

3 Site Information

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Site Description

3.1 The extent of the boundary covered by this Planning Brief and referred to as the triangle site is shown on Figure 1 and covers approximately 1.83 hectares of the town centre.

3.2 The area is located in the south of the High Street between Queen Street and the Nicholson's Centre which provides a link onto the prime retail pitch on High Street. The site is predominantly level and is defined by King Street to the West, the Nicholson's Centre to the north and Queen Street to the South and East. The site includes Broadway, Melton Court and Cullens Passage which cuts its way across the site.

3.3 This area forms a major regeneration opportunity for the town centre. It provides the physical capacity for much needed additional retail floorspace in the town centre, as identified by the *'RBWM Retail and Leisure Assessment 2006'*. It will also be an important step in the plans for the long term renaissance of the wider town centre, as set out in The Maidenhead Town Centre Towards 2026 Vision.

Figure 1 Site Location Plan



Location and Context

3.4 Maidenhead is a major town, defined as a secondary regional centre in the draft South East Regional Spatial Strategy and a main location for a variety of shopping, leisure and employment uses. Although Maidenhead serves an affluent catchment area the *'RBWM Retail and Leisure Assessment'* indicates that the centre's market share

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has been harmed over recent years by the growth of higher order retail centres outside the District - namely Reading, Slough and Basingstoke. Its role may be further impacted in the future by the new major mixed-use developments planned for Bracknell and High Wycombe, as well as emerging plans for a scheme at Reading Station.

3.5 The town benefits from strong road and rail transport links, being only a few miles from junction 8-9 of the M4 motorway with the A4 running close to the centre of the town. The M4 and M40 are linked by the A404(M) / A404 which skirts the western side of Maidenhead. There is a frequent rail service from Maidenhead Station to London Paddington and westwards to Reading and the wider national rail network. London Heathrow Airport is approximately 15 miles away and is well served by a bus link from the town Centre. The site also includes the Nicholson's Multi Storey Car Park which provides approximately 734 car parking spaces.

3.6 The railway station and Nicholson's Shopping Centre are in immediate proximity to the site with the High Street, also less than 5 minutes walk away. One of the main objectives for the development of the site is to strengthen the pedestrian linkages between the High Street, the Nicholson's Centre and the southern part of the town centre and aid movement between these key areas of activity.

3.7 Queen Street forms the south eastern boundary of the site and is described by the Retail and Leisure Assessment as '*becoming somewhat worn and unattractive*'. This study recommends that the town centre would benefit from further investment in this area.

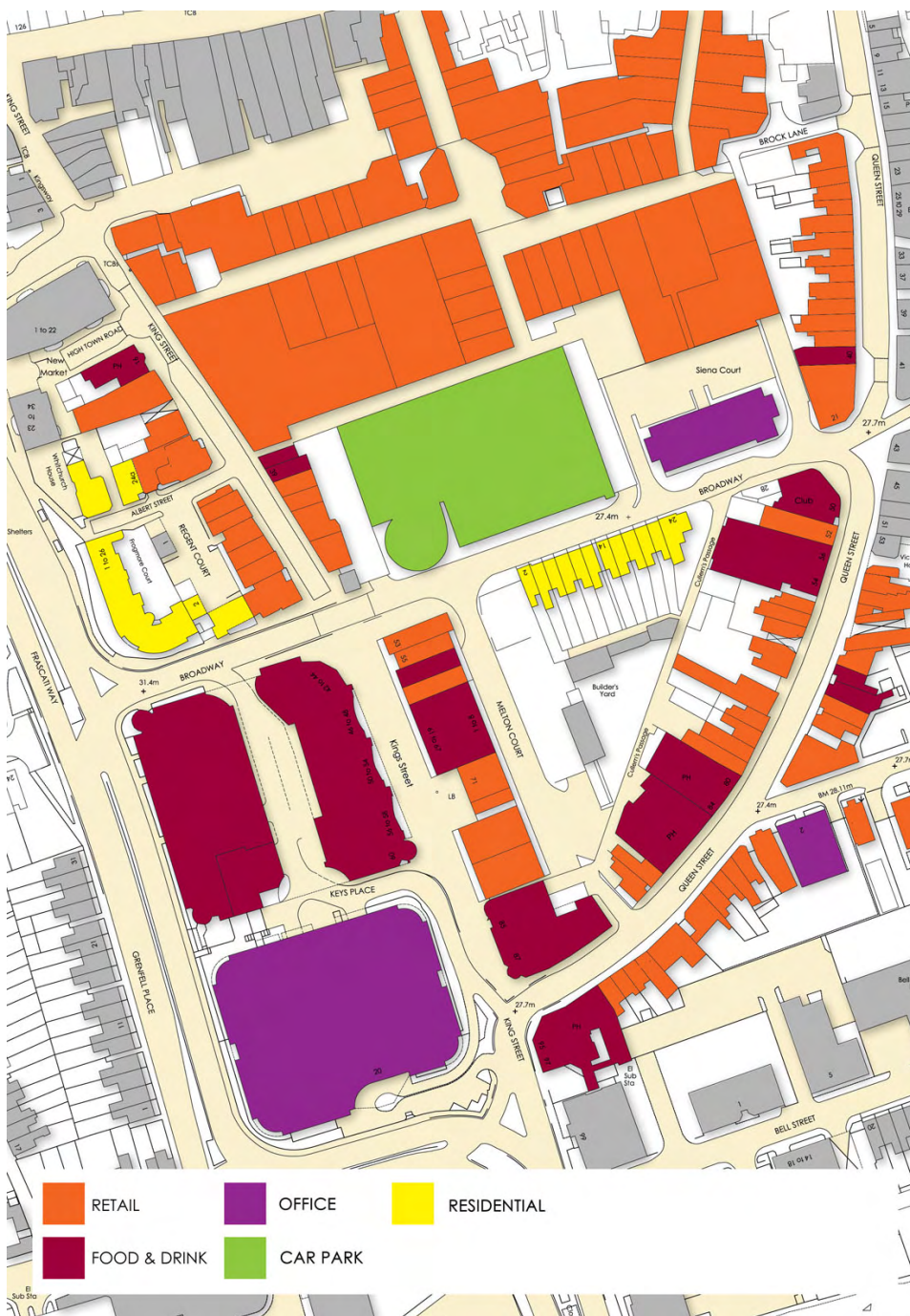
3.8 The triangle site is regarded as a key opportunity to help promote stronger physical and pedestrian linkages from the station in the south to the High Street in the north while incorporating Queen Street and King Street. It is vitally important that the redevelopment of the site promotes better access, greater activity and increased use of the town centre area as well as raising the profile and quality of retail offer within Maidenhead town centre, in accordance with the Council's policies, recent studies and emerging town centre vision.

Current Uses and Scale

3.9 There are currently a variety of uses across the site (see Figure 2). To the north is the part four/part five storey Nicholson's multi storey car park with access taken from Broadway. On the south side of Broadway is a two storey residential terrace. At the centre of the Broadway, Queen and King Street triangle is a former builder's merchants yard.

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Figure 2 Land Use



3.10 Queen Street comprises a mix of retail, food and drink uses at ground floor level, many with residential, office or storage use above. The predominant building height along Queen Street is two stories however this increases towards the junction with Broadway. The site currently accommodates approximately 27 residential units in the form of 16 flats within Melton Court, King Street and the residential terrace of 11 houses along Broadway. Large office uses are predominantly located on King Street in Babbage House and 85-87 King Street, with the exception of Siena Court on Broadway. Together these buildings provide approximately 4,500 sq m of office accommodation. A number of smaller offices occupy the upper floors of the properties along Queen Street.

3.11 King Street has recently benefited from new development along its western side, south of Broadway. This mixed use scheme, approved in 1999, contains a multi-screen cinema, a health club and restaurant uses along with office accommodation arranged over four stories. On the eastern side of King Street, there are a mix of retail and food and drink uses at ground floor with residential and offices above. Building heights along this section range from three to five stories.

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3.12 The built environment of Queen Street and Broadway is generally quite poor and does little to enhance the appearance of Maidenhead town centre when approaching from the train station.

3.13 Broadway is a key traffic route, however, it is a significant barrier between the site and the other retail/leisure facilities. The new development should include means to breakdown this barrier by improving links between the town centre and the station area.

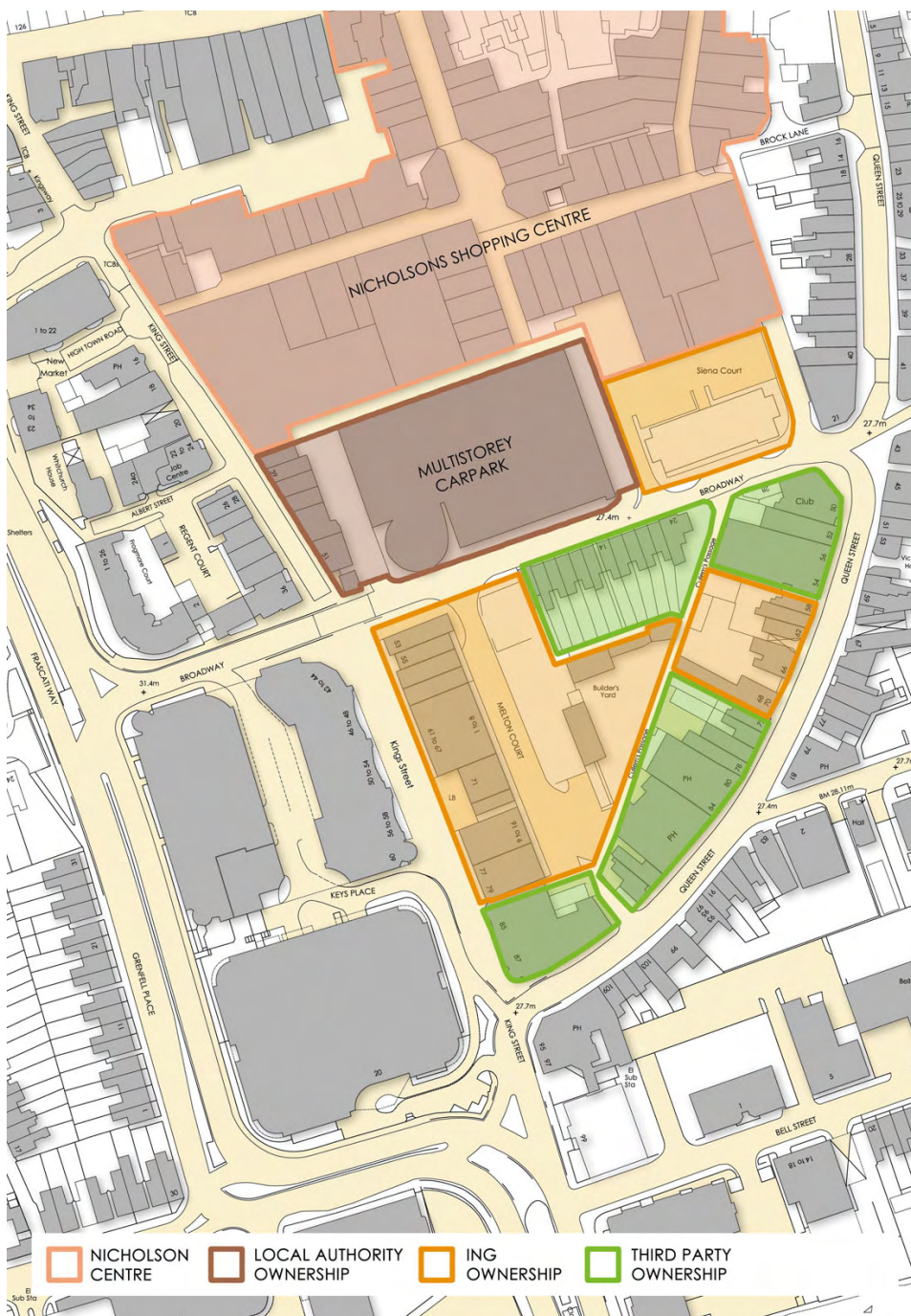
3.14 There are a number of existing routes between the station and the High Street but they are poorly signposted, unattractive and uninviting. These routes are King Street and Queen Street, which provide access to the High Street and the Nicholson's Centre.

Ownership

3.15 The Queen Street and Broadway site is held in a variety of different ownerships (see Figure 3). The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead own the Nicholson's Multi Storey Car Park and the buildings at 39-51 King Street.

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Figure 3 Land Ownership Plan



3.16 The land in the centre of the triangle, the majority of the King Street frontage south of Broadway and part of Queen Street is owned by ING Real Estate Developments. The majority of the retail units on Queen Street, the building on the Corner of King and Queen Street and the residential terrace along Broadway are in separate freehold ownerships.

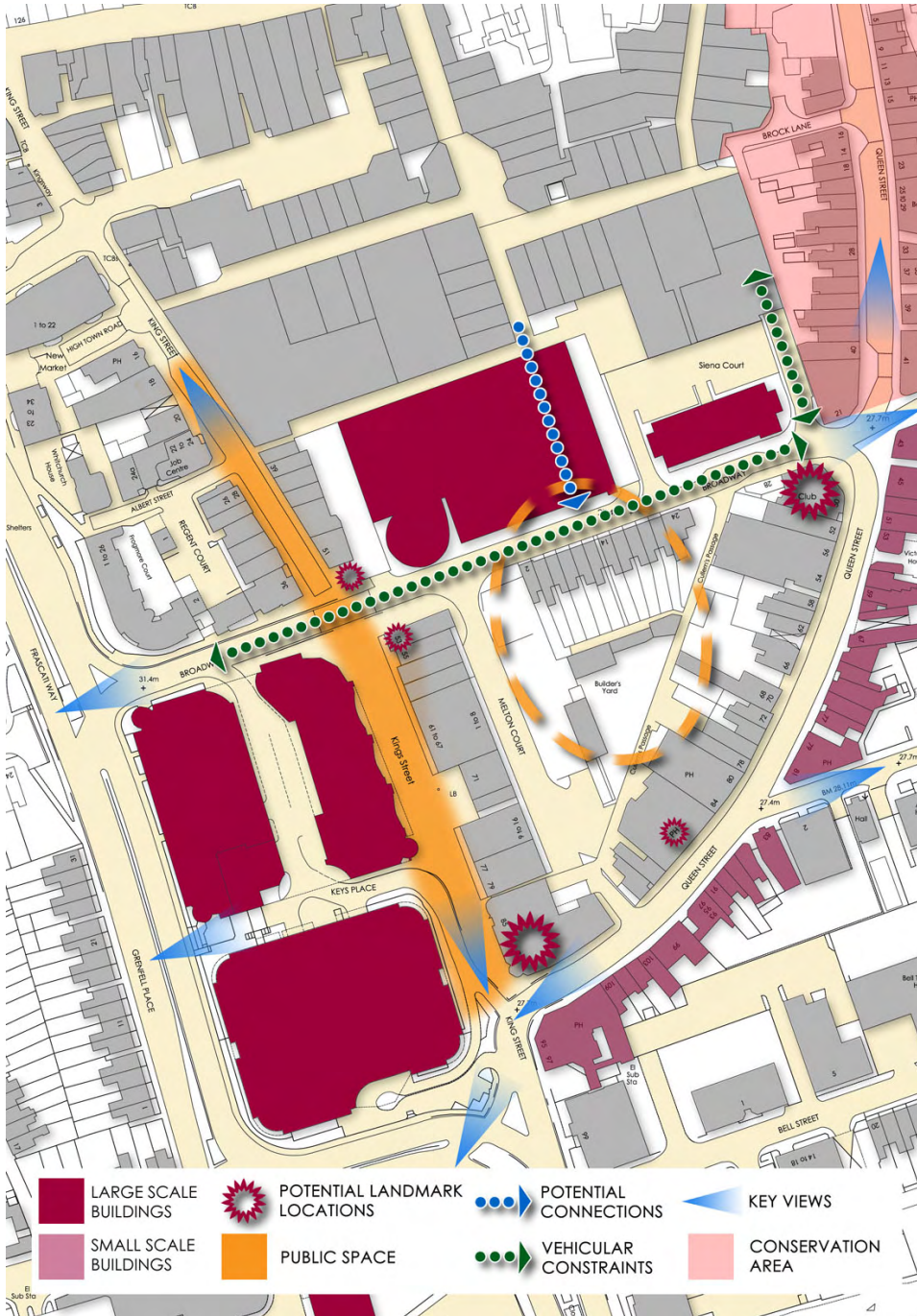
Planning and Area History

3.17 This site has not previously been the subject of a comprehensive development proposals and this is reflected in the piecemeal development that is currently visible across the site. The most recent permission has been for the development of land at 58 - 70 Queen Street including the builder's merchants yard to rear for 50 flats and retail/restaurants totalling 1,022 sq m [ref. 07/01298], which was approved in August 2007. This has not been implemented.

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3.18 Other recent developments include the mixed use development on the Grenfell Island site for construction of offices, cinema, leisure and restaurants with ancillary servicing, car parking and highway improvements [ref. 98/33076/FULL] and the development on the corner of Queen and King Street for a 3-storey building retail 'A3' in ground floor with offices over [ref. 01/37018/FULL].

Figure 4 Townscape Analysis



Site Constraints/Opportunities

3.19 Figure 4 identifies the main opportunities and constraints to the potential development of the Queen Street and Broadway site. These include transport; archaeology; servicing and car parking; and other economic and physical regeneration issues. These are reviewed in more detail below:

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i. Transport and Linkages

3.20 Maidenhead has a broad existing network of routes for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, which provide the town with a level of permeability. However, beyond the pedestrianised area of High Street and King Street, priority is given to vehicles via narrow and inconvenient routes that also accommodate pedestrians and cyclists.

3.21 Within the town centre there are frequent buses, serving Maidenhead the surrounding area, with varying frequencies between 2 and 7 per hour, on a daily basis.

3.22 The railway station is on the southern edge of the town and is within 5 minutes walking distance of the centre. This station is on the main Reading to London Paddington railway line with up to 4 services per hour to Reading, Oxford and London Paddington. The inclusion of Maidenhead within the Crossrail Project is significant.

3.23 At present the dual carriageways of the A4 and A308 pass directly around the northern and western edges of the Town Centre, separating residential areas from important shopping and business areas. The one way system around the central area operates reasonably efficiently for car traffic but presents a significant barrier to walkers, cyclists and those with mobility problems when using these routes or when crossing them.

3.24 Broadway presently provides the only route for vehicles to service the Nicholson Centre and has been described as a "chasm" between the site and the remainder of the town. This development provides the opportunity to address these constraints.

3.25 National and local cycle routes are in existence around Maidenhead town centre but there is a lack of a comprehensive network that allows continuous movement throughout the town. King Street is an existing strategic north/south route but there is currently poor east/west cycle movement through the town centre.

ii. Archaeology and History

3.26 Historic maps show that the town of Maidenhead was concentrated along the High Street until as late as the mid 19th Century. The Great Western Railway line opened in 1835 and Maidenhead began to expand into the fields to the south between the High Street and the Railway Station. By 1881-1887 the current form of King Street, Queen Street and Broadway had been established.

3.27 By the end of the 19th Century, buildings had been created all along Queen Street and the existing terrace of houses erected on Broadway opposite the Nicholson's Brewery. The County Police Station stood on the site of what is now Siena Court. The 1931 OS map shows the cinema on Queen Street, which has now been converted to the Chicago Rock Café. Some new buildings, including a warehouse, were built to the rear of the King Street properties in the 1950s. By the mid 1960s the houses on the north side of Broadway had been demolished for the construction of the car park. The Police Station closed in 1988 and was replaced by Siena Court in the 1990s.

3.28 Although the archaeological potential of the site is low, a programme of archaeological evaluation and mitigation would need to be agreed with the Berkshire Archaeological Service prior to the commencement of any groundworks.