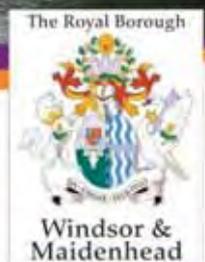


# Borough Local Plan

Preferred Options Consultation 2013







<b>Foreword</b> .....	<b>i</b>
<b>1 Introduction</b> .....	<b>2</b>
1.1 What is the Local Plan .....	2
1.2 How has the Preferred Options plan been prepared and what is it trying to achieve? .....	2
1.3 How do neighbourhood plans fit in? .....	3
1.4 How can I express my views? .....	3
1.5 What happens next? .....	4
1.6 Can I contact someone if I have any queries? .....	4
<b>2 Spatial Portrait</b> .....	<b>6</b>
2.1 Linkages to surrounding areas .....	6
2.2 The Built and Natural Environment .....	7
2.3 Community .....	10
2.4 Economic Prosperity .....	12
2.5 Climate Change and Environmental Management .....	13
2.6 Minerals and Waste .....	15
2.7 Key Spatial Issues .....	15
<b>3 Vision and Objectives</b> .....	<b>18</b>
<b>4 Strategy</b> .....	<b>24</b>
4.1 Strategic Options .....	24
4.2 Spatial Strategy .....	25
4.3 Key diagram .....	28
4.4 Presumption in favour of sustainable development .....	29
4.5 Community-led development .....	30
<b>5 Quality of Place</b> .....	<b>34</b>
5.1 Design .....	34
5.2 Townscape and landscape .....	36
5.3 River Thames corridor .....	37
<b>6 Green Belt and Countryside Character</b> .....	<b>42</b>
6.1 Green Belt .....	42
6.2 Countryside Character .....	45

## Contents

6.3	New Residential Development in the Green Belt .....	46
6.4	The Re-use and/or replacement of Non-Residential Buildings in the Green Belt .....	48
6.5	Equestrian Development in the Green Belt .....	49
6.6	Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt .....	50
<b>7</b>	<b>Housing .....</b>	<b>54</b>
7.1	Amount and distribution of housing .....	54
7.2	Allocated housing development sites .....	58
7.3	Meeting a range of housing needs .....	66
7.4	Affordable housing .....	67
7.5	Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople .....	71
7.6	Protection of residential land and the housing stock .....	73
7.7	Housing layout and design .....	74
7.8	Housing density .....	75
7.9	Conversion of dwellings .....	77
7.10	Residential gardens .....	78
7.11	Extensions and outbuildings within a residential curtilage .....	79
7.12	Residential amenity .....	80
<b>8</b>	<b>Economy .....</b>	<b>84</b>
8.1	Economic Development .....	84
8.2	Defined Employment Sites .....	86
8.3	Other Sites and Loss of Employment Uses .....	89
<b>9</b>	<b>Town Centres and Retail .....</b>	<b>92</b>
9.1	Hierarchy of Centres .....	92
9.2	Maidenhead and Windsor Town Centres .....	94
9.3	District and Local Centres .....	96
9.4	Shops Outside of Centres .....	97
9.5	Markets .....	98
<b>10</b>	<b>Tourism .....</b>	<b>100</b>
10.1	Tourism Development .....	100
10.2	Visitor Accommodation .....	102

<b>11 Historic Environment</b> .....	<b>104</b>
11.1 Historic Environment .....	104
11.2 Listed Buildings .....	105
11.3 Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Archaeology .....	106
11.4 Registered Parks and Gardens .....	107
11.5 Conservation Areas .....	108
11.6 Non-Designated Heritage Assets .....	109
<b>12 Natural Resources</b> .....	<b>112</b>
12.1 Minerals - Strategy .....	112
12.2 Minerals - Preferred Areas for Future Working .....	113
12.3 Minerals - Environmental Impacts and Restoration .....	114
12.4 Waste - Waste Strategy .....	114
12.5 Waste - Preferred Areas for New Facilities .....	116
12.6 Waste - Environmental Impacts and Restoration .....	116
12.7 Waste - Providing for Waste in New Development .....	117
12.8 Sustainable Design and Construction .....	117
12.9 Energy .....	119
12.10 Managing Flood Risk and Waterways .....	120
<b>13 Environmental Protection</b> .....	<b>124</b>
13.1 Environmental Protection .....	124
13.2 Air Pollution .....	125
13.3 Artificial Light .....	126
13.4 Noise .....	127
13.5 Contaminated Land and / or water .....	128
<b>14 Natural Environment</b> .....	<b>132</b>
14.1 Nature Conservation .....	134
14.2 Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area .....	135
14.3 Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows .....	139
14.4 Open Spaces .....	141
14.5 Rights of Way and Access to the Countryside .....	142

## Contents

<b>15 Infrastructure</b> .....	<b>146</b>
15.1 Community Facilities .....	146
15.2 Sustainable Transport .....	147
15.3 Developer Contributions .....	149
15.4 Telecommunications .....	150
15.5 Water Supply and Sewerage Infrastructure .....	151

## Appendices

<b>A Glossary of Terms</b> .....	<b>154</b>
<b>B Green Belt Boundary Amendments</b> .....	<b>158</b>
<b>C Marketing and Viability Evidence</b> .....	<b>188</b>
<b>D Open Space Standards</b> .....	<b>192</b>
<b>E Site Allocations</b> .....	<b>196</b>
Housing Site Allocations .....	196
Employment Site Allocations .....	235
Other Site Allocations .....	260
<b>F Areas in the Green Belt for Future Analysis</b> .....	<b>262</b>
Area west of Whyteladyes Lane, Cookham Rise .....	262
Area around Spencers Farm; east of Cookham Road, Maidenhead .....	263
Area west of Sheephouse Road, Maidenhead .....	264
Strip of land west of Cannon Lane, Cox Green .....	265
Area south of railway and north of Breadcroft Lane, Cox Green .....	266
Area including Maidenhead Golf Course .....	267
Area west of A404M, Maidenhead .....	268
Triangle enclosed by M4/A308/Ascot Road, Maidenhead .....	269
Area north of Kimbers Lane, Maidenhead .....	270
Area south of Harvest Hill Road, Maidenhead .....	271
Area south of Stafferton Way, Braywick, Maidenhead .....	272
Area between Ascot Road and Holyport Road, Holyport .....	273

Area north of A308, south of Maidenhead Road, Windsor .....	274
Area south of A308, east of Oakley Green Road and north of Dedworth Road, Windsor .....	275
Area south of Dedworth Road and west of Broom Farm Estate, Windsor .....	276
Area south of Old Ferry Drive, Wraysbury .....	277
Area south of The Drive, Wraysbury .....	278
Area south of Waylands, Wraysbury .....	279
Area south of St Andrew's Close, Wraysbury .....	280
Area around Tithe Farm, Wraysbury .....	281
Area north of Church Road, Old Windsor .....	282
Area west of Old Windsor and north of Crimp Hill, Old Windsor .....	283
Area south of Ascot High Street .....	284

## Index of Policies

Borough Local Plan Overall Vision .....	18
Preferred Policy Option BLP 1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development .....	29
Preferred Policy Option BLP 2 Community-Led Development .....	31
Preferred Policy Option PLA 1 Design .....	35
Preferred Policy Option PLA 2 Townscape and Landscape .....	37
Preferred Policy Option PLA 3 Thames Riverside Corridor .....	40
Preferred Policy Option GBC 1 Green Belt .....	43
Preferred Policy Option GBC 2 Countryside Character .....	45
Preferred Policy Option GBC 3 New Residential Development in the Green Belt .....	47
Preferred Policy Option GBC 4 Reuse and Replacement of Non-Residential Buildings in the Green Belt .....	48
Preferred Policy Option GBC 5 Equestrian Development in the Green Belt .....	49
Preferred Policy Option GBC 6 Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt .....	50
Preferred Policy Option HOU 1 Amount and Distribution of Housing .....	57
Preferred Policy Option HOU 2 Allocated Housing Development Sites .....	59
Preferred Policy Option HOU 3 Meeting a range of housing needs .....	67
Preferred Policy Option HOU 4 Affordable Housing .....	68
Preferred Policy Option HOU 5 Affordable Housing Rural Exception Sites .....	69
Preferred Policy Option HOU 6 Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople .....	72
Preferred Policy Option HOU 7 Protection of Residential Land and the Housing Stock .....	74
Preferred Policy Option HOU 8 Housing Layout and Design .....	74
Preferred Policy Option HOU 9 Housing Density .....	76
Preferred Policy Option HOU 10 Conversion of Dwellings .....	77
Preferred Policy Option HOU 11 Development Involving Residential Gardens .....	78

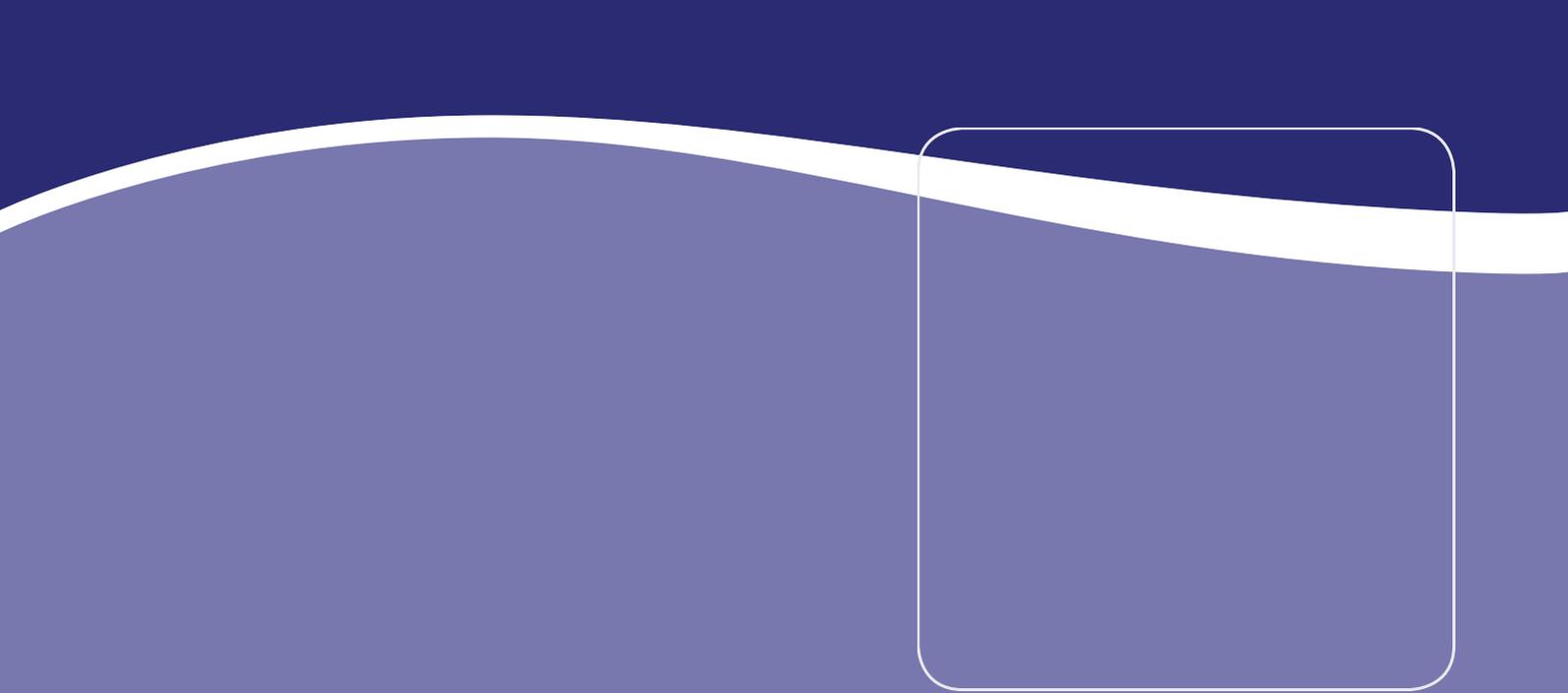
## Contents

Preferred Policy Option HOU 12 Extensions and Outbuildings within a Residential Curtilage .....	80
Preferred Policy Option HOU 13 Residential Amenity .....	81
Preferred Policy Option EC 1 Economic Development .....	84
Preferred Policy Option EC 2 Defined Employment Sites .....	86
Preferred Policy Option EC 3 Other Sites and Loss of Employment Uses .....	89
Preferred Policy Option RET 1 Hierarchy of Centres .....	92
Preferred Policy Option RET 2 Maidenhead and Windsor Town Centres .....	95
Preferred Policy Option RET 3 District and Local Centres .....	96
Preferred Policy Option RET 4 Shops Outside of Centres .....	97
Preferred Policy Option RET 5 Markets .....	98
Preferred Policy Option TM 1 Tourism Development .....	101
Preferred Policy Option TM 2 Visitor Accommodation .....	102
Preferred Policy Option HE 1 Historic Environment .....	105
Preferred Policy Option HE 2 Listed Buildings .....	106
Preferred Policy Option HE 3 Scheduled Ancient Monuments .....	107
Preferred Policy Option HE 4 Archaeology .....	107
Preferred Policy Option HE 5 Registered Parks and Gardens .....	108
Preferred Policy Option HE 6 Conservation Areas .....	109
Preferred Policy Option HE 7 Non-Designated Heritage Assets .....	110
Preferred Policy Option NR 1 Minerals Strategy .....	112
Preferred Policy Option NR 2 Minerals - Preferred Areas of Future Working .....	113
Preferred Policy Option NR 3 Minerals - Environmental Impacts and Restoration .....	114
Preferred Policy Option NR 4 Waste Strategy .....	115
Preferred Policy Option NR 5 Preferred Areas for New Waste Facilities .....	116
Preferred Policy Option NR 6 Environmental Impacts and Restoration .....	116
Preferred Policy Option NR 7 Providing for Waste in New Development .....	117
Preferred Policy Option NR 8 Sustainable Design and Construction .....	118
Preferred Policy Option NR 9 Renewable Energy Generation .....	119
Preferred Policy Option NR 10 Managing Flood Risk and Waterways .....	121
Preferred Policy Option EP 1 Environmental Protection .....	125
Preferred Policy Option EP 2 Air Pollution .....	126
Preferred Policy Option EP 3 Artificial Light .....	127
Preferred Policy Option EP 4 Noise .....	128
Preferred Policy Option EP 5 Contaminated Land and Water .....	128
Preferred Policy Option NE 1 Nature Conservation .....	134
Preferred Policy Option NE 2 Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area .....	138
Preferred Policy Option NE 3 Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows .....	140
Preferred Policy Option NE 4 Open Spaces .....	141
Preferred Policy Option NE 5 Rights of Way and Access to the Countryside .....	143
Preferred Policy Option INF 1 Community Facilities .....	146
Preferred Policy Option INF 2 Sustainable Transport .....	148
Preferred Policy Option INF 3 Planning Obligations and Developer Contributions .....	149
Preferred Policy Option INF 4 Telecommunications .....	150

Preferred Policy Option INF 5 Water Supply and Sewerage Infrastructure ..... 152



## Contents



## Introduction

1

## **INTRODUCTION**

**1.0.1** This Preferred Options version of the Borough Local Plan is a key step in the direction of updating the council's planning policies. It sets out a proposed strategy and set of policies to meet the environmental, social and economic challenges facing the area up to 2029.

**1.0.2** The purpose of the Preferred Options stage is to seek feedback on the proposed approach, so that we can make any necessary adjustments before we finalise the plan. Comments should be received by 7<sup>th</sup> March 2014.

### **1.1 What is the Local Plan**

**1.1.1** The Borough Local Plan when adopted will set the long-term strategy for managing development and supporting infrastructure up to 2029.

**1.1.2** The final adopted policies will implement the strategy, essentially setting out what development will be needed and where it should occur and key areas that should be protected. Development will be guided either in principle or by allocating specific sites on a map. This includes approaches to delivering housing and where land will be provided or safeguarded for business, shopping, leisure and community uses. In terms of protection, areas will be designated on a map where development is inappropriate or where particular matters need to be considered (e.g. the Green Belt or the setting of the River Thames).

**1.1.3** Ultimately, the Borough Local Plan will be used to make decisions on planning applications. It will also be the starting point for more detailed guidance and neighbourhood development plans.

### **1.2 How has the Preferred Options plan been prepared and what is it trying to achieve?**

**1.2.1** Local Plans are required to be based on adequate, up-to-date and relevant evidence about the economic, social and environmental characteristics and prospects of the area.

**1.2.2** We have used a number of technical studies, the outcome of consultations and professional judgement in preparing the preferred plan. We believe it is a strategy that balances the protection of the environment whilst promoting strong communities and maintaining economic prosperity. Technical analysis include those relating to:

- The need for housing
- The growth in employment
- Potential land supply for housing
- Potential land supply for employment
- The availability of open space
- Potential flood risk
- Townscape character
- Landscape character
- Green Belt purposes
- Transport impacts
- Sustainability

**1.2.3** Further details of the challenges facing the area, the vision for the Borough Local Plan and an explanation of the strategy are provided in Chapters 2 to 4 of this document.

### 1.3 How do neighbourhood plans fit in?

**1.3.1** A neighbourhood plan is a community-led framework that will help guide future development of an area. It provides a formal opportunity to add real value to the planning process by setting out community aspirations.

**1.3.2** Neighbourhood plans are not however allowed to constrain the delivery of important development. This is achieved by their needing to be in general conformity with the Borough Local Plan, in particular those policies which set out the quantum of development required. Once adopted neighbourhood plans will be used in combination with the Borough Local Plan in making decisions on planning applications.

**1.3.3** Further details on neighbourhood plans can be accessed on the council's website at [http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/pp\\_neighbourhood\\_plans.htm](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/pp_neighbourhood_plans.htm).

### 1.4 How can I express my views?

**1.4.1** We want to know whether you agree with the proposed approach to various issues set out in this document, or whether you think there is a better alternative. Alternatives we have considered are explained in each section. For example you may wish to comment on:

- Vision and objectives – what sort of place do you want the borough to be in the future
- Strategy - the balancing of environmental, social and economic challenges
- Development sites – the places identified to deliver particular types of development

**1.4.2** All comments should be precise and clearly set out the reasons for your views.

**1.4.3** The Preferred Options document and supporting information can be downloaded from the council's website XXX. Alternatively, paper copies are available to view at:

- Town Hall, St Ives Road, Maidenhead (Monday – Thursday 8:45am - 5:15pm, Friday 8:45am - 4:45pm)
- York House, Sheet Street, Windsor (Monday – Thursday 8:45am - 5:15pm, Friday 8:45am - 4:45pm)
- Libraries (usual hours of opening)

**1.4.4** The consultation runs for eight weeks, from 10<sup>th</sup> January 2014 to 7<sup>th</sup> March 2014.

**1.4.5** Representations can be made online at XXX. Alternatively completed response forms can be sent to the email or postal addresses below.

Email: [planning.policy@rbwm.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@rbwm.gov.uk)

Planning Policy Unit  
 FREEPOST RLYH-SHYR-JUXJ  
 Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead  
 Town Hall  
 St Ives Road  
 Maidenhead  
 SL6 1RF

## 1.5 What happens next?

**1.5.1** Following the end of the consultation, we will consider all of the representations received and prepare the Borough Local Plan in its final form, including the detailed policies. This plan, known as the pre-submission version, will be subject to a further period of consultation following which it will be examined by an independent Inspector, appointed by the government.

**1.5.2** The Inspector will make a recommendation about whether the plan is sound (that is whether it stands up to scrutiny) or not.<sup>(1)</sup> The council will need to consider the Inspector's report. It is the decision of the council to finally adopt the plan, but it can only do so if the Inspector finds it sound.

## 1.6 Can I contact someone if I have any queries?

**1.6.1** If you have any queries relating to the consultation please contact the Planning Policy Unit by email [planning.policy@rbwm.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@rbwm.gov.uk) or by calling XXX.

---

1 The Borough Local Plan will be examined by an independent Inspector whose role it is to assess whether the plan has been prepared in accordance with the Duty to Cooperate, legal and procedural requirements, and whether it is sound. To be sound a plan must be:  
Positively prepared - the plan should be prepared based on a strategy which seeks to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements, including unmet requirements from neighbouring authorities where it is reasonable to do so and consistent with the achieving sustainable development;  
Justified - the plan should be the most appropriate strategy, when considered against the reasonable alternatives, based on proportionate evidence;  
Effective - the plan should be deliverable over its period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities; and  
Consistent with national policy - the plan should enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework.



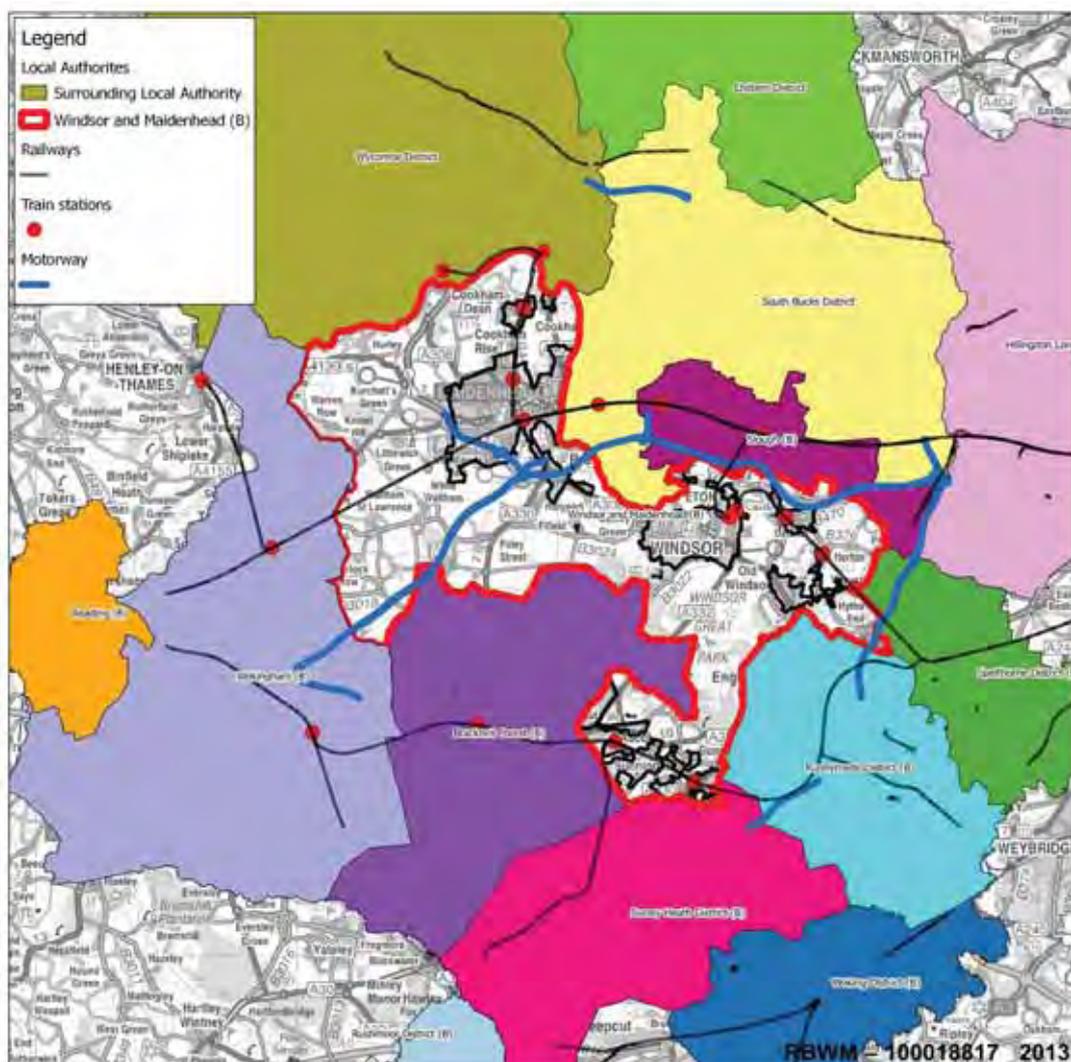
## SPATIAL PORTRAIT

### 2.1 Linkages to surrounding areas

**2.1.1** Located in the heart of the Thames Valley, less than 30 miles to the west of central London, the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM) enjoys a predominantly rural setting, with 83% of the Borough falling within the Metropolitan Green Belt.

**2.1.2** The Royal Borough borders several other administrative local authorities (see figure 1), but the wider area sees important inter-connections, such as employment and housing catchments, plus strategic transport links. The Borough benefits from having 10 rail stations, served by a combination of main line and branch lines services. Maidenhead is on the Great Western Main Line, which connects London Paddington with South West England and Wales, incorporating branch lines to Marlow and to Windsor and Eton Central. Windsor and Eton Riverside is the western terminus for services from London Waterloo, while Ascot lies on the junction of the Waterloo to Reading and the Ascot to Guildford lines.

**Figure 1 Map showing the linkages between RBWM and surrounding Local Authorities**



**2.1.3** The Royal Borough is also located only a short distance from the UK's primary international airport - London Heathrow.<sup>(2)</sup> This affects the surrounding area in terms of aircraft noise, traffic and business tourism. RBWM will also be the western terminus for Crossrail, linking Maidenhead to London and beyond.

**2.1.4** Reading is a major shopping and employment attraction in the region. The Royal Borough contributes to the workforce of Slough, London and other nearby employment centres including Reading. Indeed more than one in ten of East Berkshire's jobs are located in the Slough Trading Estate.<sup>(3)</sup>

**2.1.5** In turn, the Royal Borough provides some of the main tourist and visitor attractions in the surrounding area, with historic Windsor Castle and its Great Park, Eton College, Legoland Windsor and Ascot Racecourse to name some examples.

**2.1.6** The River Thames forms much of the northern boundary of the borough, and thus RBWM must work with the Environment Agency and other such organisations to consider fluvial impacts on settlements and neighbours further downstream. The borough also provides several crucial River Thames crossing points, thus enabling movement north and south of the river. These are located at Bisham, Cookham, Maidenhead, Windsor and Datchet.

**2.1.7** It will be important to assess the impact of development from other areas. Additional planned development in the surrounding areas (through other Development Plans) could increase pressure on the borough's infrastructure, demand for housing, or on open spaces and access to the countryside. The planned redevelopments of both Slough and Bracknell town centres will impact upon the Royal Borough, meaning towns in the borough will need to focus on their unique distinctiveness to maintain their vibrancy and vitality.

**2.1.8** A further consideration as regards linkages to other areas, will be the secondary schools sector in both Windsor and Maidenhead, which are likely to also come under pressure for places from Slough residents as demand for secondary school places in the town soar. Slough Borough Council currently expects that they will have to provide the equivalent of four new secondary schools in the town. It is likely that there will be some impact on RBWM schools. The secondary school in Datchet already serves part of Slough.

## 2.2 The Built and Natural Environment

**2.2.1** The Royal Borough enjoys a predominantly rural setting interspersed with villages and hamlets, and contains three main urban settlements, namely Maidenhead, Windsor and Ascot.

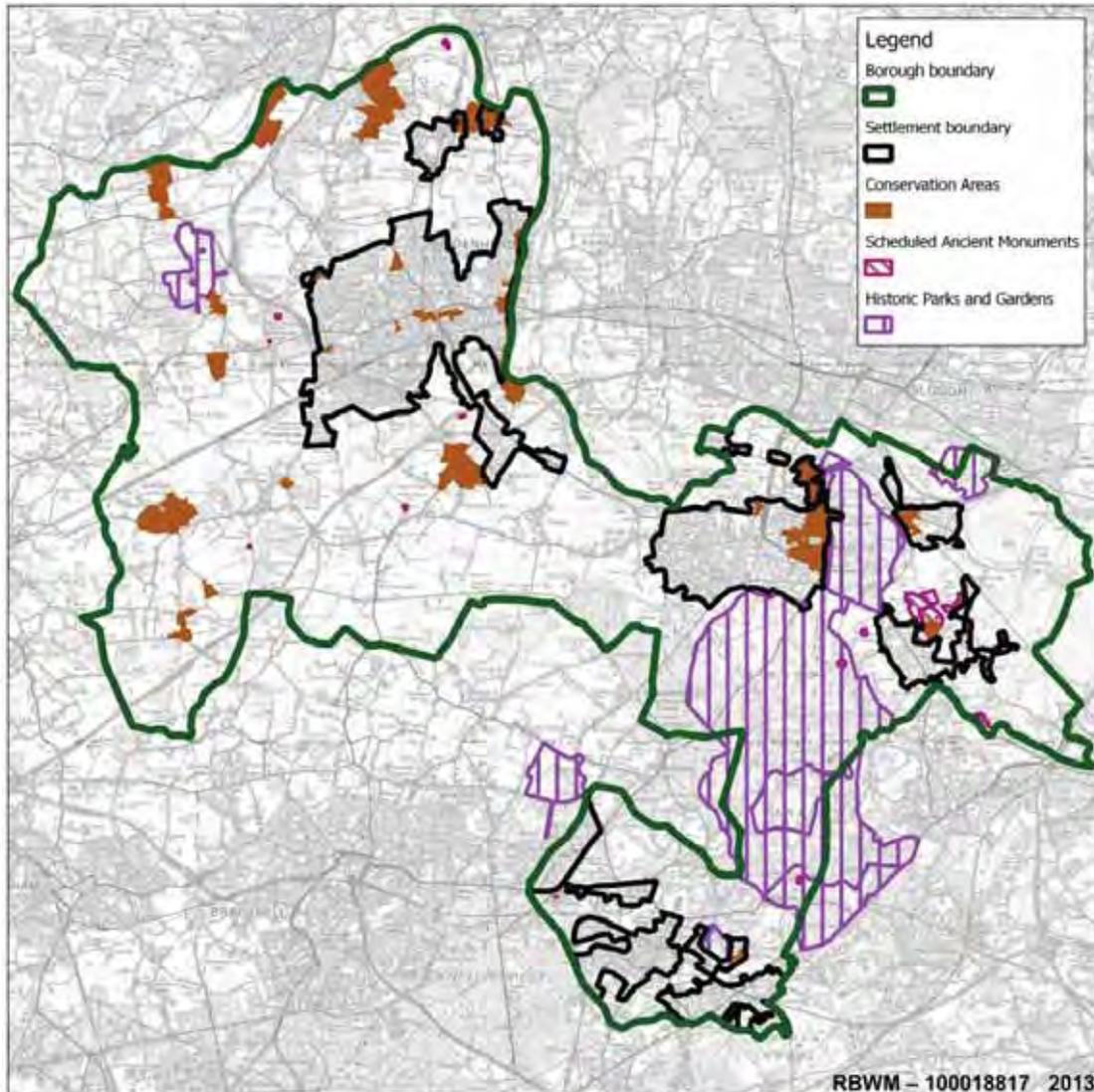
### *Heritage*

**2.2.2** The Royal Borough has 27 Conservation Areas, predominantly located in the north of the borough, designated around rural settlements, although the urban towns of Windsor and Maidenhead have several designations also. Listed buildings are distributed across the borough, with over 1000 listed buildings, and Windsor Castle is one of the many scheduled ancient monuments in the borough (See figure 2).

2 Source: RBWM Local Transport Plan 3 (July 2012).

3 Source: East Berkshire Local Economic Assessment (August 2011).

Figure 2 Map showing historic environment designations in RBWM



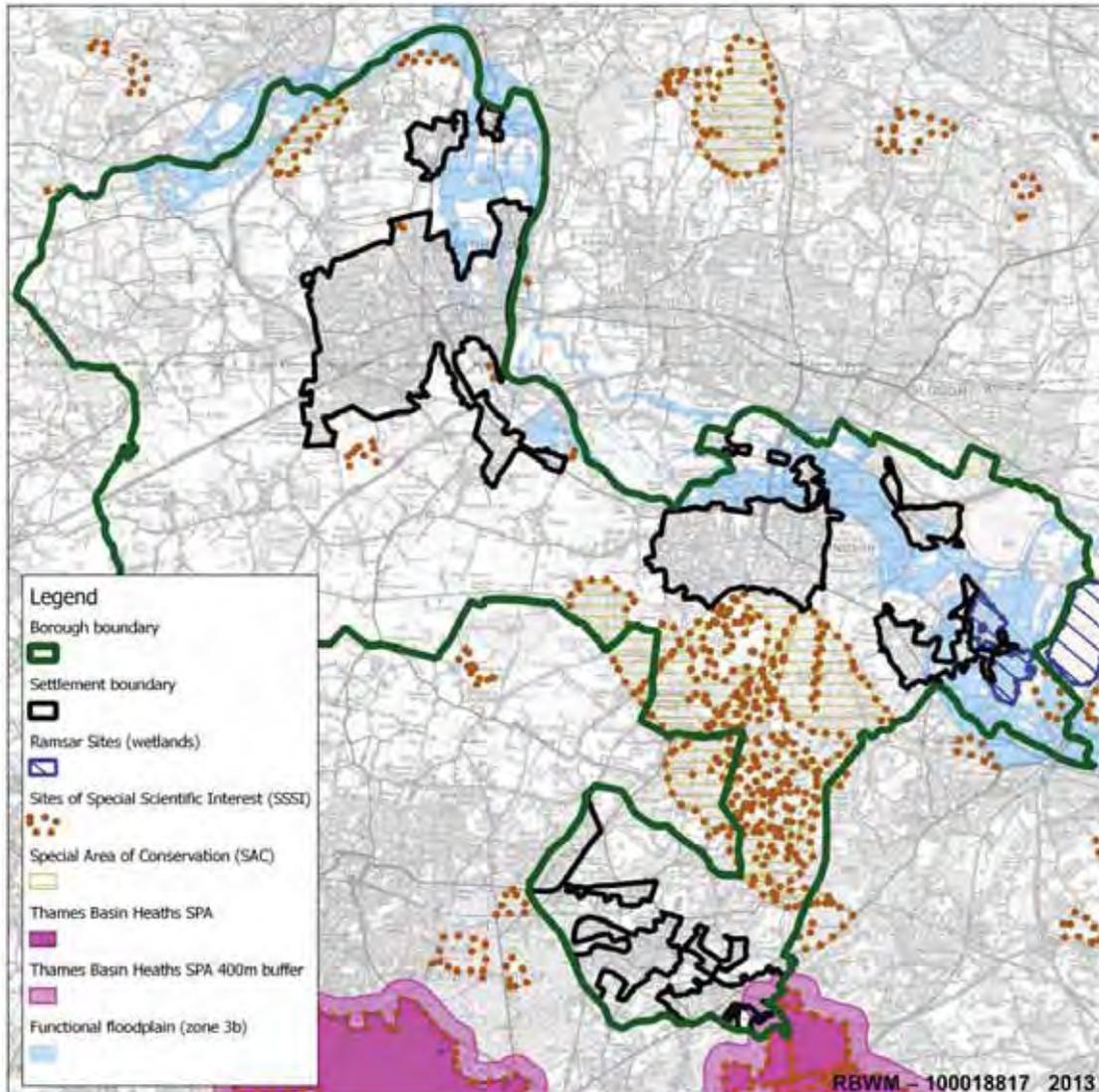
**2.2.3** The Royal Borough has 10 registered historic parks and gardens, 6 of which are part of the extensive Royal Windsor Estate. The others are Ditton Park, Datchet; Eton College, Eton; Civil Service College, Sunningdale; and Hall Place, Burchetts Green.

#### ***Landscape and Trees***

**2.2.4** A key feature of the Royal Borough is the vast number of trees and open space that residents and businesses alike can enjoy. Trees and woodlands play an important role in defining the character of the Royal Borough as a 'Green Borough', helping shape the borough's environment and peoples' appreciation of it. Within the borough, there are a number of larger sites such as Windsor Great Park, Bisham Woods, Ashley Hill near Burchetts Green and other open space containing trees and woodlands which are important for nature conservation. The River Thames and its associated tree lined and wooded banks also make distinctive features. <sup>(4)</sup>

4 Source: RBWM Tree and Woodland Strategy 2010 -2020.

Figure 3 Map showing strategic environmental designations/ constraints



**2.2.5** The Royal Borough's rural landscape provides opportunity for conservation, enhancement, restoration and creation, to strengthen distinctive character through design and management. The landscapes that borders urban areas, or are attractive tourist destinations (such as Windsor Great Park) are deemed to be particularly at threat from change, although overall the rural landscapes of the borough are deemed to have low capacity for change.<sup>(5)</sup>

### **Biodiversity**

**2.2.6** In the Royal Borough there are areas internationally designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Ramsar sites.<sup>(6)</sup> These can be seen in figure 3.

5 RBWM Landscape Character Assessment (2004).

6 Ramsar sites are wetlands of international importance, designated under the Ramsar Convention.

**2.2.7** The borough also has several national designations, including 11 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) covering 1,663 hectares (8.41% of the borough). The Royal Borough's only National Nature Reserve (NNR) is Chobham Common; only 0.27ha of Chobham Common sits within the borough in Sunningdale.

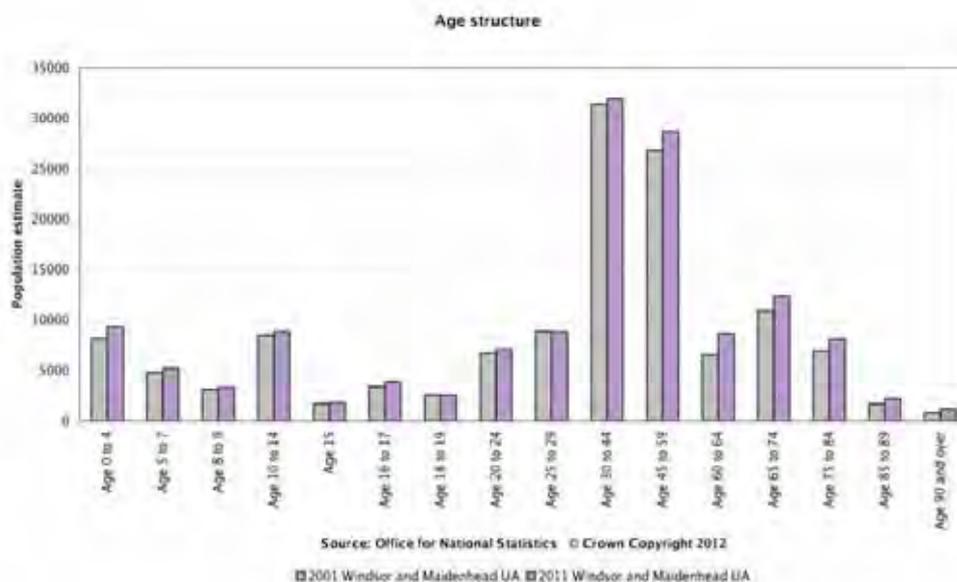
**2.2.8** In addition to these international and national designations, there are also several local nature reserves and wildlife sites, located around the borough.

## 2.3 Community

### Population

**2.3.1** The 2011 Census indicated that the borough has 144,560 residents, an 8.2% increase in last 10 years since the 2001 Census, when the population was 133,626 (see figure 4). The population of the borough is showing signs of ageing in line with national trends, seeing 16.7% of the population aged 65+; nationally this was 16.4%. The 2011 Census recorded that 6.5% of the population is aged 0-4 years of age.

**Figure 4 RBWM Age structure compared to 2011 Census. Source ONS.**



**2.3.2** The Royal Borough also has a slightly higher than national average percentage of young people aged 0 – 19 years at 24.3% of the population, compared to 24.0% nationally.

**2.3.3** A further trend in the borough is fewer young adults (19 – 30 years of age) than nationally. This could in part be linked to few further education opportunities such as universities within the borough, but also potentially the high cost of living in the area. It is possible that this reflects employment opportunities in the area.

## **Housing**

**2.3.4** The 2011 Census counted 58,349 households in the borough. In 2008, 1.4% of the borough's dwelling stock comprised second homes; nationally it was 0.9% at this time.<sup>(7)</sup>

**2.3.5** In April 2011, the tenure of dwellings across the borough was 85.5% private rented or owner-occupied, and 13% Registered Social Landlord (RSL). Nationally this was 82% and 10% respectively.<sup>(8)</sup> The 2011 Census also counted 3,495 people living in communal establishments (e.g. care homes, boarding schools) in the borough.

**2.3.6** In the last 10 years, the dwelling stock of the borough has remained relatively unchanged, seeing only a slight shift to smaller dwellings, e.g. in 2001 Band C properties made up 14.4% of the dwelling stock, but by 2011 this was 14.7%, and similarly B and G accounted for 15.4% in 2001, but was down to 15.0% in 2011.

**2.3.7** At April 2013, the average property price in the borough was £341,890 compared to £209,750 for the South East<sup>(9)</sup>. This is more than double the national average. This makes the borough one of the most expensive places to live in the country outside of London.

## **Health**

**2.3.8** Access to doctors and hospitals is often cited as a cause for concern in consultations. The Royal Borough has some small hospitals (St Marks, Maidenhead; Heatherwood Hospital; Ascot; King Edward, Windsor) but no A&E services, although some have Minor Injuries Units. Therefore the borough is reliant on either Wexham Park in Slough or the Royal Berkshire in Reading.

**2.3.9** Accession modelling undertaken in October 2011 suggests that 87% of households are within 15 minutes of a GP surgery using public transport and walking (99% are in 30 minutes). For hospitals, 90% of households can access services within 30 minutes, although only 1% can access Wexham Park Hospital within this time (71% could access it within an hour).

## **Education**

**2.3.10** There are 62 state schools in the borough: 3 nurseries, 45 primary schools, 13 secondary and 1 special school. Of these, 9 are currently academies.<sup>(10)</sup> Demand for school places is set to rise in many parts of the borough. In both Windsor and Maidenhead there is continued pressure on primary school places, particularly at the Reception intakes, with only 22 Reception places (less than 1.4%) across the whole borough unfilled, despite an ongoing programme of school expansions in both towns.<sup>(11)</sup>

## **Access to Recreation**

**2.3.11** The Royal Borough manages and maintains 53 parks, open spaces and play areas, providing opportunities for sports activities, informal play, or gentle strolls in pleasant surroundings – covering a total area of around 186 hectares. Any intensification or infilling development in the urban area could result in access to open space for recreation becoming an increasingly important local issue.

7 Source: ONS Neighbourhood Statistics (March 2008).

8 Source: ONS Neighbourhood Statistics (April 2011).

9 Source: Land Registry at April 2013. The national average at this time was £161,458.

10 Source: RBWM Education at July 2013.

11 Source: RBWM Education Department (October 2012)

**2.3.12** The Royal Borough has several indoor and outdoor sports facilities, including several leisure centres and sports pitches.

### **Arts and culture**

**2.3.13** Both The Firestation Centre for Arts and Culture, in Windsor and Norden Farm Centre for Arts in Maidenhead provide events such as cinema, live music, theatre, comedy, workshops, dance and exhibitions. There is a heritage centre in Maidenhead and a museum in Windsor also.

## **2.4 Economic Prosperity**

### ***Qualifications, Workforce and Jobs***

**2.4.1** The Royal Borough is an area that has a highly qualified workforce with 96% holding qualifications; 48% are qualified to degree level or higher. The majority of employee jobs in RBWM are in the service sector (88%), followed by construction (7%) and manufacturing (5%).<sup>(12)</sup> The number of people who are self-employed has increased in the last decade to 11.6% in 2012 from 10.5% in 2001 (nationally this was 8.3% in 2001; 9.4% in 2012).<sup>(13)</sup>

**2.4.2** The rise in self-employed workforce has resulted in an increase in demand for better access to broadband services, particularly in rural areas. In a similar manner, the borough has been encouraging small businesses by offering a relief rate to those who are eligible under the 'small business rate relief scheme'. There is also a dedicated rural relief scheme for certain businesses located in an area with a population of fewer than 3000 people.<sup>(14)</sup>

**2.4.3** RBWM is part of the East Berkshire Local Assessment Area (LEA) which it shares with Slough. The growth forecasts indicate that despite Slough having the stronger economic base, RBWM could see an employment base growth of 19% by 2030.<sup>(15)</sup> The LEA states that the area has seen a decrease in manufacturing employment and an increase in employment in banking, finance and insurance.

**2.4.4** The Employment Land Review (ELR) suggests that there will be an increase in demand for offices, whilst demand for industrial and warehousing space will decline, owing to an ongoing restructuring of the economy. At the same time other information suggests there is a trend for office downsizing; this will be investigated further and kept under review. The ELR identified a number of sites would be suitable for new development – these were principally located within Maidenhead and Windsor town centres, which are attractive office locations. If demand could not all be met within the two town centres, the study deemed there was scope to redevelop some existing industrial areas to provide new office premises.<sup>(16)</sup>

**2.4.5** The economically active workforce (aged between 16 and 64) is 81%, which is higher than that the national average (76.9%).<sup>(17)</sup> The unemployment rate is low compared to the national trend (1.8% in May 2013 compared to 3.6% nationally).

**2.4.6** Overall RBWM is a net importer of its workforce with approximately 40% of the borough's population either too young or of retirement age.<sup>(18)</sup>

12 Source: Nomis, ONS in 2008 – excludes self-employed, government-supported trainees and HM Forces

13 Source: ONS Neighbourhood Statistics/ NOMIS.

14 Information accurate as of April 2013. [www.rbwm.gov.uk](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk)

15 Source: East Berkshire Local Economic Assessment (August 2011).

16 Source: Employment Land Review Update (2009).

17 Source: Nomis, ONS at January 2012 – December 2012.

18 Source: 2011 Census © Crown Copyright

## **Retail**

**2.4.7** The borough has two sub-regional shopping centres (Windsor and Maidenhead), two district centres (Ascot and Sunningdale) and several local centres which provide vital services for residents in the wider urban areas, or villages outside of the main urban settlements.

**2.4.8** Overall the larger centres predominantly provide comparison and services retail functions, with local centres providing more convenience and service shops. A similar trend is seen with regards to whether the shops are independents or large national multiple chains; main town centres tend to see a large proportion of the latter, with local centres seeing an increased variety of occupiers.

## **Tourism and visitors**

**2.4.9** Tourism is crucial to the local economy, with over 7 million people visiting the Royal Borough each year. Windsor itself is home to two of the UK's top 20 visitor attractions, Legoland and Windsor Castle.

**2.4.10** The borough is also home to other attractions and world class events including Ascot Racecourse with Royal Ascot, Windsor Racecourse, international polo events at Smiths Lawn, the Windsor Royal Tattoo, Eton College, Windsor Great Park, and other historic villages. The borough is also home to one of the oldest and best known airfields in the country - White Waltham Airfield, reputedly the largest grass airfield in Britain.

**2.4.11** An estimated 612,000 staying trips were spent in the Borough in 2010, of which around 72% were made by domestic visitors and 28% by overseas visitors. It is estimated that 51% of overseas trips to Windsor & Maidenhead were holiday related, 28% were business related and 17% were primarily for visiting friends and relatives. Total expenditure by visitors is estimated to have increased by 10.8% between 2008 and 2010.<sup>(19)</sup>

**2.4.12** Whilst not offering the same variety of tourist attractions as Windsor, Maidenhead nevertheless saw 59%<sup>(20)</sup> of all visitors indicate that the River Thames was the main reason they had chosen to visit Maidenhead. A high proportion of visitors to the town gave the reason that they were visiting friends or family, e.g. it was not a holiday visit.<sup>(21)</sup>

**2.4.13** Tourism-related expenditure is estimated to have supported 6,425 full time equivalent jobs in RBWM; an actual total of 8,710 if part time and seasonal work is accounted for.<sup>(22)</sup>

## **2.5 Climate Change and Environmental Management**

### **Sustainable transport**

**2.5.1** The Royal Borough has high car usage and ownership, partially due to the rural nature of some settlements where regular public transport services are not viable, and also as a result of the area being relatively affluent. Car ownership was 86.7% at the 2011 Census, which has increased since the 2001 Census when it was 85.7%. The population is therefore very mobile, increasing the amount of commuting and social journeys undertaken.

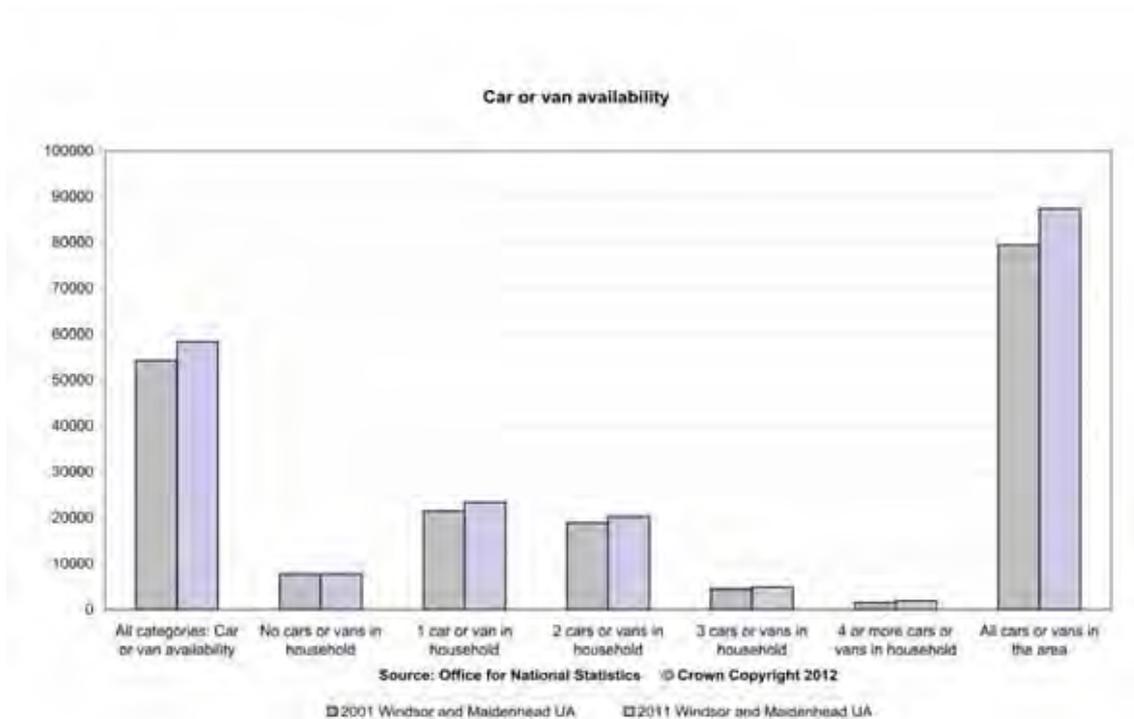
19 Source: 2011 Census © Crown Copyright.

20 Source: Maidenhead Summer Visitor Survey 2011.

21 Maidenhead Summer Visitor Survey (2011).

22 Economic Impact Study (2010).

**Figure 5 Change in Car and Van availability since 2001**



**2.5.2** The borough has 3 Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) to monitor and seek to improve air quality in urban areas that experience high levels of traffic pollution (Maidenhead town centre, Royal Windsor Way in Windsor, and where the M4 crosses the A308 at Holyport, Bray).

### ***Flooding***

**2.5.3** Just over 27% of the borough is located within floodzone 2 (1:100 – 1:1000 year risk of flooding), and 20.3 % within floodzone 3 (1:100 year risk of flooding). Therefore managing new development to not put new and existing residents at increased exposure to flooding is essential.

### ***Efficient use of energy and resources***

**2.5.4** The borough actively encourages residents and businesses to recycle as much as possible, with recycling, reusing or composting accounting for over 40% of waste in 2010/11. This is in line with the national average for the same period.

**2.5.5** Energy consumption is currently mostly from fossil fuels and not renewable sources, although the borough is increasingly seeing developments incorporating sustainable aspects, and has seen hydro-electric turbines built at Romney Weir and the retrofitting of homes. Many schools, householders and businesses are retrofitting solar panels to their properties to become more energy efficient.

**2.5.6** Water usage is a key consideration for the future of the Royal Borough, with alterations in climate patterns having the scope to impact water resources. If spring and autumn become drier and warmer seasons, then the recharge season may be shorter resulting in overall less groundwater recharge.

**2.5.7** Indeed there are already several areas across the Royal Borough that are covered by Source Protection Zones (that protect water supplies), but the most significant are SPZ1s (where development could have greatest risk to groundwater supplies). These include but are not exhaustive to the following locations: Cookham Rise, Hurley, Maidenhead, Bray and north Datchet.

## 2.6 Minerals and Waste

**2.6.1** It is important to provide as much certainty as possible about where mineral extraction can take place in the future, and where it can not. But also safeguarding future supplies. Similarly, the council has responsibilities for ensuring that all types of waste, including household, construction and demolition, industrial and commercial and special hazardous waste that require careful management and land use planning are catered for.

**2.6.2** The Borough has seen much minerals and waste activity in the past with sites around Maidenhead, Bray, Horton, Datchet and Wraysbury being a focus of past activity.

**2.6.3** There are four active sand and gravel quarries in the borough:

- Sheephouse Farm, Maidenhead
- Upper Bray Road, Maidenhead
- Kingsmead Quarry, Horton and
- Horton Brook Quarry, Horton

**2.6.4** There are also a number of sites in the borough that produce secondary and recycled aggregates: St George's Lane, Ascot; Hindhay Quarry, Maidenhead; Horwood, Kimber Lane, Maidenhead; Horwoods Yard, Green Lane, Maidenhead; St George's Lane, Fowfields, South Ascot; and Stafferton Way, Braywick, Maidenhead.

**2.6.5** The borough includes landfill sites, treatment plants, scrap metal yards and has a civic amenity site at Braywick, Stafferton Way, Maidenhead.

## 2.7 Key Spatial Issues

**2.7.1** Taking account of the character factors identified in RBWM, there are some key spatial issues that the Borough Local Plan will have to address.

**Table 1 Key Strategic Spatial Issues**

Key spatial Issues
How can RBWM provide the homes it needs without adversely impacting on the existing built character or the natural environment which makes the borough the successful place it is.
How can RBWM provide the necessary amount of affordable housing in the right locations, given land values and property prices in the area.
How can RBWM respond to the needs of an ageing population?
How and where could RBWM enable provision of the services and facilities needed for existing and future residents, including necessary infrastructure?

**Key spatial Issues**

How can RBWM improve and maintain the natural environment and countryside which makes the area an attractive place to live, work and visit?

How can RBWM plan to meet the development needs of business and support an economy fit for the 21st century, whilst maintaining the balance between residential and commercial development needs in both urban and rural locations?

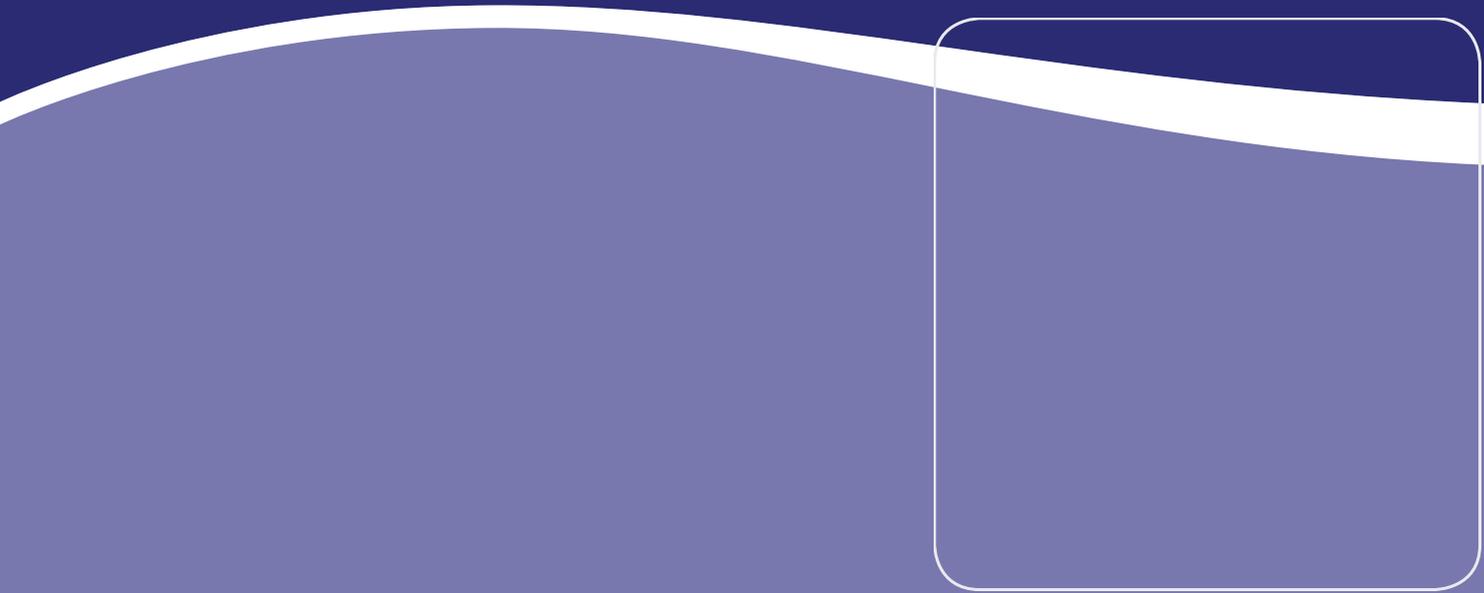
How can RBWM support and improve the tourism and visitor economy, particularly around the towns of Windsor and Maidenhead?

How should RBWM contribute to national climate change targets, and ensure the community are not put at risk of the effects of climate change, e.g. increased flood risk.

How can RBWM preserve and enhance its unique heritage and built environment for current and future residents and visitors to enjoy?

How can RBWM best accommodate the needs of people to use their car for some journeys and also encourage more use of alternatives?

How can RBWM support rural areas to improve their sustainability, whilst maintaining the factors that make the countryside a desirable place to live, work and play?



## Vision and Objectives

3

## **VISION AND OBJECTIVES**

**3.0.1** The Sustainable Community Partnership Strategy has the aspiration that “the Royal Borough is a place where everyone can thrive in a safe and healthy environment.”

**3.0.2** This aspiration has been taken and expanded into a more detailed picture of what the borough will be like following the implementation of the Borough Local Plan over the period to 2029.

### **Borough Local Plan Overall Vision**

**Our vision is that the borough remains a place where everyone can thrive in a safe and healthy environment.**

The varied character of our towns is recognised and valued. The countryside is predominantly used for agriculture and supports recreational opportunities and a diversity of wildlife. The special characteristics of the borough such as the historic environment, the River Thames, woodland and parkland remain part of our heritage.

Developments have added to the character and quality of the environment through their design. Effective use will have been made of development land in towns and villages, protecting the open countryside from unnecessary development.

The scale of interdependences between places within the borough and those outside have been maintained. Transport infrastructure will be in place to allow people to get around and telecommunications will connect people and businesses.

There will be economic prosperity with a good range of jobs. All parts of the borough will have local employment opportunities. Schools and colleges will be providing excellent education which is relevant to the needs of businesses.

The Thames Valley will continue to be a successful economic area with Maidenhead as a key component. The town centre and employment areas provide a strong economic focus within the borough. Maidenhead town centre and Ascot High Street are rejuvenated, meeting the aspirations of residents and sitting at the heart of their communities. Windsor and Eton town centres and their surrounding area is a thriving visitor destination, attracting visitors from both the local area, the United Kingdom and overseas.

### **Question 1**

Do you support the draft Borough Local Plan Overall Vision? Do you have any comments?

### **Objectives**

**3.0.3** In order to focus action in the Borough Local Plan a set of objectives has been defined.

### Objective 1

Conserve and enhance the special qualities of the borough's built and natural environment.

- i. Protect the openness of the Green Belt.
- ii. Retain the character of existing settlements through guiding development to appropriate locations and ensuring high quality of design of new development.
- iii. Protect the special qualities of the built environment including heritage assets.
- iv. Protect and enhance biodiversity within the Borough.

### Objective 2

Meet the varied housing needs of residents in an appropriate way whilst steering development to the most sustainable locations.

- i. Provide sufficient new housing to meet the Borough's needs.
- ii. Make the most of previously developed land.
- iii. Provide housing that meets the needs of all sections of community including a sufficient level of affordable housing.

### Objective 3

Enable the continued success and evolution of the Borough's distinct visitor economy.

- i. Reinforce the role of key tourism centres such as Windsor, Ascot and the River Thames.
- ii. Provide sufficient accommodation and facilities for tourists.
- iii. Identify and promote opportunities for additional tourism related development.

### Objective 4

Enable the evolution and growth of the local business economy.

- i. Maintain a buoyant and broad-based economy.
- ii. Support the reuse and redevelopment of existing employment-generating sites and premises in order to maintain a sustainable balance between jobs and local labour.

### Objective 5

Promote the vitality and viability of our town centres so they are at the heart of our communities.

- i. Promote the town centres of Windsor & Maidenhead as the principal locations for office, retail, tourism and leisure development.
- ii. Support the delivery of the adopted Maidenhead Area Action Plan Development Plan Document.

#### Objective 6

Increase the opportunities available for people who wish to remain living in their own homes as they grow older or become infirm.

- i. Promote the adaptation of existing homes.
- ii. Secure the development of homes suitable to meet the needs of people throughout their lives.

#### Objective 7

To minimise the impact of flooding and any impact attributable to climate change:

- i. Promote sustainable design and construction.
- ii. Promote the use of renewable energy.
- iii. Manage flood risk through the location and design of development.

#### Objective 8

Seek to retain, improve and provide new facilities and other infrastructure to ensure a high quality of life for residents of all ages.

- i. Ensure that new development contributes to environmental, infrastructure and service improvements.
- ii. Support the development of new educational facilities.

#### Objective 9

Reduce the need to travel by car in the Borough and encourage sustainable modes of transportation.

- i. Locate new development close to offices, shops and local services and facilities.
- ii. Encourage access to safe, convenient and sustainable modes of transportation.

#### Objective 10

Promote the prudent use and sustainable management of minerals and their extraction in the Borough.

- i. Liaise with other Berkshire authorities on developing the Joint Minerals and Waste Local Development Framework.
- ii. Ensure that mineral extraction proposals do not harm the character of the countryside.

### **Objective 11**

Promote the management of waste in a prudent and sustainable manner.

- i. Liaise with other Berkshire authorities on developing the Joint Minerals and Waste Local Development Framework
- ii. Ensure all new developments have robust waste management plans.

### **Question 2**

Do you support the objectives? Do you have any comments?





## **STRATEGY**

**4.0.1** This chapter sets out the broad development strategy of the Borough Local Plan, focusing on the key elements including the development requirement and the role of different places. It concludes with a key diagram. The strategy will be implemented through policies addressing specific issues. The subsequent sections set out our preferred approach to these policies.

### **4.1 Strategic Options**

**4.1.1** The Borough Local Plan must set out a response to the challenge of how to respond to population growth and economic needs within environmental limits.

**4.1.2** From Census data we know that in the period 2001 to 2011 the population of the borough increased by 11,000 people or 4,000 households, and that the number of people aged 16-74 in employment increased by 5,500 people. Similar increases also occurred in neighbouring local authorities although large urban areas such as Slough and Reading have seen greater increases.<sup>(23)</sup> Demographic and economic projections suggest that this growth will continue with potential for around 12,000 additional households being formed by 2029 should trends continue.

**4.1.3** The quality of the environment underpins the borough as an attractive place to live, work and visit. In addition, large areas of the borough are subject to designations where the National Planning Policy Framework indicates that development should be restricted. These include the Green Belt, sites designated for their international or national importance to nature conservation, areas important for their historic importance and areas liable to flooding.

**4.1.4** Published information on land availability across the wider area suggests most local authorities have insufficient identified capacity to meet the projected need for housing and jobs. With regard to the Royal Borough, we have identified capacity for an additional 7,415 dwellings in areas where development could occur in ways which maintain environmental quality and where development should not be restricted (see Section 7.1 Amount and distribution of housing for further information). This compares to the projected increase of 12,000 households.

**4.1.5** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires local authorities to meet the full objectively assessed need for housing unless the impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the NPPF as a whole or specific policies in the NPPF indicate that development should be restricted. This is against the background of positively seeking opportunities to meet need. Where development needs cannot be wholly met within an individual area, local authorities are expected to work together to meet unmet needs where it is reasonable to do so.

**4.1.6** In this context, there is a choice of three strategic options. Each has different positive and negative consequences.

#### **Option 1: To restrict building to the capacity of existing built up areas, avoiding building in the Green Belt.**

**4.1.7** This option places an emphasis on environmental protection, specifically the Green Belt, over social and economic consequences.

---

<sup>23</sup> The population increase across a housing market area based on neighbouring local authorities was 80,500 people and 30,500 households. A housing market area is a geographical area defined by household demand and preferences for all types of housing, reflecting the key functional linkages between places where people live and work.

**4.1.8** Protecting the current precise extent of the Green Belt would restrict building capacity and significantly fewer homes would be built than are projected to be needed. In addition to this, more people are remaining in their own home as they grow older (so existing stock ‘recycles’ at a slower rate) and the number of older people is projected to continue to increase. Older people tend to have lower levels of disposable income. These two factors would affect the number and mix of people who could live in our area because they would limit the number of young people and families who could live locally. This could lead to: an imbalance within our community; increased commuting into the borough and potentially increased congestion, and; lead to a loss of prosperity in our communities because of the drop in disposable income available locally as a result of fewer people of working age living in the borough.

**4.1.9** The NPPF would anticipate neighbouring local authorities working together to meet unmet housing need. The extent to which other local authorities can assist is presently unknown.

**Option 2: To permit sufficient building to meet the projected population growth and economic needs, recognising that this would require some building in the Green Belt.**

**4.1.10** This second option places an emphasis on social and economic needs over environmental impacts.

**4.1.11** This would allow a greater opportunity for young people and families to stay in or move into the borough, helping to ensure more balanced communities with a greater number of people of working age. Building at the level required would have a greater impact on the environment. Specifically, this option would require significantly more development in the Green Belt. The scale of building would be such that there would be some loss of openness in the areas affected and it is likely there would be some compromise of the purposes of including the land in the Green Belt.

**Option 3: To permit building to a level that strikes a balance between meeting the projected population growth and economic needs and the environmental impacts, including allowing some building in the Green Belt.**

**4.1.12** This third option seeks a balance between social and economic needs with environmental impacts.

**4.1.13** Some development would be allowed in areas of the Green Belt where the environmental impacts are considered to be limited including impacts on the purposes of including land in the Green Belt. This would deliver more homes than under Option 1, and provide long-term protection for the Green Belt against speculative proposals for inappropriate development. Whilst not meeting the full projected increase in population growth and economic needs it would meet a higher proportion than under option 1, addressing some of the negative consequences of an imbalanced community.

**4.1.14** Providing a higher proportion of the projected need for housing within the borough, reduces the demand on neighbouring local authorities to help meet any unmet housing need.

## 4.2 Spatial Strategy

**4.2.1** Based on our consideration of the three strategic options, we consider Option 3 to be the most appropriate, to seek a balance between social and economic needs with environmental impacts. We believe this approach is in line with the expectations of national policy and reflects the need for all local authorities across the housing market area to do more to increase housing supply.

**4.2.2** Our preferred spatial strategy is therefore based on the following main components:

1. Within the context of the wider functional area, providing a balance between homes and jobs;

2. To maintain an environment that conserves the special qualities of the borough's environment and places;
3. To focus the majority of development within towns and villages not in the Green Belt, optimising the efficient use of land which has previously been developed; and
4. To promote a strong network of town, district and local centres which are at the heart of the community, providing shopping, services, employment and leisure.

### **A sustainable balance between homes and jobs**

**4.2.3** Achieving a sustainable balance between homes and jobs requires the utilisation of a range of sources of housing land supply. This includes some development in those parts of the Green Belt where environmental impacts are considered to be limited and the purposes of the Green Belt are not compromised.

**4.2.4** This approach will make a significant contribution to meeting the projected need for housing and provide long-term protection for the Green Belt against speculative proposals for inappropriate development.

**4.2.5** Details of areas in the Green Belt where views are invited on their suitability for development are provided in Section 7.2 Allocated housing development sites.

### **Conserving the special quality of the environment and places**

**4.2.6** The quality of the environment is one of the Royal Borough's defining characteristics. The borough comprises a number of separate and distinct towns and villages, each with their own identity and character but related by an attractive countryside setting which includes royal parkland, forests and woodlands, the Thames river valley and farmland. Throughout the borough there are examples of the unique history and long association with the Crown, with many exceptional buildings and places.

**4.2.7** This high quality environment of our towns, villages and countryside underlines the attraction of the borough as a place to live, work and visit.<sup>(24)</sup> To maintain the borough's success and competitiveness into the future, it is essential that development is compatible with the special qualities and character of the places within the borough.

### **An urban focus, optimising the efficient use of previously developed land**

**4.2.8** Redeveloping where buildings already exist, or allowing the conversion of existing buildings, helps meet the need for housing and other development needs without using undeveloped land. Building at higher densities in the right locations optimises the efficient use of land, reduces the amount of land required for development in less sustainable locations and can help support local shops and services.

**4.2.9** To reflect the availability of suitable previously developed land, development will be concentrated in urban areas outside of the Green Belt. Higher residential densities will particularly be encouraged within and in proximity to Maidenhead town centre and to a lesser degree Windsor town centre; however all land should be used as efficiently as possible in line with relative accessibility and local character.

**4.2.10** Employment will continue to be focused in the town centres and in existing employment areas where they continue to meet the needs of businesses.

<sup>24</sup> The Business Needs Survey 2007 found that the quality of the environment was in the top three most important locational factor for business (alongside good road links and access to broadband). Visitors to the borough are estimated to support around 5,900 FTE jobs and a business turnover of around £511 million.

## A network of town, district and local centres

**4.2.11** Town centres should be at the heart of the community, providing a range of shops, services, leisure opportunities and employment. The town centre and surrounding area are the most appropriate location for higher density development and a mix of use in accordance with their greater levels of accessibility relative to other areas. Local centres are also central to their communities, providing easily accessible services and facilities.

**4.2.12** A strategy for rejuvenation of Maidenhead town centre is already in place.<sup>(25)</sup> It envisages new shops, homes, employment and leisure opportunities, alongside a raft of improvements to the environment. Around 733 additional homes were envisaged. Further opportunities are now expected, with a potential uplift in capacity of at least another 700 dwellings.

**4.2.13** The rejuvenation of Ascot High Street is also an opportunity to create a community hub through mixed development, including shopping and housing. This proposal has emerged through the Ascot, Sunninghill and Sunningdale Neighbourhood Plan. Around 200 homes are anticipated of which around 100 would be on land within the Green Belt.

### Question 3

Do you support the preferred strategy of providing a sustainable balance between housing and social needs and economic needs, whilst protecting the quality of the environment and the Green Belt (this would require development in some parts of the Green Belt where environmental impacts are considered to be limited)?

If you prefer one of the alternative options then please explain why.

Question 21 in Chapter 7: Housing invites views towards how the suitability of sites in the Green Belt should be assessed and requests views on specific areas.

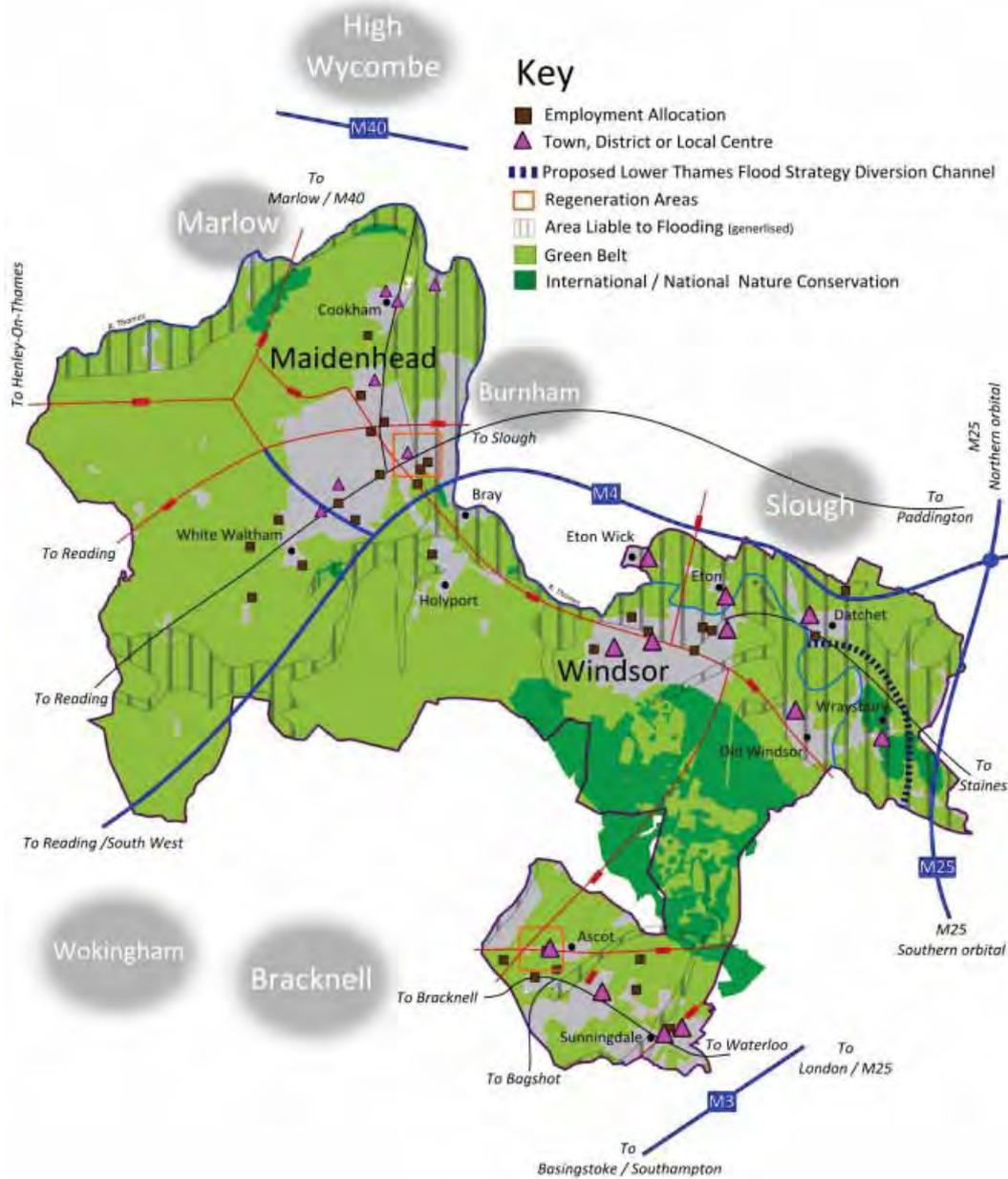
### Question 4

Do you support the three components of:

1. Maintaining an environment that conserves the special qualities of the borough's environment and places;
2. Optimising the efficient use of land, particularly land within and in proximity to town centres and other land which has previously been developed; and
3. Promoting a strong network of town, district and local centres which are at the heart of the community, providing shopping, services, employment and leisure.

4.3 Key diagram

Figure 6 Key Diagram



## 4.4 Presumption in favour of sustainable development

**4.4.1** The main purpose of planning is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.<sup>(26)</sup> The government has placed the presumption in favour of sustainable development at the heart of its approach to planning.<sup>(27)</sup>

**4.4.2** The government has issued advice that a model policy should be included within Local Plans which reiterates the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

**4.4.3** The government's view of what constitutes sustainable development is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. This plan interprets the national guidance into the local area, and in doing so defines what constitutes sustainable development for the borough. Further context is given for Maidenhead town centre by the Maidenhead Town Centre Area Action Plan.

**4.4.4** The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where national guidance suggests development should be restricted.<sup>(28)</sup> The borough is subject to a large number of designations where national policy indicates that development should be restricted. These include sites protected by the Birds and Habitat Directives,<sup>(29)</sup> Sites of Special Scientific Interest, land designated as Green Belt, designated heritage assets<sup>(30)</sup> and locations at risk of flooding. These designations are shown on the policies map.

**4.4.5** The preferred policy approach below utilises the government's model policy with appropriate amendments to reflect the local context and to increase clarity as to what national policy does and does not require. It will be delivered through decisions on applications for planning permission, which will be taken in line with the considerations set out in the policy, where the starting point is the development plan.

### Statement

The policy below is presented in a fully worked up form, unlike most of the other policies in the plan. This reflects the fact that it restates and interprets national guidance and its inclusion is mandatory.

## Preferred Policy Option BLP 1

### Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

A positive approach to considering development proposals will be taken that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework - except in circumstances listed in paragraph 14, including: sites protected under Bird and Habitat Directives (e.g. the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area), Sites of Special Scientific Interest, land designated as Green Belt, areas of Local Green Space, designated heritage assets and locations at risk of flooding.

26 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

27 National Planning Policy Framework, paras. 11-16.

28 National Planning Policy Framework, para. 14 and footnote 9.

29 Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas.

30 Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Registered Parks and Gardens, Conservation Areas.

Where appropriate, the Council will work proactively with applicants to jointly find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Planning applications that accord with the policies in the development plan (including policies in neighbourhood plans where relevant) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Proposed development that conflicts with the development plan will be refused, unless other material considerations are sufficiently significant to indicate otherwise. Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then permission will be granted unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking into account whether:

- a. Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or
- b. Specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.

## Options

**4.4.6** It is mandatory to include a policy presumption in favour of sustainable development in a development plan. Options considered were to include the government's model policy in its original form or to make small changes to reflect the specific characteristics of the borough. It was considered that such small changes would enhance the clarity of the policy and make it easier to implement, so this option was pursued. No other policy options were considered.

### Question 5

#### Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Are there any aspects of Policy BLP1 on which you wish to comment?

## 4.5 Community-led development

**4.5.1** Community-led proposals are those that are driven by local residents, rather than the council or commercial interests. The council wishes to encourage residents to directly engage in the planning of their communities and will support in principle community-led proposals which meet an identified need and have the agreement of residents.

**4.5.2** Engagement will be through the medium of neighbourhood plans. A neighbourhood plan is a community-led framework for guiding the future development, regeneration and conservation of an area. It is about guiding and shaping development, not constraining the delivery of development in that area. Neighbourhood plans are written by community representatives.

**4.5.3** Community-led proposals may be delivered on land where development is not normally permitted, for example in the Green Belt. In certain circumstances it may be appropriate for a small element of open market development to be provided as part of a community-led scheme. Where proposed, the need for the open market development must be demonstrated through financial appraisals. It must also be demonstrated that the open market element has not significantly increased the sales land value.

## Preferred Policy Option BLP 2

### Community-Led Development

The preferred policy approach is to support community-led development proposals where:

- a. The proposal has demonstrable local community support;
- b. The proposal is aligned with the strategic needs and priorities set out in this plan; and
- c. The proposal is in general conformity when assessed against the policies in this plan taken as a whole.

An element of open market development delivered as part of a community-led development will only be acceptable where:

- a. It is demonstrated through a financial appraisal that it is essential to enable the delivery of the community benefit and does not significantly increase the sales land value; and
- b. The community benefit is significantly greater than would be delivered on an equivalent open market site.

### Options

**4.5.4** The council is committed to enabling and assisting neighbourhood planning and recognises that, as part of this, development proposals may emerge that have strong community support but are outside the scope of this plan. It was considered appropriate to offer policy support to those proposals. Any neighbourhood plan must be in general conformity with the strategic planning policies of the area, and the inclusion of this policy would make that process run more smoothly and enhance the value and utility of neighbourhood plans to their communities. No other policy options were considered.

### Question 6

#### Community Led Development

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option BLP2?





## **QUALITY OF PLACE**

**5.0.1** The quality of a place is not just about how an area looks, but is also about how it feels and how it is used. New development is one factor that establishes the quality of a place. Development can help build community cohesion and define local distinctiveness, or conversely it can harm these assets by not fully considering the impacts or opportunities that exist within a scheme. Development should be a long-lasting feature within an area, so it is important to get it right.

**5.0.2** These factors make it important to ensure that the quality of our towns, villages, hamlets, spaces, and communities are retained and that any new development contributes to the local values. This does not mean that change is not welcomed. Rather, by responding positively to its surroundings, development can enhance the look and feel of our area and improve how it functions.

### **5.1 Design**

**5.1.1** The preferred policy approach is to ensure that all development, redevelopment and conversion demonstrates design excellence and responds positively to its context. This will result in the borough's places remaining distinctive, preserving important features and assets that contribute to the positive look and feel of an area. Development in the borough should create safe, secure and pleasant environments both inside and outside of buildings, with careful consideration to the way people use the area. These factors will not only improve quality of life, but will also attract business and visitors to the borough.

**5.1.2** Delivering good design is a key element to this plan and is necessary to ensure that development in the borough is high quality. There are many different principles that go into delivering good design including visual factors, functionality, sustainability and local distinctiveness.

**5.1.3** Design of any scheme should be a response to the context of a proposal both in terms of where it is located and what it is attempting to deliver. "Off the rack" designs are rarely suitable as they deliver development that fails to be distinctive and does not help establish a sense of place. Well designed schemes should look to make the most of existing buildings, greenery, topography, views and other features both on and off the site as an opportunity to develop a unique and beautiful scheme. The local importance of design and the need to respond to an area is something that is very important to our residents as demonstrated in the Cookham Village Design Statement and emerging neighbourhood plans. Proposals should be designed to complement local character and, in areas where character can be seen to be low quality, development should seek to raise the standard.

**5.1.4** The relationship with neighbouring properties should be considered to avoid conflict through proposals that are overbearing, reduce privacy or may harm outlook or light levels. Imaginative layouts can help reduce the impact of a scheme on neighbours and can create high quality spaces that are both pleasant and functional. Incorporating basic principles included in Secured by Design, such as ensuring that private and public spaces are clearly defined and that pedestrian routes do not become isolated, will assist in making spaces feel safe.

**5.1.5** Access to, through and around a scheme should be carefully thought through so that users will feel safe and will not face any unnecessary impediment. Strong landscaping schemes should be included in all development proposals as they can help to connect a scheme to the wider area and can soften the impact of new development. High standards of sustainability will be required in line with modern standards provided in other documents.

**5.1.6** The Maidenhead Town Centre Area Action Plan (AAP) identifies two areas where tall buildings are considered suitable in principle: the area around the railway station, and; south of Bad Godesberg Way. A maximum height of 12 storeys (40m) is suggested based on the height of existing tall buildings. Maidenhead town centre provides an opportunity to create more dynamic contrasts in building heights. Elsewhere, contrasting building heights should generally be avoided. To assist the rejuvenation and optimise the use of land in the town centre, we propose to introduce greater flexibility than currently outlined in the AAP, allowing proposals across the town centre to be judged on their individual merits whilst still ensuring that sensitive areas such as the Conservation Area are protected.

**5.1.7** The council will view favourably those proposals that have incorporated local views throughout their design. Neighbourhood Plans may wish to set guidance for what level of community engagement is sought for different developments to be appropriate for the area. The plan will set out more details of how each of the design principles in the preferred policy approach below will be applied.

## Preferred Policy Option PLA 1

### Design

The preferred policy approach is to achieve high quality design in buildings, spaces, and connections with the wider community, by having regard to the following design principles:

- Local character and context
- Views
- Appearance
- Relationships with neighbouring buildings or areas
- Movement and access
- Legibility or ease of understanding or navigation
- Public realm
- Parking
- Landscaping and amenity
- Materials
- Interiors
- Community safety
- Storage
- Sustainability

Within Maidenhead town centre, greater flexibility on building heights will be permitted. Tall buildings will be supported where they demonstrate exceptional high quality design and do not cause unacceptable impacts.

Developments should be designed in partnership with:

1. the council through pre-application advice;
2. the local community through engagement methods appropriate to the proposal or in line with standards set out in other documents; and
3. design panels as appropriate for major schemes.

## Options

**5.1.8** Good design was considered fundamental to proper planning and the achievement of sustainable communities, so no other options were considered during the formulation of this policy.

### Question 7

#### Design

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option PLA1?

### Question 8

#### Maidenhead town centre

Do you support the greater flexibility in heights across Maidenhead town centre, provided that safeguards are put in place to protect sensitive areas such as the Conservation Area?

## 5.2 Townscape and landscape

**5.2.1** The borough has a varied landscape and townscape which contribute to its distinctiveness and its attraction to residents, businesses and visitors. Retaining this distinctiveness is essential especially in high quality areas of townscape or landscape. In areas of lower value, improvement should be sought where possible in all development proposals.

**5.2.2** A variety of character types in both urban and rural areas each have their own defining features and attributes that contribute to the distinctiveness and attractiveness of the area. Within each area of distinct character there are individual opportunities and issues that should be central to approaches taken in development proposals.

**5.2.3** The borough has carried out a detailed review of the character of its rural and urban areas. A Townscape Assessment was produced for all of the urban areas that are not within the boundaries of the Green Belt.<sup>(31)</sup> Similarly, a Landscape Character Assessment was produced to provide a starting point for considering the character attributes locally for schemes in areas within the Green Belt, including villages and hamlets that are in the Green Belt.<sup>(32)</sup>

**5.2.4** In urban areas the Townscape Assessment identifies the character types across the borough. It should be used in development proposals to identify the character attributes of both the immediate and wider area. Development proposals should demonstrate how they integrate with the local area making the most of features and contributing to the specific characteristics, and making the most of any opportunities that exist to enhance the local character.

31 Detailed Townscape Assessment maps can be found at [http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/pp\\_townscape\\_assessment.htm](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/pp_townscape_assessment.htm).

32 Detailed Landscape Character Assessment maps can be found at [http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/pp\\_landscape\\_character\\_assessment.htm](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/pp_landscape_character_assessment.htm).

**5.2.5** The Landscape Character Assessment identifies a number of character areas which are formed by the nature and geology of the area. It should be used to demonstrate an understanding of the special qualities of the landscape area, and how these are taken account of in development proposals.

**5.2.6** The preferred policy approach below requires development proposals will be required, through design and access statements, to demonstrate how a proposal takes into account the character of its surroundings and responds positively to it through proposals. Positive features and views should be retained and opportunities to improve the distinctive character through development should be delivered.

## Preferred Policy Option PLA 2

### Townscape and Landscape

The preferred policy approach is for development proposals to respond to the local context, retaining important attributes and where possible enhancing the quality and character of the local area.

Using the Townscape Assessment, development proposals in the urban areas will maintain and, where appropriate, enhance the local character. This will be in terms of both the immediate surroundings and streetscene, and at the wider settlement or character type area, and will respond positively to defining features.

Using the Landscape Character Assessment, development proposals in rural areas will maintain and enhance the quality, distinctive local characteristics and features that contribute positively to landscape character and rural views.

### Options

**5.2.7** Other options considered for this policy included whether or not to have a separate policy on landscape and townscape character, or whether instead to address the matter as part of the general design policy. It was considered that the character of an area was a sufficiently important and defining element of the development context to warrant its own policy. In addition, the general design policy could become over-complicated if it were to include specific requirements for addressing townscape issues. If that was done, the general policy would become unwieldy and difficult to understand and apply. For these reasons, it was chosen to have a bespoke policy on townscape and landscape.

### Question 9

#### Townscape and Landscape

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option PLA2?

## 5.3 River Thames corridor

**5.3.1** The River Thames flows through the Borough for 25 miles making a unique contribution to the environment and forming one of the Borough's most significant landscape features. It includes stretches of great scenic character, for example steep wooded slopes between Bisham and Maidenhead, and

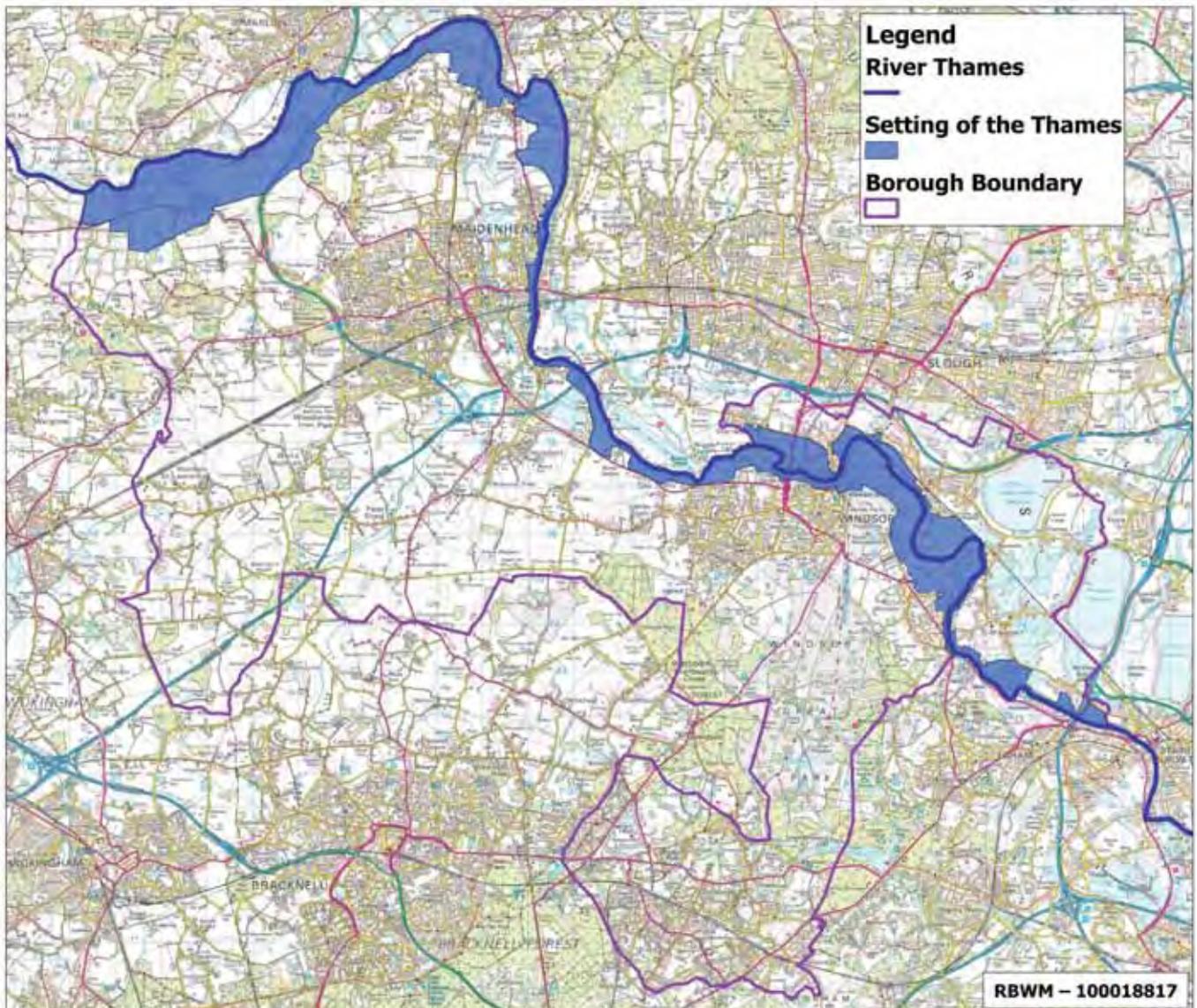
extensive floodplain valleys such as around Hurley. It also has stretches with deep historic associations, often with national importance, such as in Windsor, Eton and Ankerwycke. The River Thames is therefore one of the borough's most important natural and cultural assets, providing extensive leisure, ecological, and economical benefits. It is essential to ensure that this importance and attraction is preserved whilst welcoming the opportunities the river brings for positive change.

**5.3.2** This policy applies to development of all uses and scales that would have an impact on the River Thames and its setting. This includes the valley sides and crests which form a distinctive topographical feature, and the flat open floodplain where change could have a significant impact on views from the river. In built-up areas, the setting may in places be defined simply by the line of buildings closest to the river; but in other places could comprise a wider area including entire villages. Similarly, historic buildings and their settings that have a visual or historic link with the river, for example Windsor Castle and Eton College, would also form part of the river setting.

**5.3.3** The Landscape Character Assessment identifies landscape character areas including important aspects linked to the river, for example flat open floodplain, long distance views and views of historic buildings, diverse river edge habitat including linear woodland and quiet, remote landscapes. In many areas it is identified that the relationship with the Thames is central to the character areas, as a key reason for how and why these areas were developed.

**5.3.4** The quality of the building and spaces alongside the river makes an important contribution to the borough's environment and enjoyment of the river. Particular care will be taken to ensure developments within the setting of the Thames complement the distinctive character of the water frontage and important views. The extent of the setting of the Thames can be seen in figure 7.

Figure 7 Setting of the Thames



Existing riverside access will be maintained and opportunities examined to extend access to the river and adjoining sites. River-related services, businesses, and infrastructure, make an important functional contribution to the character and use of the River Thames. The council supports sites associated with river-related activities and employment. Opportunities for generating renewable energy will also be supported in principle, provided that they do not adversely impact on the River Thames Corridor. The ecological value of the river will be maintained and enhanced.

The preferred policy approach below promotes the healthy growth in the use of the River Thames for communities, wildlife, leisure and business in ways that are compatible with its character and setting and ecology, and is in line with the objectives of these plans. The council will work with adjoining authorities and other partner organisations where needed for wider strategies or projects.

### Preferred Policy Option PLA 3

#### Thames Riverside Corridor

The preferred policy approach is to conserve and enhance the special character and setting of the River Thames, whilst protecting and promoting appropriate river-related economic, leisure and sporting activities.

Where appropriate, development proposals within the River Thames Corridor will be required to:

1. Protect, and where possible enhance, views of and from the river;
2. Meet the principles of high quality design set out in this plan, having special regard to the riverside setting and water frontage character, and considering views of proposals from all public vantage points, including from the river;
3. Protect and conserve landscape features, buildings, structures, bridges, archaeological remains associated with the Thames and its history and heritage;
4. Enhance public access for riverside walking and river corridor cycling;
5. Maintain tree cover and riverbank vegetation, and conserve or improve the ecological value of the area including its role as a wildlife network. Where appropriate, opportunities for the restoration and enhancement of natural elements of the river environment should be incorporated within the design of new developments.

Appropriate proposals for sport, leisure, and river-related employment, infrastructure, and renewable energy generation will be supported where they meet the above criteria and where they will not obstruct access along or to the river for any users.

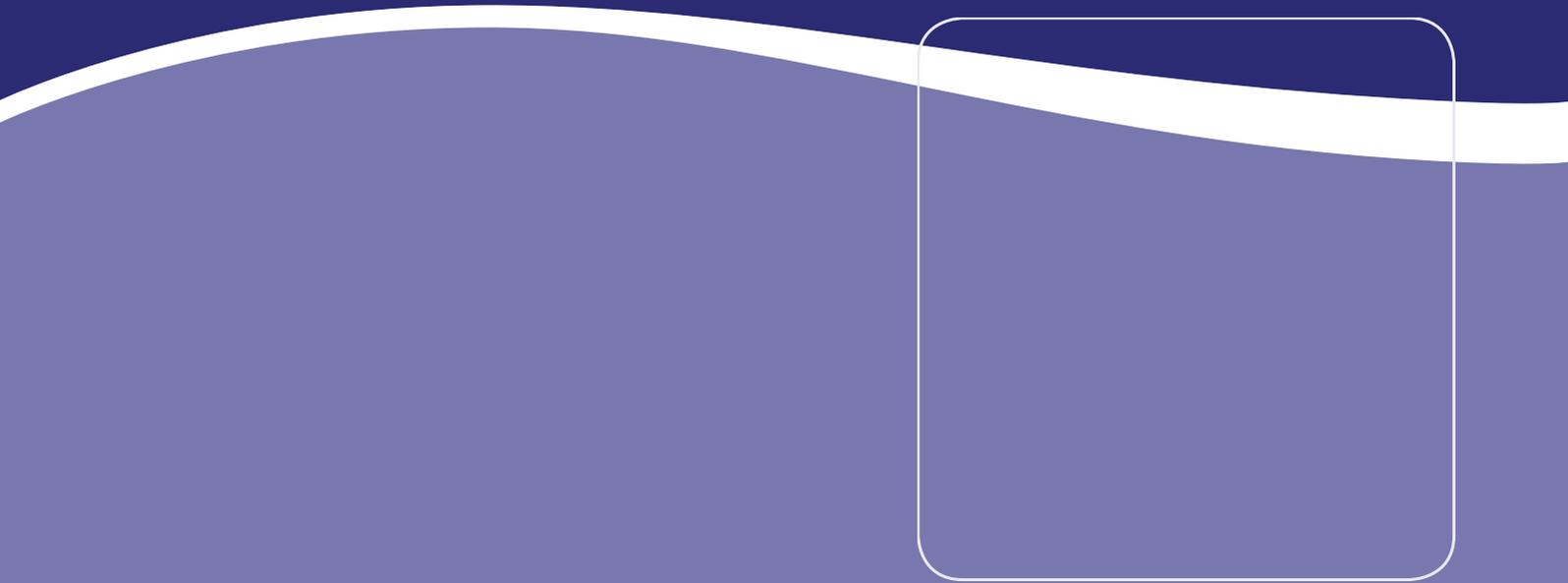
#### Options

Options considered for this policy related to the extent of protection to be given to the setting of the Thames, and the extent of the area to which the policy refers. The spatial extent was defined with reference to existing policy and included input from local representatives where appropriate. The extent of protection offered was based on a policy adopted some years ago by the council, which has been seen to work well in protecting and conserving the qualities of the setting of the Thames.

#### Question 10

##### Thames Riverside Corridor

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option PLA3?



## **Green Belt and Countryside Character**

**6**

## **GREEN BELT AND COUNTRYSIDE CHARACTER**

**6.0.1** The whole of the borough, with the exception of the larger settlements, lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt (approximately 83% of the borough's extent).

**6.0.2** Much of the Green Belt is used for agriculture, forestry, open land and recreational uses, however it also includes a number of small villages and hamlets, education establishments and other institutional uses, employment premises and mineral workings. The plan's spatial strategy is to build upon the existing pattern of towns and villages which are excluded from the Green Belt. These are regarded as the most sustainable locations for development by virtue of their existing access to services and facilities, and the availability of previously developed land.

**6.0.3** The council will continue to restrict development in the Green Belt as set out in national policy. Where development is deemed appropriate, it should be located and designed to minimise any impact on openness and countryside character.

**6.0.4** Previous local plan consultations have indicated that, Green Belt aside, a significant part of the borough is valued not only for its open countryside but also for its natural beauty, wildlife and historical and cultural associations. The plan seeks to manage development pressures so as to protect and enhance the distinctive character and heritage of its settlements and the countryside that surrounds them. One key way to achieving this is by steering growth towards the urban areas as indicated above, but also by promoting a strong and vibrant countryside character. This is consistent with national policy<sup>(33)</sup> that promotes economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity.

### **6.1 Green Belt**

**6.1.1** The borough takes great pride in being described as the first countryside west of London along the M4 corridor and has its own local Green Belt objectives:

1. To protect the Green Belt.
2. To safeguard the open and rural character of the countryside and to protect it from inappropriate development.
3. To enhance the quality of the Green Belt while providing opportunities for appropriate sport and leisure activities.
4. To encourage the re-use of surplus permanent and substantial agricultural and existing buildings for uses appropriate to the countryside.
5. To preserve and enhance existing gaps between settlements.

**6.1.2** National policy attaches great weight to green belts and advises that, when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the green belt. Very special circumstances to justify development will not exist unless the potential harm to the green belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

**6.1.3** The aim of the preferred policy approach is to preserve the openness and purposes of the Green Belt. National policy<sup>(34)</sup> advises that changes to green belt boundaries should only be made in exceptional circumstances, through the preparation or review of the Local Plan. The general extent of the Green Belt is shown on the Key Diagram and will be maintained and supported through the plan's strategy and settlement policy.

<sup>33</sup> National Planning Policy Framework, para. 28.

<sup>34</sup> National Planning Policy Framework

## Preferred Policy Option GBC 1

### Green Belt

The Metropolitan Green Belt will be defined in the Proposals Map. The preferred policy approach is to maintain and support the Green Belt in order to safeguard the open and rural character of the Borough's countryside and to protect it from inappropriate development.

The boundaries of existing Recognised Settlements washed over in the Green Belt are to be maintained in order to identify the limits of any infilling. The council will determine whether local exceptional circumstances exist to warrant minor changes to these boundaries in neighbourhood plans.

Six existing Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt will be retained together with a continued approach for infilling and complete or partial redevelopment.

In areas excluded from the Green Belt, but conspicuous when viewed from it, development proposals will only be supported where the proposal would respect or improve the visual amenities and openness of the Green Belt through scale, form, siting, design, materials and landscaping.

## Question 11

### Green Belt

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option GBC1?

**6.1.4** National policy sets out that, once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances, through the preparation or review of the Local Plan. The case for changes to be made is being considered through the preparation of the emerging strategy. The Edge of Settlement Analysis (2013) looks at the potential to make allocations for development, including for housing. The Analysis will make final conclusions following public consultation and further technical work. Potential amendments to the Green Belt boundary through the Local Plan process will help to then protect the Green Belt from the risk of further development for the rest of the plan period.

**6.1.5** Land on the edge of Ascot High Street and land at Little Farm Nursery, Maidenhead are both identified as areas where development in the Green Belt would be supported to achieve specific community benefits. The rejuvenation of Ascot High Street to create a community hub through mixed development, including shopping and housing, has been identified through the emerging Ascot, Sunninghill and Sunningdale Neighbourhood Plan. The land at Little Farm Nursery is suggested as an opportunity to provide enhanced sporting facilities for the Maidenhead area. Ascot High Street is proposed to be removed from the Green Belt to allow for the regeneration scheme, whilst Little Farm Nursery would remain in the Green Belt.

**6.1.6** In addition, land north of Ockwells Road, (an area of undeveloped land) lies adjacent to Green Belt land and is considered to be within the setting of Ockwells Manor. In light of a restrictive covenant held by the National Trust which requires their consent to allow development, it is logical and appropriate to include this area within the Green Belt.

**6.1.7** Several adjustments to the Green Belt boundary have been proposed where inconsistencies are evident. These include instances where a boundary needs to reflect more readily the edge of the built-up area, or to provide a more rational and defensible boundary. These amendments include additional land being designated as Green Belt. Boundary amendments are listed in Appendix B together with map references.

### Question 12

#### Minor Adjustments to the Green Belt

Do you support or object to any of the minor adjustments to the Green Belt as listed in Appendix B? If so, which area(s) and why?

### Recognised Settlements

**6.1.8** There are a number of smaller settlements within the Green Belt which have shown in the past to have the ability to absorb limited amounts of residential infilling development without harming the overall character of the Green Belt. These "Recognised Settlements" are washed over by the Green Belt<sup>(35)</sup> and are villages to which national planning policy on limited infilling in villages, and limited affordable housing for local community needs, would apply. These places will be identified on the policies map as "Recognised Settlements washed over by the Green Belt"<sup>(36)</sup> and are also listed in **Box 1**.

**6.1.9** Whilst Recognised Settlements are a strategic matter, the preferred approach is not to seek to amend any boundaries of Recognised Settlements from those defined in the previous Local Plan. Neighbourhood Plans are considered best placed to consider whether the boundary of a Recognised Settlement remains relevant and so the preferred policy approach supports the correction of minor local inconsistencies in any Recognised Settlement boundary. Within the context of reviewing boundaries of Recognised Settlements, Neighbourhood Plans should consider the incorporation of recent development and the incorporation of strong and permanent physical features as a revised boundary where a current boundary may be less well defined.

### Box 1

#### Recognised Settlements

Bisham (Village) and Bisham (Marlow Bridge); Bray; Burchetts Green; Cheapside; Fifield; Holyport (Holyport Lodge) and Holyport (Village); Horton; Hurley; Hythe End; Knowl Hill; Littlewick Green; Shurlock Row; Waltham St Lawrence; Warren Row; White Waltham.

35 For the avoidance of doubt, Recognised Settlements are washed over settlements in the Green Belt within the context of National Planning Policy Framework, para 89 (bullet point 5).

36 See National Planning Policy Framework, para. 86.

## 6.2 Countryside Character

**6.2.1** The plan seeks to protect and enhance the distinctive character and heritage of its settlements and the countryside that surrounds them, by steering growth towards the urban areas and also by promoting a strong and vibrant countryside character. Some areas of the borough's Green Belt are not countryside, and likewise there are rural areas and villages in the borough which are not in the Green Belt. The Preferred Policy Option GBC2 sets out additional, complementary principles to those strategic elements of Preferred Policy Option GBC1, to ensure that development seeks to maintain the open and rural character of the countryside, and that Green Belt and other rural areas help to promote a living, working and vibrant countryside.

**6.2.2** The approach in preferred policy option GBC2, below, translates five key countryside principles that are important to the delivery of the plan and that sit alongside and complement the plan's Green Belt objectives:

- The important role of the Metropolitan Green Belt as the first significant open space west of London;
- The protection and enhancement of the environmental quality of the borough;
- The conservation and enhancement of the borough's natural beauty and cultural heritage;
- The support and enhancement of people's understanding and enjoyment of the countryside; and
- The promotion of economic and social health and well-being of local communities.

**6.2.3** Whilst striving for greater versatility in the rural areas of the borough, the preferred policy approach sets out a number of key tests. For example, to ensure that proposals for development in the countryside are appropriate to their location, small in scale and do not detract from the character of the area. Care should be taken over the scale, siting, design and materials employed in any new buildings so as to limit the impact on the character of the countryside.

**6.2.4** The policy also draws together key activities that the council wishes to support in the countryside; its purpose being to manage general change within the countryside. Suitable rural enterprise schemes in appropriate locations can help to support local communities and agriculture, and other rural pursuits can assist in maintaining rural character.

**6.2.5** Separate preferred policy options in the Plan deal with re-use or replacement of non-residential buildings (GBC4), rural tourism (TM1), rural housing (HOU5), infilling within villages (GBC3) and limited infilling or redevelopment of previously developed sites (GBC6).

### Preferred Policy Option GBC 2

#### Countryside Character

Proposals for development in the countryside will need to respect the character of the countryside taking into account a number of principles:

- Development should be located where it would be viewed against existing built form and sited adjacent to existing settlements, making the best use of existing community facilities
- The scale of proposed development should be appropriate to its location
- Design and layout should respect the character and appearance of the countryside and landscape setting

- Should not lead to a level of activity which is incompatible with the rural character
- The best and most versatile agricultural land and woodland is protected from development
- Should not lead to unacceptable harm to residential amenity.

Communities will be encouraged to identify important characteristics of their rural places and to develop suitable policies to support the countryside through neighbourhood plans or village design statements.

The following types of development in the countryside will be supported:

- the development and diversification of agriculture;
- the re-use or replacement of non-residential buildings (refer to the criteria set out in preferred policy approach GBC4)
- rural tourism and leisure development that benefits businesses, communities and visitors in rural areas
- limited infilling in villages, and limited affordable housing for local community needs (refer to the criteria set out in preferred policy approach GBC3)
- limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites (refer to the criteria set out in preferred policy approach GBC6).

Proposals for significant infrastructure within the countryside will be supported where very special circumstances can be demonstrated.

### Question 13

#### Countryside Character

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option GBC2?

## 6.3 New Residential Development in the Green Belt

**6.3.1** The acceptability of additional development in the Green Belt is guided by national policy<sup>(37)</sup> where there is scope for a replacement of an existing building in the same use, or the extension or alteration of a building.

## Preferred Policy Option GBC 3

### New Residential Development in the Green Belt

The preferred policy approach is to support new residential development within the Green Belt where:

- the proposal relates to infilling within the boundaries of a Recognised Settlement as defined on the proposals map
- there is a proven need for a new dwelling to be provided ancillary to an existing, agricultural or forestry use on the site and where it can be demonstrated that the dwelling has to be located on the site and no suitable existing buildings could be converted or extended for this purpose
- the proposal relates to the creation of a subordinate dwelling (annex)
- the proposal relates to the rebuilding or one-for-one replacement of an existing habitable dwelling of permanent construction where the residential use is not seasonal or occasional and which has not been abandoned
- the proposal relates to affordable housing on rural exception sites (refer to the criteria set out in preferred policy option HOU5)
- the proposal is for the reuse of a building (refer to the criteria set out in preferred policy option GBC4);
- proposals are identified in neighbourhood plans.

Support for proposals for the extension or alteration of an existing residential building will be given where they would not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.

Proposals to extend residential curtilages in or into the Green Belt will only be supported where the proposal would be entirely contained within the boundary of a Recognised Settlement or where it can be demonstrated that no unacceptable effect will be caused to the openness of the Green Belt or the rural character of the landscape.

### Question 14

#### New Residential Development in the Green Belt

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option GBC3?

## 6.4 The Re-use and/or replacement of Non-Residential Buildings in the Green Belt

**6.4.1** National policy<sup>(38)</sup> states that the extension or alteration of a building (in the same use), or the replacement of a building, subject to key tests, is not inappropriate development in the Green Belt. To apply this effectively, the preferred policy approach balances the need to control the re-use and replacement of non-residential buildings in the Green Belt, with the Plan's objective to maintain a buoyant and broad-based economy in the rural parts of the Borough.

**6.4.2** The council will impose such conditions as may be appropriate to ensure that the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land within it are maintained. This may include withdrawal of permitted development rights.

**6.4.3** The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (England) Order 2013 (GPDO)<sup>(39)</sup> permits existing buildings used for agricultural purposes to be used for purposes supporting rural growth. This is a temporary provision which is due to expire on 30<sup>th</sup> May 2016.

### Preferred Policy Option GBC 4

#### Reuse and Replacement of Non-Residential Buildings in the Green Belt

The preferred policy approach is to support the reuse or replacement of buildings in the Green Belt subject to a number of criteria relating to:

- When the building was substantially completed (as a guide, at least 4 years before the date of the application)
- Whether the building is of permanent and substantial construction and its form is in keeping with its surroundings, would not require extensive reconstruction or a material increase in size or scale
- Whether the use proposed would have a materially greater impact than the present or last approved lawful use on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land in it.

A reuse of a building for business and industrial uses should be appropriate in size and viability to agricultural units or buildings on the farm. The policy approach is for 'appropriateness' to be tested against the context of the locality as justified in a farm management plan.

### Question 15

#### Reuse and Replacement of Non-Residential Buildings in the Green Belt

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option GBC4?

<sup>38</sup> National Planning Policy Framework

<sup>39</sup> Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (England) Order 2013: Class M: Development consisting of a change of use of a building and any land within its curtilage from use as an agricultural building to a flexible use falling within either Class A1 (shops), Class A2 (financial and professional services), Class A3 (restaurants and cafés), Class B1 (business), Class B8 (storage or distribution), Class C1 (hotels) or Class D2 (assembly and leisure) of the Schedule to the Use Classes Order.

## 6.5 Equestrian Development in the Green Belt

**6.5.1** Through consultation, residents have expressed concerns about the proliferation of equestrian establishments and how this might compromise the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land in it.

**6.5.2** The purpose of the preferred policy approach below is to guide equestrian development towards proposals which maintain the rural character and local distinctiveness of the borough and to set size limitations and criteria within which proposals will be supported in order to maintain the openness of the Green Belt.

### Preferred Policy Option GBC 5

#### Equestrian Development in the Green Belt

Equestrian development in the Green Belt will be supported whilst ensuring there is no over-development. The preferred policy approach will support proposals for new or enlarged equestrian establishments, including large private establishments involving the overnight accommodation of horses subject to a number of criteria relating to:

- The presence of any existing residential accommodation on or near the site
- The number of existing and permitted intensive equestrian establishments within an area
- Traffic implications
- The availability of suitable bridleways or other riding land close by

Small scale private equestrian related development will also be supported subject to a number of criteria:

- The availability of grazing land (at least 0.5 hectares per horse)
- Limits being placed on the numbers of stables and field shelters, tack and feed rooms per 0.5 hectares (up to a maximum of 4 stables on any site)
- The need to minimise the visual impact of any proposed buildings
- The availability of suitable bridleways or other riding land close by.

### Question 16

#### Equestrian Development in the Green Belt

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option GBC5?

## 6.6 Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt

**6.6.1** National policy<sup>(40)</sup> advises that infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites, whether redundant or in continued use, which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land within it than the existing development, is appropriate development. It does not include a "major developed sites" policy that was detailed in previously guidance.<sup>(41)</sup> Previously, sites that were considered substantial and in continuing use or be redundant were recognised in national guidance, firstly as institutions standing in extensive grounds and then latterly as major developed sites.

**6.6.2** The council has for many years applied a policy approach which identified key sites in the Green Belt, firstly through a policy that covered redundant hospital sites and sites in further or higher education, and then latterly through a policy of major developed sites that was incorporated into the current Local Plan (Alterations adopted 2003).

**6.6.3** Thus, whilst recognising the changed approach to infilling or partial or complete redevelopment in the Green Belt in national policy, the six major developed sites in the Green Belt that were identified in the previous Local Plan, continue in this plan to be specifically identified. The continuation of this approach, and the inclusion of defined development envelopes of the sites where infilling development or partial or complete redevelopment is acceptable in principle, continues to allow organic growth and change within the sites.

**6.6.4** Of the six sites, Berkshire College of Agriculture, Beaumont College, Imperial College and Legoland all continue to aspire to rejuvenate and redevelop their sites during the plan period. The preferred policy approach will therefore assist by allowing reasonable development activity within defined site development envelopes. In the case of Heatherwood Hospital and Sunningdale Park (formerly the Civil Service College), these sites have been identified as being available for comprehensive redevelopment during the plan period. As such a suitable policy context continues to be valid and the preferred policy approach is framed accordingly.

### Preferred Policy Option GBC 6

#### Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt

At the following six major developed sites in the Green Belt, appropriate planning applications for infilling development or partial or complete redevelopment will be supported:

- i. Berkshire College of Agriculture, Burchetts Green;
- ii. Beaumont Estate, Old Windsor;
- iii. Legoland, Windsor;
- iv. Imperial College, Silwood Park, Sunninghill;
- v. Heatherwood Hospital, Ascot (Allocated for housing. Refer to Policy HOU2.)

40 National Planning Policy Framework

41 Planning Policy Guidance Note 2: Green Belts (1995) was cancelled by the replacement NPPF.

vi. Sunningdale Park, Sunningdale. (Allocated for housing. Refer to Policy HOU2.)

Planning permission for development within the defined development envelopes of these sites will be supported where such proposals are in accordance with individual site policies which will be included in an appendix in the plan.

## Options

**6.6.5** This chapter of the plan sits within a strong national policy presumption in favour of conserving and protecting the green belt and countryside, imposing strict restrictions on the type and scale of development possible. The borough derives much of its character and identity from its green belt, and it is considered entirely appropriate to apply national policy at a borough level. Although no longer part of national policy, the previous approach of defining major developed sites in the green belt is considered to have worked well in the borough and to still present an appropriate policy context at a local level. Hence this policy approach is continued in the preferred options. To ensure protection of the borough's green belt, and compliance with national policy, no policy options are presented for the policies in this chapter.

### Question 17

#### Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option GBC6?





## **HOUSING**

**7.0.1** Planning supports the provision of housing, helping to ensure homes are available to meet future needs. Deciding the scale, distribution and type of new homes that are to be provided in the future are amongst the most significant issues that the Borough Local Plan must address.

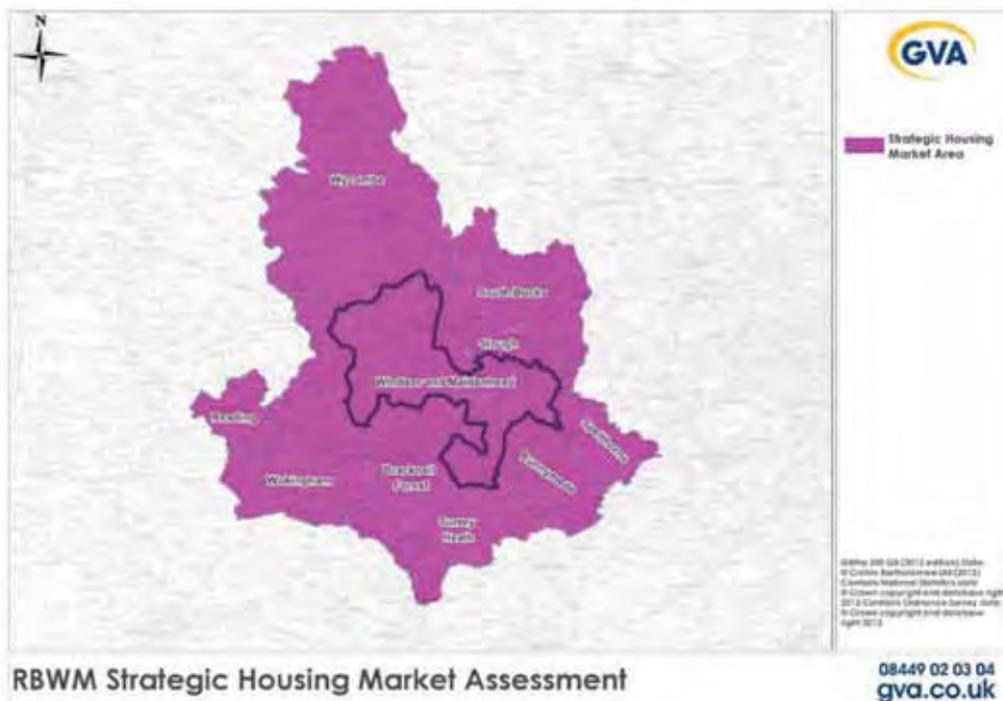
**7.0.2** The strategy for meeting the borough's housing needs has many elements. It is vital to make the best and most efficient use of previously developed land so as to minimise the amount of new land required for house building. This can include the redevelopment of existing sites at higher densities, changing the use of some redundant employment sites, encouraging flats above shops and new housing development in town centre opportunity areas, and development on other previously developed windfall sites. Other strategies run in parallel to the planning system to maximise the supply of housing, for instance it is important to bring empty homes back into use.

### **7.1 Amount and distribution of housing**

**7.1.1** The National Planning Policy Framework requires an objective assessment of the future need for housing over a functional housing market area - an area which reflects the key functional relationships between places where people live and work. The assessment should identify the scale and mix of housing that meets the household and population projections, taking account of migration and demographic change.

**7.1.2** The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Strategic Housing Market Assessment (RBWM SHMA) undertaken in 2013 concludes that whilst the borough is located within an area of significant and complex interrelationships, with no dominant town and substantial flows to and from London, for the purposes of strategic planning, the functional housing market area should be taken to comprise either in part or as a whole of the surrounding neighbouring local authorities and Reading Borough Council (see Figure 8).

**Figure 8**



**7.1.3** Based on projected demographic change using available data, the RBWM SHMA concludes that almost 100,000 new households could be formed in the housing market area by 2029 of which the change within the borough would contribute around 12,000. This translates into an annual increase of around 5,500 for the housing market area and 700 for the borough<sup>(42)</sup>.

**7.1.4** The National Planning Policy Framework requires local authorities to meet the full objectively assessed need for housing unless the impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the NPPF as a whole or specific policies in the NPPF indicate that development should be restricted. This is against the background of positively seeking opportunities to meet need.

**7.1.5** The borough is subject to a number of designations where the NPPF indicates that development should be restricted. These include the Green Belt, sites designated for their international or national importance to nature conservation, areas of historic importance and areas liable to flooding. All of these limit the availability of land for development.

**7.1.6** We have identified a deliverable capacity for an additional 7,415 dwellings across the borough in areas where the NPPF advises that development is not restricted or where redevelopment of existing sites would be supported. This equates to 390 dwellings per annum between 2012/13 and 2029/30. Table 2 and Table 3 summarise the various sources which make up this figure and its distribution across the borough.

**Table 2**

<b>Housing supply from areas where development is not restricted 2011/12 to 2029/30</b>	
Source of supply	Number of dwellings (net)
Housing completions	370
Housing commitments at March 2013	1,866
Housing allocations in the Maidenhead Town Centre Area Action Plan <sup>(43)</sup>	733
Housing allocations proposed in Policy HOU2 of the Borough Local Plan <sup>(44)</sup>	2,237
Housing provision from other identified sites	431
Housing provision from small sites <sup>(45)</sup>	1,778
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,415</b>

42 To put this into context, the South East Plan required the provision of 6920 additional dwellings over the period 2006-2026 (an average of 346 dwellings per year).

43 The total supply of housing within Opportunity Areas defined in the Maidenhead Town Centre Area Action Plan less sites granted planning permission and counted under completions or commitments.

44 The total supply of housing from sites proposed to be allocated under Policy HOU2 of the Borough Local Plan less sites granted planning permission and counted under completions or commitments

45 Provision from small sites is based on past trends.

Table 3

Distribution of housing supply from areas where development is not restricted 2011/12 to 2029/30	
Area <sup>(46)</sup>	Number of dwellings (net)
Maidenhead and Cox Green	3,476
Windsor	1,784
Bisham	2
Bray	201
Cookham	166
Datchet	30
Eton	96
Horton and Wraysbury	72
Hurley, Shottesbrooke, Waltham St Lawrence and White Waltham	269
Old Windsor	73
Sunninghill and Ascot, and Sunningdale	1,251

**7.1.7** In addition to the sources outlined in Table 2, ongoing work linked to the rejuvenation of Maidenhead town centre suggests there is greater scope for residential development in central Maidenhead above that currently accounted for in the Maidenhead Town Centre Area Action Plan. We propose under Policy PLA1 to allow greater flexibility in height within the town centre. If this is accepted, we estimate the potential uplift in capacity could be at least 700 dwellings.

**7.1.8** A key aspect of the preferred strategy is, within the context of the wider functional area, to provide a sustainable balance between homes and jobs. Comparing the potential housing supply with the projected increase in the number of households shows there is insufficient capacity to meet the need for housing.

**7.1.9** Restricting development so that fewer homes are built than are projected to be needed will affect the number and mix of people who can live in our area. For example it will limit the number of young people who can live locally. This could lead to an imbalance within our community, increased commuting into the borough and potentially increased congestion, and lead to a loss of prosperity as a result of fewer people of working age and a resulting drop in disposable income.

**7.1.10** The preferred approach is to utilise a range of sources of housing land supply and to achieve a sustainable balance between housing and social needs and economic needs, whilst protecting the quality of the environment and the Green Belt. This requires some development in those parts of the Green Belt

<sup>46</sup> The defined area is based on parish and town council boundaries, or the absence of such organisations. Where appropriate areas have been grouped into neighbourhood plan areas.

where environmental impacts are considered to be limited. This approach will make a significant contribution to meeting the projected need for housing. We believe the approach we have taken to challenging constraints with a view to increasing supply is in line with the expectations of national policy and reflects the need for all local authorities across the housing market area to do more to increase housing supply.

**7.1.11** It is important to note that a Local Plan housing requirement does not represent all sources of new accommodation that can be anticipated. Ancillary accommodation created through the extension of properties and some forms of shared accommodation do not require planning permission but will still make an important contribution to meeting housing needs.

## Preferred Policy Option HOU 1

### Amount and Distribution of Housing

The preferred policy approach is to ensure provision for the delivery of additional dwellings which would achieve a sustainable balance between housing and social needs and economic needs, whilst protecting the quality of the environment and the Green Belt.

The target will be based on:

1. 7,415 dwellings - the delivery of capacity where the NPPF advises that development is not restricted or where redevelopment of existing sites would be supported; and
2. Some building in the Green Belt – we are inviting views on 23 areas which are in the Green Belt under preferred policy option HOU2.

## Options

**7.1.12** National policy requires local authorities to meet the full objectively assessed need for housing unless the impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the NPPF as a whole or specific policies in the NPPF indicate that development should be restricted. This is against the background of positively seeking opportunities to meet need. Options considered regarding the number of dwellings to be delivered were therefore:

- Restrict house building to the capacity of existing sites within settlements excluded from the Green Belt plus developed sites within the Green Belt;
- Permitting house building to meet the demographic change within the borough should current trends continue; and
- Permitting house building to achieve a sustainable balance between housing and social needs and economic needs, whilst protecting the quality of the environment and the Green Belt.

**7.1.13** The first option of restricting house building to the capacity of previously developed sites represents an emphasis on environmental protection, specifically the Green Belt, over economic and social impacts. Analysis of demographic projections suggests that such a limitation would result in a loss of residents of working age and the forecast increase in jobs would significantly exceed the increase in labour.

**7.1.14** The second option of placing an emphasis on social and economic needs over environmental impacts and meeting the full projected housing requirement would have a greater impact on the environment and be contrary to national planning policy.

**7.1.15** The final option is to utilise all sources of housing land supply and ensure a balance between housing and social needs and economic needs, whilst protecting the quality of the environment and the Green Belt. This option would require some development in the Green Belt, with limited environmental impacts. This option would deliver more homes together with the long-term protection of the Green Belt. It is also noted that with this option, in falling short in terms of capacity, the council will try and re-address the shortfall through the duty to cooperate process.

## Question 18

### Amount and Distribution of Housing

Question 3 in Chapter 4: Strategy invites views towards the preferred strategy of balancing housing and social needs and economic needs, whilst protecting the quality of the environment and the Green Belt.

Are there any other aspects of preferred policy option HOU1 on which you wish to comment?

## 7.2 Allocated housing development sites

**7.2.1** Allocating land makes a significant contribution to ensuring there is a long-term supply of land available for housing. By allocating land there is a presumption against the development of the site for other uses.

**7.2.2** Two categories of sites are proposed to be allocated at this time:

1. Sites in urban areas, outside the Green Belt (see Table 4); and
2. Sites which involve the redevelopment of existing developed sites within the Green Belt (see Table 5).

**7.2.3** Several of the sites are allocated for a mix of housing and employment in combination with preferred policy option EC2 Defined Employment Sites. Detailed information on these sites is available in the supporting document Housing Sites Assessment.

**7.2.4** In addition, and in accordance with the preferred strategy to achieve a sustainable balance between housing and social needs and economic needs, whilst protecting the quality of the environment and the Green Belt, we are inviting views on the suitability for development of 23 areas which are in the Green Belt (see Table 6 and Figures 9 and 10). Your views will help inform our analysis of their suitability for development. Information on each area is available in the supporting document Edge of Settlement Analysis.

**7.2.5** The area of land enclosed by the M4, A308 and Ascot Road, Maidenhead has been proposed by a third party as being suitable for a new hospital facility. We are therefore specifically inviting views on this site with regard to both residential-led development and hospital-led development.

**7.2.6** Figures provided are expressed as the total number of dwellings that would exist on a site following development (the gross figure). For the small number of sites where dwellings already exist, a figure showing the increase in the number of dwellings that would exist is also provided (the net figure).

## Preferred Policy Option HOU 2

### Allocated Housing Development Sites

The preferred policy approach will allocate the sites listed in Table 4 and Table 5 for housing and for the proposed number of dwellings. Maps showing the sites are provided in Appendix E.

The areas listed in Table 6 are locations in the Green Belt where views are invited on their suitability for development, to inform the selection of sites for allocation. The preferred policy approach will be to allocate sites with limited environmental impacts. Maps showing the areas are provided in Appendix F.

**Table 4**

Housing site allocations: Sites in urban areas, outside the Green Belt	Number of dwellings
	Gross (Net)
Berkshire House, Queen Street, Maidenhead	65
Exclusive House, Oldfield Road, Maidenhead	24
Land east of Oldfield Road, Maidenhead	30
Travis Perkins Wood Yard, Boyn Valley Road, Maidenhead	58
Middlehurst, 99-103 Boyn Valley Road, Maidenhead	15
Belmont Place, Belmont Road, Maidenhead	18
DTC Research, Belmont Road, Maidenhead	123
Eastern part of Whitebrook Park, Lower Cookham Road, Maidenhead	36
150 Bath Road, Maidenhead	14
Maidenhead Lawn Tennis Club, All Saints Avenue, Maidenhead <sup>(47)</sup>	32
35, 37 and 33 (Velmead Works), Lower Cookham Road, Maidenhead	19 (net 18)
Land at Ray Mill Road East, Maidenhead	87
Shoppenhangers Manor, Manor Lane, Maidenhead	52
Reform Road Industrial Estate, Maidenhead <sup>(48)</sup>	100
Gas Holder Station, Whyteladyes Lane, Cookham Rise	41

<sup>47</sup> Development is subject to the relocation of the tennis club.

<sup>48</sup> Mixed allocation. Also see Policy EC2.

Housing site allocations: Sites in urban areas, outside the Green Belt	Number of dwellings
	Gross (Net)
Post Office, William Street and Telephone Exchange, Bachelors Acre, Windsor	85
Crown House and Charriott House, Victoria Street, Windsor	45
Minton Place, Victoria Street, Windsor	110
Land between Alma Road and Goslar Way, Windsor	84
Windsor Fire Station, St Marks Road, Windsor	10
Offices at Thames Side, Windsor	40
Territorial Army Centre, Bolton Road, Windsor	25 (22)
Vale Road Industrial Estate, Windsor	110
Sawyers Close, Windsor	400 (200)
95 Straight Road, Old Windsor	11
Straight Road Works, 65A Straight Road, Old Windsor	20
Land at High Street, Ascot	110
Gas Holder Station, Bridge Road, Sunninghill	80
Broomhall Car Park and land adjoining, Sunningdale	31 (28)
High Peak, White House and Holcombe House, London Road, Sunningdale	25 (20)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,893 (1,688)</b>

Table 5

Housing site allocations: existing developed sites within the Green Belt	Number of dwellings
	Gross (Net)
Summerleaze Office and Workshop, Summerleaze Road, Maidenhead	40
Woolley Hall and Grange, Westacott Way, Littlewick Green <sup>(49)</sup>	43 (27)
Land at Grove Business Park, Waltham Road, White Waltham <sup>(50)</sup>	79

49 16 dwellings were granted under permission 10/00134. These are already recorded under commitments and as such not reflected in these figures.

50 Mixed allocation. Also see Policy EC2.

Housing site allocations: existing developed sites within the Green Belt	Number of dwellings
	Gross (Net)
Land at Water Oakley Farm, Windsor Road, Oakley Green	44 (28)
Wyevale Garden Centre, Dedworth Road, Oakley Green	35
Squires Garden Centre, Maidenhead Road, Windsor	40
Ascot Railway Station Car Park, Station Hill, Ascot	50
Land at Heatherwood Hospital, High Street, Ascot	200
Shorts Ltd, St Georges Lane, Ascot	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>581 (549)</b>

Table 6

Areas in the Green Belt where analysis of development suitability will be undertaken	
Area	Indicative number of dwellings Gross (Net)
Area west of Whyteladyes Lane, Cookham Rise	75
Area around Spencers Farm, east of Cookham Road, Maidenhead	500
Area west of Sheephouse Road, Maidenhead	50
Strip of land west of Cannon Lane, Cox Green	40
Area south of railway and north of Breadcroft Lane, Cox Green	140
Area including Maidenhead Golf Course <sup>(51)</sup>	250 to 955
Area west of A404M, Maidenhead	200
Triangle enclosed by M4/A308/Ascot Road, Maidenhead <sup>(52)</sup>	400
Area north of Kimbers Lane, Maidenhead	126 (125)

51 The number of dwellings is dependent on the area considered suitable for development. Redevelopment of the northern section could accommodate in the order of 250 dwellings. More comprehensive development across the whole golf course could accommodate around 955 dwellings.

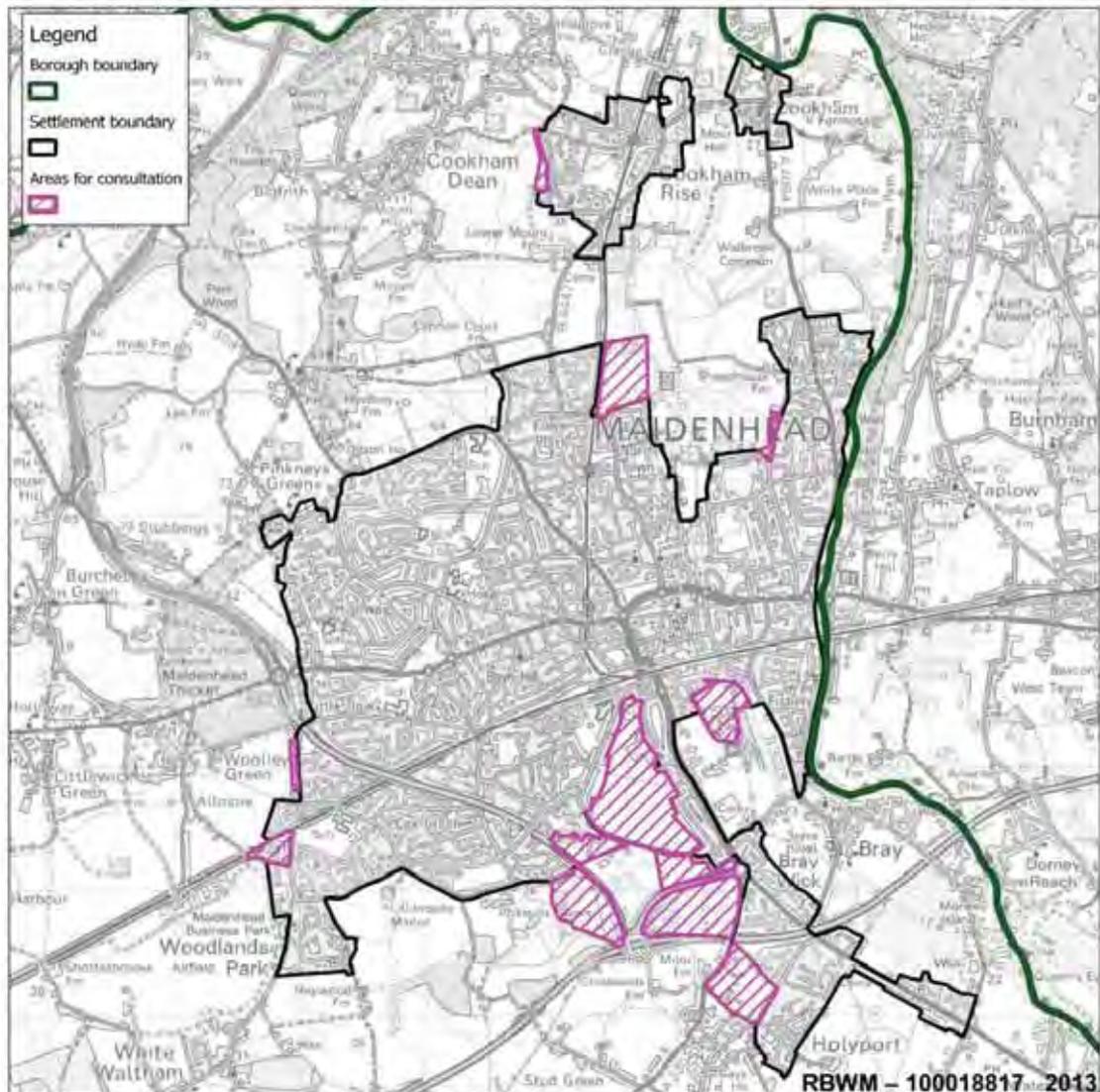
52 The site has been promoted by third parties as suitable for a new hospital facility. The indicative number of dwellings presented here does not allow for a hospital facility. Should this be progressed the number of dwellings would reduce.

**Areas in the Green Belt where analysis of development suitability will be undertaken**

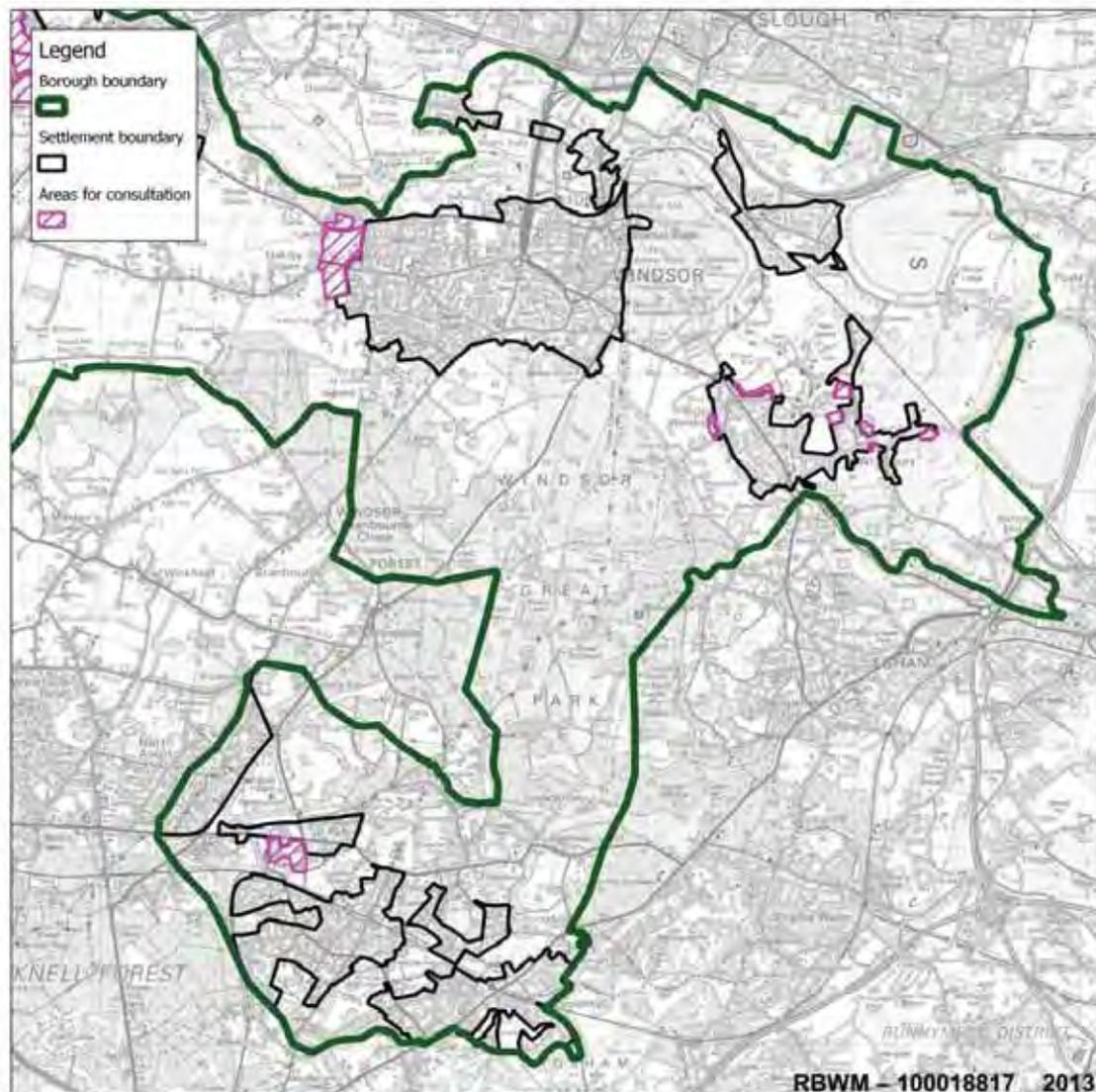
Area south of Harvest Hill Road, Maidenhead	154 (150)
Area south of Stafferton Way, Braywick, Maidenhead <sup>(53)</sup>	240
Area between Ascot Road and Holyport Road, Holyport	200
Area north of A308, south of Maidenhead Road, Windsor	140
Area south of A308, east of Oakley Green Road and north of Dedworth Road, Windsor	400
Area south of Dedworth Road, west of Broom Farm Estate, Windsor	150
Area south of Old Ferry Drive, Wraysbury	33 (30)
Area south of The Drive, Wraysbury	62 (50)
Area south of Waylands, Wraysbury	50
Area south of St Andrew's Close, Wraysbury	11 (10)
Area around Tithe Farm, Wraysbury	30
Area north of Church Road, Old Windsor	30
Area west of Old Windsor and north of Crimp Hill, Old Windsor	60
Area south of Ascot High Street	100

53 Mixed allocation including housing and employment (please see Policy EC2). The southern part is occupied by a recycling and sewage works. Capacity is dependent on the area considered suitable and available for development. The number of dwellings presented is based on the development of the northern part of the site and does not consider a more comprehensive development.

**Figure 9 Areas in the Green Belt where analysis of development suitability will be undertaken**



**Figure 10 Areas in the Green Belt where analysis of development suitability will be undertaken**



## Options

**7.2.7** The suitability of sites and areas was assessed through a process which considered matters including land availability, nature conservation, flood risk and character. Details of the assessment process, including those sites which have been rejected, are set out in the Housing Site Assessment and the Edge of Settlement Analysis studies.

### Question 19

#### Allocated Housing Development Sites

Do you support the allocation of the sites listed in Table 4 and Table 5 for housing? Maps showing the sites are provided in Appendix E. Please comment on individual sites as necessary.

## Question 20

### Sites in the Green Belt

How important do you consider the following factors to be in considering the suitability of areas in the Green Belt for housing?

Please circle the number which most accurately reflects your view on each factor – 5 being of the highest level of importance and 1 being the least level of importance. This will help us to understand which of the following are of most importance to you.

Avoiding areas which are more distant from services and facilities	1	2	3	4	5
Avoiding areas with higher quality agricultural land	1	2	3	4	5
Avoiding areas which are more important for wildlife	1	2	3	4	5
Avoiding areas which are visually more prominent within the Green Belt	1	2	3	4	5
Avoiding areas which are at higher risk of flooding	1	2	3	4	5
Avoiding areas which are visually more prominent from within historic areas	1	2	3	4	5
Avoiding areas where gravel or sand could be extracted in the future	1	2	3	4	5
Avoiding areas with lower environmental quality such those affected by noise	1	2	3	4	5

Do you have any views specific to the areas listed in Table 6? Maps showing the areas are provided in Appendix F. Please comment on individual areas as necessary.

## Question 21

### Triangle enclosed by M4, A308 and Ascot Road, Maidenhead

Do have any views on the use of the area enclosed by the M4, A308 and Ascot Road for residential development and/or hospital-led development? Please comment on each as necessary.

## 7.3 Meeting a range of housing needs

**7.3.1** Providing a range of homes in terms of sizes, types and tenures helps achieve balanced and sustainable communities. It also helps to ensure that there is a range of dwelling types to meet the requirements of different groups and for people at different stages of life. The council recognises the need for homes to help address current and future housing requirements.

### Housing mix and type

**7.3.2** It is important to ensure that a range of housing types and sizes are available to meet local needs of different groups such as families with children, single person households and older people. It is also important to consider the mix and type of housing needed to maintain a local workforce. The objective of seeking to meet the varied needs of residents in an appropriate way would suggest that the majority of homes should be capable of meeting the requirements of a broad cross section of households.

### Adaptable homes

**7.3.3** The 65-79 age group in the population is projected to increase by 23% over the plan period, while the over 80s age group is set to increase by 77%.<sup>(54)</sup> The changing demographic profile will have implications for meeting the housing and support needs of the elderly particularly people living alone.

**7.3.4** It is well documented that people want to live at home as long as possible. In recognition all new homes should be designed to be adaptable so allowing people the choice to remain in their home as they age or develop physical disabilities rather than having to move to a new property.<sup>(55)</sup>

**7.3.5** Whilst all new homes should be adaptable, it is important that a proportion of these are specifically designed from the outset to be fully wheelchair accessible. In general, a proportion of dwellings within larger developments should be designed to be wheelchair accessible with the necessary circulation space and level of access throughout.

### Residential Care

**7.3.6** It is important that future social care provision addresses local needs. The commissioning priorities of the council and clinical commissioning group are highlighted through a market position statement which is regularly updated.

**7.3.7** The council will seek to manage the residential care so that it meets the local priorities set out in the market position statement. At present there is considered to be a large amount of residential and nursing care provision for older people in the borough. This alongside the increased emphasis of supporting people to continue to live in their own home and remain independent, assisted by adaptations and community based care, means proposals for additional residential or nursing care are unlikely to be supported in the short to medium term. In contrast there are currently inadequate local options for adults with learning and mental health difficulties.

**7.3.8** Supporting text will set out how development proposals should demonstrate that housing type and mix has been taken into account and show how Lifetime Homes principles have been addressed.

---

54 Based on delivering 7,415 dwellings.

55 The Lifetimes Homes Standard promoted by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation is the current system by which developments are considered adaptable.

## Preferred Policy Option HOU 3

### Meeting a range of housing needs

The preferred policy approach is that new homes should contribute to meeting the needs of current and projected households by having regard to the following principles:

- Provide an appropriate mix of dwelling types and sizes
- Be adaptable to changing life circumstances.
- For proposals of 20 or more dwellings, at least 5% of dwellings designed to be fully wheelchair accessible.

Development proposals for residential care will be supported where they meet local commissioning priorities or a demonstrable local community need has been established.

### Options

**7.3.9** The principles outlined in the preferred policy approach were considered to properly address housing need issues in the borough, and no alternative options were considered when developing the policy. When defining the proportion of wheelchair accessible housing, the need for accessible homes was balanced against development viability and the resultant figure of 5% of dwellings was considered to offer an appropriate and proportionate response to these two factors.

### Question 22

#### Meeting a Range of Housing Needs

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option HOU3?

## 7.4 Affordable housing

**7.4.1** Affordable housing is housing which is provided for households which cannot afford to buy or rent in the main housing market without some assistance. A definition of affordable housing is provided in the National Planning Policy Framework.

**7.4.2** Work undertaken to assess the likely future need for affordable housing suggests an annual need for 427 homes over the next 10 years. This is significantly more than the identified capacity for housing from sites in urban areas and existing developed sites in the Green Belt. Setting a target for affordable housing in relation to need is therefore unrealistic and the preferred approach is to maximise the amount of affordable housing, whilst making sure that housing schemes are deliverable, and to only support shared equity and staircased home ownership options for affordable housing delivery.

**7.4.3** The preferred approach is to require a proportion of affordable housing on all sites which involve the provision of 5 dwellings and above (gross) or sites of 0.16ha or more (where there is a net gain in the number of dwellings). Qualifying sites will be expected to provide up to 30% of the gross number of dwellings provided as affordable housing. Affordable housing should be provided at the level specified and on site.

However, our approach recognises that there may be sites where provision of 30% affordable housing would render the development uneconomic or would prejudice the realisation of other planning objectives. We will take these factors into account, where the developer provides a full development viability statement for scrutiny.

**7.4.4** Supporting text will set out the criteria which will be used to judge whether a lower proportion of affordable housing might be reasonable and whether off site provision is acceptable. The Borough Council will provide clarification through publication of separate guidance.

**7.4.5** There are cases where a particular local community need for housing cannot be met by development within urban areas outside of the Green Belt or by the redevelopment of previously developed sites within the Green Belt. In such circumstances, national policy allows small sites to be developed within the Green Belt.<sup>(56)</sup> These are sites which would not normally be released for housing but, in the case of a proven local need, housing can be permitted as an exception to normal policies which can only be used in perpetuity for affordable housing.

**7.4.6** Households with a local community need will be those who need to be housed, but are unable to buy or rent on the open market and will normally fall into one of the following categories:

1. Existing residents of the locality, or where appropriate from the wider parish and adjoining parishes, who are currently living in accommodation unsuitable for their needs;
2. People whose work in the locality requires them to live locally;
3. People who are not necessarily resident in the locality but have long-standing family links to the community, for example close relatives.

**7.4.7** The council will need to be satisfied that the local community need for affordable housing is genuine, that the need cannot be met on land which is immediately available elsewhere and that the housing will meet needs to the longer-term benefit of the community. The scale of development should be no greater than the level of the established local community need. New isolated homes in the open countryside should be avoided.

**7.4.8** Supporting text will set out that development proposals should demonstrate how the interrelationship between open countryside and the built form is respected. Careful siting and design of development should aim to allow a suitable transition between the built area and the open countryside, the aim being to avoid stark contrasts.

## Preferred Policy Option HOU 4

### Affordable Housing

The preferred approach is that development proposals involving the provision of 5 dwellings and above (gross) or sites of 0.16ha or more (where there is a net gain in the number of dwellings) will provide up to 30% of the gross number of dwellings provided as affordable housing.

The tenure, size and type of affordable housing unit will be negotiated on a site by site basis, having regard to housing needs, site specifics and other factors.

56 National Planning Policy Framework, para. 89.

## Preferred Policy Option HOU 5

### Affordable Housing Rural Exception Sites

The preferred policy approach is that development proposals for limited affordable housing within the Green Belt will be permitted as an exception where all of the following criteria are met:

- a. A demonstrable local community need for affordable housing has been established;
- b. The number, size and tenure of the dwellings are suitable to meet the identified need;
- c. The site and the development proposal are well related to existing housing and not in the open countryside;
- d. The proposal is designed to respect the characteristics of the local area including the countryside setting;
- e. Adequate schools, health, shops and other community facilities are within reasonable travelling distance;
- f. Essential services such as power, water, sewerage, drainage and waste disposal are either available or can be provided to serve the site;
- g. The initial and future occupation is controlled to ensure the dwellings remain available to people in housing need, with a strong and demonstrable local connection.

### Options

**7.4.9** National policy is supportive of affordable housing and local survey work indicates a need for affordable housing in the borough. No alternative options concerning the principle of affordable housing were considered. With regard to the thresholds set in preferred policy option HOU4 the main options considered were:

- To continue the existing policy threshold and target as set out in the adopted Local Plan,
- To maintain the existing threshold and increase the target,
- To lower the threshold and maintain the target, and
- To lower the threshold and increase the target.

**7.4.10** The existing policy threshold and target as set out in the adopted Local Plan requires a proportion of affordable housing to be provided on schemes involving a net increase of 15 dwellings or a site area of 0.5 hectares or more. The proportion of affordable housing sought is 30% of the gross units provided.

**7.4.11** The first option of continuing the existing threshold would represent more of the same and is no longer considered appropriate. The level of affordable housing delivered through this approach does not maximise potential delivery. The threshold also encourages development schemes to be designed with fewer dwellings to avoid providing affordable housing.

**7.4.12** The second and third options are essentially a refinement of the existing approach. Increasing the target would marginally increase the number of affordable houses delivered over the same number of sites, however care would need to be taken to avoid negative consequences on viability. Lowering the threshold would result in more sites needing to make a contribution to affordable housing. Retaining the current threshold would not resolve the issues around development schemes being designed to avoid triggering a requirement. Lowering the threshold has the greater capacity to increase delivery and this represents the preferred approach.

**7.4.13** The final option is a combination of the second and third options, lowering both the thresholds at which a proportion of affordable housing is required and increasing the size of that requirement. This option whilst having the potential to increase delivery the impacts are less certain.

**7.4.14** With regard to preferred policy option HOU5, the options considered related to whether or not to include a policy in the plan. National policy is supportive of rural exceptions sites, but the importance of the green belt in the borough is such that careful consideration was given to the need to balance protection of the green belt against the needs of residents and communities for housing.

**7.4.15** Including a policy on this topic was considered to strike an appropriate balance between these two matters. Although setting out a policy might be seen to encourage rural housing development, it would allow parameters to be set for such development and to guide it to the most sustainable location. In contrast, if a policy was not included, and national policy relied on instead, there would be less ability to influence such development. This could lead potentially to more sporadic development that would harm the green belt. On balance it was considered appropriate to include a policy on this topic.

### **Question 23**

#### **Affordable Housing Thresholds**

Do you support the principle of lowering the threshold at which a proportion of affordable housing would be required in developments? Do you have specific comments regarding the preferred approach of preferred policy option HOU4?

### **Question 24**

#### **Affordable Housing Shared Equity**

Do you support enabling people to own a proportion of their home?

### **Question 25**

#### **Affordable Housing Rural Exception Sites**

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option HOU5?

## 7.5 Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

**7.5.1** Around 220 borough residents are gypsies and travellers.<sup>(57)</sup> While many live in conventional housing, some live on specific sites to maintain their cultural traditions. The council is required by national policy to assess and make provision for the likely permanent and transit housing needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, working collaboratively with neighbouring authorities.<sup>(58)</sup>

**7.5.2** There are three types of Gypsy and Traveller sites:

1. Permanent residential sites – sites providing residents with a permanent home. The site is made up of a number of individual caravan pitches, with amenity blocks and essential services. A pitch may accommodate one or two caravans.
2. Transit sites – sites used to provide only temporary accommodation to their residents. The length of stay can vary but is normally limited to a few months.
3. Temporary stopping places – sites used as authorised short-term stopping places. The length of stay is normally limited to a few weeks.

**7.5.3** Travelling Showpeople are self-employed business people who travel the country holding fairs, chiefly during summer months. They require secure, permanent bases for storage of their equipment and to provide a home when not travelling. These sites may also be occupied by some family members permanently, particularly older family members and children. The sites are often made up of a number of individual plots, and combine residential, storage and maintenance uses.

**7.5.4** Work undertaken to assess the likely permanent accommodation needs suggested a need for 20 additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches within the borough in the period to 2027<sup>(59)</sup> and an additional 4 Travelling Showpeople plots across Berkshire in the period to 2017.<sup>(60)</sup> At present there is insufficient information available to assess whether there is a need for a transit site or emergency stopping place within the borough.

**7.5.5** The preferred policy below sets out criteria to ensure that new sites come forward at suitable locations, provide for a good quality environment and do not give rise to unacceptable impacts. Proposed sites in areas excluded from the Green Belt are considered acceptable in principle, as are proposals in the Green Belt which replace existing non-agricultural buildings and would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development. All other ways of providing sites constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

**7.5.6** The criterion for high risk of flooding refers to the particular vulnerability of caravans and mobile homes as identified in national policy. This defines them as highly vulnerable and advises that such uses should be located in Flood Zone 1 (low probability of flooding). If, following the application of the sequential test, it is not possible, consistent with wider sustainability objectives, for a proposed development to be located in zones of lower probability of flooding, the "Exceptions Test" can be applied to consider locations in Flood Zone 2 (medium probability of flooding). The council will generally expect new Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites to be located in areas at low or medium probability of flooding. Exceptions will only be made to meet a specific community need which cannot reasonably be met elsewhere.

57 Census 2011.

58 Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, DCLG 2012.

59 Windsor and Maidenhead Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment, 2013.

60 Needs Assessment for Travelling Showpeople, 2007.

**7.5.7** Information should be provided in support of development proposals to demonstrate how the interrelationship between open countryside and the built form is respected. Careful siting and design of development should aim to allow a suitable transition between the built area and the open countryside, the aim being to avoid stark contrasts. Supporting text will set out the tests to determine whether very special circumstances exist to justify development in the green belt, including length of residence, family connections and personal circumstances.

**7.5.8** At present no site allocations are proposed. The council continue to positively seek opportunities to enable sites to come forward.

## Preferred Policy Option HOU 6

### Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

The preferred policy approach is to ensure provision for the delivery of 20 net additional permanent Gypsy and Traveller pitches in the following broad phases:

- April 2012 to March 2017 – 7 pitches
- April 2017 to March 2022 – 7 pitches
- March 2022 to April 2027 – 6 pitches

In allocating sites and considering development proposals the following criteria should be met:

All sites:

- a. The initial and future occupation is controlled to ensure the site remains available to gypsies and travellers and travelling showpeople;
- b. The proposal would provide a satisfactory standard of accommodation, including adequate living and amenity space;
- c. The proposal would be compatible with the character and appearance of the area;
- d. Provide satisfactory levels of residential amenity for future occupiers and would not unacceptably affect the residential amenities of nearby properties;
- e. The site is well related to major roads;
- f. Satisfactory access, car parking, turning and manoeuvring space can be provided which is suitable for use by motor homes and vehicles towing caravans;
- g. The proposal is not within an area at high risk of flooding, unless exceptional or very special circumstances can be demonstrated.

Sites in the Green Belt will only be supported where:

- g. The proposal involves the redevelopment of previously developed land which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development, unless exceptional or very special circumstances are demonstrated;
- h. The site is well related to existing housing and is not in the open countryside
- i. Adequate schools, health, shops and other community facilities are within reasonable travelling distance;
- j. Essential services such as power, water, sewerage, drainage and waste disposal are either available or can be provided to serve the site;

- k. The site is designed to respect the characteristics of the local area including the countryside setting;
- l. Permanent structures are restricted to essential facilities such as small amenity blocks.

Sites for Travelling Showpeople should include appropriate space for the storage, maintenance and testing of equipment without creating an unacceptable effect on amenity or presenting a risk to the health and safety of those living on or near the site.

Transit sites and emergency stopping places should have good access to the strategic highway network.

## Options

**7.5.9** National policy is supportive of making suitable provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. No alternative options were considered concerning the principle of addressing provision through the plan.

### Question 26

#### Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option HOU6?

## 7.6 Protection of residential land and the housing stock

**7.6.1** The existing stock of housing is the main resource for meeting housing needs. This policy aims to retain the existing stock of dwellings to avoid a net loss of existing homes as a result of development or change of use, and so minimise the need to build additional dwellings to meet housing requirements. It sets out how exceptions to this general principle will be considered.

**7.6.2** While the loss of existing homes or land with planning permission for residential accommodation will be resisted, there may be circumstances where it can be justified. Exceptions will only be considered where overall planning benefits would result, such as the provision of essential community facilities, or where the existing accommodation is not capable of providing a satisfactory living environment, or where on balance the achievement of other objectives should take priority.

**7.6.3** Whilst converting part of a dwelling for another use, for instance commercial use, does not result in the loss of a unit of accommodation, it can have a harmful effect upon the remainder of the property. Where the establishment of non-residential use in part of a property is found to be acceptable, the remaining residential accommodation should provide a satisfactory living environment to ensure its continued use.

**7.6.4** The plan will set out criteria to be examined when justifying the loss of housing and the partial conversion of dwellings to other uses.

## Preferred Policy Option HOU 7

### Protection of Residential Land and the Housing Stock

The preferred policy approach is that there should be a presumption against the net losses from the existing stock of dwellings unless justified by specific circumstances.

#### Options

**7.6.5** For many years the borough has successfully operated a policy of resisting the loss of housing stock. Given the importance of providing sufficient housing for the borough and the contribution made by existing housing stock towards meeting needs, it was considered essential to include a policy resisting loss of dwellings. No alternatives were considered for this topic.

### Question 27

#### Protection of Residential Land and the Housing Stock

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option HOU7?

## 7.7 Housing layout and design

**7.7.1** The principles of sustainable development suggest there is a benefit to the wider environment from general increases in density, particularly in locations which are close to services and facilities. However it is also important to ensure that those good and attractive elements of the existing environment are protected. A high standard of design should be achieved in the layout and landscaping of residential developments so that proposals complement the existing character and appearance of the area.

**7.7.2** The way housing is laid out and designed can have a significant impact on potential energy consumption, for instance through passive solar designs, building siting and orientation, internal layout and landscaping. These measures can reduce energy use and provide a pleasant living environment.

**7.7.3** Developments should provide an attractive and safe residential environment. The preferred policy approach below sets out considerations which are specific to residential developments. It supplements preferred policy option PLA1 which sets out design principles which are applicable to all proposals (including residential).

## Preferred Policy Option HOU 8

### Housing Layout and Design

The preferred policy approach is for proposals for residential development to display high standards of design and landscaping in order to create attractive and safe residential areas.

In addition to the requirements of preferred policy option PLA1, the layout and design of residential development should:

- a. Be compatible with the character of the surrounding area;
- b. Provide adequate levels of residential amenity for future occupiers and not unacceptably affect the residential amenities of nearby properties;
- c. Respond to the need to reduce potential energy consumption through siting and orientation, internal layout, landscaping and, natural lighting and ventilation;
- d. Create visual interest through the use of views into and out of the site, and through the use of an appropriate variety in building types, materials, means of enclosure, surface treatment and landscaping;
- e. Avoid large blank areas of facade to public areas;
- f. Provide a satisfactory level of car parking, which is convenient and accessible, close to the housing served;
- g. Within mixed use schemes, provide a separate access to any residential accommodation;
- h. Within retirement schemes, provide convenient and accessible storage for mobility aids;
- i. Avoid prejudicing the satisfactory development of the wider area.

## Options

**7.7.4** The main policy option considered was whether to include a bespoke policy on the design of residential development, or to address the matters as part of the general design policy in the plan. It was considered that residential development had sufficiently distinct design requirements to justify its own policy. In addition, the general design policy could become over-complicated if it were to include specific requirements for residential development. If that was done, the general policy would become unwieldy and difficult to understand and apply. For these reasons, a bespoke residential design policy was chosen.

### Question 28

#### Housing Layout and Design

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option HOU8?

## 7.8 Housing density

**7.8.1** Over the last decade, development density has generally increased across the borough. This has helped contribute to the rejuvenation of some areas and introduced a better mix of homes in others, helping to meet the need for smaller homes. However, these benefits need to be balanced against some of the impacts that increased development densities can have on the surrounding area.

**7.8.2** Building at higher development densities in the right locations maximises the efficient use of land, reduces the amount of land required for development in less sustainable locations and can help support local shops and services. The benefits of increased density are most prevalent in areas of high accessibility to services and facilities, whereas higher densities in areas with poorer accessibility encourage more unsustainable travel. There should therefore be a gradation of densities in relation to relative accessibility.

**7.8.3** In considering the most appropriate and efficient density for a site it will be necessary to consider the site in the context of its location and surroundings. The highest densities should be within or adjacent to town centres and other areas with good access to local services and facilities. A hierarchy of centres is set out in preferred policy option RET1 and should be used to help inform the level of local services, facilities and infrastructure.

**7.8.4** In assessing proposals, regard will be had to how the development density manifests itself onsite, in particular the scale and extent of the built form in relation to the application site, character of the surrounding area and the effect on residential amenity. The council will not support proposals which would result in a poor residential environment or have an unacceptable effect on the surrounding area.

**7.8.5** The plan will set out that density of development should be informed by the character of the area, residential amenity, accessibility and availability of services and infrastructure.

## Preferred Policy Option HOU 9

### Housing Density

The preferred policy approach is to make efficient use of land without compromising the quality of the environment. Higher development densities will generally be supported in and around town centres and other locations with good access to local services and facilities.

### Options

**7.8.6** Options considered for this policy concerned the degree of support to be given to increased densities, and whether such increases should be permitted in all locations or steered towards certain areas.

**7.8.7** As explained above, a higher density of development produces sustainability and other benefits but can have an adverse effect on the character of an area. It was therefore considered necessary to put in place guidelines to ensure that the density used on any given site was appropriate to the site and its surrounding area.

**7.8.8** While giving support to increased densities on all sites would produce maximum benefits in terms of reducing the land take required for development, it could have drawbacks in terms of locating development in less sustainable locations. The appropriate policy response to this was considered to be a gradation of density, with the most accessible and sustainable areas having the highest density of development, and density levels reducing in less sustainable locations. This was considered to strike an appropriate balance between these two factors.

## Question 29

### Housing Density

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option HOU9?

## 7.9 Conversion of dwellings

**7.9.1** The conversion of buildings to provide additional dwellings or other forms of shared accommodation such as houses in multiple occupation<sup>(61)</sup> is one of the ways in which housing needs can be met. The conversion of larger dwellings into additional residential units is generally acceptable, provided that the proposed accommodation would be of a satisfactory standard and would not unacceptably affect its surroundings.

**7.9.2** The conversion of smaller dwellings is less suitable. Providing a satisfactory standard of accommodation and amenity without harming the character and appearance of the original building or the surrounding area is unlikely to be achievable, principally due to the demand for car parking, the loss of garden area and the general intensification of activity. In addition, smaller dwellings provide an important supply of more affordable properties suitable for smaller households including young families. For these reasons the council will resist the conversion of two storey terrace and semi-detached houses into apartments or houses in multiple occupation.

**7.9.3** In all conversions and sub-divisions, a satisfactory standard of accommodation and quality environment should be provided both internally and externally. In addition to the physical appearance of the proposed development, particular regard will be had to the adequacy of living space (including the arrangement of rooms of the property proposed to be converted and any adjoining it), noise insulation and residential amenity.

**7.9.4** In assessing proposals, regard will be had to effects resulting from the proposed development itself and cumulatively with other proposals. The intrusion which can result from the introduction of large areas of hard surfacing for car parking will generally be resisted.

### Preferred Policy Option HOU 10

#### Conversion of Dwellings

The preferred policy approach is to support proposals for the conversion of dwellings to form additional dwellings or houses in multiple occupation in areas excluded from the Green Belt where the proposal would meet all of the following criteria:

- a. Not result in the loss of small family accommodation;
- b. Respect the character and appearance of the original property;
- c. Be compatible with the character and appearance of the area;
- d. Provide satisfactory levels of residential amenity for future occupiers and would not unacceptably affect the residential amenities of nearby properties;
- e. Provide a satisfactory standard of accommodation, including adequate living space, appropriate noise insulation and layout of rooms between units of accommodation;
- f. Provide suitable outdoor amenity space;
- g. Provide suitable space for refuse and recycling storage and drying area;
- h. Provide satisfactory access, car parking and secure cycle parking.

61 A shared house or flat occupied by three or more unrelated people who share basic amenities such as a toilet, personal washing facilities or cooking facilities.

## Options

**7.9.5** Given the importance of providing sufficient housing for the borough and the contribution that can be made by converting existing housing stock, it was considered appropriate to include a policy giving general support to residential conversions. Equally, it was considered that important amenity issues needed to be addressed and that controls should be placed on how and where such conversions could happen. The preferred policy approach delivers these objectives and no alternatives were considered.

### Question 30

#### Conversion of Dwellings

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option HOU10?

## 7.10 Residential gardens

**7.10.1** Residential development of garden land is a component of the overall housing land supply in the borough. National planning policy distinguishes between land that has previously been developed and land which has not. The effective use of land is encouraged by re-using previously developed land, provided it is not of high environmental value. The definition of previously developed land normally includes all land within the curtilage, however private residential gardens are specifically excluded. The council considers private residential gardens to be undeveloped land either within the curtilage of a dwelling, or where the previous lawful use was for private residential garden.

**7.10.2** Development within established residential areas presents specific issues. The preferred policy approach supplements other design policies by providing criteria of particular importance for new residential development in private gardens. Such proposals need to be sensitively designed so that they integrate with the surrounding area, making a positive contribution to the established local character.

**7.10.3** Private residential gardens can be of significant biodiversity value. Groups of gardens often contain a mosaic of habitats supporting a diversity of species and often provide important links or stepping stones for species moving through an urban area.

**7.10.4** This policy seeks to ensure that proposals to build new homes on gardens are sensitively designed so that they can make a positive contribution to the character of the area. It should be read in conjunction with preferred policy options HOU8, PLA1 and PLA2. Proposals which unacceptably affect the area will be refused.

### Preferred Policy Option HOU 11

#### Development Involving Residential Gardens

The preferred policy approach is to support the erection of new dwellings on gardens in areas excluded from the Green Belt where this can be achieved without compromising the quality of the environment. The following criteria are proposed to be used to judge whether a proposal is acceptable:

- a. The proposal is compatible with the character and appearance of the area, particularly in terms of the built form and spaces around buildings;
- b. The layout integrates with the surrounding area with regard to site coverage of each plot, building lines, urban grain, rhythm of plot frontages, parking areas and existing pattern of openings on to the highway;
- c. The proposal provides appropriate hard and soft landscaping, particularly at site boundaries;
- d. The proposal would not have an unacceptable affect on biodiversity in terms of the fragmentation of blocks of gardens, which as a unit or in association with adjacent open space are deemed to make an important contribution to biodiversity and contribute to green corridors and networks.

### Options

**7.10.5** It was considered necessary to set parameters to define the extent of support for garden development. The preferred approach strikes a balance between maximising the supply of new housing and addressing legitimate concerns about the impact of development on the character of an area. No other policy options were considered.

### Question 31

#### Development Involving Residential Gardens

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option HOU11?

## 7.11 Extensions and outbuildings within a residential curtilage

**7.11.1** It is clear that the ability to extend a house can be of great importance to residents. Extensions ensure that houses are able to cope with changing family circumstances. However, there is clearly a need to balance this against the effects which some extensions can have on the appearance of a property and the amenities of neighbouring properties.

**7.11.2** In general, extensions and outbuildings should retain the architectural integrity of the original property by appearing subordinate and by using complementary materials and designs as appropriate. Where side extensions are proposed, a gap between the building and the boundary should be provided to avoid the linking of properties. Extensions to the side and front of houses are particularly visible. In these cases, it is important to reflect the character of the street and ensure that an extension is not visually dominant in a way that detracts from its surroundings. The plan will set out guidance on this topic.

**7.11.3** The provision of ancillary accommodation, such as annexes, can help elderly people, or other more vulnerable groups, to live as independent a life as possible. It provides a degree of separate living space but not to the point of being occupied as a separate dwelling. The plan will set out how to assess whether accommodation is ancillary or self-contained.

**7.11.4** Preferred policy option HOU12 relates to all types of extensions to existing homes and the erection of outbuildings where planning permission is required. This includes porches, dormer windows and ancillary buildings (e.g. garages and sheds).

## Preferred Policy Option HOU 12

### Extensions and Outbuildings within a Residential Curtilage

The preferred policy approach is to support development proposals which involve the extension to an existing building or the erection of an outbuilding within a residential curtilage, where the proposals meets all of the following criteria:

- a. Respect the character and appearance of the original property;
- b. Be compatible with the character of the surrounding area;
- c. Provide a satisfactory level of amenity for occupiers of the existing property;
- d. Not unacceptably affect the residential amenities of nearby properties;
- e. Avoid large blank areas of facade to public areas;
- f. Not sited where it would impair highway safety or lead to inadequate parking provision.

### Options

**7.11.5** Given the important effects residential extensions can have on an area, it was considered necessary to include a policy in the plan. No alternatives were considered for this topic.

### Question 32

#### Extensions and Outbuildings within a Residential Curtilage

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option HOU12?

## 7.12 Residential amenity

**7.12.1** All new housing should provide a good quality living environment. Care needs to be taken to ensure the residential amenities of existing properties are not unacceptably harmed as well as ensuring that the proposed development itself delivers a quality environment.

**7.12.2** The siting and orientation of buildings, and positioning of windows, needs to ensure against the unacceptable loss of privacy or the creation of unacceptable overbearing or overshadowing. All residential developments, whether new development or conversions, should include appropriate amenity space for residents. Residential amenity may be harmed by noise, smell or other nuisance, and so new houses should not be located in areas where they are subject to unacceptable impacts.

**7.12.3** The Borough Council will provide clarification through the publication of separate guidance.

## Preferred Policy Option HOU 13

### Residential Amenity

The preferred policy approach is that all homes, whether proposed or existing, should have a satisfactory level of residential amenity. Proposals for new or extended residential accommodation should:

- a. Provide adequate and adaptable living space;
- b. Provide a satisfactory standard of privacy for both the proposed accommodation and for nearby properties;
- c. Allow for a satisfactory outlook for both the proposed accommodation and for nearby properties;
- d. Allow for a satisfactory level of sunlight and daylight for both the proposed accommodation and for nearby properties;
- e. Include suitable outdoor amenity space;
- f. Include suitable space for refuse and recycling storage and drying area;
- g. Not be subject to unacceptable nuisance, pollution or contamination.

### Options

**7.12.4** The preferred policy approach seeks to ensure that all homes have a high quality living environment which is attractive and usable. No other policy options were considered.

### Question 33

#### Residential Amenity

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option HOU13?





## **ECONOMY**

**8.0.1** Planning supports sustainable economic development and policies will guide and support economic development in the borough. This ensures that residents will benefit from a thriving and healthy economy. Reflecting this, an important plan objective is to enable the evolution and growth of the local business economy.

**8.0.2** Research<sup>(62)</sup> shows that the borough has a strong economy, with several headquarters offices and a range of small and medium sized companies, together with an important tourist sector. Unemployment is low, with most people of working age in employment, and the workforce is well skilled and educated.

**8.0.3** The borough's strengths include: good transport accessibility; location within the M4 corridor and close to London and Heathrow; high rates of new business formation; a workforce with high level job skills; high proportions of knowledge-based businesses; good quality of life factors; and attractiveness to inward investment.

**8.0.4** Alongside these strengths, challenges exist in the form of: a limited supply of employment sites because of heritage and countryside designations; high housing costs and wage levels; high levels of out-commuting (people living in the borough but working somewhere else, like London); and regional influences such as the future role of Heathrow airport.

**8.0.5** No major structural changes to the local economy are expected over the plan period. There is a long term trend away from industrial uses and towards higher value, office-based employment uses. The demand for offices is projected to rise during the plan period, while the amount of industrial and warehousing space needed is forecast to fall, although some demand will remain. At the same time other information suggests there is a trend for office downsizing; this will be investigated further and kept under review. Within this context, policies aim to be business-friendly and support economic development and the economic well-being of the borough.

**8.0.6** Where policies refer to an economic use, this means a use that provides employment opportunities, generates wealth or produces an economic output or product, excluding retail use.

### **8.1 Economic Development**

**8.1.1** Sustainable economic development provides local employment opportunities, attracts people to spend time and money in the borough and can enhance daytime activity. It generates wealth and can help establish town centres and employment areas as the vibrant and successful hearts of their communities. It is supported by national policy and the Borough Local Plan must respect and respond to this.

#### **Preferred Policy Option EC 1**

##### **Economic Development**

The preferred policy approach is to promote sustainable economic growth and manage the supply of required employment floorspace. A range of different types and sizes of employment land and premises will be encouraged, as will making more efficient use of existing sites and premises. Appropriate intensification, redevelopment and upgrading of existing employment sites and premises will be supported, together with working from home and the infrastructure required to service that.

62 Employment Land Review Update September 2009.

Improvements to education and skill levels, and the use of local labour, will be supported. Appropriate development proposals that would assist small or start-up businesses will also be supported.

**8.1.2** Society is moving towards a more flexible and responsive way of working, including much greater use of home-working. The principle of flexible working and the infrastructure necessary to support this forms a central part of the council's strategy and is strongly encouraged. This will be applied within the context of determining whether its impact on the local area is acceptable

**8.1.3** Development that brings new jobs into the borough brings economic benefits but, where there are skills shortages in particular areas, it will require additional training for residents. Improvements to education and skill levels will be supported, along with initiatives to encourage the use of local labour in new developments.

**8.1.4** Industrial and warehousing uses play an important role in maintaining a diverse economy and offering a range of job opportunities for residents. These uses often need to operate from lower-cost property, a feature they share with many small and start-up businesses. All can come under pressure from higher-value uses that can support greater rental levels. Within the context of a rising demand from offices, it is appropriate to ensure that a range of types of premises remains available to meet the future needs of all sectors of the borough's economy.

**8.1.5** The borough has a high level of new business formation, and the small business sector is vital to the social and economic well-being of the borough. Enabling small businesses to develop and thrive can strengthen the local economy and increase business vibrancy, as well as leading to greater employment opportunities for local people. The council supports the development of small businesses in a flexible and sustainable way.

## Options

**8.1.6** The main options considered for achieving sustainable economic growth were to protect all existing employment sites in their current form, to allocate new employment land for growth on the edge of settlements, and to make better and more efficient use of existing employment land. An aim for a diverse and knowledge-based economy with smart growth and higher value, lower impact activities would accompany all these options.

**8.1.7** Protection of existing sites in their current form would represent a continuation of current policy. Such a blanket approach was no longer considered appropriate as it would not allow for the continued evolution of the local economy and the changing needs of businesses. It would risk restricting the ability of the local economy to innovate and develop.

**8.1.8** Allocation of new employment land (which would have to be largely on the edge of settlements as sufficient other land does not exist) would represent "more of the same" in economic terms. While it would allow the local economy to get bigger, this growth would not necessarily be of the type that would make it better. The use of land on settlement edges would also raise issues relating to countryside character.

**8.1.9** Making better and more efficient use of land represents a strategy to improve and upgrade land and premises, alongside a restructuring of the local economy to reflect national trends towards smarter growth. This would allow the local economy to expand in a way that generates wealth without requiring large amounts of new land. It would require better use to be made of existing employment sites, which might mean more floorspace on a site or a change from low density industrial uses to higher density offices.

Such changes could have both positive and negative effects, for instance more people working on a site could generate more traffic on local roads, but would also mean more money would be spent in local businesses like shops and pubs. This option sits well with projected changes to the local economic base and is the council's preferred option.

### Question 34

#### Economic Development

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option EC1?

## 8.2 Defined Employment Sites

**8.2.1** The borough is an attractive location for employment use and research<sup>(63)</sup> shows that this high demand is likely to continue, particularly with the impending arrival of Crossrail services in Maidenhead.

**8.2.2** This research further indicates that the borough's future economic role is likely to continue in a similar pattern to now, with no obvious local factors that should lead to serious decline nor produce a step-change in economic activity. Evidence suggests that the likely need for employment floorspace within the borough can be largely met through intensification and redevelopment leading to more efficient use of existing sites, and that small elements of employment land can be redeveloped for housing alongside this.

**8.2.3** Existing employment sites have been assessed and those with the greatest ability to provide a range of types of accommodation have been identified as industrial areas, with other sites identified for business or mixed use. The policy balances the need to retain a variety of types of premises against the need to allow for a range of new development in the borough. It ensures that a sufficient portfolio of sites will remain available to serve businesses in a variety of economic sectors, to meet the full range of needs of the local economy.

### Preferred Policy Option EC 2

#### Defined Employment Sites

The preferred policy approach is to define allocated employment sites within which economic uses will be supported.

Employment areas are proposed to be designated as business areas, industrial areas or mixed use areas as listed in Table 7, Table 8 and Table 9. Maps showing these areas are provided in Appendix E.

Within industrial areas, the preferred approach is to retain existing premises and support smaller and start up businesses.

Within mixed use areas and business areas, appropriate intensification of economic activity will be encouraged. Some residential development will also occur within mixed use areas.

**Table 7**

<b>Business Sites</b>
Whitebrook Park, Maidenhead
Howarth Road, Maidenhead
Vanwall Road, Maidenhead
Norreys Drive, Maidenhead
Foundation Park, Maidenhead
Maidenhead Office Park, Maidenhead
Wodlands Business Park, Maidenhead
Priors Way, Maidenhead
Centrica, Windsor
Windsor Dials, Windsor
Imperial House, Windsor
Manor House Lane, Datchet
Ditton Park, Datchet
Ascot Business Park, Ascot
Queens Road, Sunninghill

**Table 8**

<b>Industrial Sites</b>
Kings Grove / Boyn Valley Industrial Area, Maidenhead
Furze Platt Industrial Area, Maidenhead
Cordwallis Industrial Area, Maidenhead
Vansittart Road Industrial Area, Windsor
Fairacres Industrial Area, Windsor
Lower Mount Farm, Cookham Rise

Table 9

Mixed Use Sites
Stafferton Way, Maidenhead
Reform Road, Maidenhead
Grove Business Park, White Waltham
Ascot Centre

### Options

**8.2.4** Several options were considered for the definition and development of employment sites:

- Continue existing policy of defining employment areas, with several of them specified to be for particular uses such as industry and warehousing.
- Refine existing policy to define employment areas but allow greater flexibility on most sites.
- Further refine existing policy to define employment areas but allow greater flexibility on all sites.
- Do not define employment areas, but follow a criteria-based approach to employment development.

**8.2.5** The first option would represent a continuation of current policy, and was no longer considered appropriate as it would not allow for the continued evolution of the local economy and the changing needs of businesses. It was considered too protectionist and would not allow the local economy to develop sufficiently.

**8.2.6** The second and third options were essentially refinements of the first, with fewer sites being allocated for certain uses and more flexibility permitted on other employment sites. This approach would strike a balance between the need to protect some industrial and warehousing sites, while allowing the majority of employment sites to develop in new ways that would aid the local economy. Maintaining some control while adding greater flexibility would enable the delivery of a flexible supply of floorspace thus be responsive to the needs of local businesses. This is the council's preferred option.

**8.2.7** The final option would be a different kind of approach. Although potentially offering greater flexibility for businesses, the fact that no employment sites would be officially designated would make it difficult to demonstrate that sufficient employment land existed to meet identified needs. There would be a risk of non-conformity with national policy on this issue, so this option was not taken forward.

### Question 35

#### Defined Employment Sites

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option EC2?

## 8.3 Other Sites and Loss of Employment Uses

**8.3.1** Not all employment sites can be allocated under the previous policy, and proposals for economic development may come forward on other sites. Equally, other proposals may come forward that would lead to the loss of an employment site. Both raise important issues for the local economy. It is important that existing and new businesses in the borough are supported by ensuring that a suitable supply of employment land and premises remains available.

### Preferred Policy Option EC 3

#### Other Sites and Loss of Employment Uses

The preferred policy approach is to:

- Support appropriate economic development on sites that are currently used for employment but not defined as such; and
- Require proposals in any location for change of use from economic uses to other uses to provide appropriate marketing evidence and not harm the local economy.

### Options

**8.3.2** With regard to employment development occurring on sites not identified as such, the options considered were to allow this to happen or to seek to restrict it. Non-identified sites provide a valuable function to the local economy, and employment uses could not and should not be restricted only to defined sites. Hence a policy approach to support employment development on appropriate, non-identified sites was preferred.

**8.3.3** Alongside this, it was considered necessary to apply a test to ensure that any loss of employment land would be properly justified. While there are likely to be circumstances where such loss is either desirable - for instance for amenity reasons or to support a proposal in a neighbourhood plan - or at least not harmful, a cautious approach towards the loss of employment land and premises is justified. This is to ensure that a sufficient supply of sites would continue to exist to meet the needs of the local economy. Evidence to be assessed could include building quality, vacancy and marketing, amongst other criteria. Supporting text will set out relevant factors to be considered.

### Question 36

#### Other Sites and Loss of Employment Uses

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option EC3?





## **TOWN CENTRES AND RETAIL**

**9.0.1** Town centres are at the heart of our communities. Planning can promote a competitive town centre environment and help control the management and growth of town centres, supporting their vitality and viability. This plan reflects this approach, with the relevant plan objective being to promote the vitality and viability of our town centres so they are at the heart of our communities.

**9.0.2** Shops draw people into town centres and are central to stimulating the local economy and defining the image of a place. Shopping is increasingly seen as an “experience” as well as a necessary task, and is undergoing significant change as progressively more of the routine type of shopping is conducted online. It is therefore important that policy provides for customer choice and a diverse retail offer within town centres, as well as other uses that encourage people to visit town centres and enhance their experience of visiting. Securing a town centre as a desirable place to shop and spend time is fundamental to its future success and the improvement of local image and character.

**9.0.3** The council’s strategy is to promote and maintain a range of uses within the borough’s town centres, including a strong, central retail core, so as to support their vitality and viability and promote customer choice. This strategy allows for a more diverse mix of uses in peripheral areas of town centres, to encourage their future success.

**9.0.4** The adopted Maidenhead Town Centre Area Action Plan continues to form part of the development plan for the borough. It sets out policies relating to Maidenhead town centre and allocates development sites to meet future needs for town centre activities. The Borough Local Plan will put in place a positive and flexible approach to drive the success of other centres.

### **9.1 Hierarchy of Centres**

#### **Centres**

**9.1.1** Town centres within the borough do not operate in isolation. The Thames Valley has a complex network and hierarchy of town centres, with each fulfilling different but complementary roles. Nevertheless, Maidenhead town centre currently has a particularly low level of retail market share retention.<sup>(64)</sup> To realise the council’s vision for Maidenhead to provide a strong economic focus, the strategy is to achieve higher expenditure retention levels through clawback of an element of the market share that is currently going to other centres.

**9.1.2** Boundaries for centres in the borough will be defined on the policies map, which also shows the extent of the primary shopping area and the primary and secondary frontages of Maidenhead and Windsor town centres.

#### **Preferred Policy Option RET 1**

##### **Hierarchy of Centres**

The preferred policy approach is to support development in town centres, in accordance with the hierarchy below.

Figure 11 Hierarchy of Centres



A sequential test will be applied to development using the above hierarchy of centres. Edge of centre and out of centre sites will be considered if no sequentially preferable options are suitable, viable and available. Thresholds at which the impact of a development will be measured (impact assessment) will be set out as follows:

- Retail development: 1,000 m<sup>2</sup>
- Leisure development: 2,500 m<sup>2</sup>
- Office development: 2,500 m<sup>2</sup>

**9.1.3** The scale of retail development that is appropriate within the borough will be determined with reference to the council's Retail Capacity Study and any subsequent updates. Current quantitative capacity estimates indicate a relatively small but growing capacity for convenience goods floorspace in Maidenhead and Windsor town centres, together with substantial capacity for comparison goods floorspace in Maidenhead town centre and a more modest level in Windsor town centre. Within Ascot and Sunningdale centres there is a much more modest forecast retail capacity, although the emerging neighbourhood plan for the area provides support for a greater level of floorspace in Ascot, for qualitative reasons.

**9.1.4** Where retail capacity work specifies a maximum floorspace figure for a particular centre in a particular period, permission will only be granted for retail development in excess of that figure if its impact on other centres within the development's catchment has been assessed and judged to not cause undue harm to those centres.

**9.1.5** As regards impact assessment, the national thresholds for office and leisure development are considered appropriate so are not varied here. However, the national threshold for retail development is considered to be set too high to enable proper account to be taken of the effects of development, particularly in smaller centres. Instead, a lower threshold of 1,000 square metres is considered appropriate. This approximates to the size of a small retail warehouse and marks the cutoff point between town centre type and out of centre type retail units. While larger units would normally be acceptable in central locations, their location out of centre would indicate that a different form of retailing was likely to occur from the unit in question. Such different store formats can generate different shopping patterns and have significantly different effects on town centres. It is therefore considered appropriate to fully assess their impact so as to properly inform the decision made on any planning application.

### Options

**9.1.6** National policy<sup>(65)</sup> requires the Borough Local Plan to set out a retail hierarchy. This approach is considered entirely appropriate for the borough, in order to maintain and develop the unique role played by each centre in its community. Thus this is the preferred approach.

**9.1.7** Setting thresholds for an impact assessment is optional under national policy, so the options available here are to use national thresholds, or to set them at a local level. The latter approach allows local circumstances to be considered when assessing thresholds, and hence is the council's preferred option.

### Question 37

#### Hierarchy of Centres

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option RET1?

## 9.2 Maidenhead and Windsor Town Centres

**9.2.1** The retail function of any town centre is defined by its shops. Other uses also play a valuable role in creating a balanced town centre and an attractive experience for visitors.

**9.2.2** The council's vision is for Maidenhead town centre to play a key role in the economy of the Thames Valley, providing jobs, housing and services, and for its town centre will be at the heart of the community and provide a strong economic focus. Alongside this, the vision for Windsor town centre is for it to be a thriving tourism destination, attracting visitors both from the borough, the United Kingdom and overseas.

**9.2.3** Maidenhead town centre currently provides a range of shops, services, entertainment and employment and contains a diversity of uses including offices, hotels, cinema, restaurants, shops and residential. It is in need of rejuvenation, as set out in the Maidenhead Town Centre Area Action Plan (AAP). AAP policies will be interpreted flexibly and in light of conditions existing at the time of any planning application, so as to ensure the best and most appropriate outcome for Maidenhead town centre.

**9.2.4** Windsor plays a similar role in its catchment and is a more successful centre. Alongside a range of uses providing for the needs of local residents there is a strong tourist economy.

65 National Planning Policy Framework.

## Frontages and Diversity of Use

**9.2.5** The primary shopping areas of each centre contain the main shopping streets and include most of the major retail multiples and variety stores. The council's strategy is to concentrate shopping development there, to ensure a strong, central retail core while promoting and maintaining a range of other town centre uses. The reinvigoration of Maidenhead centre is particularly supported. Primary and secondary frontages are defined in both centres, as required by national policy. Primary frontages include a high proportion of retail uses. Secondary frontages have greater opportunity for diversity of uses.

**9.2.6** Residential use is particularly helpful within town centres as it increases vitality, provides custom for town centre businesses and increases natural surveillance. Residential use at ground floor level would not be appropriate within retail frontages, apart from potentially in peripheral locations, as it can create a dead space without visual interest or appeal. However, the residential use of upper floors forms a valuable part of the mix of uses that supports a successful town centre, and is encouraged.

### Preferred Policy Option RET 2

#### Maidenhead and Windsor Town Centres

The preferred policy approach is to support development in Maidenhead and Windsor town centres, and protect their vitality and viability. Primary frontages will include a high proportion of retail uses, with appropriate other uses permitted in secondary frontages. Residential use on upper floors will be encouraged.

Within Maidenhead town centre, particular support will be given to the reinvigoration of the residential, commercial, retail and leisure aspects of the town centre.

**9.2.7** Here, "retail" means uses falling within use class A1, and all references to primary and secondary frontages refer to the uses at ground floor level in those areas.

### Options

**9.2.8** National policy<sup>(66)</sup> requires town centre boundaries and frontages to be defined. This approach is considered appropriate for the borough, so that the appropriate policy support can be put in place to ensure the success of each centre and, in larger centres, their primary core area.

**9.2.9** The boundaries for centres within the borough and for frontages within Maidenhead and Windsor town centres have been defined with reference to retail surveys and other local data. They are shown on the policies map and are considered to represent the situation that exists in reality. No options are therefore presented for consideration here or for the following preferred policy option RET3.

### Question 38

#### Maidenhead and Windsor Town Centres

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option RET2?

### 9.3 District and Local Centres

#### District centres

**9.3.1** The district centres of Ascot and Sunningdale both provide a range of shops and services. They contain at least one supermarket or superstore, and a range of non-retail services, such as banks, building societies and restaurants, as well as local public facilities such as libraries. The council's strategy is to maintain a broad mix of uses and the current function of these centres, so as to ensure the centres can continue to play a full role in the life of the area.

**9.3.2** The scale and function of Sunningdale centre is not expected to experience major change during the plan period. It would be inappropriate for the retail floorspace of Sunningdale to expand by more than the retail capacity identified in the council's technical studies. Whilst technical work indicates a restricted level of retail capacity for Ascot, a neighbourhood plan currently in preparation for the area provides support for a greater level of floorspace so as to provide qualitative enhancements.

#### Local centres

**9.3.3** Local centres perform a more limited role, acting as the focus for convenience and service uses that serve their local community. The borough's local centres are all different in terms of their size and the precise role they play in the life of their community, but in general they include a range of small shops of a local nature, serving a small catchment. Typically they will include a small supermarket, newsagent, sub-post office, pharmacy, hot-food takeaway or launderette, as well as various local services. The local centres identified in the hierarchy exclude small parades of shops of purely neighbourhood significance.

**9.3.4** The council's strategy is to ensure that local centres continue to provide a broad range of services for their local community, mainly serving specialist local needs or the immediate day to day needs of their local area. Development proposals should respect the character, role and function of the centre, and should not be of such a scale that they would elevate the centre to a higher level in the borough hierarchy.

## Preferred Policy Option RET 3

### District and Local Centres

The preferred policy approach is to support retail development and other appropriate uses within district and local centres. Residential use on upper floors and, where appropriate, at ground level, will be encouraged.

**9.3.5** Here, "retail" means uses falling within use class A1. Supporting text will set out details of when special considerations may apply in situations of sustained high levels of vacancy. For example, where the vacancy level of a centre has exceeded 30% (measured by length of frontage) for more than one year. Where there is a sustained high level of vacancy, the council will consider residential use or other uses at ground floor level.

### Question 39

#### District and Local Centres

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option RET3?

## 9.4 Shops Outside of Centres

**9.4.1** Individual shops, when located outside of centres, can often play a vital role in their local community. They can provide convenient access to day to day requirements and are often a lifeline for the borough's less mobile residents, an increasingly important consideration given the ageing profile of the borough's population. It is therefore important that the community function of shops is supported.

### Preferred Policy Option RET 4

#### Shops Outside of Centres

The preferred policy approach is to:

- Support community shops; and
- Require appropriate marketing evidence for any proposals for change of use from shops to other uses, and ensure the change will not harm the local community.

### Options

**9.4.2** Options considered to provide a policy supportive of local shops related to a blanket policy of protection, or setting out a procedure and requirements to evidence and justify changes of use. While there are likely to be circumstances where a change of use is either desirable or at least not harmful to the local community, a cautious approach towards the loss of local shops is justified, to ensure that the needs of local communities continue to be met. A procedure will therefore be set out to assess changes of use. Evidence to be assessed could include marketing and the function of the shop, amongst other criteria. Supporting text will set out relevant factors to be considered.

### Question 40

#### Shops Outside of Centres

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option RET4?

## 9.5 Markets

**9.5.1** Markets are part of the overall retail economy. In addition to providing consumers with a more varied shopping experience, they also support local producers and can enhance the overall experience of visiting a town centre.

**9.5.2** Markets and similar community events can add distinctiveness and diversity to a town centre's overall shopping experience. They attract people into a town centre, helping to make it more lively, and can significantly enhance a town centre's overall image and identity.

**9.5.3** National policy<sup>(67)</sup> supports markets, as does the Maidenhead Town Centre Area Action Plan. The council is supportive of markets where they aid town centres and so the preferred policy approach to sustain town centre markets is set out below. It is not considered appropriate to present any other options on this topic.

### Preferred Policy Option RET 5

#### Markets

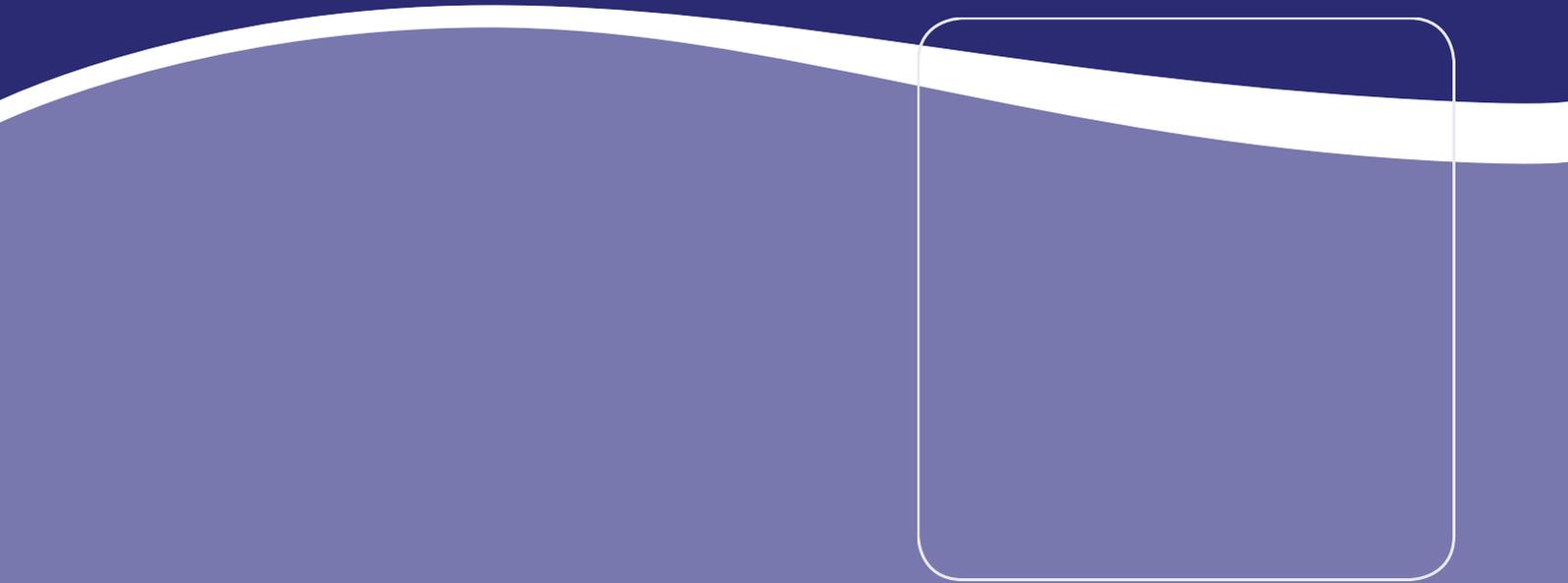
The preferred policy approach is to support existing and proposed markets within town centres.

### Question 41

#### Markets

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option RET5?

67 National Planning Policy Framework.



Tourism

10

## **TOURISM**

**10.0.1** Tourism can contribute to enhancing quality of life through delivering rewarding experiences for visitors, and a greater variety of jobs and training opportunities. It can support urban renaissance and rejuvenation, and diversify and develop the rural economy.

**10.0.2** The Royal Borough's economy is supported by a vibrant tourism market. One of the objectives of this plan is to enable the continued success and evolution of the borough's distinct visitor economy. Key principles to achieve this are to:

- Reinforce the role of key tourism centres such as Windsor, Ascot and the River Thames
- Provide sufficient accommodation and facilities for tourists
- Identify and promote opportunities for additional tourism related development

**10.0.3** To achieve these, the council will work with partner organisations through the Borough Visitor Management Forum to support the tourist economy. Policies will encourage development that supports the sustainable growth of the tourism industry.

**10.0.4** Windsor is one of the major tourist attractions of the South East of England, experiencing very high levels of tourism and day visitor activity which make a major contribution to the local economy. Windsor Castle is an international tourist destination, the River Thames is also a major tourist attraction and Legoland Windsor is Britain's third most popular paid for tourist attraction.

**10.0.5** Other attractions and events in the Borough include Ascot Racecourse (including Royal Ascot), Windsor Racecourse, the Royal Windsor Horse Show, polo at Smiths Lawn Windsor, Eton College, Cookham's Stanley Spencer Gallery, Windsor Great Park, golf in Sunningdale, Thames Valley Athletics Centre, Hurley Lock, Bisham Abbey and Windsor Festival. In many cases, tourism is important in helping to maintaining key heritage assets in the Borough, and is supported for this reason.

### **Key challenges and issues**

**10.0.6** The number of visitors received by the borough is increasing annually to around 7 million per annum, and the value of tourism to the borough was estimated in 2011 to be £578.2 million. Feedback from the Visitor Management Forum, made up of local businesses, representatives from the tourism industry and councillors, is that there is currently a sufficient level of appropriate accommodation to manage the level of growth in this area. Nevertheless, improvements to the range and quality of accommodation in the borough are encouraged.

**10.0.7** Over 9,000 jobs in the Royal Borough are supported by tourism. Unlike other industries, tourism tends to select from the local population and, therefore, the multiplier spend effect is greater in this industry than in many others. <sup>(68)</sup>

## **10.1 Tourism Development**

**10.1.1** Future needs for tourism will require development in certain areas. Given the importance of tourism to the local economy, it is considered that policies should give general support to tourism development.

---

68 Statistics from "The Economic Impact of Tourism", 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2011, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, Tourism South East

**10.1.2** The preferred policy approach is positive towards development which aims to boost the tourism economy in the borough. Criteria will be set out to assess the suitability of development proposals related to tourism - these will encourage proposals for improved or new tourism development yet maintain the character of the countryside, protect the historic fabric, manage tourism related travel, maintain the important contribution of the tourism industry to the economy and provide benefits to the community.

## Preferred Policy Option TM 1

### Tourism Development

The preferred policy approach is to encourage Windsor, Ascot and the Thames to be the main locations for major tourist development, with appropriate tourism elsewhere also acceptable. Details will be included in criteria against which tourism development should be assessed. Existing tourist uses and rural tourism will be supported where appropriate to the area.

### Options

**10.1.3** Options considered in relation to tourism revolved around how and where tourism should be supported. Possible approaches were a general support for tourism in all areas, or to refine this approach by encouraging major tourism development to concentrate in the larger towns and existing tourist areas, with support for appropriate development elsewhere.

**10.1.4** The former option would achieve the greatest benefit for the tourist economy by encouraging new attractions and facilities throughout the borough, to spread visitors around and encourage them to stay for longer. This could, though lead to unwanted consequences such as more traffic congestion, and could also dilute the focus of the borough's principal tourist locations such as Windsor. In contrast, the latter option would enable tourist development to be located where services and facilities are already in place. It would lead to economies of scale and improving the offer to visitors by concentrating attractions in fewer places, enhancing the visitor experience of those places. The latter option also accords better with national policy<sup>(69)</sup> that promotes main tourism uses in town centre locations. The council's preferred option is to encourage main towns and existing attractions to be the main focus for new tourism development, while also allowing for tourism development elsewhere.

## Question 42

### Tourism Development

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option TM1?

## 10.2 Visitor Accommodation

**10.2.1** The diversity of types of visitor accommodation in the borough is itself a major attraction and benefit to the local tourist economy. Hotels play an important role in promoting a sustainable visitor economy and supporting local business needs. Bed and breakfast establishments are important in widening the choice, price and supply of visitor accommodation, and campsites and holiday caravan parks contribute to the range and affordability of accommodation available in rural areas.

**10.2.2** The availability of visitor accommodation and facilities is important to maintain the status of the borough as a prime visitor destination, and to support an increase in the percentage of visitors who stay for longer. Given the general acceptance of the value of visitor accommodation to the borough, it is not considered appropriate to present any other options on this topic.

**10.2.3** The council's preferred approach is to seek to provide a balanced supply of accommodation to meet the needs of the variety of visitors to the area, including those from a growing base of business related tourism. Alongside this, it is necessary to include some safeguards in policy to ensure that development is appropriate to its area and does not cause problems of local amenity, traffic or disturbance, as these could be detrimental to both visitors and residents. Criteria will be set out to assess the suitability of development proposals for visitor accommodation.

### Preferred Policy Option TM 2

#### Visitor Accommodation

The preferred policy approach is to support new hotel accommodation of all categories where it would improve the quality or diversify the range of accommodation available. Details will be included in criteria against which proposals for visitor accommodation will be decided.

Bed and breakfast accommodation, and rural accommodation such as campsites and holiday parks, will be supported where they are appropriate to the area.

### Question 43

#### Visitor Accommodation

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option TM2?



## **HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT**

**11.0.1** The borough is steeped in history, with a wide diversity of rural and built character. The character of areas and the retention of a high level of the historic built environment make the borough very distinctive. The scale and extent of conservation areas varies from small hamlets like White Waltham, to villages such as Cookham Dean, to town centres like Windsor with its historic castle. All have unique historic and architectural interest.

**11.0.2** Within the borough there are many instances where sustainable development and growth has been achieved through the re-use of historic buildings - for instance Bisham Abbey. This demonstrates how the historic environment can be retained but made suitable for modern functions, evolving sympathetically to present needs while conserving appropriately for future generations.

**11.0.3** The plan's objective to conserve and enhance the special qualities of the borough's built and natural environment will be achieved by ensuring development proposals respect the individual identity and sense of place across the borough. The historic environment and particularly archaeological remains are by their very nature irreplaceable, therefore achieving this objective is essential so that future generations can enjoy the history the borough has to offer.

**11.0.4** A Townscape Assessment and Landscape Character Assessment set out the character of different parts of the borough. Conservation Area Appraisals have also been undertaken, and these guide the design of development proposals and help determine the appropriateness of development.

### **Options**

**11.0.5** This chapter of the plan sits within a strong national policy presumption in favour of conserving and enhancing heritage assets. This approach is considered entirely appropriate for the borough, given its rich heritage that provides so many benefits for residents. To ensure protection of the borough's historic environment, and compliance with national policy, no policy options are presented for the policies in this chapter.

**11.0.6** All heritage assets will be protected in line with their significance, and all development must have regard to national and local historic context. Supporting text will set out particular requirements for information that must be submitted in order to properly assess the impact of development proposals on the various types of heritage asset.

## **11.1 Historic Environment**

**11.1.1** In accordance with national planning guidance.<sup>(70)</sup> the council considers heritage assets to be an irreplaceable resource and will conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance. Heritage assets here refers to buildings, parks and gardens, standing, buried and submerged remains, areas, sites and landscapes, whether designated or not, and whether or not capable of designation.

---

70 National Planning Policy Framework.

## Preferred Policy Option HE 1

### Historic Environment

The preferred policy approach is to ensure that development respects the significance of the borough's historic environments and their settings. Development will be required to conserve and enhance the features, character, appearance and function of heritage assets and their settings. Details of how this is to be achieved and which heritage assets are included, will be included in the policy.

A local register of heritage assets at risk will be maintained, and the council will address associated issues through a Heritage Strategy.

### Question 44

#### Historic Environment

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option HE1?

## 11.2 Listed Buildings

**11.2.1** The main aim of listing is to prevent alterations that harm the special character of a building or structure – this includes the interior. There are approximately 1,700 listed buildings in the borough, of which 23 are Grade I (the highest grade), and 74 Grade II\*. The borough's rich heritage is signified by the wide variety of listed buildings, in terms of grade, character and use.

**11.2.2** National policy<sup>(71)</sup> states that when considering the impact of proposed development on a significant heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building should be exceptional. Grade I and II\* listed buildings are considered to be heritage assets of the highest significance, and harm to or loss of these should be wholly exceptional.

**11.2.3** The preferred policy approach ensures that heritage assets will be enhanced and conserved. Details will set out the information and justification required to enable development proposals to be supported. Supporting text will set out further information on the need to ensure high quality design, use of appropriate traditional materials and the need to secure an appropriate, long-term, viable use for listed buildings. The tests used to assess proposals for the loss of a listed building, in line with national policy, will be included. The plan will also include requirements for the detailed assessments or surveys that will be necessary to accompany an application, together with any marketing evidence required.

71 National Planning Policy Framework.

## Preferred Policy Option HE 2

### Listed Buildings

The preferred policy approach is to enhance and conserve heritage assets. There will be a presumption against any development that fails to respect the significance of a listed building, its setting or its grounds. Appropriate and properly justified proposals for alterations and extensions to listed buildings, or their change of use, will be supported. The loss or demolition of a listed building will not be supported.

### Question 45

#### Listed Buildings

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option HE2?

## 11.3 Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Archaeology

**11.3.1** The archaeological heritage of the borough is rich and varied, having seen many settlements growing organically over time. It is important to take all possible opportunities to discover historical remains that could provide further information about the past. As most archaeological remains are yet to be discovered, it is crucial that sites of potential interest are appropriately assessed. All works will be guided by national planning policy, plus advice issued by the government and English Heritage.

**11.3.2** Nationally important sites and monuments are given legal protection by designation i.e. inclusion on the National Heritage List as scheduled ancient monuments. Consent for works to a scheduled ancient monument is issued by English Heritage. There are 22 scheduled ancient monuments in the borough – these are not always ancient or visible above ground. The Berkshire Historic Environment Record notes over 2,000 archaeological assets in the borough, ranging from the Stone Age through to the modern period.

**11.3.3** National policy<sup>(72)</sup> states that Scheduled Ancient Monuments and areas of presumed archaeological importance can be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance by the undertaking of a thorough desk based assessment of the heritage asset, field investigation where appropriate and sympathetic design to secure preservation in-situ.

**11.3.4** The preferred policy approach seeks to ensure that scheduled ancient monuments and archaeological remains are not destroyed, and retain their heritage value. There will be a presumption in favour of physical preservation of monuments, remains and their settings.

**11.3.5** Further details of the works and justification required to support applications will be set out in the supporting text. Such text will ensure that new development avoids damage to archaeological deposits and puts in place appropriate mitigation measures where damage is unavoidable. Development proposals which affect archaeological sites and monuments of unknown importance and areas of potential will need to demonstrate that the full implications of the development on matters of archaeological interest have been assessed and taken into account. The impact of development on all types of remains should be minimised.

72 National Planning Policy Framework, para. 128.

## Preferred Policy Option HE 3

### Scheduled Ancient Monuments

The preferred policy approach is to protect scheduled and nationally important ancient monuments and their settings. This will require development proposals to properly assess their impact and how the monument or its setting could be enhanced.

### Question 46

#### Scheduled Ancient Monuments

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option HE3?

## Preferred Policy Option HE 4

### Archaeology

The preferred policy approach is to set out the requirements and mechanism for the understanding, assessment and preservation of archaeological remains. This will include a desk-based assessment, field evaluation and archaeological preservation. A programme of works to mitigate impact may be required. Development proposals must have regard to their impacts upon the historic environment, protecting and where possible enhancing archaeological remains and their settings.

### Question 47

#### Archaeology

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option HE4?

## 11.4 Registered Parks and Gardens

**11.4.1** Registered parks and gardens are designated to protect landscapes or fabric of significance. The emphasis of the Register of Parks and Gardens of special historic interest in England<sup>(73)</sup> is on gardens, grounds and other planned open spaces, such as town squares, and applies to "designed" landscapes. Parks or gardens found to be of sufficient historic interest to merit protection are added to the Register.<sup>(74)</sup> The borough has ten registered parks and gardens with a further two extending across the borough boundary.

<sup>73</sup> English Heritage

<sup>74</sup> The register is managed by English Heritage, enabled by provisions of the National Heritage Act 1983.

**11.4.2** Under national policy<sup>(75)</sup> registered parks and gardens receive similar protection to other heritage assets. Proposals which affect registered or locally significant parks and gardens must have careful regard to the important landscape architecture of the site and its special character, as well as the setting (which may include wider character and views, any historic buildings or features, and trees). Development proposals are required to provide appropriate information to demonstrate their effects on registered parks or gardens. A locally significant park or garden is defined as a park or garden significant for its historic and landscape value in the local vicinity.

## Preferred Policy Option HE 5

### Registered Parks and Gardens

The preferred policy approach is to conserve and enhance the setting, appearance of historic nature, fabric and significance of any locally significant or registered park or garden. Development proposals that cause harm to appearance or setting will be resisted.

## Question 48

### Registered Parks and Gardens

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option HE5?

## 11.5 Conservation Areas

**11.5.1** Conservation areas are designated for their particular architectural or historic interest. The character and appearance of each is unique. Conservation Area Appraisals<sup>(76)</sup> should be used to guide the design of development proposals and help determine the appropriateness of development. Conservation areas are listed below and shown on the policies map.

**11.5.2** National policy<sup>(77)</sup> states that opportunities for development within conservation areas should be considered favourably where they help to enhance or better reveal their significance. The loss of a significant building or feature that positively contributes to the character or significance of the wider conservation area should be treated as causing harm and be resisted.

**11.5.3** The council will encourage the use of appropriate traditional materials to conserve and enhance the character and appearance of a conservation area, along with retention of physical structures and the relationship between buildings. The use of buildings and pattern of spaces can be fundamental to the character of an area. Sensitive changes of use can enhance that character. In conservation areas, particularly those covered by Article 4 directions,<sup>(78)</sup> the council will encourage opportunities to minimise vehicle impact, and discourage the conversion of front gardens to car parking.

75 National Planning Policy Framework

76 Conservation Area Appraisals can be viewed on the website: [http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/pp\\_conservation\\_areas.htm](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/pp_conservation_areas.htm)

77 National Planning Policy Framework paras. 137-138.

78 These directions remove certain permitted development rights. Article 4 directions in the borough can be viewed at: [http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/dc\\_article\\_3\\_and\\_4\\_directions.htm](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/dc_article_3_and_4_directions.htm)

**11.5.4** All conservation areas will be protected and details will be set out of requirements for matters including design, materials and assessment of impact. Views of and from conservation areas should be considered. The loss of significant features will generally be resisted. Demolition will not be supported until an appropriate redevelopment scheme has been approved, and the timing of demolition may be controlled.

## Preferred Policy Option HE 6

### Conservation Areas

The preferred policy approach is to conserve or enhance the character and appearance of conservation areas, and for development to positively contribute to the character, local distinctiveness and significance of the historic environment. Development proposals that involve the loss of buildings, structures (including walls and fences) or trees that make a positive contribution to, or help conserve the character of, a conservation area will be resisted.

### Question 49

#### Conservation Areas

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option HE6?

## 11.6 Non-Designated Heritage Assets

**11.6.1** The borough has many buildings or sites of archaeological interest which make a valuable contribution to local character or local history. Whilst they do not merit national listing, such assets can, singularly and collectively, make an important positive contribution to the environment. National policy <sup>(79)</sup> states that non-designated heritage assets should be taken into consideration when making planning decisions, and that the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset should be included in this balanced decision.

**11.6.2** The council will work with local amenity groups, for example through neighbourhood plans, to establish a local non-designated heritage assets list, which will be developed as part of a wider draft Heritage Strategy. The Heritage Strategy will establish a framework with criteria for locally designating buildings. Heritage assets identified and added to the local list may be given additional protection and their status will become a material consideration in planning decisions. To protect these assets, the plan will set out requirements to demonstrate how the asset would be conserved or enhanced.

79 National Planning Policy Framework para. 135.

### Preferred Policy Option HE 7

#### Non-Designated Heritage Assets

The preferred policy approach is to identify non-designated heritage assets, then to conserve or enhance their character and appearance. Development proposals that do not cause harm to the visual, architectural or historic significance of the asset will be supported.

### Question 50

#### Non-Designated Heritage Assets

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option HE7?



## **NATURAL RESOURCES**

### **12.1 Minerals - Strategy**

**12.1.1** Minerals are an important resource within the borough and it is recognised that their local exploitation, whilst essential, can create conflicts with the plan's objectives to conserve and enhance the borough's built and natural environment. The council's objective is to promote the prudent use and sustainable management of minerals and their extraction in the borough.

**12.1.2** There are five main elements to the borough's minerals strategy:

- The sustainable husbanding of aggregates minerals
- The safeguarding of aggregates from secondary and recycled aggregates
- The conservation of minerals resources and the prevention of minerals sterilisation
- The continued identification of "preferred areas" for the extraction of sharp sand and gravel
- Careful control of the environmental impact of mineral extraction and related operations and the achievement of high standards of minerals after-care and site restoration.

**12.1.3** Saved policies within the Replacement Minerals Local Plan for Berkshire (RMLP) (incorporating alterations adopted in December 1997 and May 2001), forms part of the development plan until it is superseded. RMLP policies are annually monitored and there is a commitment, through the Berkshire Aggregates Monitoring 2011 (published April 2013) to future joint working and the associated review of the Berkshire RMLP. Until such time, the proposed general and sharp sand and gravel policy approaches in this chapter are considered to provide the appropriate local context for the review of the Berkshire RMLP whilst ensuring policy coverage and commitments in relation to existing preferred areas for mineral working.

**12.1.4** The council is currently undertaking a local aggregates assessment jointly with other Berkshire unitary authorities. With this in mind, the council will review the following policies at the earliest possible opportunity.

#### **Options**

**12.1.5** This part of the plan sits within the context set by the Replacement Minerals Local Plan (RMLP) for Berkshire. The RMLP sets out the already adopted policy approach towards minerals planning in the borough, as established by the Berkshire unitary authorities. It is considered appropriate to maintain this approach within the borough. As a result, no policy options are presented for the policies relating to minerals planning.

### **Preferred Policy Option NR 1**

#### **Minerals Strategy**

#### **Safeguarding Mineral Resources**

The preferred policy approach is an environmentally sustainable approach to minerals planning. Mineral resources will be conserved and their sterilisation by other forms of development avoided.

#### **Future Aggregates Supply**

The preferred policy approach is to provide for the supply of aggregate minerals, including both primary and secondary/recycled materials. The scale of provision for primary aggregates will have regard to prevailing national guidance on sustainable development and on aggregates provision, commitments within the Berkshire RMLP and the need to safeguard environmental interests and living conditions.

Through joint working with other Berkshire authorities the council will maintain a sand and gravel landbank, and will provide an appropriate contribution towards local demands for minerals, within the environmental capacity of the borough.

#### **Aggregates from other sources**

The contribution to aggregates supply made by secondary and recycled aggregates will be maximised, subject to environmental interests and living conditions.

### **Question 51**

#### **Minerals Strategy**

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option NR1?

## **12.2 Minerals - Preferred Areas for Future Working**

### **Preferred Policy Option NR 2**

#### **Minerals - Preferred Areas of Future Working**

The preferred policy approach is to continue to support the allocation of the following "Preferred Areas" of future working. Extraction of sharp sand and gravel will be supported in these areas and not elsewhere.

- Preferred Area 11: Riding Court Farm, Datchet
- Preferred Area 12: North of Horton
- Preferred Area 13: Railway Land, Kingsmead, Horton

### **Question 52**

#### **Minerals - Preferred areas of Future Working**

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option NR2?

## 12.3 Minerals - Environmental Impacts and Restoration

### Preferred Policy Option NR 3

#### Minerals - Environmental Impacts and Restoration

The preferred policy approach is to minimise the environmental impact of mineral extraction and related operations. Mineral workings must be restored at the earliest practicable date and to the highest practicable standards, having regard to the intended after-use of the site. Where appropriate, opportunities will be taken to secure environmental or other public benefits through site restoration.

### Question 53

#### Minerals - Environmental Impacts and Restoration

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option NR3?

## 12.4 Waste - Waste Strategy

**12.4.1** Waste includes household waste, construction and demolition waste, industrial and commercial waste and "special" or hazardous waste. As a waste collection and disposal authority, the council is responsible for the collection of household waste.

**12.4.2** The council's objective is to promote the management of waste in a prudent and sustainable manner. The preferred policy approach to waste in this plan seeks to balance the plan's strategy of steering development to the most sustainable locations in the borough and to provide for the borough's development requirements with the minimisation of such development on the borough's built and natural environment and minimising the impact of the plan on climate change.

**12.4.3** National policy<sup>(80)</sup> does not contain specific waste policies and until a National Waste Management Plan for England is published, national guidance in the form of PPS10 (Waste Planning Policy Statement) remains in place. National Policy does however indicate that, in local plans, local planning authorities should set out strategic priorities for their area to deliver (amongst others) the provision of infrastructure for waste management. Thus existing advice in PPS10 ensures the current relevance of the council's own Waste Management Strategy which delivers the objectives of the council's Integrated Municipal Waste Management Strategy through the waste hierarchy.<sup>(81)</sup>

**12.4.4** Whilst the RBWM Waste Management Strategy establishes a strategic framework for the management of municipal waste and policies and proposals for the various collection, treatment and disposal options, saved policies within the Waste Local Plan for Berkshire (WLP), forms part of the development plan until it is superseded. WLP policies are monitored and there is a commitment, through the other Berkshire authorities, to future joint working and the associated review of the WLP. Until then, the proposed

80 National Planning Policy Framework.

81 Refer to the National Waste Strategy for England 2007.

general waste management policies in this chapter are considered to provide the appropriate local context for the review of the Berkshire WLP whilst ensuring policy coverage and commitments in relation to existing preferred areas for waste management.

## Options

**12.4.5** This part of the chapter of the plan sits within the context set by the Waste Local Plan (WLP) for Berkshire. The WLP sets out the already adopted policy approach towards waste planning in the borough, as established by the Berkshire unitary authorities. It is considered appropriate to maintain this approach within the borough. As a result, no policy options are presented for the policies relating to waste planning.

### Preferred Policy Option NR 4

#### Waste Strategy

The preferred policy approach is to make provision for the management and treatment of waste, taking into account the following:

- a. Minimising the quantities of waste;
- b. Best Practicable Environmental Option;
- c. Targets for waste recycling and composting, and for reducing the volume of waste going to landfill; and
- d. Safeguarding important environmental interests and people's living conditions.

**12.4.6** In relation to (b), the 'Best Practicable Environment Option (BPEO) is defined as an option that provides the most benefits or the least damage to the environment as a whole, at acceptable cost, in both long and short term. This is further defined in the Waste Strategy 2007<sup>(82)</sup> which also identifies the 'waste hierarchy', the 'proximity principle' and 'self sufficiency' which are the key elements of the waste strategy.

### Question 54

#### Waste Strategy

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option NR4?

## 12.5 Waste - Preferred Areas for New Facilities

### Preferred Policy Option NR 5

#### Preferred Areas for New Waste Facilities

The preferred policy approach is to continue to support the allocation of the following "Preferred Areas" for future waste management facilities. Proposals for waste management development in these areas will be supported.

- Preferred Area 14: Hindhay Quarry, Pinkneys Green
- Preferred Area 15: Braywick, Maidenhead
- Preferred area 17: Plant Site, Monkey Island Lane, Bray
- Preferred area 24: Riding Court Farm, Datchet
- Preferred Area 25: North of Horton

**12.5.1** The sites listed above continue to be identified as preferred areas for the future provision for waste management. This approach continues to provide the greatest certainty for the borough that its waste management strategy can be delivered in land use terms; allows the selection of the least unacceptable sites in planning terms; allows for greater control over the scale, location and impact of development and facilitates the operation of development control. Under this approach, planning proposals for appropriate waste management development will be supported, subject to other environmental and other considerations as currently indicated in the Waste Local Plan for Berkshire, until such time as that plan is superseded.

### Question 55

#### Preferred Areas for New Waste Facilities

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option NR5?

## 12.6 Waste - Environmental Impacts and Restoration

### Preferred Policy Option NR 6

#### Environmental Impacts and Restoration

The preferred policy approach is to minimise the environmental impact of waste treatment operations. The restoration of temporary waste treatment or disposal sites will be undertaken at the earliest practicable date and to the highest practicable standards, having regard to the intended after-use of the site. Where appropriate, opportunities will be taken to secure environmental or other public benefits in association with the operation and restoration of waste management sites.

**Question 56****Environmental Impacts and Restoration**

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option NR6?

**12.7 Waste - Providing for Waste in New Development****Preferred Policy Option NR 7****Providing for Waste in New Development**

The preferred policy approach is that development proposals should include provision for:

1. the minimisation, re-use and recycling of waste
2. minimising the pollution potential of unavoidable waste, and its safe disposal;
3. the use of recycled materials in construction where appropriate; and
4. facilities within individual or groups of properties or premises for the source separation and storage of different types of waste for collection.

**Question 57****Providing for Waste in New Development**

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option NR7?

**12.8 Sustainable Design and Construction**

**12.8.1** Maximising energy efficiency and reducing resource consumption in new development, or retro-fitting existing buildings, can help to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and associated climate change effects. The council's objective is to minimise the impact of the borough on climate change. To reflect this, the council will encourage new developments to be as sustainable as possible, and seek to move towards a low-carbon economy.

**12.8.2** Ways that development proposals can achieve this include reducing energy demand, adopting sustainable methods of design and construction,<sup>(83)</sup> design, and making use of accredited assessment schemes and standards such as BREEAM and Code for Sustainable Homes where appropriate. Energy demand will be calculated against the final design of the building. The council will negotiate with applicants

83 RBWM Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document  
[http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/pp\\_sustainable\\_design\\_and\\_construction\\_spd.htm](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/pp_sustainable_design_and_construction_spd.htm) - Content contained in this document will be updated as appropriate.

over the most appropriate solutions for buildings in conservation areas and other historic buildings. The Sustainable Design and Construction SPD acknowledges consideration of viability constraints as part of the energy demand statement accompanying planning applications.

**12.8.3** Where development proposals are unable to achieve zero carbon in line with Building Regulation requirements, they should provide evidence of financial support to relevant carbon saving projects such as Allowable Solutions.<sup>(84)</sup> Allowable Solutions could take one of two options:

1. contribution to a private energy fund contracted to manage delivery, or
2. where a local authority has a prescribed list of Allowable Solutions, the applicant could choose to contribute into a local community energy fund.<sup>(85)</sup>

**12.8.4** The Zero Carbon Hub<sup>(86)</sup> suggest that emission reductions can be achieved by three methods:

1. meeting at least the Fabric Energy Efficiency Standard (FEES),<sup>(87)</sup>
2. on-site low carbon heat and power, and
3. use Allowable Solutions to meet the remaining zero carbon target.

## Preferred Policy Option NR 8

### Sustainable Design and Construction

The preferred policy approach is to support initiatives to improve sustainability of the built environment and sustainable ways of living and working. Development proposal should minimise energy demand, improve energy efficiency and develop renewable energy technologies, and should aim for reduced or zero carbon development.

Proposals should deliver a minimum 10% reduction in expected energy demand through renewable energy or low carbon technology where the development is for:

- a. Schemes of more than 10 dwellings (gross), or
- b. Non-residential proposals of more than 1,000 sq m (gross) floorspace.

When zero carbon requirements are introduced through Building Regulations, and where off-setting cannot be fully achieved on-site, financial mitigation or Allowable Solutions will be sought in line with the national Allowable Solutions framework (or any successor framework).

84 Allowable Solutions is the term used by central government although further guidance on this topic is still awaited. Element Energy - *Assessment of the zero carbon regulations: Draft Final Report for Climate Berkshire Group* (December 2012).

85 Even where a prescribed list is established, applicants retain the ability to contribute via option 1.

86 A body to which the government has given lead responsibility for delivering homes to zero carbon standards by 2016. <http://www.zerocarbonhub.org/index.aspx>

87 The Fabric Energy Efficiency Standard (FEES) was developed that set the performance levels for the building fabric that would reduce the amount of energy required to heat a home and reach the Zero Carbon standard. The FEES sets a maximum limit on the amount of energy (in kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/year) that would normally be needed to maintain comfortable internal temperatures in a home. For the majority of homes, levels of 39 and 46 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/year are proposed. For a home to be 'FEES-compliant', the fabric must be sufficiently efficient enough to ensure that heating and cooling energy demand does not exceed these figures.

## Options

**12.8.5** To minimise the environmental impact of new building, it is considered important to enable a suite of possible solutions. To this end, the council's preferred policy option is to be as flexible as possible within the framework set by other bodies. This means that no one unique design solution is sought, and various options are allowable. Given this inherent flexibility, no other policy options were considered.

### Question 58

#### Sustainable Design and Construction

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option NR8?

## 12.9 Energy

**12.9.1** Planning can make a significant contribution to both mitigating and adapting to climate change, through decision-making on the location, scale, mix and character of development. The 2008 Planning Act introduced a duty on local development plans to include policies which ensure that they make a contribution to both climate change mitigation and adaptation. Reflecting this, one of the plan's objectives is to minimise the impact the borough has on climate change.

**12.9.2** National policy<sup>(88)</sup> states that local planning authorities should adopt proactive strategies to mitigate and adapt to climate change, that planning should provide resilience to the impacts of climate change, and support the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure. It also states that planning should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate and encourage the use of renewable resources, for example by the development of renewable energy.

**12.9.3** Applications for renewable energy may include solar farms, wind turbines, weir hydro-power, biomass, district heating, combined heat and power (CHP) from renewable resources etc. The visual impact of solar farms on the landscape and other sensitive areas will be a key consideration in determining applications. Wind energy schemes should only be considered where wind is sufficiently strong. Applications for biomass infrastructure should consider the transportation and the feasibility of combined heat and power. The council's preferred approach is generally supportive of hydro-electric turbines along the River Thames.

### Preferred Policy Option NR 9

#### Renewable Energy Generation

The preferred policy approach is to support the production of renewable energy and associated infrastructure, noting that the impact of renewable energy development should be minimised and priority given to less sensitive areas.

The location and design of all renewable energy generation proposals should be appropriate to and not harmful to their area, with proposals in sensitive areas being small-scale. When considering proposals the council will have regard to:

1. the potential to integrate the proposal with existing or new development;
2. the Best Practicable Environmental Option (BPEO);<sup>(89)</sup>
3. the proximity to adequate transport networks;
4. availability of suitable connection to the electricity distribution network.

## Options

**12.9.4** Providing general support for renewable energy generation is in line with national policy and the council's objectives, so it was not considered appropriate to present options on this topic. The degree of support to be given was considered, however.

**12.9.5** Offering the maximum possible policy support to renewable energy generation would ensure that the benefits were maximised but at the possible expense of addressing legitimate concerns such as the impact of development on landscape and amenity. A policy of more general support was considered to strike a balance between these two aspects and ensure that concerns would be addressed without stifling the development of renewable energy generation.

### Question 59

#### Renewable Energy Generation

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option NR9?

## 12.10 Managing Flood Risk and Waterways

**12.10.1** The River Thames and its tributaries are a dominant feature in the borough. As a result a considerable proportion of the borough is at risk of flooding. Fluvial (river) flooding and localised flooding (e.g. from groundwater, surface water and sewers) are some of the "flooding constraints" to development in several locations around the borough, with the River Thames having severely flooded several times in the last 100 years.

**12.10.2** A key objective of the plan is to minimise the impact of the borough on climate change. One of the key ways to achieving this is by adapting to climate change through the careful management of flood risk.

**12.10.3** The council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2013) and EA flood maps show that it is predominantly locations along the Thames that are at highest risk of flooding e.g. Wraysbury, Old Windsor, Cookham and Windsor. Some other areas including around Waltham St Lawrence, White Waltham / Paley Street and up to Holyport, are at flood risk owing to Twyford Brook and The Cut, which are both tributaries of the Thames. Fluvial flood risk is therefore a constraint to development in several areas of the borough.

<sup>89</sup> In relation to (2), the Best Practicable Environment Option is defined as an option that provides the most benefits or the least damage to the environment as a whole, at acceptable cost, in both long and short term.)

**12.10.4** Fundamental to the plan's strategy is the avoidance of unnecessary development in areas liable to flooding through the adoption of a risk based approach. This approach is translated into the preferred policy approach below. The policy also provides an opportunity to support and safeguard the Maidenhead Waterways.

**12.10.5** The council will work with the EA to manage water and flooding matters in the borough, and to promote development away from areas at risk of flooding. The council will work with applicants to ensure that development is appropriately located and does not result in unacceptable flood risk or drainage problems, in the locality or elsewhere. This will involve exploring mitigation measures to ensure that they are suitable, appropriate and economically viable.

**12.10.6** As part of the plan's spatial planning approach, the preferred policy approach below recognises ongoing investigations by the EA of comprehensive flood risk management measures. Currently the EA is undertaking an investigation of appropriate measures between Datchet and Sunbury (the Lower Thames Strategy). The Lower Thames Strategy is intended to reduce the risk of river flooding to 15,000 properties with a one per cent annual (1 in 100 year) chance of flooding. The EA believe the solution to be a combination of an engineered component and a floodplain management component.

**12.10.7** An opportunity also exists to provide a policy context to acknowledge the council's support for improvements to the waterways of Maidenhead and, in particular, the implementation of the Maidenhead Waterway Project. This project involves the creation of an accessible green corridor or route with raised and stabilised water levels with a longer-term ambition that the waterways will be navigable by narrow boats.<sup>(90)</sup>

## Preferred Policy Option NR 10

### Managing Flood Risk and Waterways

The preferred policy approach is to support appropriate comprehensive flood risk management measures with land associated with strategic flood relief measures shown on the policies map and safeguarded.

Development that facilitates the improvement and integration of waterways in Maidenhead, including the implementation of the Maidenhead Waterway Project, will be supported.

The preferred policy approach is to only support water compatible uses and essential infrastructure development in the functional floodplain. In other areas at risk of flooding, development over 50m<sup>2</sup> (including buildings or structures erected under permitted development rights) will not be permitted.

A sequential test will guide development to areas of lowest flood risk, and evidence in the form of a flood risk assessment will be required. In applying this test regard will be had to a number of factors:

1. The availability of suitable alternative sites in areas of lower flood risk;
2. The vulnerability of the proposed use;
3. The present and future flood risk;
4. The scale of potential consequences.

In all cases, the development must not itself, or cumulatively with other development, materially:

90 For further information, refer to the Maidenhead Waterways Restoration Group ([www.maidenheadwaterways.org](http://www.maidenheadwaterways.org)) and the Maidenhead Waterways Framework Planning Brief [http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/public/pp\\_maidenhead\\_waterways\\_main\\_report.pdf](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/public/pp_maidenhead_waterways_main_report.pdf)

1. Impede the flow of flood water;
2. Reduce the capacity of the floodplain to store water;
3. Increase the number of people, property or infrastructure at risk of flooding;
4. Cause new or exacerbate existing flooding problems, either at the site or elsewhere.

Proposals must incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems, should increase the storage capacity of the floodplain and should aim to reduce flood risk. All new development should be constructed with adequate flood resilient and resistant measures suitable for the lifetime of the development.

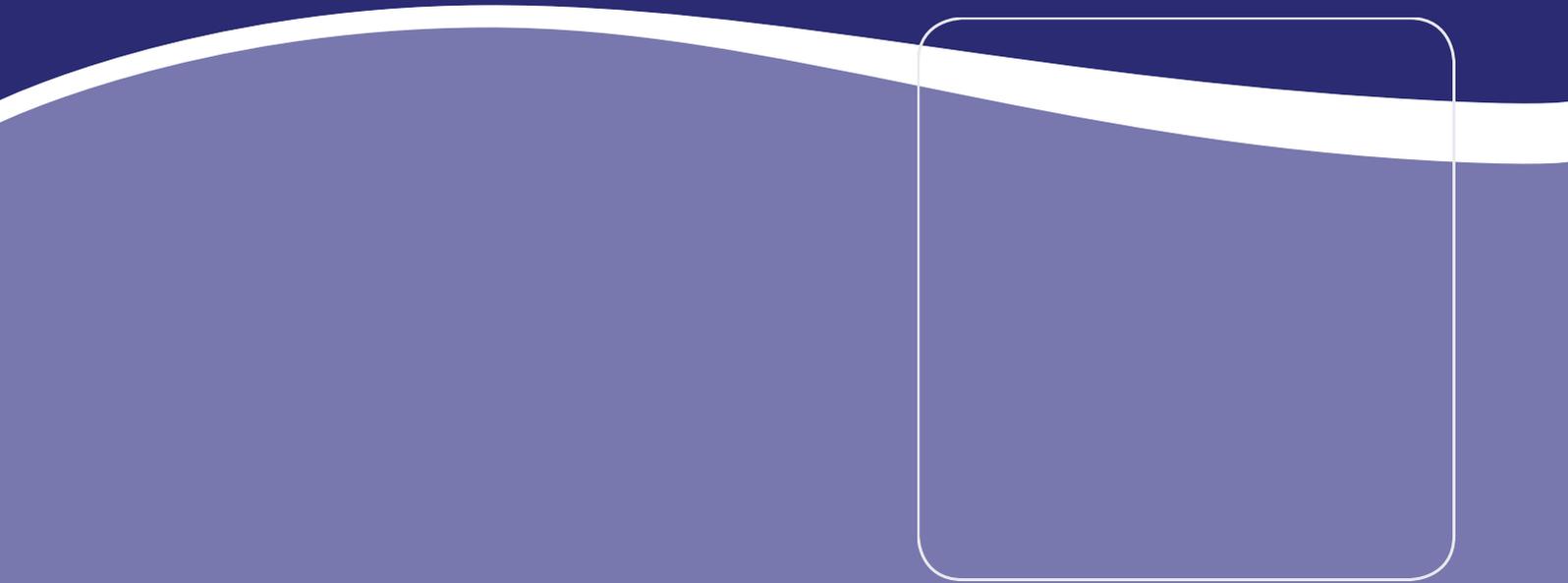
### Options

**12.10.8** This chapter of the plan sits within strong national policy advice regarding minimising and responding to flood risk. This issue is of particular importance to the borough and it is considered entirely appropriate to apply the national policy approach at a local level. As a result, no policy options are presented for this policy.

### Question 60

#### Managing Flood Risk and Waterways

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option NR10?



## Environmental Protection

13

## **ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

**13.0.1** The council's overall vision is that the borough remains a place where everyone can thrive in a safe and healthy environment. Improvements to the quality of the environment can enhance health and well-being, and help to facilitate sustainable communities. This can be done through maintaining or enhancing air quality, and minimising or reducing nuisance which affects human senses.

**13.0.2** Whilst there is legislation to control emissions from polluting activities, the planning system has a complementary role in directing the location of development that may give rise to environmental protection problems. Uses which are considered to be sensitive to environmental quality include but are not limited to dwellings, schools and hospitals.

### **Options**

**13.0.3** This chapter of the plan sits within a strong national policy presumption in favour of protecting environmental quality. It is considered appropriate to apply the national approach within the borough and, as a result, no policy options are presented for the policies in this chapter.

**13.0.4** All development must have regard to its impact on environmental quality. Supporting text will set out particular requirements for information that must be submitted in order to properly assess the impact of development proposals on the quality of the local and natural environment, and any remedial measures necessary to avoid pollution.

## **13.1 Environmental Protection**

**13.1.1** National policy<sup>(91)</sup> states that both new and existing development should not contribute to, be put at unacceptable risk from, or be adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution.

**13.1.2** The council is committed to protecting existing environmental quality and reducing adverse effects on the local and natural environment as a result of changes in activities or from new development. Therefore the preferred policy approach is that development proposals should seek to maintain existing environmental quality in the locality, and improve quality where possible, both during construction and upon completion. Opportunities for such improvements should be incorporated at the design stage or through operation.

**13.1.3** Residential amenities may be harmed by reason of noise, smell or other nuisance. Accordingly, care should be taken when siting particular agricultural proposals such as livestock units, silage storage or slurry pits which should be sited well away from the curtilage of any residential property.

**13.1.4** Supporting text will set out details of remedial or preventative measures (for example construction management plans) and any supporting environmental assessments that may be required to support development proposals. These matters may be secured by condition.

---

91 National Planning Policy Framework, para. 109.

## Preferred Policy Option EP 1

### Environmental Protection

The preferred policy approach is that development proposals should not have an adverse impact on the local environment. They should not either individually or cumulatively in combination with other schemes, have an unacceptable effect on environmental quality or landscape, both during the construction phase and when completed. They should avoid locating sensitive uses in areas with existing or likely future nuisance, pollution or contamination.

### Question 61

#### Environmental Protection

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option EP1?

## 13.2 Air Pollution

**13.2.1** Air pollution in the borough relates mainly to pollutants emitted from transport sources, together with other pollutants as specified within the national air quality strategy.<sup>(92)</sup> Local Authorities have a duty to declare Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs)<sup>(93)</sup> and work towards achieving national limit values in areas where residents are exposed to pollutants in excess of limit values. It is therefore important to ensure that new development proposals, either individually or cumulatively, do not significantly affect residents within AQMAs by generating unsatisfactory levels of pollution.

**13.2.2** National policy<sup>(94)</sup> states that policies should pursue compliance with and contribute towards EU limit values or national objectives for pollutants, taking into account the presence of AQMAs and the cumulative impacts on air quality from individual sites. Development proposals should aim to contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural and local environment, by avoiding putting new or existing occupiers at risk of harm from unacceptable levels of air quality.<sup>(95)</sup>

**13.2.3** The largest contributor to air pollution within the borough is road traffic. There are currently three AQMAs declared in the borough: one in Maidenhead town centre, one in Windsor at the junction of Royal Windsor Way and Clarence Road, and one at the M4 crossing in Bray.

**13.2.4** Applicants should consider air quality impacts at the earliest stage possible; where appropriate through an air quality impact assessment which should include cumulative impacts. Where relevant, air quality and transport assessments should be linked to health impact assessments, including any transport related mitigation measures that prove necessary.

92 UK Air Quality Strategy (2007).

93 Local authorities are required under Part IV of the Environment Act 1995 to establish AQMAs where air quality standards or objectives are not being met, or are not anticipated to be met.

94 National Planning Policy Framework, para. 124.

95 Applicants should have regard to the UK Air Quality Strategy (2007) or any successive strategies, ensuring that pollutant levels do not exceed or come close to exceeding national limit values.

## Preferred Policy Option EP 2

### Air Pollution

The preferred policy approach is to ensure no significant effect on new or existing residents within or adjacent to an Air Quality Management Area. Proposals will be supported where significant increases in air pollution can be mitigated.

### Question 62

#### Air Pollution

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option EP2?

## 13.3 Artificial Light

**13.3.1** Many forms of artificial lighting can be beneficial. However, in some circumstances the installation of lighting can be intrusive and result in light pollution. National policy<sup>(96)</sup> notes that through good design and planning policies, the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity can be limited.

**13.3.2** Light pollution is caused by a number of factors including:

- Sky glow – the orange glow seen around urban areas at night.
- Glare – the uncomfortable brightness of a light source when viewed against a dark background.
- Light trespass – the spill of light beyond the boundary of property on which the light source is located.

**13.3.3** The council wishes to maintain the distinction between urban areas and the countryside in lighting terms. To determine whether development proposals involving artificial lighting have a detrimental impact, they should be assessed in accordance with the zone in which they are located.<sup>(97)</sup> This will determine whether they have the potential to cause harm to health or quality of life, or to affect biodiversity, and also what mitigation may be required.

**13.3.4** Supporting text will set out requirements for lighting schemes, in particular design solutions to reduce light pollution and mechanisms to ensure that proposals do not have an adverse effect on adjacent areas. This may include for example a requirement for floodlighting schemes to demonstrate their impact, or for the Council to be satisfied that a proposed lighting scheme is the minimum required for security and working purposes, which will seek to minimise light used and the potential pollution from glare and spillage. The supporting text will also make reference to appropriate guidance such as the 'Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Light Pollution' issued by the Institution of Lighting Engineers.

96 National Planning Policy Framework, para. 125.

97 The Institute of Lighting Engineers specify environmental zones and corresponding thresholds for exterior lighting control: with E2 being rural, small village or relatively dark urban locations; E3 being small town centres or urban locations; and E4 being towns or areas with night-time activity.

## Preferred Policy Option EP 3

### Artificial Light

The preferred policy approach is to minimise artificial light pollution where possible. Development proposals for new floodlighting and other external lighting that are likely to have a detrimental impact on neighbouring residents, the rural character of an area or biodiversity, should provide effective mitigation measures. Proposals to replace existing light installations in order to mitigate light pollution will be considered favourably.

### Question 63

#### Artificial Light

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option EP3?

## 13.4 Noise

**13.4.1** Noise pollution can affect the local and natural environment, and the quality of life of occupiers of properties. There are two different types of noise: neighbourhood noise and environmental noise.

**13.4.2** Environmental noise is defined as transport noise (from aircraft, road and rail). Neighbourhood noise is defined as noise generated within the community, such as construction noise, noise from licensed premises including cooking facilities, industrial noise, air conditioning plants and street noise.<sup>(98)</sup> Neighbour and neighbourhood noise are controlled by specific legislation.<sup>(99)</sup>

**13.4.3** National policy<sup>(100)</sup> states that new developments should avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life, and recognise that development will often create some noise. Existing businesses wanting to develop in continuance of their business should not have unreasonable restrictions put on them.

**13.4.4** Development proposals should consider the noise and quality of life impact on recipients in existing nearby properties and also the intended new occupiers ensuring they will not be subject to unacceptable harm. Proposals that will generate unacceptable levels of noise and affect quality of life should only be granted permission where effective mitigation is demonstrated.

**13.4.5** Supporting text will set out requirements for minimising noise pollution, in particular design solutions and any noise assessment work required to support applications. Internal noise standards for noise-sensitive developments will be set out in the policy.

98 Street noise does not include traffic but noise from the street including patron noise, generators, plant and equipment, street cafes etc.

99 These are specified in the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and Control of Pollution Act 1974.

100 National Planning Policy Framework, para. 123.

### Preferred Policy Option EP 4

#### Noise

The preferred policy approach is to provide solutions to noise pollution, through design and mitigation measures.

### Question 64

#### Noise

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option EP4?

## 13.5 Contaminated Land and / or water

**13.5.1** It is important that people's health and quality of life is not put at risk by land contamination. Some human activities can put groundwater resources at risk, both in terms of quality and quantity. Such activities include landfill sites, chemical works, petrol stations and effluent from farming practices. Groundwater plays a vital role in the environment, providing drinking water and maintaining river flows.

**13.5.2** National policy<sup>(101)</sup> states that the natural and local environment should be enhanced by remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.

**13.5.3** Making use of contaminated land benefits the environment, both by cleaning the site and also utilising previously developed land, which removes pressure from greenfield sites. Both surface water and groundwater can be seriously affected by development and uses occurring within sites, therefore adequate measures are required to protect water quality. This is particularly important in groundwater Source Protection Zones (SPZ), which are areas identified<sup>(102)</sup> as at risk from potentially polluting activities. SPZs are designated for all groundwater supplies intended for human consumption. Areas in the borough covered by SPZs include Cookham Rise, Hurley, Maidenhead, Bray and north Datchet.

**13.5.4** Supporting text will set out requirements to avoid water pollution, in particular any assessment work required to support applications and any remedial or preventative measures required to remove potential harm.

### Preferred Policy Option EP 5

#### Contaminated Land and Water

The preferred policy approach is to ensure that development proposals will not cause unacceptable harm to the environment through contamination of land or water. Proposals that do not cause unacceptable harm to land or water quality will be supported.

101 National Planning Policy Framework, para. 109.

102 Identification is done by the Environment Agency through the European Water Framework Directive.

**Question 65****Contaminated Land and Water**

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option EP5?





## **NATURAL ENVIRONMENT**

**14.0.1** The high quality of the environment is a key feature of the borough. Significant areas are recognised to be of importance for nature conservation and landscape value. Environmental quality is also a major economic asset, with a healthy environment contributing to a strong local economy.

**14.0.2** The borough's ecological value is reflected in a number of international, national and local designations. International designations that apply to the borough are Special Protection Areas (SPA), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Ramsar sites (wetlands of international importance). These are shown below. National designations comprise Sites of Special Scientific Interest, while Local Wildlife Sites, formerly known as Wildlife Heritage Sites, are designated at a local level. Sites are designated independently from the Local Plan process.

**Table 10 International designations within the Borough**

<b>International designation</b>	<b>Area wholly or partially within the borough</b>
Chiltern Beechwoods SAC	Bisham Woods
South West London Water Bodies SPA and Ramsar	Wraysbury and Hythe End Gravel Pits and Wraysbury No.1 Gravel Pit
Thames Basin Heaths SPA	Chobham Common
Thursley, Ash, Pirbright and Chobham SAC	Chobham Common
Windsor Forest and Great Park SAC	Windsor Forest and Great Park

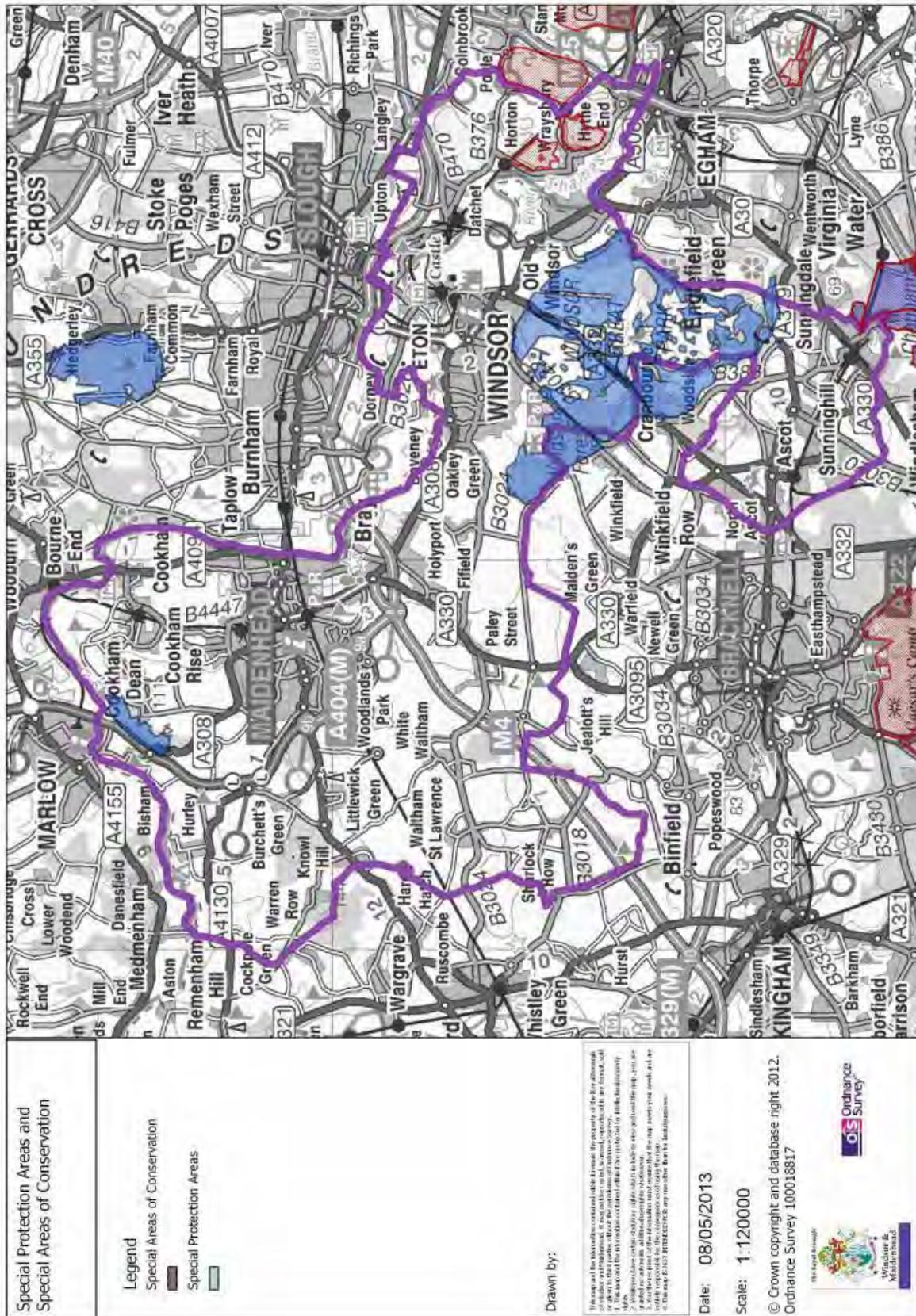
**14.0.3** One of the plan's objectives is to conserve and enhance the special qualities of the borough's built and natural environment, in particular to protect and enhance biodiversity - the variety of life in a particular habitat or ecosystem. The role of planning can include the conservation of protected species, and helping natural systems to adapt to climate change. This includes ensuring that opportunities for biodiversity improvement are sought and realised as part of development schemes.

**14.0.4** Green networks and corridors describe the linking together of natural, semi-natural and man-made open spaces to create an interconnected network. These can encompass many types of feature including grass verges, hedgerows, woodland, parks and many other elements. Planning has an important role to play to ensure that, where possible, development proposals contribute to the creation and enhancement of green corridors and networks.

### **Options**

**14.0.5** The majority of this chapter of the plan sits within a strong national policy presumption in favour of conserving the natural environment and enhancing access to the countryside and rights of way. This national policy fits well with the council's objectives and it is considered appropriate to apply the national policy approach at a borough level. As a result, no policy options are presented for this subject.

Figure 12 SPA and SAC Map



## 14.1 Nature Conservation

**14.1.1** A wide variety of valuable wildlife habitats exists in the borough. This diverse range of habitats aids the survival of numerous species of flora and fauna, as well as enhancing the character and appearance of the rural environment.

**14.1.2** Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) are designated by Natural England as the very best wildlife and geological sites in the country. 11 such sites have been designated in the borough. Some SSSIs have further designations as SACs, SPAs or Ramsar sites. These are areas that have been given special protection under the European Union's Habitats Directive. SACs provide increased protection to a variety of wild animals, plants and habitats and are a vital part of global efforts to conserve the world's biodiversity. SPAs are areas that have been identified as being of international importance for the breeding, feeding, wintering or the migration of rare and vulnerable species of birds, while Ramsar sites are those that are of international importance as wetlands.

**14.1.3** Local Wildlife Sites are non-statutory sites of significant value for the conservation of wildlife. They are identified by the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre, whose recommendations are considered by the council, with formal designation being made by the council. Local Wildlife Sites protect threatened habitats, which in turn protects the species making use of them.

**14.1.4** Supporting text in the plan will set out requirements to maintain, protect and enhance the nature conservation resource in the borough. This will include in particular any assessment work required to support applications and any mitigation or compensatory measures required to avoid potential harm, together with measures to improve biodiversity.

### Preferred Policy Option NE 1

#### Nature Conservation

The preferred policy approach is to maintain, protect and enhance designated sites of international, national and local importance, and to conserve protected species.

Proposals must avoid damage to Ramsar sites, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas. Damage to Local Wildlife Sites should be avoided. Where unavoidable adverse impacts arise from development proposals, they should be appropriately mitigated.

Development proposals should avoid loss of biodiversity and fragmentation of existing habitats. They should take up opportunities to improve nature conservation in general, achieve a net gain in biodiversity and enhance green corridors and networks.

### Question 66

#### Nature Conservation

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option NE1?

## 14.2 Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area

**14.2.1** The Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA) is designated under European Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC because it offers breeding and feeding sites to populations of three heathland species of birds – the Dartford warbler, nightjar and woodlark. It is a fragmented area extending across several local authority areas, and a small part of the Chobham Common section lies within the borough at Sunningdale. The 5 km zone of influence of the SPA extends across 11 local authority areas. It covers much of the southern part of the borough, including the settlements of Sunninghill, Sunningdale, Cheapside and most of Ascot.

### Statement

Owing to the legal tests underpinning the subject of the SPA, this policy area is presented in a fully worked up form rather than as a preferred option. In essence, no policy options are possible because the requirement is to comply with the law, rather than to make a planning judgement about the subject.

**14.2.2** The designation has a major impact on the potential for residential development both within the SPA and the areas adjoining it. New development which, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, is likely to have a significant effect on the integrity<sup>(103)</sup> of the SPA, requires an Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Regulations<sup>(104)</sup>. The general presumption in favour of sustainable development (Policy BLP 1) does not apply where an Appropriate Assessment is required.

**14.2.3** Natural England has identified<sup>(105)</sup> that net additional housing development up to 5 km from the SPA is likely to have a significant effect, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, on the integrity of the SPA. Within this zone of influence, mitigation measures are required. Similarly, Natural England has identified that an exclusion zone for new housing of 400 m linear distance from the SPA is appropriate, as mitigation measures are unlikely to be effective so close to the SPA. To enable residential development within the zone of influence but outside the exclusion zone to come forward in a timely and efficient manner, this policy sets out the extent of mitigation measures required.

**14.2.4** The Thames Basin Heaths Joint Strategic Partnership Board (made up of elected representatives from the local authorities affected by the Thames Basin Heaths SPA) has endorsed a Delivery Framework<sup>(106)</sup> which sets out a strategy for mitigating the impacts of development on the SPA. This framework explains that effective mitigation measures should comprise a combination of providing suitable areas for recreational use by residents (to draw recreational visits away from the SPA) and actions to monitor and manage access to the SPA itself. Such measures must be operational prior to occupation of new residential development, so as to ensure the integrity of the SPA is not damaged.

### Mitigation - SANG

**14.2.5** An alternative area for residents to use for recreation, in the form of a SANG, has been provided in the borough at Allen's Field, south of Ascot. This 9.5 ha site has been assessed as having the capacity to mitigate the impact of 462 new dwellings within the 5 km zone of influence. As of March 2013, permission

103 Judgements of whether the integrity of the site is likely to be adversely and significantly affected should be made in relation to the features for which the European site was designated and their conservation objectives.

104 The process and documentation associated with the statutory requirement under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010.

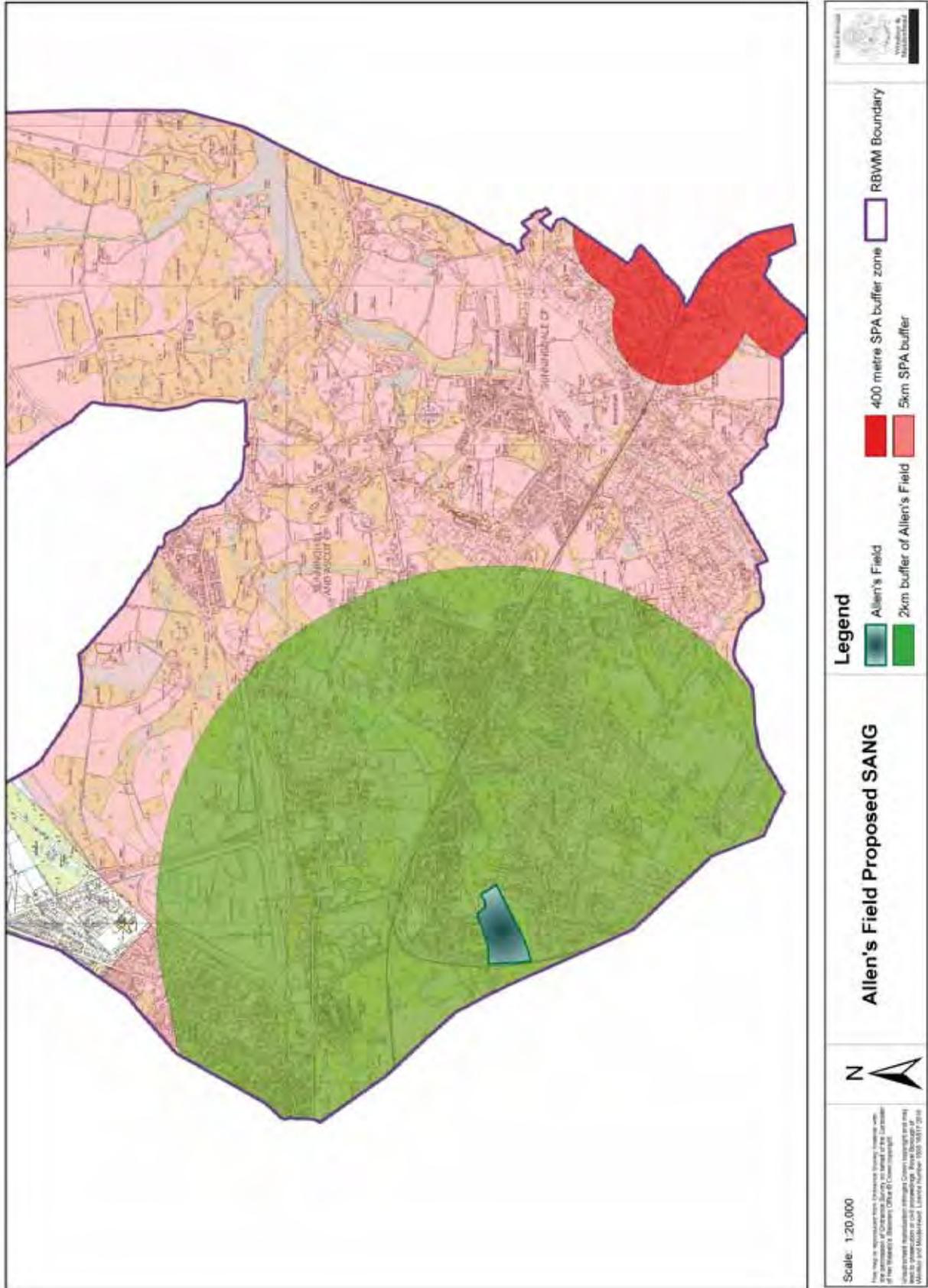
105 Visitor Access Patterns on the Thames Basin Heaths (ENRR682), 2005.

106 Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Delivery Framework, 2009

had been issued for 105 of these 462 dwellings, leaving a residual capacity of 357 dwellings. The council monitors permissions issued and developments commenced, and will use this work to ensure that no permissions are issued in excess of the mitigation capacity of Allen's Field.

**14.2.6** Provided that capacity remains, the Allen's Field SANG can be used to mitigate the impact of any residential development proposal within 2 km of its boundary, and also proposals for a net increase of fewer than 10 dwellings anywhere in the borough within 5 km of the SPA. The following diagram indicates the location of the SPA's 5 km zone of influence and 400 m exclusion zone, the Allen's Field SANG and its 2 km catchment area.

Figure 13 Allen's Field SANG



**14.2.7** Future levels of housing development expected in the 5 km zone of influence will require appropriate mitigation and it is likely that new SANG land will need to be identified in the future. The council will work with landowners, parish councils and the community group preparing a neighbourhood plan for the area, to deliver an appropriate level of SANG mitigation.

**14.2.8** Where large developments are proposed, bespoke SANG mitigation may be necessary. Applicants should engage positively with Natural England to discuss appropriate mitigation, in light of the particular location and characteristics of the development proposed. Measures proposed will be assessed on their own merits through the Habitats Regulations process. The mitigation measures adopted should be agreed with both the council and Natural England, and secured by legal agreement.

### **Mitigation - SAMM**

**14.2.9** Access management is delivered in the form of the Strategic Access Management and Monitoring project (SAMM). This project is provided at a strategic level, to ensure a consistent approach is used across the SPA and that improvements to one site do not have an adverse impact on others. It delivers a suite of measures to monitor use of the SPA and manage access through a combination of education, surveys and physical works.

**14.2.10** To ensure appropriate provision for SAMM, contributions from development proposals across all authorities affected by the SPA are collected and pooled. Natural England is currently responsible for delivering the project across all relevant areas.

**14.2.11** The council has produced supplementary guidance on the application of mitigation measures within the borough. Further guidance will be issued after adoption of the Borough Local Plan.

**14.2.12** This policy NE2 reflects the unique legal and ecological issues arising from the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area and the potential for development to have an adverse impact on its integrity. It expands on the protection offered by preferred policy option NE1 and implements a solution to enable the potential adverse effects of development to be mitigated.

## **Preferred Policy Option NE 2**

### **Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area**

Residential development proposals which are likely to have a significant effect on the integrity of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA) must demonstrate that adequate measures are put in place to avoid or mitigate any potential adverse effects.

A zone of influence is defined, set at 5km linear distance from the SPA boundary. Within this zone, proposals for residential development must take measures to ensure that the integrity of the SPA is protected.

Within the 5km zone of influence, an exclusion zone is defined, set at 400m linear distance from the SPA boundary. Proposals for a net increase in dwellings within this exclusion zone will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated through an Appropriate Assessment that there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of the SPA.

Development proposals for a net increase of dwellings outside the exclusion zone but within the zone of influence will be required to deliver mitigation measures prior to occupation and in perpetuity. Mitigation measures will be based on both the provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) and a contribution towards Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM).

The following standards and arrangements will apply for SANG provision and access management:

1. A minimum of 8 hectares of SANG land (after discounting to account for current access and capacity) will be provided per 1,000 new occupants;
2. Development resulting in a net increase of 10 or more dwellings will be required to be within a specified linear distance of a SANG that has capacity to cater for the consequent increase in residents. The relevant distance will differ for each SANG and will be calculated depending on its size[1];
3. Development resulting in a net increase of fewer than 10 dwellings will not be required to be within a specified distance of a SANG, provided that a sufficient quantity of SANG land exists overall to cater for the consequent increase in residents;
4. Large developments may be expected to provide bespoke mitigation for which the SANG requirement may vary according to the size and proximity of the development to the SPA. These solutions must be agreed with Natural England;
5. Access management measures will be provided strategically through cooperation between local authorities.

## Options

**14.2.13** No alternative options were considered for this topic. All local authorities affected by the SPA have agreed a common policy response to the subject and it is considered appropriate to adopt that agreed approach in the borough.

### Question 67

#### Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area

Do you support Policy NE2?

## 14.3 Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows

**14.3.1** The council's objective is to conserve and enhance the special qualities of the borough's built and natural environment. Trees, woodlands and hedgerows are an essential component of the natural and built environment. They play a major role in shaping the borough's environment and people's appreciation of it. Their loss either individually or cumulatively can have a significant impact on the character and amenity of an area.

**14.3.2** National policy<sup>(107)</sup> states that planning permission should be refused for development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats, including ancient woodland and the loss of aged or veteran trees found outside ancient woodland, unless the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss. Applicants will need to demonstrate that such benefits outweigh potential harm. The council is firmly committed to maintaining and enhancing the borough's trees, woodland and hedgerows as a vital part of the environment.<sup>(108)</sup>

**14.3.3** Proposals which would cause harm to ancient woodland, aged and veteran trees, landmark trees and any other irreplaceable habitats, will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that the need for, and benefits of development in that location outweigh the potential harm to these nature conservation interests and important features. Development proposals should respect the setting and character of natural areas and viewpoints.

**14.3.4** The retention of existing trees on a development site can help to soften the impact of new buildings and structures, as well as provide enhanced amenity. The introduction of planting, designed to soften the environment around major routes and reduce the impact of vehicles in terms of noise and pollution will be supported.

**14.3.5** Policy and supporting text, as appropriate, will set out particular requirements for information that must be submitted in order to properly assess the impact of development proposals on trees, woodlands and hedgerows. Any relevant design matters or planting schemes that will be required will also be detailed.

### Preferred Policy Option NE 3

#### Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows

The preferred policy approach is to maximise opportunities for creation, restoration, enhancement and connection of natural habitats as an integral part of development proposals.

The impact of proposals on trees, woodlands and hedgerows should be carefully considered. Criteria will be set out for assessment of proposals and for information that should accompany applications.

### Question 68

#### Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option NE3?

<sup>107</sup> National Planning Policy Framework, para. 118.

<sup>108</sup> To set appropriate levels of resource to plan, develop, and manage robust tree populations, the Borough Council has produced a Tree and Woodland Strategy for the period 2010-2020: [http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/trees\\_woodland\\_strategy.htm](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/trees_woodland_strategy.htm)

## 14.4 Open Spaces

**14.4.1** Open space is an important feature of the borough. An objective of the plan is to retain, improve and provide new facilities and other infrastructure to ensure a high quality of life for residents of all ages. It is therefore important that local residents have access to open spaces, including outdoor sports and leisure facilities, near to their homes.

**14.4.2** National policy<sup>(109)</sup> states that access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities. Nationally, open space is defined as all open space of public value which offers important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.

**14.4.3** The council's Open Space Study states that there is a need to provide a balance of different types of open space in order to meet local needs, and that the provision of open spaces and recreation (including outdoor sports facilities) is key to a sustainable and thriving community. The borough has an extensive green network, with open space forming an intrinsic feature and characteristic of urban areas. However overall the borough has an under provision of open space and playing pitches against recommended local standards. It is therefore important to protect and where appropriate increase provision in the future, particularly to meet the future needs associated with new development.

**14.4.4** The council's preferred approach is to ensure that new open space is provided where appropriate as part of new developments. Alongside this, the council will also seek to protect and where possible enhance the function of open space to make such areas more attractive and accessible to residents and visitors. All new residential development resulting in a net gain of dwellings should contribute towards the provision of new or enhanced open space. Each type of open space has both primary and secondary functions. For example, outdoor sports facilities have an amenity value in addition to facilitating sport and recreation.

**14.4.5** The council considers the retention of existing areas of open space to be of great importance and a high priority is attached to protecting them from development. When considering development proposals resulting in the loss of open space or harm to its use, or function or enjoyment by the public, proposals will be resisted. Policy will set out requirements on which applicants must provide evidence to justify any proposal for loss of open space.

**14.4.6** Supporting text will set out the standards and requirements for the provision of new open space, determined in accordance with the Open Space Study or successive documents. Evidence required to justify the loss of open space will also be detailed, together with other relevant guidance on topics such as the location and function of different types of open space.

### Preferred Policy Option NE 4

#### Open Spaces

The preferred policy approach is to address the need to retain open spaces in the borough, create new open space where possible, and to improve existing open spaces and access to them, including outdoor recreational / sporting facilities. Criteria will be set out to assess and justify any loss of open space.

**14.4.7** Open space here refers to all open space, including that with recreational, sports and amenity functions. Open space can be either formal or informal, and is measured in terms of its quality, quantity and accessibility. Any given piece of open space may have multiple functions and complex inter-relationships between its purpose and use.

### Question 69

#### Open Spaces

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option NE4?

## 14.5 Rights of Way and Access to the Countryside

**14.5.1** The borough has a network of around 300km of public rights of way, which provides for recreational use as well as routes for journeys to work and school. This network includes longer-distance routes such as the Green Way between Maidenhead, Cookham and Bray, the Thames Path, paths along the Jubilee River, the National Cycle Network and the Millennium Walk from Hurley to Maidenhead Riverside / Cliveden Reach. Access to this network contributes to the plan's objective of helping to ensure a high quality of life for residents of all ages.

**14.5.2** Access for all to a network of public rights of way and opportunities for recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities as recognised in national policy.<sup>(110)</sup> The council's Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) identifies ways to improve access on public rights of way for all, especially those with visual and mobility impairments, walkers, cyclists, equestrians and people with push chairs.

**14.5.3** The Borough Council wishes to see existing paths protected, maintained, improved and enhanced. Improving accessibility to existing green corridors including public rights of way must be considered in the layout of proposals. As an example, a footbridge from Boulter's Island to the east bank of the Thames linking the Thames Path and Jubilee River and walks in Taplow is being looked into. South Bucks District Council has included the bridge in a Development Brief for Mill Lane, Taplow.<sup>(111)</sup>

**14.5.4** The council will assess the potential for improving public access and recreation in individual situations against any detrimental impact which may be caused. Any initiatives to improve public access to the countryside identified in neighbourhood plans will specifically be encouraged.

**14.5.5** Supporting text will set out how development proposals should contribute to initiatives including improvements to existing public rights of way, the creation of new routes and access arrangements, management of facilities and improvement of transport links to the countryside.

110 National Planning Policy Framework, paras. 32, 35, 58, 69, 70, 73 and 114.

111 RBWM Milestones Statement and Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan Review 2013-2014.

## Preferred Policy Option NE 5

### Rights of Way and Access to the Countryside

The preferred policy approach is to support proposals that protect and safeguard the existing rights of way network and do not adversely affect the recreational/amenity value of the existing rights of way network. Proposals should demonstrate how they promote accessibility, linkages and permeability between and within existing green corridors including public rights of way such as footpaths, cycleways and bridleways, and promote the integration of the scheme with any adjoining public open space or countryside.

### Question 70

#### Rights of Way and Access to the Countryside

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option NE5?





## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

**15.0.1** This chapter outlines the approach towards providing the infrastructure and facilities needed to support the borough's requirements. This is to fulfil both existing needs and those generated by the development proposals outlined in the plan.

### **15.1 Community Facilities**

**15.1.1** Community facilities contribute to sustainable communities by providing venues for a wide range of activities and services. They make a significant contribution to people's health, social and cultural well being, sense of place and community, learning and education. Both community facilities and local services enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments and help to ensure a high quality of life for residents of all ages.

**15.1.2** Improving health, social and cultural wellbeing for all is an important element of national policy.<sup>(112)</sup> A key plan objective is to retain, improve and provide new facilities and other infrastructure to ensure a high quality of life for residents of all ages. A number of existing sports clubs expressed a wish to provide improved facilities. Accordingly, land at Little Farm Nursery, Maidenhead is proposed to be allocated for indoor and outdoor sports and recreation use. The land would remain in the Green Belt with proposals needing to be carefully designed to respond to their Green Belt setting and to manage flood risk.

**15.1.3** In the borough community uses include local shops, meeting places, indoor sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship<sup>(113)</sup> and other uses which are a focus for community activity, for example education, health care, libraries, leisure facilities, cultural facilities, day care centres and post offices. Public houses and local shops in particular can provide a community use or "hub". Due to the high cost of land in the borough there is a general shortage and difficulty in obtaining premises and land for community uses. It is therefore essential to protect sites currently in community use by resisting their loss to other uses.

**15.1.4** Supporting text will set out the locational requirements for community facilities and the evidence required to justify new provision. Where a community facility has been registered as an Asset of Community Value, the plan will indicate that the registration will be a material consideration in decision-making. Requirements for applicants to justify a loss of community facilities will be detailed, including consultation with service providers, the procedure and period for marketing the facility, examination of need and alternative provision.

## **Preferred Policy Option INF 1**

### **Community Facilities**

The preferred policy approach is to support proposals for new or improved community facilities which meet the needs or aspirations of local residents and visitors. Proposals for new development will be required to make appropriate provision for community facilities.

The status of a community facility as an Asset of Community Value will be a material consideration when determining planning applications.

112 National Planning Policy Framework, paras. 17, 28, 42, 69, 70 and 74.

113 Uses specified in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Little Farm Nursery, Maidenhead is proposed to be allocated for indoor and outdoor sports and recreation. A map showing the site is provided in Appendix E.

The loss of existing community facilities will be supported where the applicant can demonstrate that adequate alternative facilities are, or will be, provided in a suitable location, that there is no identified need for the facility, its use is not economically viable and that it is not viable for any other social or community use.

## Options

**15.1.5** Options considered to provide a policy supportive of community facilities related to a blanket policy of protection, or setting out a procedure and requirements to evidence and justify changes of use. While there may be circumstances where a change of use is either desirable or at least not harmful to the local community, a cautious approach towards the loss of community facilities is justified, to ensure that the needs of local communities continue to be met. A procedure will therefore be set out to assess changes of use. Evidence to be assessed could include marketing and the function of the facility, amongst other criteria. Supporting text will set out relevant factors to be considered.

### Question 71

#### Community Facilities

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option INF1?

### Question 72

#### Little Farm Nursery

Do you support the proposed allocation of Little Farm Nursery for outdoor and indoor sports and recreation uses?

## 15.2 Sustainable Transport

**15.2.1** The borough enjoys excellent levels of connectivity by road and rail, and is close to Heathrow airport. One of the key strategic objectives of the Plan is to reduce the need to travel in the borough and encourage sustainable modes of transportation.

**15.2.2** Transport issues by their nature do not respect local authority boundaries. The Thames Valley is a relatively densely populated area with numerous towns and villages, leading to high numbers of inter-urban trips for a wide range of purposes. The strategic road and rail corridors running through the borough carry large numbers of through movements as well as catering for more local trips. The council is working with neighbouring local authorities, through the Berkshire Strategic Transport Forum and Thames Valley Berkshire Local Transport Body, to study and address sub-regional issues.

**15.2.3** M4 corridor capacity improvements and enhanced links between the M4 and M40 have been identified by the Local Economic Partnership and the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Transport Body as a priority for sub-regional transport investment. In addition, with electrification of the Great Western Main Line and the arrival of Crossrail during the plan period, Maidenhead station will see significant investment.

**15.2.4** The council recognises the need to improve rail access to Heathrow, to encourage more sustainable travel patterns and relieve pressure on local and strategic road networks. Several proposals currently under consideration would provide new rail links from the Great Western Main Line and the Windsor to Waterloo Line. The council will consider proposals for rail access to Heathrow on their merits. In addition, there are early local proposals for a Windsor Link Railway (WLR - a line joining the two Windsor stations, connecting Slough to Waterloo via Windsor) and an alternative proposal for a Slough to Windsor tram link. Whilst Network Rail and South West Trains have concluded that the WLR is both likely to have both significant passenger demand and be viable, these proposals are at a very early feasibility stage. In addition, the council is in discussion with the owners of White Waltham Airfield about the future preferred leisure activities for which the airfield is acknowledged.

**15.2.5** The preferred policy approach to these issues provides a framework within which transport improvements will take place to minimise the negative economic, social and environmental impacts of travel. Supporting text will set out requirements for transport assessment and travel plans. Also included will be requirements for development proposals including the need to manage the demand for travel and parking, improve accessibility and integration of transport modes, and the details of parking required to be provided.

## Preferred Policy Option INF 2

### Sustainable Transport

The preferred policy approach is to work in partnership with service providers, developers, public transport operators, and neighbouring local transport authorities to improve access to key services and facilities within and around the borough. Accessibility to the Borough's centres will be optimised across all modes of travel.

Development proposals consistent with the objectives of the transport strategy set out in the council's Local Transport Plan will be supported, as will proposals that aid pedestrians, cyclists and public transport.

Land required to enable the Stafferton Way Link Road and improvements along Oldfield Road and Forlease Road, together with other land required to enable the future provision of priority transport projects, will be safeguarded from development.

### Options

**15.2.6** The Council's overall transport policy is set out in the Local Transport Plan – a long term strategy covering all forms of transport in the borough. This sets out the policy approach adopted and the justification for this. Given this established context, it was not considered appropriate to develop or examine other policy options in this plan regarding transport. No options are therefore presented for consideration here.

## Question 73

### Sustainable Transport

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option INF2?

## 15.3 Developer Contributions

**15.3.1** The implementation of plan policies and proposals will be the responsibility of a variety of organisations and individuals operating in different areas and at different times. It is important that development is carried out in a coordinated manner and that required infrastructure is provided in accordance with the rate of development and the pressures arising.

**15.3.2** Infrastructure is wide-ranging in scope and covers not just physical works but also services, amenities and facilities. Physical, social and green infrastructure all fall within the overall categorisation. The council has worked with partners to prepare an Infrastructure Study that examines current infrastructure provision in the borough and the changes made necessary by planned developments. This shows that the policies and proposals in this plan will generate a need for enhanced infrastructure provision over the plan period.

**15.3.3** In order to provide new and improved infrastructure to support planned growth, it will be necessary for the council to coordinate funding and delivery from individual developments. Development proposals should mitigate their own impact on the borough's infrastructure. Infrastructure may be secured via a number of mechanisms as appropriate to the circumstances. These may include planning obligations, a Community Infrastructure Levy or conditions attached to a planning permission. Conditions may take the form of Grampian conditions where appropriate. The council has issued supplementary guidance in the form of a Planning Obligations and Developer Contributions SPD, which provides detailed policy on securing appropriate contributions towards certain infrastructure.

## Preferred Policy Option INF 3

### Planning Obligations and Developer Contributions

The preferred policy approach is that development proposals should mitigate their impacts on infrastructure. Planning obligations and other appropriate mechanisms will be used to ensure the delivery of key on-site and area-wide infrastructure required to service and mitigate the impact of development proposals. Development proposals will be required to contribute towards the necessary provision of new infrastructure or enhancements to existing infrastructure, in both cases comprising physical, social and green infrastructure.

## Options

**15.3.4** No other policy options were considered for this topic. The principle of development proposals mitigating their own impact on infrastructure is well established and has operated successfully in the borough for many years. It is considered appropriate to continue this policy.

**Question 74****Planning Obligations and Developer Contributions**

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option INF3?

**15.4 Telecommunications**

**15.4.1** Convenient access to modern technology plays a central part in borough residents' lives. Advanced, high quality communications infrastructure is essential to support sustainable economic growth and enables many aspects of modern life including flexible working patterns and home working. The development of high speed broadband technology and other communications networks also play a vital role in enhancing the provision of local community facilities and services, particularly in rural areas.

**15.4.2** The council's objective is to seek to retain, improve and provide new facilities and other infrastructure to ensure a high quality of life for residents of all ages. In light of this, the council supports the expansion of electronic communications networks in the borough and the provision of suitable infrastructure to achieve this, including the Superfast Berkshire broadband scheme, subject to appropriate safeguards relating to the impact of the infrastructure. The preferred policy approach ensures that telecoms services can continue to grow and expand to increase the level of provision available to residents and local businesses, while minimising any environmental impacts. In particular, the proposed policy approach ensures that development in sensitive areas is undertaken with appropriate regard to their intrinsic qualities.

**15.4.3** Supporting text or policy, as appropriate, will set our criteria that proposals for telecoms development must meet. These will include locational requirements and the need to minimise harm to visual amenity, character and appearance, or assets of ecological or heritage value.

**Preferred Policy Option INF 4****Telecommunications**

The preferred policy approach is to support development proposals that would result in improvements to communications networks, provided environmental impacts are minimised. Criteria will be set out for the assessment of proposals for telecommunications equipment. These will include, amongst other criteria, a requirement for mast-sharing.

**Options**

**15.4.4** Providing general support for improving telecoms coverage reflects council priorities and it was considered appropriate to apply such a policy within the borough. As a result, it was not considered appropriate to present options on this topic. The degree of support to be given was considered, however.

**15.4.5** Offering the maximum possible policy support to telecoms infrastructure would ensure that the benefits were maximised and felt as widely as possible by all residents, but at the possible expense of addressing legitimate concerns such as the impact of development on landscape and amenity. A policy of more general support was considered to strike a balance between these two aspects and ensure that concerns would be addressed without stifling the development of telecoms infrastructure.

### **Question 75**

#### **Telecommunications**

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option INF4?

## **15.5 Water Supply and Sewerage Infrastructure**

**15.5.1** Sustainable management of natural resources is important locally. The borough is in one of the driest parts of the country and experiences a high level of demand for water. In some areas the demand is close to exceeding the available supply and the balance between the two can be very sensitive.

**15.5.2** The provision of water and waste water / sewerage infrastructure is an essential element of any new development. Climate change is leading to more unpredictable weather patterns and this in turn affects the availability of water, so care must be taken to ensure that sufficient supplies and infrastructure are available to service any new developments. Should the water or sewerage undertakers or the Environment Agency identify sites that are required to deliver necessary water or sewerage infrastructure, these will be safeguarded through the planning process.

**15.5.3** To ensure that sufficient water supplies and sewerage infrastructure are available to service any new developments, it will be necessary to examine existing provision and the impact that a development proposal is likely to have on capacity and water pressure. The major statutory undertaker in the borough has provided information on the capacity of existing sewerage and water infrastructure to accommodate new development, and this has informed preparation of the plan. All development proposals are expected to include water efficiency measures to reduce overall water consumption.

**15.5.4** Specific development proposals may require further study into their particular impacts, and agree with the water or sewerage company the delivery and funding of any required measures to address concerns. More details on this topic will be provided in the policy. The council will work with the Environment Agency and with the water and sewerage undertakers that serve the borough, over the whole plan period, to identify infrastructure needs and ensure that adequate water supply and sewerage capacity is provided in a timely manner to meet planned demand.

## Preferred Policy Option INF 5

### Water Supply and Sewerage Infrastructure

The preferred policy approach is that development proposals must demonstrate that adequate water supply and sewerage infrastructure capacity exists both on and off site to serve the development, and that the development would not lead to problems for existing users. Requirements will be set out for securing water supply and sewerage provision to a development proposal.

Sites that are identified by water or sewerage undertakers or the Environment Agency as being required to deliver necessary water or sewerage infrastructure will be safeguarded and allocated.

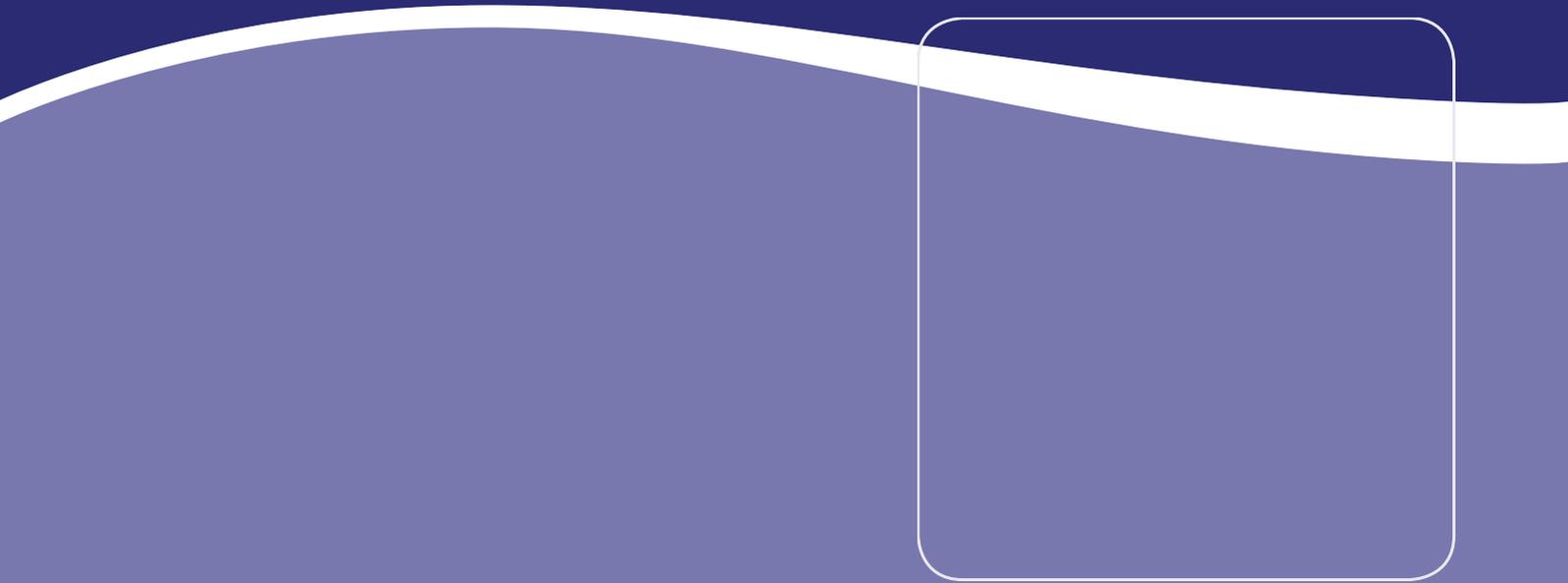
### Options

**15.5.5** Options considered for this topic revolved around the principle of whether or not to include a policy. The topic could be addressed within Policy INF3 on developer contributions. However, it was considered that the subject of water and sewerage supply was sufficiently distinct and raised different issues to other infrastructure demands, such that a separate policy was justified. The specific policy wording will be informed by discussions with water and sewerage undertakers and their input will ensure that the policy is both able to be implemented and achieves what it is designed to do.

### Question 76

#### Water Supply and Sewerage Infrastructure

Do you support the principles and preferred approach included in preferred policy option INF5?



## Glossary of Terms

**A**

## **GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

**Affordable Housing:** Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.

**Borough Local Plan:** The plan currently being prepared by RBWM for the future development of the local area, in consultation with the community. In law this is described as the development plan documents adopted under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

**Community Infrastructure Levy:** A levy allowing local authorities to raise funds from owners or developers of land undertaking new building projects in their area.

**Conservation:** The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.

**Development Plan:** This includes adopted Local Plans, Area Action Plans and Neighbourhood Plans within the Borough, plus one saved policy of the South East Plan, and is defined in section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

**Economic Development:** Development, including those within the B Use Classes, public and community uses and main town centre uses (but excluding housing development).

**Edge of Centre:** For retail purposes, a location that is well connected and up to 300 metres of the primary shopping area. For all other main town centre uses, a location within 300 metres of a town centre boundary. For office development, this includes locations outside the town centre but within 500 metres of a public transport interchange. In determining whether a site falls within the definition of edge of centre, account should be taken of local circumstances.

**Grampian Condition:** A condition placed on a planning permission, that prevents the start of a development until off-site works have been completed on land not controlled by the applicant.

**Green Belt:** In the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, Green Belt refers to the Metropolitan Green Belt. The designation accounts for 83% of the land area of the Royal Borough.

**Greenfield:** Any land that is not classified as PDL (previously developed land). Greenfield is not only countryside but also for example, open spaces in urban areas.

**Green Infrastructure:** A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.

**Lifetime Homes:** A standard by which dwellings may be considered adaptable. Promoted by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

**Main Town Centre Uses:** Retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment facilities; the more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, night-clubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres, and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities).

**National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):** National planning guidance issued by the Government, setting out policy guidance on different aspects of planning. Local Planning Authorities must take the content into account in preparing Local Plans and decision making.

**Neighbourhood Plan:** A plan prepared by a Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum for a particular neighbourhood area (made under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

**Neighbourhood Plan Area:** The land area covered by a Neighbourhood Plan.

**Open Space:** All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.

**Out of Centre:** A location which is not in or on the edge of a centre but not necessarily outside the urban area.

**Out of Town:** A location out of centre that is outside the existing urban area.

**Permitted Development:** The name given to development which can be undertaken without the need to apply to the local planning authority for planning permission. They derive from a general planning permission granted not by the local authority but by national legislation.

**Planning Obligation:** A legally enforceable obligation entered into under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to mitigate the impacts of a development proposal.

**Previously Developed Land (PDL):** Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development control procedures; land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously-developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time.

**Primary Shopping Area:** Defined area where retail development is concentrated (generally comprising the primary and those secondary frontages which are adjoining and closely related to the primary shopping frontage).

**Primary and Secondary Frontages:** Primary frontages are likely to include a high proportion of retail uses which may include food, drinks, clothing and household goods. Secondary frontages provide greater opportunities for a diversity of uses such as restaurants, cinemas and businesses.

**Ramsar Sites:** Wetlands of international importance, designated under the 1971 Ramsar Convention.

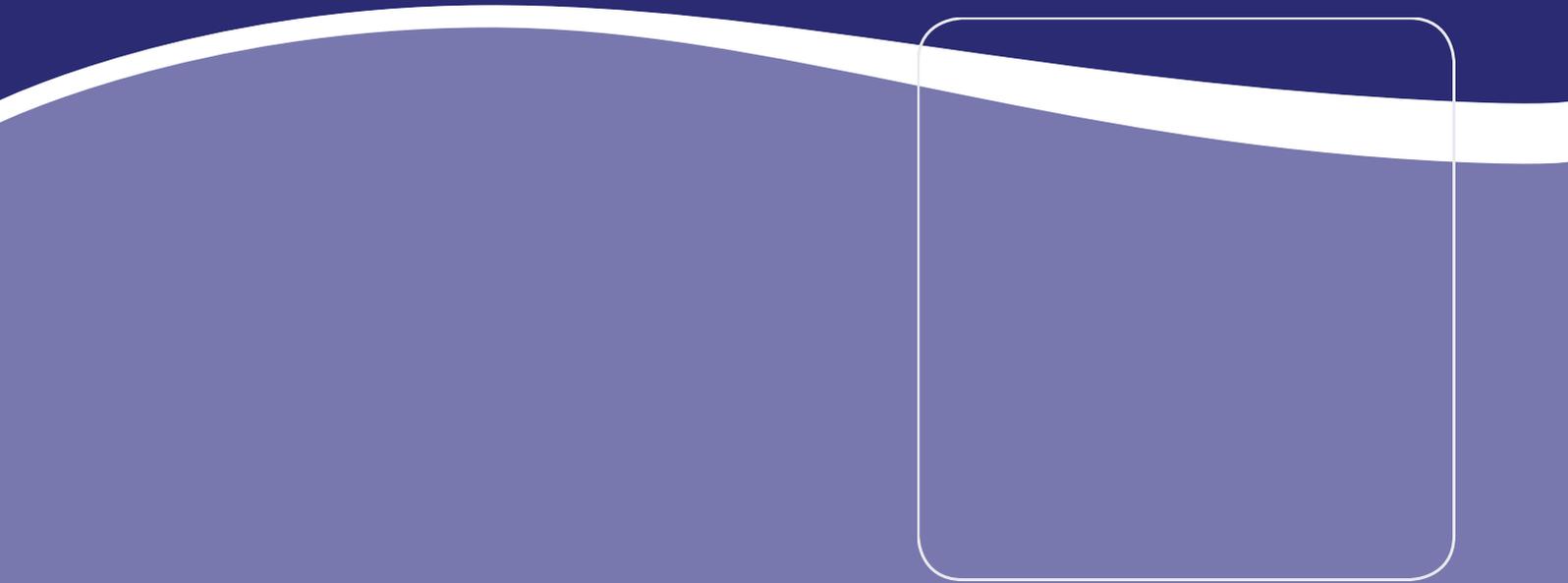
**Sites of Special Scientific Interest:** Sites designated by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

**Special Areas of Conservation:** Areas given special protection under the European Union's Habitats Directive, which is transposed into UK law by the Habitats and Conservation of Species Regulations 2010.

**Special Protection Areas:** Areas which have been identified as being of international importance for the breeding, feeding, wintering or the migration of rare and vulnerable species of birds found within European Union countries. They are European designated sites, classified under the Birds Directive.

**Town Centre:** Area including the primary shopping area and areas predominantly occupied by main town centre uses within or adjacent to the primary shopping area. References to town centres or centres apply to town centres, district centres and local centres but exclude small parades of shops of purely neighbourhood significance. Existing out of centre developments, comprising or including main town centre uses, do not constitute town centres.

**Visitor Attraction:** A permanently established excursion destination, a primary purpose of which is to allow public access for entertainment, interest or education, rather than being a primary retail outlet or a venue for sporting, theatrical or film performance.



## Green Belt Boundary Amendments

**B**

**MINOR ADJUSTMENTS TO THE GREEN BELT****Minor Adjustments to the Green Belt**

- Open space next to Holy Trinity Church, Cookham Village (Map 1)
- Land at Cookham House, Cookham (Map 1)
- Odney Club, Cookham Village (Map 1)
- South west Cookham Rise (Map 1)
- Land north of Aldebury Road, Maidenhead (Map 2)<sup>(114)</sup>
- Land north of Cookham Road, Maidenhead (Map 2)<sup>(115)</sup>
- North of Aldebury Road, Maidenhead (Map 2)<sup>(116)</sup>
- West of Aldebury Road, Maidenhead (Map 2)
- West of Maidenhead Court Park, Maidenhead (Map 3)
- Boulters Island, Maidenhead (Map 3)
- Bridge Gardens, Maidenhead (Map 4)
- Guards Club Park, Maidenhead (Map 4)
- Land at Braywick Park, Maidenhead (Map 5)
- Kingswood Court, Maidenhead (Map 6)
- Braywick House, Braywick Road, Maidenhead (Map 6)<sup>(117)</sup>
- Area east of Somersby Crescent, Maidenhead (Maps 6 and 7)<sup>(118)</sup>
- Open space to rear of Thurlby Way, Maidenhead (Map 7)
- Land at Ockwells Manor, Maidenhead (Map 7)
- Woodlands Park, Maidenhead (Map 8)
- Allotments at Breadcroft Road, Maidenhead (Map 8)
- East of Cannon Lane, Maidenhead (Map 9)
- Land south of the M4, west of Aygarth Park, Braywick (Map 10)<sup>(119)</sup>
- South of Windsor Road, Maidenhead (Map 10)
- South of Eton Wick (Map 11)
- North of Eton Wick (Map 11)
- North west of Eton Wick (Map 11)
- Playing fields at Eton Wick Church of England First School, Eton Wick (Map 11)
- Land at Tangier Mill, Tangier Lane, Eton (Map 12)
- Land at Headmaster's Garden & Fellows Garden, Eton (Map 12)
- Land at Colenorton Field, Eton (Map 12)
- Land south of Keats Lane, Eton (Map 12)
- Baths Island, Windsor (Map 12)
- Alexander First School playing fields, Windsor (Map 13)
- Land at Maidenhead Road, Windsor (Map 13)

114 This land is in proximity to an area in the Green Belt where analysis of development suitability will be undertaken. The adjustment is dependent on the outcome of this analysis.

115 This land is in proximity to an area in the Green Belt where analysis of development suitability will be undertaken. The adjustment is dependent on the outcome of this analysis.

116 This land is in proximity to an area in the Green Belt where analysis of development suitability will be undertaken. The adjustment is dependent on the outcome of this analysis.

117 This land is in proximity to an area in the Green Belt where analysis of development suitability will be undertaken. The adjustment is dependent on the outcome of this analysis.

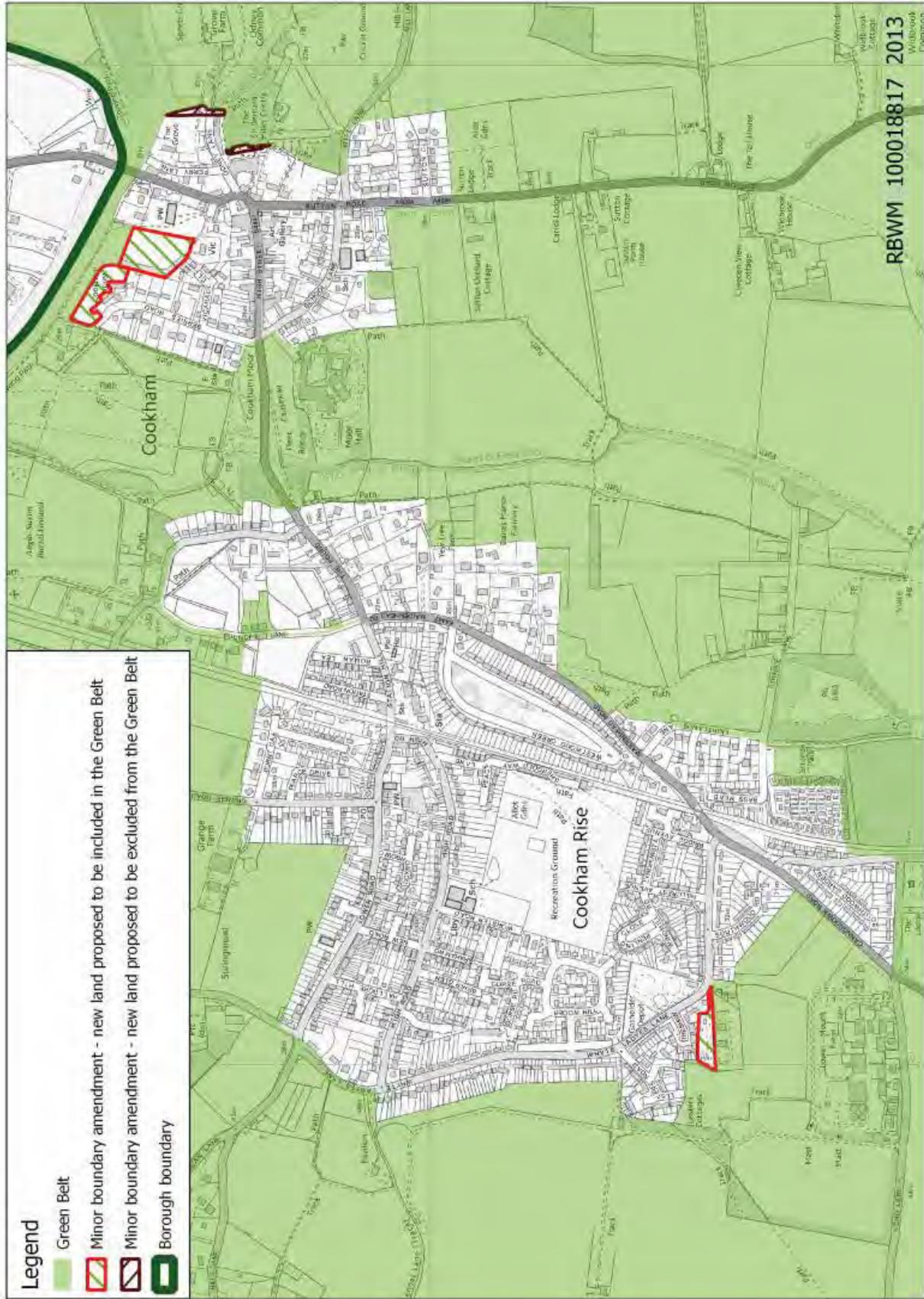
118 This land is in proximity to an area in the Green Belt where analysis of development suitability will be undertaken. The adjustment is dependent on the outcome of this analysis.

119 This land is in proximity to an area in the Green Belt where analysis of development suitability will be undertaken. The adjustment is dependent on the outcome of this analysis.

- Land south of St Leonards Hill, Windsor (Map 14)
- Spital allotments and Trevelyan School playing fields, Windsor (Map 15)
- Spital cemetery, Windsor (Map 15)
- Land east of Regents Court, Windsor (Map 16)
- Land north of Queen Anne's Cottage, Windsor (Map 16)
- East Windsor (Map 16)
- North west Datchet (Map 17)
- Recreation ground, Datchet (Map 18)
- Land west of Mill Place, Datchet (Map 18)
- Land east of Penn Road, Datchet (Map 18)
- North Datchet (Map 18)
- South Datchet (Map 18)
- South east Datchet (Map 18)
- Cemetery on Tyle Place, Old Windsor (Map 19)
- East of Old Windsor (Map 19)
- Pelling Hill, Old Windsor (Map 20)
- Thames area, Old Windsor and Wraysbury (Map 20)
- The Green, Wraysbury (Map 21)
- South east Wraysbury (Map 21)
- Land north of Francis Chichester Close, South Ascot (Map 22)
- North of Lower Village Road, Sunninghill (Map 22)
- Allotments and Holy Trinity C of E playing fields, Sunningdale (Map 23)
- Land adjacent to station car park, Sunningdale (Map 23)
- South Ascot Primary School Playing Fields, South Ascot (Map 24)
- Land south of Ascot Station, South Ascot (Map 24)
- Land south of Kinross Avenue, South Ascot (Map 24)
- Greenwood House, The Covert, Ascot (Map 25)
- Ascot Racecourse, Ascot (North of High Street) (Map 26)



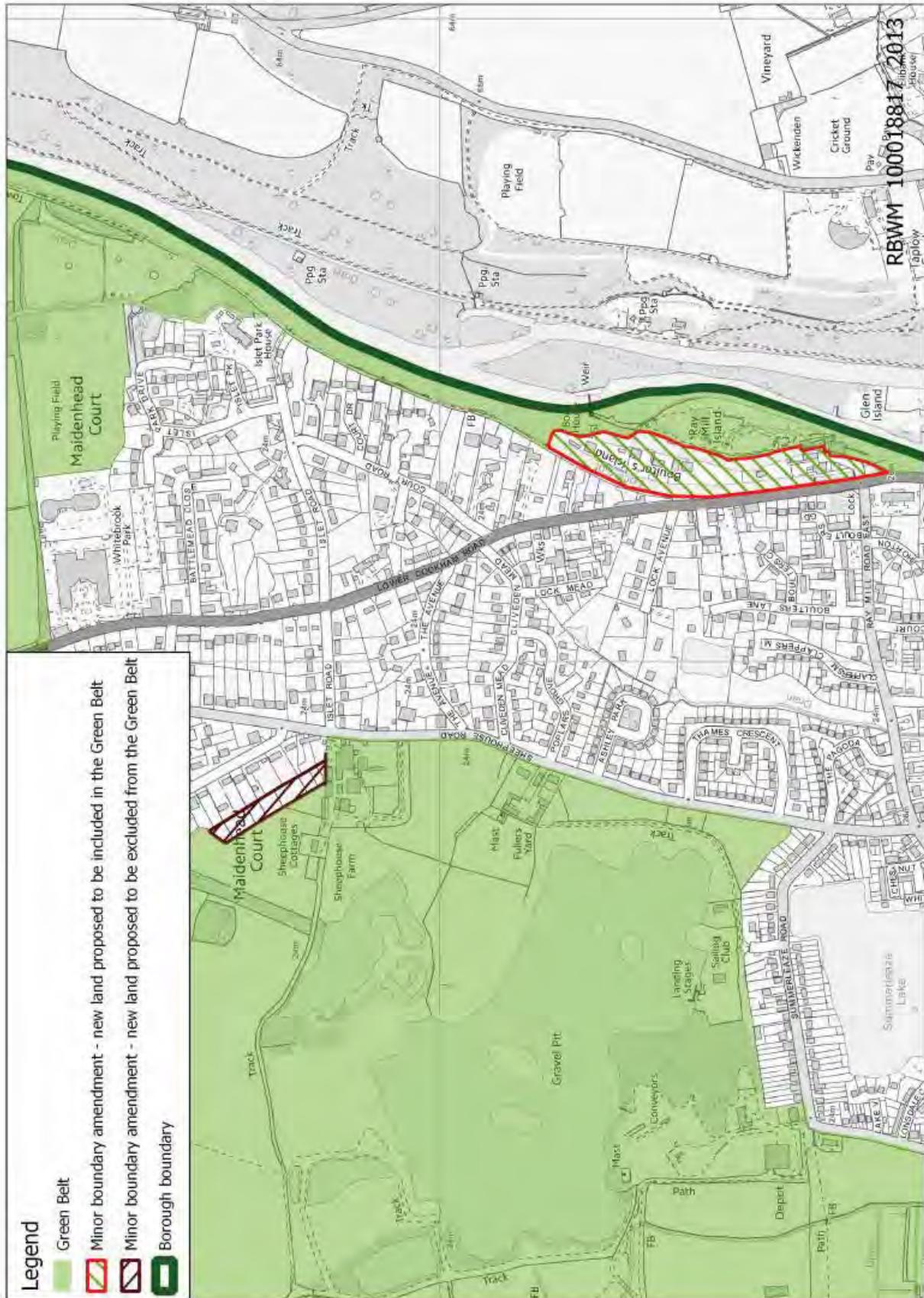
Map 1 Cookham



Map 2 North of Maidenhead



Map 3 North east Maidenhead



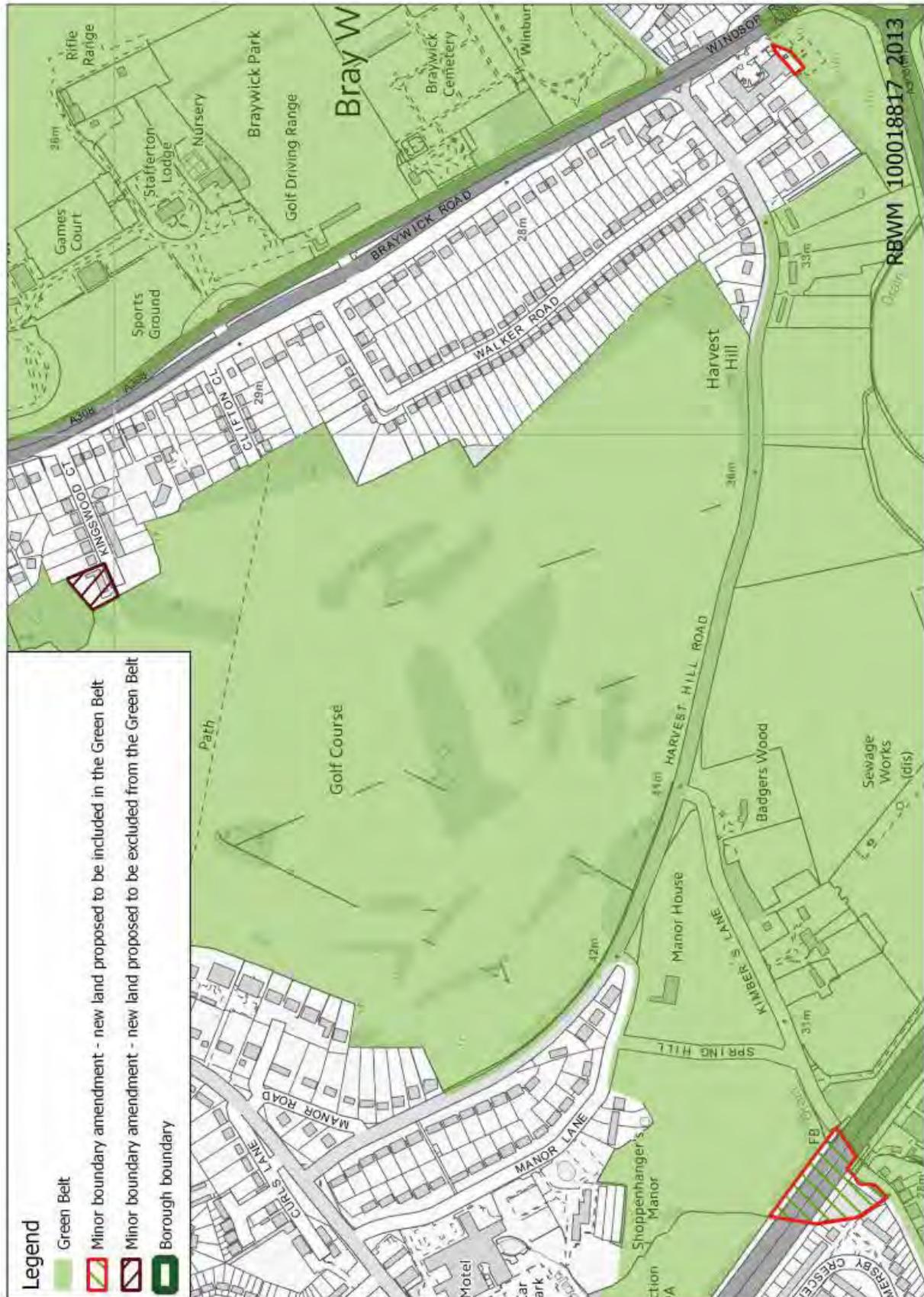
Map 4 East of Maidenhead



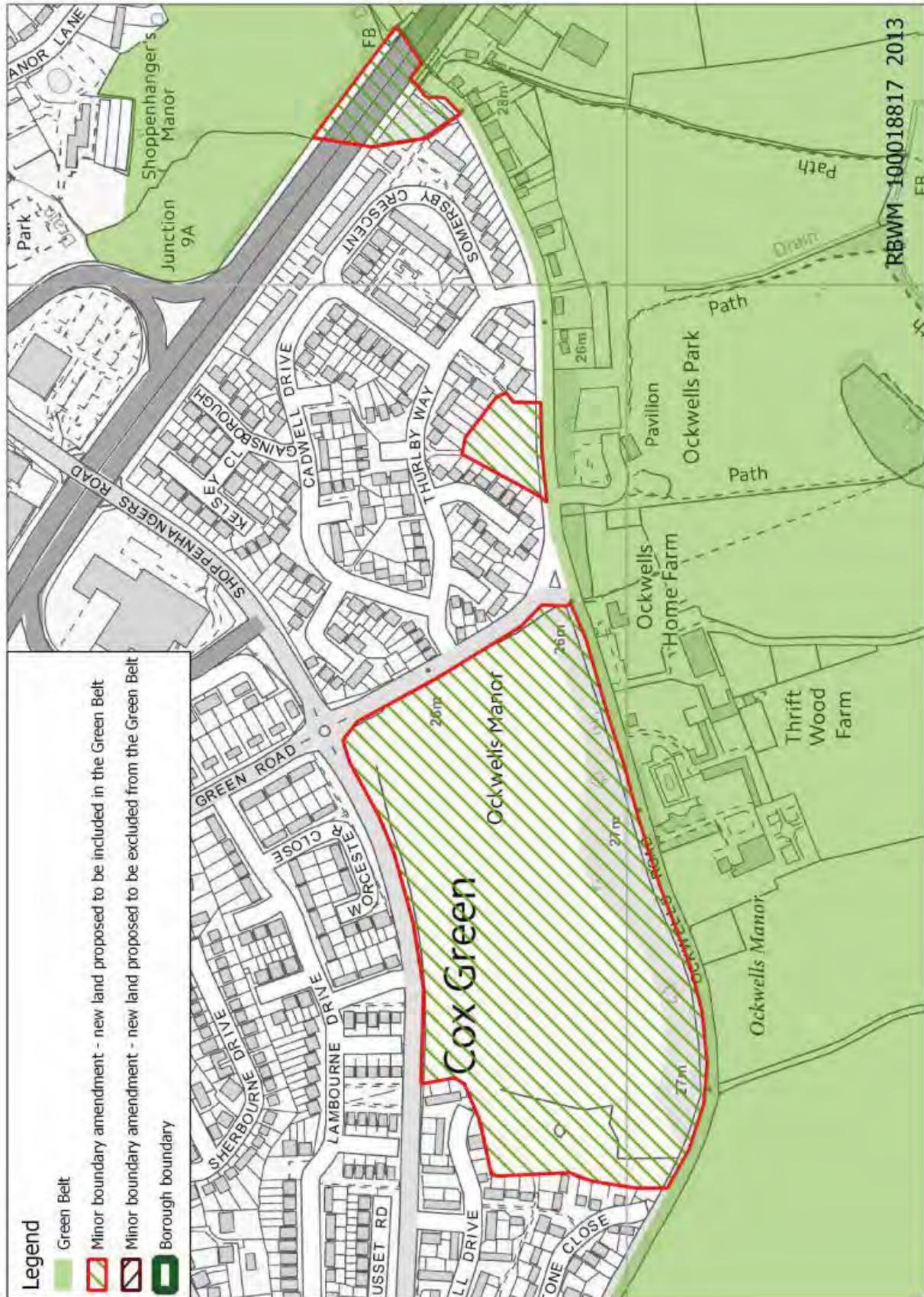
Map 5 South of Stafferton Way, Maidenhead



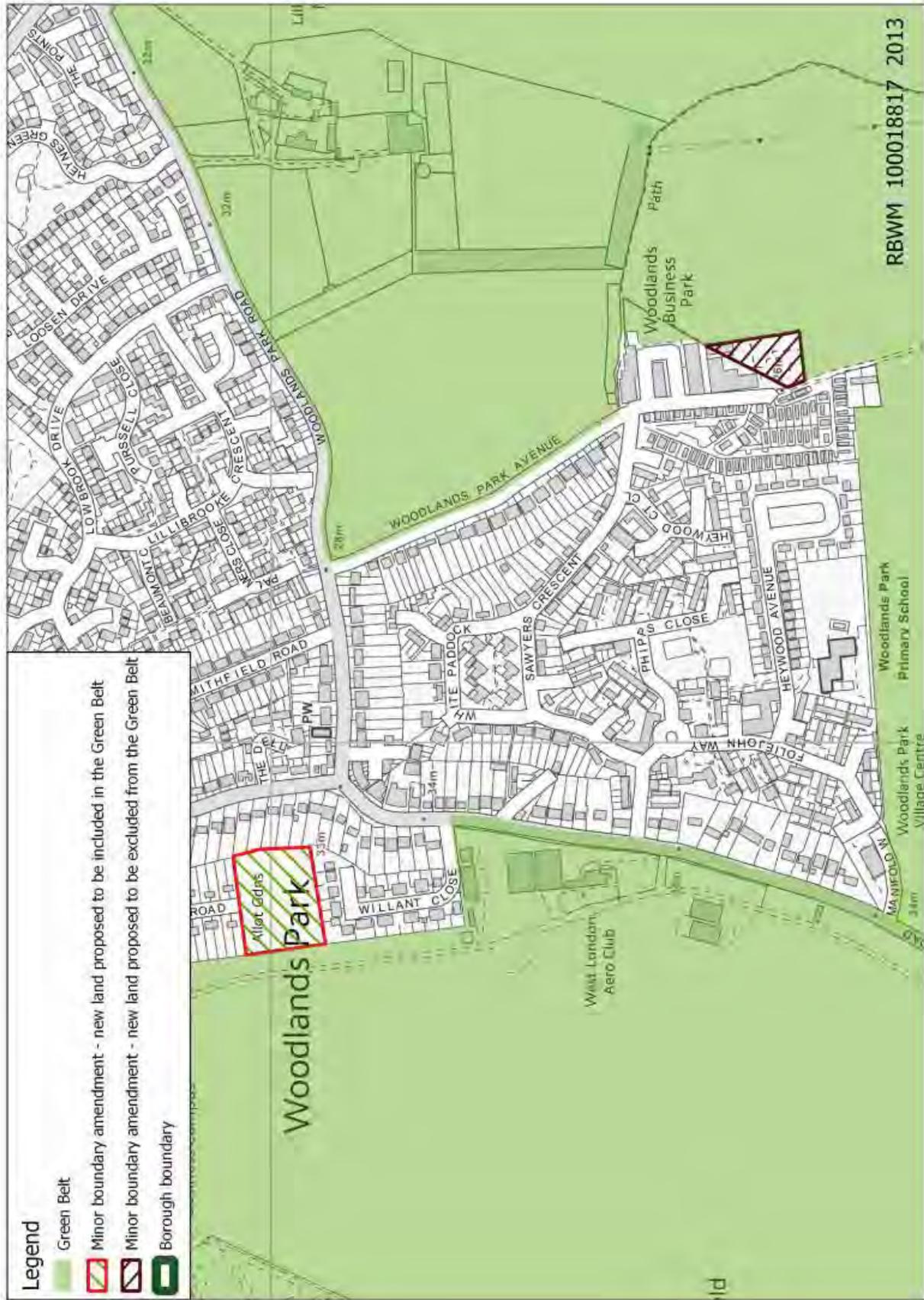
Map 6 South of Maidenhead



Map 7 South of Cox Green, Maidenhead



Map 8 Woodlands Park, Maidenhead

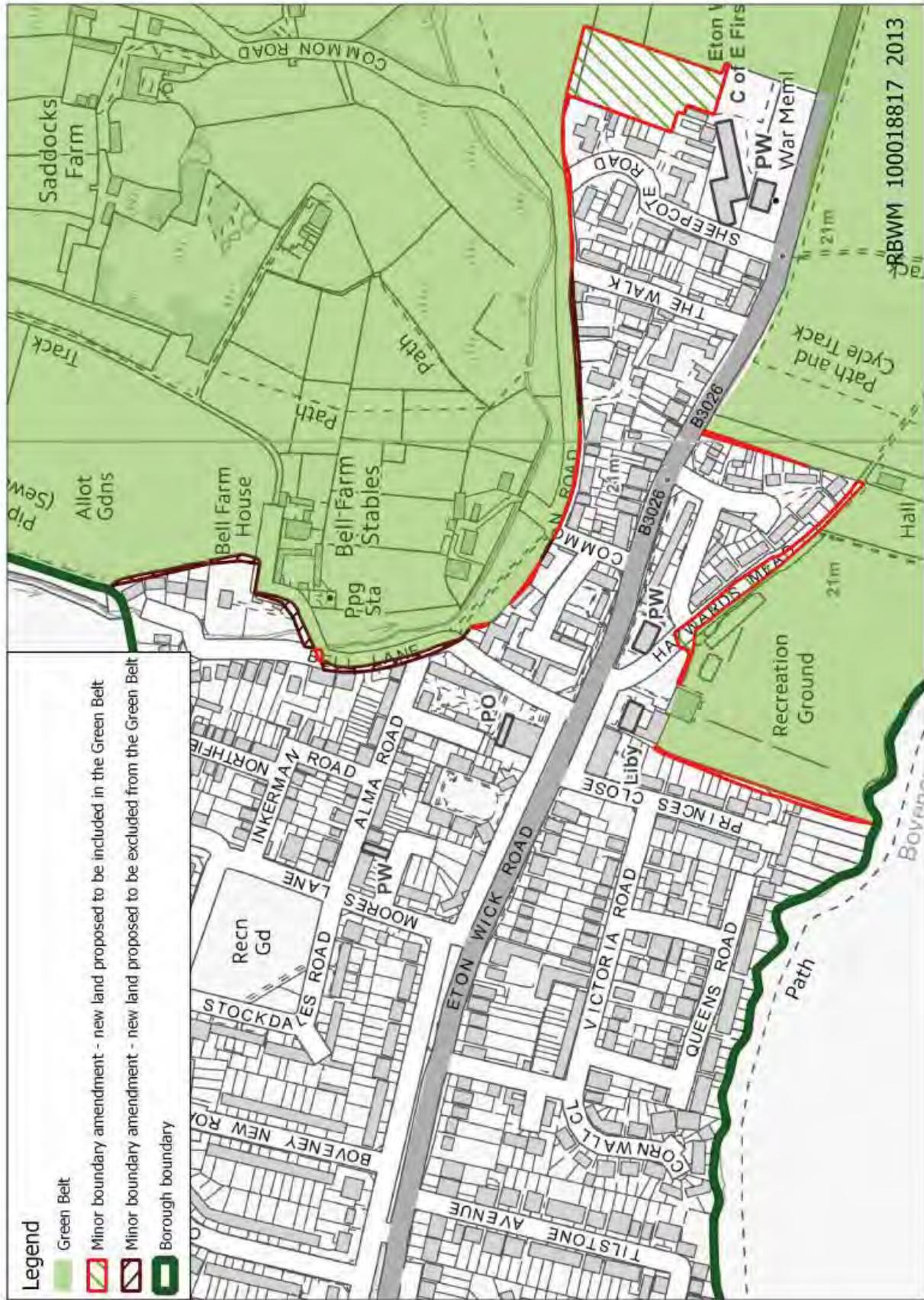




Map 10 North of Holyport

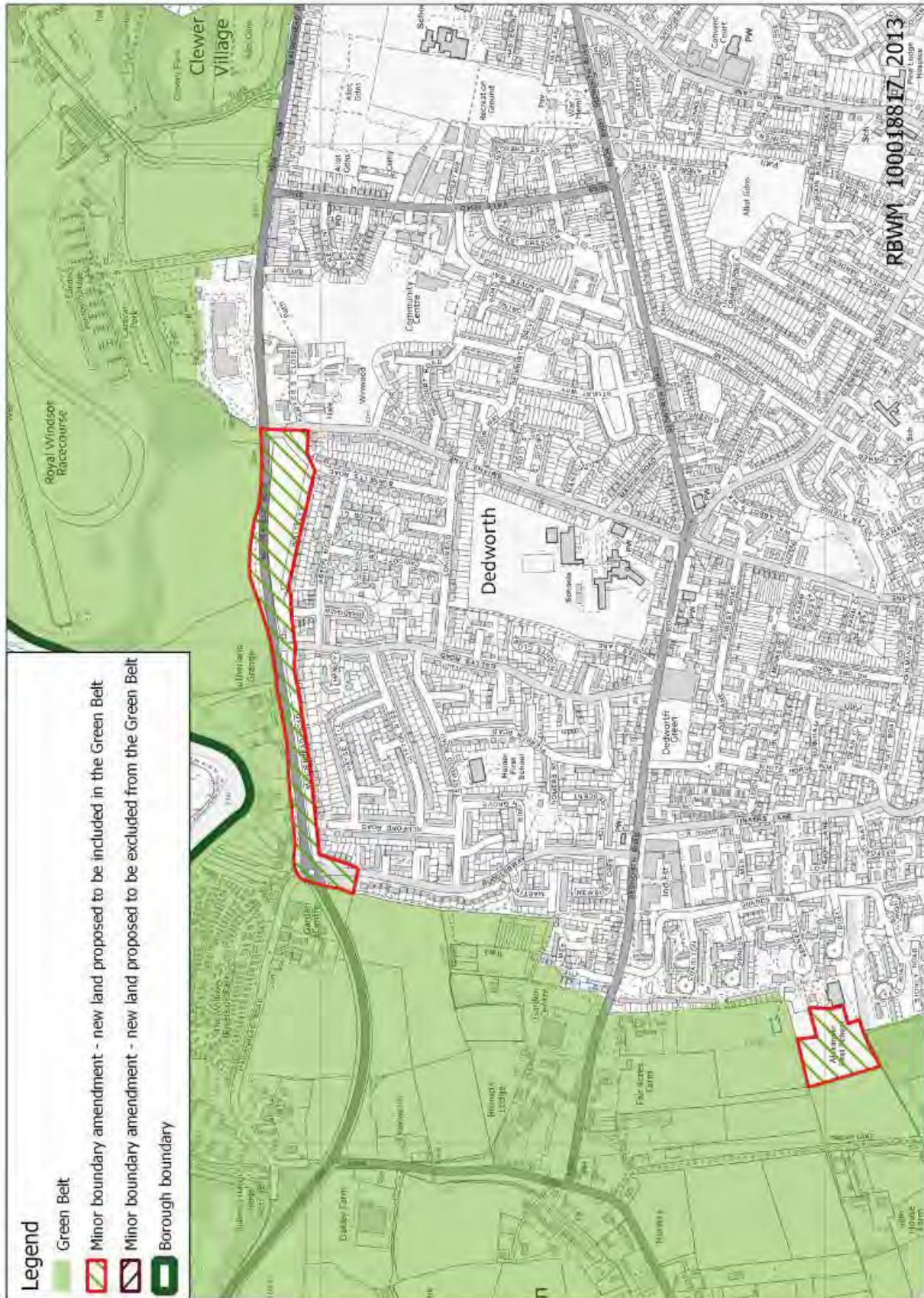


Map 11 Eton Wick





Map 13 West of Windsor



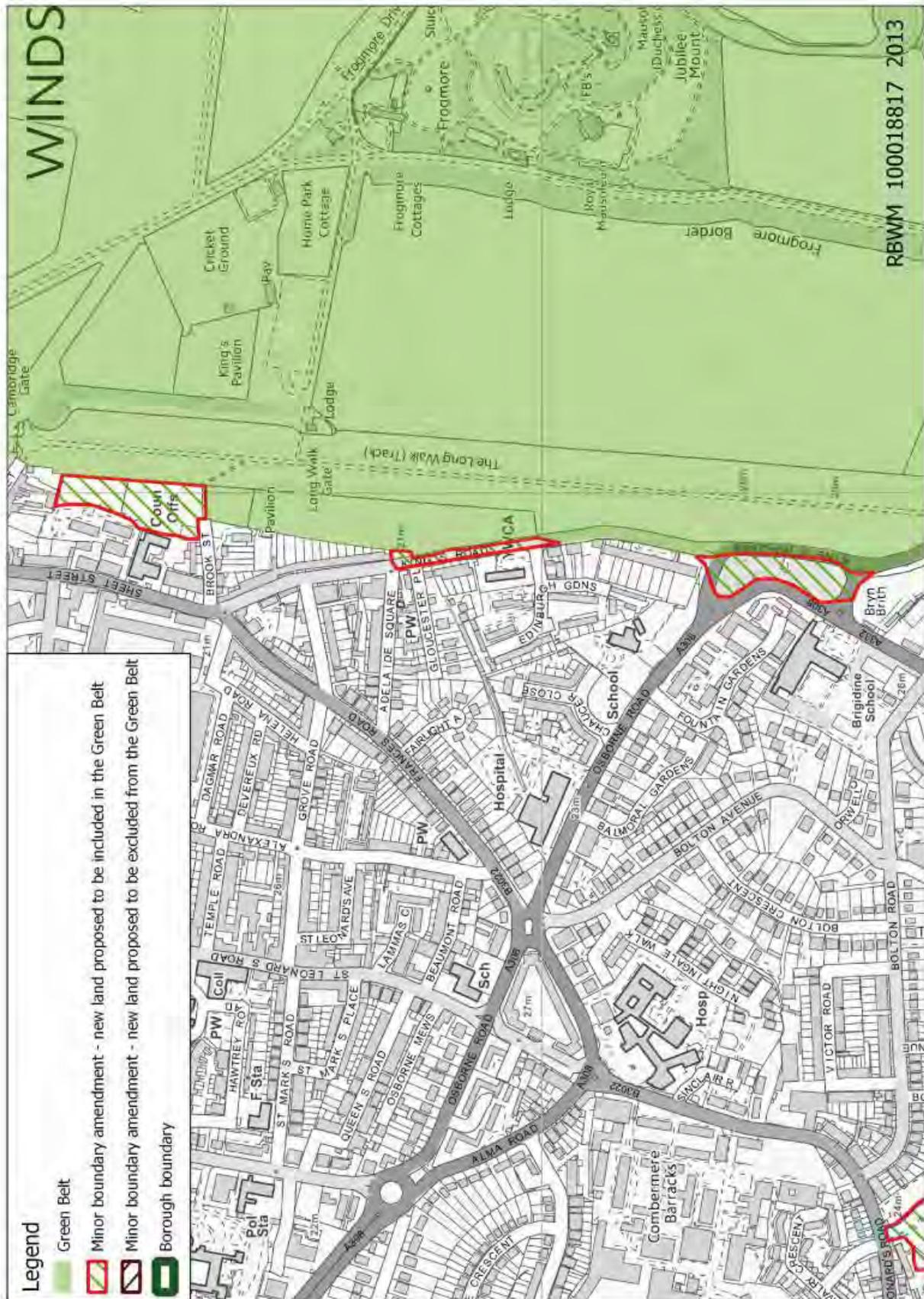
Map 14 South west of Windsor



Map 15 South of Windsor



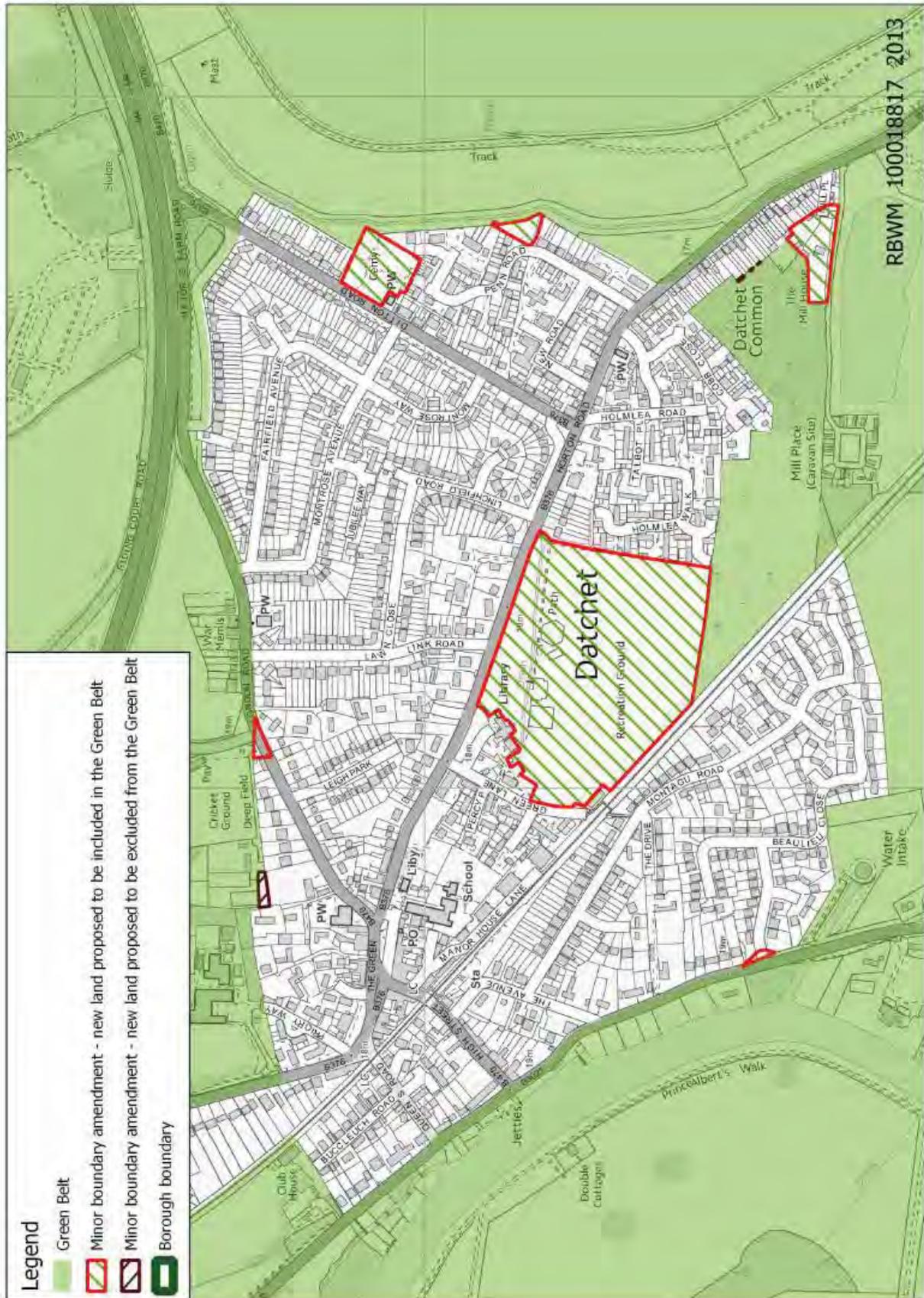
Map 16 East of Windsor



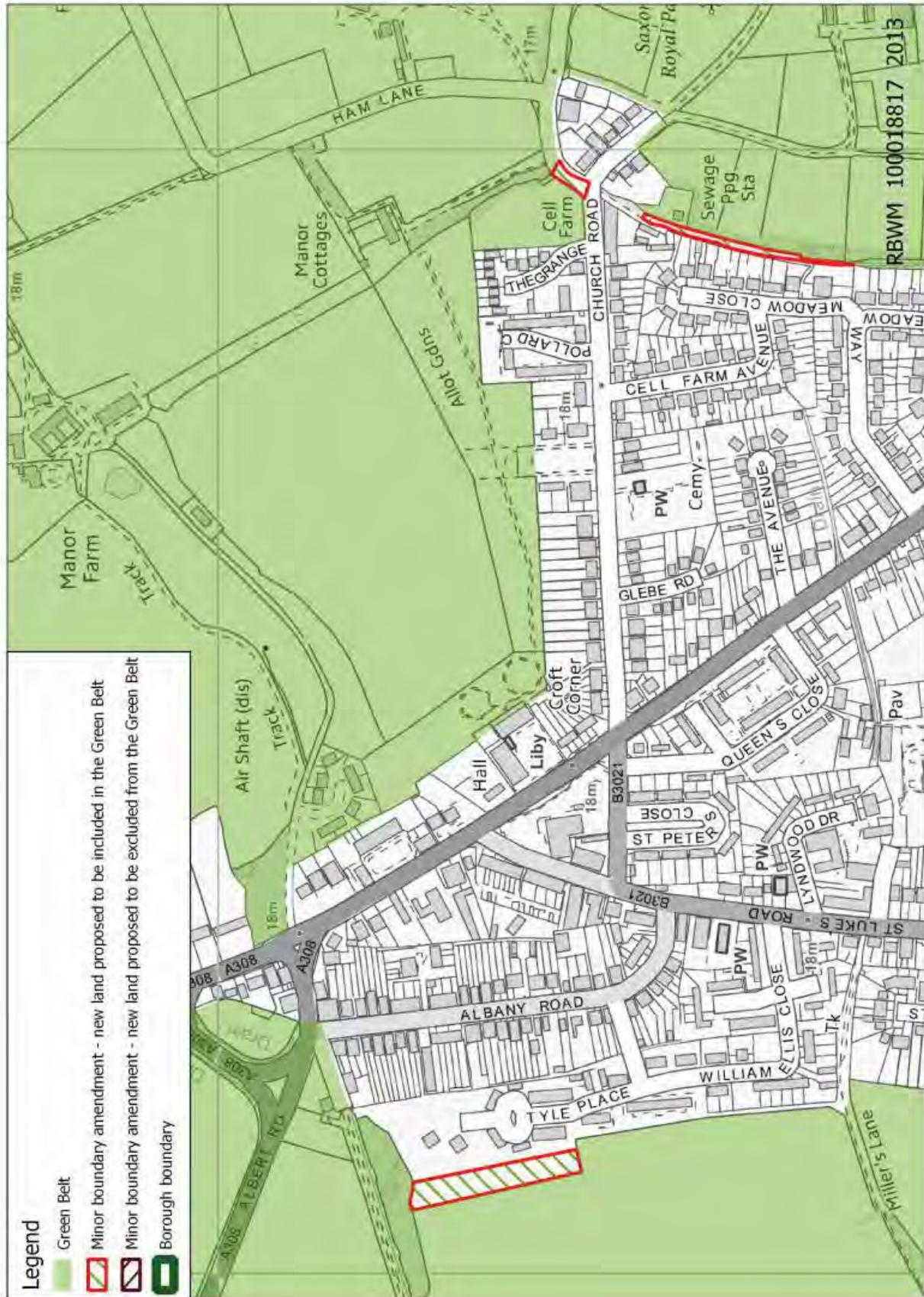
Map 17 North of Datchet



Map 18 Datchet



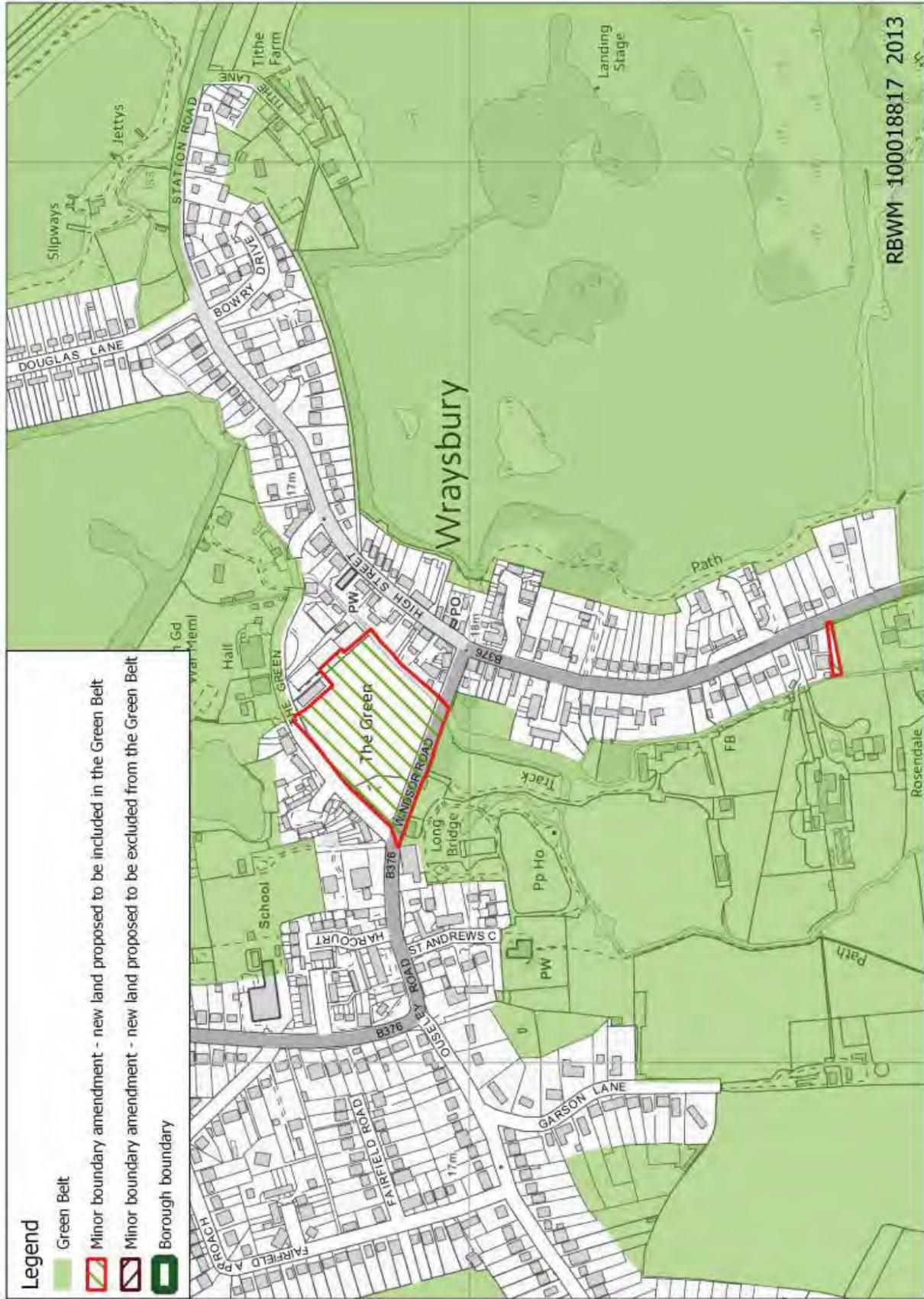
Map 19 North of Old Windsor



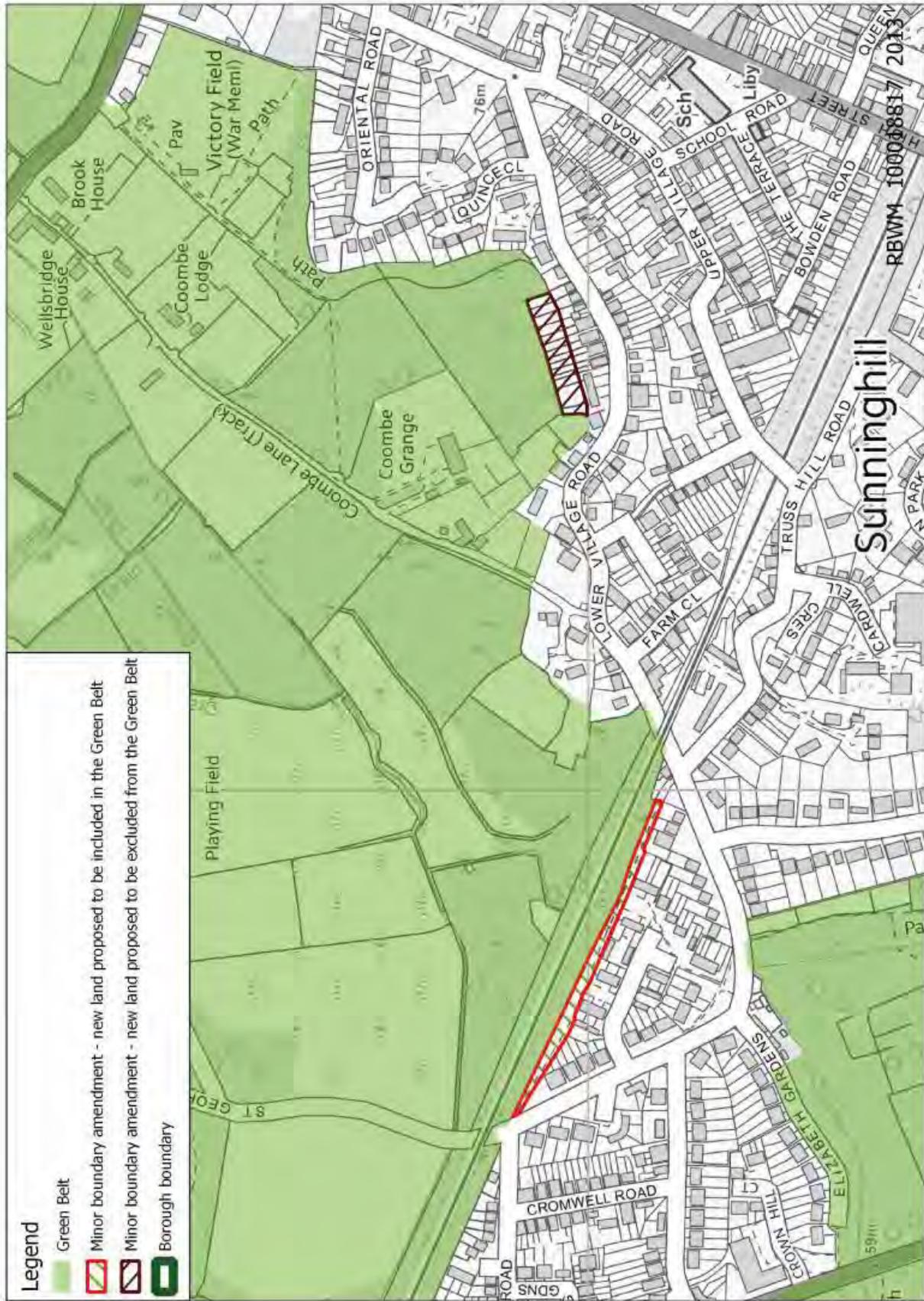
Map 20 South of Old Windsor



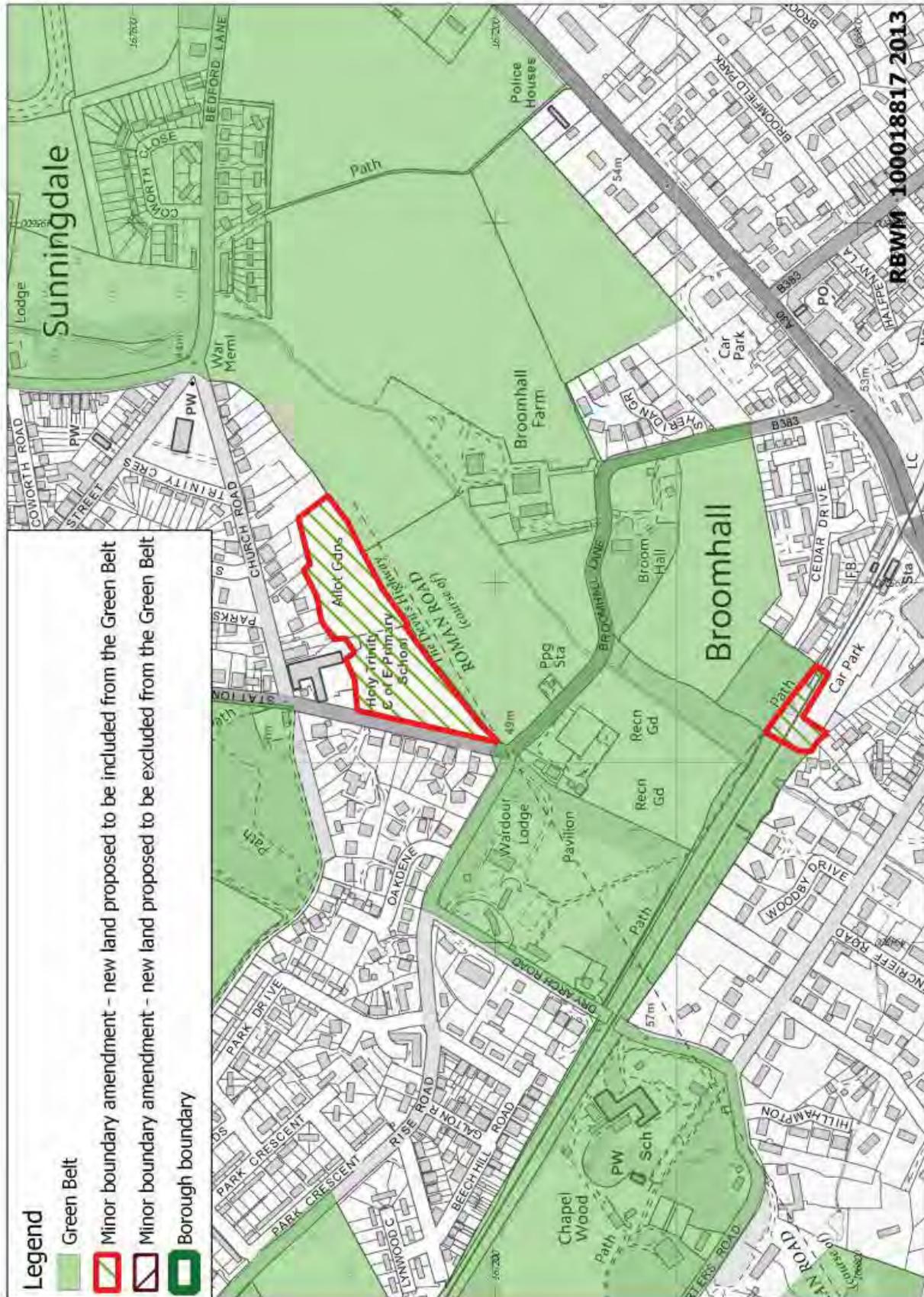
Map 21 Wraysbury



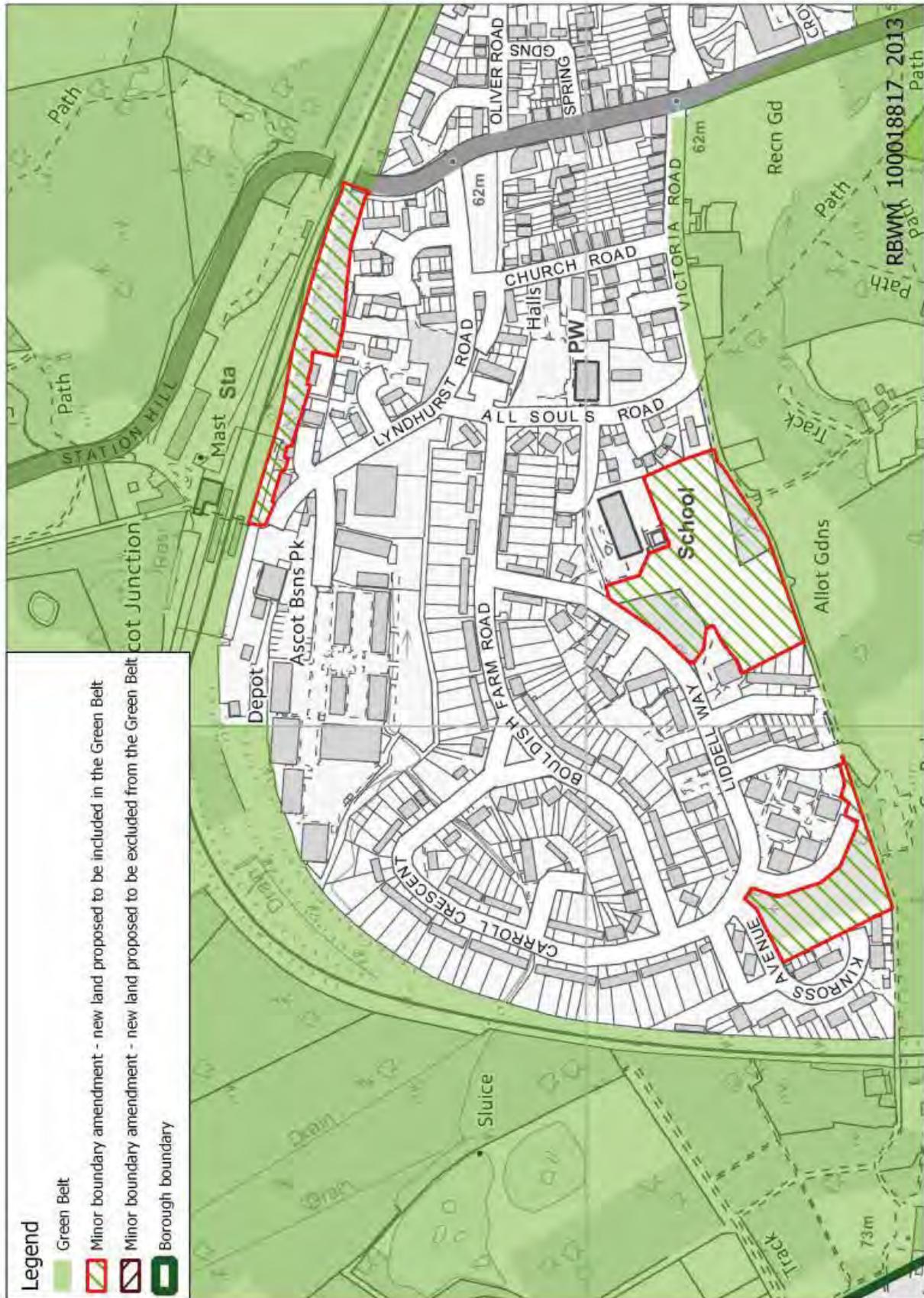
Map 22 North of Sunninghill



Map 23 Sunningdale



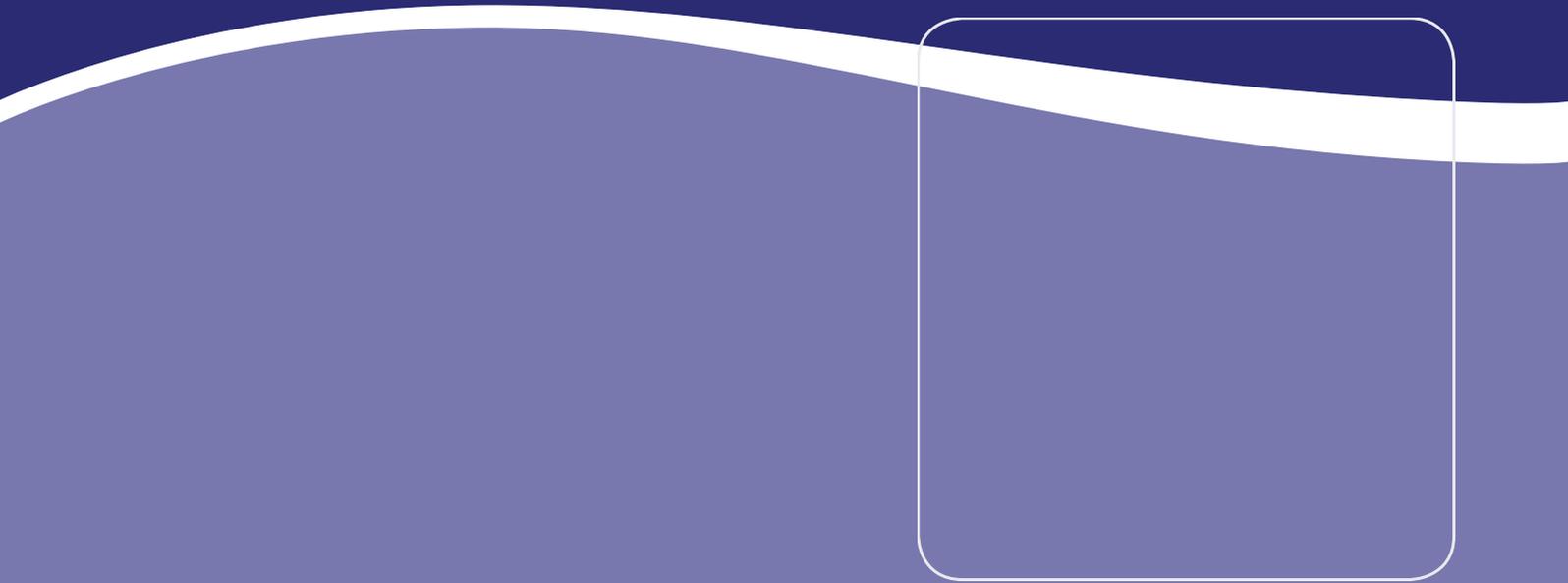
Map 24 South Ascot



Map 25 South of South Ascot







## Marketing and Viability Evidence

**C**

## **MARKETING AND VIABILITY EVIDENCE**

### **Marketing**

A number of preferred policy options in this plan require marketing evidence to be submitted in support of a planning application. These are preferred policy options HE2, EC3, RET4 and INF1. The following details will be used to assess the acceptability, or otherwise, of the information submitted and the marketing undertaken.

Marketing evidence requires demonstration of an active marketing campaign for a continuous period of at least 12 months<sup>(120)</sup>, whilst the premises were vacant, and which has been shown to be unsuccessful. Any references to marketing of property also require the site freehold to have been marketed in the same fashion.

Marketing must be through a commercial agent at a price that genuinely reflects the market value of the current or last use. It must be shown to the council's satisfaction that marketing has been unsuccessful for all relevant floorspace proposed to be lost through redevelopment or change of use.

Active marketing must include all of the following:

1. contact information posted in a prominent location on site, in the form of an advertising board (subject to advertising consent, if required).
2. registration of property with at least one commercial property agent.
3. full property details and particulars available to all inquirers on request.
4. property marketed for the appropriate use or uses as defined by the relevant planning policy.
5. property marketed at a reasonable price and terms, including in relation to use, condition, quality and location of floorspace.
6. no covenant restricting the future use of the property or land.

Sufficient detailed information is required to be submitted alongside any planning application to demonstrate compliance with the above criteria.

In addition, information should be submitted regarding:

1. the number and details of enquiries received;
2. the number of viewings;
3. the number, type, proposed uses and value of offers received;
4. reasons for refusal of any offer received, and reasons why any offers fell through;
5. the asking price or rent at which the site or property has been offered, including a professional valuation from at least three agents to confirm that this is reasonable;
6. the length of marketing period (at least 12 months continuous marketing), including dates; and
7. the length of the vacancy period.

### **Viability**

Where applications for a change of use or redevelopment of a commercially-operated community facility are received, the Borough Council will consult with the community who use that facility and will require evidence that:

---

120 unless otherwise agreed by the Borough Council

1. the community facility is not financially viable; in order to determine if this is the case, the Borough Council will require submission of trading accounts for the last three full years in which the facility was operating as a full-time business; and
2. an objective evaluation method<sup>(121)</sup> has been employed to assess the viability of the facility and the outcomes (to be shared with the Borough Council) have demonstrated that the facility is no longer economically viable.

### **Public Houses**

Special considerations that also apply in the case of public houses are:

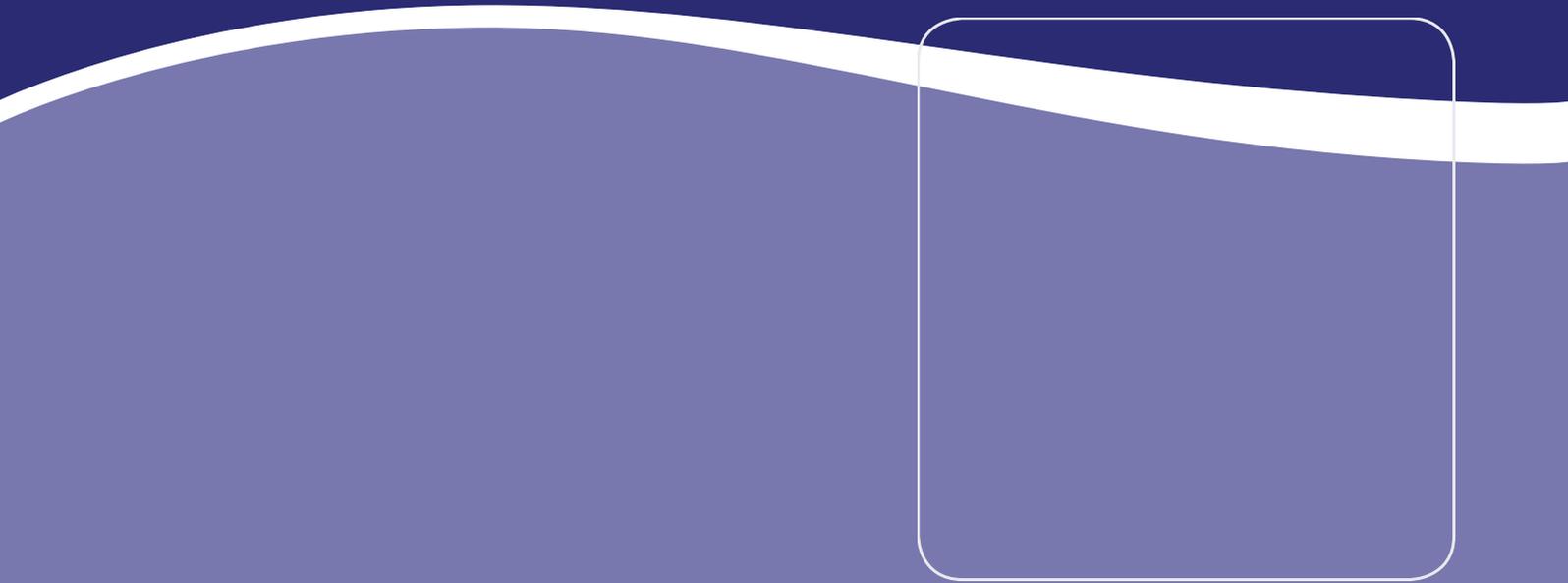
1. The public house should be marketed on a free of tie basis.<sup>(122)</sup>

---

121 The CAMRA Public House Viability Test includes useful information that can be applied both to public houses and other facilities.

122 Free of tie here means that no restrictions are imposed on the wet or dry products or services that can be procured, including restrictions on supplier, price, terms or quantity.





## Open Space Standards

**D**

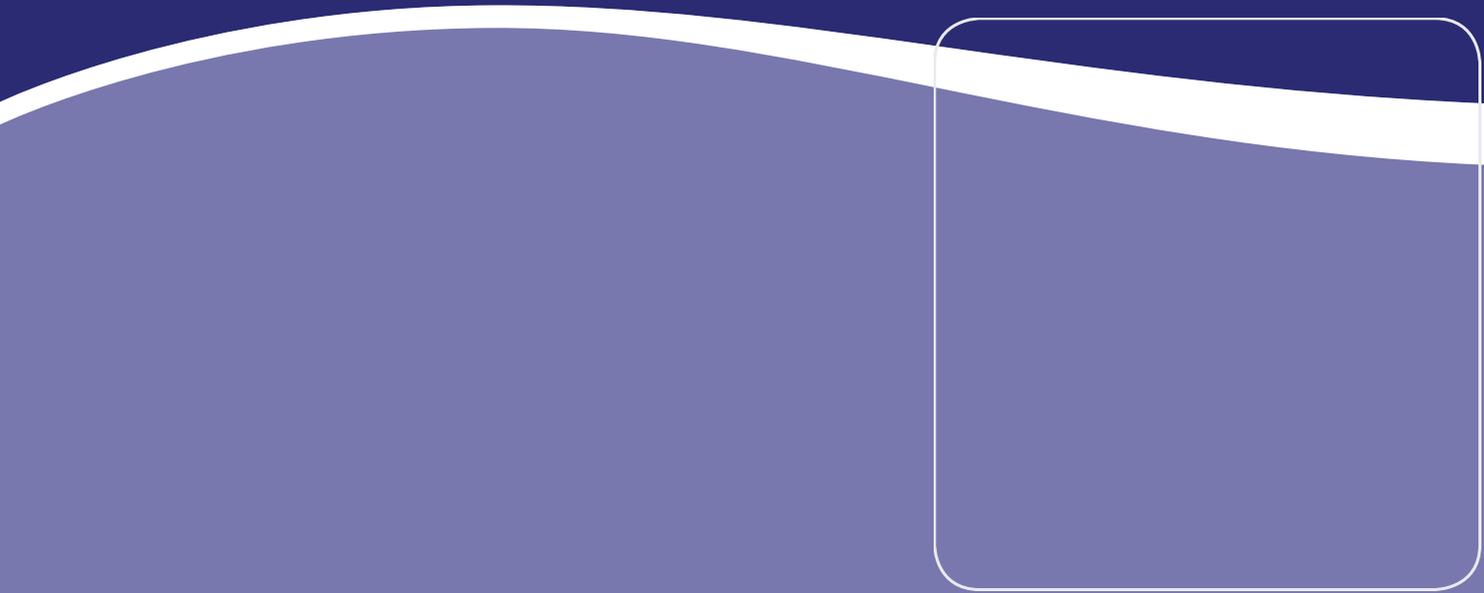
**OPEN SPACE STANDARDS**

Table 11 Local standards by typology

Type of Open Space	Quality - features that should be included	Quantity – The number of hectares required per 1,000 population	Accessibility – The required walk time in minutes to open space
<b>Parks and gardens</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clean and well maintained</li> <li>• Flowers/trees and shrubs</li> <li>• Well kept grass</li> </ul>	0.27	10 minutes walk (urban areas) 10 minutes drive (rural areas)
<b>Natural and semi-natural</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clean and litter free</li> <li>• Nature/conservation/biodiversity</li> </ul>	5.4	15 minutes walk
<b>Amenity greenspace</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clean and well maintained</li> <li>• Suitable soft landscaping</li> <li>• Flowers/trees and shrubs</li> <li>• Designed to enhance passive security</li> <li>• </li> </ul>	0.59	10 minutes walk
<b>Allotments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clean/litter free and well maintained</li> <li>• Safe and secure</li> </ul>	0.35	15 minutes walk
<b>Provision for children</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clean and well maintained</li> <li>• Apply Fields in Trust (FIT) standards</li> </ul>	0.45 facilities	10 minutes walk
<b>Teenage facilities e.g. skateboarding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clean, safe and well maintained at all times</li> <li>• Apply Fields in Trust (FIT) standards</li> <li>• Provision of seats</li> <li>• User consultation for all new provision</li> <li>• </li> </ul>	0.23 facilities	10 minutes walk
<b>Outdoor sports facilities: Grass pitches and tennis courts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clean/litter free and well maintained</li> <li>• Level surface/good drainage</li> </ul>	2.92	15 minutes walk 15 minutes drive

Type of Open Space	Quality - features that should be included	Quantity – The number of hectares required per 1,000 population	Accessibility – The required walk time in minutes to open space
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changing facilities</li> <li>• Car parking</li> </ul>		
<b>Outdoor sports facilities: Golf courses, STPs, bowls greens</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clean/litter free and well maintained</li> <li>• Level surface/good drainage</li> <li>• Changing facilities</li> <li>• Car parking</li> <li>• Toilets</li> </ul>	2.92	15 minutes walk 15 minutes drive
<b>Cemeteries and churchyards/ Green corridors*/ Civic spaces</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flowers/trees and shrubs</li> <li>• Clean/litter free and well maintained</li> <li>• Safe and secure</li> <li>• Footpaths*</li> <li>• Nature/conservation/biodiversity*</li> <li>• Designed to enhance passive security*</li> <li>• Sympathetic signage*</li> </ul>	No standard provided	No standard provided



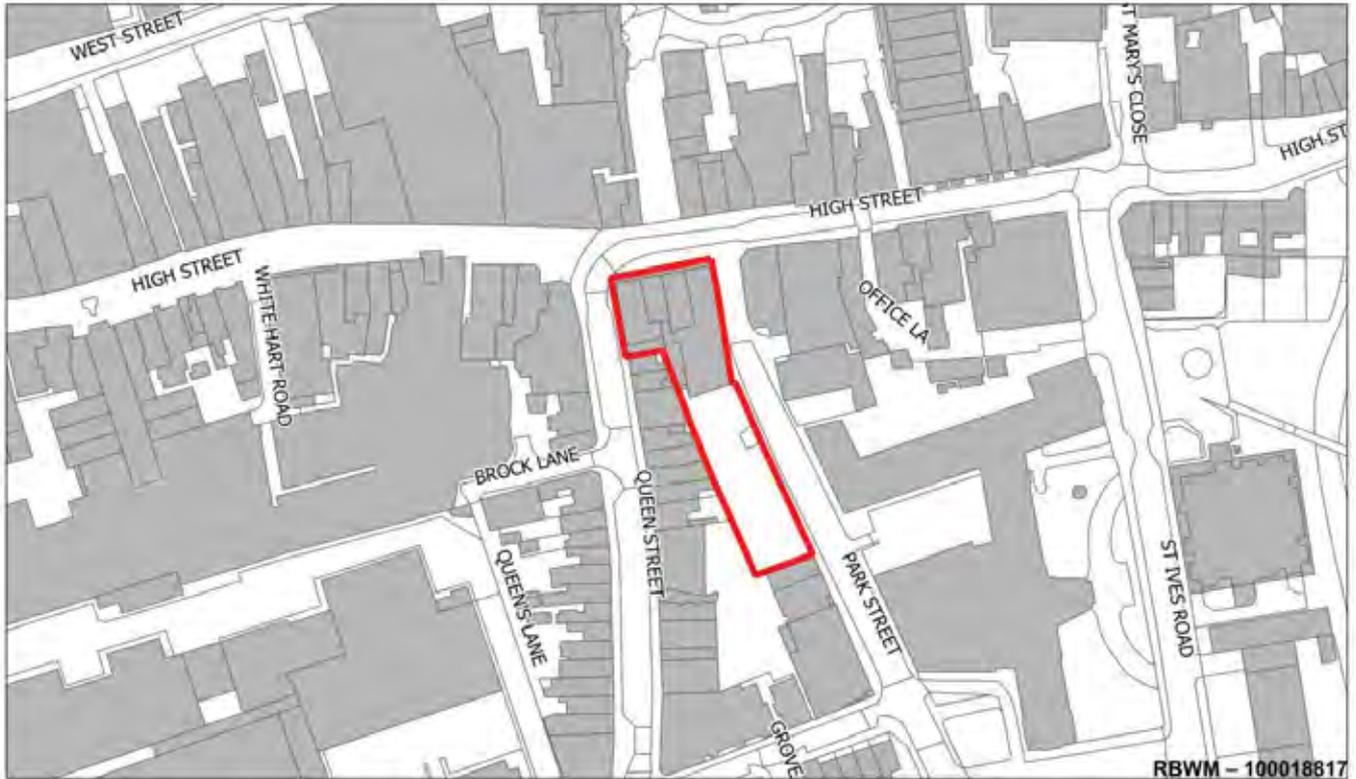


## Site Allocations

**E**

## Housing Site Allocations

### Berkshire House, Queen Street, Maidenhead



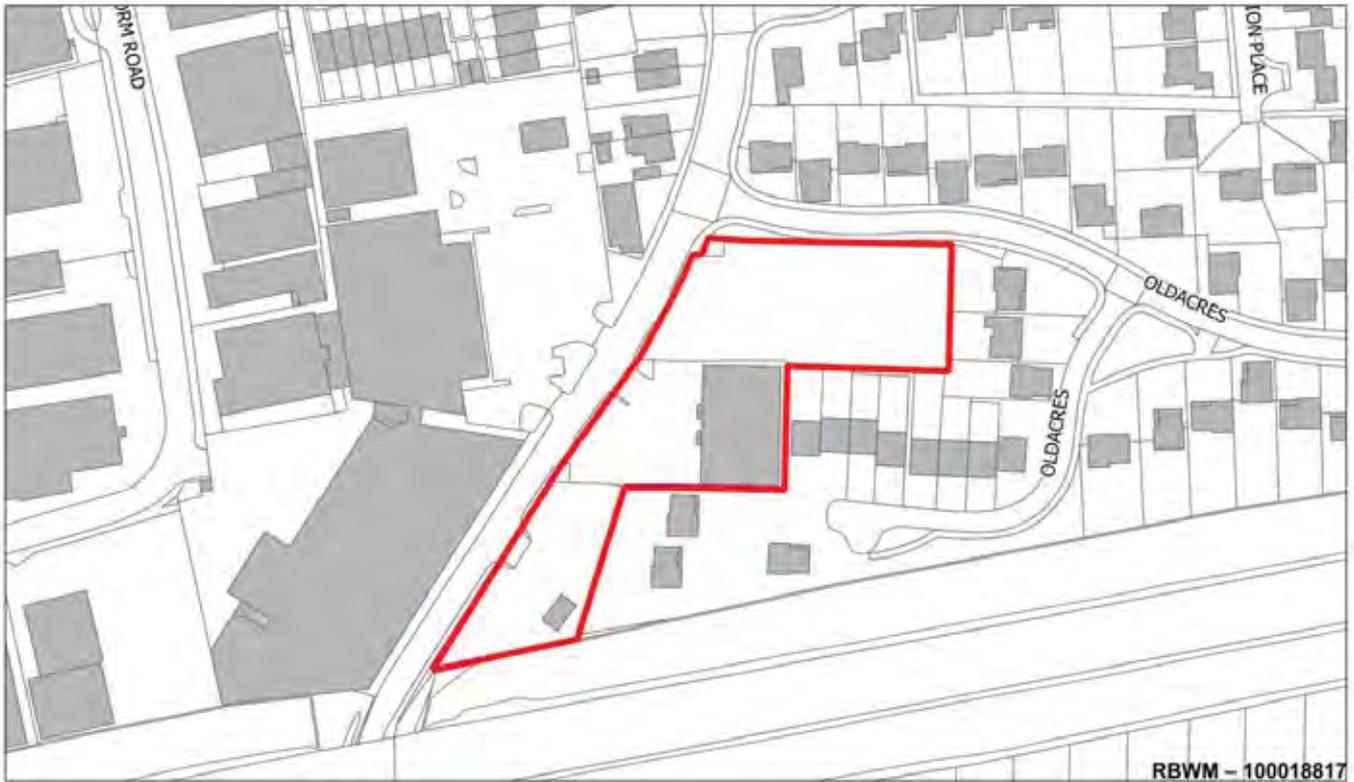
Approach	High rise flats
Proposed Capacity	65 dwellings (gross), 65 dwellings (net)
Availability	2014-2019

## Exclusive House, Oldfield Road, Maidenhead



Approach	Low rise flats
Proposed Capacity	24 dwellings (gross), 24 dwellings (net)
Availability	2020-2029

### Land east of Oldfield Road, Maidenhead



RBWM - 100018817

Approach	Mix of small houses and low rise flats
Proposed Capacity	30 dwellings (gross), 30 dwellings (net)
Availability	2020-2029

## Travis Perkins Wood Yard, Boyn Valley Road, Maidenhead



Approach	Mix of maisonettes and low rise flats
Proposed Capacity	58 dwellings dwellings (gross), 58 dwellings (net)
Availability	2020-2029

### Middlehurst, 99-103 Boyn Valley Road, Maidenhead



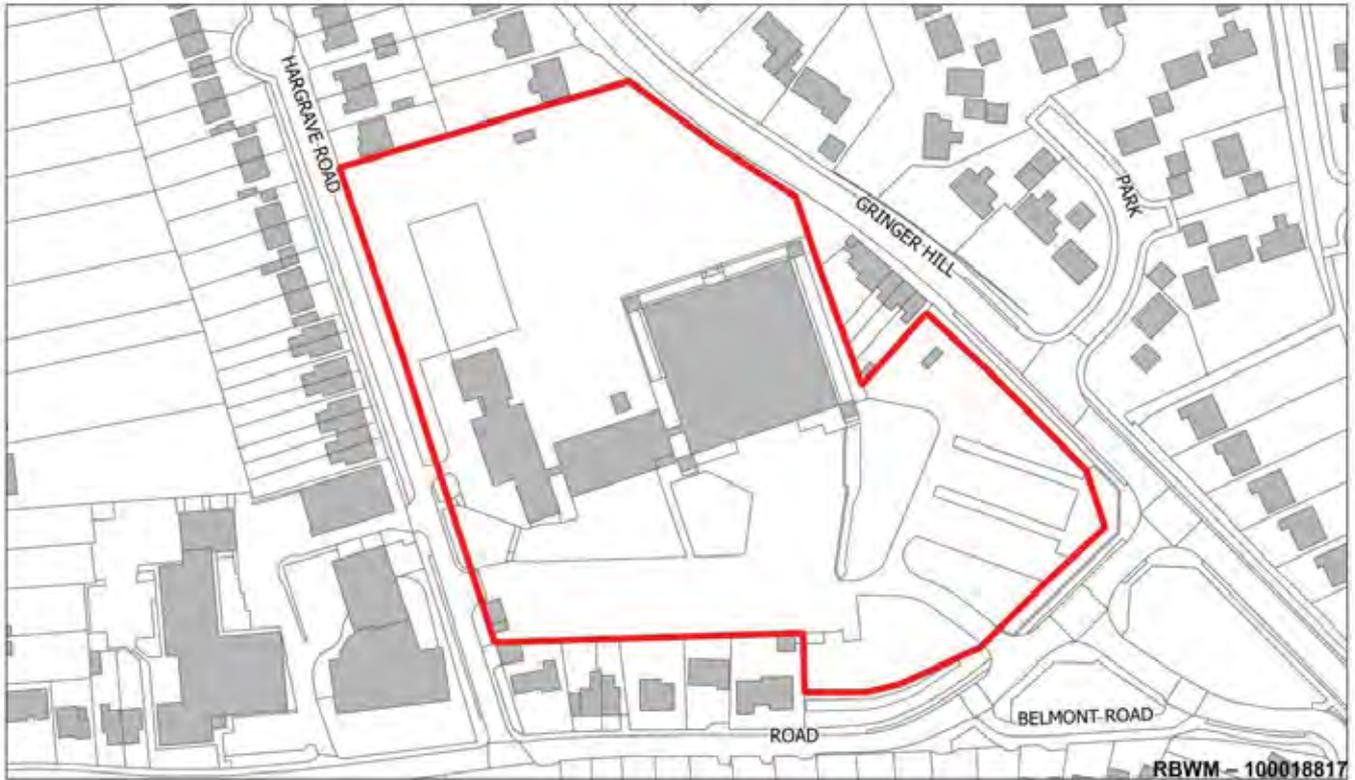
Approach	Maisonettes
Proposed Capacity	15 dwellings (gross), 15 dwellings (net)
Availability	2020-2029

## Belmont Place, Belmont Road, Maidenhead



Approach	Low rise flats
Proposed Capacity	18 dwellings (gross), 18 dwellings (net)
Availability	2025-2029

### DTC Research, Belmont Road, Maidenhead



Approach	Mix of small, medium and larger houses and flats
Proposed Capacity	123 dwellings (gross), 123 dwellings (net)
Availability	2020-2029

## Eastern part of Whitebrook Park, Lower Cookham Road, Maidenhead



Approach	Medium and larger houses
Proposed Capacity	36 dwellings (gross), 36 dwellings (net)
Availability	2014-2019

**150 Bath Road, Maidenhead**

Approach	Medium and larger houses
Proposed Capacity	14 dwellings (gross), 14 dwellings (net)
Availability	2014-2019

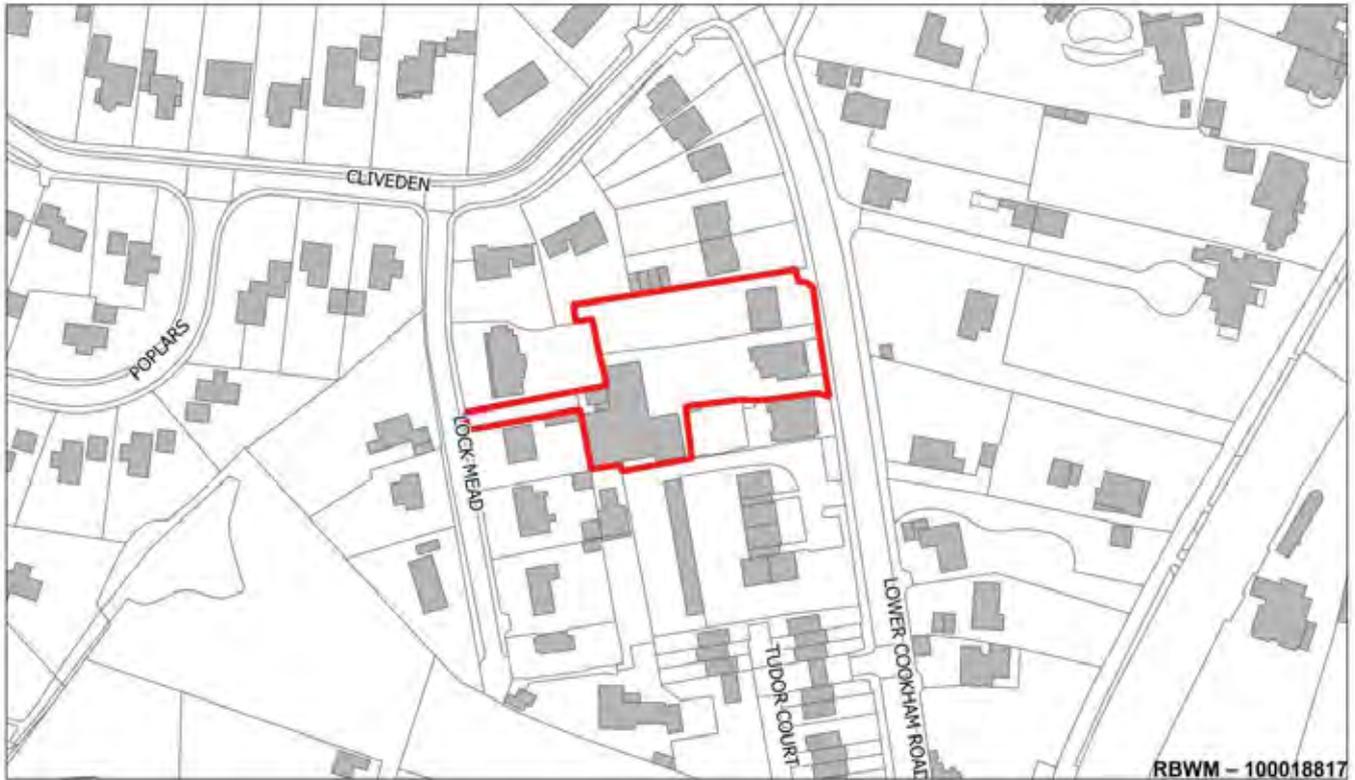
## Maidenhead Lawn Tennis Club, All Saints Road, Maidenhead



Approach	Small and medium houses with some low rise flats
Proposed Capacity	32 dwellings (gross), 32 dwellings (net)
Availability	2020-2024 <sup>(123)</sup>

123 Availability is dependent on the relocation of Maidenhead Lawn Tennis Club.

### 35, 37 and 33 (Velmead Works), Lower Cookham Road, Maidenhead



Approach	Low rise flats
Proposed Capacity	19 dwellings (gross), 18 dwellings (net)
Availability	2019-2024

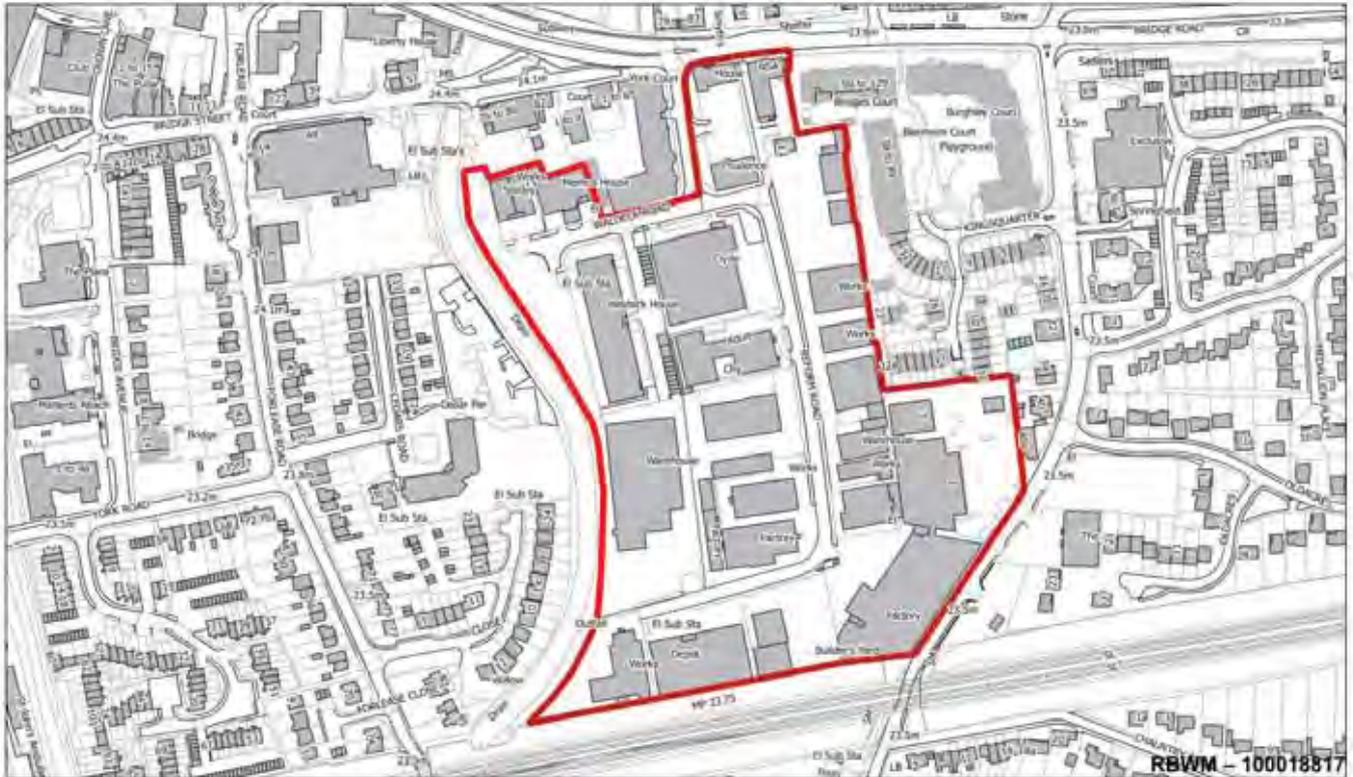


### Shoppenhangers Manor, Manor Lane, Maidenhead



Approach	Small, medium and larger houses
Proposed Capacity	52 dwellings (gross), 52 dwellings (net)
Availability	2014-2019

## Reform Road Industrial Estate, Maidenhead



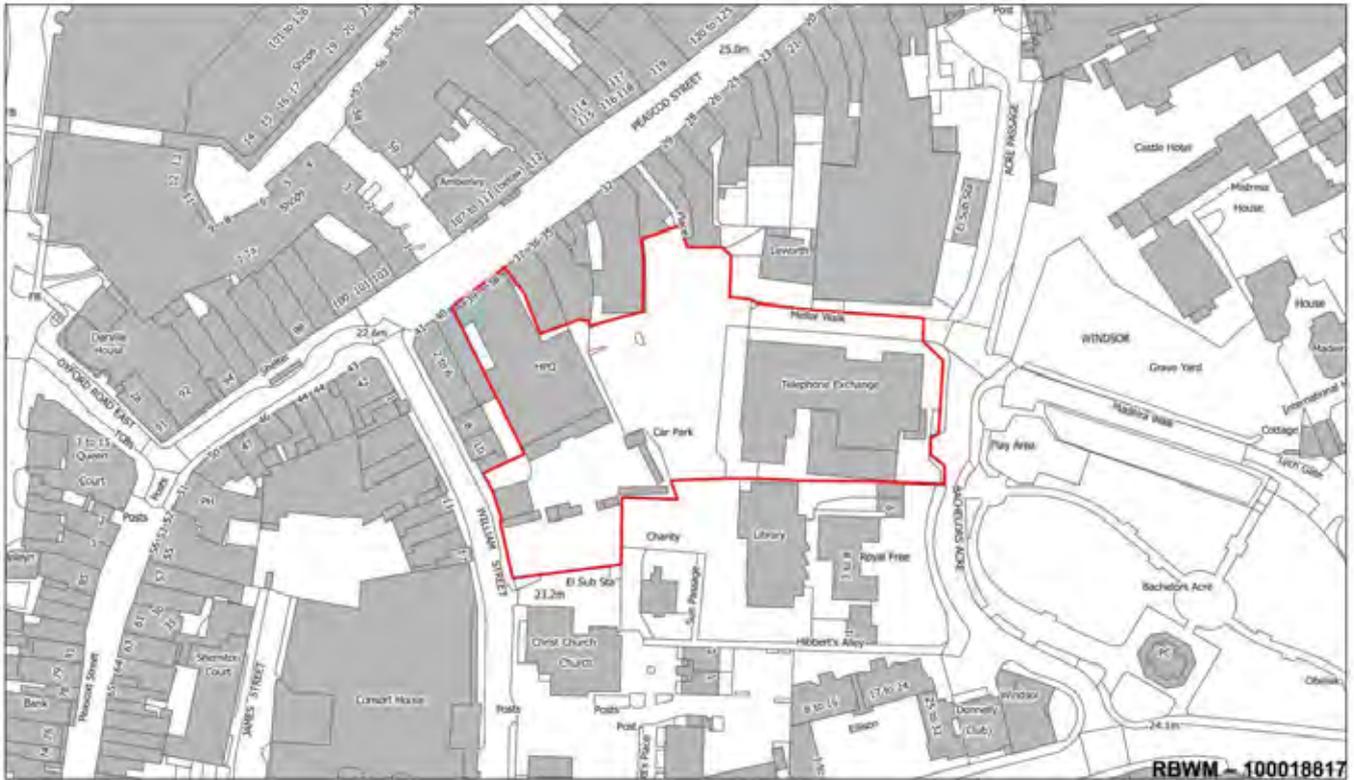
Approach	Medium rise flats and town houses. Mixed housing and employment site.
Proposed Capacity	100 dwellings (gross), 100 dwellings (net)
Availability	2020-2029

### Gas Holder Station, Whyteladyes Lane, Cookham Rise



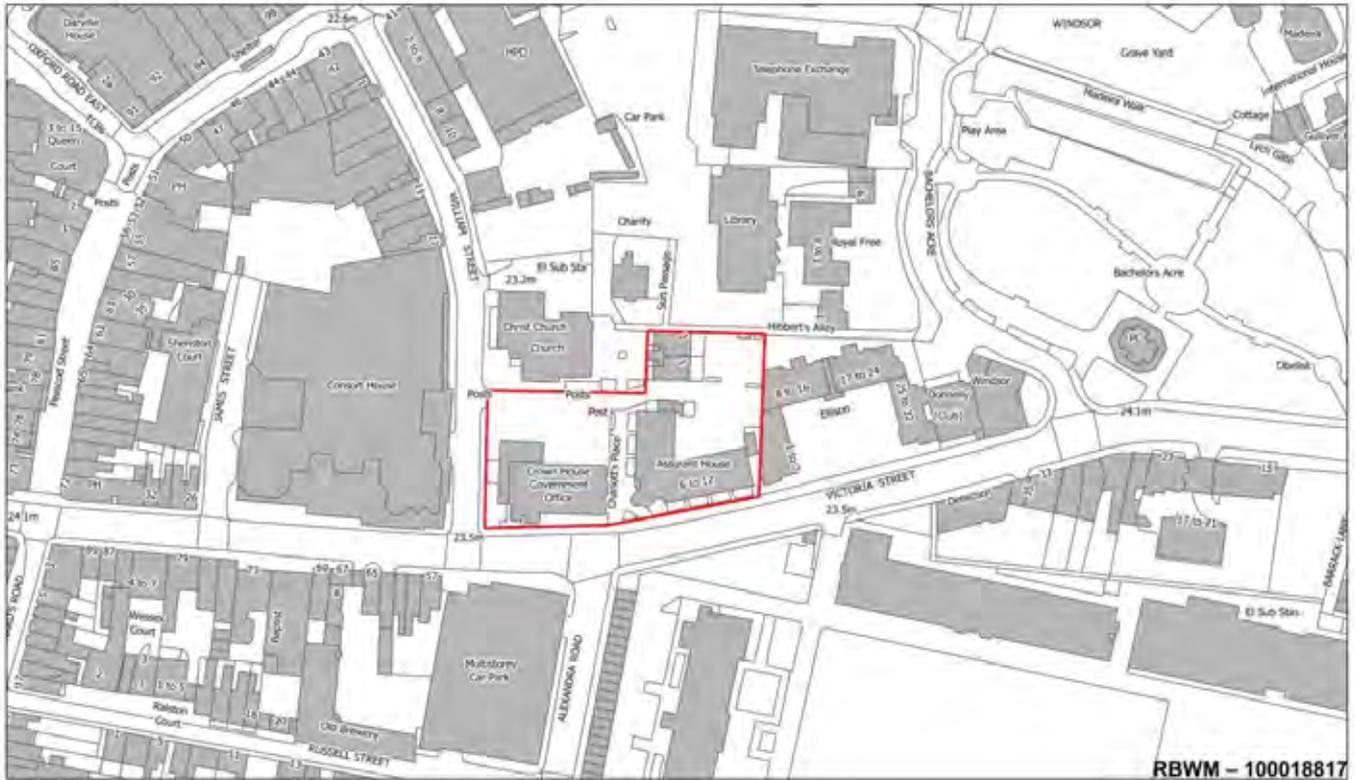
Approach	Smaller houses and maisonettes
Proposed Capacity	41 dwellings (gross), 41 dwellings (net)
Availability	2014-2024

## Post Office, William Street and Telephone Exchange, Batchelors Acre, Windsor



Approach	Low and medium rise flats
Proposed Capacity	85 dwellings (gross), 85 dwellings (net)
Availability	2020-2029

### Crown House and Charriott House, Victoria Street, Windsor



RBWM – 100018817

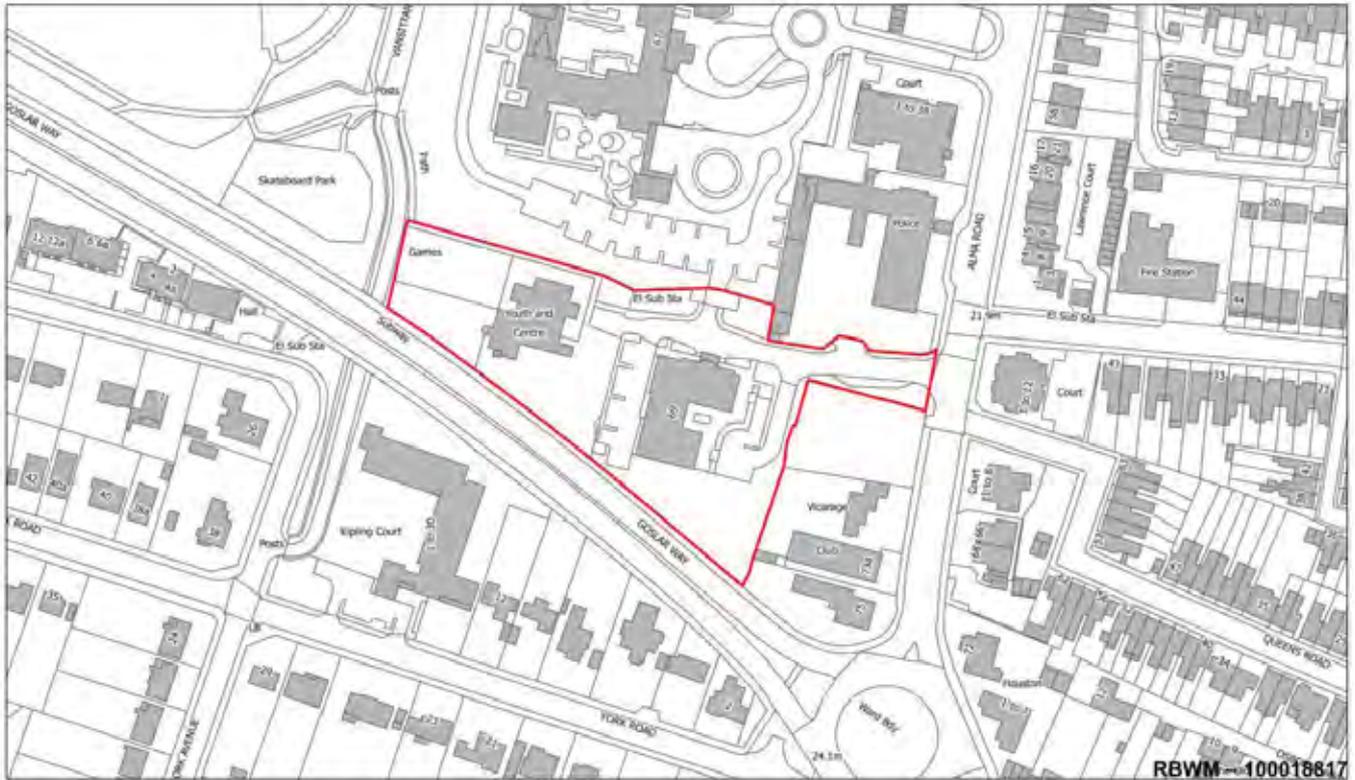
Approach	Low and medium rise flats
Proposed Capacity	45 dwellings (gross), 45 dwellings (net)
Availability	2025-2029

## Minton Place, Victoria Street, Windsor



Approach	High rise flats
Proposed Capacity	110 dwellings (gross), 110 dwellings (net)
Availability	2025-2029

### Land between Alma Road and Goslar Way, Windsor



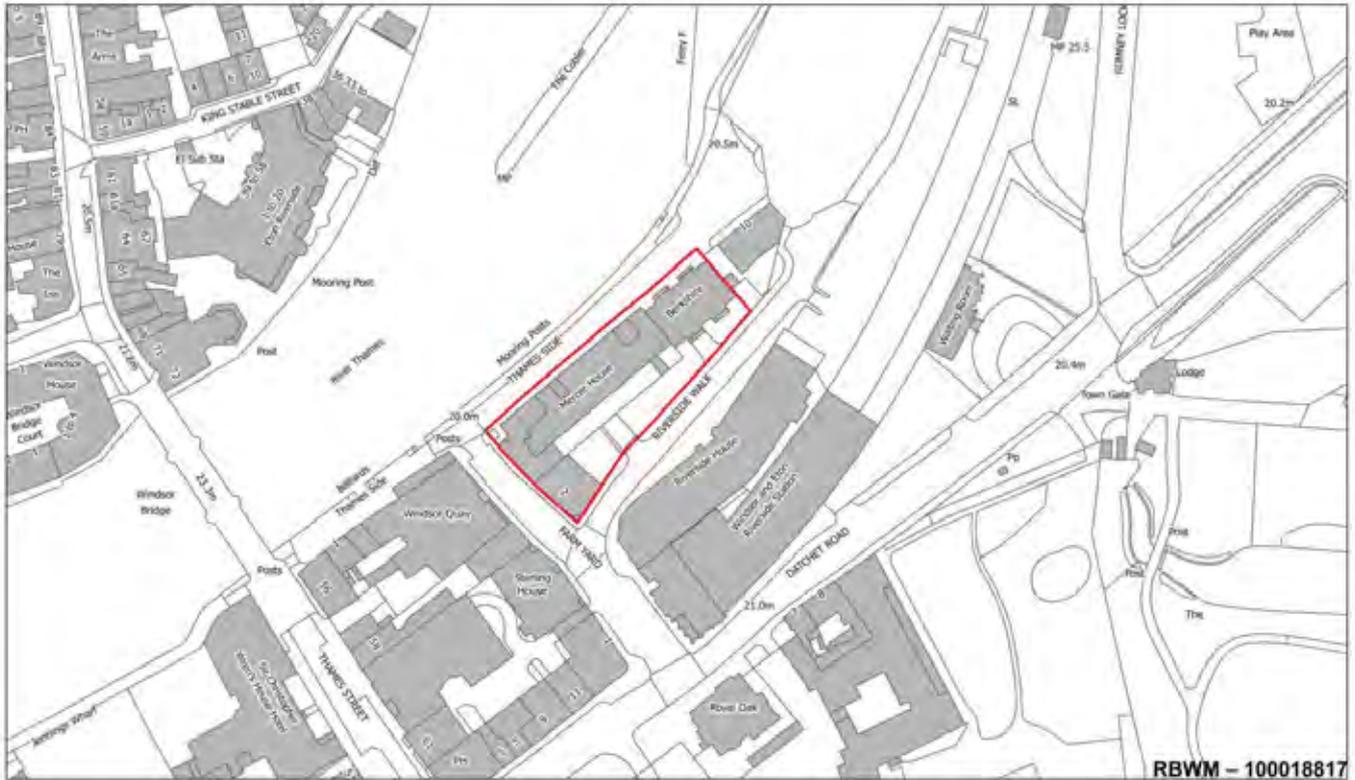
Approach	Medium rise flats
Proposed Capacity	84 dwellings (gross), 84 dwellings (net)
Availability	2020-2029

## Windsor Fire Station, St Marks Road, Windsor



Approach	Small houses
Proposed Capacity	10 dwellings (gross), 10 dwellings (net)
Availability	2014-2019

## Offices at Thames Side, Windsor



Approach	Low and medium rise flats
Proposed Capacity	40 dwellings (gross), 40 dwellings (net)
Availability	2020-2024

## Territorial Army Centre, Bolton Road, Windsor



Approach	Small and medium houses
Proposed Capacity	25 dwellings (gross), 22 dwellings (net)
Availability	2025-2029

### Vale Road Industrial Estate, Windsor



Approach	Low and medium rise flats, and small and medium houses. Mixed housing and employment site.
Proposed Capacity	110 dwellings (gross), 110 dwellings (net)
Availability	2014-2024

## Sawyers Close, Windsor



Approach	Small houses and flats
Proposed Capacity	400 dwellings (gross), 200 dwellings (net)
Availability	2020-2029

## 95 Straight Road, Old Windsor



Approach	Small and medium houses
Proposed Capacity	11 dwellings (gross), 11 dwellings (net)
Availability	2014-2019

## Straight Road Works, 65A Straight Road, Old Windsor



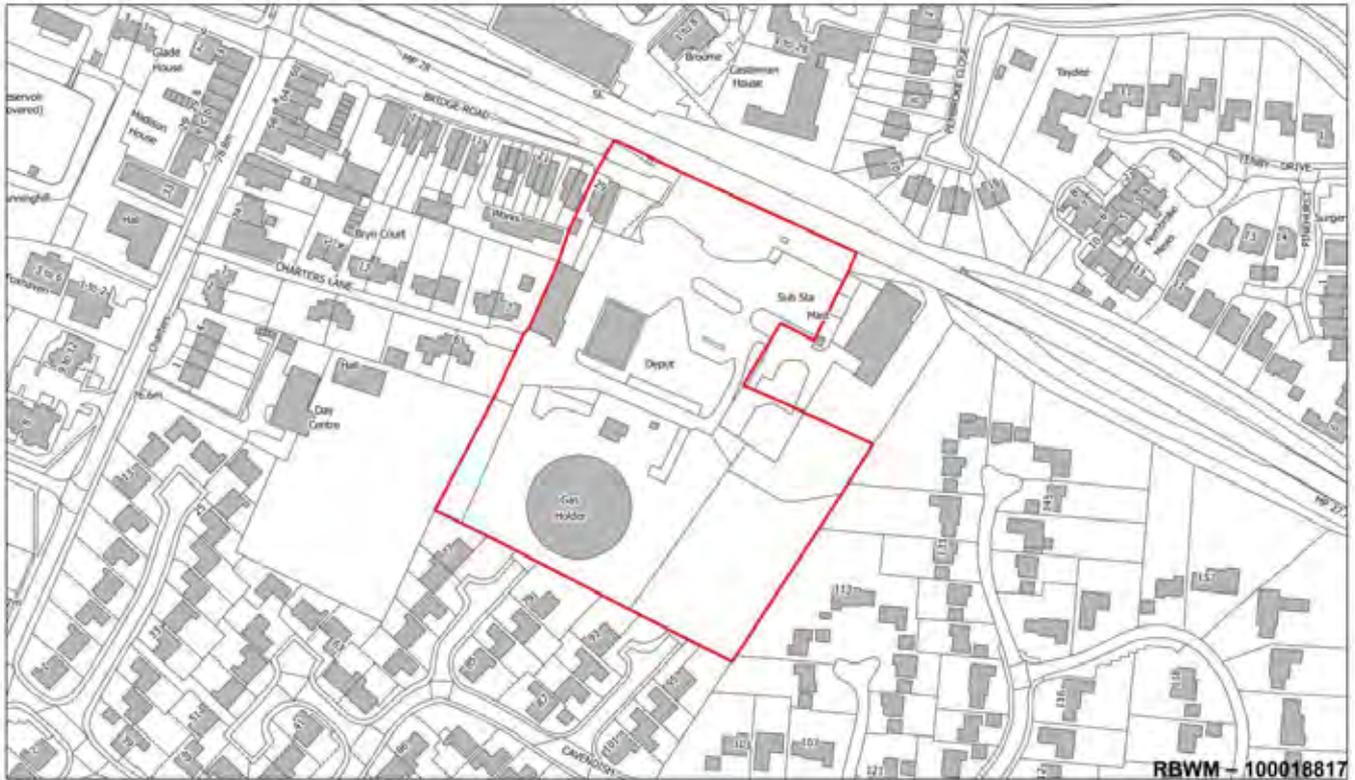
Approach	Small and medium houses
Proposed Capacity	20 dwellings (gross), 20 dwellings (net)
Availability	2025-2029

## Land at High Street Ascot



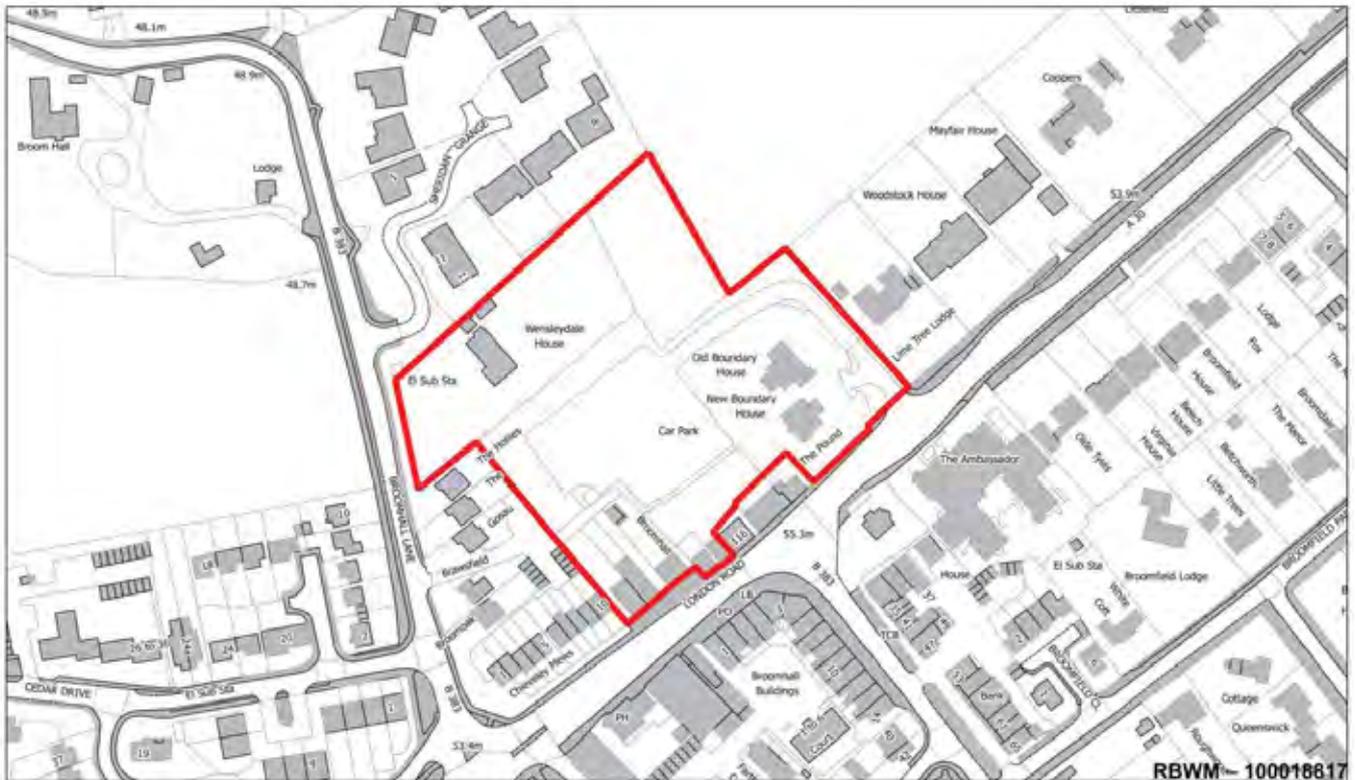
Approach	Small houses and flats above shops
Proposed Capacity	110 dwellings (gross), 110 dwellings (net)
Availability	Mid-late

## Gas Holder Station, Bridge Road, Sunninghill



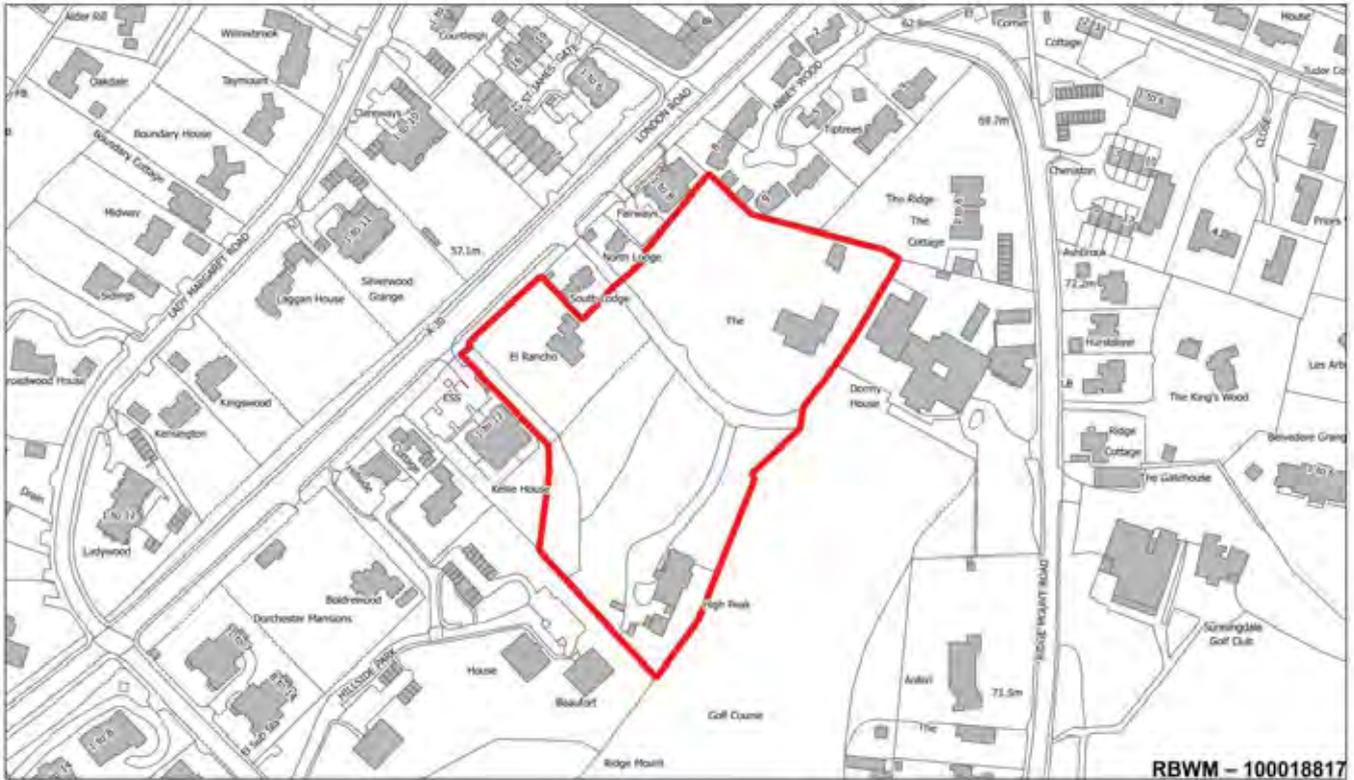
Approach	Small and medium houses. Possibly some flats.
Proposed Capacity	80 dwellings (gross), 80 dwellings (net)
Availability	2020-2024

### Broomhall Car Park and land adjoining, Sunningdale



Approach	Mixed use site including retail, car parking and housing. Smaller houses and low rise flats.
Proposed Capacity	31 dwellings (gross), 28 dwellings (net)
Availability	2020-2029

## High Peak, White House and Holcombe House, London Road, Sunningdale



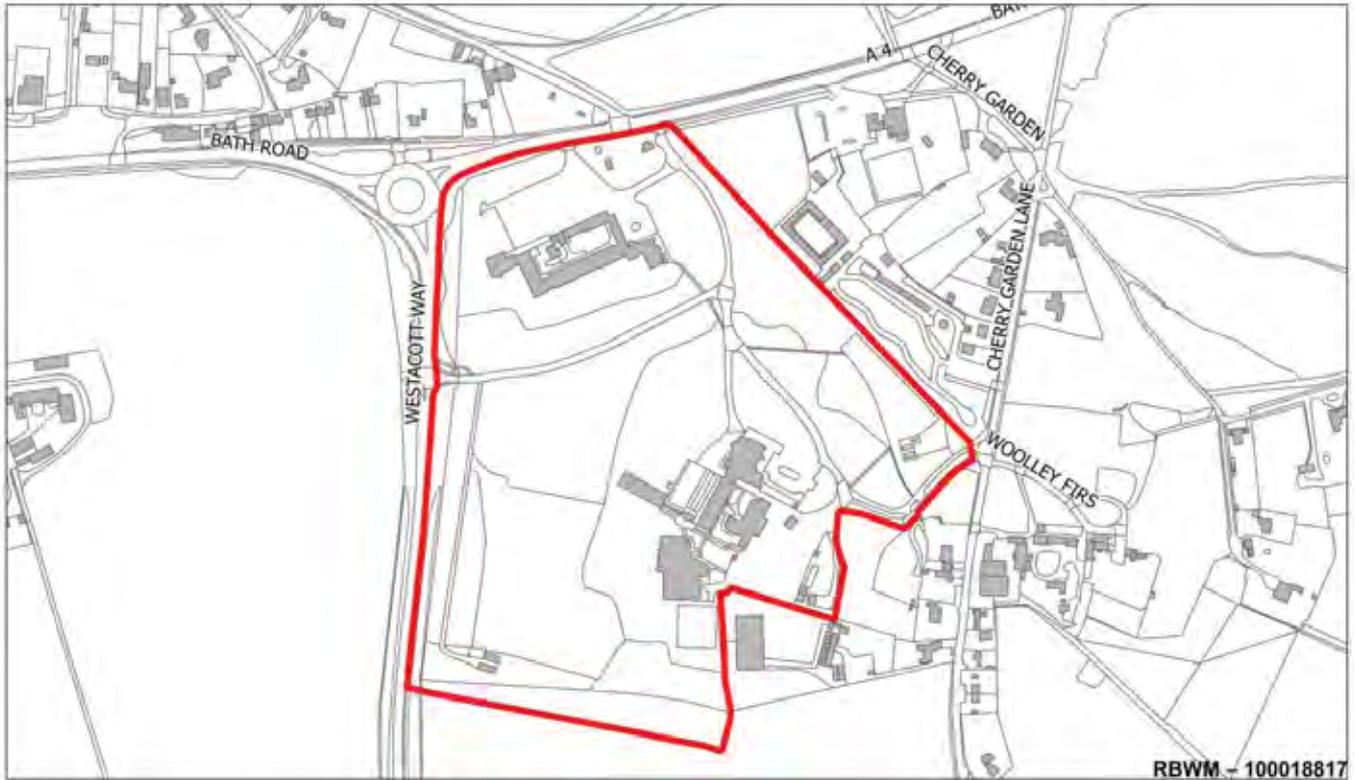
Approach	Low rise flats, and medium and large houses
Proposed Capacity	25 dwellings (gross), 20 dwellings (net)
Availability	2020-2024

### Summerleaze Office and Workshop, Summerleaze Road, Maidenhead



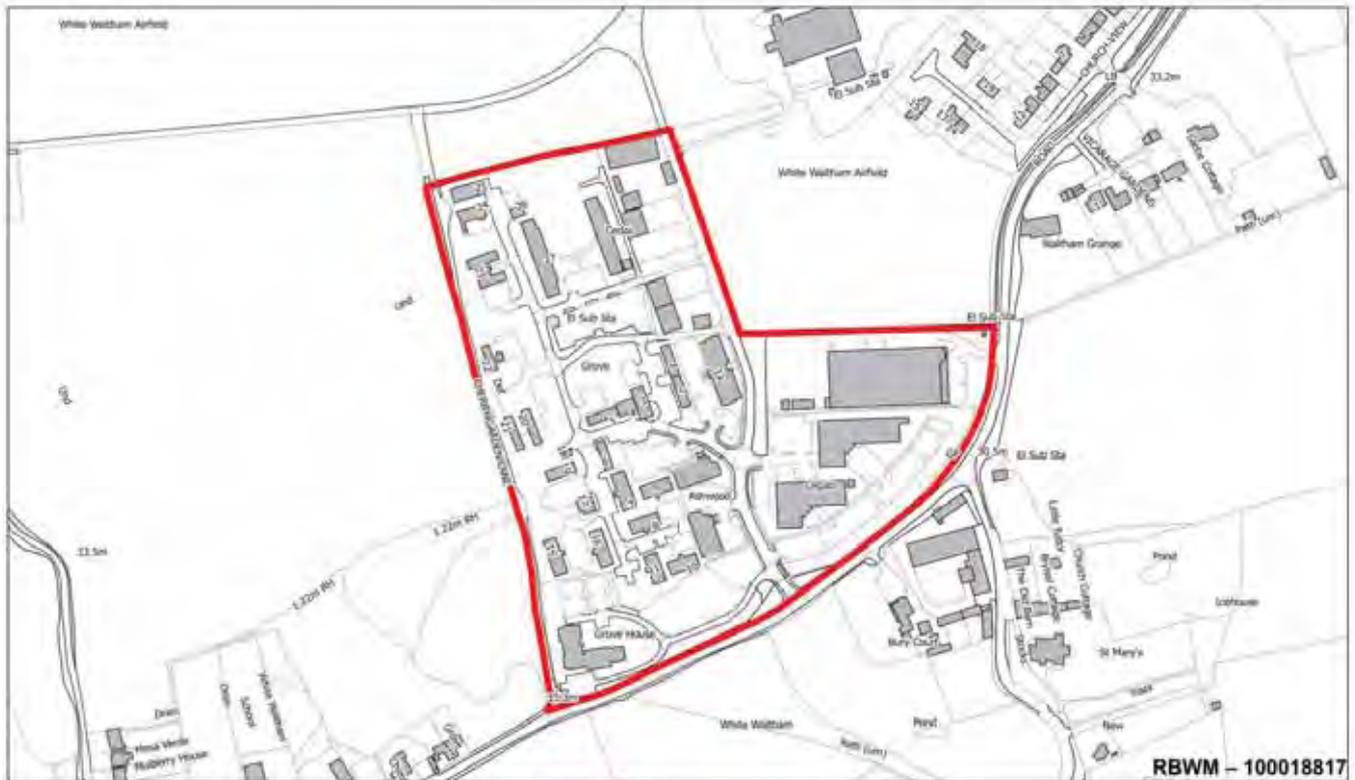
Approach	Maisonettes, small and medium houses
Proposed Capacity	40 dwellings (gross); 40 dwellings (net)
Availability	2025-2029

## Woolley Hall and Grange, Westacott Way, Littlewick Green



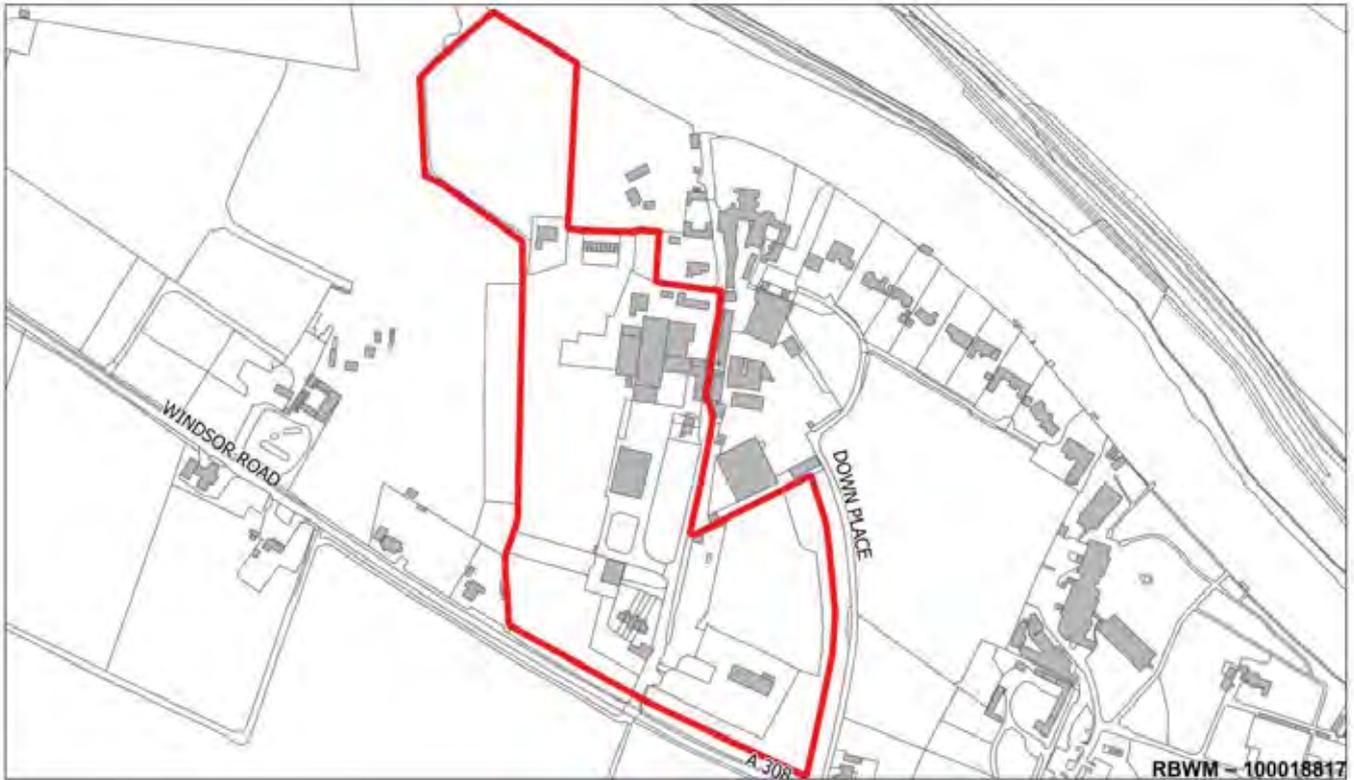
Approach	Flat and houses
Proposed Capacity	43 dwellings (gross), 43 dwellings (net)
Availability	2014-2024

### Land at Grove Business Park, Waltham Road, White Waltham



Approach	Mixed housing and employment site. Medium and large houses.
Proposed Capacity	79 dwellings (gross), 79 dwellings (net)
Availability	2014-2024

## Land at Walter Oakley Farm, Windsor Road, Oakley Green



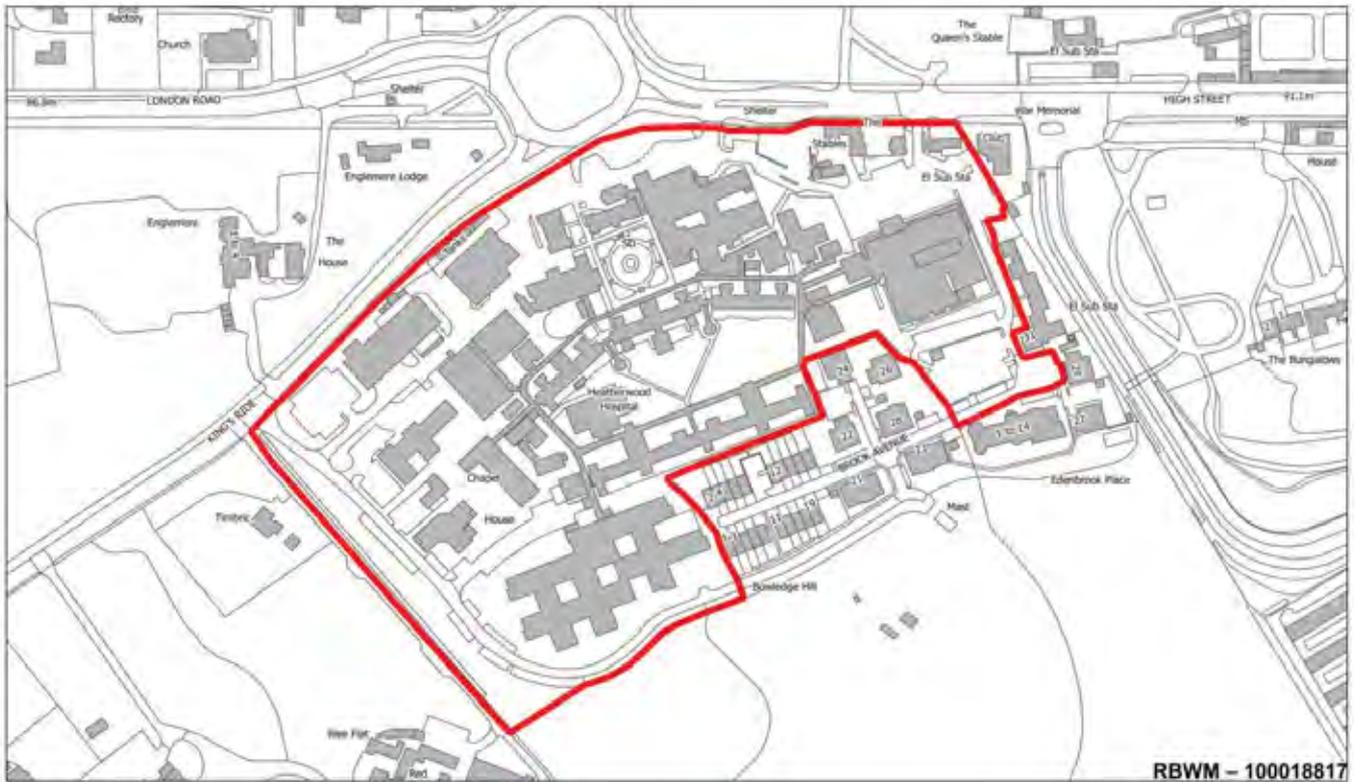
Approach	Medium and large houses
Proposed Capacity	44 dwellings (gross), 28 dwellings (net)
Availability	2014-2024







## Land at Heatherwood Hospital, High Street, Ascot



Approach	Mixed hospital and housing site. Small, medium and large houses with some flats.
Proposed Capacity	200 dwellings (gross), 200 dwellings (net)
Availability	2020-2024

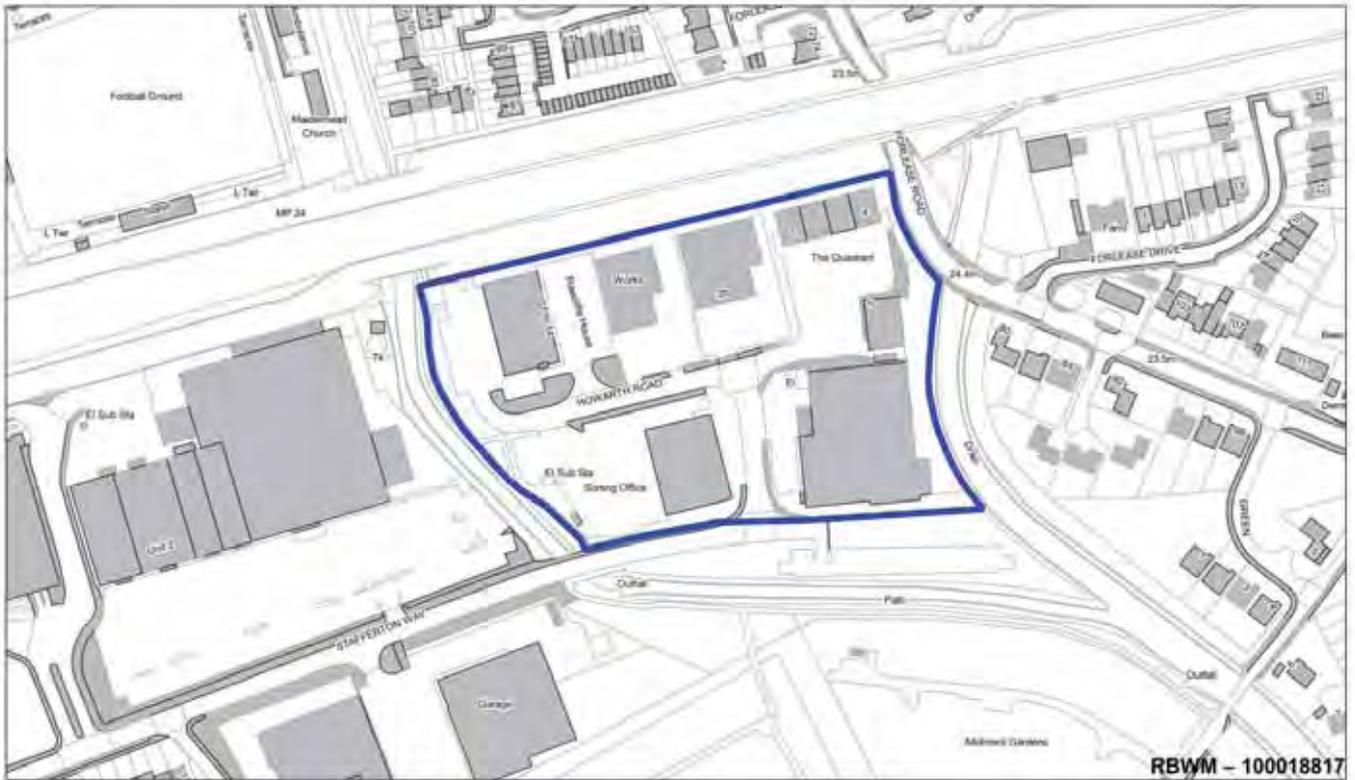


**Employment Site Allocations**  
**Whitebrook Park, Maidenhead**  
**Business area**



## Howarth Road, Maidenhead

### Business area



## Vanwall Road Business Area, Maidenhead

### Business area



**Norreys Drive, Maidenhead****Business area**

## Foundation Park, Maidenhead

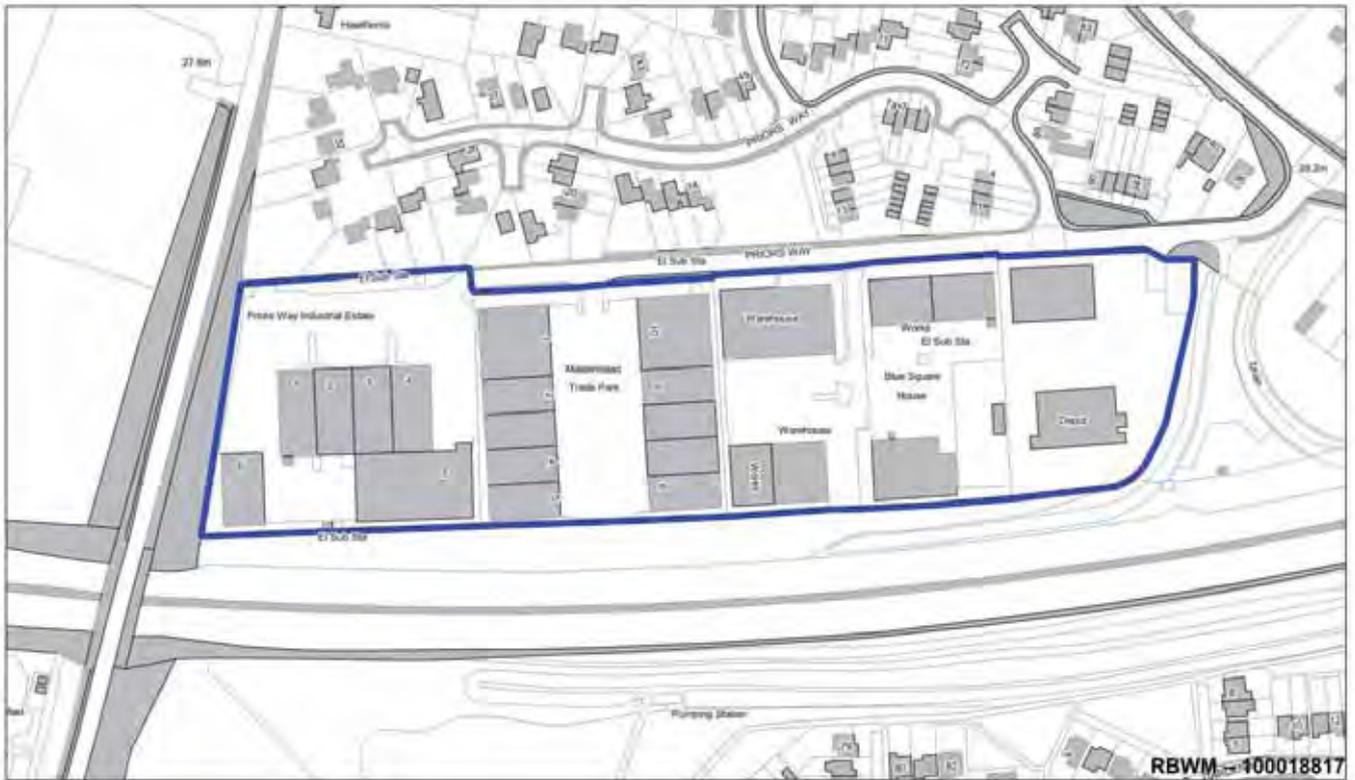
### Business area

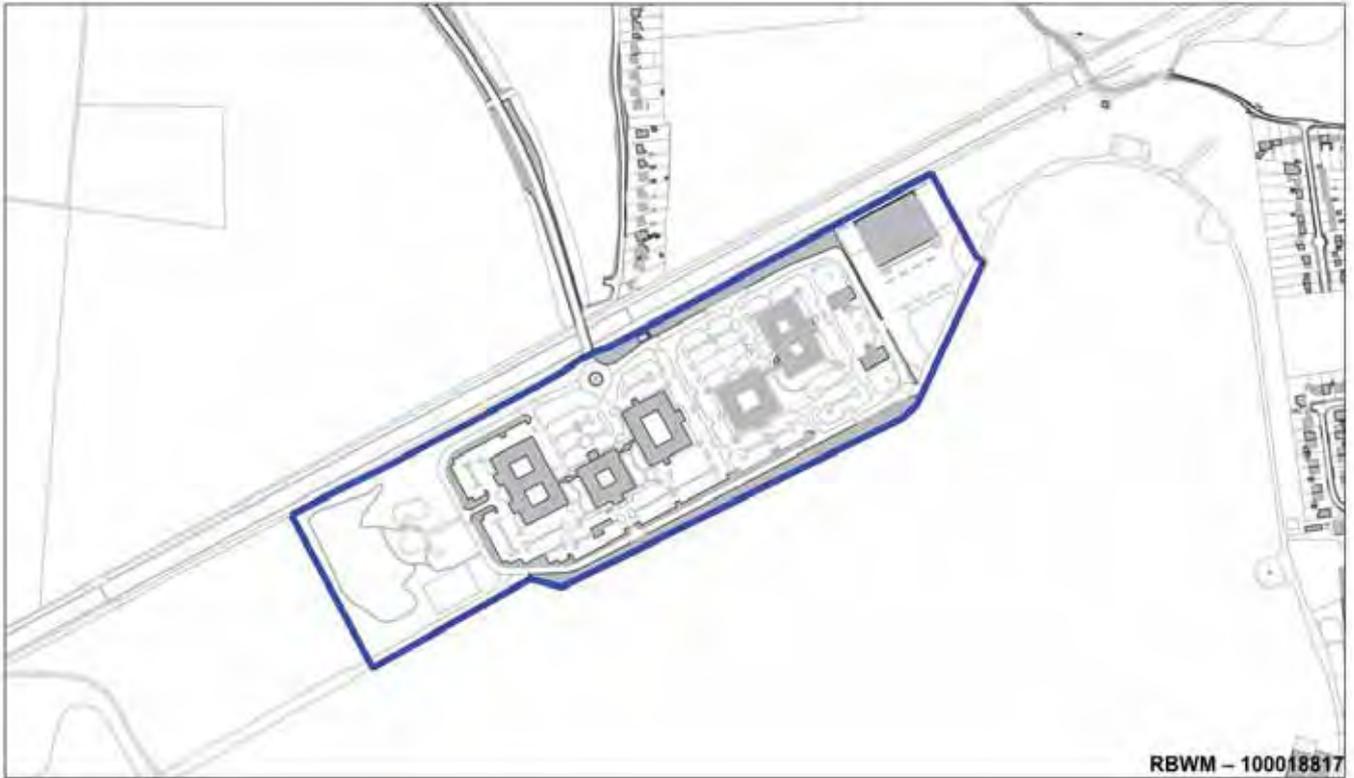




## Priors Way Industrial Estate

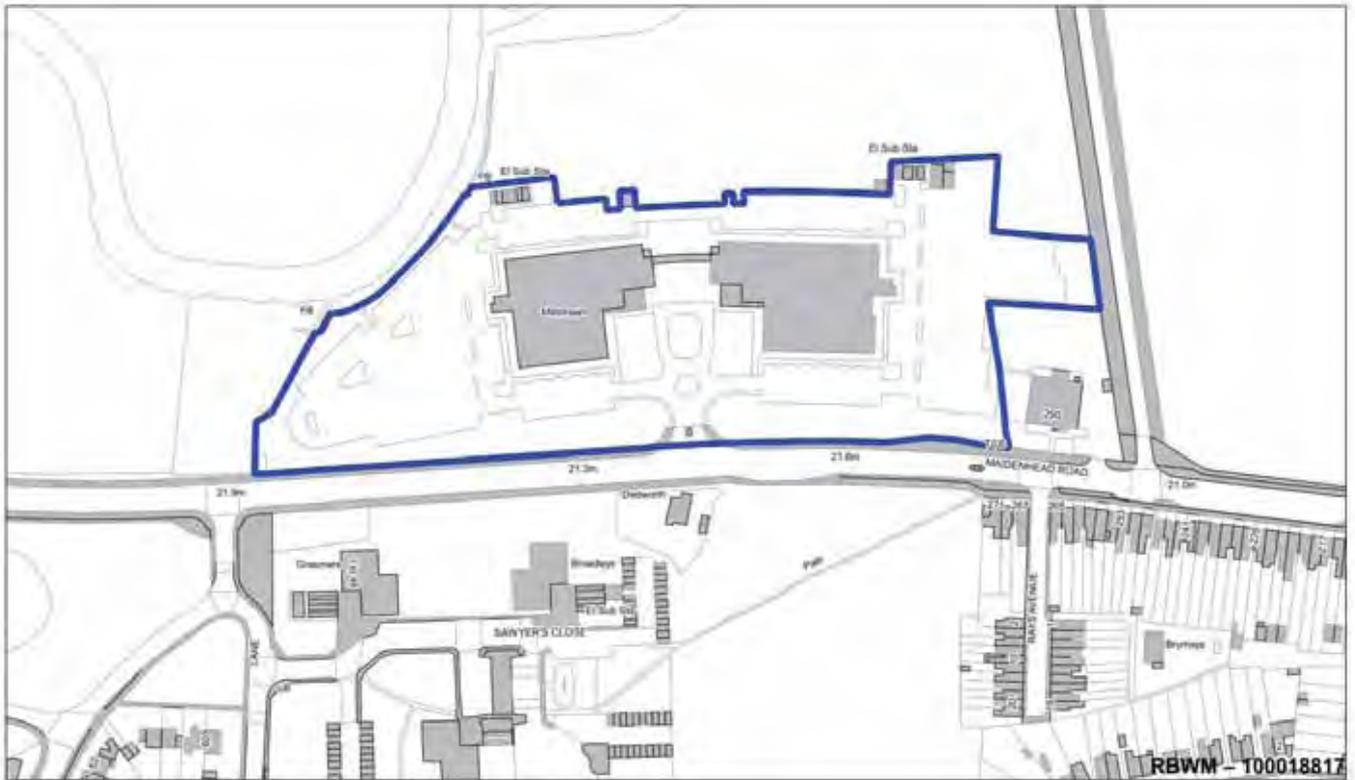
### Business area



**Maidenhead Office Park and Barloworld****Business area**

## Centrica, Maidenhead Road, Windsor

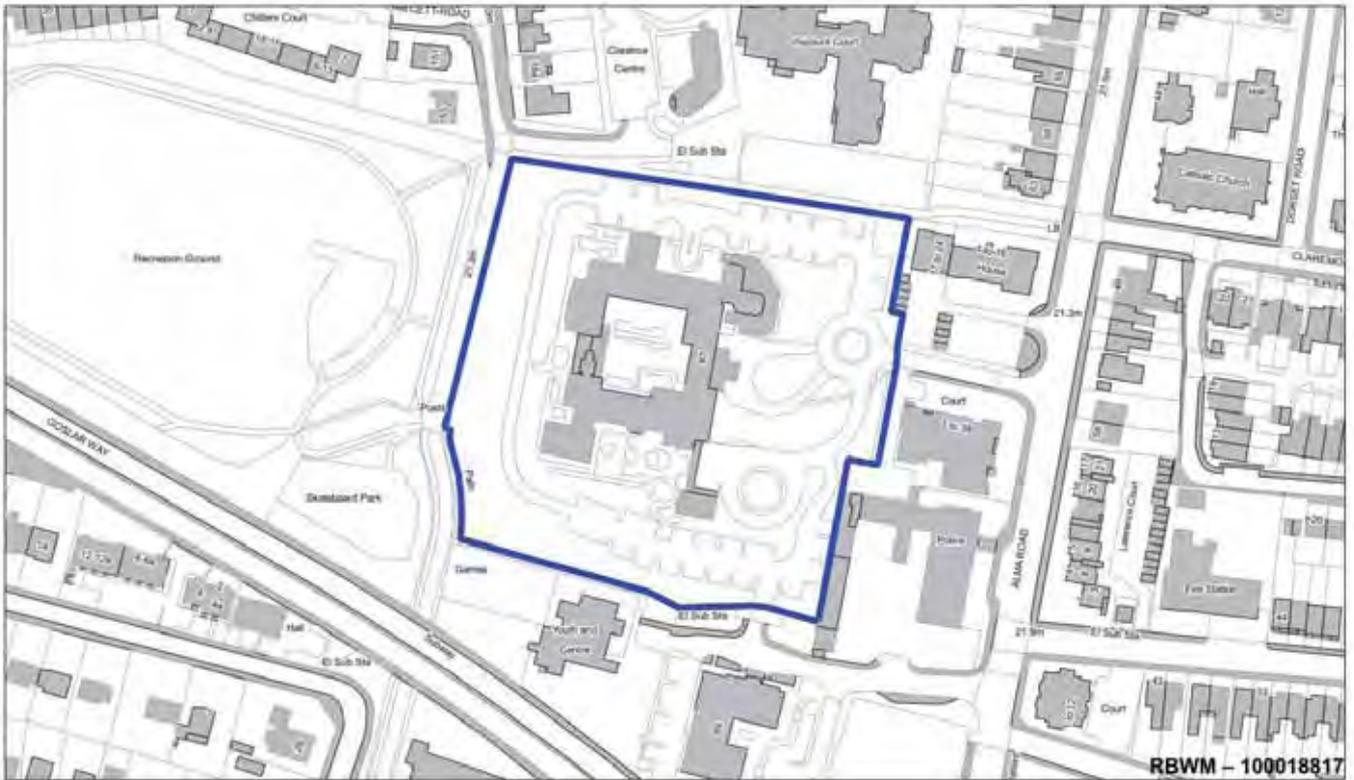
### Business area



**Windsor Dials, Arthur Road, Windsor****Business area**

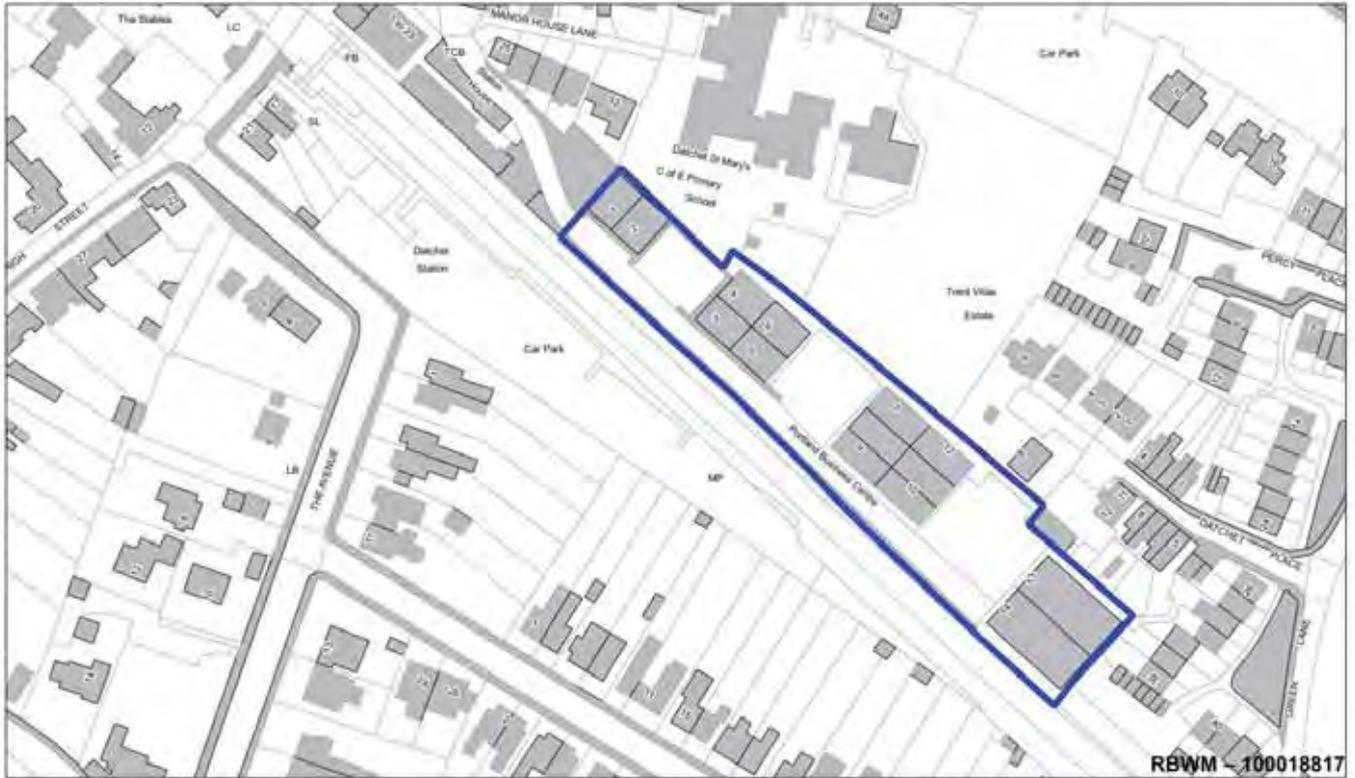
## Imperial House, Windsor

### Business area



## Manor House Lane, Datchet

### Business area



## Ditton Park, Datchet

### Business area



**Ascot Business Park, Ascot****Business area**



## Furze Platt Industrial Estate, Maidenhead

### Industrial area



## Cordwallis Industrial Estate, Maidehead

### Industrial area



## Kings Grove / Boyn Valley Industrial Estate

### Industrial area



## Vansittart Industrial Estate, Windsor

### Industrial area





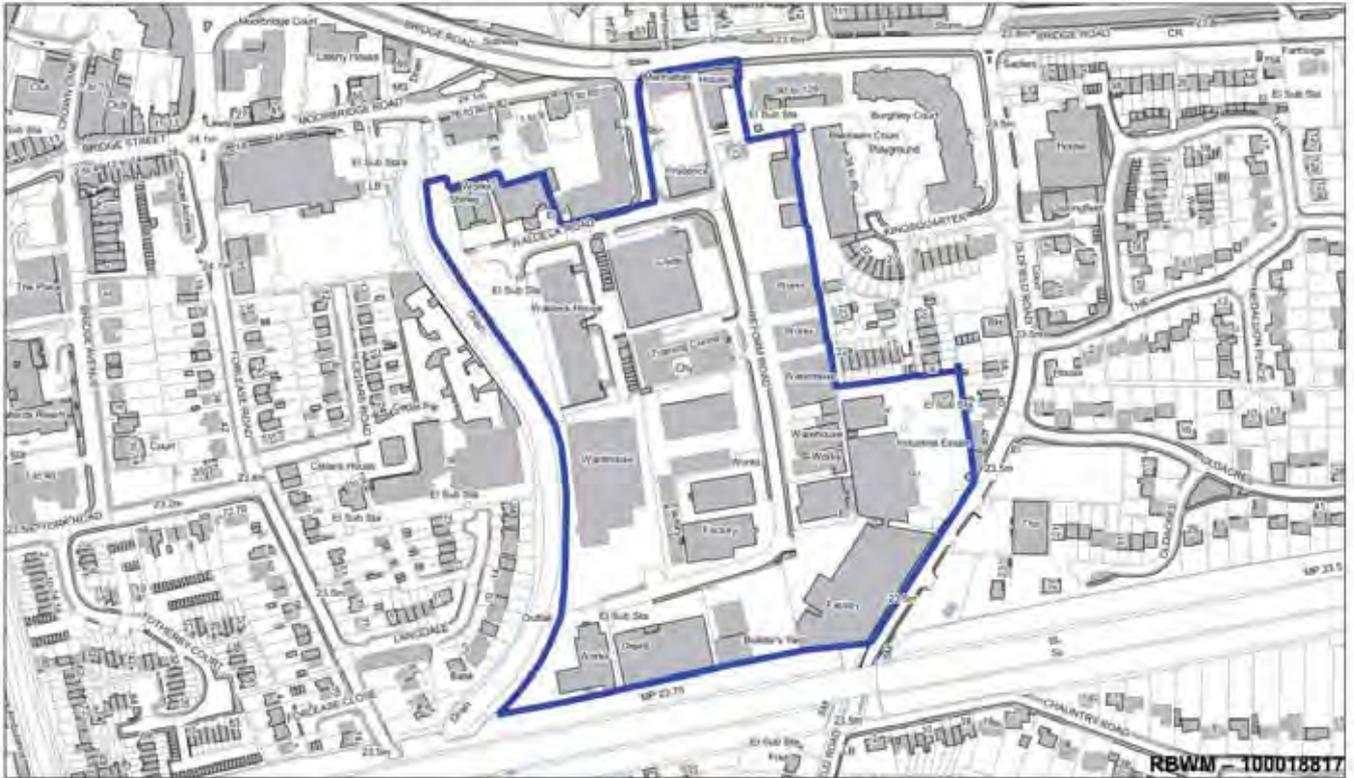
## Lower Mount Farm, Cookham

### Industrial area



## Reform Road, Maidenhead

### Mixed use area



## Stafferton Way, Maidenhead

### Mixed use area







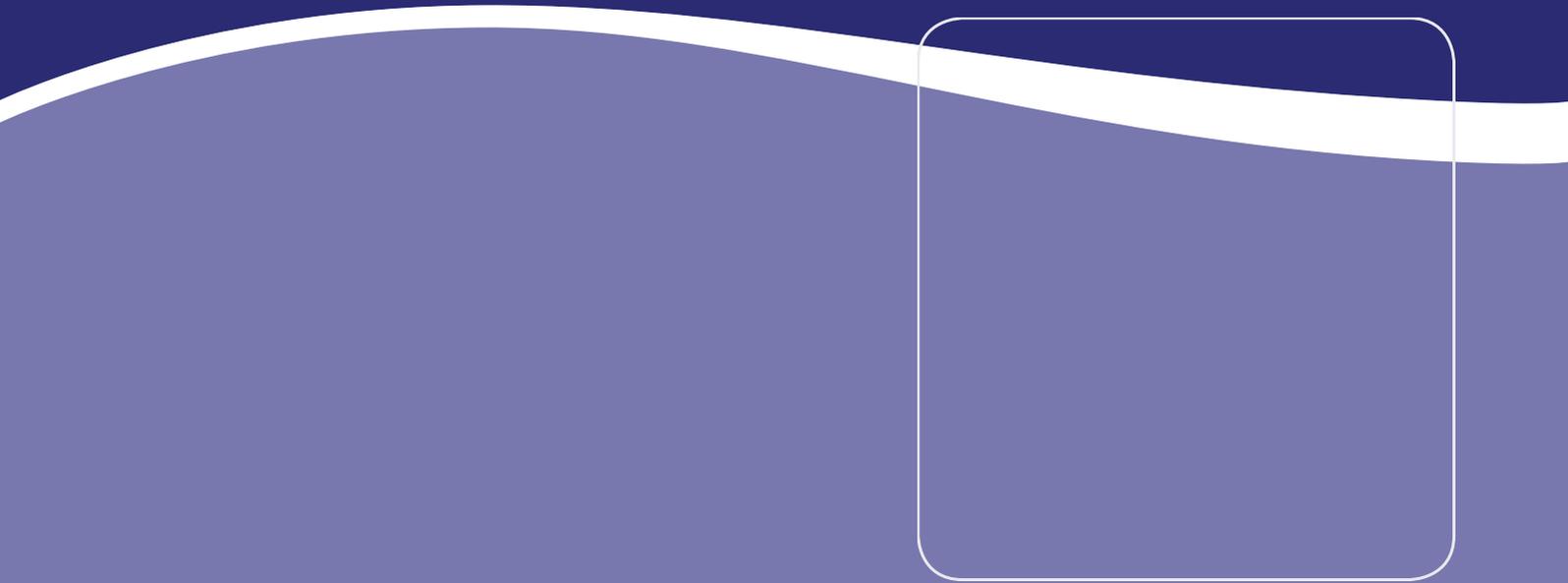
## Other Site Allocations

### Little Farm Nursery



Approach

Indoor and outdoor sports and recreation



## Areas in the Green Belt for Future Analysis

F

Area west of Whyteladies Lane, Cookham Rise



### Area around Spencers Farm; east of Cookham Road, Maidenhead



Area west of Sheephouse Road, Maidenhead



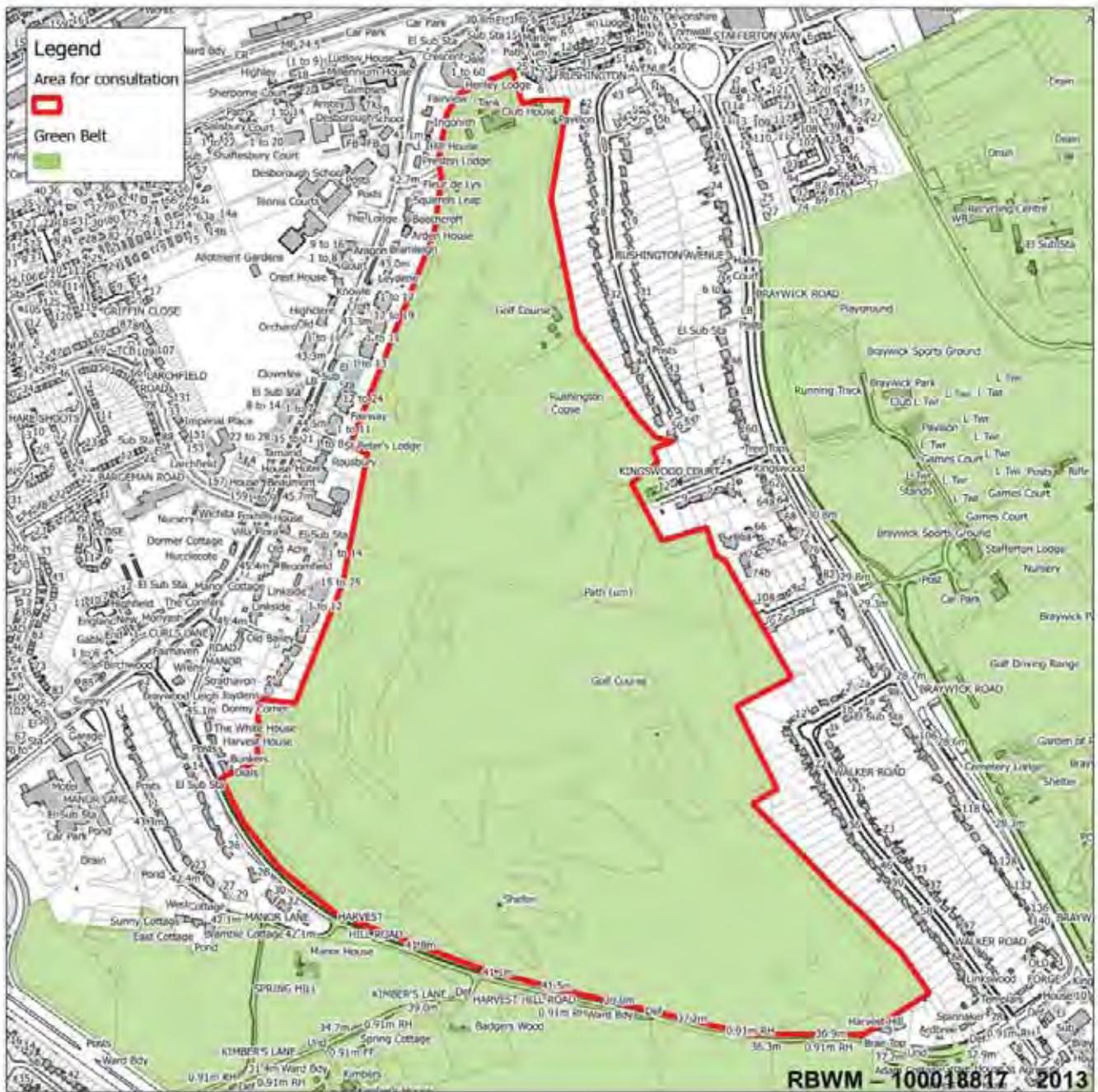
### Strip of land west of Cannon Lane, Cox Green



Area south of railway and north of Breadcroft Lane, Cox Green



### Area including Maidenhead Golf Course



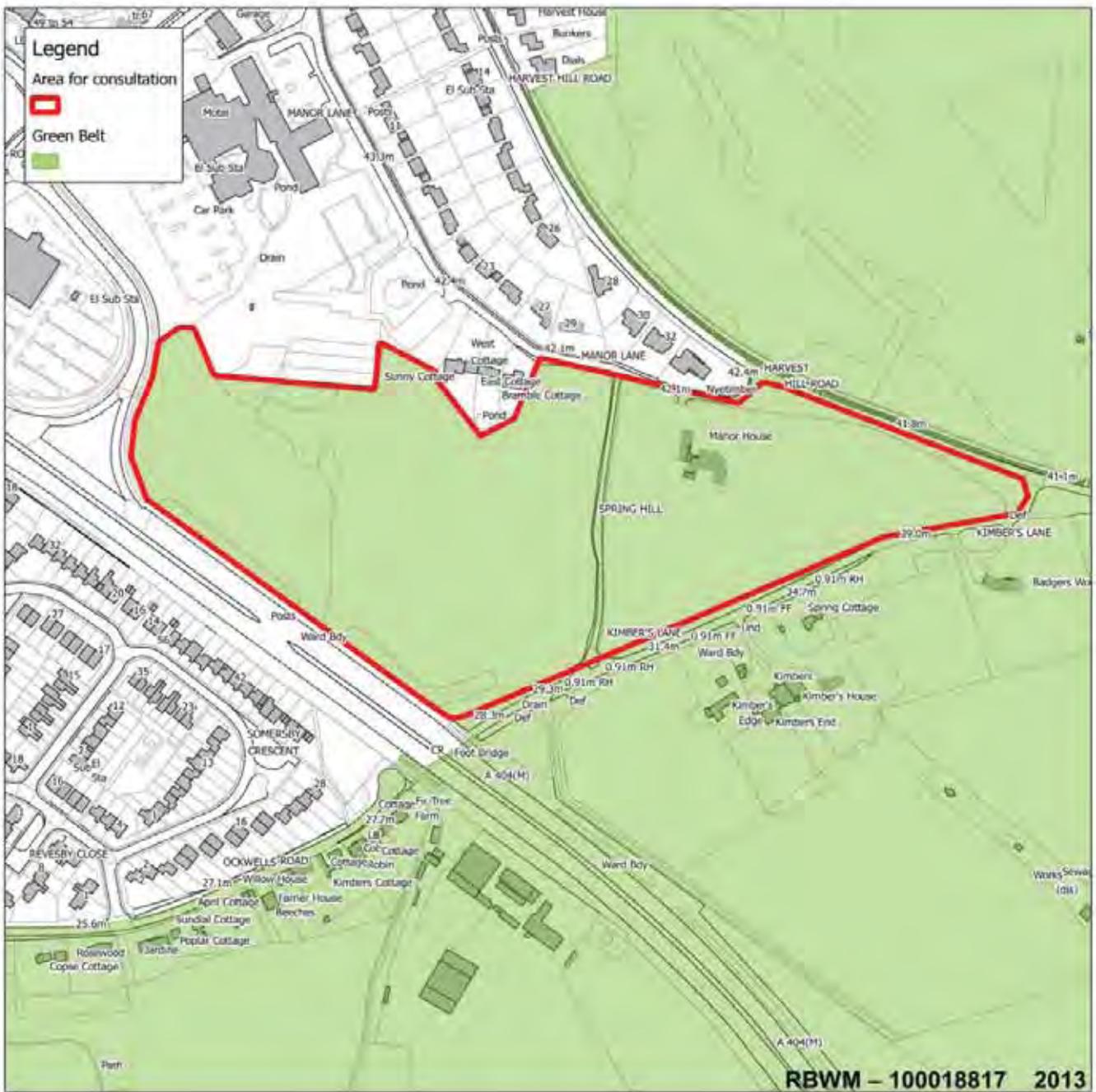
Area west of A404M, Maidenhead



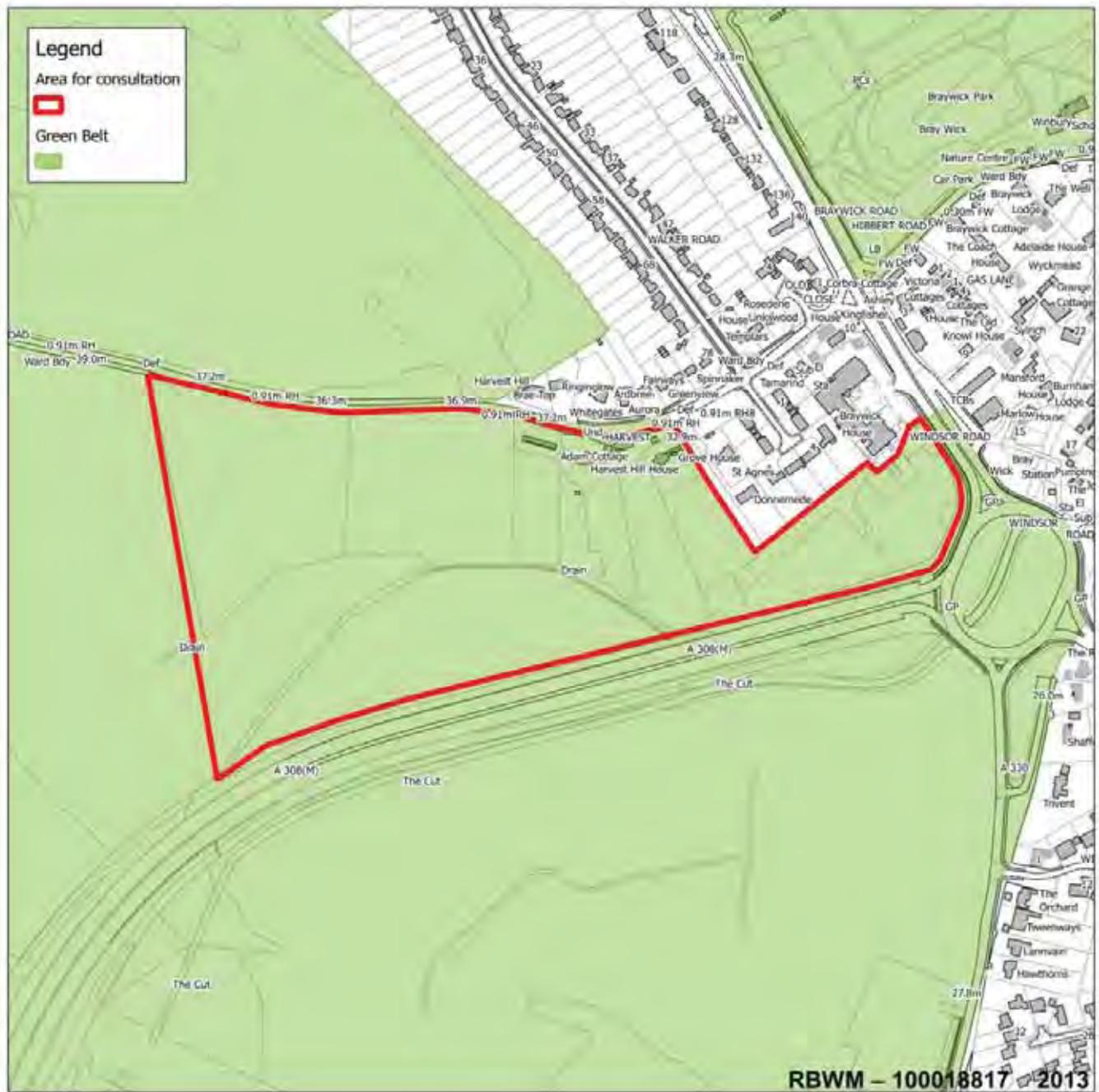
### Triangle enclosed by M4/A308/Ascot Road, Maidenhead



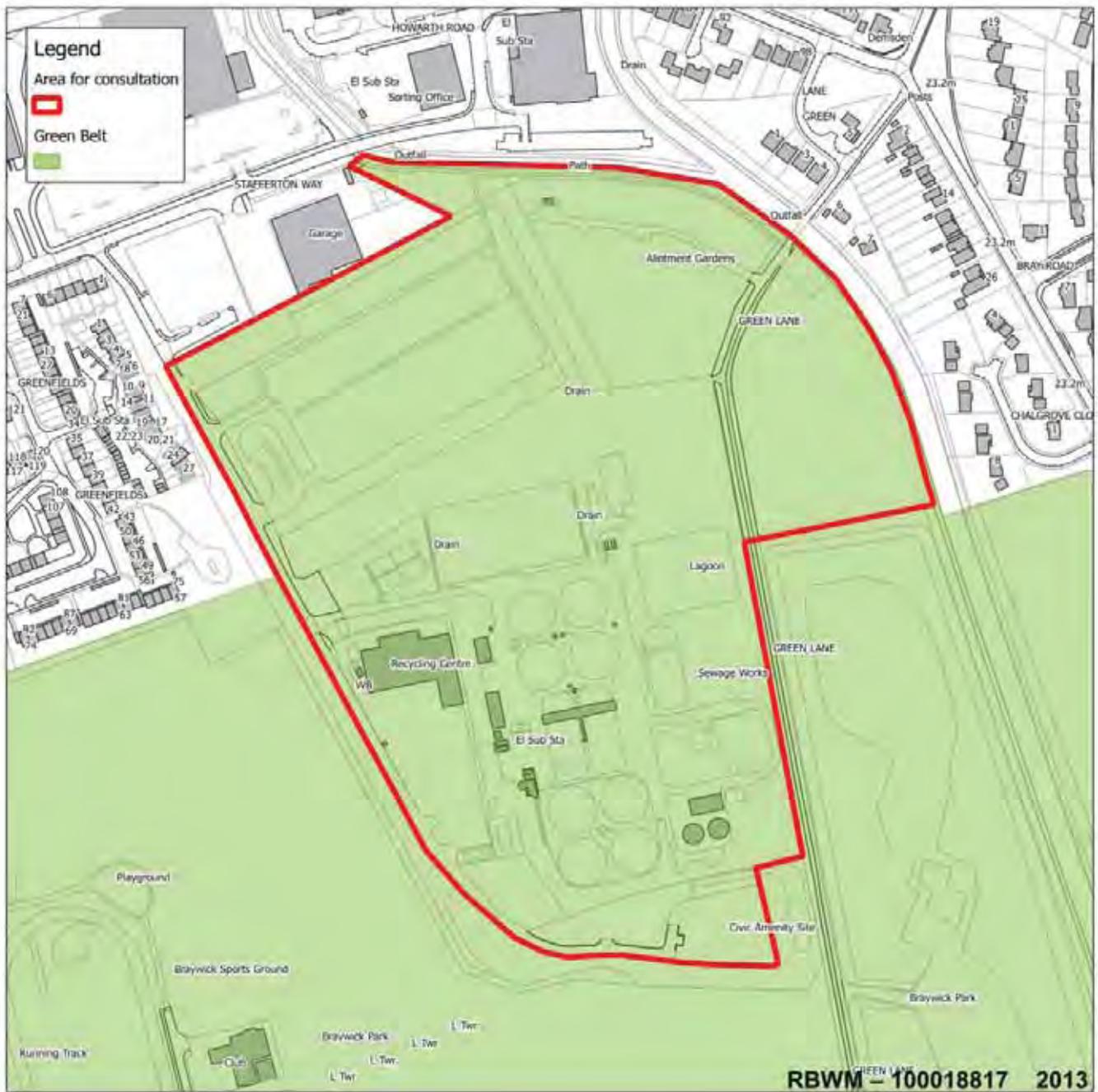
Area north of Kimbers Lane, Maidenhead



### Area south of Harvest Hill Road, Maidenhead



Area south of Stafferton Way, Braywick, Maidenhead



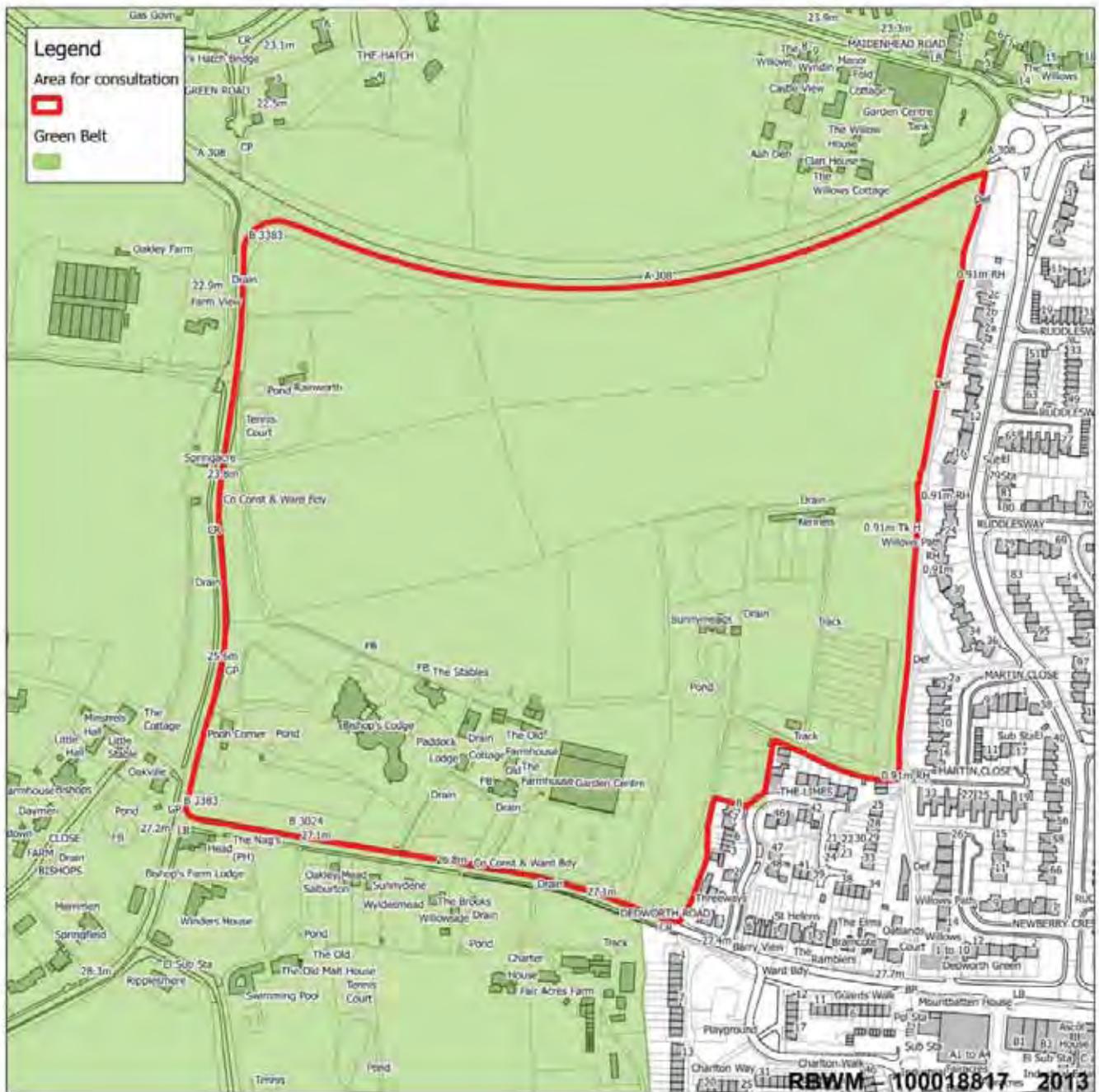
## Area between Ascot Road and Holyport Road, Holyport



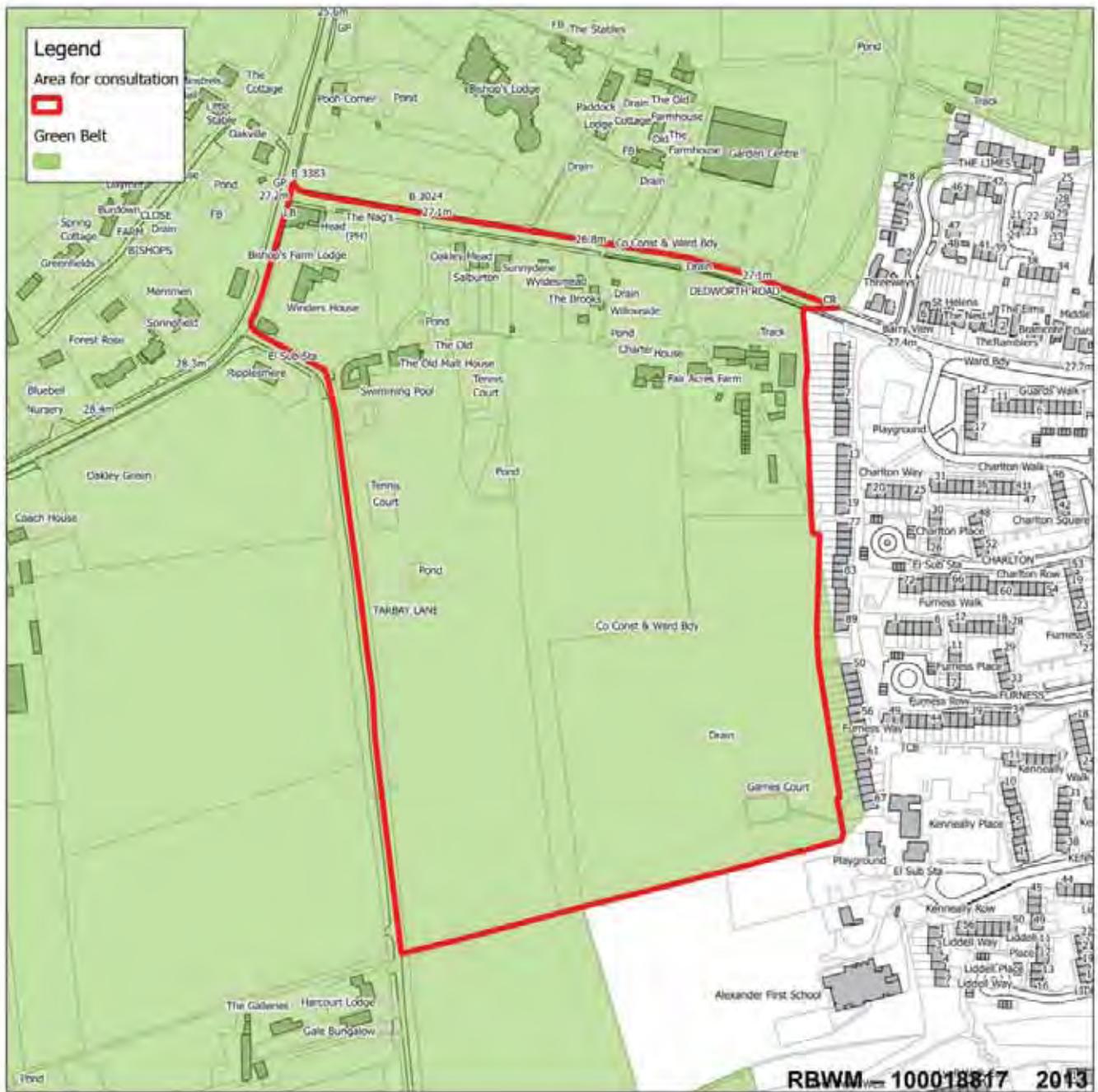
Area north of A308, south of Maidenhead Road, Windsor



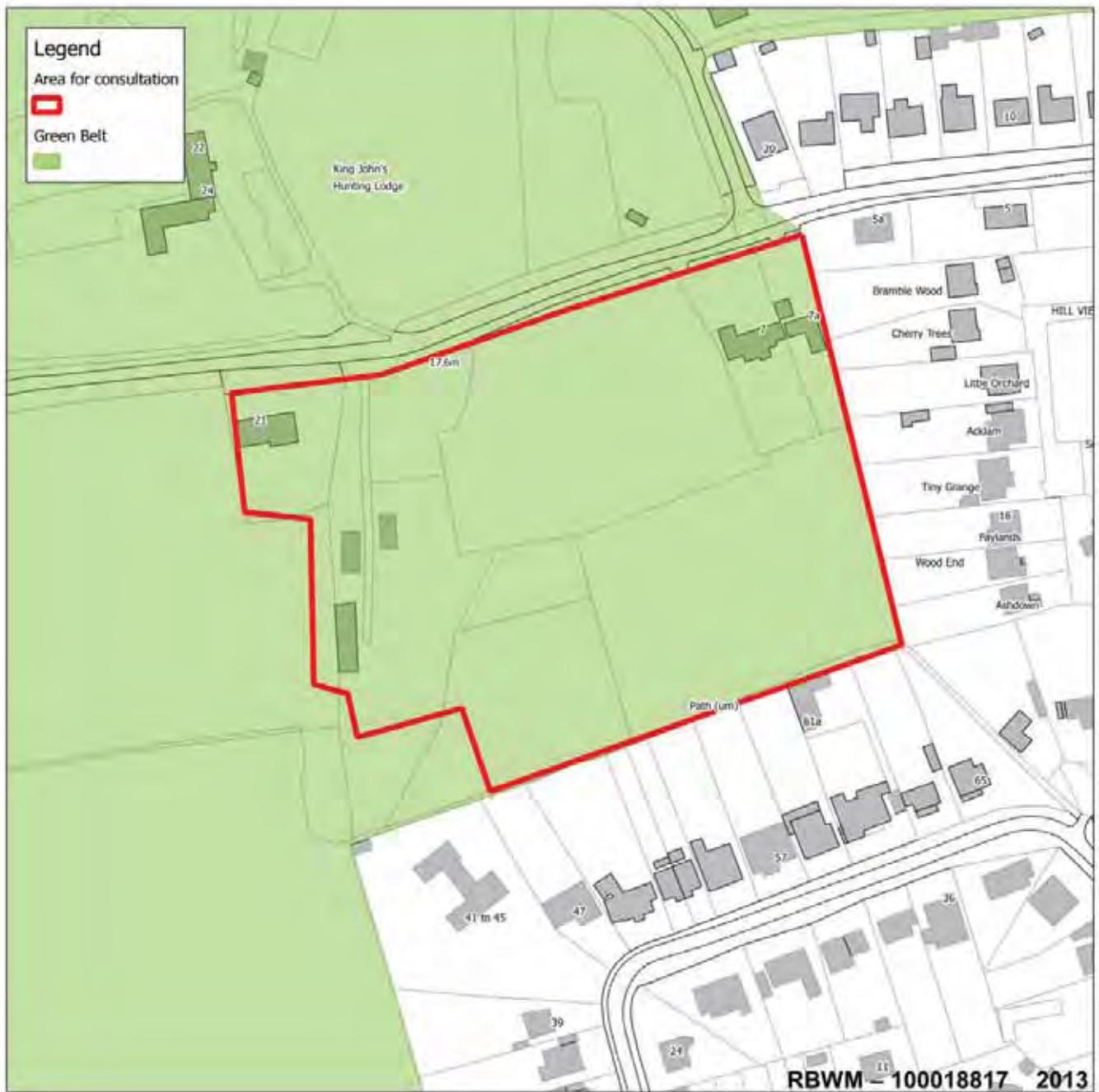
Area south of A308, east of Oakley Green Road and north of Dedworth Road, Windsor



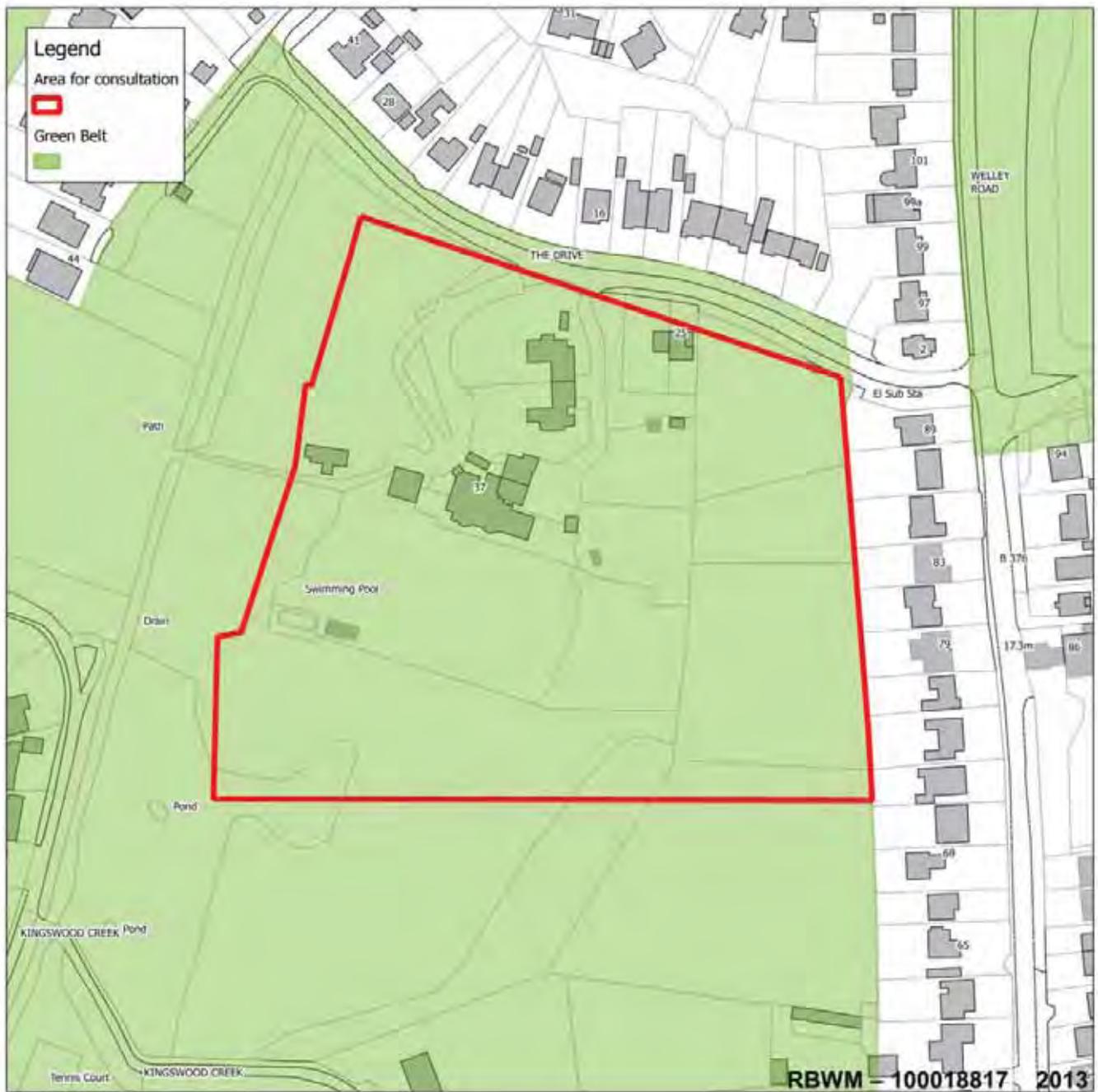
Area south of Dedworth Road and west of Broom Farm Estate, Windsor



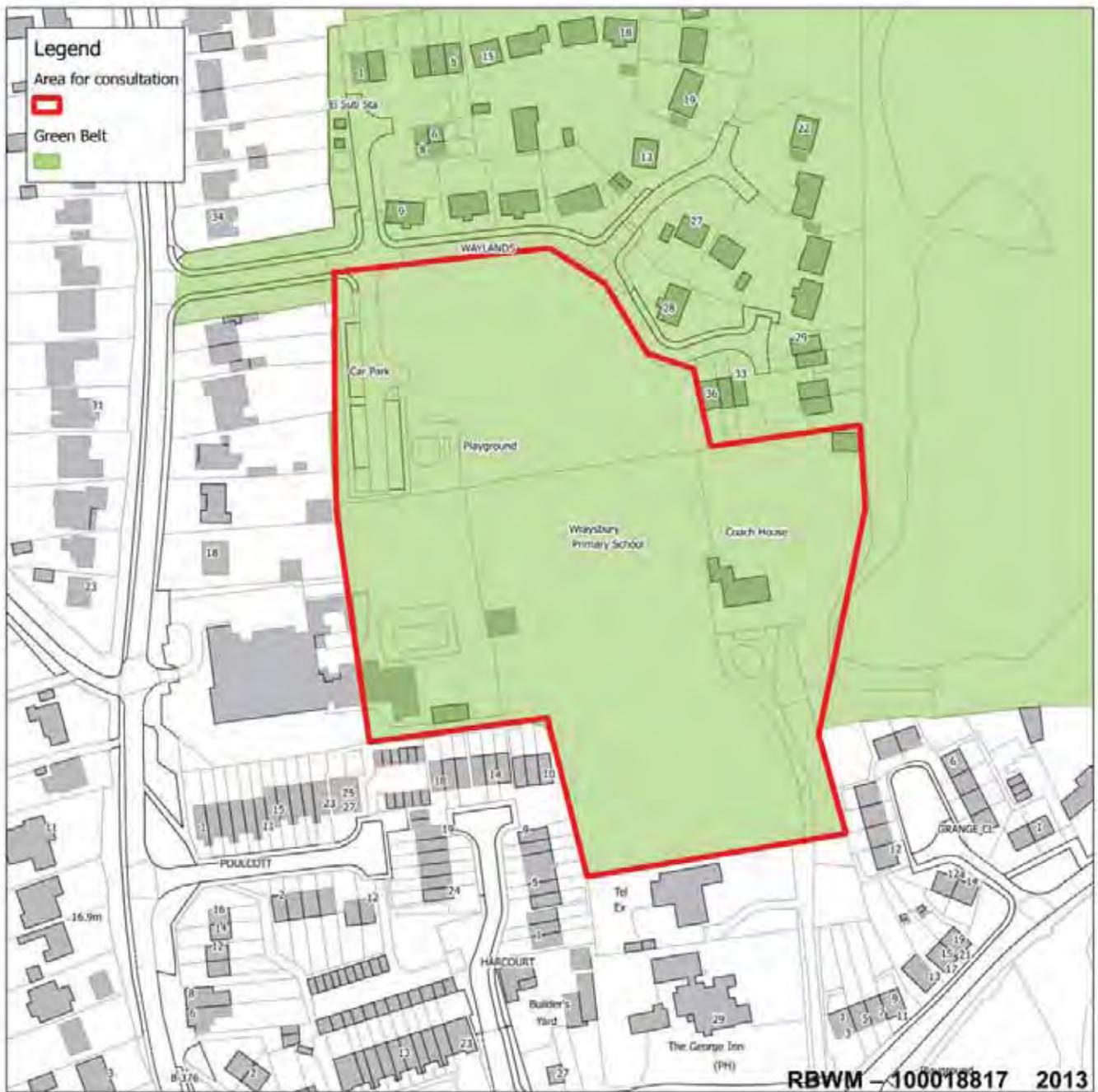
## Area south of Old Ferry Drive, Wraysbury



Area south of The Drive, Wraysbury



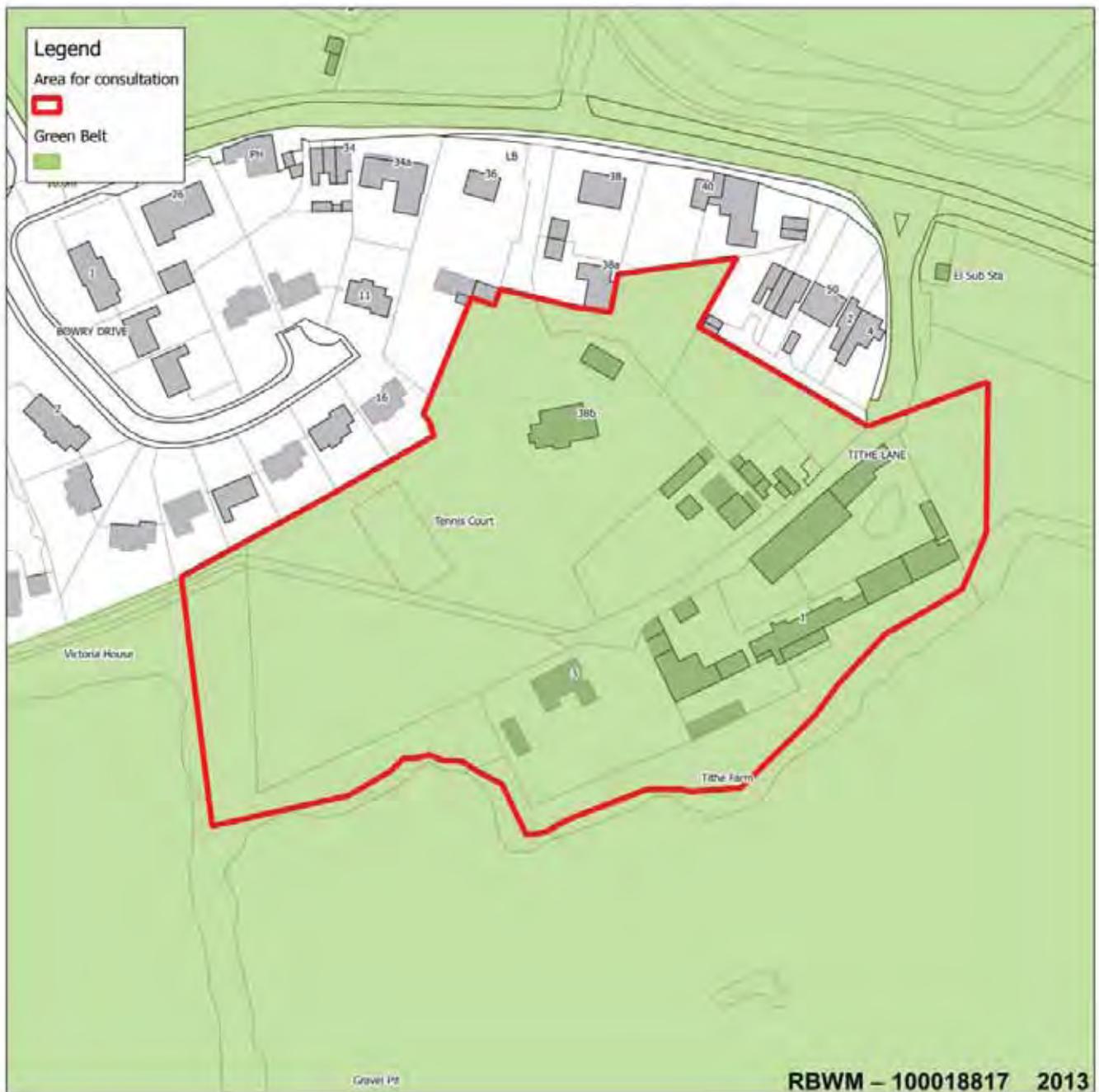
Area south of Waylands, Wraysbury



## Area south of St Andrew's Close, Wraysbury



## Area around Tithe Farm, Wraysbury



Area north of Church Road, Old Windsor



Area west of Old Windsor and north of Crimp Hill, Old Windsor



