



Market Street Urban Village, Newbury Planning and Design Brief Supplementary Planning Document 3

June 2005



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West Berkshire Council

**Market Street Urban Village, Newbury: Planning and Design Brief
Supplementary Planning Document 3**

Final Report

by

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Ref: 04047197

June 2005

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1 INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

1.01 This planning and design brief has been prepared by DTZ on behalf of West Berkshire Council for the development of the area known as the Market Street Urban Village site in Newbury Town Centre. The purpose of the document is to set out planning principles and a robust urban design rationale to guide and allow for the high quality re-development of the site.

1.02 The key aspirations for the re-development of the site are to:

- provide a high-density residential development, as part of a mixed-use scheme;
- ensure the provision of affordable housing to a level that meets policy requirements and local housing need;
- facilitate an improvement to the setting of and access to Newbury Railway Station, particularly from the rest of the town centre;
- facilitate an improvement to pedestrian and cycle connectivity through the site;
- ensure the provision of public and private open spaces;
- ensure the provision of new wildlife habitat and creative conservation measures;
- ensure development addresses energy efficiency issues through design, form, layout, orientation, material and future running costs;
- facilitate comprehensive redevelopment of the site;
- ensure development is of a high standard of design and finish; and

- protect and enhance the Conservation Area and the historic character of Newbury Town Centre.

1.03 The brief has been prepared in accordance with requirements set out in the West Berkshire District Local Plan 2002, which provides the local policy context for the area. The brief has also been informed by A Vision for Newbury Town Centre (the Newbury 2025 Vision) which sets out the long-term vision for Newbury and the role it will play in supporting the surrounding villages and rural area.

1.04 The objectives of the brief are to:

- provide relevant planning policy and urban design guidance against which proposals for the development of the site will be assessed;
- provide details of the land use, design, layout and range of densities of the development;
- provide details of and expectations for access to the site and circulation within the site for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicular traffic;
- demonstrate how the site meets national and local policy guidance on sustainable development; and
- most importantly, to encourage an innovative design response to the site.

1.05 The structure of the brief is as follows:

- **Section 2** provides an introduction and overview of the site.
- **Section 3** sets out the national, regional, sub-regional and local planning policies that need to be taken into account as part of any future development proposal.
- **Section 4** sets out the transport and movement issues which relate to the site.
- **Section 5** sets out a series of issues relating to preferred future land uses and development types.
- **Section 6** sets out key urban design principles and synthesises these into specific area design guidance.
- **Section 7** addresses a number of other important issues relating to the delivery and the implementation of the scheme.

2 SITE INFORMATION

Location and Context

- 2.01 Newbury is the largest town centre in West Berkshire and the main location for a variety of shopping, leisure and employment uses. The town benefits from strong road and rail transport links, being only a few miles from junction 13 of the M4 motorway and the A34 (Figure 1). There is a frequent rail service from Newbury Station to London Paddington, via Reading and easy access to Heathrow International Airport.
- 2.02 The A34 bypass, combined with on-going pedestrianisation initiatives, and other town centre improvements have also significantly improved the town centre environment over recent years.
- 2.03 Newbury has a number of other attractions and venues which draw visitors from a wide area including Newbury Racecourse, Corn Exchange, the West Berkshire Museum and Kennet and Avon Canal. The town is also an established 'stopping point' for those making longer journeys north-south and east-west.
- 2.04 Although Newbury serves an affluent, largely rural catchment, the *'West Berkshire Retail and Leisure Study, 2003'* indicates that market share has been impacted over recent years by the growth of higher order retail centres outside the District - namely Reading, Oxford and Basingstoke. Its role may be further impacted in the future by the new major mixed-use developments planned for Swindon and Bracknell, as well as emerging plans to redevelop Reading railway station.

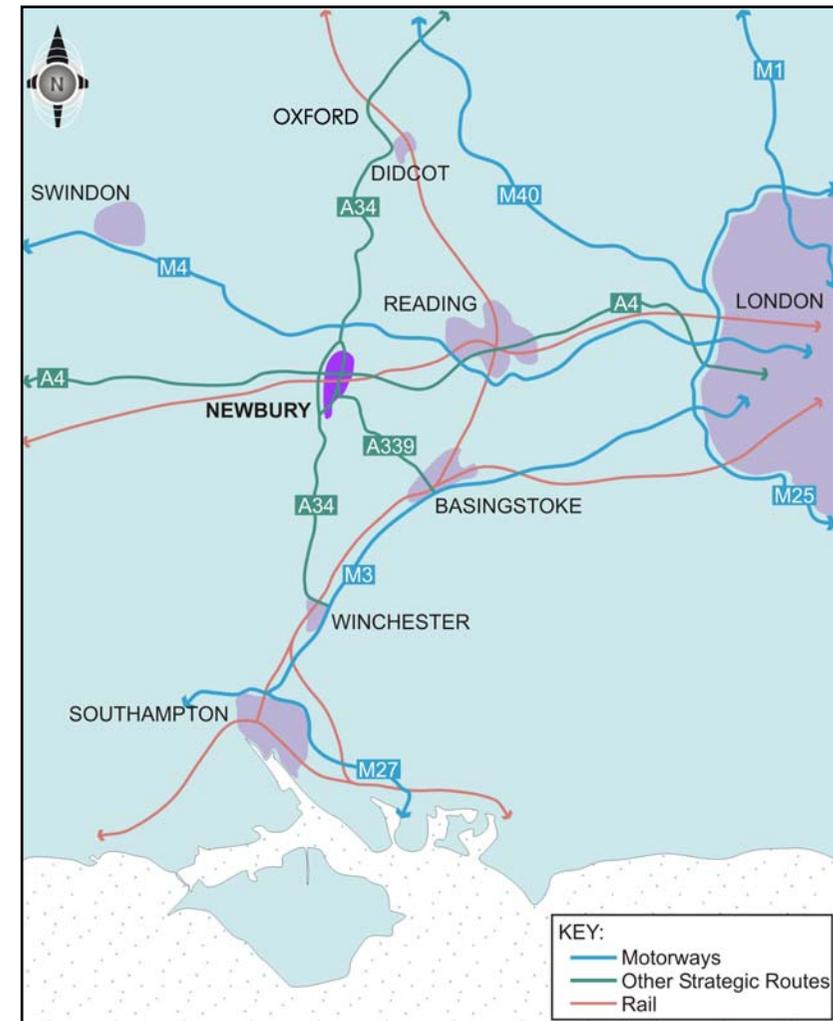


FIGURE 1
STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The Quarters Framework

- 2.05 In response to the growing competition from other town centres, and to provide a strategic direction to guide the town over the next 20-25 years, West Berkshire Council published its Newbury 2025 Vision in 2003. The vision document sets out the long-term aspirations for Newbury Town Centre, building on its inherent strengths whilst at the same time grasping the opportunities that exist to improve its attractiveness and vibrancy.
- 2.06 It is proposed that over the life of the Vision a series of Quarters will be created. These will comprise different primary functions which, when taken together, support the long-term objective of enhancing the vitality and viability of Newbury and providing a focus for the surrounding rural areas.
- 2.07 The 'Quarters Framework' (Figure 2) identifies the primary function for a number of key areas, including the Market Street area. This site is identified as one of the few opportunities for significant town centre redevelopment. The vision is to create a mixed-use neighbourhood, with a diverse range of uses and an emphasis on quality housing together with the introduction of appropriately scaled employment, retail and leisure uses.
- 2.08 The Vision states that proposals which present an opportunity for sustainable development and complement the adjoining Quarters, whilst enhancing the viability and vitality of the town as a whole, will be positively encouraged. In order to maximise the opportunities that the site presents and achieve a number of key objectives of the Vision - including improved access from the railway station into the town centre - comprehensive development of the site will be vital.

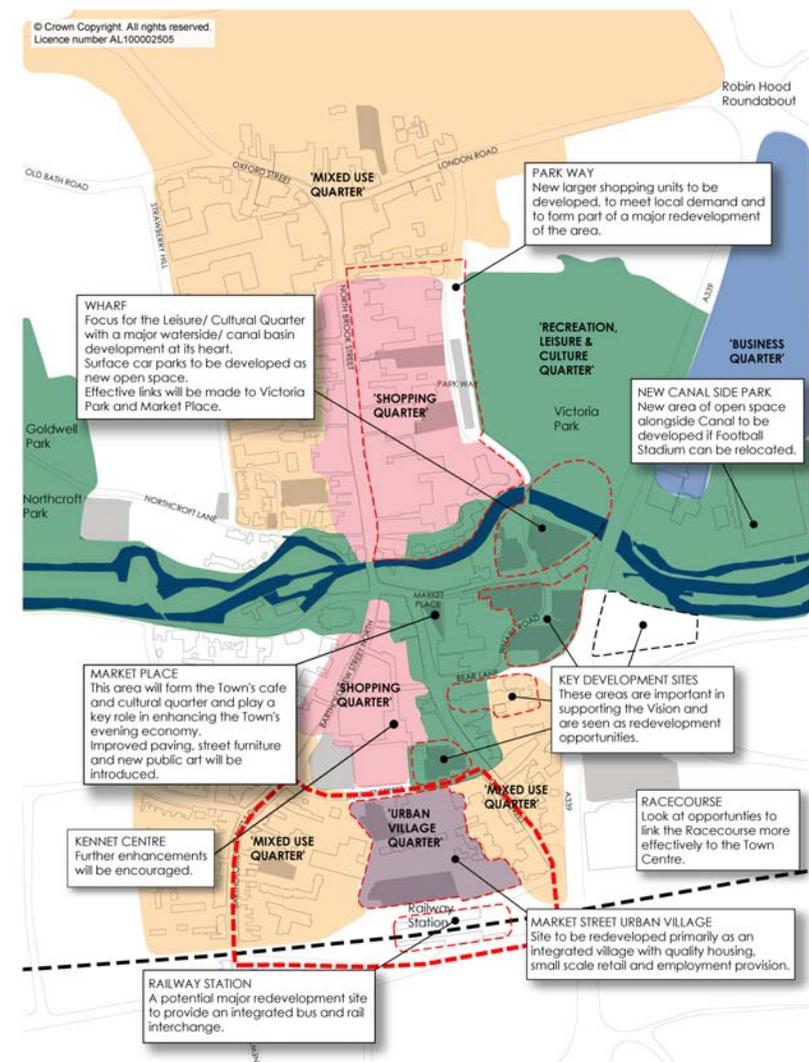


FIGURE 2: THE QUARTERS FRAMEWORK

Defining the Site

- 2.09 The site boundary for the planning and design brief is identified in Figure 3 and covers approximately 8 hectares. The Market Street site is located in the southern part of the town centre, between Newbury Railway Station and the Kennet Shopping Centre. The site incorporates the District Council Offices, Newbury Bus and Railway Station and associated surface car parking.
- 2.10 The area is defined by Market Street to the north, Bartholomew Street to the west, Cheap Street to the east and Station Road to the south. The central section of the site, including Newbury railway station car park and the area directly north incorporating the bus station, offers significant potential for redevelopment. The Council intends to take forward the redevelopment of the central section of the site (the 'Core Area' including the car parks serving the rail station and Council Offices, the bus station, car park fronting Market Street and premises on Highfield Avenue) in association with Network Rail. In providing planning policy and urban design guidance, therefore, the emphasis of this planning brief is towards the redevelopment of the Core Area.
- 2.11 It is important, however, that consideration of the Core Area is set within a wider context. The Brief purposefully covers a site larger than the core area in order to ensure redevelopment is considered in context with the surrounding town centre and takes into account wider site considerations, including access routes and linkages (particularly from the secondary retail areas of Bartholomew Street and Cheap Street), the Conservation Area, listed buildings and townscape.

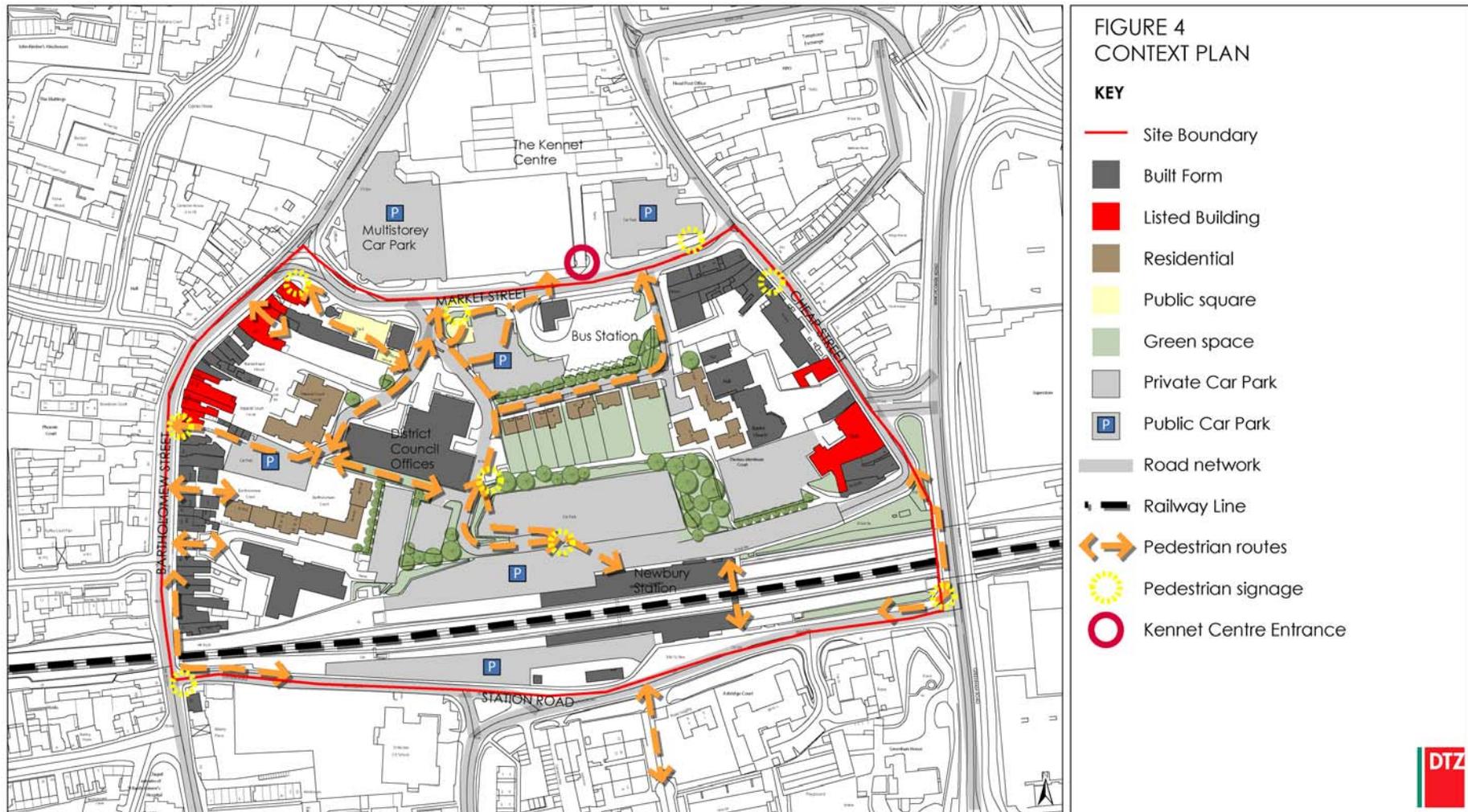
- 2.12 The site offers a major opportunity to 'fix' the missing link between the station gateway and the town centre, to improve the interface between Market Street and the Kennet Shopping Centre and the wider quarters framework identified in the Newbury 2025 Vision.

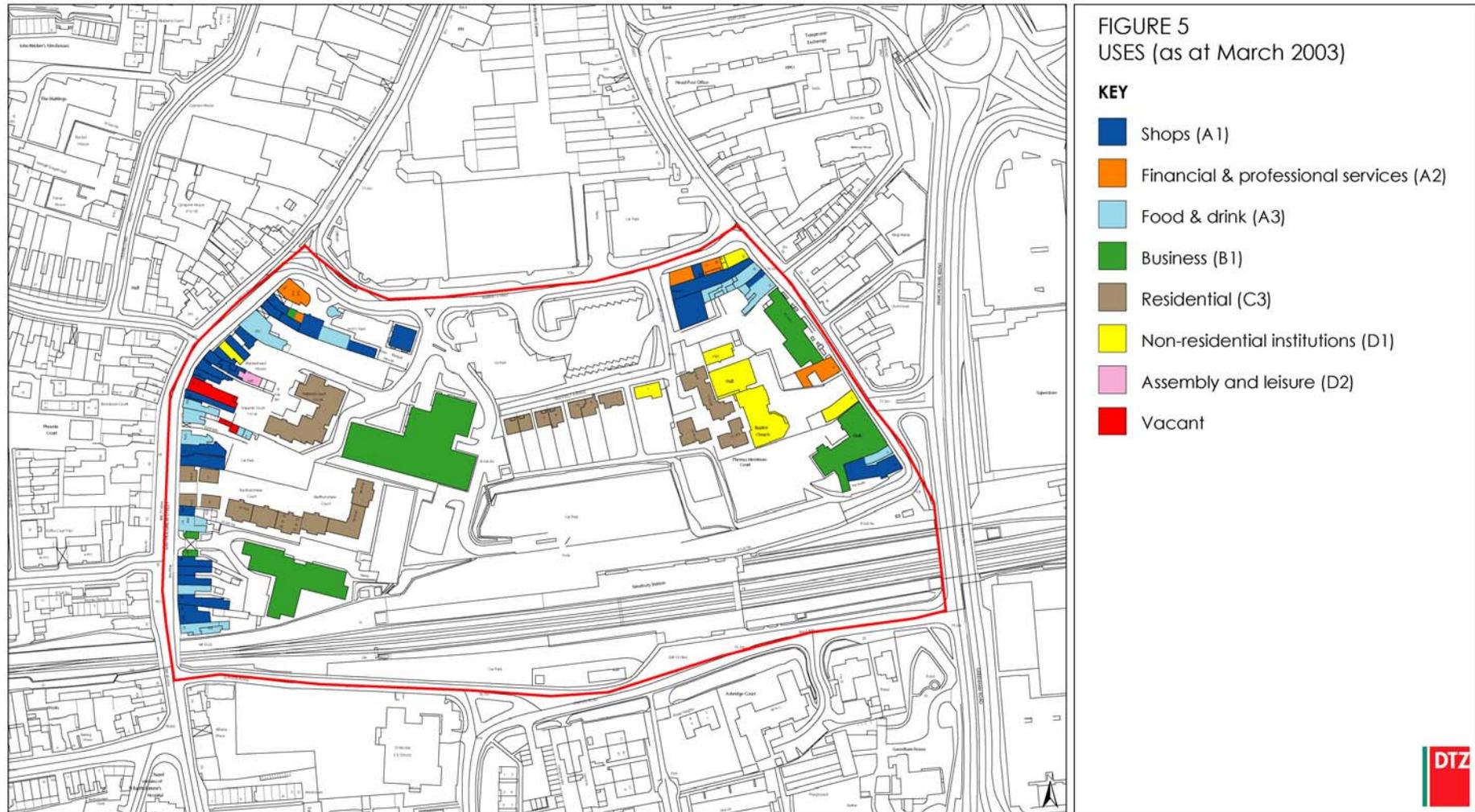


FIGURE 3
THE SITE BOUNDARY

Site Description and Current Uses

- 2.13 Figure 4 provides a more detailed analysis of the current activities across the site. The central section of the site is currently occupied by the Town Centre's bus station along Market Street, a row of detached and semi-detached houses on Highfield Avenue, the District Council Offices and associated surface car parking.
- 2.14 Cheap Street and Bartholomew Street south are also included within the site boundary and are characterised by smaller independent businesses providing a wide range of services which support the core Town Centre and local residents. An office building currently occupied by Vodafone and the private residential blocks of Imperial Court and Bartholomew Court are set behind the retail frontage along Bartholomew Street.
- 2.15 Situated to the rear of Cheap Street and accessed from Mayors Lane is the small private housing estate of Thomas Merriman Court. The Baptist Church and Hall are adjacent with access from Cheap Street. The remainder of the eastern section of the site comprises service yards, and private car parking areas. The Conservative Club has a large surface car park accessed via a narrow entrance ramp at the corner of Cheap Street and the station forecourt.
- 2.16 The north side of Newbury Station is dominated by surface car parking, serving both the station and West Berkshire Council offices. Station Road runs along the southern side of the station and provides additional surface and on-street parking opportunities. The railway line dissects the site from the school and surrounding residential areas to the south. An elevated pedestrian footbridge allows access (for those with a ticket) across the railway lines. There is, however, no wheelchair access between platforms. An alternative route leads pedestrians west along Bartholomew Street or east along the heavily trafficked Winchcombe Road (A339) and then into Cheap Street.
- 2.17 There is a significant level change (of approximately 4 metres) across the site. The gradient is at its steepest at the centre of the site and slopes downwards to the east and west. Steps provide pedestrian access from the car park to the eastern edge of the Council Offices. The Council has commissioned a topographic survey of the site, which is available to view at the Council Offices, Market Street, Newbury.
- 2.18 Existing uses across the site are indicated in Figure 5. Planning permission has been granted (subject to a S106 agreement) for a 7-screen cinema complex and ground-floor foyer, with accompanying restaurants, new public toilets, and new walkways to the Kennet shopping centre on the site of the surface car park at the corner of Market Street and Cheap Street. This will make an important contribution to the establishment of an 'active' frontage along Market Street.





Ownership

- 2.19 The Market Street site is held in a variety of different ownerships. West Berkshire Council owns a significant proportion of the central section of the site including the surface car park adjacent to the District Council Offices and north of the Railway station car park. The Council also owns the row of houses along Highfield Avenue with the exception of numbers 1 and 2.
- 2.20 Network Rail's freehold landholding includes the railway lines, rail station and the land immediately adjacent including the station car parks (north and south of the station entrances). The train operator (TOC) Great Western has the occupational lease over the car park. Network Rail also has control over the access to the Conservative Club car park.
- 2.21 Most of the retail units along Cheap Street and Bartholomew Street are in different freehold and leasehold ownerships. These have been outlined in more detail in Appendix A.

Site Opportunities and Constraints

- 2.22 Development of the Market Street site must take full account of the opportunities and constraints of the site. These are identified in Figure 7 and include: topography and visual issues; archaeology; the impact of listed buildings and the conservation area. These are outlined in more detail below.

Topography and Visual Issues

- 2.23 The topography of the area and the relative heights of the existing buildings enable significant views from within and outside the site. The development of the area therefore presents a unique opportunity to utilise the changes in level to create a place of real distinction. In achieving this objective consideration should be given to the following key views and vistas (see Figure 6):
- views into the site from the railway bridge (Winchcombe Road) and Station Road;
 - views across the surface car parks towards the station building from Highfield Avenue;
 - the view from Station Road (looking north west) of the spires of St Nicolas Church (Bartholomew Street) between the District Council Offices and the houses on Highfield Avenue;
 - the view (looking north) of the clock tower (of Newbury Town Hall) from the pedestrian footpath connecting Station Road to Catherine Road.
 - Potential views of the proposed leisure development (and possible cinema entrance) from the centre of the site (around Highfield Avenue).
- 2.24 It is important that new development complements and enhances the existing vistas, skylines and landmarks. In particular, the clock tower of Newbury Town Hall functions as an orientation marker and key landmark of the town centre. Consideration should be given to safeguard this important view from within the site.



View of the spires of St Nicholas Church from Station Road



View of the railway station from behind the houses along Highfield Avenue

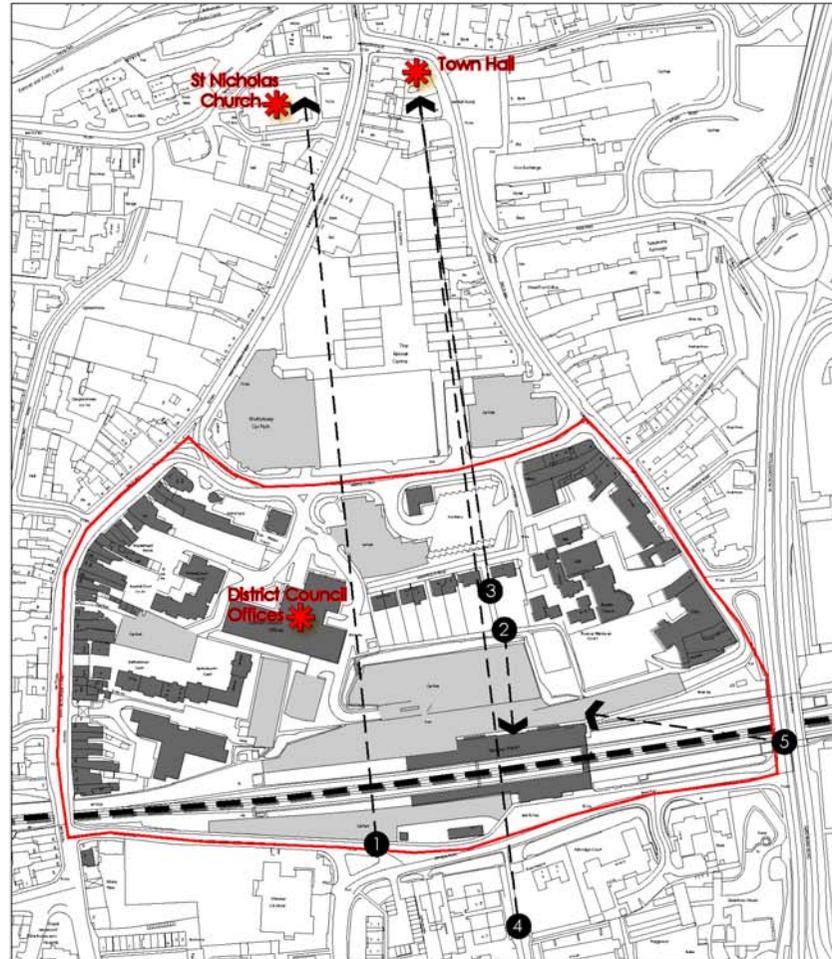


FIGURE 6
VISUAL ISSUES



View of the Town Hall clock tower from Highfield Avenue



View of the Town Hall clock tower from Catherine Rd



View of the site from the railway bridge (Winchcombe Rd)

Archaeology

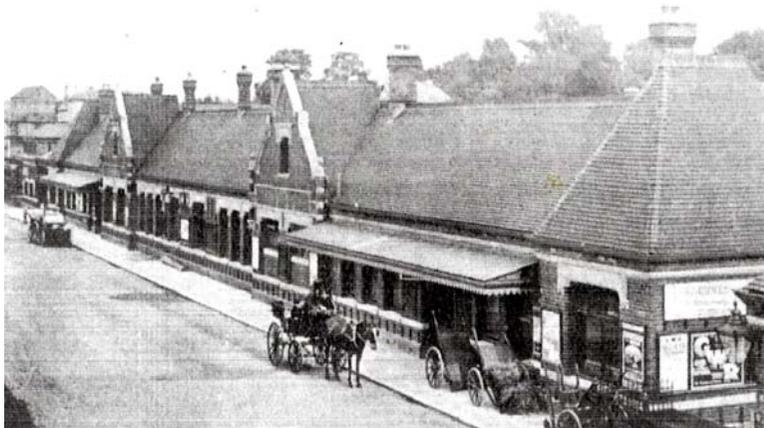
- 2.25 The appraisal set out in Appendix B has been prepared by the Archaeology Team within the Heritage and Tourism Service of West Berkshire Council. It is intended to serve as an appraisal of the archaeological issues and archaeological potential in the area covered by the planning brief and the proposed development site.
- 2.26 The site is located within the centre of historic Newbury. It contains a number of listed buildings. Documentary sources (such as old maps) show that parts of the site have been occupied from at least the mid-16th century. Prehistoric finds have been discovered at the site and evidence of Mesolithic activity has been found nearby (see Archaeological Appraisal).
- 2.27 The appraisal identifies the site as providing good potential for surviving evidence of Mesolithic and Romano-British activity in the area.
- 2.28 However, the appraisal also recognises that a significant proportion of the site has been subject to considerable modern development that will have damaged or destroyed any archaeological deposits present. This area is the central part of the site and includes the land fronting Newbury Railway Station and land adjacent to Market Street including the current site of Newbury Bus Station. Much of this area is therefore of low archaeological potential.
- 2.29 Within this central part of the site there is land to the rear of Highfield Avenue where archaeological deposits or features may survive. This land offers the opportunity for limited field evaluation to better characterise the archaeological potential of this part of the site. It is envisaged that the evaluation would consist of a small number of test pits.
- 2.30 Elsewhere within the site, and particularly parts of the site flanking Cheap Street and Bartholomew Street, there is a much greater archaeological potential.
- 2.31 There are no Scheduled Monuments within the site. However, Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 makes it clear that there will be a presumption in favour of the preservation of nationally important archaeological remains, or sites of special local significance. If sites cannot be preserved in situ, an alternative is preservation by record (i.e. excavation and recording of the remains).

Historical Development

- 2.32 The historical development of the site can be traced in the plans provided at the back of Appendix B. The area south of Market Street has a long association with the cattle market; the inn yards between Cheap Street and Bartholomew Street were used for the sale of sheep and cattle until the opening of the cattle market in 1873. The Market was extended in 1915, but closed in 1969 to make way for a multi-storey car park, later replaced by the present bus station. Newbury District Council moved to the purpose built office adjacent to the bus station in 1982.
- 2.33 Bartholomew and Cheap Street have remained relatively unchanged in terms of the grain of the built form and the strong edges to the street. There have been some new additions to the rear including an office building and residential blocks.
- 2.34 The row of houses along Highfield Avenue was built in the 1920s/1930s and the Council bought the majority in the 1950s. The Friend's Meeting House (the Quakers) occupies the last house on the row (number 1), just in front of this, near the old chestnut tree, is a stone marking the site of the old Quaker burial ground.



Newbury cattle market c. 1860-70



Newbury railway station c. 1910

Listed Buildings

- 2.35 There are a number of listed buildings along Bartholomew Street and Cheap Street (Figure 7). The most notable include the 17th century Dolphin Inn, with a typical brick and tile yard. Formerly a "putting-up" place for carriers' carts coming in from the villages on market days, and the Eight Bells coffee shop, an attractive gabled Tudor building and one of the oldest inns in the town.
- 2.36 A schedule of listed buildings on the site is set out in Appendix C. Planning **Policy ENV 32** states that the council will "*only permit proposals affecting a listed building which preserve and enhance the character, historical or architectural integrity and setting of the building. Materials and design details should be used which complement the listed building and its setting. Proposals to extend a listed building will need to be of scale and massing which do not harm, in particular by competing with or overpowering the character or setting of the listed building*".

Conservation Area

- 2.37 The site lies within a designated conservation area which covers the majority of the town centre. The Council will not permit development that would harm or prejudice the special character or appearance of a Conservation Area.
- 2.38 The presence of the listed buildings and conservation area highlight the importance of high quality urban design and landscape in the new development. Further information on development and design principles is provided in Section 5.

Services and Utilities

2.39 Appendix D illustrates the locations of known existing services and utilities in the vicinity of the site (also available from West Berkshire Council). These primarily run along the public highways. During the design of any scheme, developers will need to contact the relevant utility companies to discuss connections to existing services, as well as the following issues:

- Capacity of the existing system to supply the new development and any requirements for upgrading.
- Specific requirements for the design of any new services.
- Requirements for diversions and wayleaves for access.
- Potential measures that can be incorporated in the design of the new development to make more efficient use of resources.

Ecology

2.40 The site is currently extensively hardsurfaced, and consequently is likely to have low biodiversity. However, there is some evidence of slow worm activity within the central area of the site within the existing residential gardens and scrub/landscape areas close to the Council offices. There may also be slow worms along the railway corridor.

2.41 A biodiversity audit, including an assessment of the value of the site to bats, is scheduled to take place in June/July 2005, the results of which will be publicly available. The audit will include a phase 1 habitat survey. The Council will expect developers to take the biodiversity audit fully into account in preparing development proposals.

2.42 When considering any development proposal, applicants should consider what they could do to not only avoid damage to biodiversity, but also what they can do to promote it. This will include consideration to habitat creation and creative conservation measures such as planting native trees and shrubs, incorporating bird and bat boxes into buildings etc.

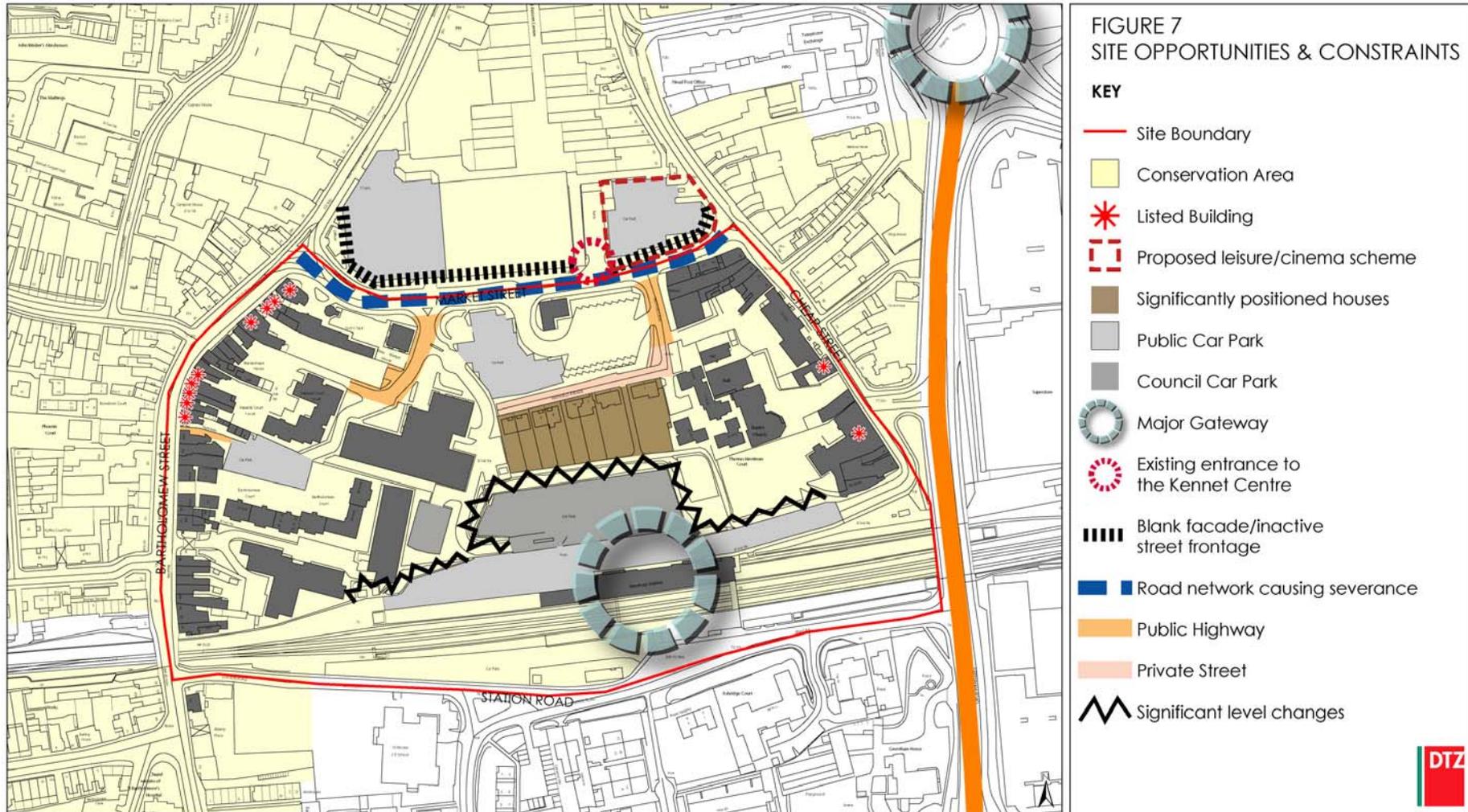
Water

2.43 The site lies above a source protection zone and minor aquifer and there is a probability that the site contains contaminated ground. The Environment Agency will require site investigations to be carried out on the site as part of any redevelopment in order to ensure development will not cause pollution of Controlled Waters. The site investigations should include a desktop study to identify previous site uses, potential contaminants and other relevant information. The investigation should be comprehensive enough to enable a risk assessment to be undertaken relating to groundwater and surface waters associated on and off the site that may be affected and the development of a Method Statement detailing the remediation requirements, including measures to minimise the impact on ground and surface waters.

2.44 Developers are advised to make early contact with the Environment Agency to ensure proposals are acceptable in terms of groundwater protection measures.

Rail

- 2.45 The site currently includes a rail maintenance compound and access to the rail track at the western end of both rail station car parks. Access to the rail track is an essential operational requirement and must be maintained (to both north and south of the rail track). The maintenance or reprovision of the maintenance compound in close proximity to the rail station will also be required.
- 2.46 Any redevelopment proposals involving the rail station will require consultation with the Strategic Rail Authority, or any successor authority, to ensure compatibility with their objectives and requirements.



3 POLICY CONTEXT

3.01 The Planning and Design Brief has been prepared in the context of National, Regional and Local Planning Policy. In addition, Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) prepared by West Berkshire District Council and other additional guidance prepared by other bodies have been evaluated.

3.02 All levels of policy and guidance need to be considered by developers to guide the future development of the Market Street site. This section highlights the most relevant policies and guidance. A more detailed analysis is set out within Appendix E.

3.03 It is considered that the most relevant policies for the Market Street site are:

(i) *The West Berkshire District Local Plan (June 2002).*

- Policy SHOP.1a (Mixed Uses in Town Centres)
- Policy HSG.9 (Affordable Housing)
- Policy ECON.5 (Town Centre Commercial Areas)
- Policy ENV.33 (Development in Conservation Areas)

(ii) *SPG 04/4 (Delivering Investment from Sustainable Development) (September 2004)*

(iii) *Newbury 2025: A Vision for Newbury Town Centre (September 2003)*

3.04 The following planning policy and guidance has been analysed to inform the planning brief for the redevelopment of the Market Street site:

National Policy Guidance

3.05 National guidance is contained in Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG's) prepared on specific issues. PPG's are gradually being replaced with Planning Policy Statements (PPS's). The relevant guidance notes are set out below. The key issues for the Market Street Site are identified in Appendix E.

- (i) PPS1, *Delivering Sustainable Development* (January 2005)
- (iii) PPG3, *Housing* (March 2000)
- (iv) PPS6, *Planning for Town Centres* (March 2005)
- (v) PPG13, *Transport* (October 2002)
- (vi) PPG15, *Planning and the Historic Environment* (October 2002)
- (vii) PPG16, *Archaeology and Planning* (August 2001)
- (viii) PPS 22, *Renewable Energy* (August 2004)
- (ix) PPS 23, *Planning and Pollution Control* (October 2004)

Regional Planning Guidance

- 3.06 Regional Planning Guidance for Berkshire is provided by the South East Regional Guidance (RPG9), which was adopted in March 2001.
- 3.07 The Guidance sets out Government Policy for the South East and provides the regional planning framework for the next fifteen years. The primary purpose of the guidance is to provide a regional framework for the preparation of local authority development plans.
- 3.08 The draft South East Plan (2005) provides the regional spatial framework for development until 2026 and the context within which Local Development Documents will be prepared. The key development principles and policies of relevance to the Market Street site within RPG9 and the draft South East Plan, are set out in Appendix E.

Berkshire Structure Plan

- 3.09 The Berkshire Structure Plan 2001-2016 is expected to be adopted in Autumn 2005 and is therefore relevant to this brief.
- 3.10 The Structure Plan identifies that Newbury will:

“continue to develop as an important business centre while maintaining its role and character as a market town with strong links to the surrounding rural areas. New residential development will continue to occur through redevelopment of sites within the built up area and will be linked to infrastructure provision. Accessibility to the national road and rail network will continue to ensure that the town is an attractive location for existing and incoming businesses. There will be enhancements to public

transport to create improving links between the towns’ business and residential areas.”

(i) Housing

- 3.11 **Policy H1** allows for the provision of the development of approximately 40,740 net additional dwellings in Berkshire between 1 April 2001 and 31 March 2016. **Policy H2** distributes this overall provision between the various districts and divides this into three periods. The following table sets out the requirements for West Berkshire for 9,080 new dwellings between 2001 – 2016.

District	2001-2006	2006-2011	2011-2016	Total 2001-2016
West Berkshire	3,900	2,590	2,590	9,080

- 3.12 **Policy H6** requires residential development to make efficient use of land, by achieving densities in excess of 50 dwellings per hectare (net) in areas with good public transport accessibility or in areas where there are firm proposals to raise the level of accessibility to an acceptable standard. The policy also requires schemes involving residential development to provide a variety of dwelling sizes and types.

3.13 **Policy EN8** requires all forms of development to maximise the opportunity to incorporate energy efficiency and energy conservation into their design, layout and orientation. Additionally, renewable energy generation should be considered in all development proposals subject to avoiding adverse impacts on landscape, biodiversity and local amenity. Whilst development proposals for the generation of electricity and heat from renewable resources are encouraged.

(ii) Shopping and Leisure

3.14 Berkshire's rapid growth and affluence has resulted in considerable growth in retail and leisure expenditure in recent years.

3.15 **Policy S1** states that the scale and nature of retail and leisure development will be consistent with the role of the centre. With regard to the function, scale and future needs of Newbury, policy advises that:

- **“Function and scale:** Newbury serves the convenience and many of the comparison shopping needs of the Newbury and Thatcham built-up area along with its large rural hinterland. Newbury has recently been enhanced by pedestrianisation. There are threats to its higher-order retail functions from Reading and other major centres outside the County.
- **Future Needs:** There is scope for retail and leisure growth in Newbury town centre as part of mixed-use development of a type that will serve to sustain and enhance the diversity of employment within the town. Such development will maintain and capitalise upon the market town character of the centre, expanding floorspace in order to enhance and

build upon the quality and variety of the shopping and leisure facilities already available in the town centre.”

Local Planning Policy

The West Berkshire District Local Plan

3.16 The Local Planning policy framework is provided within the adopted West Berkshire District Local Plan (June 2002).

3.17 The Market Street site falls within the Town Centre Commercial Area, whereby Policy SHOP.1a and ECON.5 are relevant. The site is also in the Town Centre Conservation Area and thus Policy ENV.33 is relevant. These policies, together with other relevant policies are summarised below.

(i) Overall Strategy

3.18 **Policy OVS.1** contains the overall strategy and states that in line with national and regional policy, the Council will seek sustainable, preferably brownfield locations for development with appropriate access to public transport and community facilities. Energy efficiency and reducing crime are also identified as key issues for all development.

3.19 The Local Plan states that planning obligations should only be sought where necessary to the granting of planning permission, relevant to planning and directly relevant to the proposed development.

(ii) Housing

- 3.20 The Local Plan encourages housing on appropriate sites in town centres that contribute to the vitality of urban areas and to sustainability objectives.
- 3.21 The Council intends to improve the range of housing opportunities in town centres by widening the range of housing available. **Policy HSG.13** encourages the use of space over shops for residential units.
- 3.22 The Council aims to maximise affordable housing for local needs from new developments. **Policy HSG.9** states that on sites of 15 dwellings or more or on land comprising more than 0.5 hectares, the Council will seek at least 30% of the dwellings to be affordable. Further guidance is given in **SPG 04/4: Delivering Investment from Sustainable Development**.

(iii) Economy

- 3.23 Retaining existing jobs and creating new employment opportunities are principal priorities in the Local Plan.
- 3.24 **Policy ECON.2** states that alternative uses for sites currently in employment use or with a commitment for employment use will be permitted, provided that the proposed use is compliant with the relevant Local Plan policies.
- 3.25 **Policy ECON.2A** states that proposals to redevelop, re-use or extend employment-generating sites will be permitted provided that a range of criteria is met.

(iv) Shopping

- 3.26 **Policy SHOP.1A** states that the Council encourages mixed-use developments in town centres and other areas which are highly accessible by a range of transport modes other than the private car. Newbury is the largest town centre in West Berkshire and suitable uses identified in the Local Plan are retail, small scale offices, housing, A3 uses, libraries, leisure facilities, hotels, small conference facilities and museums.

(v) Recreation and Leisure

- 3.27 Overall the Local Plan aims to ensure appropriate levels of widely accessible open space and recreational facilities for local needs. It also seeks to protect and enhance natural recreational assets.
- 3.28 The Local Plan outlines a number of ways that open space can be provided in a development. **Policy RL.1** states public open space will be required from new residential developments of ten or more dwellings at a rate of between 3 - 4.3 hectares per 10,000 population. The exact provision depends on local circumstances, associated facilities and the type of housing.

(v) The Environment and Conservation

- 3.29 The Local Plan states that in Conservation Areas, encouragement will be given to development proposals that make a positive contribution to the enhancement of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

3.30 The Market Street site comprises eight Listed Buildings, and therefore any new development will need to consider Policy **ENV.32**. This states that planning permission will only be permitted where proposals preserve and enhance the character, historical or architectural integrity and setting of the Listed Building.

3.31 The Market Street site falls within the Town Centre Conservation Area, thus any future development will need to consider Policy **ENV.33** which states that *'the Council will not permit development which would harm or prejudice the special character or appearance of a Conservation Area'*.

(vii) Transportation

3.32 In line with the overall Local Plan strategy, the Council will direct development to the most sustainable locations and will reject poorly devised schemes, which do not include adequate measures to reduce the need to travel and encourage alternative modes to the private car.

3.33 Policy **TRANS.1** deals with transportation needs for new development. It states that the transportation needs of new development should be met through the provision of a range of transport modes, particularly public transport modes.

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPGs)

3.34 West Berkshire District Council has produced numerous SPGs. These have been analysed and it is considered that the following are most relevant to the Market Street Site:

- SPG 4: *Private Open Space for New Residential Development*

- SPG 7: *Communal Open Space for New Flats*
- SPG 10: *Access for Disabled People*
- SPG 11: *Planning to Reduce the Opportunity for Crime*
- SPG 04/4: *Delivering Investment from Sustainable Development*
- Draft SPG: *Design and Sustainability: A Developer's Guide*

Additional Policy Documents For Consideration

3.35 Additional policy statements for consideration are contained within:

- Newbury 2025: A Vision for Newbury Town Centre
- Newbury Historic Character Study (2005)
- West Berkshire Retail and Leisure Study (2003)
- Cultural Strategy: Cultural Services Supporting Vibrant Communities

3.36 Various transport studies are being prepared for West Berkshire District Council. Although currently unavailable in final form, it is important to consider the findings emerging from the following studies:

- *Newbury Movement Study*. Prepared by Atkins (2005).
- *Draft Strategic Bus and Coach Interchange Study*. Prepared by Peter Brett Associates (April 2004)
- *Memo on Newbury Station: Scheme Designs from West Berkshire Rail Interchanges Study*. Prepared by Peter Brett Associates (September 2004).

3.37 The recent Government focus on promoting good design has given rise to substantial advice on ‘best practice’ in the form of guides, manuals and handbooks. The following publications provide useful reference and are summarised in Appendix E.

- *Better Places to Live: By Design*. Published by the Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions and CABI (2000)
- *The Urban Design Compendium*. Published by English Partnerships and the Housing Corporation (2000)

Newbury 2025: A Vision for Newbury Town Centre (September 2003)

3.38 Newbury 2025 sets out long-term aspirations for the town centre. The Vision covers the period 2003–2025 and focuses on meeting the needs and aspirations of current generations but also working towards creating an environment that future generations will want to live and work in.

3.39 The redevelopment of Market Street is considered vital for Newbury Town Centre, especially for opening up the station and the southern end of the town centre. The aspiration for Market Street is to create a mixed use quarter with quality housing, supported by small-scale retail uses and employment provision. The urban village quarter will compliment other quarters identified in the Newbury 2025 Vision, including the Primary Retail Quarter and the Cultural/Leisure/Recreation Quarter.

3.40 The need to address vehicular accessibility in Newbury Town Centre is key to the Vision. The Vision also identifies the need to redevelop the railway station to provide an attractive gateway into Newbury. At present the railway station is not integrated visually, or practically, with the town centre.

Newbury Historic Character Study (2005)

3.41 This study is designed to help inform development and future planning policy within Newbury in relation to the historic environment. A key strand of the survey is an assessment of the historic character of Newbury in relation to its existing built environment, through the recognition of Historic Character Areas. The survey summarises the town’s history and previous archaeological and geotechnical investigations, and identifies the Market Street site as a separate Historic Urban Character Area with little surviving historic character but with high archaeological potential in areas where modern redevelopment has not taken place.

West Berkshire Retail and Leisure Study (2003)

3.42 This study finds that Newbury is losing market share of shoppers and spend to neighbouring authorities. There is a need for immediate action to prevent further decline by improving and extending its current retail and leisure offer and by making it a more attractive location. The planning decision and development brief for Park Way are intended to meet this quantitative and qualitative need for new retailing in the town centre.

Cultural Strategy – Cultural Services Supporting Vibrant Communities

- 3.43 West Berkshire has produced a Draft Cultural Strategy to provide clear priorities for 2003-2004, and action plans for review by the community. Various cultural priorities are identified including greater social inclusion and increased awareness of local resources.

Newbury Movement Study (2005)

- 3.44 The Newbury Movement Study has been undertaken as an independent piece of work to inform the development of short, medium and long-term approaches to managing transport across a range of modes in the wider Newbury area.
- 3.45 The study includes detailed survey work to provide a clear understanding of the current transport conditions within the wider Newbury area and the potential outcomes in the longer term, based on several scenarios. An up-to-date transport model for the wider Newbury area has also been developed.

Draft Strategic Bus and Coach Interchange Study. Prepared by Peter Brett Associates (April 2004)

- 3.46 This study focuses on two sites in Newbury Town Centre; Parkway and Northbrook Street. The main findings are that buses should remain in Northbrook Street albeit with improvements to the bus stop infrastructure. Improvements should also be made to cycling facilities. The study notes that the use of Parkway for buses may not be the most effective option for the town centre. This supports the potential relocation of the bus station.

Memo on Newbury Station: Scheme Designs from West Berkshire Rail Interchanges Study. Prepared by Peter Brett Associates (September 2004)

- 3.47 The document seeks to reduce traffic around the station area. However, it is recognised that many journeys to the station can only be made by car or taxi due to the rural character of West Berkshire.

A number of principles, priorities and options are put forward to improve accessibility around the station and to enhance links from the station to the town centre.

4 TRANSPORT AND MOVEMENT

4.01 The existing transport and movement characteristics are outlined in Appendix F. This section addresses the key access and movement issues that should be addressed for redevelopment of the Market Street site.

4.02 The main elements for future change relating to railway station, public transport interchange and new development can be summarised as follows:

- Improve interchange and connectivity between rail and bus;
- Create an interchange spine (or new pedestrian/cycle/local access street);
- Enhance the environment/create a better gateway image of the rail station;
- Improving legibility of routes to the transport hubs;
- Consider arrangements for a sequence of bus shelters along Market Street (to replace the existing bus station);
- Facilitate car access and servicing to the station interchange and new development; and
- provide a new multi-storey car park.

4.03 These elements are shown in Figure 8. Some more specific principles relating to the public transport interchange, pedestrian and cycle connectivity and vehicle access are provided below:

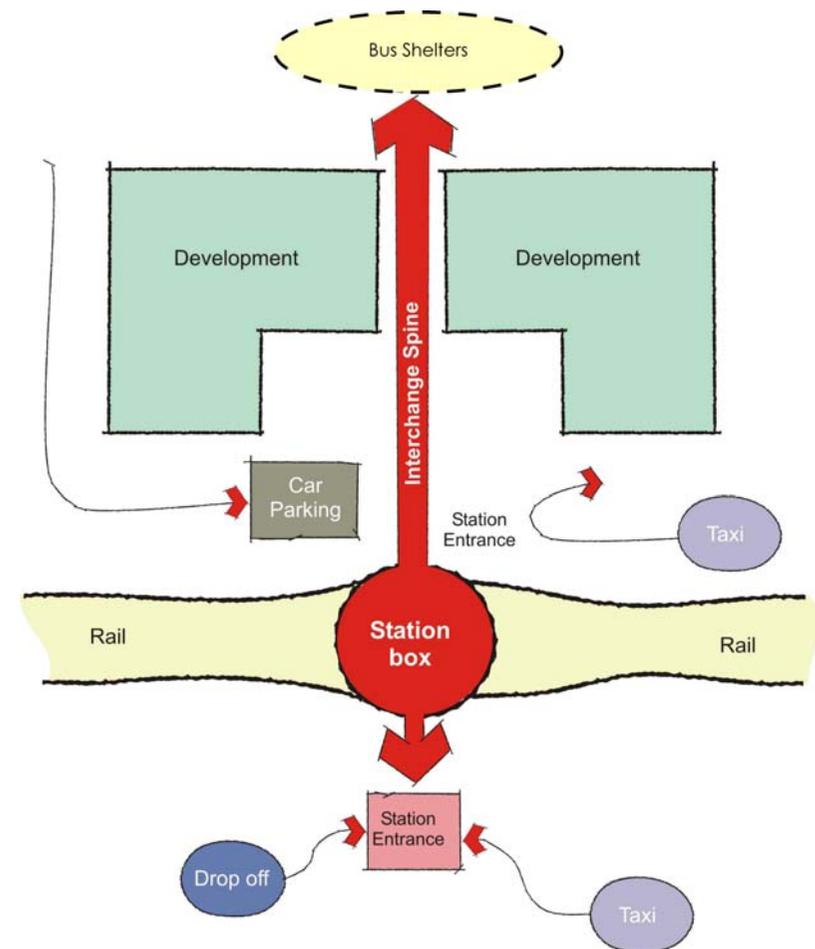


FIGURE 8
THE TRANSPORT & MOVEMENT
DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Public Transport Interchange

- 4.04 The key issue regarding interchange between bus and rail services is that the two are poorly connected and there is a lack of legibility between the facilities. A number of proposals detailing how the rail station can be better integrated with local bus services are currently being considered by West Berkshire Council (Rail Interchange Study). The provision of a direct and legible link to encourage and facilitate better pedestrian access from bus services to the rail station should be at the forefront of moves to improve local public transport use. Consideration should also be given to replacing the land intensive use of the bus station with a sequence of bus shelters along Market Street.
- 4.05 The potential for integration between buses or trains and taxis also needs to be considered. There are a number of taxi ranks in central Newbury, including one at the rail station, and most locations are at least fairly convenient for local bus or rail services.

Pedestrian and Cycle Connectivity

- 4.06 A more detailed description of the principles for pedestrian movement is outlined in Section 6. As part of improving the pedestrian and cyclist facilities, crossings, pavement and public space needs to be provided. The width, type, and waiting space associated with crossings needs to be carefully considered as part of the design process. Public space needs to be attractive, functional and safe if it is to enhance the pedestrian experience.
- 4.07 The railway line is a major barrier to pedestrian movement between the residential areas and school on the southern side of the rail lines and the town centre to the north. Proposals which seek to strengthen the access between these areas; incorporating dedicated pedestrian crossing facilities, directional signage,

lighting and planting schemes will be encouraged. As a long-term aspiration the Council would encourage the provision of a second crossing over the railway lines in the form of a station concourse or landmark pedestrian and cycle bridge crossing.

- 4.08 The Council will expect redevelopment proposals to include appropriate and adequate access for cyclists. In addition, the Council endeavours to provide cycle parking of a high standard, thus optimising its functionality and purpose for cyclists, whilst not impeding on the streetscape or pedestrian movements within the area. Development proposals will be expected to ensure sufficient and suitable cycle parking is provided including secure and dedicated cycle stores for residential and commercial units and the provision of cycle stands for public use located in accessible, safe, convenient and prominent locations within the site. (see also para 6.29).

Vehicle Access & Parking

- 4.09 Vehicle access and car parking facilities will form a fundamental part of the redevelopment of the Market Street site. On the south side of the station, vehicle access will remain along Station Road with formalised parking bays and dedicated taxi bays with a combined set down point. On the northern side of the station access and drop off will be provided directly from Cheap Street and Market Street (this being the central development access).
- 4.10 One of the core principles for the redevelopment of the station area is to take vehicle access away from the station entrance, thereby improving pedestrian access to the station forecourt.

- 4.11 This will require rationalisation of the existing car parking facilities and the likely re-provision of spaces into a multi-storey car park. A figure of around 400 – 450 spaces is anticipated (a draft plan has been prepared identifying around 400 spaces on four levels) to serve station users and West Berkshire Council’s Market Street offices. A more detailed parking study will be required to confirm the exact scale and form of the car parking facilities.
- 4.12 The Council considers the layout and topography of the site may provide an opportunity for innovative solutions to the expectations for new development, including car parking provision. The Council has no objection in principle to multi-storey car parking to the south of the railway, although such car parking is unlikely to be sufficient on its own to fully provide the parking requirements of the core area. It may however reduce the overall level of provision on the north side of the railway which could provide design benefits.
- 4.13 Any additional car parking provision to the south of the railway will be expected to compliment anticipated access and environmental improvements to the southern entrance to the rail station. It will also require the provision of an additional pedestrian and cycle access across the railway in order to ensure appropriate links to the town centre are provided.
- 4.14 Where development proposals do not include the provision of additional car parking to the south of the railway or an additional pedestrian/cycle access across the railway, the Council will expect developments to recognise the potential future provision of such facilities and ensure redevelopment proposals does not inhibit their delivery at a future date.

5 DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT AND POTENTIAL USES

- 5.01 The redevelopment of the Market Street site offers a unique opportunity to provide Newbury with a residential-led, mixed use scheme. It will seek to enhance and diversify the residential product that is currently available within the market, whilst simultaneously providing a catalyst form of development that will provide a much needed missing link between the town centre and the mainline train station.
- 5.02 Because the redevelopment of the central section of the site will be largely residential-led, it provides the opportunity to develop a strong community identity that will establish the Market Street as a distinct character area/neighbourhood. This will complement the existing town centre commercial provision, and will provide an identifiable local and regional destination.
- 5.03 From a residential perspective, demand is likely to come from younger single people and young couples, who are more comfortable in the urban scene, elderly people who wish to be close to town centre facilities and good transportation links and commuters (to London and Reading) who cannot afford London or the more expensive areas of Berkshire and Surrey.
- 5.04 From a commercial perspective it is envisaged that any proposed commercial accommodation will complement that in the town centre and will, to a certain extent, service the proposed quantum of residential development, and satisfy the requirements of passing trade to the train station.
- 5.05 It is expected that any form of commercial development will be in the form of small ground floor units, with the potential to incorporate double height frontage units with an internal mezzanine area. This format of design will appeal to bespoke and specialist retailers and also the leisure operators, who seek maximum frontage exposure and easily configured floor areas. Developers should be aware that any small-scale specialist retail user proposed for this site should be ancillary to the residential and should not impact on the vitality and viability of existing businesses in the town centre as a whole.
- 5.06 Potential leisure operators could include cafés, bars and restaurants, which would have to be incorporated in such a way to minimise conflicting operations with the residential element of the scheme. There will also be the opportunity to attract small service providers such as professional firms (eg: solicitors, estate agents). An element of community accommodation to satisfy any loss of the Quaker Meeting House (including the existing garden) will be required as part of redevelopment proposals. In particular, redevelopment that proposes the loss of the Quaker Meeting House will be expected to ensure the re-provision of existing community uses to a level at least comparable to that lost and ensure its continuous provision, including during any construction phase(s). The small elements of retail frontage will be beneficial to the streetscape and enhance the security aspects of the scheme ensuring active uses along the main thoroughfare through the development.
- 5.07 Other potential commercial uses to be considered for the site may include the provision of a hotel/leisure facility that would seek to maximise the excellent communication links and prominent position of the development site. However, careful consideration should be given to the likely impact of increased traffic movements and parking requirements if such a development is implemented as well as the commercial viability of such a use.

- 5.08 In order to maintain an element of flexibility within the development to meet changing market demand, careful consideration should be given to the design and layout of the ground floor accommodation fronting the main thoroughfare. This is to ensure that the development can change and evolve to meet market expectations without jeopardising the overall appeal and sustainability of the entire scheme.
- 5.09 For the residential element, it is envisaged that a high proportion will be provided in the form of apartments, with a proportion of town houses to provide diversity and contribute to a balanced community. Developers will also be expected to take account of any identified local housing needs.
- 5.10 Typically in Newbury, the majority of new build housing schemes outside the town centre have been in the form of houses of varying styles and design. However, over the last two years there has been an increase in residential developers actively facilitating high density developments in and around the town centre to meet the current demand for smaller more affordable residential units and the changing lifestyles of potential purchasers.
- 5.11 Consequently, the form of residential development provided is anticipated to be mainly one and two bedroom apartments with a small element of larger three bedroom units and/or some two bedroom duplex units. There could also be a distinct area of townhouses ranging in size, but of either three or four bedroom in nature.
- 5.12 To achieve a successful and sustainable mixed use development that is in accordance with planning policy, the incorporation of affordable housing that reflects the Local Authority's requirements and meets local housing need, is an essential component.
- Effective integration of affordable units is required which does not encourage social segregation or potential conflicts.
- 5.13 Developers will be expected to ensure that an effective and workable car parking solution is provided within any proposed development. This will seek to provide a strategy that does not materially affect the viability or unacceptably compromise the design of the development, or any part of the planning brief site.
- 5.14 A variety of clearly defined public and private open spaces are to be provided within the development. High quality communal courtyards to which residents can have access are to be made available, with clear management principles employed.
- 5.15 Townhouses should have private gardens and/or roof terraces and apartments are to maximise private open space with generous balconies and roof terraces that are carefully located to maximise aspect and strategic views to the surroundings without compromising privacy.
- 5.16 As the eco-homes standards continue to evolve and become more widely accepted by developers, the perception of eco-homes within the market may change to the extent that it could have either a negative or positive impact on values. To date there is no evidence that the eco-homes standard is having a direct impact from a marketability angle, although indirect impact may occur through potential increased construction cost.
- 5.17 Throughout a scheme, energy efficiency can be improved by appropriate and innovative design, form, layout and orientation of development. In addition, appropriate use of materials can lead to reduced consumption of energy and environmental running costs of the building. The overall aim is to create a development that is socially, economically and environmentally sustainable, and that

will address the key issues of energy conservation, materials specification, water conservation and waste minimisation.

- 5.18 This site provides the opportunity to create a benchmark scheme that is holistic in its approach towards environmental technologies and development design. The developer should aspire to provide innovative and ground breaking environmental technologies for the whole site which should be further explained through a Renewable Energy Strategy Statement. This should clarify the relationship between design and construction, courtyards and landscape, the impact of adopted technologies on improving energy efficiency and the implications for residents.

6 URBAN DESIGN ANALYSIS

Introduction

6.01 The Council has high expectations in relation to the development of the site and is seeking proposals which will maximise the land use potential with a focus on quality in urban design and architecture. This section outlines the key design principles that should guide future development on the Market Street site. The principles are based upon extensive urban design analysis, and set out practical solutions to aid the development process, and to ensure that development on the site is at the forefront of best practice in sustainability and design.

6.02 In order to raise the profile of the Town Centre and create the right image at this key gateway the following aspirations have been established for the site:

- Create a sustainable, flagship development;
- Provide a significant mixed-use town centre development, with a predominant focus on residential uses and an emphasis on high quality materials and sustainable development;
- Develop a new urban village quarter for the town centre that engenders a strong 'sense of place' and that complements the adjoining town centre quarters, and enhances the vitality and viability of the town as a whole;
- Undertake a comprehensive development of the core of the site, vital to maximise opportunities, including improving the integration of the railway station with the town centre and the surrounding retail and residential areas;

- Achieve appropriate levels of development density that deliver the required critical mass sufficient to encourage mixed development and to promote significant natural surveillance of the streets for most hours of the day;
- Provide high quality urban design, architecture and landscaping within the planning and development of the project;
- Design fully accessible quality public spaces that respond to the needs of new and existing communities; and
- Ensure areas outside the core area compliment the anticipated development at the centre of the site.

6.03 The following sets out in more detail the key design elements which will help to define the pattern and layout of future development.

Sense of Place and Character

6.04 The redevelopment of the site should provide a strong positive image as one of the key gateways into the town centre. Importance is placed upon building a distinct image and high quality 'sense of place' which is distinct from other parts of town but which respects the surrounding areas.

6.05 As such, the development should respect and complement the historic environment of the Town Centre in terms of scale, style form and local materials.

6.06 A Conservation Area Appraisal for the Newbury Town Centre Conservation Area is proposed for completion by Spring / Summer 2006. Prior to completion of the appraisal, developers will be required to undertake a specific historic/conservation

appraisal of the development area to inform development proposals and ensure the potential impact on the historic character and environment of the area is taken fully into account.

Permeability and Accessibility

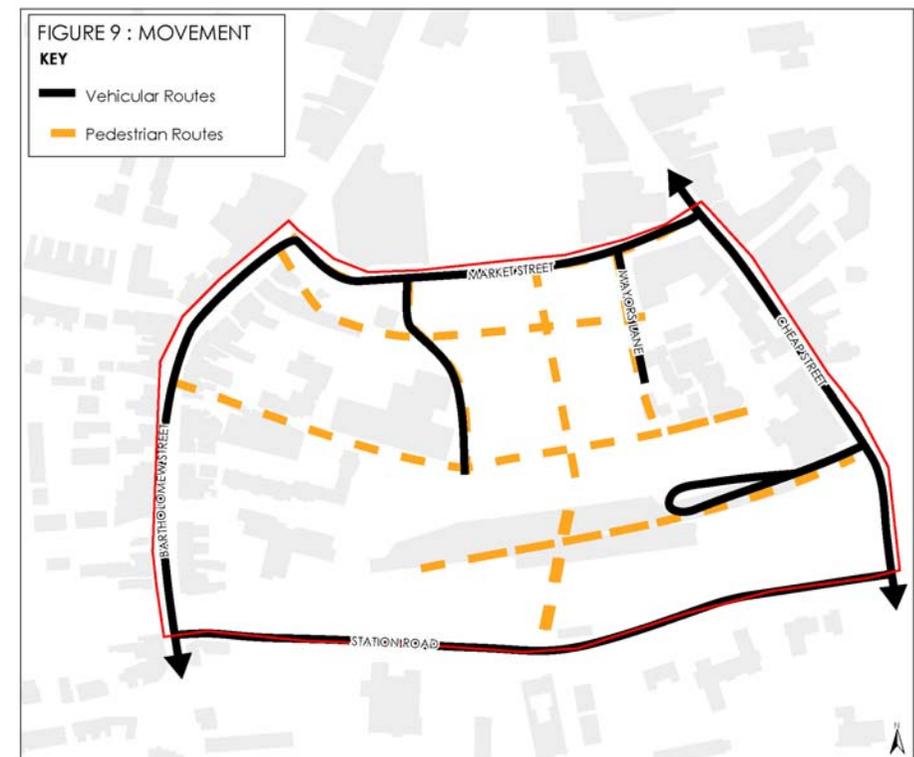
6.07 Section 4 provides an overview of the key transport and movement issues which relate to the Market Street area. The pedestrian movement between the station arrival point and the town centre is an essential component. The movement network should also reinforce existing pedestrian and cycle routes and create new opportunities to link the Core Area with the secondary retail areas along Bartholomew Street and Cheap Street. Consideration should also be given to the provision of a more direct link for pedestrians and cyclists from Station Road, on the south side of the railway station, to the town centre.

6.08 The opportunity should be taken to include the following (see Figure 9):

- **A strong north-south pedestrian route providing a direct connection between the station and Market Street.** This will require an innovative approach to overcome the significant level change across the central section of the site.
- A wide, light-controlled pedestrian crossing over Market Street providing **a direct link from the new quarter into the town centre** following pedestrian desire lines.
- **A strengthened western pedestrian route linking Bartholomew Street to the heart of the quarter.** This will lead pedestrians through the 'Eight Bells' Arcade and along an enhanced pedestrian path to the rear of the Council Offices. Where the route crosses traffic accessed roads, a

change in the surface treatment on the carriageway should reinforce the priority of pedestrians.

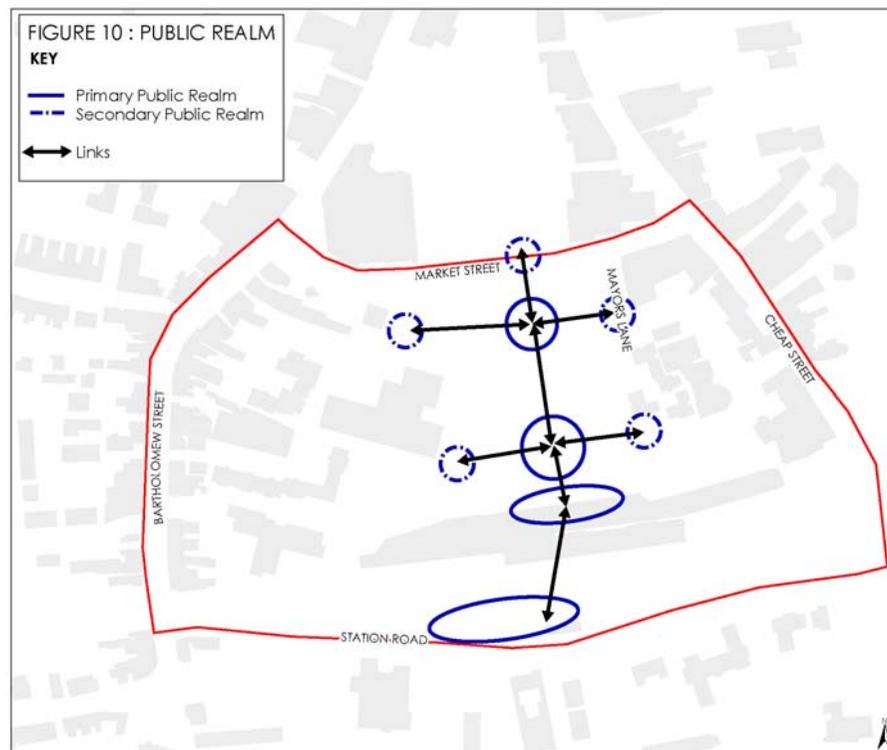
- Opportunity for the provision of a **dedicated cycle route from Bartholomew Street** should be explored in the interests of enhancing cycle access to the rail station. There may be opportunity for a cycle route to follow a similar alignment as the pedestrian route although the Council will be keen to ensure potential conflict between pedestrians and cyclists is minimised.



- **A new eastern route linking Cheap Street to the quarter.** This should be encouraged as part of any proposed redevelopment along Cheap Street or within the area immediately behind Cheap Street.
- **Enhanced connections between the residential areas and school on southern side of railway lines,** the new quarter and town centre beyond. This could take the form of a second pedestrian/cycle bridge which could also provide a landmark feature for the area. The bridge would enhance the connections between the areas north and south of the railway line, with opportunities to provide disabled access between platforms.

Public Realm

- 6.09 Development should seek to improve the permeability and legibility of the area with a seamless series of active streets, spaces and paths. In particular new development should seek to strengthen the strategic axis between the station gateway and the town centre with efforts to integrate the inward looking Kennet Centre and proposed cinema/leisure development. The network should also reinforce existing routes and create new opportunities to link the development with the secondary retail areas along Bartholomew Street and Cheap Street.
- 6.10 Routes into and through the new development should be aligned to provide visual connections to the town centre which will naturally lead pedestrians from the rail station towards Market Street. This can be achieved through the creation of visual connections to existing landmarks such as the prominent clock tower in Market Place, and also through the creation of occasional focal points of activity. Marking these points with landmarks, squares or other distinctive landscaping.
- 6.11 New buildings should present an active ‘front’ to this network of streets and spaces. Particular consideration should be given to ground floor uses which are adjacent to public spaces. Opportunities exist to enhance the functionality and vitality of these areas by incorporating uses which can ‘spill out’ into the space (such as cafes, food/flower stalls).
- 6.12 Within the body of the development a number of discrete areas should assist in creating a special character. Opportunities to create key spaces should be explored particularly at entrance points to the development and at the focus of converging routes. It is important that this network is accessible to all, with particular consideration to negotiating the level changes across the site.
- 6.13 The opportunity should be taken to include the following key spaces within the new development (also outlined in Figure 10):
- a **central square** which acts as a focal point at the ‘heart’ of the new quarter providing the opportunity for sitting, relaxing and meeting;
 - a high quality, attractive **station plaza** which announces ones arrival in Newbury; this should be a functional space incorporating active uses and offering the opportunity to ‘gather oneself’ after a journey;
 - a **square at the southern entrance of the station** which complements the station plaza at the northern entrance. To incorporate high quality hard landscaping with street trees and cycle stands/parking provision; and
 - a number of high quality **entrance points** to the development defined by landmarks (buildings, public art works), small squares, or distinctive landscaping.



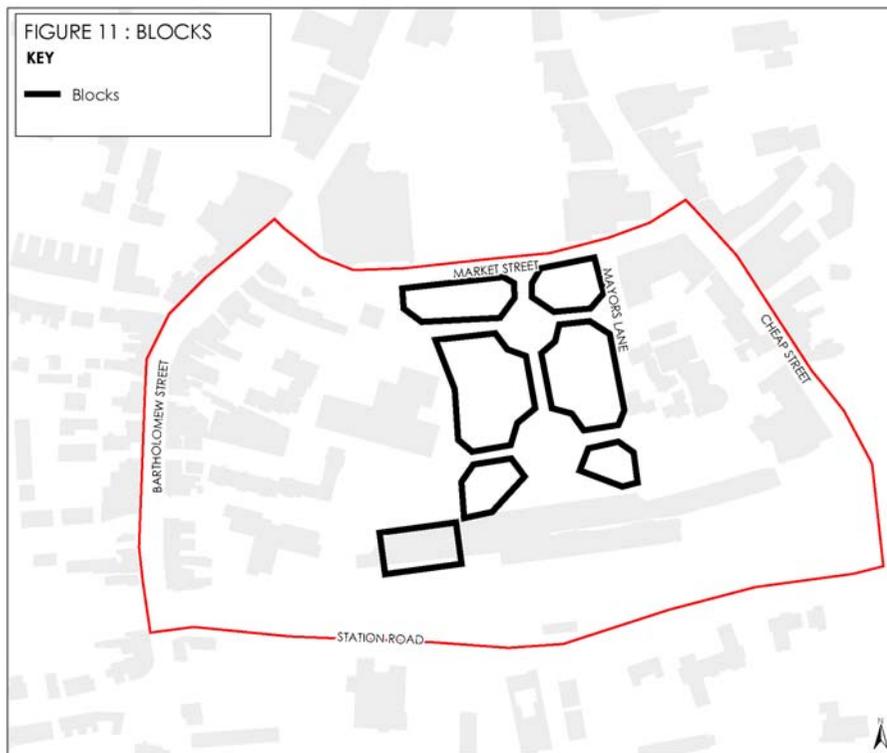
Land Use Layout

- 6.14 The suitable mix of potential land uses across the site is outlined in Section 5. The urban design analysis suggests a logical approach to the allocation of these land uses, as described opposite:
- The whole site, including the station area, should be a best practice example of **vertical and horizontal mix of uses**, ensuring a vibrant community throughout the day and into the evening;

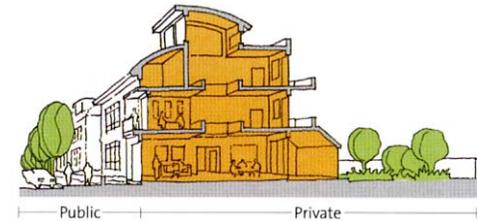
- **Residential and office uses** should be accommodated in the **upper floors**;
- At key **corners, gateways and entrances** and around **public squares** active uses which ‘spill out’ onto the street will be encouraged including **cafes, bars, restaurants, food/flower shops**.
- The area around the **station forecourt** should be occupied by uses that relate directly to passing pedestrians including **cafes, bars, restaurants, and small local convenience shops**. **Residential units** should also be considered on the **upper floors**.
- The **Market Street frontage** should be considered for a mix of uses at ground floor to include an extension of the existing **leisure and retail units** (in Inch’s Yard), with **flats and offices** on the upper levels.
- The **eastern edge** of the site along Mayors Lane should be predominantly **residential** in character with a mix of housing types, sizes and affordability levels, reflecting the need to sensitively integrate the development with the existing residential units in Thomas Merriman Court. Consideration should also be given to an element of community accommodation in this area including the potential re-provision of the Quakers Meeting House (see also para. 5.06).
- At the **corner of Mayors Lane and Market Street** the ground floor uses should be active **small-scale retail units and/or restaurants, cafes, service providers** to complement the existing activities on the opposite site of the road.

Layout/Block Structure

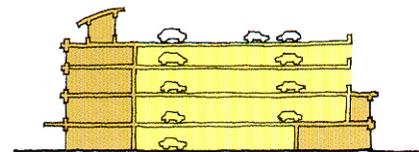
6.15 The central part of the site should be sub-divided into smaller plots which enable higher densities to be achieved and encourage a greater diversity of uses, and a more active street frontage (see Figure 11).



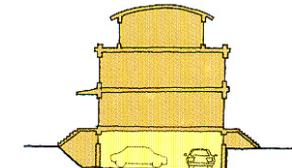
6.16 New development within these plots should take the form of perimeter blocks, whereby development directly fronts onto streets, paths and squares. Development blocks should be relatively small, in keeping with the historic urban grain to create a more ‘walkable’ and user-friendly public realm. Perimeter blocks also help to make a clear distinction between public fronts and private backs with the interior of the block presenting an opportunity to accommodate car parking, gardens or service areas.



6.17 Where larger development blocks are required these must be carefully designed to contribute to the street scene. Sensitively designed multi-storey car parks for example, can integrate with the surrounding urban fabric when they are ‘wrapped’ by single aspect buildings designed to incorporate ground level activities such as shops and cafes on the street face. In this way the bulk of the building is concealed and is better integrated within the fine-grain urban setting.



A shielded multi storey parking structure



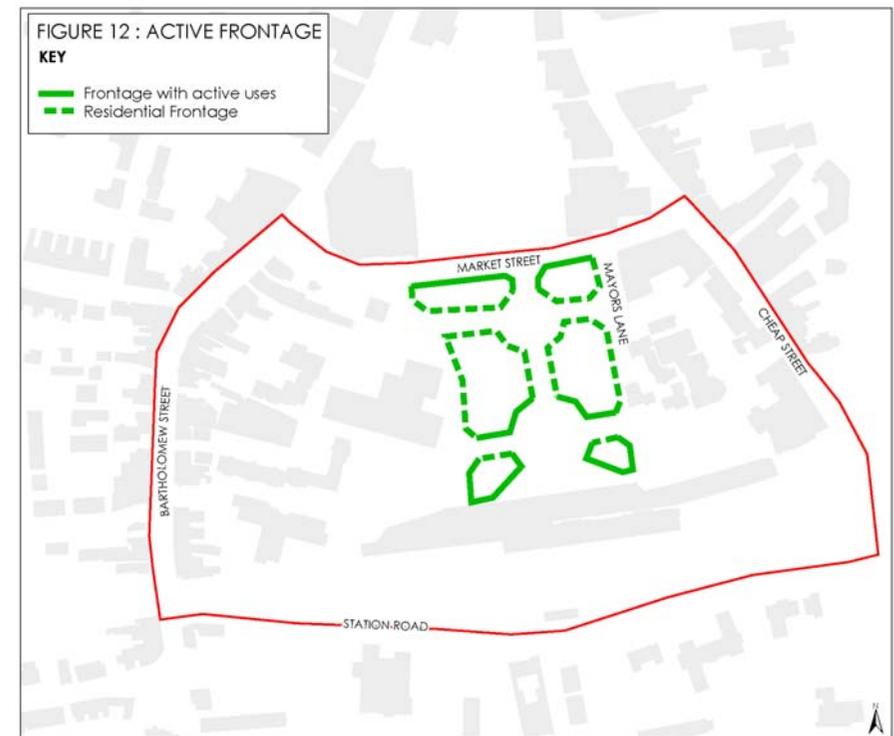
An undercroft parking space

Source: The Urban Design Compendium (2000)

Continuity and Enclosure of Street Frontage

- 6.18 A common building line creates continuity of frontage and also provides definition and enclosure to the public realm. It can also help ensure that new development is properly integrated into the existing street. New development along Market Street for example, should be designed to provide a strong active edge with cohesive facades and form a natural extension to the existing building line (Figure 12).
- 6.19 New development along Mayors Lane will also need to strengthen the enclosure and activity of the street on both sides. Development along Mayors Lane and behind Cheap Street and Bartholomew Street will need to demonstrate resolution of the conflicts between the backs and fronts of buildings and instances where the rear/blank sides of buildings, car parking and service areas are exposed to public view.
- 6.20 Maintaining a continuity of frontage and visual surveillance onto the street, areas of public realm and open space, is a basic requirement of creating safe places. Making these frontages 'active' adds interest, life and vitality and can be achieved with careful attention to the following elements:
- setback distances should be minimised to increase the ability of a building to interact with the street;
 - marking visually prominent corner sites with entrances and/or windows at the apex to avoid blank facades;
 - frequent doors and windows, with few blank walls;
 - narrow frontage buildings, giving vertical rhythm to the street scene;

- enlivening edges with balconies, hanging baskets, window boxes;
- lively internal uses visible from outside, or spilling out onto the street;
- where residential uses are incorporated at ground level active rooms (such as the kitchen) should face onto the street;
- the use of transparent glass for windows, where privacy allows, rather than mirrored or frosted glass that only allows occupants to benefit from views out.



Building Heights and Density

- 6.21 The Council's Newbury 2025 Vision, identified 'gateways' into the town centre that reinforce points of arrival and provide visual interest and legibility. The rail station and its surrounding area represents one of the Town's major gateways and as such presents the opportunity to achieve higher density development.
- 6.22 Medium-rise buildings (of about 3-4 storeys) in general provide an optimum form, because of their ability to accommodate a range of uses, as well as generally lower energy demands and construction costs. Taller buildings should be placed in key locations such as on corners, along principal routes, the end of vistas or at gateways/entrances into the site.
- 6.23 The building heights should also relate to the creation of good enclosure of the public realm. Consideration should also be given to the design, height and orientation of buildings in the interests of achieving high levels of natural light penetration maximising daylight within any scheme and particularly to public squares where people will be encouraged to sit. Similarly adequate shelter should also be incorporated within public areas.
- 6.24 The existing height and roofscapes of surrounding buildings should help determine the scale and massing of new development across the site. In some areas it will be necessary to moderate the mass of a building or group of buildings to step up or step down to its neighbour. This will also reflect the distinctive varied rooflines which characterise much of Newbury Town Centre.



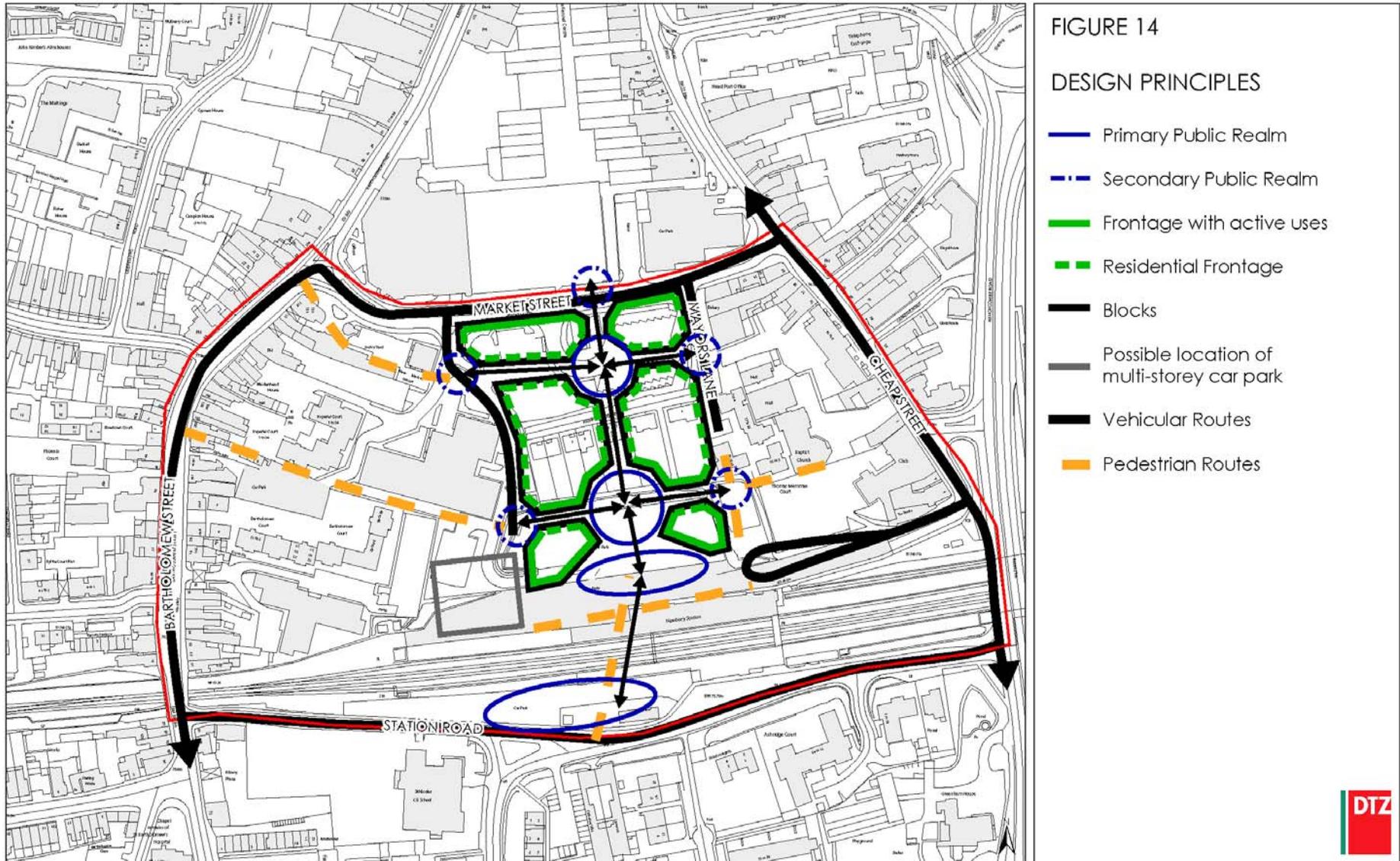
- 6.25 Any redevelopment of the site should be designed to achieve a consistent, high density character although the scale and massing will vary accordingly to integrate with the surroundings. As a general guideline the following heights will be considered appropriate (this is also presented in Figure 13):
- taller buildings on the site should provide frontage onto Market Street. Heights up to 4 storeys would be acceptable although taller buildings of approximately 5 storeys can be considered in key locations such as on the corners or at gateways/entrances into the site;

- the massing on the east side of the site should step down from Market Street to 3.5 storeys to complement the existing building frontage along Mayors Lane;
- the buildings on the western edge of the site should also step down from the scale of the Market Street frontage, but because of the frontage onto the District Council Offices, can retain a taller massing profile of up to 4 storeys;
- the lower massing profiles should be concentrated towards the central section of the site and should not exceed 3 storeys. This will provide adequate enclosure of the main pedestrian route whilst maintaining a human scale of development;
- new buildings at the lower level of the site (around the station forecourt) present a further opportunity for taller buildings to a maximum of 4 storeys. However these must be ‘stepped down’ to positively frame the public space and prevent over-dominance of the station gateway;
- there may be an opportunity for a landmark building on the site to provide a local focal point and orientation marker for the quarter; and
- where opportunities arise for the redevelopment of existing buildings along Bartholomew Street and Cheap Street and behind the buildings along these roads, building heights should be influenced by the scale and massing of surrounding development.

6.26 As a sustainable location, with excellent access to public transport facilities and local amenities the Council is keen to promote densities which as suggested by Berkshire Structure Plan 2001-2016 (Policy H6) exceed, as an objective 50 dwellings per hectare. However, consideration should also be given to car parking

provision requirements and housing type needs in meeting this density standard.

6.27 A summary of the Design Principles is outlined in Figure 14.



Materials and Street Furniture

6.28 A palette of high quality materials will help to further establish the character and identity of the development. It may be appropriate to use distinctive materials to accentuate the particular character of the quarter, but contrasting materials should be used with restraint, and will be most effective if set against a narrow palette of materials. Consideration must be given to the longevity of the materials, and robust details to ensure long term quality of the proposals. The new buildings and hard landscape should be built to last.

6.29 The quality of street furniture is also important, as is consistency of style and good maintenance. Street furniture should be introduced with restraint, and its location should be carefully considered so that it reinforces rather than confuses the sense of place. The design of individual elements of street furniture should not compete for attention, but conform to the established theme of the area. The Council will encourage an innovative approach and the use of the best of modern design to provide an eye-catching yet understated gateway to the town centre.

6.30 The following general rules apply throughout the development;

- items of street furniture such as signs, cycle racks, bins and benches should be combined and aligned so as to minimise obstruction to pedestrian movement, particularly for disabled people;
- street lighting should meet the needs of pedestrians over that of motorists;
- seats need to be sturdy, resistant to vandalism and easy to maintain;

- cycle racks should be located where they are easy and convenient to use, overlooked and secure. The location of cycle parking should also be signed where appropriate;
- where appropriate, fixings for hanging baskets and planters should be provided to allow for seasonal colour at high level; and
- street trees and planting should be incorporated into the overall design to soften the environment. These elements should not hinder surveillance and perceptions of safety and therefore be carefully positioned.



Photos: Public Realm improvements along Bartholomew Street south

Building in Sustainability

6.31 The Council places great importance on securing a sustainable pattern of development across the site. Applicants will be expected to submit a statement demonstrating how proposals perform against the sustainability checklist contained in Appendix G. This planning and design brief has been prepared with careful regard to the sustainability checklist and proposals for development will be assessed against both the brief and the checklist.

6.32 The Council expects development to achieve high standards in sustainability and a key opportunity to provide a flagship development of exceptional sustainability credentials. Consideration should be given to the following issues:

- *Materials* - ensure the use of local and sustainable materials that are hardwearing and of quality craftsmanship. Materials should also be chosen for their low 'embodied energy' (the amount of energy expended to produce the material), the ease of maintenance and repair, and the ability to recycle and reuse the material.
- *Adaptability* – proposals need to be flexible and adaptable particularly in relation to the longevity of buildings both economically and physically and the ability to accommodate change over time;
- *Environment* - innovative technology should be used to provide an improved environment within buildings. This should encompass increases in natural lighting, improved acoustic separation, controlled ventilation and sustainable drainage and water consumption. Applicants should demonstrate in their submissions how they will achieve

'Excellent' ratings in the EcoHomes and BREEAM assessment methods;

- *Building Process* – the Council will encourage a reduction in levels of material waste during the construction process and how changes in construction techniques can lead to improved performance.
- *Energy Efficiency* - the Council will look for innovative approaches to energy generation, use and conservation. Alternative forms of energy generation, such as a district heating, cooling and power system (run on sustainably produced wood fuel), combined heat and power, and solar energy should be considered.
- *Water Conservation* – the Council will look for developments to incorporate water conservation techniques, such as Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) and the use of drought tolerant plants in landscaping schemes, etc.
- *Green Roofs* – the Council recognises the potential sustainability benefits that may be achieved through the use of green roofs, including water conservation, energy efficiency and provision of wildlife habitat. The Council will encourage the incorporation of green roofs, where appropriate, within redevelopment schemes.

Area Design Guidance

- 6.33 The following pages demonstrate how the principles discussed in this section could be interpreted. West Berkshire Council acknowledges there will be a variety of design solutions that could be achieved using the design principles set out in this guidance and would encourage developers to be innovative in their approach.

AREA DESIGN GUIDANCE

Station Plaza

Design Principles

A strong north-south pedestrian route providing a direct connection between the station and Market Street. This will require an innovative approach to overcome the significant level change across the centre of the site.

Making use of the slope helps to create attractive, distinctive spaces and encourages movement through the site.

A high quality, attractive station plaza which announces ones arrival in Newbury; this should be a functional space incorporating active uses and offering the opportunity to 'gather oneself' after a journey.

The area around the station forecourt should be occupied by uses that relate directly to passing pedestrians including cafes, bars, restaurants and small local convenience shops. Residential units should also be accommodated on the upper levels.

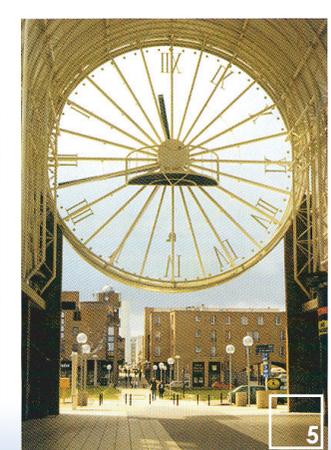
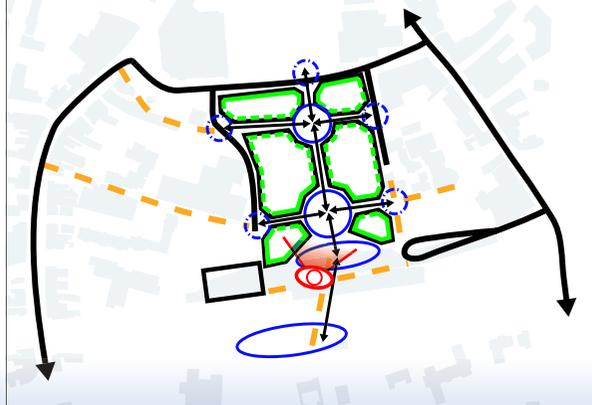
Enlivening edges with balconies, hanging baskets, window boxes.

Lively internal uses visible from outside, or spilling out onto the street.

Buildings at the lower level of the site (around the station forecourt) present a further opportunity for taller buildings to a maximum of 4 storeys. However, these must be 'stepped down' to positively frame the public space and not over-dominate the station gateway.



Design Principles



- 1 Successful civic and pedestrian focus, Victoria Square, Birmingham
- 2 Direct route from station to shopping centre, Basingstoke
- 3 Opportunities to sit and chat enliven the route
- 4 Public lavatory/flower stall, Westbourne Grove
- 5 Station gateway, Cergy-Pontoise, France

AREA DESIGN GUIDANCE



Station Forecourt Design Principles

A sensitively designed multi-storey car park can integrate with the surrounding urban fabric when 'wrapped' by single aspect buildings designed to incorporate ground level activities such as shops and cafes on the street face.

Stations designed as an integral part of the public realm create safe and secure pedestrian environments at all times of the day.

Well-designed public spaces are functioning parts of a network of pedestrian routes, providing for the needs of all users including the disabled and elderly people.

Ground floors occupied by uses that relate directly to passing pedestrians create activity and interest.

Residential upper floors enable people to keep an eye on public space and make it feel safer.

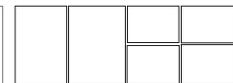
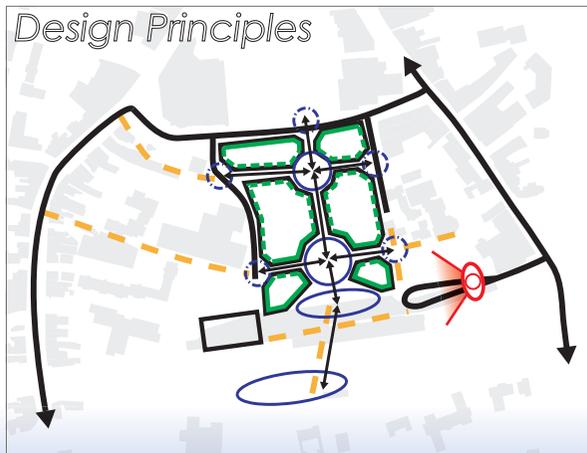
Street trees and street lighting can reinforce the character and relative importance of a route or space.

Works of art and well-designed street furniture integrated into the design of public spaces give identity and enhances the sense of place.

Co-ordinating the design of streetscape avoids clutter and confusion.

Streetscape design should take account of the need for maintenance & resistance to vandalism.

Design Principles



- 1 'Both Arms' sculpture, Mandela Garden, Millennium Square, Leeds
- 2 Abstracted stream, Exchange Square, Manchester
- 3 'Landmark' building, New Street Parking Garage, Staunton, Virginia
- 4 Benches at night, Piccadilly Gardens, Manchester
- 5 Water feature, Greenwich Millennium Village
- 6 Cafes spilling out onto the street, London Bridge



AREA DESIGN GUIDANCE

Market Street Frontage Design Principles

A wide, light-controlled crossing over Market Street provides a direct link from the new quarter into the town centre.

A high quality entrance point into the development defined by buildings and public art works.

The Market Street frontage should be considered for a mix of uses at ground floor to include an extension of the existing leisure and retail units (in Inch's Yard), with flats and offices on the upper floors.

Corner buildings should provide identity and points of orientation. Making them higher than the surrounding buildings will emphasise their importance.

Marking these corner sites with entrances and/or windows at the apex will avoid blank facades.

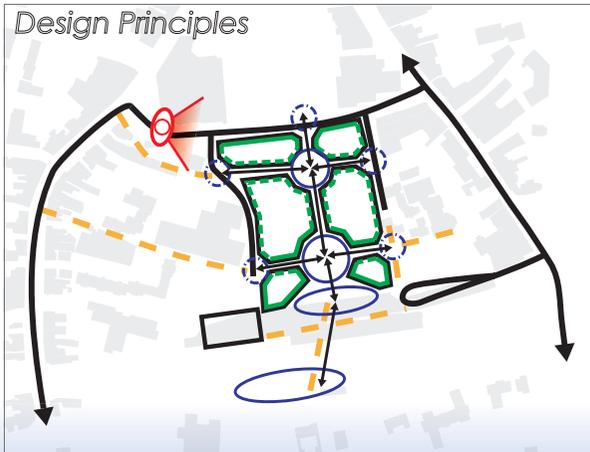
Buildings which follow a continuous building line around a street block and contain the private space within back yards or courtyards will be encouraged.

Development along Market Street should be designed to provide a strong active edge with cohesive facades and form a natural extension to the existing building line.

The taller buildings on the site should provide frontage onto Market Street. Heights up to 4 storeys would be acceptable although taller buildings of up to 5 storeys can be considered in key locations such as at the corners or at gateways/entrances into the site.



Design Principles



1 Internal Courtyard, Housing Block, Zurich
2 Prominent corner building, Manchester
3 Wide pedestrian crossing, Manly, Australia
4 The 'halo', Angel Islington
5 Tower Bridge Piazza, London



7 IMPLEMENTATION AND NEXT STEPS

Planning Application Requirements

- 7.01 Since the site lies within a Conservation Area, planning applications should be submitted in detail to incorporate existing and proposed elevations, sections and floorplans and should also show the proposed building in relation to existing properties. Conservation Area consents will also be required for the demolition of buildings. Plans should indicate where new tree planting and landscaping is taking place, and should be accompanied by an environmental management plan. The sensitive nature of the site may also require work to be carried out in relation to archaeology.
- 7.02 There will also be a requirement for an Environmental Statement to be produced as part of the planning application. This will need to be prepared in the context of the requirements for major urban development projects as set out in the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1999.
- 7.03 Given the complex nature of the site and the degree of information required, any applicant is advised to contact the Council at an early stage in the evolution of their proposals with a view to arranging a meeting with the relevant Officers and the relevant consultees.
- 7.04 The integration of the existing train station operation within the proposed development, together with a fully operational transport interchange, is a key component of the development principles to be adopted within the scheme. An innovative and workable solution that is acceptable to the Council, Network Rail and the Strategic Rail Authority must be agreed and implemented (see also para. 2.45 and 2.46).

Planning Benefits and Infrastructure Provision

- 7.05 West Berkshire Council will encourage early discussions (usually at the pre-application stage) with applicants regarding negotiation of planning obligation. The Council will seek to have a draft Section 106 Agreement settled by the time the planning application reaches the Planning Committee.
- 7.06 The policy basis for seeking a legal agreement under Section 106 is set out in the Berkshire Structure Plan and the West Berkshire Local Plan (**Policy OVS.3** – see Section 3). In relation to this site, the Council is likely to seek contributions to support service, amenity and infrastructure provision which could include:
- affordable housing;
 - community facilities, including community safety schemes;
 - provision of a new public square;
 - public art;
 - landscape enhancements;
 - streetscape enhancements;
 - improved linkages and access to the station;
 - transport interchange improvements;
 - employment/skills training provision; and
 - education contribution.
- 7.07 Applicants should also refer to Supplementary Planning Guidance 04/4 ‘Delivering Investment from Sustainable Development’, which provides further guidance on the likely scope and scale of developer contributions that may be sought.

Phasing

- 7.08 The Market Street Planning Brief encompasses a significant area of land, in a variety of ownerships interacting with different areas of the existing town centre and the station. As such it is considered unlikely that a comprehensive scheme covering all of this area will be forthcoming.
- 7.09 Where development of parts of the site come forward in isolation, West Berkshire Council expect that careful consideration is given to the interface of the proposed development with the surrounding area and the ability for any scheme to allow further development to progress at later stages.
- 7.10 It is expected, however, that a mixed residential and retail/leisure development should form the main phase of development in the core area of the site. Any such scheme should include a significant amount of high quality and high density residential accommodation, with supporting retail/leisure and community uses at ground floor level. A solely commercial scheme of retail, leisure or offices on this site would therefore be resisted by the Council on the basis that this would compete rather than complement the existing retail core of the town centre, and the Council's planning policy and strategy.

Funding and Delivery

- 7.11 West Berkshire Council District is committed to seeing significant development on the Market Street site and is therefore prepared to consider the inclusion of its land ownership as part of any scheme (subject to negotiation of appropriate price, scheme and contract).
- 7.12 In addition, if development is constrained by the multiple land ownership issues and the existing rights over the site, the Council is prepared to entertain the use of Compulsory Purchase Powers to facilitate development. Furthermore, it is the intention of West Berkshire Council to remain at its current office location immediately adjacent to the opportunity area. Careful consideration should be given to the likely impact and integration of any proposed development upon the Council's existing facilities.

Contact

- 7.13 The relevant contact at the Council:

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