# MAIDENHEAD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

2024-2039

# POLICIES

# Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan: Policies

## Date: 5-Feb-2026

Plan Period: 2024 to 2039

Status: Referendum version

Qualifying body: Maidenhead Neighbourhood Forum

# 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 sustainable 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 (BLP) 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 (IDP).

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. It is worth noting that, because of increasing environmental concerns, this Plan contains entire sections about climate and biodiversity.

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 sustainable and a more pleasant place to live.

Best regards,

Andrew Ingram and Ian Rose

Co-Chairs of Maidenhead Neighbourhood Forum

For more information on Neighbourhood Plans, please visit the Neighbourhood plans | Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

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| BI-4 | Urban Greening |
| SS-1a | Waterway Corridor Access |
| SS-1b | Waterway Corridor Development |
| SS-2 | Local Green Spaces |

## Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| BAP | Biodiversity Action Plan |
| BLP | Borough Local Plan |
| BNG | Biodiversity Net Gain |
| CIBSE | Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers |
| CIRIA | Construction Industry Research and Information Association |
| CIL | Community Infrastructure Levy |
| DEFRA | Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs |
| EUI | Energy Use Intensity |
| IDP | Infrastructure Delivery Plan |
| LETI | Low Energy Transformation Initiative |
| LWS | Local Wildlife Site |
| NPPF | National Planning Policy Framework |
| PHPP | Passivhaus Planning Package |
| RICS | Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors |
| SHMA | Strategic Housing Market Assessment |
| SPD | Supplementary Planning Document |
| TPO | Tree Preservation Order |

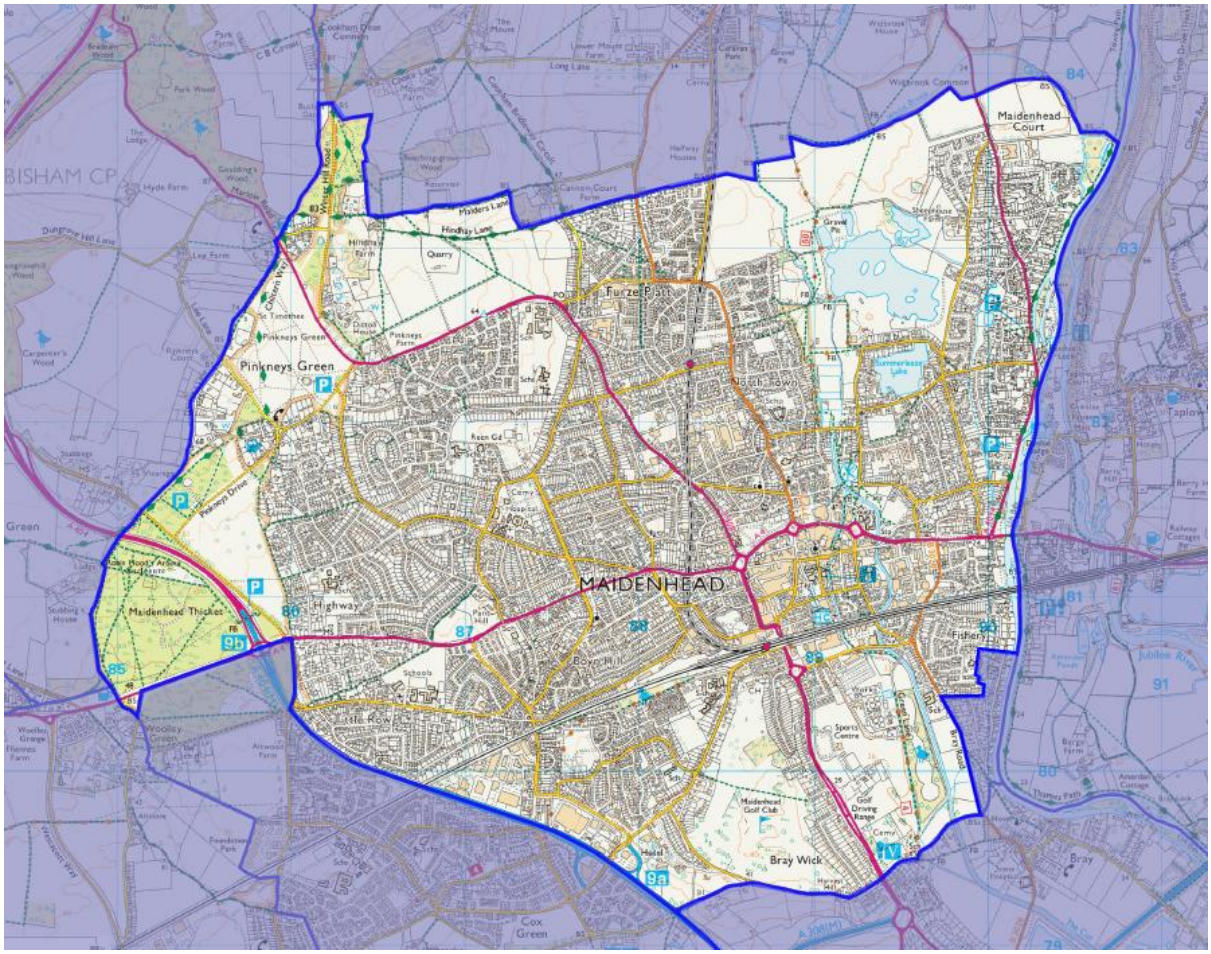
Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan

# Section 1: INTRODUCTION

# SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION TO MAIDENHEAD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

## 1.1 Introduction

### The Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan Area

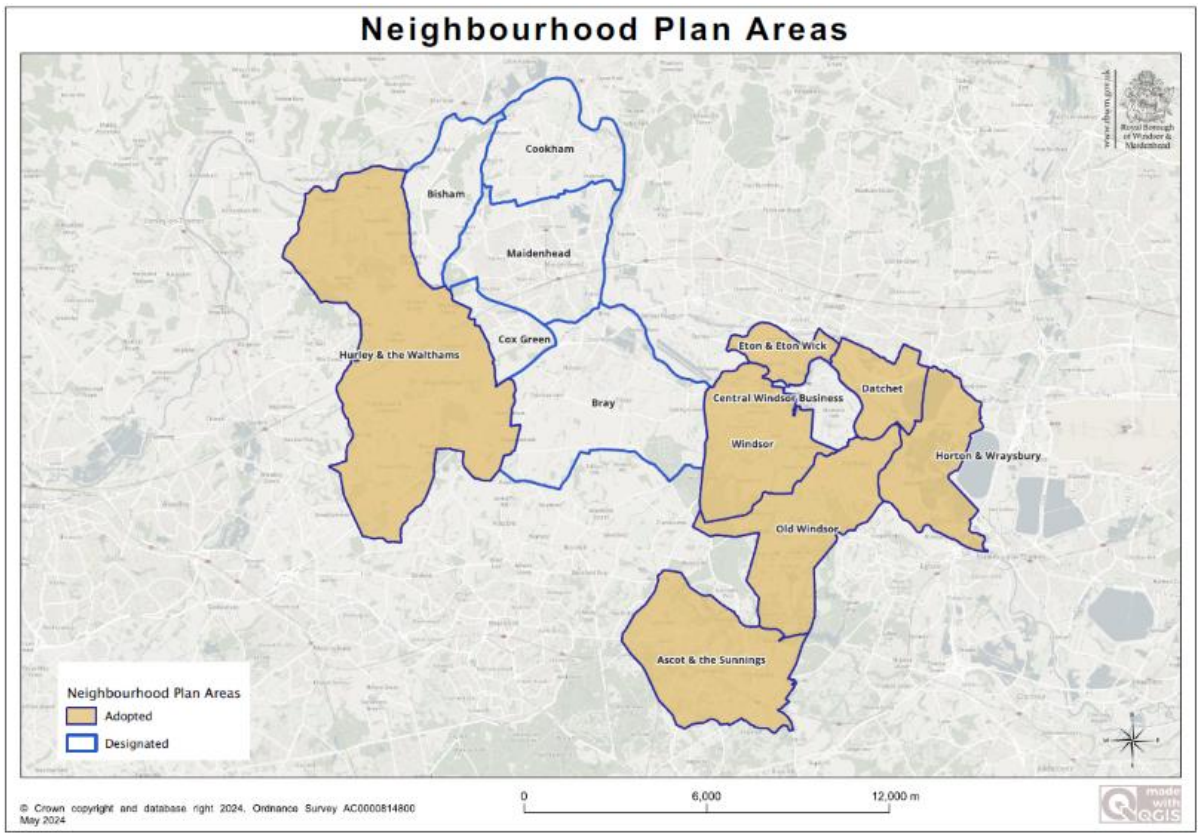



***Map 1.1-1 Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan area***

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

### 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)[1] [1.1] and the Borough Local Plan (BLP) [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 [2.6] 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.

[1] All references to the NPPF in this Plan refer to the December 2024 version of the NPPF

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 [2.6] 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 Community Infrastructure Levy (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

**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.

Paragraph: 146 Reference ID: 25-146-20190901

Revision date: 01 09 2019

## 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 e-mailings were sent to the Members (about 70) and Supporters (about 500) 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 widely publicised on social media.

Where specialist information or skills were needed we engaged consultants AECOM and Bioregional for the Housing Needs Assessment, the Design Code and the Net Zero Evidence.

**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 Section 14 and in the Evidence base itself. Where data has been collated or interpreted to inform the policies, the method and reasoning is shown in the Evidence base under an appropriate heading, and the policy's "Reasoned Justification" paragraph will refer to it.

Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan

# Section 2: THE MAIDENHEAD AREA

# 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, Evidence Base 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.

Regeneration of the town centre has commenced with the construction of several medium 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 has 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 the 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 45% of residents qualified to Degree level or above - significantly higher than the regional or national average (Evidence Base, Figure 1.1-2). Many large corporations count Maidenhead as their home – including Heidelberg Materials (previously Hanson), Johnson & Johnson and Stanley Black and Decker. With a strong focus on the IT and Health sectors, their offices are often based in Maidenhead's business parks, but also in the town centre where they help to boost trade. Employment levels across the Neighbourhood plan area are higher than RBWM and England averages, with 62% of the 16 years and over (excluding full time students) population in employment (Evidence Base Figure 1.2-1).

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 (Evidence Base 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 (Evidence Base Figure 1.1-3) 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 10% and 14% 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.

The Population Age spread in all parts of the MNP area is diverse and close to RBWM and England averages (Evidence Base Figure 1.1-1). Belmont, Oldfield and St Marys wards each have a larger proportion of mid working age (25-49 years) population and a correspondingly lower 50-74 years age population.

Outstanding connectivity (road, rail, proximity to London Heathrow Airport etc.) make Maidenhead an attractive location for major businesses and their employees, 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.

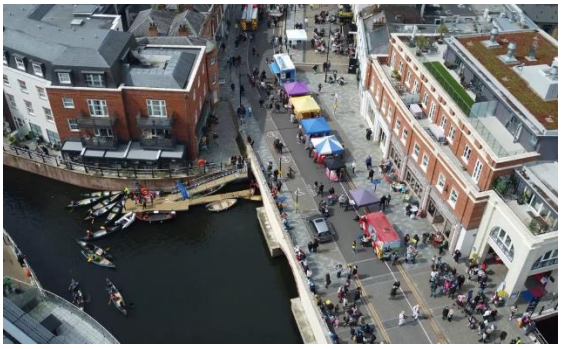
Most areas, and most new developments, are low rise and relatively leafy

Recent high-rise blocks in the town centre have been widely criticised for their height

East-west transport connections have been improved further by the new Elizabeth Line


Cycling has historically not been prioritised or well funded in local transport planning


A relatively prosperous town on paper but with a struggling, under-used town centre



It is hoped that the regenerated parts of the centre will continue to boost local trade

Climate concerns have prompted measures like integrated solar panels in new builds


The importance of Biodiversity is recognised and communicated

Many heritage assets lack protection as they fall outside the town's Conservation Areas

Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan

# Section 3:
# VISION, OBJECTIVES & POLICY APPROACH

# SECTION 3. VISION, OBJECTIVES AND POLICY APPROACH

## 3.1 Policy context

The Neighbourhood Plan must be compatible with the Borough Local Plan (BLP) [2.1], which states in policy SP1 that the overarching spatial strategy for the Borough is to focus the majority of development in the three strategic growth areas of Maidenhead, Windsor and Ascot. Within Maidenhead, new development will largely be focused on the growth locations of Maidenhead Town Centre and South West Maidenhead.

Policies in the Neighbourhood Plan aim to be compatible with Maidenhead's role as a strategic growth location, and with the identified focus on Maidenhead Town Centre and South West Maidenhead.

## 3.2 Vision Statement

The vision for Maidenhead will in some ways be common to many English towns. A vibrant, socially cohesive, safe 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 Maidonians share the common preference for 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 Maidonians continue to be very car-centric (Electric, Hybrid or otherwise) must guide ideas about development in the town centre, which can only thrive if it is easy to access for local residents.

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.

## 3.3 Vision Summary

- Design: Appropriate and liveable new buildings, retain character
- Housing: Affordable and the right mix
- Transport: Convenient and sustainable
- Carbon Emissions: Net Zero by 2050
- Built Heritage: Identify, respect and enhance
- Biodiversity: Net gain, urban greening, create habitat and sustainable drainage

Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan

# Section 4:
# DESIGN

# 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**

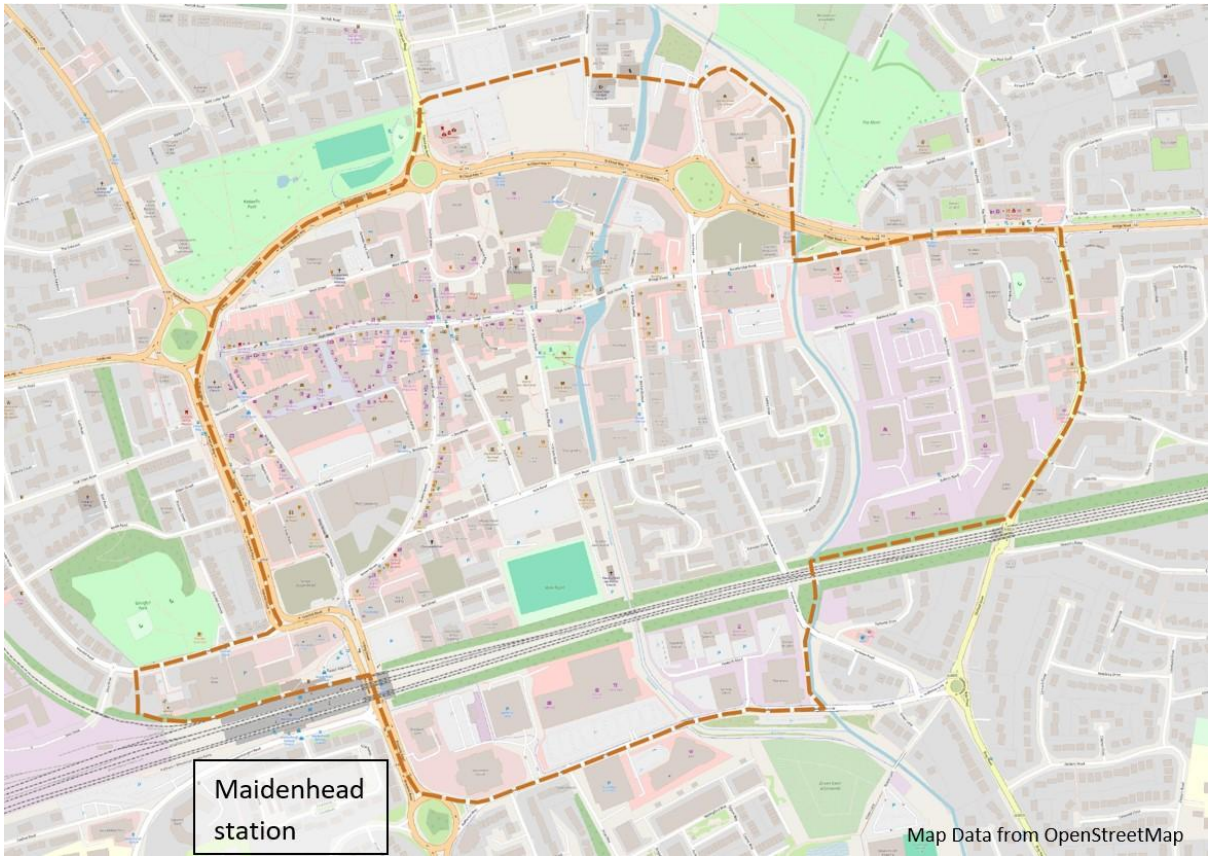
The policies have been developed with regard to the BLP [2.1] paragraphs 5.1.7 and 5.1.8 which refer to Maidenhead's rail links and location on the Elizabeth line, and with regard to policies SP1, QP1a, QP3 and QP3a on Spatial Strategy, Maidenhead Town Centre, Character and Design and Building height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

BLP policy QP3a refers to a Building Height and Tall Buildings SPD [2.9] which is now adopted. Section 6 of this document covers Maidenhead, and the policy here largely follows it.

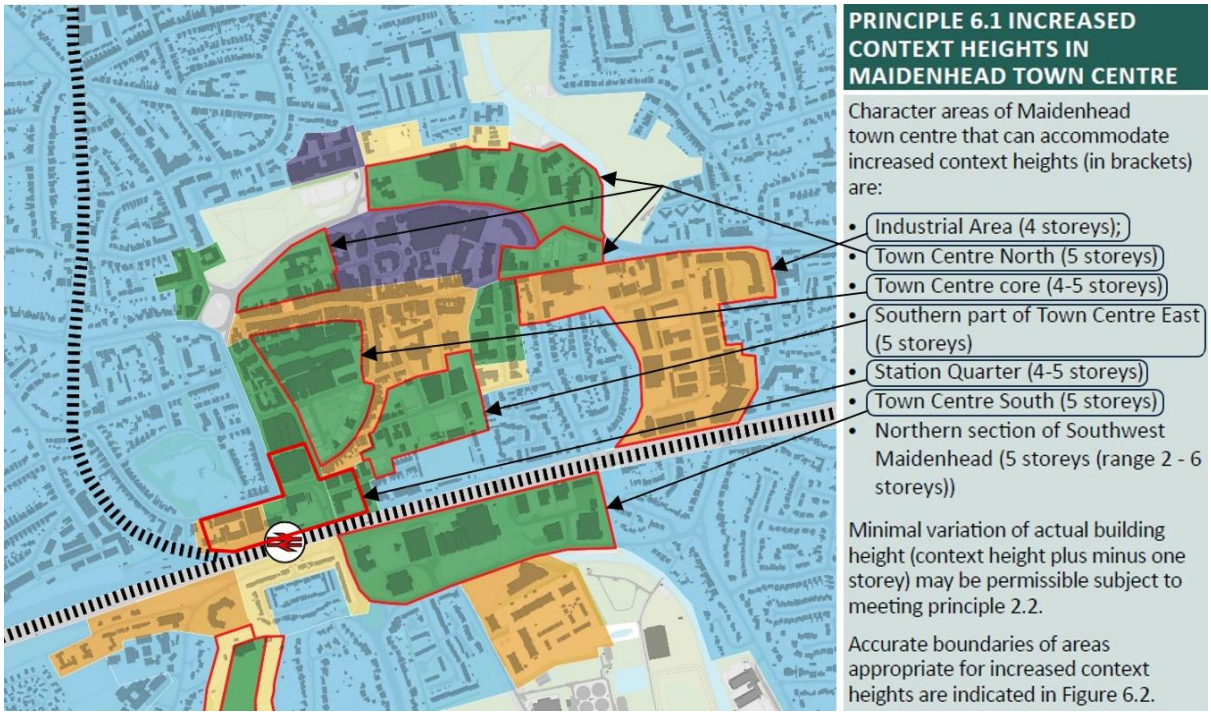
The policies follow the principles in NPPF [1.1] paragraphs 131, 132, 134, 135, 137 and 139.

**POLICY DE-1: Design principles - Town centre**

- Maidenhead town centre area boundary is shown on map 4.1-1
- The Maidenhead town centre locations where areas are appropriate for increased context heights are shown on map 4.1-2 and in the RBWM Building Height and Tall Buildings SPD [2.9]
- Development proposals must demonstrate full regard to the key principles set out in Policy QP3a of the BLP [2.1] and in the Building Height and Tall Buildings SPD [2.9] 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 4.1-2 having regard also to Principle 2.2 of the Building Height and Tall Buildings SPD [2.9]:
  - 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 4.1-3 must comply with the Building Height and Tall Buildings SPD [2.9]:
  - LM1 no more than 27m (8 residential storeys)
  - 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, already built)
  - LM6 no more than 27m (8 residential storeys)

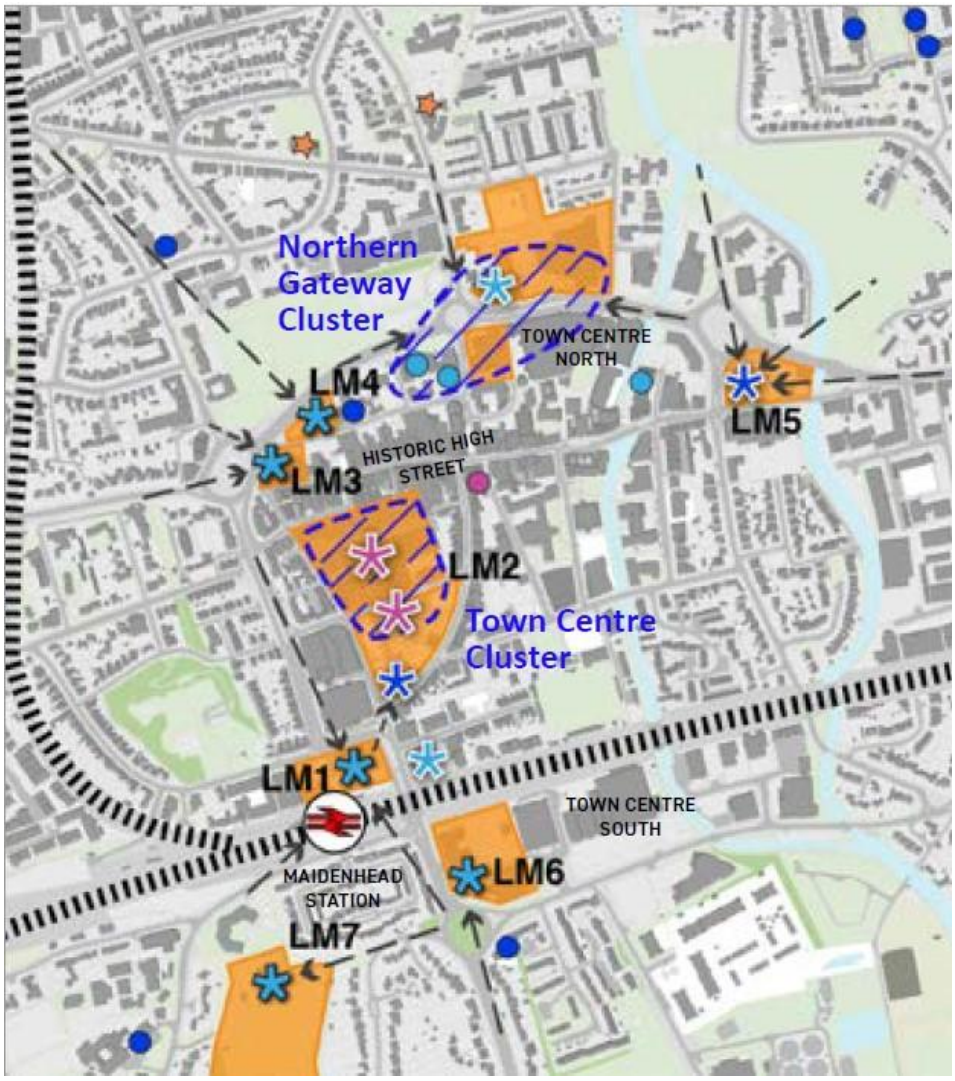



***Map 4.1-1 Maidenhead Town centre area boundary***




***Map 4.1-2 Maidenhead Historic Core/Town centre character sub-areas***

Map 4.1-2 is marked up from Figure 6.2 in the Building Height and Tall Buildings SPD [2.9] and the sub-area names follow Figure 6.1 in the same document.




***Map 4.1-3 Potential locations for landmark tall buildings***

This map is taken from Figure 6.3 in the Building Height and Tall Buildings SPD [2.9]

**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 [2.9] 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 (itself informed by the Tall Buildings Technical and Baseline Study and the Tall Buildings Strategy, both updated in 2022), 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 [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, and 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 and encouraging good compatible design. Retaining the setting and aspect enjoyed by neighbouring properties is a material consideration.

**Planning Policy Context**

BLP [2.1] policy QP3 covers character and design of new developments in general terms, and policy QP3a covers building height. BLP policy QP3a refers to a Building Height and Tall Buildings SPD [2.9] which is now adopted. Section 2 of the SPD covers building heights throughout the Borough including Maidenhead, and section 5 gives guidance on height in different locations.

The policy follows the principles in NPPF [1.1] paragraphs 131 to 135, 137 and 139.

In 2010 a Townscape Assessment was carried out by RBWM, referenced in [2.5]. To provide more targeted information, a Design Code was commissioned for the Neighbourhood plan area and is incorporated in Neighbourhood plan policy as Appendix 1. For the purpose of this plan, the Character Areas defined in the Design Code are used rather than those in the 2010 Townscape Assessment.

**POLICY DE-2: Design principles – Character Areas**

- The Maidenhead Character areas are shown on map 4.2-1. The key characteristics of each area and maps showing the boundaries of each are provided in section 4 of Appendix 1.
- Development proposals must demonstrate full regard to the key characteristics of each of the Character areas, and follow the Design guidance and codes for the relevant area in section 4 of Appendix 1 according to the location, nature and layout of the scheme.
- Residential development proposals in the character areas outside Maidenhead Town Centre will be generally expected to maintain the existing context heights as illustrated in map 4.2-3, except within areas identified as "Potential for tall building" in map 4.2-2 from Figure 5.3 of the Building Height and Tall Buildings SPD [2.9].
- In addition, proposals for the erection of new dwellings in residential gardens will be required to demonstrate they meet 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

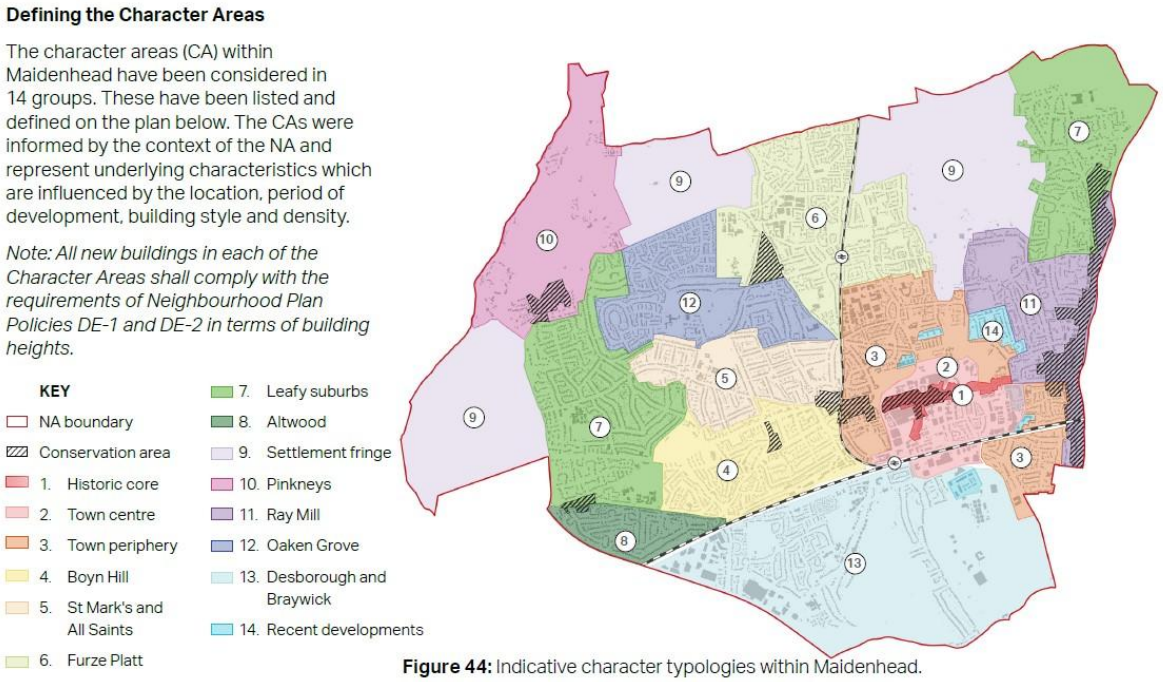



**Figure 44:** Indicative character typologies within Maidenhead.

***Map 4.2-1 Maidenhead Character Areas***

This map is taken from Figure 44 of Appendix 1, Maidenhead Design Code. Section 4 of the Design Code contains detailed maps defining the boundary of each Character Area.

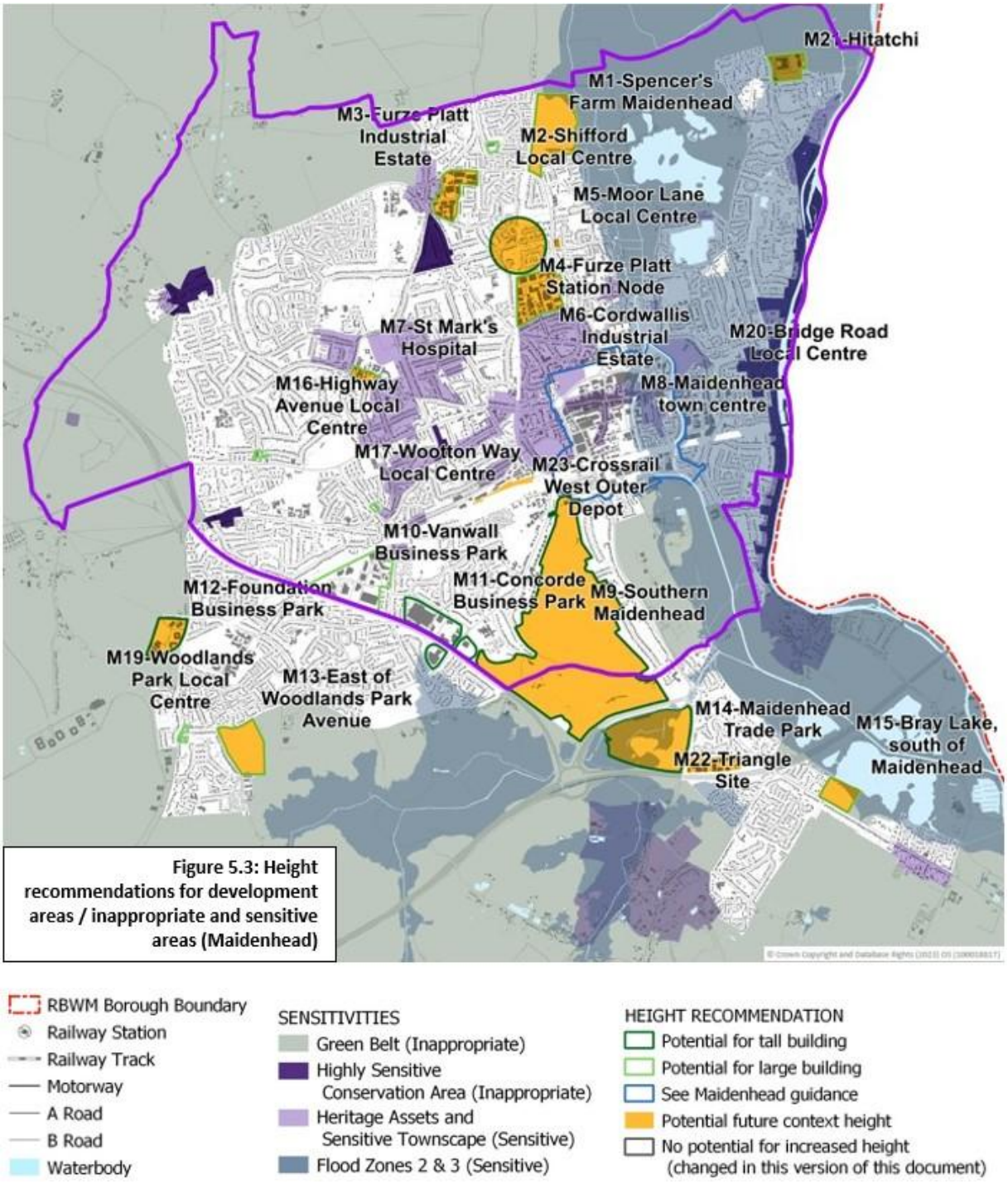
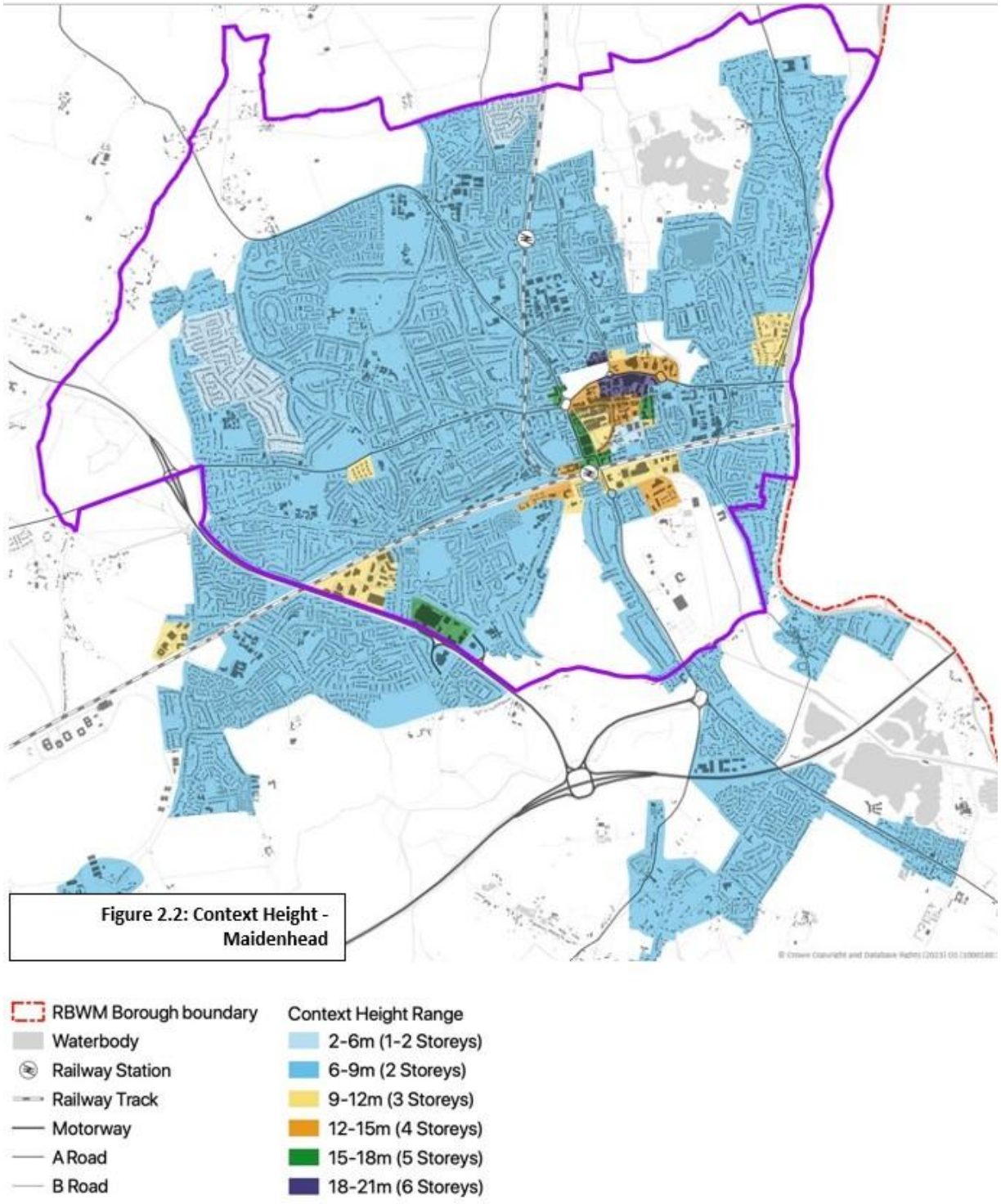



Figure 5.3: Height recommendations for development areas / inappropriate and sensitive areas (Maidenhead)

***Map 4.2-2 Figure 5.3 of the Building Height and Tall Buildings SPD [2.9]***

Map 4.2-2 is marked up from Figure 5.3 in the Building Height and Tall Buildings SPD [2.9] to show the Neighbourhood Plan area.




***Map 4.2-3 Figure 2.2 of the Building Height and Tall Buildings SPD [2.9]***

Map 4.2-3 is marked up from Figure 2.2 in the Building Height and Tall Buildings SPD [2.9] to show the Neighbourhood Plan area.

**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.

Figure 2.2 in the Building Height and Tall Buildings SPD [2.9] shows context height for Maidenhead, and almost all of the Neighbourhood plan area outside the Town centre has a context height of 2 storeys. Principle 3.1 states that a building of more than 1.5 times the context height or a 4-storey building in a 2-storey area will be considered a tall building.

The Neighbourhood Plan policy therefore aligns with the SPD [2.9] and policy QP3a of the BLP [2.1].

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 [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 Borough Wide Design Guide SPD [2.16] section 8 covers amenity, and the policies have been developed with regard to it.

The policy follows the principles in NPPF [1.1] paragraph 135, bullet point f) which refers to a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

**POLICY DE-3: Liveable buildings**

- 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" [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 contiguous garden, balcony or ground level patio/defensible space. Communal amenity areas can include ground level or roof gardens and podiums. Private or communal amenity space does not include car parking or turning areas. Flexibility will be allowed where the proposal relates to a building in a Conservation Area or to a Listed Building.
- Residential proposals will be expected to maintain the separation distances specified in Table 8.1 of the Borough Wide Design Guide [2.16]
- 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 recreational and other needs of residents, visitors and 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 | | |
| Note 1: Ground floor flats: Direct access to private amenity space of depth ≥3m, as wide as the dwelling it serves<br>Note 2: Flats above ground floor: Balconies of depth ≥2m and width greater than depth, unless conservation, privacy or heritage issues negate against the use of balconies | | | | |
| | Terraced/Semi-detached/detached houses | | | |
| | 1 bed | 2 bed | 3 bed | 4 bed+ |
| Predominantly South facing | 40m$^2$ | 55m$^2$ | 55m$^2$ | 70m$^2$ |
| Predominantly North facing | 50m$^2$ | 65m$^2$ | 65m$^2$ | 85m$^2$ |

**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 [2.18]. The 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 informed the proposed policy together with Table 8.1 in the Borough Wide Design Guide SPD [2.16]. A more recent study on Private Amenity Space Standards was carried out by South Gloucestershire Council in June 2016 [3.1] and the policy PSP43 space provision in Appendix 1 of that document has informed Table 4.3-1, together with Table 8.2 in the Borough Wide Design Guide SPD [2.16]. Note that the amenity areas are lower than those implied by Figure 1 of the Studio Real study [2.18].

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 space for modern living.

Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan

# Section 5:
# HOUSING

# 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 [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 [2.10].

BLP [2.1] Policy HO3 states that there will be a minimum requirement of 30% Affordable Housing on sites of 1000m$^2$ 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 [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 [1.1] paragraphs 61-66 and 73.

**POLICY HO-1: Affordable Housing**

- Proposals for housing development of 10 or more dwellings gross or more than 1000m$^2$ 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) 45% social rent and 35% affordable rent
- The targeted dwelling size by type is defined by Table 1 in paragraph 5.2 of the Affordable Housing Delivery SPD [2.10]
- 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 three bullet points 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 [2.10].
- 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**

This section relies heavily on a Housing Needs Assessment which was commissioned for the Neighbourhood Plan Area. This was carried out by AECOM as part of a package of technical support in February 2023. Their full report is given in the Evidence Base Appendix 1.

Many Maidonians 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, Evidence Base Appendix 1). There are also 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, Evidence Base Appendix 1), the adverse physical and mental effects of which are well documented [1.5 section 2.3].

The largest proportion of households - 40% - on the Borough waiting list wanting to live in Maidenhead require 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, Evidence Base Appendix 1). 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, Evidence Base Appendix 1). Many households in acute housing need (homeless and in temporary accommodation) are waiting years to be rehoused in larger properties. This has contributed to 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, Evidence Base Appendix 1). More affordable and accessible housing will also help the recruitment and retention of key workers.

<u>Affording Home Ownership</u>

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, Evidence Base Appendix 1). Even using the lower median average house price of £450,000 (paragraph 16 in Housing Needs Assessment, Evidence Base Appendix 1) would require an annual household 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, Evidence Base Appendix 1).

<u>Affording Private Renting</u>

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 average 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, Evidence Base Appendix 1). 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, Evidence Base Appendix 1). 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, Evidence Base Appendix 1). 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 Social/Affordable Rented and Affordable Home Ownership homes per annum is thus 188 (paragraph 24 in Housing Needs Assessment, Evidence Base Appendix 1). 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 [2.7] in which a total of 290 affordable homes were completed.

Community Land Trust Development and other Community led schemes, Self-build Housing and Custom Build Housing

Community Land Trust development is a type of community-led housing, an umbrella term encompassing several not-for-profit models of housing delivery. Studies show it has positive impacts on health and wellbeing, and possibly on health inequalities as well, due to psychosocial housing factors which are known to be beneficial for health, including social contact, affordability, employment potential, safety and environmental sustainability.

In addition, community-led housing is generally a more acceptable form of development to the wider community. Community-led, self-build and custom build housing are considered to be more appropriate for smaller sites in an urban area such as the Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan area as rural exception sites are less likely to be relevant. Moreover, little of any of these categories of housing have been built within RBWM in the past.

## 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 at all stages of their lives.
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 [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 [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 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) [2.4] 2016 or its successors, together with the need for accessible and adaptable dwellings. It is however largely silent on how housing mix will be achieved, including on allocated sites and their BLP Appendix C site proformas. As the Berkshire SHMA dates from 2016 and covers a wider area, a Housing Needs Assessment in Evidence Base Appendix 1 was commissioned for the Neighbourhood Plan area.

The policies follow the principles in NPPF [1.1] paragraphs 61-63.

**POLICY HO-2: Market Housing mix**

- For the purpose of this policy the Maidenhead Town centre area is defined by the Map 4.1-1
- Subject to local circumstances and requirements in the BLP Appendix C site proformas, and section 6.5 of the South West Maidenhead Development Framework SPD [2.19], outside Maidenhead Town Centre the market housing element of development proposals are expected to provide 20% 1 and 2 bed dwellings with 80% 3 bed and above dwellings. The 3 bed and above dwellings and their associated amenity space should be of a size, design and layout suitable for families, including providing safe and direct access for children to amenity space that is well overlooked.

**Reasoned Justification**

This section relies heavily on a Housing Needs Assessment which was commissioned for the Neighbourhood Plan Area. This was carried out by AECOM as part of a package of technical support in February 2023. Their full report is given in the Evidence Base Appendix 1.

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, Evidence Base Appendix 1). 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, Evidence Base Appendix 1).

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, Evidence Base Appendix 1), 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.

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, Evidence Base Appendix 1). 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, Evidence Base Appendix 1). 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. Further analysis of the mix and balance under different policy scenarios is provided in the Evidence Base section 1.4 and underpins the policy requirement. 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 older 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 [1.6].

Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan

# Section 6:
# GETTING AROUND

# 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.

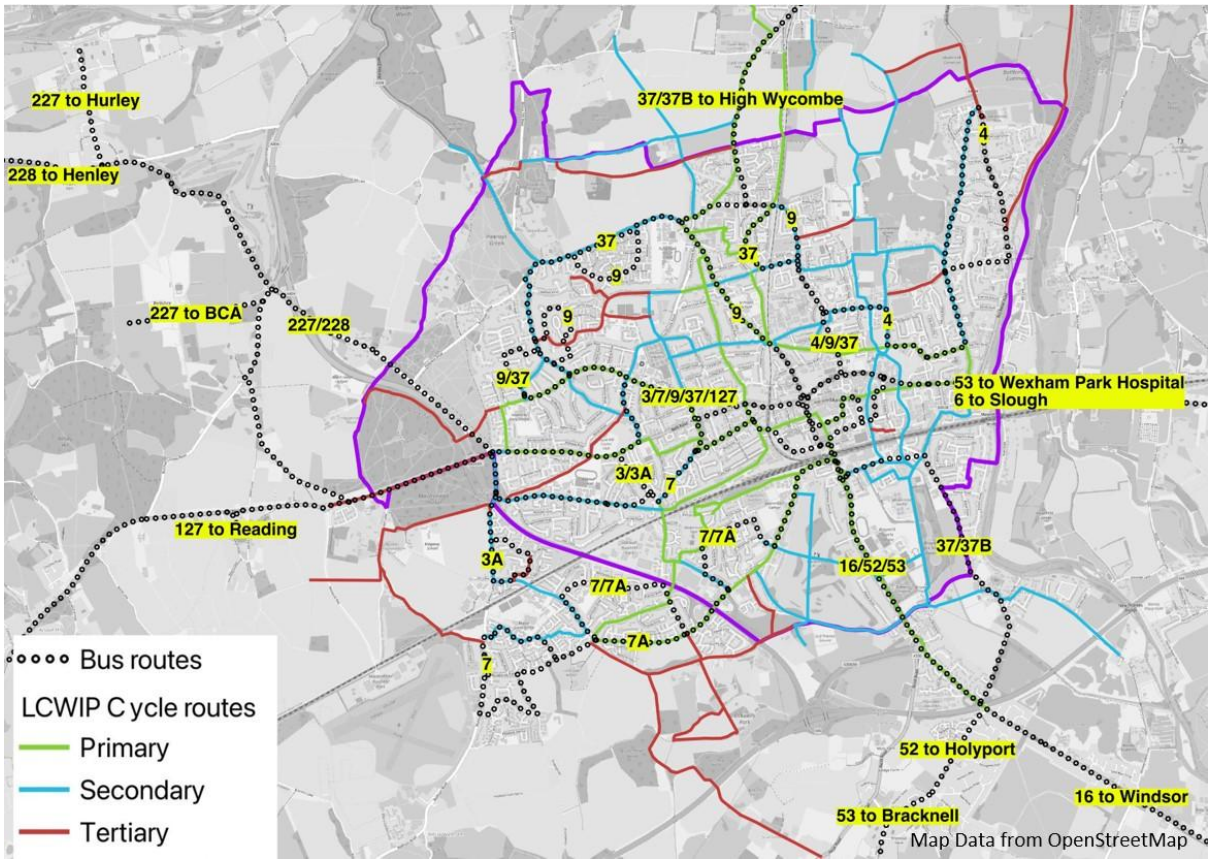
The policies follow the principles in NPPF [1.1] paragraphs 109, 110, 111 and 117.

The policies and map have been developed with regard to the RBWM Public Rights of Way Management and Improvement Plan [2.2], to the RBWM Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan [2.11], and to the BLP [2.1] policies IF2 and IF3.

**POLICY GA-1: Cycling, Walking and Bus Routes**

- Cycling 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 cycle route network 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, minimise the requirement to cross roads, be usable by wheelchairs and pushchairs where feasible, and should be designed to aid personal safety with good lighting and uninterrupted visibility which is not obscured by plants.
- All residential developments over 25 homes that are or will be served by bus services, should where feasible incorporate a Bus Stop within a 400 metre walk of each home on the development. Bus stops on main roads at the edge of such developments should incorporate suitable laybys with shelters and seating.
- All office developments served by bus services, where any part is more than a 400 metre walk from a bus stop, should have a Bus Stop and shelter provided as close as practicable to the main entrance, with a layby if on a main road.
- 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




***Map 6.1-1 Cycling routes and Bus routes***

**Reasoned Justification**

Development proposals provide the ideal opportunity to realise new cycling and walking routes with better and sustainable connectivity, while reducing traffic accidents and improving physical and mental health. They should offer 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. Routes should also be assessed to protect personal safety. The cycling routes defined in the LCWIP (2.11) are those that were proposed for investigation as potential locations to prioritise for investment and are subject to further investigation of feasibility and viability.

Residents will also be put off using bus services if they do not have a Bus Stop nearby (i.e. a short walk, 400m) 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 [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 currently in preparation by RBWM which will be a material consideration when adopted. The draft of this SPD was published for public consultation in October 2025. 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 [1.1] paragraphs 112 and 113.

Electric Vehicle charging points are covered under Part S of the Building Regulations [1.7], and with no local reason to differ from National standards are not specified by this plan.

**POLICY GA-2: Parking and cycle storage**

- 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 in Use Classes C3 or C4 will be expected to provide off-road allocated parking spaces and cycle storage as specified in Table 6.2-1. However, these standards will be expected to be applied flexibly to take account of local and site specific circumstances including accessibility of the site by non-car modes, having regard to the latest evidence on accessibility and the need to avoid potential adverse impacts of overspill parking in the local area. Sites identified for landmark tall buildings LM1, LM2, LM3, LM4, LM5, LM6, LM7 as defined on map 4.1-3 will also be allowed flexibility to provide a lower parking standard.
- All apartment blocks should in addition have sufficient additional unallocated spaces for visitors, servicing or specialist needs such as mobility scooters.
- New non-residential development and development in Use Classes C1 and C2 will be expected to provide their own parking space and cycle storage on site in accordance with the non-residential standards set out in the RBWM Parking SPD once adopted, and in accordance with the RBWM Parking Strategy 2004 [2.8] in the interim.
- 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.
- Minimum car parking space size for new developments and for new public car parks should be a clear 2.5m x 5m.

Table 6.2-1: Residential parking and cycle storage standards

| | 1 bed | 2 bed | 3 bed | 4 bed+ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Expected Car Parking standards** | | | | |
| Town Centre | 0.5 space | 1 space | 2 spaces | |
| Outside Town Centre | 1 space | 2 spaces | 2 spaces | 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.<br>Disabled parking provision should follow the RBWM Parking Strategy 2004 [2.8] or successor document. | | | | |
| **Cycle Storage** | | | | |
| All areas | Minimum 1 space | Minimum 2 spaces | Minimum 4 spaces | |

**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 park in Maidenhead and 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/cycle storage requirements and Office/Commercial parking/cycle storage requirements are derived in the Evidence Base section 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 [1.1] section 9 seeks to promote sustainable transport through the planning system. BLP [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.

**POLICY GA-3: Public Transport Interchange**

- Station or rail development, including at site AL7 in BLP Appendix C, 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:
  - Shelters with seating and power, including ports for mobile devices
  - Route Maps for the relevant Rail and Bus services
  - 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.

Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan

# Section 7:
# CLIMATE

# 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 [2.1] policy SP2, the March 2021 RBWM Position statement on sustainability and Energy Efficient Design [2.12] and follows the principles in NPPF [1.1] paragraphs 161, 164, 165, 166 and 167. The policy has also been developed with regard to the RBWM Sustainability Supplementary Planning Document [2.13].

**POLICY CL-1: Net Zero development**

- 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'. If this requirement cannot be met, proposals must provide clear evidence to demonstrate why not.
- Developments over 10 dwellings and non-residential floorspace over 100m$^2$ should provide an operational Energy Use Intensity (EUI) calculation in kWh/m$^2$/year using CIBSE TM54 [1.11] or Passivhaus PHPP [1.12], and the percentage of energy use over a year which is matched by onsite renewable energy.
- Developments over 10 dwellings and non-residential floorspace over 100m$^2$ should report embodied energy performance for life cycle stages A1-A5 using the latest RICS-approved methodology [1.8] with reference to 2030 targets set by LETI and specified in the RBWM Sustainability SPD [2.13] Appendix 7.
- 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.

**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 for operational emissions and hence whether developments will have net zero carbon emissions.

Clear and consistent reporting of carbon emissions performance should be provided 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. The embodied energy targets and life cycle stages have been aligned to the RBWM sustainability SPD.

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 [2.13] describe "two camps", 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/m$^2$/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.

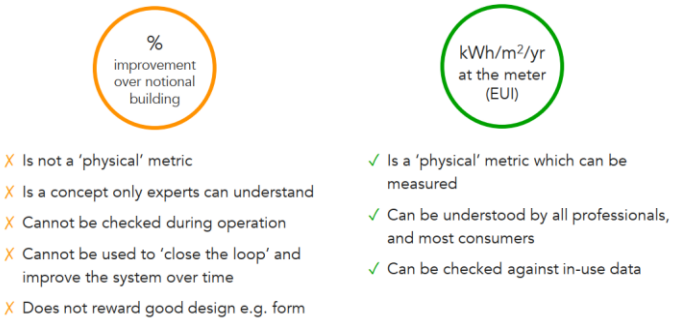



***Figure 7.1-1 Illustration of "Two alternative camps"***

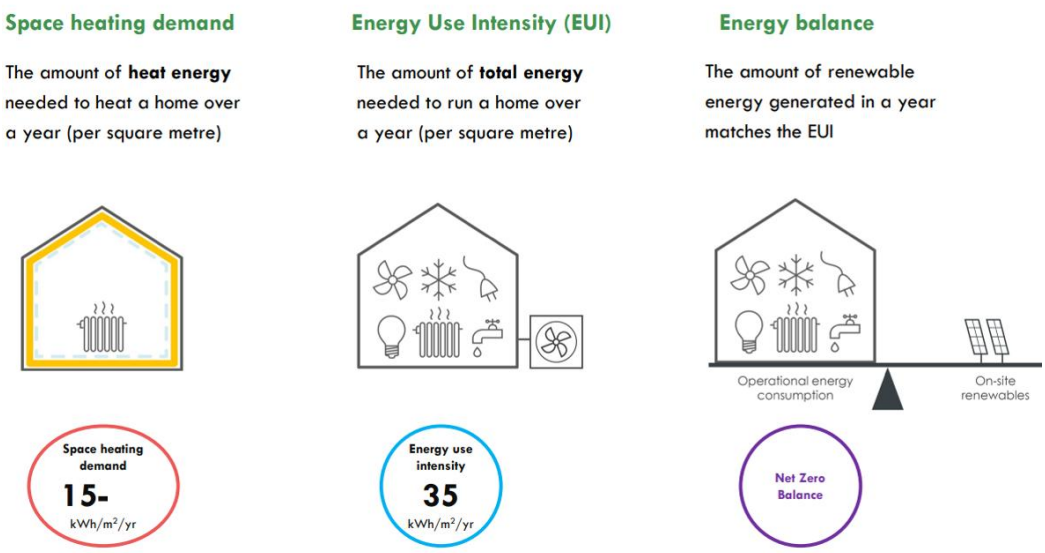



***Figure 7.1-2 The energy based / EUI approach to operational net zero (Source: LETI)***

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 [2.12]. 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.

The legislative framework and reasoning to set an Energy-based policy for new homes is given in Evidence Base Appendix 2, Evidence base to support net zero policy. This also covers the likely cost implications. The approach is compatible with section 3 of the RBWM Sustainability SPD [2.13] and with the March 2021 RBWM Position statement on sustainability and Energy Efficient Design [2.12].

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 assessed under BLP Policy SP2.

Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan

# Section 8:
# BUILT HERITAGE

# SECTION 8. BUILT HERITAGE

Heritage assets take many forms; they can be a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions because of their heritage meaning, interest and significance. The use of the prefix 'built' includes designed landscapes and gardens whilst excluding the natural environment.

At the heart of the term 'significance' is the extent to which an asset adds character, distinctiveness, and a positive sense of place to a location, thus contributing to wellbeing and individual and community identity. Their significance lies not only in the assets themselves, but also in their setting.

There are several bodies, classifications systems and routes to identify an object as being a 'heritage asset'. The impact of inclusion on a heritage list varies according to the degree of significance of a particular asset. Listing does not necessarily result in additional planning controls. Inclusion adds however to an asset's legitimacy and weight within the planning system by bringing an asset into the purview of the NPPF as being a material consideration when determining the outcome of a planning application. Labelling a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape as being a heritage asset is not arbitrary; the various classifications systems apply a criteria set and process that must be followed.

Several types of built heritage assets have been identified in the Neighbourhood Plan area, and are all shown in Figure 06 of Appendix 1, Maidenhead Design Code:

Firstly, there are Nationally listed heritage assets (e.g. Grade I and II listings) administered by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. Secondly, the Neighbourhood Plan area contains seven conservation areas. Thirdly there are Non-designated heritage assets that have some significance, but not as much as designated assets. A fourth aspect of Built Heritage is commemorative plaques.

## 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 [2.1] paragraph 11.2.5 and policy HE1, and follow the principles in NPPF [1.1] paragraphs 202 to 221. These references set out quite general principles, which are refined here for the Conservation areas in the Neighbourhood Plan Area.

**POLICY BH-1: Buildings in Conservation Areas**

- There are 7 Conservation Areas within the Neighbourhood Plan area: Maidenhead Riverside, Maidenhead Town Centre, Furze Platt Triangle, Castle Hill, All Saints Boyn Hill, Altwood Road and Pinkneys Green. All are shown in Figure 06 of Appendix 1, Maidenhead Design Code. Detailed maps of each area and Conservation Area Appraisals are available from RBWM planning.
- Proposals for development are required to enhance or preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, as described in the Conservation Area appraisal
- Alterations, extensions and new buildings should respect the scale, height, massing, footprint, layout, building lines, architectural styles, building detailing, form, bulk, style, materials palette, and roofline of the Conservation Area
- The location 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 factors, 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 or preserve the Conservation Area.

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 [2.1] paragraph 11.2.5 and policy HE1, and follow the principles in NPPF [1.1] paragraphs 202 to 221. 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.

**POLICY BH-2: Gardens, open spaces, street pattern and parking in Conservation Areas**

- There are 7 Conservation Areas within the Neighbourhood Plan area: Maidenhead Riverside, Maidenhead Town Centre, Furze Platt Triangle, Castle Hill, All Saints Boyn Hill, Altwood Road and Pinkneys Green. All are shown in Figure 06 of Appendix 1, Maidenhead Design Code. Detailed maps of each area and Conservation Area Appraisals are available from RBWM planning.
- Proposals for development should retain existing trees, hedges, walls and fences and where feasible add sympathetic 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 to and 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
- The boundaries of the 7 Conservation Areas within the Neighbourhood Plan area are shown in Figure 06 of Appendix 1, Maidenhead Design Code

**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 or preserve the Conservation Area as a whole.

## 8.3 Setting of Heritage Assets

**OBJECTIVE:**
To ensure that Heritage assets such as Conservation Areas, Listed buildings and Non-designated heritage assets 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 non-designated heritage assets identified on the local list in Appendix 2. 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 [2.1] policy HE1, and follow the principles in NPPF [1.1] paragraphs 202 to 221. Historic England's Good Practice Advice [1.3] gives further information.

**POLICY BH-3: Setting of Heritage Assets**

- The Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and Non-designated heritage assets within the Neighbourhood Plan area are shown in Figure 06 of Appendix 1, Maidenhead Design Code.
- Development proposals affecting the setting of a Heritage Asset should include a heritage statement and impact assessment of the effect on the setting and significance of the Heritage Assets. Proposals that result in an adverse impact will be resisted.
- Development which enhances the setting of a Heritage Asset will be supported.
- Developments adjacent to a Conservation Area should respect the scale, density and grain of the Conservation Area itself, and not adversely affect its appearance, character or significance
- Developments adjacent to or within the setting of a listed building should enhance, and not adversely affect, the building's special character, grounds, setting, or justification for listing
- Developments adjacent to or within the setting of a locally listed Non-designated heritage asset are required to preserve or enhance the significance of the Asset according to the criteria for which the asset was selected, defined in Appendix 2.

**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 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 List of Non-designated Heritage Assets

**OBJECTIVE:**
To ensure that locally listed Non-designated heritage assets maintain their significance, character and value for the enjoyment and enrichment of residents and visitors.

**Planning Policy Context**

Non-designated heritage assets are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets. Locally listed heritage 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 [2.1] policy HE1, and follow the principles in NPPF (1.1) paragraphs 202 to 221. Historic England's Advice Note (1.4) gives further information. These references set out general principles so are applied here to the Locally listed heritage assets and Landscapes identified in Appendix 2. 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 in Appendix 2 was compiled following extensive public consultation, and the appendix also includes a summary of the process.

Once nominated and accepted, non-designated heritage assets become material considerations that must be weighed up by planning authorities in their decision-making process.

Another aspect of Built Heritage is commemorative plaques. Although plaques offer less protection than being listed as a non-designated heritage asset, NPPF paragraph 211 states that in considering any applications to remove or alter a historic plaque (whether listed or not), local planning authorities should have regard to the importance of their retention in situ. A list of commemorative plaques in the Neighbourhood Plan area is included in Appendix 3, including those authorised by RBWM.

**POLICY BH-4: Local List of Non-designated Heritage Assets**

- Non-designated heritage assets within the Neighbourhood Plan area are listed and described in Appendix 2, and are shown in Figure 06 of Appendix 1, Maidenhead Design Code.
- Alterations and extensions to locally listed Non-designated heritage assets should respect the scale, height, footprint, massing, layout, building lines, architectural styles, building detailing, form, bulk, style, materials palette, and roofline of the Asset.
- New buildings within the setting of a locally listed Non-designated heritage asset or adjacent to it should be in keeping with existing street patterns and plot layouts of the heritage asset.
- Changes of use should preserve or enhance the significance of the Asset according to the criteria for which the Asset was selected.
- Proposals for development affecting landscapes identified in the Local Heritage Asset list are required to retain the significance of the landscape according to the criteria for which the landscape was selected

**Reasoned Justification**

The NPPF [1.1] paragraph 216 states that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application; a balanced judgement will be required for applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

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. A list has therefore been compiled for the plan area.

Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan

# Section 9:
# BIODIVERSITY

# 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 [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.

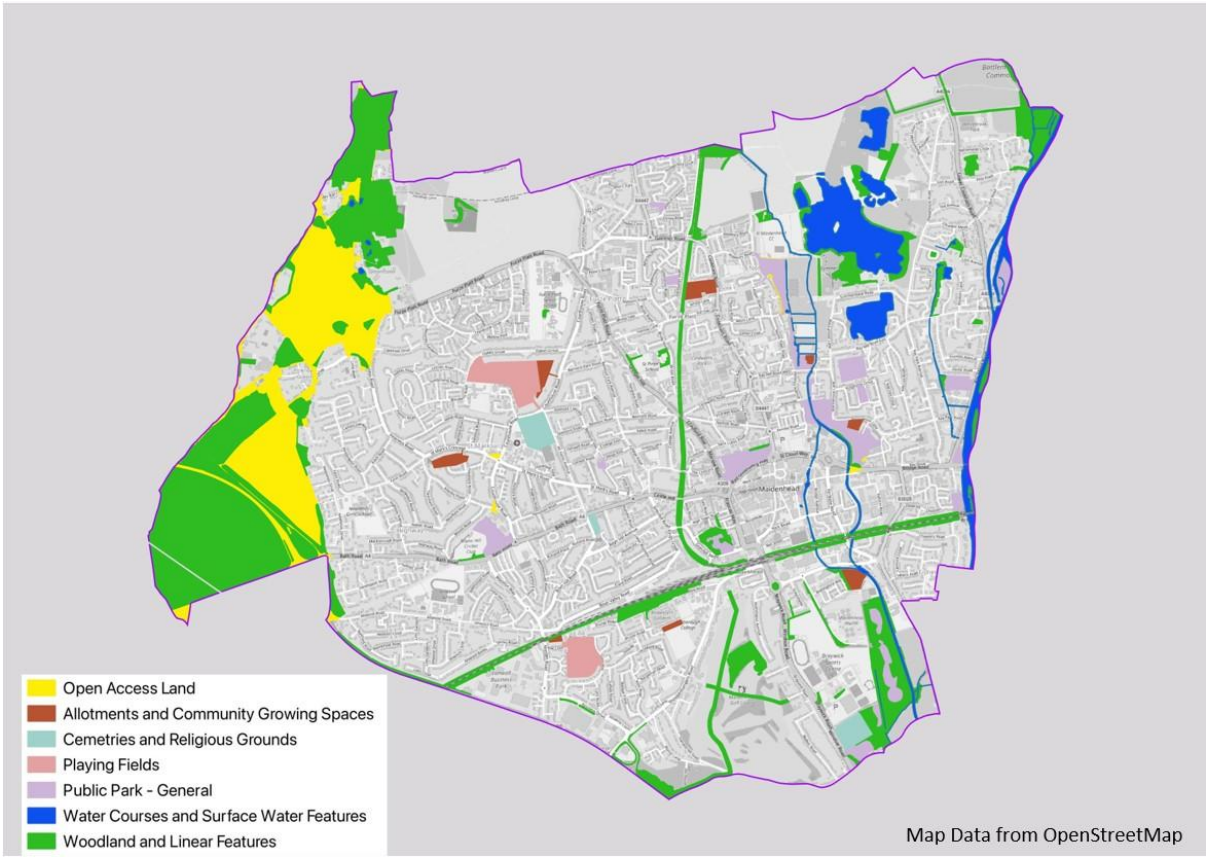
Paragraphs 12.6.2 and 12.6.3 of the BLP refer to trees, woodlands and hedgerows, but are silent on how such corridors are to be identified or taken into account when determining a planning application. Paragraph 12.4.3 of the BLP states that development proposals should contribute to the creation and 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 [1.1] paragraphs 188 and 192.

The policies also have regard to section 9, 'Recommended Next Steps', of the 2019 RBWM Green and Blue Infrastructure Study [2.14], particularly the recommendations to work closely with communities and to protect Green and Blue assets.

**POLICY BI-1: Green and Blue Corridors**

- Green and Blue corridors, existing and proposed, include all those identified on Map 9.1-1
- 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 9.1-1, they should demonstrate how they intend to mitigate the impact on or enhance the blue infrastructure network whilst maintaining public access




***Map 9.1-1 Green and Blue Corridors***

Note that some watercourses shown on the map are seasonally 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. Personal safety should be considered with good lighting and ensuring footpaths are not restricted from view by plants.

As identified in the RBWM Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) [2.15], 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 Flood Risk and 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 [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 [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 181 and 182.

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 [2.16] adopted in 2019 gives no guidance on the design of sustainable urban drainage systems. The RBWM Sustainability SPD [2.13] 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. Additional guidance produced by the RSPB and WWT on how to design and manage SuDS for the benefit of both people and wildlife is also available.

**POLICY BI-2: Managing Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage Systems**

- Proposals for development within designated Flood Zones 2 and 3, or sites of more than 1 hectare in Flood Zone 1, 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, upstream 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 take account of guidance established in the CIRIA SuDS Manual [1.9] or a subsequent update of this
  b) SuDS should be designed to be multi-functional and deliver benefits for wildlife, amenity and landscape.
  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 map 9.2-1. 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 [2.16] 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.


SuDS Bioretention Area (illustration courtesy of RSPB/WWT SuDS guide)

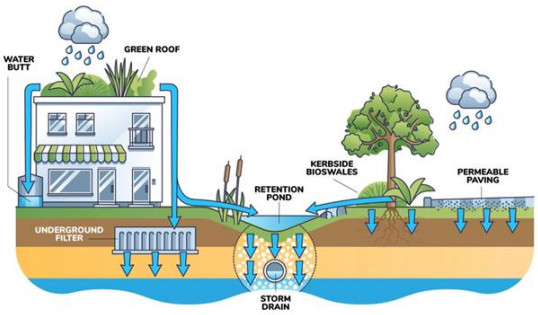
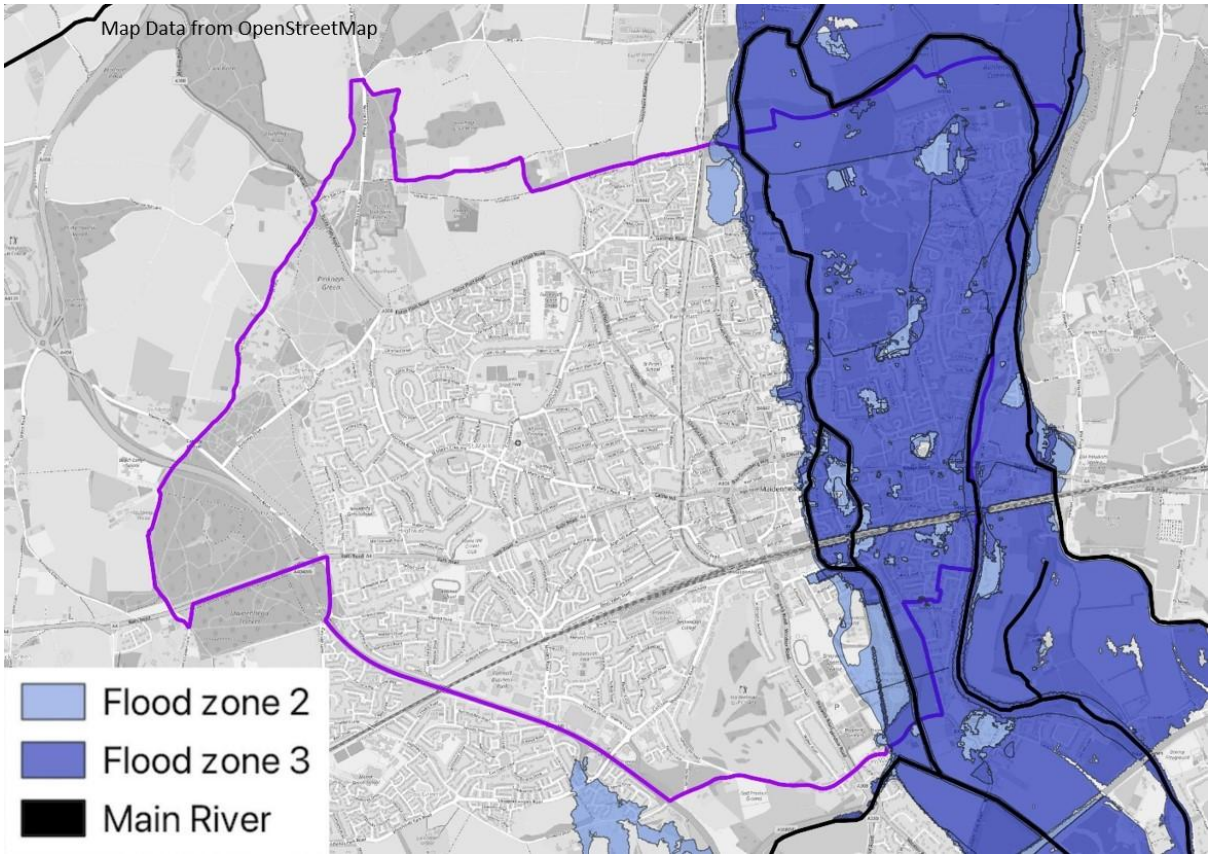



Diagram of Sustainable Drainage System




***Map 9.2-1 Indicative map of Maidenhead Flood Zones***

Map 9.2-1 indicates the area around Maidenhead that falls within Flood zones 2 and 3. Flood zones are defined by the Environment agency and planning applications should be based on information using the map available at [Map – Flood map for planning – GOV.UK](Map – Flood map for planning – GOV.UK).

## 9.3 Biodiversity Net Gain

**OBJECTIVE:**
To ensure that opportunities for biodiversity and habitat creation, 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 [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 [1.1] paragraphs 187, 192 and 193. The policy has also been developed with regard to the RBWM Sustainability Supplementary Planning Document [2.13], particularly section 6.2.1 on Biodiversity Net Gain.

**POLICY BI-3: Biodiversity net gain**

- 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 it is not practicable to deliver biodiversity net-gain on-site, off-site measures are lower in the hierarchy given below 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 [2.15].
  a) Avoid adverse effects on onsite habitat with a habitat distinctiveness of medium or higher
  b) If such onsite adverse effects can't be avoided, mitigate those effects
  c) If such onsite adverse effects can't be mitigated, enhance onsite habitat
  d) If onsite habitat can't be enhanced, create new onsite habitat
  e) If onsite habitat can't be created, provide registered offsite biodiversity gain units
  f) If offsite biodiversity gain units can't be secured, purchase biodiversity credits
- Examples of beneficial habitat features and landscape features are listed in the Reasoned Justification text.

**Reasoned Justification**

Measures to protect and enhance wildlife must be included with development proposals, to ensure that development enhances biodiversity rather than reduces it. Even small scale developments can 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 [1.1] which are: ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees, blanket bog, limestone pavement, sand dunes, salt marsh and lowland fen.

As many as practical in the list of wildlife habitat features below should be incorporated:

- Integral bird nest bricks (such as swift bricks) at a minimum of two per dwelling
- Integral bat boxes
- Overhanging eaves suitable for nesting house martins, supplemented by nest cups
- Landscape features to support insect life, such as log piles, insect hotels, invertebrate/bee bricks and reptile hibernacula
- Hedgehog highways (such as suitable gaps in fences) integrated throughout the development between gardens and the wider ecological network
- Use of native plants in landscaping schemes

Outside the town centre area as defined by map 4.1-1, proposals should strive to incorporate a range of landscape features that provide:

- A diverse patchwork of complementary habitats and edges
- Planting that provides nectar, pollen or fruit across as wide a period of the year as possible
- Planting that can be maintained with minimal disturbance, especially wildflower meadows and verges which only need to be cut once or twice a year
- Wildlife access to water, such as ponds and water features
- Maintenance of 'dark 'areas at night time, avoiding light pollution to habitats

## 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) [2.14], defines green roofs and walls as urban greening approaches to providing green infrastructure.

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

Section 4.3.2 of the Sustainability SPD [2.13] which relates to the provision of green roofs to mitigate heat gain, has also been referenced in the policies.

**POLICY BI-4: Urban Greening**

- 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 features such as:
  a) Roof gardens or extensive green roofs
  b) Brown roofs
  c) Blue roofs
  d) Podium roofs
  e) Green walls
  f) Street level greening including water features and native trees
- Proposals including green roofs should aim to provide 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.

Roof gardens offer the greatest range of benefits but also require the most work to maintain. Also known as intensive green roofs, roof gardens are suitable for installation on strong structures that can accommodate a substrate depth from 150mm to 450mm, to support grasses, perennials, shrubs and trees. Roof gardens 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.

Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan

# Section 10:
# SITE-SPECIFIC

# 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 [2.3] 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 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 and map have been developed with regard to the 2009 Maidenhead Waterways Framework [2.3], the RBWM Public Rights of Way Management and Improvement Plan [2.2], to the RBWM Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan [2.11], and to the BLP [2.1] policies NR1 and IF5.

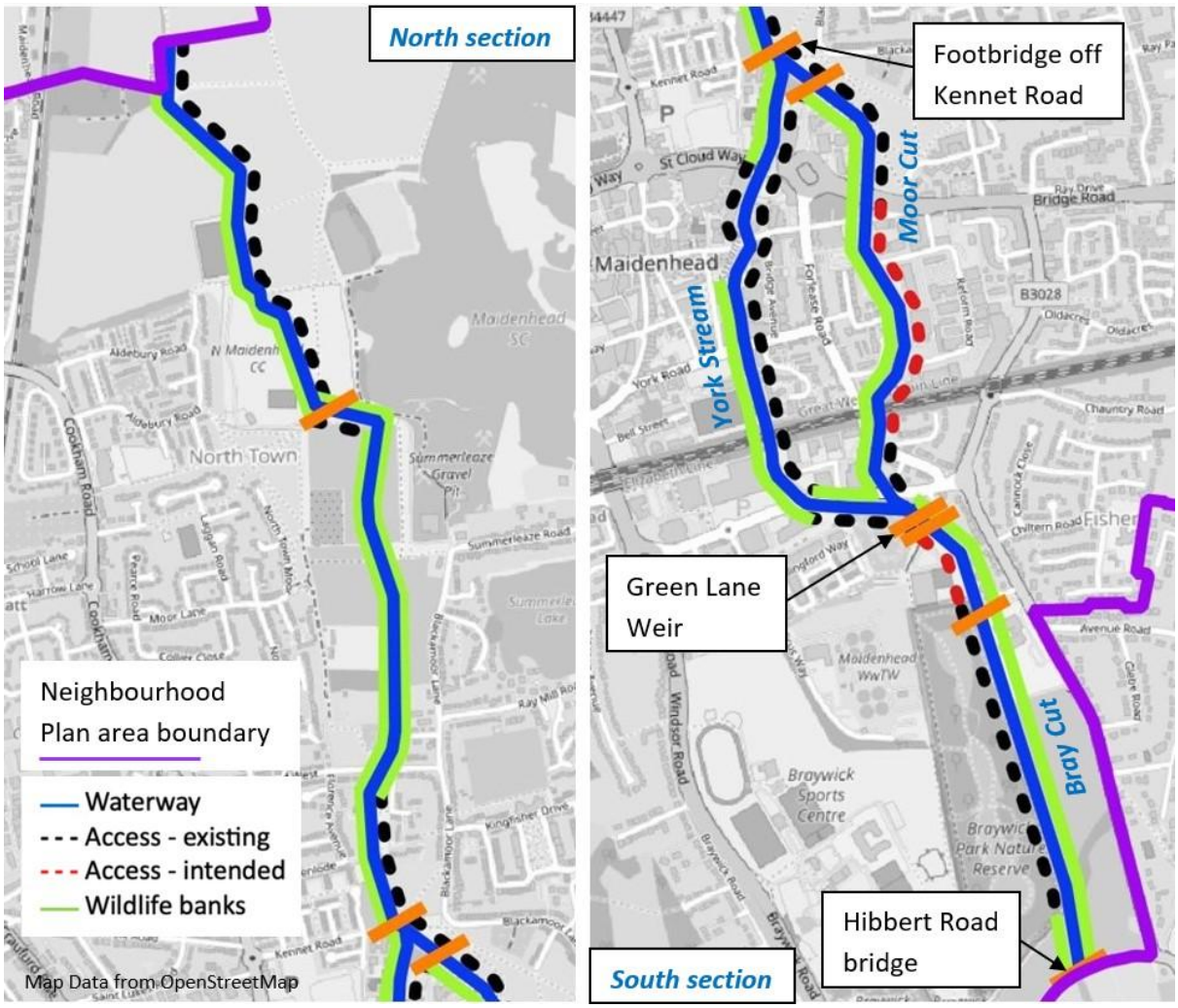
The policies follow the principles in NPPF [1.1] paragraphs 96, 98, 105, 109, 111, 187 and 192.

**POLICY SS-1a: Waterway Corridor access**

- 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.
- Cycling routes should allow continuous riding, and minimise requirements to stop, dismount, or give way to vehicular traffic. Walking routes should allow uninterrupted walking, adjoining and in clear sight of the water's edge and minimise the requirement to cross roads.
- Proposals for new or replacement crossing structures over or under the Waterway shall comply with the standard in Figure 10.1-1 and the accompanying paragraphs, allowing use by boats and for a continuous pedestrian and cycle path where public access is provided or consented.

**POLICY SS-1b: Waterway Corridor development**

- 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
- Developments with public amenity space adjacent to the waterway on the public access bank will be supported and are expected to incorporate facilities for boat launching and embarking or disembarking of canoes, paddleboards and other small craft
- 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.
- Development of Moor Cut should respect the following principles:
  - Opportunity for recreation and habitat creation
  - Navigable channel for canoes, kayaks and small boats
  - Mosaic of wetlands, backwaters and aquatic habitat to support an abundance of wildlife
  - Create a footpath linking to the Green Way at both Town Moor and Green Lane
  - Water depth of about 1 metre in the centre channel
  - Use of soft banks
  - Prevent water losses




***Map 10.1-1 Waterway Corridor Access bank, Wildlife bank and crossing structure reaches***

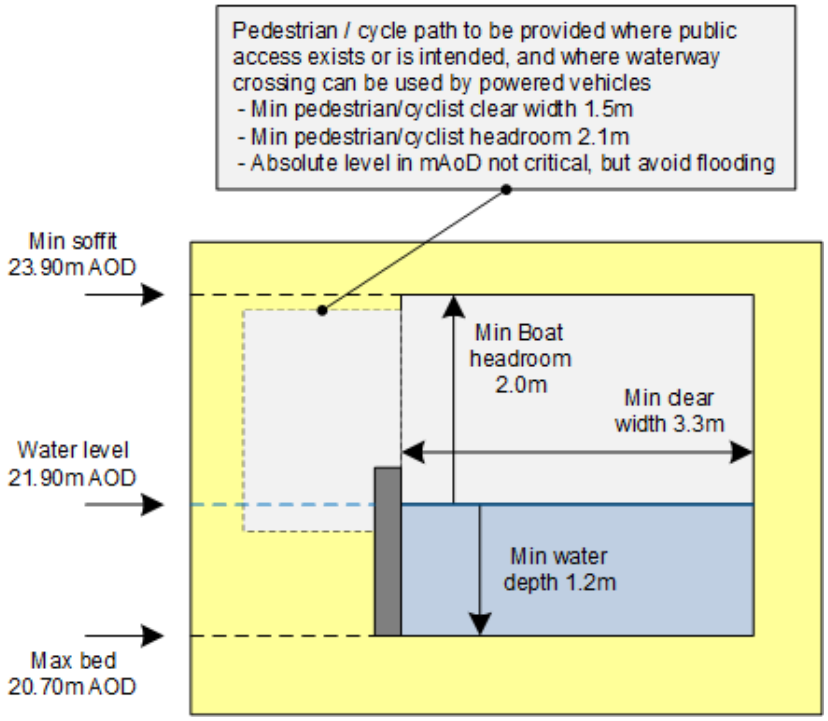



***Figure 10.1-1 Crossing requirements from footbridge off Kennet Road to Green Lane Weir***

From the footbridge off Kennet Road to above Green Lane Weir, minimum crossing requirements are shown in Figure 10.1-1, and structures defining the limits of this reach are shown on map 10.1-1.

For the reach below Green Lane Weir to Hibbert Road bridge, 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. The structures defining the limits of this reach are shown on map 10.1-1.

**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 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. For Moor Cut, the aim is to create a more natural channel than York stream, and as it is less built up there is greater opportunity for habitat creation.

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 provides 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 safe 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**

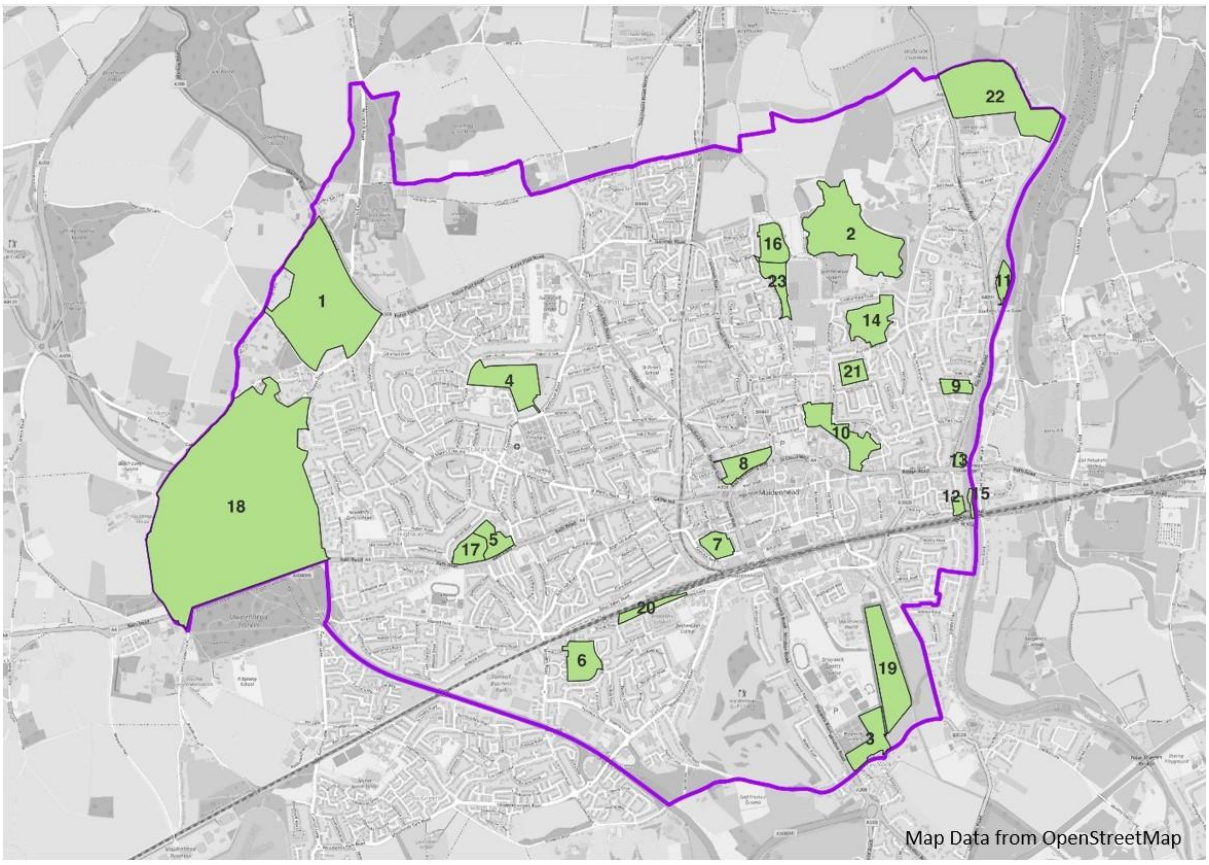
The policies have been developed with regard to the BLP [2.1] paragraphs 14.8.2 and 14.10.2 to 14.10.5 and policy IF4 on Open Space. They have also been developed with regard to BLP policy QP5

on Rural Aras and Green Belt, 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 [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 [1.1] paragraph 106. The policies and designations follow the principles in NPPF paragraphs 106, 107, 108, 151 and 154.

**POLICY SS-2: Local Green Spaces**

- 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 [1.1] paragraph 107 and defines the boundary of each.
- Development in Local Green Spaces is expected to be consistent with policies for Green Belt




***Map 10.2-1 Index map of Local Green Spaces***

**Reasoned Justification**

NPPF [1.1] paragraph 107 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 [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 [1.10] 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. NPPF paragraph 154 (b) lists exceptions where new buildings are not inappropriate.

Additionally, the 2019 RBWM Open Space Study [2.17] 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. Designation of these areas as Local Green Space will enable their protection, providing the opportunity for biodiversity enhancement within Maidenhead.

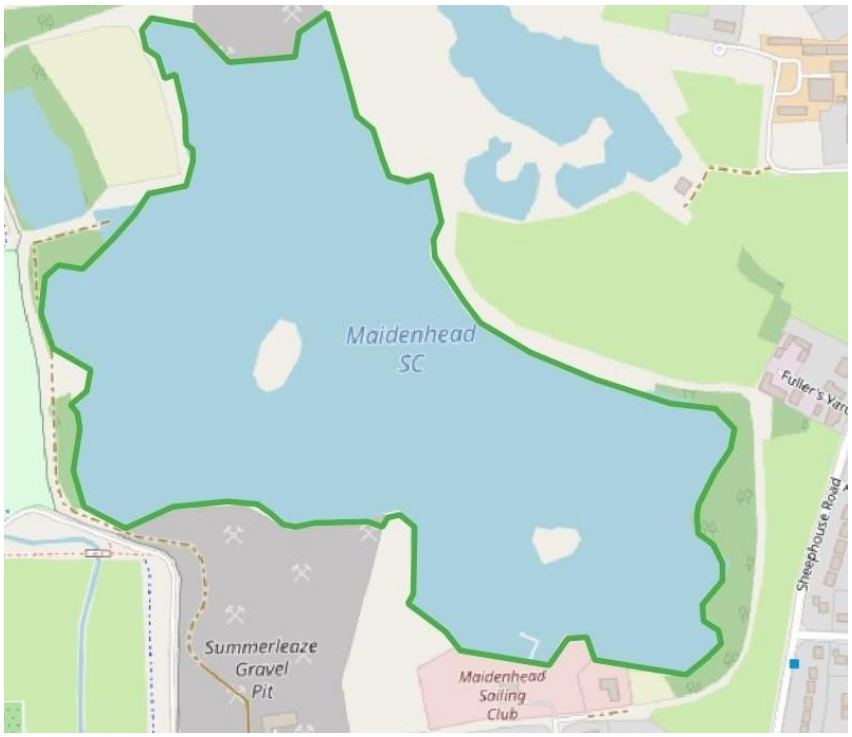
There are few areas left within the Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan environs that are designated for nature over people and play. Green spaces designated because of the richness of their wildlife need protection so biodiversity within them can survive and thrive, and future generations can enjoy them.

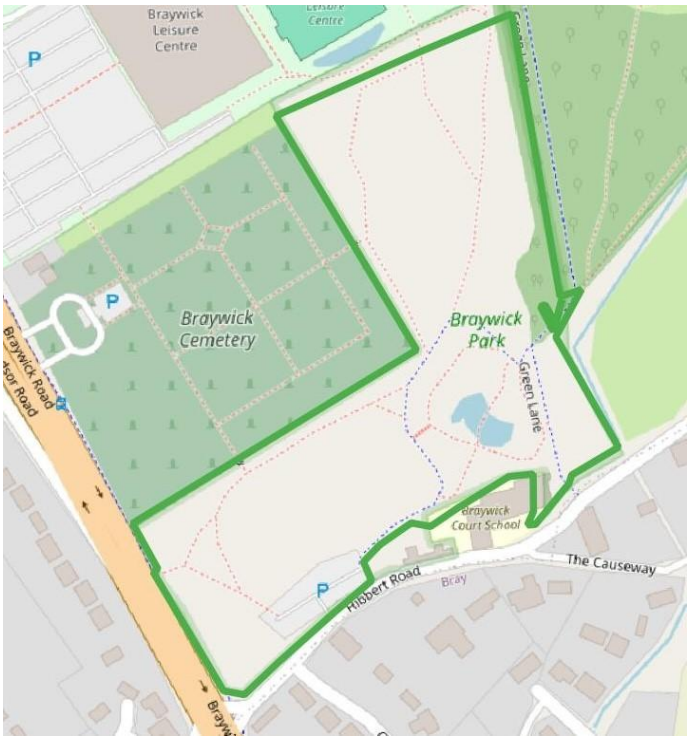
Table 10.2-1: Local Green Spaces



| Statements applicable to all Local Green Spaces: |
| --- |
| **Proximity:** All Local Green Spaces are adjacent to Maidenhead urban area, as seen on Map 10.2-1, and serve the Maidenhead community. |
| **Area and Local character:** Most of the Local Green Spaces have areas in the range 1-12 Hectares, with a few larger areas such as Maidenhead Thicket and Pinkneys Green. The larger areas are well contained and are not considered to have characteristics of an extensive tract of land. |

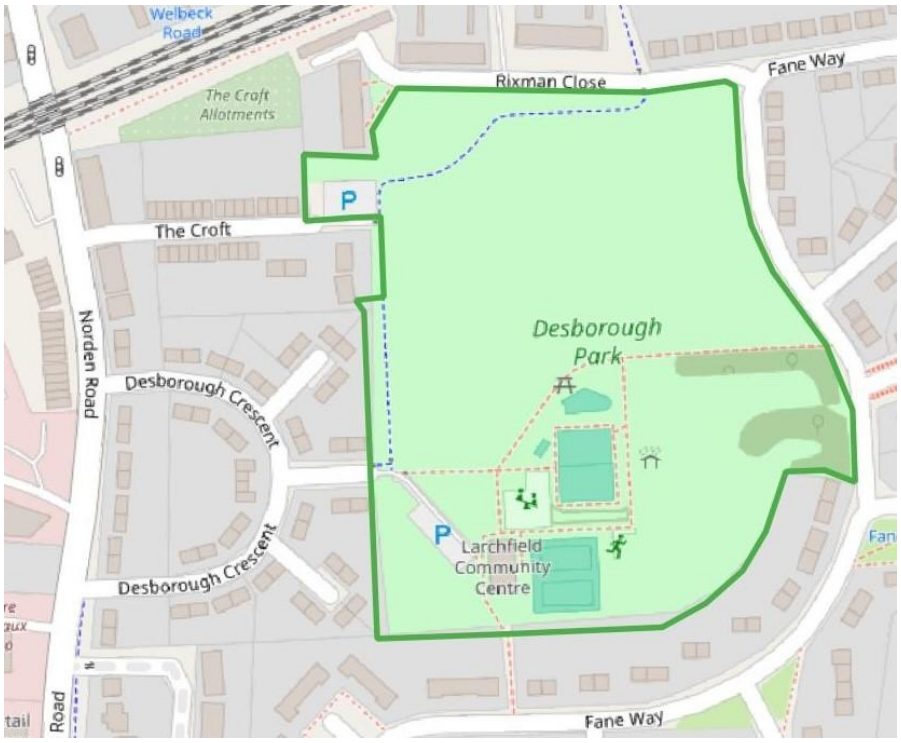
| **1 Pinkneys Green** | **Area**: 33.2 ha |
|---|---|
|  | |
|  | **Beauty:** Large open meadow surrounded by trees<br>**Recreational value:** Network of paths for walking and dog walking, kite flying. Part of the land is home to Pinkneys Green Cricket Club.<br>**Tranquillity:** Pleasant and quiet open space bordering the busy A308, big enough to feel non-urban.<br>**Richness of wildlife and biodiversity:** Rich grassland habitat maintained for wildlife, mature Trees, a few near western boundary with TPOs, but most without. |

| **2 Sailing Club Lake** | **Area**: 20.2 ha |
|---|---|
|  | |
|  | **Beauty:** Lake with islands, surrounded by trees<br>**Historic significance:** Formerly a gravel pit, now used for leisure rather than industry.<br>**Recreational value:** Sailing and Watersports, home to Maidenhead Sailing Club.<br>**Tranquillity:** Quiet, a wholly different sense of place from the urban area in the vicinity. |

| **3 Braywick Formal Park** | **Area**: 3.2 ha |
|---|---|
|  | |
|  | **Beauty:** Park laid out originally for Stafferton Lodge, contains remaining elements such as steps and trees.<br>**Historic significance:** Remnant of formal park with characteristics of former use.<br>**Recreational value:** Dog walking, strolling.<br>**Tranquillity:** Pleasant and quiet open space close to, but separate from, the busy A308.<br>**Richness of wildlife and biodiversity:** Many mature Trees, although none have TPOs. |

| **4 Oaken Grove Park** | **Area**: 7.7 ha |
|---|---|
|  | |
|  | **Historic significance:** Contains Sir Nicholas Winton Memorial Garden, opened in 2017.<br>**Recreational value:** Tennis Courts, Bowls club, Sports pitches, Games area, Children's play area, Outdoor Gym, dog walking, Café, parking.<br>**Tranquillity:** A calm oasis with a degree of isolation from the surrounding busy roads and residential areas<br>**Richness of wildlife and biodiversity:** Many mature Trees, although none have TPOs. Wildflower areas. |

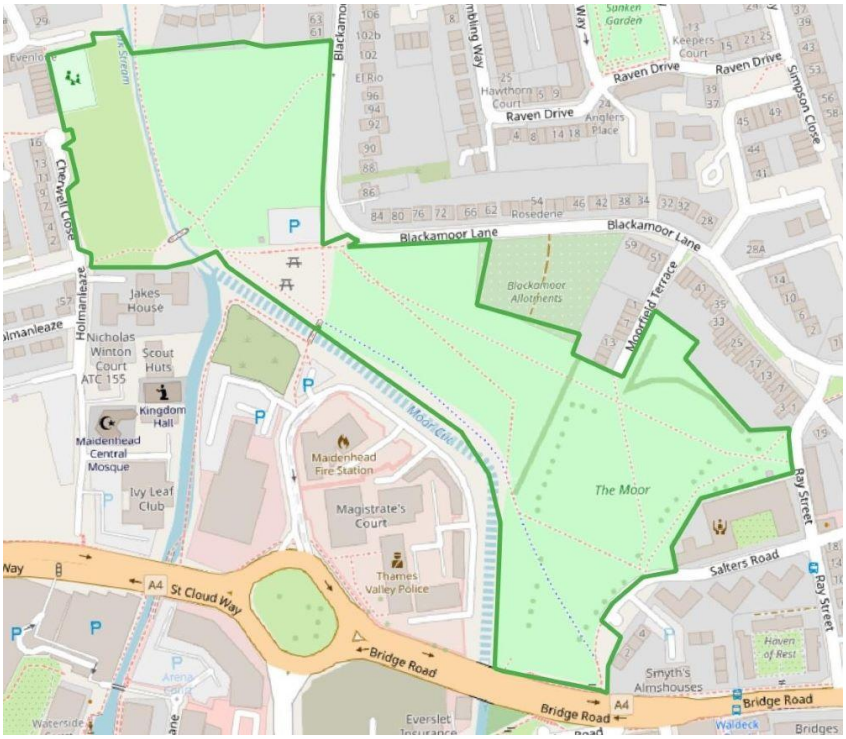
| **5 Boyn Grove Park** | **Area**: 2.8 ha |
|---|---|
|  | |
|  | **Recreational value:** Children's play area, dog walking, sledging in winter, parking.<br>**Tranquillity:** A calm oasis with a degree of isolation from the adjacent busy A4 road.<br>**Richness of wildlife and biodiversity:** Fringed by and containing many mature Trees, although none have TPOs. |

| **6 Desborough Park** | **Area**: 4.3 ha |
|---|---|
|  | |
|  | **Recreational value:** Skate park, Sports pitches and games areas, Children's play areas, Outdoor Gym, dog walking, parking, part-time snack shop run by residents.<br>**Tranquillity:** A calm oasis within a residential area.<br>**Richness of wildlife and biodiversity:** Many mature Trees, although none have TPOs. |

| **7 Grenfell Park** | **Area**: 2.4 ha |
|---|---|
|  | |
|  | **Beauty:** Set in a dell partly surrounded by steep banks of trees.<br>**Historic significance:** Donated to the town in 1897 by Lord Desborough (William Grenfell) to mark Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee.<br>**Recreational value:** Children's play areas, Outdoor Gym, dog walking, pleasant woodland paths, Café, parking.<br>**Tranquillity:** A calm oasis within the surrounding busy roads and residential area.<br>**Richness of wildlife and biodiversity:** Many mature Trees, although none have TPOs. Some trees grown from seeds provided by Lord Desborough after travelling the world. |

| **8 Kidwells Park** | **Area**: 3.7 ha |
|---|---|
|  | |
|  | **Historic significance:** Kidwells Park was gifted to the town in 1890 by J.D.M. Pearce, who was the Mayor of Maidenhead five times.<br>**Recreational value:** Tennis, netball and football Courts, Skate park, Children's play area, dog walking. Used for Maidenhead Festival and Maidenhead at the Movies events.<br>**Richness of wildlife and biodiversity:** Many mature Trees, although none have TPOs. Wildflower areas. |

| **9 Riverside Gardens** | **Area**: 1.5 ha |
|---|---|
|  | |
|  | **Historic significance:** Acquired in 1949.<br>**Recreational value:** Children's play area, Crazy Golf, Café, parking.<br>**Richness of wildlife and biodiversity:** Mature Trees, although none have TPOs. |

| **10 Town Moor** | **Area**: 5.9 ha |
|---|---|
|  | |
|  | **Beauty:** Landmark row of poplar trees.<br>**Recreational value:** Strolling, dog walking, used for picnics and for feeding ducks.<br>**Tranquillity:** A calm oasis with a degree of isolation from surrounding busy roads such as the A4.<br>**Richness of wildlife and biodiversity:** Many mature Trees, although none have TPOs. Adjacent to York Stream and Moor Cut which are Local Wildlife sites. |

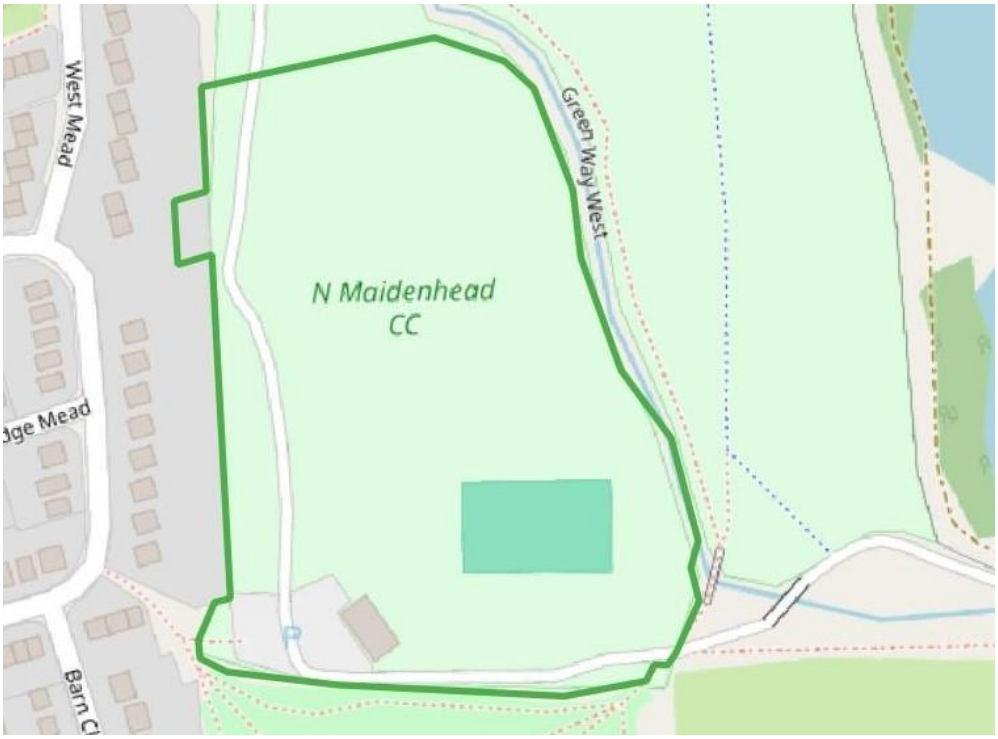
| **11 Ray Mill Island** | **Area**: 1.3 ha |
|---|---|
|  | |
|  | **Beauty:** Island on the Thames next to the iconic Boulters lock. Access via a bridge to views up and down the Thames.<br>**Historic significance:** The Island's name dates from when the Ray family managed a flourmill here. The site was acquired by Maidenhead Borough Council in 1950 from the Conservators of the River Thames.<br>**Recreational value:** Children's play area, dog walking, Café, streamside walk, also used for picnics and for feeding geese. Canoeists access the water below the weir, and swimmers access the river. Aviary and Guinea pig enclosure.<br>**Tranquillity:** A pleasant way to experience the river from within.<br>**Richness of wildlife and biodiversity:** Many mature Trees, although none have TPOs. |

| **12 Guard's Club Park** | **Area**: 0.8 ha |
|---|---|
|  | |
|  | **Beauty:** Views up river to Maidenhead bridge and down river to Brunel's famous railway bridge. Attractive footbridge across to Guards Club Island<br>**Historic significance:** Site of the Guards Club, which provided recreation for officers from the depots at Windsor and Pirbright.<br>**Tranquillity:** Quiet open space adjacent to river.<br>**Richness of wildlife and biodiversity:** Mature Trees, although none have TPOs. |

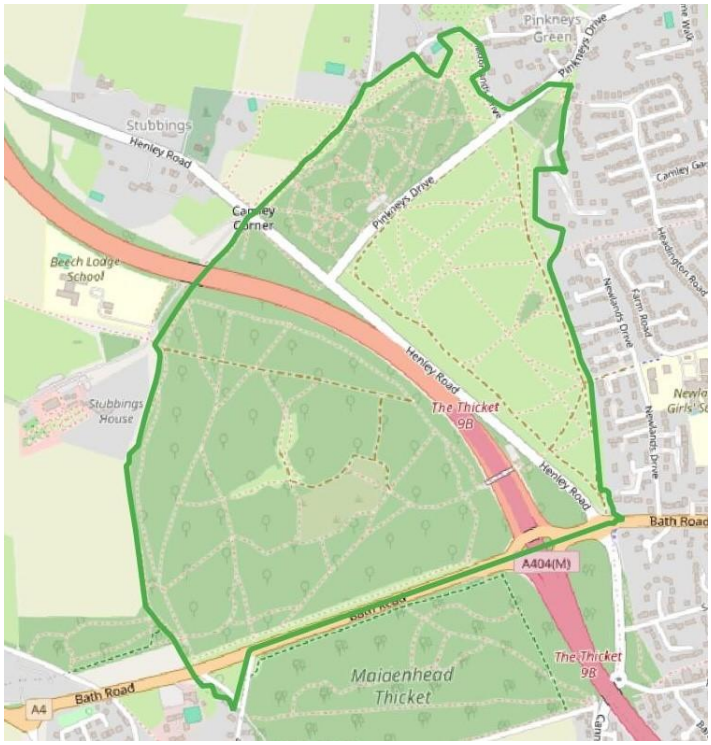
| **13 Bridge Gardens** | **Area**: 0.5 ha |
|---|---|
|  | |
|  | **Beauty:** Views of river and adjacent to Maidenhead bridge. Illuminated fountain.<br>**Historic significance:** 2 plaques, one giving the history of the bridge, the other a reminder of the serious flood of 1947.<br>**Recreational value:** Walking and being by the river.<br>**Richness of wildlife and biodiversity:** Mature Trees, although none have TPOs. |

| **14 Summerleaze Lake** | **Area**: 5.4 ha |
|---|---|
|  | |
|  | **Beauty:** Lake surrounded by trees.<br>**Historic significance:** Formerly a gravel pit, has now become an important wildlife site.<br>**Tranquillity:** A peaceful oasis within a built-up area, which can be seen and enjoyed from the adjacent Ray Mill Road East and from part of Blackamoor Lane.<br>**Richness of wildlife and biodiversity:** Breeding site for Toad population, linked to Deerswood Meadow which is the toads' land habitat. |

| **15 Guards Club Island** | **Area**: 0.4 ha |
|---|---|
|  | |
|  | **Beauty:** Island on the Thames next to Brunel's famous Railway bridge and supporting the central pier. Access via an attractive footbridge to views up and down the Thames.<br>**Recreational value:** Publicly accessible island in the River Thames, Mature Trees, views across river and of Maidenhead Bridges.<br>**Tranquillity:** A pleasant way to experience the river from within.<br>**Richness of wildlife and biodiversity:** Breeding site for waterfowl. Mature Trees, although none have TPOs. |

| **16 North Maidenhead Cricket Ground** | **Area**: 3.3 ha |
|---|---|
|  | |
|  | **Beauty:** Open space surrounded by trees.<br>**Recreational value:** Home to North Maidenhead Cricket Club and Maidenhead Softball Club. |

| **17 Boyne Hill Cricket Ground** | **Area**: 2.8 ha |
|---|---|
|  | |
|  | **Beauty:** Open space surrounded by trees.<br>**Historic significance:** Boyne Hill Cricket Club was founded in 1890 by the Wootton family, and the present ground was bequeathed in 1951.<br>**Recreational value:** Home to Boyne Hill Cricket Club. |

| **18 Part of Maidenhead Thicket** | **Area**: 108 ha |
|---|---|
|  | |
|  | **Beauty:** Range of trees, paths both formal and informal, interspersed with open spaces.<br>**Historic significance:** Prehistoric Celtic farm enclosure, Historic refuge of Highwaymen.<br>**Recreational value:** Accessible woodland with network of paths, walking and dog walking.<br>**Tranquillity:** Away from the adjacent roads, a pleasant opportunity to hear birdsong.<br>**Richness of wildlife and biodiversity:** Mature woodland with clearings. Associated variety of bird species, deer, insects and plants including orchids. |

| **19 Braywick Nature Reserve** | **Area**: 12.1 ha |
|---|---|
|  | |
|  | **Beauty:** A range of wild habitat including woodland, open meadow and bordering Bray cut watercourse.<br>**Historic significance:** Reclaimed from a Former landfill site, now used to provide wildlife habitat. Some landscape features from the Braywick Lodge Estate remain, as do previous watercourse routes.<br>**Recreational value:** Wildlife education and a variety of paths for walking and exploring.<br>**Tranquillity:** Central area is remote from surrounding developed land and provides a peaceful oasis.<br>**Richness of wildlife and biodiversity:** Designated Local Nature Reserve, Home of the Braywick Nature Centre and outdoor classroom that benefits thousands of school children annually. |

| **20 The Gullet** | **Area**: 2.3 ha |
|---|---|
|  | |
|  | **Beauty:** Mature woodland.<br>**Recreational value:** Pleasant walking route as an alternative to local roads.<br>**Richness of wildlife and biodiversity:** Designated Local Nature Reserve. Strip of woodland containing a mixture of trees including oaks, beech and conifers on a chalky soil, along with flowering plants, scrub and rough grassland. |

| **21 Deerswood Meadow** | **Area**: 2.1 ha |
|---|---|
|  | |
|  | **Recreational value:** Rough cycling, dog walking.<br>**Tranquillity:** Small green oasis in urban surroundings.<br>**Richness of wildlife and biodiversity:** Land habitat for Toad population, linked to Summerleaze Lake which is the toads' breeding site. |

| **22 Southern part of Battlemead Common** | **Area**: 16.1 ha |
|---|---|
|  | |
|  | **Beauty:** Woods and meadows adjacent to an attractive part of the River Thames.<br>**Historic significance:** Previously part of White Place Farm and before that part of the Cliveden estate, owned by the Astor family until the 1940s. Said to be the site of battles or skirmishes in the English Civil War, and also between the Anglo-Saxons and the Vikings in the 9th century.<br>**Recreational value:** Part of the Maidenhead Boundary walking route, views across the Thames to Cliveden.<br>**Tranquillity:** Area with a feeling of isolation between the settlements of Maidenhead and Cookham.<br>**Richness of wildlife and biodiversity:** Variety of habitats: woodland (both natural and plantation), grassland/meadow, hedgerows, waterway (the White Brook) and wetland. Rare birds and insects, including winter visitors such as Teal and Wigeon. |

| **23 North Town Moor** | **Area**: 2.6 ha |
|---|---|
|  | |
|  | **Recreational value:** Sports pitches, walking and dog walking, used for picnics. Network of footpaths.<br>**Tranquillity:** A calm oasis within a built up area.<br>**Richness of wildlife and biodiversity:** Mature trees, although none have TPOs. |

# SECTION 11. INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS

## 11.1 Community priorities for Developer contributions

Community priorities for spending Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) are on Biodiversity gain, improving cycling and walking infrastructure, and implementation of Green and Blue corridors including the Maidenhead Waterway project.

These priorities reflect the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan where infrastructure spend is relevant. Priorities for Biodiversity gain are given in the RBWM Biodiversity Action Plan [2.15] and priorities for improving cycling and walking infrastructure are given in the RBWM Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan [2.11]. Information on the Maidenhead Waterway project is given in the Waterways Framework policy [2.3].

# SECTION 12. DELIVERY AND IMPLEMENTATION

## 12.1 Proposed Delivery and Implementation Mechanisms

The Plan period is based from 2024 and looks ahead 15 years to 2039. It has been prepared to align with the current RBWM Borough Local Plan, which runs from 2013 to 2033.

The policies will be implemented by RBWM through the determination of planning applications. Policies may also be used as guidance by developers or landowners preparing planning applications, and by members of the community who wish to comment on those applications.

A review of the Neighbourhood Plan may be considered when the BLP is updated, major changes to national planning policy occur, or other changes impact its effectiveness. Maidenhead Neighbourhood Forum was designated in December 2022 for a period of 5 years, which expires in December 2027. To update the Neighbourhood Plan, the Forum would need to be re-designated by RBWM.

# SECTION 13. List of Committee members

The people listed below have served or are serving on the Management Committee for the Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Andrew Ingram | Ian Rose | Richard Davenport |
| Mark Fessey | Susan Ingram | Mick Jarvis |
| Judith Littlewood | Donna Stimson | Nicola Stingelin |
| Andy Woodcock | Phil Adkins | Bob Beauchamp |
| David Dyer | Deborah Mason | Martin McNamee |
| Pamela Midgley | Roger Panton | Matthew Shaw |
| Thanks also to Gill Evans for providing many of the maps | | |

# SECTION 14. Reference documents

National Reference documents:

[1.1] National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) December 2024

[1.2] National Space Standards, Department for Communities and Local Government, 2015

[1.3] The Setting of Heritage Assets, Historic England, 2017

[1.4] Local Heritage Listing: Identifying and Conserving Local Heritage, Historic England Advice Note 7, 2021

[1.5] Overcrowded housing (England), House of Commons Library CBP1013, 2023

[1.6] Families in Flats, HMSO, 1981

[1.7] The Building Regulations, Infrastructure for the charging of electric vehicles, Approved Document S, HM Government, 2021

[1.8] Whole life carbon assessment for the built environment, RICS, 2024

[1.9] SuDS Manual, CIRIA

[1.10] Planning for Sport Guidance, Sport England, 2019 (updated 2024)

[1.11] TM54 Evaluating operational energy use at the design stage, CIBSE, 2022

[1.12] Passive House Planning Package, Passive House Institute, 2021

Local Reference documents:

[2.1] RBWM Borough Local Plan, 2022

[2.2] RBWM Public Rights of Way Management and Improvement Plan, 2016

[2.3] Maidenhead Waterways Framework, 2009

[2.4] Berkshire (including South Bucks) Strategic Housing Market Assessment, GL Hearn, 2016

[2.5] RBWM Townscape Assessment Volume 1, 2010

[2.6] RBWM Infrastructure Delivery Plan, 2019

[2.7] RBWM Authority Monitoring Reports, 2013 to 2023

[2.8] RBWM Parking Strategy, 2004

[2.9] RBWM Building Height and Tall Buildings SPD, 2023

[2.10] RBWM Affordable Housing Delivery SPD, 2024

[2.11] RBWM Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, 2023

[2.12] RBWM Position statement on sustainability and Energy Efficient Design, 2021

[2.13] RBWM Sustainability SPD, 2024

[2.14] RBWM Green and Blue Infrastructure Study, 2019

[2.15] RBWM Biodiversity Action Plan, 2022

[2.16] RBWM Borough Wide Design Guide, 2020

[2.17] RBWM Open Space Study, 2019

[2.18] RBWM Capacity Assessment, Studio Real, 2013

[2.19] RBWM South West Maidenhead Development Framework SPD, 2022

Reference documents from other areas:

[3.1] PSP 43 Private Amenity Space Standards, South Gloucestershire Council, 2016

# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1 – Maidenhead Design Code

## APPENDIX 2 – Local List of Non-designated Heritage assets

## APPENDIX 3 – List of Commemorative plaques