Walkable Neighborhoods
And Reasoned Justification on Social and Community Uses

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Walkable Neighbourhoods

Introduction
The aim of this report is to establish a means of judging the most suitable distance for a walkable neighbourhood and those facilities which should form part of this.

A "walkable neighbourhood" is characterised by having a range of (predominantly day-to-day) facilities within a walkable distance.

Uses within Walkable Neighbourhood
The Core Strategy Towards Preferred Options identified the need to establish two-tiers of services falling within a walkable neighbourhood. Research conducted as part of Kensington and Chelsea's Community Strategy which highlights that residents thought that a 5-10 minute walk was suitable for local shops, GP surgeries and post offices whilst an 11-20 minute walk was more suitable for cultural and sport facilities.

It also takes account of the Trends and Indicators for Monitoring the EU Thematic Strategy on Sustainable Development of Urban Environment (April 2005) which notes that basic services are:

- Primary public health services (general practitioner, hospitals, first-aid posts, family advice bureaux or other public centres supplying medical services
- community schools
- food shops
- spaces and structures for cultural and leisure activities

Distance of a Walkable Neighbourhood
This distance is widely regarded as being 10-minute walk or 800 metre radius. This is calculated by using the principle that the average person walks at a speed of 5km per hour. This is detailed in the Department of Transport's "Manual for Streets" (2007). As such it is considered that this is a suitable timescale and distance to be used within the borough's Local Development Framework for assessing most day-to-day needs.

However, responses to previous consultation for the Core Strategy and North Kensington Plan have suggested that due to the higher density of the borough, a 5-minute walking time (and a 400 metre radius) would be more appropriate.

Finding the correct measure has is not simple. Neither the Greater London Authority's Walking Plan (2004) not the London Plan make reference to concept of Walkable Neighbourhood, in fact, there is no evidence base in UK legislation or government guidance that suggests that the 5 minute walking distance should supplant the 10 minute walk.

The 10 minute walk is also in line with the Kensington & Chelsea Primary Care Trust who have undertaken individual research as part of their 10 Year Primary Care Strategy July 2008-July 2018 and established that the majority of residents are within a 10-minute walk of a primary care facility.

However, an aspiration target of 400 metres does seem to fit with EU policy research which suggests a 300m walk to basic services is more appropriate.

As a result a two tier system will be used which reflects the intensification of uses in the Borough:

5 minute (400 metre walk):
- Neighbourhood Shopping Centres

10 minute walk:
- General Practitioners
- Primary School

The borough is extremely well served in terms of local shopping provision (featuring 34 local shopping centres) a shorter walk is considered to be more appropriate. Therefore the 400 metre/5-minute walk target is more desirable means of measuring deficiency of facilities.

Calculation anomaly
Using current Geographic Information System (GIS) Network Analysis tools, it is possible to pin the 400 metre radius to the street network as opposed to a bird's eye radius. This gives a far greater understanding of barriers which exist and provide "on-the-ground" results which are of a far greater use. However, this technology can only read "point data" in other works, a precise geographic co-ordinate. Therefore the centriod of the shopping centre polygons has been used to generate the results. Naturally, this does distort the results somewhat and less of the borough may in fact be deficient than currently calculated. However, in spite of this, the same method has been used throughout the process and will be used (at least, until technology progresses) in future monitoring of policies so as to maintain consistency.

Areas of Deficiency
The attached maps show areas of deficiency. Currently, the 74.8% of the borough is within a 5 minute walk of local shopping facilities. This includes 1.3% of the borough being served by neighbourhood or larger centres out side of the Royal Borough, the bulk of this being from Westfield and Shepherds Bush. It is believed that this is one of the highest in London and therefore in the UK, however, as no other authorities are adopting this means of assessment, it is impossible to fully measure this.

The Core strategy proposes to intensify shopping uses in Kensal and Latimer primarily through the creation of Neighbourhood Shopping Centres. The addition of these centres will lead to 77% of the borough being within a 5 minute walk of local shopping facilities.

Government guidance also states that larger facilities such as secondary schools and hospitals should be within a 30 minute journey using public transport. This will not be added to the Core Strategy as it adds no local distinctiveness as the borough is already achieving this and it would be unlikely to change due to the Borough's prominent location within the heart of a World City, its transport hubs and the long-established facilities within the Borough.

Recommendations

The implications establishing walkable neighbourhoods have implications for the Core Strategy. Spatial implementation should look to create inclusive, sustainable communities in line with Central and Regional Government legislation.

A policy should be included within the Core Strategy which promotes 77% of the borough being within 5 minutes or 400 metres of a local shopping facilities in line with the Council's ambitions for new Neighbourhood centres at Latimer and Kensal.

The deficiency should be used in the determination of planning applications at development management level. In areas where a deficiency is identified, it is prudent to encourage growth and more importantly, to resist the loss of uses which might result in a deficiency.

To ensure this is kept up to date, the deficiency should form part of the AMR process.

Social and Community Uses

Introduction
The aim of this part of the report is to provide background information as to what uses will feature in the Core Strategy as Social and Community uses and a short summary of the less-traditional uses which the Borough consider worthy of designation.

Uses deemed unnecessary of explanation

- Community meeting halls and rooms
- Doctors, dentists, hospitals and other health facilities
- Libraries
- Metropolitan Police and other emergency service facilities
- Places of worship
- Schools and other educational establishments
- Youth facilities

Explanation of inclusion as social and community uses

Care homes, care facilities and Elderly People's homes: This use, whilst not strictly in the traditional sense, a social and community use, does still provide a valuable community function. Residents of these facilities tend to be local and keeping them within their neighbourhood is not only beneficial to them and their family in keeping them local but therefore also reducing the environmental impacts which would be faced by moving the elderly further away from family and friends.

Further to this, care homes are a prime example of a land value which is low and under threat from higher values (primarily residential). For these reasons it has been identified and a social and community use.
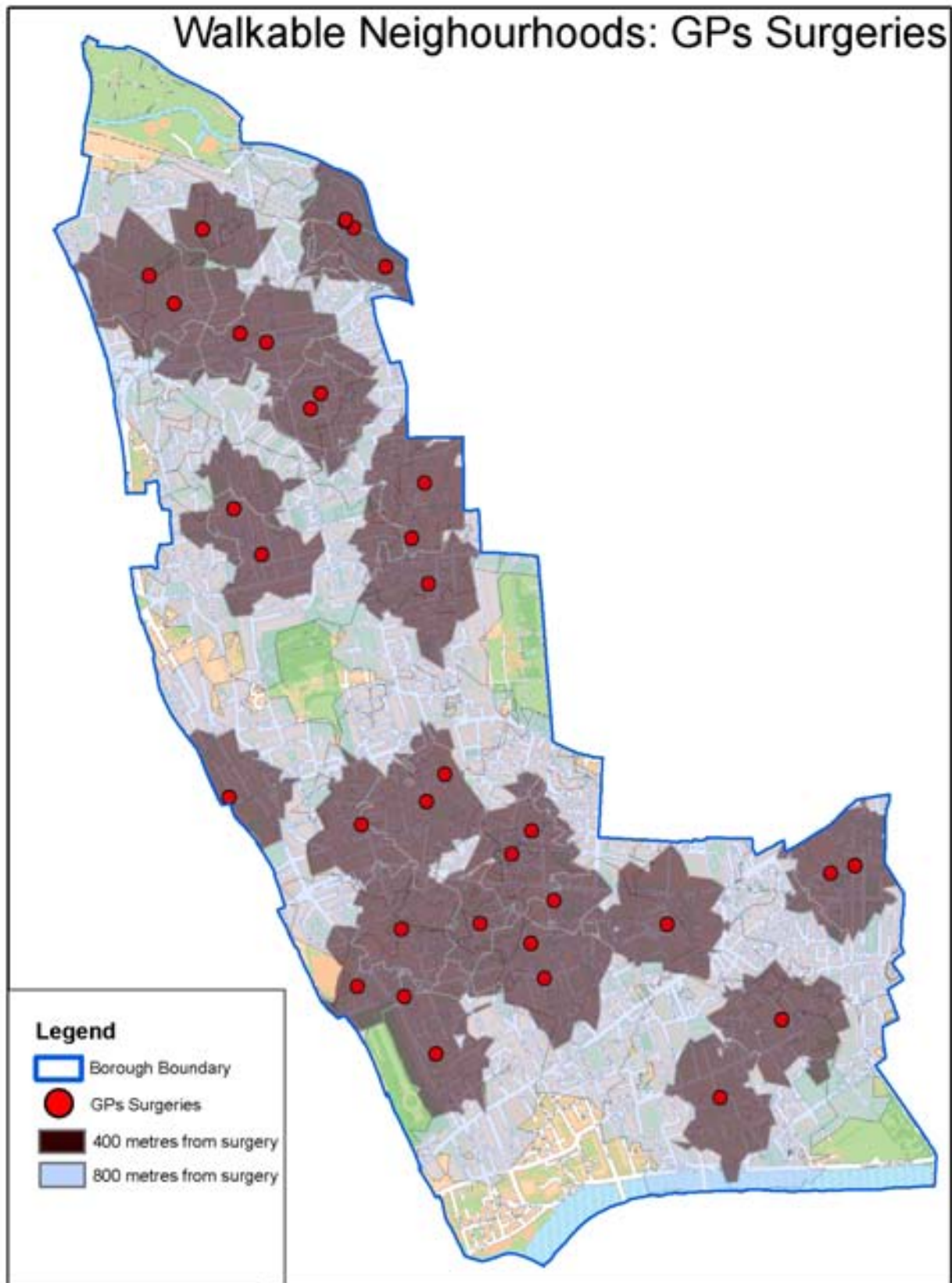
Residential Hostels: In a borough where land values are so high, it is important to reserve land for residential occupation by those unable to afford the Borough's high property values. This ensures that communities across the Borough are mixed and reduces segregation based on social classes. Whilst this is aided by on-site affordable housing. Providing for those unable even to attain such properties is vital. Often these residents are in need of residential care and the use of hostels is the first step toward integration with the rest of the community. Therefore, whilst not being a traditional facilities for use by the community, their role in sustaining balanced, healthy and integrated communities is vital.

Launderettes: The survival of Launderettes in the borough is essential to many of our residents. Due to many properties being too small to sustain washing and drying facilities or space, these services provide residents with a facility essential to their local life. Travelling distances for such purposes is awkward and unrealistic, therefore maintaining a bank of launderettes is necessary. These facilities are often found in retail parades and are under threat from retail development, it is therefore important to protect.

Petrol Filling Stations: The borough in recent years has lost a number of its facilities and is now served by just 2 filling stations. Whilst the Council and indeed, the Core Strategy discourages car usage in favour of more sustainable modes of transportation, the use of cars in essential to many in connecting them with personal and business uses. Whilst it is not anticipated that applications will come forward for new petrol stations, it is important that we maintain the facilities which the Borough currently has, therefore their designation has been included.

Sport Facilities: This designation includes all sport facilities both public and private. Whilst preservation of public facilities is obvious, the Council's position regarding private facilities including gyms and smaller studio uses is more unusual.
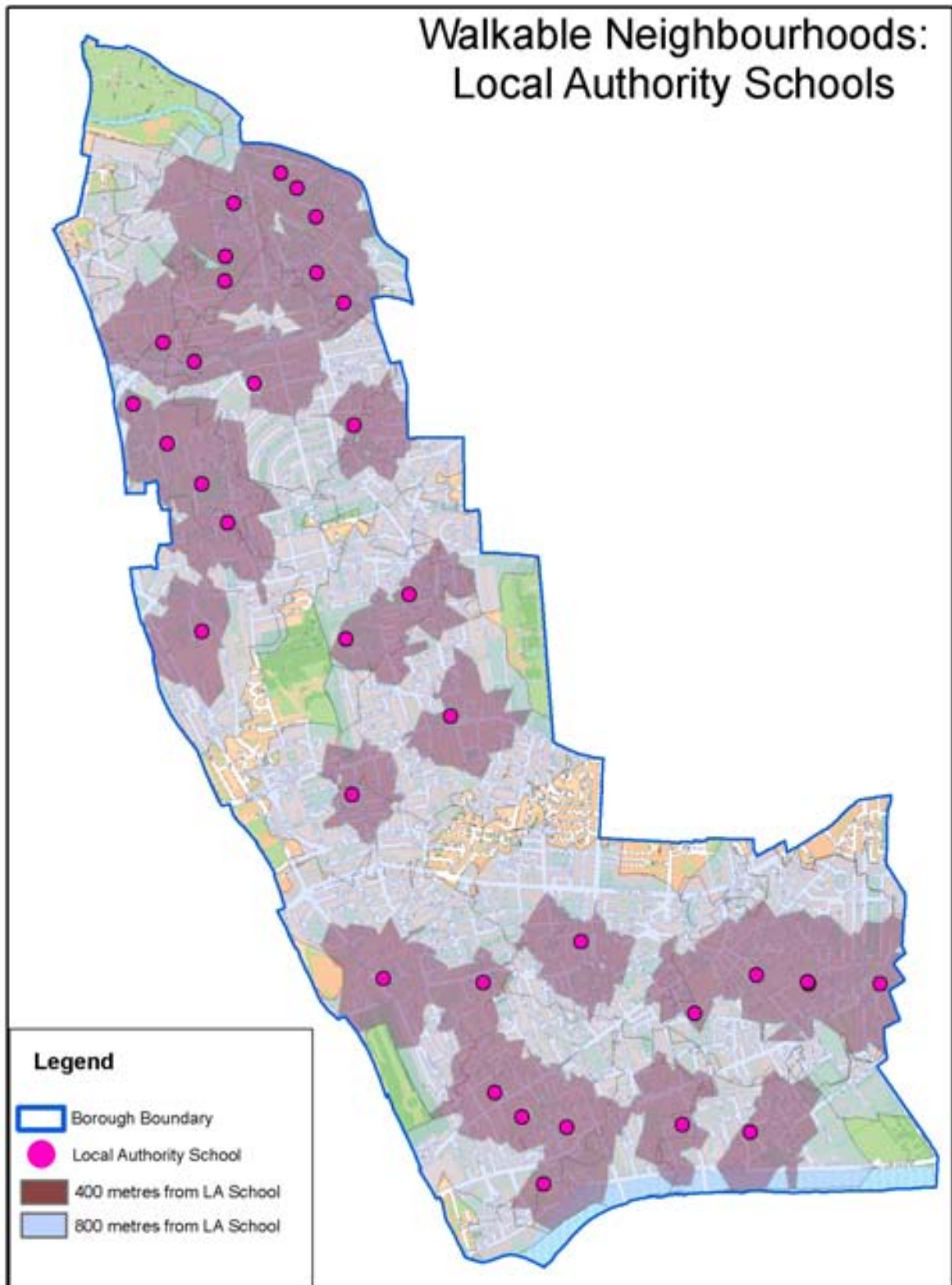
In the Royal Borough, only two public facilities exist, with many choosing to use private gyms instead. These facilities plays as much of a role in sustaining local life and contribution towards community cohesion as public sports facilities. Whilst their land value is greater than that of public facilities, they are still seen as facilities which require protection.

Walkable Neighourhoods: GPs Surgeries

Legend

☐ Borough Boundary

● GPs Surgeries

■ 400 metres from surgery

☐ 800 metres from surgery

0 237.5 475   950 Meters

Walkable Neighbourhoods:
Local Authority Schools

Legend

Borough Boundary

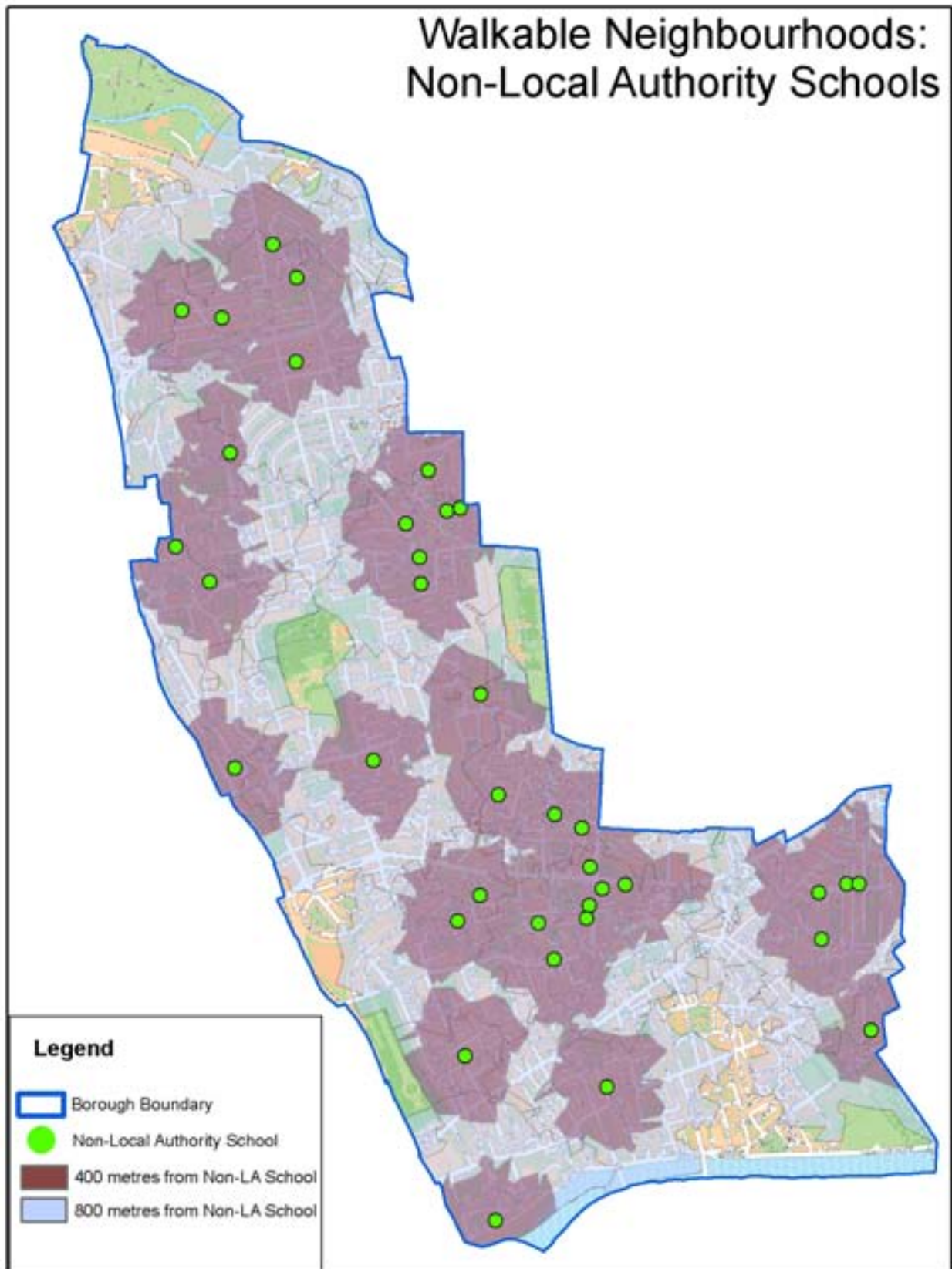Local Authority School

400 metres from LA School

800 metres from LA School

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0 240 480 960 Meters

Walkable Neighbourhoods: Non-Local Authority Schools

Legend

- Borough Boundary
- Non-Local Authority School
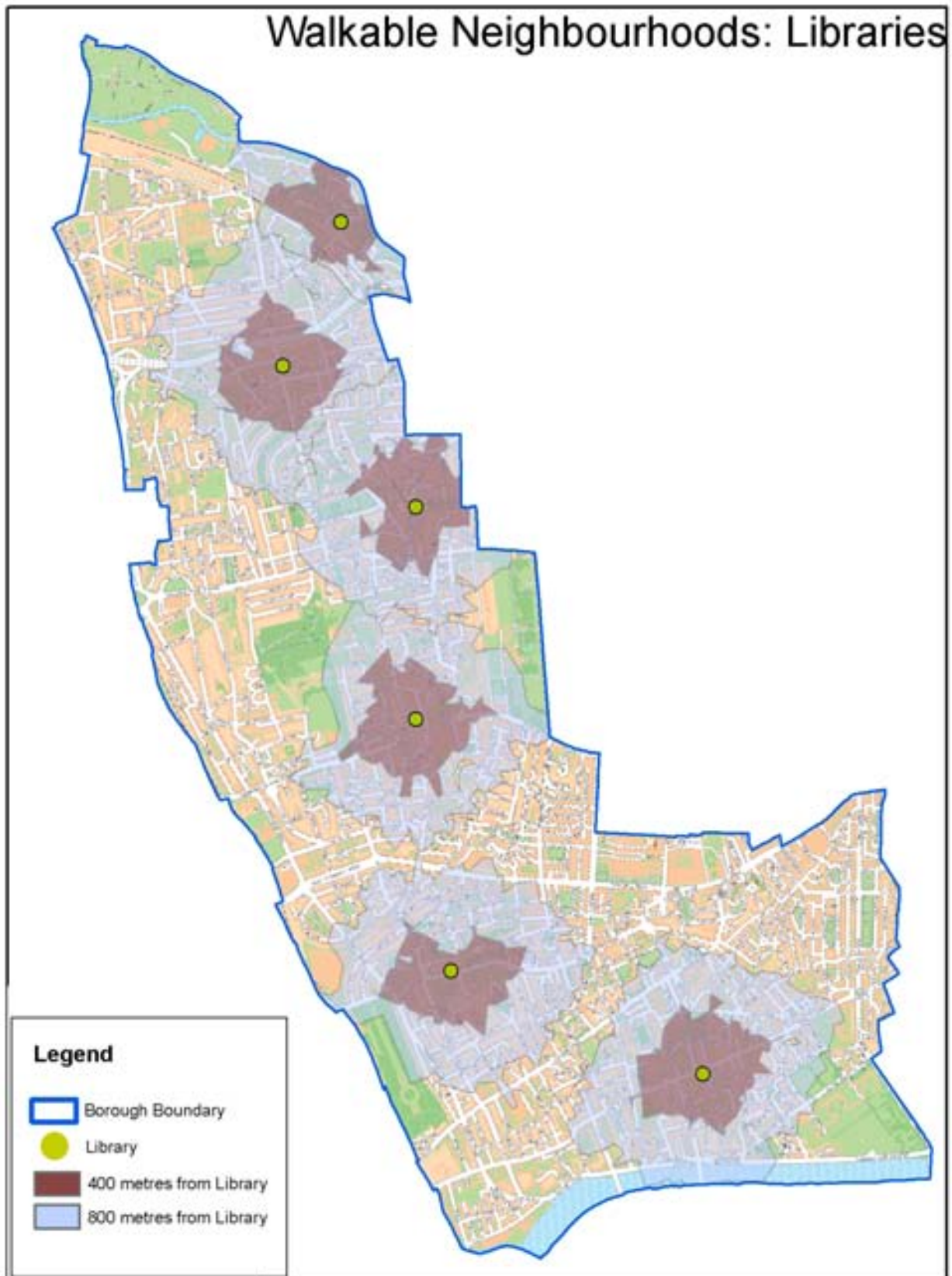- 400 metres from Non-LA School
- 800 metres from Non-LA School

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0 240 480 960 Meters

Walkable Neighbourhoods: Libraries

Legend

Borough Boundary

Library

400 metres from Library

800 metres from Library

0 240 480   960 Meters

Walkable Neighbourhoods: Sport Facilities

Legend

Borough Boundary

Sport Facilities

400 metres from Sport Facility

800 metres from Sport Facility
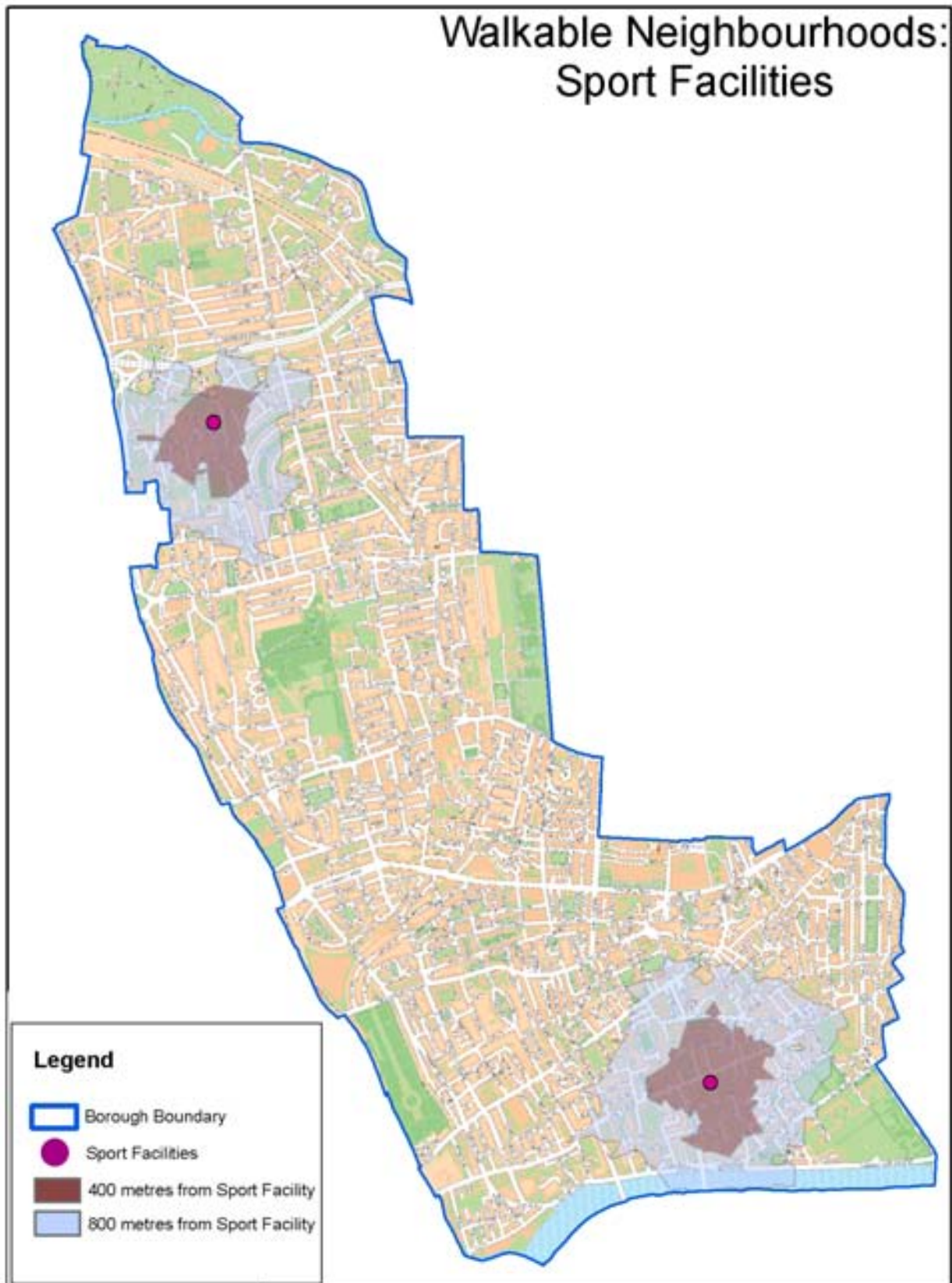
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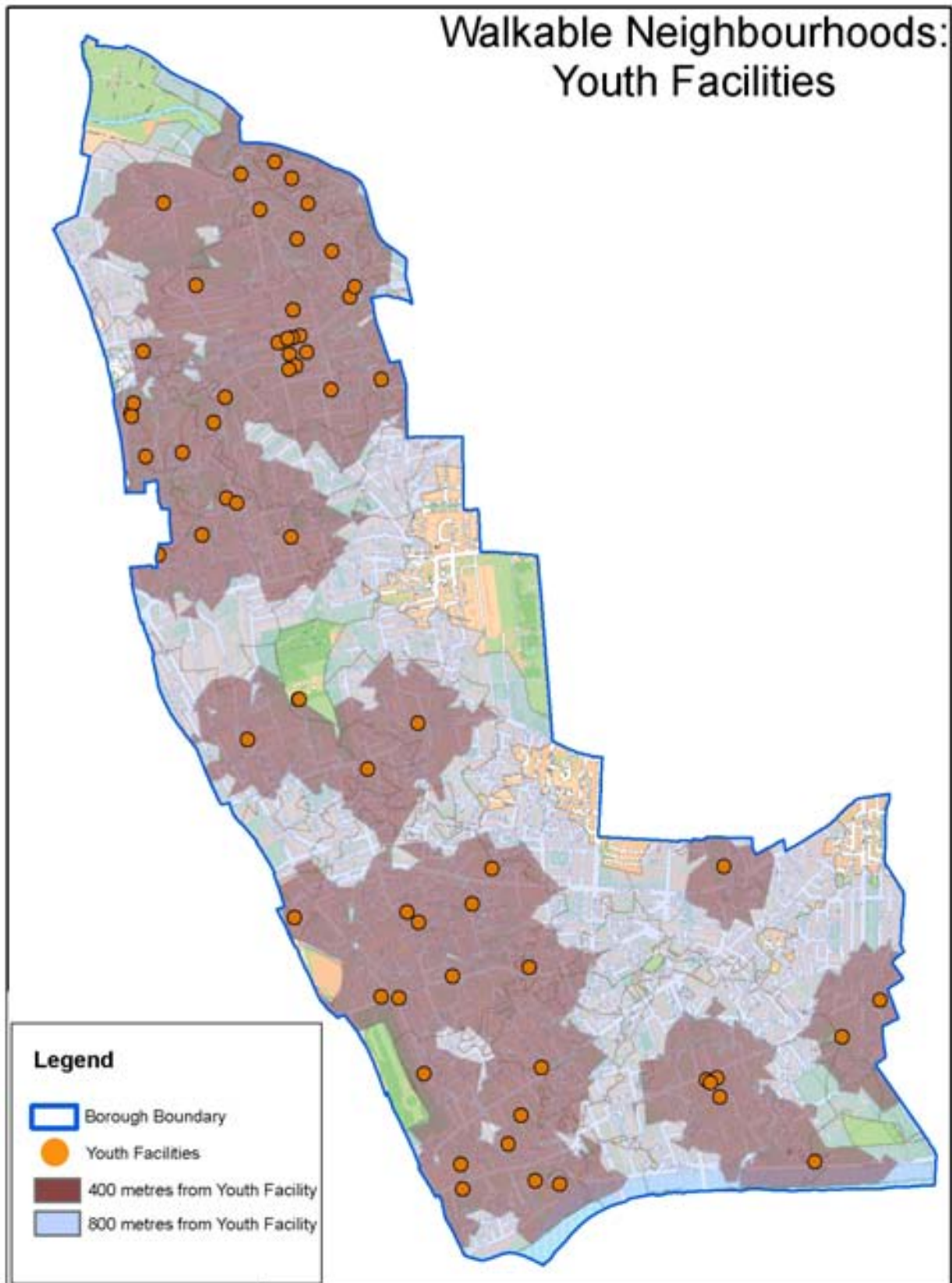The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea
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0 240 480 960 Meters

Walkable Neighbourhoods: Youth Facilities

Legend

Borough Boundary

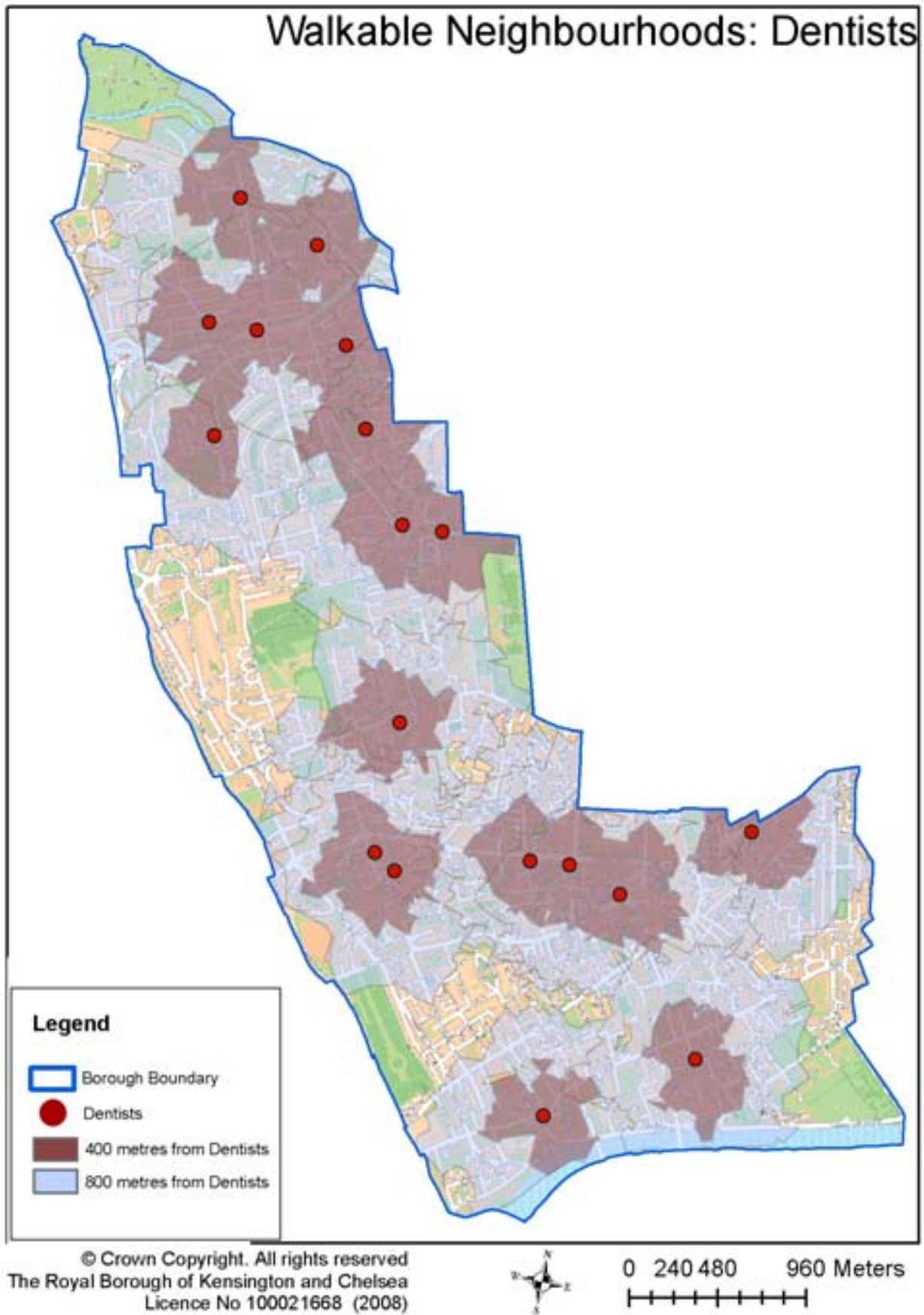Youth Facilities

400 metres from Youth Facility

800 metres from Youth Facility

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0 240 480 960 Meters

Walkable Neighbourhoods: Dentists

Legend

- ☐ Borough Boundary
- ● Dentists
- ▨ 400 metres from Dentists
- ☐ 800 metres from Dentists

0 240 480   960 Meters

**Walkable Neighbourhoods:
Places of Worship**

Legend

☐ Borough Boundary

● Place of Worship

▮ 400 metres from Place of Worship

▮ 800 metres from Place of Worship

0 240 480   960 Meters

Walkable Neighbourhoods:
Launderettes

Legend

Borough Boundary
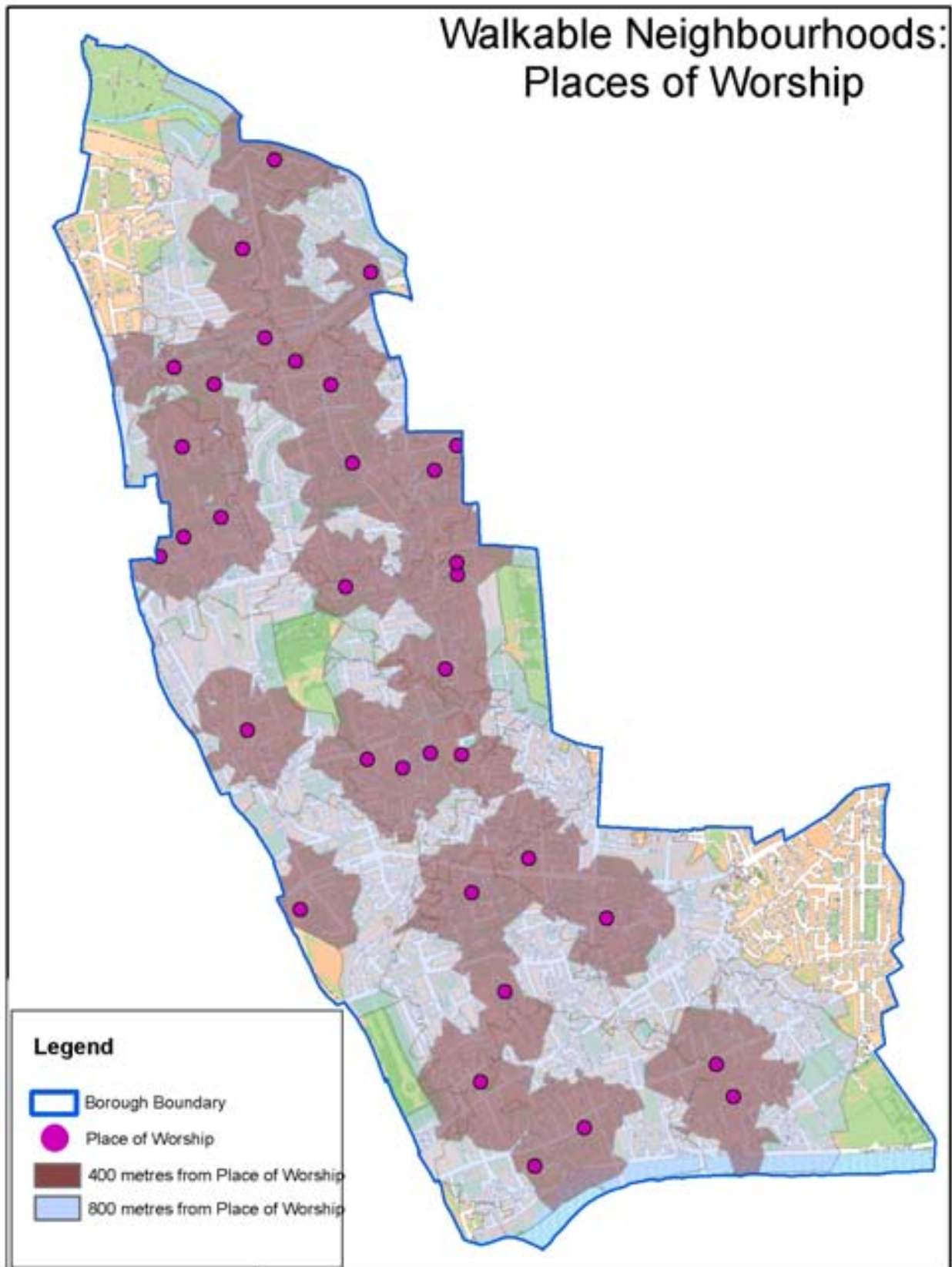
Launderettes

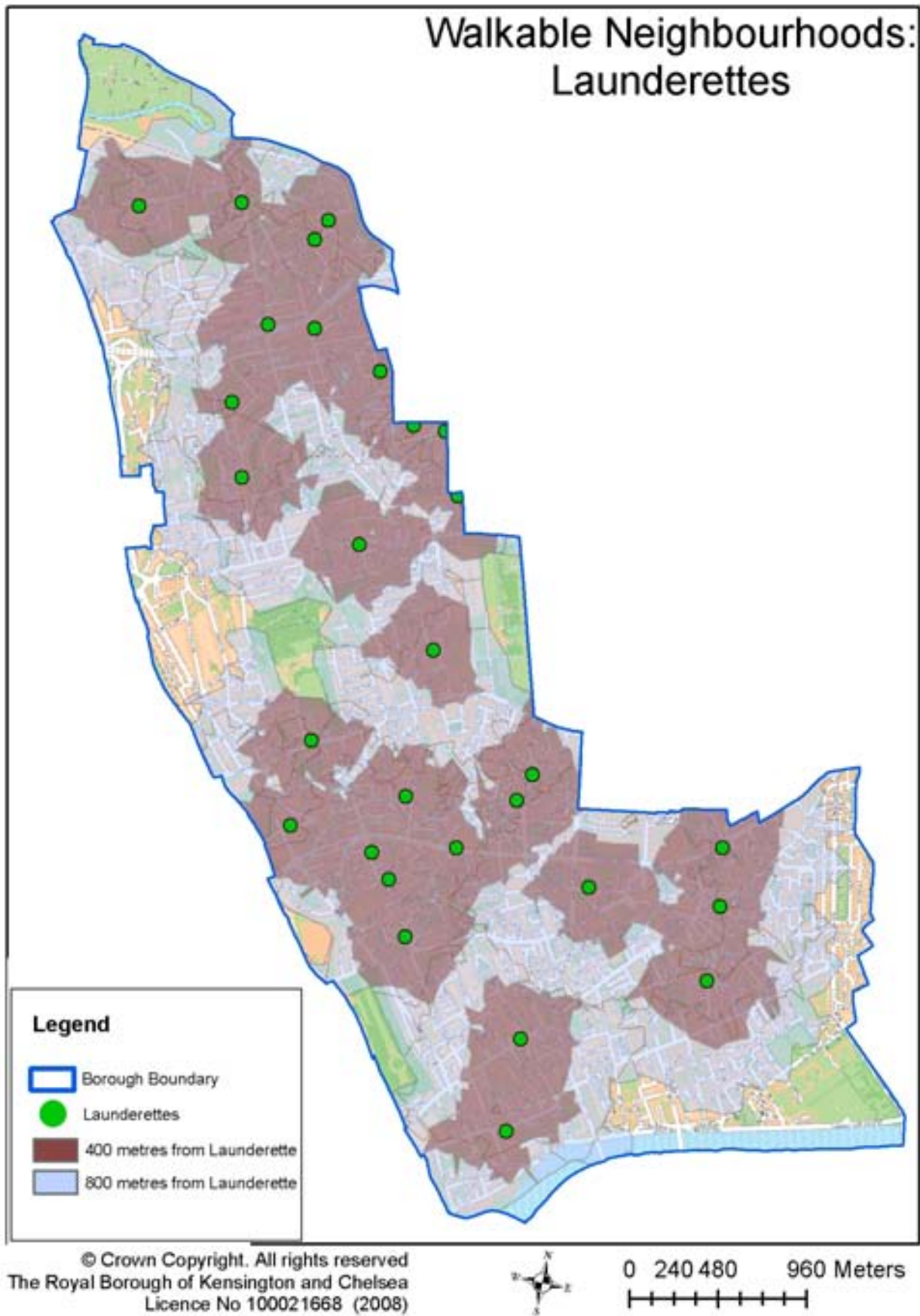400 metres from Launderette

800 metres from Launderette

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0 240 480 960 Meters

Walkable Neighbourhoods: Public Houses

Legend

☐ Borough Boundary

● Public House

▓ 400 metres from Public House
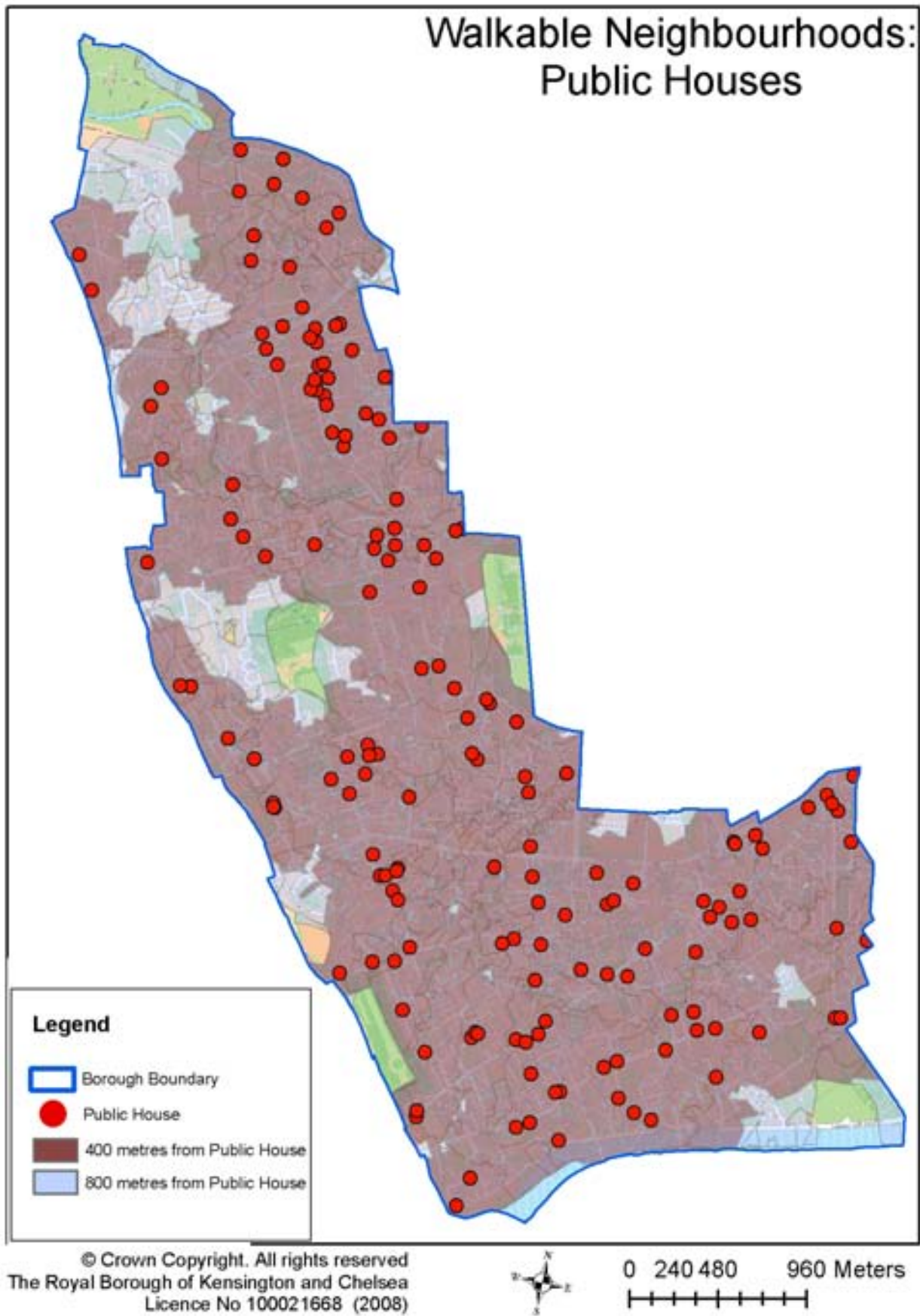
☐ 800 metres from Public House

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0 240 480 960 Meters

Walkable Neighbourhoods:
Post Offices

Legend

Borough Boundary
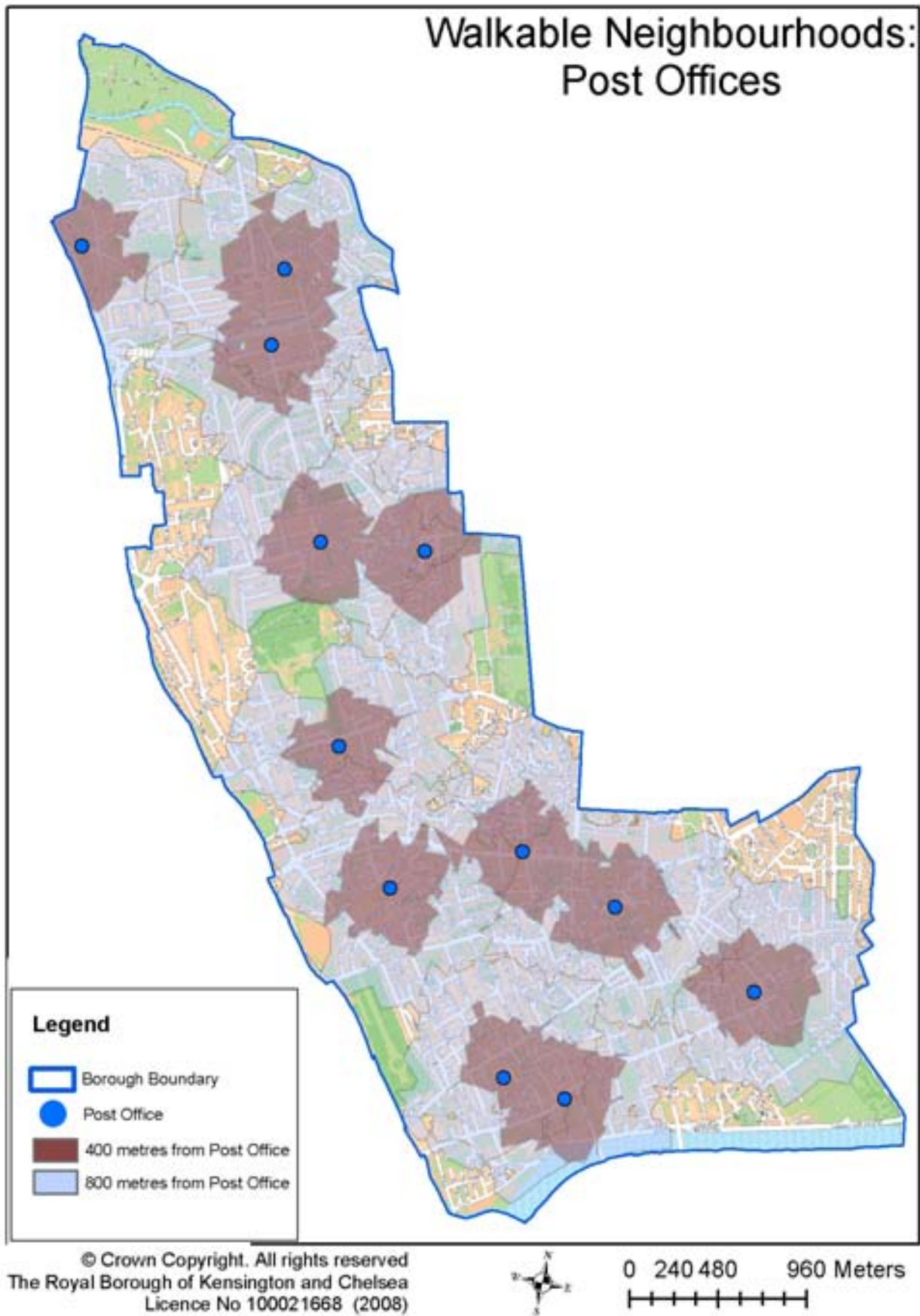
Post Office

400 metres from Post Office

800 metres from Post Office
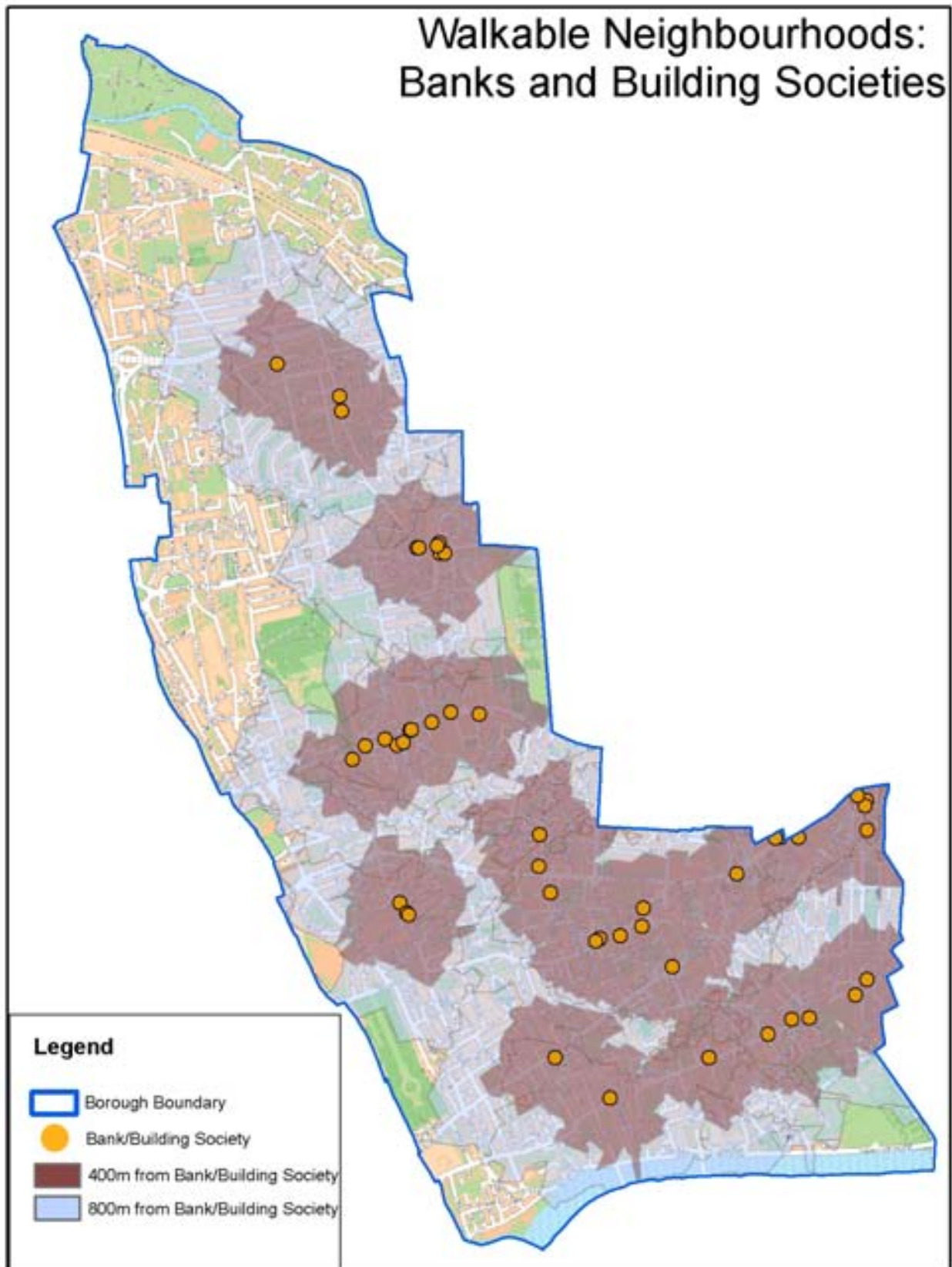
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0 240 480   960 Meters

Walkable Neighbourhoods:
Banks and Building Societies

Legend

Borough Boundary
Bank/Building Society
400m from Bank/Building Society
800m from Bank/Building Society
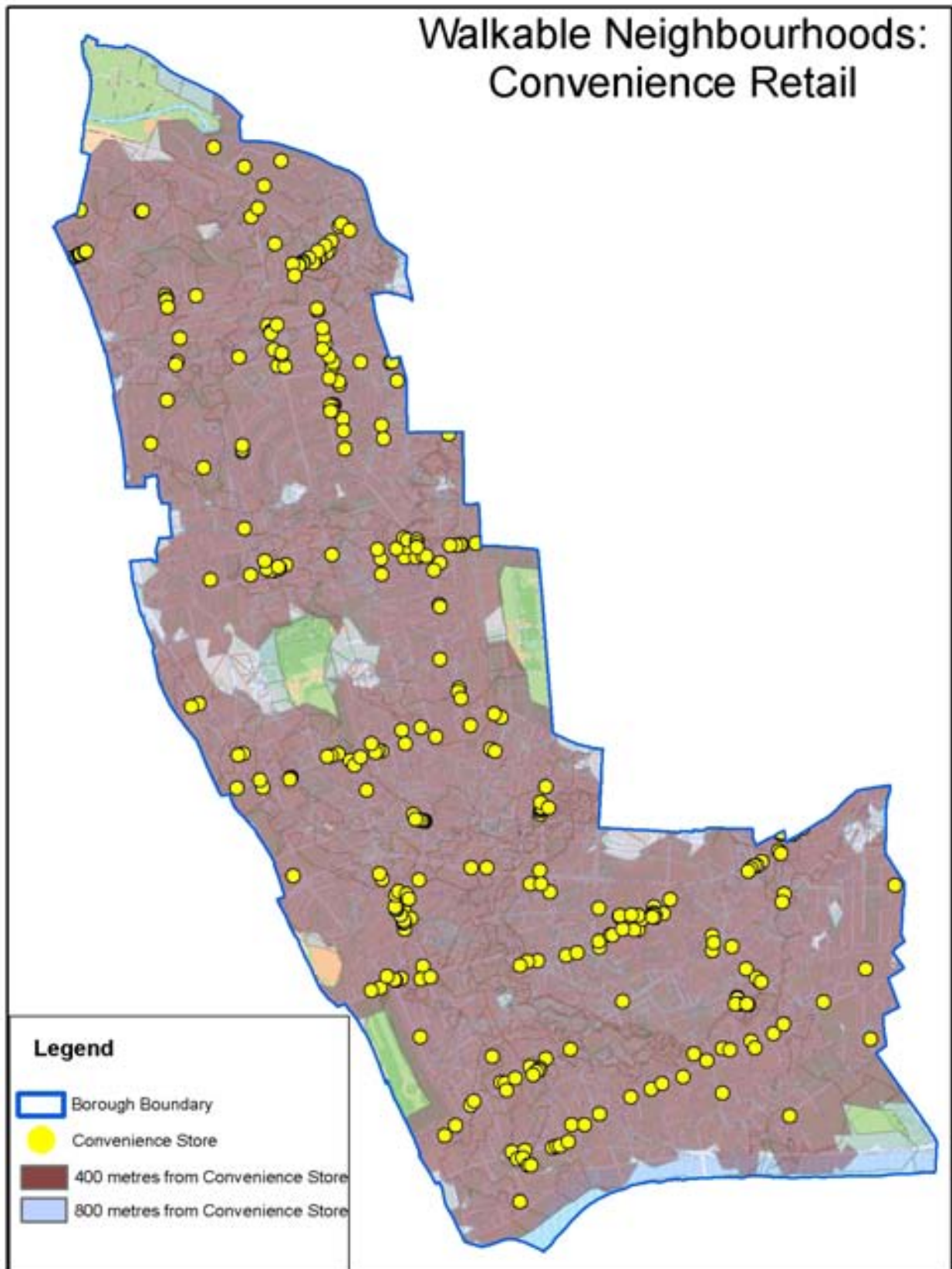
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0 240 480   960 Meters

Walkable Neighbourhoods: Convenience Retail

Legend

☐ Borough Boundary
● Convenience Store
▨ 400 metres from Convenience Store
▨ 800 metres from Convenience Store
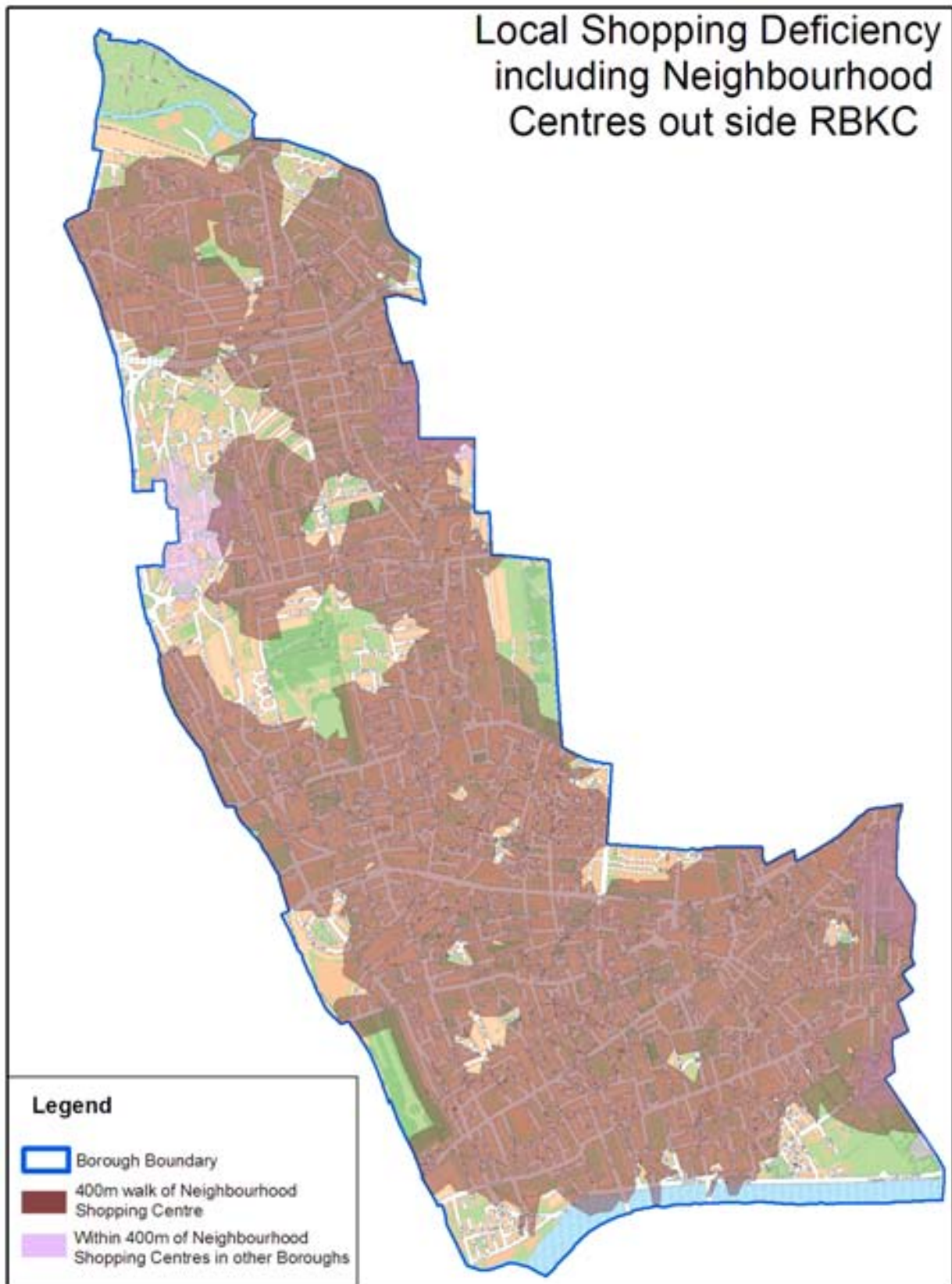
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0 240 480   960 Meters

Local Shopping Deficiency including Neighbourhood Centres out side RBKC

Legend

Borough Boundary

400m walk of Neighbourhood Shopping Centre

Within 400m of Neighbourhood Shopping Centres in other Boroughs

0 240 480   960 Meters