

Eastern Area

4.29 The Eastern Area is made up of the Eastern Urban Area consisting of Purley on Thames, Tilehurst and Calcot plus the rural service centre of Theale.

Eastern Area - The Vision

4.30 The individual identities of Purley on Thames, Tilehurst and Calcot will be maintained and enhanced, as will the quality of the built environments. This area will have a close functional relationship with the Reading area and will benefit from the facilities and services that Reading offers.

4.31 Transport infrastructure will be enhanced to tackle issues of car dependency and congestion. Capacity on the road network will be increased through traffic management measures and upgrades to key routes. Public transport services will be improved through working with Reading Borough Council to increase accessibility to employment and services in Reading. Walking and cycling routes will be improved and more people will use these modes of travel. Additionally, traffic calming measures will improve the quality of the local environment.

4.32 Local centres will serve the needs of the communities of Calcot, Tilehurst and Purley on Thames. The area's retail offer will be improved and scope for improving the provision and enhancing the quality of the environment at the Pincents Lane Retail Park will be explored. Young people will have access to improved facilities and the community will benefit from better local sports provision. Education provision will be enhanced in the Tilehurst area. Regeneration opportunities and enhancement schemes such as at Underwood Road in Calcot will be completed.

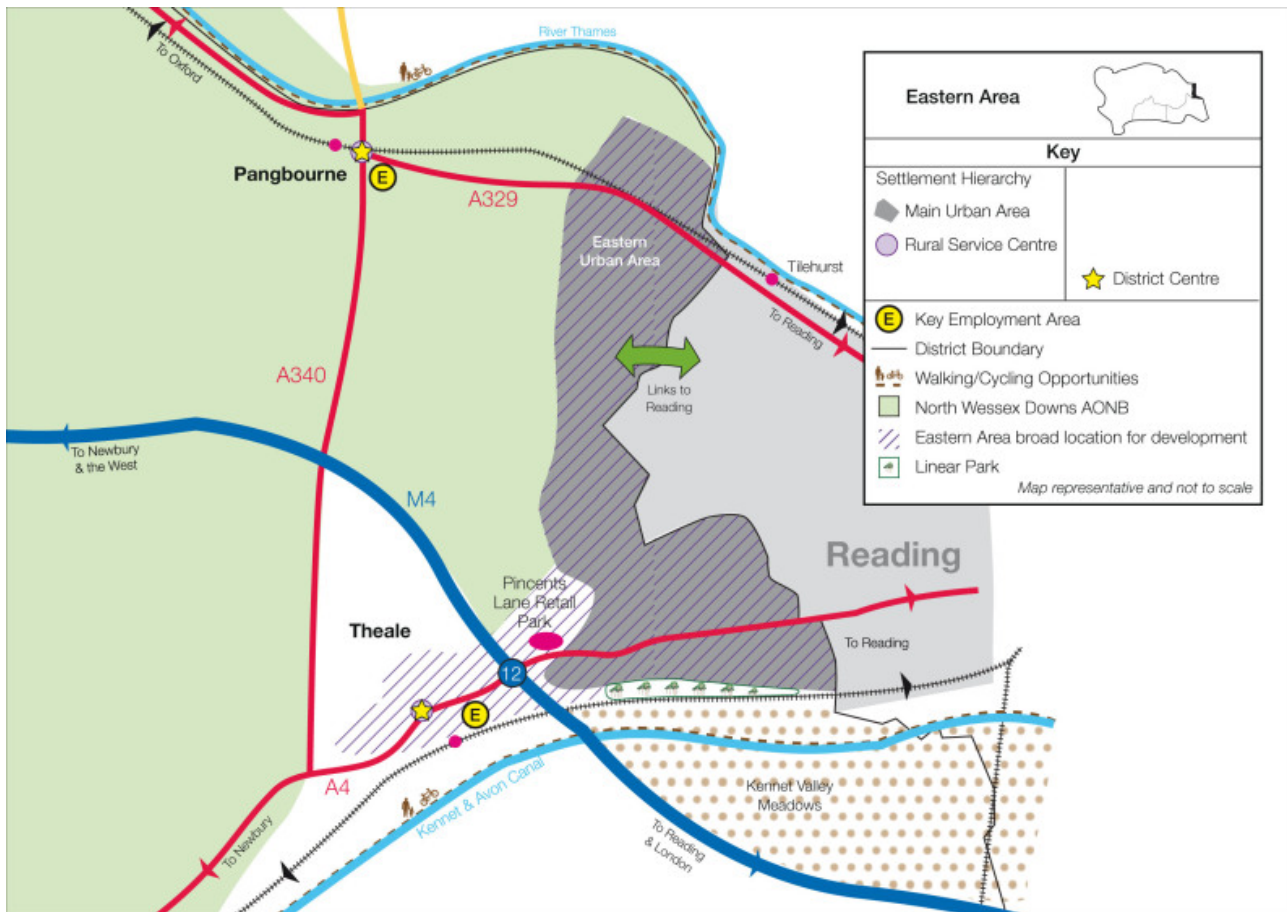
4.33 The high quality landscape and environmental assets in this part of West Berkshire, which includes the Thames National Path and the adjoining North Wessex Downs AONB will be protected and enhanced as a resource for the local population and for green tourism. As part of the Kennet Valley East Biodiversity Opportunity Area (BOA) the Kennet Valley Meadows to the south of Calcot will be enhanced through better management and will provide a higher quality resource for the local community.

4.34 Whilst Pangbourne lies within the North Wessex Downs AONB, it maintains strong functional linkages with the eastern area. There are therefore references to these linkages within this policy.

4.35 Theale will remain a vibrant village which maintains a distinct identity and sense of community. The Lakeside development has planning permission to provide 350 homes in a range of different sizes and types, which would become a well integrated part of the Theale community. If this development goes ahead, Theale would need to undergo a period of consolidation to provide an opportunity for facilities and services to be upgraded. The wide range of shops and businesses in the High Street will be maintained and enhanced. Important countryside assets such as Hosehill Local Nature Reserve will be managed and enhanced as an important resource for recreation and leisure during this period. Linkages between the town and railway station will be improved.

4 The Spatial Strategy

Figure 2 Eastern Area



Area Delivery Plan Policy 4

Eastern Area

Housing

- The Eastern Area of West Berkshire will accommodate approximately 1400 new homes during the plan period, in order to support the growth of the Reading area and to sustain services in the rural service centre of Theale. Further development will take place through the implementation of existing commitments, infill development, and sites allocated through the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD. A broad location has been identified on the Key and Area Diagrams which covers the Eastern Urban Area, Theale and the intervening land within which to find sites for the housing required. A number of sites which have future potential for development have been identified in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA).⁽³⁵⁾

Transport

- Cycle and pedestrian accessibility between Theale and Calcot will be enhanced by the construction of a new bridge over the M4 in partnership with the Highways Agency.

The Spatial Strategy 4

- Better cycle provision between Pangbourne and Tilehurst, through Purley on Thames; as well as safe and attractive cycle links between Pangbourne and Theale will be delivered in accordance with the Transport Vision⁽³⁶⁾.
- Facilities at Theale railway station will be improved in partnership with First Great Western; including additional parking where possible, and greater accessibility to facilitate interchange between modes.
- Existing and new businesses, particularly around junction 12 of the M4 at Pincents Lane Retail Park and Arlington Business Park will engage with the Council in travel planning.
- Highways infrastructure will be upgraded to reduce congestion along the A4 corridor, including improvements to the Langley Hill / A4 junction and potentially dualling the A4 from Langley Hill to the M4. Upgrades are identified and prioritised in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan with details of any critical infrastructure set out in Appendix D.

Retail Centres

- The retail park at Pincents Lane will be retained and enhanced as an important retail centre for the residents of Calcot, Tilehurst and Theale.
- The retail and service offer in the district centre of Theale will be protected and enhanced. The district centre boundary and its primary shopping frontage will be reviewed in the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD.
- Local centres will be identified through the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD.

Employment

- Theale town centre will accommodate small scale office development, whilst Arlington Business Park, Station Road and adjacent estates which comprise of a mix of high quality office and distribution floorspace, will continue to provide sustainable employment opportunities for local residents.
- The role, function and boundaries of the Protected Employment Areas of Arlington Business Park, Station Road and adjacent estates will be reviewed through the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD.

Community Infrastructure and Services

- Educational facilities will be improved through the refurbishment of Denefield and Brookfields Schools, and expansion of Theale Primary School. The need for any other educational facilities will be assessed using a formulaic approach.

Environment

- As part of a Biodiversity Opportunity Area, a strategic approach will be taken towards the Kennet Valley Meadows to ensure that the habitat continues to be able to support a diverse range of species and that the area's recreational function is maximised. Cross boundary work with Reading Borough Council on the management of this area will continue.
- Access to opportunities for leisure and tourism on the Thames National Path, the Kennet and Avon Canal and in the North Wessex Downs AONB will be improved through signposting and communication methods. They will be an important resource for both local residents and for visitors to the area.
- Conservation Area Appraisal will be undertaken for Theale Conservation Area in accordance with the Council's programme.

4 The Spatial Strategy

Delivery and Monitoring

The strategy for the Eastern Area will be delivered through the range of core policies identified in Section 5 'Core Policies'.

Monitoring will be through a range of indicators which are outlined in Section 6 'Monitoring Framework'.