1.0 Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to capture the outcome of the Maidenhead and Cox Green Neighbourhood Plan (MNP) visioning workshop held on 25th February 2015 and to make recommendations for the consideration of the Steering Group. Definitions of the technical terms used in this report are given in Appendix C on page 12.

The vision workshop was carried out to start to define a scope and brief for the neighbourhood plan, and to establish a set of principles for a vision that could be used in the development of the neighbourhood plan framework. There will be a follow up meeting to review the outcomes of this workshop and the suggested scope of the neighbourhood plan, and to agree the working groups and the information gathering and engagement tasks.

Cox Green is a separate parish but is preparing a plan jointly with Maidenhead as the Maidenhead and Cox Green Neighbourhood Plan (MNP). The workshop was attended by nineteen people including local residents, RBWM councillors, a Cox Green parish councillor, members of the Civic Society and Chamber of Commerce, and representatives of the RBWM Planning Policy team. The list of attendees is appended to this report. Following the workshop all the attendees confirmed that they would be part of the Maidenhead and Cox Green Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. (MNPSG)

The neighbourhood plan area encompasses two distinct areas; the town centre which is undergoing significant expansion, change and development, and the seven surrounding Wards.

The spatial structure of the neighbourhood plan area is defined by the road and railway networks, the River Thames and watercourses, and the setting of the green belt backdrop. The location of the town centre and station give the overall area a centre of gravity towards the River and the south eastern comer of the neighbourhood plan area (see Figure 1 below). An inner ring of four Wards wrap around and share a boundary with the town centre; Oldfield, Boyn Hill, Belmont and Maidenhead Riverside, with the remaining three Wards; Furze Platt, Pinkneys Green and Cox Green forming an outer ring around the western side.
The planning and development context

The development plan for RBWM consists of the saved policies of the 2003 Local Plan (RBWMLP) and the Maidenhead Town Centre Area Action Plan (AAP) adopted in 2011. The policies of the MNP must be in conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan. However, the RBWM is preparing the Borough Local Plan (BLP) which is likely to be adopted in early 2017 and will then supersede the current development plan. The MNP will therefore look at the reasoning of the emerging plan and its more up-to-date evidence base in preparing the MNP, in particular in considering housing allocations and the Green Belt.

The BLP second preferred options paper will be published for consultation in June 2015. The committee report on the second preferred options paper provides the most up-to-date housing supply numbers, site recommended for residential and mixed development and the development needs in the Green Belt. Although it is
likely that the MNP will be adopted before the Borough Local Plan, it will benefit from looking at its reasoning and up-to-date evidence base.

Figure 2: Second Preferred Options - map of recommended allocations

The Town Centre AAP was adopted in 2011 and set out to deliver attractive streets and places, new shops, homes and business and leisure opportunities. The Townscape assessment was prepared in 2010 and sets out the character of the different towns and villages in the Borough. These documents will be useful tools and background work in preparing the Neighbourhood Plan. Both the AAP and the Townscape assessment need to be reviewed by the RBWM, and the Neighbourhood Plan may want to participate in the review of these documents.
The Maidenhead and Cox Green vision statement

A Vision Statement which identified four goals was prepared by the MNP SG prior to the vision workshop and as part of the initial neighbourhood plan work. These are:

1. Rejuvenation of the town centre
2. Reinforcing the connection to, and relationship with the River Thames and historic bridge crossings
3. Improvements in accessibility and connectivity
4. Protection and enhancement of the town’s history, heritage, character and assets

These goals were translated into six key objectives in the vision’s Mission Statement which will be developed and refined as the Plan develops;

1. Protect existing assets
2. Provide the necessary facilities, services and infrastructure
3. Encourage the right types of development in suitable locations
4. Make it easier, safer and more pleasant to move around
5. Foster business and local employment
6. Maximise opportunities to improve the relationship of the town with the River Thames

The issues

The workshop considered the following topics against the background of the planning and development context, designations and constraints, and the spatial characteristics of the neighbourhood plan area.

- The impact of the latest developments in the Borough Local Plan
- The relationship between the Wards and the town centre
- The progress of the Town Centre AAP and its review
- Townscape, character and social infrastructure
- Crossrail

2.0 the workshop

The Local Plan

Based on the Borough Local Plan 1st preferred options which was considering Areas in the Green Belt for analysis of development suitability, the MNP would have had limited scope to allocate housing. However, the Second Preferred Options Consultation (February 2015 Appendix I Overview maps of recommended allocations – see Figure 2 above) proposes a different spatial strategy with two significant factors for the MCGNP:
1. There are a significant number of sites being put forward for housing/mixed allocations within the built up area.

2. The Second Preferred Option also proposes that two significant sites are taken out of the Green Belt; the Braywick sports and recreation ground which would be allocated for leisure/recreation and Maidenhead Golf Course which would be allocated as a safeguarded site (see Figure 3 below).

Figure 3: Braywick sports and recreation ground and Maidenhead Golf Course
Discussion

The sites identified in the Second Preferred Options could deliver around 1,400 new dwellings and it is thought that the majority are still in play with no planning approvals in place (Appendix A). The MNP could therefore make allocations to determine the nature of their development.

The sensitivity of these sites, in terms of their impact on views and contribution to townscape was considered with the suggestion that any allocations made through the MNP should include design parameters to address massing and appearance in addition to the type and quantity of uses.

The potential for identifying additional sites was discussed with areas alongside the railway line put forward for consideration with the acknowledgement of possible environmental constraints such as noise and vibration.

Removing the Braywick sports and recreation ground from the Green Belt will bring it into play for the MNP to determine how it is developed. The Borough’s strategy of relocating the leisure centre from the north of the town centre frees up a site with an estimated capacity for 500 dwellings which is favourable located for a high density scheme and will contribute to housing numbers. However, this would have an impact on the Braywick sports and recreation ground and there were a number of issues discussed including; how the space could work, capacity, access and parking, existing uses such as the sewage works and how it would fit into a wider green infrastructure strategy.

The Maidenhead Golf Course is owned by the Borough and is let on a lease to the current operators. The Borough proposes safeguarding this site for future development but had no plans to bring it forward during the Plan period. When it does come forward for development it is likely to be predominantly housing and will further intensify the residential pressures around the town centre. Irrespective of when it might be developed, the MNP should consider the longer term implications as they may have a bearing on other elements of the Plan.

The relationship between the Wards and the town centre

The areas that make up the MNP area are varied. The residential expansion of the town centre will involve planning for a new community, whereas the Wards will involve planning within an existing community and a more established context. How this might affect the Plan was discussed and whether or not the geographical or community definition of the areas will need to be addressed in formulation and consultation of the Plan.
Community infrastructure

Apart from delivering housing, the sites identified in the Second Preferred Option have the opportunity to contribute to community infrastructure which the MNP could address through making allocations. To do this, the current and future needs would need to be identified.

Town Centre AAP

The Maidenhead Town Centre Area Action Plan (TCAAP) was adopted in September 2011 and is in the process of being delivered.

The TCAAP sets out a spatial strategy, provides site assessments, identifies site and includes policies to direct the delivery of the Plan. In this respect it covers the ground that a Neighbourhood Plan would, but to a higher level of detail. In most circumstances a neighbourhood plan would therefore remain silent over the area covered by an AAP. However, there are considerations in this case that would warrant the MNP having a role in the TCAAP.

Discussion

The intensification of residential capacity in the town centre as part of Borough’s spatial and housing strategy will be tested through a Tall Buildings Study. The opportunity and benefits of the MNP having an input into the scoping of the Tall Buildings Study was discussed. The Tall Buildings Study may have visual and spatial impacts on the rest of the MNP area, and there was felt to be benefit in integrating proposals with the developing MNP in terms of Townscape, connectivity and amenities to achieve an integrated green infrastructure and movement network, including access to the River.

Residential intensification of the town centre brings with it consideration of how to plan for a future community through the neighbourhood plan process, and this was discussed along with the impacts of Crossrail in terms of transport links and interchanges and how the railway Station Opportunity Area could be integrated with and serve the wider MNP area.

Crossrail station improvements at Maidenhead are scheduled for completion in September 2016 with services due to begin in 2019. The proposals include the creation of a new landscaped plaza to the front of the station giving a strong physical connection between the station and the town centre. The King Street and Queen Street junction will also be reconfigured to improve connectivity between the station and town centre. The impact of Crossrail and Crossrail 2 were discussed briefly and given the changes proposed it will be important for these to be considered and integrated with the MNP.
The progress of the TCAAP and the balance that will be achieved between residential, commercial and retail uses was also discussed and identified as a topic for review.

**Townscape and character**

A Townscape Assessment of Maidenhead was adopted by the Borough in June 2010 (Volume 1: Maidenhead and Cookham Areas) and provides an analysis of the character areas, urban structure and landscape setting.

**Discussion**

The value of the Townscape Appraisal in informing the MNP was discussed and its use in developing design policies at a more local scale. The overlap between the Townscape Appraisal and the TCAAP was also discussed in terms of a review of the Tall Buildings Study and of the assumptions made concerning nodes, views, connectivity and access to the River.

**3.0 Outcomes**

To conclude the workshop the issues outlined at the outset were discussed and it was agreed that the MNP should:

- Make site allocations
- Review the status of the sites identified in the Second Preferred Options Consultation February 2015 Appendix I
- Identify further sites for consideration
- Identify the need and plan for additional community infrastructure
- Plan for an integrated green infrastructure and sustainable movement network
- Be developed on a thematic rather than a Ward basis
- Take a role in reviewing the TCAAP and defining the scope and outputs of the proposed Tall Buildings Study
- Review the Townscape Appraisal as part of the TCAAP review and use it to inform design policy

The decision to take this approach was driven not just by practical considerations but also by the wish for the neighbourhood plan to reflect the idea that this is one community;

“One community, One plan,”
4.0 Scope of the neighbourhood plan

From these outcomes it is recommended that the scope of the MNP includes:

1. Site allocation policies which should be used to determine the location, quantity and type of development and should consider not only housing, but also the provision of community infrastructure and open space.

2. Input into the scoping and use of the TCAAP Tall Buildings Study to inform the MNP and potentially be included as policy.

3. A review of the TCAAP and input into any revisions to accommodate its integration with the MNP. This should include the Crossrail urban realm proposals.

4. Sustainable movement policies: these should be used to achieve safe and effective movement within the plan area and links to amenities beyond the plan area, with an emphasis on walking, cycling and public transport. Where possible site allocation policies should be used to assist in delivery.

5. Green infrastructure policies: These should be designed to improve connectivity across the whole plan area including the town centre and reinforce the connection to, and relationship with the River Thames.

6. Local Green space policies: these should be used to identify and protect important Local Green Spaces and integrate them with the green infrastructure.

7. A review of the Townscape Assessment as an informative for the Tall Buildings Study and TCAAP review, and a basis for developing design policies outside the town centre area.

8. Local employment considerations and policies to support the retention of existing facilities and deliver specific types of employment opportunities.
5.0 Actions

To progress the plan there are a number of information gathering and engagement exercises to carry out and the following are recommended:

- Formalise steering group members and roles
- Formalise working groups and develop briefs
- Town Centre AAP – tall buildings study; agree programme briefing and involvement
- Town Centre AAP – carry out a critical review of the progress to date, successes and failures, the mix of development, public realm and general recommendations
- Town Centre AAP – consider integration with the NP; connectivity, views, tall buildings impact/inputs, review of the Townscape Assessment
- Sites – carry out an assessment of identified sites, sensitivity, local needs, uses, acceptability
- Sites – identify additional sites to consider: local knowledge, local call for sites
- Green infrastructure; map out existing routes, potential routes, barriers, associated assets, potential new assets, connections to the river, town centre and areas beyond the NP boundary, cycling and other users
- Recreation & leisure facilities; assess existing facilities, population growth and projected needs, town centre impacts, Ward provision and needs, the park and
- Identify Local Green Spaces and community assets
- Consider the Townscape Assessment and its use for design statements for the Wards
Appendix A: sites identified in the Second Preferred Options

Appendix F
Sites in urban areas outside the Green Belt

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site in urban areas outside the Green Belt</th>
<th>Capacity (net)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land at High Street, Ascot</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gas holder station, Bridge Road, Sunninghill</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broomhall car park and land adjoining, Sunningdale</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holcombe House and The White House, London Road, Sunningdale</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gas holder station, Whyteladies Lane, Cookham Rise</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land at St Clouds Way, Maidenhead</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land at Ray Mill Road East, Maidenhead</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35, 37 and 33 (Velmead Works), Lower Cookham Road, Maidenhead</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belmont Place, Belmont Road, Maidenhead</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DTC, Research, Belmont Road, Maidenhead</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exclusive House, Oldfield Road, Maidenhead</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land east of Oldfield Road, Maidenhead</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Motors Europe, 150 Bath Road, Maidenhead</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maidenhead Lawn Tennis Club, All Saints Avenue, Maidenhead</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middlheurst, 99-03 Boyn Valley Road, Maidenhead</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reform Road Industrial Estate, Reform Road, Maidenhead</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travis Perkins Wood Yard, Boyn Valley Road, Maidenhead</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former Stiefel Laboratories, Whitebrook Park, Lower Cookham Road, Maidenhead</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Straight Road Works, 65A Straight Road, Old Windsor</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95 Straight Road, Old Windsor</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area between Alma Road and Goslar Way, Windsor</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offices at Thames Side, Windsor</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sawyers Close, Windsor</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Territorial Army Centre, Bolton Road, Windsor</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vale Road Industrial Estate, Vale Road, Windsor</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former Windsor Fire Station, St Marks Road, Windsor</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>1,821</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Recommended new allocations – Sites in the urban areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site in the urban areas</th>
<th>Capacity (net)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land at St Clouds Way, Maidenhead</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Recommended new allocations – Previously Development Land in the Green Belt

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site in the Green Belt</th>
<th>Capacity (net)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land at Grove Business Park, Waltham Road, White Waltham</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summerleaze, Summerleaze Road, Maidenhead</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land south of Stafferton Way, Maidenhead</td>
<td>440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land at Water Oakley Farm, Windsor Road, Water Oakley</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bray Studios, Down Place, Water Oakley</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Squires Garden Centre, Maidenhead Road, Windsor</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyvale Garden Centre, Dedworth Road, Windsor</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ascot Railway Station Car Park, Station Hill, Ascot</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land at Heatherwood Hospital, London Road, Ascot</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorts Recycling Centre, St Georges Lane, Ascot</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B: Attendees

Cllr Philip Love (MNP Chair)
Cllr Derek Wilson
Richard Davenport
Roger Panton
Jeremy Greenhaigh
Ian Harvey (Cox Parish Council)
Mike Copeland
Matt Sharpe (Rotaract)
Ian Rose (Civic Soc)
Martin McNamee (Civic Soc Planning)
Derek Roberts
Peter Sands (Chamber of Commerce)
Laura Rheiter (RBWM Planning Policy)
Ian Church (RBWM Planning Policy)
Ian Bellinger (RBWM Planning Policy)
Susan Brett (Churches Together)
Richard Sylvester
Brendan O’Neill (rCOH)
Caroline Finney (rCOH)
Appendix C: Definitions

There are a number of terms used in this report which reflect the terminology used in planning policies:

**Green infrastructure**: this is a network of open spaces and landscape that provide for leisure and recreation. It can also provide other functions and benefits including biodiversity, stormwater management and food production. The waterway ‘Ring’ route is a part of Maidenhead’s green infrastructure. How these spaces are linked together, made accessible and used is very important to health and quality of life for a community.

**Sustainable movement network**: this term is used to describe a combination of existing footpaths, open spaces and streets that can be planned to provide for sustainable transport options such as walking and cycling. It is often linked to and overlaps with the green infrastructure, and for Maidenhead would also include the waterway ‘Ring’ route.

**Social Infrastructure**: a broad term that covers the community facilities that are generally building related such as schools, leisure facilities, health facilities and support services

**Homes**: all types of housing including affordable, social rented and open market