

South West Maidenhead Placemaking Study

Royal Borough of Windsor &
Maidenhead Council



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Table of Contents

1. Introduction	03
<hr/>	
2. Local Plan Approach	10
<hr/>	
3. Site Context & Analysis	17
<hr/>	
4. Vision & Key Principles	39
<hr/>	
5. Placemaking Approach	42
<hr/>	
6. Delivery & Implementation	54

Appendices

Appendix A: Allocated site proformas from submission version of the Borough Local Plan	58
<hr/>	
Appendix B: South West Maidenhead Placemaking Report of Workshops	60

1. Introduction

1.1 Maidenhead is a key town in the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. It has been identified as a key location to accommodate future growth and new development as part of a wider spatial strategy for the area that has been evolved by the Borough and is being established through the emerging Borough Local Plan (BLP).

1.2 The Borough Council recognises the importance of ‘placemaking’ as part of planning for future growth and development, and that the quality of the place that people live in and use will have a powerful impact on quality of life.

1.3 There can be multiple influences and considerations for what may create a quality place. All the elements of the built environment work together to create a character that reflects the identity of the place and its community. Historic places can connect us to the achievements and lives of previous generations. Good contemporary design can be utilised to integrate modern and innovation and express confidence in the future. Functional places can contribute to people’s productivity. Sustainable places contribute to people’s health and wellbeing.

1.4 Successful places should be distinctive and memorable. Placemaking also makes economic sense - good quality places are usually cheaper to run, easier to maintain, and attract investment.

1.5 Placemaking itself is also not just about design. It involves understanding the bigger story about a place, as well as being attentive to the small but important details. It involves taking care of what is there already, and anticipating what is still needed

to make a place work whilst ensuring that the quality of the place can be managed and maintained in the long term.

1.6 As part of considering the approaches to future development at key locations across the Borough, the Council have initiated work to look more closely at 3 areas which are identified to accommodate the majority of the proposed future change. These are the South West Maidenhead, Maidenhead Town Centre and Ascot areas. The intention is to draw together existing evidence relating to these areas, consider all the relevant issues and consultation responses to date and help to evolve an overall placemaking response.

1.7 Ultimately the Council seek to evolve suitable overarching frameworks and appropriate strategic policies for the areas that can then help to manage future development across these important areas.

1.8 The Council commissioned Hyas Associates to work alongside Officers to prepare this placemaking study which considers the particular issues, influences and opportunities relating to the South West Maidenhead area. The Study has been prepared against the policies in the submission version BLP and the evidence base in place at submission. The Council has, concurrently, been undertaking a significant amount of work to revise and update both the BLP policies and supporting evidence base in response to matters arising from the Stage 1 examination hearings. This Study has had regard to new evidence where relevant and provides the background to the development of a new placemaking policy for South West Maidenhead and a number of new or revised site allocations.

The Study Area

1.9 The submission version Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Local Plan (the BLP) 2013 – 2033 (BLPSV) which was submitted to the Secretary of State on 31 January 2018, allocates a significant amount of new development to the south west area of Maidenhead, totalling some 2600 new homes and representing around 31% of the proposed total housing allocations in the Plan. Within the Study area, the BLP also allocates Ockwells Park and Nature Reserve as an area of open space (Policy IF4); Braywick Park for the provision of a new leisure centre and associated indoor and outdoor sports facilities (Policy IF6) and land south of the A308(M), known as the Triangle site as an area protected for future long term employment uses (Policy ED2).

1.10 The Study Area is a large wedge of land to the south west of Maidenhead railway station. The land has a range of topographies and comprises of a mix of open space (including a golf course), leisure, residential and employment activities. A number of key local roads into Maidenhead town centre run through the area and the A404(M), A308(M) and the M4 are significant assets and barriers for the area. Maidenhead town centre lies to the north of study area.

1.11 Much of the land allocated for development in

the Study Area is proposed, in the BLP, to be released from the Green Belt. The higher ground in the north of the Study Area is largely free from flood zone 2 & 3 designations. There are several heritage designations and areas of ancient woodland. The area is in multiple ownerships with both public and private interests represented. A significant area has been promoted for development and is included in the Council’s most recent Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (HELAA 2019). Part of the area is in Council ownership.

1.12 Whilst there are a number of housing, employment and open space allocated sites the submission version BLP does not identify the overall extent of the Study Area either on the Proposals Map or as a policy area. There is therefore currently no coordinated or comprehensive approach to the area or the allocations in the submitted Plan. Given the scale of development, the Council recognises the need to plan the area comprehensively to ensure the delivery of a high quality and sustainable place.

**Figure 1 :
Study Area**



National Policy and Key Drivers

1.13 The current development planning system is established through the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and subsequent amendments, such as the Localism Act 2011 which introduced Neighbourhood Plans. The national approach to planning policy matters is set out principally in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). A revised NPPF was published in July 2018 and further updates published in February 2019.

1.14 The Submitted Borough Local Plan (BLP) was prepared under the 2012 NPPF and benefits from the transitional arrangements in Annex A of the 2018/9 revised NPPF as it was submitted for examination prior to 24 January 2019. References to the NPPF in this are therefore to the 2012 version unless stated otherwise.

1.15 The NPPF introduced the presumption in favour of sustainable development. For plan making, this means that local planning authorities should plan positively to meet the development needs of their area, and meet objectively assessed needs unless the adverse impacts of doing so would ‘significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits’, or specific policies of the NPPF indicate that development should be restricted. The NPPF also contains national land use policy on matters such as the economy, town centres, transport, housing and good design. Policies in the NPPF are supplemented by the National Planning Practice Guidance.

1.16 Section 3 of the current NPPF sets out guidance for plan-making, amongst others, plans should be prepared with the aim of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development; be prepared positively, so that they are aspirational but deliverable; benefit from early, proportionate and effective engagement; contain policies that are clearly written and unambiguous so that decision makers are clear how they should respond to development proposals.

1.17 The NPPF states that planning should:

- *always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;*
- *promote mixed use developments, and encourage multiple benefits from the use of land in urban and rural areas, recognising that some open land can perform many functions;*
- *actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable;*
- *conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations.*

1.18 On Design, the NPPF paragraph 57, states the importance of planning positively for high quality and inclusive design for all development from individual buildings to wider area development schemes. Paragraph 58 requires local and neighbourhood plans to set “robust and comprehensive policies” that establish the quality of development expected for an area. It goes on to set out a number of requirements for policies and decision making. Developments should:

- *function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- *establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit;*
- *optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development, create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses (including incorporation of green and other public space as part of developments) and support local facilities and transport networks;*

- *respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation;*
- *create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion;*
- *be visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.*

1.19 These design principles are retained in the current NPPF, which places much more focus on design and early neighbourhood engagement, including a greater emphasis on the importance of local plans setting out a clear design vision and expectations, so that applicants have as much certainty as possible about what is likely to be acceptable.

1.20 The development sites in the Study Area are currently in the Green Belt but, as explained in submission document SD001, the updated Shaping the Future Topic Paper, 2018, despite the Council making every effort to maximise its urban and brownfield land supply, the supply from non-Green Belt locations was estimated to only provide around 60% of the OAN requirement. The decision to release some Green Belt land was therefore considered to present the most sustainable balance of social, environmental and economic needs. Changes to National Planning Practice Guidance on 22 July 2019 suggest that where the release of Green Belt land for development has been demonstrated to be necessary, plans should include policies for compensatory measures including improvements to the quality of the environment and the accessibility of remaining Green Belt land.

1.21 The Shaping the Future Topic Paper discusses a number of key factors that the Council considers to be key to justifying Green Belt release:

- *Housing need;*
- *Affordability;*
- *Housing supply, including housing mix, starter homes, self-build and custom housebuilding;*
- *Sustainable patterns of development;*
- *Compensatory measures;*
- *Infrastructure.*

1.22 The nature of the proposed Green Belt release in the submission BLP has been designed to minimise Green Belt loss both in terms of quantity and quality. A small number of Green Belt sites have been identified for release in areas that make only a limited or moderate contribution to the purposes identified in the NPPF, and where other constraints were not considered to preclude development.

1.23 An update to National Planning Practice Guidance in July 2019 suggests ways in which plans might offset the impact of removing land from the Green Belt by providing compensatory measures such as new or enhanced green infrastructure; woodland planting; improvements to biodiversity, habitat connectivity and natural capital; new or enhanced walking and cycle routes and improved access to new, enhanced or existing recreational land and playing field provision. This approach to compensatory measures forms a key element of the placemaking approach to development in the Study Area which seeks to improve connectivity within and across the area to existing areas of open space and recreational land, as well as providing new and enhanced green infrastructure.

1.24 Recent reviews of the planning system and the delivery of new development have highlighted the importance of planning in creating places and not just delivering houses. The Raynsford Review final report, November 2018¹ considers the role of planning – “It must deal with everything from the detailed design of

buildings to national infrastructure. In short, it involves a broad set of issues around the interaction of people and the built and natural environment. To be effective it has to be much more than a numbers game.”

1.25 The Building Better: Building Beautiful Commission was established by the Communities Secretary Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP in 2018 with 3 primary aims:

- *To promote better design and style of homes, villages, towns and high streets, to reflect what communities want, building on the knowledge and tradition of what they know works for their area.*
- *To explore how new settlements can be developed with greater community consent.*
- *To make the planning system work in support of better design and style, not against it.*

1.26 The Commission’s interim report, published in

July 2019 highlights the role of the planning system “Beauty first. Beauty and place making should be a collective ambition for how we move forward and a legitimate outcome of the planning system. Great weight should be placed on securing them in the urban and natural environments. This should be embedded prominently and alongside sustainable development in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), associated guidance and encouraged via ministerial statement. Local Plans should embed this national requirement locally, discovering and defining it empirically through analysis and by surveying local views on objective criteria.”

1. Raynsford Review:

<https://www.tcpa.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=30864427-d8dc-4b0b-88ed-c6e0f08c0edd>

Role and Purpose of this Placemaking Study

1.27 The purpose of this Study is to firstly, set out the approach taken to the development of policy and guidance for the study area, including analysis of the local plan approach; the site context and the available evidence; and the outcomes from engagement. Secondly, the study sets out the vision and key principles that will guide the development of the study area culminating in an overall placemaking concept plan. Finally, the study considers the delivery and implementation process from now onwards, including the approach to the co-ordination and comprehensive masterplanning of the area as a whole.

1.28 A key element of the Study is the emphasis on the need for placemaking and the establishment of design principles to ensure the delivery of a high quality and sustainable development. The South West Maidenhead area comprises a variety of components contributing different qualities to the town's identity

and functioning. Work to prepare a new strategic policy seeks to take an overall view of these components and consider the opportunities to capitalise on the area's assets. A placemaking approach focusses on the social and cultural importance of vibrant communities. The work to prepare a strategic policy for this area seeks to promote a co-ordinated approach to the technical delivery of a place for people which will endure for the future.

1.29 It is anticipated that this study will be included as part of the overall evidence base for the Borough Local Plan, and will help to inform the Council's approach to further policy development. It should be read alongside the wider available evidence base, and in particular the updated Shaping the Future Topic Paper, January 2018² which documents the information, evidence and feedback that has informed the choices made in formulating the strategy and key policies in the BLP.

Approach to the Placemaking Study

1.30 The preparation of the Study has involved the following work areas:

- **Site familiarisation** – a series of site visits were undertaken to understand the existing site conditions and context; access arrangements; role and location of green infrastructure and the relationship of the individual site allocations to each other and to the wider area.
- **Baseline evidence review** - the evidence documents submitted alongside the BLP were reviewed and their implications for the Study Area assessed. The Evidence Base review also included a review of the Regulation 20 representations relevant to the sites within the Study Area.
- **Meetings with RBWM councilors and officers** – a series of meetings were held with a number of key contacts within the Council, including the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Planning and the Leader of the Council and officers representing service areas including highways, education and ecology.
- **Engagement** – due to the limited timescale for the preparation of the Study, a limited and targeted engagement approach was taken. Two workshops were held with external stakeholders in July 2019, one with the allocated sites landowner interests and technical stakeholders and a second with community interest groups, including local residents.

2. Updated Shaping the Future Topic Paper, January 2018

https://www3.rbwm.gov.uk/info/201026/borough_local_plan/1350/examination/4

Scope and content

1.31 The Study contains the following sections which, taken in order provide context and support for the evolution of a comprehensive approach to the study area:

- **Local Plan Approach :** *current local plan status; stages in the preparation of the BLP; key sites and policies in the submitted BLP, relevant to the Study area; overview of Regulation 20 representations.*
- **Site Context and analysis:** *a review of key evidence by theme; constraints and opportunities; outcomes from engagement and the emerging challenges for the area.*
- **Vision & Principles:** *for the development of the study area.*
- **Placemaking Approach & Plans:** *a series of plan layers by theme from which an overall placemaking concept plan has evolved.*
- **Delivery and Implementation:** *the process to deliver coordinated development across the study area from here onwards. This section considers the appropriate design controls and approach to comprehensive masterplanning of the study area to bring forward a coordinated development which can ensure the timely delivery of quality placemaking including all necessary infrastructure.*

2. Local Plan Approach

Overview

2.1 The current Development Plan for the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM) comprises the:

- *Saved South East Plan Policy NRM6: Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (2009).*
- *Saved policies of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Local Plan (1999) incorporating 2003 amendments.*
- *Maidenhead Town Centre Area Action Plan (2011).*
- *Replacement Minerals Local Plan (Incorporating the Alterations Adopted in December 1997 and May 2001).*
- *Waste Local Plan for Berkshire (adopted December 1998).*
- *Ascot, Sunninghill and Sunningdale Neighbourhood Plan (made 2014).*
- *Hurley and Walthams Neighbourhood Plan (made 2017)*
- *Eton and Eton Wick Neighbourhood Plan (made 2018)*

2.2 A new local plan – the Borough Local Plan (BLP) has been under preparation over recent years. It was submitted to the Secretary of State on 31 January 2018. Stage 1 Examination hearings were held for 3 days from the 26-28 June, 2018. Matters covered include the BLP’s legal compliance; duty to co-operate; Green Belt considerations; the spatial strategy and flood risk. A number of the topics covered in the Stage 1 hearings address some issues relevant to the Study Area including:

- *the reason behind the decision to focus growth on the three main settlements of Maidenhead, Windsor and Ascot (Matter 3);*

- *how the cumulative effects of the scale of growth in Maidenhead have been assessed (Matter 3);*
- *the approach taken to assessing sites for removal from the Green Belt (Matter 4).*

2.3 The Inspector issued advice after the Stage One hearings in letter ID07. The letter sets out a number of areas of further work, including the undertaking of an Appropriate Assessment of the likely effects of the local plan on a small part of the Chiltern Beechwoods SAC; further work to address conflicts with the Hurley and Walthams Neighbourhood Plan and the carrying out of further work on flood risk, the sequential test and its application to the site selection process. The Inspector asked the Council to report back to her with a timetable for undertaking the additional work.

2.4 As a result of the Council’s consideration of the implications of the additional work required by the Inspector and its timetable for undertaking the required additional evidence gathering, the examination is currently in a ‘pause’ period. Whilst the preparation of a strategic policy for the South West Maidenhead study area was not directly requested by the Inspector, the benefit of taking a holistic and comprehensive approach to the development of this area was highlighted in a number of the responses made under Regulation 20 of the Town & Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. Moreover, establishing an approach that focusses on place-making rather than just housing numbers is considered by the Council to be a positive way forward to ensure the delivery of a high quality and effective development.

Stages in the Preparation of the BLP

2.5 There were five main periods of consultation and engagement during the preparation of the Borough Local Plan (BLP) prior to the Regulation 19 publication period (June-September 2017)

- *Local Development Framework (LDF) Options Consultation: 6 March - 22 May 2009;*
- *Borough Local Plan Consultation ('Planning for the Future'): 10 February - 16 March 2012;*
- *Borough Local Plan: Preferred Options DPD Consultation: January - March 2014;*
- *Borough Local Plan: 'Planning for the Future' Consultation: Summer 2015; and*
- *Draft Borough Local Plan: Regulation 18 consultation: December 2016 - January 2017*

2.6 A detailed discussion of the previous stages and their respective outcomes is set out in the Updated Shaping the Future Topic Paper, January 2018.

2.7 The **2009 Options Consultation** resulted in the majority of respondents preferring the protection of the Green Belt, with support expressed for higher density growth in urban areas.

2.8 The **Planning for the Future consultation in 2012** was followed up with a series of workshops and targeted consultations:

- *Business Workshop: March 2012;*
- *Neighbourhood Planning Groups/Parish Council sites consultation: August and September 2012;*
- *Public Sites (housing and employment) Consultation: November 2012 - January 2013;*
- *Spencers Farm and Ockwells Manor Consultation: November 2012 - January 2013.*

2.9 Feedback from this stage of engagement revealed strong support for the protection of the Green Belt; 40% of respondents preferred locating new homes in the existing built area, with 19% suggesting a combination of locations in the built area and outside built areas.

2.10 The consultation with Neighbourhood Planning Groups and Parish Councils saw a general preference for focusing new development on the urban areas with support for growth around Maidenhead to take advantage of Crossrail. The Public Sites consultation saw support for the designation of land north of Ockwells Manor as Green Belt and, whilst urban housing sites were generally supported for redevelopment, there was a preference for lower density options where possible.

2.11 The **Preferred Options consultation, 2014** included a preferred Vision for the Borough focusing development on Maidenhead as a part of the successful economic area of the Thames Valley and promoting the rejuvenation of the Town Centre. The preferred Spatial Strategy took an urban focus, making the best use of previously developed land, and building at higher densities in the right locations with higher residential densities encouraged within and in proximity to Maidenhead town centre.

2.12 The consultation sought views on a number of potential housing sites in the Green Belt, including the sites allocated in the BLPSV as HA6, Maidenhead Golf Course and parts of sites HA7, Land south of Harvest Hill Road and HA8, land south of Manor Road. Respondents were asked to comment on the importance of a number of factors in considering the suitability of areas in the Green Belt for housing. The factors considered most important were flooding, prominence from within the Green

Belt and wildlife. The least important factors were minerals extraction and environmental quality. Views were sought on the potential use of the Triangle site (currently allocated as a protected employment site in the Green Belt in BLPSV Policy ED2) for residential or hospital-led development. Comments generally supported a hospital-led approach, with alternative suggestions including using the site as park and ride for Crossrail or a mixed use development including small commercial and conference facilities. Concerns were expressed that the site was at risk of flooding and its development would exacerbate existing traffic problems in the area.

2.13 The **Planning for the Future Consultations, February 2015**, sought views on a number of pieces of evidence and used an online questionnaire to gain views on four specific topics. These consultations were not part of a formal stage in the consultation on the new Borough Local Plan. The four topic areas were:

- *Local green space – suggestions for areas suitable for designation;*
- *Braywick Park and Magnet Leisure Centre - views on current and relocated leisure facilities;*
- *Which parts of Maidenhead town centre have the greatest potential to accommodate tall buildings;*
- *Windsor link railway.*

2.14 The **Regulation 18, Draft Borough Local Plan** was published for consultation between 2 December 2016 and 13 January 2017. The Spatial Strategy, Policy SP1 maintained the focus on the urban area of Maidenhead with new housing, economic and leisure development directed in the first instance to a number of strategic locations identified on the Policies Map:

- *Maidenhead town centre.*
- *Ascot town centre.*

- *Maidenhead golf course and associated sites (c 2,500 dwellings in total).*
- *The Triangle (Land bounded by M4, A308(M), A330) (for housing, industrial and warehousing floorspace).*
- *Land west of Windsor, north and south of A308.*
- *Braywick Park.*

2.15 The Spatial Strategy focus on Maidenhead town centre was intended to support its role within the wider Thames Valley and to make the most of the town's transport links. The Strategy included the development of an integrated transport hub centred on Maidenhead railway station to take advantage of Crossrail connections.

2.16 There was a mixture of support for Maidenhead as a growth area. Some considered that Maidenhead was being asked to accommodate too much growth and sought the retention of green gaps between Maidenhead and Holyport, Bray and Cookham. A number of respondents supported the expansion of the high density area where tall buildings could be accommodated beyond the defined town centre area. Others sought the retention of the Maidenhead Town Centre AAP Tall Buildings policy in terms of area and height. It was considered that the cluster of strategic sites south of Maidenhead Town Centre were interdependent and should be considered on a comprehensive basis.

2.17 Throughout the previous stages, there has been a consistent focus on Maidenhead as a significant area for future growth and general support for further development in the area to benefit from the opportunities presented by Crossrail. Support for the further development of Maidenhead and its surrounding area was tempered by concerns of the loss of the golf course and the urbanisation of what is currently a green wedge from the M4 to the town centre.

2.18 The **Regulation 19, proposed Submission Version Borough Local Plan** was published for consultation from June to September 2017. The Submission Version BLP focussed future development on three sustainable growth areas – Maidenhead, Windsor and Ascot which, together, contain the largest concentration of housing and employment opportunities in the District (Spatial Strategy chapter, paras 5.1.6, 5.1.7). Maidenhead acts as the main centre in the borough benefitting from excellent rail links to London and the west of England and the delivery of the Crossrail/Elizabeth Line project is expected to enhance its attractiveness further by faster access into and across London and beyond. Due to its rail connection and main service centre role, Maidenhead is identified in the BLP as a strategic growth location. The submission version BLP Key Diagram reflects the Spatial Strategy approach of directing a significant amount of development to Maidenhead and identifies a growth area for the town, extending from the town centre down to Junction 8/9 of the M4.

2.19 Policy SP1, Spatial Strategy, focusses the majority of new development on Maidenhead, encouraging “higher intensity” development within and near to the town centre to take advantage of the town’s transport links. The Strategy directs a large proportion (approx. 2,500 homes) of the new housing development to a cluster of sites to the south west of Maidenhead railway station (HA6 Maidenhead Golf Course, HA7 Land south of Harvest Hill Road and HA8 Land south of Manor Lane). Whilst the Key Diagram shows a broad ‘growth area’ extending over Maidenhead town centre and the Study Area, the BLP does not define the extent of a strategic growth area either on the Proposals Map or as a policy area and there is no coordinated or comprehensive approach to the area despite the scale of growth proposed.



Figure 2: Key diagram in submitted BLP showing Maidenhead growth area

2.20 The BLPSV included the following site allocations in the Study Area:

Housing (Policy HO1) and site proformas at Appendix D to the Plan:

- HA6, Maidenhead Golf Course, c2000 homes.
- HA7, Land south of Harvest Hill Road, c380 homes.
- HA8, Land south of Manor Road, c220 homes.

Employment (Policy ED2):

- the submission version BLP retained the Triangle site (land south of the A308(M), west of Ascot Road and

north of the M4) in the Green Belt but protected it for potential long term employment use.

Open space (Policy IF4):

- Ockwells Park and Nature Reserve, Cox Green, is allocated as an area of open space.
- New sports and leisure development at Braywick Park (Policy IF6)
- The former golf driving range at Braywick Park is allocated for a new leisure centre and associated indoor and outdoor sports facilities.

Key issues and matters arising from the Regulation 19 BLP

2.21 A key element in the approach to this study has been to consider the most recent consultation responses on the Submission version BLP, which have informed the current Examination in Public process. In summary, the key issues raised include:

- *The justification for removing sites HA6, 7 and 8 from the Green Belt, including the consideration of alternative spatial strategies and sites;*
- *The cumulative impact of the proposed quantum of new development on the south west area of Maidenhead, its character, biodiversity and the ability of the existing infrastructure to cope and expand to meet the new demands placed upon it;*
- *The design and density of development within the South West Maidenhead area and the deliverability of the allocated sites within the plan period;*
- *The employment land needs of the Borough and the treatment of the Triangle site as a potential strategic employment location;*
- *The proposed relocation of the leisure centre to Braywick Park will increase congestion in the area as*

pedestrian and cycle access to the area is limited. The proposed development of the site will also result in a loss of open space and existing facilities at Braywick Park;

- *The need for a coordinated and comprehensive approach to be taken to the development of the SWMGA.*

The issues by theme include:

2.22 Green Belt: At a strategic level, representations challenged the scope, robustness and approach taken to the review of Green Belt sites. The strategic approach to Green Belt review was addressed in the Stage 1 Examination Hearings, see Council's Response on Matter 4 (RBWM_006) and the Topic Paper, Shaping the Future (SD_001) at Chapter 6 explains the approach taken to selecting sites.

2.23 Site specific objections referred to the Green Belt role and purpose of the proposed allocated sites in holding back urban sprawl and the merger of towns, with sites HA6 and HA7 referred to as preventing the coalescence of Maidenhead with Holyport and Bray.

2.24 Cumulative impact of development on

Maidenhead: The proposed scale of growth in this area was a common issue for individuals and local interest groups. Concerns include increasing local traffic levels; access to services and facilities and loss of green space all impacting on the overall character of the area. The cumulative effect of the growth to the south of Maidenhead was addressed in Stage 1 hearings (Matter 3, Q2.1 issues c, d and e).

2.25 Given the scale of development and their close proximity, there is support for a comprehensive approach to the delivery of sites HA6, 7 and 8, although smaller sites are promoted as having the ability to come forward quickly, ahead of the larger scale development on Site HA6.

2.26 Scale and Deliverability of Proposed

Allocations: Questions were raised about the density of development on the 3 housing sites, HA6,7 & 8, given the number of dwellings to be accommodated. Issues affecting the sites' ability to accommodate the proposed numbers: topography; flooding; proximity to sources of noise and air pollution. There was acknowledgement that higher densities would be appropriate to the northern part of HA6, benefitting from proximity to the town centre and rail station.

2.27 Issues as to the deliverability of sites HA6, 7 and 8 within the plan period, which included the potential need for land acquisition; multiple ownerships and the need to address traffic/ junction improvements on A330, A308, 308(M) and M4 junction 8/9.

2.28 Highways & Movement: Current congestion at Norreys Drive/Shoppenhangers Road; Shoppenhangers Road and Braywick Road junction and the junction of Harvest Hill Road and the Windsor Road. The relocation of the Leisure Centre to Braywick Park led to concerns at the ability of the Braywick Road dual carriageway to cope with additional traffic especially during rush hour. There are limited bus services in the area – the 4 and 4A run at peak times in the early morning and late afternoon and the 53 runs only every two hours to Bracknell. Pedestrian and

cycle links and crossings of main roads are identified as a challenge, for example the ability to cross Braywick Road.

2.29 Air Quality: the northern edge of HA6 is adjacent to the Maidenhead Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). Whilst not within the AQMA, development in such close proximity to it may exacerbate emissions in the area. Noise and air quality issues could also arise due to the proximity to the A404(M) and A308(M).

2.30 Biodiversity: Concerns at the loss of the Golf Course and impact on fauna and flora as well as the landscape character impact arising from the loss of the landscaped open green areas, woodlands and other 'green' features to an urban environment. Concern of biodiversity impact on Rushington Copse and areas of woodland due to proximity of built development and increased recreational pressure. Questions as to whether onsite net biodiversity gain is achievable given the proposed housing density.

2.31 Employment and the Triangle site: Agents on behalf of the site's owners set out a detailed response justifying the site's availability and suitability for commercial development and requesting its removal from the Green Belt in the current BLP. Concerns raised by individuals and Bray Parish Council of increased traffic levels; impact on surrounding road infrastructure and loss of the current green character of the area and setting for the entrance to Maidenhead from the M4 to the south should the site be developed. The site's proposed Protected Status in the green belt was questioned as being too vague and failing to provide clarity as to the future intentions for this site; the site is also referred to as an alternative to some of the housing allocations elsewhere in the area.

2.32 The representations provided a range of views in terms of the scale and character of future development across the area, with a number of views relating to the need to protect the existing character and identity of the town and local area, yet also make maximum use of opportunities for growth to be focused at Maidenhead and support its regeneration.

Current position

2.33 As set out in para 2.4 above, at the time of preparing this Study, the examination of the local plan is in a lengthy pause period whilst the Council undertakes work on a range of matters, a significant number of which are relevant to the Study area. As a result of the updated site selection work undertaken and the outcome of the placemaking work set out in this Study, the Council will be proposing changes to the residential and employment allocations in the area.

2.34 The Council declared a climate emergency in June 2019, aiming to:

- *continue its ambitious targets to reduce energy consumption at the council by a further 10% on top of the 21% reduction already achieved;*
- *lobby government to provide the council with additional powers and resources so that the borough can meet the national commitment of net zero carbon emissions by 2050;*
- *establish a cross-party working group to undertake an in-depth review of the council's current carbon footprint and agree a strategy to enable the Royal Borough to become carbon neutral by 2050.*

2.35 The emphasis now being placed on placemaking in the local plan is one measure that will support the achievement of the Council's ambitions.

2.36 A new residential allocation, Site HA57, is proposed, that amalgamates the three allocations in the Study area in the submitted BLP (sites HA6, 7 and 8) and includes additional land, taking the total site area for the allocation to 89.93 hectares.

2.37 On employment, it is now proposed to release the Triangle site from the Green Belt and bring it forward in the current plan period as a strategic employment site.

2.38 Policy IF6 (Braywick Park) is proposed to be amended to reflect a change in emphasis in the use of this site, allocating it instead as a mixed use strategic green Infrastructure site to serve Maidenhead, providing a sports hub; public park; special needs school and multi-use games area and a 'wildlife zone' comprising the Braywick Local Nature Reserve and a Site of Special Scientific Interest. The site will remain in the Green Belt.

3. Site Context & Analysis

Defining the site

3.1 The study area is drawn deliberately widely to include not just the three housing allocations in the submission version BLP (Sites HA6, 7 and 8), but also the protected employment site to the south (the Triangle site); Ockwells local nature reserve and open space and Braywick Park, which includes the new leisure centre site as well as the greenway area. It also considers the relationship between these sites and adjoining communities and activities.

3.2 Both Ockwells and Braywick Park offer valuable opportunities for access to open space and leisure facilities which would benefit both existing and new future residents, but a key challenge is the

connectivity between these areas. Ockwells in particular may also offer opportunities for net environmental gain for the Study Area as a whole.

3.3 The study area also includes at its most northern point, the Courtlands Estate, an existing housing estate comprising buildings up to so 5-6 storeys in height. This site has a pivotal location between the new development to the south and the railway station and town centre to the north. Redevelopment of the site could potentially enable new road and pedestrian/cycle links to be created, and improve north-south connections.

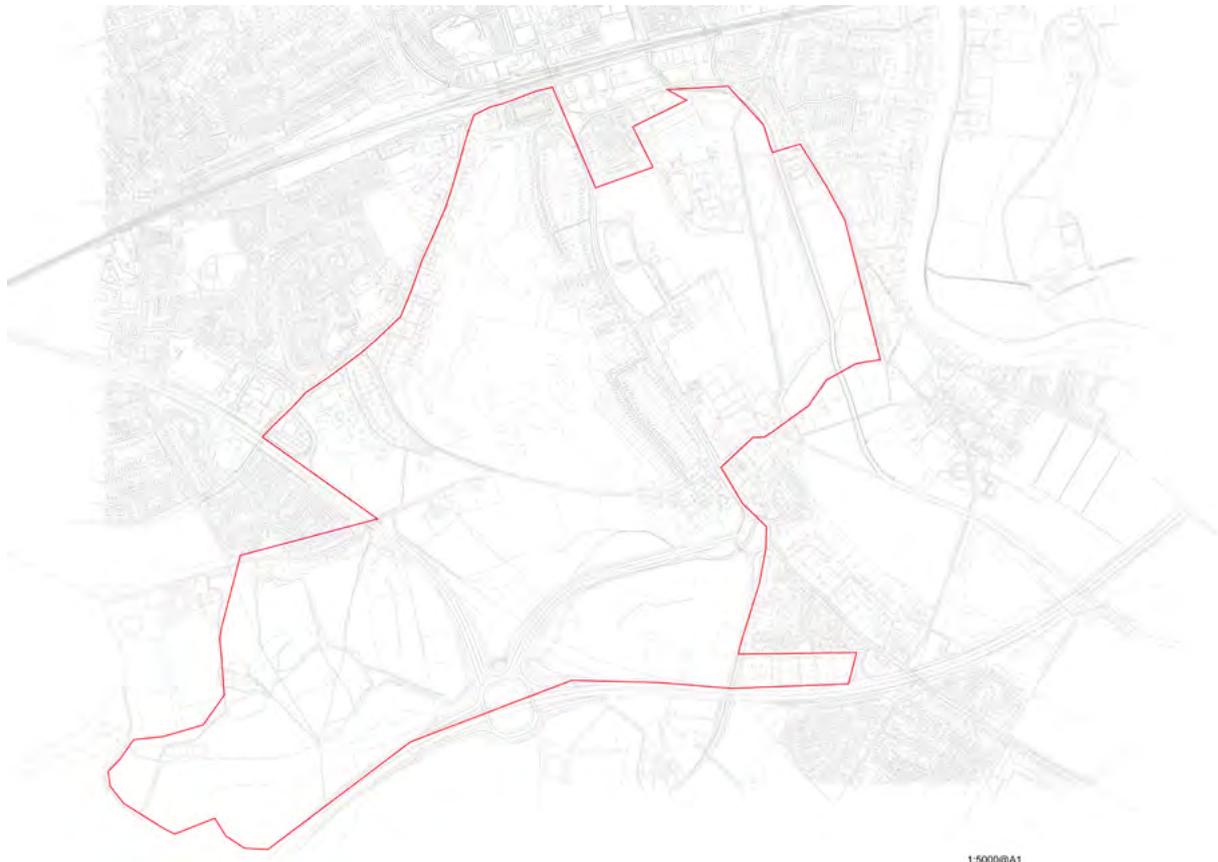


Figure 3: SWM Strategic Policy & Study Area

Site Allocations Proformas

3.4 Appendix D to the submission version BLP includes a series of proformas for the housing site allocations and for Braywick Park. Each proforma defines the allocation; the site size; development requirements and key considerations. The proformas are attached at Appendix A to this Study.

Evidence Base Review

3.5 “A thorough appreciation of the overall site context is the starting point for designing a distinct place” (Urban Design Compendium, 2000). This section sets out the context of the study area and the relevant evidence documents. The constraints and opportunities identified help to shape the future approach to the area.

3.6 The following Evidence Review considers the following documents:

- *Emerging draft Green and Blue Infrastructure Study.*
- *Open Spaces Study, 2019.*
- *Design.*
- *Tall Buildings.*
- *Urban and Landscape Character.*
- *Flood Risk.*
- *Ecology/Biodiversity.*
- *Sustainability Appraisal.*
- *Infrastructure.*
- *Transport and Movement.*
- *Viability and Deliverability.*

The Evidence Base documents can be found on the Council’s evidence base page webpages at:

https://www3.rbwm.gov.uk/info/201048/evidence_base_and_monitoring/592/evidence_base

3.7 Green and Blue Infrastructure: the draft Green and Blue Infrastructure Study, 2019 provides a baseline of the current green and blue infrastructure across the Borough and, through a consideration of a number of opportunities and challenges presents a vision and a series of recommendations for the development of a Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for the Borough. The study highlights that whilst the Borough as a whole has high quality and quantity of green and blue infrastructure assets, there is a lack of connectivity between these assets at the landscape, local and site level in relation to both amenity and biodiversity networks.

3.8 The Study notes that the commitment to the delivery of new strategic growth location in the BLP spatial strategy presents an opportunity to introduce new green and blue infrastructure that would not be possible without the funding and design associated with the new development. It recommends that the strategic growth areas should be seen as catalysts for bringing about high quality urban greening as part of the local network. Key opportunities for green and blue infrastructure include:

- *New connections to join up amenity and biodiversity assets in a network.*
- *Greening of private gardens.*
- *Opening up of waterways.*
- *Employing urban greening approaches such as green roofs.*

3.9 Open Spaces Study 2019: An update to the 2008 Open Spaces Study has been carried out to review the previous qualitative and quantitative assessment of the existing and future needs of the community for different types of open space in the Borough. The assessment considers the needs for:

- *Public parks and gardens.*
- *Amenity green spaces.*
- *Provision for children and young people.*
- *Allotments and community gardens.*
- *Cemeteries.*
- *Natural and semi-natural greenspaces.*

3.10 The study sets new standards for quality, quantity and accessibility. Quantity standards were devised using Fields in Trust guidelines and , for allotments, by the Thorpe Report 1969. These standards are expressed in terms of hectares per 1,000 people.

3.11 With regard to Maidenhead, relevant recommendations are:

- *Recommendation 4: increase public park and gardens provision to take account of increased growth;*
- *Recommendation 15: create additional amenity greenspace as part of growth allocations in Maidenhead;*
- *Recommendation 18: increase the range of informal activities for children and young people;*
- *Recommendation 19: apply the Fields in Trust standards for LAPs, LEAPS and NAPS in all new development; and*
- *Recommendation 30: Provide allotments in new growth areas.*

3.12 Current Open Space standards based on the

2008 study are set out in Appendix G to the submitted BLP. It is anticipated that this Appendix will be updated to reflect the new standards set out in the updated Study.

3.13 Design: The Borough Local Plan’s Spatial Vision requires a high quality design response to a variety of objectives: Special qualities, Heritage, Environmental Protection and Climate change & biodiversity. Elsewhere, the Borough Local Plan outlines, in broad terms, how high quality design is an integral part of maintaining the quality of a place with design needing to consider how a place meets the needs of users and ‘help to create attractive environments that set a positive context for the development of successful places and sustainable healthy communities’. Policy SP2 Sustainability and Placemaking outlines how design should contribute to the physical, and social aspects of new development.

3.14 The BLP (section 6.4) outlines how design should respond to context also recognising that in some locations the scale of development will: ‘be such that it creates its own identity and character’. Policy SP3 outlines the design principles by which new development will be measured.

3.15 The definition of the South West Maidenhead strategic placemaking area is based on understanding the variety of components of a new place and the opportunities, through design, that exist to take a comprehensive approach to the creation of a new place. While work to allocate housing sites in the south west area has been completed at previous stages of the plan process, there has not yet been an attempt to set out a comprehensive placemaking approach. This could provide a rationale for future design and masterplanning that can respond to the wider context, not just of the study area itself, but of the town as a whole, its setting, character and settlement pattern. It could establish the basis of character and distinctiveness of a new place which could become sustainable in its own right.

3.16 In many other policy areas, consideration of key issues and opportunities is encouraged at an early stage in the design process with design offering a tool to a holistic approach to many borough wide objectives and requirements.

3.17 A Borough wide Design Guide has been prepared in draft form and reflects the approaches described above to undertaking a design process which is holistic and comprehensive and to help deliver design excellence in priority areas:

- *An attractive and well connected Borough;*
- *Healthy, skilled and independent residents;*
- *Safe and vibrant communities; and*
- *A growing economy and affordable housing.*

3.18 In respect of this wide role of design, the Design Guide has two main purposes:

- *To help guide a major step change improvement in the quality of new development and places created across the Royal Borough;*
- *To provide guidance to council members, officers, developers and local communities on how to ensure future development has the required high quality and inclusive design to create beautiful places that function well.*

3.19 The Design Guide outlines strategic design themes for the Borough and also provides information on good design process, including the need for a vision, a concept and resulting masterplans and plot plans, justified against these.

3.20 Establishing a comprehensive placemaking approach for the study area can provide a framework by which design excellence could be achieved in all of the priority areas identified in the Design Guide (while these originate from adopted Local Plan policies, they translate into the Quality Places objectives described in the submission version of the BLP). It can

include developing a vision for growth for the area in the context of the whole town and the development of a concept, with the benefit of consultation and engagement of various parties, for a structured approach to placemaking which can take into account social, environmental and economic factors.

3.21 Tall Buildings: The 2010 Maidenhead Tall Buildings study fed into the Area Action Plan for Maidenhead Town Centre whose boundary was restricted to the immediate town centre area as defined by the railway to the south, the Moor Cut waterway to the east and the ring road to the north and west. At the time of preparing this study there was no broader strategy for tall buildings outside of Maidenhead Town Centre or across the Borough as a whole. As a result, there has been no defined strategy for tall buildings relating to the south west area of Maidenhead.

3.22 New development opportunities and pressures however create a different context for the consideration of some of the Maidenhead Town Centre AAP policies. In particular, the AAP's identified gateway opportunity to the town centre from the south along Braywick Road must now take account of a wider opportunity area. At the time of preparing the AAP, the housing allocation on the golf course site to the south of the town centre was not in consideration. With this, the Courtlands site to the south of the station entrance on Shoppenhangers Road becomes an important consideration in how the integration of the golf course site and the town centre can be achieved.

3.23 In 2019 a Borough wide Tall Buildings strategy was commissioned by RBWM to review the approach to tall buildings in the BLP. At the time of preparing this Placemaking study, the updated Tall Building work is yet to reach its conclusion but interim analysis work identifies a contrast between general height creating character and setting the context of a town or area and exceptional height which offers different opportunities for creating landmarks among other things. Potential issues with tall buildings include:

- *Potential harm to heritage assets, their setting or views to and from;*
- *Risk of a fragmented skyline stemming from uncoordinated development;*
- *The microclimatic effects of tall buildings and their locations;*
- *Ensuring adequate residential amenity, privacy, right to light and the quality of outdoor space;*
- *Poor relationships with public realm;*
- *Providing adequate parking;*
- *Quality of design.*

3.24 The emerging 2019 work includes a methodology for characterising tall buildings and development context across the Borough in order to provide a framework for a Tall Buildings strategy. While work is still emerging at the time of writing, the consequences for the south west area of this work are anticipated to be limited. The work references existing townscape characterisation carried out by RBWM in order to identify suitable locations and conditions for tall buildings. It identifies sensitivities to tall buildings and outlines key objectives in developing tall buildings many of which reflect the placemaking and high quality design objectives of the Borough Local Plan as a whole. Beyond the contextual response the study also recognises the positive role of tall buildings in the development of place where they can: ‘help to deliver sustainable development by intensifying centres and urban areas with high public transport accessibility’; and: ‘provide meaningful enhancement to legibility and contribute to place making by significantly enhancing the townscape character of an existing or emerging area as part of a comprehensive plan led approach to change’.

3.25 The study area includes particular opportunities that could become the focus of higher intensity of development around key movement corridors and/or new centres of activity. These could have potential for tall buildings to be included where they comply with the objectives outlined in the above study.

3.26 Urban and Landscape Character: the Townscape Assessment was prepared by Land Use Consultants for the Council in 2010. Volume 1 of the Assessment covers the Maidenhead and Cookham Areas. The overall purpose of the study was to provide a detailed understanding of the character and composition of the built environment and to provide guidance on managing change to ensure it responds to local context and enhances local distinctiveness. The majority of the study area is not covered by the Townscape Assessment but rather by the Landscape Character Assessment due to the Area’s Green Belt location.

3.27 The Assessment identifies Maidenhead as a town with well-defined historic gateways, surrounded by leafy suburbs with strong links to its historic riverside setting to the east and to the chalk landscapes to the west, and with strong visual links to its wider landscape setting, including the Cliveden escarpment.

3.28 The character of Shoppenhangers Road and the northern part of Braywick Road adjoining the Golf Course are classified as Leafy Residential Suburbs, with some areas of Post War Suburbs (to c 1960) on the southern stretch of Braywick Road.

3.29 The Assessment sets out some guiding principles including one which identifies an opportunity to enhance the southern approach from the village of Bray by avoiding further urbanising influences such as insensitive or unnecessary road signage and infrastructure.

3.32 The key characteristics of the area are:

- *a diverse rural landscape with flat to gently undulating landform which is intermittently open and enclosed with some long distance views.*
- *Mixed farmland with small - medium arable fields and areas of permanent pasture.*
- *Remnant woodland areas, farm woodlands and copses of ancient origin.*
- *Hedgerows and hedgerow/trees.*
- *Historic designed landscapes with mature parkland trees including exotic species*
- *Vernacular building forms with red brick, timber frames and weatherboard details with brick boundary walls of manor estates.*
- *Rough grazing/horsiculture near settlements.*
- *M4 road motorway corridor and other trunk roads*
- *Rural lanes with grass verges, ditches and hedgerows.*
- *Numerous footpaths and bridleways.*
- *Fish ponds associated with farms and manor houses.*

3.33 Whilst the M4 motorway cuts through the rural landscape, its influence on character is localised due to the low lying nature of the landform. The assessment considers that despite the area's proximity to Maidenhead and Bray the area retains an intimate agrarian feel and intact rural character with some long distance views from elevated locations.

3.34 The Ockwells sub division of the character area, shown on Figure 6 has the additional characteristics of the M4, A404(M) and A304 (M) road corridors and associated embankments; recreational land uses; remnant parkland trees and woodland areas and The Cut historic stream. The Ockwells Settled Farmed Sands and Clays landscape area is described as a damaged tract of landscape adjacent to the residential areas of Cox Green and Bray Wick whose former character is indicated by the fragments of mature woodland hedgerows and hedgerow trees found within the vicinity of Junction 8/9 of the M4 and the parkland landscape associated with Ockwells Manor.

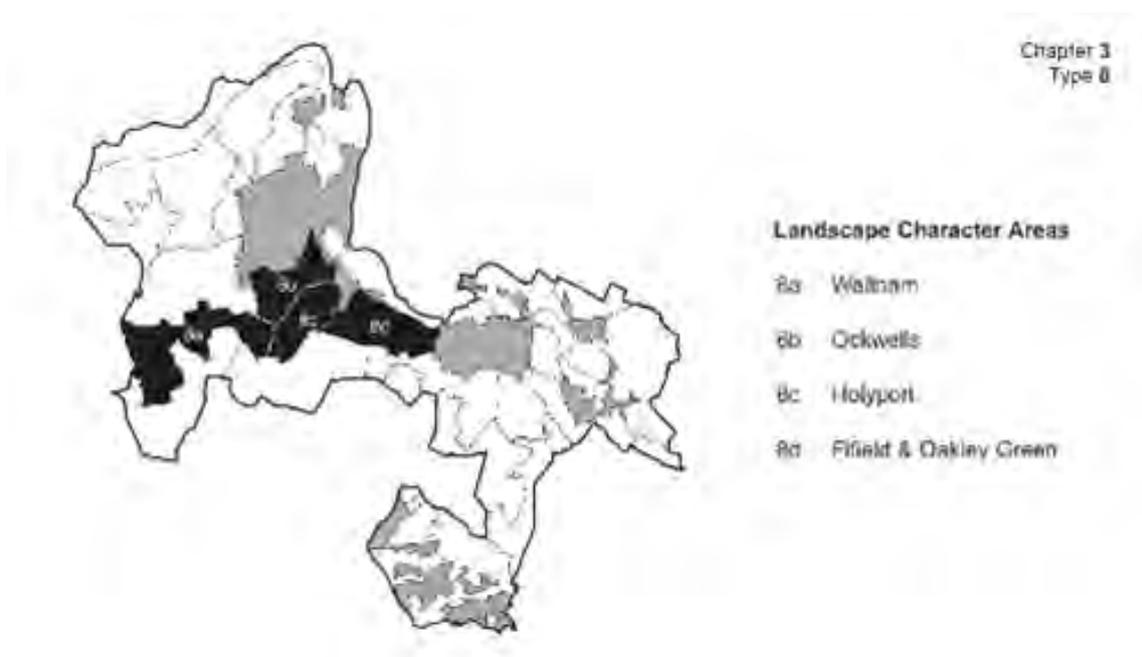


Figure 6: Potential landscape character subdivisions within Character Area 8

3.35 Flood Risk - Part 1 Strategic Flood Risk

Assessment (SFRA), June 2017: The SFRA Part 1 assessed the existing flood risk to the Royal Borough thorough review of the data sources held by the Environment Agency (which include hydraulic model outputs), Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and Thames Water. The Level 1 SFRA identified where there were significant areas of flood risk within the Royal Borough from all sources, including fluvial, surface water, groundwater and sewer and drainage infrastructure.

3.36 The Level 1 SFRA provided a number of maps which demonstrate the fluvial flood risk in the Royal Borough, including Flood Zone 3a, Flood Zone 3b developed and Flood Zone 3b functional floodplain extents. Maps are also provided showing the extent of flood risk from other sources, the effect of climate change and other supporting information.

3.37 Appendix B to the SHRA includes a series of area based maps showing fluvial flooding. Figures 6 and 8 cover the Study Area and show:

- *The three housing allocations HA6, 7 and 8 to be outside Flood Zones 2 and 3, with the exception of a small area to the eastern side of site HA7.*
- *The northern edge of the Triangle site lies within Flood Zone 3a, with much of the remainder of the site falling within Zone 2.*
- *The majority of Ockwells open space either side of the channel of The Cut watercourse falls within Zone 3b, functional floodplain with the northern part of the site in either Zone 2 or Zone 3a.*
- *The eastern part of Braywick Park falls within Zone 2.*

3.38 Appendix C of the SFRA includes a series of local sources flood maps with Figures 6 and 8 covering the study area. The mapping is based on the Environment Agency’s published updated Flood Map for Surface Water (uFMfSW). The mapping provides flooding extents from surface water for three storm events; the 3.3% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP), the 1% AEP and the 0.1% AEP. The mapping also provides information on the depth and velocity of flooding, as well as the

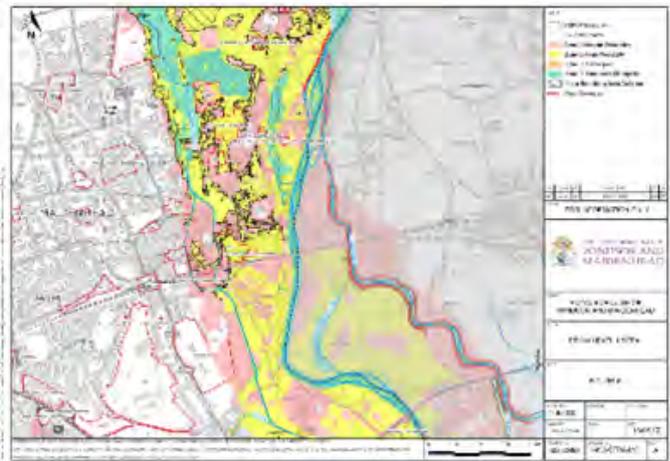


Figure 7: SFRA, 2017, Appendix B, Figure 6



Figure 8: SFRA, 2017, Appendix B Figure 8



Figure 9: SFRA 2017, Appendix C, Figure 6

hazard associated with the flood water and incorporates locally produced mapping where available.

3.39 The flood maps act as a starting point to highlight areas where the potential for surface water flooding needs particular assessment and scrutiny and should not be used as the primary factor guiding the site allocation process.

3.40 The maps show a number of water sources on Site HA6, Maidenhead Golf Course including one running east-west across the site. Site HA7, land south of Harvest Hill Road is shown to have a number of water sources, predominantly running north-south following the topography.

3.41 Open Spaces Study: The maps show a number of water sources on Site HA6, Maidenhead Golf Course including one running east-west across the site. Site HA7, land south of Harvest Hill Road is shown to have a number of water sources, predominantly running north-south following the topography.

3.42 Findings for Maidenhead were as follows:

- *Public parks and gardens: Maidenhead has 19 public parks and garden, 79% of which were found to be in 'good' condition. Any issues identified related to a shortage of seating in some places, the need for better signage and the use of more informal landscapes. The recommendation is to increase Public Parks and Gardens provision in Maidenhead to take account of increased planned residential growth.*
- *Natural & semi-natural greenspace: Maidenhead has Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspaces at Maidenhead Thicket, The Gullet, North Town Moor, and Ockwells. Improvements should be carried out to improve the availability of seating and litter bins.*
- *Amenity Greenspace: Maidenhead has a number of Amenity Greenspaces, most of which rated as "average" in quality. Issues include the need to enhance biodiversity, provide more seating, and include signage. The centre of the town on both*

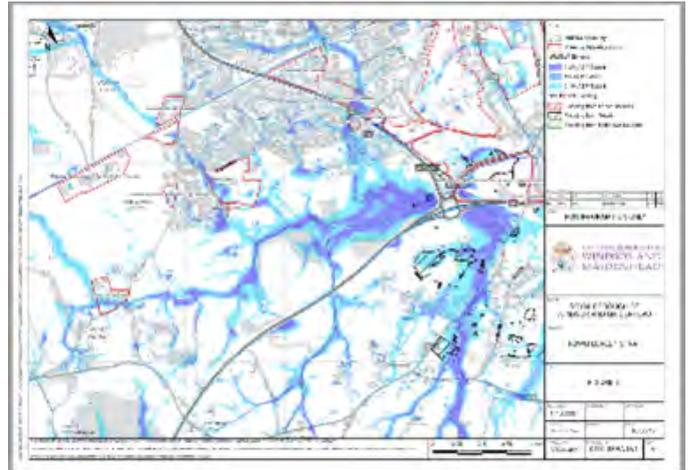


Figure 10: SFRA, 2017, Appendix C Figure 8

sides of Bath Road is short of provision. Overall, the quantity of Amenity Greenspace the Borough is adequate at present. However, increases in population would result in a shortfall unless current levels of provision are maintained in new development. Recommendation 15 is to seek to create additional Amenity Greenspace as part of growth allocations for Maidenhead, and in the centre of the town.

- *Provision for children and young people: Maidenhead has 25 playgrounds which were qualitatively assessed to be "average" or "good." Safety surfacing needs careful monitoring to reduce the risk of injury. Provision of LAPs needs to be improved in the centre and west of the town, LEAPs and NEAPs in the west, There is little landscaping.*
- *Allotments: across the Borough as a whole, allotments were generally "good" in terms of quality. Some issues included poor site boundaries, inadequate signage to advertise the site and welcome visitors, and limited access. Overall levels of provision in terms of quantity are generally good across the Borough. There is, however, a paucity of provision in the north west. Recommendations include providing allotments in new growth areas and increasing access to allotments in the north-west of the borough.*

3.43 Ecology/Biodiversity: Wild Maidenhead carried out a Habitat Survey in 2017. An extract from the habitat mapping below identifies the Golf Course and land south of Harvest Hill Road as predominantly amenity grassland with some broadleaved woodland along the eastern edge of site HA6, and into the site around Rushington Copse and in part of HA8, Ockwells and the Triangle site. Some small areas of mixed woodland are recorded to the southern end of the Golf Course.

3.44 There is an area of scattered mixed woodland on site HA8, and areas of scrub and shrub around Junction 8/9 of the M4 and along the strategic roads, A308 and A404. Much of Ockwells is shown to be marshy grassland with some semi-improved grassland to the north eastern edge, a habitat which is also found on the Triangle site. There is a significant tree copse on the Triangle site in addition to significant tree belts along the motorways in this area.

3.45 Sustainability Appraisal (SA), June 2017: The

purpose of the SA process is to appraise the social, environmental and economic effects of a plan and, by so doing to help ensure that decisions are made that contribute to achieving sustainable development. The SA is an integral part of the plan making process. It should perform a key role in providing a sound evidence base for the plan and form an integrated part of the plan preparation process. It should be transparent and open to public participation.

3.46 The purpose of the SA Report is to identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects of the Borough Local Plan and its reasonable alternatives and to inform the development of the Plan's policies.

3.47 Maidenhead Golf Course and Associated Sites: Section 13.2 assesses the three residential allocations HA6, 7 & 8 within the study area as a 'growth location'.

3.48 Connections: The SA considers the sites to have very convenient access via road and car with the sites located just off M4 Junction 9A for the A404(M) as well

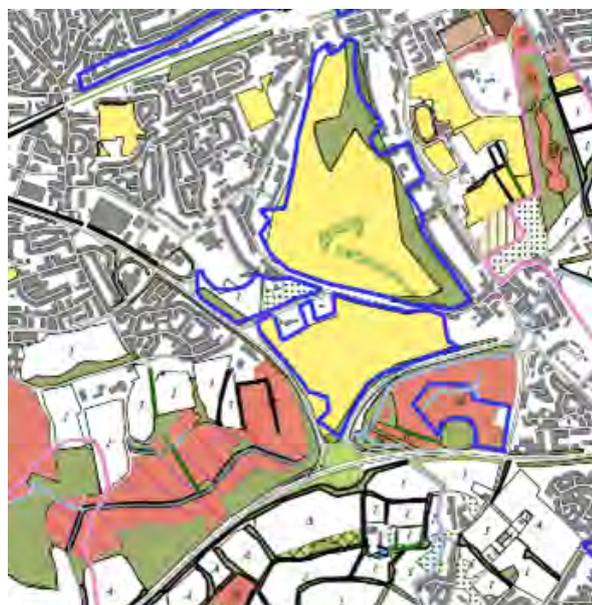


Figure 11: extract from Wild Maidenhead Habitat Survey, 2017

as the A308, A303 and A308(M) motorway roundabout. Maidenhead Railway Station lies within 2km and an 8 minute drive from all parts of the area which is also found to have access to various bus routes. Accessed on Braywick Road A308, the number 53 bus provides a frequent service between Wexham Court and Bracknell whilst the number 4 provides an infrequent service between Binfield and Maidenhead Town Centre.

3.49 The SA finds that the approach to the three sites as set out in Appendix D of the BLP require suitable mitigation and interventions to have a positive impact on access and transport, as well as a mitigating effect

on climate change impacts, including enhancing the local PROW network, enhancing vehicular access and the provision of pedestrian and cycle links. Low carbon district heating is also recognised as a key consideration for Maidenhead Golf Course.

3.50 Flood risk: approximately 0.2ha of Site HA7 is located in Flood Zone 2 with the remainder of the allocated sites falling within Flood Zone 1. Some parts of Site HA7 are also considered to be at a high risk of surface water flooding. In response, the site proforma directs development away from the southern portion of the site at risk of flooding.

3.51 Air Quality: As referenced earlier in this study, the northern edge of Site HA6 adjoins the Maidenhead AQMA. Whilst not within the AQMA, development in such close proximity to it may exacerbate emissions in the area. The SA suggests that mitigation measures such as electric car charging points and the re-routing of buses through the area may not be sufficient to fully ensure that development would have a negligible effect on the AQMA.

3.52 Approximately 400m east of Site HA6 is a licensed waste site which includes the Braywick Recycling and Refuse Centre. The southern areas of the housing allocations are also adjacent to the A404(M) and A308(M). Whilst neither road is designated as an AQMA, the SA anticipates that the areas of the sites closest to these roads may be adversely affected by noise and air quality issues. As such the proformas for these sites require appropriate mitigation to address these issues.

3.53 Biodiversity: the SA identifies a number of ecological site designations in the areas surrounding the housing allocations. Bray Meadows Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is approx 850m east and Great Thrift Wood SSSI approx 1.2km south west. The Gullet Local Nature Reserve (LNR) is 200m north west, Braywick Park LNR / Local Wildlife Site (LWS) is approximately 400m east and Ockwells Park LNR approximately 400m south west of the Growth Location. Ockwells Manor Wood LWS is approximately 1km to the south west. The Greenway Corridor is approximately 590m east of the housing allocations. The SA notes that the scale of housing development in this location may increase recreational pressure on local wildlife sites such as Ockwells Park, which is relatively accessible via a pedestrian bridge crossing the A404(M). The scale of growth is considered to provide an opportunity to retain existing biodiversity through, for example, retention of Rushington Copse alongside enhancing biodiversity through a variety of methods including, for example, bird and bat boxes, habitat creation through landscaping and the provision of green Infrastructure or green walls and roofs.

3.54 Landscape character: The allocations are all located within the Green Belt and within the Ockwells Landscape Character Area, as described above. Development would substantially change the character of the area from its current mix of landscaped open green areas, woodlands and other features associated with a golf course to an urban environment. The proforma requirements for the allocated sites include sensitive design to take into account the long distance views and the scale and heights of local buildings. The requirements also include consideration of the local topography, which slopes up towards the centre. In accordance with Policy SP3, development will need to maintain and enhance the quality and distinctiveness of the landscape character (SA Objective 5).

3.55 Heritage Assets: The Grade II listed 'Clocktower' is approximately 280m to the north east of Site HA6 at Maidenhead Railway Station although SA does not anticipate that the development will impact on the setting, features and views of the Clocktower particularly as the elevated railway at Maidenhead Railway Station prevents views to the development. Approximately 70m south of sites HA7 and HA8, on the south side of the A308(M), there is 'Mesolithic site, Moor Farm, Holyport', a monument scheduled under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. Development provides the opportunity to enhance the setting of the historic assets in accordance with Policy HE1 (SA Objective 6).

3.56 Agricultural Land: the majority of Sites HA6, 7 & 8 is classified largely as Grade 4 agricultural land, with some urban land to the far west. The south-western part of site HA8 is Grade 3 agricultural land, which is the best and most versatile land that would be lost if development took place. The location is not on contaminated land, landfill or a mineral extraction site (SA Objective 7).

3.57 Access to services: the SA notes that home occupancy in Windsor and Maidenhead is approximately 2.42 people per dwelling. The SA refers to the growth location's potential allocation of 2,000

homes, which at an average of 2.42 people per dwelling would lead to an expected population of approximately 4,840 people. Based on an optimum list size of 1 GP per 1,800, a population of 3,630 people would require 2.6 full time equivalent (FTE) GPs.

3.58 The closest existing GP surgery is Ross Road Medical Centre, which is up to 1.4km and a four minute drive from the south east corner of the study area. The

south eastern area of the study area is up to 1.4km from the Ross Road Medical Centre. Holyport Surgery is 1.4km and a five minute drive to the south east of the study area. Further GP surgeries are available in Maidenhead, approximately 2.2km to the north of the study area. The entirety of the study area is within the target distance of St Mark's Hospital, whilst some areas are also within the target distance of Marlow Community Hospital or King Edward VII Hospital.

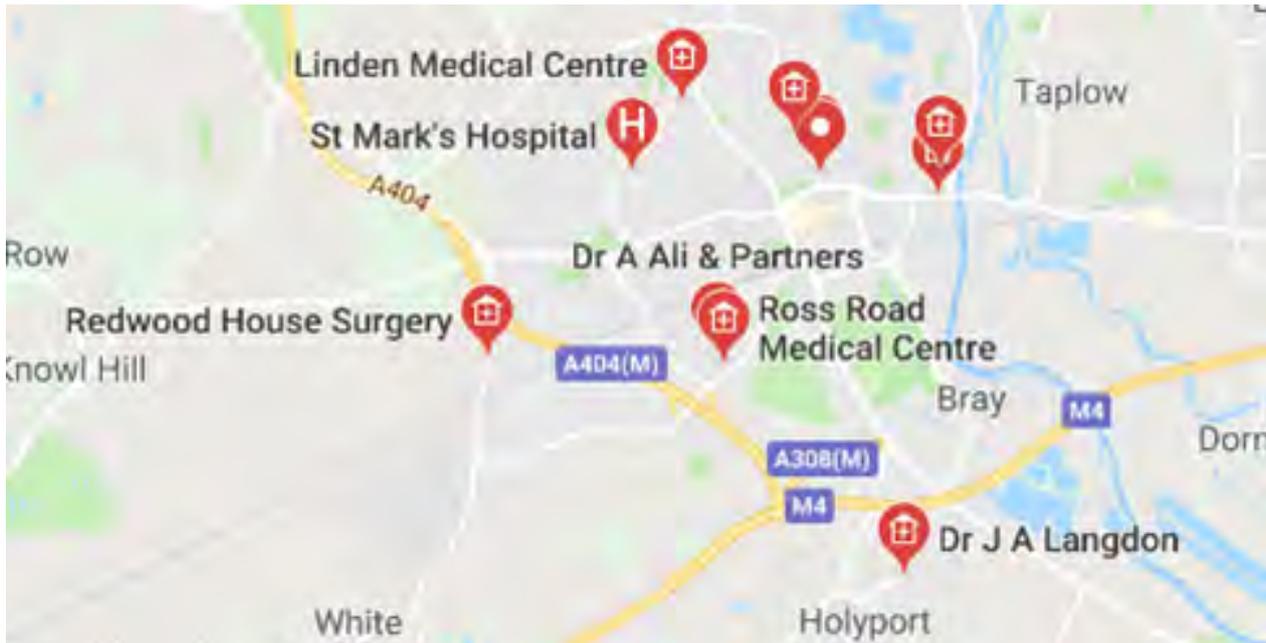


Figure 12: : location of health facilities, source Google Maps

3.59 Braywick Park and Leisure Centre provides leisure facilities within the target distance and is considered to be within a ten minute drive of all areas of the housing allocations. The SA does not comment on accessibility to the facilities by non-car modes of transport.

3.60 The SA notes that community facilities are to be provided on site, in addition to those already in the local area, such as Larchfield Community Centre 850m to the west of the site. The allocations also include some small scale retail opportunities (SA Objective 10).

3.61 A range of primary and secondary schools are accessible from the sites including Larchfield Primary and Nursery School, Braywick Court School,

Desborough College and Holyport College. The allocations will include a primary and secondary school which, the SA anticipates would provide sufficient capacity to accommodate the pupil yield arising from the development.

3.62 Employment: the SA considers the sites to be well located for access to a range of employment opportunities in Maidenhead, accessible via public transport, walking or cycling. It is anticipated that additional employment opportunities would be provided on the allocated sites as a result of the inclusion of local shops and community facilities (SA Objective 14).

3.63 Policy ED2 - Protected Site in Policy ED2: Land south of A308(M), west of Ascot Road and north of the M4 (the Triangle Site):

the SA assesses this site as per is BLP designation as a protected site for potential employment needs in the latter part of the BLP period and, perhaps, beyond the end of the current plan period.

3.64 The SA acknowledges that the site's location just off the A404(M), A308(M) and A308 roundabout, provides good access to the site via road and car, however, the SA also notes that the road network results in the site being relatively impermeable to residents and pedestrians with the M4 and A308(M) forming barriers. Maidenhead Railway Station lies 2.3km and a five minute drive north of the site. The location also has some access to various bus routes, served by the number 53 bus on the Braywick Road A308, whilst the number 4 provides an infrequent service between Binfield and Maidenhead Town Centre. The nearest bus stop to the site is approximately 300m away at Braywick House East. Bus services to the site are considered to be limited at present.

3.65 Flooding: Approximately 6ha of the site is located in Flood Zone 3b. A further 2.3ha of the site is located in Flood Zone 3a. The remainder of the site is split across both Flood Zones 1 and 2. The proforma for the site states the requirement for development to be focused in the east of the site where flood risk is lowest. Flooding and drainage are also recognised as key considerations for the site. The SA notes that an Exception Test would be required to determine if proposed development would be compatible with the areas of Flood Zone 3a. Some areas of the western portion of the site are considered to be at a high risk of surface water flooding. The areas of greatest surface water flooding risk generally correspond with those at the greatest risk of fluvial flooding.

3.66 Air Quality: the site is 200m west of the Bray/M25 AQMA. The contribution to emissions from the M4 and the A308 is of a similar proportion as whilst

traffic on the M4 is of a greater volume than that on the A308, the elevation of the M4 means the motorway emissions account for less at the ground level. The site sits between these two roads as they converge on to Junction 8/9 of the M4 and the SA anticipates that a large number of vehicle movements from the site would utilise these roads, with the potential to adversely affect air quality at the AQMA. The RBWM Air Quality Action Plan has identified that raising the height of the acoustic barrier in the area could help to mitigate low level air pollution. Whilst not within the AQMA, development in such close proximity to it may exacerbate emissions in the area. The SA warns that mitigation measures such as electric car charging points and rerouting buses to pass through the site may not be sufficient to fully ensure that development would have a negligible effect on the AQMA.

3.67 Policy IF6 - Relocation of Magnet Leisure Centre to Braywick Park:

the SA expects the development to have a positive effect on health and wellbeing as it provides public access to leisure and recreation. The policy is considered to have a neutral effect on environmental objectives, as development will be on previously developed land surrounded by development.

3.68 Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP), January

2018: the IDP has been prepared on the basis of 14,260 new residential units being built during the plan period (2013-33). The BLP directs development primarily to locations in and around the urban area of Maidenhead, and other identified strategic locations. For the study area, the IDP has considered infrastructure requirements for the BLP allocations of approx. 2,600 dwellings in sites HA6, 7 and 8.

3.69 Education Provision: The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP), January 2018 identifies a need for a new 4 form entry primary school and a 7 form entry secondary school on Site HA6, Maidenhead Golf Course to meet the need for additional capacity arising from the housing allocations in South West Maidenhead.

3.70 The IDP explains that in seeking ways to address capacity challenges, the Council has investigated building more capacity onto sites by using multistory buildings and all-weather pitches. Known as ‘compact sites’, this approach has the potential to reduce the building footprint whilst enabling schools to take more pupils. The IDP makes the assumption that the new schools will be on compact sites, utilising multistory buildings and all-weather pitches to maximise capacity. Furthermore, the Council expects that all school facilities, including pitches, will be made available for community use and this will be secured through the planning application process.

3.71 To supplement the IDP, the Education Planning Team has published a detailed Assessment of Need for Additional Education Infrastructure, January 2018. This Assessment considers further the role of ‘compact sites’ noting that Building Bulletin 103 allows for schools on restricted sites, usually in urban areas, where space is limited. These schools are still required to have standard teaching and non-teaching accommodation, but may have much less outside space, such as playing fields, in which case the school will be expected to have access to offsite sports facilities.

3.72 The Assessment notes that from limited experience with offsite playing fields, these are generally underused, due to issues getting pupils to and from the facilities safely and in a reasonable amount of time. In addition, the offsite spaces would need to be provided, and the capacity of existing leisure facilities to absorb significant extra school use is questioned. This analysis therefore suggests that a full restricted site model should not be adopted, but that capacity can be increased through multi-storey buildings and use of all-weather playing pitches.

3.73 The Assessment demonstrates that by providing the proposed new primary and secondary schools on Site HA6 as compact schools, it would be possible to increase capacity from a 3 to 4 form entry primary

and from a 5 to 7 form entry secondary school without increasing the site size requirements of 2.645ha for the primary and 6.644ha for the secondary school.

3.74 Health Provision: Para 3.10.7 of the IDP notes that across the Windsor, Ascot and Maidenhead Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) area there are currently 22 GP premises with 83 Full Time Equivalent GPs serving a total population of 156,000 people which equates to a ratio of 1,880 patients per GP. The existing provision ratio of GPs in Windsor, Ascot and Maidenhead CCG is below (i.e. better than) the Department of Health’s target patient list of 1,800 patients per GP22.

3.75 The Borough has a high concentration of residential and nursing homes which places pressure on existing facilities due to the higher dependency of elderly patients on primary care facilities.

3.76 Overall, the IDP notes that the existing health infrastructure is under increasing pressure due to a rise in population, the demography and age of Borough residents and the inadequacy of some of the surgery buildings due to outdated premises which are no longer fit for purpose. In terms of the future approach to the provision of GP services, there has, in recent years been a shift away from single GP practices towards larger practices which enable greater capacity and resilience in a challenging financial landscape for public services.

3.77 In terms of the development within the study area, the IDP notes at para 3.10.18, that options around the impact of the residential development on the health and social care offer to those new residents will need to be considered and that this could be done by the Council, NHS and CCG working together to review options to deliver the required increased capacity both here and across the borough as a whole. There are, therefore, currently no specific requirements for the provision of healthcare facilities to accompany the development in the study area.

3.78 Police: Thames Valley Police (TVP) have an aspiration raised by TVP for a touchdown office on the Maidenhead Golf Course development to reinforce the visibility of policing in the new community (para 3.12.9). The IDP notes that this is planned to be a small office within any proposed Community hub or other public building. TVP are seeking the transfer of land or building at nil cost, and a contribution from Section 106 or CIL contributions. The delivery of this would be linked to the delivery of development.

3.79 Ambulance: The IDP at para 3.12.12 refers to consultation with the South Central Ambulance Service which has determined that the service may require a small site allocation in the Maidenhead area to enable a small building to operate emergency and standby resources in the area. The intention is that the Ambulance Service will be involved in the early planning of any development site in order to identify if there would be an opportunity for a facility, and will explore opportunities with other stakeholders, regarding funding and any opportunities to share space and / or costs of providing such a facility.

3.80 Library Provision: The IDP (para 3.13.9) refers to the significant increase in the population of Oldfield ward, due to the BLP allocations in the study area and notes that, whilst Maidenhead central library is still within the current ward there should be additional provision as a flexible community space/building for a folding library and educational, health and inclusion purposes. The IDP states that services can be designed and delivered when the needs have been identified, and sites and funding secured.

3.81 Community Facilities: The Council's preferred strategy is to invest and upgrade current facilities rather than develop new centres. The IDP notes (para 3.13.24) that provision of community and youth services is generally adequate across the Borough, but that current provision in and around the centre of Maidenhead should be enhanced to cater for needs arising from new housing in Maidenhead town centre. The northern part of Site HA6 could potentially benefit from such enhancement of facilities.

3.82 Sewerage: To support the growth identified in the BLP, the IDP notes (para 3.19.3) that upgrades are likely to be required at Maidenhead Sewage Treatment Works

amongst others in the next Asset Management Plan period (2020-2025) and therefore towards the end of the BLP period. Further investigations by Thames Water will be required to understand the nature of the upgrades required but, in general, the expansion and provision of the additional capacity may require a lead in time of 18 months to three years. Developers will be required to agree the drainage strategy and confirm the point of connection into public sewers and flow rate into the proposed connection points. In sewerage areas with limited spare capacity and significant predicted growth, sewer impact assessments for individual sites would be required, to be funded by the developer.

3.83 Junction Improvement Schemes: As part of the transport evidence for the BLP, the borough's strategic traffic model has been updated to provide a sound 2016 base year scenario for the AM and PM peak periods. The base year model has been used to develop forecast scenarios to quantify and assess the likely impacts of allocated housing and employment development on local and strategic road networks up to 2032.

3.84 Analysis of the 2032 forecast scenarios considered the performance of junctions in terms of their 'level of service' and journey times on selected routes. Comparisons were then made with the 2016 base year to understand the impact of planned development on the road network. The forecast scenarios highlighted a number of junctions facing severe congestion issues. Of these, 15 junctions were identified by the Local Highway Authority as having strategic importance to supporting the delivery of the BLP, those with a relationship to the study area are highlighted below:

1. M4 J8 / 9 *
2. A404 (M) / Shoppenhangers Road / Norreys Drive roundabouts *
3. A404 (M) / A404 / A4 Thicket roundabout *
4. A308 Braywick Road / Stafferton Way / Rushington Avenue roundabout
5. A308(M) / A308 / A330 / The Bingham's (Braywick) roundabout *
6. A308 / B3028 Upper Bray Road

* Denotes junctions affecting the motorway and trunk road network for which Highways England is the local highway authority.

3.85 Transport - RBWM Local Plan Assessment using RBWM Strategic Highway Model, June 2017: The assessment uses three forecast scenarios to analyse the impact of allocated housing and employment up to 2032, the end of the emerging Local Plan period:

- **Scenario A:** includes planned development outside the borough and committed development in the borough but does not include the Local Plan growth in the borough.
- **Scenario B:** is based on Scenario A but also includes Local Plan development in the borough. This Scenario includes new on-site infrastructure and a new roundabout on Braywick Road to provide access into Site HA6 (See below for extract of Figure 2-3 in the Local Plan Assessment).
- **Scenario C:** is based on Scenario B but also includes transport interventions that may be required to mitigate the impact of the Local Plan developments.

3.86 The assessment shows that traffic levels increase in Scenario A compared to Base resulting in increasing journey times on existing roads in the Borough. The addition of the Local Plan development trips in Scenario B, results in

a further increase in journey times, especially on routes travelling through Maidenhead town centre, due to the proximity of many of the local plan sites to this location. The assessment also notes that there are a number of failing junctions surrounding the town centre which are causing congestion along the routes. As a result, the assessment suggests that there may be a need to manage the transport impact of the local plan development sites so that appropriate mitigation can be implemented.

3.87 When the transport interventions in Scenario C are taken into account in the year 2032, the assessment finds improvements in travel times in each peak period for the vast majority of journey time routes when compared to scenario B.

3.88 Maidenhead Town Centre - Missing Links: the Council has provisionally been allocated £3.048 millions of Local Growth Deal funding by the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Economic Partnership for the ‘Maidenhead Town Centre - Missing Links’ project, subject to production of a satisfactory business case. This £4.75 million project comprises a package of schemes designed to complete the ‘missing links’ between planned major development areas in and around Maidenhead and to improve their connectivity to the town centre and surrounding residential areas and local facilities. A new ‘inner-ring’ is proposed for pedestrians and cyclists, which will be tied into a new pedestrian / cycle subway under the A4 between Kidwells Park and West Street. The routes will tie into infill public



Figure 13: : New road infrastructure for HA6, from Local Plan Assessment

realm improvements in the town, which will in turn trigger a review of the core town centre road network. Whilst town centre focused, the Missing Links Project has the potential to enhance connectivity between the proposed development in the Study Area and the wider town. Additionally, the Maidenhead Station Access project, includes improved crossings between the station and town centre with widened approach routes. This project will connect with the Missing Links scheme.

3.89 In terms of future highway/junction requirements the IDP at para 3.2.13 notes that the transport model is strategic in nature and that local junction validation may be required to model the operation of individual junctions. The Council has commissioned work to review local highway issues, potential access points, visibility splays, and parking and servicing provision (for non-residential uses) and the suitability of sites for development from a highways point of view.

3.90 Viability and Deliverability: the 2017 Local Plan Viability Update reviewed the comprehensive appraisal of residential and commercial development viability and infrastructure priorities that informed the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) (effective from 1st September 2016). The Update reviewed the profiles of the types of development likely to come forward to take into account the requirements of the new Borough Local Plan.

3.91 The Update also took into account on-going changes in national planning policy regulations and guidance which may impact on development viability. This Viability Study assessed the deliverability of the development sites and the potential of CIL as a mechanism to fund, at least in part, the infrastructure required to support the development set out in the Plan.

3.92 Para 3.24 of the Study noted that where individual sites in the BLP were of such a scale that their deliverability was important to the overall Plan strategy, then these needed to be addressed separately. The Study provided a high level assessment of the deliverability of a large strategic site of 2,000 units on the edge of Maidenhead., based on the development of the Maidenhead Golf Club (which is owned by the Council).

3.93 Para 10.12 of the Update notes that a strategic site of 2,000 units has been modelled under three scenarios and

is indicative of the proposed development of Maidenhead Golf Course. The Update was undertaken prior to any master planning being carried out. The Update noted that the modelling for this scale of development was different, being at a significantly higher density, to the typical large scale 'estate housing' type schemes likely to come forward in South East England. It also referred to it being unusual to bring such a large urban extension forward as a largely flatted and terraced scheme. The Residual Value is notably lower (about a third) where the scheme is modelled with a higher element of flats.

3.94 The Update indicated that, at the time of preparing the report it was too early to provide definitive advice as to the deliverability of this site and that, once the Council had completed the work assessing the strategic infrastructure and mitigation requirements of this site, it would be necessary to revisit the analysis. In the meantime, the Council is advised to continue to engage with the owners to consider deliverability in the round.

Outcomes from Engagement

3.95 In order to better inform the preparation of this study and understand stakeholder views and inputs, landowners, key stakeholders and local community interests participated in two engagement events in July 2019. One workshop was held with landowners of the constituent sites and statutory consultees; RBWM officers and the Lead Member for Planning. A second workshop brought together individuals and local interest groups from the local community, who had made representations on the submitted Borough Local Plan (BLP). Both workshops took place in the Desborough Theatre at Maidenhead Town Hall.

3.96 The workshops provided an opportunity to bring together key stakeholders to update them on the work underway; to share the results of the site and baseline analysis to benefit from their local knowledge; and to facilitate a discussion to help to inform a vision and set of objectives for the study area. A report of the workshops is attached at Appendix A to this Study which sets out the outputs captured at the events.

Key messages from the workshops:

Landowners and Key Stakeholders session

3.97 Connectivity, or the lack of it, particularly on an east-west axis both within the study area and to the wider Maidenhead area was highlighted throughout the discussions. This related not just to connectivity for travel (especially by cyclists and pedestrians) but also for biodiversity, with the need to improve links to and between existing areas of open space and habitats.

3.98 A proposed concept of a key north-south connection (referred to as the 'Maidenhead Mile' in the CALA Homes vision for the Golf Course Site) was identified as an opportunity to address some of the connectivity issues, with the potential to link all the housing allocations and on into the Triangle site.

3.99 There was recognition that there could be benefits from looking at the three housing allocations in particular as a whole, especially in terms of delivering a net gain in biodiversity, but also in ensuring that the location of key facilities such as the new primary and secondary schools benefitted the wider community. The benefits of taking a comprehensive and co-ordinate approach to place-making in this area were generally acknowledged by the stakeholders.

3.100 Given the scale of development proposed for the study area in the BLP allocations, it was acknowledged that the design and character of this growth area would, by necessity, be different from any view of a 'traditional' Maidenhead approach. There was, however, some concern that the costs associated with designing and building to any higher specification could make it difficult for the area to compete with other new builds in the area which were not subject to the same standards. Whilst there are risks in this, overall there was recognition that the opportunity existed to deliver something different and attractive to the market.

Community Interests session

3.101 A key concern expressed by participants was that of traffic and congestion. Participants noted existing problems of connectivity to and within Maidenhead which were exacerbated by matters such as road corridors and the railway line.

3.102 Whilst appreciating that there may be opportunities for the new development to support and enable modal shift, there were concerns that the existing road infrastructure especially the Shoppenhangers and Braywick Road corridors are already heavily trafficked and constrained and, as a result, would not easily lend themselves to adaptation for bus lanes or other features.

3.103 Given the concerns around the existing capacity of the roads and other infrastructure, participants were clear that infrastructure improvements would be vital. Possible new transport interventions suggested included the creation of a multi-modal transport interchange in the railway station area, enabling the interchange from one mode of transport to another; and the creation of a park and ride at Junction 8/9 to reduce car borne traffic into Maidenhead from the south.

3.104 On Housing, there was consensus amongst participants that the scale of development now proposed was too much for the area and comprised over-development.

3.105 In terms of the type of development, there was a strong preference expressed for family housing, rather than too much emphasis on flats and apartments which are already being developed in the town centre. Densities likely to be necessary in order to deliver the BLP housing numbers were felt to be too high relative to the existing character of the area and were considered to be indicative of the fact that too much development was being proposed for the sites. Development was, though, seen to offer opportunities for more self-build

homes and developments by smaller builders as well as to deliver a mix of housing types and tenures to widen choice in the local market.

3.106 The open green space provided by the golf course, whilst not offering full public access, was regarded as a key green lung within the centre of Maidenhead and its loss was a matter of great concern to participants.

3.107 The need for the new development to include some local services to meet the day to day needs of residents was highlighted as this would help to reduce the need for people to travel by car to access such facilities elsewhere.

3.108 Although the participants were asked to focus on the site allocations in the submission BLP, a number of suggestions were made as to alternative sites and approaches for the delivery of new homes. Many of the alternative locations had previously been considered by the Council as part of the assessment of sites and their suitability.

3.109 The review of the local plan evidence base relevant to the study area and the discussions at the engagement workshops have identified a range of strengths, challenges and opportunities for development in South West Maidenhead. These are summarized in the following table.

Constraints & Opportunities

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessibility – immediately south of the town centre and railway station and access to the Elizabeth Line; M4 junction 8/9 to southern boundary and the strategic roads A308(M) and A404 flank the southern part of the area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roads within and surrounding the area act as barriers to connectivity as well as limiting access eg: to open space at Ockwells and Braywick Park and the River Thames beyond.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proximity to existing assets and facilities, including those in the town centre and open spaces/leisure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor connectivity particularly for pedestrians.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site currently comprises extensive areas of open space and green infrastructure, creates a green entrance to Maidenhead from the south. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual site allocations approach may not bring forward a comprehensively planned new community.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The built form and layout of the surrounding areas does not readily lend itself to the creation of new connections and linkages to the new development. includes cul-de-sacs,

Opportunities	Threats/Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scale of development requires a new approach to the design and delivery of the area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site capacity & suitability to accommodate likely density requirements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a new character in this area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of space and capacity on surrounding roads, eg Shoppenhangers and Braywick Roads, to accommodate bus or cycle lanes.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attract new investment and new residents to support local services and enable the provision of new businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of green space as a result of development and impact on existing landscape character.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A co-ordinated approach to development will support delivery of renewables and low carbon living at scale, eg development of district energy networks could enable the area to become a net exporter of energy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of ecological capital and increased environmental impact arising from development.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscape led approach to development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cumulative impact of the proposed quantum of development and resulting pressure on existing facilities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Innovation in green buildings & landscape function. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliverability and viability
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walkable neighbourhoods. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity of Braywick roundabout to absorb proposed planned growth in area plus traffic attracted by Crossrail
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance pedestrian & cycle interconnectivity and priority. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental capacity of wider area to absorb cumulative impacts from Maidenhead development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shared/coincidental facilities to make efficient land use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited capacity and ability to provide adequate infrastructure to deal with SWM & MTC development combined.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aspiration for modal shift through public transport provision, new routes & integration. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mixed & balanced community building -creating diversity through housing mix and types. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biodiversity gain 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GB loss compensatory measures 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proper planned approach to Braywick Park and development of town wide Sports hub to serve all of Maidenhead 	

The Challenge

3.110 The scale of development in this area provides a challenge but equally an opportunity to deliver a high quality development at a higher density and different character to the surrounding urban area. The area will have a distinct character and degree of self-containment supported by the provision of on-site services and facilities including a new primary and secondary school, local centre; open space and health facilities.

3.111 Development in this area will need to address a number of issues including tackling congestion, managing demand, enhancing access, increasing active travel and enhancing public transport. In addition to the transport challenges, the scale of development and the loss of the golf course and other Green Belt land poses challenges for the protection, enhancement and provision of green infrastructure to serve the new community and for the delivery of net gains in biodiversity. Whilst on-site provision of open space and green infrastructure is important, the improvement and provision of connections to existing areas of open space elsewhere in the Study Area and wider Maidenhead area for pedestrians, cyclists and nature are equally key to creating a healthy, sustainable community.

3.112 The transport network surrounding the study area presents both opportunities and challenges. The site is close to Maidenhead town centre, which is a hub in the local bus network from where passengers can catch services to surrounding towns and villages. Proximity to Maidenhead railway station provides access to London, Slough, Reading and the south west, which will be improved further with the arrival of the Elizabeth Line and Western Rail Link to Heathrow. The site has excellent links to the strategic road networks, including the M4 to the south and the A404(M) to the west., while the A308 provides access to Windsor. The study area is, however, constrained by the surrounding roads which act as barriers to pedestrian and cycle movements in particular and limiting access to adjoining area of open space and the wider town.

3.113 Connections within the Study Area and between it and the wider Maidenhead area present a challenge for the successful integration of this area into the wider town. North-South connections are provided by the existing road corridors of Shoppenhangers and Braywick Roads although these corridors are limited in width and in their current form present few opportunities for accommodating bus or cycle lanes. Further to the south, the protected employment site is separated from the housing allocations to the north by the strategic road network, making access to future employment opportunities there limited by any means other than the car. East-West connections from the Study Area out to adjoining areas, especially Braywick Park and south-west to Ockwells are also limited, both for vehicular and non-vehicular modes as well as for wildlife and biodiversity.

3.114 The scale of development proposed for the study area in the BLP represents a challenge in that, it will require a different approach to the type, design and layout of dwellings to that prevalent in the surrounding area, including higher densities and taller buildings than can be seen in the surrounding established residential area. Despite this challenge, the development represents an exciting opportunity to develop a new, sustainable community within Maidenhead with a focus on active travel and the integration of new areas of green infrastructure and biodiversity

3.115 Building at scale presents a range of opportunities, for example for modal shift, where the development of the Study Area can encourage a movement towards lower car-ownership in those parts of the area that are well-served by public transport and by delivering services and facilities within walking distance of a large proportion of residents. The scale of development here also presents the opportunity for innovation in building types, incorporating green buildings and exploiting opportunities for low carbon lifestyles.

4. Vision & Key Principles

The importance of a vision and set of guiding principles

4.1 Setting out an overall vision and set of principles can help to establish strong foundations to ensure that future proposals can deliver on local ambitions and expectations.

4.2 A key part of establishing a strong ‘vision’ is the recognition and understanding of the benefits that growth and new development can deliver, and the objectives that could be achieved. It must look beyond the boundary of the any specific site in isolation, and recognise the wider influences and opportunities that will inform the final outcome.

4.3 A vision should be put together collaboratively between the key stakeholders and take the following key elements into account:

- National planning guidance as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and other guidance produced by relevant bodies;
- Relevant local plans and strategies;
- The views of the local community;
- The views of any other key stakeholders that may be involved in or impacted upon, including Statutory Agencies,
- Matters relating to deliverability; and
- The spatial context and opportunities presented by the area in question.

4.4 The preparation of this Placemaking Study

has sought to take account of the above elements in a limited timescale whilst also recognising that further work will be required going forward to evolve and shape expectations as the development of the South West Maidenhead area moves through future planning and design stages. It is therefore anticipated that the emerging Vision, key development principles and any related policy will continue to evolve and respond to changing circumstances going forward.

Emerging Vision

The South West Maidenhead area is a large urban extension delivering strategic housing, employment, community centres, leisure and open space, of key importance to the future success and growth of Maidenhead and the Borough as a whole. The area will extend the built up areas of Maidenhead in a green, healthy and sustainable form and connect existing wild and open space areas into the wider town. The SWM area will fulfil a variety of living, working, educational, leisure and sporting roles within the town and contribute in a number of ways to helping Maidenhead to become a more sustainable, more distinctive and more desirable town.

Sense of place and distinctiveness will emerge in different ways across. The South West Maidenhead (SWM) area is a large as a whole. Maidenhead is renowned for its strong ‘green’ credentials with leafy approaches, rich landscape backdrop of the Thames Valley, the Chilterns margins and wider surrounding open countryside. This context will be enhanced by the provision of new, accessible and integrated open spaces extending the area’s significant green spaces of Ockwells Park and Braywick Park. Existing public open spaces in the area will be maintained and enhanced to perform a range of green and blue infrastructure roles. Green Infrastructure in the area should facilitate health and wellbeing and also help support the health of the natural environment.

New and existing communities alike will live a greener existence, among a flourishing network of green streets and spaces which accommodate wildlife, biodiversity and people harmoniously.

New development will come forward to provide vibrant and successful new neighbourhoods set in a high quality setting. New development will make an overall positive contribution to Maidenhead by providing a wide mix of housing types, local services and facilities and good access to employment opportunities. New connections will be provided to create a permeable and attractive environment to promote sustainable movement and enable integration of new development with adjoining communities.

The Council has committed to become carbon neutral by 2050. This is a challenging commitment which will require a pro-active approach by many parties, including the residents of Maidenhead. South West Maidenhead will provide real opportunities for people to live more sustainably. As new communities become established across South West Maidenhead, more sustainable patterns of living will come into their own as residents and workers instinctively choose to reduce their environmental impact and enjoy a more sociable, connected, and healthy lifestyle.

Emerging Development Principles

1. Development across the South West Maidenhead area will need to come forward to integrate the best of landscape and urban design, to create a distinctive and modern place that local communities can be proud of.
2. The overall approach to the area will need to come forward in an integrated and comprehensive way, guided by a strong overall framework and masterplan and a long term approach to secure design quality throughout the planning and delivery process.
3. Future residential development in the SWM area will comprise two distinct neighbourhoods each with a clear sense of place and sustainable function:
 - a. A northern neighbourhood, orientated towards the town centre, will contribute to and benefit from its proximity to the town centre;
 - b. A southern neighbourhood concentrated around a new local centre at Harvest Hill Road and the formation of a new, distinctive and accessible sustainable community.
4. Future employment in the SWM area will primarily be focused on the development of the Triangle site for a suitable and sustainable mix of B2 and B8 uses. Additional employment will come forward from the new schools, services and facilities to be provided in the area.
5. Future sports development on Braywick Park will provide formal sports provision and informal leisure and recreation opportunities for the wider town as well as benefitting new residents in the Desborough area.
6. New connections, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists will link the development to existing residential

areas and by so doing provide opportunities for improvements to the overall sustainability of the wider area.

7. Fundamental to the placemaking approach and sustainability of the area as a whole is the inclusion of a multi-functioning, highly connected green corridor that can create a continuous route through the area and host new sustainable movement including public transport, fast cycle links and safe pedestrian connections.
8. Retention and enhancement of existing ecological assets, including Rushington Copse and the tree copse on the Triangle site with measures to increase biodiversity and wildlife connectivity will underpin the identity of Maidenhead as a green town.
9. Employment uses on the Triangle site will be integrated in a sustainable way with residential areas, requiring the consideration of a new connection over the A308(M) for sustainable transport modes. The impact of vehicular movements, especially HGVs, from the employment development on this site will, however, require careful consideration.
10. Harvest Hill Road provides the primary vehicular access into and through the southern new neighbourhood and should provide the primary east-west sustainable transport route in this area. New development along the road corridor will include a variety of building forms and establish a new local centre which can act as a destination and provide services and facilities for the whole South West Maidenhead area.
11. Site layout and land assembly at the northern end of the Golf Course site should look to facilitate a new route for Shoppenhangers Road to connect to Braywick roundabout. This could enable the area immediately to the south of the station to be

transformed into a welcoming gateway to the town and transition point into the South West Maidenhead area. It would also allow the area to become a southern interchange for Maidenhead Station, which would have significant benefits for reducing town centre traffic, avoiding the need for vehicles heading south from the station to travel up to the A4 or Broadway to turn around due to the lack of right turn from the station forecourt. It could also offer an opportunity for bus priority if the left turn out of Stafferton Way were to be retained for buses only.

12. East-west connectivity across the area will be important and will need to be improved to enhance permeability and ensure integration with adjoining areas. Existing east-west links should be reinforced and new links introduced in a number of ways which relate to the desire lines created by new facilities and destinations across the area.
13. The study area as a whole can benefit from an integrated network of public open space which draws together new and existing spaces within a hierarchy and links them via safe, attractive green routes. Where possible, these should incorporate existing trees and habitats.
14. Efforts should be made to integrate the open spaces at Ockwells Park and Braywick Park to help them function as local resources for both existing and new residents, and link them sustainably to the wider town.
15. Infrastructure should be delivered in a comprehensive way and phased appropriately with residential and employment development across the site.
16. Proposals will need to promote and support new and existing residents to live in a sustainable way, incorporating appropriate measures to reduce the use of natural resources, and contributing towards the Borough becoming carbon neutral by 2030.

5. Placemaking Approach

5.1 The preceding sections of this study have considered the context and key issues that will inform and influence the approach to the future for the South West Maidenhead area.

5.2 Drawing the various influences and considerations together has enabled consideration of how best to bring forward a spatial approach across the area as a whole, including the form and function of different spaces, the wider scope of uses and the role that the area will play as part of Maidenhead into the future.

Key Spatial Influences

5.3 This contextual analysis has been accompanied by a closer consideration of key spatial considerations and influences including but not limited to

- The identified allocations sites and anticipated areas of change within the study area;
- Key routes, transport and movement opportunities and implications;
- Existing ecological and open spaces & assets;
- Adjoining areas – their character and relationship to areas identified future development;

5.4 The overall placemaking approach draws together the various influences to identify how new development can be best accommodated in light of the assets that already exist, and the challenges of accommodating major development in a sustainable way. The resulting ‘Placemaking Concept Plan’ identifies how, within the context of site constraints and available land, a place can emerge which is deliverable and distinctive.



Allocation Sites & Areas of change

Areas of change are generally sited through the centre of the site running down from the town centre towards the motorway. This establishes a core focus of future development within this area which is of sufficient scale to enable a comprehensive approach to be applied. Other areas within the study area primarily comprise established residential neighborhoods or valued open spaces, where development and transformation will not be appropriate.



Key routes & transport implications

The site is located with good accessibility to the strategic highways network to the south. A number of core transport corridors run primarily outside of the core development area but within the overall study area. These generally provide important north-south corridors for vehicular movement. Given the nature of these routes, they provide constraints to permeability within the overall study area.



Open Spaces & Ecological Assets

The study area benefits from substantial and valued strategic open space to the east at Braywick and to the south west at Ockwells. Elsewhere there are important pockets of green infrastructure, woodland and local ecological areas given the current open nature of the land and its part use as a golf course.



Character & relationships

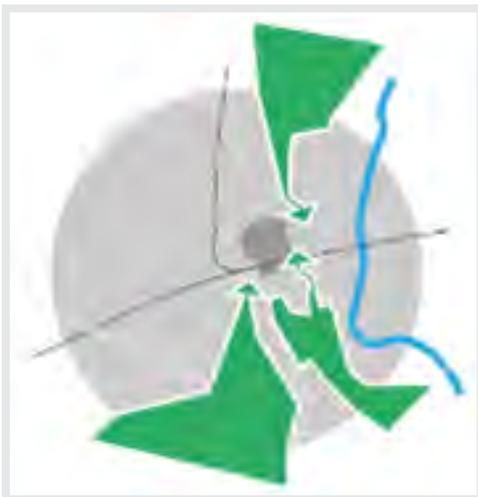
This part of Maidenhead has several different character areas, including post war and late 20th Century suburbs, some benefitting from strong 'leafy' characteristics with large properties set on generous plots. There is limited commercial character with some employment uses adjoining the town centre and on edges to main transport corridors.

Evolving a spatial approach

5.5 The BLP and existing evidence provides much valuable information as to how to establish a suitable placemaking approach. Inevitably a balance will be needed between accommodating and providing for the scale of future growth whilst doing so in a way that can retain the important general character of the town and of the development sites themselves. This balance will need to consider the most appropriate blending of urban characteristics with green credentials to create an overall environment that can be used and valued by both new and existing communities alike.

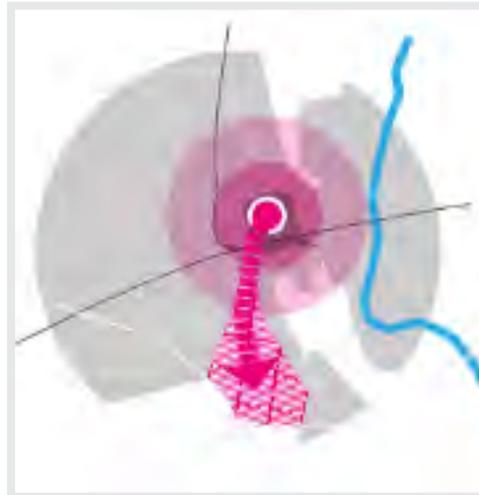
5.6 A key consideration has been the extent to which the new residential development, in particular, could and should reflect the character of the adjoining area, given the scale of development to be accommodated in the study area. In order to deliver the planned quantum of approx. 2,600 dwellings, together with supporting facilities, grey and green infrastructure, the placemaking approach to this area takes the opportunity to create new, higher density neighbourhoods and to promote more sustainable lifestyle choices.

‘Green in’ to the urban area



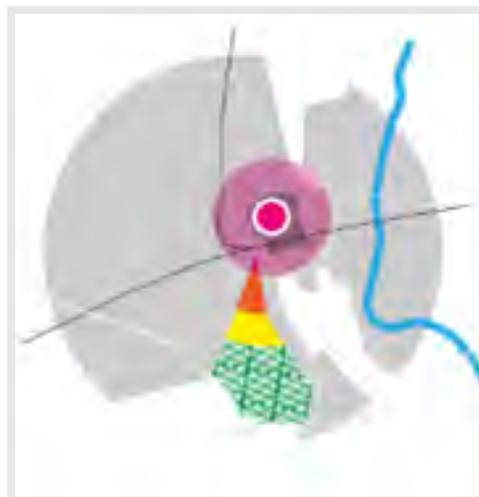
Maidenhead benefits from a strong relationship with adjoining countryside with green corridors bringing green areas right in to the urban area. The green character of the area is particularly apparent when approaching the town from the south due to the relatively undeveloped nature of land within the study area.

‘Urban Out’ to the green corridors



The town centre will continue to face pressure to grow, especially given the introduction of improved accessibility through Crossrail. This pressure will push development out along key corridors where development could occur.

A blended approach of urban & green



The South West Maidenhead area provides an opportunity to accommodate new development yet doing so in a sensitive manner to blend higher density development pushing outwards from the town centre with the protection of the town’s green character. The provision of a strong green link from the urban area outwards is a key placemaking element.

5.7 The approach can also introduce wider opportunities to better stitch the area together to improve both north-south and east-west connectivity, with the need to integrate new and improved connections to the north to the town centre, to the east and west to adjoining communities (and to better link Braywick with Ockwells), and provide an alternative to the already constrained routes along Shoppenhangers and Braywick Roads.

A Placemaking Concept Plan for South West Maidenhead

5.8 The preparation of a Placemaking Concept Plan draws together the various influences on the study area to set out an approach that can guide future approaches to the area.

5.9 The Placemaking Concept Plan outlines the need to consider the development in the study area in the context of the existing settlement pattern, its constraints and opportunities, but also recognising that pro-activity is required to shape the emerging settlement pattern in a positive way.

5.10 The scale of development compels the need for a bold vision of placemaking and this can only emerge through a structured framework to ensure the necessary infrastructure, community needs and design objectives can be met.

5.11 A suggested approach to create a strong sense of place across the study area is to start to consider future development in the proposed strategic residential allocation HA57, Desborough, as occurring around two distinct neighbourhoods. The northern part of Desborough has a natural affinity with the town centre in terms of access to services, public transport and other facilities. Taking its cue from the development form, layout and design of the public realm in the town centre, the neighbourhood will be characterised

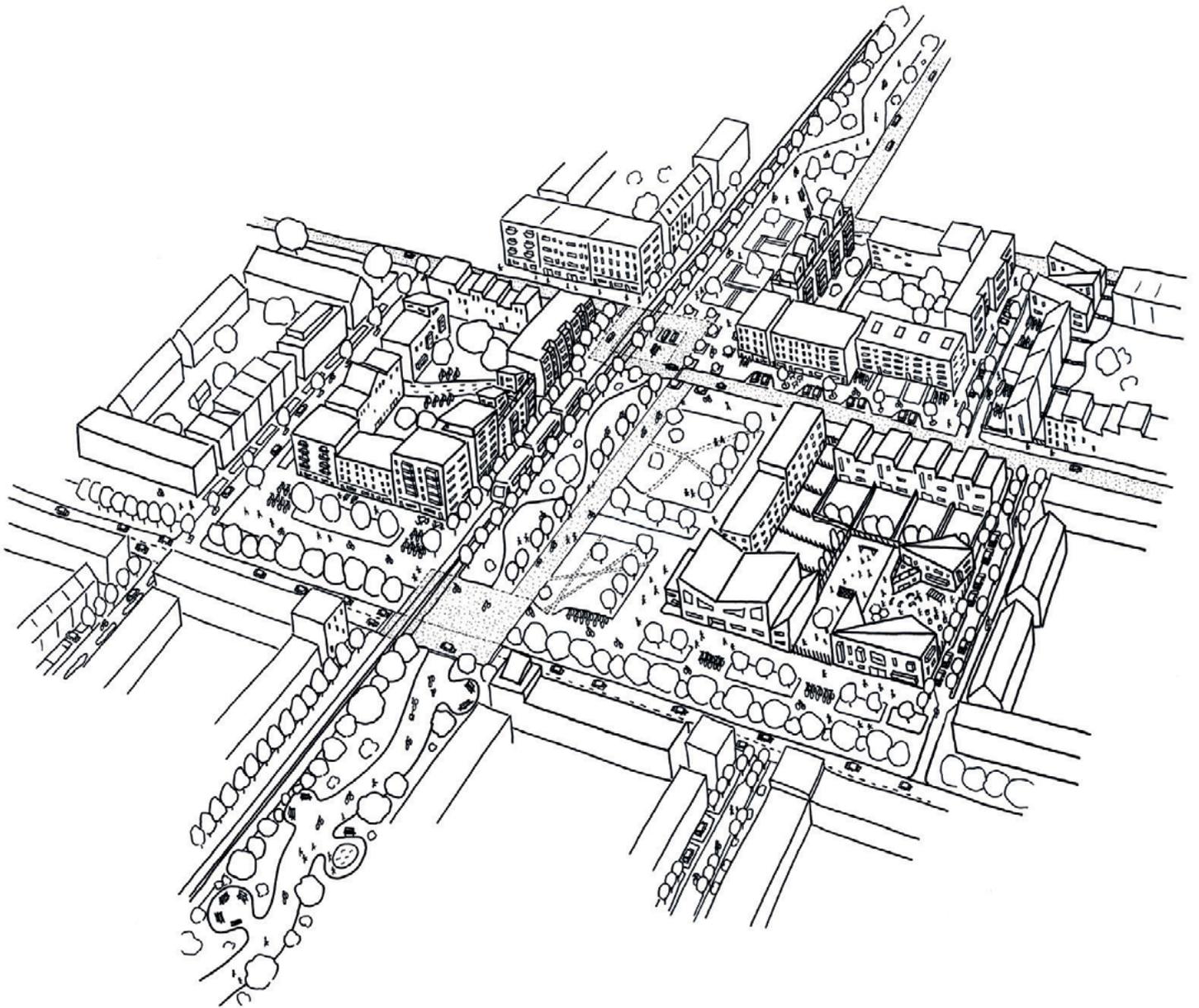
by higher density development and greater building heights. Further south into the centre of the strategic allocation, beyond immediate walking distance from the town centre, an additional new neighborhood could emerge at Harvest Hill with a new Local Centre to become a key focus of activity.

5.12 The structuring of development around these two distinct neighborhoods can form the basis of other structuring elements across the wider study area and creates the framework for the following components:

5.13 Overall the study area can become united through the delivery of strategic green links. The opportunity presented by an area stretching from the settlement and countryside edge to the edge of the town centre is that a new sustainable green link can be established, different in form and character to the existing congested north-south routes into the town (Braywick Road and Shoppenhangers Road). This new link is not proposed to be an additional vehicular route but a rich and diverse green corridor hosting public transport, fast cycle routes and safe pedestrian connectivity. Creating continuity across the area through the use of this strategic green infrastructure can ensure that the identity of this new development, and the study area as a whole is rooted in the perception of Maidenhead as a green town.

5.14 Landscape and open space can become fundamental to the identity and structure of the study area by considering their strategic role and contribution to a variety of aspects of community life from movement along green corridors, to education in the landscape, day-to-day interaction with wildlife and the management and provision of utilities and energy.

5.15 A hierarchy of green spaces also determines the patterns of living among communities in the new development ensuring this is a place where it is possible to live sustainably. A high quality framework of green space and landscape can become the centrepiece of the place.

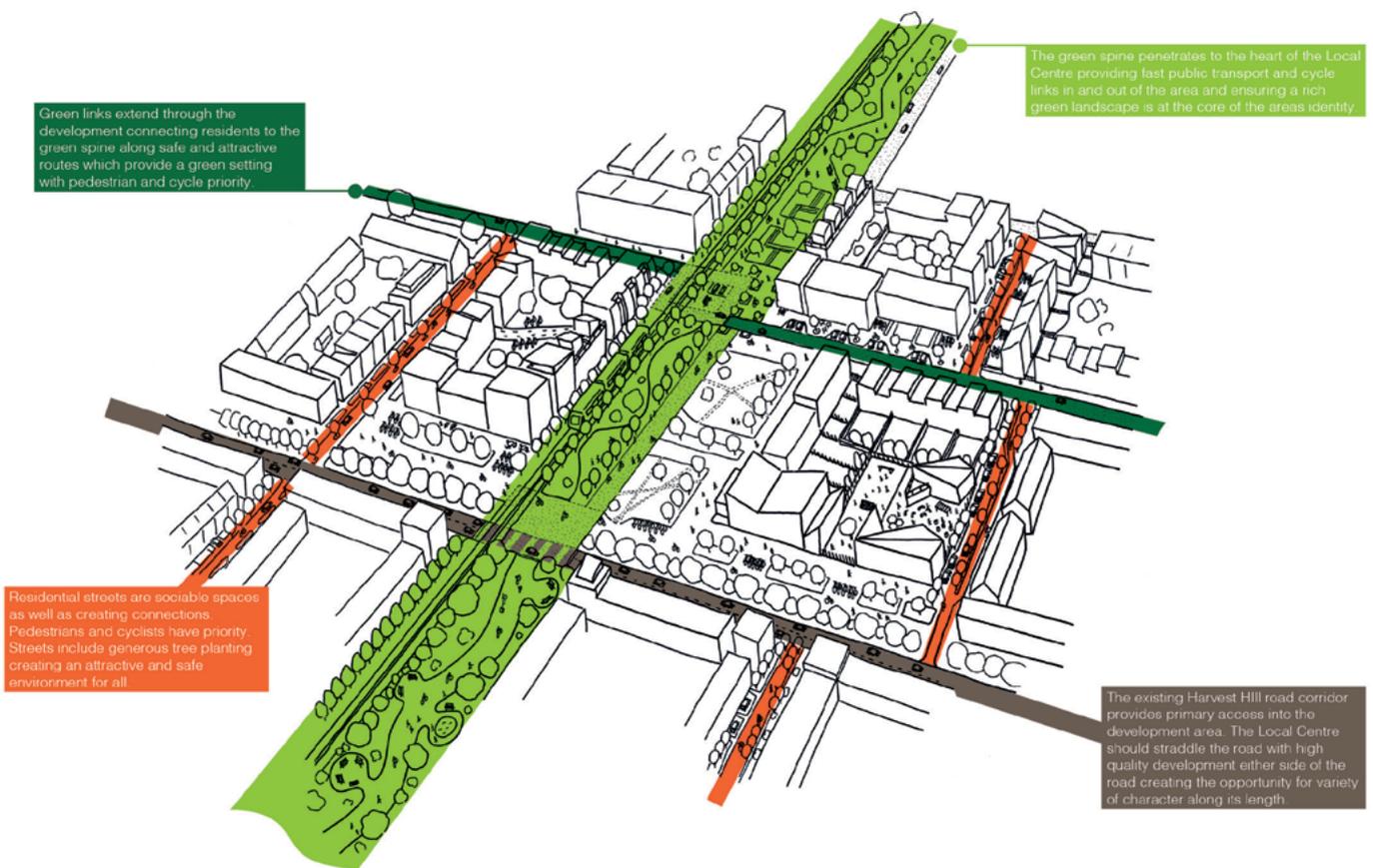


5.16 The mix and distribution of uses and the character of built form and public realm in the proposed Desborough strategic allocation should respect the structuring of development within the area around two distinct neighborhoods.

- To the north, development will be primarily high density housing set in high quality public realm with a priority given to civic spaces and accessibility routes leading directly to the train station and town centre, for which communities

located here will rely upon for the majority of their facilities and services. The northern neighbourhood will play an important role adjacent to the town centre district, benefitting from and contributing to the mix of uses and diversity of open spaces which lie within easy reach.

- In the south of the area, centred on Harvest Hill, a new neighbourhood can be established which will include a green heart surrounded by certain



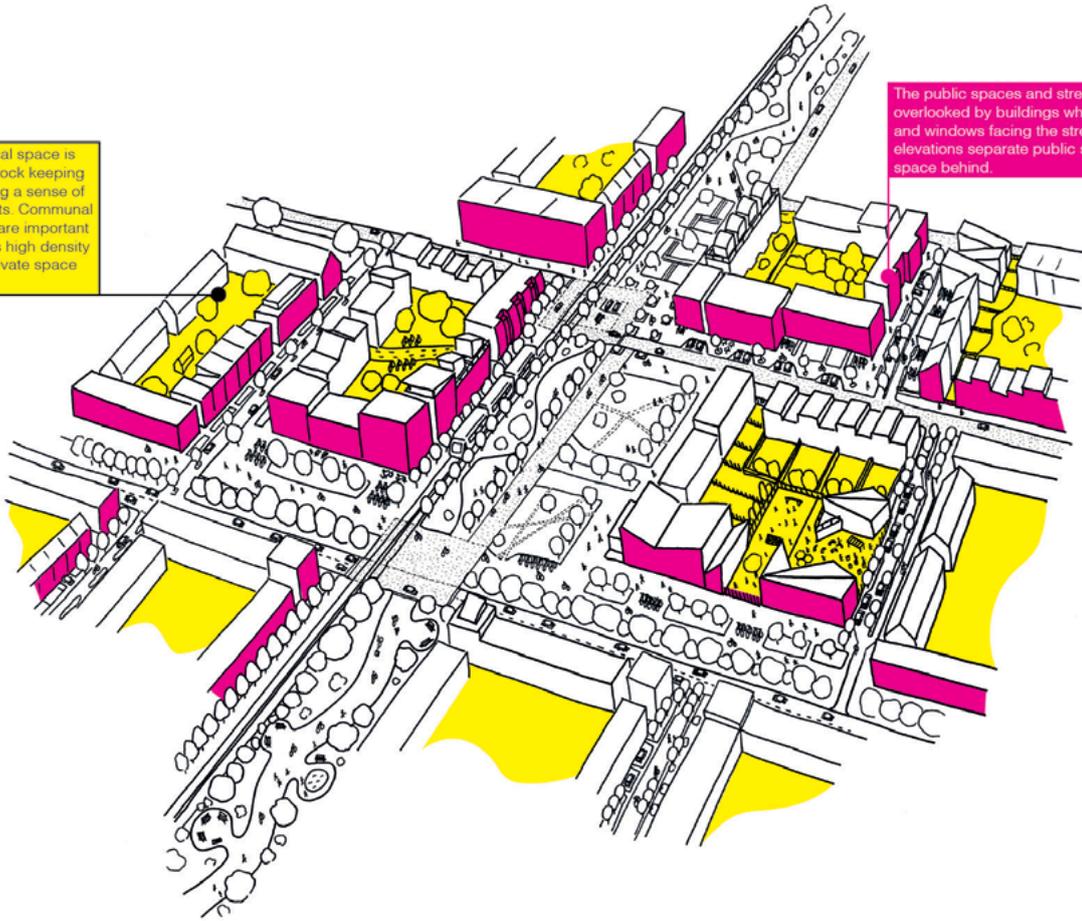
A Green Spine crossroads with Harvest Hill road and other streets and green links.

facilities suitable to serving a local population providing the means by which communities can exist in a sustainable way and to facilitate identify and support community events and cohesion. This can include a small amount of convenience retail, a primary and secondary school, some community facilities and new public transport links. The following images illustrate the mix of uses and proposed character of the local centre area.

- In the southern neighbourhood in particular, a greater variety of housing types can come forward

to reflect the need to create a diverse and balanced community. While the density of development will be relatively high, with development close to the heart of the local centre likely to be around 4-6 storeys, this can make a positive contribution to the vibrancy and attractiveness of the new neighbourhood including by bringing a focus of activity to public spaces and the local centre. Building forms will need to include apartment living for families, a variety of type and style of housing for varied age groups and smaller units for young and older people including the potential

Private and communal space is enclosed within the block keeping it secure and providing a sense of ownership for residents. Communal gardens and spaces are important where development is high density and less dedicated private space is possible.



The public spaces and streets are animated and overlooked by buildings which have their entrances and windows facing the street. Continuous building elevations separate public space from private space behind.

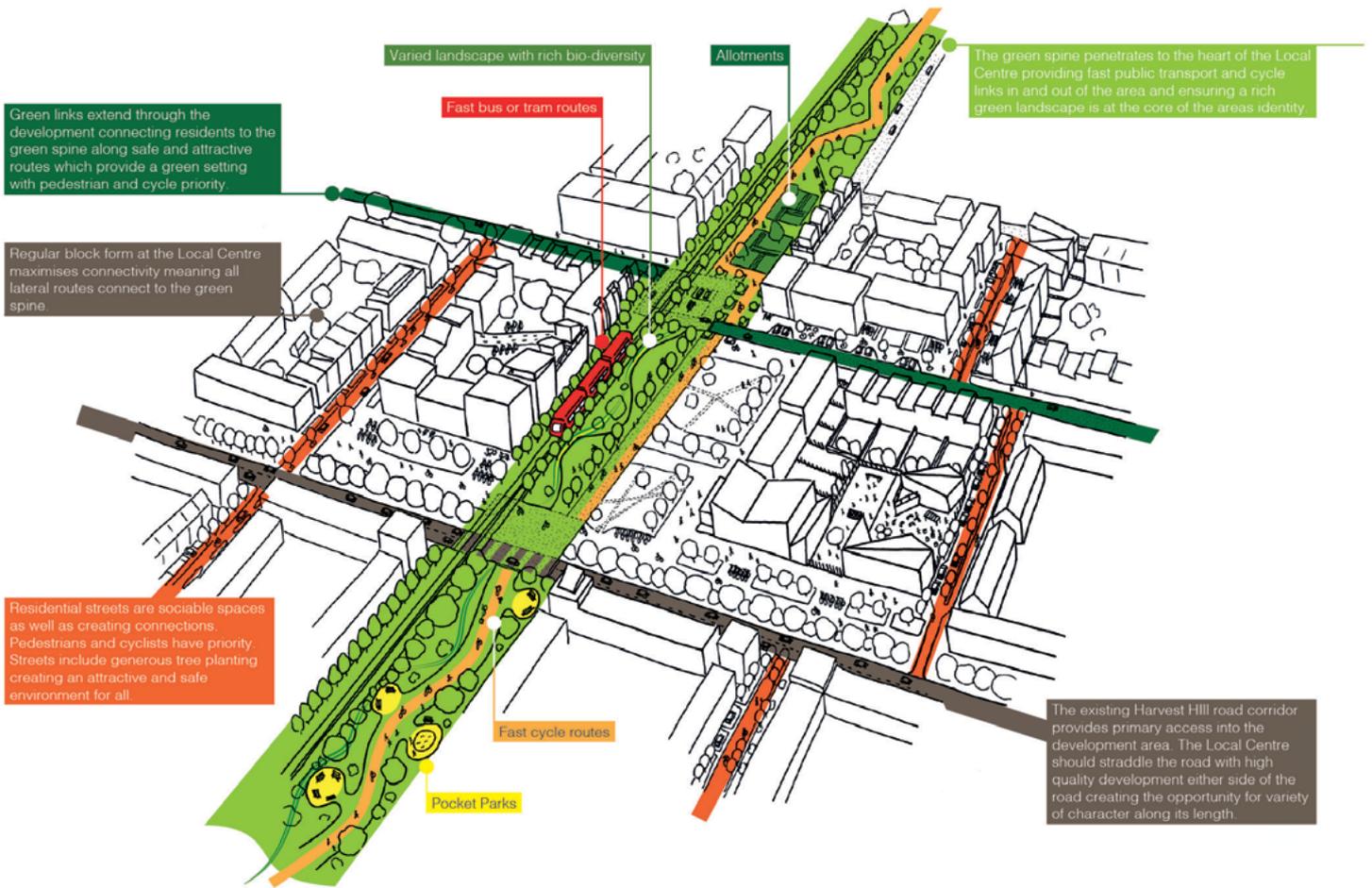
The arrangement of development blocks clearly defines private and public space.

for sheltered or assisted living. Serviced plots at both high and low densities will be provided to meet the strong local demand for self-build opportunities. The design principles can deliver attractive and desirable places for a variety of people to live and feel they have a long term security and sense of belonging.

5.17 The proposed employment use to the south of the area at the Triangle site provides the opportunity to contribute to the diversity and function of the area in a sustainable way where the development is integrated with residential development. Easy access by bike and for pedestrians must be a fundamental part of development on the Triangle site in order to

ensure access to local jobs is possible. A new bridge over the A308(M) is a key part of creating a movement network by extending the green spine and enabling ease of access to the new employment opportunities for residents and to the Harvest Hill Road Local Centre facilities for workers.

5.18 Braywick Park to the east of the South West Maidenhead area provides opportunities for future residents of Desborough and the wider town to access a wide range of formal and informal leisure and recreation opportunities as well as access to nature. Improved east-west connections across the Braywick Road for pedestrians and cyclists will be key to this area being able to fulfilling its potential.

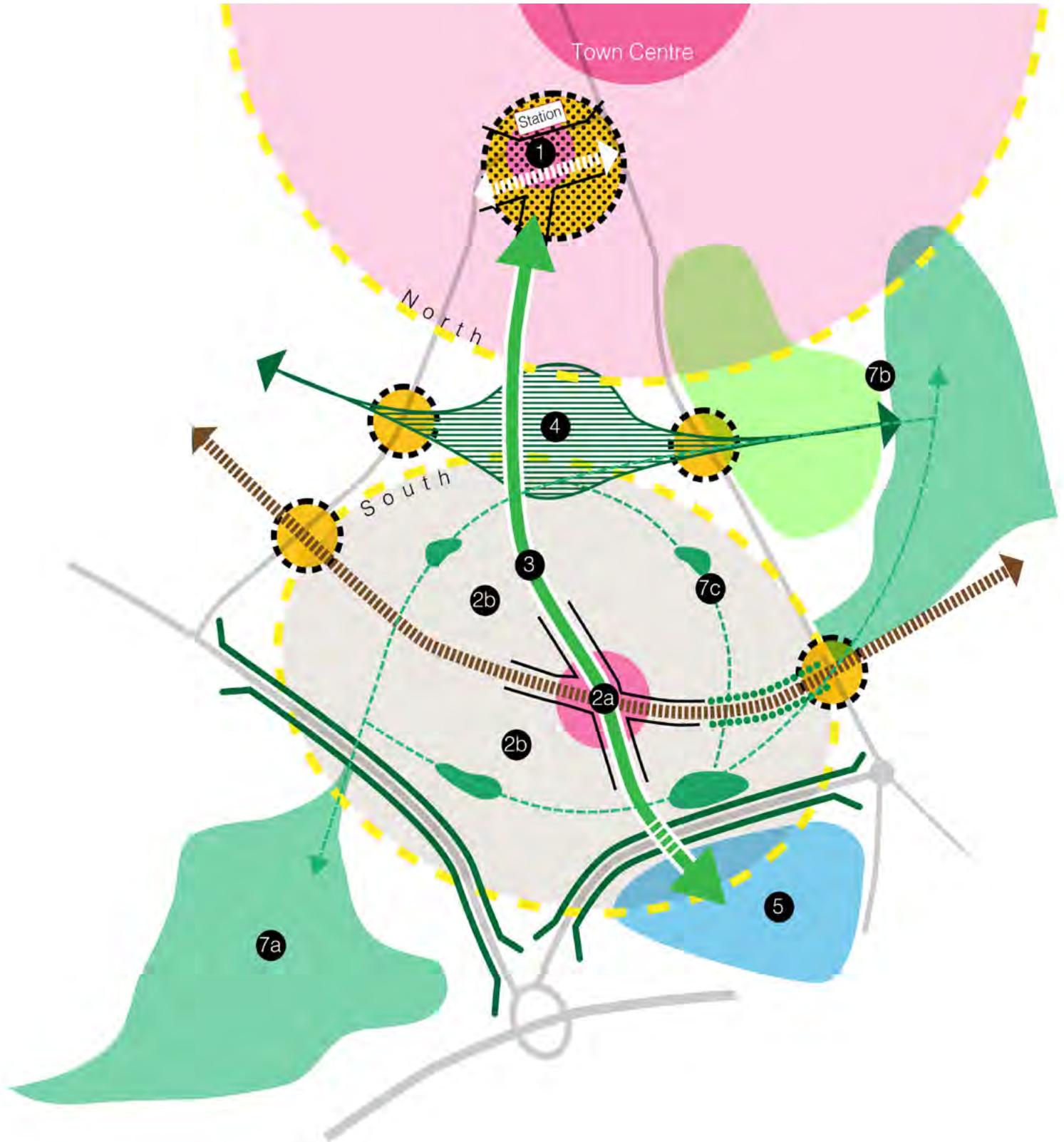


A Green Spine crossroads with Harvest Hill road and other streets and green links.

5.19 Overall, the study area can become a well-connected area using sustainable means of transport and prioritising public transport, pedestrian and cycle movement. The development of the specific allocated sites at the centre of the study area provides the opportunity to create links which have not previously existed and, by so doing, overcome the dominance of vehicular movement outside of the area. Establishing two new neighborhoods in the area provides the opportunity to consolidate residential development within easy reach of existing public transport and the town centre facilities. Embedding sustainable transport and movement into the structure of the place allows for the greatest potential for reduction of car use locally.

5.20 Establishing this new network of green links and pedestrian and cycle routes helps in relieving many of the existing challenges at roads and junctions throughout the study area. Rather than solely relying on piece meal ‘improvements’ to existing highways and junctions aimed at increasing capacity for vehicles and measured by the extent to which the car journey is eased, the approach to transport and movement should be a strategic and pro-active one, ensuring sustainable choices are possible and favoured above other traffic generating options. The overall approach therefore seeks to establish a place where car use is not an inevitability and that quality of life and alternative choices are desirable alternatives.

South West Maidenhead Placemaking Concept Plan



South West Maidenhead Placemaking Concept Plan:



North

The approach to placemaking in the South West area revolves around the creation of two distinct neighbourhoods. In each area new and existing development is drawn together to form a clear sense of place and sustainable function.



South



To the north of the area new development is orientated towards the town centre since available and potential sites are located on the periphery of the town centre and within easy reach of the station.



To the south of the area new development is concentrated around a new local centre and the formation of a new sustainable community. A mixed local centre unites local facilities, a primary and secondary school and higher density residential development to create a vibrant high quality heart to the new neighbourhood.

2b

Areas in the southern neighbourhood outside of the local centre include existing outlying residential areas which contribute to the identity of the neighbourhood and benefit from the proximity of new facilities and improved connections to existing ones, along with new development which is formed around a green structure of connections and spaces.

3

A multi-functioning green spine creates a continuous corridor through the area with the opportunity to provide a new public transport corridor, fast cycle links, safe pedestrian connections and an attractive variety of open space. The green link is designed with a view to becoming the primary route between the new southern community and the town centre and providing a sustainable means of travel, relieving the reliance on the car.

4

The distinction of the two neighbourhoods in the south west area is key to their sustainability as they each create a focus of activity and critical mass around their respective defined centres (the town centre to the north and the Harvest Hill Local Centre to the south). A central green area, combining existing ecological assets, (possibly including Rushington Copse) and new publicly accessible spaces, retaining the existing public right of way, and including measures to increase biodiversity, establishes the distinction between north and south.

5

The site safeguarded for employment and known as 'The Triangle site' has the potential to contribute to the sustainability of the town as a whole and to the identity and functioning of the south west area as a new neighbourhood by providing a range of jobs within easy reach of the new residential neighbourhood. It is important all possibilities to physically link the site across the A308(M) for pedestrians and cyclists are explored in order for the site to function in as sustainable way as possible.



The existing Harvest Hill corridor is the primary vehicular access into and through the area of new development. Improvements to the road, the creation of various junctions and secondary accesses and accompanying development either side of the road will help this become a safe and attractive route retaining and improving important links to the east and the west around the south of Maidenhead. The road should vary in character along its length creating the opportunity to provide green avenues connecting key green assets.



At the north of the site a new link between Shoppenhangers Lane and Braywick Road, facilitated on land in council ownership at the golf course should be explored as an important way of providing an additional vehicular access into the golf course site from the north. This can also facilitate different traffic priorities and environmental improvements around the south of the railway station.



Where east-west connections cross existing highways corridors, improvements to pedestrian and cycle crossings are needed. At the junctions of Harvest Hill Road with Shoppenhangers Road and Braywick Road new junction design must take account of these being the primary vehicular accesses to the new development. All these locations offer the opportunity to create more prominent gateway features through the use of public realm design and street tree planting which help navigation to the new development whether by foot, by bike or by car.

Public open space across the south west area should create an integrated network, drawing together new and existing spaces within a hierarchy and linking them via safe, attractive green routes.

7a

Ockwells Park offers a considerable open space resource. Links across the existing pedestrian bridge should be exploited and the legibility improved by the use of good signage and visible links.

7b

Braywick Park, provides an alternative green route directly into the town centre and safe, legible crossings across Braywick Road should be explored. The Park also hosts the new leisure centre, and important destination for pedestrian and cycle routes, as well a stop on a circular public transport route.

7c

A variety of new open spaces ranging in scale and type should be well distributed throughout the new development, linked by safe, attractive green links and incorporate where possible existing trees and habitats.



Despite the barrier the southern road corridors create for human movement, the planted embankments and margins of the A404 and A308(M) fulfil an important wildlife corridor function as well as contributing to the green identity of the town. These features should be exploited for their benefits alongside the need to find solutions to integrating the area across these barriers.

Triange Site design principles



The Triangle Site, new employment site, Design Principles Key

1. A new pedestrian bridge across the A308(M) has the potential to create a distinctive landmark on the approach into Maidenhead by car. As an extension of the green spine running through the development area it is representative of the green links defining the area and a significant move to reducing the reliance on the car.
2. Extending the principles of the green spine over the A308(M) and into the Triangle site provides the opportunity to integrate public realm within the employment area. In order to establish visual links between the Harvest Hill Local Centre and the Triangle site employment area, the green spine is aligned with the highest part of the Triangle site.
3. The Cut waterway extends through the site and should be retained and enhanced.
4. Pedestrian and cycle links around the outside of development blocks create safe routes around the employment area and help encourage integration with the residential development area to the north by providing accessible and attractive spaces around buildings and appealing places to come and work..
5. The most prominent development on the site will be that which is positioned along the edge of the A308(M). Here, development is on display to passing traffic on its approach into Maidenhead (by car) and therefore has the potential to create a first impression and with a new pedestrian bridge over the A308(M) can form an important gateway to the town. It is therefore important, where employment use is predominantly industrial in type, that any office and ancillary uses included in the employment mix are combined to create taller, higher quality building elevations and are located facing this corridor.
6. Servicing access and HGV bays and turning areas should be enclosed within development blocks and segregated from pedestrian and cycle circulation to ensure safety and a high quality public realm. Car parking may be distributed around the site, in public areas and enclosed within blocks to ensure some activity within public areas. Parking should not dominate the space at the front of buildings however.
7. Existing green edges to the site should be retained and if necessary enhanced to provide a green setting for buildings. This green approach to the town is an important aspect of the town's identity and can be the setting for new employment space on the site despite the potential for industrial type uses.
8. Lower lying areas of the site can be used for accommodating additional tree planting and retaining existing green areas as well providing areas for potential flood attenuation requirements of the site and of the development areas to the north.
9. The edge of the site facing east also has an important role in the approach to Maidenhead from the south along Ascot Road. Efforts should be made to create continuity of frontage along the road corridor with corner buildings creating landmarks in views along Ascot Road.
10. Pedestrian and cycle circulation should be included into and around the site to avoid the site becoming a vehicle only environment. The design of public realm and orientation of buildings will need careful consideration to avoid conflicts between the functional requirements of industrial employment uses and safe and attractive public realm.
11. Development should be arranged so that front entrances and other frontage face outwards onto public areas. The building form should attempt to create continuous building elevations around outside edges of the development in order to clearly segregate public areas from servicing and functional areas.
12. Where new development boundaries with existing residential areas, to the west of the site, development should look to create a relationship with existing development and provide access for existing residents into the new area and links it provides to facilities and green space.

6. Delivery & Implementation:

Introduction

6.1 It is anticipated that the Council will consider the findings of this Placemaking Study alongside the wider evidence base and use it to establish a strong policy basis for the future of the South West Maidenhead area. The inclusion of strategic policies and some form of spatial framework could provide a robust basis for the future planning of the site. It is also important to consider how the site allocations and the area as a whole will progress to the submission of planning applications and onwards to implementation.

6.2 The intention has been to prepare clear, succinct guidance and principles which set out key environmental, social, design and economic requirements of the study area and its constituent sites. Policies defined within the BLP can then provide a sound basis for the preparation of a subsequent Masterplan which could be adopted as Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and for the submission of planning applications.

6.3 National planning guidance and recent reviews of the planning system emphasise the need to think ahead to the delivery of sites including the need to use the planning system in a positive and proactive way, and consider the need for more direct roles in terms of infrastructure funding and scheme delivery.

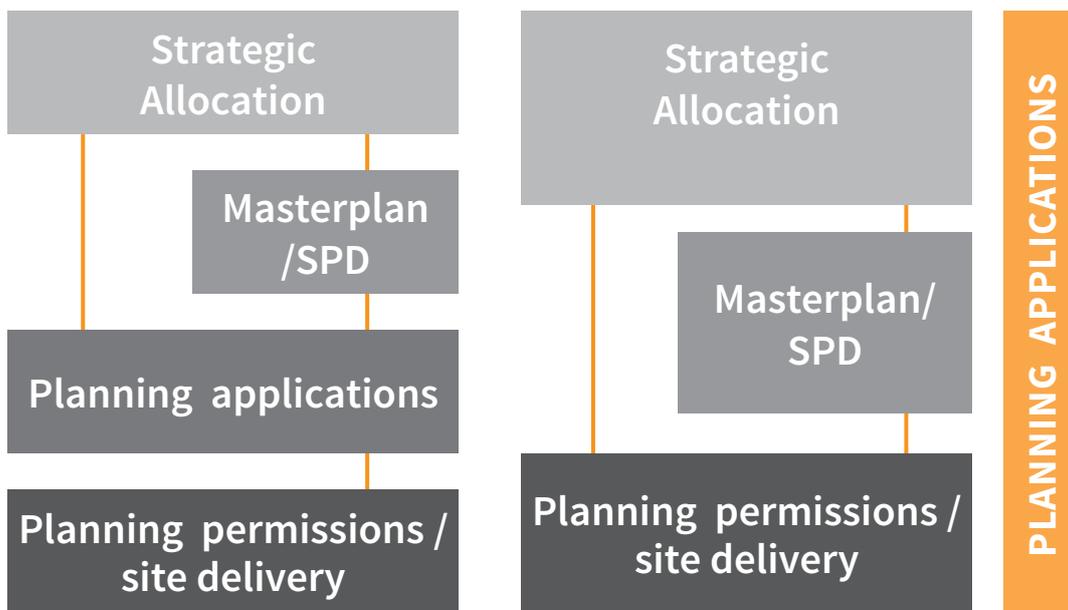
6.4 In order to meet these expectations, it is important for local planning authorities to be prepared to see sites through to delivery, starting by getting the right guidance in place up front. Councils increasingly need to work proactively with landowners and developers to drive forwards site delivery, as is the case with the South West Maidenhead area, where the Council are landowners of a key site, and are seeking funding (via the Housing Infrastructure Fund) to support the delivery process.

Planning

6.5 It is anticipated that any strategic policy for the area will set out a requirement for the preparation and adoption of an area-wide Development Framework SPD prior to the grant of planning permissions on sites within the area in order to ensure a co-ordinated and comprehensive approach to the development. It is recommended that work on the SPD should commence immediately and should take advantage of the placemaking work undertaken as part of this study as well as the vision and concept plans that have been prepared by the landowning interests in the area. The commencement of work on the SPD would provide reassurance to the BLP Inspector as to the Council's commitment to the delivery of the sites and that the preparation of a further level of design guidance will not cause undue delays.

6.6 In terms of the sequencing of the preparation of an SPD, there are two broad approaches as shown below. An SPD can be produced to closely follow on from the BLP, but prior to the submission and consideration of planning applications. Alternatively, an SPD could be produced alongside the preparation of the BLP and planning applications and considered in tandem. The latter approach would be more expedient but involve greater risk should either the SPD or planning applications not come forward in an appropriate manner.

6.7 The successful delivery of the significant development planned for the study area will require commitment to partnership working, sound project management and effective communications. An SPD will need to be led by the Council, but should involve close collaboration with landowners and developers involved with the main sites. It will also be important to reduce delays and uncertainty for developers and local communities in bringing forward proposals for



sustainable development. Effective community and stakeholder engagement will be an important part of the process.

6.8 To support the delivery of high quality and co-ordinated development here, pre-application discussions will be required for any specific proposals and these should be taken forward through the use of Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs) as they are able to provide bespoke ongoing advice through a structured process.

6.9 PPAs can provide an effective mechanism for giving advice to applicants before applications are made, to an agreed project plan and work programme. They provide a framework for the involvement of councillors, the community and relevant partner organisations. They can be used to agree timescales, actions, and resources for handling particular applications and can be used as part of pre-application and application stages, as well as extending through to the post-application stage.

6.10 Nationally local authorities and planning applicants have identified a number of clear advantages for using PPAs. A PPA will deliver clarity, speed, and certainty through the following:

- Early consideration of relevant issues, an agreed approach to the project management and resourcing of a proposed development from

initial inception through to determination and implementation of a planning application(s);

- Better overall management of advice and application processing;
- Identification of key issues at an early stage;
- More realistic and predictable timetables;
- Greater accountability and transparency;
- Improved partnership working;
- Dedicated time to your project to an agreed level; &
- Continuity and consistency in the Council's team.

In addition, PPAs can be used effectively to

- Establish a shared commitment for the development process to be progressed as quickly and efficiently as possible.
- Establish and meet an agreed timetable towards the determination of a planning application in due course and compliance with statutory procedures.

- Set out the appropriate level of engagement with stakeholders.
- Identify determining issues and agree tasks & actions to resolve them.
- Identify, address, and determine the requirements of all necessary planning considerations including accompanying S106 agreement(s) where relevant.

6.11 Outline applications: the Council encourages early dialogue on pre-application proposals. Developers should contact the Council at an early stage with regard to the supporting information that should be submitted with their application.

6.12 Design and Access Statements will be required to accompany planning applications for major developments under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The design principles and components set out in Design and Access Statements for Outline Applications should also be in accordance with policies set out in the BLP and any SPD that may be subsequently prepared for the South West Maidenhead area. The Design and Access Statements should provide the basis for the quality of design to be controlled through subsequent Design Codes and Reserved Matters applications. Applicants would be expected to demonstrate how they have incorporated high standards of design throughout the design evolution process and how these will be carried through to completion and subsequent maintenance.

6.13 Design Codes set out specific rules to guide the nature of the built form, streets and spaces and should be prepared in accordance with the principles of the local policy basis. Design Codes will help to deliver the highest feasible and viable design standards and provide certainty and clarity to developers and other stakeholders about the form of development expected at the detailed stage. They should be prepared in partnership with the Council, local community interests, services providers and other stakeholders.

6.14 It is anticipated that there will be a policy requirement for the preparation of an area-wide

Development Framework SPD which should include a site wide masterplan to show how a comprehensive approach to the area would come forward. The preparation of a masterplan for the whole area will help to deal with complex issues, particularly where different stakeholder's interests may overlap or conflict. Such an approach should

- create a clear vision for an area and address wider planning objectives;
- support co-ordinated, comprehensive and integrated development;
- encourage joint/partnership working;
- ensure physical, social and green infrastructure can support new housing and be phased and provided at the right time;
- test site constraints, capacity and site specific issues in more detail;
- understand viability and equalise costs of development; and
- co-ordinate and support funding and delivery and promote a site to the market/attract investment.

6.15 The emerging Borough-wide Design Guide categorises the development sites in the study area as large sites and seeks a design process that would include the preparation of a vision; concept plan; master and plot plans and community involvement in the preparation of these documents.

6.16 The overall approach going forward is illustrated on the figure overleaf.

Infrastructure Delivery

6.17 The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) submitted with the BLP focusses on the infrastructure required to meet the needs primarily of the largest site - Maidenhead Golf Course. The strategic approach to the development of the wider area and any proposed modifications to the submitted plan to bring forward

	Planning process	Masterplanning process
	Establishing the policy basis	Concept framework
	Site-specific SPD	Masterplan framework – defining key parameters
	Outline planning application	Area focused masterplan
	Post outline (pre consent) design work e.g. design codes	Defining quality in more detail
	Reserved matters applications	Finer, deliverable elements – plot specific

Figure 15: Relationship of planning and masterplanning processes

the Triangle site as a strategic employment location in the current plan period means that a review of the submitted IDP and the needs of the Study Area will be required.

6.18 Whilst the evidence base supporting the BLP as a whole is being updated to reflect potential modifications, the production of a Development Framework SPD should include a specific IDP for the sites within the South West Maidenhead area. Such an approach will need to:

- Identify the full scope of infrastructure required;
- Clarify the location and scale of necessary infrastructure works;
- Set out an approach to phasing of each infrastructure item, including identifying (as appropriate) thresholds and triggers for when certain facilities and measures are required;

- Understand the approach to funding and delivery, including any necessary mechanisms for funding between multiple sites/developments to ensure a fair and equitable approach; and
- Define wider stakeholder roles and responsibilities including requirements relating to third parties such as statutory and/or external bodies, including their approach to funding, planning and delivering any requirements, and mechanism to ensure they can come forward in accordance with the overall development programme.

6.19 A key part of the approach to infrastructure will be to secure suitable agreements between separate landowners as to how infrastructure will be funded and delivered comprehensively. Part of the approach may require a proactive public sector role to coordinate infrastructure funding and delivery, potentially alongside leading with bids for future infrastructure funding should opportunities arise.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Allocated Site Proformas (taken from the submission version BLP)

Site HA6 – Maidenhead Golf Course: Site size is 53.18ha and is allocated for approximately 2,000 residential units on Green Belt land together with educational facilities including primary and secondary schools; strategic public open space, formal play and playing pitch provision; and a multi-functional community hub as part of a Local Centre.

Requirements are:

- Provision of strategic public open space; education facilities, including primary and secondary schools.
- Provision of a Local Centre to include small scale retail services, community facilities, health infrastructure and a local recycling point.
- Rushington Copse is to be retained together with other mature trees and hedgerows where possible. Protected species are to be safeguarded and the design of any development should be done sensitively to conserve biodiversity of the area.
- Vehicular access to the site is to be enhanced, together with the existing Public Right of Way from Clifton Close to Shoppenhangers Road.
- Provide appropriate mitigation measure to address the impact of noise and air quality on Maidenhead Town Centre AQMA.
- Provision of pedestrian and cycle links through the site to provide links between Harvest Hill Road, Shoppenhangers Road, Braywick Road and to National Cycle Route/Green Way.
- Design should consider the impact of long distance views and should be sensitive to existing properties around the site, and the sloping topography.
- The design should take account of the impact of lighting.

- Off-site improvements will be required to enhance access to Braywick Park, together with alterations to Harvest Hill Road to facilitate pedestrian and cycle access across the town

Key considerations are for:

- On-site infrastructure provision and phasing.
- Highways.
- Biodiversity.
- Sloping topography.
- Public Right of Way across the site.
- Low carbon district heating.
- Development intensity.



Site HA7 – Land south of Harvest Hill Road: Site size is 25.58ha with an allocation of approx. 380 dwellings.

Requirements are:

- Retain valuable trees where possible, particularly at site boundaries.
- Retain boundary hedgerows where possible.
- Retain and reinforce the tree landscape buffer to Avoid development in areas at risk of flooding to the south of the site.
- Provide appropriate mitigation measure to address the impact of noise and air quality from the A404(M) and A308(M).
- Provide a tree landscape buffer between the site and the adjoining licensed waste site.

- The site should be designed sensitively to consider the impact of long distance views; enhance the gateway into Maidenhead; conserve and enhance the nearby setting of the listed building and scheduled monument; conserve biodiversity of the area and have regard to the scale and heights of the existing properties on Harvest Hill Road and Kimbers Lane.
- Provide appropriate on-site public open space.
- Off-site improvements to enhance access to Braywick Park.
- Alterations to Harvest Hill Road to facilitate pedestrian and cycle access across the town
- Design to take account of the impact of lighting.

Key considerations are for:

- Vehicular access.
- Biodiversity.
- Trees and hedgerows.
- Character and appearance, particularly from the A404(M), A308(M).
- Heritage.
- Noise and air quality due to proximity to the A404(M), A308(M) and licensed waste site.

Sloping topography.



Site HA8 - Land south of Manor Lane: Site size is 7.32ha with an allocation of approx. 220 dwellings.

Requirements are to :

- Retain valuable trees and boundary hedgerows where possible.
- Retain and reinforce the tree landscape buffer to the A404(M).
- Provide appropriate mitigation measure to address the impact of noise and air quality from the A404(M).
- Provide appropriate on-site public open space.
- The site should be designed sensitively to consider the impact of long distance views; to conserve biodiversity of the area; to be sensitive to the scale and heights of the existing properties on Manor Lane and Kimbers Lane, and those granted planning permission on the former site of Shoppenhangers Manor.
- Provide pedestrian and cycle routes through the site to improve connectivity to the footbridge crossing the A404(M).
- Alterations to Harvest Hill Road to facilitate pedestrian and cycle access across the town.
- Designed to take account of the impact of lighting.

Key considerations are for:

- Vehicular access.
- Biodiversity.
- Trees and hedgerows.
- Noise and air quality due to proximity to the A404(M).
- Sloping topography.

Policy IF6: New Sports and Leisure Development

at Braywick Park The site is located in the Green Belt surrounded on three sides by existing built form. The site is allocated for leisure development to accommodate relocated Magnet Leisure Centre and associated facilities.

APPENDIX B

Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead Local Plan South West Maidenhead (Desborough) Placemaking Report of Workshops held on 3 July 2019

Introduction

Hyas Associates has been commissioned by the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead (RBWM) to prepare a Placemaking Study for South West Maidenhead (Desborough)). A key part of this work is engagement with landowners, key stakeholders and local community interests. Two workshops were held on the 3rd July 2019, the first took place with the landowners of the constituent sites; statutory consultees; RBWM officers and the Lead Member for Planning. The second workshop, brought together individuals and local interest groups from the local community, especially those who made representations on the submitted Borough Local Plan (BLP). Both workshops took place in the Desborough Theatre at Maidenhead Town Hall.

Purpose of workshops

The workshops provided an opportunity to bring together key stakeholders to update them on the work underway to prepare the Placemaking Study ; share the results of the site and baseline analysis to facilitate a discussion to help to inform a vision and set of objectives. Given the importance of taking a co-ordinated and comprehensive approach to the planning of the area, a key aim of the workshops was to benefit from local knowledge and inform a suitable approach. A summary of the outputs from the workshops is included earlier in this report as part of the explanation and background evidence for the development of the Placemaking Study.

Approach to engagement

When working with stakeholders on the vision and objectives for a large scale development, the process would ideally start at the early stages of plan making to develop consensus and bring partners along with the evolution of the policy and plans. As the Council are considering potentially new policy as proposed modifications to the submitted BLP, this engagement has, by necessity, had to take place at a much later stage and have regard to the context set by the existing available evidence base and approach as set by the submitted version of the BLP.



Workshop 1 for Landowners/ key consultees

13:30–16:30, 3rd July 2019
Venue – Desborough Theatre, Town Hall

Aims and Purpose

The main aim of the workshop was to:

- Provide participants with a brief update on the current status of the Borough Local Plan examination;
- Identify and discuss some of the key issues and matters arising from the Reg 20 representations, to consider their implications for both the preparation of a Placemaking Study for the South West Maidenhead area and any future BLP examination hearings;
- Set out some initial thoughts on the site constraints and opportunities for place-making; &
- Generate discussion on possible elements of a vision and objectives for creating a high quality, sustainable new community in this area.

The agenda for the session was structured to deliver the aims set out above:

1. Welcome and introduction (Cllr Coppinger and Hyas).
2. Current Planning Policy Context (Jennifer Jackson, Head of Planning, RBWM).

3. Issues Arising from Reg 20 Responses (Diane Webber, Hyas).
4. Introduction to the site context, constraints and opportunities (David Hawes, Hyas).
5. Group Activity: Elements of Sustainable Communities (All).
6. Feedback & Summary of Discussions (All).
7. Next steps and close (Cllr Coppinger and Hyas).

Outputs

Discussions around Items 2 and 3 on the agenda (current policy context and the Regulation 20 responses summary) raised points in relation to the following matters:

- **The summary of regulation 20 responses didn't mention the importance of delivery of employment land (and in particular the Triangle site).** This point was acknowledged - the summary of the Reg 20 representations as presented had focused on place making matters primarily rather than site specific issues, but the comprehensive analysis of the representations had covered the employment issues.
- **Where are we in terms of sequential test (flooding) and will the outcome of that work impact upon the overall strategy?** The Council responded with a brief update as to the progress of this and other evidence work for the BLP and its implications for the plan strategy and forthcoming stage 2 of the examination hearings.
- **The Ockwells lozenge isn't in the plan?** Ockwells is identified as a park and local nature reserve in Policy IF4 of the BLP.
- **The plan will deliver the employment needs of the**

Borough rather than just SWM through the Triangle site allocation. Noted

- **Has the above been factored in to the traffic modelling?** An update to the BLP transport assessment work is being undertaken to review changes to allocated sites.
- **Will the Placemaking Study address the latest climate change issues?** The work will be considering how to deliver a high quality and sustainable new development that takes advantage of its location within the existing urban area and access to strategic public transport routes.
- **The need to provide access to Ockwells Park for cyclists.** Noted.

For the Group activity, the components of sustainable communities were presented using the Excellence Framework originally devised by Inspire East. Groups were asked to consider each of the three elements of Social, Economic and Environmental sustainability in turn and a feedback discussion was held after each one.

Social Sustainability

Who will live here?

- All sectors of the community – a need for starter homes; for downsizers and retirement accommodation.
- All tenures of housing and affordable housing required.
- Implications of higher densities that will be required to deliver the numbers of homes planned in the BLP – what might density mean for housing types?
- Concerns raised on lower densities on the edge of the allocated sites as these are more at risk from noise and air pollution from adjoining strategic road corridors and a hard urban environment.

- Site HA7 presents a green entrance to the town and this is likely to be maintained due to noise issues.

Services needed?

- Services: schools; health; community spaces; small scale food and beverage.
- Local employment opportunities presented by the Triangle site.
- Current deficits in education provision – there may be a need for additional education provision on other sites (other than that being planned for site HA6).
- Deficits in health provision.
- Deficits in B class employment development.
- Value of biodiversity to residents and their health & wellbeing – connecting people and nature.

Barriers to social sustainability?

- Key issue is connectivity (or lack of) within the area and to surrounding areas.
- Cycle routes across the A308 needed to overcome barriers - A308 presents challenges for pedestrian and cycle access/ crossing points.
- Links to new leisure centre need to be easy by means other than the car.
- Improve Braywick roundabout
- Coordinated approach to public transport needed throughout.
- Enable ease of movement through and within site to provide ease of access to services.
- Importance of biodiversity connections for flora and fauna, especially from the south to the north of the area.

Economic Sustainability

Where will people work?

- Changing working patterns and need for co-working space.
- Harvest Hill Road currently lightly trafficked and could be used by pedestrians and cyclists.
- Issue for the Triangle site which is bordered by three strategic road corridors, making crossing points a key challenge to enable connectivity by means other than the car.
- Incidental employment opportunities will arise in the new development
- More traditional B class floorspace is required and there is an opportunity to meet these needs on the Triangle site.
- Triangle site deliverable and available for development with excellent connectivity by road, rail and Crossrail – new developments need to plug into the strategic roads (A308/A404/M4).
- The scale of housing development proposed here is approaching ‘new settlement scale’ and these people will need employment opportunities. The area should be expected to meet its jobs need which will enhance vibrancy.
- Failing to provide services and facilities on site will mean people having to travel elsewhere.
- Concern that higher density development will be less attractive to people – although counter argument made that there is a demand for flats, particularly from the younger generation.
- The development itself – likely to generate construction jobs. Large scale development brings with it benefits of economies of scale and innovative construction methods.
- Opportunities to use the local workforce and develop skills through apprenticeship partnerships with local colleges.

How will people travel to work?

- Locate residential developments close to the town centre - the ‘Maidenhead Mile’ on site HA6

(but could extend to link to the other housing and employment allocations to the south) provides a well-designed, high quality walking and vehicular route north-south encouraging residents to walk or cycle to the town centre and railway station.

- The Triangle site would benefit from a co-ordinated public transport system – a looped bus route(s) should be extended into the employment site.
- Issue of congestion potential – increasing time to travel to the railway station; but there is a unique opportunity here with the northern part of the site being so close to the town centre.

Environmental Sustainability

Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure (GI):

- **Habitats – connections/corridors support biodiversity; retain existing habitat eg bat runs etc on development sites.**
- **Net gain of biodiversity – looking at individual parcels on sites or look across the whole SWM development area for net gain? A key issue for biodiversity is the lack of connectivity between areas of habitat across the study area.**
- **The Cut provides opportunities for wildlife and biodiversity corridor. Opportunity for sensitive realignment in the Triangle site to enhance the setting of the Scheduled Ancient Monument.**
- **Improve links to Ockwells, but also look for smaller scale biodiversity gain integrated within developments.**
- **Existing Green Infrastructure (GI) at the southern end of the study area serves an important function at the entrance to Maidenhead – providing a green entrance to the town. The wooded areas could be included and retained in any development.**
- **Areas of ancient woodland on golf course need to be respected.**

- Note that Wild Maidenhead have carried out species/ habitat surveys across the town;
- Important relationship between people and nature.
- Biodiversity enhancements can be included as small scale interventions in individual buildings. Added value if there is an accompanying educational package for new residents.
- Combine surface water attenuation and biodiversity for added value.

Sustainable Travel

- Integrate electric car charging/ car clubs etc to promote more sustainable travel choices.
- Enhance cycling/walking routes - reduce reliance on Shoppenhangers and Braywick Roads.

Energy & Utilities

- Maidenhead-wide there are questions of the capacity of utilities and services given the cumulative scale of development in the BLP.
- Opportunities for local energy generation and energy efficient buildings on site.
- Discussion around the market for energy efficiency homes – has a tipping point yet been reached, where buyers are expressing a preference for eco-friendly/ energy efficient homes? Overall the view was that this point has not been reached as affordability of homes in this area is so difficult, buyers have other priorities although it was recognised that energy efficient properties are attractive due to lower living costs.
- Delivery at scale enables efficiency in building methods, making energy efficient features more cost-effective.
- There was a concern that energy efficient buildings are more expensive to build and may not meet other requirements to deliver more homes to meet the needs in the BLP. Wariness of competition with other housebuilders on other sites in the area who may not

be required to build to the same high standards. High standards of design/ energy efficiency etc should therefore apply borough-wide.

Place-making

Seeking to deliver confidence that an attractive place can be created here; one that is attractive and has its own, Unique Selling Point (USP) relative to the rest of Maidenhead, making it a place where people will want to live.

Summary of Discussions & Conclusions

Connectivity, or the lack of it, particularly on an east-west axis both within the study area and to the wider Maidenhead area was highlighted throughout the discussions, with a focus not just on connectivity for travel (especially by cyclists and pedestrians) but also for biodiversity, with the need to improve links to and between existing areas of open space and habitats highlighted.

The proposed north-south ‘Maidenhead Mile’ in the CALA Homes vision for the Golf Course Site HA6 presents an opportunity to address some of the connectivity issues, with the potential to extend its southern reach into the housing allocations HA7 and 8 and to the Triangle site.

There was recognition that there could be benefits from looking at the three housing allocations as a whole, especially in terms of delivering a net gain in biodiversity, but also in ensuring that the location of key facilities such as the new primary and secondary schools benefitted the wider community. The benefits of taking a comprehensive and co-ordinate approach to place-making in this area if significant new development were acknowledged.

Given the scale of development proposed for the study area in the BLP allocations, it was acknowledged that the design and character of this growth area would, by necessity, be different from the ‘traditional’ Maidenhead

approach. There was, however, some concern that the costs associated with designing and building to a higher specification could make it difficult for the area to compete with other new build developments in the area which were not subject to the same standards. Whilst there are risks in this, overall there was recognition that the opportunity exists to deliver something different and attractive to the market.

Workshop 2 for Community Interests

18:30–21:00, 3rd July 2019
Venue – *Desborough
Theatre, Town Hall*

Aims and Purpose

The main aim of the workshop was to:

- provide participants with a brief update on the current status of the Borough Local Plan examination.
- Generate discussion on possible elements of a vision and objectives for creating a high quality, sustainable new community in this area.
- Set out some initial thoughts on the site constraints and opportunities for place-making, and
- Encourage participants to take part in the Placemaking process, to consider how and where to accommodate the development proposed in the BLP on the allocated sites.

The agenda for the session was structured to deliver the aims set out above:

1. Welcome and introduction (Cllr Coppinger and Hyas).
2. Current Planning Policy Context (Jennifer Jackson, Head of Planning, RBWM).

3. Group Activity: Elements of Sustainable Communities (Led by Hyas).
4. Introduction to the site context, constraints and opportunities (David Hawes, Hyas).
5. Group Activity - spatial analysis and masterplanning (All).
6. Feedback (All).
7. Next steps and close (Hyas).

Outputs

Group Activity 1 – Elements of Sustainable Communities

Hyas presented a number of slides on the key components of sustainable communities. Using the Excellence Framework which was originally developed by Inspire East (then part of the East of England Development Agency) to support the development of high quality places.

Eight elements of sustainable communities were presented, including Connectivity and Movement; Housing and Services, to provide participants with the context for the study area and examples of how a more sustainable approach could be adopted. Participants were invited to capture their thoughts on each of the 8 elements on sticky notes, with issues/challenges on pink notes and opportunities on yellow. The notes were then shared with the wider group and collected under each topic.

As noted in the Approach to Engagement earlier in this report, the work is to prepare a placemaking approach to the study area that takes into account the context set by the BLP, particularly the proposed housing, employment and other allocations of relevance. Many of the participants have objected to the loss of the green belt land at the golf course and other housing sites proposed in the submitted BLP and would prefer to see an alternative strategic approach to development, potentially in the

form of a satellite settlement in the green belt and countryside to the south of the town. These objections were acknowledged at the start of the workshop but participants were asked to set aside their objections for the evening and to contribute their ideas as to the planning of a high quality and sustainable place.

Transport & Connectivity Issues:

Connections:

- Connectivity in south Maidenhead is poor – solutions need to take into account restricted Thames crossings.
- Railway bridges are a constraint. There is also congestion at the railway station.
- The railway provides excellent east-west connections, but north-south journeys depend on the car.
- Connectivity of the River Thames, York Stream and town centre is poor – opportunities exist to improve this situation.
- A second river crossing is needed to alleviate congestion and avoid the risk of a Marlow Road accident.

Infrastructure capacity:

- Congestion. Bypass needed to avoid the town centre and reduce congestion.
- Infrastructure capacity is an issue already.
- Future transport ideas seem to require road space, but the current roads are limited in width with little opportunity to widen them – the proposed housing numbers on the golf course would leave little room for ‘new ideas’. Few opportunities to improve traffic ‘throughput’ through the town.
- No bus lanes in Maidenhead presently.
- Concern that residents from the large scale housing development in Bracknell will want to

access Crossrail in Maidenhead, worsening existing congestion.

- The high level of development is being planned for a town whose infrastructure is already inadequate, with no space to address the deficiencies. Pushing most of the facilities and employment out of the town centre will exacerbate this.
- Maidenhead is facing 45% increase in population as a result of the BLP proposals, infrastructure solutions are needed before the development takes place.
- Where will funding for transformative transport solutions come from? Nothing appears to be allocated for this in the current IDP.
- Braywick roundabout capacity.

Impact of proposed development:

- What assumptions are being made in terms of the number of cars per home and what will the parking standards be? Will every house have parking for 2 cars?
- How much new traffic is expected from the development?
- Where are the entrances to the sites?
- How will traffic from the development access the M4?
- How will traffic on Harvest Hill Road access the A308?
- New bus routes into the site will be needed, but question the ability of existing roads to accommodate bus lanes.
- Roads in the area are already overloaded at peak times.
- A308 is not fit for purpose – busy and narrow; cycle lane is too narrow as it shares a narrow footpath. Traffic is already overloaded.
- Lack of a central transport hub.
- Examples provided from Harlow and Milton Keynes where infrastructure is c 50 years old, whereas Maidenhead is 100 years old and solutions are more difficult to come by.

Challenges:

- Ideas for alternative modes of transport are too optimistic – nothing to date has succeeded in persuading people to switch away from car use in this area – 70% of journeys are by car according to DoT statistics.
- At 1.38 cars per household, the new developments would result in 5,800 cars on the roads.
- Bus services limited and last bus is too early in the day – can services be extended?
- Consider access for all parts of society - eg older people may not be able to/want to use cycles.

Opportunities:

- Tram route, linking Windsor and Maidenhead and onward to link to the Marlow branch line.
- Good opportunity to remove cars from the station concourse to improve pedestrian access to and from the station.
- An integrated transport hub at the railway station to enable linking of journeys by modes other than the private car – redevelop sites in the town centre to provide this
- Widening the focus for this study would increase the potential for transport solutions, for example provide a new platform at Cox Green station (on the old airfield sidings site) would create more capacity for the Elizabeth line and metro service. Also extending Westacott Way south of the business park west of the airfield could link with the truncated southern end of Cherry Tree Lane.
- Park and Ride at Junction 8/9 for Crossrail/ rail passengers.
- The site offers at 21st century opportunity for the next phase of the growth and expansion of Maidenhead.
- Deliver free and/or frequent public transport.

Housing & the Built Environment

Issues:

- Town Centre AAP promotes high rise apartments. Locally expressed need is for family accommodation – 3/4/5 bedrooms – will these be provided?
- Risk of too many flats changing the character of the town.
- Risk of over development driven by top-down housing targets.
- Family houses needed with gardens, not high-rise flats.
- Anticipated density of development is considered to be inappropriate on the edge of town, and should be appropriate to the surrounding area – apartments should not be more than 5 storeys high.
- Disperse polluted air by providing green spaces in every development
- Building on the green belt is impacting the ‘green village’ feel of the area.

Challenges:

- How to ensure that communal space is not used for anti-social activities?
- Need for joined up planning – infrastructure first.
- Deliver improvements to sewerage and water infrastructure to cope with the increased demand from new development.
- Build outwards rather than upwards.
- Provide communal green spaces in every development. Take advantage of existing green spaces such as the golf course to create an attractive living environment.
- Provide truly affordable social housing, not just shared ownership.
- All new development must include integrated

parking (at realistic standards)

- Make Maidenhead a sanctuary for those wanting to escape the congestion of London.
- What about existing housing stock? Can this be upgraded?

Opportunities:

- Deliver more self-build opportunities.
- Build terraces/ crescents to replicate the look of Bath/ Cheltenham.
- Provide safe cycle routes along roads.
- Deliver a mix of dwelling types to enhance Maidenhead's reputation as a pleasant green place to live.
- Provide more green spaces and plant trees to absorb pollution from traffic. Consider ecology in new buildings.
- Link green spaces together.
- Build environmentally friendly homes - solar power; insulation etc.
- Encourage smaller builders to deliver homes here.

Environment

Issues:

- There are no green areas in the town centre where pollution levels are worst.
- Need to think through heavy truck movements through the town – potential to use the river/ waterways. Proposed development is on areas prone to flooding.
- Wind turbines are an eyesore and unsafe in urban areas.
- Risk of loss of existing vistas – eg view of golf course trees as currently seen from Braywick Park.
- Facing the irreversible destruction of the golf course and its ancient trees etc.

- Higher densities will result in surface water run-off & flooding problems.

Challenges:

- Reduce air pollution by building outwards rather than upwards

Opportunities:

- Create a new forest on the golf course.
- Make the most of the Waterway corridor
- Consider examples from elsewhere to create a feeling of space in new development.

Services

Issues:

- Travel to school needs to be by walking/cycling or public transport.
- 25% of school age children resident in Maidenhead do not attend a local school.

Challenges:

- Ensure services are provided to meet the needs of a growing elderly population.

Opportunities:

- Locate new schools on the edge of town to serve surrounding areas as well?
- Relocate some town centre uses (such as the Town Hall) to reduce car parking demands and congestion.
- Relocate the sewage works and recycling centre out of the town centre and replace with other services.

Economy

Opportunities:

- Deliver superfast fibre to facilitate home working.

Social & Cultural

Issues:

- Existing commercial and industrial areas are under pressure from the Town Centre AAP, to be re-designated for residential development, eg Reform Road – this reduces employment opportunities locally.
- No point in having an affordable home if you can't get to work due to road congestion and the poor bus service.
- Loss of golf course and its public amenity – need for leisure and social amenities.

Opportunities:

- Demolish the Town Hall and turn it into a cultural zone with open spaces and cultural centres.
- Provide shops/pubs within new housing developments to enable people to walk there, rather than have to use the car.

Governance

Issues:

- Sources of funding for new services and infrastructure? What will be the role of the Community Infrastructure Levy, as the area is zero rated?
- Great concern of loss of Green Belt

Equity

Issues:

- Housing mix is enforced- a result of top down targets.
- What is meant by affordable housing or social housing?

Challenges:

- Deliver homes that address social housing needs.
- Affordable housing – what is affordable to one person is not to another.

Opportunities:

- Provide self-build opportunities

Anything else?

Participants were invited to contribute any other points that they felt had not been addressed in the previous discussions:

- Maintain existing green spaces to give improved lifestyles and accessibility to nature.
- Encourage local initiatives by listening to focus groups and responding.
- Lack of alternatives to the development in the study area in the BLP – would prefer a new village in the Great Park with new transport links. The only way to achieve the required housing numbers and provide the necessary infrastructure would be a new settlement/village.
- What is the envisaged 'boundary' of Maidenhead for public transport purposes?
- The only way to achieve the housing numbers is to build high.
- No infrastructure - concerned would result in gridlock.
- Difficulty of building higher densities and retaining the character of Maidenhead, but, equally, lower density developments may make it difficult to fund/justify provision of the social/cultural facilities necessary to support a sustainable community.
- A new access and bus station should be provided linked to the railway station as part of an integrated

multi-modal transport hub.

- Higher density terraced houses would be preferable to flats.
- The Council has a financial interest in the area, more houses = more money for the Council.
- Strong opposition to any development from existing residents.
- BLP uses Green Belt land; Bray Parish Council wants to retain green gaps between settlements – evidence for this provided in the Bray Parish Plan, 2011-2016.

Summary of Key Points

A key concern is that of traffic and congestion. Participants noted existing problems of connectivity to and within Maidenhead which were exacerbated by the limitations of existing River Thames crossings and the barrier effect of the railway line.

Whilst appreciating that there may be opportunities for the new development to support and enable modal shift, there were concerns that the existing road infrastructure especially the Shoppenhangers and Braywick Road corridors were narrow and constrained by existing development, and, as a result, would not easily lend themselves to adaptation for bus lanes or other features.

Given the concerns around the existing capacity of the roads and other infrastructure, participants were clear that the infrastructure deficit should be addressed before new development comes forward. Possible new transport interventions suggested included the creation of a multi-modal transport interchange in the railway station area, enabling the interchange from one mode of transport to another; and the creation of a park and ride at Junction 8/9 to reduce car borne traffic into Maidenhead from the south.

On Housing, there was a strong reference expressed for more family housing, rather than flats and apartments which are already being developed in the town centre. High densities which are likely to be necessary in order

to deliver the BLP housing numbers were felt to be too high relative to the existing character of the area and were considered to be indicative of the fact that too much development was being proposed for the sites. Development was, though, seen to offer opportunities for more self-build homes and developments by smaller builders as well as to deliver a mix of housing types and tenures to widen choice in the local market.

The open green space provided by the golf course, whilst not offering full public access, was, nevertheless regarded as a key green lung within the centre of Maidenhead and its loss was a matter of great concern to participants.

In terms of services and facilities, suggestion included the redevelopment of some of the existing public facilities such as the sewage works/ recycling centre and the Town Hall, for more town centre housing and to relocate these to new sites outside the urban area. Redevelopment of the sewage works site was suggested multiple times as a new housing site which, if developed, could reduce the number of homes required for the sites in the study area. The need for the new development to include some local services to meet the day to day needs of residents was highlighted as this would help to reduce the need for people to travel by car to access such facilities elsewhere.

Group Activity 2 – Spatial Analysis

To introduce this activity, there was a presentation of the site analysis slides to identify some of the key constraints and opportunities.

Working in individual groups, participants were provided with an OS map base of the Study Area and an aerial photograph of the same area, together with a bag of tiles coloured to depict different land uses, including homes, schools, and open space. The number of tiles provided represented the total quantum of development to be accommodated on the three housing site allocations in the BLP.

Participants were invited to distribute the tiles according to what they considered the most appropriate location for each land use. In order to accommodate the planned

scale of development they had to stack tiles to create developments of several storeys and one of the aims of the exercise was to encourage them to consider where taller buildings would be best located.

Overall, there was a reluctance from many participants to take part as they considered that they did not have

sufficient information to enable them to undertake the task and generally did not support the principle of accommodating the scale of development on the site. All groups of participants did, however, place some tiles and produced layouts with varying levels of detail. Some of the layouts are shown below.



- Local Centre and schools located either side of Harvest Hill Road.
- Green space retained on the Golf Course
- Housing placed on the current sewage works site and recycling centre (which participants in the earlier discussion had suggested relocating and redeveloping) .
- Residential development also located along the railway line to provide good access to public transport for commuters.
- Further residential development south of Ockwells, adjacent to the M4.

- Mixed residential and open space on golf course site and land south of Harvest Hill Road.
- Local centre and schools located along Harvest Hill Road.
- Development on the sewage works site as above.



- Higher rise development to the northern end of the golf course site recognising proximity to the town centre and railway station.
- New bus station and hub indicated around railway station.
- Development on sewage works
- Schools located on golf course site on an east-west access route across the site with new roundabouts indicated on Braywick and Shoppenhangers Road.
- Park and ride shown on Triangle site.
- Housing and green space throughout golf course site and housing along Harvest Hill Road and Manor Road/Kimbers Lane.
- Green space along motorways

Conclusions

Given the expressed concern and reluctance of many participants to take part in the second group exercise, it is difficult to draw clear conclusions. Nevertheless, a few points emerged

- There was a consensus amongst participants that the scale of development proposed in the BLP and for the Golf Course site in particular, was too much and comprised over-development. Participants were unclear as to the reasons for current anticipated housing numbers.
- There were indications of a desire to see the re-use of existing development land such as at the sewage works/recycling centre and in the town centre along the railway line.
- The proximity of the northern part of the golf course site was used to locate higher rise development by one group.
- There was a strong desire to retain green space particularly on the golf course.
- A Park and Ride site was suggested for the Triangle land to reduce car-borne traffic into Maidenhead from the south.
- The location of the schools and local centre varied with a couple of groups locating them along Harvest Hill Road and another suggesting a site further to the north but with connections east and west for ease of access for children from surrounding areas.



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