

How should Reading develop in the next 20 years?

Reading Borough Local Plan - Consultation on Issues and Options

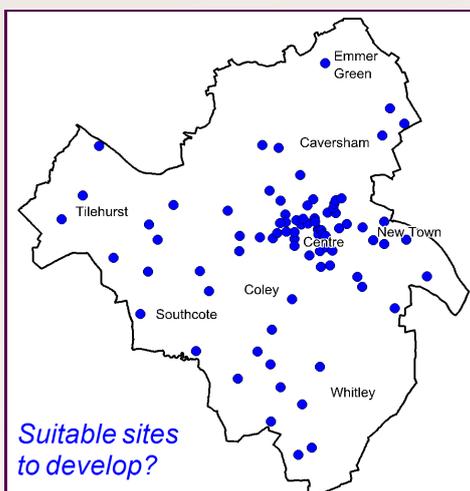
We are starting to draw up a new Local Plan for Reading. A Local Plan will be our plan for how Reading will develop up to 2036. It will cover all of the important matters, from the question of how much development there will be, right down to matters such as design of house extensions. When we decide planning applications, it will be the Local Plan that is the main consideration.

We are at the start of this process, and we are therefore asking you what the plan should cover, and what approach it should take. An 'Issues and Options paper', which discusses these matters, is on the Council's website, and we encourage you to have a look at this document and tell us what you think.

Some of the main topics ...

How many new homes should we plan for?

One of the main questions the paper asks is how much new development we should plan for. Most importantly, we need to think about how many new homes we should plan to build every year. National policy expects us to meet our full housing need unless there are strong reasons not to, and we have worked out that our need is 699 homes per year up to 2036. But do we have enough suitable sites to meet this need, and, if not, how many homes can we accommodate?



Where should development go?

We also need to think about where new development should take place. Should it continue to mainly be in the town centre and south Reading, as in our current plan? And which specific sites should be used? The paper contains a list of candidate sites, which include sites from our existing plan as well as sites that have been suggested to us. We are asking for your views, and do not necessarily endorse any of the suggested sites at this point.

The map on the left summarises where these sites are, and the paper contains more detail, with key information set out on each site.

Which other issues should we deal with?

The paper deals with other issues, such as our heritage, infrastructure needs, changes of use in our smaller centres, the future of pubs and standards for the construction of new housing. It asks how we should approach these issues, and what other matters the plan should consider.

It also asks which important areas we should protect from development, or designate for other uses.



What is the process for producing the plan?

Local plans take some time to prepare, with a number of stages to go through, and a final plan is not expected to be in place before 2018.

We intend to publish a draft plan, taking your responses to this consultation into account, in 2017 and will ask again for your views. Once we are happy with the draft, it will be submitted to the government, and a public examination of the plan will take place. If the plan passes that test, it can be adopted as our official policy.

How to find more information

The full Issues and Options paper is on the Council's website here:

<http://www.reading.gov.uk/newlocalplan>

Copies can also be viewed at the Civic Offices, Bridge Street, Reading, RG1 2LU (between 9 am and 5 pm on weekdays) and in all Council libraries (normal opening hours).

The planning policy team at the Council can be contacted on 0118 9373337 or LDF@reading.gov.uk.

Various background documents are also on the Council's website, including the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (which assesses the level of need for new homes) and a Sustainability Appraisal of the issues and options (which considers what the environmental, social and economic effects would be).

How to get involved

Written responses: Please provide written responses to the consultation by 5 pm on 7th March 2016. Responses should be sent in writing to:

LDF@reading.gov.uk

Planning Policy Team, Reading Borough Council
Civic Offices, Bridge Street
Reading
RG1 2LU

There is also a form that can be filled out, which is available at <http://www.reading.gov.uk/newlocalplan>

Events:

We will be holding the following events:

Workshops

Come and get involved in activities to consider the future development of Reading. Please contact us if you would like to attend.

- Tilehurst Village Hall, Victoria Road, RG31 5AB
Thursday 4th February 7:30–9:30 PM
- Church House, 59 Church Street, Caversham, RG4 8AX
Tuesday 16th February 7:00–9:00 PM
- Civic Offices, Bridge Street, RG1 2LU (Committee Room 4a/4b)
Wednesday 24th February, 7:00–9:00 PM

Drop-in events

Come and speak to a member of the team in a more informal setting. There is no need to let us know if you want to attend beforehand.

- Civic Offices, Bridge Street, RG1 2LU (main reception)
Monday 15th February, 2:00–7:00 PM
Tuesday 16th February, 1:00–6:00 PM
- St Paul's Church Hall, Whitley Wood Lane, RG2 8PN
Friday 19th February, 2:00–6:30 PM