



# Smiths Field, New Road, Tadley

Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan Examination

Response to Inspector's Questions



**Boyer**

Report Control

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Primary Author	Mandy Owen
Checked By:	Alison Thompson

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## **APPENDIX**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 These representations have been prepared by Boyer on behalf of Bloor Homes in response to the Inspector's questions regarding the Examination in Public of the Basingstoke and Deane Council Local Plan.
- 1.2 The report is structured such that each section covers a separate hearing session Boyer will present at. These are:-
  - Chapter 2: Other Housing Matters (Issue 4)
  - Chapter 3: Omission Sites (Issue 6)
- 1.3 On behalf of Bloor Homes, WSP will be attending the Hearing on Nuclear Installation (Issue 8) and a separate statement will be prepared for this.

## 2. OTHER HOUSING MATTERS (ISSUE 4)

*Is the Plan's distribution of overall housing development, including indicative levels of housing growth in the Borough, as set out in policy SS3, the Council's Document PS/02/14 and the 2014 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) (H04), justified and at the right level of detail for the Plan?*

- 2.1 The Local Plan housing distribution priorities housing locations in Basingstoke, followed by Whitchurch, Overton, Bramley, Kingsclere and Oakley with the assumption that other settlements will have Neighbourhood Plans to guide development. We raise a concern over this method of distributing housing to 'Other Settlements'.
- 2.2 For development within 'Other Settlements', this will either be done through Neighbourhood Plans or infill development within existing Settlement Policy Boundary. This method of distribution therefore discounts appropriate edge-of-settlement development if there is no Neighbourhood Plan in place.
- 2.3 Paragraph 3.1 of the emerging Local Plan states that the growth of Tadley is constrained given its 'location within the inner consultation zone of the Atomic Weapons Establishment' and as such Tadley's housing needs will be met elsewhere in the Borough. This should be revised accordingly to provide for a certain level of development, subject to compliance with appropriate criteria.
- 2.4 Settlements such as Tadley have the capacity to support small scale housing numbers with no restrictions in regards to deliverability. Future housing in Tadley is managed under policy SS7 – Nuclear Installations – Aldermaston and Burghfield with the requirement that developments be managed through the Emergency Plan. Separate representations will be made to these under Issue 7; however, the representations will demonstrate that small scale developments, such as that at Smith's Farm, New Road, Tadley, can be accommodated under the emergency plan.
- 2.5 Smith's Field sits between two existing residential developments and is bounded to the north by a golf course. The site therefore provides a logical edge-of-settlement infill development site on a self-contained site.
- 2.6 The Plan's housing distribution should therefore provide for appropriate small scale edge-of-settlement development and enable 'Tadley's housing needs to be met locally.

*Are the Plan's landscape protection policies (EM1-3) sound and how much weight should be given to them as constraints to new development? How important are the proposed strategic gaps and how should they be designated?*

- 2.7 The principles of policies EM1 and EM3 are considered sound and there are no objections to the weight added to these policies.
- 2.8 Policy EM2 (Strategic Gap) identifies the proposed Strategic Gaps. This policy aims for strategic gaps to “prevent coalescence of built up areas and to maintain the separate identity of settlements”. This policy aim in itself is sound and important in shaping the future relationship between urban and open space areas. However, the effectiveness of the Strategic Gap policy is dependent on the proper and sound designation of the Strategic Gaps.
- 2.9 Insert Map 3 of the Submission Local Plan defines the extent of the Baughurst – Tadley Strategic Gap. The Submission Local Plan continues to include the land at Smith's Field, Droxford Crescent/New Road, Tadley within the Strategic Gap and we object to its inclusion in the Gap for the reasons below.
- 2.10 A Landscape Capacity Study (LCS) was produced by the Council in 2008 to help inform decisions about the further extent and direction of development within the borough of Basingstoke and Deane.
- 2.11 Within the LCS, Study Area TA04 (Bishopswood Golf Course Slopes) is identified as having ‘medium’ overall landscape capacity. The LCS concludes that:
- “This is a modified landscape which has only localised impacts on the adjacent area. There is the potential for mitigation within this area which would have limited impact on the character. There is the potential for development here although its layout would need to take into account the more elevated parts of the area and would be limited to the southern part of the area.*
- ... The narrow part of the character area in the north-west corner provides an important buffer between Baughurst and Tadley and would need to be retained to prevent coalescence of the two settlements... [Our emphasis]”*
- 2.12 In the first instance, Land at Smith's Field is located in the south-west corner of Study Area TA04 and does not form part of the character area which the LCS identifies above as providing a buffer between Baughurst and Tadley.
- 2.13 Secondly, Policy EM2 states that the purpose of the Strategic Gaps is to “prevent coalescence of built up areas” and “maintain the separate identity of settlements”. The south-east boundary of the Baughurst – Tadley Strategic Gap is tightly drawn around the perimeter of Land at Smith's Field and excludes Droxford Crescent to the east and the residential property immediately to the west of the site.

- 2.14 The Strategic Gap boundary itself emphasises how the site at Land at Smith's Field is already bounded by existing development on two sides, and the site is also visually well contained by existing vegetation. The site therefore clearly does not serve the purposes of the Strategic Gap, neither in terms of preventing the coalescence of built up areas, nor in maintaining the separate identity of Tadley.
- 2.15 Furthermore, Bishopswood Golf Course is located to the north and north-west of the site at Land at Smith's Field and provides a more than sufficient buffer along the western boundary of the built up area of Tadley.
- 2.16 The Strategic Gap should be applied to those locations where it can actively make a difference in terms of preventing coalescence of built up areas and maintaining a separate identity of Tadley. In light of the existing development surrounding this site and the existing vegetation buffer of the golf course to the north, the designation of this site within the Strategic Gap has little purpose and the underlying intention of policy EM2 cannot be wholly applied here.
- 2.17 Instead, it is suggested that the boundary of the Baughurst – Tadley Strategic Gap be amended to exclude Land at Smith's Field to follow a more logical and defensible boundary to the north of the site. Altering the boundary in accordance to the above suggestion would not undermine the ability of the Strategic Gap to prevent the coalescence of the built up areas and to maintain a separate identity of Tadley.

*Should a review of any of the landscape policies be undertaken as part of the Plan?*

- 2.18 We suggest that policy EM2 – Strategic Gap needs reviewing as part of this plan. In answer to the first question an argument has been put forward to support the omission of Smith's Field from the Strategic Gap.
- 2.19 With Smith's Field bounded by development on two sides, its inclusion within the Strategic Gap appears illogical. Policy EM2 intends to prevent coalescence of built up areas, but with residential dwellings either side of the site, this is a logical site for development.
- 2.20 The principle of Strategic Gaps is supported, but a review should be undertaken to ensure the sites included in the Strategic Gap can meet the intentions set out in the relevant Policy.

### 3. OMISSION SITES (ISSUE 6)

- 3.1 *Potential development sites omitted from the Plan: Are there other sites, currently omitted from the Plan, which justify inclusion, and if so on what grounds?*
- 3.2 A location plan of Smith's Field can be seen in Appendix 1.
- 3.3 This site is omitted from the Local Plan on the grounds that the site is located outside of the Settlement Policy Boundary and within the 'inner zone' of the Detailed Emergency Planning Zone of the Aldermaston Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE). We suggest that neither of these arguments carries weight in the context of this development, as discussed below.
- 3.4 While the site currently falls outside of the Settlement Policy Boundary, it is bounded by existing residential development on two sides. The site is therefore not isolated in its location and the development of the site for residential use would be sympathetic to the surrounding uses and a natural continuation of the existing pattern of development.
- 3.5 In regards to the proximity to the AWE site, Bloor Homes support the need to manage development in the zones surrounding AWE Aldermaston and AWE Burghfield in the interests of public safety. However, in light of the increased housing number requirements, Bloor Homes considers it to be inappropriate to restrict development within or around Tadley, if a proposal can demonstrate that it can be accommodated under the emergency plan. The appropriateness of this site for development in light of the relationship with the AWE site will be discussed in the session surrounding Issue 8 of the Hearings. Therefore, to save duplication, this Statement will not focus on this side of the argument. However, Dr Alexander Lee, Technical Director at WSP advises that:

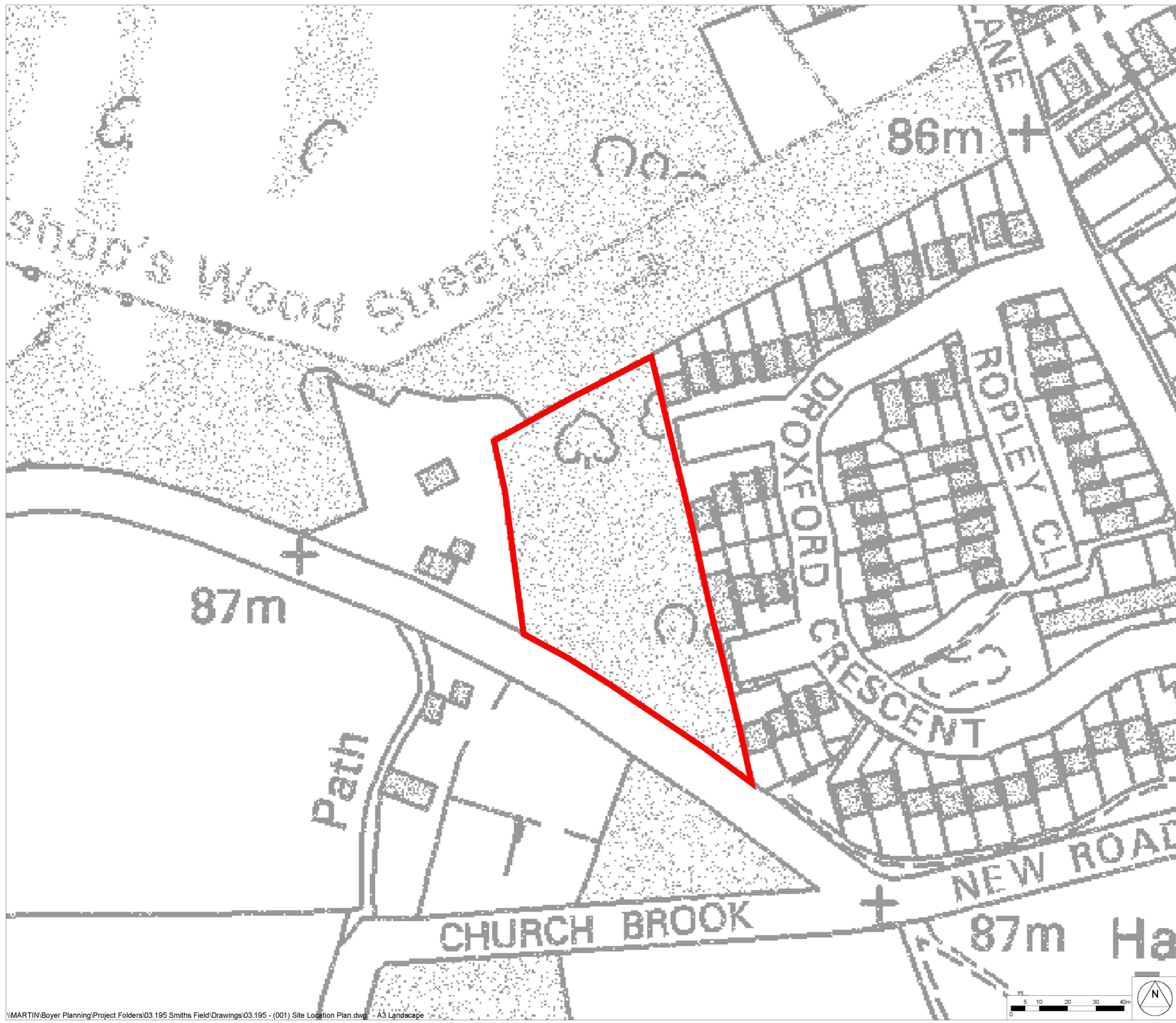
*“Individual and societal radiological risks to residents of Tadley due to accidents at AWE Aldermaston, while real, are so small that they should not be regarded as a significant factor when considering whether residential developments should be permitted. Furthermore, a reasonable programme of such developments, provided that it does not grossly increase the overall population of Tadley and provided that some other practical considerations (such as maintenance of ready access of the emergency services to the AWE Aldermaston site) are addressed, should not adversely affect the off-site emergency plan that has to be put in place for AWE Aldermaston. This plan has to be reviewed and updated every three years and it should be straightforward to adapt it to a structured programme of developments in Tadley, rather than regarding the current plan as a straightjacket that severely constrains the potential for giving planning permission for residential and other developments within the DEPZ.”*

- 3.6 This site could accommodate approximately 25 dwellings, at a modest density of 33dph. A future development would incorporate public open space and retain the high quality trees to maintain the existing view of the site from surrounding areas and maintain the soft boundaries to the site. With the existing development on two sides and the existing vegetation of the Bishopswood Golf Course to the north, the site is and self-contained. We suggest that this site provides a modest, sympathetic and natural edge-of-settlement development.
- 3.7 The site is bounded by development on two sides and 25 dwellings would appear a natural expansion to Tadley which would maintain the existing development lines to the north of New Road and the northern boundary along Droxford Crescent. With residential development to the east and west of the site, the exclusion of Smith’s Field for development is illogical.
- 3.8 The development of this site would comply with policy within the emerging Local Plan Policies and thus contribute to the needs of the District. Policy dictates that sites should provide for 40% affordable housing. A viability appraisal for the development at this site has been run and 40% affordable housing would be achieved on site. Policy also requires that market housing provides an adequate range of house size and types, which can be achieved on this site.
- 3.9 Access to this site can be achieved from New Road and would cause little significant impact on the existing transport/road network.
- 3.10 Smiths Field, located at the edge of the settlement, is accessible to local facilities with a primary school, doctors surgery and playing fields a maximum distance of 800m away and shops, libraries and a secondary school a short drive away. The site’s location is therefore sustainable and convenient.
- 3.11 To conclude, the development of this site would provide a logical and sustainable infill opportunity, which would not harm the views or character of the local area. It would also contribute towards enabling Tadley to meet its own housing needs.

## **APPENDIX ONE – SITE LOCATION**

LEGEND

Site Boundary



Rev	Date	Description
-	15/07/13	First Issue

Client



Project Title

Smith Field, Tadley

Drawing Title

Site Location Plan

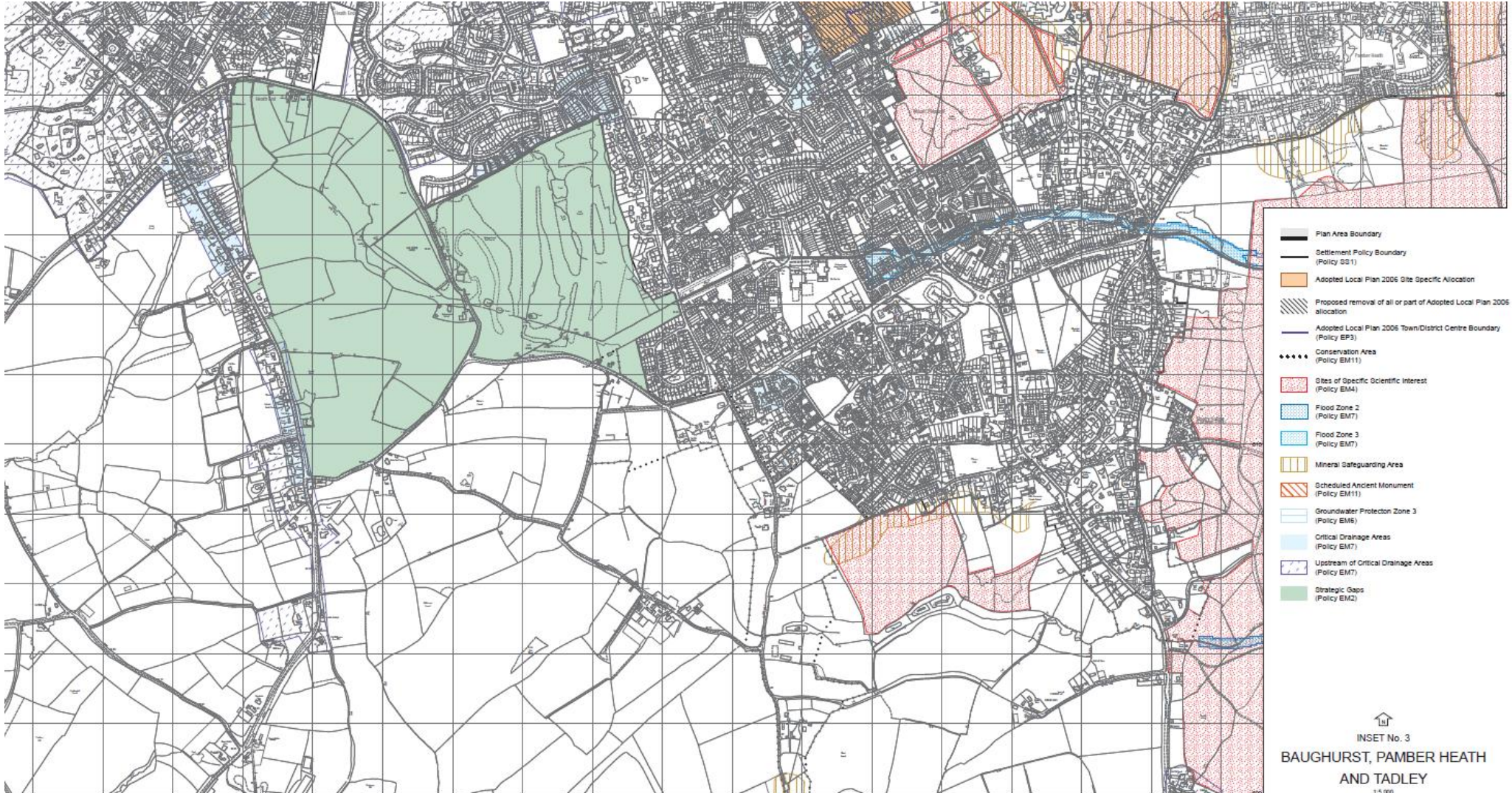
Date	Drawn	Checked	Authorised
15 Jul 2013	BDC	EK	JS
Number	Rev.	Scale	
03.195/001	-	1:1250 @ A3	



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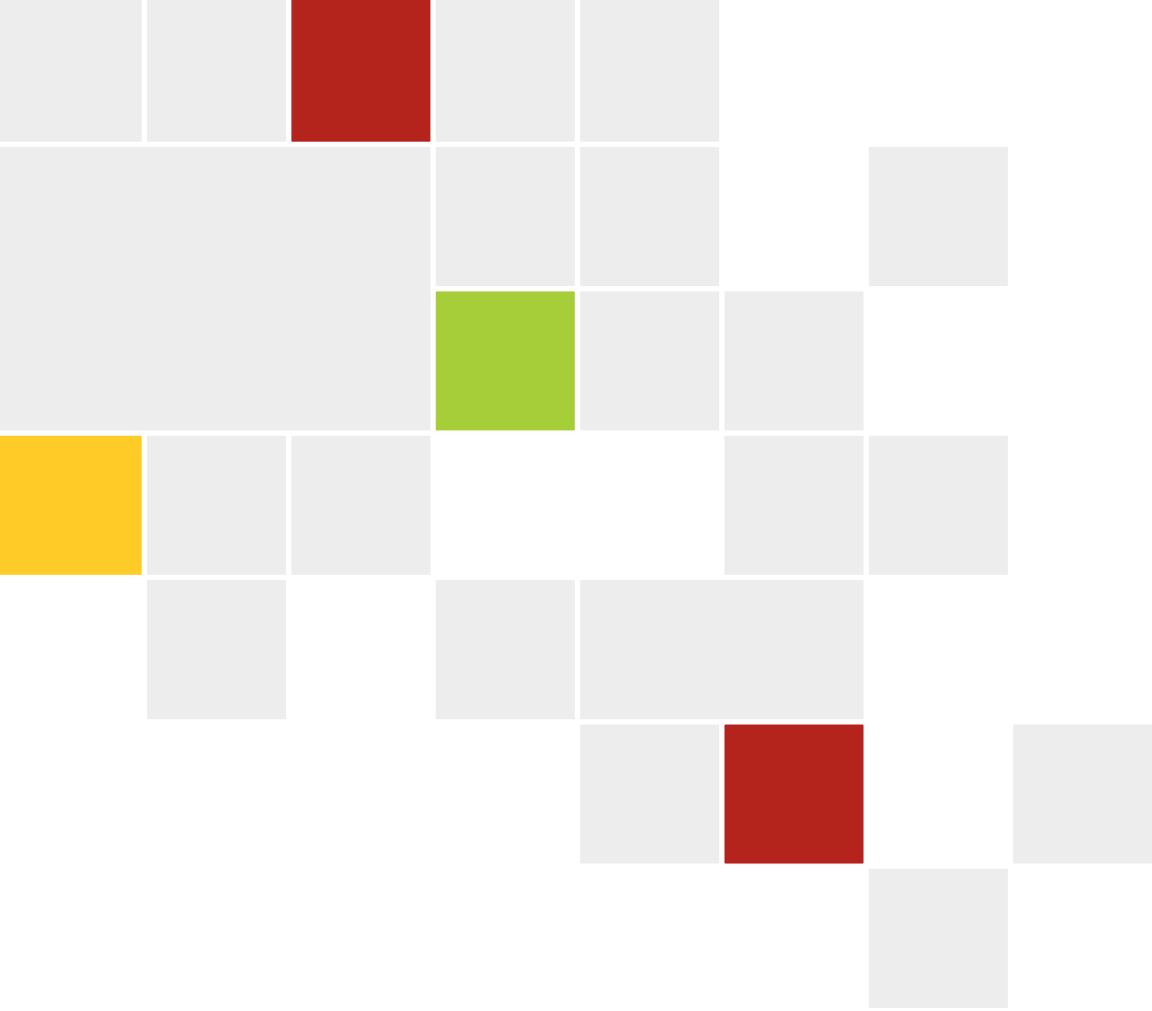
## **APPENDIX TWO – STRATEGIC GAP MAP**



- Plan Area Boundary
- Settlement Policy Boundary (Policy SS1)
- Adopted Local Plan 2006 Site Specific Allocation
- Proposed removal of all or part of Adopted Local Plan 2006 allocation
- Adopted Local Plan 2006 Town/District Centre Boundary (Policy EP3)
- Conservation Area (Policy EM11)
- Sites of Specific Scientific Interest (Policy EM4)
- Flood Zone 2 (Policy EM7)
- Flood Zone 3 (Policy EM7)
- Mineral Safeguarding Area
- Scheduled Ancient Monument (Policy EM11)
- Groundwater Protection Zone 3 (Policy EM6)
- Critical Drainage Areas (Policy EM7)
- Upstream of Critical Drainage Areas (Policy EM7)
- Strategic Gaps (Policy EM2)

  
 INSET No. 3  
**BAUGHURST, PAMBER HEATH  
 AND TADLEY**  
 1:5,000





# Boyer

Crowthorne House, Nine Mile Ride, Wokingham, RG40 3GZ | 01344 753 220  
wokingham@boyerplanning.co.uk | boyerplanning.co.uk