



Maidstone Town Mail

Best Steak in Maidstone



01622 669333

...another initiative from Town Centre Management



Maidstone... ...OUR vision

We make no apologies for radically changing the layout and content of this edition of Town Mail. What you will read here is Town Centre Management's vision for the future of our County Town, and we need your feedback to tell us how you feel about our ideas.

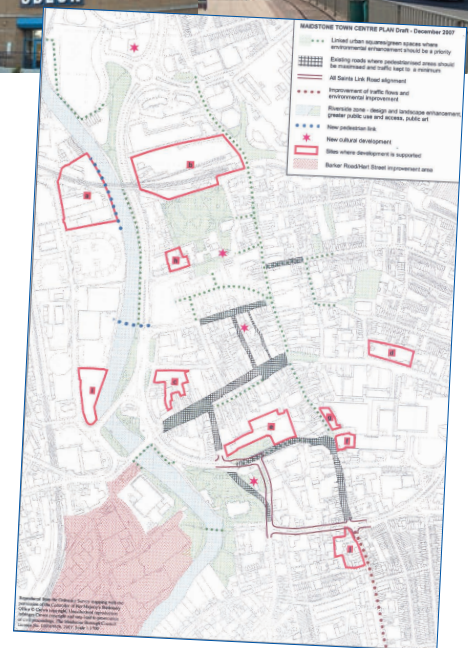


Maidstone Town Centre Management Limited (MTCM) supported by Maidstone Borough Council, is preparing a Town Centre Plan which, for the first time, pulls together MTCM's aspirations on how the town centre should change over the next five years. It will also serve as TCM's contribution to more formal planning studies of the town centre which the Borough Council will need to prepare in due course as part of the Local Development Framework.

A Working Group led by Trevor Gasson, Deputy Chief Executive of the Borough Council and a Director of

Town Centre Management, has prepared this draft of the plan which is deliberately very succinct. Comments on the proposals from anybody with an interest in Maidstone town centre are invited by 18 February 2008. These will then be carefully considered by the Working Group before the TCM Board of Directors endorses the final plan in March.

Please contact us by e-mail at info@mtcm.co.uk or by post to MTCM, Mall Chequers Management Suite, Pads Hill, Maidstone, ME15 6SG



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Town Centre Plan

Key Features & Aspirations:

- (1) **Linked** squares and public spaces;
- (2) **Maximise** pedestrianisation, and reduce vehicular traffic together with environmental improvements wherever possible;
- (3) **Further enhancements** of the riverside and promotion of concert hall/conference facility; greater use of the river
- (4) **Celebrate** the Towns History;
- (5) Ensure **highest levels** of community safety;
- (6) **Improve** the fabric of the town centre especially roads, pavements and signing;
- (7) **Facilitate access** to the town centre presenting a choice of parking options, but in a way which minimises congestion and allows an improvement to air quality;
- (8) Make Maidstone the **music capital** of Kent.



1. Environment

- **Plant trees** and further greening wherever possible;*
- **Complete paving** in Week Street;
- **Further traffic restrictions and environmental improvements** in High Street, Rose Yard, Market Buildings, Earl Street and part of Union Street*;
- **Enhance and protect** buildings of character;
- **Enhancement** of the area from Bishops Way to Fairmeadow and improved circulation around/through the bridge gyratory;
- As part of **greater pedestrianisation** in the Upper High Street explore the feasibility of moving the Queens Monument within the same area;
- **Support Construction** of All Saints Link Road;
- Press for **good quality paving** throughout the town centre and immediate reinstatement of this when utilities undertake work;
- Promote a **design guide** for paving, street furniture and signing throughout the town centre to ensure that a consistent style can be adopted, emphasising the identity of the town; *
- Promote the **visual and practical enhancement** of the Barker Road/Hart Street area;
- Support the enhancement of **community safety** through improvements and effective use of CCTV and the Storenet/Nite Net systems and deployment of features such as Street Pastors and the SOS bus;*
- Improve the **relationship** of Brenchley Gardens to the town centre and Maidstone East station and rationalise new planting*.



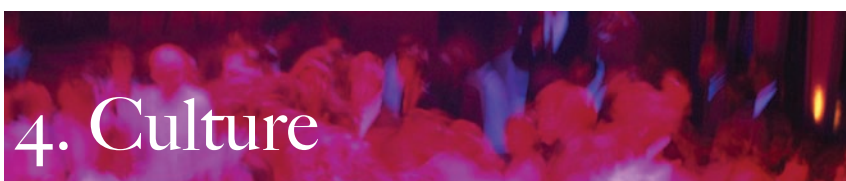
2. Business

- **Capitalise upon and promote** 50% independent retailer offer, and revitalise secondary and tertiary areas;
- **Encourage traders associations** for secondary shopping; *
- Promote **markets** in the town centre; *
- Promote more **town centre hotels**; *
- Facilitate **locating** new town centre businesses.



3. Access

- Support the completion and continued enhancement of Maidstone **Urban Traffic Management Centre** in order to enhance accessibility;*
- Support tangible **environmental improvements** to the Mall bus mall;*
- Identify a **new public transport** interchange to serve the town centre;
- Encourage **top quality public transport** (trains and buses) including Park and Ride and ensure that all services can operate efficiently and effectively to maximise their use; *
- Ensure that **car parking** serving the town centre is well designed and in close proximity to major access roads; *
- Promote a **new pedestrian footbridge** from St Peters Street to Fremlin Walk, and enhancement of the high level bridge;
- Support **improving traffic flows** and environmental improvements in Upper Stone Street.
- Ensure that Groups representing people with **disabilities** are involved at an early stage in the development of all proposals.



4. Culture

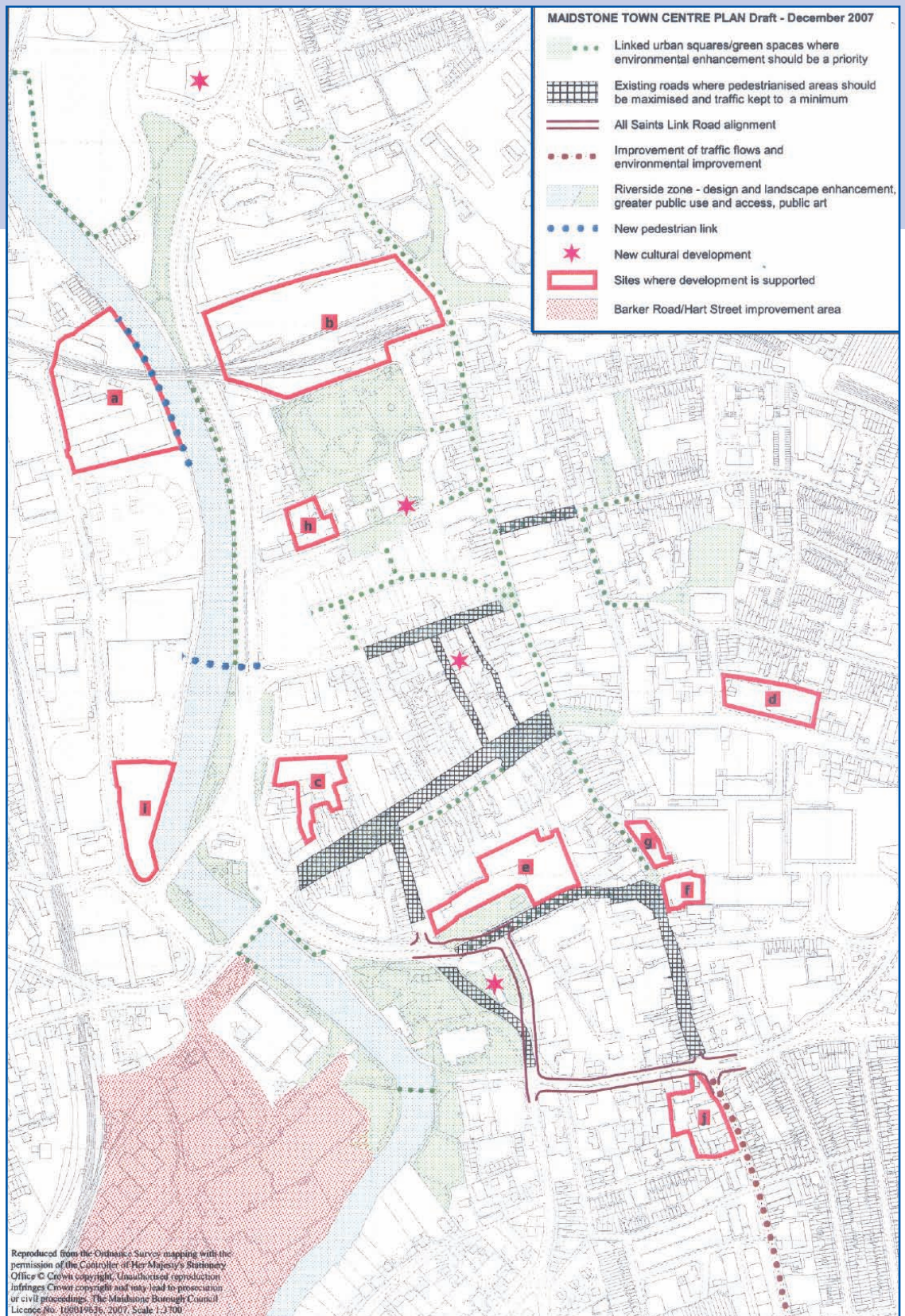
- Promote civic **Pride***;
- Broaden **night-time economy** offer*;
- Encourage **public art**; *
- Support the development of a **History Centre**;
- Support **cultural development**: Hazlitt Arts Centre*, History Centre, New Library, Museum Extension *, Refurbish Carriage Museum.

Timescale:

This plan will be adopted by the TCM board in March 2008 and the hope is that the majority of proposals will have been implemented within 5 years. Commitments marked with an asterisk will hopefully be substantially fulfilled by March 2010.

Sites where high quality future development is supported

- (a)** Powerhub, St Peters Street
- (b)** Maidstone East Station & Sessions House Square
- (c)** Medway Street
- (d)** King Street
- (e)** Robins & Day
- (f)** Gala Bingo
- (g)** Granada House
- (h)** Maidstone Library
- (i)** St Peters Wharf
- (j)** Wrens Cross



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Battle of Maidstone

Following the recent publicity concerning the reenactment of the Battle of Maidstone taking place in the town centre on 1 June, we were approached by Cllr Dan Daley offering us a first hand account of the original battle in 1648.

Although many of us have admired Dan's energy despite his advancing years, few of us realised just how far back this stalwart of Maidstone Borough Council and KCC actually went. We are indebted to former Mayor Dan for allowing us to reproduce his account of the battle in full, and to his hypnotherapist for making the whole process possible.

In trying hard to remember the happenings of June 1st 1648, I found the memory hazy, so went to a local Hypnotherapist for regression treatment. Apparently this is what the tape recorded.....

"All us lads had been walking for miles from Blackheath to Aylesford, then through Farleigh and were well knackered by the time we got to the bottom of Stone Street. There were no buses even in them days".

"Me boots were fair wore out and leakin' – and the rain started on the Thursday at about five, just as we was getting in to Gabriels Hill - and all the shops were shut for fear of the Battle. The lads had gone on afore and I was left in the wet, - soakin' and cussin' about me boots when I sees this sign – 'Golden Boot'. Well, no one about because of the fightin', so in I goes for a bit of lootin' and finds a fair pair".

"I'd just got 'em on, when I hears this voice....."nice boots" she says, "I'll bet they're a bit stiff?" "Oh ar", says I, a bit startled like".

"She was blonde and buxom. "I've got some real ale upstairs" says she, "why not tarry a-while soldier boy?". "Why not?" thinks I, "the lads are well away and won't miss me with all this shootin' and shoutin'". So up I goes and tarries, - and I tarries and I tarries until I was fair tuckered from tarrying and - me boots were soft".

"Out I comes to find that the Battle was over, it bein' Thursday night and late night anythin' in Maidstone had not been invented. Anyway, I catches up with the lads in St. Faith's churchyard at two on the Friday mornin' (still rainin') and we got our heads down after tuckin' up the prisoners. I found that we had won about 5-2 which was better than Maidstone United did the followin' day.

"So, that was my Battle of Maidstone. By all accounts it were quite lively. I often looks at me boots and has a quiet smile".

..... and then I woke up.

Dan Daley



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