

Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan: Part 1

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Editor's Notes unresolved: 18

Maps missing: 6.1-1, 10.1-1, about 20 in Table 10.2-1

Maps to be updated: 1.1-2, 4.1-1, 9.1-1, 9.1-2, 9.2-1, 9.2-2

FOREWORD

We are delighted to introduce the Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan (2024-2039) and to commend it to you for approval. It is based on the aspirations of Maidenhead's residents who want their town to become a vibrant and resilient place to live and work in the twenty-first century.

In the absence of a Town Council for the seven unparished wards of Maidenhead, the Plan was put together by the volunteers of Maidenhead Neighbourhood Forum, and we would like to thank all of them for their hard work. We would also like to thank the many Members and Supporters who have encouraged and helped us over the period of development.

At the beginning of 2020, when this Plan was first being put together, Maidenhead was the only part of RBWM without a designated Neighbourhood Plan either in place or in development. And yet 40% of borough's growth is projected to take place here, so a Neighbourhood Plan is clearly essential.

Our Plan cannot override the Borough Local Plan adopted by the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead (RBWM) or the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). But it can add detail and fill policy gaps where those sources are silent, and if the Plan is adopted it will have equal weight in planning decisions with the Borough Local Plan and other council policies. Inspectors will also be required to take into account the Neighbourhood Plan when deciding on appeals against planning refusals. We are confident it will become a force to shape the long term character of Maidenhead over the next fifteen years in tandem with those other planning sources and the RBWM Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

Not every topic of Planning Policy is covered in this Plan (for example, economic development), and this is because it is primarily based on the issues which residents put forward at the start of the consultation process in 2023.

The general view in the town is that the historic charm and character of Maidenhead has been spoilt in many respects by brutal demolitions and poor planning decisions in the later 20th century. Our vision for the town, based on wider feedback from people who live and work here, is included in Section 3, and our hope is that this Neighbourhood Plan can play its part in moving Maidenhead towards a future which is better planned, more resilient and a more pleasant place to live.

The Borough Local Plan and Infrastructure Delivery Plan are silent on how some of these issues are to be addressed and in order to provide an insight from residents who have contributed to the activities of the Neighbourhood Forum as to how some of these critical structural issues facing the Town should be considered in the future, our vision for Maidenhead in 2039 may be included.

Best regards,

Andrew Ingram and Ian Rose

Co-Chairs of Maidenhead Neighbourhood Forum

Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan.

For more information on Neighbourhood Plans, please visit the [Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead website pages on Neighbourhood Planning.](#)

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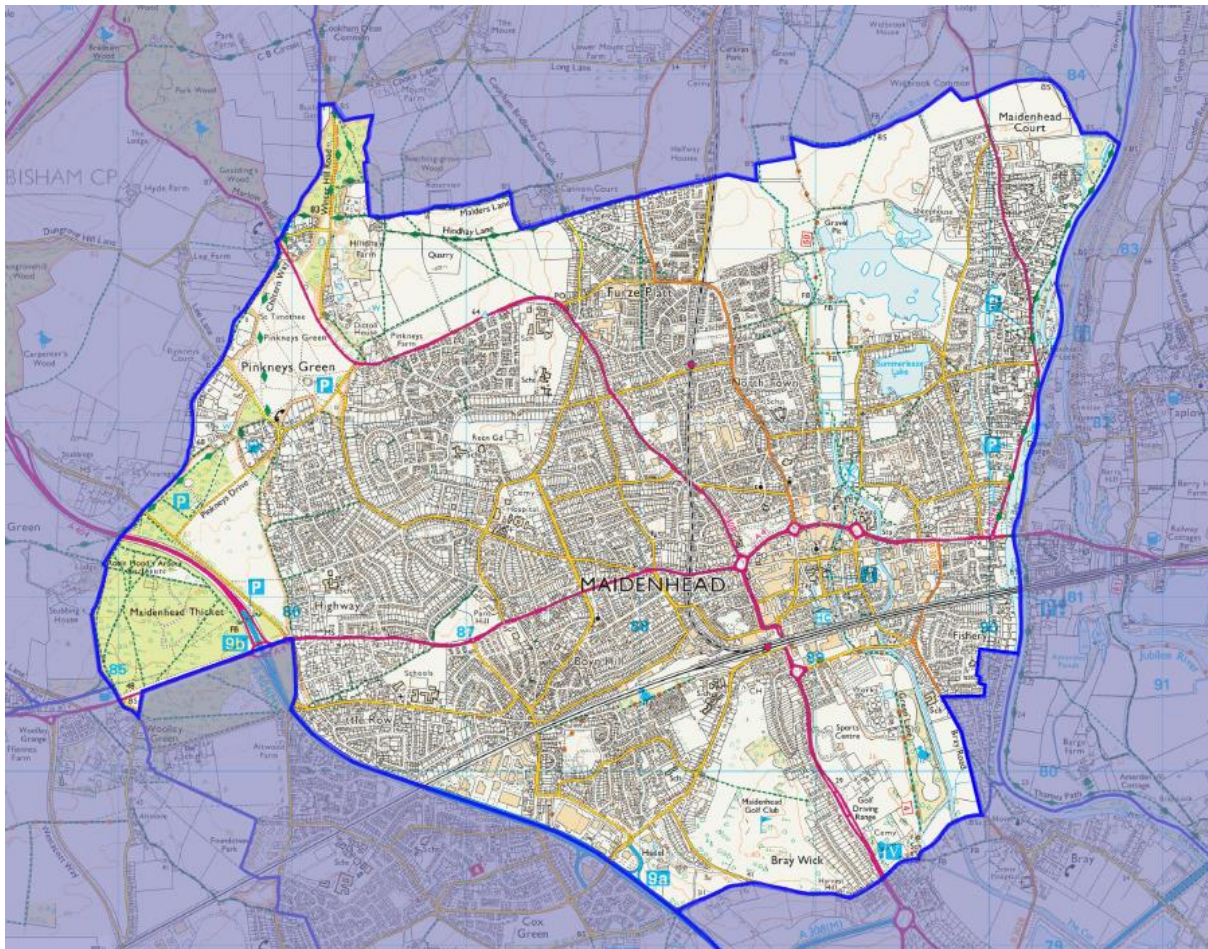
SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION TO MAIDENHEAD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

List of Policies

DE-1	Design principles - Town centre
DE-2	Design principles – Character Areas
DE-3	Liveable buildings
HO-1	Affordable Housing
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GA-1	Cycling, Walking and Bus Routes
GA-2	Parking and cycle storage
GA-3	Public Transport Interchange
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BH-3	Setting of Heritage Assets
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BI-1	Green and Blue Corridors
BI-2	Sustainable Drainage Systems
BI-3	Biodiversity net gain
BI-4	Urban Greening
SS-1	Waterway Corridor
SS-2	Local Green Spaces

1.1 Introduction

The Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan Area



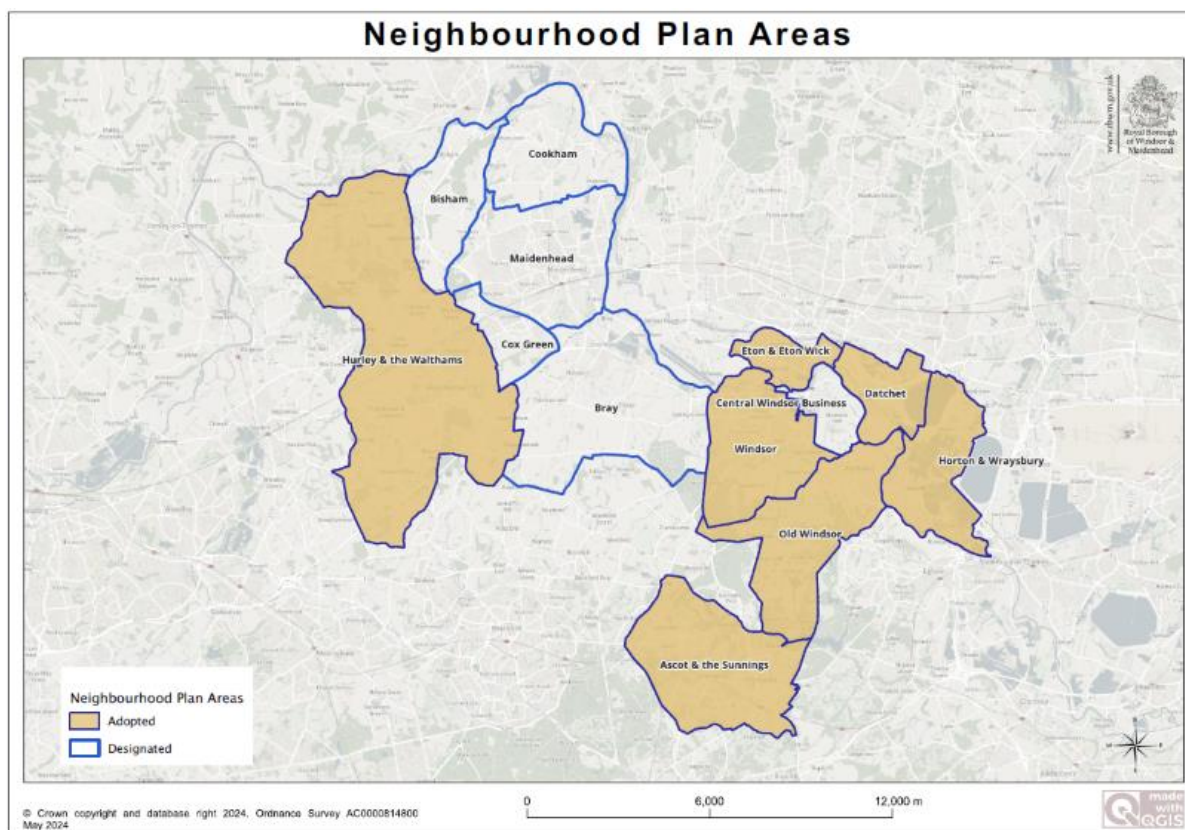
Map 1.1-1 Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan area

The Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan area consists of the 7 wards of Belmont, Boyn Hill, Furze Platt, Oldfield, Pinkneys Green, Riverside and St Mary's (which includes the town centre).

Editor's note: If time permits may add Ward boundaries to map 1.1-1

Adjoining Neighbourhood Plan Areas

Many areas of the Royal Borough are progressing Neighbourhood Plans, each at different stages. The currently adopted or designated Neighbourhood Plan areas are shown on Map 1.1-2.



Map 1.1-2 Other surrounding RBWM designated Neighbourhood Plan areas

1.2 Planning Context.

What the Neighbourhood Plan can and can't do

The Neighbourhood Plan must be compatible with higher level planning policy such as the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) [Part 2, 1.1] and the Borough Local Plan (BLP) [Part 2, 2.1].

Each policy in this Plan therefore contains a paragraph on planning policy context.

The Neighbourhood Plan can include policies that influence the type of development on the allocated sites, and policies about redevelopment of existing sites. It can for example designate local green spaces and identify corridors which connect them, but it should not aim to prevent development on sites identified in the BLP.

Larger infrastructure projects such as roads, public transport, the provision of public services, education and major land-use decisions defined as “strategic” are outside the scope of a Neighbourhood Plan and should be addressed by the Infrastructure Delivery Plan [Part 2, 2.10] which forms part of the BLP. More local transport needs such as cycle routes and footpaths are within scope.

The Plan does not itself initiate ideas for infrastructure or development; rather it contains a set of policies which guide proposals, and against which proposals can be assessed.

As the BLP aims to meet the housing target and employment land need, the Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate any additional sites for development.

1.3 Infrastructure and developer contributions

A high level Borough Infrastructure Delivery Plan [Part 2, 2.10] has been developed by RBWM to support the Borough Local Plan. With nearly half of growth targeted at Maidenhead, significant infrastructure spend in and around the town will be required.

Decisions on infrastructure spending are currently decided wholly at RBWM level, with the priorities, locations and targeted improvement projects decided by councillors and officers. Once a Neighbourhood Plan is in place for a designated area, then the community itself should be able to influence how 25% of all CIL collected from developments in their area will be spent. Maidenhead is however unparished and does not have a Town Council, so the influence is limited as described in the extracts below:

Figure: relationship between the levy and neighbourhood plans in England

Parish council	Neighbourhood plan	Levy
✓	✓	25% uncapped, paid to parish each year
✓	X	15% capped at £100/dwelling (indexed for inflation), paid to parish each year
X	✓	25% uncapped, local authority consults with community about how funds can be used, including to support priorities set out in neighbourhood plans
X	X	15% capped at £100/dwelling (indexed for inflation), local authority consults with community to agree how best to spend the neighbourhood funding

Paragraph: 145 Reference ID: 25-145-20190901

Revision date: 01 09 2019

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Where there is no parish or town council, who receives the neighbourhood portion?

Communities without a parish or town council can still benefit from the neighbourhood portion. If there is no parish or town council, the charging authority will retain the levy receipts but should engage with the communities where development has taken place and agree with them how best to spend the neighbourhood funding. Charging authorities should set out clearly and transparently their approach to engaging with neighbourhoods using their regular communication tools for example, website, newsletters, etc. The use of neighbourhood funds should therefore match priorities expressed by local communities, including priorities set out formally in neighbourhood plans.

The law does not prescribe a specific process for agreeing how the neighbourhood portion should be spent. Charging authorities should use existing community consultation and engagement processes. This should include working with any designated neighbourhood forums preparing neighbourhood plans that exist in the area, theme specific neighbourhood groups, local businesses (particularly those working on business led neighbourhood plans) and using networks that ward councillors use. Crucially this consultation should be at the neighbourhood level. It should be proportionate to the level of levy receipts and the scale of the proposed development to which the neighbourhood funding relates.

1.4 How we developed the plan

Topic research

After the Area and the Forum were designated in January 2023, this was publicised in social media and the local newspaper asking for people to get involved. The first event was a well-attended public meeting in March 2023 at which people were asked to suggest topics to be included in the Neighbourhood Plan. There were over 100 suggestions, although inevitably many fell outside the remit of planning policies (see below).

The remaining suggestions fell broadly into 6 topic areas which were then separately researched by working groups of Forum members. The working groups were on Design, Biodiversity, Climate, Built Heritage, Housing, and Getting Around.

During development work, regular emailings were sent to the Members (c70) and Supporters (c500) of the project to advise them of progress and also ask for input on specific topics such as Local heritage Listing and Design. These were also publicised on social media.



Topic group discussions, March 2023

Topics outside the remit of a Neighbourhood Plan

Although many suggested topics fell outside the remit of planning policy, it is worth describing them broadly here because they give a sense of which aspects of the town people would like to change or see enhanced.

- “Project” suggestions – e.g. more litter bins, better noticeboards, improved bus services, build a band stand, reduce potholes, improve footpaths and lighting, more activities for youth in the town, open up more of the neglected waterways, better maintenance of heritage assets, new wind turbine.
- “Specify/enforcement” suggestions – e.g. no flat roofs, enforce affordability of homes in new developments, more attractive boutique-style stores, fewer pound shops, reduce lorry movements, 20mph speed limits
- “Higher authority” suggestions – e.g. more GP surgeries, more nurses, change Building Regulations, better definition of affordable homes, change Community Infrastructure Levy.

While these fall outside planning policy, they are a cross-section of genuine local sentiment and are therefore reflected to some extent in the Vision in section 3.

Evidence base

The evidence which has informed the Plan is covered by the Reference documents in Part 2 and in Part 3, the Evidence base itself. Where data has been collated or interpreted to inform the policies, the method and reasoning is shown in Part 3 under an appropriate heading, and the policy’s “Reasoned Justification” paragraph will refer to it.

SECTION 2. ABOUT THE MAIDENHEAD AREA

2.1 Overview of the town and the issues

Lying in the western part of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM), the town of Maidenhead is home to 53,000 residents in 21,000 households (2021 Census [Part 3, Figures 1.3.6-1 and 1.3.4-1 respectively]). It includes beautiful and biodiverse habitats for wildlife: the River Thames on its eastern edge, a network of smaller water channels, orchards of North Town Moor, the Greenway Corridor, Maidenhead Thicket woodland and grassland habitat to the west, former gravel pit lakes, and raptor nesting and feeding sites on tall buildings. It enjoys an attractive Thames Valley setting - close to, but separate from both London and nearby large towns such as Slough and Reading - with many nearby areas of publicly accessible National Trust land.

In recent years Maidenhead town centre has suffered from decay and stagnation. Shops have closed and footfall has declined. As a shopping facility it faces strong competition from Windsor, Bracknell, High Wycombe, Slough and Reading and from small nearby towns such as Henley and Marlow which are situated closer to the River Thames unlike Maidenhead where the river is not within easy walking distance of the town centre. Maidenhead also lacks further education establishments which traditionally draw young students to congregate together.

However in recent years regeneration of the town centre has commenced with the construction of several low rise developments and a cluster of four tall apartment buildings (“One Maidenhead”) with associated retail and office units is nearing completion. Construction of a further 1150 apartments has been approved, many of which will benefit from the restoration of the once derelict town centre waterway channels - Phase 1 of the recently completed waterways project has proved to be a catalyst for regeneration. This project, jointly funded by RBWM and developers, is now ‘bringing the Thames into the town’ and received a Civic Society award.

In common with the rest of the Royal Borough, Maidenhead is surrounded by Green Belt. Demand for housing is high, with development constrained by the Green Belt, Flood Plain, Crown land and National Trust land, adding to pressure to reuse brown-field sites and allow taller buildings.

Wildlife in the area is varied and abundant, but pressure on habitats from development, pesticide use and human disturbance is high. Development within the Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan area also has a potential to negatively impact downstream waterway sites between Maidenhead and Bray such as Braywick Park Local Wildlife Site.

The town has a large skilled workforce including London commuters, many professions and trades, with 46% of residents qualified to Degree level or above - significantly higher than the regional or national average. Many large corporations count Maidenhead as their home – including Heidelberg Materials (previously Hanson), Johnson & Johnson and Stanley Black and Decker. With a focus on IT, their offices are often based in Maidenhead’s business parks, but also in the town centre where they help to boost trade.

Average incomes, home and car ownership are all higher than the national average, with housing 64% Owned/Part Owned and 1.4 vehicles per household on average according to the 2021 Census [Part 3, Figure 1.3.4-1]. The housing mix spans the entire range:

- bed sits and apartments of all sizes varying from modest town centre homes to luxury penthouse suites in the riverside areas (26%);
- terraced houses (16%);
- semi-detached family homes with gardens (26%);
- medium and larger detached houses including some very large riverside dwellings (28%).

Many residential roads are tree-lined and most houses have gardens, adding to the verdant appearance of the town.

However Maidenhead has a wide range of households, with 2021 census data showing several areas in and around the town centre where up to half the households have 2 or more Dimensions of Deprivation, compared with a town-wide average of 12% and 17% for England. Social rented housing at 13% in Maidenhead is broadly in line with the average for the Royal Borough, but with some notable concentrations in and around the town centre. *Editor's Note: Reference for these figures?*

Outstanding connectivity (road, rail, proximity to London Heathrow Airport etc.) make Maidenhead an attractive location for major businesses, whilst its Thames Valley setting surrounded by Green Belt, the variety of housing and a good range of public and private schools all add to its attraction as a place to live. Property prices are high by national standards and among the highest outside Greater London. Maidenhead's population grew by 9.0% between the 2011 and the 2021 Censuses and our town is expected to be the main area of growth (+40% population) within the Royal Borough under the recently adopted Borough Local Plan.

The Great Western Railway main line to/from Paddington runs east-west through the centre of town and has recently been electrified and upgraded for the new Elizabeth Line service which now runs through to central London and beyond, as well as west to Reading. The branch line to Marlow provides an important link to neighbouring communities outside the plan area of Cookham, Bourne End and Marlow and also serves the station at Furze Platt.

Outside of the town centre, the Neighbourhood Plan area comprises largely Inter War and Post War suburbs of 2- or 3-storey houses, with a considerable number of Leafy Residential Suburbs on the fringe of town and in the river areas. Various Industrial and Commercial Estates either adjoin the town centre (e.g. Reform Road) or tend to be in the northern (e.g. Switchback Rd) and western edges of town (e.g. Norreys Drive). Maidenhead does not have any heavy industry or large Industrial and Commercial Estates, however there is a working gravel pit near Summerleaze Lake.

Editor's and Andrew's note: Suggest include photos to illustrate a range of topics relevant to planning, maybe one from each topic group such as low and high rise buildings, Local Wildlife sites.. - aiming to get balanced coverage. Also more general ones such a bustling/non bustling High Street.

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SECTION 3. VISION AND POLICY APPROACH

3.1 Vision Statement

The vision for Maidenhead will in some ways be common to many English towns. A vibrant, socially cohesive and successful 21st century town; embracing sustainable growth; preserving its character buildings and its greenery & open spaces; offering good quality jobs and homes; creating an attractive town centre with good infrastructure and accessibility.

Luckily, Maidenhead starts with some advantages. It enjoys an enviable location, excellent connectivity, and a relatively affluent and well-educated population – although there are significant areas of deprivation.

But in planning terms, the brutal post-war redevelopments in the town make residents wonder whether things could get worse, as the Borough Local Plan sees 40% of RBWM's population growth concentrated in Maidenhead.

This growth will mean intensification of development in the town centre, some elements of which are approaching completion (notably 400+ flats at One Maidenhead, part of a total 1150 flats approved at the time of writing) and, while this brings newcomers who can support the local economy, the preponderance of apartments rather than houses means that there are fewer properties suitable for families with children – a very important social group which a thriving town needs to accommodate.

The 17-storey height of these new buildings has also been seen as excessive by most residents (NB planning permission was given before the RBWM Tall Buildings SPD in November 2023). It's also clear that most Maidenheadians prefer traditional styles of building – natural materials, pitched roofs, historic visual cues – to some more modern approaches.

The preference for more natural styles of streetscaping is now, in 2024, inextricably linked with the biodiversity imperative – the need to accommodate and encourage natural biodiversity at all levels of development in terms of planning and execution. Maidenhead needs to be in the cohort of localities which take this seriously and are seen to do so.

This also applies to the town's approach to the declared climate emergency, although inevitably this is a technical area which is less visible to the public – essential nonetheless.

A vision for the town might also include an end to housing waiting lists and homelessness, but that is probably unrealistic (and might have unintended repercussions in neighbouring areas). However residents want and deserve to see a reduction in both, and planning policy can enable this.

In terms of transport, it's clear that Maidenhead was increasingly dominated by the private car from the 1950s, and that the future must be less polluting and more accommodating for active travel like walking and cycling. At the same time, the fact that Maidenheadians continue to be very car-centric (EV or otherwise) must guide ideas about development in the town centre, which can only thrive if it is easy to access for locals.

Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan.

The town's remaining character buildings – those that escaped demolition – are highly valued and should be offered some protection as the town develops. They create the character and atmosphere of the town.

There are other widely desired elements for the vision of Maidenhead's future which lie outside the scope of a Neighbourhood Plan. These are described in section 1 but could be broadly characterised as quality of built environment, improved infrastructure and regulation, and quality of town centre offering.

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SECTION 4. DESIGN

4.1 Design principles - Town centre

OBJECTIVE:

To ensure that new buildings are appropriate to the location in Maidenhead Town Centre, and to provide guidance on where taller buildings are acceptable.

Planning Policy Context

The policies have been developed with regard to the BLP [Part 2, 2.1] paragraphs 5.1.7 and 5.1.8 which refer to Maidenhead's rail links and location on the Elizabeth line, and with regard to policies SP1, QP1a, QP3 and QP3a on Spatial Strategy, Maidenhead Town Centre, Character and Design and Building height respectively.

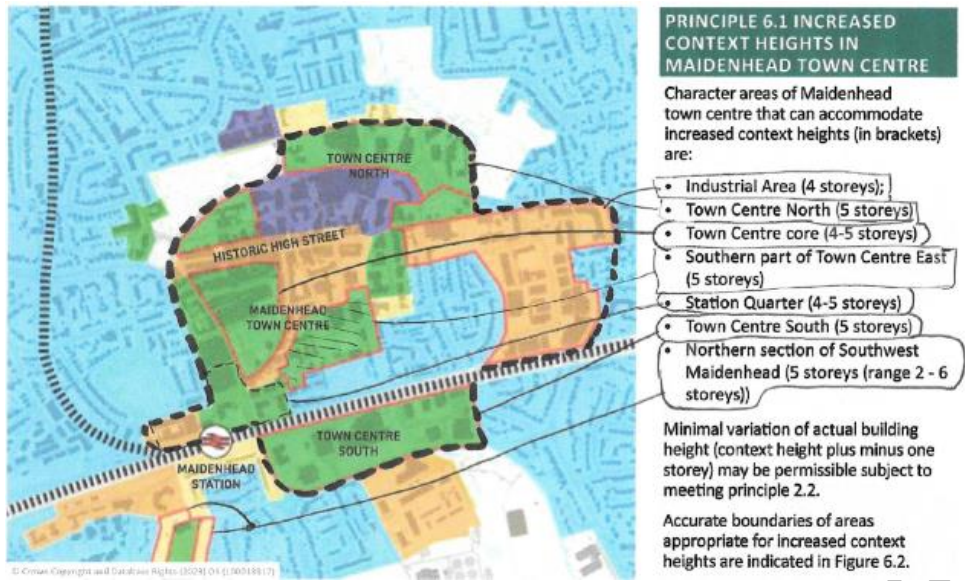
BLP policy QP3a refers to a Building Height and Tall Buildings SPD [Part 2, 2.13] which is now adopted. Section 6 of this document covers Maidenhead, and the policy here largely follows it.

The policies follow the principles in NPPF [Part 2, 1.1] paragraphs 131, 132, 134, 135 and 139.

POLICIES: Design principles - Town centre

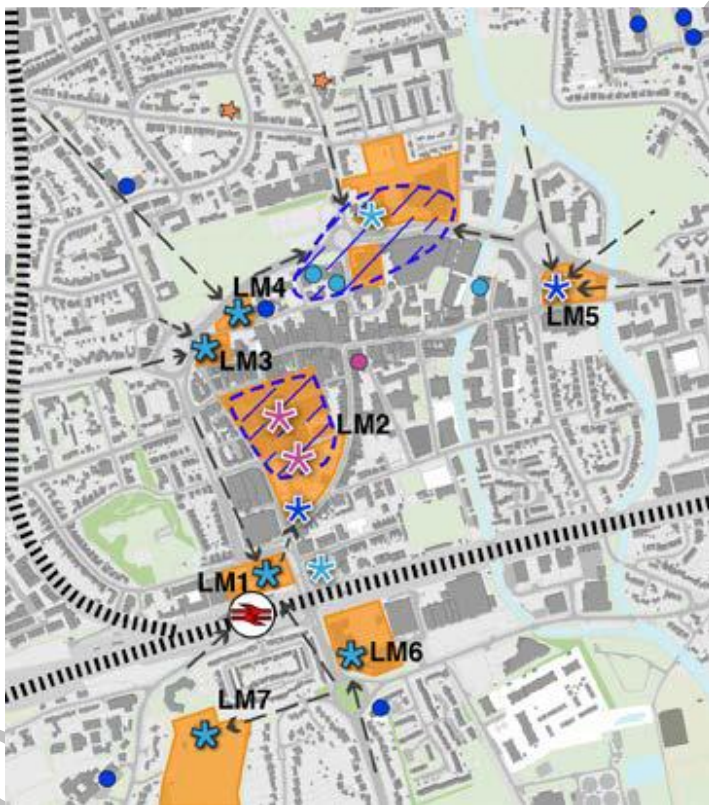
DE-1

- The Maidenhead town centre boundaries of areas appropriate for increased context heights are shown on map 4.1-1 and in the RBWM Building Height and Tall Buildings SPD [Part 2, 2.13]
- Development proposals must demonstrate full regard to the key principles set out in the Building Height and Tall Buildings SPD [Part 2, 2.13] as they apply to Maidenhead, responding appropriately to the site context, townscape features, listed buildings, conservation areas and lower rise residential buildings, and where necessary step down in height.
- Development proposals in the character areas of Maidenhead town centre will be no higher than the increased context heights (in brackets) as defined on map 4.1-1:
 - Industrial Area (4 storeys)
 - Town Centre North (5 storeys)
 - Town Centre Core (4-5 storeys)
 - Southern part of Town Centre East (5 storeys)
 - Station Quarter (4-5 storeys)
 - Town Centre South (5 storeys)
- Development proposals for landmark tall buildings as defined on map 4.1-2 must comply with the Building Height and Tall Buildings SPD [Part 2, 2.13]:
 - LM1 no more than 27m (8 residential storeys) *Editor's note: Possible AW comment*
 - LM2 no more than 54m (16 residential storeys)
 - LM3 no more than 20m (6 residential storeys)
 - LM4 no more than 33m (10 residential storeys)
 - LM5 no more than 33m (10 residential storeys)
 - LM6 no more than 27m (8 residential storeys)



Map 4.1-1 Maidenhead town centre character areas

Editor's note: Map needs to be clarified and key added to say Town centre boundary shown as ---



Map 4.1-2 Potential locations for landmark tall buildings

Reasoned Justification

The BLP spatial strategy is to encourage higher intensity development in strategic growth locations, and Maidenhead town centre is identified as one such location. It is better to plan how such

intensification can be accommodated rather than to allow it to develop as a result of uncoordinated speculative planning applications. With the limited area of Maidenhead town centre, intensification will result in an increase in building height.

The Building Height and Tall Buildings SPD [Part 2, 2.13] introduction explains that it is not designed to encourage tall buildings, but rather to allow the Council more control over any planning applications for large or tall buildings that come forward in the future. Chapter 6 is dedicated to Maidenhead town centre, and states that tall buildings are not the only way to deliver high density, as it can also be achieved by increasing the context height of a wider area. As significant work and analysis went into the Building Height and Tall Buildings SPD, the approach taken here has been to reinforce the conclusions of the SPD by incorporating them into Neighbourhood Plan policy.

The Neighbourhood Plan policy therefore sets the increased context heights, identified in the SPD for specific town centre areas, as a maximum. It also sets the height of tall buildings on SPD-identified landmark sites as a maximum.

By virtue of their size and prominence, tall buildings affect the image, identity and functioning of a place. As the design of a building and development is about much more than the external appearance, an opinion that a tall building is of for example of “exemplar” visual design does not itself guarantee that it will enhance an area. While there are often mixed views towards tall buildings, in the right place and with careful integration they can make a positive contribution towards the rejuvenation of Maidenhead both visually and by enabling a greater population to live in the town centre.

Maidenhead is not a city, nor a suburb of the Greater London conurbation. Even after the over 40% growth proposed in the BLP [Part 2, 2.1] by 2033, the Neighbourhood Plan area will have approximately 32,000 homes and a population of 75-80,000, making it a medium sized country town, set in the Thames Valley and will remain surrounded by the Green Belt and large areas of National Trust land. The intent of these policies is to allow taller buildings in a balanced and targeted way that help satisfy growth and minimise Green Belt intrusion, while respecting the existing balance and retaining as far as possible the character of the town.

South-West Maidenhead is covered by separate SPDs and BLP policy, so is not included in the town centre.

4.2 Design principles – Character Areas

OBJECTIVE:

To retain the appearance and features of the existing Avenues, Streets and Roads in the plan area while encouraging good design where opportunities are available. Retaining the setting and aspect enjoyed by neighbouring properties is a material consideration.

Planning Policy Context

BLP [Part 2, 2.1] policy QP3 covers character and design of new developments in general terms.

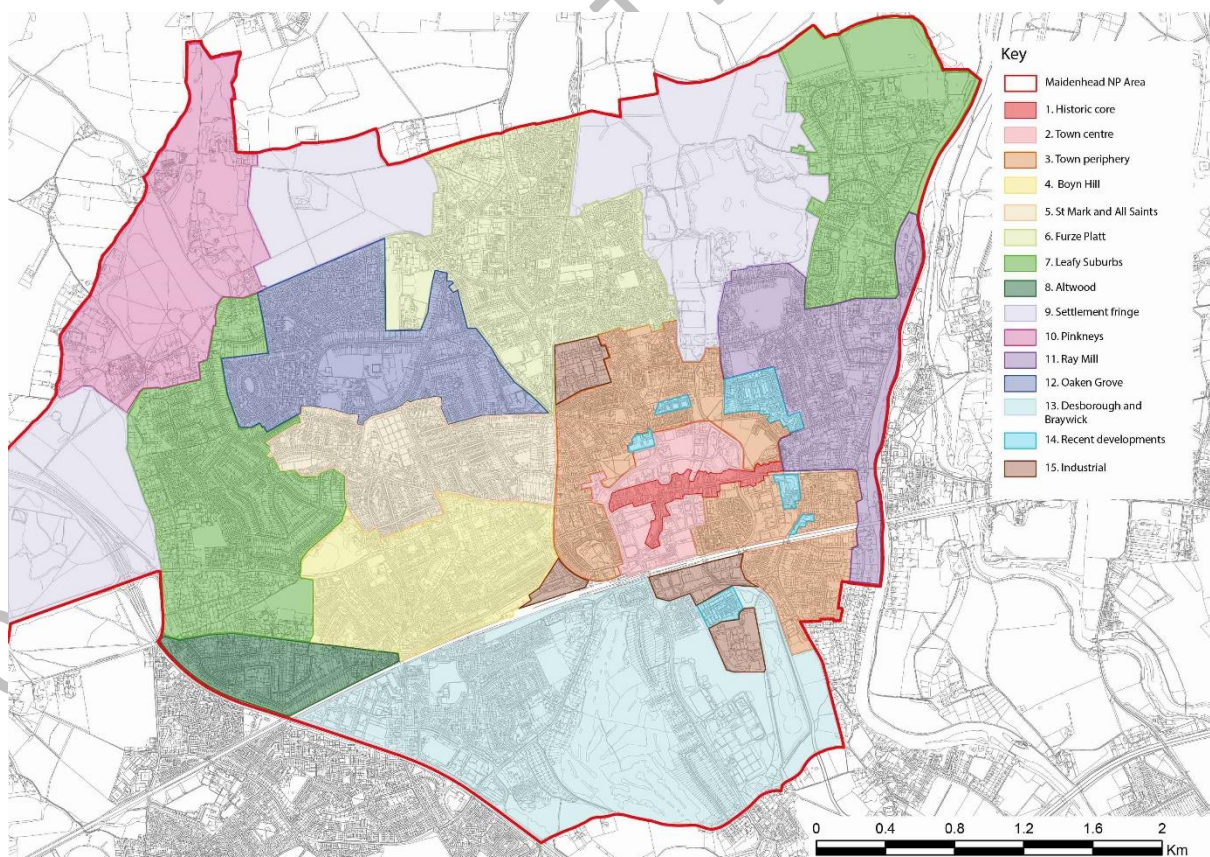
The policy follows the principles in NPPF [Part 2, 1.1] paragraphs 131 to 135 and 139.

In 2010 a Townscape Assessment was carried out, referenced in [Part 2, 2.8]. To provide more targeted information, a Design Code was commissioned for the Neighbourhood plan area and is incorporated in Neighbourhood plan policy as Appendix 2.

POLICIES: Design principles – Character Areas

DE-2

- The Maidenhead Character areas are shown on map 4.2-1
- Development proposals must demonstrate full regard to the key characteristics of each of the Character areas, and follow the Design code in Appendix 2 relevant to the location, nature and layout of the scheme.
- In addition, proposals for the erection of new dwellings in residential gardens will be required to demonstrate they meet all of the following criteria:
 - The layout integrates with the surrounding area with regard to site coverage of each plot, building lines and heights, urban grain, rhythm of plot frontages, parking areas and existing pattern of openings onto the highway
 - The proposal provides appropriate hard and soft landscaping, particularly at site boundaries and retains the setting and aspect enjoyed by neighbouring properties



Map 4.2-1 Maidenhead Character Areas

Reasoned Justification

Throughout its history, each new transport era brought investment and growth to Maidenhead. Water transport, horse-drawn coaches, railways, the motor car and even air travel left their mark. The layout and streetscape in the Neighbourhood Plan area reflect this. The strongest influence is the east-west alignment of the Bath Road (A4), the coaching route between London and Bath. With the development of the railways and the location of the main station in Maidenhead with its branch line to Furze Platt, Cookham, Bourne End and Marlow (and until 1969 High Wycombe), development expanded in the immediate vicinities to provide housing for commuters and appropriate services. This resulted in Maidenhead developing as a commercial centre and transport hub.

Despite the ravages of piecemeal planning in the 20th century, Maidenhead remains a town with considerable assets, many of them associated with its enviable Thames-side setting, its exceptional accessibility and its pleasant residential suburbs. A key element of its appeal is the preponderance of low to medium density housing on well-sized plots, with a large number of what are now mature trees.

Although many streets are still characterised by large houses sitting on substantial plots, some sites have been used to create a cluster of smaller dwellings. Such developments should not adversely impact the character of the neighbourhood, but seek to enhance it with developments of compatible type and tenure, so it is reasonable to establish a set of criteria to retain the key characteristics.

The existing streetscapes provide easy access for residents to walk their children to their local schools in most cases, reducing the use of cars for this purpose. Older children can walk safely to senior schools. Low rise buildings with good pavement access from the front door to the road provide greater levels of security and enhance neighbour contact. Maintaining a mix of environments, housing types and styles adds to the town's appeal as a place where homes are available for households or people at all points in their journey through life.

Gardens form an important habitat for wildlife, with blocks of gardens providing significant areas of connected green space and allowing movement of wildlife between adjoining green spaces.

4.3 Liveable buildings

OBJECTIVE:

To ensure that sufficient internal space and private amenity space is provided in dwellings and other non-custodial institutions.

Planning Policy Context

Government Planning Update dated 25th March 2015 delivered by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government under the heading "Decision taking, transition and compliance" states: *"From 1 October 2015: Existing Local Plan, neighbourhood plan, and supplementary planning document policies relating to water efficiency, access and internal space should be interpreted by reference to the nearest equivalent new national technical standard. Decision takers should only require compliance with the new national technical standards where there is a relevant current Local Plan policy."*

The BLP [Part 2, 2.1] is silent on internal space standards and on private amenity space standards. For internal space standards, the 25th March 2015 Government Planning update only requires compliance where there is a relevant current Local Plan policy. The Neighbourhood Plan is therefore a suitable place for a policy on private amenity space, and for a policy on internal space in the form of a reference to national standards.

The policy follows the principles in NPPF [Part 2, 1.1] paragraph 135, bullet f) which refers to a good standard of amenity for existing and future occupants of land and buildings.

POLICIES: Liveable buildings

DE-3

- Development proposals for new dwellings must provide internal space standards that meet or exceed those set out in “Technical Housing Standards – nationally described space standard” [Part 2, 1.2] published by the Department for Communities and Local Government, dated March 2015 or the latest revision available at the date of the Planning Application
- proposals for new residential units (including those created by the change of use, development or sub-division of existing buildings), will be expected to have access to private amenity space of at least the amount specified in Table 4.3-1. Private amenity space can include a private garden, roof garden, balcony or ground level patio/defensible space and shared (communal) amenity areas. External private amenity or communal space does not include car parking or turning areas.
- Private and communal external amenity space should meet the following criteria:
 - be functional and safe
 - easily accessible from living areas
 - orientated to maximize use of sunlight and shade
 - take account of the context of the development, including the character of the surrounding area
- Development proposals for specialist residential accommodation, including care homes, nursing homes and other non-custodial institutions, should ensure sufficient private and public external amenity space to accommodate the normal recreational and other needs of residents, visitors or employees.

Table 4.3-1: Private amenity space standards

	Flats/apartments/maisonettes			
	1 bed	2 bed+		
All locations ^{Note 1,} _{Note 2}	5m ²	5m ² and private shared communal space		
	Terraced/Semi-detached/detached houses			
	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed+
All locations ^{Note 1}	40m ²	50m ²	60m ²	70m ²
Note 1: Rear gardens to houses and flat developments should have a minimum depth of 10m, to ensure a minimum distance of 20m is retained between facing windows back to back				
Note 2: Where amenity space is provided by balconies, a minimum depth of 1.5m is required				

Reasoned Justification

The policy here seeks to ensure that acceptable minimum internal areas are achieved in all residential units in accordance with nationally recognised minimum space standards, and that sufficient private amenity space is provided.

Access to adequate private outdoor space can play an important role in the physical and mental health and wellbeing of people. Access to daylight and fresh air, with space to dry washing, socialise, play in, enjoy wildlife and grow plants or vegetables can add significantly to the quality of life of residents of all ages. We are therefore concerned to ensure, that in a place like Maidenhead new residents are provided with such opportunity to support healthy communities. The policy therefore proposes minimum external space standards.

In terms of the usability of space, the size of the external amenity space should, as a minimum, accommodate a table and chairs suitable for the size of dwelling and, where relevant, provide space for a garden shed for general storage (including bicycles, where no garage provision or cycle storage to the frontage of the dwelling is possible) and space for refuse and recycling bins; an area for drying washing; circulation space and an area for children's play.

In 2013 RBWM commissioned a Capacity Assessment report from Studio Real [Part 3, 1.6]. The first report resulting from this suggests density targets for developments based on plot sizes and parking requirements. The recommendation within that report for minimum garden depth, and therefore back to back dimension, has been included in the proposed policy. A more recent study on Private Amenity Space Standards was carried out by South Gloucestershire Council in June 2016 [Part 3, 1.6] and has informed this policy. *Editor's Note: These two documents should be changed to Part 2 Refs*

The provision of significant numbers of additional dwellings in the Borough covered by the new Local Plan, whether "affordable" or open market, should not be achieved at the expense of providing homes with insufficient internal space for modern living.

SECTION 5. HOUSING

5.1 Affordable Housing

OBJECTIVE:

To provide sufficient affordable housing within all parts of the Neighbourhood Plan area, with a suitable mix of housing type and amenity. To promote social cohesion and inclusion, all residents in the Plan area should be well housed in good and adequate accommodation irrespective of tenure.

Planning Policy Context

The policies have been developed with regard to the BLP [Part 2, 2.1] paragraphs 7.7.1 to 7.7.13 and policy HO3 on Affordable Housing. Paragraph 7.7.15 refers to a Supplementary Planning Document [Part 2, 2.14].

BLP [Part 2, 2.1] Policy HO3 states that there will be a minimum requirement of 30% Affordable Housing on sites of 1000m² internal floor area or larger, or on sites with over 10 net additional dwellings. The definition of Affordable Housing for planning purposes given in NPPF [Part 2, 1.1] Annex 2 and includes Social Rented, Affordable Rented, Discounted market sales housing and Other affordable routes to home ownership, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Social rented housing and Affordable rented housing is owned by local authorities, Housing Associations or similar licenced providers and let at rents no higher than 80% of market levels. Other affordable routes to home ownership includes homes for sale and rent provided at a cost below market levels, but above social rent and includes shared equity schemes.

The policies follow the principles in NPPF [Part 2, 1.1] paragraphs 63-66.

POLICIES: Affordable Housing

HO-1

- Proposals for housing development of 10 or more dwellings or more than 1000m² of residential floorspace shall deliver on site a minimum of 40% affordable housing on greenfield sites up to 500 dwellings and 30% affordable housing on all other sites including those over 500 dwellings.
- Affordable housing should be delivered in the form of:
 - a) 20% affordable home ownership or shared ownership
 - b) 80% affordable rent and social rent. The mix to be determined on a site-by-site basis at the planning application stage
- The targeted dwelling size by type is 20% 1 bed flats, 40% 2 bed flats and 40% 3 bed and above (houses)
- Priority will be given to affordable rented and home ownership schemes for key workers.
- Affordable housing should be indistinguishable from and have the same external appearance as private housing with integrated access arrangements.
- Where the requirements of the first two bullets cannot be met, proposals must provide clear evidence to demonstrate why it is not viable to do so according to the Affordable Housing Delivery SPD [Part 2, 2.14].
- Community Land Trust development and other community led schemes which ensure that affordable housing units will be secured in affordable tenure in perpetuity will be supported

Reasoned Justification

To provide information on housing need for the Neighbourhood Plan area a Housing Needs Assessment was carried out by AECOM. This is given in Appendix 3.

Many Maidenheadians are well housed owning their own homes and living in leafy suburbs. However, the very attractiveness of Maidenhead as a place to live has led to high house and rent prices which a growing proportion of people are unable to afford. House prices have increased over 50% between 2013 and 2022. There are currently about 515 households on the waiting list for social housing [paragraph 26 in Housing Needs Assessment, Appendix 3], and 989 households consisting of 5028 people living in overcrowded housing according to the 2021 Census [Table 5-9 and paragraph 5.24 in Housing Needs Assessment, Appendix 3], the physical and mental effects of which are well documented. There has also been a four-fold increase throughout the Borough in the use of temporary accommodation in the past 10 years. In March 2022 there were 191 households living in temporary accommodation of which 119 were households with children [paragraph 32 in Housing Needs Assessment, Appendix 3]. Good housing is not only about making it accessible and affordable but also that it is provided in the right quantity and of the right type size and design to meet the needs of different types of households.

AFFORDING HOME OWNERSHIP

Almost two thirds of households - 63 % - are home owners with only a small increase in this sector in the last ten years. At the end of 2022 the average house price in Maidenhead was £569,966 [paragraph 16 in Housing Needs Assessment, Appendix 3]. Even using the lower median average house price of £450,000 [paragraph 16 in Housing Needs Assessment, Appendix 3] would require an annual income of £115,700 to purchase a home, 65% higher than the current average household income of £69,700 [figures from paragraph 18 in Housing Needs Assessment, Appendix 3].

AFFORDING PRIVATE RENTING

The high price of homes has led to a 53% growth in the private rented sector over the last ten years which is currently 23% of all households. According to Home.co.uk there were 207 properties for rent in the area in 2023 with a monthly rent of £2,650 and 62 two bed properties with a median average price of £1,650. Taking this as the entry level would require an income threshold of £106,000 to rent in the private rented sector [figures from C.1 paragraphs 12 and 13 in Housing Needs Assessment, Appendix 3]. This limits who can afford to live in Maidenhead, and also prevents them from joining the waiting list for social housing which is restricted to residents with some exceptions for those moving for work. The number of households seeking social housing in Maidenhead is thus underestimated.

Another result of the lack of affordable housing is that in line with the national trend 10% of households have non-dependent children living in them.

MEETING THE NEED FOR AFFORDABLE SOCIAL RENTED HOUSING

Over the 15 years of the plan period AECOM estimate that 38 social rented affordable homes are needed each year to meet the demand [paragraph 4.39 in Housing Needs Assessment, Appendix 3]. We think this is an underestimate as it does not deal with the backlog of households on the waiting list. AECOM estimate that if this backlog were addressed in the first half of the plan period, then 60 social /affordable homes would be needed per annum. The lower figure also does not take into account that the Plan area may have to provide for housing needs in the wider Borough.

There is a group of high rent paying households earning between £66,000 and £84,000 who would benefit from more affordable ownership schemes such as shared ownership and First Homes. This is estimated to be 150 households a year [Table D-3 in Housing Needs Assessment, Appendix 3]. We agree the numbers but doubt that the market would realistically provide this amount without substantial public subsidy thus potentially increasing the demand for social renting.

The minimum requirement for both new and rented and owner-occupied affordable homes per annum is thus 188. This is considerably more than the 58 affordable homes which the Borough has averaged in the past five years, according to the RBWM Authority Monitoring Reports for 2019 to 2023 [Part 2, 2.11] in which a total of 290 affordable homes were completed.

5.2 Market Housing mix

OBJECTIVE:

To ensure that planning policies and decisions deliver a balanced housing stock that satisfies the requirements of all types of households and life stages of the market.

To increase the proportion of 3 and 4 bedroom properties as there is a greater requirement for family dwellings, and ensure the market is not distorted by an imbalance in availability.

Planning Policy Context

The policies have been developed with regard to the BLP [Part 2, 2.1] paragraphs 7.5.1 to 7.5.4 and policy HO2 on Housing Mix and Type, and also with regard to policy SP1 on Spatial Strategy.

BLP [Part 2, 2.1] Policy HO2 states that the provision of new homes should have regard to providing an appropriate mix of dwelling types and sizes, reflecting the evidence set out in the Berkshire SHMA 2016 or its successors, together with the need for accessible and adaptable dwellings. It is however largely silent on how housing mix is achieved, including on allocated sites and their proformas. As the Berkshire SHMA dates from 2016 and covers a wider area, a Housing Needs Assessment in Appendix 3 was commissioned for the Neighbourhood Plan area.

The policies follow the principles in NPPF [Part 2, 1.1] paragraphs 61 and 63.

POLICIES: Market Housing mix

HO-2

- For the purpose of this policy the Maidenhead Town centre area is defined by the Map 4.1-1

- Within Maidenhead Town Centre market housing development proposals are expected to provide 80% flats (1 and 2 bed) and 20% as maisonettes or houses (3 bed and above).
- Outside Maidenhead Town centre market housing development proposals are expected to provide 20% flats (1 and 2 bed) with 80% maisonettes and houses (3 bed and above).

Reasoned Justification

To provide information on housing need, a Housing Needs Assessment in Appendix 3 was commissioned for the Neighbourhood Plan area, the assessment being undertaken by AECOM as part of a package of Technical support.

The majority of people living in the plan area are well housed. Slightly more are owner occupiers (63%) than in England as a whole but less than in the Borough overall (66%) [Table 4-1 in Housing Needs Assessment, Appendix 3]. More than a quarter live in detached houses and have more bedrooms than they need with over a quarter (28%) having four or more bedrooms [Table 5-4 in Housing Needs Assessment, Appendix 3].

However, at the other end of the scale almost 5% of households are overcrowded which rises to almost 8% of those with dependent children [paragraph 5.23 in Housing Needs Assessment, Appendix 3], which has increased since 2011. Ethnic minority groups are disproportionately affected and those living in the most deprived wards. Overcrowding is more acute in Maidenhead than in the Borough as a whole and in the social rented sector.

The largest proportion of households - 40% - on the Borough waiting list wanting to live in Maidenhead are entitled to a 2 bed property with 26% requiring a 3 bed property. But the majority of lettings are of 1 bedroom, and there are very few lettings of properties with 3 beds or larger [paragraphs 4.47 and 4.48 in Housing Needs Assessment, Appendix 3].

Consequently, for every 3 and 4 bed property that becomes available through re-lettings there are 10 and 33 households respectively waiting for one to become available [Table 4-7 in Housing Needs Assessment, Appendix 3]. Many households in acute housing need (homeless and in temporary accommodation) are waiting years to be rehoused in larger properties.

There has been a big increase in the last few years in the provision of smaller dwellings in Maidenhead particularly of flats. In 2021 26% of dwellings in Maidenhead were in purpose-built flats compared with 20% in the Borough as a whole and 16% in England. This proportion is set to rise as there are currently approvals for some 1150 flatted developments in the Neighbourhood Area, mostly of 1 and 2 bedroom dwellings. Over the same period family households with dependent children have grown at the greatest rate, higher than in the rest of the Borough (28%) and England (26%) [paragraphs 5.18 and 5.19 in Housing Needs Assessment, Appendix 3]. Yet Maidenhead has a slightly smaller share of 3 and 4 bedroom properties (61%) than the Borough as a whole (62%) and this has declined since 2011 [Tables 5-3 and 5-4 in Housing Needs Assessment, Appendix 3]. When young people in these new flats want to move on and start families then they will be looking for accommodation suitable for families without having to leave Maidenhead. Maidenhead will also become less attractive for young families wanting to move into the area. With the vast majority of Town Centre developments built or permitted

being 1 and 2 bedrooms, the future mix can only be balanced by a higher proportion of development outside the Town centre being 3 and 4 bedrooms. Similarly, older residents should have suitable housing choices to downsize and free up larger accommodation if they so wish, also assisting the supply chain.

Ensuring that people are well housed is not only about a sufficient quantity of housing but about its suitability for different types of households. Whereas young single people and couples and some old people will be satisfied and indeed may prefer living in flats, family households overwhelmingly require houses with gardens. There are almost 2,000 children living in flats mostly under the age of ten, a number which is set to rise when the new family housing in the Magnet development is completed. There are not only practical problems of raising young children in flats but the children themselves play out more if they live below the second floor, have more friends, do better at school and are less likely to be injured or killed falling from balconies and windows. (HMSO 1981) [Part 2, 1.7].

WORKING DRAFT NOT FOR PUBLICATION

SECTION 6. GETTING AROUND

6.1 Sustainable transport routes

OBJECTIVE:

To deliver a safe, direct, convenient, coherent and connected cycling, walking and bus route network allowing sustainable local journeys.

Planning Policy Context

The benefits of cycling and walking rather than car use for local journeys include reduction in traffic congestion, and improvements in health and fitness. Provision for cycling and walking in and around Maidenhead has to date been rather patchy and disconnected, resulting in over-reliance on powered transport and discouraging the use of alternatives. The policies here aim to ensure that cycling and walking provision is an integral part of the design of new development, resulting in a significant and coherent improvement over time.

Although the provision and operation of affordable, practical and convenient public transport services does not itself form part of the borough's Development Plan, development can be planned to allow best use of the available network.

The policies follow the principles in NPPF [Part 2, 1.1] paragraphs 108, 109, 110 and 116.

The policies and map have been developed with regard to the RBWM Public Rights of Way Management and Improvement Plan [Part 2, 2.3], to the RBWM Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan [Part 2, 2.15], and to the BLP [Part 2, 2.1] policies IF2 and IF3.

POLICIES: Cycling, Walking and Bus Routes

GA-1

- Cycling and Walking routes, existing and proposed, and bus routes are defined on Map 6.1-1
- Proposals for development shall demonstrate provision of safe access on foot and by cycle, and how such access connects to the Town centre, the nearest station, to local schools and to the inner and outer ring shown on Map 6.1-1
- Proposals for development on or adjacent to identified cycling and walking routes shall demonstrate that connectivity is provided, maintained or enhanced to give a continuous route
- Cycling routes should allow continuous riding, and minimise requirements to stop, dismount, or give way to vehicular traffic
- Walking routes should allow uninterrupted walking, and minimise the requirement to cross roads
- All residential developments over 25 homes that are or will be served by bus services should incorporate suitable laybys for Bus Stops, with shelters and seating, placed so that no home in the development is more than a 500 metre walk from a bus stop.
- All office developments served by bus services should have a layby, Bus Stop and shelter provided as close as practicable to the main entrance
- Real Time information boards (where a system is operational) and power should be included in all new bus stops, either immediately or in the future as information systems evolve

- Where feasible, priority access (lanes or lights) onto the main highway from the development site should be provided for connecting local bus services

Editor's note: Placeholder for map defining Cycling, Walking and Bus routes.

Map 6.1-1 Cycling, Walking and Bus routes

Reasoned Justification

Development proposals provide the ideal opportunity to realise new cycling and walking routes with better connectivity, offering a genuine and safe alternative for sustainable everyday transport. To allow best use of such opportunities, individual sites should be assessed for both their own connections and also for the contribution they can make to a cycling and walking route network as defined in the objective.

Residents will also be put off using Bus services if they do not have a Bus Stop nearby (i.e. a short walk) or if they don't offer shelter from inclement weather. Real time information at Bus Stops (where the systems are available) adds certainty to journeys and allows passengers to judge the wait time and decide whether or not to walk on to the next stop. Incorporating facilities to encourage the use of public transport should not be seen as a burden by developers, as it increases the appeal of the development to prospective buyers/occupiers.

6.2 Parking and cycle storage

OBJECTIVE:

To ensure that each new development fully self provides for its own parking and cycle storage needs.

Planning Policy Context

The policies have been developed with regard to the BLP [Part 2, 2.1] paragraph 14.6.3 on Car parking and policy IF2, both of which anticipate that locally specific parking standards may be included in Neighbourhood plans. Paragraph 14.6.3 also refers to a Supplementary Planning Document, but this is not yet available. BLP Policy SP2 on Sustainability and Placemaking also specifies that larger developments in particular will be expected to contribute to the provision of transport infrastructure.

The policies follow the principles in NPPF [Part 2, 1.1] paragraphs 111 and 112.

Electric Vehicle charging points are covered under Part S of the Building Regulations [Part 2, 1.8], and with no local reason to differ from National standards are not specified by this plan.

POLICIES: Parking and cycle storage

GA-2

- For the purpose of this policy the Maidenhead Town centre area is defined by Map 4.1-1

- New purpose built residential developments or conversions will be expected to provide off-road allocated parking spaces and cycle storage as specified in Table 6.2-1.
- Exceptions to the above for special purpose residential developments such as retirement or nursing homes will be supported, where analysis of the likely need can be clearly justified.
- All apartment blocks should in addition have sufficient additional unallocated spaces for visitors, servicing or specialist needs such as mobility scooters.
- All new office, commercial and retail development will be expected to fully meet their own parking space and cycle storage/parking needs on site as specified in Table 6.2-2. Leasing of space within Public car parks to offset under provision in new development will be discouraged, to avoid reducing existing shared capacity.
- Underground parking will be encouraged for new town centre developments and office or commercial buildings outside of the town centre, maximising usable above ground space. Where underground is technically infeasible roof top parking should be considered as an alternative to keep the necessary parking capacity on site.
- Minimum car parking space size for new developments and for new public car parks should be 2.5m x 5m.
- Proposals to increase rail commuter parking capacity will be supported, in line with growth in rail use at the town’s railway stations, and maximising usage of this capacity at other times will be encouraged.

Table 6.2-1: Residential parking and cycle storage standards

	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed+
Car Parking				
Town Centre	Minimum 1 space		Minimum 2 spaces	
Outside Town Centre	Minimum 1 space	Minimum 2 spaces	Minimum 2 spaces	Minimum 3 spaces
Garages able to accommodate a vehicle count towards parking space provision. The minimum internal size should be 3m x 6m to allow for cycle storage alongside a vehicle, unless cycle storage is provided separately.				
Cycle Storage				
All areas	Minimum 1 space	Minimum 2 spaces	Minimum 4 spaces	

Table 6.2-2: Office and Commercial building parking standards:

	Office and Commercial
Car Parking	
All areas	Minimum 3.3 spaces per 100m ² of lettable internal area
Cycle Storage	
All areas	Minimum 1.5 space per 100m ² of lettable internal area

Reasoned Justification

Provision of adequate off-street parking is necessary to ensure road safety, reduce visual clutter and to ensure that road capacity is not reduced by on road parking obstructing the flow of traffic. The nature and requirement for off street parking varies considerably throughout the Neighbourhood Plan

area, but is an important issue everywhere. The balance of requirements differs between the town centre, where demand is driven by a combination of office, retail, residential and commuter parking, and the more suburban parts of town, where demand is primarily driven by residential parking or within the office parks. The extension of the Elizabeth Line through central London in 2022/23 has added to Maidenhead's appeal for commuters, including those that live in nearby towns seeking to join a direct line into and through London's west end and city.

The long term trend to lower car ownership ratios is supported and encouraged. However, applying unrealistic assumptions in advance of the broader solutions needed to diminish the need for private car ownership would risk new development aggravating existing on road parking problems and reduce road capacity, worsening congestion.

The shift toward cleaner hybrid or electric vehicles is likely to accelerate further, but the absence of a dense, convenient, frequent and affordable local public transport network - serving all desired directions of travel - means that the private vehicle will continue to dominate transport needs in Maidenhead for the foreseeable future. New development needs to reflect this reality, while encouraging a lesser reliance on the private car over time, for example by provision of cycle paths and the provision of better access to available bus services.

Although public transport will hopefully be their main mode of travel, most of the new generation of commuters living in the town centre will also want their own vehicles for evening and weekend use. For daily use, public transport is stronger East-West than in other directions, yet for many local journeys remains slow, inconvenient and infrequent, leaving the private car as the preferred or often only practical method of door to door transport. Maidenhead does not enjoy the dense public transport provided in large cities, and assumptions about usage of public transport cannot be carried over from city scenarios.

Outside the town centre, most residential homes have at least some off road parking, but older property such as terraced housing is under provided, leading to double parking and parking on the pavement to let traffic pass. Both cause congestion, slow traffic flows and pose a hazard for pedestrians and road users alike. Pavement parking poses a particular hazard for the less able or parents with pushchairs. New developments should provide an adequate level of parking, rather than replicate the historic lack of provision from a less mobile era.

Residential parking requirements and Office/Commercial parking requirements are derived in the Evidence Base [Part 3, 1.3].

6.3 Public Transport Interchange

OBJECTIVE:

To achieve safe, convenient and well informed interchange between each mode of public transport.

Planning Policy Context

The NPPF [Part 2, 1.1] section 9 seeks to promote sustainable transport through the planning system. BLP [Part 2, 2.1] policy IF2 expands on the NPPF and outlines how Development proposals should support the policies and objectives of the Transport Strategy as set out in the borough's Local

Transport Plan. However, the provision and operation of affordable, practical and convenient public transport services does not itself form part of the borough's Development Plan. This is a role that local councils manage via suitable partnerships and where necessary support by subsidy, noting that a Neighbourhood Plan cannot itself set subsidy levels.

The Neighbourhood Plan focuses on expanding on the principles in BLP policy IF2 and site AL7 by ensuring that providing access to and convenient interchanges between different public transport services/modes are considered.

POLICIES: Public Transport Interchange

GA-3

- New station or rail development should incorporate public transport interchange facilities, allowing convenient and easy (step free) interchange between connecting local bus and rail services
- Transport interchange facilities should incorporate:
 - a) Shelters with seating and power, including ports for mobile devices
 - b) Route Maps for the relevant Rail and Bus services
 - c) Real Time information boards (where there are operational systems) providing the latest departure information (timings) for both bus and connecting rail services. Departure information for Train services should additionally include platform numbers where available

Reasoned Justification

The take up and use of public transport (reducing the need for car usage) is encouraged throughout the Neighbourhood Plan, but will be heavily influenced by the convenience and practicality of the services that can be accessed, including how easy it is to change from Rail to Bus and vice versa. Having a fully accessible interchange between Rail and Bus is essential.

SECTION 7. CLIMATE

7.1 Carbon emissions

OBJECTIVE:

To ensure that development proposals do not add to operational carbon emissions, which would make the national target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 harder to meet.

Planning Policy Context

The policy has been developed with regard to the BLP [Part 2, 2.1] policy SP2, the March 2021 RBWM Position statement on sustainability and Energy Efficient Design [Part 2, 2.16] and follows the principles in NPPF [Part 2, 1.1] paragraphs 157, 159, 160, 161, 162 and 164.

POLICIES: Net Zero development

CL-1

- All developments shall provide clear reporting of built environment decarbonisation performance with a focus on both operational and embodied energy/emissions
- Developments over 10 dwellings should report operational energy performance in kWh/m²/year and the percentage of energy use over a year which is matched by onsite renewable energy.
- In line with the energy hierarchy, energy use should be minimised and within this, there should be a focus on minimising energy use for space heating. Onsite renewable energy generation over a year should match energy use, such that the development achieves 'onsite net zero'.
- In line with the energy hierarchy, offsetting to achieve net zero should be seen as a last resort and any offsetting should be quantified and justified.
- Developments over 10 dwellings should report embodied energy performance using the latest RICS-approved methodology with reference to targets set by RICS, RIBA and LETI *Editor's note: Need to say which target and reference (Part 2, 2.19) where it is specified.*

Reasoned Justification

RBWM has declared a Climate emergency with a target date of 2050 for net zero carbon emissions. Buildings constructed now are likely to remain standing and in operation after 2050, so should be able to operate without net carbon emissions. The existing BLP policy SP2 addresses climate change adaptation and mitigation but is silent on requirements on requirements for operational emissions and hence whether developments will have net zero carbon emissions.

We want to see clear and consistent reporting of carbon emissions performance at the planning application stage, such that applications can be easily scrutinised. Also the reporting methodology must allow 'as-built' performance to be easily monitored and evaluated against the design intent.

Three key principles underpin our approach:

- There must be a clear focus on the **energy hierarchy** – this is the simple idea that: A) energy use must be minimised in the first instance through efficiency measures, including high standards of thermal efficiency (a ‘fabric first’ approach); and then B) required energy must be generated from renewable sources onsite, as far as possible. Only if this is not possible (i.e. if there is a residual energy requirement) should there be offsetting - steps taken offsite.
- There is an important distinction between **two types of built environment energy use** – namely A) operational energy use, essentially heat and power use by the building’s occupants; and B) non-operational energy use, commonly referred to as ‘embodied’ energy, and primarily relates to the energy use associated with construction, e.g. steel and concrete production.
- There must be **clear quantifiable performance metrics** that do not stifle innovation – focusing on operational emissions, and at the time of writing this matter is a focus of debate nationally. Industry leaders BioRegional, authors of the RBWM Sustainability SPD [Part 2, 2.17] describe “two camps”,¹ namely: A) supporters of reporting of performance using the complex and confusing Buildings Regulations methodology, which involves reporting performance relative to a Target Emissions Rate (TER) set for a ‘notional building’; and B) simply reporting the energy use / generation balance of any given development in absolute terms (kWh/m²/year). The former approach has well understood and wide ranging issues. The latter approach is strongly favoured by industry specialists, and BioRegional describe it as the only way to achieve “true net zero”. It also allows for ease of monitoring, simply using a smart meter.

Figures 7.1-1 and 7.1-2 below aim to elaborate on the final point regarding best practice reporting of the operational built environment decarbonisation performance of proposed developments. The first figure compares the two competing approaches (‘camps’). The second summarises what is considered to be the best practice approach, commonly referred to as an ‘energy based’ approach.

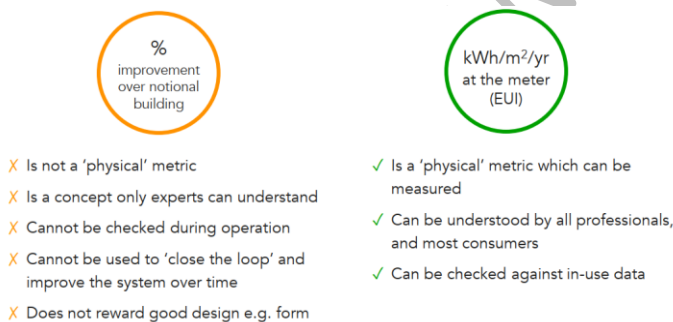
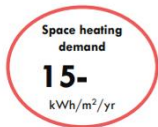


Figure 7.1-1 Illustration of “Two alternative camps”

¹ A presentation given by BioRegional in April 2024 is available [here](#), and the presentation can also be watched [here](#).

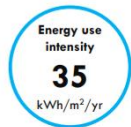
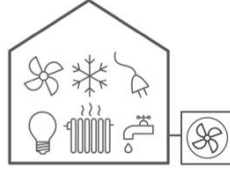
Space heating demand

The amount of **heat energy** needed to heat a home over a year (per square metre)



Energy Use Intensity (EUI)

The amount of **total energy** needed to run a home over a year (per square metre)



Energy balance

The amount of renewable energy generated in a year matches the EUI

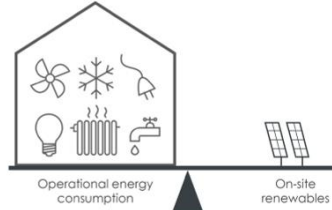


Figure 7.1-2 The energy based / EUI approach to operational net zero (Source: LETI)

RBWM was at the forefront of good practice nationally in 2021 when it set a requirement for reporting performance using the energy based approach through the position statement on sustainability and Energy Efficient Design [Part 2, 2.16]. Subsequently, dozens of local plans have proposed using the energy based approach. We recognise the Written Ministerial Statement of December 2023 which strongly favours the Building Regulations methodology for reporting performance. However, at the time of writing, the advice of BioRegional is that there remains scope to require the energy-based approach.

We recognise that any requirement to achieve energy/emissions standards that go beyond the minimum standards set out in the Building Regulations will have cost implications. We also recognise requiring reporting in energy-based terms will involve a modest degree of administrative burden. Given these factors, the current proposal is for this policy to apply to major developments only (>10 dwellings). Minor developments will continue to be judged under BLP Policy SP2.

WORKING DRAFT - NOT FOR PUBLICATION

SECTION 8. BUILT HERITAGE

8.1 Buildings in Conservation Areas

OBJECTIVE:

To ensure that existing and new buildings in a Conservation Area contribute positively to its character and appearance.

Planning Policy Context

Each Conservation Area is described in a Conservation Area Appraisal. This identifies its special architectural and historic interest, defines the boundaries, and guides planning decisions to ensure that changes through development contribute positively to the character and appearance of the area.

The policies have been developed with regard to the BLP [Part 2, 2.1] paragraph 11.2.5 and policy HE1, and follow the principles in NPPF [Part 2, 1.1] paragraphs 195 to 214. These references set out quite general principles, which are refined here for the Conservation areas in the Neighbourhood Plan Area.

POLICIES: Buildings in Conservation Areas

BH-1

- Proposals for development are required to enhance and preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, as provided in the Conservation Area appraisal *Editor's note: All Saints and Castle Hill do not have appraisals*
- Existing buildings should be retained, unless identified in the Conservation Area appraisal as having a negative effect
- Alterations, extensions and new buildings should respect the form, bulk, style, materials palette, and roofline of the Conservation Area
- The siting of new buildings should be compatible with the historic street pattern and plot layout of the Conservation Area
- Changes of use and new uses should be compatible with the nature of the Conservation Area, and not adversely affect its appearance or character

Reasoned Justification

The Conservation Area Appraisal identifies its special architectural and historic interest, and justifies its designation. The character of a Conservation Area is made up from many aspects, of which the buildings are one. Additions and alterations to existing buildings can change their significance and contribution to the area, with either positive or negative effect. New buildings can contribute positively to a conservation area, provided they recognise the salient characteristics and are compatible with the special interest which justified the area's designation. The policies in this section aim to ensure that development proposals enhance and preserve the contribution made by such buildings.

Not all buildings in a Conservation Area are described in the Conservation Area appraisal, but nonetheless contribute to its character and are therefore expected to be retained. Occasionally, specific existing buildings within a Conservation area are identified as having a negative impact on the character. In such cases, appropriate redevelopment can bring overall improvement.

8.2 Gardens, open spaces, street pattern and parking in Conservation Areas

OBJECTIVE:

To ensure that developments in a Conservation Area retain the contributions to its character and appearance from trees, soft landscaping, street pattern, views and open spaces.

Planning Policy Context

Each Conservation Area is described in a Conservation Area Appraisal. This identifies its special architectural and historic interest, defines the boundaries, and guides planning decisions to ensure that changes through development contribute positively to the character and appearance of the area.

Most Conservation Areas were built before powered road vehicles became commonplace, and were not often designed to accommodate their use. Transport and social developments since then have placed new demands on the historic built environment, and today's needs and expectations can present a challenge to the character and appearance of Conservation Areas.

The policies have been developed with regard to the BLP [Part 2, 2.1] paragraph 11.2.5 and policy HE1, and follow the principles in NPPF [Part 2, 1.1] paragraphs 195 to 214. These references are silent on some common features that help define the character of Conservation areas, but such features are often a relevant concern when determining a planning application. They are therefore appropriate to be addressed in a Neighbourhood Plan.

POLICIES: Gardens, open spaces, street pattern and parking in Conservation Areas

BH-2

- Proposals for development should retain existing trees, hedges, walls and fences unless identified in the Conservation Area appraisal as having a negative effect, and where feasible add sympathetic new plantings and landscaping.
- New boundary treatments should be compatible with the existing character
- Proposals for development should substantially retain the proportion of garden area within plots
- Proposals for development should retain open spaces and views within a Conservation Area, and retain views from the Conservation Area that contribute to its character
- Proposals to add or improve vehicle access and parking should take care to respect and preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area
- Proposals for development should be compatible with the rhythm, spacing, plot size, street pattern and streetscape

Reasoned Justification

The Conservation Area Appraisal identifies its special architectural and historic interest, and justifies its designation. Trees, gardens, the street pattern, the rhythm of building and open spaces very often make a significant contribution. Removal of trees, subdivision of plots, and insertion of access roads can detract from the character and special interest of the area. The policies in this section, taken together with the Conservation Area Appraisal, aim to ensure that development proposals enhance and preserve the Conservation Area as a whole.

8.3 Setting of Heritage Assets

OBJECTIVE:

To ensure that Heritage assets such as Conservation Areas and Listed buildings maintain their significance and character, and are not degraded or adversely affected by development within their setting.

Planning Policy Context

Heritage assets include Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings and items identified on the local list. Their significance lies not only in the assets themselves, but also in their setting. Developments adjacent to Heritage assets should enhance or preserve the significance of the Heritage asset.

The policies have been developed with regard to BLP [Part 2, 2.1] policy HE1, and follow the principles in NPPF [Part 2, 1.1] paragraphs 195 to 214. Historic England's Good Practice Advice [Part 2, 1.3] gives further information.

POLICIES: Setting of Heritage Assets

BH-3

- Development proposals affecting the setting of a Heritage Asset should include an assessment of the effect on the significance of the Heritage Asset. Proposals that result in an adverse impact will be resisted.
- Development which enhances the setting of a Heritage Asset, for example by revealing a view that was masked by previous development, will be supported.
- Developments adjacent to a Conservation Area should respect the scale, density and pattern of the Conservation Area itself, and not adversely affect its appearance, character or significance
- Developments adjacent to or within the curtilage of a listed building should enhance, and not adversely affect, the building's special character, grounds, setting, or justification for listing

Reasoned Justification

Heritage assets are seen in the context of their setting - for example Maidenhead Bridge is a Grade I Listed structure, but its setting and significance include the river itself, the adjacent bankside buildings,

their use for leisure and amenity, and trees in the vicinity. Developments adjacent to Heritage assets can either enhance or detract from the public's enjoyment of the Heritage asset itself.

Other types of Heritage asset such as Conservation Areas, listed or locally listed buildings are experienced within their setting, such as the townscape or adjacent countryside.

The policies in this section, taken together with the description of the Heritage asset itself, aim to ensure that development proposals enhance or preserve the Heritage asset and its setting.

8.4 Local Heritage List Assets

OBJECTIVE:

To ensure that Local Heritage List assets and views maintain their significance, character and value for the enjoyment and enrichment of residents and visitors.

Planning Policy Context

Local Heritage List Assets are classified as non-designated, but which have met criteria for being included on a Local Heritage List. As with designated Heritage Assets, significance lies not only in the assets themselves, but also in their setting.

The policies have been developed with regard to BLP [Part 2, 2.1] policy HE1, and follow the principles in NPPF (Part 2, 1.1) paragraphs 195 to 214. Historic England's Good Practice Advice (Part 2, 1.3) gives further information. These references set out general principles so are applied here to the Local Heritage List assets and Views identified in Appendix 4. The BLP states that non-designated heritage assets may be discovered through a number of different processes, including the making of neighbourhood plans. The Local Heritage List of assets was compiled following extensive public consultation.

POLICIES: Local Heritage List Assets

BH-4


- Local Heritage List Assets should be retained
- Proposals for development within the curtilage of a Local Heritage List Asset or adjacent to it are required to retain the significance of the Asset by preserving or enhancing all of the criteria for which the asset was selected, defined in Appendix 4.
- Alterations and extensions to Local Heritage List Assets should respect the form, bulk, style, materials palette, and roofline of the Asset.
- New buildings within the curtilage of a Local Heritage List Asset or adjacent to it should be compatible with existing street patterns and plot layouts of the heritage asset.
- Changes of use should retain the significance of the Asset by preserving or enhancing all of the criteria for which the Asset was selected.
- Proposals for development affecting views identified in the Local Heritage Asset list are required to retain the significance of the view according to the criteria for which the view was selected

Reasoned Justification

Heritage assets are seen in the context of their setting. Developments adjacent to heritage assets can either enhance or detract from the enjoyment of the asset itself.

Although the BLP refers to non-designated heritage assets of local value and the preparation of Local Heritage Asset lists, it does not include or refer to a list for the Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan Area.

----- Example to show possible format of entry in Maidenhead Local Heritage List -----

16 Linden Avenue	Early C20 detached, with strong characteristics of the Arts and Crafts Movement. It draws on a similar set of features to number 4 Furze Platt Road, but interprets them differently to give a house of different proportions. The roof is less dominant, but other typical features such as the leaded rectangular windows with horizontal emphasis, and the wide half-dormers interrupting the eaves line, remain unchanged. The house has some resemblance to "The Orchard", house of the Arts and Crafts architect C.F.A Voysey.	 <p>Selection criteria met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• architectural interest• aesthetic interest• historic interest
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SECTION 9. BIODIVERSITY

Biodiversity is a measure of variation and richness of living organisms. Biodiversity includes not only organisms and species we consider rare, threatened, or endangered but also every living thing — including organisms we know little about such as microbes, fungi, and invertebrates. Each of these species work together in ecosystems, to maintain balance and support life. No organism can exist in isolation and each contributes to the balance of nature and the survival of life on earth.

There are two reasons to value, uphold and improve biodiversity: taking an anthropocentric point of view, or an ecocentric perspective. An anthropocentric position measures biodiversity based on what humans need to survive such as food and fuel production, regulation of flooding and climate change, maintaining and being maintained by soil and water quality, shelter and carbon storage as well as mental and physical health and recreation needs. An ecocentric position considers that all organisms have an intrinsic value, irrespective of any potential human uses; an ecocentric perspective values all organisms, ecosystems and species for their own sake without needing to reference a benefit to humans.

We are seeing a transition in the drafting of legislation from an anthropocentric worldview to a more ecocentric approach emphasising the importance of holistic ecosystem protection. The Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan embraces an ecocentric as well as anthropocentric position.

The Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan area is largely urban, and expanding due to the increased pressure on housing numbers. Urban areas are often considered as being less important for biodiversity than the more rural environments. However, urban environments can provide important habitats for a range of plants and animals as well as providing ecosystem services for local residents, such as mental and physical health and wellbeing, provision of food and clean water, reduction of pollution and flood amelioration. Features such as roads and railways connect the majority of the man-made structures within the borough but can also provide important connectivity for wildlife.

New developments can have a significant effect on wildlife and on the ability of people to experience and enjoy nature and therefore it is important that this be recognised, protected and enhanced.

The biggest opportunity for enhancing biodiversity and creating new habitat in urban areas is by 'urban greening'. This can be through the creation of green roofs, green walls, providing artificial nest and roosting sites for birds and bats and through the incorporation of Sustainable Urban Drainage systems (SuDS).

9.1 Green and Blue Infrastructure

OBJECTIVE:

To ensure that existing green and blue corridors are maintained and enhanced, and able to connect wildlife habitats together allowing movement of species. Where such corridors are also public footpaths or cycle paths, to allow their continued use as a pleasant alternative to roadside pathways.

Planning Policy Context

The policies have been developed with regard to the BLP [Part 2, 2.1] paragraphs 6.4.6, 6.10.1, 6.10.2, 6.10.3, 12.4.2, 12.4.3 and 12.6.1 to 12.6.3, and with regard to policies NR2, NR3, QP2 and IF5 on Nature Conservation and Biodiversity, on Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows, on Green and Blue Infrastructure and on Rights of Way and Access to the Countryside respectively.

Paragraphs 12.6.2 and 12.6.3 of the BLP refer to trees, woodlands and hedgerows, but are silent on how such corridors are to be identified or taken into account when determining a planning application. Paragraph 12.4.3 of the BLP states that development proposals should contribute to the creation and enhancement of green corridors and networks, and suggests that this could encompass features such as grass verges, hedgerows, woodland and parks.

The policies follow the principles in NPPF [Part 2, 1.1] paragraphs 181 and 185.

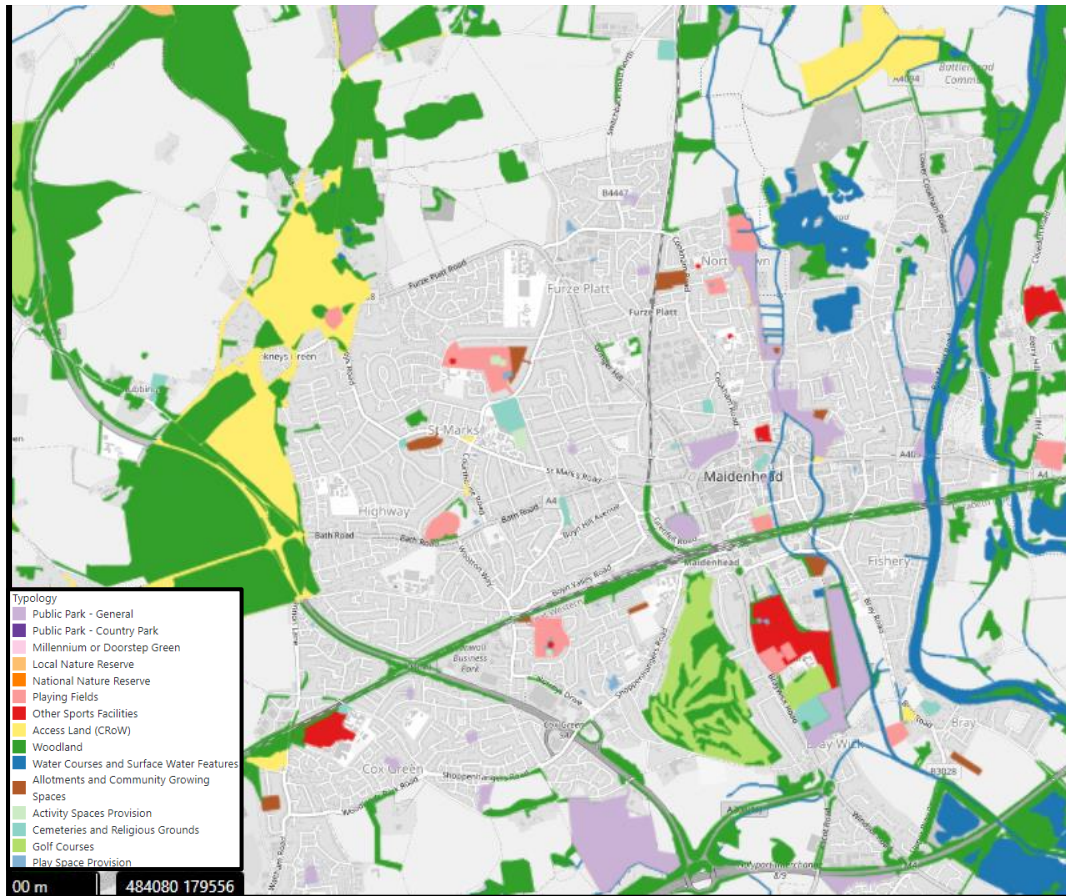
The policies also have regard to section 9, 'Recommended Next Steps', of the 2019 RBWM Green and Blue Infrastructure Study [Part 2, 2.18], particularly the recommendations to work closely with communities and to protect Green and Blue assets.

POLICIES: Green and Blue Corridors

BI-1

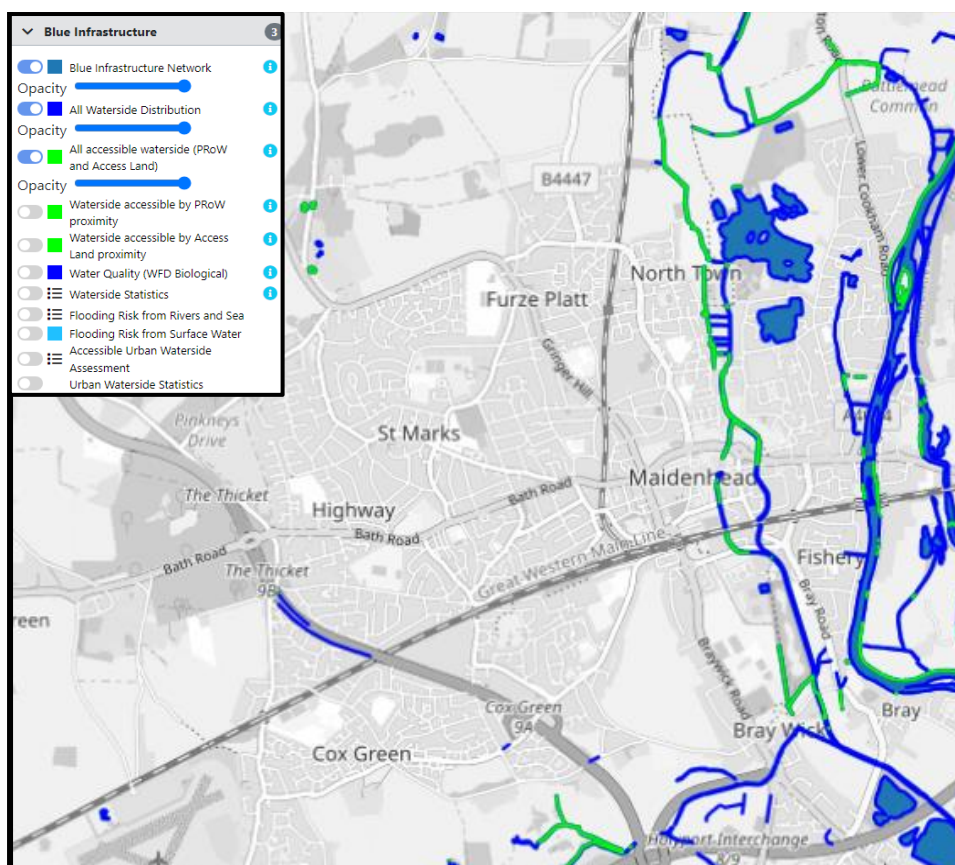
- Green and Blue corridors, existing and proposed, are defined on Maps 9.1-1 and 9.1-2
- For land corridors a best practice minimum width of 5m is to be retained for natural habitat
- Proposals for development on or adjacent to identified Green corridors must maintain and as far as possible, enhance the function of the corridor. Proposals for development should demonstrate how connectivity and continuity of green corridors is provided, to allow free movement for species on or through the site.
- Proposals that provide new blue corridors or enhance and the expand existing blue corridors will be supported. Proposals to connect two or more existing blue corridors will be supported where the proposal can demonstrate an ecological and social benefit
- Where development proposals border the existing blue infrastructure network defined in map 9.1-2 they should demonstrate how they intend to mitigate the impact on or enhance the blue infrastructure network whilst maintaining public access

Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan.



Map 9.1-1 Green Corridors

WORKING DRAFT NOT FOR



Map 9.1-2 Blue Infrastructure

Editor's note: Both maps should show Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan Area

Editor's note: Some watercourses shown on the map are seasonally or permanently dry

Reasoned Justification

Green corridors often exist as historic pathways or routes that have since been urbanised, but where plants are allowed to grow with minimal maintenance. As such they often provide both habitats for wildlife and a pleasant walking or cycling route away from roads, hard landscaping and heavily built-up areas. They can also provide a route connecting wildlife habitats, for example larger green spaces such as public parks.

To retain these often under-valued functions, such corridors should be kept green, for example by the retention of hedgerows rather than replacement by walls or fences.

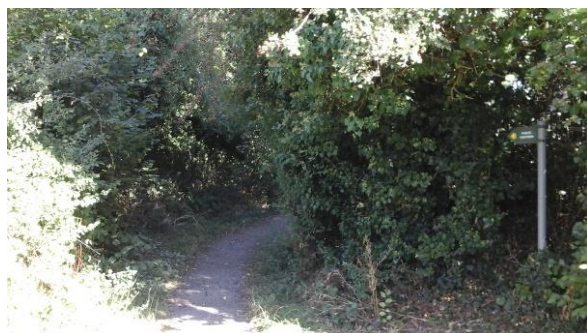
As identified in the RBWM Biodiversity Action Plan [Part 2, 2.19], the waterways in Maidenhead are invaluable to wildlife. Additionally, the BAP states that waterways are currently under threat and that protecting them will be important to achieving sustainable development within the Borough. As such, the policies aim to support the connection and enhancement of Maidenhead's waterways, providing more valuable spaces for nature and enhancing access by the public.

Within the Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan area there are several significant areas of blue infrastructure, including the River Thames and the York Stream. The Neighbourhood Plan area also

includes several lakes and ponds which the BAP states are associated with numerous protected and priority species.

Note that the Maidenhead Waterway corridor is covered by a separate policy.

Examples of footpaths that do/do not provide Green Corridors:



a) Off Cannon Court Road



b) Near Switchback Road South

9.2 Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)

OBJECTIVE:

Ensure that new developments and improvements to existing ones include Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) that benefit wildlife and help to alleviate flood risks.

Planning Policy Context

The policies have been developed with regard to the BLP [Part 2, 2.1] Objective 1 which includes Protecting and enhancing biodiversity within the Borough, Objective 9 which includes ensuring that new development contributes to environmental improvement, and Objective 11 which includes promoting sustainable design and construction and managing flood risk through the location and design of development.

They have also been developed with regard to the BLP [Part 2, 2.1] policies SP2 on Climate Change, QP2 on Green and Blue Infrastructure and NR1 on Managing Flood Risk and waterways. The policies follow the principles in NPPF paragraphs 173 and 175.

Policy NR1 of the BLP refers to sustainable urban drainage systems but does not detail the design standards required when determining a planning application. Policy QP2 also suggests that Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) could be included in development proposals as a way of providing blue infrastructure. Equally, the Borough Wide Design Guide [Part 2, 2.20] adopted in 2019 gives no guidance on the design of sustainable urban drainage systems. The **emerging** RBWM Sustainability SPD [Part 2, 2.17] does give detailed guidance on how proposals can demonstrate they have implemented SuDS, and also suggests a range of SuDS measures that can be incorporated such as green roofs, permeable paving, rain gardens, swales, retention ponds and attenuation tanks.

The policies therefore refer to the CIRIA SuDS manual to ensure all SuDS are implemented and maintained effectively. **Guidance produced by the RSPB and WWT on how to design and manage SuDS for the benefit of both people and wildlife (2013) is also referenced** and should be taken into account by applicants in planning applications.

POLICIES: Sustainable Drainage Systems

BI-2

- Proposals for development should demonstrate that:
 - a) there is adequate water drainage infrastructure to serve the development, without surcharge of foul drainage; and
 - b) there will be no adverse impacts from flood risk, including surface water flood risk on adjoining or downstream land; and
 - c) mechanical pumping is not required in order to prevent flood impact, in the event of up to and including a 1 in 100 year event
- Where SuDS are proposed as part of any development:
 - a) The design of all SuDS should be in accordance with guidance established in the CIRIA SuDS Manual [Part 2, 2.10] or a subsequent update of this **Editor's note: Also RSPB and WWT**
 - b) SuDS should be designed to be multi-functional and deliver benefits for wildlife, amenity and landscape; and
 - c) Where it is proposed to provide SuDS within the public realm these should be designed as an integral part of the green infrastructure and street network, responding positively to the character of the area.

Reasoned Justification

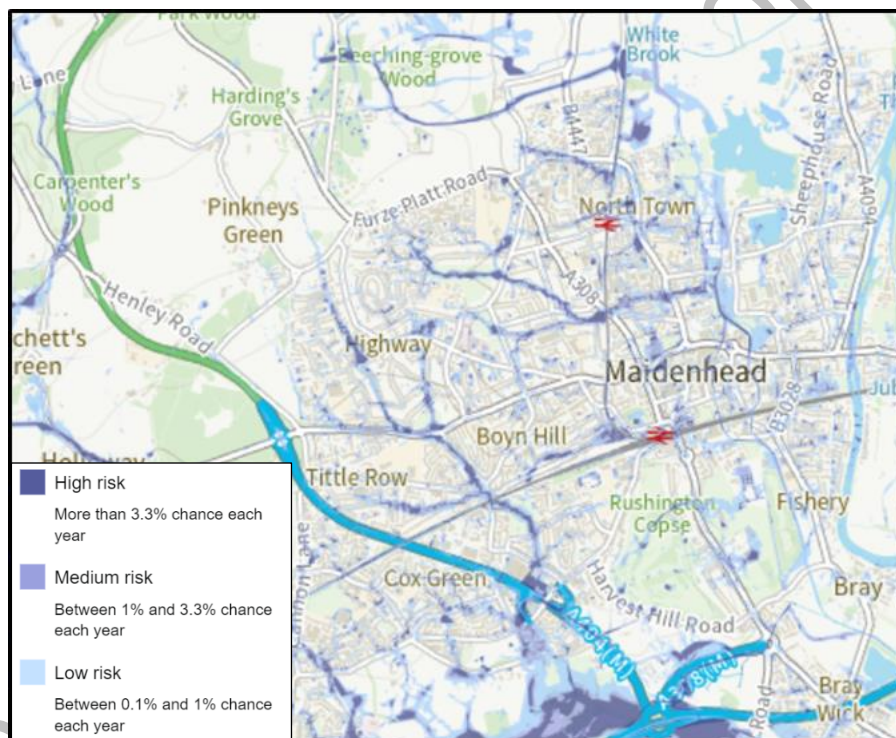
Large parts of the Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan area are at risk from fluvial and/or surface water flooding, as shown in maps 9.2-1 and 9.2-2. With the increasing threat of more extreme weather events due to climate change, such as more frequent flooding and wetter winters, it is now very important that neighbourhood plans consider correct water management. In the past, site water management has attempted to remove water off site through pipes as quickly as possible. Sustainable drainage systems are a way of managing surface water run-off so as to retain water on or near the site, and therefore to mimic natural drainage systems that allow water to permeate into the ground.

The RBWM Borough Wide Design Guide recognises the value of SuDS not just in mitigating the risk of flooding, but also in contributing diverse and high-quality network of open spaces. Indeed, the use of SuDS can help contribute towards achievement of biodiversity net gain on development sites, as well as comprising a wider response to climate change and resilience. SuDS can not only enhance biodiversity by providing habitats and food for wildlife, but they can also help to mitigate the urban heat island effect through a cooling effect produced by evapotranspiration.

Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan.



Map 9.2-1 Maidenhead Flood Zones



Map 9.2-2 Surface water, ground water and reservoir flood risk

Editor's note: Add small number of SuDS pictures or diagrams?

Editor's note: Both maps should show Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan Area

9.3 Biodiversity Net Gain

OBJECTIVE:

To ensure that opportunities for biodiversity and habitat retention and improvement are sought and realised as part of development schemes.

Planning Policy Context

The Environment Act 2021 is the national legislative framework for environmental protection and covers the protection of nature and biodiversity, water and air quality and waste. It requires that all developments (excluding exemptions) deliver a minimum biodiversity net gain of 10%.

The policies have been developed with regard to the BLP [Part 2, 2.1] paragraph 12.4.1 and policy NR2, which relate to nature conservation and the role planning can play in protecting and enhancing biodiversity. They have also been developed in regard to Monitoring Indicator 9, which requires that all developments are to result in a biodiversity net gain of at least 10% in line with national legislation.

The policy follows the principles in NPPF [Part 2, 1.1] paragraphs 180, 185 and 186. The policy has also been developed with regard to the **emerging** RBWM Sustainability Supplementary Planning Document [Part 2, 2.17], particularly section 6.2.1 on Biodiversity Net Gain.

POLICIES: Biodiversity net gain

BI-3

- Development proposals must manage impacts on biodiversity and secure a minimum biodiversity gain of 10%, as calculated through use of the most up-to-date version of the DEFRA statutory biodiversity metric, with confirmation that this was performed by a suitably competent person. A biodiversity net gain plan should be provided, informed by current site conditions, with any proposed habitat creation being appropriate to local context, shown on site or landscape plans, and secured for 30 years or more. On-site gain is at the top of the hierarchy.
- Where practicable, development proposals will be looked favourably upon where they secure a biodiversity net gain of 20% or higher, taking into account the scope for improvement from the pre-development site.
- Where it is not practicable to deliver biodiversity net-gain on-site, off-site measures are second in the hierarchy and must be provided to offset any biodiversity deficit. These must be located within the Borough and as close as possible to the development site. The applicant will need to demonstrate these are deliverable and maintainable, and show how these support projects identified in the RBWM Biodiversity Action Plan [Part 2, 2.19].
- The applicant is required to demonstrate why offsetting is necessary with reference to the specific characteristics of the development site, and confirm that offsetting credits have not been used to 'compensate' any loss of irreplaceable habitat which is defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF [Part 2, 1.1] and must be retained.
- As a minimum, proposals should integrate as many as practical of the following wildlife habitat features:
 - a) Integral bird nest bricks (such as swift bricks) at a minimum of two per dwelling
 - b) Integral bat boxes
 - c) Inclusion of overhanging eaves suitable for nesting house martins, supplemented by the provision of nest cups

- d) Inclusion of landscape features to support insect life, such as log piles, insect hotels, invertebrate/bee bricks and reptile hibernacula
- e) Hedgehog highways (such as suitable gaps in fences) integrated throughout the development between gardens and the wider ecological network
- f) Use native plants in landscaping schemes
- Outside the town centre as defined by map 4.1-1, proposals should strive to incorporate a range of landscape features that provide:
 - a) A diverse patchwork of complementary habitats and edges
 - b) Planting that provides nectar, pollen or fruit across as wide a period of the year as possible
 - c) Planting that can be maintained with minimal disturbance, especially wildflower meadows and verges which only need to be cut once or twice a year
 - d) Wildlife access to water, such as ponds and water features
 - e) Maintenance of 'dark' areas at night time, avoiding light pollution to habitats

Reasoned Justification

Conditions to protect and enhance wildlife must be included with development proposals. This means developers will have to agree to make provision for nature within the development before they are granted full planning permission. Even small scale developments could contribute significantly to creating and enhancing local wildlife habitat.

As per the national approach, negative impacts to 'irreplaceable habitat' cannot be compensated with offsetting and proposals should be designed not to harm them. Any such harm must be treated separately from the main BNG metric, but enhancements to them can count towards the net gain. RBWM will use the definition of irreplaceable habitats in the NPPF [Part 2, 1.1] which are: ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees, blanket bog, limestone pavement, sand dunes, salt marsh and lowland fen.

9.4 Urban Greening

OBJECTIVE:

To maximise available Town centre space to enhance the natural environment, biodiversity and important wildlife habitats, and to ensure that opportunities for biodiversity improvement are sought and realised as part of development schemes.

Planning Policy Context

The policies have been developed with regard to the BLP paragraphs 6.10.2 and 6.10.3, which relate to the importance of green and blue infrastructure networks. Section 3 of the Borough's Green and Blue Infrastructure Study (2019) [Part 2, 2.18], defines green roofs and walls as urban greening approaches to providing green infrastructure.

The policy follows the principles in NPPF [Part 2, 1.1] paragraph 20 d), which references conservation and enhancement of the natural environment, including green infrastructure.

Section 4.3.2 of the **emerging** Sustainability SPD [Part 2, 2.17] which relates to the provision of green roofs to mitigate heat gain, has also been referenced in the policies.

POLICIES: Urban Greening

BI-4

- Within the town centre area as defined by map 4.1-1, development proposals should seek to maximise the green space provided on site through the specification of:
 - a) Intensive or extensive green roofs
 - b) Brown roofs
 - c) Blue roofs
 - d) Podium roofs
 - e) Green walls
- Proposals should strive to design green roofs with enough substrate to support invertebrates and ground-nesting birds
- Planting schedules should strive to incorporate native planting to feed native wildlife

Reasoned Justification

The RBWM Biodiversity Action Plan section identified that the largest opportunity to enhance biodiversity in the Borough's urban environments is through 'urban greening', which can be provided through green roofs and walls. Green roofs, podium roofs and walls can be designed in a variety of ways to complement different types of development. The characteristics and benefits of the various roof types and green walls are outlined below.

Intensive green roofs offer the greatest range of benefits but also require the most work to maintain. Also known as 'roof gardens' intensive green roofs are suitable for installation on strong structures that can accommodate a substrate depth from 150mm to 450mm, to support grasses, perennials, shrubs and trees. Intensive green roofs can afford benefits under both amenity and biodiversity value including mitigation of the urban heat island effect, storm water attenuation, insulation, aesthetic value, improvement to health and well-being and increased urban biodiversity.

Extensive green roofs typically provide visual interest and biodiversity value but afford little amenity value. The substrate depth would be lower, and therefore the structure more suitable for buildings that could not support the load of an intensive green roof. Vegetation may include sedums and wildflowers.

Brown roofs are not designed to support plants but rather provide a rocky environment to support a number of bird species. Blue roofs are designed specifically to hold surface water and therefore limit the burden on the drainage network. The captured water can be treated and used for purposes within the building such as to flush toilets or irrigation.

Podium roofs are types of inverted roofs used to create communal outdoor spaces in the form of roof platforms, predominantly serving as trafficked amenity spaces. These can include landscaped

recreational areas similar to green roofs, but within the context of the greater Maidenhead area could be used to house planters and encourage biodiversity through organic fruit and vegetable growing.

Green walls can introduce striking features at ground level, transforming the character of an area and delivering a host of biodiversity and air quality benefits.

WORKING DRAFT NOT FOR PUBLICATION

SECTION 10. SITE-SPECIFIC POLICIES

10.1 Maidenhead Waterway Corridor

OBJECTIVE:

To ensure that the Maidenhead Waterway Corridor fulfils its potential in all its key roles, as an accessible public amenity asset, a wildlife habitat and a sustainable transport route.

Planning Policy Context

The Maidenhead Waterway corridor that runs through the town centre and Neighbourhood Plan area deserves special consideration in planning terms, because it serves a number of purposes simultaneously:

- A walking route, forming part of the Green Way
- A cycling route through Maidenhead Town Centre
- A wildlife habitat for both land and water-based species, and those that inhabit the margin
- A navigable route for canoes, paddle boards and other small boats. As a side channel of the Thames the waterway has a public right of navigation
- A public Amenity space and attraction within the town
- A channel for carrying flood water through Maidenhead

Uncoordinated development in the town centre over many years led to the waterway being ignored, allowing it to become a wasted asset and largely hidden flood channel. Unstable water supply, lack of maintenance and shallow water depths have over time undermined the habitats and its role and effectiveness as a designated wildlife corridor. RBWM's adopted 2009 Waterways Framework policy [Part 2, 2.6] for the first time required new developments to protect and embrace the waterway, while its flood role has been much reduced following the construction of the Jubilee River. The 2011 Area Action Plan [Part 2, 2.5] took the protections of the Framework policy a step further and aimed to make the waterway a major feature of a rejuvenated town centre and a key public amenity for the benefit of everyone that lives, works or spends their leisure time in Maidenhead. It acknowledged an existing shortfall in green Public Open Space in the town centre, which the waterway helps overcome. The BLP proposes many more new households in the town centre, almost all flats, and with no existing alternative areas of public open space inside the town centre ring road, the importance of the waterway as an accessible public amenity and green Public Open Space for the future has increased accordingly.

The policies aim to ensure the Maidenhead Waterway corridor continues to provide all the listed functions, is genuinely sustainable, and that adjacent developments enhance the corridor without adversely affecting any of its purposes, or eroding its benefit to people and wildlife. In accordance with the Framework policy and evolution strategy set out in the consented planning application for the Waterway, no new obstructions to navigation will be permitted.

The policies and map have been developed with regard to the 2009 Maidenhead Waterways Framework [Part 2, 2.6], the RBWM Public Rights of Way Management and Improvement Plan [Part

2, 2.3], to the RBWM Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan [Part 2, 2.15], and to the BLP [Part 2, 2.1] policies NR1 and IF5.

The policies follow the principles in NPPF [Part 2, 1.1] paragraphs 96, 97, 104, 108, 110, 180 and 185.

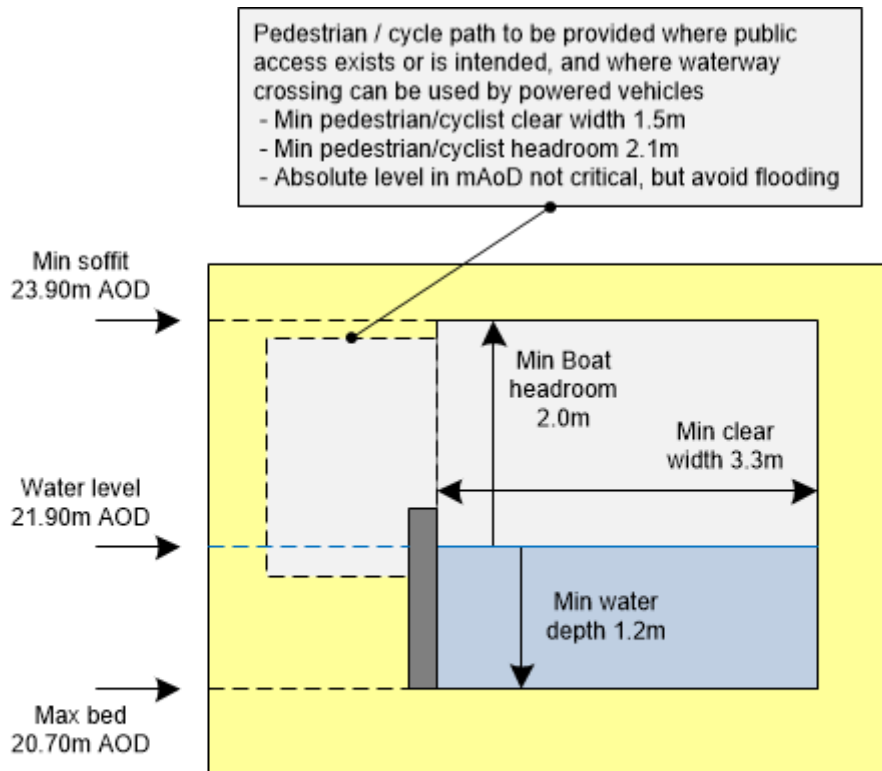
POLICIES: Waterway Corridor

SS-1

- Public access for walking and cycling is expected on one bank of the Waterway Corridor, with the opposite bank prioritised for wildlife habitat. Development proposals are expected to comply with Map 10.1-1 showing the intended public access bank and wildlife habitat bank, together with an area in the more urban part of the town centre where public access is expected on both banks.
- Proposals for development on either bank are expected to retain or provide at least an 8m buffer zone of green space, with banks sloping to the water's edge
- Proposals for development adjacent to the Waterway Corridor shall demonstrate that cycling and walking connectivity and public access is provided, maintained or enhanced according to Map 10.1-1
- Developments with public amenity space adjacent to the waterway are expected to incorporate facilities for boat launching and embarking/disembarking of canoes, paddleboards and other small craft
- Walking routes should allow uninterrupted walking, adjoining and in clear sight of the water's edge and minimise the requirement to cross roads
- Cycling routes should allow continuous riding, and minimise requirements to stop, dismount, or give way to vehicular traffic
- Proposals for new or replacement crossing structures over or under the Waterway shall comply with the Navigation and access standard below, allowing use by boats, and for a continuous pedestrian and cycle path where public access is provided or consented. Map 10.1-1 shows where the crossing structure standards apply.
- Proposals for public amenity space adjacent to the Waterway Corridor will be supported, subject to the wildlife habitat requirements above
- Proposals affecting the ability of the Waterway to carry flood water shall demonstrate that they do not increase flood risk
- Development proposals affecting the banks or bed of the waterway shall demonstrate that they do not adversely affect the flow or levels of water.
- Development adjoining the waterway shall contribute toward the costs of maintaining the banks, bed and water in the channel, proportionately to the length of banks adjoining the site being developed. Maintenance of the water includes protecting the water supply, maintaining water quality, undertaking weed and litter clearance, plus removal of obstructions that fall into the water. Undertakings would be secured in perpetuity via a S106 agreement attaching to the consent.

Editor's note: Placeholder for map defining Waterway Corridor. This map defines sections of the waterway where crossing requirements apply, and the Public access Bank/Wildlife habitat bank. Decide how to handle sections where there is no existing or consented public access.

Map 10.1-1 Waterway Corridor



Minimum Crossing requirements below Ray Mill Road West and above Green Lane Weir

If crossing is on or near a bend, clear width should increase to allow navigation

From below Green Lane Weir to Hibbert Road, the minimum soffit height is 22.75m AOD, set to be no more restrictive than the existing crossing at Green Lane, the most upstream point.

Reasoned Justification

The Maidenhead Waterways project was conceived as an amenity asset for residents of the Maidenhead area, and as a contribution to sustainability including wildlife habitat. In itself it creates a new place but will affect, and be affected by, adjacent development. It is important to achieve a balance between the benefit conferred on, or given by, adjacent developments and retaining the wildlife and amenity value of the waterway as an escape from the urban environment.

The following examples illustrate aspects of the Waterway in its current form that do, or not, meet the key purposes:

Examples of York stream bridges that do/do not meet the connectivity and navigation requirements:



a) St Cloud Way

b) York Road

a) St Cloud Way bridge:

- Provides uninterrupted walking, without having to cross a road
- Provides continuous riding, without need to stop, dismount, or give way to vehicular traffic
- Provides boat headroom and depth to navigation standard

b) York Road bridge:

- Interrupts walking route, need to cross a road
- Fails to provide continuous cycling: need to stop, dismount, and give way to vehicular traffic
- Inadequate boat headroom and depth for navigation standard

Good design of structures such as bridges encourages use of sustainable transport, avoids conflict with or interruption to road traffic, and allows access by mobility-impaired users. It also makes for easier, safer and more enjoyable use by parents with young children or by elderly people.

Note that although these bridges provide for movement of fish and birds, St Cloud way does not provide easy movement for land-based animals as there is no habitat or cover. York Road bridge does not provide easy movement for non-swimming land-based animals, as they must cross the road.

10.2 Local Green Spaces

OBJECTIVE:

To provide sufficient accessible Local Green Spaces for Maidenhead's growing population, ensuring existing green spaces remain green, retain their current level of access to the public, and support biodiversity by providing wildlife habitat. Spaces designated because of the richness of their wildlife serve to protect and enhance biodiversity, and to educate the population on biodiversity benefits.

Planning Policy Context

The policies have been developed with regard to the BLP [Part 2, 2.1] paragraphs 14.8.2 and 14.10.2 to 14.10.5 and policy IF4 on Open Space. They have also been developed with regard to BLP

paragraphs 6.10.1 to 6.10.3 and policy IF3 on Local Green Space, and to BLP paragraphs 12.4.1 to 12.4.6, 12.6.1 to 12.6.7 and policies NR2 and NR3 on Nature Conservation and Biodiversity and on Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows respectively.

The only Local Green Space designated by the BLP [Part 2, 2.1] is in Cookham, outside Maidenhead's Neighbourhood Plan area. Designation of Local Green Space is within scope of a Neighbourhood Plan according to NPPF [Part 2, 1.1] paragraph 105. The policies and designations follow the principles in NPPF paragraphs 105, 106 and 107.

POLICIES: Local Green Spaces

SS-2

- Local Green Spaces are defined on Map 10.2-1, and Table 10.2-1 summarises the justification for the designation according to the criteria in NPPF [Part 2, 1.1] paragraph 106.
- Designated Local Green Spaces should be retained as predominantly green, and minimise hard or artificial surfaces to a small proportion of the site. All such surfaces should be made of rainwater permeable materials allowing rain to go straight into the earth below rather than run off into drains or sewers.
- Where Local Green Spaces have existing recreational or sport usage, development connected with the sport or recreational activity will be supported subject to complying with other policies within this plan, for:
 - Changing rooms
 - Pavilions, club houses and cafes
 - Surfaced tracks, access roads, car and bike parking
- Development connected with the sport or recreational activity shall:
 - demonstrate the need in connection with the recreational activity
 - be of a size and scale proportionate to the size of the site and number of users
 - be in keeping with the surrounding area
 - have no significant detrimental impact on the ability of the site to accommodate playing pitches
- Development proposals that allocate 50% or more of the total site area as green space, of which half is public access, will be looked favourably upon.
- Development proposals that allocate 70% or more of the accessible outdoor space as planting or tree canopy will be looked favourably upon. *Editor's note: The policy bullets need to be scaled back and should differentiate between green spaces that are primarily for amenity and those that are primarily for wildlife, noting that some spaces do both. In addition to the NPPF criteria, the list of green spaces could include MNF-specific tags so we can identify which policy bullets apply to each (for example don't build on wildlife sites).*

Editor's note: Placeholder for map defining Local Green Spaces. Do we need an overall map, or just a map for each in Table 10.2-1?

Map 10.2-1 Local Green Spaces

Reasoned Justification

NPPF [Part 2, 1.1] paragraph 106 defines the criteria for Local Green Space designation. To meet this designation green spaces should be:

- a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
- c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

Table 10.2-1 summarises how each proposed site meets the above criteria.

BLP [Part 2, 2.1] policy IF4 on Open Space is written in general terms, and does not define specific locations. It is almost silent on the balance of land use between for example sports facilities, which are essential to human wellbeing but often provide little biodiversity, and natural or wild areas where wildlife can thrive.

Where Local Green Spaces have existing recreational or sport usage, in line with Sport England recommendations [Part 2, 1.11] the provision of new or enhanced ancillary facilities can play an important role in helping people to become and stay active as well as improving the use and viability of a playing field for sport. Along with enhancing the experience for existing users, they can make use of the playing field a more attractive proposition for potential new users.

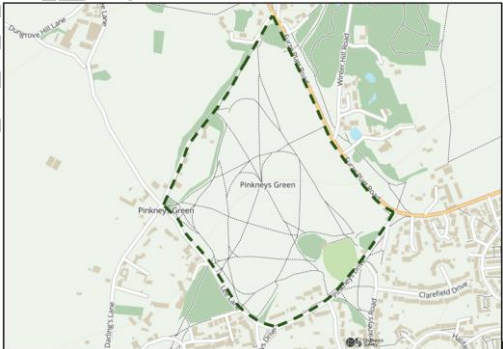
Additionally, the 2019 RBWM Open Space Study [Part 2, 2.21] section 15.24 states the biodiversity value of open space sites can be considerably enhanced in most types of open space, even those where maintenance is relatively formal. The provision of these areas of Local Green Space will enable their protection, providing the opportunity for biodiversity enhancement within Maidenhead.

There are few areas left within the Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan environs that are designated for nature over people and play. Green spaces designated because of the richness of their wildlife need protection so biodiversity within them can survive and thrive, and future generations can enjoy them.

Table 10.2-1: Local Green Spaces

Editor's note: Review list, and remove sites that are already protected by being in Green Belt

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Map Ref	Site Name	Summary of reasons for designation in NPPF paragraph 106
	Pinkneys Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity: Adjacent to North-Western edge of Maidenhead urban area • Community value: Accessible Open Common with network of paths, Rich grassland habitat • Character: Defined common, not extensive tract of land

[x]	Sailing Club Lake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proximity: Close to and surrounded by North-Eastern part of Maidenhead urban area Community value: Recreation area for water sports Character: Lake, not extensive tract of land
[x]	Braywick Formal Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proximity: Close to and surrounded by Southern part of Maidenhead urban area, and close to land designated in the BLP [Part 2, 2.1] for housing development Community value: Key publicly accessible recreation area, Mature ornamental trees Character: Defined local recreation Area, not extensive tract of land
[x]	Oaken Grove Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proximity: Close to and surrounded by North West part of Maidenhead urban area Community value: Key publicly accessible recreation area, Play Area, Sports pitches, Mature Trees. Character: Defined local recreation Area, not extensive tract of land
[x]	Boyn Grove Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proximity: Close to and surrounded by Western part of Maidenhead urban area Community value: Key publicly accessible recreation area, Play Area, Sports pitches, Mature Trees. Character: Defined local recreation Area, not extensive tract of land
[x]	Desborough Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proximity: Close to and surrounded by Southern part of Maidenhead urban area Community value: Key publicly accessible recreation area, Play Area, Sports pitches, Mature Trees. Character: Defined local recreation Area, not extensive tract of land

[x]	Grenfell Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity: Close to and surrounded by Maidenhead urban area, near station • Community value: Key publicly accessible recreation area, Play Area, Mature Trees and Woodland. • Character: Defined local recreation Area, not extensive tract of land
[x]	Kidwell's Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity: Close to and surrounded by Maidenhead urban area, near Town centre • Community value: Key publicly accessible recreation area, Play Area, Mature Trees, open space used for community events. • Character: Defined local recreation Area, not extensive tract of land
[x]	Riverside Gardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity: Close to and surrounded by Maidenhead Riverside residential Area • Community value: Key publicly accessible recreation area adjacent to River Thames, Play Area, Crazy Golf Course, Mature Trees. • Character: Defined local recreation Area, not extensive tract of land
[x]	Town Moor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity: Close to and surrounded by North Eastern part of Maidenhead urban area, near Town centre • Community value: Key publicly accessible open space, adjacent to York Stream and Moor Cut, Mature Trees, Biodiversity value. • Character: Defined local recreation Area, not extensive tract of land
[x]	Ray Mill Island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity: Close to and surrounded by Maidenhead Riverside residential Area • Community value: Key publicly accessible recreation area adjacent to Weir, River Thames and Boulter's Lock, Play Area, Streamside walk, Aviary, Mature Trees, view across to Cliveden estate. • Character: Defined local recreation Area, not extensive tract of land

[x]	Guard's Club Park and Island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proximity: Close to and surrounded by Maidenhead Riverside residential Area Community value: Key publicly accessible recreation area adjacent to River Thames and Maidenhead Bridges, footbridge across to island, Mature Trees, view across river. Character: Defined local recreation Area, not extensive tract of land
[x]	Bridge Gardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proximity: Close to and surrounded by Maidenhead Riverside residential Area Community value: Publicly accessible recreation area adjacent to River Thames and Maidenhead Bridge, Mature Trees, view across river. Character: Defined local recreation Area, not extensive tract of land
[x]	Summerleaze Lake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proximity: Close to and surrounded by North Eastern part of Maidenhead urban area Community value: Wildlife, breeding for Toad population Character: Lake, not extensive tract of land
[x]	Pinkneys Green Cricket Ground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proximity: Adjacent to North Western part of Maidenhead urban area Community value: Home to Pinkneys Green Cricket Club, Mature Trees. Character: Defined local Sports Pitch, not extensive tract of land
[x]	North Maidenhead Cricket Ground and Maidenhead Softball Ground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proximity: Adjacent to North Eastern part of Maidenhead urban area Community value: Home to North Maidenhead Cricket Club and Maidenhead Softball Club. Character: Defined local Sports Pitch, not extensive tract of land
[x]	Boyne Hill Cricket Ground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proximity: Surrounded by Western part of Maidenhead urban area Community value: Home to Boyne Hill Cricket Club.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Character: Defined local Sports Pitch, not extensive tract of land
[x]	Maidenhead Thicket	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rationale for selection: Mature woodland • Proximity: Close to Western fringe of Maidenhead dense urban area • Community value: Accessible woodland with network of paths, Rich Wildlife, Prehistoric Celtic farm enclosure, Historic refuge of Highwaymen • Character: Defined local woodland, not extensive tract of land
[x]	Braywick Nature Reserve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rationale for selection: Designated Local Nature Reserve, Home of the Braywick Nature Centre and outdoor classroom that benefits thousands of school children annually • Proximity: Close to and surrounded by Southern part of Maidenhead urban area, and close to land designated in the BLP [Part 2, 2.1] for housing development • Community value: Diverse habitat, Rich Wildlife and Educational resource • Character: Defined local Nature reserve, not extensive tract of land
[x]	The Gullet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rationale for selection: Designated Local Nature Reserve • Proximity: Close to and surrounded by Southern part of Maidenhead urban area, near station • Community value: Accessible woodland with paths, Rich Wildlife • Character: Defined local woodland, not extensive tract of land
[x]	Deerswood Meadow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rationale for selection: Protect vulnerable Toad population, valuable area given for natural sustainable drainage systems

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity: Close to and surrounded by North Eastern part of Maidenhead urban area • Community value: Open space, rough cycling, Rich Wildlife including Toad population • Character: Defined local open space, not extensive tract of land
[x]	Battlemead Common	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rationale for selection: Rare birds and insects, wetland habitat, to encourage a diverse range of wild plants and animals to thrive there at certain times of the year to hasten the return to a richer and more diverse habitat • Proximity: To the west and north of the Maidenhead urban area • Community value: Diverse habitat, Rich Wildlife and Educational resource, walking paths • Character: Defined local open space, not extensive tract of land

SECTION 11. INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS

11.1 Community priorities for Developer contributions

SECTION 12. DELIVERY AND IMPLEMENTATION

12.1 Proposed Delivery and Implementation Mechanisms, Policy Monitoring.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 - Abbreviations

BLP	Borough Local Plan
BNG	Biodiversity Net Gain
IDP	Infrastructure Delivery Plan
LWS	Local Wildlife Site
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document

APPENDIX 2 – Maidenhead Design Code

APPENDIX 3 – Maidenhead Housing Needs Assessment

APPENDIX 4 – Local Heritage List of assets

APPENDIX 5 - List of Committee members

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REPORT VERSION CONTROL

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