

# COUNCIL

TUESDAY, 8TH FEBRUARY, 2022

At 7.00 pm

in the

HOLIDAY INN, MANOR LANE, MAIDENHEAD, SL6 2RA,

## SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

### PART I

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>PAGE NO</u>
3.	<u>PUBLIC QUESTIONS</u>  Written responses	3 - 20

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**a) Mark Loader of Oldfield ward will ask the following question of Councillor Coppinger, Cabinet Member for Planning, Environmental Services and Maidenhead:**

A recent Environment Agency document states we live in an area of serious water stress. The council are planning large housing developments. The population growth will result in more demand for water as will the impacts of climate change. In a drought will we have enough water in the Borough without the need for extreme measures?

*Written response: The Council has engaged with the Environment Agency throughout the plan making process as well as other relevant organisations such as Thames Water. The Council has committed to working with the Environment Agency and partners that provide water and sewerage services across the Borough over the plan period to identify infrastructure needs and to ensure that adequate water supply and sewerage capacity is provided in a timely manner to meet planned demand.*

*A Statement of Common Ground was agreed with Thames Water in June 2018 (RBWM\_015) and this was updated in October 2020 (PS/057). Thames Water confirmed that they believe the BLP (Borough Local Plan) meets the test of soundness in relation to water supply and is supported by an appropriate evidence base covering infrastructure requirement relating to water resources and supply. The Council and Thames Water have committed to continuous and proactive joint working throughout the rest of the plan period on water supply (and sewerage infrastructure) matters, including the provision of key infrastructure.*

*Policy IF7 of the BLP states that, development proposals must demonstrate that adequate water supply infrastructure capacity exists both on and off site to serve the development and that the development would not lead to problems for existing users.*

*Developers must liaise with Thames Water at the planning application stage to identify and respond to any necessary infrastructure upgrades. The BLP Inspector is content that IF7 is, as amended, sound.*

**b) John Sewell of Boyn Hill ward will ask the following question of Councillor Coppinger, Cabinet Member for Planning, Environmental Services and Maidenhead:**

The council's environment strategy states access to greenspace is vital for mental and physical wellbeing. However - in response to the housing need for 712 new homes each year there are already hundreds of new flats in the town centre. Surely it's vital for our growing community to protect all the greenspace and amenity potential of the golf course?

*Written response: It's correct to say a large proportion of the new dwellings permitted in recent years have been flats in Maidenhead town centre. The Council has done everything it can to use brownfield sites first, and almost 70% of the housing allocations are on previously developed land. However, such sites are usually in other positive uses (such as providing employment), constrained and expensive to develop. The evidence shows that we need family houses with gardens as well as flats,*

*affordable housing, and community infrastructure such as schools. To achieve this, it's necessary to also build on a limited number of greenfield sites such as the golf course site. The new development will provide a central green area and strategic and local open spaces across the site, including a green spine running from north to south and these facilities will be accessible to all. Rushington Copse would be retained along with as many mature trees as possible, with biodiversity net gains secured.*

**c) Paul Strzelecki of Bisham and Cookham ward will ask the following question of Councillor Clark, Cabinet Member for Transport, Infrastructure, and Digital Connectivity:**

The report finds BLP traffic impact at Cookham Bridge and the narrow Pound “would not be severe”. My detailed analysis, shared, with cabinet and relevant officers, shows a 540% increase in delay times to less than walking pace. RBWM presented 13%! No responses and refusals to meet on the topic. Will you state I was wrong and Cookham traffic sustainable?

*Written response: The evidence for the Borough Local Plan was prepared in line with appropriate guidance, including in terms of assessing the impact of the proposed spatial strategy on transport and local infrastructure. The assessment considered a reasonable worst case for traffic generation which did not take make allowance for the additional investment in sustainable transport expected to come forward as a result of development and our wider transport strategies.*

*This matter and others related to the transport evidence base were discussed extensively at the examination hearings in late 2020 and given due consideration by the Inspector. The Inspector’s report, quite correctly, concludes that the approach is robust at a strategic level and that the impacts cannot be considered as severe.*

*The Development Management process will provide further opportunity for modelling and assessment of highways impacts and secure mitigation relating to more detailed proposals at the planning application stage.*

**d) Andrew Hill of Boyn Hill ward will ask the following question of Councillor Coppinger, Cabinet Member for Planning, Environmental Services and Maidenhead:**

Does the Council agree with the Inspector's final report (ID-34, 153-161) that under the NPPF the loss of the golf club “...will not result in an actual loss of open space useable by members of the public”, and what steps were taken within the BLP allocations to ensure compensatory leisure and sporting sites for this net loss?

*Written response: The Council agrees with the Inspector that the loss of the golf course would not result in an “actual loss of open space useable by the general public”. Other than the public rights of way running across the site, Maidenhead Golf Course is not publicly accessible. In contrast, the many greenspaces created on AL13 will be accessible to everyone.*

*The Council addressed the issue of the loss of the Golf Course in paragraph 4.17.11 of its Matter 11 response, stating that “There is a significant demand for golf in the Borough and the level of golf provision is good with a mix of different types of courses. Maidenhead Golf Course...intend to use the surrender money to purchase and construct a new golf course within Maidenhead.”*

*The Council understands that the Golf Club are still looking to secure a replacement site with the lease surrender money. On 9 September 2021, the Golf Club voted to accept a revised offer for surrendering the lease and on 11 January, it is understood that members of the golf club agreed to use the funds that would be released to purchase land for a replacement site.*

*The Council maintains its view that Maidenhead is well served by golf courses and there is a realistic prospect that the Golf Club will obtain equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality. Sport England did not object to the Plan at the Proposed Change (or indeed the Main Modifications) stage.*

**e) Andrew Hill of Boyn Hill ward will ask the following question of Councillor Coppinger, Cabinet Member for Planning, Environmental Services and Maidenhead:**

The Council's note to the Inspector (RBWM 074, para 29) says it is factually incorrect that the golf club renegotiation will delay delivery of houses in 2023/24.

Given the new contract when did RBWM advise the Inspector of changes to years 9-13 of the housing trajectory (RBWM note 073b), and what are the new numbers for that table?

Written response: *At the time of producing RBWM\_074 in March 2021, the position was that there was an agreement in place for Maidenhead Golf Club to surrender its lease by 2023, with delivery expected to start at the Golf Club part of AL13 in 2024/25 (124 dwellings).*

*On 9 September 2021, the members of the Golf Club voted to accept a revised offer to vacate their existing site by the end of 2025.*

*On 20 January 2022, the Inspector asked the council to respond to some points made by Mr Hill in connection with the revised surrender agreement. On 21 January, the Council provided a response to the Inspector, including on the implications of this revised agreement on the housing trajectory. The implication is simply that the housing supply for Year 13 (2025/26) would fall from 1,820 dwellings to 1,696 dwellings and these homes would be provided in later years. It is noted that the Inspector's Report includes a footnote on page 40 that demonstrates that the Inspector is aware of the renegotiation of the surrender agreement and that this would potentially extend the date by which the Club must vacate the golf course, from 2023 to 2025. The revised lease surrender agreement has now been signed by both parties.*

*To conclude, the housing trajectory is cautious in terms of delivery dates and there is sufficient flexibility within it to absorb a delay of 2 years on the golf course part of allocation AL13. The Inspector is fully aware of this matter and has also confirmed in the report her view that the availability of the land is not at significant risk.*

**f) Ivan McCullough of Riverside ward will ask the following question of Councillor Stimson, Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Sustainability, Parks and Countryside:**

Within the Borough Local Plan, allocation AL27 is designated as a "2.29 hectare pocket park" and the site specification stresses its role in flood attenuation, its importance for biodiversity and its educational and leisure potential.

Can the lead member give us more details of her plans to fulfil this vision?

*Written response: Site allocation AL27 (Land South of Ray Mill Road East, Maidenhead) is allocated in the BLP for green infrastructure, including a pocket park, habitat area and flood attenuation. It is noted that a planning application for 80 dwellings and open space on this site (21/02866/FULL) was considered recently by the planning committee and that Members resolved to approve the proposed development subject to referral to the Head of Planning and the Secretary of State under the Call-in direction. The Council is currently awaiting a decision from the Secretary of State on whether to intervene.*

*Should the development for housing not proceed, then the Council considers that the site is a feasible location for a pocket park that would deliver biodiversity enhancements and a pond, with trees and grassland retained and enhanced. Pocket Parks can be created at relatively low cost, sometimes supported by grants; for example, in 2019/20 two 'Pocket Parks' were created on open spaces in Windsor, both of which were supported by grants of £25k-£30k under the Government's 'Pocket Park' grants scheme.*

*In the event the proposed housing development is implemented, about 40% of the site would be retained as open space with works to this area funded by the development.*

**g) Phoebe Ibison of Riverside ward will ask the following question of Councillor Stimson, Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Sustainability, Parks and Countryside:**

There are thousands of mature trees on Maidenhead Golf Course, which have supported our local ecosystem for decades. How can the council justify cutting down so many trees when we face a Climate Emergency and we have the sixth mass extinction on our hands? The Environment Strategy states the importance of protecting our natural environment, so why aren't you?

*Written response: Achieving a sustainable plan for development involves carefully balancing social, economic, and environmental factors. Whilst it is acknowledged that there will be tree loss because of the proposed development, the proforma for the site in Appendix C of the Plan puts in place both safeguards and proposals for enhancement regarding trees and biodiversity.*

*It indicates that proposals should retain Rushington Copse, together with other mature trees and hedgerows where possible, including buffers zones where necessary, to protect trees from the impact of development. It also indicates that the tree and landscape buffers along the site boundary should be retained and reinforced.*

*The proforma also indicates that development should safeguard protected species and conserve and enhance the biodiversity of the area in addition to providing net biodiversity gain across the site and adjoining open spaces within the South West Maidenhead Strategic Area. The provision of a green spine running north to south through the site provides an opportunity to connect the biodiversity and green infrastructure networks across the site.*

*Whilst the character of the area will undoubtedly change, development will overall have to deliver a biodiversity net gain, helping to improve biodiversity across the Borough in line with the Environment and Climate Strategy. At the same time, the allocation will provide substantial social and economic benefits by providing much needed homes, schools, accessible open space, and other facilities near the town centre and transport links adding to the overall sustainability of the plan.*

**h) Fiona Allen of Oldfield ward will ask the following question of Councillor Coppinger, Cabinet Member for Planning, Environmental Services and Maidenhead:**

Climate change is already bringing us more heavy rainstorms and flood events. Building on the greenspace will make our community even more vulnerable to devastating flooding. Why aren't you taking steps to help protect our community by building on brownfield sites instead?

Written response: *The Plan ensures the re-use of brownfield land wherever this has been feasible, but it is not possible to meet the Borough's housing needs using only brownfield land. Almost 70% of the housing site allocations are brownfield sites and 45% of the housing arising from allocations is on this land.*

*Because the base date for the Plan is in 2013, a significant proportion of the nearly 16,000 homes provided for in the Plan is made up of homes built since 2013 and sites with current planning permissions. A high proportion of these are on brownfield sites or involve intensification of development within existing built-up areas, with only very limited amounts of greenfield development. In addition, in helping to meet the housing target, assumptions are made about further brownfield development coming forward in the future that we currently cannot identify – this is called a windfall allowance.*

*Whether the site is brownfield or greenfield, care has been taken to avoid development on areas of greatest flood risk and policies have been set out to ensure detailed consideration of flooding related matters at the planning application stage.*

**i) Ceri Glen of Furze Platt ward will ask the following question of Councillor Coppinger, Cabinet Member for Planning, Environmental Services and Maidenhead:**

Houses in the Aldebury area, adjacent to site AL25, are in flood zone 3. Residents report significant flooding in February 1990, December 2000, 2012, January 2003, &

from January to March 2014. What do you say to residents who fear things will get worse, when building on flood plains, despite prevention schemes, only leads to an increase in flooding?

*Written response: Any planning application received proposing development on site AL25 (Spencer's Farm, Maidenhead) will be subject to full assessment as per national and local flooding policy, including Policy NR1 – Managing Flood Risk and Waterways – of the BLP. Point 5(d) of Policy NR1 states specifically that, in all cases, development should not itself, or cumulatively with other development, materially cause new or exacerbate existing flooding problems, either on the proposal site or elsewhere.*

*Document RBWM\_086 (post-hearing action note re Exception Test for AL9 and AL25 allocations) describes how the latest flood data results in parts of AL25 falling within Flood Zone 3. As a result, the Council's flooding consultant undertook Exception Test work. This work confirmed that the site can be developed in a manner which is safe for its lifetime and will not increase flood risk elsewhere.*

*The allocation also specifically requires development and site-specific Flood Risk Assessment at the planning stage to ensure this remains the case with any detailed proposals and The Flood Risk Assessment would be expected to include an assessment of the flood risk from all sources of flooding for a proposed development, plus an allowance for climate change. Further information on the requirements for the Flood Risk Assessment on this site are detailed in Appendix D of the BLP.*

**j) Ceri Glen of Furze Platt ward will ask the following question of Councillor Coppinger, Cabinet Member for Planning, Environmental Services and Maidenhead:**

Will the Council fund independent consultants to advise residents about our legal rights, planning law and environmental laws, to counter all the Council paid consultants and staff who do not represent residents or our well-being and who are working towards the councils' objectives regardless of resident's objections and wishes?

*Written response: Members of the Council are democratically elected to represent the residents of the Borough and the Council has adopted a Corporate Plan which sets out our priorities and objectives in meeting these needs. The staff and consultants employed by the Council work towards these objectives and seek to deliver the best overall outcomes for the Borough's residents.*

*The Borough has 151,273 residents, every one of whom is unique and contributes to the community with a variety of actions, perspectives, beliefs, and opinions.*

*The Council will always engage with our community and seek to shape our plans around your diverse needs. This is what we have done in progressing the Council's Corporate Plan and Housing Strategy. It is also what we have done throughout the preparation of the Borough Local Plan. It is recognised that no solution will meet the needs or wishes of every resident but the Council seeks to deliver the best outcomes it can.*



*Many residents would like to see no building on greenbelt land and we can see that view through the petition which has been submitted. But there are also many people who are unable to access a safe and appropriate home within the borough, children and families who call the Borough home but cannot find a suitable home, and people who would wish to contribute to our community but cannot.*

*The Corporate Plan and Housing Strategy commit the Council to providing adequate housing to ensure the well-being of our residents. The adoption of a Borough Local Plan which fully meets housing need is essential to doing so and delivering on those promises.*

*Whilst many residents would prefer these homes not to be provided, nevertheless others within our community desperately need them.*

*The Corporate Plan and Housing Strategy are well worth a read for any resident who wishes to better understand the situation some members of our community find themselves in and the reasons the Council must make hard choices. These documents are available at:*

*[Corporate Plan 2021-2026 | Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead \(rbwm.gov.uk\)](#)*

*[Housing strategy | Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead \(rbwm.gov.uk\)](#)*

*Of course, it goes without saying, that it would not be appropriate for the Council to provide public funds to those who wished to undermine the democratic decision of the Council should it choose to adopt the Borough Local Plan on Tuesday 8 February.*

**k) Jean Sutherland of Furze Platt ward will ask the following question of Councillor Coppinger, Cabinet Member for Planning, Environmental Services and Maidenhead:**

According to the September Cabinet report “Demand for School Places”, a surplus of school places of 5% in September 2021 could increase to 14% by September 2024. The only area of slight concern is in south-east Maidenhead. So why are you building a primary school in the north of Maidenhead where we already have three primary schools close by?

Written response: *The Royal Borough has carried out extensive analysis of the likely impact of new housing on demand for new school places, as part of the analysis supporting the Borough Local Plan and the related Infrastructure Delivery Plan. This analysis looked at the longer-term impacts, so that the borough would still be able to meet demand for school places in fifteen- or twenty-years’ time.*

*This work concluded that, at times of high birth rates, the proposed new housing would lead to significant shortfalls of both primary and secondary school places.*

*The strategy for addressing this shortfall involves a mixture of further expansions at our existing schools and new schools, including a primary school within the 'Spencer's Farm' development (AL25). The Borough Local Plan has identified the potential sites for new schools, giving us options to meet future demand over the longer term.*

*It's correct that there is no current need for new primary school places in North East Maidenhead, due to low birth rates and reduced movement of new families into the borough. The Royal Borough will not, therefore, be looking to open a new school at Spencer's Farm in the immediate future. We will continue to review demand for school places annually and will only bring forward proposals to open the school if a shortage of places locally is expected.*

*You can find out more about the school places analysis for the Borough Local Plan on the Council's website at: <https://www.rbwm.gov.uk/home/schools-and-education/school-organisation-places-and-planning/longer-term-needs-school-places>*

**l) Paul Strzelecki of Bisham and Cookham ward will ask the following question of Councillor Coppinger, Cabinet Member for Planning, Environmental Services and Maidenhead:**

*“Duty to cooperate” is a plan legal requirement. An agreed strategic issue in the MOU with Wycombe council of Feb 17 is traffic bottlenecks at Cookham Bridge. Do you believe during the plan making phase that there was sufficient and ongoing cooperation on this issue, what were the specific outcomes and why weren't they included in examination evidence?*

*Written response: As stated in the Council's examination note RBWM\_076, on 13 February 2017, the Royal Borough and Wycombe District Council signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) covering a range of strategic plan-making issues including transport (PS/009). The two councils agreed to seek longer term strategic solutions to address (amongst other matters) congestion related to Cookham Bridge.*

*Potential solutions that have been explored since 2017 have included modal shift measures to encourage the use of public transport and walking, strategic route planning to direct traffic away from Cookham Bridge and potential changes to the signals to balance the queues of each side of the bridge. The two Councils have continued to engage constructively on plan-making, including making representations to each other's emerging Local Plans.*

*In answer to the question, the Council is confident that there was sufficient and ongoing cooperation on this issue. The Inspector states, in paragraph 24 of her report that “the Council has engaged constructively, actively and on an on-going basis in the preparation of the Plan” and concludes that the duty to cooperate has been met. The MoU is part of the examination evidence, as is RBWM\_076.*

**m) Graham Owens of Pinkneys Green ward will ask the following question of Councillor Coppinger, Cabinet Member for Planning, Environmental Services and Maidenhead:**

The Plan incorporates our Climate and Environment Strategy. However, RBWM scored a very disappointing 48% in the 325 Councils assessed by the independent Climate Emergency UK, in marked contrast to Wokingham (79%) and Reading (74%). Now that Sustainability is one of three top priorities in our 2021/6 Corporate Plan, how and when will we align this Strategy with our priorities?

Written response: *Clearly it is disappointing that the scorecard reflects a lower score than some of our neighbouring boroughs but there are also many of our other neighbours who are also scoring much lower. We are looking at the results to see how to improve our plans. Any scorecard-based approach cannot fully reflect the work of the Council and are dependent on the scoring methodology and the interpretation by the assessor.*

*In this case, the scorecard reflects the written plan rather than what has been delivered. The council has been working hard with communities to deliver many of the actions within the plan that will make a real difference in creating a more sustainable borough:*

- *We have increased the size of the team to provide more resource to deliver the strategy and its actions.*
- *We have committed to funding and setting up the Climate Partnership to involve more people in tackling the climate emergency*
- *This winter we have already planted over 6000 of the 8000 trees we are planning to plant.*
- *We are currently surveying 31 of our buildings to develop heat decarbonisation plans for them to enable the rapid decarbonisation of the council estate.*
- *We are currently undertaking heat mapping of the Borough to understand where opportunities may lie to further decarbonise heat.*
- *We are helping residents on low incomes to improve the energy efficiency of their homes through money secured from government*

*Due to the timing of the assessment, we also lost marks that will later be included in our score because of the work we have already done or is in progress. We lost a lot of marks on not including adaptation in our plan. We were clear that our strategy is focused on mitigation, and we would bring forward another plan to deal with adaptation. We have recently moved the Flooding function into our Sustainability and Climate team to better address this issue. Since the climate scorecards were assessed, we have made action on climate change a key pillar of our corporate plan, another area we were marked down.*

*On a positive note, we scored very highly in the community, engagement, and comms section. We recognise this is not an issue the council can tackle alone and communities across the Borough have a key role to play. Only 6 single-tier councils received 9/9 so to receive 8/9 puts us in the top 20 single-tier authorities on the criteria.*

*We are making strong progress and fully expect that in next year's scorecard, which will mark progress, not just the plans themselves, we will score more highly.*

**n) Thomas Wigley of Clewer East ward will ask the following question of Councillor Coppinger, Cabinet Member for Planning, Environmental Services and Maidenhead:**

What assurances can RBWM provide for its residents that it will objectively and properly assess Air Quality Impact reports submitted by Developers as part of their

planning application submissions to RBWM. Does it have enough qualified resources?

Written response: *Policy EP2 in the Borough Local Plan requires that “Development proposals should show how they have considered air quality impacts at the earliest stage possible; where appropriate through an air quality impact assessment which should include the cumulative impacts”.*

*This may give rise to a need to implement development-specific mitigation to ensure that localised adverse air quality impacts do not occur in the short/medium term.*

*The Environmental Protection (EP) team are consulted on planning applications. The air quality assessment would need to consider the baseline conditions and the impact of the development proposals on air quality. The assessment may include mitigation measures where necessary and the EP officer can recommend planning conditions.*

*The Council can confirm that it has the necessary resources to ensure that this requirement can be met.*

**o) George Shaw of Oldfield ward will ask the following question of Councillor Coppinger, Cabinet Member for Planning, Environmental Services and Maidenhead:**

The Borough Local Plan being considered this evening cites a significant number of Supplementary Planning Documents, most of which are not yet adopted.

Please could the Lead Member give a progress update on each of these emerging SPDs, including anticipated adoption timetables, and comment on any risks to decision making whilst these are not in place?

Written response: *As stated in para 3.8 of the report to Full Council, several new Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) will be produced to help deliver the BLP. These will include the Sustainability and Climate Change SPD, Building Height and Tall Buildings SPD, and the South West Maidenhead Development Framework SPD as well as SPDs for Parking, Affordable Housing and the Ascot and Central Maidenhead Placemaking areas.*

*Detailed timetables for all these SPDs are not available at this stage. The delay in the Inspector finalising her Report has had a knock-on effect on the timescales for a number of these SPDs. Now that the Inspector’s report has been received and the plan can be adopted, timetables for the necessary SPDs can be produced.*

*Work has already commenced on several of the SPDs, including the Tall Buildings SPD and the South West Maidenhead SPD. It is likely that these will be published for consultation in Spring 2022. The Sustainability and Climate Change SPD is expected to be completed before the end of 2022.*

*Confidence should be taken from the fact that the purpose of SPDs is to build upon and provide more detailed advice or guidance on policies in an adopted local plan. The BLP, which has been found sound, contains all the detailed policies necessary to*

*ensure appropriate decision making and high-quality outcomes until the SPDs are adopted.*

**p) Sarah Bowden of Boyn Hill ward will ask the following question of Councillor Johnson, Leader of the Council:**

In October 2019, you said the plan was not perfect for 2019 but once adopted, the council would seek to make amendments relating to biodiversity and sustainable development. Two years later, the clock is ticking. Has this time been spent wisely preparing the Climate and Environment SPD strengthening the Sustainability Position Statement and when will this be tabled for adoption?

*Written response: The interim sustainability position statement has provided a temporary solution to some of the issues that will be included in the Climate and Environment SPD. This has delivered some success in terms of influencing applications to be more sustainable and reduce emissions and as a result we have secured commitments for over £900k in contributions that will be used to support delivery of the Environment and Climate Strategy with further contributions expected to be secured. There have been delays to the Borough Local Plan adoption and there is also uncertainty about what changes might be made to planning guidance in June when the new building regulations come into force. At this stage our target is to ensure that the SPD is adopted by the end of this year.*

**q) Dave Scarbrough of Belmont ward will ask the following question of Councillor McWilliams Cabinet Member for Housing, Sport & Leisure, and Community Engagement:**

The proposed plan results in a 22.5% increase in emissions and lacks details of mitigation measures; no areas are set aside for nature-based solutions or renewable energy provision. How are you going to ensure the housing planned doesn't make net-zero by 2050 an impossible task and more importantly mitigate against the worst-case scenarios that will impact people across the globe?

*Written response: Officers do not agree that the plan results in a 22.5% increase in emissions or lacks mitigation measures.*

*The 22.5% figure arises from the Sustainability Appraisal which was undertaken in 2019. The appraisal assesses a potential impact, stating that 'The proposed development within the BLPSV-PC could potentially increase local carbon emissions by approximately 22.5%', but then recognises that the 'The contents of the BLPSV-PC would be likely to help reduce the adverse impacts of the Plan in relation climatic factors, with policies and site proformas focusing on the integration of green infrastructure.' Hence, the estimated 22.5% increase is before mitigation considerations are factored in.*

*Within the Borough Local Plan (BLP) itself, policy SP2 was added to the proposed changes version of the plan to specifically address and mitigate against the issue of climate change. This requires proposals to address several key topics relating to both*

*climate change and its effects. Further to this, whilst no areas are designated specifically for renewable energy provision policy, policy NR5 states that development proposals for the production of renewable energy and associated infrastructure will be supported, should they not cause adverse harm to the area.*

*The BLP also has three designated areas for green infrastructure within the Borough, involving AL15, AL27 and AL28. The site proformas for all three sites share several climate and nature-based requirements, from biodiversity improvements to the retention and enhancement of trees and wildlife areas on site. Almost all of the other site proformas also require tree planting and local biodiversity enhancements.*

*Other policies and initiatives which have arisen since would also serve to mitigate the impacts. These include, but are not limited to, the Council's Environment and Climate Strategy adopted in December 2020, the Council's Interim Sustainability Position Statement, the Government's Net-Zero Strategy, the Government's Heat and Buildings Strategy and revisions to part L & F of the Building Regulations.*

*Moving forward, the upcoming Sustainability/Climate Change SPD will provide further guidance on climate change issues expanding on the policies set out in the Borough Local Plan and dealing with more specific issues such as carbon emissions, waste recycling, transport, biodiversity and energy.*

**r) Daniel Seris of Furze Platt ward will ask the following question of Councillor Coppinger, Cabinet Member for Planning, Environmental Services and Maidenhead:**

The report commissioned to assess the risk of flooding, conclusions were based on flooding caused by the rain, not rising water from the ground. As flooding is coming from the ground in Spencer's farm, how do you plan to fix this and make sure it doesn't affect future residents? Are further studies going to take place to assess this issue?

Written response: *The Sequential and Exceptions test (BLPSV-PC-030) undertaken by the Council as part of the Examination into the Borough Local Plan provides information not only on flooding from rivers but also from other potential sources such surface water flood risk and susceptibility to groundwater flooding.*

*Any planning application received proposing development on site AL25 (Spencer's Farm, Maidenhead) will be subject to full assessment as per national and local flooding policy, including Policy NR1 – Managing Flood Risk and Waterways – of the BLP. Clause 5(d) of Policy NR1 states specifically that, in all cases, development should not itself, or cumulatively with other development, materially cause new or exacerbate existing flooding problems, either on the proposal site or elsewhere.*

*Document RBWM\_086 (post-hearing action note re Exception Test for AL25 allocations) describes how the latest flood data results in parts of AL25 falling within Flood Zone 3. As a result, the Council's flooding consultant undertook Exception Test work. This work confirmed that the site can be developed in a manner which is safe for its lifetime and will not increase flood risk elsewhere.*

*The allocation also specifically requires proposed development to provide a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment at the planning stage to ensure that this remains the case with any detailed proposals. Any Flood Risk Assessment would be expected to include an assessment of the flood risk from all sources of flooding for a proposed development, plus an allowance for climate change. Further information on the requirements for the Flood Risk Assessment on this site are detailed in Appendix D of the BLP.*

*In addition, the AL25 site proforma stipulates that any proposed development will need to address potential risks to groundwater and investigate an appropriate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) for the proposals as part of the surface water drainage strategy. The use of infiltration as a potential option for surface water disposal would require a thorough site investigation and risk assessment to demonstrate that the use of infiltration SUDS would not mobilise contaminants which could then pollute groundwater.*

**s) Daniel Seris of Furze Platt ward will ask the following question of Councillor Coppinger, Cabinet Member for Planning, Environmental Services and Maidenhead:**

Spencer's Farm currently has a lot of deer, foxes and other animals that usually eat and live there. Has the impact to those animals' habitats been considered? If so, how and by who?

*Written response: The Borough Local Plan (BLP) acknowledges that planning has an important and positive role to play in protecting and enhancing the Borough's biodiversity, including the conservation of protected species, and helping natural systems to adapt to the impact of climate change.*

*Policy NR2 (3) states that Development proposals shall also avoid the loss of biodiversity and the fragmentation of existing habitats, and enhance connectivity via green corridors, stepping stones and networks. Where opportunities exist to enhance designated sites or improve the nature conservation value of habitats, for example within Biodiversity opportunity Areas or a similar designated area, they should be designed into development proposals. Development proposals will demonstrate a net gain in biodiversity by quantifiable methods such as the use of a biodiversity metric.*

*Regarding Spencer's Farm, careful provision has been made within the BLP to protect the diverse local wildlife in and around the site.*

*Firstly, the site proforma for site AL25 states that any development of the site will be required to conserve and enhance local biodiversity, as well as retaining high/medium quality trees and planting of replacement trees.*

*Furthermore, AL28 to the immediate east of AL25 has been allocated as a green infrastructure site. Any development of the site will be required to deliver significant biodiversity improvements, including along the Greenway Corridor/Strand Water, which is a Local Wildlife Site. Development will also be required to retain the existing area of woodland to the north of the site.*

*Sustainability Appraisal has been carried out at all relevant stages of the plan making process and all have found that Policy NR2 (previously NR3) is anticipated to ensure the ecological value of AL25 is protected and enhanced.*

**t) Ian Lester of Furze Platt ward will ask the following question of Councillor Coppinger, Cabinet Member for Planning, Environmental Services and Maidenhead:**

How confident are you that the already busy junction of Aldebury Road and Cookham Road can cope with additional traffic linked to 330 new homes and a primary school?

*Written response: The evidence for the local plan was prepared in line with appropriate guidance and is considered appropriate for an assessment of a local plan and the impact of the proposed spatial strategy on transport and local infrastructure. The assessment considered a reasonable worst case for traffic generation which did not take make allowance for the additional investment in sustainable transport expected to come forward because of development and our wider transport strategies.*

*The strategic transport assessment identified a series of junctions that may require improvement because of the overall development coming forward in the plan. At this stage, no improvements were identified as being needed at the Aldebury Road/Cookham Road junction.*

*As part of the planning application process there will need to be a full transport assessment prepared which will consider the impacts of the proposed development on the transport network. This more detailed modelling will identify whether any site-specific improvement or mitigation is required, and this will be secured through an appropriate legal agreement*

*The site proforma requires the development to come forward with a robust travel plan for the residential development and school to reduce car trips from the site.*

**u) Ian Lester of Furze Platt ward will ask the following question of Councillor Coppinger, Cabinet Member for Planning, Environmental Services and Maidenhead:**

As local residents we all enjoy watching the wildlife that roam Site AL25 - I especially like seeing the herd of deer. Should we build 330 homes on this land what will happen to the wildlife that live on this land?

*Written response: The Borough Local Plan (BLP) acknowledges that planning has an important and positive role to play in protecting and enhancing the Borough's biodiversity, including the conservation of protected species, and helping natural systems to adapt to the impact of climate change.*

*Policy NR2 (3) states that Development proposals shall also avoid the loss of biodiversity and the fragmentation of existing habitats, and enhance connectivity via*



*green corridors, stepping-stones and networks. Where opportunities exist to enhance designated sites or improve the nature conservation value of habitats, for example within Biodiversity Opportunity Areas or a similar designated area, they should be designed into development proposals. Development proposals will demonstrate a net gain in biodiversity by quantifiable methods such as the use of a biodiversity metric.*

*Regarding Spencer's Farm, careful provision has been made within the BLP to protect the diverse local wildlife in and around the site.*

*Firstly, the site proforma for site AL25 states that any development of the site will be required to conserve and enhance local biodiversity, as well as retaining high/medium quality trees and planting of replacement trees.*

*Furthermore, AL28 to the immediate East of AL25 has been allocated as a green infrastructure site. Any development of the site will be required to deliver significant biodiversity improvements, including along the Greenway Corridor/Strand Water, which is a Local Wildlife Site. Development will also be required to retain the existing area of woodland to the north of the site.*

*Sustainability Appraisal has been carried out at all relevant stages of the plan making process and all have found that Policy NR2 (previously NR3) is anticipated to ensure the ecological value of AL25 is protected and enhanced.*

**v) Mark Smith of Furze Platt ward will ask the following question of Councillor Coppinger, Cabinet Member for Planning, Environmental Services and Maidenhead:**

There are two areas of the field, outside of the river flood zone, that flood due to the rising of the ground water table and not "ponding" as was suggested at a previous meeting. What evidence is there that it possible to prevent flooding from Ground water rising on the site?

Written response: *The Sequential and Exceptions test (BLPSV-PC-030) produced for the Borough Local Plan Examination provides information not only on flooding from rivers but also from other potential sources such surface water flood risk and susceptibility to groundwater flooding.*

*Any application received proposing development on site AL25 (Spencer's Farm, Maidenhead) will be subject to full assessment as per national and local flooding policy, including Policy NR1 – Managing Flood Risk and Waterways – of the BLP. Point 5(d) of Policy NR1 states specifically that, in all cases, development should not itself, or cumulatively with other development, materially cause new or exacerbate existing flooding problems, either on the proposal site or elsewhere.*

*Document RBWM\_086 (post-hearing action note re Exception Test for AL25 allocations) describes how the latest flood data results in parts of AL25 falling within Flood Zone 3. As a result, the Council's flooding consultant undertook Exception Test work. This work confirmed that the site can be developed in a manner which is safe for its lifetime and will not increase flood risk elsewhere.*

*The allocation also specifically requires a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment at the planning application stage to ensure that this remains the case with any detailed proposals. The Flood Risk Assessment would be expected to include an assessment of the flood risk from all sources of flooding for a proposed development, plus an allowance for climate change. Further information on the requirements for the Flood Risk Assessment on this site are detailed in Appendix D of the BLP.*

*In addition, the AL25 site proforma stipulates that any proposed development will need to address potential risks to groundwater and investigate an appropriate Sustainable Drainage System (SUDS) for the proposals as part of the surface water drainage strategy. The use of infiltration as a potential option for surface water disposal would require a thorough site investigation and risk assessment to demonstrate that the use of infiltration SUDS would not mobilise contaminants which could then pollute groundwater.*

**w) Caroline Lester of Furze Platt ward will ask the following question of Councillor Coppinger, Cabinet Member for Planning, Environmental Services and Maidenhead:**

Parking and transportation – how will the local area cope with the influx of vehicles from an additional 330 homes – not only resident vehicles, but deliveries – which have increased significantly with people working from home and shopping online, the train bridge already has a weight limit – how will we manage congestion around the Cookham road?

*Written response: The evidence for the local plan was prepared in line with appropriate guidance, including in terms of assessing the impact of the proposed spatial strategy on transport and local infrastructure. The assessment considered a reasonable worst case for traffic generation which did not take make allowance for the additional investment in sustainable transport expected to come forward because of development and our wider transport strategies.*

*The strategic transport assessment identified a series of junctions that may require improvement as a result of the overall development coming forward in the plan. At this stage, no improvements were identified along Cookham Road. As the local transport authority, we will keep this under review to ensure changing transport trends such as online shopping and delivery are not affecting these conclusions. We will continue to assess the need for improvements across the transport network, in line with our corporate plan actions and targets.*

*This matter and other related to the transport evidence base were discussed extensively at the Examination hearings in late 2020 and given due consideration by the Inspector. The Inspector's Report quite correctly concludes that the approach is robust at a strategic level and that the impacts cannot be considered as severe.*

*The Development Management process will provide further opportunity for modelling and assessment of highways impacts and secure mitigation relating to more detailed proposals at the planning application stage*

*The site proforma requires the development to come forward with a robust travel plan for the residential development and school to reduce car trips from the site.*

**x) Caroline Lester of Furze Platt ward will ask the following question of Councillor Coppinger, Cabinet Member for Planning, Environmental Services and Maidenhead:**

What plans are in place to mitigate the effects on the local infrastructure – 330 additional homes (some 600-800 + residents) will put a huge strain on our local infrastructure – Doctors surgeries, dentistry etc which already have waiting lists.

*Written response: As set out in our corporate plan, delivering quality infrastructure is a priority for the Council. As part of the Borough Local Plan process, an Infrastructure Delivery Plan was prepared which assesses the impact on local infrastructure because of the local plan growth to identify where additional capacity in the school, healthcare and other systems may be required. This allows us to plan future investment in partnership with teams across the council and the NHS to ensure this capacity is in place when it is needed.*

*This is a document that is kept under review and will be regularly updated over the life of the Borough Local Plan to ensure it represents the current infrastructure needs of the borough and its communities.*

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