

1 Foreword

1.1 The Queen Street, King Street and Broadway site is arguably the most important opportunity site for a comprehensive major retail-led development in Maidenhead town centre. Due to its location within the primary shopping area it is key to the Council's strategy for the growth and enhancement of the town centre as a whole.

1.2 The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead's *'Maidenhead Town Centre: Towards 2026. A Plan for Partnership Action (January 2007)'* discusses the long-term vision for Maidenhead town centre and the role it will play in supporting the surrounding villages and rural area.

1.3 The Council's vision and emerging strategy is also informed by the *'Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Retail and Leisure Assessment April 2006'*. This study concluded that whilst Maidenhead is an attractive shopping location, it has fallen in the national rankings due to increased shopping and leisure provision in larger neighbouring centres. The study found that there is a significant opportunity to improve and increase the town centre's retail and leisure offer to meet the demands of modern businesses, as well as the growing needs and aspirations of consumers within the catchment area for greater choice in more attractive environments.

1.4 Immediate action is therefore needed to stop the potential long-term decline of the town centre as a shopping, leisure, employment and visitor destination. The site is a large and strategically important area in the heart of the town centre and offers the best opportunity to improve and enhance Maidenhead's retail offer as part of a mixed use development.

1.5 Any proposal for the site will also need to contribute towards enhanced linkages between the train station and the primary shopping area whilst being sympathetic to the town's historic and built environment. Proposals for the site must therefore complement the Council's wider urban design, image-building and place-making strategies for the town centre as a whole.

1.6 Importantly, the redevelopment of the site should;

- improve and enhance Maidenhead's economic position and prosperity within the growing local economy in the Thames Valley and the South East Region;
- enhance the town centre as a location for retail, employment, leisure, cultural and recreational activities;
- promote improved town centre accessibility through the greater use of public transport, cycling and walking providing convenient links between venues and open spaces;
- improve the quality and character of the public realm and associated open spaces, and conserve its historic character; and
- promote greater sustainability and energy efficiency in the design and layout of buildings and the use of urban land.