Bray Parish
Neighbourhood Plan
2015 – 2030

Bray Parish Council
Draft for Pre-Submission Consultation
May 2015
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I. Introduction

A Neighbourhood Plan is a new type of planning document introduced by the Localism Act of 2011 to influence the use and development of land. Once in force a Neighbourhood Plan must be considered in determining planning applications in the Plan Area. The Bray Parish Neighbourhood Plan (‘the Plan’) has been compiled by local residents and the Bray Parish Council as the Bray Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (‘the Steering Group’). The Plan provides guidance for development and long-term sustainability of the Bray, Holyport, Fifield and Oakley Green settlements and surrounding Green Belt of the Parish for the next 15 years. The Plan may be updated from time to time, and will be formally reviewed every 5 years.

Neighbourhood Plans are required to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan (‘Development Plan’) of the Local Planning Authority, the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (‘RBWM’ or ‘the Borough’) and the Government’s National Planning Policy Framework (‘NPPF’). The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead recognised the Bray Parish Council (‘BPC’) as providing leadership for the Neighbourhood Plan development process in 2012 and has supported all public surveys, consultations and plan preparations with continuing guidance. The Bray Parish Council has recognised the Steering Group as authorised to carry forward the work of neighbourhood planning within the Parish.

The current Steering Group members are:

- Steve Adams
- David Coppinger
- William Emmett
- Chris Graham
- Martin Hall
- Duncan Johnston
- Jacqueline Mainprice
- Derek Mellor
- Roger Nilsson
- Nick Pellew
- Linda Shaw
- Leo Walters

The Steering Group together with the members of the four Topic Groups have developed the content and policies contained in this plan.

Sarah Ball together with Laura Rheiter and their team in RBWM Planning Dept. have provided invaluable advice and have been truly a central part of the team.

We are indebted to John Hurley from The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) for his advice and support.

This team has worked to promote wide discussion of planning within the community and to engage with the community in developing the plan. They are the joint authors.
of this report. They are indebted to Kathleen Tyson who has edited and brought together the final draft.

Over nearly four years of plan development there have been many local consultations and surveys, and over 60 public meetings of the Steering Group and more meetings of topic sub-groups. The Steering Group has met monthly, welcoming both the public and press to its meetings. A dedicated website for the Neighbourhood Plan has been maintained at http://www.brayplan.com to provide Parish residents with detailed information about the planning process, Steering Group meetings and public consultations.

Consultation with Parish residents started with three launch events in November and December 2011. A survey booklet was delivered to every household in the Parish in hard copy and provided online in early 2012. The survey was followed in October 2012 by a series of workshops in partnership with the Prince’s Foundation for Building Community to communicate the information gained from the survey to refine community policies, with a further event for public feedback in November 2012. Consultations in Fifield and Oakley Green were held in September 2013 on an issue specific to both those communities. A Survey was conducted in Fifield in October 2014 on a possible project.

The Steering Group has drafted this Plan to respect the interests of those living in our community using the outcomes of all earlier surveys, consultations and workshops. Whilst this Plan does not recommend any land for development, it aims to supplement Borough and National planning policies to better influence the type, design, location and mix of new housing in the Parish, to promote improved use and development of non-residential lands, protect, conserve and enhance Conservation Areas and Flood Plain, and to contribute to better community amenities, quality of life, and sustainable economic development. The Plan addresses a number of policy areas including preservation of the Green Belt, housing, agricultural and commercial development, village centres, roads and public transport, and economic growth that are important to residents of the Parish.

The purpose of the Plan is to:

- Record the historical and current status and nature of the community and its environment;

- Provide a framework to guide residents, RBWM planning authorities and developers on how the community of the Parish wishes to manage and control future development in the Plan Area over the next 15 years, including the preservation and improvement of facilities, services and environment;
• Provide guidance aimed at improving community facilities and services within the Parish.

Preparing a neighbourhood plan will help Bray Parish cope with the challenges it faces now and in future. In particular the required rate of house building in the past has been relatively low but current demographic change suggests there is increased demand for more new homes. Through this Plan, as a statutory document, residents of the Bray Parish will have real influence on the location, nature and scope of new developments and the sustainability of roads, transport facilities, community facilities and amenities that contribute to the quality of Parish life.

The draft Plan will be subject to 6 weeks of pre-submission public consultation. The Steering Group will consider all responses to the consultation and apply any necessary revisions to the plan. After this consultation the Steering Group can send the Neighbourhood Plan to Bray Parish Council who have the power to submit the Plan to RBWM for independent check by a Government Inspector to see that it is general conformity with existing Policies and Legislation. If passed by the examiner, the Neighbourhood Plan will be put to local referendum so that the community of the Parish will have the final say in whether the plan is given legal force. If more than 50 per cent of local people who vote in the referendum support the Plan, then RBWM must bring it into force.

Once a Neighbourhood Plan is brought into legal force, it forms part of the statutory Development Plan for the Parish. Decisions by RBWM on whether or not to grant planning applications and determination of strategic policies in the Borough Local Plan must be consistent with the Neighbourhood Plan. Our policies as stated in this Plan will take priority over non-strategic policies in the RBWM Local Plan, giving our community a real and lasting tool to influence the future of our neighbourhood.

The land use policies in the Neighbourhood Plan will have a statutory effect on planning decisions once voted into force, while other provisions will provide a non-statutory framework for influencing transport and economic policies for the Parish, RBWM and other government authorities.

“Once a Neighbourhood Plan has demonstrated its general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan and is brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in the Local Plan for that neighbourhood, where they are in conflict.” Paragraph 185, National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012
A. *Vision Statement*

‘As a community Bray Parish seeks to retain and protect the distinct character of our villages and hamlets, maintain the separation between them by preserving the Green Belt, and protect our fauna and flora for recreation and community wellbeing. We will respond to the housing needs of our communities with sympathetic development, enhance the village and rural economy, improve road safety and facilities for all users, and ensure that our parish remains a special place to live and a community that welcomes visitors.’

B. *Map of the Plan Area*

The Parish of Bray in its entirety was designated by RBWM in December 2012 as the Plan Area for Neighbourhood Planning purposes.
C. Description of Bray Parish

The Parish of Bray is within the unitary authority of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. It lies between Windsor and Maidenhead and is bordered to the north by the Thames River. The Parish is steeped in history, with links back to Roman times and many listed buildings. The villages and hamlets were originally scattered amongst the dense woodland of Windsor Forest, which still accounts for a sizeable portion of the southeast corner of the Parish.

Key Facts:

- The Parish is 2684 hectares (6632 acres) in area;
- 94.8% of the Parish is Green Belt (see insert map on previous page);
- There are 4,249 homes in the Parish and 6,493 residents on the electoral role as at 31/3/2014;
- There are three Grade 1, nine Grade 11* and seventy one Grade 11 Listed Buildings in the Parish;
- The outskirts of Windsor and Maidenhead extend into the Parish, including urban extension along A308, off Harvest Hill Rd;
- The two principal villages of Bray and Holyport are both covered in part by Conservation Areas;
- The only locations for retail premises in the Parish are the recognised settlement areas within the Green Belt covering parts of Bray, Holyport and Fifield;
- Other villages and hamlets include: Bray Wick, Water Oakley, Oakley Green, Moneyrow Green, Stud Green, Foxley Green, Touchen End, Braywoodside and Hawthorn Hill;
- Flood plain lies along the northern boundary with the Thames and some areas of high and medium risk along the Bourne stream to the west of Holyport and across Oakley Green from the streams and drainage channels coming from the Crown Estate Land to the south;
- Mineral extraction activities and processing together with areas of land fill are established within the Parish;
- Leisure and sports facilities are offered at Bray Watersports Lake, Bray Marina, Windsor Marina, Eton Excelsior Rowing Club, Holyport Real Tennis Club, Maidenhead & Bray Sports Club, Braywood Cricket Club, Bird Hills Golf Club.
Centre and the Phoenix Gym at Water Oakley. In addition there are several playing fields and two tennis courts run by Bray Parish Council and Holyport War Memorial Hall;

- The Waterside Inn and The Fat Duck are highly distinguished restaurants of world renown being two of the four Michelin 3 star restaurants in the UK. This year the Waterside Inn will celebrate having enjoyed continuous 3 star rating for 30 years - a unique achievement for a restaurant based in a village, anywhere in the world. In addition there are several other pubs and restaurants in the Parish. The Oakley Court Hotel, a number of B&B’s, and other hospitality businesses provide visitor accommodation;

- A large part of the Parish consists of farm land, including Crown Land, with three operating farms and other rural businesses. There are also a number of riding and polo establishments and three garden centres;

- The Parish has three infant or junior schools and Holyport College, a Free School, which opened in 2014;

- The Parish holds two specialist medical centres, several nursing homes and one GP practice;

- There are three Memorial community Halls, 1 church, 1 chapel and several cemeteries, but no natural heart to Parish villages;

- Warehousing, light industrial buildings and offices are in various locations at Priors Way, Tectonic Place, Weir Bank and New Lodge (change of use recently approved for housing).

The area of Bray Parish is bordered by four major highways M4, A308M, A404M, A4 and has two main transit roads, the A308 and A330, passing through the Parish. As such the area is served by main roads with origins and destinations beyond the bounds of the Parish and even beyond the bounds of the Royal Borough. A relevant characteristic is that all the A and B roads are single lane in both directions. This feature creates significant problems of congestion, excessive use by heavy goods vehicles 'in transit' and associated issues of speed and safety. Population growth, concentrated in areas immediately adjacent to the A roads, has made the problems worse.

D. Planning Constraints

The Bray Parish Neighbourhood Plan will influence future development, but cannot determine all aspects of development that affect the Parish. Much that will affect us
will remain beyond our control, or even the control of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. To the extent that the views of the Parish may have weight in deciding these issues, we mention a few issues which are important to the Parish and which are currently under consideration by national or regional authorities.

The NPPF sets out the government’s policy on planning, including the context in which the RBWM Local Plan must be prepared. At the heart of the current NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which requires RBWM to positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of the area. In particular, RBWM must increase the supply of new housing and affordable housing.

Re-engineering the motorways that border and cross our Parish will have a major impact on potential development and will significantly improve the quality of life in the Parish. The roads in the Parish, in particular the A308, A330 and the Braywick roundabout are the responsibility of the Highways Agency and RBWM. These are not 'local' roads, as they currently carry a high volume of transit traffic which neither originates nor terminates in the Parish. Worsening congestion inevitably limits further housing development in the Parish.

A new regional super hospital, popularly referred to as the Royal Thames Valley Hospital, would greatly impact the Parish if located in or near Bray Parish. While Parish residents strongly support the principle of a new regional super hospital, there is concern that the proposed site would aggravate traffic congestion and frustrate access to any existing or future Accident & Emergency facility.

The new Crossrail service will increase housing demand in central Maidenhead and in the Parish and will add to traffic congestion on local roads. Monitoring of traffic conditions and sources will be part of the framework for monitoring and reviewing the Neighbourhood Plan.

The Jubilee River has addressed the flooding issues in Maidenhead, Bray and Windsor but events over the winters of 2012/13/14 have shown that flooding is still a major concern for all those bordering the Thames and its tributaries. Several of these cross the Parish and still flood, adding to many low spots across the Parish that often hold water. Flood Management is the sole prerogative of the Environment Agency and is not controlled by the Parish or Borough Councils. Ground water levels are often at the surface in many locations in the Parish during the winter months and flooded sewer problems have occurred in several parts of the Parish.
E. **Plan Objectives**

1. Protect existing Green Belt land and prevent urban sprawl by safeguarding the open and rural character of the countryside and preventing inappropriate use and development;

2. Preserve and enhance existing gaps between settlements, and in particular the ‘Bray Green Gap’ between the towns of Windsor and Maidenhead, whose outskirts already extend into Bray Parish either side;

3. Encourage the re-use of surplus agricultural and farm buildings, where redundant, for uses appropriate to the countryside;

4. Control land raising to ensure that it is only in the interests of agriculture or equestrianism and does not have an adverse impact on residents;

5. Mitigate future gravel extraction impact by placing requirements for ground re-use and landscaping after works completion;

6. To protect the Green Belt and our two Conservation Areas but allow minor changes in specific locations where there is strong support from residents;
7. To ensure that housing changes maintain, and where possible enhance, the quality and character of the Parish so that future generations can enjoy the same or a better living and working environment;

8. To facilitate the realisation of community benefits as part of any multi-family housing development proposal;

9. To ensure that any new developments are appropriate to the character and style in the different parts of the Parish;

10. To ensure that traffic and congestion across the Parish is not increased and, where possible, to improve the current traffic and congestion situation;

11. Support expansion and maintenance of footpaths, cycle routes and bridleways as amenities to residents and visitors;

12. Ensure planning policies and regulations generally support business and employment delivering a sustainable balance between supply of jobs and the local labour supply to minimise commuting into and out of the local area;

13. Retain and support existing businesses important to Parish quality of life, such as shops, pubs, restaurants, offices, industrial premises, leisure clubs and facilities, and the rural economy;

14. Support the increasing number of people working in home-based businesses both generally and by allowing the limited employment of staff at home to support and expand these businesses;
II. Green Belt Policies

Bray Parish is mostly rural, with 94.8% of its lands designated as Green Belt. Within its boundaries it also has areas of Crown Land, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Conservation Areas and local wildlife settlements.

The look and feel of the Parish are important to residents’ quality of life and enjoyment of the Parish lands and amenities. Ensuring that the quality of the countryside and our settlements are maintained is an important aim of Parish sustainability objectives. Residents wish to maintain and enhance the quality and character of the Parish to ensure that they and future generations can enjoy the living environment it offers.

A. Green Belt Preservation and Enhancement

Green Belt designation seeks to prevent inappropriate development of the countryside and makes sure that land continues to be available for agriculture and other acceptable rural uses. Bray Parish residents generally support national planning policies and objectives on Green Belt and it is felt unnecessary to restate these. Residents have highlighted preservation of the openness of the countryside as the highest priority. The future protection of Green Belt in Bray Parish specifically, however, needs to be balanced with development of local enterprises, rural activities and housing availability, subject to strict controls outlined in this Plan.

Green Belt objectives of particular relevance in Bray Parish include:

- Protect existing Green Belt land and prevent urban sprawl by keeping Green Belt land permanently open;
- Safeguard the open and rural character of the countryside by preventing inappropriate use and development;
- Preserve and enhance existing gaps between settlements, and in particular the ‘Bray Green Gap’ between the towns of Windsor and Maidenhead, whose outskirts already extend into Bray Parish either side;
- Encourage the re-use of surplus agricultural and farm buildings, where redundant, for uses appropriate to the countryside;
- Protect farmland and encourage agriculture and rural enterprise consistent with the rural aspect of the area,;
- Control land raising to ensure that it is only in the interests of agriculture or equestrianism and does not have an adverse impact on residents;
• Mitigate future gravel extraction impact by placing requirements for ground re-use and landscaping after works completion;

• Support expansion and maintenance of footpaths, cycle routes and bridleways as amenities to residents and visitors.

**Neighbourhood Plan Policy BNP-GB1:** Land use decisions should be consistent with Green Belt preservation, safeguarding the open and rural character of the countryside. Inappropriate development within the Green Belt will not be supported unless very special circumstances apply, to include evidence that the development offers significant benefits to the local community and is supported by more than 50% of the registered electors who live in the Parish ward affected by the development and who vote in a survey. Such evidence is to be provided in a Statement of Community Consultation to be arranged and provided by the developer or other party proposing such development.

**B. The ‘Bray Green Gap’**

The Bray Green Gap between Windsor and Maidenhead is important in terms of maintaining the separate physical locations and identities of the towns of Windsor and Maidenhead and the rural identity of Bray Parish. The Bray Green Gap forms an important recreational, ecological and rural landscape corridor for residents of the Parish and an amenity for residents of the settlements either side. Bray Parish residents want to halt any further deterioration of the remaining Green Belt between the outskirts of Windsor and Maidenhead and enhance the rural character of this landscape.
A Landscape Character Assessment report published in 2004 provides background information about the landscape types in the Bray Green Gap, identified then as the open land north and south of Windsor Road. The area south of the road has remained largely undeveloped, and contains open, relatively level farmland and meadows. The area north of the road is the Thames Corridor and contains a mix of land uses including residential development at Water Oakley, a hotel, a caravan park and Bray Studios.

The area provides long views east and west across the gap, and also southwards. The boundaries of the gap are formed by the developed edge of Dedworth, containing suburban housing, the river Thames to the north, open arable fields to the south and the furthest east developed area of Maidenhead to the west. There are a few footpaths crossing the area in north-south direction.

The Landscape Character Assessment report identifies two landscape character types for the area. The Landscape Character Type (14) north of Windsor Road is Settled Developed Floodplain and south of Windsor Road it is Settled Farmed Sands and Clays (8). The landscape condition is declining to derelict (north of Windsor Road) and good to declining (south of Windsor Road). The strength of landscape character has been described as declining (north) and moderate (south).
The declining condition and character of the landscape in the Bray Green Gap is a result of pressure for a mix of development uses which have the following potential landscape implications:

- Loss of permanent pasture to other, more intensive land uses such as arable horticulture;
- Fragmentation of land holdings primarily for horticulture uses leading to loss of landscape structure;
- Perception of decline/neglect around settlement fringes;
- Degradation of boundary features with the loss of hedgerows, hedgerow trees, shelterbelts and linear woodlands;
- Loss of quiet rural character and views;
- Upgrading of minor roads and lanes associated with new development;
- Loss of land to aggregate extraction with landfill after use.

Proposals for housing development within the Bray Green Gap (as identified on the map above) will only be supported if they enhance the environment and landscape and do not impair the character of the Parish. Applications for land use within the Bray Green Gap should be evaluated against the following requirements:

- Development should protect the distinct and disparate identities of existing settlements and conserve the road network between them;
- Urban edge land use should be strongly discouraged and current degraded urban border areas restored;
- Traditional boundary features such as hedgerows should be retained or restored;
- Building, where appropriate, should be designed to minimise visual intrusion in the surrounding areas.
C. RBWM Consultation on 23 Green Belt sites

At the beginning of 2013, RBWM initiated a substantial consultation exercise to invite comments on the suitability of 23 Green Belt sites across the Borough for development. This was as a result of a projected increase in the number of households to around 12,000 between 2011 and 2029. As a result the primary selection criteria for these sites was ‘Edge of Settlement’ and the Bray Parish, falling, as it does between Maidenhead and Windsor, has 6 of these sites, 3 on each side. These are:

a) Area 5C, the Triangle enclosed by M4, A308(M) and Ascot Road, Maidenhead.

b) Area 5E, South of Harvest Hill Road, Maidenhead.

c) Area 7A, between Ascot Road and Holyport Road, Holyport.

d) Area 8A, North of A308, south of the Old Maidenhead Road, Windsor.

e) Area 8B, South of A308, east of Oakley Green Road and north of Dedworth Road, Windsor.

f) Area 8C, South of Dedworth Road, west of Broom Farm Estate, Windsor.

This approach runs counter to one of the primary issues of concern to our residents, relating to the ever increasing pressure to expand the towns of Windsor and Maidenhead into the Green Belt and the traffic congestion caused by traffic passing through the Parish.

At meetings conducted in January 2012 as part of the Neighbourhood Plan process, residents told us:

- Preserve the ‘Green Gap’ between Windsor and Maidenhead - do not build on the edge of existing settlements
• Build on previously developed land (brownfield sites) first, derelict and unattractive sites

• Locate most new housing in the town centres

• Do not build on the Green Belt unless there are significant community benefits and the majority of those living in the area have voted for it

• Do not build on sites prone to flooding

No one doubts the need for more housing, but in our response to the Borough in February 2014 we seriously questioned the Edge of Settlement approach. This is expected to create more traffic growth and therefore be less sustainable than comparable town centre developments and the whole approach flies in the face of what residents have clearly and regularly stated – maintain a gap between rural and urban settlements.

In addition the Parish faces major traffic increases as a result of Crossrail with services expected to commence in late 2018 or early 2019 and at peak times there will be potentially up to 6,000 people per hour trying to catch trains from Maidenhead station, with many of these coming by car.

Housing developments to the South of the Borough (8,000 to 15,000 homes planned in North Bracknell) as well as a similar number in Wokingham will substantially increase transit traffic through the Parish into Maidenhead and thus the traffic congestion can only get substantially worse.

On this basis our response to the Consultation concluded that there is a critical need for housing close to the Crossrail terminus in Maidenhead and as many homes as possible need to be constructed within walking distance of the station. Our full response is on the BPNP website – “Bray Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Response to RBWM Preferred Options Consultation February 2014”. The conclusion drawn in this response is that none of the 6 sites listed earlier are suitable for housing development.

The Borough intends to do a second round of consultation in June 2015. The preferred approach is now to permit development on suitable land within urban areas, on previously developed land in the Green Belt and on greenfield land south of Ascot High Street – therefore excluding 21 of the 23 areas within the Green Belt that were consulted upon as part of the first consultation (including the six sites in Bray Parish). There will still be pressure on the Parish to accept some additional housing on previously developed land in the Green Belt.
D. Fifield Survey

A proposal was made in September 2014 by a local landowner to gift some land in Fifield village for the establishment of an Open Space and children’s’ playground. The proposal also included a small housing development on the same site which is located in the Green Belt.

Whilst the establishment of an Open Space and a children’s’ playground had already received significant support from local residents in a survey carried out by Oakley Green, Fifield and District Community Association in 2008-09, the inclusion of housing in the latest proposal led the BPNP Steering Group to carry out, in October 2014, a new survey of the residents of Fifield who were most directly affected. Exactly 50% of residents who voted in this survey were supportive of the proposal.

On this basis, the Steering Group considered that the proposal did not satisfy the proposed requirement of Neighbourhood Plan Policy BNP–BE1 and therefore the SG decided not to include this specific proposal in the Neighbourhood Plan. However further consideration should be given to providing an Open Space/children’s’ playground in Fifield/Oakley Green in the future, providing it complies with the Policy III-A-2 and is supported by more than 50% of the registered electors who vote in a survey and who live in the Fifield and Oakley Green Ward affected by the development.
III. The Built Environment

A. Housing

Overall objectives of this Plan for housing include:

- To protect the Green Belt and our two Conservation Areas but allow minor changes in specific locations where there is strong support from residents;

- To ensure that housing changes maintain, and where possible enhance, the quality and character of the Parish so that future generations can enjoy the same or a better living and working environment;

- To facilitate the realisation of community benefits as part of any multi-family housing development proposal;

- To ensure that any new developments are appropriate to the character and style in the different parts of the Parish.

Land for future development in Bray Parish is extremely limited under established preservation policies. The Crown Estate, prior designation of Green Belt, the two Conservation Areas and the Flood Plain are over-arching limitations on where new housing can be sited. While residents are strongly in favour of protecting the Green Belt, the two Conservation Areas and the Recognised Settlements in the Green Belt within the Parish, nonetheless we have families who want their children to be housed nearby, older people who want to stay near their families and people working nearby that all want suitable housing. The policies of this Plan attempt to balance the preservation of Green Belt, Conservation Areas and Recognised Settlements washed over by the Green Belt with the provision of additional suitable housing. The policies for evaluation of housing development proposals are stated below as the Plan Housing Assessment Criteria.

The NPPF recognises that future requirements for development may lead to an increased requirement for land. This land is to be sourced from brownfield sites, limited infilling, land re-use and areas outside the Green Belt.

Residents of Bray Parish were surveyed in January 2012 on where future housing development might be supported within the Parish and the criteria important to permitting future developments. Preservation of Green Belt was expressed as extremely important. Residents understand that development may be allowed under existing infill rules within Recognised Settlement Areas or could be considered elsewhere if supported by exceptional circumstances such as strong community support and valuable community benefits. Re-use of previously developed sites was
the highest ranked category of potential sites for future development supported in the survey, with support also expressed for re-development of derelict and unattractive sites subject to other conditions being met.

The Plan Housing Assessment Criteria, as set out in “B” below, support housing developments that comply with the normal RBWM planning policies. Priorities for development are described here to recognise that some plans for additional housing may be acceptable, particularly those including community or sustainable benefits, even where not all assessment criteria are met.

Additions to the housing stock through refurbishments, redevelopments, including those involving change of use conversions (e.g., re-purposing offices or agricultural buildings to housing) and limited infill within Recognised Settlements, may be supported where proposals meet Plan Housing Assessment Criteria. Proposals for development on previously developed land or re-purposing long term vacant, derelict, or redundant agricultural buildings will be supported where the proposed development meets a genuine need for housing demonstrated by RBWM and the proposals otherwise meet Plan Housing Assessment Criteria. The rules for conversion of redundant farm buildings are being continuously updated by the Department for Communities and Local Government.

**Neighbourhood Plan Policy BNP-BE1:** Proposals for development in the Green Belt will only be supported where they can be shown to deliver significant community benefits and are supported by more than 50% of the registered electors who live in the Parish Ward affected by the development and who vote in a survey.

With 94.8% of Bray Parish being in the Green Belt, it cannot accommodate large scale developments. The community has been unequivocal about its desire to retain the character of the area and to protect our green and leafy environment. Where future housing development is contemplated, the provision of appropriate and necessary infrastructure and community amenities is also a priority.

We wish, through this Plan, to have greater community involvement and influence on proposals for developing any larger sites (5 or more dwellings on sites larger than 0.25 hectares) (as recognised in NPPF paras 69 and 188).

A Development Brief is a very useful tool to achieve this goal. Developers can set out their proposals for new development schemes with sufficient detail to allow the local community to understand what is being proposed and to engage in a meaningful consultation process. It is part of the design process and should be used
as part of an iterative process through which local views can be incorporated into the evolution of the design of the development. Any proposals should take into account the issues that the local community are passionate or concerned about. These include:

- Ensuring infrastructure is put in place to support the proposed development – especially roads, pedestrian and cycle routes, and parking provision.

- That proposed designs for the development are of high quality, in keeping with the character of the area and will enhance both the natural and built environment.

- Desired public amenities and open spaces are provided as appropriate as part of the development.

- Proper consideration is given to the need to increase capacity for schools and/or health services.

- Impact on trees, landscape and wildlife.

This policy will ensure that the community is involved at an early stage in the planning process and will also be of benefit to developers when subsequently submitting a planning application, to know that they have general community support for it.

Although the focus of this policy is on larger development sites (i.e. 5 or more dwellings), it is good practice for community consultation to have a role in significant planning applications.

Neighbourhood Plan Policy BNP-BE2: Development Proposals which include 5 or more dwellings on sites larger than 0.25 hectares shall be required to submit a Development Brief as set out in Section VII of this Plan to RBWM, and actively to engage in consultation with the Parish Council and the community as part of the design process prior to any planning application being submitted.

Neighbourhood Plan Policy BNP-BE3: Planning applications for developments which require a Development Brief must be accompanied by a Statement of Community Consultation, as set out in Section VIII of this Plan.

**B. Plan Housing Assessment Criteria**

The construction of new housing is considered inappropriate in the Green Belt. Very special circumstances must be established to justify any development in the Bray
Green Gap, Conservation Areas or within the Flood Plain. Other development in the Green Belt may be justified if it respects the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of adjacent land uses. Such development in the Green Belt must demonstrate community benefits and gain approval of a majority of residents.

Proposals for housing conversion or development should be assessed based on whether they meet the following criteria:

- There are strong Parish and community benefits;
- Projects bring back into use previously developed sites, derelict or redundant farm buildings or long term vacant properties;
- The proposal complements the style or character of the surrounding location and does not adversely impact the visual amenity or create noise for near neighbours;
- The proposal makes use of land proximate to existing village centres with good public transport links;
- The proposal is sustainable and minimises impact on the environment. Factors to be addressed in proposals include:
  - Minimising resource use by encouraging the reduction of car trips and increasing use of public transport,
  - Environmental benefit through preserving landscape character and functioning farm land,
  - Quality of Life benefit through promoting local employment close to housing and local amenities,
  - Quality of design benefit, through improved landscaping, pedestrian footpaths and quality architecture.
- Multi-family development proposals should include a broad mix of housing suited to a variety of needs, consistent with scale and density of adjoining housing and the local character of the neighbourhood.
- The character and style of housing should be consistent with RBWM Borough Plan Policies:
  - To allow a variety of types and sizes of houses but ensure a particular development is in keeping with the adjoining or nearby properties;
To ensure compatible scale and density and overall look and feel;

To establish minimum internal space guidelines for bedrooms and reception rooms;¹

To take account of the changing demographic profile of the local Bray Parish population.

- Applications for refurbishment of vacant houses or shops will be given favourable consideration, particularly where refurbishment will create some affordable housing or other sustainable community benefit.

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**Neighbourhood Plan Policy BNP-BE4:** The Plan Housing Assessment Criteria supplement RBWM planning policies to provide the acceptable conditions for housing development in Bray Parish. They apply to refurbishments and redevelopments involving change of use or limited infill at existing Recognised Settlements.

**Neighbourhood Plan Policy BNP-BE5:** Compliance with the Plan Housing Assessment Criteria must be presented with proposals for housing development. Proposals will be assessed on the degree to which the criteria are satisfied.

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C. **Housing Layout Objectives**

Parish residents support the objective of sustainable housing development in rural areas (NPPF Para 55) through the protection and maintenance of areas surrounding housing development. While the RBWM Planning Department will have primary responsibility for ensuring objectives are met, the Parish is concerned that future developments do not increase congestion in areas of the Parish already coping with heavy traffic, and that fences along properties do not obscure views or impede drivers’ vision at junctions. All proposals for development of more than 5 housing and/or business units should include a traffic impact assessment.

The following objectives should be considered for housing development proposals:

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¹ There has been a trend for smaller rooms in houses and flats, with bedrooms in particular becoming unreasonably small. The Government initiated a consultation exercise on minimum space and access standards in August 2013 and several London Boroughs already have minimum space standards. This Plan intends to adopt these and any other relevant National Standards, when published.
- Ensure the visual amenity of neighbouring properties is not adversely impacted;
- Ensure the building line is maintained;
- Ensure the roof line and frontage does not encroach on neighbouring properties;
- Maintain and protect opens spaces and any visual amenities within the built environment;
- Ensure any larger development of more than 10 homes includes some open spaces and encourages walking or cycling to community facilities or other local amenities;
- Ensure that new fences don’t affect users of the public highway;
- Encourage landowners or developers to provide land for community use as part of development proposals;
- Ensure there is sufficient minimum parking spaces or access for off-street parking for any development;
- Ensure that overall traffic levels are within acceptable levels for the existing roads or improvements to the roads are included as part of the development proposal;
- Ensure that the infrastructure can support the proposed development.

**Neighbourhood Plan Policy BNP-BE6:** Proposals for housing development should respect the Housing Layout objectives, in particular preserving visual amenity, minimising any further contribution to traffic congestion and not obscuring drivers’ vision at junctions.

**Neighbourhood Plan Policy BNP-BE7:** Fences along the public highway should not exceed 1.2m height. Owners replacing higher existing boundary structures should be encouraged to comply with the 1.2m limit.

**Neighbourhood Plan Policy BNP-BE8:** Proposals for development of more than 5 housing and/or business units must provide a traffic impact assessment and address negative factors relevant to the development plan.
D. Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings

The Plan Area includes two Conservation Areas, see map on page 6, and 83 Listed Buildings. Residents consider that maintaining the character of the Conservation Areas and of the buildings is important. This Plan therefore favours reviewing the Conservation Area boundaries every 10 years, and updating the boundaries or defining new Conservation Areas where necessary or desirable. Residents also wish to support owners of listed buildings in maintaining their properties.

Neighbourhood Plan Policy BNP-BE9: The Parish Council will support an owner’s proposal for change of use or further modifications of a Listed Building, in keeping with the character of the existing building, where such use or modification will support the owner’s ability to maintain the Listed Building and render it more economic and hence sustainable.

Neighbourhood Plan Policy BNP-BE10: Change of use or modification of a Listed Building must not impair visual amenity or create noise nuisance for near neighbours.

E. Other Developments

The following is a list of residents’ general objectives for future non-residential building and infrastructure development:

- Encourage more walking, cycling and public transport to community facilities, schools, shops and other similar classes of building with public transport aligned with community requirements;

- Car use should be discouraged in favour of alternatives (e.g., walking, cycling and public transport) and car sharing should be promoted (e.g., through provision of dedicated car sharing parking spaces in public parking lots);

- Access for cars and commercial vehicles to properties should have minimum impact on other road users (e.g., off-road access and drop-off areas and on-site parking for staff or visitors should be sufficient for any new development);

- Shops and licensed premises should keep fronts, signage and the surrounding environment tidy and repair/replace defective signs, frontage glass and lighting if broken or becoming unsightly;

- Street furniture should be kept to a minimum and suit the character of the local area;
• Advertising hoardings should have no adverse impact on surrounding housing glimpses of countryside or impair residents’ amenity (e.g. no strong lighting left on at night);

• Sites for telecoms masts, telecoms equipment boxes, utility substations and other similar equipment should be subject to Parish Council review and located in less obtrusive locations and/or appropriately disguised to diminish the effect on local area appearance.

1. Non-Residential Re-Use and Development

The community supports re-use or conversion of existing buildings for business expansion or new business establishment, subject to consideration of transport and environmental implications, particularly where existing or new businesses will service visitors to the Parish (e.g. sale of local produce, hospitality and services to promote walking, riding, cycling, etc.).

Local employment must be encouraged. A stock of simple buildings at affordable rents is vital to modest businesses that otherwise struggle to afford premises in urban centres. Local commercial premises provide the opportunity for new businesses to establish themselves and so promote economic development and contribute to local quality of life.

Many visitors come to the Parish to enjoy the countryside and rural activities, but services for walkers, bicyclists and riders are currently limited. This Plan supports establishment of local produce sales outlets, catering and recreational businesses to improve the experience visitors have when enjoying the countryside.

It is important to maintain the separation of settlements, which is a fundamental objective of the Green Belt, but to allow greater flexibility for rural settlements to develop and provide for their local population. Strict confines for settlements have to be balanced against the risk of over-intensive land use within confines (‘village cramming’). Intensification of dwellings increases as the land available for further development declines, and there is the risk that employment, retail and community developments are sacrificed to more valuable residential use. The use of all previously developed land for residential development is encouraged.

Landfill and land raising are discouraged as diminishing the natural beauty of the countryside where such activity will lead to significant change in the lie of the land. Gravel extraction should be permitted strictly on condition that the land is restored to its original state afterwards.

Riding establishments are to be encouraged where they can make use of the bridleway network (which will be maintained and improved), but some other equestrian users (e.g., polo) are viewed by the Parish community as self-contained
and making little contribution to the rural way of life. Existing facilities for polo are considered adequate.

The effect of new development on traffic movements is of great concern in the Parish, and all proposals for development must include a detailed assessment of impact on road traffic and description of any mitigating factors such as footpaths or cycle routes to facilitate residents’ access to the public transport network.

**Neighbourhood Plan Policy BNP-BE11:** The Plan supports sustainable growth of all types of business in rural areas and promotes diversification of agricultural businesses (NPPF Para. 28). Justifiable developments may include:

- Buildings supporting agriculture and forestry uses of the land;
- Facilities for expanding outdoor sports and recreation;
- Cemeteries;
- Limited infilling in Recognised Settlements, providing all buildings are of acceptable height (maximum 15 metres) and of a suitable style;
- Limited infilling, partial or complete replacement, or redevelopment of previously developed sites or permanent buildings, whether redundant or in use.

**Neighbourhood Plan Policy BNP-BE12:** Proposals to develop or extend large equestrian and polo establishments will be supported if they provide suitable access to the relevant associated infrastructure such as exercise facilities.

**Neighbourhood Plan Policy BNP-BE13:** This Plan supports (i) the extension or alteration of an existing non-residential building, provided that the extension does not result in any increase in the ridge height nor an increase in the building footprint of more than 50% or 50 square metres, whichever is the larger; and (ii) the construction in domestic gardens of separate non-residential buildings (such as offices, garages, sheds or summerhouses) which have a footprint of less than 30 square metres and are less than 2 metres high to the gutters.

**Neighbourhood Plan Policy BNP-BE14:** Street furniture, advertising hoardings and utility infrastructure should be unobtrusive and appropriate to the local setting.
2. Mineral Extraction

Mineral extraction activities in the Parish are long-standing and accepted, but the residents consider it important that they have a say over the nature and scale of mineral developments in Bray Parish. Any proposals for new extraction activities or the expansion of existing activities should be subject to local consultation on the impact on the local environment during and after extraction, and provide for restoration of the sites after extraction to a condition that is satisfactory to the Parish. It may influence Parish opinion if sites of extraction will support improved public access following restoration.

**Neighbourhood Plan Policy BNP-BE15:** Proposals for minerals extraction will usually be restricted to areas identified at County level and contained within the RBWM Local Plan with these sites being chosen using the County level assessment criteria as to their suitability. Proposals must include plans for restoration back to agriculture or other acceptable uses which will include public access, fishing and non-water-based leisure activity and should ensure that there will be no unacceptable change to the volume, pattern and nature of road traffic during the operation to the detriment of the local environment, infrastructure and quality of life.

3. Land Shaping

Parish residents support the introduction of strict controls on land shaping (either by excavation or deposition) by farmers and landowners. Decisions on land shaping pursuant to this Plan will be made at the Parish level in preference to the issue of permits at the national level by the Environment Agency to limit adverse impact on the local environment, particularly that caused by the lorry movements associated with such works.

**Neighbourhood Plan Policy BNP-BE16:** Applications for land shaping must positively demonstrate that the depositing of waste materials is only in the interests of agriculture or equestrianism. Such applications will only be supported if it can be shown that it will in no way affect the quality of life for any immediate residents by reason of noise, dust or loss of views from their properties. Operators will be liable for any damage caused to the surrounding roads and verges as a result of increased heavy traffic movements.
IV. Transport & Infrastructure

Local and RBWM surveys undertaken in 2011/2 indicated that transport together with related infrastructure and services were deemed by residents of Bray Parish as more important in terms of planning policies than housing, countryside, employment, and education, and only marginally lower priority than preservation of the Green Belt. The Plan therefore considers the objectives of improving transport infrastructure and provision of public transport within the Parish as key priorities.

The Parish of Bray has a strong economy based around hospitality, agriculture, recreation and IT-related businesses with only very few retail outlets. The Plan recognises the need to ensure access to all the above businesses to allow them to flourish.

Residents deem the local road network adequate in off-peak periods, with the exception of some speeding issues in Holyport and problems near the Industrial Park and mineral excavation sites where the size of the vehicles is often a source of pressure on the road network. Sections of the A330 and most of the B roads in the Parish are not wide enough to cater for HGV traffic and the re-routing of unnecessary HGV traffic, as discussed below, would improve traffic conditions on these local roads.

Parking and pedestrian access for local retail and hospitality businesses is inadequate and should be promoted where practical in road planning and proposals for re-development or new development, whether residential or non-residential.

Attracting trade and business investment to the area, with the creation of associated jobs, would be easier with better public transport, parking provision and reduced road congestion.

Improvements to rail services in the region will bring more people to the Borough and to the Parish to work and live, and should be supplemented with appropriate transport planning in the Parish.

A. Road Traffic Provision and Improvements

The use and congestion of roads within the parish is determined by the growth in both local and neighbouring populations, higher rates of vehicle ownership and use, and the proximity or ‘route association’ with key local growth towns such as Reading, Slough and Bracknell. Proximity to the M4, A404M and A308M motorways also contribute to the increased traffic on the A and B roads passing through the Parish. This increased traffic is traffic whose journeys do not originate or terminate in the Parish, often called transit traffic, and are described in this Plan as “passing through”
or “crossing” the Parish. There has been no new road development in the Parish for
the last 35 years and any future development needs to be balanced against
preservation of the rural nature of the Parish and the predominant agricultural and
equine land use in the rural economy. This is likely to cause distinct transportation
challenges.

![Map showing main roads through and around the Plan Area](image)

At present the narrow, single-carriageway main roads are often congested, with
traffic being particularly heavy during peak commuting hours around schools during
drop-off and pick-up times, especially when stationary, oversize delivery vehicles
block routes. Topography and the close proximity of housing to the roads,
specifically the A308 Windsor Road, preclude road widening and right turn lanes in
much of the Parish. Congestion on main roads has been worsened by adjacent cul-
de-sac housing developments, particularly along the A308. Pollution is often higher
than would be the case otherwise as exhaust fumes of slow-moving or stationary
vehicles are more prominent in the area.

Residents are concerned that road congestion will worsen in years to come as a
result of initiatives outside the Parish boundaries. Crossrail access at Maidenhead is
likely to lead to more through traffic as more commuters will cross the Parish
heading for the station. The Town Centre Regeneration Project and similar
recreational and retail developments in Windsor and Maidenhead is likely to increase
night visitor traffic and shopping traffic through the Parish. The Priors Way/Maidenhead Industrial Trade Area may promote more commercial and industrial traffic on Parish roads, particularly oversized vehicles that are a principal factor in area congestion.

There are no convenient and immediate solutions to the traffic congestion issues in the Parish, but there are measures that can be taken to reduce congestion and public policies can improve longer-term road conditions. The following is the objective of this section of the Plan:

- To ensure that traffic and congestion across the Parish is not increased and, where possible, to improve the current traffic and congestion situation.

The Plan also supports the following additional initiatives which would address some of the issues faced in the Parish with respect to traffic.

- The Plan favours road restrictions to discourage commercial vehicles from transiting through the Parish on A and B roads.

- The Plan favours limiting the size of delivery vehicles stopping on B roads. Weight restrictions already apply on the Bailey bridge, and these should not be changed by any reconstruction.

- The Plan favours a 40 mph speed limit Parish-wide, with 30 mph zones in residential neighbourhoods and on stretches of A308 and Holyport Road. The limited existing 20 mph restrictions in the Parish, notably at Bray Village and in school zones, will be maintained.

- The Plan supports the planning and construction of a link road to the south of the M4 to alleviate passing traffic problems on the A330. The planned-for increase in traffic on the 'widened' M4 together with the substantial population increase resulting from housing development in the Royal Borough and in the adjacent areas North of Bracknell/Binfield are the main contributors to the issues, as well as commercial traffic passing through the Parish. A southbound link road would complement the busy A404(M) thus linking the M40 to the A4 and M4 and through towards the M3. The Plan supports the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership which has identified the need for a North-South link between the M40/M4 corridor and the M4/M3 area as a strategic priority to promote economic development in the region. Similarly the Plan sees this link as a main priority in securing a solution to the increasing Parish traffic problem and the method for improving intra Borough traffic flow. The link through the M4 should serve the A404M to encourage through traffic usage. It is noted that there are only two southerly exits on the
M4 between Junction 4b (M25) and Junction 10 (A329M). The Plan supports the Highways Agency M4 SMART scheme currently under consultation.

- The Parish Council should continue to contribute to Highways Agency, regional and RBWM planning, and the M4 SMART Scheme in particular, to ensure future highways and road developments fulfil the objectives of alleviating traffic and other road congestion in the Parish.

**Neighbourhood Plan Policy BNP-TI1:** As an objective of the Plan is the free flow of safe traffic throughout the Parish, any developments that have an impact on traffic movements in the Parish must provide a road infrastructure that is appropriate for all forms of transport allowing for regulatory requirements and forecasted increases in such movements.

The Plan supports specific traffic management changes aimed at improving traffic flow at the key junctions in the Parish, and specifically junctions of the A308 with Priors Way, Upper Bray Road, and Monkey Island Lane/Fifield Road. These include:

- Right turn restrictions may be appropriate on some roads to improve flow rates;
- A mini roundabout at the offset junction of A308/Monkey Island Lane/Fifield Road;

In the longer term residents of the Parish would support limiting the size and weight of commercial vehicles passing through the Parish on the A330 and on Holyport Road.

Traffic flow on roads and through junctions should be improved by selective introduction of right turn lanes, mini roundabouts and other improvements where practical. Peak hours right turn restrictions may be appropriate on some roads to improve flow rates. Size restrictions should be evaluated for HGV/delivery vehicles stopping on Parish roads.

The expansion of school traffic flows in the Parish needs to be raised with the Highways Agency, RBWM and other local authorities. Road development must be addressed as a requirement arising from increased housing construction in the Parish and in neighbouring settlements. Many residents of the Parish and non-residents drive their children to schools in the Parish and across the Parish to schools in adjacent areas, contributing greatly to congestion on the roads at peak hours. Driving is often perceived to be safer than walking, so that a balanced policy to reducing schools-related road traffic will also promote a safer pedestrian.
environment. Safety for school children also requires vigilance enforcing speed restrictions, respect for pedestrian priority at road junctions, and the provision of appropriate pedestrian crossings and cycle routes. School transport policies are central to this.

Residents believe traffic flows can be better managed on roads around Holyport Church of England School, Braywood School, Oldfield School (to be relocated in 2015), Holyport College and the Free School at Braywick Park on Hibbert Road. The creation of safe drop-off and pick-up zones near schools is a high priority. The increase in school traffic flows in and through the Parish needs to be raised with the Highways Department and local authorities as an issue arising from increased housing construction in the Parish and adjacent school catchment areas.

**Neighbourhood Plan Policy BNP-Ti2:** Development must provide safe drop-off and pick-up zones which do not impede through traffic on roads at proposed school sites.

### B. Public Transportation

The villages and settlements in the Parish have only limited access to public transport. Rail stations are located 2 to 4 miles either side of the Parish in Windsor and Maidenhead, so that residents from within the Parish and visitors to the Parish must plan for additional road transport to supplement rail journeys. Investment in rail improvements including Crossrail to Canary Wharf and Heathrow together with First Great Western services to Reading and Paddington are very welcome, as would be any planned improvements to the South West Trains services from Windsor. Residents are concerned, however, that improved rail services have not been supplemented by local planning to address the increase in road congestion near stations or through Bray Parish likely to result from more passenger journeys or to address improvements to public transport linkages by bus.

The uncoordinated public transport infrastructure makes integrated and efficient travel using public transport very difficult for residents of Bray Parish and visitors to the Parish alike. Bus routes in Maidenhead and Windsor do not currently include stops at rail stations. Bus services should include Maidenhead and Windsor Riverside Stations in their operating pattern. Rural bus services should link to the high frequency Slough-based bus services in the Dedworth area at the eastern edge of the Parish.

One bus company, Courtney Buses, operating for only 12 hours daily from Monday to Saturday and just over 8 hours on Sundays, serves Bray Village, Holyport, Fifield and Dedworth. Service frequency is hourly for the most part. The hourly service is
viewed as inadequate for reliable planning of journeys. The lack of late evening or night services discourages local participation in the night economy or use of public transport to reach regional retail, recreational, medical and sporting venues. The bus schedule and stops for Courtney Bus service can be viewed at: http://www.courtneybuses.com

It serves little purpose for Crossrail to transport passengers in 48 minutes from Maidenhead to Canary Wharf, or First Great Western to have an elapsed time from Maidenhead to Paddington of circa 25 minutes or 18 minutes to the Reading hub, if passengers must plan for much longer journeys to access the rail stations from the distant parts of the Parish due to infrequent bus service, unpredictable road congestion and unreliable parking availability. Achieving the projected UK economic benefit from Crossrail of £42M annually, will require dependable passenger access to services and termini. Stations will require more parking, bike sheds and public transport connections.

A coordinated public transport policy would promote faster and more frequent buses serving Bray Parish, with express operations on the link between Maidenhead and Windsor during the peak hours using the A308. Better bus service would increase passenger usage, limit public subsidy, as well as reducing pressure on car parking in Windsor and Maidenhead. Higher frequency bus services, better provision of bus shelters on bus routes, better access with pedestrian crossings at bus stops on A roads and fare incentives would encourage wider and more frequent use of buses in preference to cars. Later bus services would promote the night economy, which is of considerable importance to the hospitality enterprises in Bray Parish and also to Parish residents wanting to visit venues in neighbouring settlements and beyond.

The frequency and duration of the bus services that transit the Parish should be improved. Buses should operate half-hourly during daylight hours, with express services in the peak hours for links to Maidenhead and Windsor. Hours of service should extend to 17 hours a day to support the night economy in the Parish and adjoining settlements. Fare incentive schemes should reward more regular use of buses in preference to cars.

C. Pollution - Transport Related

Although Bray Parish is predominantly Green Belt, air pollution continues to be a problem especially around the M4 flyover on the A308 at the junctions of the Upper Bray Road and Holyport Road where congestion is frequent. Other areas frequently impacted by congestion are also at risk. The junction of B3204/Upper Bray Road and the A308/Holyport Road now exceeds the National Air Quality Objectives (NAQO) target by 40% at times and with a forecasted large increase in M4 usage then this could worsen.
Better screening of the M4, which is responsible for 50 per cent of the pollution, should be a priority, particularly with the planned increase to 4 lanes in both directions by the use of the hard shoulder under the Highways Agency Managed Motorway system. Reduction of right turning traffic to/from the Upper Bray Road would contribute to lower exhaust from stationary traffic.

Increased pressure on Parish roads is anticipated from the Priors Way/Maidenhead Industrial Trade Area and public and private bus stops associated with relocated and new schools in area. Commuter traffic and housing density around Aysgarth Park/Bray Court/Earlsfield add to the challenge.

**Neighbourhood Plan Policy BNP-TI3:** Planning decisions should take account of the impact on air quality in the parish, supporting proposals which will result in the improvement of Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) or minimise reliance upon less sustainable forms of transport.

### D. Parking

Parish residents support free-to-resident or low cost car parking in the Parish to support local retail and hospitality sectors. Residents and visitors alike should have access to parking facilities in the Borough, with support expressed for the planned expansion of the car parking facilities at Stafferton Way to ease pressures anticipated from increased demand for access to Maidenhead Station as a result of Crossrail and First Great Western Hub developments.

Parish residents have recognised the need to discourage the use of the car but feel that unless the necessary investment by in rural public transport is forthcoming, the rural population will continue to depend on the private car, particularly given the low number of retail outlets and services in Parish settlements. Parking should be addressed in all development proposals, both residential and non-residential, to prevent an increase in parking problems in the future.

Residential parking should be extended and should be part of the evaluation of new housing development proposals. This Plan supports all new housing providing at least 2 off street car parking spaces for each additional housing unit.

Bray Village attracts many visitors to its world famous restaurants but lacks adequate provision for short term and street parking. There is limited scope for supplementing visitor parking without compromising designated Green Belt lands. Misuse of Village Hall parking and road parking near hospitality outlets should be discouraged. Residents of the village may support charging visitors for parking and local businesses may object. Alternatively, the area to the south of the Bailey Bridge
currently being excavated could be acquired for parking overspill, possibly with funding from the hospitality venues. Alternative schemes to increase parking should be considered.

Pavement parking should be discouraged on A roads to prevent any contribution to road congestion or detriment to road safety.

The Parish Council will monitor the adequacy of car parking facilities in the Parish for commuters, customers of retail, hospitality and recreational businesses, school drop off and pick up traffic.

E. Footpaths, Bridleways and Cycle Routes

This Plan supports creating safe and attractive alternatives to motorised transport and encouraging recreational use of Parish cycle routes, bridleways and footpaths. Pedestrians, horse riders and cyclists should be kept off the margins of local roads by being provided with pavements, cycle routes and bridleways in a sensible network. There is currently an extensive network of footpaths and bridleways but in many cases these do not join up and it is necessary to use the roads to move between them. Access to the river is a paramount priority in provision and maintenance of public rights of way for residents and visitors.

In line with the Parish Paths Initiative, the 'Milestones Approach' and the Public Rights of Way activity, the Parish seeks to ensure that landowners appreciate and cooperate on improvements in any identified areas. Where relevant development in the Parish should seek Section 106/Community Infrastructure levies\(^2\) or similar monies for the recreational rights of way to be constructed or improved simultaneously with development.

All A roads should have a footpath suitable for pedestrian/cycle dual usage in rural areas on at least one side. A similar policy should be adopted for some sections of the four B roads in the Parish where supported by demand and not constrained by road width.

Monkey Island Lane should be evaluated as a potential cycle path to shorten bicycle journey times from Maidenhead to Windsor and to protect cyclists from having to use

\(^2\) A Section 106 agreement, also known as a planning obligation, is an agreement between a local authority and a developer that the developer will provide contributions to offset negative impacts caused by construction and development. Contributions can include affordable homes, open space, public transport infrastructure and/or services, footpaths and cycle routes, and community facilities (e.g., health, leisure and education facilities). Expect that this will become Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in 2015/16.
the busy A308. The Bray Lake area merits special attention with Section 106 money to be used for developing the footpaths and cycle routes and Monkey Island Lane.

Pedestrian crossings should be considered for introduction on the A308/A330 and the Holyport Road to ensure safe crossing for all pedestrians. Pedestrian crossings on these roads would have several major benefits for the community:

- Improve access to local retail outlets and play areas currently perceived as too dangerous for pedestrian access;
- Improve commuter and retail access to bus services and so promote use of public transport as an alternative to cars;
- Ease the exit of cars joining the A308/A330 from cul-de-sacs along these routes;
- Act as deterrent to excess speed by traffic passing though the Parish.

Signage should be posted on rural B roads to create an awareness of horses. Local equestrians should be discouraged from riding along A roads. S106 funds should be used to improve footpaths, modernise stiles/gates, and improve bridleways.

Cycle routes should be provided on the riverside to divert cyclists from roads, and more cycle routes along roads should be provided where feasible.

**Neighbourhood Plan Policy BNP-TI4:** Proposals for new developments should include appropriate provision for footpaths, bridleways and cycle routes through agreements for Section 106 or the new Community Infrastructure Levy (from 2015/6) funds to be dedicated to local improvements.

**F. Sustainability**

A successful transport policy can only be sustained by the recommended road infrastructure improvement being implemented by the respective agencies. Sustainability is also dependent on the goodwill of residents recognising the need for a reduction in non-essential personal car use.

Improved public transport frequency will sustain better use of the local facilities and retail outlets in the Borough thereby improving the local economy. In turn the subsidy of public transport will be saved. Expanding population in the Parish, Borough and the neighbouring areas will assist in sustaining all initiatives.
V. Economy

A. Background

The Plan Area contains an eclectic mix of businesses from home-workers to world-renowned Michelin starred restaurants and large established companies. Agricultural and equestrian businesses hold much of the land in the region. Retail businesses are represented in Holyport and the Windsor Road. Gourmet restaurants are a feature, particularly within Bray Village and there are many very good gastro pubs across the rest of the Parish, several Hotels & B&B’s, as well as Care Homes and Clinics. Leisure facilities are offered at Bray Lake and support boating on the Thames. Tennis and polo establishments also attract leisure visitors to the Parish.

Parish residents are keen to promote and support the economic and leisure enterprises within the Plan Area. Residents, daily commuters to Windsor and Maidenhead, and tourists visiting Windsor and Legoland all offer business opportunities which should contribute to local employment for local residents.

The Parish has a number of Green Belt sites that have been proposed by developers for residential development and have been rejected by many local residents. As an alternative some form of leisure facilities may be more acceptable on these sites. Leisure facilities may wish to relocate out of the centre of Maidenhead to improve facilities and some of these could be located in the Parish. The acceptability of moving such facilities would have to be supported by a survey of users and local residents.

The overall objectives for economic development in the Parish are:

- Ensure a sustainable balance between supply of jobs and the local labour supply to minimise commuting into and out of the local area;
- Ensure planning policies and regulations generally support business and employment;
- Retain and support existing businesses important to Parish quality of life, such as shops, pubs, restaurants, offices, industrial premises, leisure clubs and facilities, and the rural economy
- Promote new low cost flexible premises, and in particular make better use of redundant farm buildings, to support existing and new local businesses;
• Support the increasing number of people working in home-based businesses both generally and by allowing the limited employment of staff at home to support and expand these businesses.

B. Farming and the rural economy

There are 3 major landowners each owning several farms in the Parish, with over 800 hectares of productive, mainly arable, farm land. There are a number of other smaller farms and many of these have already diversified and let units to businesses. Many fields are let as pasture for horses. There are a number of stables and a vet.

The Plan supports the following objectives for farms and rural businesses:

• Promote a viable and sustainable farming and rural economy in Bray Parish;
• Promote the diversification of rural businesses;
• Encourage new businesses to provide a wider range of local produce, services and leisure facilities, to provide local employment and attract visitors to the Parish;
• Maintain and enhance the local environment of rural and agricultural lands.

Neighbourhood Plan Policy BNP-E1: Applications to convert genuine redundant agricultural buildings on working farms into suitable offices or light industrial workshops or warehouses will be supported along with other rural recreational and leisure activities except where such developments would result in significant adverse environmental or highway problems, or where general access to the facility is limited, or where there would be a significant adverse impact on neighbours through noise, light pollution, increased traffic levels, increased flood risk or inadequate provision of parking.

Note that ‘Adverse’ means that the problem could not be adequately overcome without spending in excess of the Section 106 / Community Infrastructure Levy for the development. The Parish Council is encouraged to work with proposal developers and planning authorities to overcome these potential adverse impacts through the appropriation of Section 106 funds or Community Infrastructure Levy, where appropriate, or to design off-highway access via driveway or lane to provide parking facilities appropriate to the proposed use, staff numbers and expected visitors.
C. Retail, hospitality and leisure services

Existing businesses in the Parish provide a diverse range of retail offerings and services. There are two main areas of shops in Holyport and along the A308 Windsor Road in the Plan Area. There are 2 well established garden centres on the eastern end of the Parish that have well frequented cafés and several other nurseries. Elsewhere there is a farm produce shop on the A308 and a bee keeping shop, set back on the Oakley Green Road, and two kennels. Bray Village is home to the internationally renowned Waterside Inn and Fat Duck and 3 other gastro pubs. Holyport has 4 Pubs, Oakley Green 3 and Fifield 1. There are two substantial hotels at Oakley Court and Monkey Island and several scattered B & B’s. There are two large care homes and a rehabilitation clinic. Motorists are served by 2 petrol stations and other car service, maintenance, repair and sales businesses.

Parish residents are keen to support the existing retail, hospitality and other service businesses in Bray Parish and attract appropriately scaled new businesses to provide a wider range of retail goods, services and employment. In particular, Fifield residents are keen to have a small-scale shop that meets local needs. An appropriate small scale with regards to retail activities is defined for this Plan as being no more than a gross internal area (GIA) of 200sqm with some minor variation being considered within the context of other shops in the vicinity. A garden centre will not be viewed as a shop for the purposes of this test. Larger scale retail developments are not considered appropriate within the Parish due to inconsistency with the rural character of our settlements.

Businesses should provide off-highway general access to the site via a private driveway or lane, if appropriate, and provide for drop-off and pick-up by delivery vehicles and staff and visitor parking facilities. These facilities must be of appropriate scale to the expected business traffic volumes, staffing and vehicle types.

Many retail shops, services and hospitality businesses are deemed to provide community contributions of benefit to all or part of the local community. This might be a place for clubs and societies to meet, a place for local people to socialise, a place to buy food locally, a place that could provide inside or outside catering or a bar for community events, etc. Residents wish to encourage and promote these local businesses so that they can continue to enjoy the benefits of having convenient shops, pubs and venues that make their communities more attractive to residents and more sustainable communities.
In general residents would wish to discourage visual clutter along public routes in the Parish, but balanced against this is the need to encourage custom to local businesses. While signage on public land will not be permitted, unobtrusive signage on private lands is considered appropriate. Direction arrows to local venues will be considered on their merits to encourage custom to local shops and hospitality venues.

**Neighbourhood Plan Policy BNP-E2:** Proposals to create appropriate small-scale retail, hospitality or service premises will be supported except where such developments would result in significant adverse environmental or highway problems or where general access would be limited or where there would be a significant adverse impact on neighbours as a result of noise, light pollution, increased traffic levels, increased flood risk or inadequate provision of parking.

**Neighbourhood Plan Policy BNP-E3:** Proposals for improvements to existing retail and hospitality businesses, including pubs, will be supported. Proposals that would result in the loss of these premises or limit their community contribution will be resisted. Proposals that would help secure their future and community contribution will be supported.

### D. Offices, warehouses, commercial, industrial and home-based businesses

There are a number of large established companies in Priors Way, Tectonic Place and along the A308 Windsor Road. At the other end of the spectrum there are a number of small home-based businesses scattered across the Parish. Home-based employment and home-based businesses are likely to become more popular as better broadband services are provided to the Parish.

The Plan supports these objectives to support this wide diversity of businesses:

- Maintain and promote a variety of types and sizes of premises in existing business areas to satisfy the range of requirements of local businesses, including small and newly established firms in Bray Parish;

- Maintain and encourage a balance of employers to give an appropriate range of opportunities for the local workforce;

- Support the increasing number of self-employed workers and people working in home-based businesses and encourage improvements to the broadband supply across the Parish.
As described above, all offices, warehouses, commercial, industrial and home-based businesses should provide appropriate off-highway access, pick-up/delivery area, and staff and visitor parking appropriate to the expected scale of the business and staff levels.

The number of additional staff that would be allowed in a home-based business will depend on location of the home office. Off road parking will be needed for each additional staff member who is anticipated to commute to the office by car. Additional off road parking should be provided for any regular clients or visitors to the business who stay for longer than 1 hour.3

Neighbourhood Plan Policy BNP-E4: Proposals to improve or create suitable office, commercial, warehouse or industrial premises will be supported in existing designated business areas, except where such developments would result in significant adverse environmental or highway problems or where general access would be limited or where there would be a significant adverse impact on neighbours as a result of noise, light pollution, increased traffic levels, increased flood risk or inadequate provision of parking.

Neighbourhood Plan Policy BNP-E5: Developments which promote wider availability of broadband services in the Parish will be supported.

E. Leisure

Bray Parish has a wide range of leisure facilities, enjoyed by its residents as well as many visitors from outside the Parish. Water activities are well represented with two marinas, a rowing Club, and windsurfing, sailing and related activities at Bray Lake. Cricket is played at Holyport and Braywood. Holyport also has one public tennis court and a real tennis court. Horse riding and related activities are conducted right across the Parish with polo clubs and a number of stables. With significant traffic on our main roads, more bridleways are needed. Cycling is also popular, with several of our roads used for cycling events on a regular basis. There are a reasonable number of footpaths, including the Thames Path along the river. These provide an alternative link between the settlements, the river or Windsor Forest on our South east boundary, and are used by many dog owners, walkers and some horse riders.

Parish residents have expressed the following objectives for leisure businesses:

3 Provisions on use of home premises may be difficult to monitor and enforce. Complaints by neighbours about congestion or parking abuses will likely be the basis for enforcement action.
- Maintain and improve the leisure provision within Bray Parish of both outdoor and indoor facilities by supporting leisure businesses;

- Promote and support sensible use of land for leisure, sport and other recreational uses where practical, enabling wide public access and use;

- Promote access to leisure, sport and recreational facilities using non-motorised transport where possible in addition to the provision of sufficient car parking and satisfactory road access;

- Improve access to current areas of leisure and recreation such as the Thames Path and Bray Watersports Lake for both residents and visitors;

- Support commercial providers of leisure, sport and recreational facilities within the Parish and support provision of these types of public facilities by RBWM for use by our residents and visitors.

The Parish has a number of Green Belt sites that have been proposed for residential development where local residents have rejected planned developments. Some form of leisure facilities may be more acceptable on these sites. Consideration will be given to leisure business or facilities developments, particularly on previously developed sites or where similar activities have been planned or conducted in the past. As part of such proposals residents would accept some infrastructure development incidental to leisure use, such as playing fields, club house, parking, access road, etc.

**Neighbourhood Plan Policy BNP-E6:** Proposals to create or expand leisure facilities will be supported, except where such developments would result in significant adverse environmental or highway problems or where general access would be limited or where there would be a significant adverse impact on neighbours as a result of noise, light pollution, increased traffic levels, increased flood risk or inadequate provision of parking.
VI. Plan Monitoring and Review

The Bray Parish Neighbourhood Plan sets out the vision, action plan and policies to facilitate sustainable growth and development for our communities. It has been prepared in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 and the proposed RBWM Local Plan to supplement the policies, objectives and constraints to deliver sustainable growth and improve the Parish quality of life. The Plan also expresses objectives for Parish cooperation with neighbouring settlements of Windsor and Maidenhead, the RBWM Highways Department and the Highways Agency and others, where collective action can contribute to better outcomes for the Parish.

As policies and plans for the local authority, regional development and neighbouring settlements may change and impact the Parish in future, it is envisioned that this Plan may be reviewed and revised to better address the priorities and objectives of the residents of the Parish. The Plan should continue to align Parish residents’ objectives with the strategic aims, needs and priorities of the wider local area. To this end the Parish Council will continue to liaise with RBWM and neighbouring planning authorities. Changes to the RBWM Borough Local Plan or significant developments in neighbouring settlements and areas may have an impact on our Plan Area and require some aspects of this Plan to be reviewed.

This Plan has been drafted to provide support for development for up to 15 years. A formal review process in consultation with the community and the RBWM Local Planning Authorities should be undertaken every 5 years at a minimum to ensure the Plan is still current and serves its function as a positive planning tool to deliver sustainable growth. If the review deems the adopted Neighbourhood Plan to be insufficient, the development of an updated Neighbourhood Plan shall be initiated.

The scale of regional development and other factors can have a significant impact on Bray Parish in the future. In circumstances where the Parish Council, supported by a simple majority of residents attending the Parish Annual General Meeting, deem that the Plan requires review, for whatever reason, the Plan will be reviewed in consultation with the Parish community.
VII. Development Brief

A Development Brief shall include all relevant information needed to facilitate an informed and effective consultation, including, but not limited to:

- A site map showing the site’s location and its context within its immediate neighbourhood – including any areas of Green Belt, flood zones, the location of any SSSIs, SPAs, LWSs and heritage assets, landmark buildings or views.

- An illustrative layout that shows how the proposed development could be accommodated on the site.

- Scale, footprint, bulk and height of buildings.

- Mix of dwelling types and tenure.

- Design style and guidelines.

- Improvements to infrastructure and facilities to be provided.

- Access, parking, cycle and pedestrian ways and any required traffic congestion and parking assessments.

- Landscaping and publicly accessible open spaces.

- The location of trees and any that may be affected by the development.

- Indicative timing and phasing of the proposed development.

- Community benefits to be provided.

- An analysis of how the development proposals comply with the whole policy framework including the Neighbourhood Plan.
VIII. Statement of Community Consultation

It is good practice for community consultation to have a role in proposed developments, enabling local views about proposals to be understood, before planning applications are submitted.

Where a policy in this Plan includes a requirement for a Statement of Community Consultation to accompany a planning application this must, as a minimum, include the following:

1. An explanation of how a broad cross-section of local people likely to be affected by the development proposals, both in the immediate area and in the wider neighbourhood, were consulted on the development proposals in a timely fashion.

2. The means used to involve and engage with local people in the consultation.

3. Evidence that the development offers significant benefits to the local community.

4. A record of the views expressed by local people and the Parish Council, demonstrating that more than 50% of the registered electors who live in the Parish ward affected by the development - and who vote in a survey - support the proposed development.

5. An explanation of how the proposals being submitted following this Consultation have addressed the views of and any issues or concerns raised by local people and the Parish Council.
## IX. Index to Policies

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