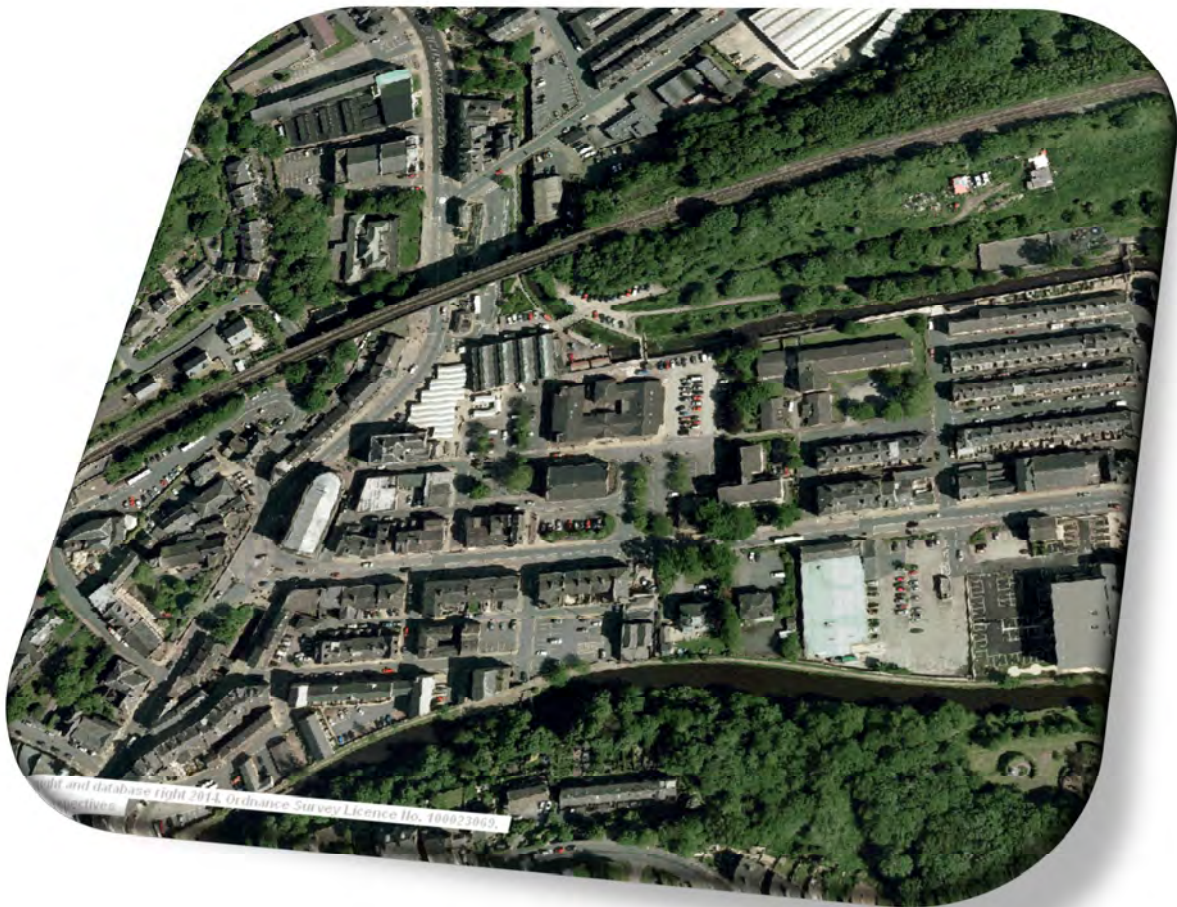


Development Brief

**Bramsche Square/Rose Street Site in
Todmorden**



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1. Introduction

Located in the heart of the South Pennines within Calderdale, the town of Todmorden nestles within stunning valley scenery, possessing magnificent architecture, a diverse range of shops and a thriving business and community scene.

Situated alongside major highway routes linking Calderdale to greater Manchester and Lancashire, public transport hubs at Todmorden rail and bus stations and set within a vibrant commercial core, Todmorden's "Town Centre Development Opportunity Area" lies at the heart of the Todmorden Conservation Area.

Characterised by its historic urban townscape and key heritage buildings, including the Grade I listed Town Hall, Victorian Market Hall and Central Methodist Church, the Development Opportunity Area centres on Bramsche Square. Green infrastructure, public realm and convenient parking all linked by a network of pedestrian routes also extend between the Market Hall, Town Centre and adjoining residential areas, whilst cycling routes closely serve the site. These include the long distance Sustrans 'Route 66' that provides links throughout the Upper Calder Valley and onto Rochdale and Manchester, as well as local routes linking the bus and rail stations.

Calderdale Council, working in partnership with the Todmorden Town Development Board, is driving forward the regeneration of Todmorden and believe that the centrally located Opportunity Area offers both developers and investors a unique opportunity due to its position and potential footfall.

The Development Opportunity Area also encompasses the Rose Street development site. The location of a former health care centre, this cleared site currently accommodates a temporary public open space and community garden that provides a focal point for local activities and events.

This Bramsche Square/ Rose Street Development Brief aims to provide a clear indication of the Vision and Quality Principles that should govern the future regeneration of the Development Opportunity Area including the Rose Street development site. More specifically it will help guide future developer proposals and bids - stimulated through an associated marketing campaign and commercial competition – that should aim to produce a high quality sense of place, further enhance the viability and vitality of the Town Centre and thereby improve the quality of life for residents and visitors alike.

This Brief has been prepared and approved by the Todmorden Town Development Board following consultation.

2. Development Opportunity – Site Description

The Development Opportunity Area is approximately 2.08 acres and incorporates land formerly occupied by the Todmorden Health Centre (Rose Street Development site - approximately 0.77 acres), now demolished and within the Council's ownership (see Appendix 1 – Development Opportunity).

The Development Opportunity Area is centrally located in Todmorden Town Centre with direct access to the A646 & A6033, within walking distance of both bus and train station and adjacent to cycle routes. The Development Opportunity Area is predominantly flat and generally used for surface car parking. The Area encompasses the historic Methodist Church and extends between the

Market Hall/ Market Place, River Calder, Halifax Road and an existing residential neighbourhood centring on Roomfield Street and Cambridge Place (Appendix 2 – Existing Site Situation).

3. Development Vision

The Development Opportunity Area, including Bramsche Square, is currently dominated by car parking. Whilst this offers some practical advantages for operators and customers of the indoor and outdoor markets and for surrounding businesses, the quality of the space is compromised.

The area lacks architectural quality and has a negative effect on the historic setting of the Town Hall, Market Hall and other key buildings including the Methodist Church which has lost its historic tight urban setting, being stranded in a sea of car parking.

Despite this, the area encompasses open spaces and green infrastructure including a temporary community garden and other spaces incorporating trees and soft landscaping close to the edge of the site, whilst outward views and the backdrop of hills, together with the site's historic urban townscape setting offers the possibility of considerable enhancement of space, building and experience.

Todmorden Town Development Board and Calderdale Council intend for the successful bidder to deliver:

A comprehensive, mixed-use development that creates a 'sense of place' for shopping, working, relaxing and living, and which incorporates the creation of a vibrant, multi-purpose, market place in Bramsche Square fit for the 21st century.

This vision will require development proposals that demonstrably enhance the setting, vistas and pedestrian and cycle linkages with key historic buildings, the existing urban fabric, surrounding uses and local areas.

Development proposals should be composed of a variety of complementary mixed uses, which may incorporate retail, business/ commercial, leisure and tourism elements. The innovative use of associated car parking that is accessible and convenient for all users and which caters for differing mobility needs should also be incorporated together with the provision for active modes (walking and cycling). Ancillary residential uses will also be considered.

Set within an enhanced public realm and green infrastructure where the pedestrian is the dominant user, a hierarchy of spaces should be created that include areas for exclusive pedestrian use as well as flexible shared surface to permit ease of access by active modes.

The ambition is for the creation of a newly configured Town Square / enhanced public space which should provide a focal point for the Town Centre, acting as a hub for new economic activities and programmes of events and festivals during the day and early evening throughout the year.

Improvements to the public realm will enhance the town's quality of place, encourage more businesses to relocate to Todmorden and strengthen the success of existing businesses, as can be demonstrated by public realm improvements in areas such as nearby Hebden Bridge.

Deliverability is crucial and whilst proposed development options must be of high design quality, they should also represent realistic opportunities both in financial and planning terms.

4. Strategic Objectives

The following strategic objectives have been established and approved by the Todmorden Town Development Board. These objectives and accompanying “Bramsche Square, Todmorden: Conservation and Urban Design Principles” (appendix 4) provide a general framework for guiding the preparation of development proposals and their assessment for suitability.

Developers are also strongly encouraged to refer to the “Todmorden Conservation Area Character Appraisal” (Calderdale Council, April 2008) when developing proposals.

Strategic Objectives:

- To establish the principle of a mixed use development across the Town Centre Development Opportunity Area encompassing the redevelopment/ reconfiguration of Council car parks and the redevelopment of the Rose Street former health centre site.
- To create a high quality development, with improved public realm and green infrastructure that is appropriate to its context and which preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the Todmorden Conservation Area.
- To create an environment that increases economic activity, tourism and footfall in the Town Centre and increases the retail offer in Todmorden.
- To create better visual ‘bridges’ and pedestrian linkages between Bramsche Square, Todmorden Town Hall and the main shopping areas to integrate the site within the fabric of the town, including enhancing sight lines towards the canal beyond Halifax Road.
- To create logical and eligible pedestrian and cycle linkages between the site and public transport modes (rail station, bus station and local bus stops) as well as with local walking and cycling networks and routes, including Sustrans ‘Route 66’.
- To improve the economy of Todmorden by encouraging developments providing an attractive viable home for new or expanding businesses.
- To assist in the improvement of the indoor and outdoor markets.
- To encourage suitable retail, commercial, leisure uses and ancillary residential uses;
- To encourage development of environmentally friendly and sustainable schemes as part of wider initiatives already being undertaken in Todmorden.

5. Site Constraints/ Other Information

- Part of the site lies within the Todmorden Town Centre Conservation Area currently specified by Historic England as being ‘at risk’. In line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), there is an opportunity for positive new development that will enhance and better reveal the

significance of the Conservation Area. Development proposals should therefore sustain or enhance the special character and appearance of the area. Appendix 4 “Bramsche Square, Todmorden: Conservation and Urban Design Principles” acts as a guide providing further details.

- Some buildings around the site are also designated Heritage Assets, including the grade I listed Town Hall and grade II listed Odd Fellows Hall which are subject to a greater level of protection. Development proposals have an additional opportunity to further enhance their significance by improving the setting of these buildings.
- Whilst a flexible parking regime and shared surfaces are advocated within the Square and although alternative parking opportunities are currently provided elsewhere in the Town Centre, proposals should carefully consider and evidence the impact of the loss of any car parking provision on the Town Centre and where appropriate, identify any mitigations including alternative locations. Proposals should also make provision for secure cycle parking facilities applicable to the various uses.
- The corner of the Rose Street development site which bounds Bramsche Square presently contains a temporary community open space called ‘Pollination Street’. This is currently enjoyed and maintained by the local community and provides an important focal point and amenity for recreation, community activities and events. Proposals should successfully incorporate a community garden into the future development of the site.
- Proposals should ensure the area is an amenity that is safe, convenient and accessible to walk, cycle and move around for people of all ages and mobility, integrate with and add value to the community. This should include incorporating ‘green street’ design principles that give priority to pedestrian circulation and open space.
- Proposals must carefully consider road safety implications of all users particularly if residential usage is included in the mix.
- The Development Opportunity Area borders directly onto the River Calder and is located on a functional flood plain liable to surface and river flooding. As such, the development area is categorised as ‘at risk of flooding’ by the Environment Agency (Flood Zone 3). Appendix 3 illustrates the Environment Agency Flood Risk Map (Flood Zone 3). Development proposals should therefore be informed by a flood risk assessment that establishes the current extent of flooding and considers the impact of the proposed development and neighbouring structures (including the River Calder pedestrian footbridge to the north of the site) on upstream and downstream flooding. Flood risk assessments should identify any compensatory storage and flood resilience measures.
- Development proposals must ensure and fully integrate safe and convenient pedestrian, cycle and vehicular access to the existing loading bay and south entrance of the Market Hall.

- The site is not considered to be within a historical mining area however potential bidders should make their own enquiries in relation to this, plus existing utilities, site history and potential detailed planning and flood risk mitigation requirements.
- Any future disposal of the site is subject to the formal approval processes of Calderdale Council and also the Homes and Communities Agency with regard to the Rose Street portion of the site that formerly accommodated the health centre.

6. Planning Issues

Whilst the Council is not seeking to take a prescriptive approach to possible uses, our aspiration is for a vibrant and interesting development that contributes to the vitality and continued development of Todmorden.

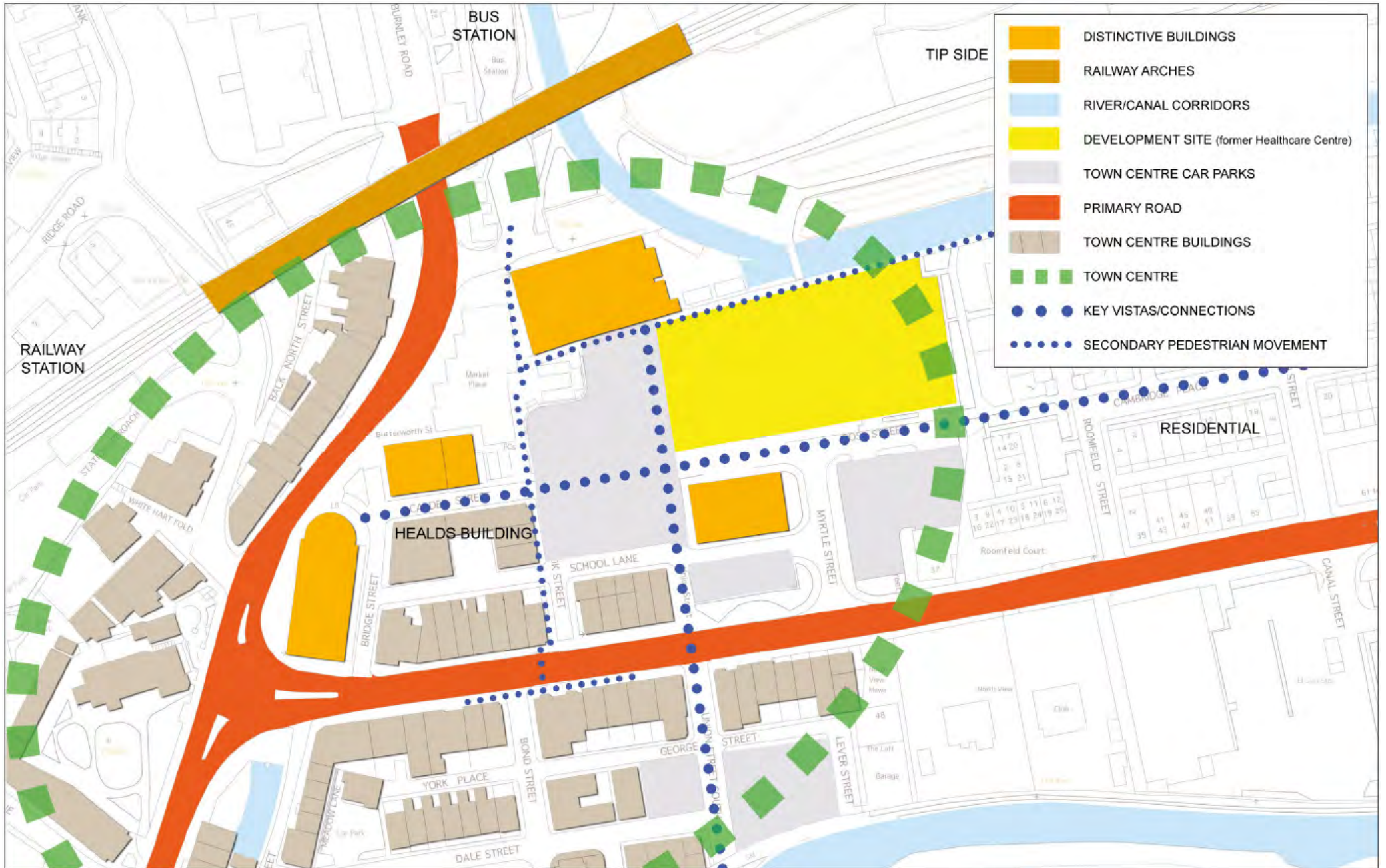
Development will be expected to incorporate a high standard of design and make a positive contribution to the area - in particular taking advantage of opportunities for enhancement and improving the significance of heritage assets, given that the site is within a Conservation Area. Development should maximise opportunities for people to visit the town centre on foot, by cycle and by public transport, and opportunities for renewable energy also need to be explored.

7. Contacts

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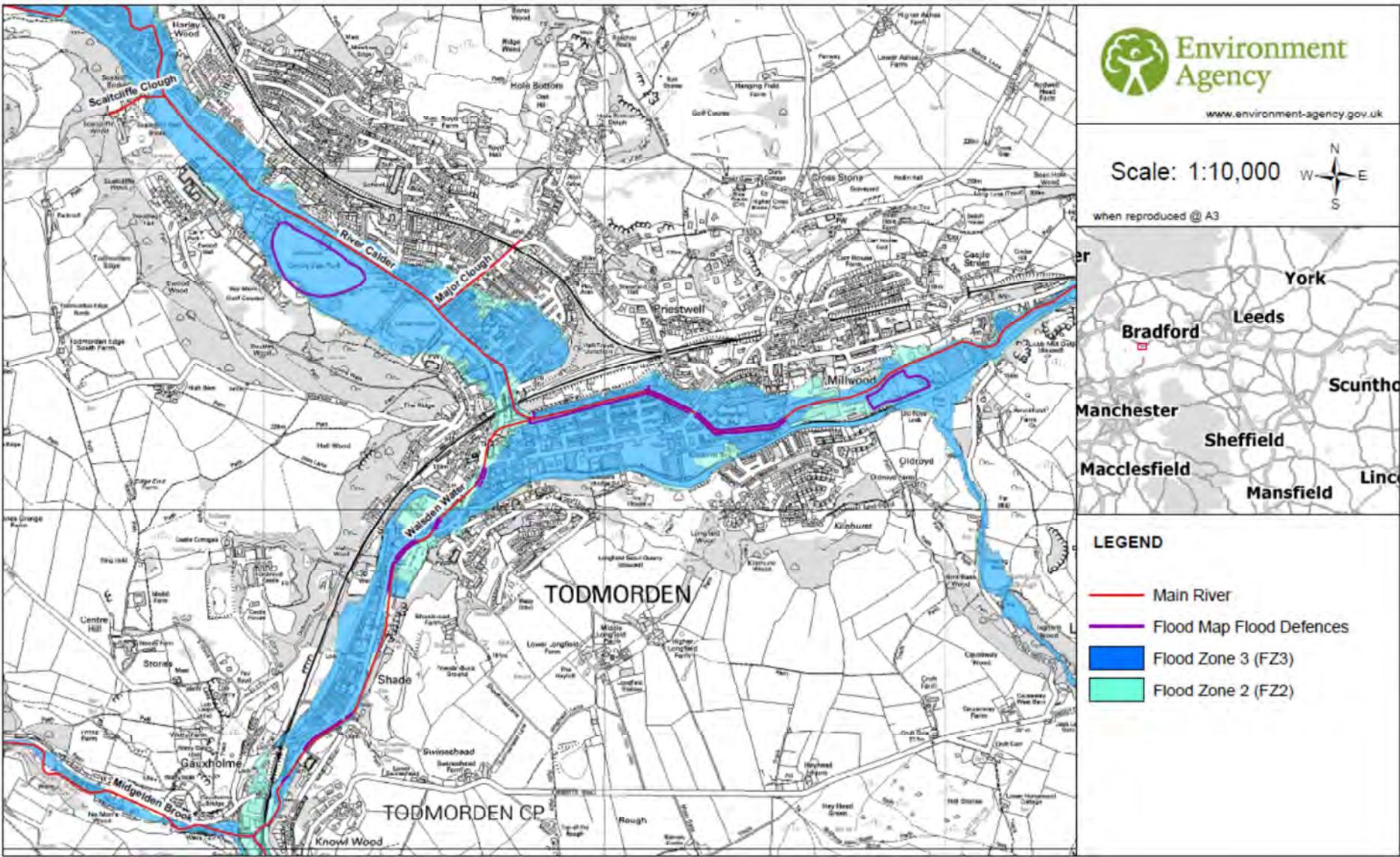
Appendix 2 - Existing Site Situation



Note: Town Centre boundary purely for illustrative purposes.

Appendix 3 - Environment Agency Flood Risk Map (Flood Zone 3)

Flood Map for Planning for for Rose Street, Tomorden **Date Created: 10/07/15** **RFI: 33107**



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Appendix 4: Bramsche Square, Todmorden

Conservation and Urban Design Principles regarding the existing context and possibilities for development (Calderdale Council, November 2013)

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1 Scope

This document draws upon basic conservation principles embodied in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, in the extant guidance provided in the 2010 PPS5 'Planning for the Historic Environment: Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide', and in the general rubric of the 2012 NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework).

Further reference is also made to the publication 'Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal & Management' (English Heritage, 2011).

2 Context: Historical and Socio-Geographical

The development of Todmorden since the early 19th century is well documented by local historians and receives an overview in the Todmorden Conservation Area Character Appraisal (2008). The canal and the introduction of the railway had a significant effect in enabling the town to develop, and to supporting its industrial activities, which in turn required a workforce which rapidly required housing and shops. It is ironic that the railway viaduct is listed yet its physical presence separates the town. However, the main roadway Burnley Road arch does allow for visual and physical permeability.

The Victorian housing spread from very near the centre (either side of the railway viaduct) towards the lower slopes of the hills. Set amongst this housing and in scattered locations were large factories and cotton and wool mills, nearby. Nearly all had ceased function or had disappeared by the late 1970s. The market was established in 1802. The Town Hall, a very grand edifice in the Romano-Grecian style was designed by John Gibson and constructed in 1875. This building dominates the centrally located roundabout and establishes the social hierarchy and building morphology for the area surrounding Bramsche Square. The Central Methodist Church is also imposing, although not listed, but well-articulated in architectural terms and facing a part of the square where it forms a visual stop-end.

Pedestrian routes have changed by default since the tightly packed terraced houses in this area were cleared for car-parking. The Conservation Area Character Appraisal rightly concludes that... "*the area lacks architectural quality and has a negative effect on the setting of the Town Hall. Bounded by the market and Market Hall (1868), the site of the former Health Centre and Roomfield Court (to the east), the area is centred on the Methodist Church which has lost its tight urban setting and now appears stranded in a sea of car-parking*"

The Appraisal goes on to describe other 'pocket parks' and tree'd spaces close to the site, and emphasises the quality of views and backdrop to be had when looking outwards and upwards towards the hills. The riverside is of necessity recently re-engineered but its own setting offers some open ground and the possibility of considerable enhancement of space, building and experience.

The NPPF qualifies 'setting' (generally) as being the surroundings in which the historic environment is experienced.

3 Context: The Conservation Area and the April 2008 Character Appraisal

The Character Appraisal is a useful starting point for developing a 'feel' for the area surrounding Bramsche Square, and points to the fact that this part of the overall area has lost its urban context and form. Historical (regression) map analysis shows that tall or large mass buildings encroached nearby (for example there was a substantial mill sited on the site of the former Abraham Ormerod centre and the building next to that was an Art Deco 1930s faience faced shoe-box - originally a theatre and cinema, before its demolition in early 2016).

The Appraisal sets out the heights of buildings fronting Halifax Road as being 3 stories, with scattered 2 storied shops and office space or some residential accommodation above.

20th century developments along Halifax Road such as the Lidl supermarket (almost opposite the substantial Hippodrome) are not characteristic.

The large areas of tarmac surrounding these 'new' buildings do not contribute to social, architectural or urban grain density except in a negative manner.

The document articulates in more detail the prevailing styles of buildings, and the part played by small parks and planting in specific areas. Recent urban hard landscaping improvements in the vicinity of the canal are noteworthy.

It should be noted that the Todmorden Conservation Area currently is stated by English Heritage as being 'at Risk'.

4 Context: a brief Urban Morphology Analysis

The grade I listed Town Hall and the unlisted Central Methodist Church establish the scale of grand buildings in the town centre, and their squarish shoe-box form could be replicated to some extent in a new development, particularly if it is set back from the main roads. These two buildings could benefit from a tightening up of the urban grain, from the removal of the seriously detracting convenience store block on the west side of Bramsche Square (outside the Development Opportunity Area). Other buildings cascade down in scale, partly because they are of a different building type (commercial, offices and retail). The riverside area to the north-east of the square is unresolved and moderately open in character but with the re-engineered riverside could offer the potential for establishing a 'flank' of higher building(s). The setting of and views towards the railway viaduct could be enhanced by closer grain development, which might result in enhanced public through routes and keyhole views.

The Market building is a curio and requires some respect for its folded-plate top-lit roof. However, this need not require much space to the rear (east) end.

The streets to the west and south of the Bramsche Square area on the opposite sides of Burnley and Halifax Roads, respectively, are narrower, and provide a context for redevelopment around or in the square itself. The morphology of the Square requires re-inventing to consolidate the liveliness and activity which closer grained buildings would provide, if given the right mix of uses. There is considerable opportunity to re-configure and enhance the pedestrian and visual linkages and green infrastructure in a creative manner within a larger urban design exercise. So the scale works from very small intimate sitting, planting and tree'd 'pockets' to well-crafted pedestrian routes with good lighting, to taller buildings sitting back behind a pocket park or back from the principal road, allowing retention and enhancement of the Victorian / Edwardian frontages which ring the site from the west around the hub of the Town Hall to the Halifax Road.

5 SWOC Analysis of the Square and its environs

Strengths: central location close to rail-links, buses, and some localised parking. Good access to the Market, Town Hall and to the cafes and small shops particularly to the south. Some artisan and professional usage exist nearby.

Weaknesses: amorphous open windy space with confused usage. Backs of properties with very poor quality especially to the west side detract from the setting of the area generally and of the Town Hall in particular. Windy, rather formless open space exists between the Square and the river way.

Opportunities: build up a tighter urban grain and create more intimate interest with pedestrian linkages through or around the site, including a new Town square. Lighting strategy required to enhance people safety and to highlight the Town Hall and potentially the image or profile of a new building, plus enhance the architectural features of the Central Methodist Church.

Challenges: parking and existing use of the Square as appreciated by the local traders and population requires to be addressed. New materials of construction should be as high as possible quality in terms of specification and appearance.

6 Significances and Values of the Designated and undesignated Heritage Assets / Historic Buildings, including Setting

The site straddles the line defining the Conservation Area and immediately of importance, the Central Methodist Church is of considerable townscape value with its quiet quasi-classical proportions and details. There is a duty (1990 Act) to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area, and to give great weight to conserving heritage assets (NPPF) or indeed achieve several of these goals at the one time

The setting of the Conservation Area must be preserved or enhanced with any new development. Bramsche Square at the moment is considered to be lackluster and negative in overall impact on the character of the Conservation Area.

The setting of the Town Hall and its character derive mainly from its strident position and outlook when viewed from the south-west approaching the junction between Halifax and Burnley Road. Yet it manages to retain a sense of awe. Viewed from the viaduct and beyond the Town Hall excites curiosity and its rounded apse end and grand scale lend to a theatrical experience, but this is slightly dissipated at pavement level, given the confusion inherent in the building's own historical planning. This is a separate need but clearly reconfiguration of Bramsche Square will wish to make reference to the grade I listed building, which should be enhanced. Perhaps the view towards the Town Hall from the re-configured Bramsche Square will be partially through key-hole slots between buildings, perhaps it will be enhanced by new planting of trees which act either as a foil or to frame the more distant building.

The character and scale of the buildings along Halifax Road is of key visual significance. The buildings architecturally are pleasant but not exceptional but with gradual improvement to the details such as signage and windows, paint colour and lighting could provide a very palatable foreground to new development within the Development Opportunity Area.

The area around the market stalls and the covered market building is weak visually, but in socio-cultural terms is very strong. Therefore how these elements are preserved and set against the re-configuring of the Bramsche Square landscape and morphology requires clear articulation so that the market traders and townsfolk can understand the changing nature (visually) of their facilities.

The large areas of plain tarmac are of negative value in terms of the appearance of materials and the historical character. The site could be modified with imaginative re-planning of the car-parking but it is the potential improvement of the pedestrian experience which will restore the values and significance of the area, complementing any new building.

7 Urban Grain and the potential for new design intervention(s)

The scale of the existing buildings which surround the site varies as has already been analysed. One has to refer to historical time lines to track how buildings have come and gone. The changing of a post medieval early textile manufacturing town to its present post-industrial decline and part commuter status has visited significant changes to the physical townscape which remains. Older patterns of employment and footpath connectivity have in many parts been completely eradicated, but the geography and topography of the settlement still influence how the movement around Bramsche Square is experienced.

The open wasted space which Bramsche Square currently presents requires a coherent challenge to build back the urban grain (juxtaposition of buildings in the overall footprint) and morphology (the actual shape of buildings; the resulting roofscape, eye-line and penetrating views along, across and beyond streets and eaves). A successful scheme will be one that re-models the entire square and recognises the key streets and historic buildings which have been referred to in this report.

New materials of construction may be appropriate so long as their quality is high and the design features do not overstate the presence of the new buildings.