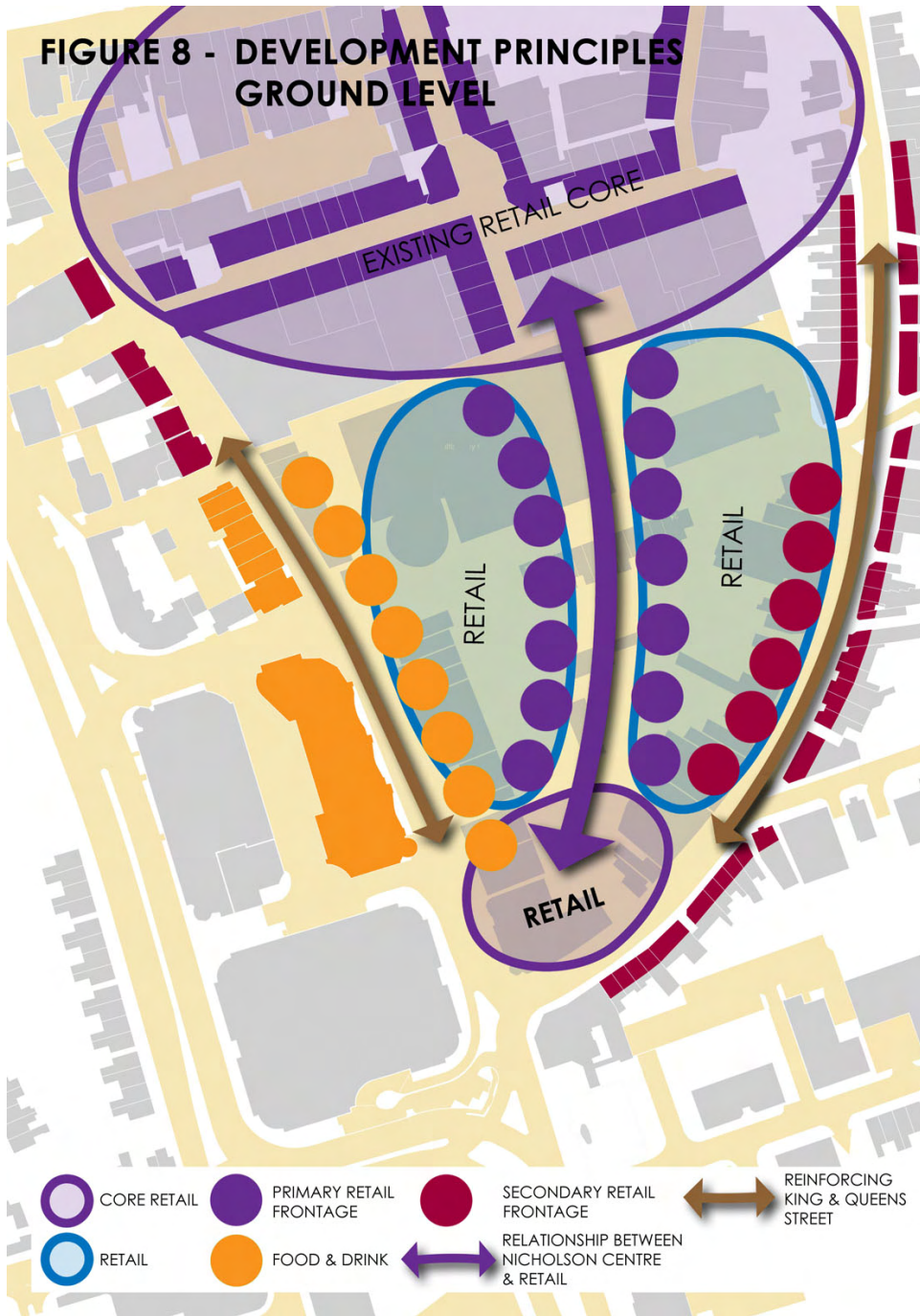


Development Principles

6 Development Principles

6.1 There are a number of general development principles for the future development of the site within the town centre. These are set out below and can be seen on Figures 8 and 9.

Figure 8 Development Principles Ground Level



Range of Uses

Retail

6.2 Any development which takes place within the town centre boundary (as defined in the Local Plan proposals map) will need to maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of Maidenhead town centre. In particular there is an emphasis in the Local Plan, LDF evidence base and this brief on strengthening the retail core of the town centre and on raising the profile of retailing within the town centre. Retail uses will be encouraged on lower floors with

Development Principles

potential for retail mezzanines and residential or offices on upper floors. In particular, continued importance is placed on adopted Local Plan policies for the primary and secondary shopping areas, whilst the primary shopping core will need to be redefined.

6.3 The 2006 Retail and Leisure Assessment has demonstrated that there is a need for Maidenhead to improve the range and quality of its shops in order to properly fulfil its role as a Secondary Regional Centre and to meet the needs of its catchment population. The potential for large retail anchors or a department store to create a step change in retail provision has also been recognised. The latest retail studies, based on expenditure forecasts, indicate there is capacity for in the order of 19,133 sq m of net sales area to 2016. Development will be commensurate with satisfying the identified qualitative need, and capacity should be demonstrated by the applicant as part of any future planning application.

6.4 It is recognised that although a mixed use town centre development is envisaged, the priority is that this site will primarily revitalise the retail provision within the town centre and this will be supported by an appropriate range of town centre uses.

Leisure

6.5 The development of this site should include leisure provision, particularly in the form of restaurants and cafes and other leisure uses to complement the primary retail function and to create an evening economy within the town centre.

Employment

6.6 An appropriate range and quantity of high quality office accommodation could be provided as part of any mixed use scheme.

6.7 Town centre offices should have a suitable ground floor presence and could be located on King Street to strengthen the concentration of offices in the town centre and to enjoy good visibility from the railway station. The appropriate mix of uses should have regard to the business use function of the site as well as enhancing retail and residential provision. Any loss of existing office space would be weighed against the benefits delivered by the development and the employment it is likely to generate.

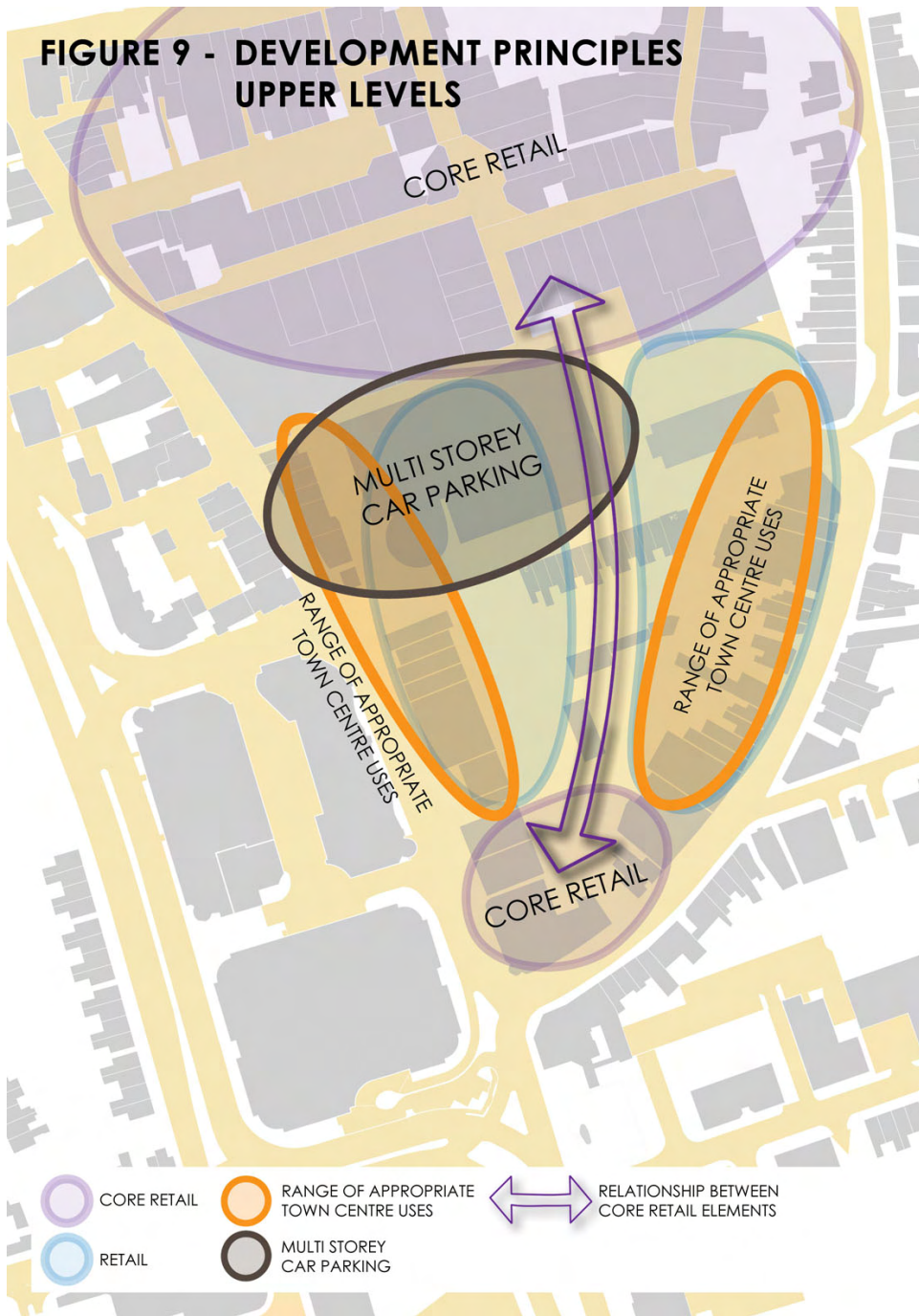
Residential

6.8 The site is identified within the Urban Potential Review 2006 to accommodate some housing (approximately 36 units) and more recently a representation was made to inform the LDF Core Strategy to promote the site for approximately 150 units. New development in the town centre should include a proportion of residential units on the upper floors wherever possible to make the most efficient use of land and to enhance the town centre's vitality and viability. The presence of residential units within the heart of the town centre contributes to a more sustainable community and a safer environment due to increased activity and surveillance. However, their relationship to neighbouring uses such as those which would result from the introduction of evening economy activities will need to be carefully designed and planned for to ensure that conflicts are avoided.

6.9 The site is considered suitable to accommodate some affordable housing as part of a mixed development scheme. It lies within an area with a high level of housing need demonstrated in the Council's Housing Need Survey with a type and tenure appropriate to the town centre. The Council will seek a target for affordable housing provision of 40% of the total number of dwellings on the site. A tenure mix of social rented and intermediate housing will be applied.

Development Principles

Picture 1 Development Principles Upper Levels



Density

6.10 The site is located within the town centre, on previously developed land and is well served by public transport, being within a five minute walk of the railway station. The site has minimal constraints in height in relation to neighbouring residential development and the historic environment and would therefore be appropriate for high density residential development, provided the housing policies within the development plan are met.

Access and Movement

6.11 The site offers a major opportunity to improve existing accessibility through the town centre and to provide an attractive environment in which to encourage use of sustainable modes of transport.

Development Principles

6.12 All development proposals should seek to reduce the reliance on the private car in favour of sustainable modes, in line with the 2006-2011 Local Transport Plan. Particular attention should be made to improving accessibility to all parts of the town centre whose layout currently presents barriers to pedestrian and cycle movement.

6.13 Proposals for the public realm and new development will need to improve this situation by attending to how people get around by foot, bicycle, public transport and the car. The scope for improvements includes the widening of footways, expansion of the pedestrianised areas and reduction in the amount of through traffic along Broadway and Queen Street, in order to increase priority for pedestrians and cyclists. Provision should be made for service vehicles and buses.

6.14 The provision of well connected pedestrian routes will be required and should be designed to be convenient, attractive, comfortable and conspicuous. Similarly clear, direct routes should be provided for cyclists. New routes should integrate with existing routes and movement patterns to connect to the wider area, in particular towards main streets and public facilities.

6.15 Public transport facilities should be designed as an integral part of the street layout, and public transport stops should be located within minimal walking distance from the key Town Centre facilities and uses.

6.16 High Street is currently pedestrianised as is the part of King Street south of Broadway. Although it is possible to navigate the town centre as a pedestrian it is confusing due to an array of separated routes. The development should look to generate a more comprehensible level of pedestrian permeability across the town centre and improve crossings and access to surrounding residential, retail and leisure areas. New and improved pedestrian routes should be generously sized, safe and well lit and the footway network should be easy to navigate, to enable greater freedom of movement.

6.17 The layout and design of the development should ensure enhancement of these routes and that the interchange between routes does not require cyclists to dismount. Links between residential areas and the town centre should be borne in mind. A comprehensive cycle hire scheme could be considered as much of the town is within 15 minutes' cycle ride from the centre.

6.18 The development should also seek to enhance pedestrian and cycle linkages between the town centre and the railway station, with focus being in the vicinity of the King Street/Queen Street junction.

6.19 As described above, access within and through the centre and the site should be focused primarily towards pedestrians, and it would be desirable to minimise conflict of modes through the limitation or re-routing of vehicular traffic through the site. As such it is an aspiration that access to any car parking should be directly from primary distributor roads, limiting traffic passing along the length of Broadway. To retain economic viability of the town centre, it will be necessary to look at an interim parking solution during construction. However, it is recognised that this may require modification of the one way system or detailed traffic management.

6.20 All the aforementioned improvements to sustainable forms of transport should be equally accessible to the able bodied and the mobility impaired. Maidenhead should aspire to achieve excellence in these areas despite a lack of regulations existing for disabled people in the public realm. Developers should pay attention to requirements for the mobility impaired.

Car Parking

6.21 New development in the town centre must balance the need to restrict parking with improving the availability of public transport. The level of car parking provision will need to meet Local Plan standards. It is recognised that a certain minimum level of car parking will be important to the success of any retail development. This should be balanced against the sustainable objectives of reducing reliance on the private car and a commitment to promote other forms of transport.

6.22 There are over 3,600 public car parking spaces across the town centre – 734 of which are contained within the Nicholson's shopping centre multi storey car park. The current aspiration is for;

- Adequate multi storey car parking to be provided to replace, and improve, existing parking levels, plus additional provision to support the development of the town centre.
- Surface car parking should be removed to enhance the street environment.

Development Principles

6.23 All on site parking should be unobtrusive and contained within the building form, where possible, otherwise screened from view by other measures. Provision should be either totally on site, or at alternative sites to be agreed as part of the Council's Parking Strategy.

Servicing

6.24 Servicing access for the existing units in the Nicholson's Centre and other remaining buildings should be carefully considered. Any changes to the existing arrangement should be developed in consultation with the building owner, the building occupier and the Council. This should be reviewed in the context of the servicing and access requirements within the town centre. Any developer should consider servicing outside of core hours and servicing arrangements should be sympathetically designed.

6.25 Servicing facilities should be shared where possible to minimise the adverse visual impact of large service yards. Where servicing arrangements are to involve the use of pedestrian routes this should be achieved in a way that minimises the conflict between the servicing vehicles, pedestrians and residential units.