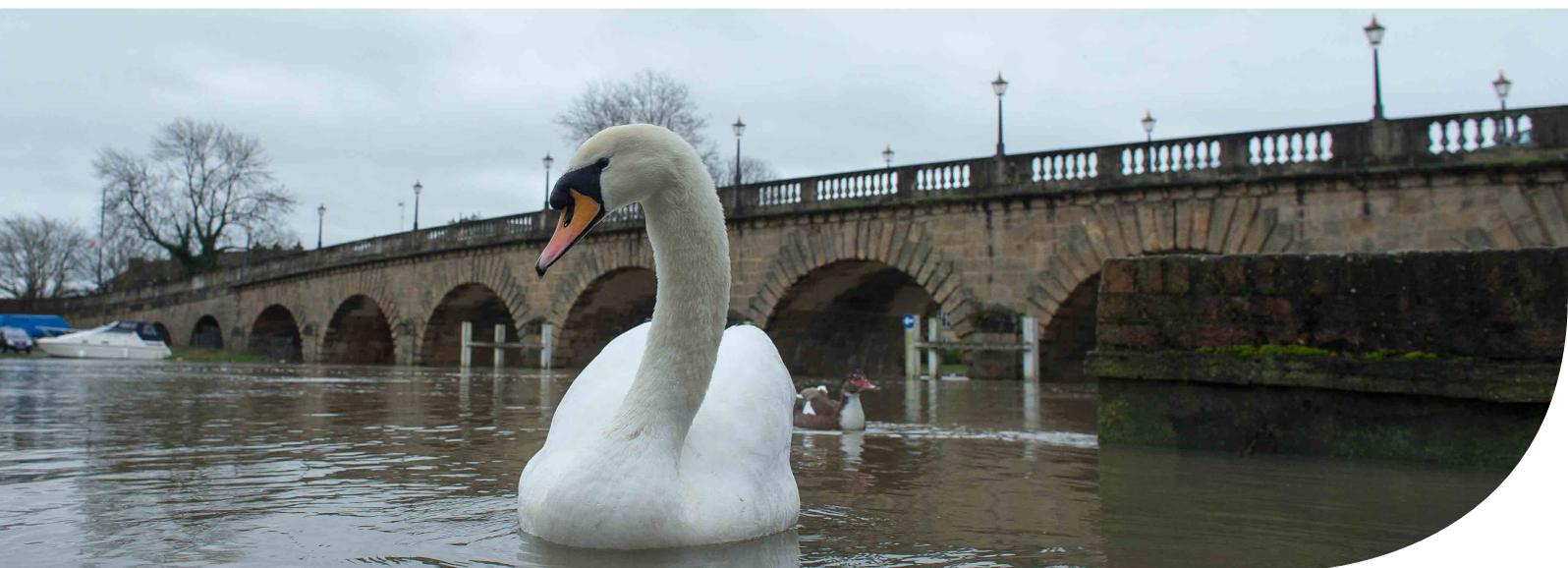


# Sustainability Appraisal of the Borough Local Plan 2013 - 2032

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

## Headlines: Reg 18 Report

November 2016



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Front cover: Maidenhead Bridge by Ollie Harding

# 1 SA Key Findings

## 1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Set out here are the main points identified from the assessment of sites. It is presented in three sections:

- Key issues for the borough;
- Key site constraints; and
- Strategic locations.

1.1.2 The Regulation 18 SA does not include a cumulative effects assessment because of the number of sites involved and the potential permutations of sites that could be brought forward. For the purposes of this note, some key cumulative issues have been identified that, whilst not reported in the Regulation 18 SA, would potentially be discussed in the Regulation 19 SA and therefore have been included in this note.

## 1.2 Key issues for the borough

1.2.1 In undertaking the assessment, a number of common themes occurred that whilst not universally applicable to every site, nonetheless hold true for much of the borough.

### Opportunities

- A large proportion of the sites are located on previously developed land, in line with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- All sites located within 2km of an NHS hospital, allowing good access to essential health services.
- There are 10 railway stations within the borough, allowing sites in the Ascot, Windsor and Maidenhead areas good access to sustainable transport.
- Access to key community facilities and amenities is very good for the majority of sites.

### Constraints

- Bus services do not run frequently – hourly or less – particularly in more rural areas. For example Horton and Sunningdale have limited employment opportunities in the area and would most likely result in high out-commuting. These out-commuters would probably be dependent on cars for this, contributing to congestion on roads already congested at peak times (e.g. A308 and B3022). This issue is also highlighted for access to education. Primary and secondary schools are outside of satisfactory distances, which would likely again rely on car use for access to schools. This is also seen in Maidenhead south – Unsatisfactory distance from primary and secondary schools

for sites furthest from Maidenhead. The M4 borders sites so likely to rely on cars for transport rather than sustainable transport methods. Railway station outside of satisfactory distance.

- A number of sites are within Flood Zones 2, 3a and 3b. This is primarily associated with Old Windsor, the northern area of Windsor and the eastern area of Maidenhead. A number of residential sites include areas designated as Flood Zone 3b, which cannot be developed for residential use and as such restricts the area of the site that can be developed. Residential sites in Flood Zone 3a would be subject to the exception test, which can be undertaken in part during the Local Plan process to identify the likelihood of a site being able to pass the test, which would be conformed when a planning application is brought forward. The number of sites in areas of high flood risk puts additional emphasis on the need for the sequential test to provide a robust justification for development in these areas.
- Individually, none of the sites would be expected to have a significant adverse effect on any of the sites designated for nature conservation. Taken cumulatively, the recreational pressure from the degree of housing proposed has a greater potential to adversely affect sites accessible to the public, for example Braywick Park.
- A number of sites are on Grade 1 agricultural land, which is the best and most versatile agricultural land. Planning Practice Guidance advises:  
*“Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, local planning authorities should seek to use areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of a higher quality.”<sup>1</sup>*
- There are a number of greenfield sites that are on the urban edge of existing towns and villages that have been identified as having a potentially adverse effect on the landscape;
- Access to GP surgeries, schools and leisure facilities is limited for those sites in the north east of Maidenhead.

### 1.3 Key site constraints

1.3.1 The assessment of sites found that for the most part the sites were acceptable with no constraints that would render the site undeliverable. Those sites with the most notable adverse effects are identified here:

- Land North of Breadcroft Lane (HELAA Ref. 00122) is designated as open access land under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.
- Land to the Rear of Ray Mill Road East (HELAA Ref. 00406) is currently a sports field that would be lost if the site were to be developed. Playing fields are one of the most important resource for sport in England<sup>2</sup>. Development of the playing field would require

<sup>1</sup> <http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/policy/achieving-sustainable-development/delivering-sustainable-development/11-conserving-and-enhancing-the-natural-environment/>

<sup>2</sup> Sport England (2016) Protecting Playing Fields. Available online at: <https://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/planning-for-sport/development-management/planning-applications/playing-field-land/>

consultation with Sport England under The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015<sup>3</sup>.

- The School on College Avenue (HELAA Ref. 00115) and School at Ray Mill Road East (HELAA Ref. 00096) are two of the three locations of Claires Court School, which is a private school for young people aged 3 to 18 years. The school is based at three locations across Maidenhead, two within the town centre and a third at Woolley Green. How the closure of this site may affect the overall capacity of the school is not known. This is because the closure of these sites may enable the school to provide additional capacity at the location in Wolley Green.
- Priors Way Industrial Estate (HEELA Ref. 00060) and Windsor Road, Bray (HEELA Ref. 00261) perform negatively for air pollution as they are on the boarder of Bray/M4 AQMA. Development at these sites likely to exacerbate this issue, as well as resulting in adverse impacts on transport.
- A number of sites in Maidenhead South perform negatively against landscape. Development is proposed on greenfield sites in the open landscape in Maidenhead South at Bray Quarry Extension Monkey Island Lane (HEELA Ref. 00263), Water Oakley Farm (Land To The North of Longlea Fifield Road Fifield Maidenhead) (HEELA Ref. 00247) and Windsor Road, Bray (HEELA Ref. 261). This would not be in keeping with the surrounding landscape character.
- Horton site Broom Lodge Stanwell Road Horton (HEELA Ref. 00198) and Maidenhead South site Tectonic Place Holyport Road Maidenhead (00270) and the majority of sites Windsor Road, Bray (HEELA Ref. 00261) and Water Oakley Farm (Land To The North of Longlea Fifield Road Fifield Maidenhead) (HEELA Ref 00247) are located on Grade 1 ALC. Development at these sites would lead to loss of best and most versatile land.
- All Horton sites scored poorly for health and education have limited access to GP surgery, secondary and primary schools. All sites in Horton also perform negatively for economy except for Land adjacent to Coppermill Road, Horton (HEELA Ref. 00294) as it is proposed for employment use. For access to employment opportunities, residents would likely drive towards larger centres such as Windsor. Access to employment is also limited for Broomhall sites.

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<sup>3</sup> HMSO (2015) The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. Available online at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2015/595/schedule/4/made>

## 1.4 Strategic Locations

- 1.4.1 The key issues discussed here for each of the strategic locations are high-level issues of principle, rather than a detailed discussion. A full assessment of the potential effects is presented in the SA Report.

### **Maidenhead Town Centre**

- 1.4.2 Accessibility to public transport and other key facilities and amenities is strong in this location. The area is designated as an AQMA. A total of 1,500 additional homes in this area provides a risk that air quality in the AQMA would deteriorate as a result of additional vehicle journeys despite the accessibility of public transport. There is also the potential risk of noise, vibration and air pollution from the railway, particularly to any dwellings on the southern edge of the Reform Road, York Road and the Railway Station.

### **Maidenhead Golf Course and associated sites**

- 1.4.3 This strategic location has relatively few constraints, particularly for sites of this scale. Development of these sites would also be a substantial change to the existing landscape. The strategic location is adjacent to the Maidenhead AQMA and in close proximity to the Bray / M4 AQMA. Given the scale of the strategic location, again there is the potential for development in this location to adversely affect the air quality in the AQMA. Whilst it is understood that the strategic location will contain sufficient schools capacity to be able to accommodate the anticipated child yield, the capacity of other key facilities to accommodate the additional residents is not known at present. Ross Road Medical Centre is the closest GP surgery and may or may not have sufficient capacity to cope with the additional demand. The site is a large release of greenfield land within the Green Belt.

### **The Triangle**

- 1.4.4 The central and eastern area of the strategic location within Flood Zone 1. The western area of the site and a strip of land across the north of the site associated with a local water course (The Cut) are in Flood Zone 3b, with the remainder in Flood Zones 2 and 3a. As such, flood risk presents a constraint to development in this strategic location. It is proposed for mixed use development and as such there is the opportunity to place the lower risk employment uses in the areas of highest flood risk.
- 1.4.5 Transport and accessibility for residents is limited. There are no bus stops on the A330, which runs adjacent to the site. The closest bus stop is at Braywick House East, 300m from the north eastern corner of the site on the opposing side of a major roundabout (Braywick Roundabout) and more the 400m from the majority of the site. As such, bus services from the strategic location should be considered limited at present. The M4 and A308(M) also present barriers to the permeability of the site for pedestrians and cyclists unless additional crossing points are made.

- 1.4.6 The Scheduled Monument 'Mesolithic site, Moor Farm, Holyport, Bray Wick' is located in the north strategic location, parallel to the A308(M). It is anticipated that this historic asset will be conserved in accordance with Policy HE 3, potentially through the use of a landscape buffer.

### **Windsor Town Centre**

- 1.4.7 The Windsor Town Centre strategic location performs positively for flood risk, being located predominately in Flood Zone 1. The western edge of the option is within Flood Zone 2. The option is located on grade 3 agricultural land. If Grade 3a, development would lead to a loss of best and most versatile land. The strategic location has good access to community facilities, services and options for recreation and sport within Windsor town centre. Further to this, primary and secondary schools are also accessible. Whilst key facilities are close, there is no railway station for 3.5km, the nearest being Windsor & Eton Central. Bus services run infrequently. Development of this strategic location therefore risks a high degree of reliance on cars by residents.

### **Ascot Town Centre**

- 1.4.8 There are a number of sites designated for the in nature conservation value in close proximity of The Ascot Town Centre strategic location. It is within the 5km buffer of Thames basin health SPA, Windsor Forest and Great Park SAC, and the Thursley, Ash, Pirbright & Chobham SPA. Additionally, the 'St Georges Lane - Fields' LWS is located adjacent to the southeastern boundary of the strategic location. Development of the strategic location may therefore have an adverse effect on the designated sites as a result of visitor pressure and potentially pollution.
- 1.4.9 The strategic location is previously developed land, which is in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance. The strategic location provides good access to facilities, including schools and Radnor House GP surgery. There are also sustainable transport options in the area to further improve access to these facilities. Public transport options include Ascot railway station, public footpaths and bus services that run frequently. Being proposed for mixed use, the strategic location will contribute positively to the local economy.

## Appendix A: Maps

- LC-273\_1 Flood Zone:** Map created by Lepus Consulting using data from Environment Agency (2016) Flood Map for Planning (Rivers and Sea)
- LC-273\_2 ALC:** Map created by Lepus Consulting using data supplied from the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (2016)
- LC-273\_3 AQMA:** Map created by Lepus Consulting using data supplied from the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (2016)

**Legend**

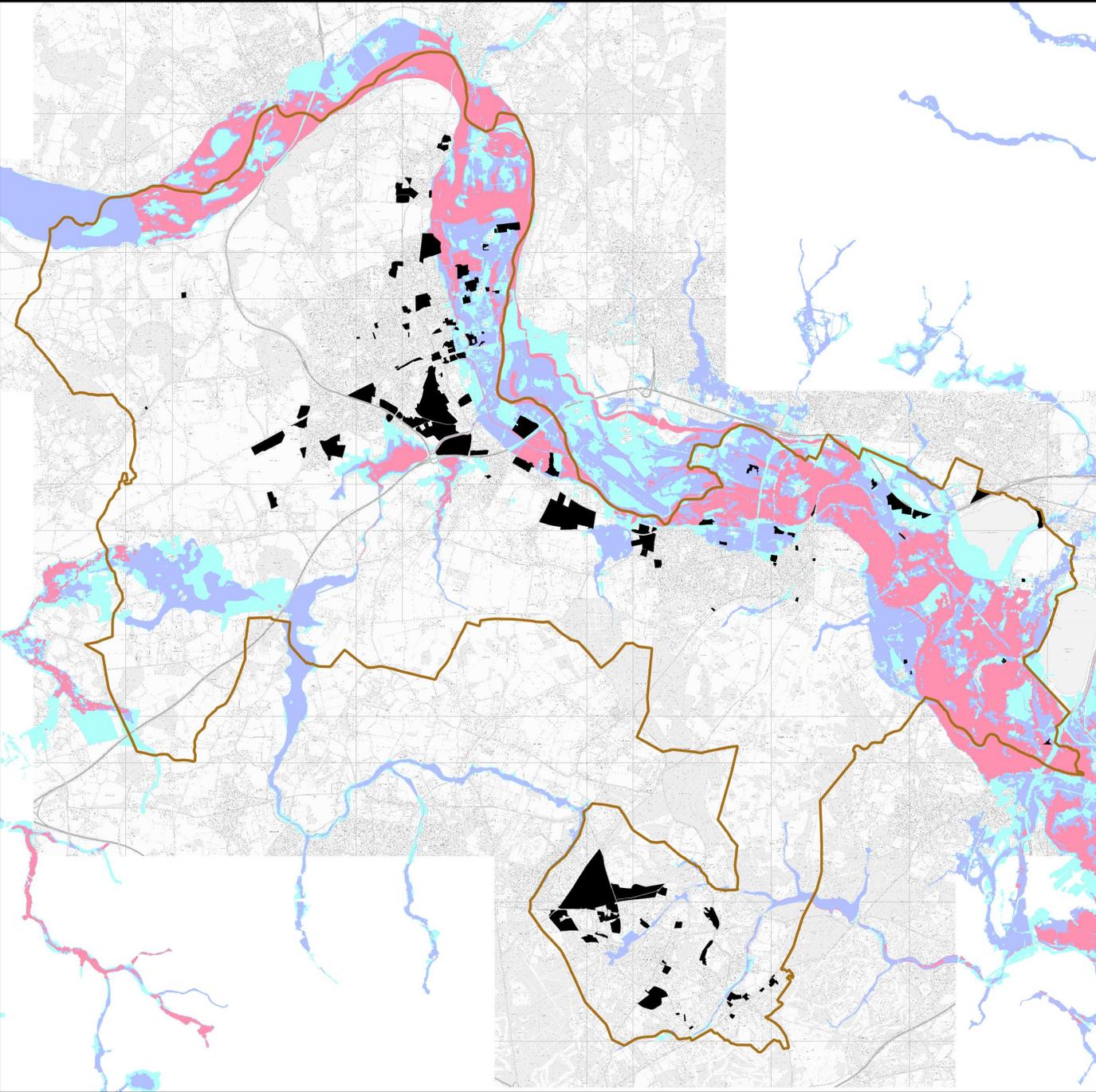
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-  Potential site allocations
-  Flood Zone 3b
-  Flood Zone 3
-  Flood Zone 2

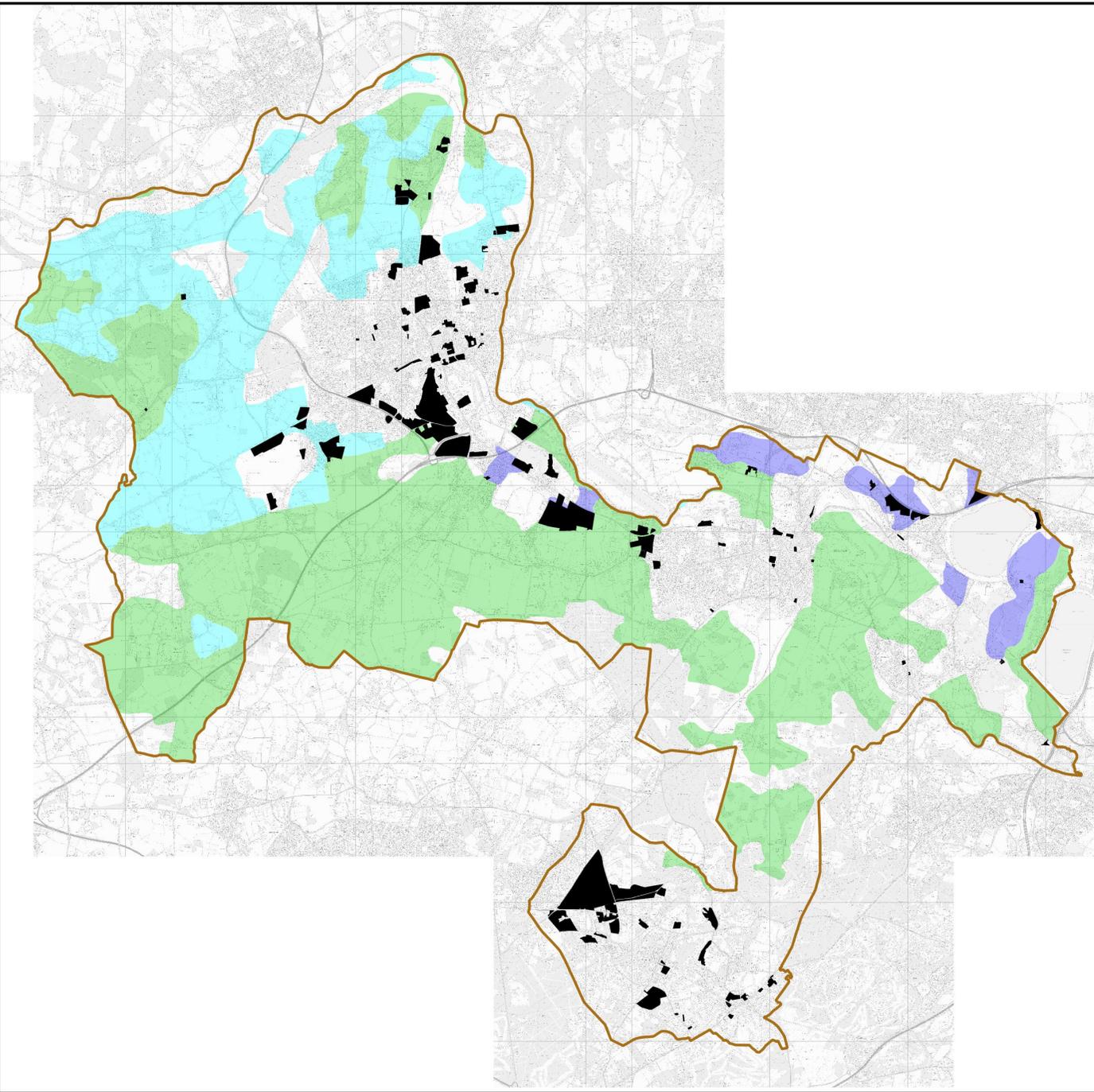
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DATE: 14.11.16

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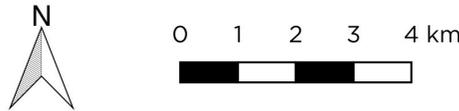


**Legend**

-  RBWM Boundary
-  Potential site allocations
-  Grade 1
-  Grade 2
-  Grade 3

PROJECT: LC-273 SA of RBWM  
 CLIENT: RBWM  
 DRAWING: Agricultural Land Classification  
 DRAWING NUMBER: LC-273\_2  
 DRAWN: WPE  
 CHECKED: RWB  
 SCALE: 1:115,000  
 DATE: 14.11.16

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**Legend**

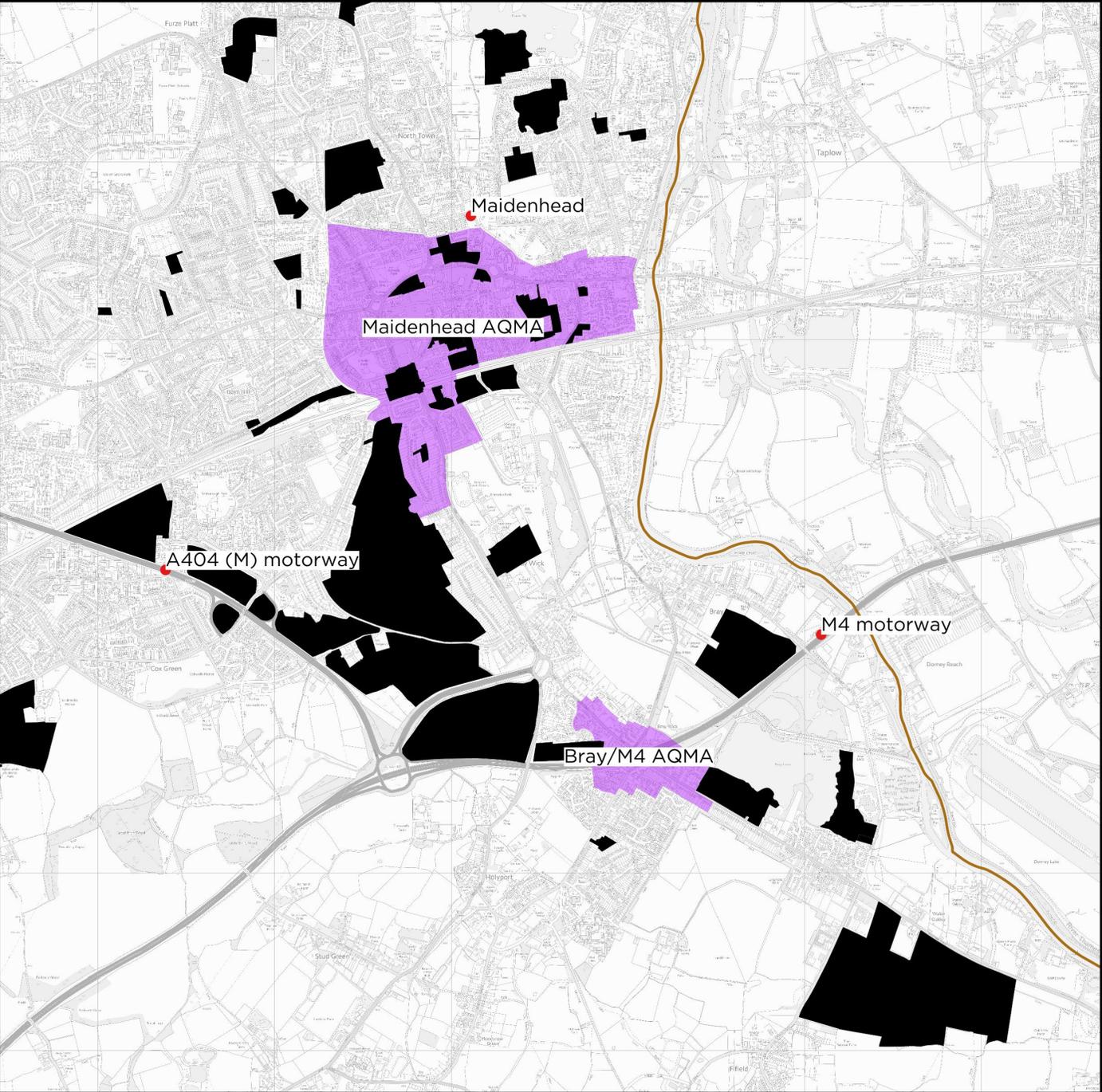
-  RBWM Boundary
-  Potential site allocations
-  AQMA

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