortly be subject to public consultation as part of the Supplementary Planning Guidance adoption process. The Strategy sets the policy direction for the Medway Waterfront for the next 20 to 25 years. It sets out the following:

- An overall development strategy for the Waterfront;
- Common themes and regeneration priorities linking the different areas;
- A series of outcomes and actions to achieve the strategy objectives; and
- The role of each individual area in relation to the Waterfront and its development potential.

For Rochester Riverside the following role is set:

*“Rochester Riverside offers a genuine opportunity to create a new riverside community at the heart of the waterfront that complements Historic Rochester and opens up a significant length of the river frontage to public access” (page 20).*

The following aspirations and opportunities are set out for the Rochester Riverside site:

- Create distinct area;
- Ensure connection and integration within area by opening it up to Historic Rochester, especially for pedestrians;
- Improve vitality east of Corporation Road and the railway embankment which acts as a barrier to views and movement;
- Develop a rich mixture of land uses that includes significant housing, office, hotel/conference centre, primary school and leisure/local shopping complementary to historic Rochester functions;
- Retain and enhance setting of businesses of Castleview Business Estate, Acorn Shipyard and PB Printing;
- Realise potential for prestige riverside development;
- Improve access to and circulation within the area for pedestrian and, public transport and private car;
- Improve access and use of riverside via a river wall with land raising to avoid flooding;
- Provide a variety of public and private spaces for appropriate environmental, cultural and recreational uses building on prominent Gashouse Point and Bath Hard Wharf;
- Preserve and enhance views along riverside and to landmarks of Cathedral, Castle and Fort Amherst;
- Improve gateways to the area;
- Encourage a more ingenious (and discrete) approach to car parking that responds positively to the issue of flood management.

*Kent Design – A Guide to Sustainable Development (1999)*

Produced by the Kent Association of Local Authorities and has been adopted by Medway Council for development control purposes.

The purpose of the guide is to advance sufficient generally applicable principles to show planning applicants what is required of them and to enable planning authorities to approve good schemes and refuse poor ones. ‘Kent Design’ aims to encourage good design.

The guide is topic-based, covering such issues as ‘Innovation’, ‘Life Cycle’ and ‘Safety’ and under each topic is a selection of examples of good practice already carried out and a checklist for designers and development controllers.

The Kent Association of Local Authorities, as publishers of the guide, recognise that design and development play a key role in achieving a strong economy, creating employment opportunities, ensuring good access to services and providing safe, attractive surroundings. Kent aims to ensure that all its new developments contribute to those aims and sets out the following objectives:

### Development Process

- Adopt a proactive and collaborative approach to development proposals to achieve the optimum solution for a given site.
- Seek environmentally sustainable solutions through innovative design.
- Ensure the public realm is maintained for its life cycle through formal adoption or other management arrangement

### Land Use

- Bring together residential, commercial, retail and community uses in a manner which reduces the need to travel and improve quality of life.
- Promote the movement of people by walking, cycling and public transport to reduce car dependency and maintain and improve air quality.

### Design

- Embrace local distinctiveness, promote quality and protect existing features of cultural, visual and historical importance.
- Provide a safe, healthy and secure environment for both people and property.
- Maximise the use of land by encouraging the development of recycled land and increasing density.
- Conserve natural resources and minimise pollution in the layout, construction and ongoing use of development.
- Conserve, create and integrate open space, landscape and natural habitats as part of development.

*SEEDA Sustainability Checklist for Developments in the South East (2003)*

The SEEDA Sustainability Checklist provides useful guidance on achieving sustainable development and enhanced quality of life and can be viewed at [www.sustainability-checklist.co.uk](http://www.sustainability-checklist.co.uk)

The Sustainability Checklist is a means of enabling local authorities and developers to implement sustainability at a development level in a considered and practical way, using a common framework.

The Sustainability Checklist is divided into a number of sections, each section containing information and a set of structured questions addressing the particular sustainability issue. The Sustainability Checklist sections are as follows:

- Outward focus – impact on the wider community
- Land use, urban form and design
- Transport
- Energy
- Impact of buildings
- Impact of infrastructure
- Natural resources
- Ecology

- Community
- Business

Each of the sections contains detailed description, giving the key issues to be considered (these are outlined in more detail in Section 6.7 of this Brief). The Sustainability Checklist works by considering positive measures that can be taken to reduce environmental impact or enhance environmental, social and economic benefits, and encourages good practice through a scoring system.

#### *Medway's Local Transport Plan (2000-2005)*

Sets the objective to restrain demand for car travel by changes to vehicle parking standards and promotes cycling, walking and public transport as alternative modes. Maximum parking limits for the private car in new development are set for all land-use classes together with minimum cycle parking standard where appropriate.

#### *More to Medway Community Plan (2002-2005)*

The Medway Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), called the Move to Medway Partnership, brings together all the main organisations representing the community including businesses, voluntary and community organisations and public bodies such as the police, health service and council. These are the key stakeholders who can shape and develop the future of Medway. One of the main tasks of the partnership is to consult local people and develop a vision for Medway and a plan of action to make that vision a reality: the Community Plan.

The vision for Medway is as follows:

*“Medway is to become a fine and welcoming city: a city where people want to achieve in all aspects of their life – through work, leisure and learning.*

*Medway will be a healthy, safe and exciting place with a good environment and major cultural attractions, yet Medway's communities will be recognised for their care, fairness and vibrancy; where people work together to realise their needs and ambitions.”*

The Community Plan is organised around seven key themes to reflect the priorities identified by the partnership in achieving the vision for Medway. These themes are as follows:

- Economic
- Education and skills
- Community safety
- Health
- Transport
- Environment and development
- Community involvement

The Community Plan includes a selection of actions and targets for each theme. These will be developed and amended over time to make sure the partnership addresses the key concerns local people have today as well as those that may emerge in the future.

A revised draft Community Plan is to be published later this year.

*Star Hill – Sun Pier Planning and Design Strategy (draft for consultation – July 2003)*

As noted in Section 3.2, a small area to the south of the Rochester Riverside site lies within the Star Hill-Sun Pier Conservation Area. Star Hill – Sun Pier is a special and unique part of Medway that presents a series of challenges and opportunities. As such, there is a need to promote, shape and encourage development and regeneration that makes the most of the opportunities and character of the area. It is important to sustain its historic environment whilst giving it a new and appropriate economic future within the context of a regenerated wider Medway Waterfront.

A draft Star Hill - Sun Pier Planning and Design Strategy has been developed to provide guidelines and policies for the long term management and development of the Star Hill – Sun Pier area. It is expected that the strategy will be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance. As such it will complement the Medway Local Plan.

It is essential that the development of Rochester Riverside complements the objectives set out in the Star Hill – Sun Pier Strategy. The four strategic objectives are as follows:

- **Reinforce the unique identity and historic character:** securing the retention and restoration of the inherited abundance of historic buildings and architecture together with the protection and enhancement of urban structure that underpins the area’s character. Enabling a high standard of design that sees the improvement of the riverfront and sympathetic development of gap sites;
- **Produce a vibrant, mixed use place:** developing a mixed-use economy, particularly along the High Street, in order to create a vibrant, diverse successful and safe place;
- **Celebrate the public realm:** creating an attractive and safe public realm based on its historic structure making the most of the area’s riverside location. Restoration of historic alleys and establishment of a sensitive river frontage and riverside walk to be used by pedestrian and cyclists area key elements as are links to the green areas around Fort Pitt;
- **Promote the riverfront:** attracting people and activity to the riverside as a key asset, protecting and enhancing views of the river and developing a riverside walk as a safe and secure place.

# 5. site constraints

This section of the brief sets out the physical, design and environmental constraints specific to the Rochester Riverside site.

## 5.1 PHYSICAL & DESIGN

There are a number of physical and design constraints which need to be considered and taken into account whilst developing Rochester Riverside including flooding, contamination and restricted access. The main physical and design constraints are as follows:

**Flooding** – Rochester Riverside fronts the River Medway and is situated in the designated floodplain. The existing river front is understood to have been constructed over the last century to facilitate wharfage associated with the gas works, coal depots and other light industries in the area. The frontage consists of various forms of construction and includes four suspended quays/wharfs supported on piers that protrude from the main frontage.

Recent survey work has shown that much of the existing frontage is unlikely to have a residual life much greater than 5-10 years. It is unlikely that any of the existing structures could be used in the new development of Rochester Riverside and that the present frontage is unable to provide flood protection to new residential development.

All development proposals will need to agree and respond to flood risk issues in line with Environment Agency guidance and *Planning Policy Guidance Note 25: Development and Flood Risk*. Any development proposals will need to incorporate the construction of a new flood defence and the raising of ground levels to 5.8m AOD. New residential development is to have a property threshold level of at least 600mm above the 1:200 year flood level. This corresponds at this development to a finished floor level of 6.1m AOD.

Once construction of a new flood defences is complete it will require ongoing maintenance. Vehicular access for maintenance will need to be discussed and agreed with the Environment Agency.

**Ground Conditions** – The site has undergone significant land use change over the past 200 years. In the early 1800's the site was predominantly marshland with little or no development. Since the mid 1800's the site has undergone significant reclamation, including land raising and construction, mainly for industrial use.

The ground conditions at the site consist of a variety of made ground depths varying between 1m and 5.8m. The made ground overlies a soft clay/silt Alluvium up to 10.25m thick, containing layers of peat. The Alluvium



overlies River Terrace Gravel varying in thickness between 1m and 7.3m, which overlies a chalk bedrock to a significant depth below the site.

The ground conditions at the site will have a significant influence on future development. The varying made ground and the underlying soft Alluvium result in poor shallow foundation conditions. Also the requirement to mitigate flood risk by raising the land levels will induce settlement of the poor ground materials below, which will need to be considered in design.

**Land Contamination** – The site has been the subject of ‘land raising’ to avoid flood risk. A number of previous site investigations demonstrate that land is contaminated (from made ground, waste disposal or industrial activities), with the most serious contamination at the site of the former town gas works. There is also potential to encounter landfill or soil gases at hazardous concentrations from any made ground or the decomposition of naturally occurring organic matter underlying the site (former estuarine march).

Remediation measures will be necessary before the development of Rochester Riverside can proceed. Remediation objectives, measures and strategies should be agreed with the Environment Agency at the appropriate time.

Any future action on the site to carry out remediation work must ensure that contaminants do not reach the watercourse.

#### Notifiable Installations

Certain sites and pipelines are designated as notifiable installations by virtue of the quantities of hazardous substance present. The siting of such installations will be subject to planning controls, for example under the Planning (Hazardous Substances) Regulations 1992, aimed at keeping these separated from the safety viewpoint. In accordance with Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions circular 04/2000 the Local Authority will consult the Health and Safety Executive, as appropriate, about the siting of any proposed notifiable installations.

The area covered by the Local Plan already contains a number of installations handling notifiable substances, including pipelines. Whilst they are subject to stringent controls under existing health and safety legislation, it is considered prudent to control the kinds of development permitted in the vicinity of these installations. For this reason the Planning Authority has been advised by the Health and Safety Executive of consultation distances for each of these installations. In determining whether or not to grant planning permission for a proposed development within these consultation distances the Planning Authority will consult the Health and Safety Executive about risks to the proposed development from the notifiable installation in accordance with Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions Circular 04/2000.



Restricted access

**Restricted Access** - The Rochester Riverside site has a long history of uses which relied on access to the river for their existence. Rapid industrialisation of the site and its wider area began in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century together with the construction of two railway lines. These served to effectively separate Rochester City Centre from the riverside. Rochester Riverside has been dependent on four historic routes under the rail embankment for the past 150 years. Access into the site is currently achieved at two points off Corporation Street and two off Rochester High Street. All the existing accesses are sub-standard not only in height but also in width or alignment. Details of the four entry points are:

- **Access Point:** Gas House Road  
**Height:** 4.50m  
**Width:** 8.5m  
**Note:** approach alignments cause HGV's to use opposing lanes
- **Access Point:** Blue Boar Lane  
**Height:** 3.13m  
**Width:** 7.5m
- **Access Point:** Furrell's Road  
**Height:** 4.42m  
**Width:** 9.5m  
**Note:** entry radius from Bardell Terrace too small for HGV's
- **Access Point:** Bath Hard  
**Height:** 3.58m  
**Width:** 4.0m  
**Note:** junction with High Street requires HGV's to use opposing land to negotiate turn

Any future work carried out as part of the proposals to improve access to the site must not have an adverse impact on Network Rail's infrastructure.

**Archaeology** – The Rochester Riverside site shares a boundary with the historic town and several key urban functions may have been carried out within the development site during most periods of the city's history. The Rochester Riverside site has potential for evidence of significant post-medieval industry, evidence of industrial-age ship and barge building, iron working and coal factors, early gas works, later shipping facilities and more recently, industrial development. Important early industrial evidence may survive buried on the site

A recent Archaeology Desktop Study commissioned by SEEDA and Medway Council (February 2004) identifies a number archaeological and historical potentials within Rochester Riverside. Further evaluation and assessment work is necessary to determine the significance of these and should be included in the design of a detailed masterplan for the site. The implications of development proposals will need to be assessed at an early stage in the detailed design process. Where it is found that important archaeological and historical remains exist, developers should prepare sympathetic designs. Importantly, there should be a presumption in favour of the physical preservation of important remains.

The following is a summary of the key finds noted in the recent Desktop Study (these have been derived from Kent County Council records, previous work and local designations):

- **Medieval and Roman Town Wall** – in the north-west corner of the site is a section of the medieval and Roman town wall of Rochester. The wall stands to about 3m above current ground floor level. Until established otherwise through further site investigation, the area remains of high archaeological potential.
- **Acorn Shipyard** – this remains as the sole surviving shipyard on the Rochester Riverside site. A number of interesting features survive including a grid-iron (of merit for being the only one of commercial shipping size in SE England), a commercial slipway with winding gear, and a 20<sup>th</sup> Century ships crane.
- **Gasworks** – one of the earliest gas works in the country built around 1818.
- **Cory's Wharf** – the wharf was built at Limehouse Reach for Messrs Cory's, coal factors, in 1911. Two travelling cranes may be of importance in terms of industrial archaeology research.
- **Furrell's Wharf** – the wharf was in use pre 1865. The site maybe one of the oldest developed areas for industry on the Rochester Riverside site.

There are a number of other historical features on the site that require further assessment and detailed clarification from documentary sources.

There are no scheduled ancient monument, registered battlefields, registered Historic Parks or Gardens, protected wreck sites, special areas of conservation, heritage court or world heritage sites located within the boundary of the Rochester Riverside site.

Numerous monuments in adjacent historic Rochester are designated at Grade 1, 2\* and 2 listed buildings and or schedule ancient monuments. The future design of a detailed masterplan for the site and environmental impact of proposed development will need to take account of the setting and context of these statutory designations.

References to the site's former industrial and maritime uses should be built into the masterplan and future detailed design work (e.g. cranes and bollards).



Views of Rochester Castle & Cathedral from within the site

**Views and Vistas** – Long distance views of Rochester castle and cathedral can be gained from the north and east of the River Medway with middle distance views available from within the body of the site. There is an important vista, which crosses the southern part of the site, leading from Rochester Castle to Chatham waterfront and war memorial. The site is visible in varying degrees in the north and east. Further detail regarding views and vistas is outlined in Section 6.4.

## 5.2 ENVIRONMENTAL

Under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) England and Wales) Regulations 1999 a planning application submitted for the site is to be accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

Particular consideration should be given to the following environmental constraints and issues:

**Biodiversity** - The scheme should seek to achieve no net loss of intertidal habitat in line with Environment Agency guidelines. Flood defences should be established at the same position in order to retain existing (uncovered) inter-tidal zones. However where this is not possible, flood defences should be pulled back to create new intertidal habitats of equal or greater area to that lost. In addition, it is envisaged that the quality and diversity of intertidal habitat would be increased by incorporating saltmarsh terraces as part of the waterfront treatment. Saltmarsh terraces should step down to the mudflats and be at an elevation that allows periodic inundation from high tides and native saltmarsh vegetation to establish.

Site planning and design should, where practical make provision for wildlife habitats as part of a wider network of wildlife corridors or stepping stones in the area. This would be best achieved as part of the green open space network which should incorporate elements of habitat creation such as wildflower grassland, wetlands, native hedgerows, native tree planting to compensate for a range of common but diverse plant communities lost to development.

Woodland has established itself along the railway line to the south of the site. Although it is not botanically rich, it does form a locally valuable ecological corridor, most notably for bats, in an otherwise urban area which should be retained where possible.

It is highly likely that common reptiles occur at the site and further surveys are required to establish this. Although their habitat is not directly protected there is a legal obligation to undertake reasonable effort in removing reptiles from a site where there is a risk of causing them harm. This will mean an area of suitable habitat would need to be conserved or created in the proposed open space network as a receptor site for translocated animals.

As part of the environmental assessment of future development a phase one habitat survey should be carried out as well as a survey of the birds that currently use the site. Particular care should be taken in assessing areas of inter-tidal habitat and assessing where present flood defences have acquired ecological value. These areas should be retained wherever possible and should be taken into account when positioning any future jetties, marinas, moorings etc.

**Noise levels** - Noise levels from the railway, Acorn Shipyard and other industrial uses along the River Medway will impact on the amenity of new residents and other users of Rochester Riverside. Attenuation measures may be necessary and innovative design solutions sought. A number of measures can be introduced to control the source of, or limit exposure to, noise. Suggested measures are outlined in *Planning Policy Guidance Note 24: Noise*.

The detailed design of proposals must ensure that, as far as is practicable, noise-sensitive developments are located away from existing sources of significant noise. Planning conditions may be imposed to ensure that the effects of noise are mitigated as far as possible. These should be in

accordance with national planning policy (PPG24) and best practice design/techniques.

Water mains and sewers – there are a number of water mains and sewers within and adjacent to the development site. These must be protected or diverted as part of detailed development proposals. The details will need to be considered once a detailed layout becomes available.

Substantial off site sewers and water mains are required to provide adequate capacity for foul sewage flows and water supply respectively. Any development proposals should include for phased provision of infrastructure to serve new developments.

#### Visual Impact

A number of important views and vistas exist within and through the Rochester Riverside site. In particular, there are sensitive and important views of Rochester Castle and Cathedral. A comprehensive visual impact analysis /assessment needs to take place for all development proposals coming forward as part of the Rochester Riverside site (see Section 6.4 for more details).

# 6. design principles

## KEY AIM

Proposals should develop a complementary mix of uses that respond to the needs of both the proposed and existing communities.

This section describes the design principles for Rochester Riverside that will be used as a measure for Medway Council in making development control decisions.

The development principles provide the overall physical framework for future development for the area, and seek to unify Rochester Riverside with the city centre and the river. It is intended that Rochester Riverside will make the river front accessible to the local community, future residents and tourists and the development will add value to Rochester and the wider area.

This section should be used as the basis for the preparation of a comprehensive masterplan for the site (see Section 8).

**The design principles set out in this section are to be fully integrated into a future masterplan that delivers a number of core elements. These elements are set out in Section 1.1.**

### *The design principles will achieve ...*

- A mixed use quarter where uses are complementary and provide a high quality environment for residential living. The proposed mix of uses is to include a range of residential types and tenures, office development for small local professional firms, a range of retail, leisure and tourism uses providing activity both day and night, supporting community uses including a centrally located two form entry primary school, a replacement coach park and market site, together with a hierarchy of publicly accessible open space (including riverwalk/cycleway and high quality public realm).
- An overarching character of completeness, life, animation and intimacy as well as the creation of a series of recognisable and distinct character areas that contribute to the overall character of Rochester Riverside.
- The highest standard of urban design that incorporates measure to integrate the development with Rochester High Street.
- A development that respects the distinct views and vistas afforded by the surrounding landscape and riverside setting.
- A series of interconnected publicly accessible open spaces, which provide an attractive environment for a wide range of users as well as wildlife.
- Development that is 'people-friendly' and offers a real choice of travel mode.
- A development that achieves best practice in sustainability and promotes social, economic and environmental well-being.
- Development is to achieve energy efficiency, waste minimisation, water resource efficiency and will not contribute to water pollution or increase flood risk.



**Key Aim**

To develop a complementary mix of uses that respond to the needs of both proposed and existing communities.



A vibrant & quality mix of uses to serve all

- An environment which protects and preserves the important and unique habitat features of the site.
- A safe, secure and inviting environment for all.

## 6.1 LAND USE COMPONENTS

Rochester Riverside is to become a mixed use quarter that derives from the 'vision' as set out in Section 1.2. Uses are to be complementary and reinforce Rochester Riverside's function and attraction. Importantly, 'Rochester Riverside should provide high quality mixed developments that are appropriate to the location of the site close to both the riverside and historic Rochester. These proposed uses are summarised below.

Whilst ensuring diversity of uses development proposals for Rochester Riverside are to provide a safe and secure environment for residential living. Residential housing will require support from a range of community facilities to ensure that Rochester Riverside matures and develops as a place where people wish to live.

Importantly, all land use components (especially community and youth facilities) should be proposed and designed carefully in consultation with the local community.

Development proposals for Rochester Riverside should include the following key use components:

- **Residential** – range of residential types and tenures. The developer should provide 'pepper-potting' of affordable housing. This will need to be agreed with Medway Council and will be in accordance with current planning policy. Residential accommodation should also adhere to current standards for disabled housing, housing for the old and retired and life-time homes.
- **Business Space** – flexible commercial and office space to provide appropriate small-scale employment uses and opportunities in Use Classes B1. In addition, there is the opportunity for incubator units and live-work units to provide accommodation for small businesses and 'start-ups' and add to the variety of accommodation available. These will bring added 'life' to development proposals and are to be located along the main routes/movement corridors. This will ensure accessibility and profitability. However, live-work accommodation should be designed flexibly to meet changing demands, requirements and market conditions, and should be capable of conversion to residential use. Proposed business space is to be compatible with the nature and type of business accommodation coming forward in the wider Medway area.
- **Retail** – local retail facilities should include a small foodstore and retail that meets the daily needs of residents, workers and visitors. Proposed retail development will need to be in accordance with adopted local plan retail policy.
- **Tourism and Leisure** – a range of bars, restaurants and cafes to provide activity both day and night are desirable. The opportunity exists for a high quality 4 star hotel with a conference centre and a smaller hotel to be developed. Both hotels, with associated facilities, will support the leisure and business uses present in Rochester Riverside. Additionally, the opportunity exists for a permanently-moored ship at a prominent location along the site's river frontage. This would provide an exciting focus and tourism destination and would result in reinforced links with the river heritage.

- **Community And Educational Facilities** – including a new two-form entry primary school and nursery with associated play area and publicly shared all weather pitch, youth facilities, community / multi-faith centre and health centre (dependent on discussion with Primary Care Trust). The new primary school should be centrally located within the site, serving the Rochester Riverside development as a whole. All new community facilities should be flexibly designed and open to a wide range of future uses, activities and users. Development proposals should also include off-site recreation and sports provision (See Section 7.2)
- **Innovation Centre** – business space together with specialist innovation support services. There is a shortage of small business and start-up space in the Medway area. An innovation centre could provide small flexible start-up space for innovative businesses, together with specialised innovation support.
- **Multi Storey And Coach Park** – relocation of the existing coach and car park on the Corporation Street site will be required. A new multi-storey car park and coach park together with car/furniture showroom facilities would improve the quality of development and frontage on to Corporation Street.
- **Public Open Space** – a succession and hierarchy of attractive public squares and open space is to be created within Rochester Riverside. The hierarchy of publicly accessible open space should provide an adequate level of provision of outdoor facilities for children and young people at a neighbourhood level and also a riverside walkway and cycleway. The character and design principles regarding these spaces are detailed in Section 6.7.

## 6.2 CHARACTER AREAS



Character areas plan

**Key Aim**

To create a character of completeness, life, spirit, animation and intimacy

Achieving diversity of use and a 'local identity' at Rochester Riverside involves the creation of a series of recognisable 'places' of varied character.

A number of character areas are identified within Rochester Riverside and should guide the design of both the built and landscaped environments and will need to be reflected in future schemes for the site. The character areas have been drawn up in such a way to ensure that the Rochester Riverside development creates viable neighbourhoods containing a mix of uses, public open space and amenities.

Each of the character areas should have distinctive attributes, reflecting the predominant uses and activity in each area whilst contributing to the overall quality and sense of place of Rochester Riverside. The overall character of Rochester Riverside should respect and complement the layout and historical context of Rochester High Street. This overall character will be one of a vibrant community that acknowledges and respects the character of historic Rochester. Additionally, Rochester Riverside will take advantage of the openness and value of the River Medway. Both physical and theoretical references should be made to the riverside and historic Rochester throughout the development.

The character of Rochester Riverside will therefore respond sensitively to its setting, but at the same time create a feeling of animation, quality, intimacy, vibrancy and admiration. This is a character that will mature over time and become a stimulating and quality place for all.

The character areas that will make up this quality place are identified as follows:

**Northern Gateway** – this area serves as a gateway marker for Rochester Riverside. It is an important entrance point to Rochester Riverside but also to Rochester City Centre. It will be the first impression that many visitors get of the city. As such it will need to contain a number of landmark structures and buildings.

The Northern Gateway should also be seen as an activity and destination focal point in its own right, containing such uses as a marina and associated clubhouse, a quality hotel with a conference centre facility, a small foodstore and flexible commercial space with potential incubator units for new businesses. The detailed design and feasibility of a marina will need to be worked through and agreed with Medway Council, the Medway Ports Authority and other key stakeholders.

**Northern Waterfront** – this area is expected to contain a series of public open spaces fronted by residential accommodation. Warehouse style apartment blocks fronting onto the river. Towards the centre of the Northern Waterfront area the type of residential accommodation should change to reflect terraced townhouses with associated private amenity space and car parking. All townhouses should front onto public open space.

The Northern Waterfront character area is bordered to the north by Acorn Shipyard. As noted in Section 5, Acorn Shipyard remains as the sole surviving shipyard on the Rochester Riverside site. Acorn Shipyard is to remain as part of the Rochester Riverside development and will add activity

to this part of the site and contribute to the mix of uses proposed as a whole. Development proposals must consider appropriate landscaping treatments to be put in place that acts as a buffer between new development and Acorn Shipyard. Any future redevelopment of the Acorn Shipyard site will need to relate positively to the character of the Northern Waterfront area and Rochester Riverside as a whole. Essentially, redevelopment would need to be in accordance with the principles set out in this development brief and be in line with national, regional and local planning policy.

**Cathedral View** – this area is expected to contain a compact urban form consisting of townhouses and a series of public open spaces. It is intended that most of the Castle View Business Park will be retained. However, as the development of Rochester Riverside takes place and matures, change of use of the Castle View Business Park may evolve. As a result, any future masterplan of Rochester Riverside should show how the Castle View Business Park can be redeveloped. Future masterplanning work should also suggest appropriate future uses for the Castle View site. At the same time, it is important that future masterplan work considers appropriate landscaping treatment to be put in place that acts as a buffer between new development and the Castle View Business Park.

The character and layout of the Cathedral View area is to complement the character and patterns found in Rochester High Street. Development of this area should maximise views of the river and Rochester Castle and Cathedral.

**Central Quarter** – a main focus of this area will be a new primary school and nursery (with associated playground/playing field facilities). The school should be the focal point for the quarter. In addition to the school, there will be other community facilities such as a new health centre and faith centre. The feasibility of these community facilities will need to be worked through when producing a detailed masterplan and disposal strategy for the site.

In relation to residential development, the principle for the layout and design of this area is to ensure that all residential accommodation (consisting primarily of townhouses) faces out onto water.

**The Waterfront** – this area should be a dynamic, exciting and vibrant place. It will be the focal point of Rochester Riverside, containing a range of activity generating and destination style uses. These would include a range of food and drink uses, live-work units and a small 'boutique' style hotel. All these activities should be focused around a major waterfront square. This square is to accommodate performance space and an area for displays and exhibitions.

The Waterfront area will restore the strong historic links between the River Medway and Rochester. As such it is to be designed to complement, and be an extension to the High Street with particular attention focused on the public realm along Blue Boar Lane.

The range of activities present in this area and its important links to Rochester High Street provides the opportunity for a number of landmark buildings and structures. These will enhance legibility within the site and the wider Rochester area. In particular, the Waterfront will contribute greatly to the image and identity of Rochester Riverside and Rochester as a whole.

**Southern Gateway** – the Southern Gateway lies to the north of the Star Hill to Sun Pier Conservation Area. The conservation area features a number of buildings of historical and architectural interest from a variety of periods. The building form in the Southern Gateway is to complement the character of the conservation area. In addition, this area is an important access point to the site and this should be symbolised and emphasised by gateway features.

Plans for this area should consist of residential units, student accommodation and commercial accommodation. The opportunity exists for an innovation centre providing small flexible start-up space for innovative businesses, together with specialised innovation support.

Existing public car parking is to be retained in this location for the benefit of High Street businesses.

### 6.3 ADDITIONAL AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

To help overcome severance problems presently experienced by the Rochester Riverside site and to achieve the replacement and retention of a number of existing facilities (as outlined in Section 1.1), two additional areas are to be developed as part of the overall scheme for Rochester Riverside.

These are as follows:

**Market Site** - This area offers an important opportunity to improve and revitalise the frontage of Corporation Street. The site should be used to accommodate 18 coach carparking spaces and a level of public car parking to be agreed with Medway Council. This parking allocation will be required to be contained within a multi-storey structure that has an active retail/commercial use at street level (e.g. showrooms). The development in this area should be sensitive to surroundings and of the highest quality of design. The development should ensure that upper carparking levels, within the multi-storey structure are fully integrated into the overall building façade and that views of parked vehicles are not visible from areas external to the site. Public amenities should be provided. Replacement coach parking facilities must be of the highest design quality and of comparable quality and value to existing facilities.

**High Street Plaza** - Located next to the high street this space is intended to become the focus of the relocated market (currently on the council carpark on Corporation Street). The space is to have high quality paving and landscaping treatments. The area will be expected to accommodate public carparking and then to be available for use as a market as required (approximately 2 days per week). The level of car parking to be accommodated on this site will need to be agreed with Medway Council. Consideration should be given in the design to the transformation the space needs to make between these two uses (eg market stall delineation, refuse areas, parking spaces, durability of landscaped areas and service points).

It is important that this area is established and perceived as a starting point for the journey along Blue Boar Lane into the Rochester Riverside site. In addition the High Street Plaza will be an important extension of the high street and should ensure that layout and materials respond to this situation.



## 6.4 URBAN FORM AND DENSITY



Urban form &amp; density plan

**Key Aim**

To employ and maintain the highest standards of urban design. Quality design will help ensure that development becomes a positive legacy for Rochester City and the Medway area

To successfully create the character areas as outlined in Section 6.2, it is important to establish the right scale, form and density of development.

The development of Rochester Riverside is to recognise and respond to the key inherent characteristics of the various parts of the site (including the extensive river frontage, the environmental and ecological qualities of the site, and the historical views across the site to Rochester Cathedral and Castle). The pattern of urban form, massing and streets should reference the historic built patterns of Rochester.



Active frontages

Key urban form and density principles include the following:

- **Building Height** – building heights to range from 2 to 8 storeys, with the highest blocks overlooking the river. Building height should reflect use, location and existing landscape markers. As further detailed in Section 6.4, all development proposals coming forward within Rochester Riverside will need to demonstrate their impact on the surrounding skyline. It is essential that schemes coming forward maintain and allow quality views of Rochester Castle and Cathedral
- **Integrating with Historic Rochester** – urban form to respond to the historic built patterns of Rochester. Proposals should connect the site with the historic urban fabric of Rochester City Centre through complementary siting, design and layout of the built form. Rochester Riverside is to contain uses that act as attractions that draw people into the site and thus improve integration with Rochester High Street
- **Respect Wider Area** – development should not impact negatively on the wider area and should contribute to the enhancement of Medway.





Landmark buildings & structures

- Human Scale & Active Frontages – buildings are to be designed at a human scale and provide active ground floor uses (in appropriate locations) and by fronting onto and overlooking public spaces.
- Establish Appropriate Level of Density and Scale – development density is to create vibrancy and be at a level that creates a population of a size to make a diversity of uses viable, recognisable urban character and is in accordance with national and local planning policy. Density and scale should not impact negatively on the existing urban grain of Rochester and the Star Hill-Sun Pier Conservation Area.
- Develop Landmark and Gateway Structures – landmark/gateway buildings/structures and gateways should be developed to signify entry into the site and into Rochester City Centre. Landmark buildings/structures will also be used to frame distinct views into and from the site.

6.4 VIEWS AND VISTAS



Views & Vistas Plan

**Key Aim**

To create view corridors that celebrate the unique and extraordinary landscape of historic Rochester and the riverside

The existing character of much of Medway Waterfront is unique. A substantial amount of the traditional townscape still exists. It is an extraordinary landscape and riverside setting which gives rise to many distinctive views and vistas.

A number of important views and vistas exist within and through the Rochester Riverside site. The view from corridors and vistas to be afforded and respected by proposed development are shown on the View and Vistas Plan.

As previously stated, a comprehensive visual analysis of any proposal coming forward will need to be carried out.



View from Rochester Castle towards site



View from All Saints Church on Chalk Ridge

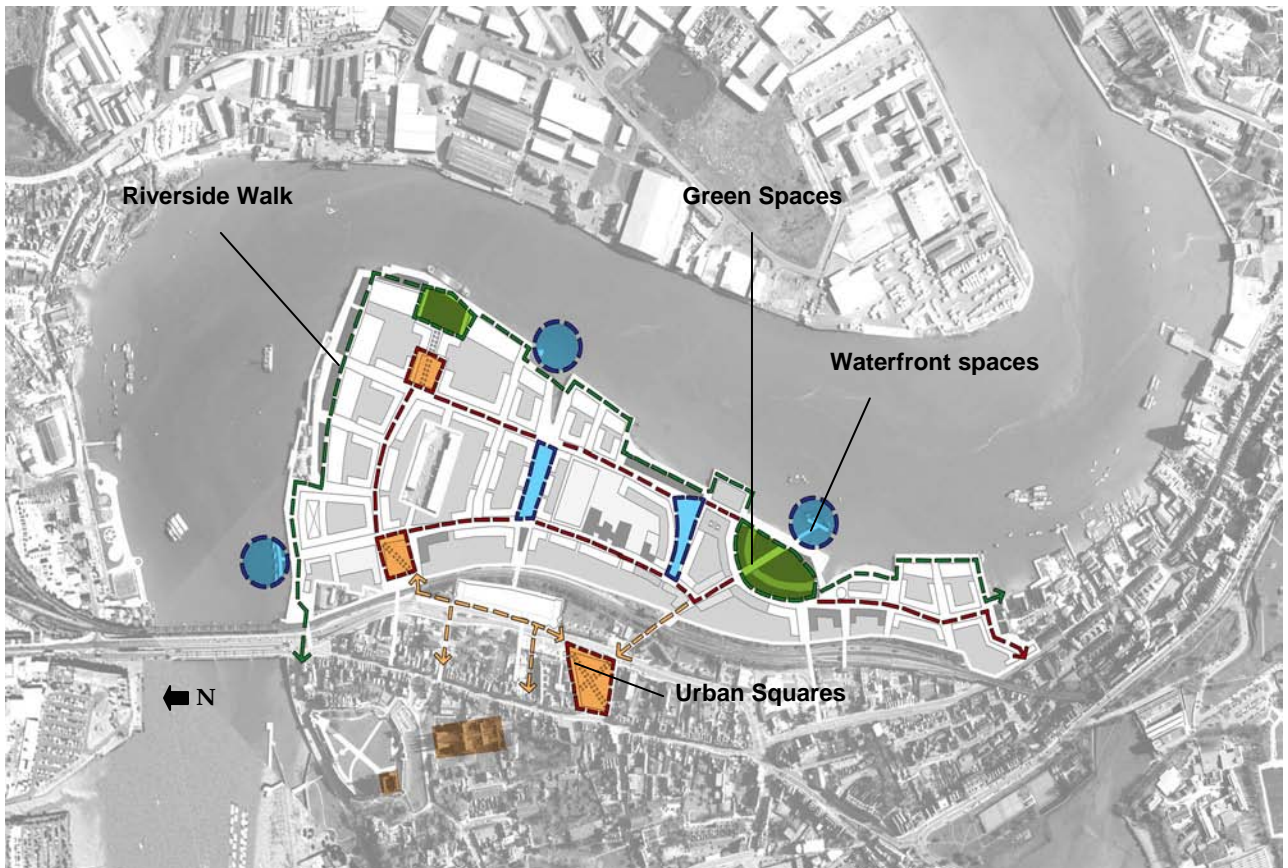
Development proposals should be sensitive to the important views from within Rochester Riverside and externally towards and across the site. Development will need to demonstrate the response to the following principles:

- **Creating View Corridors** – development proposals should create both primary internal view corridors that are framed back on the castle and cathedral and also view corridors of defining local elements (e.g. parks, landmark buildings, public art).
- **Protecting Important Views** – any future development will be evaluated against impact on important views and vistas. The layout of the built form is to strengthen the visual importance of the cathedral and castle by creating view corridors.
- **Respond to existing markers and landmarks** – the detailed design and development of Rochester Riverside should respond appropriately to the existing landscape markers (Rochester Cathedral and Castle, railway link and gasometres). Rochester Riverside should form a sensitive and attractive backdrop to views of Rochester Castle and Cathedral.



Development should be designed sensitively to protect important views of Rochester Cathedral and Castle

## 6.5 OPEN SPACE AND LANDSCAPE



Open Space and Landscape Plan

**Key Aim**

To create a series of inter-connected open spaces which provide an attractive environment for a wide range of users

The design of public open space is one of the most significant elements in shaping the future character of Rochester Riverside. Careful and sensitive treatment of open space and the public realm is fundamental to the quality of future development, and will contribute greatly to the attractiveness and vitality of the area.

New public open space is to be strategically located to meet the recreational needs of the residents and provide accessible civic spaces for visitors, residents and workers. The open space network that is created should be seen as a destination in its own right. Public open space should also contribute significantly to biodiversity objectives through the creative incorporation of new wildlife habitat.

Public art can make a major contribution to giving a place character and identity, bringing people into and through places. Public art should be a fundamental component of a future public realm strategy for the site. This strategy should provide a framework for commissioning artists and seeking funding. Public art should be a major feature of open space within Rochester Riverside. There should be a lively, stimulating and rich collection of public art which is maintained throughout each phase of development.

A succession and hierarchy of attractive public squares and open space should be created. These include:





Continuous waterfront access should be provided



Riverside Walk & attractive Public Open Spaces



Children's Play Facilities will National & Local Standards

**Riverside walk** – a riverside walk and cycleway to run the full length of the site which will play a key role in connecting the public open spaces. This should be designed in accordance with Environment Agency access requirements for maintenance. The character of the riverside walk should be inspired by Rochester’s historic river heritage in terms of simplicity and robustness. It provides an identifiable route along the entire length of Rochester Riverside. The riverside walk should be varied in terms of width, scale and landscape treatment.

In addition , moorings for recreational use of the river will be encouraged and explored with the relevant authorities.

**Waterfront spaces** – the dominant character of these spaces is ‘maritime’ and draws heavily upon the cultural and ecological character of the Medway’s tidal landscape. A series of waterfront spaces are located along the route of the riverside walk. In addition to providing passive facilities for strolling, sitting, and outdoor event space, waterfront spaces will include a significant component of inter-tidal habitat.

Waterfront spaces will step down in a series of terraces which become periodically inundated allowing saltmarsh habitats to become established. Careful detailing of these areas will be required so that it appears ‘designed’, delineated and allows safe public interaction with, and awareness of the River Medway tidal processes. Selected locations alongside the waterfront spaces will also act as interchange points for riverside traffic (moorings, wharves and landing stages). Proposed waterfront spaces should be designed and positioned to ensure that they do not impact on any existing value of the site for nature conservation. They should also not impact negatively on the sediment movements of the River Medway.

**Green spaces** – A series of pocket parks including local play areas will provide a network of green open space for informal recreation. The larger of the green parks should connect strongly with the waterfront and include lawn/meadow areas, tree and shrub planting and an element of habitat creation which complements the inter-tidal habitat of the Medway River.

**Urban Squares** – formal character with structured planting and seating facilities. These spaces play an important role in the public open space provision for the community. These space should be designed to be inviting, usable and friendly. They should contain quality hard and soft elements. Planting in the creation of urban squares should be with native species where this is possible. Careful planting with native species to give a range of heights and structure can create areas that are attractive to wildlife, whilst being principally areas for the community.

In addition, informal and incremental spaces including streets, corners, amenity planting and footpaths contribute to the provision of liveable open space.



A 'family' of street furniture will be required for the site

The following open space and landscape principles apply:

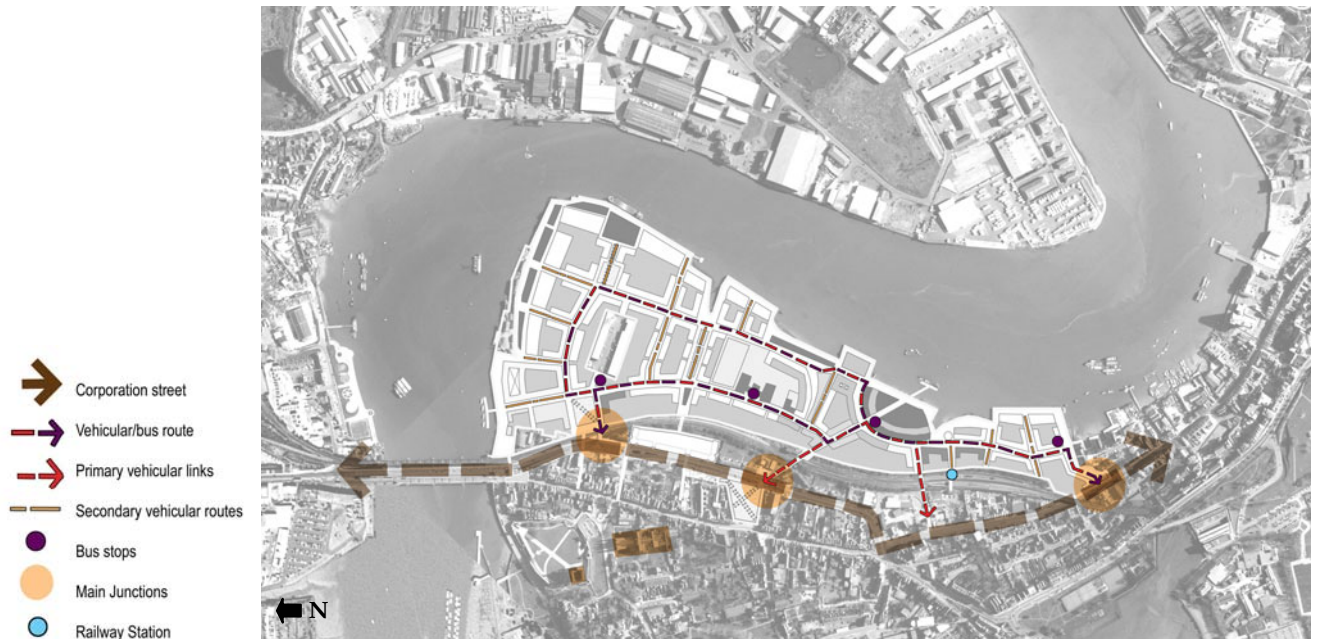
- **Design to Achieve Safety** – high quality open space that puts community and personal safety at the forefront of design.
- **Meeting Standards** – open spaces and children’s play facilities to be designed to meet the National Playing Fields Association standards for walking distances to recreation play space.
 

The development of Rochester Riverside should contain appropriately located Local Equipped Areas for Play (LEAPs) and Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play (NEAPs). The design of the LEAPs should be imaginative and take into consideration safety and the need for informal supervision. All open space to be provided in accordance with current Local Plan policy, guidance and standards.

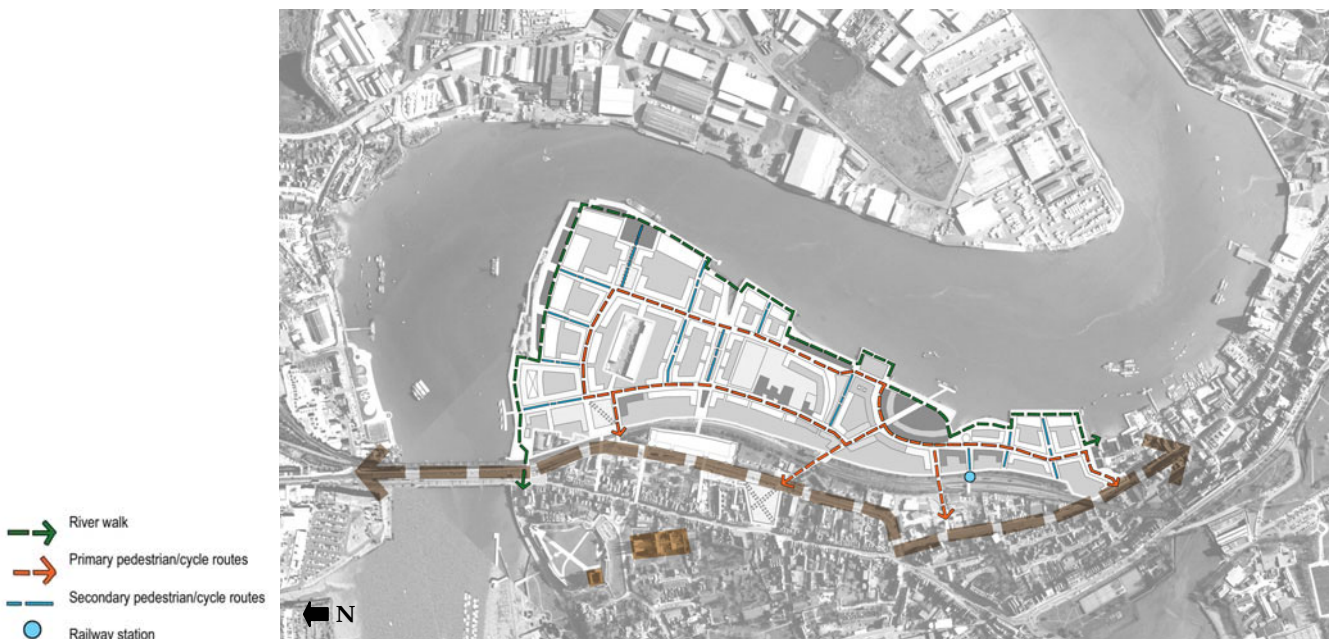
The playing field to be provided as part of future proposals should be planned and developed in line with an up to date Council Sports Strategy and Playing Pitch Strategy. The Sport England guide “Providing for Sport & Recreation through new Housing Development” (2001) should also be considered when detailed proposals come forward. In addition, it is essential that all public open space is designed in accordance with current best practice and disability standards.
- **Different Treatments** – individual areas of open space to be given different treatments to reflect their use, the prevailing characteristics of the site and the character of the area.
- **Publicly Accessible** – public realm to be publicly accessible at all times.
- **Sensitive Landscaping** – careful and sensitive treatment of proposed landscaping in conjunction with the public realm.
- **A Series of Open Spaces** – to provide a series of public open spaces of different characters which are linked by a high quality public realm.
- **Active Building Frontage** – all new streets and public open spaces should be overlooked and bounded by building frontage. Activity is to be encouraged at the ground floor level and open space to be bordered by active uses where appropriate.
- **Biodiversity as a Key Feature** – increasing biodiversity to be a key feature in the design of the open space and public realm.
- **Enhance Ecology** – habitats of ecological importance to be retained, enhanced, relocated, mitigated and created. It is essential that mitigation measures are undertaken if conservation of existing ecological areas is not possible.
- **Visual Interest** – public realm to provide visual interest and stimulation. Important to the creation of a stimulating and people friendly public realm is the inclusion of public art (permanent or temporary physical works of art visible to the general public: can include sculpture, lighting effects, street furniture, paving, signs). Artist involvement in the development of Rochester Riverside should be encouraged.
- **A ‘Family’ of Street Furniture and Public Realm Materials** – street furniture, signage, lighting, and utility furniture is to be co-ordinated and strategically sited. Street furniture and materials to provide cohesion and integration whilst also allowing for subtle changes within each character area.
- **Maintenance and Management Strategy** – maintenance and management of the public realm to be of high standard recognising the biodiversity objectives of the area and agreed by Medway Council.

- Understanding of Microclimate – design of the public realm should portray an understanding of microclimate. Development proposals are to respond to existing site conditions. Buildings should be located so that they protect the public open spaces from the prevailing winds and to minimise overshadowing. It is important that public open space is designed to include trees for shelter from the sun and roofed area to provide shelter from rain.

6.6 ACCESS AND MOVEMENT



Vehicular Movement and Bus Routes



Pedestrian and Cycle Movement



### Key Aim

The creation of an environment that is 'people-friendly' and not car dominated



The creation of an attractive & quality Riverside Walk will be a requirement of the project



Strong pedestrian connections should be created



Creation of dedicated cycle routes

Priority and emphasis of movement within Rochester Riverside is to be towards walking, cycling and public transport. Proposed development should provide good pedestrian and cycle links within the site and to historic Rochester and to the public transport network, including Rochester Railway Station. Pedestrian permeability between the site and Corporation Street should be seen as a priority. Through vehicular and commercial traffic will be discouraged within the site. Movement and access principles are discussed below.

Movement and access principles for Rochester Riverside include:

- **Strong Pedestrian Connections** – pedestrian activity to be encouraged through the provision of strong, direct and safe pedestrian connections between Rochester Riverside and Rochester City Centre, active uses, landscaping and public art. A detailed masterplan of the site should propose measures to improve pedestrian connections across Corporation Street. A future masterplan should also include a direct pedestrian link to Rochester Station from the site.
- **A Hierarchy of Pedestrian Routes** – a legible, permeable and safe hierarchy and network of pedestrian routes is to be created. This should include a mix of primary and secondary routes, home zones and pedestrian/cycle routes
- **Creation of a Riverside Walk** – the development of Rochester Riverside is to include the creation of a riverside walk that circumnavigates the entire length of the site and is accessible to all.
- **Creation of Dedicated Cycle Routes** – the flat landform of Rochester Riverside will encourage cycling. Dedicated cycle routes, that connect with the National Cycle Network, will be a key element in creating a highly accessible environment for all. Cycle routes will be segregated from pedestrian routes where practical.
- **A Real Choice of Travel Mode** – create an environment that is not dominated by the car. The needs of pedestrians (including the physically and visually disabled), cyclists and public transport users are to take precedence over motor vehicles. A real choice of travel mode is to be offered to all sections of the community (residents, visitors and workers). The site will contain a mix of travel modes including the river, roads and green routes.
- **Meeting Car Parking Needs** – Car parking will be required in such a way that does not dominate the streetscape or inconvenience pedestrians and cyclists. Car parking will be accommodated through a mix of on-street, off-street and private courtyard solutions. Car parking provision should meet adopted standards as set out in the Medway Local Plan. The Rochester Riverside site has more potential than any other in Medway to avoid dependence on the private car for access to jobs and services. Strong parking/traffic management will be required. It is essential that the layout of new development is designed in such a way as to prevent inappropriate parking. Car parking will need to be provided in such a way that routes and access for public transport and servicing vehicles can be maintained.
- **Retaining Existing Levels of Car Parking** – the amount of public car parking presently available should remain and be well integrated in to future development proposals for the site. Existing car parking is provided as follows: Blue Boar Lane (145 spaces); Market Site and Corporation Street (217 spaces); The Common (25 Spaces); and Eason's Yard (83 spaces).
- **Accordance with Disability Standards** – all routes within the new development should be designed to accord with disabled standards.

- **New Coach Parking Facilities** – a replacement coach park of comparable quality and value to the existing facility must be included in future development proposals. The new facility must offer equivalent facilities of the highest design quality.
- **Encourage the use of Public Transport** – public transport to be routed internally to serve the whole of the Rochester Riverside area. Bus stops should be located in key areas. A bus route should be provided through both the north and south of the site. This will help to provide good quality access to public transport for all future residents and users of the site. Any public transport route will need to be carefully design to prevent on-street parking prohibiting bus movement along the route.
- **A High Quality Interchange** – a future masterplan should consider opportunities to provide for a high quality transport interchange facility with the current railway station.
- **A Complementary Solution to Servicing** – servicing should be incorporated into the design of the overall Rochester Riverside development and address key issues such as design, landscaping and screening. Access needs for refuse collection and emergency vehicles should be recognised in the design of the proposed development. Developers should work with Medway Council to bring forward a complementary solution.
- **Overcome Physical Barriers** – the layout of the built form, use of landmarks and gateways and the creation of well used access routes to overcome the physical barriers to movement presented by Corporation Street, the rail embankment and the back of the High Street. Integral to the design of development coming forward within Rochester Riverside will be measures to make it easier for pedestrians to cross Corporation Street. This should be achieved through the use of attractors at key entrance point to the site, riverfront activity to attract and draw people into and through the site, high quality landscaping and through implementing a comprehensive public realm strategy.
- **Consideration of Impacts** – although Rochester Riverside will be designed towards walking and achieving a pedestrian friendly and responsive environment, there will be a need to consider fully the impacts of new development (i.e. junction improvements and other off-site transport improvements that require mitigation).

#### Travel plans

Travel plans should be submitted with a comprehensive Transport Assessment of development proposals. Three main types of travel plans will be required, as follows:

1. All commercial uses e.g. office and retail will be required to develop and implement a travel plan.
2. The primary school will be required to develop and implement a travel plan for the site. It is important that this is developed and that safer routes to school measures are built into the design of the layout from the outset.
3. The introduction of a residential travel plan for the site will be required and could encompass the following measures:
  - a. Individualised travel marketing
  - b. The formation of a car club for residents and businesses, including the setting up, marketing and operation of such a scheme. (This will include reserved parking areas at convenient locations throughout the development as well as a management office).

- c. Subsidised public transport with services in place from first occupation to help instigate a change in travel behaviour from the outset. The amount of subsidy would then decrease over the years in relation to build out and patronage. Such a scheme could include the provision of free bus passes to residents for the first 6 months of occupancy, thus hoping that they would take up the offer and when the free pass expires will continue to use the service. It is therefore imperative that a high quality public transport service is provided and that the phasing of the route is considered.
- d. A retail delivery service for example: rickshaw bicycles to discourage short trips by car.
- e. A management company for the site will be required as well as a contribution towards funding the employment of a site-specific travel plan co-ordinator who would oversee the travel plans and encourage networking and oversee initiatives and travel plan implementation and monitoring.

### Key Aim

Development that promotes sustainable social, economic and environmental well-being



Achieving best practice in sustainability through energy efficient buildings

## 6.7 SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainable development is now a well-recognised concept that touches all aspects of our life today and seeks to protect our natural environment as well as improve our quality of life. Proposals for Rochester Riverside should aspire to achieve best practice in sustainability.

Rochester Riverside is not only a valuable local opportunity but also has the potential to contribute to the economic success of the region through a high quality mixed use development, which incorporates sustainable development principles. The highest quality of building design will be expected throughout Rochester Riverside to ensure that the layout and design of the built form adopts best practice in sustainability and energy efficiency.

Sustainability should be applied to all levels of the design process of Rochester Riverside. The key themes of “Kent Design – a Guide to Sustainable Development”, are to be incorporated into the development. These themes include:

- Collaboration to achieve optimum solutions
- Innovative design solutions
- Full consideration of the impact of development throughout its entire life
- ‘Green’ transport solutions
- Cultural and historical context
- Healthy, safe and secure environments
- High density
- Conservation of resources
- Habitat conservation

Useful guidance on achieving sustainable development is contained in the SEEDA Sustainability Checklist. This can be viewed at [www.sustainability-checklist.co.uk](http://www.sustainability-checklist.co.uk). The Sustainability Checklist contains guidance on a range of sustainability issues and sets out a number of principles. These are as follows:

- Consideration of how development is going to impact on the surrounding community (particularly existing infrastructure and local services)
- Proposed development to be in line with the land use guidance contained in the development plan and current planning policy guidance notes
- Good transport to facilitate access to jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services, both within the development and in the wider community
- Consideration of the viability of renewable/alternative energy sources
- Minimise impacts of individual buildings through the use of rating systems like BREEAM
- Minimise negative impact of the construction and use of infrastructure
- Reusing and recycling building materials and choosing those with low environmental impacts. Designing and building to minimise waste is possible to reduce the amount of new building materials wasted on site.
- Measures to enhance the ecological value of a site to be proposed (landscaping, creating new habitats, etc)
- A commitment to the Considerate Constructors Scheme to guide community affairs during and after construction
- Opportunities for providing local training and employment to be exploited

Development of Rochester Riverside will promote sustainability and should therefore embrace the following principles:

- **Aspire to meet Principles set out in existing Guidance Documents** – to ensure best practice in sustainability development proposals should incorporate key themes and principles set out in “Kent Design – a Guide to Sustainable Development” and the SEEDA Sustainability Checklist.
- **Efficient Use of Land and Urban Form** – in urban design terms the general arrangement of buildings, infrastructure and landscape is to be energy efficient and sustainable. Development density is to be in accordance with current policy and have full regard to the most up to date initiatives on sustainability at the time. Additionally, built form needs to be flexible and robust so as to accommodate future uses.
- **Aspire to meet Sustainable Construction Criteria** – development of Rochester Riverside should have full regard to the most up to date initiatives at the time on sustainable construction, including renewable energy production and the use of renewable or recycled building materials.
- **Inclusion of Recycling and Waste Management** – individual building design within Rochester Riverside should incorporate recycling facilities for organic and other wastes. Recycling facilities should also be available during construction. ‘Green’ building strategies such as Combined Heat and Power (CHP) to serve development should be considered at an early stage.
- **Maintain Water Quality** – proposals must include all the pollution prevention measures which are currently being considered to protect controlled waters (this includes watercourses into/onto land) from contamination. Under the Water Resources Act 1991, Schedule 10 there must be no discharge of sewage effluent or surface water (site drainage) to controlled waters without first obtaining the Environment Agency’s written permission. Overall, proposals should ensure best practice with regard to the use of water throughout the lifetime of the

development. Future developers should consider techniques such as rain water harvesting and integrated sewage treatments works to reduce the development’s impacts on water resources and quality. Technologies such as Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) should be promoted and considered.

- **Enhance Ecology and Biodiversity** – areas of existing ecological value should be conserved in situ where feasible; otherwise suitable compensation/mitigation measures should be implemented. Elsewhere site biodiversity should be enhanced through sensitive layout and creative design proposals that facilitate habitat connectivity create new habitats and enhance existing resources. The ecological potential of the site should be recognized in the design process with ecologists informing design development throughout. An ecological appraisal of the impact of any development proposals will be required. It should be realised from the outset of masterplanning work that this project offers the opportunity to mitigate for potential habitat loss by innovative use of building design. An ecological appraisal of the site should not overlook the importance of brownfield land.
- **Improve Riverfront Interface** – development proposals should provide an improved interface to the river edge of the site and be sensitive to ecological issues.
- **Promote Livability and Social Inclusion** – this should be achieved by creating a safe, secure and welcoming environment and ensuring high level of accessibility with good road, public transport connections and cycle paths.

**ACHIEVING BEST PRACTICE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY STANDARDS**

In addition to the sustainability principles set out above, development proposals for Rochester Riverside should aspire to meet best practice environmental sustainability standards.

Sustainability standards are to be applied to developments at two levels – the overall strategic level and individual buildings. At a strategic level, consideration of the standards to be achieved will be based on an assessment scheme recently developed by the BRE, currently entitled “Sustainability Checklist for Development”.

The two schemes used for the assessment of the environmental performance of buildings are NHER (National Home Energy Rating) and BREEAM (the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method). EcoHomes is the residential version of BREEAM.

In the case of individual buildings, all will be required to meet the following standards of assessment:

Building Type	Rating Scheme	Standard
Residential	EcoHomes NHER	Excellent 10.0
Offices	BREEAM for Offices	Excellent

Other developments and mixed use schemes will require bespoke standards.

Developer and their consultants should investigate each project within Rochester Riverside to assess potential for particular elements of sustainability that could achieve an exemplar/state-of-the-art standard.



**Key Aim**

A safe and secure environment for all

## 6.8 SAFETY AND SECURITY

The design and management of the public realm significantly contributes to the safety and security of a development, and can contribute to crime prevention and to minimising the fear of crime. Development should be designed in consultation with the Crime Prevention Design Officer and the Kent Police Authority. Development should have regard to Secured By Design Standards. Further details can be found on [www.securedbydesign.com](http://www.securedbydesign.com) and Circular 5/94 “Planning Out Crime” (1994).

Additionally, development proposals should be in accordance with the safety guidelines set out in “Kent Design – A Guide to Sustainable Development”. General principles set out in this document include:

- Overlooking to enhance safety and security and to encourage self-policing
- Public realm lighting
- Traffic management
- Ownership of public realm
- Providing safe routes to school

Overall, development proposals should be designed in accordance with the following documents:

- “Safer Places: The Planning System and Crime Prevention” (2004)
- Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Circular 5/94 “Planning Out Crime” (1994)
- Secured by Design Standards (see [www.securedbydesign.com](http://www.securedbydesign.com))
- “Kent Design – A Guide to Sustainable Development” (2000).



Use of innovative lighting

Development within Rochester Riverside should conform to the following principles:

- **Casual Surveillance** - opportunities for casual surveillance should be created through the sensitive positioning of building entrances and car parking.
- **Development to front Streets and Open Space** - all principal windows and entrances of development blocks should front onto streets and/or public open spaces.
- **Active Frontages** - public open space should be overlooked and bordered by active frontages to provide animation and natural surveillance of the public realm. Active Frontages will encourage street level activity and natural policing of Rochester Riverside.
- **24 Hour Access** - all public realm, pedestrian and cycle routes are to be accessible 24 hours a day where appropriate.
- **Innovative Lighting** - innovative lighting schemes throughout the public realm to guide people to and along the major routes and to minimise potential hiding places. Lighting schemes are to respond to the sensitivities of the site’s ecology and must also minimise light pollution.
- **Controlled Access** - private areas of car parking and servicing to have controlled access.
- **Ongoing maintenance** – the ongoing and continued maintenance of the public realm is essential in ensuring safety and security. A detailed maintenance strategy should be drawn up to accompany future development proposals.



# 7. phasing & implementation

## 7.1 PHASING

This development brief has set out a series of development principles that will guide future development within Rochester Riverside.

Successful implementation of proposals for Rochester Riverside require a phasing programme to be agreed with Medway Council. Each phase of Rochester Riverside should ideally be developed out in its entirety, prior to commencing subsequent phases.

The phasing of the Rochester Riverside development will be influenced by a number of criteria:

- Residential sales
- Site availability
- Land assembly
- Infrastructure
- Environmental issues
- Remediation strategy
- Market demand for non-residential elements

Prior to the habitation of residential uses, sufficient flood defences will need to be installed and agreed with the Environment Agency and other organisation/agencies where necessary.

In addition to a comprehensive phasing programme for future development proposals, a suitable management should be put in place to ensure the ongoing quality of the site throughout all phases is maintained. This is particularly important in ensuring that the site's biodiversity is not lost.

It is essential that during each phase of development, the total number of car parking spaces publicly available is not reduced.

## 7.2 PLANNING OBLIGATIONS (SECTION 106 AGREEMENTS)

Planning obligations will be sought for development within Rochester Riverside to ensure that necessary infrastructure and facilities are provided at the time of development. Planning obligations for new developments coming forward will be subject to discussions with Medway Council upon submission of planning applications. Among the issues that will be covered are: local labour; use of the River Medway for transporting materials; off-site formal sports provision; education; affordable housing; off-site transport improvements; travel plans; public transport and maintenance of open space. The necessary off-site transport improvements will be considered in a transport impact assessment that will accompany any planning application

for the site (where this is considered necessary by Medway Council), see Section 7.5.

The location of off-site provision of facilities should be worked through and agreed with Medway Council at an early stage.

Medway Council will require developers to access local suppliers where possible. This is important in enabling local businesses access to the opportunities created by the development work.

### 7.3 SITE OPERATIONS

Construction access will be agreed with Medway Council and the Highway Authority at the relevant time.

The developer is to locate its site offices within the Rochester Riverside site boundary. Accesses for visitors and deliveries are to be clearly signed and located as agreed with Medway Council and the Highways Authority.

The developer is to carry out its own checks and is to ensure the works do not cross the site boundary.

Construction works should not impact negatively upon existing uses that are to remain on site. Construction work, phasing and programming is to be sensitive to the needs of existing occupiers and uses (i.e. Acorn Shipyard and Castleview Business Park).

### 7.4 INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAMMING

The developer is responsible for implementing and completing the majority of adoptable infrastructure. This will be subject to the phasing of construction on site.

The developer is to provide a phased programme of works which will identify the construction of pedestrian and utility routes and their availability to the public.

### 7.5 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Any single planning application for any part of this site should be accompanied by:

- a comprehensive masterplan (see Section 8.1) demonstrating the overall design concept. This should show the following: zoning of the site into different uses as appropriate, public realm strategy, block plans, approximate heights of buildings and movement system;
- a transport impact assessment (the Highways Agency should be given the opportunity to consider any transport assessment at an early stage in the design of development proposals). The transport assessment (together with travel plan and parking strategy) must accompany any future planning applications;
- an environmental impact assessment;
- a design statement and design codes;

- a sustainability statement demonstrating how the proposals meet the criteria set out under local plan policy ENE4: Energy Efficiency and the sustainability principles set out in Kent Design and this development brief;
- a public realm management statement – how spaces will be managed to allow for different types of user; and
- in addition to normal drawings, three-dimensional illustrations, photomontages or computer illustrations of the proposals may be requested to allow judgement of the overall design concept and how the schemes sits within the landscape.

# 8. next steps

## 8.1 CONSULTATION OF DEVELOPMENT BRIEF

This development brief is to be subject to public consultation and relevant amendments will be made in response to the issues raised.

## 8.2 COMPREHENSIVE MASTERPLAN

A comprehensive and detailed masterplan is to be produced for the Rochester Riverside site. This will focus on:

- Providing a vibrant and stimulating mix of uses
- Integration with the historic character of Rochester and producing measures to help reduce the severance caused by the railway and Corporation Street
- Comprehensive movement and access solutions for the site
- Creating a people friendly public realm and access to public open space that meets the needs of all users
- Access to the waterfront
- Incorporating sustainable development principles
- Creating a safe and secure environment

## 8.3 DESIGN GUIDANCE/CODES

To reinforce and ensure the quality of the Rochester Riverside development, design guidance and codes will need to be drafted. This material will be significant to inform and guide developers to prepare schemes that confirm and complement the overall proposals for Rochester Riverside and the development strategy for Medway as a whole.

The design codes will prescribe all elements of the urban design of Rochester Riverside. The document will state qualitative and character definitions for the buildings, spaces and materials. The intention of the Design Codes is to form a guide for both the detailed design process and the planning control process.

## 8.4 DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES FOR CORPORATION STREET

This development brief sets in place a number of key principles within which the development of Rochester Riverside. The boundary to which this development brief applies relates to the Rochester Riverside Action Area as designated in the adopted Medway Local Plan (2003).

The key principles set out in this development brief seek to achieve the transformation of one of the largest and most challenging brownfield opportunities in the Thames Gateway into a vibrant mixed use development. As Rochester Riverside evolves and matures it is important that any future

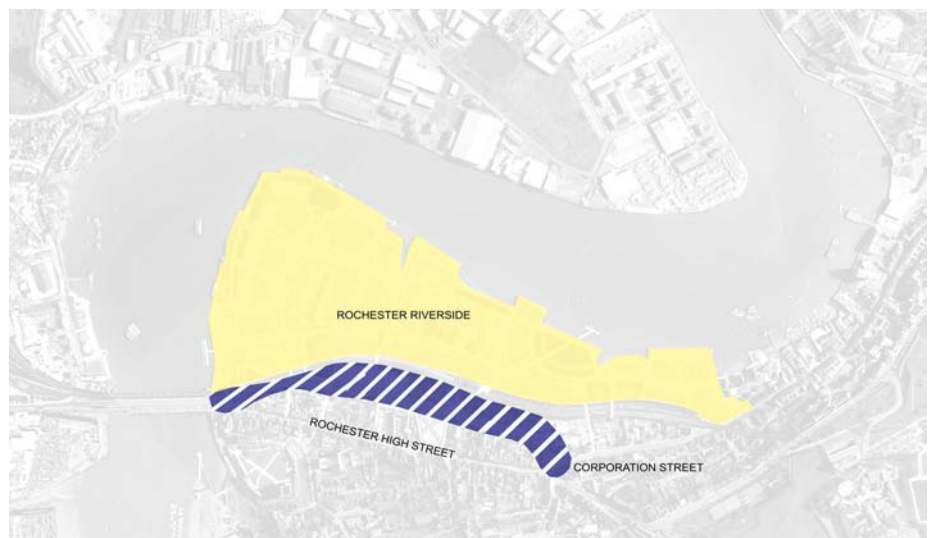
development and redevelopment sites, contribute towards its character, the quality of design it achieves and assist in 'breaking down' barriers to pedestrian movement (as identified in Section 5.1). This is especially the case with any future development along Corporation Street.

Poor quality housing and inefficient commercial uses of land in this area are a barrier to interaction and street-level activity on Corporation Street.

To ensure that any future development or redevelopment occurring along Corporation Street complements the principles set out in this development brief and development proposals for Rochester Riverside, it is recommended that a study be carried for the area identified in the plan below. This study should set in place a number key urban design principles and guidelines for future development along Corporation Street. These principles and guidelines should focus on achieving the following:

- A form of development that reflects the character of central Rochester;
- Integration with Rochester High Street and Rochester Riverside;
- Attractive and high quality publicly accessible open space and public realm;
- High quality and innovative architecture;
- An active and vibrant environment that complements Rochester High Street and the uses coming forward within Rochester Riverside;
- Improved street-level activity along the length of Corporation Street, with a particularly strong focus at Rochester Station;
- Measures to help reduce the severance currently caused by the railway and Corporation Street.

As part of this future work on Corporation Street there should be consideration of a pedestrian bridge line from Blue Boar Lane, over Corporation Street. A significant piece of bridge architecture will draw people across into Rochester Riverside and will afford great views back to the Castle and Cathedral. Such a bridge link would indicate a strong visual connection between Rochester High Street and Rochester Riverside.



Future Corporation Street Study Area

# 9. glossary

**Accessibility** - the ability of people to move round an area and to reach places and facilities, including elderly and disabled people, those with young children and those encumbered with luggage or shopping.

**Active Frontage** - making frontages 'active' adds interest, life and vitality to the public realm. Active frontage should consist of the following:

- frequent doors and windows, with few blank walls;
- articulated facades with bays and porches; and
- lively internal uses visible from the outside, or spilling onto the street

**Activity Node** - concentration of activity at a particular point.

**BREEAM** – The Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method. A scheme used for the assessment of the environmental performance of buildings.

**Build Form** - see 'form'.

**Context** - the setting of a site or area, including factors such as traffic, activities and land uses along with landscape and built form.

**Density** - the floorspace of a building or buildings or some other unit measure in relation to a given area of land. Built density can be expressed in terms of plot ratio (for commercial development); number of units or habitable rooms per hectare (for residential development); site coverage plus the number of floors or a maximum building height; or a combination of these.

**Fine Grain** - see 'grain'.

**Form** - the layout (structure and grain), density, scale (height and massing), appearance (materials and details) and landscape of development.

**Grain** - the pattern of the arrangement and size of buildings and their plots in a settlement; and the degree to which an area's pattern of street-blocks and street junctions is respectively small and frequent, or large and infrequent.

**Height** – the height of a building can be expressed in terms of a maximum number of floors or a maximum overall height.

**Human Scale** - the use within development of elements which relate well in size to an individual human being and their assembly in a way which makes people feel comfortable rather than overwhelmed.



**Landmark** - a building or structure that stands out from its background by virtue of height, size or some other aspect of design.

**Landscape** - the character and appearance of land, including its shape, form, ecology, natural features, colours and elements and the way these components combine.

**Layout** - the way buildings, routes and open spaces are placed in relation to each other.

**Legibility** - the degree to which a place can be easily understood.

**Massing** - the combined effect of the height, bulk and silhouette of a building or group of buildings.

**Movement** - people and vehicles going to and passing through buildings, places and spaces.

**Natural Surveillance** - the discouragement to wrong-doing by the presence of passers-by or the ability of people to be seen out of surrounding windows.

**Node** - a place where activity and routes are concentrated.

**Permeability** - the degree to which an area has a variety of pleasant, convenient and safe routes through it.

**Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGS)** - documents embodying Government guidance on general and specific aspects of planning policy to be taken into account in formulating local authority development plan policies and in making planning decisions. PPGs are in the process of being replaced by PPS.

**Public Art** - permanent or temporary physical works of art visible to the general public, whether part of the building or free-standing. These can include sculpture, lighting effects, street furniture, paving, railings and signs.

**Public Realm** - the parts of a village, town or city (whether publicly or privately owned) that are available, without charge, for everyone to use or see, including streets, squares and parks.

**Regional Planning Guidance Notes (RPGS)** - documents providing a regional framework for the preparation of local authority development plans and should be taken into account in making decisions on individual planning applications and appeals.

**Scale** - the impression of a building when seen in relation to its surroundings, or the size of parts of a building or its details, particularly as experienced in relation to the size of a person. Sometimes it is the total dimensions of a building which give it its sense of scale. At other times it is the size of the elements and the way they are combined.

**Sustainable Development** - defined by the Brundtland Commission (1987, and quoted in PPG1) as “Development which meets present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to achieve their own needs and aspirations”.

**Urban Design** - the art of making places. Urban design involves the design of buildings, groups of buildings, spaces and landscapes, in villages, towns and cities, and the establishment of frameworks and processes which facilitate successful development.

**View** - what is visible from a particular point.

**Walkable Neighbourhood/Environment** - a neighbourhood that is designed for ease of walking. The quality of the routes should be designed to give walking priority and discourage car use. People should be able to walk to local facilities e.g. newsagent's, bus stops, health centres, primary schools, etc.