



River Clun SAC

Nutrient Modelling Summary

Date: October 2026

We are the Environment Agency. We protect and improve the environment.

We help people and wildlife adapt to climate change and reduce its impacts, including flooding, drought, sea level rise and coastal erosion.

We improve the quality of our water, land and air by tackling pollution. We work with businesses to help them comply with environmental regulations. A healthy and diverse environment enhances people's lives and contributes to economic growth.

We can't do this alone. We work as part of the Defra group (Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs), with the rest of government, local councils, businesses, civil society groups and local communities to create a better place for people and wildlife.

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Introduction

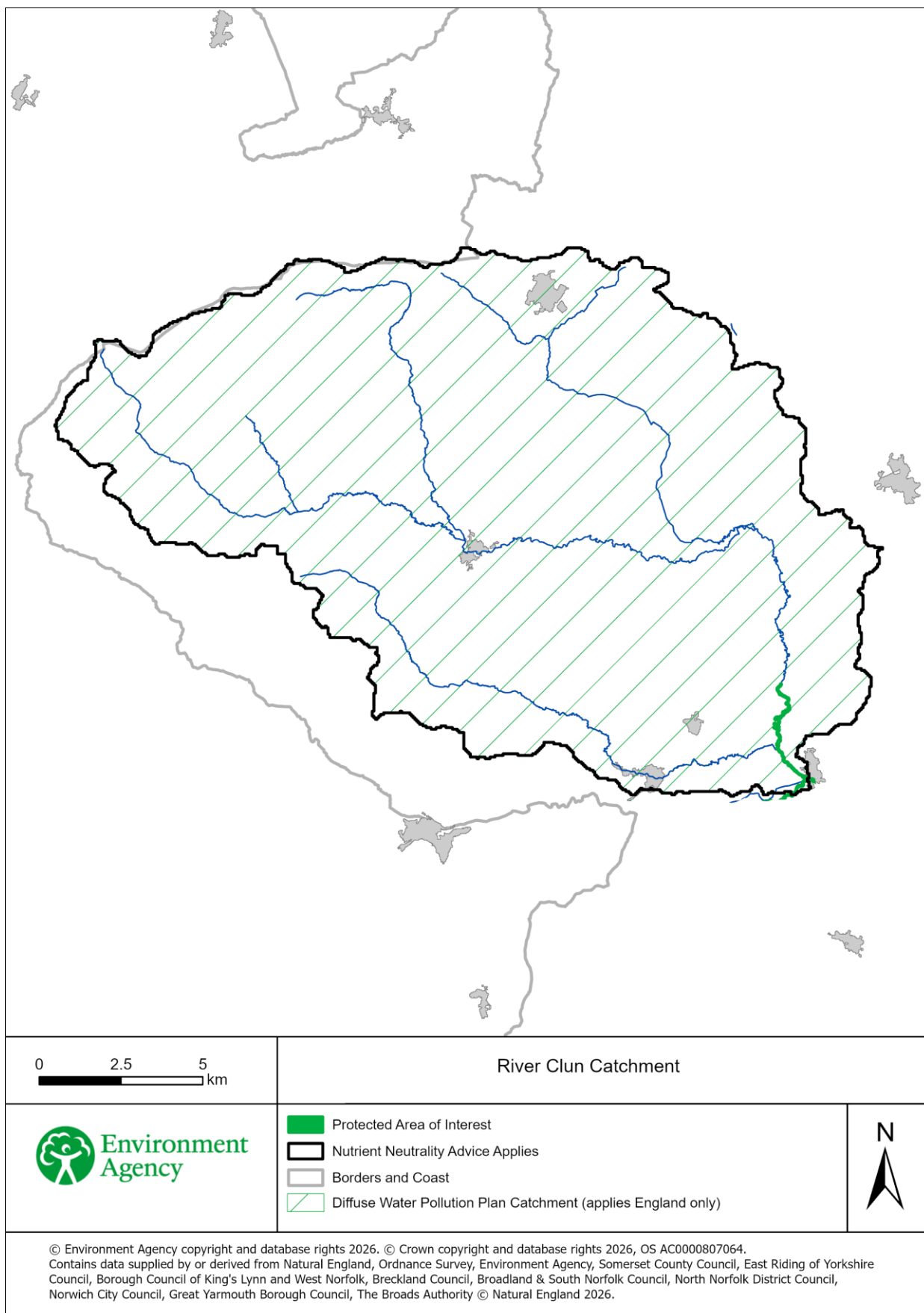
This document provides summary outputs from the Environment Agency's water quality modelling for the River Clun Special Area of Conservation (SAC) catchment (Map 1). We provide catchment-scale source apportionment information and maps showing the scale of reductions needed to achieve protected area water quality targets. Our outputs will help those working on Diffuse Water Pollution Plans (DWPPs), designing or co-ordinating nutrient mitigation schemes, and working on site restoration. We aim to support a general understanding of the catchment rather than give the level of detail needed to inform specific on-the-ground measures. Our detailed methodology is described in [Catchment statistics for nutrient pollution in protected areas](#).

We used the phosphate and total oxidised nitrogen (TON) Common Standards Monitoring Guidance (CSMG) targets applicable to the River Clun SAC. Natural England and the Environment Agency agree these targets for water dependent protected areas and publish them on the [Catchment Data Explorer](#).

Alongside Simcat SAGIS models, we used the Farmscoper v5 decision support tool and applied the revised polluter pays principle methodology (v0.17) used during PR24 planning to define the sector share of the targets for the point and diffuse sectors.

Our outputs highlight the dominant nutrient sources under a range of scenarios, including future estimates based on planned water company investment up to 31 March 2030 (AMP8) and the wider implementation of rural land use measures.

We have not incorporated the additional nutrient contributions from any future development and growth including housing. Any additional future nutrient load will be assessed through the planning process led by the Local Planning Authority or through our permitting process.



Map 1. River Clun SAC and catchment with protected area highlighted and catchment where Natural England nutrient neutrality advice applies shown.

Models used

We used the Price Review (PR) PR19 and the PR24 [Simcat SAGIS models](#) for this work alongside [Farmscoper v5](#). Simcat SAGIS (Source Apportionment Geographical Information System) integrates ArcGIS-based digital information management and visualisation with SIMCAT (Simulated Catchment), the Environment Agency's water quality model. Farmscoper is a decision support tool that can be used to assess diffuse agricultural pollutant loads and quantify the impacts of farm mitigation methods on these pollutants.

The PR19 Simcat SAGIS model is calibrated to 2010 to 2012 data, following nationally agreed model build and calibration standards across UKWIR (UK Water Industry Research). Outputs from this model are used to establish the sector share of the protected site target under the revised polluter pays principle. Similarly, the PR24 Simcat SAGIS model is calibrated to 2014 to 2020 data, following UKWIR agreed model build and calibration standards. Since publication of the Indicative Catchment Statistics Report (Version 1.2, September 2024) we recalibrated the model to seek to improve representation of the Clun catchment, the results presented in this report will therefore differ from those presented previously.

The calibration process optimises the agreement between measured and simulated values through reasonable and systematic adjustments to model parameters and input data. We adjust the inputs where there is least confidence, those representing diffuse sources of pollution. The associated project overview document details the datasets included in the models. To assess confidence in the models, we compare the measured and simulated values. While Simcat SAGIS provides a robust framework for decision-making in wastewater investment, we have less certainty in the diffuse load estimates. As a result, we have lower confidence when using the models to assess the outcomes of measures that target diffuse sources, including those used here and in the DWPPs.

Farmscoper has undergone external peer review (Gooday et al., 2014), and the component models and methods used within Farmscoper have been published in the external literature. The assumptions, methods and resulting conclusions are therefore based on sound scientific principles. Farmscoper was developed as an advisory tool to aid policy makers. Farmscoper is now used more extensively and for a wider range of purposes than originally intended, therefore the consequences of assumptions and other uncertainties in Farmscoper outputs need to be considered when decision-making and users need to understand the assumptions, uncertainty, and limitations at the relevant scale of interest.

We used Farmscoper v5 to assess diffuse agricultural pollutant loads and to quantify the impacts of farm scale mitigation methods for a range of scenarios. This applies the agricultural planning assumptions for RBMP cycle 3 for land management measures ([Environment Agency, 2022](#)), as well as information from Defra project WT1594 ([Defra, 2019a](#)) We present outputs for two Farmscoper scenarios in this report to provide

estimates of the reduction in nutrient losses from ‘full regulation’ and ‘theoretical maximum’ uptake rates in agricultural mitigation measures (Table 2).

Scenarios

The modelling scenarios (Table 4) evaluate the effectiveness of nutrient reductions in point and diffuse sources to meet protected site targets and the diffuse sector share of those targets. In the 2030 Full Regulation and 2030 Theoretical Maximum scenario we have applied the Farmscoper v5 reductions (Tables 5 and 6) to the rural land use sector inputs. We have based the point sector measures on the AMP8 Water Industry National Environment Programme agreed in December 2024 ([PR24 WINEP](#)).

Table 1: Summary description of the point and diffuse measures represented in the Simcat SAGIS Scenarios modelled.

Scenario	Point Sector Measures	Diffuse Sector Measures	Model
Actual (2014 to 2020)*	Observed discharge flow and quality (2014 to 2019). Where not available, defaults used.	Current activities as represented post model calibration.	PR24 Calibration
2030 Optimistic	Water company AMP8 quality permit limits incorporated where applicable**	Current activities as represented post model calibration.	PR24 Calibration
2030 At Permit	All discharges represented at permitted flow and quality values up to and including AMP8**	Current activities as represented post model calibration.	PR24 At Permit
2030 Full Regulation	All discharges represented at permitted flow and quality values up to and including AMP8**	Rural land use inputs reduced by Full Regulation values from Farmscoper v5 (Table 2).	PR24 At Permit
2030 Theoretical Maximum	All discharges represented at permitted flow and quality values up to and including AMP8**	Rural land use inputs reduced by Theoretical Maximum values from Farmscoper v5 (Table 2).	PR24 At Permit

*Previously referred to as the ‘recent’ scenario.

**Does not include any discharge flow increases that may be required to support growth.

Table 2: Percentage reductions applied to the rural land use sector in the Simcat SAGIS Scenarios, values produced through Farmscoper v5 modelling.

Scenario Name	Description	Phosphate	Nitrate
Full Regulation	100% uptake of Regulatory measures, 25% uptake of Farming Rules for Water ‘reasonable’ Regulatory measures and ‘current’ uptake of voluntary measures.	14%	4%
Theoretical Maximum	100% uptake of all measures in Farmscoper v5.	42%	13%

River Clun SAC modelled outputs

Phosphate

We estimate the phosphate input load source apportionment for the Clun to be 13% point source and 87% diffuse source in the Actual (2014 to 2020) scenario. Rural land use sources (74%) dominate the diffuse sector (Table 3). The source apportionment changes incrementally under the subsequent scenarios. When we apply the Full Regulation and Theoretical Maximum reductions to the rural land use sector, the contribution from the rural land use sector falls from 78% in the 2030 At Permit scenario to 75% and 67% respectively.

We estimate the baseline (2009) sector share of the phosphate protected site target to be 50% diffuse and 50% point. This means that the sector share of the target for both the diffuse sector and the point sector is 0.005mg/l (Table 5). The estimated catchment average diffuse sector concentrations in the Actual (2014 to 2020) scenario exceed the sector share of the target (Table 5). For the diffuse sector share to be met, diffuse concentrations need to reduce by an estimated 90%. In both the 2030 Optimistic scenario and the At Permit scenario, the point sector concentration meets the point sector share of the target. With the Full Regulation and Theoretical Maximum reductions applied to the rural land use sector, the residual reductions needed to meet the diffuse sector share remain high, over 50% as a catchment average (Table 5). The maps show the spatial variation in the reductions needed.

Total Oxidised Nitrogen (TON) and Nitrate

The Clun SAC nitrogen-related targets are expressed as total oxidised nitrogen (TON). We model nitrate in Simcat-SAGIS. Comparison of nitrate modelled outputs with a TON target is considered appropriate given that nitrate is the main form of nitrogen in TON.

We estimate the nitrate input load source apportionment for the Clun to be 2% point source and 98% diffuse source in the Actual (2014 to 2020) scenario. Rural land use sources (83%) dominate the diffuse sector (Table 3). The source apportionment changes incrementally under the subsequent scenarios. When we apply the Full Regulation and Theoretical Maximum reductions to the rural land use sector, the contribution from the rural land use sector falls from 82% in the 2030 At Permit scenario to 82% and 80% respectively.

We estimate the baseline (2009) sector share of the nitrate (TON) protected site target to be 91% diffuse and 9% point. This means that the sector share of the target for the diffuse sector is 1.365mg/l and 0.135mg/l for the point sector (Table 6). The estimated catchment average diffuse sector concentrations in the Actual (2014 to 2020) scenario exceed the sector share of the target (Table 6). Diffuse sector concentrations need to reduce by an estimated 61% for the sector share to be met. With the Full Regulation and Theoretical Maximum reductions applied to the rural land use sector, the residual reductions needed to meet the diffuse sector share remain high, over 50% as a catchment average (Table 6).

Input load source apportionment

Tables 3 and Table 4 show the phosphate and nitrate source apportionment figures for each scenario modelled. We have greatest confidence in the point sector loads where monitoring data is available. Confidence reduces where the contribution from the sector is based on estimates rather than observed data, such as the diffuse sectors. Apportioning the input loads gives an indication of which sector is the dominant nutrient source.

Table 3: Estimated input load phosphate source apportionment from the catchment endpoint.

Scenario	Point Sources	Rural Land Use	Urban	Septic Tanks	Other
Actual (2014 to 2020)	13.0%	74.0%	9.1%	3.9%	0.0%
2030 Optimistic	3.3%	82.3%	10.1%	4.3%	0.0%
2030 At Permit	8.3%	78.0%	9.6%	4.1%	0.0%
2030 Full Regulation	9.6%	74.6%	11.1%	4.7%	0.0%
2030 Theoretical Maximum	12.3%	67.4%	14.2%	6.1%	0.0%

Table 4: Estimated input load nitrate source apportionment from the catchment endpoint.

Scenario	Point Sources	Rural Land Use	Urban	Septic Tanks	Other
Actual (2014 to 2020)	2.1%	83.1%	0.2%	0.3%	14.3%
2030 Optimistic	2.1%	83.1%	0.2%	0.3%	14.3%
2030 At Permit	2.8%	82.5%	0.2%	0.3%	14.2%
2030 Full Regulation	2.9%	81.9%	0.2%	0.3%	14.7%
2030 Theoretical Maximum	3.2%	80.2%	0.2%	0.3%	16.1%

Catchment average concentrations and reductions

The in-river modelled concentrations arise from the input loads, after the influence of river dilution and natural decay processes in the river have been simulated. Tables 5 and 6 show the in-river concentration as a sector catchment average to be consistent with the revised polluter pays principle methodology used in the PR24 water company price reviews (v0.17).

Apportionment by concentration and by load can be different because inputs from different sources tend to occur under different river flow conditions. Inputs from treatment works occur continuously while diffuse source inputs tend to occur under higher river flow conditions where there is greater dilution available in the receiving water. As a result, a kilogram of phosphorus discharged from a treatment works will have a relatively greater impact on in-river concentrations than the equivalent input from diffuse sources.

Table 5: Estimated catchment average phosphate sector share alongside modelled catchment average concentrations (mg/l) and percentage reductions across all scenarios.

Scenario and Assessment Metric	Diffuse	Point	Total
Baseline (2009) Sector Share of the target	50%	50%	
Catchment average sector share of the target (mg/l)	0.005	0.005	0.010
Actual (2014 to 2020) - modelled sector concentration (mg/l)	0.048	0.005	0.053
Actual (2014 to 2020) - reduction to meet sector share	90%	1%	81%
2030 Optimistic – modelled sector concentration (mg/l)	0.049	0.002	0.050
2030 Optimistic – reduction to meet sector share	90%	0%	80%
2030 At Permit – modelled sector concentration (mg/l)	0.048	0.005	0.053
2030 At Permit – reduction to meet sector share	90%	0%	81%
2030 Full Regulation – modelled sector concentration (mg/l)	0.042	0.005	0.047
2030 Full Regulation – reduction to meet sector share	88%	0%	79%
2030 Theoretical Maximum – modelled sector concentration (mg/l)	0.032	0.005	0.037
2030 Theoretical Maximum – reduction to meet sector share	84%	0%	73%

Table 6: Estimated catchment average nitrate sector share alongside modelled catchment average concentrations (mg/l) and percentage reductions needed across all scenarios to meet the TON target.

Scenario and Assessment Metric	Diffuse	Point	Total
Baseline (2009) Sector Share of the (TON) target	91%	9%	
Catchment average sector share of the target (mg/l)	1.365	0.135	1.500
Actual (2014 to 2020) - modelled sector concentration (mg/l)	3.459	0.130	3.589
Actual (2014 to 2020) - reduction to meet sector share	61%	0%	58%
2030 Optimistic – modelled sector concentration (mg/l)	3.459	0.130	3.589
2030 Optimistic – reduction to meet sector share	61%	0%	58%

Scenario and Assessment Metric	Diffuse	Point	Total
2030 At Permit – modelled sector concentration (mg/l)	3.439	0.166	3.605
2030 At Permit – reduction to meet sector share	60%	19%	58%
2030 Full Regulation – modelled sector concentration (mg/l)	3.333	0.166	3.499
2030 Full Regulation – reduction to meet sector share	59%	19%	57%
2030 Theoretical Maximum – modelled sector concentration (mg/l)	3.070	0.166	3.236
2030 Theoretical Maximum – reduction to meet sector share	56%	19%	54%

Maps - modelled reductions needed

The catchment average information above provides an overview of the sector concentrations and reductions needed at the catchment scale. However, within the designated reaches there are locations where the overall reductions needed to meet the site targets are greater or less than the catchment average. We show this detail on the catchment maps.

Maps 2 to 6 (phosphate) and maps 10 to 15 (nitrate) show the percentage reduction needed in total concentrations to meet the overall CSMG targets in the Clun SAC for each scenario. Maps 7 to 9 (phosphate) and maps 16 to 18 (nitrate) show the percentage reduction needed in the diffuse sector concentrations for the diffuse sector share of the targets to be met. Data is plotted for each modelled plotting point where there is a real-world feature e.g. monitoring point or discharge location.

Phosphate

We estimate that the overall phosphate protected site target is not met under any of the scenarios. In the Actual (2014 to 2020) scenario, reductions of between 60% and 80% are estimated to be required throughout the designated reaches for the protected site target to be met (Map 2). Under the same scenario, the estimated diffuse sector reductions needed to meet the diffuse sector share of the target are greater than 80% (Map 7).

The estimated reductions required in the phosphate total concentrations remains in the same (60% to 80%) bracket for all other scenarios except the 2030 Theoretical Maximum scenario, where the estimated reductions required drop to the 40% to 60% bracket (Map 6). With the Full Regulation and Theoretical Maximum reductions applied to the rural land use sector (Table 2), the diffuse phosphate concentration reductions needed to meet the diffuse sector share of the target remains high, over 60% (Maps 8 and 9).

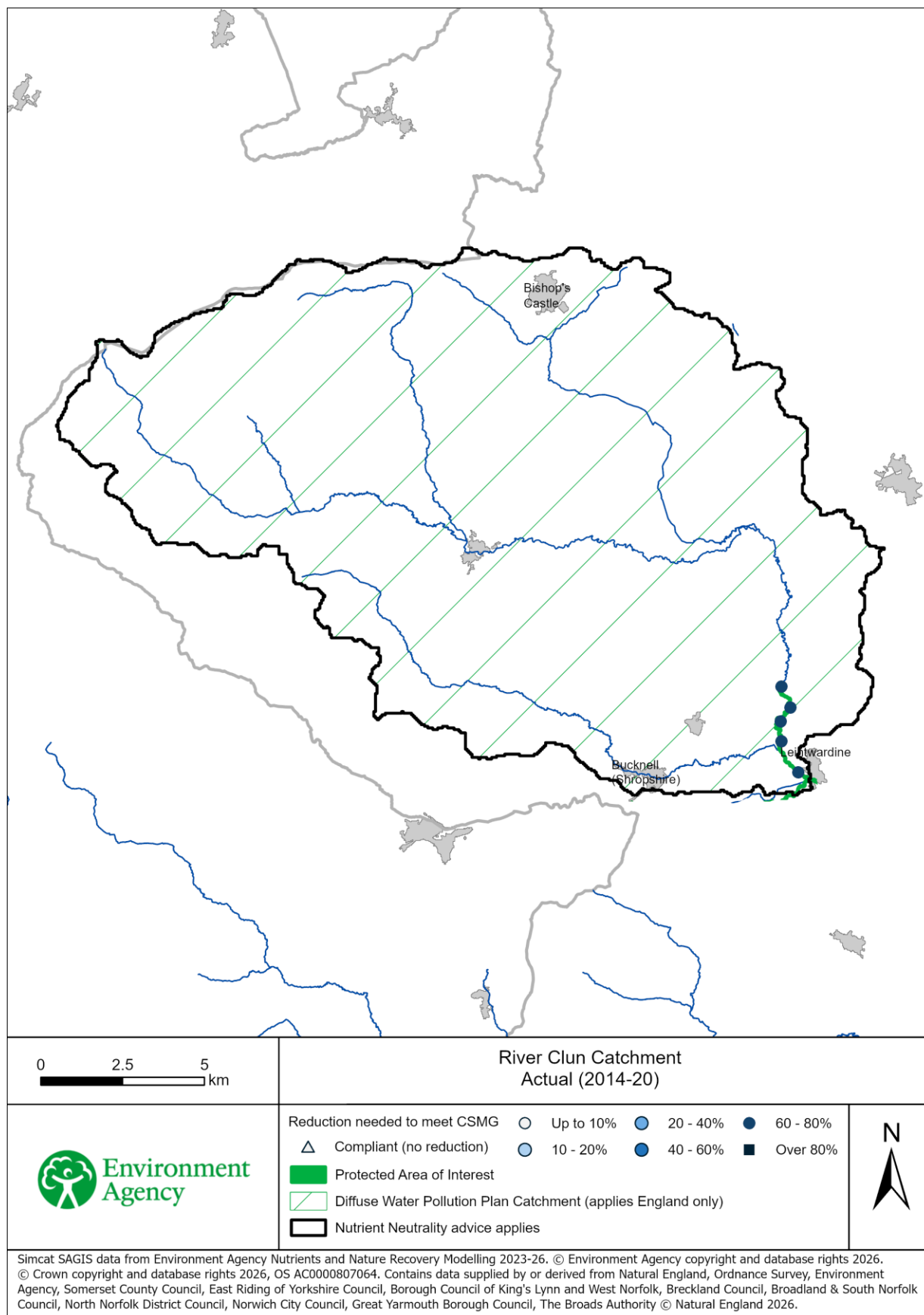
In the Actual (2014 to 2020) and 2030 Theoretical Maximum scenarios, the estimated reductions needed to meet the diffuse sector share of the target (Maps 7 and 9) are

greater than the estimated reductions needed in total concentrations to meet the overall site target (Maps 2 and 6). This is because the point sector concentrations are less than the point sector share of the target, which creates a degree of 'headroom' for the diffuse concentrations.

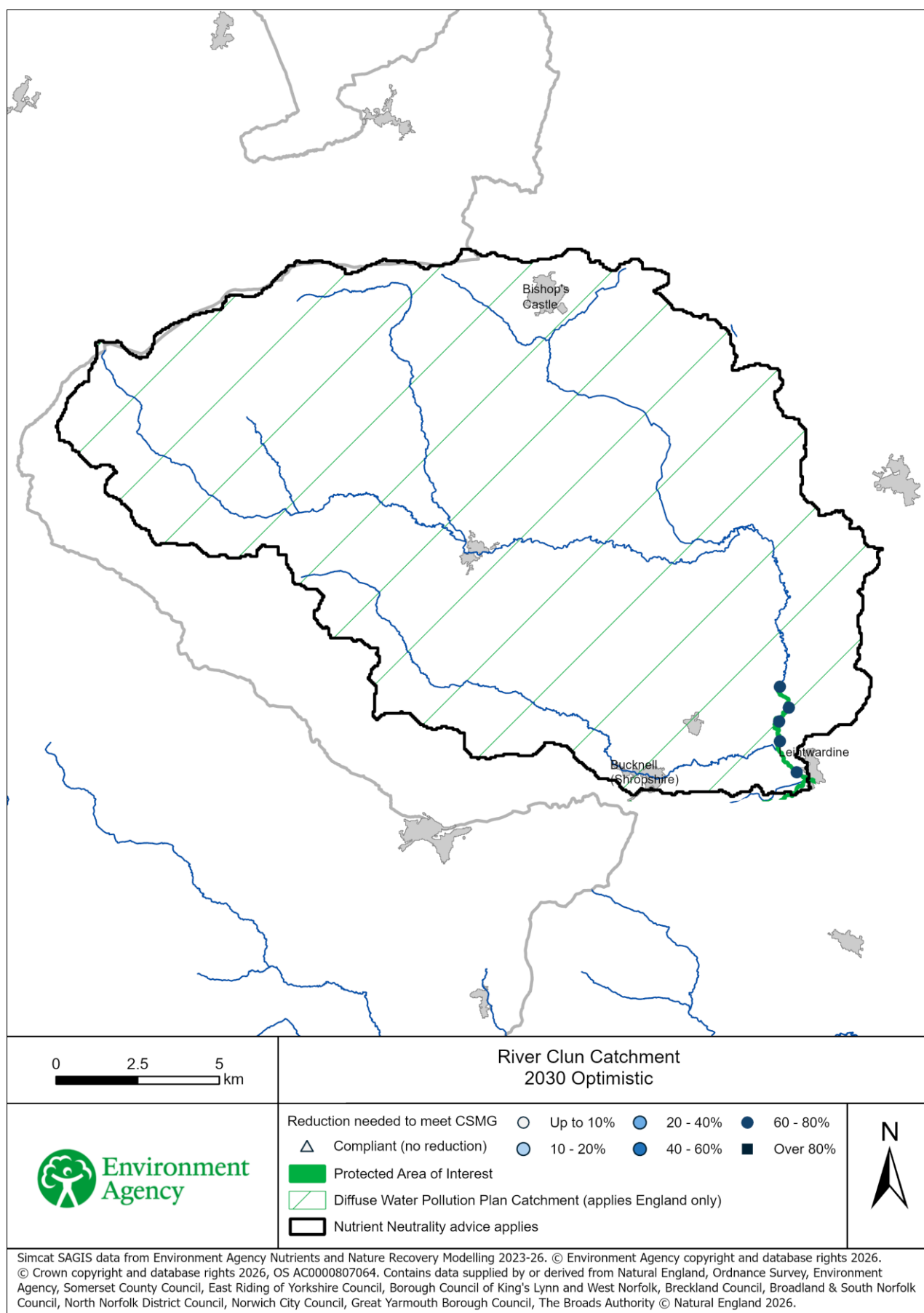
Total Oxidised Nitrogen (TON) and Nitrate

We estimate that the overall nitrate (TON) protected site target is not met under any of the scenarios. In all scenarios reductions of between 60% and 80% are estimated to be required throughout the designated reaches for the protected site target to be met (Maps 10 to 15). For the diffuse sector share of the target to be met, we estimate that diffuse concentrations need to reduce by between 40% and 60% in all scenarios (Maps 16 to 18).

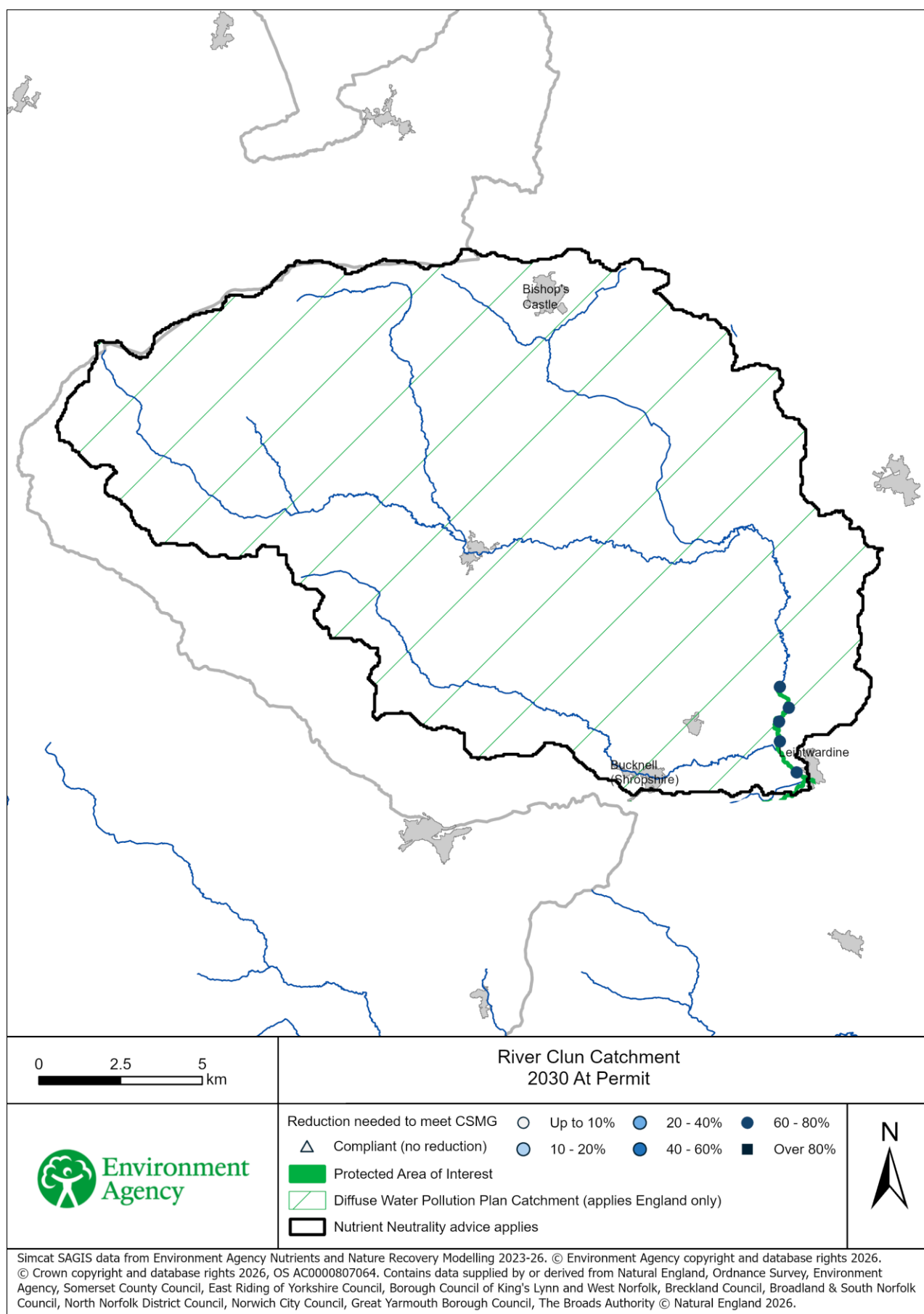
The estimated reductions required in the phosphate total concentrations remains in the same (60 to 80%) bracket for all other scenarios except the 2030 Theoretical Maximum scenario, where the estimated reductions required drop to the 40% to 60% bracket (Map 6). With the Full Regulation and Theoretical Maximum reductions applied to the rural land use sector (Table 2), the diffuse phosphate concentration reductions needed to meet the diffuse sector share of the target remains high, over 60% (Maps 8 and 9).



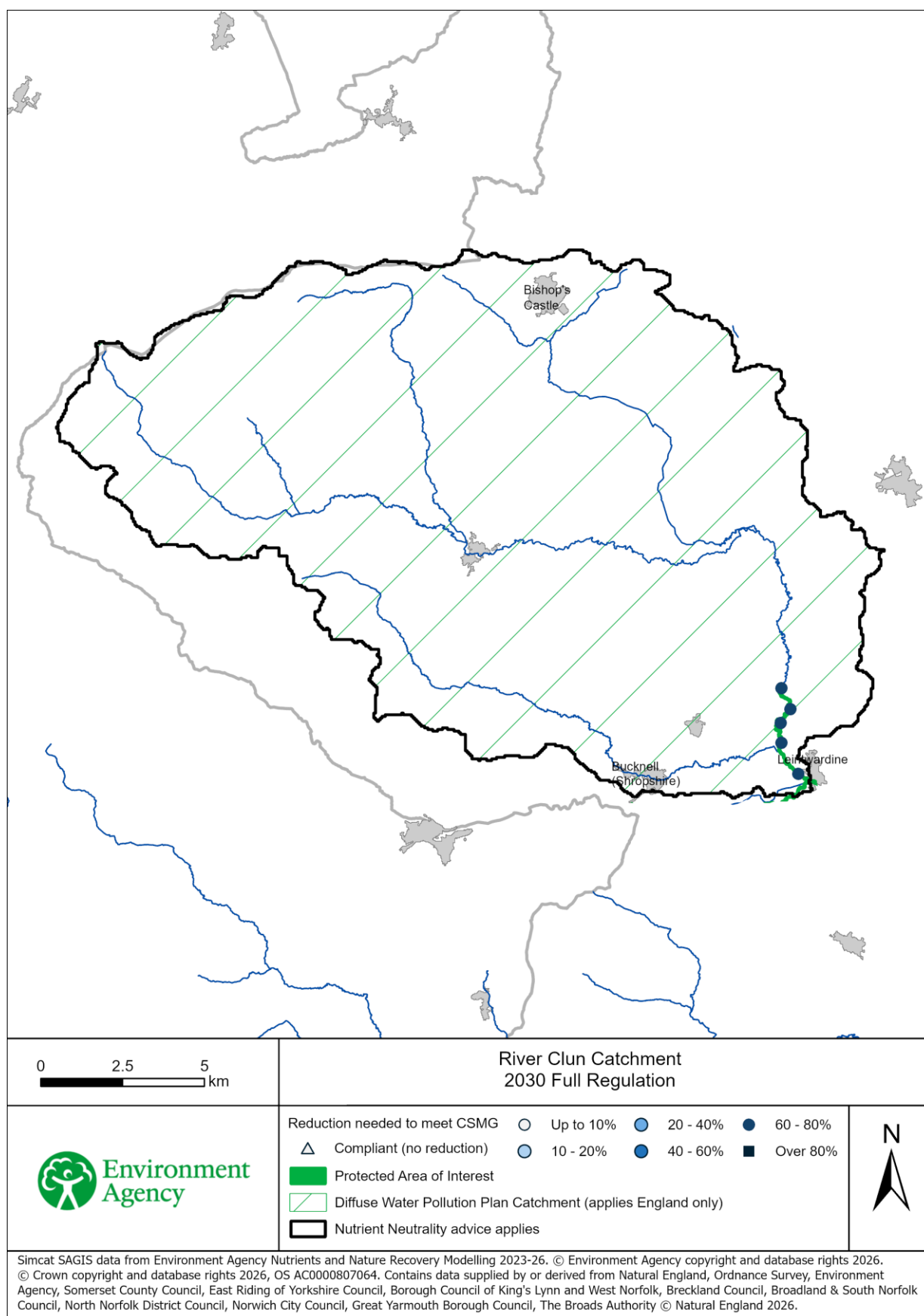
Map 2. Estimated reductions needed in phosphate total concentrations to meet the CSMG target in the Actual (2014 to 2020) Scenario. Reductions of between 60 and 80% are estimated throughout the designated reaches.



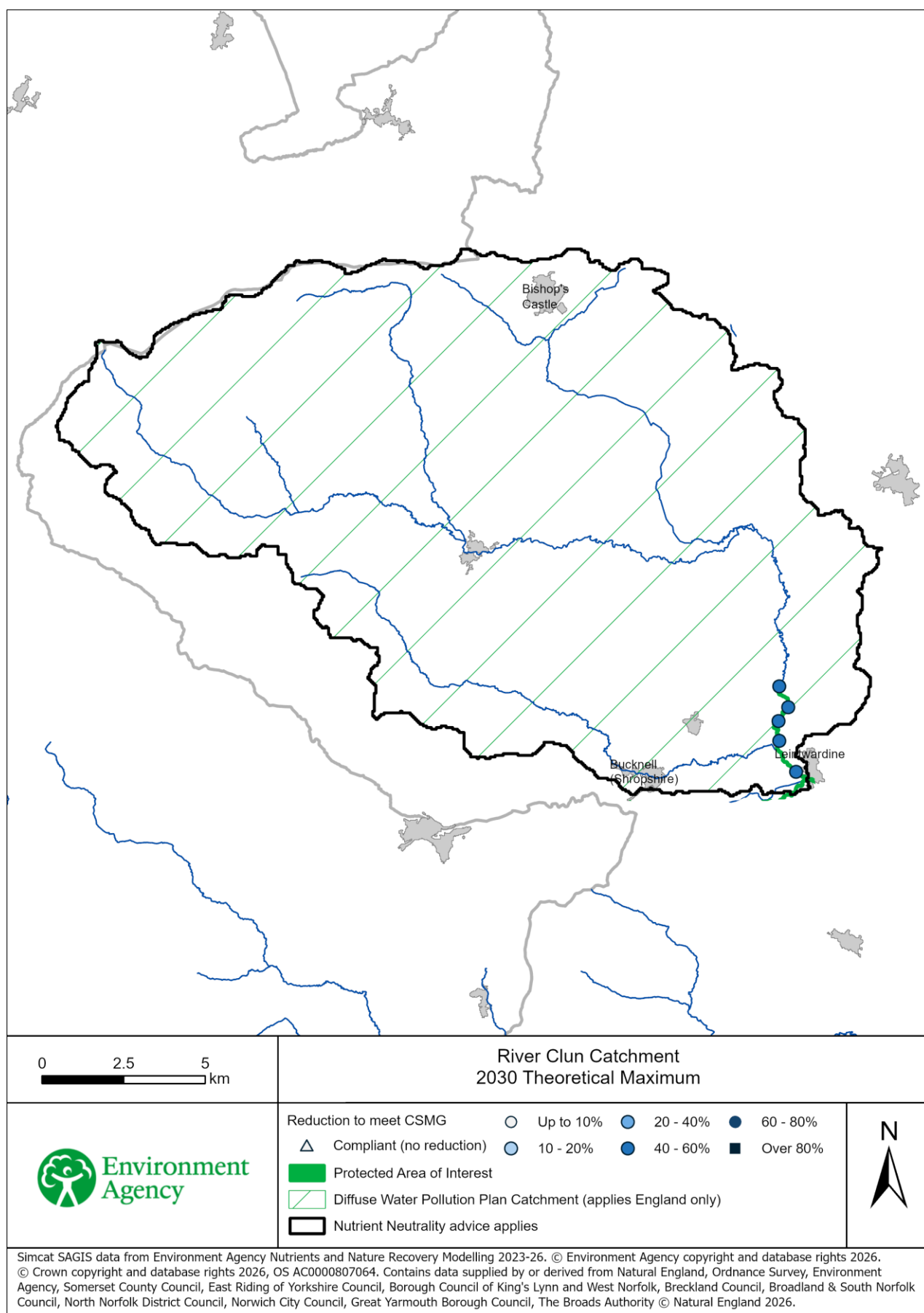
Map 3. Estimated reductions needed in phosphate total concentrations to meet the CSMG target in the 2030 Optimistic Scenario. Reductions of between 60 and 80% are estimated throughout the designated reaches.



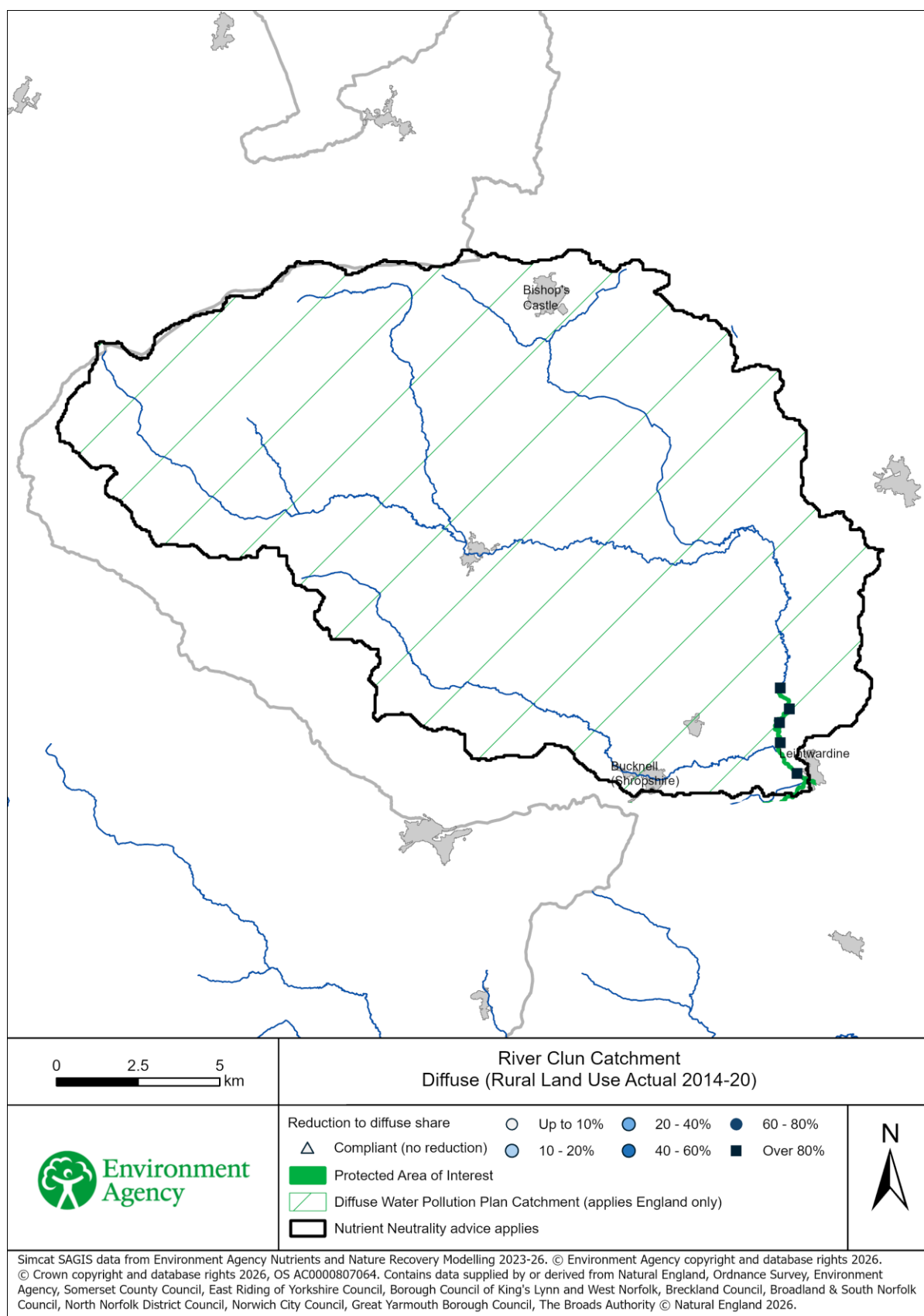
Map 4. Estimated reductions needed in phosphate total concentrations to meet the CSMG target in the 2030 At Permit Scenario. Reductions of between 60 and 80% are estimated throughout the designated reaches.



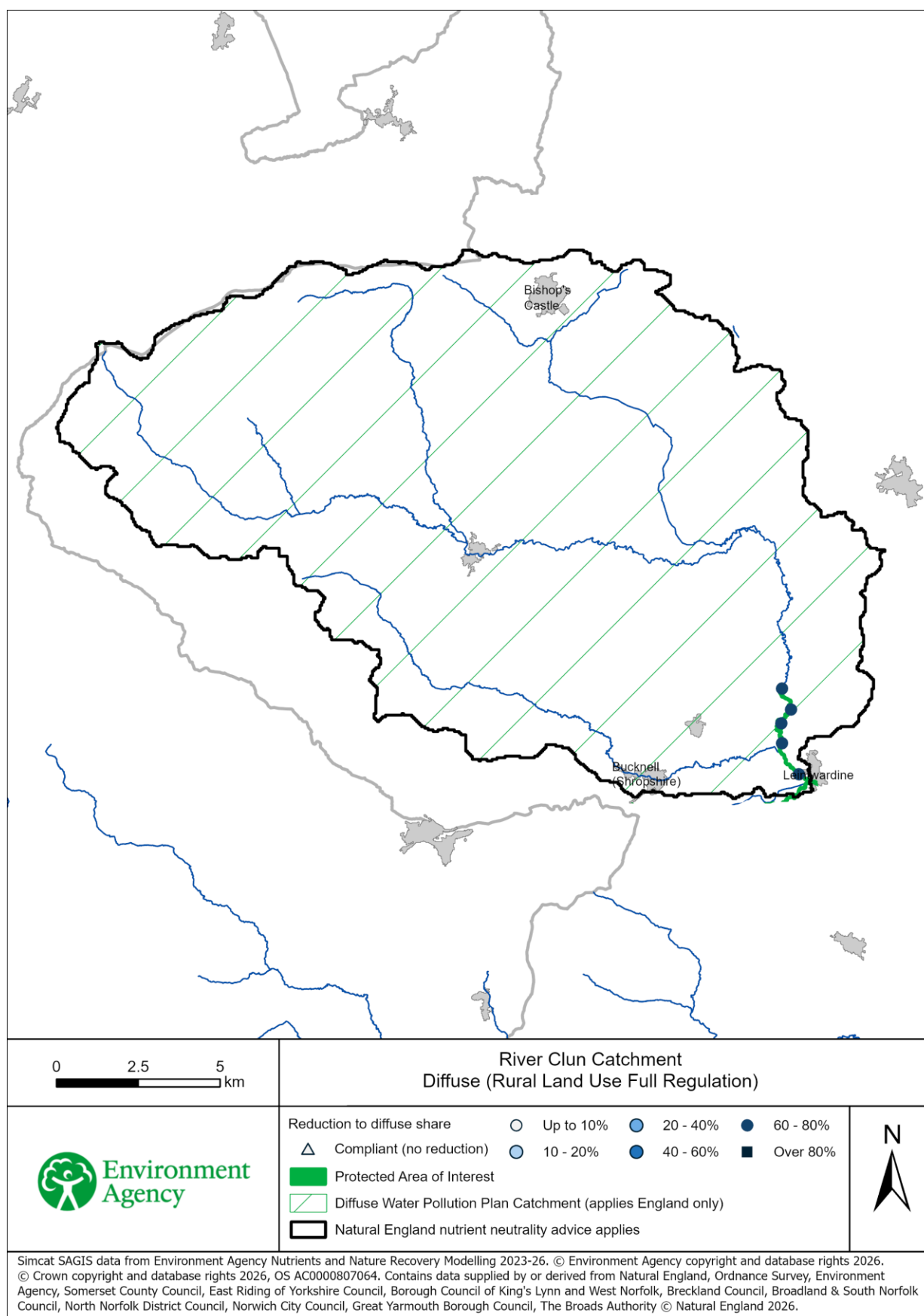
Map 5. Estimated reductions needed in phosphate total concentrations to meet the CSMG target in the 2030 Full Regulation Scenario. Reductions of between 60 and 80% are estimated throughout the designated reaches.



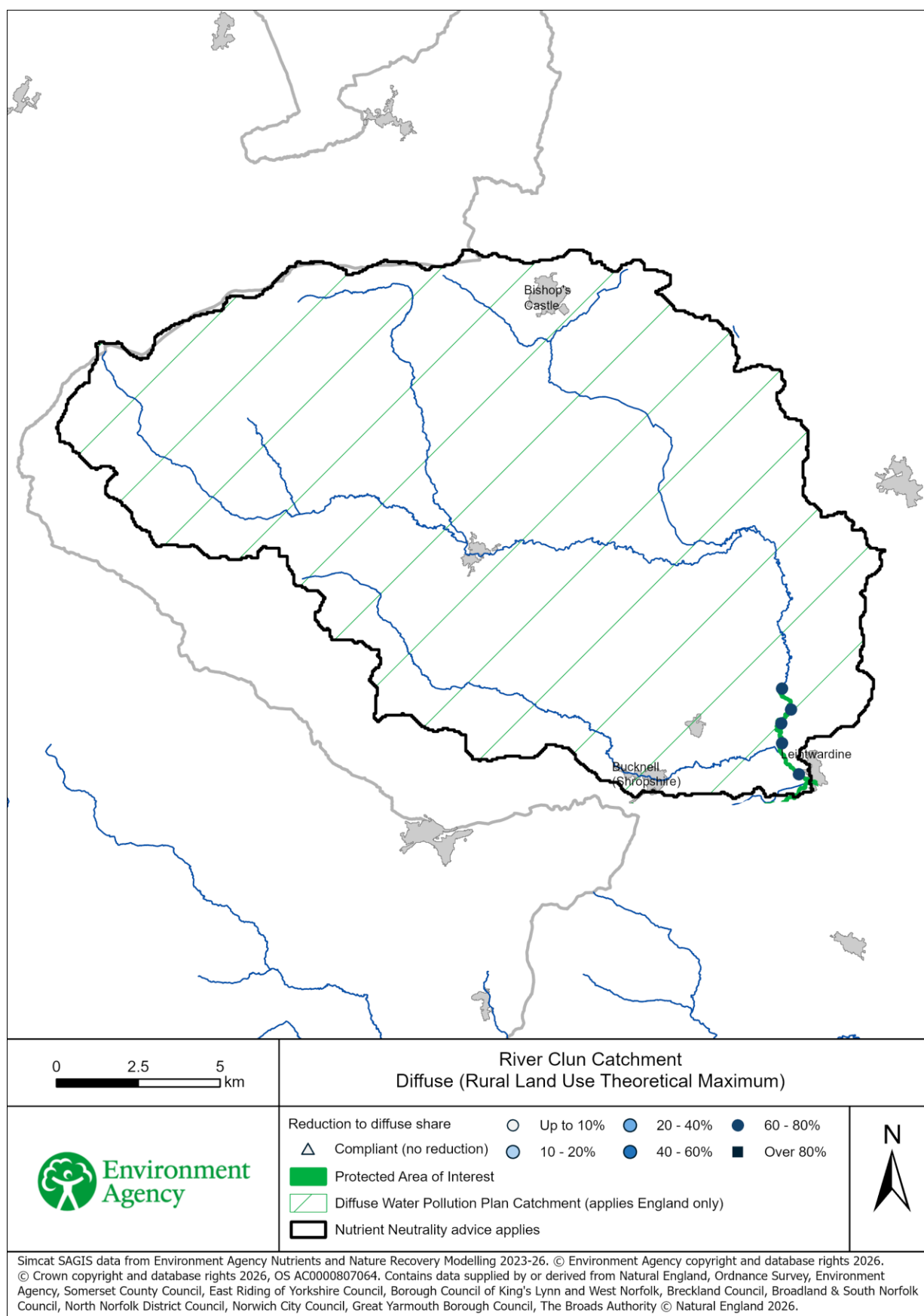
Map 6. Estimated reductions needed in phosphate total concentrations to meet the CSMG target in the 2030 Theoretical Maximum Scenario. Reductions of between 40 and 60% are estimated throughout the designated reaches.



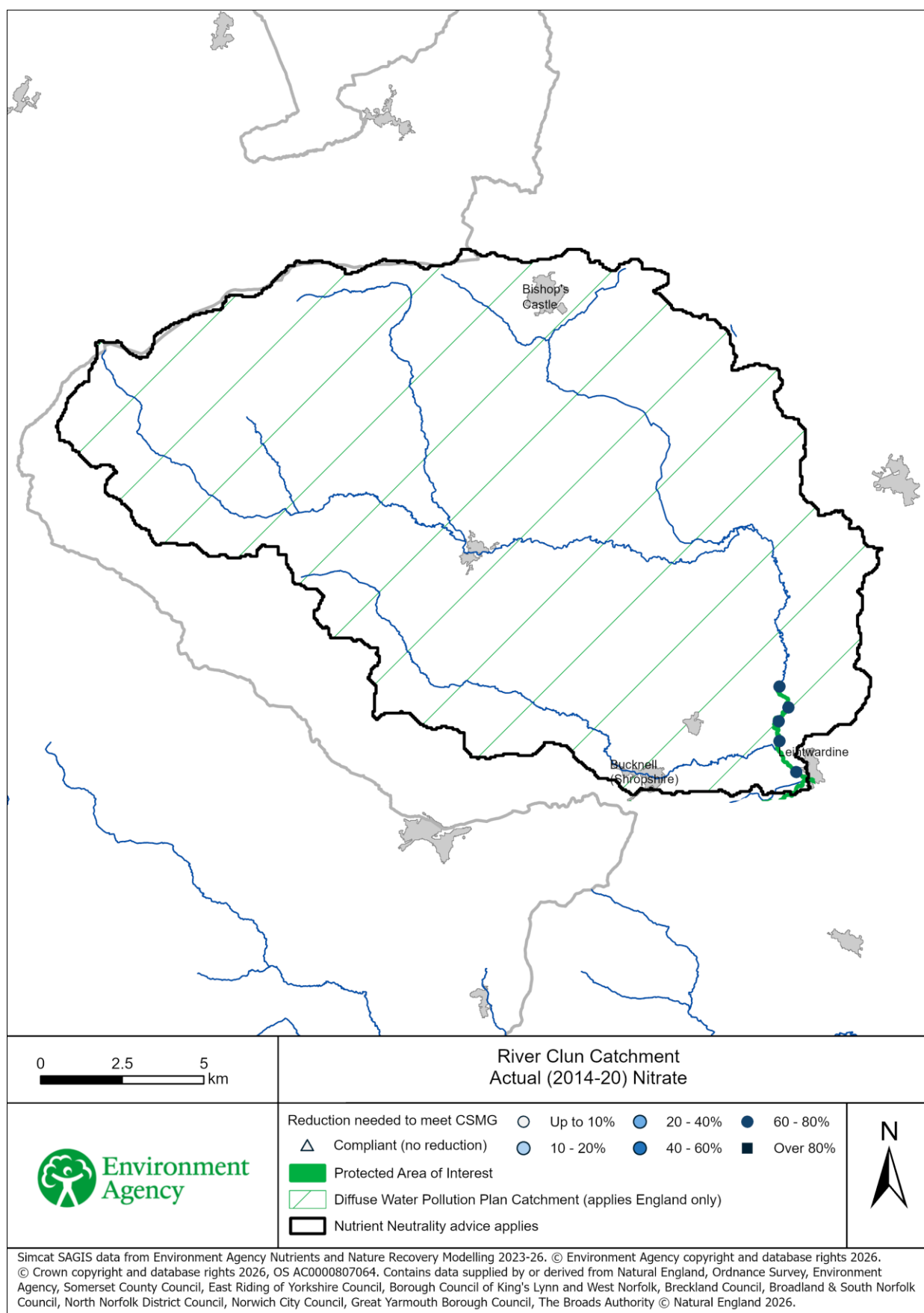
Map 7. Estimated reductions needed in diffuse phosphate concentrations to meet the diffuse share of the target in the Actual (2014 to 2020) Scenario. Diffuse concentrations estimated to need to reduce by over 80% throughout the designated reaches.



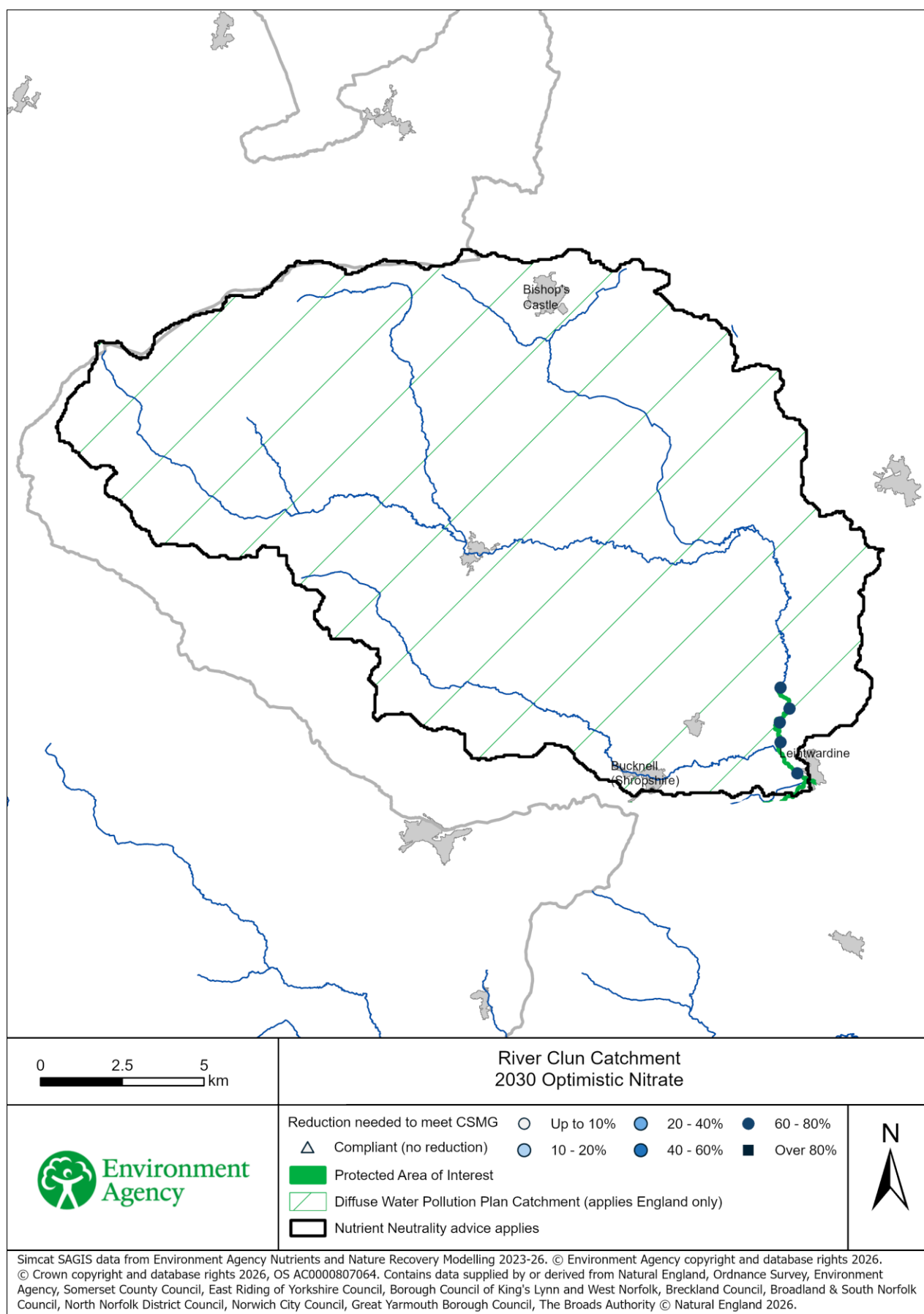
Map 8. Estimated reductions needed in diffuse phosphate concentrations to meet the diffuse share of the target in the 2030 Full Regulation Scenario. Diffuse concentrations estimated to need to reduce by between 60% and 80% throughout the designated reaches.



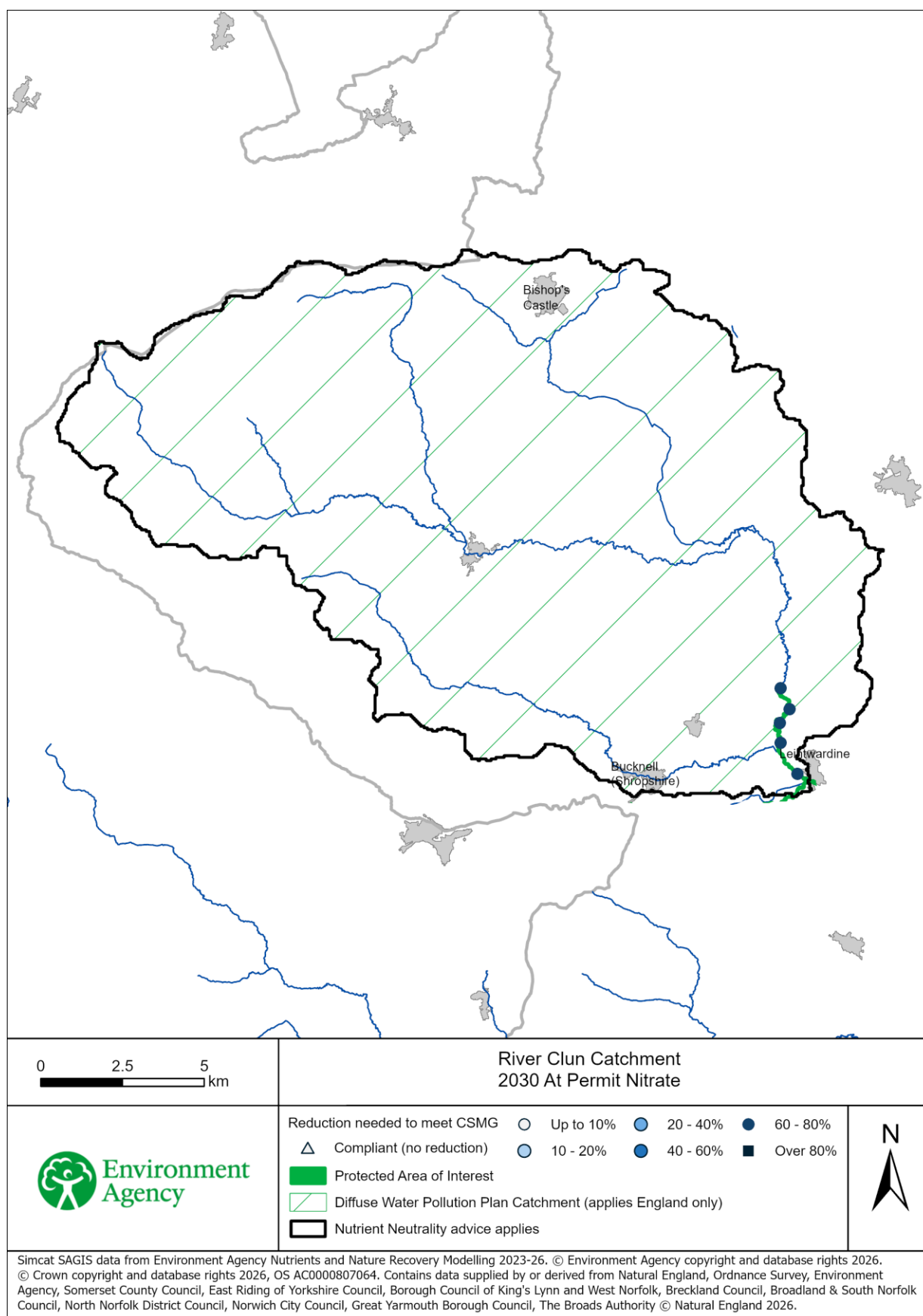
Map 9. Estimated reductions needed in diffuse phosphate concentrations to meet the diffuse share of the target in the 2030 Theoretical Maximum Scenario. Diffuse concentrations estimated to need to reduce by between 60% and 80% throughout the designated reaches.



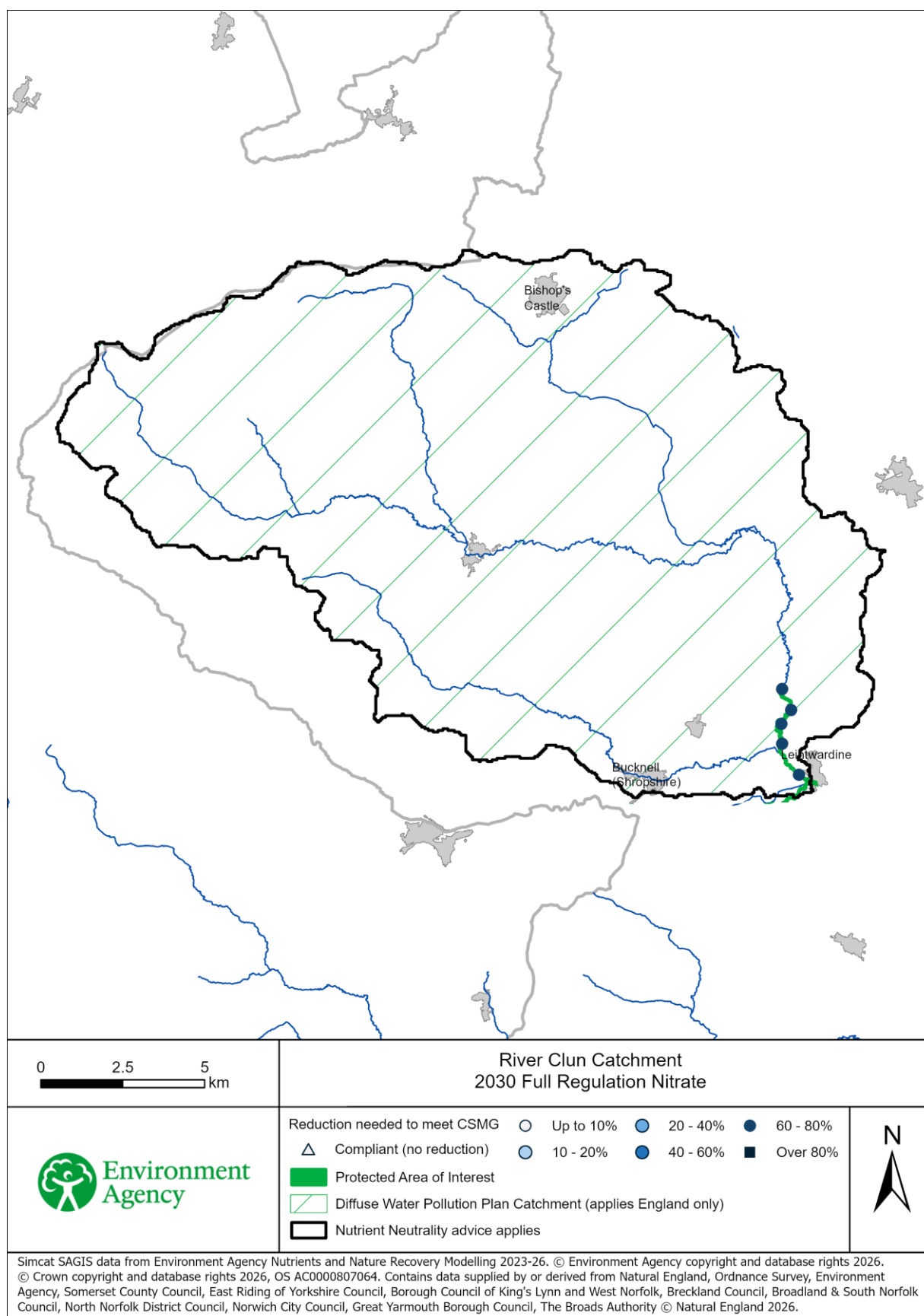
Map 10. Estimated reductions needed in nitrate total concentrations to meet the CSMG TON target in the Actual (2014 to 2020) Scenario. Reductions of between 60% and 80% are estimated throughout the designated reaches.



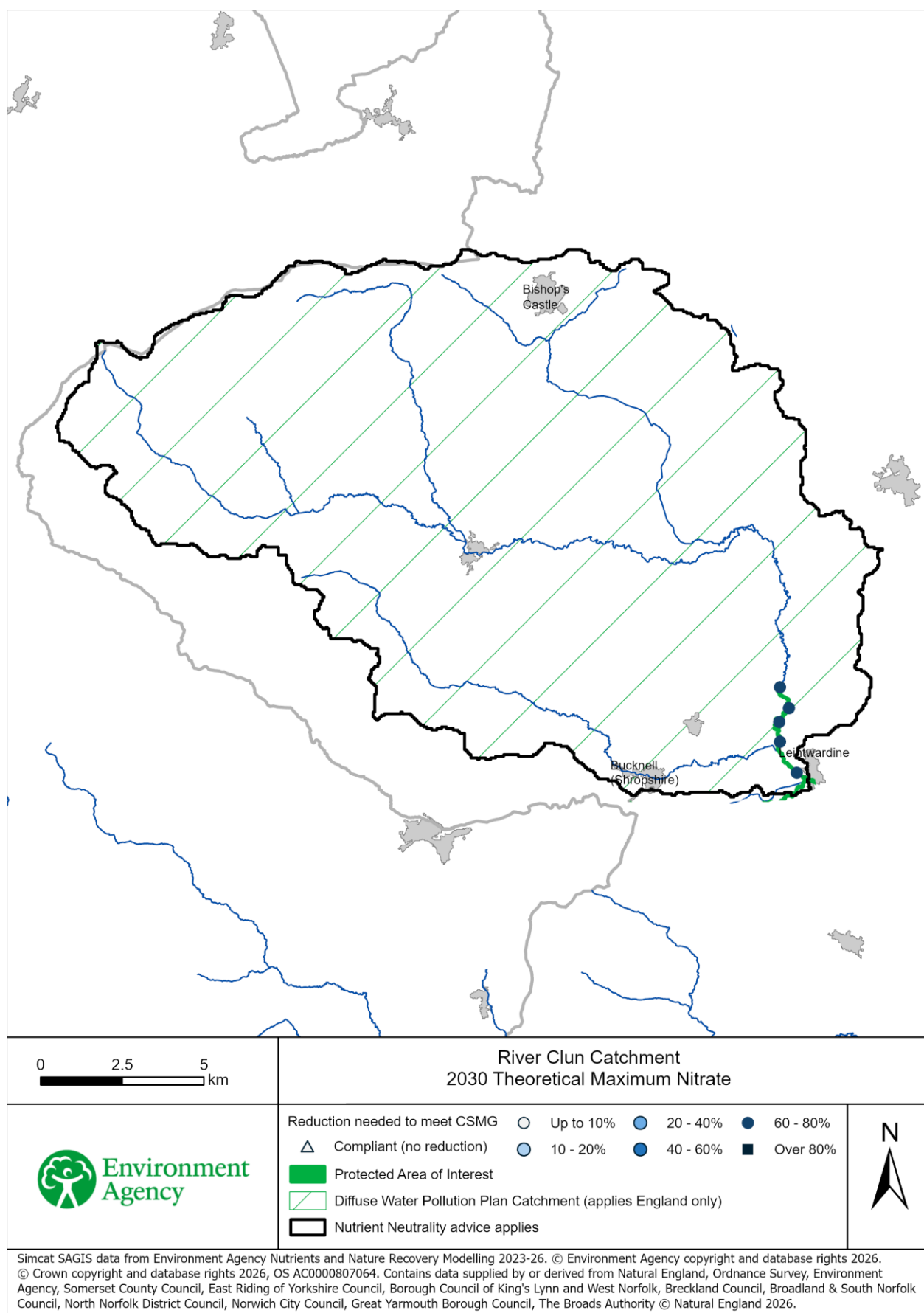
Map 11. Estimated reductions needed in nitrate total concentrations to meet the CSMG TON target in the 2030 Optimistic Scenario. Reductions of between 60 and 80% are estimated throughout the designated reaches.



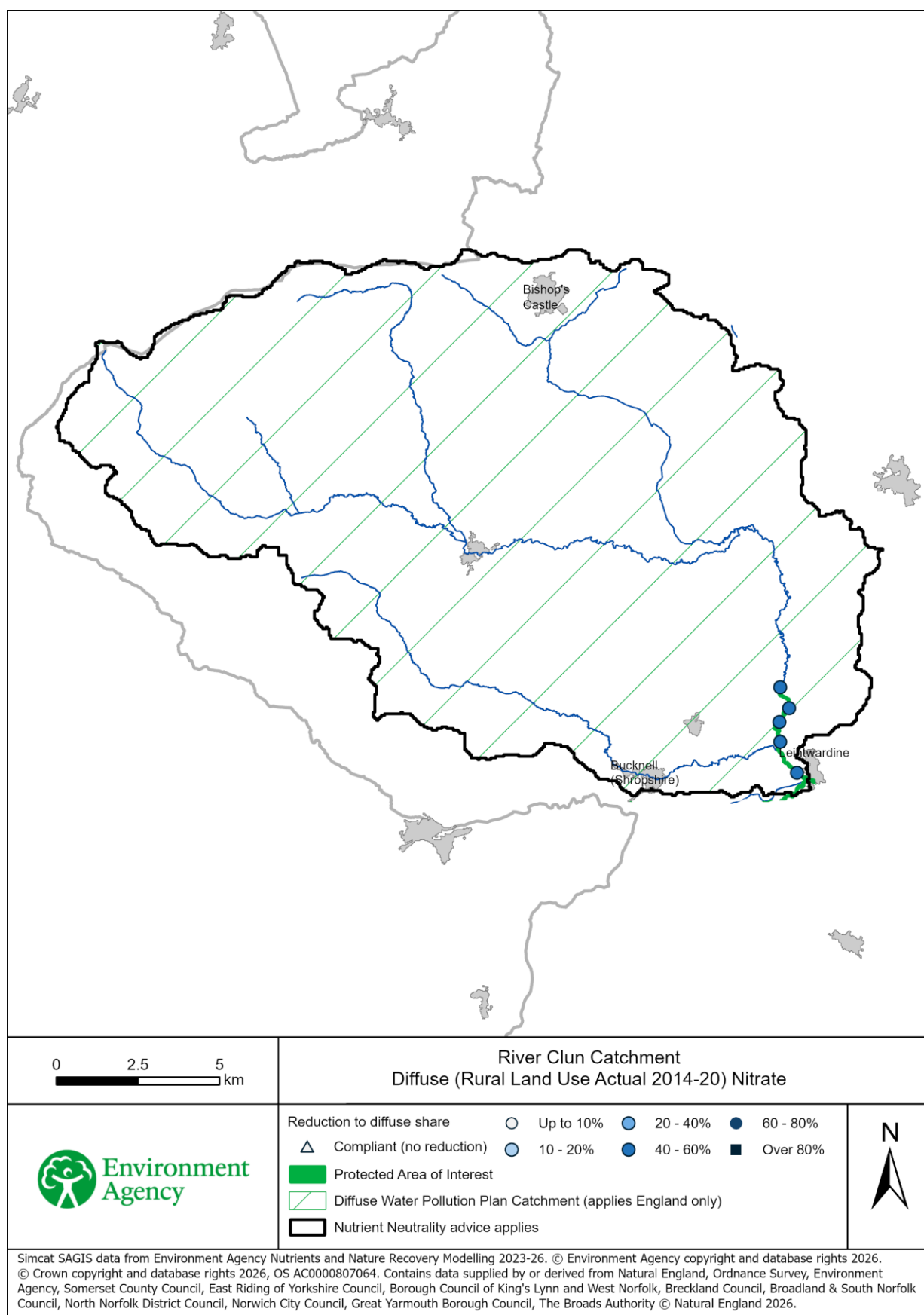
Map 12. Estimated reductions needed in nitrate total concentrations to meet the CSMG TON target in the 2030 At Permit Scenario. Reductions of between 60 and 80% are estimated throughout the designated reaches.



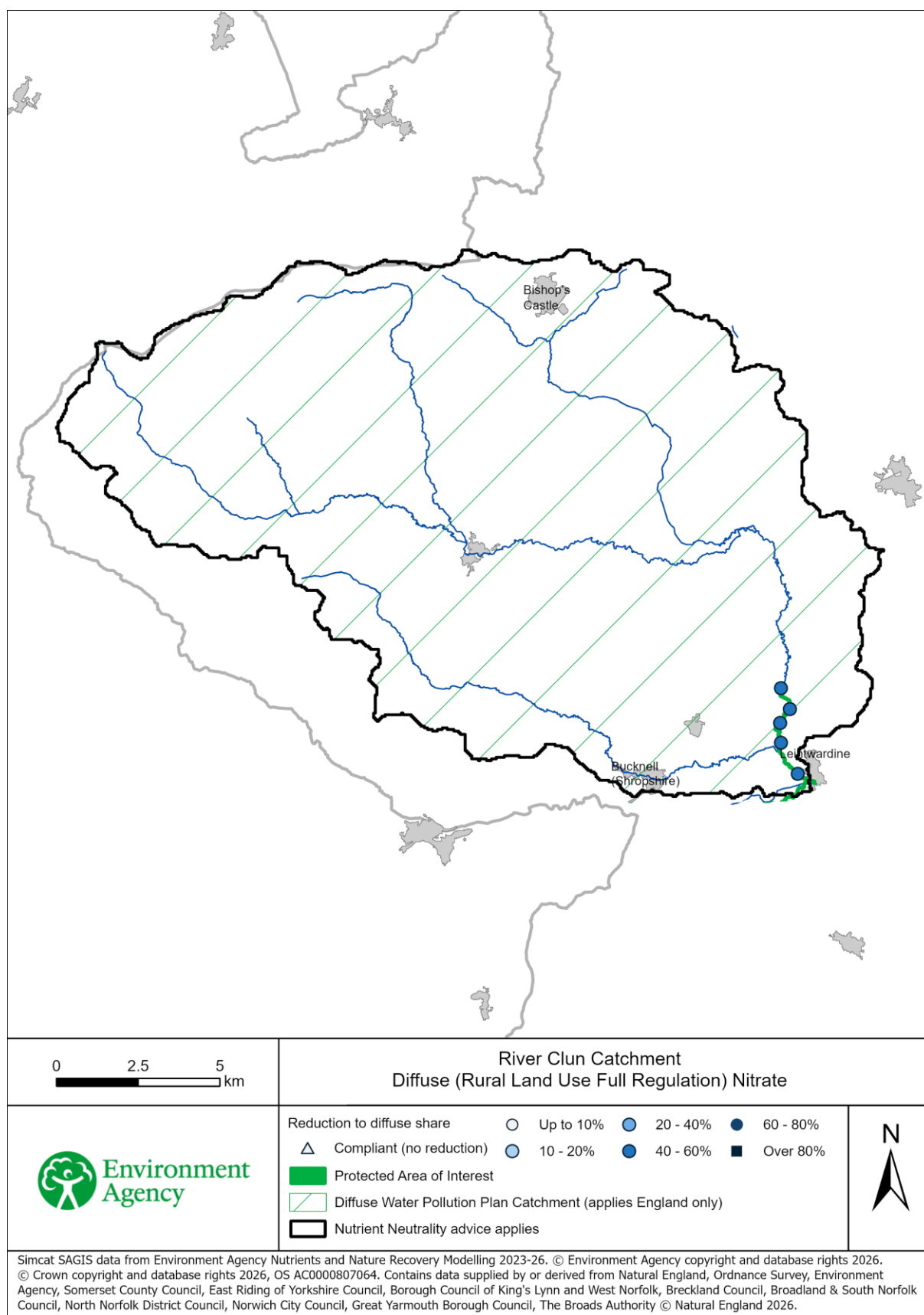
Map 13. Estimated reductions needed in nitrate total concentrations to meet the CSMG TON target in the 2030 Full Regulation Scenario. Reductions of between 60 and 80% are estimated throughout the designated reaches.



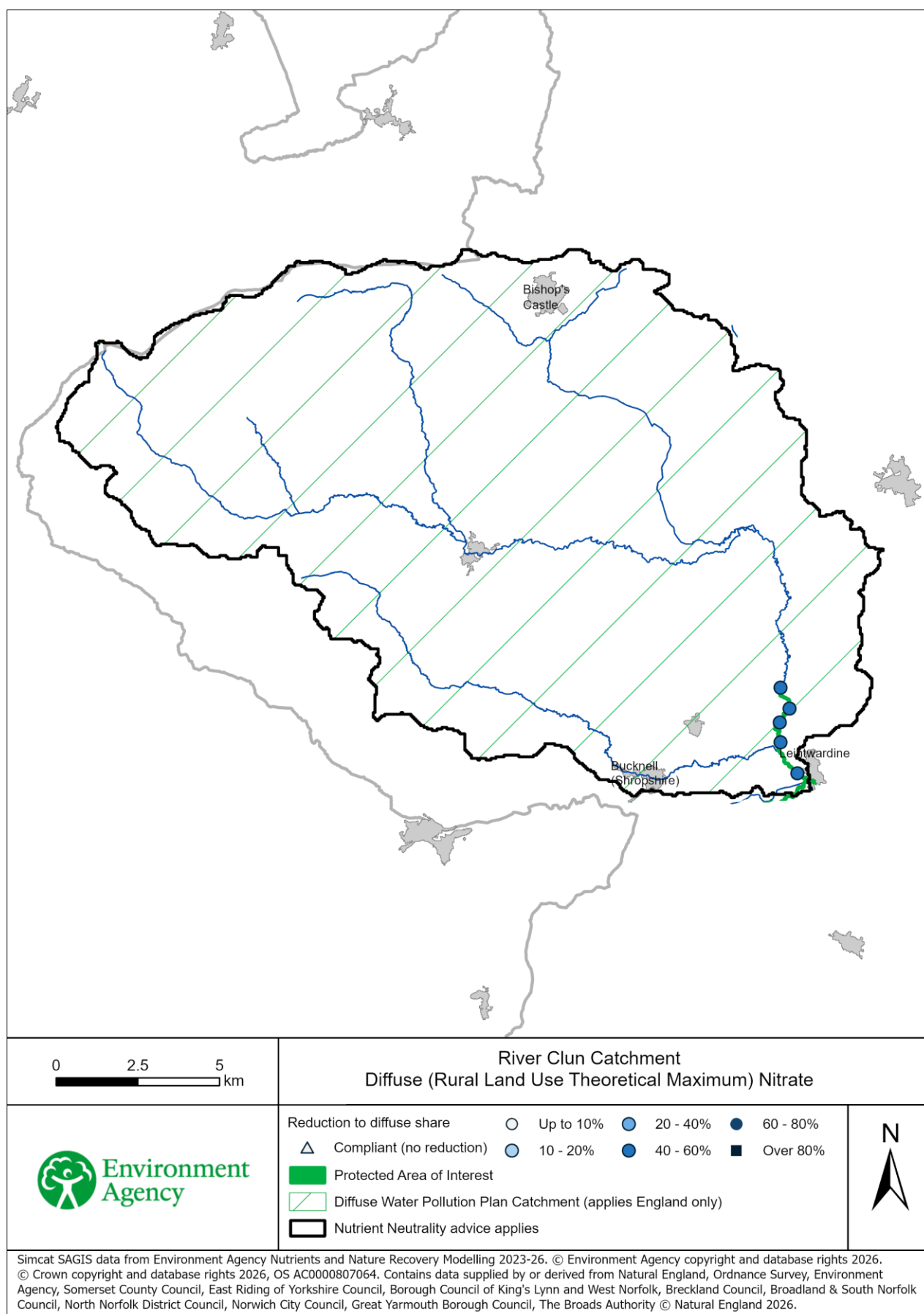
Map 14. Estimated reductions needed in nitrate total concentrations to meet the CSMG TON target in the 2030 Theoretical Maximum Scenario. Reductions of between 60 and 80% are estimated throughout the designated reaches.



Map 15. Estimated reductions needed in diffuse nitrate concentrations to meet the diffuse share of the TON target in the Actual (2014 to 2020) Scenario. Diffuse concentrations estimated to need to reduce by between 40% and 60% throughout the designated reaches.



Map 16. Estimated reductions needed in diffuse nitrate concentrations to meet the diffuse share of the TON target in the 2030 Full Regulation Scenario. Diffuse concentrations estimated to need to reduce by between 40% and 60% throughout the designated reaches.



Map 17. Estimated reductions needed in diffuse nitrate concentrations to meet the diffuse share of the TON target in the 2030 Theoretical Maximum Scenario. Diffuse concentrations estimated to need to reduce by between 40% and 60% throughout the designated reaches.

Input load figures used to calculate source apportionment

Table 7: Estimated phosphate catchment input loads (kg/d) and input load source apportionment after calibration, before in-river processes.

Scenario	STW (kg/d)	Intermittents (kg/d)	Industrial (kg/d)	Rural Land Use (kg/d)	Urban (kg/d)	Septic Tanks (kg/d)	Highways (kg/d)	Point (%)	Rural Land Use (%)	Urban (%)	Septic Tanks (%)	Other (%)
Actual (2014 to 2020)	2.07	0.02	0.00	11.85	1.46	0.62	0.00	13.0%	74.0%	9.1%	3.9%	0.0%
2030 Optimistic	0.45	0.02	0.00	11.85	1.46	0.62	0.00	3.3%	82.3%	10.1%	4.3%	0.0%
2030 At Permit	1.25	0.02	0.00	11.85	1.46	0.62	0.00	8.3%	78.0%	9.6%	4.1%	0.0%
2030 Full Regulation	1.25	0.02	0.00	9.84	1.46	0.62	0.00	9.6%	74.6%	11.1%	4.7%	0.0%
2030 Theoretical Maximum	1.25	0.02	0.00	6.92	1.46	0.62	0.00	12.3%	67.4%	14.2%	6.1%	0.0%

Table 8: Estimated nitrate catchment input loads (kg/d) and input load source apportionment after calibration, before in-river processes.

Scenario	STW (kg/d)	Intermittents (kg/d)	Industrial (kg/d)	Rural Land Use (kg/d)	Urban (kg/d)	Septic Tanks (kg/d)	Highways (kg/d)	Atmospheric Deposition (kg/d)	Point (%)	Rural Land Use (%)	Urban (%)	Septic Tanks (%)	Other (%)
Actual (2014 to 2020)	25.01	0.02	0.00	1012.50	2.49	3.55	0.00	174.60	2.1%	83.1%	0.2%	0.3%	14.3%
2030 Optimistic	25.01	0.02	0.00	1012.50	2.49	3.55	0.00	174.60	2.1%	83.1%	0.2%	0.3%	14.3%
2030 At Permit	34.23	0.02	0.00	1012.50	2.49	3.55	0.00	174.60	2.8%	82.5%	0.2%	0.3%	14.2%
2030 Full Regulation	34.23	0.02	0.00	972.00	2.49	3.55	0.00	174.60	2.9%	81.9%	0.2%	0.3%	14.7%
2030 Theoretical Maximum	34.23	0.02	0.00	868.60	2.49	3.55	0.00	174.60	3.2%	80.2%	0.2%	0.3%	16.1%

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Defra (2019a). A national scale assessment of current and future actions to reduce diffuse pollution of water by agriculture. [Report by ADAS for Defra project WT1594](#): 1-47.

Environment Agency (2022). Water quality: what 3 future environmental land management schemes can achieve by 2027. [Water quality: what 3 future environmental land management schemes can achieve by 2027](#).

Gooday, R. D., Anthony, S.G., Chadwick, D.R., Newell-Price, P., Harris, D., Duethmann, D., Fish, R., and A. L. a. W. Collins, M. (2014). Modelling the cost-effectiveness of mitigation methods for multiple pollutants at farm scale. [Science of the Total Environment](#) (468-469): 1198-1209.

List of abbreviations

ADAS – UK-based independent agricultural and environmental consultancy, previously National Agricultural Advisory Service (NAAS).

AMP8 WINEP – Asset Management Plan 8 (2025 – 2030) Water Industry National Environment Programme - [Water industry national environment programme \(WINEP\) methodology - GOV.UK](#)

CSMG – Common Standards Monitoring Guidance – includes guidance on the appropriate standards and targets for designated sites [Common Standards Monitoring Guidance for Freshwater Habitats | JNCC Resource Hub](#)

DWPP – Diffuse Water Pollution Plan

NEAP-N – ADAS model providing annual 1 km grid loadings of nitrate.

PR – [Price Review https://www.ofwat.gov.uk/regulated-companies/price-review/](https://www.ofwat.gov.uk/regulated-companies/price-review/)

PSYCHIC – ADAS model providing annual 1 km grid loadings of Phosphate.

SAC – Special Area of Conservation

SAGIS – Source Apportionment Geographical Information System

SPA – Special Protection Area

SSSI – Site of Special Scientific Interest

TON – Total Oxidised Nitrogen

UKWIR – United Kingdom Water Industry Research

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