



# **BUCKINGHAM**

**NEIGHBOURHOOD  
DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

# 2024 - 2040

Referendum Version October 2025

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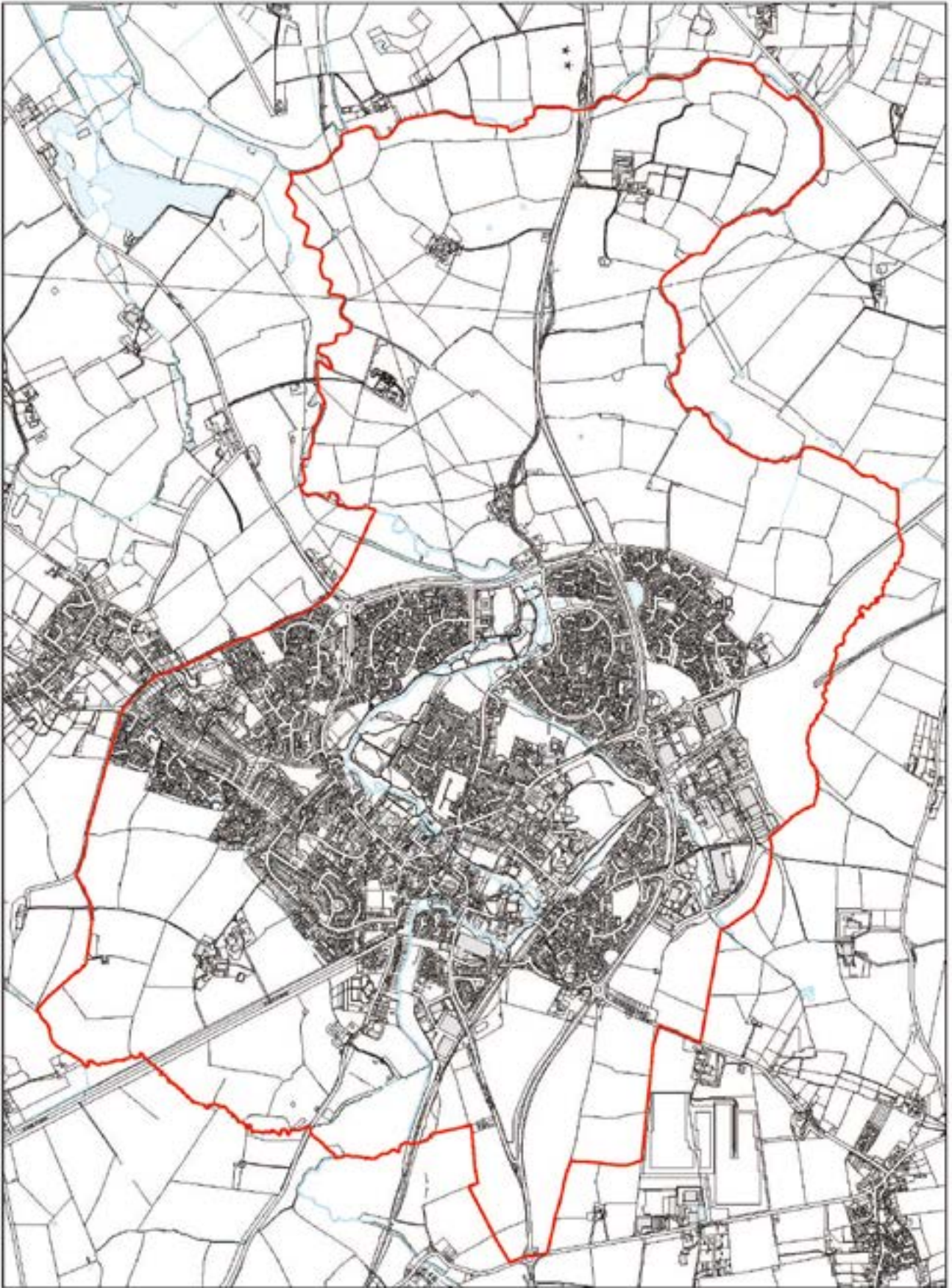
## INTRODUCTION

Buckingham Town Council has completed a review of the Buckingham Neighbourhood Plan. It is the 'qualifying body' for this purpose as defined by the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

The purpose of this review is to replace some of the policies of the made Neighbourhood Plan and to include new policies that will be used to determine planning applications in the area in the period to 2040. Given the combination of these policies is considered by the Town Council to 'change the nature of the plan' and its desire to put the new policies to referendum anyway, it was decided to carry out this review in the form of a replacement Plan rather than by making modifications to the made Plan.

The Buckingham Neighbourhood Area was designated by Aylesbury Vale District Council in November 2014. A map showing the Neighbourhood Area is shown below.

The Neighbourhood Plan covers the period 2024 to 2040. It contains policies for determining planning applications for the use and development of land within the Neighbourhood Area during that period. In doing so it operates alongside other policies of the development plan, including the Buckingham Design Code.



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*Fig. 1 Buckingham Neighbourhood Area, outlined in red*

## BACKGROUND

The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan adopted by Buckinghamshire Council in 2021. Its plan period extends beyond that of the Local Plan, which covers the period to 2033. An explanation of this difference and its implications is set out in the Basic Conditions Statement which is published alongside this Plan.

Buckinghamshire Council is bringing forward a new Local Plan to cover the period expected to be until 2043 - 2045. An explanation of how the Town Council has considered its reasoning and evidence published to date in respect of how it has helped shape the Neighbourhood Plan is included in the Basic Conditions Statement which is published alongside this Plan.

The Neighbourhood Plan has regard to national planning policy and guidance as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance.

The Neighbourhood Plan demonstrates how its policies contribute to the achievement of sustainable development in its Strategic Environmental Assessment. Further information on how the provisions of the Habitats Regulations are contained in the Basic Conditions Statement which is published alongside this Plan.

The Town Council has engaged with the local community and other stakeholders throughout the project. A Consultation Statement which summarised the nature of this work and how it has informed the Neighbourhood Plan was published.

The plan period of 2024 to 2040 has been carefully chosen. The Plan is intended to replace the made neighbourhood plan (2015) to align with the adopted Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan, and to accommodate future strategic needs. The plan period bridges the transition between the end of the existing Local Plan and the beginning of the Buckinghamshire Local Plan. The Plan reflects the strong working relationship will Buckinghamshire Council with a view to ensuring a robust plan-led growth

strategy for Buckingham through to 2040.

The Town Council will monitor the effectiveness of the Plan's policies both generally, and as it is implemented through the development management process. The Town Council and Buckinghamshire Council have agreed that should any additional housing requirement, arise from the emerging Local Plan the matter will be dealt with through either the emerging Local Plan itself or a review of the replacement Neighbourhood Plan.



*Fig. 2: Annual Town Meeting consultation*

*Fig. 3: Celebrate Buckingham Day consultation*



## VISION AND OBJECTIVES

The overarching vision of the Buckingham Neighbourhood Development Plan remains to “make Buckingham a better place to live, work, study and play.” This must be achieved in the context of sustainable growth. The following vision and objectives largely retains the work of the previous Buckingham Neighbourhood Plan, with the exception being related to the production of a Design Code, as encouraged by national guidance.

**The plan has been separated into six themes:**

**HP: Housing and Phasing**

**DH: Design and Heritage**

**ENV: Environment**

**CLH: Culture, Leisure and Health**

**EE: Economy and Education**

**I: Infrastructure**

The 12 objectives are:

1. Conserve and enhance the town’s historic environment and its setting
2. Provide maximum clarity about design



*Fig. 4 Buckingham Charter Fair (image: Brian Simonds)*

3. Encourage development that strengthens culture, leisure, sport and play facilities in the town.
4. Promote measures to improve the health of people living and working in Buckingham including the provision and retention of facilities locally.
5. Maintain the quality of Buckingham’s parkland and green space, in particular, its ‘green heart’.
6. Foster the economic development of the town and its hinterland by providing employment led growth, increasing the town’s appeal to tourists and invigorating the town centre.
7. Help enable effective education across all tiers in Buckingham and ensure that links to and from the local economy are established.
8. Provide a diverse housing stock to meet the needs of existing and future local people.
9. Secure developer contribution from (previously stated as: “the financial uplift of”) new development for the benefit of the local community through developer contributions, New Homes Bonus and/or Community Infrastructure Levy.
10. Improve movement into and around the town in a healthy and safe manner; specifically cycling, walking and ease of access for the disabled.
11. Encourage a reduction in the carbon footprint of Buckingham by promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy generation.
12. Mitigate, and improve the capability of the town to deal with flooding.

## HP policies: HOUSING AND PHASING

Fig. 5 Bridge Street



### **POLICY HP1 A SPATIAL STRATEGY FOR THE TOWN**

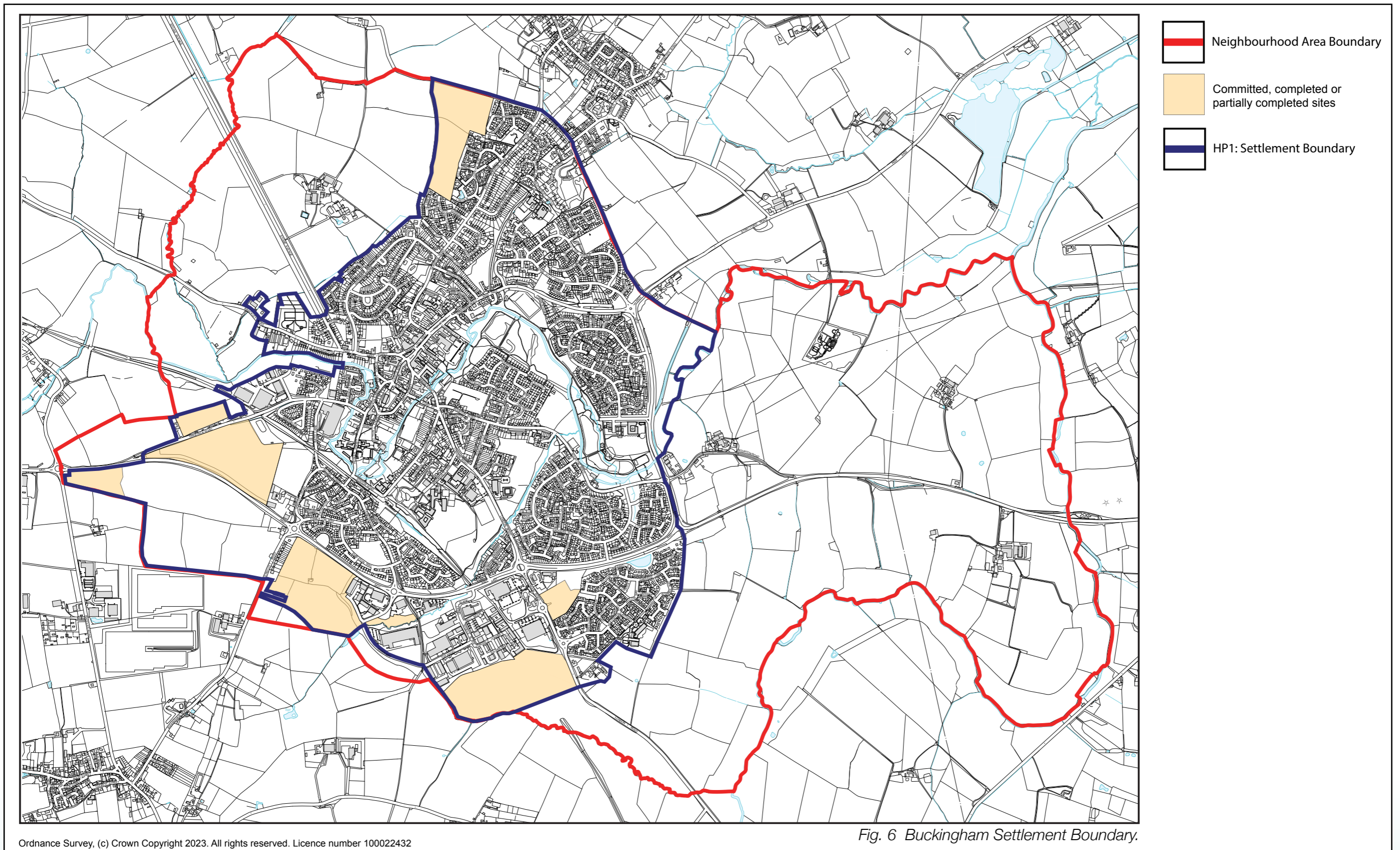
**A. The Neighbourhood Plan defines a settlement boundary for Buckingham, as shown on the Policies Map, for the purposes of:**

- i. directing future development in the town to strengthen the role of Buckingham as a sustainable market town in Buckinghamshire;**
- ii. promoting infilling and encouraging the re-use of previously-developed land, as defined in the NPPF, within the settlement boundary; and**
- iii. making provision for a minimum of 1,254 new homes, 1.7 ha of employment land, and new and/or improved infrastructure required for growth.**

**B. Proposals for development outside of the settlement boundary will only be supported if they accord with development plan policies managing development in the countryside.**

1. The policy responds to the call of the VALP for growth in Buckingham to be led by neighbourhood planning (§8 of the Spatial Vision of VALP). The policy defines a settlement boundary on the Policies Map as a means of establishing the furthest extent and direction of development growth planned for the period to 2040.
2. The policy also encourages the completion of infilling of the urban area to minimise the need to consider additional extensions of the town into the open countryside. Infilling is defined as “infilling of small gaps in developed frontages in keeping with the scale and spacing of nearby dwellings and the character of the surroundings” as defined in VALP Policy D3 1.a. The assessment work of the projects showed that there were several smaller infill sites and previously developed land within the town which could also come forward as windfall development during the plan period. The historic windfall rate ranges between 1-13 new dwellings per annum.
3. The policy also makes provision for additional growth to 2040. The quantum of development proposed is derived from a combination of factors comprising the Housing Needs Assessment evidence and a view on past and future market absorption rates in the town. Additionally, an indicative housing requirement figure for Buckingham has been provided by Buckinghamshire Council. This figure aligns with the conclusions generated by the analysis of the Housing Needs Assessment and future market absorption rates, confirming that this was a well evidenced approach. It is considered sufficient to support the next level of infrastructure growth but without prejudicing longer term growth options for the town to 2050 and beyond. Growth comprises a range of brownfield and greenfield sites of different sizes within and around the town predicting a constant delivery of homes per annum across the plan period, see Appendix A.

4. The settlement boundary follows that of the made neighbourhood plan, but also includes developments which have recently been completed, are underway or have planning permission, land that has been proposed for the allocation of housing, employment land, and new social infrastructure, and allows for the continuing growth of the town through the use of brownfield land or other suitable infill sites so that it can continue to fulfil its role as a strategic settlement and a service centre for other villages surrounding it. It will secure crucial improvements to local schools and other community facilities and support the creation of higher value-added job opportunities for the local workforce.
5. Outside the defined settlement boundary, development will only be supported if proposals accord with policies managing development in the open countryside to provide certainty to applicants and the community and to recognise the valued function of the countryside.



## **POLICY HP2 URBAN AREA ALLOCATIONS**

- A. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies nine previously developed ('brownfield') sites in Appendix A and on the Policies Map that are considered suitable in principle to a change of use to residential or residential-led development. Redevelopment proposals on the land will be supported provided they can show that their social and environmental benefits will outweigh any economic cost.**
- B. Any redevelopment proposals for site E should demonstrate that they conform with the requirements of Policy EE3 of the Plan.**
- C. The Neighbourhood Plan retains the residential allocation of Site J in the made neighbourhood plan for approximately 39 dwellings over 1.7ha of land linked with providing specialist housing for older people and relocating tree provision from the centre of the site to result in no overall loss of biodiversity.**

1. The policy identifies nine sites that have been assessed as being previously developed ('brownfield') land and comprises retained allocations from the made Buckingham Neighbourhood Plan, the Buckinghamshire Local Plan Brownfield Call for Sites and the project's own site assessment work. The project's assessment work indicates that these brownfield sites have a combined capacity to deliver approximately 300 homes as well as some new commercial, business and service floorspace. In most cases, the sites are under-occupied with some vacant land; others are occupied with businesses users or entirely vacant. The policy requires that any adverse economic effect of any loss of land or floorspace currently in established Class E, B2 or B8 use will be outweighed by the social and/or environmental benefits.

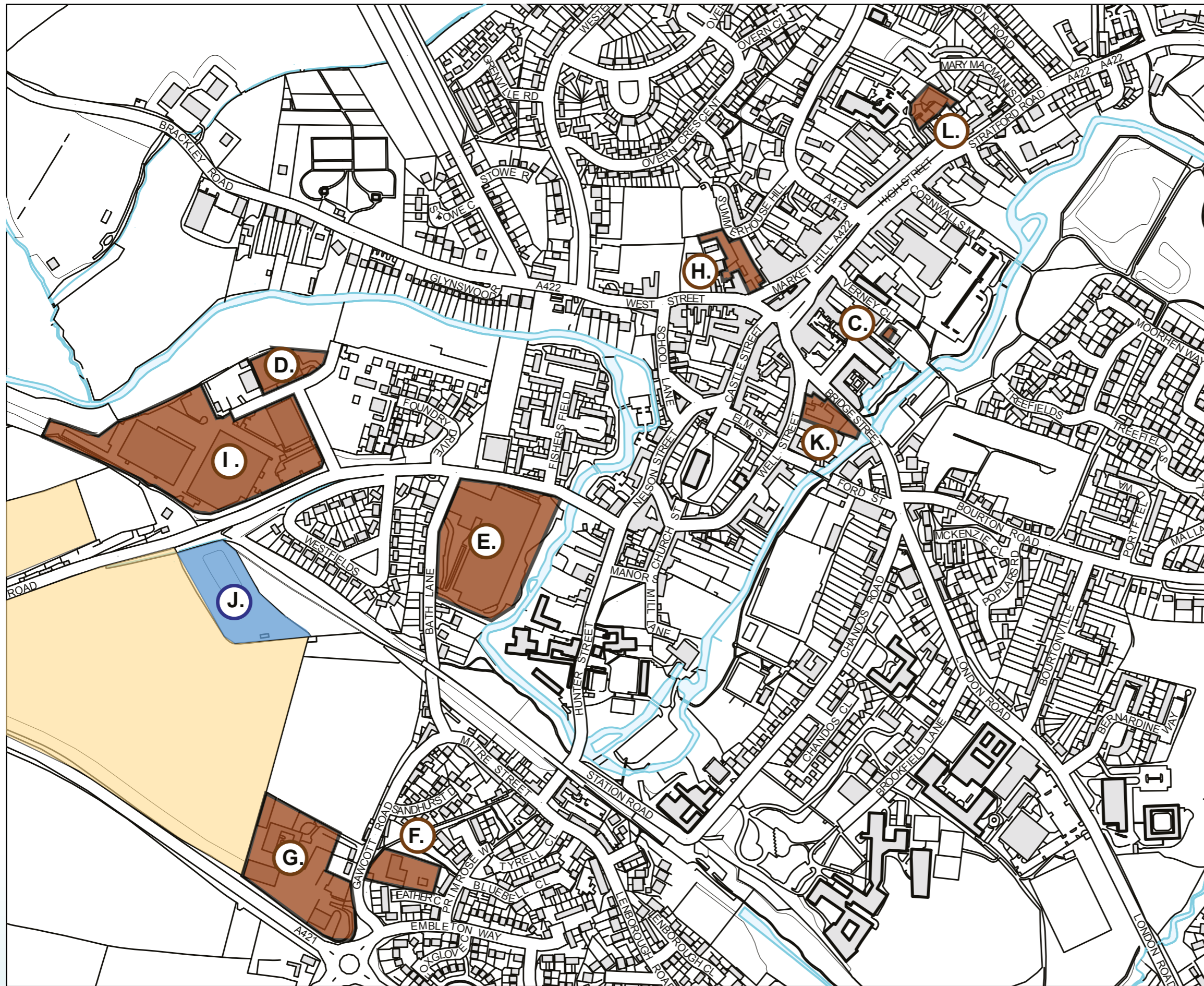
2. In measuring economic effects the applicants should show not just the amount of land and/or floorspace but also the number of FTE jobs affected (although the effects may be mitigated by proposals to relocate the use and jobs within Buckingham, either within the town centre (if appropriate) or the allocated employment development land in Policy EE2 for example). The social benefits will be measured primarily in terms of the number, type and tenure of new homes provided for by the site taking in to account the provisions of Policy HP5 of this plan. The environmental benefits will be measured primarily on the improvement to residential amenity and the delivery of on-site BNG, contribution to the Buckinghamshire Green Ring, and provision of any other required public amenity space.

3. The policy is intended to signal to land interests and investors that the community is keen to see the reuse of brownfield land to deliver new homes and jobs in the first instance, therefore limiting the scale of any greenfield sites which need to be considered for allocation.

4. There is a lack of certainty on the University's future plans. The scale and nature of its operations mean that issues and matters are constantly changing and the University therefore requires a flexible approach in managing its estate. The University is a major employer within the town, as well as providing significant input into the town's economy. Policy EE3 is therefore very supportive of any expansion or redevelopment plans which supports the University's presence in the town. The plan seeks to ensure that the growth of the University's education services is accompanied with the provision of the necessary University accommodation needs. Clause B of the policy therefore works alongside Policy EE3 to ensure this. Clause B of Policy HP2 has been modified from the made NP1. Clause B of the policy applies if the residential scheme of any future proposal at Site E includes the provision of open market homes. Policy EE3 supports the expansion and/or redevelopment of the University's buildings. This may lead to an increased need for University accommodation. A scheme including the provision of, or which consists entirely of, open market homes, should therefore demonstrate that the

University's accommodation needs, assessed against its education offer at the time of the application, has been met elsewhere. The University, as owner of Site E, has confirmed that the site would only come forward if surplus to the requirements of the University.

5. The policy also retains the made plan allocation of Site J. Clause C has been retained from the made NP1. The site would result in a much higher density development at approximately 50dph. Specialist housing for older people normally invite more communal spaces allowing for an increase in density. Specialist housing for older people includes, either all, or a combination of the following: specialist housing for older people, sheltered housing, extra care housing, accessible and adaptable dwellings and wheelchair user dwellings. Normally, Design Code I.1.i Local Character, working with site features, would require that the development of the site must respond to existing site features to create/retain character, but this does not apply to site J due to the physical limitations of the site.







-  Neighbourhood Area Boundary
  -  Committed, completed or partially completed sites
  -  HP2: Brownfield Opportunity Sites
    - C. Verney Close\*
    - D. Tingewick Road, Industrial Estate
    - E. Tingewick Road/Bath Lane
    - F. George Browns
    - G. Ring Road Garage Ltd
    - H. Market Hill
    - I. Site I NP1
    - K. Site K NP1
    - L. North End Surgery\*
  -  HP2: Retained Allocation
    - J. Site J NP1
- \*=see also CLH3

Fig. 7 Brownfield Opportunity Sites, and Site J.

## **POLICY HP3 LAND TO THE SOUTH WEST OF BUCKINGHAM**

**A. The Plan allocates land to the South West of Buckingham, as shown on the Policies Map, for a mix of residential, education, and local centre uses. Proposals should be made in the form of a comprehensive planning application prepared in the context of a masterplan that defines the land uses and sets out the key development guidance for access, layout, and design. In this context, development proposals for the land should demonstrate the way in which they meet the following principles:**

- i. The residential scheme should consist of approximately 800 dwellings including a mix of open market homes of which a percentage should be self-build and/or custom build housing\*, and a mix of affordable homes having regard to the evidence of need and viability; \*Where serviced plots have been made available and marketed appropriately for at least 12 months and have not sold, the plots may either remain on the open market for self-build/custom build or be built out by the developer;**
- ii. The education scheme should consist of the provision of a serviced site capable of accommodating a new two form entry primary school with integrated early years provision and proportionate financial contributions (or alternative mechanism) towards the construction and provision of the education facilities (the provision of the site and contributions to be in accordance with the triggers to be agreed);**

- iii. The education scheme should be designed to facilitate access by sustainable modes from locations within the site and in adjoining communities to ensure that the existing Buckingham community in the southwestern part of the town can also access the primary school safely and securely;**
- iv. The local centre should consist of workspace and/or retail uses and/or other uses to meet daily convenience needs or provide the opportunity to access such uses locally;**
- v. The transport strategy for the development of the site should incorporate:**
  - a. Design approaches to promote active and sustainable modes for journeys within the site and to the wider area;**
  - b. Measures to satisfactorily manage its traffic effects on the road network and to promote and enable active travel to the town centre, community facilities and employment areas in the town;**
  - c. Proposals for the improvement of existing bus services to serve the proposals and connecting to the town centre, community facilities and employment areas in the town; and**
  - d. Provision to encourage a connected movement network within the site, and to encourage connections to the boundary of the site to complement as appropriate proposals for strategic access around the south of the town.**
- vi. The design strategy for the site should respond positively to the relevant provisions of Buckinghamshire and Buckingham Design Guidance and Codes;**

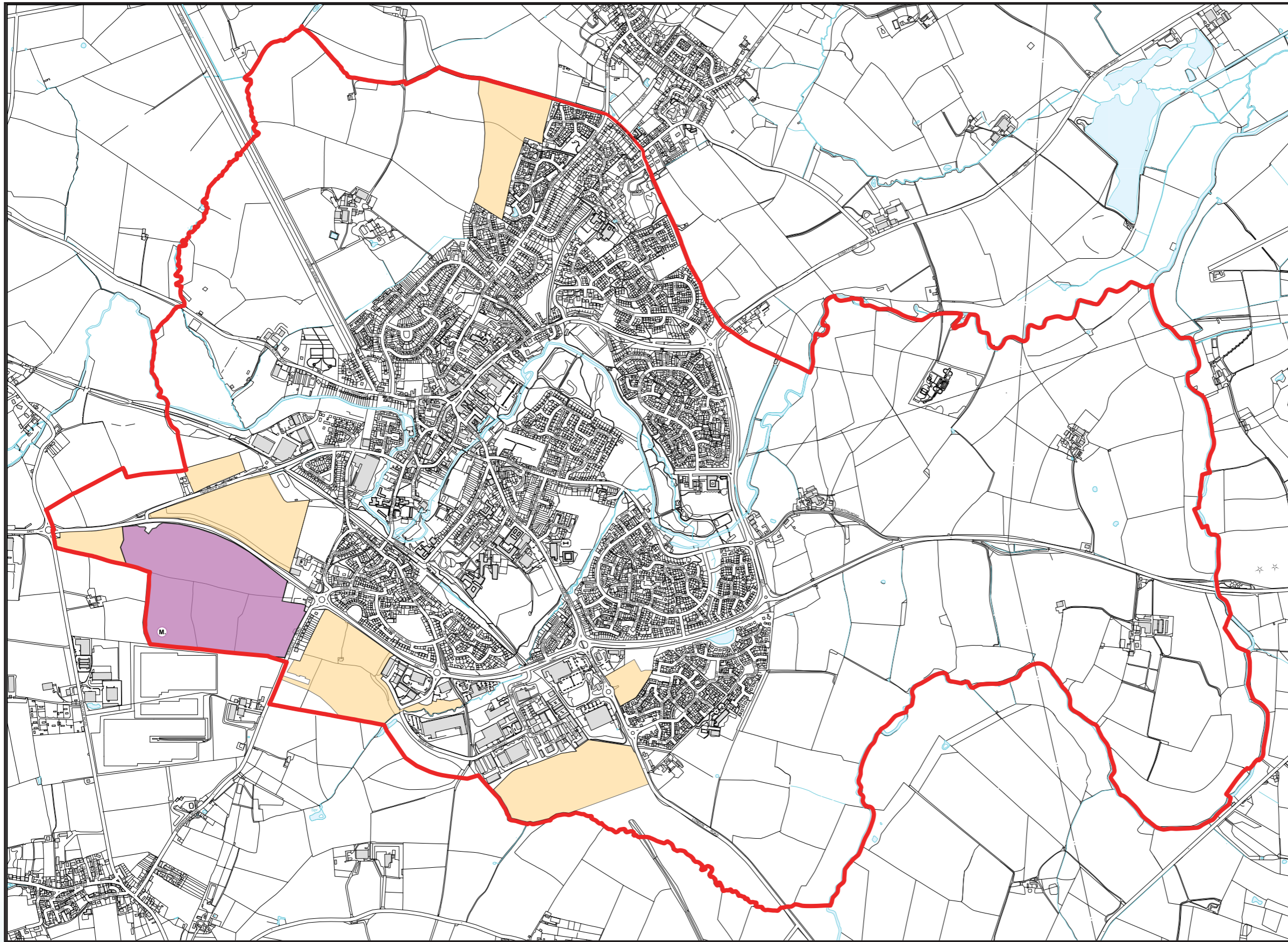
**vii. The green infrastructure strategy should make provision for onsite public open space and biodiversity net gain of at least 10% (as measured by the most up to date metric) complementary to the proposed Buckingham Green Ring and as part of its proposals to integrate with the wider network of green infrastructure. The strategy shall:**

- a. Seek to avoid any loss of existing mature trees and hedgerows within the site boundaries;**
- b. Use species of known benefit to UK wildlife in any soft landscape proposals;**
- c. Include proposals for habitat enhancements integrated within and through the site having regard to the Neighbourhood Plan desk based ecological assessment and subsequent ecological surveys to be undertaken in developing planning application proposals. Habitats to be considered as part of such proposals include semi-improved grassland/other neutral grassland, wetland, scrub and orchard;**
- d. introduce permanent or ephemeral waterbodies (such as ponds, scrapes, ditches and rain gardens) on site to create new habitats.**

**viii. The flood and sustainable drainage strategy should demonstrate how the scheme will manage and not increase surface water flood risk.**

1. The policy allocates land to the south west of Buckingham and establishes key land uses and development principles to meet the needs of the local community and to ensure a successful scheme is delivered. Alongside the brownfield sites identified within the town, the policy is an enabling policy to support the next level of infrastructure growth within the town. The policy allocates land to the south west of Buckingham and establishes key land uses and development principles to meet the needs of the local community and to ensure a successful scheme is delivered. Alongside the brownfield sites identified within the town, the policy is an enabling policy to support the next level of infrastructure growth within the town without prejudicing longer term growth options.
2. The allocation extends to 32.4 ha of land to the south west of Buckingham and includes a new primary school, local centre, green and blue infrastructure enhancements and new homes. An illustrative concept plan is shown in Fig. 8.
3. There is a larger concentration of primary schools located within the eastern part of the town. The allocation of housing in this location therefore enables the delivery of a new primary school to serve the southwestern part of the town. In addition, the highway scheme of the allocation can be designed in such a way so that any future growth scenario options are not prejudiced in any way.
4. The policy therefore seeks to ensure that the school is located in such a way so that it can be accessed by the existing and new community and that the highways scheme makes provision for a layout and access points which does not harm any future strategic access around the south of the town.








-  Neighbourhood Area Boundary
-  Committed, completed or partially completed sites
-  HP3: Land South West of Buckingham  
M. Land South of the A421 and West of Gawcott Road

Fig. 9. Outline site boundary M. Land to the South West of Buckingham

5. Importantly, the policy also requires a planning obligation to be agreed to secure all the infrastructure requirements of the policy, alongside other Local Plan requirements, to deliver a satisfactory scheme. The obligation will detail the phasing of onsite delivery of infrastructure as well as financial contributions to other off-site works.
6. Based on the housing land budget, it is anticipated that approximately 800 dwellings can be delivered. The allocation will be expected to deliver a wide range of house sizes, types and tenures, comprising open market, affordable and self-build/custom-build homes in accordance with other planning policies.
7. The local centre is intended to provide a mix of uses to be negotiated to provide amenities that meet the day to day needs of this new community.
8. In addition to the transport strategy taking into account measures required to enable strategic access around the south of the town, the policy also requires a range of measures to promote sustainable modes of travel and manage its impact on the local road network appropriately.
9. The neighbourhood plan is supported by its own evidence base and benefits from the insights of a desk-based ecological assessment prepared by Future Nature WTC, which is published alongside this plan. It recognises that there is an opportunity to create species-rich grassland in this area alongside other habitats to create habitat mosaics. In addition, the site provides an opportunity to complete another section of the Buckinghamshire Green Ring. The policy therefore requires the consideration of specific measures as part of the wider green infrastructure strategy which also reflects wider requirements imposed by national policies.
10. The site does not fall within a flood risk zone however small part of the site is subject to surface water flood risk. The policy therefore seeks appropriate measures to ensure that the development of the site manages surface water appropriately.
11. Finally, the policy requires that any planning application that wishes to benefit from its support must be comprehensive in covering all of its elements and must set out precisely how and when the education scheme will be delivered. This ensures no prospect that the housing element of the development will be built out and occupied before the mechanism for the delivery of the education scheme is secured and able to operate. This will be done through a planning obligation, which will also secure other elements of the policy, for example its provision of affordable housing. The land interest has confirmed that this approach is reasonable and acceptable. A technical summary note for the site is also attached at Appendix B.

## **POLICY HP4 DEVELOPMENT PHASING AND CONTRIBUTIONS**

- A. As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, housing developments, including infill and windfall sites, should contribute to the range of planning obligations set out in policies of the current and any future adopted development plan if it is demonstrably clear that the net developable area of the site could otherwise accommodate a suitable major housing scheme. On phased schemes, a planning application for a phase with fewer homes that could reasonably otherwise form part of a larger site, should also contribute to the range of planning obligations. Artificially subdividing sites to circumvent proportionate infrastructure contributions and operation will not be supported.**
- B. The Neighbourhood Plan recognises the role that the Town Council plays in the long-term management of community buildings and land used by the local community and visitors. Wherever practicable, developers should engage with the Town Council.**
- C. The following are local priorities for using contributions:**
- 1. Delivering and expanding healthcare provision at Lace Hill, a new facility or an alternative health care practice or practices**
  - 2. Expanding existing, and delivering new, secondary school or college provision**
  - 3. Improvements to active travel routes, including town centre access improvements**

- 4. Improvements to public transport into, away from, and within Buckingham**
- 5. Delivering of a community centre (minimum 18m x 10m) with fixed or demountable stage suitable for a theatre, to seat at least 200 people**
- 6. Expansion of existing, or the provision of new, sport and recreation facilities**
- 7. Improvements to existing green and open spaces**

1. Specific contributions on major development sites allocated in this Plan are dealt with within the site-specific policies. This policy broadly applies to any other housing development which may come forward within the plan period. The town has in the past suffered the consequences of a piecemeal approach to development resulting in infrastructure shortfall. Clause A of the policy therefore seeks to ensure that sites are not subdivided to purposely avoid the threshold for making developer contributions.
2. Clause B seeks to signal the Town Council's ability to undertake the long-term management of community buildings and land. The list of assets currently owned and/or managed by the Town Council is extensive and can be found online: [www.buckingham-tc.gov.uk](http://www.buckingham-tc.gov.uk). Proposed management plans should be clearly mapped, with the site constructed to appropriate standards, for consideration of the proposal by the Town Council. To be clear, by seeking to negotiate S106 contributions, this does not mean that the Town Council will be supportive of new development, but the opportunity for the community to benefit as a whole if an application is found to meet national and local planning policy and subsequently approved should not be missed.
3. Clause C sets out the how local infrastructure capacity improvements in Buckingham will be

prioritised. The Town Council continues to work closely with Buckinghamshire Council in preparing the indicative cost of each project.

4. Policy S5 of the VALP requires new development to support local infrastructure capacity improvements through a combination of on-and off-site provision, and land and developer contributions. Policy HP3 makes it clear how local infrastructure capacity improvements will be prioritised in Buckingham.
5. It is noted that the method for collecting developer contributions in the former Aylesbury Vale area (of which Buckingham forms part of) does not yet operate a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) scheme. The Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act (LURA) 2023 also sets out a legislative framework for a new Infrastructure Levy (IL) scheme. It requires secondary legislation to become operational. It is therefore possible that CIL or IL may become operational during the plan period. If so, the Town Council will receive a 25% proportion from a CIL scheme as it has a made neighbourhood plan and the list of local priorities for infrastructure capacity improvements will remain as set out in this policy, until such a time that they are reviewed.

## **POLICY HP5 HOUSING MIX AND TENURE**

- A. All proposals for new housing on sites 1 ha or more (or 25 dwellings or more) should provide affordable housing at a minimum rate of 35%, (subject to viability). Planning applications for residential development of 25 or more dwellings and sites of 1 ha or more must be accompanied by an Affordable Housing Plan. The Affordable Housing Plan will set out the mix and location of affordable housing and how it will be phased.**
- B. Development proposals should provide a greater proportion of affordable housing for social rent in the overall tenure mix of affordable housing with the final tenure mix agreed taking account of the Buckingham Housing Needs Assessment, or any more up-to-date Assessments, and any other available evidence regarding local market conditions.**
- C. New residential development should seek to include smaller dwellings (up to 3-bedroom) in their housing mix with an emphasis on types of homes which may be suitable for first time buyers and those looking to rent their first home, and downsizers. The number of smaller dwellings should be greater than 50% of the total in schemes of five or more dwellings. The provision of bungalows as part of the overall mix of homes will be particularly supported.**

1. The policy retains the affordable housing threshold established by the made Buckingham Neighbourhood Plan. There have been no instances of viability issues for proposals in delivering this policy requirement since the implementation of the policy, including a recent planning appeal

judgement at Land West of Moreton Road and Castlemilk which maintained the position that 35% affordable housing accords with the Neighbourhood Plan and provision of this percentage did not lead to viability issues. Clause A therefore retains this policy position. VALP Policy H1 requires a minimum of 25% affordable housing contributions on 11 dwellings or more or on sites of 0.3 ha or more. The VALP Inspector's Report noted that some neighbourhood plans required higher percentages (than in the VALP policy) and that these were justified at the time of the making of those plans. These policies exist side by side and the fact that this policy requires a greater proportion does not mean that it is inconsistent with VALP Policy H1 which sets a minimum requirement. Therefore, the higher threshold established in this policy will continue to apply where relevant.

2. A Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) was commissioned for the town of Buckingham in October 2023 and was published. It recognises that it will be important to maximise the delivery of new affordable rented housing to address a current backlog, future-proof the stock, and provide homes for households living in the wider rural hinterland. The policy therefore draws attention to this updated evidence and the importance of maximising affordable housing for social rent in the affordable housing delivery of schemes. It is expected that further local council updates will be produced, such as the Buckinghamshire Council's Local Housing Needs Assessment.
3. The Buckingham Housing Needs Assessment indicates that there remains uncertainty as to how Registered Providers operating in the area will fund or manage affordable housing for rent stock in the area. It also notes that social rent is the only tenure affordable to all incomes. A greater

proportion can therefore be defined as greater than 50%.

4. The HNA also estimates the size mix of future homes that might best accommodate demographic trends and addresses imbalances in the existing housing stock. It recognises that Buckingham needs a diversification away from the high proportion of 4+ bedroom homes in the current housing stock. Clause C of the policy therefore sets out the size and type of dwellings required to achieve these aims. The provision of a stock of smaller housing would not only provide opportunities for 'entry-level' housing but also 'exit-level' housing for downsizers, freeing up family homes. The provision of a given proportion of smaller dwellings (i.e. greater than 50% of the total) will also ensure an efficient use of land in the built-up areas of the town.
5. The HNA also notes that university accommodation in the town is currently provided for through a range of accommodation types across the town at various sites and the former Best Western Hotel has recently been converted for use as university accommodation. Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) also serve some of this market and are likely to continue to do so. The Town Council will therefore continue to monitor the location and concentration of HMOs in the town to consider any necessary policy intervention in the future.
6. Buckingham has not escaped the national trend of fewer bungalows being built. Research does indicate that there has been a rise in the number of over-65s who would consider moving to a bungalow with the ability to live on one level and easier maintenance bungalows bring offering an opportunity for older people to keep their independence when downsizing. The policy therefore also makes it clear that the provision of bungalows in the overall housing mix will be particularly supported.

## DH Policies DESIGN & HERITAGE

Fig. 10. 10 Castle Street



### **POLICY DH1 THE BUCKINGHAM DESIGN CODE**

**A. It is important that any new development demonstrates a connection with local character and place making. Development proposals will be supported provided they have full regard to the design guidelines and codes, as set out in the Buckingham Design Code attached as Appendix C.**

Buckingham Conservation Area ('The historic core'). It therefore carries the full weight of the development plan in decision making and is not subordinate or supplementary guidance carrying lesser weight.

2. The policy requires that applicants should demonstrate that they have full regard to the design principles and guidance the Code contains as relevant to the location of their proposals. This is in response to new developments since the 1940s within or adjoining the historic core failing to recognise the character or local distinctiveness of the area. When making a justification as to why an exception may be made to the Code, applicants should have regard to the use of MUST, SHOULD and COULD in the code wording. The use of these words indicates where it is expected a code would always apply with no exceptions (MUST), where a code would usually apply with very limited exceptions (SHOULD) and where the applicant may choose whether or not they feel the code is appropriate for inclusion in their development (COULD).
3. Where a development proposal does not follow the requirements of the Code the applicant should explain the circumstances and make a case for the submitted scheme.

1. There are distinctive features of Buckingham that shapes its character. These features are set out in the Buckingham Design Code attached at Appendix C. The Code is an integral part of the policy but is extensive and the document is therefore attached as an appendix for representational purposes only. Its content is given full effect through the provisions of the policy by placing additional local emphasis on the design quality principles of VALP Policies BE2 and BE1 in respect of the characteristics of the

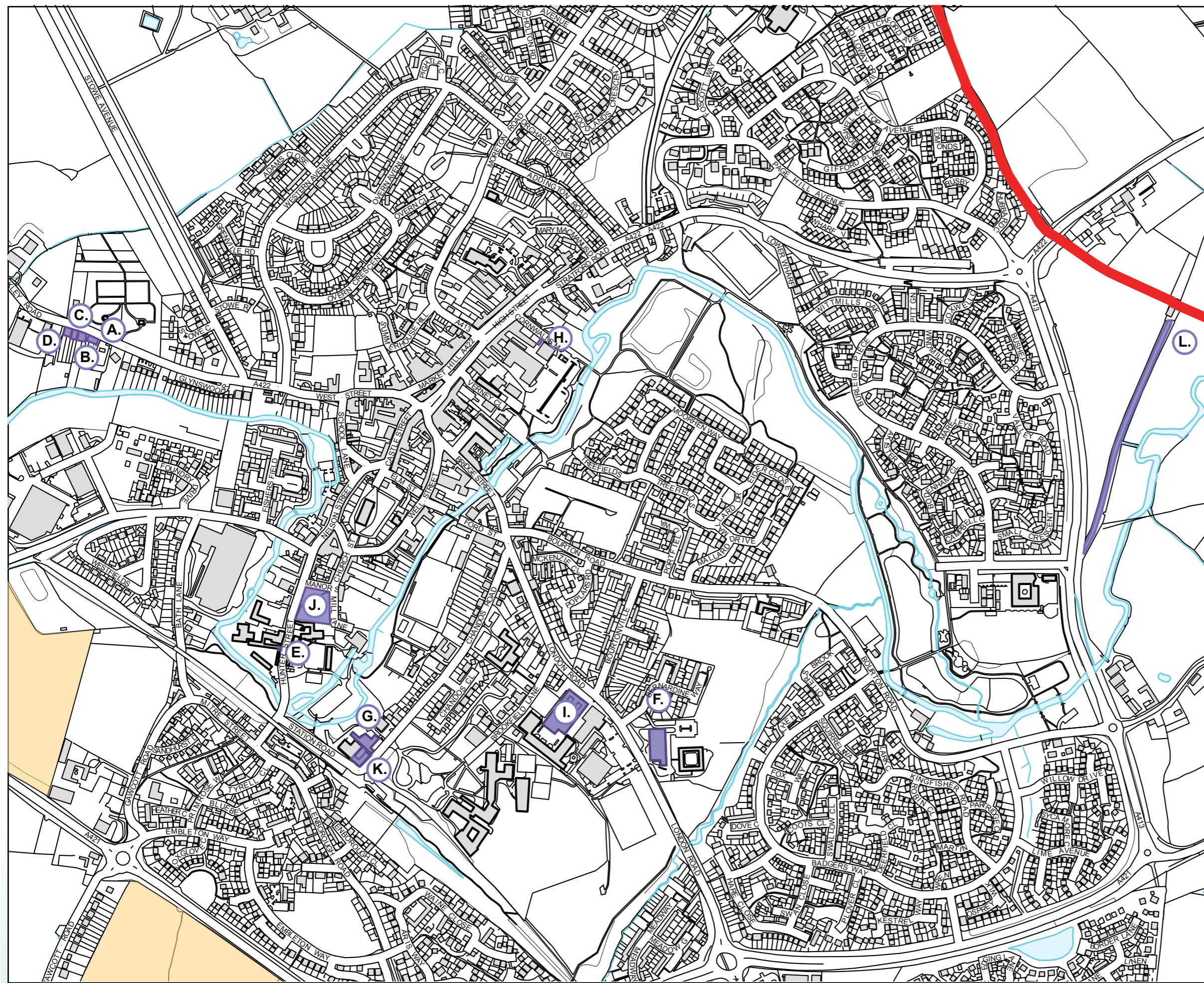
## **POLICY DH2 BUILDINGS OF HERITAGE INTEREST**

**A. This Neighbourhood Plan identifies the following buildings and structures as Local Heritage Assets, as shown on the Policies Map:**

- A. Four Terraced Villas, Brackley Road, #1-4**
  - B. Three Terraced Villas, Brackley Road, #5-7**
  - C. Two Semi-detached Villas, Brackley Road, #8-9**
  - D. Two Semi-detached Villas, Brackley Road, #10-11**
  - E. “VR” Post boxes, Hunter Street, University of Buckingham**
  - F. Franciscan Building, Verney Park Campus, University of Buckingham**
  - G. St Bernadine’s Church & Presbytery, Chandos Road**
  - H. Troughs, Cornwalls Meadow**
  - I. 1930s Building, The Buckingham School**
  - J. Old Churchyard, Manor Street**
  - K. Chandos Road Building, University of Buckingham**
  - L. The Buckingham Arm of the Grand Union Canal, Bourton Meadow**
- B. The effect of a development proposal on the significance of an identified Local Heritage Asset should be taken into account in determining planning applications. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect Local**

**Heritage Assets, a balanced judgement will be required, having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.**

1. The policy identifies as Local Heritage Assets a number of buildings and structures in the neighbourhood area that have local heritage importance, either because of their architectural/historical/social, etc value.
2. In that regard, Policy DH2 is intended to inform decision makers of the presence of what are technically referred to as ‘non-designated heritage assets’ when judging the effects of a development proposal in line with §209 of the NPPF and VALP Policy BE1. A description of each building on the list is included in Appendix D. ‘Listed Buildings’ are already subject to protection by the Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas Act 1990, by national policy as designated heritage assets and are not therefore identified in this policy. Restrictions and protection also apply in relation to the Scheduled Monument (St Rumbold’s Well) under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. Additionally, the Buckinghamshire Local Heritage List, the Buckingham Conservation Area Appraisal, and the Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Record highlight a number of other locally significant heritage assets that should be identified and considered when submitting an application.
3. As the policy refers only to built environment heritage, applicants should also consult the Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Record and consider the impact on archaeological resources.






-  Neighbourhood Area Boundary
-  Committed, completed or partially completed sites
-  DH2: Buildings of Heritage Interest
  - A. Four Terraced Villas, Brackley Road, #1-4
  - B. Three Terraced Villas, Brackley Road, #5-7
  - C. Two Semi-detached Villas, Brackley Road, #8-9
  - D. Two Semi-detached Villas, Brackley Road, #10-11
  - E. "VR" Post Boxes, Hunter Street, University of Buckingham
  - F. Franciscan Building, Verney Park Campus, University of Buckingham
  - G. St Bernardine's Church & Presbytery, Chandos Road
  - H. Troughs, Cornwalls Meadow
  - I. 1930s Building, The Buckingham School
  - J. Old Churchyard, Manor Street
  - K. Chandos Road Building, University of Buckingham
  - L. The Buckingham Arm of the Grand Union Canal, Bourton Meadow

Fig. 11. Buildings of Heritage Interest

## **POLICY DH3 RETROFITTING IN THE CONSERVATION AREA**

**A. Retrofitting proposals which would result in considerable improvements to energy efficiency, carbon emissions and/or general suitability, conditions, and longevity of existing buildings in the Conservation Area (as shown in the Policies Map) will be supported, with significant weight attributed to those benefits.**

1. The first objective of Buckingham Town Council's Climate Emergency Action Plan is to reduce energy demand, improve energy efficiency and convert to renewable, low or zero carbon technologies for energy and heat. This policy will encourage local residents to use deep retrofitting as a way to reduce their carbon footprint and help save energy and money in heating and maintaining their homes and other premises.
2. 20% of total UK carbon emissions comes from existing (rather than new build) homes but heritage and architectural constraints can make this challenging, particularly for residents living in properties located within the Conservation Area, to make changes.
3. Considerable improvements means that works have been planned as part of a whole building approach, when considering adaptation, and that cumulatively improvements will lead to greater energy efficiency, less carbon emissions and provide an opportunity for the life of the building to be extended.
4. Applicants who wish to submit proposals for properties within the Conservation Area are strongly advised to use the methodology set out in the Architects Climate Action Network (ACAN) Climate

subsequent edition), and the Historic England advice note: Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency; which can help facilitate low carbon retrofitting.

5. In December 2023, the Government changed the permitted development rights around installing solar panels on buildings in the Conservation Area. This change only relates to solar panels, so Policy DH3 is still necessary to demonstrate wider support for retrofitting beyond this.

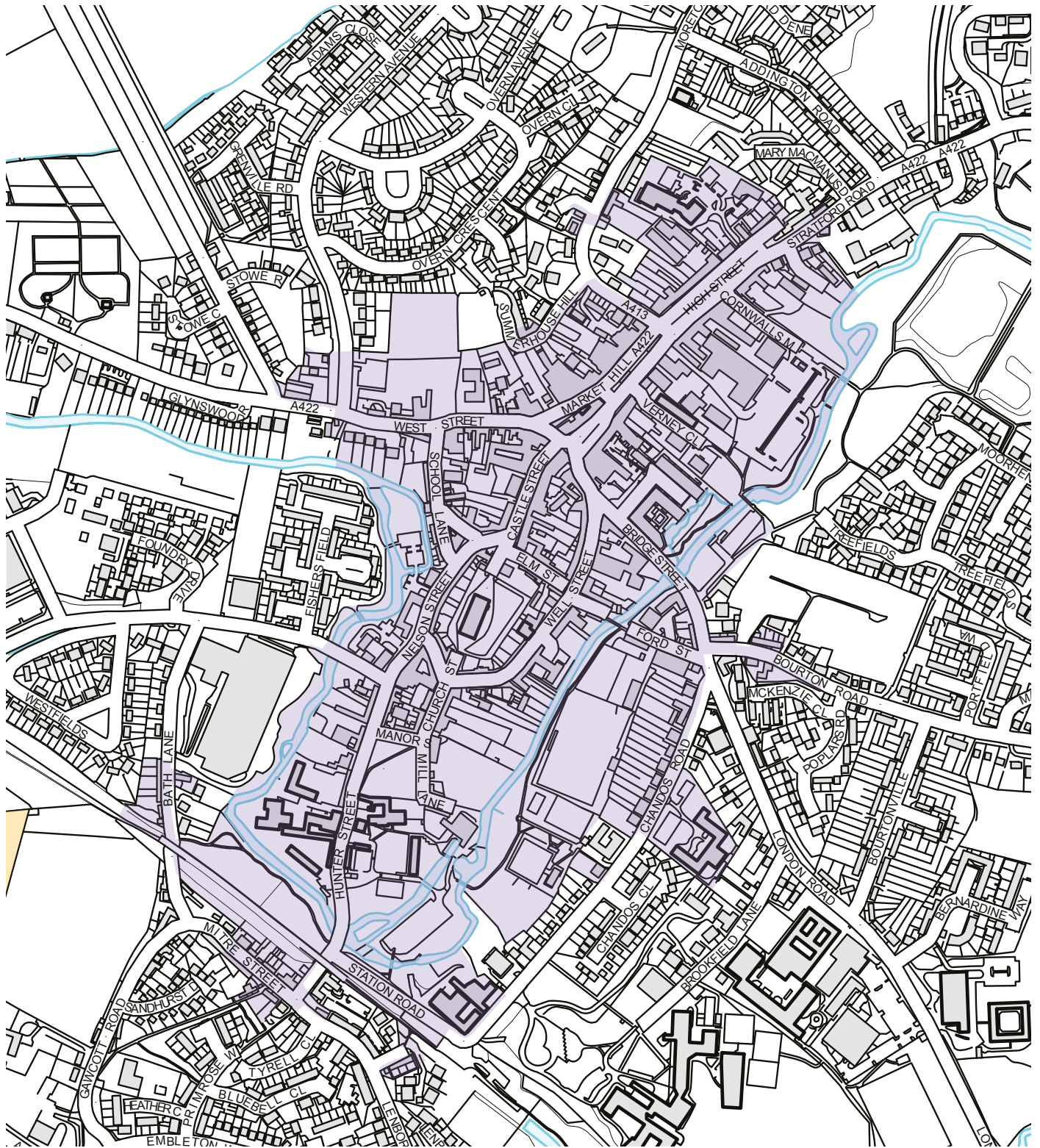





Fig. 12. Buckingham Conservation Area

-  Neighbourhood Area Boundary
-  Committed, completed or partially completed sites
-  DH3: Conservation Area

## **POLICY DH4 ADDRESSING THE PERFORMANCE GAP**

**A. Proposals for Passivhaus or equivalent standard buildings with a space heating demand of less than 15KWh/m<sup>2</sup>/year will be supported. Schemes that maximise their potential to meet this standard, by proposing the use of terraced and/or apartment building forms of plot size, plot coverage and layout that are different to those of the character area within which the proposal is located, will be supported, provided it can be demonstrated that the scheme will not have a significant harmful effect on the character area.**

**B. Development proposals that would be 'zero carbon ready' by design by minimising the amount of energy needed to heat and cool buildings through landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping, will be supported. Consideration should be given to resource efficiency at the outset and whether existing buildings can be re-used as part of the scheme to capture their embodied carbon.**

**C. Proposals for major development should be accompanied by a Whole Life-Cycle Carbon Emission Assessment, using a recognised methodology, to demonstrate actions taken to reduce embodied carbon resulting from the construction and use of the building over its entire life.**

1. The UK Parliament declared an environment and climate emergency in May 2019 and Buckingham Town Council declared a climate emergency in July 2019. The policy encourages energy efficient homes to the Passivhaus standard.

2. Passivhaus certified schemes, or those at an equivalent standard, are a way of delivering new homes that are energy efficient and do not pass on expensive retrofitting costs or fuel requirements to the future user. To incentivise the use of the Passivhaus, or equivalent standard, Clause A of the policy acknowledges that there may sometimes be a trade-off between its objectives and local design policy. Although meeting these standards ought not to compromise a scheme fitting in with the character of a local area, on occasions this may be the case. It therefore allows for some degree of flexibility in meeting the Buckingham Design Code. Proposals seeking to apply the Passivhaus Planning Package (PHPP) must also be able to demonstrate that the Passivhaus standard can be achieved. Prior to commencement a 'preconstruction compliance check' completed by a Passivhaus Designer accredited by the Passive House Institute (PHI) will be required and secured by condition. Upon completion a Quality Approved Passivhaus certificate for each building will be required prior to occupation, again secured by condition.

3. Clause B of the policy requires developers to ensure they address the Government's climate change targets and energy performance at the very initial stages of design. 'Zero Carbon Ready' by design means making spatial decisions on layout and orientation of buildings at the outset to maximise the passive design benefits ('free heat') of a site and avoids leaving this to technical choices and assessment at the Building Regulation stage, by which time the opportunity may have been lost. Applicants are directed to the Net-Zero Carbon Toolkit created by Cotswold District Council and two partner councils, West Oxfordshire District Council and Forest of Dean District Council. The toolkit is available

as a resource for private and public sector organisations to use and adopt.

4. Finally Clause C of the policy encourages major development proposals to be accompanied by a Whole Life-Cycle Carbon Emissions Assessment, RICS Methodology is preferred. The assessment will enable the design team to understand and respond to the lifetime consequence of their design decisions and to design for adaptability, longevity and disassembly, contributing to resource efficiency (as per Clause B of the policy) and the 'circular economy'. These requirements will be added to the additional supporting documents list of Buckinghamshire County Council for applications in Buckingham until such a time that there is an authority-wide requirement. Every new build or redevelopment project in Buckingham provides an opportunity to make a difference and a contribution towards meeting our climate change targets for 2050.
5. The policy complements VALP Policy C3 which encourages development schemes that achieve greater energy efficiency.

## ENV Policies ENVIRONMENT



Fig. 13. Bourton Park

### **POLICY ENV1 BUCKINGHAM GREEN RING**

- A. The Neighbourhood Plan proposes the establishment of a Green Ring around the town, as shown on the Policies Map, comprising a variety of green infrastructure assets, including formal open space, a footpath/cycle network, and land of biodiversity value for the purposes of improving the environmental support system for the community and wildlife.**
- B. Development proposals that lie within or adjoin the Green Ring should, wherever practicable, align their public open space requirements with its objectives, so that they contribute to its successful formation and maintenance. Proposals that will lead to the unnecessary loss of Green Ring land or features that will prejudice the completion of the Green Ring will not be supported.**

1. Buckingham has identified as a historic market town with strong connections to the agricultural communities surrounding the settlement which provides key services. The river running through the town has provided employment and leisure opportunities to the residents of the town over centuries.
2. In recognising the need for sustainable development, the residents of Buckingham through consultation have stressed the importance of open green space and the easy access to the surrounding countryside. This has perhaps been heightened since NP1 as a result of lockdowns, where residents became much more aware of the possibilities for access and leisure surrounding their homes. As the town grows it is important to ensure that all residents retain so far as possible the benefits of living on the edge of the working countryside. However, with expansion of the town outwards, the distance to access such open spaces increases for many, and the temptation simply to get into a car to access countryside also increases.
3. The policy therefore establishes the principle of the Green Ring at Buckingham as a green infrastructure project and identifies its broad location on the Policies Map. It requires all development proposals within its broad location to make provision for its delivery and management and it resists the loss of any Green Ring land or associated features that cannot be justified.
4. The planning of green infrastructure is an increasingly important element of national policy. The NPPF acknowledges this type of infrastructure can serve many simultaneous purposes, from providing a local recreational asset with health and wellbeing benefits, to enhancing biodiversity, protecting visual amenity and adapting to climate change. Its two most important features, however, are in creating easier access around the town and in protecting existing and/or providing new

amenity for existing residential areas.

5. In providing an inner and outer ring of open green space, connection to countryside and wildlife can be maintained; whether through providing “green spokes” to the surrounding countryside, and/or a circular or semi-circular space within easy distance of developments, allowing exploration beyond the defined green space within developments. This would build on the existing Buckingham circular walk and the new Buckinghamshire Greenway.
6. Wherever possible this will allow existing green space to be retained allowing for natural permeable drainage opportunities it provides as well as the preservation of flora and fauna and the green canopy.
7. Buckingham’s rapid development over the last 50 years has meant that developments have been placed on the outer edges of the town, but also that much infill has occurred within the town such as the Heartlands development. In order to ensure that further development does not prevent good access to semi-continuous green space, there are roughly two rings – an inner and an outer, connected by green spokes.
8. The policy will bring additional coherence to both the old and new designation of Local Green Spaces not only as standalone spaces but as part of a connected network retaining as much as possible the feeling of being “surrounded by green” wherever in the town you live and/or work.
9. The Plan has identified a significant amount of potential brownfield sites within the town centre that could come forward as development sites; therefore it is not felt that the allocation of Local Green Space will in anyway prevent sustainable development within Buckingham, but enhance the sense of place for such development.
10. The Green Ring will become a defining

landscape feature of the settlement of Buckingham in years to come. It is accepted that its completion will take many years beyond the plan period and will rely upon future development proposals and the support of relevant landowners. However, significant segments between the existing and proposed open space provisions will be delivered in the plan period through the completion of the new open space and redevelopment around the existing open space area.

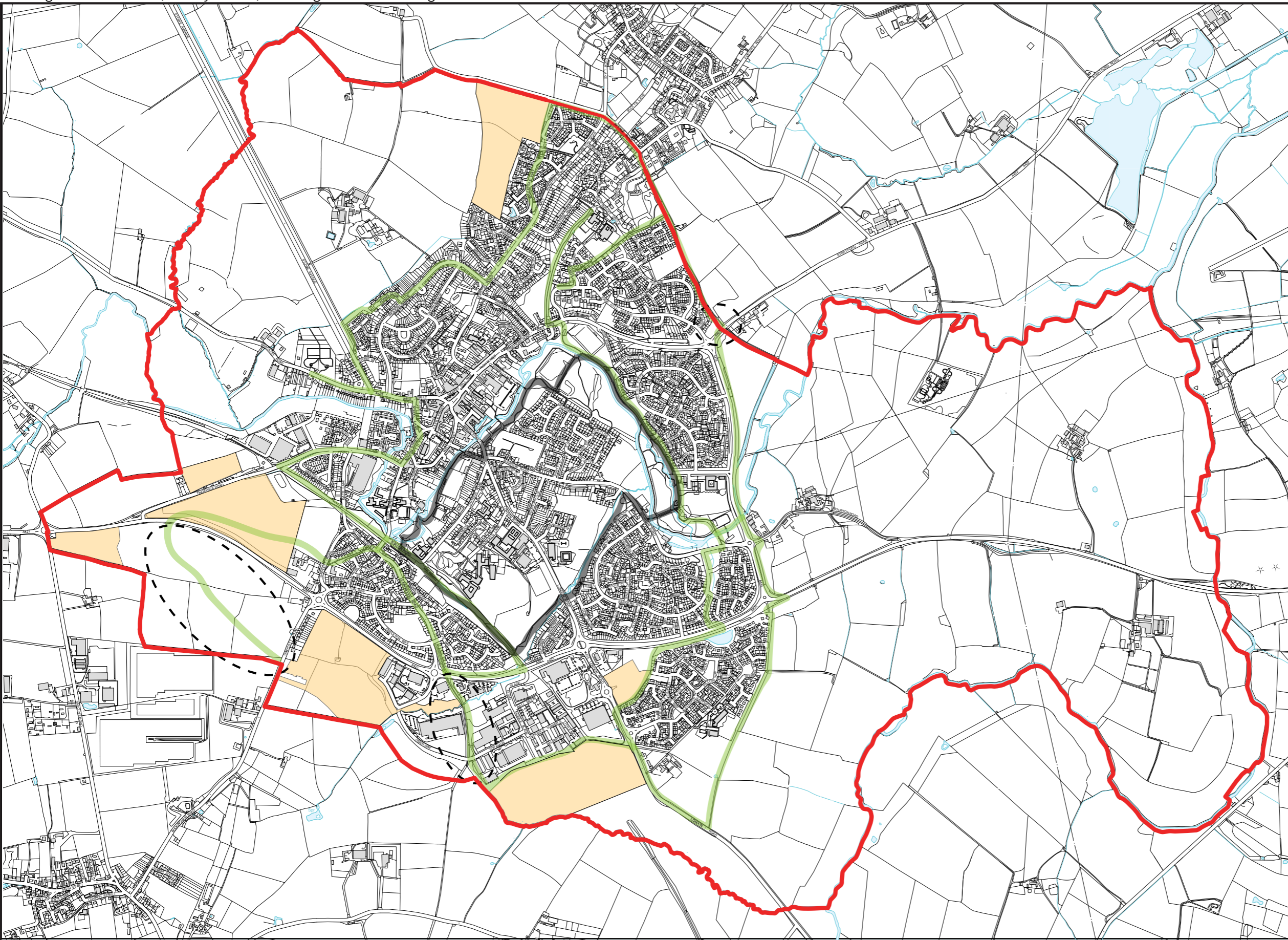
#### Outer Ring




11. North East Corner – the allocations here are of Holloway Spinney; Land behind Watlow Gardens and Manor Road; Maids Moreton Avenue, and Land south of Page Hill Avenue; this will provide a green corridor at the edge of the boundary between Maids Moreton and Buckingham, as well as a green corridor for those in Page Hill and Moreton Road residential areas to connect with Canalside area and on to Bourton Park, Ouse Valley Way and the Circular Walk. The Land south of Page Hill Avenue and Maids Moreton Avenue retains the partial greenframe around Page Hill, a development that did not provide any play facilities etc when it was built. It makes for a pleasant walk from Page Hill into the town centre. Maids Moreton Avenue provides a green corridor/spoke between the Moreton Road residential area and the town centre, or connecting to Bourton Park through Stratford Fields and the Ouse Valley Way. It also complements the Buckingham Sandpit, a site of geological note and designated as a Local Nature Reserve. It provides a green corridor to the pedestrian entrance to Buckingham Primary School.

#### Linden Village

12. The land at March Edge is already designated as Local Green Space, not only for the leisure use for residents of Linden Village but also because of the connectivity provided between

Fig. 14. Illustration, Policy ENV1, Buckingham Green Ring



-  Neighbourhood Area Boundary
-  Committed, completed or partially completed sites
-  ENV1: Inner Green Ring (completed)
-  ENV1: Outer Green Ring (yet to be completed)
-  ENV1: Outer Green Ring (yet to be completed)

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this residential area and Bourton Park and the Ouse Valley Way/Bernwood Jubilee Way and the Circular Walk, providing not just wider open green space and recreational opportunities but also a green corridor for active transport to the town centre and to the Canalside area and beyond.

13. It also provides a green corridor route to Bourton Meadow School.

#### Canalside Area

14. This will provide greater access to the Buckingham Arm of the Grand Junction Canal and the Ouse Valley Way as it heads into more open countryside. It also will provide access to the Ouse Valley Way as it connects with the Bernwood Jubilee Way and bridle path, which crosses the A421 with a Pegasus Crossing and into the Lace Hill residential area.

#### Lace Hill

15. The bridle path follows the line of the A421/413 by pass and the SUDs on the Lace Hill development. The addition of the Land behind Bobbins Way would allow an alternative route leading more directly to the Lace Hill Academy and the Lace Hill Community Centre and the associated football pitch. This strip of land affords views over the surrounding countryside and is safe and free from traffic. It also affords residents of Lace Hill an attractive route to these facilities. It also provides a significant buffer between development and open countryside for wildlife.

#### Continuation of Bridle Path to Osier Way

16. From Lace Hill the A413 can be crossed via Pegasus Crossing and the bridle path followed behind the Wipac Factory, behind the Industrial Estate until reaching the new residential development at Osier Way.
17. There is a path from here to the new Mount Pleasant Campus of the University

of Buckingham or the path can be followed and the by-pass crossed at the Mount Pleasant residential area and followed down to Lenborough Road with the existing Mount Pleasant Local Green Space to the left hand side; or the Railway Walk can be accessed slightly further down the by-pass.

#### Railway Walk [new designation].

18. This is an important green corridor/spoke as well as being an important leisure and wildlife area. It will provide a green active transport route for University students from the new Mount Pleasant Campus to the Hunter Street campus, or via the circular walk behind the Royal Latin Playing Fields, the Verney Park campus.

19. It provides a similar function for Mount Pleasant residents, and also going forward to the new residents on Osier Way development.

20. It also stretches beyond access to the town centre and provides green connectivity to the new St Rumbold's Fields development, as well as all the residential areas of Tingewick Road. It is hoped that this will provide a green route for students for the Royal Latin School and also the Buckingham School secondary schools.

21. It then continues as the Bernwood Jubilee Way linking Buckingham to the village of Radclive to the west.

#### The North

22. The north is largely green agricultural area with the important green spoke of Stowe Avenue, the Ouse Valley Way path running alongside the road, but with a considerable green buffer. To the west of the start of Stowe Avenue, is the Buckingham cemetery, an important green space and of historic significance. To the right hand side, a strip of green land runs behind Adam Close, allowing residents of the Western Avenue residential areas, access to Stowe Avenue.

23. This area is protected by the proximity not only to Stowe Avenue but to Stowe Landscape Gardens and the Stowe School which are significant listed assets.

24. The Avenue gives access to the village of Chackmore.

#### Inner Ring

25. Stratford Fields, Bourton Park, Heartlands, Skateboard Park and Play Area and Chandos Park make up the core of an inner ring of green with additional benefit of providing access to the Great River Ouse running through the town; but in addition there are other significant green areas encircling the town centre. Connected by the Circular Walk Bourton Park [which contains the community led Buckingham Edible Woodland] leads to Verney Park green space, providing significant recreational space for ball games, exercise and dog walking for residents of the St Bernardine's Way development as well as Badgers and homes on Bourton Road as well as the University students living at the Verney Park campus.

26. If the Circular Walk is followed it leads past the Royal Latin Playing Fields before joining with the Railway Walk green corridor.

#### Heartlands;

27. Skateboard Park and Play Area and the Verney Close Local Green Space provide a green active transport corridor to the town centre from London Road and the secondary schools, as well as Chandos park and the George Grenville Academy, as well as providing recreational and wildlife areas. In addition, the Heartlands is partially buffered by the Bourton Road Allotments, which provide a significant area of interesting green space very close to the town centre.

#### Chandos Park

28. Chandos Park can be accessed from Chandos Road [close to both George Grenville Academy and the Royal Latin School both of which have extensive green campuses] via the road beside the tennis and bowling clubs providing specific recreational use; or via the Chris Nicholls Walk from Ford Street, running alongside the River and also the University Playing Fields at Ford Meadow – a significant green space and also a natural flood plain. Much of the permeable surfaces of the park provide natural drainage from river flooding at certain times of the year.

29. Chandos Park provides green connectivity to the University of Buckingham's Hunter Street campus; the Railway Walk and also to Berties' Walk which continues alongside the river to Bath Lane.

30. From the University campus, the old Graveyard can be accessed, with very notable trees as well as heritage assets providing a tranquil oasis; from there a short walk leads to the Church of St Peter and St Paul and the designated Village Green space. This is in the heart of the Conservation Area.

#### Western Residential Area

31. There are existing designations for Overn Place Recreation Ground and also for the Land behind Castle House which provides significant tree canopy near the town centre but also a green corridor between the long-stay car park on Western Avenue and the new Summer Hill residential area [which as town centre housing does not have significant green space within the development] as well as the Town Centre.

## **POLICY ENV2 GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE**

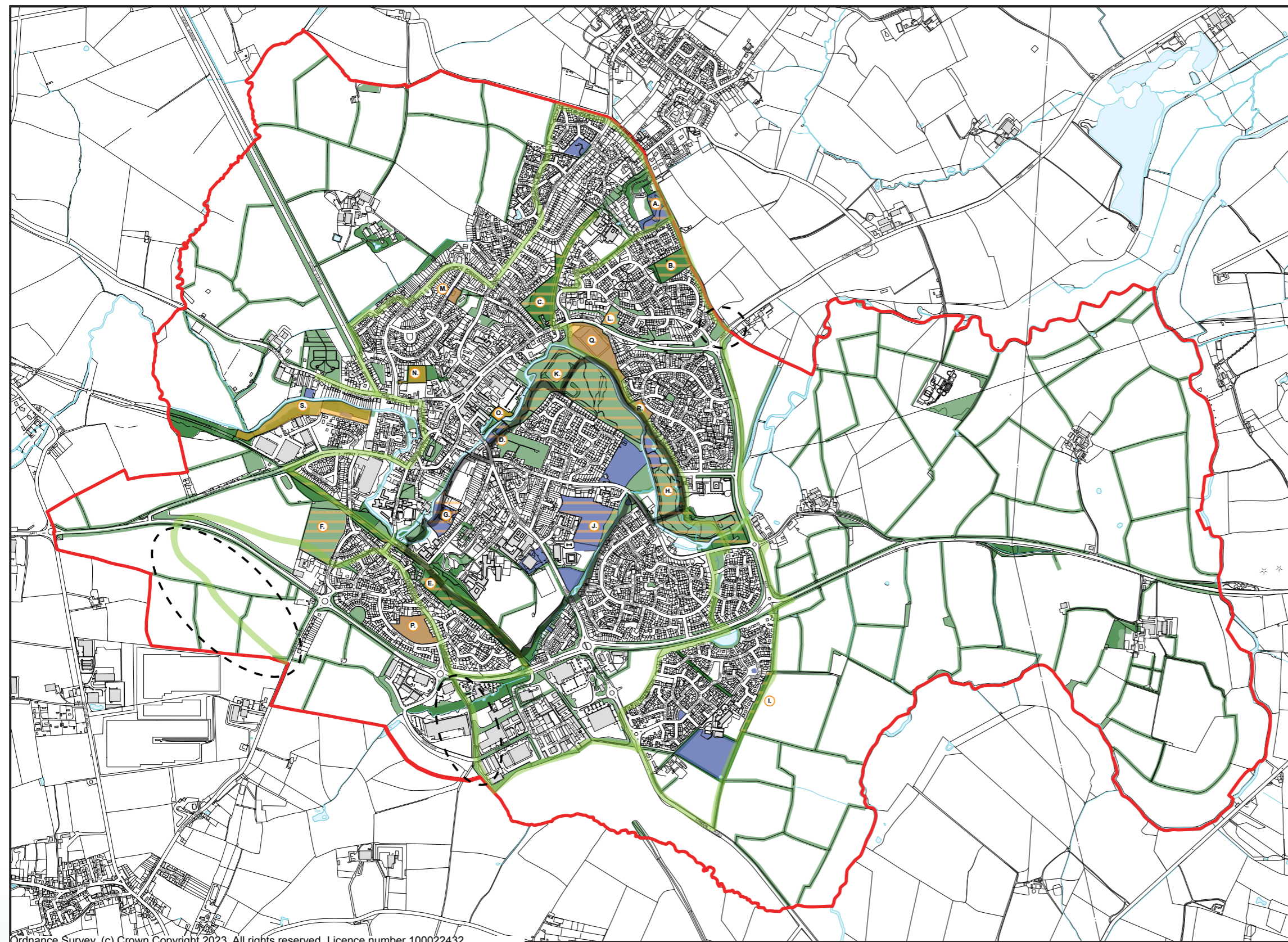
- A. The neighbourhood area contains a variety of green and blue infrastructure that provides an environmental support system for the community and wildlife. The Neighbourhood Plan designates this as a Network, as shown on the Green Infrastructure Map, which comprises land with known biodiversity value, including a Local Nature Reserve, priority habitats, woodlands, significant hedgerows and lines of trees, the River Great Ouse streams and other water bodies, wildlife corridors, sections of the Buckinghamshire Greenway, the Buckingham Green Ring, as well as open amenity and Local Green space.**
- B. Development proposals that lie within or adjoining the Network are required, where relevant, to have full regard to creating, maintaining and improving the Network, including delivering a minimum of 10% net gain to general biodiversity value and wildlife connectivity, in the design of their layouts, landscaping schemes and public open space and play provisions.**
- C. Proposals that will harm or lead to the loss of land, or existing features such as mature trees, hedgerows and other landscape elements worthy of retention, lying within the Network and that will undermine its integrity will not be supported. Development proposals that will lead to the extension of the Network will be supported, provided they are consistent with all other relevant policies of the development plan.**

- D. Where relevant, proposals should provide a minimum 15m protection buffer around Local Wildlife Sites and Biodiversity Notification Sites within which complementary habitat creation should be provided.**
- E. The Policies Map shows those parts of the designated Network that are known or likely to have biodiversity value either as habitat areas; as hedgerows or lines of trees; or as streams and rivers. When calculating Biodiversity Net Gain requirements using DEFRA's latest metric, development proposals located within or adjoining that part of the Network should anticipate achieving at least a medium distinctiveness multiplier score.**
- F. Biodiversity should be provided on-site wherever possible. Off-site alternatives will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that, after following the mitigation hierarchy, all reasonable opportunities to achieve measurable net gains on-site have been exhausted or where greater gains can be delivered off-site through maximising local place making and nature improvement opportunities.**

1. The policy refines adopted VALP Policy I1 on Green Infrastructure by identifying the Green Infrastructure Network of Buckingham. Green infrastructure can be broadly defined as a network of high quality natural and semi-natural areas with other environmental features, which is designed and managed to deliver a wide range of ecosystem services and protect biodiversity in both rural and urban settings. This includes parks, public open spaces, allotments, wildlife corridors,

- watercourses, play areas, playing fields as well as informal open land and associated features such as trees, hedgerows, ponds, green roofs and green walls. It also includes Railway Walk which forms part of the Buckinghamshire Greenway. The Policies Map shows the full extent of the Network, which allows applications to determine if their proposals should take this policy into account. These assets are highly valued by local residents consistently evidenced during consultation on the project.
2. The policy requires that all development proposals that lie within the network, or that adjoin it, should consider how they may improve it, or at the very least do not undermine its integrity of connecting spaces and habitats. This may mean that development layouts are designed to contribute to the network's effectiveness.
  3. Clauses D and E respond to the biodiversity net gain (BNG) provisions of the Environment Act 2021, which became a statutory part of plan making and development management in February 2024 and April 2024 for small sites. The BNG Metric will provide the means for applicants to calculate the baseline biodiversity value of the application site in determining the net gain requirement of their proposals. The Policies Map makes a distinction between those parts of the Network that have, or are likely to have, existing biodiversity value, based on published mapped data and observation, and those that do not. Green infrastructure is multi-functional but some features – for example amenity and formal recreational land – may have less biodiversity value than the rest of the Network or will be suited to improving that value by the nature of their use. The areas identified as 'amenity open space' consist of open spaces with recreational or social value.
  4. Clause D relates to those parts of the Network of biodiversity value. Given it includes all defined Priority Habitats and semi-natural habitats, native hedgerows and trees and natural water bodies, the clause anticipates that the distinctiveness multiplier score of the BNG Metric (from very low to very high) will be at least medium.
  5. Finally, the policy sets out how the loss of biodiversity value will be addressed through a sequential approach. The new biodiversity net gain requirement of at least 10% (as set out by the Environment Act 2021) should be delivered either onsite or within or adjoining the Network so that the benefits of development are accrued as close as possible. However, it is accepted that the Network in the neighbourhood area may not be suited to delivering every type of required off-site gain. When choosing off-site gain locations, consideration should be given to the emerging Buckinghamshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy and Clause E which allows for the gain to be delivered in adjoining neighbourhood areas to Buckingham or, as a final resort, on land elsewhere further afield with preference remaining to land which lies in closest proximity to the neighbourhood area, in such cases.
  6. For proposals seeking to deliver biodiversity net gain within the neighbourhood area, as per Clauses F in the policy, the Design Code indicates several areas which are suited in principle for achieving these improvements.

Fig. 15. Green Infrastructure Map



## Buckingham Neighbourhood Plan 2024 - 2040 Green Infrastructure Map

-  Neighbourhood Plan Area
- Green Infrastructure Network**
-  Existing Green Infrastructure with biodiversity value
-  Existing Blue Infrastructure with biodiversity value
-  Amenity Open Space
-  Inner Green Ring (completed)
-  Outer Green Ring (completed)
-  Outer Green Ring (yet to be completed)
-  Existing Local Green Spaces
  - M. Overn Avenue greenspace
  - N. Land behind Castle House
  - O. Land behind Verney Close
  - P. Mount Pleasant (Embleton) playing field
  - Q. Stratford Fields
  - R. March Edge
  - S. Riverside Walk
-  New Local Green Spaces
  - A. Land behind Watlow Gardens
  - B. Holloway Spinney
  - C. Maids Moreton Avenue
  - D. Bridge Street Skate Park and adjacent play area
  - E. Railway & Scenic Walks
  - F. St Rumbold's field (site of St Rumbold's Well)
  - G. Chandos Park
  - H. Bourton Park
  - I. Recreational strip of land behind Bobbins Way on Lace Hill
  - J. Verney Park
  - K. Heartlands Park
  - L. Land south of Page Hill Avenue

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## **POLICY ENV3 URBAN GREENING**

**A. Proposals for major development on brownfield sites within the settlement boundary should contribute to the greening of Buckingham by including urban greening measures in the design of the buildings, hard surfacing, and landscape schemes. Where it is commercially viable to do so housing proposals or mixed-use proposals that are housing-led should meet or exceed a Buckingham Urban Greening Factor of 0.4. All other major commercial development or buildings in other uses should meet or exceed a Buckingham Urban Greening Factor of 0.3.**

1. This policy is inspired by the London Plan principle of an Urban Greening Factor (UGF) to encourage more and better urban greening as the prime means of increasing climate resilience. Buckingham is an urban area and therefore with the same need and potential for this approach to help the town adapt to climate change.
2. The model assists in determining the appropriate provision of urban greening for new developments and is explained in detail in Appendix E. Urban greening should be a fundamental and integral element of site and building design in the future incorporating measures such as high-quality landscaping (including trees), green roofs, green walls and nature-based sustainable drainage.
3. The policy sets targets for new residential (a factor of 0.4) and commercial (0.3) uses and only applies to major applications on brownfield sites within the settlement boundary. In this respect it is acknowledged that the greenfield sites allocated within this plan are required to set out comprehensive green infrastructure strategies and

proposals integrated within and through the new developments. The expectations of the Plan in relation to designing in green infrastructure on greenfield sites will therefore be secured through forthcoming green infrastructure strategies, rather than by satisfying a particular urban greening factor. With the intensification in parts of the area on brownfield sites in the coming years, there is a premium on making a step change in its climate resilience. It is therefore reasonable to adopt these UGF targets and, given land values and the positive approach taken to enabling new development, there is no reason to believe that the target will undermine the viability of new developments. In addition, developments of any scale are encouraged to consider incorporating greening measures in the design of their schemes and can use the model proposed here to guide decisions. The second part of the policy acknowledges that there may be tension between urban greening and commercial viability. In this context proposals that do not incorporate the requirements of the second part of the policy should provide evidence that it would not be commercially viable using open-book calculations.

## **POLICY ENV4 PRIVATE OUTDOOR SPACE**

**A. Residential development proposals will be supported provided they supply good quality private outdoor space, which will provide an area where people can spend quality time and enjoy their surroundings. In order to achieve a good living standard for future users of proposed development and its neighbours, it should be demonstrated that amenity has been considered and appropriate solutions have been incorporated into schemes.**

1. This policy retains the made neighbourhood plan policy provision which seeks to secure development where private external space is demonstrated which could be used for a combination of activities, e.g. the cultivation of plants and vegetables; children to play; washing to be dried and hobbies to be pursued as well as providing an attractive setting for a dwelling and contributing to the overall green space of the area. In respect of proposed family dwellings the Town Council would generally expect to see the provision of private garden space (normally at the rear), of at least 11 metres in length; plot shape may allow for alternative distribution of equivalent amount of private space as illustrated in the Buckingham Design Code.
2. Gardens should be of appropriate quality i.e. lawned and landscaped to provide a pleasant view and have regard to topography, shadowing and privacy.
3. Where there is an existing tree within a proposed plot the type, size and age of the tree should be taken into account in the garden provision and made a feature of the garden.

4. In respect of proposals relating to flats, provision can be provided in the form of a communal outdoor space and/or in providing other areas for example balconies.

## **POLICY ENV5 LOCAL GREEN SPACES**

**A. The Neighbourhood Plan designates the following Local Green Spaces, as shown on the Policies Map:**

- A. Land behind Watlow Gardens**
  - B. Holloway Spinney**
  - C. Maids Moreton Avenue**
  - D. Bridge Street Skate Park and adjacent play area**
  - E. Railway Walk & Scenic Walk**
  - F. St Rumbold's Field (site of St Rumbold's Well)**
  - G. Chandos Park**
  - H. Bourton Park**
  - I. Recreational strip of land behind Bobbins Way on Lace Hill**
  - J. Verney Park, Bernardines Way**
  - K. Heartlands Park**
  - L. Land south of Page Hill Avenue**
  - M. Overn Avenue greenspace**
  - N. Land behind Castle House**
  - O. Land behind Verney Close**
  - P. Mount Pleasant (Embleton) playing field**
  - Q. Stratford Fields**
  - R. March Edge**
  - S. Riverside Walk**
- B. Proposals for development in a Local Green Space will only be supported in very special circumstances.**

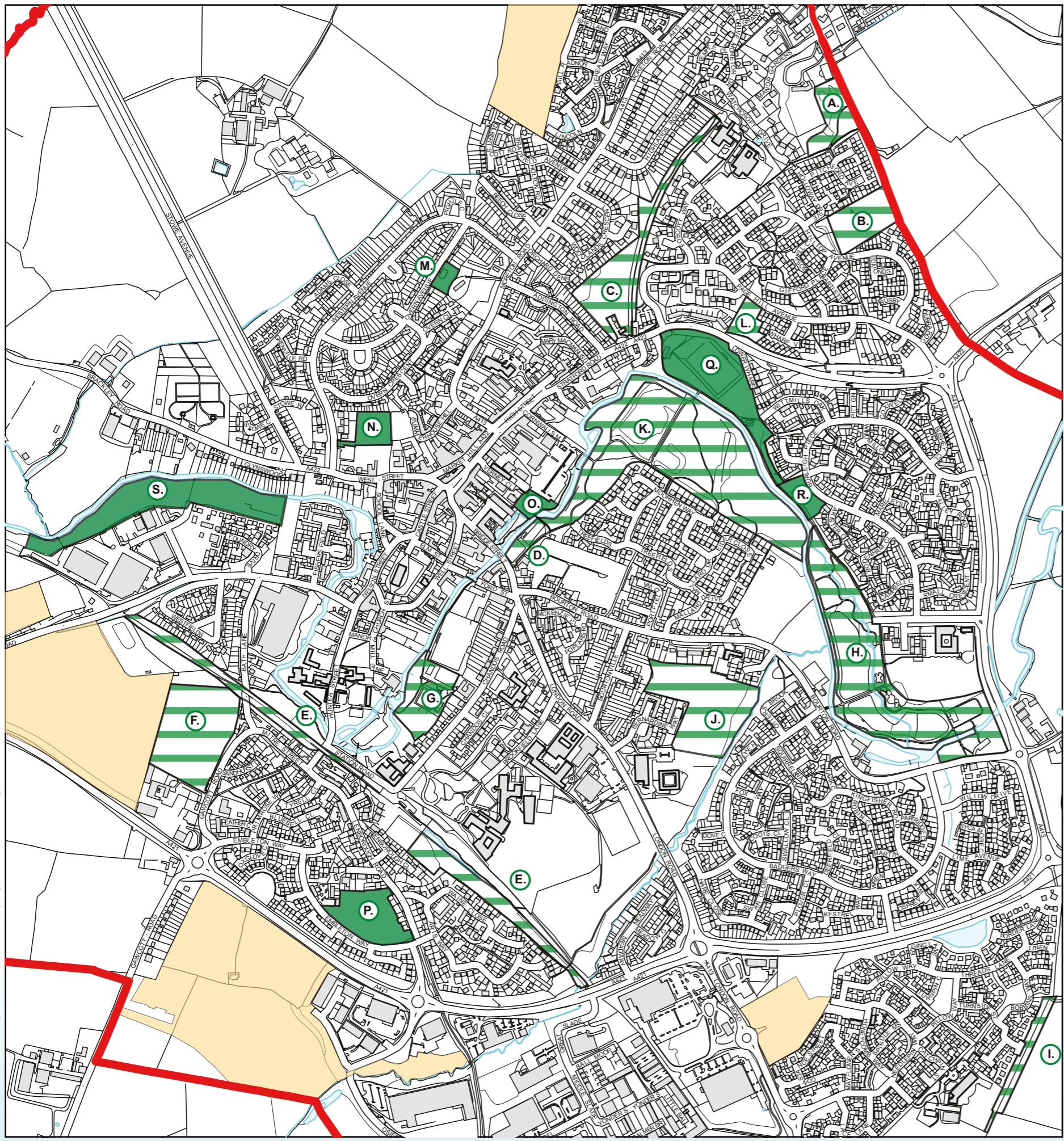
1. The policy retains the local green space designations of the made neighbourhood plan and designates a series of additional Local Green Spaces in accordance with §105 - 107 of the NPPF and VALP Policy NE6, as demonstrated in Appendix F. A designation has the policy effect of the equivalence of the Green Belt in terms of the definition of 'inappropriate development' consistent with §107 and 152 of the NPPF and of the 'very special circumstances' tests in the NPPF when determining planning applications located within a designated Local Green Space.
2. A review of all open land within the neighbourhood area has been completed, informed by the qualifying criteria in the NPPF. The land is considered to meet those criteria and is therefore worthy of designation as illustrated and justified in the Local Green Space report in the evidence base. In the Town Council's judgement, each designation is capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period having regard to NPPF §105.







*Fig. 16. Part of the existing circular walk, past St Peter and St Paul's Church.*

Fig. 17. Illustration, Policy ENV5, Local Green Spaces

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-  Neighbourhood Area Boundary
-  Committed, completed or partially completed sites
-  ENV5: Existing Local Green Spaces
  - M. Overn Avenue greenspace
  - N. Land behind Castle House
  - O. Land behind Verney Close
  - P. Mount Pleasant (Embleton) playing field
  - Q. Stratford Fields
  - R. March Edge
  - S. Riverside Walk
-  ENV5: New Local Green Spaces
  - A. Land behind Watlow Gardens
  - B. Holloway Spinney
  - C. Maids Moreton Avenue
  - D. Bridge Street Skate Park and adjacent play area
  - E. Railway Walk & Scenic Walk
  - F. St Rumbold's Field (site of St Rumbold's Well)
  - G. Chandos Park
  - H. Bourton Park
  - I. Recreational strip of land behind Bobbins Way on Lace Hill
  - J. Verney Park, Bernardines Way
  - K. Heartlands Park
  - L. Land south of Page Hill Avenue

## CLH Policies CULTURE, LEISURE & HEALTH

Fig. 18. Town centre live music event



### **POLICY CLH1 ACTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL**

- A. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies the existing Sustainable Travel Network and opportunities for improvements, as shown on the Sustainable Travel Map, for the purpose of prioritising active travel and encouraging the use of public transport.**
- B. Development proposals on land that lies within or adjacent to the Network should avoid harm and should sustain and where practicable enhance the connectivity of the Network by virtue of their layout, means of access and landscape treatment.**
1. The Policies Map shows the full extent of the Network, which allows applicants to determine if their proposals should take this policy into account. Where proposals include provision for landscaping, new means of access or new layouts, there may be an opportunity to relate the land better to

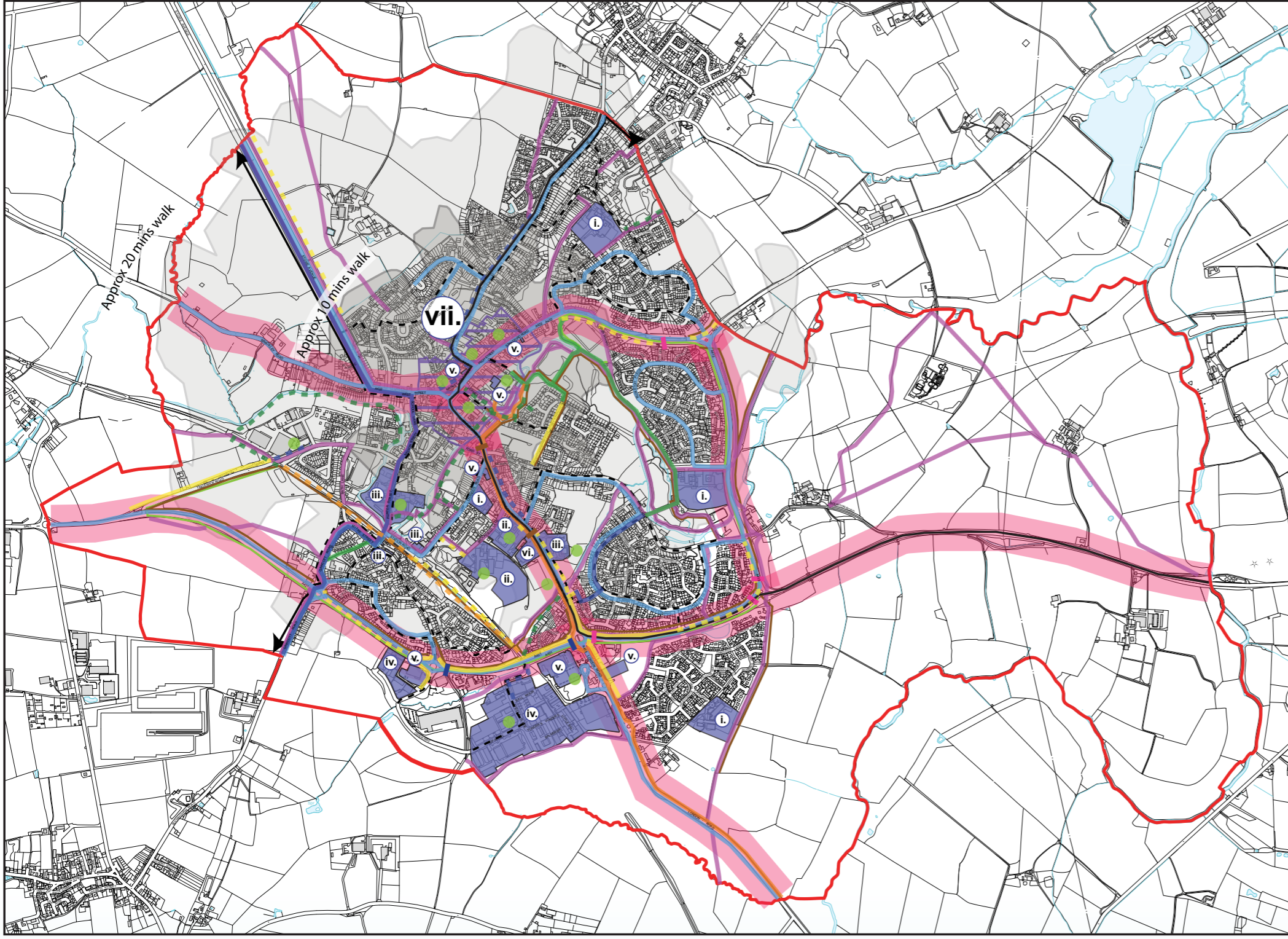
the Network and/or improve the attractiveness of rural routes. At the very least, the policy requires that proposals that will undermine the existing value of the Network will be refused permission.

2. Opportunities for improvement of existing walking and cycling routes as well as creation of new routes were identified in the 2017 Buckingham Transport Strategy and reviewed as part of the Buckingham Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan Lite. These have been identified on the Policies Map to highlight opportunities for new development to enhance the Network, in line with VALP Policy T7. Active travel refers to modes of travel that involve a level of activity, and include equestrian travel and bridleways.
3. Applicants should also consider Local Transport Advice Note 1/20.



Fig. 19. Buckingham Old Gaol Museum

Fig. 20. Active and sustainable travel map



**Buckingham Neighbourhood Plan 2024 - 2040  
Active and Sustainable Travel Map**

	Neighbourhood Area Boundary		Quiet roads
<b>Walking</b>			Local trips/leisure
	Existing Rights of Way		Local trips
	Leisure route (pedestrian priority, cycling permitted)		Commuters
	Existing toucan crossings		Longer distance routes
	Existing pelican crossing		Buckinghamshire Greenway Project
<b>Cycling</b>		<b>Key Locations</b>	
	A413 Travel Scheme & S106 TC extension		Key Locations
	On-road cycle route (National Cycle Network Route 50, also part of Bernwood Forest Route)	i.	Primary Schools
	Off-road cycle route	ii.	Secondary Schools
	Cycle Parking Facilities	iii.	University Sites
<b>Public Transport</b>		iv.	Industrial Estate
	Bus Routes	v.	Supermarkets
<b>Buckingham Transport Strategy Proposed Improvements</b>		vi.	The Swan Pool
	Leisure route		Key Locations
	Off-road cycle route	vii.	The Town Centre
	On-road cycle route		Heavy traffic routes
	Toucan crossings		

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## **POLICY CLH2 DEVELOPMENT OF THE CANAL AREA**

- A. The Neighbourhood Plan allocates 11.6 ha of land at Bourton Meadow, with a developable area of approximately 3.73 ha, as shown on the Policies Map, for a mixed-use development scheme comprising:**
- i. A new small scale visitor interpretation centre for a mix of local community uses (Class F1/F2) and associated parking; and**
  - ii. An enabling residential scheme of approximately 90 homes.**
- B. Development proposals should be underpinned by:**
- i. an illustrative masterplan that defines the land uses and sets out the key development principles for access, layout, and design;**
  - ii. a delivery plan setting out how the visitor centre and associated parking will be secured and delivered, with the requirement that a planning obligation is agreed to require the scheme to be delivered and available for operation before the final occupation of the residential scheme at the latest; and**
  - iii. details about the way in which the proposal responds positively to the development principles in Part C to J of this policy.**
- C. The visitor centre scheme should be entirely within the developable area and consist of a single building which should be located adjoining to the associated parking and designed in a way that will protect the amenities of nearby residential properties.**

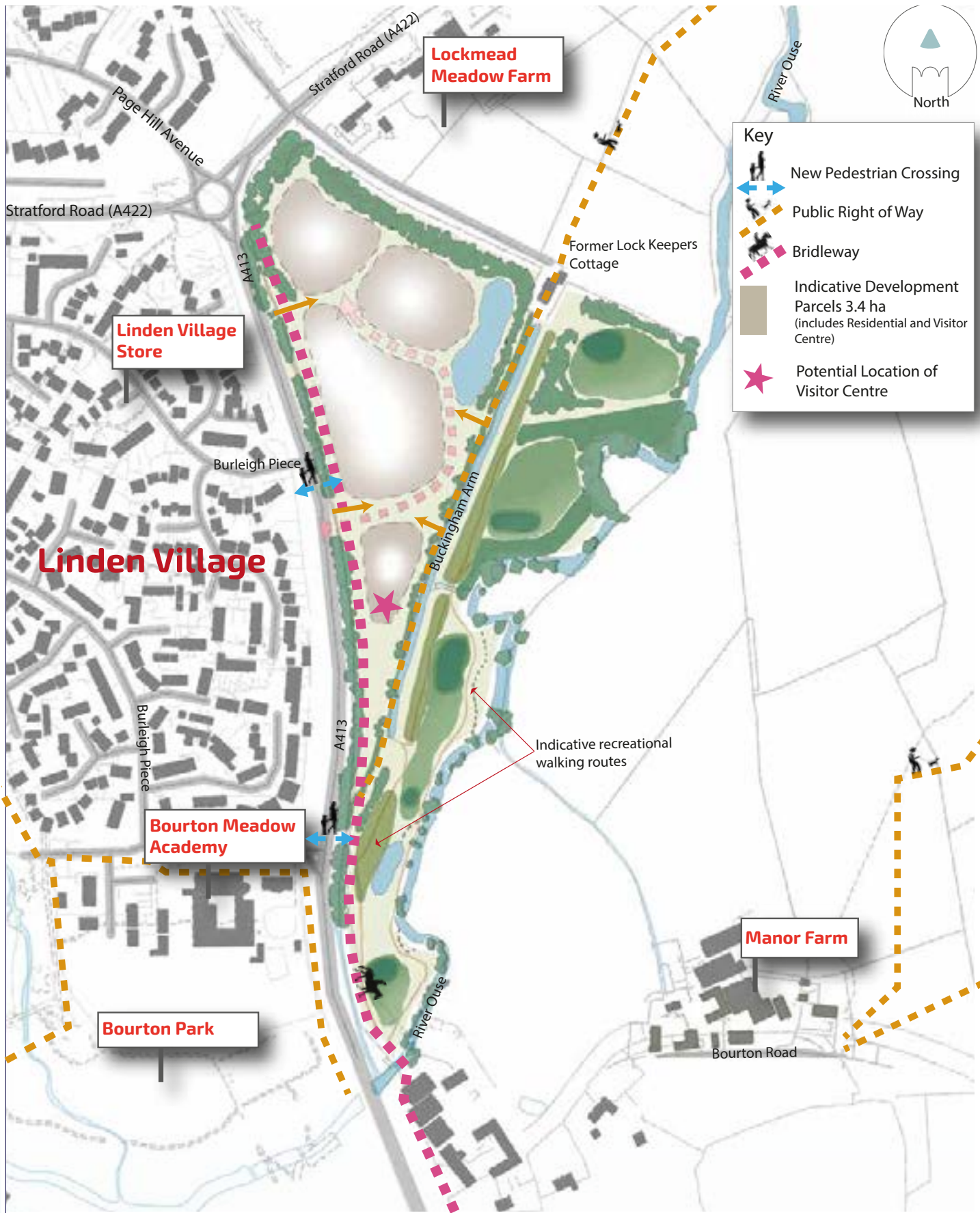
- D. The enabling residential scheme should be located entirely within the developable area and shall comprise a tenure mix of 35% affordable housing and 65% open market housing and shall be located in such a way that relates well to the visitor centre scheme to aid natural surveillance.**
- E. The design strategy should have regard to all the relevant provisions of Buckinghamshire and Buckingham Design Guidance and Codes and reassert the history of the canal within the town. The strategy should sustain and enhance the significance of the setting of the Buckingham Arm of the Grand Union Canal as a non-designated heritage asset.**
- F. The development of the site should be supported by a transport strategy which makes provision for a new single access point and a combined access/crossing onto the A413 at the northern junction of Burleigh Piece.**
- G. The layout of the site should create new routes across the A413 to improve public access to Bourton Meadow and enhance connectivity with the wider countryside beyond. The layout should also accommodate new active travel routes within the site and improving the accessibility of the towpath along the Buckingham Arm section of the Grand Union Canal. These routes shall be well-signposted with information boards; nature hides and observation areas.**
- H. The layout and landscaping scheme should have particular regard to the character of the Local Landscape Area, as set out in the report “Defining the special qualities of local landscape designations in Aylesbury Vale District” (Final Report,**

2016) and the Landscape Character Assessment (2008), or any subsequent versions, and shall acknowledge views across the site from the Ouse Valley Way. The scheme should also demonstrate how it has responded to the location of the site as a transitional edge-of-town and rural countryside setting.

- I. **The green infrastructure strategy should make provision for onsite public open space and biodiversity net gain of at least 10% (as measured by the most up to date metric) as part of its proposals to integrate with the wider network of green infrastructure. The strategy should:**
  - i. **minimise the loss of existing mature trees and hedgerows within the site boundaries;**
  - ii. **use species of known benefit to UK wildlife in any soft landscaping proposals;**
  - iii. **include a minimum 10 metre buffer area along the River Great Ouse which should be designed to be kept free from human disturbance comprising semi-improved grassland/other neutral grassland with scattered scrub and occasional individual trees;**
  - iv. **introduce permanent or ephemeral waterbodies (such as ponds, scrapes, ditches and rain gardens) on site to create new habitats as part of a natural flood management strategy; and**
  - v. **demonstrate how it supports habitat creation along the Buckingham Arm of the Grand Union Canal and River Great Ouse.**

**J. The flood and drainage strategy should direct more vulnerable development away from areas subject to flood risk and demonstrate that full consideration has been given to an infiltration drainage system and maintaining water levels of the Buckingham Arm of the Grand Union Canal as part of an overall SuDS strategy that incorporates natural flood management measures.**

1. The made neighbourhood plan recognised that this area of land had potential to enhance the green and blue infrastructure and the historic significance of the former and current Buckingham Arm of the Grand Union Canal, and its potential as a tourist attraction, and it supported new development that delivered these aims. It was intended to aid the Buckingham Canal Society in redeveloping the Buckingham Arm of the Grand Union Canal which forms part of a wider strategy to re-open the canal as a working water way with links through to Cosgrove. The policy now allocates the site for specific purposes building on the original framework set out by the made neighbourhood plan.
2. The allocation extends to 11.6 ha of land at Bourton Meadows on the eastern edge of Buckingham and includes a new visitor centre scheme and associated parking, and green and blue infrastructure enhancements, together with a housing scheme that will enable the delivery of these benefits. An illustrative proposal for the site is shown in Figure 17. Policy CLH2 sets out the context within which the site should be developed. Key elements include the need for development proposals to relate to an agreed masterplan (Part B) and to satisfy a series of development principles (Parts C to J)
3. The land is in control of a single developer and can be delivered within the next five



**Key**

- New Pedestrian Crossing
- Public Right of Way
- Bridleway
- Indicative Development Parcels 3.4 ha (includes Residential and Visitor Centre)
- Potential Location of Visitor Centre

Total Site Area = 11.4 hectares 0m 20 40 100m

Project title	Bourton Meadow	Drawing title:	Illustrative Concept Plan	Scale:	1:2000 @ A1	
Client:	Manor Oak Homes	Drawing reference:	02-22002 Rev D	Date:	20.09.2024	
				Checked:	MM	

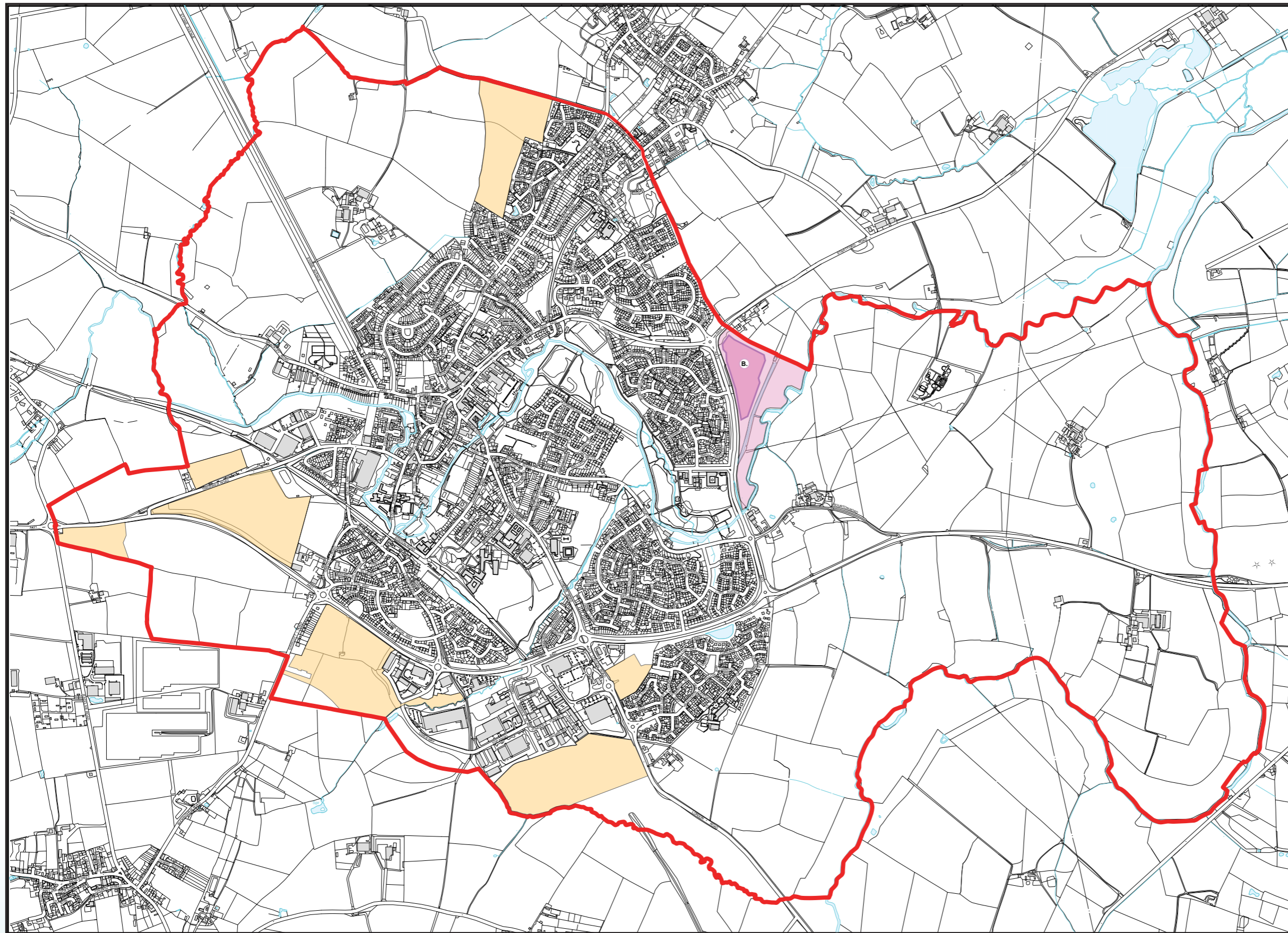
Fig 21. Outline site concept: Development of the Canal Area

year plan period with development expected to be completed by the end of 2029. The developer is working with the Buckingham Canal Society and other local stakeholders to develop the scheme and has confirmed that a viable scheme can be delivered as per policy requirements. The Buckingham Canal Society is a well-established organisation affiliated to the Inland Waterways Association and one of the main objectives is to promote the education of the public in the history and use of the canals and waterways and Buckingham Canal in particular. The inclusion of a small visitor centre to provide information and a base for educational activities for the Canal Society contributes to meeting this objective and the specific function and design of the building is being agreed with the Canal Society and through public consultation. The use of the building is likely to incorporate a mix of Class F1 (Learning and non-residential institutions) and Class F2 (Local Community Uses) uses. Whilst the building may include a café or small plant nursery, these would be ancillary to the main uses of the building and not a separate standalone facility. A small car park is also planned to serve the facility. The Buckingham Canal Society, and other local stakeholders, will seek to agree these matters with the developer as a priority on the making of the Plan.

4. The housing scheme will enable the land to be made available from its private owner to achieve the visitor centre scheme, as well as a range of green and blue infrastructure improvements, including new active travel and recreational movement routes. The new homes will also contribute to the housing supply in Buckingham over an extended plan period.
5. The policy defines the developable area of the site and this is located within Flood

Zone 1 and at a low risk of flooding from other sources. The north-eastern part of the site is located within Flood Zone 3 and is subject to a high surface water flood risk. This land is excluded from the developable area. Amenity open space, nature conservation and biodiversity proposals are water-compatible development and are planned to be located within this north-eastern part of the site. For all these reasons, it has not been necessary to undertake a sequential test in line with national policy and guidance. Given these flooding constraints on the site, the policy also requires the flood and drainage strategy for the site consider an infiltration drainage system. If an infiltration technique is not viable, a detention basin will be required to slow the rate of run off into the River Great Ouse to the south of the site. A detention basin is water-compatible development and can therefore be located within Flood Zones 1 and 2 without the need to undertake a sequential test in line with national policy and guidance. The strategy will also need to consider maintaining water levels of the Buckingham Arm of the Grand Union Canal. In this respect, it is noted that a top-up pump solution which uses a solar powered pump to draw water from the river water to maintain canal water levels is already operational. The applicant will also need to comply with VALP policy I4.

6. This neighbourhood plan seeks to identify the Buckingham Arm of the Grand Union Canal as a non-designated heritage asset as part of the historic infrastructure of the town. The policy therefore also requires that the design strategy should sustain and enhance the significance of the setting of this non-designated heritage asset alongside meeting the provisions of existing design guidance and the Buckingham Design Code which is expected to carry the full weight of the development plan following the making of this Plan.
7. A new access point into the site is likely to



- Neighbourhood Area Boundary
- Committed, completed or partially completed sites
- CLH2: Development of the Canal Area  
B. Canal Area (and developable area)

Fig 22. Outline site boundary: Development of the Canal Area

be required from the A413. Anticipated traffic volumes into the site at the detailed testing and planning application stage will determine the nature and scale of the access point. The Town Council's preferred option would be for combined access/crossing at the northern junction with Burleigh Piece in the form of a traffic signal controlled new single access point onto the A413. The policy requires that the consideration of options is demonstrated and that the final option is agreed to the satisfaction of the Highways Authority.

8. The policy also makes provision for the development to provide new active travel routes across the A413. The Town Council's preference is for this to include the provision of a Toucan crossing at the preferred traffic signal-controlled junction with Burleigh Piece (northern junction) and a second Toucan crossing to the south of the development to serve the existing Ouse Valley Way. There has been a long-standing aspiration to improve the accessibility of the towpath along the Buckingham Arm section of the Grand Union Canal, and new active travel routes within the site are also important. Negotiations have included the provision of information boards, nature hides and observation areas. These (active travel strategy) provisions have been made to improve public access to Bourton Meadow and to enhance connectivity with the wider countryside beyond.
9. The site lies at the edge of the town where it meets the countryside in a location that is considered to have important landscape characteristics. As such the site falls within a local designation, a Local Landscape Area. The policy therefore requires the layout and landscaping scheme to respond to this.
10. The neighbourhood plan is supported by its own evidence base and benefits from the insights of a desk-based ecological

assessment prepared by Future Nature WTC, which is published alongside this plan. It recognises that the River Great Ouse, which passes through the west of the site, is a designated a Biological Notification Site due to its raised ecological interest and that the site lends itself to the creation of wetland habitats with a focus on the species they may support. That would also serve as a natural flood management strategy. The policy therefore requires the consideration of specific measures as part of the wider green infrastructure strategy which also reflects wider requirements imposed by national policies.

11. The site also lies within a Mineral Safeguarding Area for limestone and clay, silt, sand and gravel. Policy 1 of the adopted Buckinghamshire Minerals and Waste Plan 2016 – 2036 requires schemes located within such areas, that are not development exempt from its requirements, to demonstrate that prior extraction is possible; the development is of a form or nature that would not hinder future extraction; there is an over-riding need for the development; or that the resource is not viable. The proposal does not meet exemption criteria and the policy therefore seeks to ensure that this test is undertaken and demonstrated as part of any planning application submitted.
12. The policy requires that any planning application that wishes to benefit from its support must be comprehensive in covering all of its elements and must set out precisely how and when the visitor centre scheme will be delivered. This reflects the fact that the housing scheme will enable its timely delivery, leaving no prospect that it will be built out and occupied before it is secured and able to operate. This will be done through a planning obligation, which will also secure other elements of the policy, for example its provision of affordable housing. The land interest has confirmed that this approach is reasonable and acceptable and that the project is small

enough to be completed in one phase comprising all its elements. In which case, it is not considered neither necessary nor reasonable for the policy to require the delivery of the visitor centre scheme any earlier than before the housing scheme is completed and almost completely occupied. Technical evidence for the site is also attached at Appendix G.

## **POLICY CLH3 HEALTH FACILITIES**

**A. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies health care sites in Buckingham, as shown in the Policies Map, for the purpose of protecting healthcare provision from unnecessary loss.**

**B. As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, residential development proposals will only be supported where they provide or improve the delivery of essential health and/or wellbeing facilities and services required to serve the scale of the development proposed. Proposals to meet increasing demand by expanding the Lace Hill health care facilities, the delivery of a new facility or the delivery of an alternative health care practice or practices will be supported.**

**C. Proposals for the redevelopment of existing established healthcare facilities at North End and Verney Close, as shown on the Policies Map, will be supported provided health care facilities at Lace Hill, or other suitable alternative provision to serve the local community within Buckingham, are operational. Should the Lace Hill relocation project not be implemented, development proposals that would result in the loss of the existing established health care facilities will not be supported.**

1. In granting permission for residential development in the town, the Local Authority agreed for healthcare provision to be relocated from the existing GP surgery sites in Verney Close and North End, to a site on the Lace Hill development to the southeast of the town. The Neighbourhood Plan cannot at this stage change this decision. Construction of the new healthcare provision at Lace Hill began in

2025. The implementation of this relocation project is currently being pursued but relies on a number of factors to fall into place, including funding streams being approved by NHS England. Whilst the Town Council will continue to lobby relevant stakeholders for solutions to maintain accessibility to healthcare provision for the whole town and the GP Practice itself is currently pursuing several options, enabling the redevelopment of the existing surgeries' sites are required to contribute to the implementation of the scheme at Lace Hill, or alternative provision. The policy therefore seeks to update the current situation surrounding healthcare provision in Buckingham.

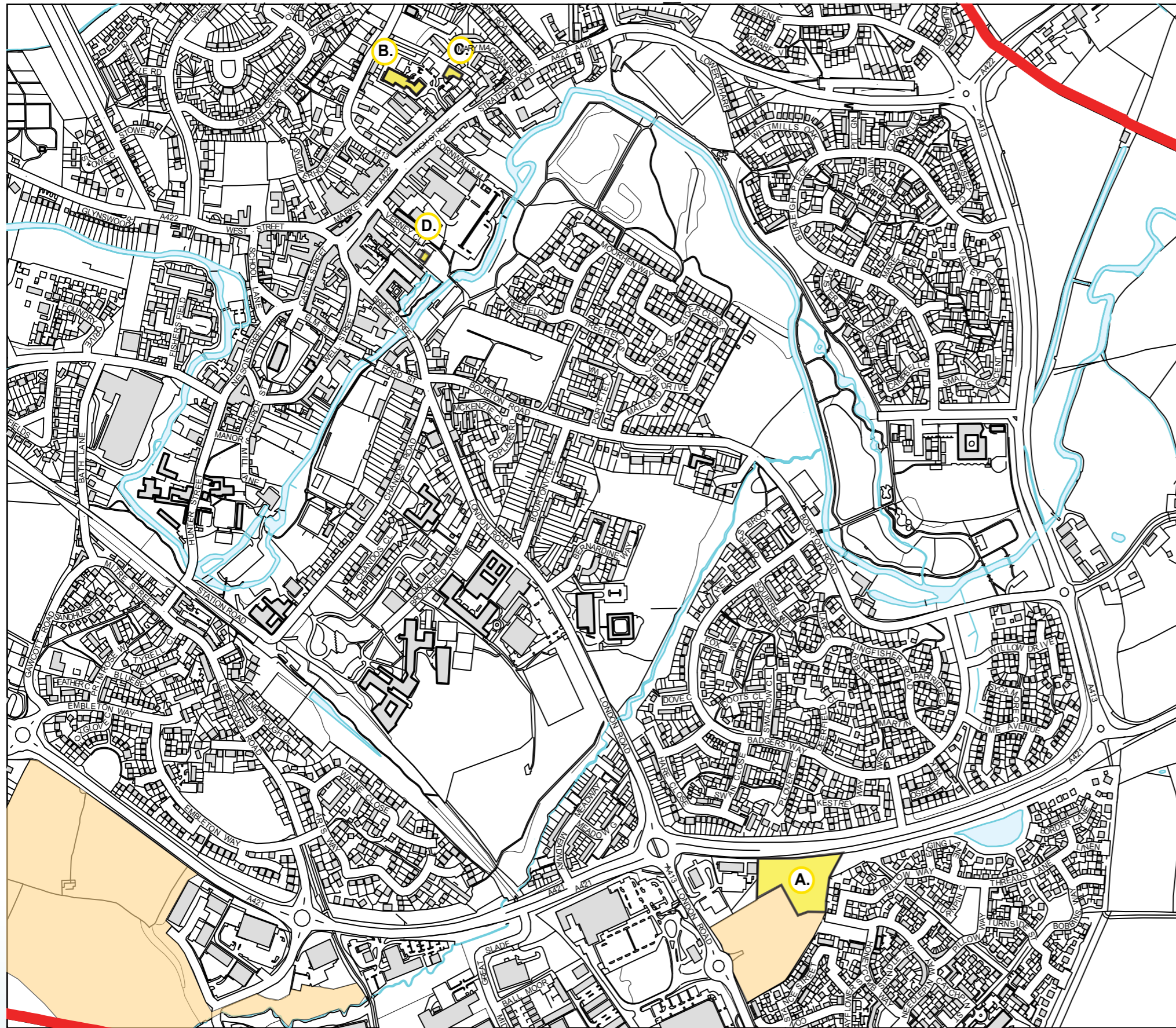
2. Clause A identifies healthcare sites in the town during the plan period which need to be protected from unnecessary loss. Following a change in the way in which the planning system classifies services and facilities, once built, the healthcare facilities at Lace Hill will fall within use Class E subcategory e). The hospital falls within a different use class where restrictions on change of use remain in place and do not require intervention. Permitted development rights allow for the change of use of a Class E premises to a residential use without the need to apply for planning permission. The submission of an application titled 'prior approval' is still however required to be made to Buckinghamshire Council. Buckinghamshire Council is required to consider the impact of the loss of a health centre in determining a 'prior approval' application amongst other matters. Although this policy will not be engaged in that determination (as it is not on the list of considerations in a 'prior approval' application), the policy demonstrated that these healthcare provision services play an important role in local provision to the community of the town and the wider rural hinterland and could therefore be a




legitimate reason for refusing 'prior approval' for proposals that will harm this provision.

3. To accommodate any further growth that the town may undergo in the future, the Lace Hill site is likely to be required to expand its provision. The site is large enough, but the building may need to be expanded. Clause B of the policy therefore supports this and any other interventions elsewhere in the town, such as satellite surgeries, which improve access to healthcare provision for the existing and any growing communities.
4. Finally the policy enables the redevelopment of existing healthcare facilities at North End and Verney Close to help enable the delivery of the relocation project to Lace Hill. It does so however, only if facilities at Lace Hill are operational. The loss of such facilities in this location without their re-provision elsewhere will have adverse effects on healthcare provision and could again be a legitimate reason for refusing any 'prior approval' or planning application.
5. The delivery of the Lace Hill healthcare facility project has suffered a number of setbacks. Whilst the site did secure planning permission, funding could not initially be realised. The scheme therefore had to be revised to suit funding parameters delaying the completion date. In the meantime land ownership changed and whilst all relevant parties are currently working in partnership to deliver the scheme, there is a need to add additional flexibility to the site should an alternative project be pursued. Given that the plan period runs until 2040 this kind of flexibility is common for projects such as these. The policy therefore identifies the Lace Hill health care facility site as a priority site, but it is recognised that such services may be delivered elsewhere. In that case Clause A of policy CLH3 will no longer have effect and policy HP1, and other relevant policies, will apply to the proposed site at Lace Hill. The current scheme for the Lace

Hill health care facility includes consulting rooms for the Swan Practice, a dental practice with a dispensary for rural patients, and residential accommodation for young adults. The principle of this current scheme is supported by this neighbourhood plan.

Fig. 23. Current Health Facilities, more may be added over the plan period.



-  Neighbourhood Area Boundary
-  Committed, completed or partially completed sites
-  CLH3: Health Facilities
  - A. Lace Hill (Currently Proposed)
  - B. The Hospital (Existing)
  - C. North End (Existing)
  - D. Verney Close (Existing)

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**POLICY CLH4 ART, CULTURAL, SPORT AND RECREATION FACILITIES**

- A. The Neighbourhood Plan supports the provision of a new community centre/hall, or the refurbishment of an existing building, to deliver a theatre space within the town. Spaces for other community activities will also be supported.**
- B. Where proposals are made to improve and create new sports and recreational facilities to serve the town, significant weight will be given to their community and health and well-being value.**
- C. Development proposals coming forward for sports and recreational facilities should demonstrate that their layouts do not prevent the future expansion of the facilities provided.**

1. Buckingham has a strong tradition of celebrating the arts, sports & culture in the town, including through Buckingham Town Council Awards, grants and the Fringe Festival. Buckingham has a variety of arts, sports and cultural facilities available to the community, largely on a not-for-profit basis and is particularly well served for outdoor sports facilities with over 20 different outdoors sports facilities available at a mix of public and private venues.

2. List of Arts and Culture Facilities:

*A number of privately owned arts and culture businesses or artists also operate in Buckingham, including: University of Buckingham Book Shop, The Dragon Gallery, local artists, musicians and graphic designers.*

Facility	Details/uses	Run by
Old Gaol Museum	Two storey museum in the historic old gaol house, built in 1755. Museum tours, art displays, community events	Old Gaol Museum Trust (not-for-profit)
Radcliffe Centre	Racked seating Max. attendees 116. Concerts, including classical and folk music	University of Buckingham
Vinson Centre	Racked seating Max. seating 156. Special lectures, community cinema	University of Buckingham
Community Centre	Large community hall and small community hall with kitchen facilities. Annual pantomime, community dances, art exhibitions	Buckingham Community Centre Committee (not-for-profit)
Adult Learning	2x permanent classrooms, including ceramics studio with kiln Wide variety of arts & culture classes	Buckinghamshire Council (not-for-profit)
Library	Large community library, 2x smaller rooms for hire	Buckinghamshire Council (not-for-profit)

3. List of sports Facilities:

Facility	Details	Run by
Rugby Club	Clubhouse, changing rooms, 3 pitches (2 pitches to be confirmed at Moreton Road)	Buckingham Rugby Club (not-for-profit)
Football Club	Clubhouse, changing rooms, 2x pitches (Lace Hill) 1x pitch (Buckingham Athletic)	Buckingham Football Club (not-for-profit)
Cricket Club	Clubhouse, changing rooms, 1x pitch	Buckingham Cricket Club (not-for-profit)
Tennis Club	Clubhouse, 3x courts	Buckingham Lawn Tennis Club (not-for-profit)
Bowls Club	3 Clubs, separate venues  2x Outdoor Bowls facilities  1x Indoor Bowls facilities  All with Clubhouse	Chandos Park Bowls Club (not-for-profit)  West End Bowls Club (not-for-profit)  Slade Indoor Recreation Club (not-for-profit)

Facility	Details	Run by
Lace Hill Sports & Community Centre	Sports hall, community room, 2x sports pitches	Buckingham Town Council
Swan Pool & Leisure Centre	25m pool, learner pool, gym, soft play, 1 x sports pitch	Buckinghamshire Council
Skate Park	1x Skate Park	Buckinghamshire Council (not-for-profit)
BMX Track	To be built – Moreton Road.	To be confirmed

*A number of privately owned sports businesses also operate in Buckingham, including: Sports4All who provide sports tuition to schools and holiday clubs, 5 gyms and 3 yoga and/or well-being studios.*

The University of Buckingham, The Buckingham School and The Royal Latin School all have sports facilities available for the private use of their students and hire. Facilities vary across the sites but include football/rugby pitches, netball/basketball courts, tennis and badminton courts. Primary school facilities are more varied but all include playing fields and/or hardstanding suitable for use for a variety of sports at a beginner level.

4. In May 2024 the Town Council conducted a survey of local arts, sports and culture traders, businesses' and not-for-profit organisations. A varying picture of physical venue needs was presented. No single facility was identified as having a strong community need for a majority of respondents. However, some did identify that performance space would be useful. This matched the results of the Town Centre user study that asked for more investment in leisure and cultural facilities. In terms of sports facilities, changing rooms, additional full sized sports pitches, indoor sports centres,

and running tracks were all requested by established sports clubs, in most cases, they wanted these to be on or near their site to supplement their facilities.

5. The policy therefore supports a theatre space to be delivered within the town. Based on the survey responses the nature of the building consists of a minimum 18m x 10m hall with a fixed or demountable stage suitable for a theatre, to seat at least 200 people, would suit the use of Buckingham community groups and businesses. A demountable stage would mean that the hall could be used for other purposes when it was not required as a theatre, for example, art displays, rehearsal or workshop space and community groups. The ideal hall would also include additional rooms for use as backstage areas.
6. The policy also seeks to support local sport club aspirations for expansion. Part C of the policy requires that when sport and recreational facilities are proposed their site layout should prevent them from being 'hemmed in' by housing or business development that prevents them adding additional pitches or buildings if the club expands in the future.

## EE Policies ECONOMY AND EDUCATION

Fig. 24. Buckingham Neighbourhood Plan engagement with local sixth form students.



### POLICY EE1 BUCKINGHAM TOWN CENTRE

- A.** The Neighbourhood Plan identifies Buckingham Town Centre, as shown on the Policies Map, for the purposes of maintaining a healthy mix of uses, enhancing public spaces and the historic streetscape, and improving the journey to and around the town. Within this context, all proposals for development, including change of uses, should conserve and enhance the special architectural and historic character and appearance of the Buckingham Conservation Area and other heritage assets, and their settings.
- B.** As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals within the defined Town Centre boundary will be supported where they can demonstrate that they:
- i.** improve the sense of arrival into the Town Centre;

- ii.** achieve a positive relationship with existing green infrastructure provision in the Town Centre and incorporate new green infrastructure in accordance with Policies ENV1 Green Infrastructure and ENV2 Urban Greening of this Plan;
- iii.** retain and, where practicable, enhance active travel routes to improve movement into and around the town in a healthy and safe manner in accordance with the Policy CLH1 of this Plan;
- iv.** contribute to the attractiveness of the Town Centre through public realm and streetscape enhancements; and
- v.** contribute to the enhancement of public transport and accessibility in the town centre.

- C.** The Neighbourhood Plan identifies Primary and Secondary Shopping Frontages within the Town Centre, as shown on the Policies Map. On ground floors within Primary Shopping Frontages, development proposals for commercial, business or service (Class E) uses will be supported. On ground floors within Secondary Shopping Frontages, development proposals for commercial, business or service (Class E), Pub or drinking establishment (Sui Generis) and other leisure, tourism, cultural and community uses will be supported.
- D.** Residential uses (Class C3) on upper floors in the Town Centre boundary, will be supported, where it can be demonstrated that:
- i.** The active town centre use of a ground floor frontage is not compromised, and
  - ii.** Satisfactory residential amenities can be achieved.

**E. Development proposals that would involve the loss of ground floor floorspace to facilitate access to upper floor residential uses will be supported where this can be achieved without undermining the integrity and viability of the existing unit(s), and where the overall number of residential accesses would not detract from the vitality and viability of a shopping frontage.**

1. The Town Centre Report published in the evidence base shows that nearly three-quarters (71%) of town centre premises are now occupied by businesses within use Class E. It also encourages planning policy to investigate what options there are for maintaining the primary and secondary retail frontages including restricting permitted development as housing. The policy therefore seeks to retain these policy levers. It is recognised that some changes of use do not now require planning permission and new permitted development rights has enabled future changes of use from what are now Class E uses to residential (C3) uses. The Town Council hopes that Buckinghamshire Council will consider requesting an Article 4 Direction from the Secretary of State to protect Class E uses at Primary Shopping Frontages premises. An Article 4 Direction can remove permitted development rights in areas or from specific premises to enable changes to remain in planning control so that their effect can continue to be properly assessed. This is noted here so that the Town Council can signal its intent to the community to submit a formal request for this following the referendum of the plan.
2. In general terms, proposals for a change of use from Class E to residential use made for a premises with a Primary Shopping

Frontage will still require the submission of an application titled 'Prior Approval' to Buckinghamshire Council. Buckinghamshire Council is required to consider the impact of that change of use on the character or sustainability of the Buckingham Conservation Area amongst other matters by way of Class MA.2.(e)(ii) of the 2015 General Permitted Development Order). The Town Centre lies entirely within the Buckingham Conservation Area and so Buckinghamshire Council will need to consider this impact for each prior approval application of this kind in this location. Although the Neighbourhood Plan policy (as part of the development plan) is not engaged in that prior approval determination (by way of S38(6) of the 1990 Planning Act), together with the Buckingham Conservation Area Appraisal from 2005 the policy demonstrates that commercial, business and service uses play an important part of the distinct function and character of the Conservation Area and protecting the Primary and Secondary Shopping Frontages from such changes is important. The policy and its evidence base therefore informs decisions on prior approval applications for proposals that will harm the character or sustainability of the Conservation Area. This is noted here to draw attention to this evidence base.

3. It is now widely accepted that high streets need to diversify to become more community focussed in their use and to do so requires planning for a mix of different uses. Whilst the main focus for the established Primary Shopping Frontage is focussed on Class E uses, the wider Secondary Shopping Frontages provides an opportunity to focus on other town centre uses which not only includes retail, but also leisure, tourism, cultural and community as identified by VALP Policy D7. The policy therefore encourages other town centre uses in the Town Centre within the Secondary Shopping Frontage.

4. It is also now widely accepted that residential uses (Class C3) in Town Centres contribute to maintaining and/or enhancing its vitality and viability. The policy therefore also makes provision for Class C3 uses on upper floors ensuring that active frontages remain at ground floor level and access schemes do not harm frontages.
5. Clause B of the policy seeks to focus on those matters that the Town Centre Study highlighted as important in delivering town centre revitalisation for Buckingham.

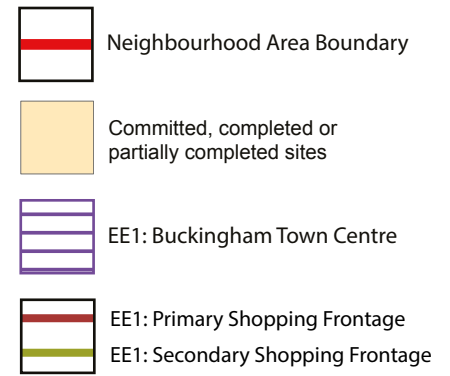
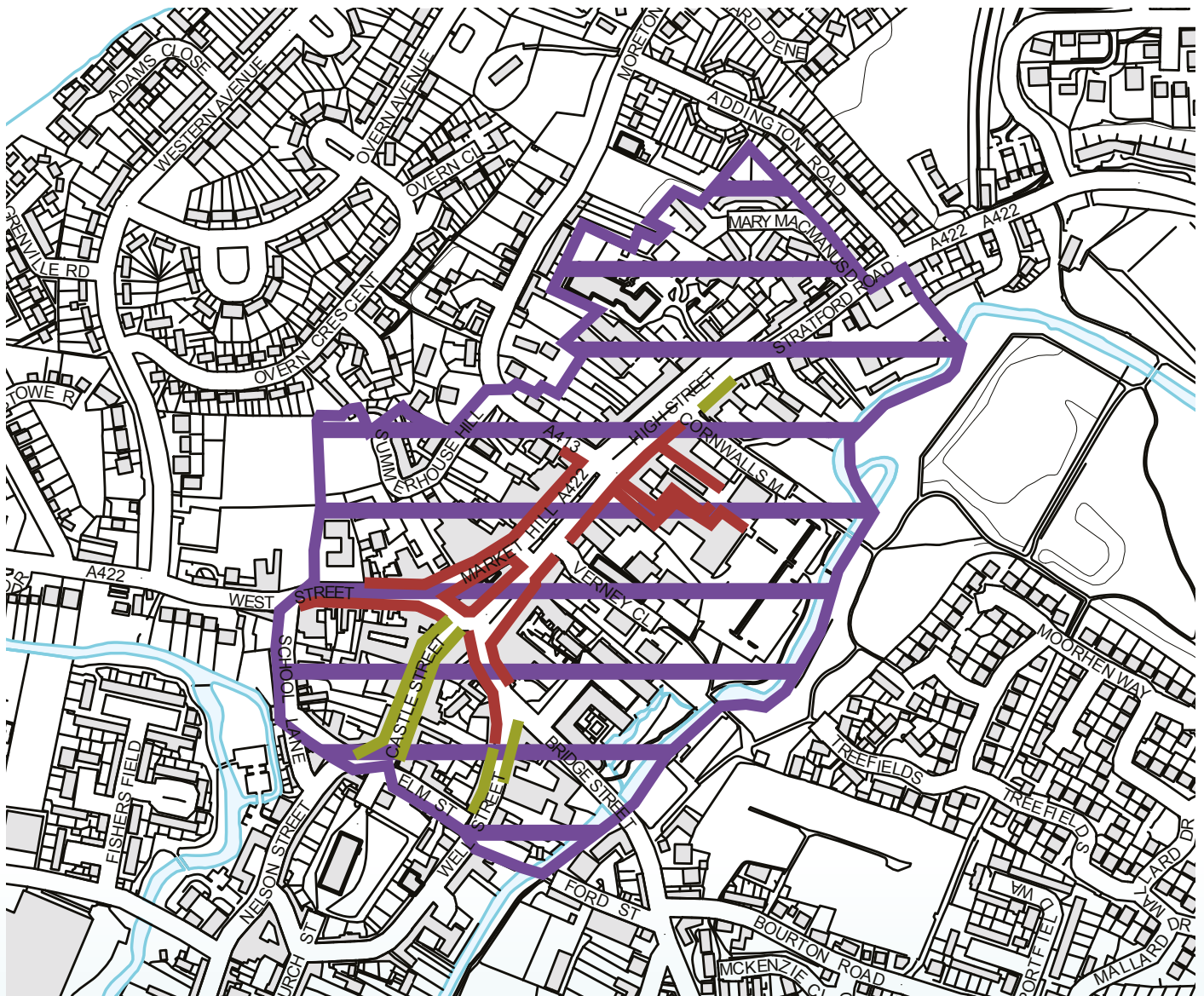


Fig. 25. Buckingham town centre and frontage



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## **POLICY EE2 EMPLOYMENT**




- A. The Plan allocates land west of London Road, as shown on the Policies Map, for 1.7 ha of new employment development as part of the approved residential-led development of the site (23/00178/AOP).**
- B. Employment development will be located on that part of the site closest to Buckingham Industrial Estate. The southern edge of the allocation will comprise a landscape buffer to protect the views between the site and the Padbury Valley. The remainder of the site will come forward as residential development in accordance with planning application 23/00178/AOP or any reserved matters applications relating to the outline planning permission.**
- C. The development of employment land must accord with the following requirements:**
- i. Appropriate vehicular access from existing sites or minor roads;**
  - ii. A pedestrian / cycle link must be provided to proposed or existing cycleways;**
  - iii. Improvements to pedestrian / cycle links into Buckingham;**
  - iv. New footpaths or cycleways on site should be overlooked but not dominated by buildings and well lit so that users feel secure;**
  - v. Highways and access arrangements that does not harm the provision of and/or enhances strategic access around the south of the town;**
  - vi. Positive building frontages and landscaping must overlook the site**

**access;**

- vii. Have a landscape buffer between the proposed employment land and any existing housing provision to ensure that new buildings are not overbearing on existing buildings.**

1. The policy reflects the recent appeal decision on the site for a mixed use residential-led development (23/00178/AOP). Given that the Tingewick Road Industrial Estate is not meeting current and projected future needs and has been allocated for residential development in Policy HP2, there remains a need to retain proposals for the development of employment land elsewhere in Buckingham. Additionally, the made Neighbourhood Plan examiner recognised that having a supply of employment land in a town like Buckingham is important to ensure that Buckingham does not become a dormitory town and that it can deliver on the VALP's ambitions for the town to become a recognised centre for investment and growth. The allocated site remains in a good location well-positioned in relation to Buckingham Industrial Park and one of the last remaining options to expand employment provision in this location. Correspondance with local businesses has demonstrated a need for bespoke premises in Buckingham, Further details of these were set out in the Consultation Statement.
2. The development of the town as an employment area is key to ensuring that Buckingham does not become a dormitory town. With large employment development taking place at Silverstone this can be an opportunity for more jobs within Buckingham. It also considers the loss of the employment land through the loss of the Tingewick Road Industrial Estate and

acknowledges the opportunities now provided for the employment use of part of the site which arise from the approved residential-led development.

-  Neighbourhood Area Boundary
-  Committed, completed or partially completed sites
-  EE2: Employment  
Q: Approved site  
23/00178/AOP

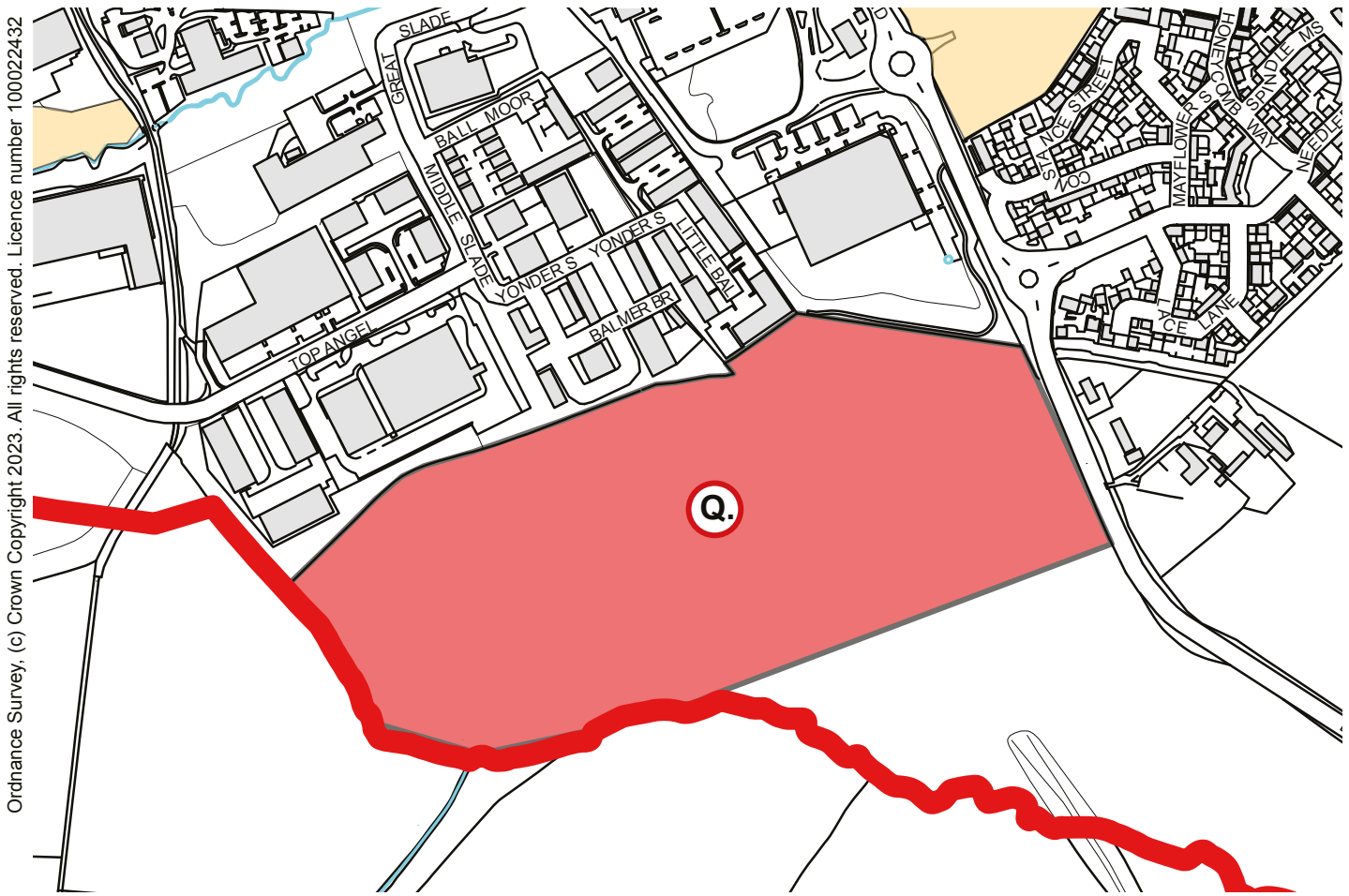


Fig. 26. Buckingham employment site Q

**POLICY EE3 UNIVERSITY OF BUCKINGHAM**

**A. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies existing University education provision, as shown on the Policies Map, for the purposes of protecting these sites for this purpose.**

**B. Development proposals for new academic buildings and the modification of existing University buildings will be supported where they otherwise comply with development plan policies.**

1. The University is an important establishment within the town and the way in which it delivers education provision may change over the Plan period. This may be through expansion or utilising existing space differently. The policy therefore seeks to safeguard existing space used for educational purposes whilst supporting proposals for new buildings or the refurbishment of existing buildings. The Town Council is aware of the effect of the expansion of the University on the Buckingham housing market. In this context, and where there is a direct relationship between the development of new academic buildings and student numbers, development proposals should provide proportionate evidence that the proposed increase in students associated with the development of new academic buildings or the refurbishment of existing academic buildings can be satisfactorily accommodated with the town.

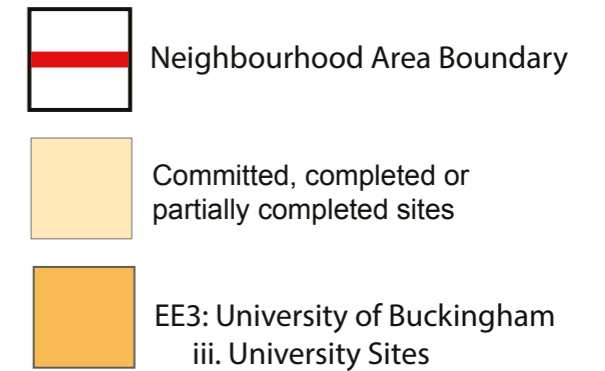
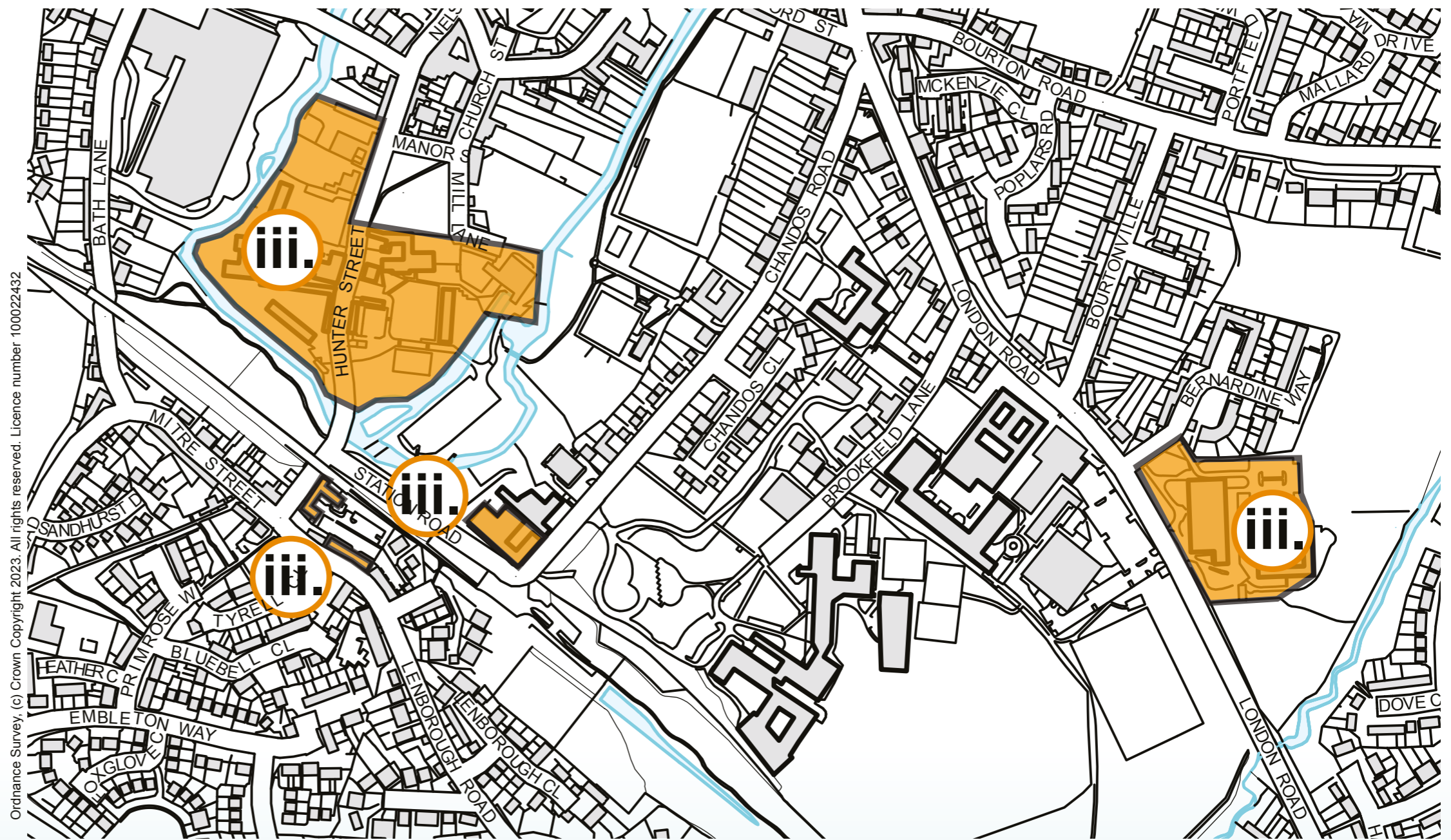


Fig. 27. University of Buckingham sites



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**POLICY EE4 PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL PROVISION**

- A. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies existing primary and secondary school provision, as shown on the Policies Map, for the purpose of protecting these sites for educational provision.**
- B. Land off Verney Park, as shown on the Policies Map, is safeguarded for the expansion of The Buckingham School.**

1. The policy seeks to safeguard existing educational provision in Buckingham. Clause A of the policy therefore identifies existing sites on the Policies Map. Provision has been made for a new primary school to serve the town in site specific allocations.
2. Clause B of the policy safeguards land for the expansion of The Buckingham School. Current plans include relocating existing sixth form provision at Buckingham School to this location to free up capacity within the main school building to admit additional 11-15 pupils. Site constraints and limited options available to expand Buckingham School within its existing site means that it is necessary to find additional land to enable this. The land has been made available for this purpose.

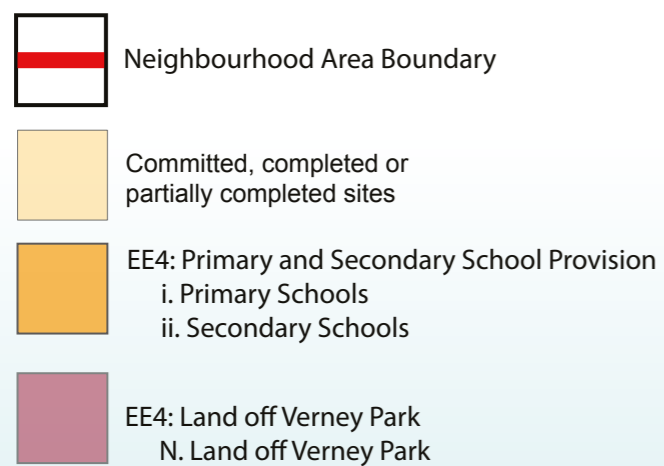
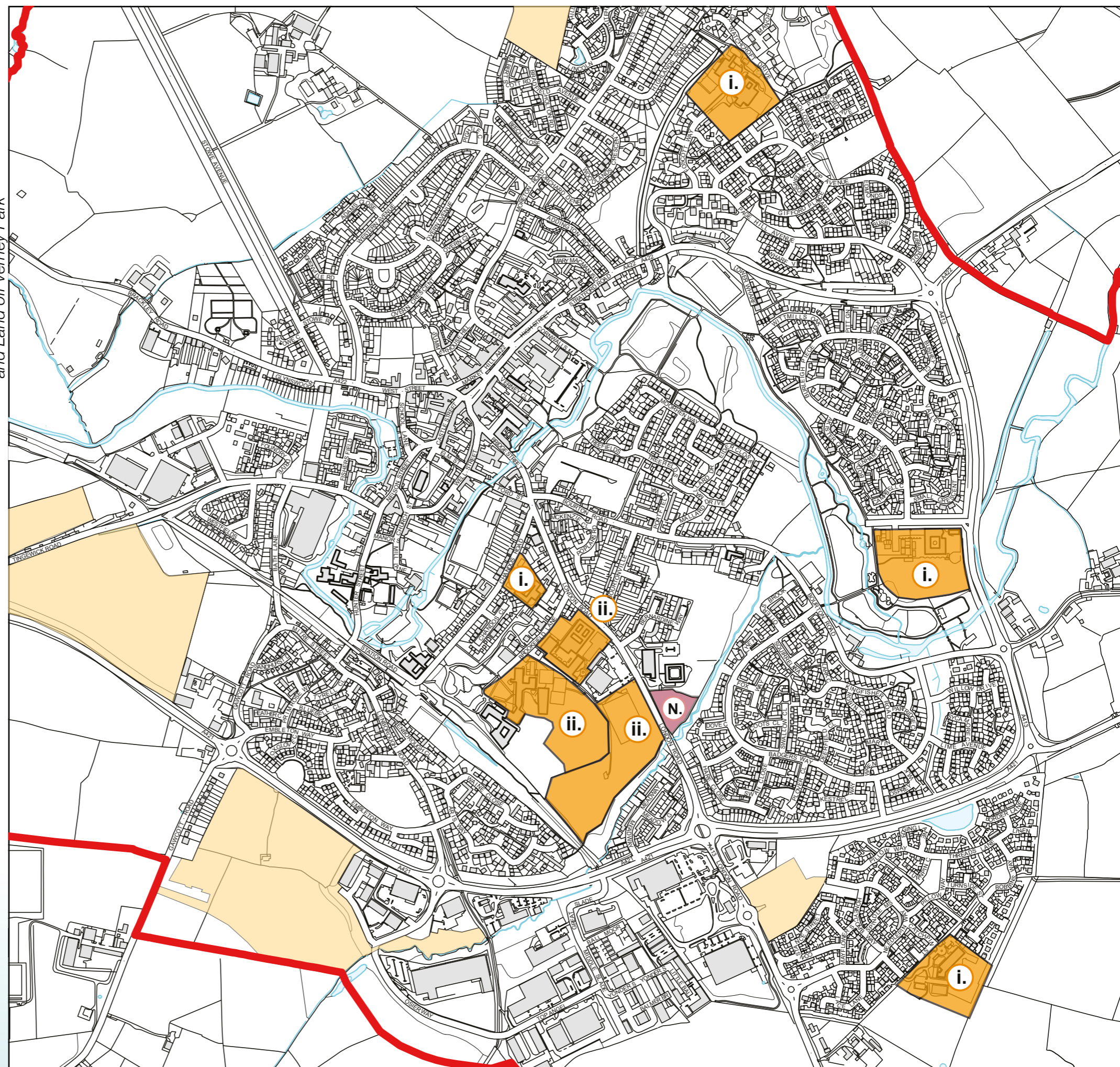


Fig. 28. Primary and secondary school provision, and Land off Verney Park



## I Policies INFRASTRUCTURE

Fig. 29. Buckingham Charter Market



### **POLICY I1 WATER MANAGEMENT AND FLOOD RISK**

**A. Development proposals will be supported, provided it can be demonstrated that, where appropriate:**

- i. Any development proposed in either flood zone 2 or flood zone 3, must be accompanied by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment that demonstrates that proposals will not increase flood risk from any form of flooding and takes opportunities to reduce flood risk where possible in accordance with national requirements. This clause also applies to sites:**
  - a. over 1 ha in flood zone 1;**
  - b. identified by the Environment Agency as having critical drainage problems;**
  - c. land identified in a strategic flood risk assessment as being at increased risk of flooding in the future;**

- d. land that may be subject to other sources of flooding, where its development would introduce a more vulnerable use.**
- ii. must be accompanied by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment that demonstrates that proposals will not increase flood risk from any form of flooding and takes opportunities to reduce flood risk where possible in accordance with national requirements;**
- iii. Managing flood risk must take account of the impacts of climate change over the lifetime of the development and have full regard to development plan requirements on Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS);**
- iv. The Water Efficiency Standard of 100 litres per person per day, or any later recommended higher standard, will be achieved in new development;**
- v. The sewer network can accommodate the additional demand for sewerage disposal either in its existing form or through planned improvements to the system to ensure sufficient wastewater treatment which can successfully avoid sewerage discharge into watercourses is in place in advance of the first occupation of the development. In this regard, applicants will need to demonstrate early engagement with the Sewerage Undertaker in relation to capacity and phasing of development and at the very least have demonstrated sufficient capacity will be in place prior to the first occupation on site;**
- vi. They accord with any other relevant development plan policies.**

1. The town has suffered during its history from flooding and the destruction which has resulted from it. As a result a key issue for the town is protecting it from flooding. After a number of major flood events in the last 26 years, including major river flood events in 1998, 2007, 2020 and 2024, flooding remains a significant concern to Buckingham. There is also an evidenced problem with sewage drainage. Given these characteristics and requirements the policy serves a number of purposes.
2. First, due to the risks associated with development on flood risk areas, the policy requires proposals to be accompanied by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment which must demonstrate that the development will be safe for its lifetime taking account of climatic factors and vulnerability of users, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, incorporating SuDS including above ground SuDS measures such as wetlands, ponds and swales. This is in line with the requirements of national policy, NPPF advice note 59 (or revisions) and advice that includes requirements for rainwater harvesting and permeable drives.
3. Finally, the policy highlights the requirement for meeting the optional building regulations standard on water efficiency and requires all proposals to demonstrate that there is sufficient sewage capacity to accommodate an increase in demand. The water efficiency standard has been set at 100 litres per day per person, in line with proposals in the DEFRA Plan for Water, in areas where there is a clear local need. This policy has been supported by Anglian Water and Buckinghamshire Council and the Water Study Cycle stage 1 report, generated as part of the emerging Local Plan, which also recommends this figure. The policy is intended to draw greater attention to these issues given the characteristics of the designated neighbourhood area when determining planning applications.

## **POLICY I2 DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE**

- A. The public benefit of improving access to digital communication infrastructure in the area will carry significant positive weight in the planning balance of proposals that may cause harm to designated heritage assets or to particular landscape features and qualities of a local landscape area. Development proposals should be sensitively located and designed in order to minimise visual impact.**
- B. Where planning permission is required for new digital infrastructure, applicants will need to demonstrate that genuine efforts have been made to work with other providers to share infrastructure.**

1. This policy seeks to encourage the provision of new digital infrastructure that will drive technological advancements necessary to support new businesses and homes. In doing so it refines the provisions of VALP Policy I6 on Telecommunications. Digital infrastructure includes the installation of new transmitters, antennas, junction boxes and satellite dishes. Creative industries, office space and commerce rely on high speed, reliable connectivity but this can be difficult. It is acknowledged that many such works may be permitted development but where they are not then Clause A of the policy requires that significant weight is attached to the public benefit of having access to this infrastructure when weighed against any harm to heritage and landscape in the planning balance of each proposal. Clause B requires applicants to demonstrate that genuine efforts have been made to use existing digital infrastructure.