

## 5.2 Marlow

- 5.2.1** Marlow is a vibrant town with many assets, the key ones being its setting on the banks of the River Thames and its location in the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It has a strong economic base thanks to its strategic location in the Thames Valley but this has suffered to some extent in recent years, and a local Business Improvement District has been established to help address local issues. The town centre is vibrant and its Thames-side location is attractive with tourists, including Higginson Park and its associated leisure centre.
- 5.2.2** Its location and strengths are also constraints in terms of its ability to accommodate development, not just the Green Belt and the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty but the extensive floodplain – the town has suffered from significant flooding in recent years. There is also significant traffic congestion in the town. Policies to maintain the vibrancy of the town centre are set out in the Delivery and Site Allocations Plan and are not re-visited in this Plan.
- 5.2.3** The Sustainable Communities Strategy aims to ensure that the character and reputation of Marlow as an attractive, vibrant and accessible place that meets the day-to-day needs of both those who live and work in Marlow and visitors is maintained. Thanks to good stewardship, the River Thames continues to attract many visitors and improvements have been made to Globe Business Park to ensure that the town has remained a thriving business centre.

### **PRINCIPLES FOR MARLOW**

**To meet the district-wide Strategic Objectives, the Council will shape development in Marlow to:**

**1. Cherish the Chilterns**

- a) Protecting the landscape setting of the town.**

## **2. Strengthening the Sense of Place**

### **a) Make the most of its Thames-side setting by:**

- i. Safeguarding its historic riverside setting;**
- ii. Improving Higginson Park;**
- iii. Supporting and enhancing the tourist industry, including public access to the river and riverbanks;**
- iv. Protecting the town from flooding.**

## **3. Foster economic growth**

- a) Maintain and strengthen the town as a Thames Valley employment centre;**
- b) Improve car parking to serve the business park to ensure its long term success;**
- c) Make best use of the existing business space at Globe Park through regeneration and take up of vacant units.**

## **4. Improve strategic connectivity**

- a) Improve highway access from the A404 to the Globe Park Business Park.**

## **5. Facilitate local infrastructure**

- a) Improve sport and leisure facilities for the town.**

## **6. Deliver housing**

- a) Provide housing and affordable housing whilst protecting the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Green Belt from inappropriate development.**

## **7. Champion town centres**

- a) Ensure the town centre remains an attractive, vibrant and accessible place;**
- b) Maintain the vitality and viability of the town centre, ensuring it delivers a strong retail offering, including a wide range of fashion,**

**leisure and restaurants;**

**c) Recognise that the historic core to Marlow is key to its character and the success of the town centre;**

**d) Improve transport links between Globe Park and the town.**

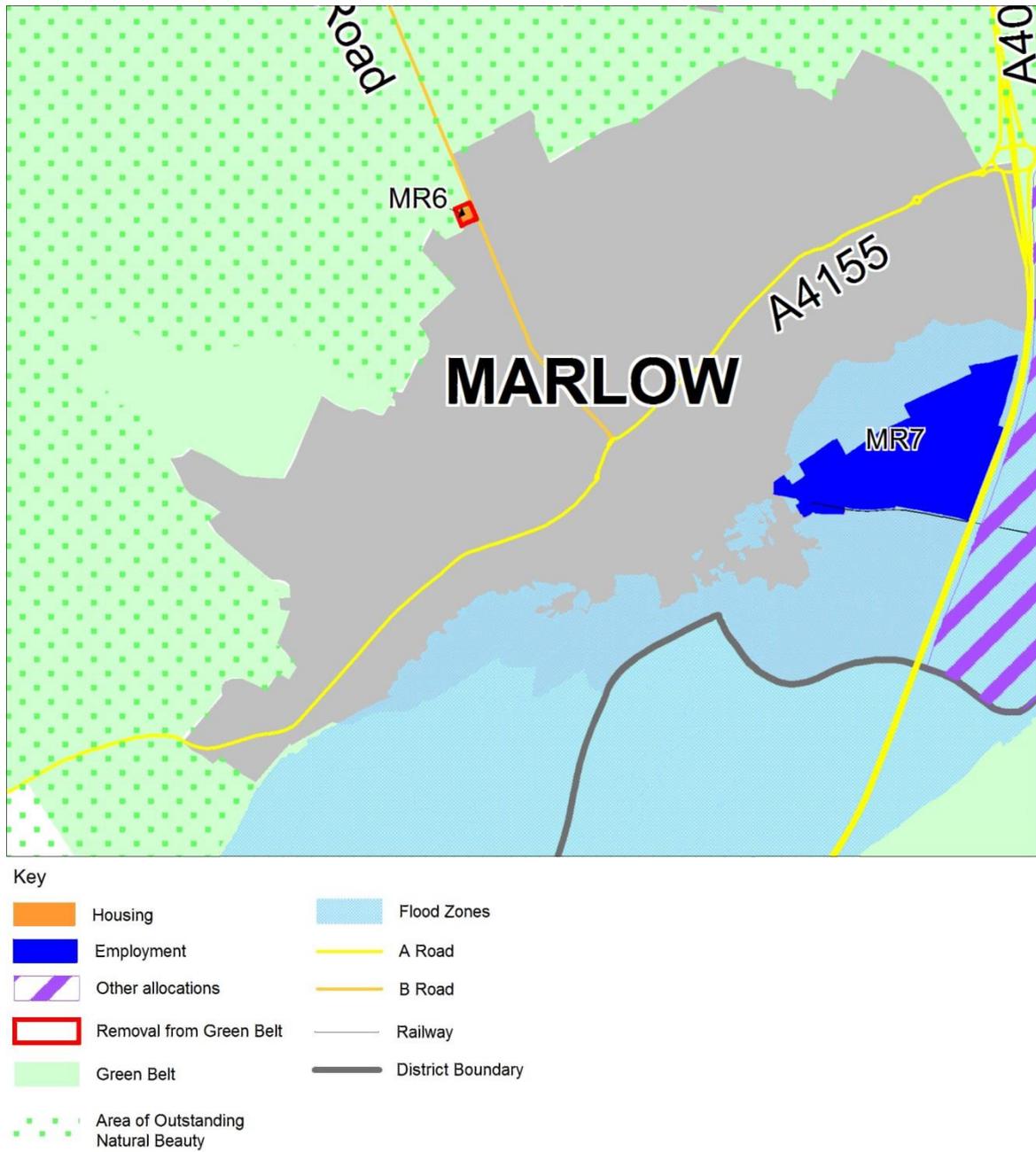
**8. Mitigate Climate Change**

**a) Protecting the town from flooding;**

**b) Improve sustainable travel choices in the town to reduce the need for residents to travel to the town centre by car.**

## Housing or Mixed Use Sites including Housing

Figure 22 Main proposals in Marlow



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**5.2.4** The following sites are identified for housing or housing led mixed use development.

*Table 13 Sites identified for housing or housing-led mixed use development in the Marlow area*

Policy reference	Site	Area (hectares)	Indicative dwelling numbers
<b>MR6</b>	Land at Seymour Court Road, Marlow	0.3	9
<b>n/a</b>	Police Station, Dean Street, Marlow	0.24	29
<b>n/a</b>	Foxes Piece, Marlow	1.52	10

**5.2.5** Additional housing will also be provided in Marlow on sites that already have a planning permission such as the Portlands site.

**MR6 – Seymour Court Road, Marlow**

**5.2.6** The site is 0.30ha and is located on the northern urban fringe of Marlow at end of a row of houses along Seymour Court Road, Marlow. The site fronts Seymour Court Road, opposite the residential area of Sunny Bank and Pinecroft Road. This is a greenfield site in the Green Belt.

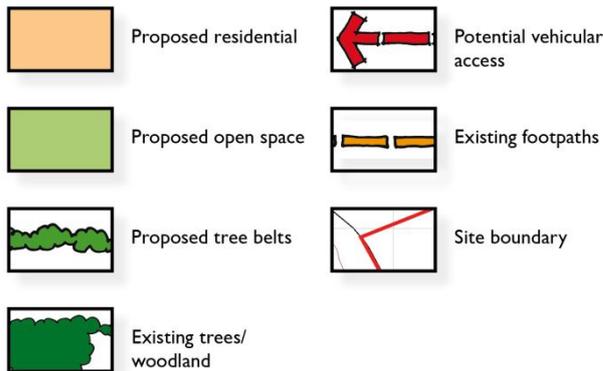
**POLICY MR6 – SEYMOUR COURT ROAD, MARLOW**

**Land is allocated at Seymour Court Road for residential use, as shown on the Policies Map.**

**Development of the site is required to:**

- 1. Adopt a landscape-led positive approach to design and layout to limit its impact upon the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty;**
- 2. Provide access off Seymour Court Road;**
- 3. Retain the existing footpath through the site; and**
- 4. Retain and strengthen existing boundary vegetation and have regard to Medmenham Biodiversity Opportunity Area Statement.**

Figure 23 Seymour Court Road, illustrative layout



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**5.2.7** The indicative capacity of the site is 9 dwellings

**5.2.8** The site is proposed to be taken out of the Green Belt and allocated for residential purposes. The Green Belt Part 2 report<sup>89</sup> has reviewed this site and indicates that exceptional circumstances exist in this case for removing the site from the Green Belt.

<sup>89</sup> Green Belt Part Two Assessment (September 2017, Wycombe District Council)

- 5.2.9** The site is also within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and whilst the Council's initial analysis suggests that there is scope for residential development a more detailed assessment is required by the developer in the form of a landscape and visual impact assessment to determine the impact, particularly in relation to longer distance views.
- 5.2.10** A public footpath runs parallel to Seymour Court Road along the eastern site boundary. Any development should ensure this footpath link is maintained.
- 5.2.11** This site lies within the Medmenham Biodiversity Opportunity Area (BOA), an area on the north-south ridge west of Marlow, from the Thames Valley at Medmenham up to Moor Common in the north. The BOA is not a constraint but an opportunity to improve and create new habitats. Development of this site should have regard to Medmenham Biodiversity Opportunity Area Statement.

## Land for Economic Development

### MR7 – Globe Park

**5.2.12** Globe Park is just off the A404, which links to the M40 Junction 4 to the north and M4 Junction 8 to the south. It is possibly the best strategic office location in Wycombe district, due to its close proximity to the strategic road network and the Thames Valley.

#### **POLICY MR7 – GLOBE PARK, MARLOW**

- 1. In Globe Park as defined on the Policies Map development will be permitted for classes B1, B2, B8 and sui generis uses that are akin to employment uses as specified in the Use Classes Order.**
- 2. Other uses that deliver economic development will be permitted where they:**
  - a) Support the business uses of the area;**
  - b) Are small scale;**
  - c) Generate employment.**
- 3. Residential uses will not be permitted.**
- 4. The Council will support proposals which deliver improvements to the access to and egress from Globe Park and facilitate its regeneration. These improvements include changes to the access arrangements to the business park, both on and off-site as well as the provision of new car parking to serve Globe Park.**

**5.2.13** Globe Park is on the edge of Marlow and includes a mix of modern offices with older industrial units. At present Globe Park is not fulfilling its full potential – there are a number of empty offices on the site and a key deterrent for new occupiers is the poor access into the park (especially at peak travel times) when there is significant queuing, as traffic tries to leave the A404 in the morning rush hour and within the business park in the

evening rush hour. There is also inadequate on-site car parking, which results in a poor environment as parking is uncontrolled and there are few on-site amenities. In 2015 a Business Improvement District was established which aims to improve the general environment of the park but is unlikely to resolve off-site access issues.

- 5.2.14** The Council has been working with Highways England, Buckinghamshire County Council and the Buckinghamshire Thames Valley LEP to identify what improvements can be made both at the A404 northbound exit slip road, the Westhorpe junction and access to Globe Park to improve accessibility for new and existing businesses.