

Development & Planning Brief

Prepared for the Former Magistrates Court, Police Station and Adjoining Land



DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING BRIEF

PREPARED FOR THE

FORMER MAGISTRATES COURT,

POLICE STATION AND ADJOINING LAND

FOR

CHRISTCHURCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

PREPARED BY

DTZ PIEDA CONSULTING

IN ASSOCIATION WITH

ALAN BAXTER AND ASSOCIATES

JON ROWLAND

STEPHEN MUSSELL AND ASSOCIATES

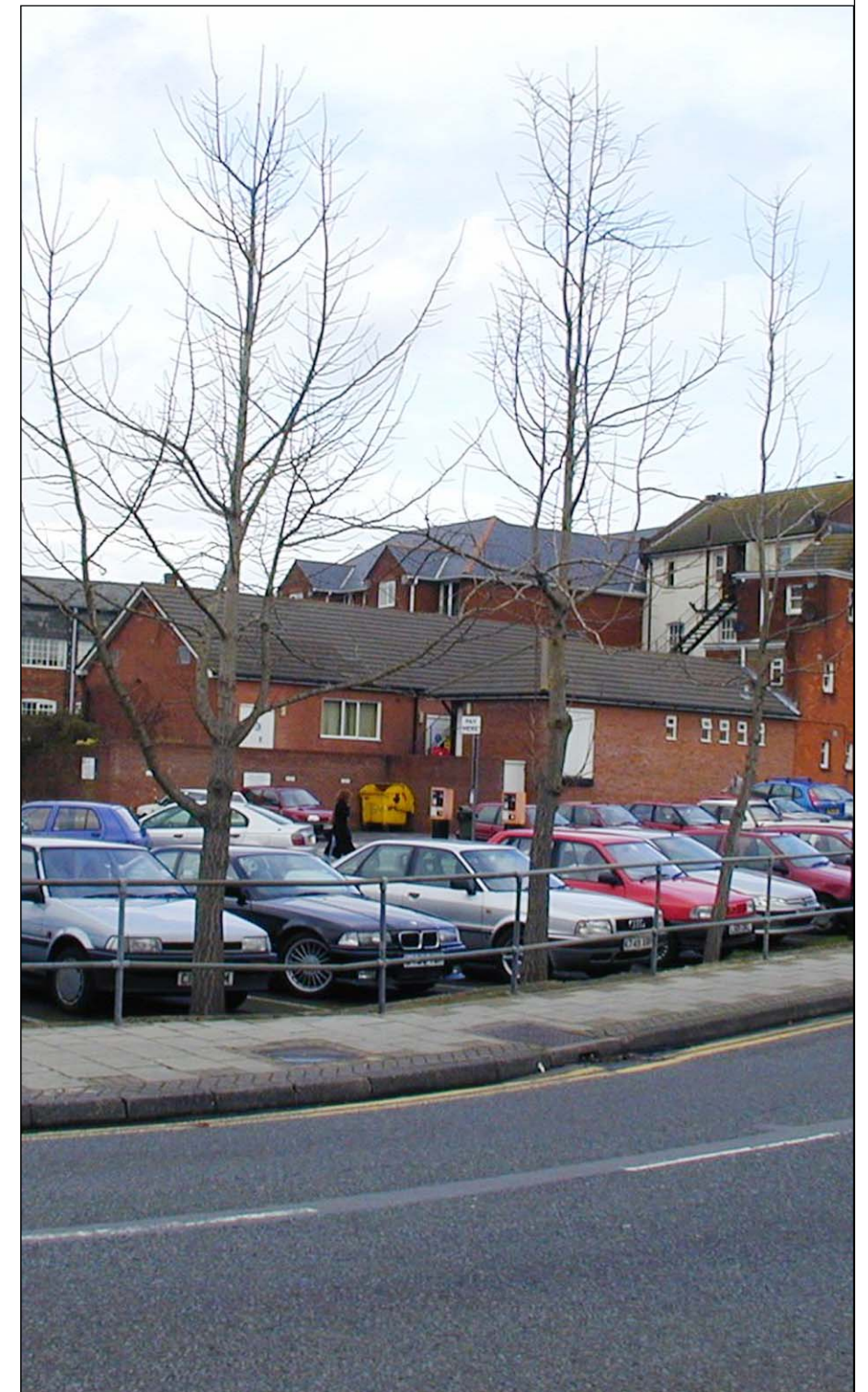
NOVEMBER 2003

Contents

Page Number

1	Section 1 -	Context & Vision
3	Section 2 -	Christchurch Town Centre & the Site
7	Section 3 -	Planning Policy Context
11	Section 4 -	Development Concept & Potential Uses
13	Section 5 -	Urban Design & Development Principles
24	Section 6 -	Implementation & Planning Application Procedure
	Appendix 1 -	Listed Buildings
	Appendix 2 -	Contacts





1.0 Context & Vision



Looking south down Bargates



Access into the site from Bargates



Pit Site Car Park

CONTEXT & VISION

CONTEXT

- 1.1 This Development Brief has been prepared in partnership with Christchurch Borough Council. It also forms part of a series of studies that have been prepared in parallel comprising:

- a Borough-wide Character Assessment and
- a Strategy for Christchurch Town Centre that identifies this site as a significant development opportunity.

The Strategy and Brief evolved from detailed consultation with key town centre stakeholders and a wider public consultation exercise.

- 1.2 The main objective of this Brief is to provide a framework document for landowners and prospective developers to help inform and deliver the development of this important and strategic site.

- 1.3 This Brief has been prepared in the context of relevant national, regional and local planning and transportation policies for the area and is not intended to replace or negate such current planning policies. Any development proposals for the site should therefore have particular regard to this policy context and the strategic location of the site in relation to the town centre.

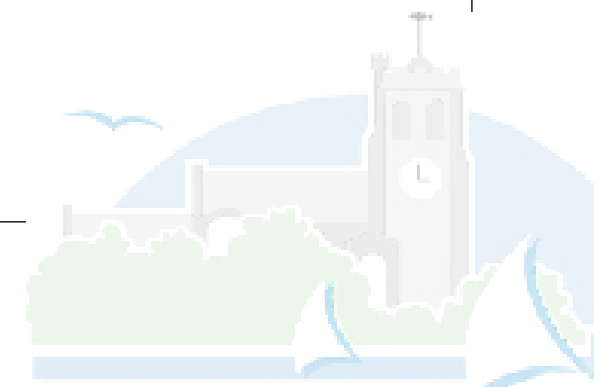
THE VISION

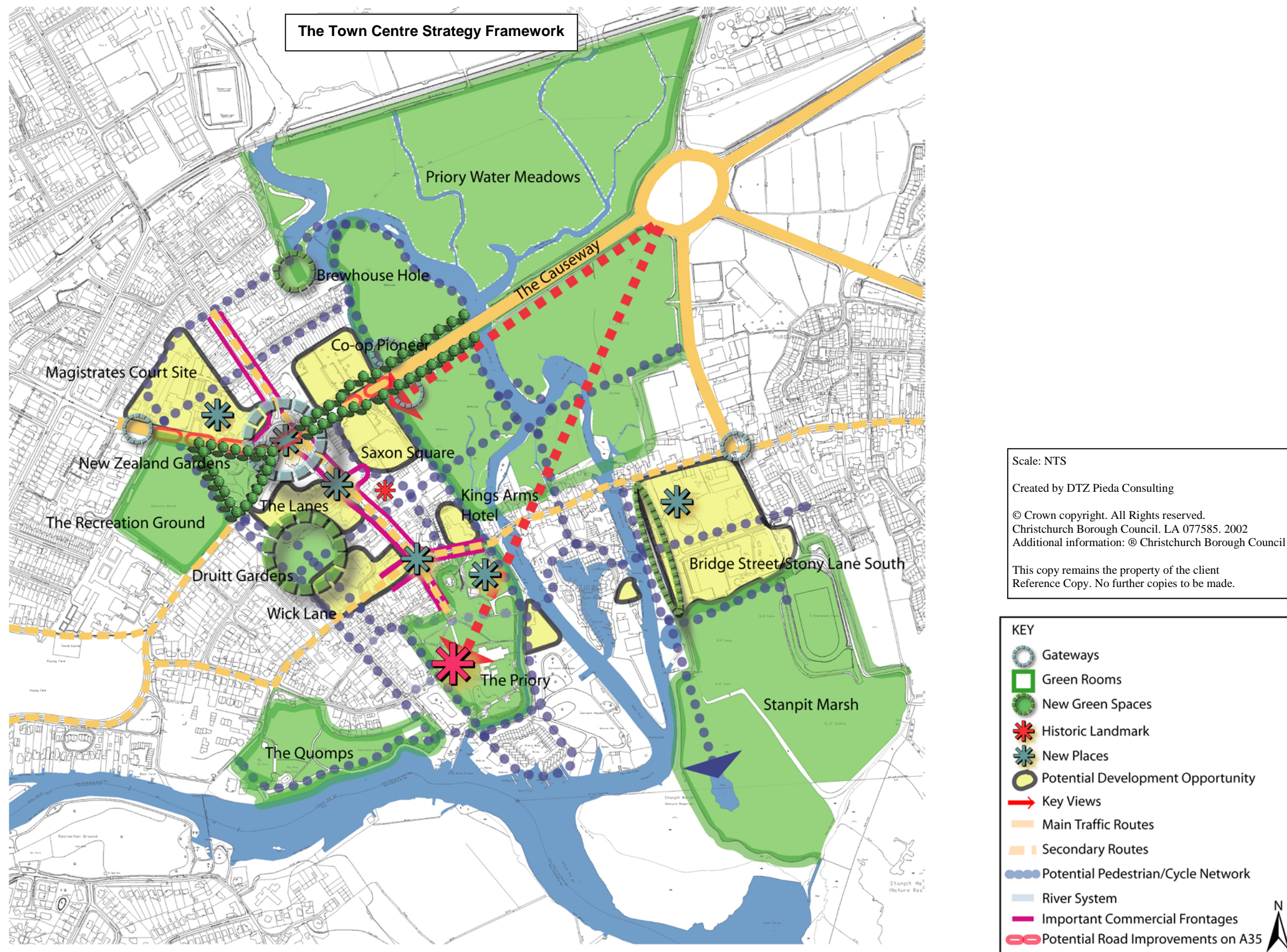
- 1.4 The former Magistrates Court site has been identified by the Borough Council as a unique opportunity in the heart of Christchurch for the development of a comprehensive and high quality mixed use scheme. The strategic location of this site is particularly important as it is envisaged that any proposal will contribute towards enhanced linkages between the High Street and Bargates and reknitting Christchurch. Any new development on this site will also provide the opportunity to improve the overall environment and help enhance its attraction as a place to live, work, shop, visit and be entertained.

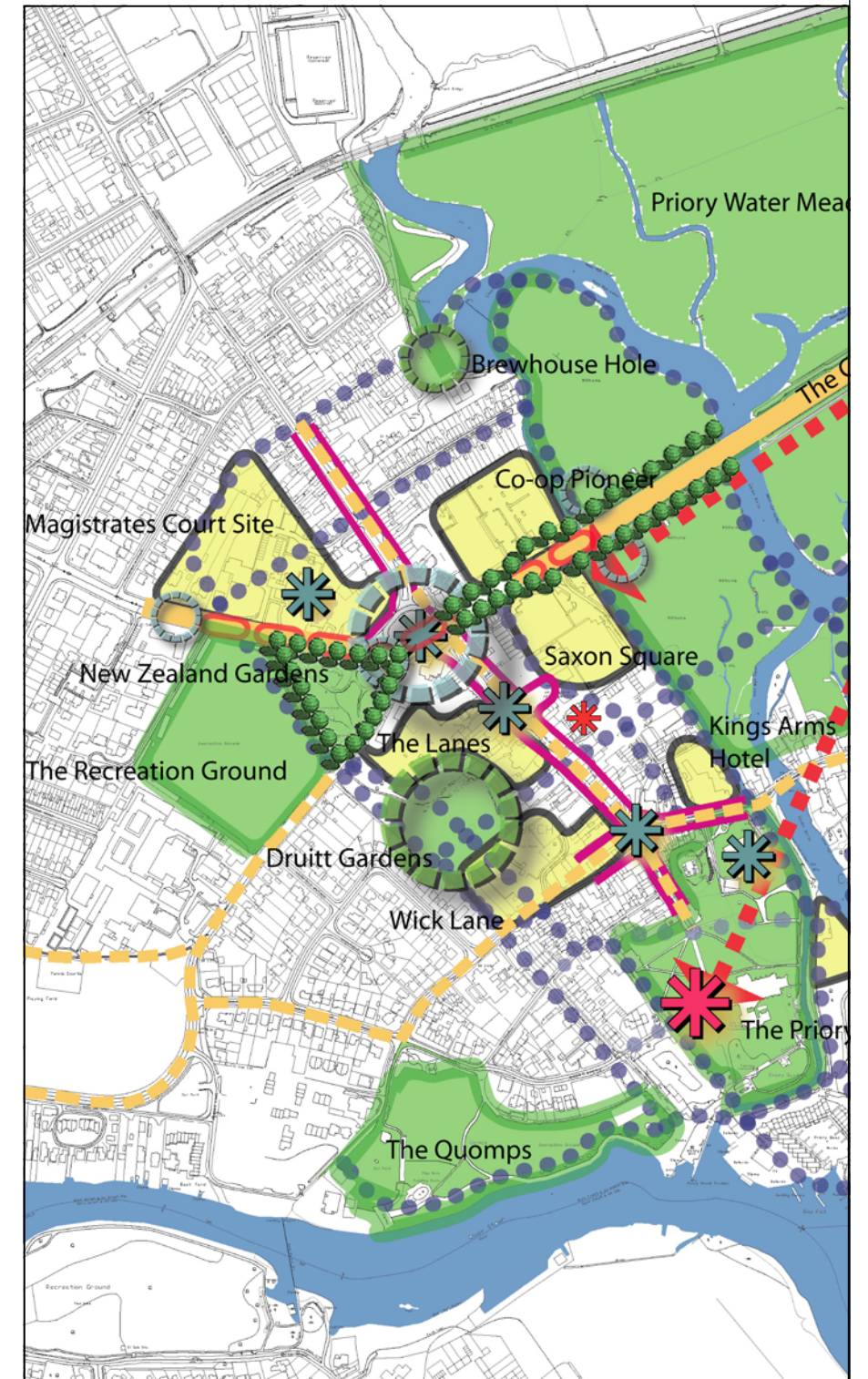
- 1.5 As reflected in the Town Centre Strategy, this site is integral to the Borough Council's vision and strategy for the long-term future of Christchurch. The principal aspirations for the site are to:

- promote development that will generate better pedestrian linkages and flows between the High Street and Bargates, and which is well integrated with surrounding areas;
- encourage design that relates to the historical character of the area and so inspires sustainable development of the highest architectural and urban design quality that compliments local distinctiveness; and
- identify a mix of complementary uses that are compatible and complementary to the town centre's existing retail, leisure and service offer, and which will not undermine the vitality and viability of the town centre as a whole.

- 1.6 Figure 1 illustrates the Town Centre Strategy Framework and sets the Magistrates Court Site in its wider context.







2.0 Christchurch Town Centre & the Site

CHRISTCHURCH TOWN CENTRE & THE SITE

CHRISTCHURCH TOWN CENTRE

- 2.1 Christchurch is a busy, historic coastal town situated some seven miles to the west of Bournemouth town centre. The town lies at the confluence of the River Stour and River Avon and enjoys an excellent position on the shores of its own harbour.
- 2.2 The town enjoys excellent access by road, rail and air. It is situated on the A35, three miles from the main A338 dual carriageway that leads to the M27 and M3 motorways and the wider national motorway network. It is served by a mainline railway station, situated on the London to Weymouth line, and is under two hours travel time to London Waterloo. It is also located some five miles from Bournemouth International Airport, which lies within the Borough and provides passenger flights within the UK and operates scheduled passenger flights to the Channel Islands and charter services to Mediterranean, Alpine and other holiday destinations. In addition, the airport is also an important centre for industry and provides employment for approximately 2,500 people.
- 2.3 The town's location on the edge of the New Forest, its heritage assets, pleasant aspect and sailing facilities in both harbour and river locations make it an attractive place for holidaymakers. It is estimated that Christchurch Town Centre attracts approximately half-a-million day trip tourists each year. These attractions, combined with its accessibility and proximity to Bournemouth, have created a relatively strong, diverse and prosperous local economy.
- 2.4 Assuming that a 10-minute off-peak drive time broadly reflects Christchurch's primary catchment area, DTZ estimate that there is a population of 103,750 (2000) within this catchment area. Compared with national averages, the Borough's population is older, more mobile and affluent. The lifestyle profile of the urban area population also confirms that there is an above average representation of prosperous pensioners (31.8%) and comfortable middle-agers (19.3%) compared with the national averages of 2.5% and 13% respectively. The 'greying' of the population, with more people of retirement age, is a long-term trend across the Borough.
- 2.5 The emerging strategy and vision for Christchurch Town Centre identifies the distinctiveness of the area and the

potential to improve the quality and choice of retail, leisure and service businesses in Christchurch Town Centre to better serve its more affluent local catchment population and its growing tourist and visitor trade. It also promotes the need for town centre living as a major contributor to vitality and viability. As is the case with many historic towns, however, this development will need to be balanced with the need to maintain and enhance Christchurch's built environment.

THE FORMER MAGISTRATES COURT DEVELOPMENT SITE OPPORTUNITY

- 2.6 The extent of the site is identified in Figure 2. The site has an area of approximately 2.703 hectares (6.68 acres). The site is in a multiplicity of ownerships. Figure 2 differentiates the approximate boundaries of the public sector agency ownership's and private ownership both within and adjoining the site, whilst Figure 3 confirms both the extent of the site and key relevant planning policies.
- 2.7 The site is generally level although it falls away at its southern and eastern boundaries to provide at grade access to its Barrack Road (A35) frontage. The main plateau area of the site is at grade with Bargates. The existing former Magistrates Court buildings and Police Station were developed in the early 1970's. It is understood that prior to the development of this part of the site by the public authorities, it was largely in private ownership. There were predominantly residential properties fronting on to Barrack Road with tennis courts and some temporary buildings and open land behind.
- 2.8 It is understood that mains supplies of gas, electricity and water are laid to the existing buildings on the site, connected to supplies following the routes of either Barrack Road or Bargates. Landowners and prospective developers are recommended to speak to the appropriate agencies to establish the availability of their specific development requirements at an early stage in formulating any proposals. Some of the key contacts are set out in Appendix 2 to this document.
- 2.9 Attention is drawn to the listed buildings adjacent to the eastern end of the site which include the Fusee Building—the former watch and clock Fusee chain factory (22—24 Bargates) and buildings on the site entrance of Bargates. Figure 3 illustrates the extent of the adjacent conservation

areas, listed and locally listed buildings, together with local plan policies affecting the site and adjacent land. Extracts from the listed building registers are attached in Appendix 1.

- 2.10 The context plan (Figure 4) sets the site in its wider context and shows the extent of green areas and tree preservation orders within the site.



The Fusee Building

- 2.11 The parallel Borough-wide Character Assessment provides a useful summary of the main characteristics of Bargates:
- busy street frontage providing predominantly neighbourhood shopping facilities;
 - street frontage comprises a mix of retail, office and some residential development in a range of building types;
 - buildings include a selection of locally listed buildings, helping to reinforce some historic character; and
 - quiet, well concealed side roads seen from the main street as glimpsed views, including attractive groups of Victorian terraces.

